



## Japanese Grand Prix.

10<sup>th</sup> – 12<sup>th</sup> October 2008  
16<sup>th</sup> of 18 World Championship races

### Preview.

Munich/Hinwil, 3<sup>rd</sup> October 2008. The mountain calls. Following the night race in Singapore – as glamorous as the BMW Sauber F1 Team's points haul was modest – Formula One now heads for the Japanese Alps to race at the foot of the sacred volcano of Mount Fuji.

There are still three races on the agenda, including the Japanese Grand Prix on 12<sup>th</sup> October. Rarely has a season proved as diverse and unpredictable as this one. The battle for the top places in the World Championship rankings is about to enter its decisive phase.

#### Nick Heidfeld:

"Firstly, I'm hoping Fuji won't bring the kind of torrential rain we had in 2007. Basically I enjoy driving in the rain, but with last year's deluge it was just impossible. Visibility was zero, which led to a number of collisions. Somebody drove into my car as well and damaged it. Even so, shortly before the end I was in sixth place, but then an engine problem put me out of the race.

"It's a fun circuit. There are lots of uphill and downhill gradients and several blind corners. But I'm a bit hard on it as Suzuka was always my favourite GP track. One feature of the Fuji circuit that stands out is its extremely long straight.

"It's a beautiful landscape, and the road from the hotel to the track could serve as an excellent rally special stage. I hope Mount Fuji is going to show its face again. Overall there doesn't seem to be much going on in the area, but that's fine after all the hustle and bustle of Singapore."

#### Robert Kubica:

"This season we go to Fuji for the second year in a row. I guess everybody remembers last year's Japanese Grand Prix as the weather conditions were crazy. It was extremely wet and visibility was poor. From a driver's perspective the track is very interesting. There are some challenging corners with different radii and also some blind corners. Under dry conditions it was very enjoyable to drive, although the last sector is quite slow as there are a lot of tight corners.

"As always in Japan, I think the fans will bring a unique atmosphere to the Formula One track. Usually they come to the track early in the morning and leave it after us."

#### Mario Theissen, BMW Motorsport Director:

"The spectacular night-race premiere in Singapore is over. For the next two races we will be stopping off in Asia as well, first in Japan and just a week later in China. Some team members flew back to Munich and Hinwil from Singapore, while others stayed on in Asia for a few days' relaxation. Others, in turn, are travelling to South Korea, where Nick will be doing some demo drives with the Formula One car on Saturday and Sunday.

"The Fuji Speedway celebrated its successful comeback to the F1 calendar in 2007. The circuit is in a picturesque setting in the Japanese Alps, against the backdrop of Mount Fuji that rises majestically behind it. Last year, however, the sacred mountain could only be seen

#### Media contact

Jörg Kottmeier  
+49 170 5666112  
joerg.kottmeier@bmw.de

Hanspeter Brack  
+41 79 7701819  
hanspeter.brack@  
bmw-sauber.com

Heike Hientzsch  
+49 172 6209904  
bmw@heikehientzsch.de

Benjamin Titz  
+49 179 7438088  
benjamin.titz@bmw.de

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on Friday, and in the sunshine it was the most photographed view. Unfortunately, it then disappeared behind a thick wall of fog and rain and was never seen again. The weather had a profound impact on the entire race weekend in 2007.

“After our unlucky experience with the Safety Car regulations in Singapore – the second time this season – which lost us important points, we aim to make up for lost ground in Japan. In the Drivers’ and Constructors’ Championships the leaders are bunched close together, which promises plenty of excitement for the remaining races.”

**Willy Rampf, Technical Director:**

“After the spectacular night race in Singapore, Formula One will be returning to normality in Fuji. Last year was our first race there, though it was dominated by a very wet track. But we still managed to gather some information in terms of the car set-up.

“At around 1.5 kilometres, Fuji boasts the longest genuine straight of any Grand Prix circuit. It means there are real overtaking opportunities. At the same time, the medium-fast and fast turns require plenty of downforce, which calls for a compromise in the aero set-up. In Fuji we drive with medium downforce, comparable to Valencia. Bridgestone supplies the two medium tyre compounds, which shouldn’t pose us any major problems.

