



FEDERATION INTERNATIONALE DE L' AUTOMOBILE

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Thursday Press Conference Transcript

PART ONE: Fernando ALONSO (McLaren), Lewis HAMILTON (Mercedes), Jolyon PALMER (Renault)

PRESS CONFERENCE

Q: Fernando, if we can start with you. It seemed like a great experience at Indianapolis. How was it to learn a completely new way of driving, of racing after all these years? And has it relit your competitive flame after a tough few years here in Formula One?

Fernando ALONSO: It was a great experience, obviously very new for me many things there, so yeah very intense because as you said I had to learn many things from zero, so it was definitely a good way to stop this year in Formula One for a couple of weeks and start from zero in something and learn from the beginning. That was the first thing that I wanted to try. Try to be competitive in a completely new car, new series. I am always searching for this kind of motivations and this year it was a good decision to go there. The race was amazing, the experience of qualifying already started to be an amazing experience there - four laps on the limit and try to not scrub the speed in any place and obviously the race strategically very different compared to F1, a very long race as well - three hours and a half, or three hours and forty-five minutes in the car. It was just you know a new thing for me but I felt competitive, I felt good in qualifying, I was leading the biggest race in the world for a while, so really really happy.

Q: So what happens next? Has the experience helped you to make any decisions or resolutions about where you take your career from here?

FA: Not really. I've said many times in F1, a third world championship is still my biggest priority. I think I developed my skills to drive F1 cars for the last 16 years, so it's the best thing that I can drive. The best car that I can drive is still Formula One. It's another time that I jump in any car in any categories with any tyres, with any rules, that I go there and I'm competitive, so I'm not afraid of the future. If I cannot succeed here and win this third world championship, I'm still loving motor racing and I will race in any series. I know that I can win any series.

Q: Lewis, coming to you. Five poles, five wins. Montreal is a great place for you to come to bounce back from your disappointment in Monaco last time out. Toto Wolff's pre-race notes are interesting: he said that it could be a tricky race for Mercedes in terms of the layout of the track. How positive do you feel about the weekend?

Lewis HAMILTON: I think Toto mentioned that he thinks Ferrari... We've obviously seen that Ferrari are quickest at the moment, so they're the favourites, but we've worked very hard to rectify the issues we had in the last race, and after the weekend... Attack this weekend. We've got some unique bits on the car I think which will work well this weekend, but it doesn't mean we can't take the fight to them.

Q: It's no secret that the Mercedes car has a few issues with the softer compound tyres this year, getting them into that sweet spot and then keeping them there. How much work have you been able to do behind the scenes to fix this problem up to this point?

LH: Not much at all.

Q: Just what you can do on-event with those tyres when you get them?

LH: Yeah. We've definitely done some analysis, but we'll find whether or not there's new things we can improve on this weekend.

Q: Coming to you, Jolyon. Best result of the season so far last time out in Monaco - P16 on the grid to P11 at the flag. How much of a confidence boost is that?

Jolyon PALMER: It's been a confidence boost. It's been obviously a very tough start to the year. There's been some positives recently, but it doesn't necessarily show on the results sheets. Monaco, at least we did race distance and we were pretty competitive in the times as well. Obviously when you start 16th it's difficult to make any overtakes or do much else. Running around in the traffic, but at least with a better pace and we can take a bit of confidence in that.

Q: Cyril Abiteboul, your team boss, in his pre-race notes has said that you now have a more robust engine and gearbox and the team can fully focus on maximising performance. Tell us about that.

JP: That sounds good! Well, we'll see - we're always pushing. This is obviously a big power circuit, difficult for the drivetrain as well; it's an important area so we're always making progress there. I think it's now time - especially for me - to start delivering and get some points.

QUESTIONS FROM THE FLOOR

Q: (Frederic Ferret - L'Equipe) Question to Lewis. Can you tell us how difficult is it to make the tyre work and how you heat them during the pre-laps?

LH: You just drive it the same. You push or you drive slowly, depending on the temperature of the circuit, and when you come to do your laps sometimes they're ready and sometimes they're not. It's difficult to... It's kind of an unfeeling - sometimes the tyres feel exactly the same when you leave the garage, and sometimes they grip up. It's the same for every tyre.

