



FEDERATION INTERNATIONALE DE L'AUTOMOBILE

## **Press Information**

### **2014 Hungarian Grand Prix Thursday Press Conference Transcript 24.07.2014**

**DRIVERS – Kamui KOBAYASHI (Caterham), Esteban GUTIERREZ (Sauber), Marcus ERICSSON (Caterham), Jean-Eric VERGNE (Toro Rosso), Sergio PEREZ (Force India), Pastor MALDONADO (Lotus)**

#### **PRESS CONFERENCE**

**Marcus can I start with you? Ten races into your first Formula One season, what have you learned about yourself and about your own racing, your own capabilities over these first 10 races?**

**Marcus ERICSSON:** Obviously coming into Formula One there's a lot to learn. I think this year it's been a bit special as well with the new power units. For sure, the management of tyres, of energy during the races is something you've got to learn quickly, I think it's not only for me but for everyone else as well. To be consistent over a race weekend; important steps during a whole race weekend and you need to be always be consistent in both the driving and the feedback to the engineers. So it's quite a lot of things but I feel like I'm taking steps all the time and learning so that's the main thing.

**So it's a work in progress, there's more to come?**

**ME:** Yeah, definitely.

**Now, there's been quite a lot of speculation at Caterham. How do you feel about your own position? Do you feel comfortable for next year as well?**

**ME:** I feel good. I think the new owners are pushing really hard. Obviously they want to update the car during the season and keep doing that and that's really positive for all of us. Hopefully now, in the second half, we can have a stronger car and we can be a bit more competitive and fight with the guys in front of us.

**Esteban, you've been on the cusp of points, very close to points a few times, 12<sup>th</sup> in Australia. How close are you to getting into the points, or have you gone as far as you can with this car, is it not possible to go any further?**

**Esteban GUTIERREZ:** At the moment we are doing our best, all the team are pushing really. Without bringing updates we don't see it very different to what we had in Hockenheim. But it seems that step by step, every race we've been closing the gap a little bit and that is putting a lot of hope and also motivation into everyone in the team. From my side I'm trying to do things as consistent as possible and trying to get the most of the car that I have at the moment.

**So the expectations for the second half of the season?**

**EG:** Expectations are... I would put them really high! I really want to make a step and that's what the team is looking for, because finishing a season on a high is really important and I think it's a good chance now that we are starting the second half of the season.

**Thanks very much, I'll come back to you in a moment with something else but we'll move on to Kamui. Kamui, a change of ownership at the Caterham and some uncertainty about what's going to happen there I guess. What can you do to strengthen your position and at the same time strengthen the team as well, because you've been around a bit, you know exactly what's required or a driver and you can gather the team yourself and be a bit of a team leader.**

**Kamui KOBAYASHI:** Yeah, hello everyone. First of all, I was quite having these changes during the season with a new owner, but I think this is what we need, otherwise I think we couldn't finish the season. It was the right move and straightaway I think... I mean, team, does it affect them a lot? As you see it in the news I think people left, quite a lot, straightaway, but I think we need to keep motivated because I think if we want to survive we need to change something. I think this is the right thing. I need really hope. Of course, it's the same from my side. I think I need to always drive 100 per cent. This just gives motivation. The biggest things... if we want to change something, we need to change the biggest things not the small things. We have new guys coming and many people left, but I think we have responsible in each part and this is going to help everybody and let's see what happens.

**You're known for your attacking style of driving. Does this car allow you to attack as much as you'd like?**

**KK:** Not really! It's not really happy but I need to hope that one day I'm going to make something, a really exciting race. Like a 'train' race is not really exciting for the spectators. I'm pretty happy last race, for example, at the German Grand Prix, we had a couple of pit stops and we saw some excitement during the race. But if it once again came back to one stop, for me it's not really nice to watch the race, I'm pretty happy. Pirelli had a nice tyre decision and think this makes more fun. Even my car... I think Pastor was like Prime and I was supersoft and I could overtake him. It was a little surprising but it's good it happens like that and it's good for spectators.

