



# Bahrain Grand Prix

BAHRAIN INTERNATIONAL CIRCUIT - SAKHIR

## QUALIFYING Up for the fight



**Sebastian Vettel**

**P 11**

1.29.149

**Charles Leclerc**

**P 12**

1.29.165

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

Sakhir, 28 November 2020 – When the Bahrain Grand Prix starts tomorrow at 17.10 local time, (15.10 CET), the two SF1000s of Sebastian Vettel and Charles Leclerc will start from the sixth row, neither of them having made the cut to Q3 and they can therefore expect to have something

of a complicated race.

**Q1.** Like the rest of the field, Seb and Charles began on a set of Softs posting times of 1.29.718 and 1.30.049 respectively before pitting to wait for track conditions to improve as the temperature dropped and the track rubbered in. On the second set of Softs, Vettel got down to a 1.29.142, beaten shortly after by a matter of thousandths by Leclerc. Their times were good enough to move on to Q2.

**Q2.** In the second phase, both drivers ran Mediums only given that it made no sense strategically to try and reach Q3 if it meant having to start the race on the Soft tyres. Two runs were planned but when Sebastian and Charles were halfway round on their first flying run, with the latter on a very good lap, the session was red flagged when Carlos Sainz stopped at Turn 1. With one more set of Mediums, the Scuderia Ferrari drivers waited in the garage for the right moment to go for a quick lap, but once back on track their lap times were not good enough to make the cut. Sebastian crossed the line in 1.29.149 to go 11<sup>th</sup>, with Leclerc 12<sup>th</sup> in 1.29.165.

## Sebastian Vettel #5



"Being able to do just a single lap is never ideal and that was clearly the case in Q2 today. We missed the cut to the next stage by a little over a tenth, but on my only quick lap, I first had George Russell ahead of me, which stopped me getting a tow from Charles, and then I didn't manage to have a perfect second sector. That just adds to the disappointment because even if we expected to be in the midfield here, we could just as easily have been in the top ten rather than on the sixth row.

All the same, I am confident that the team can still bring home a good amount of points tomorrow. Because of the track characteristics, the race will be mainly about tyre management and I think that we can do something good on that score. We will have to be as sly as a fox, be patient and make no mistakes."

## Charles Leclerc #16



"After FP3 I didn't think we could have ended up higher than P12, but looking back at how quali went, I feel I could have done a better job here and there, so I cannot hide the fact that I'm disappointed not to make it to the top ten.

Seb and I are the first on the grid to have the freedom of going for a different strategy but I don't think this is going to be much of an

advantage, to be honest, since starting on the Medium seems like the best option and the top ten will be starting on the Medium too. It's going to be a tricky race where tyres will overheat quickly so managing them will be key."

### Laurent Mekies Sporting Director

“ As expected, given how free practice went yesterday, this was a tough qualifying for us. As has been the case all season, the gaps between us and our closest competitors are pretty small but we were missing a few tenths to make it to Q3. The red flag early in Q2 certainly did us no favours, as Charles was on a really strong lap at the time. In terms of tyre useage today, we were thinking of the race and we hope that choice will work out tomorrow.

We can expect a difficult race given our grid positions but there are around a dozen cars that all have quite similar pace. In a race in which we can expect more pit stops than usual the various strategies could open up opportunities and tyre behaviour will clearly be one of the key factors. The slightest detail could make the difference and, as usual, we will try our utmost to bring home as many points as possible. ”



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**SF1000**

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