THE OFFICIALS NEWSLETTER
USGP

WELCOME

Here we are again, for the 14th running of the United States Grand Prix at Circuit of the Americas. COTA remains second only to Watkins Glen for the number of F1 races hosted in the United States. The Glen had 20, while COTA is catching up with 14, a record of which to be proud. As you visit the track, you will notice a few changes since last year. Not of the actual track, per se, but of infrastructure around the track, The operative word is More! There's the massive new Club House and Gondola at Turn 1, so now fans can get a sky ride from T1 into the paddock and back. There's the newly opened COTA Land by Turns — which allegedly has its own noise limits.

This year we come from far and wide, more from Texas than anywhere else, but as far away as Azerbaijan, no doubt the longest travel trip. We have some graphs showing the diversity which staffs this event. Overall, the last numbers had us with 505 marshals overall, with 433 from the United States and 72 from elsewhere.

This year at COTA, we have some staffing changes. Kelly Messier is now the F&C Chief, and David Thompson is now Chief of Intervention. Kim Kuzma McFarland is Race Chair, with Ciera daCorte as Assistant Race Chair, and z Jessica Althoff as unofficial Aide de camp. Our other Chiefs are Roy Spielmann - Fire Chief; Nadja Pollard - Pit/Grid Chief; Adam Gavalla - Chief Scrutineer; Jeff Brooks - Driver Recovery Chief; Jamey Osborne - Chief Starter; and Katherine Altmeyer - Hospitality Chief.

One new thing this weekend is the app which keeps all the marshals informed of that which pertains to their speciality as well as the event overall. Replacing Sportity is GoRace, which was designed by one of us, marshal Kevin Taylor, who is working Turn 20 this year as a Chief Post Marshal. There will be a feature on him tomorrow telling of his journey to create and launch this app. Well done, Kevin! In the meantime, enjoying being kept up to date on all things marshal, including this newsletter.

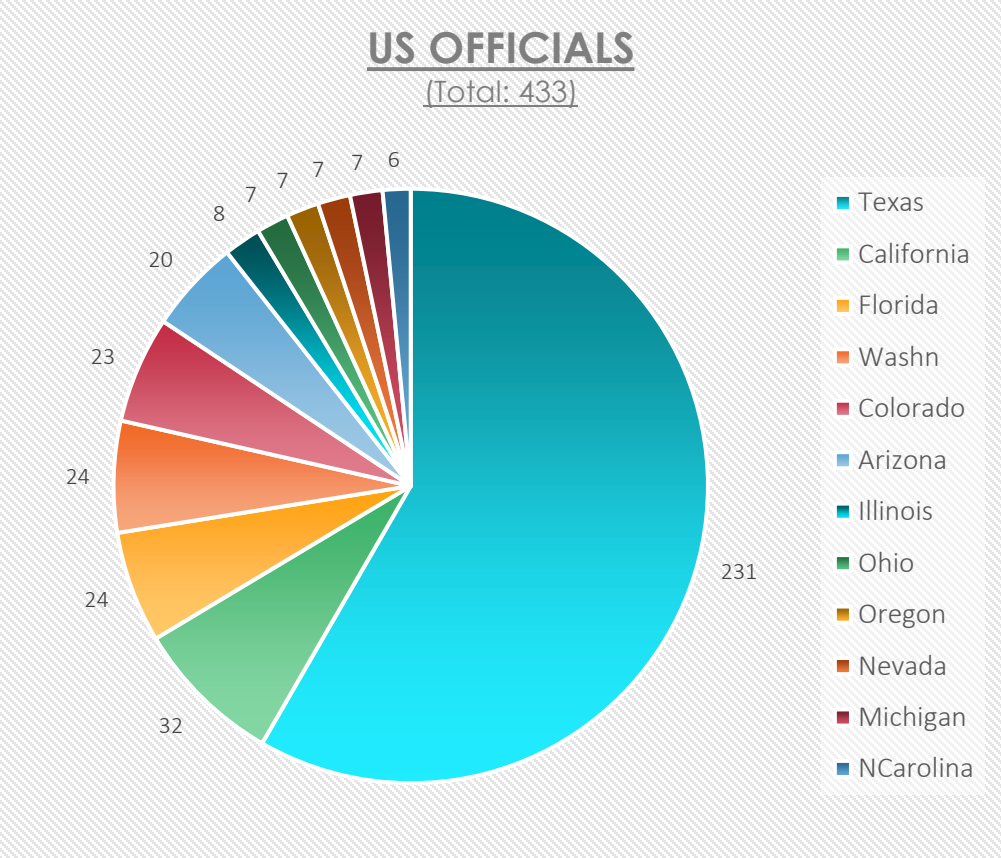
For an update on the F1 circus, the race for the championship, and how the teams are progressing with their new mandated changes this year, we have our annual article from Michael Shaw, the Aussie photographer who keeps close tabs on the teams. He worked with the Australian version of the Officials Newsletter for many years and has worked here at COTA on our inaugural newsletter.

