

Beat: Sports

2021 United States Grand Prix

Circuit of the Americas

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USPA NEWS - P2 and P6 for the Mercedes-AMG Petronas F1 Team at the Circuit of the Americas after intense battles in the closing stages

Scorching temperatures, sunny skies and packed grandstands at COTA created a spectacular atmosphere for an equally exciting 56-lap race, with Lewis narrowly missing out on victory and Valtteri recovering from his grid penalty to jump from ninth to sixth.

A storming start moved Lewis into the lead of the race, diving down the inside of pole-sitter Max Verstappen for first place, before losing the lead at the first stop when Max completed the undercut.

Lewis started to close the gap on his championship rival approaching the second round of stops, with the team opting to go long with Lewis and create an eight-lap tyre offset, setting us up for an intense finish.

He emerged 8.7 seconds behind Max but was soon chipping away at the gap and had the Red Bull in his sights with just a handful of laps remaining.

Despite the late charge, it just wasn't enough, and Lewis crossed the line 1.3 seconds behind in P2. However, he did pick up an extra point for scoring the fastest lap.

Lewis Hamilton

Firstly, congratulations to Max, he did a brilliant job today. And also, a big thank you to the amazing crowd we've had in Austin all weekend, to perform in front of such packed grandstands and passionate fans has been a real honour. I really thought for a second we might be able to win, I gave it absolutely everything out there. It was such a tough race, but unfortunately, we couldn't convert it. Red Bull just had the upper hand, and we couldn't match them. It looked like they had a better and more stable rear end on their car, with less sliding. The start was obviously great and closing the gap towards the end, but I got into the dirty air and the tyres overheated in the last few laps. Thank you to the team for amazing pit stops and so much hard work over the weekend. We didn't quite get it this time, but we'll move onto the next one.

Valtteri Bottas

It was a pretty uneventful race for me, we tried the best we could, but it wasn't easy to fight through the field. Making progress was difficult and we knew it would be, because of the temperatures here and the characteristics of the track. In the first stint I got stuck behind the Alpha Tauri's and that cost me quite a lot of time. Once I was behind slower cars, the pace difference wasn't quite big enough to make passes easily. There weren't any Safety Cars or other situations for us to make the most of, but with the grid penalty and where we started, I'm not sure what more we could have done. Not the strongest weekend for us, but in free air the car felt good and there are plenty of learnings we can take forward as a team.

Toto Wolff

This really was a race of interesting strategic games and great battles. We thought we had a sniff at the victory with Lewis and he put in a brilliant charge in the final laps, but in the end it wasn't enough. In the first stint, the car wasn't quick enough on the Medium and then Red Bull went for a super-aggressive first stop, before covering it the second time. We thought our offset strategy, going longer, would be enough at the end to get them, but the moment you get within touching distance of the car in front, it makes it very difficult to make a move. In the end, we were close, but not close enough, so Red Bull deserved to win today. For Valtteri, he also struggled with overtaking and moving through the field, but we used the longer stints to make up some places and he put in a strong move on Sainz on the penultimate lap to take sixth. It's not the weekend we hoped for, but we know there are still many opportunities to come. We are

right there, we are in the fight and we're enjoying the battle. So, let's see what the next one brings.

Andrew Shovlin

A frustrating day but we've not been strong enough here and whilst the win wasn't miles out of our reach, we weren't good enough in qualifying on Saturday and we weren't good enough on the Medium tyre in the first stint. Added to that, Valtteri's penalty meant he wasn't in the fight at the front and strategically that made our life more difficult. We understand a few of the issues that have cost us a bit of pace here, but there are others that we've not yet got to the bottom of, so that's something we need to make progress with ahead of the remaining races. We can't be anything other than disappointed when we've lost a chunk of points in both Championships but there is still a long way to go, and we've been in a worse position earlier in the Championship and pulled it back. We've got a bit of time to regroup before the triple header and prepare for the races ahead; getting the most out of the car over the next five tracks is going to be key to retaining the titles so we will be working hard in the next few days to do just that.

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