



FEDERATION INTERNATIONALE DE L'AUTOMOBILE

Press Information

2014 Hungarian Grand Prix Sunday Press Conference Transcript

27.07.2014

DRIVERS

1 – Daniel RICCIARDO (Red Bull Racing)

2 – Fernando ALONSO (Ferrari)

3 – Lewis HAMILTON (Mercedes)

PODIUM INTERVIEWS

(Conducted by Martin Brundle)

Daniel, what brilliant drive, congratulations. How on earth does that feel?

Daniel RICCIARDO: It feels as good as the first, it really does. I don't know, I mean the safety car at the beginning played to our advantage and then I thought when the second one came out it didn't really help us but we managed to pull it off at the end, had to pass our way through and that was a lot of fun in the last few laps.

You rehearsed that big outbraking move on Fernando last weekend in Germany didn't you? That was from a long way back.

DR: Yeah it was. I knew we had to make a move quick, the DRS was there and I know it could have been my only chance, so I took it and it paid off. Had to be done.

Fernando, you hung onto the tyres, you took a risk and you pushed like crazy. It's your birthday on Tuesday and you nearly had the perfect birthday present. But second place, is it painful or are you satisfied anyway?

Fernando ALONSO: No, extremely satisfied. I think it has been a tough weekend – a tough season in general – so to get a podium is always a nice surprise let's say. We took a gamble. We risked today just trying to get the victory. We went close but as I said, extremely proud of the team, extremely proud of the job we did today and very, very happy.

Rain for the start, safety cars, traffic, tyres degrading, you needed all your experience today. You needed everything.

FA: Well, today we have a combination of things that made the race difficult to execute, difficult to understand and we took our opportunities, our experience... we need some crazy races to get some podiums and today we took the opportunity.

Congratulations. Moving over to Lewis Hamilton: pit lane to podium! Lewis, that was also via the barriers of the second corner at the start. What a crazy afternoon you've had.

Lewis HAMILTON: It's been a pretty crazy weekend.

When you got out of the car yesterday, you were disappointed you had that failure and you had mentally put yourself over 30 points behind Nico. You were convinced he would win and you would struggle to get into the top five and here you are on the podium.

LH: Absolutely. Big thank you to the team, they did a great job with the pit stops and with the strategy and I just tried my best. The car's been fantastic – when it's going. Obviously a lot of points lost, because we could have had a much better weekend but we have a lot of strengths to look forward to in future races.

You were really struggling in the beginning. You were talking about the diff, you were talking about a vibration, we heard you were getting very hot in your seat, you were clearly nursing a few issues as well?

LH: Yeah, to be honest at the beginning obviously a mistake by myself, but the brakes were very, very cold and locked up and I was gone. Fortunately I got going again, thank the Lord I didn't damage the car and you know damage limitation again.

One of your finest ever drives?

LH: I don't think so.

Well, it look pretty damned good from where we were sitting and standing in the grandstands. So Daniel, we go into the summer break, although Spa will be with us soon enough, and you have a great victory. What are you going to do and what does it mean for you in the second half of the season?

DR: Well, definitely going to celebrate tonight and party for a few days I think, enjoy a bit of time off. Then just keep building on what I've done in the first six months and then look forward to Spa. Just firstly I want to thank the team, they've really let me settle in so well the first six months of the year and to grab two victories it's honestly phenomenal, so really pleased. Got a few mates here this weekend, so we'll party hard tonight.

PRESS CONFERENCE

Well done Daniel, that was an amazing victory, very exciting for all of us. You led early one and then obviously came back at the end. When did you think you had it won?

DR: I wasn't sure. I knew that the first safety car played into our hands, we inherited the lead there, pitting for slicks and then, yeah, we were looking alright. Then we got the second safety car and obviously we pitted again for another set of tyres but we obviously lost the lead. I wasn't really sure what was going to happen. We were stayed out pretty long that stint and we were leading a fair chunk of the mid-race but then I knew we weren't going to get to the end on that set of tyres. So we had to pit again and that put me back out of position. Then we knew we had to overtake to win the race. Obviously we had the fresher tyres at our disposal but I knew it was going to be an exciting finish. I honestly had a scare in the middle of the race, for a few laps we had some issues. Basically, we were down on power and had to get a bit crazy on the switches, so I thought the race could have potentially ended early but we got through that and yeah, very happy.

What about overtaking these two, the overtaking manoeuvres in the last few laps?

