



FEDERATION INTERNATIONALE DE L' AUTOMOBILE

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Spanish Grand Prix

Friday Press Conference Transcript

PART ONE: TEAM REPRESENTATIVES – Cyril ABITEBOUL (Renault), Robert FERNLEY (Force India), Toto WOLFF (Mercedes)

PRESS CONFERENCE

Q: Today is the FIA Volunteers' Day and there will be a ceremony later this afternoon on the pit straight to honour their contribution to motor sport. Perhaps a word from you all on the work of the volunteers?

Toto WOLFF: Well, we wouldn't be able to go racing without the volunteers and it's something that isn't so visible to the public that with the many devoted and engaged people, all around the world on the racetracks, they enable us to put on a show, so it's definitely a good little exercise to do and honour them.

Cyril ABITEBOUL: Nothing much to add. Motor sport is a bit strange in that it's just a few that get elected to race or even be in the garage but it's a sport that involves a lot of people, whether in the garage, mechanics, at the factory, but also around the track and taking part with the federations around the world. Yeah, it's a great opportunity to honour their ongoing commitment.

Robert FERNLEY: Yeah, without doubt they are the unsung heroes of motor racing across the board, not just for Formula One. We must remember that they do great work outside Formula One, which we're very focused on. I think people forget that weekend-in, weekend-out they're there, so great honour.

Q: Thank you. Moving back to you Cyril. Good qualifying pace so far this season, but perhaps not unlocking all the race results you might have hoped for. Why is that?

CA: Well, part of that is it's still a year where we are still in a construction phase. So in talking about construction it's easier to qualify and extract maximum performance off a given package on one lap, on a short run, which is what we are doing consistently since the start of the season. We know also that we have fragile reliability and that's really our area of focus. It is hitting us regularly, during races and also during Fridays, in the preparation of the race typically. Usually we have a good group of people who is managing or setting up the car properly for qualifying but when it comes to really managing the car and fixing the issues for a longer run, that's really down to how reliable we have been over the weekend. So that's really something that is hitting, which is biting on regular occasions, so that is the area of focus for the time being. We also have a great qualifier in Nico. He's also clearly leading the way on race pace. Jo has not been very favourite in the conditions... he's had on many occasions adverse conditions in his weekend. The only

weekend he had a clean weekend, which was in Bahrain, he managed to be in Q3. So that is what we are trying to repeat because we think that the car also has a better pace on Sundays, so that's the target for this weekend.

Q: From which race onwards are you hoping to unlock the full potential of this 2017 Renault engine?

CA: The full potential of the engine is something that will take a number of races with the existing hardware. You know that constant development, that constant improvement... based on the existing hardware there is more to come in performance and that's really down to how quickly we can fix the reliability issues. I guess that will be down to the introduction of power unit number three. We may or may not change the hardware to extract more power but irrespective of the hardware there will be more power coming that's for sure. So it's all down to the engine introduction plan.

Q: You mentioned Jolyon Palmer there, obviously he has had a few difficulties. What are you saying to him behind the scenes and what do you foresee for him for the rest of the season?

CA: Well, the main thing we have done is that we've been through what has happened since the start of the season, including the winter test, when we were in Barcelona and he already had difficult conditions to deal with. So, limited mileage over the winter, a number of reliability issues in preparation for the first four races, which has not been helpful, and clearly he has a very talented team-mate, which is clearly showing what the car is capable of. But having said, Nico is not a magician, and that's what I'm telling him. He has shown that on occasion he has definitely the pace to match his team-mate, so it is on that we are focusing. And we are making sure that he now has a clean weekend so that he can build his confidence, that we can rebuild his confidence in himself.

Q: Robert, double points in every race so far, you've got to be happy with the way your 2017 season has started and with both of your drivers appearing to be well and truly on it?

RF: Yeah, from our point of view, after the testing in Barcelona we knew we had a slight performance deficit and it was always going to be down to making sure that we extracted the optimum from the races and the team, the drivers, fantastic job, absolutely superb.

