



FEDERATION INTERNATIONALE DE L'AUTOMOBILE

Press Information

2016 Canadian Grand Prix Sunday Race Press Conference Transcript

12.06.2016

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PODIUM INTERVIEWS

(Conducted by Michael Douglas)

Bonjour Montreal. It's a pleasure for me to be here and an honour to be able to introduce our podium winners. Lewis, incredible. We have to talk about the first turn. You had Sebastian coming in on your left, you had Nico touching wheels on the right. Tell us about that.

Lewis HAMILTON: It was horrible. Firstly, I want to say a big thank you to everybody who came out here today and made the atmosphere the way it is. Thank you everyone here. We come here every year and we have the best week. The city, they just put on such a great event. The ambiance, the atmosphere is better than ever. Today, I had another really bad start, I'm not quite sure why, I think probably I overheated my clutch. Sebastian and Nico got quite a good run down to Turn One, tyres are cold, big understeer, and I feel very grateful that me and Nico didn't damage anything on our cars. And otherwise it was just trying to chase this guy down. He was so quick out there. The car felt fantastic and it was set up just right with great work from the engineers and mechanic. Hey man, I won my first grand prix here in 2007, so this just feels like such a blessing.

Congratulations Lewis, well done, fourth time?

LH: I think fifth time!

Yes, fifth time! Sebastian, nice to see you, wonderful, wonderful race. You had a phenomenal run earlier in the race, what were the issues later on?

Sebastian VETTEL: Lewis was a bit too quick! That was the issue. No, I think we had a great weekend. Obviously a fantastic start and then, yeah, lap one was a bit hairy, I just struggled to stop the car in the last corner. It was very windy today and maybe I struggled a bit with the wind from behind but I was pushing all race. I think we committed fairly early to a different strategy, which we were planning to come back. Obviously then Lewis had the chance to stay out and see what the tyres were doing and I think probably the tyres lasted a bit better than what we expected, so that

made it quite tricky to refresh the tyres and close the gap but overall a great weekend for us. We struggled a little bit in the last couple of races and the beginning of the season and now to see that the car has performance and to unleash it, it was a really fun race, I really enjoyed it. I can only add on what Lewis said: thanks to the crowd, it's great to come here. Friday, free practice, to have you guys here at the hairpin, all around the track, waving at us is making our job just much more pleasant, so this is a place we'll have to come to forever I guess, so thank you very much.

Fantastic, a really, really wonderful run, congratulations. Mr Bottas, really nice to see you up here on the podium again. I think it was Mexico last see [the last time]. The season started a little slow but you're coming on strong. How was the race for you today?

Valtteri BOTTAS: Well, I'm really pleased with today. As a team, it was really a strong one for us, really good strategy, really good pit stop; the time was perfect, the car felt really good today. I felt I was pretty on it today. So it's great to be here. I really want to thank Williams, thank you guys; everybody made an amazing job. Thank you Montreal, you've been really good to me.

Congratulations. Lewis, that's two wins in a row, so how does the rest of the year look to you, what do you think?

LH: We're going to just take it one race at a time. There's still work to do. We're going to continue to improve this car. There's a lot of race so we're really just trying to stay... we need to try to keep on a roll if possible. There's a long, long way to go. These guys are getting faster and faster at Ferrari and Red Bull, so collectively as a team we're just going to keep our heads down and keep pushing. Honestly I'm just overwhelmed with today. I remember, what was it, ten years, nine years ago here, and it feels just as great [as it did] back then.

PRESS CONFERENCE

Lewis, 45th career victory and your fifth in Canada, as you were quick to point out on the podium. You obviously lost the start to Sebastian, but you go this win I guess, in a way again, because for the second race in a row you were able to do a very, very long final stint on the tyres. How much of that was data about what the tyres would do and how much was pure feel?

