



Race Preview

2017 AZERBAIJAN GRAND PRIX

23-25 June 2017

Round eight of the 2017 Formula One World Championship sees teams and drivers head east to the Caucasus and the city of Baku, home to the Azerbaijan Grand Prix.

The long, Hermann Tilke-designed Baku City Circuit is something of an anomaly in terms of street racing. Through the Old City, it features the tight turns and unforgiving barriers common to the type, with the track closing to just 7.6m at its narrowest spot. However, sections in the new part of the city feature wide boulevards and long periods at full throttle and so it can be classed as a high-speed circuit. Indeed, unofficially, the fastest speed ever recorded by a Formula One car during a race weekend was attained in qualifying last year on this circuit.

Baku is a medium-difficulty circuit for brakes but a tough challenge for braking engineers: most of the circuit requires high levels of cooling, with many braking points and only short runs between them – but too much cooling will leave the brakes cold into Turn One after the long start-finish straight.

After two races at the softest end of the tyre spectrum, Pirelli have gone harder for Baku, with the Medium, Soft and Supersoft tyres on offer. As expected, most drivers have chosen to shun the Medium tyre, with 16 of the 20 taking only the mandatory single set. Everyone has at least eight sets of the Supersoft, while five drivers have taken nine and the McLaren pair each have 10.

At the top of the respective championships, the battles between Ferrari and Mercedes, and Sebastian Vettel and Lewis Hamilton make for fascinating viewing. Vettel currently leads the drivers' standings with a 12-point advantage over Hamilton. Mercedes, by virtue of the one-two finish for Hamilton and Valtteri Bottas in Canada, have regained top spot in the Constructors' Championship, leading Ferrari by eight points. While neither squad has a decisive pace advantage, in recent weeks Ferrari have prospered on the tighter circuits and Mercedes on high-speed tracks. The Baku City Circuit, with its mix of both, provides an intriguing battleground.



BAKU CITY CIRCUIT

Length of lap: 6.003km

Lap record: 1:46.485

(Nico Rosberg, Mercedes, 2016)

Start line/finish line offset: 0.104km

Total number of race laps: 51

Total race distance: 306.049km

Pitlane speed limits: 80km/h in practice, qualifying, and the race

CIRCUIT NOTES

- ▶ The walls at the end of the run-off areas in Turns 1, 2, 3, 5, 8 and 15 have been moved back from the track to provide additional space.
- ▶ TecPro barriers in Turns 1, 3, 5, 7, 8 and 15 have been improved by the addition of new blocks in front of the previous arrays.
- ▶ Kerbs have been removed and the ground painted at the exit of Turn 1, the apices of Turns 3 and 5 and the track/pit exit separator.
- ▶ New openings in the walls for the recovery of cars have been provided on the left before Turn 7 and on the right in Turn 18. Additionally, a number of new gates in the walls have been installed to ease circulation after track running finishes.
- ▶ The SAFER barriers around the outside of turns 13 and 19 have both been extended by 34m.

DRS ZONE

- ▶ There are two DRS zones in Baku. The first has detection at the SC2 line and activation 54m after Turn 2. The second has detection at the T20 apex and activation 347m after Turn 20.

ROUND 08	AZERBAIJAN GRAND PRIX	START TIME	17:00 Local - 13:00 GMT
RACE DATE:	25 JUN 2017	CIRCUIT LENGTH:	6.003km
CIRCUIT NAME:	BAKU CITY CIRCUIT - AZERBAIJAN	RACE DISTANCE:	306.049km
NUMBER OF LAPS:	51	LAP RECORD:	1:46.485 - N Rosberg [2016]

Notes: Speeds & gears are approximate based upon 2016 data
Lap & Sector times are based upon 2016 Qualifying data

KEY	
Speed Kmh	Sector Time
Braking 1293	Gear
Sector 1	Sector 2
Circuit	Start
DRS Detection	DRS Activation
FIA Medical & Safety Cars	Marshal Posts
	Finish
	Run-off Areas
	Light Panels



