



FEDERATION INTERNATIONALE DE L' AUTOMOBILE

2018 FIA Formula One World Championship

German Grand Prix

Post-Race Press Conference Transcript

22.07.2018

DRIVERS

1 – Lewis HAMILTON (Mercedes)

2 – Valtteri BOTTAS (Mercedes)

3 – Kimi RÄIKKÖNEN (Ferrari)

TRACK INTERVIEWS

(Conducted by David Coulthard)

Q: Lewis, starting from 14th place today, you truly couldn't have believed you could win this race?

Lewis HAMILTON: I did. I mean, it's obviously very, very difficult from that position and highly unlikely, but you've always got to believe. I said a long, long prayer before the race started. We did the parade lap, I could see how much support I had out there and I just wanted to stay collected, stay calm. But the team did such a great job, the car was fantastic today. Honestly, I'm so grateful. I would never have thought you could do something like that today, but I just kept pushing, I kept believing and it happened. I really manifested my dream today. So big, big thanks to God.

Q: I've seen you emotional on many, many occasions, but you look as if you're struggling to grasp what's just happened. You know you've just won the German Grand Prix and taken back the lead in the world championship?

LH: Yeah, I hadn't really thought about that. It was so tough out there and conditions were... perfect! The conditions were perfect for business time. When it rained I knew I would have a good position. But then you never knew what would happen after the safety car. The other guys behind had the new tyres on. I would say, as I said, I'm just so grateful for the hard work the team has done and I hopefully this solidifies their belief in me and hopefully my driver solidifies my belief in them. And I guess for those that don't know me – now you do.

Q: Lewis, truly world-class drive; go and celebrate. Valtteri, tough afternoon, because you had the chance, as did Seb, but ultimately Lewis took it. What are your feelings now? Second place is still a good result, but the win was there.

Valtteri BOTTAS: Yeah, you know, as a driver the win is what you are looking after and when Seb went off I thought 'now is a good chance', but I think for Lewis the safety car was better timed, he could stay out, I had to stop. Taking positives: as a team, a perfect result for us, in Germany, our home grand prix for Mercedes, for Daimler, so that's very good.

Q: We heard the team telling you to hold station and you very quickly said 'Ok, understand' or 'Ok, James'. What was your mind feeling at that moment?

VB: You know, we had a bit of a battle lap one after the safety car with Lewis. I didn't get past then so then they told me to minimise the risk, which I understand, but yeah...

Q: Well done, great result. Kimi, we just talked to Valtteri and he was told to hold station. We heard you team coming on and not really telling you to move but telling you that tyre temperatures were critical. You said: 'tell me what you want me to do'. You understood what they were trying to do wanted but you wanted it to be very clear that you needed the instruction to let Sebastian through.

Kimi RÄIKKÖNEN: Yeah, we have certain rules but it wasn't clear enough. I had speed and obviously it was a bit in a moment in the race that I wasn't ideally to stop... yeah, that's what happened. In the end, it didn't change an awful lot. It was a tricky race with the rain and it was pretty slippery in a few places. I had a small moment with one of the lappers, the Sauber, under braking and Valtteri got past me, so not an easy race. Happy to finish. A bit disappointed but I'll take it today and we'll try next time.

Q: We saw your team-mate go off in the hairpin there. Do you think the Ferrari was more sensitive in those conditions, it was more difficult to drive than Mercedes today?

KR: I don't know, I only drive my car, so that's only what I feel like. In the past it's been very difficult in that amount of rain and I was surprised by the grip we had. It was very difficult to know where the grip is and where not. Usually when you go fast and suddenly it's not there, there is nothing you can do.

QUESTIONS FROM THE FLOOR

Q: (Edd Straw - Autosport) A question for Lewis and Valtteri. I heard a couple of communications about steering loadings on the Turn 1 kerb, which I presume was related to the problem yesterday. I think Valtteri there were a couple of messages for you and I think Lewis you at least had one, mid-race. How big a concern was that and how was it impacting your driving knowing you were having to be a little bit more cautious there for fear of causing a reliability problem?

LH: I hadn't thought about it really until they mentioned it, but I felt it, it was quite aggressive on one particular part of the kerb, so I just stayed away from it. I had been riding the kerbs all weekend but then it started to become more and more of something that we had to be aware of. I was still running the kerb later on, just not as aggressive. I didn't have any more problems after that.

VB: Yeah, similar for me. There was one point on the kerb, if you hit it at a certain angle, you can feel it gets you harder, so you try to avoid that and it's fine.

Q: (Rebecca Clancy – The Times) To Lewis, congratulations. You seem a bit emotional. You sounded like you had a bit of a lump in your throat. You're sat there smiling, kind of shaking your head almost in disbelief. Are you able to process yet how big this race is in terms of the championship. Was it maybe slightly slipping away from you and now you've firmly got two hands back on it?

LH: It definitely felt... I mean it's too early in the season to ever really feel like it's slipping away but of course it never feels good when you face adversity but, the longer you endure it, the stronger you grow. So yeah, I definitely felt at one point, there was Jesus, it's a steep hill for us, but it's OK. Y'know, just keep believing, positive things are going to come ahead. Just keep fighting, just give it everything you've got because at some stage things will come good. Today is one of the most unbelievable days for me because... I prayed as I always do before the race and my prayers were really answered. It freaks me out a little bit more than normal. And then to see the kind of biblical storm afterwards... there was a lot of negativity before the race. Y'know, I think when you come to England, going around I don't remember any of the fans booing. We've got quite a good group of

fans in England. And when I came here, there was a lot of booing. The weird thing is that I was really happy about it. It was unusual. It's weird that I'm still happy. It was because I kept seeing individually, a couple of different British flags in amongst a hundred or a thousand... a sea of red and then you've got a British flag in there. Then you have people from Mexico, people from England, you have people I think from Nigeria or somewhere in Africa with Hamilton shirts on – the name Hamilton on, standing in amongst the red. And it was just so positive for me. That's why I said at the end, that love conquers all. And I really feel that the rain's come down and just washed away any negativity. It's a glorious day. It couldn't have been a better day for me and one that I will always remember.

