



FEDERATION INTERNATIONALE DE L'AUTOMOBILE

Press Information

2013 Spanish Grand Prix Sunday Press Conference Transcript

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DRIVERS

1 – Fernando ALONSO (Ferrari)

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PODIUM INTERVIEWS

(Conducted by Eddie Jordan)

Fernando, how much did this crowd... we saw you go off to see the crowd... How much did the embrace of the crowd help you today?

Fernando ALONSO: Well, hello everybody. Definitely it was a fantastic emotion and it really helped. You feel the support from everybody, every single member of the team taking care of every detail because we want to do well here, in front of our fans, so many people supporting Ferrari. So, we did it, we're happy for that but we don't want to stop here obviously.

How much today mean for your confidence that you can go on to win this championship?

FA: Nothing really changed. We know that we have five races only, some up and downs. Some races we had a good race with no problems and we more or less finished on the podium in all of them. Some races we had some mistakes, some mechanical problems as well that we don't want to repeat. We know that we have a car to fight with the top and if we do well we can fight for the championship. If we don't do good enough maybe we don't fight but we want to do so.

Kimi, four points off the championship lead at this stage and you're coming in under the radar so to speak, because nobody is really giving you enough credit for what you're doing at the moment. How do you respond to that?

Kimi RAIKKONEN: I don't mind. I'm here only to do as good races as we can and always you want to win and it's disappointing to finish second but sometimes we have to take what we can get. Like I said, I don't mind if people don't notice us. We do our work, be happy what we do and obviously try to achieve in Enstone.

Is the lack of attention possibly helping you?

KR: It makes no difference really to me. We know in the team, and all the sponsors, what we try to achieve and what we are doing and that's the main thing.

Felipe, what a great drive, from ninth place on the grid [to third]. Felipe, are you back to your very best?

Felipe MASSA: Yeah, I think so. For sure I was a little bit disappointed yesterday after the qualifying losing three places but anyway the race was very good for us, our car was fantastic. Very aggressive straight away. I gained back the positions. I think maybe in the first lap I was already sixth. Then overtaking cars. Struggling a bit with the tyres, to make it survive every stint in a good way but I think the race was very good for us.

PRESS CONFERENCE

Fernando, as you were saying, the first time the race has been won from that far back on the grid. Obviously your third win on home soil. Can you describe the emotion you're feeling right now?

FA: Very good again. It's very special winning at home. It doesn't matter how many times you can do it, how many you repeat it, it's always like starting from zero and you have again very emotional last laps, very long last laps because you want to finish obviously as soon as possible. Extremely happy for the team to have both cars on the podium after a difficult qualifying that maybe we were not too fast yesterday. But we knew we had the pace on the long runs and we wanted to have some clear air to exploit this potential in the car. We did it. Everything worked perfect. Happy for the team, for the fans and hopefully this is not a one-off.

Obviously you took a lot of points today out Sebastian Vettel as well. The start was clearly crucial, as was the timing of the first stop – you undercut Vettel at that point but at what stage of this grand prix did you feel you had it under control.

FA: Let's see, after the last stop. Until that point you never know what can happen. We had more or less an easy race in terms of traffic etc but we know Kimi was on a different strategy but you never know how the tyres are going to behave. When we pit two or three laps later than Kimi and we were first, at that point.

Kimi, we heard you say on the podium there you were disappointed you didn't win. You had a different strategy to Fernando, doing one stop less than the Ferrari today. Was there a point at which you thought you might have an opportunity to challenge Fernando for the win today?

KR: Maybe half way through. Obviously, we were leading but when we were on old tyres and he had newer tyres, it's too easy to overtake. There's no point to really fight against [him] because you cannot hold him behind. I knew if I could somehow stay a bit more closer, even with old tyres, maybe I have some chance, even if I'm already behind and will be with old tyres in the end but you never know. But they were just too fast. He had a good start around the outside of me. I don't think the end result really was decided there but we just did a different way of doing the race. It wasn't a winning way today but... We're never happy if we're not winning. We're only here to try to win. But we kind of caught up with Vettel few points and obviously Fernando caught me up [by] some points but we're still in the hunt and we'll keep ourselves there and hopefully in the future just try to win a bit more.

Consistency is the key though, isn't it? It's the fourth time in five races you've stood on the podium, including that win in Australia and as you say you've got it down to just five points to Vettel. How do you feel about your championship situation and what comes from here?

