

# Evans, Da Costa power to glory at inaugural Shanghai E-Prix

Ma Yue

It was a new experience for both drivers and fans as the inaugural Formula E Shanghai E-Prix double-header concluded at the Shanghai International Circuit last weekend.

Mitch Evans led Nick Cassidy to another Jaguar TCS Racing double podium in Saturday's Round 11, while Porsche's Antonio Felix Da Costa claimed the top honor in Round 12.

The race started in heat and humidity. McLaren's Jake Hughes, the pole-sitter, was overtaken by second-placed Stoffel Vandoorne of Penske at the first corner.

Andretti's Norman Nato and Porsche's Da Costa then took the lead in turn.

Portugal's Da Costa, who started from third, had energy in-hand on his rivals at the front of the pack at the half-way stage. He gave full play to his defense skills to remain untouched before securing his second win of the season.

"I'm super happy today and the car was in such a good window," he said.

Hughes and Nato settled for second and third. It was the first podium of the season for both drivers.

On Saturday, Evans started from third on the grid, and quickly moved to the front by lap 7. By the halfway mark on lap 16, the Porsches, led by Pascal Wehrlein, dominated the field.

Jaguars' superior energy management became evident in the latter part of the race, while Wehrlein, facing an energy deficit, employed very defensive tactic.

The decisive moment came on the final lap when Evans executed a daring outside pass on Wehrlein and grabbed the lead. Cassidy's last-second challenge on Wehrlein saw the latter settle for third.

With two more double-headers to go, Jaguar's Cassidy sits at the top of the drivers' standings on 167 points, a 25-point advantage over Porsche's Wehrlein. They are followed by Evans (132) and Nissan's Oliver Rowland (131).

Jaguar leads the teams' standings on 299 points, a 73-point edge over Porsche.



Antonio Felix Da Costa celebrates after winning the Formula E Round 12 race at the Shanghai International Circuit in suburban Jiading District on May 26. — Zhou Shengjie



ERT was the only Chinese team on the grid. — Zhou Shengjie

The Shanghai double-header was more of a peloton-style competition, especially in the Saturday race, given the width of the track. Audiences got to see a lot of position changes, and the situation remained unclear

because the distance between the cars was always too close.

"These wide-flowing circuits are designed for very high-speed and high-downforce, naturally-aspirated vehicles," McLaren's veteran driver Sam Bird told Shanghai Daily.

"The way we go racing with limited energy and the tow effect means it becomes a bit of a lottery," he noted. "But if the fans like it that's the most important thing."

The Briton has raced in the World Endurance Championship in Shanghai three times, but the experience was not of much help to him last weekend.

"I prefer (racing) in the city street circuits, that's where I think Formula E looks at its best," he added.

Most drivers agreed with Bird's views, including compatriot Dan Ticktum. Representing the only Chinese team on the grid, ERT, Ticktum and fellow driver Sergio Sette Camera enjoyed big support from the local crowd.

"The race actually turned out to be

a bit more difficult than I expected," Ticktum told Shanghai Daily. "It was a good peloton but the overtaking is harder here, to be honest."

"The car is not designed for this track, but for street circuits. It has no downforce and the grip is low," he explained.

Ticktum failed to collect any points in Shanghai, and is currently 17th in the drivers' standings with 12 points. "Hopefully we will have a better car for next year, so I'm just being patient and remain positive," he said.

For many spectators at the Shanghai International Circuit in suburban Jiading District, the double-header was their very first Formula E experience.

"I wanted to buy Formula One tickets, which were sold out too soon, so I bought Formula E tickets for me and my son," spectator Wang Yi said.

According to organizers, over 20,000 fans attended the Shanghai E-Prix.