



2022 JEDDAH EVENT

24 to 27 March 2022

From	The Stewards	Document	62
To	The Team Manager, PREMA Racing	Date	26 March 2022
		Time	23:26

Title DECISION - PREMA Racing - Protest
Description DECISION - PREMA Racing - Protest
Enclosed Doc 62 - DECISION - PREMA Racing protest.pdf

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The Stewards

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To	The Team Manager, PREMA Racing	Date	26 March 2022
Copy	All Teams & Officials	Time	23:23

Protest filed by PREMA Racing against the classification established at the end of the Sprint Race.

Stewards' Decision:

The Protest is Dismissed.

Procedure:

1. On 26 March, the parties were summoned at 1800 hrs. (Document 54) and heard.

The following persons were present during the hearing:

On behalf of PREMA Racing:

- Guillaume Capietto, Team Manager
- Dennis Hauger, Driver

On behalf of the FIA

- Rui Marques, F2 Race Director

The hearing adjourned at 1820 hours.

2. At the hearing the parties set out oral arguments and addressed the questions asked by the Stewards.

Timeline:

During an incident in the F2 Sprint Race, the following key times were noted:

- 15:50:00 – “SC Through Pit Lane” posted on Timing page 3 (Message A)
- 15:50:22 – “Pit Lane Closed” posted on Timing page 3 (Message B)
- 15:51:23 – Car 1 entered the Pit Entry



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The Claims of PREMA Racing:

PREMA claimed that in a point-to-point radio discussion with the F2 Race Director after Messages A and B had been posted, they had been told that the cars would go through pit lane and, therefore, told the driver of Car 1 to go through the pit lane.

PREMA argued that when Car 1 transited the pit lane, while the balance of the field stayed out, Car 1 dropped from P1 to P12, because they followed the directions of the Race Director. They subsequently received a 10 second stop and go penalty (Document 52) for Car 1 for that pit lane transit. They asked that the classification be revised to reflect the on-track order at 15:50:00.

PREMA's protest did not allege any breach of the regulations by anyone in support of its request to revise the classification.

The Claims of the FIA:

The Race Director claimed that at the time of the incident which necessitated calling for a Safety Car (SC), it was not clear whether the track blockage was before or after the Pit Entry. They initially thought the blockage was on the Main Straight after Pit Entry and issued Message A to take the SC and field through the pit lane, in order to avoid the incident area.

Very shortly thereafter, they saw incident video that showed the position of the incident, which did not necessitate taking the field through the Pit Lane and, in fact, required that the Pit Lane be closed due to blockage on the left side of the track prior to Pit Entry. They then posted Message B. This resulted in the official message board to the Teams on Timing page 3 showing Message A for 20 seconds.

The radio conversation between PREMA and the Race Director (which is not logged or recorded, as it is not a form of communication acknowledged by the regulations) happened somewhere around the time of posting of Message B. The Race Director acknowledges that at the time of that radio conversation, he told PREMA that the cars would be going through Pit Lane. He said, however, that the situation as viewed by Race Control was evolving by the second and that somewhere in the same time frame, but apparently after he stopped talking to PREMA, the pit lane was closed on Timing page 3 and on the on-track marshal panels at T27 and on the main straight. In his mind, this closing of the Pit Entry superseded his conversation with PREMA about the cars going through pit lane, as it was an official communication to all teams.

Conclusions of the Stewards:

The Stewards consider that the protest is both timely and admissible.

Having considered the protest document and the various statement of the parties, the Stewards determine the following:

The issuance of Messages A and B in quick succession simply reflected the normal flow of information in a racing incident.



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In the Formula 2 series, the official forms of communication between the Race Director, Race Control and the Teams and drivers recognized by the regulations are the flags, the marshal panels, and Timing page 3.

Informal communication channels used by the Race Director to allow the Teams to easily contact him, while appropriate for clarifying and administrative information, are not a substitute for the official forms of communications noted above.

The Race Director, via the official forms of communication noted above, notified all teams of the status of the Pit Entry as he knew it, throughout the incident in question.

For a full minute after PREMA felt they had been told to have their cars go through the pit lane, Timing page three (available to them) and the Pit Entry status boards at T27 and on the Main Straight (available to the driver when he arrived on the scene) showed the pit entry was closed, yet they took no action to clarify the situation further with the Race Director or communicate further with their driver.

The driver of Car 1 admitted that he saw the Pit Entry signs showed closed and pitted anyway at the direction of the Team. He did not query the Team again when he saw the closed signs.

No other cars in the field, including the other PREMA car, followed Car 1 (the leader) into the Pit Entry.

Car 1 was assessed a 10 second stop and go penalty for entering the Pit Lane when the Pit Entry was closed. This penalty by regulation is non-appealable. A protest of the classification, such as this, is not an appropriate means to attempt to reverse such a penalty.

No regulations were breached by the Race Director or other Race Control personnel in their handling of the incident in question, as acknowledged by PREMA. In the course of their actions they properly adjusted their methods of dealing with the incident on track in accordance with the conditions as they knew them and as they evolved.

Accordingly, the Protest is dismissed.

The Protest fee is retained.

Competitors are reminded that they have the right to appeal certain decisions of the Stewards, in accordance with Article 15 of the FIA International Sporting Code and Chapter 4 of the FIA Judicial and Disciplinary Rules, within the applicable time limits.

**Dennis Dean
The Stewards**

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