#01 Race Preview
AUSTRALIAN GRAND PRIX

RENAULT
Passion for life

RENAULT SPORT FORMULA 1 TEAM
We have all the ingredients to have a bright future. Both Enstone and Viry have been building race-winning cars for over 20 years. Enstone’s and Viry’s efforts have resulted in the creation of a fantastic group of people with a good team spirit that we need to protect and develop even further. We want to be one of the best places to work in F1. For that, we need a good equilibrium, good management, and a good atmosphere, plus the tools to motivate people to do the best job they can.

We knew we would start the year on the back foot as we made our decision to purchase the team very late in 2015. However, we still made the first test looking professional with our new identity and new kit and were ready to leave the garage at 9am on the first day. We have good things coming up on the power unit and some strong mechanical and aero developments from Enstone. Podiums are not necessarily on the menu – I think it would take a strange cocktail of circumstances for us to be there – but we should be able to fight for points in the course of the season. 2017 is still the main plan so we are laying those foundations now.

I think we have a fantastic driver line up. They bring the energy of young people who want to make a point. Both drivers want to prove a lot, but they deserve to be in F1 and will gain in experience as we gain in experience. They have shown they are winners in their respective careers; Jolyon has won GP2 and Kevin Formula Renault 3.5. Kevin is a natural talent and has sufficient experience to be a leader for the technical team and Jolyon will benefit from having a strong team-mate.

They are both smart as well, which will aid us with the raft of changes we see this year, including the ban on radio communications between pit wall and car and the new qualifying format. I am pretty sure we have two quite clever and smart drivers who will respond to this new philosophy and I can’t wait to see it play out on track.
Where do you see the team heading to the first race of the season?
Testing was positive. The car’s baseline is consistent, the balance is good and the drivers’ feedback is positive and optimistic. So the first impressions are good at this point. It was a big challenge to be in Barcelona considering we took over the team very late but we were ready to go on the first day at 9am. We didn’t encounter any major problems and were able to sort out the small issues on reliability in the first test, which meant we came to the second test in a good way to find additional performance. Although we have a lot of work to do, everything is in progress. We have to prioritise where the most gains can be found, but we head to Melbourne in relatively good shape.

You are three months into your new role and have two weeks of testing completed. Where would you say the team is now?
We know very well that we started this project extremely late and that where we need to go is ambitious, but right now we are not under pressure to achieve results. The road map from Carlos Ghosn is very clear: he wants to fight for podiums in our third year of competition. Therefore we have to make the right moves, and not rush to deliver in Melbourne. If you want to stick to the road map and fight for podiums in three years, you have to look at your competitors... look at their resources, personnel and then you need to have the same targets to fight with them consistently. I am very happy with the quality of the staff so far as the team is dedicated and focussed on the job. Now we have to supplement the workforce we have, but we will do it correctly and find the right people.

So far, where do you think you rate on the grid?
It is very difficult to see where we are ahead of the start of the season. We need to focus on our job and try to improve where we can rather than spending time analysing where we are in relative terms. We have to fight the entire grid and everyone has the same targets: to go faster than the guys around them. We need to keep our opposition under pressure and never give up. It won’t be an easy task as we started very late for this season, but we will see for 2017. Ultimately it doesn’t matter where we start, but we need to deliver in line with our targets. We will always aim to finish in the points, but bearing in mind that we only created the team in December, we need to be realistic and not start pointing the finger at anyone.

How are the two drivers working together?
I am pleased with both drivers. They are young but ambitious, which will push us in a good way. They are totally focussed on the job and have helped in direction over the first two tests. Jolyon had a few more reliability issues than Kevin during pre-season testing, but the overall feeling is that they are comfortable. They are fully focussed on extracting everything they can from the season and keeping the team motivated.
Q&A with Kevin Magnussen

AN INCREDIBLE FEELING

“I’m extremely motivated after a whole year away.”

How well prepared do you feel ahead of the Australian GP?
I feel ready for Melbourne. We’ve had some good days of testing, with lots of laps: more than 100 every day and more than 500 in four days. Putting in the mileage was the main thing as I needed to get back up to speed after some time out of a car. I really couldn’t have asked for more. I’ve been through systems checks and feel comfortable going to Melbourne and doing a race. At the moment I think we are just outside the top ten but if all goes well then who knows. You can never definitely hope for points, but if we leave Australia with points we can be happy.

