ORACLE Red Bull RACING

RB19

MAX VERSTAPPEN

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Japan 2023
Practice and qualifying



After the poor results in Singapore, Oracle Red Bull Racing arrived at the Suzuka circuit ready to get back to winning ways. An exciting weekend awaited them.

On Friday, September 22, the teams gathered at the Mie Prefecture circuit to participate in the 16th round of the 2023 season. Everyone arrived in Suzuka with the firm intention of winning, although the approaches to the task were quite different. Oracle Red Bull Racing was ready to get back to the top and definitively secure the Constructors' World Championship, leaving behind the failure it experienced just five days earlier in Marina Bay. On the other hand, its direct rivals, Mercedes, Ferrari, and McLaren, arrived with the desire to capitalise on a rare off-weekend for Oracle Red Bull Racing.

Max Verstappen pictured during free practice for the 2023 Japanese Grand Prix.

The gaze of the tiger

When Max Verstappen climbed into his RB19 to start the first free practice session, his look said it all:



An upbeat Sergio Pérez chats to Christian Horner and another member of the technical team during qualifying for the Japanese GP.

determination, a hunger for victory, and a firm desire to prove that what happened in Singapore had been just a slip-up. And he soon made his mark. In his first stint on medium tires, the Dutchman set a benchmark lap that put his rivals Carlos Sainz Jr. and Lando Norris in check.

Meanwhile, Sergio Pérez was also displaying some form. Aware that he needed a good weekend to regain confidence, the Mexican set competitive times from the start and finished the session in 11th position, behind Lance Stroll's Aston Martin.

As in the previous session, the second free practice was used for the teams to test the C2 tire prototype ahead of its introduction in the 2024 season. Norris and Leclerc briefly topped the timesheets before Max Verstappen once again demonstrated his extraordinary power. The Oracle Red Bull Racing driver even acknowledged on the radio that the RB19 was performing better than ever, and it was clearly evident on the track. The session ended with a scare involving Pierre Gasly's Alpine, which brought out the red flags after an accident that had no major consequences.

Always in the lead

After a night's rest, on Saturday the drivers returned to the track in the morning to complete the third free practice session. With no one seeming to be in too much of a hurry to top the charts, there were slow times until 20 minutes after the start when Verstappen's RB19 hit the track and began to impress. The Dutchman had already set the benchmark



time and he would continue to do so throughout practice, frustrating his pursuers, who were unable to get close to his times.

At the end of the session, Verstappen led with a time of 1:30.267, followed by the McLarens of Lando Norris and Oscar Piastri, who showed that that they would play a prominent role that weekend. Sergio Pérez, for his part, showed a better understanding of his car and recorded the fourth-fastest time.

No margin for error

Q1 began at 3:00 pm. The drivers set off determined not to make any mistakes, as the Suzuka circuit is particularly unforgiving. After having dominated the free practice sessions with manifest superiority, Max Verstappen was back in champion mode and was quick to set a good time in the first qualifying session to put some pressure on his rivals. Lando Norris was 0.185 behind the champion and Charles Leclerc 0.515, while Sergio Pérez secured seventh place. Logan Sargeant caused a scare when he crashed his Williams and brought out the red flag.

In Q2, things changed slightly. The excitement grew when Leclerc managed to put Ferrari in the lead, even though he himself would admit that what Verstappen was doing was truly crazy. The Dutchman took second place, just 0.024 behind Leclerc, and with a slight advantage over his teammate Sergio Pérez.

The perfect lap

The decisive moment had arrived. All the drivers hoping for pole position had their eyes on Max

Sergio Pérez recorded the third-fastest time in Q2 but slipped a couple of places in the final qualifying session to start the race in P5.



Verstappen's flying lap in qualifying put him on pole for the Grand Prix and left his rivals astonished at the speed of the Dutchman.

Verstappen. And the champion gave his rivals little hope. From his first lap he set a demanding pace. When he crossed the finish line, the clock showed a spectacular time to secure provisional pole position. And the best was yet to come.

The other teams made their final attempts, but no one could get close. When Verstappen returned to the track for his second flying lap, the RB19 stuck to the asphalt and began to run at an astonishing pace: 1:28.877. Untouchable. Verstappen established a spectacular gap of 0.581 to his closest pursuer, Oscar Piastri, something not seen at Suzuka for years.

