



FEDERATION INTERNATIONALE DE L'AUTOMOBILE

Press Information

2015 Monaco Grand Prix Saturday Post Qualifying Press Conference Transcript 23.05.2015

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TV UNILATERAL

Lewis, it's seems to strange that it's your first pole at Monaco, what does it mean to you?

Lewis HAMILTON: It does, it's been a long, long time. I can't express to you just how happy I am. It wasn't the easiest session. I had a lot of things that kind of [would easily] throw you off your rhythm. Which it did. I didn't have the rhythm until the last two laps. So I was really, really happy with it and coming across the line just hoping for once that you've got it. This is incredibly special for me and for my guys who have worked so hard this weekend, so I'm very, very happy.

At one point, as you say, you weren't terribly happy and you said to your engineer, and to yourself it seemed as well, 'OK guys, we all just need to calm down here and refocus'. Can you just tell us a bit about what was going on and what was going on in your mind?

LH: At this track it's so hard. It's difficult to express just how difficult this track is. We do it because we've been racing for years, but getting your head around it and improving... it's important to get into a rhythm and it's really important to continue to improve. It's like climbing a ladder and every time you've got to be taking one step and if you slide back down it's sometimes harder to get back up. In our session we had some problems with tyres and we had some problem with some wing and traffic, so, you know, it wasn't easy. It makes it even more special, because normally if you just back-to-back good laps, good laps, good laps you can kind of expect it but we had some really bad laps, didn't get the quickest laps in Q1 or Q2. So, anyways, I'm blabbing on, it was great; I'm really happy.

Well done. Coming to you Nico, not your year this year, as far as qualifying is concerned anyway. A couple of lock-ups in Q2 at the end there and also it seemed at the end in Q3. What was going today?

Nico ROSBERG: Yeah, probably a bit the opposite to Lewis. I had a good rhythm starting off qualifying, which I didn't have all weekend, so it was good to get into it in qualifying and then just lost touch a little bit towards the end. Of course going for it, because I have to, because I know Lewis is going to be quick. So I needed to go for it and it didn't work out. That's it.

That banker lap, that first run in Q3 is the important one isn't it? You had it last year and obviously Lewis got it this time. How hard is the recovery if you don't have it after that first run in Q3?

NR: Recovery? I didn't really see it as too much of a problem because it was very close and I was confident that I could improve on my lap time. I changed my balance also, because on the first run I had too much understeer so I went up on the front flap by a good step. I was confident it was going to come my way, but it didn't.

Well done anyway. Sebastian, coming to you, back up the front again in qualifying, third again. Did you get the most out of the car today?

Sebastian VETTEL: Not really. Generally happy with the result but I think it was a bit too cool for us today. I think everyone was struggling a little bit with warming up the tyres. It sounds surprising because it's the supersoft. It was a shame the sun was hiding behind the clouds. Nevertheless, I think it was a good session for us and P3 is a good place to start from tomorrow. Hopefully we can split the Mercedes and therefore have an exciting race tomorrow.

Some of the midfield and backmarker cars were doing some quick laps on the supersoft in Q1, yet you and Kimi both chose to stay in the garage. Were you completely calm for those final few moments of Q1?

SV: No, not completely calm! Obviously I knew roughly that the time should be fine with what we thought will be enough. But it was close and then when you see yourself dropping down and the time ticking away from you and you can't really react and go out and have another run it's not nice but in the end it was OK for both of us. So we did the right thing and targeted to prepare for the last part of qualifying. Unfortunately it was not enough to get really, really close to them and put them under pressure, but tomorrow is another day.

Well done. Back to you Lewis, what percentage of the job is now done do you think, given the nature of this circuit and the way the race unfolds and how do you see the race unfolding tomorrow?

LH: Oh, this is... not even half the job is done. There's so much to do tomorrow. There's a long, long way to go, many, many laps here. It's going to be mentally and physically challenging. Again just so happy; nothing was able to get in my way today in this. I'm just sitting here thinking about all the previous years and things that kind of got in the way or that I wasn't good enough or whatever it may be. I'm looking forward to tomorrow. I think 2006 in GP2 was the last time I started on pole here. It's a very special day and again just a big thank you to the team. The performance we have with our car is outstanding and the guys have been perfect all weekend, so I hope we can get a real result for them tomorrow.

PRESS CONFERENCE

Q: Lewis, can you tell us a little about bringing the tyres in and what was the ideal lap for these supersoft tyres. Because obviously you hadn't done any running on them prior to this morning due to the rain on Thursday etcetera. There was various different teams with various messages about which was the ideal lap, how many timed laps etcetera. How did you find your way to the ideal moment to use them?

LH: Well, I guess I'm going to have to choose my words carefully. These tyres, they take a quite a long time to bring in. We have to push quite a lot to get the tyres to start working. They're very hard. Considering they're the soft and supersoft, they're incredibly hard. When I looked at the wear life yesterday, there's a lot of laps you can do. A lot of laps, and so to bring the tyres in you... this morning was OK. The track was a bit grippier at one point so the tyres came in really nicely, quite soon. But this afternoon, being a little cooler perhaps, we had to do the two... kind of an out-lap, a warm-up lap and then the fast lap. Even on that fast lap, they were so-so. It's interesting that you have to do that with both tyres.

