



Press Information

2019 Canadian Grand Prix Sunday Press Conference Transcript 09.06.2019

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TRACK INTERVIEWS

(Conducted by Martin Brundle)

Q: So, Lewis congratulations. We have to congratulate all three drivers on the podium that was a sensational race, a brutal race as well. Obviously I've immediately got to talk about the incident between you and Sebastian at the exit of Turn 4 there.

Lewis HAMILTON: Well, firstly I just want to say a big thank you to my team, because I wouldn't be standing here today without the incredible effort from everyone. We had a problem this morning with the engine, with my crash on Friday. If they hadn't been so diligent I wouldn't have been able to race today as I have. So a big thank you to them. Naturally, it's absolutely not the way I wanted to win. I was pushing to the end to try to get past, but obviously I forced him into an error, he went a bit wide, but then I obviously had a run on that corner and we nearly collided. It was unfortunate but this is motor racing.

Q: Sebastian has gone straight to the stewards' office to talk to them about it; he's not here at the moment. Obviously he feels he was just busy collecting the car up and trying not to crash and he had no other option coming off the grass.

LH: That's to his opinion of course, you know for me I took the corner normally. When you come back on the track you're not supposed to go straight back to the racing line, you're supposed to come on safely and I assume that's why they...

Q: As you say, you had a tricky day, you know, with the car. Even when you were on the grid they were working like made on your brakes.

LH: Yeah, absolutely. It was just so hot here, you know. The Canadian weather is just so hardcore for us here. Very hard on the brakes. Physically, I'm just destroyed just trying to hold onto Seb. The Ferraris were just so quick this weekend, so I'm really grateful that I was able to be there within the race. Nonetheless, this is good points still for the team.

Q: And finally, do you think you could have overtaken if you had to in those final few laps?

LH: Not towards the end I don't think. I think we were all struggling with brake temperature towards the end. My tyres were good at that point where he made the mistake, I was as close as I was ever going to be. But then obviously I got that blocking and the gap opened up again. It was just very, very hard all the way through. It's very, very hard to follow here. This is such a great track. And if it wasn't for these fans it probably wouldn't be as great as it is. So a big thank you to everyone that's come today.

Q: Congratulations. Charles, you nearly took second place on the last lap.

Charles LECLERC: Yeah, it was close. I'm pretty happy about the performance, my own performance today. I think we were very quick. It's a bit of a shame that yesterday I did some mistakes in qualifying.

I need to work on my qualifying to get better on them. The race pace was very, very strong, so it's a good sign for the future. I'm disappointed obviously for the team, we have all worked extremely hard to be there. I don't know what happened for Seb, but the team definitely deserved a victory today so it's a shame but we will come back stronger and we will keep pushing as we did in the first few races and hopefully the victory will come soon.

Q: Relentless pace from you but the team stopped you quite late and you just feel off the leading two.

CL: Yes, there was definitely a reason behind that. Obviously it was quite difficult to challenge the two in front at the beginning so we just tried to go long, hoping for a safety car that never came but yeah we will see.

Q: Sebastian, we missed you in parc fermé. Nine times you two have won a world championship. You are two of the finest drivers that ever graced a Formula 1 circuit but clearly you feel you've had a great victory stolen away from you today.

Sebastian VETTEL: Well, I think first of all I really enjoyed the race, I really enjoyed the crowd to be honest, every lap seeing them cheering me on, especially around the hairpin. It was very intense, I think Lewis was a bit quicker throughout the race but we were able to stay ahead. For the rest I think I've said enough. You should ask the people what they think. I think we had a great show. Lewis showed some good respect. Yeah, ask the people.

Q: Lewis, you've had a race taken away from you in similar circumstances, in Spa, so you know the pain. Does this leave a bad feeling between you two great champions?

LH: Well, all I can say is I didn't make the decision, firstly, so I don't know what they're booing at. Maybe it's the decision.

SV: The people shouldn't boo at Lewis, because I think he saw what was going on and I don't think there was any intention to be in his, harm's way. I had trouble in staying on track. But the people shouldn't boo at Lewis. If anything, they should boo at these funny decisions.

PRESS CONFERENCE

Q: What a difference 24 hours makes: complete euphoria of yesterday and the frustration of today. Can you just talk us through the incident at Turns Three and Four. What caused you to run wide on entry and is there anything you could have done differently when you were re-joining the track?

