

2005 F1 Season

German Grand Prix Preview

Round 12 of 19

By Alex "Zander" Keep

Circuit Name:	Hockenheim
Circuit Length:	4.239 miles / 6.829 km
Lap Record:	Juan Pablo Montoya, 1m14.917s
Number of Laps:	67 (306.458 Km)

Apologies to all who were expecting my British GP Preview but unfortunately, due to the effect of the bombings in London and then being unwell, I was not able to complete the preview in time. As after September 11th, Formula 1 was the first major spectacle after the events of July 7th, unfortunately a poor PA system led to the drivers clearly talking, joking and laughing during the silence to commemorate those killed in the bombings - a very poor PR move. Despite Juan Pablo Montoya winning his first race for McLaren, the British Grand Prix was something of a disappointment. The race was won at the first corner and real battles were few and far between. Kimi Raikkonen again charged through the field after a poor grid position and Jenson Button again petered out in the race following a promising qualifying position. Lets hope for better in Germany.

A Lap of Hockenheim

Drivers will go through the first corner at a much higher speed than was the case last year (probably something like 160mph in 4th instead of 140mph in 3rd as was previously the case). This corner has not been touched in the new developments, so it is still the corner that saw Fisichella and Schumacher come together in 2000 and Damon Hill spin out in the second lap in 1995.

Blasting up the first straight towards what was the Jim Clark chicane, the drivers now will break down to about 60mph to take a sharp right-hander before building up speed for two more corners that will be progressively faster and will probably be taken at around 120mph and then 140 mph.

The final corner is a right hander that will lead out onto a long straight that curves around to the left (looking like a longer version of the curved back straight at Albert Park in Australia), The speeds down here will not be quite as high as those reached down the straights in the old Hockenheim but the cars will still be brushing 200mph before breaking down for a tight right hand hairpin at the end that will be taken at 40mph.

The hairpin has caused a great deal of controversy as there is not gravel trap between it and the tire wall leaving the drivers having to rely on high friction tarmac to stop them — this is great when the car spins but a brake failure could easily see a Ratzenberger-type accident. The hairpin sees the cars briefly reappear onto the old circuit before taking a right and then left.

The right hander is likely to be taken flat as the cars accelerate away but the 90 degree left hander following it will require dropping down to third gear and 140mph.

The cars then swoop round through an easy right hander and back onto the old track, rejoining just about where Mika Hakkinen had a frightening blow out in 1999 and careered head first into the tire barriers. The cars will go through the right hander a little quicker than before due to having the extra downforce and will accelerate hard before dropping down to second gear and 70 mph for the tight left hand Sachs Kurve, taking it in second gear.

The slight right, left kink follows with the pitlane entrance being passed on the right hand side before the final corner of the lap, a third gear 130mph corner that leads back onto the start/finish straight.

Takuma Sato's View:

"You approach the first corner, the Nordkurve, in sixth gear at 300 km/h and then drop down to fifth gear carrying speeds of around 215 km/h through the corner. Next is a short straight, where your speed increases to up to 300 km/h before you reach turn two the Jim Clark curve. This corner is a slow right-hander where you carry speeds of around 85 km/h at the apex. On exit the corner opens out a little bit and for the Ostkurve, where you shift into third gear and then go flat out down the back sweeper of a 'straight' to turn six, reaching speeds of over 320 km/h. You brake hard and shift down six gears at the end of the straight for the very tight, first gear Ayrton Senna hairpin which you negotiate at about 60 km/h. Good traction is important on exit as you head up to turn seven which you take flat out in sixth gear at 290 km/h. Reaching a speed of maybe 300 km/h, you brake quite hard for turn eight since it is a tight 90-degree left-hander which you take in second gear and at just over 90 km/h. Turn nine is a relatively gentle left-hander after which you build your speed up and move up into third gear, around 200 km/h before turn ten, which is almost flat at around 290 km/h. Next you head into the Agip right-hander that leads back into the stadium. You then approach turn thirteen, the Sachs Curve, in sixth gear at 265 km/h and then move down the gears for this long left-hander to about 100 km/h. After turn thirteen you go flat out through the Elf and Opel corners before dropping down to third gear for turn sixteen. The final corner is approached at 170 km/h and you need a good exit to set you up for the run onto the start/finish straight."

