

2026 Chinese Grand Prix - Friday

Shanghai, 13 March 2026 – Audi Revolut F1 Team was on the cusp of a place in Sprint Qualifying 3 as competitive action for the Chinese Grand Prix kicked off in earnest in Shanghai. In the session to set the grid for tomorrow morning's Sprint, Nico Hulkenberg was 0.015s away from a spot in the top ten, closing with the 11th fastest time. Team-mate, Gabriel Bortoleto, was 14th, with both cars progressing solidly from the first segment of the session and steadily in the midfield mix.

With tomorrow's 100km event rewarding the top eight finishers with points, there will be plenty to fight for in Shanghai; furthermore, every bit of knowledge about the car's behaviour around this track will be carried over to the afternoon's Qualifying session and Sunday's showpiece event, the race.

Jonathan Wheatley, Team Principal: "A sprint weekend always brings its challenges for the teams, as there is very little time to learn about the car before going straight into sprint qualifying and then the sprint race itself - the momentum builds very quickly. With these new and very complex cars, arriving at a new circuit means you are constantly learning more about the package — understanding where the performance is and where improvements are needed, lap after lap.

"Considering those challenges, I think the team did a good job between FP1 and sprint qualifying to address the main areas where we could extract performance from the car, and the result was a fair reflection of our pace today. There are still some issues the drivers have been highlighting since the winter, which remain a focus for us as we continue to develop the car. On Nico's side we briefly lost communication during SQ2, but the team was able to resolve that issue once the car returned to the garage."

"Our priority now is to have a clean sprint race and then see what progress we can make ahead of qualifying."

Nico Hulkenberg (Car 27):

FP1: 9th / 1:34.639 (27 laps)

SQ1: 1:33.997 (8 laps)

SQ2: 11th / 1:33.635 (6 laps)

"It is a shame to miss out SQ3 by such a small margin, but overall, P11 is still a solid result. In SQ2 I lost radio communication with the team, so I had to manage part of the run on my own, which made things more complicated.

"Aside from that, the feeling with the car has been good since this morning. We look to be right in the midfield fight again, which is encouraging. It's very tight out there, so we'll take what we've learned today and aim to move forward tomorrow."

Gabriel Bortoleto (Car 5):

FP1: 12th / 1:34.828 (26 laps)

SQ1: 1:34.291 (8 laps)

SQ2: 14th / 1:33.774 (6 laps)

"It's been a bit of a tricky Friday for us. We came across a few issues during Free Practice which appeared again during Sprint Qualifying, keeping us on the back foot. Of course, it's a different type of track from what we've had so far, with different ranges of corners, and we're discovering once again how our car is behaving. Looking at the Sprint tomorrow, let's see what we can achieve. It's a quite short race obviously, and after that, we'll make sure to fix any issue that is going on in the background, in order to go into qualifying in a better place and give it our best."

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About Audi Revolut F1 Team

Audi Revolut F1 Team is the official factory team of Audi, as the brand enters the FIA Formula 1 World Championship for the first time in 2026. This project, in which Audi will create its own hybrid drive system ('power unit') developed in Germany, represents the ultimate expression of the manufacturer's 'Vorsprung durch Technik' philosophy and embodies a long-term commitment to compete at the pinnacle of motorsport with the clear objective of challenging for world championships by 2030. Audi Revolut F1 Team is based in three locations: the power unit is developed by Audi Formula Racing GmbH at the Audi Competence Center Motorsport in Neuburg, Germany; the chassis is engineered and race operations are managed from the state-of-the-art facilities of Audi Motorsport AG in Hinwil, Switzerland; while the Audi Motorsport Technology Centre UK in Bicester, United Kingdom, provides a foothold in the heart of 'Motorsport Valley', with direct access to top F1 talent and key strategic partners. This integrated structure provides complete control over the project, embedding a culture of precision, innovation, and relentless performance. Audi's entry is strategically timed to coincide with new Formula 1 regulations focused on increased electrification, as the electric share of the hybrid drive is raised to almost 50%, and the introduction of 100% sustainable fuels. The entry into Formula 1, one of the most important platforms in the world, serves as a high-tech catalyst for the entire Audi brand, acting as a global stage to demonstrate technological leadership and connect with new, diverse audiences by creating cultural impact that resonates far beyond the race track.

