



Lewis Hamilton celebrates with the Bahrain Grand Prix winner's trophy

Hamilton just keeps on winning!

Mercedes superstar avoids plenty of race drama to claim 11th win of 2020 and fourth in F1 Gulf Air Bahrain Grand Prix at BIC

● **Haas' Romain Grosjean crashes into barrier moments after race start, resulting in huge explosion and car engulfed in flames**

● **Both cars of Mercedes, Red Bull, McLaren and Renault in top 10**

TDT | Manama

Seven-time F1 world champion Lewis Hamilton won a drama-filled Formula 1 Gulf Air Bahrain Grand Prix 2020 last night at a brilliantly floodlit Bahrain International Circuit (BIC) in Sakhir.

His Royal Highness Prince Salman bin Hamad Al Khalifa, Crown Prince and Bahrain Minister, was at BIC yesterday.

Hamilton crossed the finish line under safety car conditions, as the chequered flag was waved by National Taskforce for Combatting the Coronavirus (COVID-19) member and Bahrain Defence Force (BDF) Hospital Infectious Disease Consultant and Microbiologist Lt Col Dr Manaf Al Qahtani.

Dr Al Qahtani was one of many of the Kingdom's frontline health workers, first responders and their immediate family members invited to enjoy the event. Their invitation came following the directives of HRH the Crown Prince and Prime Minister, in appreciation of their

tremendous efforts and sacrifices in Bahrain's national response to COVID-19. The initiative was being held under the theme "#ThankYou_OurHeroes", and another batch of health professionals and their loved ones will be able to watch next weekend's F1 Rolex Sakhir Grand Prix at BIC, which will be the second race of the Kingdom's first-ever F1 double-header.

The Red Bull pair of Max Verstappen and Alexander Albon joined Hamilton on the podium.

Yesterday's 57-lap night racing spectacle had three major incidents on track, two of which took place without even a lap being completed.

The first involved Romain Grosjean, who crashed his Haas into the barrier just moments after the start, resulting in an immediate red flag. Following over an hour's delay, the race was re-started but then Lance Stroll's Racing Point challenger flipped over, forcing a brief safety car period.

Both Grosjean and Stroll were able to walk away from each incident and they received immediate medical attention. Each instance involved both drivers making contact with AlphaTauri's Daniil Kvyat.

The third incident took place two laps before the end, when Sergio Perez in the other Racing Point car was third and on his way to a podium finish. But bad luck hit and flames started to come out from the car's rear, forcing him to pull over and retire. Albon inherited third place.

When racing resumed after Stroll's flip, Hamilton put in an-



Hamilton on the podium with Verstappen, Albon and officials

other masterful drive to continue his magnificent winning run this F1 season. He was able to build a massive gap from the rest of the field en route to the finish, but following Perez's car trouble, the yellow flag came out and it was a crawl to the end behind the safety car.

Hamilton was classified as the winner in a total time of two hours 59 minutes 47.515 seconds, 1.254 seconds ahead of Verstappen and 8.005s in front of Albon.

Following the race, which lasted about three hours including the stoppage, Hamilton commented: "It was physically very demanding. With the break we had at the beginning - you get into a mindset of going out and getting a good start - but with that 45-minute wait we had, it is so easy to step out of the zone. "They (the Red Bulls) had a lot of speed today so I was flat out all the way trying to keep them at bay.

"It's physical, this track has always been physical. We've got lots of high-speed corners so I was definitely feeling it.

"I managed to just about re-

ply to him (Max Verstappen) when I needed to but I was sliding around a lot out there and I wasn't really quite sure how it would play out at the end.

"So I'm massively thankful to my team. They did a great job with the strategy and what a privilege it is to get another result like this."

Fourth win in Bahrain

Hamilton's victory was the 95th of his F1 career, his 11th of the 2020 season, and his fourth in the Bahrain Grand Prix, tying the record of Ferrari's Sebastian Vettel. It was also his fifth straight race triumph this year, and second successive at BIC.

