



FEDERATION INTERNATIONALE DE L' AUTOMOBILE

## **2017 FIA Formula One World Championship**

### **Azerbaijan Grand Prix**

#### **Sunday Post-Race Press Conference Transcript**

#### **DRIVERS**

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

**2 – Valtteri BOTTAS (Mercedes)**

**3 – Lance STROLL (Williams)**

#### **PODIUM INTERVIEWS (Conducted by David Coulthard)**

**Q: Did anyone predict this podium – I don't think so! Congratulations. Can you believe you've won the grand prix from 10th place?**

**Daniel RICCIARDO:** Not really. It was a crazy race. We knew the podium was a chance after the re-start but then we heard the problems with Lewis and Seb. It was just a crazy race. I made an unplanned pit stop at the beginning. After a few laps we had some debris I think in the brakes so we had to stop and clean it, so we dropped back to I think 17th place. Did I think then that I would the race today? Absolutely not. I would have put all of my money on it that it was very unlikely. Crazy race. This is the race we expected last year, with all the safety cars and all the chaos and we got it this year.

**Q: Well, it was a fantastic comeback from a difficult quali. You kept your chin up when we spoke to you after putting it in the wall there, so it just goes to show you never give up.**

**DR:** Yeah, obviously yesterday I was disappointed with the mistake but hey, I guess you have to make these to try and find that last little bit. I knew today would be a different outcome and yeah, I said it yesterday, we had to stay out of trouble and it certainly paid off today. Big thanks to the team, Red Bull Racing, it was nice to get one car home and on the top step, so thanks guys and thanks everyone that came out.

**Q: Valtteri, right on the line. You were a lap down in last place and you come through and deliver a result for the team, you must be mighty relieved?**

**Valtteri BOTTAS:** It's what Daniel also said: just a crazy race with so much happening. I was one lap down in the beginning and during the safety car I had to overtake everyone and catch them again. But this just shows you should never give up, you never know what is going to happen in the race. Just kept the head down, kept pushing, and team also during the red flag managed to fix the car a little bit so they did a really good job during that. I really enjoyed it and just had fun. But shame, in the end, that Daniel was just too far away but you know, taking the circumstances at the beginning it's a good result for us.

**Q: Well, tell us about that, you seem to be magnetically drawn to your countryman. You and Kimi came together? What's your view from the cockpit?**

**VB:** Yeah, going into Turn 2 I was on the inside and he was on the outside and there was no space for me to go apart from over the kerb and when you go over the kerb the car obviously jumps and I couldn't keep the line, so I think another racing incident to be honest but it's just unlucky that it's me and Kimi again.

**Kimi took full responsibility.**

**VB:** OK...

**Q: No, he didn't, but it was great to see you believe that for a moment. Right, the man who is going to feel that he won this grand prix. One of the youngest ever podium finishers – Lance Stroll. Fantastic feel free to full express all the emotions. Your father is down there. It's all come good in the past two races.**

**Lance STROLL:** Yeah, I'm just lost for words right. I don't even know what to say. I can't quite realise what just happened. It was a hectic race... people crashing. We just stayed out of trouble. I just kept my head cool and took it to the end. I just lost out to Valtteri there in the end. I think that was probably one of the closest finishes of all time. But what race! I couldn't believe coming into the weekend that I would be standing on the podium. It's amazing.

**Q: Well I know your father has broad shoulders but I can see a tear in his eye from up here, so I think you're going to get a monster bear hug when you come down from here?**

**LS:** Just the whole team, it's amazing.

**Q: You were voted by the fans of Formula One as the driver of the day as well, so you've really punched through and connected with the public.**

**LS:** I was chatting to Daniel and saying motor sport is a love/hate relationship. We've had a couple of hard races but the last two races have been amazing and I'm just over the moon right now.

**Q: Fantastic, very well deserved. Daniel, another line from you? You'll take the wins when they come. You seem... you could see the smile almost through your helmet when you were in the cockpit, but now you seem a bit calmer than I was expecting. You've just won your fifth grand prix!**

**DR:** Honestly, I'm speechless. After the race on the cool down lap I was kind of just giggling; giggling like a little schoolboy.

**[Coulthard unties Ricciardo's bootlaces]**

**DR:** You want some?

**Q: I think your podium colleagues need a little celebration.**

**DR:** Well it's Stroll's first podium, so he certainly deserves one. Is he old enough to drink?

**LS:** You realise this is going to scar me for life! Oh, my God, I'm too young for this. It's like there's some dirt in there as well.

