

Sunday 4 July 2021

Vesti clinches dominant first win for ART Grand Prix at the Red Bull Ring

ART Grand Prix's Frederick Vesti came out on top of a battle with Championship leader Dennis Hauger to clinch his first win of the season at the Red Bull Ring and move up second in the title fight.

PREMA Racing's Hauger took his third podium of the weekend in second, but had to recover from a tough opening stint, with the polesitter briefly dropping to third.

The Red Bull junior's teammate Olli Caldwell took the final podium position, after a brave late move on Alex Smolyar. The ART Grand Prix had looked likely to take the lead at one point after passing Hauger but struggled for pace in the closing laps and fell back to fourth.

Neither of Hauger's main title rivals took points, with Victor Martins and Jack Doohan finishing at the back of the grid due to separate collisions.

AS IT HAPPENED

Dennis Hauger and Frederik Vesti have enjoyed two scintillating Qualifying battles of late and picked up their fight from the front row of Race 3. The Red Bull junior confidently hauled his PREMA off the line and into Turn 1 when the lights went out, but Vesti smartly ducked behind him and took a tow, attempting to slipstream past at the second turn. Hauger was smart to the move and covered himself to retain the lead.

The main mover in the top 10 was Martins, up three places from 10th. Although one of the positions gained was his teammate Caio Collet, who had initially failed to get his MP going and dropped down to the back of the grid.

At the front, Vesti continued to hound the back of Hauger and refused to let him build up any form of gap. Three times the Dane took a look, but he opted for patience and resisted making the move without the aid of DRS. The system was switched on for Lap 4 and Vesti made the move a lap later, diving down the side with the aid of DRS for P1.

Vesti's teammate Smolyar compounded Hauger's misery by following his teammate through two tours later, just as the second PREMA of Caldwell moved ahead of Clement Novalak for P4.

While Hauger was losing places, his teammate Arthur Leclerc was gaining then, with the Monegasque up to P6 after a move on Martins.

CONTINUES

Smolyar swiftly set about chasing his race leading teammate and it didn't take long for an opening to arise. The Russian made a brave move down the side, but couldn't make it work and ended up dropping back to third.

Behind them, Leclerc and Martins were continuing their back and forth. The Frenchman briefly reclaimed sixth and Leclerc ran wide in an attempt to fight back, which saw him collect Martins. Novalak was caught up in the incident, his Trident plunged into the gravel alongside Leclerc. Martins escaped the gravel but fell to the back of the field.

Leclerc and Novalak both clambered out of their cars and a Safety Car was required to clear away the debris.

The top three all held their positions when racing resumed, with Hauger seemingly over his earlier struggles and now putting pressure on Vesti. An opening failed to arise for the Norwegian as DRS was enabled with three laps to go. But his teammate Caldwell did manage to get the jump on Smolyar for the final podium position.

Jak Crawford and Jack Doohan were fighting for fifth when the Australian tagged the back of the Hitech, which dropped the pair of them down the order and brought out a Virtual Safety Car.

Action restarted once more, but without DRS and with just one lap remaining. Caldwell had a glance down the side of his teammate on the main straight but wasn't able to make it work. Their tussle pulled Hauger away from his fight with Vesti, which allowed the Dane to cross the line unopposed.

Behind them, Matteo Nannini and Ayumu Iwasa benefitted from the two collisions to finish fifth and sixth. While Collet crossed the line seventh after a stellar recovery from the back of the grid after his opening lap woes. Logan Sargeant, Calan Williams and Jonny Edgar completed the top 10.

THE KEY QUOTE – FREDERIK VESTI (ART GRAND PRIX)

"We won Race 3 and I am really happy. P2 in Quali, P2 yesterday and then we got the win today. It is my first victory for ART Grand Prix and I am really proud of that."

THE CHAMPIONSHIP VIEW

With neither of his two main rivals finishing, Hauger has increased his lead at the top of the Drivers' Championship to 115 points. Vesti has jumped to second with 74 points after his first win of the season, with Doohan in third on 72 points. Caldwell is fourth with 70 points and Martins fifth with 66.

In the Teams' Championship, PREMA lead with 207 points ahead of Trident on 136 and ART Grand Prix on 135. MP Motorsport are fourth on 107 and Hitech Grand Prix with 38.

WHAT'S NEXT?

The field have a few weeks to settle down and look over the data before meeting again in Budapest at the end of July. Vesti will hope to carry over his good form and put pressure on Championship leader Hauger.

CONTINUES

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

	DRIVER	TEAM
1	Frederik Vesti	ART Grand Prix
2	Dennis Hauger	PREMA Racing
3	Olli Caldwell	PREMA Racing
4	Alexander Smolyar	ART Grand Prix
5	Matteo Nannini	HWA RACELAB
6	Ayumu Iwasa	Hitech Grand Prix
7	Caio Collet	MP Motorsport
8	Logan Sargeant	Charouz Racing System
9	Calan Williams	Jenzer Motorsport
10	Jonny Edgar	Carlin Buzz Racing
11	Oliver Rasmussen	HWA RACELAB
12	David Schumacher	Trident
13	Enzo Fittipaldi	Charouz Racing System
14	Roman Stanek	Hitech Grand Prix
15	Lorenzo Colombo	Campos Racing
16	Juan Manuel Correa	ART Grand Prix
17	Tijmen Van der Helm	MP Motorsport
18	Jonathan Hoggard	Jenzer Motorsport
19	Ido Cohen	Carlin Buzz Racing
20	Reshad De Gerus	Charouz Racing System
21	Amaury Cordeel	Campos Racing
22	Filip Ugran	Jenzer Motorsport
23	Rafael Villagómez	HWA RACELAB
24	László Tóth	Campos Racing
25	Victor Martins	MP Motorsport
26	Jak Crawford	Hitech Grand Prix
27	Jack Doohan	Trident
DNF	Clément Novalak	Trident
DNF	Arthur Leclerc	PREMA Racing
Fastest lap	Victor Martins	MP Motorsport 1:21.737 (Lap 21)

ENDS