Azerbaijan Grand Prix

BAKU CITY CIRCUIT

QUALIFYING

CHARLES LECLERC		CARLOS SAINZ	
P1	1’40"203	**P4**	1'41"016

Weather: sunny, dry. Temperatures: air 19°, track 36°

Charles puts on a show! Third pole in a row in Baku

Baku, 28 April 2023 – When the Azerbaijan Grand Prix gets underway on Sunday at 15 local time (13 CET), Charles Leclerc will be starting from pole, having yet again out-paced the rest of the field for a third consecutive time at the Baku City Circuit. This has always been a special track for him, after scoring his

first Formula 1 points here in 2018. This is Charles' 19th pole, the Scuderia's 243rd, its fourth in Azerbaijan, the first courtesy of Sebastian Vettel in 2018. Carlos Sainz will start from fourth place on the second row.

Q3. Charles had a perfect qualifying right from being fastest in Q1 and for the decisive phase, he had two sets of new Soft tyres available. Carlos had a less smooth time of it, as he twice had his time wiped out by red flags in Q1 on his fast lap. It meant that he had to use another set of new Softs at this point, so that he only had one new set left to tackle Q3. On his first run, Leclerc set an identical time to Max Verstappen (1'40"445) which meant he was second on the time sheet, as the Dutchman was the first to post that time. But Charles dug deep and on his second run he got down to 1'40"203, which no one was able to beat. As for Carlos, he gave it his best shot on his only run on new tyres, stopping the clocks in 1'41"016.

Standalone Saturday. Tomorrow, sees the very first running of the new Sprint format. The day starts with its very own Shootout qualifying at 12.30 local (10.30 CET) followed by a 17 lap (100 kilometre) race at 17.30 local (15.30 CET) which no longer sets the grid for the real Grand Prix. However, the race will be an opportunity to check race pace given that there was not really enough time in today's only free practice session of the weekend for drivers to do any long runs.

It feels really good to be back on pole and it's something we didn't take for granted coming here. The team did a perfect job in managing the session and I'm very happy with my lap.
We have to see where we stand in the Sprint and the race, where we expect to be a bit more on the back foot compared to our competitors, but we will give it our all and I look forward to being back in the car for the Shootout tomorrow.

Charles Leclerc #16

It was a very tricky day for me today. Since the very beginning of free practice I didn't feel confident in the car and, with this format, there is obviously no time to change and try different set-ups. Qualifying was a bit of a mess as well, having to use two sets of new tyres in Q1 and therefore only leaving myself one set for Q3. I never got into a decent rhythm overall, my bad.
I will fight back from P4 on Sunday and tonight we will focus on how we can improve the feeling in the car. Congratulations to Charles on a great lap and on securing pole for the team.

Carlos Sainz #55

We are very pleased with how qualifying went, because both our cars were able to fight with the Red Bulls which had always taken pole so far this season. Congratulations to Charles, who was quickest of all here in Baku for the third time in a row, proving that he's a real qualifying specialist. Carlos had a tougher time of it today, as he struggled to feel confident in the car and he also had to use an extra set of Softs in Q1.
However, in the end, this pole position and Carlos' fourth place confirms that we have done a good job in Maranello over the past month. In fact, even though the results didn't show it, in Melbourne we had already made progress and this qualifying performance confirms it.
We don't have much information on race pace, which is what we will focus on as from this evening, as we start to prepare for tomorrow's Sprint and the Grand Prix itself. There is still a lot of work to do, but all the same, we can enjoy today's good result for the team

Laurent Mekies
Racing Director

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