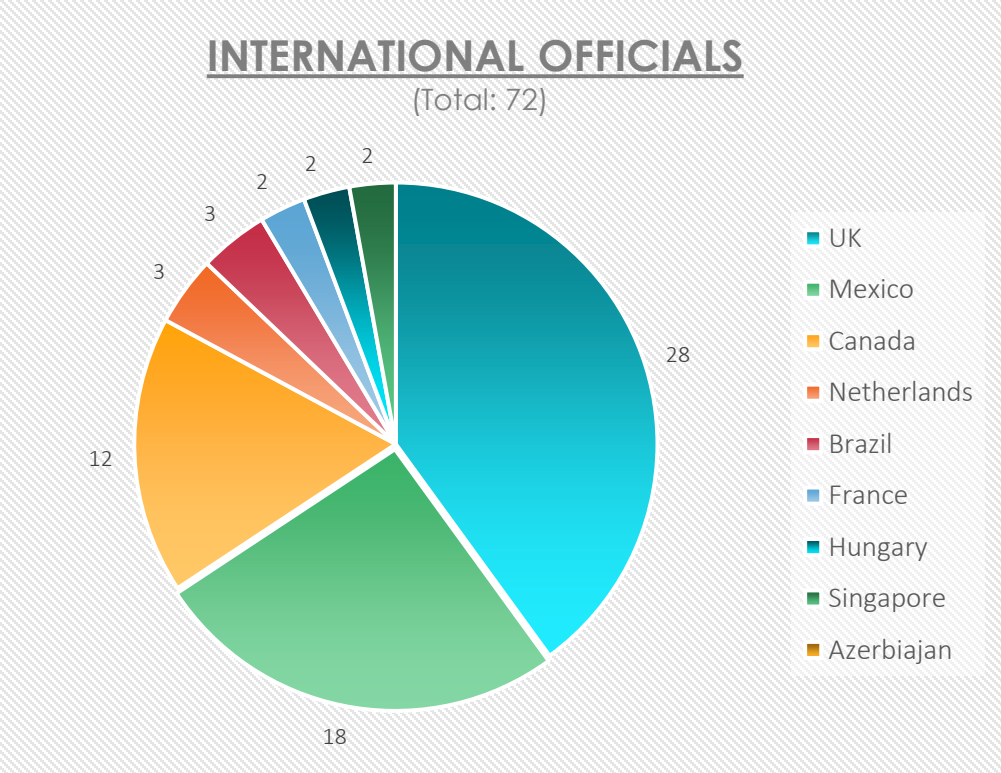
The weather is forecast to be warm to hot, so now is the time to start hydrating and keep it up throughout the weekend.

