

= 2000 Japanese Grand Prix =

The 2000 Japanese Grand Prix ( formally the XXVI Fuji Television Japanese Grand Prix ) was a Formula One motor race held on 8 October 2000 at the Suzuka Circuit in Suzuka , Japan . It was the 16th and penultimate round of the 2000 Formula One season , as well as , the 26th Japanese Grand Prix . The 53 @-@ lap race was won by Ferrari driver Michael Schumacher after starting from pole position . Mika Häkkinen finished second in a McLaren with teammate David Coulthard finishing third . Schumacher 's win confirmed him as 2000 Drivers ' Champion , as Häkkinen could not surpass Schumacher 's points total with only one race remaining .

Häkkinen started the race alongside Michael Schumacher on the front row of the grid . Michael Schumacher attempted to defend his lead off the line by moving into Häkkinen 's path , but Häkkinen passed Michael Schumacher heading into the first corner , with Coulthard withstanding Williams driver Ralf Schumacher attempts to pass him to maintain third position . Michael Schumacher managed to close the gap to his title rival by lap 31 and passed Häkkinen during the second round of pit stops . This allowed him to maintain a 1 @.@ 9 second gap between himself and Häkkinen towards the end of the race to secure his eighth victory of the season .

Michael Schumacher received praise from many within the Formula One community , including former Champion Jody Scheckter and Ferrari president Luca di Montezemolo , though he was criticised by former Italian president Francesco Cossiga for his conduct when the Italian National Anthem was played on the podium . The Ferrari driver also received predominant congratulations from the European press . Häkkinen 's second @-@ place finish secured him second position in the Drivers ' Championship , while Ferrari extended the gap to McLaren in the Constructors ' Championship to thirteen points , with one race remaining in the season .

= = Report = =

= = = Background = = =

The Grand Prix was contested by eleven teams , each of two drivers . The teams , also known as constructors , were McLaren , Ferrari , Jordan , Jaguar , Williams , Benetton , Prost , Sauber , Arrows , Minardi and BAR . Tyre supplier Bridgestone brought three different tyre types to the race : the Medium dry compound and two wet @-@ weather compounds , the intermediate and full wet . The Suzuka Circuit underwent a minor circuit change ahead of the Grand Prix . The pit lane entry was moved from the end of the 130R left @-@ hand corner to the exit of the Casio chicane in an effort to improve safety .

Going into the race , Ferrari driver Michael Schumacher led the Drivers ' Championship with 88 points , ahead of Mika Häkkinen on 80 points and David Coulthard on 63 . Rubens Barrichello was fourth on 55 points , with Ralf Schumacher fifth on 24 points . A maximum of 20 points were available for the final two races , which meant Häkkinen could still win the title . Michael Schumacher only needed to clinch victory in the race , regardless of where Häkkinen finished , Schumacher would be more than ten points ahead of Häkkinen with one race remaining . Otherwise , Häkkinen could win the Championship in the final race of the season in Malaysia by out @-@ scoring his rival . In the event of a points tie , Michael Schumacher would win the Championship on count @-@ back , having more wins . In the Constructors ' Championship , Ferrari were leading on 143 points , McLaren and Williams were second and third on 133 and 34 points respectively , while Benetton with 20 and Jordan with 17 contended for fourth place . Championship drivers Barrichello and Giancarlo Fisichella had each gained second @-@ place finishes while Ralf Schumacher and Heinz @-@ Harald Frentzen had both achieved third place podium finishes .

A pneumatic valve failure in the preceding race , the United States Grand Prix , had forced Häkkinen to retire from the Grand Prix . With two races of the season remaining and an eight @-@ point deficit after losing the lead in the Drivers ' Championship , Häkkinen remained confident about his title chances : " I know that what happened to me in the last Grand Prix , when I had to retire ,

can happen to anyone , It could happen to Michael . So I am very optimistic . I have come here prepared and thinking about these two races together . Not one , two . " Michael Schumacher emphasised the pressure of leading the championship going into Japan : " It hasn't been a relaxing time at all and I still haven't completely got over the jetlag from the States . But I'm prepared to sacrifice this and a lot more to bring the title back to Maranello . And the same can be said of the entire team . " Ferrari team principal Jean Todt and former World Champion Jody Scheckter called for Barrichello and Coulthard to race fairly as both drivers were ordered by their teams to assist their teammates in the Championship battle .

