

the 9 OCTOBER 2007
challenge

MOTOGP
STONER'S PATH
TO TITLE GLORY



GP2 SERIES
HOW TIMO GLOCK
REIGNED IN SPAIN

PLUS
FORMULA ONE | E-REPORTER
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F1 TITLE FIGHT GOES TO BRAZIL

Mixed fortunes for Lewis Hamilton and Fernando Alonso in Japan and China re-opens the championship chase

Lewis Hamilton looked like he had put this year's Formula One title out of reach with a stunning wet win in Japan, but a bizarre retirement in China has left the Briton just four points ahead of McLaren team-mate and defending champion Fernando Alonso, and seven points ahead of Ferrari's Kimi Räikkönen going into the season finale in Brazil.

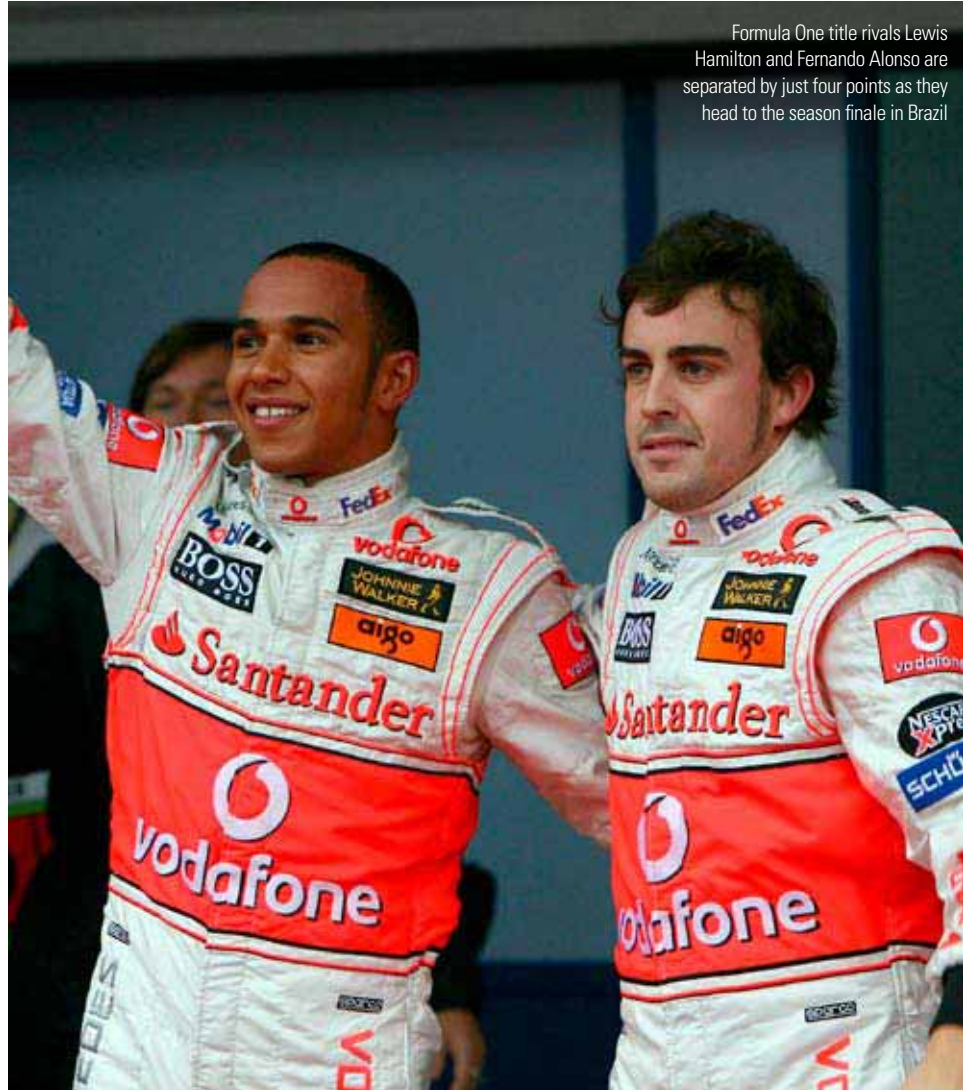
Hamilton passed another test in his sensational rookie season by dominating an atrociously wet race at the new Fuji circuit in Japan, and a mid-race accident for Alonso put Hamilton 12 points ahead of the Spaniard for the Chinese Grand Prix.

