



FEDERATION INTERNATIONALE DE L'AUTOMOBILE

**Press Information**

**2015 Russian Grand Prix  
Friday Press Conference Transcript**

**09.10.2015**

**TEAM REPRESENTATIVES – Paul HEMBERY (Pirelli), Graeme LOWDON (Manor), Monisha KALTENBORN (Sauber), Paul MONAGHAN (Red Bull Racing), Rob SMEDLEY (Williams)**

**PRESS CONFERENCE**

**Graeme, if we can start with you, obviously the big news as far as you are concerned is Mercedes engines for next year. What does it mean you can do now and where do you expect to be fighting in 2016?**

**Graeme LOWDON:** Well, it's a big step forward for the team. If you look at the last... from 12 months from this weekend last year, there's an awful lot happened in the team. We've been very much rebuilding. This year has very much been very much about getting back to really where we were probably about a year and a half ago. This new agreement with Mercedes AMG HPP and also with Williams, who obviously we have worked with before in the past and had a very successful relationship with Williams in the past, gives us the chance to really get back into the pack and get back to racing, which is what we want to do. It's also pretty important to recognise the assistance we have had from Scuderia Ferrari as well this year. This year was a very strange year for us and we were in a situation where without their help at the start of the season we simply wouldn't be here. So without the assistance of Sergio Marchionne and Maurizio Arrivabene and also in particular at the start of this season James Allison... there was a huge amount of effort that went into making sure our team was still on the grid and I think we'll always be extremely grateful for that. But looking to the future I think we've got a chance to level the playing field a little bit and try to get back into the pack and really start racing again.

**And driver-wise, would you expect to be running one of the Mercedes development drivers next year or is the field completely open?**

**GL:** The field is completely open. It's not easy for any driver to get into Formula One at the minute and there are some quite good drivers looking to do that but also the

grid is pretty full at the moment. We have drivers that we need to focus on for this year as well. Decisions on drivers for us will come much later in the season.

**Paul [Hembery], coming to you: a different choice tyre choice this year here in Sochi as far as Pirelli is concerned – supersoft and soft. What difference do you expect that to have on race strategy?**

**Paul HEMBERY:** Well, not too sure after today in the sense that we didn't get any dry running of note. The reason for that was based on last year. It was the first year here. We found the surface to be a lot smoother than anticipated. I think it was Nico who basically ran the whole, bar one lap, on the medium, so we felt that we would be in a position to be able to use the two more aggressive compounds for here. If we get some warm temperatures maybe they'll push us on to a two-stop race.

**And from what you've learned from the developments of this year, what kind of tyres do you want to provide next year in Formula One? More strategic variation? Any particular channels you're thinking of, pathways?**

**PH:** Well, I think there's been a lot in the media about maybe changes to the rules for next year in terms of the way that the tyres are selected for each race, giving more freedom to the teams, and that appears to be getting close to a final decision. So hopefully over the next few weeks we'll be able to explain that to people, how that's going to work. That's the main change. We want to make some structural changes, as we try to look at each year, particular with the cars getting quicker. There's a new supersoft that we're working on to bring to the races next year. So, there are a few changes, but I think the most significant is going to be centred on the way that the tyres are allocated for each race.

**Q: Paul, coming to you, obviously as we were just hearing, very little running today for a variety of reasons, not least the weather. Talk us through how much there is to do tomorrow in that free practice three session. What does the job sheet look like?**

**Paul MONAGHAN:** Quite full – but most P3s do fill up. You tend to run nearer the end of the session when the track has evolved a little bit. So, obviously, we trundle out on a green track tomorrow morning. I think it will depend on what each team considers it wants to be its aims from P3. Some might do a little bit more work towards qualifying, others may do a little bit of work for qualifying and then try to have a look at the car's behaviour on higher fuel loads. I suspect the majority will do a mix and the bias will depend on what the team wishes to pursue more vigorously.

**Q: It's now early October and you don't know yet what engine you'll be using in the back of your car next year. At what point does being forced to miss the pre-season tests become a real risk? Presuming, of course, that Red Bull continues in Formula One next year.**

**PM:** It's getting a little bit late. At the moment it will be a squeeze but we'll do it. I guess if you're... OK, we can go to the first test and it can be a washout for three or four days, so it's wrong to say that anybody that runs the first test will automatically have a benefit on us. Yeah, they might, but we could cope – so however the land lies, we'll deal with it.

**Q: Monisha, coming to you, obviously the development since the last race, you've lodged a formal complaint to the EU. Can you tell us why and why now?**

**Monisha KALTENBORN:** Well, to start with the second part, this has been an ongoing process so there's no real specific to it why exactly now. The reason what we've done it for, I think we've explained earlier on, so what I can tell you so far is we have, together with another team, lodged this formal complaint to the European Commission alleging violation of European competition law and we want to challenge the rule-making powers and the privileges that together, in our view, harm the sport. I think we've been saying that for quite a while and now this is the next logical step. We hope from this that the commission will start a proper investigation. We hope they'll put the sport onto a footing which allows teams teams to compete on the same basis and that they will look into why the unfair terms – which we feel are unfair – were actually imposed.

