

TMAN'S F1 UPDATE

An oddly and sporadically written F1 newsletter

2007 F1 Primer

Ok, for those of you who are normal and don't read F1 web sites everyday, I've decided to write up a little primer of what to look forward to in 2007. Once again we should see 12 teams on the grid this season. The teams will travel the globe, starting March 18 in Australia and ending 17 races later in Brazil, October 21. Notable stops this season are in the US and Italy at what could be the final races, for the current tracks in these countries. The unspectacular Indianapolis circuit only renewed it's contract for this season, and drivers' safety concerns at Monza could see this track retired. Making a return to the schedule this year is the newly updated track, at Spa Fanncorchamps. Missing from this year's calendar are, The San Marino GP at Imola, and The European GP held at the famous circuit at Hokenheim. The rumor mill has it that the German GP may alternate tracks between Hokenheim and the legendary Nurburring.

Winter testing wrapped up last week in Bahrain, and Catalunya Spain, with all the teams getting their Australia aero packages installed (see photos) and many laps run. At the end of winter testing we see Ferrari and McLaren leading the way with good pace and apparent reliability. A surprising test season by BMW brings them near to par with a competent but slightly off the pace Renault.

It was nice to see Williams getting some of their form back, the addition of Toyota engines at that camp is clearly helping. After a disappointing 2006, it looks as if the Grove based squad may be able to find their way back to the podium this year. The rest of the teams had mixed results with nothing too surprising from any of the mid-field to back of the pack runners.



Top photo shows the original front wing on the Toyota TF107. The bottom photo is final front wing set up for Australia

Changes we will see in 2007 are the loss of French tire supplier Michelin, leaving Bridgestone to supply all the tires this year. There has been talk of a number of strange options to try and keep tire choice exciting. Talk of a "Red Tire", a super soft and fast compound tire for rocket hot laps, but teams only getting one set per race. The tires would be denoted with some sort of red marking so that other teams and fans will know what's going on. The red tire is used in the Champ Car racing series to mixed reviews, and as for F1 we won't see this happen this year. The attempt to spice things up that will be implemented this season is a bizarre rule, that I don't know will last the season. It has all the teams being required to run race laps on two different compounds, but only one stint on the less preferred compound. Confusing no? The cars will be powered by V8 power plants just like last year. Actually exactly like last year. Teams engine development was stopped at the end of last season and so there will be no developments or exciting news there. Teams again need to run two race weekends on one engine. This year also brings an end to some of the mid to back runners getting to run a third car on free practice Fridays.