



FEDERATION INTERNATIONALE DE L'AUTOMOBILE

## Press Information

### 2012 Brazilian Grand Prix Sunday Press Conference Transcript

25.11.2012

#### DRIVERS

1 – Jenson **BUTTON** (McLaren)

2 – Fernando **ALONSO** (Ferrari)

3 – Felipe **MASSA** (Ferrari)

#### PODIUM INTERVIEWS

*(Conducted by Nelson Piquet)*

**First of all, a question for the winner. For sure, you've done a fantastic job all year round? But the best race was the most exciting race I ever saw in Formula One. The question for you is, I'm sure you're very happy in this race, but are you happy also that you get Hamilton out of the way?**

**Jenson BUTTON:** First of all, I want to congratulate the whole team. This is the perfect way for us to end the season. We started on a high and we've had ups and downs, and to end on a high is fantastic. It bodes very well for 2013. Congratulations guys. We fought for second in the Constructors' today but these boys were a little bit too strong. Thank you very much.

**Alonso, I'm sorry. You did a fantastic job all year round. Massa can say, you have some accidents that were not your fault. I'm sorry about you because I have also... I lost two championships at the last race, I know how it feels. Actually, I'm asking about your feelings now.**

**Fernando ALONSO:** Well, first of all I feel very proud of my team, very proud of the season we did. Obviously we lost the championship now, but I don't think, as you said, that we lost here in Brazil, we lost in some races where we were a little bit unlucky. But this is a sport, but when you do something with your heart, when you do something with 100 per cent, you have to be proud of your team, happy for them, and we will try next year.

**And my friend Massa: you started the year not very good but you have been improving all the time. What about next year? Are you going to start in the right way?**

**Felipe MASSA:** Yeah, for sure. I think the second part of the year was the preparation for next year. It's such an emotion to race here. I think the race was really fantastic. For sure, it could have been a better position than what I finished but anyway I didn't know what to say. Just crying and I didn't know what to say. I didn't know what to feel, it was so amazing.

## **PRESS CONFERENCE**

**Jenson, congratulations, what an amazing race for you. First of all, that tyre strategy, staying out, it really worked well for you.**

**JB:** Yeah it did. It was one of the toughest races I've had. It was very tricky. It was on that point many times when you think Inters is the right tyre. I kept asking the team "what's going to happen with the weather: it's supposed to be light showers?" Well OK, we'll see how we go but it was so, so difficult. You're locking up tyres here and there but you've just got to push to the limit. You have to wait for the team to give you the information about all the other people on Inters so it's not just about driving the car at that point. Y'know, you need every single piece of information that's out there to know that you're doing the right thing. But it was a really good race. Obviously things were made more difficult with the first safety car. Lost 40 seconds, the race was between me and Nico then. It was made a lot more difficult. And then when the safety car came in I grained the front-right tyre. I really struggled but when that went away it was good. The two guys in front obviously had a coming together, which helped things but in that sort of race you never really know what the outcome is going to be. We still had a lot more rain coming. We still had to make the right call on the pitstop again, which I think we did, and then we just tried to hold the gap really to the Ferraris, which was about 20 seconds, which was difficult in itself, because there was so much water out there for Inters. But really happy with the end result. We started the year so strong and we've ended it so strong. Just a few areas that we need to improve in the middle of the season. It's sad that Lewis isn't here to enjoy his last race with the team but it's racing and these things happen. I'd like to bid him farewell. We've had a good time together over the last three years and I think we've proved that on the first ten laps of the race with how close our fighting was. I hope he has a good career in his next team. Lastly, I'd like to congratulate Sebastian on his third title in a row. He's very, very impressive so congratulations to him and also Red Bull for clinching the Constructors' at the previous race.

**Fernando, you wanted unusual circumstances but it seems they weren't either the right ones or not enough. But it was just an incredible race for all of you.**

**FA:** Yes, it was good I think. It was more or less what we wanted. Mixed conditions and very, very difficult race. It was one of the most difficult races we ever drove, I think with the conditions out there and you feel that you are with the wrong tyre every lap but you ask the

team and everyone is in the same position so you need to keep fighting. There was a lot of risk every lap to crash and have an accident and finish the race there. So we could not afford this for sure because we needed a podium finish to have any chance, so it was a very delicate situation but we managed very well and again we starting in eighth or seven or something like that and we finished in the podium one more time. As usual in the last couple of races. So this can only be achieved with perfection from the team, with good strategies, with good start, with good pace in the car. And today we mixed all again and it was very fine. Obviously you are not in control of what your rivals do. And I think we need a second place and Sebastian eighth or something like that, which we know that is a very strange combination of results because to be out of the first eight positions for Red Bull in this race is not so easy, so we were hoping a little miracle, as we were hoping for all through the year, I think from the start to the end it was a dream and we had this little present to fight for the championship until the last race. So we enjoyed the race, we did our job and the dream continued until today. And this was... thank you for the team to have a perfect season.

