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Two points-scoring finishes and a podium: David Beckmann makes excellent start in FIA Formula 2

- David Beckmann takes third place in his maiden FIA Formula 2 race
- Driving for Charouz Racing System, the series newcomer scored points towards the overall standings in two of the three races
- David: "As a racing driver, it's always nice to stand on the podium after a gruelling race but it feels even more special in Formula 2, because your opponents are stronger, the car is more demanding to drive and racing can be seriously affected by tyre degradation"

20-year-old David Beckmann achieved immediate success on his FIA Formula 2 debut at the weekend, finishing his first race of the 2021 season in P3. Driving for Charouz Racing System, he scored vital points towards the overall standings again in the second of three races held at the Bahrain International Circuit. Now on twelve points, he is currently in ninth place after the first of this season's eight meetings.

Beckmann used Friday's sessions to familiarise himself with his new racing car after the test outings that took place three weeks before the season opener. He finished 16th in practice but reduced the gap on the leader in qualifying to just 0.7 seconds and was ninth.

David Beckmann tackled his first Formula 2 race from P2 on the grid (the starting grid is based on the Top Ten from qualifying in reverse order). After the start, he maintained position by driving in a focused and determined manner but was eventually overtaken by another competitor. Keeping a watchful eye on his tyres in the extreme heat, the Formula 2 rookie then stayed in contact with the race leaders despite pressure from more experienced drivers hot in pursuit. At the end of 23 laps, he claimed third place and his maiden podium in Formula 2 which is just one stage down from Formula 1.

Race 1 results determine the grid for the second round, so drivers have to line up in reverse order. Beckmann started eighth and had to adjust to a change in conditions, as the race took place on Saturday evening under floodlights. Air and track temperatures were much lower than had previously been the case, so the tyres which are quite sensitive to extremes had to be handled differently. Beckmann fought for tenth position over quite a few laps before deciding to take a risk with strategy during a late safety car period. He switched to used softs in order to gain a competitive advantage on his opponents over the final stages of the race. His brave decision paid off and he came seventh.

The main race, during which there is a mandatory pit stop with a change of tyres, took place on Sunday afternoon. Beckmann started out from grid slot nine but just missed the points after taking the chequered flag in P11.

The next race weekend for the juniors contesting their top class in formula racing is scheduled to take place on Monaco's street circuit which puts huge demands on drivers. Another set of three races are due to be held in the Principality 20th-22nd May.

Three questions for David Beckmann**How did it feel to achieve a podium in your maiden FIA Formula 2 race?**

It felt mega! As a racing driver, it's always nice to stand on the podium after a gruelling race but it feels even more special in Formula 2, because your opponents are stronger, the car is more demanding to drive and racing can be seriously affected by tyre degradation. I'm very pleased that we as a team were able to achieve a good result straightaway. We can build on that.

What were the biggest sporting challenges facing you during this Bahrain race weekend?

Tyre degradation was very bad in the first race, because it was so hot. The strong wind was also majorly challenging in the second and third races. The aerodynamics on Formula 2 cars are so finely tuned that even very small changes to the ambient can make all the difference. The car's balance was different in every corner because of the wind. The conditions made it difficult not to make any mistakes.

What did you learn from your first couple of Formula 2 races, driving a car that you are not yet really used to?

I gained a lot of confidence in these races. I was strong on the brakes and overtook quite a few opponents as a result. As a rookie, it's vital that you gain as much experience as possible, so I found it really beneficial to have gone the distance in all three races. You gain confidence with every lap covered. Knowing how the car behaves in different situations makes it easier to consistently do better.

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