



FEDERATION INTERNATIONALE DE L'AUTOMOBILE

Press Information

**2016 Brazilian Grand Prix
Friday Press Conference Transcript**

11.11.2016

TEAM REPRESENTATIVES – Christian HORNER (Red Bull Racing), Maurizio ARRIVABENE (Ferrari), Paul HEMBERY (Pirelli), Monisha KALTENBORN (Sauber), Guenther STEINER (Haas), Frédéric VASSEUR (Renault)

PRESS CONFERENCE

Christian, can we start with you: just looking at the track action that's been going on today, the long run pace obviously looks quite close to Mercedes, but is it really that offers you the chance to fight for victory, or can you be a little more optimistic after today?

Christian HORNER: Well, I think under normal circumstances the usual business will happen. Mercedes have been the dominant force all year and there's no reason to expect any different this weekend. But, race pace over the last few race, on a Sunday we've managed to get close to them particularly their tail car. Perhaps with a little bit of weather... there are some unpredictable forecasts over the next few days and opportunities can hopefully present themselves to put a challenge on.

Either way, there is a pretty good chance that you are going to wrap up second place in the Constructors' Championship this weekend. Given where you've been, in transition from 2015 to 2016, does that constitute a success?

CH: It would represent an enormous achievement for the whole team. We came into the year thinking, 'you know what, to get into the top five will be difficult'. But the guys have produced a great car. The people at Renault have done a good job with the engine over the winter. Our season has just grown stronger and stronger. To be sitting here having achieved 14 or so podiums, two grand prix victories, Max's first victory in Barcelona, Daniel with a one-two finish in Malaysia and to be sitting here ahead of Ferrari on points and the nearest competitor to Mercedes represents and extremely impressive season for the whole team.

Maurizio, what about your side of that story: the battle with Red Bull. It's not the team you set out to be battling against this year in the world championship but how and why did they get ahead of you?

Maurizio ARRIVABENE: I think first of all we need to take into consideration... it's not an excuse but it is circumstances that happened where we lose position on the grid and you know when you start a bit in front the story is going to change. Having said so, they have a strong reaction, as Christian said, and we are below of our expectation. By the way, as I said many, many times, we are not giving up here and not either in Abu Dhabi. I know it's tough, but the championship is still not finished.

Now you told Sebastian yourself, personally over the radio in Mexico, to "calm down", quote-unquote, and he admitted sitting here yesterday that he did lose his cool in Mexico but he said it was *not* down to frustration, so how happy have you been in general with his performance?

MA: I have zero problem with Sebastian. I mean, as I said many, many times, Sebastian is quite emotional. Sometimes he looks a bit more Latino than German. I think Christian knows the matter like I do. He's very emotional, he's very passionate, especially when he's driving and it's in a racing battle. It's not a question of frustration. Sometimes he can be unhappy as we are unhappy because our expectations are different. But he's not a guy who is giving up; he's a guy that is pushing like hell. Sometimes when the adrenalin is going up to the sky, maybe he's choosing a word more than what is expected, but then my role, like in Mexico, is also to call him and to invite him to be focused on what he's doing.

Paul, you brought soft and medium again this year to Interlagos, but also the hard tyre. It's quite an unusual move, only the second time this season you've brought a harder tyre than the one that came last season. How's that looking?

Paul HEMBERY: Well, you wouldn't want the supersoft here that's for sure, so it sort of chose itself from that point of view. The soft tyre is suffering. It's hot, an aggressive track, high wear, so it's pretty much as we expected, but that was the majority choice as well of the teams.

Important test coming up for you in Abu Dhabi. Can you give us a preview of what to expect and a general overview on progress, where you are with next year's tyres?

PH: Well, we're clearly homing in on final solutions now. There are still going to be a lot of combinations tested next week in Abu Dhabi. Still some compounding work, we're still working on some internal aspects of the tyre but we're progressing as planned.