How do you feel within the team?
It’s a good place to be. Renault’s ambitions are big and that’s the most important thing for a driver; to be in a team that aims to win world championships. Renault, Viry and Enstone – it’s a good combination and they have won championships not that long ago. I have a lot of confidence that they have not forgotten how they did it. The guys at Enstone had tough years but stuck together and came out of it. Now they have a long term plan and backing, it creates a buzz. It’s the perfect place for me as a young driver.

How have you found the car so far?
We have a good platform to start with and are comfortable with what we have. We are not entirely happy with the performance but we are comfortable with where we are and what we have achieved in the short space of time we have had. It’s good and we know that it can be better. It’s not yet the best power unit or the best car, but we know how to improve and need to get our heads down, work hard and get to the top. We need to keep working, keep together and it will come good.

You had a great start to your F1 career in Melbourne, so you must have some good memories. What are your thoughts ahead of your 2016 debut?
I enjoy going to Melbourne. In 2014 I had a brilliant start with the podium, but I went again last year and it wasn’t as good as the first time! Hopefully we will complete the race this year and to get some points. That’s my aim. If both myself and Jolyon can come away with points, it would be a massive achievement!
What is your approach to the season?
To be as prepared as I can be and deal with the challenges as they arise. It's been good to have the winter break to get myself in a very good place mentally and physically. My winter training's been really intense and positive. When you're unable to drive the car it's good to be able to work on your fitness. Unfortunately I've had to contend with the British weather so I've done quite a bit inside in the gym! I'm a bit of a fair weather player, but I have been outside running when it stops raining!

How would you sum up your winter testing?
We had some frustrations but in the end we managed to get some good performance running in. I was unlucky in that every day I picked up a problem, which has cost us a few hours. It's not what you want when you're a rookie, but all the same I have done a reasonable amount of laps and Kevin has had four very good days so we have been able to gather a lot of information on the car. We know it is a strong basis to start from and we'll keep working to deliver more performance.

How important do you think last year's free practice outings are for you?
It's important as there are a lot of procedures and the cars are very technical to drive so it has been a big help to have the experience of last year to fall back on. Even though I did not get the greatest amount of laps in testing, I don't feel too behind and know that when we turn up in Melbourne it will be OK.

What are your expectations for Melbourne?
I am really looking forward to Friday when the 22 cars are out on track pounding round. I think everything will be ready. We always keep working on performance but when it comes to a race weekend you give it your all to achieve a good result. It will be busy for us in the race but I feel I'm in an OK position right now.
HIGHLY POSITIVE

“We know that the team has strength and depth, and we will go even further in the future.”

Q&A with Bob Bell

Talk us through the next stages of your master plan...
We are in the process of re-resourcing Enstone and part of the road map is to be clear how we build up the resources over a two year timeframe. The head count is around 470 now and needs to be close to 650 in the long term, but it will take us up to 18 months to do it. At Viry it is less about resourcing and more about restructuring to make it mesh with Enstone and fit for purpose in the coming years. In parallel we need to think about the design of the car and consider our priorities. We need to ascertain where we will find most gains for 2017 but also look forward to 2018. It’s a reasonably protracted process to get to where we need to get, but we still need to show good progress and move forward in all areas in the meantime.

What kind of personnel are you looking for?
In truth, recruitment is about finding the right mix of people. We need fresh, young inexperienced blood mixed with older hands. It’s about getting that balance right and it’s very important not to rush it and take people because they are available or because we have a slot. We need to make sure we have the right mix.

How have you settled into the job?
It’s been a relatively easy transition. I knew a lot of the people and the organisations so it has been quite straightforward. We have a mountain of work ahead of us so I am not under any illusions, but initially it’s been highly positive.

The first manifestation of how Enstone and Viry are working together is the car we have seen on track. What conclusions were you able to draw from testing?
The first and most obvious conclusion is that we have a strong and dedicated team who are able to bring a car together in a short space of time! It naturally does not represent the pinnacle of integration we would aspire to but we will get there. First and foremost we know that the team has strength and depth, and we will go even further in the future. We are actually in good shape and were able to do fairly thorough checks as the car we brought to Barcelona is pretty much what we will run in Melbourne. We were pleasantly surprised. Although we are down on aero and power, the car is nicely balanced, consistent and good to develop. We didn’t need to chase a lot of time finding the balance so there’s a lot confidence we can get up to speed relatively quickly. If we can sneak into the top ten in Melbourne we’ll be pleased with that.

