



FEDERATION INTERNATIONALE DE L'AUTOMOBILE

## **Press Information**

### **2014 Australian Grand Prix Sunday Press Conference Transcript**

**16.03.2014**

#### **DRIVERS**

- 1 – Nico ROSBERG (Mercedes)**
- 2 – Daniel RICCIARDO (Red Bull Racing)**
- 3 – Kevin MAGNUSSEN (McLaren)**

#### **PODIUM INTERVIEWS (Conducted by Alan Jones)**

**Well Nico, wel done. I couldn't think of a better start to the season. What a great start to the 2014 championship. A great start to the new era of Formula One.**

**Nico ROSBERG:** Yes, I mean, already it's been an amazing time here in Melbourne. Thanks to all of you, you've made it all the more special, all your support has been fantastic this weekend. Even though Daniel got a little bit more support than us. Anyway that's normal. It's been an amazing day. I'm just over the moon really. It's incredible, everybody has worked so hard over the winter and now to have such an amazing Silver Arrow to drive is just unreal. This thing was unbelievably quick today and the reliability was good also, so it was just the perfect start to the season. I'm really thankful to Mercedes, they have done an amazing job over the winter.

**Well, all your hard work has paid off well and truly.**

**NR:** Yeah, for now yes. Today, definitely.

**Daniel, g'day. You were thinking you may not even finish, let alone be on the podium.**

**Daniel RICCIARDO:** Yeah. Two or three weeks ago I would have bet pretty everything I have that we would not be standing up here. Full credit to the team for an unbelievable turnaround. I don't understand how they did it but they did, so thank you guys. And, of course, the Aussie fans. Wow, completely overwhelming. No words. I'm trippin' balls right now.

**There's a bloke up in Noosa that'll be very happy too.**

**DR:** Yeah I thought I'd do a stack just to commemorate Mark as well. It's an Aussie thing, but yeah, really pleased to be up here. First Aussie on the Aussie podium, so that's really nice to have. Thanks everyone.

**Well you've done us all proud. Good on you, mate. Kevin, well done. First Dane on a Formula One podium.**

**Kevin MAGNUSSEN:** It's hard to believe really. It just seems so unreal. What can I say. The car was so much better than it's been at any point. We just keep improving the car. I had just exactly what I need the whole race. The preparation we've done this winter has been fantastic. I've never done a Formula One and testing is so limited, so big congratulations to the team for doing such a good job.

**Well, your father is racing on the other side of the world this weekend as well, so he's got something to live up to.**

**KM:** I think they did the race already, so I'll need to see how it went. I wish he could have been here. It's a great day.

**So you're looking forward to the next one obviously?**

**KM:** Yes I am – great things ahead.

**Nico, what are you going to do now between here and the next one?**

**NR:** We'll definitely evaluate everything that we've learned now from this weekend because for sure there's some way to go. We still can improve a lot. We must, because our competitors aren't going to be asleep. Definitely they are going to try to catch up quickly, So just try to learn as much as we can, improve the car, go on holiday a little bit next week and then get ready for Malaysia.

## **PRESS CONFERENCE**

**Q: Nico, what a start, what a race, what a win.**

**NR:** Yeah, the start was just... off like a bullet – or off like a Silver Arrow – thanks to Evan he did a great job on my start – my engineer who's responsible for that. And then after that the car was just really, really quick today and the whole team did such a good job on it. Engine: really good engine, not much of a problem with fuel consumption, didn't have to worry much about that, pretty much as usual. It just all worked perfectly. Reliability was great. So, fantastic. I'm just so happy for everybody. They work so damn hard, I don't think people can really imagine how hard everybody works in my team and I'm sure in other teams too – so that's just the best reward possible. To dominate in such a way the first week, the first race out.

**Q: Big winning margin, obviously a lot of pace in the car and there was a lot of radio communication about extending that middle stint – which you seemed to be able to do quite comfortably.**

**NR:** Yeah, got into a bit of a strange situation in that middle stint because I got graining on the front and then somehow I was losing temperature and somehow it started to get really difficult out there. So, I thought I was going to have to come in soon and they just said try to stay out, try to stay out and I did and then the graining cleared on my tyre and I was off, I was able to go again. It was a bit of a strange period but then it was fine again after that.

**Q: Dan, as you said on the podium, what a turn around – does this exceed your wildest expectations of your first race with Red Bull?**

**DR:** Definitely. If I look back at where we were three weeks ago – or however long ago it was, definitely. We've never done a race distance up until today, so we didn't really have much confidence we'd see a chequered flag, let alone see it in a podium position. Obviously, as Nico said with his team, the same for ours. They really worked hard over the winter and really clawed back a massive margin. Obviously we still don't have the pace of the Mercedes but it's a result that we will definitely take today and we can make a lot of progress from here. So, pretty happy. It's a bit overwhelming for now but an unbelievable day.

