Beat: Sports

2017 Australian Grand Prix Preview

Melbourne Grand Prix

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USPA NEWS - The Australian Grand Prix is a motor race held annually in Australia currently under contract to host Formula One until 2023. The Grand Prix is the oldest surviving motor racing competition held in Australia having been held 79 times since it was first run at Phillip Island in 1928.

Toto on Melbourne

“It´s the dawn of a new era ““ in more ways than one. This is the first time that Formula One has changed the rules to make the cars faster. We have new management looking at how we take the sport forward. And, in our team, we have seen some significant changes of personnel over the winter. It´s been a busy few months, no doubt. But an extremely exciting time, too.

“The target with these new regulations was to make this generation of F1 cars the quickest in the history of the sport. And looking at the results from testing, we´re well on the way to achieving that. It´s something that´s never been done before and that´s a radical change. We´ve even made them look more spectacular.

“Having spoken to the drivers, these machines are violent ““ just like Formula One cars should be. I have been out on track watching them and, next to the previous generation of cars, these are properly spectacular cars. From a fan perspective ““ and a part of me will always be a fan ““ it really is something special. Any true motorsport lover simply has to see them in the flesh.

“Lewis and Valtteri are in a great place. They have a respectful and friendly relationship from what we´ve seen in our team briefings so far. It´s an exciting time for them because these new cars are a real physical challenge. Both felt from testing that the G-Forces are enormous and they are embracing the new challenge of F1 2017.

“We have tackled with determination the challenge of the new regulations. We have been very successful over the last three years through stable rules ““ but no team has ever maintained its success over such a big regulation change before. In a way, it´s just what the doctor ordered. To have such a challenge is good for the team.

“There is an art to managing expectations. You must not set them too low ““ but you must also keep them under control. With new regulations, everyone starts with zero points. It provides opportunities as well as risks for every team on the grid. You only need to look back to 2009 to see how unpredictable Formula One can be, with Brawn winning the Championship after being on the brink of extinction.

“We enter 2017 with that mindset. We take every one of our rivals seriously and respect every team´s ability to find that magic bullet. They are all full of very clever people ““ the best in the world in their fields. We have done the best job we possibly could over the winter and, if we are not the fastest in Melbourne, then it´s about finding out why and what needs to be done to get us back to that top spot. It´s a challenge we will take on with great motivation and energy. Setbacks can provide a long-term opportunity because you constantly need to improve yourself.

“What we´ve seen from Barcelona is that the margins at the front of the field have shrunk. We´ll see how that pans out in Melbourne, because we still don´t know about the fuel loads, weights or power settings of the other cars. As the old saying goes, it is when the flag drops that the bullshit really stops.“

- Toto Wolff, Head of Mercedes-Benz Motorsport

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