



FEDERATION INTERNATIONALE DE L'AUTOMOBILE

Press Information

2013 Monaco Grand Prix Sunday Press Conference Transcript

26.05.2013

DRIVERS

- 1 – Nico ROSBERG (Mercedes)
- 2 – Sebastian VETTEL (Red Bull Racing)
- 3 – Mark WEBBER (Red Bull Racing)

TV UNILATERAL

Q: Nico, you controlled the race from pole position but you had to deal with two safety cars, a red flag, a lot of mental resets no doubt, but describe your feelings right now, you're a Monaco Grand Prix winner?

Nico ROSBERG: Yeah, amazing! This is my home, I've grown up here lived all my life here, I've gone to school here. So now to win at home is very special; a very special day for me. The whole weekend really went perfectly, qualifying [everything]. The start was very close. I had a terrible start! I was close to Sebastian and then with Lewis also, but then that worked out well. After that I could control the pace. The car was really good, the tyres held on ok, so that was really the key to the victory. So massive thanks to the team for having improved from Barcelona and I'm just ecstatic

Q: Sebastian, podium for you today, I guess you must be delighted that you've extended your championship lead?

Sebastian VETTEL: Yeah, I think overall I'm very happy and pleased with the result. We know that it's very difficult to overtake here. I think first of all congratulations to Nico, he did a very good job, a very controlled race. I think he had the pace and the tyres to respond whenever we tried to get a little bit closer, yeah. The start of the race... fantastic start but no room. I think I could have gone past both Mercedes but didn't have the room, had to lift. Then Mark came and it was tight into the first corner. And after that I was a bit surprised by the slow pace in the opening laps. Usually you expect two silver arrows in front of you and there were two buses today going for a cruise – at least in the first couple of laps. But obviously the strategy was clear and they did a very good job. We were lucky on the strategy point of view. The team did a fantastic job to get past Lewis, so yeah. After that, with the restart: pretty difficult. Warm-up was very, very tricky. I saw Lewis was all over Mark behind me, so I think we can happy with the result. Great achievement from the team again. We seem to like this place the last couple of years so very happy. Congratulations, thank you, thanks to our partners as well. Thanks to Infinity, they are pushing an awful lot in the

last couple of months to help us and I think it goes without saying, thanks to Renault as well, two cars out of three on the podium again powered by Renault – in ‘Little France’ in a way, so it’s sort of a home grand prix for them so congratulations as well. Overall, as I said, pretty happy.

Q: Mark, fourth in the opening stint but obviously the safety car at the first stop gave you and the team the opportunity to jump ahead of Hamilton. Important moment for you?

Mark WEBBER: Yes. First of all, congratulations to Nico. It’s a very special place to win at so, yeah, he had a seamless weekend and that’s what you need to do here. It’s never easy when you’re leading, you still have to pull it off. So, well done to Nico and Mercedes. For us, we knew it was a little against us starting on the second row but got an absolutely incredible start – and sod’s law it’s the shortest run to the first corner so, I think Seb and I had nowhere to go really so we were lifting. It’s looking like Nico and Lewis had pretty tricky ones, so we’ll try to save some of those starts for future reference. And then after that it was just basically saving tyres and making the one-stop work. It was completely predictable that if the race was going to stack up then the two-stop was not really an option to come back into traffic. So we had to go very long, all the drivers were nursing the cars very aggressively and as you say, it was nice to get Lewis. Obviously it’s never nice to lose positions around the stop so I’m sure he’s not too pleased with it but in the end we’ll take that position. It was difficult to get the restarts going on the primes but in general just really driving around, saving the tyres and waiting for the chequered flag.

Q: Nico, first son of a former Monaco Grand Prix winner to repeat the feat. Congratulations. 30 years on from your father Keke’s victory here at Monaco. Did that add a certain extra-special something to this win today.

NR: It is special to hear that, yes but honestly that’s not what I was thinking about when I was crossing the finishing line, definitely not. Just extremely happy to win this race. Also, we’ve had again such a difficult time behind us. In the last couple of races pole position and dropping back so much. There was always that a little bit in the back of my mind today in the race: ‘I hope that it’s going to last and I’ll be able to pull it off today and not drop back again.’ Because it’s not nice when you’re starting in front and dropping back. And then today the team gave me a great car. It’s really fantastic to see how they’ve been able to improve in such a short space of time. Little improvement here and there but on this track – this track suited us anyway – and so it was enough to make it happen.

