

## **ALPINE ESPORTS CELEBRATE STRONG EVENT IN F1 ESPORTS PRO SERIES**

Alpine Esports celebrated the return of F1 Esports with pole position and two podiums at event three of the 2021 F1 Esports Pro Series.

The event was highlighted by a new initiative of a 'watch party', which allowed around 100 Alpine Esports fans to virtually attend Wednesday's races and interact directly with the drivers and staff of Alpine Esports.

The seventh race of the season at Portimao confirmed the good form of the team in qualifying. The two cars driven by long-time Alpine Esports drivers Nicolas Longuet and Fabrizio Donoso went through to Q3 without any problem. It was Fabrizio who this time took team bragging rights with fourth place on the grid, whilst Nicolas was P10. The start was without incident for both drivers. Lucas Blakeley detached himself very quick to claim victory, but the battle for the podium spots was on between Rasmussen, Tonizza and Fabrizio. Through pitstops and strategy, Rasmussen emerged to finish P2, whilst Fabrizio overtook Tonizza a couple of laps before the end to finish P3, his second podium this season and the team's third in 2021.

Behind, Nicolas crossed the line in P8, but was demoted to P12 after the Stewards considered that a move to overtake Leigh was illegal, resulting into a post-race three seconds' penalty.

The second race of Wednesday night was at Zandvoort. Patrik Sipos made his race debut for Alpine Esports, joining Fabrizio at the wheel. Fabrizio's qualifying was unfortunately over very quickly after an opponent blocked him on his last attempt in Q1. Patrik however confirmed the potential of the car, delivering an excellent fourth position, the best qualifying result of his season so far. The race was more difficult. After being in the top five most of the race, Patrik dropped to eighth on the last lap. This was still a great performance from the rookie, and his first points in F1 Esports were welcome. Behind Fabrizio's race never really got going after qualifying and he finished P16.

The last race of the event was at The Circuit of The Americas. Practice went very well and the team was very confident with the potential of the car. Nicolas took pole position by just one millisecond, the second this season for the team after Nicolas's pole at the inaugural race in Bahrain. Patrik made his first mistake in qualifying in Q2, cutting a corner on his last attempt and starting P15. The race wasn't much better for the Hungarian, victim of a collision on the run up to in turn one. He received damage from the incident and crossed the line in P16.

Nicolas was on the alternate strategy with a start on medium tyres. He passed Opmeer, 2020 world champion, on lap 19 to lead the race. He tried on last lap to let the two others by before the DRS detection point but slightly misjudged the manoeuvre, and crossed the line in P3, the fourth podium of the team in nine races!

In the Constructors' Championship, the team is increasing its advantage in fourth place against McLaren and Ferrari and stays mathematically in contact with third place Aston Martin. Two podiums in three races and a rookie reaching new heights highlighted a positive event for Alpine Esports

The last round and finale of the championship will take place on 15 and 16 December.

**Nicolas Longuet** : "For event three, I was much better prepared this time around and I think it showed in our pace. Portimao qualifying was going smoothly until I made a small mistake with my tyre temperatures which meant I started P10 but with a good recovery drive and strategy got back

up to top eight. Unfortunately, I received a penalty from the stewards but luckily Fabrizio managed to secure the podium up front. COTA was almost perfect to be honest. Qualifying was really on point, and I was very happy with pole position. The race as well, no real mistake until the last lap where I overheated my tyres, and I became a sitting duck really. I'm still satisfied with the podium though as it's been a while. Onto event four now!"

**Fabrizio Donoso** : "Another double podium for the team, good results although for me it's hard to take as I obviously wanted more, Portimao went really well with a very good qualifying and another well managed and well executed race. For Zandvoort as it was my best track it's obviously very frustrating to be so far behind even more when it wasn't my fault! Thankfully Patrik secured some points. Now onto event four to finish on a high"

**Patrik Sipos** : "Event three showed me that hard work pays off. I had one of the strongest qualifying performances in Zandvoort which I'm really happy about because it shows that I've got the pace to be a top driver. The race was unfortunate, but I still got my first points. COTA was my strongest track all year. I was fast in every practice session but then I made a silly mistake which cost us the Q3 appearance. I'm so disappointed because I let myself down but mainly the team and I'm really sorry for that. We still have one event left so I really want to end the year on a high so I will push even more to show what the team and I are capable of!"

Richard Arnaud, coach: "An event reflecting our season. We didn't yet put everything together, but our progression is again clear. Two podiums, a pole position and the first points of Patrik in F1 Esports are very positive highlights. We want to finish the season on a high and set the tempo before 2022 and being able to fight for the title with this team."