In China, Hamilton once again took pole and, in the early portion of the race, was on track to clinch the championship as Alonso worked his way into the top three. On lap 30, though, Hamilton was clearly struggling on worn standard wet tyres in the drying conditions and came in for his second pitstop. As he entered the pitlane, he ran wide onto the gravel and was unable to rejoin the track.

Alonso finished second behind Räikkönen – winning Ferrari's 200th grand prix – putting the Spaniard back into contention for a title he had almost conceded after Saturday's qualifying. Heading to Brazil, Hamilton has 107 points to Alonso's 103. Räikkönen has 100 points.

"The tyres felt like they were finished, but I was pitting that lap anyway," Hamilton said. "As I came in, I lost grip, slid wide and went into the gravel. Obviously I'm gutted because I haven't made any mistakes all year, but these things happen, I'm sorry for the team, but I can still do it."

Alonso has admitted he'll need another stroke of luck to guarantee him a third title. "It's still very difficult. It will not be easy to take four points from Lewis," he said. "I need something dramatic to win. With a normal race it will be impossible."



Formula One title rivals Lewis Hamilton and Fernando Alonso are separated by just four points as they head to the season finale in Brazil

Stoner takes dream MotoGP crown

Ducati's Casey Stoner secured this year's MotoGP title – the first world motorcycle championship for a Bridgestone-shod rider – at Motegi in Japan.

The 21-year-old briefly looked like he might have to wait until his home round in Australia to seal the crown after dropping behind chief title rival Valentino Rossi. A late pitstop for Rossi enabled Stoner to sneak back ahead, though, and sixth place, with Rossi finishing 13th, was enough for Stoner to put the championship out of reach.

"I've worked for this for so long, it's hard to know what to say," Stoner said. "The race was hard, nothing seemed to go right and I thought I'd have to postpone things. Rossi also had problems, though, and we got back in front."

"On the tyre front, Bridgestone has done a fantastic job to come up to this level. We work well with them and I'm grateful for their effort."

Motegi proved doubly successful for Ducati and Bridgestone, with Ducati's Loris Capirossi taking his third win at the track, bolstering the

number of Bridgestone-shod victories this year to 10 from 15 races. Kawasaki's Randy de Puniet and Honda Gresini's Toni Elias rounded out the top three, securing the fourth podium clean sweep of the year for Bridgestone-shod riders.

"It's an amazing feeling to see a MotoGP world champion on Bridgestone tyres," said Motorcycle Sport Department Manager Hiroshi Yamada.

"It is a truly unforgettable day for Bridgestone, and a great reward for everyone who has worked on our MotoGP project during the last six years."

"Everyone at Ducati must be complimented for an outstanding year and thanks must go to Casey and Loris for their contributions. Casey has been a special addition to the Bridgestone family. He has excelled in every way and deserves to have won."

"To see him wrap up the title in our home GP is special. Now we look to the last three races to try our best to add more success to the season."



[Casey Stoner profile – page 4](#) ➔

In brief...

F1 stars attend Tokyo event

A group of Formula One luminaries, including drivers Lewis Hamilton, Felipe Massa and Takuma Sato, team boss Aguri Suzuki and Bridgestone Director of Motorsport Tyre Development Hirohide Hamashima attended a special Q&A at the ANA Intercontinental Hotel in Tokyo in the run-up to the Japanese Grand Prix. Among the subjects discussed were Bridgestone's role as sole tyre supplier to F1 and this year's move for the Japanese GP from Suzuka to the Fuji Speedway.



Changes to 2008 F1 calendar

Formula One's governing body, the FIA, has amended the 2008 F1 calendar. The Italian and Belgian grands prix swap places, with the Belgian race now on September 7 and the Italian race on September 14. The Japanese and Chinese grands prix have also swapped, so that the Japanese GP now takes place on October 12 and the Chinese GP takes place a week later on October 19.

'08 IndyCar schedule unveiled

The organisers of the Firestone-backed IndyCar Series have unveiled their calendar for 2008. The US-based championship will feature one less round following the dropping of the oval event at Michigan, but will keep the same condensed schedule that packs 16 oval, street and road-course races into seven months between March and September. The centrepiece of the schedule, the famed Indianapolis 500, will take place on May 25.

