

Beat: Sports

2016 Barcelona Test One

Day 3

Barcelona, 24.02.2016, 22:32 Time

USPA NEWS - MERCEDES AMG PETRONAS continued the opening pre-season test of the 2016 season today at the Circuit de Barcelona-Catalunya, with Nico Rosberg at the wheel of the Mercedes-Benz F1 W07 Hybrid in the morning and Lewis Hamilton in the cockpit during the afternoon.

In a change to the original run plan, Nico Rosberg and Lewis Hamilton split driving duties for the third day of pre-season testing at the Circuit de Barcelona-Catalunya. With the unprecedented mileage levels seen thus far in Barcelona, the intention is to keep both Nico and Lewis in top shape. This strategy of alternating drivers will therefore continue throughout the remaining 2016 pre-season tests. Nico emerged for his first run as the track opened at 09:00, completing 74 laps before the hour-long lunch break at 13:00. Lewis completed a further 88 laps in the afternoon - finishing for the day at 18:00. Today's programme focused on setup evaluation, aerodynamic data analysis and race simulation work - including starts and pit stops. Mercedes-Benz Power Units today completed a total of 2,085 km. Lewis Hamilton will take the wheel of the F1 W07 Hybrid tomorrow morning, Nico Rosberg in the afternoon for the fourth and final day of the opening pre-season test in Barcelona.

Nico Rosberg -

That was another very valuable day for us. It's amazing to see that the car is already so reliable and we started trying some basic set up changes this morning too. It was good to split the time on track with Lewis. The car is able to do so many laps, so I think it's probably a more effective way of doing things. Two drivers doing half days will do better work compared to 160 or 170 laps from one person.

We want to get the maximum out of the very few testing days we have this year, so to me it makes perfect sense. I also heard about the new qualifying format for 2017 today. I hope it stays simple and clear for the fans, so we'll see how that works out. But, in general, it's definitely important that we rethink the sport and try to make it better from time to time, so I'm open to any improvements.

Lewis Hamilton -

It felt quite long out there today "" even though it was only the afternoon session! We'd spoken about splitting the driving beforehand, so it wasn't a surprise. I was happy to do full days "" but they are long days, so the team felt it best to mix things up to keep us both fresh. I feel great now "" but yesterday I was a bit sore. It's a bit like going to the gym when you haven't been for ages. If you do a hard workout straight away, you'll be in pain afterwards. For your neck in particular, it doesn't matter how hard you train during the winter, driving just hits it in a different way that you can't really simulate.

It is quite tedious, too, going round and round all day. It's not like a race, where you've got a strategy and you're competing "" fighting the clock and your opponents. But testing never has been the most exciting. I think in my younger days, back in Formula Renault for example, it was a big buzz. But by the time you've spent ten years in F1, it just becomes the norm. It's quite cool being out on track with the other new cars. Your gut reaction is to try to get close and see how they perform through the corners and along the straights. But that's a waste of time, really, so you have to resist! In any case, we've had a great start to testing as a team so far.

Article online:

<https://www.uspa24.com/bericht-7230/2016-barcelona-test-one.html>

Editorial office and responsibility:

V.i.S.d.P. & Sect. 6 MDSStV (German Interstate Media Services Agreement): Daren Frankish - Daimler AG.

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Official Federal Reg. No. 7442619