Q: (Sef Harding - Xiro Xone News) Lewis, I want to talk a little bit about here, as it's a very special place for you. Obviously this is where it all began, and this is where you started to build your legacy. You posted a picture on Instagram that was very nice, it was a young you in your karate uniform and your father was with you. Fathers' Day is this weekend, and I wanted to know - when you come here, does it still... Do you still have those good memories, do you have that positive feeling, those feelings when you first won the race? It's been ten years now, and I just wanted to know: do you still feel that positive energy going into this weekend?

LH: Montreal's been... Obviously, having the amazing experience I had in 2007; I remember standing on the podium and looking down at my dad and just seeing the biggest smile I'd ever seen in my life on his face, which was a very proud moment. And then, since then, just every year I come, I've just grown a lot with Canada and with Montreal, and the following has grown along the time, ten years, and so a lot of my time when I see get here is spectacular. You definitely feel the energy. Here is such a great race; the weather's generally really good, the circuit's incredible and unique to its own, the city's one of the greatest cities. I've not been here when it's not been a grand prix, but there's a huge buzz here. I love being here. I try and get here a bit early, because the food's great, the people are great, and I generally get left alone, so it's a good weekend.

Q: (Ralf Bach - Sport Bild) Question to Fernando. Fernando, would it help you to learn for your decision for next year that you maybe get the same engine next year as Lewis has this year?

FA: I think it doesn't make any change to my decision.

Q: (Bruce Schoenfeld - Sports Business Journal) At this point in the season, from a driver's perspective, has much changed with the change in administration of the sport? Have you noticed anything heading in any direction in terms of commercial opportunities, of the way the sport is run, or when you wake up in the morning is it business as usual, with no noticeable differences?

LH: Very very small changes. At the moment I think they're in planning, so. Coming into this track today, I don't know if you know where the bridge is? Normally they stop the traffic to let the fans walk through. After ten years or 15 years or whatever, they've finally built a stairway to go up and over the road. I don't know who did that, but otherwise there's not really other changes so far.

Q: (Heikki Kulta - Turun Sanomat) Lewis, it is said that a driver gets stronger after winning for the first time. Have you noticed any change in Valtteri after Sochi? And did you notice any change in yourself here ten years ago after your first victory?

LH: I've not noticed any difference in Valtteri - he's still his calm, composed self. But definitely for me when I won my first grand prix it was definitely a huge boost, confirming what I knew in my heart I could do. So I can only imagine that it's the same for anyone else, it's just that some people show it more than others.

Q: (Helmut Uhl - Bild) Question for Fernando. I have read that you said in Spanish TV that if they announce 25 races you would quit. Is that right?

FA: Yes.

Q (Andrew Benson - BBC Sport) Fernando, looking at it from a distance, in Indy you appeared to be quite different - there was a kind of lightness about you. Skateboarding down the paddock, or Gasoline Alley, attending press conferences with Indiana farmers, and all that kind of thing. What made that change, and are you going to bring it to here as well?

FA: Well, the skateboarding I think here you are not allowed to bring those kind of things. The farmer thing, they give you money if you are the fastest rookie. Someone give us money here, I will attend, no worries. The whole atmosphere is just different there, I think everyone is more relaxed, is happy, you know. Even the way of the events we had, it's all about... Everyone is proud of that race, that event. They've been for many years there, you know everyone that comes to the race they are just proud. They expect to have fun in that race. I don't say that here is different, but here with years with all of the business that is around F1, you know everyone is trying to find some word, some thing you say or you do that creates maybe a theme behind, for more on the news. That is just about, you know, 33

drivers doing the race and just enjoy racing. Here, it's more. Formula One is bigger in every sense. It's bigger, there are other things, you know. But this in all kind of sports it happens the same. In tennis when you start and when you play Roland Garros there are many details that they take care of, the players. In football the same thing - when you start, you have fun, you just enjoy the sport. And then when you go to the champions' league final a small comment before the match maybe creates a polemic and afterwards or something like that. You are more relaxed, the environment is more relaxed. There's not the pressure and everything that Formula One has here, so it's just different.