Q: So the big question is can you keep it going? You're up against some fairly tough opposition in this midfield, not least Cyril. Of course you've got Williams to think about, Toro Rosso as well. How important is the update pack you've brought here this weekend and what has it given you so far?

RF: I think like all teams we're looking for direction more than physically upgrading at the moment. It's the direction that we need to be able to develop for the rest of the season. I think what we have seen so far is very promising and we'll take it through going forward for the next races. Hopefully Renault's problems will remain large ones and we can keep going!

Q: Toto, first of all a word on this dramatic looking, updated car that you've brought here this weekend. Did it perform according to expectations during the practice sessions?

TW: Yes, so far we are happy with the correlation and the results of the two Friday sessions and the car certainly looks very sophisticated. But it's the interaction of all those bits that overall should make us achieve a performance gain. But Friday is pretty early days in the weekend. Tomorrow afternoon you're going to see whether there is a real effect.

Q: Valtteri Bottas won his first race last time out. You've had an interest in him for many years, what did you feel personally to see him winning a Formula One grand prix?

TW: I've known Valtteri for 10 years so it's clear that achieving his target to win a race is something special but in my position it's about the team's interests and having a Mercedes winner is great. Having a Mercedes challenger for the world championship or even winning a world championship and I'm behind both of them and we'll be cheering whoever wins.

Q: It was important that he won, with an all-Ferrari front row for that race in Russia. It could have been costly for you in the world championship, when Lewis was clearly having an off day. What did the debrief reveal?

TW: Valtteri had a very good day because he was able to exploit P3, which is probably the best starting position in Sochi and used the slipstream down to Turn One and from thereon controlled the race. Considering that a four-time world champion was close behind him in those last laps, he did a very good job. As for Lewis, he was in traffic. We were a bit marginal with the cooling and that's why he had a car that was not able to deliver maximum performance at all times. We could see that there were glimpses of performance but if you run into hot air and the car is heating up too much there's not a lot you can do. From there it's a difficult situation for the driver and the team and there wasn't a lot we could do.

QUESTIONS FROM THE FLOOR

Q: (Peter Windsor– Motorsport Network) Toto, what about Lewis' problems in sector three? We heard talk of diff, traction that wasn't that happy with. What were you able to look at after Russia? I presume there was nothing broken on the car or anything like that, but can you give us more insight into what the problem was for him?

TW: The interaction between the chassis, the suspension and the tyres is new ground for every team. And you need to understand how you make each of those various tyre compounds function. We tried to fix out, we tried to cure a problem that was created in the interaction of those two components by giving different diff settings or by trying to switch the brake balance back and forth. Just to give it a go or give it a try. It is a more fundamental issue. You need to have a car that is stable in the window, that has the basic performance and then translate that into qualifying performance and race performance and if you add to the equation a new compound or various new compounds it becomes a difficult exercise and that is one of the key topics we are looking at the moment.

Q: (Graham Harris – Motorsport Monday) The FIA has mandated that all driver numbers and driver names are clearly displayed on cars from this race onwards. Looking at it this morning it seems that some teams have embraced it wholly and included it in their new colour schemes and that others have perhaps paid lip service to it. Could all three of you give your opinion on it and whatever you think it's a good move?

RF: I think it's a good move from the FIA, probably overdue in all fairness. I think that perhaps some time out, when all the commercial agreements that we currently have, that's across all the teams, come to an end they should standardize where the numbers go and make sure everything is clear for everybody going forward. At this point I think you have to do the best you can with whatever you have from a commercial agreement and I think all of the teams have tried their very best to embrace it.

TW: Bob just summarized it pretty well. It's trial and error. We played around with various designs. Some of us like the look of it, some of us don't. We took a little bit off after P1 and just have the number now. But with all aesthetics, it's mixed feelings.

