



FEDERATION INTERNATIONALE DE L'AUTOMOBILE

Press Information

2014 Monaco Grand Prix Sunday Press Conference Transcript

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DRIVERS

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PODIUM INTERVIEWS

(Conducted by Benedict Cumberbatch)

Nico, congratulations, man – a home win for the home boy. How did it feel? You had Lewis very, very close to you all the race but you held on to your lead. How was it?

Nico ROSBERG: A very, very special day for sure. Lewis drove really, really well and pushed me massively hard, so the pressure was on all the way. But I kept it cool and, yeah, was able to win, in the end pulling a bit of a gap because I had the fresher tyres. So, fantastic and I'm very, very happy for the whole team, it's an amazing car they've built and given us this year.

Congratulations, well done to the Monaco boy. Lewis, how are you? Tell us a little bit about what happened on the 56th lap? You got something in your eye?

Lewis HAMILTON: Yeah, just through the visor... but anyway that's not important. It was a good day and really good for the team to get a one-two.

You had [Daniel Ricciardo] right close behind. How was it? You started second and finished second and how are things with your team-mate, I think people want to know?

LH: I had great pace, you know, obviously I felt I was very strong today but it's a very, very difficult circuit to overtake on...

It's incredibly thrilling to watch, you were all incredible out there, the closeness of the cars...

LH: Thank you. Fortunately we didn't make any mistakes, so....

Daniel, well done, man. Nice to meet you; Benedict. Tell us a little bit about your race. You were in third for a while, then the pit stops, tell us a little about your strategy.

Daniel RICCIARDO: Firstly, it's really nice to be up here on the podium in Monaco.

It's your first podium here isn't it? Congratulations.

DR: Yeah, thank you. The start was not great, I dropped back to fifth actually. A bit of frustration but then we saw Vettel had a problem, so we were able to get fourth and then we saw Raikkonen had a puncture on one of the safety cars. So we sort of inherited third after a poor start...

You got very close to Lewis. You were right on his gearbox at the end?

DR: At the end we really closed in. I believe he had an issue. We tried to put some pressure on but in the end third was the best we could do.

PRESS CONFERENCE

Congratulations Nico – a two-time Monaco Grand Prix winner, only a handful of drivers have ever done that before. Fifth consecutive one-two finish for the Mercedes team and you are back on top of the Drivers' standings. Can you sum up what this win means for you today in the context of the battle with Lewis for the championship?

NR: Yeah, it's a special win, definitely, because Lewis has had the momentum with the results and everything and I really needed to try to break that momentum and somewhat I managed to do that this weekend. Of course taking the leading again in the world championship and winning here in Monaco, yeah, all in all really, really cool.

Well done. Lewis, obviously the momentum is broken for the moment. We heard you on the radio quite a lot after the safety car and the pit stops, questioning and speaking about the strategy calls. Obviously you pitted together under the safety car. Had there been a thought that you might try to undercut Nico before that? Can you explain to us what the conversation was about?

LH: I don't remember to be honest. I don't. I think they saw a crash and normally under the crash we could have come in and I really should have come in but the team didn't call us in. We really should have pitted that lap.

Fair enough. Daniel, your first Monaco podium. Can you describe your feelings about that and looking back across qualifying and the race is there any way you could have got a better result than the one you got today.

DR: To describe the feeling, it's really nice to be up here. Could we have done better? I don't know. I felt yesterday that we left a little bit of lap time on there. Where that would have jumped on the grid, who knows. After that, the race itself – the start was not good, not what I wanted. I actually dropped back to fifth and then Seb had his problems, still not sure what, but pretty evident he had problems when he slowed on the straight. Then Raikkonen I saw got a puncture under the safety car, so I got third and then pretty much was just trying to maintain the gap behind me to Alonso. Then when I thought there was enough or the right amount of laps left before the end to push and not really save tyres anymore, I did and went for it. We got close to at least one of the Mercedes at the end but you know what it's like around here, it's quite hard to pass. Tried to put a bit of pressure on but third was the best we could do but not a bad day.

