



FEDERATION INTERNATIONALE DE L'AUTOMOBILE

Press Information

2016 Grand Prix of Europe Sunday Race Press Conference Transcript

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DRIVERS

- 1 – Nico ROSBERG (Mercedes)
- 2 – Sebastian VETTEL (Ferrari)
- 3 – Sergio PEREZ (Force India)

PODIUM INTERVIEWS

(Conducted by Eddie Jordan)

Azerbaijan, Baku: what an amazing city and what an amazing race and we have your winners here today. Nico, tell us, you needed this today didn't you, your fifth win of the season? Tell us about it.

Nico ROSBERG: Yeah, Eddie, it's been an amazing day really, an amazing weekend. Thank you all here in Baku for welcoming us in this way. It's been spectacular, great track you've made, really exciting racing. Of course, for me the weekend went perfectly: qualifying, race, everything to plan, so it was really awesome.

When we saw you at the beginning of the week, you had some concerns about how you would approach this particular weekend. That's all forgotten about I expect?

NR: No concerns; flat out.

Brilliant result for your today, we'll come straight back to you. Second place, ladies and gentlemen, please, Sebastian Vettel. Come on Seb, tell us, second place in Canada, second place here, is this a complete Ferrari revival or are you going to have a word with Sergio, your boss and your President at Ferrari. Are you going to look for more horsepower?

Sebastian VETTEL: Well, first of all, thank you very much. It's the first time we are here in Azerbaijan. I didn't really know what to expect, but it's been a great track, a great pleasure, a great welcome for all of us. I think the circuit is incredible. You need to be 'well-equipped', let's put it this way, around here, so some proper high-speed corners and very, very close. Today has obviously been a great job for us. Already by the end of yesterday the car was coming alive. We were struggling a bit on Friday, but to see where we are now I think is a great recovery. Second place in a row, two times on the podium now in a row after Canada, which is great, scoring some good points

– even though this weekend was a bit different to last week. But still I think the pace is there, the car is good, we are coming along, so all in all a great day and thanks to the team.

The two different make-ups of the circuit – the slow speed and then the high-speed – did you enjoy that difference between the two?

SV: Yeah, definitely, especially because in the low speed you have to tackle quite a lot of kerb and be very, very aggressive. Very easy to get caught out. I think a lot of people lost a lot of money because they were betting on a safety car and we didn't have one! I think it also speaks for the quality of the drivers. So it was a clean race. I expected a couple of safety cars, but it didn't come out. But it's a great circuit, a great challenge and with the high-speed sections where it's really narrow it's a lot of fun.

Well, it's delightful to see you on the podium; we all love it. Ladies and gentlemen, the pride of Mexico! You've got a lot fans here.

Sergio PEREZ: Many Mexicans I hope.

We thought you'd blown it yesterday: you ran into the wall with a lap to go in the qualifying [sic] and to have to need a new gearbox, I said "well, he's just cost the team a podium". You've proved me wrong!

SP: Me either. I knew yesterday when I put the car in the wall in P3 that this was a big chance for us to score a massive result [potentially lost]. I was so frustrated with myself. Then going into qualifying, my boys did an amazing job to fix the car, to put everything together. And then I had to do the job, you know. I had to get on with the job. We had a great qualifying but still we were starting P7 today and we had to make our way through. Very good start, very good first lap. Very nice overtaking in Turn Two for Massa and Kvyat and then fighting with Kimi all the way to the end. I knew that he had a five-second penalty, but it was still nice to get him on the last lap.

Exactly – how sweet was it just to pip him on the last lap?

SP: Very nice. Although I knew that the podium was secure but when I saw the opportunity, that it was safe enough to do it and no risk at all, I went for it, because it obviously feel a lot nicer to finish the race P3.

Well, we're very pleased, amazing drive from seventh to third. We come back to the winner – Nico! Nico we have to talk about the championship. You won the first four races, everyone thought it was in the bag and then you had a couple of little hiccups, so to speak. Are you back with a vengeance?

NR: To be honest, today I'm just enjoying this win, because that's what I came here for. I wanted to win Baku and it worked out, so ecstatic, can't wait to go down and see everybody....