Fred, coming to you, you've retained Jolyon Palmer for 2017 to drive along Nico Hulkenberg. What were the reasons for that and what do you expect from him in his second year?

Frédéric VASSEUR: First we had to secure the first one. It was done with Nico around Suzuka, something like this. Then we were able to postpone a little bit the decision. If you have a look at the last event, I think that Jo did a very good job; he is improving. If you have a look also to what he did in the past in the junior series he was always able to improve step by step, year after year and we took the decision to move forward with Jo and I would expect that he will have the same improving curve that he did in the junior series and it will be good.

Now, a lot hinges for next season, for you team and for Christian's team, on the Renault engine taking a decent step. So will it?

FV: I hope so! It's in the pipe... I think Christian also thinks so... no, no we are working on the project of the new engine and I think everything is going well so far and we will see in Barcelona.

Guenther, coming to you and continuing on the theme of the drivers, Esteban Gutierrez has said on social media this weekend that he is leaving your team and there are strong suggestions that Magnussen will be leaving Fred's team to come and join you. What's most important for you over the next couple of years? Is it to have consistent drivers that you can work with to develop the team and the cars or would you look to bring in an American or a rookie? What's the most important thing?

Guenther STEINER: I think the most important... just if somebody hasn't seen the press release, it just came out maybe 10 minutes ago, we confirmed that Romain and Kevin will join us next year, that just came out 10 minutes ago. We want to grow the team and therefore we wanted some experience of drivers that have been on the podium and that have scored points and Kevin was fitting the bill, therefore we moved forward with him. I would like to take this moment to thank Esteban for what he did for us over this year. I think he has got a good future; he did a good job and whatever people say he is a good driver. He helped us develop the team from nothing to be where we are so thanks a lot to him.

Q: The Ferrari partnership has obviously got you started in 2016; you've scored plenty of points but as you now move forward, are you now looking to build your own capability in the future to be able to take control of your own destiny.

GS: No, we have a long-standing contract in place with Ferrari that we can continue the business model we are doing. We are going forward like this for the next few years and then we see, we rethink. But at the moment we are very happy with Ferrari, what they did for us over the year to get again to the point where we are now. Hopefully we finish eighth if Fred's team doesn't pull out something very special, and we hope we move up next year. But in the moment, for sure you always develop your team and you keep on getting better and more people in and that will happen – but in general it stays like we are now.

Q: Coming to you Monisha, staying again on the theme of the drivers, the other teams clearly as we're hearing have been tying down their drivers and making their announcements, just a few moments ago in the case of Haas. You did yours here a couple of years ago I think. How far off being able to do the same thing are you and should we expect any changes?

Monisha KALTENBORN: Well we are still in the process of analysing our options but it's not going to take that long any more. We still have the target that we do want to announce in the season, so there's not that much time left. So that's all I can tell you now.

Q: Jörg Zander has returned to the team. How had he benefitted from his years with Audi in particular and what will that bring to your team?

MK: Well, we know Jörg Zander for quite a while. He was the chief designer in our team earlier and now, as we decided to actually take up a technical director again it was quite an obvious person to look at. He's been working at Audi for very long, he has a lot of motorsport experience now, inside Formula One, outside Formula One, so we do think he fits in very well with that because we also have third party business outside Formula One.

I'm sure he'll bring many new ideas and the team can only benefit from that because we are now in a new era, you know it's a new chapter in the team history and this kind of influence and these ideas will only be beneficial to move into the right direction.

QUESTIONS FROM THE FLOOR

Q: (Alessandro Giannini – Agência O Globo) For you Monisha, I would like to ask you a direct question about Felipe. How are the talks with him and if he has one chance to stay at the Sauber team?

MK: Well, Felipe is certainly one of our options, that's clear, we know him well, we know his skills. We've had a lot of experiences together with him: good ones, bad ones, so we can assess him very well. So talks are taking place, that's what I can tell you.

