

UP TO SPEED: MEDIA COVERAGE

SUNDAY 06 JULY

04-06 JULY
#BRITISHGP

 Silverstone



F1 75 QATAR
AIRWAYS

FORMULA 1 • QATAR AIRWAYS

**BRITISH
GRAND PRIX**

2025

Verstappen relishes playing role of villain



Molly Hudson
Motor Racing Reporter

Of course it was Max Verstappen, the ultimate anti-hero, who ended the hopes and dreams of the British talents, to take pole position in the final seconds of qualifying at Silverstone.

Verstappen has never been a favourite of the British crowd, but that probably suits the Dutchman, who cares little about anything other than the time across the line.

Lewis Hamilton looked on course to challenge for pole in the first two sectors of his final lap but made a mistake in the crucial third, eventually finishing fifth. Oscar Piastri, the championship leader, will share the front row with Verstappen, while Lando Norris could only manage third.

Hamilton believed the snap of understeer he experienced at turn 16 had “probably cost me at least second”.

This qualifying session was a perfect illustration of the difficulties of Red Bull’s season; a temperamental car, which has partly been designed that way to cater to Verstappen, but with only his mercurial talent able to pull a sublime lap out of nowhere.

Pole, by just over a tenth of a second, led to a return of his “simply lovely” catchphrase, not heard in a while after both McLarens pulled

away from him in this year’s drivers’ championship battle.

His future – in the short-term at least – looks to be at Red Bull rather than Mercedes, with Toto Wolff appearing to confirm he is happy with his present driver line-up of George Russell and Kimi Antonelli.

“At a certain stage we have to calm things down; George Russell is our driver, we are extremely happy with what he is doing – look at the performance today,” Wolff, the Mercedes team principal, told Channel 4. “This noise is just disturbing for everyone and at that stage there is no point to talk about a new line-up next year.”

There were predictions that as many as six drivers could challenge for pole: both McLarens, Ferrari’s pair, Russell in the Mercedes and Verstappen in the Red Bull.

The Mercedes – which is usually much better in cooler conditions – was not quite as competitive as expected, with Russell qualifying fourth. Very light rain did not particularly affect the session, but gusty winds and the high-speed nature of the track made for a gripping hour of action as momentum swung from one driver to another.

Similar drama is predicted today: Verstappen had been complaining about his car all weekend, but having opted for a more extreme low down-force set-up (which may negatively affect him if today’s race is affected by rain) is faster on the straights. The McLarens are, mostly, faster in the corners. Ferrari had the best race pace in the simulations they did in practice sessions.

Hamilton has won this grand prix nine times, the most victories of any

Grid for the British Grand Prix

Driver	Team	Time
1 Max Verstappen (Neth)	Red Bull	1:24.892
2 Oscar Piastri (Aus)	McLaren	1:24.995
3 Lando Norris (GB)	McLaren	1:25.010
4 George Russell (GB)	Mercedes	1:25.029
5 Lewis Hamilton (GB)	Ferrari	1:25.095
6 Charles Leclerc (Monaco)	Ferrari	1:25.121
7 Fernando Alonso (Sp)	Aston Martin	1:25.621
8 Pierre Gasly (Fr)	Alpine	1:25.785
9 Carlos Sainz Jr (Sp)	Williams	1:25.746
10 Kimi Antonelli (It*)	Mercedes	1:25.374
11 Yuki Tsunoda (Japan)	Red Bull	1:25.826
12 Isack Hadjar (Fr)	Racing Bulls	1:25.864
13 Alexander Albon (Thai)	Williams	1:25.889
14 Esteban Ocon (Fr)	Haas	1:25.950
15 Liam Lawson (NZ)	Racing Bulls	1:26.440
16 Gabriel Bortoleto (Br)	Sauber	1:26.446
17 Lance Stroll (Can)	Aston Martin	1:26.504
18 Oliver Bearman (GB)†	Haas	1:25.471
19 Nico Hulkenberg (Ger)	Sauber	1:26.574
20 Franco Colapinto (Arg)	Alpine	1:27.060

*3-place and †10-place grid penalties

Championship standings

Driver	Pts
1 Oscar Piastri (Aus)	216
2 Lando Norris (GB)	201
3 Max Verstappen (Neth)	155
4 George Russell (GB)	146
5 Charles Leclerc (Monaco)	119
6 Lewis Hamilton (GB)	91
7 Kimi Antonelli (It)	63
8 Alexander Albon (Thai)	42
Constructor	
1 McLaren	417
2 Ferrari	210
3 Mercedes	209
4 Red Bull	162
5 Williams	55



driver at a single F1 venue. Russell and Norris may be much further ahead of him in the championship, but neither have lifted the trophy here. As Norris put it on Thursday, “I have the best chance of winning the race, I would say, and of course the one who’s most likely fighting for the championship this season.”

“Am I British No 1? I don’t know. If

you still take history into account, then Lewis is quite convincingly at the top. A lot more race wins and poles and championships than anyone else really, put together.”

The 10,000 supporters in the Land-ostand around the outside of Stowe corner featured a sea of neon – the orange of McLaren and Norris’s yellow helmet – but they were left disap-



Verstappen celebrates after clinching pole for today's race at Silverstone

HOW SILVERSTONE COPES WITH HALF A MILLION FANS

In a non-descript industrial estate outside of Silverstone's Gate 16, the most important logistical operation of the race weekend, event control, is a hive of activity.

Representatives from the circuit itself, police, ambulance service, National Highways and even waste management are watching an array of screens covering almost every inch of the site.

Traffic management is a particular issue for organisers, given the attendance on a race weekend is the largest of any on the calendar. And unlike the Middle East, there is no straightforward way to simply add an extra lane on the country roads for Formula 1 paddock members to avoid the queues.

FAST FACTS

● This year, about 500,000 people are expected to attend across the four-day

race weekend — 60,000 arrived on Thursday (a day with zero F1 on-track running), many to watch Sam Fender. That is more fans than a third of the grands prix on the calendar attract on their race day. Another 130,000 arrived on Friday, 140,000 yesterday, and up to 170,000 will be present on Sunday.

● This year, Silverstone has cut the car parking available by a third, to encourage fans to avoid driving, given the traffic constraints in the

local area. Today, 600 buses will take 800 journeys, transporting about 50,000 people in various park-and-ride schemes. Buses have



Event control watches over the whole site

been drafted in from around the UK, including one from Edinburgh.

● For Silverstone staff, it is a truly 24-hour operation. The whole venue closes to the public (apart from those on campsites) from 2-5am, when everything is serviced and cleaned.

● The British weather is often a talking point during the weekend. Silverstone works with the Met Office to begin tracking potential rainfall three months before the grand prix.

ing stages of yesterday's third and final practice session. After a red flag following Gabriel Bortoleto's crash in the Sauber, Bearman should, according to the regulations, have proceeded slowly back to the pitlane.

Instead, he accelerated to simulate a race entry into the pitlane, and with cold brakes and tyres lost control of his car and hit the barriers. Stewards gave him a ten-place grid penalty for today's race, and four penalty points — taking him to eight of 12 allowed on his super licence. He qualified in eighth but will start 18th, with a sense of what could have been.

"It's not a relief [to qualify well]. I'm still angry at myself and very sad... I'm really disappointed in myself because I've let my team down. It [in practice] was a silly error, that shouldn't happen at this level," Bearman said.

Antonelli also has a three-place grid penalty carried over from Austria last week, when he hit Verstappen at turn three, so will start tenth.

Twice the British Grand Prix has taken place on July 6, and on both occasions, in 2008 and 2014, Hamilton prevailed. After the final sector of his lap got away from him, he will perhaps again require rain this afternoon to reach double figures in Silverstone race victories.

ON TV TODAY

British Grand Prix
Channel 4/Sky Sports F1, start 3pm

Rothesay
Protecting Pensions

**Your future
in safe hands**

Rothesay secures the pensions of over a million people. Now, with the Rothesay Test Series, we are proud to partner with the ECB in securing the future of Test cricket.

Rothesay
Protecting Pensions

**WE ARE
ENGLAND
CRICKET**

OFFICIAL PARTNER

Verstappen pole stuns Silverstone

Hopes of home win take hit as Dutchman sets standard
Norris admits it will be tough task to get past Red Bull

By Tom Cary
SENIOR SPORTS CORRESPONDENT
at Silverstone

What a difference a day makes. In practice on Friday Max Verstappen was nowhere, his Red Bull car, in his words, “understeering to the moon”. Twenty-four hours later, the four-time world champion had somehow claimed the 44th pole position of his career, stunning the 100,000-plus Silverstone crowds who had been eagerly anticipating a battle of the Brits on home soil, with McLaren’s Lando Norris and Ferrari’s Lewis Hamilton looking all weekend as if they would be challenging for the front row.

In the end, neither man did. Norris will start third, just behind McLaren team mate and championship leader Oscar Piastri, while Hamilton will start fifth, ahead of his team-mate Charles Leclerc (which represents a win of sorts for Hamilton) but behind Mercedes’ George Russell.

With Brits in third, fourth and fifth, there is still plenty for the home crowds to look forward to today. But they are all going to have to get past Verstappen, with the Dutch driver delivering once again when it mattered.

Verstappen has cut a frustrated figure of late. Punted out of Red Bull’s home grand prix in Austria last weekend, the 27-year-old’s future has been the subject of frenzied speculation with Mercedes’ Toto Wolff openly courting him.

On Friday, Verstappen finished fifth fastest in FP2, half a second off the pace and highlighting a lack of balance in the car, particularly in cornering.

In desperation, Red Bull went with a low downforce set-up for yesterday’s third and final practice session, with a Monza-esque rear wing. It worked. Verstappen finished just 0.087sec off the pace of Leclerc and stuck with the set-up for qualifying.

After a short delay to Q1 due to Franco Colapinto’s spin in the Alpine, Verstappen went quickest in that first session, then repeated the trick in Q3 after the Ferraris were quickest in Q2.

His final lap of 1min 24.892sec was simply magisterial, recalling his pole lap at Suzuka – another pure, high-speed drivers’ circuit – earlier this year.

“You need to work around the tools that you have and luckily we went into the right direction with it,” Verstappen said of his set-up changes overnight. “We just keep learning and keep trying to be better, take it race by race and what we can do.”

“We looked a bit slow yesterday in the other wing, plus I was just understeering to the moon... [The new set-up] is light on downforce, I guess, but it seemed to hold on and that is why we decided to stick with it and we will see what we get with it tomorrow in the race.”



Dutch delight: Max Verstappen exits his Red Bull after securing pole position (below) during qualifying at Silverstone

It promises to be an intriguing one, with the cars set up so differently and competitive in different areas of the track.

“I think there’s plenty of opportunity tomorrow,” said Norris, who heads into the race 15 points behind Piastri in the drivers’ championship. “We’ll probably catch [Verstappen] in the high-speed corners but then it will be tough to get past with the dirty air and the DRS. To be honest, our DRS speed probably just about matches Max’s speed! But let’s wait and see. It can be different with strategies.”

Russell, just behind him, said he was hoping for more cool, overcast conditions today, which might give

How they line up

1	Max Verstappen (Netherlands) Red Bull	1:24.892
2	Oscar Piastri (Australia) McLaren	1:24.995
3	Lando Norris (GB) McLaren	1:25.010
4	George Russell (GB) Mercedes	1:25.029
5	Lewis Hamilton (GB) Ferrari	1:25.095
6	Charles Leclerc (Monaco) Ferrari	1:25.121
7	Fernando Alonso (Spain) Aston Martin	1:25.621
8	Pierre Gasly (France) Alpine	1:25.785
9	Andrea Kimi Antonelli (Italy) Mercedes	1:25.374
10	Carlos Sainz Jr. (Spain) Williams	1:25.746
11	Yuki Tsunoda (Japan) Red Bull	1:25.826
12	Isack Hadjar (France) RB	1:25.864
13	Alexander Albon (Thailand) Williams	1:25.889
14	Esteban Ocon (France) Haas	1:25.950
15	Liam Lawson (NZ) RB	1:28.440
16	Gabriel Bortoleto (Brazil) Kick Sauber	1:28.446
17	Lance Stroll (Canada) Aston Martin	1:28.504
18	Oliver Bearman (GB) Haas	1:28.471
19	Nico Hulkenberg (Germany) Kick Sauber	1:26.574
20	Franco Colapinto (Argentina) Alpine	1:27.060

* Bearman 10-place penalty; Antonelli 3-place penalty

his Mercedes a chance to move forward.

Hamilton has a bigger task from fifth on the grid. He rued a mistake on the penultimate corner in Q3. “I just had understeer in Turn 16 and lost the time that I had,” the seven-time world champion said. “It probably cost me at least second.”

