

I'd run out of annual leave by this point in the season, and was working out my notice at my day job, so they weren't too keen on me taking extra time off. As a result, I arrived in Germany late on Friday night, and only made it to the paddock on Saturday morning.

## F1 Hockenheim Blog: FP3 in the drizzle

Shortly before FP3 began, the sun broke through the thick clouds hovering over the Hockenheimring. But the sunshine was but a brief respite, and the final practice session of the weekend began in light rain.

Rain overnight meant that much of the rubber the track picked up on Friday afternoon has been sluiced away, and the circuit is relatively green. But with the shorter session and comparatively dry conditions there was no time to waste, and installation laps quickly gave way to serious running.

Friday belonged to Red Bull and Ferrari – in the dry afternoon session, the two teams recorded the four fastest times of the day, with Sebastian Vettel and Fernando Alonso split by a micro margin in the hundredths of seconds. Both teams are under pressure to perform this weekend, Red Bull because the German race is a quasi home GP, and Ferrari because they need to start scoring serious points if they want to keep the championship battle alive.

Adrian Sutil had yet to set a timed lap when he reported to his team that he had "lost power". It was eventually confirmed as a driveshaft problem. The Force India driver then had to limp his car back to the pits for repairs in the limited window between FP3 and qualifying.

The early part of the session saw many drivers stay in the pits, hoping that the rain would be the radar-predicted brief shower, and not an endless deluge. But by the time the session was half finished, half the drivers had set timed laps.

At the half-way point, Felipe Massa led Sebastian Vettel by nearly a second, with Mark Webber yet to set a time and Fernando Alonso in P10, 3.3s behind his teammate. According to Ferrari, Alonso's initial run was for tyre-scrubbing, not pace setting, which is why he appeared to be so far behind Massa.

Lewis Hamilton again spent much of the session in the pits: after a quick installation lap his mechanics began working on a problem with his left front brakes. The McLaren driver has had very limited running this weekend, after an F1 smash saw him sit out much of FP2 while repairs were being completed. Hamilton had not run on the option tyre until some last minute flying laps in the final session, his first option run with the revised exhaust blown diffuser set-up.

With around 20 minutes remaining of the session, the track began to dry out enough that slicks were worth a gamble. First man to take the punt was Toro Rosso's Sebastian Buemi, who was seven-tenths faster than the competition on the prime compound. Along the pitlane, teams could be heard calling their drivers in for a quick change of rubber, inters to primes.

And with the prime tyres, times began to tumble. The pace-setting Toro Rossos found themselves pushed down into the middle of the pack, while many of the usual suspects took their turn at the top. Ferrari, McLaren, Red Bull, and Mercedes each took a turn in P1, and times fell at such a rate that spectators could be forgiven for mistaking FP3 for the final seconds of qualifying.

The final minutes of the session were judged to be dry enough for some laps on the option tyre. And in the final seconds the big hitters of the 2010 season fought for position at the top of the boards. Hamilton was briefly top of the heap, but ended the session in P6 following flying laps from Vettel, Alonso, Webber, Massa, and Nico Rosberg.

The Red Bulls are undoubtedly as fast as ever, and Ferrari are now in a good position to challenge them for poles and wins, assuming the bad luck doesn't strike again. But the home crowd advantage appears to be with the Germans this weekend – four of this morning's ten fastest men were playing to their fans, while Timo Glock's car is not competitive enough for the top ten and Sutil was unable to complete a timed lap. Sebastian Vettel could be a good bet for pole this afternoon, assuming he keeps finding those extra tenths in the crowd.

### FP3 times (unofficial)

1. Sebastian Vettel (Red Bull) 1:15.103s
2. Fernando Alonso (Ferrari) 1:15.387s
3. Mark Webber (Red Bull) 1:15.708s
4. Felipe Massa (Ferrari) 1:15.854s
5. Nico Rosberg (Mercedes) 1:16.046s
6. Lewis Hamilton (McLaren) 1:16.207s
7. Michael Schumacher (Mercedes) 1:16.473s
8. Rubens Barrichello (Williams) 1:16.481s
9. Robert Kubica (Renault) 1:16.646s
10. Nico Hulkenberg (Williams) 1:16.743s
11. Kamui Kobayashi (Sauber) 1:16.882s

