THE OFFICIALS NEWSLETTER
MIAMI

F1 REVIEW (*article by Michael Shaw*)

It's a new year and it's almost a new Formula 1. There have been a lot of changes to the cars since we were last here.

Starting with the easy part, the cars are a little smaller and a little lighter, with 100mm taken away from the width of the cars. Additionally, the floor area of the car is a smaller space but the diffuser at the back of the car is larger. The reason it is larger is that all of the tunnels in the cars have been removed and we're back to flat bottomed cars.

This means that there is a rather large reduction in downforce. To compensate for this change, active aerodynamics have returned where the front and rear wings are able to flatten in what is being called Straight Mode, where this is allowed to be activated in designated areas of the track.

The tires have been narrowed too, as well as general safety improvements such as updated impact structures to help if there is a crash, as demonstrated by Oliver Bearman in Suzuka.

The biggest changes have been applied to the drivetrain. Increased battery size and deployment systems have been designed to give a 50/50 split between the combustion engine and electrical systems, up from about a 80/20 split before.

The engines are able to charge the battery up to improve corner exit speed, though as has been seen at the end of long straights, there can be a reduction in car speed; but they're only a few seconds off the lap times of the previous generation cars. This process is called super-clipping.

Between the last race in Suzuka and here in Miami there have been some tweaks to the limits, where less energy can be recovered which should, especially in qualifying, improve how on the limit the cars look.
As a result of all the updates, there have been a few changes to procedures, with a short period before the red lights come on at race start being the most obvious.

For the teams, there has only been a little bit of a shakeup with one exception – Cadillac!

Cadillac has entered F1 with their own car and plans to have their own engine in a few years – for now they're using a Ferrari. The first few races have shown some promise, but there's still a long way to go before they're truly competitive. They've hired veterans Sergio Perez and Valtteri Bottas to help develop the car.

Audi has also entered for the first time since the World Championship was started, but they have purchased the Sauber team to do so. Audi do have their new engine in place and have performed better than expected. They have the largest turbo on their engine, which is a little bit of a problem at the starts, but works well once they're underway.

Aston Martin have continued with Fernando Alonso and Lance Stroll behind the wheel, but behind the scenes is very different. Adrian Newey has brought his genius to the team to design the car and Honda has joined to supply the power. Unfortunately it hasn't gone well so far. Large vibrations have hampered progress, as it has been breaking the cars; and they had enough trouble finishing races, let alone score any points.

Williams were one of the first teams to move from their 2025 campaign and design their 2026 cars, but it hasn't worked. There's been some promising results at times from their drivers, Carlos Sainz and Alex Albon, and also very little consistency. The team are scrambling to work out where they need to improve, so expect a lot of updates to arrive for this team.

Racing Bulls see the return of Kiwi Liam Lawson and gain rookie Arvid Lindblad behind the wheel. For their power, they have now got Ford working with Red Bull Powertrains. Despite all of the changes, they're continuing to run in the middle of the mid-field.

F1 REVIEW (continued)

Red Bull Racing have also picked up Ford support. The Ford engine is reportedly one of the better ones available, but the results haven't backed this up. Max Verstappen has struggled to get much speed out of the car, and his teammate, Isack Hadjar, has broken the recent curse by running reasonably close to the 4-time World Champion.

Alpine has been a bit of a surprise so far this season. Moving from Renault to Mercedes for their motive force has meant they've lost their boat anchor holding them back. Pierre Gasly will be familiar, but their second driver, Franco Colapinto, will be having his first racing visit to Miami.

Haas has also been racing above its means, as the smallest team on the grid. They've been able to score some excellent results as others have faltered. Esteban Ocon and Oliver Bearman have continued to impress with raw speed in a car that appears to be quite versatile.

Defending champions, McLaren, have slipped off the top. They've had a huge number of technical issues, which meant that Oscar Piastri has failed to start two races, including his home race in Melbourne, while Lando Norris hasn't had much better luck. When the car works, they've shown some promise, including a podium in Japan for Oscar.

A rejuvenated Ferrari has gotten a good start to the season – the only thing better has been their race starts, where they've been able to leap ahead of everyone almost every time. Charles Leclerc and Lewis Hamilton have both been enthusiastic about the performance of the car and where they think it will go from here.

