

Race Weekend Recap: Australian Grand Prix

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In what was already a dramatic set of practice sessions leading up to race day, even more action unfolded during the Australian Grand Prix.

Problems in Practice

Williams driver Alex Albon suffered a big crash in Free Practice 1, resulting in him sending the car into the barriers and not being able to drive in Free Practice 2. He was uninjured, but the same cannot be said for the car. The team put out a statement later saying that due to extensive damage, they were forced to retire the chassis, and because of a lack of a third chassis, Albon would be racing using the one used by his teammate, Logan Sargeant. To put it in simpler terms: Albon crashed and now he gets to drive Sargeant's car, while Sargeant sits on the sidelines.

The internet was up in arms over this decision, specifically for the blatant disrespect to Sargeant. Unfortunately, this was out of both drivers' control, as they had to follow team orders. The decision makes sense since Albon is much more experienced than Sargeant, but it doesn't make it any easier. It's in the team's best interest to score points, and Albon had a better chance of doing just that.

A Smooth Operation for the Smooth Operator

Just 16 days after having surgery, Carlos Sainz won another Formula 1 grand prix. The Ferrari driver made his way back into the seat of a Formula 1 car after missing out on the previous race in Saudi Arabia due to appendicitis. He took a flawless victory, proving once again why the fans call him the "Smooth Operator", and even put a halt to Red Bull's dominance.

World Champions Retire

Right when we thought that no one could stop Max Verstappen, apparently a problem with his braking could. After a dominant qualifying and starting the race from pole position, the reigning World Champ allowed himself to be overtaken by none other than Carlos Sainz on lap 2, before retiring on lap 5 of the race. The reason for retirement was a right-rear braking issue: it had stuck on, progressively getting warmer and warmer, before starting to smoke during the early laps of the race, and completely catching fire as he made his way into the pits.

Another surprising retirement was Lewis Hamilton, who suffered from a power unit failure on lap 17. The 7-time World Champion was a humble passenger as his Mercedes lost power and he was forced to limp the car to the nearest escape road.

Russell (Almost) Rolls

As the race was coming to a close, the other Mercedes of George Russell had a major crash on lap 58. After getting caught in the dirty air of Aston Martin's Fernando Alonso, he lost control and the car ended up on its side. Fortunately he is unharmed, but over the radio he was heard panickedly demanding a red flag to stop the race, since he was stuck across the middle of the track.

In another shocking turn of events, Fernando Alonso was issued a 20-second time penalty for "potentially dangerous driving" regarding the crash involving Russell. He braked earlier than anticipated, and is believed to have inadvertently caused the collision.

Edited by:

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