

Friday 24 September 2021

Piastri beats Daruvala to Sochi pole with title rival Zhou in fourth

Oscar Piastri claimed his third consecutive pole position of the 2021 season in Russia, setting a blistering lap time of 1:47.465 at the Sochi Autodrom which was enough to beat Jehan Daruvala to the top spot. By adding four points to his championship tally, he further extends the gap to rival Guanyu Zhou, who was forced to settle for fourth place.

ART Grand Prix's Christian Lundgaard was the first driver to emerge on the circuit at the start of Qualifying on Friday afternoon, with Ralph Boschung topping the timesheet at the end of the first runs with a 1:48.130.

However, after all drivers completed a cool down lap and then another push lap, it was Zhou who found himself positioned at the head of the leader board, becoming the first driver to dip into the 1:47s, while Daruvala moved into third position behind Piastri.

The cars then returned to the pits in preparation for the final runs. When the drivers returned to the track once more with 10 minutes to go, Piastri set the fastest time, going marginally faster than Zhou, who couldn't improve on his third flying lap.

The fight for pole appeared to be on between the top two in the championship, however on his final push lap Carlin's Jehan Daruvala found time to jump to the head of the table with a 1:47.653 and looked to be on for his maiden pole position in Formula 2.

However, the charging Piastri couldn't be denied, and the Australian driver went almost two-tenths quicker than Daruvala to seal his third pole position of the season.

A late improvement for Théo Pourchaire saw him move into third place, while Zhou couldn't improve on his final effort and was forced to settle for fourth, over half a second down on pole-sitter Piastri.

Boschung, who displayed strong pace in the Free Practice session as well as during Qualifying, was fifth fastest ahead of Jake Hughes, who makes another outing for HWA RACELAB this weekend.

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Robert Shwartzman was seventh, while the Hitech Grand Prix duo of Liam Lawson and Juri Vips were eighth and ninth respectively, the latter securing a front-row start for Sprint Race 1. Rounding out the top ten and ensuring he would start on reverse pole for Saturday morning's race was Carlin's Dan Ticktum.

Sprint Race 1, which is forecast to be held in wet conditions, is set to get underway at 10:30am local time on Saturday.

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2021 FIA FORMULA 2 CHAMPIONSHIP – ROUND 6 QUALIFYING PROVISIONAL CLASSIFICATION

	DRIVER	TEAM
1	Oscar Piastri	PREMA Racing
2	Jehan Daruvala	Carlin
3	Théo Pourchaire	ART Grand Prix
4	Guanyu Zhou	UNI-Virtuosi
5	Ralph Boschung	Campos Racing
6	Jake Hughes	HWA RACELAB
7	Robert Shwartzman	PREMA Racing
8	Liam Lawson	Hitech Grand Prix
9	Jüri Vips	Hitech Grand Prix
10	Dan Ticktum	Carlin
11	Marcus Armstrong	DAMS
12	Christian Lundgaard	ART Grand Prix
13	Felipe Drugovich	UNI-Virtuosi
14	David Beckmann	Campos Racing
15	Richard Verschoor	MP Motorsport
16	Bent Viscaal	Trident
17	Lirim Zendeli	MP Motorsport
18	Roy Nissany	DAMS
19	Guilherme Samaia	Charouz Racing System
20	Marino Sato	Trident
21	Enzo Fittipaldi	Charouz Racing System
22	Alessio Deledda	HWA RACELAB

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