QUESTIONS FROM THE FLOOR

Q: (Paolo Ianieri – La Gazzetta dello sport) A question for Nico and Lewis. We have seen that there is a pretty tense situation between the two of you and we also heard comments from Lauda saying you did not want to talk and apologise. Are you going to have a pizza together, a dinner, to sort the problems, talk about it and try to get the situation back to normal.

NR: It's fine. We've had discussions and the benefit we have is that we've known each other for so long. We always sit down and discuss it and then move on and that's what we're doing this weekend also.

Lewis?

LH: I don't really have an answer for you there.

Q: (Oana Popoiu – F1 Zone) I have a question for Lewis. Niki Lauda said that in Barcelona you used an engine mode you were told not to and you had to apologise to Nico for that. Do you think that that mode would have helped you win the race today?

LH: No... today we were using all the modes. In the last race it was a mode that didn't really affect the outcome of the race. We were told that we had to stay in a certain mode. Nico did it in Bahrain and I did it in Barcelona. In this race we stuck to the strategies we had to stick.

NR: I don't know what Niki is referring to but it's completely normal that we switch modes together you know, we always do that in the races. It's nothing unusual.

Q: (Dan Knutson – Auto Action and National Speedsport News) Lewis, yesterday you told the BBC that you might handle the situation with Nico like Senna would. What did you mean by that?

LH: I don't know. I can't really remember to be honest. I think it was just a joke. Obviously I didn't.

Q: (Michael Schmidt – Auto Motor und Sport) I think you said on the radio that you had a problem with your eye in the closing stages. What happened there?

LH: I've never really had it before. I kept making sure my visor was as closed as possible but I had quite a bit of wind coming in. I got close to Nico at one stage and all of a sudden I got a bit of debris in my eye, or some dirt, so I was driving with one eye, which is virtually impossible to do and so through the low-speed corners I was trying to open up my visor to clear it up but it was just making it worse. Fortunately, I think with five laps to go it cleared up so I was able to stay ahead of Daniel.

Q: (Vincent Marre – Sports Zeitung) in the last days Nico was mentioning that the previous races were not one-to-one races. What do you think Lewis about this race or this race weekend. Was it a one-to-one races.

LH: I don't fully understand the question.

Q: (Vincent Marre – Sports Zeitung) last day Nico Rosberg was mentioning that the previous races were not one-to-one races, relating to the weather, because you were

winning the races and this time he's winning the race and I want to know if you think this weekend is a one-to-one race for you?

LH: I'm still not fully understanding it, but all the races have been very, very close but this weekend I think I had very good pace. I drove with all my heart and gave it all I could, fairly, and I feel like I drove fairly all weekend. So I leave today quite happy and I can go into the next race with even more energy and determination.

Q: (Ian Parkes – Press Association) Lewis, it seems pretty clear to us that you feel aggrieved with the events that occurred yesterday in qualifying. Is this it now for you? Is it gloves off in your battle with Nico? And secondly, do you feel that you are getting full and fair support from the team?

LH: Generally, there is a fierce battle between me and Nico and it will continue that way to I'm sure quite late in the season. Nico's not had a single hiccup through the season so far. Obviously I had a car that didn't finish in Melbourne but otherwise it's still quite close, so I'm just going to keep my head up, keep pushing. I know the team are working hard for the both of us. The team can sometimes be in awkward positions, which they were yesterday, and their job is really to protect us both and that's what they did.

Q: (Graham Harris – Motorsport Monday) Question for Nico: you were being told to back-off and coast with fuel. How critical was your fuel?

NR: Yeah, the fuel was very critical and caught me off-guard a little bit because it was a major change that I had to make and especially with Lewis being so close behind, it was a tough moment because I had to change the driving style completely, use different gears, different lifting and coasting, everything different. But, again, the team managed that well and got me to do what I needed to do. And then, once I got into the groove again, it was OK and everything... it was no problem them. But it was still difficult.

Q: (Jussi Jäkälä - YLE) Nico, 31 years ago Keke won here, today you are double Monaco winning. Which do you think is prouder at the moment: you or your Dad?