Q: (Simon Lazenby - Sky Sports) Fernando, just to follow that up, how do you feel coming back to Formula One? You were promised an engine upgrade for here in Canada; it doesn't look like that has materialised. Zak's come out again and been critical of Honda; he says the next 90 days is important. What has to change to keep you at McLaren?

FA: We have to win. You know, if we are winning before September or something like that I will make a decision and I will stay.

Q (Guillaume La Francois - La Presse) My question's for Lewis. I know you mentioned enjoying your time in Montreal, which we all really appreciate, but as far as when you're on the track, what is it about the track that suits you well, that enables you to have all that success here?

LH: It's been ten years, I think it's just a bit like once you get to the corners it's a bit like a go-kart track, and long straights added to that, so it creates lots of opportunities for overtaking, you can follow here a little bit better than perhaps at other circuits, it's a lot more of a mechanical, technical circuit, and it suits well an aggressive driving style I guess I would say. So all of that means you have to be generally more aggressive than we can be at other circuits.

Q: (Jeff Pappone - Inside Track) This year is the 50th anniversary of the first Formula One race in Canada. I just wanted to know from all three of you, what is the significance of this race to Formula One and personally, is there a significance of this race to you?

LH: The significance of this race? Well, Formula One is obviously made up of a lot of great countries, a lot of great races, but there are the exceptional races and there's only a few of them. This race is in that few.

FA: Agreed!

JP: Personally, there's not anything special for me, but I think it's always a great race. There has been a lot of action here in the past, and it's a different market here - it's North America, so it's always interesting to come.

Q: (Jon McEvoy – Daily Mail) To Fernando, if they add five races to the year, you say you won't go on. What are your objections to that – and what would you do if you stopped doing Formula One for that reason?

FA: I think, y'know, I started when the calendar was 16 races, plus the tests, and now we keep on increasing the races year after year and I think we are in a number that is quite demanding already: the life you have, y'know, between the preparation, the sponsor events, the tests, the commitments you have plus 20-21 races, I think is already enough. If there are 25 or 26 races or whatever, I think it's good in one aspect but in other aspects, in how demanding becomes your life, at this point of my career, I consider that a good quality of life is more important than to do more seasons in F1 – so if the calendar stays between 20-21, so this range that we know from the last couple of years, I'll be happy to continue. If

it's increasing, like NASCAR, that they have 40 or 50 races, it's not for me. It's better for other drivers.

The second part is, if you did leave for that reason, what would you do?

FA: I don't know. In September I will think about it.

Q: (Silvia Arias – Parabrisas) Jolyon, there are some rumours about your future in Renault. Does it put some pressure on you and what are your feelings about it?

JP: What puts pressure on is not putting in good performances. I'm aware that the start of the year has been pretty disappointing. I'm working hard and I'm ready to turn it around. In terms of rumours, there have been rumours since my third-ever race in Formula One, so it's nothing new for me. The way to stop it is to do well on track and hopefully I can do that this weekend.

Q: (Ralf Bach – Sport Bild) Question to Fernando, again. You went to Indy, you were one of the quickest guys from the beginning, you nearly won the race. Do you think in the opposite, one of the top American drivers from the IndyCars, they could do the same in the Formula One?

FA: Depending on the car, I guess. Yes.

Q: (Andrew Benson – BBC Sport) Fernando, I have to ask you to follow-up your answer to my original question where you said if McLaren aren't winning by September you'll leave. They're not going to be winning by September: you know that; I know that; everyone in the room knows that – but you don't have that many options for next year it would appear. Are you saying definitively, one hundred per cent, if you don't win a race by September, you'll definitely leave McLaren? Can you just clarify that?

FA: You never know. You cannot be 100 per cent now in June about a decision for next year that I don't even start to consider. What we all want is to win and, related to the answer before, what Zak commented yesterday and the Honda thing is probably what you will expect Zak to say. He wants to win; he wants to put McLaren again on a contender position for the championship. So, y'know, after three years we are not in that position. Things have to change, I guess, for the team. And the same with me. I want to win, and I joined this project because I wanted to be World Champion and we are not in that position. So, if you don't see things changing and you are not in a competitive position, maybe you change projects. That's the only think that I can say now, until I sit down with myself in September, October or whatever – after the summer as I always said, I cannot say 100 per cent about anything now. The best decision I will take after summer.

