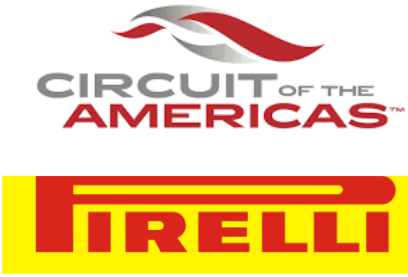
THE OFFICIALS NEWSLETTER

UNITED STATES GRAND PRIX





WELCOME

To the 7th annual running of the Formula 1 Pirelli United States Grand Prix at Circuit of The Americas

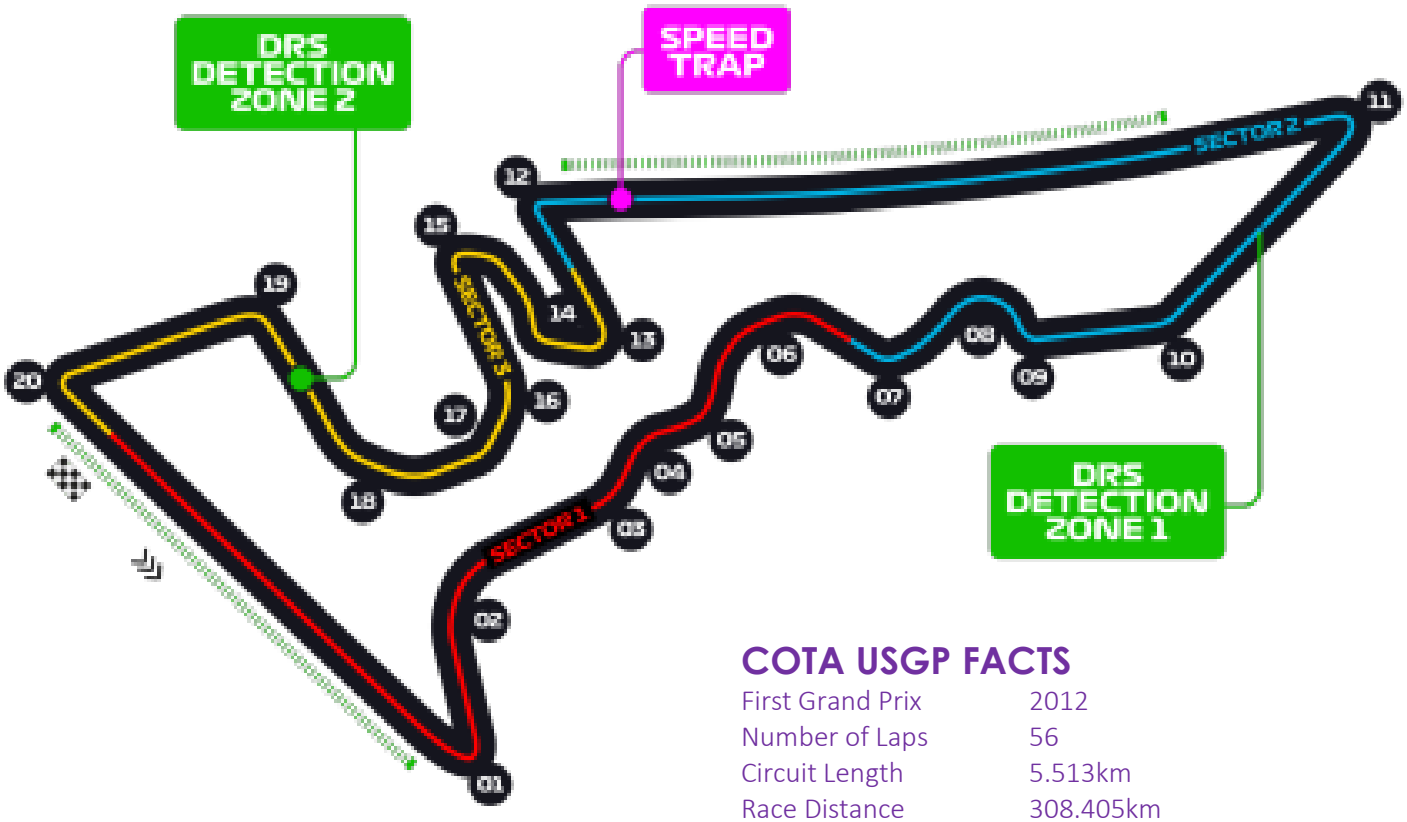
COTA and all of Austin, Texas welcome Formula One back for its 7th year at this gorgeous circuit. For this year's edition, our volunteer marshal and race officials team numbers in excess of 430 people. Bill Armitage as Race Chairman and Marshal Coordinator, Sydney Davis Yagel are excited to report that for 2018, there are a record-breaking number of marshals at 318 people (headed up by Chief Flag Marshal, Bryan Gregory) that will manage the corners as chief post marshals, communicators, flag marshals, and intervention marshals. This is the largest number of volunteers for this role in the seven-year history at COTA exceeding even the inaugural race that saw 271 "corner workers".

