

## Jolyon Palmer wins GP2 championship: Palmer becomes first British champion since Lewis Hamilton after feature race win in Russia



Palmer won a dramatic feature race to clinch the GP2 Drivers' Championship with three races to spare

**JACK DE MENEZES** | Saturday 11 October 2014

Jolyon Palmer won the 2014 GP2 Drivers' Championship in with a typically brilliant drive to win the first ever race in the series at the Sochi Autodrom in Russia.

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Palmer's victory in Saturday's feature race put him 66 points ahead of his nearest rival Felipe Nasr and meant that his championship lead was unassailable with three races remaining this season. The 23-year-old, who drives for DAMS, becomes the first British driver to win the title since Lewis Hamilton's triumph in 2006, and opens the door to a similar progression to Formula one next season.

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He was made to fight for the win on the Black Sea coast resort, which has been baked in sunshine since the weekend got underway on Friday, as he came under serious pressure from New

Zealand's Mitch Evans in the closing stages of the race.

Having spent the opening eight laps behind McLaren protégé and pole-sitter Stoffel Vandoorne, Palmer used a timely safety car period to make his mandatory pit stop. The timing of the deployment of the safety car caused a mix-up on the ART pit wall and meant that Vandoorne was forced to continue, but despite attempting to build a gap it quickly became clear that he would not win the race as his strategy would cost him precious time.



Jonathan Palmer congratulates his son Jolyon after winning the GP2 championship

Suddenly the picture became clearer for Palmer when Nasr was handed a drive-through penalty got cutting across the inside kerb of turn two in order to gain an advantage. His misery was compounded when the stewards forced him to serve the penalty twice, as his initial drive-through was served during the safety car period.

Despite an intriguing battle with Evans, Palmer was able to hold onto the race win and secure his first major championship of his young career.



Jolyon Palmer wins the GP2 championship

While opportunities in F1 are always limited, a seat could open up towards the back of the grid that would see Palmer make the step-up and add to the number of Britons currently competing, with Hamilton, Button and Max Chilton all set to race in tomorrow's Russian Grand Prix.

Palmer will be in action again on Sunday morning ahead of the main event of the day that sees Hamilton start from pole in the first Grand Prix to be ever staged in Russia.

**GP2 Russian feature race results:**

1. Jolyon Palmer (GBR) – DAMS – 54:37.072
2. Mitch Evans (NZL) – Russian Time - +1.267
3. Raffaele Marciello (ITA) – Racing Engineering - +15.584
4. Arthur Pic (FRA) – Campos Racing - +17.550
5. Stoffel Vandoorne (BEL) – ART Grand Prix - +18.104
6. Andre Negrão (BRA) – Arden International - +23.154
7. Sergio Canamasas (ESP) – Trident - +28.231
8. Julian Leal (COL) – Carlin - +29.382
9. Marco Sørensen (DEN) – MP Motorsport - +29.493
10. Nathanael Berthon (FRA) – Venezuela GP Pazarus - +31.332

**Drivers' Championship**

1. Jolyon Palmer – 256
2. Felipe Nasr – 190
3. Stoffel Vandoorne – 180
4. Mitch Evans – 143
5. Johnny Cecotto - 128