

2005 F1 Season

Canadian Grand Prix- Round 8 of 18 Circuit Gilles Villeneuve, Montreal

By Alex "Zander" Keep

Circuit Name:	Circuit Gilles Villeneuve, Montreal
Circuit Length:	2.747miles / 4.421km
Race Length:	189.543miles / 305.049km
Lap Record:	Rubens Barrichello, 1m13.622s
Number of Laps:	69

The Track

The Canadian GP usually gives some excellent racing. Unlike the vast majority of tracks the Formula One circus visits at this time of year, Montreal is a 'green' track (this means that the tarmac is free of the rubber put down on the track as a result of other cars accelerating or braking heavily). As the cars go out for the various practice and qualifying sessions, so as more rubber goes down on the track so the speeds steadily increase through the weekend. The other affect of this is that the car's set-up needs to be played with as the track gets bedded in.

The track has some great quick corners allied to a couple of really slow corners (in particular the hairpin and the final corner before the pitstraight) making passing relatively easy here. That said, Irvine's battle with Herbert in 1999 and Schumacher's with Hill the year in 98 showed just how tricky overtaking is though the new rules forcing the front wing to be higher up has made overtaking a viable proposition this year so fireworks should be in store!

The Gilles Villeneuve circuit is almost tailor made for a first corner pile up and it is usually pretty rare that someone does not come a cropper. Although the circuit is hard on the cars (particularly the car's brakes and transmissions) the teams love this place and the boating lake in the center of the island is the location for the inter-team mechanics raft race that takes place on the Sunday morning before the race.

Standing Canada joined the Formula One calendar in 1967 and apart from missing out in 1975 and 1987, has been a regular World Championship venue ever since.

The inaugural race took place at Mosport Park in Ontario, a high-speed and challenging road course through undulating wooded countryside.

In the early years the race was also staged at Mont Tremblant, but this tree-lined track was deemed too dangerous even by the standards of F1 in those days and after two races, Mosport Park took over as the permanent venue from 1971.

But within a few years Mosport was itself being seen as too dangerous and in 1978 the race moved to its current home in Montreal.

Built on the Ile Notre Dame in the St. Lawrence Seaway — alongside the rowing venue for the 1976 Olympics and near to the site of the 1967 Expo — it is a cross between a street circuit and a permanent road course.

Local hero Gilles Villeneuve was the dream first winner, perhaps adapting better to the unusual conditions. Held in October, the weather was so cold it snowed.

The circuit was renamed after Villeneuve following his death at the 1982 Belgian Grand Prix though that year's race in Canada was also marred by the death of Riccardo Paletti after an horrific start-line crash.

In 1991, Britain's Nigel Mansell started celebrating his second 'victory' in Montreal too early having miscalculated the number of laps, and after stalling his Williams saw Brazil's Nelson Piquet sweep to the final victory of his career.

Mansell missed out the following year when he crashed at the final chicane, the difficult, high-speed section of the track where world champions Michael Schumacher, Jacques Villeneuve and Damon Hill all crashed in 1999.

Jacques Villeneuve

"Montreal is a special race for me. That's not only because this is my home race so it feels special to come here, but also because there are many great aspects to this event. The track is located in a very nice area and the crowd is fantastic. The drivers are closer to the fans than at most tracks and it creates such a great atmosphere. The city offers a lot of entertainment and the people are very welcoming. I don't know of anyone coming to Montreal without being literally charmed. In terms of racing, the qualifying laps are not so exciting as there aren't any real fast corners, but racing is great because of the many heavy braking areas available around the track, where it is possible to overtake. Down the main straight you reach speeds between 330 and 340 km/h but the mid-speed chicane halfway down is a tricky one: You have to carry a lot of speed into this corner and change direction quickly. A lot of drivers have had accidents there, me included! I hope that we will be able to score some points here as we suffered from bad luck in recent races and the team really deserves some good results. I know that my week is going to be very intense but I am very excited about it and look forward to being there."

Kimi Raikkonen:

"The Circuit Gilles Villeneuve is one of the fastest tracks we race on, with speeds reaching 320km/h on the back straight. This of course means there are big braking zones, and as a result we will run with larger brake ducts than normal, and have a set-up that gives us good stability under braking. If you were looking to compare it to another track, the Canadian circuit would be most similar to Imola, and, despite the end result,

the MP4-20 was suited to its characteristics, so hopefully we will run well this weekend. However, I will be out pretty early for Qualifying on Saturday, which will be a disadvantage as the track is always really dirty."