Q: Nico, Lewis just said a moment ago in the Unilateral that he doesn't consider even half of the job is done yet with this pole position. What's your view on what you can do

from where you are? He feels there's clearly a threat from you and from Sebastian. Can strategy help you?

NR: I am very glad to hear Lewis' opinion on that! Yeah, I'm going to try and keep the pressure up, of course. That's all I can do tomorrow. Well, that's what I need to do tomorrow. And I'll do it.

Q: Sebastian, the gap is again that stubborn three-quarters of a second between you and the Mercedes. It doesn't seem to be changing too much at the moment. Obviously Lewis won from third on the grid, I think back in 2008, so it can be done. Drawing some encouragement from that?

SV: Definitely. I think, y'know, so far nobody has scored any points so everything is possible tomorrow for sure. We know it's Monaco, we know it's difficult to pass, so if you start on pole you have a good chance of winning the race - but there's 78 laps to do. The start will be important. I start on the inside which obviously gives me the possibility with a good start, yeah, to split them, and then we'll see what happens. In terms of strategy it's pretty straightforward: it's statistically not the most exciting race but if you take 2008 as an example it was very exciting. I think there was some rain, I remember it was very slippery. I don't know the forecast for tomorrow but who knows? Anything can happen around here.

QUESTIONS FROM THE FLOOR

Q: (Ottavio Daviddi - Tuttosport) For Sebastian, you mentioned the weather forecast - do you prefer a wet race tomorrow or not?

SV: Well, it's very easy to look at it: if it's wet there's a lot more chances. Also, there's higher risk. So, y'know, if you're on the good side, you take the chance, if you get it wrong and hit the risk the wrong way then it goes, y'know, in the wrong direction. So, in the end the weather, thanks God, is something we cannot influence and we have to deal with it. Sometimes it makes things a lot more exciting. But we see tomorrow. I think nonetheless we should have a good car in the race. Obviously we weren't really able to have a look in long runs, no-one was. But the car feels good around here and hopefully we can put some pressure onto these two guys tomorrow.

Q: (Michael Schmidt - Auto Motor und Sport) Question to Sebastian. Do you think that today's performance is confirmation of what we have seen in Barcelona or are you now back to where you have been in the first four races?

SV: No, I don't think you can compare this race to Barcelona. It's a completely different track. I think today was significantly cooler. Probably it's true with a little bit higher temperatures we could have been a little bit closer. As it stands today, obviously we were quite far away again but tomorrow we should be a bit closer to them.

Q: (Andrea Cremonesi - La Gazzetta dello Sport) Lewis, you finally achieved this pole position; you are a fan of Ayrton Senna. How did you miss this pole position? Do you feel that this is an important milestone in your career, to get this pole position on this track?

LH: I don't feel like it's a milestone, but I definitely feel like it's an important day for me because, as I was saying, since 2007 it wasn't great, 2008 wasn't great again, and every year, generally, it's been quite poor. Some years I've had the car to do it, sometimes - at least once or twice - some things have got in the way. Sometimes I've not actually had the car to do so and if I have, I have not executed it. So yeah, I've got a long way to go to get anywhere near what Ayrton achieved here but this is kind of... maybe this is the first step in the sense of Monte Carlo. And as this is now my home for the past three or four years, it makes it even more special. I wake up here, I've never been so happy living here with the views and the way of life here. You get to drive the track every day when I'm here so it's a very special day.

Q: (Rodrigo Franca - VIP Magazine) Lewis, here in Monaco, we know that fans are really close to the drivers and sometimes maybe movie actors and even athletes don't like this proximity. How do you feel about it, very close to the fans here in Monaco?

LH: This is probably the best track... for me, this is the best track not only to drive on but because the fans get close. There's a lot of races where we go to and the grandstand is 100 meters away from the side of the track. People are having to use binoculars to watch the cars. It's so much more exciting when you can get close up. I was watching the Renault cars going round - the V6 is it, World series - and I was watching at Rascasse and I was standing right by the barrier and I've seen them come by and I'm thinking this is how racing should be, this is how spectating should be. Not that I can change anything but as a spectator, I think this is the best place to come and watch.

Q: (Livio Oricchio - Globosport.com) Nico, I'm sorry to put it this way, but you have a first problem to start behind Lewis. The second is, two sets of tyres on which you've locked the front left tyre. Will it be a problem for the race condition?

NR: First problem, you are right, to start behind Lewis. Second problem is not a problem because it's one stop so I don't have to use those tyres because we just start on soft(er) and then one stop and then the hard(er) tyre, so I don't have to use the soft tyres that I flat-spotted. And the set that I'm starting the race with is my Q2 set which I did my lap time with in Q2 and there was no blocking there. That one's fine.

Q: (Andrea Cremonesi - La Gazzetta dello Sport) Nico, in the last part of Q2 you had an exit at Ste Devote. Did you have any psychological handicap about it in Q3?

NR: Well, of course it's not ideal: better not to have such a thing of course in the middle of qualifying, but I had two shots in Q3 afterwards, so with two solid runs, it doesn't have an influence, eventually then, so not really, no.

Ends