



# PRESS RELEASE

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## Impressive Ugochukwu earns maiden F3 victory in Melbourne



Ugo Ugochukwu claimed his maiden victory in FIA Formula 3 with a dominant drive in the Melbourne Feature Race.

The Campos Racing driver recovered from a slow start, which dropped to third, to win the race ahead of TRIDENT's Freddie Slater. ART Grand Prix driver Taito Kato took the final spot on the podium after Théophile Nael and

Noah Stromsted both received time penalties.

## **AS IT HAPPENED**

Polesitter Nael kept the lead into Turn 1, while Slater got ahead of Ugochukwu to take second place at the opening corner.

Slater's strong opening lap continued as he tried to go around the outside of Nael at Turn 3 only for the Campos driver to shut the door.

Kato was also on the move for ART Grand Prix, as he managed to make a move around the outside of TRIDENT's Stromsted at the penultimate corner for P8.

On to Lap 2, Ugochukwu was within one second of Slater and overtook his rival at Turn 9 to get back to P2.

Ugochukwu then closed in on Nael rapidly after and once again made a move at Turn 9, this time to take the lead of the race.

Just behind them, Kato and Mattia Colnaghi went side-by-side through Turns 9 and 10, with the ART driver taking P7.

Out in front, the top three had separated themselves and were two seconds clear of Maciej Gladysz at the start of Lap 8.

Brando Badoer and Nicola Lacorte had been battling for P5 with the former having lost the place to the DAMS Lucas Oil driver earlier in the lap. As he looked to regain the position, he spun at the final corner, dropping him down to P12.

The Safety Car was then called upon on Lap 9 with Nandhavud Bhirombhakdi having found the barrier at Turn 12.

Racing resumed at the start of Lap 12, and Ugochukwu pulled out a 1.1s gap to Nael, who was coming under pressure from Slater after running wide at the exit of Turn 4.

The Campos driver was holding on to P2, but Gladysz lost P4 to Lacorte at Turn 9, while Bruno del Pino was up eighth ahead of Colnaghi after making a move at the same corner.

Lacorte was charging towards the podium and was right on the back of Slater at the start of Lap 15, and before taking P3 on the brakes at Turn 12.

Moments later, Nael was given a five-second time penalty for a false start.

Slater though was struggling on Lap 16, coming under pressure from his teammate Stromsted, who had just overtaken Gladysz for P5 at Turn 12.

Lacorte's hopes of a podium were damaged on the next lap, losing out to Slater, before contact with Stromsted gave him front wing damage. The Stewards then handed the DAMS driver a five-second penalty for a false start, while Stromsted was later handed a 10-second time penalty for causing a collision with the Italian.

Slater had recovered things nicely and was within 0.5s of Nael for P2 by the start of Lap 20. The TRIDENT driver used the DRS to overtake the Frenchman at Turn 9 to get up to second.

Just as Nael was fighting Stromsted for the final spot on the podium, the Safety Car was called upon with Woohyun Shin having pulled over at the side of the road with rear suspension damage at Turn 6.

The track could not be cleared in time for a restart, with the race ending under Safety Car conditions, leaving Ugochukwu to take a first victory in F3 ahead of Slater. With Nael and Stromsted's penalties taking effect, Kato inherited P3.

Del Pino followed his Sprint Race victory with a run to P4 ahead of Gladysz and Enzo Deligny. Brad Benavides was seventh for AIX Racing ahead of Pedro Clerot and Jin Nakamura, with Colnaghi in 10th.

### **KEY QUOTE – Ugo Ugochukwu, Campos Racing**

“The Feature Race done here in Melbourne, managed to come away with a

win, so super pleased, my first win in F3. It's been a perfect start to the season, we have been quick all weekend. P2 of the line, fell back a little at the start but managed to make my way back through to the lead and from there I had a nice gap until the last Safety Car. Super happy and thank you to the whole team."

