

2021 FRENCH GRAND PRIX – FRIDAY 18/06/2021

Pierre Gasly (AT02-05, Car 10)**First Practice Session - Best lap: 1:34.699 pos. 8th, 20 laps****Second Practice Session - Best lap: 1:33.696 pos. 7th, 25 laps**

“Today was an ok day, however it’s been quite difficult with the wind which has made the car very tricky to drive. In terms of performance, I think it’s good that we’ve ended both sessions within the top 10, but it’s definitely been more difficult than the last two weekends. We’ve been working on the balance of the car today, so we’ll analyse all the data tonight and make some improvements to the set-up of the car to be more confident out on track tomorrow. I’m racing in front of my home fans here and I’m aiming to reach Q3 again in Qualifying. It’s so great seeing this many French flags in the grandstands here, I really want to do well for the people here supporting me this weekend, so they’ve got something to celebrate on Sunday.”

Yuki Tsunoda (AT02-06, Car 22)**First Practice Session - Best lap: 1:34.847 pos. 10th, 22 laps****Second Practice Session - Best lap: 1:33.955 pos. 13th, 25 laps**

“It’s been a good day. I think the approach here in France compared to the last few races is a bit easier, as I’ve already got experience driving here at Paul Ricard. I had a spin in the first session, but I think we’ve made good progress through the two sessions today. I struggled a bit with the set-up in FP2, but we adapted really well and by the end of the day I was happy with the car behaviour. My confidence in the car is definitely returning and my result in Baku has helped with that. We still have lots of work to do ahead of Qualifying and the field is very tight, so it’s going to be very competitive but the pace is definitely there.”

Jonathan Eddolls (Chief Race Engineer)

“We headed to France following a great result for the team in Baku but have remained realistic with our targets for this weekend, knowing that we return to a more normal circuit. One of the main areas for us to work on during Friday was setting the car up around the higher rear tyre pressures, as well as managing the performance on the very hot track. In addition to this required learning, FP1 was focused on a matrix of set-up work based around some finding of the car performance we observed in Baku to further understand some of the characteristics of the AT02 and how we can apply these to more standard tracks. So, it was a very busy session for both cars and unfortunately, we sustained some damage to the floor of Pierre’s car after running wide in T2. He lost some laps with this, but we still gathered plenty of data to analyse for FP2. We used this learning to further adapt the set-up of both cars for this afternoon’s session and the changes appeared to be a step in the right direction. We didn’t have the cleanest of laps, due to traffic again, but piecing together the laps the performance is looking encouraging and in line with our expectations, particularly given both drivers felt there was still room to work on the balance. We have a lot to look through tonight, but we will aim to put it all together and target Q3 tomorrow.”

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