

= 2007 French Grand Prix =

The 2007 French Grand Prix ( formally the XCIII Grand Prix de France ) was a Formula One motor race held on 1 July 2007 at the Circuit de Nevers Magny @-@ Cours , Magny @-@ Cours , France . It was the eighth race of the 2007 Formula One season . The 70 @-@ lap race was won by Kimi Räikkönen for the Ferrari team after starting from third position . Felipe Massa , who started the race from pole position , finished second in the latter Ferrari , with Lewis Hamilton third in a McLaren car .

Massa controlled most of the race from the front , but Räikkönen overtook him during the second round of pit stops to take the lead .

= = Report = =

= = = Background = = =

Following the United States Grand Prix , the Formula One teams headed to Silverstone for a three @-@ day test . Nine teams participated , with the exception of Honda and Super Aguri , who opted to test at the Jerez circuit . Neither Ferrari nor McLaren were fastest on the first two days at Silverstone , rather it was Toyota that was fastest on both of the days . However , on the third and final day of testing Felipe Massa put Ferrari on top with a time of 1 : 20 @.@ 805 . The nearest challenger , Nico Rosberg was 0 @.@ 469 behind , with Fernando Alonso a further 0 @.@ 010 behind . With Ferrari fastest on the third day , both of their drivers , Massa and Kimi Räikkönen were very confident heading into the French round of the season .

Off track Ferrari launched a criminal investigation in Modena against their own employee Nigel Stepney . Stepney 's lawyer ruled out sabotage claims , and Stepney said it was part of a " dirty tricks " campaign .

There was also controversy at the rear @-@ end of the grid , as Spyker asked the Fédération Internationale de l'Automobile ( FIA ) to look at the new updates that were put on the Super Aguri at Indianapolis to see whether the Aguri team are receiving current Honda parts . On Saturday , Super Aguri 's managing director Daniel Audetto said " We have rules ? they [ Spyker ] can just protest . Tell them to protest ? if I have something to complain about , I will make a protest . "

Robert Kubica was back in his BMW after his crash at the Canadian Grand Prix . Early on Saturday , Nick Heidfeld was cleared to continue in his BMW after experiencing back pains during Friday practice .

= = = Practice = = =

Ferrari dominated both practice sessions on the Friday , with Räikkönen fastest in the first Practice Session and Felipe Massa was fastest in the second Practice Session . Behind the Ferraris , Alonso was third in his McLaren , but seven tenths behind , with his team @-@ mate and World Championship leader Lewis Hamilton sixth , but lost nearly an hour of the session due to car trouble . The two McLarens were split by David Coulthard and Nico Rosberg .

Hamilton managed to recover from his morning trouble to post the fourth fastest time in the second Practice Session on Friday afternoon . The Ferraris were still leading , but Massa was fastest , just 0 @.@ 035 seconds ahead of Räikkönen . However , one of the major surprises came from Scuderia Toro Rosso , as Scott Speed posted the third quickest time , with Vitantonio Liuzzi posting the fifth quickest time . During the session , Liuzzi was involved in a bizarre incident with Anthony Davidson ; Davidson exited his garage , and smashed his Super Aguri into the side of Liuzzi 's Toro Rosso ; knocking his front wing off in the accident . Alonso finished the second practice session eighth .

In the final practice session on Saturday morning , Hamilton managed to beat Ferrari , with the Englishman ahead of second @-@ placed Massa by 0 @.@ 063 seconds . Hamilton and the two Ferraris completed the top three , but Alonso was again down in eighth , having missed nearly the

whole of the session with a faulty brake sensor . The Renaults sparked a return to form with Heikki Kovalainen and Giancarlo Fisichella fourth and fifth , both ahead of rivals BMW , who were sixth and fifteenth respectively .

= = = Qualifying = = =

Both Spykers and both Super Aguris were knocked out of the first phase of qualifying , along with Alexander Wurz 's Williams and Vitantonio Liuzzi 's Toro Rosso . For Super Aguri 's Takuma Sato , it did not matter where he qualified , as he was docked ten places , due to overtaking Jenson Button under yellow flags at the last Grand Prix . Spykers Adrian Sutil was hoping for a wet race after an unspectacular qualifying . At the front end of the grid , the McLarens were first and fourth , with Hamilton on top , and the Ferraris splitting them in third and fourth . Heikki Kovalainen rounded out the top five .