Q: (Flavio Vanetti – Corriere della Sera) To Lewis, is there any major, urgent upgrade you need to be more competitive against Ferrari?

LH: Not that I know of. Not that I know of. I don't have that information to say.

Q: (Phil Duncan – PA) Lewis, you said you were going to go into the factory after the last race. Did you go in and what did you learn with your engineers?

LH: We were just focussed on this race, and it was shortly after the last race, so after the last race there was lots of information for them to be working on. So, we didn't have all the solutions and the answers at that point.

Q: (Silvia Arias – Parabrisas) Fernando, which were you feelings when we saw on the replay the Dixon accident – it was so spectacular and the cars are as strong as Formula One, of course.

FA: Well, obviously it was a big accident and we saw this in qualifying, another one with Sébastien Bourdais, so, you know, when you're running at 380km/h every single thing will be big. There are some risks when you race the Indy 500 but it has always been like that. It's part of the race – but obviously it was red flagged, I was in the pitlane but you don't have the communication with the team as much as you have here, you don't have the mechanics, you cannot jump out of the car, so I was there and just asking if everything was OK and what to do on the restart – because again the procedures are different: here you can change the tyres, you can prepare the car, whatever, under a red flag and there you cannot do anything. We were planning to pit on the next lap after the pace car was on the track, so you just focus on the procedures and the race restart, you are not concerned too much about the accidents – but from the first minute that I decide to race there, I knew about the risk, and I knew also about what was that race. I was happy to take those risks.

Q: (Helmut Uhl – Bild) One more question to Lewis, going back to the 25 races, how do you think about that and would this be just a case for you to think about backing out also, like Fernando said?

LH: I haven't really given it any thought but I understand what Fernando's saying and tend to agree with him.

Q: (Sef Harding – Xero Xone News) Fernando, to go back on a question earlier where you said the atmosphere here is the way things are. Isn't that the issue? That we're in a wash-rinse-repeat situation where it takes all of us to start to develop and change that atmosphere so we can be more relaxed, so that it's a better relationship between you, between us, between the fans and to make it a more positive, more relaxed environment?

FA: There are definitely things that are difficult to change, so difficult to consider if they are good or bad. Formula One is the biggest motor sport category in the world for a reason. Whatever that reason is, maybe it's all about this thing as well. An example is this press conference: there has not been one single question about this race weekend. Not for me, not even for Lewis, not for him. If the future will be OK, if the upgrades will be OK, or not. There is always thinking forwards too much: about next year, about September, about whatever, so, there is not enough focus on this race weekend, because also, the positions, more or less, we know. We can put in a paper the first 15 positions for qualifying and the first 15 for the race. 99 per cent we will match ever single position. This lack of unpredictable racing, generates a lot of... too much thinking forwards, too much guessing. Obviously, it's a good for some part of the sport that will benefit from that, because we will generate a lot of talks in the media and a lot of fan-interaction – but you miss a little bit what is going to happen this weekend. So, y'know, it's not being more or less relaxed in the weekend but when you come here you focus with the engineers, you prepare the race, you prepare the strategy, the tyre temperature, whatever, you come to the press conference and it's all about next year, about what Zak said, about Toto said, you freeze a little bit the emotions that you have about racing this weekend. It's probably what it is.

PART TWO: DRIVERS – Lance Stroll (Williams), Sergio Pérez (Force India), Marcus Ericsson (Sauber)

Q: Marcus, why don't we start with you. You said you particularly look forwards to this Canadian Grand Prix every year, why is it so important to you?

Marcus ERICSSON: Did I?

Yes, you did!

ME: OK. I enjoy it here, it's a good race, not only the track but I think the whole city. It's really cool because it's buzzing, the whole city, wherever you do, all week. There's a lot going on. Then the weekend as well, around race day, a lot of fans, the atmosphere is great. I think it's this combination of things that makes it one of the better races of the year, I think.