12. Sebastian Buemi (Toro Rosso) 1:16.990s
  13. Jenson Button (McLaren) 1:17.037s
  14. Vitaly Petrov (Renault) 1:17.148s
  15. Pedro de la Rosa (Sauber) 1:17.220s
  16. Jaime Alguersuari (Toro Rosso) 1:17.341s
  17. Tonio Liuzzi (Force India) 1:17.583s
  18. Heikki Kovalainen (Lotus) 1:19.193s
  19. Jarno Trulli (Lotus) 1:19.607s
  20. Bruno Senna (HRT) 1:20.533s
  21. Sakon Yamamoto (HRT) 1:21.538s
  22. Lucas di Grassi (Virgin) 1:23.444s
  23. Timo Glock (Virgin) 1:23.873s
  24. Adrian Sutil (Force India) No Time Set
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## F1 Hockenheim Blog: Q1 in Germany

There's no rain right now, but the air feels heavy with the possibility of more showers to come. The support races have helped dry the track, which is currently a cool 24 degrees, but off the racing line there is still very limited grip on offer.

The big news between practice and qualifying was Force India's announcement that a gearbox had to be changed on Adrian Sutil's car. The German driver will be able to take part in qualifying, but will have an automatic five-place grid penalty for tomorrow's race.

And with the session underway, cars are on track for around five minutes before Tonio Liuzzi crashes on the straight and red flags Q1. The young Italian ran wide at the final corner, skidded on a pool of standing water and smashed into the wall along the pit straight. He lost a tyre in the process, which bounced across the track narrowly missing a very lucky Timo Glock. Liuzzi appears to be unharmed, and got out of the car unaided, but it was a nasty shunt nonetheless.

Praise is due to the marshals working at the Hockenheimring this weekend – eight minutes after Liuzzi's crash, the pitlane will reopen and Q1 can continue. Impressive work, even from trained experts.

The session has restarted, and thanks to the red flag a number of unexpected names – all of whom had yet to set times – were in the dropout zone or very near it. But timed laps have rescued the likes of Nico Rosberg from a Q1 dropout, and the bottom seven are almost certain to be the six drivers for the new teams and the unfortunate Liuzzi.

Kamui Kobayashi has been driving well here, even though it is not a track he won in his GP2 days. But something about the Hockenheimring is bringing out the best in the young Japanese driver, who is currently in P7, sandwiched between champions – Jenson Button in P6, and Michael Schumacher in P8. Whether or not he can maintain these speeds all the way through to Q3 remains to be seen.

Standing water at Turn 1 is obviously a problem this afternoon. While no one has had an accident like Liuzzi's, Sebastian Vettel, Michael Schumacher, Felipe Massa, and Bruno Senna have all come off at the first corner, making the most of the run-off area, and then rejoining the track.

Fernando Alonso was the fastest man in Q1, followed by Vettel, Massa, Webber, and Hamilton. Kobayashi and Sebastian Buemi put in surprise appearances in the top ten, which was completed by Schumacher.

Due to gear selection problems, di Grassi was unable to set a time for Virgin.

Dropout zone:

18. Jarno Trulli (Lotus) 1:17.583s
  19. Timo Glock (Virgin) 1:18.300s
  20. Heikki Kovalainen (Lotus) 1:18.343s
  21. Bruno Senna (HRT) 1:18.592s
  22. Tonio Liuzzi (Force India) 1:18.952s
  23. Sakon Yamamoto (HRT) 1:19.844s
  24. Lucas di Grassi (Virgin) No Time Set
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## F1 Hockenheim Blog: Q2 in Germany

Other than Liuzzi's accident, the two big stories from Q1 were Fernando Alonso's blisteringly quick P1 time of 1:14.808s and the news that Jarno Trulli had managed to wrestle the Lotus to within a second of Jaime Alguersuari's Toro Rosso.

But Q1 is old news, with cars out on track and setting times for Q2. Mark Webber is first to set a time for Red Bull, and goes straight into P1 as a result. But he holds that position despite flyers from Lewis Hamilton, Fernando Alonso, and Sebastian Vettel, none of whom can currently match him for pace.

Alonso's first lap was not representative of either driver or car, as with his second trip round the circuit the Spaniard manages to set a time of 1:14.664s, even faster than his Q1 run and approaching the lap record. But not so fast it can't be broken by teammate Felipe Massa, who shaves a few hundredths off Alonso's time, crossing the line in 1:14.607s.

Kamui Kobayashi is hot on the heels of P5 Hamilton, while teammate Pedro de la Rosa is languishing in the dropout zone. There are rumours de la Rosa may not keep his seat for the duration of the season, but as of yet there's no telling whether that's gossip founded in fact, or idle chatter to while away the days between race weekends.

