

Beat: Sports

2018 Bahrain Grand Prix

Bahrain International Circuit

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USPA NEWS - Double podium finish for Mercedes-AMG Petronas Motorsport in the desert of Bahrain

Valtteri came home in P2, just 0.7 seconds shy of the win "" his 23rd career podium, 14th with Mercedes-AMG Petronas Motorsport and first of the 2018 season

Lewis fought his way through the field from ninth on the grid, finishing in P3 "" his 70th podium with Mercedes-AMG

Petronas Motorsport in his 100th race for the team as well as his 27th consecutive top 10 finish, equalling Kimi Raikkonen's all-time record

Sebastian Vettel (50 points) leads the Drivers' Championship by 17 points from Lewis (33 points) in P2, with Valtteri (22 points) in P3

Ferrari (65 points) leads Mercedes-AMG Petronas Motorsport (55 points) by 10 points in the Constructors' Championship

Valtteri Bottas

It was so close in the end, it's a shame I couldn't win. When it's so close, you start to think about every lap and every corner after the race, trying to figure out if there is something you could have done better. But I feel like I did a good race, I didn't make any mistakes and I gave it everything I had. I didn't try the Medium tyres before the race, but it went well and we managed to do a really long stint. Only in the last three laps I started to struggle with the tyres and once I got close to Sebastian everything got more difficult. The pace today was better than expected so that we could put some pressure on Ferrari. It's very close and it's going to be an interesting season. We still have work to do, especially for conditions like here in Bahrain. I think we can see some positives, but the main thing for us is to really learn from this weekend.

Lewis Hamilton

It was not an easy race, but one that I feel quite happy with now that I've cooled down. Today was all about damage limitation and I think to get in the top three is a really great result for the team and for myself. We would prefer we didn't have the gearbox issue that we had this weekend, but I was really happy with my race pace. I had a really good start but I didn't capitalize on it. I got past a couple of cars off the line and then I went opposite to go on the inside. But the car ahead decided to dice to the right so I had to bail out and had cars pass me on the left, so I fell back on the opening lap. In my mind I knew that I had to get past that group of cars very early on. But by the time I did get past them the guys were 15 seconds ahead, so really the race was lost in those opening laps. Ferrari have shown over the last two races that they have the edge at the moment, but it is close and we definitely have to do a better job. Shanghai has always been a good hunting ground for me, so I really hope that we can go there with some strength.

Toto Wolff

It's incredibly frustrating to come so close to a win and to miss out at the very end but that was a race that kept us on the edge of our seats until the final corners. If you had offered us P2 and P3 yesterday, I would have taken it straight away; but when you consider that both Red Bulls retired, and one Ferrari, then it was also the minimum result we should expect from the race. In hindsight, it's easy to look back at the race and see opportunities to win. When we came out after the first stops, running the medium tyre, I think we were in a potentially race-winning position with Valtteri "" but Ferrari and Sebastian managed the race extremely well and earned the win.

Our car really came alive on the soft and medium compounds today, and that is probably one indication that we will see the

competitive balance swing from track to track this season. For Lewis, a podium finish after starting P9 is better than our predictions ““ and his three-car overtake was a real highlight of the race. Overall, it was good damage limitation after we put ourselves on the back foot with the penalty. And now we need to focus on those fine margins that make the difference between winning and losing these finely balanced races.

James Allison

This is a Grand Prix that has to go down in the category of “one that got away”^[7]. But after a difficult qualifying session yesterday, it was encouraging to see our long run pace was extremely competitive, especially because this is what let us down so badly one year ago at this track. We cannot help but wonder what might have been for Valtteri given another lap on Sebastian’s tail, or indeed had Lewis started the race without the handicap of his gearbox penalty. But we must put those speculations behind us and head to China determined to claim our first win of the 2018 season.

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