



FEDERATION INTERNATIONALE DE L'AUTOMOBILE

Press Information

2013 Hungarian Grand Prix Post Qualifying Press Conference Transcript

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DRIVERS

1 – Lewis HAMILTON (Mercedes)

2 – Sebastian VETTEL (Red Bull Racing)

3 – Romain GROSJEAN (Lotus)

TV UNILATERAL

Q: Congratulations Lewis, a phenomenal pole position, a phenomenal time on what is a very challenging circuit I think.

Lewis HAMILTON: Thank you. Yeah, it is. Especially with the temperatures and everything. That makes it pretty tough but I was really surprised when I came across the line and they said I got pole. I was expecting Sebastian to get it because he had shown some serious pace before. And it didn't even feel that great a lap so that's why I was quite surprised.

Q: When we saw Sebastian's time we thought surely it's not possible to beat him – yet you did so.

LH: As I said, I'm really surprised. I felt maybe he made a mistake or something. But I think as always it's down to the... we bought some upgrades this weekend. The guys have been working incredibly hard to try to catch everyone and they're just doing a phenomenal job. It's a result of all the hard work they've put in.

Q: A tough circuit here. Surely pole position is very, very important because it's so difficult to overtake?

LH: It definitely helps. It's very difficult to follow here. If you can get off the... it's a long way down to Turn One from the start but if you can get into Turn One first, try and hold your position then it's definitely advantageous. But looking after the tyres in these conditions is going to be, as always, trouble. These guys are going to be ridiculously fast so trying to keep ahead of them or hold onto them is going to be the challenge tomorrow.

Q: Sebastian. I have to say we thought you surely had it in the bag with that time. Did you feel the same?

Sebastian VETTEL: Well there wasn't much missing so I think Lewis did a good job. I put a strong lap in, I had two sets of new tyres and I was pretty happy with both laps. Maybe on the second try I was losing out a little bit in the middle sector. It's very twisty and a lot of corners in a short amount of time. Maybe I wasn't aggressive enough there. But it's stupid

to sit here now and say “we should have done this, we should have done that.” At the end of the day I was pretty happy with my lap but it was just not quick enough. Obviously Mercedes have a very strong pace in qualifying. I think Lewis did an exceptional job today if you look also at the gap to Nico, so you have to be fair and respect that. I’m not arguing with that. Surely I would have loved to be a little bit faster and to be on pole but still I think it puts us in a great place for tomorrow. I think we have a good car and good pace also for the race. Shame that in the other car Mark had an issue. He didn’t have KERS and had a problem with the gearbox so had slow upshifts so he was basically not having an attempt for the front and the first couple of positions but still I think we should have a good race tomorrow because the car feels fine. I’m quite confident.

Q: Romain, you were second on the grid here last year, finished third. You’re in the first three again this year. It must be a lucky circuit for you, do you feel that?

Romain GROSJEAN: Well I don’t know! I quite like the circuit but it doesn’t mean much unfortunately. It has been a good weekend so far, been working pretty hard with the team, trying to get the best out of the car. Our last lap was a pretty good lap, not missing much to get even more ahead but those guys were really quick so I think it’s good to be here. The race is very long tomorrow and it’s hot so we will see what we can do and what we can get as a best result.

Q: And both the long and short runs have been good in practice?

RG: Yeah, they were pretty all right yesterday. I think the Option is quite a tough tyre to make last but then the medium one was all right on our car. With the temperature coming up it can change a little bit the things. It was the case last race. My first stint was very long just because the tyres held up pretty well. Hopefully tomorrow is going to be the case again and then I can try to have a go. But we’ll decide when the time comes.

PRESS CONFERENCE

Q: Lewis, how much of a worry is the long-run pace for the race tomorrow? Particularly given the heat?

LH: It is what it is, y’know? It’s been the same for a long time. We don’t come into the race and it’s a surprise to us. That’s what it is. It’s great to have the pole position but it doesn’t really mean a lot throughout the weekend. Obviously the race is where we score the points. It’s going to be tough tomorrow. It didn’t feel like a disaster through our long runs but it definitely wasn’t as good as the guys next to me. So, that’s the way it is.

Q: Sebastian, this is a trophy that’s missing from the trophy cabinet. You reduced that number by one last time in the German Grand Prix. How badly do you want this one?

