



## **PERSEVERANCE PAYS, CRAWFORD SCORES TWO TOP-10 FINISHES IN AUSTRALIA AFTER ROUGH START TO F2 WEEKEND**

MELBOURNE, Australia (25 March 2024) – Jak Crawford rebounded from a difficult qualifying session to run a pair of competitive FIA Formula 2 Championship races in his third weekend driving for DAMS Lucas Oil, finishing 10th in both the Sprint Race and Feature Race despite having to start 22nd in both events.

The 18-year-old Texan also scored the first fastest lap of his F2 career in the Feature, leading the race with two laps remaining before his mandatory pit stop.

The strong pace and impressive forward progress in the races followed a challenging start to the weekend.

On the first lap of qualifying, Crawford took a trip into the grass and subsequently cut a tire, forcing him to pit lane for a new set. His final qualifying run was truncated following contact with a barrier, leaving him without a representative time from the critical session.

“It was very unfortunate the way it started out,” Crawford said of the Australian weekend. “I had a technical issue in practice, which was no fault of the team, and then we didn’t get it right in qualifying. We struggled and I was off a little. That forced me to push the limits, and I ended up crashing. So instead of getting something, I wound up last. This weekend showed just how important qualifying is.”

Without a competitive lap, Crawford was slotted 22nd and last for both races. He gained five positions on the opening of the 23-lap Sprint Race, and went up to 13th after a pair of early cautions. Crawford battled to 14th over the opening nine laps, and worked his way to 11th with six laps remaining. He ended up strong, passing the current championship leader on the final lap to place 10th.



“Everyone was on the same tire, and it was a carnage, with a lot of safety car laps,” he said. “At the end, the speed was quite good. [On the last lap] it didn’t mean anything as far as the points, but it felt quite good to make the move and get the position.”

DAMS opted for an alternative strategy for the 33-lap Feature, one of the few teams to start on the medium compound tire that was used in the Sprint Race. Crawford went from starting 22nd to move up to 15th by the time a virtual safety car arrived on lap nine, and then went up to fifth when the competitors who started on the super-soft compound took their mandatory stop.

Unfortunately, another caution – this time involving a safety car – bunched the field up behind him. When racing resumed on lap 16, Crawford made a pass to take third, and then began running down second place with 12 laps remaining.



He set fast lap on the medium tire three times, taking second position with five laps remaining and then passing the race leader with two laps to go. He then made his mandatory stop, falling to 13th, but once again setting another fastest race lap on the softer compound as he raced into the final points paying spot with a 10th place result.

“It was very, very positive to set those fastest laps,” he said. “We were really fast on the medium compound after more than 20 laps. My tires were old, but I had more pace than the guys running on the other newer tires. I was working my way up the field but it was unfortunate the way it fell with the safety car. But we did really well, and we learned a lot. We had really good race pace. But on my side, I’m disappointed on how it went down in qualifying.”

The two points for 10th and fastest lap have him tied for seventh in the standings with 26 points.

After three race weekends in March, Crawford gets nearly a two-month break in F2 competition. He will have an official F2 test in Barcelona from April 23-25, with the next race at Imola May 18-19.

“We ended up with a lot of positives, so now we go back to Europe and really start the season.”

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