

# UP TO SPEED: MEDIA COVERAGE

SUNDAY 09 JULY



**aramco**  
**FORMULA 1**  
**ARAMCO**  
**BRITISH**  
**GRAND PRIX**  
**2023**



# SILVERSTONE

07 - 09 JULY 2023



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ALASDAIR REID



For the few seconds that Lando Norris's name topped the timing screens around Silverstone, the roars of the crowd drowned out the noise of the engines on the track. But just when it seemed that they would have a Briton on pole position, Max Verstappen came screaming round the final bend and grabbed it for himself.

"Max always ruins everything," Norris joked. But the 23-year-old Englishman now has a precious chance to turn the tables on the world champion as he lines up alongside him on the front row of the grid.

Verstappen has the advantage of track position, but for all his superiority in other regards he has not been the most impressive starter this season. If Norris can get a jump on him off the line then a magnificent battle

Norris, left, and Piastri enjoy a good day in qualifying, which would have been even better for them were it not for Verstappen's late intervention



## NORRIS READY FOR VERSTAPPEN BATTLE

**Briton just misses out on pole to champion but has chance to cause upset in front of Silverstone crowd**

could be in store. Norris may gain some advantage from having his McLaren team-mate, Oscar Piastri, as a wing man after the Australian grabbed third place on the grid. McLaren have had a few struggles this year so this was a stunning performance by the Woking outfit.

McLaren celebrate their 60th birthday this year and they have honoured their past, and specifically the 2008 car in which Lewis Hamilton won their most recent driver's title, with a new colour scheme. It was meant to be a one-off, but after yesterday's performance they might decide to stick with it.

Verstappen was gracious about the McLaren performance. "It's great to see both of them here, a great result for their team," he said. "Also, from the way they started the year [with a run of poor results] it is quite impressive to see them here as well. I'm very happy for them and hopefully they can also have a strong race tomorrow."

Norris admitted that he and Piastri had enjoyed some good luck, but was also pleased with the way his newly upgraded car had performed after so many disappointments earlier in the year. Norris said: "I guess I'm a little bit surprised. I wasn't expecting for us to be here. We are very happy with the

result, but [getting pole position] was more whether Max made a mistake than if we were quicker than him. His team are doing a very good job.

"I don't think expectations were low. In qualifying like this, when it is wet then dry, it's always very difficult to predict what's going to happen. Some quicker cars were knocked out earlier so that opened up some opportunities for us to be here. It's clear we've made some improvements. That's very evident."

Piastri backed up Norris's claim that the McLaren is still not where they want to be and that they will continue to struggle on certain circuits. Overall, though, he was happy with their performance.

"The car doesn't feel too much different," Piastri said. "I think we still

**'Hamilton was lucky to survive after spinning off the greasy track at Stowe'**

have some weaknesses we want to address, but overall it's faster. If the choice is between a car that feels great or a car that goes fast, I would choose one that goes fast and worry about the handling later."

With intermittent spots of rain to deal with, Verstappen was clearly in no mood for taking unnecessary risks in the early part of qualifying. At least that was the case out on the track, but when he came into the pits he had a major attention lapse and somehow managed to clatter a wall with his front wing. It was an embarrassing moment for the Dutchman, but strangely reassuring for those of us who were starting to wonder if he would ever make a mistake.

Meanwhile, will Sergio Pérez, Verstappen's team-mate, ever get through qualifying without one? Reports that Pérez had rediscovered his mojo by finishing second in Austria last weekend turned out to be premature as the Mexican failed to make it through to Q3 for the fifth race on the trot.

In fact, for the fourth time in those



four races, Pérez did not even make it past Q1. You have to wonder how long Red Bull will tolerate that level of underachievement.

That opening session had been a dramatic affair. Hamilton was lucky to survive it after spinning off the greasy track at Stowe on his first flying lap. Hamilton's car threw up a shower of gravel, but he managed to maintain enough momentum to get it back on the road.

Much had been expected of the Mercedes, with a slew of new parts and a track that should have suited its strength. In light of which, George Russell's sixth place and Hamilton's seventh was a disappointment, especially after some recent signs of improvement.

Hamilton said: "I'll try to be optimistic and do our best, but I'm really not sure. It's always a great feeling to be here for the British Grand Prix. We always want to do a great performance for the British fans so today is disappointing that we haven't done more. Hopefully tomorrow we can give them a good race."

Of the McLarens, Hamilton suggested that following a similar design route to Red Bull was paying dividends. "I'm not surprised," he said. "If you look at the car it makes sense. I'm really happy for them because they've had such a bad run for so long. For them to be back up there is great to see."

### GRID FOR BRITISH GRAND PRIX

Driver	Team	Time
1 Max Verstappen (Neth)	Red Bull	1:26.720
2 Lando Norris (GB)	McLaren	1:26.961
3 Oscar Piastri (Aus)	McLaren	1:27.092
4 Charles Leclerc (Mon)	Ferrari	1:27.136
5 Carlos Sainz Jr (Sp)	Ferrari	1:27.148
6 George Russell (GB)	Mercedes	1:27.155
7 Lewis Hamilton (GB)	Mercedes	1:27.211
8 Alexander Albon (Tha)	Williams	1:27.530
9 Fernando Alonso (Sp)	Aston Martin	1:27.659
10 Pierre Gasly (Fr)	Alpine	1:27.689
11 Nico Hülkenberg (Ger)	Haas	1:28.896
12 Lance Stroll (Can)	Aston Martin	1:28.935
13 Esteban Ocon (Fr)	Alpine	1:28.956
14 Logan Sargeant (US)	Williams	1:29.031
15 Valtteri Bottas (Fin)	Alfa Romeo	1:29.798
16 Sergio Pérez (Mex)	Red Bull	1:29.968
17 Yuki Tsunoda (Japan)	AlphaTauri	1:30.025
18 Guanyu Zhou (China)	Alfa Romeo	1:30.123
19 Nyck de Vries (Neth)	AlphaTauri	1:30.513
20 Kevin Magnussen (Den)	Haas*	1:32.378

### CHAMPIONSHIP POSITIONS

Driver	Pts
1 Max Verstappen (Neth)	229
2 Sergio Pérez (Mex)	148
3 Fernando Alonso (Sp)	121
4 Lewis Hamilton (GB)	106
5 Carlos Sainz Jr (Sp)	82
6 Charles Leclerc (Monaco)	72
7 George Russell (GB)	72
8 Lance Stroll (Can)	44
9 Esteban Ocon (Fr)	31
10 Lando Norris (GB)	24
Constructor	
1 Red Bull	377
2 Mercedes	178
3 Aston Martin	175
4 Ferrari	154

### ON TV TODAY

British Grand Prix Race starts 3pm, Sky Sports F1/Channel 4

## Martin Samuel

### The voice of sport

To a teenager, cricket is the sporting equivalent of bed blocking – where old men are still the dominant force



**SKEWED PRIORITIES OF NHS CHIEF YOU WOULD NOT PUT YOUR SHIRT ON**

Having returned from holiday, it is delightful to hear all the problems of the NHS have been resolved, with Amanda Pritchard, right, the chief executive of NHS England, free to focus on more important matters: like football shirts.

Pritchard recently pontificated on shirt-sponsorship deals with gambling companies, which can only mean we no longer have unmanageable waiting lists of 6.2 million, we aren't standing 17th out of 19 major nations for healthcare standards, aren't bottom

When the television show *Superstars* was at its peak, cricketers didn't get much of a look in. Between 1973 and its Eighties heyday, as the greats of sport competed against each other in various athletic disciplines, the champions, the great all-rounders, tended to emerge from Olympic events.

David Hemery, Brian Hooper and Garry Cook were from track and field, Tim Crooks was a rower, Brian Jacks a judoka, John Conteh – not an Olympian but a Commonwealth Games gold medallist – a boxer. *Superstars* wouldn't get made now because today's stars are worth too much money to risk the type of wounds that the England captain Kevin Keegan received, coming off a bicycle at speed in 1976.

Yet in any modern-day equivalent, no one would bet against Ben Stokes. Hand-eye co-ordination, physical endurance, hitting, throwing, trials of strength – there is arguably no greater pound-for-pound athlete in the country right now. And yet, it's cricket. It's problematic.

There is much talk of how to get the game back in front of the nation's youth, after the Independent Commission for Equity in Cricket found a classist divide between state and private schools harming the pathway. Yet, if you were in charge of the nation's health, and for all the example set by brilliant athletes such as Stokes or Joe Root, would more cricket be the way to go?

### OIL STANCE IS A BIT RICH, ISN'T IT LEWIS?



Lewis Hamilton understands just Stop Oil's cause. He also plainly doesn't mind if they prevent you going about your business, or getting your children to school, going to work, or making that appointment at the hospital, even if you are the one performing the surgery. Just as long as they don't stop those engaged in the important stuff. Like Formula One drivers.

"We believe in what people are fighting for," Hamilton said, before today's British Grand Prix. "But safety is key. We don't want to put them in harm's way and we don't want them to put anyone else in harm's way. If there was to be a protest, we hope it's not on the track."

Charles Darwin might argue that if you stage a slow walking or sit-down protest on a Formula One track and are run over by a car, that's natural selection. The planet has been saved from something, even if it isn't oil. Yet it never ceases to surprise just how green some people are: right up to the moment when it actually starts to affect them.

Leave aside that it is expensive, time consuming and any wicket improperly prepared is potentially very dangerous. Leave aside that it is a hugely technical game, requiring significant coaching expertise and, without that, is potentially very dangerous. Just consider the hanging about. The point of sport in state schools is to promote health and exercise. The NHS wants the next generation running. There's not a whole lot of that in cricket. When a team bats, nine of their 11 members are dormant; when they are fielding, ten of the 11 are doing very little unless the ball comes their way.

Cricket, for the majority of participants, is not aerobic. Intikhab Alam was one of its greatest proponents, with a physique that wouldn't get him a start in most pub football teams. Ollie Robinson had already reached the international pinnacle with England before the need to get slimmer and fitter was impressed on him; the same with Andrew Flintoff.

It's a great game, a wonderful game, and we love it. Yet, if it's not the answer to an obesity crisis, why would state schools be re-encouraged down that path? Football's cheaper, less time consuming, more easily organised and everyone bar the goalkeeper is active.

Old men can play cricket, and do. That's another complication. Too old to run around? Take part in one of this country's biggest growth sports: walking football. The same game, but walking. The equivalent of walking football in cricket? It's still cricket.

Fourth XI cricket, fifth XI cricket, with a few teenagers in to do the hard yakka. Of course, clubs thrive on loyal members; but to a teenager looking to get a game, it's the sporting equivalent of bed blocking. There is a reason why at a club where a friend plays, they have recently announced that in matters of selection, young trumps old. It shouldn't have to be a debate. And, no, they're probably not finding England's next opener in those ranks; but they're not going to lose another generation, either.

Depends what your dad does, too. That's the real class divide in cricket. Not state versus private. In 2012, the report found, 57 per cent of England players were privately educated. Now run those figures for how many came from a club-cricketing family – it would be nearer 100 per cent. If your dad captains the thirds, you've got a lot more chance of playing for them, and not because elite athletic ability owes much to the genes. We can all work out why Erling Haaland might be better at football than most. This is about grassroots ability and opportunity. It isn't innate.

That's the conundrum for cricket. How to keep the next generation engaged. It's not a class war, even a race war. And it's not about getting the sport back into state schools because that horse went to pasture long ago. Cricket is in no position to pick and choose participants. I had three boys that all played, for the school team, the district, had county trials, and none of them pick up a ball now. But they all went to private school. So that's a triumph, right?

## THE BEST OF THE WEEK AHEAD SEVEN-DAY LISTINGS FOR JULY 9-15

# TV & RADIO

## SUPER SUNDAY OF SPORT

Fans of televised sport are spoilt for choice today with Formula 1, Ashes cricket and Wimbledon tennis all fighting for their attention. Silverstone once again becomes the epicentre of the Formula 1 world as the 2023 **British Grand Prix** arrives at the venerable circuit. The only Grand Prix of the season live on



free-to-air television (Channel 4, from 1.30pm), the presenting line-up includes Steve Jones, Lee McKenzie, two-times British Grand Prix winner David Coulthard and the Australian driver Mark Webber. Sky Sports F1 channel, meanwhile, starts its Grand Prix coverage with **Pit Lane Live** at 2pm. Middle Sunday is no longer a rest day over in SW19 as

**Wimbledon** reaches the fourth round in both the men's and women's singles; and up in Yorkshire, **The Ashes** (Sky Sports Cricket, 10.15am) reaches day four of the crucial Third Test as Ben Stokes' England must beat Australia to keep the series alive. *Victoria Segal, Tim Glanfield*



## Racing at Silverstone for a British crowd is a boy's dream

**David Coulthard** talks to **Jake Helm** ahead of the 2023 **British Grand Prix**

**What does Silverstone mean to you?**  
My father drove karts, which meant I often went to Silverstone, so it feels like I've known it my whole life, whether it's camping there or learning to drive my mother's car around the perimeter fence. Then, years later, being able to race there in front of a British crowd is the stuff of a little boy's dream.

