

Monaco polesitter Leclerc faces anxious wait over crash-damaged Ferrari

Leclerc beats Verstappen to sensational Monaco pole as late crash prevents others improving

AFP | Monaco



A truck takes pole-sitter Leclerc's damaged Ferrari back to the pits

Charles Leclerc will start on pole for his home Monaco Grand Prix after setting the fastest time in qualifying yesterday despite crunching his Ferrari into a wall which could yet lead to a grid penalty depending on the extent of the damage.

Red Bull's Max Verstappen will set off alongside the locally-born Leclerc on the front row of Formula One's iconic street race with world champion Lewis Hamilton in unfamiliar territory back on the fourth row.

Qualifying was red flagged at the end after Leclerc's smash, depriving the likes of Hamilton and Verstappen a chance to better Leclerc's time with a

flyer lap.

Leclerc, who has a pointless record in his local race, admitted he was "worried" about a penalty for a change of gear-box.

"It's a shame to finish in the wall, it doesn't feel the same but I'm incredibly happy about my

lap.

"I could feel I was quite emotional in the car - now it's Q3, now it's time to put everything together. I managed to do so and I'm incredibly happy."

With his teammate Carlos Sainz on the second row along-

side the Mercedes of Valtteri Bottas after posting the fourth quickest time Ferrari were confirming their impressive form in practice.

"It's tomorrow that we score points but we are incredibly surprised to be on pole and fourth



It's a shame to finish in the wall, it doesn't feel the same but I'm incredibly happy about my lap. I could feel I was quite emotional in the car - now it's Q3, now it's time to put everything together. I managed to do so and I'm incredibly happy

CHARLES LECLERC

place for the race tomorrow," added Leclerc who has given Ferrari a real shot at their first grand prix win since 2019 after a sharp slump last season.

Verstappen, who trails Hamilton by 14 points in the drivers' world championship, bemoaned the red-flag suspended conclusion to Q3.

"The red flag ruined the chance for pole. Nevertheless, a good weekend and we recov-

ered well from Thursday so not too bad."

Hamilton, who has won three of this season's four races, said it was a case of going "back to the drawing board now".

"There is a lack of grip, that leaves you to overdrive the car and unfortunately it just didn't improve," said the seven-time world champion.

With overtaking difficult on Monaco's tight and twisting circuit, Hamilton's chances of moving up to 99 grand prix wins look compromised.

"I guess the minimum will be hopefully finish seventh, and then hope we can get higher," he said.

Monaco's mythic circuit is back on the F1 menu after last year's race was dropped from the coronavirus-disrupted season.

The presence of 7,500 fans is also an indication that gradually a degree of normalcy is returning to the sport's landscape.

The same could be said about Ferrari's return to form.

City wouldn't have won title with similar injury issues: Klopp



Jurgen Klopp, Manager of Liverpool interacts with Pep Guardiola, Manager of Manchester City during a match (file photo)

Reuters | London

Liverpool manager Juergen Klopp said Manchester City would not have won the Premier League this season if they had had to deal with an injury crisis like that of the Merseyside club.

Liverpool were without central defenders Virgil van Dijk and Joe Gomez for most of the campaign due to knee injuries, while Joel Matip was sidelined because of an ankle injury.

Fabinho, who was moved from midfield to central defence to help plug the gaps, also picked up a muscle problem, while forward Diogo Jota and midfielder Jordan Henderson were also out for large parts of the season due to injuries.

"It is how I said before this year, with the amount of injuries we have had, it was not the year to become champions. No chance. For nobody," Klopp said before Sunday's final league game against Crystal Palace.

"As good as they are, if (Manchester) City have their three centre-halves out, no," they don't win the league. "Three centre-halves of United, no."

Liverpool, who stormed to the title last season, were eighth in March with Cham-



Liverpool, who stormed to the title last season, were eighth in March with Champions League qualification looking unlikely, but Klopp's side went on a nine-match unbeaten run to move up to fourth

ions League qualification looking unlikely, but Klopp's side went on a nine-match unbeaten run to move up to fourth.

Chelsea (67 points), Liverpool and Leicester City (66 points each) are in a three-way battle for the last two Champions League places ahead of Sunday's final round of matches.

"We have fought back a bit, accepted the difficulties and made the best of it," Klopp said. "And if we win on Sunday, and if we qualify for the Champions League, then we made the best of it. That is it."

Table listing movie titles, genres, cast members, and showtimes for various theaters including Oasis Juffair, City Centre, Wadi Al Sail, and others.