**[Both drink from Ricciardo's race boot]**

## **PRESS CONFERENCE**

**Q: Daniel you said this is taking a while to sink in, but how does this victory, the fifth of your career, compare to the ones before, particularly that first one in Montreal, where you took the lead with three laps to go?**

**DR:** I don't know. I think I have been pretty fortunate. I've only had a few victories but I think pretty much all of them have come under pretty crazy circumstances or the races have been far from dull. Obviously all of them are special. Today was just crazy. We haven't been necessarily

the quickest car on track or all weekend. I said it yesterday after my crash in qualifying, I said 'be there and capitalise on opportunities' and I certainly capitalized on all the re-starts where I was able to gain at least one position if not more. Then we had some fortune, with Lewis, I think he had a loose headrest or something and he had to box and then Seb has his penalty behind the safety car. It was crazy, there was so much going on, but it was fun. It was fun to be in the battle for the most part and towards the end, obviously once I got the lead it was just trying to keep the laps I could. As I said, we knew we weren't setting probably the quickest times on track but I knew if I kept that rhythm it was enough to win. Now it's sunk in a bit more, I'm obviously very happy.

**Q: And after you made that unscheduled pitstop near the start of the race to remove some debris, was the car behaving as you wanted it to?**

**DR:** Yeah, it got better after that. We pitted very early on, I can't remember what lap but I assume it was within the first handful of laps. I think it dropped me back to 17th on one of the restarts or something. How we're here a few hours later, I don't know – but it was cool. It was a lot of fun. Thanks to the team, thanks for... yeah, making it happen today. It's cool. Nice feeling.

**Q: Coming to you Valtteri, can you explain how your goals today fluctuated. Second on the grid, what did you think was possible? A lap down at the end on lap one and then, of course, you've ended up in second place. Just talk us through that race.**

**VB:** Yeah, like Daniel said, it was a completely crazy race and especially for me. Had a puncture in lap one with the contact with the Ferrari in Turn Two. I was one lap down, had to overtake everyone, under the Safety Car. Catch them. There was another Safety Car, which really helped me out and just, y'know, step-by-step started to go forwards. For me, obviously, the goal going to the race today was to fight for the win, and after lap one, what happened, you can't really set a goal. For me, I just tried to keep my head down, keep pushing and take maximum out of every single corner, every single situation and, yeah, ended up really good for us in the end. We managed to get some more points against Ferrari and some good points for me personally as well. But yeah, just... don't really know what else to say! Crazy race. Well done to Daniel and especially to Lance. His first podium. I know the feeling, it's a good one. Enjoy it mate!

**Q: Let's come onto Lance. Lance, you got your first points in Formula One two weeks ago at your home grand prix in Canada. Now your first podium in your eighth grand prix. Just describe your emotions.**

**LS:** That's tricky right now. I'm a bit lost for words. It was such an intense race. A crazy race. So much happened. The red flag... hopping out of the car then having to get back into the car and having to reset and everything... it just all happened so quickly but I think today what we did well was just stay out of trouble. We let some of the other drivers make mistakes and took it to the end. Just lost out to Valtteri in the end. He came pretty quick towards the last couple of laps. Still extremely happy with the result today. I can't really describe how I feel, it's beyond amazing. Yesterday was such a great day already and starting to get back to grips with the car. I had a couple of races where Saturdays didn't go too well, and then we got back into Q3 since China yesterday and that was really a breakthrough for me. Today to come away with a podium is

absolutely amazing. And the shooney at the end, that killed it. Still sitting in my gums... Kidding aside, I'm so happy for myself, for the team, for everyone. A day to remember.

## **QUESTIONS FROM THE FLOOR**

**Q: (Jerome Pugmire – AP) Question for Lance. You faced a lot of criticism earlier in the season, you were really up against it and you had to defend yourself from waves of possibly unfair criticism as well. Do you feel that you've proved a point today – and how pleasing is that for you?**

**LS:** I don't think I proved a point. I don't listen to that stuff. It's just noise, y'know. It was there last year when I had a perfect year so this year when I had some tough times, it's probably still going to be there. It's just people talking. I'm just happy for myself, happy for my team, my friends, family. Everyone who's in it with me. That's all that matters. The rest is all just noise in the background and I don't really care for it.

