

= 1995 Pacific Grand Prix =

The 1995 Pacific Grand Prix (formally the II Pacific Grand Prix) was a Formula One motor race held on 22 October 1995 at the TI Circuit , Aida , Japan . It was the fifteenth round of the 1995 Formula One season . The 83 @-@ lap race was won by Michael Schumacher for the Benetton team after starting from third position . David Coulthard , who started the Grand Prix from pole position , finished second in a Williams car , with Damon Hill third in the other Williams . Schumacher 's win confirmed him as 1995 Drivers ' Champion , as Hill could not pass Schumacher 's points total with only two races remaining . This was also the last race for Jean @-@ Christophe Boullion .

Hill started the race alongside Coulthard on the front row , amidst pressure from the British media for not being " forceful " enough in battles . Schumacher attempted to drive around the outside of Hill at the first corner , but Hill held Schumacher off as Jean Alesi , driving for Ferrari , got past both on the inside line to take second position . As a result , Hill dropped down to third and Schumacher dropped down to fifth behind Gerhard Berger . Schumacher managed to get past Alesi and Hill during the first of three pit stops . This allowed him , on a new set of slick tyres , to close on Coulthard who was on a two @-@ stop strategy . Schumacher opened up a gap of 21 seconds by lapping two seconds faster per lap than Coulthard , so that when his third stop came , he still led the race .

= = Report = =

= = = Background = = =

The race , originally scheduled to be held as the third round of the season on 16 April 1995 , was moved to October as the local infrastructure and communications were badly damaged from the Great Hanshin earthquake .

Heading into the 15th race of the season , Benetton driver Michael Schumacher was leading the Drivers ' Championship with 82 points ; Williams driver Damon Hill was second on 55 points , 27 points behind Schumacher . A maximum of 30 points were available for the remaining three races , which meant that Hill could still win the title . Schumacher only needed a fourth @-@ place finish to become Drivers ' Champion as , even if Hill won , Schumacher would be more than 20 points ahead of Hill with two races remaining . Behind Hill and Schumacher in the Drivers ' Championship , David Coulthard was third on 43 points in a Williams , with Johnny Herbert and Jean Alesi both on 40 points . In the Constructors ' Championship , Benetton were leading on 112 points and Williams were second on 92 points , with a maximum of 48 points available . In the two weeks leading up to the race , there was heavy criticism towards Damon Hill , with pundits feeling that Hill had not been " forceful " enough in his battle at the European Grand Prix against Schumacher . In an interview leading up to the race , part @-@ time Ligier driver Martin Brundle said :

Damon has to do two things . First , he has to establish himself as the No1 at Williams for next year so the team can give him their full support . Second , he has to re @-@ establish himself as a racer . Maybe he needs to lose a front wheel once or twice to re @-@ establish himself .

Schumacher , his title @-@ rival , said that Hill made " half @-@ hearted attempts " to overtake , which led to him " getting into trouble " . The comments were prompted after a series of battles between Hill and Schumacher in previous race meetings , most notably at the Belgian Grand Prix , where Hill accused Schumacher of blocking him . At a Fédération Internationale de l'Automobile (FIA) World Motor Sport Council meeting on October 19 to discuss driver etiquette , they opted against introducing new rules on the issue . Formula One 's governing body emphasised that the International Sporting Code would be enforced on the basis that drivers are free to drive as they wish " provided they do not deliberately endanger another driver or repeatedly obstruct him on a straight " , following incidents during the year involving Hill and Schumacher .

Williams were favourites to win the race due to the nature of the track ? their Williams FW17 car

was more suited to high @-@ downforce tracks like Aida , and thus had the advantage over Benetton . In an attempt to match the pace of the Williams cars , Benetton introduced a revised rear suspension geometry to the Benetton B195 for the race .