Both Mercedes drivers are currently in the dropout zone, and are lapping around a second slower than the Ferraris. The bigwigs in Stuttgart are unlikely to be impressed with such a showing at the home grand prix, where the paddock lies under the watchful eye of the Mercedes logo atop a tower.

And with some hell for leather flying laps towards the end, the session draws to a close. Nico Rosberg just squeaked through into Q3, pleasing team, fans, and sponsors, but Michael Schumacher will begin tomorrow's race from P11. The advantage of the P11 finish is that he will be the first man on the grid with a free tyre choice tomorrow, presuming it doesn't rain. The disadvantage? Starting his home GP in P11...

Dropout zone:

11. Michael Schumacher (Mercedes) 1.15.026s
12. Kamui Kobayashi (Sauber) 1.15.084s
13. Vitaly Petrov (Renault) 1.15.307s
14. Adrian Sutil (Force India) 1.15.467s \*
15. Pedro de la Rosa (Sauber) 1.15.550s
16. Jaime Alguersuari (Toro Rosso) 1.15.588s
17. Sebastian Buemi (Toro Rosso) 1.15.974s

\* Adrian Sutil will start from P19, thanks to a five-place grid penalty.

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## F1 Hockenheim Blog: Q3 in Germany

The final ten minutes of Saturday qualifying have begun. Despite the efforts made by other teams, Ferrari have been dominating the sessions thus far, with Fernando Alonso coming out top in Q1 and Q2. But there is a sense in the paddock that Red Bull often keep a few tenths in reserve for the final shootout, meaning we could be in for some thrilling battles between Maranello and Milton Keynes.

Mark Webber was the first man to set a time, but Fernando Alonso quickly took top spot with a 1.13.927s, the first driver of the weekend to break the 1.14s barrier. The current lap record here, set by Kimi Raikkonen in 2004, is 1.13.780s. Will that record be broken this weekend?

Sebastian Vettel has also lapped in the 1.13s, but is still marginally slower than Alonso. Ferrari have been working on their interpretation of Red Bull's retarded ignition, and if this weekend is any indication, the efforts were not in vain.

Lewis Hamilton and Jenson Button are doing their best, but the McLarens simply don't have the outright qualifying pace that Red Bull and Ferrari are showing this afternoon. Hamilton is currently running faster than Felipe Massa, but Alonso is out of reach for everyone except the two Red Bull drivers.

As the session was drawing to an end, Sebastian Vettel managed to find an extra two-tenths, giving the young German driver the boost of scoring pole at his home race. Alonso found a similar two-tenths, and in the end the two drivers were separated by two-thousandths of a second: 1.13.791s for Vettel and 1.13.793s for Alonso.

The Red Bull pole streak remains unbroken (Montreal aside).

In the end, Jenson Button managed to out-qualify his teammate for the first time since China, a fact which should go a long way towards restoring the British driver's self-confidence. It is also worth noting that had Michael Schumacher made it into Q3, his Q2 time of 1.15.026s would have seen him start tomorrow's race in P7.

Provisional grid:

1. Sebastian Vettel (Red Bull) 1.13.791s
2. Fernando Alonso (Ferrari) 1.13.793s
3. Felipe Massa (Ferrari) 1.14.290s
4. Mark Webber (Red Bull) 1.14.347s
5. Jenson Button (McLaren) 1.14.427s
6. Lewis Hamilton (McLaren) 1.14.566s
7. Robert Kubica (Renault) 1.15.079s
8. Rubens Barrichello (Williams) 1.15.109s
9. Nico Rosberg (Mercedes) 1.15.179s
10. Nico Hulkenberg (Williams) 1.15.339s
11. Michael Schumacher (Mercedes) 1.15.026s
12. Kamui Kobayashi (Sauber) 1.15.084s
13. Vitaly Petrov (Renault) 1.15.307s
14. Pedro de la Rosa (Sauber) 1.15.550s
15. Jaime Alguersuari (Toro Rosso) 1.15.588s
16. Sebastian Buemi (Toro Rosso) 1.15.974s
17. Jarno Trulli (Lotus) 1.17.583s

18. Timo Glock (Virgin) 1:18.300s
19. Adrian Sutil (Force India) 1:15.467s \*
20. Heikki Kovalainen (Lotus) 1:18.343s
21. Bruno Senna (HRT) 1:18.592s
22. Tonio Liuzzi (Force India) 1:18.952s
23. Sakon Yamamoto (HRT) 1:19.844s
24. Lucas di Grassi (Virgin) No Time Set

\* Adrian Sutil's qualifying time was worthy of P14, but he is starting from P19 due to a five-place grid penalty.

