



FEDERATION INTERNATIONALE DE L' AUTOMOBILE

2017 FIA Formula One World Championship

Bahrain Grand Prix

Thursday Press Conference Transcript

PART ONE: DRIVERS – Lewis HAMILTON (Mercedes), Sergio PÉREZ (Force India), Stoffel VANDORNE (McLaren)

PRESS CONFERENCE

Q: Lewis, great win last time out in China, current joint leader of the FIA Formula One World Championship – so far so good?

Lewis HAMILTON: So far, so good, yeah. Happy to be back in Bahrain; always amazing weather. Yeah, it's been an awesome season so far. We're working very hard collectively as a team to try and continue at that level.

Q: Just following up on some comments after the last race, obviously you are a two-time winner here in Bahrain but given the circuit layout here, and particularly the higher temperatures, which could possibly play to Ferrari's strengths are you expecting an even tougher battle to keep them behind you this weekend?

LH: I definitely do. I think Ferrari have shown tremendous pace and I think obviously in the first race, particularly in race trim, they're very, very quick, particularly on the hotter circuit. So, being that it is a hotter race here I think the gap is going to be even closer, if not different that to perhaps it was before, but we shall see.

Q: Obviously, yesterday Fernando Alonso announced he's going to race at Indy next month, in the Indianapolis 500. As a motor sport fan yourself, as well as an old rival of Fernando's, what do you think of him skipping Monaco for Indy?

LH: I think, firstly, it's great that a driver is able to do that. I think us drivers should be able to do more than one series. Obviously there was a period of time in the past when there were drivers doing multiples series, so I think it's pretty cool that he's doing it. And I hope that Jenson comes back, I think it would be great for the sport to have Jenson back in.

Q: Thanks for that. Stoffel, coming to you, you obviously made your Formula One race debut here 12 months ago with a points-scoring finish. It's been a pretty tough first couple of races for you, but what have you taken from them to make you stronger going forward?

Stoffel VANDORNE: Yeah, it's great to be back in Bahrain. I obviously had a good race here last year, which was nice to get that opportunity. A year on, I think it's a lot different; I've now got two races under my belt and a bit more experience. It's not been an easy situation for us at the moment but I feel in a good position and hopefully this weekend we can prove again that we made a step forward.

Q: Clearly very tough for you to have that lack of performance from the McLaren-Honda package at the moment. When do you expect a step change and how have you revised your expectations for the season?

SV: It's difficult really to put any timeframe on it, when it will get better. Obviously we are all hoping it's gets better sooner rather than later, I don't know exactly when we will see a step in performance.

Q: Thanks for that. Sergio, you finished on the podium here in 2014 and you have a 100 per cent finishing record at this track, so is it one of your favourites?

Sergio PÉREZ: Yeah, I think it's one of my favourites. I've had good races here in the past, certainly the podium the year before. This track suits my style quite well, so hopefully we can have a good finish, close the gap to the cars ahead, especially now that the midfield is so packed and we are probably a little bit behind in that group but hopefully we can keep scoring good points on Sundays.

Q: Let's drill down into that a little bit, about the midfield. The team has bagged two double points finishes in a row, but give us an insight into just how tight that midfield battle is and what kind of things make a difference to getting a good result in that battle?

SP: Basically the whole difference is getting a perfect qualifying because if you don't get a perfect qualifying it's the difference between getting P8 and P14 or P15. So having a great qualifying makes a huge difference to your weekend. The first lap counts a lot as well and yeah, just have good strategy calls, executing a perfect weekend. Otherwise, that's the difference between scoring points and not scoring any points.

QUESTIONS FROM THE FLOOR

Q: (Frédéric Ferret – L'Equipe) A question for Lewis. You said you love the weather. How have you been working to deal with the heat for Sunday's race?

LH: Just running in this heat. I was in Dubai from Tuesday onwards. I was in Dubai for a couple of days and got here this morning. A couple of good runs in this heat always help. It's hard work, but that's really all you can do.