Following the United States Grand Prix on 24 September , the teams conducted testing sessions at various racing circuits across Europe between 26 ? 29 September to prepare for the Grand Prix . McLaren 's test driver Olivier Panis flew to the Circuit de Nevers Magny @-@ Cours to undertake preparations for Suzuka and development work on their 2001 car . Ferrari test driver Luca Badoer spent two days at the Fiorano Circuit testing mechanical components and ran on an artificially wet track for testing of Bridgestone 's wet weather tyre compounds . Williams , with rookie competitor Jenson Button , went to the Autódromo do Estoril for two days and tried wet weather tyres and different aerodynamic configurations . Prost travelled to Magny @-@ Cours and their test driver Stéphane Sarrazin collected three days of chassis design data for the upcoming AP04 chassis . Benetton opted to miss testing prior to the event but their test driver Mark Webber tried developments at the Circuit de Catalunya that were incorporated into their 2001 car .

At the drivers meeting held the Friday before the event , the Fédération Internationale de l'Automobile ( FIA ) Race Director Charlie Whiting announced that any potential blocking manoeuvres that interfered with the World Championship battle would result in a driver being shown a waved black and white flag , before giving a black flag to signal disqualification from the race . The penalty also had a potential ban for up to three Formula One World Championship events for any driver found to have breached the new ruling . Ralf Schumacher agreed with the penalties . However , McLaren team principal Ron Dennis was more vocal in opposing the new rules as he believed they were arbitrary and were against choosing team tactics . He was also unhappy with the inclusion of Italian lawyer Roberto Causo as a race steward because Dennis held the view that any decision would be biased towards Ferrari .

Some teams had made modifications to their cars in preparation for the event . Honda introduced a more powerful version of its V10 engine for Saturday 's qualifying session and the race . Sauber brought lighter components to reduce the weight of their cars and the Williams team arrived with a revised rear wing . Williams engine suppliers BMW confirmed that they would be running the same specification of engine introduced in Belgium .

= = = Practice and qualifying = = =

Four practice sessions were held before the Sunday race ? two on Friday , and two on Saturday . The Friday morning and afternoon sessions each lasted an hour . The third and final practice sessions were held on Saturday morning and lasted 45 minutes . The Friday morning and afternoon sessions were held in dry and warm weather conditions . Michael Schumacher was fastest in the first practice session with a time of 1 : 38 @.@ 474 , ahead of Häkkinen and Coulthard . Barrichello set the fourth quickest time and caused the session to be yellow flagged when he lost control of his car and spun at the hairpin between turns ten and eleven and crashed into the perimeter fencing . Ralf Schumacher was fifth fastest , ahead of Fisichella . Frentzen and Jarno Trulli set the seventh and ninth fastest times respectively for Jordan ; they were separated by Jaguar 's Eddie Irvine . Jacques Villeneuve in the BAR completed the top ten despite spinning off the circuit which caused grass to penetrate his radiators . In the second practice session , Michael Schumacher set the fastest lap of the day , a 1 : 37 @.@ 728 , six @-@ tenths of a second faster than Häkkinen . Barrichello had trouble selecting first gear on his final run although he set the third quickest time . Coulthard was fourth fastest , ahead of Button . Frentzen and Trulli continued their good form setting the sixth and seventh fastest times . Arrows driver Pedro de la Rosa , Villeneuve and Ricardo Zonta completed the top ten fastest drivers . During the session , an earthquake measuring 7 @.@ 1 on

the richter scale was felt at Suzuka , although no structural damage was reported around the circuit despite mild alarm .

The weather remained dry and warm for the Saturday morning practice sessions . Michael Schumacher again set the fastest time for the third session , a 1 : 37 @. @ 176 , quicker than his best on Friday . The Williams drivers were running quicker ; Ralf Schumacher in second and Button in fourth . They were separated by Coulthard . Fisichella set the fifth quickest time , ahead of Villeneuve , who spun into the gravel late in the session . Barrichello , Irvine , Johnny Herbert and de la Rosa completed the top ten . In the final practice session , Häkkinen set the quickest time , a 1 : 37 @. @ 037 , one @- @ tenth of a second faster than Michael Schumacher . Button was happy with the performance of his car and was third fastest . Barrichello maintained his consistent performance and set the fourth fastest time despite again spinning into the gravel traps . He was ahead of Ralf Schumacher who had his fastest time revoked after exceeding track limits . Coulthard was sixth , two @- @ tenths of a second faster than Fisichella . Irvine , Alexander Wurz and Villeneuve completed the top ten ahead of qualifying .

