Beat: Sports

2017 Japanese Grand Prix - Saturday

Suzuka Circuit

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USPA NEWS - Lewis claims pole in Suzuka with Valtteri coming in second

Lewis claimed his 71st career pole position ““ his tenth of the 2017 season and his first ever at the Suzuka International Racing Circuit

Valtteri finished second but loses five places owing to a grid penalty

Today´s pole means that Lewis has secured a pole position at every circuit of the 2017 calendar over the course of his career

Lewis ran the Soft compound tyre in Q1, while Valtteri used the SuperSoft

In Q2, Valtteri completed one run on the Softs and one on the SuperSofts with Lewis completing two runs on the SuperSofts

Both drivers completed two runs in Q3 (SuperSofts)

Lewis Hamilton -

I´ve been coming here for so long, but it´s my first pole here at Suzuka! It was definitely worth the wait. I didn´t make one mistake all session and just kept getting better and better. We built the foundation in Q1 and then just built upon it as qualifying developed. I´ve been waiting all weekend for that moment, for that lap in Q3 ““ and it feels so good when that comes together. It´s incredible to come here with this car and drive on this track. It´s always been one of the greatest but with this car, it´s mind-blowing, I wish everyone could feel what we feel. It´s always been a crazy rollercoaster ride, but with the downforce on these cars, it´s insane. The way you can throw the car around, I love that. We know how quick the Ferraris were in Malaysia, so it´l l be interesting to see how we compare. We´ve put ourselves in the right position to get the job done on Sunday. I don´t know if people watching realise how much effort goes into qualifying, but the team worked perfectly to get me out at the right time, into space on track and allow me to do what I needed to do ““ I´m so grateful for that. They did a great job, I hope I can capitalise on that tomorrow.

Valtteri Bottas -

It was a tricky day. I had a bit of an off in FP3 and the car was damaged. But the guys did a great job getting the car back together, everything worked perfectly. It´s been a few tough races, I´ve been off the pace quite a lot. So now I´m at least a bit closer and with the limited running we had today, it really wasn´t too bad. But it´s a shame to lose the position due to a grid penalty. The car has been feeling really different this weekend compared to last week. I was able to trust it more and drive a bit more naturally which always makes the result better. I should never lose self-confidence; it´s the key in this sport. I just need to carry on, keep chipping away and learning from everything. I´m going to start on the Soft tyre, so I think we have a chance to try a different strategy to all the other cars around. So hopefully we can gain a few places as overtaking is very difficult on this track.

Toto Wolff -

The car has been performing well all day ““ the combination of track surface, layout and temperatures is suiting us much better than a week ago in Sepang. The swings of performance we have seen this season prove that this is a complicated science for each of the teams, and that small factors make a big difference to the final result. Today´s result brings us another piece of the puzzle to help our understanding. As for the performance this afternoon, Lewis was untouchable today; he just built up the performance level lap by lap and improved with every run. It was a day that shows why he is one of the best of all time. On the other side of the garage, Valtteri did everything he needed to. He will start on the Soft tyre, which will open up alternative strategies for him tomorrow, and delivered a very strong performance in Q3, finding time on each lap. Overall, a great starting point for tomorrow´s race. But the hard work is still to be done.

James Allison -

We had a good feeling with the car yesterday, although the sessions were somewhat disturbed by the weather conditions, and that was truly underlined this afternoon with extremely solid performances from both cars in qualifying. One of the nice things about motor racing is the way that it offers a chance of redemption at every Grand Prix. After the difficulties we encountered in Sepang, we have come here and demonstrated in the most eloquent way possible that we mean business here in Suzuka. We know that we have to do it all again tomorrow, but this gives us the best possible starting point for that challenge.

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