Q: (Graham Harris – Motorsport Monday/Motorsportweek.com) A question for all three drivers: with Fernando announcing that he is doing the Indy 500, would any of you like to do the Indy 500 or possibly another iconic race like Le Mans if you were offered?

SV: Yeah, I think I've decided to do the Spa 24 Hours instead of Hungary this year!

LH: I wouldn't miss out any of the races in Formula One. I'd definitely continue to do all the races, but I'd like to do MotoGP. I'd like to ride a MotoGP. Is there another race? Probably a NASCAR race, like the Daytona 500 maybe.

SP: I certainly wouldn't miss Monaco because for me Monaco is my favourite weekend in the whole calendar, so I wouldn't miss Monaco and normally you have that clash. But I'd like to do some other racing. I certainly have some interest in IndyCar. The Indy 500 is certainly one of the best races in the world, so I'd definitely to do some.

Q: (Simon Lazenby – Sky Sports) A question for Lewis. I know it's early days but how does it compare, fighting a four-time world champion at another team as opposed to fighting your own team-mate in the same car? Does it excite you more this year if you were to take it a relative stage as last year say?

LH: I've commented on that same question a couple of times in the last two races but yeah, it is more exciting racing another team, very much like I experience in 2007 and 2008. Also, growing up seeing races with McLaren and Ferrari, the great teams that were at the top competing with each other was always exciting. So to be in amongst the fight with the Silver Arrows and Ferrari, which is also a very historic, great team, I think it's more exciting than just silver at the front.

Q: (Louis Dekker – NOS.nl) A question for all three drivers. This is a back-to-back race. Can you explain a little bit not how heavy it is for you as drivers but for the team, logistically, physically, mentally?

SP: Yeah, it's very hard for our guys. They have such a hard time, the mechanics, they come here very early in the morning and they leave very late at night, pretty much every day, they are coming here since Tuesday, so it's very hard for the mechanics. I think for us as drivers, it's not that hard. It's another race and we have plenty of time to rest. But especially everyone who is involved in the team they have a very hard time. Having two races back-to-back is pretty much the limit, if we have a third one it would be very hard for all the boys in the team.

Lewis?

LH: Yeah, I think for the drivers it's easier doing back-to-backs. Could be back, weekend on, weekend off. Just keeping weekend in, weekend in, I think would be easier for us because staying in the zone between races, it's just easier that way. When you have the gap you have to switch back into it, so it's a little bit trickier. But for the team it definitely is very, very tough. It's time away from the family; they're on their feet for long, long hours during the day. But in all honesty, a lot of the guys, particularly my guys, they love it. There's nowhere in the world they'd rather be. So whilst it is very tough for them, for sure, and they definitely feel it, it's great to see that enthusiasm, and that sheer drive to just keep doing something you love. So, I never, ever see them complain, ever.

Stoffel?

SV: I think they pretty much covered everything.

Q: (Dieter Rencken – Racing Lines) Lewis, when you are racing your team-mate, regardless of who it is, you both have very similar characteristics, similar strengths, weaknesses, you have data. When you are racing someone in a different car, the Ferrari for example, that car has different characteristics, you don't have data. Which is more difficult to do?

LH: Ah, I think it's more difficult for sure racing up against... I wouldn't say there's one more difficult than the other, they're just different. When you're racing up against another team there are strengths and weaknesses. You know last week when we were qualifying against the Ferrari they looked like they were going to get pole but we were finding a bit more time on the track, in the blind really, because at the time I was the quickest of the two guys in our garage, so I was having to base myself on myself, I couldn't base myself on Sebastian. Definitely having to push the boundaries on your own is more of a challenge, which I love. When you are comparing data and you are constantly pushing each other, it's OK, but it's not as much fun as competing against an unknown.

