



Tuukka Taponen wins race 1, in control from pole to checkered flag Arvid Lindblad in second, then James Wharton for a PREMA Racing podium

Misano Adriatico, Saturday, May 6, 2023 – Race 1 of the Italian F.4 Championship opens the rich program of the second ACI Racing Weekend. The first win for Finn Tuukka Taponen arrived today, with a perfect start from pole that forced his 32 rivals behind him. Taponen firmly held the leadership until the checkered flag. Arvid Lindblad, the Championship leader after his great performance in Imola, closed in second place, looking forward to the next two races of the weekend in which he earned the first block of the grid. Third is James Wharton, who thus closed the PREMA Racing trio on the podium. The Australian returns to the podium after celebrating with champagne in 5 of the 7 rounds in 2022.

Kacper Sztuka, US Racing, finished the first race of the weekend fourth with an overtaking move in the closing stages on Van Amersfoort Racing's Italian driver, Brando Badoer. Badoer arrived fifth to the checkered flag, with the position gained over Ugo Ugochukwu; the American of PREMA Racing then finished sixth.

The Emirati driver, Rashid Al Dhaheri, was seventh ahead of Nicola Lacorte, both PREMA Racing flag-bearers. P9 for Gianmarco Pradel, Australian of US Racing, who is long involved in the tough battle with Valentin Kluss, German driver of PHM Racing, and the Italian of BVM Alfio Spina. Pradel gets the better of them and brings home valuable points, while Kluss closes the top 10 by collecting the last point at stake.

Frightening incident in the early stages of the race for Tina Hausmann, Swiss driver of AKM Motorsport, after a collision with Frassinetti (BVM Racing) that caused her car to roll over and end up in the gravel. The driver left the cockpit without difficulties, right after the impact. The incident also forced Raphael Narac to pit in. Noteworthy, in the first of the three big shows of the weekend, are then the fights between Van Amersfoort Racing's Uzbek Ismail Akhmed and PHM Racing's Victoria Blokhina. It was a tough fight that even saw contact between the two cars. Still, earning the race highlights, the all-Brazilian duel between Aurelia Nobels, Prema Racing, and Matheus Ferreira, Van Amersfoort Racing, which repeatedly heated the race. Ferreira kept his rival behind for a long time, but did not resist then and loses his position. Nobels is then forced into the pitlane after contact with US Racing's Chinese driver Ruiqi Liu. In the latter stages of the race bad luck also for Ferrereira, who broke the front wing in a contact with PHM Racing's American, James Egozi.

Tuukka Taponen: *"it felt good. Qualifying was really important to do a pole position and in the race i got a good start. I managed the gap to the back and I tried to save the tyres as much as possible. I think I did a good job. I didn't felt pressure, it was everything under control".*

Arvid Lindblad: *"good start, I think the pace was strong. It is a very difficult track to pass. I stayed really close the whole race, but never quite got the opportunity, the open door to try and have a go. Regardless of that, the pace is really strong. We start the next two races from pole. We are in a really good position. Really good points, I'm really happy with the race and*



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with the Team, my engineer Vincenzo, mechanics Mauro, Laura for the phenomenal car and job they did.”

James Wharton: *“it was a hard race, but finishing P3 is a big step forward from what happened in Imola, now is time to get the Championship back on track. This podium is helping, but I still want to get a win, we will push for that, we have 2 more races to do it.”*

Now it is time for race 2, today, Saturday, May 6, live at 17:35. Sunday, May 7, race 3 will open the second day of the ACI Racing Weekend Misano, with the start scheduled at 9.00. All races will be broadcast live with English commentary on the Italian F.4 Championship's Youtube and Facebook pages and on Motorsport TV (<https://eu.motorsport.tv/>); also airing with commentary in Italian on ACI Sport TV (Sky channel 228), on www.acisport.it and on the Facebook page @acisporttv.

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