



FEDERATION INTERNATIONALE DE L'AUTOMOBILE

Press Information

2014 Singapore Grand Prix Saturday Press Conference Transcript

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DRIVERS

1 – Lewis HAMILTON (Mercedes)

2 – Nico ROSBERG (Mercedes)

3 – Daniel RICCIARDO (Red Bull Racing)

TV UNILATERAL

Lewis, pole position once again for Singapore and you saved the best until last it seems?

Lewis HAMILTON: Yeah, that's always the plan. It doesn't always go to plan but yeah, quite an exciting qualifying session. I wasn't expecting... I guess no one was really expecting to see so much difference and how close everyone was. I did some good laps in the first and second qualifying sessions and saw the Ferraris were very, very close and then obviously for it to end up the way it did is good obviously for our team. My last lap, I locked up into turn one and lost a bit of time but still managed to pull it back later on in the lap. So, at that point I honestly thought that perhaps it was... I lost over a tenth and a half or was two tenths down but I just kept going and it just got better and better throughout the lap.

Were you surprised when you saw Felipe Massa on provisional pole after the first runs?

LH: I wasn't really trying to look at it too much because there was so much happening. I don't know what it ended up as but obviously it was very close. But a great effort by the team. To come here at very much a downforce and engine dependent circuit to have the performance we have I think it's a fantastic performance by them.

Very well done. Nico you missed out by the smallest of margins, I think seven one thousandths of a second. Your radio message at the end on the cool down lap there said it all: "Damn it!"

Nico ROSBERG: Yeah, because seven thousandths, you know, when I think back at the lap, seven thousandths it's nothing, a little bit here or there, you know, like "come on!" I could

have done it. But OK, that's the way it is. Lewis did a good job to get pole, fair play. And second place is OK, obviously first would be better but it's a long race ahead and, yeah, it's fine.

Tell us about the Q2 session? You were in sixth place in the closing stages there and you obviously felt you needed to run again so you did an extra lap?

NR: Yeah, because we changed brakes going into qualifying and I got into a rhythm with the other brakes and so that was a challenge. I mean we expected it to be, but it always is a bit of a challenge. So it took me some time to get into qualifying. And the balance was also very different because the track had cooled down relative to the session before qualifying, which was hotter. There was a lot more understeer now, in the rear we had a lot more grip, so had to complete adapt settings and it just took us some time to get into the qualifying. That's why I'm pleased that in the end I was able to push flat out and put in a good lap time.

Daniel, a tenth-and-a-half behind the Mercedes; can you race them from here?

Daniel RICCIARDO: It's definitely encouraging. Coming into the weekend I thought if we could be within two or three tenths it should give us a bit more optimistic chance in the race to stay with them, so, yeah, I think we ended up a bit closer than we thought we would, particularly after yesterday. So I think it was a good day. Yeah, it was good fun out there. The track was really improving so you had to adapt a lot during the session. Street circuits normally tend to be like that, so it keeps you on your toes. Yeah, good fun.

There was a big roar from the grandstands when you took provisional pole. Have you brought a few thousand of your closest friends from Perth?

DR: I've got a few mates here this weekend and there's probably a few more here that I don't know about. Yeah, it's close to home and it's nice to see a few Aussie flags. Yeah, hopefully keep it up there tomorrow and try and see a better view from the podium.

Q: Lewis, tyres have obviously been a big part of the story throughout this weekend, particularly today and it's obviously going to have an impact on tomorrow's race. What kind of race can we expect tomorrow?

LH: I think coming into the weekend we had a certain opinion about how the tyres would behave, and obviously when we got into the long runs yesterday we saw quite a big difference from what we had though was going to happen. So, I think tomorrow's going to be a really interesting race. Looking after these tyres is not easy but I think it will be a great race to watch for the fans. I think there's going to be a lot going on.

PRESS CONFERENCE

Q: Lewis, one of the things I think is interesting about how today has evolved, that might surprise a few people, is that Mercedes hasn't really shown too much. FP3, then you weren't really at the top of the timesheets throughout qualifying. You mentioned "that's the plan", about saving the best to last. So, what was the strategy today?

