

Beat: News

2016 Australian Grand Prix "" Saturday

Melbourne

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USPA NEWS - Silver Arrows star in Melbourne on landmark day for Lewis. Lewis today claimed his 50th career pole position "" his fifth at the Melbourne Grand Prix circuit. Nico completed a Silver Arrows front row lockout for the opening race of the 2016 season in P2.

Lewis Hamilton -

I have to take my hat off to the team. What they've done to raise the bar once more, for the third year in a row, really inspires and motivates me. I really enjoyed driving the car in qualifying today. We got the setup just right and they were some sexy laps! They felt so good "" flowing nicely with no real mistakes. That's all you can hope for "" to always improve "" and that's what we've done, so I'm very happy.

There's still a lot of work left to do tonight and especially tomorrow, though. There's a lot more studying for us drivers with the changes to the radio rules. We can't be told if the strategy is changing through the race, so we have to be able to anticipate what's happening if you end up in a different situation than expected. I'm excited. It's a new thing and I hope it adds to the spectacle. I highly doubt it! but we shall see.

Nico Rosberg -

We have to be careful, as it's very early days. But I have to say it's very impressive how the team has come out as the quickest here by a good margin for the third year in a row. It's amazing to see, as the risk when you're dominating is that you start to become complacent. It's a big risk too "" one that we've seen before "" but everyone seems to be pushing on through. Of course, I'm not happy with second place today. My last lap in Q3 was good "" but Lewis just did a better job, so that's it. Still, there are a lot of opportunities starting from P2 so I'm looking forward to the race.

Toto Wolff, Head of Mercedes-Benz Motorsport -

First, it's good to finally be back on track "" especially with our cars on the front row after all the hard work over the winter. Congratulations to the whole team on a top job "" and to Lewis on an impressive pole. Second, "" and we need to look at the qualifying format again. I'm the first person to say that we shouldn't talk the sport down but when the evidence is there before your eyes, you cannot shut them and deny reality.

The new format is pretty rubbish "" much too complicated to follow and a damp squib at the end with nobody running. These were the downsides that we expected to see "" and they outweigh the upsides, that much is clear now. We wanted to listen to the promoters who were calling for a change "" but my personal opinion is that we have found the wrong solution and we need to think carefully about what we do next.

Paddy Lowe, Executive Director (Technical) -

As I said before the weekend, qualifying here is the most important hour of the year. It's where you really see what kind of car you've got for the season and the first time you meet your competitors head on, on the limit, at maximum power and minimum weight. So, it's been a very tense build-up to this session as always "" and a hugely satisfying conclusion to see that we have a quick car once again. Congratulations today go to everyone at Brackley, Brixworth and Stuttgart, who have been involved in this project over many months, for a tremendous achievement. Both drivers put in good laps today and the forecast is looking better for tomorrow, so we look forward to a good race.

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Editorial program service of General News Agency:

United Press Association, Inc.

3651 Lindell Road, Suite D168

Las Vegas, NV 89103, USA

(702) 943.0321 Local

(702) 943.0233 Facsimile

info@unitedpressassociation.org

info@gna24.com

www.gna24.com