

Beat: Sports

2017 Azerbaijan Grand Prix

Baku City Circuit

Baku, 25.06.2017, 20:19 Time

USPA NEWS - Valtteri fights back to the podium, Lewis claims P5 in dramatic Azerbaijan Grand Prix

Valtteri fought back from P20 on Lap 1 to snatch P2 on the finish line at the Baku City Circuit

Lewis came home in P5, after a pit stop for a loose headrest dropped him from the lead

Lewis (139 points) trails Sebastian Vettel (153 points) by 14 points in the Drivers' Championship, with Valtteri (111 points) a further 28 points back in P3

Mercedes-AMG Petronas Motorsport (250 points) leads the Constructors' Championship by 24 points from Ferrari (226 points) in P2

Valtteri Bottas -

Today was a crazy race, especially for me. I had a puncture on the first lap after the contact with Kimi on Lap 1. I was a lap down, then had to overtake the field under the Safety Car. The second Safety Car after that really helped me out and, step by step, I moved forward from there. My main goal today was to fight for the win but that went out of the window after the first lap. I was actually last at one point, but I got my head down, gave it absolutely everything and tried to get the absolute maximum out of every single corner. We didn't quite manage to win but P2 from where we were is a great feeling. Importantly for the team, we scored more points in the fight with Ferrari and I got some good points for myself as well.

Lewis Hamilton -

It's difficult to swallow a result like this after a strong weekend. I drove my heart out today right to the line - I gave it everything. I know the team will be devastated about the issue with the headrest, but what we have to take away from this weekend is the great performance we have shown. We all feel that pain, but it's on me to gather my thoughts and try and lead the team through this adversity.

We'll pull together and move forwards. I'm proud of my performance and I hope we can take the speed we've shown this weekend forward. I definitely didn't brake-test Sebastian. I controlled the pace under the Safety Car and, just like with the other restarts, I slowed down in the same place on the entry to T15. At that point, it is up to me to control the pace and then I felt a bump from behind. But that wasn't the issue for me "“ everybody saw clearly what happened after. All the young kids in other series look up to us, as champions, to set an example and that is not the behaviour you expect to see from a multiple champion. But we know that when times get tough, true colours show, and we have managed to apply some good pressure in the last weeks. Personally, I want to do my talking on the track and win this championship in the right way. More than ever after this weekend, I believe we can.

Toto Wolff -

When the winner was at one point in P17, and the guy in second was a lap down and last after lap two, then you know it's been a crazy day! Our big picture from today is that we extended our lead in the constructors' championship by 16 points and confirmed we have a very fast race car. But that isn't what people will remember. For Lewis, it was a really eventful race. With the Vettel incident, I think the FIA has made its decision during the race and we can't rewind the race now.

Emotions cook high in the moment but it doesn't change the relationship between our two teams. Then he was leading after the red flag when we had the problem with the headrest and had to change it; that cost him the win but we need to investigate what exactly happened there. It is never about blame; we look at the process to see what we can improve, then go to the next race better and stronger, and this is what we will do again as a team. But we should be encouraged with the pace Lewis had. As for Valtteri, it just goes to show you can never give up. He did a sensational job from a lap down and it was the perfect finale to steal P2 on the line. But nevertheless it could have been P1 and P3 today, so we need to learn our lessons and keep pushing for the next race in Austria.

James Allison, Technical Director -

It was a bittersweet race, more sweet than bitter on balance given how much worse it could have been, but it hurts to cost ourselves the win because of a detail like a loose headrest. Taking a step back and looking at the bigger picture, both cars were fast and had the pace to convert the promise of their qualifying positions - and in the end we still brought home a useful haul of championship points. But we now can't wait to get back out on track in a fortnight's time in order to chase the full reward that the car's pure performance deserved this weekend.

Article online:

<https://www.uspa24.com/bericht-11490/2017-azerbajjan-grand-prix.html>

Editorial office and responsibility:

V.i.S.d.P. & Sect. 6 MDSStV (German Interstate Media Services Agreement): Daren Frankish - Daimler AG.

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