



## Singapore GP

MARINA BAY STREET CIRCUIT

### QUALIFYING

Red lightning in the night: Charles on pole and Seb third



**Charles Leclerc**

P1

1'36"217

**Sebastian Vettel**

P3

1'36"437

*Weather: (night) clear, dry. Temperatures: air 30°; track 31°. Humidity: 63%.*

Singapore, 21 September 2019 – Tonight we witnessed two fantastic laps from a couple of drivers on top of their game, getting the most out of the SF90, which itself seemed to have

improved even on high downforce tracks like this one. Charles Leclerc took his fifth pole position of the season and of his Formula 1 career, while Sebastian Vettel will line up third on the grid, beaten to second place by just 29 thousandths by Lewis Hamilton.

**Q1.** Having gone well in the final free practice session, Charles and Sebastian ran Soft tyres throughout qualifying. On his first run, the Monegasque did a 1'38"014 which got him safely through to Q2, while Sebastian got caught in traffic on his way to a 1'38"939. Both drivers did a second flying lap. Charles did not improve but Sebastian got through to the next session with a 1'38"374.

**Q2.** Leclerc immediately posted an excellent 1'36"930 while Vettel stopped the clocks in 1'37"305. They went out again and got down to 1'36"650 and 1'36"720 respectively to comfortably make it to the final 12 minutes to decide the top ten places on the grid.

**Q3.** Seb and Charles went out on new Softs to fight for pole. The German got a really good first lap in 1'36"437, which was the target for the rest to aim for, even though he "kissed" the wall with left rear wheel, but with no damage to the car. Leclerc encountered traffic but still posted a 1'36"791. In the final minutes, both SF90s went back out on track: Sebastian was unable to improve, but Charles produced an amazing lap in 1'36"217, which not even Lewis Hamilton could match, although the Englishman did manage to lap a whisker faster than Vettel.

**Statistics.** Thanks to today's fifth pole, his third in a row, achieved in a record 22 days, Charles now has more number one starts in 2019 than any other driver and this is also the sixth of the year for the team, as Sebastian was on pole in Canada. This is pole number 225 for the Italian squad. Tomorrow's 61 laps produce a race distance of 308.706 km, however very often here, the appearance of the Safety Car means the race ends before full distance once it hits the maximum two hour time limit.

## Charles Leclerc #16



"Coming to Singapore, we expected to have a difficult weekend. I struggled with the car yesterday and was not satisfied with my driving.

I knew that there was more to extract and focused on the improvements I had to make on myself to do a better job today.

Pole felt out of reach but this morning, the car came alive and felt great. The team in our factory in Maranello did an incredible job to make this result possible by giving us the high-downforce package we need on this track.

The lap itself was not perfect. I made some mistakes and there were some close calls. To finish it like this just feels amazing. I have to keep my head down now and stay focused. It is difficult to overtake here, so

the start will be the most important part of the race for me. I hope it will be an exciting one."

### Sebastian Vettel #5



"I'm not completely satisfied with my Q3, as I wasn't able to improve on my second attempt. I made a mistake in sector 1 and I realised I was not improving, so I decided to abort the lap. It started off very well, but I wasn't able to put together the lap I potentially had. Overall, first and third is great for the team and even if I cannot be entirely happy we can say that we were able to extract the most from today.

The new parts we have on the car worked as expected this weekend, since we are not losing out in the corners to the extent that we were in in Hungary, a track quite similar to this. We were able to extract more performance and also, in terms of race pace, I think we can be competitive.

Yesterday we suffered with a lack of front grip, but tonight as the temperature dropped, it was better for us, the balance also improved from yesterday to today. The race will be really long but I think we could have some opportunities."

### Mattia Binotto Team Principal

“ Today things went better than we had hoped. After the two wins in Spa-Francorchamps and Monza we all came out here somehow hoping to continue the momentum and do something special, and somehow we did it. We brought a new aero package here, which proved positive but more importantly, it shows that our development is going in the right direction. We have clearly identified our weaknesses and we are addressing them, which is also useful for next year. I still believe that our rivals are very strong and that we need to improve in some areas but at least we are on the right path.

Charles set an impressive pole by extracting the maximum from the car, which around here is extremely tricky and he took some risks. He hasn't put a foot wrong and has improved his confidence throughout the season.

It was a shame for Sebastian, who had a fantastic first attempt and was doing very well in the second. He could have easily been on the front row and has proved again today that he can be very fast and that's very important for him.

But the race is tomorrow, we should not forget that, and starting at the front in Singapore is always very important. What we achieved today is very good.”



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