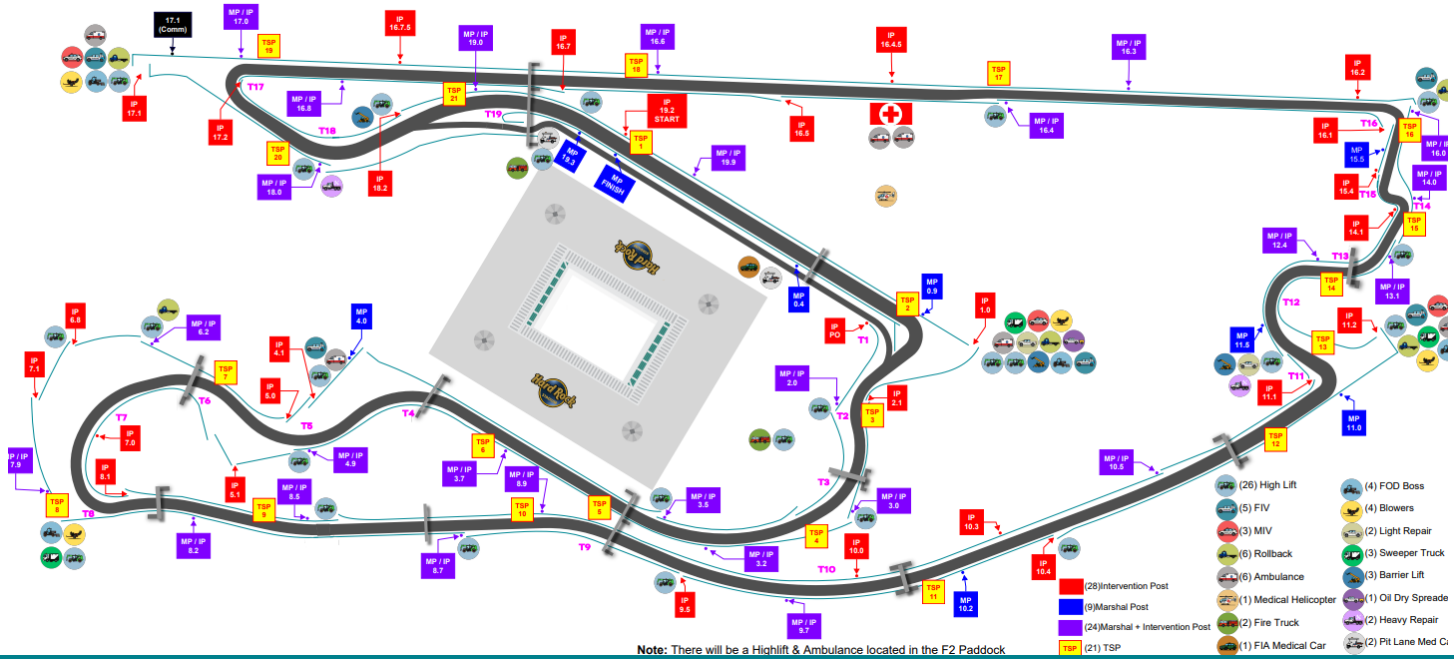
Despite everything written above, Mercedes-AMG has been a step above everyone else. They've won every race so far, two for young Kimi Antonelli and one for pre-season favorite, George Russell. The team has blitzed the results across qualifying and racing, with only some minor issues hampering one car or the other, keeping the team from complete domination.

With a month long break now ending, we will see what the teams have been able to do to improve their cars compared to their competitors. Will there be a change at the top, or will Mercedes escape further up the road?

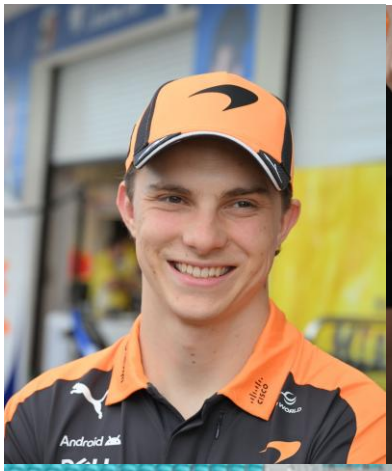
Let's find out

Article by Michael Shaw who also contributed yesterday's F2 Review

F1 MIAMI GP 2026 CIRCUIT MAP- MASTER MAP



Note: There will be a Highlift & Ambulance located in the F2 Paddock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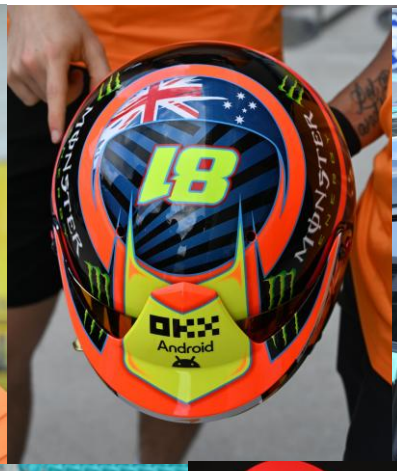
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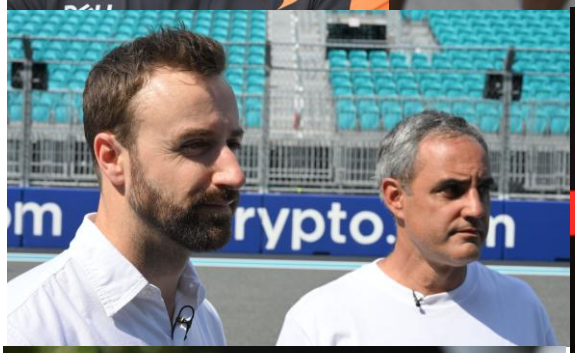
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TGR
HAAS F1 TEAM


