

= 2015 Austrian Grand Prix =

The 2015 Austrian Grand Prix ( formally known as the Formula 1 Grosser Preis von Österreich 2015 ) was a Formula One motor race held on 21 June 2015 at the Red Bull Ring in Spielberg , Austria . The race was the eighth round of the 2015 season , and marked the 29th running of the Austrian Grand Prix .

Mercedes driver Nico Rosberg entered as the defending race winner , while his teammate , Lewis Hamilton , entered with a seventeen @-@ point lead over him in the Drivers ' Championship standings . Mercedes were leading rivals Ferrari by 105 points in the Constructors ' standings .

Hamilton started from pole position , but was overtaken by Rosberg at the first corner . Rosberg held the lead for the remainder of the race , barring brief periods during pit stops , and won by over three seconds . Hamilton remained ahead of Williams 's Felipe Massa to claim the runner @-@ up position . Ferrari driver Sebastian Vettel had been holding third position for much of the first half of the race , but a delay due to a stuck wheel nut during his pit stop dropped him into fourth place . Former World Champions Kimi Räikkönen and Fernando Alonso were eliminated on the first lap , after Räikkönen lost control of his Ferrari at the second turn and collided with Alonso . The two came to rest against the safety barrier , with Alonso 's McLaren atop the Ferrari .

= = Report = =

= = = Background = = =

Having just nine turns , the fewest on the Formula One calendar , the circuit offers very few low @-@ speed sections and gave teams an opportunity to push their power units to their potential . As in the previous year 's event , and for the third straight event overall , the yellow @-@ banded soft compound tyre were the prime dry selection while the red @-@ banded supersoft compound were the option dry selection . Pirelli also supplied two wet weather compounds : the green @-@ banded intermediate compound and the blue @-@ banded full wet compound .

Going into the race , Lewis Hamilton was leading teammate Nico Rosberg by 17 points , having won the previous race in Canada . Mercedes were leading Ferrari by more than 100 points in the Constructors ' standings . After introducing an engine update at the previous round in Canada , Ferrari were considered the most likely contenders for favorites Mercedes . Several other teams introduced updates to their cars as well , including Williams and McLaren .

= = = Supporting programme = = =

As part of the Grand Prix programme , a Legends Parade was held before the race , with a group of eight Formula One drivers from the 1980s set to present cars , mostly from Formula One 's first turbo era . Participating were local favorite Gerhard Berger ( 1988 Ferrari F1 / 87 / 88C ) , former McLaren teammates Niki Lauda ( 1984 McLaren MP4 / 2 ) and Alain Prost ( 1985 McLaren MP4 / 2B ) , Nelson Piquet ( 1983 Brabham BT52 ) , Jean Alesi ( 1995 Sauber C14 ) , Pierluigi Martini ( 1986 Minardi M186 ) , Riccardo Patrese ( 1984 Renault RE50 ) and Christian Danner ( 1987 Zakspeed 871 ) .

= = = Free practice = = =

Per the regulations for the 2015 season , three practice session were held , two one @-@ and @-@ a @-@ half @-@ hour sessions on Friday and another one @-@ hour session before qualifying on Saturday . At the first session , both Mercedes drivers were fastest , with Nico Rosberg being three @-@ tenths of a second faster than teammate Lewis Hamilton . The Ferrari of Kimi Räikkönen was the only other car to come inside one second of the Mercedes . The other Ferrari of Sebastian Vettel set the slowest lap time , as a gearbox problem prevented him from driving more

than four laps . The McLaren of Fernando Alonso suffered from gearbox issues as well , but the Spaniard was able to get back on track for the later part of the session . The team had brought a new aerodynamics package to Spielberg , which was tested by Alonso in free practice , who described it as " an improvement to the car " .

After his problems in the first session , Vettel was fastest in the second session on Friday afternoon . Nico Rosberg was second , about a tenth of a second behind , but did not set any timed laps in the last twenty minutes as his car was losing gearbox oil . Lewis Hamilton meanwhile struggled on the super @-@ soft tyres , making several errors that left him fifth . Both Lotus cars made it into the top ten , with Pastor Maldonado and Romain Grosjean in fourth and seventh respectively . Max Verstappen 's Toro Rosso was the fastest Renault @-@ powered car in eighth position , while the McLarens once again had to stop their session early .

