

16 MARCH 2019

**AUSTRALIAN GP – QUALIFYING****MAX VERSTAPPEN, Position: 4<sup>th</sup> 1: 21.320 (Practice 3 – P9 1:23.481)**

"I am pretty happy with the way qualifying went. After some of the difficulties we've had this weekend, especially this morning, I was a bit worried but the guys here and back at the factory have been working really well together to find a good set-up and I think we can be pleased with the second row. It was really tight in Q1 and on a street circuit like this you really have to nail the first run. I was lucky to have that second lap on the board where I improved but it was really tight, especially as we only used one set of tyres, unlike many others. I definitely felt the extra performance coming from the qualifying mode which is also very pleasing. It has been tricky finding a good balance and we are of course not where we want to be in terms of the gap, but we also have to be realistic and happy with this grid position. Fourth is better than we expected going into qualifying. It's difficult to say where we will be tomorrow and I didn't get to do a full long run on Friday, but it looks like the tyres are holding on quite well, so as long as we get a clean start, we will find out what we can really do."

**PIERRE GASLY, Position: 17<sup>th</sup> 1: 23.020 (Practice 3 – P6 1:23.367)**

"I had a bit of traffic in Turn 1 but apart from that, I was quite happy with my Q1 lap. We went for one run whilst most others went for two and it cost us. I think we've been quite optimistic as we didn't expect such track evolution and the pack to be so close. We're not exactly where we'd like to be but session after session we're going in the right direction. There were not many overtakes at last year's race so starting from where we are, it's going to be difficult but we will of course try and make it into the points. It's a tough day today but we need to stay positive. For me, tomorrow will be all about gaining experience in the car and recovering positions."

**CHRISTIAN HORNER, Team Principal:**

"That was a very strong session from Max and an impressive lap in Q3 to qualify fourth. Splitting the Ferraris was an excellent effort on his last run and he's getting our new power unit partnership off to a great start with Honda's highest qualifying position in the current V6 era. Unfortunately, Pierre, after a strong first lap didn't improve on his second flying lap and with the circuit evolving and other cars electing to take another set of tyres, he just missed the cut. Whilst that's hugely frustrating for him, I'm sure he will recover and race hard from there tomorrow."

**ENDS**