There were five driver changes heading into the race . Having been in one of the two Ligier cars since the tenth race of the season at Germany , Martin Brundle was replaced by Aguri Suzuki as part of the two sharing the drive for the season . Jan Magnussen was drafted into the McLaren team to replace Mika Häkkinen because of the Finn 's operation for appendicitis . The third driver change was Ukyo Katayama 's return to Tyrrell after missing the European Grand Prix due to a crash at the Portuguese Grand Prix . Gianni Morbidelli returned to the Footwork team replacing Max Papis , while at Pacific , Bertrand Gachot came back to replace Jean @-@ Denis Délétraz , both men having driven for these teams at the start of the season . Délétraz was replaced as he had not made agreed payment instalments to the Pacific team for the privilege of the drive . Pacific had originally intended to run local driver Katsumi Yamamoto in place of Délétraz , but he was not granted an FIA Super Licence and so Gachot retook the seat . Similarly , the Forti team 's plans to replace Roberto Moreno with Hideki Noda came to nought for the same reason , even though Noda had started three Grands Prix for the Larrousse team the previous year .

= = = Practice and qualifying = = =

Two practice sessions were held before the race ; the first was held on Friday morning and the second on Saturday morning . Both sessions lasted 1 hour and 45 minutes with weather conditions dry throughout . Schumacher set the fastest time in the first session , posting a lap of 1 : 16 @.@ 057 , three @-@ tenths of a second quicker than Hill and Coulthard , in second and third places respectively . The Ferrari cars were fourth and fifth fastest ; Gerhard Berger ahead of Jean Alesi , with McLaren driver Mark Blundell rounding out the top six . Coulthard lapped faster than Schumacher in the second practice session with a time of 1 : 15 @.@ 730 . Hill was second in the Williams , three @-@ tenths of a second behind Coulthard . Eddie Irvine in the Jordan car was fourth , seven @-@ tenths behind Coulthard . He was split by the Ferraris who were third and fifth ; Alesi in front of Berger . The Benetton cars were sixth and seventh ; Schumacher in front of Herbert . Heinz @-@ Harald Frentzen and Jean @-@ Christophe Boullion were eighth and tenth in the Saubers , with Rubens Barrichello ninth in the Jordan , two seconds off the pace .

The qualifying session was split into two one @-@ hour sessions ; the first was held on Friday afternoon with the second held on Saturday afternoon . The fastest time from either sessions counted towards their final grid position . Coulthard clinched his fourth consecutive pole position , in his Williams , with a time of 1 : 14 @.@ 013 . He was joined on the front row by teammate Hill , who was two @-@ tenths of a second behind . Schumacher was third in the Benetton , edging closer to the Williams drivers throughout both days of qualifying by steadily reducing the downforce on his car . His last run , right at the end of the second session , pressured Coulthard into leaving the pits to cover the German . The pole position man thus used an additional set of slick tyres , meaning that out of the allocation of seven sets of slick tyres as set out by the FIA , he had only two sets of brand @-@ new rubber for the race , whereas Schumacher had the advantage of three sets of new rubber . Hill , concerned about starting from the dirty side of the track (the side of the track that is opposite to the racing line) , had only two sets of brand new tyres for the race .

Berger took fourth despite going off into the gravel late in the second part of qualifying . Berger 's teammate Alesi was fifth , with Irvine completing the top six for his best qualifying position of the season . Rookie Magnussen qualified 12th , only two places behind teammate Blundell , after not making a mistake in either of the two sessions . Returning drivers Suzuki , Katayama , Morbidelli and Gachot qualified 13th , 17th , 19th and 24th respectively , with the grid covered by 7 @.@ 392 seconds .

