

= 2015 United States Grand Prix =

The 2015 United States Grand Prix (formally known as the 2015 Formula 1 United States Grand Prix) was a Formula One motor race that took place on 25 October 2015 . The race was contested over fifty @-@ six laps and held at the Circuit of the Americas . It was the sixteenth round of the 2015 season and marked the thirty @-@ seventh time that the United States Grand Prix was run as a round of the World Championship since its inception in 1950 , and the fourth time that the event was hosted at this circuit .

Lewis Hamilton was the defending race winner and entered with a 66 @-@ point lead in the Drivers ' Championship over Sebastian Vettel of Ferrari , with Hamilton 's Mercedes teammate Nico Rosberg a further seven points behind . The three @-@ day event was run in torrential conditions ; as a result , the second practice session and the final qualifying session were cancelled , while the whole of qualifying was delayed until the morning of the race day .

Hamilton won the race , passing Nico Rosberg in the later stages , and thereby secured his third Drivers ' Championship , as Sebastian Vettel finished third . An incident @-@ packed race saw only twelve cars reach the finish line , with Max Verstappen repeating his best result of the season in fourth and Jenson Button finishing a season @-@ best sixth . After starting in damp conditions , both Red Bull drivers were initially able to challenge the Mercedes for the lead , but later dropped back as the track dried , with Daniil Kvyat retiring after a crash and Daniel Ricciardo eventually finishing tenth .

= = Report = =

= = = Background = = =

Alexander Rossi became the first American to drive in the United States Grand Prix at the Circuit of the Americas , returning to Manor Marussia after Roberto Merhi had raced for them in Russia . The Sauber team celebrated their 400th Grand Prix in Formula One . The weather was forecast to be wet all weekend , with especially treacherous conditions on Friday afternoon and Saturday , while the race day itself was expected to be slightly less wet .

Fernando Alonso ran a new power unit in his McLaren over the weekend , one that he had already used once during practice for the previous race in Russia , having taken the grid penalty for it there . Teammate Jenson Button hoped for Alonso to " annihilate " him , adding : " It 's unusual to say that , but in our situation it 's about getting it on the car . " McLaren also introduced new aerodynamic parts to their cars for the Grand Prix . Both Sebastian Vettel and Kimi Räikkönen of Ferrari needed to exchange their power units . Having already used the allowed four units for the season , both drivers received ten @-@ place grid penalties . Manor Marussia 's Will Stevens was placed back twenty grid spots for a change of his engine , turbocharger and MGU @-@ H unit . Renault used eleven of their twelve remaining token for changes to their power unit . However , both customer teams , Red Bull and Toro Rosso chose not to run with the update , saying its performance advantage was not worth taking the grid penalties . Both Red Bull and McLaren used new front wings , emulating a concept introduced by Mercedes supposed to create more downforce by directing the airflow towards the outside of the front tyres . Similar changes were made by Ferrari to their SF15 @-@ T. In preparation for the effects of the high altitude in Mexico , Mercedes added two " ears " at the top of the airbox in order to improve cooling to the Energy Recovery System of their power unit .

The race used the same two DRS zones as previous races at the track . The first was between turns eleven and twelve , and the second on the start / finish straight between turns twenty and one . Pirelli supplied teams with the white @-@ banded medium tyre as the prime compound and the yellow @-@ banded soft tyre as the option selection , with the manufacturer citing the characteristics of the circuit with " a wide range of corners and elevations " as the reason the two middle compounds were chosen .

Coming into the weekend , Mercedes had already secured the Constructors ' Championship , having done so at the previous race in Russia . Ferrari was in second place on 359 points , 139 points ahead of Williams . In the Drivers ' Championship , Lewis Hamilton led with 302 points , 66 ahead of Sebastian Vettel and 73 ahead of his teammate , Nico Rosberg . This meant that Hamilton would be able to win the title with three races to spare , as long as he gathered nine points more than Vettel and two more than Rosberg at the Grand Prix .

= = = Free practice = = =

Per the regulations for the 2015 season , three practice sessions were scheduled , two 1 @. @ 5 @- @ hour sessions on Friday and another one @- @ hour session before qualifying on Saturday . However , with treacherous weather conditions including flood warnings , the second practice session was cancelled due to heavy rain and a thunderstorm . The other two practice session were run in wet conditions .

