



F1 Championship Round 3: Singapore

Round 3 kicked off with a packed out grid of 14 drivers with a few new faces hoping to throw a spanner in the works of the returning drivers who had already posted some championship points on the board.

Qualifying 1 – 14 Drivers

The first few laps saw a few of the newer drivers taking a more cautious approach trying to get the heat in to their tyres while at the same time trying to work out their best racing line. In the early laps there were a few incidents on circuit with drivers spinning out on the track causing for yellow lights to come in to play. With the yellow flags in play a lot in the first qualifying round it was hard for drivers to get any consistency with their lap times but the early leader was David Softley who managed to squeeze out a clean lap and finish with the best lap time in Q1. At the chequered flag the four eliminated drivers were Steve Gibson – P11, Michael Bateman – P12, Adam Braimah – P13 and Scott Gilhooly – P14.

Qualifying 2 – 10 Drivers

After the loss of four drivers there was a lot more space on the circuit and Lee Maguire started off the best posting a 26.227 lap time on the 1st lap of the session but would soon see himself drop in to second place when David Softley found some clear track and managed to post the quickest time for qualifying 2 with a 25.6 second lap time. With a lot of drivers racing against each other in packs rather than spreading themselves out their lap times were suffering and when the chequered flag went out four more drivers were eliminated. John Teasdale – P7, Mark Hitchcock – P8, Gordon Lindsay – P9 and James Benson – P10.

Qualifying 3 – 6 Drivers

The last qualifying was a shootout for that pole position for the start of the race. Lee Maguire had a solid performance in Q1 and 2 finishing both sessions in 2nd place but couldn't complete the set after he started slipping down the order eventually finishing in 4th place. Shirley Hennessy was showing good pace in the session but was coming under increased pressure from Julian Philippe who was getting quicker and managed to leap frog himself in to 2nd place while Shirley held out for 3rd. David Softley managed to complete a clean sweep throughout qualifying posting the quickest lap times in all 3 qualifiers and starting the race in Pole position.



The Singapore Grand Prix 61 Laps

After a much needed break the drivers were back on the grid for the start of the race. Lights out and 14 karts were pedal to the metal and in to the first few corners.

Mitch Millet from 5th place managed to get along side Lee Maguire as they exited the bridge neither driver gave an inch. On the exit Lee was forced wide in to the barriers, as he makes contact Mitch hits the other side of lee and is spun around. An unfortunate racing incident but Mitch must have been cursing his luck as he is facing the wrong way to see the rest of the field passing him by.

The end of lap 3 and Shirley Hennessy holding out in 2nd place came in to contact with Michael Bateman an early back marker as drivers got side by side on the bridge their momentum took them towards the tire wall which caused both drivers to lose control as a result Lee Maguire makes up a position and moves in to 2nd. It didn't take long for back markers to start coming in to play by lap 10 there were 3 drivers feeling the pace. Blue flags were constantly being issued by the marshals to keep the track clear for the front runners.

At this stage of the race David Softley has managed to push forward and get a 6 second lead from his next rival Lee Maguire. The marshals were on top form keeping the blue flags out trying to keep it a clean race but even with the aid of the blue flags drivers were still finding it difficult to pass as Gordon Lindsay found out on lap 33 as he chooses the wrong path to try and pass a back marker he has to anchor on his brakes to avoid contact which opened the door for Mitch Millett to pass and move in to 5th.

At the mid way point of the race the field had managed to calm down and was taking a familiar shape. David Softley still holding 1st place but Lee Maguire had managed to close the gap to 1.3 seconds. Julian Philippe is in 3rd with Shirley and Mitch fighting it out in 4th and 5th. Shirley was feeling the pressure from Mitch Millett who was having a fantastic race after his early incident. By lap 49 the pressure seemed to be too much for Shirley as she leaves the door open for Mitch to pass and move in to 4th.

This late stage of the race had the back markers feeling the pace and their lap times were suffering being nearly 10 seconds slower a lap than the quickest driver on the circuit black flags were issued to the drivers who looked like they were struggling. The brief thinning out of the field gave a chance for Lee Maguire to move closer to David Softley and now only being 0.1second behind was looking for any gap he could to try and make an overtake. But Lee was finding it increasingly difficult and when the backmarkers came back in to

play blue flags were issued Lee saw his opportunity to pass he pulled alongside David who didn't know much about it and squeezed Lee towards the barrier Lee showing his experience pulls back out of the manoeuvre and sticks to 2nd place but the change in pace allowed Dave to move 1 second ahead.

After a hard fought final 10 laps the chequered board shone and a relieved David Softley crossed the line in 1st a well driven race and Lee Maguire taking home the 2nd place. A 1st appearance for Julian Philippe saw him take the final step on the podium. Mitch Millett after a very unfortunate start managed to rescue his race and take 4th place. Shirley having had a good qualifying round and a great start only saw herself slowly moving backwards and eventually finishing 5th.

1st – David Softley, 2nd - Lee Maguire, 3rd – Julian Philippe