

MERCEDES FASTEST ALL DAY ON ULTRASOFT IN WARM CONDITIONS BUT UNCERTAIN WEATHER EXPECTED FOR REST OF THE WEEKEND

LOW DEGRADATION SO FAR ON A 'GREEN' AND SLIPPERY TRACK WITH NEW SOFTER COMPOUNDS

SO FAR, AROUND 0.6 SECONDS SEPARATE THE ULTRASOFT AND SUPERSOFT COMPOUNDS: ALL THREE TYRES ARE VIABLE OPTIONS FOR THE RACE

Melbourne, March 23, 2018 – The first free practice sessions of the year with the softer 2018 compounds was held in asphalt temperatures that peaked at 40 degrees centigrade (and 30 degrees ambient), with Mercedes fastest in both sessions but closely challenged by Red Bull in the afternoon.

Despite a brief red flag stoppage, the teams carried out plenty of running on all three compounds as they assessed the 2018 range of tyres in warm conditions for the first time.

As usual on the semi-permanent Albert Park track, which is rarely used outside of the grand prix, there was a very slippery surface today that should improve as more rubber is laid down

MARIO ISOLA - HEAD OF CAR RACING

"It's early days, especially as this is the first warm running these tyres have had in conditions that we can directly compare to last year. On the longer runs, the pace of the frontrunners seems closely matched so far. The complexion tomorrow might be altered completely by the forecast of rain, with uncertain weather perhaps persisting on Sunday as well. After the first day of running of a new season, there's obviously a lot of data to sift through, and it's certain that the full picture is yet to emerge. With the performance gap between soft and supersoft quite low from what we can see so far, and a bigger gap of 0.6 seconds to the ultrasoft, all three compounds appear to be viable options for the race strategy."

FREE PRACTICE 1 – TOP 3 TIMES

DRIVER	TIME	COMPOUND
Hamilton	1m24.026s	ULTRASOFT NEW
Bottas	1m24.577s	ULTRASOFT NEW
Verstappen	1m24.771s	SUPERSOFT NEW

FREE PRACTICE 2 – TOP 3 TIMES

DRIVER	TIME	COMPOUND
Hamilton	1m23.931s	ULTRASOFT NEW
Verstappen	1m24.058s	ULTRASOFT NEW
Bottas	1m24.159s	ULTRASOFT NEW

FP1 - BEST TIME BY COMPOUND

COMPOUND	DRIVER	TIME
SOFT	Raikkonen	1m24.875s
SUPERSOFT	Verstappen	1m24.771s
ULTRASOFT	Hamilton	1m24.026s

FP2 - BEST TIME BY COMPOUND

COMPOUND	DRIVER	TIME
SOFT	Verstappen	1m24.401s
SUPERSOFT	Hamilton	1m24.385s
ULTRASOFT	Hamilton	1m23.931s

MOST LAPS BY COMPOUND SO FAR

COMPOUND	DRIVER	LAPS
SOFT	Leclerc	27
SUPERSOFT	Ericsson	25
ULTRASOFT	Bottas	22

TYRE STATISTICS OF THE DAY

			
Kms driven*	1462	1876	2704
Sets used overall**	18	24	40

* The above number gives the total amount of kilometres driven in FP1 and FP2 today, all drivers combined.

** Per compound, all drivers combined.

MIN. STARTING PRESSURES (slicks)		EOS CAMBER LIMIT	
	22.0 psi (front) 19.5 psi (rear)	-3.75° (front) -2.00° (rear)	

*Updates are available also on our
official media channels*



Twitter @Pirellisport



Instagram/pirelli_motorsport



Facebook/PirelliMotorsport



The Racing Spot: Racingspot.pirelli.com



Pirelli F1 Press Area: f1pressarea.pirelli.com

*For further information
please contact*

*Roberto Boccafogli • +39 335 125 6694
roberto.boccafogli@pirelli.com*

*Anthony Peacock • +44 7765 896 930
anthony.peacock.ex@pirelli.com*

*Sara Vimercati • +39 366 620 9720
sara.vimercati@pirelli.com*

*Pirelli Tyre Press Office • +39 02 6442 4270
pressoffice@pirelli.com*