What will you change on the car going forward?
We have to balance resources, but we need to improve in every area. That said, it’s much easier to do this when you have a well-balanced car as we know that real performance can come from balance and driveability, and we have already made some good steps in this area. Ultimately we need to concentrate our efforts on where we get the most bang for buck.

“We didn’t need to chase a lot of time finding the balance so there’s a lot confidence we can get up to speed relatively quickly. If we can sneak into the top ten in Melbourne we’ll be pleased with that.”
Were you pleased with the eight days of testing?
On the whole, yes. Given the time we had due to the late power unit swap, we can be pleased with how testing has gone. We’ve learnt a lot about how the car responds to different set-ups and completed a great deal of aero work, which is useful to check the correlation to the wind tunnel. We covered a lot of miles so we’ve been pleased with the reliability. Kevin had a good amount of laps, while Jolyon was a bit more unlucky, but over both drivers we put in a lot of laps. The driver feedback has been good; they have reported it is easy to drive and are generally happy with the car. We now need to give more grip and power to extract its maximum potential.

Did you encounter any surprises over testing?
The nature of testing is such that you will necessarily encounter some issues. Jolyon seemed to have more, unfortunately, for no particular reason. There are some areas we need to work on but others are relatively OK and all the major items are working reasonably well.

What kind of development programme will you have over the year?
We have a comprehensive development plan over the season: our aero programme is ongoing and we’ll be trying to bring bodywork updates to put more downforce on the car. In parallel we also have a suspension programme to bring mechanical updates, with sizeable upgrades scheduled for the first test after the Spanish Grand Prix.

What are the technical objectives for the season?
We will focus on developing the building blocks to help us progress for 2017. We want to improve reliability, develop the integration between the chassis and the power unit, all with the target of having a far more integrated car in the future. A lot of our focus is also about building the team and the infrastructure. 2016 is about getting the car out and learning lessons on track as we build the team rather than having set aspirations for on-track performance.

What can we expect in Australia?
Overall we have learnt that we have a fairly good baseline car, which is something we can run with and develop over the course of the year. There’s an amount of small tidy-ups we want to do post winter testing, as every team would do. Our aim is to go to Melbourne with all problems fixed, then concentrate on suspension and the usual aero development thereafter.
What have you learnt about the R.S.16-R.E.16 package in winter testing?
We learned that we could do a good job in a short time. We had to marry the engine and chassis together very quickly and it generally went very well. We put the power unit in and fired up before the first test, which isn't always a given. On the first two days in Barcelona we had a few issues, but nothing dramatic and we were able to have a good few days afterwards. I have to say that the relationship between the two factories at Enstone and Viry is working well and we need to build on that.

Is the R.E.16 a step forward over its predecessors?
We used the same power unit over two weeks, barring one day when it was easier to swap the entire unit rather than change an individual problematic component. Apart from a few glitches, we had no big warning signs. For every issue encountered, we could find an answer and worked through updates in a few days. We tested the Melbourne PU specification and nearly everything went well. Aside from a few things, we are all on target.

What will be the development programme this year?
We know we need more power and we are targeting something mid-season. We will have a couple of steps from Melbourne onwards before a big package later in the year. If we have the chance to introduce more items by the end of season we will, but the big stage is mid-season. Over testing everything worked well so the rest is about getting the drivers ready for the races and settled into the team.

What kind of results are you expecting this year?
The feeling is good. We knew we had two difficult years but were able to stabilise the situation. The target is to get to 2017 with a good PU and car and eventually challenge for podiums. Not saying that we are counting them out this year, if we can challenge for podiums, we will, but we have to be realistic.
Circuit Data

**MELBOURNE**

With the teams now having some freedom over compound choice and a tyre one step softer than 2015 being available, simulations are run to determine the optimum selection. We have to bear in mind that we need to select tyres to qualify and race on. Most drivers have the majority of their tyres as SuperSoft – this will allow for optimum qualifying whilst still being a decent tyre for the race. One feature of this new regulations is that we may see an increase in the number of race pitstops as teams push their selection towards the softer end of the range.