**Jean-Eric, we know that the car is capable of getting into the points, and the qualifying is there as well. But you've had problems in various; well, what seems like different areas, I don't know if you would agree. Is it just one fix that is needed? What's basically the problem?**

**Jean-Eric VERGNE:** I don't think we really have any problems at the moment. The only problem we have is to get the points at the end of the race. Obviously the first part of the season has been quite competitive, but unfortunately I couldn't finish all the races – I think I had five DNFs, so that's quite a few, all the time when we were in a position to score points. So, I will take only the positive and the positive is that we have great people working in the team, working really hard to improve the reliability, and we've got a good car. It's not like if every time we had a problem we were not in the position to score the points. Now I think we just need to keep on working in the same way and the points should be there.

**So what are the expectations for the second half of the season then?**

**J-EV:** Ah, the expectation is to finish as many times in the points obviously. This is definitely possible. We have a quick, we still have some new updates to come. So I really believe in the team. I believe they can bring us a better car again and just to finish the races... in the points!

**So you are confident that things will improve reliability-wise?**

**J-EV:** Yeah, definitely. That's not really my big concern... I'm not concerned about it. I'm more concerned about the speed that we need to have every race weekend. And then

from there all I have to do is drive this car as quick as possible and do the best job possible. Not thinking there will be a problem happening or not. It's not really in my mind.

**Sergio, we heard a somewhat frustrated engineer talking to you in Germany, saying 'fuel saving, fuel saving, fuel saving'. We won't go into the details of the whole conversation but is it a problem for a driver that you don't have some sort of fuel indicator or your own that you can manage, that you have to rely on hearing a message from the engineers. Would you prefer something in the car?**

**Sergio PEREZ:** We have the capability as drivers to see how we are doing with the fuel. We get some target numbers and we have to give them back. Of course, Hockenheim was really tough on fuel for us, especially due to the race I was having. It was very difficult to keep temperatures in the tyres and by saving fuel of course you lose more temperature, so it was really a difficult race for myself, which I was not really expecting after the pace we had shown on Friday.

**So you would prefer to have some kind of indicator or are you happy with what you've got?**

**SP:** I'm happy with what I've got. We're all clear on that. Obviously we get the message; we always get prepared of how much fuel we have save and during the race we see how we're doing with the engineer and they can tell us.

**Now, a Mexican Grand Prix looks like a real reality for next year, I hope you agree. What are your feelings about it, and I'll come back to Esteban about that as well?**

**SP:** It's great, I'm so happy. Since I left my home at 13, 14 years I never raced in Mexico. I never raced in my home country. Now to go back after so many years and race actually in Formula One is great. They've been really pushing for so many years, since I came to Formula One four years ago. The spirit of the fans is massive back home. It's great for my country, for all the fans back home and I'm sure you all will be surprised at how good the event will be. I'm just very proud and excited. It's great that we can confirm that we will have a Mexican GP next year.

**I think there's quite a lot to be done though isn't there?**

**SP:** Yeah, there are a lot of things to be changed. The circuit is quite old. I mean, the last time you raced there was 22 years ago. They already started to build a new circuit. It will be fantastic once again; you are all going to be surprised. I'm sure it will become a very popular grand very soon.

**Esteban, your feelings about it?**

**EG:** I have good feelings about it, because all these years that Mexico has been involved in Formula One with obviously first Checo getting to Formula One and now myself, we are two in Formula One and I think this is a great step to have a grand prix. It's really a dream come true for many of us. I had the chance to race once in Mexico City, back in 2008, when we did the world finals of Formula BMW. It was a great experience. I think it was an introduction to what it can be, obviously very, very small by comparison but now we will be able to go into the biggest thing in Mexico and to really share with our fans, with our supporters, to share with them physically the sport.

**Pastor, sorry to keep you waiting. First of all, of course, the inevitable question about your contract for next year. Where are you in terms of thoughts for next year?**

**Pastor MALDONADO:** We've been confirmed from mid-season, which is good. It's always good to know the future. It's a great team; I always mention that. There are fantastic people working at the team and pushing very hard to improve the performance. We've been suffering a lot since the beginning of the season. Most of the problems have been down to reliability. We've been nearly... most of the races stopped and not finishing, which

is not the best when you are looking for performance. We didn't have the chance to test and explore 100 per cent of our package. But it's looking quite good. It's always been a great team in the past and for sure will be one of the good ones for the future.

