



FEDERATION INTERNATIONALE DE L' AUTOMOBILE

2018 FIA Formula One World Championship

Canadian Grand Prix

Saturday Post-Qualifying Press Conference Transcript

09.06.2018

DRIVERS

- 1 – Sebastian VETTEL (Ferrari)
- 2 – Valtteri BOTTAS (Mercedes)
- 3 – Max VERSTAPPEN (Red Bull Racing)

TRACK INTERVIEWS

(Conducted by Paul Di Resta)

Q: Sebastian, your 54th pole position, here in Montreal. What a day for Ferrari. What it could have been. You left it late this weekend but you got the job done?

Sebastian VETTEL: Yeah, I did. Yesterday, I think were a bit in trouble, I wasn't really happy with the car, we had some problems, I just couldn't get the rhythm, usually I like this track. Yesterday was very difficult, but today it switched on. I guess I woke up the right way and what a day. The car was incredible in quali. It just kept getting quicker. In my final lap I had a small mistake, otherwise I think there was a little bit more but it was fantastic. Thanks to the team, thanks for fixing the car yesterday after I hit the wall a little bit. Yeah, really happy, and also a massive crowd. I think the hairpin is so cool. There are so many people waving every lap and yeah a lot of Ferrari fans here so yeah, a very good.

Q: You can see what it means to you. Job done, good luck to you tomorrow. Max, we didn't expect to see Red Bull that far up, to get yourself in front of Hamilton. He had a small lock-up down at the hairpin. But you put yourself in contention and you've looked supreme all weekend after that difficult Monaco.

Max VERSTAPPEN: Yeah, I know. I'm very happy with this weekend so far. We know that in qualifying we are just missing top speed but to be third is great for us and I think especially in the race I think we can do a really good job.

Q: Do you think you can take the fight to Ferrari and Mercedes? Obviously it's a mixed up grid, do you think you've got the pace?

MV: Yeah I think we have. Starting on the softer tyres is also a benefit here, because it's quite slippery on the track and during the race I think we are anyway competitive.

Q: All the best, I hope you get in the mix; it's a great battle between the three of you. Valtteri, best Mercedes, getting the job done, you're on the front row. A perfect start and you can lead into Turn 1.

Valtteri BOTTAS: Yeah, I think qualifying-wise obviously it was close with Ferrari, so it's always annoying when it's so close and we are not ahead but anyway starting from the first row is good for this race and happy to go for it tomorrow.

PRESS CONFERENCE

Q: Sebastian, that's a new track record out there but you suggested that you made a little mistake on your final lap, so just talk us through that lap and how good it was.

SV: Well, I was very happy with the last qualifying, very happy with the first lap, but I thought that maybe in the first half of the circuit there's a bit more. And the second attempt in Q3 I found that little bit and then I was like 'OK, now I just need to repeat what I did before, because it was really, really good' but I struggled and I lost a little bit of time. I crossed the line and I wasn't sure it was going to be enough because I didn't know who is coming and then you try to look around at the screens to see something and you wait on the radio but yeah, big relief when I heard it's enough and we made it. Being on pole here is... I don't know, I like this track. Yesterday was really difficult but being on pole here with Ferrari means something extra. The Circuit Gilles Villeneuve – I think the meaning of Gilles for the Scuderia Ferrari is huge and I think motorsport in Canada is linked to that name. Obviously it's a great result, a lot of Ferrari fans out there, probably a lot of them from back then as well, and their kids, so great to carry the momentum we've had this year in qualifying even though the last races maybe were a little bit less strong, but still overall I think the performance has been there. Yeah, it's great when you have a session like that.

Well done. Valtteri, second place and a very tight battle with Sebastian. You didn't improve on your second run but your first lap was very impressive. So did it feel like a missed opportunity or are you happy with the performance?

VB: I think now seeing the lap times in the end, the difference, they were just a little bit quicker today. I felt like in the first run I more or less got everything out of the car. I knew that normally second run, yes there will be place that I could improve, but I just couldn't. I had some understeer in the second run for I don't know what reason, but I don't think we missed any positions for the second run. We only today for the first time experienced the hypersofts and we made good progress run after run, all the way up until Q3 with it. Obviously we like Ferrari are starting with the ultra for the race, so let's see what we can do from there.

Thank you. Max, you tried the hypersofts a lot this weekend and were fastest in every practice session, but is third place still a satisfying result given Red Bull's usual performance in qualifying?

SV: Yeah, absolutely. I think we extracted the best we could out of qualifying. We knew that in Q3 of course it was going to be a bit harder for us but to be still so close was I think still good. The car all weekend has been really strong. Every session we just made progress with the car and also in qualifying the track grips up quite a lot so you just have to follow the track. Yeah, very happy.

QUESTIONS FROM THE FLOOR

Q: (Frederic Ferret – L'Equipe) Question to Sebastian: were you thinking at the end of Q2 of trying to qualify with the hypersoft? And are you anxious about the strategy of the Red Bulls?

SV: No. No. It was a very smooth session, to be honest. A long briefing talking about what we want to do, and so on, just trying to squeeze everything out. Then it was very smooth: Q1 was smooth; Q2 was smooth, and so was Q3, in the end. I think we've seen also in the last couple of years, people are doing a preparation lap; sometimes they go for two push laps – but for me it was pretty straightforward that the first lap was there. Also, in terms of strategy, we did what we wanted to do. I

don't think the hypersoft is a good race tyre, so I'm a bit surprised that both of the Red Bulls chose that – but I guess they have their reasons. We'll see what happens tomorrow.

