

Beat: Sports

2015 Australian Grand Prix - Practice

Melbourne, Mar 13, 2015

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USPA NEWS - MERCEDES AMG PETRONAS kicked off the 2015 Formula One season at the top of the timesheets today, with Nico Rosberg narrowly edging Lewis Hamilton in each of the day's two practice sessions at Albert Park.

Nico topped the opening session by just three hundredths of a second from Lewis in P2. The second session saw the pair separated by exactly one tenth of a second in the same order. Both drivers used the medium compound tyre only during the first session, the medium and soft in the second; setting their fastest time of the day on the soft. Both F1 W06 Hybrid cars ran trouble-free throughout the day, completing a combined total of 92 laps.

Nico Rosberg -

It was great to be back in the car at this awesome track. Today we have the evidence that our Silver Arrow is quick again and it was a great start for the Team. I was very happy with my long run but on one lap I still need to work on the pace as I had a lot of oversteer in the car. It seems again that it's very close between Lewis and me and he is a great driver, so I need to nail the setup every time to come out on top. This year will be a big battle again against him, I'm sure. I'm looking forward to the first weekend of the new season with all the great fans out there.

Lewis Hamilton -

It feels great to be back on track and back into a race weekend. In general it's been a good first day. The teams back at the two factories have done an incredible job over the winter. To arrive here and have such good pace in the car for the second year in a row is an amazing feeling. But, naturally, as drivers we want to push the car to the edge and when you get to that limit it gets tricky.

That's where it's our job to keep our heads down and really try to figure out how to maximise the setup and get the most out of the car. There's a little bit of work to do on my side as I'm not 100% comfortable with the car "" but that's to be expected on the first day. Today seemed to confirm that we have pretty good pace. But there are still other quick cars out there and we can't go into tomorrow's sessions not thinking that they will be close.

Toto Wolff -

It was a good day. We need to keep our feet on the ground but it makes no sense to talk ourselves down: the performance is good and we look competitive. But it wasn't a seamless day, the drivers weren't too happy with the car on the final run, so we have some work to do overnight to find the sweet spot. Looking at the field, it will be close with Ferrari and Williams, too. Of course, we don't know fuel loads and don't know what engine modes were run, whether it was really spicy or if there is still more to come. Like always: when the flag drops, the bull**** stops. Let's see how it looks tomorrow.

Paddy Lowe -

Today was a good start to the season and we're happy to have successfully run through our programme with no problems to report. We had a look at the car on both high and low fuel and we've assessed the two available tyre compounds "" both of which seem to be performing well at this circuit. We've also got quite a few new configurations on the car so we've got quite a lot of homework to do tonight to make sure we've got the right setup for qualifying and the race. Tomorrow we have the first qualifying session of the new season "" arguably the most important hour on the calendar, where we see the results of our hard work over the winter. It will be very interesting to see how the field lines up.

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Editorial program service of General News Agency:

UPA United Press Agency LTD

483 Green Lanes

UK, London N13NV 4BS

contact (at) unitedpressagency.com

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