Q: (Livio Oricchio – Globosport.com) I'm sorry to come back to the same subject. If you were going to race in the Indy 500, what would be the biggest challenge, considering the average speed you have, the cars are most of the time very close, you have a wall at your side? What would be the main lesson should be important to race there?

LH: It's a completely different category; it's a lot, lot different. I've never driven one of those tracks, but it would be so much different for us to go and do that – how a car's set up, because it's asymmetric I think, I believe the set-ups are asymmetric. The banking, how much you lift, how you use the tyres. It takes us guys forever through these test days to learn how to operate these tyres in the right window, so I would imagine it's not an easy thing to do in one go, so it's definitely a tall order in a short space of time, but Jeez, you've got one of the best drivers in the world going there, for sure, he will be the best driver in the paddock, but he won't have the experience any of them have. So I think it will be a very exciting challenge for him, to see how strong he can fare against those who have all that experience.

Q: What do you think Stoffel? You've obviously watched a few of these races. What's the biggest thing you would be wanting to understand straight away?

SV: I think it's a very strategic race. We've seen last year Alex Rossi winning the race and doing huge amounts of fuel saving. I think anything is possible. Fernando is a clever guy. He knows what he is doing. Hopefully he comes back with a trophy. I'll give him a bottle of milk as well.

Q: Have you spoken to him about it?

SV: Only a little bit at the moment, but I'm sure I'll catch up with him over the weekend.

Q: And what about you Sergio? What would you be thinking about on your first runs around the Speedway?

SP: Yes, as these guys say, there's so much to learn from a completely new series. I mean we have been doing this for many years and through the lower series as well, which is something more similar to what we do now, so going to a completely new tyre, new characteristics, new ways of setting up the car, circuits, driving in the traffic. But I think with Fernando that's probably one of his strengths, how he can manage the race situations, so he'll be really good on that. Indy really depends on the last 10 laps, so I think he will be really good at it.

Q: (Phil Duncan – PA) Lewis, you said you'd like to see JB back in the car for Monaco. Can you just elaborate on why you'd want to see him there? And Stoffel, is JB the man you'd like to see back at McLaren replacing Fernando in Monte Carlo?

SV: It's not in my hands in the end. I'm sure the team has got everything under control. I don't know yet who it will be. I'm sure the team will pick the right driver.

LH: Because I like Jenson and I think he's still one of the best drivers and his calibre is still higher than any other driver that's going to be able to take that spot for sure.

Q: And experience is important in Monaco?

LH: Yeah, his calibre and his experience for sure.

PART TWO: DRIVERS – Fernando ALONSO (McLaren), Kevin MAGNUSSEN (Haas), Jolyon PALMER (Renault)

PRESS CONFERENCE

Q: So, Fernando, twice a winner here in Bahrain but really only one thing to ask you about this afternoon, which is the Indianapolis 500. First current F1 driver to do Indy, I think, for around 40 years. What's in it for you, and what's in it for Formula One?

Fernando ALONSO: As you said, it's something that is not very common now. I think the past it was all about the best drivers in the world with the best cars in the world and the best races in the world. Then it became more and more professional, the sport, and everyone was dedicated or fully committed to only one series and I think that changed over time. This possibility, it was there for us this year, and I think I am excited to try a different thing. If I want to be the best driver in the world there are two options: I win eight Formula One World Championships, one more than Michael, which is very unlikely; the second one is to win different series in different moments of my career and be a driver that can race and win in any car, in any series. So, that's very challenging – but attractive as well. So, this is the reason behind. With the same team is a win-win situation. I think it is good for Formula One. This big market in North America that we've been pursuing for many years: I think it's good to go there now and show the respect for the Indy Car series; good for Indy, I guess, to have some Formula One drivers in the competition, and same for McLaren-Honda. I think, as a team, to be racing in the same day in Monte Carlo and in the Indy 500, two McLaren-Hondas in different series, is an amazing thing for motorsport fans. As I said, I think it's a win-win series for everyone.