**Did you get more nervous racing in front of a home crowd?**

I get more nervous delivering a keynote speech than I ever did driving a Grand Prix car. The desire to do well is there regardless of whether it's Silverstone or Monaco. The difference is when things don't go well at a British Grand Prix; you get a strong feeling of disappointment as you know a lot of the crowd is there for the British driver.

**What was it like winning in 1999 and 2000?**

In 1995, I was close to winning but I ended up third. It felt like the British Grand Prix had

slipped away. To then win it twice in a row was incredibly special. There's a festival feel to the British Grand Prix. I think that's something Britain does really well, whether it's Glastonbury or Silverstone. Brits know how to pack their kits and make a day of it.

**What are your predictions for this year's Silverstone?**

It's not like any of the other circuits we've been at of late. It has a much faster speed, flow and

**Fast car star** The former F1 driver, 52, is now a C4 pundit

corners. On the face of it, that's going to help Red Bull and Max Verstappen, who have a very efficient car. But Mercedes are pretty handy in high-speed balance and have a pretty hefty upgrade coming into the race. If they get that right, we may well have a tasty battle on our hands.

**Max Verstappen is again a clear frontrunner. Is there a worry F1 could become a one-horse race?**

The reality is, there's a set of regulations that everyone gets to

design their car to fit within, and for whatever reason, the Red Bull team has done a better job. It's down to the other teams to improve rather than try to handicap Red Bull because they have managed to exploit the regulations.

**Who are the homegrown talent to look out for?**

British driving is in a great place. Hamilton is still very motivated and we've got brilliant young talents in Lando Norris, 23, and George Russell, 25. The Thai-British Alex Albon, 27, has done well at Williams too. I think Russell has a better chance than Norris based on current form.



## The Sunday Telegraph



Brad Pitt takes a walk in the paddock amid the busy of Silverstone qualifying

advice from Mercedes AMG, the vehicle is designed to look like the current F1 generation of cars. There are 15 camera positions mounted around his specially built car as he takes to the circuit.

Pitt is being advised by Lewis Hamilton, who has a consultancy producer role on the film, and so far the seven-time world champion is impressed.

"We did do a day together at a track in

LA and for someone that hasn't raced he's definitely already got a keen eye," he said on Thursday. "He loves watching MotoGP. He already had a knack for the lines and he was fully on it."

One source described the production as "method acting version of Steve McQueen's *Le Mans*".

The fictional Apex team has a garage in the Silverstone pit lane between

'Nobody knew it was Brad - we thought it was a F2 car'

those of Ferrari and Hamilton's Mercedes team. During the final cut, action sequences will be blended to give the impression that Pitt is racing in real-life F1. Similar technology was used in action scenes starring Tom Cruise in *Top Gun: Maverick*. The ambition, with the help of Hamilton, is to make "the most authentic Grand Prix film ever". Pitt has recently trained at Winfield

Racing School at the Paul Ricard circuit near Marseille, France, as well as at Silverstone, starting out in a kart before progressing to F3 and then F2, in which cars can travel at almost 200mph.

There will even be filming in the pits as today's real race takes place.

At 59, Pitt is a year more senior than the oldest ever driver, Louis Chiron, at the Monaco GP in 1958.

The Sunday Telegraph

# Norris talent merits main stage – not Muppet Show

McLaren driver, second on Silverstone grid, is talked of as future world champion... could it be in a Red Bull?

By Tom Cary  
SENIOR SPORTS CORRESPONDENT  
at Silverstone

Lando Norris is wearing a bracelet on his wrist at this weekend's British Grand Prix bearing the word "MUPPET". It was given to him by a fan and he found it amusing, so he wears it now, along with another which says "Let's Go Lando".

Muppet, the McLaren driver explains, is a reference to his former team-mate, Carlos Sainz, now at Ferrari.

"I used to call him a muppet," Norris says, laughing. "The fans loved it and still say it to me now. I can't remember exactly how it started. I think I called Carlos a muppet in a video or something."

"I get loads [of bracelets] from fans," he adds. "During the weekend, I'll get more and I'll swap them out eventually. It's just one thing I like to do."

One thing is for sure, muppet is certainly not an accurate description of Norris behind the wheel.

The 23-year-old took a sensational second place on the grid at Silverstone yesterday, just two tenths of a second behind Red Bull's pole-sitter Max Verstappen, sending the 140,000 fans packed into the old Northamptonshire airfield absolutely potty.

After finishing fourth in Austria last weekend – Norris's best result of the season – it all adds to the feell-good factor surrounding the British driver, who has become a firm fans' favourite.

He is trying not to get carried away. "I guess I'm a little surprised," he told the press conference immediately after qualifying. "I wasn't expecting to be up here this weekend."

Norris, in fact, spent much of this week talking down McLaren's chances.

Yes, they had a new front wing in Austria last weekend which appeared to have made a difference. Yes they brought more upgrades here to Silverstone.

But they were not suddenly going to find themselves ahead of Aston Martin, Ferrari and Mercedes, he insisted. It would take time for them to consistently challenge those teams rather than battling the odd qualifying result at high-speed circuits such as Barcelona, Spielberg and Silverstone, which particularly suit them.

As boring as it sounds, he is probably right. While Norris is second quickest in qualifying, and rookie team-mate Oscar Piastri third, there is no guarantee they will stay up there in terms of race pace. Or in Hungary in a fortnight's time.

The question is, how long will it take for McLaren to get back consistently to the front of the grid? And more to the point, will Norris still be there when they do?

The Briton's star is firmly in the ascendancy. Norris is almost universally regarded as a potential world champion in the right car. Even Verstappen acknowledged as much earlier this week.

"If Lando was in a race-winning car, he would win races. It's as sim-

ple as that," the double world champion stated.

Verstappen's words were particularly intriguing as Red Bull currently have a second driver who is in a complete funk. Sergio Perez exited in Q1 at Silverstone, the fifth time in a row that he has failed to make the top 10 shootout. The Mexican has a contract through to the end of next season. And Norris has what is said to be a "watertight" contract with McLaren through to the end of 2025.

One, moreover, which he has 'Lewis has been top Briton at Silverstone for too many years already. It's about time he let someone else have a go'

consistently said he will honour. But everything and everyone in F1 has a price and if Red Bull want Norris enough, that transfer could happen.

"Red Bull cannot afford to have a car that good and not have two cars right up there for the championship," noted former world champion Damon Hill this week, adding he did not think the champions would turn to former driver, and current reserve, Daniel Ricciardo,

should they decide to jettison Perez. "I think they'd want a fresh face. Possibly Lando."

It is an intriguing prospect. And what a combination they would be. Two old friends from junior formulae, battling it out in the same team.

Norris smiles. As one of F1's highest-rated and most popular drivers – he revealed last week that he was getting increasingly unusual requests from his fans, but that he drew the line recently at "signing a baby's forehead" – he is philosophical about his current lot.

"I am not a guy who wastes time wishing for something else," he says. "When the time comes and something happens then something happens, but I don't get carried away with any of that, as much as I daydream about things in life, like everyone does." For now, he is just intent on trying to take McLaren back to the front.

Results like the one in Austria last week, or in qualifying yesterday, plus McLaren's new wind tunnel and simulator – both of which are coming onstream this year – give him cause for hope. But it is small steps.

"Of course I'd like that," Norris replies when asked whether he would like to finish as the top Briton this weekend, a distinct possibility with Mercedes' George Russell and Lewis Hamilton sixth and seventh respectively, and Williams' Alex Albon eighth.

"Lewis has had it for too many years already. It's about time he let someone else have a go!

"But there's no jealousy. It's like when you say 'Are you jealous of Lewis Hamilton's stats in Formula 1?' As much as I'd like them, there's just no point saying 'It's my goal' because it's absurd. Almost impossible. I'm just doing the best I can in the car that I'm driving. That's all I can do."

It is proving more than enough right now. F1's big dogs are circling. If McLaren do not get their act together in the next couple of seasons, the muppet show will move on.

## How they line up

3pm, Sky Sports F1

- 1 Max Verstappen (Netherlands) Red Bull 1:26.720
- 2 Lando Norris (GB) McLaren ..... 1:26.361
- 3 Oscar Piastri (Australia) McLaren ..... 1:27.032
- 4 Charles Leclerc (Monaco) Ferrari ..... 1:27.136
- 5 Carlos Sainz Jr. (Spain) Ferrari ..... 1:27.140
- 6 George Russell (GB) Mercedes ..... 1:27.155
- 7 Lewis Hamilton (GB) Mercedes ..... 1:27.211
- 8 Alexander Albon (Thailand) Williams ..... 1:27.530
- 9 Fernando Alonso (Spain) Aston Martin ..... 1:27.659
- 10 Pierre Gasly (France) Alpine ..... 1:27.689
- 11 Nico Hulkenberg (Germany) Haas ..... 1:28.896
- 12 Lance Stroll (Canada) Aston Martin ..... 1:28.935
- 13 Esteban Ocon (France) Alpine ..... 1:28.956
- 14 Logan Sargeant (US) Williams ..... 1:29.031
- 15 Valtteri Bottas (Finland) Alfa Romeo ..... 1:29.798
- 16 Sergio Perez (Mexico) Red Bull ..... 1:29.968
- 17 Yuki Tsunoda (Japan) AlphaTauri ..... 1:30.025
- 18 Guanyu Zhou (China) Alfa Romeo ..... 1:30.113
- 19 Nyck de Vries (Netherlands) AlphaTauri 1:30.513
- 20 Kevin Magnussen (Denmark) Haas ..... 1:32.378

Driver standings	
1 Max Verstappen (Netherlands).....	229pts
2 Sergio Perez (Mexico).....	148
3 Fernando Alonso (Spain).....	131
4 Lewis Hamilton (GB).....	106
5 Carlos Sainz Jr. (Spain).....	82
6 Charles Leclerc (Monaco).....	72
7 George Russell (GB).....	72
8 Lance Stroll (Canada).....	44
9 Esteban Ocon (France).....	31
10 Lando Norris (GB).....	24
11 Pierre Gasly (France).....	16
12 Nico Hulkenberg (Germany).....	9
13 Alexander Albon (Thailand).....	7
14 Oscar Piastri (Australia).....	5
15 Valtteri Bottas (Finland).....	5
16 Guanyu Zhou (China).....	4
17 Yuki Tsunoda (Japan).....	2
18 Kevin Magnussen (Denmark).....	2
Constructor standings	
1 Red Bull 377pts, 2 Mercedes 176, 3 Aston Martin 175, 4 Ferrari 154, 5 Alpine 47, 6 McLaren 29, 7 Haas 11, 8 Alfa Romeo 9, 9 Williams 7, 10 AlphaTauri 2.	



# Russell: New set-up gives podium hope

By Tom Cary

George Russell believes he and team-mate Lewis Hamilton can challenge for the podium in today's British Grand Prix after making big improvements to their set-up, allowing them to claim sixth and seventh on the grid respectively.

A fascinating qualifying session on a drying Silverstone track ended with Red Bull's runaway champion-

ship leader Max Verstappen taking his fifth pole position on the trot. The double world champion will be a huge favourite to extend his championship lead and claim an eighth win of the season.

But there is plenty of British interest for the anticipated 160,000 fans packing out Silverstone, headed by McLaren's Lando Norris.

The 23-year-old claimed a shock second place on the grid, 0.24sec behind Verstappen, with rookie

team-mate Oscar Piastri arguably an even more impressive third, a further tenth back, as McLaren built on an impressive weekend in Austria last time out.

There were a few heady seconds when the Silverstone crowds thought Norris might even have snatched pole, before Verstappen completed his final flying lap.

"It's always Max," Norris joked afterwards. "He always ruins everything for everyone."

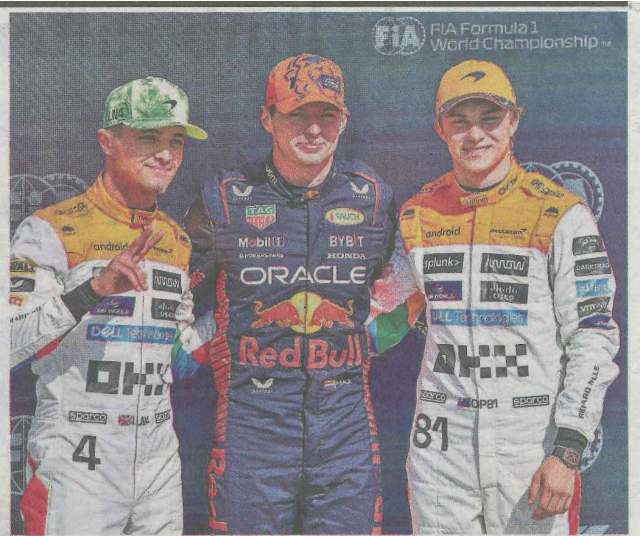
Behind the two McLarens are the Ferraris of Charles Leclerc and Carlos Sainz Jr, ahead of Russell and Hamilton.

