

22 March 2021

2021 Bahrain Grand Prixview**Pierre Gasly #10**

"I can't wait to go racing! It's the first time we start the season at the same track where we had three days of testing just a short time ago, which is like having extra free practice sessions. It means we have a good idea of what we need for this Sakhir track."

"The aim of the test was to understand our new car, particularly the new aero package in order to get the most out of it during the season. I'd say we had the best ever pre-season test since I joined this team: we did more laps than any other team and it was really productive. Actually, looking at all the teams, the level of performance and reliability achieved in Formula 1 is really impressive, if you compare it to winter testing from just a few years ago, when it was normal for everyone to have quite a few problems. There has been a lot of technological progress."

"We had no technical or mechanical worries, which is very encouraging. Those first laps gave me a good feeling with the car and there are a lot of positives to take away from the test. In the time since then, everyone in the team has worked very hard to prepare for the first race and I hope that pays off this weekend."

"When it comes to the effect of the new technical regulations, I'd say what we saw is that we have a little bit less grip everywhere. You don't feel a difference in terms of how the car handles and behaves and I'd say it's fairly similar to what we experienced last year – a bit worse in some places, a bit better in others. The overall balance is similar, it's just there's less grip so you are slower through the corners. But it's not a big difference. Apart from that, the first time we tested the car it gave us a baseline that worked straight away. We were able to work on fine tuning in some corners and now it's down to the engineers working mainly in the wind tunnel to push to try and find more downforce through the year. But we have a really good base from which to start the year and the car also reacts well to any changes we make to it, which is a good sign. During the test, we didn't push flat out very often, so it's hard to get an accurate picture of the improvement on the PU side, but I know what Honda has done and it was encouraging that we had zero bother on the PU over the three days, even though we did a huge number of laps. We'll get a better idea when we push harder at the first race."

"From a team point of view, it's important to have two drivers who can deliver and Yuki did a good job at the test, doing a lot of laps, which is a good sign. He made no mistakes and did everything that was asked of him. Both of us are ready to attack the season."

Yuki Tsunoda #22

"Making my Formula 1 debut this weekend in Bahrain is going to be a big step up from Formula 2. During the off-season, I was able to drive some older F1 cars and then we had the three-day test at Sakhir, so with all of that combined I feel I am well prepared. There has been a lot to learn, in terms of the power of the car, how effective the brakes are and, especially unique to Formula 1, how many controls and switches there are on the steering wheel. During the test, I worked on

understanding how the car reacts to all the changes that can be made to it, I spent a lot of time studying the data and I feel I have made some progress. Comparing this year's car to last year's, I had a good feeling through the steering and the engine seems to have more power, but although testing went well, we won't know how competitive we are until this weekend, because in testing, everyone is running different programmes."

"I have also worked hard on my physical preparation, training every day and focusing on those areas where I saw I needed to be stronger. I am keen to see what happens in this first race. My approach to the season will be to push hard right from the start, building on my experience to find the limits of the car and I hope that, by the mid-season, it all comes together with some good results. My team-mate is very fast and experienced, and I plan to learn as much as possible from him. I am the first Japanese driver to race in Formula 1 since 2014 and I know a lot is expected of me from the Japanese fans, so I will be trying my best to make them happy. I think I'm ready!"