

## 2020 RUSSIAN GRAND PRIXVIEW

**PIERRE GASLY (#10)**

"After the win in Monza, Mugello showed what can happen in sport. We had our best free practice sessions of the year, we were really competitive on Friday and Saturday morning as I was P5, but then we had problems in qualifying. I was confident I could move up some places in the race, but unfortunately, the grand prix lasted all of one corner for me. A shame, as given how the race went, there would have been opportunities to do something good. But that's racing.

"Now we can look ahead to Sochi and I have to say it was nice to have a weekend without a race because the schedule is pretty intense. It's also important for the mechanics and engineers in the team to get a break. We can reset and come back to Sochi in top form. It's a completely different track to the last few we have raced on. It is much slower than Monza and Mugello. In some ways, Sochi is a sort of street circuit with the majority of corners being 90-degree fourth or fifth gear turns, so all very similar. Then there's a slower final sector. It's an interesting track, but it's hard to say now how well our car will work there. One nice thing is that I believe we will have quite a lot of spectators allowed in the grandstands, more than at Mugello. It will be nice to see more people and have a bit more atmosphere.

"We will have to wait and see how we go, but I'd say we are working in the right direction with the car. We have learned a lot about setting it up to get all the performance out of it. We are pretty consistent now in performance terms and we have shown weekend after weekend that we are constantly improving. We have a better understanding of how the car works and the updates we introduced seem to work well. Now we have to make sure we keep out of trouble, as we have seen there is a lot going on in the races at the moment. We want to continue this upward trend: in Spa and Monza our performance was good, and even in Mugello right up to qualifying. Where we are in the midfield is incredibly close between several teams. We are in a group separated within three-tenths of a second, so it will be important for us to do everything perfectly if we want to fight with the cars directly ahead of us.

"Even now, a few weeks on from Monza, I have had a bit more time to savour and enjoy what happened, as it was such a rush from there to Mugello. It's cool and of course, it was a very strong moment that came as a result of so much work from everyone. I think it has given everyone a real boost; not just the race team but also everyone behind the scenes. Now, we have to try and continue with a run of strong performances that we have seen since the start of the season."

**DANIIL KVIAT (#26)**

"It was cool to have a bit of a break after Mugello. That wasn't an easy race for us, but I managed to keep out of trouble with all the incidents and red flags. I concentrated on keeping focussed and keeping it clean because in these sorts of situations that's what normally brings you a good result. I believe we managed that quite well as a team and got the maximum amount of points we could have done. I enjoyed Mugello, a track with gravel traps, which is the way racing should be really! It made every high-speed corner even more exciting: one small mistake and you are in the gravel trap. We didn't need to have discussions about track limits.

"I would say our car has been looking more competitive in these last few races, with continuous progress being made. In general, it's a very tight midfield and, as we have seen in normal circumstances, without any unusual events in the race, we are slightly behind McLaren, Racing Point and Renault. However, we are talking about very tiny margins. We are looking to completely eliminate that gap in the near future and I believe we are on the right path to doing so.

"It's great to have a home race and nice to go where people are the same nationality as you and support you. Of course, I'm quite excited about the weekend, as there is always a special feeling for me when I'm in Sochi. We already had some fans allowed in Mugello and I believe there will be even more in Sochi, which will be very cool. Of course, it will be important to keep everyone safe, but like every race, there are checks and measures in place to ensure that. I hope the spectators will really enjoy the show. I think the grandstand at Turn 3 is still named after me, so I hope that will have plenty of fans. That corner has a very long apex which looks good, although to be honest it's not too difficult and you take it flat in the dry in qualifying, although you are steering round it for a long time. With mainly medium speed corners and some slow ones in the final sector, you need to find a good compromise in terms of downforce. Once you find the right balance you are in a happy place. With low tyre degradation, you might think it will just be a one-stop race, but we will have to be careful, running quite soft compounds. As usual, we will have a busy Friday trying to understand everything."

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