“After Singapore’s turbulent race, where the Safety Car phase threw a spanner into the works, we want to achieve a strong points haul with both cars in Japan.”

**Facts and figures:**

<b>Circuit/Date</b>	Fuji/2 <sup>nd</sup> October 2008
<b>Start time (local/UTC)</b>	13.30 hrs/04.30 hrs (06.30 in Central Europe)
<b>Lap/Race distance</b>	4.563 km/305.416 km (67 laps)
<b>Corners</b>	10 right-hand and 6 left-hand corners
<b>Winner 2007</b>	Lewis Hamilton, Vodafone McLaren Mercedes, 2 hrs 00:34.579
<b>Pole position 2007</b>	Lewis Hamilton, Vodafone McLaren Mercedes, 1:25.368 minutes
<b>Fastest lap 2007</b>	Lewis Hamilton, Vodafone McLaren Mercedes, 1:28.193 minutes
<b>Data 2007 (race):</b>	Full-throttle percentage: 60% Top speed: 310 km/h Longest section at full throttle: 20 sec / 1,445 m Gear changes per lap: 44 Tyre wear: medium Brake wear: low Downforce level: medium





Driver	Nick Heidfeld	Robert Kubica
Date of birth	10.05.1977	07.12.1984
Place of birth	Mönchengladbach/Germany	Cracow/Poland
Nationality	German	Polish
Residence	Stäfa, Switzerland	Monaco
Marital status	Partner Patricia Papen, daughter Juni, son Joda	Single
Height	1.67 m	1.84 m
Weight	61 kg	69 kg
F1 debut	2000, Melbourne	2006, Budapest
GP starts	149	37
Pole positions	1	1
Wins	-	1
Podium places	11	7
Fastest laps	2	-
Best placing	5 <sup>th</sup> (2007)	6 <sup>th</sup> (2007)
Total points	196	109
Points 2008	56 (5 <sup>th</sup> place)	64 (3 <sup>rd</sup> place)

BMW Sauber F1 Team	
Founded	01.01.2006
Locations	München (DE) and Hinwil (CH)
F1 debut	2006, Melbourne
GP starts	50
Pole positions	1
Wins	1
Podium places	14 (6x3./7x2./1x1.)
Fastest laps	2
Championship placings	5 <sup>th</sup> (2006), 36 points 2 <sup>nd</sup> (2007), 101 points 3 <sup>rd</sup> (2008), 120 points after 15 GPs

## Season 2008:

	Nick Heidfeld			Robert Kubica		
	Qualifying	Race	Points	Qualifying	Race	Points
Australian GP	5 <sup>th</sup>	2 <sup>nd</sup>	8	2 <sup>nd</sup>	DNF	-
Malaysian GP	7 <sup>th</sup> (grid 5)	6 <sup>th</sup>	3	6 <sup>th</sup> (grid 4)	2 <sup>nd</sup>	8
Bahrain GP	6 <sup>th</sup>	4 <sup>th</sup>	5	1 <sup>st</sup>	3 <sup>rd</sup>	6
Spanish GP	9 <sup>th</sup>	9 <sup>th</sup>	-	4 <sup>th</sup>	4 <sup>th</sup>	5
Turkish GP	9 <sup>th</sup>	5 <sup>th</sup>	4	5 <sup>th</sup>	4 <sup>th</sup>	5
Monaco GP	13 <sup>th</sup> (grid 12)	14 <sup>th</sup>	-	5 <sup>th</sup>	2 <sup>nd</sup>	8
Canadian GP	8 <sup>th</sup>	2 <sup>nd</sup>	8	2 <sup>nd</sup>	1 <sup>st</sup>	10
French GP	12 <sup>th</sup> (grid 11)	13 <sup>th</sup>	-	7 <sup>th</sup> (grid 5)	5 <sup>th</sup>	4
British GP	5 <sup>th</sup>	2 <sup>nd</sup>	8	10 <sup>th</sup>	DNF	-
German GP	12 <sup>th</sup>	4 <sup>th</sup>	5	7 <sup>th</sup>	7 <sup>th</sup>	2
Hungarian GP	16 <sup>th</sup> (grid 15)	10 <sup>th</sup>	-	4 <sup>th</sup>	8 <sup>th</sup>	1
European GP	8 <sup>th</sup>	9 <sup>th</sup>	-	3 <sup>rd</sup>	3 <sup>rd</sup>	6
Belgian GP	5 <sup>th</sup>	2 <sup>nd</sup>	8	8 <sup>th</sup>	6 <sup>th</sup>	3
Italian GP	10 <sup>th</sup>	5 <sup>th</sup>	4	11 <sup>th</sup>	3 <sup>rd</sup>	6
Singapore GP	6 <sup>th</sup> (grid 9)	6 <sup>th</sup>	3	4 <sup>th</sup>	11 <sup>th</sup>	-