CA: Exactly the same. It's a good move from the FIA. It's something that maybe should have happened earlier and hopefully they will make sure to standardize. Just like in any other sport, where you know where to find the name and number of any player on the soccer field or anything. That's the sort of thing where you want to have a standard position, so as mentioned as soon as the sponsorship contracts are falling out you want to make sure to seize the opportunity, that window, to impose what it should be. Formula One. Formula One should be at the top of the sport in terms of presentation, the standard of presentation, so that's what should happen sooner rather than later.

RF: Just to add to that, I think it's the number that is more important element, because now that the drivers have got numbers throughout their career I think the promoters would ideally like to see the number prominent rather than worrying too much about the same, so I think that would be the right move going forward.

Q: (Sven Haidinger – motorsport-total.com) Toto, the Mercedes car is a little bit difficult in terms of the set-up to get it into the right window. Are you missing Nico Rosberg a little bit in terms of that, because Lewis has taken the set-up a couple of time from him and he's one of the most experienced guys in the team or has been?

TW: Certainly if you have the experience of Nico who has been in the team for a long time it is always helpful, but Valtteri has filled those shoes pretty well. He's similar to Nico, an engineering-minded driver, and it's more in those early stages of the season to understand the basic product, the car, the architecture of the car, suspension, kinematics, so I wouldn't see it as a deficit.

Q: (Sam Collins – Racecar Engineering) It looks like the UK is heading towards a so-called hard Brexit and that could have serious implications for the Formula One teams based in the UK, especially for the ones with engine suppliers who are based outside the UK, such as Cyril and his customers. With no single and no freedom of movement of EU citizens into and out of the UK, what implications do you forecast it having for you, what contingency plans have you put in place – that in respect of customs reflecting the lead times and recruitment going forward for the 2019 season?

CA: Thank you for the question! We will have to see, because there were already a number of forecasts when Brexit happened that a number of things would happen which have not happened so I don't think it's for me to comment on what's going to happen or not. The main elements will be currency and it has had frankly a positive impact on all of the UK-based teams so in that respect that's good news for us strangely. We have to see long-term how that evolves because that is not a situation that is sustainable. Then we will have to look at the movement of staff, because clearly we need to attract talent from everywhere around the world and we need to make that the UK remains a place that is welcoming talents from wherever they are. We have lots of movement of staff between France and the UK. That's something we will look at carefully. When it comes to transfer of goods that is something that is not bothering us, in the sense that the engine, if that's what you are referring to, are actually leased, the ownership is not passed on to the UK entity and that's the same with all our customers, so VAT should be neutral in that respect. Obviously we have to be careful but when it comes to contingency plans, no, we don't really have a plan as we are building new buildings in Enstone in the UK, we don't really have a plan to move that we are currently building somewhere else. We are still assuming that people will be reasonable and we trust the UK to protect their industry and motorsport is an important industry for the UK.

TW: Cyril has given us a 360° view. There's nothing to add to that. We are monitoring it. Hopefully it will turn out well. I like to work in the UK and I'd like to continue to work there.

RF: Unfortunately I'm probably a little bit older than these two and I remember when we used to do it before we had the EU, so it's not an issues and we still do an awful lot of races today where we still go through an awful lot of compliance issues so I don't really see it as an issue at all.

Q: (Alan Baldwin – Reuters) A question for Bob really. Some projected figures came out during the week about FOM payouts to teams for 2017. There are no great surprises but yet again your team, despite finishing fourth, seems to be getting less than half than the top three and less than McLaren even. Just some comments on how you see things panning out with the new owners and whether you see any progress being made on redistribution in the future?

RF: I think my position on this is pretty clear. I have been very much a strong voice against these type of things for the last couple of years. But I think what we have to do now is support Liberty and the new owners as they are making noises and definitely looking into trying to address both costs and income distribution. Let's give them an opportunity, the key thing is to support them going forward. The disparities are not acceptable as far as we are concerned, but as I say I think time will tell.

Q: (Sergio Alvarez – One Magazine) Question for Toto: do you believe the changes in your technical direction may have hindered your understanding of the car? How are you managing the transition in the technical department from Paddy to James Allison?