FAST FACTS

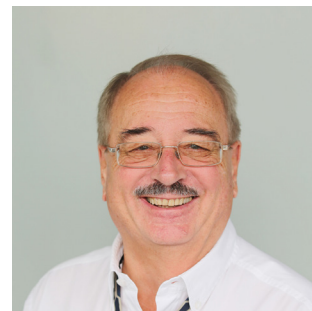
- ▶ This is the first Azerbaijan Grand Prix. Last year the Baku City Circuit made its Formula One debut hosting the 23rd running of the European Grand Prix. There is no European Grand Prix on the calendar this season.
- ▶ Measuring 6.003km, the Baku City Circuit is the second-longest track on the current Formula One calendar, with only 7.004km Spa-Francorchamps longer. Baku narrowly edges out Silverstone, which is next on the list, 112m shorter.
- ▶ Last year's race in Baku was won by Nico Rosberg from pole position. Rosberg also set the fastest lap of the race and thus holds the lap record with 1:46.485. The German also led every lap of the race, recording the second and final grand chelem / grand slam of his career, the first being a few weeks earlier at the Russian Grand Prix.
- ▶ Following qualifying at the Baku City Circuit last year, Williams announced their telemetry had recorded Valtteri Bottas, assisted by a tow, travelling at 378km/h on the main straight, approaching Turn One. This is the fastest speed recorded by a Formula One car during a race weekend. Speeds were slightly slower during the race, with Lewis Hamilton the fastest driver over the start-finish line at 364.4km/h.
- ▶ The preferred strategy last year was a one-stopper, with the top six cars all starting the race on the super-soft and switching to the soft. The pitstop window for those six was relatively wide. Kimi Räikkönen (P4) made his stop on lap eight, Rosberg on lap 21. The Red Bulls of Daniel Ricciardo and Max Verstappen finished seventh and eighth respectively, on three-stop strategies, going supersoft-soft-medium.
- ▶ Uncommonly for a street circuit, grid position did not prove decisive last year, with out-of-position cars able to affect overtaking moves with relative ease. Force India's Sergio Pérez qualified a career-best P2 but was relegated to P7 after a gearbox change. He was able to climb back into a podium position and finished P3. Hamilton started P10 and finished P5, while Jenson Button started P19 and came through the field to P11.
- ▶ Bucking the usual attritional nature of street circuits, last year the Baku City Circuit witnessed only four retirements: Fernando Alonso stopped with gearbox trouble, Pascal Wehrlein with a brake issue, and the Toro Rossos of Carlos Sainz and Daniil Kvyat with suspension problems.
- ▶ At its lowest point on the start-finish straight, the Baku City Circuit is some 24m below mean sea level, making it the lowest point on Earth to host a grand prix. It is 2,253m below the high-point of the F1 season, which can be found at Turn Six of the Autódromo Hermanos Rodríguez in Mexico City.
- ▶ Stoffel Vandoorne, Esteban Ocon, and Lance Stroll will all be making their debut on the Baku City Circuit this weekend. None participated in a support race last season, and thus this year represents a genuine first look at the circuit.

RACE STEWARDS BIOGRAPHIES

PAUL GUTJAHR

PRESIDENT OF THE FIA HILL CLIMB COMMISSION, BOARD MEMBER AND PRESIDENT OF AUTO SPORT SUISSE SARL

Paul Gutjahr started racing in the late 1960s with Alfa Romeo, Lancia, Lotus and Porsche, then March in Formula 3. In the early '70s he became President of the Automobile Club Berne and organised numerous events. He acted as President of the organising committee of the Swiss GP at Dijon between 1980-82. Between 1980-2005 he acted as President of the Commission Sportive Nationale de l'Automobile Club de Suisse and in 2005 he became President and board member of the Auto Sport Suisse motor sports club. Gutjahr is President of the Alliance of European Hill Climb Organisers and has been Steward at various high-level international competitions. He was the Formula 3000 Sporting Commissioner and has been a Formula One steward since 1995.



ENZO SPANO

PRESIDENT OF THE SPORTING COMMISSION OF THE AUTOMOBILE AND TOURING CLUB OF VENEZUELA

Italian-born Vincenzo Spano grew up in Venezuela, where he went on to study at the Universidad Central de Venezuela, becoming an attorney-at-law. Spano has wide-ranging experience in motor sport, from national to international level. He has worked for the Touring y Automóvil Club de Venezuela since 1991, and served as President of the Sporting Commission since 2001. He was president for two terms and now sits as a member of the Board of the Nacam-FIA zone. Since 1995 Spano has been a licenced steward and obtained his FIA steward superlicence in 2003. Spano has been involved with the FIA and FIA Institute in various roles since 2001: a member of the World Motor Sport Council, the FIA Committee, and the executive committee of the FIA Institute.



DANNY SULLIVAN

FORMER F1 DRIVER, INDIANAPOLIS 500 WINNER AND CART CHAMPION

US racer Danny Sullivan made his F1 debut with Tyrrell at the 1983 Brazilian Grand Prix. He raced just one season in F1, scoring a best result of fifth in Monaco. In 1984, Sullivan returned to the US where he resumed a successful Indy Car career. He is perhaps best known for his 'spin and win' victory at the 1985 Indianapolis 500, where he passed leader Mario Andretti, survived a 360 degree spin, and then caught and re-passed Andretti to claim the Borg-Warner Trophy. He won the Indy Car World Series title in 1988. After 17 victories from 170 Indy Car starts he drew a line under his open-wheel career in 1995. He finished third in the Le Mans 24 Hours in a Dauer Porsche 962 in 1994. He made four starts at Le Mans, the most recent being 2004.



FORMULA ONE TIMETABLE & FIA MEDIA SCHEDULE

THURSDAY

Press conference 1500

FRIDAY

Practice session 1 1300-1430

Practice session 2 1700-1830

Press conference 1900

SATURDAY

Practice session 3 1400-1500

Qualifying 1700-1800

Followed by unilateral and press conference

SUNDAY

Drivers' Parade 1530

Race 1700

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 will be located outside the paddock between the entrance (Race Control side) and the Media Centre, in order to be closer to the Press Conference Room.

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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