THE OFFICIALS NEWSLETTER
UNITED STATES

WELCOME

Here we are again at Circuit of the Americas for the 2024 Formula 1 Pirelli United States Grand Prix. So welcome one and all. This is the 12th Grand Prix for COTA since 2012, as 2020 was Covid-canceled. Having done so many USGPs here at COTA, we're in a rhythm now.

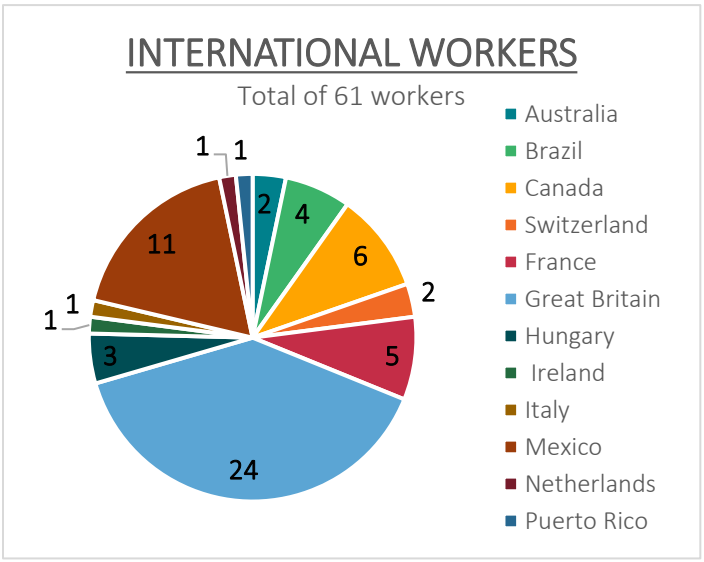
This year our volunteer Marshal numbers, about 550, are about the same as last year, give or take. Of those 61 are from foreign countries including far away places such as several countries in Europe. The furthest away might be the two from Australia, which is about 8500 miles/16,600 klicks away. We're looking forward to seeing those country flags displayed.

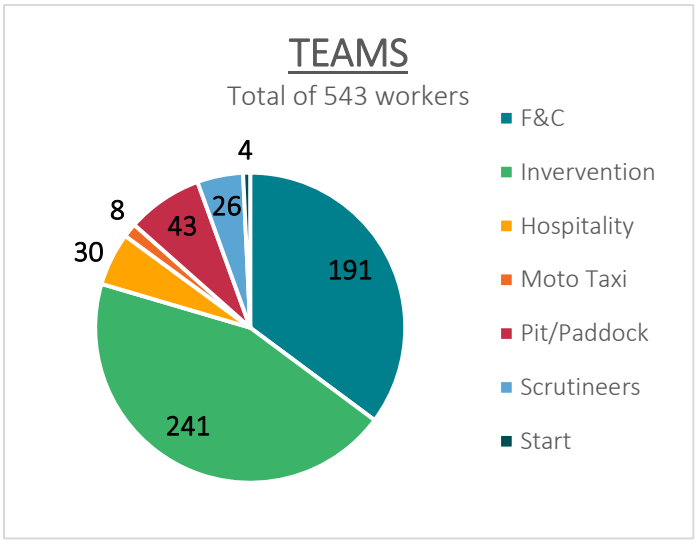
COTA has basically seven volunteer Marshal teams, of which Intervention is the largest, with 241-Chief Don Erickson. Flagging & Communication is second with 191-Chief Bryan Gregory. Pit/Paddock/Grid has 43 with Chief Nadja Pollard. Hospitality takes care of the Marshals with 30 volunteers, with Chief Katherine Altmeyer. Scrutineers, with Chief Adam Gavalla, now has 26, down from its former high of 31. The reduction is F1 mandated, as more Tech tasks are being done by Tech tools. Moto Taxi, aka Boundary Riders, are eight in numbers, all on motorcycles circling the 22 turns around the 3.41-mile track, with a 133 feet elevation change. The new Chief this year is Jeff Brooks. The smallest crew is Start, with four, stationed at each end of the pit lane. Chief Jamey Osborne.

