



## 2011 JAPANESE GRAND PRIX

### PIRELLI HEADS TO JAPAN WITH P ZERO MEDIUM AND SOFT TYRES

#### WHAT'S THE STORY?

*Milan, October 3<sup>rd</sup>, 2011* – Suzuka is one of the classic venues of the Formula One calendar, incorporating a huge variety of demanding corners such as the well known Spoon and 130R.

Located to the west of the Japanese capital, Tokyo, Suzuka has undergone a number of significant enhancements since it was originally inaugurated as a Honda test track back in 1962.

Pirelli will bring the P Zero White medium compound tyre to Japan together with the P Zero yellow soft compound: the same combination that was used recently on two other demanding circuits featuring high-speed corners, Spa and Monza.

The wide range of speeds and corners at Suzuka mean that it is essential to have a versatile tyre, with the soft and medium compounds providing a good compromise between grip and durability, together with the possibility to create some interesting pit stop strategies.

The technical and abrasive layout of Suzuka, particularly in the long and fast corners such as 130R, place heavy demands on the construction of the tyres, which have to absorb huge loadings that equate to 800 kilograms or more.

Coming at the end of the season, Suzuka has frequently played host to races that decide the world championship and this year is no exception, as Red Bull Racing's Sebastian Vettel needs just one more point to clinch his second consecutive title. The German has won the Japanese Grand Prix for the last two years, with only Fernando Alonso, Michael Schumacher and Rubens Barrichello being the other current drivers to have won at Suzuka previously.

The Japanese Grand Prix has often been characterised by wet weather, meaning that the P Zero Blue intermediates and P Zero Orange wet tyres might also come into play after a recent spell of dry races. The safety car has appeared for the last two years in Japan, which is sure to have a profound impact on tyre strategy.

#### PIRELLI'S MOTORSPORT DIRECTOR SAYS:

**Paul Hembery:** "After what has been a devastating year for Japan, we are very pleased to be showing our support for the country and coming to the Japanese Grand Prix, on a circuit that all the drivers love. Suzuka is all about putting power down effectively in order to obtain maximum grip in terms of traction, braking and cornering. There's a lot of energy and lateral load going through the rubber, so once more it is going to be important for all the drivers to manage their tyres effectively, because of the speeds involved and a high-downforce set-up that pushes the tyres onto the road surface. We are likely to see our very first P Zero-equipped world champion crowned at Suzuka this weekend, so it's a race that is set to go down in our history. The combination of soft and medium tyres has produced several close finishes in the past, as there is not a hugely different level of degradation between these two compounds. All the ingredients are in place for a memorable race."

## THE MEN BEHIND THE STEERING WHEEL SAY:

**Sebastien Buemi (Toro Rosso):** "Driving here is fun and exciting with so many great corners that ask a lot of you and the car. The Esses after the start, 130R and others make this place unique, not to mention the unusual figure of eight layout. We have seen this year that Pirelli tyres have played a big part in adding to the excitement on Sunday afternoon and that should be the case again here. We will have the medium and soft compounds to work with on a track that is generally tough on tyres, with quite an abrasive surface. The first Esses section requires the car to switch direction rapidly several times, while other long corners like Spoon also put a heavy load on the tyres. As usual, making the best use of both compounds could be the key to a good result here. The atmosphere is also special, with the politest fans in the world, who are prepared to sit in the grandstands late into the night to watch the action in the pit lane. Japan has had a very tough time since the earthquake and the effects of the Fukushima nuclear disaster earlier this year, so I think it is important that Formula One is coming to the country."

## TECHNICAL NOTES:

- \* Suzuka requires a car with a good handling balance in order to minimise tyre wear throughout the rapid changes of direction and long corners. The absence of any long straights mean that the cars run with comparatively high levels of downforce, but as usual the teams will be trying to find the best compromise between aerodynamic and mechanical grip.
- \* One of the best places for overtaking is into the chicane just before the end of the lap. The comparative difficulty of overtaking means that qualifying is even more critical than usual. Since Suzuka returned to the Formula One calendar in 2009, the winner has started from pole position.
- \* The track has recently been resurfaced, making the surface more uniform than it used to be. The figure of eight layout is unique, meaning that the tyres on both sides of the car are equally challenged.

## THE TYRE CHOICES SO FAR:

	<b>PZero Red</b>	<b>PZero Yellow</b>	<b>PZero White</b>	<b>PZero Silver</b>
<b>Australia</b>		<b>Soft</b>		<b>Hard</b>
<b>Malaysia</b>		<b>Soft</b>		<b>Hard</b>
<b>China</b>		<b>Soft</b>		<b>Hard</b>
<b>Turkey</b>		<b>Soft</b>		<b>Hard</b>
<b>Spain</b>		<b>Soft</b>		<b>Hard</b>
<b>Monaco</b>	<b>Super Soft</b>	<b>Soft</b>		
<b>Canada</b>	<b>Super Soft</b>	<b>Soft</b>		
<b>Europe</b>		<b>Soft</b>	<b>Medium</b>	
<b>Great Britain</b>		<b>Soft</b>		<b>Hard</b>
<b>Germany</b>		<b>Soft</b>	<b>Medium</b>	
<b>Hungary</b>	<b>Supersoft</b>	<b>Soft</b>		
<b>Belgium</b>		<b>Soft</b>	<b>Medium</b>	
<b>Italy</b>		<b>Soft</b>	<b>Medium</b>	
<b>Singapore</b>	<b>Supersoft</b>	<b>Soft</b>		
<b>Japan</b>		<b>Soft</b>	<b>Medium</b>	

## **PIRELLI IN JAPAN:**

- \* Pirelli has had plenty of success at Suzuka in the past, having won on the circuit both in endurance racing and with motorbikes at the Suzuka Eight Hours. Pirelli has also won the Rally Japan four times, having enjoyed a long relationship with Japanese manufacturer Subaru.
- \* Pirelli Japan won the prestigious Autobacs award last year for being the best tyre supplier of the year. Autobacs is a long-established dealer in automotive parts and accessories that was founded in 1947. Pirelli Japan won the award for its sales success, with the P4 tyre proving to be the best-selling product.
- \* Pirelli's market share in Japan has increased steadily over the past few years, with one of the latest products on sale being the winter ICE Control tyre, designed specifically for extreme weather conditions such as those found in northern Japan. Pirelli also has a strong presence in the premium tyre market in Japan. Premium tyres currently account for 12% of the global tyre market.

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