



# Race Preview

## 2019 AZERBAIJAN GRAND PRIX

26 – 28 April 2019

Round four of the 2019 FIA Formula One World Championship take teams and drivers to one of the season's most challenging and unpredictable races – the Azerbaijan Grand Prix.

Unusually for a street track, the Baku City Circuit blends the tight and twisting configuration and close barriers of the Old Town with long, high-speed sections on the wide boulevards of the modern quarters of the capital city.

The variance means that drivers will not only reach some of the highest speeds of the season on the 2.1km-long pit straight – last year's maximum race speed of 344.4 km/h was recorded across the finish line by Daniel Ricciardo – they also face the daunting task of threading an F1 car through medieval streets that, at their narrowest, measure just 7.6 metres wide.

The challenge is no less difficult for teams seeking the perfect set-up across the weekend. Despite the street layout, the Baku City Circuit calls for a low-downforce set-up, in order to make the most of the long straight of the final sector. Balancing the need for outright pace on the long straights with the demands of the low-speed corners of the Old Town is the major call of the weekend for engineers.

In the Drivers' Championship, following victory a fortnight ago in China, Mercedes' Lewis Hamilton heads into this weekend at the top of the standings for the first time this season. The defending champion holds a six-point advantage over team-mate Valtteri Bottas, with Red Bull's Max Verstappen third on 39 points, two clear of Ferrari's Sebastian Vettel.

In the battle for the Constructors' title, three straight one-two finishes, allied to early season woes for Ferrari, have given Mercedes a sizeable 57-point lead ahead of the Scuderia, with Red Bull Racing third. However, at a race that delivers thrills and spills in abundance, the early season table is an unreliable indicator of how one of F1's most unpredictable grands prix might unfold.



### BAKU CITY CIRCUIT

**Length of lap:** 6.003km

**Lap record:**

1:43.441 (Sebastian Vettel, Ferrari, 2017)

**Start line/finish line offset:**

0.104km

**Total number of race laps:** 51

**Total race distance:** 306.049km

**Pitlane speed limits:**

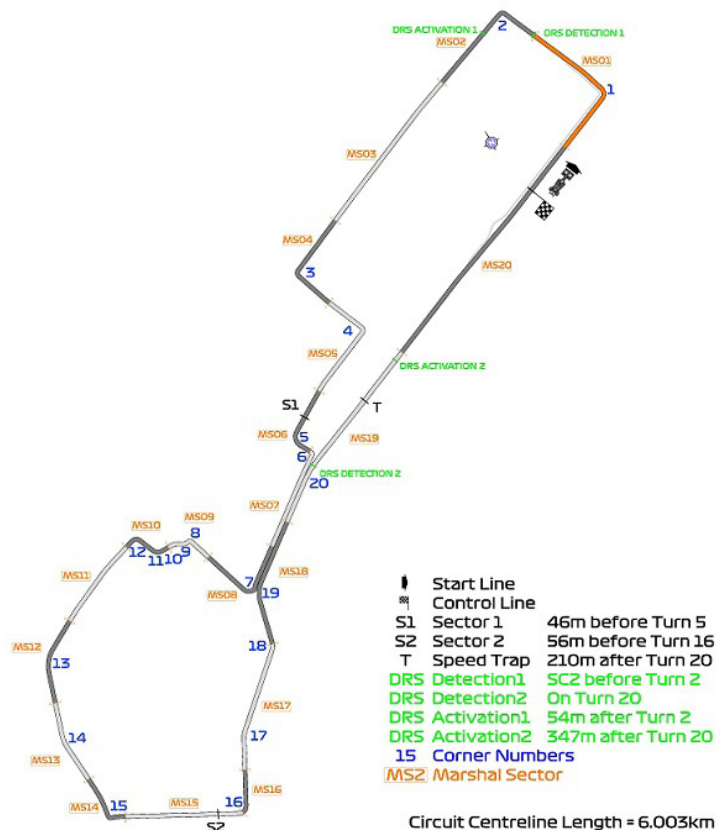
80km/h in practice, qualifying, and the race

### CIRCUIT NOTES

- ▶ Other than routine maintenance, no changes of significance have been made since last year.

### DRS ZONE

- ▶ There are two DRS zones in Baku. The detection point of the first is at the SC2 line, while activation is 54m after Turn 2. The detection point of the second zone is at the apex of Turn 20, with activation 347m after Turn 20.