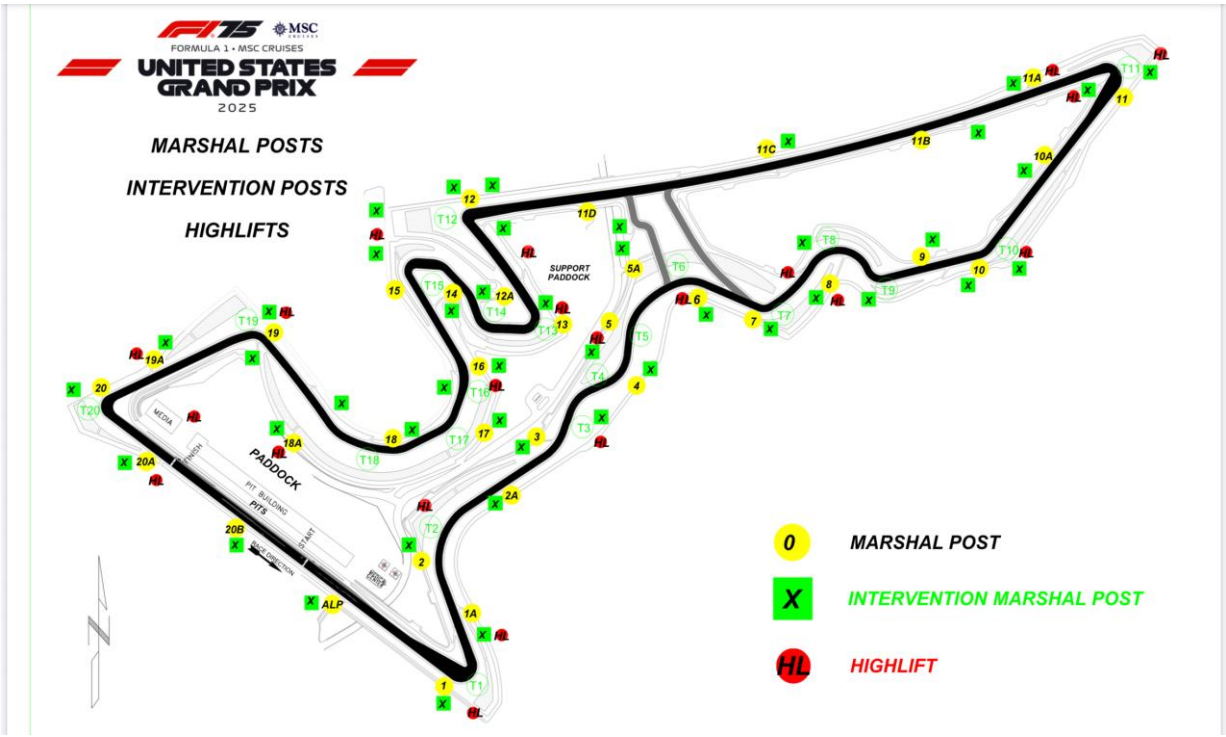
We have two support series with us again at COTA, the F1 Academy and the Masters Historic Challenge. So a blast from the past and our future drivers and teams all in one racy weekend.

As has been the FIA practice for the past few years, more digital and less paper-generated information. The Officials Newsletter will be found on the GoRace app as well as on this link. Our thanks, as always, go out to Sydney Davis Yagel, for facilitating this link, which has also maintained an archive of all the Officials Newsletters at the three venues.

Our Newsletter staff consists of veteran photographers Nico Matamoros, Pablo Matamoros, and Ron Searle who also is our Newsletter designer and layout artiste. Lynne Huntting is the founder, writer and editor of the Officials Newsletter. The boys will be roaming, trying to photograph everyone. Smile and say cheese!







TRACK FACTS

First GP	2012	
Number of Laps	56	
Circuit Length	5.513km	
Race Distance	308.728km	
Lap Record	1:36.169	Charles Leclerc 2019

SCHEDULE

FP 1	Friday Oct 23	12:30pm - 1:30pm
FP 2	Friday Oct 23	4:00pm - 5:00pm
FP 3	Saturday Oct 24	12:30pm - 1:30pm
Qualifying	Saturday Oct 24	4:00pm - 5:00pm
Race	Sunday Oct 25	3:00pm - 5:00pm

PAST COTA USGP WINNERS

Lewis Hamilton	'12, '14, '15, '16, '17
Max Verstappen	'21, '22. '23, 25
Sebastian Vettel	'13
Kimi Raikkonen	'18
Valterri Bottas	'19
Charles Leclerc	'24



F1 UPDATE REVIEW (by Michael Shaw)

Welcome to the US Grand Prix. Not wishing to spoil anything, but there is a chance that the World Championship could be sealed on Sunday. Yep, Kimi Antonelli could secure enough points if results fall his way, which wouldn't be the first time this season. So how did we get here…

This year has seen the introduction of new rules for Formula 1. I'm sure most of you reading this are up on what's happened, so here's a quick recap for the rest.

