

Beat: Sports

2015 Spanish Grand Prix - Race

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USPA NEWS - Silver Arrows kick off European season in style with one-two finish in Barcelona!

Nico took his first victory of the 2015 season "" the ninth of his Formula One career to date "" with a superbly controlled drive from pole position.

Nico Rosberg -

We had a perfect weekend here in Spain. We have a fantastic car and everybody did a really great job in the break, so thanks to the team for everything. My start was great for the first time this season. From there I was able to control the pace and I never felt in danger throughout the whole race. I'm so happy about this win. It's still early days in the season so it's good to close the points gap to Lewis. I will continue to push hard - starting with a home race for me in Monaco!

Lewis Hamilton -

I got off to a poor start with too much wheel spin and had to fight hard just to keep third. From there it was always going to be tough as it's difficult to run right behind another car here and even tougher to pass. I managed to stay close enough to Seb before the first stops but unfortunately we lost a bit of time there. In the end, we went for a three stop strategy to try something different.

That call was made quite early on as it was clear it wouldn't have worked to stay out for that long and, again, passing on track was almost impossible. Luckily we had the pace to make it work. Nico was then 22 seconds ahead with 15 laps to go which was a big gap. I pushed really hard to close up until about 6 laps from the end but I was only gaining about a second per lap which wasn't enough. So, damage limitation on a difficult weekend for me. But I'm grateful that I could score some good points for the team.

Toto Wolff, Head of Mercedes-Benz Motorsport -

That feels like two P1 results today after such a demanding race. Nico did the perfect job this afternoon: he had a great start, built the gaps that he needed and made his two-stop strategy work in a fantastic way. He was controlled and composed throughout. Lewis lost a position on the start, then had a slow first pit stop, and that left him stuck behind Vettel's Ferrari in the second stint. At that point, we knew that the only chance of getting past Sebastian was to do something different with the strategy but it was still a bold move to try the three-stopper.

It was only going to work if Lewis managed to overtake on track and he made it work with great moves on Räikkönen and Bottas "" he was decisive when he needed to be and showed some incredible pace on the prime tyre. As Lewis was building the gap he needed ahead of Sebastian in his third stint, we actually compromised Nico a little bit by leaving him out longer than optimum before his second stop. This made sure the two cars didn't trip over each other on track, while running different strategies, and gave Lewis the clear air he needed to build the gap to secure P2.

Following Lewis' final stop, it was clear after a few laps pushing that the pace difference between the cars wasn't big enough for him to challenge for the win, so we then told both drivers to bring the car home. It's a great feeling to take a one-two finish at this circuit, which is a really severe test for the complete car package, and a confirmation that the updates we brought in a number of areas correlated to the track and delivered a good performance improvement. Well done to everybody back at both factories, now we will get our heads down and start working for Monaco.

Paddy Lowe, Executive Director (Technical) -

We're absolutely delighted with today's result. Nico took an excellent pole yesterday, which put him in prime position to drive a controlled and disciplined race from the front. This is precisely what he did to take a well-earned first win of the season. It's important for us as a team to have two drivers competing and pushing each other "" which is exactly what we're seeing again this year "" so well done to Nico on a very strong weekend.

For Lewis, the race didn't start off well with a lot of wheel spin off the line. From there, it was impossible for him to overtake Sebastian

with the very marginal pace advantage we enjoyed in the first stint. We therefore attempted the undercut with an early stop but, unfortunately for Lewis, this didn't work out after a problem with the left rear in the pit stop, so our apologies to him for that. This then required us to pull out something more extreme with the three stop strategy "" which seemed like a bit of a long shot at the time.

But Lewis' pace on the prime tyre and then again on the second set of options was extraordinary. This enabled him to break free enough to avoid an overtaking situation before the third stop, making it a much more comfortable second place that it could have been. So, a huge congratulations to everyone on an important result to start the European season and a special thanks to everyone at our factories for all their hard work.

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