Hamilton particularly frustrated given this was probably the first race of the season in which Ferrari have had a genuine shot of pole. “I’m really pleased with the progress [overall],” he said. “I’m really pleased with the direction. My engineer and I have been really gelling a lot better in terms of how we set the car up, and I was much happier in the car.”

“It was just that last corner. I don’t know if it was the kerb that sent me a little bit wide and I just lost it. I think it was just over a tenth

“You need to work around the tools that you have and luckily we went into the right direction with it”

so that would definitely have put me on the front row.”

At least he is still in with a chance of challenging the frontrunners. Another Briton, Haas’s Oliver Bearman, qualified eighth but will have to start 18th after crashing on entry to the pitlane in final practice.

Bearman was given a 10-place grid penalty and four penalty points on his licence and cut a distraught figure after qualifying, ruing what he called a “silly, dumb error”. “We actually had a very, very strong qualifying and the car was feeling great, the best it’s ever felt for me,” he said. “Then, of course, I’m really disappointed in myself because I’ve let my team down today.”

It is not often you hear Verstappen say that. More often than not these days, it is him bailing his team out, and he definitely pulled another rabbit out of the hat here.

Whether he can stay in front is another question. Silverstone’s crowds will be roaring on the Brits in third, fourth and fifth in a race which is set up nicely.

“It’s going to be fun,” Verstappen predicted. “I’m happy with today. It’s a good boost for everyone, especially after last weekend.”



84 FORMULA ONE

By Jonathan McEvoy

AT SILVERSTONE

LEWIS HAMILTON had them on their feet like the old days, a proud brother clapped in the Ferrari garage and for a minute or two we wondered whether the sun would again shine through on Silverstone's favourite son and truest master.

In the end, the half-evoked memories came to nothing, Hamilton's brief period on top ended, running wide at the final bend. And so Max Verstappen, the old villain of the airfield, stamped his class on proceedings by taking a typical pole conjured from thin air. Cold air, too, that favoured his Red Bull under a grey sky.

Oscar Piastri qualified second for McLaren, his final lap a little frayed, with Lando Norris third in the other papaya car.

George Russell was fourth quickest for Mercedes and

British Grand Prix

GRID POSITION

1	Max Verstappen	1min24.892secs
2	Oscar Piastri	+0.103
3	Lando Norris	+0.118
4	George Russell	+0.137
5	Lewis Hamilton	+0.203
6	Charles Leclerc	+0.229

DRIVERS' TITLE RACE

1	O Piastri	(McLaren)	216pts
2	L Norris	(McLaren)	201pts
3	M Verstappen	(Red Bull)	155pts
4	G Russell	(Mercedes)	146pts
5	C Leclerc	(Ferrari)	119pts
6	L Hamilton	(Ferrari)	91pts

TODAY 3pm: Race live
(Sky Sports and Channel 4)

Hamilton ultimately fifth. Dejection. 'The lap was really, really nice,' he said, adding: 'It was just a bit of understeer at the last corner. I don't know if it was the kerb that sent me wide and I lost it. It was worth over a tenth so that would definitely have put me on the front row.'

He cut a downbeat figure as he spoke, aware of what rapture he had let slip through his fingers.

Still, there are three Brits in the top five, and separated by very little, so there is a decent chance of a home victory. But, then again, Verstappen is a machine and Piastri is hardly a slouch.

But first, to Hamilton, and despite missing out on pole by 0.203sec, this was a feel-good drive in his first season at Ferrari



HOUNDED OUT: Lewis Hamilton took his bulldog Roscoe, 12, to Silverstone, where Max Verstappen (above) secured pole in the Red Bull

Hamilton's dog day afternoon

Lewis a whisker away from front row before running wide on the final bend

where there have been precious few of them. He came here trailing Charles Leclerc 8-3 in Ferrari v Ferrari qualifying. But he pipped him, a place ahead, having marginally had the edge throughout the afternoon.

After Q2, Hamilton lay first,

hence prompting our hopes of him securing his first pole since the Hungarian Grand Prix two years ago, or exactly 714 days earlier. As he went top, a cheer. He had, after all, set that time on the start-finish straight named after him.

There is a lot of history in this

affinity, and it involves nine British Grand Prix victories, more than any other driver, unforgettably in the rain, often at the peak of his majesty, occasionally at moments of doubt, in the wet, in the dry, and once finishing on three wheels.

It is why going into today's race,

in front of 150,000-plus fans, some of whom have carried him crowd-surfing, it is impossible to rule out his latest version of Lazarine revival revealing itself.

'I'm really pleased with the progress,' said Hamilton. 'My engineer and I have been gelling a lot better in terms of how we set the car up. I was much happier in it.'

'Our improvement, our process, the way we go about our weekends, it definitely feels better.'

'It's been amazing at Silverstone this year. To be in the red car, to see Brits shift to embracing the Ferrari badge. My family's here.'

But just as you could once bet your house on Hamilton, you can now do so on Verstappen (when he has equipment at least half up to the task). And that is

one of the four problems in front of Hamilton across the 52 laps of the race.

Verstappen was ill with a stomach bug earlier in the week, unable to make Red Bull's annual clay pigeon day in Oxfordshire. His complaint cleared and he had positive talks with boss Christian Horner, smoothing out his intention to stay at the team.

In an interview with Mail Sport, he spoke of how he wanted to remain where he is, pushing aside stories about a move next season to Mercedes. It is a trait that he can clear his mind fast, and the clarity of his display demonstrated again. It was his first pole since Miami, in a difficult season. This latest act of escapology was helped by reducing downforce between Friday and yesterday.

'It was tricky out there with the wind,' said the quadruple world champion. 'It was shifting around a bit. These cars are extremely sensitive to it.'

'That final lap was good enough. This is a proper track. You have to go flat out, be really committed.'

Conditions turned archetypically Silverstone as qualifying approached. The sun of midweek had taken its hat off. There were a few dots of rain, and Verstappen handled them superbly.

As for Norris, Hamilton's heir as the faithful's favourite, he did OK and was not too crestfallen. 'I'm happy with qualifying,' said the Britonian, 15 points back from Piastri. 'We'll try hard. We are going to have fun and try to do the best we can.'

Over-eager Bearman pays penalty

A CARELESS 160mph smash in practice all but ended Oliver Bearman's chance of fighting for the points in the first home race of his career today.

The Brit produced a stellar display in his first qualifying session at Silverstone, making it to the third and final running before posting the eighth-fastest time of the day in his Haas.

But Bearman, 20, will start today's race way down in 18th after being slapped with a 10-place grid penalty following a rookie error in third practice yesterday morning.

A red flag had been shown after

By Henry Clark

AT SILVERSTONE

Kick Sauber's Brazilian driver Gabriel Bortoleto spun out, hit the barriers and became beached in the gravel.

And as the rest of the field made their way back to their garages, a lapse in Bearman's concentration proved costly. He was overzealous on his approach to the pit lane and lost control of his car, careering into the barriers and losing his front wing.

More damaging, though, was the punishment handed down to him

by the stewards, which included four penalty points on his licence. Even a strong performance later in qualifying failed to soften the blow.

'It's not a relief. I'm still angry at myself and very sad,' said the London-born driver, who has collected six points this season.

'I didn't account for the cold brakes and tyres. It was a silly error, one that shouldn't happen at this level. We actually had a very strong qualifying and the car was feeling great, the best it's ever felt for me. Then, of course, I'm really disappointed in myself because I've let my team down.'

SPORT IN BRIEF

Football

UEFA WOMEN'S EURO GROUP D	
FRANCE (2) 2	ENGLAND (0) 1
Katoto 36, Baltimore 39	Wash 56
WALES (0) 0	NETHERLANDS (1) 3
	Miedema 45, Pedra 48, Brugs 57

FIFA CLUB WORLD CUP QUARTER-FINALS	
PSG (0) 2	BAYERN MUNICH (0) 0
Doue 79, Dembele 90	Wash 56
PALMEIRAS (0) 1	CHELSEA (1) 2
Estevao 54	Palmer 17, Gray 84 (og)
REAL MADRID (2) 3	BORUSSIA DORTMUND (0) 2
G Garcia 10, F Garcia 20,	Beer 90+2, Guanyo 90+6, pen
Mbappe 90+4	

Cricket

T20 BLAST – NORTH GROUP – Old Trafford, Lancashire 178-6 Derbyshire 136-6 (W L Madden 53), Lancashire (4pts) bt Derbyshire by 42 runs.

Golf

DP WORLD TOUR BMW OPEN – Golfclub Munchen Eichenried, Munich, Germany, 3rd Rnd (36 & 1st unless stated, Par 72): 200 – D Brown 70 65 65, 201 – J Smith 68 67 66, 202 – J Luthen (Jed) 69 69 65, 204 – K Roiban (Nor) 69 65 70, M Penge 67 71 66; Y Katsuragawa (Jpn) 68 67 69; R Neergaard-Petersen (Den) 71 66 65; D Bryant (US) 69 67 72, 205 – A Wu (Chn) 71 66 68, B Stone (SA) 70 67 66, I Cantero (Spa) 71 69 65

Rugby League

BETFRED SUPER LEAGUE	
HULL (6) 6	ST HELENS (0) 0
T. Litten	T. Ford 2
G. Haldane	DG: Lomax
	G: Lomax 2

WAKEFIELD (44) 44	
CATALANS DRAGONS (6) 6	
T. Jowitt, Wainman 2	T. Pangle Jr
Route 2, Griffin,	G: Wilkinson
Lino, Johnstone	
G: Jowitt 6	

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Hull R	16	5	0	1	58	12	30
Wigan	17	10	0	4	508	223	36
Leigh	17	11	1	5	353	323	23
St Helens	17	11	0	6	477	198	22
Leeds	16	11	0	5	352	211	22
Wakefield	17	9	0	8	403	284	18
Hull	17	8	1	8	309	295	17
Warrington	17	8	0	9	322	391	16
Catalans Dragons	17	6	0	11	252	428	12
Castleford	17	4	0	13	276	441	8
Huddersfield	17	3	0	12	212	468	6
Salford	17	1	0	16	178	722	2

JOSE WATCHES IS STILL AT MAX POWER

Dutch ace puts on Special show to claim pole

AFTER a lap like that, it was only fitting that he received his prize from the Special One.

It was not the result the locals wanted, but no one could deny that Max Verstappen produced something remarkable yesterday to get the pole position award handed to him by Jose Mourinho.

Because Red Bull were truly nowhere in practice.

But it is like Lewis Hamilton said: "Max always comes out of nowhere."

You can never count the four-time champion out and the Dutch lion roared while, in their final efforts, the Brits were a little tame.

Hamilton was on target until a mistake at the final corner meant fifth was the best he could do.

George Russell will start fourth and was baffled by Mercedes' lack of performance on a cold Silverstone track, conditions their car usually loves.

Lando Norris could only go third quickest and said: "I'm gutted not to put it on pole."

They make up a trio of Brits

who can pile the pressure on Verstappen and Oscar Piastri, the championship leader joining the Dutchman on the front row.

And with rain a potential factor, it is all set up for another special race at a Silverstone track which rarely disappoints.

Verstappen, never one to shy away from a fight, is gearing up for war.

"For sure, I can see a proper battle," he said.

"Naturally, I have everyone behind, so I have to look behind me and see what will happen."

"In the practice long runs, there were a lot of cars that were quick and even in qualifying it was quite tight."

"It's just going to depend on who can keep their tyres alive."

Norris is chasing a first F1 victory in his home race – but also has the title race to think about and must overtake Piastri to avoid losing ground to his McLaren team-mate.

The top six all look quick and so the Brit expects "a tough but exciting race".

He said: "It was reasonably smooth and most laps always

BRITISH GP QUALI

Driver	Team	Time
1 M Verstappen (Ned)	Red Bull	1:24.892
2 O Piastri (Aus)	McLaren	1:24.995
3 L Norris (GB)	McLaren	1:25.010
4 G Russell (GB)	Mercedes	1:25.029
5 L Hamilton (GB)	Ferrari	1:25.095
6 C Leclerc (Mon)	Ferrari	1:25.121
7 A K Antonelli (Ita)*	Mercedes	1:25.374
8 O Bearman (GB)**	Haas F1	1:25.471
9 F Alonso (Spa)	Aston Martin	1:25.621
10 P Gasly (Fra)	Alpine	1:25.785

11 C Sainz Jr (Spa) Williams 1:25.746, 12 Y Tsunoda (Jpn) Red Bull 1:25.826, 13 I Hadjar (Fra) RB 1:25.864, 14 A Albon (Tha) Williams 1:25.889, 15 E Ocon (Fra) Haas F1 1:25.950, 16 L Lawson (Nz) RB 1:26.440, 17 G Bortoleto (Bra) Kick Sauber 1:26.446, 18 L Stroll (Can) Aston Martin 1:26.504, 19 N Hulkenberg (Ger) Kick Sauber 1:26.574, 20 F Colapinto (Arg) Alpine 1:27.060.
*receives 3-place grid penalty, **receives 10-place grid penalty

DRIVERS' CHAMPIONSHIP		CONSTRUCTORS	
1 O Piastri	216pts	1 McLaren	417pts
2 L Norris	201	2 Ferrari	210
3 M Verstappen	155	3 Mercedes	209
4 G Russell	146	4 Red Bull	162
5 C Leclerc	119	5 Williams	55

improved and found good lap time.

