

Press Information

2014 Brazilian Grand Prix Thursday Press Conference Transcript 06.11.2014

DRIVERS – Kevin MAGNUSSEN (McLaren), Adrian SUTIL (Sauber), Pastor MALDONADO (Lotus), Jean-Eric VERGNE (Toro Rosso), Felipe MASSA (Williams), Nico ROSBERG (Mercedes)

PRESS CONFERENCE

Nico, if we could start with you? It's the first time this year, in this championship, that the championship itself is out of your hands, in the sense that two wins, here and in Abu Dhabi, won't be enough. Do you feel you need to rely on a little bit of luck then and this venue might provide it?

Nico ROSBERG: Yeah, it's clear that I need to rely on something happening. Yeah, for sure there's not enough for me to win, unfortunately, but that's the way it is. Anyways, in sport so much can happen, so I'm still very optimistic.

You had a rich run of form from Monaco through to Hockenheim. How would characterise the period since then?

NR: A less rich run of form! What is it? Lewis has done a little bit of a better job since then. That's it, pretty simple, but as I say, still two races.

OK, thank you. Felipe, coming to you: obviously, you're a two-time winner of the Brazilian Grand Prix. Do you feel that with this car this year is your best shot of getting back on the podium, since that great win in '08.

Felipe MASSA: Yeah, I think so. Anyway, I was on the podium in 2012. It's a fantastic track for me. A track that I had great results. As you said, two victories, almost three I would say. Three pole positions. I always love this track. I won many races [here] even before Formula One. So I started my career here, on the other side of the wall, which is a go-kart track, at the top. I love this place. I love the energy that I feel here and I'm really looking forward to having a fantastic weekend. I hope our car can be as competitive as shown in the other tracks here as well. We'll see how far we can be, or maybe even in the middle of these guys here on the left [Mercedes]. Trying to get all the opportunities to have a great race here.

You've obviously been a key part of Williams' renaissance this year. With all the experience you have, tell us how you feel this team can become more competitive in 2015?

FM: Well, first of all you cannot forget how much we grow from the first race until now. I think maybe... I would say it was the team that grows more during the championship. It was a team that gets better, that improved the car in the top level,

from the first race to the last race, looking at where we started and where we are now. So, I think definitely the team... when we started at the first test and where we are now, the team changed completely the organisation, the mentality. We are still changing, there are still some improvements we are working to be there before the first race of next year. But I really believe in this team. I think this team has everything to be even more competitive, it has everything to be fighting for victories and I really, really hope for championships as well.

Kevin, coming to you, obviously clear progress for McLaren on the car side in the last few grands prix, that's clear to see. But the car still seem to have a narrow sweet spot in terms of getting the most out of it during a race weekend. What's going on there?

Kevin MAGNUSSEN: A lot of it is down to the tyres, making the tyres work. It's seems that sometimes we get it better than others. Sochi was an example of where we got the tyres working very well and I think Austin was an example of where we didn't. It's a little bit hard to understand but we're trying out best.

Since the summer break you've had pretty strong form yourself personally, especially in qualifying. Do you think you've done enough to book your seat for 2015?

KM: I can only say I hope so. I think I've learned a lot. I've improved a lot in many areas and yeah, I'm sure I have a lot more potential even from where I am now. So, I hope so.

Thank you very much. Pastor, coming to you, first points in Austin, a very strong performance. Tell us about your and Lotus' fight back?

Pastor MALDONADO: It was a very tough season, especially at the beginning, even not able to run the car as we wanted. It was not maybe the best way to start to work with a team. But we did a great job to try to put everything together, to get better and better and at some point we decided to be focused on next year's car. But the team seems to be quite good, very competitive in terms of spirit. They are used to being in the front. They know how to do a good car, so let's hope the best for next year.

How do you feel about opportunities for this weekend? This track is always very unpredictable and the weather forecast looks like it's going to be pretty wet throughout the weekend. A lot of variables there. Opportunities?