= = = Race = = =

The conditions for the race were dry with the air temperature 21 ° C (70 ° F) . The drivers took to

the track at 09 : 30 JST (GMT + 9) for a 30 @-@ minute warm @-@ up session . Both Williams cars maintained their good performance from qualifying ; Coulthard had the fastest time of 1 : 16 @. @ 831 . Hill was third in the other Williams car ; Boullion split them in the Sauber for second position . Olivier Panis completed the top four in a Ligier car , eight @-@ tenths of a second behind Hill . Hill drove the spare Williams car along the inside of the start ? finish straight in an effort to clean up his grid position on the dusty side of the track . Schumacher finished the session in eighth , despite going off the track , damaging his race car in the process . The remote and inaccessible nature of the circuit and the fact that the Japanese Grand Prix took place just one week later resulted in a meagre race @-@ day crowd of only 15 @, @ 000 spectators .

The race started at 14 : 00 JST . Coulthard , from pole position on the grid , held onto the lead into the first corner . Hill , who started alongside Coulthard , had a bad start . Schumacher attempted to go around the outside of Hill at the first corner , but Hill held Schumacher off . Both drivers ran off the racing line in the process , allowing Alesi through into second place . At the end of lap one , Coulthard led Alesi by 2 @. @ 8 seconds , with Hill a further three @-@ tenths back . Berger was fourth , with Schumacher demoted to fifth . Bertrand Gachot in the Pacific became the first person to retire from the race with a gearbox problem on lap two . He was followed by Suzuki and Boullion , who both spun off the track and were unable to continue . Boullion blamed his spin on Minardi driver Pedro Lamy , whom he accused of weaving in front of him . Schumacher passed Berger for fourth position on lap five , and immediately began closing on Hill in third , who himself was only a few tenths behind Alesi . Schumacher attempted to pass Hill on lap 11 for third place at the hairpin , but Hill held him off . As Hill and Schumacher were held up by the slower Ferraris , Coulthard pulled away by more than a second a lap in the first eight laps . By lap 18 , Coulthard 's gap to second place was 14 seconds , and it appeared that he would win the race comfortably .

Alesi , Hill and Schumacher all pitted for their first of three stops on lap 18 . The Benetton pitcrew made a quick stop for Schumacher , allowing him to get out ahead of Alesi and Hill . Hill lost additional time with a sticking refuelling valve , causing his stop to last almost twice as long as Schumacher 's . Schumacher exited the pit stop in fourth place (behind Coulthard , and the yet @-@ to @-@ stop Berger and Herbert) , with Alesi in seventh place (split from Schumacher by Irvine) and Hill in tenth place (separated from Alesi by Frentzen and Blundell) . With Alesi and Hill held up by the slower runners on two @-@ stop strategies in front , Schumacher pulled away and closed in on Coulthard . Blundell pitted on the next lap , and Hill passed Frentzen on lap 22 . On the following lap , Alesi passed Irvine at the hairpin ; Hill tried to follow Alesi through but his front wing hit the rear of Irvine 's car , causing minor damage . Irvine pitted at the end of lap 25 , allowing Hill to resume his chase of Alesi unimpeded . Like his teammate , Coulthard was scheduled to make three stops , but his pit strategy was changed to make only two by staying out six laps longer than originally scheduled , and then taking onboard more fuel than first planned at his first stop on lap 24 . As a result of a lighter fuel load for Schumacher because of the different strategies , Schumacher began to consistently lap faster than the Scotsman .

Schumacher made his second stop on lap 38 , and came out of the pits just in front of third @-@ placed Alesi , but over twenty seconds behind Coulthard . Schumacher immediately began setting fastest laps and began to close in on Coulthard once more . Hill managed to move up to third , in front of Alesi , during their second pit stops on laps 38 and 39 respectively . The Ferrari of Alesi then dropped further back as teammate Berger passed him at the hairpin for fourth position on lap 45 . Coulthard made his second and final stop for new tyres on lap 49 ; exiting 14 seconds behind Schumacher , who continued to extend the margin between the two . Coulthard was unable to capitalise on the performance advantage offered by the new tyres after the stop due to lapped traffic getting in his way . The German made his third and final pit stop on lap 60 with a 21 second advantage , exiting in front of Coulthard to lead the race . Schumacher opened the gap to 15 seconds , and won the race after 83 laps to secure his eighth victory of the season in a time of 1 : 48 : 49.972s. Schumacher was crowned the 1995 Drivers ' Champion as Hill could not catch his points total with two races remaining . He also became the youngest double Drivers ' Champion in Formula One history . Coulthard finished second in his Williams , 14 seconds behind Schumacher , with teammate Hill third . The Ferraris of Berger and Alesi were fourth and fifth respectively , but off the