"Today we witnessed something very special," said an impressed Christian Horner at the end of the day. "Max was in a different league. I encourage you to watch the replay of the last lap and look at turns five, six, and then at that high-speed section. It was truly exceptional and you have to take your hat off to him."

McLaren achieved an excellent result, with Piastri and Norris in second and third places respectively. Charles Leclerc's Ferrari would start from fourth position.

Sergio Pérez experienced problems with the balance of his car in the corners of the circuit and managed to qualify in fifth position, almost eight-tenths of a second behind his teammate; it was a respectable result after a difficult Q3, but the Mexican was not satisfied with his lap.

Qualifying classification

Pos.	Nº	Driver	Constructor	Q1	Q2	Q3	Final grid
1	1	Max Verstappen	Red Bull Racing-Honda RBPT	1:29.878	1:29.964	1:28.877	1
2	81	Oscar Piastri	McLaren-Mercedes	1:30.439	1:30.122	1:29.458	2
3	4	Lando Norris	McLaren-Mercedes	1:30.063	1:30.296	1:29.493	3
4	16	Charles Leclerc	Ferrari	1:30.393	1:29.940	1:29.542	4
5	11	Sergio Pérez	Red Bull Racing-Honda RBPT	1:30.652	1:29.965	1:29.650	5
6	55	Carlos Sainz Jr.	Ferrari	1:30.651	1:30.067	1:29.850	6
7	44	Lewis Hamilton	Mercedes	1:30.811	1:30.040	1:29.908	7
8	63	George Russell	Mercedes	1:30.811	1:30.268	1:30.219	8
9	22	Yuki Tsunoda	AlphaTauri-Honda RBPT	1:30.733	1:30.204	1:30.303	9
10	14	Fernando Alonso	Aston Martin Aramco-Mercedes	1:30.971	1:30.465	1:30.560	10
11	40	Liam Lawson	AlphaTauri-Honda RBPT	1:30.425	1:30.508	N/A	11
12	10	Pierre Gasly	Alpine-Renault	1:30.843	1:30.509	N/A	12
13	23	Alexander Albon	Williams-Mercedes	1:30.941	1:30.537	N/A	13
14	31	Esteban Ocon	Alpine-Renault	1:30.960	1:30.586	N/A	14
15	20	Kevin Magnussen	Haas-Ferrari	1:30.976	1:30.665	N/A	15
16	77	Valtteri Bottas	Alfa Romeo-Ferrari	1:31.049	N/A	N/A	16
17	18	Lance Stroll	Aston Martin Aramco-Mercedes	1:31.181	N/A	N/A	17
18	27	Nico Hülkenberg	Haas-Ferrari	1:31.299	N/A	N/A	18
19	24	Zhou Guanyu	Alfa Romeo-Ferrari	1:31.398	N/A	N/A	19
NC	2	Logan Sargeant	Williams-Mercedes	DNF	N/A	N/A	PL*

* Logan Sergeant crashed during Q1 and did not record a qualifying time. He was authorized to participate in the race, starting from the pit lane.

2023 Japanese Grand Prix

Two drivers and one destiny



The two Oracle Red Bull Racing drivers pictured together on the circuit at the 2023 Japanese GP.

On Sunday, September 24, the sun shone on the legendary Suzuka circuit and the fans rushed to find good positions from which to enjoy one of the most eagerly awaited races of the season.

In the exciting qualifying session the day before, Max Verstappen had already made it clear that he had more than recovered from his stumble in Singapore and was ready to mathematically clinch the Constructors' World Championship for Oracle Red Bull Racing. However, McLaren drivers Lando Norris and Oscar Piastri had conspired to spoil the party, so it was a far from simple mission. Meanwhile, from fifth position on the grid, Sergio Pérez was hoping to finish the day on the podium, unaware that he was about to face one of the most difficult races of his career.

An explosive start

Grand Prix starts are always exciting, but the one at Suzuka was dizzying. As expected, as soon as the lights went out, Verstappen came under attack from the McLarens, who came after him like a pair of wolves. Although he was hounded by Piastri on the inside while Norris attacked him on the outside, the champion defended his position firmly and began to set the pace that suited him best. In this way, he escaped from a chaotic start in which incidents followed one after another.

