



Days that Shook the F1 World – Series 1 Omnibus

Welcome to the omnibus edition of the Sidepodcast miniseries Days that Shook the F1 World. These seven shows were originally broadcast over consecutive days, and are collected together here for easy listening.

US Grand Prix 2005

Welcome to Sidepodcast. This is the first part in our latest mini series – Days that Shook the F1 World. The idea is to pick out some specific dates in Formula 1 history that made drivers, teams, fans and the media sit up and take notice. Days that quite literally shook the F1 World. Our first date is June 19 2005.

The 2005 Formula 1 season proved to be a refreshing break from the Ferrari dominance of previous years. Fernando Alonso took his R-25 Renault and made it work out on track, and Michael Schumacher was left struggling in the distance. Only Kimi Raikkonen could match Alonso's pace, but the McLaren suffered from reliability problems.

In June, Formula 1 descended upon the USA, and the Indianapolis Motor Speedway. The Speedway features some of the only high banking in the Formula 1 calendar, as the cars leave the infield section and rejoin the Speedway oval. The critical corner is Turn 13. During Friday Practice, Ralf Schumacher suffered a left rear tyre failure at the turn and crashed heavily. After close inspection by Michelin of both the tyres in use, and spare tyres flown in from Spain, they advised their customer teams – seven out of the ten teams competing – that they couldn't guarantee safety through the banking for a full race distance. On Saturday, Michelin informed the FIA that they didn't know what the problem with the tyres was, but that it could be solved by slowing the cars down at Turn 13. The teams proposed several options: new spec tyres to be flown in, or a temporary chicane to be built, but Race Director Charlie Whiting would not allow either of these amendments. According to him, Bridgestone would be unfairly put out by a chicane, and essentially it was Michelin's problem if they couldn't bring the correct tyres to a race.

The teams met up, discussed the options, and all except Ferrari, who weren't there, agreed that a chicane really was the best way to go, despite the FIA's concerns that any changes to the track layout would render the race outside of the championship. Bernie Ecclestone offered to ask Jean Todt for Ferrari's position on the proposal but returned with bad news. Todt believed the problem was between the FIA and Michelin and didn't want to get involved.

Discussions continued, and the proposals went back and forth, with the teams beginning to come round to the idea of running a non-championship event, if only for the fan's entertainment. The FIA and Ferrari continued to disagree to all the options presented to them.

With only moments to go, and confusion reigning supreme, the teams decided that they had no options left and would be forced to complete only a formation lap and then retire from the race. Ferrari were going to race, and Jordan decided to race also. Minardi team principal, Paul Stoddart, who was running on Bridgestones decided he needed to race, to keep the fight up with Jordan, but announced he would retire his cars if the Jordan's were out of the race.

And so, twenty cars took to the grid, twenty cars completed the installation lap, then fourteen cars peeled off into the pit lane. Six cars took their places at the start line.

The crowd boomed.



Obviously Ferrari won the race, and it helped them considerably in both driver and constructors championship. But any benefits the team had were outweighed by the many, many complaints. Anyone attending the race was absolutely furious, the race was rubbished and the future of F1 in the United States looked very shaky.

The fans blamed the FIA. The FIA blamed Michelin.

It was a very dark day in the entire history of Formula 1, and still provokes reactions today. Although the FIA eventually decided Michelin was not solely to blame, it was too late for the company, and the sport is now supplied by a single tyre manufacturer. Although the US Grand Prix battled through the bad feeling in both 2006 and 2007, it is off the calendar for 2008. Michelin eventually gave refunds to anyone who had attended the race.

That's our first topic covered, a day that really did unsettle F1 to its very foundations. Join me again tomorrow for part two, featuring another day that shook the F1 World.

Death of Ayrton Senna

Welcome to the second episode of Sidepodcast's latest series – Days That Shook The F1 World. Yesterday we looked at the US Grand Prix in 2005, and today we'll focus on another earth-shattering day in F1 History. This time it's May 1st 1994.

Formula 1 is synonymous with the warning: "Motorsport is dangerous."

And it is, although it used to be a lot worse.

Sir Jackie Stewart's autobiography talks about a period in his racing career where he lost over 50 friends and colleagues in ten years. In the 50s and 60s, a serious crash in racing meant terrible injuries or death. And the trend continued until 1994 when the death of Ayrton Senna put F1 safety on the front page.

Senna was a legend, a hero, a proper champion. He didn't always do things by the book, but he was one of life's good guys. He took the usual route to F1, through karting and Formula 3, then dominated Formula 1 for the ten years he participated. With many wins and three championships already under his belt, Senna started the 1994 season badly. He'd recently made the switch to Williams but the Renault powered car was a bit of a handful and he retired for the first couple of races of the season. Arriving for the third race at Imola, Senna was hoping for some good luck.