The pit/paddock and grid team headed by Nadja Pollard this year has 33 people managing the combined work in the F1 pit and paddock area along with the support paddock that the USF4 and F3 Americas Series call home for the weekend. The deeply experienced Scrutineer team of 30 is again led by ASN/FIA National Scrutineer Suzanne Royce and will work with F1's Technical Manager Joe Bauer to ensure full compliance of all F1 teams and cars this weekend. The smallest specialty in terms of number is our talented team of 4 starters inclusive of their new chief this year, Terry "Doc" DeYoung .

While it is amazing how many volunteers are supporting the on-track operations, behind the scenes are teams of incredible folks looking out for the entire marshal team and the drivers who get stuck out on course. The "hospitality" team numbers 43 people who are truly taking care of all of the marshals. These folks ensure that everyone is kept fed, has a place to relax with friends at the end of the day, have water and ice all day every day and then are tasked with getting all of the uniforms collected and sorted - they make it easier for everyone and are some of the least visible to the rest of the F1 world. This team is again led by Werdna Ault. The Moto team with George Majewski as its chief, is comprised of 8 riders who are responsible for transporting drivers stranded out on course back to the paddock.

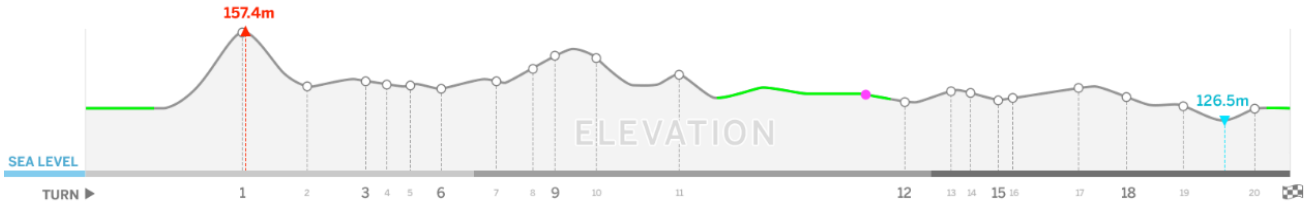
What is truly amazing about the 436 people that are here this weekend is that that have come from all over the country and world. We have sixteen countries represented (at last count): Argentina, Australia, Brazil, Canada, England, Germany, India, Ireland, Malaysia, Mexico, Netherlands, New Zealand, Scotland, Singapore, the UAE and the USA. There are 28 US states represented this weekend are: Arizona, California, Colorado, Florida, Hawaii, Illinois, Indiana, Kansas, Kentucky, Louisiana, Massachusetts, Michigan, Missouri, Nevada, New Jersey, New Mexico, New York, North Carolina, Ohio, Oklahoma, Oregon, Pennsylvania, South Carolina, Tennessee, Virginia, Washington, and Wisconsin. WOW!

Sit back, enjoy your days and know that you all have the best seat in the house for one of the largest sporting events in America! Thank you for vour dedication!



COTA USGP FACTS

First Grand Prix	2012
Number of Laps	56
Circuit Length	5.513km
Race Distance	308.405km
Lap Record	1:37.766 (Sebastian Vettel (2017)



HISTORY OF THE USGP

The United States Grand Prix dates back to 1950 when the Indianapolis 500 counted as a round of the world championship. Eleven times from 1950 to 1960, points scored at Indy were added to a F1 driver's season tally. In 1959 America hosted two F1 races when, in addition to Indianapolis, the United States Grand Prix was held at Sebring (Fla.) International Raceway. In 1960, F1 moved to Riverside (Calif.) International Raceway before finally settling down for a 20-year tenure at Watkins Glen (N.Y.) International from 1961 to 1980. From 1976 to 1980, Watkins Glen was joined by Long Beach, California, with the United States Grand Prix West taking place until 1983.

After Watkins Glen fell off the calendar, Las Vegas took its place for two seasons (1981-1982) with the Caesars Palace Grand Prix being held on its hotel parking lot. In 1982, America hosted three F1 races when in addition to Long Beach and Las Vegas, Detroit was added to the schedule. Detroit hosted F1 on a bumpy street circuit for seven years, with its last grand prix coming in 1988. Dallas made a one-race appearance in 1984 when Fair Park was converted to a F1 circuit for the Dallas Grand Prix. Phoenix was next up for F1 from 1989 to 1991. Then came a nine-year absence of the sport from America's shores.

