THE OFFICIALS NEWSLETTER
LAS VEGAS GRAND PRIX

F1 SPEED READ

Welcome to Fabulous Las Vegas!

The very first Las Vegas street circuit welcomes the Formula 1 circus with open arms. The return of the series after 40 years has started with the star-studded spectacular opening ceremony, but there have been 20 F1 races that have happened already.

World Champion Max Verstappen has been absolutely dominant, winning 17 of the races so far, but it hasn't all been smooth sailing for the Dutchman.

It started perfectly for Max in Bahrain with a pole and race win; but his teammate, Sergio Perez, fought back in Saudia Arabia doing the same trick.

The third race, in Australia, was a hot mess of a race. While Verstappen had pole, he lost out to George Russell at the start and dropped back to third; but a record total of three red flags for crashes kept the officials busy and the record Melbourne crowd enjoying multiple starts and a difficult Verstappen win.

Azerbaijan saw street circuit specialist Perez head back to the top step of the podium with Verstappen not far behind.

Miami was the first American race of the year, and Verstappen overcame a qualifying issue to come from ninth to win. Monaco saw Verstappen win again, but was also one of many podiums that Aston Martin's Fernando Alonso achieved in a brilliant start to the season for the green team.

The Spanish Grand Prix was a cruisy win for Max, while Mercedes finally showed some improvement with second and third for Russell and Lewis Hamilton.

Canada was a tough race for second place with a battle between Alonso and Hamilton. Perez climbed from a very poor qualifying to be sixth and kept his slim title hopes alive.

Verstappen continued his winning ways in Austria, and Ferrari had a bit of a comeback drive with Charles Leclerc taking second from Perez.

The British Grand Prix had Verstappen lead home an otherwise British podium, where new favorite, McLaren's Lando Norris, took second ahead of absolute home hero Hamilton.

The Hungarian race had a surprise pole for Hamilton, though he wasn't able to convert this to a result, dropping to fourth behind Verstappen, Norris and Perez. Rookie Oscar Piastri showed his long-held promise with a fifth place.

The Belgian Grand Prix at the stunning Spa circuit had a double win for Verstappen, where he won the Sprint and main races after initial Ferrari promise.

Max's home race at the Dutch Grand Prix wasn't an easy win, with a late rain shower putting a 45-minute delay into the middle of the race, but it couldn't stop him. Alonso took second, and Alpine's Pierre Gasly took a rare and happy podium.

Monza held the Italian race and Ferrari took pole with Leclerc; but neither Ferrari could hold back the dominant Red Bulls, who were first and second – unsurprisingly Max ahead and Verstappen breaking the record for most wins in a row with 10.

The 15th race of the season in Singapore finally saw someone other than a Red Bull driver win a race. Ferrari's Carlos Sainz Jr drove an amazing race to hold off Norris, Russell and Hamilton - the latter two who were charging very hard after a late pit stop. Verstappen pushed through to sixth position, his worst result of the season so far with a car that did not like the track.











F1 SPEED READ (continued)

Japan was business as usual for Verstappen, with McLaren's Norris and Piastri confirming the team's ridiculous series of improvements through the year, where they've managed to come from basically the rear of the field at the start of the year to now consistent top five performers.

Qatar and Max wins again, but behind there was a slight change with Piastri finishing ahead of Norris. The Sprint the day before the Grand Prix had Piastri take his first race win in F1, and only the fourth different winner of the season.

F1's second visit to the US, in Austin Texas had an unusual result. Verstappen won with Hamilton closing in behind to finish runner up; but both he and Leclerc were later disqualified for a technical infringement with their cars (a worn plank under the car.)

The Mexican race had its typical colorful crowd and a different color on the front row of the grid where Ferraris locked it out. Unfortunately for them, they were not able to hold back Verstappen who took the lead at the first corner, while his teammate took himself out with an ambitious overtake attempt.

Brazil had a storm roll-in at the end of qualifying, which mixed up the grid with both Aston Martins on the second row of the grid, with Lance Stroll ahead of Alonso. They were able to hold on for fifth and third respectively. Yes, Verstappen won again for his record 17th win of the season and Norris showing yet again how well the McLaren is going now.

