

# Hamilton out for Singapore sting

## Singapore

**L**ewis Hamilton will aim to plunge a dagger into Sebastian Vettel's world title ambitions by upsetting his expected march to victory in Singapore -- two weeks after ruining Ferrari's anniversary celebrations at Monza.

Hamilton is distinctly second favourite against his title rival at the twisting, turning and stiflingly hot Marina Bay street circuit, which plays to Ferrari's strengths and where Vettel has won four of the nine races.

But an unexpected victory for the Mercedes driver, who edged to the front of the standings by just three points with his wire-to-wire win in Italy, would set alarm bells ringing at Ferrari.

The Italian team will be smarting after Hamilton's crushing triumph at their home

circuit this month -- spoiling their 70th anniversary party, and earning boos on the podium from irate fans.

Another disappointment on Sunday in Singapore, the 14th of 20 races and the unofficial start of the title

run-in, would deflate optimism of Ferrari's first world title in a decade.



Lewis Hamilton

Ferrari's downforce is a key weapon at the 23-corner street circuit, whose lack of long straights traditionally nullifies Mercedes' high-speed advantage and puts overtaking at a premium.

Mercedes chief Toto Wolff said the German marque faced a difficult weekend -- but he will take heart from the fact that in five of the last seven seasons, the winning driver in Italy also took the chequered flag in Singapore.

"So far this year, we have seen the pendulum swing according to circuit type. On the surface, Singapore is the kind of circuit that should favour both Ferrari and Red Bull," said Wolff.

"Both have shown strong performance on low-speed circuits demanding maximum downforce, and we have found life more difficult at those places in 2017." (AFP)

## Bottas signs new Merc deal

### London

**F**ormula One team Mercedes confirmed yesterday that Valtteri Bottas has signed a new one-year deal and will remain Lewis Hamilton's partner for the 2018 season.

Bottas, who replaced world champion Nico Rosberg at Mercedes following the German's shock retirement, has won two races this year and heads into Sunday's Singapore Grand Prix third in the standings, 41 points adrift of championship leader Hamilton.

The 28-year-old Finn's deal allows Mercedes to keep their options

open, with Daniel Ricciardo and Max Verstappen both contracted at Red Bull until the end of 2018.

Hamilton's deal with Mercedes also expires at the end of next year, but the English driver is expected to sign a new long-term contract with the team.

Mercedes non-executive chairman Niki Lauda revealed he had spoken to Sebastian Vettel about the German's future plans, but following the announcement of his new three-year extension with Ferrari last month, Bottas was always likely to be retained. (AFP)



Valtteri Bottas

## Honda 'committed' to F1, says sport's CEO

### Singapore

**F**ormula One chief Chase Carey said yesterday he was confident that Honda was in F1 for the long haul as reports said McLaren was about to confirm its split with the Japanese engine-maker.

Carey met Honda executives at this month's Italian Grand Prix and

said they seemed excited about the future of Formula One, despite the company's troubled return to the sport.

McLaren are strongly rumoured to be on the verge of going with Renault engines rather than Honda's, whose power units have been notoriously unreliable and under-powered.

# Serena Williams reveals baby to the world

## Washington

**T**wo weeks after becoming a first-time mother, tennis legend Serena Williams revealed her baby daughter to the world yesterday in an online montage that featured moments from early sonograms to just after the birth.

In the touching compilation posted on Williams' Instagram account, the 23-time Grand Slam singles champion also said that there had been "complications" in the delivery

of Alexis Olympia Ohanian.

"It's been a long time, but we had a lot of complications, but look who we got -- we got a baby girl!" said Williams in one segment of the home movie as she left the hospital with fiancé and Reddit co-founder Alex Ohanian.

She said the couple had spent almost a week at the hospital after the September 1 delivery, but did not say what the complications had been. Media reports said the birth

had been induced by doctors.

The clips show the pregnant tennis star -- who turns 36 at the end of this month -- showing off her belly bump, dancing and practicing her game, as well as shots of the expectant couple assembling their daughter's nursery.