Rounding out the points winners from fourth through 10th place, respectively, were McLaren's Lando Norris and

Carlos Sainz, AlphaTauri's Pierre Gasly, Renault's Daniel Ricciardo, Valtteri Bottas in the other Mercedes, Esteban Ocon for Renault and Ferrari's Charles Leclerc.

The rest of the drivers were classified in the following order: Kvyat, Williams' George Russell, Ferrari's Sebastian Vettel, Williams' Nicholas Latifi, Alfa Romeo's Kimi Raikkonen and Antonio Giovinazzi, Haas' Kevin Magnussen and Perez. Perez was classified 18th having completed most of the race.

Grosjean's incident took place just moments after the start as he clipped the front-left wheel of Kvyat, spun out of control, and then hit the barrier. He was later taken to nearby BDF Hospital for further evaluation. The race was stopped and the other compet-

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LEWIS HAMILTON

itors lined up in the pit lane to await its resumption, while the barrier was replaced and the track cleared of oil and debris.

At the first re-start, the drivers lined up on the grid once again but in the positions they were in when Grosjean's crash took place. Hamilton was able to get away cleanly, followed by Verstappen and Perez. But soon after, Stroll's car had flipped after making contact with Kvyat on turn eight. That led to a safety car period as his car was being craned off.

That set the stage for Hamilton's triumph, Perez's late disappointment and Red Bull's double podium.



Following last night's race, Lewis Hamilton tied Sebastian Vettel for the most victories in the F1 Gulf Air Bahrain Grand Prix with four. Hamilton had also won with Mercedes in 2014, 2015 and 2019



Final classification

1	Lewis Hamilton	Mercedes	2:59.47.515
2	Max Verstappen	Red Bull Racing	+1.254s
3	Alexander Albon	Red Bull Racing	+8.005s
4	Lando Norris	McLaren	+11.337s
5	Carlos Sainz	McLaren	+11.787s
6	Pierre Gasly	AlphaTauri	+11.942s
7	Daniel Ricciardo	Renault	+19.368s
8	Valtteri Bottas	Mercedes	+19.680s
9	Esteban Ocon	Renault	+22.803s
10	Charles Leclerc	Ferrari	+1 lap
11	Daniil Kvyat	AlphaTauri	+1 lap
12	George Russell	Williams	+1 lap
13	Sebastian Vettel	Ferrari	+1 lap
14	Nicholas Latifi	Williams	+1 lap
15	Kimi Raikkonen	Alfa Romeo	+1 lap
16	Antonio Giovinazzi	Alfa Romeo	+1 lap
17	Kevin Magnussen	Haas	+1 lap
18	Sergio Perez	Racing Point	DNF
Not classified			
	Lance Stroll	Racing Point	DNF
	Romain Grosjean	Haas	DNF



Stewards and medics attend to Grosjean after the crash



Reactions from the F1 family to the incident involving Romain Grosjean

"It was such a shocking image to see. When I get in the car I know I am taking risks. I respect the dangers that are in this sport. I posted about it during the break because it is horrifying. The car, the cockpit. I don't know what Gs he pulled but I'm just so grateful the halo worked."

Bahrain Grand Prix winner Lewis Hamilton

"So glad to see Romain Grosjean get out after that. What a fighter. Not a nice thing to see and I hope he recovers well and can join us again soon."

McLaren driver Lando Norris

"It was horrible, when I saw the images I was shocked. It was really scary but I had no idea a Formula 1 car could break that way. The halo really proved to be working. I have text him to wish him a good recovery. I think he is fine but a really scary thing."

AlphaTauri driver Pierre Gasly

"The fire was worrying, the barrier coming apart was worrying, but we can be happy with safety of the car. We haven't seen anything like that for a very long time, but the barrier splitting normally results in a fatality. The halo saved the day and it saved Romain."

F1 Managing Director Ross Brawn