Nick Heidfeld 's View:

"I am looking forward to Hockenheim as it is one of my home races, following Silverstone which was almost like a home Grand Prix," Heidfeld said. "The atmosphere at Hockenheim is probably the best in the world especially for the spectators, being in the stadium section. You feel that as a driver too and I hope there will be a lot of supporters for the German drivers, including me. At Silverstone we had a positive test and tried

something new on the mechanical side which found us a good margin of lap time so hopefully that will help us in Hockenheim.”

The Track

The German Grand Prix was, along with Monza, the fastest Grand Prix circuit on the calendar. It was also easily the longest (drivers who retire at the far side of the circuit on the first lap used to spend the rest of the race walking back!). The circuit was actually pretty boring to drive as it consists of a series of very long straights linked by chicanes though the drivers find the low downforce setup combined with the twisty stadium section tricky.

At the end of the lap is the stadium section, a series of 1st and 2nd gear corners that provide the only real chance for the less powerful cars to show their mettle and it is this part of the circuit that has survived into this year. This was nowhere near enough to compensate for the rest of the lap so it is often the case that the most powerful car and the latest braking (i.e. bravest) driver will end up fastest — it is no surprise that Gerhard Berger has such an impressive record here (He won here in 94 and 97 and has always done well here).

Surprisingly Schuey has, apart from his win in 95 (which was taken after Hill retired while leading comfortably), always done badly here. In 1999 a horrific blow out on the back straight put Hakkinen out of a comfortable lead resulting in Irvine and Salo taking a comfortable 1-2. Salo gifted the win to Irvine and Irvine ended up giving his winners trophy to the Finn afterwards.

In 2000 one of the strangest races ever took place here with Rubens Barrichello winning having started 18th on the grid. A formidable performance, terrible weather and a disgruntled Mercedes employee meant that the Brazilian was ahead into the dying laps and sneaked the win from Coulthard and Hakkinen.

The track is still fast and there will still be one decent blast for the drivers but there will be far more overtaking opportunities and the cars will be setup with more than the "tea trays" that were prevalent on the old circuit.

Fifty-one German, plus eight more European (including 2003) and two Luxembourg Grand Prix means that Germany has been the scene of more Grand Prix than there have been years in the World Championship. In 2002 it hosted its 50th race and the 26th at Hockenheim, and has since moved ahead of the Nurburgring as the location of the German Grand Prix, although Nurburgring has European and Luxembourg Grand Prix to its credit.

Germany has become much more of a force to be reckoned with in the last ten years, thanks to the emergence of Michael and Ralf Schumacher as well as other German drivers, Arrows man Heinz Harald Frentzen and Sauber driver Nick Heidfeld. Add to that the involvement of Mercedes-Benz and the recent return of BMW and the powerful German force in the series grows even stronger.

But Germany also has a huge long history in motor racing and Grand Prix. The Nurburgring was built back in the 1920s and was opened in 1927, the first race won by Mercedes. In terms of the World Championship and German drivers, you go all the way

back to Wolfgang von Trips, who was the country's lone winner for many years (two wins in 1961). Then came Jochen Mass, who squeezed in with his half-points victory at the Spanish Grand Prix in 1975. Since then, however, Michael Schumacher has brought 61 wins to the country on his own, not to mention five titles! Heinz-Harald Frentzen and Ralf Schumacher have also added to the ever increasing tally, three from Frentzen and four from Ralf Schumacher, bringing the total number of wins for German drivers to 70.

There has been a total of 40 German Grand Prix drivers plus another nine who failed to qualify. Some of these have been virtual unknowns as early German Grand Prix included a class for Formula Two cars and two of them failed to complete a single lap — although that lap was 22kms in length. However, others were pre-war Grand Prix heroes such as Hermann Lange and Hans Stuck Senior.

Hockenheim was first used just before the last war and the famous Tripoli 1.5 litre Mercedes were tested there before a brief, but successful, race in North Africa. The track had to be shortened in 1966 when an autobahn was built and the compensation financed the current massive grandstands. Nurburgring hosted early World Championship Grand Prix until the end of the fifties when a single race was run on the autobahns of Avus, just outside Berlin. But then, the Grand Prix returned to the Nurburgring again.

