

## MERCEDES DRIVER VALTTERI BOTTAS TAKES POLE POSITION WITH FASTEST-EVER LAP OF SOCHI ON P ZERO PINK HYPERSOFT

### FERRARI AND MERCEDES WILL BOTH START THE GRAND PRIX ON THE ULTRASOFT TYRES TOMORROW

#### TEAMS WILL AIM FOR ONE STOP DURING THE RACE: TWO STOPS ARE POSSIBLE AS WELL, BUT SLOWER

*Sochi, September 29, 2018* – The strategic battle between the championship protagonists was already evident in qualifying, where both Mercedes and Ferrari drivers managed to get through Q2 on the ultrasoft tyres: meaning that they will be the only four cars to start the race on this compound in the top 10.

All the drivers used the hypersoft, around 0.8 seconds per lap faster than the ultrasoft, in Q3: which was claimed by Bottas with the fastest-ever lap of Sochi. This was 1.8 seconds faster than last year's pole (set on ultrasoft).

Wear and degradation remained low throughout the hour-long third free practice session this morning, but some graining was noted on the hypersoft due to the cars sliding on the slippery surface.

The shape of the grid was also influenced by grid penalties for a quarter of the field, which will add another strategic variable to tomorrow's race.

#### MARIO ISOLA - HEAD OF CAR RACING

*"Strategy was clearly at the forefront of qualifying, so we're going to see an interesting situation tomorrow with the top four cars starting on the ultrasoft tyre, immediately followed by six cars behind them starting on the faster hypersoft. If you add in to this the number of cars starting out of position due to grid penalties, with a completely free choice of tyres, then we could see a big mix of strategies tomorrow. The ultrasoft starters can target a one-stop race, but the situation for those starting on the hypersoft is less clear cut, even though they should be much quicker off the start line."*

#### HOW THE TYRES BEHAVED TODAY



YELLOW **SOFT**

Not seen in qualifying but forms part of the theoretically fastest one-stopper.



PURPLE **ULTRASOFT**

Used by Mercedes and Ferrari in Q2: a likely start tyre for those outside the top 10



PINK **HYPERSOFT**

0.8s faster than ultrasoft: with this either a one or a two stopper is possible.

### FREE PRACTICE 3 – TOP 3 TIMES

DRIVER	TIME	COMPOUND
Hamilton	1m33.067s	HYPERSOFT NEW
Bottas	1m33.321s	HYPERSOFT NEW
Vettel	1m33.667s	HYPERSOFT NEW

### QUALIFYING TOP 10

DRIVER	TIME	COMPOUND
Bottas	1m31.387s	HYPERSOFT NEW
Hamilton	1m31.532s	HYPERSOFT NEW
Vettel	1m31.943s	HYPERSOFT NEW
Raikkonen	1m32.237s	HYPERSOFT NEW
Magnussen	1m33.181s	HYPERSOFT NEW
Ocon	1m33.413s	HYPERSOFT NEW
Leclerc	1m33.419s	HYPERSOFT NEW
Perez	1m33.563s	HYPERSOFT NEW
Grosjean	1m33.704s	HYPERSOFT NEW
Ericsson	-	HYPERSOFT NEW

### MOST LAPS BY COMPOUND SO FAR

COMPOUND	DRIVER	LAPS
SOFT	Sirotkin	26
ULTRASOFT	Stroll	27
HYPERSOFT	Magnussen	22

## BEST TIME BY COMPOUND SO FAR

COMPOUND	DRIVER	TIME
SOFT	Hamilton	1m34.818s
ULTRASOFT	Hamilton	1m32.595s
HYPERSOFT	Bottas	1m31.387s

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