



Inside Track – Montreal Preview

[Opening credits]

Christine: You're watching Inside Track from Sidepodcast, and this is our preview for the French Grand Prix. After all the excitement, surprises and championship changes in Canada, it's time to look ahead and see what France has to offer. Coming up this week, we catch up with both driver and constructor championships, tour the circuit at Magny-Cours and hear from a Frenchman.

Christine – Voiceover

Canada offered a great mix of results after Hamilton and Raikkonen were eliminated from the race early on. Kubica took his maiden win and 10 points, with Heidfeld just behind him taking 8. Coulthard rounded out the surprising podium with 6 points, followed by Glock, Massa and Trulli with 5, 4 and 3 respectively.

This unexpected win boosts Kubica to the top of the driver's championship, four points ahead of Hamilton now, 42 to 38. Massa is also on 38, but sits just behind Lewis. Raikkonen is now fourth with 35 points, Heidfeld next on 28, and Kovalainen has 15.

The constructors still has Ferrari at the top, with 73, BMW are next on 70, and then a larger gap to McLaren on 53. Coulthard has given Red Bull a few extra points on 21, whilst Toyota have 17 and Williams have 15.

Chris: We've discussed F1 Digest before, and you know about Sidepodcast TV, obviously, but let's not forget about F1 Minute. My daily 60 second news show has been going strongly for about nine months now, and it's gradually getting bigger. With the start of the season, I introduced two extra shows on race weekends, to cover all the action from the event without having to rush too much. Now, I don't know about anybody else but I find it quite confusing to know whether it's an F1 Minute day or not, despite the Google Calendar. So, from this week onwards, you can catch a new podcast every day, just visit F1minute.com for all the details and to find the latest show. That's F1 Minute seven days a week. Every week. Until the season ends. Much simpler, don't you reckon?

[Footage of France. Cut to Sebastien Bourdais.]

Sebastien: Anything can happen in Magny-Cours or in any other Grand Prix. For us, it's to do the best we can, points would be great, obviously. It always is the target for us. There is going to be a Bourdais grandstand at Magny-Cours, it's right in front of our pit, so that should be quite special, it's very positive. For me, there is a lot of support from the French Federation, from the track, obviously from the supporters, the fans, it's always a plus. France is where I was born, I'm very much French, I never gave up my nationality, and never will. It's my roots, it's the country I cherish for sure. I think everyone reacts differently to Formula 1. It's very easy to lose your mind and lose your head and become a bit of an idiot sometimes, just because of all the exposure you get. But I got there when I was already 28, so it's a bit easier on that respect.

[Cut to Christine.]

Chris: Before we take a look at the circuit, I'll just quickly recap what happened in 2007. Last year, Lewis Hamilton was coming into the French Grand Prix with his first two victories recently under his belt. The momentum wasn't enough to lead him to this win, however, as Raikkonen stormed to the chequered flag and the top step of the podium. A disgruntled Massa, who had started the race in pole position, had to settle for second, having been



completely outshone by his Ferrari team mate. Other notable finishes include Fisichella who picked up a couple of points in his Renault, and Button, who pulled his ailing Honda into 8th for a single point. But that's enough history, let's now take a look at one lap around Magny-Cours.

Chris – Voiceover

The drivers aren't that fussed about Magny-Cours, with the circuit tucked away in the French countryside, and none of the night life and atmosphere the rest of the calendar offers. But what of the track itself?

The first corner is a sweeping left hand bend, which means the bunching up that usually occurs off the grid, doesn't always happen. In fact most of the start of the track is sweeping, with the next corner being a long 180 degree turn to the right, leading on to an enormous straight. It eases to the right slightly, but drivers stick the car in top gear and put their foot down across the first timing sector.

The first real challenge of Magny-Cours is Adelaide, a tight hairpin taken in second gear and at about 80 km/h. This leads to a straight parallel to the one we just travelled down, again top gear, almost 300 km/h.

Last year it looked like we were saying goodbye to the French Grand Prix at this particular circuit, but towards the end of summer, organisers signed on the dotted line for another year. Even if the facilities aren't up to much, the short pit lane does make for a good mixture of strategies with three stopping not out of the question.

Our final 180 degree corner leads on to a much wonkier straight, with a couple of kinks here and there to make things more interesting. Approaching the Imola corner, drivers take 5th gear, and through to the next they dip down to fourth.

A tight right hander is taken in 2nd gear and a good exit is vital to get maximum speed out of the final stretch of track. A quick flick to the left, dropping speeds to about 250 km/h and then to the final Lesay Pin right hand corner – 2nd gear and under 100km/h. Finally, slip through the chicane and across the line.

Pole position in 2007 was Felipe Massa for Ferrari with 1 minute 15.034 seconds.

Chris: That brings us to the end of another Inside Track. Last week I asked you all to visit us on Sidepodcast.com for Live Commenting, and we saw lots of new faces, so thanks to everyone for joining in the fun. It really made a difference to all the sessions, having so many sets of eyes. Still, we didn't quite break 1,000 comments for the race like I was hoping, so if you haven't participated yet, visit Sidepodcast.com for all Free Practice sessions, qualifying and the Grand Prix, and I'll see you there. Enjoy the race.

[Still: Ove Andersson, January 3, 1938 – June 11, 2008]

[End Credits.]