NR: I don't know. I hope... of course my father is proud today and that makes me very happy, that I'm able to make my parents proud. Hopefully even my friends, for example, who all were here also this weekend and that makes it all the more special to have family, friends, everybody I know lives here and is at the track watching the race and that's even nicer.

Q: (Paolo Ianieri – La Gazzetta dello Sport) One question to Nico and one to Daniel. Nico, you said that you had to break the momentum, since Lewis is coming from four consecutive wins. Is this your most important victory so far? And to you Daniel, from what we have seen today from Red Bull, are you going to have the pace to challenge Mercedes in Montreal in two weeks?

NR: I don't know about the most important. For sure it was very, very important, yes, today because Lewis had the result moment and I needed to try and bring that to an end and managed to do that today, so that's great but, y'know, it's still early days and for sure it's going to continue to be a very, very tough battle.

Daniel?

DR: I think, yeah, we closed up a bit here in Monaco which we knew would be our best chance up until now. This circuit definitely suits our package a bit better than previous circuits – we still didn't finish in front so, unfortunately, it's still not where we want to be. Montreal is still a street circuit but unfortunately the straights go on a little bit longer there so

we're still down a little bit in that area, which I think everyone's aware of and we've made progress. Whether it will be enough by then, honestly, probably not but we are closing the gap so, that's all we can ask for, for now, and just keep chipping away at it and be patient. I'm sure a bit of perseverance as well and we'll get there.

Q: (Livio Oricchio – Universo Online) Daniel, for sure as a driver you must trust in yourself but in any moment did you believe you could beat Vettel in the way this season you are beating him in qualifying and the race?

DR: I didn't really have any visions exactly on how it would go, what the race results would be or what the qualifying score would be – but I knew that I have some talent and obviously got a bit of experience now in Formula One. So, every year, even every six month period I feel I'm still growing and getting better as a driver as well so, I knew coming into the season with the team behind me and sort of a new opportunity, that I would be able to challenge Seb. Did I think it would be going, let's say, as well as it was now? I don't know. But I knew if I had everything underneath me I'd be capable of getting the results. So, fortunately the team saw that as well, back in September, I think, last year. So, it's coming good.

Q: (Barna Zsoldos – Nemzeti Sport) Lewis, after your victory in Barcelona, you said that Nico was faster than you in the race. Today he can even beat you. Is it a worry for you? And do you know where you should improve pace-wise.

LH: erm... not really. I was pretty comfortable with my pace this weekend.

Q: (Yassmin Abdel-Magied – RichardsF1.com) Daniel, you said yesterday that there was a little bit left on the table in terms of qualifying. Do you think that there was a little bit left on the table still in the race, and was there was there any point – you got pretty close to Lewis at the end there – when you were going to go for it and then maybe not – don't want to risk it? What was the thinking in those last few laps?

DR: Everyone was trying to do a one stop today; it's a bit of a weird one, you don't really push much of the race because, especially after the first pit stop, we still had a long way to go, so you're in two minds: do I push or do I just try and hold the guy off and get to the end. By the time we'd got 15/20 laps to go I knew the tyres were going to last so then I could actually start my race, so to speak, and then start to set some quicker times. We caught Lewis, the team said I was going to catch him, the pace was good so I knew I was eventually going to get on to him. Knowing it's hard to pass around here, I wasn't... I don't know. I was just waiting to see what happened but I wasn't just going to settle for third. Obviously in the end I did but if there was a clean move to be taken then yeah, I would have taken it.

Q: (Nicola Pohl – Bild) Lewis, what do you think was the reason why the team didn't call you in immediately after the crash? You complained over the team radio about that.

LH: I think it's just what we have a rule that the guy in front gets the first opportunity to pit first so I think that would be why.

Q: (Haoran Zhou – Formula One Express) Lewis, how did the debrief of yesterday's qualifying go because as we understand, you were not in the debrief room, while Rosberg was?

LH: I was in there. I went to the toilet and Nico did his big debrief before I got there which is unusual. Usually we do it when we're both in the same room but as I came up I did mine and fortunately the engineers had written down what Nico had said so I read it.