"Probably just my final one, I would have hoped to find just that little bit more but just didn't quite get the grip out of it."

Mercedes looked for a long time to be unable to compete with Verstappen, the McLarens and the Ferraris.

And then Russell finally put it all together when it mattered to ensure he will be in the mix as he too hunts his first Silverstone win.

He said: "We were scratching our heads today because we thought the conditions would come to us."

"It was only that last lap in Q3 when it did. It's always good when your best lap of the weekend is your last one."

Hamilton continues to feel more and more comfortable in his Ferrari after a rocky start to life in red.

It almost ended in tears yesterday when the Italians failed to give him enough fuel in Q1 and he only narrowly avoided being in the bottom five. But, overall, he is much

ON AS CHAMP

FORMULA ONE 3



GOAL-DEN BOYS: Max with Jose (right)



LEADING BY EXAMPLE: Verstappen after taking pole and (below) with Plasteri and Norris

BEARMAN TO FIGHT BACK FROM ERROR

By Dan Moxon

OLIVER BEARMAN admitted a rookie error deprived Silverstone fans from having four home heroes starting in the top 10 today.

Bearman, 20, qualified eighth in his Haas – but will start near the back because of a 10-place grid penalty.

The stewards threw the book at him after speeding up in final practice when the session was red-flagged and he crashed in the pit entry, ripping the front off his car.

Data showed he was travelling at 161mph – and the Brit admitted he had no one to blame but himself.

Bearman said: “It was a silly error and shouldn’t happen at this level. It was just a misjudgment.”

He went into qualifying with that punishment already confirmed and so he ended his day with “mixed feelings”.

He said: “To be in Q3 on merit is a good feeling. “We actually had a very strong qualifying and the car was feeling great, the best it has ever felt.”

“For me, then of course I’m really disappointed in myself because I’ve let the team down today.”

“I’m angry at myself, very sad. I’m glad we could at least show today that we have a quick car in qualifying trim, which hasn’t been the case recently.”

Bearman started the season strongly with three top-10 finishes in the first four races – but Haas have gone off the boil since mid-April.

He added: “If we’re P8 in qualifying then that means we’ve got a very quick car.”



TRACK LEGEND: Lewis Hamilton at Silverstone

Hamilton’s still a Brit special as fans back hero

VERDICT

By Andy Dunn

AS usual, the Silverstone paddock was jammed with everyone from A-listers to Z-listers.

And in terms of bringing stardust to the motorhomes, Keanu Reeves was in pole position.

Reeves is fronting a documentary charting Cadillac’s 2026 entry into the sport – but is best known to many for having the lead role in the action movie *Speed*.

Which is what Lewis Hamilton has generally been short of since joining Ferrari for the 2025 season.

But while Reeves is Hollywood box office, Hamilton remains the number one draw at the home of British motor racing.

Even in Ferrari red, Hamilton is the darling of the crowd. Even with Lando Norris challenging for the world title, Hamilton is the spectators’ favourite.

Even with George Russell leading the challenge of the locally-based Mercedes team, Hamilton is the poster boy of this race.

Albeit, at 40 years of age, a relatively old poster boy.

Hamilton has stood on the Silverstone podium 15 times, a record for the most top-three finishes at a single circuit.

Also a record is his tally of nine British Grand Prix victories – no driver has won as many races at a single circuit or in a particular Grand Prix in Formula One history.

In a special race in 2020, Hamilton won by driving the final lap and a half on three

wheels. It was the type of drama he has been serving up at Silverstone for almost two decades – that is why the pit straight bears his name.

And back in his spiritual home over these past couple of days, there has been a spring in Hamilton’s step and a glint in his eye.

That was until the start of qualifying when there was more drama.

In Q1 Hamilton, sensing he was on the cusp of elimination, asked to squeeze in an extra lap.

“Sorry Lewis, you haven’t got enough fuel,” came the reply.

As he can, Hamilton sounded irritated on the team radio and, for a short while it looked as though he might not make it through to the second session.

But he did. Just. And he then responded in the way you would expect a seven-times world champion to respond, setting the fastest time in Q2, prompting early delirium amongst his legion of fans.

Maybe only a slight mistake late on his last lap in Q3 cost him a place on one of the front two rows, meaning he will start on the third row, just ahead of his teammate Charles Leclerc.

The Ferrari, though, will be competitive in the race. Considering he has been without a win in almost a year, a victory seems a long shot. But don’t bet against it.

more comfortable in his new car now.

He said: “I’m really pleased with the progress and with the direction.”

“My engineer and I have been really gelling a lot better in terms of how we set the car up – and I’m much happier in the car.”

And despite the new colours, he remains as popular as ever with the Silverstone faithful.

He added: “It’s been amazing. To be in the red car here and to see Brits shift from the outfits that I had previously

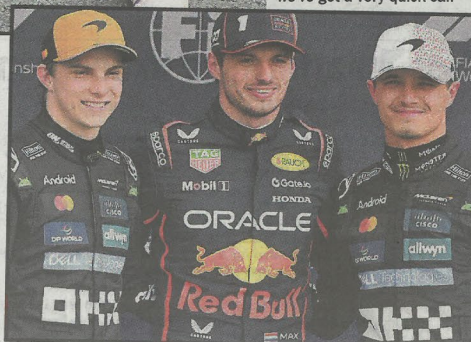
worn and now to red with the Ferrari badge has been pretty amazing. The support has been incredible.”

In the other Ferrari, Charles Leclerc was much less happy.

He qualified only sixth and reacted with a radio rant which featured nine expletives in 10 seconds.

Once he had calmed down, he said: “I haven’t been good enough.”

“I ended up P6 instead of on the front row, I can only blame myself.”



SUNDAY 06 JULY – IN PRINT

SUNDAY  EXPRESS

Lew: I'm going for Brit

LEWIS HAMILTON was gutted after one mistake cost him a shot at a fairy tale Silverstone pole. But the seven-time world champion vowed to "attack" from fifth on the grid today in search of his 10th British Grand Prix

By Dan Moxon

win, with his old title rival Max Verstappen sitting pretty at the front.

Hammy (left) said: "The lap was really nice right up until the last corner, I had a little bit of understeer.

"I just lost it. It cost me just over a tenth, so that would definitely have put me on the front row.

"I've got four really fast cars ahead but I want to be in the fight.

I'll come and attack as best as I can."

Two of Hamilton's fellow Brits are among that quartet, with Lando Norris third and George Russell fourth.

Oscar Piastri starts second behind Verstappen but both will have a swarm of Brits on their tails. Norris said: "I wish I could have given the fans something more to cheer about, but hopefully that will be the case tomorrow."

FORMULA ONE:
See Pullout P2-3



SUNDAY 06 JULY – IN PRINT

SUNDAY  EXPRESS



GEARED UP:
Keanu
Reeves
punches
the air at
Silverstone

At least one Reeves is happy
as stars shine at Silverstone

KEANU Reeves, Gordon Ramsay and Sam Ryder enjoyed the qualifying session for the British Grand Prix at Silverstone yesterday.

Hollywood star Reeves celebrated with a double fist pump as he applauded a fast lap for one of the drivers, while singer Ryder and partner Lois Gaskin-Barber, and chef Ramsay spent some time in the pit lane.

They watched as some of the biggest names in the sport competed in round 12 of the F1 season.

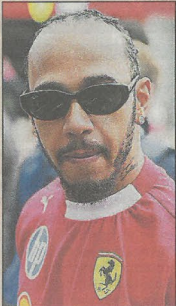
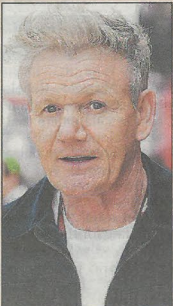
Red Bull's Max Verstappen took pole position for today's Grand Prix, with a

By Jaymi McCann

stunning lap to put himself ahead of the McLarens of Oscar Piastri and British driver Lando Norris.

Piastri lost time with a slide in the last corner on his final run, while Norris clipped a curb. Ferrari's Lewis Hamilton, a record nine-time winner of his home race, had to settle for fifth after a relatively slow end to his lap.

With George Russell fourth for Mercedes, it meant there are three British drivers in the top five, but none on the front row.



SPIN: Gordon Ramsay, Sam Ryder and Lois Gaskin-Barber, Lewis Hamilton



b7 **Sun** Sunday, July 6, 2025

FORMULA ONE BRITISH GP AT



LECLERC... fuming
Charles' Eff One outburst

By ISABELLE BARKER

CHARLES LECLERC flew into an X-rated rant as he swore NINE times at himself after Silverstone qualifying.

The Ferrari ace, 27, made sixth on the grid — behind team-mate Lewis Hamilton — for today's British Grand Prix.

On the team radio, Leclerc said: "F*** f***, f*** f***. F*** that. I am so f***ing s***. I am so f***ing s***. That's all I am. That's all I am."

It was frustrating for the Monaco-born driver who had finished strongly in second place in Q2.

He added after the session: "Every time I get to Q3, for some reason it's not clicking. At the moment, we've had good qualifying but we didn't have great qualifying."

"Again, this used to be my strength, so I'm not happy with the level that I'm showing in qualifying."

"We've got issues, for sure, particularly today and we've been fighting with something inside the car."

"But it's not an excuse as I need to be better."

Livid Ollie Haas to do better

By ISABELLE BARKER

OLLIE BEARMAN was livid with himself for getting a ten-place grid penalty for crashing under the red flag in practice yesterday.

Brit Bearman, 20, lost control of his Haas on entry to the pit lane.

The FIA ruled he had accelerated back to race speed under red-flag conditions following Sauber's Gabriel Bortoleto's crash.

Bearman, who also got four penalty points, did brilliantly to hit back with a blistering qualifying performance to bag eighth — but will start all the way back in 18th.

He said: "I'm really disappointed in myself as I've let my team down."

"I didn't account for cold brakes and tyres. A silly error that shouldn't happen at this level."

"I'm angry and very sad but glad at least that we could show the good thing was that we have a quick car in qualifying trim, which hasn't been the case more recently."

Bearman now has a total of eight penalty points and 12 would mean a race ban.



ON TOP AGAIN... reigning world champ Verstappen shows his delight after securing British Grand Prix pole

HOME BLOW AS MAX DARTS TO POLE

FRONT OF THE GRID

1 Max Verstappen	3 Lando Norris	5 Lewis Hamilton	7 Fernando Alonso
2 Oscar Piastri	4 George Russell	6 Charles Leclerc	8 Pierre Gasly

SILVERSTONE

3pm
sky sports



STARS 'N CARS... Keanu Reeves



BOSSING IT... Verstappen receives pole prize from Mourinho



FAST RYDER... singer Sam at F1

MAX VERSTAPPEN proved he can still be the 'Special One' as he rained on the Brits' parade to bag pole position at Silverstone.

Legendary football manager Jose Mourinho made the pole tyre presentation to the Dutchman after British Grand Prix qualifying yesterday. Four-time world champion Verstappen pipped McLaren's Oscar Piastri into second by 0.103 seconds.

British trio Lando Norris (below), George Russell and Lewis Hamilton took the next three places.

Verstappen, 27, was only fourth after the opening runs in Q3 at a gusty and overcast Silverstone, and complained his Red Bull was difficult to drive.

But he later delivered his catchphrase of "that was simply lovely" over the radio as he claimed his first pole since Miami at the beginning of May.

Verstappen added: "That final lap was good enough. 'This is a proper track in qualifying where you have to go flat out."

"You have to be committed and it's really enjoyable. 'We are quite quick on the straight. We have to wait to see what Sunday will do and if there's rain around or not."

"I'm happy with qualifying. It's a big boost for the team as well and I'm excited to go racing."

"We'll try. We are going to go racing, have fun and try to do the best we can."

Off the back of his win in Austria last weekend, Norris was not short of support at his home race – with his fans taking over Silverstone in the new luminous Landstand in his honour.

By ISABELLE BARKER

But you write Verstappen off at your own peril as the Red Bull driver threaded the eye of the needle with the cleanest lap to start today's race on the front of the grid.

Norris, 25, took too much kerb in his final lap and was out-qualified by McLaren team-mate Piastri, as the championship leader snuck into second.

Hamilton was forced to settle for an underwhelming fifth after looking red hot until the dying moments of his final lap.

An under-steer at turn 16 cost the seven-time world champion at least second place.

Q2 was very close between the McLarens and Verstappen at the front of the pack, with Russell (right) a bit further back in fourth for Mercedes.