Power now comes half from a battery and half from a combustion engine. This has created a little controversy and some yo-yo racing while everyone worked out how they ran and raced. On top of this, the cars have been updated – they're smaller and lighter. It's not a lot but it all helps. Additionally, there's now active bodywork – the front and rear wings can be moved in designated zones around the track, usually on two or three longer straights on each track.

Crazy back and forth wasn't restricted to the racing, either, with a new track in Madrid and the late return of an old friend with the Bahrain GP moving to Malaysia temporarily. Fun fact, it's the fourth race to be named for a country it wasn't held in, with the previous races being San Marino (at Imola,) Switzerland (at Dijon,) and Luxembourg (at the Nurburgring.)

Cadillac has decided to join the F1 circus and have had a tough introduction. Brake issues have plagued most of their season, but it has been promising with their veteran drivers, Valtteri Bottas and Sergio Perez occasionally sneaking ahead of their rivals. Look out for the black and white cars at the back of the pack.





Aston Martin changed over to having Honda supply its engines, and Adrian Newey designing their cars. Just a shame that nothing has come together well, and they've had a torrid season so far. The car vibrated too much in pre-season, had trouble finishing races, and was just generally slow. Updates have improved the car to the point where they're now on the edge of scoring points most races, but COTA will not be kind to their powertrain.



Williams promised much by starting to design its 2026 car very early; but unfortunately the results haven't matched the aims. Their performance hasn't been great, but there have been some much needed updates that have improved their position on the grid. Alex Albon & Carlos Sainz have both been pushing as hard as they can, sometimes a little too hard, with results hard to come by.



Audi has bought out Sauber to return to Grand Prix racing for the first time since 1939, when they were entered as Auto Union. They have been doing better than most people expected, with some surprise results and generally being near the front of the midfield. Veteran Nico Hulkenberg, has lived up to his reputation, while Gabriel Bortoleto has been able to show off his talent with some excellent drives.



Haas was hoping to be able to leap up the standings with the new regulations. Instead they have been rather inconsistent. Sometimes they've been at the front of the midfield, and other races, only just ahead of Aston Martin and Cadillac. Oliver Bearman has continued to display why Ferrari has him on retainer. Esteban Ocon hasn't been far behind, though he hasn't been able to hold onto his seat for next year.



Alpine have been the only team to truly take the fight to the top four, so much so that they were able to take pole in Monza in an incredible drive by Pierre Gasly. Franco Colapinto hasn't been slow either. They have, though, not had everything work well. Colapinto took both cars out in Baku with an error The long straight at COTA could help them sneak a few points.

Racing Bulls have been able to pick up the pieces left by those ahead. Liam Lawson was pinched by Red Bull Racing for a few races to replace the injured Isack Hadjar, when Yuki Tsunoda took over with a temporary return. Rookie Arvid Lindblad has shown why Red Bull have supported him all the way up to Formula 1 with strong results, hot on the heels of Lawson. Alpine have closed the gap a lot, so there's no guarantee of points for the second Ford squad.





Red Bull Racing appears to have won the development race this season. With a brand new engine partner in Ford, and Red Bull Powertrains making their first power unit, they have had some minor teething issues, but success at the same time. Early races were plagued more by car speed than power, as FIA testing showed the Ford unit was the best of all. Isack Hadjar has broken the alleged second seat curse at RBR by taking a couple of podiums, including in Monaco, though he did miss a few races due to a training injury. Max Verstappen has been Max Verstappen. Max has chased hard, pushed his team to improve the car, and this has resulted in him winning the last two races, and the R26 being potentially the fastest car on the grid now.



McLaren went from the highest of highs last year with both Driver and Constructor trophies to the lowest of lows, when only Lando Norris started in Melbourne and neither driver was able to start the race in China. When the car worked, it was fast. Multiple podiums in the first half of the year led to Norris winning two races in a row. Oscar Piastri has taken longer to get into a groove with the new rules, which don't appear to suit his driving style. McLaren will challenge for the podium, but a win might be beyond them this weekend.



