

F1 – Hamilton cruises to victory in Malaysia

Lewis Hamilton today made up for his disappointment in Melbourne with a dominant performance in the Malaysian Grand Prix, cruising to victory to mark his 100th points finish in Formula 1.

The 29-year-old British driver ended his 9-race run without a podium in a drive that saw him pick up his first win of the 2014 season, finishing 17 seconds ahead of his nearest challenger and team-mate, Nico Rosberg. It was a composed and assured performance from Hamilton, who only lost the lead once on lap 16, when Nico Hulkenberg stretched his first stint to pit after Hamilton. Hamilton managed to catch the German before completing the lap, however, meaning that he achieved his first Grand Chelem – collecting pole position, fastest lap, and leading every lap of the race.

Rosberg, in the other Mercedes, didn't appear to have the same pace as Hamilton and was put under pressure at several points during the race by the Red Bull of Sebastian Vettel, who managed to overcome his own problems from Australia to finish 3rd and get his first podium of the season.

Vettel's team-mate Daniel Ricciardo didn't fare as well, suffering more wretched luck at the beginning of his Red Bull career. After being disqualified from the Australian Grand Prix because of a fuel flow infringement, Ricciardo managed to make a good start in the race, jumping Vettel at the beginning to take 3rd place. As the race went on, he dropped back to 5th but looked to be on for a solid points finish before a botched pit stop saw him stopped in the pit lane as a wheel was not attached properly.

The time lost effectively ruined his race, and things went

from bad to worse as he suffered a front wing failure two laps later, forcing him to return to the pits to have it replaced. The Australian driver was then hit with a 10 second stop/go penalty for the pit stop, and eventually took the decision to retire from the race. Unfortunately, the 24-year-old's misfortune will continue in Bahrain next week after being hit with a ten-place grid penalty for the unsafe release by the pit stop crew.

Hulkenberg fought hard with Fernando Alonso for 4th place, with the Ferrari driver having the advantage of fresher tyres but still having to work hard to get the move done on the determined Hulkenberg.

Elsewhere in the field, there were controversial team orders at Williams, reminiscent of the infamous "multi 21" order in the same race last year. Felipe Massa was told to move over to allow Valtteri Bottas through in order to try to catch Jenson Button, but Massa was not compliant, believing that he had the right to fight for position.

Another battle being fought towards the end of the race was between ex-team-mates Kimi Raikkonen and Romain Grosjean. Grosjean, who has been struggling in the Lotus, showed signs of improvement as he managed to hold off Raikkonen. The Finn, now at Ferrari, was trying to make up places after being hit by Kevin Magnussen on the opening lap, causing a puncture and forcing him into an early pit stop.

In the end it was a comfortably victory for Hamilton, and the double podium for Mercedes – their first one-two since 1955 – means that the team now leads the constructors championship going into next week's race in Bahrain.

Full Race Results

- 1 HAMILTON
- 2 ROSBERG
- 3 VETTEL

4 ALONSO
5 HULKENBERG
6 BUTTON
7 MASSA
8 BOTTAS
9 MAGNUSSEN
10 KVYAT
11 GROSJEA
12 RAIKKONEN
13 KOBAYASHI
14 ERICSSON
15 CHILTON
RICCIARDO (DNF)
GUTIERREZ (DNF)
SUTIL (DNF)
VERGNE (DNF)
BIANCHI (DNF)
MALDONADO (DNF)
PEREZ*

*Did not start the race because of an engine problem