

= 2016 Spanish Grand Prix =

The 2016 Spanish Grand Prix (formally known as the Formula 1 Gran Premio de España Pirelli 2016) was a Formula One motor race held on 15 May 2016 at the Circuit de Barcelona @-@ Catalunya in Montmeló , Spain . The race was the fifth round of the 2016 season , and marked the forty @-@ sixth running of the Spanish Grand Prix as a round of the Formula One World Championship . It was the twenty @-@ sixth time that the race has been held at the circuit .

Nico Rosberg was the defending race winner and entered the round with a forty @-@ three point lead over teammate Lewis Hamilton in the Drivers ' Championship . Their team , Mercedes , held an eighty @-@ one point lead over Ferrari in the Constructors ' Championship . Hamilton took pole position during qualifying , ahead of teammate Rosberg and Red Bull 's Daniel Ricciardo .

Max Verstappen won the race upon his debut for his new team Red Bull , having swapped his Toro Rosso seat with Daniil Kvyat ahead of the event . At the age of 18 years and 228 days , Verstappen became the youngest ever winner , the youngest driver to score a podium finish and the youngest ever to lead a lap of a Formula One race , breaking the previous records held by Sebastian Vettel . In the process he also became the first Dutchman to win a Grand Prix . Both Mercedes drivers retired from the race following a collision with each other on the first lap , thus marking the first Mercedes double retirement since the 2011 Australian Grand Prix and the first time the team had not scored a point since the 2012 United States Grand Prix .

= = Report = =

= = = Background = = =

Daniil Kvyat and Max Verstappen traded places ahead of the race . Verstappen joined Red Bull Racing while Kvyat returned to Scuderia Toro Rosso . Red Bull 's team principal Christian Horner explained the driver swap with Verstappen 's talent , saying that the 18 @-@ year old Dutchman and Daniel Ricciardo had the potential to become Formula One 's best driver pairing . Furthermore , he stressed that Verstappen 's move to Red Bull would tie him to the team for the foreseeable future . Daniil Kvyat meanwhile expressed surprise at the decision , saying during Thursday 's press conference that he was " shocked " by his demotion , stressing that Red Bull did not give him a " real explanation " . Following problems with his power unit in both the Chinese and Russian Grand Prix , Lewis Hamilton received a redesigned MGU @-@ H unit , in a bid to solve the troubles which hampered him earlier . However , Mercedes was unable to guarantee that the problem would not appear again .

With Spain being the first race in Western Europe , and a mid @-@ season test coming up after the race , many teams introduced their first major car updates for the Grand Prix . Mercedes ran a new front wing with a " more pointy " nose during first free practice . Other changes were made to the engine cover and the rear wing . McLaren made more significant changes to their MP4 @-@ 31 , most notably on the front wing , which Sky Sports commentator Ted Kravitz called the " most intricate front wing I 've ever seen " . Force India updated their VJM09 to improve airflow . According to the team , they were looking for improved driveability rather than faster lap times . Renault introduced a new chassis for Jolyon Palmer . More significantly , the French manufacturer debuted a new version of their power unit for both their works team and Red Bull at the two @-@ day test following the race . All other teams except for Sauber also made changes to their cars , with the Swiss team continuing their financial struggles . They also announced that they would be forced to miss the mid @-@ season test , being unable to field a development driver , with regulations demanding that two out of four test days be driven by young driver talents . Both Sauber and Haas were allowed to use the updated version of Ferrari 's 2016 power unit , which the works team had already used in Russia two weeks earlier .

Going into the weekend , Nico Rosberg led the Drivers ' Championship , having taken the maximum number of 100 points from the first four races . Lewis Hamilton followed in second with 57 points ,

while Kimi Räikkönen was third with 43 points . Daniel Ricciardo followed in fourth , ahead of Sebastian Vettel . In the Constructors ' standings , Mercedes was first with 157 points , 81 points clear of second @-@ placed Ferrari . Behind them , Red Bull led fourth @-@ placed Williams by just six points .

