



FEDERATION INTERNATIONALE DE L'AUTOMOBILE

## Press Information

### 2016 Brazilian Grand Prix Sunday Race Press Conference Transcript

13.11.2016

#### DRIVERS

1 – Lewis HAMILTON (Mercedes)

2 – Nico ROSBERG (Mercedes)

3 – Max VERSTAPPEN (Red Bull Racing)

#### PODIUM INTERVIEWS

(Conducted by Martin Brundle)

**Q: Lewis, what a race!**

**Lewis HAMILTON:** Not too bad, huh!

**Q: You were out front but calling for the red flags and aquaplaning coming up the hill... talk us through it a little bit?**

**LH:** Firstly, as you said, I want to say a big thank you to all the fans that came out today because that was a long, long race and they stood out in the rain and still at the end there were even more people at the end than there were at the start, so I appreciate all the support here in Brazil. They are always so welcoming to us and their hospitality is second to none. For me, I was generally just chillin' up front. When it rains it's usually a good day for me. Today it was tricky for everyone, there were definite opportunities for aquaplaning, which everyone did, but I want to say a big thank you to my team. We're creating history in this team. This year the stuff that we've done, the results we have got are just incredible and I'm so proud to be a part of it.

**Q: You talked about water coming in your crash helmet following the safety car early doors, was that your only drama today?**

**LH:** Yeah, that was the only drama: no mistakes, no issues, no spins. It was kind of interesting to hear along the race how many people were spinning and that, but I didn't have that problem so I'm really happy about that.

**Q: Fifty-second victory, you move ahead of Alain Prost, second in the all-time list only behind the great Michael Schumacher. Nico, second place, not what you were looking for but it will do today in the championship. You head to Abu Dhabi in two weeks' time with a 12-point lead, what are you thinking standing here?**

**Nico ROSBERG:** Yeah, of course, it didn't go my way today with the win; Lewis just did a great job. But for sure, yeah, it was very difficult conditions out there and I can live with second today for sure.

**Q: Max was pretty handy out there. He was pushing like crazy and taking some rather unusual lines and you must have been thinking: "just leave me alone, I've got a championship to win."**

**NR:** Yeah, and then I arrived on the straight and I saw him pointing 90 degrees towards the wall! I was like "what the hell?"

**Q: We saw you also once having a bit of a scary moment up the hill?**

**NR:** That is true, yes. But it worked out fine to stay on track.

**Q: A tough call for the race direction today, safety car, red flag. Do you think they got it right?**

**NR:** It was on the limit, but in the end, yes, they got it right. They did a good job of judging it but it was quite a fine line out there.

**Q: Max, may I shake your hand, because that was some kind of incredible performance, and he's already been voted driver of the day by the fans. What an adventure you had this afternoon.**

**Max VERSTAPPEN:** Yeah, it was an incredible race, of course, with the red flags, difficult conditions, especially the last straight, really slippery. And then in the final re-start I managed to overtake Nico and I was in quite a comfortable position over there and then I had a massive moment...

**Q: Talk us through that.**

**MV:** I just... I don't know, maybe I clipped a bit the kerb, had a massive moment, locked all four wheels, managed to keep it out of the guard rail, continued still in second. Then we decided to pit for intermediates but unfortunately it started to rain afterwards and it didn't work out. But then after that, I think I was 15, 14, I don't know what I was, and some great overtakes afterwards to come back on the podium so yes, of course, amazing.

**Q: You were just using a different race track to all the other all afternoon – wherever they went, you went somewhere different.**

**MV:** Well, I couldn't see when I was straight behind them, so I had to take another line.

**Q: That big incident you had up here, how much luck and how much skill to keep it out of the barriers?**

**MV:** 50-50 I guess.

**Q: I thought you might say that. Well, you gave us a thrill. The bravery when you guys just could not see. Did you guys see his incident?**

**NR:** I just saw him pointing 90 degrees towards the wall.

**LH:** I saw both of theirs on the TV.

**MV:** He was watching the TV!

**Q: Well, you were cruising out front, Lewis. The showdown, then, in Abu Dhabi, 12 points, what's it going to be Lewis, how do you go to Abu Dhabi?**

**LH:** Well, I'm hunting. I'm hunting and all I can do is do what I'm doing right now. The team have been giving me a great car and finding the reliability has been really good, so the results are really

showing that. I'm going to go and give it everything I've got. Abu Dhabi is generally a really good track for me. But right now I'm just going to live in the moment. This has been my dream since the first time I watched Ayrton race, when I was five or six years old, so to win here...

**Q: Your first victory in Brazil of course.**

**LH:** Exactly, exactly. And it's the 44<sup>th</sup> grand prix here, so it's kind of a lucky weekend.

**Q: Where would you put this in your 52 wins, one of the tougher ones? One of the very toughest, top five?**

**LH:** For me, one the easier ones. It was a very easy race generally. Usually in the rain here it's the hardest but honestly I didn't have any spins, I didn't really have any moments and it was pretty straightforward. Silverstone 2008 was way harder than this.