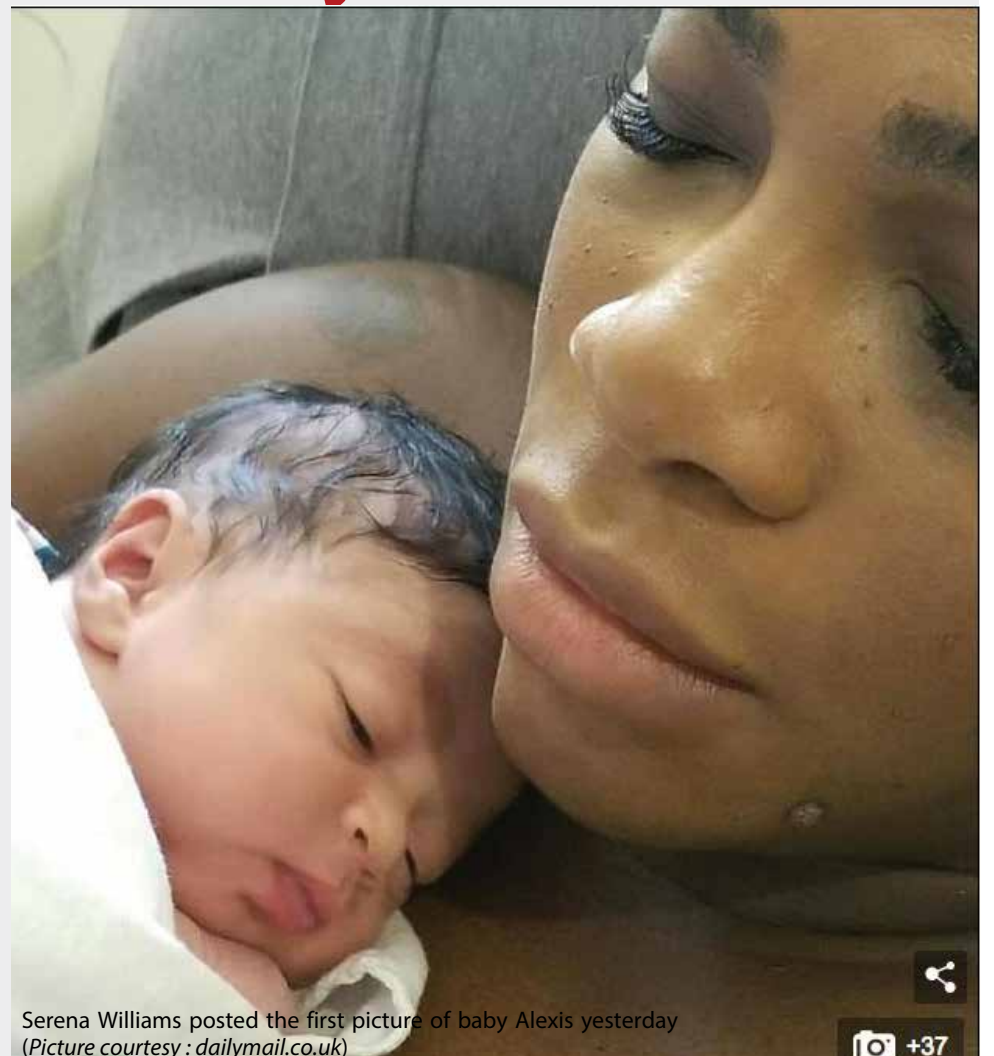
The film appeared to be meant as much for her daughter's future viewing as for Williams' millions of ecstatic fans, with the pregnant tennis mom telling the camera as she filmed her belly, "You move at 10:15 or 10:30 every night."

Williams won the Australian Open while newly pregnant with her daughter, a fact reflected in a shot on the Instagram post that read "Born: September 1, 2017, Weight: 6LB 14 Oz, Grand Slam Titles: 1."

Williams has vowed to return to defend her title next January.

"It's the most outrageous plan," she told Vogue last month. "I just want to put that out there. That's, like, three months after I give birth. I'm not walking anything back, but I'm just saying it's pretty intense."

Williams had used Snapchat in April to confirm reports that she was pregnant. (AFP)



Serena Williams posted the first picture of baby Alexis yesterday (Picture courtesy : dailymail.co.uk)



This file photo taken on April 30, shows Alexis Ohanian and Serena Williams at the "Rei Kawakubo/Comme des Garçons: Art Of The In-Between" Costume Institute Gala at Metropolitan Museum of Art on May 1