

Beat: Sports

2016 Bahrain Grand Prix

Formula 1

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USPA NEWS - Nico doubles up, Lewis fights back on eventful night in Bahrain, Nico took his 16th career victory today "" his first at the Bahrain International Circuit. Lewis claimed his 89th Formula One podium after a battling comeback drive to P3. Nico leads the Drivers' Championship.

Nico Rosberg -

Wow, what a weekend! I am so happy with how everything is working out at the moment. The start was definitely the key to my win "" and that was a really great moment, as it was an area that we put a lot effort into before the race. Leading into Turn One was a relief, to be honest, as I could see in my mirrors that it was very busy behind me.

But from then on I was able to control the pace and take the win. Strategy-wise we had to play it safe. It maybe wasn't the quickest option "" but we had to cover the risk of a safety car. It was an almost perfect weekend for me "" only qualifying could have been a fraction better. What a great start to the season "" a big thank you to the guys and girls at the factories for this amazing car! Now I look forward to China, where I won my first ever Grand Prix, so I have plenty of positive energy heading there.

Lewis Hamilton -

I didn't get a good start today "" but it actually wasn't as bad as the last one. They were completely different incidents "" both painful, but this one probably more so! In Melbourne I had loads of wheel spin but this time I just didn't get away as well as I needed to and that was down to me. If you start on pole and go backwards it quickly becomes a domino effect. It's so easy to get clipped from there and unfortunately that's what happened at Turn One. Nonetheless, I managed to climb back up there and at least get some points, so again it was good damage limitation.

I could easily have not finished the race, so I'm glad it wasn't more points dropped in the end. I had so much damage on the car that I couldn't keep up with Kimi. I was fighting hard and did what I could with it "" but it wasn't quite enough to catch him, so in the end I had to just save the tyres in case of a safety car. A big thank you to all the fans who came out this weekend. I've got some incredible support here. I've been so well taken care of, so I look forward to coming back next year. Now I've got to wait until China for the next battle "" but it's a track that has been good to me for many years, so hopefully things will turn around a bit for me there.

Toto Wolff, Head of Mercedes-Benz Motorsport -

Congratulations to Nico first of all. He's on a roll right now, with five race wins in a row, and he didn't put a foot wrong today "" a clean start, clean turn one and then the race was his to control. He was quick when he needed to be, without taking any unnecessary risks, and deserved another great win. On Lewis' side, like in Melbourne he found himself P7 on the first lap "" and, again, he used the fighting spirit we all know to get back to the podium. He got a poor getaway again "" and we saw up and down the field that the new rules are causing much more variability in the starts, which was the intention.

After that, he got hit by Bottas at the first corner in a pretty over-optimistic move, which damaged the car pretty badly on the front wing and the floor "" it cost a good chunk of overall performance. From then on, it was about damage limitation and trying to get back through the field, even with a damaged car; Lewis did a great job at that. But it was clear in the middle of the race that he didn't have the pace to challenge Raikkonen, so then we just played it safe and brought everything home.

We're just two rounds into a season of 21 races, so there are no trends to find in the results right now; as a team, we're pleased to have made this strong start to the year, and that we are taking our opportunities when they come. But it's clear that we would have seen a different race today if Sebastian had not been forced to retire before the start. So we will keep our feet on the ground and keep pushing for the next race in China.

Paddy Lowe, Executive Director (Technical) -

An eventful start to the race, with Sebastian dropping out and then the first corner incident for Lewis. There was a lot of damage to the car "" particularly to the floor but also to the front wing "" so we were very relieved to see that it still had enough performance to allow

Lewis to start fighting back through the pack.

We debated changing the front wing at the first stop but eventually decided that there was not sufficient damage to warrant the time loss in the box. Meanwhile, Nico made a strong start and had a good buffer after Kimi also lost out at Turn One, so it was a fairly straightforward race for him with no issues to report. For Lewis, he battled his way up to Kimi and we decided to try something different to get him past by taking the medium tyre and targeting a two stop strategy. Initially this looked promising, as he was gaining on Kimi despite running a slower compound after the first stops.

However, it soon became apparent that the medium was degrading as badly as the soft, so that strategy unfortunately began to unwind quite quickly. We therefore converted him back to a three stop "" but of course Ferrari shadowed and we then had to cover that in turn with Nico. At that point, with all three cars on the same tyres, we had to just hold position to the end. It was great for Nico to get the win and great damage limitation on Lewis' side to recover good points "" if a big shame for him that he couldn't convert his amazing pole position into a win, through no fault of his own.

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