

New season, new components

From aesthetic makeovers to faster tyres, The Straits Times looks at the key Formula One changes ahead of the season opener in Melbourne.

RACE DATES

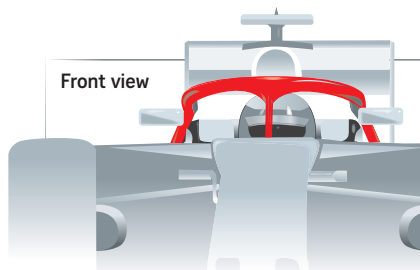
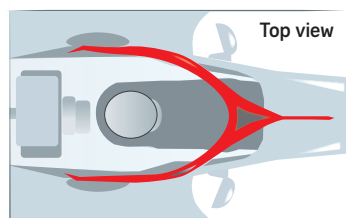
France returns for the first time since 2008, with Le Castellet's Circuit Paul Ricard back on the calendar for the first time since 1990. Germany's Hockenheim circuit is back after being left off last season's schedule.

TOMORROW	
Australian GP, Melbourne	
APRIL 8	
Bahrain GP, Sakhir	
APRIL 15	
Chinese GP, Shanghai	
APRIL 29	
Azerbaijan GP, Baku	
MAY 13	
Spanish GP, Barcelona	
MAY 27	
Monaco GP, Monaco	
JUNE 10	
Canada GP, Montreal	
JUNE 24	
France GP, Le Castellet	
JULY 1	
Austrian GP, Spielberg	
JULY 8	
British GP, Silverstone	
JULY 22	
Germany GP, Hockenheim	
JULY 29	
Hungarian GP, Budapest	
AUG 26	
Belgian GP, Spa	
SEPT 2	
Italian GP, Monza	
SEPT 16	
Singapore GP, Marina Bay	
SEPT 30	
Russian GP, Sochi	
OCT 7	
Japanese GP, Suzuka	
OCT 21	
United States GP, Austin	
OCT 28	
Mexican GP, Mexico City	
NOV 11	
Brazilian GP, Sao Paulo	
NOV 25	
Abu Dhabi GP, Yas Marina	

HELLO, HALO

F1's head protection device is designed to shield a driver's head from flying debris and the danger of being struck by bouncing wheels.

Mandatory halo in 2018



Without halo in 2017

Teams are allowed to swathe the device in an aerodynamic fairing with mini-wings of up to 20mm.

Material: Titanium

Weight: Around 7kg

Protection: Strong enough to support a London bus.

Initial concerns: Obstructed views of overhead start lights, stop/go signals in the pits. The lights have been repositioned to ensure drivers can see clearly.

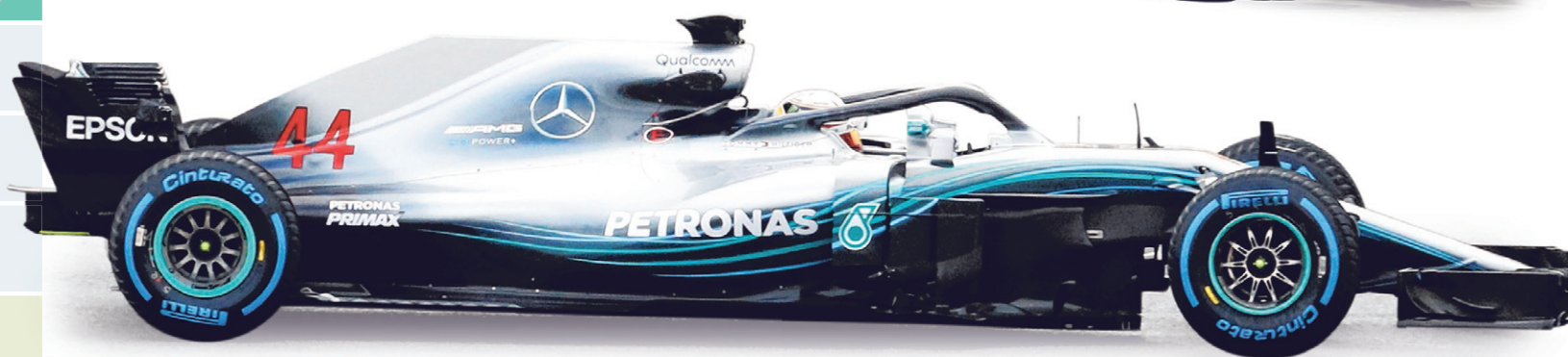
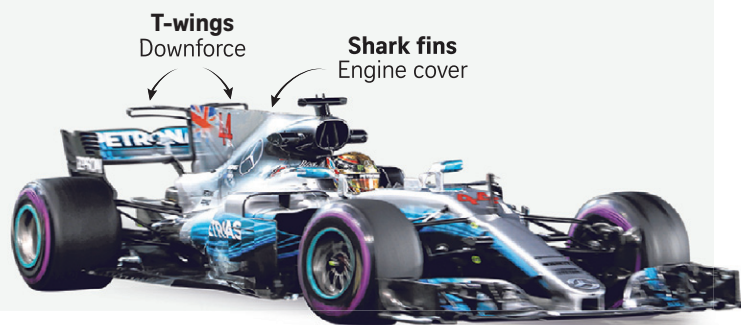
Drawbacks: Getting in and out has become trickier, raising questions about emergency extractions.

LESS ROOM FOR ENGINE FAILURE

- Drivers are allowed three, down from four, power units this season.
- They are limited to only two MGU-K units (Motor Generator Unit-Kinetic) and two energy stores.
- Any additional elements incur grid penalties. Any driver who is handed a penalty of 15 places or more will start from the back.

OUT WITH THE OLD

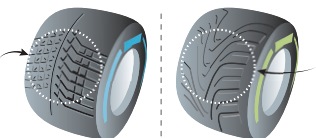
- T-wings and shark-fin style engine covers outlawed
- With two of the most controversial aerodynamic elements on the 2017 F1 cars no longer a feature, the cars will look sleeker between the cockpit and rear wing.



PIRELLI TYRES FOR 2018

New compounds could produce the fastest times ever

Two wet tyres



Wet Blue

- For heavy rain, wet track

Intermediates Green

- For wet but drying track



Superhard Orange

- Fast corners, durability



Hard Ice Blue

- Abrasive track, fast circuits



Medium White

- High speeds, performance and durability



Soft Yellow

- Speed over long distance, and on full fuel



Supersoft Red

- Ideal for qualifying, cold weather and slow circuits



Ultrasoft Purple

- Tight, twisty circuits, but limited life



Hypersoft Pink

- Maximum grip but short lifespan

TEAMS & DRIVERS

Formula Two's Monegasque champion Charles Leclerc and Russian Sergey Sirotkin are the two rookies. New Zealander Brendon Hartley and his French team-mate Pierre Gasly are starting their first full seasons.

	Mercedes
	44 Lewis Hamilton
	77 Valtteri Bottas
	Ferrari
	5 Sebastian Vettel
	7 Kimi Raikkonen
	Red Bull
	3 Daniel Ricciardo
	33 Max Verstappen
	Force India
	11 Sergio Perez
	31 Esteban Ocon
	Renault
	27 Nico Hulkenberg
	55 Carlos Sainz Jr
	Williams
	18 Lance Stroll
	35 Sergey Sirotkin
	McLaren
	14 Fernando Alonso
	2 Stoffel Vandoorne
	Toro Rosso
	10 Pierre Gasly
	28 Brendon Hartley
	Haas
	8 Romain Grosjean
	20 Kevin Magnussen
	Sauber
	9 Marcus Ericsson
	16 Charles Leclerc