



Abu Dhabi Grand Prix

YAS MARINA CIRCUIT

QUALIFYING

Charles and Seb end the year starting in the mid-field



Charles Leclerc

P 9

1.36.065

Sebastian Vettel

P 13

1.36.631

Weather: night, clear sky. Temperatures: air 23°, track 27°

Abu Dhabi, 12 December 2020 – Charles Leclerc will start from 12th place and Sebastian Vettel from 13th in the last race of the season, the Abu Dhabi Grand Prix which gets underway tomorrow at 17.10 (14.10 CET) at the Yas Marina circuit.

Q1. Charles and Sebastian both made the cut out of Q1 without too much trouble. They did two runs each on the Softs, with Charles third fastest (1.35.881) and Seb 12th (1.36.655).

Q2. The German's final qualifying with the team ended in Q2. Seb's first time was a 1.36.898 on the Mediums, followed by a 1.36.631 on the Softs. Unfortunately, that was not enough and he qualified 13th. Charles did make it to the final part with a great 1.35.932 set on the Medium tyres so he can start on that compound tomorrow.

Q3. In the 12 minutes of Q3, all ten drivers used two sets of new Softs. On his first run, Charles posted a 1.36.248 and then on his second he did a 1.36.065. As the chequered flag was waved, the Monegasque was ninth fastest, but because of the three place grid penalty he was given following the first lap collision at the Sakhir Grand Prix, he will start from 12th on the grid.

Charles Leclerc #16



"I am not so happy about today. Even though Q1 was good and Q2 was very, very good on Medium tyres, in Q3 we lost the rhythm, especially in the last sector and it didn't work out for us. Unfortunately, we have a three-place grid penalty to take tomorrow so it won't make much difference that I am starting on Mediums, as I expect people around me at the start to go for Medium or Hard tyres.

We were quite competitive in FP2 even though our long runs were affected by the red flag, so our pace shouldn't be too bad tomorrow.

It's going to be a tricky race because here in Abu Dhabi it's always very warm so tyre management will be a big thing, more than usual. I want to stay sixth in the drivers' championship so for this last race of the season I'll do all I can to make up as many places as possible."

Sebastian Vettel #5



"Obviously it is not nice to start my final race with the team from 13th on the grid. The result itself is quite bad, even if I was happy with my own performance on the lap. Maybe putting together the perfect lap would have got me as high as tenth, but no better than that.

My plan for the race tomorrow is simply to try and do my best. I guess we won't have an easy race.

I think it will be special since it is the last one. I want to enjoy this race and feel very close to the people in the garage, the mechanics, the engineers, everyone. It will be very emotional."

Laurent Mekies Sporting Director

“ Today’s qualifying result was pretty much in line with the rest of the season, but it’s worth looking at it more closely as there were some positives to be drawn from it. Our main aim was to get into Q3 on the Medium tyre, especially with Charles, to minimise the effect of his three-place grid penalty from the previous round.

Thanks to a great lap, Charles managed to make the cut but after that, he didn’t get the same feeling for the Soft that he had found in Q1, where he was one of the quickest. A shame, as we have seen very often this year how the mid-field is very evenly matched and it doesn’t take much to be at the front or the back. Last week in Sakhir we led this group of cars, but today we are in the middle. Unfortunately, Sebastian only managed to qualify 13th.

Yas Marina has never suited our cars, especially the third and slowest sector, although today we are among the quickest on this part of the track, which is interesting looking to the future. We can as usual expect the race to be closely fought and difficult, with a lot of cars bunched together, given that the performance gaps are down to a few tenths. ”



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Motor Sport Press Office - press.office@ferrari.com - phone +39 0536.949450 - fax +39 0536.949049

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