The Ferraris then blew everyone out of the park with them on brand new soft tyres as Hamilton finished fastest and Leclerc second ahead of Norris.

Norris, who is 15 points behind Piastri in the drivers' standings, said: "Not the top but still a good day."

"It's going to be fun tomorrow. I think it's going to be a good battle between the three of us."

"Probably more, you know, with Lewis, with Charles behind – George as well."

"It's going to be an interesting Sunday, so I'm looking forward to it."

"We're home, so it's close."

Hamilton's racing-driver brother Nicolas and his mum Carmen Larbalestier were both in the Ferrari garage giving the 40-year-old support. It was

way too close for comfort for Hamilton in the first session as he progressed into Q2 by the skin of his teeth.

The Stevenage-born driver was unable to go again at the end of the session as there wasn't enough fuel in his car.

But Hamilton, who won last year's race with Mercedes, insisted: "I'm pleased with the progress. I'm really pleased with the direction."

"My engineer and I have been really getting a lot better in terms of how we set the car up."

"I was much happier in the car. The lap was really, really nice."

"Up until the last corner, there was a bit of understeer."

"It was the kerb that put me a little wide, but then I just lost it."

"It's been amazing to be in the red car here and to see Brits shift from the outfits that we had previous now to red and embracing the Ferrari badge."

"The support has been incredible."

"My family is here, which is great."

With eight minutes to go in Q1, Franco Colapinto suffered a huge spin and veered off track backwards into the barriers.

The Argentinian did well to keep it going and drive his car back on to the track.

But a red flag was thrown after Colapinto, 22, was told to stop, presumably because of the gravel in his car.

The Alpine driver will start today's race from 20th on the grid.

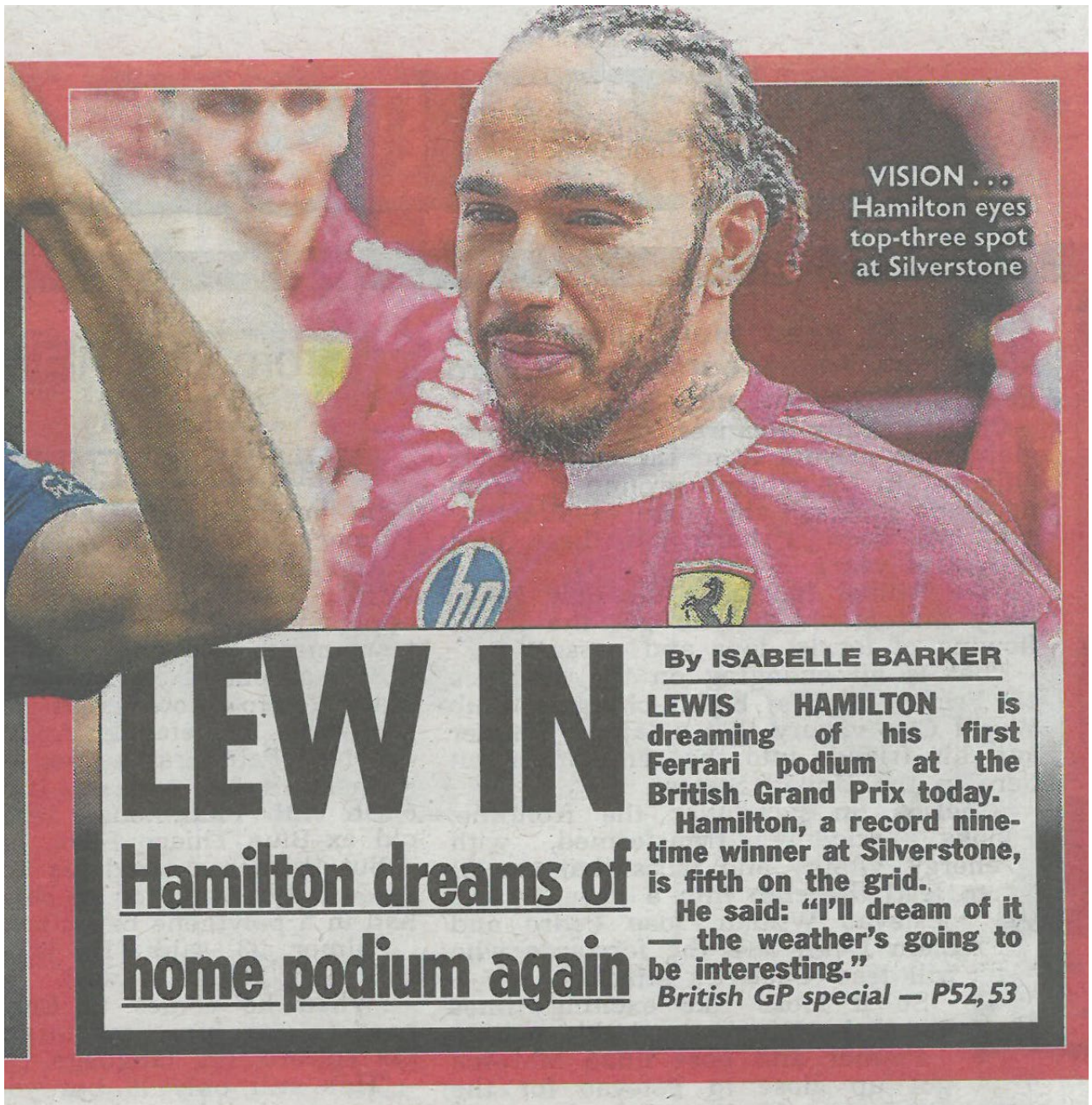


HOME HERO... driving for Ferrari did not stop Hamilton (right) having plenty of support – but he had to settle for fifth on the grid



SUNDAY 06 JULY – IN PRINT

**THE
Sun**

A photograph of Lewis Hamilton, a professional racing driver, wearing a red Ferrari team shirt. He is looking slightly to the left with a focused expression. In the background, another person in a red shirt is partially visible. The photo is framed by a thick red border.

VISION ...
Hamilton eyes
top-three spot
at Silverstone

LEW IN

**Hamilton dreams of
home podium again**

By ISABELLE BARKER

LEWIS HAMILTON is dreaming of his first Ferrari podium at the British Grand Prix today.

Hamilton, a record nine-time winner at Silverstone, is fifth on the grid.

He said: "I'll dream of it — the weather's going to be interesting."

British GP special — P52, 53

Race ace Lewis **fast** and furious

Lewis Hamilton has been fasting in order to be a lean, mean racing machine at today's British Grand Prix.

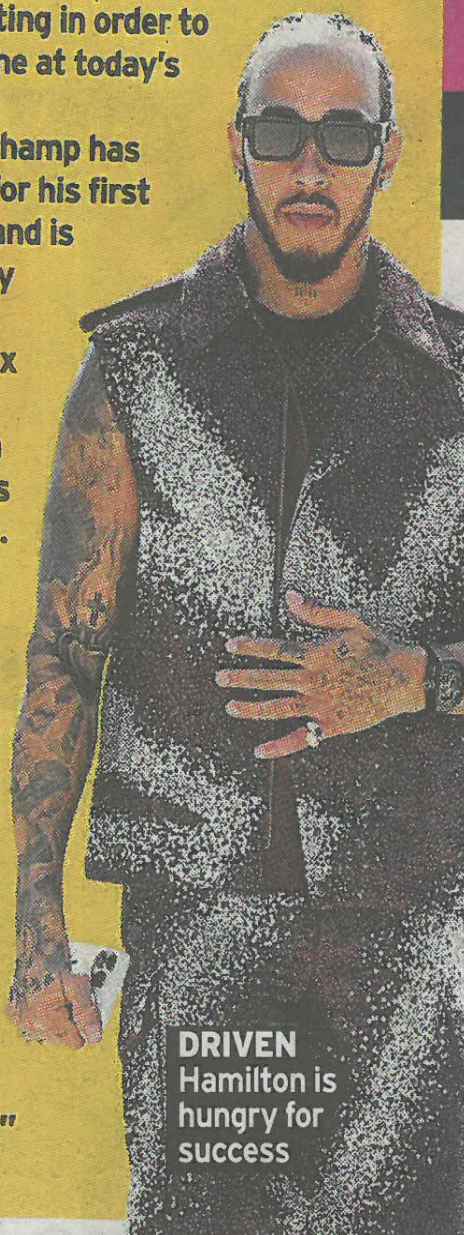
But the seven-time world champ has confessed that he can't wait for his first taste of post-race freedom - and is planning to tuck in to a mighty Deliveroo order this evening.

At Peroni 0.0%'s Grand Prix party, the Ferrari driver explained: "I went to Dishoom last night, weighed myself this morning and I was overweight. Now I can't eat today.

"I have to be 74.5kg when I get my kit on and get in the car. This morning I was 76.5kg so I haven't eaten all day.

"I do 20-hour fasts when it's like this, leading up to a race - and no carbs.

"My team literally all stand around me looking at the scales to see what weight I am and if I'm over, it's a nightmare. I feel like making them all get on the scales, too." It sounds like the pits to us.



DRIVEN
Hamilton is
hungry for
success



CLOSE ALLY Verstappen with Marko

A BULLISH WARNING TO RIVALS

BY DANIEL MOXON
RED BULL chief Helmut Marko has fired a hands-off warning to Mercedes, saying: "Max Verstappen is our greatest asset."

The Silver Arrows are courting the four-time world champion, with Brit George Russell the fall guy if they get the Dutchman.

For Marko - Verstappen's closest ally in F1 apart from his father Jos and manager Raymond Vermeulen - it is critical that the 27-year-old remains with the team.

The 82-year-old Red Bull special adviser said: "Max is our greatest asset. We have achieved most of our successes in recent years mainly thanks to him."

Verstappen slipped through Mercedes' grasp once before, as a teenager, when he rejected Toto Wolff to sign with Red Bull.

He quickly developed a bond with Marko, who is a man not easily impressed, but was in his first meeting with the youngster in 2014.

Marko said: "Max was not nervous at all. He had prepared well, knew how many cans of Red Bull sold worldwide and that kind of stuff - an older mind in a young body."

That first Red Bull contract was signed in "some coffee shop at Düsseldorf Airport".

All of Verstappen's subsequent deals have been thrashed out and agreed in Marko's office at one of his hotels in Graz, Austria.

That includes his current one, signed in early 2022, which runs until the end of 2028.

But with Red Bull seemingly on the decline and McLaren now the dominant force on the grid, there are parallels to the story of the team's other four-time champion.

Sebastian Vettel quit in 2014, feeling Ferrari would offer him a better chance of more success, but Marko insists Verstappen's current situation "is different".

He said: "At that time it was clear that we could not win, with a Renault engine."

Red Bull are building their own engines for the 2026 season, with Mercedes tipped to adapt best to the new regulations.

That could prove a factor in Verstappen's decision, but Marko added: "Everyone is talking about next year's engines and, yes, we have our own model for the first time."

"Nobody has proof that Mercedes has next year's best."

"It's not just about the combustion engine, but also battery and petrol."

"Who knows? Our engine might just be competitive."

FORMULA ONE BRITISH GRAND PRIX

A SPECIAL



TYRED AND EMOTIONAL Mourinho congratulates Max on his pole position

Verstappen: A lot of cars were quick and I see a proper battle

QUALIFYING RESULT

- 1 Verstappen (Ned) 1:24.892
- 2 Piastri (Aus) 1:24.935
- 3 Norris (GB) 1:25.010
- 4 Russell (GB) 1:25.029
- 5 Hamilton (GB) 1:25.055
- 6 Leclerc (Mon) 1:25.121
- 7 Alonso (Spa) 1:25.621
- 8 Gasly (Fra) 1:25.785
- 9 Sainz Jr (Spa) 1:25.746
- 10 Antonelli (Ita) 1:25.374
- 11 Tsunoda (Jpn) 1:25.826
- 12 Hadjar (Fra) 1:25.864
- 13 Albon (Tha) 1:25.899
- 14 Ocon (Fra) 1:25.950
- 15 Lawson (NZ) 1:26.440

DRIVERS' STANDINGS

- 1 Piastri (McLaren) 216pts
- 2 Norris (McLaren) 201
- 3 Verstappen (Red Bull) 155
- 4 Russell (Mercedes) 146
- 5 Leclerc (Ferrari) 119
- 6 Hamilton (Ferrari) 91
- 7 Antonelli (Mercedes) 63
- 8 Albon (Williams) 42
- 9 Ocon (Haas) 23
- 10 Hulkenberg (RB) 22

CONSTRUCTORS

- 1 McLaren (3 Wins) 417pts
- 2 Ferrari (0) 210
- 3 Mercedes (1) 209
- 4 Red Bull (2) 162
- 5 Williams (0) 35
- 6 RB (0) 36
- 7 Haas (0) 29
- 8 Aston Martin (0) 25
- 9 Sauber (0) 26
- 10 Alpine (0) 11



HE'S A BRIT EXCITED!
Verstappen celebrates getting pole at Silverstone



Hamilton's Grand affair can't go on ... or can it?