Williams' London-born Thai driver Alex Albon starts eighth, just ahead of the Aston Martin of Fernando Alonso, making it four British drivers in the top 10 on the grid.



In the slipstream: Max Verstappen hunts down Lewis Hamilton in qualifying

## The Sunday Telegraph



Fast learner: Lando Norris (left) on his way to securing second place on the starting grid for the British Grand Prix at Silverstone; (above, left) with McLaren team-mate Oscar Piastri (right) and Red Bull's Max Verstappen; (below) taking a turn ahead of compatriot Lewis Hamilton



Mercedes were perhaps fortunate that Verstappen's Red Bull team-mate Sergio Perez had yet another disastrous qualifying session, knocked out in Q1 as the drivers left it late to set their times on a rapidly drying circuit following an earlier shower.

It was the fifth race in a row in which the Mexican has failed to make the top 10 shoot-out and will increase the pressure on him.

Hamilton also had a scare in Q1, spinning off the track at Stowe, but he managed to keep the engine running.

Russell said he expected Mercedes to move forwards given their long-run pace in practice. "I mean we had numbers suggesting we were 17th and 18th quickest [in one-lap pace] on Friday and third

and fourth quickest [in race pace]," he said. "Clearly we have made some improvements.

"I was pretty gutted to see the timesheets and see that we were only half a tenth from P3, which would have been incredible, but my lap felt great. I don't think there was a lot more in there.

"Lewis has been really on it this weekend and pushing me hard. Well done to McLaren. They have come from nowhere and they are the big unknown for tomorrow."

Asked whether he expected to have a strong race today, Russell said: "I think so. We always tend to have a better Sunday than Saturday, which is the right way to be. It's an interesting grid. I think Fernando is a little bit out of position, obviously Checo [Perez] is well out of position

but McLaren is the unknown. They were strong in Austria. They seem really quick here. Let's see what we can do."

Mercedes team principal Toto Wolff said the big unknown was how much of a pace differential cars would need in order to be able to overtake and his words were echoed by Hamilton, who has an astonishing record at Silverstone.

The seven-time world champion has won his home grand prix eight times and not finished outside the top three since finishing fourth in 2013.

Hamilton said he was slightly frustrated not to have qualified higher than seventh. "We came here with an upgraded front wing and we were hopeful that was going



Scare: Lewis Hamilton spun off in Q1 but managed to keep engine running

to help propel us a little bit more forwards," the 38-year-old said. "But the car was very much the same today.

"I think we made some progress overnight and got better with the set-up in FP3 but in quali we just struggled right at the end. It's a shame because there were moments that felt like we were just about there.

"I don't really know where our race pace is, if I'm really honest. Everyone was on different fuel loads but it didn't look terrible. We've changed the car so we'll have to see how it is tomorrow.

"Still, even if our race pace is good, we have to try and overtake a bunch of cars and it's not so easy to do here. We'll give it everything."

90 Sport

Verstappen flies in to steal pole in the final seconds from unlucky Norris, who has to grin and bear it, joking...

# MAX RUNS IT ALL

LANDO NORRIS'S eyes turned to the big screen. A patriotic Silverstone crowd held their breath. Could the 23-year-old Englishman cling on for an unexpected pole?

His name lingered at the top of the charts for 12 seconds as two of the three cars still going crossed the line, but the express called Max Verstappen had not finished powering his way around. As A Question of Sport might ask, what happened next?

Of course, Verstappen plonked himself on pole for the British Grand Prix.

Or as Norris, beaten by 0.241sec, put it: 'Max ruins everything.'

It was a verdict delivered with a broad smile. For Norris qualified second with his McLaren team-mate Oscar Piastri third. The British team, who started the season so poorly, knew their upgrade would put a spring in their step but they hadn't dared dream of such a fillip. The Ferraris, Mercedes and Aston Martins were all in their wake.

Zak Brown, McLaren chief executive, celebrated by hugging everyone he could find dressed in team papaya. He nearly asphyxiated several of them. And he threw high-fives like Tyson Fury. An emotional Norris whimpered over the radio: 'Yeah, baby.'

There remains only a slim chance of a British winner here today in front of up to 160,000 spectators, and if it were to materialise the final inclination would be to think

By Jonathan McEvoy  
AT SILVERSTONE



some mishap had befallen Verstappen, the defending champion holding an 81-point lead over the field with nine of 22 one-sided rounds complete.

A stronger likelihood is that Norris will finish the day simply as the top Briton. That is a reflection of the malaise at Mercedes, for whom George Russell qualified sixth and Lewis Hamilton seventh. So much, on this evidence, for talk of their turning a corner.

Yesterday, the Silver Arrows — Hamilton half

**PIT STOP:** Brad Pitt is at the British GP



a second back — were embarrassingly poor. They are erratic beyond belief and, when Hamilton said afterwards that McLaren's success on the day was a 'wake-up call', you can only say it is overdue. They have slept through several alarms.

What it means for Hamilton's contract talks, who knows. That whole distraction needs to be put to bed for the sake of the team and they need to stop all the bafflingly contradictory commentary around it.

But back to Norris and his feel-good story. 'We have high-speed strength and overall speed and we have made a decent step forward,' he said. 'It is payback for the work that has been done and the car has improved.'

I was pretty much P1 in Q1 and Q2 and almost in Q3. Some of the faster cars went out in Q1 so that opened up some opportunities. I have some reason to believe we can do OK, but not to beat this guy.'

It was another woeful day for Verstappen's out-

DREAM ON: Lando Norris powers to pole position, only to have it snatched from him by Max Verstappen



British Grand Prix, Silverstone

DRIVERS' TITLE RACE

1	Verstappen	Holl	7 wins	229 pts
2	Perez	Mex	2 wins	148 pts
3	Alonso	Spa	0 wins	131 pts
4	Hamilton	GB	0 wins	106 pts
5	Sainz	Spa	0 wins	82 pts
6	Leclerc	Mon	0 wins	72 pts
7	Russell	GB	0 wins	72 pts
8	Stroll	Can	0 wins	44 pts
9	Esteban Ocon	Fra	0 wins	31 pts
10	Lando Norris	GB	0 wins	24 pts



POLE STAR: Verstappen

TODAY'S RACE

3.0pm: Race live on Sky Sports F1 & Channel 4. Highlights 11.50, Ch 4

of-sorts team-mate Sergio Perez, who qualified 16th. It was the fifth consecutive occasion he has not escaped from Q1, a disappointment put into context by the Dutchman serially galloping away at the sharp end.

Much more of this form and the Mexican's position at the team will be in doubt. Red Bull's hierarchy are not known for their tolerance of wobbling drivers, but Perez has enough credit in the bank for now to be given a little longer.

The afternoon's qualifying was enlivened by intermittent rain. Earlier in the day it had been heavier, but, alas, that had largely blown away. Still, the timing of runs was crucial. That militated against Perez, but it was only half an excuse in such a rocket ship.

The early slippery conditions caught out Hamilton. He veered on to a white line at Stowe and spun into the gravel. He was fortunate enough to carry on without damage. Even Verstappen made an elementary error. Leaving the

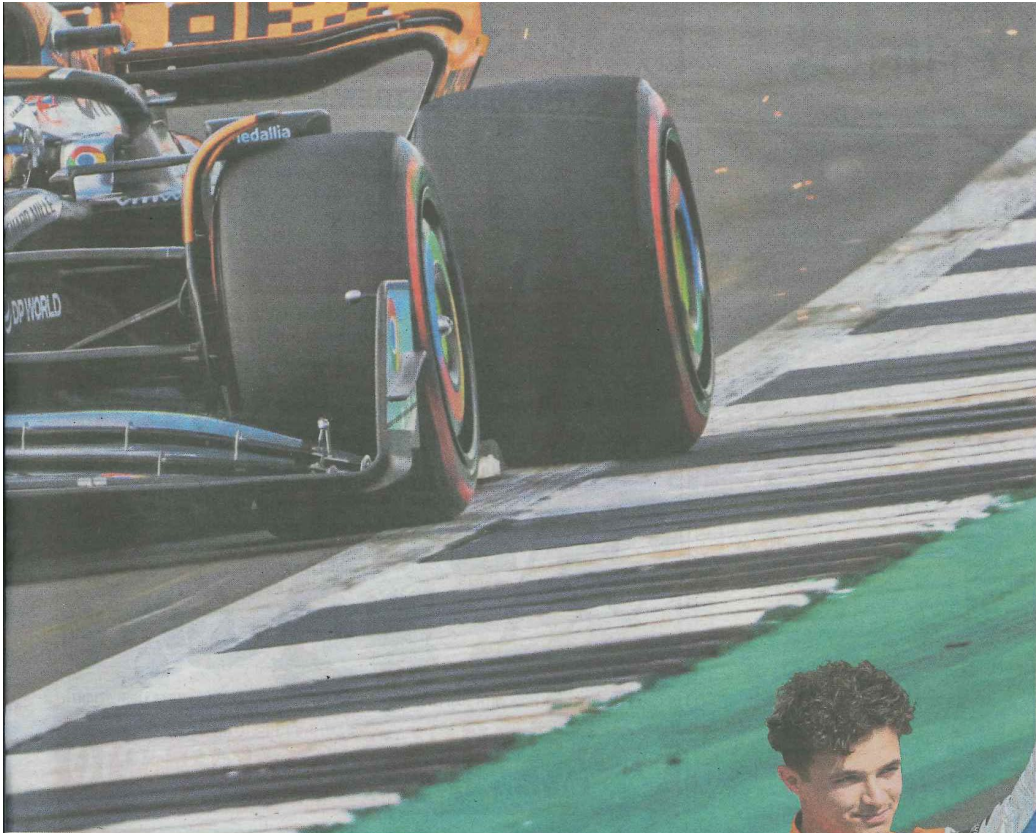
garage after a brief interlude brought about by Kevin Magnussen's Haas conking out, he clipped the wall as he turned out.

'The car has understeered,' said Verstappen, as if a helpless victim. He later accepted the blame and laughed that 'these things happen'.

The Ferraris were fourth and fifth in the form of Charles Leclerc and Carlos Sainz respectively.

One pleasing occurrence for the organisers was that Just Stop Oil stayed away, at least for the day. The Sabbath is expected to be their big day out.

As Mercedes were conducting their latest inquest, Brad Pitt slipped out of the paddock after his day's filming. He completed a few laps for the F1 movie in which he is starring. The Hollywood icon will also be on the grid today, though the eyes of most fans here will be trained on Norris and whether he can, just possibly, make any impression on his good friend Max when the lights go out.



### SILVERSTONE DIARY

By Nathan Salt

#### COX PITCHES HIS OLDHAM DREAM

WHO had Professor Brian Cox attempting to find Brad Pitt to try to convince him to buy Oldham Athletic on their bingo card?

Cox strolled down the paddock before joking in an interview that he wants to buy a football team with Pitt, who is here making a film that has Lewis Hamilton as an executive producer.

#### RECORD CROWD AT SILVERSTONE

THE Silverstone track record is being demolished this year by a whopping 79,000.

On the busiest sports weekend of the year, with plenty of eyes on the Ashes and Wimbledon, a three-day crowd of 480,000 is anticipated here, despite the sport being panned for lacking a genuine title battle and entertainment value.

#### SIR JACKIE MARCHES ON

SIR JACKIE STEWART was in demand when he arrived at the paddock, but took it in his stride.

As revealed by Mail Sport, the 84-year-old suffered a mini-stroke five weeks ago. Stewart was not 100 per cent but he smiled for photos and signed some autographs. A welcome sight of a true legend.

#### TOTO TALKS TO FIA PRESIDENT

THERE was a flurry of speculation when Mercedes chief Toto Wolff was seen having a lengthy discussion with FIA president Mohammed Ben Sulayem. Last week Ben Sulayem shot down the idea of trying to limit Red Bull's dominance after a plea from Lewis Hamilton. Whether that came up as he and Wolff reflected over coffee remains to be seen.

#### DISASTERCLASS FROM PEREZ

FAMOUS last words from Red Bull boss Christian Horner when he said heading into this weekend that Sergio Perez is 'starting to find that form again'.

After a podium finish last week in Austria, a disasterclass from the Mexican made it five straight races without making it into the final round of qualifying.

#### RICCIARDO KEEPS TABS ON RED BULL

HE MAY just be a reserve driver now but Daniel Ricciardo has his eyes fixed on a Red Bull return.