Saturday 's afternoon qualifying session lasted for an hour . Each driver was limited to twelve laps , with the grid order decided by the drivers ' fastest laps . During this session , the 107 % rule was in effect , which necessitated each driver set a time within 107 % of the quickest lap to qualify for the race . The session was held in dry weather conditions . The air temperature ranged between 23 ? 24 ° C ( 73 ? 75 ° F ) and the track temperature was between 27 ? 31 ° C ( 81 ? 88 ° F ) . Michael Schumacher clinched his eighth pole position of the season , his fifth at the circuit , in a time of 1 : 35 @. @ 825 . He was joined on the front row of the grid by Häkkinen , who was nine thousandths of a second slower than his championship rival and battled him for grid position throughout the session . Häkkinen 's teammate Coulthard qualified third , and conceded that he was not quick enough to challenge for pole position . The two Williams drivers qualified on the third row of the grid ; Button ahead of Ralf Schumacher although both drivers had mixed feelings over their performance . Both Jaguar drivers took seventh and tenth and were satisfied with their pace . Frentzen reported that his car was difficult to handle but was happy to manage an qualifying position of eighth . Villeneuve took ninth despite suffering from excessive oversteer and was unable to improve his time because he changed his car in the opposite direction . Herbert who rounded out the top ten felt he could have qualified on the fourth row despite changes to his set @- @ up . Wurz qualified eleventh and missed on qualifying in the top ten by nearly two thousandths of a second . His teammate Fisichella started from twelfth position and reported his car lost performance after the morning practice sessions . Both Arrows drivers filled the seventh row of the grid ? de la Rosa was faster than Verstappen ? and were afflicted with problems on the cars limiting their running . Trulli had issues with his car 's handling and qualified 15th . Heidfeld qualified 16th , ahead of teammate Jean Alesi . Zonta had limited qualifying time because of an engine change and managed 18th overall . The tenth row of the grid was filled by both Sauber drivers ; Mika Salo in front of Pedro Diniz . Salo used the spare Sauber because his race car had issues with its alternator Both of Diniz 's two fastest qualifying times were disallowed because of him laying oil on the circuit in the morning practice sessions . The two Minardi drivers qualified at the rear of the grid with Marc Gené faster than Gastón Mazzacane .

== Race ==

The drivers took to the track at 10 : 00 JST ( UTC + 9 ) for a 30 @- @ minute warm @- @ up session . It took place in dry weather conditions . Both Ferrari cars maintained their good performance from qualifying ; Michael Schumacher set the fastest time of 1 : 38 @. @ 005 . Barrichello was third in the other Ferrari car . They were split by the McLaren drivers ? Häkkinen was second and Coulthard rounded out the top four .

The race started at 14 : 30 local time . The conditions for the race were dry and overcast for the race . The air temperature was at 22 ° C ( 72 ° F ) and the track temperature at 23 ° C ( 73 ° F ) . Approximately 151 @, @ 000 people attended the race . During the final parade lap , Häkkinen 's car developed an leak in the hydraulic system which caused smoke to depart but managed to take the start . Frentzen started the race using Jordan 's spare monocoque . Häkkinen accelerated faster

than Michael Schumacher off the line , withstanding the German 's attempts to maintain his position to clinch the lead heading into the first corner . Behind the leading three in the run down into the first corner , Ralf Schumacher moved ahead of Barrichello and Coulthard withstood his attempts to pass for third position . Verstappen made the best start in the field , moving from 14th to tenth at the end of the first lap , while Fisichella made a poor start and lost eight places over the same distance ; the result of his anti @-@ stall system activating . At the completion of the first lap , Häkkinen led from Michael Schumacher , Coulthard , Ralf Schumacher , Irvine , Barrichello , Button , Herbert , Villeneuve , Verstappen , Frentzen , Trulli , de la Rosa , Wurz , Salo , Alesi , Heidfeld , Zonta , Diniz , Fisichella , Gené and Mazzacane .