Q: It's obviously a very different kind of driving discipline. In terms of the preparation, how many days of running do you expect to get before race day and what kind of preparation do you think you're going to be able to do?

FA: There is not a defined plan yet, it's still on-going, so I cannot answer 100 per cent sure what will be there. The plan, at the moment is that next weekend I will be in Alabama just visiting the race and meeting the team members to see how things go there. Probably on Monday after the race I will do the seat fitting, and then I will fly to Russia for the race. After Russia, I will try to be in Indianapolis for a couple of simulator days and hopefully test the car – but it's not 100 per cent sure. And after that I will go to the Spanish Grand Prix and then fly to America on Sunday after the race because the free practice is on Monday at midday. So, definitely busy weeks in front. On the planes, I will try to look at some videos and some races from the past years and try to learn as

quick as I can. It's completely different skills that you need there, to adapt to the car, to adapt to the circuit, strategies, ways of racing: that close, at that speed, so many things that I have to learn and I'm not ready yet, at the moment – but in the next couple of weeks I am confident I will be able to adapt as quick as I can.

Q: Just before you came in, Lewis and Sergio were talking about it and thinking about the challenge ahead of you, they were both saying they think you'll go great because you're outstanding at race management: if you need to save fuel, save tyres, managing the tyres – but also moving through traffic. When you look at those races do you feel confident that there's a lot of areas like that that you've got in your game that will really help you?

FA: Hmm... not really. I never thought about that before making the decision. I think... I don't feel prepared now. I don't feel... let's say I'm not in my comfort zone driving those cars or thinking about those cars. But I'm not afraid of trying and I'm not afraid of not delivering a good result – but knowing at the same time that there are very important weeks ahead. If I want to win one day the triple crown, I have to make this step. This year was the best opportunity for us as a team.

Q: Kevin, coming to you. Eighth, obviously, in China, scoring Haas' first points of the season. We asked Sergio earlier on about the intensity of that midfield battle this year, with Haas' best-ever result coming here 12 months ago. Do you feel this again is a circuit that gain you can rise on, as a team?

Kevin MAGNUSSEN: I don't see any reason why it wouldn't be as good as China, or even Melbourne. I think we have a good car that works well in most conditions and I think, yeah, as I said, there's no reason why we shouldn't be able to perform here. The midfield is very close and competitive, so getting points, you really need to be on top of everything. That's our target: to be on top of everything and to try and score points again – but it's not easy.

Q: You've raced with two well established operations in McLaren and Renault. How different is it racing for a start-up? Does being in a team like this actually suit you?

KM: In some ways it does. Being small some things are easier, some things are more difficult. I think there's a lot of talent in the team. They've got together a really strong, small group of people that work really well together. In some situations, it's difficult when you're small. For example, when we need to go into FP3 with no practice; when we miss Friday like we did in China, it's not easy because our preparation before the race weekend is not as strong as the big teams, of course. But, we react quickly and we take decisions well and, as I said, if everything goes well, I think we should be strong.

Q: Jolyon, a brutal weekend in Australia but then in China, qualified 18th but finished 13th, it's clearly not gone as expected so far? So, what have you had to deal with?

Jolyon Palmer: Australia was very tough for many reasons but China was much better, to be honest. The car was feeling good, I finally had a clean session in FP3 and we were in the top ten. And then qualifying I really feel I could have been in Q3 as well but I didn't get a lap in in Q1 really. Starting from the back, it's difficult to do much and we couldn't make a lot of inroads in the race. I think the performance of the car is pretty good, as Nico has been showing, especially in China qualifying, so it's just a matter of putting a clean weekend together, getting some laps on Friday – I think I've done about ten so far across two weekends, so yeah, would be nice to have a clean weekend and I think we can get in the points.

Q: Do you think this generation of cars suits you?

JP: I like it! That's for sure. I think probably every driver is enjoying driving one of these cars: there's a lot of downforce. For me, having never driven a V8 or a V10 era of F1 car, this is really exciting. It's easily the quickest I've ever driven. The downforce is the main thing that we feel and it's exciting.

