

Friday 10 September 2021

Piastrì takes pole at Monza with Championship rival Zhou in third

Championship leader Oscar Piastrì became the first repeat polesitter of the season in Monza, finishing first in Qualifying for the second round in a row to add four more points to his title advantage. His main rival, Guanyu Zhou, was only 0.051s off pole but had to settle for third with Jehan Daruvala claiming his first front-row start of the season, missing out on pole by just 0.016s.

Théo Pourchaire led the field out onto the Monza tarmac, hoping to make the most of the clean air, but the Frenchman was down in 10th after the first lot of runs, despite a positive Sector 1.

It was Ralph Boschung, from the back of the pack, who slotted into first place at the end of that run, the Swiss driver punching in 1:32.609 to put his Campos at the front.

Championship leader Piastrì – who was on pole last time out at Silverstone - found his bearings on the next tour, stealing first from Boschung by two tenths. Meanwhile, Free Practice's fastest man, Dan Ticktum, had taken third.

After losing the Championship lead to Piastrì in Silverstone, Zhou needed a big weekend in Italy, but the UNI-Virtuosi racer was lagging behind in P8 with 12 minutes to go. Heading to the pits for a fresh pair of Pirellis, Zhou managed to improve five places to third when he returned but was still unable to challenge his main rival in P1.

Enough life remained in his tyres for a final attempt with two minutes to go and this time, Zhou did manage to beat Piastrì. However, the Australian was just a few places further back in a slipstream fuelled train and managed to beat him by 0.051s, retaking his position at the top of the timesheet.

Daruvala benefitted from a slipstream himself to dive into second place and bump Zhou down to third, by a mere 0.016s. Only 0.202s separated the top five, with Liam Lawson in fourth and Felipe Drugovich fifth. Meanwhile, Boschung equalled his best Qualifying result at this level with sixth, ahead of Pourchaire and Ticktum.

Finishing 10th overall, David Beckmann will start ahead of Jüri Vips in Saturday's reverse grid Sprint Race 1, which takes place at 8.50am local time.

2021 FIA FORMULA 2 CHAMPIONSHIP – ROUND 5 QUALIFYING PROVISIONAL CLASSIFICATION

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

ENDS