



FEDERATION INTERNATIONALE DE L'AUTOMOBILE

Press Information

**2014 Spanish Grand Prix
Saturday Press Conference Transcript**

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DRIVERS

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TV UNILATERAL

Lewis, your fourth pole of the season and this time you had to save the best until last.

Lewis HAMILTON: Yeah, it's been a tough day and Nico has been driving really well, through P3 and also through qualifying and so I didn't know if I'd be able to get it, but right at the end I had to eke out absolutely everything and more from the car. But coming here this weekend, we didn't know where everyone was going to be, so to see the develop that has gone on and the hard work that has gone into getting our car ready for this week – it inspires me. So a really big thank you to the team. To have the kind of performance we have, I've never really known that before. Still, it's very difficult out there, the track conditions are pretty poor, but I', overwhelmed I'm so happy to have had that.

Nico, obviously Lewis was looking strong yesterday but you were fastest in Q1 and Q2, so you obviously found something overnight? Given how it's all; ended up are you a little disappointed?

Nico ROSBERG: Yeah, definitely very disappointed. I don't particularly enjoy coming second to Lewis. I am of course disappointed but in the end it was a good lap from me, so Lewis just did a better job and that's just the way it is. Anyway, it's still all to play for tomorrow. Second place is only a little bit away from optimum because all it takes is a good start tomorrow and then I'm in the lead again. That's the good thing about it and that's why it's still all to play for.

Daniel, another top three, a good day for you personally, obviously problems for you team-mate, Sebastian, in Q3 there, and a fairly big margin between Lewis and yourself there on the grid.

Daniel RICCIARDO: Yeah, I think we're again sort of best of the rest but that's not quite good enough, we're still a second off and the lap, I thought my lap was not too bad, so I was expecting a smaller gap than that. I think we've made some improvement but they – they being Mercedes – have as well. So we would have liked to have closed that but we have some work ahead of us. On a positive note we're a clear third today. I think we had a pretty to P4, so that's not too bad, but for sure we want to get closer to the front two.

Well done. Coming back to you Lewis. You've never won here: why is that and how much would it mean to you to put that right tomorrow?

LH: There are lots of different circumstances, situations I've been in but generally, it's not being fast enough. Even going into today I lost a bit of pace today, so I'm really even happier knowing that I dropped a bit of pace but was able to get back at the front. In the past I guess it's just not been my time, so I'll do everything I can to bring some really good points for the team and let's hope that means something positive.

PRESS CONFERENCE

Q: So, Lewis, during Q1 we heard a radio message from you saying "I don't know how but we've made this car worse." What were you feeling at the time and how did that translate into what happened at the end when you managed to get pole?

LH: Well, yesterday I had such a great day and was really happy with the car and then, often when things are that good, you generally don't want to change much but we changed a couple of things overnight in the hope of making it a little better. Small things, like a half a millimetre here and there. The smallest of tweaks. But today the track grip, I think went down and today my car's been a real handful for me. Just lots of oversteer, very inconsistent corner to corner. So it was kind of back to square one, where I was in P1. And once you're in qualifying there's nothing you can do. We made some changes going into qualifying but I was generally struggling. So that's why in Q1 you saw I was half a second off Nico, just struggling to put a lap together. But at the end I just did it by the skin of my teeth.

Q: So, you found it yourself, you say?

LH: Well a little. I couldn't change anything so I really had to tweak a little bit the diff settings, otherwise just drive a little bit differently to just get the car around the lap. Obviously we were very quick but it doesn't matter how fast your car is, we take it to the limit. That's what all of us drivers do, we take our package to the limit. We're on the edge of our limit.

Q: Nico, you're still leading the Drivers' World Championship, tomorrow's an important day, some thoughts on that. But also, everyone's come here with updates, and as Daniel said, you perhaps expected the gap to you guys to be smaller. Do you feel that, if anything, Mercedes have slightly pulled ahead of the opposition?

NR: No, I wouldn't say that but it looks like we've managed to keep the gap consistent – and that's an achievement already. That's fantastic and I'm very happy about that – great job from the team and everybody because our ambition is to make the gap bigger, not try and be shaky and hope they don't close the gap too much. No, we want to grow the gap. Nearly managed to grow the gap, I think we kept it consistent and that's fantastic to see.

Q: And your own personal thoughts on the race...

NR: Personal thoughts are, of course, not ideal today but still all to play for tomorrow. It's going to be a long race so it's all possible. Tyre degradation is going to be a key point, need to get a handle on that.

