



FEDERATION INTERNATIONALE DE L'AUTOMOBILE

## Press Information

### 2013 Monaco Grand Prix Post Qualifying Press Conference Transcript

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#### DRIVERS

- 1 – Nico ROSBERG (Mercedes)
- 2 – Lewis HAMILTON (Mercedes)
- 3 – Sebastian VETTEL (Red Bull Racing)

#### TV UNILATERAL

**Q: Nico, I guess in some ways the result that many people had expected – but it was not straightforward in the way it was achieved today, given the conditions.**

**Nico ROSBERG:** Oh, definitely, yeah! It could have been a lot easier out there today. The conditions were all over the place and as soon as it started drizzling again the lap times became a lot slower, even on the Inters. So it was really difficult and changing so much, y'know? So you really have to be out there at the right time with the right tyres, especially in Q2, changing over to slicks – but I'm really happy. Everything went to plan and the last lap was OK. It's great to be on pole again, especially in Monaco. If at any track then it's this track where it makes a difference.

**Q: Lewis, you held provisional pole position for a matter of a few seconds...**

**Lewis HAMILTON:** Thanks!

**Q: ...before Nico came through. Did you think you'd done enough on that lap? Did you think that today was the day?**

**LH:** I didn't, definitely not. I've been struggling all weekend as you can see, my pace was sucking all weekend and just struggling with the car if I'm honest. It's the first time I've ever had that experience here in Monaco, since 2005, every year, I was on it and didn't have any problems with confidence or anything like that – but this weekend has been difficult. So I'm really happy to be here, be able to lock-out, obviously, the front row for the team and just massive improvement for me, considering all the sessions in qualifying – so I'm still chuffed.

**Q: Sebastian, you were fastest in Q2 but when push came to shove at the very end, were you just missing that final little bit, do you think?**

**Sebastian VETTEL:** Yeah, I think it was very close. Mercedes was very quick all weekend, we know they are very quick on one lap. But I don't want that to sound like an excuse. I think it was a bit more than a tenth missing and I think I had that today but it didn't come together on the last lap. Really, if anyone's to blame... I think the car was very, very good

and if anyone's to blame then it's me. So, not entirely happy .with the last lap but quite happy that there isn't a Ferrari or a Lotus ahead. Tomorrow I think these guys will have to stop at least as much as us – yeah therefore I think sitting in third is still a good result and should be a good opportunity tomorrow to win the race.

**Q: Back to you Nico, it's 30 years since your father Keke won this grand prix, 30 years to the year You're bidding to become the first son of a former winner to win the Monaco Grand Prix. Your thoughts on tomorrow's grand prix.**

**NR:** Well, it's always nice to hear these statistics but... yeah, it's nice but it doesn't really change much for tomorrow. Just very happy starting first. And you know, in Barcelona we were still struggling a lot in the race. I was 70 seconds behind at the end of the race from the race winner. We're improving, it's difficult to understand the tyres and get the most out of it. We're improving step by step – but there's still a lot of question marks remaining. And so here, yeah, I'm sure we've made a step forward but it's still going to be difficult for us tomorrow, definitely. It's still our weakness but we'll make the best of it and, who knows? You can always have a few surprises.

## **PRESS CONFERENCE**

**Q: Obviously Nico it's an all-German final this evening in the Champions' League, you've stuck the car on pole position so a fair bit to shout about there – but there was one moment in Q1 at Mirabeau where you appeared to be about to go straight on – so quite a close moment. Did you have your heart in your mouth at that moment?**

**NR:** Two moments actually! I did exactly the same thing twice. I was just surprised by the lack of grip going into there and then I didn't really want to accept the next time around that I had to take so much speed out, and so I went straight again. But anyway, it was the beginning of the session, it was drying out so I knew that there was plenty of time to set a time later on. But of course those moments are not great. Prefer staying on track.

**Q: Lewis, I guess it's moments like that where you guys really show what you can do, finding grip levels. At no point in the weekend have we had any wet-running and you had to go out there and find the limit almost immediately. Can you just put into words how you do that and what it feels like, what you're getting back through the car?**

**LH:** That's not an easy question to answer. It's just down to feel and we all have... that's the skill that we have, to feel the grip when it's unknown and that's really one of the most exciting things about this session: you never knew where the grip was. You'd arrive in a corner: sometimes you've overdone it; sometimes you've undershot. And like Nico said, it's surprising how little grip there was in some places. And that's what makes the session so exciting. And like I said, I'm just happy. Congratulations to Nico, he did a great job today – but I'm really happy I could be up here with him.

