



Double podium positions for Victor Martins as FIA Formula 2 and FIA Formula 3 returned to the Circuit de Barcelona-Catalunya

Five Alpine Academy drivers lined up on the grid in Spain this weekend, as FIA Formula 2 and FIA Formula 3 returned to the Circuit de Barcelona-Catalunya for Round 6 and Round 4 of their respective championships.

Victor Martins (ART Grand Prix) secured double podium positions over the weekend, despite starting on the back foot with limited track time after a spin in Free Practice took him out of the session. He turned his weekend around in Qualifying, finishing the session in seventh to set himself up for a fourth place start in the Sprint Race. Running in the top three for much of the wet-to-dry race on Saturday, Victor claimed his first podium of the weekend. Victor then lined up seventh on the grid for Sunday's Feature Race, being just one of two drivers running on the alternative strategy with the Hard compound of tyre. The Frenchman saw the decision pay off, moving up the grid as others pitted early, before coming out on fresher tyres later in the race and making several overtakes to finish on the third step of the podium once again.

Jack Doohan (Invicta Virtuosi) started the weekend off strong, qualifying in third position with a 1:23.656, just 0.033secs off Enzo Fittipaldi in second. Starting from seventh for Saturday's reverse grid Sprint Race, the Australian driver took the long way round to overtake Ayumu Iwasa on the first lap, moving up two places to fifth with Jak Crawford out of the race. Pitting for slicks under Safety Car conditions as the track dried out, Jack held on to fifth position for the remainder of the race. On Sunday, Jack ran in fourth for the majority of the Feature Race but lost out to those on the alternative strategy, ultimately crossing the line in sixth and taking home a total of 12 points over the weekend.

A challenging weekend for Gabriele Minì (Hitech) in Spain as the driver struggled in the car during both sessions on Friday. Managing to improve his timings on his final flying lap in Qualifying, Gabriele reached fifth before having his time deleted for track limits, ultimately moving him down to 18th. Starting in the bottom half of the grid for both races, Gabriele made great headway during Saturday's Sprint Race, moving up to 14th on the first lap of the race. Continuing to storm through the order, Gabriele made up a total of 10 positions to finish eighth on track, but a 10 second time penalty took him down to 20th. On Sunday, struggling with a lack of pace, he made up just four places to finish 14th in the Feature Race.

Suffering from illness all week, Nikola Tsolov (ART) made the most of a tough weekend at the Circuit de Barcelona-Catalunya despite finishing Free Practice and Qualifying in 19th place after struggling with pace in both sessions on Friday. Starting towards the back of the field for both races, he made good progress during Saturday's Sprint making up six places to finish in 13th position, but a lack of pace meant Nikola struggled to make any overtakes in Sunday's Feature Race, with the Bulgarian driver finishing 19th.





Sophia Floersch (PHM) showed promise over the weekend making up a significant number of places in both races. Qualifying 27th in Friday's afternoon session due to technical issues, she made up a total of six places during Saturday's Sprint Race, matching the pace of those in the top 12. Continuing with her show of excellent race craft, she once again carved her way through the order on Sunday, gaining four places in the early laps of the Feature Race before making a series of overtakes to ultimately cross the line in 20th, seven places ahead of her starting position.

Overall, it was a mixed weekend for the Alpine Academy drivers who now look ahead to Austria for Round 7 of the FIA Formula 2 Championship and Round 5 of the FIA Formula 3 Championship.

Jack Doohan, Invicta Virtuosi Racing: *"The weekend in Barcelona started off strong with a great Qualifying. We went fastest by just under fourth tenths with our first run but the second didn't quite come together in the last sector, so we were pushed off pole by a tenth of a second. Saturday in the Sprint Race we started eighth and got to fifth and although the pace wasn't amazing in the wet, we hung in there and managed to get some points. On Sunday, we started in a better position in third, but unfortunately the pace wasn't what we were hoping for, and we got undercut by Iwasa and lost out to the two alternative strategy runners meaning we finished in sixth. It wasn't what we were looking for from the weekend, but we came away with some points which is a positive. Now we have some time to reset before Austria in a month and I am looking forward to joining the F1 Team in Canada to support and learn where I can."*

Victor Martins, ART Grand Prix: *"It was a great weekend overall. We maximised everything we could during the races despite not starting off on the best foot. With no representative laps completed in Free Practice the weekend wasn't going to be easy, but we remained focused, and we knew what we needed to do in Qualifying both with the car and from a driving perspective on my side. Considering the circumstances, I was satisfied to come out of the session in seventh. We then maximised everything we could have done in the races and that is the approach I needed to have, not to lose energy unnecessarily and to keep it for when it is needed. Putting in the effort when the situation is right, I would say we managed both of the races really well and I am happy we delivered the result that we should have got and that we wanted to. This has obviously given me and the team the confidence for the future, it is a little reward which is important for everyone, and we will keep going and continue working hard. It is a big step forward and it is the start of our season. Now we have a break, we can analyse everything and see what we can do even better and look ahead to Austria in a month."*





Gabriele Minì, Hitech Racing: *“The weekend in Barcelona wasn’t the best of the season by far. Friday’s Free Practice didn’t work out as we wanted it to as the traffic made it really tricky to understand the balance on the car, and then in qualifying the tyre temperature made it hard to keep the car on track. I managed to keep the car out of the gravel and put it up into fifth but unfortunately, I was slightly outside of track limits which meant we would start both races in 18th which wasn’t ideal. In Saturday’s Sprint, I had really good pace and it was a really good race overall, we managed to finish eighth on track but with the 10 second penalty we dropped out of the points. In the Feature Race, we once again tried to come back but this time the pace wasn’t as good, it was really hard for me to follow in the last corner, so it was difficult to get an overtake in. It was a frustrating weekend, but we are going to keep pushing and focus on the next race in a month.”*

Nikola Tsolov, ART Grand Prix: *“It was a difficult weekend in Barcelona, and I wasn’t well all week which didn’t help. We headed into the weekend with high expectations as it is a track that I know quite well, but we seemed to be lacking pace and we were surprised by our result in Qualifying which didn’t set us up well for the races. Saturday’s Sprint Race was positive, we moved up six positions to finish in 13th, but we were still outside of the points which didn’t satisfy us. The race on Sunday was extremely difficult on my side physically because I wasn’t 100%, so I was just happy to finish the race. We did a set up change for Sunday which helped me to follow the cars in front more closely so there were some positives to take to Red Bull Ring in Austria.”*

Sophia Floersch, PHM Racing: *“First of all, it was amazing to see how many people showed up for the Spanish Grand Prix. From our side, the weekend didn’t start great, but it ended well. Because of technical issues in Qualifying, we started 27th for both races, but we were able to gain some positions and finish 21st and 20th in the races. I drove well in the Feature Race and made some great overtakes which makes me proud and gives me the confidence to keep on working hard with the team and look ahead to Austria at the end of the month.”*