AS USUAL, the Silverstone paddock was jammed with celebrities of varying grades - A-listers to Z-listers.

And in terms of bringing stardust to the motorhomes, Keanu Reeves was probably in pole position.

He is fronting a documentary charting Cadillac's 2026 entry into the sport, but is best known to many for having the lead role in the action movie Speed.

Which is what Lewis Hamilton has generally been short of since joining Ferrari for the 2025 season. But while Reeves is Hollywood box office, Hamilton

ANDY DUNN
BRITAIN'S BEST COLUMNIST FROM SILVERSTONE



remains the No.1 draw at the home of British motor racing.

Even in Ferrari red, Hamilton is the darling of the crowd. Even with Lando Norris challenging for the world title, Hamilton is the spectators' favourite. Even with George Russell leading the challenge of the locally based Mercedes team, Hamilton is the poster boy - albeit, aged 40.

It has been a long-running love

affair, starting with a podium place in his first British Grand Prix in 2007.

Hamilton has stood on the Silverstone podium 15 times, a record for most top-three finishes at a single circuit.

Also a record is his tally of nine British Grand Prix victories - no driver has won as many races at a single circuit or in a particular Grand Prix in Formula

ROUND 12: BRITISH GRAND PRIX
TODAY, START 3PM, LIVE ON SKY SPORTS

ONE, MAX



'SILLY ERROR' Bearman

Crashing Bear roar of anger

BY DANIEL MOXON

BRITISH starlet Oliver Bearman admitted a rookie error deprived Silverstone fans from having four home heroes start in the top 10 today.

Bearman, 20, qualified eighth in his Haas, but will start near the back due to a 10-place grid penalty.

The stewards threw the book at him after speeding up in final practice when the session was red-flagged and crashing in the pit entry, ripping the front off his Haas.

Data showed he was travelling at 161mph, despite the session being stopped, and the Brit admitted he had no one to blame but himself.

Bearman said: "It was a silly error and one that shouldn't happen at this level. It was just a misjudgement."

He went into qualifying with that punishment already confirmed and so he ended his day with "mixed feelings".

He said: "To be in Q3 on merit is a good feeling. We actually had a very strong qualifying and the car was feeling great, the best it has ever felt."

"I'm really disappointed in myself because I've let the team down today."

"I'm glad we could show today we have a quick car in qualifying trim, which wasn't the case recently."

Bearman started the season strongly with three top-10 finishes in four races, but Haas have gone off the boil and their rookie hasn't scored a point since mid-April.

After 11th-placed finishes in his last two races, he hopes to end his barren run in a first F1 home race.

And the Essex-raised Ferrari academy driver still rates his chances, despite starting 18th on the grid.

He said: "If we're P8 in qualifying, that means we've got a very quick race car because normally our qualifying car is not as good as our race car."

London-born Thai Alex Albon starts 13th and criticised his Williams team. He said: "We should not be here, we should be in Q3 quite comfortably."

LEW: I'M REVVED UP FOR ATTACK

BY DANIEL MOXON

LEWIS HAMILTON was gutted after one mistake cost him a shot at a fairy-tale Silverstone pole position.

But the seven-time champ vowed to "attack" from fifth on the grid today in the quest for his 10th British Grand Prix win.

He said: "The lap was really nice right up until the last corner, I had a little bit of understeer. I just lost it."

"It cost me just over a 10th, so that would definitely have put me on the front row."

"I've got four really fast cars ahead, but I want to be in the fight. I'll come and attack as best as I can."

Two fellow Brits are among that quartet, with Lando Norris third and George Russell fourth.

Championship leader Oscar Piastri starts second behind Max Verstappen, but both will have a swarm of home hopes on their tails.

Norris said: "I wish I could have given the fans more to cheer about, but hopefully that will be the case tomorrow."



IT'S A MAC ATTACK McLaren pair Lando Norris poses with fans while Piastri concentrates



joining the Dutchman on the front row.

And, with rain a potential factor, it's all set up for another special race at a Silverstone track which rarely disappoints.

But Verstappen, never one to shy away from a fight, is gearing up for war.

"For sure, I can see a proper battle," he said.

"Naturally, I have everyone behind, so I have to look behind me and see what will happen."

"In the practice long runs, there were a lot of cars that were quick and, even in qualifying, it was all quite tight."

"It's just going to depend on who can keep their tyres alive."

Norris is chasing a first F1 victory in his home race, but also has the title race to think about and must overtake Piastri to avoid losing

ground to his McLaren team-mate.

The top six all look quick and so the Brit expects "a tough, but exciting race".

He said: "It was reasonably smooth and most laps always improved and found good lap time."

"Probably just my final one. I would have hoped to find just that little bit more, but didn't quite get the grip out of it."

Mercedes looked for a long time to be unable to compete with Verstappen, the McLarens and the Ferraris.

And then Russell (above) finally put it all together when it mattered to ensure he will be in the mix as he, too, hunts his first Silverstone win.

He said: "We were scratching our heads today because we thought the conditions would come to us."

"It was only that last lap in Q3 when it did. It's always good when your best lap of the weekend is your last."

Hamilton continues to feel more and more comfortable in his

With rain a potential factor, it's all set up for a special race



By DANIEL MOXON at Silverstone

AFTER a special lap like that, it was only fitting that he received his prize from the Special One.

It wasn't the result the locals wanted, but no one could deny that Max Verstappen produced something remarkable yesterday to get the pole position award handed to him by Jose Mourinho.

Because Red Bull were truly nowhere in practice.

But it's like Lewis Hamilton said, "Max always comes out of nowhere".

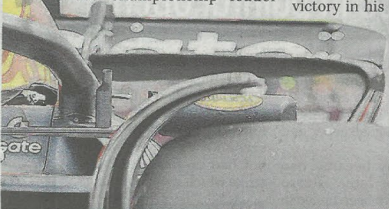
You can never count out the four-time champion and the Dutch lion roared while, in their final efforts, the Brits were a little too tame.

Hamilton was on target until a mistake at the final corner meant fifth was the best he could do.

George Russell will start fourth and was baffled by Mercedes' lack of performance on a cold track, conditions that their car usually loves.

And Lando Norris could only go third quickest and said: "I'm gutted not to put it on pole."

They make up a trio of Brits who can pile the pressure on Verstappen and Oscar Piastri, the championship leader



One history. In his 18 Silverstone starts - he was third in the 70th anniversary Grand Prix in 2020 - Hamilton has finished outside the top 10 only once.

That race in 2020 was a week after the British Grand Prix, a race that Hamilton won by driving the final lap-and-a-half on three wheels.

It was the type of drama Hamilton has been serving up at Silverstone for almost two decades - that's why the pit straight bears his name. He is a part of Silverstone's history, his image dominating the billboards.

And there has been a spring in

Hamilton's step and a glint in his eye - that is until the start of qualifying when there was more drama.

In Q1, the impressive Ferrari pace in practice looked to have gone and Hamilton (right), sensing he was on the cusp of elimination, asked to squeeze in an extra lap.

Sorry, Lewis, you haven't got enough fuel, came the reply. Don't they know you have always got a few more miles when it says zero?

As he can, Hamilton sounded

irritated on the team radio and it looked as though he might not make it through to the second session.

But he did. Just. And he then responded in the way you would expect of a seven-time world champion - setting the fastest time in Q2.

Maybe only a slight mistake on his last lap in Q3 cost him a place on the front two rows, meaning he will start the race on the third, just ahead of his team-mate Charles Leclerc. The Ferrari, though, will

be competitive in the race. But as he has not won in almost a year and has yet to stand on the podium in his Ferrari gear, a victory seems a long shot.

Yet, similarly, arriving at Silverstone 12 months ago, Hamilton had not won for over two years.

And what happened? After a titanic early tussle with Norris and Russell, Hamilton kept Max Verstappen at bay for a sensational triumph.

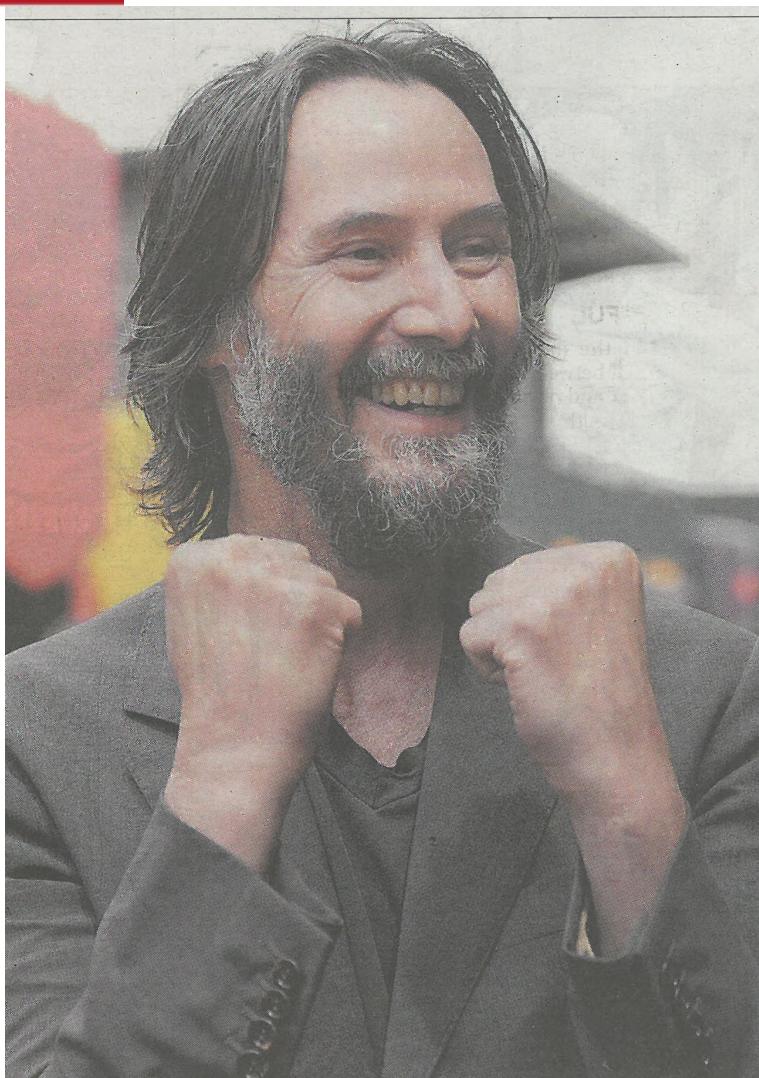
It rained that day and there is a chance of rain today.

He couldn't, could he? Don't bet against it.



SUNDAY 06 JULY – IN PRINT

SUNDAY
Mirror



Racing fan is Keanu for green light

HE made his name with *Speed*, so Keanu Reeves is in the right place at Silverstone ahead of the British Grand Prix today.

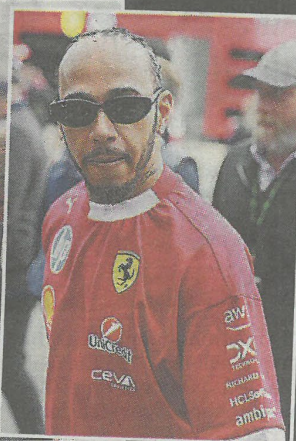
The Hollywood star was joined in the

paddock yesterday by chef Gordon Ramsay and his wife Tana.

Lewis Hamilton will be looking for his first win with Ferrari in the race, which starts at 3pm.



PIT STOP Gordon Ramsay with Tana; right, Lewis Hamilton.



The Observer

Forget a festival of racing, it's a carnival of cash

Enjoy the dramas of Love Island on wheels, but really F1 is an advert that masquerades as a sport, writes *George Simms* at Silverstone

‘What do you care what they say?” purrs an ageless, edgeless Brad Pitt in F1, a movie-cum-commercial with a dubious portrayal of women and even more dubious portrayal of F1. “It’s all just noise.”

There is perhaps no neater summation of modern Formula One. After all, the series so technical it is named after its own rulebook has reimagined and reinvented itself by learning to love the noise, by understanding and prioritising humanity’s base desires, by accepting drivers are far more interesting off the grid. Writers Joshua Robinson and Jonathan Clegg dubbed it “post-sport sport”. Maybe it isn’t sport at all. Maybe that doesn’t matter.

But before the noise, before the sound and fury of shrieking engines and tyres and fans, the first thing that hits you about Silverstone on Grand Prix weekend is the smell. The stench of acrid rubber hangs over the track like a shawl. Vape smoke and petrol fumes haunt the air. But most of all, it stinks of money. Forget a festival of racing, this is a carnival of cash.

