



Japanese Grand Prix – Race, Sunday – 12.10.08

Weather: Dry but overcast, Air: 16-17°C, Track: 21-22°C

Fuji (JP). In the Japanese Grand Prix the BMW Sauber F1 Team claimed its eleventh podium of the 2008 season. Robert Kubica finished second in Fuji, coming from sixth on the grid. It is the seventh podium for the Pole this year and his third second place. Nick Heidfeld, who started from 16th, improved to tenth in the dramatic race, which saw the championship contenders dropping back right after the start. In the Constructors' Championship the BMW Sauber F1 Team is third, 13 points behind leader Ferrari.

Robert Kubica: 2nd

BMW Sauber F1.08-05 / BMW P86/8

Fastest Lap: 1:19.292 min on lap 16 (7th fastest overall)

"My start was good but the clutch slipped a little, therefore Jarno Trulli was able to pass me on the straight. I then decided to take the inside line and braked very late, too late actually and I locked the front wheels. But then everybody went wide while I was more or less able to keep my line, and after the second corner I was in front. I then tried to pull away, but I couldn't. My tyres were graining and I lost time, particularly in the last sector. I was pushing as hard as I could, but after the pit stop, Fernando Alonso was in front of me and I was not able to match his pace. At the beginning of the final stint the tyres were graining heavily and my lap times were slow, so I came under strong pressure from Kimi Räikkönen and we had a great fight. At one point he was beside me in corner two, but I was on the inside, just didn't back off and was able to keep him behind. After a few laps the graining went away and I was able to run at my normal pace. It's a great result for the whole team at a time when it is not easy. We have been struggling a little bit recently and we were under pressure from some teams, so this second place is a real boost for our morale. Now we have nothing to lose, but everything is possible."

Nick Heidfeld: 10th

BMW Sauber F1.08-07 / BMW P86/8

Fastest Lap: 1:19.461 min on lap 67 (8th fastest overall)

"Compared to the Williams cars in front of me, my start was okay, but the Hondas behind got off the grid even better. There was an awful lot of traffic in the first corner and I was lucky to get through all the hassle. For me the nicest moment of the race was certainly when I managed to overtake two cars at the same time on lap four. I was on a one stop strategy and, as well as that, the second last one-stopper to pit. It was not easy to handle the heavy car. Now I'm looking forward to next weekend's race in Shanghai where we should do better in qualifying."

Mario Theissen (BMW Motorsport Director):

"This was a really strong performance from Robert. In the first corner chaos after the start he took the lead. Later in the race he had to let Fernando Alonso go, but defended successfully against Kimi Räikkönen. It was our team's eleventh podium of the season, and Robert has now been on the podium seven times in 2008. Nick also did a good job by improving from 16th to tenth, but couldn't score points today. We are now looking forward to exciting final races in China and Brazil."

Willy Rampf (Technical Director):

"Contrary to all the prophecies, this was an exciting race. Robert had the best result at the start as he managed to take the lead, thanks to a little bit of luck and lots of guts. He was in the lead until the first pit stops, but after that we weren't able to match the pace of Fernando Alonso. In the third stint Robert defended his position from the attacks by Kimi Räikkönen in a clever and fair way, and claimed his well earned seventh podium of the season. That was really a brilliant performance by Robert. Nick managed to move up to tenth with a one-stop-strategy, but unfortunately, because of coming from 16th on the grid, more than this was not possible."

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