= = = Free practice = = =

Per the regulations for the 2016 season , two 90 @-@ minute practice sessions were held on Friday and another 60 @-@ minute session was held before qualifying on Saturday . The Ferrari drivers , Sebastian Vettel and Kimi Räikkönen , set the pace in the first session , both on the soft tyre compound . The Mercedes drivers Rosberg and Hamilton followed , albeit on the medium compound , recording more timed laps than their rivals . Both Red Bull cars followed in fifth and sixth , with Daniel Ricciardo faster than new teammate Max Verstappen . Valtteri Bottas was seventh for Williams , two places ahead of teammate Felipe Massa , who at one point spun out at turn five . Upon his return to Toro Rosso , Daniil Kvyat was unable to match the pace of his teammate Carlos Sainz Jr . , ending up half a second behind him . Esteban Ocon made his first free practice appearance of the season for Renault , replacing Jolyon Palmer , but was unable to set a timed lap . He suffered a tyre failure , caused by debris on the track . Force India 's Sergio Pérez managed only nine laps as he spent much of the session in the pit lane after smoke emerged from the rear of his car .

Mercedes topped the time sheets in the second session , now switching to the soft compound tyres as well , with Nico Rosberg two and a half @-@ tenths of a second clear of Kimi Räikkönen , while Lewis Hamilton was third fastest , more than seven tenths off Rosberg 's time . Räikkönen 's running was interrupted for a while when he was called back into the pitlane to investigate a fuel system problem , but was able to get back out . Fernando Alonso was seventh fastest for McLaren , but needed a replacement of his car 's plank after running wide over artificial grass surrounding the track . His teammate , Jenson Button , also experienced problems , having to stop at the end of the pitlane early in the session with an electrical issue . Renault 's problem from the first session continued : Jolyon Palmer , back in his car in place of Ocon , suffered a tyre failure on the start @-@ finish straight , bringing out red flags in the process . Renault and tyre supplier Pirelli were left puzzled over the failure , as in this incident , no sign of a cut from debris was found .

Nico Rosberg was again fastest in the third practice session on Saturday morning , setting a time of 1 : 23 @. @ 078 on his first timed run , a time that stood until the end of the session . Hamilton was second , 0 @. @ 126 seconds off , followed by Sebastian Vettel just two @-@ hundredths of a second behind him . In fourth place , Max Verstappen was faster than teammate Ricciardo for the first time , who finished fifth , ahead of Räikkönen . Upon beginning his preparation laps for qualifying , Rosberg had to come back into the garage , as a sensor on his car was malfunctioning . The team was capable of repairing the damage and he went back out for the final minutes of practice . Sergio Pérez was satisfied with the eighth fastest time , saying that the car had improved " everywhere " following the updates it had received .

= = = Qualifying = = =

Qualifying consisted of three parts , 18 , 15 and 12 minutes in length respectively , with six drivers eliminated from competing after each of the first two sessions . In the first part of qualifying (Q1) , Nico Rosberg set a time of 1 : 23 @. @ 002 , the fastest of the weekend up to that point , two @-@ tenths of a second ahead of teammate Hamilton . Manor and Sauber occupied the back rows of the grid . Felipe Massa 's first lap was seven @-@ tenths of a second slower than the one from his teammate Bottas and as he was unable to set another timed lap , he became the surprise elimination in Q1 , behind Jolyon Palmer , who was dropped into 17th place by a late improvement from Jenson Button .

In Q2 , it was Hamilton who came out on top , exactly six @-@ tenths of a second ahead of Rosberg . Verstappen was third fastest , ahead of Ricciardo in fifth . Kimi Räikkönen had to abandon

his first fast lap after running wide in turn four , but later set a time good enough for fourth . Meanwhile , Sebastian Vettel recorded just one timed lap , saving a set of tyres and was sixth . On his return to Toro Rosso , Kvyat was eliminated in 13th place , while teammate Sainz went through to Q3 . Sergio Pérez advanced as well , demoting his teammate Hülkenberg into elimination in the process , who would line up eleventh on the grid . Joining him on the sidelines for Q3 were Jenson Button in twelfth , with Romain Grosjean , Kevin Magnussen and Esteban Gutiérrez lining up behind Kvyat .

