



FEDERATION INTERNATIONALE DE L'AUTOMOBILE

Press Information

2014 Singapore Grand Prix Sunday Race Press Conference Transcript

21.09.2014

DRIVERS

- 1 – Lewis HAMILTON (Mercedes)
- 2 – Sebastian VETTEL (Red Bull Racing)
- 3 – Daniel RICCIARDO (Red Bull Racing)

PODIUM INTERVIEWS

(Conducted by Eddie Jordan)

Lewis, did or dream or think this would be the result today?

Lewis HAMILTON: Of course, I was dreaming it last night but you never really think it's going to happen. I just want to say a huge thanks to my team. What they've done this year is absolutely incredible and to be able to arrive here knowing that we have a car we can fight with, and just the feeling I had through the race, it's... I couldn't do it without them. Thank you guys.

We know you've won seven races this year but the talking point is how big a pressure was on you in that last pit stop? That's what we wanted to know.

LH: Ah, it wasn't that bad.

Well you sounded totally paranoid up there I have to tell you!

LH: No, I think at the time it was just not really knowing what the situation was. I knew I had a big gap but if a safety car comes out, what does that mean, but then when I came in and knew that I had to fight the guys on a long, long, run-down tyre, I knew that we would have chance to get by, so I felt kind of comfortable.

Well, we'll come back to you because we have lots more questions but ladies and gentlemen, Sebastian Vettel, four times world champion, his best result of the year! Sebastian, what is it with Singapore and you? You seem to be a night raider or something like that. Every time there's a night race you do remarkably well. Obviously on the podium again this year.

Sebastian VETTEL: Yeah, kid did well! It's a circuit that I really enjoy, I really like. The atmosphere is great. You know, on the drivers' parade there are already so many people in for the race. It's great. It's a tough one, it's two hours and again we went to the full two hours. I had a good start, got past Daniel and then I think we had a decent race. We played a little bit with strategy and then the safety car came in the worst possible moment for us. So we tried to obviously stay out with the last

set of tyres and make them work, which was very, very much borderline. I had a lot of pressure from Daniel and also from Fernando behind, but very happy obviously to make it P2.

A lot of red faces up here – the dehydration, the heat, the temperature. A huge race here is it? Is it very, very difficult?

SV: Yeah, it's quite hot. The cars are sliding a lot, so you have to focus quite hard. It's definitely a race we all enjoy as drivers because it's such a big challenge and to stand up here and get a cool glass or bottle of champagne is quite nice.

Well, your best race of the season, your best result and we know what you've done here before. Now, ladies and gentlemen, the pride of Australia, Daniel Ricciardo! Almost like a home race really?

Daniel RICCIARDO: Yeah, feels like a home race. Singapore to Perth is pretty much as close as Melbourne to Perth, so for West Australia it's like another home race.

I need to ask you the question: do you think that when Fernando gave up the place to Sebastian, do you think he should have given up the place to you?

DR: To be honest, I'll have to have a look. Obviously he went off, that was clear. I knew he would give it back to Seb [but] whether he had to give it back to me, I'll have a look at that. I was just sort of focused on regrouping from the start really. To get on the podium I guess is not a bad result, good for the team and at least we've got some Aussie flags.

We see a lot of Aussie flag, you're the pride of Australia. Lewis, things have changed, really, haven't they, for you?

LH: Absolutely.

Big smile on your face.

LH: Yeah, I was so excited to have... I was looking for that clean weekend and this has been it. It's been fantastic. It's not perfect for the team because Nico didn't finish and we're always striving to get both cars finishing 1-2. I don't think anyone has finished one-two before and that was our goal. So there are things we can still work on. I also want to say a big thanks to all the fans. Incredible support today, so thank you guys.

PRESS CONFERENCE

Q: Lewis, your second victory in Singapore, your seventh of the season and a very popular win, it would seem, with the crowd – but there was clearly a tense moment for you after the safety car when you knew you had to stop again and it was clear the four or five cars behind you didn't – but the strategy team stayed calm, you stayed calm and you're now leading the Drivers' Championship. Just tell us about the rollercoaster of emotions and the way you feel leaving Singapore tonight.

LH: Coming here and to the last six races with a great race in Monza, knowing that we had a car to compete here, obviously yesterday in qualifying it was very close between everyone so I didn't really know what to expect today – but got off cleanly. Of course it would have been a hardcore race if Nico was in the race with me as the car was feeling very good and we would have been very strong. But, yeah, later on in the race, I think for me I was a bit unaware of what I needed to do. That second-to-last stint, I extended it as long as I could and then they said "we need 27s." And that was still six seconds I needed more, and my tyres were dropping off, so I didn't really understand

why. And I was also nervous that, if the Safety Car came out, would that cause me big problems? So anyway, fortunately we got to where I needed to go and we pitted. I came out, and I saw Sebastian going past but straight away I knew they would be on... they were obviously doing a two-stop, I would have good pace. So, took it easy the first lap. It was actually a bit of a tight gap, maybe I should have overtaken him somewhere else but fortunately Sebastian was very fair and I got by. After that it was quite straightforward. Amazing job from the team and the guys back at the factory. The car was really spectacular in the race.

Q: Sebastian, clearly the start was decisive for you. A fantastic initial getaway up into second place, you got the place back from Fernando. You were also a little bit sceptical when it came to the strategy, saying “that’s not my plan,” to go to the finish. So, tell us about the thinking at that point and how the race played out from your mind.

