



FEDERATION INTERNATIONALE DE L' AUTOMOBILE

## 2018 FIA Formula One World Championship

### Chinese Grand Prix

#### Post-Race Press Conference Transcript

15.04.2018

#### DRIVERS

1 – Daniel RICCIARDO (Red Bull Racing)

2 – Valtteri BOTTAS (Mercedes)

3 – Kimi RÄIKKÖNEN (Ferrari)

#### PODIUM INTERVIEWS

(Conducted by Martin Brundle)

**Daniel – what an absolute star. What a race! Your sixth victory, but is that the sweetest one?**

**Daniel RICCIARDO:** I don't know what it is, I don't seem to win boring races, they're all pretty fun. That was unexpected. Put ourselves 24 hours ago and I thought we'd maybe be starting at the back of the grid. Firstly, thanks to the boys yesterday. I thanked them after qualifying but today is the real reward for that work. So thank you to everyone at Aston Martin Red Bull Racing, the mechanics worked their butts off, so...

**And the team had their brain in gear didn't they, under the safety car, getting you in the pit lane. Double stacked the car twice, so the pit crew were on it as well?**

**DR:** It was hectic. I heard 'safety car' in Turn 14, and they said 'we're going to double stop, come, come, in the box'. It happened very quickly but very decisive moves, winning moves also from the team, so thanks a lot. Yeah, fat lip and all I got the win.

**Just take us through one of the great overtakes – maybe on Lewis? That came out of nowhere down to the Turn 14 hairpin.**

**DR:** Yeah, sometimes you've just got to lick the stamp and send it. So, there we go. I enjoyed it very much.

**You still made the apex somehow, extraordinary?**

**DR:** Yeah, obviously we had the soft tyre so I knew I could get a little bit more out of the braking than them. A lot of the time you get one chance to try so I made the most of every opportunity.

**You were a little closer to Valtteri when you passed him than you are now, but Valtteri, kind of bittersweet. Your 100<sup>th</sup> start but the safety car didn't play into your hands and left you on some slightly older tyres and struggling a little bit.**

**Valtteri BOTTAS:** Yeah, you know, the race was going pretty well for us and we were looking strong all the way, until the guys, during the safety car, stopped and we were in trouble then with Daniel and nearly with Kimi in the end. It is disappointing. We were giving everything we had and it kind of felt like we deserved victory... but not today.

**Without the safety car, do you think you had enough grip and pace to keep Sebastian behind you and take victory?**

**VB:** It felt like everything was under control so far. I had no major drop-off in the end, so I think we could have done it, but this is racing, these things happen.

**Kimi, wow, it looked like you were a bit out of position. It looked like you were struggling a bit. They kept you out a long time before the pit stop. Then the safety car played into your hands and you had great speed and you got yourself back onto the podium.**

**Kimi RÄIKKÖNEN:** Yeah, I think we made a good start and then got, unfortunately, blocked a bit and passed in the first corners. I struggled a little bit following people in the beginning. On my own I wasn't too bad, but far from ideal at the start of the race and then obviously we stayed very long out. A little bit of luck with the safety car. I had good speed on the mediums but in the end we would have needed the soft tyres to really go for it. But I think I was kind of OK in the end, but once I got close I had much more speed than Valtteri but once you get close it's so difficult to follow people, to get a good run you need much better tyres to get that proper run and you can kind of offset yourself. But I'll take what I got, because at one point it didn't look good at all.

**Daniel, I just want to go through the other overtake, when you passed Valtteri into Turn 6, because that looked a little bit touch and go.**

**DR:** It was close. I think it was hard but fair. I saw him defend, so I wanted to go shallower, but then he came a bit more... I thought about pulling out. No, I'm just kidding! I knew there would always be enough room and the tyres had pretty good grip, so worst case I went wide and I'd have another crack somewhere else.

## **PRESS CONFERENCE**

**Q: Daniel, many congratulations. In winter testing, if someone had said to you "Red Bull will win a race this year before Mercedes," what would have been your reaction?**

**DR:** Good job. Yeah, pretty cool. Holy Testicle Tuesday! I don't know. I'm sitting here, reciting everything in my head what just happened. Yeah, awesome. Even after yesterday. I've only got six, it's not a whole lot but the wins seem to come under always some circumstances. Baku, and this one now where we really thought we were going to start the race at the back. We didn't think we were going to get out in qualifying and, just over 24 hours later, now to be here, it's... this sport's crazy. A week ago I was with my head down after two laps on Sunday. Yeah, frustrated at the sport, frustrated at all the variables that are involved in the sport. Sometimes I question why I chose this sport because there's so many other things out of your control and it does get you down a lot – but then when you have a day like this it's worth fifty of those bad ones.