KR: Obviously it's better than before the race now. It will not be easy. We cannot fight against... it's the same for everybody. Everybody wants to win it, but sometimes you have a bad day. You try to minimise those and make the most out of them and give yourself a chance to be up there and fight for wins. I think if you can do that often it will give a good chance in the end to fight for the championship. It's only a five race-old season, so there's an awful lot to be raced. We'll see what happens. We'll try to do well and see where we are in the end.

Felipe, your first podium of 2013. You recovered from your penalty in starting ninth to finish in third today. What does this result say about you and Ferrari this season?

Felipe MASSA: Well, I think a bit disappointed for what's happening yesterday. These things happen many times and no penalties happen so I'm disappointed with that. I didn't cause him any issues for him in the qualifying, so I'm disappointed for that. The race was good. Very good start; very good beginning of the race; overtaking cars; trying to be aggressive, you know and passing people, which was the case. I tried to undercut people as well, stopping before. Maybe it was a little bit early as well. Looking at the end of the race I thought I maybe had the opportunity to fight with Kimi. But I think it was a great race, we did a good job. Our car was really superb for this track. The degradation on the tyres was not Lotus but I think we did the best as we're supposed to do and we showed a good performance that I expected to have from Friday. I think we are [heading] in a good direction so I hope from now on we are fighting for the podium every race, especially in the race, which is where it counts. Qualifying we know is not easy for us. We are pushing very hard to improve the car, to make the car quicker in qualifying. But we know we have a good car for the race so I hope me and Fernando are having great races from now and until the end of the year.

And looking at your performance across this weekend, from what you felt in the car, do you feel that you could be winning races soon?

FM: Yeah, definitely.

QUESTIONS FROM THE FLOOR

Q: (Adrian R. Huber – Agencia EFE) In China you equalised Mansell's victories now you have overtaken him, 32 victories. Senna has 41, do you think that's possible? How about Prost, 51 and Schumacher, 91?

FA: No. I don't know. I just be happy if I finish second all the races and I win more championships.

Q: (Jaime Rodriguez - El Mundo) This is your fourth year in Ferrari, is there in this moment, have you got the best chance to win the Championship this year, do you feel like that?

FA: Probably yes, in terms of performance of the car. We should have won the championship, I believe, in 2010. We arrived in Abu Dhabi with seven points, or nine points ahead of Sebastian [15]. We lost there but nothing we can change now. Last year maybe we didn't deserve it because we were one second off the pace but even with that we

manage to fight until Brazil race. So, this year we have in our hands a package that maybe is not the fastest, still not the fastest but we are working on that. But definitely on Sundays it's a very competitive team package, let's say. We are not the quickest over one lap, maybe we don't set the fastest time in the race but we have fantastic strategy people, fantastic pitstops, the starts, tyre degradation. We have many ingredients to have a competitive car to fight for the championship. In the four years in Ferrari maybe it's true that this is the one we feel more confident with but we are not happy still with the performance of the car and we want to have a good and aggressive developing programme for the next races.

Q: (Toni Lopez – La Vanguardia) Two questions for Fernando. Congratulations. In 2006 you said, when you had your first winning at home that it had been your best race in Formula One. What can you say now? And when have you realised that you can win this race?

FA: Well the first, I didn't remember to say this in 2006. And if I say that, obviously from 2008 to 2013 I did better races. Maybe, as I said before, after the last pitstop when I found myself in front of Kimi, eight or nine seconds, and our tyres were two or three laps newer than Kimi, I realised that the race was in our pocket if we don't do mistakes.

Q: (Carlos Miquel Gomez – La Gaceta) A question for Fernando: what about the overtake, two guys, Hamilton and Räikkönen in the third corner. Was your belief in the last moment that you can pass Hamilton because you stay very, very near of the line.

FA: Yes, I think we knew that to win the race we needed to pass people at the start. The start was very good but then it was very narrow and we didn't have the space to move a little bit. So, I wait for a better opportunity. It came straight after turn one. I saw Kimi and Lewis running a little bit wide in turn one so I changed trajectory and I had a clean exit in turn two. I passed Kimi and I said 'why not also Hamilton?' I had a little bit of KERS that I saved from the start for turn three, so I used that to pass Hamilton and I think that was a lot in the race and I think also when exiting the first pitstop, we undercut and we overtook Vettel, in the strategy in lap 11 but not Rosberg. So Rosberg, we have to overtake him at the end of the straight. And that was also very close.

Q: [Paolo Ianieri – La Gazzetta dello Sport) Fernando, historically this has always been a track where it was pretty difficult to overtake but today we have seen that there were many manoeuvres. You made history because nobody ever won starting fifth, so how do you feel about it? And also, to all of you, don't you think it's too much with these tyres having too many pitstops and there is too much confusion?