Lewis Hamilton and Nico Rosberg were the first out in Q3 . Hamilton 's early sector times put him on course to a new fastest lap of the weekend , but a brake lockup at turn ten ruined his lap and tyres , handing provisional pole position to Rosberg . As the two Ferrari drivers struggled to find pace , Max Verstappen claimed second place for the time being , before the drivers went out for their second laps . Lewis Hamilton 's second flying lap bested Rosberg 's time by almost three @-@ tenths of a second , and saw him take the fifty @-@ second pole of his career . The two Red Bull cars of Ricciardo and Verstappen followed , with Räikkönen and Vettel for Ferrari in fifth and sixth respectively , both more than a second behind Hamilton . Valtteri Bottas was best of the rest ahead of Sainz , Pérez and Alonso . It was the first appearance in Q3 for McLaren since they resumed their association with Honda in 2015 .

= = = Race = = =

At the start , Nico Rosberg got around the outside of Hamilton in turn one , while Räikkönen lost positions due to a slow getaway . Sebastian Vettel got past Verstappen , but was immediately repassed on the approach to turn four . At the front of the race , coming out of turn three Hamilton and Rosberg collided ending the race of both Mercedes drivers . The collision resulted in a safety car period , with the order standing : Ricciardo , Verstappen , Sainz , Vettel and Räikkönen . The safety car came in at the end of lap four . Vettel got past Sainz on lap eight and Räikkönen tried to follow suit two laps later , but was forced off track into turn two . He completed the move one lap later at the same spot . Sainz and Button were the first to come into the pits for new tyres on lap 12 , followed by race leader Ricciardo one lap later , making Verstappen the first Dutchman to lead a Grand Prix , before he came in another lap later . When Vettel made a pit stop on lap 16 , he emerged third behind the two Red Bull drivers , all on the medium compound tyre .

By lap 20 , Sebastian Vettel was closing the gap to the two Red Bulls ahead of him , coming within three second of Verstappen . On lap 22 , Nico Hülkenberg retired when his power unit caught fire and he had to stop on the sidelines . While Massa had fought from 18th on the grid into tenth , his teammate Bottas was lying fifth by lap 25 , ahead of Sainz . On lap 28 , Ricciardo was again the first of the front runners to pit , taking on the soft compound . Vettel came in two laps later , making the same choice in tyres . This left Verstappen to lead Kimi Räikkönen , as it emerged that both would run on a different strategy , pitting only twice in contrast to the three stopping Vettel and Ricciardo . On lap 34 , the gap between the two leaders was 2 @.@ 1 seconds , before Verstappen came in on the following lap . Räikkönen responded one lap later , emerging behind Verstappen . On lap 39 , Vettel came in for his third and final stop , while Ricciardo stayed out for another four laps . When he returned to the track , he was behind Vettel , but on fresher tyres .

While Räikkönen closed on Verstappen at the front , Fernando Alonso 's home race ended on lap 47 , pulling over to the side of the track at turn three . Räikkönen managed to get into the one @-@ second window to activate the drag reduction system (DRS) , as Vettel was eight seconds behind him with Ricciardo closing on him in fourth place . By lap 57 , Ricciardo was close enough to use DRS as well , but unable to pass . Three laps later , Ricciardo made an attempt at overtaking into turn one , but braking too late left him running wide , allowing Vettel back through . As the front runners lapped backmarkers , Kvyat , after scoring the first fastest lap for himself and Toro Rosso , overtook Gutiérrez for tenth place . Two laps from finish , Ricciardo suffered a puncture and was forced to pit , but retained fourth place ahead of Bottas . On the last lap , Renault drivers Kevin Magnussen and Jolyon Palmer collided , but both made it to the finish . As Verstappen crossed the finish line , he became the youngest ever and first Dutch race winner in Formula One .

== Post @-@ race ==

At the podium interviews , conducted by singer Plácido Domingo , Verstappen expressed delight about a " great race " , crediting his team with giving him a good car . Kimi Räikkönen said that while he was happy for Verstappen , he was disappointed not to have won . He blamed the lack of downforce while following as the reason why he had been unable to pass Verstappen . Vettel congratulated the winner as well , but lamented that his different strategy had not worked out in his favour . During the post @-@ race press conference , Räikkönen stressed that had anyone offered the team two podium positions after their poor performance in qualifying , they would have taken it " happily " . Fourth placed Ricciardo expressed bitterness over Red Bull 's decision to switch him to a three @-@ stop strategy , which eventually lost him a podium position , saying : " I 'm a bit devastated . A big part of me is happy the team are on winning form but it 's hard to celebrate " . His team later explained their decision , declaring that they had focused their strategy on Vettel , who they had considered the biggest threat .