Q: Sauber was one of the teams that had real problems getting the softer tyres to work, all weekend in Monaco. Do you anticipate similar problems with them this weekend?

ME: Yeah, it's true that in Monaco we were struggling quite a lot to get the tyres to work in the right window. We have worked quite a bit after Monaco to understand that and to make sure that we are better off here in Montreal because it's also a track where you are generally struggling a bit with tyres, especially the front tyres, to get them into the right temperature. We have some ideas of how to do it and hopefully this type of track will help us to get them to work a bit better – and then we hope the temperature stays a bit high, and that will also help – but let's see how it goes.

Q: Sergio, coming to you, your 15 race points-scoring streak that stretched back all the way to Germany last season was interrupted in Monaco in a strange race for you – how do you look back on it now?

Sergio PÉREZ: Yeah, it was quite a strange race, y'know? Great qualifying and we were on to a... let's say a piece of cake – a race that was very easy – but then we have something unexpected in lap one. I slightly touched Sainz into the hairpin with my front wing, which meant I had to pit, like after 17 laps or so to change my front wing, and that meant that I end up in a big battle where I didn't need to be. And from then on I had to take big risks. I take a big risk overtaking Lance, actually, Palmer, Vandoorne, and then I found myself in a very strong position. My team did a massive call to box me under the safety car. I didn't lose any positions. I was on fresh tyres so I was around two seconds a lap quicker than the car ahead, and I was in the points. Everyone ahead of me was struggling massively. I knew how much they were struggling with the warm-up of the tyre and Kvyat left the door open a bit so I just went for it and, if I have that opportunity again, I think I will do the same. If you don't go for the gap, you don't give the right message to your competitors, you know? So, I think one of the reasons that I've been so many times in the points was thanks to that aggression. Many times of those 15 I didn't have the pace to be on the points and yes, sometimes I think you have to be quite aggressive. In Monaco, you know as a driver if you try the manoeuvre there is a big chance that it is not going to happen and it's going to ruin the race. It's a risk that you decide to take. I think I was the only car out there to overtake. You saw what happened with Jenson and Wehrlein: with these wide cars, with the amount of limited grip we have in the corners, it is very hard to overtake so you have to take big risks.

Q: You had a podium here back in 2012 but since then it's not been a particularly kind circuit for you. Do you think this year's Force India car with it's characteristics will give you a better shot at a big result here this weekend than the last few seasons?

SP: I think so. I think we should be relatively stronger than probably other circuits in the past. But we still have a big margin to the top three teams ahead. They're in another category. For us, just in pure pace, if we finish behind them it's the maximum we can achieve at the moment. So, let's see what we can do for Sunday.

Q: Coming to you Lance, I guess having grown up here and been inspired by seeing Formula One cars once a year on this race track, you must feel quite emotional at the thought of racing one here this weekend?

Lance STROLL: Yeah, it's kind of a dream come true for me. Growing up here I was sitting in the grandstands at five or six years old and watching the races here and now to finally be part of it, it's very special.

Q: This has been a strong track for Williams in the last few years – back-to-back podiums the last two seasons and there has been a Williams on the front two rows of the grid in three of the last four years. So are expectations high for getting your first championship points?

LS: I think so, yeah. It has been a strong track for us in the past. It suits our car very well. Hopefully that remains the same this year. I think we just need to focus on our job. Hopefully a bit of luck will be on our side, that we can have a clean weekend and get the best out of our car. That's definitely the plan.

QUESTIONS FROM THE FLOOR

Q: (Pierre Durocher – Montreal Journal) I want to ask you, Lance... people seem to forget sometimes but two years ago when you first appeared in F3 you had some problems you had to fight to get the results you wanted and then the next year you became champion. Is there anything that you learned through your first year in F3, that was a bit difficult, and make you stronger that you can make you stronger right now and help you go through the hurdles of having success in F1?

