



FEDERATION INTERNATIONALE DE L'AUTOMOBILE

**Press Information**

**2016 Spanish Grand Prix  
Saturday Post Qualifying Press Conference Transcript**

**14.05.2016**

**DRIVERS**

**1 – Lewis HAMILTON (Mercedes)**

**2 – Nico ROSBERG (Mercedes)**

**3 – Daniel RICCIARDO (Red Bull Racing)**

**TV UNILATERAL**

Lewis, a bit of pressure on you there in the final run after that mistake in the first run of Q3 but 1 minute 22 flat is some kind of lap time around this place?

**Lewis HAMILTON:** Yeah, very, very happy with getting the lap. Obviously Nico has been very strong all weekend, so it was crucial that... you know bit by bit, stepping stone, one step at a time, I've been really trying to bring the pace together. Firstly, I really want to say a big thank you to all the time, all the guys back at the factory, for working so hard over the past two weeks to try to rectify the issues we've had. This is three out of three for me. So I'm pretty happy. Obviously I didn't get to compete in the last two qualifying sessions, so very, very happy with it and very grateful as well. The car was great. Yesterday was a bit of a difficult day, so to be able to start on the right foot today is a real blessing.

**OK, thank you very much indeed. Coming to you Nico, you had the strongest first run in Q3 but are you a little bit disappointed with the outcome at the end of qualifying or are you taking a view at the long game here?**

**Nico ROSBERG:** No, for sure I'm disappointed to be second, yeah. I wanted to be first today, of course. But Lewis was just quicker in qualifying today and that's it. Fortunately, it's the race that counts so there are still a couple of opportunities tomorrow for sure. at the start for example. And then strategy-wise it's not going to be an easy race tomorrow, so I'll try and take my chances there.

**Thanks for that. Daniel, you looked delighted at the end there after that qualifying lap. You only had one run to do it in and also a fair bit of pressure from your new young teammate?**

**Daniel RICCIARDO:** Firstly, really happy to be back here in this press conference. Try to be here tomorrow. I think happy to be in front of both Ferraris as well, both of us. Max obviously was doing really good. We're both on the second row, that's pretty awesome. Yeah, we chipped away it, but it took a bit of time to come. Yeah in Q3 I knew I had one lap and just knew I had the pace and where I could do it and it was just about putting it all together. Up until then I hadn't really got it all together but Q3 is what counts and yeah, did what I had to do, so I was very happy.

**Very well done indeed. Coming back to our polesitter, Lewis Hamilton. It's always a close race here in Barcelona, as Nico was referencing a moment ago. Clearly there are more strategy variables this season than there has been in the past, but I guess from your point of view you've got to look forward to the race and to coming round at the end of that first lap at the front for the first time this season.**

**LH:** Yeah, hopefully everything comes together. I've been working on starts obviously at the past races and yeah, we're in the best position to start from. We'll try to get off on the right foot and you know tomorrow could be a good day.

## **PRESS CONFERENCE**

**Lewis, coming back to you: one little talking point just before the end, it was quite close in the pit lane as you went out for your final run in Q3, with Kimi Raikkonen coming out of the Ferrari garage. Your thoughts on that?**

**LH:** Yeah, I found it quite unusual. I mean, I was pulling out and all of a sudden he appeared and I thought he was going to hit. A little bit of an unsafe release from them, but it's not a race, so whether or not that affects...

**Did you have to jump on the brakes?**

**LH:** Yeah, I think I did have to brake and just lift, or at least lift. But I think he saw me, so...

**Nico, looking at the difference in your performances in the second part of qualifying, which is obviously the one that dictates the tyres you start the race with, there was quite a big difference between the two of you, I think it was about half a second, six tenths, something like that. Was that performance or was that you taking a tiny bit less out of the tyres with a view to the opening stint of the race?**

**NR:** No, I was pushing. So it wasn't saving tyres...

**OK, fine...**

**NR:** Unfortunately!

**I thought I'd just check! Finally, Daniel, talk a little bit about the atmosphere inside the garage this weekend and the atmosphere inside the cockpit of your car when you were looking at some of those lap times that Max was turning on his first acquaintance with this Red Bull car of yours?**

**DR:** Sure, it's been a bit different this weekend. Not so much from what I've been doing, obviously my side of the garage hasn't changed. Sure, there has been a bit more attention surrounding the team and sure, I've got another guy directly opposite me, who is doing very well. We've both locked out the second row of the grid. Obviously very happy to be here, but for both of us to be in front of Ferrari and on the second row, I thought maybe one of us could sneak in and get a P4 and split the Ferraris but to both be in front is really cool. We know from the start Max is quick and he's shown that throughout, also yesterday he showed speed as well. It's been a good start for him and I think for us as a team really good for this weekend.

