



FEDERATION INTERNATIONALE DE L'AUTOMOBILE

## **Press Information**

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

**20.04.2014**

#### **DRIVERS**

**1 – Lewis HAMILTON (Mercedes)**

**2 – Nico ROSBERG (Mercedes)**

**3 – Fernando ALONSO (Ferrari)**

#### **PODIUM INTERVIEWS**

**(Conducted by Martin Brundle)**

**Three consecutive for Lewis Hamilton – how about that? Great stuff, Lewis. That looked, from where we were sitting, incredibly easy. How was it for you?**

**Lewis HAMILTON:** *Ni hao.* The fans have been incredible this week, so I really felt a lot of energy but I really couldn't do this without all the hard work from the team, it's incredible. Honestly, I just can't believe how amazing the car is, and how hard everyone has worked. The results we're getting is a real true showing of all the hard work.

**Absolutely incredible. You were radioing in and saying 'my tyres feel good' and everybody else was screaming to come into the pits. The first stint was just beautiful for you.**

**LH:** Yeah. Surprisingly, again, as I said, after P2 I had to make a lot of changes in anticipation of today, even though yesterday was wet, but it worked perfectly and I was able to look after the tyres. After that I was just really racing myself. I did lose a lot of time after the first stop but still it was great. I am really happy that Nico is up here with us, it's great points for the team and they really deserve it.

**You had one little trip off the circuit, obviously when the front tyres were finally going away. A little fright there for you?**

**LH:** No, no, fortunately there's lots of run-off area. Basically the left front is the one that's graining and wearing and I'd gone quite a lot longer than I'd planned and eventually the tyre was dead so I locked it, but it was OK and I recovered.

**Nico, you still lead the Formula One World Championship so some consolation in that respect?**

**Nico ROSBERG:** Yeah, definitely. That's there. I'm not going to use the word still because I plan to keep it that way. Definitely in the lead and that's good. Especially considering that the whole weekend was really, really bad for me. It went completely wrong in so many different respects. Also, in the race we had no telemetry so there was no communication between the car and the pits, so they had no idea what was going on on track and that's why the start was also so bad and a lot of things came together. So I'm pleased with second and I just look forward to a normal weekend again in Barcelona, full attack again.

**Yeah it was a bad start. Take us through that first corner when you had contact with Valtteri Bottas in the Williams.**

**NR:** It was just very close, there were cars all over the place. Just had a bit of contact there and it was great that my car held on.

**Then you had to make your way back through the field. You had a little bit of fun coming through?**

**NR:** It's really a pleasure to drive this car at the moment. It's incredible the car that the team has built – fantastic. So thanks to the whole team. And Mercedes. This thing is so quick. It really increases the enjoyment level even further.

**Let's talk to Fernando Alonso, third for Ferrari. I know there are a lot of Ferrari fans out there and of course Fernando Alonso fans. Fernando, you beat the Red Bulls and you're third only behind the Mercedes Benz cars. You must be really satisfied with that.**

**Fernando ALONSO:** Hello everybody, first of all. It was a good weekend. We did improve the car a little bit compared to the first three races, so we felt more competitive and now in the race being here on the podium is some kind of surprise for us, a nice surprise finally. Happy with a podium finish today. I think I'm third in the Drivers' Championship behind these two guys. So we didn't have the start of the season that we would like but at the end of the day we're still in the fight.

**Just briefly you had a big contact with Felipe Massa going into the first corner. You were lucky [there] with no suspension damage.**

**FA:** Yeah, it was a big contact. I asked on the radio 'can you check the car', because it felt OK but I don't know how it looks from the outside, but it was OK and we managed very lucky to finish the race and hopefully next one it will be a clean start.

**Lewis, we're back to tracks you know well, obviously Barcelona, you've got some testing coming up. Surely you can't keep improving this car?**

**LH:** Well, this team is on a roll that's for sure. The team have done a great job, as I said. We're going to keep pushing; we're going to keep moving forwards. That's what Mercedes Benz want to do. They want to keep moving forward, developing, hopefully improving the engine, also the car. But as I said, I'm going to be working hard, we're going to keep working hard because obviously the others are pushing to catch us up. So I hope it continues.

