



FEDERATION INTERNATIONALE DE L'AUTOMOBILE

Race Preview

2013 AUSTRALIAN GRAND PRIX
15 – 17 MARCH 2013

Once again Melbourne extends its welcome to Formula One as Albert Park prepares to host the Australian Grand Prix – the opening race of the 2013 FIA Formula One World Championship. Sixteen weeks after storm-lashed Interlagos and the drama-laden climax of the 2012 season, the teams reassemble for what is widely expected to be an incredibly close year of racing.

Stability in the technical regulations leads to a great deal of carryover from 2012 and, several notable exceptions aside, optimising existing designs has been the primary focus in the development of 2013 cars.

While the machinery has a familiar look, the same cannot be said for the driver line-up. Four of 2012's field have switched teams in the off-season and five rookies will be making their F1 race debut in this weekend.

Albert Park is not the easiest place to make a good impression. Running on public roads through the park, the temporary circuit has a reputation for being slippery with several large bumps known to destabilise cars under braking. Gravel traps wait for the unwary and the unlucky – but being a street circuit there are also plenty of walls. Added to the limited and hazardous nature of overtaking opportunities at Albert Park, it means the safety car is often busy at the Australian Grand Prix.

Another variable to factor in are the new tyres on offer from Pirelli. Reports from winter testing suggest teams are not yet fully on terms with the revised compounds, raising the possibility of early races this year seeing shorter stints (and thus more frequent pitstops) than was usual in 2012.

As ever, winter testing did not provide any reliable evidence of a pecking order but did greatly add to the stock of speculation. Consensus points to a very tight battle ahead but without any hard evidence, this weekend will provide the first real indication of how the 2013 FIA Formula One World Championship will unfold.



CIRCUIT DATA

ALBERT PARK CIRCUIT

Length of lap:

5.303km

Lap record:

1:25.125 (Michael Schumacher, Ferrari, 2004)

Start line/finish line offset:

0.000km

Total number of race laps:

58

Total race distance:

307.574km

Pitlane speed limits:

