

Beat: Sports

2016 Australian Grand Prix

Race

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USPA NEWS - Nico and Lewis clinch memorable 1-2 after a thrilling race in Melbourne. Nico took his 15th career victory today "" his second at the Melbourne Grand Prix Circuit. Lewis claimed his 88th Formula One podium to complete a Silver Arrows 1-2.

Nico Rosberg -

That was a perfect race for me. The start was tricky, as I was on the dirty side of the grid and Vettel managed to be ahead. He did a really good job at the start "" but we chose the perfect strategy by going onto the medium tyre after the red flag. A big thanks to the team on the pit wall for that, to everyone back at the factories for this fantastic car and to everyone back in Europe who woke up so early to tune in for the race.

I hope it was a good show for you! We can enjoy this moment for sure "" but we know now just how strong those red cars will be this season, so we cannot afford to relax. I'm really looking forward to the next races and hopefully some more exciting battles. Finally, I also have to say it was a big relief to see Fernando walk away from his shunt. It shows how incredible the safety of these cars is now, which is great to see.

Lewis Hamilton -

I'd had a perfect weekend in every way up until the lights went out and felt confident heading into the race. I got a bit of wheelspin off the line then got pushed wide at the first corner, so from there it was just about recovering. But these things happen and I'm grateful for the way I was able to fight back through. P2 isn't bad in terms of damage limitation after a start like that. I spent a long time stuck behind one of the Toro Rossos and there wasn't a lot I could do about it as he was on a quicker tyre.

I could just see the others pulling away, so the safety car definitely helped by bunching us all up again. I was already on a one-stop strategy and, to be honest, I don't know why everyone else didn't do the same on the medium. I'm happy they didn't, as I probably would have finished a lot further back. In any case, the team did a great job to help us pull it back and there's still 20 races to go, so I'm feeling pretty chilled. I've had far worse starts to the season, so I'll take that today and head into the next one looking up.

Toto Wolff, Head of Mercedes-Benz Motorsport -

First of all, a big relief to see Fernando walk away from that shunt. The race itself was extremely tense throughout "" a real cliffhanger and a great way to show what Formula One is really about. We didn't get it right at the start. The drivers were slow away from the line then touched at the first corner, so we were forced into recovery mode. Our plan from there had been to put Nico on a two stop and Lewis a one stop strategy before the red flag came out.

We did the maths and opted to go with one set of mediums to the end, with the drivers on the knife edge of endurance and performance. Managing tyres and temperatures became a big challenge, with debris causing an overheating brake caliper that almost forced us to retire Nico at one stage. Thankfully that was not the case and he led Lewis home for a hard-fought 1-2. A perfect result to start the year, a great job from the drivers to manage and recover the race, fantastic work on the pit wall to give them the right strategy to do so and an incredible team effort from everybody at the factories to get us here. We must now sort our starts and look to carry out momentum into Bahrain.

Paddy Lowe, Executive Director (Technical) -

What can you say after a race like that? Absolutely fantastic to get a 1-2 at the first race of the season "" particularly after we made life difficult for ourselves with a pair of poor starts. After the red flag we opted to run the medium tyre to the end and expected others to do the same "" which would have made the win a very big ask, let alone a 1-2. Of course, we can look back and enjoy it now "" but it was quite stressful at the time! It made for a great spectacle, so I hope the fans enjoyed it. Overall, we can be extremely happy today. Congratulations to everyone back at Brackley, Brixworth and Stuttgart. Together, they've produced a car which has given us the perfect start to the season.

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