

Beat: Sports

2017 Spanish Grand Prix

Circuit de Barcelona Catalunya

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USPA NEWS - Mixed emotions after tense Barcelona battle, as Lewis claims victory but Valtteri retires. Lewis took his 55th career victory today "" his second at the Circuit de Barcelona-Catalunya, and second of the 2017 season.

Lewis Hamilton -

It's been a really good weekend and a great way to bounce back from Russia. It was the rawest fight that I can remember having in a long-time. I loved it, this is why I race. This is what made me get into racing in the first place. This is what the sport needs to be like every single weekend. To have a close battle like that with a four-time champion is awesome. I lost out on the start and had to watch Sebastian fly by.

He was so fast out in front and it was such a push to keep in touch with him and not let him pull away. I was able to manage my tyres in the first stint and keep relatively close, then it was tricky to keep up on the Medium tyre and then after the second stop. We came out so close together which was super tight into Turn 1. He didn't give me much space, it was close! I thought Seb would get me at the end of the final stint but I was able to do it. I have to congratulate my team today, with the strategy and the pit stops, as well as everyone back at the factory that has worked so hard to deliver these upgrades, enabling us to be so close in this fight with Ferrari.

Valtteri Bottas -

It's been a tough weekend. We had problems straight from practice, when we had to swap to the old engine on Saturday morning. Then today we had an engine failure in the race. We don't know any more than that at this stage. We knew it was a risk switching back to the old Power Unit in terms of the mileage but we didn't if we wanted to qualify yesterday. At least we got more points than Ferrari today in spite of the retirement. The first corner was very tight.

I had a good start but there was no where to go. I tried to avoid the collision but I touched Kimi. Lewis was on a different strategy while I was running long. We tried to execute a one-stop which is why I was lapping slower at that point. It could have been a rewarding strategy but with the Virtual Safety Car the guys in front had a free pit stop. We should have both been on the podium today. It's always disappointing when you don't finish but we'll pick ourselves up and move on.

Toto Wolff, Head of Mercedes-Benz Motorsport -

That was an epic Grand Prix. Racing simply doesn't go more wheel to wheel "" and we were treated to some fantastic racing for the win. Today's win was one for the whole team: an amazing drive from Lewis, great calls by our strategy team, good defensive driving by Valtteri, the fastest pit stops of the race and a quick, consistent upgraded car. Everything clicked and came together for us. It wasn't an easy race after we lost position at the start: we were on the back foot, so when Vettel covered the early undercut, we sent Lewis long and took the medium tyre "" to give us options at the end with another set of softs.

Then we made perfect use of the VSC and took a risk to run nearly half the race on a set of softs: we thought it would work out but it was always going to be tight. After that, it came down to some brilliant driving and then managing the tyres and engine just right to the final lap. But it was not a perfect day: we lost one car with a technical failure and Valtteri struggled with a damaged car after the contact at Turn One. In spite of that, he drove well and the one-stop approach could have worked out for him until the VSC happened. But it was a day when only one Ferrari finished, so in spite of the retirement, we built up our championship lead. But this was Lewis' day with a supreme drive.

James Allison, Technical Director -

Grands Prix like that are why we go motor racing. Winning is always lovely. But when you win a proper 12 round heavyweight fight in this kind of style, and along the way answer all sorts of questions about tyre degradation, following other teams and the car's handling "" and then see a driver at the peak of his craft like Lewis was today "" there's nothing better than that. It was a body blow not to get our second car home and we will be looking carefully at what happened to Valtteri. But the sweetness of winning is some

compensation for the bitterness of that retirement.

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