

F1: Session Report

2026 Chinese Grand Prix - Sunday

History made as Kimi takes first win in 1-2

- Kimi Antonelli became the second youngest Grand Prix winner as he claimed his maiden F1 victory in today's Chinese Grand Prix.
- Teammate George Russell came home second as the team brought home another 1-2 to begin the season.
- It was an all-Mercedes front-row with Kimi on pole and George alongside, both drivers starting on the Medium tyre.
- As in Australia, the fast-starting Ferraris got the best launch with Lewis Hamilton taking the lead and Charles Leclerc jumping up to P3, with Kimi second and George fourth.
- Kimi and George kept cool though and cycled through to P1 and P2 ahead of the Ferraris before a Safety Car intervention neutralised the field.
- Opting to take a cheap stop, both drivers swapped to the Hard compound but found it difficult to switch on the tyre in the cool conditions.
- That enabled the Ferraris to once again put pressure on our duo and George found himself once again having to battle back past both Hamilton and Leclerc.
- He was able to do that after several laps whilst Kimi stretched his legs at the front.
- Both drivers managed their cars and their tyres to the end, Kimi thus securing his first win in F1, George taking P2, and Lewis Hamilton rounding out the podium in P3.
- The team was represented on the podium by Head of Race Engineering and Kimi's race engineer, Peter 'Bono' Bonnington.
- George continues to lead the Drivers' World Championship with Kimi four points behind in P2.
- The next race for the team is the Japanese Grand Prix at Suzuka (27-29 March).
- Earlier in the day, the team's F1 Academy driver Payton Westcott secured her maiden podium finish in the series with a controlled drive to P3 in the Feature Race.
- Imagery of the day is available on our [media site](#). All imagery is rights-free for editorial use.

Driver	Grid	Result	Fastest Lap	Start Tyre	Stop One
Kimi Antonelli	P1	P1	1:35.275	Medium	Hard (L11)
George Russell	P2	P2	1:35.400	Medium	Hard (L11)

Kimi Antonelli

What an incredible day! This win is a fulfilment of one of the dreams I've had ever since I first drove a go-kart. I want to say thank you to my amazing family and the incredible team at both Lauda Drive and Morgan Drive. I couldn't have done this without any of them, and it means so much to take my first victory in F1. It was a very special moment for all of us.

The race itself wasn't easy. I lost a position at the start and had to fight back to get ahead. We then had to manage the Safety Car restart which wasn't easy on the Hard compound. It was difficult to get the tyres working but fortunately we were able to before we were under threat from those behind.

This has been a great way to close the first double-header of the season but there is lots of work ahead. We aren't taking anything for granted and will make sure we work hard ahead of Japan and arrive in Suzuka in the strongest position we can.

George Russell

Firstly, huge congratulations to Kimi on his first victory in F1. He drove a great race, and it was brilliant to be up there on the podium with him. I am sure it is a moment he will never forget and to do it with the team scoring a 1-2 is fantastic.

My own race was not straightforward. I lost positions both at the start and then at the Safety Car restart as we struggled to switch the Hard tyres on. The Ferraris were quick, particularly in the early stages, and we had to get back past them twice. They were fast in all the right places and that made our job a lot more difficult. Happily, we were able to do it each time, but it cost us the chance to fight for the win.

It has been a great way to start the season, and we are definitely the team to beat at the moment. We have been put under a lot of pressure at these first two races, and we need to keep pushing hard. The package is strong though so I'm looking forward to heading to the next race in Japan.

Toto Wolff, Team Principal & CEO

This moment was never in doubt for Kimi. Right from his days in karting, we have known that he has all the talent necessary to develop into a Grand Prix winner. His family, along with the team, have done a brilliant job nurturing that talent and today shows that. There have been so many doubters writing him off, saying it was too early, that he doesn't have the composure necessary, and Kimi has proven them all wrong. This is just the start for him; he will keep his feet on the ground and keep working hard but he can definitely enjoy himself this evening.

Despite the result, it wasn't an easy afternoon for the team. The Ferraris kept us honest and George did a good job to battle back and finish ahead of them. It was also great to see Lewis (Hamilton) up on the podium with Kimi, George, and Bono. All four of them are such a big part of this team's history and it was brilliant to see them all up there together.

We've made a good start to the season but there is much work ahead. We will keep focused, keep pushing on and hopefully can continue to fight for victories as the season progresses.

Andrew Shovlin, Trackside Engineering Director

Well done to Kimi on his first win! His first test in an F1 car was less than two years ago and to win today shows how far he has come in a short space of time. He has always had the raw speed but both he and the team have worked hard to refine that and he continues to grow. Today is another step on that journey and we are all so pleased for him.



We're also delighted to take home our second 1-2 to begin the season. It's not been an easy weekend; we've had quite a few problems on the cars and we were really lucky to get George out in Q3 yesterday. Nevertheless, it has been a great example of how this team never gives up. Despite the setbacks, we've raced hard and come away with a maximum number of points.

We've got a week to regroup now before we head to Japan. There is lots of work to do and we know further challenges ahead. We will focus on that but as we leave Shanghai and finish this first double header, it's great to be able to enjoy the results of the last two weeks after the work that has gone into producing and racing the W17 across both Lauda Drive and Morgan Drive.

Payton Westcott, F1 Academy Driver

I am really happy to take my first F1 Academy podium. We've had good pace all weekend here in Shanghai and it felt great to convert that to a P3 finish in today's Feature Race. It was brilliant to receive my trophy from the team's Development Driver and last year's champion Doriane (Pin) too!

This first round has given me a lot of confidence, and I can't wait to get back into the car at the next round. There's plenty I believe I can improve and that bodes well for the rest of the year.

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