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## F1 Hockenheim Blog: The post-qualifying analysis

Science journals often have an abstract before their articles, a 200 word summary of the piece for those short on time. For those of you with busy lives, the post-qualifying analysis can be summed up in six words: Ferrari fast, Red Bull marginally faster.

But there is a lot more to be gleaned from a qualifying session than outright speed over a single lap. It matters not only who's fast, but who's fast where.

The two McLaren drivers, who qualified side by side in P5 and P6, were fastest through the speed trap, followed by the two Force India drivers. For the umpteenth time this season, the customer teams have been faster than the Mercedes work team, a fact that speaks volumes about the difficulties the German team are facing at present.

Nico Rosberg was sixteenth fastest through the speed trap, while teammate Michael Schumacher was eighteenth. The two drivers were split by 0.2kph, which indicates that both were going as quickly as the MGP W01 would allow, but were nearly 10kph slower than Jenson Button.

The only slower cars to have qualified in the top ten were the two Williams of Rubens Barrichello and Nico Hulkenberg. The Cosworth engine simply isn't a match for the Mercedes when it comes to outright power, so it is unsurprising to see the Williams drivers towards the bottom of the classification, with the other Cosworth-powered drivers. Except HRT, that is – Bruno Senna and Sakon Yamamoto were twelfth and thirteenth fastest respectively.

But the speed trap is far from the be-all and end-all of racing – it measures speed at one point only. A better indicator of comparative performance is in the list of sector times. It will come as no surprise that Fernando Alonso and Sebastian Vettel come top of the lists, with Alonso fastest in sectors one and two, and Vettel fastest in sector three.

Where the sector times become less predictable is in positions two through six. In sector one, the top five times were set by the two Red Bull and Ferrari drivers, with Lewis Hamilton in P4. Jenson Button is in P6. In sector two, the fastest times were set by the two Ferraris and both McLarens, with Button in P2 and Hamilton in P3. Mark Webber was in P6. In the final sector, the times get really interesting – the Ferraris and Red Bulls make up the top four, but Rubens Barrichello is in P5 and Michael Schumacher in P6.

Michael Schumacher aside, as he is unlikely to make much progress from a P11 grid start, the sector times set in qualifying show us who will be able to fight for position on which parts of the track. Schumacher fans should keep an eye on their driver in the final sector, as it is where the German driver has been most comfortable and able to find the most pace.

Lewis Hamilton and Jenson Button qualified side by side on the third row, and much of that intra-team battle will depend on their relative starts. Hamilton is half a tenth faster than his teammate in sector one, while Button should be in a position to chase his teammate (if necessary) in sector two, again with a half-tenth advantage. But in the third sector Hamilton is more than a tenth faster than Button, creating the potential for battles for position depending on who got the best start.

Fernando Alonso is faster than Felipe Massa in all sectors, and should stay comfortably ahead of his teammate assuming he makes the most of his front row starting position. Sebastian Vettel was also faster than Mark Webber in every sector, and the Red Bull battle is likely to mimic that of the prancing horses.

According to the technical delegate's pre-qualifying report, two drivers will be starting outside of their qualifying position this afternoon, both as a result of grid penalties for new gearboxes. Adrian Sutil has a simple five-place drop, but Timo Glock will drop ten places for Virgin: five for his new gearbox, and five for "using a different gear ratio than declared yesterday".

Fernando Alonso, Rubens Barrichello, Vitaly Petrov, Pedro de la Rosa, Robert Kubica, and Kamui Kobayashi are also running new gearboxes this weekend, but the change is in conformity with the FIA's Sporting Regulations, so no penalties have been issued.

All of the top ten qualifiers did their final runs on the option tyre, and so will start this afternoon's race with the supersoft compound. Track temperature is slightly warmer than it was yesterday (currently 27 degrees), but the air temperature has been dropping as clouds gather overhead. There's no sign of rain at the moment, but heating up the front tyres is likely to be a struggle this afternoon.

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## F1 Hockenheim Blog: Skype-ing the race

With minutes to go before the race starts, I am offered a lift to the airport. Catch? I need to leave as soon as the chequered flag falls. Not wanting another Valencia style 300 euro taxi ride to the airport if I miss my train, I leap at the offer. But it leaves me with no option but to do another Skype chat of the race.

Analysis will follow when I'm back in England...

