

2019 AUSTRALIAN GRAND PRIX – SATURDAY 16/03/2019

Alex Albon (STR14-02, Car 23)

Third Practice Session - Best lap: 1:24.328, pos. 15th, 15 laps

Qualifying - Best lap: (Q1) 1:22.757, (Q2) 1:22.636, pos. 13th

"My Qualifying started off okay. I did my first lap and when I got told of the lap times I saw how quick it is around here. I hooked it up on the second of the Q1 laps and fell into the rhythm - it took me all the way until Qualifying to get there, but once you get the feel you gain confidence, because the grip is there as the track evolution is huge. I'm a bit gutted to miss out on Q3, we knew it was going to be close in winter testing, but it's so tight in the midfield that you can't afford to make any mistake! I'm happy with the lap I did, but on the other side a tenth or a tenth and a half quicker and I would have been in Q3! This track isn't easy for overtaking, but maybe the new regulations will come into play and give us a chance to move up the field. Our long runs look pretty good - we're close to the points so that's the goal for tomorrow. I'll be a bit nervous and I'm not sure if I'll sleep too well tonight! I'm really looking forward to my first race in F1 and I'll try to keep my nose clean and bring home a good result."

Daniil Kvyat (STR14-03, Car 26)

Third Practice Session - Best lap: 1:23.442, pos. 8th, 16 laps

Qualifying - Best lap: (Q1) 1:22.511, (Q2) 1:22.774, pos. 15th

"I'm happy with how the weekend went until Qualifying. It was perfect until Q2 where things got a bit scrappy. I had a bit of traffic on the last lap when Sebastian went off the track. I'm not at all blaming him but I lost time there. We need to remain optimistic because we still have to extract everything from the car, otherwise the timesheets would surely be different. I think my lap from Q1 would have been enough for Q3, but if you do it once you need to be able to do it twice, so we will work to understand where it went a bit wrong. It's really nice to be back pushing the car to the limit, I've enjoyed every lap this weekend - it's been cool! I think we can try to recover a few positions tomorrow as our long runs didn't look too bad and with good tyre management and strategy we'll see where it will get us!"

Jody Egginton (Deputy Technical Director)

"Today's sessions have again highlighted how very tight the midfield pack is, with small differences in lap time having quite big effects on final positions, so I expect we are not the only team being frustrated not to be starting further up the grid tomorrow.

"We had a straightforward final practice for Dany, with car balance in the ballpark and completing the normal fine-tuning to prepare for Qualifying. Alex had a slightly more challenging FP3, but also made some steps to improve. Overall, both drivers headed into Qualifying with a reasonable baseline setup. Ultimately, it did not quite live up to our expectation of getting at least one car into Q3, as such we will be working hard to improve in order to be in the position to take this opportunity in the future. However, Alex has delivered a solid performance in his first F1 Qualifying, which is a further positive sign of his progress. Our long run pace during Friday was reasonable, so we will do our best to have both cars in contention to take any opportunity which may present itself in tomorrow's race."

Toyoharu Tanabe (Honda F1 Technical Director):

"It was good to get through the first qualifying session of the season without any difficulties on the PU side. The final result over the four cars had some positives and negatives. With Toro Rosso, we saw the potential of the STR14-Honda so far this weekend, but then both of them were a bit unlucky with traffic in Q2. It will be a long race tomorrow and we hope to get a good result for our first outing with Red Bull and also with our established partner Toro Rosso."