FA: I don't know. I'm happy to win from whatever position to start. Here, I think this historically has been difficult to overtake and starting off the front row was hard for the race but now with this year's degradation and this year's tyres we see the races keep changing all the time. Whatever car keeps the tyre alive normally is on the podium at least – or winning the race. So, happy for this. If it's too much confusion for the spectators? There is no doubt. I think it is impossible to follow one race now. Here it's good because you have the tower and I think you follow the race on the tower with the numbers and you see who is first, who is second. But in some other circuits, if I'm sitting in the grandstand, without any information: radio, telephone or something, you only see cars passing.

Kimi, your thoughts on that?

KR: I don't really think it's any different to last year. Obviously I wasn't there the year before but they had a lot of pitstops also. So that's the way it is and it's the same for everybody.

For sure sometimes it's a bit tricky, even for us, who is where and what is going on if you haven't seen it as the guy in front, what's going on. But that's what Formula One is today. It might change, it might not.

And Felipe. Do you know where you are in the race at all times?

FM: Yes. You can see on the...[points]

Q: (Pierre Van Vliet – F1i.com) Kimi, in the early part of the race when you had your first pitstop, you came back with new soft tyres and you spent... you lost a few laps behind Vettel. Without that time lost do you think you could have been in front of Fernando on the last stint?

KR: It wasn't a new, it was used from qualifying. So, I mean obviously I have to overtake and I took maybe a few laps more than I expected but I got past him and I really could pull away but in the end I really don't think those were the decisions that were the deciding story of the race. I think we had the speed but we should have done it different. Maybe more pitstops, then you can push all the time – but I think this was our best way of doing the race. That's what we planned and that's what we did and I think we deserved to be second and not really winning today. It's OK for the team, the guys did a good job and we go for the next race to try to do better and get the best out of it.

Q: (Leonid Novozhilov – F1Life) Kimi, what do you think about the pit stop strategy in Monaco?

KR: I have no idea. I know what we did here and yesterday. There's a few weeks to go. We will see what happens, what tyres they bring and how everything plans out. I think it's usually quite straightforward there. Usually, if you're not in the front, you start behind somebody else and it's really difficult to overtake. We will see.

Q: Fernando, what are your thoughts on Monaco, because obviously the Mercedes is very quick in qualifying, they were quick in Monaco last year, do you think the problem that they have at the moment with tyres in the race is less of an issue there? Are they going to be more difficult to beat in Monaco?

FA: Yes, definitely. They will arrive as favourites for Monaco. They've been on pole position for the last three races, they were on pole last year with Michael's lap, so it would be a surprise if they weren't on pole position in Monaco. And as you said, it's more difficult to overtake in Monaco, so maybe they can keep good positions for longer. It's something we need to understand and we need to do a better job on Saturday, Felipe and I, and Monaco is one of those places where we must do it.

Q: (Heikki Kulta - Turun Sanomat) Kimi, you have three successive second places and now you've managed to catch up Sebastian by six points; was this the most rewarding of these three races, and how do you see your chances to do better in Monaco?

KR: First of all, Monaco is a different place compared to this, so it's a bit hard to say. Last year I wasn't very good there. For sure, it should be a bit better but I've had some good races there – it's a dangerous thing to say – but as Fernando said, I think Mercedes will unfortunately be pretty quick there and after that it's difficult to overtake. The only difference that they have made against most of us is in the last sector where it's tight so you can really expect, from what they did last year and what they did here, that they should be pretty fast there. We will see what happens there, but gaining the points on Sebastian was nice. If he would have lost more points and still be second it would have been even more annoying,

but OK, you also want to win but we cannot still put ourselves in a better position for the championship so at least something good came out of it.

Q: (Fulvio Solms - Corriere dello Sport) Fernando, are you concerned that this fantastic situation with this marvellous pace of Ferrari in the race can be changed in Monte Carlo?

FA: I'm confident for Monte Carlo. Looking at the last three years, even when we were not competitive in Monte Carlo, we always managed to be on the podium, more or less, in a consistent way so that's the aim for this year as well. We had a problem in Malaysia, the retirement, the problem with the rear wing in Bahrain and we lost some of the consistency that we need to fight for the championship. In the three troublefree races we've had this year we finished second in Australia, we won in China and in Spain so what we want to do is put together four or five consistent races with no problems and try to get some podiums in our pocket and score some good points, and I think in Monaco we can continue this trend. I remember in 2011 we were lapped here by the McLarens and Red Bull and we arrived in Monaco and we nearly won the race, we finished second behind Sebastian with a red flag on the last lap. We were fighting for victory so I don't see any reason – with this car which is also competitive everywhere – not to fight for top positions in Monaco. Let's hope so.

