



FEDERATION INTERNATIONALE DE L'AUTOMOBILE

**Press Information**

**2013 Singapore Grand Prix  
Thursday Press Conference Transcript  
19.09.2013**

**DRIVERS – Adrian SUTIL (Force India), Nico HULKENBERG (Sauber), Valtteri BOTTAS (Williams), Sergio PEREZ (McLaren), Kimi RAIKKONEN (Lotus), Nico ROSBERG (Mercedes)**

**PRESS CONFERENCE**

**I'll start with Kimi if I may. Congratulations on the move for next season. First time we've seen you since the announcement. If we'd have said to you at the start of the season that you'd be a confirmed Ferrari driver by September, what would have said then: no chance, no way or is it something you always thought might be possible?**

**Kimi RAIKKONEN:** I just have to say things change in Formula One a lot. I never had a bad feeling with them really. But I mean I still have a lot friends and good memories from there. I knew that my contract will end at the end of this year so obviously I had to make some kind of decision what to do for next year and now it's been done.

**Was there anything that Lotus could have done to keep you with the team or was the attraction of a return to Ferrari just too strong for you?**

**KR:** Yeah, there was a lot of things and for sure they know what it is. It's hard to say which way it would have gone if that would have had happened but the deal's done now and I'm very happy with the new deal.

**What would you say is the biggest challenge for you then next season at Ferrari?**

**KR:** I know the team and I know the people. Obviously there are some new people and some more have left since I was there but most are the same. I don't think this will be too difficult to go there and do well. The car's will be obviously different so I think that will be the most difficult thing, to get the cars right and get them running reliable and whoever makes the best car will probably make the best out of it.

**Thank you Kimi. Let's turn to Nico Hulkenberg, sitting behind you. There's at least one seat going at Lotus and if you look at some of the headlines on the Internet you're the man for the man for that team for next season. With due respect to your current team, is signing for Lotus a priority for you?**

**Nico HULKENBERG:** It's not a priority. The priority is to find a good deal and a good car, a competitive car, and a good package. Nothing is finalised. Nothing has been decided at this point. Trying to sort out all the options and then to come up with a good decision for the future.

**Your name was of course linked to Ferrari. Did you think you got very close to a move there?**

**NH:** I don't know. I guess so. There was a chance there. There's no point now to think about that too much. That's history now. I have to look forward and move on.

**You come here fresh with your performance at Monza in your mind. How much of a relief was that result for you given some of the difficulties on track this year?**

**NH:** It was a fantastic weekend for us, a great effort by the team. I'm really happy for everybody there, for the hard work and that finally we could reward them a little bit, and for sure that's given us a boost and some momentum for the final seven races. Monza, after a very challenging and disappointing year, has been very happy and good for us.

**Sergio, I'm sure you're really excited to be here in Singapore this weekend but I'm sure your thoughts aren't very far away from your fellow countryman affected by the tropical storm in Mexico?**

**Sergio PEREZ:** Definitely. We're not having a great time right now. A lot of people have lost their houses; other people have died. Things are getting a bit more complicated. That's a bit sad for my country. I will dedicate my race weekend for all my country, all the people that is suffering, losing their houses, their families, so hopefully things can get better.

**From a personal perspective, this time last year we were discussing your future and linking you to a move to McLaren, which eventually came off. Twelve months on people are talking about your future again. Have you signed a contract with McLaren yet?**

**SP:** Yeah, it's pretty much everything done, I think, But the right thing to do is to ask Martin about that but everything is done.

**Have there been stumbling blocks along the way or have you been in unanimous agreement with McLaren?**

**SP:** Yeah, we've been having some discussions about the contract. The contract is done but we are just finalising the final dots. Obviously I cannot give much details about them but everything is pretty much done.

**Q: Valtteri, driving the Marina Bay circuit for the first time – what challenges lie ahead for you do you think this weekend?**

**Valtteri BOTTAS:** I think it's going to be a difficult race weekend, like Monaco was first time for me. And then this track, it's a night race obviously but the lighting is very good and bright so that shouldn't make a big difference but y'know, it's a difficult circuit, a lot of corners, so there's lots to learn on Friday.

**Q: Realistically, what are your goals for this weekend?**

**VB:** Still our goal is points. This track is a lot different from Monza. We were not really strong there but this is different and it means we can be stronger here. The team was very strong here last year actually, so really hope this track suits our car. We have some little updates and if they work I really think it is possible to fight for the points in the race.

**Q: We're talking about drivers' futures. For yourself for next season is it safe to assume you'll be staying with Williams?**

**VB:** I think we still have to see. It's always best to ask the team, they know the best what they are going to do but at the moment I'm very confident with Williams and comfortable and really would like to continue.