**Q: Valtteri, coming on to you. A lot was made yesterday after qualifying about the team having set the cars up for the warmer temperatures that we had today in the grand prix. How was the balance of the car?**

**VB:** I think the balance was OK. Like actually it felt OK yesterday, we were just not quite quick enough with the ultrasoft, so yeah, today we only used soft and medium and I think on the soft it was next to nothing, the difference to Ferrari. We were as competitive as them. I think with the medium it was pretty much the same case. So, for sure, starting the race from the second row makes it more difficult. It's a shame what happened in the end because we really took the opportunities in the beginning of the race start, during the pitstop. After the pitstop everything was going fine. And then with the Safety Car we just got a little bit unlucky – but that happens sometimes. It's difficult to accept that quickly, after the race – but that's F1.

**Q: Talk us through the undercut. Were you surprised to come out ahead of Vettel?**

**VB:** No. We knew that it is possible with this kind of gap, if you get everything perfect, coming in, in the box, into the pitlane and all that. If you can switch on the tyres quickly, it's possible. That's why we stopped at this point. It was perfect timing from the team. I think it felt it was my quickest stop I've had with the team. So, everything just went really well. Good out-lap. So, we knew it was possible.

**Q: Kimi, can we get your thoughts on the pecking order now. Because Ferrari were so quick in qualifying yesterday, yet here you are in third place.**

**KR:** It's very hard to say. I think if you ask anybody, it's a bit tricky to give you an answer. I think today a lot of the end results depended on whether you had better tyres than others, when you could offset yourself to the others. Obviously, it's part of the game. A big part of the game. And here it made a big difference. And the safety car playing in there. So, like pure speed, with everybody on

the same tyres... it's difficult, very difficult to say in a race. I think it's nice like that, for everybody to watch, because nobody really knows, everybody would love to know, nobody really has because it changes from race to race. And such a small difference makes a big difference in the end results. I think you just have to wait and see. I think it might change from race to race and who runs what tyres.

## **QUESTIONS FROM THE FLOOR**

**Q: (Scott Mitchell – Autosport) Daniel, you've pulled off a lot of spectacular overtakes already in your Formula One career, not just to win races. Where does the overtake on Valtteri today rank and can you just talk us through what was going on in the car and going on in your head at the beginning of that process, through the overtake and afterwards?**

**DR:** Yeah. Opportunity be knocking! That's what I would say. I could tell that obviously we had the advantage coming in at the safety car and having those softs. Yeah, I sensed the opportunity. Initially it was 'OK, maybe now we can fight for the podium' and at the rate that we were going through the field, and I could feel the tyres were holding on well, then it was obviously fully set on the win. Yeah, I don't know. Obviously I had pace over all the guys that I got ahead of but you still don't want to sit behind for too long. I saw Valtteri defend but I was kind of committed already from turn three that I was going to try. It was cool, it was close but I would say close but fair and it's cool when you go wheel-to-wheel and I think it's fun for drivers and it's good TV so I enjoyed it. It makes it a bit sweeter than just maybe cruising past on the straight so that was a lot of fun.

**Q: And Valtteri can we just have your take on that overtaking manoeuvre?**

**VB:** Well, yeah. I was defending, obviously I saw him very close in turns one, two, three. He got a decent exit as well. He was closing lap after lap with pretty big gains. Yeah, from my side there was not much to do. I tried to defend but ultimately, with the better tyres, he could really brake quite a lot later and got inside. Like he said, it was all fair and like this. I think it was just a matter of time, with the pace he was going.

**Q: (Keren Wang – Top Driver) Daniel, why didn't you share your shoe with Valtteri and Kimi?**

**DR:** To be honest, actually I don't know if I've ever offered it to Kimi but to be honest I sprayed most of the champagne so I didn't have that much more and obviously I saw my number one mechanic Genty (Chris Genty) and he was the priority at the time. There wasn't enough to go round today unfortunately. Hopefully there's plenty more opportunities.

**Q: Kimi, would you accept a shoe?**

**KR:** Lucky for us...

**DR:** Maybe next time. It's a privilege.

**Q: (Keren Wang – Top Driver) Daniel, you kept your cool throughout the race. What was in your mind when you saw that Max had made a mistake and you overtook him?**

**DR:** I could see it coming a few corners before. Obviously I saw he was close to Lewis out of 'three'. I wasn't close enough to be involved at that moment so yeah, I was just watching, I guess and obviously if there is some contact, I've got to then position myself and try and be prepared. Yeah, then I saw he was trying on the outside of 'seven' and I could see them both drift wide and I could see that one car was probably not going to make it, so the difficult thing was then when Max went off track I wasn't sure if he was going to slide back across, hold the line, so that was quite tricky initially, but then I could see he was coming on with quite a bit of speed so then it was quite easy in my mind to cut across the inside to let him go. But yeah, even those things, they happen so fast and you're still in the heat of the battle so it's quite hard to always pick the right move. Fortunately I didn't really lose any time with that and yeah, it was pretty close, so I don't know what the viewers thought but it seemed like it was a pretty close battle.

Ends