SV: Well, hopefully... I’m not that young anymore but hopefully I’ve got a couple of years left and I’m not in a rush. Obviously it’s a very nice race, a lot of fans coming, especially from Austria to support our team. So, yeah, that’s great, a great atmosphere and it would be very nice to win here. It’s a shame that they don’t have the nice, traditionally trophy any more. Instead we get this, I don’t know, this six-legged dog as the trophy on the podium the last couple of years. But, no, I think we are in a good position. Pretty happy with qualifying, obviously I would have loved to have been on pole but Lewis did a good job, as I said before. So we’ll see what we can do tomorrow. I’m sure it’s going to be hot and a lot will be decided over the tyres. We’ll see what we can do.

Romain, you were on the podium last year. Is there a certain confidence after last year's performance and this year's performance as well? You were fastest this morning and now here you are third fastest on the grid.

RG: As I said, this has been a pretty good weekend so far and the car is behaving pretty well. The main job was to try to get those new tyres to work properly and it didn't change night and day, so that was a good surprise from yesterday morning. And then, just trying to improve the car lap after lap, and that's what we did. The long run yesterday was OK. It felt OK in the car, which was important. Then tomorrow we will see with the race. We will see different strategies I guess and we'll try to get the best of our car when we get free air and stuff like that.

QUESTIONS FROM THE FLOOR

Q: (Peter Farkas – Auto-Motor) Sebastian you have mentioned in the [TV] press conference that maybe you were not aggressive in the middle sector. Was it because you thought you virtually had pole and you didn't want to take too many risks.

SV: No, surely not. In the end, I wasn't on holiday. If you could, then I would say have a go and try to do the same time. I lost a little bit of time there and should have been more aggressive. That doesn't mean I didn't push but maybe I should have pushed a little bit harder and a little bit extra to get some more time. I think the time Lewis did was in the car but it's always easy with hindsight to say you could have done a little bit more here or there but as a fact, we did not, so we deserve P2 today.

Q: (Leonid Novozhilov - F1 Life) Romain, what does it mean your little smile. Is this success for you, this third place, or maybe you want more?

RG: I do always smile, so it's hard to read on that. It's OK. You always want better and I think we had a tough quali and it's really hot in the car and I gave a good effort to get there. It's good to be in the top three. This morning we were fastest but we knew it would be very tight and again it is. I'm, pretty pleased with the gap which is behind. Tomorrow's race is long and a different story. I was a bit surprised by the Mercedes being that quick but in the race we know it's a different story.

Q: (Kate Walker – GP Week) Lewis, your pole has demonstrated that your qualifying pace has not been affected by the new Pirelli constructions. What kind of feelings do you have about your long run pace, about the race tomorrow and especially the fifty degree plus track temperatures we are anticipating?

LH: I'm not really looking forward to it. I was just saying to Sebastian, it's just a shame that we obviously have good pace... we've got a good car so I think if we didn't have the tyre issues we would be able to compete with the guys in the race. It sucks in the way that I'm not able to have a race with these guys but we will do the best we can tomorrow. The tyre degradation is an issue and no matter what rules change or whatever solutions we find, so far, generally it seems very difficult for us to improve. But we're just working away at it and hopefully we will get there before the rules change again for next year, different tyres come in. Otherwise it's just trying to get as many points as we can and trying to hold on to Sebastian for as long as I can.

Q: (Peter Vamosi – Vas Népe) Lewis, Michael Schumacher won here four times at the Hungaroring with two different teams. You can be the next one tomorrow. Is there any more pressure because of that?

LH: No. I really am not bothered at all about beating someone else's record or matching someone else's record. I've been very fortunate to have had a good car for quite a few years when I've come here with McLaren and I was privileged to have the opportunity with them and obviously now we are in a good position but now I don't envisage tomorrow being a win for us. We've got a steep hill to climb tomorrow with these tyres and in these conditions. If we did win it would be a miracle and I would be really happy with it of course but I still feel the win is a while off.

Q: (Sarah Holt – CNN.com) Romain, it looked like the new tyres have actually helped you as opposed to your teammate. Is that a fair reading?

RG: No, I don't think it is. I think at Silverstone and Nurburgring we were very competitive and to be honest I haven't really found exactly the same feeling as I had last year with the tyres. I think we are just doing a good job with the car. That we struggled at the beginning of the year is not a secret with mapping and stuff like that, but since then we have found what I need to bring the car where I want to and it's getting better and better. I don't think those tyres have changed the deal massively.

Q: (Sarah Holt – CNN.com) There was another close race between you and Seb in Germany; now you have another chance to do that tomorrow. Is there any chance that Lewis might hinder you as you chase after him tomorrow?