Nico Rosberg topped the timesheets on Friday , ahead of the two Red Bull cars of Daniil Kvyat and Daniel Ricciardo . The session started on a very wet track , but with no more rain falling , it dried out as the practice progressed , with drivers soon switching to intermediate tyres . Lewis Hamilton was fifth fastest , behind Carlos Sainz , Jr .. Despite going off the track late in the session , Fernando Alonso was ninth fastest in the McLaren with the new power unit . A gearbox problem meant that Pastor Maldonado was unable to take to the track , while at Sauber , Raffaele Marciello replaced Felipe Nasr , ending the session three tenths of a second quicker than teammate Marcus Ericsson .

The practice session on Saturday was run without spectators to ensure their safety . On track , Lewis Hamilton was fastest , ahead of his closest championship rival Sebastian Vettel . With conditions worsening over the course of the session , Vettel spun out twice . Max Verstappen ended the session last , while Force India 's Nico Hülkenberg was third , ahead of Valtteri Bottas and Sainz .

= = = Qualifying = = =

Inclement weather continued to disrupt the Saturday 's proceedings as qualifying was delayed multiple times before being ultimately rescheduled for Sunday morning . Many drivers backed the decision , with Jenson Button saying : " It was the right thing to do [...] . In one respect , maybe if we decided three hours earlier it would have been better for the fans . But we wanted to get out there and drive and put on a show . Delaying it every half an hour was the way it had to be . " During the waiting period on Saturday , many teams had engaged in tomfoolery in the paddock to entertain the crowds , such as bowling or ballroom dancing between Red Bull teammates Daniel Ricciardo and Daniil Kvyat . Ferrari later condemned the behaviour of their fellow teams , with team principal Maurizio Arrivabene saying : " We are a Formula One team , not the Cirque du Soleil . " Kimi Räikkönen backed him , stating : " I think this is F1 and not the circus . The people are obviously not happy when we 're not running but we cannot make them happy with whatever we do apart from running . "

Qualifying was scheduled to consist of three parts , 18 , 15 and 12 minutes in length respectively , with five drivers eliminated from competing after each of the first two sessions . The first part of qualifying (Q1) was disrupted after a little more than five minutes , when Sainz crashed at turn four , bringing out red flags . Due to the prospect of worsening rain and the chance that qualifying could be brought to an end by the weather at any point , the teams fought for grid positions early on , with Lewis Hamilton , Nico Rosberg and Daniel Ricciardo setting the fastest times . Apart from Sainz , both Manor Marussia drivers were eliminated , along with the two Sauber cars of Marcus Ericsson and Felipe Nasr . Sebastian Vettel , after making contact with a barrier , finished Q1 in fifteenth place , barely making it into Q2 .

In Q2 , lap times improved and the two Mercedes drivers led the way , with Rosberg a little over a tenth of a second ahead of teammate Hamilton . Fernando Alonso went faster than Valtteri Bottas and looked to make it into Q3 , when Max Verstappen went faster and eliminated the McLaren driver

. Also not in the top ten were both Lotus and the second McLaren of Jenson Button . Conditions soon worsened , preventing faster lap times . Many drivers spun out in the latter part of the session , complaining about aquaplaning .

With more rain falling , the decision was made to cancel the third part of qualifying and use the results of Q2 to determine the grid . Therefore , Nico Rosberg secured his third consecutive pole position , ahead of Hamilton , Ricciardo , and Daniil Kvyat . Fifth fastest was Sebastian Vettel for Ferrari , but his grid penalty meant that the third row on the grid was made up by the two Force India cars of Sergio Pérez and Nico Hülkenberg respectively . The penalties for both Ferraris saw Fernando Alonso move up to ninth on the grid , the highest grid position for McLaren at that point of the season . Following his third pole in a row , Rosberg said he wanted to win the race " really badly " , after being passed by Hamilton in Japan and retiring from the Russian Grand Prix whilst in the lead . Sainz required permission from the stewards to start the race , after failing to set a time within 107 % of Ricciardo 's fastest lap in Q1 . He was later allowed to start and did so after his team was able to repair his car in time for the start . Following a gearbox change , Valtteri Bottas received a five @-@ place grid penalty , moving him from eleventh to sixteenth on the grid .