SV: Well, I lost the rear of the car, so obviously it wasn't voluntarily going sailing across the track, not knowing how and in which fashion and so on I will be rejoining. I think it is pretty clear I was on the limit. I was pushing very hard throughout the entire race and... yeah. Obviously I was going through the grass and I think it's quite commonly known that the grass isn't very grippy. So – you agree? – and then I was coming back on track and just trying to, y'know, make sure I have the car under control. Once I regained control, made sure it was sort-of alright, I looked in the mirrors, and saw Lewis right behind me. As you said, yesterday we had the euphoria and the enthusiasm of a great day. I feel, in a way, the same today. I think we had a great race, the team did fantastic and, yeah, obviously I'm not happy with the decision the stewards took. I think you can understand. It feels a bit weird to sit here, not having won the race even though you crossed the line first. And as I said, I don't think I have done anything wrong; I don't feel I could have done anything different. I don't know, actually, what the problem was. So... yeah. Not much more to say, I think, from my point of view. I think all the people out there, they probably agree with me.

Q: Where you aware of where Lewis was as you were rejoining?

SV: No! How? I've got two hands and I had them on the steering wheel, trying to keep the car under my control. So, I don't know... I think we are pretty good at multi-tasking, driving these cars – but if it is required to drive... to catch the car once you come back from the grass or off the track, maybe one-handed, use the other hand to pull off a tear-off and maybe hit the radio button to talk to the team at the same time, I don't qualify, I can't do that. I had, as I said, my hands full, trying to keep the car somewhere in my control. Obviously I knew that Lewis was behind somewhere because he was, like, a second behind, but when I looked in the mirror he was right there. So I was obviously then racing him down to Turn Six.

Q: And the race pace of your car. What positives can you take away?

SV: Yeah, I think overall it's been a positive weekend and I think a very positive result. Obviously we're both sitting up here. As I said, on my side, it feels a bit weird but I think the pace was good. I think it was clear to see that Mercedes probably was faster throughout the race but yeah, we managed to fight them off.

Q: Charles, coming to you. You seem much happier with the car today than during qualifying yesterday?

CL: Yeah, I was quite a lot happier today. I think race pace was quite strong, so, on that I was very happy. The start was quite tricky with Lewis but I decided to not take any risks. So then, yeah, it was quite a boring race from then-on, trying to manage the tyres in the first eight-nine laps and from then on I started to push. I could feel that we were quite good and, on the second stint, the car felt great. We were very quick. I could feel I was catching a little bit in front. The team asked me to pit to do the fastest lap, and I asked to continue because I could see that the gap was closing. I knew it will be quite difficult to catch them but if there was an opportunity I wanted to be there, so I didn't give up. At the end, it didn't pay off. We do third, it's a good result home, but the team definitely deserved more after such a great weekend. Also, Seb, disappointed for the team and Seb. I think the first position was in our hands and it's a shame it slipped away the way it did. So hopefully we'll have other good races in the future.

QUESTIONS FROM THE FLOOR

Q: (Christian Menath – motorsport-magazin.com) Sorry Seb to jump in that again, could you just talk us through when you realised you lost it. Did you think about... was it only that you wanted to catch the car or did you also think about to get back the fastest possible way – and did you lift or did you stay in the throttle?

SV: Look, I think it was clear what happened. I mean, what's the point of going through split-seconds for an hour now? With all the respect, there's nothing to add from what I said. You lose the car, I don't do that voluntarily because the outcome is unpredictable. Once I manage to catch the car, obviously I realise that I couldn't stay on track, couldn't keep the car on track, slowed down, had to slow down, go over the grass really cautiously, lost a lot of time. Managed to get back on track with dirty tyres, and once I regained, sort of, control, being somewhere on the track, I had to check my mirrors and Lewis was right behind me, just to see where he is, not to, I don't know, be in his way or whatever. So, that's what happened. I'm not the first guy in the world of racing that had a mistake on corner entry and had to catch the car going through the grass, gravel or whatever.

Q: (Michelangelo Choppi – La Voce Euro Canada) What do you have to say about the race today? You do everything you can do to win the race. After you have five seconds penalty. What do you think personally, for the Italian community here who support Ferrari all these days. What do you have to say personally. And for Charles Leclerc, what is the difference between racing with Alfa Romeo last year and this year with the Ferrari here in Montreal? Thank you.

SV: Well, I think we have tremendous support here, it's crazy. In the morning I commute by bike so I see the people when they queue to get onto the island. It's crazy. The atmosphere is fantastic. There's so much support for Ferrari. Obviously a great Ferrari fanbase but I think a great atmosphere in general. During the race I really enjoyed it. Obviously it was very intense, when you have Lewis behind you, pushing you so hard – but I really enjoyed it and halfway through the race I was thinking 'this is a good day, this is why I'm doing this'. So, I really enjoyed looking up at the grandstands in the hairpin – you have a bit of time while you wait for the car to turn – and the people are going wild and I really enjoyed that. Still, it's very special. It's a special position for us to be in. Drivers' Parade, having the cheer from the people, sitting on the grid, people shouting. Obviously I think I share the people's opinion after the race as well. It feels a bit funny – but certainly grateful for all the support we get.

