

Hamilton defies boos to take Hungarian pole

Hamilton roars to pole, as Bottas denies Verstappen front-row start

● Lewis Hamilton aims for 100th win

AFP | London

Seven-time world champion Lewis Hamilton shrugged off boos and accusations of gamesmanship to secure the 101st pole position of his career yesterday as he defied the heat and championship rival Max Verstappen to set the quickest lap in qualifying for Sunday's Hungarian Grand Prix.

Hamilton, who is aiming for his 100th Grand Prix victory and his ninth in Hungary, will be joined on the front row by Mercedes teammate Valtteri Bottas with Verstappen starting third alongside his Red Bull teammate Sergio Perez.

Hamilton brushed off the boos that came from a section of Verstappen supporters during the post-qualifying interviews.

"I have never felt so great with the booing," Hamilton said. "If anything it just fuels me, so I don't really mind it."

He also rejected suggestions of gamesmanship when his slow out lap at the end of the session prevented Perez from getting in a second fast lap.

"I was not playing any tactics, I don't need to, I know what I'm doing in the car and am fast



Mercedes' British driver Lewis Hamilton waves from his car as he celebrates winning the pole position

enough," he said at a testy press conference.

"Those making the comments do not know about the job that we're doing, which is why they are not driving."

AlphaTauri's Pierre Gasly and Lando Norris of McLaren took the third row of the grid with the Ferrari of Charles LeClerc, the Alpines of Esteban Ocon and Fernando Alonso, and Sebastian Vettel in the Aston Martin rounding out the top 10.

Hamilton, who began the weekend eight points behind Verstappen in the championship, was quickest during the final practice session yesterday

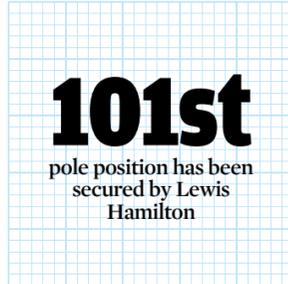
morning.

However, the Briton bided his time in the afternoon and, unlike his rivals, stuck to the longer-wearing medium tyres in P2 which saw him land just the sixth-quickest time.

Switching to the softs for P3 he produced a blistering lap of 1min 15.419sec, over three-tenths of a second faster than Bottas, who had also used the mediums.

"It was an amazing qualifying lap and it has been amazing teamwork from everyone, Valtteri included, trying to push the car forward," said Hamilton.

"The guys at the factory have



left no stone unturned.

"The soft tyre is worth something like five metres into turn one. It was surprising to see everyone in the top 10 on the softs apart from us."

Verstappen, who crashed out of the last race at Silverstone after a first lap collision with Hamilton, had to make do with third, 0.106secs behind Bottas.

"The whole weekend we've been a bit behind and it showed in qualifying," said the Dutchman who has now made a remarkable 20 consecutive top three qualifications.

"It's not what we want but we're still there in P3 and will see what we can do."

"It's going to be really hot so a soft tyre will not last as long as the mediums but we should be good off the line."

The Hungarian GP is the last before the summer break with racing resuming at Spa for the Belgian GP on August 29.

Mir hits hat-trick to send Spain into Olympic semi with Japan



Pedri Gonzalez of Spain in action with Youssouf Dao of Ivory Coast

AFP | London

Substitute Rafa Mir hit a hat-trick as Spain finally saw off Ivory Coast 5-2 in extra time in the Tokyo Olympics men's football yesterday to set up a semi-final with hosts Japan.

Brazil defeated Egypt 1-0 thanks to a first-half strike by Matheus Cunha and will play Mexico in the other last-four clash. Both matches are on Tuesday.

The Spaniards are one of the gold medal favourites after naming a strong squad featuring six members of the team that reached the Euro 2020 semi-finals.

But they suffered a major fright before reaching the last four at the pandemic-delayed Games, even if the scoreline suggested otherwise.

Spain were just minutes from going out when forward Max Gradel's deflected strike made it 2-1 to the Ivorians in the 91st minute of normal time.

But the Spaniards responded almost immediately, Wolves forward Mir lashing in from close range to force extra time, just a minute after coming on. Manchester United defend-



Japan are the only team to maintain a perfect record in the group stage and are now just one win away from securing a first medal in men's soccer since claiming bronze at the 1968 Games

er Eric Bailly then conceded a penalty for handball after the intervention of VAR, with Mikel Oyarzabal stroking the ball in for a 3-2 Spain lead in the 98th minute.

Mir struck twice in the dying minutes to put extra gloss on the scoreline and claim the match ball for himself.

Japan's quarter-final with New Zealand was a far tighter affair with the score deadlocked at 0-0 after 120 cagey minutes. New Zealand had only two shots on target all match.

Fighters make weight ahead of BRAVE CF 52

TDT | Manama

It's official! BRAVE Combat Federation will be crowning a new Light Heavyweight World Champion this Sunday, August 1st in the beautiful city of Milan after its headliners made weight for their monumental clash.