Talk of a move to their sister team AlphaTauri seems to have legs given doubts over Nyck de Vries, but the Aussie suggested he'd only return to F1 if an eventual move to Red Bull is on the cards.

#### OCON'S TRIBUTE TO ALPINE COLLEAGUES

CREDIT to Alpine driver Esteban Ocon for the work that went into his special helmet design.

The Frenchman had the name of every Alpine employee placed on his helmet, along with the coordinates of team factories in Enstone and Viry-Châtillon.

CLOSE CALL: McLaren's Lando Norris



### THE GRID

1 MAX VERSTAPPEN  
RED BULL

3 OSCAR PIASTRI  
McLAREN

5 CARLOS SAINZ JR  
FERRARI

2 LANDO NORRIS  
McLAREN

4 CHARLES LECLERC  
FERRARI

6 GEORGE RUSSELL  
MERCEDES

7 LEWIS HAMILTON  
8 ALEXANDER ALBON  
9 FERNANDO ALONSO  
10 PIERRE GASLY  
11 NICO HULKENBERG  
12 LANCE STROLL  
13 ESTEBAN OCON  
14 LOGAN SARJEANT  
15 VALTERRI BOTTAS  
16 SERGIO PEREZ  
17 YUKI TSUNODA  
18 ZHOU GUANYU  
19 NYCK DE VRIES  
20 KEVIN MAGNUSSEN

MERCEDES WILLIAMS  
ASTON MARTIN ALPINE  
ALPINE HAAS  
ASTON MARTIN ALPINE  
WILLIAMS ALFA ROMEO  
RED BULL ALPHATAURI  
ALFA ROMEO ALPHATAURI  
HAAS

By Nathan Salt  
AT SILVERSTONE



# McLaren form hands Lewis a wake-up call

LEWIS HAMILTON has warned that McLaren qualifying second and third for the British Grand Prix is a 'wake-up call' for Mercedes.

Red Bull have won every race this season but were made to sweat for pole position, with Max Verstappen only swiping it out of the hands of McLaren's Lando Norris in the final sector of the last lap.

Norris has had the edge on Mercedes in recent weeks — he finished ahead of both Hamilton and George Russell in Austria last time out — and with McLaren rookie Oscar Piastri producing his best ever qualifying in F1 to take third, alarm bells should be sounding at Mercedes, according to Hamilton. 'It is not a blow,' said

Hamilton of his old side's success. 'It is just a wake up call for us. Others are overtaking us and we need to do more.'

'It is always a great feeling to be at the British Grand Prix but it's disappointing that we could not do more.'

Mercedes struggled badly for grip on Friday and, while there were shots of life in final practice yesterday morning, another head-scratching qualifying session played out, with Hamilton starting seventh and Russell up a place in sixth. It was far from an ideal start

for Hamilton in particular when, 75 seconds into the session, Hamilton found himself in the gravel, spinning off at Stowe on Turn 15 on slick tyres as the drizzle greased the track.

'I wasn't planning to go in it [the gravel]. It was wet and we were on slicks. I was pushing and went over the limit,' said Hamilton.

This was supposed to be Mercedes' bounce back weekend following a miserable time of it in Austria. On this evidence, a podium seems out of reach. 'I will be optimistic and do my best but realistically I'm not

sure,' said Hamilton, when asked if he can reward a record turnout this weekend with a podium.

'We have two Ferraris and two McLarens there now so it is going to be a tough race.'

It was not all doom and gloom for Hamilton though, as he had the 'best drivers' briefing' he has ever had, from none other than Hollywood star Brad Pitt.

Pitt is in attendance filming an F1-inspired movie about a fictional team called Apex, who have their own motorhome as part of the realism.

### FORMULA ONE – BRITISH GRAND PRIX SILVERSTONE

# LANDO HOPE

## Norris pick of the Brits after



ALL SMILES: Britain's Lando Norris shares a laugh with rival Max Verstappen



#### QUALIFYING RESULTS

1 Max Verstappen (Nld) Red Bull 1:26.720, 2 Lando Norris (GB) McLaren 1:26.961, 3 Oscar Piastri (Aus) McLaren 1:27.062, 4 Charles Leclerc (Mon) Ferrari 1:27.136, 5 Carlos Sainz Jr (Spn) Ferrari 1:27.148, 6 George Russell (GB) Mercedes GP 1:27.155, 7 Lewis Hamilton (GB) Mercedes GP 1:27.211, 8 Alexander Albon (Tha) Williams 1:27.530, 9 Fernando Alonso (Spa) Aston Martin 1:27.609, 10 Pierre Gasly (Fra) Alpine 1:27.689

CHASING PACK: Brits George Russell and (inset) Lewis Hamilton in the Silverstone rain



#### Neil RANON REPORTING

**L**ANDO NORRIS had the widest smile on his face after British Grand Prix qualifying despite having pole position snatched from his grasp in the dying moments of the session by world champion Max Verstappen.

For about a minute at the end of the 10-car shootout, 23-year-old Norris had sensationally planted the fastest lap in his McLaren, only for Verstappen, winner of the past five races, to score the 27th pole of his career.

But it was only by 0.241sec – and right at the death.

Norris, competing in his fifth season in F1 and yet to win a Grand Prix, began to think a second career pole could be his.

"There are a lot of TV screens around the circuit and I was trying to watch as many as possible," Norris said. "And I was surprised how long we were on the top for. I'm a bit surprised. I wasn't expecting us to be here.

"It's always Max. He always ruins everything for everyone!

"Expectations weren't low. When qualifying is like this – when it's wet, then dry – it is very difficult to anticipate what is going to happen. Some quicker cars were knocked out earlier on so that opened up some opportunities for us."

Verstappen was surprised at the level of competitiveness from McLaren, with Norris' team-mate Oscar Piastri third fastest. The Dutchman's own team-mate, Sergio Perez, failed to make it out of Q1 for the third race in succession.

"It's been quite a crazy qualifying," Verstappen said. "It's been quite hectic and also quite slippery in some places."

With a greasy track drying after earlier rain showers, most went out on slick tyres in Q1 – and any mistake had the potential to wreck the chance of a good grid position.

And it was the seven-time world champion Lewis Hamilton who made an uncharacteristic error, spinning his car on the exit of Stowe corner.

To audible gasps from the packed grandstands, Hamilton just managed to free his Mercedes from the gravel and return to the circuit.

But the eight-time British Grand Prix winner threw the hammer down and finished seventh-fastest

### HOME TRIO FLYING THE FLAG IN BIG RACE

# AND GLORY

## battling Max for pole



**BRIT SPECIAL:** Lando Norris in qualifying action and below, with Verstappen and Oscar Piastri



overall, just one place behind his Mercedes team-mate George Russell.

The Ferraris of Charles Leclerc and Carlos Sainz were fourth and fifth.

"It was a fun session," said Hamilton. "I was really pushing. Where I finished was the best I could do." And the

ex-McLaren driver complimented his old team being back at the front of the grid.

"I'm not surprised," he said. "If you look at the car, it makes sense and I am really happy for them. They have had such a bad run, so to see them back up there is really great to see. But it is a wake-up call for us."

While the 38-year-old had been optimistic he could fight for a podium 24 hours earlier, he was now less so.

"We will do our best but realistically we have got to pass two Ferraris and we've got two McLarens now there," he said. "It's going to be a tough race."

Russell, however, was

more optimistic. He said: "After Practice 2, our strategy had us down as 17th and 18th quickest in single-lap work and third and fourth-quickest in race pace – we made some really good improvements overnight. There is no reason we can't fight for a podium in the race."

**SUNDAY 09 JULY – IN PRINT**

**SUNDAY  EXPRESS**

# LANDO IS JUST A BRIT SPECIAL

**F1  
BRITISH  
GRAND  
PRIX  
SPECIAL:  
See  
Pullout  
Pages 8-9**





FORMULA 1  BRITISH

# CHEEKY

## Lucky so-and-so



**CHEEKY** Lando Norris joked Max Verstappen 'ruins everything' after the Dutchman snatched a dream British Grand Prix pole from him.

Brit Norris watched on the giant Silverstone screens to see if his lap was enough to secure first place on the grid. But he was pipped by Verstappen, who recovered from hitting a wall in the pit-lane to take his fifth pole in a row.

Norris quipped: "It's always Max. He always ruins everything for everyone!"

"I was watching all the TV screens. It was more about seeing if Max made a mistake rather than us being quicker."

Red Bull's Verstappen dashed the hopes of home fans after McLaren's Norris went fastest with just three drivers left to set final times.

The defending world champ grabbed pole by 0.241 seconds

By **BEN HUNT**



and Norris – who will line up in second with team-mate Oscar Piastri in third – added: "I was close. I was P1 in Q1. I think it was P1 in Q2. And two tenths to P1 in Q3, so pretty insane."

"My last lap was a good lap. Great for myself, but also for both of us – to be second and third was pretty amazing for the whole team."

"I am very happy. I've got a big thanks to the crowd here, it's been a very special day for us. I look forward to tomorrow. We couldn't have had a better result. It's great."

It is the first time since 2008 that McLaren are starting on the front row of



**FRONT OF THE GRID**

1  Max Verstappen	3  Oscar Piastri	5  Carlos Sainz	7  Lewis Hamilton	9  Fernando Alonso
2  Lando Norris	4  Charles Leclerc	6  George Russell	8  Alexander Albon	10  Pierre Gasly



# CLAIRE 'PAIN' FOR

**WILLIAMS** rack up their 800th F1 race today.

But the milestone is too "painful" to watch for Claire Williams (left), daughter of the team's founder, Sir Frank.

She sold the family business in 2020 to US investment firm Dorilton Capital – and has not been to a race since.

It ended one of the great Formula One family dynasties after Sir Frank founded the

**EXCLUSIVE** by BEN HUNT

team in 1977 and won nine constructors' titles and seven drivers' championships.

But since selling up, it has been too much for Claire, who ran the team from 2013-20.

She said: "I don't watch it any more. It has been a really conscious decision because I'm still recovering from taking a

step back. Leaving my team

has left an enormous gap. We were reluctant sellers. Life took us down that road where we were forced to sell."

"I'm getting to that point now where I'm going to start watching again."

"It is still quite painful and difficult seeing someone else run the team that was once in our family and life."

Williams are now under the stewardship of James Vowles,



GRAND PRIX

3pm, C4 & sky sports

LANDOS

Max 'ruins' it for Norris

their home race. And Norris faces a big task trying to stop Verstappen from adding to his lead at the top of the table.

He added: "Me and Max are very good friends, even though we had never raced each other until we reached F1.

"We always get along and have the same mentality. As soon as we put the helmet on, we are the same as everyone and have the same respect, but I am sure if he needs to be aggressive, he will be."

Verstappen added: "I had my little incident out of the box, too much understeer and no grip and I needed to take a front wing. It happens. The last time I hit a wall properly was here. These things happen."

McLaren CEO Zak Brown feels they can now be in a fight for a podium finish.

He said: "Our race pace was really strong. Hopefully we can get a sniff of the podium. I don't think we can win it on pure pace, so we will have our hands

full. This is the hard work of everyone at McLaren - the upgrades are working.

"We have made a step forward and we are in the game now. I feel like our season got started in Austria (in which Norris finished fourth last week) and it feels like we have good momentum.

"Nobody is sitting still and it's unbelievably close, so we have to keep our head down and keep pushing."

Lewis Hamilton qualified in seventh after he spun off in the first session. He also had a near miss with one of the Alpine drivers as he battled for track position, while Mercedes team-mate George Russell will line up in sixth.

Hamilton, who started his F1 career with McLaren in 2007, was not shocked to see his old team challenging for pole.

He said: "I am not surprised. If you look at the car, it makes sense. I'm really happy for them, they've had a bad run

for so long. To be back up there is really, really great to see.

"To have them up in the mix is what we want to see in this sport.

"Of course I'll try to be optimistic and do our best in the race but realistically it was difficult to get past the two Ferraris and we have two McLarens now there.

"It's not a blow, it's just a wake-up call for us. Others are overtaking us. We need to do more."

Sergio Perez was eliminated in the first qualifying session - but will start 15th after Valtteri Bottas' disqualification for a fuel-sample breach.

Red Bull's Mexican driver has now failed to start in the top ten on the grid in the last FIVE races.

There is talk of another Just Stop Oil protest today - and it could prove to be the only way of stopping Verstappen from adding to his tally.



BLISTERING BRIT... McLaren ace Norris sets a rapid pace in qualifying but just fails to snatch pole position



STAR... Brad Pitt joins Hamilton, Gasly and Leclerc

HER DAD'S TEAM

a smart Englishman who was motorsport strategy director at Mercedes-AMG Petronas.

And there is a real sense the team are making progress on the track, having slumped to the back of the grid.