LS: I think it just comes down to experience and sometimes it just takes a bit of time for things to fall into place. Back in Formula 3, I ended 2015 very well and then I started 2016 very well and it stayed the same way the whole year. So, it just sometimes takes some time to break the ice and once you get rolling it keeps working. I mean, I think this year has been a bit different. We have had some strong qualifying – in China, Bahrain, in Russia – there have been some Saturdays, but there has been some bad luck as well with technical issues and other things and we haven't been able to capitalise on those results on Sunday and I think a lot of our non-finishes are because of that and I think we just need to stay calm, we need to stay focused, focus on what we need to improve on – myself, car, everything – and just every weekend try to get stronger and stronger. I think that's the goal now. We can't panic, we can't lose concentration; we have to stay in it. It's a long year. There have only been six races and there's still 14 more to go. The year is a marathon and it's about forgetting about what happened in the past and focusing on the next one. That's definitely what I did in F3. There were a lot of hard times in 2015 and then I came back in 2016, worked on my weaknesses over the winter, and came back a much better, a much more complete driver. The same thing happens when you move into Formula One. There are new things to learn. The tyres are very tricky to understand, so that is definitely something I'm learning at the moment, trying to get on top of that every weekend as consistently as possible and just driving the car and getting used to it. I'm getting more comfortable, more confident everywhere I go. A lot of the tracks are new as well. That's definitely something that takes some getting used to. In FP1 you just have to learn these new tracks and all that. It's time and experience. But at the same time you've got to always push as hard as you can and focus on what you really need to improve on, weekend by weekend.

Q: (Jeff Pappone – Inside Track) A question for Sergio. I'm just wondering, with the changes to the car, the tyres that are different this year, you have a rookie teammate: Is this one of the toughest years – F1 is always hard for rookies – but is this one of the toughest years for them to come in and figure out the cars and figure out how to be fast?

SP: It's hard for me to judge, because the last time I was a rookie in F1 was seven years ago. I think F1 is quite as well, you know, but certainly with these tyres it's quite difficult to know what is going on. I think especially in Formula One, you have a lot of people around

your team that can help you a lot to understand what is going on with tyres. Since I came to Formula One, the most important thing is tyres. We are always talking about tyres, tyres. When you come from a junior category to Formula One there is so much to learn on tyres. Whether it's harder now or when I came? I don't think it's any harder now, but it's hard for me to judge. Certainly I'm finding it hard to know what's going on with these tyres. All the time they are very different, depending on which track they work very different. Having them in the window to having them over the window, it's a very little margin. So certainly tyres are something that rookies might find a little bit harder than experienced drivers.

Q: (Silvia Arias – Parabrisas) Sergio, you just said that there are a lot of people around trying to help about the tyres. I would love to know, all of you, what about the sensibility. How sensitive do you have to be, driving a car, to add to this help? Your own feelings into the car. Do you feel this year you have to use even more your sensitive approach?

SP: I don't think you have to use it any more than any other year. You always have to try to know what's going on with tyres. It's obviously very hard to know what's going on with the set-up and the tyres at the same time, whether it's a lack of warm-up or whether it's a problem with the balance of the car. That's something that for us, as drivers, is hard to judge. I like to do a lot of work with tyres and I like to focus a lot on that regard. Firstly I try to understand what's going on with the tyres before I judge the set-up.

LS: Sergio said a lot of it. I think tyres are the biggest performance gain in Formula One today. You can do an out lap very slow or you can do one very fast and then get into detail about it and you can find a ton of lap time when you get it right and you get in the window. Coming from junior categories I think there is a big difference in that from Formula One. In F3, for example, where I come from, F4 as well, you go out, the tyre is very consistent all the time, you have three push laps in qualifying where you can get the lap time you want. It's just very forgiving, it's very easy, you can slide the tyre, you can do whatever you want, and then just focus on driving. But in Formula One there's a lot that comes with getting good out laps, getting the tyre working, and if you miss that, if you get traffic on an out lap, and you don't get it working the way you want you can lose a massive amount of performance and that just really affects your position on the grid. Same in the race. If you have some overheating or something, you slide the surface too much, you go backwards. So these tyres are very, very tricky to understand. There are some weekends that are very straightforward. We've seen weekends this year where I think it has been pretty easy for everyone to get temperature into the tyre and then it's just been consistent and then it's just about focusing on your driving. Then there have been other weekends where it has been extremely complicated to get it working properly and you just have to wait and see if it's going to work or not. Definitely you always have to be on top of it, listen to people in your team who are trying to help you. For me it's just about gaining experience with the tyres and trying different things, seeing if it works, and obviously using the help of people in my team around me.