AMG
PETRONAS
FORMULA 1 TEAM


0824-MIA


TWG


CADILLAC
FORMULA 1 TEAM


41
Red Bull
VISA
HUGO
Mobil
Ford
RACING
PIRELLI




0031-MIA
DEPUTY CHIEF
PIT LANE
MARSHAL


0096-MIA
SCRUTINEER
F1
0088-MIA
SCRUTINEER
F1
DHL
MSC
CRUISES
0511-MIA
FLAG
MARSHAL
COURSE
ACCESS
IN CASE OF
INCLEMENT WEATHER,
SEEK SHELTER AT
HARD ROCK STADIUM
IFS
TWG
Claro
JIM BEAM




0875-MIA
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0798-MIA


0747-MIA
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COURSE


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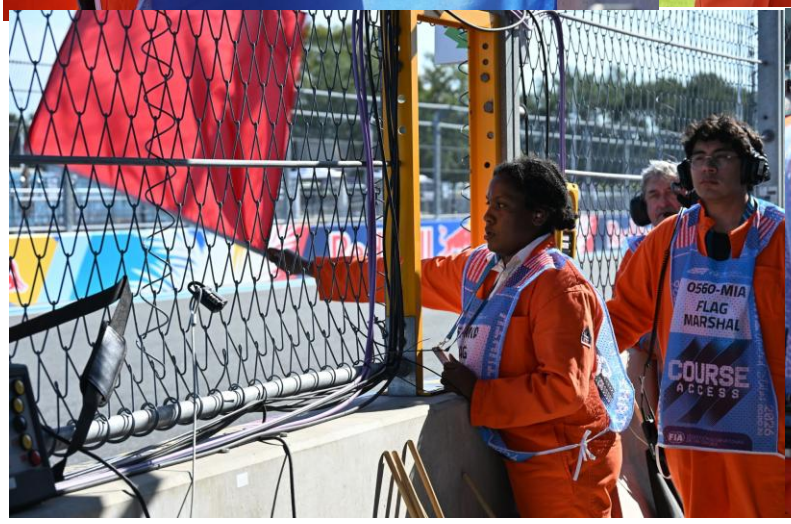
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Miami
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0035-MIA
PIT MARSHAL
2026
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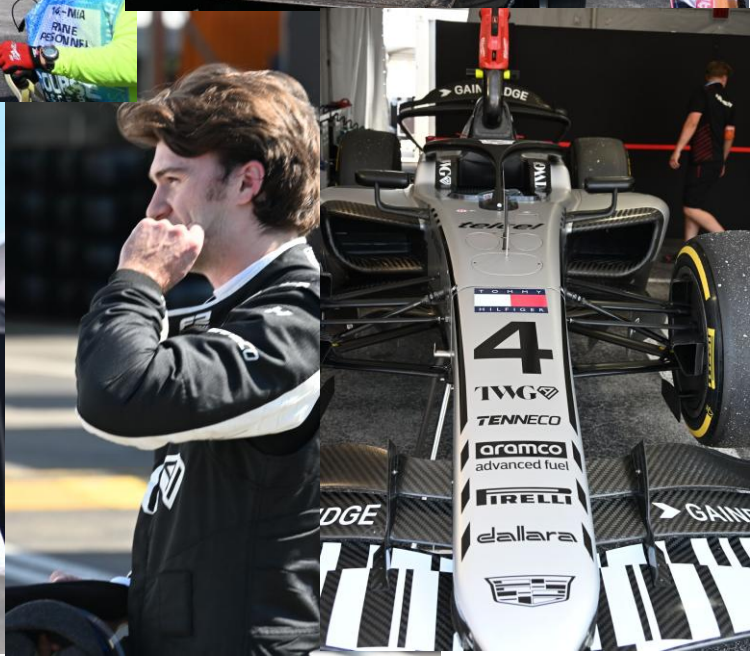
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TWG
TENNECO
aramco
advanced fuel
PIRELLI
dallara