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TEAM REPRESENTATIVES – Jonathan Eddolls (Toro Rosso), Nick CHESTER (Renault), Ayao KOMATSU (Haas), Jock CLEAR (Ferrari), Rob SMEDLEY (Williams)

PRESS CONFERENCE

Nick, it's been a great last couple of races for Renault and it looks like you've pretty much secured P4 in the Championship. That was your stated aim at the start of the year, but just talk us through how satisfied you've been with the development curve of this year's car?

Nick CHESTER: Well firstly, it has been a pretty tight fight, we've had a fight all year and the last couple of races have been pretty good for us. We've developed the car pretty hard all year. We knew we were going to have to and that it would be a tight fight. But it's pleasing and I think if we have another couple of decent races towards the end of the year – Brazil and Abu Dhabi – then we'll be about there.

Q: These past couple of races, as we said, have been good. Have you made a step forward that has allowed you to be that competitive on every track or has it been track specific?

NC: It's been a bit track specific. We know that there are some tracks that are better for us than others. We're a little bit better in slow-speed corners than high-speed corners but also we have been working the development to try to bring the car on through the year.

Q: Thank you. Jock, it's been a fantastic battle between yourselves and Ferrari this year but there can only be one winner. Where in your opinion did it start to slip away from Sebastian Vettel?

Jock CLEAR: Yeah, it has been a fantastic battle and that's why we do this sport. It's seasons like this that you just relish, Obviously when you are on the wrong end of it, it is frustrating. But specifically, we haven't really looked back at what point, as you put it, things slipped away from us. The fact is a season is season and the points we score in Abu Dhabi are just as important as the points you score in Australia, and to win a championship you need to put together a full season and we haven't done as good a job in that respect as our direct competitors and we are aware of that. We look back over the season, we look at the strengths of what is probably the strongest Ferrari season for 10 years and we build on those strengths. I think the win in Austin is a testament to the fact that the team does come back and does fight back and we did understand some of the issues we uncovered in the second third of the season. The fact is that over the course of 21 races you have to score more points than the opposition. We haven't done that for Seb, we're still in the hunt for the Constructors' obviously and it's going to be a tough battle here and hopefully to Abu Dhabi.

Q: Sebastian has been performing under a lot of pressure this year. How difficult do you think it's been for him?

JC: It's difficult to say really. The fact is drivers of his caliber relish the pressure. That's again what I think, the top athletes pit themselves against the best and the pressure is the pressure. That's part of the job. I think he has enjoyed the season. There have been highs and lows. I think he said recently that losing the championship in 2009 he found more frustrating. I think on the whole, he has come to this battle willing to take risks, willing to give it his all and we're part of that. We've all done our part this year to the ups and downs. I think from Seb's point of view it just gives him more strength to come back next year and say 'this is unfinished business'.

Q: Thank you. Ayao, coming to you, Mexico aside, which was a bit of a blip for the team, it's been a positive and consistent season for Haas. In what areas have you improved the car since Melbourne?

Ayao KOMATSU: I think most of... all the areas. This is only the third year for us but this is also only the first year that we actually decided to develop the car throughout the season. The first year was all about operation. The second year we managed to focus a bit more on performance but third year we really focused on performance and improving the cars throughout the season. Of course last year we stopped development early to focus on this year, so that paid off. We are very happy with our baseline and how the team is operating, especially considering it is only our third season.

Q: So looking forward, there is a bit of a reset with the new aero rules. How are you guys dealing with that transition and how confident are you of retaining P5 in 2019?

AK: I think we are dealing with it as well as we can be. Obviously when the regulations changed from '16 to '17 that was a big change for us, that was going from first to second year. We were pretty aware of the challenge but we managed it. This year our understanding of the car, at least from an aerodynamics point of view, is reasonable, so yeah, I'm confident that our aero guys will do a good job again for next year. But if you ask me how confident am I to retain P5, of course it's a competition, so we've got to do a better job than other people. So it's not easy, I'm under no illusion and then going into our fourth again we need to look at ourselves, improving in every single department to have a chance of retaining fifth. So a huge challenge, but a challenge we will love to attack with our full capability.

Q: Thank you. Jonathan, we've talked about Haas' development curve, we've talked Renault's, can we talk to you about Honda? Specifically, where have they added performance and reliability over the year?

Jonathan EDDOLLS: Yeah, I think with Honda, honestly it was surprise at how good they were at the start of the year, given everything that we had seen in the press. They'd had a fairly... not a bad picture painted of them, but the expectation were lower than we experienced and they were already at a reasonable level. Through the year there have been two really big updates, the Spec 2 for Canada and then the Spec 3 fairly recently. The Spec 3 in particular saw a really big improvement in power, especially in qualifying, and that has really helped in some of the races and will help us for the next two races. Reliability has actually been relatively good. I think if you look at the number of PU penalties we have taken, it's very high, and it doesn't look like Honda has had such good reliability. However, many of those we have elected to take ourselves just to get Pus in the pool when we have had a bad qualifying for instance. Reliability has come on a long way and power is now looking good.

Q: Certainly is. Now while we're talking progress, can we talk drivers as well, specifically Pierre Gasly? What has impressed you about him and in what areas have you seen him progress this year?

JE: Well, firstly he is very confident in his ability. He is a very fast driver and I think that confidence has grown throughout the year. Some the areas he has improved the most: tyres management. He was good already at the start of the year. As we know these Pirelli tyres are very difficult to understand in all of the conditions. Every race is different, every race presents a different challenge – graining, blistering, overheating. I think that's one of the areas he's worked on and developed the most. He's still had a couple of races recently where it's shown that we haven't fully understood the tyres but the good thing with him is he's happy to sit down after the race and go through everything – he's massively keen to learn. The most recent races, he's shown that in tyres management he has made big steps there. I think also his ability to track the grip in qualifying. Maybe at the start of the year, let's say it was a surprise to him how much the grip would come up through qualifying and it can be quite difficult to track that run to run, but that's another area that he has improved a lot.