[12:54:09] Kate Walker: About five minutes to go now!

[12:56:31] ... Think this is going to be a big one, especially where Ferrari are concerned.

[12:57:18] ... If they don't get good finishes here and Hungary, FA will find the WDC near impossible. Will bad luck strike the Scuderia again?

[12:58:04] ... Track temperature has climbed to 35 degrees, with air temperature at 22. Tyres will be very interesting..

[12:59:38] ... Was that Schumacher on primes that I just saw?

[12:59:47] ... Or has he gone for the option?

[13:00:04] ... Mercedes' tyre strategy will be key here.

[13:00:11] ... No, he's on options! Bizarre.

[13:00:25] ... Thought prime would give him an advantage here.

[13:00:42] [redacted]: so will ferrari actually get some points today

[13:01:09] Kate Walker: Depends if MAS and ALO crash into each other at the start again.

[13:02:29] [redacted]: nearly time

[13:02:44] Kate Walker: All lined up in their boxes.

[13:02:54] ... GO

[13:02:57] [redacted]: on go your lights

[13:03:17] Kate Walker: Wow, FER got VET already.

[13:03:23] [redacted]: pincerd him

[13:03:26] Kate Walker: And did HAM get BUT?

[13:03:33] ... Yup.

[13:03:58] [redacted]: buemi lost his rear wing

[13:04:00] Kate Walker: MAS in the lead! Go Felipe! Today's the lyr anniversary of his crash, so a win would be brilliant.

[13:04:34] ... Missed HAM getting WEB - did you see it happen?

[13:05:05] ... BUE out already.

[13:05:11] [redacted]: buemis out

[13:05:36] Kate Walker: Poor guy. Races ending on the first lap are so lame.

[13:05:46] [redacted]: i think webber gained his places going off the track and might have let people back past

[13:06:12] Kate Walker: Nah, HAM got him as he got BUT, I just missed it.

[13:06:56] ... HAM is 1.3s off VET already, and 3s behind MAS.

[13:07:20] ... TRU out.

[13:07:33] ... Poor guy - he said yesterday this was his best weekend of the season.

[13:07:53] ... When did MSC leap ROS?

[13:08:31] ... HAM purple in s2.

[13:09:16] ... MSC now chasing KUB for P7. Maybe the homecrowd are throwing him that extra pace.

[13:09:29] ... Can air horns help propel a car forwards? ;p

[13:09:49] ... ALO goes purple.

[13:10:26] [redacted]: maybe

[13:11:55] Kate Walker: 1.1s gap between MAS and ALO.

[13:12:27] ... Will he outbrake him and get him on the hairpin? You know ALO's going to try...

[13:13:27] ... Oops! BUT had a wobble off track.

[13:14:14] ... WEB is gaining on HAM - gap now 0.5s.

[13:14:35] ... McLarens are faster on top speed, so it might just be in this sector. Not sure yet.

[13:15:23] ... HAM pulls away on the straights, WEB closes in the corners. This could be a delicious battle.

[13:16:00] [redacted]: could be

[13:16:26] Kate Walker: ALO purple again. He's really hungry for some success here.

[13:16:41] ... And MAS just goes purple. Those Ferraris are scary fast now.

[13:18:20] ... BUT's now 4s down on Webber. Did he damage the car when he went off?

[13:18:30] [redacted]: i don't think so

[13:18:40] Kate Walker: Just not his day, I guess.

[13:18:50] [redacted]: no

[13:19:05] ... vet in the pits

[13:19:20] Kate Walker: VET pits from P3, back in P6.

[13:19:30] [redacted]: out in clean air

[13:20:05] Kate Walker: Once those tyres warm up, BUT will have a tough job keeping VET behind him.

[13:20:10] [redacted]: looks like ferrari are ready

[13:20:19] Kate Walker: ALO pits from P2.

[13:20:22] [redacted]: alonso in

[13:20:29] ... mclaren out too

[13:20:34] ... web in

[13:20:35] Kate Walker: WEB pits from P4.

[13:20:50] ... WEB back in traffic, ends up P9.

[13:20:54] [redacted]: web in 9th

[13:21:09] Kate Walker: ALO back in P4 - impressive work from Ferrari.

[13:21:11] [redacted]: i think a mclaren in next lap

[13:21:19] ... not sure who

[13:21:24] ... it will be lewis

[13:21:31] Kate Walker: MAS pits.

[13:21:47] ... HAM pits.