This year, unlike last year, both of the F1 championships (Driver and Constructor) are still being hotly contested, so we'll have some exciting racing to watch. And the track was repaved and is ready to race. This year's schedule will have a F1 Sprint race on Saturday and the main attraction Sunday afternoon. In addition to F1, we'll have Porsche Carrera Cup, the Masters Historic Series and the Masters Endurance Legends Series.

For entertainment the Workers will have free admission to two concerts: Slim Shady opening for Sting on Friday night, and Eminem on Saturday night.

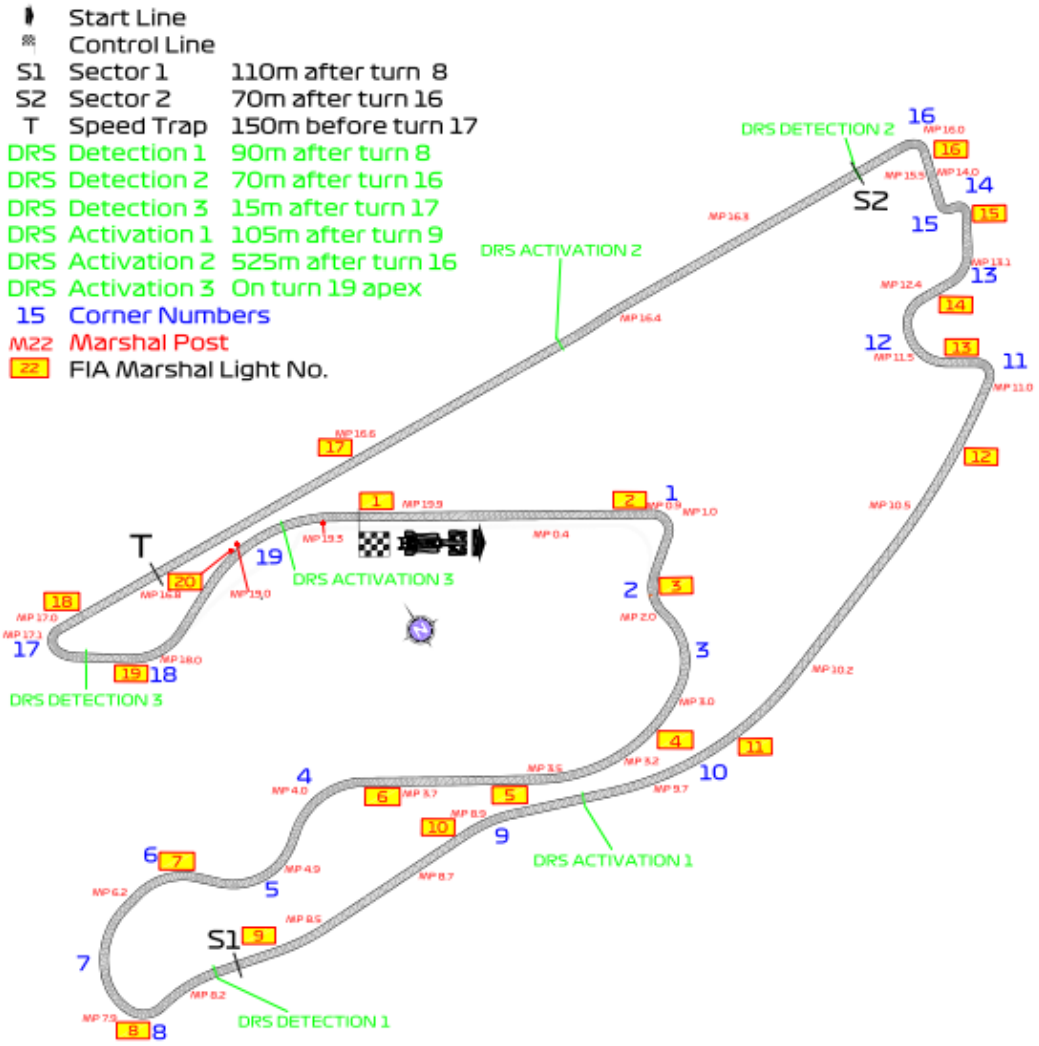
The weather promises to be warm, so don't forget to hydrate.





