

My Visit to a Formula E Race - Jakarta

The closest Formula E race to Australia is Jakarta, home to more than 10 million people. Jan and I headed over there for a double header in early June.

The Racetrack

The Jakarta International e-Prix Circuit is a permanent purpose built 2.370 km (1.473 mi) racing circuit in Ancol, Jakarta. Ancol contains the main beach resort of Jakarta and is the largest integrated tourism area in South East Asia. The first edition of Jakarta ePrix was held in 2022.

The circuit has 18 corners and is driven clockwise. The circuit features a start/finish line straight of 600 m (2,000 ft).

A very old friend and part time race mechanic told me over 50 years ago that the best place to be on a race circuit is the first corner at the end of the main start/finish straight. I have followed his advice ever since, and his theory has never let me down. So, Turn 1 grandstand is where we went, right at the end of the straight.



Racing in Jakarta witnessed overtakes, crashes and edge-of-your-seat racing

The corner is a wide right-hander with multiple choices of racing lines which generates ample overtaking opportunities. It is followed by two right-handers and two fast left-handers approaching another shorter straight.

Access to the Racetrack

To get to the circuit is interesting to say the least. You can't drive to the circuit and can't just rock up to the front gate. They won't let you in.

Instead, we went to a designated huge carpark and swapped our E-Tickets for printed tickets and lanyards. We then hoped on one of hundreds, if not thousands of buses, that took us to the circuit. There were two other similar set-ups located elsewhere. I don't know how many people there were at the track this year, but there were 60,000 last year. And the whole lot of us got moved in and out on buses with minimal fuss. Quite amazing.

Qualifying: Race 10

On the Saturday we sat on Turn 1 grandstand, one of 22 huge grandstands located around the track, and watched the qualifying and then the race.

My greatest fear when I attend events, like watching our kids playing sport, - is that it will put a jinx on them. Well, I wasn't let down. After four wins in a row for Jaguar powered cars, their luck could not continue and it didn't.

The Jaguars were reportedly struggling with chassis balance and qualified 11th and 16th. The Envision Jaguar powered cars also struggled and started in 10th and 13th.

At this point I should note that contrary to public perceptions, the cars do make a noise and you can clearly hear them coming at some 200 miles an hour, and through the corners, there is the sound



The race track contained life-size cardboard cutouts of each of the drivers. Yours namely, seen here with Jaguar and New Zealand Driver Mitch Evans.

My Visit to a Formula E Race - Jakarta (cont)

of screeching tyres and the smell of burning rubber.

Saturday Race 10

Mitch Evans started 11th and moved into 8th position and into the points with 3 laps to go.

Meanwhile Sam Bird made up seven positions from P16 with a combination of overtakes and an effective race strategy, and was behind Mitch in 9th, also with three laps to go.

I mentioned before that Turn 1 was the place to be. Well on this occasion I would have to say no.

Right in front of us, Sam Bird made what they are calling a mistake and made contact with teammate Mitch Evans spinning him into the concrete barriers. The incident meant that Mitch retired from the race.

On the last lap Sam made contact with another car and spun into the barriers and finally finished in P21.

Safe points for eighth and ninth went begging. Unbelievable. This is not the first time Sam Bird has taken Mitch Evans out of a race.

It happened in India when Mitch started on Pole. It will be a miracle if Sam is still in the Team next year. Amazingly Jaguar still managed to hold onto third place in the manufacturer's championship.

Meanwhile after stunning back-to-back victories in Berlin and Monaco, Envision Jaguar Racing's Nick Cassidy showed he can bag the points, and mostly keep out of trouble, in his quest to maintain his place at the top of the Drivers' Championship standings.

Starting 10th Nick made early race progress, moving up to eighth by the end of the first lap. A mid-race heart-in-mouth moment came following contact with another driver, (right in front of us again), but seventh place at the flag meant that Cassidy maintained his place at the top of the championship standings, albeit with a reduced margin.

Envision Racing's Sébastien Buemi had a race to forget, however. The Swiss driver started 13th, but an early race puncture scuppered any progress.



Mitch Evans finished third in race 2 with Jaguar remaining third in the team championship

Sunday Race 11

Jaguar had a much better qualifying with Mitch Evans starting from P3. The Jaguar TCS Racing team had clearly improved the Jaguar I-TYPE 6 set-up and performance over the course of the weekend.

However, before the lights went green, Sam Bird suffered a technical problem, and was unable to start the race, and was wheeled off the grid. At least it stopped him from running into Mitch!

Mitch held his position in the opening lap and then proceeded to rotate for the lead with Maximilian Günther and Jake Dennis. Mitch held the lead a number of times but settled for third and the final podium position after what was an intense 36-lap race in extremely challenging conditions.

Mitch Evans is back fourth in the drivers' standings, with Sam Bird in eighth. Jaguar TCS Racing remain third in the 2023 ABB FIA Formula E World Championship teams' standings.

Envision Jaguar

Rare pointless finish for Envision Jaguar Nick Cassidy underlines the challenging Jakarta track, but the title remains well within his reach.

Cassidy went into the race weekend in Indonesia leading the championship. The second race saw Cassidy moving slowly, but surely, through the field. Starting 10th, by lap 20 of 38, the Envision Racing driver was up to eighth, behind title rival Wehrlein. It all went wrong in the second half of the race when a seemingly innocuous clash with Wehrlein saw him dislodge his front wing, forcing a pitstop, and ending any hope of points.

It was left to team-mate Sébastien Buemi to battle for the points. He left it late but managed to sneak into the top 10 over the final laps, bringing home a single point that could yet prove vital come the end of the season.

For highlights of the race 10 goto: [Jakarta Formula E Round 10.](#)

For highlights of the race 11 goto: [Jakarta Formula E Round 11.](#)

Would we go to another Formula E race?

The answer is definitely yes, but there is no real point revisiting the same race track. Maybe Berlin, and of course there is always Monaco.

Graham Franklin