[13:21:51] [redacted]: back out in 6

[13:22:27] ... : kob pressuring web for a bit

[13:23:02] Kate Walker: How on earth did Ferrari get MAS back in P2? That's brilliant, given the lack of gap.

[13:23:03] [redacted]: button still going

[13:23:10] ... not sure

[13:23:17] Kate Walker: Hope he enjoys his brief time at the front.

[13:23:20] ... Won't last.

[13:23:24] [redacted]: nope

[13:23:41] Kate Walker: ALO hot on MAS' tail - he will be fired up now.

[13:23:56] [redacted]: massa struggling on his new tyres

[13:24:23] ... keeps locking his front tyres

[13:24:29] ... and back

[13:24:37] Kate Walker: They'll bed in soon. But it is the fronts he's struggled with this season.

[13:24:47] ... ALO is getting very close now...

[13:24:49] [redacted]: possibly problem with brake bias

[13:24:59] Kate Walker: For who? MAS?

[13:25:13] [redacted]: i think so

[13:25:47] ... think that might be why he keeps locking it into corners

[13:26:00] Kate Walker: Oops. Did you hear about Force India? They put the wrong tyres on each car. Doh!

[13:26:21] [redacted]: oops

[13:26:45] Kate Walker: Rules mean they had to bring them back in and play swapsies.

[13:27:28] [redacted]: oh dear

[13:28:07] ... vettel catching mas and alo

[13:28:19] ... but purple in s2

[13:28:27] Kate Walker: Apparently McLaren see BUT racing KUB, which is why they've got him running long.

[13:28:50] [redacted]: button pulling out a gap

[13:28:56] ... slowly but surely

[13:29:03] Kate Walker: It's a 4.3s advantage. Won't keep him the lead.

[13:30:39] ... : ALO and MAS are amusing right now.

[13:30:40] [redacted]: vettel nearly hit the back markers

[13:30:50] Kate Walker: Silly backmarkers not moving over like they should.

[13:32:05] [redacted]: no it was coming into the hairpin

[13:32:16] ... they had nowhere to go

[13:32:17] Kate Walker: God, HAM is miles behind VET. Whatever happened to McLaren's straight line speed advantage?

[13:32:24] ... BUT pits at last.

[13:32:28] [redacted]: button coming in

[13:32:41] Kate Walker: Back in behind HAM.

[13:32:52] [redacted]: good stop back in fifth

[13:33:19] Kate Walker: Will we see HAM and BUT battle like Turkey?

[13:33:26] [redacted]: maybe

[13:33:33] ... i hope so

[13:33:40] Kate Walker: Or is everyone in play it safe mode now we're in the second half of the season?

[13:33:49] ... There are points to harvest, remember...

[13:33:51] [redacted]: i hope not

[13:34:03] Kate Walker: WEB is closing from behind.

[13:34:47] [redacted]: button close on hamilton

[13:34:59] Kate Walker: ALO has been muttering on the radio, says it's "ridiculous". Can't mean MAS keeping him behind, surely?

[13:35:15] [redacted]: mas on an awesome last lap

[13:35:27] ... 1:18.6s

[13:35:31] Kate Walker: Gap now 0.7s between BUT and HAM, MAS goes purple and has a 1.8s lead on ALO.

[13:35:47] ... A full second quicker than ALO's last lap.

[13:36:02] [redacted]: rosberg out in front of msc

[13:36:18] ... only 1/2 sec gap though

[13:36:30] Kate Walker: Says 2.4s on the screens here.

[13:37:06] [redacted]: kudos to bbc

[13:37:14] Kate Walker: Huh?

[13:37:16] [redacted]: live tracker working well this week

[13:37:37] Kate Walker: Was rubbish at Silverstone, kept jumping around.

[13:38:07] ... Screen here now says MAS has 3s on ALO.

[13:38:23] ... HAM extended gap to BUT up to 1s now.

[13:38:36] [redacted]: yup massa another fastest lap

[13:39:00] Kate Walker: There's a lot for him to fight for today. Should be able to take advantage of ALO's hot-headedness.

[13:39:24] ... VET goes green.

[13:39:28] [redacted]: massa is flying

[13:39:54] ... a 1:18.3s

[13:40:05] ... alonso on a flyer

[13:40:12] ... purp in 1 and 2

[13:40:45] ... alonso new fastest lap

[13:41:12] Kate Walker: We're at the point where fuel balance should be feeling lovely, and handling smooth. Primes should be working at peak, too.

[13:41:17] ... Sweet spots all around.