Q: Do you feel you're more comfortably in race mode than in qualifying? Is qualifying an area that's a particular focus for you going forward this year?

JP: No, I just think we've had particularly difficult weekends. Qualifying in China would have been fine. The lap that I was on in Q1 would have easily seen me through to Q2, so I'm really sure I

could have been in Q3 but it's just how it goes. The Sauber crashing meant that I couldn't complete the lap properly.

QUESTIONS FROM THE FLOOR

Q: (Dieter Rencken – Racing Lines) Fernando, if you win in Indianapolis, and you're able to win at Le Mans after that – and both are big ifs unfortunately, it would still only pull you level with another double World Champion who won the triple crown. So, what other iconic event could you aim for to really set yourself apart from everybody else, as you said earlier on you'd like to?

FA: I don't know. That's thinking too much ahead. Go-Kart World Champion. I don't know if the other guy was.

Q: (Ian Parkes – New York Times) Fernando, two-part question: would this have happened had Ron Dennis still been in charge. And b) more significantly, would you be doing this if you had a competitive car beneath you this season?

FA: First part of the question, I guess not. Zak is a man who has a bigger vision than other team principals or bosses that I had. He sees motorsports differently; he sees McLaren bigger, not only concentrated in Formula One. McLaren won Le Mans a couple of times, won the Indy 500 in the past as well a couple of times. I think he is a true racer. I think it is great that McLaren and Zak joined forces last year. It's a good thing. Secondly, if the car was competitive this year and we were with 43 points together with the other two guys, you cannot afford to lose 25 points possibility missing one race. So, probably the feeling was different if we were competitive.

Q: (Jerome Pugmire – AP) Fernando, do you have any idea when you think you'll be able to race Le Mans?

FA: I don't know. It's between Canada and Baku no? We'll see how many flight connections there are! No, I think definitely... it was something also on the table this year, also because Zak, as an American was pushing for the Indy 500, Eric as a Frenchman, he was pushing for the Le Mans, so I had two good friends in one moment pursuing the race. I think the McLaren-Honda partnership, to be able to run this in the Indy 500, was very attractive this year. For Le Mans it is something I will do – probably as soon as I can. I don't know if it will be next year or from the following years. The only and first priority is Formula One, so if I can race together with Formula One and other series, as I'm doing this year, will be great. If not, I will do only Formula One.

Q: (Simon Lazenby – Sky Sports) Just to follow-up again, on what Ian Parkes was saying, you said this wouldn't have happened under Ron Dennis potentially but it's happening under Zak. What about the new owners, Liberty, have they given it their blessing – they don't have to but have they done so? And could you imagine you being allowed to do this, or would the squeeze have been put on for you to not, one of the leading Formula One drivers to have done this, under Bernie?

FA: As you said, I don't think they have a key role on all of these decisions. It's more of a team decision but yeah, I think they are also more open than in the past. We see that also with all of the things we are allowed to do here now. A little bit more relaxed environment. I think it's also great for Formula One.

Q: (Abhishek Takle – Middy) Two part question to Fernando: firstly, who would you like to see replace you in Monaco, who do you think would be the ideal driver to do that? And secondly, when you say good result at Indy, what do you mean? Are you going there for the win, or is it too early to set that target? Do you see winning this year a realistic prospect at Indy?

FA: I think for the Monaco replacement I don't know. I have no idea of what the team is thinking of at the moment and I don't have any preference either. I think whoever will be in the car will do great because the team will try to make the best decision possible. Also I'm sure that Stoffel will put the car where he will need to put it because now with some more races and also testing next week here, I think we will get to the maximum speed as soon as possible, so I'm not concerned for this. It will be a good weekend in Monaco for the team, I'm sure. In Indy, I don't have a clear target, let's put it that way. I'm going there just with the feeling of enjoy this experience, learn as

much as I can from the track side with the different skills that I will need to drive those cars - and also from the outside which I think... the event is quite big, it's a 14 day event with many things happening there. So (I'm) very open to anything that comes, but at the same time I'm a racer and if I want to win the triple crown one day I have to win that race. If that win happens earlier than expected it's welcome. Otherwise I need to go again.