Q: (Sarah Holt – CNN.com) Fernando, an impressive drive. I'm wondering if you felt under pressure this weekend after two difficult races and you're at home. Did you feel pressure that you had to perform this weekend? Maybe you like pressure. I wonder.

FA: Not extra pressure but it's true that, as I said just now, we need some good races and I will feel more or less the same in Monaco. We must take extra care for the next races, in terms of possible mechanical issues, driver errors, strategy mistakes, whatever. All these things happen sometimes in races. I think all the team and myself are extra focused now on this part of the championship, because we felt we lost too many points with some things that we didn't do right and we must put everything together and avoid any more mistakes. Here, there was this extra pressure to do everything well but I don't think it will be any different in Monaco or in Canada where we will go and approach the race to really avoid any mistakes that can arise. So good to race at home, extra motivation, little bit more pressure but I didn't do 100 percent in the car sometimes. You are fifth, sometimes third or first, the happiness of the grandstands changes, it depends on the position but inside yourself, you are normally quite happy with the performance if you give 100percent of the time.

Q: (Cristobal Rosaleny - Car and Driver) Fernando, have you been surprised not having Sebastian breathing down your neck today?

FA: Sebastian, not really. I think that when we started the race we knew that Kimi was probably the fastest on race pace of the leading guys. The Mercedes were a question mark. We thought that maybe they would have problems in the race but you never know until it happens really. And Sebastian... they didn't have an easy weekend on Friday and in qualifying they were not on pole which is normal for them and then in the race, they struggle a little bit more, so, as I said, Lotus was the team that we looked at a little bit more.

Q: (Cristobal Rosaleny - Car and Driver) And Fernando, could you please compare your feelings when you seem to be very relaxed in comparison to the European Grand Prix last year?

FA: Emotions compared to last year? Valencia was very different because it's not that we expected to win today but we were completely surprised last year when we won the race. We knew that today, if everything goes well and we do a fantastic race, we can win the race but in Valencia last year, we thought optimistic strategies pays etc, maybe our final results in the simulation were sixth, seventh, fifth and when we won that race starting eleventh and in front of everybody, it was a little bit more joy or a little bit more of an emotional win.

Q: (Michael Schmidt – Auto, Motor und Sport) Fernando, you had to catch up the time for one extra pit stop against Kimi. How difficult was it to balance the speed or the pace against tyre saving?

FA: Not so difficult today. We had the pace in the car, we had clean air, no traffic, only a little bit in the first stint behind Sebastian and Rosberg. Then we undercut and we passed Sebastian in the pits and Rosberg two laps later at the first corner, from that point we just pushed 90 percent, more or less. You have enough pace to open the necessary gap and you know that if you push 100percent maybe you kill the tyres, so it's more or less normal driving, let's say, in 2013 races. You try to control the pace and the tyres and you put in balance these two things.

Q: (Livio Oricchio – O Estado de Sao Paulo) Felipe, when you left the pit at the last stop, you were ten seconds behind Kimi on new hard tyres, and Kimi had already pitted before you. Did you think it could be possible to overtake him?

FM: Well, first of all I was 15.5s behind Kimi, not 10s, so anyway, I was pushing hard to see if I could manage to catch him. I was catching him until lap six or seven by more than one second per lap but then maybe I was pushing too hard, I lost the tyres at the end, so I saw that maybe it was not possible to catch him so I started to save the rears more and the pace didn't carry on like that. The only way to catch him was to push so I tried to push but it was not possible.

Q: (Livio Oricchio – O Estado de Sao Paulo) Alonso, did you anticipate a third pit stop, because you set very good laps and then suddenly you came into the pits?

FA: I don't have any answer, really. They called me in; I don't know if it was too early or too late, because our fight was with Kimi at that point, because we were out of sync with Kimi for five laps always. It didn't look anything special, short or long. I don't know really.

Q: (Jussi Jakala – YLE) Kimi, all top drivers are kind of supermen; did you have time to enjoy the battle that you had with Sebastian?

KR: Yeah, it didn't last very long. It took a few laps. I maybe had a chance earlier but I didn't think that I would take him at the end of the straight but actually they were very fast at the start of the straight so I couldn't catch him there, so it took a bit longer than I expected but then it was quite nice, fair but quite tough fight, but it worked out OK.

Ends