So now we end up on the Las Vegas Strip. The cold weather and late start could shake up the field and give someone other than Verstappen the chance to win. Let's roll the dice and find out.

Article by Michael Shaw, Australian Grand Prix Officials Gazette Team



MORE TRACK AND F1 TRIVIA

- The GP is estimated to inject $1.3 billion into the Las Vegas economy this year (twice the estimated figure for the upcoming Super Bowl)
- The new 300,000 sqft pit and garage building houses the F1 garages, hospitality suites and Paddock Club as well as offices
- The ritziest hotel package this race weekend is believed to be the $5M Emperor Package from Caesars Entertainment – 5 nights in a 3 bedroom Sky Villa at the Nobu Hotel, 12Paddock Club tickets, a chauffeured Rolls-Royce for the weekend and a dinner for 12 prepared by famed chef Nobu Matsuhisa.
- It took 378 days to deliver the Vegas Strip Circuit project with a workforce of nearly 2,900.
- The track required the replacement of 5 – 10 inches of asphalt with 60,000 tons of base layer pavement and then 43,000 tons of intermediate and race pavement.
- The Las Vegas Strip Circuit at 3.803 miles is the third longest on this year's calendar (Spa is the longest).
- In simulation, the average GP speed of 147 mph. On the longest straight stretch (1.2 miles on Las Vegas Boulevard) speeds could reach 210+ mph
- The minimum weight of an F1 car is 1,759 lbs (includes the driver, dry-weather tires and no fuel) which is heavier than they have ever been before primarily due to added safety features.
- F1 cars consumers commercial fuel compounds with a minimum of 10% advanced, sustainable ethanol. F1 cars will typically use nearly 36 gallons a race.
- The power output of an F1 power unit (petrol internal combustion engine and ERS) is around 1,000 bhp. The 1.6 litre V6 runs at 15,000 rpm.









GUENTHER GATHERING

In the Haas garage, several marshals met with Guenther Steiner, Team Principal of Moneygram Haas F1 Team. He said that he felt it was important to acknowledge the workers and what they contribute to the event. Steiner thanked the group and said that he hoped that Haas would have a good weekend here. He then shook everyone's hand and gave them "Haas Vegas" beanies and they all took a group photo.





LYNNE'S WANDERINGS

The good news is that FP2 finally occurred, and ran the full 90 minutes allotted - a session and half worth of track time. Charles Leclerc/Ferrari was the last fastest, of the nine lead changes with a time of 1:35.265. Max Verstappen led the first half hour, and once more. Leclerc led the most times, mostly lowering his times while leading. He ran mostly on Softs but his last fastest lap was on Mediums. The top five were Leclerc, Carlos Sainz/Ferrari, Fernando Alonso/Aston Martin, Sergio Perez/Red Bull and Valteri Bottas/Alfa Romeo. All were on Mediums at the finish as were the majority. Two drivers were on Hards.



Turn 12 was a nemesis for several drivers, who spun off and on. Turn 5 caught a couple more and Turn 14 and 4 had visitors also. Most spins were early on.

Afterwards the drivers practiced starts.

The session went unappreciated by onsite fans as they were cleared out of the stands prior to the FP2 session.

The day ended close to 4 a.m. The marshals appreciated the hand warmers that were included in their packs.

The bad news is that FP1 wasn't much of a session. Practice went five laps and was Red Flagged for Carlos Sainz/Ferrari having a problem with drain covers coming up. The session was canceled and then restarted, and then quickly canceled again. It was a while for the marshals sitting and waiting for the final decision regarding FP2. That session finally started at 2:30 a.m. Friday and went for 90 uninterrupted minutes.



Wednesday night/Thursday morning's 2 a.m.high-speed test, with F1 Safety Car Driver, Bernd Marylander at the wheel, went well. He was clocked at 177 mph at the end of the front straight. The marshals were on track til 4 a.m, and then got up in time Thursday for the 12-2 p.m. buffet luncheon at the Luxor. They were given a packed box lunch for dinner. They loaded up on busses, by corners, and were dropped off corner by corner.