TW: There are figureheads that are present in the media: some more, some less, that represent the team – but it's an organisation of 1,000 people – almost 1,000 people – that run a team and especially in the area of tyres, race delivery, race track engineering, the situation is unchanged. We have a great team that is there, that has been in place for many years, that is looking after these components – and I'm extremely happy with how they've tackled the situation until now.

Q: (Sef Harding – Xiro Xone News) This is for all three of you, since Fernando Alonso's announcement to go to the Indy 500 there's now a debate created between IndyCar and the comparison to F1 and the differences in terms of show, presentation, and as you Mr Fernley said earlier, the presentation, would you be willing to work in depth with the new owners to make a better show for the viewing audience as well as the fans in attendance that come from all over the world to watch the sport in terms of opening up the paddocks more, making it more accessible for the drivers, making it more accessible for the pits. We saw that they bought down a two-seater car and are giving tours now. Would you be willing to do the same for viewing fans that are coming to the race?

RF: Having done both IndyCars and Formula One I can speak from a reasonable amount of experience on that. IndyCars is a fantastic show, especially the Indy 500, there's no question of that. Can we get more access? I think we can. I think we can learn a little bit from IndyCars but overall we are Formula One and we've got to keep that identity as well. I think that Liberty understand that. I think they're working to getting it more inclusive but, on the other hand, keeping it where it needs to be – which is slightly exclusive as well. So it's a balancing act and I'm sure they'll do a great job. They have all the expertise to be able to look at that.

Toto?

TW: Yes, the Indy 500 is one of the great races and the concept is completely different to what we have. The oval, per se, gives different access and it's a one-a-year event. If you look at the IndyCar series overall, they're far away from where we are. Having said that, I think Fernando going to Indy is a great opportunity for him, it's an opportunity to create

some good news around the team again, and they need that, and it has given Formula One more exposure in the US, so overall I think it is a good exercise.

Cyril?

CA: Yeah, I would agree that there is definitely lots to learn from other sports. To a certain degree we tend to, y'know, we're not necessarily all very old but we still spend quite a lot of time in Formula One, so having some people showing us what can be done outside – whether it's new owners, new management but also F1 drivers getting experience outside F1 and returning to Formula One, I think it's great. We need to constantly benchmark. We are in a competition – not just in Formula One but Formula One is in a competition against other sports properties – whether motorsports or other forms of sports – because that's where all sponsors, all carmakers, all fans will look. They are benchmarking us, even if they don't realise they benchmark: they always have multiple choices when it comes to looking at a programme, buying tickets... they cannot follow all the sports so we have to make sure to remain at the top of the offer. And that's great, to finally have the opportunity of a fresh breathe of new air coming and influencing us – but as mentioned by Bob, we need to keep our identity. I think this exercise will kick off under the influence of all these new sorts of people: what is the core identity of Formula One? That will be an exciting exercise to do, starting with, for instance, engine topics.

Q: (Dieter Rencken – Racing Lines) Primary question to Toto and then a follow-up question to the other two. Toto, there's a very strong rumour, or suggestions, that Mercedes-Benz is going to offer some form of technical assistance to Honda. Would you care to comment on that please. And then to the other two, should such a concept of one winning engine manufacturer helping another one, should that be allowed in Formula One.

TW: At that stage I wouldn't want to comment.

You're not excluding it then?

TW: I'm not commenting.

Cyril?

CA: I cannot comment on a no comment.

Bob?

RF: I'll comment! As a team that's not only paid for its engines but contributed to the development of them I would certainly be very negative towards sharing that technology with another team that is a competitor of ours.

Q: (Ralf Bach – Autobild Motorsport) A question to Toto. Is there a possibility or, let me say, how big is the possibility that next year drivers, by example Fernando Alonso or Stoffel Vandoorne, driving a Mercedes engine without moving to your team?