Claire, 46, revealed Vowles' appointment as team principal would have received the full backing of her dad, who died in 2021. She added: "It is nice that Williams as a name still

remains a Formula One. With James now being there, it looks like the team is moving in the right direction.

"When they told me it was James I was like, 'My goodness, just genius. He's a brilliant choice.'

"I genuinely believe my dad would have been really happy with that decision as well."

Claire got to know Vowles when he was overseeing George

Russell's three-year loan from Mercedes. And she is delighted to see him doing so well as Lewis Hamilton's team-mate.

Claire said: "I'm really proud of George and so happy for him because we did hold him back at Williams and kept him to his contract."

"My dad taught me, when you go through a struggle, the success when you finally get it, is all the more rewarding."

WILLIAMS IN F1 CONSTRUCTORS' TITLES

1980, 1981, 1986, 1987, 1992, 1993, 1994, 1996, 1997

DRIVERS' TITLES

- 1 Alan Jones 1980
- 2 Keke Rosberg 1982
- 3 Nelson Piquet 1987
- 4 Nigel Mansell 1992
- 5 Alain Prost 1993
- 6 Damon Hill 1996
- 7 Jacques Villeneuve 1997



# STORM IT,

## Hamilton hails 'wake-up call' and Brit fans dare to dream as Norris grabs front-row slot

BY NEIL RANDON

**LANDO NORRIS had the widest smile on his face after British Grand Prix qualifying.**

Despite having pole position snatched from his grasp in the dying moments of the one-hour session by world champion Max Verstappen, the Belgian-British driver had stormed it.

For about a minute at the end of the 10-car shoot-out, 23-year-old Norris had sensationally planted the fastest lap in his McLaren, only for Verstappen, winner of the last five races, to score the 27th pole of his career – but by only 0.241sec – right at the death.

Norris, in his fifth season in F1 and yet to win a Grand Prix, began to think a first Silverstone

pole – and only the second of his career after Russia 2021 – could be his, as he watched the screens around the circuit on his slowing-down lap.

"There are a lot of TV screens around the circuit and I was trying to watch as many as possible," Norris said.

"And I was surprised how long we were on the top for. I wasn't expecting us to be here.

"It's always Max. He always ruins everything for everyone!

"Expectations weren't low. When qualifying is like this – when it's wet, then dry – it is very difficult to anticipate what is going to happen.

"Some quicker cars were knocked out earlier on so that opened up some opportunities for us to be sitting here."

Verstappen was surprised at the level of competitiveness from McLaren, with Oscar Piastri third fastest. The Dutchman's own Red Bull team-mate, Sergio Perez, failed to make it into Q3 for the fifth race in succession.

"It's been quite a crazy qualifying," Verstappen said. "It's been quite hectic and also quite slippery in some places."

With a greasy track drying after earlier rain showers, most went out on slick tyres in Q1 – and any mistake had the potential to wreck the chance of a good grid position.

And it was the seven-time world champion Lewis Hamilton who made an





## BRITISH GRAND PRIX

### TODAY'S GRID

1	Verstappen	Red Bull	1:26.720
2	Norris	McLaren	1:26.961
3	Piastri	McLaren	1:27.092
4	Leclerc	Ferrari	1:27.136
5	Sainz Jr.	Ferrari	1:27.148

### DRIVERS' TABLE

1	Max Verstappen	229 pts
2	Sergio Perez	148 pts
3	Fernando Alonso	131 pts
4	Lewis Hamilton	106 pts

# LANDO!

uncharacteristic error, spinning his car on the exit of Stowe corner in the opening minutes.

To audible gasps from the packed grandstands, Hamilton just managed to extract his Mercedes from the gravel trap and return to the circuit.

Having momentarily increased the stress levels of the huge home support, the eight-time British Grand Prix winner soon got the hammer down to finish seventh fastest, just one place behind his Mercedes team-mate George Russell. The Ferraris of Charles Leclerc

and Carlos Sainz were fourth and fifth.

"It was a fun session," said Hamilton (left). "I was really pushing. Where I finished was the best I could do."

As a former McLaren driver, Hamilton complimented his old team being back at the front.

"I'm not surprised," he said. "If you look at the car it makes sense and I am really happy for them."

"They have had such a bad run, so to see them back up there is really great. But it is a wake-up call for us."

While 24 hours earlier the 38-year-old had been fairly optimistic he could fight for a podium, he was now less so.

"We will do our best, but realistically we have got to pass two Ferraris and we've got two

McLarens now there," he said. "It's going to be a tough race."

Russell, however, was far more upbeat.

He said: "After practice two, our strategy had us down as 17th and 18th quickest in single-lap work and third and fourth quickest in race pace – the only difference was with the tyres and we made some really good improvements overnight."

"We were only half a tenth away from third on the grid and that would have been an amazing result."

"But I was happy with my lap. Lewis has been pushing me very hard all weekend and I stayed calm and it all came together on that last lap."

"There is no reason we can't fight for a podium in the race."



## F1 police use facial ID tech to stop demos

FACIAL recognition tech is in use at the British Grand Prix at Silverstone this weekend to tackle Just Stop Oil protesters.

Police are on alert after climate protestors sat on the track last year and targeted Wimbledon and the Lord's Ashes Test in recent days.

The Northamptonshire force said it was the first time facial recognition had been used outside London and South Wales.

Silverstone was expecting 480,000 spectators over the weekend.

And seven-time world champion Lewis Hamilton revealed 100 extra marshals had been hired.

Track boss Stuart Pringle said he would "plan for the worst" and added a live race was "not the place to go and sit on a floor".

Just Stop Oil has said it will disrupt sport events until fossil fuel exploration is halted in the UK.

**SUNDAY 09 JULY – IN PRINT**

**M** SUNDAY  
**irror**



**That was a Brit  
special, Lando**

BRITISH GRAND PRIX: PAGES 66&67

## The Observer

### Leclerc's big goal: 'I want to put Ferrari on top as it deserves'

Assured driver is confident in his own ability and for the Scuderia to deliver the right racing car, he tells *Giles Richards*

There is an admirable spirit to Ferrari's Charles Leclerc and, as you would expect from a highly competitive Formula One driver, he is feisty. Yet there is also refreshing honesty. In a sport where self-belief and ego are equal and often the noisier, underserving senior partners to talent and touch, Leclerc has a distinctively mature attitude.

"There is this legend that some people have infinite confidence," he says. "But there are moments that are difficult for everybody and you go through a period where you are asking yourself questions. I have always had the approach where I am asking myself: 'Is this the right approach, Charles?'"

Relaxed and at ease, his answers are considered but he hesitates rarely. Assured rather than arrogant, there is a charm to him and clearly a sharp mind behind the still-boyish visage. He has done thousands of interviews in his career, not least since we first spoke in 2017 when he was still in F2, but there is no sense it is tiresome; there is still the same desire to best express himself that there was six years ago.

"I am very self-critical when I make a mistake but as part of a team I try to be very objective and very straight with them," he says. "I try to push everybody to have the same approach, to be self-critical and try to learn from it and improve."

Leclerc's attitude reflects the sharp assessment that drives the greats onward. The 25-year-old Monégasque harbours hopes of joining them and is right to do so. Great things have been expected of him since he burst into F1 with Alfa Romeo in 2018 before promotion to Ferrari a year later. He

has since had five wins but is yet to be given a car capable of fighting for the title. Leclerc has handled it with a composure that suggests when his chance comes he will not be found wanting.

For the moment, it is about closing a gap. At Silverstone he is hopeful Ferrari can move closer to the dominant Red Bull but he is unfazed by the task. He has good form here, revelling in the fast, sweeping challenge of the old airfield, and has enjoyed some mighty runs, notably a gripping battle with Max Verstappen in 2019 and a mighty drive in 2021 where, even with engine trouble, he almost held off a charging Lewis Hamilton.

This year, however, with Ferrari struggling to tame a peaky, unpredictable car, the task is all the harder – a challenge to which Leclerc has one approach. "My mentality has always been to push at the maximum and not leave anything on the table," he says. "When you have a trickier car to drive, mistakes happen. I know this. Whenever there is something missing I am trying to find something that is not there, I will always try to push the limit."

This is one of the reasons Leclerc is so compelling. At Baku, he took pole, the only time Red Bull have been denied this season, with a breathtaking lap between the walls of the city. As the Ferrari performance engineer, Jock Clear, noted, drivers want to make the difference themselves and Leclerc did so. But at the next round in Miami he finished qualifying in the wall.

Better this than accepting a mediocre fate and Enzo Ferrari

**'When you have a trickier car to drive mistakes happen. I will always try to push the limit'**

would have admired the fighting attitude. Ferrari's shortcomings of late would be less well received. Last season, Leclerc's strong start fell away because of strategy and reliability issues and the team was unable to keep pace with Red Bull. This season they are even further away.

Leclerc has not been shy in expressing his exasperation with Ferrari, on occasion on team radio mid-race, but is insistent transparency is key if they are to progress. "We disagree sometimes as we are very honest with one another," he says. "I say to the team what I think and the team say what they think. This is the way to move forward."

It is the sophisticated take of a man who has weathered far more serious travails. Leclerc's father, Hervé, instrumental in guiding his career, died during that 2017 F2 season and he had already lost his godfather, the F1 driver Jules Bianchi, who died a year after crashing at Suzuka in 2014.

It probably informs his ability to deal with a disheartening time at the Scuderia. Now in his fifth year at Ferrari and still not a real contender in a title fight, one would expect a level of frustration, but he contends it is only incentive.

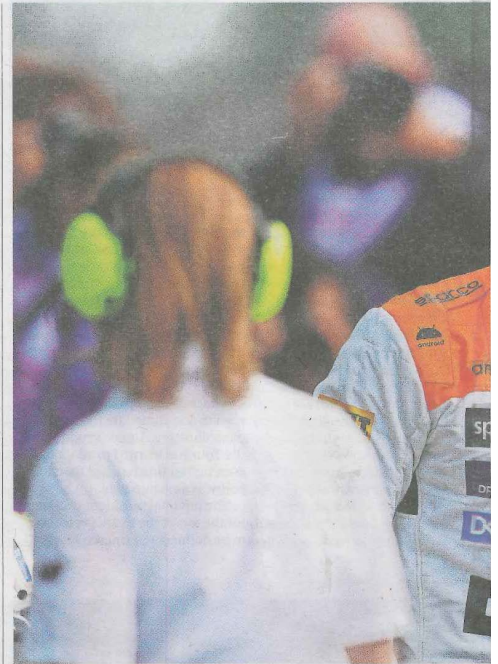
"I am the first one who wants to be in a title fight," he says. "But it's not frustrating, it motivates me a lot. I am even more motivated to change that, to bring Ferrari back to where it deserves to be, which is consistently on top. Once we get there I am sure it will be a very, very special moment."

There is a calm equanimity that makes it hard not to warm to him, clearly a trait that serves him well in one of the highest pressure gigs in F1. In Italy, he is referred to as "Il Predestinato", the predestined, who would return the glory days to the Scuderia. The spotlight is intense, but Leclerc places greater demands on himself.

"This year is far away from where we expected it to be but being a Ferrari driver is something very special," he says. "I don't feel the outside pressure but I am putting myself under a lot of pressure in order to succeed, the responsibility of bringing Ferrari back to the top."

He is once more being patient this season, working through the problems, so where does he turn when he needs to talk things through? Unsurprisingly, family remains very close to his heart.

"My father was this figure for a very, very long time," he says. "Since then, my older brother is the person I refer to the most and my younger brother as he is becoming older. My mum, of course, is always there for me for personal advice. I always know I can call my mum, she is always there for me but she lacks the technical side. She's not too much into motorsport."



### Home hero Norris denied at the last by Verstappen

**Giles Richards**  
Silverstone



Championship leader snatches pole away from British McLaren driver as security is stepped up for today's race

Just as the sun finally broke through the clouds over what had been a distinctly gloomy Silverstone, Lando Norris also shone for the home crowd in a thrilling finale to qualifying for the British Grand Prix.

They were on their feet roaring their approval for the British driver as he appeared to have claimed pole, their joy echoing round the old airfield, only for hearts to be broken when normal service was resumed seconds later when Max Verstappen pipped him.

It had been a trying day for the fans thronging the circuit in record numbers. With the British summer in full swing, Silverstone had been swathed in lowering, grey clouds delivering intermittent deluges to the circuit, as wind swept across the wide open spaces of the track. After they had huddled under ponchos and umbrellas for so long, there was finally reward to warm the cockles.

In the final hot runs in Q3, Norris, who has struggled in a recalcitrant McLaren all season, briefly gave fans the chance to dream of an almighty upset and a British triumph at his home grand prix. After opening in wet conditions the track had dried by the death and Norris threw his car into the sweeping high-speed corners of the circuit.

