



## **BUTTON DOMINATES JAPAN PRACTICE ON BOTH PIRELLI COMPOUNDS**

*Suzuka, October 7<sup>th</sup> 2011* – The 12 Formula One teams had their first taste of Pirelli's P Zero tyres in Japan today, with McLaren driver Jenson Button – the only person who is theoretically able to deprive Red Bull Racing's Sebastian Vettel of the championship this year – setting fastest time in both of the two free practice sessions.

Button was quickest in the morning using the P Zero White medium tyres with a time of 1m33.634s. In the warmer conditions of the afternoon, with ambient temperatures of 23 degrees centigrade and track temperatures of 37 degrees, he switched to the P Zero Yellow soft tyres to set a best time of 1m31.901s.

As usual, the cars were allocated two sets of the harder compound (which here is the P Zero White medium) and one set of the softer tyres (the P Zero Yellow) for Friday's free practice sessions. As per the regulations one set of the medium tyres was handed back after the first session, leading all the drivers to use this tyre only in the morning so that they could save their single set of the soft tyres for the more representative race conditions of the afternoon. During the afternoon, they split their running between the P Zero medium and the soft tyre, ending the day by carrying out longer fuel runs as part of their race simulation programmes.

The P Zero Yellow soft tyre proved to be around a second per lap faster today than the P Zero White medium in terms of pace, although some slightly bigger differences were seen when the drivers went from a used medium tyre to a new soft tyre in the afternoon. Degradation was within the anticipated levels – slightly better than expected in the case of the medium compound – and the tyres also stood up well to the lateral loads of up to 2.5G that can cause them to flex and overheat.

Pirelli's Motorsport Director Paul Hembery commented: "There's no question that Suzuka is an extremely tough track for the tyres, so we're pleased with the way that our tyres have performed so far. In the morning using the medium tyre we saw drivers carrying out runs of around 20 laps on a track that was still 'green', without much rubber laid down, and in the afternoon the durability of the soft tyre was good too, with some drivers putting in more than 12 laps on heavy fuel loads as we expected. We will analyse all the data we collect tonight now, but from what we can see so far we're anticipating between two and three stops during the race. Due to the nature of the pit lane here, we could end up seeing a multi-stop strategy from some of the teams, while others go longer."

## **Pirelli facts of the day**

The 395-metre pit lane in Suzuka carries one of the lowest time losses for a pit stop all year. A pit stop is expected to take slightly over 21 seconds.

Pirelli recently moved into third place of the nine tyre companies ever to have taken part in Formula One. Heading into the Japanese Grand Prix, Pirelli has racked up 217 Formula One starts. The only two companies with more are Goodyear (495 starts) and Bridgestone (244 starts).

\*\*\*

Follow us on Twitter @ Pirelli\_Media or Facebook on [www.facebook.com/Pirelli](http://www.facebook.com/Pirelli)

### **For further information please contact:**

Alexandra Schieren +33 607 03 69 03 [alexandra.schieren@pirelli.com](mailto:alexandra.schieren@pirelli.com)

Anthony Peacock +44 7765 896 930 [anthony@mediatica.co.uk](mailto:anthony@mediatica.co.uk)

\*\*

Francescopaolo Tarallo +39 334 684 4307 [francescopaolo.tarallo@pirelli.com](mailto:francescopaolo.tarallo@pirelli.com)

(Head of Product and Motorsport Communications)

Pirelli Tyre Press Office  
Ph. +39 02 6442 4270 – [pressoffice@pirelli.com](mailto:pressoffice@pirelli.com) – [www.pirelli.com](http://www.pirelli.com)