TW: What are the options? They are driving a Honda engine like it is today and it looks like this is the current situation or different engines. I think it's important for Formula One... Honda is important for Formula One. It's a massive and very successful company and I have no doubt they will eventually be where they expect themselves to be. So, I don't think they are going to drive a Mercedes engine.

Q: (Mike Doodson – Auto Action) This is for Toto. Bit more lighthearted. You and your fellow Austrian Niki Lauda seem to be the TV face of Mercedes AMG. You've known each other a long time. I wonder if ever you've ever had any disagreements

with him on strategy or whatever – if you could let us in on any of the little disagreements you might have had in the course of your association.

TW: Well, we've been doing that for quite a while. We had a certain period at the beginning of our relationship where we were both thrown into the team, where we needed to find a way of making decisions in a committee and not alone like we've both done our whole lives. But since then our relationship has contributed in a good way, I believe. He's a completely different personality. For me, he's the personification of pressure – and pressure's good sometimes. He certainly has a lot of experience and has been around for many years and I enjoy working with him. Niki says he has no friends – but when we won one of the last races, we were on a flight together and in the plane he had an emotional moment and said he hasn't got any friends – but he has a half-friend now. So I consider myself out-performing some others. He's somebody that I value and enjoy being around. Disagreements? Permanent disagreements for the benefits of the company. We are able to come into discussions with two different standpoints and walk out with one – and that's good.

Q: (Jon McEvoy – The Daily Mail) Toto, just building on what Dieter said, in this new open world of disclosing things to the media, which Liberty Media say that they're in favour of. Can you really not elaborate, in the name of openness, about what you're doing with Honda? The work that I'm sure many thousands or millions of fans in Formula One would wish to know, which in a sense, strikes me as quite straightforward, to be upfront about the work that you guys might be doing with them in developing their engines.

TW: I understand your standpoint. We are not doing anything for Honda. That is the current status quo. So, unless that situation changes, I don't want to contribute to rumours out there, that are false and I think are damaging for Honda and create hardened standpoints from teams or from other stakeholders. We'll see what happens.

PART TWO: TEAM REPRESENTATIVE – Maurizio Arrivabene (Ferrari), Christian HORNER (Red Bull), Monisha Kaltenborn (Sauber)

PRESS CONFERENCE

Q: Christian, there was talk of the Red Bull for this Spanish Grand Prix being a substantial step ahead of the car that started the season. How different is it in the end, and how satisfied are you with the performance on day one?

Christian HORNER: I think it's probably been overstated slightly in various media outlets but it's a pretty significant upgrade, it's an aerodynamic upgrade, most of which is pretty visible. It's the knock-on from those elements and probably the bits that you can't see that obviously involve a great deal of work, a great deal of time and effort from back in the factory. They've done an incredible job to get it all turned around and on the car in time for today's running.

Q: Cyril Abiteboul was with us a few moments ago in part one and told us that the full potential of the Renault 2017 engine would really come with the third iteration of the season. What's your view?

CH: Well I was trying to ask him the question at the back that you wouldn't give me the microphone for in the previous version, because I was very keen to learn when that third edition will come. Obviously for us, the sooner the better. It seems that Renault has chosen a path that is showing true potential but I think they've got some complications in terms of being able to extract the power unit's full potential. Hopefully they'll be able to release that sooner rather than later.

Q: Yesterday, here in the press conference, we talked with the top drivers about the driver market and possible moves for next year. Is it the case that you know already that both of your drivers are locked into your team for 2018?

CH: Yes, absolutely.

Q: Monisha, moving on you. Obviously you announced the Honda deal which means that eight months from now you'll be bolting a Honda into your 2018 car to go testing. How far up the road from where they are today do you expect them to be at that point?

Monisha KALTENBORN: Well, we certainly expect that they'll have sorted out all the issues they have been facing so far and we expect that to also happen still in this season. Looking at the talks we've had with Honda and having seen their facilities, knowing how determined they are, we have no reason to doubt that.

Q: Are these conversations that you've had with them for some time? In Honda just generally about participation together with you?