## **QUESTIONS FROM THE FLOOR**

**Q: (Ralf Bach – Autobildmotorsport) – A question for Nico. Nico, you were one of the experts, you were right warning for the strength of Ferrari, so I guess you're not surprised they're so close, only one second?**

**NR:** Yeah, it makes look like not so much of an expert, huh! Anyways, we're surprised. We're surprised to be so far ahead. At the same time we're also surprised how close Red Bull now is. It's really changing around quite a lot. The only constant is us, we're always there and always up front and we always have a gap to whoever is in second at the moment. That's been impressive to see. Very pleased with that of course, it's just a great job by the team, that on every track we manage to keep the car working perfectly and that's really fantastic to see.

**Q: (Livio Oricchio – globoesporte.com) Daniel, when you saw in Q2 that Max was 407 thousandths faster than you, did it bring you any special emotion: 'I need to beat this guy in Q3'. Something like that?**

**DR:** Your mentality is you need to beat everyone. Sure, my Q2 definitely didn't go as good as his. His first lap was on the money. I didn't feel we had to run again but obviously the team wanted to play it safe, so we ran again and even the second lap I did in Q2 wasn't great. So sure, I knew there was more to come in Q3 – but also I knew where the time was and I knew just putting it all together would give us a bit of lap time. So, I think the only disadvantage coming into Q3 was that I knew I just had one set of tyres – but been in that position before and, sure, it creates a bit of excitement. Max had already set one time in Q3 with one set, so yeah, obviously you look across at your team-mate but I was also looking at Ferraris. And yeah, to get in front of one of them I thought would be good but to get in front of both, and also for Max to jump them as well... it's a good day. I never doubted myself but yeah, left it pretty late.

**Q: (Peter Windsor – F1 Racing) Two questions if I may. First to Lewis: you weren't very happy with the car yesterday Lewis, I was wondering how much the car has gone to the other end of the spectrum in terms of feel and balance and grip level now, whether it was the circuit perhaps coming in as well? And was the lock-up in that first Q3 run indicative that maybe things still aren't 100 per cent?**

**LH:** Nope. I had a problem yesterday with something on the car so it wasn't the easiest of days and almost a bit of a waste of a day for me. So today was really starting from scratch, the car felt great from the get-go once that was rectified. We made a few changes to the balance – but very few, just a couple of changes. Nico was very comfortable in the car so

kind of more in the direction he was going. They weren't very far apart anyway. But to get out today and feel the car beneath me once again was a great relief. But still, Nico was incredibly strong, as you can see, so there was areas I knew I needed to pick up and that was really what I was trying to do – and in Turn Ten a little bit too much. When I came in I was just laughing, believe it or not, like between that session because the lap was so good. Between those runs I was just giggling. Just thinking 'it was such a good lap'. It would have been easily pole – but I'm glad I got it with the second one. Whilst it put a bit more pressure on the second lap, I was still able to get it, so happy with that.

**Q: (Peter Windsor – F1 Racing) Daniel, the traction of the Red Bull is brilliant around here, sector three looks great for you – but I'm wondering – we didn't see the lap on TV – how much could you push through sectors one and two knowing your lap was really going to come together in sector three?**

**DR:** Yeah, I think, surprisingly, the track got a bit better for sure as qualifying went on, but it was getting hotter as well a bit so it wasn't... I thought sector three would have dropped off more to be honest as the track got warmer but it wasn't too bad and you could still push. I think the lap times – I'm not sure how they were compared to last year – but you could push pretty much the whole lap and not really worry about the tyres too much, so that was good. At least for us. We were able to go for it, the majority of the lap. Sure, the last sector, you get a little bit of overheating, particularly the last corners, traction, you're fighting a bit. But, as you said, the last sector is still relatively strong compared to Mercedes and Ferrari, so yeah, it'll be interesting in two weeks' time in Monaco. Hopefully we can get even closer.

**Q: (Angélique Belokopytov – AutoDigest) Two questions to you Daniel. My first is, it's a long time we didn't see you here, so how will you manage to be back tomorrow, to carry on the tradition tomorrow? And the second is, we saw an impressive Max today, you are here, there are Ferraris behind so is it a new Red Bull era?**

**DR:** I think... yes for sure it's great to be back up here and in dry conditions it's nice. A bit like China. This is really the first track of the year that we've probably, all of us, put on the majority of downforce that we currently have on the car and it's shown our strengths are coming back. I think for us as a team we've shown signs already this year and today that's shown again. That we do have a good car underneath us and it'll be interesting come even tighter, twistier circuits. Monaco, as I said, in a few weeks' time will be interesting: should be fun. And yeah, to be back here tomorrow, I think just do what I guess I've been doing. I feel I've been driving really well this year and just to keep it up. Yeah. I'd love to say we can fight with them but I'll just try to hang with them. Hopefully get a slipstream and they can drag me down into Turn One. And yeah, stay close.