Q: (Andrew Benson – BBC Sport) Fernando, was McLaren's desire to keep you for 2018 any part of these discussions?

FA: No, no. At the beginning of the year, the team asked me what was my intention and my thoughts for the future. I told them the same thing that I told you guys at the launch of the car. After the summer I will think and I will make a decision of what I will do next year, so nothing has changed after this discussion. It's not that I'm thinking 'away from Formula One', so this will be my last year because this decision and obviously it's not that thanks to this decision... You know I'm closer and closer to McLaren and to renew the contract so it's completely independent. After the summer I will see.

Q: (Graham Harris – Motorsport Monday, Motorsportweek.com) Fernando, you said you're open to other things in Indycar as well. Would you be open to other Indycar races, bearing in mind there's a double-header the week after Indy before Canada, and you're in North America already? And it's a street circuit?

FA: No. I don't think so. I think it's a one-off. I will do the Indy 500 because it's the race, it's the biggest race in the world and the fastest race in the world but after that, especially after Indy and Canada I will probably be two weeks in the living room watching television and relaxing.

Q: Just before we move on, I just wanted to ask the other two gentlemen what do you think of this and is it something that you'd like to do?

JP: I think it's cool. I think it's obviously something pretty different, it's exciting for everyone, for him especially but the whole of F1. For me to do it, we're in quite different positions right now so maybe in 15 years if I'm in a similar position then maybe.

KM: Yeah, I can see that with his situation it makes sense and it's a really cool thing to do so I can understand it.

Q: (Frederic Ferret – L'Equipe) Fernando, two parts: was it your idea to go racing elsewhere, Indy or Le Mans, and secondly, you had some tough times physically in Bahrain – I don't remember when, 2006? Did you prepare differently for this race with the new cars?

FA: Indy and Le Mans – I don't know, it was a conversation at dinner in Australia that we were sharing our ambitions for the future: me as a driver, of my karting school and different things, different projects that I'm in and as a driver to win something else other than Formula One that we succeed to win a few things was attractive. Zak was telling me his vision about the team in the near future, expanding McLaren into different series in motorsport so I think it was a conversation that began casually but it didn't come from my side or his side. It was just a conversation. And then in Bahrain, it was 2009 when I lost five or six kilos of sweat, five or six litres of water. We had a problem with one of the looms on the radiator. I completely burnt all my back in the race and after the race I was completely off, so hopefully everything will be in place and we will not burn the skin any further than in the sun in the morning.

Q: (Livio Oricchio – Globosport.com) Fernando, what is the influence of the difficulties of your team today in your decision to compete in the USA 500? And will this decision interfere in your presence in this Formula One season this year in other races?

FA: It will not influence anything for the remainder of the year. I will be back in Canada, stronger, hopefully, because there are some improvements also during the year which will put us in a more normal position. Right now we are very uncompetitive and we are not happy with the situation so I think it's going to be much more fun for us, the remaining races from Spain onwards, let's say. And what was the first question? Not really. I think it's true that it's a good motivation and the possibility to win a big race, a big trophy like the Indy 500 in the middle of a year is like winning a World Championship in one weekend so you have two possibilities in one year, so it's very

attractive but it's not that it came to our mind because this year we're struggling or last year or the last two years we're not competitive. This is something that I keep repeating since 2014. I remember leaving Ferrari and talking about this possibility to Mattiacci and people at Ferrari, even racing the 24 hours of Le Mans with a 458, so you're competing in two different categories in the first year in the same year. So it's nothing new because of the performance of this year.