On Friday, Rubens Barrichello was seriously injured and hospitalised, preventing him from completing the race weekend. Ayrton Senna was his mentor, and visiting his friend in hospital shook his confidence in the safety standards at the track quite considerably.

On Saturday, Austrian driver Roland Ratzenberger was killed during a practice session. Senna began to question his involvement in the sport, but spent Sunday morning organising the recreation of the Driver's Safety group and offering to take the lead role within the group.

Despite his misgivings, Senna's racing blood took over and he started the race from pole position. A safety car slowed the cars down for 6 laps, after a start line accident, and then on the 7th lap, Senna went off track at almost 200 mph, and crashed into a concrete barrier. Although it was a high speed crash, it didn't look like the devastating crashes the sport had previously seen. However, Senna was motionless in the cockpit, until medical attention arrived. He was airlifted to hospital but pronounced dead.



Several questions were raised about the incident itself, including why it took the medical staff so long to reach the car. Marshalls were on the scene instantly, but could only wave their yellow and red flags to stop the passing cars, they were not allowed to go near the car itself. It looked terrible, with many people standing around whilst Senna remained in the car.

There are also questions about why Senna wasn't pronounced dead at the scene of the crash, rather than being airlifted away during resuscitation procedures. Italian rules declared a death at the track would result in an investigation and the sporting event to be cancelled.

Whilst questions remained, Senna was given a state funeral and the world mourned. Books have been written about him, songs reference him, and charity events take place in his name. His most important legacy though, is the improvement of safety in the sport.

There had been several attempts to tighten up safety procedures over the years, but with such an awful weekend as that fateful one in Imola, Max Mosley decided enough was enough and things had to change. New introductions included the HANS device, higher cockpit sides, sturdier chassis', and that was just on the cars. Better tyre walls and gravel traps were also put in place. It's no coincidence that there hasn't been a death in Formula 1 racing since 1994. Thank you for listening to Days That Shook the F1 World. Visit Sidepodcast.com to leave your comments, and don't forget to join me tomorrow for our third important date.

That's our first topic covered, a day that really did unsettle F1 to its very foundations. Join me again tomorrow for part two, featuring another day that shook the F1 World.

Team Orders, Austria 2002

Welcome to the Sidepodcast series: Days that Shook the F1 World. So far we have covered the US Grand Prix in 2005 and the death of Ayrton Senna in 1994, now it's time to look at another relatively recent date: May 12th 2002.

Team orders have always been a controversial subject. The argument is debated extensively these days, and mostly focuses on where to draw the line. Should a team favour one driver over the other in order to maximise championship points? Is it wrong to give one driver the advantage because he is ahead in the championship?

In 2002, the issue hit the news in a big way. The Austrian Grand Prix took place in May of that year, and featured possibly the most controversial, and certainly the most blatant use of team orders that the sport had ever witnessed. At the time, team orders weren't illegal, but good sportsmanship was still encouraged and manipulation frowned upon.

Rubens Barrichello had been consistently fast throughout the weekend. He was ahead of teammate Michael Schumacher in the practice sessions, and he took pole position. He led the majority of the race, but at the very end, was told to let Schumacher past. Schumacher was already leading the championship by plenty, whilst his team mate had yet to break into double figures. This win took Schumacher's total to 27 points clear of his next rival, Montoya, but Ferrari clearly thought he needed all the points he could get. With just a few metres to go before the finish line, Barrichello, who actually could have used the extra points, allowed the sister car past, much to the viewing public's disgust.

When the time came for the top three drivers to take to the podium, The drivers received only boos and jeers, and so Schumacher stepped onto the second place position, and encouraged Barrichello to take his place on the top step. He still took all the points though, saying: "I thank Barrichello for the points, but I am not happy." The BBC reported the incident at the time with the headline: "Schumacher Steals Austrian Win."



Although everyone knew that team orders went on, there had never previously been such an obvious and unnecessary manipulation of race results. The public, rival teams and other drivers, were not happy and the FIA were inundated with complaints. They hastily arranged a meeting to try and come up with a solution to the problem. They did not have an easy job ahead of them.

The rules had been adjusted a couple of times, due to a less severe incident a couple of years previous, and were left a little, shall we say, ambiguous. The basic gist of the legislation meant it was acceptable for a team to favour one driver and demand the other to play a support role, but it was not acceptable for a team to interfere with a race unnecessarily." Not exactly explicit.

