

2005 F1 Season

Turkish Grand Prix Preview

Round 14 of 19

by Alex "Zander" Keep

Track Length: 5.340 km
Number of Laps: 58 (309.720 Km)
Number of Corners: 14 (left: 8) (right: 6)
Top Speed: 320 Km/h
Lap Record: N/A

Last Time Around - Hungary

Is it me or does it seem ages since the Hungarian Grand Prix? In Hungary Kimi Raikkonen proved that the race for the title wasn't quite dead yet as he produced a blistering drive to take a well-deserved victory. His joy was further compounded when his main rival for the title Fernando Alonso suffered a rare car failure thereby reducing the Finn's deficit by ten points. Michael Schumacher proved that he was still a force to be reckoned with by setting a great pole position and finishing second while Ralf Schumacher scored an understated podium to provide the team's paymasters some solace for his incredible salary demands. Since Hungary Rubens Barrichello has announced his departure to BAR while Felipe Massa will be taking his place at Ferrari. Jenson Button is continuing his fight to get out of his contract and Williams have formally announced their deal with Cosworth for engines next season.

First Turkish Grand Prix

Turkey is to host its first Formula One race in August of 2005, pushing the already packed Formula One schedule out to 19 races for the first time. Work on the new Herman Tilke designed 5.333 KM circuit began with a ground breaking ceremony performed by the Prime Minister of the Republic of Turkey in September 2003 with Grandstand construction starting in June of 2004 and come January of 2005, the circuit landscaping was fully underway.

Felipe Massa's View:

"I already won there for Sauber because I did the race on my PlayStation - and I did it on the difficult level against all the other championship runners! Usually these computer

games are very accurate in the way they depict the circuits and there are some quick corners, elevation changes and long straights, a bit like the Nurburgring in Germany."

Fernando Alonso's View:

"The new circuit is already in the PlayStation game. That means I have been able to do several laps - I did the same thing ahead of China last year, and it worked well. Of course, the problem is that you end up cutting the chicanes and overtaking in the grass - which doesn't quite correspond to reality, but I already have a good idea of the way the corners go."

Michael Schumacher's View:

"I visited Istanbul a few years ago for a sponsor event and I remember well the enthusiasm and warm reception we received. I have the impression that the Turkish people love F1 and I think that they are pleased we will be holding a Grand Prix in their country. I don't know much about the circuit. I will take a close look at it and try to recall every detail on Thursday. Arriving earlier would not really have served any purpose. Thursday's check will be enough and, in any case, I have no trouble in approaching new circuits. As I have said, we will see what happens. It will be a very interesting weekend."

The Track's F1 History

This year's race is the first Grand Prix ever held in Turkey.

Last Year's Turkish Grand Prix Results

N/A

Strategy

As it's a completely new track it is difficult to see how the strategy for this race will play out. The circuit seems to be a mixture of corners and it is difficult to see how the tires will respond to the sharp corners 1, 2, 4, 7 and 9 while still being able to generate grip through the long fast corners such as 3 and 6. As a circuit designed by Hermann Tilke this mix of corners should be expected and again it seems likely that some close racing should ensue. Two stops seems the best bet but with the Turkish summer heat and the wear rate likely to be high it seems possible that many teams will go for three stops.

Championship Standings

Drivers			
Rank	Driver	Team	Points
1	F. Alonso	Renault	87
2	K.Raikkonen	McLaren-Mercedes	61
3	M.Schumacher	Ferrari	55
4	J.Trulli	Toyota	36
5	Juan Pablo Montoya	McLaren-Mercedes	34
6	Ralf Schumacher	Toyota	32
7	R.Barrichello	Ferrari	31
8	Giancarlo Fisichella	Renault	30
9	Nick Heidfeld	Williams-BMW	28
10	Mark Webber	Williams-BMW	24
11	Jenson Button	BAR-Honda	19
12	David Coulthard	Red Bull	19
13	Felipe Massa	Sauber-Petronas	8
14	Tiago Monteiro	Jordan	6
15	Alexander Wurz	McLaren-Mercedes	6
16	Jacques Villeneuve	Sauber-Petronas	6
17	Narain Karthikeyan	Jordan	5
18	Christijan Albers	Minardi	4
19	Pedro de la Rosa	McLaren-Mercedede	4
20	Christian Klien	Red Bul	4
21	Patrick Friesacher	Minardi	3
22	Vitantonio Liuzzi	Red Bull	1
23	Takuma Sato	BAR-Honda	1

2005 Constructors' Championship

Pos	Constructor	Points
1	Renault	117
2	McLaren Mercedes	105
3	Ferrari	86
4	Toyota	68
5	Williams-BMW	52
6	Red Bull	24
7	BAR-Honda	20
8	Sauber-Petronas	14
9	Jordan	11
10	Minardi	7

The Teams

Ferrari

(Red with Marlboro signs)

1. M. Schumacher
2. Barrichello

Ferrari's relative lack of pace this season could all be just about to change. Ferrari, unlike the other teams, has been testing furiously throughout their summer break and this will surely have helped the Scuderia to catch their rivals in the final few races. It seems unlikely that Michael Schumacher will be able to catch Raikkonen and Alonso but he is sure to mount a challenge for a race win or two before the end of the year. Rubens Barrichello is sure to also be aiming to end his time at Ferrari with a race win with Brazil seemingly the best place to do this. Schumi's incredible aptitude at learning tracks coupled with the team's three weeks of extra testing is sure to make the red cars contenders this weekend.

