

FORMULA 1 GRAN PREMIO DE MÉXICO™

October 28th, 2017.

STUNNING SEB KEEPS HIS FERRARI IN THE TITLE HUNT

- *First Mexico pole is German's 50th*
- *Verstappen courts controversy again*
- *Hamilton to use crowd's energy to boost title drive*

Mexico City, Mex. – Saturday's one-hour qualifying session for the Mexican Grand Prix matched and then surpassed everyone's expectations as Sebastian Vettel claimed a stunning first pole for Ferrari since the race returned to the Autódromo Hermanos Rodríguez.

The 50th pole position of the 30-year-old German's career is the perfect platform to keep his title chase alive, even though he starts 66 points behind Mercedes' Lewis Hamilton, who will be behind him on the starting grid.

For most of the third and final qualifying segment it seemed certain that Red Bull's Max Verstappen would write his name into history as F1's youngest-ever pole-winner with a time of 1 minute 16.574 seconds.

But Vettel produced a brilliant last run to clock 1:16.488, a full 2.3 seconds below last year's Mexican pole, claiming his own first pole since Monza in round 13 and his fourth of the season.

'It's very difficult here, it's very slippery, so it's difficult to get everything in one lap,' said an elated Vettel. 'I had a bit of a wobble in Turn 6 and had to go down to first gear, but I knew in the last sector if I could keep it clean then it should be enough.'

Verstappen will be on the front row, if the stewards do not penalize him for allegedly impeding Mercedes' Valtteri Bottas, with Bottas and Hamilton on the second row –

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the first time the Englishman has not started the Mexican race from first or second on the grid.

‘There’s a long way to Turn 1,’ smiled Hamilton, who need finish only fifth to clinch the title, ‘so we should have some fun tomorrow.

‘If you’ve seen the crowd today, it’s such a spectacle from above. I saw the camera from the helicopter, it looks incredible. There’s a lot of energy in the crowd so yeah, to do it on Mexican soil would be pretty neat.’

Local hero Sergio Pérez starts from 10th place, four behind Force India teammate Esteban Ocon.

#MexicoGP #F1ESTA

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