The team argued that if Schumacher lost the championship by only a couple of points, then they would end up looking stupid that Barrichello was the one who prevented him from being victorious.

After much deliberation, the FIA came to the conclusion that they could not punish the team for what had happened on track, as technically it was not illegal. They said Ferrari had handled it clumsily, but no penalty could be imposed. What they did was issue a \$1 million fine for the antics on the podium. The FIA are very particular about their podium ceremony and no one is allowed to mess with it, especially people who are only just escaping sanction anyway. Half was suspended for a year, and the \$500,000 immediately payable was to be shared between Ferrari, Schumacher and Barrichello. Compared to the budgets of the three, a \$500,000 split was not particularly taxing.

To ease the public outrage, Max Mosley set up a Working Group to discuss the team orders problem, and even went so far as to ask the public opinion on the subject. Eventually, they came to the conclusion that team orders should be banned.

Such a rule is incredibly difficult to implement and control, however. These days, all it takes is for a driver to be told via the pit-to-car radio that his teammate is quicker. No explicit orders are given, but everyone involved knows what that means and what needs to be done.

Even if a driver is not playing the team game, a mechanic could quite conceivably make a small mistake during the pit stop that costs a few seconds, and allows the favoured driver to get ahead.

Meanwhile, the public quite rightly continue to debate, complain, and generally badger the FIA for a more concise, understandable and measurable ruling on the matter.

That wraps up another episode of Days that Shook the F1 World. Don't forget to join me tomorrow for the fourth important day in our series.

Ground Effects Banned, 1982

Hello everyone, welcome to Days that Shook the F1 World, a series from Sidepodcast that takes a look at some of those important days that left the sport reeling, never to be the same again. Today we're looking at the 3rd November 1983.

Whilst advocating safety at every opportunity, the majority of people involved in Formula 1 also want more speed. That's the aim of the game, after all - to maximise speed and beat your rivals because they haven't found that edge within the regulations like you have.

Ground effects was one of those things.



The basic theory behind the ground effect is to create as much downforce as possible, enabling a car to go faster around corners. By making the sides of the car as low as possible, the air pressure underneath the chassis is lower than that above, which basically glues the car to the track.

Lotus were the first team to introduce the concept to the Formula 1 back in the 1970s. They were helped along by the use of a wind tunnel, which resulted in longer sidepods and consistent ride height, creating a reasonable inverse wing effect.

This effect didn't necessarily help on the long straights, but when it came to cornering, it left the old style cars in its wake. When Lotus introduced their car in 1978, it won 8 out of 16 races, proving that the new developments would revolutionise the sport.

Other teams began to sit up and take notice and it wasn't long before the ground effects principal was becoming ubiquitous. By 1982, there were no cars without the technology. Fast races, fantastic cornering speeds, all great stuff.

Except, the cars were inherently unstable.

The forces created by the ground effects were all well and good, if the car managed to stay stuck to the circuit, but once the effect was broken, it had potentially devastating consequences. A wing would then act as a wing should, rising up and literally flying the car off the track.

It wasn't long before serious accidents started to happen. Drivers were often struggling to keep their cars on track during high speed cornering, and incident after incident culminated in the death of Alfa Romeo driver Patrick Depailler in Germany. Although a lack of safety fencing was deemed the reason for his death, there was no denying that the speed carried through the bend had something to do with it as well.

During this time, the two rival governing bodies the FISA and FOCA were at war, and ground effects was one of the big catalysts for their arguments. After Depailler's death, the FISA finally forced through a new rule, stating that, whilst in the pits, cars had to have at least 6cm of clearance between their skirt and the ground. Teams very, very quickly got around this, by running their cars close to the ground out on track, and simply raising them up on hydraulics when it came to measurements in the pits. Given the ingenuity of the teams, or the uselessness of the rule, the FISA soon revoked their ruling, and allowed skirts to return to the cars.

Big mistake.

Accidents continued to occur, and although they were excused by other circumstances, they could almost always be traced back to the lower sides on the cars. Then came the tragic death of Gilles Villeneuve, and an accident later in Germany that saw Didier Pironi break both his legs in multiple places. The cause of those accidents could not be brushed aside and it was obvious something had to be done.

In November 1982, ground effects were officially banned with a more explicit rule, stating that from 1983 flat bottoms were required for F1 cars from the trailing edge of the front wheels, to the leading edge of the rear wheels. Since then, the sport has never looked back. There's no denying the fact that it was a brilliant piece of engineering, to get the idea off the page, out of the wind tunnel and onto the cars. But the dangers and speeds involved were just too great, and there is no question that banning the principal was the right thing to do.