Hockenheim had its first Grand Prix in 1970 and then, after Niki Lauda's accident at the Nurburgring, one of only two German Grand Prix race stoppages, incidentally, the race returned to the circuit by the Rhine in 1977, briefly returning to the new Nurburgring for the 1985 race. All subsequent races have been at Hockenheim. The Nurburgring is often thought to have been the longest Grand Prix circuit in history and its early configuration did make it the longest circuit until 1957 when Pescara ran a single World Championship race. This Adriatic circuit was 25.579kms/15.894 miles long and remains the longest Grand Prix circuit of all time. However, Hockenheim was 6.825 kms, second only to Spa at 6.968 kms, up until last year. For this year the length has been drastically reduced to 4.574 kms.

Last year saw the Hockenheim circuit celebrate its 70th anniversary and for the occasion, the track presented a new look and a new name, the "Hockenheimring Baden Württemberg". The popular long straights through the woods are now gone with new parts taking their place. Where the circuit once went into the wood there is now a sharp right turn into the extremely long high speed left turn "Parabolika". This results a hairpin to be driven with maximum steering in first gear.

After this huge corner there is a right-left-right-again turning into the famous Motodrom with the unique stadium atmosphere. Work on the circuit has reduced the lap distance so this weekend's race is now 67 laps long instead of 45. The spectators will also be in for a treat as the viewer capacity has been increased to accommodate over 40,000 more spectators.

The first three German events were all won by Ferrari from pole position. In 1952, Ferrari filled the first four positions and in 1953, 34 cars started the race, more than in any other Grand Prix, but that included Formula Two cars. Three years later, however, only five cars finished, the second fewest number of finishers of all time. Fangio won, the second of his three consecutive German Grand Prix wins — all from pole position. The finishers included Louis Rosier who was three laps and a massive 66 kms behind.

The 1959 German Grand Prix at the Avus was the only Grand Prix to have been run intentionally as a two-part race. Cliff Allison set pole position time but was a reserve driver and had to start at the back. So Tony Brooks won from pole position, flag to flag and set fastest lap. He headed a Ferrari 1-3 and there were 22 leadership changes in that race. Two years later Nurburgring hosted the 100th race in the World Championship while in 1965 Jim Clark clinched his second World Championship title with a flag-to-flag victory at the 'Ring from pole position with fastest lap.

It was the seventh race of the year with three still to go. In 1968, Jackie Stewart won the first of his three — and two pole positions — at the Nurburgring while his 30second win in 1971 over 12 laps was the shortest in terms of laps, even if they were each 22 kms (13.6 miles) long. Jackie Ickx headed one of Ferrari's four one- two finishes in 1972 when he started from pole, led every lap and also set fastest lap. Jacques Laffite scored Williams' first ever Formula One rostrum placing with second in 1975. Williams has won eight times, including 2001, with two one-two finishes.

Nelson Piquet won the first of his three German Grand Prix victories in 1981. Four years later, Patrick Tambay and Derek Warwick were joined by Francois Hesnault in the Renault team, the last time a team ran three cars in a Grand Prix and unfortunately, none finished. In 1988, Ayrton Senna won the first of his three successive German Grand Prix victories, all of which he started from pole for McLaren. The team has won six times in Germany, four times with the drivers in first and second places.

A year later, Michael Schumacher won his home race, the first time for a German driver. However he will be hoping to contribute to his own and Ferrari's remarkable record in Germany. Ferrari has won the race 16 times, twice as many as Williams, the last being Rubens Barrichello's superb win here two years ago in wet/dry conditions after starting 18th on the grid, the first GP win of his career. The Italian team has also scored four one-two finishes.

This track was originally used as a test track for Mercedes, but became a venue for Formula One in 1970, while the Nurburgring was being modified. Sadly, this is another track that is remembered because of tragedy; this time it was the death of the great Jim Clark when he raced Formula 2000 in 1968. Patrick Depaillar also lost his life here, during testing in 1980.

The first F1 race held here, in 1970, was dramatic, as Jochen Rindt drove his Lotus home, a nose in front of Jacky Ickx's Ferrari. This circuit lacks character, basically a high-speed race through the forest, interrupted slightly by three chicanes, and is very hard on engines, but all the devoted Michael Schumacher fans look impressive in the stands, waving their Ferrari flags with pride.

The race returned to Hockenheim in 1977, in response to the drivers not wishing to race at the Nurburgring, following Niki Lauder's near fatal accident in 1976. Lauder, ironically enough, won the 77 race.