LH: Well, firstly, if I may, I want to... I never really dedicate wins to anyone but someone who really inspired me so much throughout my life, Muhammad Ali, and obviously he passed just recently, so I'd love to be able to dedicate this to him and his family. The last 15 laps, for some reason all I could think of was him and Rumble in the Jungle, it was really, really weird. I was driving and I was just thinking of him, and thinking maybe he would be watching the race, I don't know. So, that's to him and his family. Rest in peace.

In terms of the tyres: It was really feel. The team obviously told us what the tyres could do, how far they would go. I wasn't really sure how far the ultrasoft would go. I had already seen graining earlier when I was behind Sebastian. So I was a little bit nervous about it, but it seemed to last, which was great. I could have kept going on the ultrasoft, which was interesting; I had a good pace. Then we swapped. It was a long stint on the information we got before that that tyre could last quite a long time and it was just a beauty. I didn't have to push too much on the tyre at the beginning, just looking after them, but very conscious that this guy behind was pushing. I was really enjoying the race with him, you know, just battling times here and there. He was so quick and it's great to see how quick they are and they are really giving us a run for our money, and I just happened to be on a one stop. But fantastic job by the team. I'm really overwhelmed to think just how difficult this season was before these last two races and I feel incredibly grateful and very

blessed to have had these two great weekends. I'm just going to keep working hard, as you can see I'm super-focused. For me I felt that today was one of my best races for a while, maybe not as good as the last one, but still really happy with it. Onwards and upwards hopefully.

Very well done. Turning to you Sebastian, got the feeling before the race that Ferrari might be able to win this, had that amazing start, and then obviously you committed to that two-stopper with the pit stop on lap 17 under the VSC. Was that because the team thought you wouldn't be able to do what Lewis did and do that one-stopper and in the final part of the race did you think that a 13-lap tyre offset to Lewis would be enough to challenge?

SV: Yeah, I think that was the plan, so obviously we committed fairly early. We were in the lead. As the second car in the row, which was Lewis in that case, obviously you have the chance to choose – if the car in front pits you might pit, if the car front stays out you might pit. We committed fairly early to that strategy and I think I was probably the right thing to do in terms of getting to the chequered flag the quickest way. But obviously we lost track position and we didn't expect that the soft tyre that Lewis put on... first of all the ultrasoft and then the soft would last as long. Myself, I was also surprised to see how long the supersoft lasted and then the soft tyre lasted until the end. As Lewis said, we could have kept going. The degradation wasn't maybe as high as we expected. That's maybe where we lost the race. But I want to make one thing clear: I'm not a big fan of blaming anyone or anything. I think it was a great weekend for Ferrari. We've had a difficult start to the season because we were never really able to show the true performance of the car and this was maybe the first clean weekend if you look at Saturday and Sunday. And actually I enjoyed the race a lot. Didn't get the result I was hoping for, especially after the start, but I was enjoying it a lot. The last 30 laps I was just flat out – maybe pushing a little bit too hard at times. It just felt great. That's what racing should be about. The tyres were fairly consistent. I really enjoyed chasing him down but a couple of laps to go I realised that he was just a bit too quick or the tyres didn't drop enough.

Q: Valtteri,, podium here for the second year in a row in Montreal. Same strategy as Lewis that got you ahead of the two-stopping Red Bulls and Kimi Raikkonen; tell us about your drive today and also those strategy calls?

VB: Thank-you, yes. It feels really good to be here again. Montreal has been pretty to me and pretty good to us as a team. For sure it was always going to be one of the good tracks for our car but really pleased with what we have done. Of course, today didn't come easily. I really needed to thank the team for the decisions they made to commit to the one stop and also the stop lap, it was perfect. This stop was again, massively quick as we've seen all season so really thankful for Williams, for today and for the whole weekend. We need more of these kind of results. We just need to keep trying but just very happy at the moment.

QUESTIONS FROM THE FLOOR

Q: (Peter Windsor – F1 Racing) Lewis, what happened at the start, more of the same?

