



## Video 8 – France Preview

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[Initial shots of France. Cut to Christine.]

**Chris:** Welcome to Sidepodcast TV. This is our preview of the French Grand Prix. Poor old Magny Cours, nobody loves it. The drivers don't love it, the teams don't love it, and with Renault not looking on fine form, even the French fans aren't gonna love it. Most importantly though, Bernie Ecclestone doesn't seem to love it, he's kicked it off the calendar for 2008. So make the most of our one and only lap around the circuit at Magny Cours.

[Cut to Allianz animation]

### Voiceover

The pit lane of the Magny Cours circuit is one of the shortest on the calendar, which is a polar opposite of the previous race in the US. It means three pit stops are entirely possible, although the tyres will be the dominating force this weekend.

The lap is a real challenge that includes pretty much every kind of corner, starting with a 4<sup>th</sup> gear left hander dipping away for Turn 2 to the right. Turn 3 is a long, long sweep to the right, that leads into a huge straight. A couple of kinks temper the speed slightly, but the top gear straight reaches speeds of 306 km/h, passing the cheering grandstands on the left hand side. All too soon, it's hard on the brakes for Turn 5, an incredibly tight hairpin. This corner has the highest g forces of the lap at 4.6, and has plenty of run off areas – just in case.

Back down the hill again, drivers arrive at the first s bend – named after another track that has been axed from the calendar - Nurburgring. Turn 8 is a 180 degree left hander, with a braking time of 2.5 seconds and disc temperatures reaching up to 1000 degrees C. The drivers then head back down another short straight to meet the second s bend – this time named after Imola. A 5<sup>th</sup> gear corner, Imola is taken at just over 200 km/h, but the cars are soon slowed for Turn 13. A second gear, 80km/h corner and another with plenty of gravel run-offs, Turn 13 leads the track down yet another dipping straight until the final corner complex.

Revised in 2003, the last section of the lap was supposed to encourage overtaking, but had little effect. All that it achieved was the shortened pit lane I mentioned earlier. The drivers take a sharp right that leads into a small chicane before crossing the start/finish line for the lap.

Pole position in 2006 was Michael Schumacher with 1m 15.493 seconds.

[Cut to Christine]

**Chris:** That is what the lap looks like in glorious, technical detail. Now we can take a look at the event in general, by reviewing the ING Race Index. Remember, it's like the Dow Jones, but for F1 circuits, scoring out of 100 to compare tracks on a fair and equal basis.

[Cut to ING Race Index]

### Voiceover



The ING Race Index has four categories – Circuit and Strategy, Strain on Drivers, Vehicle Setup and Engineering Requirements. It's all very mathematical and done very well, but I'm not happy. The figures all seem to end up between 50 and 65 which makes me think they have wasted the idea of making comparing tracks easier. So, whilst I will tell you what ING have suggested for each category, I'm also gonna add a bit of spice.

First up – Circuit and Strategy. Magny Cours lies in the peaceful French countryside, and next year the countryside will be even more peaceful. Bernie's not happy with the location, but what do we think? The circuit boasts the shortest pit lane which has incredibly fast access, so it looks like most of the overtaking work will be done by the pit crews. Out on the track, the main focus point will be at Adelaide where braking is crucial to stay ahead. With these thoughts, ING gives the track a mundane 56 points out of 100. I prefer to think it deserves a 24.

Next up – Strain on drivers. The official line from ING reads that the statistics prove this event is perhaps uneventful for the drivers. However, the track shows a different story with fast sections and slow curves. In reality, the strain is all on the tyres, which in turn puts pressure on our drivers to stay in control. So, whilst ING give Magny Cours a relatively massive 66 out of 100, I'm gonna bump that up to 72.

Our third category is Vehicle Setup. Like I said, the tyres take a lot of punishment around the 70 laps. A perfect morning setup might be completely useless in the afternoon. That sounds pretty tricky to me, which makes me wonder why ING are settling for 50 out of 100. I reckon, at least 60.

The fourth and final category is all about engineering. This time I have to quote the ING information: "Magny Cours is business as usual." Which means there are no special requirements needed. You would expect the ING score to be something low, like 38, right? They've decided to go for 58. Weird.

So, all in all, the French race is a bit up and down. Setup is tricky, but the course itself is not quite so bad. The track can be temperamental but at least it's in a relaxing atmosphere. It's a relief for the drivers to be back in Europe after two long-haul races in North America. Overall, I reckon Magny Cours deserves a 47 out of 100. ING went for 56 points – giving it 15<sup>th</sup> place out of all our circuits.

[Cut to Championship Tables]

#### **Voiceover**

Lewis Hamilton will be hoping to add to his already impressive trophy collection, and he goes into this weekend 10 points ahead of his team mate – 58 to Alonso's 48. The Ferrari's remain third and fourth with Massa on 39 and Raikkonen on 32. Heidfeld makes up the top five with 26 points.

McLaren are seemingly storming away with the constructor's championship, taking the lead with 106 points. Ferrari have 71, BMW - 39, Renault have 25 and Williams-Toyota remain on 13.

[Cut to Christine]

**Chris:** That's our French Preview. Don't forget if you are attending a race, you can call our Skype number to tell us all about it [0121 28 TRACK] and we always love to see your photos. Keep in touch.

[End credits]