

Beat: Sports

2021 Hungarian Grand Prix

Hungaroring

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USPA NEWS - A race of high drama results in a P3 and a DNF for the Mercedes-AMG Petronas F1 Team at the 2021 Hungarian Grand Prix

Lewis completed a remarkable recovery drive to finish on the podium despite finding himself running last on lap five after an action-filled start to the race.

Valtteri suffered wheelspin in the heavy rain at the race start, losing position to the cars around him on entry to the first corner. He locked brakes and collided with NOR, sparking a multi-car accident with several cars suffering damage and a number of retirements, including Valtteri. Lewis was unscathed out-front.

The race was red-flagged and upon the standing restart, the Team chose to keep Lewis out on the Intermediate tyre and start from the grid, while the remainder of the field behind opted to pit for slick tyres and start from the pit lane.

On a rapidly drying track, Lewis was forced to pit just one lap later to fall in line with the other cars and found himself emerging from the pits 14th and last, with a mountain to climb.

Lewis Hamilton

First of all, I want to say a quick congratulations to the Alpine Team and to Esteban – he's been a shining star for some time now so it's been a long time coming and I'm really, really happy for him. It's great to see Aston Martin up there with their best result so far and I know there's more to come from them. We've had an amazing crowd this weekend and I'm grateful for the support.

Today was definitely tough, it's crazy to think we were the only ones on the grid at the start, but these things happen in an unpredictable race, and we will learn any lessons that need to be learnt. I gave it everything today and I had nothing left at the end. I came into this weekend not knowing how we would perform and considering the circumstances today, I'll take P3!

Valtteri Bottas

I had a poor start with lots of wheelspin off the line, lost a couple of places and then into turn one, I was right on the gearbox of Lando and locked the wheels. I misjudged the braking point - it's always difficult starting a race in those conditions, you're always 'guesstimating' grip levels and today I got it wrong. I've spoken to Lando and Checo to apologise, it was my bad today and sometimes you have to hold your hands up.

Toto Wolff

A difficult start for Valtteri, he suffered wheelspin off the line and found himself sandwiched into the first corner and missed the braking point. A small mistake with large consequences and damage to several cars, and I'm sorry to McLaren and Red Bull - to lose out in an accident like that at the start of the race is tough to take.

We then had a decision to make with Lewis on the race restart and I stand absolutely behind our decision, keeping him out was absolutely the right call for us, even if it was a little lonely for him out there. It would have been a gamble to pit from the lead, the track dried unbelievably quickly in the sun and it could have easily gone the other way, and then we would have looked foolish for bringing him in. It was a courageous drive from Lewis to carve his way back through the field and the win was possible at the end, but Fernando defended strongly and perhaps it wasn't our day to win.

Andrew Shovlin

Congratulations to Esteban and Alpine on the win. For us it wasn't a very tidy day - Valtteri had a very poor start and then his mistake at turn 1 obviously ruined the day for Max, Sergio and Lando; we can only apologise for that, although it's not much by way of consolation. Given the position we were in at the restart, we didn't particularly want to gamble on slicks but we were surprised when

the entire grid left on intermediates. It was even more surprising to see them all pit on the formation lap. That is obviously one of the key moments of the race for us, although we wouldn't have been leading on the restart as having the first garage means the field coming in behind us prevents us from leaving our pit box. Recovering from last position was clearly then an enormous challenge for Lewis and to get to third took everything he had.

It's such a difficult track to overtake on and we had to convert to the two-stop to get through but unfortunately we spent too many laps behind Fernando and that meant Lewis was only catching the leaders on the last lap. It's frustrating to have given away a chance to win here but encouraging that the car was really good – we weren't expecting to be so strong. We've got a week before the summer shutdown and there's lots to do in the next few days to prepare for a triple header on our return but it's going to be nice to have some time off as it's been non-stop since testing back in February.

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