= = = Race = = =

While the rain had stopped come race time , the track was still wet and slippery and all drivers opted to start on intermediate tyres . Hamilton got away better at the start , entering the first corner alongside pole @-@ sitter Rosberg and , by forcing the German wide , took the lead exiting turn one . Getting off track saw Rosberg lose additional positions , running fifth behind Hamilton , Kvyat , Ricciardo and Pérez . Further back , a collision involved Alonso , Massa , the two Saubers of Ericsson and Nasr as well as Bottas , who pitted after the first lap , as did Nasr , who was the first to fit slick tyres , as the track was starting to dry . Will Stevens was touched from behind by teammate Alexander Rossi , breaking his rear wing and forcing him to retire . Having started from the back of the grid , Carlos Sainz profited from the incidents and was up to tenth by the end of the first lap . While Rosberg soon took back fourth from Pérez , Hamilton in front came under pressure from Kvyat , with the Red Bulls running fast in the damp conditions . With Kvyat just half a second behind the championship leader , a virtual safety car period was declared on lap five to clear the debris from the first corner incident . On lap 7 , Valtteri Bottas retired with a damper failure caused by the turn one contact . When the virtual safety car ended on lap 8 , Rosberg made an immediate move on Ricciardo to move into third , overtaking Kvyat for second on the same lap . Romain Grosjean became another victim of the accident on lap one , when he came into the pits for a second time on lap 12 and retired . By the same time , Sebastian Vettel had moved up into sixth place from thirteenth on the grid . Up front , Kvyat went wide while trying to overtake Rosberg , allowing teammate Ricciardo through into third ; Ricciardo in turn made a successful manoeuvre on Rosberg to move up into second .

A battle for the lead developed between Hamilton and Ricciardo , until the Australian moved around Hamilton on lap 15 . With the grip of the intermediate tyres deteriorating , there were many overtaking manoeuvres on track . Rosberg unsuccessfully tried to overtake teammate Hamilton for second on lap 16 , while Verstappen took sixth place from Vettel one lap later , only to run wide and lose the position again . On lap 18 , Rosberg moved ahead of Hamilton , who was the first of the front runners to change tyres at the end of the lap , going for a dry compound . The other frontrunners followed suit over the next couple of laps . Following the pit stops , Ricciardo led from Rosberg , Kvyat and Hamilton . The two Mercedes drivers moved ahead of their respective Red Bull rivals on laps 22 and 23 , while Vettel , now in fifth , closed on the leading quartet . On lap 24 , he reached Kvyat and overtook him for fourth , while Nico Rosberg extended his lead to Ricciardo to nine seconds by lap 25 . Hamilton took second place from Ricciardo one lap later . At the same time , Kimi Räikkönen was forced to retire . So had Massa on lap 24 , suffering the same problem that had forced his teammate to stop .

On lap 27 , Marcus Ericsson 's Sauber came to a halt on track , bringing out the proper safety car . At this halfway point of the race , the order stood as : Rosberg , Hamilton , Ricciardo , Kvyat ,

Verstappen , as Vettel used the safety car period for a tyre change , moving him back into sixth . When the safety car pulled into pit lane at the end of lap 32 , Vettel was back in fifth after Verstappen had also pitted for new tyres . The German moved ahead into fourth at Kvyat 's expense into turn one at the restart and went on to overtake the other Red Bull of Ricciardo some turns later . However , Ricciardo fought back to regain the place in the next corner . Vettel was able to make the move stick going into turn one on the subsequent lap . Meanwhile , Kvyat was further demoted when Verstappen moved ahead into fifth , followed by Hülkenberg . On lap 35 , Verstappen overtook the second Red Bull of Ricciardo to move into fourth . When Nico Hülkenberg attempted to do the same one lap later , he and Ricciardo collided , forcing the German to retire . Ricciardo was able to continue , but was overtaken by his teammate , with Jenson Button behind in seventh place . When another virtual safety car period was declared to clear Hülkenberg 's car , Rosberg decided to pit , moving him back to fourth behind Hamilton , Vettel and Verstappen . By lap 40 , when the safety car period was over , Rosberg was up into third at the expense of Verstappen , while Alonso moved up several places into sixth , with teammate Button in fifth . Running on newer tyres , Rosberg was able to overtake Vettel on lap 42 .