PRESS CONFERENCE

Q: Nico, what was it like to be in control of a race but then have to mentally reset each time? There was nothing straightforward about the way that race unfolded for you today.

NR: No, definitely not. It wasn’t very nice y’know? Because I was in a great rhythm on those prime tyres, trying to nurse them towards the end and then all of a sudden a race stoppage. It’s never nice to get out of that rhythm y’know? Because especially around Monaco it’s so easy to have a quick concentration error and then you’re in the tyre barrier and it’s the end of the race. So, it was really important today to remain concentrated and that didn’t make it easy, all those safety cars and the red flag and everything – but fortunately in the end it all worked out.

Q: Did you think at any point about the school runs you used to do down these roads and the fact that you were actually going to be winning a race on the roads you used to go to school on?

NR: No! There was a lot of thoughts going through my mind, definitely, but not about the roads to school. Various things. Even, to be honest, winning Monaco in a silver arrow. I was thinking about that and that's very special to me.

Q: Sebastian, you hinted in your answer in the unilateral that the Mercedes were slower in the opening stint than you expected them to be. You said it was fair play to them but you could tell they were driving to a tactic today.

SV: Yes, definitely. I think we could see that the field didn't spread out, so as I said, they did what worked best for them. Obviously Lewis lost a couple of positions with the safety car – I'm sure he's not too pleased about that – but we took that, no question. Yeah, I think it was very marginal on one stop. I think the red flag helped all of us to put a fresh set of tyres on to save that ten, eleven laps, total race distance. It was clear what they were doing a couple of laps after the start. They were going quite slow and trying to obviously make the one stop happen. And fair play, they were in the lead, around here it's very tricky to pass. Every time I tried to get a little bit closer with Lewis... in the beginning with Lewis it was quite close, yeah they reacted, they had the pace, so they could afford to go slow and then if they had to, they had the pace to pick it up again. In that regard, not the most exciting race because you just wait for the chequered flag. It's still a lot of laps, looking after the tyres wasn't straightforward for us today – so overall, happy with the result we got.

Q: Obviously when the safety car came out that caught Lewis out, the Mercedes had just completed a lap. Where exactly were you when you got the message to come into the pits.

SV: The safety car wasn't out yet. Obviously it was a very, very good call from the team. Initially we wanted to pit a lap earlier but then we aborted that. Obviously there was a yellow and in the end I think we were just a little bit lucky. So we decided to pit and when I changed tyres and went back out, at the same moment the safety car came – which probably helped us a little bit. I don't know if Lewis had a problem with the stop or if it was just down to the fact that the safety car came at the wrong time for him. But, yeah, it was nice. At some stage I was hoping that it might be enough to get Nico as well but he obviously was in the lead by quite a bit at that time, before we came in.

Q: Mark, there were quite a lot of incidents today, obviously a couple of safety cars, red flags. Some drivers were making passes today but did it feel very touch-and-go, very marginal out there to you?

MW: To make moves? Yeah, I think so. Especially when you're with the guys I was with today, very experienced and they know what they need to do and where to put the car so, unless you had a big discrepancy in tyre performance, like I did after my pitstop – I had to clear Nico Hülkenberg pretty quick and try to make that undercut work a little bit – but in general after that, as the guys have touched upon, it was measured, controlled aggression, if you like, trying to nurse the tyres as best you can. It became very, very obvious early in the grand prix that the tyres were going pretty well. Obviously the pace wasn't electric and, fair enough, that's how... you can do that if you're at the front of the race, as I did last year, so you can do that. And when the options were starting to go that far – the supersoft – the one-stop started to become viable for everybody and that's why it probably wasn't a super-exciting race today for the fans. But even if it was two-stops, it would probably have just

been a bit more action around the pitstops and obviously not much on circuit because that's the sort of track it is.

QUESTIONS FROM THE FLOOR

Q: (Ralf Bach – Der Spiegel) Nico, the two secret test days that you had in Barcelona. How helpful were those days for you?

NR: That you have to ask, you have to ask Pirelli about all this, about this issue. I'm not going to comment. I'm not going to comment on that. You have to ask Pirelli.