## History and background:

The Fuji race track opened its gates in 1966. It has already hosted Formula One races in 1976 and 1977, and even then became notorious for its rain. At the start of the 1976 GP – the closing race of the season – the rain was bucketing down. Aquaplaning forced defending champion Niki Lauda to park his Ferrari in the pits after just two laps. Mario Andretti went on to win the race, and James Hunt was crowned World Champion with a single-point lead.

In 2005 the complex was given a complete overhaul in order to meet the Formula One standards set out by the FIA. 2007 saw the return of Formula One to the Fuji circuit. As of 2009, the Japanese Grand Prix is to be held alternately in Suzuka and Fuji.

The Speedway takes its name from Fujiyama or Fuji-san, as the mountain is more commonly known today. Both “yama” and “san” can mean “mountain”, depending on whether one follows Kunyomi or Onyomi pronunciation.

The composite volcano rising to a height of 3,776 metres above sea level is Japan’s tallest mountain. Its rock is dated 100,000 years old. Not only is the volcano a highly popular photo opportunity, it is still active, though classified as harmless. The last eruption was recorded in 1707.

Mount Fuji is in the Japanese Alps on the main island of Honshu. Its summit marks the border between Yamanashi and Shizuoka Prefectures. Geologically, the volcano is located where the Eurasian, Pacific and Philippine plates meet.

Thanks to its gently sloping contours, it is relatively easy to climb. The first to do so was a Japanese monk in the year 663. Today such an expedition has lost any trace of exclusivity, with thousands of people congregating at its peak in summer.

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## Schedule for group interviews at the weekend:

Thursday:

13.30-13.50 – Nick Heidfeld – print media  
13.50-14.00 – Nick Heidfeld – TV  
14.00-14.10 – Christian Klien – TV  
14.10-14.30 – Christian Klien – print media  
15.00 – Robert Kubica – FIA press conference  
15.30-15.35 – Mario Theissen – TV  
15.35-16.00 – Mario Theissen – print media  
18.00-18.30 – Willy Rampf – by prior arrangement only

Friday:

16.00 – Mario Theissen – FIA press conference  
16.45-16.55 – Nick Heidfeld – TV  
16.45-16.55 – Robert Kubica – TV

Saturday:

16.45-16.55 – Nick Heidfeld – TV  
16.55-17.15 – Nick Heidfeld – print media  
16.45-17.05 – Robert Kubica – print media  
17.05-17.15 – Robert Kubica – TV  
17.30-17.35 – Mario Theissen – TV  
17.35-18.00 – Mario Theissen – print media

Sunday:

Approx. 30 minutes after the end of the race Heidfeld, Kubica, Theissen and Rampf will be on hand in the team's Hospitality area.

**Involvement in the FIA press conference means the group interviews will be cancelled on the relevant day.**

For further information please visit the media website [www.press.bmw-motorsport.com](http://www.press.bmw-motorsport.com) (press releases, press kits, images, TV footage) and the official team website [www.bmw-sauber-f1.com](http://www.bmw-sauber-f1.com) (car, season, Race Club, team updates).

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