



Races to Remember – Italy 1967

Hello and welcome to the Races to Remember mini series, brought to you by Sidepodcast. So far, we've checked out some controversy in 2003, and some chaos at Spa in 1998, now it's time for a close race in Italy, 1967 .

Back in 1967, the circuit at Monza was very similar to its current condition, although there was a distinct lack of chicanes. Most of the corners were flat out, and there was a worrying lack of runoff area. The F1 circus came from Canada to Italy, with Honda nice and refreshed – having missed out on the North American race, in favour of getting their new chassis completed. Jim Clark was a double world champion, and had won just two races so far in the season. There were only three Grand Prix remaining, and he needed to start winning.

There was no qualifying in those days, and the grid was determined on the Free Practice times. Clark put his Lotus on pole, with Jack Brabham behind. Brabham was also on a tally of two wins for the season, and the pair were ready to battle it out. When the race got underway, Brabham took the lead but he soon lost it as a stream of cars passed him. By the third lap, Clark had re-taken the lead and was pulling out a nice gap.

On the 14th lap, Clark was comfortably in front but suffered a puncture and had to pit. The stop took much longer than he would have hoped, and he rejoined more than a lap down and just three places from the back of the field. Meanwhile at the front, the lead changed hands on almost every lap, with a total of 12 race leaders by the time the chequered flag was waved.

Whilst the front runners were busy battling each other, Jim Clark was working hard making his way through the field. Some of his progression was due to the unreliability of others, and the many retirees during the afternoon. In fact, there were only seven classified drivers when the race finished. However, Clark's progress was also a mix of skill, slipstreaming, and pushing his Lotus to the limit. Before long, he was back on the lead lap. Even more impressively, it was just a few more minutes before he was back in front, and heading for a victory.

On the final lap, though, the Lotus ran out of fuel. The Ford Cosworth engine struggled to keep going, and in the end, Clark was left coasting for the finish line, helpless and merely a passenger. All his hard work had come to nothing, and what could have been one of the greatest comebacks had been thwarted.

The excitement wasn't over though, as in second place, Jack Brabham was doing his best to defend from third place John Surtees, who was in the Honda. On the last corner, Surtees used the momentum and slipstream to pull out next to the pit wall, and in a blink, the pair crossed the finish line, and the race was over. Surtees had managed to win the race by just two tenths of a second. Brabham had to settle for second, and Jim Clark's Lotus drifted across the line over twenty seconds later for third.

The result was Honda's second win as a constructor in Formula 1, and was the last before the 39 year drought led them to the 2006 Hungarian GP victory.

That's it for this episode of Races to Remember. Please let me know your feedback on this race, this show, or Honda's lack of wins. Email me Christine@sidepodcast.com, or leave a comment on the site. I will see you again tomorrow for another look at a Grand Prix from history.