

MONACO GRAND PRIX - PART THREE

Alan, John, Kenny and Robert settled down to watch the race. Kenny had brought some cans of beer, and the balcony was cool with a breeze from the sea. From where they were situated they could clearly see the start. Twenty-five cars lined up with the current leader, the Italian, in pole position. The only British driver was in sixth.

The red lights came on, then the green light, and they all sped away on the promenade lap to warm up their tyres. Once round the track they again lined up, ready for the race to begin.

On the green light all the cars raced away, negotiating the right hand Virage St Devote for the first time, jostling for position on the dangerous corner. The Belgian driver was unlucky and his car touched with the Italian, and was forced to run off into the tyre wall.

Accelerating up the hill into Casino Square, the drivers had a chance to change gear. The road was slippery and the German driver nudged the British in an attempt to overtake. The British driver held his line and the German remained behind him.

"Wow!" Alan said. "This is great! Better than the Malaysian and I thought that was really something."

Trying to out-accelerate the Italian, the Brazilian miscalculated and hit the barrier very hard, causing severe damage to his bodywork. He had to head for the pits.

The cars had to slow down for the tight left and right through Casino Square, and then they accelerated down the hill passed Hotel Metropole.

The beer was very welcome, and John was really enjoying the race. Robert was standing at times, shouting his head off.

Kenny looked at Alan. "Wishing you were down there?"

"How did you guess?" Alan replied.

On the cars raced, down through the hairpin at the Monte Carlo Grand Hotel and the sharp right hand past the fountains then into the Virage du Portier and the tunnel. Here the British tried to overtake the French and managed it, coming out of the tunnel into the bright sunlight at 170 mph.

"Great!" Kenny shouted. "With the Belgian taken off, that means that Jack is now in 4th. Could end with a podium finish if he can get past the Canadian."

"You're cheering the British?" John queried.

Kenny looked slightly sheepish. "Well, to be honest, the American driver was injured in the last

race and is not taking part. Jack is a friend, so yes, I guess I am cheering for him."

A tight left-right chicane led into a short straight and then the swimming pool complex. This was followed by a hairpin turn of Virage Rascasse. Here the Canadian came undone as the driver completely blew it and ploughed into the barriers, thus making the way clear for the British to go into 3rd place.

As the cars roared past on to the second lap, the four young men cheered and shouted encouragement. Lap followed lap. The Italian had a terribly slow pit stop, which put him back three places. The British had incredibly bad luck with a puncture. On the final lap there were a few hair-raising moments, but the French finished in good style, followed by the Finnish and the Brazilian

"Let's go down and see the winners on the podium," Kenny suggested

Walking down to the street below, they battled through the milling throng of fans, sightseers and mechanics that were now spilling on to the streets. Eventually, they managed to get in front of the podium. This had been erected, just behind one of the main stands. All four cheered as they watched as the trophies were given and then the usual champagne fight, as the bottles were shaken, opened and sprayed over the winners and the crowd watching.

"Hi there!" a female voice shouted, and Monique hurried over to where they were standing. Fabia, and two young men, dressed in bright red, Ferrari team overalls, followed her. Smiling at John, Monique introduced her boyfriend, Antonio, and Fabia's boyfriend, Carlos. Both young men shook hands with John and Alan.

"It was a good race?" Carlos asked.

"Yes, it was," Kenny answered. "Shame about your driver."

"Oh, next time it will be different. You'll see," Antonio replied. He linked arms with Monique and Fabia, saying, "Come on, girls. Let's go and see how Giuseppe is feeling." Then all four wandered away.

"Well, I think we had better be heading back to the airport and home," Alan told his friend.

"Before we go, I promised I'd buy something for Kat and Tyler," John explained as he went over to where souvenirs were being sold. He bought Kat a T-shirt and baseball cap. ~Too bad I can't get an autograph. Then he looked around for something for Tyler. Finally he bought him a T-shirt and a model racing car.

They said goodbye to Robert, and Kenny drove them to the airport, stopping at the apartment to collect their luggage. In the departure lounge, they all shook hands. "Until the next race?" Kenny asked hopefully.

"We'll see," Alan said. "But don't get your hopes up."

"Okay. Anyway, nice seeing you, John," Kenny added.

"Same here," John replied.

On the return, Alan said, "That Monique is very beautiful."

"Mm, yeah" John murmured. He sighed and closed his eyes. Yes, Monique was beautiful, but she had a boyfriend. Besides, he had someone else he'd rather think about.

Thanks to Tikatu and Hobbeth for these posts.

From: Tawnyangel22 Sent: 10/9/2005