**Q: I think we could hear your smile over the team radio at the end there but talk about the support from this Australian crowd here today – and the whole weekend.**

**DR:** Yeah, it's been a lot. It's been a crazy amount. The support for Formula One in general. They've been really behind this event and always when the drivers rock up at the circuit, everyone's cheering for everyone and wanting autographs. Obviously there's been a bit more for me, being the only Aussie on the grid this year and that's just been more than I could have possibly expected. At times a bit embarrassing. Everyone knows who I am now – but it's cool. Very positive.

**Q: Kevin, no podium for McLaren in 2013. You go on the podium in your first appearance in Formula One. You were pinching yourself in the press conference here on Thursday to be in the company of world champions and race winners and stars. You're a star yourself today.**

**KM:** Yeah. Nico was just saying, 'Mate, you're on third!' I can't believe it. It's not a win but it definitely feels like a bit of a win because, as you said, the team is coming off a difficult season and they really wanted to come back and they've worked so hard over the winter. And working with a rookie as well who hasn't got experience. It's been tough for them, for sure – but they've done such a good job, made me feel really at home and made me feel comfortable with everything. Yeah. I couldn't have asked for more.

**Q: Just talk us through the final stint because you started closing up quite a bit on Dan, then you started pulling back a bit, then it was a bit erratic.**

**KM:** I think me and Dan had pretty similar pace but obviously you can do stuff with the engine to try and push for a few laps and then you have to back off because you have to harvest the energy again. And you're fuel saving as well and then stop for a few laps and then you begin again and you have to do more and catch that up. I guess it makes it exciting from the outside because it creates opportunities for overtaking but it just wasn't enough today. I didn't have enough pace to get past Dan.

## **QUESTIONS FROM THE FLOOR**

**Q: (Heikki Kulta – Turun Sanomat) Nico, congratulations. How does it feel to lead the championship for the first time in your life, and actually be the first Rosberg in front since Keke in 1982?**

**NR:** Mr Statistics! It feels... I don't think about that. I'm really just in the moment. I have an unbelievably quick car or I had an unbelievably quick car today. That gives me a lot of... you know, it's such a pleasure to drive. It's such a great feeling and I really look forward to the next races so much now, having this.. it's so fast, it's great. Of course, it's still going to be tough and reliability is not 100 percent sorted, there's still lots of work we need to do and there's a lot of work ahead of us but it's a great start and I'm just excited about the result today and sharing it with the whole team. It's just fantastic.

**Q: (Dan Knutson – Auto Action) Daniel, naturally you've always believed you could do this, but now you've done it, you've got the podium, you've run at the front. Tell us how this gives you confidence and momentum going into the championship and running at the front for the rest of the year?**

**DR:** Yeah. A lot, I guess. Yeah. It's nice to be up here. Even yesterday during the post-qualifying press conference, that was already a nice little boost, to be up in that top three and now to be here. It's strange, because I guess it's expected to see Nico up here but to have Kevin as well, feels like we're back in World Series by Renault or something. So it's a bit surreal still, but I'm sure tomorrow it will all sink in. Yeah, a lot of confidence, I'm really happy with how the whole weekend has gone. Dry and wet conditions, showed a lot of confidence and some good pace. Obviously I've got to continue this now but the team has to be pleased with what they're seeing at the moment.

**Q: (Ian Parkes – Press Association) Nico, you talked about the reliability of your car but obviously a different story for your teammate in what happened to him in first practice and also at the start of the race today. Does that bring any concerns for Mercedes, for yourself going forward as well, that the car isn't as bullet-proof as we perhaps saw during testing?**

**NR:** Yeah, I'm not sure what happened to the other car but for sure it's a fact that we're not 100 percent sorted yet. We know that and the team did a great job to get my car working so well in the race today but there's still work to be done. We have two weeks now. We need to identify all the things that we can still do better because even leading up to this weekend, there were still a lot of changes on the car and you don't really want to be doing that just going to the first race. And also in testing there were still a couple of problems at the end there, so great job, but still things to get sorted.

**Q: (Jacob Polychromis – F1Plus.com) Daniel, in a weekend where the AFL season started in Melbourne, you still managed to outshine it – perhaps our international guests don't appreciate how huge that really is but we do. What does that mean to you to essentially become Australian sporting royalty?**

**DR:** Obviously there's been a lot of support for me this week but the support everyone has shown for Formula One, it's made headlines every day in the papers, I think. As I said, the crowd was amazing, not only for me but for every other driver this week, they've showed incredible enthusiasm for the event and if there's any doubts that the Oz Grand Prix won't last, I think they definitely put a stamp on that this year and I'm sure it will keep kicking for a while now, so really pleased to be a part of that.

**Q: (Leonid Novozhilov – F1 Life) Kevin, can you say if you had any problems with your car today?**

**KM:** If I had a problem? No, no issues with the car that we weren't expecting. We didn't really know what to expect but luckily we didn't have anything really that came up that we couldn't handle so again, big congratulations to the team and to Mercedes for providing such a reliable power unit. It's quite impressive in the first year.

**Q: How about the fuel, was that ever a concern?**

**KM:** No, I probably saved a bit too much in the beginning which turned out to be alright because then I could give Daniel a little bit of pressure at the end and I didn't have to save fuel so much which was good. It's something I will certainly learn more about and get into a rhythm with.