Q: (Ben Hunt – The Sun) Lewis, just to bring you back to Sebastian's celebrations after the British Grand Prix, laughing at Mercedes, promising to take the English flag at his Italian HQ, does that serve as motivation in some sort of way? Do you use that as a boost ahead of race like this? Knowing that you could inflict damage on his title...

LH: Honestly, I don't need to search for a boost or energy from other people's business. I just focus on mine. I truly believe that... I'm just focussed on trying to be the best I can be in myself. Because the best me... if I'm my best and my higher self, I feel like I'm able to drive like I was able to today, regardless of all the people, who else is around doing whatever they are doing. So, I did say when I came here that you can see things and they can often be maybe a sign of weakness. As I said, if we just kept our heads down, we knew this weekend Ferrari were going to be quick – and they're ridiculously quick on the straights. I think Valtteri did a fantastic lap yesterday, really great lap when I watched it – but he was just losing down the straights which there's nothing you can do about. But, yeah, we just... I'm just really proud of my guys as well, not getting phased by this fight that we're having. They could easily jump to conclusions and say, oh well, they're doing this or they're doing that, instead of, you know what? All we can do is control our own destiny. All we can do is work on our starts, try and improve, make sure we do a better job understanding the car, doing a better job, pushing for better aero performance, all these different things. Massively proud of them.

Q: (Livio Oricchio – Globoesporte.com) To Kimi. Kimi, when we have the restart of the race on lap 58, you were on ultrasoft and new tyres, Valtteri also. But Lewis had ultrasoft from lap 42. Were you surprised with the performance of Mercedes in these last ten laps, considering Ferrari seemed to have the fastest car all weekend?

KR: Yeah, for sure. They were very strong. All the stories that we are so quick on the straight. It wasn't really the case after the restart. Yeah, I think for sure there was some difference I guess, because Valtteri had a good run. I was surprised overall how good the grip was, because it was still some rain and it was pretty decent grip and the tyres were still cold but I think the ultrasoft worked pretty well in that rainy condition. Usually when you have that amount of rain it's usually pretty slippery but yeah, it was slippery in some places but most of it was still... you had some grip. Quite a surprise overall from what I remember from the past. Usually it gets pretty slippery quickly.

Q: (Heikki Kulta - Turun Sanomat) To the Finnish drivers: how long do we Finns have to wait for a Finnish victory or is P2 going to be the maximum for the rest of the season?

LH: I have a fraction of Finnish in me, so that's all three of us. You have a bit of a victory today.

Q: (Heikki Kulta - Turun Sanomat) Yeah, but we are not hearing the Finnish anthem!

VB: Yeah, hopefully we don't have to wait long but obviously there was a possibility for that today. Always through the race, I knew that it is possible and also things started to unfold quite nicely towards the end of the race with the rain and everything. But yeah, like I mentioned before, it was just not for me the best timing for the safety car with the tyres I had. It's just a matter of time. All the drivers will always want to win and me and Kimi are amongst those. We are both in a competitive car so for sure it's going to happen at some point.

KR: I will keep trying. Who knows? Maybe, maybe not. We will try every weekend and every race and we're not far from it but obviously so far it's not been happening so we will try next weekend again and I'm sure it will come but obviously there's no guarantee or anything. Things change quickly and we've seen it. Home today and come back next Thursday and do a better job.

Q: (Livio Oricchio – Globoesporte.com) Next Grand Prix is on a completely different circuit to the two previous ones, Silverstone and here. Considering what you know from your car in this season, what can you project for the Budapest race?

KR: Very difficult to say, I think. It's traditionally been good for us but there's a lot on the weather, what it's going to be like there. In the past years we would probably be feeling more stronger to go there but it's the same as always. It's going to be close and whoever makes the best out of it is going to come out on top. We go there and try and do the best that we can and see what we get.

LH: It's usually not our strongest track but I'm hopeful that... it's not a power circuit so hopefully this extra chunk of power that Ferrari have doesn't serve them as well there and maybe we can have a decent fight with them but they've always been really good on tyres and that's quite a hot track so undoubtedly they'll continue to be fast but I really hope that... I've got high hopes for it still. Red Bull? Oh yeah, exactly. Red Bull's power unit has been good. They suffered here for whatever reasons but they will be very quick, I'm sure in the next races where it is really strong for them. So, should be a closely matched race.

Q: (Edd Straw – Autosport) Kimi, can you just talk through your thought process coming up to the second pit stop. We could hear on the radio that you were keen to take the risk and just stay out because there wasn't too much to lose for you so do you regret the fact the team didn't let you stay out, because even when they called you in you did say 'are you sure?' so was there an opportunity missed there?

KR: No, it's always easy to say afterwards but honestly we don't know what would happen if we stay out. I'm 100 percent sure that the ultras worked better plus I had very used tyres at that point already but I can't give an answer if it would have been just fine or a complete disaster, so that's always an unknown and you try to weigh up the differences and hope that the new tyres will give you some grip to come back. Obviously we knew that the Mercedes will be on one of the some aged tyres but they seemed to be the right decision in those conditions so I don't have an answer, I don't think anybody would have an answer what the end result if we stayed out or not. Who knows. That's how it goes.

Ends