

## Mini fastest in first free practice for Formula 3 Macau Grand Prix



Italian Gabriele Mini led the way from Briton Luke Browning in Thursday morning's opening free practice session for the Formula 3 Macau Grand Prix – FIA F3 World Cup.

The SJM Theodore PREMA Racing driver, who is making his debut on the Macao streets this weekend, was consistently among the leading contenders throughout the 40-minute session that offered drivers a first chance to get up to speed ahead of the afternoon's first qualifying session.

But it was his best lap of 2 minutes 6.871 seconds, which he put in on his final lap of the 6.2-kilometre Guia Circuit, that secured him the top spot during a final flurry of quick times as drivers continued to build their confidence.

Behind Mini was fellow Macao rookie Browning, who was another driver who made continuous improvement throughout, as the Hitech Pulse-Eight driver ended up just 0.429 seconds behind at the chequered flag.

The late rush of times that shuffled the finishing order in the session was triggered by a red flag interruption with 20 minutes to go. The stoppage was caused by Dutchman Laurens Van Hoepen running off into the barriers at Lisboa Bend, badly damaging the front left of his ART Grand Prix car and bringing his running to a temporary end.

With just 14 minutes of track action left when the session got going again, the track was pretty packed as drivers traded times at the top. IndyCar driver Marcus Armstrong briefly put himself at the top for MP Motorsport, before his time was beaten by SJM Theodore PREMA Racing's Dino Beganovic, prior to Mini and Browning then going better.

Former Macau Grand Prix winner Richard Verschoor ultimately ended the session in third place, ahead of MP Motorsport duo Mari Boya and Dennis Hauger.

Two-time Macao victor Dan Ticktum, who is chasing an historic third victory this weekend, finished eighth quickest as he got himself back up to speed with F3 machinery for the first time since 2019.

Hitech Pulse-Eight driver Isack Hadjar put early session car trouble, which left him briefly stranded on track before he was able to restart and get going again, behind him to end up ninth fastest, ahead of team-mate Alex Dunne who had a run down the escape road at Lisboa late on but avoided hitting anything.

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Macau Grand Prix Organizing Committee  
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