



## F1 Digest 2009 – Monaco GP

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Welcome to F1 Digest 2009 – Monaco GP.

We've been building up to this for one extra day than normal, so by the time Sunday rolled round we were looking forward to a good race.

### The Race

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Another beautiful day in Monaco, the track temperature was up to 42 degrees C and the air up to 25. Lewis Hamilton took the opportunity of his bad qualifying position to change his gearbox, thus putting him to the back of the grid. However, Toyota started Glock from the pitlane, so really he was last.

The race got underway so cleanly that we weren't sure it had actually started. Barrichello got past Raikkonen off the line, but there were no incidents round the first corner, and everyone behaved themselves through the first lap. Hamilton managed to get past Trulli and move up a place. On only the third lap, Kubica came into the pitlane for what appeared to be a regular stop – he changed tyres and added fuel.

Massa was trying to get past Vettel, and hustled him for a few laps. He cut across the swimming pool, getting in front of the Red Bull and had to hand the place back. Unfortunately for him, Rosberg put his foot down and made his way past as well.

Vettel was holding everyone up – he was the lightest man in the top ten and it appeared that his soft tyres weren't holding up too well. He started falling back, letting Rosberg and Massa past, before diving into the pitlane.

Out on track, Buemi ran straight into the back of Piquet, pushing them both off and into the barriers. Our first two retirees. Vettel was the next in line, as he also crashed into the barriers.

The first round of pit stops saw Button retain his lead at the top. Massa was spotted cutting corners, with all four wheels off track. He was told twice over the radio that the FIA had given him a warning. Kubica came into the pitlane and retired from the race with a brake problem.

Next we spotted Kimi cutting the corner, but his was much more of a mistake and didn't benefit him at all. The second round of pit stops saw Button come out behind the Ferrari, but only momentarily until Kimi came in for his stop.

Kovalainen went nose-first into the barriers, whilst Hamilton had to pit for a nose change, possibly from brushing the barriers earlier in the race.

Button was heard on the radio asking if he could slow so as not to catch the barkmarkers in front and risk an incident. With just one lap to go, Nakajima was the final man to end up in the barriers, causing waved yellow flags but it didn't affect Button crossing the line for yet another win.

### Results

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Button takes his fifth win of six races, with Barrichello just seven seconds behind making it a Brawn 1-2. Raikkonen was third with Massa in fourth, showing vast improvements for the Ferrari. Webber finished 5<sup>th</sup> and Rosberg 6<sup>th</sup>, whilst Alonso and Bourdais rounded out the points positions. Fisichella narrowly missed out on a point for Force India, and Glock finished tenth – a step up from his beginning in the pit lane. He was the first man to finish one lap



down though, followed by Heidfeld, Hamilton, Trulli and Sutil. Nakajima finished two laps down... and in the barriers. The retirees were Kovalainen, Kubica, Vettel, Piquet and Buemi.

## Championship Standings

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Button increases his lead in the drivers championship with 51 points to Barrichello's 35. Vettel has 23, Webber 19.5 and Trulli has 14.5. In the constructors, Brawn GP have 86 which is more than double Red Bull's second place with 42.5. Toyota have 26.5, Ferrari have 17 and McLaren have 13.

## Team by Team

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Let's start with BMW, and Heidfeld tells of just how tight it is around Monaco: "I tried to make up positions at the start and on the first lap, but this time it just didn't work out. It is too narrow here. I was stuck behind Adrian for quite a while. Apparently he had problems with his tyres, and once I even touched the rear of his car. In turn one Lewis hit me, but I was happy I was able to continue." Kubica explains his early pit stop: "We had difficulties over the entire weekend. I had a problem at the start and fell to the back of the grid. Then I had a puncture on my rear right tyre." The eventual DNF just rounds off a great weekend for BMW.

