

28th October 2023**2023 MEXICO CITY GRAND PRIX – SATURDAY****Daniel Ricciardo (AT04-02, Car 3)****Third Practice Session – Best lap: 1:18.499, pos. 9th, 15 laps****Qualifying - Best lap: (Q1) 1:18.341, (Q2) 1:17.706, (Q3) 1:17.382, pos. 4th**

“I’m very pleased. P4 is a little higher than we expected within the top 10, but the pace has been there from the start of the weekend. After Austin, knowing we had a normal weekend in Mexico to try things with our setup, we started with a slightly different car and definitely more toward what I was after. I was happy to hit the ground running yesterday. The confidence in the car was there, and we were always a solid P10 car, with some purple sectors sometimes. Before qualifying, it wasn’t about whether we could make it into Q3 but how far up the grid we could qualify. Yuki was great and gave me a slipstream in Q1 and 2, so that definitely gave us the extra tenth or two to get in, and then Q3 was just our pace. From that point of view, we had the pace to do it. The lap I was visualising in my head was maybe P7, or P6 at best, but P4 is wild. As a team, we have to enjoy it because it’s a big moment. It’s not often that we get this far into the top 10, so there’s a part of me that will be enjoying it for the next hour. Points are awarded tomorrow though, and I believe we have a chance to score a lot. Half the job is done but it’s a long run to Turn 1, so I’ll keep calm, pick a good line, and race hard.”

Yuki Tsunoda (AT04-04, Car 22)**Third Practice Session - Best lap: 1:18.450, pos. 7th, 26 laps****Qualifying - Best lap: (Q1) 1:18.890, (Q2) No time, pos. 15th*****starting from the back of the grid due to engine penalty*

“Firstly, a great job to the team and Daniel. We knew I was taking an engine penalty, so we just wanted to maximise the opportunity for my teammate. Obviously, I’m frustrated because there was definitely the potential to have both cars in Q3, but I’m happy with how I did and that I was able to help my team and teammate. We focused mainly on race pace during Free Practice, so I’m confident the car will be strong tomorrow. I’ll do my best again and try to overtake as much as possible. Our car’s characteristics seem to suit this track, so we’re aiming to have both cars finish in the points.”

Jonathan Eddolls (Chief Race Engineer)

“From Friday, we could see signs that the car was performing well here and that there was even more performance to find after FP2 because neither driver had the perfect balance. The team put a lot of effort into the overnight analysis, particularly on the tyres, to make changes and improvements for Saturday. The track temperature for FP3 and Qualifying was similar to FP2, so we had a consistent set of conditions to work with. From the get-go, it was clear the changes were in the right direction. Daniel was very competitive on his first run on the medium tyre, but he and Yuki struggled a bit more on the soft compound. It was harder to find the sweet spot, but it gave us a platform to work on for Qualifying. With Yuki starting from the back of the grid, he showed how much of a team player he is by giving Daniel tows throughout Qualifying. This was key to the success today because it allowed Daniel to save a tyre set in Q1, leaving two new sets of the soft compound for Q3. On top of that, Daniel and the AT04 were flying today, and he was consistently putting in times towards the top of the timesheet. The track changed slightly for his last run in Q3, and a number of teams didn’t improve, but even with that, Daniel’s first lap was quick enough for P4 on the grid tomorrow, with a purple Sector 3 and only one tenth behind Max. It’s been hard to take for Yuki, knowing he starts from the back on a weekend in which the car is performing so well. Thanks to him from the whole team for giving Daniel the tow, which was instrumental in today’s result. The performance this weekend has been the best of the season so far, but there are no points for today, so we need to remain focused on the job at hand, which is turning our strong qualifying performance into points tomorrow.”

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