

21st of June, 2009

Felix Da Costa now leading NEC and EUROCUP

After an amazing start, storming from p8 to p1 in the first three corners, Antonio Felix Da Costa ruled the entire NEC weekend during the FIA GT event at Motopark Arena Oschersleben. The young Portuguese driver already put the first race on Saturday on his name, and could have not wished for a better continuation of this success on the early Sunday morning, the 21st of June 2009.

The Motopark Academy already showed their strong presence before the weekend officially started during the free practice on Friday the 19th. The Northern European Formula Renault 2.0 was the first car on the track, which was still wet after rainfall during the night before. The temperature helped to dry the track and after four laps the teams already switched to slicks. Felix Da Costa was on top of the list during both free practice qualifications. Best car after the Motopark army was Nigel Melker for MP Motorsport, who continually positioned himself on 3rd and 4th place.

Aside of the fixed field of 21 cars, Robert Siska and his team KEO racing, and Harry Tincknell of CRS Racing had joined the grid of the NEC as guest drivers. Furthermore, Juan Jacobo, racing car number 8 has been replaced by his team for Polish Kuba Giermaziak, who had starting number 48 assigned to his car. Czech EURO CUP team Krenek put besides Luis Sa Silva, also Adam Kout on the list of participants for this 4th round of the Northern European Cup, making it a number of 23 drivers in total.

Saturday morning started with bright sunshine and optimal conditions for qualification. Adrian Quaife – Hobbs and Kevin Magnussen, both representing Timo Rumpfkeils Motopark team opened the fight for the fastest time, but soon Felix Da Costa took over. Daniel Aho, leading the championship at that moment, did the best he could do against the strong Motopark cars on their home track, by qualifying on a fifth position. Nigel Melker qualified on sixth, promising an exciting start as he usually is very quick when the lights turn off. Winner of last weekends EURO CUP race, Marco Sorensen qualified for 7th position.

Later that day, the threat of rain already became apparent and would later be present during the whole duration of the first race. As expected a good start for Nigel Melker, who took the fifth place of cup leader Daniel Aho, who fell back to an eight position. Young German Julian Eisenreich is building on a reputation as an incredibly good starter, remembering his performance of taking six cars in one lap in Finland and doing the same again at the Motorsport Arena Oschersleben. Jesse Laine was touched by Karl Oscar Liiv in the neon striped TT car, and although Liiv could rejoin the race, Laine was eliminated and had to park his Finnish Formula Renault 2.0 along the outside

of the white line. Daniel de Jong of MP Motorsport started to make good process in the second half of the race. Leaving from 15th position he first fought his way up front and then started to take a position as each lap progressed.

Then, after racing nineteen of the twenty-five minutes, rain started to kick in and race control decided to interfere immediately. A red flag was shown and after the Wiesmann safety car collected all remaining Renaults. The top three of the starting grid, being Antonio Felix da Costa, Kevin Magnussen and Adrian Quaife-Hobbs was never threatened by any other competitor, and these drivers could find their way to the podium in that order.

All circumstances were looking good for MP Motorsport. Daniel de Jong finished his Saturday on eight position and through this qualification takes pole position for the second race on Sunday morning. Moreover there was rain and a very wet track and both MP drivers were the most experienced drivers in the front rows of the grid. When the lights turned off, Daniel had already moved, and even though he left his starting place earlier, Estonian Kevin Korjus takes the lead from De Jong in the first meters. Felix Da Costa has as mentioned earlier an amazing start, coming from place eight and closing the gap between him and Korjus in the first two corners, to eventually also pass the TT racing driver in the third corner of the first lap. Marco Sorensen falls back from second to third position, but this is nothing compared to Daniel de Jong who drives on 9th position when he passes the start finish line for the first time. To make things worse for the place in Daniels race, he is punished by race control for his jump-start and has to make a drive through penalty. He also spins in the third lap of the race and after completing the penalty he ensures himself of a backmarker role in this race.

The wet conditions of this race make the race an exciting one to watch. Guest driver Harry Tincknell makes steady progress in the NEC field, but spins in lap three. Arnold Neveling also leaves the track twice in one lap but then is able to find the right lines again. Jimmy Eriksson and Luis Sa Silva spin together in lap ten but are both able to continue their way to the finish.

Kevin Korjus, although doing an amazing job, is not able to hold his second position and loses it to the faster Marco Sorensen and Kevin Magnussen who joined the front-runners from 7th place. These first three have a gap to Nigel Melker of 7 seconds and this gap does not become smaller further on in the race. Nigel fights but also loses his position in the twelfth lap of the race to Polish Giermaziak and has to be satisfied with a fifth position in the classification of the second race.

All three Motopark boys are obviously extremely happy with their podium on the teams' home track, having had a tough job keeping the cars on track and trying to maintain their lead in the race. In addition, a very remarkable result for Julian Eisenreich should be mentioned, who managed to fight his way up from the 16th to the 7th position.

Although the Motopark cars were very dominant in this weekend, there are still three different teams in the top three of the current Northern European Cup standings. Antonio Felix Da Costa now leads the Cup with a 159 points, a strong lead compared to the now number two Koiranen Bros' Daniel Aho with 128. The third place at this moment is for South African Arnold Neveling with SL Formula.

The next and fifth round of the NEC will be held on the 8th and 9th of August, during the Rizla Racing days at Assen.

Race 1:

1. Felix Da Costa	Motopark Academy	12 laps
2. Magnussen	Motopark Academy	
3. Quaife – Hobbs	Motopark Academy	
4. Giermaziak	Motopark Academy	
5. Melker	MP Motorsport	
6. Korjus	TT racing	
7. Sorensen	Motopark Academy	
8. De Jong	MP Motorsport	
9. Aho	Koiranen Bros	
10. Heikkinen	Koiranen Bros	

Race 2:

1. Felix Da Costa	Motopark Academy	15 laps
2. Sorensen	Motopark Academy	
3. Magnussen	Motopark Academy	
4. Giermaziak	Motopark Academy	
5. Melker	MP Motorsport	
6. Aho	Koiranen Bros	
7. Eisenreich	Jedi Racing	
8. Neveling	SL Formula	
9. Korjus	TT racing	
10. Quaife – Hobbs	Motopark Academy	

Further information about the Northern European Cup Formula Renault 2.0 can be found on the official websites www.renault-sport.de and www.necup.com.

For any questions, please contact Claire Dubbelman (claire@necup.com, tel: +31 654 782 300) and Ralph Weishaupt (ralph.weishaupt@renault.de, tel: +49 22 32 / 73 92 21).