

Saturday 2 September 2023

Vesti holds Martins at bay to keep title hopes alive in Monza

Frederik Vesti claimed his fifth win of the season from sixth on the grid in a tightly contested Monza Sprint Race. The PREMA Racing driver kept a charging Victor Martins at bay in the final laps after a late-race Safety Car wiped out his lead. Van Amersfoort Racing's Richard Verschoor completed the rostrum, denying Championship leader Théo Pourchaire a podium visit.

AS IT HAPPENED

Polesitter Ralph Boschung was on the defensive immediately and locked-up going into the first corner, running across the escape road and falling down to fourth. Having been three-wide with the Swiss, Verschoor and Vesti battled for the lead out of Turn 2, but it was the PREMA driver who managed to edge ahead through Turn 3 to hit the front of the field.

There was contact between Zane Maloney and Amaury Cordeel through Ascari on the opening lap and the Invicta Virtuosi Racing driver spun to a halt, requiring an early Safety Car intervention.

Back to racing conditions on Lap 5, Vesti got the restart he needed to retain the lead while Boschung fell outside of the top 10 on his heavily flatspotted medium tyres.

Pourchaire was up to sixth with a pass on compatriot Isack Hadjar at Turn 1 on Lap 6 as he aimed to close on his title rival in the lead. Two laps later and it was ART Grand Prix teammate Martins on the move, taking third from Kush Maini with a late-braking dive to the inside of the first corner. Further back and Pourchaire went right around the outside of Jak Crawford into Turn 4 to claim fifth position.

By Lap 10, Martins had clawed his way into DRS range of Verschoor ahead. Onto Lap 12 and late on the brakes, the Frenchman made another lunge to take second, turning his focus to leader Vesti. However, the Dane's lead was instantly wiped out after a spin for Roy Nissany at Turn 4 brought out the Safety Car later on the same lap.

Vesti launched through the middle of the final corner to get racing underway on Lap 16, again managing to keep the lead. Pourchaire had been defending fifth from Crawford into Turn 4 but caught Maini unawares with a late-braking manoeuvre to secure fourth from the Campos Racing driver.

Although the Safety Car had wiped out Vesti's advantage, the Dane held onto the lead despite Martins keeping within DRS range as the top four were separated by just two seconds. A series of fastest laps from the chasing ART driver wasn't enough to catch Vesti during a tense final lap, and the Mercedes junior secured his fifth win of 2023 ahead of Martins and Verschoor.

Pourchaire claimed important points in P4 ahead of Maini in fifth for Campos. Hadjar and Crawford battled for sixth on the final lap, but both were dropped out of the top 10 with five-second time penalties for exceeding track limits and leaving the track and gaining an advantage, respectively. Oliver Bearman, Arthur Leclerc and Roman Stanek profited, rounding out the points in sixth, seventh and eighth places respectively.

KEY QUOTE – Frederik Vesti, PREMA Racing

“P1 in the Sprint Race at Monza. Honestly it feels so good to be back on the podium. The last few rounds have been very tough for me, so this is a great way to bounce back. Ready to push for tomorrow in the Feature Race.”

THE CHAMPIONSHIP STANDINGS

The gap in the Drivers’ Championship comes down to nine points, though Théo Pourchaire retains the lead with 175 points to Frederik Vesti’s 166. Ayumu Iwasa failed to finish but remains third in the standings on 134. Victor Martins climbs up to fourth position, now on 131 with Jack Doohan fifth on 130.

In the Teams’ Standings, ART Grand Prix extend their advantage at the top, moving onto 306 to PREMA Racing’s 271. Rodin Carlin remain third on 200 points.

UP NEXT

The penultimate Feature Race of the season kicks off at 09:55 local time. Théo Pourchaire goes from pole position with the ART Grand Prix driver looking to stamp his authority in the Drivers’ Championship battle.

CONTINUES

2023 FIA FORMULA 2 CHAMPIONSHIP – ROUND 13 SPRINT RACE PROVISIONAL CLASSIFICATION

	DRIVER	LICENCE	TEAM
1	Frederik Vesti	DNK	PREMA Racing
2	Victor Martins	FRA	ART Grand Prix
3	Richard Verschoor	NLD	Van Amersfoort Racing
4	Théo Pourchaire	FRA	ART Grand Prix
5	Kush Maini	IND	Campos Racing
6	Oliver Bearman	GBR	PREMA Racing
7	Arthur Leclerc	MCO	DAMS
8	Roman Staněk	CZE	Trident
9	Jack Doohan	AUS	Invicta Virtuosi Racing
10	Clément Novalak	FRA	Trident
11	Isack Hadjar	FRA	Hitech Pulse-Eight
12	Dennis Hauger	NOR	MP Motorsport
13	Jak Crawford	USA	Hitech Pulse-Eight
14	Zane Maloney	BRB	Rodin Carlin
15	Enzo Fittipaldi	BRA	Rodin Carlin
16	Joshua Mason	GBR	PHM Racing by Charouz
17	Jehan Daruvala	IND	MP Motorsport
18	Juan Manuel Correa	USA	Van Amersfoort Racing
19	Ralph Boschung	CHE	Campos Racing

NOT CLASSIFIED

DNF	Ayumu Iwasa	JPN	DAMS
DNF	Roy Nissany	ISR	PHM Racing by Charouz
DNF	Amaury Cordeel	BEL	Invicta Virtuosi Racing

OVERALL FASTEST LAP

Victor Martins	FRA	ART Grand Prix
1:34.308 (Lap 10)		

FASTEST LAP ELIGIBLE FOR POINTS

Victor Martins	FRA	ART Grand Prix
1:34.308 (Lap 10)		



MEDIA RELEASE

ENDS

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