The newsletter is again digital, per FIA policy. It is found on the Sportity app and also on the F4 US Championships website, where it has been for some time, thanks to Sydney Davis Yagel. The newsletter staff are returning veterans: Photographers Pablo Matamoros, Nico Matamoros, and Ron Searle, who also handles layout; and Lynne Huntting, journalist and editor.

CIRCUIT MAP



F1 SCHEDULE

Friday	P1:	12:30 – 13:30	Sprint Qualifying:	16:30 – 17:14
Saturday	Sprint:	13:00 – 13:30	Qualifying:	17:00 – 18:00
Sunday	Race:	14:00 – 16:00		

THE RACE

Number of laps: 56 Track length: 5.513 km (3.42 miles) Race length: 308.405 33 km (191.5 miles)
Lap Record: 1:36:169 (Charles Leclerc 2019)

TRACK CHANGES FOR 2024

Following last year's race the track has been resurfaced. Some of the track was 12 years old. Hopefully the resurfacing should help solve the bumps problem which many drivers had complained about last year.

Resurfacing presented an opportunity to address the other main problem of track limits/cutting corners. This has been addressed in multiple ways. On the inside of Turns 6, 13, 14 and 15, the asphalt verges have been narrowed and replaced with turf. Cameras have been installed in "strategic places" to help policing. At the exit of Turn 11, the tight left-hander on to the back straight, which had previously been an asphalt run-off area has now been fitted with a resin-bound gravel filled insert. This "experiment" is viewed as a balance between the requirements of F1 and MotoGP. Finally, some kerbs have been replaced around the track and drainage added to improve wet conditions.

F1 2024 REVIEW

Thanks to Michael Shaw of the Australian Newsletter team for this review

It was the best of lap times, it was the worst of lap times for Red Bull Racing. That paraphrasing of 'A Tale of Two Cities' sums up the 2024 F1 championship so far.

The year started with Max Verstappen continuing his winning ways with Ferrari, McLaren and Mercedes fighting it out behind; but then things started to falter. By mid-season, there was almost nothing between the four teams. And now in the run home, we're seeing McLaren slightly on top with Red Bull mixing it with Ferrari, and Mercedes nipping at their heels – but really, this order can, and has, changed from race to race.



Before we move on to the review of the season so far, we must acknowledge the big news announcements for next year.

Lewis Hamilton has decided to go from silver to red in a move to Ferrari, alongside Charles Leclerc, in what many would consider the strongest driver pairing on the grid.

Carlos Sainz will bounce over into Williams, replacing Logan Sargeant who was himself bumped mid-season for rookie sensation Franco Colapinto.

Daniel Ricciardo is out of Visa Cash App RB and Liam Lawson was announced as his replacement for next year as well as the rest of this season.



And the biggest news is that Red Bull designer, Adrian Newey, who essentially masterminded Red Bull's recent dominance (and more,) is on his way to Aston Martin. He won't have any real influence over their 2025 car but the new 2026 rules could see the green team move up the grid and challenge for the title.

Now onto the review…
We started in Bahrain where Red Bull were business as usual with Max Verstappen dominating, followed by Sergio Perez. Ferrari was a distant third ahead of the Mercedes and McLarens.

In Saudi Arabia the next week, fans around the world started to fear it would be another year of domination with the same result at the top. The biggest difference on the podium was that Leclerc replaced Sainz, who had been replaced by Oliver Bearman due to appendicitis.

