

# FORMULA 1 GRAN PREMIO DE MÉXICO 2015

Mexico City, October 31, 2015

## FORMULA 1 GRAN PREMIO DE MEXICO 2015®

### It is not unfamiliar terrain...

It's not all about tacos and tequila.

After a little taste of Formula 1 cars in the stunning Autodromo Hermanos Rodriguez with its 4.305 km., we are now anxious to witness the 71-lap race this Sunday.

How will drivers and racing cars face the multiple challenges imposed by the Mexican circuit? It all begins just by watching the track of 4,305 meters of new asphalt. During the first practice session we could verify the track is slippery, not only because of the rain in the morning, but also because it...is brand new! That means that the oil spilled on the asphalt will go up to the surface, representing a whole challenge when it comes to the control of the car.

*"I can't get any rear grip"* regretted Kimi Raikkonen, from Scudery Ferrari, shortly after starting the first practice session. Fernando Alonso said he felt like he was driving on an ice rink aboard his McLaren Honda; but soon both, drivers and engineers of Pirelli, F1 tires supplier adjusted to it.

For the first race back in Mexico, the Italian Company used computerized simulators to ensure that their P Zero medium (White) and soft (yellow) tires, had the necessary performance range: not that soft or hard.

*"It is always a challenge to nominate compounds for a new track, but now simulation is really precise—one of the most important aspects in F1 technology development, affirms Paul Hembery, from Pirelli.*

Drivers know it and spend hours in the simulators searching a way to avoid any surprise on the circuit, or, asking their "third driver o reserve driver" to do such tedious duty. But just like McLaren's Engineer in chief, Matt Morris, said, this is not enough. "Despite the fact these simulators are pretty advanced, there are still some unknown zones in the *Gran Premio de Mexico*", stated last week.

### Mexican mystery continues with its geography.

In the past, Mexico City's altitude of 2,200 meters and the high mountains that surround it would have caused the lack of oxygen to people and to F1 engines. But this is not the case of turbo charged hybrid engines that exists today, due the air injection to internal combustion engines. However, the altitude does affect the aerodynamic performance of the car. The lack of oxygen means less downforce and less resistance, so get ready to watch incredible speeds on the two main straights.

*"I don't think drivers will have any problem"*, confirms Romain Grosjean, from Scudery Lotus, *"but I'm aware there will be some areas that will need different calculations from the engineers, we'll notice some differences on brakes cooling and those kind of things, but every track has its own features, so I guess I won't cost a lot of work adjusting to it"*.



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On the matter of brakes cooling, it is possible that Nico Rosberg is the man who we should turn to, since the German car screeched until stopping before hitting the Wall on the first practice and then rejoined the track, with the rear brakes on fire!

After ninety nine minutes on the track, Pirelli said the Autodromo Hermanos Rodriguez will witness one of the highest speeds of the year in FORMULA 1. And this is fine, but cars speed is not enough, because they should also know how to stop. Brembo, Italian Company leader in brake system supports several F1 racing cars, said lap number one of the Autodromo Hermanos Rodriguez will be more complicated during braking, as it is expected on such long straight.

Once going out of lap 17, cars may drive the track for about 1.3 kilometers to lap number one, then they shall slow down the maximum speed estimated of 360 KPHT or just 100 KPHT in a space of only 73 meters, with a braking time of 3.31 seconds. Drivers will feel the G force of almost 4.0, meaning four times their body weight, while slowing down on the curve. Until now, the maximum speed registered so far in 2015, belongs to Daniel Ricciardo with 362 Kph on his Red Bull of Renault in Monza.

It is a new track, so circumstances must be very different, we shouldn't be surprised if F1 drivers push things to the limit whenever they can. In fact, it is likely to witness just what happened just a few weeks in Texas, where the Safety Car or rather, the **Safety Car Virtual** was pushed to the limit.

This happens when racing officers decide there is a section of the track where competitors or they may be in danger, even the risky situation doesn't need to neutralize the race and use the Safety Car "the real one".

The topic came up on the first press conference at the Autodromo Hermanos Rodriguez on Thursday. Has it been helpful or a hindrance, when it comes to start an interrupted race again? *"I don't consider it is a problem"*, said Fernando Alonso of McLaren. *"Conditions are the same for everyone and rules are always the same, you must be in the right place, being focused and clever"*.

The most complicated part comes when the "VSC ending" message appears on the electronic boards around the track, and those same lights change just 10 or 15 seconds after the green indicator, that means drivers must be ready to resume the race.

The F1 rookie, Carlos Sainz from Toro Rosso said this: *"I think it works perfectly. It is the same as when you restart with the Safety Car, you just have to be in it, although everything turns complicated when message appears, cause you have many changes to do while you try to place the green panel, but that's all"*.

We will know more about it when we see the racing cars on the qualification rounds, but especially on Sunday race. The cars will start with 100 kilograms of fuel, it means, over 130 liters and they will use about one and a half kilogram average per lap—max weight lower speed. Drivers will make about 44 changes to the gearbox per lap: over 3,200 in total during the 71 laps forming the race.

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Those are the known figures, but we still ignore other; for example: How many racing cars will end the race? How fast will they go? And the most important of all, who will take places 1-2-3 of the podium this Sunday?

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