BAR

(White with Red Lucky Strike Roundels on it)

3. Button
4. Sato

It looks certain to be all change at BAR. The team have told Button that he must sort out his own contracts and, unlike last year, are sure to have a strong driver line up no matter what happens to Button. Rubens Barrichello and (sporting director) Gil de Ferran are great friends from childhood so it is no surprise to see them reunited next season. Sato may well be retained if Button is forced to go to Williams, alternatively several names are being mentioned in connection with the BAR seat next season. For the immediate future another strong, if hardly dazzling, race showing seems likely.

Renault

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

5. Fisichella
6. Alonso

Poor reliability in Hungary means that the Renaults will be amongst the first out on track on Saturday. There is little doubt that this is going to hurt both drivers as the track will still be very green (i.e. there will be little extra grip from the rubber of the other car's tires) and so Alonso and Fisichella can expect to have to fight through the field for a podium. Peter Sauber has recently been criticizing Fisico for leaving the team - considering Sauber effectively swapped Fisichella for Villeneuve it does seem a case of the pot calling the kettle black!

Williams

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

7. Webber
8. Heidfeld

Now stuck with customer Cosworth engines for the next twelve months Williams seem to be quite bullish at the prospect of being able to go their own way after the end of this season. There is no doubt that BMW will be ensuring that Williams are not able to test a Cosworth V8 until after the end of the season while they themselves will be finding it difficult to do any meaningful testing without giving away their secrets to the Williams engineers. All in all it seems likely that both sides will be happier when they can get on with what they are good at.

McLaren

(Gray with West signs on it)

9. Montoya
10. Raikkonen

Now the silver arrows are beginning to look like they have the reliability to match their speed. The race in Hungary was a clear indication that Kimi Raikkonen is still a threat to Alonso's first championship. In previous years Renault have tended to struggle with car development during the second half of the season and should this continue this year then Kimi may well claim the championship in the final race or two. Montoya still seems to view himself as a challenger for the championship and McLaren's admirable ability to allow their drivers to race could be Kimi's undoing if Montoya starts to seriously challenge him for points.

Sauber

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

11. Villeneuve
12. Massa

With Massa now confirmed as Michael Schumacher's number two driver (something I find very odd - at least Irvine and Barrichello had beaten all their team mates before going to Ferrari, Massa has been outpaced by all of his apart from Villeneuve) it looks like BMW F1 (as Sauber will be known next season) will have Villeneuve in one of their cars. Jacques has agreed to star in a film about his father which looks set to be released in a couple of years but in the mean time Villeneuve's improved pace and the team's increased facilities are sure to see them enjoy a strong end of the season.

Toyota

(Red & White with Toyota & Panasonic logos)

14. **R Schumacher**

15. **Trulli**

Ralf's first podium for Toyota has helped to silence the mounting criticism that the German was facing in light of his poor results and high wage demands. Toyota are producing the goods and Mike Gascoigne seems to be keen to ensure that the car continues developing for the rest of the season. Toyota are particularly determined to beat Honda in Japan and to this end they are again accelerating development of their car and engine, particularly in light of Honda's threatening a 1000 horsepower engine for Suzuka.

Red Bull Racing

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

16. **Coulthard**

17. **Klein**

A major publicity coup for Red Bull occurred a few weeks back when David Coulthard drove across the Bosphorous from Europe to Asia in Istanbul. Williams' decision to use Cosworth next season is sure to help Red Bull this year as it means that Cosworth will have extra money to develop their V10 in the final few races. The second driver for next year still is yet to be finalized but Klein seems to be doing the better job and it is notable that he has now been in the car for the vast majority of races this season.

Midland Jordan

(Yellow with Sobraine on it)

18. **Karthekeinan**

19. **Monteiro**

With Anthony Davidson being heavily touted for a Jordan seat next season things are finally looking up for the Silverstone squad. Johnny Herbert has been taking an active role in coaching the drivers and it is hoped that this will tame the increasingly wild Karthekeinan while Monteiro is already thought to be looking at other teams for next year. Being increasingly outpaced by Minardi has been a bitter pill to swallow for the squad and the arrival of the EJ15B onto the circuit in Istanbul should help the team redress the balance.

Minardi

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

- 20. **Leinders**
- 21. **Doornbos**

Having had the oldest debutante F1 driver in Hungary (& Israel's first grand Prix driver) the team have reverted to promising former F3000 driver Enrico Toccacello for third car testing duties this weekend. The team have shown increased speed of late and their no longer being the slowest team on the grid will have been of great personal satisfaction to Paul Stoddart. For this weekend Minardi will be unlikely to score points but at least they will be hoping to overtake Jordan in the constructor's championship by scoring four more points than they score in the remaining races.

Alex's 2005 Turkish Grand Prix Predictions

Qualifying	Race
1. Michael Schumacher	1. Michael Schumacher
2. Kimi Raikkonen	2. Kimi Raikkonen
3. Rubens Barrichello	3. Rubens Barrichello