



FEDERATION INTERNATIONALE DE L' AUTOMOBILE

## 2017 FIA Formula One World Championship

### Brazilian Grand Prix

#### Post-Race Press Conference Transcript

12.11.17

#### DRIVERS

1 – Sebastian VETTEL (Ferrari)

2 – Valtteri BOTTAS (Mercedes)

3 – Kimi RÄIKKÖNEN (Ferrari)

#### PODIUM INTERVIEWS

(Conducted by Kai Ebel)

**Q: Sebastian, isn't that a fantastic payback after Mexico, winning in front of this outstanding audience. It was an outstanding start too?**

**Sebastian VETTEL:** Yeah, initially I had a very good getaway and then I had a bit of wheelspin, so I thought, "ah, I missed my chance". But I think Valtteri was struggling even more off the line, so I really had a chance to squeeze down the inside. I think I surprised him a bit, which obviously was crucial. After that, I think we were pushing, after the safety car, for the remaining 65 laps flat out. I was really trying to give everything to pull a little bit of a gap, to control the race from there. Really happy, especially for all the guys in the team back home in Maranello, they have been working so hard. It's been a tough couple of weeks for us but nice to get it today and have both cars up here.

**Q: Valtteri, a lot of people dream about being in an Italian sandwich, so you're the one up here, tell me about it?**

**Valtteri BOTTAS:** Well, I didn't want to be sandwiched, honestly. We started from the pole, so of course the only goal for us was to win the race today. So, very disappointing. We lost it in the race start. After that it was very, very close with them. I was trying to put pressure on Sebastian but it didn't lead to anything more. I have to say also, Lewis did a great comeback, he got some really good points still. So, yeah, on to Abu Dhabi.

**Q: Coming to another Finn, who had the hot breath of Lewis in his neck all the time. How tough were the closing laps, Kimi?**

**Kimi RÄIKKÖNEN:** Well, it wasn't all the time, obviously, it was only in the end. I must admit I had a little bit tricky balance on the first set. It improved at the end of the first run. The second set was very good, the car handled very well and I could catch up with the guys, but it's impossible to get past here if you have this close the speed of a few cars. Yeah, he [Hamilton] got close to me, also I got close to Sebastian and Valtteri, but I wasn't too worried, I had a pretty good run out of the last corner, so it was OK.

**Q: Seb, I know tonight you're going back home, but I'm pretty sure it will be a shaky flight during which you'll make a few caipirinhas disappear. How much will you celebrate in the air?**

**SV:** Well we'll see. I think for now, it's a great release. Obviously it's been a tough day, tough race. I just spoke with Valtteri and I think the pace, we were all more or less the same. It was really difficult, no room for

mistakes, really difficult to control the tyres the whole race. I think it will take a while and then I'm sure we'll have a drink here and then see what's coming.

## **QUESTIONS TO FELIPE MASSA** **(Conducted by Rubens Barrichello)**

**Q: Felipe, just tell us how was your race – physical, mental, difficult? How was it?**

**Felipe MASSA:** I'm really emotional today, because of all you guys. So thank you very much for everything that we passed together. For all the support, for all the energy that I felt today here, for making the best race I could, and to be honest I'm so happy for my race. I did the best of the car, what the car could achieve. So thank you, thank you very much, all of you guys. All of you guys that we work together, even the people that I didn't work together but I love you guys. Thank you very much.

## **PRESS CONFERENCE**

**Q: Congratulations to Sebastian on your victory, your third victory here in Brazil, fifth with Ferrari this season of 2017. Can we drill down a little bit more into the start, the initial launch, the whole approach into Turn One – because clearly the race was won there – but also just the whole way you had to manage that race with, at the end five seconds separating four cars, showed that it was quite some job.**

**SV:** yeah, it was tight, I think we all had more or less the same pace. It was difficult to leave the pack. I tried very hard. The start, initially I had a very good launch and thought 'I've got this' then I was maybe a bit too greedy with the throttle, spinning up the wheel a little bit and losing a bit of the momentum on Valtteri but then I looked over and saw that he was still struggling and then I sort of gained a little bit again on the second phase, which was just enough to give me momentum to hang in there into the first corner. Yeah, I knew I had to go for it. There was a little bit of a gap, I went for that and yeah, obviously it turned out to be very important. Safety Car restart was tricky: I think the Safety Car switched off the lights very late and it was very difficult to then open a sufficient gap because it's a long straight and the Safety Car is not very quick, so difficult to know how much time you need to give the Safety Car before you can go but that worked well because I think overall we had less straight-line speed than Mercedes this weekend and it was tough: always seeing him in the mirrors in the race and seeing that he was closing, especially in the first and last sector. So I really had to nail the middle sector every single time. At the end it was I think at the limit with the tyres. Obviously, I tried to manage the gap but to be honest it was very much flat out all the time and I had to push to stay ahead and try and keep control with one or two or three seconds in the end.

**Q: Valtteri, can we have your side of the story, obviously of the start, your feelings as you saw the red car moving alongside you – and also the timing of the pitstop. Clearly you were a little too far away to make the undercut work – but just the thinking going into that, what you were hoping for.**

**VB:** In the race start obviously, we lost the race, which is unfortunate for me. The issue was just initial wheel-spin. As soon as I started to release the clutch just broke the traction and it was wheel-spin and that's why I had a poor getaway. I was trying to cover the inside but honestly looking at the mirror I could only see Kimi behind. So, didn't see Seb anywhere, I was kind-of guessing that he could be shooting from the inside and so he did. Yeah, there was nothing to do, he got a better start, he was on the inside so unfortunate. After that I think, pace-wise, it was very, very close. I think we were trying to put a lot of pressure on Seb and trying to keep up, get close, especially around the pitstop. Once I was getting a little bit closer we decided to stop, trying to undercut but it was not quite enough. I got pretty close after he came out from the pits but just not quite enough to try to overtake. So, yeah, definitely disappointed after a good day yesterday, and obviously not so good for me on the battle we have for the second place of the championship. He's got quite a good lead now so we need some miracles in Abu Dhabi.