PM: Yeah, the main objective is to maintain the performance we had last week in Austin, so we think, as a team, we can continue to fight for the points. That is the main focus at the moment.

Q: Adrian, coming to you, obviously Sauber have announced both their 2015 drivers, so in what direction does your future lie, do you feel?

Adrian SUTIL: I don't know, so I will see what is possible, what I want and also... yeah, it's quite a few things to think about and I can't really say more at the moment.

Q: Are you optimistic that you'll be in Formula One next year?

AS: At the moment, I don't know. Maybe. F1 is unpredictable – but as I said, there are a few things to think about first and then the team has to comment the rest.

Q: Obviously great performance in qualifying in Austin, you must have been so disappointed the way that first lap turned out. Have you spoken to Sergio [Pérez] afterwards? Have you been back through it?

AS: No, we didn't speak. He didn't apologise, to be honest. But anyway, that's how it is. Shame, it was for sure a good chance for points. It was a very nice qualifying, it was good to be in Q3 finally with this car. It has been quite a challenge this year, to be honest, so we didn't expect it – but for some reason it got better and better through the qualifying session and especially on Saturday, the car was better than ever before, so, many things to analyse. We try it of course again here. I look forward to the race weekend. Big chances with weather looking very wet and I think everyone knows how the weather can turn out here in Brazil. We have seen many exciting races.

Q: Jean-Eric, coming to you, some encouraging noises that you may get a chance to retain your Toro Rosso seat for next year. Can you tell us about progress on that and progress on any other options you might have in Formula One?

Jean-Eric VERGNE: Well yeah, there were some good words from many people, especially from Franz [Tost]. Well, you know, it would be a good thing to stay with this team, I really believe in it and I think this year we did get a lot stronger and next year we'll be again on this up-trend, so I believe we can be again in a better position next year so hopefully we can continue. But you never know. And I don't know much more about the situation than this.

Q: It's clear from watching you race in the last period of time, just more recently, that there's a lot of passion in your driving. Is that coming from the adversity that you've been through, the setbacks, or is it anger? What's driving it?

JEV: Definitely not anger. I believe that I've done many races in the past like this but unfortunately the beginning of the year I had a lot of DNF and obviously, when you don't finish the race, people don't remember what you've been up to in the race. That was a little bit of a shame. I haven't changed anything. I drive with a lot of passion, I love racing, that's what I do best and it doesn't matter what I do next year, I continue, I don't continue, I'll always give my best to a hundred percent and try to have the most fun possible. This is when you perform well.

QUESTIONS FROM THE FLOOR

Q: (Elmar Dreher – German Press Agency) Adrian, I can imagine that you are very frustrated. Can you describe a little bit your feelings about this bad situation for you?

AS: Well, I'm not frustrated but that's just how it is in F1 since many years. It's a little bit a different business. That's all I can say right now. I look forward to the race and that's it.

Q: (Flavio Vanetti – Corriera della Sera) Nico, we know the championship will not finish here in Brazil. Is it an add-point from a psychological point of view that you can have a last chance in Abu Dhabi?

NR: It's... for sure it's great. Great news that for sure this year I have a chance to win the championship the way it is now. That's a good thing. I'm also happy because it's good for the fans that it's going to be exciting until the very end. And, yeah, for sure it keeps me very, very optimistic.

Q: (Paolo Ianieri – La Gazzetta dello Sport) Nico, Lewis said that what happened in Spa was kind of a war for him and since then he changes his attitude and everything. What has it changed for you since then and what do you think you have to do now to change the results of the last five races?

NR: Did he say we're at war? I don't think anything has changed. It was an intense battle before and it still is an intense battle now. So, I don't know his exact opinion on things but for me nothing has changed since then.

Q: (Claudio Nogueira – O Gobo) Felipe, can you make an overall evaluation of your first season with the Williams team?

