



Spa-Francorchamps, James Wharton secures his first victory in the Italian F.4 Championship

On the podium, alongside Prema Racing, US Racing is represented by Zachary David in P2, and Van Amersfoort Racing has the Italian Brando Badoer on the third step

Spa-Francorchamps, May 27th, 2023 – Starting from pole position in Race 1, the Australian driver from Prema Racing takes the top step of the podium, achieving a victory that he had been seeking for a long time. The race was intense and action-packed, despite a long interruption due to an incident in the early stages. There was a red flag period in the initial laps after a terrible accident involving Victoria Blokhina from PHM Racing and Guido Luchetti from Airflow Racing. Both drivers immediately left their cars and were okay, providing further evidence of the safety standards of the new-generation Tatuus cars, fully compliant with the latest FIA safety regulations. After the restart behind the Safety Car, there were no issues for the leader of Race 1, who set the pace while a fierce battle for the podium ensued behind him, ignited right from the start. The main contenders were Zachary David, Filipino-Maltese driver from US Racing, who managed to secure second place by overtaking Brando Badoer, Van Amersfoort Racing, at Les Combes after skilfully utilizing the slipstream of his rival. David then maintained the second step of the podium in a highly concentrated race on-track and also claimed the Rookie win. Closing out the podium was Italian driver Brando Badoer, who initially gained second place with an excellent start but later dropped to third in the battle with David. Finally, he lost the third position on the track to Ugo Ugochukwu from Prema Racing. Ugochukwu, after a long pursuit, successfully completed the overtake with a great exit from La Source, staying close to the Italian driver through Eau Rouge, and ultimately passing him at Les Combes. However, his efforts were nullified by a red flag displayed shortly after due to an incident involving Davide Larini from AKM Motorsport and Ruiqi Liu from US Racing, both of whom lost their front wings in a collision. The race was stopped just over a minute before its scheduled end, and the final standings were determined based on the previous lap, allowing Badoer to celebrate on the third step of the podium.

Ugochukwu had to settle for fourth place, ahead of his teammate Arvid Lindblad. The British Red Bull junior driver was also among the main contenders in the battle for the top positions in the first race of the third round of the Italian F.4 Championship at the Spa-Francorchamps circuit. Polish driver Kacper Sztuka from US Racing fought hard as well, but a difficult start from the front row caused him to lose the second position. He then fought vigorously to regain positions, finishing sixth. Seventh place went to Finnish driver Tuukka Taponen from Prema Racing, also part of the Ferrari Driver Academy program. Akshay Bohra finished eighth in Race 1, earning more points for the Team managed by Gerhard Ungar and Ralf Schumacher, followed by Rashid Al Dhaheri from PREMA. Matheus Ferreira from Alpine Academy, racing for Prema, secured the final points-paying position in tenth place.

The battle for entry into the top 10 was highly contested, with Valentin Kluss from PHM Racing finishing in eleventh place. The German driver engaged in a tough battle with Alfio Spina from BVM Racing. Spina, starting from the eighteenth block of the starting grid, showcased several exciting overtakes and ultimately finished twelfth after the race



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concluded. One of the most spectacular passes was his overtake on Kluss at Bruxelles. Ariel Elkin, Israeli driver from Jenzer Motorsport, took advantage of the duel between Kluss and Spina and fully joined the battle for the points-paying positions in the closing stages of the race. He actively participated in the intense fight on track, which unfortunately came to an early conclusion before reaching its climax.

James Wharton: *"It was not the race that I wanted to win, being my first win of the Italiana F.4, but it is still a win. I will still take it, but we have 2 more races to do it properly. I'm quite happy with the pace, I know I can go forward again and hopefully get gap so I don't have to defend it the next races as well. I worked so hard for this moment, finally it is done now, I can get away from that and start moving forward. I am here to win the Championship, so it is still a long way to go."*

Zachary David: *"It was a good race overall. On my side I have to work on my start a little bit. It wasn't the greatest. I dropped down one position, but we were able to recover well with the speed we had and finish P2. It is always special because it is Spa, and the history behind it is a lot. Feels good to race here and feels even better to score a podium here."*

Brando Badoer: *"It was a very special race. The first thing I am happy about is that the girl who had the incident is okay. It was a very positive result for us, we showed speed since free practices and we are happy to have finished on the podium today. Tomorrow we have 2 more races, we will try to bring home more trophies. I am happy with the work the team has done and is continuing to do, let's keep it up!"*

The weekend schedule:

The next action will be tomorrow, Sunday, May 28th, with Race 2 (30' + 1 lap), starting at 10:35. Then, Race 3 (30' + 1 lap) will take place at 17:20, concluding the weekend.

The races of the weekend will be broadcast live with English commentary on the Italian F.4 Championship's YouTube and Facebook pages, as well as on Motorsport TV (<https://eu.motorsport.tv/>). They will also be aired with Italian commentary on ACI Sport TV (Sky channel 228), on www.acisport.it, and on the Facebook page @acisporttv.



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