Häkkinen set the fastest lap of the race on lap two and began to maintain the gap between himself and Michael Schumacher while both drivers pulled away from the rest of the field . Villeneuve moved into eighth position when he passed Herbert on lap seven , while Trulli clinched 11th from teammate Frentzen . Verstappen became the first retirement of the race when he coasted across the circuit with gearbox problems on lap nine and drove to his garage . Diniz made his first pit stop on lap 13 , starting the first round of pit stops . At the front of the field , Häkkinen increased the gap between himself and Michael Schumacher to two seconds , who in turn was a further ten seconds ahead of Coulthard in third . Ralf Schumacher was a further 8 @.@ 8 seconds behind the second McLaren driver , but was drawing ahead of Irvine in fifth . Further back , Trulli made a pit stop from tenth on lap 15 and emerged in 18th position . Irvine became the first of the front runners to pit the following lap and emerged behind Frentzen .

Wurz , Herbert , Salo and Heidfeld all made pit stops on lap 18 , while Trulli lost time after going off the track . On the 19th lap , Ralf Schumacher , Villeneuve , Frentzen , Pedro de la Rosa and Fisichella made their first pit stops . Barrichello and Button made pit stops on the following lap , and rejoined ahead of Irvine . Alesi retired from the race with an engine failure and spun off onto the circuit on lap 21 . Häkkinen made a pit stop on lap 22 . Michael Schumacher took over the lead for one lap before his pit stop on lap 23 giving it to Coulthard . The Scot took his pit stop on lap 24 handing back the lead to teammate Häkkinen . On the same lap , Villeneuve passed Irvine into turn 16 for seventh position . All of the drivers had made pit stops by the end of lap 25 . The race order was Häkkinen , Michael Schumacher , Coulthard , Barrichello , Ralf Schumacher , Button , Irvine , Herbert , Frentzen , Trulli , Diniz , Zonta , Salo , de la Rosa , Heidfeld , Fisichella , Gené , Wurz and Mazzacane . Häkkinen set a new fastest lap of the race on lap 26 , a 1 : 39 @.@ 189 , as he built a gap between himself and Michael Schumacher to 2 @.@ 9 seconds .

Trulli became the first driver to make a second pit stop on lap 28 . Light rain began to fall on lap 29 and track started to become slippery . The gap between Häkkinen and Michael Schumacher fell by one second after the McLaren driver encountered lapped traffic on lap 30 . Ralf Schumacher lost sixth position to teammate Button after making a mistake on the same lap , while Frentzen pulled off the track at the entry of First Curve to retire from a hydraulic pump issue which caused his gearbox to fail . Michael Schumacher closed the gap to Häkkinen by 0 @.@ 7 seconds by lap 31 , although he made minor contact with Zonta two laps later . Further down the order , Heidfeld overtook Trulli for 13th position on lap 34 . The second round of pit stops began on the same lap when Irvine made a pit stop . Häkkinen made his second stop on lap 37 , and came out of the pit lane 25 @.@ 8 seconds behind rival Michael Schumacher but ahead of Coulthard . Michael Schumacher began to immediately pull away from Häkkinen . Coulthard , Barrichello and Button remained in third , fourth and fifth positions respectively , during their second stops on lap 38 and 39 . Wurz went into retirement when he spun sideways near the entry of the pit lane on lap 40 . Michael Schumacher took his final pit stop on the same lap , and emerged 4 @.@ 1 seconds in front of Häkkinen .

Ralf Schumacher became the sixth retirement of the race when he lost the rear @-@ end and spun into the gravel trap when trying to lap Gené at turn two on lap 42 . This allowed Villeneuve to enter the points @-@ scoring positions in sixth . Heidfeld became the final driver to make a scheduled pit stop on the same lap . At the conclusion of lap 42 , with the scheduled pit stops completed , the order was Michael Schumacher , Häkkinen , Coulthard , Barrichello , Button , Villeneuve , Herbert , Irvine , Zonta , Salo , Diniz , Trulli , Fisichella , de la Rosa , Gené , Heidfeld and Mazzacane . Heidfeld retired from a suspension failure on lap 43 as de la Rosa passed Fisichella for 13th position