The Radio Checks started at 6 p.m. Most of the corners and marshals are on radios, with some on a landline to Jim Swintal in Race Control.



Thursday night's Track Inspection Lap in the Medical Car was driven by F1 Medical Delegate, Dr. Ian Roberts. It's customary that the Medical doctor drives the Medical Inspection Lap. This was news to me, but as I was told - "If someone offered you a chance to drive round this course, what would you say?" The look on Dr. Roberts face says it all.

The Pit Lane was busy before FP1. Several teams were doing Pit Stop Practice. F1 has no limit on the number of crew involved in Pit Stops - so many are involved that often times the car and driver can't be seen. No wonder the teams got the times down to under three seconds, and now under two seconds. Mind boggling.





LYNNE'S WANDERINGS (continued)

The Pit/Grid Marshals lined the pit wall railing and the Scrutineers took their positions in the garages.

That's a job easier said than done, especially for Sector Chiefs, with no crossover bridges or tunnels. They're being creative in getting about.

Chief Technical Delegate, Jo Bauer, was seen checking out the Medical Car/Safety Car paddock. He looked relaxed. He's working his 501st consecutive Grands Prix without a break. The volunteer Scrutineers now have new tabards, which no longer reflect the designation Tires, because that Tire position has been deleted. New technology allows for off-site digital reading of tire information. Now a Scrutineer is a Garage Scrutineer or has a plain tabard. There are two per garage, one assigned to each F1 car. All of the 25 Scrutineers are from the US. No Canadians this weekend.