The most memorable race at this circuit was in 1982, when Nelson Piquet made the headlines after trying to punch Eliseo Salazar after they collided. It also saw Pironi badly injured during wet practice for the race, and his teammate, Patrick Tambay, went on to score an emotional win. The craziest race held here would have to be 1994, when, the end of the first lap left saw only half the field remaining. Michael Schumacher retired, and Gerhard Berger went on to give Ferrari their first win in 4 years.

Although the 82 race was very memorable for fans and drivers alike, the 2000 event was very powerful, especially for Brazilian driver, Rubens Barrichello. The Ferrari driver took his first Grand Prix victory after starting 18th on the grid and after a race that was dictated by changing weather conditions and a disgruntled Mercedes employee who decided to walk across the track, Rubens succumbed to tears on the podium as his emotions overwhelmed him.

Hockenheim will forever be known as the circuit at which Jim Clark was killed in 1968. However, the track in recent years has come into its own as having one of the most unique layouts in modern Formula 1. Basically the circuit comprised a twisty stadium section which then opens into a flat-out blast disappearing off into the forest.

The first race at Hockenheim took place in 1977 after Niki Lauda's near fatal crash at the Nurburgring the year before. Fittingly, it was Lauda that took the victory. Throughout the Eighties it was McLaren who were the dominant force, Alain Prost taking victory in 1984 and Ayrton Senna winning in 1988 and 1989. Michael Schumacher's emergence in the Nineties gave the Hockenheim crowd a hero of their own to cheer, although 'Schumi' has not had the best of luck at his home grand prix. He has won only once in 1995, when arch-rival Damon Hill crashed while leading in the early stages. Another crowd favorite Gerhard Berger had a particular affinity with the track, winning for Ferrari in '94 and taking his final win for Benetton in 1997. Last year saw the track substantially revised and a gripping race emerge behind Michael Schumacher's dominant Ferrari.

The Track's F1 History

Hockenheim's old circuit layout usually leads to either thrilling or amazingly boring races! The field can get very spread out resulting in a procession of cars all separated by 20 or 30 seconds but the stress on the engine means that engine blow ups were also pretty common. The German Grand Prix was moved to Hockenheim after Niki Lauda's fiery accident at the old Nurburgring in 1976. In recent years Hockenheim has tended to favor the late breakers and there has been a healthy slice of luck involved in a few of the victories as well. Gerhard Berger is probably the most successful driver here in recent times.

He won in 1994 for Ferrari after Mika Hakkinen managed to wipe out half the field on the opening lap and then repeated the feat in 1997 with his last Grand Prix win with an emotional comeback after an appalling season, both personally and professionally (he was also pretty lucky as Fisichella was leading for Jordan until a puncture in the last few laps).

In 1994 Jos Verstappen survived a spectacular fireball that engulfed his car in the pits while in 1995 Michael Schumacher won a dominant win for Benetton and Damon Hill scored a lucky win in 1996 after Berger's Renault blew in a big way in the dying laps.

In 1998 McLaren had a comfortable romp to the flag and 1999 saw a lucky win for Irvine who was down on power to the McLarens (and even Jordans) but a blow out by Hakkinen and a Stop/Go penalty by Coulthard saw him emerge behind Salo who then gifted him the race.

In 2000 a demented spectator, steaming rain and a first win for Rubens Barrichello resulted in a memorable race. Rubens qualified 18th on the grid after his car had electrical problems and Schuey crashed in qualifying resulting in their sharing the spare car. Rubens took advantage of another first lap retirement from his teammate then steadily climbed through the field and was helped by deciding to stay on slick tires despite the rain at the end. Although Rubens' win was lucky, it was also overdue. Barrichello first showed his form at Donnington Park in 1993 at the European Grand Prix there held in pouring conditions.

2001 was the last race at the old circuit and was an entirely Williams affair. Montoya blitzed pole position but it was his teammate who took the win after Montoya's engine expired after a lengthy pit stop. The race had to be restarted after Luciano Burti suffered a spectacular accident at the start, barrel-rolling his Prost after he launched himself over the back of Michael Schumacher's slow starting Ferrari. Schumacher again showed that he was not the master of Hockenheim by retiring with a fuel pressure. Ralf angered team principal Patrick Head by claiming that Montoya had caused his own retirement by running flat out. In fact both engines were said to be running identically and it was bad luck that Montoya's chose to expire. Further back Barrichello followed up his debut win in 2000 with a second place finish and Jacques Villeneuve got BAR's second podium of the year ahead of the vastly improved Benetton's of Fisichella and Button and Jean Alesi's Prost.