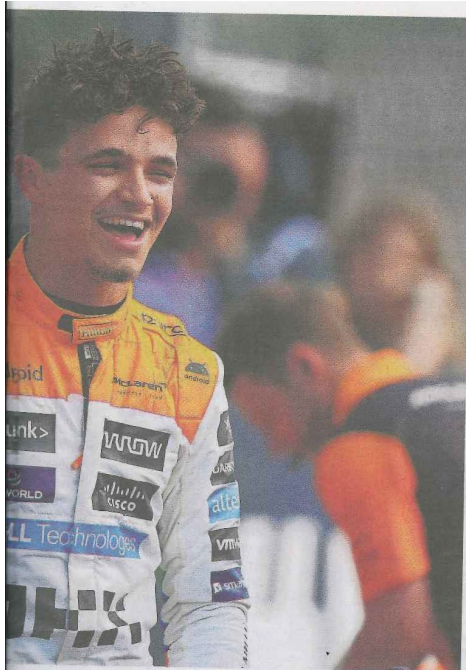
First sector, second sector and

Charles Leclerc gets in the picture with fans at Silverstone for the British Grand Prix

ANDRIE HAKOVIC/AP/GETTY IMAGES



## The Observer



● Lando Norris shows his delight after taking second position on the grid for today's grand prix  
DAVID DAVIES/PA

**'I was a little bit surprised, I wasn't expecting myself to be here. We are very happy with the result'**  
Lando Norris

Russell and Lewis Hamilton into sixth and seventh for Mercedes. Both teams have barely been troubled by McLaren almost all season.

Just as he had provided the crowd with a welcome shock it was more than Norris had expected. "I was a little bit surprised. I wasn't expecting for myself to be here, we are very happy with the result," he said.

"I want to be hopeful. I am not normally hopeful going into a Sunday because of how this year has been but I've got some reasons to believe and some hope after our pace today. I think we can have a good race tomorrow."

Norris has described Verstappen as his best friend in F1 and the world champion reciprocated by saying the McLaren driver would undoubtedly win races in the right car but it was clear there would be no quarter given when the lights go out.

"Me and Max are very good friends. We have grown up in similar generations and similar times. We have always got along, we have similar mentalities," he said. "But as soon as you put the helmet on you forget about everything else."

Norris said last week winning the this grand prix in front of his home fans was the goal he wanted to achieve most. He faces an almighty struggle against the dominant Verstappen and Red Bull today but at the very least has given himself every chance to be in the mix. He will doubtless be roared home whatever the outcome.

Organisers are still expecting that just Stop Oil will launch some form of protest today. They have increased security at the circuit, including the police using live facial recognition to scan the faces of people attending, the first time the technology has been used outside London or south Wales.

There will also be extensive bag searches on entry but with a record crowd of 150,000 expected, they face an enormous task. Last year, five just Stop Oil protesters invaded the track on the first lap of the race.

### Silverstone stats

# 74

Today's race will be the 74th British Grand Prix. Along with Italy, it is one of two ever-present races on the calendar since 1950. This year's race will be the 57th British GP at Silverstone.

# 8

Lewis Hamilton has won the British Grand Prix a record eight times. He shares the F1 record with Michael Schumacher (eight at the French Grand Prix).

# 12

Hamilton has been on pole seven times at Silverstone and on the podium 12 times. No driver has been on the podium more at a home race.

# 8

Mercedes have won eight of the past 10 British Grand Prix. Ferrari have won the race 18 times.

# 3

Three current drivers have won the British GP at Silverstone: Hamilton (2008, 2014, 2015, 2016, 2017, 2019, 2020, 2021), Fernando Alonso (2006, 2011) and Carlos Sainz (2022).

# 4

Every winner has started from fourth or higher on the grid since 2000.

# 11

Red Bull are chasing their 11th win in a row to equal McLaren's record set in 1988 with Senna and Prost.

## Mercedes relaxed over engine staff leaving

Mercedes have played down the impact of staff leaving their Formula One engine division to join Red Bull's new powertrains company and other rival manufacturers.

Mercedes won eight successive constructors' titles from 2014 to 2021 when they had what was considered the sport's best engine. Red Bull have since been on top and have set up their own power unit operation for a new engine era from 2026, with several senior employees hired from Mercedes AMG High Performance Powertrains (HPP).

Audi, who are taking over the Sauber team, are building an engine while Honda, Ferrari and Renault are also on the lookout for staff.

"HPP has 1,000 employees and lost some to Red Bull in the same way we lost some to Ferrari, and we lost some to Renault, and indeed the other way around," said the Mercedes team principal, Toto Wolff, at the British Grand Prix.

"You know, we are not bragging about any people that have joined us from Red Bull. I won't mention any names. We have a constant influx of Red Bull people, as we have from the other teams.

"The people they've hired, we wish them the best. Some of them were retired in our organisation and ended up there in a leading position, but that's fine. They've been given a second lifeline."

The Red Bull operation is the first time since Cosworth were competing in the early years of the century that Mercedes have had a rival engine manufacturer so close at hand.

Renault, with a team at Enstone in Oxfordshire, build their engines in France, while Audi's power unit plant is in Germany, Ferrari's is in Italy and Honda's assembly is in Japan.

The Mercedes HPP managing director, Hywel Thomas, said there was no problem with people leaving. "We have had plenty of good people join us to replace those people that left, we've had plenty of really strong people promoted within the organisation."

Reuters



● Toto Wolff said those joining Red Bull have been given a 'second lifeline'

### Today's grid

British Grand Prix Silverstone  
3pm. Live on Sky Sports F1/C4

1M Verstappen (Neth) Red Bull 126.720
2L Norris (GB) McLaren 126.961
3O Piastri (Aus) McLaren 127.092
4C Leclerc (Mon) Ferrari 127.136
5C Sainz (Sp) Ferrari 127.148
6G Russell (GB) Mercedes 127.155
7L Hamilton (GB) Mercedes 127.211
8 A Albon (Tha) Williams 127.530
9 F Alonso (Sp) Aston Martin 127.659
10 P Gasly (Fr) Alpine 127.689
11 N Hulkenberg (Ger) Haas 128.896
12 L Stroll (Can) Aston Martin 128.935
13 E Ocon (Fr) Alpine 128.956
14 L Sturgeon (US) Williams 129.931
15 V Bottas (Fin) Alfa Romeo 129.796
16 S Perez (Mex) Red Bull 129.968
17 Y Tsunoda (Jpn) Alpha Tauri 130.025
18 Zhou G (Chn) Alfa Romeo 130.123
19 N de Vries (Neth) Alpha Tauri 130.513
20 K Magnussen (Den) Haas 132.378

#### Drivers' standings

1 Verstappen (Red Bull) 7 wins 229pts
2 Perez (Red Bull) 2 wins 148pts
3 Alonso (Aston Martin) 13pts



● Max Verstappen takes pole position for Red Bull – his fifth in a row – after a punishing final third

CHRISTIAN BRUNA/SPA



Max Verstappen chats with Lando Norris after they qualified first and second at Silverstone.

Picture Darrell Benns

# Norris pipped to a dream pole as Verstappen rules

## McLaren ace Lando shines

By Philip Duncan  
sport@sundaypost.com

**Max Verstappen dented Lando Norris' dream of a shock pole position at the British Grand Prix by taking top spot in the closing seconds of a dramatic qualifying session.**

Norris surged to the summit of the order to the delight of the Silverstone crowd, only to see Verstappen snatch pole by 0.241 seconds as the last driver over the line.

The Brit starts alongside Verstappen, who took his fifth consecutive pole, with Oscar Piastri third on an excellent day for McLaren at the team's home race.

"It was a crazy qualifying session and quite hectic," said Verstappen. I was surprised to see those two (Norris and Piastri) there but it was great for McLaren.

"I am looking forward to tomorrow."

Norris said: "It was close, pretty insane. My last lap was a good lap. I could hear Zak (Brown – McLaren CEO) on the radio during the in lap which was the best thing ever.

"To be second and third was amazing for the whole team. But Max ruins everything for everyone. I am happy for the whole crowd here."

Lewis Hamilton could manage only seventh, just behind George Russell in the other Mercedes.

Verstappen, a winner at seven of the opening nine rounds of a one-sided campaign, has already established a commanding 81-point lead in his pursuit of a hat-trick of world championships. The Dutch driver cruised to the chequered flag

a week ago at Red Bull's home race in Austria and he will head into today's race favourite to extend his lead, particularly after Red Bull team-mate Sergio Perez lines up a lowly 16th.

No driver has won the British Grand Prix on more occasions than Hamilton, with the 38-year-old winning seven of the last 10 races staged here. But the Mercedes man will be disappointed to start only seventh, half a second off the pace, in front of his home fans.

Mexican Perez was first out of the pits when the action resumed following a red flag to clear Kevin Magnussen's Haas.

Perez momentarily headed to the top of the order, but the evolution of the track saw him tumble all the way down to 16th when Q1 came to an end.

It marked the fifth consecutive race in which Perez has failed to make it into Q3 in a machine Hamilton described as the fastest

Formula One has ever seen. Perez's early exit capped a frantic few minutes which saw Verstappen and Hamilton dice for position on a piece of asphalt now named after Britain's seven-time world champion.

Prior to that, Verstappen required a new front wing after he grazed the wall along the pits just moments after he left his garage.

And even earlier Hamilton survived a spin through the gravel when he lost his control of his Mercedes on the entry to Stowe.

Despite the threat of action from Just Stop Oil protesters, qualifying passed off without incident.

However, F1 bosses, Silverstone and Northamptonshire Police remain on high alert for today's 52-lap race where 150,000 spectators are expected to attend.

Security has been beefed up, with facial recognition cameras posted around the 3.66 mile track in a move to foil any potential plot.

**SUNDAY 09 JULY – IN PRINT**

**The SUNDAY POST**

FORMULA ONE



# Verstappen pips Norris to dream British pole

**PAGE 58**

# LANDO HOPE FOR GLORY..

## Norris pipped at post by super Max

**LANDO NORRIS** was all smiles despite having pole position snatched from his grasp late on.

It looked like the McLaren star was going to post the fastest lap in British Grand Prix qualifying only for world champion Max Verstappen to pip him by 0.241 seconds.

The Brit said: "There are a lot of TV screens around the circuit and I was trying to watch as many as possible."

"And I was surprised how long we were on the top for. I'm a bit surprised. I wasn't expecting us to be here."

"It's always Max. He always ruins everything for everyone."

Verstappen was surprised at the level of competitiveness from McLaren, with Norris' team-mate Oscar Piastri third fastest at Silverstone.

The Dutchman's own team-mate, Sergio Perez, failed to make it out of Q1 for the third race in succession.

"It's been quite a crazy qualifying," said Verstappen. "It's been quite hectic and also quite slippery in some places."

With a greasy track drying after earlier rain showers, most went out on slick tyres in Q1.

And any mistake had the potential to wreck the chance of a good grid position for today's race.

It was the seven-time world champion Lewis Hamilton who made an uncharacteristic error, spinning his car on the exit of Stowe corner in the opening minutes.

To audible gasps from the packed grandstands, Hamilton just managed to extract his



**POLE VAULT:** Verstappen shares a joke after squeezing out Norris (left)

### QUALIFYING RESULTS

1 Max Verstappen (Nld) Red Bull 1:26.720, 2 Lando Norris (Gbr) McLaren 1:26.961, 3 Oscar Piastri (Aus) McLaren 1:27.092, 4 Charles Leclerc (Mon) Ferrari 1:27.136, 5 Carlos Sainz Jr. (Esp) Ferrari 1:27.148, 6 George Russell (Gbr) Mercedes GP 1:27.155, 7 Lewis Hamilton (Gbr) Mercedes GP 1:27.211, 8 Alexander Albon (Tha) Williams 1:27.530, 9 Fernando Alonso (Spa) Aston Martin 1:27.659, 10 Pierre Gasly (Fra) Alpine 1:27.689

by **NEIL RANDON**

Mercedes from the gravel trap and return to the circuit.

Having momentarily increased the stress levels of the huge home support, eight-time British Grand Prix winner Hamilton soon got the hammer down and finished seventh fastest overall, just one place behind his Mercedes

team-mate George Russell. The Ferraris of Charles Leclerc and Carlos Sainz were fourth and fifth.

"It was a fun session," said Hamilton. "I was really pushing. Where I finished was the best I could do."

As a former McLaren driver, Hamilton complimented his old team on being back at the front of the grid. "I'm not

surprised," he added. "If you look at the car it makes sense and I am really happy for them."

"They have had such a bad run so to see them back up there is really great to see. But it is a wake-up call for us."

While the 38-year-old had been fairly optimistic he could fight for a podium 24 hours earlier, he was now less so.

"We will do our best but

realistically we have got to pass two Ferraris and we've got two McLarens now there," he said.

Russell, however, was more optimistic.

