



## 2011 MALAYSIAN GRAND PRIX

### HOT AND HUMID: PIRELLI FACES THE MOST CHALLENGING CONDITIONS YET

*Milan, April 4<sup>th</sup> 2011*

#### WHAT'S THE STORY?

Following a successful debut in Australia, characterised by plenty of on-track action and a wide variety of race strategies, Pirelli heads next weekend to the Malaysian Grand Prix: a completely different type of challenge. The Sepang circuit is one of the hottest and certainly the most humid venue of the year, with temperatures in the region of 35 degrees centigrade and 80% humidity. The track is demanding on the tyres due to its aggressive surface, heavy braking areas, long straights and wide variety of speeds and corners.

Once again Pirelli has nominated the hard and soft compound PZero tyres as the prime and option rubber respectively for Malaysia, as was the case in Australia last weekend. But the ever-present humidity in Malaysia makes rain almost inevitable at some point over the weekend. In 2009, the race had to be red-flagged after 31 laps due to torrential rain, while last year a number of drivers were caught out by a downpour during qualifying. This means that Pirelli's intermediate and wet tyres stand a strong chance of making their competitive debut at Sepang.

During the two free practice sessions on Friday, Pirelli will be providing an extra two sets of dry-weather tyres for the teams to assess. The new tyre is an experimental hard compound that could be used in the future, in keeping with Pirelli's philosophy of combining entertainment with cutting-edge technology. The tyre allocation for the rest of the weekend, from Saturday onwards, is not affected.

#### PIRELLI'S MOTORSPORT DIRECTOR SAYS:

**Paul Hembery:** "We were absolutely thrilled by our grand prix debut in Australia, but we're aware that Malaysia should be a very different proposition, with higher temperatures and increased degradation. We said all along that we would be seeing two to three pit stops in Australia, but in Malaysia I think that figure is likely to increase to three to four. They say that it's never a question of if it rains at Sepang but when, so the performance of our wet tyres could be crucial this weekend and we're certainly looking forward to seeing them out on track. We never believe in standing still at Pirelli, which is why the teams will have two extra sets of slick tyres available to them during Friday's free practice sessions for evaluation purposes. With testing not allowed during the season, this gives us a valuable opportunity to gather more data and feedback, while it also gives the teams an interesting taste of what could be coming in the future."

#### THE MEN BEHIND THE STEERING WHEEL SAY:

**Jenson Button (McLaren):** “The tyres will be the same in Malaysia as they were in Australia: the hard and the soft compounds. But Sepang will be much hotter, with much higher track temperatures, maybe as much as 45 degrees centigrade, and the track surface is very abrasive, particularly in comparison to Albert Park, which is very smooth. Sepang really requires a lot of high-speed stability from the tyre. So all of these factors will make the tyre situation a bit trickier – I think we’ll see higher degradation and more pit stops. It’s a highly abrasive track, so the fronts and rears will suffer. In terms of overall wear and durability across all the tracks we visit this year, Sepang probably sits somewhere in the middle.”

#### TECHNICAL NOTES AND TYRE CHOICES SO FAR:

\* The Sepang circuit, located south of the Malaysian capital Kuala Lumpur, hosted its first Formula One race in 1999 and has remained on the calendar ever since.

\* There are eight right-hand and five left-hand corners on the 5.543-kilometre layout. With 56 laps scheduled the total distance is 310.408 kilometres.

\* Michael Schumacher holds the record for the most number of Malaysian Grand Prix wins with three victories. The German also tops the list pole sitters with five fastest qualifying laps to his name.

\* The highest number of pit stops in the history of the Malaysian Grand Prix was in 2004. There were a total of 56 stops, the equivalent of 2.8 pit stops per driver. In 2009 there were 50 pit stops in the space of just 30 laps before the race was red-flagged.

#### THE TYRE CHOICES SO FAR:

	Super Soft	Soft	Medium	Hard
Australia		Option		Prime
Malaysia		Option		Prime

#### PIRELLI IN MALAYSIA:

- \* Pirelli has had a presence in Malaysia for more than 30 years, via its Singapore base.
- \* Pirelli tyres were winning in Malaysia through supporting the Motor Image Racing Team in the Asia Pacific Rally Championship from 2007-2009.

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