When F1 travelled down under, Red Bull's armor started to crack. After securing another pole position, Verstappen only made it a handful of laps into the race before his rear brakes caught on fire and he was forced to retire. Ferrari, led by a recovered Sainz, completed a 1-2 finish with Lando Norris starting to show some of McLaren's season-long development strides. Mercedes, meanwhile, had Hamilton drop out early and then George Russell had a large crash and rollover, leaving him mid-track while the field completed the last lap of the race.

Japan appeared to be a return to normality within the Red Bull team, with Verstappen and Perez in front, followed by the two Ferraris. Norris was fifth and Fernando Alonso finally showed a hint of speed with sixth, ahead of the Mercedes.

A return to China brought the first Sprint race. Last minute rain mixed up the grid, with Lando Norris alongside Hamilton, though Verstappen was still able to sneak through to win. Hamilton took second, splitting the Red Bulls. Qualifying for the Grand Prix was then a huge let down for Lewis, as he went from second in the Sprint to second last on the grid, while the Red Bulls stayed up front. In the race, Verstappen cruised to an easy victory, with some light chaos behind – Norris took advantage to steal second but his teammate, Piastri, suffered a Lance Stroll from behind when he wasn't paying attention to those in front slowing down.

The first visit to America in Miami also brought another first. In the second Sprint of the year, Daniel Ricciardo shocked everyone, including himself, to qualify and finish in fourth place behind the Red Bulls and Leclerc's Ferrari. Norris, meanwhile, crashed out when he was an innocent victim of a clash between Hamilton, Alonso and Stroll. But how quickly things change. In the Grand Prix, Verstappen was leading easily until a small mistake when he took out a bollard and damaged his car. A Virtual Safety Car period brought some into the pits and some slightly after, leaving Lando in the lead after Piastri and Sainz ahead of him then pitted. Shortly after, a full Safety Car was needed after Kevin



Magnussen and Logan Sargeant collided, and Norris took full advantage, pitting for tires and retaining the lead ahead of Verstappen. Norris held off Max long enough for the damage on the Red Bull to wear out his tires prematurely, allowing Lando his first victory.

F1 visited Europe for the first time in 2024 with the Formula 1 MSC Cruises Gran Premio del Made in Italy e dell'Emilia-Romagna 2024, aka Imola. Verstappen won, but Norris was nipping at his heels, showing how far McLaren have come even without lucky timing. Leclerc was third and Oscar Piastri fourth in the second McLaren.

Monaco brought tears to the Monegasques. Charles Leclerc finally won his home Grand Prix with a quality display throughout the weekend, including pole position. The result was initially overshadowed by a huge crash between Perez, Nico Hulkenberg and Magnussen on the first lap, bringing out a red flag with debris strewn across the track. Piastri took his first podium of the season, and Carlos Sainz had the luck as he'd received a puncture on the first start; but was able to return to his original position due to the timing of the red flag. Alex Albon's ninth place finish was also Williams' first points of the season.

The Canadian Grand Prix saw a rare feat with George Russell taking pole position with the exact same lap time as Verstappen, with George having set the time first. Ricciardo again surprised with a fifth placed grid slot. In the race, Russell led early in damp conditions, then Norris took the lead just in time for a Safety Car, which allowed others to change tires before he could, dropping him back down to third. From there, both Ferraris retired (engine for Leclerc, being spun by Albon for Sainz) Perez crashed, Yuki Tsunoda crashed and the two Mercedes had one of the battles of the season. Verstappen eventually won out ahead of Norris and Russell.

Barcelona had McLaren again showing their speed with a pole for Norris; but Lando wasn't able to hold off Verstappen in the race. The Mercedes and Ferrari created a Noah's Ark style situation behind.

Red Bull's home race in Austria was controversial. It started as other recent races had, with Verstappen and the two McLarens fighting hard at the front in the third Sprint race, with Mercedes and Ferrari watching from nearby. In the Grand Prix, Verstappen and Norris were fighting too hard. During the second round of pitstops, Verstappen had a slow stop allowing Norris to close in; and for a number of laps, they almost collided at Turn 3, until they finally did. Norris was forced to retire, with Verstappen receiving a penalty, but recovering to sixth place. Russell benefited from the melee to record his second ever victory ahead of Piastri and Sainz.