**Q: A lot of changes have been made – maybe just for reliability's sake but also from competition's sake – are you feeling those changes, do you actually notice those changes, and also, do you feel that the car is a bit too track specific, that it only works on one type of track?**

**PM:** It's difficult to say because even in the last race, Romain, my teammate had a problem with his car and he needed to stop and to finish the race earlier than me. Unfortunately, we still have some problems. Most of the problems are due to the power unit but we've been working very hard with Renault to try to help them and to help each other to have a more stable car and at the same time, better reliability for the races and to approach the weekend in a different way. Sometimes we need to jump on the track just thinking about finishing the race and not thinking about exploring the full performance of the car which is not a great approach, but sometimes you need to maybe do one step back to recover the things in the team and it seems to be that now we have more the entire control of the car it's getting better and better, so hopefully this weekend will be good for us and both cars in the points would be fantastic before the break.

## **QUESTIONS FROM THE FLOOR**

**Q: (Alan Baldwin – Reuters) Sergio, on the Mexican Grand Prix again, it was on the calendar before but it didn't happen this year. Are you sure that it will now happen next year, that the problems of getting the track ready and everything else will be overcome and it will be done in time?**

**SP:** Yeah, hundred percent sure that we will go to Mexico next year, no doubt about it. Everything is confirmed. Last year was a difficult situation due to the time that we had to build the circuit, but now there is no doubt and I think we can all think that we're going there. Already they're building the circuit, they've already started on the circuit, so yes, we're definitely going there.

**Q: (Graham Killoh – F1 Plus) Esteban, it looks to outsiders that the Sauber benefitted in Germany from the removal of FRIC up and down the field. Is that your feeling and the feeling within the team?**

**EG:** Yes, it is the feeling and we tried to get that opportunity, to take advantage of this position. Maybe it was not a big thing but it gives us a few tenths per lap, probably, which may benefit a lot in the race, so that's what we're looking to and that's our main focus, to extract that.

**Q: (Peter Vamosi – Vas Nepe Kiadoi) Pastor, there are some rumours that John Player Special will be on board again with Lotus. Has this a special meaning for you?**

**PM:** It's difficult to say because I'm not getting involved in marketing and this part of the team. But for sure, it's always welcome, a sponsor is always welcome and whoever can join the team, it's always welcome. From my point of view, it's a good team in terms of image, marketing, one of the best in Formula One, for sure.

**Q: (Heinz Pruller – Honorary) Can I ask the Mexican gentlemen about the Mexican Grand Prix? I have been there in '68 in the Magdalena Mixhuca park. I guess this will be a new circuit, they will change this circuit. How much will they change the circuit and how far advanced is the work on it and what is the date for the Grand Prix next year?**

**SP:** We don't have a date confirmed yet. I think once the calendar is released, I suspect that it might be towards the end of the year because that's when we go back to America and also it gives more time to the circuit to rebuild, to make all the changes necessary for Formula One to host a Grand Prix. It will be totally different. I was so unlucky not to be in a Formula One race back in Mexico but I think it will be quite different, and as I said before, I'm really enthusiastic and I'm sure you're all going to be surprised as to how well we can do this kind of event.

**Q: (Heinz Pruller – Honorary) Will it be in the Magdalena Mixhuca park; will they keep Peralta corner?**

**SP:** I don't know if they're going to keep Peralta. I suspect that they're going to make some changes. It's a very historic corner. Everybody I have been talking to in the park, they all tell me 'how are we going to have the Peralta?' Everyone is really excited about Peralta but we don't really know if we're going to have it because I think we're also going to change the layout of the circuit.