**Felipe, on the podium at home, you were also the perfect team-mate, and also an emotional podium for you.**

**FM:** Yeah, I think it was so emotional. Not just the podium, I mean what's happened all through the year, y'know? I think everything came together in the same moment. And I didn't know what to say, didn't know what to think, I mean I just couldn't even breathe. It was very emotional. The race was good, we made some mistakes on the strategy but you never know. It was raining, stopping, raining, stopping and you never know what to expect. And I choose also together, to try that strategy but then after we saw, I saw myself again in 11<sup>th</sup> and just was quite aggressive overtaking cars and I think from there on the race was incredible. It was very good. And for sure with... together with this problem on the strategy, I mean the race I suppose should be different. Suppose even to fight for the victory maybe, y'know? Under normal circumstance. I think all together the first part of the season, which was a disaster and then after that was completely different; doing what I like, doing what I know, the performance I know and I think when we put everything together it just collapsed.

## **QUESTIONS FROM THE FLOOR**

**(Adam Hay-Nicholls – Metro) Fernando, when Seb had his first lap spin, did the team get on the radio and tell you what had happened, or did they just let you get on with it?**

**FA:** Yes, yes, they told me that they had a spin and he was last. But nothing because the conditions were so difficult that being last, 11<sup>th</sup> or 12<sup>th</sup> was not a big drama at that time but obviously it was one more time to be cool and to calm down. The race was on and it was very strange situations and very strange conditions on the track and obviously when Sebastian was quite far down after the spin it was obviously a message to calm down and stay cool because we need to keep it in the track. That was sometimes the most difficult thing. It was not about lap time, it was not about one-tenth it was just to survive every lap. So it was the most difficult thing in the race.

**(Anne Giuntini – L'Equipe) Question for Fernando, where and when do you think you lost this championship?**

**FA:** Many, many places. Obviously I have two retirements in the year, over 20 races and the two retirements was not engine problem, not gear problem, not driver error. It was nothing. It was one car puncturing your rear tyre and one car passing over you. Nothing really you could do in these two starts. So for sure there you lose a couple of points. There were also some races that we have some strange decisions let's say, and some penalties, so maybe we lost also there.

**(Michael Schmidt - Auto, Motor und Sport) Fernando, before you did your last pitstop, Sebastian went in for another set of dry tyres and then took Inters. You stayed out, how difficult was it for you to find the balance? I mean you stayed out on probably very used old tyres. And who did the decision to stay out?**

**FA:** It was a shared decision, obviously. It was getting quite wet and the pace was starting to be six seconds slower, then eight, and then the last two laps were 14 seconds slower than the normal dry pace. They call me to put the new tyres, dry tyres, two laps before and I said "guys, it's raining quite a lot, so let's wait one more lap. Give me one more lap because I don't think it is ready for new dry tyres or for intermediate." And then we wait one more lap and it was very clear that it was intermediate conditions, so we were lucky in that lap.

**(Leonid Novozhilov - F1Life) Question to all drivers: this season was usual or unusual for you – and why?**

**JB:** I think it's pretty obvious it was quite an unusual season, especially at the start of the year, having seven different winners from so many different teams. We don't see that in Formula One so often. Well, ever. I think a lot of it was down to the way we were getting the tyres working or not getting the tyres working. But also I think a lot of the teams, the teams that aren't normally at the front, I think they've done a very good job over the winter. But through the year when the bigger teams work out how to use the tyres and also, you know, the development race, suddenly you see a difference towards the end of the season. Not as big as some might have thought. I don't think we would have expected a Force India to be leading the race today. So, I think it shows Formula One is a lot closer than it used to be; in terms of regulations it's a lot tighter and also with not many regulation changes, it brings the field very close – and I think we'll see that also next year.

