Beat: Sports

2016 Japanese Grand Prix

Suzuka

Suzuka, 09.10.2016, 20:09 Time

USPA NEWS - Silver Arrows seal #TheTriple at Suzuka! - Nico today took his 23rd Formula One career victory "" his first at the Suzuka International Racing Course and ninth of the 2016 season so far. Lewis recovered from a slow start which dropped him to P8 on the first lap to clinch P3 at the flag.

Nico Rosberg -

What an awesome weekend! It felt great right from when the lights went green on Friday. I got a good rhythm in practice, had a strong Qualifying, a decent start and then from the lead I was able to control the pace in the race. I had to save my engine a bit as it was my last race in the cycle "" but the gap was always safe. I came here to win in Japan and I managed to do so, which is really special.

It´s a fantastic feeling to win at this legendary race track. Massive congratulations to all of my colleagues here in Japan, back at Brackley and Brixworth, and the hundreds of thousands of Daimler employees out there for the third Constructors´ World Championship. A huge thank you to every single person and to every partner who made this possible. They are really the best! They deserve it so much after the unbelievable effort over these past few years, so let´s celebrate hard! I might do a little bit of celebrating myself but not too much.

The season is not over yet with a few races still to go around the world, so I need to keep my energy up! Thank you so much to everyone out in the crowds this weekend too. The fans here always create a special atmosphere and they´ve put on such a great show. Arigato! Now we need to focus on the last four races. I look forward to going to America next. See you there!

Lewis Hamilton -

Firstly, I´d like to say a huge congratulations to everyone back at the factories and the whole of Mercedes-Benz. Everyone has done a fantastic job and to have this success three years in a row is incredible. It´s been an awesome effort from so many people over the last three years and that is the most important thing to take from today. We couldn´t have done it without all of their support and I´m very, very proud to be a part of it.

I´m also proud to have been part of the Mercedes-Benz journey since 2007 and then since 2013 with this team. Looking at the race itself, I´m not really quite sure what happened at the start. I´ll have to see what the engineers say "" but I got the worst getaway I could possibly get. My side wasn´t completely dry and there was lots of wheel spin "" but that wasn´t the whole issue. I lost a lot of ground as everyone else gained traction moving away. It was frustrating, but that´s the way it is. These things happen. Then, in the first part of the race, I didn´t have the pace of Kimi, so knew I had to go longer and wasn´t really trying to attack him in the first part of the race.

The second half got a lot more interesting and I was able to pick up some serious pace on the hard tyre. The car was feeling better, I was feeling more comfortable and I was able to overtake people. We put a bit of front wing in and the understeer completely disappeared, so I was able to make my way through the field and close the gap. Unfortunately I wasn´t able to take second but I did the best job I could out there today.

Every point counts, so I drove my heart out to get as many as possible. Nico did a great job today and he has a healthy margin now, so the Drivers´ Championship has got harder for me. I´ll give it everything I´ve got, as I did in the race today and always do. That´s all I can do "" focus on doing the best that I can "" so we´ll see what happens. A big thank you to everyone who came out today. The fans were amazing here as always. I´m looking forward to getting home and then moving onto the next race.

Toto Wolff, Head of Mercedes-Benz Motorsport -

It is a great honour today to represent the hundreds of people in Brackley, Brixworth and Stuttgart who have made us triple World Champions. The story begins on the shop floor of our team and goes all the way to the board room of Mercedes-Benz. It is a tale of

passion, commitment and incredible people working beyond their limits to win.

And not just doing it once, but re-motivating themselves to surpass their achievements year after year. This is their moment "" all those heroes in the background who are the core of what makes this team so special. It is a humbling experience to walk the corridors of our factories and to see their faces every day. If I had a hat like Niki´s, I would take it off to them. And, okay, it might sound a bit corporate"¦ but we couldn´t do it without the support of all the partners who invest in our vision and in our determination to win. Thank you to each and every one for their fantastic contribution to this success.

Looking back at today´s race, so much was decided at the start. Nico got a perfect start, while Lewis suffered on the right-hand side with the damp line but also got a bad getaway. We know that our clutch is tricky to manage and we have not given the drivers the easiest system to use this year. Our first indications suggest that the clutch release was the problem today "" but we will look into all the data before reaching a definitive conclusion. After that moment, Nico put in a perfect drive.

He managed the gaps, controlled the race and took a really well-deserved win. For Lewis, it was fight-back time and he did that just as well as we know he can. Helped by a great strategy, on a circuit where it´s tough to pass, he came back from P8 to P3 in a great drive. It was a fantastic way to win the Championship today, with two cars on the podium. And now, it´s finally mathematically between only our two boys. The gap in the Championship is now 33 points and we will let them battle it out in a clean race to the end. If this season has shown one thing, it´s that anything can happen and big swings are possible. There are 100 points still to be scored and a lot of racing still to go.

Paddy Lowe, Executive Director (Technical) -

A terrific result today and congratulations to the whole team for securing a third consecutive Constructors´ World Championship. This has come from a huge amount of great work over many years and is an achievement that every individual will treasure. The race was quite straightforward for Nico but didn´t start brilliantly for Lewis, which immediately gave us a challenge we hadn´t expected to bring him up from eighth position to the front again.

He drove one of his strongest races of the season to recover to third "" and it could even have been second save for a rather controversial manoeuvre by Max Verstappen at the final chicane. He had some fantastic pace, great management of the tyres, and great management of the traffic particularly. He made up a huge amount of time to finish only six seconds away from Nico, having been as far as 20 seconds behind at one point in the race.

So, congratulations to Lewis for a great recovery, although I´m sure he´ll be feeling disappointed with the result overall. For Nico, whilst it was a less dramatic day, he drove a perfect race. There were some issues for him to overcome in terms of managing fuel, as it turned out we were a bit short on fuel load. But he handled it well with a perfect drive to sum up a perfect weekend from his point of view with a very well-deserved first win at Suzuka. This is a classic track "" one of the greats of the Formula One World Championship both now and throughout history "" and I think we delivered a great spectacle befitting the venue to secure our third World Championship.

Article online:
https://www.uspa24.com/bericht-9452/2016-japanese-grand-prix.html

Editorial office and responsibility:
V.i.S.d.P. & Sect. 6 MDStV (German Interstate Media Services Agreement): Daren Frankish - Daimler AG.

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Official Federal Reg. No. 7442619