



Austrian Grand Prix

SPIELBERG

FREE PRACTICE A working birthday for Sebastian



	Sebastian Vettel			Charles Leclerc		
Sessione 1	P 12	1'06"077	32 laps	P 10	1'05"924	31 laps
	Weather: rain, cloudy, sunny. Temperatures: air 23°; track 24°					
Sessione 2	P 4	1'04"961	48 laps	P 9	1'05"298	46 laps
	Weather: sunny. Temperatures: air 29°; track 36°					

Spielberg, 3 July 2020 – Sebastian Vettel celebrated his 33rd birthday, spending his time at the wheel of the SF1000, 215 days on from the Abu Dhabi Grand Prix that brought the curtain down on the 2019 season. It was the third longest break in the 70 years of this sport, given that only between 1950 and 1951 and then between 1961 and 1962 have there been longer ones. This will be Vettel's 102nd race for Scuderia Ferrari. He was fourth fastest in today's free practice for the Austrian Grand Prix on the Spielberg track, three tenths quicker than team-mate Charles Leclerc. Between them they completed 157 laps of the track in the climbs and drops of the Styrian hills, equivalent to over two race distances.

First session. The restart after the break caused by the Covid-19 pandemic was affected by driving rain which fell on deserted grandstands, with clouds hanging over the track, but it did not deter the Scuderia drivers who left the pits almost together a few seconds after 11 o'clock. The track dried almost immediately and therefore the rain had little effect on the programme. Seb and Charles ran just the Medium tyres, working on set up at first. On his first quick lap, the Monegasque did a 1'06"554, dropping that time twice, first to 1'06"120 and then to 1'05"924. The German began with a 1'06"343, quickly getting down to 1'06"124 and then 1'06"077. Charles and Sebastian were tenth and twelfth respectively completing a total of 63 laps.

Second session. Vettel and Leclerc completed 94 laps in the 90 minutes of the afternoon, getting through the planned programme, with 48 for the German and 46 for the Monegasque. In the first hour, both drivers started on the Hard compound, before moving onto the softs in order to go for a fast time over a single lap. At this point, Seb stopped the clocks in 1'04"961, which ended up as the fourth best time of the day, while Charles did a 1'05"298, putting him ninth on the time sheet.

Long run. In the final 30 minutes, the team began working in race configuration to do some long runs. Sebastian began on the Hard tyre, before finally moving onto the softer one, while Charles did the opposite, beginning a race simulation on the Softs and ending on the Hards.

Programme. Tomorrow it will be time for qualifying, but first there will be the final free practice session at 12, before the grid decider gets underway at 15. The Austrian Grand Prix, the first Formula 1 race to be run behind closed doors, starts at 15.10 on Sunday 5th July.

Sebastian Vettel #5



"I think we had a decent day. We didn't have any trouble with the cars. It was good for us all to be back at the track and it was good to see that the team got up to speed fairly quickly and had no problems running through all the procedures. In terms of speed and competitiveness, it was an interesting day. I think we've seen that we are not at the top, that we are not the favourites.

And then there is a lot of stuff going on behind that, and it's very tight. So, we will see, I think tomorrow will be a big day. I don't think we will be fighting for pole, but we must try to be the best of those behind that battle.

We didn't take much notice of the teams around us to be honest, as it's always difficult to predict what sort of fuel loads people are running. I think we will see tomorrow, because we haven't got a clear picture today.

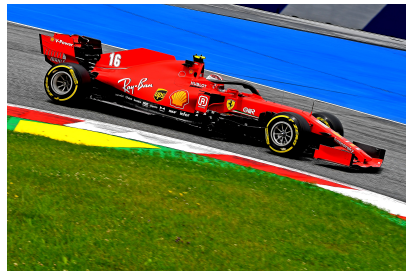
It's up to us to develop and work so that the car gets faster. We're lacking grip and downforce compared to others. So it's a mix of all these things."

Charles Leclerc #16



"It's good to be back in the car after a long pause but on the other hand it wasn't an easy day for us so it was difficult to enjoy it fully. All the cars are very close, which is exciting to see on the one hand, but on the other hand, we would like to be fighting a bit nearer the front. The balance of the car is not that bad, we need to catch up in terms of overall performance.

The lack of pace is not down to any one thing in particular so we'll try different ways for tomorrow and see if we can gain some performance. Qualifying will be good for the show, as there are quite a lot of teams all close together. We'll be fighting very hard and it's crucial we make the right choice tonight to come back with a stronger car tomorrow."



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