

= 2015 Singapore Grand Prix =

The 2015 Singapore Grand Prix (formally known as the 2015 Formula 1 Singapore Airlines Singapore Grand Prix) was a Formula One motor race held on 20 September 2015 at the Marina Bay Street Circuit in Marina Bay , Singapore . The race was the thirteenth round of the 2015 season . It was the eighth time the race was run as a round of the Formula One World Championship .

Defending race winner Lewis Hamilton of Mercedes entered as the leader in the World Drivers ' Championship with 252 points , 53 points ahead of teammate Nico Rosberg and 74 points ahead of Ferrari 's Sebastian Vettel . Mercedes came into the race leading the Constructors ' Championship by 181 points ahead of Ferrari , with Williams a further 82 points back in third place .

Vettel won the race from pole position , ahead of Red Bull 's Daniel Ricciardo in second and Vettel 's Ferrari teammate Kimi Räikkönen in third . The Mercedes team struggled at Singapore ; Lewis Hamilton recorded his first retirement of the season , while Nico Rosberg managed only fourth place , closing the gap in the championship to 41 points .

= = Report = =

= = = Background = = =

Coming to Singapore , Nico Rosberg was forced to change his power unit after his engine failure at the previous race in Italy . Using his fourth unit of the season , Rosberg was one power unit change away from a possible grid penalty . Alexander Rossi made his Formula One debut after signing a five @-@ race deal to replace Roberto Merhi at Manor Marussia . Acting as race stewards at the Grand Prix were Garry Connelly from Australia and Vincenzo Spano from Venezuela , who assisted driver steward Martin Donnelly in his first appearance in this position since the 2014 Malaysian Grand Prix . Sauber brought a " heavily @-@ updated car " to the Grand Prix , featuring a shorter nose and revised front and rear wings as well as a new engine cover and brake ducts . Toro Rosso also came to Singapore with new parts , bringing a revised front wing . Red Bull introduced a new component as well : Daniil Kvyat 's car was equipped with new turning vanes installed to improve the airflow under the car and therefore create more downforce . The feature would be run by both cars at the following Japanese Grand Prix . Further updates included changes to the diffuser , rear wing , brake ducts and bodywork of the Force India VJM08B and modifications to the floor in front of the rear wheels of the Ferrari SF15 @-@ T.

The FIA approved minor changes to the layout of the Marina Bay Street Circuit ahead of the Grand Prix . The modifications ran from turn 11 to turn 13 ; drivers still turned right at turn 11 but it now kinked left slightly on entry , with the track shifting to the left @-@ hand side of Fullerton Road . This changed the profile of turn 12 , as drivers now used the other side of the Anderson Bridge , while the hairpin at turn 13 has been widened by a metre in order to increase overtaking opportunities . The drag reduction system (DRS) had two activation zones for the race ; the first between turns five and seven down the length of Raffles Boulevard , and the second on the start / finish straight between turn 23 to turn one .

As in the previous year 's event , and third season in a row , Pirelli , Formula One 's sole tyre supplier , brought its yellow @-@ banded soft compound tyre as the harder " prime " tyre and the red @-@ banded supersoft compound tyre as the softer " option " tyre , as well as the green @-@ banded intermediate weather and the blue @-@ banded full @-@ wet weather compounds .

With forest fires continuing to burn in neighboring Indonesia , heavy smog was a concern for the event . Unhealthy levels forced the cancellation of other events in Singapore in the week leading up to the Grand Prix . Race organisers , however , did not speculate whether the Grand Prix was also under threat of cancellation . It was later reported that the smog had lifted and that the race could go ahead without any restrictions .

Coming into the race weekend , Lewis Hamilton was leading the Drivers ' Championship with 252 points , 53 points ahead of Nico Rosberg , his teammate at Mercedes . Another 21 points behind in

third was Sebastian Vettel , driving for Ferrari . In the Constructors ' Standings , Mercedes were leading on 451 points , followed by Ferrari and Williams with 270 and 188 points respectively .

= = = Free practice = = =

Per the regulations for the 2015 season , three practice sessions were held ; there were two 90 @-@ minute sessions on Friday and another one @-@ hour session before qualifying on Saturday . Since Singapore was a night race , the practice sessions started at a later local time ; 18 : 00 for the first and 21 : 30 for the second session on Friday . This meant that the gap between the first two practice sessions was half an hour shorter than in other races . The two Mercedes cars were fastest in the first session on Friday , with Nico Rosberg topping the time sheets at 1 : 47 @.@ 995 . Championship leader Lewis Hamilton was second , 0 @.@ 319 seconds behind , while Daniel Ricciardo was 0 @.@ 017 seconds slower in third , ahead of the two Ferraris of Sebastian Vettel and Kimi Räikkönen , even though Vettel briefly left the track in turn five towards the end of the session . While Ricciardo felt he could go even faster , his teammate Daniil Kvyat was able to put in only eight laps due to a fuel system problem , and he finished the session eighteenth , just ahead of the two Manor Marussia drivers . Manor 's Alexander Rossi placed last , albeit close to teammate Will Stevens , before crashing out at turn 18 , ending the last timed runs of all other drivers left on track .

