



F1 Championship 2012

Round 1 of the 10 round championships kicked off at Daytona with Melbourne Australia being the front of the race. Drivers had to race through 58 laps to the chequered flag. But before the race got underway there was 3 qualifying sessions for the drivers to earn their place on the grid.

9 Entrants were waiting at the pit lane exit for the start of qualifying. Drivers had 8 minutes to post their best lap time, the two slowest drivers would be eliminated and start from 8th and 9th positions on the grid. At the chequered flag Stuart Whitworth and Rowan Arnold didn't make the cut to proceed to session 2 so were directed back to the pit lane and would make up the back row of the grid.

7 drivers remained in qualifying 2 only 5 of them would stay in the running for the pole position shoot out in session 3. Drivers had 5 minutes to post their lap times and it proved to be a close race. With only tenths of seconds between the drivers it went right down to the chequered flag. Sean Barnardo and Julian Philippe were the drivers eliminated and would start the race from 7th and 6th place.

The drivers remaining on circuit were now in for a chance to start from pole position in the grand prix. All that stood before them was a 5 minute qualifying session to determine the order. A close race ensued but a consistent Mark Hitchcock crossed the line to take pole position. Rocky Lam joined mark on the front row. Lee Maguire and Ruifeng Cai take 3rd and 4th and Dave Pattison starts in 5th place.

The Australian Grand Prix 58 Laps

Green light for the start of the grand prix. Mark Hitchcock getting a good run in to the first corners and gets a bit of room behind him coming off the bridge. Behind him there is a battle for second as Lee Maguire gets alongside Rocky Lam, running in to the first hairpin Lee takes the inside line and smartly seals second place not much fighting from Rocky as he tucks in behind and chases Lee down. The highlight from the opening lap goes to Sean Barnardo after gaining two positions moving himself through the field in to 5th place from a 7th place grid start. The early stages of the race were calm as the drivers settling in to their rhythm. Lee Maguire though made an uncharacteristic error at the 1st hairpin as he brakes too late in to the corner and puts his kart in to a spin. With the race being so close all the drivers lock up behind him to avoid any contact. After the karts cleared themselves and put them back in the race the field had been switched. Mark Hitchcock managing to capitalise on the error behind him gains a 4 second advantage. Julian Philippe moves up to second place he must have found a path through the spun karts to gain the positions and Rocky Lam is lucky to get through and keep 3rd position. Mark and Julian were setting the pace for the race but there was still plenty of battling going on through the field. Sean Barnardo managed to move up to 6th place by overtaking Lee Maguire on turn 1 as Lee left the door open.



The first black flag of the race was issued on lap 29 to Ruifeng Cai he made contact on another driver to push them offline which allowed him to set up for an over take. Rocky was brought in to the sin bin to give the position back. Meanwhile Sean Barnardo and Lee Maguire were pushing forward and had now latched on to the back of Dave Pattison. Dave was forced to take a defensive line as he was coming under increasing pressure from Sean but as he defends a move from Sean he slows the both of them down and Lee Maguire capitalises and gains two positions to move up to 4th. Sean stays in behind Dave Pattison and manages to get through on the next lap and quickly latches back on to Lee Maguire. Sean keeps the pressure on Lee and finally makes him pay as he undercuts Lee on to the bridge a risky overtake but pulls it off cleanly and moves in to 4th. Blue flags were used throughout racing and the back markers were doing an excellent job of staying out of the way and allowing the traffic to flow through to keep the race in a fast pace. However Rocky Lam chose the wrong way to overtake a back marker who had been blue flagged as he gets caught both Sean Barnardo and Lee Maguire move past him a small mistake which cost Rocky two places.

The chequered flag was shown at the end of 58 laps to Mark Hitchcock who had maintained the gap at the front throughout the race and Julian Philippe finished in second place and an excellent race from Sean Barnardo finishing in 3rd.

Finishing Positions	
1. Mark Hitchcock	25
2. Julian Philippe	23
3. Sean Barnardo	21
4. Lee Maguire	20
5. Rocky Lam	19
6. Dave Pattison	18
7. Ruifeng Cai	17
8. Rowan Arnold	16
9. Stuart Whitworth	15