Q: (Andrea Cremonesi- La Gazzetta dello Sport) Question for Maurizio, yesterday you present an appeal now for the podium win in Mexico. I would like to know some more details, when you find out the new elements. If you can give us some more details about which are these elements.

MA: Yes, if we present according with the International Sporting Code Article 14.1, we presented new elements, of course, as we said, what we think are new elements and we have the right to present it. If you want me to present all the elements here, is not something that I'm going to do because in 40 minutes we have a conference call and we have to discuss the matter. I think it's not correct to share this kind of information here.

Q: (Dieter Rencken – Racing Lines) As the previous question proves, there's been a lot of controversy about the regulations etc and Christian, you and Maurizio have been particularly outspoken about them. You're both members of the Strategy Group: would you like to take them up in the Strategy Group. Would you like to take them up in the Strategy Group? What would you like to see changed? And if anybody else would like to comment, feel free, please.

MA: Back, if you refer to Mexico and many other races, I think, I understand the difficulties of the stewards because sometimes they have to take a decision immediately and to take this decision they need to collect in quick time all the available data and material – and it's not an easy job, I think. That is further complicated by what we said many, many times at the strategy group level about sometimes the complication of the regulation. We ask many, many times to try to find a way to simplify the rules, so I think this is something that we need to think further for the future, making sure that we don't have a Rule A that is covered by the Rule B that is covered by the Rule C and D and E and F and so on. If there is a rule it is A dot. And then we go to the B. I'm expressing my thought with all the respect for the people that is making the rule. But I think this sport, it is already complicated in terms of technology, in term of what we have to do to build-up the car and to make competitive the car. I think simplifying the rules could be a good help for everybody.

Christian, your view.

CH: Yeah, I think that we're over-regulated in many respects, that the drivers need to take a rulebook with them really on a Sunday now in the car and consult it before they either defend or make an overtaking manoeuvre these days and there's too much subjectivity and interpretation of different events. So Lewis Hamilton going straight on at the first turn last

weekend, comes out half a kilometre up the road, is that an advantage or a disadvantage compared to Max going off and coming back in the same position he went off with, with dirty tyres later in the race. It's very difficult for the teams, for the drivers and one can only think for the viewers as to what's permitted and what isn't. I think, like all things in life, keep it simple. Keep it straightforward. I'd say less rules in terms of... but more clarity in terms of what the rules of engagement are. Nobody wants to see dangerous driving but let the drivers race, let them go wheel to wheel. I mean everybody's talking about the last five or six laps in Mexico because, let's face it, the rest of the race was pretty boring. The last ten laps were fantastic and of course there's been a whole bunch of discussion about it since then and that's what Formula One needs to be and I think let's avoid the situation that drivers can cut corners and gain an advantage. Put a gravel trap there. Put something to slow the cars down, and then it takes that subjectivity away from stewards having to interpret 'well, is that result different to this one. Is that incident different to that?' We can see so many examples of that that I think for the teams, for the drivers and most importantly for the fans, let's come up with something straight forward and simple that's easy to understand and interpret.

Monisha, do you agree?

MK: Well I agree with that but I think there's another element to it which is how you actually apply the rules, and you would need to try to bring some consistency in there. At the end of the day it's always up to an interpretation, it's up to the discretion of the people who are doing it, so apart from making things simpler it's also that you try to have consistency on the people. That you have somebody who is always there, or a group of people because this is how you will bring in certain consistency on how rules are applied. So I think you have to look at both sides: look at the rules themselves but also how they are implemented.

Fred?

FV: It's not an easy point and to know if we are to take the decision during the race or not, the first one is that you will always have someone to complain: that if you take the decision during the race you will say that OK, the steward has to take time before to take a decision and, if they take the decision after the race, OK you will affect the results of the race, after the podium and so on. But for sure we'll have always issue with the chicane and probably the only solution would be to do all the races in Monaco but even Monaco will be tricky. The solution to slow down the car when they cut the chicane would be the best one to be sure. We have to find a solution that the guy will be directly penalised, that will avoid discussion and the stewards and so and so and so because it will be always the same mess after the race.