## **PRESS CONFERENCE**

**Q: Lewis, congratulations, a three-time winner here. How does that feel?**

**LH:** It feels incredible. I just have to shout out a big thank you, thank you so much to the team, firstly for embracing me into the team last year and for all the hard work and for them continuously pushing forward. I really hope that the guys back at the factory are enjoying this and really have a great week. I'm so, so happy. I had such a great race, really enjoyed it, particularly the last few laps, y'know? Really trying to keep temperature in the tyres, pushing a little bit more, just to keep temperature up and the car was great.

**Q: You spoke about the work being done in FP2 and then of course the car was good enough for pole in the wet and then good enough to win in the dry. How perfect was it?**

**LH:** The car was really good. As I said, made lots of changes overnight on Friday night and obviously it was wet for qualifying. So I didn't get to feel... I didn't know what it was going to be like today. And really just that hard work sitting down with the engineers, really choosing... we didn't guess, we really made those steps in anticipation for today and it worked perfectly. I couldn't really have asked for more.

**Q: The only really big surprise I guess was getting the chequered flag a lap early – which could have tripped you up.**

**LH:** That was very strange! I was thinking 'am I seeing things?' I looked up, I was coming across the line expecting to do another lap and all of a sudden I looked for a split second and I saw the flag, I lifted for a second and I saw there was no-one on the wall, so then I just kept going. I did lose a second or so. I asked the team, they said no, so I just kept going. Very, very strange. It was good to do another lap.

**Q: Nico, you said so many things went wrong. What was your set-up like from Friday FP2 though to the race itself?**

**NR:** It was all OK. Set-up-wise it was a good team effort this weekend. Because it's a very unique track here with the understeer being the main problem and the front-left tyre, so you really have to change everything, adapt to the needs of the track and we did well as a team. It wasn't perfect in the race but it was definitely... pretty good.

**Q: As you played catch-up from the start you could really see what your strengths were in comparison to other cars.**

**NR:** Yeah, definitely. We have the best car, y'know, and that makes it more enjoyable then to do catch-up, even though of course don't want to do any catch-up – but I was back there so then catching up was nice with this fast car. It's a good weapon.

**Q: Then we heard you not entirely happy giving a fuel report every lap.**

**NR:** No! My telemetry failed, yeah? So I was completely on my own out there. The team then never... doesn't see any information from the car, so they have nothing to do. Er... well not... they do have things to do! So I had to do all the things on my own out there and, for example, it was then telling the team what my fuel level is so that they could judge if I was using too much fuel or if I'm safe – and I had to do that in Turn One y'know and Turn One is a difficult corner anyways, so yeah, didn't enjoy that point.

**Q: Fernando, first of all, first podium this year for Ferrari, how satisfying is that?**

**FA:** It is. Obviously we had a difficult start of the season with some lack of performance in the first races and, y'know it's good to be on the podium here on the fourth race after a not-easy weekend with changeable weather conditions and a difficult race as well, as Nico touched on. I think with the tyres, being a unique track with the front graining that you need to take care, plus some actions because we were not alone on the race. We managed, I think, quite well to get this podium and this is hopefully some boost of the team and some extra motivation y'know, to keep improving and to do even better in the next couple of races.

**Q: And again, the set-up from FP2 to the race, how good was that?**

**FA:** I think we make very few changes to be honest, from FP1 to now in the race. We brought some new parts here, a small step that probably we are a little bit more competitive now and we concentrate on Friday testing those parts and not much set-up work to be honest. Yesterday on the wet conditions, now in these days it's not much to do, wet to dry anyway, so, as I said, the setup, my feeling was quite OK from Friday to now.

