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21st April 2024

2024 CHINESE GRAND PRIX

Daniel Ricciardo #3

Race – DNF

"We started to make up a lot of ground in the stint before the Safety Car but during the restart, I got a pretty big hit and the car was damaged. We decided to retire because I wasn't really driving an F1 car. It's very frustrating. I watched his onboard and it looked like he wasn't even looking at me, it seemed that his helmet was looking at the apex. We'll never know what could have happened later in the race, but I think we were looking in a good place. Getting ruined by someone else makes me frustrated and this is where the disappointment comes, because today we had an opportunity and we missed it. I think there's a lot of disappointment for everyone in the team. When I got back to the garage, I saw the mechanics looking at the damage and they feel as heartbroken as I do. I think we definitely had a better weekend from a pace point of view, and I think the team could feel some momentum and some shift to the season. We go onto Miami and we'll just try to keep working on that."

Yuki Tsunoda #22

Race – DNF

"It's unfortunate and frustrating how it ended up today. I was happy with how I progressed in the race until my contact with Magnussen. After the Safety Car, the start was good and I gained five positions, so I feel I maximised what I could do but the pace itself hadn't improved as much as we wanted. We've been sliding more than other cars and the team has been pushing hard and helping me sort it out but overall, this week we weren't able to show our true strong performance, and that's a shame. We'll look into why back in Faenza, and I know as a team we'll come back stronger in Miami. It's a shame that also Daniel had to retire because he had good pace in this race, so as a team, it's frustrating that neither car finished the race and we couldn't score points."

Claudio Balestri (Chief Engineer – Vehicle Performance)

"For the race, we decided to split the two cars on a different strategy, starting Daniel on the medium compound and Yuki on the soft compound. For Daniel, he lost some positions at the start while Yuki was able to gain some. At the end of Lap 1, Daniel was P15 and Yuki P16, and considering we were far from the points we decided to pit Yuki for an early pitstop, with the target being to undercut the others and fitting a set of new medium tyres. Instead with Daniel, we decided to stay out and go for a longer first stint, pitting him on Lap 14. The degradation was a bit higher than expected on all the compounds and when Bottas stopped his car on track, it created a Virtual Safety Car, followed by a full Safety Car. Almost all the cars pitted for the hard compound to try and go to the end, including Yuki. Unfortunately, just before the restart, Stroll ran into the back of Daniel and heavily damaged his car, and immediately after the restart, Magnussen hit Yuki, damaging his rear right tyre. In summary, both cars were out of the race. Today was not our day but we'll switch our focus to the next race in Miami, where we want to fight for the points."

Laurent Mekies (Team Principal)

"It is a disappointing Sunday for us with both cars taken out of the race in separate incidents which our drivers could do nothing about. It's painful but we have no other choice than to accept it and move on. On a positive note, and even if the weekend had started on the slow side, everyone has been working very hard to recover enough pace to be in the fight for P10 again. Daniel produced a very strong drive all weekend, especially today, battling with Lewis just before the Safety Car came out. It was a trickier weekend for Yuki. It is always going to be difficult to drive for the first time here during a sprint weekend, but he kept fighting hard and drove a good race today where he made up a lot of positions. We will be regrouping with Daniel, Yuki, and the whole team in Faenza and in Bicester to analyse the weekend together and come back stronger in Miami for another ultra-tight battle, and hopefully a less frustrating Sunday!"

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