- Alan Permane, Trackside Operations Director

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**CAR SET-UP**

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|                      | The range of the range. Idealised towards bursts of speed, it can still cover long distances. Has some jumpy peaks too. |

| MEDIUM              | ─── | ─── | ─── | ─── | ─── |       |
|                      | The supersoft is an ideal compromise between performance and durability, just like the Australian emu, which can travel great distances but can sprint when necessary. |

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**TELEMETRY**

- **FUEL EFFECT**
  - (2015 average: 0.33sec/10kg)
  - 0.37 sec

- **FUEL CONSUMPTION**
  - (2015 average: 1.89kg/lap)
  - 1.72 kg/lap

- **FULL THROTTLE**
  - (2015 average: 53.5% of lap)
  - 51% of lap
Albert Park is one of the toughest circuits of the year for the power units due to the short bursts of acceleration between turns. There are 10 periods of acceleration over the lap where the car will go from approximately 150kph to just under 300kph in less than three seconds. The ICE will accordingly go from 9,000rpm to 13,000rpm over these distances.

Large forces run through the engine in the heavy braking zones. The load in Turn 13 is the heaviest 'stop' of the circuit. The car brakes from 300kph to 125kph in 2.5 secs, generating peaks of 4g, approximately the same forces a jet pilot will encounter.

With the majority of corners taken in first to third gear with a period of acceleration straight after, good traction and engine response is key. The turbo will need to be correctly calibrated (or driveable) to avoid any lag between the driver putting his foot on the gas and the engine kicking in.

Energy will be harvested from the K in the braking zones for roughly 15% of the lap.

Correctly mapping the Power Unit to give good power delivery could gain a few tenths of a second over the course of the lap.

The fastest car in 2014 qualifying was 317kph, but it increased in 2015 to 329kph. In 2016 speeds have increased yet again, so watch the top speed figures for something impressive.

The track is a tricky one to learn with little in the way of landmarks or reference points for the drivers.

At this time of the year the ambient temperature can swing from 35°C to 15°C from day to day, depending on wind direction. If the wind comes from the north it is typically hot, but cool if blowing from the south. This can play havoc with cooling settings but also makes tyre management unpredictable as the circuit temperature also changes a great deal.

This year teams will have medium, soft and supersoft tyres available. In 2015 medium and soft were available. This is likely to lead to faster qualifying and more pit stops in the race.

Brake wear is towards the higher end of the scale and with all running taking place at Barcelona so far, which is low wear, this will be an area the teams will have to pay close attention to.
What we’ve been up to...

How much can you cram into one winter? Quite a lot it turns out. And we’re not talking Caribbean holidays or ski jaunts...

Since the Abu Dhabi Grand Prix we’ve become Renault Sport Formula One Team and the Enstone Technical Centre and Viry-Châtillon Powertrain Centre are undergoing complete rebrands.

We covered 772 laps of the Barcelona track in testing, which equates to more than 3,500km, or 11 race distances. Or the distance from London to New York.

As part of the plan to re-resource Enstone, 27 positions were advertised in January. In one month, that’s a potential 5% increase in staff.

Our new recruits have certainly generated the column inches. In addition to interviews with Fleet Street’s finest and filming with a wealth of broadcasters, Jolyon has enjoyed a day at BBC HQ in Salford. Denmark has meanwhile embraced Kevin’s return. 34% of everything written in Denmark about cars and the automotive industry has been geared around Renault, with Renault’s media coverage increasing by 400%!

What we will get up to this week...

Jolyon and Kevin will have a busy media schedule in Australia. The pair touch down in Sydney over the weekend for a day video shoot just outside the city. The video will be unveiled on Wednesday... which leads us to...

Our final and definitive 2016 livery will be presented on Wednesday 16 March. Our drivers and management will unveil the new colours in an event at the Docklands, Melbourne at 19.30hrs. If you can’t be there in person, check Twitter and Facebook for the new look.

Kevin and Jolyon will have in-circuit media commitments on Thursday, and then the pair will be on track. You can catch them for autographs in the fan area on Sunday before the race.

If you are at Albert Park, Renault Australia will once again have an activation at the F1 Central area along with the Renault Torque Bar area. The F1 Central activation is a great place for fans to come and learn about the new team as well as check out the new Renault Sport Formula One Team livery.

MEMORY LANE

Australian GP, 2005. Giancarlo Fisichella confirmed that the Renault challenge was serious with victory in Melbourne. The Italian raced away from pole position and controlled the race from the front.