DR: Yeah, obviously there was only one way to win it and that was to get around them. Obviously I had the advantage of the fresher tyres, but I knew they wouldn't make it easy. I attempted Lewis into Turn Two, I think the previous lap or maybe two before I eventually got him, but just locked up and went too wide. I had a second crack at it and I still locked up but I managed to just hang on and just had a bit more grip around the outside there, so that was that. And then, once I got close enough to Fernando, I knew I just had to go for it. Being in that sandwich there, Lewis was still I think in the DRS zone, basically I couldn't waste too much time and that's what I did and then once I got the lead I knew it was just a couple of laps to go. Yeah, it feels good.

Well done. Fernando, coming to you. What does this mean to you? What does it mean to Ferrari, coming just before the break?

FA: It means a lot. Obviously we had some tough races recently and to see one Ferrari again on the podium is the best news. We took the opportunity after a difficult race, with a wet start and then some difficult decisions to make around the safety cars – if pitted or not. Unfortunately first safety car we went a little bit out of position, because the safety car went out and we were in the last corners so we missed the opportunity to stop. We stopped the lap afterwards and we lost a couple of places. We have to attack, we have to overtake a couple of people and just 10 laps to the end we were discussing if we stop and secure the fourth place that we really needed, those points, so just try to defend the position as much as you can and maybe finish in fourth, so at the end it's the same result but at least you have the chance to fight for the podium positions. So we were in that position 10 laps to the end and at the end we chose the right thing – stay out, defend the position as best we could and secure this second place that, for sure, it tastes like a victory for us at the moment.

Yes, it's interesting what Ferrari will take from this. Presumably you'll still be telling them to push on other types of circuit, this was a very tight circuit obviously?

FA: We'll see. This circuit didn't change much our performance, our position but today we had a little bit of a chaotic race and we took every opportunity we had in front of us. I think cars from behind also had some issues, with Rosberg, with Hamilton yesterday, with the issues in qualifying, we get this position for free. We had Vettel, had a problem in the last corner today, the Force India. We had some cars out of the way let's say and we took benefit from this and we secured some very strong points for the team.

And Lewis... I think a lot of people may be extremely surprised to see you here but it was a fantastic race for you. Did you ever think it was possible? You had some great wheel-to-wheel racing as well out there.

LH: I don't know, I was just pushing as hard as I could to see if I could get as high as I could and yeah, I mean, a great result obviously.

What does this third place mean to you or are you still regretting yesterday?

LH: No, obviously this is damage limitation. On one hand I'm very grateful to have been able to get through with all the difficulties I've had this weekend, obviously yesterday and the first lap. I can't believe how things have gone but to be able to come back through... the safety cars obviously helped quite a lot but naturally I look at the fact that I had the pace this weekend I lost quite a lot of opportunistic points. Still, we're there in the fight, fortunately I stayed of my team-mate, which means I'm still there or thereabouts.

Q: How hard did he come back at you?

LH: Well, he was catching me at three seconds a lap, so it was very, very tough at the end. Fernando, and big congratulations to Daniel, drove fantastically well, both of them. It was very difficult to keep him behind, and also with Nico, and impossible to get past Fernando.

Q: Quite tricky, the last few laps?

LH: Yeah, definitely.

QUESTIONS FROM THE FLOOR

Q: (Ian Parkes – PA) Lewis, we heard on the radio the messages from the team asking you to pull over and let Nico by, around about lap 50-51. We can now see why you didn't do it, otherwise you wouldn't be on the podium. Can you just explain your thoughts at that particular time: what was going through your head? Why you didn't let him by? And secondly, how do you feel the dynamic of your relationship will again maybe now change, following the summer break, with Nico?

LH: Well obviously I'm aware that when you're... y'know I was in the same race as him. Just because he had one more stop than me doesn't mean I wasn't in the same race as him. And naturally if I'd have let him past, he would have had the opportunity to pull away and when he does pit, he's going to come back and overtake me, so I was very, very shocked that the team would ask me to do that, to be able to better his position. But to be honest, he didn't get close enough to overtake but I was never going to lift off and lost ground to Fernando or Daniel to enable him to have a better race. So that was a bit strange. But we've got a long way to go, moving forwards still and, as I said, thankfully I'm still in that battle, so, I hope we can come away stronger.

Q: (Kate Walker – Crash.net) I've got a question for you Lewis. Going into the summer break, psychologically, what does it mean for you, the fact that you started in the pitlane, your team-mate started on pole, and you're here and he isn't?

LH: Well that in itself is huge for me. I can't express to you the pain that you feel when you have issues such as the issues that I've had in the last couple of races. It's very, very difficult to swallow, and, to come back the next day and get the right balance between not attacking too much, and not making mistakes, all these different things. So many things that... obviously when you're at the back you're having to push way past the limit than perhaps you would off pole position or in the top five. So the fact that I'm managed to come back through obviously is a showing of just how great this car is and how great this team is – but ultimately we've worked, I've worked hard for it so it feels probably better than perhaps a win, gliding from the lead. It feels definitely much more satisfying when you come back through. And, as I said, to be ahead and to win the fight is really encouraging.