The Track's F1 History

The Canadian Grand Prix track is named after its first winner and Canada's most famous racing driver, Gilles Villeneuve. It is also the site of Jean Alesi's one and only grand prix victory (an incredible record given the number of races he has had in race winning machinery). His win here in **1995** for Ferrari seemed to be almost destined as it happened on his 31st birthday in a scarlet Ferrari bearing Villeneuve's famous number 27. The son of person after whom the circuit was named has had a torrid time of it over the last few years.

Jacques Villeneuve's best result here was a 2nd in **1996** after which Villeneuve has posted a string of retirements. Both Schumacher and Hakkinen have won here in fine style over the last few years though it is also a circuit that suits Coulthard and Barrichello (the former leading comfortably until his retirements both in **1997** and **1998**).

In **1999** the final corner caught out three former world champions when Villeneuve, Schumacher and Hill all came to grief there. In the end Mika Hakkinen came through to take the win, resulting in his only win here.

In **2000** the race was a pretty good one with rain late in the race resulting in a shaking up of the order that resulted in a Ferrari 1-2. The main loser in the rain was Coulthard who ended up having to come in for a third pitstop, which resulted in a 7th place. Giancarlo Fisichella ended up taking the last podium place - hardly a surprise as Fisichella always drives impeccably here.

In **2001** Ralf Schumacher and his brother had a thrilling battle for the lead which was eventually resolved in Ralf's favor. Mika Hakkinen showed he still had some life left in him with a third place finish while Montoya clattered into the barriers taking out Barrichello with him. Frenzen had to withdraw from the race after he suffered headaches in practice leading to Riccardo Zonta driving his first race for Jordan.

In **2002** the Canadian race began what was to be a familiar sight as Juan Pablo Montoya took pole position but was beaten through better strategy, better tires and better overall race pace by Michael Schumacher's Ferrari (the fact that his engine let go didn't help matters either!). Coulthard and Barrichello had a good scrap for second place but there was no way that Michael Schumacher was going to be headed on Ferrari's 150th race. The race was dull for a Canadian Grand Prix (which is usually very exciting indeed) but was still better than some of the "snorathons" that were to come later in the season.

2003 saw Michael Schumacher take a narrow win from his brother with Montoya and Alonso putting in an impressive scrap behind them. Alonso's performance was particularly noteworthy as he was using the down on power wide angled engine. Alonso and Montoya repeatedly went wheel to wheel, at one stage even heading into the first corner three abreast with Ralf Schumacher! Barrichello and Raikkonen suffered their share of problems but still finished ahead of Webber and Panis who rounded out the points.

Last year Button put in another sterling drive to keep the Ferraris from disappearing into the middle distance. His eventual third was again a poor reward for some excellent driving. Giancarlo Fisichella again drove better than his car's abilities and finished a great fourth for Sauber with Coulthard and Raikkonen reflecting the improved pace of the McLarens behind the Sauber. Rookie Timo Glock finished ahead of his teammate Nick Heidfeld and scored points on his F1 debut (Giorgio Pantano having been sidelined because of sponsorship issues).

Last Year's Canadian Grand Prix Results

Position	No	Driver	Team	Engine	Time	Laps	Delay/ Retire- ment
1	1	Michael Schumacher	Ferrari	Ferrari V10	1:28'24.803	70	
2	2	Rubens Barrichello	Ferrari	Ferrari V10	1:28'29.911	70	5.108
3	9	Jenson Button	BAR	Honda V10	1:28'45.212	70	20.409
4	11	G.Fisichella	Sauber/ Petronas	Renault V10	1:28'44.952	69	1 Lap
5	6	K.Raikkonen	McLaren	Mercedes	1:29'05.165	69	1 Lap
6	5	D.Coulthard	McLaren	Mercedes	1:29'11.637	69	1 Lap
7	19	Timo Glock	Jordan	Ford	1:29'10.219	68	2 Laps
8	18	Nick Heidfeld	Jordan	Ford	1:29'10.556	68	2 Laps

Championship Standings

Rank	Driver	Team	Points
1	Fernando Alonso	Renault	59
2	K. Raikkonen	McLaren	27
3	J. Trulli	Toyota	27
4	N. Heidfeld	Williams	25
5	M. Webber	Williams	18
6	G.Fisichella	Renault	17
7	R.Schumacher	Toyota	17
8	J.Montoya	McLaren	16
9	M.Schumacher	Ferrari	16
10	R.Barrichello	Ferrari	15
11	D. Coulthard	Red Bull	15
12	A. Wurz	McLaren	6
13	J. Villeneuve	Sauber	5
14	P. de la Rosa	McLaren	4
15	C. Klien	Red Bull	3
16	F. Massa	Sauber	2

