Beat: Sports

2018 Italian Grand Prix

Monza

Monza, 02.09.2018, 22:08 Time

USPA NEWS - Double podium for Mercedes-AMG Petronas Motorsport in Monza

Lewis scored his 68th career victory today ““ his sixth of the 2018 Formula One season and fifth at the Italian Grand Prix

Valtteri finished the race in P3 ““ his sixth podium of the 2018 season and 77th points finish in Formula One

Lewis claimed the fastest lap in Monza ““ his 40th fastest lap in Formula One

The 2018 Italian Grand Prix marked the 400th race for a Mercedes-AMG Safety Car in Formula One

Lewis (256 points) leads the Drivers´ Championship by 33 points from Sebastian Vettel (226 points) with Valtteri (159 points) in P4

Mercedes-AMG Petronas Motorsport (415 points) leads Ferrari (390 points) by 25 points in the Constructors´ Championship

Owen Jones, Head of Performance at Mercedes-AMG High Performance Powertrains, accepted the Constructors´ trophy on behalf of the team

Lewis Hamilton

That was one tough race, but a really enjoyable one - I´m very, very happy. This afternoon has shaken off to be one of the best. It´ s so close between Ferrari and us, this race was really down to who makes the least mistakes and who looks after their tyres the best. Valtteri did a great job extending his stint which enabled me to close up to Kimi. It was really great team work today, a great pit stop, great communication with the team. It was an intense first lap, we all got off to similar starts. When we went into Turn 4, I was a bit surprised that Sebastian chose the inside and did not go for the outside.

That was my opportunity and I had to make sure that I was far enough alongside him. We touched for a brief moment and my car was slightly damaged afterwards, but fortunately I was able to continue and keep up with Kimi. Once I had closed the gap to Kimi on my second stint, I could see that his tyres were blistering, so I started to take care of my tyres and made sure that I didn´t blister mine. When Valtteri then came in for his pit stop it was a bit harder to keep up with Kimi, but I knew that my tyres were in better shape. I had to push as hard as I could to close the gap, particularly through the Lesmos and Ascari. But this track is really just incredible, it´s such a phenomenal circuit to drive with all it´s high-speed corners and the fact that you can follow through the corners and the chicanes make it one of the best tracks in the world. It´s always a real privilege to win in Italy. But we need to keep our heads down, work hard and make sure that we put up a good fight in Singapore.

Valtteri Bottas

It was a very successful day ““ both for me and for Lewis ““ and it feels good to be back on the podium. We knew the Ferraris were going to be quick today, so we wanted to give 100 per cent and put them under pressure. We knew we had to work together as a team today and that worked out very well for us. After what happened in the first lap with Sebastian, I knew that there was a good chance for me to get to the podium today. But it was still not an easy race; I did a very long first stint, trying to keep Kimi behind me on old tyres. I managed to still extract decent lap times out of the tyres so that Kimi never really got close enough to be able to overtake. Ultimately, this strategy helped both Lewis´ and my race. After the long first stint I had the chance to take the fight to Max on fresh rubber and ended up on the podium. It was a really good team effort today and we managed to get more points than Ferrari even though we started behind them. But we know we have to keep pushing in order to be able to put them under pressure.

Toto Wolff

This is what makes racing so special: the points are given out on Sunday, not Saturday, and today we were all privileged to enjoy a fantastic race-long between two champions. Lewis didn´t put a foot wrong today "" he put his car in the right place each time, was patient when he needed to be and took a fantastic win, his fifth here in Monza. But we must not forget Valtteri today: he drove a great race and deserved his podium finish this afternoon. For us, P1 and P3 is a fantastic result and a great reward for all the hard work the teams in Brixworth and Brackley have put in over the past weeks; last week, we struggled with the tyre management; today, it was the Ferrari that blistered the soft tyres.

This afternoon, I think we had the fastest car on race pace "" although we must be a little cautious because we didn´t see Sebastian´s pace without damage - but we were able to put pressure on Kimi all through the race. We got the strategy just right: with Kimi and Lewis at the first stop, we were ready to do the opposite of Ferrari - then extended the stint to have the biggest offset of tyre life when Kimi pitted. And with Valtteri, it was exactly the same: it was the right strategy to leave him on track, building the offset to Verstappen so he could attack in the final laps with fresher tyres. And that´s exactly what he did to get his podium. Overall, it was a very good day for the team at every level. We have Singapore coming next, which has not been our strongest track in past years. But we will be turning over every stone in the next weeks to find even more performance and pushing flat out to build our lead in both championships.

Andrew Shovlin

We certainly didn´t expect today to go the way it did but we knew if we could put them under some pressure, opportunities for the win would start to appear. The first lap was quite dramatic, we had good starts with both cars and Lewis was able to put himself into really good position into Turn 4 nosing ahead of Vettel. We were lucky that he did more harm to his own race than ours and we didn´t have much damage to the car. The race with Lewis and Kimi was interesting and one that we had covered in the morning strategy meeting. They couldn´t leave the pit window open, but it meant we were able to create an offset on tyres that in the end won us the race.

The tyres were on the limit and the work to understand the blistering we suffered in Spa helped today, the strong end of stint pace with both cars was a testament to the hard work that has gone on at the factory over the last week. Both drivers did a brilliant job today and looked after the tyres very well. Valtteri had a tough battle with Verstappen but once we knew that Max had a penalty, there was no point in continuing to attack him so we backed off knowing we had secured a podium. We´re in Singapore next and that is a track that hasn´t been kind to us over the years so we are under no illusions that it will be a difficult challenge. However, we have a good car, a fantastic team and two great drivers so we will be doing everything we can to keep our championship leads intact.

Article online:
https://www.uspa24.com/bericht-14048/2018-italian-grand-prix.html

Editorial office and responsibility:
V.i.S.d.P. & Sect. 6 MDStV (German Interstate Media Services Agreement): Daren Frankish - Daimler AG.

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Editorial program service of General News Agency:
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