[13:41:21] [redacted]: alonso on another flyer

[13:41:40] ... spoke to soon on the driver tracker

[13:41:58] Kate Walker: Had a wobbly, has it?

[13:42:42] [redacted]: yup

[13:43:01] Kate Walker: Nearly half way through the race. These short laps make time pass too quickly.  
[13:43:56] ... MAS now 3.2s up on ALO.  
[13:44:16] [redacted]: 2.8  
[13:44:31] ... alonso fastest lapp  
[13:44:52] Kate Walker: And what a lap - he's closed the gap by 0.4s.  
[13:45:44] ... Poor WEB's not really featured much in a while, has he? Stuck behind the McLarens with all that pace.  
[13:45:46] [redacted]: alonso and massa are just trading fastest laps  
[13:46:10] Kate Walker: Slightly easier to do when you're not in traffic and your fuel load's plummeting.  
[13:46:52] [redacted]: mclarens are playing the defensive game now to keep webber behind  
[13:47:07] Kate Walker: Whatever Mercedes did with MSC's tyre strategy, it's not really done much for him, has it? P11, will be P9 when DLR and HUL pit.  
[13:47:45] ... Think HAM will still lead the championship if it finishes like this.  
[13:48:00] [redacted]: 40th year of hockenheim this year  
[13:48:54] ... dlr just got hul  
[13:50:00] ... hulkenberg 2.9 second pit stop  
[13:50:09] Kate Walker: But Jim Clark died here in '68. Was that not an F1 race? I have a feeling it might have been F2...  
[13:50:12] [redacted]: fastest of the year  
[13:50:18] Kate Walker: Very impressive!  
[13:51:07] ... ALO purple again - he's closing that gap to MAS.  
[13:52:22] [redacted]: he's reeling him in slowly  
[13:53:11] Kate Walker: Well, he's got 29 laps to get the job done, but he needs to approach it calmly or he risks taking them both out, which is not what the Scuderia want.  
[13:53:52] [redacted]: not really  
[13:53:58] Kate Walker: MAS/ALO gap now down to 1.7s.  
[13:54:37] ... Now down to 1.4s...  
[13:54:44] ... 1.1s...  
[13:54:48] ... This is getting silly.  
[13:55:02] [redacted]: alonso wants it  
[13:55:10] Kate Walker: HAM is slowing down behind VET.  
[13:55:24] [redacted]: needs to save fuel  
[13:56:06] Kate Walker: I hate this light running they're doing now. Just race, dammit!  
[13:56:10] [redacted]: think webber is being told to back away from button  
[13:56:48] Kate Walker: I was wondering - he's 4.4s behind BUT right now.  
[13:57:32] ... SUT just went purple, I'm sure. At least, he flashed purple on the screens, but it was so brief it might have been a mistake.  
[13:57:38] [redacted]: yep, webber has been instructed to back away from button  
[13:58:02] Kate Walker: Why? Save his tyres for a hopeful run at the end when the McLarens are tiring?  
[13:58:16] ... ALO/MAS gap is steady on 1s, has been for a while now.  
[13:58:20] [redacted]: nope might be a heat issue  
[13:58:28] ... not sure of what though  
[13:58:54] Kate Walker: Ah. Maybe he was trying the retarded ignition in the race for added speed.  
[13:59:04] ... That causes all sorts of heat issues.  
[13:59:08] [redacted]: oil consumption problem  
[13:59:33] ... might have an engine overheating problem  
[13:59:42] ... if it carries on  
[14:00:04] Kate Walker: Sounds like it could well be the EBD/ignition working overtime and causing trouble.  
[14:00:21] ... VET goes purple with a 1.17.170s.  
[14:00:38] [redacted]: think the red bulls were short fuelled hoping for a quiet period to manage fuel  
[14:00:53] ... the ferraris might have done the same  
[14:00:56] Kate Walker: A quiet period? On a lap this short? Ha!  
[14:01:16] [redacted]: i know  
[14:01:31] ... alonso 0.8 behind mas  
[14:01:38] Kate Walker: Everyone's short fuelling these days, it's the hot new thing. That's what was behind all the chaos at Turkey, for RBR and McLaren.  
[14:01:58] ... The gap had steadied at 1s for about 4 laps. Wonder why he's pushing now.  
[14:02:03] ... Or is MAS slowing?  
[14:02:22] ... VET purple again.  
[14:03:16] [redacted]: vet and web have same problem i think  
[14:03:32] Kate Walker: So why's VET going purple all the time?  
[14:03:41] ... Or has his problem only just kicked in?  
[14:03:58] [redacted]: not sure, commentary is confusing  
[14:04:00] Kate Walker: ALO/MAS gap back up to 1s.  
[14:04:23] ... They should have made Chandhok do it! He was AWESOME on Friday.  
[14:05:19] ... ALO goes purple as MAS goes green, gap is now 0.9s.  
[14:05:58] [redacted]: massa has been told alonso is faster than him  
[14:06:14] Kate Walker: As long as that's not code for 'move over, Felipe baby'.  
[14:06:33] [redacted]: possibly might have to let him through  
[14:06:39] Kate Walker: We're not supposed to have team orders, remember?  
[14:06:43] ... They're against the rules.  
[14:07:04] [redacted]: just let him through  
[14:07:05] Kate Walker: That was disgusting.  
[14:07:23] ... Ferrari should have this race stripped from their records.  
[14:07:28] [redacted]: what a poor show of sportsmanship

