

Friday 27 August 2021

Novalak quickest ahead of Rasmussen in return to action at Spa

Trident's Clément Novalak set the benchmark as the field returned to action in Spa but left it late to set the fastest lap of the opening session. HWA RACELAB's Oliver Rasmussen was top of the timesheet with seconds to go before Novalak found an extra four-tenths to take the spot from him with a time of 2:05.330.

The field were greeted by a spot of rain and chilly 14-degree track temperatures upon their return from the summer break. It took a while for them to get a feel for the slippery surface, but Alex Smolyar eventually set the benchmark at 2:06.748 for ART Grand Prix, ahead of Johnathan Hoggard.

Jack Doohan edged the lap closer to last year's quickest Free Practice time of 2:05.769, stealing first with a tour of 2:06.356.

Action was briefly halted by a pair of yellow flags as Ayumu Iwasa's Hitech Grand Prix stopped on track. The Japanese driver was able to get going again, but there was then a spin for Charouz Racing System debutant Zdenek Chovanec. That brought out another yellow flag before the Portuguese driver also got moving again.

Lorenzo Colombo had shown good speed in the last round at Budapest, taking two P7 finishes, and carried over his good form by going first when action resumed, slicing more than two tenths off Doohan's time, with 2:06.100.

Rasmussen was briefly in first with five minutes to go but Novalak stole the spot off him in the dying seconds, beating last year's quickest time with a 2:05.330. In doing so, the Trident racer dropped Rasmussen and Colombo down a place.

Doohan bettered his early tour by a tenth but finished the session in fourth. Jak Crawford got up to fifth ahead of Frederik Vesti, with Roman Stanek in seventh and Smolyar falling to eighth. Ollie Caldwell beat Hoggard to ninth, with the duo completing the top 10.

Action will resume in just under three hours when the field tackle Qualifying at 1.55pm local time.

CONTINUES

2021 FIA FORMULA 3 CHAMPIONSHIP – ROUND 5 FREE PRACTICE PROVISIONAL CLASSIFICATION

	DRIVER	TEAM
1	Clément Novalak	Trident
2	Oliver Rasmussen	HWA RACELAB
3	Lorenzo Colombo	Campos Racing
4	Jack Doohan	Trident
5	Jak Crawford	Hitech Grand Prix
6	Frederik Vesti	ART Grand Prix
7	Roman Stanek	Hitech Grand Prix
8	Alexander Smolyar	ART Grand Prix
9	Olli Caldwell	PREMA Racing
10	Jonathan Hoggard	Jenzer Motorsport
11	Ayumu Iwasa	Hitech Grand Prix
12	Matteo Nanni	HWA RACELAB
13	Dennis Hauger	PREMA Racing
14	Arthur Leclerc	PREMA Racing
15	Victor Martins	MP Motorsport
16	Logan Sargeant	Charouz Racing System
17	Caio Collet	MP Motorsport
18	Juan Manuel Correa	ART Grand Prix
19	David Schumacher	Trident
20	Hunter Yeany	Charouz Racing System
21	Calan Williams	Jenzer Motorsport
22	Rafael Villagomez	HWA RACELAB
23	László Tóth	Campos Racing
24	Zdenek Chovanec	Charouz Racing System
25	Tijmen Van der Helm	MP Motorsport
26	Jonny Edgar	Carlin Buzz Racing
27	Ido Cohen	Carlin Buzz Racing
28	Amaury Cordeel	Campos Racing

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