

British Drivers Celebrate China One-Two

Shanghai's Grand Prix was an F1 race that had a little bit of everything - from inclement weather at times, to mishaps and driver miscues, the race was certainly interesting and unpredictable.

When the checkered flag came down, two British drivers secured the top two spots on the victory podium. It was a banner day for Team McLaren in the fourth race of the 2010 Formula 1 racing season.

The Chinese Grand Prix takes place on the Shanghai International Circuit, in the Jiading District of the city. The circuit has a reputation for its high-speed straights that offer overtaking opportunities, which add to the drama of the race spectacle. This particular Formula 1 race is 56 Laps. The circuit length is 5.451 km, with the race distance being 305.066 km.

Saturday's Qualifying runs saw Sebastian Vettel of Red Bull Racing take the coveted pole position. His teammate, Australia's Mark Webber, took second spot on the starting grid. Fernando Alonso of Ferrari secured third spot on the grid in qualifying. Nico Rosberg of Mercedes GP held down fourth spot to start the race, with Jenson Button and Lewis Hamilton behind him.

Right off, the race began under light rain conditions. On top of that, an incident on the first lap caused the safety car to come out.

Real racing didn't begin again until Lap 6. The cause for the safety car was Force India's Vitantonio Liuzzi. His rear brakes grabbed on the first lap and this resulted in him crashing into Kamui Kobayashi and Sebastien Buemi. Consequently, all three drivers were out of the race before even getting a lap in.

When racing resumed Nico Rosberg had the lead for Mercedes GP over McLaren's Jenson Button. This resulted from other drivers making tire changes during the safety car period, which caused position changes. Hot on their tails was Renault's Robert Kubica.

As the race progressed, Lewis Hamilton of McLaren was making aggressive moves. First he and Sebastian Vettel had a pit row spat where each tried to outmaneuver each other to get back onto the circuit. They jostled with each other for position as they exited pit row side-by-side. Both received admonitions from the race stewards for dangerous driving.

After that, on Lap 12, Lewis Hamilton made his move to get past the Red Bulls of Vettel and Webber. He succeeded and was ready to move on up to challenge the leaders.

Meanwhile, the lead driver, Nico Rosberg was experiencing some misfortune due to heavier rain occurring. He miscued on Lap 19 and slid off in the final corner of the circuit. This was a surprise gift to Jenson Button, and he took advantage of it, acquiring the lead.

The rain caused drivers to change their tires to intermediate rain tires. Lap 21, however, saw the safety car out again. Jaime Alguersuari of Toro Rosso flew off the track and debris spread across the driving line on the circuit.

As a result, Jenson Button's lead over the other drivers was extinguished. All the drivers lined up behind the safety car waiting for the race to kick into high gear once again.

The race resumed a few laps later and at the race's midpoint, Jenson Button still held first spot. Nico Rosberg was close behind in second, with Robert Kubica and Lewis Hamilton third and fourth respectively. It wasn't long before the McLaren of Hamilton used its straightaway speed to catch Kubica and vault into third spot giving the race a real [buzz](#)

Now, Hamilton and Rosberg battled each other. Hamilton made a move and passed him; Rosberg responded in kind and reacquired second spot.

Then Hamilton reentered the pit lane to get a fresh set of rain tires. Rosberg pitted a lap later as did Button and Fernando Alonso. The result of these stops saw Lewis Hamilton emerge in second place, ready to grind out the rest of the race against his McLaren teammate Button.

Button had a good lead over Hamilton, however as his tires degraded, Hamilton pulled closer. The race was now McLaren versus McLaren for top spot on the podium. Hamilton pressed, but in the end, Jenson Button won by 1.5 seconds over his fellow Brit.

Nico Rosberg continued to drive consistently and cleanly for Mercedes GP and made the podium in third spot. He has performed well this season, and in this race placed seven spots ahead of his teammate Michael Schumacher. In the first four races this season, Schumacher has not attained a

podium position. His best result so far is a sixth at the Bahrain Grand Prix.

Ferrari's Fernando Alonso finished fourth in the Chinese GP. He caused heads to turn when he passed his teammate Felipe Massa as they headed for the pits on Lap 38. It remains to be seen how this will affect their relationship on the team for the rest of the season. Alonso has a reputation for these types of aggressive moves.

The Renault's of Robert Kubica and Vitaly Petrov performed well in this F1 race. They secured fifth and seventh place respectively for their team.

The Red Bull machines of Sebastian Vettel and Mark Webber couldn't hold the pace of this Formula 1 race. Therefore, they had to settle for sixth and eighth place respectively in this year's Chinese GP. Just ahead of Michael Schumacher, this past Sunday, was Ferrari's Felipe Massa, who took ninth spot.

Aside from the three aforementioned drivers who crashed out on Lap 1, several others didn't make it across the finish line.

Timo Glock of Virgin didn't even start the race due to pneumatics issues. His teammate Lucas di Grassi retired on Lap 8 with clutch trouble. Pedro de la Rosa of BMW Sauber retired on Lap 8 with engine problems. Jarno Trulli of Lotus retired on Lap 26 with hydraulics trouble.

With the 2010 Chinese Grand Prix now one for the record books, McLaren-Mercedes sits atop the Constructors Standings with 109 points. Second is Ferrari with 90 points. In third is RBR (Red Bull Racing)-Renault with 73 points.

In the Drivers Standings, last year's World Champion, McLaren-Mercedes' Jenson Button leads with 60 points. Nico Rosberg of Mercedes GP is second with 50 points. In third is Ferrari's Fernando Alonso with 49 points.

Now the Formula 1 caravan moves to Barcelona, Spain's Circuit de Catalunya, for the GP race on May 9, 2010. The teams have a few weeks to make the changes necessary to ensure they're competitive for the rest of 2010.

About the Author

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