FM: Starting with the team, the team did a fantastic season, looking at how they were last year and looking at how they are now. I think the team did a fantastic season in terms of what I was saying before: improving the car and working in the good areas. We lost some opportunities, I lost many opportunities during the season, so many races that I couldn't finish for different reasons. Some unlucky races as well, I would say. But I think now, I would say maybe from the middle of the season, things were a lot more consistent for myself, for the races, and I really believe that we can still do a great two races for the end of the championship. I'm really working and looking forward to having a very consistent and good season in 2015.

Q: (David Croft – Sky Sports F1) Kevin, two part question: first of all, I take it you still don't know exactly what your future is for next year, and secondly, then, if you don't know what your future is, do you feel a bit let down by the team, that in your rookie year, after you've done your best to try and perform on the track, you've got two races to go and they still haven't told you whether you've got a drive next year or not?

KM: They're not doing that to annoy me. They have a reason for it.

Q: (David Croft – Sky Sports F1) Do you feel let down?

KM: No, because I understand why I've not been told yet. Some things are still not sorted out from their side and if they could let me know, they would. Yeah, I can only just wait and see what happens. I'm not planning anything else, I'm not looking for anything else. I'm planning as if I'm here next year, so that's what I'm working for and doing my best to get to.

Q: (Alan Baldwin – Reuters) Adrian, I understood you had a two year contract and it seems that it's only one year. Is this something you have to talk to Sauber about resolving? You alluded to some issues to sort out still.

AS: Yes, there are certain things to talk about, definitely, yes. They've confirmed two drivers but that doesn't mean the drivers can drive and it doesn't mean that the team's going to drive. So there's no real change from last weekend to this weekend. It's just an announcement and now, of course, my situation, I think I have to do some talking, to sort out the things.

Q: (Luiz Fernando Ramos – Racing Magazine) I don't know which drivers have done a track walk or saw the new pit entry and pit exit but if somebody can comment on what they saw? Maybe Felipe?

FM: Yeah, I saw it. The pit exit is more or less similar, a little bit more inside and I would say corner two is more safe, because the wall is a bit further away, so we won't see some crashes which we saw many times. I think that corner will be a lot safer now. And the pit entry, I would say, was a good job. You still have the wall there, in a similar place – this is the only thing that we need to be careful of, but the pit entrance is better so I would say it's more safe, it's better and I really hope we will see no accidents or less accidents than we saw in the past there. Anyway, we need to drive to see exactly but it looks OK by looking but we just need to drive to be sure about it.

Q: (Andy Benson – BBC) At the beginning of the year, Nico, you were quite outspoken against double points, you didn't like it.

NR: I do now! It's really a fantastic idea.

Q: (Andy Benson – BBC) I'm coming to that, yeah, and last weekend you were also saying you didn't like it but you could see the positives. If you end up winning the championship because of double points now, the way the season's gone, some people will say that it was a hollow victory or it shouldn't have happened or whatever. How would you respond to that?

NR: I wouldn't respond. Everybody can have their opinion and in sport it's the points that count in the end and of course, then you can debate who deserved it more or less. That's always going to be the case.

Q: (Paolo Ianieri – La Gazzetta dello Sport) Felipe, we heard that Felipe Nasr is going to race for Sauber next year. You know him pretty well, he's been the third driver for your team. What do you think he can bring to Sauber and what do you say about him as a driver?

FM: Well, I'm happy for him. I think for Brazil it's great to have another Brazilian driver racing. I'm quite close to him, we've worked together the whole season inside the team. He's in GP2, maybe his third season in GP2 so it's his time, his opportunity to go to Formula One, otherwise it starts to be a little bit more difficult after that so I'm happy that he had his opportunity, his chance and I hope the best for him. I hope the best for him and I hope that we can bring our Brazilian flag on the top now with two drivers, not just one, and I hope the best for him. Definitely, it's not a great moment for Sauber. I don't know exactly how it's going to be next year, his team, I don't know which car and how competitive they can be, seeing that they are suffering a little bit of crisis and crisis is not good for everything you're doing but anyway, I hope the best for him and I hope he can have a good start and a good experience and being in Formula One for a long time, not just for a few years.

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