One of them involved Verstappen's teammate. As soon as the race started, Sergio Pérez found himself trapped between the cars of Carlos Sainz Jr. and Lewis Hamilton. In the sprint to the first corner, Checo moved to his left and made contact with Lewis Hamilton's Mercedes, sending it into the grass. Behind them, Ocon, Zhou, Bottas, and Albon were involved in another incident, which would lead them all to make a premature pit stop. Pérez resisted, but on lap 3 he had no choice but to stop so that the front wing of his RB19 could be changed.

This forced Checo to make up lost ground when he rejoined the race. But things would get even more difficult. Checo returned to the track under the safety car and, as it was considered a breach of the rules, he was given a five-second penalty.



A dominant Max Verstappen built a healthy lead over his rivals at the Suzuka circuit in September 2023.

FINAL CLASSIFICATION

Sergio Pérez Red Bull-Honda RBPT RET	Logan Sargeant Williams-Mercedes RET	Kevin Magnussen Haas-Ferrari 15	Zhou Guanyu Alfa Romeo-Ferrari 13	Liam Lawson AlphaTauri-Honda RBPT 11	Esteban Ocon Alpine-Renault 9	George Russell Mercedes 7	Lewis Hamilton Mercedes 5	Max Verstappen Red Bull-Honda RBPT 1											
RET Valtteri Bottas Alfa Romeo-Ferrari	RET Lance Stroll Aston Martin A.M.	RET Alexander Albon Williams-Mercedes	14 Nico Hülkenberg Haas-Ferrari	12 Yuki Tsunoda AlphaTauri-Honda RBPT	10 Pierre Gasly Alpine-Renault	8 Fernando Alonso Aston Martin A.M.	6 Carlos Sainz Jr. Ferrari	4 Charles Leclerc Ferrari	3 Oscar Piastri McLaren-Mercedes	2 Lando Norris McLaren-Mercedes									

Verstappen pulls away

Oblivious to all the incidents, as soon as the safety car departed, Max Verstappen continued with his business, setting a devastating pace. Each lap became a lesson in precision and speed. The McLarens tried to follow in his wake. The Ferraris of Charles Leclerc and Carlos Sainz Jr. also fought to keep up with him, while the Mercedes of Lewis Hamilton and George Russell engaged in a surprising race of their own. But it didn't matter, because Verstappen still didn't take his foot off the accelerator and, with his RB19 at full power, he escaped from his rivals without difficulty.

Meanwhile, things were getting more complicated for his teammate. On lap 12, Sergio Pérez made a late move on Kevin Magnussen's Haas. Another crash forced him back to the pits, where he had to change the front wing again and serve his first five-second penalty. Given his slim chances, when he rejoined the race and reported that something was still wrong with the RB19, Pérez was advised to retire. It had been a dark day for the Mexican.

Heads and tails

Max's lead kept increasing. On lap 39, he set the fastest lap with a time that no other driver managed to beat for the rest of the race. Mercedes, with Hamilton and Russell, tried to play with the strategy of a single pit stop, but tire degradation forced them to rethink the plan. McLaren, meanwhile, put in a great performance with Lando Norris and Oscar Piastri, who were still holding onto their podium positions.

While Verstappen demonstrated once again why he led the championship, Pérez had a disastrous day that resulted in his retirement.

After a long time off the track, Sergio Pérez was forced to rejoin the race, even if only for two laps. This shocking decision was based on an obvious strategy: to prevent the five-second penalty he had received for the accident with Magnussen from taking effect in Qatar, the next round of the championship. Despite it being a somewhat humiliating experience for him, Checo agreed so as not to reduce his chances in the next race.

While the Mexican was racing with no interest other than to use up the time of his penalty, with ten laps to go, the distance between Verstappen and the rest of the pack was more than ten seconds. Only a breakdown or a monumental error could take the victory away from him, but Max remained impassive, driving his RB19 to the finish line without mishap.



The Oracle Red Bull Racing team prepare Sergio Pérez's RB19 before the start of the 2023 Japanese GP.