In the Grand Prix , Max Verstappen broke several records : apart from being the youngest ever driver to win a race at 18 years and 228 days , he also was the youngest to stand on a Formula One podium , in both instances breaking Sebastian Vettel 's record set at the 2008 Italian Grand Prix by more than two years . Vettel had been 21 years and 2 months at the time . Verstappen also became the youngest driver to lead at least one lap of a Grand Prix , again overcoming a record set by Vettel , at the 2007 Japanese Grand Prix . Verstappen also was the first driver born in the 1990s to win a Grand Prix . He received considerable praise after the race , with Sky Sports F1 's David Croft saying that he " has shown he has everything to be a world champion " . His father Jos Verstappen , himself a former Grand Prix driver , declared that he considered his son a better driver than himself , as race wins had eluded him during his own career in the sport . French sport newspaper L 'Équipe declared Verstappen to be " already a great " and " in the big leagues " . Verstappen was also the first Dutchman to win a race , with the Netherlands becoming the 22nd country to produce a race winner . He was the tenth different winner of the Spanish Grand Prix in as many past editions .

Following their collision , Hamilton and Rosberg were summoned to the stewards after the race but neither received a penalty , as the stewards rated their crash as a racing incident , with no driver in particular to blame . It emerged that Rosberg had chosen the wrong engine mode for the start , being down on power which led to Hamilton going for a passing manoeuvre . However , Rosberg remained convinced that he had done nothing wrong , saying : " I made it very clear I wasn 't going to leave any space on the inside and I was very surprised he went for the gap " . While Hamilton apologised to the team after the incident , he refused to accept blame for it . Opinions about the incident varied : While Mercedes 's executive chairman Niki Lauda blamed Hamilton for the crash , former F1 driver Anthony Davidson said on Sky Sports F1 that Rosberg 's move was " very aggressive " . Three @-@ time world champion Jackie Stewart said after the race that Mercedes should fine Hamilton for the crash : " Hamilton is to blame . Rosberg was allowed to protect himself . You don 't go for it on the first lap . " Mercedes 's head of motorsport Toto Wolff stressed after the race that the team would continue to let their drivers race against each other freely , a decision praised by former world champion Alain Prost . While Rosberg said after the race that he contemplated having a talk with Hamilton about the situation , Mercedes later decided that they did " not need clear @-@ the @-@ air talks " . However , it later emerged that the pair did have a conversation about the incident before the next race in Monaco , which , according to Hamilton , was marked by " pure respect " . It was Mercedes 's first double retirement since the 2011 Australian Grand Prix , and the first time they failed to score a point since the 2012 United States Grand Prix , ending a 62 @-@ race long streak , the third longest in Formula One history .

For his last lap collision with teammate Jolyon Palmer , Kevin Magnussen received a ten @-@ second time penalty , dropping him one place to 15th . He also received two penalty points to his licence . Carlos Sainz received a reprimand from the stewards for leaving the pit lane one minute before it was allowed . He escaped a more severe penalty because he stopped shortly afterwards , thereby not gaining an advantage . Upon his return to Toro Rosso , Daniil Kvyat recorded the first

fastest lap of his career , and the first for the Italian team in their 190th Grand Prix .

With 100 points from the first four races , Nico Rosberg remained on top of the Drivers ' Championship , while Hamilton 's retirement dropped him behind Räikkönen , who now trailed Rosberg by 39 points , four points ahead of Hamilton . Sebastian Vettel and Daniel Ricciardo were level on points with 48 , while Verstappen 's victory moved him into sixth on 38 . In the Constructors ' standings , Mercedes retained their lead on 157 points , but Ferrari closed the gap to 48 points , with Red Bull in third on 94 . Toro Rosso moved ahead of Haas into fifth , while Force India took seventh from McLaren .

= = Classification = =

= = = Qualifying = = =

= = = Race = = =

Notes

^ 1 ? Kevin Magnussen originally finished 14th but received a ten @-@ second time penalty after the race for causing a collision with Jolyon Palmer .

= = = Standings after the race = = =

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