

Lewis Hamilton Wins 2009 Singapore Grand Prix

A demanding street course and 30C temperatures at this year's Singapore Grand Prix combined to make this year's race an endurance test. In the end, Britain's Lewis Hamilton crossed the finish line to secure victory for McLaren-Mercedes.

Last year, Singapore held the first nighttime race in Formula 1 history. The Singapore Grand Prix races at night under extremely brilliant lighting that replicates daylight conditions. This is primarily for driver safety. Additionally, it is so the circuit shows up well on television for the millions of F1 fans who watch worldwide.

The Marina Bay Street Circuit is 5.073 kilometers in length. The race is 61 laps covering a distance of 309.316 kilometers. The course consists of public roads around the Marina Bay area. Of course, with public roads come some bumpy stretches and tight turns, which challenge the drivers. This street circuit accommodates more than 80,000 race fans in its environs.

The weekend began well for Lewis Hamilton in qualifying. He took the pole position on the Saturday, with Sebastian Vettel securing second. Nico Rosberg of Williams-Toyota took third place on the starting grid for Sunday's race. Mark Webber, Rubens Barrichello, Fernando Alonso, Timo Glock, and Nick Heidfeld rounded out the top eight starting grid positions.

Starting from the pole, Lewis Hamilton negotiated the course with focused driving from start to finish. The Singapore circuit is a race of many turns. The course's concrete walls always loom as drivers maneuver the intricacies of the track's layout at high speed. In addition, high temperatures, even at night, add to the drama of the circuit.

Hamilton himself admitted that the race was straightforward for him. He had no major issues to contend with on Sunday. One minor issue was his KERS system. KERS is short for Kinetic Energy Recovery System. The device recovers the kinetic energy present in the waste heat created by a racecar's braking process. The KERS stores the energy and converts it into power that a driver can use to boost acceleration during a race.

Hamilton's McLaren-Mercedes team had him make some adjustments and re-boot the KERS system in the car. This worked well for Hamilton. The acceleration boost at the start gave him a 10 car-length lead by the first turn. For the rest of the race, skillful driving and quality pit stops made the day problem free for Hamilton. He received ten points for his sterling effort.

Timo Glock of Toyota drove a clean race as well and secured second place and eight points. He passed Fernando Alonso on the first lap after failing to do so right at the start. He saw Alonso battling for position with Mark Webber and took advantage of this, nosing in and making the pass.

Fernando Alonso also ran a good race. He gradually brought himself up to third place after starting in sixth. This gave him a champagne-spraying podium position and six points. Sebastian Vettel finished fourth, although he had to treat his temperamental brakes gingerly throughout the race. He may have placed higher but received a penalty for speeding through the pit lane.

Jenson Button and Rubens Barrichello finished the Singapore Grand Prix fifth and sixth respectively. The Brawn-Mercedes teammates both ran sound strategic races to secure valuable points. In fact, Jenson Button was the fastest car at one point during the final stages of the race. However, with brake concerns he pulled back on his pace a bit. He was happy to garner fifth after starting 12th on the grid.

Heikki Kovalainen, Lewis Hamilton's McLaren teammate, finished the F1 race in seventh spot. He couldn't keep the pace of the frontrunners, although he managed to score two points to add to McLaren's points total for the day. Robert Kubica of BMW Sauber earned one point finishing in eighth position. Significant rear tire wearing marred his race day and was noted in quite a few post-race [articles](#)

For some drivers, this weekend's Grand Prix race was one to forget. Romain Grosjean of Renault retired on Lap 3 with brake problems. Mark Webber of Red Bull Renault also retired with brake problems on Lap 46. With this disappointing finish for Webber, he lost his chance to challenge for the Drivers' Championship.

Nick Heidfeld of BMW Sauber left the race on Lap 20. Adrian Sutil of Force India tried to pass Jaime Alguersuari but ended up hitting Heidfeld's car. Sutil subsequently retired on Lap 23 with car damage as well as brake trouble. Alguersuari's day ended too. Sebastien Buemi of Toro Rosso left the race when he ran into gearbox trouble.

There are three races left on the Formula 1 calendar. Going into the final stretch, Jenson Button leads the Drivers' Championship with 84 points. Rubens Barrichello is in second with 69 points. Sebastian Vettel sits in third place with 59 points.

For the Constructors' Championship, Brawn-Mercedes is in first place with 153 points. Red Bull-Renault is in second place with 110.50 points. Ferrari rounds out the top three with 62 points.

For Lewis Hamilton, the Singapore Grand Prix is another example of his returning to championship form. He now has two first-place finishes and one second-place finish in his last five races. Now he's heading to Japan with the rest of the Formula 1 fraternity. There, they'll move from nighttime racing to displaying their skills in the Land of the Rising Sun.

About the Author

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