Daniel, what about your personal thoughts? You mentioned the margin behind them you are in qualifying – a second – your own goals for this weekend and also, what are the team's objectives now that you've seen where you stand at this stage relative to Mercedes?

DR: I think, y'know, for us it's just to keep closing that gap to them. On a positive, we're the best of the rest but we've still got to keep the others, keep the guys we have behind us behind us, but to close to them. A second is too much. Even with a different strategy in the race it's going to be very hard to make up a second per lap. We've got to just keep chipping away. Obviously they're doing a great job and, yeah, I'm sure I can still learn a bit. As I am, I think, each race. We'll put up a fight tomorrow and at least try to get on the podium. And if we can't do anything about them, then keep the rest behind us.

QUESTIONS FROM THE FLOOR

Q: (Adrian Rodriguez - Agencia EFE) Lewis, is the main guy to watch sitting on your right? What are your feelings about your other rivals for tomorrow?

LH: Well, we always keep our eyes open for everyone. Of course Nico's the closest but Daniel's been driving very well in the first part of the season so anything can happen tomorrow. We've just got to really try to work hard to stay out in front and as Nico said, it's a long race so really try and look after the tyres, they're still going to be a huge player tomorrow depending on what strategy people do and tyre degradation.

Q: (Dan Knutson – Auto Action and National Speedsport News) Daniel, at the end of the session, the team sent you a message on the radio saying something about 'remember what Charlie said about the photo.' What was that about?

DR: He didn't want us running away, the top three guys, after qualifying, he didn't want us running away out of the scene, to do the group photo. I think last time I was hiding for a little bit too long, so just a reminder from the team, nothing technical, just outside dramas.

Q: (Pablo Grau – F1aldia) Daniel, your pace in long runs yesterday was very good; what do you expect for tomorrow, maybe an aggressive start?

DR: Yeah, I mean the plan is always to try and get a good start. Yeah, if we can do something about Lewis and Nico we will try our best and then yes, the pace yesterday was good, still not as good as a Mercedes but I think in relative terms we made the tyres last a long way. I think if there's any issues with making a two stop possible, if the race ends up being more of a three stop, then we might be in that window to do a two but we will see how we go. We have to assess everything after lap one and then push from there, but it's a tricky one here. You push but you're in conservative mode for the tyres as well. It's one of those tracks where tyre wear is a big one.

Q: (Michael Schmidt – Auto, Motor und Sport) Lewis, you said you had to cope in qualifying with some issues on the car. Is that a worry for tomorrow because you can't change very much or do you think that with more fuel, all these issues will be gone?

LH: I'm not worried for tomorrow but of course it's a concern for today with the balance being a little bit tricky. My long run yesterday was good but the track kind of

went away from us a little bit, I think it went away from everyone a little bit today. Perhaps tomorrow will be different, you just don't know. This track can go up and down so we will just wait and see how tomorrow goes. You can adjust some things – your diff settings and your front wings – so hopefully I'll get that just right for the race.

Q: (Dan Knutson – Auto Action and National Speedsport News) A question for all three: normally you drive around Monaco with a millimetre or two to spare. This year the cars are a lot more tail happy. How are you going to deal with that?

NR: Yeah, it will be a little bit more of a challenge this year because we have less grip and traction than we had last year and harder tyres so it will be even more exciting but that's all good.

LH: Yeah, we'll just have to be a lot more cautious, I think, because today, massive oversteer moments. I don't really know what to expect when we get there.

Q: Daniel your thoughts, and is it a circuit that gives Red Bull some optimism?

DR: I think, yeah – Lewis just asked me, actually, if we will be quick there and I said I hope so. We'll see how we go. It's a track that I think all of us drivers enjoy driving around. We're always on the limit there. We get a few corners where we brush the barriers and I think this year it's going to be even more of a challenge. We may not have to get too carried away with getting close to the walls, because if the rear snaps, then as we saw with Bottas in Melbourne, a similar scenario, where he had that incident and yes, things like this are probably more likely to happen but that's what we get paid the big bucks for, yeah? So I'm sure we will be right.

Q: (Livio Oricchio – Universo On Line) Daniel, your team always puts a lot of responsibility for the lack of performance this year on Renault, and Renault have announced that they have a new version of engine here. Can you tell us if the engine is really better than the previous one?

DR: Looking at the speed traps this week, we seem to be closer than we were the last few races at least. Obviously the straight here is not as long as Shanghai but I think realistically we have closed the gap there, so I think they've done a good job Renault is helping us all the time. We know we've still got more ground to make up but to answer your question, I think yeah, we have made some progress.

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