

FORMULA 1

GRAN PREMIO DE MÉXICO 2018™

Ciudad de México a 26 de octubre de 2018

RARE AIR AND HOT AIR Red Bulls top opening session at AHR

Max Verstappen has begun his 2018 Mexican Grand Prix by putting his Red Bull Renault where it finished at the Autodromo Hermanos Rodriguez in 2017 – ahead of all the rest.

Last year's Mexican race-winner carried on his fine form from last weekend in Texas with a best time of 1 minute 16.656 seconds, just over a second faster than the best mark in last year's corresponding session as Renault-powered cars filled the top four places.

Daniel Ricciardo was second for Red Bull, just under half a second behind, while Renault themselves, fresh from their best result of 2018 last weekend, saw Carlos Sainz and Nico Hülkenberg finish third and fourth respectively

That's rare air for the French manufacturer – and it was Mexico City's own rare air that caused some of the problems that saw many drivers take to their radios to complain to their engineers back in pit lane.

Tyre suppliers Pirelli have brought the three softest compounds in their range to compensate for the lack of downforce at 2200 metres, and on a 'green' track (where not much rubber has been laid down) they struggled in the early stages, particularly the new-for-2018 Hypersoft pink-walled tyres.

'Chewing gum', was how Haas's Kevin Magnussen described them, while a more diplomatic Sebastian Vettel told his Ferrari team it was 'a waste of running' to stay on them too long.

That was nothing to some of the other messages that turned the airwaves hot.

The normally mild-mannered New Zealander Brendon Hartley, who had only his second F1 race here last year, called his Toro Rosso crew to complain of 'brutal traffic' and suggested they have a word with Williams, whose Russian driver Sergey Sirotkin had got in his way.

It got worse: later in the session Hartley was back on the radio again to complain about Italian Antonio Giovinazzi, being given an outing in the Sauber instead of regular occupant Charles Leclerc.

'This Giovinazzi's an idiot,' said the Kiwi. 'What a bunch of amateurs!'

There were three 'stand-in' drivers in the session, and on the plus side, all three were faster than their respective teammates. Former GP2 runner-up Giovinazzi was 0.178 ahead of Marcus Ericsson, Briton Lando Norris, occupying Fernando Alonso's cockpit, finished 0.070 ahead of Stoffel Vandoorne in the other McLaren, and Canadian Nicholas Latifi, a race-winner in F2 this season, outpaced Force India's Mexican Sergio Pérez by an even more marginal 0.046.

'Checo' had a quiet session, finishing in 11th spot overall.



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So did the men in contention for the world title. Lewis Hamilton, on the brink of his fifth world title, was fifth, 1.419 seconds off the pace, while Vettel, who has to win here to keep his own title chances alive, was seventh.

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#MexicoGP #F1ESTA

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The top category of motorsport has returned to Mexico, after twenty-three years of absence, a pioneer of major sporting events in our country. With hosting rights from 2015 to 2019, the renewed Autódromo Hermanos Rodríguez is the scene of the return of F1ESTA to the country, with a track of the highest world standard.

In its most recent three editions (2015, 2016 and 2017), over 1 million people have witnessed the race, which – according to analysis by Formula Money – has made the Mexican GP the second with more spectators worldwide (after Great Britain).

To date, the 2015, 2016 & 2017 editions of the FORMULA 1 GRAN PREMIO DE MÉXICO™ have generated over 30 thousand jobs in the region and have achieved an economic impact of \$2.2 billion USD (\$39.6 billion MXN).

Mexico will once again achieve global recognition through the race, which will take place from October 26 to 28 – after the third successive year of being voted “Best Promoter of the Year” in the category by FIA and FOM, the highest authorities of professional motorsports worldwide.

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