"I was happy with my lap," he said. "Lewis has been pushing me hard all weekend and I stayed calm and it all came together on that last lap."

"There is no reason we can't fight for a podium in the race."

## I DON'T WANT TO LEWIS OUT

### FORMULA ONE

LEWIS HAMILTON insists he's determined to be on the podium at the British Grand Prix despite a disappointing first day at Silverstone in which Max Verstappen and Red Bull dominated both practice sessions.

Verstappen's fastest lap in second practice, one minute 28.078 seconds, was just 0.022 seconds quicker than last year's race winner Carlos Sainz in his Ferrari.

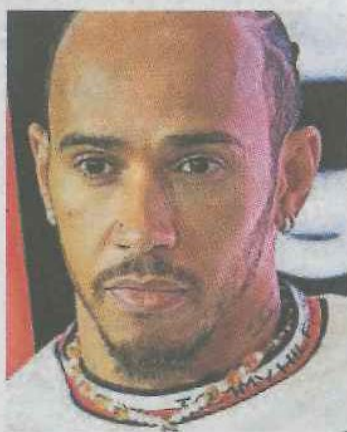
It was a low-key session for Mercedes, who focused more on race set-up.

Seven-time world champ Hamilton was 14th, 1.2 seconds off the Dutch world champion's time, and George Russell 12th – despite the introduction of a new front wing.

Verstappen was also out on his own on long-run stints, more than half a second quicker than his team-mate Sergio Perez.

There was some hope, however, that Hamilton will be in better shape for the race tomorrow.

While he struggled on a single flying lap, he ran



### DISAPPOINTING Hamilton

similar lap times to Perez during long-run pace. He said: "It continues to be a tough car to drive.

"On a single lap I didn't feel any improvement between tyres. That shows there's something wrong – we're missing something – but on the long run it didn't seem too bad. That's a positive at least.

"We're not in the same race as the Red Bulls, they're just too quick. I'm really hoping somehow we can get to the podium.

"It's going to take a big push, for sure. But where there's a will, there's a way."

Team boss Toto Wolff said: "We have Lewis and George being very vocal about what they want to change in the car."



# STORM IT,

## Hamilton hails 'wake-up call' and Brit fans dare to dream as Norris grabs front-row slot

BY NEIL RANDON

**LANDO NORRIS had the widest smile on his face after British Grand Prix qualifying.**

Despite having pole position snatched from his grasp in the dying moments of the one-hour session by world champion Max Verstappen, the Belgian-British driver had stormed it.

For about a minute at the end of the 10-car shoot-out, 23-year-old Norris had sensationally planted the fastest lap in his McLaren, only for Verstappen, winner of the last five races, to score the 27th pole of his career – but by only 0.241sec – right at the death.

Norris, in his fifth season in F1 and yet to win a Grand Prix, began to think a first Silverstone

pole – and only the second of his career after Russia 2021 – could be his, as he watched the screens around the circuit on his slowing-down lap.

"There are a lot of TV screens around the circuit and I was trying to watch as many as possible," Norris said.

"And I was surprised how long we were on the top for. I wasn't expecting us to be here.

"It's always Max. He always ruins everything for everyone!"

"Expectations weren't low. When qualifying is like this – when it's wet, then dry – it is very difficult to anticipate what is going to happen.

"Some quicker cars were knocked out earlier on so that opened up some opportunities for us to be sitting here."

Verstappen was surprised at the level of competitiveness from McLaren, with Oscar Piastri third fastest. The Dutchman's own Red Bull team-mate, Sergio Perez, failed to make it into Q3 for the fifth race in succession.

"It's been quite a crazy qualifying," Verstappen said. "It's been quite hectic and also quite slippery in some places."

With a greasy track drying after earlier rain showers, most went out on slick tyres in Q1 – and any mistake had the potential to wreck the chance of a good grid position.

And it was the seven-time world champion Lewis Hamilton who made an

**GRAND PRIX**

**TODAY'S GRID**

1	Verstappen	Red Bull	1:26.720
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3	Piastri	McLaren	1:27.092
4	Leclerc	Ferrari	1:27.136
5	Sainz Jr.	Ferrari	1:27.148

**DRIVERS' TABLE**

1	Max Verstappen	229 pts
2	Sergio Perez	148 pts
3	Fernando Alonso	131 pts
4	Lewis Hamilton	106 pts



# LANDO!

uncharacteristic error, spinning his car on the exit of Stowe corner in the opening minutes.

To audible gasps from the packed grandstands, Hamilton just managed to extract his Mercedes from the gravel trap and return to the circuit.

Having momentarily increased the stress levels of the huge home support, the eight-time British Grand Prix winner soon got the hammer down to finish seventh fastest, just one place behind his Mercedes team-mate George Russell. The Ferraris of Charles Leclerc

and Carlos Sainz were fourth and fifth.

"It was a fun session," said Hamilton (left). "I was really pushing. Where I finished was the best I could do."

As a former McLaren driver, Hamilton complimented his old team being back at the front.

"I'm not surprised," he said. "If you look at the car it makes sense and I am really happy for them."

"They have had such a bad run, so to see them back up there is really great. But it is a wake-up call for us."

While 24 hours earlier the 38-year-old had been fairly optimistic he could fight for a podium, he was now less so.

"We will do our best, but realistically we have got to pass two Ferraris and we've got two McLarens now there," he said. "It's going to be a tough race."

Russell, however, was far more upbeat.

He said: "After practice two, our strategy had us down as 17th and 18th quickest in single-lap work and third and fourth quickest in race pace – the only difference was with the tyres and we made some really good improvements overnight."

"We were only half a tenth away from third on the grid and that would have been an amazing result."

"But I was happy with my lap. Lewis has been pushing me very hard all weekend and I stayed calm and it all came together on that last lap."

"There is no reason we can't fight for a podium in the race."



# Hamilton finishes his radio goo goo

## NO MORE MOANING SAYS LEWIS

**LEWIS Hamilton said he will tone down his radio complaints following team boss Toto Wolff's public rebuke at last weekend's Austrian Grand Prix.**

During the race, Hamilton, sanctioned for exceeding track limits, asked why some of his rivals – namely Sergio Perez – had not been penalised, and also lambasted the speed of his under-performing Mercedes machine.

Wolff rarely speaks to his drivers over the radio, but he was on the intercom twice to Hamilton.

"Lewis, the car is bad, we know," said Wolff on his second appearance over the airwaves.

"Please drive it."

Addressing Wolff's comments ahead of his home race at Silverstone on Sunday, Hamilton said: "We always learn from our experiences, and on my side I've reviewed my comments, where I was at mentally, and will make sure I adjust that for the future."

"The best thing about my partnership with Toto is that we can be direct with each other. He is just an out-and-out racer. He was just

F1 By MARK NAYLOR

trying to encourage me and that was his way of doing it."

Hamilton has endured another up-and-down campaign.

He arrived at the last round in Spielberg following consecutive podium finishes but Mercedes struggled at the Red Bull Ring.

Hamilton crossed the line in seventh and was demoted to eighth following a second timed penalty, this time after the race, for exceeding track limits.

His £40million-a-season deal with the Silver Arrows expires at the end of the campaign and Hamilton and Wolff say the terms and finances of his next contract have been agreed, but an extension will not be announced at the seven-time world champion's home race.

Hamilton was asked if he could yet move elsewhere if Mercedes fail to show him he can be in a contender in their machinery.

"That is not what I am thinking," said Hamilton. "I still have 100 per cent faith in this team."

"It has taken longer for all of us to get to where we want to be and it's definitely not easy, but I believe that we will get there."

"We've just got to continue

to work and chip away at it."

Hamilton's Mercedes team were handed a reprimand after the British driver arrived late for Thursday's press conference.

Mercedes blamed Lewis's tardy entrance on an "extremely busy schedule" and said "it is difficult for Hamilton to move through the paddock" because of the interest at his home race.

A statement from the FIA read: "While the stewards understand this to be the case, it is also true that this is an activity required by the regulations, that late attendance is disruptive to the press conference, and that there is significant interest by the media in talking to the drivers whose access is limited."

### Reprimand

"Activities on Thursday are generally organised by the teams and the drivers follow the instructions of their team co-ordinators."

"The stewards determined the most appropriate penalty was to the team rather than to the driver."

"As some leeway has been given the stewards consider a reprimand to the team to be appropriate, with the warning that further penalties may be considered in case of repetition."

Hamilton has defended

the casting of Brad Pitt as a Formula One driver with the Hollywood actor to start filming for his new blockbuster at the British Grand Prix on Friday.

Pitt will race an adapted Formula Two machine between practice sessions at a sold-out Silverstone for the movie which Hamilton is helping to produce.

It is understood that the 59-year-old (below) will play the role of a veteran driver returning to the grid after a 30-year absence.

The plot line has raised eyebrows, given Pitt's age, but Hamilton said: "Brad looks like he's ageing backwards. He looks great for his age."

"Of course that was a big topic at the start when we discussed the first story. But he's super-fit."

"He is such an iconic actor. He's always done such an

incredible job. I can't tell you how excited I am to have Brad Pitt in Formula One. It's incredible."

Pitt has been getting up to speed in Formula Two machinery for two months – first at the Paul Ricard Circuit in France and then here at Silverstone.

While Pitt will be alone on track at Silverstone in a modified car prepared by Hamilton's Mercedes team, it is believed that the assistance of computer generated imagery will make him look as though he is racing this season's grid.

A garage has been set up in the paddock to replicate a fictional "11th team", called Apex GP.

They will also have a presence on the grid ahead of Sunday's race.

"There are nerves because it is something we've been working on for so long," added Hamilton.

"We want everyone to feel we encapsulate what the essence of this sport is all about."

"I don't know if this would have been possible 10 years ago when old management was in place. They wouldn't have perhaps seen this as an important step in terms of the sport's growth."

RADIO SILENCE: Hamilton



## Verstappen quit threat over crazy calendar

MAX Verstappen believes next season's Formula One calendar is too long and hinted it will be a factor in whether he stays in the sport beyond 2023 – but George Russell thinks the Red Bull driver simply wants more money.

The Dutchman is powering towards a third successive drivers' title – holding an 81-point lead heading into the British Grand Prix – but has again suggested that ongoing disgruntlement with elements of the sport might cause him to walk away at the end of his current contract.

The 2024 Formula One calendar will feature a record 24 races – starting on March 2 and ending on December 8.

Verstappen says that is too many and, having already hit out at the increase in the number of sprint races and the new car regulations for 2025 this season, says he will need certain conditions if he is to extend his stay in the sport.

"It is too many races for me but we just have to deal with it," Verstappen said.

"I think it is a bit more logical the way that it is planned at least, I guess that is better for everyone."

"But more things will have to come together for me to make my mind up over whether I stay longer than 2023 or not. But these things are definitely not helping for sure."

Mercedes driver Russell believes talk of retirement is a tactic from Verstappen but admitted that the lengthening calendar and the commitments on the drivers is an issue.

"I think he is whingeing because he wants more money!" Russell said.

"He is the highest paid on this grid and rightly so for what he is achieving but I think it is all a big tactic of his, this threat of retirement."

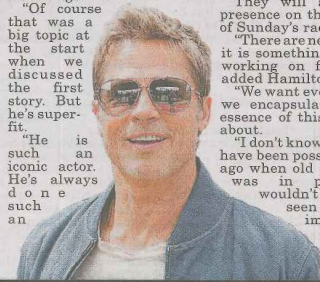
"I hope he doesn't – I hope he stays for as long as I stay because I want to fight against the best drivers in the world."

"I think we are in a great place at the moment with the sport."

"It is challenging, we can't just keep adding more commitments and races, there has to be a point where if you add something then something has to be taken off."

"We are adding more races and we are working overtime and I'm sure that's the case at Red Bull."

"If we didn't have any other commitments I'm pretty sure we'd be happy to race every weekend."





# PERFECT TIME FOR A CHEEKY LANDO'S

Norris almost dines out on pole

**A BRIT SPECIAL**  
Verstappen (left) has a chuckle with Norris after qualifying

**THE GRID**

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**DRIVERS TABLE**

1	Max Verstappen	229 pts
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**Lando Norris joked "he always ruins everything" after watching a fairy tale Silverstone pole get snatched away by Max Verstappen.**

But not even being denied top spot for the start of today's British Grand Prix could wipe the smile off the McLaren man's face.

For about a minute at the end of the 10-car shoot-out Norris had sensationally

**Neil Randon**

planted the fastest lap... only for Verstappen, winner of the last five races on the trot, to score the 27th pole of his career by only 0.241 seconds in the Red Bull.

Norris, in his fifth season in F1 and yet to win a Grand Prix at the age of 23, said: "There are a lot of TV screens around the circuit and I was trying to watch as many as possible. I was surprised how long we were on the top for."

