



FEDERATION INTERNATIONALE DE L'AUTOMOBILE

Press Information

2016 Russian Grand Prix Sunday Race Press Conference Transcript

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PODIUM INTERVIEWS

(Conducted by Martin Brundle)

Congratulations Nico. Wow, a man who can't stop winning – seven in a row. Only three other drivers in the history of Formula One have done that: Alberto Ascari, the great Michael Schumacher, Sebastian Vettel, and now you. Well done.

Nico ROSBERG: Thanks very much. It's been an awesome weekend. The car has been fantastic all weekend, really even in qualifying and in the race today. It felt very special out there. So, very, very happy. Thanks to everybody. Thanks to all of you in Russia who have come here. The sport is growing; 60,000 of you – amazing, great atmosphere, it's been a great weekend.

Full house for you today: pole position, led every lap, fastest lap, and you won the grand prix. You were putting in some spectacular times at the end, just to make a point I guess?

NR: I just like to it for concentration; just keep going, because if I slow down otherwise, you start making some mistakes and I was enjoying it out there, just flat out until the end.

And you were aware obviously that Lewis was up into second place, so you and to keep an eye on his pace?

NR: Yeah, of course. Great job from Lewis to come up through to second so quickly from down in tenth and I was always aware of what he was doing and trying to keep the gap as big as possible.

Lewis, you stayed out of trouble on the first lap and there was plenty of that going on in front of you?

Lewis HAMILTON: Absolutely. It was not the easiest first corner but all races have been the same so far.

So are you pretty happy? Yeah, you've had a difficult weekend, but you must be pretty satisfied to be up here, even though it's only second place?

LH: Yeah, absolutely. I'm really happy for the team and you know, I got the points.

Some critical overtakes you made that really made your afternoon – one on Kimi and the other on Valtteri Bottas.

LH: Yeah, I mean with Kimi I don't know if he was expecting me to overtake there, which was great and with Valtteri it was from quite far back but he didn't seem to defend, so it was quite easy.

You got the gap down to 7.7s; you must have just have seen down the pit straight. Was there a moment. Was there a moment where you thought 'I could still win this'?

LH: There wasn't a doubt in my mind that I could win it. I had the pace but then I problem with the engine again, so I had to back off.

That was the water pressure situation we had about? So you had to get out of it a little bit to protect the engine?

LH: Yeah, I wasn't at full throttle down the straights, so just trying to look after it.

Thank you. Over to Kimi. Kimi Raikkonen your third place man today. Very popular man out there, Kimi, and you have the honour today... this is the 700th podium for the Ferrari team. How are you feeling about third place in particular today?

Kimi RAIKKONEN: Of course it's not exactly what we want. We want to win races and put the two cars as far up as we can. We tried to today. I had a pretty OK start, managed to get Valtteri on the first lap but again after the restart, same like last time here, we just don't have the speed. He managed to get me and then when I tried to get past him obviously Lewis got past me, but we just had to try to run a bit longer and pass them and we managed to do the Williams but not fast enough for Mercedes. Then we had a good speed but with the fuel saving we had to take some measures, so obviously you cannot push as fast as the car can go.

Lewis says he's not sure you knew he was coming through. Did you know?

KR: yeah, I could see him. When I tried to pass Bottas then I was obviously close to him in there and got some understeer and ran wide, so he got a good run on me. I tried to block a little bit but it was too late, so I had to let him go.

OK, good stuff. Back to you, Nico. We head off to Spain of course. You have a 43-point in the World Championship. A long way to go, but that's pretty healthy.

NR: Yeah, but it's four races from 21. Lewis is going to come back of course. He's on it and as motivated as ever. So, early days, just taking it race by race, looking forward to Spain now. We have such an incredible car, which is really a pleasure to drive, so just want to try to win races.

PRESS CONFERENCE

Q: Nico, many congratulations, four from four, seven in a row. It was a superbly-controlled drive right from the start. There was a moment when Lewis was catching you midway through the middle of the second stint. Was that still under control? Were you fuel-saving and tyre-managing at that stage or he genuinely catching you, was there an issue?