The British Grand Prix would require its own story to fully cover it. Mercedes locked out the front row in a surprise result and they both led away, Russell ahead of Hamilton. Hamilton took the lead on Lap 18 and on Lap 27, rain began falling and drivers started to pit for intermediate tires, though too late for Piastri; and he dropped to the back of the leading group. Russell retired shortly after, leaving Hamilton in the lead. Late in the race, the track dried and Hamilton pitted for softs, Verstappen for hards and Norris to mediums. Norris faded and was passed by Verstappen, who tried to catch Hamilton; but wasn't able to make it and Lewis won his first race in over two years.

The Hungarian Grand Prix provided another new winner as Oscar Piastri won his first non-Sprint F1race ahead of teammate Norris. Norris had led in the middle, when the team pitted him earlier than Piastri to protect Lando from Hamilton. Team orders then dominated as Norris reluctantly gave up the lead, allowing Oscar to win. Verstappen faded to fifth, showing how far the Red Bull had fallen in pace compared to the competition.



Verstappen then showed his class by easily being fastest in qualifying in Belgium, though he took an engine penalty, dropping his starting position to 11th. Max recovered in the race to fourth as Mercedes appeared to take a 1-2 until, the then winner, Russell was disqualified for being underweight due to him taking an unusual one stop strategy in what was an extremely impressive drive. Hamilton benefited with another win, with Piastri just behind.

The Dutch Grand Prix had utter domination by one driver but, for a change, not Max Verstappen. Lando Norris blew away the field with pole and the biggest winning margin of the season. Verstappen kept the home fans happy with second place and Leclerc third.

The Italian Grand Prix saw yet another home win, this time for Ferrari. Leclerc started fourth but took a strategy gamble with stopping only once compared to everyone else's twice. He masterfully kept his tires alive with consistency being the key, where he was metronomic in his lap times. Piastri, who'd overtaken pole-sitter Norris on the first lap, finished second ahead of his teammate.

Azerbaijan once more provided some action. Oscar Piastri won his second Grand Prix, controlling the pace at the front with a little help from his teammate, holding up Sergio Perez during the pitstop cycle. Leclerc pushed Piastri but was unable to get past, and started to fade late allowing Sainz and Perez to catch up. On the second last lap, chaos ensued when Perez, Sainz and Leclerc squabbled, eventually having Perez and Sainz collide in a cloud of carbon fiber. Norris missed out in qualifying, starting 15th, but drove through the field to fourth and gained a few more points on Verstappen. McLaren now led the Constructors' Championship for the first time since 2014.



And finally Singapore had Norris win his third race of the year ahead of Verstappen. For the first time, there was no Safety Car in this race and that statistic was, unfortunately, the most exciting part of the race. But it looked beautiful under the Singapore lights. And then the lights went out on the F1 career of Daniel Ricciardo, who turned the fastest race lap on his way out the door.

So here we are in Texas. McLaren are leading for teams, but Verstappen is still holding on to a decent points lead over Norris. One mistake could see them close up to almost nothing. All the teams will be bringing upgrades to try to defeat the others; but it will be hard for them to catch the McLarens, who are the development kings over the last couple of years.

Let's see who Sprints to victory!

















