

F1 Canadian Grand Prix 2026 Preview: Can Anyone Stop Antonelliâ??s Perfect Start In Montreal?

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Four races. Four wins. Kimi Antonelli has announced himself to Formula 1 in the most emphatic way possible. The 19-year-old Italian, driving for Mercedes, has not just won every race of the 2026 season so far â?? he has dominated them. As the championship heads to the Circuit Gilles Villeneuve in Montreal for the Canadian Grand Prix (22â??24 May), the question is no longer whether Antonelli is for real. It is how long anyone can stop him.

Antonelliâ??s Perfect Start

The 2026 Formula 1 season has produced one of the sportâ??s most startling storylines in recent memory: a teenage debutant, replacing the legendary Lewis Hamilton at Mercedes, winning all four opening rounds. Antonelli took victory in Australia, China, Japan, and â?? most recently â?? the Miami Grand Prix, where he crossed the line in 1:33:19.273 to complete an unblemished start to his career.

Miami was particularly telling. In a race that featured a Max Verstappen incident, a penalty for Charles Leclerc, and a fierce battle between the McLaren duo behind him, Antonelli was serene. Lando Norris finished second, 3.264 seconds adrift; Oscar Piastri was third, over 27 seconds back. The Mercedes W16 is a formidable machine â?? but the driver inside it has been equally impressive in managing races, tyres, and pressure.



Race action from the 2026 Miami Grand Prix â?? Source: Formula 1 Official

For context on just how dominant this run is: only two other drivers in the modern hybrid era â?? Lewis Hamilton (2019) and Nico Rosberg (2016) â?? have won the opening four races of a season. Antonelli is in rarefied company before he has even reached his first Canadian Grand Prix.

Montreal: The Challenge of Circuit Gilles Villeneuve

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The Circuit Gilles Villeneuve, on the Ã?le Notre-Dame in the St Lawrence River, is one of the most distinctive circuits on the Formula 1 calendar. Named after the legendary Ferrari driver who died at the 1982 Belgian Grand Prix, it is a power-sensitive layout that rewards raw straight-line speed and clean braking â?? a circuit where Mercedes and Antonelliâ??s consistency will again be tested.

The lap is essentially a series of long straights connected by tight chicanes and hairpins, including the famous final chicane â?? the â??Wall of Champions,â?• named for the retaining wall that has collected Damon Hill, Michael Schumacher, and Jacques Villeneuve himself in previous years. Overtaking is possible under braking, which means race strategy and tyre degradation will be crucial factors on Sunday.



Lando Norris and Oscar Piastri â?? McLarenâ??s best hope of stopping Antonelli â?? Source: Formula 1 Official

The Canadian Grand Prix has historically been unkind to dominant cars and dominant drivers alike. Verstappen has won here multiple times, and the Safety Car â?? which tends to appear with regularity in Montreal â?? often scrambles the order and creates opportunities for rivals. If there is a circuit on the 2026 calendar where Antonelliâ??s run could be interrupted, this is one of them.

The Championship Challengers

With four wins in four races, Antonelli already holds a commanding lead in the Driversâ?? Championship. His nearest challengers are Norris and Piastri, both of whom have been consistent but unable to match the Mercedes pace. Red Bullâ??s Max Verstappen, who had a difficult Miami â?? spinning and losing valuable championship points â?? will be desperate for a strong result in Canada to arrest his slide down the standings.

Ferrari, who have had Leclerc penalised in Miami and have struggled for pace over a full race distance, need a circuit that suits their characteristics. Montrealâ??s power-sensitive layout may suit them better than recent venues, and a strong qualifying performance from Leclerc could set up a genuine challenge on race day.

Keep an eye also on Norris. The Briton has been Antonelliâ??s most consistent shadow through the opening rounds, and Montreal â?? a circuit where he has challenged for wins before â?? could give him the platform he needs for his first 2026 victory.

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The Singapore Connection

For Singapore fans, the 2026 Formula 1 season carries an added layer of excitement beyond the championship battle. The Singapore Grand Prix â?? Round 16 of the 2026 season â?? is scheduled for 9â??11 October 2026 at the Marina Bay Street Circuit. If Antonelli remains in title contention (and all current evidence suggests he will be), Singapore could find itself hosting a championship-deciding round in October.

The Marina Bay circuit, with its punishing heat, humidity, and technical demands, has produced some of Formula 1â??s most dramatic nights. A night race under the Singapore skyline â?? with the championship potentially on the line â?? would be something to savour.

For now, though, all eyes turn to Canada. The Canadian Grand Prix weekend begins with practice on Friday 22 May, qualifying on Saturday 23 May, and the race at 14:00 local time (02:00 SGT on Monday 25 May).

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