Q: (Kate Walker – GP Week) Nico, we often hear drivers say that the most exciting race to win other than their home Grand Prix is Monaco. Obviously this is both for you. Could you please give us a bit of a sense of the elation and euphoria you must be feeling? What was it like doing that slowing down lap?

NR: Unbelievable. If there's maybe a childhood dream... when I was quite young, watching the race, always. First memories were of Ayrton Senna with his yellow helmet, red and white winning, a childhood dream to one day win the Grand Prix of Monaco, because it is my home and that's the most special race for me to win, so the feeling was just incredible, it was unreal. That's what's so special about the sport: these emotions that you then get and that makes up for all the difficult moments that have gone before, those great moments of joy and winning. Amazing.

Q: (Vincent Marre – Sport Zeitung) Nico, now that everything is going well, I would like to rate the percentage of your chances of winning the title?

NR: I haven't thought about that at all yet, because just two weeks we ago were seventy seconds away in the race and even today, tyre degradation was still an issue. I think we were in a better position, much better definitely, but it's also a different track, very different track, different circumstances. I had the possibility of taking it easy and dictating the pace initially to save tyres, so we shouldn't get over-excited now, for the next couple of races. We still have a bit of an issue with our race pace and that's still what we need to work on, and also the development race. Everybody's pushing forward, flat out, and we need to make sure to keep up with that as we have been doing at the moment, which is great to see, because that was one of our weaknesses last year, we dropped away mid-season. For now it's going really well, so thanks to everybody back in the factory, doing a really cool job. But we have to wait and see. I'm definitely not thinking about the championship, I'm just thinking about today, winning Monaco.

Q: (Jussi Jakala – YLE) Nico, do you think this was maybe the final seal to get rid of the status of being Keke's son, so that you have achieved everything by your own skills now?

NR: Don't know, that's for you to judge. I don't think about that in that sense so you need to judge that for yourself. I can't comment on that.

Q: (Dan Knutson – Auto Action/National Speedsport News) Mark, before the red flag, Lewis got right up alongside you at Rascasse. What happened, did he maybe catch you by surprise there?

MW: No, I was probably just saving my tyres a bit too much and yeah, he was going for a little bit of a surge also, I think. They were probably a little bit more comfortable on the primes in certain performance areas of the circuit and also the car characteristics, so, yeah, he was a little bit more comfortable on that section of the track. I was also just... we knew

we had a long way to go in the race and also I had four or five laps less on my tyres, because I did the undercut on these guys. I had to give him room. I think experience helps in those scenarios. I thought he might tap me... I could just see him in the mirror. I thought 'mmm, he's in there somewhere' but I had to give him the room and then thank God we got round Rascasse together somehow. I think that was probably not that straightforward. Not possible for GP2 drivers but us boys managed to pull it off which we should be able to so it was a rewarding little battle.

Q: (Bob McKenzie – Daily Express) Nico, referring back to that previous question about your father; have you at times, when you were younger or when you came into Formula One, did you feel any pressure from the fact that your father was so well known, being a World Champion, that sort of thing?

NR: I've always felt very fortunate to have had my father... what he achieved and everything... to have his support and extra pressure? It's a normality for me you know, having my father World Champion. I grew up with that, started racing like that, so it's not something where I feel any extra pressure because for me that's normal.

Q: (Jacqueline Magnay – News LTD Australia) Mark, I'm just wondering whether you have an opinion on this secret tyre testing, whether it had any impact, and whether you think there was any advantage to Mercedes having done the testing?

MW: That's a fair question. I think we were probably a little bit surprised that it happened. I don't think it probably had a huge bearing on today's result. I think their car was always going to perform pretty well round here, to be fair, but yeah, you can't unlearn what went on at the test obviously, so we need to see how the test came about and whether it's within the rules or not. I'm sure Mercedes thought it was OK, so that's why they did it, so time will tell. But I don't think it affected today's result.

Q: (Frederic Ferret – L'Equipe) Nico, what was the most difficult thing for your victory today, getting the pole yesterday, starting after the safety car, or the last lap with the emotion?

NR: Qualifying was difficult because of the conditions. The start was very difficult because I had a bad start. Those were the two keys. Once those two things were done, from then on it was OK. There were still some challenges with the safety car, because the tyres were very cold on those prime tyres, for example so there were other challenges but the main ones were qualifying and the start.

Ends