



F1 Championship 2012

Round 3 – Monaco

Qualifying

The 2012 season of Daytona's F1 championship continued in March as we took the short trip over to Monaco for the most glamorous race of the season. With our biggest turnout of the season to date, 13 drivers joined us on the track for qualifying session 1. However, the amount of drivers on the grid and the range of driving experience did not hamper the lap times being set as all the drivers managed to spread out to set their flying laps. We had to lose 3 drivers at this stage of qualifying and at the end of the 8 minutes; it was Simon Cooke, Chris Moorcroft and Vicky Monk that exited the circuit in 11th, 12th and 13th position respectively.

Qualifying session 2 began quickly and the 5 minutes ticked by with no real incidents as experience led to all drivers getting into their own private part of the track for a chance to fight for the top 6 places in qualifying session 3. 4 drivers however would miss out on that chance and it was Saul Nyland and Dan Greenwood in 10th and 9th position, who missed out with lap times of around 27.5s, and Luke Jameson and Dave Pattison in 8th and 7th, who featured in the low 27 second lap times.

This left us with our fastest 6 drivers moving on to a straight shoot-out for pole position in Qualifying 3. All 6 managed 26 second lap times in Qualifying 2 to earn their place, but again this turned into a rather tactical affair right up until the final lap. John Gwyneth settled into pole position with an early 26.324s lap time, but all 6 drivers were only spread across 7 tenths of a second. John's time seemed enough for pole position right up until the final moments when Lee Maguire snatched pole position with his final lap of 26.309 seconds. John dropped down to second with Mark Hitchcock in third. Steve Gray, Julian Philippe and Rowan Arnold completed the starting grid order for our third grand prix of the season

Grand prix – 78 Laps

All 13 drivers lined up on the grid with aspirations of taking the most prestigious trophy of the season home with them, but a gruelling 78 laps separated them from victory. The start lights flicked to green and the engines roared into life as the drivers jockeyed round the first few corners as one mass of karts. A coming together on the bridge meant Dave Pattison managed to pass Julian Philippe into 5th position and this allowed the top 3 drivers to pull away as the incident slowed down the rest of the field. Backmarkers came into play early and it became increasingly apparent that they



would play a key role in deciding the final positions. This happened all too early for Lee Maguire as he overshot hairpin one avoiding a backmarker and John Gwyneth seized upon the opportunity to move into the lead. These two would remain within a few seconds for the rest of the race with Mark Hitchcock in constant pursuit in third.

With the front 3 drivers escaping into the distance, the mid-field positions became more important and all the drivers were scrapping to hold onto their points. Saul Nyland and Steve Gray were having a ferocious battle for 8th and 9th position, but unfortunately this led to Saul losing out during a racing incident with Steve and dropping down to 12th position. However, this incident may have done damage to Steve's kart as during Lap 12, as the blue flags began to fly; he was forced to return to the pit lane for a kart change.

The middle portion of the race flew by with little incident as John and Lee stayed within 2 seconds of each other through backmarkers and blue flags. The laptimes were tumbling down as we looked set for our fastest lap of the season so far and by lap 36 both drivers had lapped Julian Philippe in 5th position, only to pass Dave Pattison in 4th four laps later. Saul Nyland was also setting extremely quick laptimes as he climbed up the field after that unfortunate incident on Lap 5 and by Lap 42 he was back up to 8th position overtaking Simon Cooke for the points.

The race settled down again around Lap 50 as Julian Philippe moved onto the back of Dave Pattison in the battle for 4th position. The marshals were doing some fantastic work with the blue flags to keep everyone racing at their own limits and to keep the battles going around the circuit. The only black flag of the event was then issued as Dan Greenwood misjudged Steve Gray's racing line during Lap 60 and gained advantage from the resultant contact. He took the sin bin penalty well though and resumed racing again immediately.

With 14 laps to go, John Gwyneth finally lapped Mark Hitchcock, who was running in third position and was one driver away from repeating his heroics in the last round in Spain, where he lapped the whole field in his pursuit of victory. However, Lee Maguire was managing to keep John firmly in his sights as they weaved in and around the other drivers towards the podium. Then with only 9 laps remaining, Julian finally managed to steal 4th position of Dave as a backmarker caused confusion before the blue flags could be issued of the next corner. This set up an amazing finish with battles all the way down the order as the drivers wrestled for their fair share of the points.

As the chequered flag began to wave to greet our Round 3 champion, it was John Gwyneth who emerged victorious after holding off Lee Maguire for 76 of the 78 laps with a final gap of 6.777 seconds whilst putting in the fastest lap time of the year of 25.924 seconds! Mark Hitchcock collected an extremely efficient 3rd place after a fantastic solo drive without incident.



That brings us to the end of a sensation race with all drivers acquitting themselves brilliantly in what will be the longest race of the season. Next month we will be taking the long journey over to Montreal for 70 laps at the Canadian Grand Prix for Round 4! We will see if John Gwyneth will make it a hat-trick of wins or if any of our competitors can knock him of that top spot of the podium. Make sure you grab your space early to ensure you are in a seat come April the 4th. We look forward to seeing you there...

Finishing Positions	
1. John Gwyneth	25
2. Lee Maguire	23
3. Mark Hitchcock	21
4. Julian Philippe	20
5. Dave Pattison	19
6. Rowan Arnold	18
7. Saul Nyland	17
8. Dan Greenwood	16
9. Luke Jameson	15
10. Simon Cooke	14
11. Steve Gray	13
12. Chris Moorcroft	12
13. Vicky Monk	11