[14:07:56] Kate Walker: I hope ALO isn't foolish enough to take pride in this win.  
[14:08:16] [redacted]: course he will  
[14:08:32] Kate Walker: And I hope Ferrari's fans tell the team that such behaviour is not on.  
[14:08:54] [redacted]: course not  
[14:08:57] Kate Walker: What a sham.  
[14:09:02] [redacted]: yup  
[14:09:11] Kate Walker: And after they complained about manipulated results in Valencia.  
[14:09:23] ... I feel sick. What terrible behaviour.  
[14:10:16] [redacted]: if i was massa i would have said bugger off  
[14:10:28] Kate Walker: And that's exactly what he should have done.  
[14:10:38] ... Can't believe Smedley did that to Felipe baby.  
[14:10:47] ... What a con.  
[14:10:58] [redacted]: all of the ferrari pit wall aren't talking to each other now  
[14:11:08] ... smedley is not happy  
[14:11:24] ... apologized to massa over the radio  
[14:11:50] Kate Walker: He shouldn't have transmitted the message in the first place.  
[14:12:03] [redacted]: di grassi lost it  
[14:12:10] Kate Walker: Will the FIA investigate? After all, it was blatant team orders, and that's against regulations.  
[14:12:14] [redacted]: didn't hit anything though  
[14:13:07] ... no. they are ferrari and they don't count  
[14:13:15] Kate Walker: Ferrari fans are kicking off on Twitter, tweeting the team to say how disgusted they are.  
[14:13:25] [redacted]: good  
[14:14:09] ... : di grassi out  
[14:16:01] Kate Walker: People are beginning to pack up and go. This isn't a race any more, it's an outrage.  
[14:16:37] [redacted]: i think the stewards might investigate it  
[14:16:52] Kate Walker: Still no message from the stewards vis-a-vis investigating possible team orders at Ferrari.  
[14:17:03] ... They need to get a move on if they're going to do anything.  
[14:17:16] [redacted]: i bet they won't  
[14:17:51] Kate Walker: VET goes purple. At least Ps 3-20 are actually racing.  
[14:18:16] ... So, VET wins, HAM in P2, BUT P3. Because Ferrari shouldn't be in there after this.  
[14:19:15] ... To do that to MAS on the one year anniversary of his accident, when he was leading the race? If ALO can't get past then he needs to work on his overtaking skills, end of.  
[14:19:39] ... MSC is next to get lapped.  
[14:19:52] [redacted]: vet 1.5 behind mas  
[14:20:14] ... kov having problem  
[14:20:31] ... dlr hit hov  
[14:21:47] Kate Walker: And DLR was running in the points for once. Poor guy!  
[14:22:15] ... ROS next to be lapped. Both Mercedes now likely to end the race a lap down.  
[14:22:20] [redacted]: no he was in 12  
[14:22:34] ... working his way back up the grid on soft tyres  
[14:22:59] ... vet mas gap down to 0.8  
[14:23:03] Kate Walker: Sorry, took my eye off the ball there. He was in the points for ages: forgot about his pitstop. Lalala.  
[14:23:50] [redacted]: kov is out  
[14:24:07] Kate Walker: Yup. Just GLO and SEN left of the newbies.  
[14:25:40] ... ROS has been lapped as well. Not great for Merc at their home GP.  
[14:26:49] ... Augh, need to pack my laptop! Airport lift says we need to go.  
[14:29:45] [redacted]: buttton had abit of a moment into turn 1  
[14:29:49] Kate Walker: Right, we're off as soon as the race ends.  
[14:30:45] ... : Press room boos.

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