

FREDDIE SLATER CLAIMS THIRD POLE OF THE SEASON AT PAUL RICARD

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The opening qualifying session of the **Formula Regional European Championship by Alpine** at **Paul Ricard** proved to be a challenging one, marking the fifth round of the season and the midway point of the 2025 campaign. The French circuit welcomed drivers with cloudy skies and a brief shower that complicated conditions for Group A, which was the first to hit the track this morning. While the session began on a dry surface, rain started to fall just five minutes in, making life difficult for the first 13 drivers on track.

Matteo De Palo (Trident Motorsport) set the early pace and stayed at the top of the timesheets for much of the session. However, the spotlight shifted to an incident at Turn 15 between **Zachary David (CL Motorsport)** and **Ean Eyckmans (RPM)**, which resulted in a three-place grid penalty for David. Later, **Michael Belov**, also driving for CL Motorsport, emerged as a strong contender, but the session was red-flagged following a crash at Turn 8 involving David, who fortunately walked away unharmed.





Once the session resumed with just three minutes remaining, De Palo managed to reclaim the top spot in Group A with a lap of 1:59.332, ahead of Belov and the two **ART Grand Prix** drivers, **Taito Kato** and **Evan Giltaire**. Rounding out the top five was **Jin Nakamura (R-ace GP)**, who edged out his teammate **Enzo Deligny** by nearly two-tenths of a second.

However, De Palo's hopes for a second pole of the season were dashed by **Freddie Slater (Prema Racing)**, who topped Group B with a commanding lap time of 1:57.351, securing his third pole position of the year. The tight battle between Slater and De Palo continues in France, with just four points separating the two in the overall standings of the international series promoted and organized by **ACI Sport** and **Alpine Racing**.

Akshay Bohra (R-ace GP) will line up on the second row thanks to an impressive performance, just ahead of **Pedro Clerot (Van Amersfoort Racing)**, who managed to edge out his teammate **Hiyu Yamakoshi** in the closing moments of the session. Also showing strong pace was **Nikita Bedrin (Saintéloc Racing)**, who ended the session in fifth, followed closely by **Kanato Le (ART Grand Prix)**.

Attention now turns to Race 1, a 30-minute plus one lap contest scheduled to get underway at 13:00 local time. As per tradition, the race will be streamed live on the championship's official [YouTube channel](#) and broadcast on [TV networks](#) following the series, including ACI Sport TV (Sky channel 228).



Freddie Slater (Prema Racing)

"It was a challenging but really positive qualifying session. After the rain in Q1, adapting quickly was key. We led the pack and made the most of the changing conditions. The team gave me a great car, and we managed to reset after the very different free practice yesterday. Now, the focus remains on taking pole positions and winning races. The championship will be decided in Monza, until then, we just keep pushing."

Matteo De Palo (Trident)

"Before the red flag, I couldn't complete a clean lap due to traffic and rain, so I was a bit worried. After the restart, I managed a strong lap, especially in sectors one and two, despite some traffic. Starting from the back of the pit lane made tyre warm-up difficult, but we handled it well. The pace is there, and I'm confident we can fight for the win."

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