

BMW Sauber F1 Team



Brazilian Grand Prix.

31st October – 2nd November 2008
18th and final World Championship race

Preview.

Munich/Hinwil, 24th October 2008. Rarely has a season been so unpredictable. Fears of humdrum afternoons were dispelled as thrilling battles unfolded; while where high drama was expected, an orderly procession ensued. On 2nd November one of the most exciting Formula One seasons on record will go down to the wire in São Paulo. All we know for certain is both the Drivers' and Constructors' World Championships will be decided at the Brazilian Grand Prix.

Although still in its early years on the grid, the BMW Sauber F1 Team retained an outside chance of claiming both titles right up to the 17th of 18 World Championship races. A one two, a total of 11 podium finishes, one pole position and two fastest race laps, as well as 100% technical reliability and the fastest pit stops on the grid, have so far provided the success stories in the team's third season.

Robert Kubica goes into the final race of 2008 determined to hold onto his third place in the drivers' standings. But that is no easy task, with the Ferrari of reigning World Champion and last year's Brazilian Grand Prix winner, Kimi Räikkönen, lurking six points behind him. Nick Heidfeld lies fifth in the standings, nine points behind the Finn and seven ahead of Renault's resurgent Fernando Alonso.

The Constructors' Championship could also see further shifts in position. The BMW Sauber F1 Team is currently third on 135 points, ten points behind McLaren Mercedes. In 2007 the BMW Sauber F1 Team collected 101 points in 17 World Championship races.

While Heidfeld will line up at Interlagos with the same powertrain as in China, Kubica is due both a new engine and gearbox. The two drivers have been out of sync in this respect since the first race of the season, when Kubica's F1.08 was rear-ended in the Australian Grand Prix.

Before setting off for Brazil, the team's drivers and management are scheduled to make a pit stop in Munich. Kubica is visiting the BMW plants in Landshut and Dingolfing today (Friday), then on Saturday he and Heidfeld, the test drivers Christian Klien and Marko Asmer, plus Mario Theissen, Willy Rampf and Peter Sauber will all be attending the BMW Sauber F1 Team Race Club Fan Event in and around the BMW branch in Fröttmaning. Around 1,000 members of the fan club came to last year's get-together in Munich. The highlight of the event will once again be the demo runs with the Formula One car on a sealed-off road.

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Nick Heidfeld:

"I'm pleased for the fans, but also personally, that we have an exciting finale to the World Championship. Plus, I'm curious to see whether the track is still the same as it was in 2007. That was a nice surprise, as the track's surface used to be really bad and very bumpy. It was always being patched up, but it was only when the track was re-asphalted ahead of the 2007 Grand Prix that it really became a good surface. The layout of the Interlagos track is excellent and very demanding on the drivers – not least, of course, as far as our neck muscles are concerned. I think São Paulo's pretty cool as a city, but at the back of your mind are always the stories about muggings and you hear about that sort of thing every year."

Robert Kubica:

"Brazil is traditionally the final race of the season, and Interlagos is a very demanding and interesting circuit. My first race there was in 2002 in Formula Renault, and I've been back with the BMW Sauber F1 Team for the last two years. Interlagos is physically very tiring because we drive the circuit anticlockwise. That's something we're not used to, and we feel it especially in the neck. I'm currently third in the drivers' standings, six points in front of Kimi, and, of course, it's my aim to defend this position."

Mario Theissen, BMW Motorsport Director:

"The 2008 Formula One season is now going onto the finishing straight. In 2007 the outcome of the title was only decided in a thrilling final race in Brazil. Perhaps the Formula One fans will also get to enjoy a similarly exciting finale this year. Two drivers still have a chance of becoming World Champion in São Paulo."

"The Interlagos circuit has many different aspects, and the weather can also be unpredictable. The long, uphill start-finish straight places particularly heavy loads on the engines. This uphill section also makes the start extremely exciting. Another of its characteristic is the altitude of São Paulo. The thin air means that the engines generate approximately eight percent lower output than at sea level. We are very much looking forward to the final race of 2008 and are aiming to record another good result to round off the season."