Ferrari has had a revival of sorts. After being a bit at sea last year, they hit the ground running with both Charles Leclerc and Lewis Hamilton both showing improved confidence in the car, if not the team's decisions on track. Hamilton and Leclerc have both won a race; and another win in the US isn't beyond them if they can make the right moves.



Mercedes-AMG have dominated this year. It has designed the cars to be the best of everyone with these new regulations, both aerodynamics and power. They opened with a 1-2 in Melbourne for George Russell and Kimi Antonelli. Antonelli then won five in a row. Antonelli has won eight races in total, with Russell taking three wins. Every race has had at least one Mercedes driver on the podium. Red Bull are likely very slightly faster now but it took the whole year until now for them to catch up.

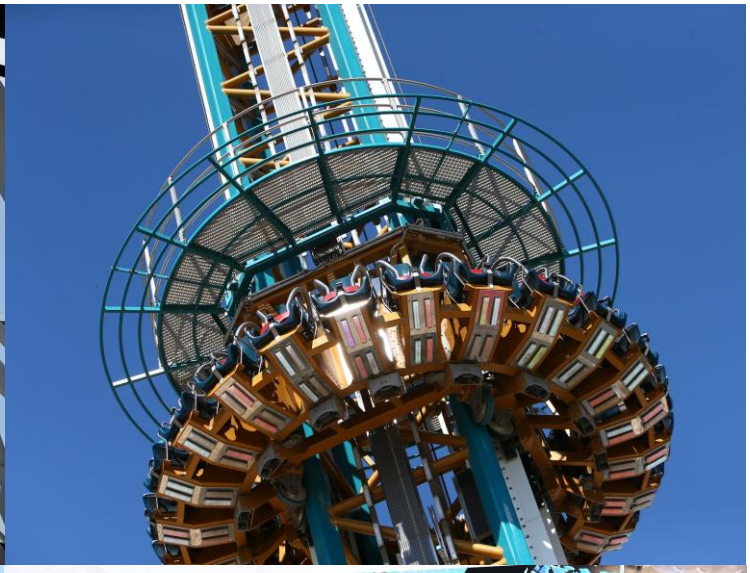
The US Grand Prix should be a good battle, with up to eight potential winners before we find out where everyone is, speed-wise, in practice.

Returning to our opening, if Antonelli wins the race, Russell finishes ninth or lower and Hamilton finishes fifth or lower, then Kimi becomes the youngest Formula 1 World Champion. The overall outcome is almost inevitable, it's just whether you'll be watching it happen in Texas.





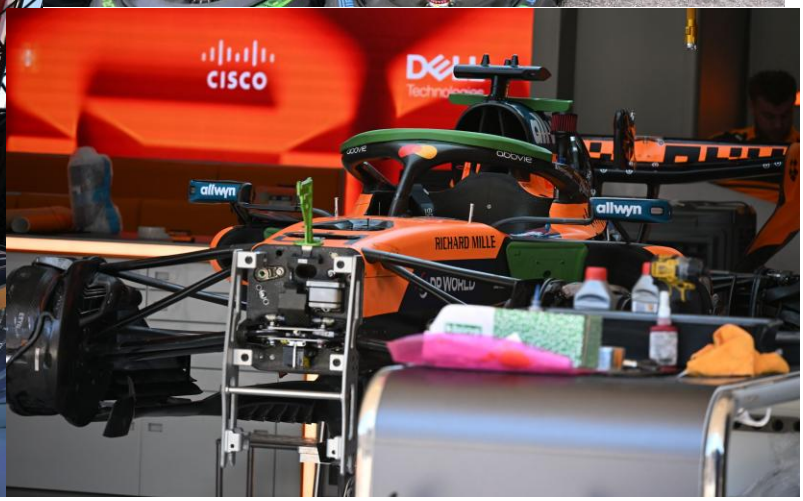





CIRCUIT OF THE AMERICAS
MSC
TIME
LAP


GODZILLA
MINUS ZERO


aws
Global AI Partner of FORMULA 1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