One lap later , Daniil Kvyat suffered a heavy impact at the penultimate corner , causing another safety car period . Both Hamilton and Vettel used this to change tyres again , as did Button on lap 45 . The safety car came back in at the end of lap 46 , with the order being : Rosberg , Hamilton , Verstappen , Vettel , Alonso , Pérez , Button and Maldonado . At the restart , Verstappen tried to move past Hamilton but failed and was in turn overtaken by Vettel . On lap 48 , Nico Rosberg lost the lead to Hamilton after sliding off track due to wheelspin in his rear tyres . The German later declared that his mistake was caused by a strong gust of wind . Hamilton soon opened up a gap to his teammate , while Jenson Button moved up into sixth ahead of Alonso on lap 50 , but lost the position again to Sainz before the end of the race . His teammate Alonso had been running fifth , but a loss of power from his engine moved him down the order to eventually finish eleventh . In the closing laps , Vettel edged closer to Rosberg in second , but was unable to overtake . This meant that Hamilton , who crossed the line as race winner , also took his third career championship title , with both Vettel and Rosberg now too far behind .

= = = Post @-@ race = = =

At the podium interviews , conducted by Elton John , Nico Rosberg expressed his disappointment at the outcome of the race . He had visibly vented his anger in the cool down room , when he was seen throwing his podium cap at Lewis Hamilton , an incident he later played down as " just our typical games " . Sebastian Vettel on the other hand was delighted with his performance , saying that the team had " exceeded all expectations " . Newly crowned world champion Hamilton called his third title " the greatest moment of my life " , thanking his father and his family for their support . Comparing the title win to his two previous ones , he said : " the last two times were really climactic in the last race . This one still feels just as special if not more special [...] . It has kind of topped last year for me ? it 's equalling Ayrton [Senna] " . He described equalling his idol 's title tally as " a very humbling experience " , saying that he felt " very blessed " . However , more friction appeared at Mercedes , when Nico Rosberg called Hamilton 's manoeuvre at the start " very , very aggressive " . Hamilton in turn said of the incident : " It was very close with Nico at the beginning . It wasn 't intentional . We both braked deep and there is no grip there and he was turning and I wasn 't turning . " The team 's executive director Toto Wolff said that the incident would need to be discussed , a notion dismissed by Hamilton , who said : " There is no need . Everyone has a right to an opinion but it doesn 't matter . I won the race . "

Manor Marussia 's Alexander Rossi was delighted with his result in twelfth , feeling that it could be " the start of great things " , after he had equalled the team 's best result of the season . Daniel Ricciardo called for the FIA to clear up the regulations of the virtual safety car , following him being overtaken easily at the first restart by Nico Rosberg , saying that he had not gotten a warning about the end of the period . Kimi Räikkönen was equally displeased , complaining about the rules concerning driving standards . Following his on @-@ track battle with Max Verstappen , he

demanded clarification on whether Verstappen 's aggressive driving style was legal , saying : " I just wanted to ask if it 's OK when you are next to another car , at some point on the exit of the corner are you allowed to always push the other car up on the kerbs [...] . Apparently it 's fine . As long as everybody has the same rules that 's OK . " Concerning the collision between Nico Hülkenberg and Ricciardo , Force India revealed that damage to Hülkenberg 's front wing had caused him to lose downforce and slide into the Red Bull . Following the turn one collision between their two drivers , Sauber 's team principal Monisha Kaltenborn announced that she intended to " have a word " with her drivers , saying : " The bottom line of this is that these kind of things simply must not happen . It is OK if you have decent and healthy competition which they do ? both drivers are respectful to each other . [...] I 'm upset . These mistakes shouldn 't happen . We are much better than this . "

Following the Grand Prix , Bobby Epstein , chairman of the Circuit of the Americas spoke of a " tough weekend " for the organisers . According to Epstein , the weekend had been " financially devastating [...] for the company " that runs the track . This was caused in large parts by the weather conditions over the weekend , while the return of the Mexican Grand Prix also played a role .

= = Classification = =

= = = Qualifying = = =

Notes

^ 1 ? Due to heavy rain and aquaplaning on track during Q2 , Q3 was cancelled with all positions being taken from Q2 times . ^ 2 ? Sebastian Vettel and Kimi Räikkönen both received ten @-@ place grid penalties for using an additional power unit . ^ 3 ? Valtteri Bottas received a five @-@ place grid penalty for a gearbox change after qualifying . ^ 4 ? Will Stevens received a twenty @-@ place grid penalty for various changes to his power unit , but was not placed back on the grid due to Sainz Jr. not setting a timed lap . ^ 5 ? Carlos Sainz , Jr. failed to set a lap time within 107 % of the fastest time set in Q1 ; he was later permitted to race by the stewards .

= = = Race = = =

Notes

^ 1 ? Carlos Sainz , Jr. finished sixth but had five seconds added to his race time for speeding in the pit lane .

= = = Championship standings after the race = = =

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

Bold text indicates 2015 World Champions