## CHAMPIONSHIP STANDINGS

Campos Racing's Ugo Ugochukwu leads the Drivers' Championship after Round 1 with 25 points, ahead of Freddie Slater and Bruno del Pino, who both have 18 points. Taito Kato is fourth with 16 points, while Enzo Deligny is fifth on 12.

In the Teams' Standings, Van Amersfoort Racing lead the way with 30 points, ahead of second placed Campos Racing on 27 points and ART Grand Prix on 26. TRIDENT are fourth with 20 points, while Rodin Motorsport round out the top five.

## 2026 FIA FORMULA 3 CHAMPIONSHIP – Round 1 Feature Race Provisional Classification

	DRIVER	LICENCE	TEAM	
1	Ugo Ugochukwu	USA	Campos Racing	
2	Freddie Slater	GBR	TRIDENT	
3	Taito Kato	JPN	ART Grand Prix	
4	Bruno Del Pino	ESP	Van Amersfoort Racing	
5	Maciej Gladysz	POL	ART Grand Prix	
6	Enzo Deligny	FRA	Van Amersfoort Racing	
7	Brad Benavides	USA	AIX Racing	
8	Pedro Clerot	BRA	Rodin Motorsport	
9	Jin Nakamura	JPN	Hitech	
10	Mattia Colnaghi	ARG	MP Motorsport	
11	Hiyu Yamakoshi	JPN	Van Amersfoort Racing	
12	Theophile Nael	FRA	Campos Racing	
13	Tuukka Taponen	FIN	MP Motorsport	

14	Fionn McLaughlin	IRL	Hitech
15	Alessandro Giusti	FRA	MP Motorsport
16	Brando Badoer	ITA	Rodin Motorsport
17	Patrick Heuzenroeder	AUS	Campos Racing
18	Fernando Barrichello	BRA	AIX Racing
19	Nicola Lacorte	ITA	DAMS Lucas Oil
20	Gerrard Xie	CHN	DAMS Lucas Oil
21	Yevan David	SRI	AIX Racing
22	Christian Ho	SGP	Rodin Motorsport
23	Matteo De Palo	ITA	TRIDENT
24	Noah Stromsted	DEN	TRIDENT
25	Jose Garfias	MEX	PREMA Racing
DNF	Woohyun Shin	KOR	Hitech
DNF	Nandhavud Bhirombhakdi	THA	DAMS Lucas Oil
DNF	Kanato Le	JPN	ART Grand Prix

#### OVERALL FASTEST LAP

	Bruno Del Pino	ESP	Van Amersfoort Racing
			1:37.955 (Lap 4)

#### OVERALL FASTEST LAP FOR POINTS

	Bruno Del Pino	ESP	Van Amersfoort Racing
			1:37.955 (Lap 4)

**ENDS**

### About FIA Formula 3:

2019 marked the launch of the FIA Formula 3 Championship. An ambitious new project from the FIA and the former GP3 Series Organisation to form an official third rung of the Road to F1 ladder. Combining GP3 and European F3, the idea was to create a defined entry point for young and ambitious drivers to join the Formula 1 circus, and to give them the chance to take the

path to join their heroes in the main paddock. With some of the world's best racing teams on board, and the hottest junior motor racing talent from across the globe filling their race seats, Formula 3 promised to be one of the most exciting championships in motorsport.

Designed as the perfect training ground for both F2, and ultimately, F1, our young drivers must showcase their skills both in speed and in tyre management, just like they will have to do when they move up the motorsport ladder. Notable F3 alumni include 2020 Champion Oscar Piastri, F1 rookie Arvid Lindblad and of course the F1 rookie class of 2024 that included F3 Champion Gabriel Bortoleto, Oliver Bearman, Franco Colapinto and Isack Hadjar. The Championship benefits from the FIA's excellence in the scrutineering of cars and the overseeing and running of events, while FOM's (Formula One Management) unparalleled expertise in broadcasting and marketing ensures that the Championship has a truly global reach and appeal. 2026 promises to be a thrilling spectacle from start to finish.

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