

2026 Pre-Season Testing – Week 2 Round-Up

Sakhir, February 20, 2026 – Audi Revolut F1 Team brought pre-season testing to a close with a productive day of action in Sakhir. Nico Hulkenberg completed his programme with 64 laps in the morning, before Gabriel Bortoleto's race and qualifying simulations added 71 laps to the team's tally. The day's action brings the total for the second week of Bahrain testing to 357, with the overall mileage reaching up to 2,775.649 km (851 laps).

It's been a busy off-season for Audi Revolut F1 Team: a first shakedown on January 9, the first team to hit the track with the new-generation 2026 cars, was followed by three days on track in the Barcelona Shakedown Week and the fortnight of action in Sakhir – adding up to one of the longest testing programmes in recent decades.

The team now returns to its bases in Hinwil, Neuburg and Bicester: plenty of data to analyse awaits as the secrets of the R26 are unlocked and performance brought to the surface. Next time out, it will be Melbourne – for the first Formula One race as Audi Revolut F1 Team.

Circuit: Bahrain International Circuit / 5.412 km

Driver: Nico Hulkenberg (morning); Gabriel Bortoleto (afternoon)

Laps: 64 laps, 346.368 km (HUL); 71 laps, 384.252 km (BOR)

Fastest Lap: 1:36.019 – P15 (HUL); 1:33.755 – P7 (BOR)

Mattia Binotto, Head of Audi F1 Project: "It's been a long, intense pre-season, a long winter, and the team has shown great dedication and commitment throughout since our first outing at the beginning of January. We started from a rather challenging position, with a list of areas to improve, and the response has been very strong across all departments: I want to thank everyone in Hinwil, Neuburg, and Bicester for their hard work. Step by step, we've addressed many of those points and made significant progress. We haven't solved everything, yet, but the development and the attitude across the team have been very encouraging. Looking at where we are now, I feel positive as we approach the start of the season."

Jonathan Wheatley, Team Principal of Audi Revolut F1 Team: "If I look back at 2026 so far, I see an extraordinary level of ambition across the team. Over the winter, we relocated several hundred people following refurbishment of our factory building, signed a roster of new partners, renewed every element of our trackside infrastructure — from pit equipment and panels to pit walls and hospitality — all delivered on schedule.

"We also became the first team to run a 2026-specification car, taking to the track in the second week of January after successfully completing all FIA crash tests – an exceptional achievement in itself. Since then, we have launched the team in Berlin, participated in every day of testing and gathered a vast amount of information, not only about the car but about ourselves as a team.

"The mileage we have achieved and the way the organisation has responded to every challenge over the past two months give me great encouragement. There is still a substantial job list heading into the season. We have made strong progress over the past two weeks, but we are under no illusion about the task ahead or the level of competition we will face in Melbourne.

“That said, we are motivated, focused and united. The team spirit across Hinwil, Neuburg and Bicester is of the highest order. We now pack up, regroup and turn our full attention to Melbourne.”

James Key, Technical Director of Audi Revolut F1 Team: “Firstly, it has been a long time since we have had three winter tests. It brings back memories of an era when testing was far more extensive, but it was certainly necessary given these new cars and the scale of the regulation changes. It is hard to believe that only six weeks ago we were tentatively rolling the car out of the garage in Barcelona for our filming day in early January.

“Since then, we have made significant progress. Over the past weeks we have introduced our race-spec aero package, completed race distance simulations, and carried out an extensive amount of set-up work across both chassis and power unit. It has been an extremely busy and intense period. The drivers are comfortable with the car and it is a good platform to work with. There are areas to improve in terms of reliability and performance, but nothing unexpected at this stage.

“Overall, we are broadly where we hoped to be at this point in the season and in our development as a team. As we continue to mature as Audi Revolut F1 Team, we can take more positives than negatives and head into the season with a degree of optimism — even if none of us truly knows where we stand competitively.

“I would also like to recognise the team’s effort. We were the first car on track and made substantial steps across the tests in how the car was configured and developed. Our colleagues in Neuburg have worked immensely hard to translate the first track data into continuous improvements over the course of the programme. A sincere thank you to everyone involved for the enormous effort required to reach this point.

“Thank you as well to Gabi and Nico for their positivity, feedback and the many laps they completed. Finally, particular recognition goes to the trackside team. Working with an unfamiliar car, they put in long hours to ensure we were ready to exit the garage at nine o’clock each morning, incorporating updates and managing issues throughout the day. Their work has been outstanding, and we leave testing with a strong foundation to build on.”

Nico Hulkenberg (Car 27): “A rather solid day to finish our work here in Sakhir and, with it, pre-season testing. Our programme in Barcelona and the two sessions here in Bahrain are complete, and the focus now shifts to Melbourne, something that felt so far away in January. Looking back to these weeks of testing, we can find encouragement in the significant number of laps we completed: it’s testament to the enormous amount of work that has gone in across the factories in Hinwil, Bicester and Neuburg, in particular. Bringing a new power unit to the track and beginning to understand it properly is a major undertaking, so a sincere thank you to everyone involved.

“We have made substantial progress over the course of the tests, learning day by day and taking important steps forward. The team has been very hands-on, responding quickly to challenges and implementing solutions effectively. Now we have a week to consolidate all our learnings, do our homework and prepare thoroughly for Melbourne. Then it is finally time to go racing.”

Gabriel Bortoleto (Car 5): “We wrap up two productive weeks here in Bahrain, and overall a very busy pre-season. I think the team has done a really good job: we’ve made solid progress with our car from where we started, and that’s really encouraging to see. There are still areas to work on and plenty to learn about it, but overall, it’s safe to say it’s been a positive test, and I want to thank everyone in the team, both trackside as well as in Hinwil, Neuburg and Bicester for their support and hard work. Now, the focus shifts to Melbourne: I’m looking forward to getting the season started.”

Contact:

press@audif1.com

Will Ponissi, Head of Corporate and Race Communications, william.ponissi@audif1.com, +41 79 591 57 85
Nives Pavicic, Communications Manager, nives.pavicic@audif1.com, +41 76 384 07 50
Elena Rovelli, Communications Manager, elena.rovelli@audif1.com, +41 78 209 18 57

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.