"This is the final race in what has been our most successful season since the launch of the BMW Sauber F1 Team. We have achieved our ambitious aims for the third year in succession. We not only proved to be one of the top teams from the outset, we also recorded our maiden race win. It was all the sweeter, of course, that our success in Canada came in the form of a one two. As things stand, we have now had 11 podium finishes this year, compared with two in 2007. This statistic alone is evidence of the considerable steps forward we have made."

"Added to that, Nick brought us our first fastest race lap in Malaysia, Robert claimed our first pole position in Bahrain, and we've now scored points in 34 consecutive races, something no other team can match. The last time we went home empty-handed from a GP weekend was in Brazil in the final race of 2006. This achievement does not come down to chance. Our trump cards this season have been spotless reliability, our – for the most part – excellent race strategy, outstanding work in the pit stops and a very small number of mistakes from the drivers."

"In terms of pure performance, we still have ground to make up on Ferrari and McLaren Mercedes, and we didn't make the progress we hoped to in the second half of the season. Indeed, some of our development projects did not yield the expected performance gains on the track. But I am certain we shall learn the lessons from this for 2009. After all, we want to be up there fighting for the World Championship title next season."

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Willy Rampf, Technical Director:

“For us, the Brazilian Grand Prix represents the end of a highly successful season, and of course we want to round the year off on a positive note. Interlagos is one of the few circuits – alongside Istanbul Park and Singapore – which we drive anticlockwise. Here, the middle sector is critical, with one corner following the next. The key elements are good traction and car balance. Top speed is important in the first and third sectors, with engine output playing a particularly prominent role on the uphill start-finish straight. This section also offers a good overtaking opportunity, as does the end of the straight in sector one. The track was resurfaced in 2007, which evened out a lot of bumps. In contrast to last year, when we opted for the softest tyre option, this time around we’ll be using the medium compounds.”

Facts and figures:

Circuit/Date	Interlagos / 2 nd November 2008
Start time (local/UTC)	15.00 hrs/17.00 hrs (18.00 hrs in Central Europe)
Lap/Race distance	4.309 km/305.909 km (71 laps)
Corners	5 right-hand and 10 left-hand corners
Winner 2007	Kimi Räikkönen, Scuderia Ferrari Marlboro, 1 hr 28:15.270 minutes
Pole position 2007	Felipe Massa, Scuderia Ferrari Marlboro, 1:11.931 minutes
Fastest lap 2007	Kimi Räikkönen, Scuderia Ferrari Marlboro, 1:12.445 minutes
Data 2007 (race):	Full-throttle percentage: 65% Top speed: 314 km/h Longest section at full throttle: 17 sec / 1,220 m Gear changes per lap: 40 Tyre wear: medium Brake wear: medium Downforce level: medium to high

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BMW Sauber F1 Team



Driver	Nick Heidfeld	Robert Kubica
Date of birth	10.05.1977	07.12.1984
Place of birth	Mönchengladbach/Germany	Krakow/Poland
Nationality	German	Polish
Residence	Stäfa, Switzerland	Monaco
Marital status	Partner Patricia Papen, daughter Juni, son Joda	Single
Height	1.67 m	1.84 m
Weight	61 kg	69 kg
F1 debut	2000, Melbourne	2006, Budapest
GP starts	151	39
Pole positions	1	1
Wins	-	1
Podium places	11	8
Fastest laps	2	-
Best placing	5 th (2007)	6 th (2007)
Total points	200	120
Points 2008	60 (5 th place)	75 (3 rd place)

BMW Sauber F1 Team	
Founded	01.01.2006
Locations	Munich (DE) and Hinwil (CH)
F1 debut	2006, Melbourne
GP starts	52
Pole positions	1
Wins	1
Podium places	15 (6 x 3 rd / 8 x 2 nd / 1 x 1 st)
Fastest laps	2
Championship placings	5 th (2006), 36 points 2 nd (2007), 101 points 3 rd (2008), 135 points after 17 GPs

