



## TYRE TACTICS HELP DECIDE THE GRID IN BARCELONA

*Barcelona, May 21th 2011* - The Pirelli PZero Yellow soft tyre has claimed its fifth pole position in succession, thanks to a stunning lap of 1m20.981s from Red Bull Racing's Mark Webber – two-tenths of a second faster than his team mate Sebastian Vettel. It was Webber's first pole position since the 2010 Belgian Grand Prix last August.

The Australian completed only one run in the final Q3 session, at Barcelona in order to save an extra set of PZero Yellow soft tyres, as did Vettel and both McLaren drivers. Lewis Hamilton qualified third for McLaren while Fernando Alonso enjoyed his best qualifying performance of the year to line up fourth for Ferrari on home territory.

Williams driver Pastor Maldonado also used the PZero Yellow soft tyres to get into Q3 for the first time, but the most interesting tactic came from Mercedes driver Michael Schumacher, who completed only one out lap on the new PZero Silver hard tyres in Q3, meaning that he will start from P10 on these tyres tomorrow.

All the other drivers used Pirelli's PZero Yellow to set their quickest times in the final session, with the new PZero Silver hard tyre making an appearance during both Q1 and the start of Q2 as well. This tyre is not as quick as the tyre that it replaces, but it is more durable and will allow most drivers to extract up to 10 more laps compared to the previous version, enabling the pit stop window and the opportunity for strategy to be widened.

Conditions were the warmest they have been so far this weekend in Barcelona, with track temperatures peaking at 40 degrees centigrade. This increased the stress on the PZero tyres, with the front-left in particular facing a big challenge from the long Turn Three.

Pirelli's Motorsport Director Paul Hembery said: "We'd like to congratulate Mark Webber for his first pole position with us. Like a number of other drivers he was able to use the new PZero Silver hard tyres to get through the first qualifying session and also save a set of PZero Yellow soft tyres for the race, making use of what appears to be the perfect strategy so far. But Mercedes have also put a very interesting plan in place by running Michael Schumacher on the PZero Silver tyres in Q3: it will be fascinating to see how he gets on in the race. As we've hoped, the teams are using our tyres to put in place increasingly creative race tactics, which should provide us with another great race tomorrow. I'd also like to give a special mention to Williams: a fantastic effort from Pastor Maldonado has put the team in the top 10."

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