**Q: Sebastian, your thoughts on that – and also on what we saw on Thursday from Red Bull in terms of long-run performance. Obviously we know what's happened the last few races with Mercedes after strong qualifying but this is a very different kind of race track in terms of tyre wear, isn't it?**

**SV:** Yeah, I think we will have to wait until tomorrow really to be precise – but I think we had an idea on Thursday. Our performance on Thursday – my performance on Thursday was not great. I wasn't feeling the car and therefore today I was much, much happier. We improved the car a lot so having that extra day yesterday I think helped us. Right from the start this morning the car was much more to my liking. I felt much more confident, got into the rhythm nicer which is the most important around here. If you don't feel comfortable

then you just don't dare to go faster. So I was very happy with the car and I'm, I think, very confident for tomorrow. Long run pace looked already good on Thursday so I expect it to be again a bit again a stronger on Friday [Sunday]. I think we're pretty much average in terms of tyre wear, so yeah, the last couple of races Mercedes was worst in that regard but Monaco is a different track. A little bit different what we can expect tomorrow, so I think we still have a great chance from P3, hoping for a good start and then getting into the race nicely, doing the right calls at the right time and hopefully come out ahead. That's the plan. But surely those guys have something against that. But yeah, our target tomorrow is to win.

## **QUESTIONS FROM THE FLOOR.**

**Q: (Michael Schmidt – Auto, Motor und Sport) Seb, you were the only one in the last outing who did only one flying lap instead of two. First of all, why did you do it? And second, was it a mistake? Because everybody seems to be faster on the second lap.**

**SV:** Yeah, would, could, should! I think if I could decide again then I'd probably go for two and two. Two laps every time. I was confident that when the track picks up I'm able to nail the first lap. My first sector wasn't bad but the first two corners, which is turn one and then the Casino, the fronts weren't ready and then you play catching up. You feel that you've lost something. Overall I was happy with the lap but I think there was a tenth, a tenth-and-a-half for sure somewhere. So therefore initially a little disappointed. But as I said, overall happy because on Thursday it didn't look as if we were anywhere close to the first two rows, so I'm happy with the result and confident for tomorrow.

**Q: (David Tremayne – The Independent) Two questions to Lewis. Can you expand a little bit more on what you said about this struggle. Is it a matter of just the setup of the car?**

**LH:** No, the setup of the car is good. It's been good all weekend but that's probably... that last lap is probably the first time I've switched my tyres on all weekend. And when you don't generate the heat in your tyres you don't have the confidence to hit the brakes hard and brake late. Even on that lap, my tyres weren't ready by turn one, similar to what Seb was experiencing. That means you just have a bit of understeer and you're playing catch-up for the rest of the lap. But generally the rest of the lap was great. That's why my middle and my last sector were competitive. It was a big improvement for me because in P1, P2 and P3 it was a disaster. I think it's just that it's a new car still. For whatever reason I'm still coming to terms with it.

**Q: (David Tremayne – The Independent) Lewis you've been criticised again lately – it's the lifestyle thing again and that's why you're struggling and everything else. What's your reaction to that?**

**LH:** Well, I'm not really aware of it. Someone mentioned something about my dog. How the hell can a dog be distracting? I don't really know how I could live my life any different. I'm enjoying my life, so if people have a got a problem with that then that's there problem.

**Q: (Frederic Ferret – L'Equipe) A question to Sebastian. Apart from the start, where do you think you can overtake the Mercedes tomorrow?**

**SV:** I don't know. There's a lot of laps here, 78, so... I think on track it will be difficult, we all know that. I think obviously I was fourth last year at the end of the race for quite... many laps. I had the feeling I could go faster, I think Nico was in second, he had the feeling he could go faster but it's difficult to overtake. In 2009 I didn't mind that it was difficult because I was in the lead, it always depends where you are. On track it will be difficult but, yeah, if all goes well hopefully the Mercedes will struggle and we'll sail past in the pit stop. I think

we can't rely on that. As I said tyre wear for will for sure play a role tomorrow but I think we need to look after ourselves first and then we'll see what happens and hopefully we make the right calls at the right time. I think that will definitely be the chance we have.

**Q: (Vincent Marre – Sport Zeitung) My question is to all three of you. Two weeks ago Fernando Alonso was mentioning the GP2 race, he was mentioning the fact that it helped him because he realised that he could overtake at a specific curve and in some words he was... Tom Dillmann was helping him to overtake at this curve. So my question to all three of you, I would is when you are watching the GP2 races, does it help you. How do you watch it, what do you feel, do you prepare for the race with that?**

**NR:** I always watch it, and especially I learn from the start. See how it goes, grip left and right, how it goes into the first corner. That's probably the only thing I personally pick up from them.

**LH:** The same really. I have a question, though. What corner was it?

**It was in Barcelona. It was the third corner.**

**LH:** Round the outside.

**Yes, Tom Dilmann did it. He [Alonso] was saying that he was not thinking he was able to overtake there.**

**LH:** Yeah, it can definitely help sometimes.

**Q: (Leonid Novozhilov - F1 Life) My question is to Sebastian Vettel. Do you have maybe special training exercises for Monaco race? Or maybe for you it's same race as other races?**

**SV:** Interesting question. I think it would be ideal to get some extra laps compared to everyone else, but that's not possible – they would need to block the whole city and you're not allowed tot do that so it's a bit difficult. Surely around here it's a very different track, it's very bumpy, you need to be very sharp. Timing matters. You need to dare to go close to the rails. It's difficult to practice. Obviously we have a simulator and you get an idea, but it's different in reality, especially when you brush the wall. You feel it a little bit more than in the simulator. But it's good fun. We enjoy coming here. There has been some talk about the track not being safe. There will always be some risk but I think we have for example the best marshals here for the whole year, so it does make you feel safe when you know that if something goes wrong these people know how to take care of you. So compliments for that and generally I quite like street circuits.

