



Bahrain Grand Prix

SAKHIR - BAHRAIN INTERNATIONAL CIRCUIT



Qualifying

CHARLES LECLERC		CARLOS SAINZ	
P4	1'29"678	P8	1'30"215

Weather: night, dry, windy. Temperatures: air 33°, track 28°

Signs of progress

Sakhir, 27 March 2021 – Qualifying went well for Scuderia Ferrari Mission

Winnow, with Charles Leclerc fourth fastest and Carlos Sainz eighth.

Improvement. Saturday evening in Sakhir confirmed that work on the SF21 has produced progress in terms of performance, as can be seen in a comparison with qualifying at the last race here when neither Ferrari driver got to Q3. Today, both of them made the cut, in full control of the situation, so that Charles and Carlos were in the fight for the top three rows on the grid.

Different Q3 strategy. As has often been the case, Leclerc did a fantastic job of getting the most out of his only set of soft tyres, stopping the clocks in 1'29"678. It was good enough for fourth, under a tenth of a second off Valtteri Bottas in third.

Carlos. Unlike his team-mate, Sainz opted to go for two runs. On used Softs he posted a solid 1'30"536, but on the second run he made a small mistake in the first sector and had to settle for 1'30"215, which put him eighth in the end.

The race. The opening round of the season, the 17th Bahrain Grand Prix, run over 57 laps, starts tomorrow at 18 local (17 CET).



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We know now where we are in terms of qualifying pace and it's a pleasant surprise, as we didn't expect to be here, but today we need to keep our feet on the ground. It's only the first qualifying of the year and it's run in very strange conditions.

I think we should be satisfied as a team with the step we made since last year, so to be so far forward on the grid feels great. I have been struggling in FP2 and FP3 as I could not find the feeling with the car but I worked quite a lot on the driving and in qualifying I was actually quite confident I would be able to do the lap I wanted.

I feel confident for tomorrow but it's going to be difficult as other cars around us seem to be very strong in terms of race pace and are starting on Mediums, so it's going to be tricky to keep them behind. Also, it's not going to be easy because of the wind, but that's the same for everyone.

Charles Leclerc #16



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A very positive day for the team. I think we can be happy with where we are. We had that very big shock in Q1, with the car turning off, but thankfully I could start it again and made it to the pits. It's not always easy to recover from that, but we managed to have a very strong Q2. I'm obviously not happy with my last attempt in Q3. I went for it, but I'm probably lacking a bit more knowledge on the car and I couldn't put together a clean lap. It is what it is.

In general, though, I'm happy. I've been improving throughout the sessions, with good pace and very few mistakes so I want to keep gaining experience with the car and building confidence on a one-timed lap.

There will be time to analyse Qualifying in depth next week, but now I want to switch my full focus to tomorrow's race. I'm looking forward to my first ever race with the team and we'll give our best to gain positions and finish as high as possible.

Carlos Sainz #55

“

A good qualifying session, with both drivers getting through to the final part: something we have not seen since Silverstone last year. Charles, Carlos and the whole team have tackled the start of the season working methodically and with determination, going into the smallest detail to get all the potential out of the package. Today, we saw the first fruits of this work and we hope to see more tomorrow, when the points are given out. We know there's still a lot of work to be done, but we cannot deny that the first real comparison with our opponents proves that our efforts seem to be going in the right direction, although a clearer picture of the hierarchy will only emerge after three or four races. Now we have to focus on preparing for what will be a long and difficult race, run in conditions that could be very different to those we have seen so far this weekend.”

Laurent Mekies
Racing Director

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