



Inside Track – São Paulo

[Opening credits]

Christine: Welcome to Inside Track for the Brazilian Grand Prix. We've been previewing all the races this year, and this is the last one. Coming up this week, a final reminder of the standings, our tour of the circuit at Interlagos, and Toyota reflect on their season.

Christine – Voiceover

Hamilton had the best weekend he possibly could, leading all session except Free Practice 3. He took the victory and the maximum 10 points. The Ferrari swap allowed Massa to pick up 8 and Raikkonen 6. Alonso finished 4th with 5 points, Heidfeld picked up 4, and Kubica's 3 points meant his title fight was over.

Hamilton continues to lead the championship going into this final weekend, and he'll hope to stay at the top once it's over as well. He's ahead of Massa by 7 points, 94 to the Ferrari's 87. Kubica has 75, Raikkonen 69, Heidfeld 60 and Alonso 53.

Meanwhile, the constructors has Ferrari on top with 156 points, McLaren just 11 points behind, and BMW third with 135. Renault have 72, Toyota 52, and Toro Rosso have 34 points.

[Cut to Christine.]

Christine: It's been on hiatus for the last two races, but Brazil sees the return of one of our new shows The Parade Lap. And boy, what a return. For both Italy and Singapore, we streamed a live show one hour before TV coverage starts in the UK, with music and F1 chatter, callers and weather updates. The Parade Lap endeavours to be a nice relaxing way to get into the F1 spirit before we go headlong into Live Commenting the race itself.

We chose not to broadcast Parade Lap shows in the small hours of the morning for the last two races, but Brazil is on at a sensible time in the UK and it's the last race of the season so if you haven't heard it yet, now would be a good time to check it out. Visit Sidepodcast.com for more information.

[Cut to footage of Brazil. Cut to Richard Cregan.]

Richard: I believe we're on the verge of a very good season in 2009. It's an equal platform for everybody where we go in with a completely new car, and I think that's going to be the real tell-tale of whether we've done our homework or not in the previous years. So it's been a good year, but the future is the middle, number one.

[Cut to John Howett.]

John: Yea, our ambition really is to squeeze more performance and be more aggressive to achieve podiums. It's great this year to be back on the podium. I think we have two drivers and a car that can challenge for podium positions

[Cut to Christine]



Christine: It's always worth looking back at what happened last season, so before we carry on, let's revisit 2007. Going into Brazil last year, Hamilton had a four point lead over Alonso and seven over Raikkonen. Massa took pole, and a bad start from Hamilton meant Raikkonen managed to jump up and slot in behind his team mate. Alonso also managed to get past Hamilton, and in trying to get the place back, Lewis ran really wide, dropping down to 8th. Just a few laps later, his gearbox cut out, leaving him in neutral for 30 seconds, and at the back of the pack. He put in a strong drive to finish seventh, but was out of the title challenge.

Massa dutifully let his team mate past for the lead and the win, and held up Alonso, meaning Kimi managed to scoop the title by just one solitary point. The 2007 Brazilian Grand Prix will always be the yardstick to show that it's not over until it's over. Having said that, the cool fuel thing meant it wasn't over even when it was over, but let's not go back there again. Now, it's time to take a look at one lap of Interlagos.

[Cut to animated circuit.]

Christine - Voiceover

The first thing you need to know about Interlagos is that it's an anti-clockwise layout, meaning it adds that extra challenge to the normal, gruelling race weekend. The second thing you need to know is that it has the history and the passion, and most of the drivers love it.

The first corner is the Senna S, taken in second gear, at about 80 km/h, leading round to the left. Speeds and gears go up for the second part of the S, but back down again for Turn 3.

We've got three drivers celebrating a home race this weekend, Barrichello, Piquet and Massa, with the latter hoping to repeat his 2006 feat of securing victory in front of the Brazilian fans. There are quite a few overtaking opportunities on this track, so hopefully we'll see a few of those this weekend.

The long straight ends with a double left turning back on itself, that sees speeds drop from 300 km/h on the straight, to 140 round the first bend and 240 round the second. This leads back up a short straight to Ferra Dura and Pinheirinho, which are quite simply two fabulous names for corners. Pinheirinho can be a 1st gear turn, with low, low speeds, and that leads to another 1st gear corner. This sharp right is taken at about 75 km/h, one of the slowest points on the circuit.

With the track as bumpy as Singapore and the weather forecasts predicting storms and showers, the drivers have plenty to anticipate for this season finale.

Now, it's just one long unwind back round to the start/finish straight. We pass through Turns 11 to 15, getting faster and faster until the driver can blast over the line. Pole position in 2007 was Felipe Massa, in the Ferrari, with 1 minute 11.931 seconds.

Christine: Now it's time to say goodbye. Don't forget your checklist for the race weekend. Live Commenting through all free practice sessions, qualifying and the race, F1 Minute for a quick roundup of the action, F1 Digest for more detail, The Parade Lap pre-race as a nice introduction to the action, and F1 Debrief post-race for all the gossip. Even if this is the last Inside Track, there's still plenty to keep you busy, so I'll see you on Sidepodcast.com.