## FAST FACTS

- ▶ This is the third edition of the Azerbaijan Grand Prix. It is, however, the fourth grand prix to be held at the Baku City Circuit. The track joined the calendar in 2016, when it hosted the 23rd European Grand Prix, the first such race to be held since 2012. For 2017 the race here was renamed the Azerbaijan Grand Prix.
- ▶ No driver has won Baku's race more than once. Nico Rosberg won the inaugural event with Mercedes in 2016, Daniel Ricciardo emerged victorious in 2017 and Lewis Hamilton won last year's race after inheriting the lead three laps from the finish when team-mate Valtteri Bottas suffered a blow-out.
- ▶ Racing Point's Sergio Pérez is the only multiple podium finisher in Baku. The Mexican driver finished third here in 2016 and repeated the feat in last year's race. Both were scored with Force India. Pérez's 2018 result made him Mexico's most frequent podium finisher. His eight career podiums put him ahead of Pedro Rodríguez who scored seven across a 54-race career that stretched from 1963-1971.
- ▶ Lance Stroll set a record here in 2017 when third place in the first Azerbaijan Grand Prix made him the youngest rookie driver to finish on the podium in Formula One. The Canadian youngster was just 18 years and 239 days when he set the record. His P3 for Williams remains his only podium finish to date.
- ▶ Nico Rosberg's 2016 win here was the second and final grand chelem of his career. The German took pole position, won the race, posted the fastest race lap and led every lap of the grand prix on his way to the top step of the podium. Rosberg's first grand chelem was achieved earlier in his championship season, at the 2016 Russian Grand Prix.
- ▶ Fastest lap has gone to a different driver at each race here. After Rosberg's fastest lap record here in 2016, Sebastian Vettel went quickest in the race in 2017 and Bottas set last year's fastest lap with a time of 1:45.149 on lap 37 of the race.
- ▶ Charles Leclerc scored the best result of his rookie season here last year, with sixth place for Sauber. The Monegasque driver went from P13 on the grid to take eight points in the race.
- ▶ Two-time F1 champion Fernando Alonso holds the record for most places gained from a starting position during a race here. The two-time champion went from P19 on the grid in 2017 to P9 at the flag to pick up two points for McLaren.
- ▶ Only three teams have led laps in Baku. Mercedes top the list with 102, followed by Ferrari with 33 and Red Bull with 18.
- ▶ Only one driver on the current grid has not raced in Baku before – Robert Kubica. Full-season rookies Antonio Giovinazzi, Lando Norris, Alex Albon and George Russell all raced here in either GP2 or the FIA Formula 2 Championship. Giovinazzi won the Feature Race and the Sprint race in GP2 in 2016, Albon won the feature race in Baku last year, while Russell was victorious in the Sprint race on the same weekend. Norris, meanwhile, took a best result of fourth in last year's Sprint race after finishing the Feature race in P6. Kubica has returned to the F1 grid this year after an absence of eight seasons.

# RACE STEWARDS BIOGRAPHIES

## DR GERD ENNSER

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

Dr Gerd Ennser 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 Ennser, 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 Ennser is a board member of the South Bavaria Section of ADAC, Germany's biggest auto club.



## NISH SHETTY

### **FIA STEWARD AND MEMBER OF THE FIA INTERNATIONAL COURT OF APPEAL**

Nish Shetty sits on the FIA International Court of Appeal as a judge and is a permanent member of the National Court of Appeal (Singapore). He is also Chairman of the Disciplinary Commission of the Singapore Motor Sports Association and a national steward of the Singapore Grand Prix. Shetty has assisted the Singapore Motor Sports Association for many years as a legal advisor and committee member. In addition to being involved in the Singapore Grand Prix, Shetty has acted as a steward in the Singapore Karting Championship. Away from motor sport, he is a Partner and Head of International Arbitration and Dispute Resolution, South East Asia at global law firm Clifford Chance.



## MIKA SALO

### **FORMER F1 DRIVER, MEMBER OF THE FIA SINGLE-SEATER COMMISSION**

Finnish racer 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. After calling time on his F1 career, Salo competed predominantly in sports cars, most notably racing in GT classes. He has GT2 victories at both Le Mans and Sebring to his name, and in 2007 won the GT class in ALMS. He also tried his hand in CART and Australian V8s. Salo is still a familiar face in the Formula 1 paddock, working extensively for Finnish TV among other roles.