pace as Schumacher lapped them both in the closing stages . Berger suffered from a misfiring engine throughout the race . Herbert took the final point in sixth place for Benetton , ahead of Frentzen , Panis and Blundell . Throughout the race , Barrichello and Magnussen engaged in a battle for tenth and eleventh positions , with Magnussen keeping Barrichello behind until lap 37 when the Brazilian managed to overtake him into the hairpin . Magnussen finished in tenth place , but Barrichello subsequently retired on lap 67 with an engine problem . Magnussen 's first race was described as " highly accomplished " by the year 's Autocourse annual . After his impressive qualifying performance , Irvine was heading for eighth place , but made an unscheduled pit stop on lap 72 and dropped to eleventh . The attrition rate was low , with 17 of the 24 starters finishing the race .

== Post @-@ race ==

After the race , it was revealed that Schumacher endured a downshift problem after his final stop , and that he was lucky to complete the final lap as warning lights had activated on his steering wheel . Schumacher praised his pitcrew for doing a " perfect " first stop which helped him move in front of Alesi and Hill . He said he " never saw anything like this team and its ability to come up with strategies " and that they never made " one mistake this season " . Off @-@ camera while going through parc fermé , Schumacher and Hill renewed their argument from the Belgian Grand Prix over what degree of blocking was acceptable after their first corner incident . Schumacher told Hill that he was unhappy with Hill 's driving throughout the race , most notably during Schumacher 's overtaking attempts on lap one and lap eleven where Schumacher felt Hill had " brake tested " him . Hill refuted Schumacher 's claims , saying :

Michael wasn 't happy with what I did a couple of times in the race and he has told me that he is unhappy with my driving . I find that extraordinary . The situation now is that we are completely free to drive as we like as long as it is not deliberately dangerous , So I drove in that style and he didn 't like it . He should have no complaints ... somehow or other , when we got into the braking area at the end of the back straight I did something wrong . But I can 't see what I did wrong . It seems that there is one rule for him and another for everybody else at times . I just think that either you agree to that , and there should be no complaints , or there are rules and you should stick to them . I think that I am a better , stronger driver this year than I was last year and can build on that for next year . Clearly Michael has an advantage over everyone and if I want to win , then I am going to have to overhaul him .

Despite Hill 's comments , he endured continued criticism by the British media after the poor performance ; speculation brewed that Williams were going to replace him with Frentzen for the 1996 season . Despite the rumours , Williams team boss Frank Williams gave Hill " an unequivocal vote of confidence " heading into the next race , the Japanese Grand Prix . Schumacher subsequently changed his opinion of the incident after watching video footage prior to the Japanese race and no longer blamed Hill for it .

During an interview Coulthard , who finished second , revealed that it was his decision to change to a two @-@ stop strategy from a three @-@ stop strategy , telling the Williams pitcrew to delay his stop . Afterwards , he said that in hindsight he would have stayed on a three @-@ stop strategy , and wished he could " blame someone else for this decision , but I can 't " . The 1995 race was the last held at the Aida circuit , and the last Formula One race to date held under the Pacific Grand Prix banner , with the manager of the TI Circuit unable to keep the venue financially profitable .

== Classification ==

== Qualifying ==

== Race ==

= = Championship standings after the race = =

Bold text indicates who still has a theoretical chance of becoming World Champion .

Note : Only the top five positions are included for both sets of standings