

Verstappen halts McLaren at Monza

Reigning champion wins fastest F1 race in history after bold overtake on Norris

- Verstappen wins from pole position
- Norris second, Piastri third
- McLaren enforces position swap
- Lewis Hamilton finishes sixth

AFP | Monza

Max Verstappen slowed McLaren's Formula One dominance yesterday with a phenomenal display of driving on his way to victory at the Italian Grand Prix, the fastest ever race in the sports history.

Starting from pole, reigning world champion Verstappen completed a magical weekend at Monza which included the fastest lap ever in F1 in Saturday's qualifying by schooling McLaren pair Lando Norris and Oscar Piastri at Monza.

Red Bull's Verstappen has little chance of securing a fifth straight drivers' title as he still trails championship leader Piastri by 94 points with the Australian finishing third.

"It was really enjoyable," said Verstappen who took the chequered flag in 1hr 13mins 24.325sec.

"I think we pitted at the right



Red Bull Racing's Dutch driver Max Verstappen celebrates after winning the Italian Formula One Grand Prix

time and with the hard tyres at the end you can push a bit more... It was a fantastic execution by everyone.

"I think the whole weekend we were all in. It was super enjoyable to win here."

Piastri leads the drivers standings by 31 points from Norris, who finished second and would have finished third behind his teammate due to an awful pit stop had McLaren not enforced a position swap between the pair.

"I always know it's going to be a good fight with Max and it was," said Norris.

"But just not the speed today, not the pace of Max and the Red Bull. But it was still fun, still a good race."

Charles Leclerc, last year's winner and the last driver to win at Monza from pole position back in 2019, couldn't take a podium spot for the massed ranks of Ferrari fans in the stands, the Monegasque finishing fourth.

Leclerc's teammate Lewis

Hamilton gave it his best shot after a five-place grid penalty had him bumped back to 10th at the start, charging up to sixth thanks to some spectacular driving early in the race.

But the seven-time F1 champion couldn't push past his former Mercedes teammate George Russell and was left with another underwhelming result in his first Monza GP with Ferrari.

Verstappen show

Yesterday's win, which hinged

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After a pit-stop error, McLaren ordered Oscar Piastri to let teammate Lando Norris pass to protect his championship position

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MAX VERSTAPPEN

on a bold overtaking move against Norris on lap four, was just Verstappen's third of a season dominated by a McLaren car which has blown away the competition by winning all but four GPs.

But a second win in Italy this year, after triumphing in the last Emilia Romagna GP back in May, caps a historic weekend for the blunt 27-year-old.

Verstappen was forced to allow Norris into first place after a frantic start in which he appeared to forced his British rival off the track.

That move caused Norris to call Verstappen an "idiot" over the team radio, but he was soon back behind the Dutchman who took control of the race by passing Norris with a daring move at the chicane on lap four.

From there Verstappen sped off into the distance, developing a gap of around six seconds over Norris by the time he pitted to switch from medium to hard tyres on lap 38.

Verstappen only lost two places in the pits and soon closed the gap again on the two McLarens who left it very late to pit, with Norris not heading into the box until lap 47.

That slow pit stop left Norris third, bringing back memories of the mechanical failure at last weekend's Dutch Grand Prix which cost him 18 points in his title battle with Piastri.

But with the race effectively won by Verstappen at that point McLaren ordered Piastri to let Norris pass so that another case of bad luck didn't cost him.

It was a gesture which caused Verstappen to chuckle on the Red Bull team radio as he was left to cruise around the track on his way to a hugely impressive victory.

Bahrain meet UAE in Dubai friendly



Mohammed Marhoon sharpens his finishing with a volley

TDT | Manama

Bahrain face the United Arab Emirates tonight in Dubai as their international break continues with a second friendly fixture.

Kick-off at the Zabeel Stadium is set for 7:15pm Bahrain



Bahrain coach Dragan Talajic addresses his players during training

time. It follows Tuesday's 2-2 draw against Qatar in Doha, where Bahrain showed attacking promise but defensive frailties.

Head coach Dragan Talajic is expected to shuffle his pack, handing opportunities to fringe players while keeping the back-

bone of the team intact. Key figures Mahdi Humaidan, Sayed Dhiya Saeed, Ali Madan, and Mohammed Marhoon are all available, alongside experienced defenders Ahmed Bughammar and Waleed Al Hayyam.

The hosts, meanwhile, will also use the encounter to fine-

tune preparations ahead of a busy run of fixtures, with both nations eyeing December's FIFA Arab Cup in Doha.

For Bahrain, the focus will be on tightening up defensively after conceding twice to Qatar, while continuing to build rhythm up front.

Son scores and assists to lead South Korea over host USA 2-0

AFP | New York

Son Heung-min scored one goal and set up another to spark South Korea's 2-0 victory over the United States in an international football friendly on Saturday.

The matchup between two clubs bound for the 2026 World Cup was played at Harrison,

New Jersey, in the home stadium of MLS's New York Red Bulls.

The South Koreans advanced through Asian qualifying to next year's World Cup, to be co-hosted by the Americans, Canada and Mexico.

Son scored in the 18th minute and Lee Dong-gyeong added another in the 43rd to

secure South Korea's triumph against a US side coached by Mauricio Pochettino -- Son's former boss at Tottenham Hotspur.

Son joined Major League Soccer's Los Angeles FC in a blockbuster move last month that has energized Korean football fans in the United States.



Son Heung-min, at right being hugged, celebrates his goal with teammates

Alex Marquez cruises to Catalunya MotoGP victory



BK8 Gresini Racing MotoGP team's Spanish MotoGP rider Alex Marquez (L) rides ahead of Ducati Lenovo Team's Spanish MotoGP rider Marc Marquez

AFP | Montmeló

Alex Marquez comfortably held off his brother Marc to claim the Catalunya MotoGP yesterday, snapping his older sibling's winning streak of seven straight victories.

The 29-year-old's triumph on his home circuit, meant standings leader Marc Marquez, who finished second by 1.740s, cannot seal a seventh world title next weekend at Misano.

Ducati rider Marc Marquez leads the overall standings on 487 points, with Alex trailing by 182 after his second career victory and the second of this season.

Enea Bastianini came in a further 5.562s behind on his KTM to finish third.

"I'm very happy, very pleased, but to be honest I still had a thorn in my side from yesterday," said Alex Marquez, who crashed from the lead during the Sprint on his Gresini Ducati.

"Today I had to pull that thorn out -- maybe without that mistake yesterday, I would have had it today, so maybe it served for something.

"It was a race of self-control. I had more but I didn't want to destroy the tyres."

Even though he will have to wait longer to complete his title charge, Marc Marquez was content with the day's racing.

"I gave everything. I had the perfect race. I led on the first laps," he said.

"On the last laps I was on the limit, it was hard for me."