

Friday 9 September 2022

### Vips in a class of his own in Monza opener

Jüri Vips was the man to beat in the opening Free Practice session around Monza. The Hitech Grand Prix driver immediately got up to speed around the historic track and continued to lead the way throughout the session, ending over three tenths clear of the pack. Ralph Boschung also got his weekend off to a strong start in second, as Marcus Armstrong ensured both Hitech Grand Prix cars secured spots inside the top three.

As the sun beamed through the trees along the 5.793km circuit, several drivers were straight out of the blocks as soon as the lights turned green at the end of the pit lane. Following overnight rainfall, a clear dry line extended around the track, but there were plenty of precarious damp spots to catch drivers unawares on their yellow-walled medium compounds.

Steadily tip toeing their way around, it was a leisurely start to the 45-minute session. It wasn't until nine minutes into their running that Luca Ghiotto laid down the initial benchmark with a 1:41:912, only to be immediately beaten by Boschung. However, it wasn't long before the DAMS driver became the first runner to break into the 1:36 barrier, one of only five drivers to set a semi-representative time.

With just over 23 minutes remaining, Marino Sato's 1:35.934 became the new time to beat, as drivers set out to find the limits around the Temple of Speed. Both Clément Novalak and David Beckmann struggled to find the apex at Turn 2 in quick succession, with the MP Motorsport driver having a nervous moment – dramatically spinning along the red, white and green kerbs on the exit of the Ascari chicane. Meanwhile, Enzo Fittipaldi found himself forced to follow the path of the runoff after a heavy snap of oversteer into the second Variante Chicane.

The circuit continued to rubber in, giving both Hitech Grand Prix drivers an opportunity to take turns at the top of the timing sheets. Firstly, Vips went quickest with a 1:35.335, before Armstrong brought the session times into the 1:34s, as a parade of cars followed through the main straight. This allowed Théo Pourchaire, Liam Lawson and Vips to trade the P1 spot, but it was Virtuosi Racing's Jack Doohan who pipped them to the fastest time of the session so far by 0.071s.

Approaching the final 10 minutes, Lawson returned to the top of the order with a 1:33.314. However, clocking in a fast lap proved to be easier said than done, as those on their push laps found themselves getting caught out by traffic ahead. Even Championship leader Felipe Drugovich wasn't immune, diving across the kerb at the second Lesmo corner to get past Campos Racing's Olli Caldwell. Unfortunately for Brazilian, his lap only moved him up from last to 13th.

His nearest title rival Pourchaire was having a much stronger session, timing his exit nicely out of Parabolica the Frenchman managed to utilise the tow to move up into second, as Vips once again pulled clear of the pack. The silver Hitech managed to improve on the ART driver's lap by over half a second and showed no signs of slowing down with a 1:32.337, as his teammate hopped back up to second momentarily.

A late flurry of improvements allowed Boschung to move ahead of Armstrong into second, while Pourchaire and Richard Verschoor also moved up into the top five, just ahead of Drugovich – whose best effort was 0.560s down on Vips' leading time heading into Qualifying at 18:30 local time.

**CONTINUES**

## 2022 FIA FORMULA 2 CHAMPIONSHIP – ROUND 13 FREE PRACTICE PROVISIONAL CLASSIFICATION

	<b>DRIVER</b>	<b>TEAM</b>
<b>1</b>	Jüri Vips	Hitech Grand Prix
<b>2</b>	Ralph Boschung	Campos Racing
<b>3</b>	Marcus Armstrong	Hitech Grand Prix
<b>4</b>	Théo Pourchaire	ART Grand Prix
<b>5</b>	Richard Verschoor	Trident
<b>6</b>	Felipe Drugovich	MP Motorsport
<b>7</b>	Frederik Vesti	ART Grand Prix
<b>8</b>	Liam Lawson	Carlin
<b>9</b>	Jehan Daruvala	PREMA Racing
<b>10</b>	Dennis Hauger	PREMA Racing
<b>11</b>	Jack Doohan	Virtuosi Racing
<b>12</b>	David Beckmann	Van Amersfoort Racing
<b>13</b>	Luca Ghiotto	DAMS
<b>14</b>	Calan Williams	Trident
<b>15</b>	Logan Sargeant	Carlin
<b>16</b>	Ayumu Iwasa	DAMS
<b>17</b>	Marino Sato	Virtuosi Racing
<b>18</b>	Amaury Cordeel	Van Amersfoort Racing
<b>19</b>	Enzo Fittipaldi	Charouz Racing System
<b>20</b>	Olli Caldwell	Campos Racing
<b>21</b>	Clément Novalak	MP Motorsport
<b>22</b>	Tatiana Calderón	Charouz Racing System

**ENDS**

### Notes to editors

A selection of high-resolution images and prints from this session are now available via our [media platform](#), along with a variety of driver interviews, press conference transcripts and the FIA Formula 2 media kit.

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