

Formula E crowns a new champion as season six ends in Berlin

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- The races use the prewar concrete apron of Tempelhof Airport, and unlike some of Formula E's city street circuits, this one usually makes for exciting action.
- da Costa dominated race 6, winning from pole position.
- And he did the same in race 7, to take a commanding lead in the driver's championship.
- da Costa (left) talks to previous Formula E champions Sebastian Buemi (middle) and Lucas di Grassi (right).
- A socially distanced podium.
- Race 8 saw a new winner in the shape of BMW's Maximilian Guenther.
- The following day, Guenther was crashed out on lap 1, bringing out a safety car.
- Race 8 was won by Jean-Eric Vergne, who won the 2017-2018 and 2018-2019 seasons.
- da Costa only came fourth in race 8, but that was enough to take make his championship lead unbeatable.
- The 5 FIA ABB Formula E champions, from left to right: Sébastien Buemi (Nissan e.Dams, 2015-2016), Antonio

Félix da Costa (DS Techeetah, 2019-2020), Nelson Piquet Jr (NEXTEV TCR, 2014-2015), Jean-Eric Vergne (DS Techeetah, 2017-2018, 2018-2019), and Lucas Di Grassi (Audi Sport ABT Schaeffler, 2016-2017).

- Oliver Rowland gave Nissan e.Dams its first win in Formula E since the Japanese OEM replaced its French partner Renault in the sport.
- Rowland finished the championship with 83 points, just behind his teammate Buemi.
- The final race in Berlin saw another maiden win for a driver and their team when Stoffel Vandoorne took the win for Mercedes-Benz.
- This must feel good after his fairly disastrous time in Formula 1.
- Sam Bird has been with the Envision Virgin team since the inception of Formula E, and he's nearly won the championship a few times. But now he's leaving to join Panasonic Jaguar for season seven.
- Bird will be replacing his friend James Calado, who had a pretty dismal year in Formula E.
- Jaguar drafter Tom Blomqvist in for the final two rounds at Berlin to replace Calado, who was needed elsewhere for a sportscar endurance race.
- René Rast was a mid-season sub for Audi, and he found his feet by the final rounds, scoring his first podium with a third place in round 10 and a fourth place in round 11.
- We were a bit surprised when Venturi suddenly announced it was parting company with Felipe Massa following the conclusion of this season.
- Antonio Félix da Costa (PRT), DS Techeetah with his championship trophy.

Squeezing six races out an old airport in Berlin over the course of nine days wasn't how anyone expected Formula E's season to end. The electric racing series made it work, though. The series pressed pause on its world tour after round

five, which was held in Morocco in February. When that pause happened, the championship was fairly close, with Antonio Felix da Costa leading the way after getting his first win for the DS Techeetah team.

First run it backwards

As the teams emerged from their pre-race quarantine, da Costa had lost nothing in terms of form. He was unbeatable in races 6 and 7, which were held on a reversed version of the 1.5-mile (2.35km) course that Formula E has used for all its previous visits to the Tempelhof airport. Meanwhile, none of his rivals were able to finish consistently enough to stay within shouting distance.

Now run it run forward

For races 8 and 9, Formula E kept all ten turns in the same place, but the series returned to its normal racing direction around Tempelhof's prewar concrete. BMW i Andretti's Maxi Guenther narrowly beat Envision Virgin's Robert Frjins to win race 8, with da Costa in fourth place behind his teammate and double-champion Jean-Eric Vergne. However, this fourth place was enough to make da Costa's championship lead unassailable. The following day, Guenther went from hero to zero in race 9 when he crashed out on lap 1. This race saw a pretty close fight between both DS Techeetah cars and the pair of Nissans with Vergne beating da Costa and Nissan's Sebastian Buemi for the win.

How about more corners?

For the final two races—rounds 10 and 11—the series moved some barriers and reconfigured Tempelhof into a 16-turn, 1.6-mile (2.5km) configuration. Shaking things up further, for round 10 DS Techeetahs, Buemi, and Audi's Lucas di Grassi all mistimed

their qualifying laps, so the four champions had to start that race from the back of the grid. The result was a maiden Formula E win for Nissan's Oliver Rowland.

The final outing in Berlin saw another new winner in Formula E: Stoffel Vandoorne took his and Mercedes-Benz's first victories in the series. Vandoorne was followed to the flag by his teammate Nyck de Vries, with Buemi in third. Vandoorne ended the year runner-up in the championship, but with 87 points to da Costa's 158 that's probably slim consolation for one as competitive as a racing driver. DS Techeetah won the teams championship, their second in Formula E's six seasons.

That's now a wrap from the all-electric racing series. If things go to plan—and that's no longer a sure thing, I know—season seven should start in Santiago, Chile in mid-January 2021.

Listing image by Formula E

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