



F1 Digest - Germany Preview

Intro

Hello and welcome to F1 Digest – your dedicated F1 coverage from Sidepodcast. You know the drill by now, there are four shows covering four days making sure you don't miss a minute of the action. Today we are previewing the German Grand Prix.

Vital Statistics

Date: 20th July

Circuit: Hockenheim

Length: 4.6km

Laps: 67

Last Year

Now, it's all very confusing. There wasn't a German Grand Prix last year, but the teams did race at the Nurburgring only it was called the European GP. This time, the European race is at Valencia, so we have the German race back but it's at Hockenheim. Next year it will be back at the Nurburgring. All I'm trying to say is that there are no last year clips for this preview because, well, we didn't talk about either Hockenheim or the German Grand Prix last year. So, let's move straight on to this year.

Insider's View

This week we'll hear from two of the drivers who are looking forward to their home races in Germany. First up, Nico Rosberg tells us why Hockenheim is special to him.

Nico: Germany is another of my home Grands Prix, it's great to have the chance to have two Home Grands Prix. I really enjoy going there because the fans are all German, so it's good to have a bit of extra support and also the track is great. This year it's in Hockenheim, which is in fact where I won my first ever single-seater race. In fact I think I've won most of my races at this track so I really enjoy it and I'm looking forward to the race this year.

And next we have Vettel, who proves he's a local boy.

Vettel: Well, I'm very pleased. I'm very much looking forward to the German Grand Prix especially in Hockenheim. It's my real home Grand Prix, I'm just coming from the area, half an hour away by car, so it's basically around the corner. I have a lot of friends, family, friends here. Now I just have to do a good race and everything's perfect.

Team Thoughts

Whilst Rosberg is confident due to his previous successes at the circuit, Nakajima has been doing all he can to get ready for this race: "The test helped me get used to the circuit, and I've also spent some time in the sim at the factory to help me prepare. It's a great track, but quite challenging. It's quite similar to Silverstone and Magny-Cours in that sense. I'm looking forward to it."

Despite his win at Silverstone, Lewis Hamilton isn't relaxing just yet. "Pressure always exists because you need to win consistently. In Formula One, you're only as good as your last race and Silverstone already felt like an old memory by the time I was testing at Hockenheim on Tuesday. Generally, however, a race win briefly takes the load off everyone's shoulders because it allows you to push forward without looking back at the problems you may have faced in the previous race. But you can never get complacent." Kovalainen is feeling comfortable in the car, finally settled at the team, and now wants to work harder to show that he can improve things on the racetrack as well.

For BMW, Heidfeld is looking forward to racing on the circuit: "I personally have a lot of good memories of the Hockenheimring, especially the old circuit with its long straights through the forest. Those sections were really unmistakable, but the new track is, of course, significantly safer and better for the spectators – and I appreciate it for those reasons. Plus, a good overtaking opportunity has been created in the Parabolika." Can I just say, Parabolika may be my favourite corner name ever. Kubica will be in his first F1 race at the circuit, having only tested there before and says he will try his best.

Fernando Alonso easily deflects the question of whether his R28 Renault will perform well this weekend, by saying they completed their test programme last week, they have a good basis to work from and he wants to realise their full potential in Germany. A simple yes or no would have done. Piquet is coming to terms with his poor result at the British GP: "I was obviously disappointed to retire from the race, especially from such a strong position with a car that was handling well. Still, I take some positives from Silverstone because the car was good, we improved it throughout the weekend, and I qualified well inside the top ten, just behind Fernando."

Pascal Vasselon who is the Senior General Chassis Manager at Toyota, has noted the tyres may be an issue: "This will be the first time that we have been to Hockenheim with the current tyres. Bridgestone's choice of the two hardest compounds in the range is conservative because Hockenheim is a medium severity track, a little like Magny-Cours." Meanwhile, Trulli says he prefers the old longer circuit, but is looking forward to the chance to overtake at the new one. Glock says Hockenheim is one of his favourite circuits, mostly because it's only 45 minutes away from where he grew up.

Barrichello is naturally still on a high from his podium at Silverstone, but is keeping his feet on the ground. "However we have to keep our focus and continue to improve the performance of the RA108 as we are fully aware that our result at Silverstone was assisted by the wet conditions. We made a small step at the test so it will be interesting to see how the car performs against our midfield competitors this weekend." And Button refused to make any guesses, saying: "It is so incredibly competitive in the midfield pack at the moment that it is almost impossible to make predictions."

Sutil is another one of our guys with a home race in Germany, and is happy that the fans will be there, that the circuit is good, and that he's enjoyed driving here in the past. Fisichella, meanwhile, says the track is not one of his favourites, but he thinks it should make for some good racing.

Raikkonen is hoping for hot weather in Germany this weekend, as the Ferrari has had its run of bad luck at the cooler climates. "I hope it will be hot, as it usually is at Hockenheim. Our car goes really well at high temperatures and also the tyre-wear is not too high. So I really hope it will be hot." Massa is busy defending himself after his record five spins at Silverstone. He says only the first one was actually driver error, and the rest were down to the tyres. He's confident that he can do better in Germany.

The lack of Red Bull and Toro Rosso quotes won't stop me guessing how they're all feeling. Vettel has been in the headlines recently saying he just wants a car that is competitive and isn't bothered by how much he gets paid. A very timely announcement by the boy wonder, who has now been confirmed as Red Bull's number two for next year. Webber did pretty well on the last day of testing at Hockenheim, so he'll no doubt be feeling quite confident, and



Coulthard is probably going to want to do better after a not particularly impressive exit from the British Grand Prix. That's mostly speculation, of course, but we will find out how they get on soon enough.

Thanks for listening to today's preview show, don't forget to tune in tomorrow for a round-up of the Free Practice action. If you're anywhere near Sidepodcast.com during the sessions, visit the live commenting threads, and you could get a mention on this show. See you there.

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