**Q: We'll stay on that theme. Adrian, your chances of staying with Force India for next season?**

**Adrian SUTIL:** Yeah, I would be happy to do another year. I'm just back into Formula One, more than half a year only. It would be OK but I haven't really lost too many thoughts about it yet. It's quiet at the moment.

**Q: You and the team haven't sat down and started to look ahead just yet then?**

**AS:** No, not yet.

**Q: And this season, the form of the team, it was an upward curve and then the tyres changed. We had the construction from last year and the compounds from this year and the team's form seemed to take a bit of a dip. Is it all tyre related?**

**AS:** Yes, I think so. Since the new tyres came in it was clearly a step down for us. We used to be able to do one less stop in the race which was a big advantage compared to others and also the general balance of the car was much better and we lost it a little bit now, last few races. Spa was still OK but Monza was a big disappointment. Coming here of course we try to improve our performance again. I don't think we get everything out of our package and we don't develop the car any more – that's clear – but it's not different to other teams. So, we have to get back again where we used to be and I think even with this car what we have, we can show more in Singapore – here I expect a better performance.

**Q: Is that very similar to yourself Nico Rosberg, that after the disappointment for the team in Spa and in Monza, Singapore, totally different track, Mercedes should improve? Or are you fearful of another disappointing weekend?**

**Nico ROSBERG:** Spa wasn't really a big disappointment. Of course it wasn't a win – and we're aiming quite high recently – but still it was a great points haul for the team with third and fourth. Monza, yes, didn't go to plan. I think we had a very, very quick car so a lot more would have been possible. Unfortunately my weekend didn't go perfectly. But that's why I'm really looking forward to this race here. It's back to high downforce package where Lewis won last with this package in Hungary, so I'm confident we can be very quick again this weekend.

**Q: A track you quite enjoy as well, I'd have thought.**

**NR:** Yeah, for sure. I've had great results here in the past and really enjoyed the track and that's why I'm looking forward to it.

**Q: Have you enjoyed this season? There have been two tremendous highs but some frustrating moments as well.**

**NR:** In general I've really enjoyed it, yes, because it's the first time in my career that I've really had a car that on numerous occasions I can win races with. That's a great feeling. To come to a race track knowing I can put it on pole, I can win the race, it's really nice.

## **QUESTIONS FROM THE FLOOR**

**Q: (Paolo Ianieri – La Gazzetta dello Sport) Kimi, you said last year that when you left Ferrari you felt liberated. So what made you decide to go back and lose your – in brackets – freedom?**

**KR:** I always had freedom there also. There are a lot of stories from my past, from different teams but it's all from you guys and I don't think that you guys work in the team so you don't really know what's happening and you write a lot of stuff which can sometimes be true and sometimes not. I had a good time, like I said, and I'm sure we will have a good time together again.

**Q: (Jacob Polychronis – F1Plus.com) Kimi, some other drivers have been quite quick to already suggest that your partnership with Fernando Alonso may not work out, namely Jenson and Sebastian. Do you care to weigh in on the issue?**

**KR:** I don't see the reason why it wouldn't work. We are all old enough to know what we are doing and for sure the team is working for the right things to make sure. If there is something, I'm sure we can talk it through. It's not like we are 20-year old guys any more. I might be wrong, but time will tell, but I'm pretty sure everything will be good. For sure there will be hard fights on the race circuits but sometimes things go wrong... like I said, I'm pretty sure it will all be OK.

**Q: (Andrea Cremonesi – La Gazzetta dello Sport) Kimi, Mr Montezemolo said in an interview in our newspaper that he expected victories and poles from you, but also that you can help Alonso to develop the car. Are you ready to spend more time in Maranello, like Fernando, to stay there even more than in the past?**

**KR:** It's a pretty similar answer to before. There are a lot of stories but I think we've done pretty well in this team when we started and I don't see any reason why we shouldn't be able to produce a very good car for next year and keep improving it. Obviously there are new rules so it will be more challenging for all the teams but I have no worries about those things.

**Q: (Luc Domenjoz – Le Matin) Kimi, it seems that Lotus owes you a lot of money, so the question is simple: why, if the team doesn't fulfil its part of the contract, why do you respect yours and why don't you simply stay at home?**

**KR:** I like to race and then obviously that's the only reason why I'm here; it doesn't matter which team it is and obviously the reasons why they ask from the team but the reasons why I left from the team is purely on the money side, that they haven't got my salary so it's an unfortunate thing but like I said, I want to try and help the team as much as I can and I like to race.

**Q: (Fulvio Solms – Corriere dello Sport) Kimi, referring to your next teammate, what do you think will be possible to learn from him next year and can he learn from you?**

**KR:** For sure, you always learn from different teammates; everyone does different things. Maybe they do something better than you but often there are a lot of things that only suit one guy and it doesn't work if you try to do the same thing for yourself, it's not going to work. I know the team, I know the people. Like I said, I have no worries to go there and have something that wouldn't work. I don't really worry about it, I've never worked with Alonso. I obviously know him from racing but I'm sure it will be fine.

