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Pau Euro F3: Tom Blomqvist beats Esteban Ocon in race two epic

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Tom Blomqvist denied Esteban Ocon in a thrilling second race of the Formula 3 European Championship weekend at Pau.

Blomqvist, who started the wet race fourth on the grid, was gifted second place by accidents ahead, and then made the most of a late safety car to squeeze past Ocon in a brave round-the-outside move in the flat-out left-hand kink leading into Parc Beaumont.

Ocon, who had dominated the weekend, led the race after the safety-car start, but Felix Rosenqvist began reeling him in after the Lotus F1 Junior inflicted slight damage to his car on the kerb at the final chicane. The Swede attacked the Frenchman on the uphill climb to the Pont Oscar hairpin on the 14th lap, jinking to the outside, but he tripped over the early-braking Ocon's right-rear wheel and crashed into the barriers.

Two laps earlier, Max Verstappen had spun backwards into the tyre wall at the exit of the Foch chicane after running in third place, elevating Blomqvist to second.

Ocon's Prema Powerteam Dallara-Mercedes was clearly struggling after the contact with Rosenqvist and, with Carlin Dallara-Volkswagen stablemate Jake Dennis breathing down his neck, Blomqvist began closing the gap.

A safety car, caused when Ed Jones hit the barriers entering Parc Beaumont, put Blomqvist right onto Ocon's tail, and just two laps remained when the race went green.

Ocon made an excellent restart, but Blomqvist was all over him through Pont Oscar and the following Lycee hairpin before making his move.

From then on, Ocon had to do a stout defending job to keep Dennis, Antonio Giovinazzi and Dennis van de Laar at bay, but held on to claim second place.

Blomqvist, for whom this was the second win since he was picked up for this season by the Indonesian Jagonya Ayam scheme, said: "It was quite difficult and there wasn't too much grip. I was struggling a little bit compared to Felix and Esteban.

"I heard on the radio that Esteban was struggling, but it was pretty difficult to get by because there isn't much room around here."

A chain-reaction incident behind the leading quintet after the restart ended with Mitch Gilbert taking sixth place - without a front wing.

Nicholas Latifi, who had stormed up the order from 14th on the grid, passed Gilbert at the restart for sixth. Half a lap later the Canadian was in the barriers, while Jordan King and Antonio Fuoco stalled in the drama and could not restart.

Meanwhile, John Bryant-Meisner, Riccardo Agostini, Gustavo Menezes and Michele Beretta were all delayed and incurred varying amounts of damage.

Lucas Auer and Felix Serralles crept through the mayhem to seventh and eighth, while Roy Nissany and Hector Hurst found themselves elevated into the final points positions, having been 17th and 16th respectively when the race restarted.