Q: (Heikki Kulta – Turun Sanomat) Valtteri, you lost the pole by ninety-three thousandth of a second. With the new upgrade of engine, would you have done it?

VB: Maybe! Obviously... yeah... everything with the new engines, the numbers are just in theory but there would have been gains and I think it would have been a close fight for the pole with the new engine – but we're going to get it later anyway, so that's all good.

Q: (Edd Straw – Autosport) Max, can you just explain the decision to use the hypersofts in Q2 – and is there any concern that will be a disadvantage going into the race, given the deg you've experience on those?

MV: Well, we feel it's a good tyre for us and, in the long run, I felt good on it – so yeah, no big surprises. We knew – or we thought – Mercedes were going to qualify on the ultra, so yeah, we'll see tomorrow.

Q: (Christian Menath – Motorsport-Magazin.com) Question for Seb. It was not the first time that you had some problems on Friday and improved quite a lot to Saturday. Do you have any special explanation – because your team-mate was quite strong on most of the Friday and didn't improve that much?

SV: Waking up later than him! Usually he's the one that wakes up late. Yeah, yesterday we had a scrappy day. I had an issue with the steering in the morning and brushed the wall. We lost a little bit of time getting ready for the second session. Yeah, it was just a... I couldn't find the rhythm; wasn't happy with the car. I knew it... I felt it was there but it just didn't stack-up and couldn't get to it. This morning when I went out straight away it felt a lot better. At the end, on a track like this where you have to attack braking and kerbs so much, I think it's important that you feel at home and have the confidence to play around and then yeah, I think you can extract a lot more from the car. So yesterday I wasn't really in charge, more of a passenger. We still got everything out of the day that we needed – but a bit compromised if you look for pace, and today it was a lot more natural.

Q: (Michael Schmidt – Auto Motor und Sport) Sebastian, what happened in the second run of Q2? You aborted it, there was a line of cars and you were not very happy with them. Did you want to go for a fast lap?

SV: Also, to get a feel and to see where we end up – but that was... it's never happened to me. There were three cars, they were doing maximum 100kph and, either they weren't told or they weren't looking. Obviously, they were all trying to get a slot for their flying lap – but I was coming there at full speed. I had to abort – there was no chance to slalom around them. It was a bit surprising. There was no way for me to carry on. It was interesting.

Q: (Massimo Lopes Pegna – La Gazzetta dello Sport) If I'm not mistaken, the last Ferrari pole (here) was in 2001 with Michael Schumacher; any thoughts and comments about being the...

SV: Well, it was a long time ago. I said earlier that the meaning for Scuderia Ferrari in this country is huge with the history. Gilles Villeneuve, the favourite driver of Enzo Ferrari and I think his charisma, his character that he brought to Formula One, to racing in general, is still alive today. You can see there's a lot of flags. He left the heritage, so the people who fell in love with motor sport back then, it's still them hanging around and their kids and maybe grandchildren by now, I don't know. Yeah, so really really happy and it's an important day for us but for sure, Saturday is not as important as Sunday so we hope to do well tomorrow as well.

Q: (Arjan Schouten – Sportwereld) Max, quick all weekend, today also very close; has there been one moment today when you were thinking 'I'm going to take my first pole here'?

MV: I knew that we had a good car but I just wanted to wait and see how we were going to... how competitive we were going to be in Q3 and I quickly saw that it was going to be very hard to take pole position but you always do your best, you try to get the best lap time out of it.

Q: (Nicolangelo Cioppi – La Voce Euro Canada USA) Max and after Sebastian Vettel: yesterday, you had the best car, what happened today that you don't have the pole? And to Sebastian Vettel, congratulations for the pole today. Do you think tomorrow you are going to win?

MV: Well, I still think we have a really good car but we know that in Q3 and in general, throughout the whole year already, we were just lacking power so we were just trying to compensate with that but I think it showed in Monaco that we have a great car and again here but of course with those long straights it's just very hard to fight for pole position. And in the race, of course, it all calms down a bit so that's why I think in general we are always a bit more competitive in the race.

SV: I don't know. I'm not a bookmaker but I would say they are pretty good. Obviously we got pole today and we got pole for a reason so as I said today, I was a lot happier with the car and I think we can carry that into the race. For myself and for the team, I think we start on the right tyre and then we see. Nevertheless, it's a long race here, a lot of laps, a lot of things to look out for so we'll see. I think in terms of race pace as we've seen many times this year it's very close between the three teams and between the six drivers so we will see but for sure if you start on pole you want to win.

Q: (Maxime Sarrasin – 95.8 Montreal) Questions for Max: we had a talk with Niki Lauda and we asked him which of today's pilots makes him remember the most from Gilles Villeneuve, and he told us that you were the kind of pilot that makes him think about Gilles Villeneuve, so what are your thoughts about that?

MV: Well, he was good-looking so... I don't know. I've never met him in real life so for me it's difficult for me to judge that but if he thinks it's like, I'm fine with that.

SV: That was a good one. Confident.

Q: (Maxime Sarrasin – 95.8 Montreal) And if I might, I have another question for you. We remember that Thursday you were quite exhausted with the questions about the accident...

MV: Be careful, hunh?

Q: (Maxime Sarrasin – 95.8 Montreal) No, no, I don't want to get head butted but as a result yesterday and today you had pretty good pace in the test and for the race and you showed us that you were able to push your car further and further. Did it give you motivation to go further again and push your pace higher than normal?

MV: No, because that normally I'm not doing a good job so I always try to do the best I can every single weekend and I felt straight away really comfortable in the car so that helped, of course.

Ends