

31st March 2023

2023 AUSTRALIAN GRAND PRIX - FRIDAY

Yuki Tsunoda (AT04-02, Car 22)**First Practice Session – Best lap: 1:20.399, pos. 17th, 14 laps****Second Practice Session – Best lap: 1:20.220, pos. 11th, 18 laps**

“We started with a difficult FP1 as I struggled with the rear, but I'm happy with our FP2 performance. There was traffic in FP1 caused by GPS issues which caused me to slow down a lot in the last sector, meaning the tyres were not up to temperature when I started my quick lap and I experienced a lack of grip. We don't know exactly where we are compared to the rest of the field, but we will concentrate on what we have to do as a team to be able to put it together for tomorrow. It will be close and we are aiming for Q3, but first through to Q2. The midfield is tight so any small mistakes are costly, but the car is better than last year, so once we've reviewed the data, we see what we can do about tomorrow.”

Nyck de Vries (AT04-03, Car 21)**First Practice Session – Best lap: 1:19.933, pos. 14th, 25 laps****Second Practice Session – Best lap: 1:20.600, pos. 17th, 8 laps**

“Today's sessions were certainly different in terms of conditions but also as for learning and trying various things. The GPS issue didn't help, especially due to the nature of the track in which the tyre warm-up also plays an important role. We had a good FP1, after which we made some changes for FP2 to better understand what our new upgrades are doing. Because there is a small bit of grass between the track and the wall, it is a tricky street track where there's no margin for error. After today, there are a few unknowns about the new upgrades, but we will find out more after the analysis we do tonight. We will need to continue to put things together and build on them during FP3 tomorrow.”

Jonathan Eddolls (Chief Race Engineer)

“We didn't have the most straight-forward of Fridays in Melbourne. FP1 started according to plan with both cars running the Medium tyre and Yuki testing some new aero components. As is always the case here, the level of grip was improving significantly during the session and the lap times were improving lap by lap. Our performance looked respectable, so we fitted the Soft tyres expecting to find another step in grip, but both drivers struggled to make it work and did not improve. In fact, Yuki had an unexpected snap entering Turn 1, lost the car, and in hitting the kerb on the outside he damaged the floor, which meant the end to his session since there wasn't enough time to repair it. We carried out a number of setup changes for FP2 and moved Nyck to the new aero components. We could see rain on the radar about 30 minutes into the session, so we thought we could get out for a couple of short runs beforehand, with the Hard first followed by the Soft. However, we had a drizzle 15 minutes in so we didn't get a short run on the Soft tyre on either car. The rain intensity increased so that was it for dry running. We did a few laps on intermediates at the end of the session with Yuki just to increase our understanding of that tyre, but we stayed in the garage with Nyck after spotting a small mechanical issue on his car. We have quite a bit to think about overnight in preparation for tomorrow and the race. We didn't get to cover all of the work planned, so I expect a busy FP3 session tomorrow to help fill the gaps we have.”

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