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TESTING ROUND-UP - DA COSTA AND BMW i ANDRETTI MOTORSPORT SETS PACE IN VALENCIA

BMW i Andretti Motorsport emerges on top in first season as factory team at pre-season testing ahead of season five



'IT HAS BEEN VERY PROMISING. WE GOT OFF TO A GOOD START FROM THE WORD GO - SO THAT WAS REALLY POSITIVE. THE PERFORMANCE DEFINITELY MOTIVATES EVERYONE AND I AM ENCOURAGED WITH THE OUTCOME OF TESTING.'

Antonio Felix da Costa
BMW i Andretti Motorsport

VALENCIA, SPAIN (October 19, 2018) - Antonio Felix da Costa set the pace at pre-season testing in Valencia, showing promising speed from BMW i Andretti Motorsport in their first season as a full factory team in the ABB FIA Formula E Championship.

After three days of testing at Circuit Ricardo Tormo with the new Gen2 machinery, Da Costa posted a best time of 1:16.977s - over three-tenths clear of his closest rival and reigning Formula E champion Jean-Eric Vergne for DS TECHEETAH.

Please see below to view a full list of times - showing combined results over the course of testing.

It was the first time the drivers were together on track with the new-look next generation car - boasting more power, performance and almost double the battery capacity. The teams had their work cut out getting acclimatised to the systems software and set-up - racking up mileage with race simulations and qualifying runs throughout testing.

Following storms in Spain during the rest day on Thursday and inclement weather continuing into Friday - there was limited chance to overhaul Da Costa's time set on day two.

It isn't just the car that's new for season five, there are plenty of fresh faces up and down the pitlane getting a first taste of Formula E. The new kid on the block - HWA RACELAB - ran through their programmes with Gary Paffett and Stoffel Vandoorne behind the wheel, as well as Dani Juncadella on the final day.

Antonio Fuoco and Maxi Gunther exchanged sessions for GEOX DRAGON with both vying for a race seat alongside Jose Maria Lopez.

Newly-named Nissan e.dams ran with season two champion Sebastien Buemi and one-time E-Prix entrant Oliver Rowland. Da Costa's team-mate Alexander Sims quickly got to grips with the BMW i Andretti Motorsport car, with Pascal Wehrlein (MAHINDRA RACING) and Felipe Massa (VENTURI Formula E Team) also busy preparing for their first competitive outing at the SAUDIA Ad Diriyah E-Prix on December 15.

QUOTES - TOP-THREE

Antonio Felix da Costa, BMW i Andretti Motorsport, said: *"It's been very promising. We got off to a good start from the word go - so that was really positive. We've done a lot of testing - 15 days that each manufacturer gets - and we worked hard and went through a lot. It's nice to see that we're on the pace together with everyone on track. The track isn't very representative compared to our street circuits... so it's not like we can go away from here thinking we'll win the first race. But the performance definitely motivates everyone and I'm encouraged with the outcome of testing. I'm very excited for the new season - it's impressive what's going on here in this paddock. I never thought five years ago in Donington that we'd be here today with all these top drivers and manufacturers. The growth of this sport is remarkable."*

Jean-Eric Vergne, DS TECHEETAH, said: *"Testing has gone very well. I'm very pleased and we haven't had any issues. The team is working very well together and we have more people thanks to DS and a lot more resources - it's just a question of how to use them best. So far I've been very happy with what I've seen. I also see a lot of improvements in many areas and the car behaves well. There's still a lot to come with understanding the car and systems. We now need to go back and analyse everything ready for Ad Diriyah."*

Alexander Sims, BMW i Andretti Motorsport, said: *"All in all it was a really positive pre-season test in Valencia for BMW i Andretti Motorsport. I was a bit hesitant of how to judge things after the first session on Tuesday, but we've gone through all the different conditions, particularly with the rain today and a fairly green track this afternoon. I think we've managed different situations well with our BMW iFE.18 cars. Obviously, the track itself is still unrepresentative but nevertheless we've been competitive in all conditions. I learned a lot from my side as the team was able to put me through different runs and set-ups, which has been really beneficial."*

BEST OF SOCIAL

- On a dark and rainy final day in Valencia - one thing shone brighter than the rest... the LED lights on the halo head protection device of course! - take a look here (<https://twitter.com/FIAFormulaE/status/1053215586275287040>)

- Get a driver's eye view from the cockpit of Envision Virgin Racing's Robin Frijns, as he completes an installation lap around the Circuit Ricardo Tormo - click here to watch (<https://www.facebook.com/fiaformulae/videos/747551918932838/>)

