

29th March 2023**2023 AUSTRALIAN GRAND PRIXVIEW****Nyck de Vries**

"Looking back at Saudi, obviously I'm not satisfied, but let's say content with the progress I felt on my side of the garage. I think the two race weekends so far have shown strengths and weaknesses and overall, Saudi was a more competitive and performant weekend, even if missing FP3 didn't help. After the race, I was critical of my own performance and I meant what I said - I think I need to improve in those scenarios. At the start and the restart, I should have been a little bit more aggressive, while the end of my race was very strong. Of course, you can find a million excuses in your own defence, but I look at myself and I feel like we're progressing.

We are realistic and smart enough to understand that, at the moment, we won't be fighting for race wins with Scuderia AlphaTauri, so we just look for our own little victories within the championship. Obviously, as a team, we want to be further up the grid and be more competitive in going for points, and we will continue to strive and push for that. Whatever situation a team is in, I think the work is still very similar. The kind of commitment and desire to excel is exactly the same.

We will have some updates in Australia, but it's impossible to say what effect that will have, as other teams are also pushing and developing, so it will be an ongoing process that will hopefully allow us to be a little bit more competitive within the midfield but until qualifying, we won't know. Obviously, there is always a little bit of optimisation to do with the car as it is, but it's also a moving target. If you add performance to the car, then we might need to reassess or rethink how we execute the best performance out of it, but we clearly need more points of downforce, so we will have to see what the upgrades deliver.

After Saudi, I spent two days in the simulator preparing for Australia. I see the value in it as part of our preparation and hopefully therefore performance on track, I do it with joy because ultimately, I believe it can help us on track and it's also good to continue to practice your driving techniques and skills. I've never been to Melbourne, never been to Australia, so it's going to be a completely new experience for me. I'm very much looking forward to travelling to the other side of the world and to see what it's like over there. As a kid, I always remember watching Melbourne because it used to be the first race of the season. I'd be waking up very early to watch qualifying and the race. It's just nice after all those years, to actually travel out to Melbourne myself and race there. Everyone tells me it's a great place, so I'm keen to experience it for myself."

Yuki Tsunoda

"Another eleventh place in Saudi after the same result in Bahrain was a bit frustrating as I was so near to getting in the points. The car was more suited to Jeddah than to Sakhir and overall, the team did a good job with the package we had, making a step forward in terms of race pace. I was happy with my own performance, fighting for points, and also with how the team worked. We knew the car's limitations, and these are more visible when you are having to fight with other cars in the actual race, as the limitations are exaggerated in that situation. We struggled for straight line speed, so I was quite pleased that I could hang on until the last four laps in my battle with Magnussen for P10. I enjoyed the fight, it was good fun.

This weekend will be my second time racing in Melbourne and last week I drove it in the simulator, when we also went over some aspects of the Saudi race that we wanted to look at again, such as items we couldn't do in race week, or set-ups that could have worked better before moving on to the next race and track. We will have some aero updates for this race and my focus will be on giving the team good feedback about them. If they work well, I hope it means I can extract as much performance as possible from the car and fight for points again. Last year, I didn't have a particularly good weekend in Melbourne, but I enjoyed the overall experience of being in Australia, in Melbourne, where the atmosphere is really good around the circuit. I like the track and so this time, I came out to Melbourne quite early to get over the jet lag and acclimatise, but also to enjoy the city and the beach for a couple of days before starting work."

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