



MEDIA



Saturday, May 08th 2010

## Nigel Melker takes first ever GP3 Series pole

The early morning start meant a low track temperature of just 14 degrees on a drying track for the first ever GP3 qualifying session in Barcelona, making the conditions tricky for the 30 young drivers.

It was an extremely closely fought battle to take the first ever GP3 Series pole position, with positions constantly changing during the final few minutes. Almost half of the field were potential pole sitters and it was impossible to predict who would find the extra few hundredths needed to claim the coveted top spot.

Status GP's Robert Wickens put in a last minute push and looked likely taking the inaugural pole position posting the first lap time under 1 minute 53. But it wasn't to be for the Canadian driver, as RSC Mucke Motorsport continued their strong weekend and Nigel Melker crossed the line seconds later posting a time of 1:52.602 and holding on to the top spot despite last ditch attempts from the remainder of the field. Pal Varhaug then put in an extremely impressive performance for Jenzer Motorsport, the young Norwegian improving lap after lap in the dying moments, his last lap time of 1:52.931 enough to knock Wickens down into third. Daniel Morad finished the thrilling session in fourth with a time of 1:53.311, followed by James Jakes for Manor in fifth spot with a time of 1:53.440. Dean Smith flied up the time sheet on new rubber, ending in sixth spot for Carlin, and in a surprise seventh spot for ART was one of the pole favourites Estenban Gutierrez.

Alexander Rossi's start to his 2010 campaign continued to disappoint as the American crashed into the barrier early on in the session, completing just three laps in total. Another casualty was Adrian Quaife-Hobbs. After putting in impressive lap times during the session, the British driver pushed a bit too hard to take the coveted top spot and ended his session prematurely in the barrier.

Only 29 cars took part in the qualifying this morning. Mirko Bortolotti had to sit the session out after injuring his thumb during yesterday's practice session.

Press conference quotes to follow shortly.

### Full qualifying results:

POS	Car #	DRIVER	TEAM	BEST	LAPS
1	10	N. MELKER	RSC Muecke Motorsport	1:52.602	14
2	23	P. VARHAUG	Jenzer Motorsport	1:52.931	13
3	4	R. WICKENS	Status Grand Prix	1:52.974	15
4	6	D. MORAD	Status Grand Prix	1:53.311	15
5	7	J. JAKES	Manor Racing	1:53.440	14
6	15	D. SMITH	Carlin	1:53.600	15

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7	2	E. GUTIERREZ	Art Grand Prix	1:53.603	14
8	28	J. VERGNE	Tech 1 Racing	1:53.765	13
9	11	R. VAN DER ZANDE	RSC Muecke Motorsport	1:53.914	15
10	24	S. TRUMMER	Jenzer Motorsport	1:53.983	14
11	17	F. GUIMARAES	Addax Team	1:54.159	15
12	14	J. NEWGARDEN	Carlin	1:54.329	15
13	8	R. HARYANTO	Manor Racing	1:54.331	13
14	16	L. FORESTI	Carlin	1:54.477	13
15	27	D. JUNCADELLA	Tech 1 Racing	1:54.495	15
16	20	M. CHRISTENSEN	MW Arden	1:54.658	13
17	21	M. MONRAS	MW Arden	1:54.666	12
18	3	P. NUNES	Art Grand Prix	1:54.686	14
19	18	P. SANCHEZ LOPEZ	Addax Team	1:54.691	13
20	25	N. MULLER	Jenzer Motorsport	1:54.726	13
21	22	L. CORDEIRO	MW Arden	1:54.758	13
22	30	O. OAKES	Atech CRS GP	1:54.817	13
23	26	D. SECHELARIU	Tech 1 Racing	1:55.069	15
24	29	P. REITERER	Atech CRS GP	1:55.394	13
25	12	T. HEGEWALD	RSC Muecke Motorsport	1:55.643	14
26	5	I. LUKASHEVICH	Status Grand Prix	1:55.927	15
27	9	A. QUAIFE-HOBBS	Manor Racing	1:57.082	9
28	1	A. ROSSI	Art Grand Prix	2:00.622	3
29	31	V. GHIRELLI	Atech CRS GP	2:01.311	8