LH: I just mean that, as a driver through the weekend you plan to have the last lap as your fastest lap because that's when the track is at its best. That's when you've got the configurations as close to perfect. That's really the lap you want to do it on. The others have just obviously taken a step. It's a real, real surprise. I'm sure the team are surprised, I'm sure

we are just as surprised to see Ferrari really competing on a lap, which is great to see. Also with Williams, also with Red Bull. I think for racing it's great. It makes it... that's probably the most exciting qualifying session I've had for a long time, where there's a lot of people really in the mix and you have to be spot on. I was almost there with that.

Q: Nico, there was a radio message for you: "look after these, these are the race tyres." Obviously there is a consideration there: you have to take some performance out of them because you need the lap time but you've also got to use them tomorrow. How do you see the use of them tomorrow playing out?

NR: Tomorrow is going to be a tough race in terms of tyres. They have a lot of degradation but I'm confident because I had some really good long runs on Friday, so I'm well prepared for the race and feeling good about it.

Q: Daniel, are you fully able to recharge the energy system around this lap? One or two drivers are saying it's been a bit of a struggle. Are you completely on top of that side of things with Red Bull?

DR: Yeah. Yes we are. We're not having any issues there. I think for such a long lap, a little bit on what Lewis touched on, it's amazing how close we are, y'know. Monaco is a street circuit but it's a lot shorter lap so you can expect us to be closer but this one, yeah, it's pretty cool how many cars are within half a second or a second. So, it's going to be a fun race tomorrow definitely. I think tyres will be key, as always, but particularly here. It's not going to be as straightforward as Monza with a one-stop. So, it should be fun.

QUESTIONS FROM THE FLOOR

Q: (Silvia Arias – Parabrisas) Daniel, we saw you doing a wonderful lap, it was unbelievable watching it on TV. Do you have the same feeling when you're going to the limit? Your feelings about this lap please?

DR: Yeah, street circuits are fun. I think all us drivers enjoy them. You jump across kerbs, you brush near the wall, it's a little bit like the closer you get the more you want to risk and I guess that's why we race, we love that rush, that adrenalin. It's like speed, we wish we could go faster. It's a bit like that when you come to a street circuit, you just really enjoy handling the car, playing with fire, so to speak. It's not always the quickest way when it's sliding around but I think you've got to take hold on a street circuit so that's where I get the enjoyment.

Q: (Michael Schmidt – Auto, Motor und Sport) Lewis, Nico just explained why, on the last lap, he was quick enough to be on the front row. How was it with you because you also did your fast lap only on the last lap? I guess you didn't go slowly beforehand intentionally. Did you have any problems before?

LH: I just didn't really have a clean lap through the whole of qualifying. The last one was the cleanest. When you do the first lap, you get your lap time. The next time you go out you have a delta so you know whether you're up or down on that lap. I locked up into turn one and missed the apex and so I was down 0.18/two tenths by the time I got to turn five. At that point, I was thinking this is going to be almost impossible to regain that but the previous lap there were a couple of corners where I lost out as well so I fixed those and got back the time. It's great that there's still potential there and with a perfect lap it's a good place to be.

Q: (Don Kennedy – Hawke’s Bay Today) Lewis and Nico, if I understand the restrictions on radio use, how important is that going to be in terms of this race and information about how each other is doing in terms of your position on the track and what tyres you’re on and so on? Do you think it’s going to affect your battle for the championship?

NR: I don’t think it’s actually going to make too much of a difference tomorrow. There’s just a few bits and pieces... you know they can’t tell me ‘OK, work on turn seven because that’s where you’re losing some time’ or something like that or ‘turn twenty is good, keep doing what you’re doing.’ That’s the main difference, so actually for tomorrow’s race really, I don’t think it’s going to be too much of a thing.

Q: Lewis, anything to add? The starts, obviously, you’re going to be able to be talked through all the things you need to do still, that’s still permitted.

LH: Yeah, obviously coming into the weekend there was a plan of zero being able to say to us but I think there’s a just a few things (that are banned). We’re all in the same boat so I’m quite excited about that.

Ends