Q: (Michael Schmidt – Auto Motor und Sport) Nico, have you been surprised that the team didn't call you in right after the crash of Sutil?

NR: No. Surprised? No, not really, because I don't think about that too much. I know I can rely on them to make the right call at all times so it's not something that I'm thinking too much about, the strategy and should I be boxing now or not, because I know that they're going to make the right call.

Q: (Christian Hoenicke – Der Tagesspiegel) Nico, do you think it was fair what Lewis said about you not being hungry as him because you were growing with boats and jets and all that stuff?

NR: I didn't hear Lewis say that and so I'm not going to comment because it's easy for you to just invent something and so I'm not going to comment on that, and even if something like that was written – which I don't know because I don't read the media – then still, between what Lewis says and what's written, so much can turn around so it's better I don't say anything and I know that Lewis wouldn't say something like that, especially not to the press, maybe to me if he feels like it but not to the press.

Q: (Ian Parkes – Press Association) Nico, you may give the same answer to this question then, because there were some comments from yourself in one of the German newspapers or certainly a few of the German newspapers and you can correct me if I'm wrong, if the English translation was not correct but you remarked that when Lewis goes through a difficult period that he can crack. Do you think that that's what happened this weekend, that maybe Lewis did crack under the press yesterday in qualifying, and Lewis, any comment on that yourself? Do feel you're the kind of guy that doesn't crack, that you can hold it together in these kind of circumstances?

NR: Again, that is definitely very very far from anything that I've ever said and ever would say. Definitely not and I've known Lewis for many many years and he's always been strong, among other things mentally, so I'm definitely not expecting him to crack any time soon, that's for sure. It's going to be a tough battle which is going to be ongoing, but I would never say something like that anyways.

LH: Do I feel like I crack? No.

Q: (Ralf Bach - Sport Bild) Lewis, to clean the situation, did you tell the BBC in this interview where you said these things with the boat or didn't you say that?

LH: I was asked who was hungrier. I think if you ask every driver they will say that they're the hungriest and I said that what gives me the hunger is where I grew up in comparison to where Nico grew up. You know I've always been striving to come and live here. I used to travel around with Nico in his Dad's plane, I used to go to his boat, I used to go to his house, I used to have those experiences and that gave me those experiences and that gave me the desire to want that one day, which gave me the hunger. It was his Dad obviously who inspired me to be where I am today.

Q: (Ralf Bach - Sport Bild) So you did say it.

LH: Yes, but – as Nico said – it was taken out of context a little bit.

Q: (Livio Oricchio – Universo On Line) Lewis, do you believe with a normal pit stop – not under safety car conditions – you would have had any chance to overtake Nico and get the lead of the race?

LH: It's irrelevant now, but obviously with the start, we got exactly the same start... there's only two opportunities in the race and the pit stop would have been the other one but the

safety car came out at the perfect time for him so I didn't have the chance there. Otherwise, that was it.

Q: (Gloria Scola – El Mundo) The race has just finished; I was wondering what racing gives you, is it freedom of expression, a way to express yourself, adrenalin?

NR: First of all, we're here to entertain and hopefully give people a great time and a spectacle to watch, and especially in Monaco, it's very obviously because everybody's there on boats and houses and everything, and I just hope that we're able to put on a great show, that our sport is seen as the best sport in the world, the most fun sport in the world, the most exciting sport in the world and so that's a special feeling as such. And then of course driving my car through the streets of Monaco on the limit, battling everybody else, trying to win and then of course the win itself is the most special moment.

LH: I'm living my dream so it gives good energy.

DR: I get... honestly, freedom is definitely one thing. I remember when I first hopped in a go-kart as a kid, just being in control and not having anyone else in your space and then going at speed was a sense of freedom definitely. It's nice as well, particularly with everything that happens around F1, all the media and everything else – when you hop in the car, it's just you and the car and occasionally you have an engineer on the radio but it's just you so definitely a sense of freedom along with a wicked adrenalin.

Ends