



NEW PIRELLI FORMULA ONE TYRES FACE THEIR FIRST TEST

Milan, February 6, 2012 – The Formula One teams will get the chance to sample the definitive specification of Pirelli's new tyres for the first time this year, as the 2012 Formula One season gets underway at Jerez in Spain this week.

During a four-day test at the Andalusian circuit, from Tuesday to Friday (7-10 February) each car will have 25 sets of Pirelli's new soft, medium and hard compounds available, along with the wet tyres if needed. Teams are allowed a maximum of 100 sets of tyres per car each year for testing purposes, and they are permitted to choose the compounds they would like to test within their allowance. None of the teams have nominated the supersoft compound for Jerez: the only compound to remain unchanged from 2011.

Experimental compounds for the 2012 tyres were tried out during some of the free practice sessions last year, as well as at the young driver test following the Abu Dhabi Grand Prix. However, the regular drivers now have the opportunity to test the new compounds together with the new profiles for the tyres, which this year are much 'squarer' in order to provide a greater contact patch and deliver a longer period of peak performance, while maintaining an overall lifespan in the region of 100 kilometres.

The tyres have been designed to provide more grip at the rear of the car, following the latest changes in the aerodynamic regulations that ban blown exhausts for 2012.

Once more the teams will start from scratch, as all the compounds apart from the supersoft are new, with more visible colour markings. In the unlikely event that it rains in the south of Spain next week, the drivers will also get to try out the new Cinturato rubber: the designation for the intermediate and full wet tyres – which echo the name of Pirelli's first Formula One tyres from the 1950s.

With the 2012 cars in different phases of development, and some new drivers as well, the emphasis in Jerez will not be on peak performance but instead on understanding the characteristics of the new tyres and matching them to the cars.

The 4.43-kilometre Jerez circuit has hosted both the Spanish and European Grands Prix previously, and it is a popular venue for Formula One testing due to its technical configuration and year-round warm weather. It was one of the venues that Pirelli used for testing in 2010, when the company was building up to its return to Formula One.

The track contains quite a wide variety of corners, ranging from slow curves to some medium to fast bends. The layout puts particular emphasis on rear tyres, which have to work hard to supply the best traction throughout an ample range of speeds. While Jerez does not result in especially high top speeds, every aspect of a car's performance is

comprehensively tested.

Pirelli's Motorsport Director Paul Hembery said: "After a successful first season in 2011, we are determined to help provide an even better spectacle this year, which is why the entire tyre range has been renewed. At this early point, the emphasis for the teams is expected to be on learning the new tyres and it will be interesting to see which approach they take to that process. Last year, it didn't take the teams long at all to understand the characteristics of our tyres, and while we are sure that this will be the case again, there will be less of an element of surprise this year, as to some extent the teams know what to expect from our products. This rapid pace of development and reaction is what makes Formula One our ultimate research tool, enhancing Pirelli's status as the world leader in the Ultra High Performance sector."

While the teams are testing the 2012 Formula One compounds for the first time, the brand new P Zero Silver road car tyre will also be launched in Jerez: the first of a series of specialised tyres from Pirelli that use Formula One technology. The P Zero Silver road tyre – the same name that is given to the hardest compound in the Formula One range – is designed to combine performance with durability, created for motorists who enjoy sporty driving and cover more than 20,000 kilometres a year.

As well as a name, the P Zero Silver shares Pirelli's sporting DNA with the Formula One tyres, making use of the same sophisticated design technology that has gone into the tyres that will take to the track in Jerez.

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