Final thought on this Guenther

GS: I think everything was said. I think I'm good, y'know, they all spoke and I agree with all of which was said. It's just to try to simply what we are doing.

Q: (Silvia Arias – Parabras) **Maurizio Arrivabene, just two days ago Bernie Ecclestone said that in his opinion maybe the problem with Ferrari not winning races is because it is 100 percent an Italian team. I would love to know if you agree with that and in which way the passion which we know the team has and which we know is fantastic is a handicap for your work?**

MA: First of all, we all know Bernie. The day after he said the opposite and he also came to me to explain himself without being requested to do so. If I'm not wrong, it's said that I need somebody nearby me to help. I don't need it. I'm part of the Ferrari racing department and I have hundreds of people who are nearby me. We have a new technical group led by Mattia Binotto. They are enthusiasts, they are working very very well. So we have a team. In terms of the passion, I was always passionate about Ferrari, all my life, I have to say, even before doing this job and Ferrari is about passion, it's about emotion. When I'm at the factory and I cross the street to go in the GT department and I'm looking at new GT cars that are coming out from the factory, for me it's a big emotion. And this is something that is not a handicap, it's a dream.

Q: (Andra Cremonesi – La Gazzetta dello Sport) Maurizio, it's about the arguments of the last Grand Prix. Have you talked to Sebastian, have you tried to make a different approach for this Grand Prix, even because the FIA said they will not forgive another situation like this in the future?

MA: Listen, first of all I think... I don't know if you know but Sebastian asked... he excused himself in writing with Charlie and the FIA and the FIA responded to Sebastian in a way that we really appreciated. I spoke every day with Sebastian, and not only after the Mexican race. Somebody maybe thinks we have tension or things like this. No, we are honest with each other. The word honesty must sometimes be put in the script or in the article, because we have an honest, open, straightforward relationship and if you are asking me, we are always in agreement, like all human beings, sometimes yes, sometimes no. We have a fantastic relationship and it's based on an honest, day after day feedback. I respect him as a driver, he was four times World Champion. He's putting all of himself into the job that he's doing. A couple of months ago, I said sometimes even too much but it was not a criticism. I want to make it clear, once and forever. It's because he's putting all of himself – he tries to put all of himself into everything he's doing and sometimes you just have to say, like in Mexico, 'hey Seb, calm down, head down, look in front of you and push.' And there's nothing wrong with that so you ask me, you can ask him and you have the same version.

Q: (Dieter Rencken – Racing Lines) I'm not Italian but the question's for you, Maurizio, and I'd like to refer to yesterday's teleconference call by your president to investors after your Q3 results. One of the things that Mr Marchionne didn't do is rule out Ferrari possibly going into Formula E. And the second thing is that he said that Ferrari can't continue throwing money at Formula One, which would indicate that the investors are starting to seek more value for money. How do you feel about these two comments? Could we see a red Formula E car and how do you see this for Ferrari's future, that just maybe investor pressure could turn Ferrari away?

MA: The strategy in terms of investment at Ferrari is not under my responsibility. Formula E, I think Mr Marchionne was very very clear, at the moment it's not in the programme of Ferrari. If we're talking about hybrid, we have Formula One, we are building up our experience in Formula One on that side. We could be but it's not up to me to decide or to indicate the right strategy but Formula E, I don't think so.

Again, it's not my responsibility to talk to the investors. I can talk about the word pressure. Everybody is talking about pressure when they are referring to our job and everything we are doing but there's nothing strange in that. If you are working in a team like this, the day that you sign a contract you know what you are doing, you know that the sport is pointing at

you because we are Ferrari. Sometimes I am hearing 'are you guys under a lot of pressure?' It makes me laugh. So what, it's expected when your name is Ferrari.

Ends