F3 title fight heats up in Japan

Roberto Streit, Oliver Jarvis and Hiroaki Ishiura shared the victory spoils in the latest Japanese Formula 3 triple-header at the Sendai Hi-Land Raceway. Pre-race series leader Kazuya Oshima posted one podium finish and two DNFs, and has now dropped to third in the points behind Streit and Jarvis.

Ardigo wins world kart crown

Italian karting sensation Marco Ardigo capped his highly successful season by clinching the CIK-FIA World Championship at Mariembourg in Belgium. The Bridgestone-shod Tony Kart ace had previously dominated the CIK-FIA's European KF1 series earlier in the year.



Glock seals GP2 glory in Spain

German Timo Glock has won this year's GP2 Series crown after perhaps the most dramatic title fight since the championship's inception.

The iSport International driver has suffered a turbulent mix of race wins and appalling bad luck throughout 2007, but headed into this year's season-closing double-header in Valencia, Spain, with a two-point lead over his chief rival, ART Grand Prix's Lucas di Grassi.

Di Grassi suffered a serious blow to his title hopes by retiring from a rain-affected feature race on Saturday, while Glock ultimately

clinched the crown with a seventh-place finish in the feature event and a dominant lights-to-flag victory in Sunday's sprint race.

"At the moment, it's difficult to believe I've won the title," Glock said. "It was so hard this year, with all the problems that we had. When you have so many ups and downs, but at the end of the year you win the championship, it's just a great feeling. This is definitely the place to be if you want to make your way into F1."

Timo Glock profile – page 5



BRIDGESTONE BACKS GP2 ASIA SERIES

Bridgestone will extend its involvement in the GP2 Series to act as official tyre supplier for the new five-round GP2 Asia championship, which will be run at the start of 2008.

GP2 Asia will use the outgoing Dallara-built GP2 chassis and Renault engines, which are being replaced for 2008 by an all-new design.

The races are set to take place between January and April at Dubai and Indonesia, and as part of the support race line-up for the F1 events in Malaysia and Bahrain. One key rule for the series is that at least one driver in each team must be from outside of Europe.

As GP2 Asia takes place during the early portion of the season, existing GP2 teams will run the cars in the championship before the European-based GP2 Series starts in late April.

"The philosophy of GP2 Asia is to expand GP2's successful concept to emerging motorsport nations," said GP2 Asia organiser Bruno Michel. "They will benefit from the incredible racing which GP2 has as its hallmark at a much reduced cost. As F1 expands into Asia and the Middle East, GP2 Asia is perfectly placed to act as its support event as we strive to promote the best emerging talents."



Hungarian András Kittka (left) was crowned this year's winner of the Bridgestone e-Reporter contest for aspiring motorsport writers during the GP2 Series prize-giving ceremony in Valencia, Spain. The 23-year-old was presented with his prize – which includes an interview with a GP2 graduate in Formula One, a state-of-the-art laptop and a working trip to a Bridgestone safety event – by Bridgestone Spain Managing Director Tomàs Zumarraga.

CHARLY KOBLBAUER

Bridgestone F1 chef

INSIDE LINE



What exactly does your job entail?

As the chef for Bridgestone at

Formula One grands prix, I do a lot of cooking! It's our team's responsibility to prepare meals for all the Bridgestone staff at each race, from the F1 tyre fitters and engineers to the PR staff, Bridgestone's corporate guests, the F1 media and so on. For the European races I also help set up the motorhome and take it down at the end of the weekend. There's also organisation of the kitchen, which can vary quite a lot on the flyaway races when we can't take our European motorhome with us.

How did you start working in motorsport?

This is actually my first job in motorsport, but I've always been a huge motorsport fan, so when the opportunity came up to combine the two I took it like a shot. I've been watching F1, MotoGP and rallying for absolutely years, so this is a great job for me to be involved in.

How did you get into your current role?

I was actually working in a hotel in the Lech Am Arlberg resort in Austria when this opportunity came up, and – being a motorsport fan – I didn't hesitate to apply.

What do you enjoy most about your job?

I really enjoy the travelling. As you can imagine with this job, you're always on the move from race to race – particularly at the height of the season – and you get to work in some really exciting places around the world. There's also the fact that you get to meet lots of new people. Every race is a different experience.

What has been your proudest moment while working for Bridgestone?

It would have to be when Michael Schumacher came so close to winning the championship for Ferrari with our tyres last season, but every time a race is won on Bridgestone tyres is a proud moment for me.



