

Saturday 4 September 2021

Martins beats Novalak to a maiden victory at Zandvoort

MP Motorsport's Victor Martins put on a spectacular show to clinch his first Formula 3 win, rising four places from fifth to beat Trident's Clément Novalak and ART Grand Prix's Frederik Vesti, both of whom will feel they could have won a tightly fought Race 2 at Zandvoort.

Novalak had shot ahead of reverse polesitter Ido Cohen at the start and dominated the majority of the race, but didn't have the grip or the pace to prevent Martins from stealing the lead late on with the aid of DRS.

Vesti clinched a fourth podium of the year but will be disappointed not to have put more pressure on the front two and falls to fourth in the drivers' title fight, behind Martins.

Neither of the Championship's top two scored points as Hauger was taken out of contention on the penultimate lap by a collision with Cohen, which dragged them both out of the points.

This handed Doohan a chance to close the gap between himself and his fellow Red Bull junior, but the Trident went skidding through the gravel on the final lap and fell out of the points himself.

AS IT HAPPENED

Starting from the front for the first time, Cohen stuttered off the line when the lights went out which allowed Novalak to dash into the lead. The Carlin Buzz driver swung to the right in reaction but had already lost significant ground and had to settle into second.

Behind him, Vesti had scampered ahead of Olli Caldwell for third, while Doohan had lost three places and fallen to 10th after a poor getaway.

Martins managed to haul himself in front of Caldwell before the Safety Car was called out to clear up Lorenzo Colombo's standard Campos, with the Italian suffering a puncture that took him off track and into the barriers.

Action resumed and Vesti instantly homed in on Cohen, but the ART driver was caught off-guard by Martins, who pounced on the distracted Dane, stealing third at the exit of Turn 1.

Cohen recovered from his shaky start to the race and was hanging on to the rear of the Trident, having cut the gap between them down to less than a tenth. Martins and Vesti were locked in battle directly behind, with the front four practically on top of each other.

Novalak clawed his way back out of DRS range and this allowed Martins to pounce for P2, Cohen powerless to defend from the MP Motorsport on the main straight. It had been a valiant effort by the Carlin rookie, but one lap later and he was off the podium as Vesti squeezed past at Turn 1.

Vesti's pass had been made possible, in part, by Martins, who had robbed Cohen of DRS once more by catching up to Novalak. The Alpine junior wasn't hanging about and swept around the outside of Novalak down the main straight to move into first, before claiming the fastest lap to boot.

Hauger had remained patient in his pursuit of Caldwell further back, wary of causing trouble with his PREMA teammate, but the Norwegian spotted an opportunity and flung himself down the inside of the Briton. Another pass on Cohen followed shortly after as he claimed fourth, with the Carlin struggling for grip.

After a frantic couple of laps, the Safety Car gave the field a breather as Amaury Cordeel beached his Campos in the gravel trap.

Bernd Mayländer pulled the Safety Car into the pits with two laps to go and the chaos resumed as Cohen and Hauger collided at the top of the banking and were dramatically tossed out of the top 10.

This handed Doohan a major boost in the title race, but the Trident was unable to take advantage, running wide from eighth and falling out of the top 10 himself.

Martins was able to withstand late pressure from Novalak to cross the line in first place, followed by the Trident and Vesti. David Schumacher completed a late move on Caldwell for fifth, finishing one place behind Collet.

Race 1 winner Arthur Leclerc finished in seventh, ahead of Jak Crawford, Matteo Nannini and Logan Sargeant.

KEY QUOTE – VICTOR MARTINS (MP MOTORSPORT)

"I have no words. We just got our first win of the season, our first win in Formula 3, and it feels amazing. I want to thank the team because the car was unbelievable, I was giving it everything.

"We will keep pushing for tomorrow. We start P3 and I think there is a lot more for us to get."

THE CHAMPIONSHIP VIEW

Hauger retains the Championship lead on 166 points, ahead of Doohan on 138, with Martins up to third on 116 and Vesti fourth with 113. Novalak is now fifth with 104.



MEDIA RELEASE

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In the Teams' Championship, PREMA lead with 323, ahead of Trident on 297 and ART Grand Prix on 214. MP Motorsport are fourth on 193 and Hitech Grand Prix fifth with 107.

WHAT'S NEXT?

Starting from pole for the third time in Race 3, Hauger will get another chance to stretch his Championship lead. Schumacher and Martins will line up behind him in second and third when action gets underway on Sunday at 10.45am local time, the grid set by Friday's Qualifying session.

CONTINUES



2021 FIA FORMULA 3 CHAMPIONSHIP – ROUND 6 RACE 2 PROVISIONAL CLASSIFICATION

	DRIVER	TEAM
1	Victor Martins	MP Motorsport
2	Clément Novalak	Trident
3	Frederik Vesti	ART Grand Prix
4	Caio Collet	MP Motorsport
5	David Schumacher	Trident
6	Olli Caldwell	PREMA Racing
7	Arthur Leclerc	PREMA Racing
8	Jak Crawford	Hitech Grand Prix
9	Matteo Nannini	HWA RACELAB
10	Logan Sargeant	Charouz Racing System
11	Kaylen Frederick	Carlin Buzz Racing
12	Filip Ugran	Jenzer Motorsport
13	Oliver Rasmussen	HWA RACELAB
14	Rafael Villagomez	HWA RACELAB
15	Alexander Smolyar	ART Grand Prix
16	Roman Stanek	Hitech Grand Prix
17	László Tóth	Campos Racing
18	Juan Manuel Correa	ART Grand Prix
19	Jack Doohan	Trident
20	Jonathan Hoggard	Jenzer Motorsport
21	Zdenek Chovanec	Charouz Racing System
22	Tijmen van der Helm	MP Motorsport
23	Calan Williams	Jenzer Motorsport
24	Hunter Yeany	Charouz Racing System
25	Jonny Edgar	Carlin Buzz Racing
26	Ido Cohen	Carlin Buzz Racing
27	Dennis Hauger	PREMA Racing
DNF	Amaury Cordeel	Campos Racing
DNF	Ayumu Iwasa	Hitech Grand Prix
DNF	Lorenzo Colombo	Campos Racing
Fastest lap	Victor Martins	MP Motorsport 1:26.857 (Lap 14)

ENDS