Vettel was again fastest in third practice on Saturday morning , narrowly ahead of Hamilton 's Mercedes . Before all drivers were able to set times on the super @-@ soft tyres , Fernando Alonso coming to a stop on the start / finish straight brought out a red flag , halting the session . When practice resumed , rain had started to fall , preventing the drivers from improving on their times . Only Force India 's Sergio Pérez set a lap on the faster tyre compound , ending up fourth in the session .

= = = Qualifying = = =

Qualifying consisted of three parts , 18 , 15 and 12 minutes in length respectively , with five drivers eliminated from competing after each of the first two sessions . During the first part of qualifying ( Q1 ) , Kimi Räikkönen was eliminated due to a failure in communication , which meant he did not have enough time left for another fast lap at the end of the session . With the track still damp when qualifying began , times improved with every passing lap , with the drivers being able to switch from intermediate to slick tyres at the end of the first session . While the two Manors once again qualified at the end of the grid , Jenson Button was also eliminated in Q1 , leaving him with time penalties in the race , not being able to take the full extent of his 25 @-@ place grid penalty .

A dry track during Q2 saw the two Mercedes drivers fastest , Rosberg four @-@ tenths of a second faster than Hamilton . Fernando Alonso failed to make it into Q3 , the seventh time that season . He had missed the last part of qualifying seven times over the entire course of his Ferrari stint in the five previous seasons . Daniel Ricciardo was eliminated in 14th place , meaning that he - like Button - was unable to take the full extent of his ten @-@ place grid penalty .

The top ten contested the third part of qualifying . Romain Grosjean was unable to post a lap time after having problem with his brake @-@ by @-@ wire system . At the beginning of the session , both Mercedes drivers set two fast laps . After the first time around , Rosberg was ahead of Hamilton , but the World Champion improved on his second lap , being two @-@ tenths of a second faster than his teammate . During their final flying laps at the end of the session , both drivers spun on different parts of the track , Hamilton in turn one and Rosberg in the final corner , meaning the order remained , with Hamilton taking the 45th pole position of his career , drawing level with Sebastian Vettel , who qualified third . Last year 's pole sitter Felipe Massa followed in fourth , while Le Mans winner Nico Hülkenberg finished fifth , ahead of the second Williams of Valtteri Bottas .

= = = Race = = =

At the start of the race , Rosberg got off the line well and overtook teammate Hamilton for the lead going into turn one . Coming out of the following turn , Kimi Räikkönen was caught out by heavy wheelspin on his harder tyre compound going side by side and swept to the outside of the track , crashing into Fernando Alonso 's McLaren , who was lifted on top of the Ferrari . Both drivers were able to walk away unharmed from the incident . The collision brought out the safety car . At the end of the lap , Daniil Kvyat made a pit stop to replace a damaged front wing , while Will Stevens retired from the race with an oil leak . When the safety car came back into the pits on the end of lap six , Rosberg was able to defend his lead against Hamilton and quickly built a gap , leading him by 2

@. @ 3 seconds by lap eleven . Lap twelve saw the second McLaren of Jenson Button retiring with an intake system sensor failure .

On lap 16 , Valtteri Bottas reclaimed sixth position from Max Verstappen , a position he had lost at the start , while Hamilton started to close the gap to Rosberg in front . The German however reacted and extended his lead back to four seconds by lap 27 . Meanwhile , Bottas went past Le Mans winner Nico Hülkenberg for fifth place on lap 26 , but an earlier pit stop brought the German back out in front of the Williams . For speeding in the pit lane , Carlos Sainz , Jr. was handed a five @-@ second time penalty , which was not to be applied since the Spaniard retired on lap 34 due to a technical problem . Prior to the pit stops at the front of the field , Lewis Hamilton was able to reduce the gap to 2 @. @ 2 seconds by lap 32 . When Rosberg pitted one lap later , Hamilton led the race . Having thereby led a lap in seventeen consecutive races , Hamilton equalled a 45 @-@ year @-@ old record set by Jackie Stewart , who had led at least one lap each between the 1968 United States Grand Prix and the 1970 Belgian Grand Prix .