Leaders of the pack

Sealing this season's MotoGP crown in Japan was the result of many years of hard effort for Ducati, Australian star Casey Stoner and tyre supplier Bridgestone

Casey Stoner's MotoGP title success in Japan was the culmination of a long journey for the Australian, his Ducati team and Bridgestone, but it was also perfect proof that when the right elements of a package blend together, then nothing can stop the resultant whole.

It's a journey that began in 2002 when Bridgestone stepped up from 125cc and 250cc racing to MotoGP's top level. By the end of 2004, Bridgestone-shod riders were winning races and the company was clearly making progress with its tyres' pace and durability. At the same time, Italian bike firm Ducati was keen to find a technical advantage that could help its riders match the acknowledged skills of the then-dominant world champion Valentino Rossi.

"Knowing it would be difficult to beat Rossi with the same technical conditions, [Ducati team boss] Livio Suppo had an idea that turned out to be a winner," Ducati Corse CEO Claudio Domenicali says. "To face Rossi with different weapons – that is different tyres. I remember well our first contact with Bridgestone. We had found a company with the technology, resources and motivations that convinced us that – with time – we would achieve great results together."

After a learning year in 2005, Ducati's Loris Capirossi was on course to mount a real challenge for the title in 2006 until a nightmare crash at the Catalan Grand Prix in Barcelona.

The addition of emerging star Casey Stoner threw open the promise of a two-pronged Ducati assault in 2007, but nobody – including Stoner himself – could have predicted just how well the Australian would gel with the Ducati GP7 bike and Bridgestone's latest generation of tyres.

After a mixed debut MotoGP season with Honda in 2006, Stoner quickly became the very model of both outright winning pace and points-scoring consistency in 2007. By mid-season he was the clear title favourite. But, for all his success on the track, Stoner has retained his charm off it.

As Domenicali admits, there are two distinct sides to Stoner's personality. "Casey is like Dr Jekyll and Mr Hyde," he says. "He's a 21-year-old boy – nice and sweet outside of the track – but ultra-combative when the helmet is on."

Stoner still finds it hard to believe he is now MotoGP champion – Australia's first since Mick Doohan took the old 500cc crown in 1998. "It's a little bit unreal at the moment," he admits. "There's nothing that can compare. I've worked hard all my career to get here and we've worked hard all this year. We put in the effort and we got the rewards. There are a lot of people I have to thank who helped me along the way – my family, my wife, my team, Bridgestone, everyone."

But even as he struggles to take in this year's success, Stoner is already looking towards 2008. "For sure our rivals will get stronger," he admits. "They're not happy that we've got the title and they'll be trying to chase us down next year. We must try and win more races as well as improving the bike, but we still just have to take it race by race."

In fact, just the same way Stoner, Ducati and Bridgestone have been doing it for the last few years – with great results.



"Casey Stoner is like Dr Jekyll and Mr Hyde. He's a 21-year-old boy – nice and sweet outside of the track – but ultra combative when the helmet is on"

Claudio Domenicali, Ducati Corse CEO

Shooting for the stars

This year's GP2 championship has been the most dramatic since the single-seater series' inception in 2005. In the end, German Timo Glock was a deserving winner

Some days, it takes a bit of luck to become champion. Other times, it takes incredible tenacity to fight against atrocious bad fortunes to take a deserved title. Newly crowned GP2 Series champion Timo Glock knows all about the latter.

The 2001 German Formula BMW champion came into 2007 as one of the best prepared title contenders in years, having already competed in a one-off Formula One race for Jordan in 2004, before winning the ChampCar rookie title in 2005 and placing fourth in the 2006 GP2 standings on his first year with the iSport International team.

This year, though, Glock has faced perhaps one of the most turbulent up-and-down campaigns of any budding champion. The month of July was particularly hard for Glock. The problems started when the German collided with iSport International team-mate Andreas Zuber off the line in France. A catalogue of technical problems and mid-race incidents left him with no points under race conditions from four rounds.

Throughout July, August and September, Glock's lead see-sawed between a 16-point domination and a two-point deficit, then back to a two-point lead over ART Grand Prix's Lucas Di Grassi as the highs of victory in Germany, Turkey and Italy were balanced by another nightmare weekend in

Hungary. Perhaps the lowest blow, though, came in Belgium when he was taken out by a rival on the warm-up lap.