Early on in practice two , Will Stevens became the second Manor driver to make contact with the barriers , damaging his car . Teammate Rossi was limited to only three laps of running as his team spent most of the session repairing the damage from the shunt in first practice , he eventually finished almost 14 seconds down on Daniil Kvyat , who topped the session with a time of 1 : 46 @.@ 142 . The second Red Bull of Daniel Ricciardo finished third , with Räikkönen in between the two . Hamilton was the fastest Mercedes driver in fourth , while Rosberg managed only seventh fastest , behind Sebastian Vettel and Sergio Pérez . Fernando Alonso finished eighth for McLaren , also within a second of Kvyat . However , his teammate Jenson Button , who was 14th with a detuned power unit , still expressed disappointment at the team 's pace , saying he had hoped the car to be better . Several drivers made minor contact with the walls on the narrow Singapore circuit , including Pastor Maldonado and Carlos Sainz , Jr . , who suffered a left @-@ rear puncture after hitting the wall at turn five . After the performances by both Red Bull and Ferrari , Lewis Hamilton expected a " genuine challenge " from both teams over the rest of the weekend . Meanwhile , both Red Bull 's Daniel Ricciardo and Ferrari 's Sebastian Vettel were less optimistic . While Ricciardo said he was " still not looking to them [Mercedes] " , Vettel felt that Mercedes " looked a bit slow but I 'm sure they will change it for tomorrow " .

In the third practice session on Saturday evening , the two Ferraris were in front , with Vettel fastest at 1 : 45 @.@ 682 , while Räikkönen was almost half a second off his teammate 's pace . The two Red Bulls of Kvyat and Ricciardo were behind , followed by both Mercedes cars , who trailed Vettel by more than a second . Meanwhile , Fernando Alonso continued McLaren 's good form and finished seventh fastest . Lewis Hamilton had several problems during the session ; an early run was interrupted by him leaving the track and he was later called to drive through the pit lane to cool down his overheating car . Valtteri Bottas was the fastest Williams driver in eleventh , just in front of Nico Hülkenberg , who drove a revised version of his Force India . The two Manor Marussia cars were again last , with Rossi almost three seconds ahead of Stevens .

= = = 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) , only the Ferrari were confident enough to run only on the slower , harder tyres , while the rest of the field needed to equip the super @-@ soft compound . Daniil Kvyat topped the session with a time of 1 : 45 @.@ 340 on the supersoft tyre . Pastor Maldonado was eliminated , as were the two Manor Marussias , who were even further off the pace than usual . Both of the team 's drivers

received a five @-@ place grid penalty for a gearbox change . Both Sauber drivers also did not make it into Q2 , when Jenson Button was the last to set a fast lap , edging out Felipe Nasr by less than a tenth of a second .

Vettel set the fastest time in the second part of qualifying as well , being two tenths faster than second placed Daniil Kvyat . While Max Verstappen made it into Q3 , his teammate Sainz hit the wall in turn 19 close to the end of the session , damaging his suspension and front wing , with parts of debris left on the track . With the session ending under yellow flags , both Force India and both McLaren drivers joined Sainz in elimination , with Nico Hülkenberg fastest in eleventh place on the grid . Everyone behind Sainz failed to finish their laps , including Mercedes drivers Nico Rosberg and Lewis Hamilton .

At the beginning of Q3 , Lewis Hamilton aborted his first fast lap . Mercedes seemed to struggle most in the final sector , where Hamilton lost half a second to the Red Bull of Kvyat . Hamilton later stated that the team had problems generating heat in the tyres , essential for the final sector that benefitted high traction . It was Sebastian Vettel who took pole position , having led the final two parts of qualifying , ahead of Daniel Ricciardo , who lost time in the first sector after having to back off from Valtteri Bottas in front of him . The other Ferrari and Red Bull of Räikkönen and Kvyat claimed third and fourth on the grid respectively , followed by both Mercedes cars , who were one and a half seconds down on Vettel 's pole time of 1 : 43 @.@ 885 . This was the first pole position for Ferrari since the 2012 German Grand Prix , the first in dry conditions for five years , and also prevented Lewis Hamilton from equalling Ayrton Senna 's record of eight consecutive pole positions . Vettel 's pole also brought an end to Mercedes ' 23 @-@ race long run of pole positions , and it was the first time since the beginning of the 2014 season that the first spot on the grid was not taken by a Mercedes @-@ powered car .