MK: It's been going on for some time but, you know, we looked at all the options we had. We had a couple of talks going on for a long time.

Q: What does the Honda partnership allow you to do from the point of view of sponsorship, driver choices etcetera, does it open things up for you?

MK: Well, regarding drivers, I've said before, at the end of the day it's the team's decision, and also the team's responsibility to have good drivers. And like we've done in the past, even with our current engine supplier, Ferrari, that we've discussed these kind of issues with the key partner. And we have also taken drivers from our engine supplier because it was the right thing to do there. It's something that we're open to and we'll see how it pans out. In terms of sponsorship I think it's far too early to look at these things. We've just announced the deal. So we'll see how that develops as well.

Q: Maurizio, could you have imagined that, after four races, your driver would be two wins to the good and 13 points in the lead of the Drivers' Championship, much of that, I guess, you would say, by being bold, which is what you called for the team to be, you and Sergio Marchionne.

Maurizio ARRIVABENE: OK, we are happy, of course, we were not expecting to be here but I'll add that the hard work is paying back, so, I mean I'm very, very pleased for the overall team, for the guys that are here, the guys in Maranello, that they are working very, very hard. Having said so, I saw how Red Bull was growing here in Barcelona and how they are competitive. Mercedes have to defend the title of the World Champion, and we are still focussed on the race after race work and we try to do all our best to make the race interesting.

Q: We spoke with Toto a few minutes ago in part one of this press conference about the dramatic-looking car that Mercedes have brought here this weekend and asked him if he was satisfied with the performance of it. What are your thoughts on how of the balance of competitiveness between you and them, where that lies now going forwards through this weekend and the next few races ahead of us?

MA: One of the lessons that we learned last year is to look at all of our competitors. Visually the Mercedes is very impressive because yesterday we were looking at the Mercedes but we were looking also at the Red Bull and you have two schools: one that is the one of Mercedes that is quite interesting, creative and surprising, the other one is the Red Bull school where maybe something is not really evident but it's extremely efficient. We need to take in consideration what they do, to be able to compete with them and to

continue our development. One of the mantra this year is that we are looking, if there is something interesting, we are investigating, but we follow our way, we have our programme and we want to continue to follow our programme without distraction.

QUESTIONS FROM THE FLOOR

Q: (Kate Walker – Motorsport network) I'm sure you're aware that the FIA are currently celebrating all of the volunteers who allow motor sport to happen in every category. I was wondering if you could give us your thoughts on the importance of celebrating these men and women and any sort of positive experiences you've had with circuit officials around the world?

CH: It's quite incredible the job that they do, not just at Formula One events but racing events and categories around the world, from club racing upwards and quite an awful lot of them are doing it out of the love of their hearts, their passion for the sport. Again, all the medical assistance, the doctors etc etc, I'm only full of admiration for them and without them we quite simply wouldn't be able to operate. They make it look easy but do a wonderful wonderful job.

MA: I've a good case that is when I was young and crazy for Formula One that I tried to apply to be a voluntary marshal but my objective was only – the money was not a lot in my case – just to be near by the car and to see the race. Then they asked a couple of questions, they discovered that I was just a Formula One supporter and they threw me out. This is really... I have to say Chapeau to the Federation because that means that the guys are not only passionate for Formula One, they are here working for free but they are also experts in the world that they are doing for all of us who have a great respect for all of them.

MK: Well, I think it's very important that you have a day like this because this is really the moment that you can focus on all the volunteers who are doing such a great job. They are doing it really out of passion and without them, like Christian said... such difficult situations can be sorted out and just have such a smooth way things go so we should try to really show, like this, so many more examples where people are in the sport at whatever their level, whatever category, that it takes so much more than just what you maybe see during the race, the teams or the drivers, it takes so many more people to bring across all this.

Q: (Flavio Vanetti – Corriere della Sera) Maurizio, we saw in P1 big time differences between the Ferraris and the Mercedes. Did you have any issue and how was it so big? And the second question: do you believe that Mercedes still have an advantage on a single lap and it's tough to catch them now?

