



# AUSTRALIAN GRAND PRIX

ALBERT PARK CIRCUIT



## FREE PRACTICE

### SESSION 1

CHARLES LECLERC #16	P4	1'18"599	Soft	22 laps
CARLOS SAINZ #55	P8	1'18"686	Soft	23 laps

Weather: sunny, dry. Temperatures: air 19°, track 34°

### SESSION 2

CHARLES LECLERC #16	P1	1'17"277	Soft	26 laps
CARLOS SAINZ #55	P3	1'17"707	Soft	25 laps

# AN ENCOURAGING FRIDAY

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Melbourne, 22 March 2024 - Scuderia Ferrari got off to an encouraging start in the first two free practice sessions for the Australian Grand Prix at the Albert Park circuit. The most important factor is that Carlos Sainz is fully fit and did brilliantly to return to the cockpit just 14 days after undergoing an appendectomy, which meant he had to sit out the Saudi Arabian Grand Prix. Today, the Spaniard completed 48 laps, almost a race distance, without any physical problems, gradually getting back into the swing of driving the SF-24 in between the walls around the Albert Park track. The other positive is that the SF-24 performed well over the single lap, with Charles quickest in the second session when the track was at its best, while Carlos was third, and the car was also competitive in race trim, giving the drivers positive feedback which will now need to be confirmed in qualifying tomorrow and, above all, in Sunday's race.

**FP1.** Charles and Carlos ran the Soft tyre throughout the session. Leclerc posted a 1'18"599, fourth fastest, before taking on more fuel for the final part of the session to assess the car in race configuration. Sainz ran low fuel throughout get used to being back behind the wheel of the SF-24 and to feel the g-forces the drivers are subjected to when pushing to the maximum. The Spaniard continued with this programme after the session was red flagged following Alex Albon's crash, setting the eighth fastest time in the closing moments in 1'18"686. He did 23 laps, one more than Charles.

**FP2.** In the afternoon, Charles and Carlos started off on the Medium tyre and low fuel before switching to the Softs to end the session in qualifying trim. On the softest compound they set their best times of 1'17"277 and 1'17"707 respectively, good enough to go first and third quickest respectively. In the final third of the session, the SF-24s reverted to running the Medium tyres used at the start, with a heavy fuel load bringing the total number of laps to 51, split 26 for Leclerc and 25 for Sainz.

**Tomorrow.** The cars will be back out on track in Melbourne tomorrow at 12.30 (2.30 CET) for the final hour of free practice, followed by qualifying at 16.00 (6.00 CET).



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*It was a solid first day, everything felt good from the start and I was comfortable in the car.*

*The most important thing for us to do tomorrow will be to go with the track and anticipate what the evolution will be like. We will focus on optimising our balance and try to make a step forward before qualifying. It looks good for now but we have to wait and see how it will look tomorrow, I expect the field to be much tighter.*

**Charles Leclerc #16**



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*It's been a couple of tough weeks leading to today and to be honest I'm very happy I could complete both sessions feeling reasonably comfortable. I will continue to take it step by step to make sure I come to qualifying and to the race in the best form possible.*

*I'm confident tomorrow will be better and overall, the car seems to be in a good place this weekend. We'll try to maximise everything from body and machine!*

**Carlos Sainz #55**

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