

Friday 3 March 2023

Mini rockets to debut pole position in Sakhir

Gabriele Mini began his Formula 3 career in knockout fashion, storming to his first pole position on his Championship debut in Sakhir. The Hitech Pulse-Eight driver's late effort of 1:47.055 couldn't be matched, as less than half a second separated the top 17 runners.

With the track rubbered in and temperatures cooling around the Bahrain International Circuit, track evolution meant the drivers needed to adapt quickly in the 30 minutes available.

Mini immediately threw down the gauntlet to his rivals. Clocking in a benchmark 1:47.844, the Hitech Pulse-Eight's pace was electric as his teammate Sebastian Montoya slotted up into second.

It was clear the field were pushing it to the limit and beyond, as Bortoleto momentarily took the top spot. However, the Brazilian driver became the first of many drivers to fall foul of track limits.

Opting to run mid-session, PREMA Racing's Dino Beganovic and Zak O'Sullivan took turns in the P1 spot momentarily, before the highest-placed returning driver from last season – Caio Collet, put Van Amersfoort Racing on provisional pole with a 1:47.670.

Times continued to tumble, as Mini launched himself half a second clear of Collet. Laying down a 1:47.118, the Alpine junior's improvements showed no signs of stopping. With three minutes remaining, he delivered once more with a 1:47.055.

The order continued to chop and change, with a flurry of purple sectors flooding in as the session drew to a close. The PREMA trio rose up into the top six, with Beganovic ahead of rookie teammate Paul Aron and O'Sullivan.

After his earlier efforts had been wiped away due to track limits, Bortoleto was a man on a mission. The Trident driver launched himself up to second, 0.057s off Mini's untouchable lap.

Grégoire Saucy's consistent and impressive pace from testing continued, getting his sophomore season off to a strong start in third ahead of Trident's Oliver Goethe. Hugh Barter's decision to leave it late paid off, as the Campos Racing driver snatched fifth at the chequered flag ahead of Kaylen Frederick and Leonardo Fornaroli.

Rookies Beganovic and Aron took eighth and ninth, whilst Collet ultimately had to settle for 10th ahead of Campos Racing's Josep María Martí.

Williams junior Franco Colapinto will be eager to start the season with a victory when he lines up on reverse grid pole for Saturday's Sprint Race. The lights go out for the first race of the year at 12:15pm local time.

2023 FIA FORMULA 3 CHAMPIONSHIP – ROUND 1 QUALIFYING PROVISIONAL CLASSIFICATION

	DRIVER	LICENCE	TEAM	LAPTIME
1	Gabriele Minì	ITA	Hitech Pulse-Eight	1:47.055
2	Gabriel Bortoleto	BRA	Trident	1:47.112
3	Grégoire Saucy	CHE	ART Grand Prix	1:47.166
4	Oliver Goethe	DEU	Trident	1:47.190
5	Hugh Barter	AUS	Campos Racing	1:47.274
6	Kaylen Frederick	USA	ART Grand Prix	1:47.283
7	Leonardo Fornaroli	ITA	Trident	1:47.290
8	Dino Beganovic	SWE	PREMA Racing	1:47.320
9	Paul Aron	EST	PREMA Racing	1:47.322
10	Caio Collet	BRA	Van Amersfoort Racing	1:47.371
11	Josep María Martí	ESP	Campos Racing	1:47.391
12	Franco Colapinto	ARG	MP Motorsport	1:47.398
13	Christian Mansell	GBR	Campos Racing	1:47.451
14	Sebastian Montoya	COL	Hitech Pulse-Eight	1:47.476
15	Jonny Edgar	GBR	MP Motorsport	1:47.535
16	Nikola Tsolov	BGR	ART Grand Prix	1:47.593
17	Luke Browning	GBR	Hitech Pulse-Eight	1:47.694
18	Zak O'Sullivan	GBR	PREMA Racing	1:47.717
19	Mari Boya	ESP	MP Motorsport	1:47.885
20	Rafael Villagómez	MEX	Van Amersfoort Racing	1:47.950
21	Oliver Gray	GBR	Rodin Carlin	1:48.200
22	Nikita Bedrin	ITA	Jenzer Motorsport	1:48.203
23	Piotr Wisnicki	POL	PHM Racing by Charouz	1:48.515
24	Sophia Floersch	DEU	PHM Racing by Charouz	1:48.659
25	Ido Cohen	ISR	Rodin Carlin	1:48.665
26	Hunter Yeany	USA	Rodin Carlin	1:48.685
27	Tommy Smith	AUS	Van Amersfoort Racing	1:48.687
28	Alejandro García	MEX	Jenzer Motorsport	1:49.184
29	Roberto Faria	BRA	PHM Racing by Charouz	1:49.465

NOT CLASSIFIED - 107% TIME

30	Taylor Barnard	GBR	Jenzer Motorsport	2:01.193
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OLIVER GRAY HANDED POST-QUALIFYING GRID PENALTY

3 March 2023



Oliver Gray has been penalised following the conclusion of first Qualifying session of the 2023 Formula 3 season in Sakhir.

The **Rodin Carlin** driver has received a three-place grid drop for Saturday's Sprint Race, after he was found to have impeded PHM Racing by Charouz's Roberto Faria at Turn 15.

As a result, the British racer will start from 24th on the grid.