MA: I received the same question in Australia on Friday, I remember, and the gap in FP1 was the same, it was one second between us and Mercedes. On that occasion, I answered the question as I answer today. Chapeau to Mercedes for what they have done but we are not going to change our programme. We have a programme for this weekend, starting from Friday, improving Saturday and looking also for Sunday. This is what we want to do and what we are focused to do. Having said that, as I've said many many times, they are the World Champions and they have to defend their title of course. They are stronger, they are the reference for all of us and what we have to do is just try to create them some problems.

Q: (Alan Baldwin – Reuters) Maurizio, nice to see you here on a Friday. We're seeing more of your drivers on a Sunday but a lot less of you; Liberty Media want the teams to do more for the fans, more media. I think I'm right in saying your team is probably the one that does less media this year than last year. Could you perhaps explain some of that and is that because it was a distraction last year, is it stress reduction or... what is the thinking behind it?

MA: I'm surprised, honestly, because we were doing social media for two races on Thursday with one driver and then we continue to do what we were doing last year, so what are we talking about? This is my simple answer. Liberty, of course, they would like to have more and more and more interviews but they are also talking about digital so we try to balance the first two races and now we are back to what we were doing in the past so my opinion... all of you have the newspaper (version) but they also have a digital version of the newspaper so I don't see where the problem is. We are really focused on what we are doing, that's true.

Q: (Jon McEvoy – Daily Mail) Maurizio, just to follow up on that, but I thought you would usually speak after the race...

MA: Yes, if you received the press release, I'm putting a statement on paper what we are going to think. It's also true – your colleague mentioned Liberty before. One of the things we are pushing for is to have the driver that somehow they are the heroes of the show. The role of the team principal is to manage the team, to put the driver up, to do their job. At the moment, we are really really focused and I am focused with all the team to do their job and I tell you, it's quite hard to fight with a monster like Mercedes and to look at what these guys are doing, so that's a question of concentration, to give statements to the media when we have to do it, on Sunday after the race. That's it, there is no other intention.

Q: (Jon McEvoy – Daily Mail) Sure, I was slightly distracted. What I was going to ask you – though it's useful in a sense than just a statement, that we can ask you things and you can respond to them rather than it's just a blank statement that we can't really get back to. But that's slightly by the by. I was actually going to ask you, before that, was would you rule out having Fernando Alonso back as a driver at Ferrari or not?

MA: Ah, this is the real question! Is there a reason why you want me to talk... It's not different to the answer that I gave to you before. You need to understand the spirit of our team this year. We are really working as a team and the two guys, the two drivers, they are part – an integral part – of this team. We are so concentrated on what we are doing, we are working so hard, all together that the conversation about contracts is not a priority. I don't want to be... I tell you the truth. We are working well together, we are feeling very very well together so we want to do our best, to work on the performance of the car and for us it's... the contract is not a priority. The atmosphere is great, why we have to start talking about something that is distracting us? We look each other in the eyes and we understand that we are a team.

Q: (Martin Vriezema – NOS) Christian, we just had an interview with Max and he said in a very realistic way 'we are still the third team.' And there was also a bit of frustration, maybe he was a little bit sad even. How do you deal with this ambitious driver who realises he's not the number one yet... which also counts for Ricciardo of course, and do they ask for a different approach from your side?

CH: Well, first of all, he's probably right in his observation that yes, today we are still currently the third team but I think it has concertina-ed, I think we are closer to Ferrari and Mercedes than we've been at any points so far this season. I think we've bought some performance to the car. There's still some fine tuning that needs to be done and understanding of what we've introduced but I don't sense any frustration with him. He's focused, he's motivated, he goes for it on every lap that he's out on the track. He's enjoying being a Grand Prix driver. Of course he's hungry and ambitious but that applies to Daniel as well. I don't sense any frustration; he's certainly not requesting any change to our approach. He can see the effort that's going on behind the scenes, the hours that people are working, because it is a sport at the end of the day and department after department are competing against some enormous adversaries in the likes of Ferrari here and obviously Mercedes.