Q: (Dan Knutson – Auto Action / National Speedsport News) Two questions, one for Daniel: how does this compare to Canada? And for the other two guys, you've battled wheel to wheel with Daniel. Has he now established himself as a front-runner?

DR: It honestly does compare to Canada. Obviously the first victory is special but it definitely leaves you wanting more. I was just as hungry for this second one and it feels just as good – I won't say better but you realise it a bit more so it feels like you can enjoy it a bit more. And when I crossed the line, everything felt a bit more real, so I guess I took in a bit more of this one today. So, yeah, it feels awesome. And I just want to obviously quickly thank the team as well. To have two victories in the first half of the season with them,

obviously I owe a lot of that to them as well, for letting me just settle in, establish myself with them. They never put too much pressure on me, they let me roll into it as I liked – and I think that's been the best balance for all of us. The results are showing and I'll enjoy this one as much as Canada.

Fernando, your thoughts about Daniel – has he established himself?

FA: Yeah, definitely. I think he's leading the champion team. That says all. He's doing a fantastic job this year and now he had a few bottles. In Hockenheim I had a very fresh tyre which probably allowed me to pass with some advantage but even with that it was not easy. Today, I really didn't have the tools to fight but I tried to do my best – but definitely, congratulations to him for today, for the whole championship and it's going to be an interesting fight in the next couple of years.

Lewis?

LH: Yeah, as Fernando said, he's been driving fantastically well from the beginning of the year. So, it's not only now, it's through the whole year he's shown his capability and is going from strength to strength. Not only one of the nicest guys in the paddock but also one of the best drivers here, for sure.

Q: (Flavio Vanetti – Corriere della Sera) To Fernando, a couple of questions, first one: does this result show that something can still be taken from the car, and the second one, your birthday is approaching: we know what you wished last year – what about this year? What is the gift you would like for your birthday?

FA: hmmm... I think from this year's car there are obviously some positive things and some negative things. Now, together with the team try to analyse what to carry on and what to change. Philosophy of the car probably is not perfectly right because we are not as competitive as wish, so there are things that we need to change but also there are things that are probably working OK. Well last year it was a very big understanding of what was my wish. Especially in Italy. So, this year, I will not wish anything about the car and I will wish a happy day to everyone in Italy.

Q: (Carlos Miquel Gomez – La Gaceta) Two questions for Fernando. Do you think that this race is one of the best races of your career? And the other thing, to hear the people cheering “Alonso, Alonso” is one of the reasons that you are following Formula One.

FA: I don't think that is one of the best in my career. It has been a good and a complex race, let's say, to execute and perform – because there were some difficulties around the race that make the 70 laps not straight forward. You just need to make decisions during the race and all of them were, together with the team, and I think we did the best we could. And then in the podiums, the support from the people has been amazing. Especially this two or three last seasons – which is a little bit strange when you think that I won the World Championship the last time in 2006, I suppose that my career should be going down and it's going up. So that's definitely something that keeps my motivation very high. I would like to give them something back in terms of trophy and in terms of titles. It's what we're working on.

Q: (Peter Vamosi – Vas Nepe Kiadoi) Daniel, when do you think your next victory will come? This year you are the only Mercedes destroyer. And do you still continue to develop this year's car or will you focus on next year after Spa?

DR: I think – answering your second question quickly – I think we're definitely going to keep trying to push for this year. There's still a lot to play for. In any case, what we learn this year we can still take forward for next year so the team will keep pushing and I'm sure that now this second victory will keep the motivation strong within the team so that's good. Sorry, what was the first question?

Q: (Peter Vamosi – Vas Nepe Kiadoi) This year you are the only Mercedes destroyer.

DR: Good. Someone's got to do it.

Q: (Frederic Ferret – L'Equipe) Lewis, during this crazy race, what was the main difficulty for you, trying to find your way on the wet track at the beginning or resisting your teammate at the end?

LH: The beginning. The strange thing about starting from the pit lane is that you don't get ready to go out. Your brakes are cold as you start, your tyres are brand new and obviously I experienced that into turn two. It was an interesting beginning to the race but I'm very very grateful that I got through.

Q: (Livio Oricchio – UOL) To all of you: three different drivers, three different teams, three different power trains in the last race of this part of the season. Does it mean that in the second part of the season we will maybe see some more competition or did the circumstances of the race create this situation?