SV: As you mentioned, the start obviously was good for me. Quite weird to stop with no car ahead but not being on the first row. But it helped, obviously, because I had no car in front and I could get side by side and get straight into second place. After that I think we had a good race. Not ideal, in terms of timing with the safety car. Obviously, before that we lost a position to Fernando because we stopped too late – but we decided to go on the primes and we were hoping for no safety car to come out, which came out, so not ideal! But yeah, after that, obviously after the restart, we knew it was difficult with 27 seconds to make up on older tyres than everyone behind – it’s probably impossible. So, obviously to get the best result we knew we have to get to the end. I wasn’t very confident that we can do it, simply because of the wear we had the sets before. Obviously for one lap I was in the lead. As Lewis touched on, the overtaking manoeuvre, I wasn’t quite sure what he was doing. I thought that I give him all the space to pass me on the inside for the next corner but it seemed like he couldn’t wait to get back in the lead. It was quite tight but I saw him, obviously, so I had to back-off and let him through. There was no point fighting him at that stage because I didn’t have the tyres to match him. Nevertheless, to finish P2 obviously was the best we could do. We had the oldest set of tyres in the last stint, so it was quite tricky managing those to the finish line with not much tread left. Obviously very good result for the team.

Q: Daniel, I guess the opposite for you. Not a great initial getaway, you lost the initiative to Sebastian there, which is why you finished behind him in the end. Tell us whether you expected the attack from Alonso at the end because obviously he had pitted under the safety car, was on much fresher tyres than you . Were you surprised the attack didn’t come? What was going through your mind?

DR: Yeah, I think the closing stages, I could see after the restart for the safety car, he wasn’t attacking as much as I thought with a new set of primes, so I thought he was holding back and was going to make a late charge at the end. I think we all just piled up. I caught the back of Sebastian, he caught the back of me and we were all in a train and not really any real opportunities arose for any of us. So, it was what it was. I probably did expect him to come on a get stronger at the end but I think once you start following and trying to get the pedal down a bit harder to set up a pass, then you start hurting the rears and you all fall into each others’ pace. The start initially wasn’t too bad but just before Turn One we had a bit of an issue and I think we lost a bit of power. Whether we could have held on or not... who knows? But then yeah, Fernando went wide and then gave the place back to Seb and the race from there was fairly straightforward. Encountered a few other issues and bits and pieces here and there – so we’ll have to look into that. See how much it cost us in the end. But obviously it was nice to get on the back of Seb and try to put him under a bit of pressure but I think for all of us here it was follow-the-leader a bit and not much else to do.

QUESTIONS FROM THE FLOOR

Q: (Lennart Wermke – Bild) Lewis, is there anyone you dedicate your victory to?

LH: I've not really thought of it. There are only a few of the race wins which I've really dedicated to anyone. Maybe to my fans, I think. I met a couple of really special people last week – they'll know who they are – and just generally to all the fans. They're sending me messages and all that, really just saying that we win or we lose together and also being here with all the British flags, it lifts you up so much that probably they don't even realise, so this is for them.

Q: (Dan Knutson – Auto Action and National Speedsport News) Daniel, you were on the radio during the race saying that you were losing power and I believe gears. What was happening and was the team able to help you correct those matters?

DR: Yeah, we had quite a bit going on during the race so yeah, power was coming and going and from the safety car onwards it was pretty consistently down on power and basically, coming up through gears, I would get a bit of power and then it would drop and then it would come again. So we definitely had a few issues and we tried fixing them but to be honest we didn't quite clear it all up. I guess it did cost us a bit today but obviously we still got it to the end but obviously we will definitely look at what the cause was and if we can fix it. Normally, if we have those glitches after a couple of laps we clear it but this one pretty much carried through all race. I guess I was a bit frustrated, bit concerned as well that we wouldn't get it to the flag but luckily it held on and as I said, we'll just look at it and I'm sure we'll fix it for Japan.

Q: (Michael Schmidt – Auto, Motor und Sport) To Seb and Daniel, what was the plan to have the harder tyre, the prime tyre, in the third stint rather than at the end, because at that moment, I don't think you could know that the safety car would come out?

SB: I guess in my case Fernando undercut us, it was quite obvious, and then I think it was pretty pointless to do the same as him so we tried to do opposite and then get him back obviously, in the last stint of the race, I think that was the plan. With hindsight, we should have obviously stopped earlier, tyres were at the end of their wear life anyway so I think that was the plan. It was obviously high risk because of the safety car. In the end, we got lucky because the tyres held up but at that stage it didn't look like it.

Q: (Don Kennedy – Hawke's Bay Today) Lewis, you said on the podium that Mercedes were hoping for a one-two finish but in terms of the championship, can you say, in all honesty, that you're sorry that Nico didn't finish?

LH: Well, of course the points are something... I came here hoping to really gain those seven points and anything more than that was just a bonus, so today, of course, those extra points are a huge help. That's several DNFs we've had now on either car and we want to continue getting those one-tuos still. I know that the team will not be 100 percent happy today because we want to win collectively, we want to get those one-tuos, we want to be the dominant team all together, so by not getting that result, they'll be going back to the drawing board trying to figure out what happened. They're constantly coming up to things and perhaps other people are starting to be a bit more reliable than us so that's an area that we can still definitely improve on.

Ends