Hamilton pitted on lap 35 , coming out behind his teammate , driving over the white pit exit line in the process . This handed him a five @-@ second time penalty to be added to his finishing time . Sebastian Vettel came in two laps later , being stationary for more than 13 seconds due to a problem with the wheelnut of his rear right tyre and came out behind Felipe Massa in fourth place . Meanwhile , Romain Grosjean retired with gearbox issues . Vettel closed the gap to Massa in the last podium position , but was eventually unable to pass the Brazilian , handing Massa his first podium finish of 2015 . Toward the end of the race , Pastor Maldonado was racing Max Verstappen for seventh place . Going past the start / finish straight , Maldonado almost lost the rear of his car coming out of the Toro Rosso 's slipstream , while Verstappen locked up going into turn one , handing the position to the Lotus driver . Rosberg , who complained about vibrations in his front tyres during the last laps , crossed the finish line three seconds ahead of teammate Hamilton , taking his third victory of the season and the second consecutive one at Spielberg , reducing his championship gap to ten points .

= = = Post @-@ race = = =

At the podium interview , conducted by Gerhard Berger , Rosberg expressed his satisfaction with the victory , saying : " The start made the race . It was a great start and I managed to defend in the first couple of corners and then I really just tried to push flat out this time . I was really happy with the car and happy to see the gap open up to Lewis , so it really worked out perfectly today . " Meanwhile , Lewis Hamilton conceded that his teammate had done a " fantastic job , " stating that " [ a ] t the end of the day , he was quicker during the race . " Speaking about his start at the post @-@ race press conference , Hamilton explained that his car suffered from a lot of wheelspin , which made him get off the line slowly . Meanwhile , third placed Felipe Massa told the press that his team had " managed to get the opportunities , which it was a mistake of another team , " adding that the changes made to the car were " definitely positive . "

When asked about the necessity of closed cockpits following the first lap accident between Alonso and Räikkönen , Rosberg and Massa stated that improvements to safety should be made in this area , while Hamilton said he had no opinion on the matter . Alonso stated that he was " scared " after the collision and was visibly concerned for his rival 's safety upon checking on the condition of Räikkönen , and relieved that the accident left his former teammate uninjured . The race stewards decided not to take any disciplinary actions concerning the crash .

Following their battle for seventh place towards the end of the race , Pastor Maldonado accused Max Verstappen of " not respecting the rules , " though he went on to concede that it was great to be allowed to race on the limits by the stewards . The Dutchman in turn stated : " It 's quite funny that Pastor said that . It 's the only thing I say about it , it 's quite funny . " After suffering from multiple problems during and race and being unable to place any of their cars in the points , Sauber team principal Monisha Kaltenborn said the team needed to recover from a " really horrifying race . "

It was the fifth one @-@ two finish for Mercedes that season and Massa 's first podium appearance since Abu Dhabi the year before . The victory moved Rosberg closer to his teammate in the Drivers '

Championship , now ten points behind . It was his eleventh career victory , putting him level with Jacques Villeneuve , Rubens Barrichello and third placed Felipe Massa , who became only the eighth driver in the history of the sport to achieve more than 1 @, @ 000 championship points . In the Constructors ' Championship , Williams extended their lead to Red Bull to 74 points , while Force India moved up to fifth after their second double @-@ points finish of the season . In a weekend that the official Formula One website described as " a new low " for McLaren , Fernando Alonso retired from the fourth consecutive race , something that had never happened to him in his career .

= = Classification = =

= = = Qualifying = = =

#### Notes

^ 1 ? Daniil Kvyat received a ten @-@ place grid penalty for exceeding the allowed internal combustion engine allocation . ^ 2 ? Daniel Ricciardo received a ten @-@ place grid penalty for exceeding the allowed internal combustion engine allocation . ^ 3 ? Fernando Alonso received a ten- and two five @-@ place grid penalties for exceeding the allowed allocation of three of his power unit components , as well as a five @-@ place grid penalty for an unauthorized gearbox change . ^ 4 ? Jenson Button received a ten- and three five @-@ place grid penalties for exceeding the allowed allocation of four of his power unit components .

= = = Race = = =

#### Notes

^ 1 ? Lewis Hamilton received a 5 @-@ second time penalty for crossing the white line on pit exit .  
^ 2 ? Carlos Sainz , Jr. received a 5 @-@ second time penalty for speeding in the pit @-@ lane .

= = = Championship standings after the race = = =

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