17	V. Liuzzi	Red Bull	1
18	C.Albers	Minardi	0
=18	J. Button	BAR	0
=18	A. Davidson	BAR	0
=18	P.Friesacher	Minardi	0
=18	N.Karthikeyan	Jordan	0
=18	T.Monteiro	Jordan	0
=18	T.Sato	BAR	0

Constructors

Rank	Team	Points
1	Renault	76
2	McLaren	53
3	Toyota	44
4	Williams	43
5	Ferrari	31
6	Red Bull	19
7	Sauber	7

Setup & Strategy

Like Monaco, the fastest way to the end of the race is stopping once. Unlike Monaco, there are plenty of places to overtake and qualifying well is not a premium. With long straights to work out the engines the advent of a safety car period is crucial to fuel consumption and can make all the difference to strategy decisions. Short or long fuelling the car can give vital track position and tactical games are more likely to be employed here than they have in recent races.

A Lap of the Circuit Gilles Villeneuve

Accelerating out of the last corner and across the start finish line you take a slight right hand kink before braking hard and changing down to second gear to take the 70 mph Senna, a right hander that leads into a tight right hander called the island hairpin. This is usually taken at 45mph and this little complex of corners is often the scene of a big pile up away from the grid. In 1998 Alexander Wurz barrel rolled his Benetton here and Jarno Trulli has twice ended up parked on top of Jean Alesi following coming together away from the line. One of the fastest crashes of recent years happened here in 1997 when Ralf Schumacher managed to pile Johnny Herbert's Sauber into the sidewall. You accelerate slightly uphill under a bridge that usually has a Players' logo on it before braking down again for the right-left chicane that is comprised of the (unnamed) turns 3 and 4. These are both taken at about 75 mph in third gear.

Accelerating through turn 5 (which really just requires a slight dab of the brakes and is taken in 4th gear at 165mph) you then brake for turn 6 which is a much slower left hander taken at a shade under 100mph in 2nd gear.

Turn 7 is a right hander called Pont De la Concorde. Although this a slow corner (is another 2nd gear corner taken at 90mph), the proximity of the guard rails to the track means that an off can hurt as Olivier Panis found out here in 1997 when he crashed his Prost at this point, breaking both his legs.

You accelerate out of there and get a decent head of speed up before braking under a bridge down to third gear for a right-left that forms turns 8 and 9. In 1995 David Coulthard spun his Williams out early on when the damp under the bridge caused his Williams to get away from him. These turns are taken in 3rd gear at about 65mph.

You accelerate hard down to the Virage Du Casino where you brake incredibly late and very hard to the 1gear 40mph right hand corner. This has been the scene of some good overtaking moves and it is also the scene of some poorly considered lunges (none more so than Mika Hakkinen's move on Johnny Herbert's Benetton on the opening lap in 1995). It was here that Nigel Mansell managed to stall his engine on his final lap here in the 1991 race while waving to the crowd — this led to Nelson Piquet winning for Benetton.

Coming out of the hairpin you accelerate hard for well over a mile and a half where you reach speeds approaching 200mph before braking hard for the final chicane which is a right-left which is a 50mph 2nd gear turn which leads back onto the start/finish pitstraight. It was here in 1999 that Schuey, Jacques Villeneuve and Damon Hill all came to grief against the wall on the outside of the final corner. It was also at this corner that Nigel Mansell crashed in 1992 while pressuring Senna for the lead. This led to his breaking the longest winning spell since Alberto Ascari (though Schumacher replicated the feat at the start of this year).

Occasional crashes can happen just before the final corner due to the pitlane being straight on and therefore requiring a later braking point than the track and is where Riccardo Paletti was killed in 1982.

The Teams

Ferrari

(Red with Marlboro signs)

1. **M. Schumacher**
2. **Barrichello**

Mystic Meg can breathe easy, Michael Schumacher has admitted that he has given up

on making predictions ahead of the Canadian Grand Prix. The World Champions are severely lagging behind the Renaults & McLarens while Bridgestone try to come up with something that will redress the gap between themselves and Michelin. Until this happens Barrichello and Schumi are going to be running around at the back of the midfield in cars that they could dominate the championship in.

BAR

(White with Red Lucky Strike Roundels on it)

3. **Button**
4. **Sato**

A really poor return to racing showed BAR just how badly their ban had hurt them. The car is clearly not working properly and improvements on the drawing board had not translated themselves into making the car better on the track. Canada should be BAR's big chance to shine. Honda have ramped up the power again and the team believe that they have got to the bottom of the team's disappointing weekend in Germany. Either way it seems too little too late to retain Button next season.