And Charles?

CL: On my side it's just different, of course. You approach the race weekend a little bit differently. Because obviously now I have the car to fight for wins and podiums which, last year, the approach was a bit different: podiums and wins were not on the cards, more points. And the support, as Seb mentioned, is just amazing. A lot more than what I would have expected, and a lot more than last year.

Since the beginning of the season really, every race we come to there's a lot of support and this has changed a lot from last year. So it's great.

Q: (Phil Duncan – PA) Sebastian, will you be appealing the decision, or will Ferrari be appealing the decision. And do you feel any sympathy towards Lewis being booed – given that he didn't really do anything do anything wrong.

SV: I said, nothing to do with Lewis. I obviously understand that the people weren't happy, as I wasn't happy myself with these sort of decisions – but nothing to do with Lewis. It's just not nice when people boo you, so that's why I jumped in. I'm sorry that I interrupted his answer but I jumped in and said 'don't boo him, he's done nothing wrong'. If anything he drove a great race, put me under a lot of pressure and I really, really enjoyed that. I think we share great respect amongst each other. Nothing to do with him.

Q: Quick question for Lewis. Congratulations, by the way, win number 78, your fifth of the season. We're talking about the incident. Can you just tell us what you had to do to avoid Sebastian as he came back on the track?

LH: Well, to me it's a bit of an empty feeling today, which is kind-of crazy because we're in this beautiful country. It's been ultimately a really great race between two different teams and it ends with a bit of a kind of negative. From what I remember, I came through the corner, I was quicker at that point and I was really just trying to apply pressure to Seb. One, to try and get close enough, but two to push him into an error. It's not too often you're able to push a four-time World Champion into making an error but it came and at the time I was like 'OK, great, this is my opportunity.' So I continued the corner as normal. Came around, and was on the line. The gap just closed, it looked like we were going to crash so I just had to brake and come off the gas to avoid a collision. Fortunately we did avoid it. But obviously that was one kind-of window. And then the gap opened up because I did brake to avoid it. And even when I heard there was a penalty I just kept pushing because I was like 'maybe we can still have that race'. It's such a hard race to follow; the temperatures are so high; it's the heaviest-duty track for the cars. It's very, very physical for the car and also for the driver. It's so easy to make a mistake, so I was really just trying to get as close as I could. The Ferrari is ultimately this weekend so strong. They were so quick on the straights. They definitely have another power mode that we currently don't have. So, all of a sudden they turn up the power and he pulls away massively on the straight, even if I have DRS open. But I really... just trying to focus on the positive, in a sense, that my team worked so hard this morning to get... I nearly didn't start the race because we had an engine problem. So, the guys have really had their work cut-out this weekend because I crashed the car on Friday – which is rare for me – and then had a good Saturday and then, this morning had that problem. To take the engine apart and rebuild it, was very, very easy to make mistakes and so, I just wanted to deliver them the best race I could possibly deliver. I didn't feel I did anything wrong today. I just gave it my all. So, there's nothing more I could really ask.

Q: (Maxime Sarrasin – 98.5FM) Question for Lewis. What happened, we understood it was your seventh win in Montreal, you equalised the record of Michael Schumacher here. So, what are your thoughts about that? Having equalised the record from him?

LH: I have not really thought about it, if I'm really honest. As I was saying earlier, it does kind of feel like a deflated win, naturally. Hopefully by 2021 they redesign the rules better, that enables us to race better than we can currently today. But, this has always been a great hunting ground for me. It's been a place that I really have loved, and have always felt like I've been really accepted and supported here. There's a lot of Ferrari fans in Canada but nonetheless I still appreciate them. And we get such a great crowd here, y'know. It's in the top three of the best races of the year, arguably for me. The British Grand Prix is obviously is great for me because I've got my home crowd, which is even bigger than this place because it's a bigger space. When the weather's great, like today, it's just one of the most beautiful weekends of the year. So, often have family come out here. I won my first grand prix here, lots of poles, and it's just been a place that I've thoroughly loved driving. So, that's never going to change. As I said, I felt a little bit odd, being booed – but it's not like the first time I've been booed. I'm used to it – and I forgive.

Q: (Frederic Ferret – L'Equipe) Sebastian, do you plan to go to talk to the stewards afterwards and Lewis, can you summarise what was your feeling in Spa in 2008 when the same happened to you?