**Q: Kimi, for you obviously, the real talking point was the end. Hamilton was going past cars with sometimes 248km/h on the straight in the DRS. Talk about that and also, he had a couple of lock-ups. Do you think that's where he lost the momentum that stopped him coming through on you?**

**KR:** He did or I did? OK. Obviously, I don't really look at what he's doing. All the time I try to do my own stuff. I had a few lock-ups in the first corner, basically for no really good reason. I was checking a bit, obviously, this year it's very hard to see from the mirrors where the other guy is, especially in the circuit where it goes a

bit up and down: you lose the sight of them. I had very good last few corners so I could see it when we pulled out of the last corner that he was quite far away. I know that they're very fast when they put full power and full energy and DRS, they catch up a lot by the end of the straight – but I was quite comfortable with a, let's say, gap in the last three corners and I was surprised that he didn't go closer to me. That's why I wasn't too worried – but then I locked a few times into Turn One because I think I was looking too much in the mirrors and not really braking so heavy and then just locked a bit. To be honest, my car was pretty good. Maybe the first part was a bit tricky. More, close to that first pitstop it got a bit better. The second, with the soft tyres, with the pitstop was very good. I took it very easy in the beginning and was still catching up with the guys in the front but I felt always I took care of my tyres but once I pushed, it's nothing... you can get close but you cannot really do anything. The circuit, the cars this year, in this kind of place, it seems to be very difficult to pass anybody and it gets a bit boring, unfortunately. I felt that I had a lot of speed but I felt there's nothing that I could have done. We all stayed the same distance. Yeah. It was a good end result but obviously I wanted more.

## **QUESTIONS FROM THE FLOOR**

**Q: (Michael Schmidt – Auto Motor und Sport) Sebastian, did you see Lewis ever as a threat for the win in the end? I guess you had been informed about his progress and especially at the early stages on the super soft he was catching up almost a second a lap.**

**SV:** Not really. Obviously I saw him pitting just in front of me so he had to make up that pit stop but I think it's not the first time this year that we've seen that the mirror strategy has some advantages. Obviously it's not very attractive if you're starting in the front but it can be very attractive when you're out of position which he was. So you obviously have an advantage. I think the track ramped up in the end and the supersoft was clearly the faster tyre but overall it's fair to say that Lewis was very quick. I think for us, as I said yesterday, it was nice to see that we were that close in qualifying trim. I feel fair also, we have to be fair to ourselves, we're losing in the straights. Obviously that was...even enhanced with Valtteri in the tow at some point in the race, I was told that we were half a second faster in the middle sector but obviously losing quite a lot on the straight and more or less we did the same lap times for the whole race. It was very close. Obviously also, when you're close, in Valtteri's position, then you lose a little bit in the middle sector and you gain a little bit in the tow so difficult to say. But no, I don't think he was really a threat. Obviously they told me at some point that he's catching up with Kimi but I knew that it would be quite difficult to get past.

**Q: (Livio Oricchio – GloboEsporte.com) Valtteri, would it be possible to keep the first place if you had started better? And Sebastian, do you think it would be possible to overtake him if you were second after the first bend?**

**VB:** Yes, I think so, with a good start it would have been possible to keep the lead because also like Sebastian said, I think our pace, our car was pretty similar today, not much pace difference. Being first out of turn one, two would have been quite a different race but if and if... he got a better start and that's it.

**SV:** Very difficult, I think. When you have the same pace, when you do the same lap times it's difficult because you're not really any faster and also how are you going to get close so I think it would have been difficult and for sure the start was very very crucial. There was maybe a chance at the stop that Valtteri nearly was able to take on me but it would have been very tough.

**Q: (Ian Parks – New York Times) Seb, I appreciate there's still one more race to go but with the titles done and dusted now, I was just wondering how you reflect on this season, one of hope and promise but frustration and bitterness, what happened after Italy going through those Asia rounds? How do you look on it?**

**SV:** Well, I think it's a good job that we have races now because it helps to sort of get over it because you're distracted, I guess. I think it's tough... obviously in the past you didn't have to deal with this so it's not to say I was quite fortunate but I think it helps to just have something to do, to be honest. Overall I think it was very positive this year. Nobody expected Ferrari to be that strong, for us to be that strong. We made the biggest step, there was a lot of talk about other people but in the end we were there from the start and also until the end. We are two races to go, we are in a position to fight for victory, we won here, two cars on the podium. I think there's a lot of positives. Of course if you miss out it sort of sucks, there's no other way, but you have to be fair as well. We hadn't been very competitive last year, we hadn't been very good developing the car and we've made massive progress this year so even if you look at the chance that maybe you missed, you have to give credit to all the people, to all the team for the step that we made. I think we can all feel that we're

getting stronger so hopefully we can carry that strength into the next couple of years, not just next year, not just the winter but also the future because I think our objective is to bring Ferrari back properly, get there and dominate. That's what we want to do.

Ends