



FEDERATION INTERNATIONALE DE L'AUTOMOBILE

Press Information

2014 Bahrain Grand Prix Post Qualifying Press Conference Transcript

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DRIVERS

- 1 – Nico ROSBERG (Mercedes)
- 2 – Lewis HAMILTON (Mercedes)
- 3 – Daniel RICCIARDO (Red Bull Racing)

TV UNILATERAL

Nico, Lewis was ahead of you going into the crucial parts of qualifying but you managed to turn it around. How did you do it?

Nico ROSBERG: Yeah just worked well through the weekend, just planning my way and progressing, getting around some issues, understanding what set-up to go for and things like that. The challenge this weekend you know is that the free practice sessions were in such hot conditions mainly, also the one before qualifying and it's just very difficult and you have to guess sort of what the set-up is and what the car is going to be like in the colder conditions in the evening. It worked out well, I was feeling comfortable, I got my laps together. I'm very happy and it's great to start from pole.

And for the second year in a row in this place. What is it about this track and you?

NR: I have very good memories from this track – in GP2 here, the championship, and also my first race in F1. I've always liked it, I enjoy coming here and again today, yeah it suited me.

Lewis, a little disappointed perhaps? At the end there what happened?

Lewis HAMILTON: No to be honest I'm not. You can't always get it right. Congratulations to Nico. He's done a great job this weekend and he's been improving and picking up his pace and he had a really good at the end there for us. Obviously I made a mistake on my last lap, locked up and went straight on but generally I'm happy. I'm really proud of the team for us to continue to keep moving forward and progressing as we are.

Obviously it's going to be difficult for everyone on fuel consumption tomorrow. Can you talk a little bit about the management of that through the race?

LH: Yeah it's no worse than it's ever been in the past I don't think really. There's a lot of emphasis put on it but I think it should be fine tomorrow.

Thanks for that. Come to you Daniel, up in the top three again but this time you've got to move back 10 places. Your feelings on the performance and on that penalty?

Daniel RICCIARDO: Yeah really pleased with the performance. At the moment it's the best anyone else can do besides the two guys alongside me. We've still got some ground to make on them tonight. As Nico touched on it's been really tricky. You know, the temperature drops a lot for these evening sessions and as you probably saw in P3 we were a long way off the pace but it turned around this evening and it was nice to close to gap. As I say there's still more. Tomorrow, yeah, unfortunately I don't stay at the front here but it'll give me a bit of a work to do and I'll move forward from there.

Talk about the race situation tomorrow. Is there much you can do on strategy to get yourself back on terms?

DR: I hope so. We've got some good guys in the office back there and I'm sure they'll do what they can to get me as far up the front as possible. I think at the moment it's pretty close between two and three stop and maybe there's a bit of room for us to try something there.

Back to you Nico. The race tomorrow between you and Lewis,. The pendulum keeps swinging between you, which way will go tomorrow?

NR: Well, starting from pole is obviously a great thing but it's a whole different story, a whole different challenge awaiting us in the race, with tyre degradation the main problem, the main difficulty. But I'm confident. I had some good runs yesterday on the high fuel, so I'm confident that I can stay ahead tomorrow in the race.

PRESS CONFERENCE

Nico, in Q1 neither of you needed to use a set of Softs to get through. Just talk a little bit about that margin there that you've got and the psychological advantage of having that in your pocket.

NR: Yeah, it's definitely an advantage because we're quick at the moment, especially on this track because it just suits the engine power that we have, y'know? That makes it a bit more easy to get through qualifying – but still, even the Red Bulls, even on a track like here, they've really picked up the pace and we need to keep pushing, definitely, because they're pushing fast.

Lewis, Nico just mentioned the power is definitely part of it – but it's not just that is it? The advantage that Mercedes have on this circuit? It seems to really suit your car.

LH: Yeah, I think the guys have done a fantastic job with setup simulation this weekend. The car has done a lot of testing here, obviously and so it's as good as we can get the car here.

Daniel, I wonder whether driving under lights for the first time in a place like this... obviously it's not the first time in Formula One or for you, but is it a bit like re-learning a circuit? Seeing it in a different complexion?

DR: It's probably not that extreme but it's nice, it's something different. I've always enjoyed driving around under the lights, even when I was young, racing go-karts in the summer back home, we had a lot of night races. It's even cool following some cars, seeing the sparks come off. It creates a little bit more excitement. I think they've done a really job here with the lighting. There's plenty of it. And, yeah, it's going to be a good race.

QUESTIONS FROM THE FLOOR

Q: (Paolo Ianieri – La Gazzetta dello Sport) Daniel, the other day you said ‘I have to qualify first to start eleventh’ so you were close, considering the two of them. What do you think you can do in the race? You have the pace to come back and perhaps think of a podium or are you too far behind?

DR: I would love to charge through and have a podium after the 57 or so laps. I think realistically we just have to get some points to start with. My season has been going well but I don't have any points to show for it so far, so I think that's the first target. But in saying that, I don't think we need to be conservative. We need to push, we are obviously out of position, starting 13th, so I will do what I can and obviously if there's an opportunity to move forward then I will take it and hopefully walk away tomorrow with some points on the board.

Q: (Vincent Marre – Sport Zeitung) To the two Mercedes drivers: how would you rate Daniel Ricciardo today, and Sebastian Vettel? Would you rate Ricciardo in front of Vettel?

NR: I don't really want to rate them. Sebastian is clearly a fantastic driver, one of the best out there and Daniel is doing a great job and definitely deserves the seat that he's got at Red Bull. It will be an interesting battle between the two.

LH: Same.

Q: (Paolo Ianieri – La Gazzetta dello Sport) Lewis, are you disappointed that you didn't grab pole after being dominant in the first free sessions and Nico, are you surprised that you got pole?

LH: Not particularly. The weekend's gone pretty well. Generally it didn't really go the right way in my car, I think. I wasn't really too comfortable at the end, much more comfortable through practice but Nico did a great job today. Naturally I'm happy that my teammate's there and no one else.

NR: For me, Lewis is tough to beat always. In qualifying, everything needs to go right to be ahead and today it worked out but my mind is on pole when I go into qualifying so that's what I'm going for. So not surprised.

Q: (Livio Oricchio – O Estado de Sao Paulo) Question to Nico and Lewis: it's clear both of you have the fastest car on the grid. Is there any agreement between you and Lewis, is there any orientation from the team concerning the start of the race?

NR: For sure, we as Mercedes AMG Petronas, the Silver Arrows in F1, we're here to race, we're here to put on a great show and so I think you could see some action tomorrow between us, hopefully not. It's very possible and we owe that to the fans, to everybody, to put on a fantastic show and that's what we will do.

LH: Yeah, as he said.

Ends