Season 2008	Nick Heidfeld			Robert Kubica		
	Qualifying	Race	Points	Qualifying	Race	Points
Australian GP	5 th	2 nd	8	2 nd	DNF	-
Malaysian GP	7 th (grid 5)	6 th	3	6 th (grid 4)	2 nd	8
Bahrain GP	6 th	4 th	5	1 st	3 rd	6
Spanish GP	9 th	9 th	-	4 th	4 th	5
Turkish GP	9 th	5 th	4	5 th	4 th	5
Monaco GP	13 th (grid 12)	14 th	-	5 th	2 nd	8
Canadian GP	8 th	2 nd	8	2 nd	1 st	10
French GP	12 th (grid 11)	13 th	-	7 th (grid 5)	5 th	4
British GP	5 th	2 nd	8	10 th	DNF	-
German GP	12 th	4 th	5	7 th	7 th	2
Hungarian GP	16 th (grid 15)	10 th	-	4 th	8 th	1
European GP	8 th	9 th	-	3 rd	3 rd	6
Belgian GP	5 th	2 nd	8	8 th	6 th	3
Italian GP	10 th	5 th	4	11 th	3 rd	6
Singapore GP	6 th (grid 9)	6 th	3	4 th	11 th	-
Japanese GP	16 th	9 th	-	6 th	2 nd	8
Chinese GP	7 th (grid 9)	5 th	4	12 th (grid 11)	6 th	3

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History and background:

Paulista coffee plantations laid the foundations for the economic growth of the region around São Paulo in south-eastern Brazil. The industrialisation of the late 19th century brought riches, but these have been spread unevenly among the population. Today, the people of São Paulo suffer from the effects of jarring social disparities – bitter poverty and immense wealth exist side by side and crime is rife. The city of São Paulo, founded in 1554, is the capital of the Brazilian state that bears its name and the country's financial and trading hub. The size of the local population can only be estimated. Eleven million people are thought to live in the city itself, 20 million in the wider São Paulo area. The climate is subtropical.

F1 has been hosted by Brazil since 1973, and 2008 marks the country's 36th Grand Prix. The debut event was held at Interlagos, with the track still covering 7.96 kilometres at the time and located outside the São Paulo city limits. The city has since mushroomed right up to the outskirts of the race track. In 1978 the Brazilian GP was hosted by the Jacarepagua circuit near Rio de Janeiro for the first time, and it was held there on ten occasions in all. In 1990 F1 returned to Interlagos, where the Brazilian GP has been staged ever since.

Schedule for group interviews at the weekend:

Thursday:

12.00-12.10 – Robert Kubica - TV
12.10-12.30 – Robert Kubica – print media
12.00-12.20 – Nick Heidfeld – print media
12.20-12.30 – Nick Heidfeld – TV
12.30-12.35 – Mario Theissen – TV
12.35-13.00 – Mario Theissen – print media
13.30-13.40 – Christian Klien – TV
13.40-14.00 – Christian Klien – print media
18.00-18.30 – Willy Rampf – by prior arrangement only

Friday:

09.30-09.40 – Team photo in the pit lane
16.00 – Mario Theissen – FIA press conference
16.45-16.55 – Nick Heidfeld – TV
16.45-16.55 – Robert Kubica – TV

Saturday:

16.45-16.55 – Nick Heidfeld – TV
16.55-17.15 – Nick Heidfeld – print media
16.45-17.05 – Robert Kubica – print media
17.05-17.15 – Robert Kubica – TV
17.30-17.35 – Mario Theissen – TV
17.35-18.00 – Mario Theissen – print media

Sunday:

Approx. 30 minutes after the end of the race Heidfeld, Kubica, Theissen and Rampf will be on hand in the team's Hospitality area.

Involvement in the FIA press conference means the group interviews will be cancelled on the relevant day.

For further information please visit the media website www.press.bmw-motorsport.com (press releases, press kits, images, TV footage) and the official team website www.bmw-sauber-f1.com (car, season, Race Club, team updates).

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