**Q: And what are you hoping the outcome will be?**

**MK:** That, essentially, we have a fairer system in the sport, which the bottom line is that we can all compete on the same basis. That's it.

**Q: Coming to you Rob, Felipe was in the press conference yesterday and said that the focus of the team is now on 2016, although there are still some development parts scheduled to come onto the car before the end of this season. What can you tell us about your 2016 car and the targets you're setting for it?**

**Rob SMEDLEY:** Well, obviously we've been working on the 2016 car as most of the teams probably, up this end of the grid have been doing for a reasonable amount of time now. Certainly the focus has been fully switched to that car for a good few months. There are still things coming through for the FW37, so the 2015 car, but they're more corollary development of next year's car. The targets are ever-improving. I can't really go into the specifics but we're looking at all the areas: vehicle dynamics, vehicle science, aerodynamics obviously. Tyre science is of great importance to us and we're constantly striving to improve that. So, there's no one, single target that we have; there's no one magic bullet in Formula One. It's more just about trying to improve every little bit.

**Q: There's a lot of talk obviously at the moment, about engine suppliers in Formula One. Do you feel that you have reached the limit of what's possible as a customer engine team in this sport?**

**RS:** No, not at all. You could perhaps argue that if we were the second quickest team but no, I don't think that we've reached the limit. I think that there's still more for us to do. I think that as a company Williams, over the past 18 months, has been improving. Some of that you see is directly affecting what we do at the track or our results at the track and some of it's a little bit more subtle but certainly there's still a lot more that we need to do if the team wants to make good on its ambition, if the team wants to eventually win races and then World Championships, then there's a great deal of background work both subtle and fundamental structures of the business which we still need to look at. I don't think that we've reached... we haven't fulfilled the full potential. We're still being a customer team.

## QUESTIONS FROM THE FLOOR

**Q: (Ben Edwards – BBC TV) Rob, just a quick question on today, specifically. You did a bit more wet running than some of the other guys. That's been a weakness of the team over the last 18 months or so. Do you feel as though you're making some progress, was what you saw today a bit more promising today?**

**RS:** Yeah. It's always very difficult to say because it's practice and you very rarely know what other people are doing but on pure face value, I think that we are probably moving forward in that area. We have spent quite a lot of time as a group and that involves all the groups back at base, trying to understand where the issues lie with our car in lower speed corners, in certain trajectory of corners and in the wet. That work now, I would say, is starting to come to fruition, we're starting to get some leads on where we need to take the car and that's why... you probably saw in Singapore we were keen to get lots of set-up work in, lots of practice work in and the same here. We wanted to run. We were a little bit scuppered by the track conditions that we had today which were neither one thing nor the other. It was a weird situation where half the track was a lot wetter than the other half and of course the teams who were confident in their wet running didn't need to run but we were out there, we were just trying to understand a little bit more about the tyres. We had to wait until other people were running so we could pitch ourselves against them but I think that more than just the lap times, which can be a little bit misleading in practice, I think the drivers were just happy with the balance of the car. We know we've got a specific problem in the wet and certainly today that was a lot better.

**Q: (Kate Walker – motorsport.com) Monisha, regarding the EU investigation of the lodging of the complaint, there are more than two disenfranchised teams, both in terms of rule making and CCB payments. What efforts did you guys make to get everybody in on the complaint and would having more signatories have strengthened your case do you think?**

**MK:** Well, these talks amongst the non-privileged teams – if you can put it like that – have been going on for quite a while so they were always informed about it but it's their decision not to sign it or not to support it, at least at the moment – I don't think there's anybody out there who would not support it but they probably have to take a public position on that as well. We've always been transparent, from our side. We've always told them where we stand and it's entirely up to them and they'll decide, I guess, when they want to join it or not and they will have their reasons for that.

**Q: (Daniel Ortelli – Agence France Presse) Question about these privileges; Sauber has been in Formula One for 20 years but it gets no money from the premium fund, do you think it's normal and is it part of your complaint?**

**MK:** Well, we've been (involved for) 23 years actually. I can't tell you details about the complaint because now it's an ongoing procedure and we have to adhere to all the steps there. What we have basically requested or asked the commission to do is to investigate why these – in our view – unfair terms regarding the voting rights, the rule-making on one side and on the other side the distribution of revenues have

been imposed. We have asked the commission to – as we see – abuse of dominance arising from the way these privileges have been granted in these two areas. So we have our position on that, we don't consider it to be fair and based on that, we have submitted our complaint which is to be also clear about it against the commercial rights holder.

Ends