



## Formula 1's High Noon at Circuit of The Americas™

*Vettel takes pole, Alonso starts down the grid*

**AUSTIN, Texas (Nov. 17, 2012)** – Sebastian Vettel's third world title came just a little nearer when the 25-year-old German claimed pole position for Sunday's 2012 Formula 1 United States Grand Prix™.

Red Bull Racing driver Vettel, wearing a helmet with a design reminiscent of a Wild West saloon, won the shoot-out among the top 10 drivers in Q3, the final 10-minute qualifying segment, to take his sixth pole of 2012 with Red Bull Racing.

Vettel shrugged off the Friday afternoon interruption that cost him 55 minutes of his weekend program. "If anything we missed a little bit out of our short runs," he said, "and we had to try a couple of things to make the car go quicker in qualifying. I think you could say that we are very happy with the result!"

Vettel looked untouchable through the three qualifying segments and was sitting pretty on a time of 1 minute 35.877 until Lewis Hamilton in the McLaren Mercedes staged a determined assault on pole in the closing seconds.

Hamilton, who has also been on pole six times, this year fired in laps of 1:35.928 and 1:35.766. "I just went into Q3 really hard and gave it absolutely everything," said Hamilton. "Surprisingly the second lap was even quicker, even though I'd just done a fast lap, and on that second lap we were on the limit everywhere."

Back came Vettel with a 1:35.657 to seal the 36<sup>th</sup> pole position of his Formula 1 career. It could be one of the most important as his title rival Fernando Alonso in the Ferrari could do no better than ninth and will need another typically strong Sunday to stop Vettel extending his 10-point lead beyond the Spaniard's reach.

Mark Webber took third position in the second Red Bull Renault but the 36-year-old Australian is looking to improve on that on Sunday. "Would I be happy with that in the race tomorrow?" he was asked. "No – for sure we want to move forward, you never know how tomorrow will unfold. If there are any issues in front we want to grab that."

Both Webber and the man in fourth spot, Romain Grosjean, faced an anxious wait for results of investigations into technical infringements. Webber was alleged to have failed to stop for mandatory weighing after Q1 while Grosjean's Lotus Renault needed a gearbox change after final free practice and may incur a five-place grid penalty.

Fifth in qualifying was the second Lotus of Abu Dhabi winner Kimi Raikkonen, while Michael Schumacher pulled a vintage performance out of his locker to claim sixth for Mercedes.

Felipe Massa qualified seventh in the faster of the two Ferraris, with Nico Hulkenberg's Force India eighth and Pastor Maldonado's Williams in 10<sup>th</sup>.

### **About Circuit of The Americas**

Circuit of The Americas is a world-class destination for performance, education and business. It is the first purpose-built Grand Prix facility in the United States designed for any and all classes of racing, from motor power to human power, and is home to the 2012 FORMULA 1 UNITED STATES GRAND PRIX™ set for Nov. 16-18. Racing series joining the Circuit's 2013 line-up include MotoGP™, V8 Supercars™ and GRAND-AM Road Racing™. The Circuit of The Americas' master plan features a variety of permanent structures designed for business, education, entertainment and race use. Its signature element is a 3.4-mile circuit track. Other support buildings include an expansive outdoor live music space, an iconic 251-foot tower with observation deck, an events and conference center, a banquet hall as well as a state-of-the-art medical facility. For more information and downloadable video, audio and photos, visit: [www.CircuitofTheAmericas.com](http://www.CircuitofTheAmericas.com).

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