Every element of the grand prix experience, of the F1 experience, has been painstakingly monetised. A surface unbranded is a surface

wasted. The majority of teams only exist to bolster an external brand, be that an energy drinks company or the largest machine tool-builder west of Suez. In turn, every team have their own roster of sponsors – 20 or so, on average. This used to be the reserve of Big Tobacco, but now it’s for anyone with a dream and a few billion dollars.

The Las Vegas GP is advertised across the finish line, overlooking adverts for F1: The Movie and a collaboration with Disney next year. Actor Tobias Menzies namedrops Drive to Survive in the film, while the premiere will undoubtedly feature heavily on next season. Even the livery of the fictional team APX GP includes an advert for the F1 25 video game.

This self-serving, self-sustaining circularity, this advection, is ubiquitous. There’s sponcon for everyone. Beneath all the noise, just as F1: The Movie is an advert masquerading as a film, as Drive to Survive is an advert masquerading as a documentary, Formula One is an advert masquerading as a sport.

The Paddock – the teams’ tarmac oasis – is the epicentre of F1’s noisy opulence. Once a collection of crumbling motorhomes, every team now ferries sleek palaces from race to race. There are more roof terraces than Soho. Aston Martin’s glass frontage is adorned by manicured trees. The F1 base serves fresh gelato on the patio. Was that José Mourinho? Ferrari disseminate drinks called “Fantasy Vibe” and “Cosmic Wave”. If you need a quick trim, Qatar Airways operate a complimentary salon.

Everywhere you look are beautiful, marketable, Instagram people. There are faces for which launching a thousand ships would seem wholly inadequate. Even the drivers are a titivated boyband of hairstyles and jawlines and eyes you forget yourself in. Model good looks are not an official prerequisite to operate an F1 car, but it clearly doesn’t hurt.

Opposite the pit lane, a BMX rider



‘Model good looks aren’t officially a prerequisite to operate an F1 car, but it clearly doesn’t hurt’

flicks and flitters through a fully functional half-pipe on the Red Bull hospitality balcony. The extremes of depth and superficiality, indulgence and vanity, reality and artifice, are intoxicating. You cannot help but imagine what it would be to belong here. F1 understands this and, of course, knows how to monetise it. The Paddock doubles as a human zoo. People pay thousands to be near their heroes, shepherded by harassed guides. You’re allowed close, but never actually inside. The more you pay, the closer you can get to the Have Yachts, and yet the further away you realise you are.

At one of countless merch stands, I inquire whether there’s been a labelling error, but a dull grey Pirelli cap really does cost £95. “It’s special edition,” I’m told, as if that explains everything. Bernie Ecclestone

believed young fans were not a market worth targeting because they “don’t buy Rolexes”. That might be true, but they certainly buy merch.

Between 2018 and 2023, online sales of F1 merchandise rose 1,084%, underpinned by increased partisanship and an intimate understanding of the commercial power of parasocial relationships. You might never really know your idols, but you can dress like them. Imitation is the sincerest, and most commercially beneficial, form of flattery.

In Thursday’s press conferences, Russell (in a £110 Mercedes hooded himself) complimented Yuki Tsunoda on his Red Bull rugby shirt (£80), a relative steal when you consider Charles Leclerc was sat in a standard Ferrari T-shirt costing £81. “You haven’t got any



merchandise on!" a glossy presenter goaded a child no older than 12 before the first practice session. "You need to get down to the shop." The overwhelming colour of the weekend was McLaren papaya, because orange is not sexy enough. Every driver is now a superbrand in themselves, only ever referred to by their first names, walking, grinning catalogues. The five most popular drivers – Lewis Hamilton, Leclerc, Max Verstappen, Carlos Sainz and Lando Norris – have more Instagram followers than the 10 teams combined. Even Hamilton's dog has 1.2m followers, more than two of the lesser-known drivers. And so the weekend is dominated by easily comprehensible psychodramas, featuring easily comprehensible characters, Love Island on wheels. Verstappen – the

God-given talent who just won't play ball – has reportedly had his head turned by Mercedes, who appear his type on paper. Mercedes's Russell, the clean-cut face of English middle-classness, at risk of being dumped from the villa, says he's "loyal". Over at McLaren, Norris – the effortlessly charming son of a Rich List father whose greatest flaw might be being too nice – prepares to overcome the odds to drive the undisputed fastest car, while enjoying overwhelming support and adoration from a home crowd. Oh, the humanity. Norris and Hamilton both have dedicated stores stuffed with signed and Silverstone editions. Norris's is plastered in faux graffiti, just in front of the Landostand, renamed in his honour despite him never winning the British GP, and still

The eyes have it: Carlos Sainz waits in his Williams before going out for practice.
Mark Sutton/
Formula 1 via
Getty Images

Handbags and glad rags: The F1 Paddock is full of beautiful people (top) and every surface is an advert
Mark Sutton/
Formula 1



being 25. There are specific stalls for each major team separately, all the teams combined, Brand F1 and Silverstone itself. If you're mildly interested in anything F1-adjacent, there's someone here to sell you something.

Part of me wants to hate this – and a lot of me does – but there is no denying it works. Other sports are desperately attempting to steal or replicate part of the model, with limited success. F1's global fanbase is estimated at about 826 million, up 90 million year on year according to Nielsen Sports.

Just shy of 500,000 people will pass through Silverstone between Thursday and today. Amid the Mercedes dominance of the mid-2010s, ex-Silverstone managing director Patrick Allen once told Ecclestone: "I can't sell tickets for a shit product". Yet F1 has now successfully future-proofed itself from its inevitable swathes of dominance and inaction by shifting focus away from racing. Sam Fender played on Thursday, Fatboy Slim yesterday. Surveys suggest as many people are here to just be close to their heroes as are for the racing. A significant proportion of fans will admit they cannot even sit through a race. They buy merch just the same.

For drivers who spend their years in Bahrain and Vegas, much is made of Silverstone's history. Hamilton says "there's always magic here", while there are constant references to "F1's spiritual home". The first F1 grand prix was held here in 1950. F1 is still a British enterprise to a fascinating extent. When Cadillac become the 11th team next year, 10 will have major operational bases in the UK. F1 contributes £12 billion to the economy annually. A quarter of the drivers are either British or British-born. If the sport has a soul, it's somewhere within this converted RAF airfield in a sedate village.

And yet it's hard to look past that soul being world-dominating, empire-building greed. F1 earns an estimated £320million annually from their nine primary sponsors alone, spanning state-owned Saudi oil to crypto. There's an almost admirable shamelessness to the naked willingness to take money from anywhere so long as the cheque clears. Cadillac's inclusion is the latest attempt to entrap

American eyeballs, after casting Pitt as the tentpole of your tentpole movie. You get the sense F1 is so terrified of irrelevance that it will only be satisfied when everyone is engaging. Actually watching is not the only way to play. Love the drivers, watch the movie, follow Hamilton's dog. Here's more access, another part of ourselves we've sacrificed on the altar of engagement. None of it matters so long as you pay.

The only thing as loud as the money is people telling you just how well it's doing. "It's one of the most loved sports at the moment," Norris explained. "And still growing." Does anything else matter? Probably not. It's all just noise.

3pm Sky Sports F1 & Channel 4
British GP, Silverstone

Today's Grid

	Team	Time
1 Max Verstappen	Red Bull	1:24.89
2 Oscar Piastri	McLaren	1:24.99
3 Lando Norris	McLaren	1:25.01
4 George Russell	Mercedes	1:25.02
5 Lewis Hamilton	Ferrari	1:25.09
6 Charles Leclerc	Ferrari	1:25.12
7 Kimi Antonelli	Mercedes	1:25.37
8 Oliver Bearman	Haas	1:25.47
9 Fernando Alonso	Aston Martin	1:25.52
10 Pierre Gasly	Alpine	1:25.78

Drivers' standings top 8

		Podiums	Wins	Pts
1 Piastri	McLaren	9	5	216
2 Norris	McLaren	9	3	201
3 Verstappen	Red Bull	5	2	155
4 Russell	Mercedes	5	1	146
5 Leclerc	Ferrari	4	0	119
6 Hamilton	Ferrari	0	0	91
7 Antonelli	Mercedes	1	0	63
8 Albon	Williams	0	0	42

Constructors' standings

	Podiums	Wins	Pts
1 McLaren	18	8	417
2 Ferrari	4	0	210
3 Mercedes	6	1	209
4 Red Bull	5	2	162
5 Williams	0	0	55
6 RB	0	0	36
7 Haas	0	0	39
8 Aston Martin	0	0	28



FORMULA ONE

BRIT

Max on pole

AFTER a lap like that, it was only fitting that he received his prize from The Special One.

It wasn't the result the locals wanted, but no one could deny that Max Verstappen produced something remarkable yesterday to get the pole position award handed to him by Jose Mourinho.

Because Red Bull were truly nowhere in practice.

But it's like Lewis Hamilton said: "Max always comes out of nowhere."

You can never count the four-time champion out and the Dutch lion roared while, in their final efforts, the Brits were a little tame.

Hamilton was on target until a mistake at the final corner meant fifth was the best he could do.

George Russell will start fourth and was baffled by Mercedes' lack of performance on a cold Silverstone track - conditions their car usually loves.

And Lando Norris could only go third quickest and lamented: "I'm gutted not to put it on pole."

They make up a trio of Brits who can

pile the pressure on Verstappen and Oscar Piastri, the championship leader joining the Dutchman on the front row.

And with rain a potential factor, it's all set up for another special race at a Silverstone track which rarely disappoints.

Verstappen, never one to shy away from a fight, is gearing up for war.

"For sure, I can see a proper battle," he said.

"Naturally, I have everyone behind, so I have to look behind me and see what will happen.

"In the practice long runs, there were a lot of cars that were quick and, even in qualifying, it was all quite tight.

"It's just going to depend on who can keep their tyres alive."

Norris is chasing a first F1 victory in his home race but also has the title race to think about and must overtake Piastri to avoid losing ground to his McLaren team-mate.

The top six all look quick and so the Brit expects "a tough but exciting race."

He said: "It was reasonably smooth and most laps always improved and found good lap time."

"Probably just my final one, I'd have hoped to find just that little bit more but didn't quite get the grip out of it."

Mercedes looked for a long time to be unable to compete with



REVVED UP:
Hamilton, Norris
and Russell



THE DUST

as home hopefuls fade

by DAN MOXON

Verstappen, the McLarens and the Ferraris. And then Russell finally put it all together when it mattered to ensure he will be in the mix as he too hunts his first Silverstone win.

He said: "We were scratching our heads today because we thought the conditions would come to us. It was only that last lap in Q3 when it did. It's always good when your best lap of the weekend is your last one."

Hamilton continues to feel more and more comfortable in his Ferrari.

It almost ended in tears yesterday when the Italians failed to give him enough fuel in Q1 and he only narrowly avoided being in

the bottom five. He said: "I'm really pleased with the progress and with the direction. My engineer and I have been really gelling a lot better in terms of how we set the car up."

And despite the new colours, he remains as popular as ever with the Silverstone faithful and added: "To be in the red car here and to see Brits shift from the outfits that I had previously and now to red with the Ferrari badge has been pretty amazing. The support has been incredible."

In the other Ferrari, Charles Leclerc was much less happy.

He qualified sixth and reacted with a radio rant which featured nine expletives in 10 seconds.

DUTCH OF CLASS:
Verstappen after taking pole in big display

Bear with sore head

OLIVER BEARMAN admitted a rookie error deprived Silverstone fans from having four home heroes starting in the top 10 today.

The 20-year-old qualified eighth in his Haas – but will start near the back because of a 10-place grid penalty.

The stewards threw the book at him after he sped up in final practice when the session was red-flagged and he

by DAN MOXON

crashed in the pit entry, ripping the front off his Haas.

Data showed he was travelling at 161mph, despite the session being stopped.

And the Brit admitted he had no one to blame but himself.

Bearman said: "It was a silly error and one that shouldn't happen at this level. It was just a misjudgement from my side."

He went into qualifying with

that punishment already confirmed – and so he ended his day with "mixed feelings".

He said: "To be in Q3 on merit is a good feeling. We actually had a very strong qualifying and the car was feeling great, the best it has ever felt."

"For me, then of course I'm really disappointed in myself because I've let the team down today."



