

Saturday 28 August 2021

Doohan strengthens title bid with wet weather win at Spa

Jack Doohan breathed fresh life into the title battle, slicing 13 points off Dennis Hauger's advantage at the top of the Championship with a controlled second win of the season in a wet Race 2 at Spa.

Doohan led a Trident one-two ahead of David Schumacher and Charouz Racing System's Logan Sargeant, who crossed the line behind the Safety Car after a late crash between Calan Williams and Amaury Cordeel, who both escaped unscathed.

Although the rain stayed away until the closing laps, the field were still forced to overcome slippery conditions on a wet track, with visibility remaining at a premium.

Caio Collet and Clément Novalak both moved up a place to complete the top five after a sloppy start from Alex Smolyar, who fell from third to eighth in the opening lap, finishing behind Frederik Vesti and Victor Martins.

Championship leader Hauger made up four positions to ninth, overtaking Arthur Leclerc in the closing stages to claw back two points from Doohan.

AS IT HAPPENED

After a rain-hampered opening race that started behind the Safety Car, the field were able to get away under normal conditions in Race 2, with the almost constant downpour taking a temporary break. Though they were warned on the radio during the formation lap that the heavens would likely reopen at the halfway point.

Reverse polesitter Doohan retained first when the lights went out as he pulled in front of his teammate, Schumacher, and formed a shield of spray behind him.

Sargeant barged his Charouz Racing System past Smolyar's ART Grand Prix for third at the start, making the most of the Russian's sluggish getaway. Smolyar attempted to fight back but was chucked wide and returned in eighth. His ART teammate, Vesti, enjoyed a much more productive opening stint, making up three places to sixth.

Following one another in tow, PREMA Racing duo Leclerc and Hauger jumped three places each in the opening three laps, rising to 10th and 11th. The pair quickly closed in on Johnathan Hoggard, and Leclerc attempted an overtake, but the Monegasque clipped wheels with the Jenzer and Hoggard was sent into a dizzy spin.

The Briton got going again at the back of the pack as Leclerc steadied himself to take ninth in front of Hauger, who moved into the points' positions for the first time this weekend.

HWA RACELAB delivered a reminder to Matteo Nannini that rain was coming within the next 10 minutes, but the Italian wouldn't get to see it as he spun at the Bus Stop chicane, which ended his race and resulted in a Safety Car.

The rain did arrive as Nannini's HWA was cleared by the marshals, with Doohan's win suddenly thrown into doubt for the first time, the Trident's advantage sliced from 5s to nought.

Doohan aced the restart and got to work rebuilding his advantage, but before he could, the Safety Car was called out for a second time after a collision between Calan Williams and Amaury Cordeel heading up to Eau Rouge.

The duo clambered out of the cars safely but with just three laps to go and plenty of damage and debris to clear, the race finished behind the Safety Car. Doohan crossed the line ahead of Schumacher and Sargeant, with Collet in fourth and Novalak fifth.

Vesti claimed sixth following his surging start, ahead of Martins and Smolyar. Hauger had managed to scramble past Leclerc before the second Safety Car and doubled his points tally, taking ninth ahead of the Ferrari junior.

KEY QUOTE – JACK DOOHAN (TRIDENT)

"Drier conditions than this morning, and I have to say that visibility was a lot better from pole. I got a decent start, I wasn't expecting it to be as good as it was, but I was happy with the getaway. From there, I was managing the rears because that is where I was quite quick early on.

"I didn't want to be too high on the pressure and then the other guys come at me at the end, so decided to be quite conservative. But when the Safety Car came out, our tyre pressures could all lower again.

"Overall, I'm very happy. I would have preferred to win a full race and not finish behind the Safety Car, but I will take the points – game on for tomorrow."

THE CHAMPIONSHIP VIEW

Hauger retains his advantage at the top of the Drivers' Championship with 154 points, ahead of Doohan on 108. Vesti is third with 93 and Olli Caldwell fourth with 86. Novalak is fifth with 82.

In the Teams' Championship, PREMA Racing are top with 285 points, ahead of Trident on 237 and ART on 179. MP Motorsport are fourth with 127 and Hitech Grand Prix fifth with 86.

WHAT'S NEXT?

Doohan has another chance to eat into Hauger's advantage when he starts from pole in Race 3 on Sunday at 10.40am local time, the grid set by Friday's Qualifying session.

CONTINUES

2021 FIA FORMULA 3 CHAMPIONSHIP – ROUND 5 RACE 2 PROVISIONAL CLASSIFICATION

	DRIVER	TEAM
1	Jack Doohan	Trident
2	David Schumacher	Trident
3	Logan Sargeant	Charouz Racing System
4	Caio Collet	MP Motorsport
5	Clément Novalak	Trident
6	Frederik Vesti	ART Grand Prix
7	Victor Martins	MP Motorsport
8	Alexander Smolyar	ART Grand Prix
9	Dennis Hauger	PREMA Racing
10	Arthur Leclerc	PREMA Racing
11	Ayumu Iwasa	Hitech Grand Prix
12	Jak Crawford	Hitech Grand Prix
13	Roman Stanek	Hitech Grand Prix
14	Lorenzo Colombo	Campos Racing
15	Olli Caldwell	PREMA Racing
16	Tijmen van der Helm	MP Motorsport
17	Jonny Edgar	Carlin Buzz Racing
18	Juan Manuel Correa	ART Grand Prix
19	Filip Ugran	Jenzer Motorsport
20	Ido Cohen	Carlin Buzz Racing
21	Oliver Rasmussen	HWA RACELAB
22	László Tóth	Campos Racing
23	Zdenek Chovanec	Charouz Racing System
24	Rafael Villagomez	HWA RACELAB
25	Jonathan Hoggard	Jenzer Motorsport
26	Hunter Yeany	Charouz Racing System
DNF	Calan Williams	Jenzer Motorsport
DNF	Amaury Cordeel	Campos Racing
DNF	Matteo Nannini	HWA RACELAB
Fastest lap	Clément Novalak	Trident
		2:24.940 (Lap 9)

ENDS

Chovanec handed suspensive five-place grid drop

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Charouz Racing System rookie Zdenek Chovanec has been handed a suspensive five-place grid drop for failing to serve a 10s stop-and-go penalty during Race 2.

Due to an error on the pit wall, Charouz were unaware of the penalty and as such Chovanec was not told. The team's manager has accepted full responsibility for the error, however, the Stewards determined that had Chovanec understood the regulation, then he would have been expecting the penalty and could have prompted the Team.