



FEDERATION INTERNATIONALE DE L'AUTOMOBILE

## **Press Information**

### **2014 Malaysian Grand Prix Sunday Press Conference Transcript**

**30.03.2014**

#### **DRIVERS**

**1 – Lewis HAMILTON (Mercedes)**

**2 – Nico ROSBERG (Mercedes)**

**3 – Sebastian VETTEL (Red Bull Racing)**

#### **PODIUM INTERVIEWS**

**(Conducted by Benedict Cumberbatch)**

**Well Lewis, congratulations, your first win this year and you got the hat trick – pole position, the best lap time, on lap 54 I think, and now you're here. How does it feel?**

**Lewis HAMILTON:** Incredible, incredible. After such a difficult weekend and such a long winter. We have a great crowd here today. For Petronas, who worked so hard with Mercedes to give us this win, I just feel so grateful, particularly after such a tragedy three weeks ago. I'd really like to dedicate this to those people and their families.

**Quite right. Tell us a bit about what it's like to drive in Malaysia. You're covered in Champagne now rather than sweat but as one wily commentator pointed out to me on the grid earlier it's incredibly hot here. It's in the mid-50s in terms of humidity and we hit 35 degrees Celsius on the track. What do you have to consider when you're driving?**

**LH:** Yeah, you're sweating even before you get in the car. It's trying to keep your body as cool as possible and then just keep your focus. Fortunately, the team were just spot on with all the pit stops and the calling, the timing. Also the info I was getting was just spot on.

**It seems much clearer these days. You can hear the radio a bit more. Is that to do with the cars being a little bit quieter?**

**LH:** It is. The cars are quieter. The most noise is the wind, the buffeting. Otherwise, what a great car, what a great job from everyone.

**You did a fantastic job, congratulations once again. Now, Nico, congratulations to you too, well done, sir. That was a fantastically exciting moment just there [at the start]. Did you feel Sebastian on your shoulder? Because you took such a hard line on the right, you were like less than a foot away from the side.**

**Nico ROSBERG:** Thanks to my engineer we worked together well and we got a great start and that allowed me to go into second place. It was a bit 'iffy', Turn Three I got a bit sideways, saw plenty of action there but it worked out well and from then on I was trying to chase Lewis but he was a bit too quick today.

**Well, you did fantastically well, it was a superb run.**

**NR:** Just one more thing. Malaysia you can be proud because your company Petronas has taken us to the front of F1, so you can be really proud of that. Petronas has given us the best oil and fuel in F1, it's brilliant.

**Sebastian, congratulations, your first time on the podium this year. You won here last year in the rain and that was an interesting race to say the least. How did it work this time being in the dry and the heat rather than the wet?**

**Sebastian VETTEL:** It was dry last year as well.

**It was dry; there you go.**

**SV:** It was a really good race. The start was not very good. I was quite surprised when I saw Nico on my right.

**Tell us about that.**

**SV:** I don't know. I thought I had a good start but then I focused on getting in the tow of Lewis to maybe attack him going into the first corner. Then Nico was there on the right and it was quite tight. Daniel was coming as well as I was trying to get past Nico. So I lost a place but fortunately I got it back and then later on I was trying to get as close as I could to Nico. At some stage it looked like we are pretty similar, pretty evenly matched but then it's like he found another gear, he was pulling away. In the end I was just trying to get the car home. Obviously Daniel didn't make it for a couple of reasons. All in all it's good to get another podium after Daniel has been on the podium in Australia. But we still have a long way [to go] these guys are bloody quick, congratulations to them, they did a good but we are trying to catch-up.

## **PRESS CONFERENCE**

**Q: Lewis, congratulations, the 23<sup>rd</sup> win of your career. The first 1-2 for Mercedes of the modern era, your first win in Malaysia. You weren't wanting to celebrate yesterday after that pole but I guess you will allow yourself a celebration tonight.**

**LH:** Yeah. Definitely. Incredibly happy. My first time. It's my eighth year here and finally got that win. I really just owe it all to the team. Did a fantastic job, the guys back at the factory pushing non-stop to get the car to where it is, and of course to do it on Petronas... on our home ground... almost, to get a one-two, I mean it's quite special when you get a one-two. I've not had many in my career and so that makes it even more special. I'm really grateful for all the work that's done and... yeah, great day.

**Q: Nico, I guess you're looking on your mobile there at the points position because you're not only leading the World Championship but you've extended your lead today in the World Championship. But to take you back to earlier in the race, you seemed to have a few problems with the rear tyres, we were hearing over the radio, maybe you could tell us a bit about that – and also maybe a bit about the start as well....**

**NR:** First of all the start, I had a really good start, so I was happy about that because it's not so easy this year. The rear tyres are harder and we have more torque. So it's very difficult

to get it right – but it felt great and got away well and then Sebastian, I thought he was going to put me right into the wall, but he stopped just before – so thank you for that!

**SV:** I had a similar experience last year...

**NR:** ...that doesn't make it right to do it again! My heartbeat skipped a beat a little bit but I kept right on it, it was OK anyway, it wasn't that bad. Then I had a bit of a moment in Turn Three, a bit of a tail, tank-slapper and that allowed them all to get another run on me, but it all worked out. And then I was just trying to chase Lewis but he was a bit too quick today. It was a bit difficult out there because the track was really poor, it seemed, sliding so much, and just struggling with the rear tyres especially. That made it a bit difficult out there.