BRITISH GP QUALI		
Driver	Team	Time
1 M Verstappen (Ned)	Red Bull	1:24.892
2 O Piastri (Aus)	McLaren	1:24.995
3 L Norris (GB)	McLaren	1:25.010
4 G Russell (GB)	Mercedes	1:25.029
5 L Hamilton (GB)	Ferrari	1:25.095
6 C Leclerc (Mon)	Ferrari	1:25.121
7 A K Antonelli (Ita)*	Mercedes	1:25.374
8 O Bearman (GB)**	Haas F1	1:25.471
9 F Alonso (Spa)	Aston Martin	1:25.621
10 P Gasly (Fra)	Alpine	1:25.785

11 C Sainz Jr (Esp) Williams 1:25.746, 12 Y Tsunoda (Jpn) Red Bull 1:25.826, 13 I Rodriguez (Fra) RB 1:25.864, 14 A Albon (Tha) Williams 1:25.889, 15 F Ocas (Fra) Haas F1 1:25.950, 16 L Lawson (Rct) RB 1:26.440, 17 G Bortoletto (Bra) Kick Sauber 1:26.446, 18 L Stroll (Can) Aston Martin 1:26.504, 19 N Hulkenberg (Ger) Kick Sauber 1:26.574, 20 F Colapinto (Arg) Alpine 1:27.060.

*receives 3-place grid penalty. **receives 10-place grid penalty

DRIVERS' CHAMPIONSHIP		CONSTRUCTORS	
1 O Piastri	216pts	1 McLaren	417pts
2 L Norris	201	2 Ferrari	210
3 M Verstappen	155	3 Mercedes	209
4 G Russell	146	4 Red Bull	162
5 C Leclerc	119	5 Williams	55



CLOSE ALLY Verstappen with Marko

A BULLISH WARNING TO RIVALS

BY DANIEL MOXON
RED BULL chief Helmut Marko has fired a hands-off warning to Mercedes, saying: "Max Verstappen is our greatest asset."

The Silver Arrows are courting the four-time world champion, with Brit George Russell the fall guy if they get the Dutchman.

For Marko - Verstappen's closest ally in F1 apart from his father Jos and manager Raymond Vermeulen - it is critical that the 27-year-old remains with the team.

The 82-year-old Red Bull special adviser said: "Max is our greatest asset. We have achieved most of our successes in recent years mainly thanks to him."

Verstappen slipped through Mercedes' grasp once before, as a teenager, when he rejected Toto Wolff to sign with Red Bull.

He quickly developed a bond with Marko, who is a man not easily impressed, but was in his first meeting with the youngster in 2014. Marko said: "Max was not nervous at all. He had prepared well, knew how many cans of Red Bull sold worldwide and that kind of stuff - an older mind in a young body."

That first Red Bull contract was signed in "some coffee shop at Dusseldorf Airport".

All of Verstappen's subsequent deals have been thrashed out and agreed in Marko's office at one of his hotels in Graz, Austria.

That includes his current one, signed in early 2022, which runs until the end of 2028.

But with Red Bull seemingly on the decline and McLaren now the dominant force on the grid, there are parallels to the story of the team's other four-time champion.

Sebastian Vettel quit in 2014, feeling Ferrari would offer him a better chance of more success, but Marko insists Verstappen's current situation "is different".

He said: "At that time it was clear that we could not win, with a Renault engine."

Red Bull are building their own engines for the 2026 season, with Mercedes tipped to adapt best to the new regulations.

That could prove a factor in Verstappen's decision, but Marko added: "Everyone is talking about next year's engines and, yes, we have our own model for the first time. "Nobody has proof that Mercedes has next year's best."

"It's not just about the combustion engine, but also battery and petrol. "Who knows? Our engine might just be competitive."

FORMULA ONE BRITISH GRAND PRIX

A SPECIAL



TYRED AND EMOTIONAL Mourinho congratulates Max on his pole position

Verstappen: A lot of cars were quick and I see a proper battle

QUALIFYING RESULT

- 1 Verstappen (Ned) 1:24.892
- 2 Piastri (Aus) 1:24.995
- 3 Norris (GB) 1:25.010
- 4 Russell (GB) 1:25.029
- 5 Hamilton (GB) 1:25.095
- 6 Leclerc (Mon) 1:25.121
- 7 Alonso (Spa) 1:25.621
- 8 Gasly (Fra) 1:25.785
- 9 Sainz Jr (Spa) 1:25.746
- 10 Antonelli (Ita) 1:25.374
- 11 Tsunoda (Jpn) 1:25.826
- 12 Hadjar (Fra) 1:25.864
- 13 Albon (Tha) 1:25.889
- 14 Ocon (Fra) 1:25.950
- 15 Lawson (NZ) 1:26.440

DRIVERS' STANDINGS

- 1 Piastri (McLaren) 216pts
- 2 Norris (McLaren) 201
- 3 Verstappen (Red Bull) 155
- 4 Russell (Mercedes) 146
- 5 Leclerc (Ferrari) 119
- 6 Hamilton (Ferrari) 91
- 7 Antonelli (Mercedes) 63
- 8 Albon (Williams) 42
- 9 Ocon (Haas) 23
- 10 Hulkenberg (RB) 22

CONSTRUCTORS

- 1 McLaren (8 Wins) 417pts
- 2 Ferrari (0) 210
- 3 Mercedes (1) 209
- 4 Red Bull (2) 162
- 5 Williams (0) 55
- 6 RB (0) 36
- 7 Haas (0) 29
- 8 Aston Martin (0) 28
- 9 Sauber (0) 26
- 10 Alpine (0) 11



HE'S A BRIT EXCITED! Verstappen celebrates getting pole at Silverstone



Hamilton's Grand affair can't go on ... or can it?

AS USUAL, the Silverstone paddock was jammed with celebrities of varying grades - A-listers to Z-listers.

And in terms of bringing stardust to the motorhomes, Keanu Reeves was probably in pole position.

He is fronting a documentary charting Cadillac's 2026 entry into the sport, but is best known to many for having the lead role in the action movie Speed.

Which is what Lewis Hamilton has generally been short of since joining Ferrari for the 2025 season. But while Reeves is Hollywood box office, Hamilton

ANDY DUNN
BRITAIN'S BEST COLUMNIST FROM SILVERSTONE

remains the No.1 draw at the home of British motor racing.

Even in Ferrari red, Hamilton is the darling of the crowd. Even with Lando Norris challenging for the world title, Hamilton is the spectators' favourite. Even with George Russell leading the challenge of the locally based Mercedes team, Hamilton is the poster boy - albeit, aged 40.

It has been a long-running love

affair, starting with a podium place in his first British Grand Prix in 2007.

Hamilton has stood on the Silverstone podium 15 times, a record for most top-three finishes at a single circuit.

Also a record is his tally of nine British Grand Prix victories - no driver has won as many races at a single circuit or in a particular Grand Prix in Formula

SUNDAY PEOPLE

ONE, MAX

By DANIEL MOXON
at Silverstone

AFTER a special lap like that, it was only fitting that he received his prize from the Special One.

It wasn't the result the locals wanted, but no one could deny that Max Verstappen produced something remarkable yesterday to get the pole position award handed to him by Jose Mourinho.

Because Red Bull were truly nowhere in practice. But it's like Lewis Hamilton said, "Max always comes out of nowhere".

You can never count out the four-time champion and the Dutch lion roared while, in their final efforts, the Brits were a little too tame.

Hamilton was on target until a mistake at the final corner meant fifth was the best he could do.

George Russell will start fourth and was baffled by Mercedes' lack of performance on a cold track, conditions that their car usually loves.

And Lando Norris could only go third quickest and said: "I'm gutted not to put it on pole."

They make up a trio of Brits who can pile the pressure on Verstappen and Oscar Piastri, the championship leader



IT'S A MAC ATTACK McLaren pair Lando Norris poses with fans while Piastri concentrates

joining the Dutchman on the front row.

And, with rain a potential factor, it's all set up for another special race at a Silverstone track which rarely disappoints.

But Verstappen, never one to shy away from a fight, is gearing up for war.

"For sure, I can see a proper battle," he said.

"Naturally, I have everyone behind, so I have to look behind me and see what will happen."

"In the practice long runs, there were a lot of cars that were quick and, even in qualifying, it was all quite tight."

"It's just going to depend on who can keep their tyres alive."

Norris is chasing a first F1 victory in his home race, but

also has the title race to think about and must overtake Piastri to avoid losing

ground to his McLaren team-mate.

The top six all look quick and so the Brit expects "a tough, but exciting race".

He said: "It was reasonably smooth and most laps always improved and found good lap time."

"Probably just my final one, I would have hoped to find just that little bit more, but didn't quite get the grip out of it."

Mercedes looked for a long time to be unable to compete with Verstappen, the McLaren's and the Ferraris.

And then Russell (above) finally put it all together when it mattered to ensure he will be in the mix as he, too, hunts his first Silverstone win.

He said: "We were scratching our heads today because we thought the conditions would come to us."

"It was only that last lap in Q3 when it did. It's always good when your best lap of the weekend is your last."

Hamilton continues to feel more and more comfortable in his

Ferrari after a rocky start to life in red.

It almost ended in tears yesterday when the Italians had failed to give him enough fuel in Q1 and he only narrowly avoided being in the bottom five.

But, overall, he's much more comfortable in his car now.

He said: "I'm really pleased with the progress and with the direction. My engineer and I have been gelling a lot better in terms of how we set the car up, and I'm much happier in the car."

And, despite the new colours, he remains as popular as ever with the Silverstone faithful and added: "It's been amazing."

"To be in the red car here and to see Brits shift from the outfits that I had previously and now to red with the Ferrari badge has been pretty amazing. The support has been incredible."

In the other Ferrari, Charles Leclerc was much less happy.

He qualified only sixth and reacted with a radio rant which featured nine expletives in 10 seconds.

Once he had calmed down, he said: "I haven't been good enough. I ended up P6 instead of on the front row. I can only blame myself."



'SILLY ERROR' Bearman Crashing Bear roar of anger

By DANIEL MOXON

BRITISH starlet Oliver Bearman admitted a rookie error deprived Silverstone fans from having four home heroes start in the top 10 today.

Bearman, 20, qualified eighth in his Haas, but will start near the back due to a 10-place grid penalty.

The stewards threw the book at him after speeding up in final practice when the session was red-flagged and crashing in the pit entry, ripping the front off his Haas.

Data showed he was travelling at 161mph, despite the session being stopped, and the Brit admitted he had no one to blame but himself.

Bearman said: "It was a silly error and one that shouldn't happen at this level. It was just a misjudgement."

He went into qualifying with that punishment already confirmed and so he ended his day with "mixed feelings".

He said: "To be in Q3 on merit is a good feeling. We actually had a very strong qualifying and the car was feeling great, the best it has ever felt."

"I'm really disappointed in myself because I've let the team down today."

"I'm glad we could show today we have a quick car in qualifying trim, which wasn't the case recently."

Bearman started the season strongly with three top-10 finishes in four races, but Haas have gone off the boil and their rookie hasn't scored a point since mid-April.

After 11th-placed finishes in his last two races, he hopes to end his barren run in a first F1 home race.

And the Essex-raised Ferrari academy driver still rates his chances, despite starting 18th on the grid.

He said: "If we're P8 in qualifying, that means we've got a very quick race car because normally our qualifying car is not as good as our race car."

London-born Thai Alex Albon starts 13th and criticised his Williams team. He said: "We should not be here, we should be in Q3 quite comfortably."

No driver has won as many races at a single circuit in F1 history

One history. In his 18 Silverstone starts – he was third in the 70th anniversary Grand Prix in 2020 – Hamilton has finished outside the top 10 only once.

That race in 2020 was a week after the British Grand Prix, a race that Hamilton won by driving the final lap-and-a-half on three wheels.

It was the type of drama Hamilton has been serving up at Silverstone for almost two decades – that's why the pit straight bears his name. He is a part of Silverstone's history, his image dominating the billboards.

And there has been a spring in

Hamilton's step and a glint in his eye – that is until the start of qualifying when there was more drama.

In Q1, the impressive Ferrari pace in practice looked to have gone and Hamilton (right), sensing he was on the cusp of elimination, asked to squeeze in an extra lap.

Sorry, Lewis, you haven't got enough fuel, came the reply. Don't you know you have always got a few more miles when it says zero?

As he can, Hamilton sounded

irritated on the team radio and it looked as though he might not make it through to the second session.

But he did. Just. And he then responded in the way you would expect of a seven-time world champion – setting the fastest time in Q2.

Maybe only a slight mistake on his last lap in Q3 cost him a place on the front two rows, meaning he will start the race on the third, just ahead of his team-mate Charles Leclerc. The Ferrari, though, will

be competitive in the race. But as he has not won in almost a year and has yet to stand on the podium in his Ferrari gear, a victory seems a long shot.

Yet, similarly, arriving at Silverstone 12 months ago, Hamilton had not won for over two years.

And what happened? After a titanic early tussle with Norris and Russell, Hamilton kept Max Verstappen at bay for a sensational triumph.

It rained that day and there is a chance of rain today. He couldn't, could he? Don't bet against it.



Will Max be here next year? It's Dutch & go



Horner tells Verstappen to stay put at Red Bull

CHRISTIAN HORNER is confident that star driver Max Verstappen intends to remain with Red Bull next year.

But he's issued a warning to the Dutchman the grass is not always greener on the other side amid speculation he could join rivals Mercedes.