# 2019 FIA Formula One World Championship

## DRIVERS' CHAMPIONSHIP STANDINGS

|    | AUSTRALIA     | BAHRAIN           | CHINA             | AZERBAIJAN       | SPAIN | MONACO | CANADA | FRANCE | AUSTRIA | GB | GERMANY | HUNGARY | BELGIUM | ITALY | SINGAPORE | RUSSIA | JAPAN | MEXICO | USA | BRAZIL | ABU DHABI | POINTS |    |
|----|---------------|-------------------|-------------------|------------------|-------|--------|--------|--------|---------|----|---------|---------|---------|-------|-----------|--------|-------|--------|-----|--------|-----------|--------|----|
| 1  | L. HAMILTON   | 18 <sub>2</sub>   | 25 <sub>1</sub>   | 25 <sub>1</sub>  |       |        |        |        |         |    |         |         |         |       |           |        |       |        |     |        |           |        | 68 |
| 2  | V. BOTTAS     | 26 <sub>F 1</sub> | 18 <sub>2</sub>   | 18 <sub>2</sub>  |       |        |        |        |         |    |         |         |         |       |           |        |       |        |     |        |           |        | 62 |
| 3  | M. VERSTAPPEN | 15 <sub>3</sub>   | 12 <sub>4</sub>   | 12 <sub>4</sub>  |       |        |        |        |         |    |         |         |         |       |           |        |       |        |     |        |           |        | 39 |
| 4  | S. VETTEL     | 12 <sub>4</sub>   | 10 <sub>5</sub>   | 15 <sub>3</sub>  |       |        |        |        |         |    |         |         |         |       |           |        |       |        |     |        |           |        | 37 |
| 5  | C. LECLERC    | 10 <sub>5</sub>   | 16 <sub>F 3</sub> | 10 <sub>5</sub>  |       |        |        |        |         |    |         |         |         |       |           |        |       |        |     |        |           |        | 36 |
| 6  | P. GASLY      |                   | 4 <sub>8</sub>    | 9 <sub>F 6</sub> |       |        |        |        |         |    |         |         |         |       |           |        |       |        |     |        |           |        | 13 |
| 7  | K. RÄIKKÖNEN  | 4 <sub>8</sub>    | 6 <sub>7</sub>    | 2 <sub>9</sub>   |       |        |        |        |         |    |         |         |         |       |           |        |       |        |     |        |           |        | 12 |
| 8  | L. NORRIS     |                   | 8 <sub>6</sub>    |                  |       |        |        |        |         |    |         |         |         |       |           |        |       |        |     |        |           |        | 8  |
| 9  | K. MAGNUSSEN  | 8 <sub>6</sub>    |                   | 13 <sub>13</sub> |       |        |        |        |         |    |         |         |         |       |           |        |       |        |     |        |           |        | 8  |
| 10 | N. HÜLKENBERG | 6 <sub>7</sub>    |                   | 17 <sub>NC</sub> |       |        |        |        |         |    |         |         |         |       |           |        |       |        |     |        |           |        | 6  |
| 11 | D. RICCIARDO  |                   |                   | 6 <sub>7</sub>   |       |        |        |        |         |    |         |         |         |       |           |        |       |        |     |        |           |        | 6  |
| 12 | S. PÉREZ      |                   | 1 <sub>13</sub>   | 4 <sub>10</sub>  |       |        |        |        |         |    |         |         |         |       |           |        |       |        |     |        |           |        | 5  |
| 13 | A. ALBON      |                   | 2 <sub>14</sub>   | 1 <sub>9</sub>   |       |        |        |        |         |    |         |         |         |       |           |        |       |        |     |        |           |        | 3  |
| 14 | L. STROLL     | 2 <sub>9</sub>    |                   | 14 <sub>12</sub> |       |        |        |        |         |    |         |         |         |       |           |        |       |        |     |        |           |        | 2  |
| 15 | D. KVYAT      | 1 <sub>10</sub>   |                   | 12 <sub>NC</sub> |       |        |        |        |         |    |         |         |         |       |           |        |       |        |     |        |           |        | 1  |
| 16 | A. GIOVINAZZI |                   | 15 <sub>11</sub>  | 15 <sub>15</sub> |       |        |        |        |         |    |         |         |         |       |           |        |       |        |     |        |           |        | 0  |
| 17 | R. GROSJEAN   |                   | NC <sub>NC</sub>  | 11 <sub>11</sub> |       |        |        |        |         |    |         |         |         |       |           |        |       |        |     |        |           |        | 0  |
| 18 | C. SAINZ      |                   | NC <sub>19</sub>  | 14 <sub>14</sub> |       |        |        |        |         |    |         |         |         |       |           |        |       |        |     |        |           |        | 0  |
| 19 | G. RUSSELL    |                   | 16 <sub>15</sub>  | 16 <sub>16</sub> |       |        |        |        |         |    |         |         |         |       |           |        |       |        |     |        |           |        | 0  |
| 20 | R. KUBICA     |                   | 17 <sub>16</sub>  | 17 <sub>17</sub> |       |        |        |        |         |    |         |         |         |       |           |        |       |        |     |        |           |        | 0  |

F = POINT FOR FASTEST LAP



# FORMULA ONE TIMETABLE & FIA MEDIA SCHEDULE

## THURSDAY

**Press conference** 1700

## FRIDAY

**Practice session 1** 1300-1430

**Press conference** 1500

**Practice session 2** 1700-1830

## SATURDAY

**Practice session 3** 1400-1500

**Qualifying** 1700-1800

Followed by track interviews, press conference

## SUNDAY

**Drivers' Parade** 1430

**Race** 1610

Followed by parc fermé interviews and press conference

## ADDITIONAL MEDIA OPPORTUNITIES

### QUALIFYING

All drivers eliminated in Q1 or Q2 will be available for media interviews immediately 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 between the media centre and paddock.

### 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.

Following the end of the race, drivers who do not have sessions for print media organised by their team will be available for interview in the Mixed Zone immediately after they have completed their TV interview obligations. A list of these drivers will be distributed to all media at the event during the race.

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