#### **PRESS CONFERENCE**

**Q: Lewis Hamilton, clearly a very special satisfaction for you today, your first Brazilian Grand Prix win as we were hearing on the podium there with Martin. But I don't know if you're aware it's also a new record: it's the 24<sup>th</sup> different race track you've won on and that's never been done before in Formula One history. Obviously today was about what Formula One is all about – but just sum up your feelings and the emotion, I guess.**

**LH:** I just feel very grateful right now and just incredibly happy. Of course this is a race I've been dreaming of winning since I was very, very young. Unfortunately these experienced feel very surreal and probably won't really kick in until later but after so many years of trying to win this grand prix, all the ups and downs, the emotion, y'know, it's a hard grand prix to win and today was one of the most difficult in terms of being wet and aquaplaning and everything. Probably the most smooth-sailing race I've had here in ten years. I'm just very, very grateful for all the hard work my engineers and mechanics have done because I wouldn't have been able to do it without them.

**Q: Just one detail. When the race was stopped straight after the resumption, you were a bit surprised on the radio. You were saying: "the track is fine." Tell us a little about the condition at that point and how you felt about the decision to stop it.**

**LH:** Yeah, I mean, it's understandable after the first red flag obviously because people were going off, and then the second one... once we went back out after that the track was intermediate tyres – but the Safety Car stayed out for ages. And then that went back in. And then I don't really understand why the last one came out but the track was the same pretty much throughout, apart from after the first Safety Car so it was kind-of a pointless need to have a Safety Car come out, we should have just kept going. But, y'know, obviously safety comes first and they obviously felt that was the case. Fortunately everyone's safe so it was obviously the right decision.

**Q: Coming to you Nico, you obviously did what you needed to do today. I guess the key was not being tempted to respond to the provocation of Red Bull twice when they went onto the Intermediate. You basically just, both of you, stayed with that Wet tyre.**

**NR:** Yeah, it was touch and go but for sure it was risky to go on the Inter because it was just very, very tricky through those couple of sections. It just, as you saw, it caught out Felipe and a few others and you know, of course, in the position that we're in, can't really take such big risks. So it was the right decision, of course, and the strategy came in our favour, which is good.

**Q: And what's the emotion now. Are you feeling relieved at the end of today? If you're here again on Sunday afternoon in Abu Dhabi, you're the World Champion.**

**NR:** Yeah, I mean of course in light of that I have to... I can live with a second place today for sure even though I was hoping for the win – but of course second is OK, yeah.

**Q: Max, an astonishing drive, where do we pick the bones out of that one? Maybe we could start with those passes at the start on Raikkonen and the restart on Nico. Talk us through those.**

**MV:** Yeah, in the first run I was trying some different lines and I found a good one so I knew that if Kimi was not going to take that line then I had a good chance of overtaking him. That worked out, he couldn't really see what was happening in front of him and I pulled out of the spray and then I could brake on the inside and pass him, so that was all clean. From there on, I was a bit relieved because they were a bit slower behind me so I could follow the guys in front. But then of course, with the red flag and stuff, coming in twice actually, the same like Lewis, the second one I didn't really understand because I think I was ready to go. It was similar to before. Then from there on, once we restarted again, I think the track was worse than before. We had good pace again, I had a good fight with Nico in turn three so of course enjoyed overtaking him there and then trying to follow Lewis a bit and then I had a massive moment in the second last corner onto the straight, so lucky not to hit the guardrail. And then I continued and then at one point I got the call to box because I heard Daniel was already gaining a second on the intermediate tyre so we did a pit stop. The first set was actually pretty good but then it started to rain a bit harder than before so then the last sector was undriveable, it was very difficult before but then undriveable on the intermediates, so we had to pit again and I don't where I was, fifteenth? I hadn't a clue, fifteenth, sixteenth? Yeah, then I started to pass people again and then it was very difficult, very tricky. I couldn't see where I was going on the straight, at such high speeds it's not nice but we managed to pass a lot of them and then of course you come back on the podium and it's a great result at the end of the day.

**Q: Obviously the feeling was that if you could get the race onto the intermediate condition across the three of you, maybe the Red Bull would be the quicker car. You tried it twice, two gambles as you just referred to, but if you hadn't taken those gambles, looking back on it, do you think this was possibly a winnable race for you or were they just too strong today?**

**MV:** Win? Maybe not but I think a second was definitely possible. I think we were in quite a safe position in second but sometimes you have to gamble a bit to try and win the race. That's what we tried today, it didn't work out but we're still on the podium with some great overtakes so I'm quite a happy person.