60km/h in practice

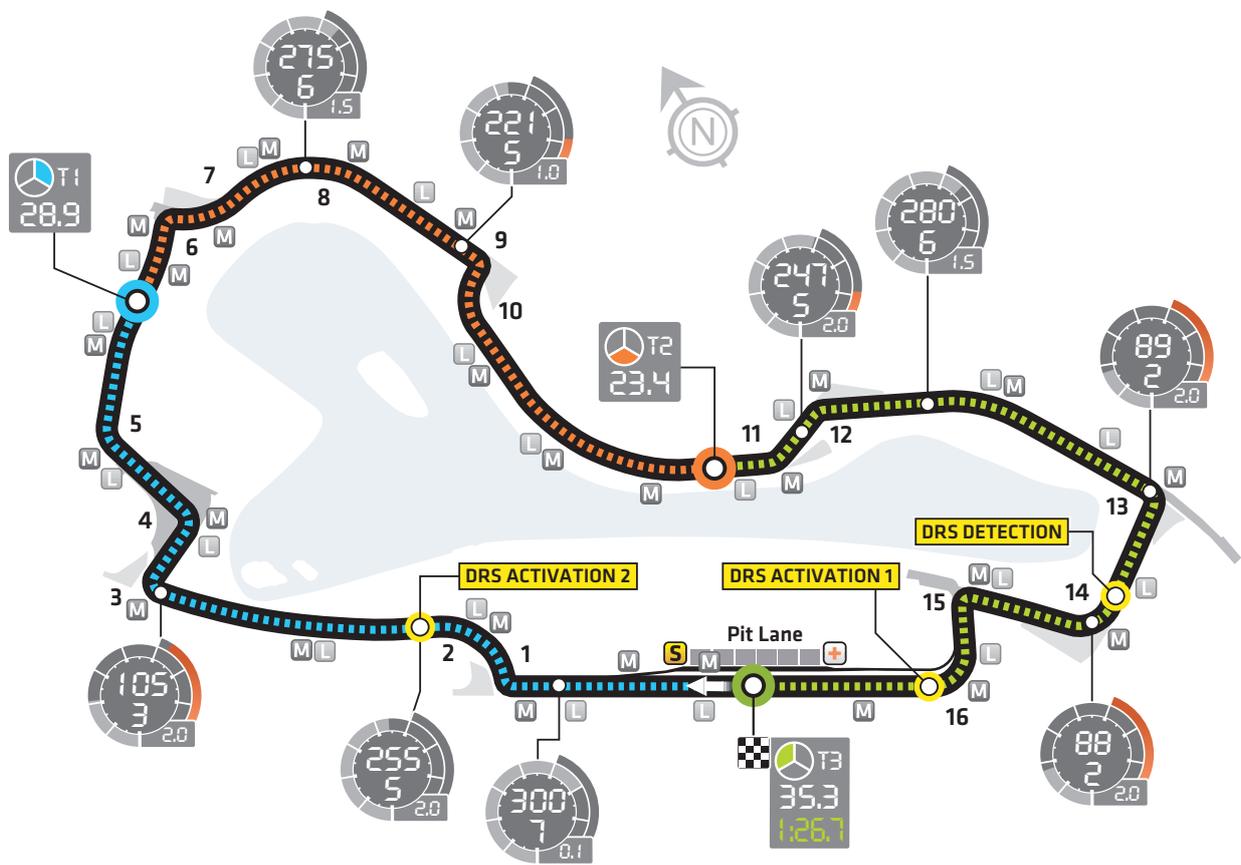
100km/h in qualifying and race

CIRCUIT NOTES

- ▶ Kerbs on the exit of turns 14 and 16, which had subsided prior to last year's race, have been repaired.
- ▶ Shade cloth will be used again, installed behind the debris fence in the section of track between turns two and three.

DRS ZONE

- ▶ DRS sectors will be the same as 2012, located between turns 16 and one (pit straight) and then between turns two and three. They share a single detection point, located at turn 14.



Speed Km/h Gear Braking Lateral G-force	Timing Sector Sector Time Lap Time	Sector 1 Sector 2 Sector 3	Circuit Safety Car Light Panels	Start Medical Car Run-off Areas	Finish Marshals Gravel Traps
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Australian GP Fast Facts

- ▶ This will be the 29th F1 World Championship running of the Australian Grand Prix. It is the 18th consecutive year of the race being run at Albert Park, 16 of which have opened the Formula One season.
- ▶ In 1996, when the race moved to Albert Park, it produced the oddity of Australia hosting back-to-back grands prix, the closing race of 1995 having taken place at Adelaide.
- ▶ Albert Park is a temporary circuit with parts of the track used by general road traffic for the majority of the year. As such, it features unusually high grip-evolution (and thus falling lap times) over the course of the weekend, as the track 'rubbers-in'.
- ▶ In common with Abu Dhabi, the Australian Grand Prix has a local start time of 5pm. Unlike the event at Yas Viceroy, this race finishes in daylight – but the low angle of the sun and the lengthening shadows have been known to make the latter stages of the race difficult for drivers.
- ▶ Another perennial problem in tree-lined Albert Park is leaves and twigs being sucked into car radiators.
- ▶ Of the current grid, Jenson Button is the standout performer, having won three times in the last four years. It leaves him one victory short of equalling Michael Schumacher's F1-era record. Schumacher won the race in 2000, '01, '02, '04.
- ▶ On 11 occasions from 17 starts, the winning driver at Albert Park has gone on to lift the Drivers' Championship trophy at the end of the season.
- ▶ The race winner has started on pole eight times at Albert Park. The lowest starter to win was Eddie Irvine, who started 11th for Ferrari in 1999.
- ▶ Four drivers start this race for new teams, having moved during the off-season. Lewis Hamilton has moved from McLaren to Mercedes; Sergio Pérez from Sauber to McLaren; Nico Hülkenberg from Force India to Sauber and Charles Pic from Marussia to Caterham. Also, Adrian Sutil is beginning his second stint with Force India.
- ▶ Five rookies will contest the Australian Grand Prix: Esteban Gutiérrez (Sauber); Valtteri Bottas (Williams); Giedo van der Garde (Caterham); Max Chilton and Jules Bianchi (Marussia).
- ▶ Reigning GP2 Champion Davide Valsecchi is not among the rookie intake. He instead has signed as a test driver for Lotus in 2013. The only other GP2 champion to not move directly into an F1 race seat was 2008 winner Giorgio Pantano – who raced in F1 before going to GP2.
- ▶ Giedo van der Garde ends a barren spell for Dutch representation in Formula One. The Netherlands hasn't had a driver in the Championship since Christijan Albers raced for Spyker for the first half of the 2007 season.
- ▶ The demise of HRT returns F1 to a 22-car grid for the first time since the opening rounds of 2008. During that season the withdrawal of Super Aguri after four rounds reduced it to 20. It expanded to 24 in 2010.

Australian GP

Formula One Timetable & FIA Media Schedule

THURSDAY

Press conference 1500

FRIDAY

Practice session 1 1230 – 1400

Practice session 2 1630 – 1800

Press conference 1830

SATURDAY

Practice session 3 1400 – 1500

Qualifying 1700 – 1800

Followed by unilateral and press conference

SUNDAY

Drivers' Parade 1530

Race 1700 – 1900

Followed by podium interviews and press conference

ADDITIONAL MEDIA OPPORTUNITIES

QUALIFYING

All drivers eliminated in Q1 or Q2 are available for media interviews immediately after the end of each session, as are drivers who participated in Q3, but who are not required for the post-qualifying press conference. Where? Through the paddock entrance, first grassed area on the left next to the fountain.

RACE

Any driver retiring before the end of the race will be made available at his team's garage/hospitality.

In addition, during the race every team will make available at least one senior spokesperson for interview by officially accredited TV crews. A list of those nominated will be made available in the media centre.



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