That's all for this episode of Days that Shook the F1 World. Please visit Sidepodcast.com to leave your comments and feedback about this and the other shows in this series.



Monaco Qualifying 2006

Welcome to Sidepodcast's Days that Shook the F1 World, a series sharing some of the more pivotal moments in F1 History. Today, the 27th May 2006.

Michael Schumacher had already won twice in 2006, but was still struggling for form against defending champion Fernando Alonso. In the back of his mind he might have known this would be his last season and therefore his last race in the principality. Desperation may have been starting to set in.

Qualifying began as it always did, with the first of the three sessions. Notably, Felipe Massa crashed out in the sister Ferrari, causing red flags and plenty of chaos. Whatever help Michael may have expected from Felipe was immediately out of the window, and Ferrari's race strategy was further compromised because Massa would likely start last in Sunday's Grand Prix.

The second session passed without event, and the majority of the third session evolved predictably.

As the session drew to a close, Schumacher began his last attempt at a flying lap, but he lost two tenths somewhere in the middle sector. Aware that he could not make up that kind of deficit in the remainder of the lap and aware that his closest rival was behind him on the track, he got out of shape around the hairpin at Rascasse, pulling to a stop inches from the barrier.

The Ferrari was stuck in a dangerous position, so marshals had to wave their yellow flags, ensuring that a following Fernando Alonso had no choice but to slow down and abort his lap. How convenient.

The big question was: did Schumacher do it deliberately or was it merely a mistake?

Ferrari absolutely denied the former. It was an accident, a pure racing incident with no malice intended.

The entire pit lane rallied against this claim. How could it be an accident? The man was a master at Monaco, he missed the barriers by inches, meaning Alonso's lap was ruined while the Ferrari suffered no damage. Surely an act of evil genius?

The stewards investigated, ruled Schumacher had done wrong, and pushed him to the back of the grid meaning both Ferraris would start from the back row, making it the teams worst ever qualifying position. During the race, Schumacher wowed everyone by fighting his way through the traffic and ended up in the top eight. No one denied the man could drive.

But that didn't matter. The event caused a reaction completely unprecedented in the F1 World. Previous attempts to disrupt the course of a GP weekend by Schumacher and/or his team were now viewed in a new light. How could you believe that his accidents with championship rivals Damon Hill and Jacques Villeneuve in previous years, were simply mistakes? Fans were instantly reminded of his other misdemeanours, and now excuses were much less credible.

If he did do it on purpose, it revealed an enormous amount about Michael Schumacher's character. Being a seven times world champion clearly wasn't enough, and even though he claimed to always want to win everything fair and square, a little underhand technique every now and then wasn't completely out of the question.

Prior to Monaco '06, when an incident occurred where questionable tactics had been used, the pit lane traditionally stayed quiet, had some time to think about it, and then responded via press releases and lawyers. After this event though, no one was backwards in coming forward. The entire pit lane erupted with scorn and derision, crying



“cheat” and demanding action. Of course, they got what they wanted, and a new precedent was born. If you have an opinion on any subject, better to share it immediately, loudly, and to anyone who cares to listen.

Most importantly though, this event took place as fans were becoming more vocal too. Bloggers were just waiting for a controversial event to get their teeth into, and Michael Schumacher well and truly delivered. Everyone had an opinion, whether for or against the German, and now everyone could have their say.

Coverage of Formula 1 was changing, and this was the first major event to have everyone call it – cheater, evil genius or genuine mistake?

That’s all for our fifth important date. Join me tomorrow for another Day that Shook the F1 World.

Last Cosworth Races 2006

Welcome to Days that Shook the F1 World, a Sidepodcast series dedicated to bringing you some of the important dates in F1 History. We’ve looked at races and at controversies so far, and in this sixth episode, we’ll look at the disappearance of a legendary name. The date, October 22nd 2006.

Whilst the final race of an engine manufacturer may not have as much hard-hitting foundation-rocking emphasis as other specific days in Formula 1, Cosworth bowing out after almost forty years in the sport is just as important as any other headline.

Their final race came in Brazil, 2006, where Fernando’s second championship success overshadowed the exit of a supplier who had been in F1 since 1966. Back then, they entered their first season supplying no less than three teams – Stebro, Lotus and Brabham – with engines. By 1967, they were on winning form with the Lotus-Ford.

From a company that began in 1958, with Mike Costin and Keith Duckworth at the helm, the reputation for building strong race engines with high performance levels and excellent support from engineers built very rapidly.

Once they started winning, they couldn’t stop, and these following two facts can only prove what a remarkable engine it really was. Between 1968 and 1974, Cosworth engines were running the cars of every World Champion. Between 69 and 73, Cosworth engines were inside the cars of every single race winner.