**What about you Nico, because you have a whole warm-up routine involving footballs and various things with your trainer. Is it different in any way here in Monaco?**

**NR:** No same thing. I just like to play some soccer before getting in the car – just to move about it.

**Q: (Malcolm Folley – Mail on Sunday) Nico and Lewis, now that I've been reprimanded by the headmaster, you'll talk through tonight how you'll approach the start tomorrow. Can you just confirm to us that you'll be expected to race against one another but clearly the instruction will be to make sure that you don't take each**

## **off early in the race?**

**NR:** Can you assure us that you're going to behave from now on? Then we'll answer the question. Of course, well we respect each other and the start is going to be important for sure and we'll see who gets to the first corner first. I have the advantage that I'm ahead and on the clean side of the grid so that will definitely be good and then from there we have to see how it goes – who's quicker in the race and strategy and things like that.

## **Your thoughts, Lewis?**

**LH:** Yeah, I think tonight we'll speak about it. It's obviously important that we position ourselves in a smart way that we can keep Sebastian behind and then focus on trying to grab that one-two.

## **Q: (Heikki Kulta – Turun Sanomat) Nico congratulations for the pole. How much easier would it have been in dry conditions?**

**NR:** It's never easy, but for sure the conditions out there were more difficult out there than if it had been completely dry. I don't know it was probably similar because it's the same for everybody, so yeah similar.

## **Q: (Livio Oricchio - O Estado de Sao Paulo) To both drivers of Mercedes. Your car has some news here on this track. From the information you got in free practice do you believe you can have a race different from the last ones where you also started from the front and lost a lot of performance?**

**NR:** It's only two weeks since then, yeah. We were 70 seconds away then so for sure we still have large problems in the race and it's definitely still going to be a difficulty yeah. The track is an advantage for us because you can't overtake so easily. It also eats the tyres less this track, so for sure there are some advantages. We made a few changes to improve things so we are progressing and hopefully looking better than Barcelona but it's still our weakness you know, so we have to wait. But it can also be a bit better than expected tomorrow. We just have to wait and see.

## **Your thoughts on that Lewis and when there is a fix coming for this problem in the race?**

**LH:** There isn't a fix. Obviously we've been working very hard to understand them, so there will be a slight adjustment. Hoping that they will be a little bit better for us. As Nico said it's difficult to overtake here but it has only been two weeks so we haven't made a huge step forward but hopefully with less high-speed corners here we might stand a better chance.

## **Q: (Walter Kosta – Saarbrücker Zeitung) Question to Sebastian. Did you expect that the team Lotus, in this qualifying, would be the third power, with your friend, I mean Kimi, before Ferrari, with Alonso?**

**SV:** I think it was difficult to foresee what is going to happen in qualifying. In practice it looked as if the Lotus is very quick, at least Romain was very, very quick through all the sessions – sometimes a little bit too quick, especially in the first corner, he was struggling a little bit there. I spoke to Kimi on Thursday and he said that he didn't feel so well yet but I think they managed to improve the car. But as I said before, when you feel confident around here, when you like your car, you can gain quite a lot of time, much more than on a normal track. So it's very important to feel comfortable. So in that regard it is a surprise

that Lotus beat Ferrari because Ferrari looked very competitive already on Thursday.

**Q: (Barna Zsoldos – Nemzeti Sport) Lewis, it's already three-in-a-row for Nico. How do you cope psychologically that your team-mate is constantly faster than you in the qualifying, because it's a completely new situation for you?**

**LH:** It is a new situation for me, one that I seem to be dealing with pretty well. As I said, I've had pretty good seasons here in the past in terms of being on the pace. This has definitely been one of the worst so far. So to be second is a bit of a blessing for me considering how slow I was earlier on in practice. Of course I need to correct this. As soon as I'm able to extract the maximum from the car hopefully in the next couple of races, hopefully we'll see the true pace.

**Q: (Andrea Cremonesi – La Gazzetta dello Sport) Nico, this is the third pole in a row for you. I would like to know how is the situation. You made pole position on the last two races and don't make any mistake and you are the real Monegasque guy because you grew up here. I want to know how is the feeling to make this achievement, the pole position, in your really home grand prix.**

**NR:** Very special for sure. I've grown up here. Lived here all my life. Gone to school here. The way through the tunnel is my way to school and now I'm driving through there with a silver arrow. To be on pole today is a great feeling and yeah fantastic, look forward to tomorrow and make the best of it and try to get a good result.

Ends