Beat: Sports

2019 Monaco Grand Prix

Monte Carlo

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USPA NEWS - For Niki: Mercedes-AMG Petronas Motorsport win the Monaco Grand Prix

Lewis took his 77th career victory today - his fourth of the 2019 season and his third at the Monaco Grand Prix

Valtteri finished the race in P3, his first-ever podium finish in Monte Carlo

Lewis (137 points) leads the Drivers´ Championship by 17 points from Valtteri (120 points)

Mercedes-AMG Petronas Motorsport (257 points) lead Ferrari (139 points) by 118 points in the Constructors´ Championship

Ron Meadows, Sporting Director, accepted the Constructors´ trophy on behalf of the team

Lewis Hamilton

Today was one of the hardest races of my career, it was so intense. With 20 laps left I thought there was no way I was going to make it to the end. I thought I was going to crash, I was battling so much with the car. There was absolutely nothing left in the tyres and it was so tough to keep the car on the track. I thought to myself, "˜what would Niki do´. I was trying my hardest "" giving everything I had. I just tried to stay focused and make no mistakes. I know he was watching me today, but with Niki by my side we managed to do it. I wore his helmet colours today and I didn´t want to let him down. He was close to my heart, I really wanted to deliver for him this weekend and I was determined not to crack under the pressure. Today belongs to Niki.

Valtteri Bottas

My race was decided in the pits. We did a double-stacked pit stop under the Safety Car, Lewis first, then me. Vettel and Verstappen came in as well and when I left the pits, Max was released at the same time and was side-by-side with me. We touched, I hit the wall because there´s no space to go and I got a right-front puncture. So I had to do another pit stop the following lap. At that point, I thought I´d be at the end of the field, but I only lost a couple of places, so I guess I was unlucky but lucky at the same time. It´s always disappointing if you finish the race lower than you qualified; however, my pace was really good all weekend long and I still scored valuable points for me and the team. One of my first thoughts this morning was that I wanted to drive well for Niki, I wanted to win for him. Ultimately, I didn´t, but Lewis did, so I´m sure Niki would be proud right now.

Toto Wolff

That result means a lot. It was a World Champions´ drive for a World Champion that isn´t among us anymore. It couldn´t have been a more dramatic race, so I am relieved it is over. Lewis did an incredible job out there, it was a really hard-fought race with Max. We know the tyre choice, in hindsight, was wrong with Lewis and we should´ve taken the Hard tyre at his stop. But, these things happen and at the time we thought the Medium was the right call. It was the driver who made the difference and managed the race. Valtteri had a tougher time, losing ground with the pit stops and the clash with Verstappen in the pit lane, but he did a great job and will be determined to fight back. This one was a really hard-fought victory and now we have a couple of days that are going to be difficult with Niki´s funeral in Vienna before we set sail for Canada.

Andrew Shovlin

We wanted to win this race for Niki but winning in Monaco is always much easier said than done. There was a bit of a risk of rain early

in the race and while it didn´t really turn into much, it meant that we were pushing a bit harder than we´d planned to build a bit of a gap to the midfield. The Safety Car was earlier than we would have liked and with hindsight, we should have fitted the Hard tyre, but we were concerned about the warm-up on the restart, which was why we took the medium. That obviously made life difficult for Lewis and we´ll review our decision making and the information that we had at the time. We´re grateful that Lewis was able to manage it so well to the end as he really had to work for the victory today.

Valtteri´s race was also compromised at the Safety Car. We felt the release from Red Bull was ok, but Max had room on the left to give Valtteri more space rather than putting him into the wall. That broke the front right wheel rim and caused a puncture, so we had to pit for a new set. From there his opportunities were rather limited. The car had good pace, but you simply can´t pass here and Valtteri had a frustrating race stuck behind Vettel. It was some consolation that Valtteri was able to get back on the podium after Max had the time penalty applied. Well done to Lewis, we made life more difficult than we needed to for him today, but our thoughts are now with Niki and his family. He has been such a big part of this team over the last few years, we have benefited so much from his wisdom and straight talking, and he is simply someone who cannot ever be replaced. All he would have asked of us is to give it 100% and race hard and that´s what we will do.

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