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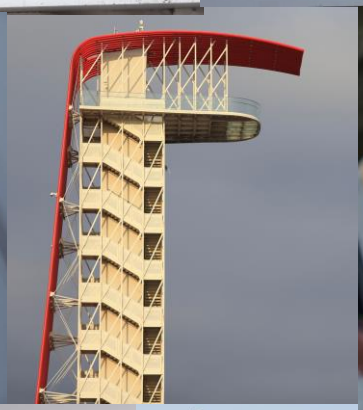






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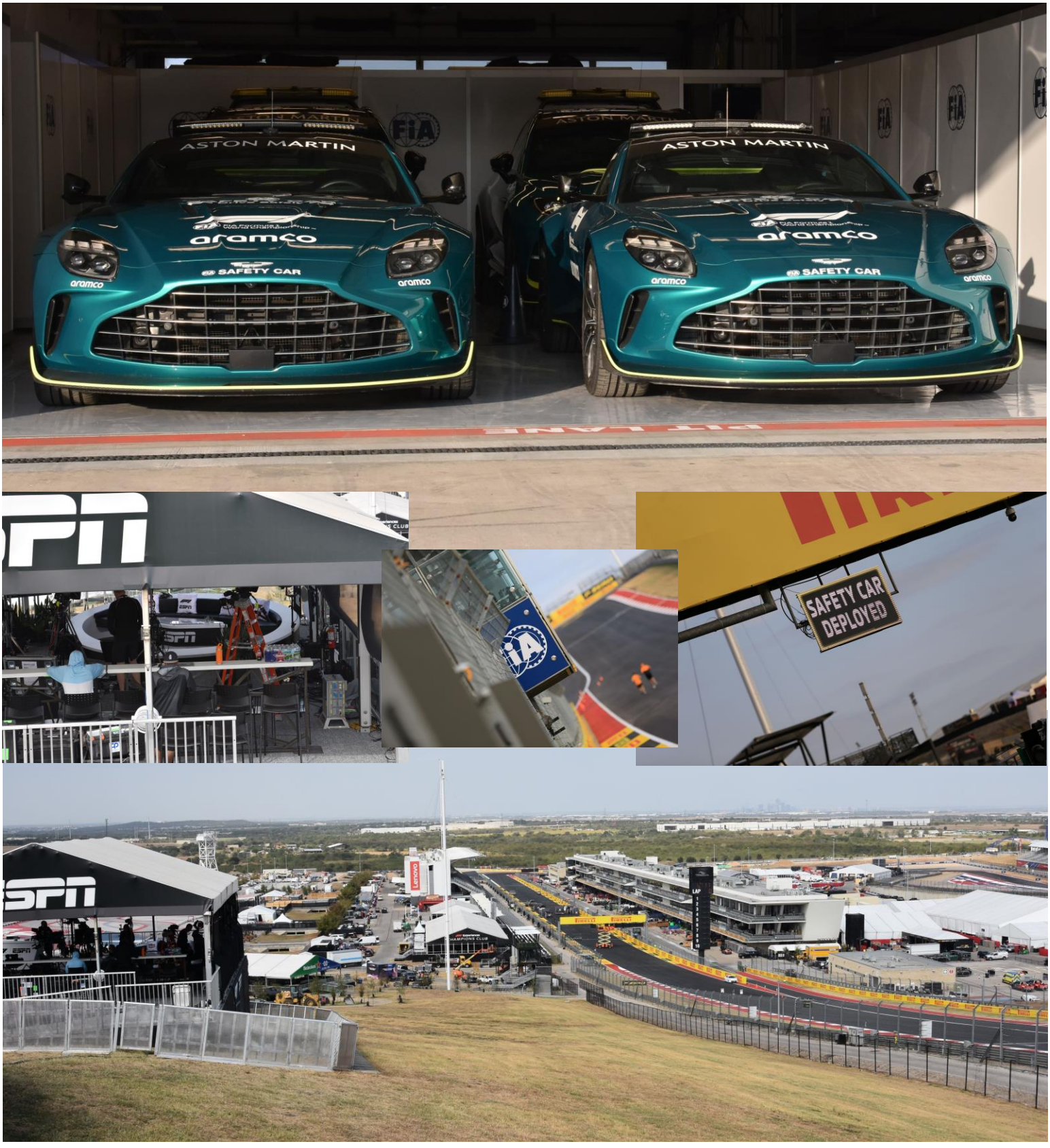
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