NR: No, for sure, I mean I knew the gap to Lewis and it was just through the traffic. If I get the traffic first I lose a couple of seconds, then he gets it and it opens up again. No, I was feeling really comfortable today, especially at the end of the race, in the last 15 I opened the gas and pushed a

little bit more because I knew it was safe to push and definitely get to the end of the race with that set of tyres. It was working really well. The whole weekend. Even in qualifying. Seldom had such an awesome car. So, special weekend.

Q: Lewis, you were probably one of the only drivers up here to see what happened at the start, to make your way through the chaos. How was it from your point of view, how difficult to get through? Then your problem with the water pressure late in the race. How serious was that?

LH: I just caught a small glimpse of some drama happening, in the corner of my eye. I knew someone looked like they were spinning so I drove wide to avoid that. Then when I got to Turn Three, one of the Ferraris was right next to me and all of a sudden I heard a big bang almost and he was gone – so I don't know really what happened. After that, I don't know how critical the engine was. There was no indication for me in the car but I did have to slow down.

Q: Kimi, you obviously had a good battle with Valtteri at the beginning and then you were slightly ambushed by Lewis after the restart. Beyond that it seemed to be a pretty regulation race for you. Was it a lonely experience to some degree?

KR: I think a little bit yes – but the start is so important here because it's such a long straight to the first corner, so I got a very good – well not very good but as good as the other two in front of me – start and then you get the big tow effect and I managed to get past Valtteri. I was surprised how little Nico pushed, or went fast in the first lap and obviously it was a Safety Car and after the Safety Car the same happened as last year, that Williams with the long straight just towed past me and nothing that I could do on that. Then I was able... speed-wise the lap time was good. I was able to follow and then I tried once to overtake in the first corner and was a bit unsure. I lost some speed a few corners later and made some small mistakes, so Lewis got next to me. I tried to squeeze him a little bit but then he was there and I had to let him go and the only chance was to follow them and run a little bit longer and push when we had free traffic. We managed to get Williams. Think the car behaved pretty nicely but there was quite a bit of fuel saving to do, limiting us on the lap time. But it was a fine race. Definitely want to be more higher up with two cars – not ideal on that side. I had quite a big struggle the whole weekend so I'll take third place but in the race the car was good, like I wanted, but qualifying we struggled, and in the practice. OK, fine but not what we want.

QUESTIONS FROM THE FLOOR

Q: (Livio Oricchio – Globoesporte.com) Lewis, you said you didn't have any indication on the dash that you had a problem with the power unit, right? So it was the team that signalled it for you. Without this problem, do you think it would have been possible to fight with Nico? At one moment you were 7.7s behind him.

LH: I think it's impossible to really say right now but the car felt good. At that time I was lapping a little bit quicker than Nico so I was chewing away... there was quite a big gap but it did come down from 13s to 7.5s or something like that. At that point it was when I had to back off and drive a second slower through the laps, just to try and hope that the car was going to make it. Because I had no indication or didn't really know what the biggest issue was or whether the engine was going to make it so I just tried to nurse it home.

Q: (Livio Oricchio – Globoesporte.com) Were you surprised?

LH: I've been surprised every weekend... the last two weekends.

Q: (Kirill Zaytsev – 66.RU) Kimi, will we see you here next year?

KR: I don't know.

Q: (Kirill Zaytsev – 66.RU) What about your contract, I mean?

KR: I have a contract until the end of this year so who knows what will happen next year but I wouldn't be here if I didn't enjoy what I do. Obviously I have a passion for racing but many things are not in our hands. We can only try to do our best and then see what the future will bring. We go race by race. I'm sure at some point this year, latest next year we will know.

Q: (Angelique Belokopytov – AutoDigest) So before the season began, there was some expectation that Ferrari's performances which were announced and now after a few races we see that it's not really achieved so my question is for you Kimi, I'm asking for your point of view, what Ferrari is missing to be a real threat to Mercedes?

KR: I think it's not very easy to pinpoint what we need but I'm sure we know quite a few small things that we want to improve and we know that there's some improvements coming but Mercedes were very fast for the last few years and they are fast this year. I don't think that so far this year we have ever really put together a really clean weekend either so that doesn't help. You cannot give anything away and expect to beat a team like them. We definitely have it to be done but I am quite confident that once we get everything as we want that we can be very strong as a team. We've been failing to finish with two cars in the position that we probably deserve so yes, it's been disappointing but now we have a good way of doing things. We are behind where we want to be but I'm sure as a team we will get there.

Ends