== Race ==

Before the formation lap , Rosberg appeared to have an issue with his car , when he stopped at the end of pit lane on the way to the start grid . However , his mechanics were able to rectify the problem , described by Niki Lauda as " a glitch " , and he made it to the grid . With everyone starting on the super @-@ soft tyre compound , a race with two pit stops was expected for most drivers . At the start , all drivers at the front of the field held their positions , while further back , Nico Hülkenberg , who had a good start , and Sergio Pérez nearly collided while fighting for position . Max Verstappen 's Toro Rosso STR10 stalled on the grid and was pushed back to the pits , only to start his race shortly after , more than one lap down on the leaders . Vettel was able to build a gap to Ricciardo behind him quickly , leading the Red Bull by three seconds after the first lap . Fernando Alonso , who had enjoyed a decent start to move up into eleventh , came under pressure from Sainz by lap four , followed by Grosjean , who lost places at the start because he had to move around the stationary Verstappen . While Vettel 's lead was about five seconds on lap five , Verstappen unlapped himself by lap six and posted fast lap times . Meanwhile , Nico Rosberg held off the two Williams cars of Bottas and Massa , while Lewis Hamilton in front was able to move clear of the pack fighting for sixth place . Kimi Räikkönen in third place was held at a distance by Ricciardo , trailing him by 1 @.@ 6 seconds on lap nine . A lap later , Grosjean became the first driver to pit . More cars came in on lap eleven , leading to heavy traffic that prevented Sainz and Alonso from leaving their pit boxes , costing time . Alonso emerged from pit lane ahead of Grosjean , who moved past him into thirteenth . Felipe Massa had a slow stop of 4 @.@ 8 seconds when he pitted at the end of lap 13 . When he emerged from pit lane , Nico Hülkenberg was approaching on the racing line . Both drivers collided , with Hülkenberg being catapulted off Massa 's front right tyre , causing him to retire from the race . A Virtual Safety Car period ensued , that saw all drivers pit that had not done so before . Since Kvyat had pitted shortly before the safety car was deployed , both Mercedes cars were able to move in front of him , leaving Kvyat in sixth place . Jenson Button 's stop took a long time , dropping him to 16th place . By lap 16 , the virtual was replaced by the actual safety car , which stayed out until the end of lap 18 .

At the restart , Sainz was caught out by his car being stuck in neutral , losing many places and

dropping back to 18th position , but managed to continue . The safety car had meanwhile allowed his teammate Verstappen to move closer to the pack , being about half a lap down on lap 20 . The next laps saw Vettel setting a steady pace at the front to conserve his tyres , leading Hamilton to declare that " Vettel 's backing up Ricciardo " on team radio . On lap 26 , Hamilton reported a loss of power to his crew . He subsequently lost positions rapidly , dropping back to ninth by lap 28 , eventually retiring on lap 33 . Meanwhile , Felipe Massa had problems with his car as well . Similar to Sainz , he saw his car switch to neutral . After driving through pit lane without stopping on lap 30 , he retired a lap later , with Fernando Alonso also ending his race on lap 34 with a defective gearbox . On the same lap , Daniil Kvyat came in for his second pit stop , but trouble with the tyres caused him to lose positions as he dropped to ninth . Around the same time , Vettel held a five @-@ second advantage over Ricciardo , while Pérez overtook Grosjean for ninth on lap 36 .

A second safety car period was caused on lap 37 by a man walking on the track . Several drivers again used the safety car to pit for new tyres , including Jenson Button , who emerged in tenth place . By lap 40 , Alexander Rossi was instructed to unlap himself behind the safety car , but when he failed to do so in an acceptable time , the race was resumed on lap 41 , with Rossi stuck between the front runners . By lap 42 , Button was racing Pastor Maldonado for position , when both collided in turn 15 , damaging Button 's front wing , who was forced to pit to have it exchanged . Button rejoined in 14th place , telling his team on the radio " I should have known , really , that he 's mental " , speaking about Maldonado . By lap 45 , Max Verstappen , who had started more than a lap behind , was up to ninth and set the new fastest lap of the race . One lap later , he took eighth place from Grosjean . His teammate Sainz followed two laps later , with Grosjean complaining that Sainz had left him " nowhere to go " . Meanwhile , at the front , Ricciardo set a fastest lap on lap 51 , being 2 @.@ 9 seconds behind leading man Vettel . Lap 53 saw Jenson Button become the second McLaren to retire , suffering from a gearbox issue as well . During the closing stages of the race , Valtteri Bottas in fifth experienced gearbox problems of his own , but was able to continue . On lap 60 , Grosjean ran wide and let Felipe Nasr move through into the final point scoring position , tenth . During the last lap , Toro Rosso instructed Verstappen to let his teammate Sainz pass him for eighth , but Verstappen refused and stayed in place . Sebastian Vettel crossed the line to win the race , which took the entire allowed span of two hours .

