

The 2009 Japanese F1

The world of Formula 1 racing is all about speed, and Sebastian Vettel took that notion to heart at this year's Japanese Grand Prix. Starting in qualifying, through to the race, controlled velocity was his key to victory. In the end, he stood atop the podium, garnering 10 points in the Japanese Grand Prix at the Suzuka circuit.

Race weekend in Japan involved intricate maneuverings on the figure 8 layout at the Suzuka International Racing Course. It's a unique course with an enormous theme park built alongside it. Eye-catching is the giant Ferris wheel, which dominates the panorama, looking down over the course.

The circuit length is 5.807 kilometers, and this particular F1 race is 53 laps. This brings the total race distance to 307.573 kilometers. The course has the tight Hairpin curve in its second sector. This sector also contains the sweeping Spoon Curve, which leads into a high-speed straight.

Push-the-envelope acceleration, strategic braking and precision negotiating of turns are what this circuit demands of drivers. This was especially evident in the Qualifying session. Several accidents marred these sessions.

In fact, German driver Timo Glock of the Toyota team was unable to race on Sunday. He injured his leg in a high-speed crash during the qualifying session. There is hope he will be ready for the next race on the F1 calendar.

Sebastian Vettel set a blistering pace in the qualifying runs to gain pole position. Right behind him on the starting grid was Jarno Trulli of Toyota, and Lewis Hamilton of McLaren-Mercedes.

Continuing his impressive qualifying driving, Sebastian Vettel held his lead at the start of the Japanese Grand Prix. He had pressure from Jarno Trulli and Lewis Hamilton as they approached the first turn. However, Vettel, with steely resolve held his line and did not allow the other two drivers to pass him.

From there he took further control of the race. He gradually built a gap between him and the pack. He ran a smooth race from start to finish never threatened seriously for the lead. The only glitch in an otherwise perfect race for Vettel was the yellow flag in the last part of the race.

The cause of the flag was Jaime Alguersuari of Toro Rosso who racked his car up. He went off course and smashed through an advertising sign and into the tire wall. The safety car came out with the yellow flag in effect, and this necessitated the pace slowing.

The rest of the drivers lined up behind Vettel as course workers worked to clear the debris. However, upon restart, Vettel pulled away. He built his lead up again, and vaulted through with ease to take the checkered flag.

Jarno Trulli of Italy drove an excellent race as well. He stayed clear of any track incidents and pushed hard. While he did not match Vettel's pace, he did perform well enough to place second. This was the second race in a row that Toyota achieved this feat, as Timo Glock took second the week before. It was especially satisfying for the team as they were racing on home turf in Japan.

Britain's Lewis Hamilton initially passed Trulli early in the race to gain second. After the second set of pit stops, he failed to hold his position and dropped back again. He managed to secure third spot and six championship points. It made for a great Far East swing for Hamilton who the week previous won the Singapore Grand Prix.

Ferrari's Kimi Raikkonen showed marked improvement from his tenth place finish in Singapore. He drove a strong race and finished in fourth spot. It was ditto for Nico Rosberg of Williams-Toyota. He improved from his 11th place finish the previous week to finish in fifth spot. BMW Sauber's Nick Heidfeld finished the race in sixth position. During his second pit stop, he lost valuable seconds when the right rear-wheel nut became stuck.

For the Brawn-Mercedes team, there was no podium placing, although they secured precious points. Rubens Barrichello came in seventh and gained two points for the team. Jenson Button finished eighth to gain one point.

Button took advantage of an attempt by Adrian Sutil in the chicane in the first part of the race. Sutil tried to pass McLaren's Heikki Kovalainen, who was having none of this - it was like an unfolding game of [blackjack](#) at times. Kovalainen held his line causing the Force India driver to do a 360. Jenson Button calmly assessed the situation and passed them both. This was a gift of an incident, which helped him get into points territory.

This weekend in Japan was not so pleasant for Red Bull's Mark Webber, Vettel's teammate. He made numerous pit stops with car troubles and ended

up in 17th position. In addition, Sebastien Buemi, of Toro Rosso had to leave the race on Lap 11 with clutch problems.

With Japan's race in the books Jenson Button still leads all drivers with 85 points. His teammate Rubens Barrichello has 71 points. Closing the gap in third with his victory is Vettel with 69 points. For the Constructors' Championship Brawn-Mercedes leads with 156 points. Second is RBR-Renault with 120.50 points. In third is Ferrari with 67 points.

To Sebastian Vettel, it's not over until it's over. Two races remain in the F1 season, the Brazilian and Abu Dhabi Grand Prix. He has an outside chance of overtaking Jenson Button for the Drivers' Championship for 2009.

About the Author

The Monaco Grand Prix next year is selling tickets now and official details plus accommodation at the [Columbus Hotel Monaco](#) are at [monacoproperty.net](#) plus information on [Majorca advertising](#)

The [Monaco Grand Prix](#) is the highlight of the F1 season and there are several [articles and blogs](#) on the internet about it.

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