

Saturday 9 July 2023

Martins overcomes penalty to secure maiden victory

Victor Martins was in a race against the clock to bring home his first victory in FIA Formula 2. Handed a five-second time penalty early on, the ART Grand Prix driver pulled out fastest lap after fastest lap following a third Safety Car restart to give himself a seven-second window and a first F2 win.

Rodin Carlin's Zane Maloney tried to claw back the Frenchman's advantage but had to settle for second, having started seventh. Théo Pourchaire made up lost ground in the Championship fight as he completed a double podium for the French team.

AS IT HAPPENED

Ayumu Iwasa got a lightning start from third, immediately getting the better of pole sitter Martins off the line. However, the ART Grand Prix instantly fought it back, diving up the inside of The Loop to retake the lead, but crucially going beyond track limits in the process which later earned him a five-second time penalty.

Meanwhile, second-place Kush Maini got bogged down off the line, allowing Oliver Bearman to move up into third and Enzo Fittipaldi dived up past Jack Doohan for fourth. Pourchaire was another driver on the move, diving down the inside of compatriot Isack Hadjar into Brooklands for ninth.

Martins already had a 4.5s advantage before the first Safety Car arrived on Lap 7 following a spin for Amaury Cordeel at Stowe. The ART driver and the top six soft tyre runners took the opportunity to complete their mandatory stops. Hadjar assumed the lead on the alternate strategy ahead of Arthur Leclerc, with Martins' early advantage enabling him to feed out into third.

Racing resumed on Lap 11, Hadjar was able to put a gap between himself and Leclerc, while Doohan lost out to both Maloney and Pourchaire. Further back, Championship leader Frederik Vesti was caught up in a crash at Vale, tagged from behind by Dennis Hauger. The contact knocking him straight into Roman Stanek's Trident, triggering a second Safety Car. The Dane managed to get back to the pits but was forced to park up with suspension damage.

Back to green flag conditions on Lap 15, Hadjar once again nailed his restart, whilst a wide moment for Bearman at Abbey dropped the Briton down from P8 to P12. Maloney continued carving his way through the pack, going around the outside of Ralph Boschung at Stowe. The Bajan driver then dove to the inside of fellow Red Bull junior Iwasa at Vale for sixth, with the DAMS driver going wide, enabling Pourchaire to follow Maloney through.

On Lap 17, Martins was handed a five-second time penalty for leaving the track and gaining an advantage, just as the Safety Car made a third appearance of the day. Maini had tried to find his way

past Bearman at the Vale chicane but made contact with Campos Racing teammate Boschung ahead which sent the pair spinning.

Taking advantage of the situation, the alternate strategy runners boxed for softs, promoting Martins back into the lead ahead of Maloney and Pourchaire, whilst Leclerc leapfrogged Hadjar.

Martins held out front on the restart on Lap 19. Leclerc slipped through past Pourchaire at The Loop on the same lap. The soft tyres soon fell away from peak performance levels, as Pourchaire cleared Leclerc down the Hanger Straight to return to the podium on Lap 25. A lock-up the following lap opened the door for Doohan to make his own pass through on the Monégasque.

Martins steadily set faster laps than a chasing Maloney behind, extending his advantage to beyond the crucial five-second window to secure the win.

Maloney couldn't respond but scored his first podium since the Monaco Feature Race. With Vesti not scoring, Pourchaire secured an important third position to close the gap in the Championship. Doohan brought home back-to-back top four finishes in fourth ahead of Iwasa, whilst Bearman made a penultimate lap pass on fellow Ferrari junior Leclerc and Daruvala for sixth. Fittipaldi took seventh, as Leclerc fell to ninth and Jak Crawford rounded out the points in 10th.

KEY QUOTE – Victor Martins, ART Grand Prix

“Finally, a Feature Race win! Everything went right. We did a mega job, honestly, I had a penalty, but I felt I wasn't deserving it. So, I just fully sent it, and we got our first win. A mega job from the team, the car was just amazing, and the first win is always special so I will enjoy the moment.”

THE CHAMPIONSHIP STANDINGS

Frederik Vesti remains at the top of the Drivers' Championship on 135 points, but Théo Pourchaire has slashed the PREMA Racing driver's advantage to just six points. Ayumu Iwasa remains third, now on 111 points. Oliver Bearman is the leading rookie driver in fourth on 92 points, as victory promotes Victor Martins to fifth on 88.

PREMA Racing have also seen their lead reduced, with the Italian team now just 10 points clear on 227 points to ART Grand Prix's 217. DAMS remain third on 150, but Rodin Carlin have edged closer on 132, whilst MP Motorsport round out the top five on 107.

UP NEXT

The field will have one-week break to rest and reset before the Championship heads to Budapest's Hungaroring from 21-23 July.

2023 FIA FORMULA 2 CHAMPIONSHIP – ROUND 9 FEATURE RACE PROVISIONAL CLASSIFICATION

	DRIVER	LICENCE	TEAM
1	Victor Martins	FRA	ART Grand Prix
2	Zane Maloney	BRB	Rodin Carlin
3	Théo Pourchaire	FRA	ART Grand Prix
4	Jack Doohan	AUS	Invicta Virtuosi Racing
5	Ayumu Iwasa	JPN	DAMS
6	Oliver Bearman	GBR	PREMA Racing
7	Jehan Daruvala	IND	MP Motorsport
8	Enzo Fittipaldi	BRA	Rodin Carlin
9	Arthur Leclerc	MCO	DAMS
10	Jak Crawford	USA	Hitech Pulse-Eight
11	Juan Manuel Correa	USA	Van Amersfoort Racing
12	Roy Nissany	ISR	PHM Racing by Charouz
13	Clément Novalak	FRA	Trident
14	Brad Benavides	USA	PHM Racing by Charouz
15	Dennis Hauger	NOR	MP Motorsport
16	Isack Hadjar	FRA	Hitech Pulse-Eight
17	Richard Verschoor	NLD	Van Amersfoort Racing

NOT CLASSIFIED

DNF	Kush Maini	IND	Campos Racing
DNF	Ralph Boschung	CHE	Campos Racing
DNF	Frederik Vesti	DNK	PREMA Racing
DNF	Roman Staněk	CZE	Trident
DNF	Amaury Cordeel	BEL	Invicta Virtuosi Racing

OVERALL FASTEST LAP

Victor Martins	FRA	ART Grand Prix
1:42.091 (Lap 23)		

FASTEST LAP ELIGIBLE FOR POINTS

Victor Martins	FRA	ART Grand Prix
1:42.091 (Lap 23)		



MEDIA RELEASE

ENDS

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