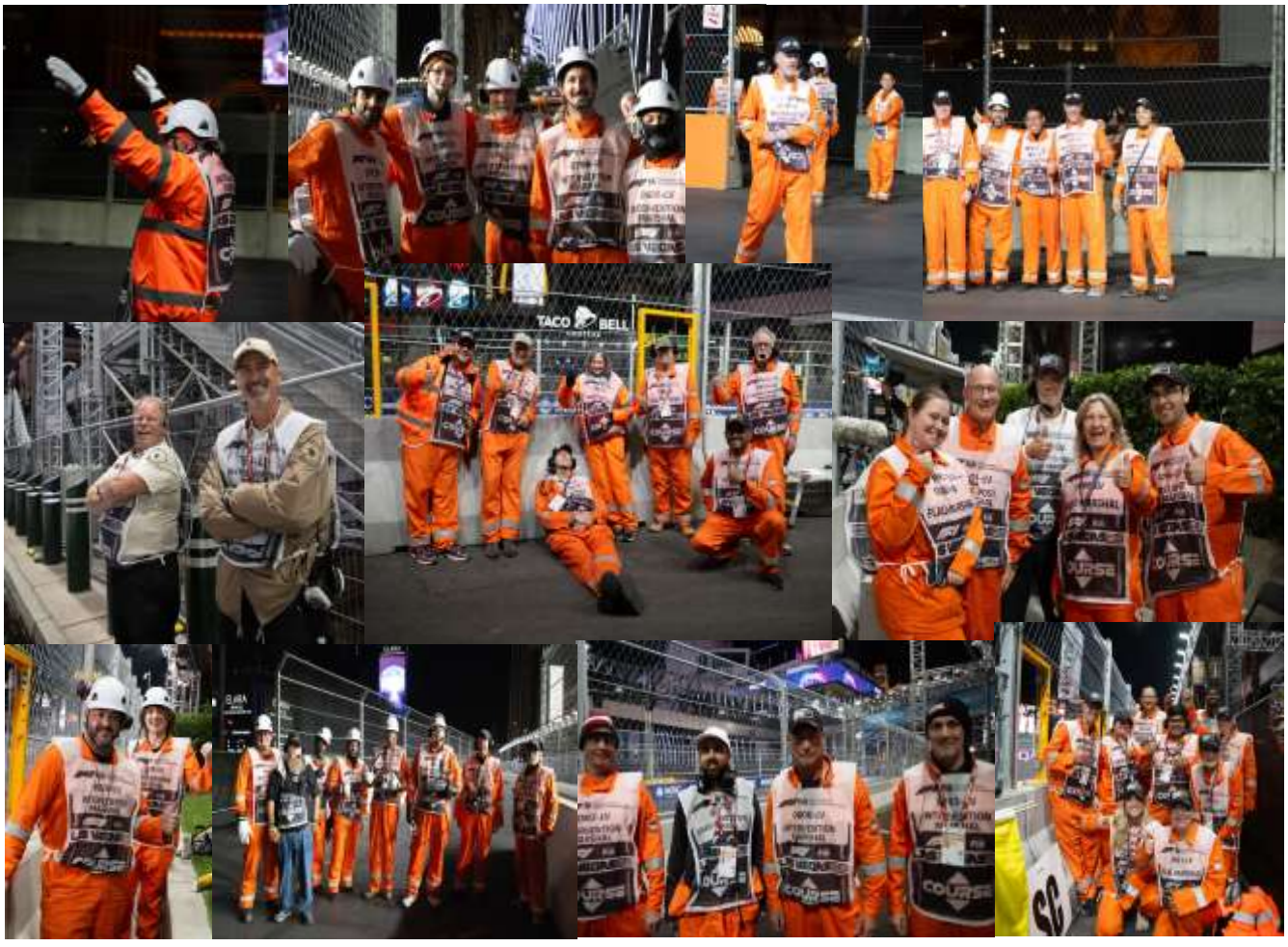




Michael Royce, former Assistant Chief F1 Scrutineer and husband of the late long-time F1 Chief Scrutineer, Suzanne Royce, was here Thursday night. He did the honors for the Scrutineers first Radio Check-in.

The Paddock Club had a display and the F1 Driver's Championship trophy was one.

It was another long day at the track, and even though my hotel is nearby, didn't make it back until after 4 a.m. Later …..



PIRELLI TIRE UPDATE

It was a very long day, with most of the personnel only leaving the paddock as dawn was breaking. The first session was red flagged after eight minutes when a manhole cover lifted off the track surface, damaging the cars of Carlos Sainz and Esteban Ocon and then was stopped completely to allow for a thorough track inspection and, where necessary, repairs. This meant the second session began at 2.30 am, a delay of two and a half hours, with running time extended by 30 minutes to make up for the lost track time. In addition, the FIA ruled that the teams' normal requirement to return two sets of tires after FP1 as per the Sporting Regulations, could now be postponed until two hours after the end of FP2.

Red was the dominant color when it came to compound use: the Soft completed 408 laps (54.11%), followed by the Medium (302, 40.05%), while the Hard only did 44 laps (5.84%), the latter used in FP2 by just Bottas, Tsunoda, Albon and Sargeant.

Simon Berra, Pirelli Chief Engineer said the following: "It was definitely an unusual first day, with one session reduced to almost nothing and the next one extended by 50%, along with permission granted to use all the sets of tires available to make up for the time lost in the first session. This meant we were able to get some useful initial indications which are important for the rest of the weekend, starting with how the track is evolving. As was entirely predictable, lap times tumbled down pretty quickly with every passing lap, even if we are still quite a long way off our simulation times, by around three to four seconds. Furthermore, we were able to check the speed of track evolution over a time period reasonably similar to a race distance, which highlights how conditions might change during the race itself, thus informing strategy and compound choices.

Looking at the split of laps completed between the Soft, Medium and Hard, it seems the last of these is being saved by several teams specifically for Saturday night, with the Medium also being very much in the running. Having said that, the Soft cannot be ruled out completely, precisely because of my earlier comment about track evolution. When assessing this, we must also take into account that much of the track is now open again to road traffic which is bound to lead to a quite significant reset in terms of the rubber laid down on the track surface.

Going into the Las Vegas round, we had two bugbears in mind: warm-up and graining. Honestly, as regards the first of those, today we didn't notice anything dramatic or unprecedented compared to what we have seen before in this discipline. As for the second, it was clearly significant, but still in line with what we have experienced at other tracks. Furthermore, we saw today how the graining tended to progressively reduce as the cars did more and more laps, a sign that the situation could change, possibly quite significantly, by Saturday night, opening up opportunities that maybe today seemed unlikely."

