

Vettel delivers Ferrari 1-2 at Monaco

Ferrari's German driver Sebastian Vettel competes

Monaco

Sebastian Vettel secured a memorable one-two for Ferrari in yesterday's 75th Monaco Grand Prix to extend his world championship lead to a luxurious 25 points over Lewis Hamilton.

Taking full advantage of generous, if grim-faced, support from his team-mate Kimi Raikkonen, who led from pole position until the pit-stops, the four-time champion came home 3.1 seconds clear of the Finn in glorious Mediterranean sunshine.

Vettel's success was Ferrari's first in the principality in 16 years since seven-time champion Michael Schumacher triumphed in 2001. It was the 82nd 1-2 in the team's history and celebrated noisily by the tifosi who had thronged into the circuit overnight.

It was also the 29-year-old German's second Monaco triumph, his third win this year and the 45th of his career, lifting him 25 points clear of Mercedes' Hamilton in the title race.

Vettel now has 129 points after six rounds of this year's 20-race championship ahead of Hamilton on 104.

"Yes, yes, yes," screeched Vettel after winning before launching into thanks for his team. "The two laps with old tyres, I gave it everything I had," he said.

Raikkonen was stoney-faced and more taciturn than usual when retired 2016 champion Nico Rosberg interviewed him by the podium.

"Hard to say, really," he responded when asked about his feelings. "It's second place and it doesn't feel good. This is how it is sometimes."

Australian Daniel Ricciardo,

who was unlucky not to win last year, finished third for Red Bull, despite hitting the barrier at Ste Devote, ahead of Valtteri Bottas of Mercedes and Dutch teenager Max Verstappen in the second Red Bull.

Safety car

"I didn't enjoy that!" said Ricciardo. "I wasn't sure if I damaged anything. These tyres are like driving on ice when you get a Safety Car..."

Carlos Sainz was a well-judged sixth for Toro Rosso ahead of Hamilton, who had started 13th, and Frenchman Romain Grosjean of Haas.

Briton Jenson Button, back for one race to replace two-time champion Fernando Alonso, racing at the Indianapolis 500 later Sunday, retired his McLaren after a collision with Pascal Wehrlein's Sauber.

The crash left Wehrlein's car on its side at Portier, but he was unhurt in the crash, which required a Safety Car intervention for six laps in the closing stages.

Vettel was quick to ask if his compatriot was ok before the action resumed.

He added: "It's unbelievable. This was such an intense race. I hoped to have a better launch, but Kimi had a really good start so I had to be patient."

"It is very special to win here and we will have a fun night and then enough time to prepare for Canada..."

"I had a couple of really good laps when I could take control of the pace and I was able to use the Safety Car."

Vettel's joy appeared not to

be shared by Raikkonen who remained evasive in interviews after the race and, under specific questions, conceded that it was not his idea to be the first to pit when he was leading.

"I was called in... That was about it," he said.

Shrugging his shoulders, he later added: "It is a great result for the team and that is the main thing..."

Minute's silence

On a perfect afternoon on the Cote d'Azur, the track temperature was 50 degrees and the air 26 as the drivers stood for a minute's silence in memory of the victims of the Manchester terrorist attack.

The conditions were ideal for sunbathing, but not for race incidents.

When Vettel pitted after 39 laps, he rejoined in the lead ahead of Raikkonen with Ricciardo third, thanks to fast pre-stop laps, and Bottas fourth.

For Ferrari, it seemed a perfectly executed plan to enable Vettel to win, and boost his drivers' championship bid, had unfolded.

Hamilton finally came in after 45 laps from sixth, rejoining seventh, but Vettel was out of sight, nine seconds down the road and clear of Raikkonen, with Ricciardo a further five seconds adrift in third.

By lap 50, it was 10.2 seconds



Ferrari's German driver Sebastian Vettel holds his trophy