RG: Well, he's on pole at the moment, so he's the one with the advantage on the grid but then it's just up to how the tyre reacts in the race, what the degradation is like, when people pit, the strategy and stuff like that. We know the track is quite short and you can easily fall into traffic which cost me the win here last year in the second stint, so it's just up to us to get the best out of everything I can.

Q: (Abhishek Takle – Midday) Sebastian, how difficult do you think it's going to be for you to keep Romain behind, given that he's qualified so close to you and he could potentially run longer on the soft tyre?

SV: Well, it depends, obviously. We know that the Lotus usually is very good with its tyres, exceptional to everybody else. I think we are in a good position too so we will see. At the moment, as Romain said, Lewis is leading the pack and then we go from there. The race is long, the first corner is only a small part of it so we will see what happens at the start and after that it could be all different already. It's a long way to go, it's a lot of laps here, 70 laps, it's a long race, it's going to be hot so I think it will be tough for drivers but also for the cars in terms of cooling. I think we're all on the limit. It will be a long race and surely tyres will be important but I think we are confident, as confident as we can be. How strong the Lotus will be I don't know. On the long runs they don't look anything special but we saw the same at Nurburgring on the Friday so let's see what happens tomorrow.

Q: (Zolt Godina – Best of Radio) Lewis, do you have problems with the car in terms of driving, as in the first part of the season?

LH: It's still not the easiest to set up but we've not done a bad job this weekend as we have managed to get through the last couple of races, getting quite high up. I love the car and I'm constantly growing with it and improving with it. Each qualifying I get into I'm getting stronger and more confident as to how to get the best out of the car. I hope there's more to come.

Q: (Peter Farkas – Auto Motor) We are hearing – it will be announced tomorrow – that the contract for the Hungaroring will be extended until 2021. Could you please all comment on that, if you are happy to come to the Hungaroring?

LH: I love it here. I love the track, I've had good experiences every time I've come since 2006. Budapest is a beautiful place. We have a good turn-out every time we come, great weather. We can't really complain so I'm happy that it's on the calendar. It's a historic

circuit so I'm proud to have put my name to it and when I retire someone else will come but I'm grateful to be around when it's here.

SV: Yeah, not much more to add. I think the race has been here since '86 so it is already a tradition to come here. Obviously it's very special to have a lot of fans always coming despite the fact that it's very hot and they usually leave the track with big sunburn. Yeah, they love coming here, a lot of people from Germany, from Austria which is obviously very special for us. Looking forward to the next couple of years and I think it's a good message. The only downside probably is the fact that usually overtaking around here is not that easy but I think it's a great place, nevertheless.

RG: I was planning to stay on holiday a little bit next year after the race so it's great news. I love the city, I love the place so I'm pleased with that.

Q: (Jerome Pugmire – Associated Press) Yesterday, team principals were divided in opinion as to whether there should be more races on the calendar. As drivers, do you think there should be more?

SV: I think it's enough, twenty is enough races. Maybe for us (drivers) it's possible to have another one here or there but especially for the teams, in terms of logistics and for team staff I think it's already a big effort, very little time, very few weekends to spend at home with their families, with their kids. I think you mustn't forget about that and therefore I think twenty races is already a lot. Five years ago or ten years it was only 16 races so it's already a lot more and I don't think more than twenty races is good for the teams.

LH: I love racing so I could race every weekend if I had to, but as Sebastian said, it's difficult for the guys in the garage and people back at the factory. They're constantly on the edge, and particular the guys who are travelling, as you said, seeing their families and stuff. I'm sure if I went into the garage and asked my guys if they wanted to race more I'm sure they would say they would but they would also miss their families.

RG: I quite agree with Seb. Twenty is pretty alright and it's tough for everyone so why not some more testing but twenty races is about good.

Q: (Jeroen Huis in T Veld – Jhed Media B.V) We've talked about the heat a lot and what it does to the tyres but what does it do to you, Lewis, physically and even more, in tomorrow's race for two hours in the heat?

LH: It's not really that bad, to be honest. I've not really noticed the heat too much so far this weekend. Malaysia is usually the biggest killer and Singapore, obviously, with the humidity but it's not that humid here. It's nice and warm and of course it would be nice to be cooler in the car but by this time of the season you are used to it so just have to make sure you drink plenty and that's it.

Q: (Gabor Joo– Index) Romain, do you expect one pit stop less than the other two guys tomorrow?

RG: How much do you plan? I don't know. It really depends on how it goes. I think again it's a question of how long you can go in the first stint without losing too much time or gaining time and then the strategy guy will be on the pit wall making all the calculations and working harder to give me the best chance.

Ends