

# Vettel warns Ferrari no shoo-in for Singapore

**Singapore**  
**S**ebastian Vettel yesterday warned he was in for a close fight with Lewis Hamilton's Mercedes at the Singapore Grand Prix, despite his peerless record and Ferrari's supposed superiority at the night race.

Vettel has won four of the nine Singapore races so far, but he dismissed expectations that Ferrari will have the edge over Mercedes at the corner-heavy Marina Bay street circuit.

Vettel trails Hamilton by just three points in the standings, but the Mercedes driver has won three of the last four grands prix -- including his crushing victory two weeks ago in Italy.

"In theory it should be a bit better here than Monza but I think it will be close," Vettel told reporters.

"We've seen that it's very close no matter where we go (even on) tracks that (should) definitely suit Mercedes or (should) definitely suit

Ferrari."

A Mercedes win would be considered an upset in Singapore, whose 23 corners and lack of long straights tend to play to Ferrari's strengths.

But Vettel said there had been little between Ferrari and

Mercedes on tracks of all different types this year.

Asked whether victory on Sunday was vital for his season, Vettel said: "I think it's more important to have the lead after Sunday night in Abu Dhabi (the final race).

"Whatever happens on the way, happens. The target is clear. We have a lot of races, a lot of time to get points, and then we see the count at the end."

As well as his wins in 2011, 2012, 2013 and 2015 in Singapore, Vettel drove brilliantly from the back of the grid last year to finish fifth.

But the four-time world champion said: "It's a big challenge. It's the longest race of the season in terms of duration. It's the toughest one in my opinion for focus and stress.

"It's the sort of race you look forward to the whole season but you don't really want to start, because you know how difficult it is." (AFP)



# Alonso gives McLaren chance

**Singapore**

**F**ernando Alonso yesterday said he'd give McLaren a chance to settle their plans before making a decision about his future -- but warned that he wouldn't stick around in a losing car.

The frustrated two-time world champion has been making noises all season about quitting the British team, who are widely expected to dump their misfiring Honda engines and go with Renault instead.

Alonso's car has failed to complete six races this season, and his best finish so far is sixth. He said he had "many options" both inside and outside of Formula One, but added that "very good news is coming".

"Whatever I do next year is because I want to win. I will not be around in any series to be fighting for top 10 or top 15," he told reporters ahead of the Singapore Grand Prix.

"There are many options out there that I'm looking at.



McLaren Honda's Spanish driver Fernando Alonso addresses a press conference

Formula One is my first and only priority so I will wait to make a decision on that before making decisions on other series.

"At the same time I want to give time to my team. After the last three years, the struggles we went through together, to have time for them to make decisions, to see the future, next year's car. And after they take decisions I will take mine."

Alonso's comments appear to hint that he will stay at McLaren next year if they axe Honda, which is strongly rumoured to happen before Sunday's race.

Alonso, 36, is one of the oldest drivers on the grid, and he also hankers after becoming only the second man after Graham Hill to complete motorsport's Triple Crown -- winning the Monaco Grand Prix, Indy 500 and Le Mans. (AFP)

# Palmer insists he'll see out season

**Singapore**

**J**olyon Palmer insisted he'll be with Renault until the end of the Formula One season yesterday, dismissing reports that he will be replaced by Carlos Sainz in a matter of weeks.

Palmer is yet to score a point this year, fuelling rumours he'll make way for Toro Rosso's Sainz as early as the upcoming Malaysian Grand Prix.

Asked to comment on the

speculation, Palmer shot back: "I don't care too much to talk about it, no."

"I know what's happening, I think there will be an

announcement probably at some point in the future, not too long."

Sainz is rumoured to be moving to Renault as part of a deal in which Toro Rosso will stop using Renault engines and switch to Honda instead.

"I've got a contract for seven more races this year. There's been suggestions for I think 35 races that I won't be in the next one so this is nothing new for me," said Palmer, 26.

"It's water off a duck's back now. For most races this year it's been the case, so nothing changes... I've got seven races to do, I'll be in Malaysia. I'll be racing till Abu Dhabi," he said, referring to the season finale. (AFP)



## Singapore Grand Prix

Marina Bay Street Circuit Sept 17 Race 14 out of 20



61 laps of 5.065 km = 308.828 km  
 Lap record: 1 min. 47.187 Daniel Ricciardo (2016)

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Source: FIA, Formula 1.com

## Driver standings



Lewis Hamilton - Mercedes	238
Sebastian Vettel - Ferrari	235
Valtteri Bottas - Mercedes	197
Daniel Ricciardo - Red Bull	144

## Teams

Mercedes	435
Ferrari	373
Red Bull	212
Force India	113

# Probe after Valentino Rossi scan defused on social media

**Ancona, Italy**

**T**he publication of a scan of motorcycling ace Valentino Rossi's broken leg on social media has sparked an investigation by the Prosecutor's Office in

Ancona, according to reports yesterday.

The 38-year-old Italian legend underwent surgery in Ancona, in eastern Italy, earlier this month after a crash in training, discharging himself from

hospital the following day.

According to the newspaper 'Il Resto del Carlino' a hospital employee was responsible for copying the scan which was later widely defused outside the hospital via

the social network.

The Italian nine-time world champion is fighting to be fit for the final races of the season which finishes on November 12 in Valencia. (AFP)



Valentino Rossi (file pic)