A truly special victory

Finally, after 53 laps of true exhibition driving, Max Verstappen crossed the finish line in first place, putting in another stellar performance. His final margin of victory was 19.387 seconds. Max comfortably won the Japanese Grand Prix for the second consecutive year and recorded his 13th victory. As if that were not enough, this victory helped Oracle Red Bull Racing secure the Constructors' World Championship several races before the end of the season, an achievement that displayed the team's dominance in the 2023 season. Despite Sergio Pérez's early retirement, the whole team celebrated Max's victory with genuine satisfaction.

On the podium, alongside Verstappen, were Norris and Piastri, celebrating a great performance by McLaren. For Piastri it was an especially emotional moment, as it was the Australian rookie's first ever podium finish in his debut season.

Christian Horner, team principal of Oracle Red Bull Racing, made no secret of his satisfaction and was full of praise for his drivers, especially highlighting the extraordinary drive by Max Verstappen. At the press conference after the podium, the star of the race admitted that the RB19 was working perfectly and had words of thanks for the whole team: "I feel very proud of everyone who works on the track, but also in the factory. We're having an incredible year and I'm very proud of everyone."



Team principal Christian Horner leads the celebrations after Max's win secures the 2023 Constructors' Championship for Oracle Red Bull Racing.

Japanese games



Max and Sergio enjoy a lighthearted moment with the media in the Paddock at the start of the 2023 Japanese Grand Prix weekend. The fun continued when they went head-to-head against their AlphaTauri rivals while racing in small Japanese city trucks.

During the Formula 1 championship, the demands placed on the drivers are extraordinarily high. These are weeks in which they have to perform at their best, both physically and mentally. For this reason, it is essential to find activities that help to take the pressure off them. Precisely with the aim of improving the mood of the drivers before the Japanese Grand Prix, Oracle Red Bull Racing organized a new edition of its (Un)serious Race Series.

On this occasion, the team's official drivers, Max Verstappen and Sergio Pérez, had to face their AlphaTauri counterparts, Yuki Tsunoda and Liam Lawson, in an unusual race in which the fast Formula 1 cars were replaced by the slow, small, and pretty *kei* trucks, designed to be able to navigate the narrow streets of Japanese cities. The event took place in Tokyo's Ariake stadium, where the participants found themselves on a circuit full of surreal obstacles, which looked like something out of a TV game show, including large bowling pins, giant inflatable balls, and colored boxes that the drivers themselves had to load onto their trucks. The competition, which was finally won by Max and Checo was filled with jokes and laughter.

"It's been a fun day," commented Sergio Pérez. "It's great to be part of the Red Bull family, as we can do so many crazy events all over the world. I never expected to do this challenge here in Tokyo. I just wish *kei* trucks had more downforce!"