LH: Yeah, the start was... I don't understand it. This time I really don't understand because practices have been good, the formation lap was amazing, dropped the clutch and the thing pulled away perfectly. Yeah, I stopped, did the normal procedure, let the clutch out and it just didn't go anywhere. I'm really lost as to know what... Obviously I had really good pace today and that really got in the way. Had it been a longer straight, I would have been a sitting duck. I don't really know what to say about it. And into turn one, these tyres, these ultrasofts, he(Sebastian) was lightning on the first lap but me, I had no grip. I got to turn one and I had this understeer and I thought that it

was going to continue for the rest of the lap. I think the guys behind me were also tiptoeing but very close, obviously, between me and Nico which wasn't intentional. But fortunately none of our cars were damaged.

Q: (Peter Windsor – F1 Racing) And second question is – as Sebastian has said, the cars are pretty good as you've said as well, you had a good view of them in the early laps. What's the power like on the straight, how quick were they on the straight compared with you now?

SV: Quite quick. I think we're quite quick.

LH: These guys were pretty quick on the straight. I didn't get quite close enough to really gauge just how quick they are but I think it looked pretty close, I have to say. I was so excited with wheel-to-wheel racing but then he pitted after the VSC and I'm like shoot, I was a bit annoyed. Still it was a good battle at the time.

Q: (Dan Knutson – Speedsport Magazine) Valterri, as you say, a good track for you and the team. However does it give you confidence that you can now start to challenge Red Bull or was it just track and strategy specific today?

VB: It definitely keeps confidence for us that we can do good things. For sure, it is one of the good ones, as a track for us but I think as a team we did such a good job with the strategy but the car was also good today at the beginning and end of the race when everyone was on the same tyres, I did feel that I could put pressure on Kimi in front and even the Red Bulls, so that was a good feeling and even though some of them were on two stop and we were still on one stop and we put pressure, so that was good. I think the next few races should be good. Lot of confidence now and this really makes a lot of good for the team, a result like this, a motivation boost for the next ones.

Q: (Ralf Bach – AutoBild Motorsport) Seb, my impression is that we already saw the race from today in Melbourne, didn't we?

SV: I don't think that's true. I think Australia, you can argue with hindsight, we would do a different strategy. If it's that straightforward and easy to know what it's like, then everyone is doing the right thing. As it turned out, we committed fairly early, maybe we were also hoping that the virtual safety car gives us a bit of an advantage and makes the two stop favourable but I will always defend our strategies, what we committed to as a team. I think there were other people as well, favouring the two stop. With hindsight maybe they would do a different job but as I said, that's a decision we take as a team. Kept in hindsight it's always easy. Put yourselves in the shoes of those on the pit wall, to make that call is quite tricky and you have to be really quick. Strategy-wise I think we have a very very strong team. I wouldn't favour anywhere near to criticise them because the guys are really on the money and very strong, reacting very well and if here and there we maybe don't do the optimum, that's part of the job but overall I think we end up doing better choices than other people.

Q: (Michael Schmidt – Auto Motor und Sport) Lewis, was the tyre management here more difficult than in Monte Carlo because at a certain stage we saw one big, black stripe on one of your front tyres. Was that graining?

LH: Honestly, as Sebastian said, the tyres were really good today, I have to say. I guess with the cooler temperatures graining wasn't really an issue. I think if it was hot like it was in P2, I think, maybe a one-stop wouldn't have been possible but yeah, there was a small bit of... on the Ultrasoft there was a little bit more graining but on the soft there was hardly any graining at all. It was like a small band on the front left tyre but otherwise they stayed very, very consistent. Being so cool I

think you just had to try to keep the temperature in them more than anything. I was really actually, for once, happy with the performance of the tyre, to be honest. They did a good job.

Q: (Jimmy Gordon – AP) Lewis, we heard you talk about Ali. Can you tell us what it was about his life or his career that made such an impact on you?