**Q: (Cristobal Rosaleny – Car and Driver) Esteban, Checo and Pastor, all of you come from Hispanic countries and now Mexico is going to be on the calendar next year which is very good news for your fans too, that they will have you closer than ever, but don't you miss more Hispanic people in the paddock – mechanics, engineers and other professionals that maybe can help to really establish motor sport in your countries? And are you thinking about doing something about it from your experience, which has been tough, coming to Europe and growing into Formula One?**

**PM:** Yes, I know that at Lotus they have a plan – especially for Venezuelan people – to join in various different areas in the team. That will be good. I know that there are some Venezuelans working in the factory. We have this plan and year after year I hope this will increase, but for sure, it will be very good to compensate the programme, not only with the drivers but even with the people who want to work with us and want to join the teams.

**Q: Sergio, how do you think Mexicans would get on in Northamptonshire?**

**SP:** Yeah, it's a long way to travel and for us to come over to Europe is not so easy but for me, for example, I had to leave home when I was only 15 so I think that kind of thing, that kind of culture has to change so I'm sure getting back onto the calendar with the Mexican Grand Prix, that will definitely help. There is a lot of excitement about Formula One back in Mexico so I'm sure that the younger generation are all interested in Formula One and I will be really happy if this can open doors to have engineers, mechanics, drivers, people working in the media, more and more Mexican and more Hispanic overall. That would be great for Formula One and for the sport.

**EG:** I think the platform will start growing. Obviously when you have Mexican drivers, now we have a Grand Prix, it will even produce 3000 jobs back in Mexico related to that. When you build a platform in Mexico, then that platform starts to transfer to other areas, to Europe, to Asia and obviously into the top level. So I think it's the way to go and it will be very pleasing to help and also to be part of opening the doors and all of these things, opportunities for more Hispanic people here.

**Q: (Joo Gabor – Index) To you all, Felipe Massa just said in the paddock that Magnussen was to blame for the crash at Hockenheim and that the FIA made a mistake by not penalising him. What do you think about the FIA's stance?**

**KK:** It's very difficult to say. For me, Magnussen looks very difficult to avoid. He's keeping his line. For me, it looks as though Felipe is a bit too tight on his line, because I think if he gave a bit more space, I think he would not have had the accident, because it looks as though... Difficult to explain what Felipe's going to do. It kind of looks like he suddenly dived into the corner. I think Magnussen could have avoided it by braking or whatever but it's just after the start. He braked in that corner, I think he would lose a lot of positions so it's a very difficult part. In the end, I don't think we can see the mirrors. The mirrors are

quite small and I think that at that angle it's very difficult to see. I think that's the biggest problem.

**SP:** I think it was really really close at the start of the race. Turn one at Hockenheim is... that kind of accident can happen. Kevin did everything to avoid Felipe. In the end, they touched and it was a really really bad accident for Felipe. Who to blame is difficult. I think they both collided but it's difficult to blame someone from that accident.

**Q: (David Croft – Sky Sports F1) Just on the subject of accidents – obviously we have Esteban and Pastor who have both been involved in a couple of incidents with each other this year – when you do have a crash, do you, as drivers, do you look to blame somebody? Do you look to find somebody at fault? Or is it easy to accept when you're to blame? Do you ever talk to each other and in the case of Esteban and Pastor, have you had words since the last race? Just your personal thoughts on what you do after you've been involved after a crash.**

**PM:** When you make a mistake for sure, it's easy to accept. Before, you need to accept and learn from the mistake. We are not perfect sometimes. When we are racing each other, you can make some mistakes. We are racing, we are doing our best to take a position or to defend a position and sometimes, when it's very tight, the contact happens.

**EG:** Well, I think it's very simple, it comes down to having respect between all of us and as Pastor says, when you make a mistake, you just have to accept it and really the strong position to do it in public and as well to find the right compromise, because at the end, it's not beneficial for any of us. If we both crash, we both end our races. It's obviously not beneficial, so it doesn't matter what happens afterwards. Already the effect and the problem is already done. We just need to look into more... It's fun racing, this is what we enjoy, this is what we like and between Pastor and myself, for example, yes, we've been involved, but we've also spoken to each other and we find the right compromise and we keep a good relationship. It's not a problem. In the end, we are here, we enjoy it and it's our passion to race.

Ends