**Q: (Dan Knutson – Speed Sport magazine) Lewis, in the unilaterals you thanked the team for working so hard to improve, change the car. What is different about the car now?**

**LH:** We obviously came with some small upgrades. Obviously the car is constantly improving but I would say, obviously I've got an improved turbo for this week, which was coming probably a race or two away, and just to really rectify and understand the issues that we've had in the last races. I just know everyone was working hard, whether or not we've actually rectified and fixed everything, we will find out. One thing I know is that the guys are working flat out. Everyone was feeling the pain over the last couple of races with the faults, and so

just grateful to them for putting the work in because hopefully because this weekend and moving forwards we'll see the results of that.

**Q: (Michael Schmidt – Auto, Motor und Sport) Daniel, if the engine upgrade brings what is promised, do you think that's enough to close the gap to Mercedes, or is there still more needed?**

**DR:** I think there will still be a little more, but sure on some circuits it could be enough. So if we were to have it here, for example, I think there's still 0.6s off Lewis today so I don't think we're expecting 0.6s from the upgrade so we would probably still not quite be there but it would certainly put us a lot closer. Monaco and Budapest, some of these tighter circuits, I think (it) would give us a real shot so hanging out for the next few races, really.

**Q: (Ralf Bach – AutoBild Motorsport) Lewis, I read some English papers today which say there's a possibility that you could take a sabbatical next year. What are your plans in this time?**

**LH:** A sab... a year out? No way! Yeah, the guy whoever wrote that was smoking something. Probably good stuff.

**Q: (Christopher Joseph – Chicane) Daniel, you said you don't need motivation in general as an F1 driver, but surely a hot new teammate must have had an effect today, so how will you approach the race tomorrow, both strategically for yourself and collectively for the team?**

**DR:** That's alright. Again, I said I don't need any extra motivation because I feel I'm my own motivation. I love the sport, I love the competition so as long as there's someone to compete against, sure I'll always have a high level of motivation but I would say sure, it's another challenge, having Max in. At the moment I guess he's the hottest young property as the up-and-comers are concerned. At least he's created the most hype I would say out of the new kids on the block and I think it showed today, he was very quick throughout qualifying. It's good for me, obviously: more challenges and more people to measure myself against. I do believe he is very quick and today I managed to put in a good lap in Q3 and we will see how the season progresses but sure, it's exciting.

**Q: (Rodrigo Franca – VIP Magazine) Nico, do you see a difference in your life as an F1 driver being the World Championship points leader and after seven wins in a row, you have more pressure or have more attention from fans and media etc?**

**NR:** No, no difference. We've been fighting now for the championship for the last two years now, so it's no different again this year. The battle with Lewis and the battle trying to stay ahead of all the other teams, nothing has changed. And I did lead the championship already anyway in 2014 for example, so even that is not the first time.

**Q: (Fabrizio Cognati – diariodelweb.com) Daniel, Max said on Thursday that now he doesn't see a reason to leave Red Bull now that he's been upgraded to the top team. Seeing that Red Bull is so competitive, I think that you as well will stay in the team and see no reason to leave.**

**DR:** Sure, the position we're in now is getting stronger and obviously you want to put yourself with the best team or the best position available and for sure, Max moving up now he's very happy and for me as well, I'm very happy with the progress I've seen, especially

after last year, there was a bit of a dip in performance and then we started to creep it back up in the second half of the year and we've really continued that. I think we've done a bigger step forward already than what we expected so sure, if it keeps going like this then I think both of us are very happy here.

**Q: (Livio Oricchio – GloboEsporte.com) Lewis, you didn't have good starts in the first two races and then you had problems in the last two races and tomorrow the start will be very important to win the race. Will you do any special preparations for this race, knowing the importance of the start here?**

**LH:** Like meditation or something? No! In China I had the best start of the whole grid. The last start actually was so-so. So I'm hoping for another good start. I think whatever issues we had they definitely have been rectified and I think ultimately with starts, I think for all of us in Formula One, it's always up and down. The starts have been great so far this weekend so I don't see why they won't be tomorrow.

Ends