



F1 Advent Calendar 2009 – Day Thirteen

Hello, this is our F1 Advent Calendar 2009 and we are right in the middle of it. This extended mini-series takes a look behind a different door every day of advent to remember another key moment from the 2009 season. We're on to Day Thirteen - Back on Form.

We've been looking at the Hungarian race weekend in quite a lot of detail so far - qualifying was quite a key moment in the year, with Massa's accident and a major live timing fail. Now, we're actually going to look at the Grand Prix itself.

Alonso was on pole for the race, with Vettel and Webber behind him, and the Renault driver managed to retain his lead through the first corner. It was Raikkonen who made the best start though, flying past cars from seventh on the grid to move up towards the front. Vettel fell backwards a couple of places, and Kimi found himself squeezed between Hamilton and Webber.

The Finn gave up that fight, dropped back a little, and found himself touching wheels with Vettel. It was an incident somewhat similar to the penalty given to Webber at the German Grand Prix, but Kimi was not investigated until after the race, and then no penalty given.

Alonso pulled away at the front of the field, whilst at the back, Sutil retired after just one lap. Hamilton was hustling Webber for second place, and on lap five, he made best use of his KERS device to get past the Red Bull. It's fair to say that KERS wasn't having the reception that was anticipated in Formula 1. The device left fans in the dark, and although on-screen graphics were brought in to try and help matters, they weren't always on screen, and therefore it wasn't always clear when it was being used. However, the cars that had KERS fitted could sometimes gain the advantage, and Hamilton used it to perfection to pass Webber. He then started to hunt down Alonso.

Lewis was gaining on the Spaniard, but the Renault car was experiencing difficulties. The early race pace had damaged the tyres, and a fuel pump problem was causing concern on the pit wall. Fernando came in for his first pit stop on lap 12, and although most of the stop was good, there was trouble in the tyre department. The front right wheel had been incorrectly attached, and the wheel spinner was clearly wobbling around as the car exited the pitlane. The loose part fell off after a couple of corners, followed by the entire wheel just a few turns later. The wheel bounced down the track, thankfully missing any major targets. It came to a stop by the barrier.

Alonso continued round the track very slowly on three wheels, and the mechanics fitted him up with a spare and sent him on his way again. He retired later, though, as the fuel pump problem returned.

Hamilton was promoted to the lead, whilst Raikkonen was getting into trouble again. This time, Red Bull released Webber from his stop into the path of an oncoming Ferrari, and the pair narrowly avoided contact. Hamilton continued to romp away at the front, as Vettel retired and left Raikkonen as his nearest competitor - some ten seconds down the road.

The defending champion took his first win of the year, and it was also a first for KERS. McLaren and Ferrari made it a KERS 1-2, which, although not proving the device was useful, at least proved that it wasn't detrimental to achieving those vital victories.

That's all for this Advent episode. I hope you're enjoying the series, thank you for reliving the 2009 season along with me. I will be back tomorrow to open the next window on our calendar - Day Fourteen.