on the same lap , and Fisichella was forced onto the gravel to avoid contact. de la Rosa made up a further position overtaking Trulli five laps later . Gené became the race 's final retirement with an expired engine on lap 49 . Michael Schumacher maintained his lead throughout the remaining four laps and crossed the finish line on lap 53 to win his eighth race of the 2000 season in a time of 1 ' 29 : 53 @.@ 435 , at an average speed of 128 @.@ 902 miles per hour ( 207 @.@ 448 km / h ) . Michael Schumacher was crowned 2000 Drivers ' Champion as Häkkinen could not catch his points total in the one remaining race . He also became the first driver to clinch the title with Ferrari since Jody Scheckter in 1979 . Häkkinen finished second in his McLaren , 1 @.@ 8 seconds behind , ahead of teammate Coulthard in third , Barrichello in fourth , Button in fifth , and Villeneuve rounding out the points scoring positions in sixth . Herbert , Irvine , Zonta , Salo and Diniz rounded out the next five positions. de la Rosa , Trulli , Fisichella and Mazzacane were the last of the classified finishers .

== = Post @-@ race == =

The top three drivers appeared on the podium to collect their trophies and in the subsequent press conference . Michael Schumacher revealed that he took a cautious approach when the track became slippery due to rain in the second stint . He also added his team made adjustments during the first stop which helped to contribute to his quick pace . Häkkinen congratulated Michael Schumacher on clinching the Drivers ' Championship and said that although he felt naturally disappointed , he admitted that " to be a good winner , sometimes you also have to be a good loser " . He also confirmed that Ferrari 's strategy lost him the chance of victory and acknowledged that Schumacher was at an advantage after his second pit stop . Coulthard described his race as " quiet " because of the lack of action he encountered . He also admitted that he struggled to handle the car in the wet conditions .

Michael Schumacher 's title triumph was well received in the Formula One paddock and in the media . German national newspaper Die Welt said : " A dream has been fulfilled and it will have far @-@ reaching consequences . Ferrari and Formula One are alive again in this season and a new monument has been created ... Hard work and self @-@ sacrifice have been rewarded . " In Italy , events were held across the country to celebrate Michael Schumacher 's championship victory . Candido Cannavò , director of the Italian sports newspaper La Gazzetta dello Sport described the moment as : " On the dawn of a luminous autumn Sunday Ferrari reconciled itself with history . "

Ferrari president Luca di Montezemolo described Michael Schumacher 's title victory as the " most beautiful day of my life " . He further dedicated the championship to the Ferrari team , their worldwide fan base , Ferrari 's majority owner FIAT , and the team 's sponsors and suppliers for their continued support . Former World Champion Scheckter praised both Ferrari and Michael Schumacher , though he expressed disappointment at losing his status as the final World Champion for Ferrari . However , the former President of Italy Francesco Cossiga criticised Michael Schumacher 's conduct during the Italian National Anthem where the German traditionally imitated a conductor when it was heard . Michael Schumacher responded by saying that he did not mean to cause offence and insisted that he was respectful to the national anthem .

Off track , the argument over the new rules implemented at the Grand Prix and the inclusion of lawyer Roberto Causo as a race steward was renewed . FIA president Max Mosley published a letter dated from 19 October to Ron Dennis which accused him of damaging the image of Formula One with his recent stream of comments over the issues . Mosley also defended Race Director Charlie Whiting 's announcement that marshals could use racing flags to caution drivers over unsportsmanlike behaviour . Dennis responded by apologising for his comments , saying that he did not intend to bring Formula One into disrepute and cause disrespect to Causo . " It certainly has not ever been my intention to damage a sport to which I have devoted most of my working life . " he said .

As a consequence of the race , Michael Schumacher won the Drivers ' Championship with a twelve @-@ point gap over championship rival Häkkinen , who in turn was confirmed as the runner @-@ up in the Championship . Coulthard maintained third with 67 points , nine points ahead of Barrichello

, and 43 in front of Ralf Schumacher . In the Constructors ' Championship , Ferrari increased their lead to thirteen points . Williams , with 36 points , increased the gap to their rivals Benetton by 16 points , while BAR passed Jordan for fifth place on 18 points , with one race of the season remaining .

= = 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 .