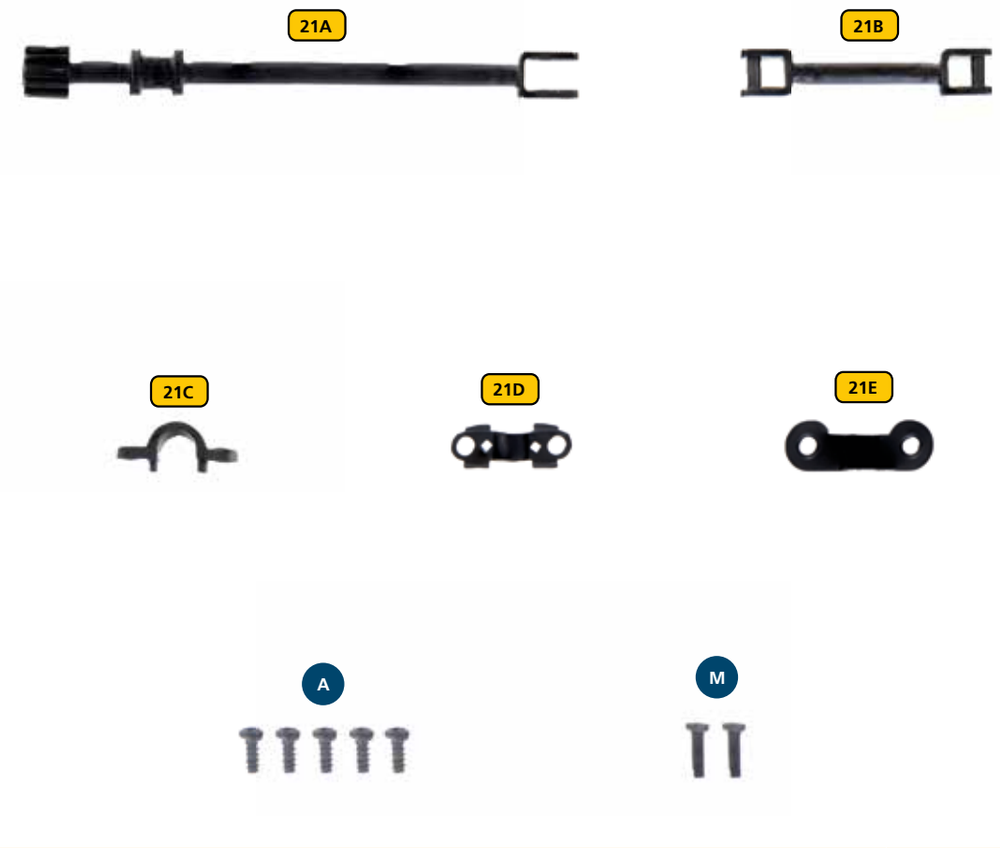
BUILD THE

ORACLE Red Bull RACING RB19
MAX VERSTAPPEN

STEERING SHAFT

In this issue, the steering shaft and the steering column are mounted on the survival cell assembly.

PIECES IN THIS ISSUE

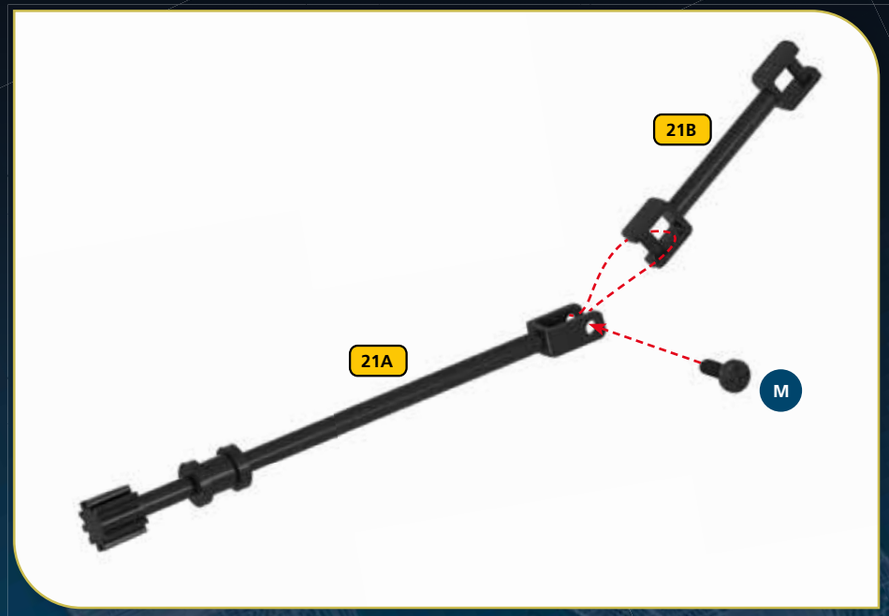


21A Steering shaft
21B Steering column
21C Steering shaft upper front support
21D Steering shaft lower front support
21E Steering shaft upper rear support
A Screws 2.3 × 4 mm (4 + 1*)
M Screws 2 × 7 mm (1 + 1*)

* Spare screw

STEP 21–1

Insert the end of the steering column **21B** between the two tabs on the steering shaft **21A** and secure it with an **M** screw.



STEP 21–2

Retrieve the survival cell assembly from the previous issue and place the steering shaft lower front support **21D** over the highlighted holes in the survival cell **7A**.



STEP 21–3

Place the steering column **21B** and the steering shaft **21A** on the steering shaft lower front support **21D** and the steering shaft lower rear support **20D**, paying attention to the orientation of the parts.



STEP 21–4

Place the steering shaft upper front support **21C** on the steering shaft lower front support **21D**. Secure both supports with two **A** screws.



Steering shaft

STEP 21–5

Place the steering shaft upper rear support **21E** on the steering shaft lower rear support **20D**. Secure both supports with two **A** screws.



FINAL RESULT



This is how the pieces look at this stage of the assembly.