You could answer my question!

NR: I'm not answering the question; I'm avoiding it! I'm going to go down and see everybody and big celebrations.

QUESTIONS FROM THE FLOOR

Q: (Flavio Vanetti – Corriere della Sera) Sebastian, going to the very first part of the race, can you confirm that you were asked to come into the pits but you preferred to stay out?

SV: Yeah, yeah, basically I was called in. We wanted to react to Daniel who pitted. He was struggling a lot with his tyres; obviously we passed him and then he went into the box. But I had a decent feeling, the pace was quite OK, I thought, and then we decided to stay out so I was asking the team to stay out, the tyres felt OK and I wanted to keep going. I was maybe at that point, seeing that Daniel was struggling and feeling that the tyres were not feeling so comfortable in the first, six, ten laps, a bit worried that the second stint would be very very long. In the end I don't think there was much in it. Obviously we lost position to Kimi who undercut us but obviously we played well as a team together to make sure that when I came out behind him with the fresher tyres to use the pace and secure second place.

Q: (Oana Popoiou – F1 Zone) Sergio, do you think you had the pace to fight for a victory today if it wasn't for the grid penalty?

SG: No, I don't think so. I don't think we could have fought Nico. He was very strong, in another league, but certainly I would have had a really good fight with Sebastian for P2.

Q: (Livio Oricchio – Globo Esporte.com) Sebastian and Sergio, we saw in Monaco and Canada some teams more close to Mercedes and here Mercedes was one second faster per lap. How do analyse that please?

SV: Well, I think they had a very strong package here. I think, as I explained, Friday was a bad day for us and we managed to recover, get away from here with a second place. I think it's the optimum so we can be happy with that but surely not happy with the gap. Why they are quicker? I think looking at the comparison yesterday they were gaining quite a lot down the straights. I think maybe we carried a little bit too much wing. The other bit, we were losing quite a bit in low speed corners. Arguably they are doing something clever to pick up some pace there in low speed, the way they treat the tyres but if there's something clever to be done, we need to be as clever as them and not be lacking that.

SP: Yeah, for us I think relatively on this track we certainly got a little bit closer to Mercedes but not a lot. I think everyone else dropped behind and they lost some performance so for us, I think the track suited our car well. Obviously a good power unit and I think good balance around the track. People were probably struggling more than we did but I think that was the main reason why we managed to be so much further up.

Q: (Jerome Bourret – L'Equipe) For all of you, after we have seen yesterday in qualifying and during the GP2 races, we were all expecting a crazy race. It hasn't been the case; do you have any explanation for that? Have you been more cautious or was the track less tricky than yesterday?

NR: I think for sure a little bit the experience helps in that case. We're all much more experienced and we're able to avoid the incidents better and we also learned a lot from what was going on in the GP2 for sure, because we were watching and that was mayhem so I think we picked up a few things there as well and that's it, but very surprising anyways.

SV: Well, surprised, yes, but then again I think it speaks for the quality. I think we've talked a lot about this track being high risk, dangerous. It reminds me. A couple of months ago I had a very nice lunch with Sir Stirling Moss. Obviously in 'their' time, you can argue it was very dangerous everywhere they went and he said it was a big deal of the reason why he jumped in the car,

because it was dangerous.. Otherwise anybody could do it, so the thrill of it was exactly that challenge. I think we had some corners here where you don't want to think about what's happening if you get it wrong, very little room for mistakes and error but then it definitely makes you more alert, you're awake and obviously you try to go as hard as you can and push but I don't think we were taking it easy, any one of us, but equally, obviously, you don't take any stupid approaches to risk because it could end quite badly.

Q: Checo, how do you describe the lack of safety car?

SP: To be honest, I'm very surprised, given how difficult this track is but it also speaks for the quality of the drivers that we have in Formula One. It's not that we were taking it easy out there, I think we were all pushing and every braking point you really feel it can go wrong at any point. There is no room for mistakes in any place. The very least that can happen to you if you make a mistake is you lose a couple of seconds but I'm really surprised and I think well done to everyone because nobody made a mistake. Very surprised for that.

Ends