



2011 HUNGARIAN GRAN PRIX

SOFT AND SUPERSOFT TYRES FACE WARM WEATHER FOR THE FIRST TIME

Milan, July 25th 2011

WHAT'S THE STORY?

After the fast corners and cool temperatures of Silverstone and the Nurburgring, the tight and twisty Hungaroring on the outskirts of Budapest in Hungary – which is normally characterised by hot weather at this time of year – presents a stark contrast for the Pirelli P Zero tyres. The Hungaroring was inaugurated in 1986, after just eight months of construction work, as the first grand prix in Eastern Europe.

Since then it has proved to be extraordinarily popular, even though it is used very infrequently outside of the grand prix. This is key to one of the circuit's main features: a dusty, slippery surface that progressively rubbers in over the course of the weekend. This puts grip at a premium, which is one of the reasons why Pirelli has brought the P Zero Yellow soft and P Zero Red supersoft tyres to the Hungaroring. The 16 corners are tight and narrow, similar to Monte Carlo, with a low average speed. This makes the circuit ideally suited to the softer tyres in Pirelli's P Zero range, although this is the first time all season that the supersoft will face competition in very warm weather.

While it rained in Budapest over the weekend, temperatures for the race are expected to be in the region of 26 or 27 degrees centigrade, meaning that the drivers will have to think about conserving their tyres. With the Hungaroring renowned as a track where overtaking is difficult, like Monaco, the teams are presented with a chance to make up places through clever use of tyre strategy – and this is sure to be one of the focal points of the weekend.

Spectators are able to see a lot of the action at first hand as from most vantage points 80% of the circuit is visible, due to its location in a natural bowl. The track surface itself tends to be bumpy, testing traction to the limit as well.

For this race, there will be no allocation of extra tyres for free practice, leaving teams with their normal 11 sets of tyres for the weekend.

PIRELLI'S MOTORSPORT DIRECTOR SAYS

Paul Hembery: "Hungary certainly couldn't be more different to the races we have seen recently, as we found out when we went to the Hungaroring for our first season of the GP3 series last year. However, as the GP3 tyres are completely different to those we race in Formula One, there's not much that we learned apart from an initial idea of what to expect: high temperatures and a slippery track surface. The big challenge for the teams and drivers is going to be keeping tyre wear under control in the warm conditions, but we have used the P Zero Yellow soft tyre in warm weather before and it has shown

good performance. The supersoft tyre is almost certain to result in some quick qualifying laps but obviously it doesn't have the same resistance to wear. How the teams juggle the parameters of speed and durability will once again form the key to their different strategies. There has been plenty of drama at the Hungaroring in the past and with so many new elements to the racing this year, I hope we're in for another exciting grand prix."

THE MEN BEHIND THE STEERING WHEEL SAY

Vitaly Petrov (Lotus Renault GP): "We had plenty of good potential in Monaco and Canada, both of which have similar characteristics to the Hungaroring, so I'm hopeful of another good race in Hungary. Canada was slightly different, because we used the wet and intermediate tyres, which should not be the case in Hungary, but our performance on this type of circuit is good. One of our biggest challenges so far this season has been to get up to speed with the tyres straight away in free practice, so that we are well prepared for qualifying. This will be even more important than usual in Hungary, where it is easy to have understeer but quite difficult to overtake. We will also need to understand how long we are able to run on the supersoft, which is going to be a crucial part of the strategy for everyone. So far the Pirelli tyres have been fun to drive and the performance has been good when we get the best out of them – like when I was on the podium in Australia at the start of the year – but in general I think we need to find a bit more consistency."

TECHNICAL NOTES

- * The Hungaroring is one of the lowest grip circuits of the year, which means that tyre wear is not particularly extreme. However, the high temperatures, non-stop succession of corners and low average speeds with little airflow make it one of the most physically demanding races of the year for the drivers. It has only rained once there, in 2006.
- * The unusual layout of the Hungarian circuit is well-known for producing several new winners. Damon Hill (1993), Fernando Alonso (2003), Jenson Button (2006) and Heikki Kovalainen (2008) all took their debut wins at the Hungaroring.
- * The Hungaroring requires a high-downforce set-up, as the cars are on full throttle for only around 10 seconds over the course of the 4.381-kilometre lap. Soft suspension settings at the rear help to optimise the mechanical grip and traction out of all the corners, but this can cause excessive loading on the rear tyres.

THE TYRE CHOICES SO FAR

	PZero Red	PZero Yellow	PZero White	PZero Silver
Australia		Soft		Hard
Malaysia		Soft		Hard
China		Soft		Hard
Turkey		Soft		Hard
Spain		Soft		Hard
Monaco	Super Soft	Soft		
Canada	Super Soft	Soft		
Europe		Soft	Medium	
Great Britain		Soft		Hard
Germany		Soft	Medium	

PIRELLI IN HUNGARY

- * Pirelli's first activity in Hungary was via the cables business, which was subsequently sold, but the company has since grown to be one of the leading players in the Eastern European tyre market, with the emphasis on winter tyre sales.
- * Pirelli had never raced on a circuit in Hungary prior to the 2010 GP3 Series. However, the Italian company has enjoyed numerous successes on the Hungarian Rally Championship.
- * Pirelli supplies Suzuki with original equipment in Hungary, which has been the biggest manufacturer importer into Hungary for more than 10 years.

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