BRAVE CF Middleweight World Champion Mohammed "The Latest" Fakhreddine is slated to take on Mohamed "L'Ambiance" Said Maalem for the vacant BRAVE CF Light Heavyweight World Championship in the main event of BRAVE CF 52: Bad Blood.

Fakhreddine stepped on the scales at 92.3 kilograms, while his opponent Said Maalem checked in at 91.6 kilograms.

This bout was originally penciled to take place at BRAVE CF 50 in the Kingdom of Bahrain this past April, but Fakhreddine had to withdraw from the title tilt after backstage doctors on standby at Arad Fort deemed him unfit to compete due to illness.

However, Fakhreddine's last-minute pullout didn't sit well with Said Maalem, who went on a social media tirade by branding the Lebanese stand-out "disrespectful, eventually turning the competitive rivalry into a personal feud.

Both men have the chance to settle the score at BRAVE CF 52: Bad Blood, with the winner being guaranteed to walk out with an intricately-crafted belt



Mohammed Fakhreddine during the Weigh Ins

around his waist.

In the co-main event, the passionate Italian crowd will see their very own Enrico "The Killing Machine" Cortese in action against Rustam "The Russian Bear" Chsiev in a pivotal middleweight match-up.

Cortese weighed 84.3 kilograms to get the green light to face Chsiev, who posed and flexed his muscles in front of the camera at 83.9 kilograms.

The rest of the historic card will also serve as a showcase

for a host of the very best international talents in the sport, including Elias Boudegzdam and Abdoul Abdouraguimov.

BRAVE CF 52: Bad Blood will be broadcasted to more than 150 countries worldwide, and fans can watch via television, computer or mobile device. The full event stream will be available on the BRAVE CF TV website—with some regions excluded. Check your local listings for time and availability. Don't miss the action!

BRAVE CF 52 Weigh-In Results

BRAVE CF Light Heavyweight World Championship: Mohammed Fakhreddine (92.3kg) vs. Mohamed Said Maalem (91.6kg)

Middleweight: Enrico Cortese (84.3kg) vs. Rustam Chsiev (83.9kg)

Catchweight: Abdoul Abdouraguimov (80.5kg) vs. Nursulton Ruziboev (81kg)

Lightweight: Valeriu Mircea (70.4kg) vs. Ayub Gaziev (70.7kg)

Bantamweight: Gamzat Magomedov (61.7kg) vs. Mochamed Machaev (61.6kg)

Super Lightweight: Ahmad Labban (75.2kg) vs. Virgiliu Frasinac (74.6kg)

Super Lightweight: Benoit St. Denis (75.3kg) vs. Arkaitz Ramos (75kg)

Featherweight: Elias Boudegzdam (66.2kg) vs. Brice Picaud (64.8kg)

Machaev makes Bantamweight for the first time for BRAVE CF 52

TDT | Manama

After competing as a featherweight for nearly four years, unbeaten Austrian phenom Mochamed "The Beast" Machaev opted to switch things up as he makes his fourth appearance under the BRAVE Combat Federation banner.

The 21-year-old standout from Vienna, Austria is set to make his bantamweight debut at BRAVE CF 52: Bad Blood in Milan, Italy this Sunday, August 1 against Russian spitfire Gamzat Magomedov.

Machaev, the 2020 BRAVE CF Breakout Fighter of the Year awardee, has never had an issue making weight at the Featherweight division, however going down a weight-class increased the level of difficulty of his weight-cut journey. The Beast made several changes to his process, and admitted to going vegan, something he has always wanted to do, to make weight. "Plant-based food is better for you," he said.

After what seemed like a daunting and frustrating weight-loss process, Machaev was able to make weight as he tipped the scales at 61.6 kilograms. Meanwhile, his opponent, Gamzat Magomedov, checked in slightly heavier at 61.7 kilograms.

Holding a pristine professional record of 10-0 with five victories via knockout and one



Mochamed Machaev

It's actually easy. I will strike with him (Magomedov), I will defend his takedowns, and I will get the finish, as planned in the very first minute of the fight

MOCHAMED MACHAEV

win by way of submission, Machaev bared that this is no one-off stint at bantamweight. "I'm planning to stay at bantamweight. Bantamweight is my division," he said.

A decisive victory over a high-profile opponent such as

Magomedov will further bolster Machaev's stock in the division and could land him a chance to vie for the vacant BRAVE CF Bantamweight World Championship.

Machaev believes the striking aspect of the match-up against Magomedov can be the difference-maker.

"He's a typical wrestler, that's it. In technical striking, he's not on my level. He comes from a wrestling background, so he has good wrestling. But we will see how good he really is," he stated.

"It's actually easy. I will strike with him, I will defend his takedowns, and I will get the finish, as planned in the very first minute of the fight"