



Race Preview

2017 BELGIAN GRAND PRIX

25-27 August 2017

Back from the summer break, F1 heads to the Ardennes and Spa-Francorchamps for Round 12 of the 2017 World Championship, the Belgian Grand Prix.

Indisputably a classic of the World Championship, the circuit looping through the Ardennes offers high speeds, fast corners and pronounced gradients. The extra downforce of the 2017 aerodynamic packages and the increased mechanical grip from the wider tyres adds a new element for 2017, particularly in the ultra-fast double left-hander at Pouhon, likely to see entry speeds of 300km/h this year.

Tyre choices will be interesting in Spa. Pirelli's ultrasoft is making its Belgian Grand Prix debut, in line with the tyre-makers' declared intention to bring more aggressive choices in the second half of the season. This has produced more variance in the allocation than has been seen in the past few races: the Mercedes drivers go into the weekend with six sets of the ultrasoft tyre; the Ferrari pair have seven and the Red Bull Racing drivers nine.

That said, the long-range forecast doesn't necessarily suggest dry tyres will be the order of the day: while the weather in Spa is predictably unpredictable, the early indicators suggest wet weather is on the way for the weekend.

The battle for the Constructors' Championship resumes this weekend with rather more to play for than has been the case at this point in recent seasons. Mercedes lead Ferrari by 39 points, the latter having closed the gap in Hungary with a one-two finish. Meanwhile in the race for the drivers' title, a three-way fight promises a fascinating run-in. Sebastian Vettel leads with 202 points, 14 ahead of Lewis Hamilton, who is a further 19 ahead of Mercedes team-mate Valtteri Bottas.



SPA-FRANCORCHAMPS

Length of lap:

7.004km

Lap record:

1:47.263 (Sebastian Vettel, Red Bull Racing, 2009)

Start line/finish line offset:

0.124km

Total number of race laps: 44**Total race distance:**

308.052km

Pitlane speed limits:

80km/h in practice, qualifying, and the race

CIRCUIT NOTES

- ▶ Two additional rows of tyres and a second conveyor belt have been added in Turns 4, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13, 14 and 15.
- ▶ A total of 2000 tube inserts have been fitted to various tyre barriers around the track.
- ▶ The guardrail on the right between Turns 8 and 9 has been replaced with a wall.
- ▶ The kerb on the apex of Turn 15 has been extended as far as the asphalt section on the right after the corner, a drain has also been installed in front of this kerb.

DRS ZONES

- ▶ There will be two DRS zones at Spa-Francorchamps. The detection point for the first is located 240m before Turn 2, with the activation point 310m after Turn 4. The second zone has a detection point 160m before Turn 18 and an activation point 30m after Turn 19.

ROUND 12	BELGIAN GRAND PRIX	START TIME	14:00 Local - 12:00 GMT
RACE DATE:	27 AUG 2017	CIRCUIT LENGTH:	7.004KM
CIRCUIT NAME:	CIRCUIT DE SPA-FRANCORCHAMPS	RACE DISTANCE:	308.052KM
NUMBER OF LAPS:	44	LAP RECORD:	1:47.263 - S Vettel [2009]

KEY

Speed Kmh

Braking **135 4** Gear

Sector Time **T3 28.7** Lap Time **1:46.6**

Sector 1 (Blue circle) Sector 2 (Red circle) Sector 3 (Green circle)

Circuit (Grey line) Start (Black flag) Finish (Checkered flag)

DRS Detection (Orange circle) DRS Activation (Yellow circle) Run-off Areas (White triangle)

FIA Medical & Safety Cars (+S) Marshal Posts (Brown square) Light Panels (Yellow square)



Notes: Lap & Sector times are based upon 2016 Qualifying data
Gears are approximate based upon 2016 data
Speeds are approximate based upon 2017 Simulation data

