



# JAPANESE GRAND PRIX

SUZUKA CIRCUIT



## QUALIFYING

CARLOS SAINZ #55

CHARLES LECLERC #16

P4

1'28"682

P8

1'28"786

*Weather: cloudy, dry. Temperatures: air 17°, track 23°*

## A DIFFICULT QUALIFYING

Suzuka, 6 April 2024 – Not the best qualifying for Scuderia Ferrari in Japan. Carlos Sainz secured fourth place on the grid, while Charles was eighth fastest in the final phase, where positions four to ten were fought over to the nearest thousandths of a second, illustrated by the 104 thousandths four place gap between the two Scuderia drivers.

**Vulnerable on a flying lap.** It was clear from this morning's third free practice session that the SF-24 lacked pace over a single flying lap and the situation did not improve by much during this afternoon's qualifying. Charles needed two sets of new Soft tyres to ensure he made the cut to Q2 and that made life complicated as it meant he only had one new set of Softs for Q3. Carlos had a more straightforward time of it, getting through Q1 and Q2 on his first runs, thus having two sets of the softest compound available for the final shoot-out.

**Q3.** Like the majority of drivers, Carlos set his best time on his first run with a 1'28"682, giving it his very best shot. Charles opted to wait in the garage to go for his only attempt at pole when the others were pitting for their second sets of tyres. The Monegasque was very quick in the middle sector, but at the line he was seventh quickest with a 1'28"786. One of the only drivers to improve on his second run was Fernando Alonso, who got ahead of Leclerc, who will therefore start from eighth on the grid. Carlos did a very similar time to that of his first run but without improving, to stay fourth.

**Fighting back.** The SF-24 proved to be competitive in race trim in free practice, with tyre degradation seemingly under control, which is not the case for some other cars. It will be a long race, probably a two-stopper and so there are plenty of variables that could come into play. Obviously, the aim for both drivers is to move up the order. Carlos can expect a solid race, while Charles' afternoon will probably be dependent on what happens immediately after the start, when he will be trying to get ahead of some cars off the line.





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*I'm happy with my qualifying and with the lap in Q3, as I think we maximised our potential today. We knew since FP3 that this weekend we were lacking a bit over one lap, but starting P4 leaves us in a good position to fight tomorrow. We've made good steps in terms of race pace and I hope we will be able to exploit it during the race and fight for a podium position. Let's go!*

**Carlos Sainz #55**



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*I'm not happy with our qualifying today. The feeling in the car was quite good, but the pace was just not there, so we will look at the data and assess what exactly this was down to. Our car is slightly stronger in race pace than qualifying pace this year, however, it is quite difficult to overtake on this track, so we will aim for a good start and take any opportunity to fight our way back to the front in the race.*

**Charles Leclerc #16**

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*Overall, the qualifying result was not so good. It went reasonably well for Carlos, but Charles paid the price for having to use two sets of Softs to get through to Q2. But if we now focus on tomorrow, we know our race pace is okay with both our guys and I believe we can be in the running, make up some places and bring home a good result. Both Carlos and Charles will need to have a good first lap so that they can run in free air, without getting stuck in traffic, given that overtaking at Suzuka is really difficult, especially as there is only one DRS zone.*

**Fred Vasseur**  
Team Principal

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