DR: I think today obviously the mixed conditions and the safety cars maybe helped out this order in terms of having three different manufacturers up here but I would like to think that it can create something for the second half. I think that in pure dry conditions, Mercedes still have a pretty significant edge on everyone else. Spa, it's a pretty good place to start the second half of the year. Maybe the weather and the changes they have there could create something exciting but forgetting all the stats, obviously this is a great thing to see today: three teams, three manufacturers all up here. It's refreshing, for sure.

FA: I agree with everything. Let's hope so. I think the circumstances and the weather played a big factor today. The circuit characteristics also probably helped some of the power units that we are not on top of the game still, so let's see at Spa. Monza is quite a tough challenge for us and that will give us some answers for the final part.

LH: I think it's great for the fans to see. I'm sure today – people say it was a great race – that's really what the fans want to see so I hope that continues for the future.

Q: (Istvan Simon – Auto Magazin) Lewis, the last time that things didn't go according to plan was at Silverstone – apart from Hockenheim but that was a technical issue – when something messed up your qualifying, you said that you spent the night or I heard you spend the night with your mother, with your father, with your family, with your loved ones. What helped you through this time, in this dip? What did you do yesterday to prepare yourself for the race day?

LH: I had a pizza last night! I did, some pizza and some chocolate and watched a movie. Went to dinner with Niki yesterday and played a prank on him as it was his birthday and just tried to have some fun. We really have some of the greatest fans here and I think really some of my really close fans that I have here really got me through this weekend. I didn't have my family here with me and it's great to be able to turn to them and to be able to receive positive energy from them. I got a letter from one of my fans this morning and just the comments it had in it were really uplifting and really helped kick my mind into gear so I'm grateful for that.

Q: (Peter Farkas – Auto Motor) Lewis, yesterday you were quoted as saying that what happened starts to go beyond bad luck. Could you please explain what exactly you meant by that and are you maybe starting to lose confidence in the team, because of the technical problems and now they asked you to move over for Nico who was on a different strategy?

LH: I don't really remember... I mean yesterday after what was quite a difficult time, I came straight out and spoke to the media so I think fortunately I controlled myself quite well and I don't really remember what kind of frame of mind I was in at that point but it's the same as saying 'it's beyond a joke.' Sometimes there's one joke, there's another joke and sometimes it gets a little bit past that and obviously with the faults that we've had on my car, it's made it very difficult for this championship but as I said, fortunately I got some points today which means that I'm still there or thereabouts but the telling thing would be how my car performs through the rest of the year.

Q: (Carlos Jalife – Fastmag) Daniel, who do you side with: Fernando said a few races ago that the championship was basically over? It was for one of the guys from Mercedes. And Sebastian said that mathematically it was still on, so what's your opinion on that? Is it over or is it not?

DR: I think there's obviously a couple of opinions. When maybe some of us say it's over, I think it's just purely looking at the performance of Mercedes. On a normal weekend with normal conditions on pretty much all circuits, they've been dominant. I think days like today, with some changing conditions, some safety cars, it helps us keep our nose in the fight. I think Seb's right in saying that until it's mathematically over it isn't. If you look at today, I closed in on the championship but realistically we're still a long way off. It doesn't really change the approach in any case. If we're in it or not, we still race for the highest position possible and obviously as we saw today, the win was there for grabs and we took it. In any case, I don't think it changes the approach for Sundays. I think with the Abu Dhabi system they've applied this year, it's still going to be pretty open until late on in the season. We'll just keep doing what we can.

Q: (Cristobal Rosaleny – Car and Driver) Fernando, how impressive or how surprising for you and for the team was having such an amazing pace with the soft tyres for such a long time with the degradation of the tyres. Was it really a surprise, a question of weather?

FA: Yeah, it was definitely a surprise. We found ourselves leading the race when Ricciardo and Massa pitted so we thought OK, let's give the maximum for three or four laps just to open up a gap and stop see whether we are in the final part and then we realised that it was not so many laps to the end and it was a difficult call: stopping and keep pushing and finishing fourth or keep going and risking the cliff with the tyres and finishing fourth or fifth or whatever. So it was surprisingly good, it was surprisingly fast, the car in the race. I think the weather helped us with cooler temperatures and the track a little bit damp in the first part. Obviously you don't stress the tyres as much as a completely hot track. I felt the car was good and it was definitely a surprise.

Q: (Oliver Barstow – Crash.net) Lewis, yourself and Nico have had the odd technical issue over the course of the year. Given the performance between you two is so close, how concerned are you that the title could be decided between you by who has the least technical issues?

LH: Ultimately it is a concern because I've stopped more than him. But as I said, there's still quite a few races to go and it will be telling, dependent on how... Obviously I've got the pace, got the ability, just really whether or not the car holds up.

Ends