- See some of the best images from pre-season testing. Finally, there isn't just one Gen2 car on track - there's a whole bunch of them - click here to follow the link (<https://www.instagram.com/p/BpCgfUBgGIH/?taken-by=fiaformulae>)

2018/19 - Official pre-season testing (Combined fastest times over three days)

- 1 - **Antonio Felix da Costa**, BMW i Andretti Motorsport, 1:16.977s
- 2 - **Jean-Eric Vergne**, DS TECHEETAH, 1:17.342s
- 3 - **Alexander Sims**, BMW i Andretti Motorsport, 1:17.402s
- 4 - **Jerome D'Ambrosio**, MAHINDRA RACING, 1:17.431s
- 5 - **Andre Lotterer**, DS TECHEETAH, 1:17.437s
- 6 - **Sebastien Buemi**, Nissan e.dams, 1:17.473s
- 7 - **Lucas di Grassi**, Audi Sport ABT Schaeffler, 1:17.535s
- 8 - **Felipe Massa**, VENTURI Formula E Team, 1:17.696s
- 9 - **Edoardo Mortara**, VENTURI Formula E Team, 1:17.729s
- 10 - **Pascal Wehrlein**, MAHINDRA RACING, 1:17.781s
- 11 - **Daniel Abt**, Audi Sport ABT Schaeffler, 1:17.819s
- 12 - **Jose Maria Lopez**, GEOX DRAGON, 1:17.830s
- 13 - **Mitch Evans**, Panasonic Jaguar Racing, 1:17.864s
- 14 - **Maxi Gunther**, GEOX DRAGON, 1:17.947s
- 15 - **Stoffel Vandoorne**, HWA RACELAB, 1:18.032s
- 16 - **Robin Frijns**, Envision Virgin Racing, 1:18.088s
- 17 - **Sam Bird**, Envision Virgin Racing, 1:18.115s
- 18 - **Gary Paffett**, HWA RACELAB, 1:18.164s
- 19 - **Tom Dillmann**, NIO Formula E Team, 1:18.217s
- 20 - **Oliver Turvey**, NIO Formula E Team, 1:18.240s
- 21 - **Antonio Fuoco**, GEOX DRAGON, 1:18.284s
- 22 - **Nelson Piquet Jr**, Panasonic Jaguar Racing, 1:18.498s
- 23 - **Dani Juncadella**, HWA RACELAB, 1:19.353s
- 24 - **Oliver Rowland**, Nissan e.dams, 1:20.416s
- 25 - **Alexander Albon**, Nissan e.dams, NO TIME SET

To get the latest news on the ABB FIA Formula E Championship, visit - www.FIAFormulaE.com

ENDS

Notes to editors:

Photo caption - Pre-season testing pace-setter Antonio Felix da Costa heading the field for BMW i Andretti Motorsport.

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About the ABB FIA Formula E Championship:

The ABB FIA Formula E Championship is the electric street racing series and the world's first fully-electric international single-seater category in motorsport. Formula E brings intense and unpredictable racing to some of the world's most recognisable and progressive cities - including Hong Kong, Rome, Paris, Berlin and New York.

Formula E enters a new and exciting era in season five with the competitive debut of the next generation car. The striking new model boasts a distinctive futuristic design and demonstrates a clear step-up in performance with almost double the energy storage capacity - allowing teams and drivers to complete a full race distance at higher speeds without needing to swap cars. The Gen2 car is a testament to the ongoing advancements in battery and electric vehicle technology in the space of only four years.

The fifth edition of the ABB FIA Formula E Championship will see 11 teams and 22 drivers tackle a variety of challenging circuits in 12 cities - across five continents - in a bid to be crowned champion. Formula E will be making its debut in the Middle East on December 15 for the season-opener in Ad Diriyah, with the championship once again coming to a close in New York City over the course of two days on July 13 & 14.

The concept of Formula E is to act as a platform to test and develop road-relevant technologies, helping refine the design and functionality of components and infrastructure - actively speeding-up the transition and uptake of electric vehicles on a global scale.

Formula E is continuing to attract some of the leading names and renowned brands in motorsport and the automotive industry. For this season, Formula E has nine manufacturers on its roster - including Nissan - taking over the existing entry from Renault - and BMW linking-up with Andretti. This number is set to rise further still, with the highly-anticipated inclusion of Mercedes-Benz and Porsche in season six.

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