ME: Not much to add to be honest. Like they said, tyres are the key to performance and I agree with that.

Q: (Sef Harding – Xero Xone News) A question for Lance. What have you had a chance to do since you've been home and I'll slip another question in there: what you have on your playlist this weekend, because I know you're a music guy?

LS: First of all, it's great to be home. I don't get to come back too often, so it's been a busy week, with some media stuff and sponsor events and a lot of that, but at the same time I have had a chance to visit some friends, family, here in Montreal, that I don't get to see often, so that's been great. Music for the weekend? I'm not too sure yet. I'll have a better idea tomorrow on what I feel like listening to. Some hip-hop, soft rock, deep house, I don't know yet, but we'll see.

Q: (Alexandre Geoffrion-McInnis – La Presse Canadienne) Sergio, we all know it's Lance's first Canadian Grand Prix, but I want to know how you felt to race in front of your home crowd in Mexico back in 2015? Did you get any emotion boost? Did you feel more pressure?

SP: It's a big emotion, you know. When you race in front of your home crowd you have all the support from your fans, all your people, your friends, family, people that they don't get to see you in life for the rest of the year. It's certainly a weekend where your emotions are 100 per cent, all the time. From P1 to when you finish the race it's very emotional. They always say that when you are home you are two tenths quicker and I believe so, you know. You have so much energy through you and so much support and there is so much willingness to do well in front of them. And instead of feeling pressure you feel extra energy and that helps you to focus on set-up decisions, on preparing your race weekend, on preparing your qualifying. It's something really well. It's important that you don't let the emotions go too high and always stay calm and just enjoy the weekend, because it will go very fast.

Q: (Alessandra Retico – La Repubblica) Lance, you are very young, but what does Gilles Villeneuve mean to you and how do you feel to be the first Canadian guy to compete here since Jacques?

LS: Well, Gilles was a bit before my time, so I didn't really have a chance to watch him race. But obviously an extreme talent and very loved. He really went for the gaps and took the risks that back then other drivers wouldn't take. An extreme talent and a very special driver that goes down in the history books in Formula One. To race here since Jacques is really an honour. He won the world championship with Williams in 1997, the year before I was born. Now 20 years later to be here in the Canadian Grand Prix, just memories of when I was a kid watching the race. Formula One was always a dream for, but separately the Canadian Grand Prix is really a dream for me to compete here. I was a bit worried over the winter when they were saying 'oh maybe next year not sure if it's going to be on the calendar', but now to be here and experiencing the whole thing, I think Sergio mentioned, from the moment you get home, FP1, the race, you're just embracing all that positive energy from the fans, from everyone around. I think it's one of those grands prix that you really have to enjoy and embrace it and then it's a race like every other one and you have to go and have fun.

Q: (Salim Valji – CBC) For Lance, how do you handle the perception that maybe you are here based on family money as opposed to talent? Kind of an awkward question but how do you handle that, what's your response to that perception?

LS: Never heard that question before! You know, it's always going to be said and asked, about where I come from and all that. But I focus on the positives. I've won the championships to arrive here, Formula 4, Formula 3 European Championship, I got my 40 Superlicence points that the FIA has placed just for that reason. Drivers can't just buy their way into Formula One, you have to actually go out and get the results. There are always going to be haters, there is always going to be jealousy, that's just the nature of sports in general. When you win it's expected and when you have hard times people put you down and that's how it goes. But I don't focus on that. I know who is important around me and those are the people I listen to. The rest of the noise you just have to block it out, it's out of your control. You have to know who you need to trust around you and that's all you can focus on and then it's about going out on track. Sometimes there's hard times, sometimes there's good time but you just need to always go to the next weekend and be positive and try as hard as you can and that's how I go about my business.

Ends