LH: I think it's the same for everyone really. I think he was just a unique, iconic individual who had a character unlike anyone else's and everyone aspired to be like him. I wish I could have spoken with the charisma that he would have, or the comedic side that he would have, that confidence that he could carry into a fight and outwit and outsmart his opponents. And then for the things that he stood for. Even more importantly politically, I think believing in who you are and not letting anyone dictate who you have to be. I think as a kid, when I saw that, I think I was like: 'this is the guy I want to be like'. In terms of an athlete I hope one day I can be like him. Coming from a family of similar background in a sense of ethnicity, it was someone to look up to. Obviously in Formula One there was no one of the same colour as us as a family, so it was another athlete for me to look up.

Q: (Luigi Perna – La Gazzetta dello Sport) A question for Seb. Seb, during this weekend we've seen one of the closest gaps between Ferrari and Mercedes. Are you confident you feel you can be even closer to a win in the next race?

SV: First of all, I hope that you write exactly that tomorrow: that we were closer than ever. So, I think sometimes it's a bit surreal. We are an Italian team. I think Ferrari stands for great passion and a lot of values in Italy and sometimes it seems like the Italian press is our biggest opponent. So, maybe you can write something nice, which would be a nice message for all the people in Maranello that are really working their arse off day in, day out to make a strong Ferrari car. I've never had a doubt. I know this car is a big step up and I think we had a mixed-up start to the season which was difficult because we were never really in the position to show what the car can deliver. Especially because Saturdays here and there weren't great. So, I think this weekend was just normal. We had a great Saturday and great pace today. Just look at the opening laps of the race. I was pulling away, pulling a gap to... maybe not so much to Lewis but to all the cars behind. So, it felt great and the car felt great all weekend. So, really happy and happy with the progress the team is making. Again, I ask you to be a bit patient, a bit more patient. The team is on a great path, things are improving and I think we're seeing results quicker than anyone else so far in the history of F1. So, I think we're on the right track, it's a great team and I'm enjoying it a lot.

Q: (Bill Beacon – The Canadian Press) For Sebastian. Can you go over for us what you did off the start? Where you planning that ahead of time? And what exactly did you do to slip by everybody and get first place?

SV: I know it sounds silly saying it now but I sort-of had the gut feel that I will have a good start. Obviously it depends on what the other people are doing but I had the feel that, when the lights went on... [to Lewis] I didn't know what you were doing but I knew there would be a good start. I had a good feeling the formation lap and I think I reacted well, as well – without giving myself too much credit. I just... I don't know... I felt it would be a good start. It was, so I was very happy with that and just went for it. Had a big lead in the first lap which, nearly all of it I gave away in the last corner and then it was obviously it was a bit more tricky to keep Lewis out of the DRS until a couple of laps in – until just before the Virtual Safety Car actually. I was a bit distracted, we chatted about it, I have to mention it, I don't know why but I have to, there were two seagulls. I think it was a couple that wanted to commit suicide. They were at the apex of Turn One. Lewis obviously didn't care, so he made up quite a bit of time, about half a second, but I didn't do that couple that favour

to say goodbye for good, so by the time Lewis came around they just flew off. Wasn't fair! I brake for animals, Lewis doesn't but... yeah. Then the Virtual Safety Car came and freezes the gap at that point.

Q: (Peter Windsor – F1 Racing) Following on from that Sebastian, I wonder what you felt about the grip level on the in-field of the chicane there? You went through it three or four times just to get it right. What was the racing line like through there? You were very quick the first time you went straight on.

SV: Very quick on the first lap. Braking very late. I think I was a bit caught out by the wind, to be honest. I shouldn't have – I had all the information but I was struggling a bit. It was very gusty and, here and there, got caught out. So, I was trying everything all around the whole lap. I was getting close to the wall: exit of Four; exit of the last corner, exit of Nine as well. So really trying everything. Eventually in there too much, which obviously loses you more than a second. And then yeah, I think I was around four and a half seconds to Lewis and then back to five and a half. Didn't do myself a favour but I had to try. For some reason yesterday I was very good friends with the last corner and today not so much. So, yeah, not great from my side obviously to miss the braking. Quite tricky with a bit of bottoming. Just locked it three times in total and didn't make it.

Ends