For Force India, Sutil says that starting on the wrong tyre and having to pit because of that signalled the end of his competitive one-stop strategy. Fisichella, though, is happy with his race: "Ninth position is a great result for the team. The pace was very good and consistent and I felt I was driving well, taking care of the tyres and putting in some fast laps at the same time. I just lost a position at the start and perhaps it was this that cost me the point in the end, but we have to be happy about today."

Rosberg had a better tyre strategy that worked out well, seeing him finish 6<sup>th</sup>: "We did a long middle stint on primes as we were worried about the durability of the option tyre, but they seemed to hold on much better than expected in the last stint, perhaps due to the amount of rubber down on the circuit by the end of the race." Nakajima is realistic about his incident: "In the final analysis the outcome was disappointing, I was on the option tyre and I was pushing perhaps too hard when I had my accident nearly at the finish, but at least I had a good feeling with the car today."

Glock is impressed with the way his race turned out: "I have to say that finishing in the top 10 was a bit more than I expected at the start of the race considering how the weekend had gone up to then. We had good pace in the last stint but when you start from the pit lane in Monaco you cannot expect to score points." Trulli didn't have such a good day: "It was a tough race for me, as we anticipated after the qualifying result. It was always going to be very difficult from where we were on the grid and my strategy didn't work out. I seemed to always be in the wrong place at the wrong time with the traffic, which is obviously a real problem at this track."

Over at Red Bull, Vettel has little to say about his accident: "Not much to tell - I was braking maybe a little bit too late, locked the rears, lost the car and hit the wall. Of course we lost a lot of time already in the first stint, being on the soft tyres. We were confident that they would work for the first short stint, but they didn't." On the other side of the garage, Webber says that finishing fifth is good enough, as it was a challenging weekend all round.

Raikkonen's podium finish still isn't enough to satisfy him, because he says his aim is always to win. But he does say: "Over the past few weeks we have made a real step forward in terms of performance and this result confirms it. We still have work to do to catch up with the best, but we are moving in the right direction." This is a sentiment that Massa echoes, feeling that he had a very competitive car under him. He is expecting more results as the season progresses.

For Renault, Piquet is very disappointed to have been taken out of the race when it wasn't his fault: "I got hit from behind on the straight by Sebastien Buemi, which damaged the rear of my car and forced me to retire. It's really



frustrating as I think I could have maybe scored some points today." Alonso is relatively happy with what he achieved: "We had a good strategy but here in Monaco the starting position is essential and so starting ninth and gaining two places and two points is a satisfying result."

For once, Bourdais had a good day: "Once I got ahead of my direct rivals and there was no one within reach in front of me, I settled into a rhythm, concentrating on bringing the car home. I had several tricky moments, but that's what street racing is about. It was a fun race, with the satisfaction of scoring a point starting 14th." Buemi apologises to Piquet for taking him out, but was just too close behind when the Renault braked.

Hamilton is also retaining his good mood, mostly happy that he raced his heart out and got all the way through to the chequered flag. Kovalainen wasn't so lucky, though: "A disappointing outcome to my weekend after some real promise. During my first stint, I had a little difficulty making my tyres work properly. My second set was much better and I was just waiting for Nico's pitstop to have chance to pass him, unfortunately I didn't get that far." He says the accident was his fault and apologises to the team.

Finally, Brawn GP are continuing their dominance at the top. Barrichello says: "Another one-two for the team today is just amazing. I had a really good start on the option tyre and was able to get ahead of Kimi before the first corner which put me in a great position to challenge Jenson." Of course, he couldn't and Button says: "Winning the Monaco Grand Prix is something that you dream about as a child and as a racing driver and the reality of taking that victory just feels awesome. To win in Monaco is truly a special feeling."

### Quote of the Day

That's it for this race weekend. Next up, we're in Turkey in two weeks time, so join me again then for four more shows. I'll leave you with this quote from Dr Vijay Mallya: "This has been a very encouraging weekend all round. We got two cars into Q2 and finished within a whisker of the points; and all on merit."