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Australian GP

MELBOURNE - ALBERT PARK

RACE

Ferrari fourth and fifth in Australia



	Pos.	Time	Gap	Laps	FL	Lap
VETTEL	4 th	1:26:24.434	57.109	58	1:27.954	16
	1 st stop		Lap 14		Medium	
LECLERC	3 rd	1:26:25.555	58.230	58	1:26.925	58
	1 st stop		Lap 28		Hard	

Weather: air 22/24°C, asphalt 41/43°C Clear

Melbourne, 17 March 2019 – It was a complicated Australian Grand Prix for Scuderia Ferrari, although it still managed to pick up 22 points that will be important for the championship, with both its SF90s seeing the checkered flag. However, the team had to accept that it was not in condition to fight for the podium positions. Sebastian Vettel finished fourth and Charles Leclerc, on his race debut with the Scuderia, was fifth.

Sebastian and Charles both got good starts, with Vettel able to get alongside Hamilton's Mercedes. Leclerc got past Verstappen in the Red Bull but he was forced to put two wheels on the grass at the first corner and had to give back the position to the Dutchman.

In the early stages, Sebastian was able to keep a good pace, while Charles made a mistake on lap 8 and lost ground to Verstappen. On lap 14, Vettel pitted, switching from the Soft to the Medium tyres, while Leclerc stayed out until lap 28, when he fitted the Hard compound tyres.

In the second stint, the car on Medium tyres didn't perform as expected and so Sebastian had to manage the rubber for the rest of the race. Charles could run a good pace and in the final stages closed on Vettel, but the team decided the drivers should hold position, given that the cars ahead were too far away and so an assault on the podium was unlikely. The next race takes place in Bahrain in a fortnight's time

Sebastian Vettel #5



"We were not happy with the car the whole weekend but today we struggled a lot. The reason I was so slow in the race was mostly due to the fact that the car could not find enough grip with the medium tyres that we fitted at the pit stop. As a team, we still got a decent amount of points from our fourth and fifth places, but this is not the result we were aiming for just a few weeks ago. So in the coming days, we will analyse the data in detail so as to be ready for the next race, which is not far away now. I'm sure that looking at all the information we have gathered here will give us a better understanding, but today, the result we got was the best we could do."

Charles Leclerc #16



"I made a good start, to the extent that I managed to pass Verstappen and found myself alongside Sebastian, who was fighting a Mercedes. That meant I had to put my wheels on the grass at the exit of the first esses, which allowed Max to get in front of me again. At the start, the car was not so easy to drive and that led to me making a small mistake at the first corner, which cost me a handful of seconds. We decided to fit the hard tyres at the pit stop and, I have to say, that from then on,

the car improved a lot and I was able to push. Towards the end, I closed on Sebastian, but the team decided to keep our positions, given that the top three places were not within our grasp today. Now, we will work with the engineers to try and understand why we were not as strong as we had hoped to be, even though we brought home a good points haul.”

Mattia Binotto Team Principal

“Right from Friday, we didn’t feel comfortable at this track. Even though we did a lot of work on set-up, we didn’t find the right balance and even our qualifying performance demonstrated that we were struggling to adapt to the Albert Park track. Then, in the race, in the first stint, we tried to keep up. Charles made a slight mistake, which meant he could not stay with the leaders. After his pit stop, Seb’s car never found the right grip level on the Medium tyres and so the driver was unable to attack those ahead of him. When he could no longer fend off Verstappen, we decided the most important thing was to get to the end, managing the tyres. When Charles caught up to him, it seemed wise not to take any risks. We leave Australia with a lot of data to analyse and we will use that to work out how to get back to our actual level of competitiveness for the race in Bahrain in two weeks time”.



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