



FEDERATION INTERNATIONALE DE L' AUTOMOBILE

2018 FIA Formula One World Championship

German Grand Prix

Saturday Post-Qualifying Press Conference Transcript

21.07.2018

DRIVERS

- 1 – Sebastian VETTEL (Ferrari)
- 2 – Valtteri BOTTAS (Mercedes)
- 3 – Kimi RÄIKKÖNEN (Ferrari)

TRACK INTERVIEWS

(Conducted by David Coulthard)

Q: Sebastian, you've still got your helmet on but the people want to hear from you. Your 55th and I suspect one of your most enjoyable pole positions?

Sebastian VETTEL: So I just said thanks to the fans. It was amazing to see so many red flags, Ferrari flags, so much support, German flags, all around the track. Yeah, I felt in Q1 that the car could do it and it just kept getting better. I knew that for the last lap I had a little bit in me and I was able to squeeze everything out. Still a bit full of adrenaline but very happy.

Q: Valtteri, it looks to me like you gave it absolutely everything, everyone was stunned when you temporarily took pole position. In the end, the Ferrari was just too quick for you. Was there anything left?

Valtteri BOTTAS: I don't think so. I think it was a good lap. Of course, maybe we can speak about the hundredths, but not a couple of tenth. Yeah I gave it all and they were just a bit too quick today but we'll see tomorrow.

Q: What about tomorrow? You a little indication yesterday of race pace. It's nip tuck between you and Ferrari, so the start is going to be crucial.

VB: It is going to be. Now we are starting on the same compound for this race, so it's definitely going to be crucial, race pace-wise I think we are going to be close.

Q: Congratulations on your second place. Just coming to Kimi, congratulations, top three. You've always been a bit of a specialist around Hockenheim, in fact this is the first time Seb's outqualified you, but in the end it just slipped away towards the end of session?

Kimi RÄIKKÖNEN: Yeah, I had a small moment in the first run, in 12, I touched the inside kerb and got sideways, so you know, not ideal. And then in the second run I had a little bit of caution because of that. For sure, there was more but today it didn't come.

Q: So looking towards to the race tomorrow, you need to get the start to work for you to be the perfect rear-gunner for Sebastian?

KR: Well, we'll try to obviously race ourselves and we're going to race as a team and I think third place should be pretty for the start itself so we'll see tomorrow.

PRESS CONFERENCE

Q: Sebastian, what a performance from you in the car this afternoon?

SV: Well, thank you very much. I think it was not an easy day. This morning we woke up and some clouds and quite a lot of rain. But I was surprised how quickly the track was drying and in qualifying the car was really, really a pleasure to drive. Some days you can feel already when you go out and you do your first flying lap that you've got something in your hands that you can play with and that's the feeling I had today and from there it just got better and it was more about tuning myself in the sessions before. Sometimes I did get the laps together and sometime I did not entirely; I was trying different things. But I knew in Q3 I could get quite a bit out of the car and myself and made it work. Yeah, really happy. Both laps on the limit and then the adrenaline kicks in and it's quite a good feeling to get everything right. So I was really happy with the car and the work we have done overnight to squeeze a little bit more out of the car. It feels so quick around this track with these cars and it's really enjoyable. To do it here, just minutes away from where I come from, where I was born and grew up I think means a lot, so thanks for all the support this weekend; to see the fans, the red hats and the German flags waving all around the track, no matter, really cool, looking forward to tomorrow.

Q: Very well done. Valtteri coming on to you: tremendous final sector from you in Q3 but can you just talk us through your laps in that final session and how are you emotionally now, are you frustrated?

VB: Well, for sure it was a tough battle for the pole and in the end today Ferrari was just a little bit quicker, especially Sebastian has a very nice lap. I think if I could do the lap again I'm sure there would be hundredths here and there, maximum one tenth, I think, but just a bit too quick. Otherwise, yeah, a good lap, especially the last sector. That was something I missed in the first run of Q3, so yeah, for me the feeling with the car was quite and yeah, that was the result.

Q: Kimi, we've talked about Q3 with the other two, so just talk us through the session please.

KR: So-so. I think in the end it's not too bad but there was one moment in Turn 12 in the first try and then obviously after that I knew there was quite a bit of lap time but tend to be a bit safer and not to have mistakes and lose positions more. I was a bit compromised because of that. The car was working well and, for sure, there was more lap time but this is what we got today.

QUESTIONS FROM THE FLOOR

Q: (James Roberts – F1 Racing) Sebastian, of all the laps that you've done in your career, where does that one rank, in front of your home crowd today?

SV: To give you an honest answer, I don't remember all the laps I've done in my career. I've done quite a lot – but yeah, I think today is definitely one of the best moments. Yeah, I... I have a bit of a mixed relationship with this track. It seems sometimes we were really close in the past then for some reason it didn't come together. So far this weekend it's been great. The car is behaving well. I think we improved it for today. Tomorrow we need to be sharp. I don't know what the weather's going to be like. I think anything can happen. For now, that doesn't matter. I'm just happy. It's great to get the lap together here and obviously it means a lot with the support that I get – and we get as a team, with so many passionate German tifosi. I think it's quite nice. That's what counts and that's what I feel now. And yeah, I was happy with the lap. Very happy. I think I have done decent laps, I have done bad laps. This is one of the better ones but I don't think... I'm not a fan of saying this is the best I've ever done. I hope the best I will ever do is yet to come.