**Q: (Livio Oricchio – GloboEsporte) To Lance. What happened? In Canada you had self-confidence, we could see that in the track and also here. You feel more comfortable in the car that you can take more risk and go to the limit? And from the outside we saw, maybe, a different driver?**

**LS:** Yeah. I think it just takes a bit of time. And there will still be hard weekends moving forwards. Sometimes I'm perfect but no one, I think, understands that sometimes a jump from F3 to F1 is quite big and it took me a bit of time to understand what I wanted from the car. This weekend we took a very different direction with the setup. We kinda shifted away from that setup after Bahrain. We started in Barcelona taking a different direction with the car and we came back to it this weekend. I'm much more competitive, similar to the beginning of the season, China, Bahrain, when I was in Q3, P11 in qualifying, much more competitive. And this weekend we came back to that set-up and it gave me a lot more confidence with the car. I feel like I'm able to really drive the car now and push the car, and it gives me a lot of confidence and comfort and I think that's a big reason why I'm much more competitive this weekend. But also, there's so many other things in the background. I've really improved my driving style, adapting to Formula One and I need to keep working on little things moving forward. It's not finished yet – I still can improve a lot. It just takes a bit of time. I think sometimes people don't realise that. This year is a very different formula for me and I just need to experiment it and try different things and come back and figure this and that out. I think that's a big part of the reason why sometimes it's tricky. This weekend it was good. It's just about improving myself, the car, what I want from the car. Yeah, it's a process. You just have to hang in there and keep driving.

**Q: (Arjan Schouten – AD Sportwerld) Daniel, you're one of the lucky, fortunate guys today. Your teammate was one of the unlucky guys again. Do you feel pity for him?**

**DR:** Yeah. Look, I do understand. Obviously I'm super happy to be here but yeah, Max has had two races in a row where I guess where he's been in strong positions and it hasn't worked out for him through, I believe, no fault of his own. Today as well. Yeah, obviously he's going through a

harder time on the fortune side of things right now but he's driving well and I think he knows that. Obviously he's missing possible podiums and chunks of points here and there but for sure he'll bounce back. It's frustrating and I'm sure he's annoyed right now but he's driving well, as I said, and he knows it so I'm sure he will continue to persist and be strong and we'll keep pushing each other so that will continue to be important for both of us and the team as the season goes on.

**Q: (Luis Vasconcelos – Formula Press) For Daniel, Lewis pitting to replace the headrest and Sebastian getting his penalty came at the same time. You probably heard both at the same time, so did you believe then that you could win or did the realisation come when you saw how far behind they were?**

**DR:** Once they had their penalties and whatever was going on, yeah, I certainly believed I could win but you never know, obviously, until it's the end but sure, I believed the race was then in my hands so I kind of understood more or less the lap times the guys around me were doing and I knew the gap I had so I was just trying to be consistent with the times I could do, more or less, and that was that. So yeah, just trying to match those times and get it home to the finish. It was nice on the last lap, I could finally smile a little bit.

**Q: (Luis Vasconcelos – Formula Press) For Valtteri, how difficult was it to keep going, especially in the first part of the race when you were behind the Saubers and the McLarens and all that and did you, with 14 laps to go when you got clear of Ocon, and you were 14.5s behind, did you still really believe it was possible to get it on the podium?**

**VB:** So, for me, when I got the message about the headrest I actually... I think I got the message wrong, I thought it was Sebastian's so I thought he had a double problem so I was really surprised that at some point Lewis was behind me. But anyway, like I said before, it was difficult to set a target really, what is achievable, but once I got through Ocon, I was already in a good position and the team gave me the gap to Lance and also the possible place difference if I did everything right. Then I just really focused every single corner, every single lap absolutely perfect and pushing the maximum there was in the car, there was in the engine, in the brakes and really glad I managed to get a couple more extra points in the end. Just tried to keep my head down and keep pushing.

**Q: (Jerome Pugmire – Associated Press) Lance, you mentioned before when you were growing up, I think, watching Formula One on Sunday mornings with your father and with Michael Schumacher as your idol, I believe. Could you talk about those days?**

**LS:** I'd watch the start and then go and do something else but they were good days. Growing up, I'd always been into cars and motor sport, Formula One. Michael was really my hero, growing up as kid, a true champion on and off the track. Yeah, he was just someone I really looked up to and I still look up to. So those days were special and we've definitely come a long way and to be sitting here today on the podium, in a Formula One Grand Prix, is a part of the dream come true, I guess you could say.