David Coulthard failed to complete a single timed lap in the second part of qualifying due to a gearbox problem , and started sixteenth . Both Hondas were knocked out also , along with Mark Webber , Scott Speed and Ralf Schumacher . Both Button and Barrichello were happier with the upgraded Honda , with Button saying " the car is certainly better than the last race in Indianapolis , although the positions don 't reflect that " . Hamilton was again fastest in Part two , with team @-@ mate Alonso down in fifth . Massa , Räikkönen and Kubica rounded out the top four .

After topping the first two parts of qualifying , Hamilton dropped to second in the third and final part , with Massa taking pole position , just 0 @. @ 070 ahead of the Englishman . Massa stated in the post @-@ Qualifying press conference that " it looks like we [ Ferrari ] are back and fighting " , with Hamilton believing pole was possible had he not made a mistake at Turn 15 . Räikkönen qualified third as he lost time on one corner , which he called " all my fault " . Alonso was unable to complete a single lap in the session due to a gearbox problem . He was classified tenth and stated that he 'd " prefer a wet race " . Behind Räikkönen was Kubica in fourth , but despite qualifying fifth , Giancarlo Fisichella believed there was " potential for more " from the Renault . Fisichella 's team @-@ mate Kovalainen was sixth , with Nick Heidfeld seventh . Jarno Trulli , Nico Rosberg and Alonso rounded out the top ten . Rosberg also had a slight gearbox problem in the final part of qualifying , which he believed cost him a few tenths coming into the final few corners .

= = = Race = = =

Three people were killed in a helicopter crash at the circuit on Saturday night . They were Emmanuel Longobardi , a PR operative ; the pilot Pierre Bennehard ; and Simon McGill , a New Zealand national . A Bridgestone employee and his niece were injured . Longobardi was a popular member of the Formula One Paddock .

Adrian Sutil in the Spyker opted to start from the pitlane . Massa got off to the best possible start and retained his lead , but Räikkönen passed Hamilton into Turn One . At the back of the field , Anthony Davidson hit the back of Vitantonio Liuzzi 's Toro Rosso . The Toro Rosso came back onto the track and smashed into the side of the Super Aguri . Liuzzi said afterwards that " all we can do is wait for Silverstone and hope that the definite improvement we have made with the car pays off " . At the Adelaide hairpin , Jarno Trulli rammed into the back of Heikki Kovalainen . Trulli was out , but Kovalainen continued at the back of the field . Trulli apologised to Kovalainen after the race , and declared it " a racing accident " . The tangle promoted Alonso up to eighth .

Robert Kubica was quickly losing ground on the two Ferraris and Hamilton . Alonso passed Rosberg for seventh , and quickly closed in on Heidfeld , but stayed behind him until he pitted on Lap 16 . Alonso attempted to get past on Lap five , but ran wide , giving the position back to the German . Hamilton also pitted on Lap 16 , with Massa pitting on Lap 19 and Räikkönen on Lap 21 .

Räikkönen decreased Massa 's lead back down from four seconds to two seconds . Alonso passed both Heidfeld and Fisichella in the middle section of the race . In the second round of stops , Räikkönen pitted two laps after Massa . These two laps extra gave Räikkönen the lead after his second stop , with Massa now second . Alonso pitted for the second time on lap 35 . Heidfeld and

Fisichella pitted several laps later , and both of them got out in front of Alonso . Christijan Albers had an unusual accident , his car left the pit lane with the fuel rig attached without being detached by the pit crews . Eventually , he drove to the side of the track and retired .

Räikkönen won the race from team @-@ mate Massa , with Hamilton third . This marked Ferrari 's first one @-@ two of the season . Massa stated that the race win was lost " because of traffic " , while team @-@ mate Räikkönen stated he was " much happier with the car " , as he became the first Finn to win the race . Kubica was a lonely fourth , with Fisichella , Heidfeld , Alonso and Button rounding out the points . Despite it being Button 's first points of 2007 , he said that he was " not getting too excited about it " . Despite finishing seventh , Alonso was still confident about his title chances , saying that he hoped the " two points are important at the end of the season " .

= = Classification = =

= = = Qualifying = = =

#### Notes

^ 1 ? Fernando Alonso did not set a time in Q3 due to a gearbox problem .

^ 2 ? David Coulthard did not set a time in Q2 due to a gearbox problem .

^ 3 ? Takuma Sato was given a drive @-@ through penalty for passing Button under yellow flags at the 2007 United States Grand Prix but retired from the race before he could serve the penalty , so the penalty was changed to a ten @-@ place grid penalty at this event .

= = = Race = = =

= = Championship standings after the race = =

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