**Q: The podium here, what can you promise your home fans at the next grand prix at home?**

**FA:** We need to see. We need to remain very calm. It has been a very unique race, we make a step forward. We were ninth and tenth fifteen days ago and that was hard, pain a little bit. So, yeah, we need to remain calm. We are happy, we need to enjoy the result today but still a long way to go and we cannot promise anything for Barcelona. We will give 100 per cent again and we will fight – but in terms of result we need to remain very calm and see how development is these three weeks if we can bring some extra new parts for Barcelona.

## **QUESTIONS FROM THE FLOOR**

**Q: (Michael Schmidt – Auto, Motor und Sport) Nico, when you said that you had to report your fuel consumption or fuel level to the pit lane every lap, why is that? Wouldn't it be easier that you saw on the dashboard a plus or minus and then you could drive on your own rather than talking to your pits?**

**NR:** Yeah, you're right. Just that I didn't have that function, probably because we don't really need that normally. It's fine like that, it's just reporting once in a while to the paddock. It wasn't every lap, you know, it was just once in a while so they can put a few dots and see where it's going. That's it. So that wasn't a problem at all, it was just that I didn't like where I had to do it because it was in turn one and that was not good.

**Q: (Flavio Vanetti – Corriere della Sera) Fernando, you said several times that Ferrari needs a global improvement but is there a priority in this situation, to try to get closer to Mercedes?**

**FA:** Well, of course it is a priority, we need to close, we need to catch them as soon as possible before the championship is over, so we need to keep scoring points, as many as we can now that we are not super-competitive, try not to lose too much ground on points in the championship, and if in one race we become as competitive as them, try to catch up in terms of points. At the moment, it seems very far away because they have a big advantage and we need to work really hard if we want to have that possibility. There is nothing really special we can do, just don't give up; we're in the fourth race in the championship, there 's

still a long way go but being super-realistic, knowing that the gap is very very big it's going to be very tough.

**Q: (Livio Oricchio – Universo On Line) Fernando, how can you understand this race? In the last one, you finished a long way behind the Mercedes; this time you were seven seconds behind Nico. Is it the characteristics of the track or the new parts that you brought that has made the car so fast?**

**FA:** I think it was a combination. As I said, we brought new parts that feel a little more competitive - the car feels a little bit faster - we also tested in Bahrain, they felt OK and we confirmed that here. On the other hand, I personally have had an extremely good weekend, probably at the level of 2012 in terms of driving and feeling comfortable with the car, qualifying, Friday, today. In Bahrain, we were one minute behind the leaders, ninth and tenth and today we are on the podium, seven seconds behind Nico as I said, but Kimi's one minute behind the leaders. I think it's a combination. Hopefully I can keep going like this. I felt more comfortable with the car and we will not give up.

**Q: (Alexander Aucott – China Radio International) Lewis, you mentioned the support of the Chinese fans on the podium. Have you seen an increase in support over the years here and is it something that makes them unique here at Shanghai?**

**LH:** Every year I come here, I feel that the fan base – at least my fan base - feels like it's growing every year here. Growing up in Stevenage, I never ever thought that I would fly halfway round the world and have so many people who chose to wear my cap, to wear my top, to have my flag and really support me. It's absolutely phenomenal, and here it's maybe my second year, I think, that from the moment I'm at the airport – I don't know how they know I'm there but they know I'm there – it's almost like they radio to the guys at the hotel and when I get to the hotel – I don't know how they know I'm at that hotel – but they're there every morning, every evening, day and night and that's why I always say we win and we lose together. This morning and on the way, one of my fans she gave me like a digital photo frame and on it, they did a special video for me from all the fan base here and for me, it's touched my heart so much so I want to say a big thank you to all of them.

**Q: (Luis Fernando Ramos – Racing Magazine) Nico, all the other teams have set their sights on the Barcelona race as their best chance to improve their performance with the novelties on their cars, so how confident is Mercedes that the things you're going to bring to Barcelona will keep the gap or maybe even extend the gap you have to the other teams?**

**NR:** Hopefully, more than all the other teams; we want to go to Barcelona with the biggest step, that's our ambition. Barcelona is a chance for us to extend the advantage that we have and that's the approach that we have going to Barcelona, 100 percent.

Ends