Four-time world champion Verstappen looks set to lose his crown this season, with Red Bull unable to compete with a dominant McLaren.

And at Silverstone on Thursday he declined to state definitively he will drive for Red Bull next year.

Verstappen has clauses in his deal which might allow him to leave but, on the eve of today's qualifying, team boss Horner said: "With any driver's contract, there is an element of a performance mechanism and, of course, that exists in Max's contract."

"His intention is that he will be there and driving for us in 2026. It's inevitable he's of huge interest to any other team. Inevitably there will always be speculation."

"The most important thing

FROM DANIEL MOXON AT SILVERSTONE

is the clarity that exists between Max and the team – and that's very clear."

Mercedes are not in title contention this year.

But the Silver Arrows are confident that, like they did in 2014 at the time of the last major engine regulations change, they could emerge as the dominant force when new power units are brought in next year.

That would be attractive to Verstappen, who will want a car that can win races and championships.

But Horner has reminded

his driver there is no certainty Mercedes will fare better than Red Bull, who for the first time will use engines designed and built by themselves.

He said: "Nobody can know what the pecking order is going to be, so there's an awful lot of subjectiveness to 2026."

"It will only be this time next year that we'll have a clear indication of what that pecking order is."

"So there are no guarantees that jumping into a Mercedes car would automatically be a better proposition."

George Russell is the most likely driver to be cut loose by Mercedes if they were to sign

Verstappen despite his strong season up to now.

"The Brit is out of contract at the end of the year and would be an obvious candidate for Red Bull to turn to if they needed a replacement."

Horner joked he'd like to poach championship leader Oscar Piastri, with a swift glance at McLaren boss Zak Brown sat next to him.

And regarding Russell, he declared there have been no talks with the 27-year-old up to now.

He said: "It's remarkable George is still on the market. "We haven't engaged in any discussion with George,

so he is obviously pretty confident that he's going to remain where he is."

Brits topped the timesheets in both practice sessions yesterday, with Lewis Hamilton quickest in the first hour and Lando Norris top after the second.

Hamilton was also third quickest in that second session, raising hopes that Ferrari might be able to compete and he could fight for a 10th Silverstone victory.

But Norris, searching for his first win on home soil, remains favourite along with McLaren team-mate Piastri, who ended the day fourth.

5 BEST RACES

BY PHILIP DUNCAN

SILVERSTONE hosted the first world championship grand prix 75 years ago.

Here are five top races at the famous circuit.

1987

Nigel Mansell was forced to pit for a new set of tyres after reporting vibrations on his Williams. With 30 laps remaining, he was the best part of half a minute behind his team-mate and fierce rival Nelson Piquet.

Spurred on by his home crowd, Mansell smashed the lap record nine times before catching and passing Piquet with two laps left to win.

1994

Michael Schumacher illegally overtook pole-sitter Damon Hill on the parade lap and was punished with a stop-and-go penalty, which he ignored. He was shown a black flag – which should have resulted in his instant disqualification – but kept driving before serving his stop-and-go on lap 27.

Hill went on to claim a crucial victory. Schuey finished second but he was later disqualified and banned for two races.

1998

Mika Hakkinen led from the start but in a downpour lost control of his McLaren and spun. His 40-second lead was wiped out and rival Schumacher looked odds-on to win.

However, the German had illegally passed Alexander Wurz under a yellow flag, which resulted in a stop-and-go penalty. At the end of the final lap, Schumacher entered the pits to serve his penalty but he had already crossed the finish line so won the race. The result stood despite McLaren's protests.

2008

Lewis Hamilton arrived at his home race fourth in the drivers' standings but left on top after storming to victory. In torrential rain he blitzed the field, finishing the race almost 70 seconds ahead of second-placed Nick Heidfeld and lapped the entire pack up to third.

2021

Max Verstappen was sent into the wall at Copse following a 180mph collision with Hamilton.

Verstappen was taken to hospital with concussion, while Hamilton was hit with a 10-second penalty.

Hamilton served his punishment and fought back through the field, passing Ferrari's Charles Leclerc in the final laps to take a remarkable, if not controversial, victory.

MARKO: MERCEDES WON'T GET OUR STAR

RED BULL chief Helmut Marko has fired a hands-off warning to Mercedes, declaring: "Max Verstappen is our greatest asset."

The Silver Arrows are courting the four-time world champion, with Brit George Russell the fall guy if they get the Dutchman.

For Marko – Verstappen's closest ally in the sport outside

BY DANIEL MOXON

of his racer father Jos and manager Raymond Vermeulen – it is critical he stays put.

The 82-year-old Red Bull special advisor said: "Max is our greatest asset. We have achieved most of our successes in recent years mainly thanks to him."

Verstappen slipped through

Mercedes' fingers once before as a teenager when he rejected Toto Wolff to sign with Red Bull.

The Austrian team are building their own engines for the 2026 season, with Mercedes tipped to adapt best to the new regulations.

That could well factor into Verstappen's decision but Marko

added: "Everyone is talking about next year's engines and, yes, we have our own model for the first time."

"Nobody has proof that Mercedes has next year's best. It's not just about the combustion engine but also battery and petrol. Who knows? Our engine might just be competitive."



MAJOR MAX FAN Marko

Last-gasp error costly as Lewis misses out on pole

By Philip Duncan
sport@sundaypost.com

Lewis Hamilton last night admitted his late mistake denied him a dream pole position for today's British Grand Prix.

Max Verstappen came from nowhere to take his third pole of the year with a brilliant lap to silence the Silverstone crowd. Oscar Piastri finished second with McLaren team-mate and championship rival Lando Norris third.

George Russell will occupy fourth on the grid for Mercedes, while Hamilton – despite appearing to be in the mix for his 105th career pole and his first in Ferrari colours in a full race – finished only fifth.

Hamilton's transfer from Mercedes to the Italian giants has so far failed to live up to its blockbuster billing, but the driver, who has won the British Grand Prix a record nine times, was fastest in Q2, and then headed into the final runs in the decisive Q3 with only Piastri ahead of him. Silverstone held its breath.

However, disaster struck at the concluding right-hander when Hamilton ran ever so slightly offline. The error denied him at least a spot on the front row, with the top five separated by only two-tenths.

A downbeat Hamilton said: "I just had understeer at Turn 16 and lost the time that I had. It probably cost me at least a second. The lap was really, really nice, it was just that last corner.

"I don't know if it was the kerb that sent me a little bit wide? I just lost it. It was just over a tenth so that would definitely have



Max Verstappen swooped following Hamilton's (inset) mistake to start from pole today.



put me on the front row.

"The understeer is something that you get with this car. It is what you do when you are overdriving to get that extra bit of time."

Hamilton has failed to finish in the top three in his first 11 full races as a Ferrari driver – the deepest he has ever gone into a season without a podium in a full race.

However, the seven-time world champion has an outside

chance of changing that run, and extending his stunning record of stepping on to the rostrum in every race staged at Silverstone since 2014.

He will also take some comfort for out-qualifying Ferrari team-mate Charles Leclerc, one spot behind him, for only the fourth time this year.

Hamilton continued: "I've got four really fast cars right in front of me. I want to go forwards if I can. I just want to be in the fight."

Verstappen will line up from the front following a scintillating lap which allowed him to beat Piastri by 0.103 seconds with

Norris third, 0.118 seconds adrift. Verstappen's Red Bull team-mate Yuki Tsunoda qualified only 12th.

Norris starts his home race 15 points behind Piastri in the world championship, and he will have to force himself ahead of his team-mate to prevent the Australian from extending his title advantage.

"I'm not going to be unhappy with third, although I'd love to have been on top here at Silverstone," said Norris.

"It is going to be fun tomorrow, a good battle between all of us, and I am looking forward to it."

SUNDAY 06 JULY: LINKS TO ONLINE COVERAGE

Headline	Media	Links
British GP qualifying: Max Verstappen takes stunning pole ahead of Oscar Piastri	ESPN	https://www.espn.co.uk/f1/story/_/id/45645621/british-gp-qualifying-max-verstappen-takes-stunning-pole-ahead-oscar-piastri
Silverstone looks set for a six-pack of spectacle	Racer	https://racer.com/2025/07/05/silverstone-looks-set-for-a-six-pack-of-spectacle
'Six-car fight for win' in prospect at Silverstone	BBC	https://www.bbc.co.uk/sport/formula1/articles/c0l47zj876jo
Has Max Verstappen already made up his mind about his Red Bull F1 future?	Planet F1	https://www.planetf1.com/news/max-verstappen-mercedes-red-bull-rumours-2025-british-grand-prix
British GP: Lewis Hamilton and Lando Norris rue errors as home duo narrowly miss out on pole position at Silverstone	Sky Sports	https://www.skysports.com/f1/news/12433/13392653/british-gp-lewis-hamilton-and-lando-norris-rue-errors-as-home-duo-narrowly-miss-out-on-pole-position-at-silverstone
Stella: Ferrari upgrade makes for "interesting" rest of 2025 F1 season	Autosport	https://www.autosport.com/f1/news/stella-ferrari-upgrade-makes-for-interesting-rest-of-2025-f1-season/10739783/
Top 10 Lewis Hamilton wins: Best F1 grand prix victories	Crash.net	https://www.crash.net/f1/feature/937663/1/lewis-hamiltons-best-f1-wins
TREMAYNE: Remembering the emotional day at Silverstone when fate – for once – smiled on Johnny Herbert	F1	https://www.formula1.com/en/latest/article/tremayne-remembering-the-emotional-day-at-silverstone-when-fate-for-once.2GJ4k4EGMUn3p8Q9JHz a0v
F1 2025 British Grand Prix starting grid with penalties applied	GP Fans	https://www.gpfans.com/en/f1-news/1055081/f1-2025-british-grand-prix-starting-grid-with-penalties-applied/
Revised Silverstone starting grid for 2025 F1 British Grand Prix with pit lane starter	RacingNews365	https://racingnews365.com/adjusted-silverstone-starting-grid-for-2025-f1-british-grand-prix-after-penalties

**SUNDAY 06 JULY:
LINKS TO ONLINE COVERAGE**

Headline	Media	Link
British Grand Prix: Max Verstappen, Lewis Hamilton, Lando Norris and more set for unpredictable Silverstone battle	Sky Sports	https://www.skysports.com/f1/news/12433/13392655/british-grand-prix-max-verstappen-lewis-hamilton-lando-norris-and-more-set-for-unpredictable-silverstone-battle
The 10 richest F1 drivers of all-time	Crash.net	https://www.crash.net/f1/news/1037010/1/10-richest-f1-drivers-alltime
Lewis Hamilton’s brother speaks out on his treatment by Ferrari at British Grand Prix	Daily Express	https://www.express.co.uk/sport/f1-autosport/2078021/lewis-hamilton-ferrari-british-grand-prix-brother
Liam Lawson advocates for a bold choice from the Racing Bulls	Formula Nerds	https://formulanerds.com/news/liam-lawson-advocates-for-a-bold-choice-from-the-racing-bulls/
Leclerc distances himself from Piastri and Verstappen	Sports.de	https://www.sport.de/news/ne9958223/formel-1-leclerc-distanziert-piastri-und-verstappen---chaotisches-ende-verhindert-hamilton-bestzeit/
Top 10 Lewis Hamilton wins: Best F1 grand prix victories	Crash.net	https://www.crash.net/f1/feature/937663/1/lewis-hamilton-s-best-f1-wins
Stella discusses how Ferrari’s upgrades will lead to an intriguing conclusion to the 2025 F1 season	Formula Nerds	https://formulanerds.com/explainer/f1/stella-discusses-how-ferraris-upgrades-will-lead-to-an-intriguing-conclusion-to-the-2025-f1-season/

SUNDAY 06 JULY:
LINKS TO ONLINE COVERAGE

Headlines	Media	Links
Oliver Bearman 'angry' as rookie error ruins stellar British GP qualifying show	Mirror	https://www.mirror.co.uk/sport/formula-1/ollie-bearman-silverstone-penalty-qualifying-35507895
Why McLaren should fear Red Bull's bold Verstappen set-up choice	The Race	https://www.the-race.com/formula-1/mclaren-red-bull-british-gp-strategy-2025/
‘Equally fantastic’ as Verstappen? Praise for P11 Tsunoda explained	The Race	https://www.the-race.com/formula-1/equally-fantastic-as-verstappen-praise-for-p11-yuki-tsunoda-explained/
BULL HORNS Christian Horner drops major hint over Max Verstappen exit as he reveals Red Bull contract clause	The Sun	https://www.thesun.co.uk/sport/35714472/christian-horner-max-verstappen-f1-future-hint/
STRATEGY GUIDE: What are the tactical options for the British Grand Prix?	F1	https://www.formula1.com/en/latest/article/strategy-guide-what-are-the-tactical-options-for-the-british-grand-prix.58mNfr3R4FZQmcAo7xwFbS