

Saturday 4 September 2021

Leclerc claims second win over Sargeant with defensive display in Zandvoort

PREMA Racing's Arthur Leclerc sustained race-long pressure from Charouz Racing System's Logan Sargeant to clinch his second Formula 3 victory with a defensive display in Race 1 at Zandvoort.

Despite a surging start from second, Sargeant was unable to prevent the Ferrari junior from storming into the lead on the opening lap, as reverse polesitter Amaury Cordeel was taken out of contention by a collision with Alex Smolyar.

Hitech Grand Prix's Ayumu Iwasa played out a patient race in third, awaiting a mistake from the tussling front two that never arrived, before settling for the final podium spot. Jak Crawford and Caio Collet got stuck into one another in the final lap but retained fourth and fifth at the flag.

AS IT HAPPENED

Sargeant said in the buildup that he felt he'd not maximised the potential of his Charouz in Qualifying and he went about proving this statement when the lights went out, shooting down the left of reverse polesitter Cordeel and into first place going into Turn 1.

From third, Leclerc had opted for the opposing side and launched his PREMA down the left of the duo, pulling up alongside Sargeant and eventually stealing the lead at the exit of the first corner.

Cordeel was denied a chance to react by a collision with Alex Smolyar, the Campos getting spun around at the opening corner and dumped at the back of the grid. The Russian was later handed and 10s stop-and-go penalty for causing it and ended up behind the Belgian at the back.

Leclerc was clinging onto the lead over Sargeant with all three of Iwasa, Crawford and Collet following as part of a DRS train.

Meanwhile, the Championship leaders had been making moves, with Dennis Hauger into the points from 12th, taking eighth ahead of Frederik Vesti and Clément Novalak while Jack Doohan had clambered up to sixth from P9, ahead of Victor Martins.

Leclerc was handed some respite by the Safety Car after Johnathan Hoggard and Hunter Yeany collected one another Turn 1, the duo getting thrown off course and into Aramco barriers at the first and second corners.

Hauger had lost eighth before the stoppage but refocused when the Safety Car returned to the pits and jumped two places at the restart, beating Novalak and Martins in a brave series of moves.

It had been a troublesome restart for Novalak, who lost further positions to Vesti and Olli Caldwell, falling out of the points to 11th.

Leclerc was able to hang on to first at the chequered flag, the PREMA crossing the line nine-tenths ahead of Sargeant, who told his team on the radio "I gave it everything."

It was settled for the final podium spot ahead of Crawford, who brushed off a late attempt from Collet to steal fourth. Title rivals Doohan and Hauger finished in sixth and seventh to set up a thrilling battle in Race 2, with Martins, Vesti and Caldwell closing out the top 10.

KEY QUOTE – ARTHUR LECLERC (PREMA RACING)

"I am really happy to have won. It was a difficult one because there was a lot of pressure from Logan (Sargeant), who was really fast. I was struggling a little bit with the balance, so we need to work a little bit to find a bit more pace, but I am really happy with the result.

"There were no mistakes, I only really made one mistake at all, so I am happy with the win. We'll now move onto Race 2."

THE CHAMPIONSHIP VIEW

Hauger retains the Championship lead on 166 points, 28 ahead of Doohan on 138. Vesti is in third on 103 with Martins fourth on 99 and Smolyar fifth on 92.

In the Teams' title fight, PREMA is first with 314, ahead of Trident on 279 and ART Grand Prix on 204. MP motorsport are fourth with 168, ahead of Hitech on 104.

WHAT'S NEXT?

Crossing the line in 12th, Carlin Buzz Racing's Ido Cohen will start from reverse grid pole for the first time in Race 2 after clinching his highest finish to date. He'll line up on the front row with Novalak, the pair both searching for a first F3 win.

CONTINUES

2021 FIA FORMULA 3 CHAMPIONSHIP – ROUND 6 RACE 1 PROVISIONAL CLASSIFICATION

	DRIVER	TEAM
1	Arthur Leclerc	PREMA Racing
2	Logan Sargeant	Charouz Racing System
3	Ayumu Iwasa	Hitech Grand Prix
4	Jak Crawford	Hitech Grand Prix
5	Caio Collet	MP Motorsport
6	Jack Doohan	Trident
7	Dennis Hauger	PREMA Racing
8	Victor Martins	MP Motorsport
9	Frederik Vesti	ART Grand Prix
10	Olli Caldwell	PREMA Racing
11	Clément Novalak	Trident
12	Ido Cohen	Carlin Buzz Racing
13	Lorenzo Colombo	Campos Racing
14	David Schumacher	Trident
15	Filip Ugran	Jenzer Motorsport
16	Calan Williams	Jenzer Motorsport
17	Matteo Nannini	HWA RACELAB
18	Oliver Rasmussen	HWA RACELAB
19	Jonny Edgar	Carlin Buzz Racing
20	Kaylen Frederick	Carlin Buzz Racing
21	Tijmen van der Helm	MP Motorsport
22	Rafael Villagomez	HWA RACELAB
23	Amaury Cordeel	Campos Racing
24	Alexander Smolyar	ART Grand Prix
25	László Tóth	Campos Racing
26	Zdenek Chovanec	Charouz Racing System
27	Roman Stanek	Hitech Grand Prix
28	Juan Manuel Correa	ART Grand Prix
DNF	Hunter Yeany	Charouz Racing System
DNF	Jonathan Hoggard	Jenzer Motorsport
Fastest lap	Alexander Smolyar	ART Grand Prix
		1:26.573 (Lap 13)

ENDS