



FEDERATION INTERNATIONALE DE L'AUTOMOBILE

## Press Information

### 2015 Belgian Grand Prix Saturday Post Qualifying Press Conference Transcript

22.08.2015

#### DRIVERS

1 – Lewis HAMILTON (Mercedes)

2 – Nico ROSBERG (Mercedes)

3 – Valtteri BOTTAS (Williams)

#### TV UNILATERAL

**So Lewis, your sixth consecutive pole. You must be pleased, particularly with the way you achieved it, but I guess also, after Hungary, a little cautious about its significance, with the race coming up tomorrow?**

**Lewis HAMILTON:** Yeah, really happy today with the performance of the car and so far this weekend the performance of this team, they've been doing a fantastic job and the car's been feeling great on the circuit. This is a circuit where if you can get the right balance it's definitely one of the most fun to drive. Of course, very conscious that pole position is a great thing to have but it's a long race and it's a long, long stretch down to turn five. But I'm just happy with today. My goal today was to get pole position and in qualifying Nico was very close and my last two laps were the two best laps I had all weekend, so I'm very, very happy with them. Again just really grateful for the big effort, the big push the team continue to put in to give us the car that we have.

**What was very noticeable in the final part of qualifying was your performance in sector two. That's what really made the difference today over Nico – you nailed it.**

**LH:** Sector two, I would say probably in the past it's always been a weak point. I know all the lines but could never really put the corners together. Definitely, particularly on those two laps, that was a very, very strong area for me.

**Well done. Nico, on top on Friday and going into qualifying, Lewis on top at the end of qualifying. Are you disappointed with that and the margin, and the same point really about sector two, where was it getting away from you there?**

**Nico ROSBERG:** Yeah, for sure disappointed. I lost it a bit this morning in free practice; we went the wrong way. Then it came back really nicely though and I had a good balance in qualifying, so I was happy with that, a good team effort, so thanks for that to get my balance back so I could push well. Yeah, just Lewis too quick in the end. Just found that little bit, or quite a lot extra, which I didn't have in my pocket. That's it, so of course disappointing. But then again, with the new starts situation, where we're having to do everything ourselves now, there's a lot more opportunity tomorrow, even at the start. And the run down to turn five: you know here it's possible to overtake, we've seen that many, many times, so my hopes are for sure still high.

**Q: I have to ask you, obviously yesterday a very frightening moment with the tyre issue – have you fully understood it? Did it have any effect on today?**

**NR:** Well, yeah, the problem is that we don't really understand it. There are theories but there's no real evidence so that's a bit worrying for sure. But we're keeping a very close eye on it and we've done some measures to make sure it doesn't happen again. So we've done the best we can and just hope it all works out and stays together.

**Q: Coming to you Valtteri. First time in the top three for qualifying in 2015 this season. Great response from you and the team.**

**Valtteri BOTTAS:** Thank you, yeah, good to be back in the top three in qualifying. It was a good session for us. We knew after the practice when we look at the time sheets that there's so much more we can do when we put everything together in the car. So we managed to get the balance fine-tuned really well for the qualifying and the car felt good through the whole session. Didn't need to really adjust the front flap or anything a lot so it was pretty well balanced. Then in Q3 it was up to me to try and put the lap together, try and put every corner together – which is not easy in this kind of track but yeah, had two good runs in Q3 and luckily that was enough for P3.

**Q: Obviously Mercedes have a good margin ahead but it's been close throughout behind the Mercedes. Are you a little bit surprised with the performance, relative to yourselves, of Red Bull and Ferrari in particular this afternoon?**

**VB:** Analysing everything after the practice we knew it was going to be really close after these guys. So, we knew P3 could be possible if we get everything perfectly and it was close and we managed to get everything right and this was the result.

**Q: Coming back to you Lewis, Nico referred to it a moment ago, new start procedures for the grand prix, it's much more down to you. The last two races at Silverstone and Hungary have seen you guys not making the best of starts with the old system. Have you had a chance to prepare to the level of satisfaction you wanted and how do you feel about the starts tomorrow? Is it going to help you or hinder you?**

**LH:** Well, the team have done a lot of analysis and I've been in factory, the same for Nico, practicing and getting ready on the simulator, and then all this weekend we've been working on it – so we are as prepared as we could possibly be. And... yeah, I think we feel relatively

good about it. It should be the same for everyone and I hope that... it's good for us but I hope it provides an exciting start for the fans to watch.

### **QUESTIONS FROM THE FLOOR**

**Q: (Heikki Kulta - Turun Sanomat) Valtteri, is this the greatest jump you have done from practice to qualifying performance?**

**VB:** Could be the biggest, possibly, but it's also the longest track so relatively so. We were quite far away but we knew all the time how much we could improve and so we were not too worried at any point. We knew this kind of result could be possible if we got everything perfect.

**Q: (Dan Knutson - Auto Action and Speedsport magazines) Valtteri, just following on from that, you improved the car to be third fastest in qualifying but overall, what's your feeling of the race pace of the car?**

**VB:** Well, we didn't get that long runs yesterday because of the red flags and everything but what we saw yesterday was that Nico and Lewis... they will be a bit out of reach if the race is a normal one, but after that it's going to be really close between us, Red Bull, even Force India looks quick, today even Lotus but it's difficult to predict in detail but it's going to be close.

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