Portuguese Grand Prix

PORTIMÃO

FREE PRACTICE

Getting to grips

	Charles Leclerc			Sebastian Vettel		
Sessione 1	P 4	1.19.309	33 laps	P 11	1.20.200	37 laps
	Weather: sunny. Temperatures: air 19°; track 24°					
Sessione 2	P 4	1.18.838	34 laps	P 6	1.19.175	34 laps
	Weather: sunny. Temperatures: air 20°; track 19°					

Portimão, 23 October 2020 – Charles Leclerc and Sebastian Vettel were fourth and sixth respectively in the second free practice session for the Portuguese Grand Prix at the wonderful

Autòdromo Internacional do Algarve just outside Portimão.

FP1. In the first session, both Scuderia drivers used the Hard tyres throughout, working on set-up and getting to grips with the drops, climbs and blind corners of the 4.653 kilometre Portuguese track. They covered a total of 70 laps, Charles doing 33, the best in 1'19"309, which put him fourth, while Sebastian completed 37 laps, the quickest being a 1'20"200, which put him eleventh on the time sheet.

FP2. In the afternoon, Charles and Seb were fourth and sixth fastest respectively (with 34 laps each). The session was red flagged twice, firstly because of a problem on Pierre Gasly's AlphaTauri and then again after a collision between Max Verstappen in the Red Bull and Lance Stroll in the Racing Point. Ferrari and all the other teams spent the first half hour running prototype 2021 tyres on all cars as requested by Pirelli.

Final part. After that, the SF1000s were fitted with Medium compound tyres but the first red flag came soon after. When it restarted, Charles and Seb stayed on the same compound, but then came another stoppage, which went on for quite a while so that there were only just over six minutes left when the action resumed. The team therefore decided to try the Soft tyre which will most likely be the quickest in qualifying. Both drivers set good split times in this configuration but were unable to beat their earlier times on the Medium compound: 1"18"838 for Charles, fourth fastest and 1'19"175 for Sebastian, sixth.

Programme. Because of the two stoppages, the team did not get through its entire planned programme. Nevertheless, both drivers managed to try some new parts on the car, brought to Portimão, to complement the aero package gradually introduced since the Russian GP, as well as some updates aimed at 2021. There's still the third free practice tomorrow at 11 local (12 CET). The grid-deciding session gets underway at 14, while the 17th Portuguese Grand Prix to count towards the Formula 1 World Championship starts at 13.10 on Sunday 25 October.

Charles Leclerc #16

"This track is amazing! It took quite a few laps to find the flow, because you don't really see any apexes but once you get into the rhythm, it's really good. The circuit is also extremely slippery and the rear of the car is moving everywhere but I think that makes it even better in terms of fun! The grip level didn't improve much throughout the sessions, which should make for an exciting race.

Today looked quite good for us and, mainly on the qualifying side, it was fairly promising. Let's wait and see though, as we haven't had much high-fuel running with normal tyres, as we did some with the prototype-tyres instead. Running with high fuel was actually our weakness at the last race, so it'll be a bit of a surprise on Sunday and we'll see where we are."

Sebastian Vettel #5

"Today the track was a big but very interesting challenge for everybody. At the beginning it was very slippery, mostly because of the resurfacing, but it is very smooth. It was my very first day and I liked it. It's good that we have plenty of tracks that are exciting. I think tomorrow will be better as the track itself will improve and we will know it better.

It's a bit difficult to say how competitive we were in the afternoon session, because not all the drivers tried a qualifying lap. Today, what everybody needed was more running to get into a rhythm. The car felt a bit nervous, partly due to the elevation changes, but I suppose that is the same for everyone. We will see the true picture tomorrow."

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