**Q: (Chetan Narula – Planet F1) Adrian, how important is it for Force India to beat McLaren, considering there is just a five point gap and quite a few races to go, also considering that extra points means extra money in the Constructors' standing, especially for a middle team going into 2014, which is a highly... the rule changes and everything for a middle team to go forward and to develop, so how important is it to beat McLaren?**

**AS:** It would be a great success, of course. We are a few points behind now and it's a very high target to complete but we showed, with a good car, it's possible also to fight against McLaren and well, what can we do, we are professionals so we want to finally actually win races which is why we're all here. That's why we never give up so at the end of the season, who knows what's going to happen? We only know that it's a big challenge to beat McLaren but it's not impossible and that's why we're pushing on. It would mean fifth position for us at the end of the year, that's two better than last year and that means much better financial backing, of course, for the next year. So you can think about it by yourself, that definitely means a better chance for us next year to compete even better.

**Q: On the flip side to that, Sergio, how important is it for you and everyone at McLaren to finish ahead of Force India this year? Is it a fight and a battle that you're taking a lot of notice of?**

**SP:** Yes, of course. It's not a secret that we haven't had the year that we were hoping for so we definitely have to try and finish as high as possible in the next seven races that we have ahead of us and maximise the full potential. Last weekend in Monza, we should have got more points than we did so I think we definitely have to make sure that we bring home all the points that we can. If at the end we beat Force India, it's good for us.

**Q: (Dan Knutson – Auto Action and National Speedsport News) Nico Rosberg, at the start of the season the momentum was on your side; then it switched to Lewis. For the latter part of the season, how do you get it back onto your side? Is it just a matter of letting things unfold?**

**NR:** I've just had a few races now when it's just not gone perfectly, a string of races and that gives a little bit of a dip but I'm really confident I can turn it around and get some good races again from now on.

**Q: (Abhishek Tackle – Mid-Day) Nico Hulkenberg, last year you were linked to a Ferrari drive; this year there was actually a contract on the table before the deal with Kimi was agreed. Is there any sort of resentment that you feel towards Ferrari, especially the way that you found out that you hadn't got the drive, I think it was an SMS or something?**

**NH:** No, not at all to be honest. I think the relationship is as good and as positive as before. I think there has maybe been some understanding and that story has been blown up by the media. I read that too but no, I don't feel that.

**Q:** Were you not contacted by text message then?

**NH:** No.

**Q: (Luke Smith – NBC Sports) Valtteri, at Singapore, traditionally, there is a high rate of attrition, lots of retirements, there's been a safety car in every race here; is this your best chance to score points this season do you think?**

**VB:** I think so, this should be the place to get the points. Like you said, a lot of things can happen in the race and safety cars etc. Like I said before, if some of the little updates work and we can get a little more speed and be a bit closer to the top ten in pure pace, then it's always possible to get points and we need to keep pushing for that.

**Q: (Andrea Cremonesi – La Gazzetta dello Sport) Kimi, in your choice of Ferrari, is there also a technical reason? I'm thinking about the turbo era; do you think that Ferrari building both engine and chassis could be a better chance of being a competitive car than Red Bull or Lotus next year?**

**KR:** Obviously I hope so. They built very good cars and engines in the past, they've won a lot of championships as a team and then you have to look on the other side at teams like Red Bull or Lotus with Renault who have done very well. It's very hard to say which way it's going to go with the new rules and who's going to have the best package. There are a lot of stories about certain engines that will be much stronger than others but there are so many different things that you have to look at and go through and make sure that it works that I have no idea which team will be strongest and which team will come out on top. We have to wait and see, really, for the first few tests.

**Q: (Chetan Narula - PlanetF1) Nico Rosberg, it's a continuation of the last question for you: for 2014, teams are looking to get the two strongest drivers to get them more points, considering it's going to be an unpredictable season. Lewis and your partnership was considered to be a very strong one, especially when Red Bull went for Daniel Ricciardo instead of Kimi. But with Kimi pairing with Alonso now, what are your thoughts on that?**

**NR:** I can just say that for us it's working well. We push each other and also through a weekend, pushing each other, stepping up our game, learning from each other so it's

working really well and we get on well together. But that's just for us. For other people, I don't know, we need to wait and see.

**Q: Is it vital to get on with your teammate? Do you have to or can you still compete well on the track if you don't get on with your teammate?**

**NR:** Well, get on, no, you don't need to get on but you need to show a certain respect, I think, otherwise it can go a bit wrong.

Ends