In 2002 Schumacher made a powerful return to his home race as World Champion and predictably blitzed the field. Montoya and Kimi Raikkonen provided the entertainment as they scrapped for second place but the real winner was the new circuit which drew cautious praise from most of the drivers even though concern was expressed at the proximity of a wall to the track.

2003 was a Williams cruise to the flag for Montoya and resulted in increased speculation that 2003 would see the championship go to Williams. Coulthard was second for McLaren ahead of the two Renaults and everything seemed set for a three-way showdown between Schumacher, Raikkonen and Montoya. Behind the podium the Toyotas showed good form and Button again beat Villeneuve to be the last of the point scorers just ahead of his team mate.

Michael Schumacher finally got a chance to reassert himself in front of his home fans last year.

Strategy

Hockenheim is big on overtaking and it seems likely that this weekend's race will be one of the most exciting of the season. It seems unlikely that the winner will be known until the dying laps and, unlike the tactical snorathon that was Silverstone, we could see a lot of fighting on track as well as off it!

Championship Standings

Drivers			
Rank	Driver	Team	Points
1	F. Alonso	Renault	77
2	K.Raikkonen	McLaren-Mercedes	51
3	M.Schumacher	Ferrari	43
4	R.Barrichello	Ferrari	31
4=	J.Trulli	Toyota	31
6	Juan Pablo Montoya	McLaren-Mercedes	26
7	Giancarlo Fisichella	Renault	25
7=	Nick Heidfeld	Williams-BMW	25
9	Ralf Schumacher	Toyota	23
10	Mark Webber	Williams-BMW	22
11	David Coulthard	Red Bull	17
12	Jenson Button	BAR-Honda	9
13	Felipe Massa	Sauber-Petronas	7
14	Tiago Monteiro	Jordan	6
14=	Alexander Wurz	McLaren-Mercedes	6
14=	Jacques Villeneuve	Sauber-Petronas	6
17	Narain Karthikeyan	Jordan	5
18	Christijan Albers	Minardi	4
18=	Pedro de la Rosa	McLaren-Mercedede	4
18=	Christian Klien	Red Bul	4
21	Patrick Friesacher	Minardi	3
22	Vitantonio Liuzzi	Red Bull	1
23	Takuma Sato	BAR-Honda	0

2005 Constructors' Championship

Pos	Constructor	Points
1	Renault	102
2	McLaren Mercedes	87
3	Ferrari	74
4	Toyota	54
5	Williams-BMW	47
6	Red Bull	22
7	Sauber-Petronas	13
8	Jordan	11
9	BAR-Honda	9
10	Minardi	7

The Teams

Ferrari

(Red with Marlboro signs)

1. M. Schumacher
2. Barrichello

Even Ferrari now admit that they are heading backwards with their new car. Intensive testing between France and Great Britain failed to cure what now seems to be a fundamental disadvantage with the tires. To add to the team's problems it is pretty clear that the F2005 is not the best car of recent seasons as well. Schumacher must go to Hockenheim not only not leading the championship but also with no likely chance of winning the race. Add in Rubens Barrichello's impressive form in recent races and Ferrari's involvement in the race may well be more interesting than in previous years!

BAR

(White with Red Lucky Strike Roundels on it)

3. Button
4. Sato

BAR are beginning to find their form for this season. The team are now expecting to hang on to Jenson Button with Williams receiving Honda engines by way of recompense. Button himself is determined to stay at BAR as he knows that his best chance for a future championship rests with the Brackley based team. Button produced a great performance here last year and his move up the grid was easily the drive of the race. This time out Button will be hoping that a higher qualifying position may allow him to have a better crack at a race win, even though the car is not quite as fast as last year's relative to the opposition and there are some question marks about its race pace relative to qualifying. Sato desperately needs points to hold on to his drive.

Renault

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

5. Fisichella
6. Alonso

With rear tire wear blighting Renaults last two outings at the Nurburgring, the team are aware that they will again face a tough challenge protecting Fernando Alonso's lead in the driver's championship. Fisichella's less than ideal pitstop strategy in Britain has again led to claims of bias against the Italian in favor of Alonso. It is clear that this is not the case but, as long as Fisichella fails to produce results, despite displaying the same blinding speed as his team mate, these rumors will persist.