Q: (Heikki Kulta – Turun Sanomat) Valtteri, how much more pressure did that put on your shoulders for the Mercedes home success when Lewis is so much far away behind?

VB: For sure it's important race for us as a team, obviously. One of our home races: home race for Mercedes; home race for Daimler. So, it is a big one. This is now where we start from. We need to make the most out of tomorrow. I'm in the second [place]. It's going to be a long race tomorrow and I'm sure Lewis can still come back to a good position. We've seen many mixed races, anything can happen. So, we won't give us still on a very good result for tomorrow.

Q: (Heikki Kulta – Turun Sanomat) Kimi, you have never had a home race and today we saw how much that helped Sebastian to get more push. Would that help you also to once in your life have a home qualifying race?

KR: I don't think so. I don't think he suddenly drives this weekend faster than he's been driving at other races just because it's in his home country. So, I don't see it makes any difference in my view.

Q: (Livio Oricchio – Globoesporte.com) Sebastian, you normally say your car in race conditions is even better. Is it possible to be even better than that? Second question, there will be a change in the President of Ferrari. What will be the impact of that for you and for the team?

SV: On the second question, I don't know. First question, I think for the race usually we are a bit quicker, so... the last couple of qualifyings... the last one was very close with Mercedes. Here we seem to be a little bit ahead. Yesterday was a good day. I think from yesterday to day we improved the car. Obviously the track was quite a bit cooler so I think everybody has the sensation that the car was a bit better today because the track wasn't that hot. Nevertheless, I think what we were lacking in places, we were better today. Yeah, I'm quite confident for tomorrow but, as I pointed out, the race is tomorrow and there's a lot of things that can happen, that can bite you, so we need to be sharp and awake. But for now, I'll just enjoy the pole and tomorrow when I wake up, I'll think, yeah, we look forward to the race and try to be there. That's what counts. We'll see what the weather does – but one way or the other I believe that we've got a strong package. So we need to make the best of it.

Q: (Sonja Kreye – SpeedNews) Sebastian, what would you say what it takes to perform such a lap as you did to get the qualifying and the pole position, considering if you're talking to someone who wants to become a professional race driver, a young talent?

SV: Practice! Obviously we're talking about how many laps I've done before. I think we all would jump in the car, going into qualifying. We'd know what is coming towards us. It's a mixture. You need to have confidence in your car, in yourself. You also need to enjoy it, have fun. Yeah, usually you're quite busy around the lap and I think one of the greatest feelings that I sense when I drive the car is that I'm not thinking of anything else, and that can be very stressful but it's also a great feeling and makes you feel very free. That's what I felt today, I didn't think of anything else and it felt good and obviously after that you see the people around and you take everything in.

Q: (Joe van Burik – Autocar NL) To all three of you: would you say getting the tyres right on Sunday is more crucial and trickier here than ever this season?

KR: I don't know really. How do we know until tomorrow? Obviously we know after the race here whether it was difficult or not. There's been many races this year where it has been tricky. I think it depends a lot on the weather, how it's going to turn out to be tomorrow. If it's something like yesterday, for sure it will be not that easy but I think it's impossible to say, what we're going to get and how it's going to be, so we prepare the best way that we can and see what it brings.

SV: Yeah. I don't know. I think we have some tricky races for managing the tyres. I don't think it will be the trickiest, I think it will be one of the trickiest. How tricky? As Kimi said, we will find out tomorrow. Obviously you try to prepare as much as you can but if it's tricky it's usually tricky for everyone so we will see.

VB: Nothing to add. I think it's not going to be the most difficult race in terms of tyres. We've had difficult ones already so we will see tomorrow.

Q: (James Roberts – F1 Racing) Sebastian, how significant is this and how sweet is it knowing that your title rival will be starting down the grid with Lewis having his gearbox problems in Q1?

SV: Well, obviously we saw it but I don't know what exactly happened. I think it doesn't really matter. We will see what happens tomorrow. Obviously you look after yourself and obviously for me it was a good session. We prepared the car well and everything went smoothly. Obviously you always try to push the limits. You don't wish anything bad or something like a technical issue which he had, I understand, to happen to anyone, so it was a shame to see him go out and I mean it, but you look after yourself and try to do the race tomorrow which is the most important part of the weekend.

Q: (Livio Oricchio – Globoesporte.com) Sebastian, do you believe that if you finish the first part of the season with a good margin in the championship and considering the car you have, the step forward Ferrari made, you go to the second part with a good advantage in terms of being World Champion?

SV: I don't know what to believe to be honest. I try to get the maximum points every weekend, especially at this stage of the year. Later on, you find out whether you are in a good position or not but yeah, if we can score points and if we have a quick car, a car to fight for wins then I believe that puts us in a very good position, and then you add up your points towards the end and you see where you are, so I don't think right now is moment to stress about the championship.

Ends