## **QUESTIONS FROM THE FLOOR**

**Q: (Livio Oricchio – GloboEsporte.com) Max, can you describe to us a little of the sensation you had overtaking so many drivers and choosing a very original line on the track?**

**MV:** About the line, I think it's just because you can't see where you're going when you just stay behind them, so you try something else and it seemed to work. The car was working really well also so that helps. Of course it's great because you have to go forward. We didn't have the best strategy at the time so you try to make up for it.

**Q: (Michael Schmidt – Auto Motor und Sport) Maybe to all three, starting with Lewis: the race was twice interrupted, you had to hang around for half an hour each time. How distracting is that?**

**LH:** Well, honestly it wasn't distracting at all. Just very focused at the beginning and managed to maintain that. Got to stop and have something to eat the second time. Fortunately, I just never had to step out of the zone, I was in the zone the whole time which was a positive. In those conditions, obviously it's much easier to lose focus, particularly in those stops but fortunately I didn't have that.

**NR:** Yeah, it was not a problem. It was fine, it was a good time to relax, eat some spaghetti and good to go again.

**MV:** Yeah, pretty OK I think. I was ready to go again so I was just sitting there waiting to hear the message that we could race again.

**Q: (Rodrigo Franca – VIP Magazine) A question to all three and then one for Lewis. The Brazilian fans don't have a Brazilian driver winning and fighting for the title and they stayed from 7am until now in the rain, so I would like you to comment on that because you guys gave them a very good race despite the conditions. And to Lewis especially, I would like to know if you feel the energy of the Brazilian fans because of your admiration of Ayrton Senna?**

**LH:** Without a doubt this is one of the best crowds we have in the whole season but the Brazilian fans have always been incredibly passionate about Formula One. I came here with a helmet which was a mix of mine and Ayrton's as everywhere I go around the world and bump into Brazilian people they think about Ayrton and it's just incredible how much he meant to the people here. I feel incredibly proud to have now won in the place that he has done but yeah, the fans are remarkable, to be able to get here that early and even though it was raining... most people would go home but they stayed and cheered the whole way. That's just fantastic. Brazil generally spits out pretty good drivers so over time I'm sure there will be another winner at some stage.

**NR:** For me, even yesterday going to the auto show it was amazing. So many people were wearing my hat and so it's really good to see a big big support and even now, just before the press conference, I went down to see everybody and they were going crazy so it's nice to have so much support here in Brazil so I'm very thankful for that.

**MV:** Yeah, it was very nice to see them staying, first of all, after two red flags, then you can clearly see the dedication they have to F1 and also when my engineer opened the radio when I was pulling passes on the cars they were cheering, so they were really living up to it and I think that's great.

**Q: (Michael Schmidt – Auto Motor und Sport) In the past we've had much worse conditions than these, much more rain – for example Fuji 2007 – but it seems more and more that driving with these cars is almost impossible, too dangerous in these conditions today. Can you explain why it gets more and more difficult to drive these cars in the rain and can you understand that some people can't understand that a racing car is not driveable in the rain by the best drivers in the world – how is that possible?**

**NR:** It's down to the tyres, you know, not coping well with the aquaplaning. We know that and we've been working on that now for next year and so we're hopeful to make progress on that. Of course it would be good, you know, if it wasn't so on the edge as soon as there's a bit of standing water.

**LH:** This is Formula One and the rain conditions are the trickiest conditions. If everyone just went round and didn't make mistakes it would be too easy and then everyone could do it. We are going at some serious speeds and there is a lot of water to disperse by the tyres and the tyre just struggles; the faster we go, the harder it is for the tyres. This wasn't a particularly difficult race in terms of being wet, there's been much much worse races in terms of aquaplaning.

**MV:** Well of course I haven't driven in 2007 but yeah, I think it's a combination of having more horsepower now, so more torque, so the cars are speeding up more and less downforce at the

moment. Yeah, I think next year it should be solved already, it will be much easier to drive the cars in the wet because of having quite a lot more downforce on the race. Of course, I think we can do improvements on the tyres, we're working on that for next year but I think that with more downforce that should help already.

**Q: (Livio Oricchio – GloboEsporte.com) To Nico and Lewis, Nico, you won last year in Abu Dhabi, Lewis won in 2014. A comment from you about the last round of the championship, the decision of the world title. Do you think you have more chance than Lewis who has more affinity with track? A comment in general about the last round of the championship.**

**NR:** Well, it's going to be a great, exciting race weekend, a great battle for sure. I would like to win the race and that's what I'm going there... I'm going to try and do that for sure. I've had good experience there in the past but of course that's not going to help this year. You know we all start from zero this year, every time we go to a different track. Yeah, feeling good so let's see.

**LH:** Obviously I have to continue what I'm doing. Nico's finished every single race this year apart, obviously, from Barcelona which we both didn't finish so he's had fantastic reliability, so I think right now, as the way it's going it's going to be very hard to beat him. That doesn't mean I can't win the race, so I'm going to take the energy I have now and the speed that I have which has been great this past few races and really try to push as hard as I can in that race to get as far ahead. That's all I can do.

Ends