Q: (Dieter Rencken – Racing Lines) Christian, about six or seven years ago you seemed to be totally opposed to any form of cost-control, cost caps etc, yet recently you've been reported as coming out as saying that you're in favour of some sort of budget cap. Why do you think it could now be controlled when a couple of years ago it couldn't be and also some input from the other two if they would like to comment on that as well?

CH: Well, firstly, just to clarify, I'm not at all in favour of cost caps. I think they're unworkable, un-policeable and our biggest concern throughout that whole discussion four or five years ago was how on earth do you equate what's going on within a subsidiary company of an automotive manufacturer within research and development? So I'm not in favour of a cost cap, what I am in favour of and I would expect probably every Grand Prix team to be in favour of is to try and control the amount that we're currently spending through perhaps simplicity of the regulations, perhaps de-cluttering the regulations because Formula One moves at such a pace that every area is under scrutiny and that means spend and that drives spend and I think there's an opportunity with a new commercial rights holder in conjunction with the FIA to really look at what are the key cost drivers and go upstream and deal with those and then that will naturally have an effect on the outcome of how much you can and can't spend, and there's certain aspects that, you know, people sitting in the grandstand today have no idea about and probably know interest about in terms of some of the technology that we're all spending a fortune on, so I think simplification would definitely be an effective way forward.

MK: Well, it's good to hear that from Red Bull because we, together particularly with Force India, have been exactly saying this, that we need to get the costs down and at the end of the day it doesn't really matter to us if you have a budget cap or you have other tools of cost control, they should look at prescriptive parts if you makes the rules simpler. The important thing is to bring these costs down and actually make sure that the teams can be run in a sustainable way and then focus on the show and I think now, listening to the new owners of the sport, we certainly see that they share this view and they will actively work on this, I hope very soon, and present their proposals.

MA: I think before talking about a cost cap we need to understand how in the future the actual commercial owner wants to grow the business of Formula One, to create more interest and also to work on the split-up of the relationships of Formula One and how we are in the hands of everything we are doing, especially (inaudible). I remember that we were talking about digital – I mean Liberty, not us – they were talking about digital that is representing only the one per cent of the potential commercial business for the future, so this is an area that we need to work on. Concerning the cap, I always said that we are in favour of cost reduction, then there is not a perfect formula to do it but for sure we are ready to take into consideration any kind of sporting regulation that they could help to reduce the costs without touching the performance, because if you reduce the costs and the performance is going down then you have no spectacularisation somehow. So I think this is what I said in the past and what I continue to remark for the future. It's also important to understand how is the commitment of the so-called small teams because compared to other sports they are not small at all. I think we also need people who are really committed to this sport. They want to work in the profession and they are also well-equipped financially. I think the worst image that Formula One could have is people who are building up a team, they are coming in for two or three years and then they are going out. Those are question that we need to ask of ourselves together with, as Christian said very very well, together with regulations that are helping all of us to reduce the costs.

Q: (Peter Windsor – F1 Racing) Christian, you have had a couple of brake issues this year which have hurt your race performance. You seem to be on the same brake material as Ferrari; I'm assuming therefore it's not related to that. I wonder if you could just talk us through that. It's a bit strange.

CH: We've had two issues, one in Bahrain and then one obviously at the re-start in Sochi. Whilst the outcome was the same, the failure was different. In the failure that Max had in Bahrain... it was actually a crack that allowed hot air to blow over a seal on the caliper which then failed and then he lost hydraulic fluid in the caliper itself, so that was an incident within the brake drum. The incident with Daniel was far harder to understand because it was after a safety car so the car had been going slowly, the brake temperatures were all under control and then he obviously had what was an instantaneous failure pretty much at the restart and there's been an awful lot of work and analysis going into that and we believe we have a solution that we've tried and tested hopefully today.

Ends