SV: I don't know, I don't know, I don't know what's the procedure now. I was just thinking that I really love my racing. I'm a purist, I love going back and looking at the old times, the old cars, the old drivers. It's an honour when you have the chance to meet them and talk to them; they're heroes in a way. So I really love that but I just wish I was maybe as good, doing what I do, but being in their time rather than today. I think it's not just about that decision today, there's other decisions. Just hear the wording when people come on the radio, that we have now. We have an official language, I think it's all wrong. I think we should be able to say what we think but we're not so in this regard I disagree with where the sport is now. You have all this wording 'I gained an advantage, I didn't gain an advantage, I avoided a collision'. I just think it's wrong, you know, it's not really what we're doing in the car. It's racing, it's common sense. If there's a hazard on track, obviously you slow down because it's quite unnatural to keep the pedal to the floor and run into the car and then say, 'ah, it's wrong that the car was there.' I think Lewis... obviously as I said, I rejoined the track and then Lewis obviously had to react. I don't know how close it was or close he was. Once I looked in the mirror he was sort of there but for me that's racing and I think a lot of the people that I just mentioned earlier, the old Formula One drivers and people in the grandstands and so on, would agree that this is just part of racing but nowadays it's just... I don't like it, we all sound a bit like lawyers and using the official language. I think it just gives no edge to people and no edge to the sport. Ultimately it's not the sport that I fell in love with when I was watching. Obviously it hurts me today because it impacts on my race result but I think this more of a bigger criteria. Tomorrow, when I wake up, I won't be disappointed. I think Lewis and myself we share great respect and I think we've achieved so much in the sport, I think we're both very very blessed to be in that position so one win up, one win down, I don't think it's a game-changer if you've been around for such a long time, but as I said, I'm not happy about all this complaining and stuff that we see so many times.

LH: Well, I second what Seb said in the sense of the respect that we've always had between us. We've had a lot of years racing together and there's probably no one that I enjoy racing with on the track more than he. I always relish opportunities to battle like we've had today and the previous years and they're really really memories that I will always cherish and I hope there are many more, so stick around.

I don't think you can relate it necessarily to 2008 because 2008 I made an error. Obviously I overtook someone off track and then had to let them past and then overtook them again but back then, my team asked Charlie – who was a steward clearly – whether the overtake was OK and Charlie came back and said it was totally fine but if he had come back and told us at the time that it wasn't OK, I would have let him back past and overtook him again. But the rest of that race was crazy, you know. I went off, he overtook me and then he spun and then I overtook him again and then he crashed and then I won the race – and I still got penalised at the end so it was a lot different, but I do understand what it's like to naturally lose a race. It's definitely not the way you want to win a race, it's not the way you want to lose a race also, especially when you've driven so well.

Q: (Mike Doodson -) It's an apology because it's more about the same incident but none of us have driven cars with a thousand horsepower at the speed that you do. Obviously you didn't have many options, you didn't have much time to make them. If you had lifted off, would it have been dangerous, would the car have spun because the grass was so slippery? What would have been the reaction of the car?

SV: I lifted off, of course, I lost time. I don't think it was faster that way, I think you agree. Yes, as I said, I was busy enough to keep it somewhere under control so of course, once I'd lost the rear, already I lost the corner, then I lift off and I just sort of stayed somehow in control over the grass and then came back, so I wasn't flooring it. If I would have done that I would have crashed. So the priority at that point is just to survive, it's not look around or going on the power or being fast or whatever.

Q: (Pino Asaro – Corriera Italiano) Seb, take us back to your state of mind as soon as you got out of the car? We saw you on the monitor, followed you into the Ferrari hospitality. What you going through? We're all asking questions, are you going to race control, can you please take us back to that particular moment?

LH: By the way, I stopped at the end, I thought your car broke down. I stopped to pick you up.

SV: I thought maybe, OK. No, I wasn't looking. I parked the car in parc ferme, a different parc ferme, the one that is not for the top three and then went to get weighed and then at that point didn't really want to join anything that was obviously happening after that. I wasn't very heated up, obviously angry and disappointed but I think everybody understands why but I think it's a matter of respect to show to

Lewis and Charles and also the representative for Mercedes on the podium, to be part of the podium. Certainly it wasn't the place where I wanted to be because at that point you just want to get out but yeah, also sitting here is not of my free will but I have to be here.

Q: (Pino Asaro – Corriera Italiano) And the question for Charles: you almost came within five seconds of Seb. Did you lift off, the last lap or two, to make sure that Seb at least would finish second?