**Q: (Livio Oricchio – GloboEsporte) Valtteri, we were expecting that you could overtake the safety car but it took so long to overtake in order to enter in the lap that gave you the chance to finish second. You were there in the cockpit. Were you maybe pressuring the team to ask why I can't overtake the safety car?**

**VB:** Yes, I was actually asking. It was a long time I had to wait to get through the cars in front and the safety car and I was asking for the permission and then once the track was clear, then they gave me the permission so it was very late, I had no time to catch up with everyone but after that, not so long, there was another safety car which allowed me to close the gap and that gave me the opportunity for this podium today.

**Q: (Luis Vasconcelos – Formula Press) Debris was a main concern today; there were safety cars because of that, the race was stopped because of that. Is this something we have to accept can happen every time we come here or do you think there's another way of doing things?**

**DR:** It's hard to say right now. It seemed like it was the right call. Obviously for us it's hard when you stop a race, we've got our adrenalin and we're in that race mode so to then stop, get out and then, as Lance touched on, you reset but yeah, there was a lot and I guess that was the right thing to do a) for punctures and then b) for when another car runs over it, then the debris flies and it can become dangerous as well for us when travelling at speed and then hitting it. I believe they did the right call today. As for the future, right now I'm not sure if they could make this better. Perhaps we'll talk about it in the future, yeah.

**VB:** I don't know really if there's any solution to make it better. On street circuits you get more collisions and more debris and I think it was good to have a red flag because I was coming from behind and there were relatively big amounts of debris and actually some pieces of carbon were flying and hitting my helmet and visor as well. I think it was a really good call to have a red flag.

**LS:** I think they've said it all. It was a good call in my opinion and they see more than we do. So surely they took the right decision.

**Q: (Teymur Maksutov – Sportbox) Can you describe your emotion about Baku city circuit? Last year we didn't see any safety cars and crashes but this year there are a lot of safety cars, red flag and crashes. What's your opinion about this weekend and this race? What do you feel now?**

**DR:** I think this was the race that we expected last year. Last year, as you said, there were no safety cars or anything but we were really surprised and this year we got it. To be honest I've enjoyed the two years that we've come here. Even after my crash yesterday I wasn't bitter with anything that the circuit provided. Part of me actually enjoys that risk and reward with the street circuits and you make a mistake, you pay the price. I thought it was a lot of fun this weekend. It's a challenging circuit, it's not easy and the racing is intense, you know. It's tight and twisty but then you've got the long straight to really make things happen and overtake so personally I think it's got it all. I've been pretty happy the first two years I've come here.

**VB:** I agree with Daniel. I enjoy coming here. I like the place, the weather is nice and the track is really challenging. We always love a challenge. It's very different to any other street circuit on the calendar or any other circuit anyway. For me it's a good race to have and today showed that it is pretty exciting as well.

**Q: And Lance, of course, it's your first visit here.**

**LS:** I didn't enjoy anything about this weekend! That was a joke!

**DR:** I want to know. He got ninth and crowd surfed so what are you going to do after a podium?

**LS:** Kidding aside, I really enjoyed driving here, I'm really looking forward to coming back here again next year. It has everything: high speed, you can overtake, it's technical, I agree with what Daniel said. You have to know where the limit is and then once you go over the limit push back. I think that's kind of the feeling you get here, Monaco, Singapore – I haven't been yet – but the same style. Those are the tracks that I enjoy to drive most, even though sometimes it's a bit of a pain when you touch the wall and you get a puncture, you shunt. That's kind of the beauty of driving these city circuits.

**Q: (Livio Oricchio – GloboEsporte) Daniel, you and Max have made it clear that you have had some difficulties with your power unit up to now. But on a very demanding circuit for power units, you could control the race being in the front. Does it mean that with the new specification of power unit here and the good chassis that you seem to have now, you can expect Red Bull to be stronger? Also at the next race in Austria?**

**DR:** I think this weekend we certainly... we looked pretty good in the speed traps and as I mentioned on restarts I was always moving forward. There was all different types of power units in front of me on several restarts and we were able to – if not pass them, hang with them. Obviously we had a few little updates this weekend and it seems to have helped so yeah, it's positive, it's positive. I believe that Max's issue was maybe due to some debris after the first lap and that maybe got caught and everything overheated so I don't think his problem was necessarily a genuine one from that respect and obviously we saw some good performance at least from mine in the race. Yeah, we'll move forward and try and get stronger and stronger.

**Ends**