FAST FACTS

- ▶ This is the 62nd running of the Belgian Grand Prix as round of the World Championship. The race featured as a round of the original F1 World Championship in 1950. It was not held in 1957, 1959, 1969, 1971, 2003 and 2006.
- ▶ Three circuits have hosted the race: Nivelles in 1972 and 1974; Zolder in 1973, 1975-1982 and 1984. The remainder have been held at Spa-Francorchamps.
- ▶ Michael Schumacher is the most successful driver with six victories and Ferrari are the most successful constructor with 16. They are, however, tied with McLaren on 12 each at Spa.
- ▶ Five drivers in the current field have won in Belgium. Kimi Räikkönen is the most successful with four victories, winning in 2004, 2005, 2007 and 2009. Lewis Hamilton won in 2010 and 2015. Sebastian Vettel in 2011 and 2013, Felipe Massa won in 2008 and Daniel Ricciardo in 2014. Massa's victory was initially awarded to Hamilton who accepted the trophy on the podium, only to later have 25 seconds added to his time for cutting a chicane during a thrilling fight with Räikkönen at the end of the race.
- ▶ This weekend Hamilton is set to make his 200th grand prix start. He made his debut at the 2007 Australian Grand Prix. He has 57 victories, three World Championships and this weekend he can equal Schumacher's record of 68 poles.
- ▶ The Spa-Francorchamps circuit was originally a road course, forming a triangle between Francorchamps, Malmédy and Stavelot. It held its first motorcycle race in 1921 and first car race in 1922. It has been modified many times since, settling roughly on its current layout in 1979, first used by F1 in 1983.
- ▶ The current track, featuring a new Bus Stop chicane and new pit entry, first appearing in 2007. On this version, the race has been won from pole five times and from no further back than sixth.
- ▶ McLaren's Stoffel Vandoorne is the first driver to race at Spa under the Belgian flag since Jérôme d'Ambrosio competed for Marussia during the 2011 season. Vandoorne was a winner at Spa in 2015, taking victory in the GP2 feature race. He has also won at Spa in 2013's Formula Renault 3.5 series, and both Spa races of the 2010 F4 Eurocup 1.6.
- ▶ Lance Stroll, the other F1 debutant at Spa this year, is also a previous victor at the circuit. Stroll won here last year on his way to winning the FIA Formula 3 European Championship.
- ▶ Force India's Esteban Ocon made his F1 debut at this race last year, driving for Manor. His current team have an affinity for the circuit: it is the site of their only pole position – Giancarlo Fisichella qualifying P1 in 2009. Fisichella went on to finish the race in second position – still their best result. In a previous incarnation as Jordan Grand Prix, the team scored its first victory at Spa, Damon Hill winning a chaotic wet race in 1998. Famously, Jordan Grand Prix also gave an F1 debut to a young Michael Schumacher at this race in 1991.

RACE STEWARDS BIOGRAPHIES

GERD ENNSER

MEMBER OF THE DMSB'S EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE FOR AUTOMOBILE SPORT, FORMULA ONE AND DTM STEWARD

Dr Gerd Ennsler has successfully combined his formal education in law with his passion for motor racing. While still active as a racing driver he began helping out with the management of his local motor sport club and since 2006 has been a permanent steward at every round of Germany's DTM championship. Since 2010 he has also been a Formula One steward. Dr Ennsler, who has worked as a judge, a prosecutor and in the legal department of an automotive-industry company, has also acted as a member of the steering committee of German motor sport body, the DMSB, since spring 2010, where he is responsible for automobile sport. In addition, Dr Ennsler is a board member of the South Bavaria Section of ADAC, Germany's biggest auto club.



BAHAM LEKHAL

CROSS COUNTRY RALLY AND ENDURO CHAMPION AND WTCC STEWARD

Mauretanian Baham Lekhal's motor sport career encompasses both two and four-wheel competition. In his homeland the 37-year-old is a three-time national rally and enduro champion. He has also competed on the international stage, most notably winning the Togo International cross country event in 2004 and finishing in second place at the 6 Hours Du Lac Rose and at the International Cross Country de Mboud the following year. In 2007, Lekhal became the first Mauretanian to take part in the Dakar Rally and three years later the first to participate in the FIM Cross Country World Championship, Abu Dhabi Desert Challenge. For the past three years Lekhal has acted as a steward at FIA World Touring Car Championship events. He has been President of the Fédération Mauritanienne des Sports Mecaniques since 2008.



MIKA SALO

FORMER F1 DRIVER

Mika Salo competed in over 100 grands prix between 1994-2002. After junior success in Britain and Japan, Salo made his Formula One debut for Lotus at the last two rounds of the 1994 season. Over the next eight years the Finn drove for Tyrrell, Arrows, BAR, Ferrari, Sauber and Toyota. He twice finished on the podium for Ferrari and scored points for Toyota in the Japanese manufacturer's debut race. Since he called time on his F1 career, Salo has competed predominantly in sports cars, most notably racing in GT classes. He has GT2 victories at both Le Mans and Sebring, and in 2007 won the GT class in ALMS. He has also tried his hand in CART and Australian V8s. Salo is still a familiar face in the Formula One paddock, working extensively for Finnish TV.



FORMULA ONE TIMETABLE & FIA MEDIA SCHEDULE

THURSDAY

Press conference 1500

FRIDAY

Practice session 1 1000-1130

Practice session 2 1400-1530

Press conference 1600

SATURDAY

Practice session 3 1100-1200

Qualifying 1400-1500

Followed by unilateral and press conference

SUNDAY

Drivers' Parade 1230

Race 1400

Followed by podium interviews and press conference

ADDITIONAL MEDIA OPPORTUNITIES

QUALIFYING

All drivers eliminated in Q1 or Q2 will be available for media interviews after the end of each session, as will drivers who participated in Q3, but who are not required for the post-qualifying press conference. The TV Pen is located in front of the entrance to the media centre.

RACE

Any driver retiring before the end of the race will be made available at the TV pen interview area. 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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