CL: I was not aware at all so no. I pushed but I didn't know what was going on in front, I didn't know Seb had a penalty. I was just pushing in case something happened in front, to be there if I had an opportunity but I was not aware of the five seconds penalty so no, I only did my own race.

Q: (Michael Schmidt – Auto Motor und Sport) Lewis, being the racer as you, if you were sitting in the stewards' room would you investigate such an incident, or would you give a penalty then finally?

LH: Well, the good thing is I'm not in the stewards' room so I'm not there, so it's a hypothetical question.

Q: (Rebecca Clancy – The Times) Sebastian, you talked about wanting to race in the old days and obviously you've been around for a while. Do races like today, decisions like today make you question your future in the sport?

SV: Well, I don't know. Not ready, what time is it now? I'm not ready for this kind of question. I don't know, I just feel that nowadays we look at so many things that maybe we didn't look at in the past because nobody was really making a fuss. Now, obviously it's worth making a fuss for everything because you have these decisions. I sympathise in a way with the stewards. I've said many times when I've been in there that they are sitting in front of a piece of paper and they're watching the race and they also came back to me and say we agree but look, we have to do these kind of things so I think just the way we are doing these things now is just wrong but it's our times, we have regulations for everything. We need to have this jacket when... I don't know, it's clear there's a hole when walking down a pedestrian walk and there is a hole in the street because they're doing construction work and there needs to be a be guy who guides to the other side of the road, otherwise it's the construction company's fault that you fell into the hole and broke a leg, but I think you're just an idiot if you walk into that hole and break you leg but that's a little bit how my theory is nowadays. The approaches are drifting apart.

Q: (Abhishek Aggarwal – IndiainF1.com) Sebastian, when the stewards came with the official verdict there were still 15 laps to go and I think you were two seconds ahead of Lewis. Did you think there was possibly some chance or something else to do to get three more seconds of advantage?

SV: Yes, at some point I was three seconds in front but I was pretty sure that he was controlling the pace. Obviously once that happened it felt like he reduced pressure because there was no point. Then at some point it felt like maybe he doubted the decision and was putting pressure back on but also...

LH: I wasn't backing off because of that. You just started going really quick, and I was like, shoot, he's going to pull five seconds so I was struggling with the tyres when you suddenly picked up pace and then I was like I've got to do everything to try and keep up.

SV: Yeah, so I was trying to get this five seconds but I had a sequence of good laps, maybe that was in hand with when Lewis was struggling but then I was struggling more towards the end, plus we had to save fuel also to make it so not the easiest race to manage but I think we managed to stay ahead which makes me very happy and proud. I think the credit really goes to the team, hard work and this track looked a bit more competitive for us so despite what happened today, we're looking forward to try and improve our car. There's still work to do. I think Mercedes and Lewis were a bit faster in the race we're still catching up but I think it was a good race overall for us.

Q: (Audas Ruszinov – Hungarian media) Lewis, your history in the winning circle started here in 2007. Would you take a moment to look back and compare the 2007 Lewis Hamilton to the person you are today? What was the most appreciated things of value which Formula One has taught you, as a driver, as a person, which you appreciated the most in the last 12 years?

LH: That's a good question. Well naturally I was 22-years old, pretty much a kid still and for me, personally, I feel like I've matured a lot later. I was thrown in at the deep end of this incredible circus and sport. One thing I was prepared for was to race but I wasn't prepared for the whole circus that comes along with it. I don't know if I could say what the sport's taught me. Naturally, through all these different experiences I've learned a lot about who I am, how to adapt to the different situations that

surround me. I've done everything through trial and error. I've made a lot of mistakes over these years. Many of you here have been with me through that journey and definitely seen those mistakes, the good and the bad so there's not really much that the media or you guys don't know about me in terms of my character. I'm not perfect but I've grown a huge amount with the sport and the sport's given my life meaning so I'm forever grateful to it and naturally today, I'm 34-years old, I'm a grown man and still love driving, still driving with the same heart that I did, I think, when I was 22 but just much more level head on my shoulders, a much wiser head of my shoulders which has enabled me to drive with the style and the skill that I had before but just finesse it a lot better. But also we get to travel the world, we get to see different cultures and all these different beautiful countries and people and I think what I've really really learned is really to enjoy... firstly not to take notice of what people think of you because every is going to have an opinion and then just, as long as you like yourself, know you've got great people around you who do love you, like your family most importantly, then all you've got to do is just enjoy what you do and do the best you can, because our days are limited, as I always say. I try to make sure I... like I can go to bed tonight and know that I gave everything this weekend and I'll come back stronger at the next race and hope not to make mistakes on the Friday for example.

Ends