Many drivers and champions attribute their successes over the years to the power in their cars, names such as Sir Jackie Stewart, Graham Hill, even Michael Schumacher.

However, as the decades wore on, the big name manufacturers began to enter and dominate the sport. Companies such as Honda, BMW and Toyota had bigger brands and bigger budgets, and teams switched allegiances all too easily.

When Jackie Stewart set up his own team in 1997, he decided to try and repay the favour to Cosworth, snapping them up as engine suppliers. The results didn’t follow, though, and after the team changed hands through Ford and Red Bull, Cosworth’s options within the sport began to run out.

In 2006, their final year, Cosworth supplied both Williams and Toro Rosso, but Williams were the first to admit it was their worst season in decades. However, not all of this can be blamed on Cosworth, as they were first on the grid to successfully make a modern V8 F1 engine rev all the way up to 20,000rpm.

Williams quickly signed Toyota as a supplier, and the fate of Cosworth appeared to be sealed. They announced that 2006 was the end for their name in the sport, and bowed out quietly in Brazil.



Afterwards, 200 staff were laid off. The company lacked a bit of direction. The future looked bleak.

Nowadays, Cosworth say they have learnt a valuable lesson not to keep all their eggs in one motorsport basket. They are now concentrating more on the air industry with contracts including Airbus and Boeing. A return to Formula 1 is not impossible, especially as they have a homologated FIA engine sitting idle. Sadly with the wealthy domination from suppliers like Ferrari and Mercedes, that seems highly improbable.

Anyone with an affinity for Formula 1 through the years knows that Cosworth made history, and you can't help but feel the sport isn't the same without them.

Thanks for listening to this episode. You can leave comments about the show, or suggestions for future topics over at Sidepodcast.com. Tune in tomorrow for the last in this series of Days that Shook the F1 World.

Mosley Becomes President 1991

Welcome to Sidepodcast's series Days that Shook the F1 World. So far we've looked at the US Grand Prix in 2005, Ayrton Senna's death in 1994 and more. Today we're looking at a pivotal moment in Formula 1 history, and the date was 9th October 1991.

It's fair to say that Max Mosley is not the most popular person in F1 at the moment, and his tenure at the top of the FIA may soon be drawing to a close. However, when he first got the job back in 1991, he was definitely the preferred option.

It was the events of the 1989 Japanese Grand Prix and the subsequent fallout that first promoted Max to stand against the then president of the FISA Jean-Marie Balestre. The FISA was the sporting part of the FIA, and they were suffering from a case of bad reputations. Already we have discussed the lacklustre attempt at banning ground effects, which ultimately led to more accidents and deaths.

In Japan, an accident between Senna and Prost caused the Brazilian to be excluded from the race, handing the '89 World Championship to Prost. Further to that, an appeal by McLaren served to see Ayrton's super-license suspended and he was given a fine for \$100,000. Predictably Senna spoke out about the decision and his comments claimed championship manipulation by the FISA. This angered Balestre, so much so that Senna was called before the World Motorsport Council to explain himself. The courts decided to take away Senna's superlicence altogether, and he wasn't going to be allowed it back unless he apologised for his comments.

The following February, Senna was finally persuaded to make the apology and his licence was returned. Max Mosley started to solicit support to become the FIA President. Although this obviously had something to do with the incident with Senna, it may also have had origins in the history between Mosley and Balestre. A vicious war had been raging between the FISA and the FOCA.

The FOCA was headed up by Bernie Ecclestone with Max Mosley as his right hand man. They were working on the team's behalf to increase revenue share and make sure that everyone had their say. The FISA was fighting against them.

Eventually, the war drew to a somewhat amicable resolution, with Balestre taking over as President of the FIA and continuing to make the rules for Formula 1, whilst Ecclestone took over the commercial rights for the sport and divided up the cash.



In 1991, Balestre's FIA presidency was up for renewal, and Max Mosley stood against him. Mosley easily gained the presidency. For a while, teams were satisfied. Max was working with them instead of against them, rule changes began to happen and everything was hunky dory. Teams and drivers felt so comfortable that Senna was able to speak out against the former President without fear of losing his licence. He denied making any apologies about the manipulation claims.

Of course, the happiness couldn't last, and you'll find politics rearing up almost every day now. But it's safe to say that at the time, Mosley was the best thing that could have happened to the sport.

That's all for this episode of Days that Shook the F1 World, and all for this series. Please visit Sidepodcast.com to leave your comments about this and any of the other shows in the series. Thanks for listening.

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