Renault

(Dark & Light Blue & Yellow with Mild Seven on it)

5. **Fisichella**
6. **Alonso**

The runaway championship leaders and the luckiest b*ggers on the planet managed to pull out another 10 points on Kimi Raikkonen and McLaren at the Nurburgring. Kimi's last lap failure was the latest a grand prix has ever been decided and the excitement of those final laps has been the latest instalment of a season that has been the most exciting in the last ten years. Team boss Flavio Briatore has admitted that the sport needs a change in winners from time to time and, as a marketing man first and foremost is happy to see Alonso get beaten if it means more people support him. Whether they can pull off the world championship is the £64million question?

Williams

(Dark Blue & White with Compaq & Allianz signs on it)

7. **Webber**
8. **Heidfeld**

A return to form has corresponded with a serious downturn in relations between team and engine supplier. Nick Heidfeld's pole position and his excellent race pace has been overshadowed by Patrick Head and Frank Williams both accusing BMW of duplicity and a basic lack of honesty. Frank Williams even went so far as to say BMW had been the worst engine supplier the team have had – worse than Honda who nearly ruined the team when they turned their back on the in 1987! BMW are clearly looking at other options (Sauber being chief amongst these) and the political machinations of Dr Mario Thiessen seems to be forcing their direction far more than is helpful either for the good of the company or the team. There may be trouble ahead...

McLaren

(Gray with West signs on it)

- 9. **Montoya**
- 10. **Raikkonen**

Although Raikkonen's race shattered on the last lap with his suspension the opinion was made that the McLaren still has the legs of any car out there. A poor early season run has been massively overturned to result in Kimi's domination of the last few races. Kimi still has a long way to go to catch Alonso and Williams, BAR & Ferrari's re-emergence is sure to throw some spanners in the works but it seems likely that this year's championship will go down to the wire. What a pity that Montoya doesn't seem able to find the pace of his teammate.

Sauber

(Mid Blue with a yellow airbox & white nose & front wing with Credit Suisse & Petronas written on it)

- 11. **Villeneuve**
- 12. **Massa**

Another vociferous team principal in the last week has been Peter Sauber. Though reticent to discuss his future relationship with BMW (rumors of a buy out seem wide of the mark but not that wide...) he is happy to complain that lead driver Jacques Villeneuve has not only earned black marks for his taking his teammate out in Monaco but is also driving far too slowly. Sauber's hiring of Villeneuve raised eyebrows at the time but Villeneuve's subsequent performances, particularly with reference to his relatively inexperienced team mate, demonstrate that restructuring needs to be done to save both team and driver's reputations before too much more damage is done.

Toyota

(Red & White with Toyota & Panasonic logos)

- 14. **R Schumacher**
- 15. **Trulli**

A surprisingly poor performance at the Nurburgring saw both cars slip back from quite decent qualifying positions. Trulli seemed to revert to his mid race dozes (something he was well known at when driving for Prost and Jordan) whilst Ralf Schumacher was held up in the first corner collision and then never really made much of an impact other than in roundly criticizing his brother at every opportunity! Better will be expected in Canada.

Red Bull Racing

(Dark blue with yellow airbox & thin red and white stripes down the side)

- 16. **Coulthard**
- 17. **Liuzzi**

A fabulous run by Coulthard was cruelly halted when the Scot (who was looking good for a podium) released his speed limiter around 2 meters too early so as not to get held up by a Minardi after his first stop. The subsequent drive through penalty (for driving 1mph over the speed limit) resulted in a fourth place finish for Coulthard – good but it could have been so much better! Canada sees the return of Christian Klein to the second car while US driver Scott Speed takes over third driver duties (with Nuremberg racer Liuzzi relegated to PR duties!). Another surprise seems possible.

Midland Jordan

(Yellow with Sobraine on it)

18. **Karthekeinan**

19. **Monteiro**

Tiago Monteiro's recent outpacing of his teammate seems likely to continue in Canada. Monteiro has raced on this circuit in Champ Cars last year (the US Champ Car series visits the circuit in September). Monteiro has therefore raced on this circuit in a car with approximately the same power as an F1 car of a few years back. There is no way that Moneiro has the polish of Karthekeinan but his speed can't be denied and a better result than of late can be expected.

Minardi

(TBC black, white & red - OzJet on the sidepods & engine cover)

20. **Leinders**

21. **Freidsecher**

Taking the fight to Jordan is Minardi. Is there was a chance for the team to spring a surprise it must be at these next two races. For once the team are not massively down on power compared to the rest of the grid so the long straights towards the end of the lap are unlikely to handicap them. Additionally the team are learning more about the car every race and this is sure to help them get the maximum out of the PS05. It will take a lot of luck but the odd point or two seems possible.

Predictions

Qualifying	Race
1. Mark Webber	1. Kimi Raikkonen
2. Nick Heidfeld	2. Jenson Button
3. Juan Pablo Montoya	3. Fernando Alonso