"I'm a bit surprised. I wasn't expecting us to be here. It's always Max. He always ruins everything for everyone! "Expectations weren't low. When

qualifying is like this – when it's wet, then dry – it is very difficult to anticipate what is going to happen.

"Some quicker cars were knocked out earlier on. That opened up opportunities for us to be sitting here."

While Norris' team-mate Oscar Piastri finished third fastest, Verstappen's own team-mate Sergio Perez failed to make it out of Q1 for the third race in a row.

The championship leader said: "It's been quite a crazy qualifying. It's been quite hectic and also slippery in some places."

With a greasy track drying after earlier showers, most went out on slick tyres in Q1 – and any mistake had the potential to wreck the chance of a good grid position for today's race.

Sure enough, seven-time

world champion Lewis Hamilton spun his car on the exit of Stowe corner in the opening minutes.

To audible gasps from the packed grandstands, Hamilton just managed to extract his Mercedes from the gravel trap and return to the circuit.

The eight-time British Grand Prix winner would put his foot down and cross seventh fastest overall, one place behind his Mercedes team-mate George Russell.

The Ferraris of Charles Leclerc and Carlos Sainz were fourth and fifth.

Hamilton said: "It was a fun session. I was really pushing. Where I finished was the best I could do."

As a former McLaren driver, he praised his old team for being back at the front of the grid. The

38-year-old added: "I'm not surprised. If you look at the car, it makes sense and I am really happy for them."

"They have had such a bad run, so to see them back up there is great to see. But it is a wake-up call for us."

While Hamilton had been fairly optimistic he could fight for a podium 24 hours earlier, he is now less so.

He said: "We will do our best but realistically we have to pass two Ferraris and we have two McLarens now there. It's going to be a tough race."

His younger team-mate was more optimistic as Russell said: "Lewis has been pushing me very hard all weekend. I stayed calm and it all came together on that last lap. There is no reason we can't fight for a podium in the race."



**PODIUM** Piastri (right) joins pair

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Headline	Media	Links
British Grand Prix qualifying result changes as F1 stewards disqualify star after session	The Mirror	<a href="https://www.mirror.co.uk/sport/formula-1/breaking-silverstone-grid-change-bottas-30422199">https://www.mirror.co.uk/sport/formula-1/breaking-silverstone-grid-change-bottas-30422199</a>
Verstappen beats Norris to pole in thrilling wet-dry qualifying at Silverstone	F1	<a href="https://www.formula1.com/en/latest/article.verstappen-beats-norris-to-pole-in-thrilling-wet-dry-qualifying-at.5GA7sVAs4M6oToPt7ftgpd.html">https://www.formula1.com/en/latest/article.verstappen-beats-norris-to-pole-in-thrilling-wet-dry-qualifying-at.5GA7sVAs4M6oToPt7ftgpd.html</a>
F1 starting grid: Positions for British Grand Prix qualifying online	The Independent	<a href="https://www.independent.co.uk/f1/f1-grid-silverstone-british-hamilton-verstappen-norris-b2371382.html">https://www.independent.co.uk/f1/f1-grid-silverstone-british-hamilton-verstappen-norris-b2371382.html</a>
Winners and losers from the 2023 British Grand Prix qualifying	PlanetF1	<a href="https://www.planetf1.com/features/winners-losers-2023-british-grand-prix-qualifying/">https://www.planetf1.com/features/winners-losers-2023-british-grand-prix-qualifying/</a>
British Grand Prix qualifying – F1 RECAP: Max Verstappen takes pole with Lewis Hamilton seventh	Daily Mail	<a href="https://www.dailymail.co.uk/sport/live/article-12275397/British-Grand-Prix-qualifying-F1-2023-Live-Result.html">https://www.dailymail.co.uk/sport/live/article-12275397/British-Grand-Prix-qualifying-F1-2023-Live-Result.html</a>
Brad Pitt joins highly-confident Formula 1 drivers' briefing and is 'just like his character in Bullet Train'	talkSPORT	<a href="https://talksport.com/sport/motorsport/1492107/brad-pitt-joins-formula-1-drivers-briefing-bullet-train/">https://talksport.com/sport/motorsport/1492107/brad-pitt-joins-formula-1-drivers-briefing-bullet-train/</a>
Lando Norris is no muppet – he is an F1 champion in waiting	The Telegraph	<a href="https://www.telegraph.co.uk/formula-1/2023/07/08/british-grand-prix-lando-norris-formula-one-mclaren/">https://www.telegraph.co.uk/formula-1/2023/07/08/british-grand-prix-lando-norris-formula-one-mclaren/</a>
British Grand Prix qualifying results: Norris on front row as rookie beats Lewis Hamilton	Daily Express	<a href="https://www.express.co.uk/sport/f1-autosport/1788890/British-Grand-Prix-qualifying-LIVE-Lewis-Hamilton-Max-Verstappen-F1-news-latest-highlights">https://www.express.co.uk/sport/f1-autosport/1788890/British-Grand-Prix-qualifying-LIVE-Lewis-Hamilton-Max-Verstappen-F1-news-latest-highlights</a>
Alex Albon's "disgusting" injury at Silverstone - "felt skin ripping!"	Crash.net	<a href="https://www.crash.net/f1/news/1030995/1/f1-driver-s-disgusting-injury-silverstone-felt-skin-ripping">https://www.crash.net/f1/news/1030995/1/f1-driver-s-disgusting-injury-silverstone-felt-skin-ripping</a>
Mercedes hints at rethink over Red Bull F1 copy	Autosport	<a href="https://www.autosport.com/f1/news/mercedes-hints-at-rethink-over-red-bull-f1-copy/10493639/">https://www.autosport.com/f1/news/mercedes-hints-at-rethink-over-red-bull-f1-copy/10493639/</a>
Verstappen pips Norris to British Grand Prix pole	BBC	<a href="https://www.bbc.co.uk/sport/formula1/66142467">https://www.bbc.co.uk/sport/formula1/66142467</a>

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Bottas disqualified from Silverstone qualifying – with Finn set to start British Grand Prix in P20	F1	<a href="https://www.formula1.com/en/latest/article.bottas-disqualified-from-silverstone-qualifying-with-finn-set-to-start.5smsKl0raawLdfivHEeQgg.html">https://www.formula1.com/en/latest/article.bottas-disqualified-from-silverstone-qualifying-with-finn-set-to-start.5smsKl0raawLdfivHEeQgg.html</a>
Max Verstappen denies Lando Norris at the last to take British F1 GP pole	The Guardian	<a href="https://www.theguardian.com/sport/2023/jul/08/max-verstappen-lando-norris-british-f1-gp-pole">https://www.theguardian.com/sport/2023/jul/08/max-verstappen-lando-norris-british-f1-gp-pole</a>
F1 news: Lewis Hamilton and Red Bull penalised by stewards at British Grand Prix	The Daily Express	<a href="https://www.express.co.uk/sport/f1-autosport/1788783/F1-LIVE-Lewis-Hamilton-Red-Bull-British-Grand-Prix">https://www.express.co.uk/sport/f1-autosport/1788783/F1-LIVE-Lewis-Hamilton-Red-Bull-British-Grand-Prix</a>
Brad Pitt steps out at British Grand Prix ahead of upcoming F1 movie	Daily Mail	<a href="https://www.dailymail.co.uk/tvshowbiz/article-12278219/Brad-Pitt-steps-British-Grand-Prix-ahead-upcoming-F1-movie.html">https://www.dailymail.co.uk/tvshowbiz/article-12278219/Brad-Pitt-steps-British-Grand-Prix-ahead-upcoming-F1-movie.html</a>
McLaren: Red Bull F1 car copycat claims are unfair	Autosport	<a href="https://www.autosport.com/f1/news/mclaren-red-bull-f1-car-copycat-claims-are-unfair/10493699/">https://www.autosport.com/f1/news/mclaren-red-bull-f1-car-copycat-claims-are-unfair/10493699/</a>
Wolff: Mercedes tried the Red Bull concept in wind tunnel – but it didn't work	Crash.net	<a href="https://www.crash.net/f1/news/1030987/1/wolff-mercedes-tried-red-bull-concept-wind-tunnel-it-didn-t-work">https://www.crash.net/f1/news/1030987/1/wolff-mercedes-tried-red-bull-concept-wind-tunnel-it-didn-t-work</a>
F1 drivers excited by Brad Pitt's movie project at British GP	ESPN UK	<a href="https://www.espn.co.uk/f1/story/_/id/37979789/f1-drivers-excited-brad-pitt-movie-project-british-gp">https://www.espn.co.uk/f1/story/_/id/37979789/f1-drivers-excited-brad-pitt-movie-project-british-gp</a>
F1 British GP Starting Grid: Alex Albon's Stock Rising As Ferrari, Red Bull Showing Renewed Interest	Autoweek	<a href="https://www.autoweek.com/racing/formula-1/a44482142/f1-british-gp-starting-grid-alex-albons-stock-rising-as-ferrari-red-bull-showing-renewed-interest/">https://www.autoweek.com/racing/formula-1/a44482142/f1-british-gp-starting-grid-alex-albons-stock-rising-as-ferrari-red-bull-showing-renewed-interest/</a>
Leclerc gives view of Sainz defying team orders in British F1 Qualifying	FormulaNerds.com	<a href="https://www.formulanerds.com/news/leclerc-gives-view-of-sainz-defying-team-orders-in-british-f1-qualifying/">https://www.formulanerds.com/news/leclerc-gives-view-of-sainz-defying-team-orders-in-british-f1-qualifying/</a>
F1: Lando Norris jokes Max Verstappen 'ruins everything' after British GP qualifying	GiveMeSport.com	<a href="https://www.givemesport.com/lando-norris-jokes-max-verstappen-british-gp/">https://www.givemesport.com/lando-norris-jokes-max-verstappen-british-gp/</a>

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Why Chinese F1 star Zhou Guanyu sees British Grand Prix as “my second home race”	The Mirror	<a href="https://www.mirror.co.uk/sport/formula-1/zhou-guanyu-sheffield-silverstone-f1-30420911">https://www.mirror.co.uk/sport/formula-1/zhou-guanyu-sheffield-silverstone-f1-30420911</a>
IN PHOTOS: Check out the special driver helmets and car liveries for the British Grand Prix weekend	F1	<a href="https://www.formula1.com/en/latest/article.in-photos-check-out-the-special-driver-helmets-and-car-liveries-for-the-4wwiDAMJs2ikmjulbKqObO.html">https://www.formula1.com/en/latest/article.in-photos-check-out-the-special-driver-helmets-and-car-liveries-for-the-4wwiDAMJs2ikmjulbKqObO.html</a>
Ouch! Alex Albon reveals ‘disgusting’ injury after British Grand Prix qualifying	PlanetF1	<a href="https://www.planetf1.com/news/alex-albon-silverstone-injury/">https://www.planetf1.com/news/alex-albon-silverstone-injury/</a>
Fuel burn set for F1 return as result of 2026 engine plan	Autosport	<a href="https://www.autosport.com/f1/news/fuel-burn-set-for-f1-return-as-result-of-2026-engine-plan/10493187/">https://www.autosport.com/f1/news/fuel-burn-set-for-f1-return-as-result-of-2026-engine-plan/10493187/</a>
F1 British GP: Verstappen on pole as McLaren drivers star	Motorsport.com	<a href="https://www.motorsport.com/f1/news/f1-british-gp-verstappen-on-pole-as-mclaren-drivers-star/10493329/">https://www.motorsport.com/f1/news/f1-british-gp-verstappen-on-pole-as-mclaren-drivers-star/10493329/</a>
Rivals praise McLaren’s “amazing” result as team stun in qualifying	Racefans.net	<a href="https://www.racefans.net/2023/07/08/rivals-praise-mclarens-amazing-result-as-team-stun-in-qualifying/">https://www.racefans.net/2023/07/08/rivals-praise-mclarens-amazing-result-as-team-stun-in-qualifying/</a>
‘Sign the baby’: Norris used to bizarre requests at home race	Reuters	<a href="https://www.reuters.com/sports/motor-sports/sign-baby-norris-used-bizarre-requests-home-race-2023-07-08/">https://www.reuters.com/sports/motor-sports/sign-baby-norris-used-bizarre-requests-home-race-2023-07-08/</a>
McLaren fined for rare Norris car fan ‘mishap’	Speedcafe.com	<a href="https://www.speedcafe.com/2023/07/08/mclaren-fine-lando-norris-british-gp-fan-incident/">https://www.speedcafe.com/2023/07/08/mclaren-fine-lando-norris-british-gp-fan-incident/</a>
Is format variety the saviour amid F1 calendar saturation fears?	The Race	<a href="https://the-race.com/formula-1/is-format-variety-the-saviour-amid-f1-calendar-saturation-fears/">https://the-race.com/formula-1/is-format-variety-the-saviour-amid-f1-calendar-saturation-fears/</a>