**Q: Sebastian, coming to you, you said over the radio at the end there that you're pretty pleased, that you've got some work to do still but you were on the whole pleased with the outcome – but you were 24.5s behind Lewis at the finish, and that's a pretty big number still, isn't it?**

**SV:** Yes, it is – but I don't think that's... probably Lewis could have gone faster, I think we could have gone faster at the end of the race but our priority at the end was to make sure we secure the podium. So, I think probably to see the reality, I don't know where the gaps were, probably 10, 15 laps to the end but no doubt, congratulations to them, they did a very good job, they looked nearly seamless already in winter testing, they are bloody quick, the package they have is very, very strong, we know that but I think, y'know, for us there's mostly positives that remain. After Australia, Daniel did a fantastic job here again. I think the car was very competitive, it's a completely different track, different conditions but yeah, we are there and that's the most important... I think it's much better than what we expected at some stage during the winter. We know that there's a lot we can do better – because it doesn't feel great when we are out there racing. Just if you go out on track and listen and look at how the cars behave, on power I think there's a big difference, so yeah, we know that. I think it's a question of time, how soon we manage to catch up. And then we try to give them a harder time.

## **QUESTIONS FROM THE FLOOR**

**Q: (Frederic Ferret – L'Equipe) Lewis, was there any difficulty during the race for you or was it an easy trip?**

**LH:** I don't think any race is ever easy. Obviously there are opportunities that are presented in front of you and obviously you have to take them with both hands and today that's what I did but no, looking after the car, looking after fuel, not making any mistakes, it was a massive challenge in that sense. The time... I would hear that Nico had stepped up the speed, reacting to those things without damaging your tyres, so without doubt it was still a great challenge, but one that I was able to do well because the car was spectacular this weekend, so really really happy with just a great performance by the team.

**Q: (Frederic Ferret – L'Equipe) For the three of you, do you think that the three contenders for the title are sitting up there today?**

**LH:** I would like to think that us, as Mercedes, are the title... at least, at the moment, but there's such a long way to go. We've got a lot of competition out there so I'm sure everyone's going to be pushing and so we need to stay on it.

**Q: And the championship leader?**

**NR:** That sounds very good already as it is but there's a long way to go. I'm not thinking about that at the moment, I'm really just taking it race by race, just enjoying the moment, making the most of it, keeping on it, keeping to push. The best example is now Red Bull. The last day of testing was four weeks ago or something or three weeks ago and they were absolutely nowhere and now he (Vettel) was right in the back of me, pushing me. OK, I had some pace in hand so I could beat him in the end clearly but still, the way they've ramped up their pace, very impressive, so we need to keep on it to keep our advantage.

**SV:** Well, I think Fernando is missing, Daniel, Kimi and probably one other guy that we don't know yet. Still early days, but that's what I would say.

**Q: (Kate Walker – Crash.net) For all three of you: we've heard an awful lot about some extreme measures that drivers have taken to stay below weight this season with the car. Now Malaysia is always a punishing race because of the heat. Was it more difficult this year, especially as we had no rain, just the physical challenge?**

**LH:** It's always a great challenge here and today wasn't as hot as it has been in the past, I would say. Generally, this year, with a lot less downforce, it's a lot less physical – still really physical but it's not as much as years and years ago when we had so much downforce and particularly last year when we had a lot of downforce, but it's still a serious workout.

Fortunately I'm just grateful my drink machine worked, even though it's like drinking hot tea, it did the job. I think the team has done a great job in terms of weight this year. We know we're not having to cut things off to get to the weight.

**NR:** Yeah, it's not nice that everything weight-wise is on the edge but that's the way it is. It's always a compromise between being light but still being able to perform at the highest of my abilities and I found my compromise and so I felt absolutely fine today. But of course, it is tough out there always. Malaysia is very very hot.

**SV:** It's always hot, it's not a walk in the park but I think we're going slower, tyres are harder, cars are slower, less downforce as Lewis touched on, so it's probably a little less hard than it was. The fact that we all try to save weight for this year... next year the weight goes up anyway which is good for the heavy drivers but for this year it's a pain for them. Doesn't help, because you're a bit more on the edge but this is probably one of the worst races. I think the most difficult one is probably Singapore later this year.

**Q: (Michael Schmidt – Auto, Motor und Sport) Sebastian, Red Bull made big progress between Bahrain and Melbourne, again progress between Melbourne and here. Are you happy with the speed of development, is that the speed you need in order to catch the Mercedes, let's say, when the European season starts?**

**SV:** Yeah, we need to make big steps because they are quite far ahead but I'm quite happy with the steps we're currently making. It's the first race distance I've done this year, since Brazil, it's the first race distance I've done so that's a big step. Obviously, at some stage during testing, we didn't expect to finish the first couple of races so well done to all the guys in the team on the reliability front. It's not a big secret, we know there's still a lot to do. In terms of driveability we're not yet there where we want to be. In terms of power, it's not a big secret without giving a hammering but the guys at Viry are flat out to work on that front. Renault is pushing very very hard but at this stage we have to summarise and say that Mercedes did a better job, they're quicker than us so we know that there's a lot of things we have to do better but it's still a bloody good result today, finishing on the podium, right behind them. That's what we need to do, as long as we can, up to the point where we're even and we can challenge them and give them a harder time.

**Q: (Ajit Devadason – Sify.com) Lewis, this is to do with your helmet design: the words that you have chosen for this season on the back of your helmet, Still I Rise, are you thrilled that it's working your way and it's matching belief?**

**LH:** It's what I have tattooed on my back so I just added it to the helmet design and I think the metaphor is just that regardless of what difficulties you go through, you still rise above it. That's really something my Dad has always enforced in me. We've had so many ups and downs throughout our lives and our careers, as everyone has, but he would always 'say just rise above it' and do your talking on track. I had a difficult time in the last race and that's what I did today, so I feel quite good about it.

Ends