== = Post @-@ race == =

At the podium interviews , conducted by former team owner Eddie Jordan , Sebastian Vettel described the race as one of his best ever , calling it " a great day ; we had a really great weekend " . He also revealed that his drink bottle had failed halfway into the race , causing him to become thirsty as drivers lose two to three litres in sweat during the Singapore race . Second placed Daniel Ricciardo said he felt that an undercut , overtaking Vettel by pitting earlier might have been possible had it not been for the safety car periods . Kimi Räikkönen expressed surprise at his performance , considering that he had struggled with the handling of the car both in qualifying and the race . Speaking about the track intruder , Sebastian Vettel stated at the post @-@ race press conference that he " saw him taking a picture " and continued : " I hope it was a good one at least . I hope it was in focus ! Yeah , pretty crazy , we approach that corner at around 280 ? 290 klicks so , I don 't know , I wouldn 't cross the track if I was him . It was crazy , obviously [...] " . The intruder was later revealed to be 27 @-@ year old British citizen Yogvitam Pravin Dhokia . He appeared in court on the Tuesday following the race and was offered a bail of S \$ 15 @,@ 000 , which he was unable to pay . He was later sentenced to serve six weeks in jail .

Still during the race , the stewards handed Nico Hülkenberg a three @-@ place grid penalty for the following race in Japan for causing the collision with Felipe Massa on lap 14 . Hülkenberg was " frustrated " with the decision , saying : " The accident with Felipe was very unlucky and I don 't understand why I 've been given a penalty before there has even been the chance to discuss the incident in the stewards ' room [...] In my view it was my corner and I 'm surprised Felipe backed out of it much too late , locking up just before he hit me . " Massa had a different view about the incident , stating : " I was braking for the corner and he turned his car in on mine , leaving me with

nowhere to go , so we hit . " Force India decided not to appeal the decision . Williams ' Head of Vehicle Performance Rob Smedley lamented the slow pit stop of his team that preceded the incident , saying that Massa should have exited the pits safely ahead of Hülkenberg . While initial reactions in the United Kingdom agreed with the stewards ' decision , German tabloid Bild called the penalty a " joke " . Hülkenberg later accepted that he was at fault and apologised to Massa via text message . Concerning the accident between Button and Maldonado , no further action was taken by the stewards . Jenson Button however followed up on his " mental " -remark during the race , by stating that he felt Maldonado 's driving was " very strange " and that he " won 't ever change " . Maldonado answered by saying : " No driver 's happy if there 's a car in front of them and they want to get past , especially if it damages their car trying to overtake [...] . We both got damage to our cars ; he was behind me trying to get past , I was defending my position . That 's racing . "

Following the controversial refusal by Max Verstappen to follow team orders and let his teammate pass in the final lap of the race , team principal Franz Tost later backed up his driver : " The team wanted to swap positions because we thought Carlos was faster with the new tyres , but this was not the case , he could not catch up . He was too far away , so Max said no , and he was right . " The Ferrari team came under criticism after the race , when team personnel broke through a barrier by security to enter parc fermé and celebrate Vettel 's victory . The team announced that they intended to " send a written unconditional apology " to the Grand Prix officials and security staff over the incident .

As a result of the race , Hamilton 's lead in the Drivers ' Championship was cut down to 41 points , with Rosberg still in second place . Sebastian Vettel moved closer as well , now being 49 points behind Hamilton . Felipe Massa 's retirement saw him drop from fourth to sixth in the standings , being overtaken by both Räikkönen and Bottas . In the Constructors ' Championship , Ferrari closed the gap to leaders Mercedes , now trailing 310 to 463 points . This race would prove to be the only one that Lewis Hamilton did not finish on course for his third Drivers ' Championship .

= = Classification = =

= = = Qualifying = = =

Notes

^ 1 ? Will Stevens received a five @-@ place grid penalty for an unscheduled gearbox change , but remained 19th due to Rossi 's identical penalty .

^ 2 ? Alexander Rossi received a five @-@ place grid penalty for an unscheduled gearbox change .

= = = Race = = =

Notes

^ 1 ? Romain Grosjean was classified despite retiring due to completing 90 % of the race distance .

^ 2 ? Nico Hülkenberg was penalised with a three @-@ place grid penalty at the Japanese Grand Prix for causing the collision with Massa .

= = = Championship standings after the race = = =

Bold text indicates who still had a mathematical chance of becoming World Champion .

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