**Q: (Michael Schmidt – Auto, Motor und Sport) Nico and Daniel, that was the first start with a V6 turbo. Has it been any different to the starts you have been used to with the V8s?**

**NR:** There are some small bits and pieces that are different, yeah, and then getting away, upshifting through the gears, getting that right, but in the end it's not too far apart. I think my start was spectacular today, it felt great, felt like last year.

**Q: Dan, you hadn't done too many practice starts before this weekend.**

**DR:** No, not too many. Yeah, it wasn't perfect but I think probably Nico was the only guy that had a good start from what I saw today and the rest were pretty average but definitely upshifting through the gears with the torque we have with the V6 turbos this year, it is a bit more difficult to manage the wheelspin but as we saw, I don't think everyone really has it right yet. We managed to do a sufficient enough job today but there's still a lot of progress to make with launches.

**Q: (Frederic Ferret – L'Equipe) Daniel and Nico, how difficult was it to manage the fuel during the race? Was it easy?**

**NR:** Yeah, yeah, honestly our engine I think even there, they've just done a power unit not just engine, they've done a great job because it's not much different than last year, a little bit more than last year but it's really straightforward and quite easy and this being the most difficult track, it's really impressive.

**DR:** Yeah, I think at the start of the race it was a bit of guessing. Some laps I would try and push and not really conserve and then when I felt I had enough gap then I would start conserving. We were basically learning all the time today. First time that we've done a race distance so I think we'll take a lot out of it but in the end I think the system we have to reach the fuel target is not bad, considering we haven't done too much work on that yet. I think we survived quite well.

**Q: (Don Kennedy – Hawkes Bay Today) Nico, a certain Mr Ecclestone predicted that you would win this year's championship. Do you think that favouritism is now justified by this result today?**

**NR:** Of course I heard about that and I'm thankful for such a statement. It's always a boost when it comes from Bernie but other than that, I don't think about that too much at the moment. There's a long way to go and it's just been a great day today, great win, great start to the season and just leave it at that.

**Q: (Tony Schibeci – SEN Radio) Nico, Malaysia is normally the next week after Australia. This time it's two weeks away. Is it an advantage for you to have that two weeks or is it a disadvantage because it allows everyone a bit of extra time to get their cars closer to where you're at?**

**NR:** I don't know whether it's an advantage or disadvantage but for sure we're going to use that time well to further improve our car, make it quicker, more reliable, so it's going to be a very useful gap now in between the two races.

**Q: (Sam McClure – Radio 3AW) Daniel, already today you have achieved what Mark Webber couldn't, finish on the podium in his home Grand Prix. You're going to be the new face of Australian motor sport in the papers today, in the news tonight. How does that make you feel?**

**DR:** I don't know. Obviously really nice but even when I flew into Melbourne this week, it was a bit embarrassing to see my face on a few billboards. I don't know. It's obviously nice, all the support is great but I don't know. The fame is something which I guess maybe I will

still have to get used to but it's nice, really nice to give the fans what they wanted to see. I know they went crazy yesterday when we nearly got the pole and then to back it up with a podium today is great. I think half of Perth is here as well this weekend. I told all my family to stay away from the pits, didn't need any extra distractions but I'm sure I will catch up with them tonight and enjoy a beer and relax a little bit before Malaysia.

**Q: (Silvia Arias – Parabrisas) Nico, today we saw you dancing a little bit to Get Lucky going to the drivers' parade. It looks like you were really confident, in spite of having Lewis on pole position. I want to know if you're going to dance a little bit more to get Get Lucky in every race?**

**NR:** I was very optimistic for the race today because we just prepared really well for it and so I was confident that we could do well and so I looked forward to it and from the start it just all went fantastically.

**Q: (Heikki Kulta – Turun Sanomat) Kevin, McLaren is leading the Constructors championship, do you think you can hang on there with a rookie and a champion driver together?**

**KM:** Yeah, who knows? We will certainly try our best. I know the team is massively motivated to stay on top and they are a team that should be at the top of Formula One. So, what can I say? I'll do my best and they will do their best. Who knows?

**Q: (Chris Medland – crash.net) Daniel, how much of that gap to Nico do you think can be closed just from some consistent running that you've got now?**

**DR:** I think it will definitely get smaller and hopefully not bigger over time. I think there's still a lot to learn today and once it all settles down and I go through the meeting with the engineers tonight I will start to... Now I'm obviously on a high but then I'll start to break it all down and become critical and places where we can improve. I'll definitely try and help the guys out with that. Obviously I would like the gap closed. He was pretty far away in front today and obviously second is great but it would be nice to at least have seen him on the straight and not five corners ahead.

**Q: (Ralf Bach – R&B) Kevin, one question: I think Mercedes is a very good engine. Would you like to stay with it next year?**

**NR:** Careful. He's really dangerous so best to say no comment.

**KM:** No comment.

**NR:** When he asks a question, no comment.

**KM:** I'm happy just to be with McLaren. I think what Mercedes and McLaren have done together is amazing and really looking forward to what's coming ahead.

Ends