In the last rounds of the year at Valencia, Glock extended his lead to four points with seventh place as di Grassi failed to finish a rain-affected Saturday feature race. In Sunday's season-closing sprint event, Glock showed the style that should have made him champion a few races earlier, taking the lead off the line and leaving the rest of the field in his wake to finally put the crown beyond anyone else's reach.

"After all the hard work during the year, all the bad luck and bad races such as in Belgium, when I got to the track I said I'd win the race for the team," Glock explains. "When I heard the engineers, my team boss and all the mechanics cheering on the radio, I was incredibly happy. We won the team championship as well, so it's the perfect feeling. And for now, I just hope we can get something done for 2008."

Indeed, paddock rumours suggest Glock could be on his way to joining previous champions Nico Rosberg and Lewis Hamilton by making the step up to F1 next year. However, given his one-off race for Jordan in 2004, Glock would also be the first GP2 champion to have already been in F1 before his full-time graduation. Sometimes that's how luck works.

1998

RACING MILESTONES

Just 21 months after the company's return to F1, a Bridgestone-shod driver was ready to win the title

Things were close going into the 1998 Formula One finale at Suzuka, Japan. McLaren's Mika Häkkinen had just a four-point lead over Ferrari's Michael Schumacher, who had won the race in 1997.

In qualifying, Schumacher pipped Bridgestone-shod Häkkinen to pole by one-tenth of a second. It had been a truly outstanding lap, with Schumacher leaving his own team-mate, Eddie Irvine, a full two seconds in his wake.

On the front row of the grid, the tension between Häkkinen and Schumacher was palpable, despite both drivers playing their icy cool persona to perfection.

Things weren't helped by Prost's Jarno Trulli stalling on the first start. On the second attempt, Schumacher raised his hand from his cockpit – he had stalled and would have to go to the back of the grid.

Although Häkkinen now had 20 cars between himself and his main title rival, the title still wasn't secure. Driving an outstanding race, Schumacher worked his way to third and started pushing for the win.

On lap 31, Schumacher's right-rear tyre failed after he ran over some debris from an earlier incident. With no other driver left to challenge him, the title was Häkkinen's – the first for a Bridgestone-shod driver, kickstarting a run of seven back-to-back titles during the next seven years.



Newly-crowned GP2 Series champion Timo Glock receives the US\$100,000 from Bridgestone that forms part of the prize for winning the 2007 title

CHAMPIONSHIP TABLES

Formula One

Driver (Team)	Pts
1 Lewis Hamilton (McLaren)	107
2 Fernando Alonso (McLaren)	103
3 Kimi Räikkönen (Ferrari)	100
4 Felipe Massa (Ferrari)	86
5 Nick Heidfeld (BMW Sauber)	58
6 Robert Kubica (BMW Sauber)	35

21 October Sao Paulo, Brazil

MotoGP

Rider (Team)	Pts
1 Casey Stoner (Ducati)	297
2 Valentino Rossi (Yamaha)	214
3 Dani Pedrosa (Honda)	188
4 John Hopkins (Suzuki)	156
5 Chris Vermeulen (Suzuki)	152
6 Marco Melandri (Honda Gresini)	148

14 October Philip Island, Australia

21 October Sepang, Malaysia

4 November Valencia, Spain

* Bridgestone riders in red

GP2

Driver (Team)	Pts
1 Timo Glock (iSport)	88
2 Lucas Di Grassi (ART GP)	77
3 Giorgio Pantano (Campos)	59
4 Luca Filippi (Super Nova)	59
5 Kazuki Nakajima (Dams)	44
6 Javier Villa (Racing Engineering)	42

Champ Car

Driver (Team)	Pts
1 Sébastien Bourdais (NHL)	301
2 Justin Wilson (RuSPORT)	243
3 Robert Doornbos (Minardi USA)	238
4 Will Power (Team Australia)	228
5 Graham Rahal Jr (NHL)	209
6 Oriol Servia (Forsythe)	204

21 Oct Surfers Paradise, Australia

11 Nov Mexico City, Mexico

IndyCar Series

Driver (Team)	Pts
1 Dario Franchitti (AGR)	637
2 Scott Dixon (Ganassi)	624
3 Tony Kanaan (AGR)	576
4 Dan Wheldon (Ganassi)	466
5 Sam Hornish Jr (Penske)	465
6 Helio Castroneves (Penske)	446