Q: (Dieter Rencken – Racing Lines) Fernando, given what you've just said, if you don't win in Indianapolis would you consider putting a clause in your future contracts regardless of which team, that you can actually compete in say Le Mans or the Indianapolis 500?

FA: No, no, I think if it's something that comes naturally from the team and from myself and we want to do it, it's one thing but my commitment and my desire to win in Formula One is bigger than any other challenge that I can find outside Formula One so it's Formula One or nothing at the moment but if, together with a team, we arrive at a decision that maybe could be interesting for both sides to try something else we do it but I will never put a clause or anything in a future contract because Formula One is the only thing that I want to do and the only thing that I'm probably prepared to do. The other things are just a question mark.

Q: (Michael Schmidt – Auto Motor und Sport) Fernando, how hard is it then to miss the race in Monte Carlo, the one where you can probably overcome the deficiencies of the car more than at any other place?

FA: It's very hard. Definitely Monte Carlo, we know with the package we have in the last couple of years, it was our best opportunity, it's where we achieved the best results in the last couple of years so it's a very magic event in Formula One so with all respect to all the other races, any other race to miss was fantastic compared to Monte Carlo. I will try to follow it from Indianapolis, also that that weekend is more or less free there, it's only the race on Sunday so I will miss Monaco massively.

Q: Abhishak Takle – Midday) Fernando, I know that you said you haven't yet set any targets but you must be reasonably confident of being able to run at the front because without that, to give up competing in Monaco is a pretty big decision.

FA: Yeah but in a way Monaco is the biggest race of the calendar in Formula One and the event is amazing, not only the race on Sunday but the whole weekend is amazing but the best result that we achieved was last year, fifth. Thinking that we are a little bit less competitive this year, you know and maybe you had a possibility to do another top five or seven or six or wherever, it's great to have some points but I've won a couple of times there already and two times World Champion so to have fifth, seventh or ninth in Monaco will not change my life. In a way, it's impossible to compare... to have the minimum chance to win the Indy 500 compared to a fifth or sixth or seventh in Monaco. It's much bigger, the other possibility.

Q: (Dieter Rencken – Racing Lines) Kevin and Jolyon, your fathers both raced at Le Mans in the endurance championship etc. Could you see yourselves going there?

JP: It's possible but yeah, I think for me, I'm so focussed on Formula One at the moment, only my second year so yeah, my position's pretty different. Still all eyes only on Formula One. I think I love the sprint racing but wheel to wheel racing which is not so much endurance. But Le Mans is still a legendary race so maybe.

KM: I think, for me, I want to be in Formula One and focus on that but my Dad is still racing, he's in a competitive team in his series and also racing at Le Mans, so I think it would be a shame not to try and do a race together. Me growing up with him racing all the time, it would be a really special experience to do a race with him and imagining winning something like Le Mans with him would be fantastic. It's weighing up those two things that Formula One is my main priority, that's what I want to do and what I want to focus on but there is the desire to do something like that with my Dad as well so we will see what happens.

Q: (Rebecca Clancy – The Times) Fernando, just saying then that coming fifth or sixth at Monaco isn't going to change your life, is that the approach you're also going to take when you look at where you're going to be next year as well and who you're going to be racing for?

FA: Yeah, yes, definitely. I want to win, I'm here to win. I think this year I prepared harder than ever for this year. There's also the change of regulations. We have high hopes for this year. I feel great with these cars, I'm able to extract the maximum from the cars while during the last couple of years it was difficult because especially with the tyres you had to manage the tyres in a strange way: the less you push, the more performance was there in the tyres so this year is coming back to more normal Formula One and I really enjoyed the race in Australia and in China as well. We were running and securing eighth place. With the performance we have now, it was completely unexpected. Even the most optimistic simulation we had was telling us that we were around 14th or 15th. So I think I'm really at the best of my career right now in terms of driving so for next year, the target has to be only one: fighting for the World Championship, so not any more fifth or sixth.

Ends