Then Indianapolis Motor Speedway president Tony George built a road course within the confines of the historic 2.5-mile oval and F1 returned with the United States Grand Prix at Indianapolis from 2000 to 2007. F1 in America fell off the calendar again. COTA was constructed in 2011, becoming the first purpose-built F1 facility in the United States and F1 returned to America with the 2012 United States Grand Prix. Since then, the United States Grand Prix has been held at COTA.









YOUR F1 SCHEDULE

Practice 1	Friday	10:00 – 11:30
Practice 2	Friday	14:00 – 15:30
Practice 3	Saturday	13:00 – 14:00
Qualifying	Saturday	16:00 – 17:00
Race	Sunday	13:10 – 15:10





THE ROAD SO FAR

It has been a year of ups and downs. More ups than downs for some, the opposite for others. Here is a quick rundown of each race. For Ferrari and Sebastian Vettel, the year started on a high in Melbourne, Australia. Despite Lewis Hamilton being on pole, Ferrari were able to have Vettel jump to the lead through a good strategy and a well-timed Virtual Safety Car. The second round in Bahrain continued the Ferrari high, with both pole and the win for Vettel, though Valtteri Bottas was able to close to under a second as differing strategies brought the two cars together at the end.

In China, the race went crazy. A mid-race Safety Car after the two Toro Rossos collided allowed the two Red Bulls to pit, which meant that they then had the pace on the Ferraris and Mercedes and they came through for what should have been a 1-2 result. Max Verstappen was in the box seat for the win until he rushed a few attempts at overtaking and ended up damaging his car and receiving a penalty, leaving him down in 5th position, allowing Daniel Riccardo to take his first win of the season. The race in Baku involved numerous small incidents and the race was heading for Bottas's first win of the year Vettel, until debris destroyed his tire and his race, allowing Hamilton to win and also hit the front of the championship for the first time this year.

Spain was expected to be a return to normal and it was…at the front. Hamilton led a Mercedes 1-2 with Verstappen holding off a late charge by Vettel. Monaco, the crown jewel of the F1 season, was dominated by Ricciardo. Pole and then the race win sounds simple but Smiling Dan had to grimace through engine issues for most of the race, keeping Vettel behind through the tight confines of the circuit. In the year's first trip to the Americas, F1 returned to Canada. Vettel romped away with an easy win. F1 then returned to France. Hamilton bounced back with a dominant win and a returned to the lead in the driver's championship.

From the high of France to the low of Austria, in spite of being set in the hills, both Mercedes retired – Bottas with a gearbox problem, Hamilton with fuel pressure. Verstappen was there to pounce and took his first win of the season. The conspiracy theorists came out to play when F1 visited Silverstone for the British Grand Prix. At the first corner, Raikkonen tapped Hamilton, spinning him out, leaving Vettel to romp to victory. Hamilton clawed back to 2nd in a brilliant drive.
The German Grand Prix was decided by the weather. Vettel led the race easily but passing showers led to a basic error as Sebastian slid off in front of his fans in the stadium section of Hockenheim, allowing Hamilton to take a vital win in the championship battle. Leading into the summer break, Hamilton scored his 77th pole position and a cruisy win in Hungary. The Belgian Grand Prix, at the stunning Spa circuit, will be remembered for the first corner collision more than anything else. Before the Safety Car was sent out, Vettel had overtaken Hamilton for the lead and kept it after the restart all the way to the checkered flag.

The long straights of Monza should have been a long-awaited win for Raikkonen but poor strategy allowed Hamilton to win as Kimi's tires suffered and he couldn't hold on to the lead. The streets of Singapore, Hamilton showed why he is a 4-time World Champion with a pole position that seemed to go against the relative speed of the cars. From there, Lewis lead from start, allowing Vettel to have another less than stellar showing, though still finishing on the podium in 3rd. The Russian Grand Prix at Sochi should have been Bottas' first win of the season but Mercedes called in some team orders to put Hamilton into the lead to take him one step closer to the championship. Ferrari could only look on from a short distance behind, Vettel finishing ahead of Raikkonen.

Finally, we come to Japan, just a couple of weeks ago. Hamilton moved to touching distance of the title and Vettel seemingly imploded. Qualifying 9th after a series of bad decisions by Ferrari the previous day, Vettel worked his way up to Verstappen but his attempt to overtake going into the Spoon curve led to a coming together and Vettel spun off. The race ultimately settled down, allowing Bottas to help claim Mercedes' 44th one-two finish. And now it is time for the United States Grand Prix. There is a very good chance that Hamilton will take out the F1 title at COTA as he only needs to outscore Vettel by 8 points and his record at this track is impressive, having won 5 of the 6 races.

Article by Michael Shaw, Australian Grand Prix Officials Gazette Team