Williams

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

7. Webber
8. Heidfeld

Another poor showing in Britain in what was effectively a prolonged test session rather than a race. Despite fervent press releases to the contrary, BMW are clearly shifting their attention to next season and Williams are being left behind in the power race, something they have felt for several seasons but have been unable to say out loud because of BMW's stronghold over the team's PR until recently. Honda look likely to be powering Williams next season and this will mean that Button is almost certain to be staying at BAR. Who takes the second seat at Williams will be the big question!

McLaren

(Gray with West signs on it)

9. Montoya
10. Raikkonen

Chief designer Adrian Newey has put his retirement on hold for another year as he struggles to ensure that the MP4/20 remains the class of the field. With Mercedes setting up a testing facility near the McLaren factory at the old Brooklands circuit, McLaren will soon have their own version of Fiorano to test at - anyone traveling to London from Farnborough or Basingstoke will be able to see the track from the train! Within the championship McLaren's main problem is clearly reliability. Engine failures in both France and Britain have dented Raikkonen's championship charge to the extent that even Kimi admits that it will be tough to catch Alonso this year.

Sauber

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

11. Villeneuve
12. Massa

More aerodynamic improvements along with a bolstering of staff (and greater motivation for the drivers considering their contracts are now in the hand of BMW) have given Sauber a useful impetus to improve in their last season of Formula 1. The team will be looking at catching Red Bull in the constructor's standings though whether they can regularly break into the points to bridge the gap remains to be seen. Nick Heidfeld looks likely to move with BMW so one of the drivers will surely be heading out of the door. Villeneuve looks like the likely candidate but paying him for 2006 would be the main hurdle.

Toyota

(Red & White with Toyota & Panasonic logos)

14. **R Schumacher**

15. **Trulli**

Another big name driver who has so far not quite lived up to expectations is Ralf Schumacher. Although the German has steadily racked up points throughout the season, Ralf has failed to deliver the big name drives that his lesser paid team mate has (it is rumored that the Toyota board thought they were getting the other Schumacher when they agreed to his salary). Toyota has, nevertheless improved throughout the season and the team can look with confidence towards the end of the season. A win seems possible in Germany as the track suits the TF105 though even the drivers admit that Renault and McLaren are in a class of their own this year. Even so poor tire and setup choices by the four cars could see Trulli steal home first.

Red Bull Racing

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

16. **Coulthard**

17. **Liuzzi**

Red Bull have been as active off the track as on it in recent weeks. The team have joined Ferrari in signing up to the current Formula 1 series until 2012 and it is expected that they will also join Ferrari on Bridgestone tires next season. Like Sauber before them Red Bull seem to have given away a great deal of their political clout in exchange for engines in the backs of their cars. The team staged a press day in Istanbul this week with David Coulthard (who seems to be the new shop steward for the Grand Prix Drivers Association) driving from Europe to Asia across the Bosphorous bridge. Germany should see the cars hanging onto the coat tails of the front runners again and challenging the Williams for the last points.

Midland Jordan

(Yellow with Sobraine on it)

18. **Karthekeinan**

19. **Monteiro**

Jordan's troubles continue. The EJ15B is still having cooling problems resulting in its introduction being put back to the Turkish Grand Prix on 21st August. The team are now getting short of testing time ahead of the August testing ban with a disproportionate amount of time being spent on the new car resulting in the older car slipping further back in terms of pace. Add in the loss of their third driver to Minardi and the political struggles within the team and there are definitely troubles ahead.

Minardi

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

20. **Leinders**

21. **Doornbos**

Despite some great drives and a cool helmet design, Patrick Friesacher's sponsors have failed to come up with a budget for the entire season and consequently Paul Stoddart has had to sack him. His place in the team is being taken by former Jordan third driver Dutchman Robert Doornbos. The all-Dutch driving line up is going to be after Jordan this weekend and there is a good chance that they will succeed in passing them. It seems unlikely that the car will catch the Jordan but, with the problems at the Silverstone team, anything is possible.

Alex's 2005 German Grand Prix Predictions

Qualifying	Race
1. Kimi Raikkonen	1. Kimi Raikkonen
2. Fernando Alonso	2. Fernando Alonso
3. Juan Pablo Montoya	3. Jenson Button