**FM:** I think he said everything.

**(Livio Oricchio – O Estado de Sao Paulo) Fernando, did the team inform you every single lap what was going on, behind and in front of you, considering the championship fight? And if you can make some comments about Felipe because he has been helping you a lot in the last few races.**

**FA:** Of course, I was constantly updated with the positions of our rivals. At the beginning of the race for the Constructors' Championship and also for the Drivers' Championship. After Hamilton retired the Constructors' Championship was a little easier for us so we were concentrating the Drivers' Championship. Nothing really to say, it's good to have some information because sometimes you don't know if you're fast enough or you are too slow and when you see that the pace is OK and your rivals are fighting at the back, there is some extra motivation. And about Felipe for sure it was a very, very good second part of the year with some podiums and some very good performance. If I found myself fighting for the World Championship at the last race it's also thanks to the teamwork, and when we say teamwork it's engineers, we say people in Maranello, we say sponsors and we say the drivers. There are a lot of tests that have been done in the simulator with our test drivers. There is a lot of test that Felipe was doing in the simulator also in the summer and there is the Friday practice that without a team-mate... you can share the programme and you can trust the results... it's impossible sometimes to work. Maximum trust, maximum confidence in Felipe's work every time in the races, in the practice, in the simulator, we are a team. We are united. And in the last two races, three races, there was also some help in the race itself

in terms of positions gained etcetera. So this is also due to the position in the championship that Felipe had no more options and the team decide this. As I said, fantastic team and thanks to everybody, we were in this situation.

**(Carlos Miguel – La Gaceta) Fernando, two questions, do you know something about Vettel overtaking Kobayashi with yellow flag and the second question is about the future: in what aspects must improve Ferrari to win the championship.**

**FA:** The yellow flag, not any news, only Jenson was in front of me when we arrive in the podium. There was some kind of hope when he told me there is some yellow flag problem but then I think it was not true. I don't know, I came from the podium here, so maybe you have more information. For future, I think we need to improve the car. I think we have the best team in terms of approaching the races, preparing the races. Zero mechanical problems, zero problems for the year. Good pitstops, good starts, good strategy. But we were too slow. We were behind the Red Bulls, behind the McLarens, and now in the last couple of grands prix, behind Williams, Force India. We were clearly slower than them in pace. So this is something we must improve next year because we cannot fight for a World Championship if we are too slow. We can be a little bit slower but not that much. And this year it was something strange, combinations that allowed us to fight until the end but I'm not sure we'll be this lucky in the future.

**(Claudio Nogueira – O Globo) Alonso, please, do you feel more frustrated for not being champion or satisfied having been to the end of the championship?**

**FA:** I'm very satisfied. I think it's very good feeling what I have now. It was very frustrating maybe in Abu Dhabi, feeling, two years ago because we have in our hands and we lost it. It was some kind of frustration there. Here is completely the opposite. I'm so proud and I'm so happy to fight until the last lap with the package we have in hands. That is the best thing for me, to feel proud of myself, it was by far the best season of my career and I will remember this 2012 like some dream season. Obviously we didn't achieve the points to win the title but I won so many things this year: so much respect from everybody.

**(Alberto Antonini - Autosprint) Fernando, last year in Brazil you called 2012 as your best season ever. Do you think this one was even better?**

**FA:** Yes, yes definitely. I think last year was very good, I was very proud of the season, how we approach races, how we improve mistakes we done in 2010 and this 2012, as I said,

apart from the competitiveness of the car, if I repeat the 20 races, it would be difficult to do anything different of what we did because everything was so good for me.

**(Rodrigo Gini – O Estado de Minas) Question for Felipe. The last time you entered through that door four years ago was maybe the most bitter moment on your career. You did whatever you could to try to fight to the championship and lost it to Lewis. Four years later you come through the same door and it's even emotional, can you tell us what changed and what happened through that time and how to you feel about returning to the podium in Brazil?**

**FM:** Well, I think it happen so many things in this time, from the last time I came from that door after the race and now. It was actually not a great timing on my career, and before was just great times. I had a difficult time but I think I learnt a lot. It was a life experience, y'know? Which is always important for you to learn, to understand so many things. I think the most important thing is to understand, and to turn around and go back to the good direction. To do all you know. Which I always believe I am able to do – and I think I'm showing now. So, coming back through that door is always a great feeling. And not just through that door, but in this place and being competitive. I think I was competitive the whole weekend. Even in the race, with the problems I had in the race but anyway I was always competitive. And I think that's really what makes me proud. To be here, to enjoy, to do the best you can and to do all you know, without any bullshit. Just to know and enjoy.

Ends