Q: Thanks. Rob, some big news from you in recent days, you are going to leave Williams at the end of the year. Can you share with us why you are going to do that?

Rob SMEDLEY: Well, I don't know if it's big news, but it's news I guess, on a quiet week. I think I joined Williams at a time when they were evolving from having a torrid time of it let's say – the new regulations in 2014 and the part that I was going to play in the journey was to take on the vehicle science, the vehicle performance side of it, the race operations and to try to help out in that area and I think that if you look back at 2012, 2013 and from that point on, from 2014, with the huge effort that all of the guys that work in that department, we have been able to grow it, we've been able to improve it, and hopefully I leave it in better shape than it was. It's a good group now, they've got good knowledge, good methodologies, we brought a lot of science into the way we use tyres,

into the way we use the car in general, so that the team can go ahead and pretty much exploit any car that's given to them, the race operations itself, the way the mechanics work. Hopefully it is in better shape than it was. It's kind of time for a new challenge for me now, I think. Williams has got it's own challenge in front it to come from where it is at the minute. I'm going to go away and take another challenge somewhere else. I'm going to spend some time at home – that's first and foremost the thing I'm going to do. I'm going to spend some time with my family who have supported me for a long time. I've got to do that. I have no choice in that. But I'm very, very grateful that I can do that and spend some time being a normal husband, a normal dad and not going away every two weeks and not working until 9 or 10 in the office every night, so I'll enjoy that to begin with and then we'll go from there.

Q: Well, where do you go from there. Do you want to stay in Formula 1?

RS: Yeah, I definitely want to stay in Formula 1. Formula 1 is my passion. It's been all my working life that I've been in Formula 1 and it's still the pinnacle of motorsport. There are other series that are snapping at its heels but it's still got a lot to offer. Formula 1, we're working on it all the time, it's not the complete package. It has so much more potential than what you actually see. So yeah, I do want to stay in Formula 1 on the technical side. I'm lucky, because I'm already talking to people and that's a fortunate position to be in and we'll just see where everything takes us.

Q: And just a final word on Williams? You know the team well, so what steps do you think the team needs to take next to regain performance and respectability in Formula 1?

RS: There's never one magic bullet is there. I think in all areas really, you can never stop learning and improving. I think it would be a mistake to pinpoint one area and say that has to be the sole concentration or that's the sole problem; it's not. As with anything that's not quite working as well as it should be, or as efficiently as it should be, with any business, with any organisation, it's never one thing. What Williams need to do now... they've got strong leadership and Claire is at the front of that leadership and I think what they need to do at that leadership level, is they need a recovery plan and that has to attack all areas of the business. It has to be technical, but it has to be all the support structure of the business as well. There are areas that need modernisation, there are areas that need change and there are areas you should recognise that are strong compared to other Formula q1 teams but are not supported in other ways. It's a long road, they're a talented bunch there, there are some really good technical people, some really good engineers and a good management group and the trick now is they have to pull together and start to go in one direction.

QUESTIONS FROM THE FLOOR

Q: (Frederic Ferret – L'Equipe) Question to Jock Clear. You worked with Michael Schumacher and now you work with Sebastian Vettel. Can you tell us what are the similarities in the way they work and the differences between them?

JC: Yeah, obviously I've worked with a lot of drivers so this question comes up time and time again. Sorry to sort-of evade the question direction but direct comparisons just aren't there, with any of these drivers, with any of the World Champions I've worked with. They are themselves, they are characters within themselves, they've got their own way of working. On the face of it, if you stand back and say, 'well, would operating like Michael have made Seb more successful, or even would Michael operating like Seb have made him more successful, they are what they are. You get the rough with the smooth. We don't get the opportunity to make the ideal driver. So they all attack it in a different way. The opposition and the competition of the hour of the year obviously varies, so with all sportsman it's very difficult to make direct comparisons. All I can say is that the common theme that all of these top drivers have is that they are exceptionally focussed. They are exceptionally sensitive to everything around them. And that's not just the car. That's the support structure and the people around them. And they require a whole load of things lining up to get those championships in the bag. And that's where the team comes in. That's why it's not just about the driver. It's not just about Schumacher or Vettel or Hamilton. It's about the whole team. So we, with Seb, will create victories and championships, hopefully, down the line and it won't be in the same way as Michael did.

Q: (Scott Mitchell – Autosport) It's a question to all five of you guys please. There's a fair few people hoping that the rule changes on the front wing for next season will improve racing, make it easier to follow. The more you understand and learn about your respective 2019 challengers, how confident are you that this end goal will be met? And how much of a

chance of there that this time next year we're back and looking at the same things, same sort of numbers?

NC: OK, well, yeah, it is quite a big change for 2019. Big change to the front wing with wider span, different barge boards, different front drums, and I think the concept that the FIA have put forward to try and improve the wake to the following car is the right thing. Obviously in one year you couldn't do all of the changes that are planned eventually for 2021. From what we've seen so far I think it'll make a small difference. It'll go in the right direction, so the following will be a little bit improved – but we're probably going to have to wait until 2021 to see what the full package can deliver.

Jock, your thoughts?

JC: Yes, just to echo Nick really, on the face of it, it is going in the right direction. I think we're all a little bit tentative about exactly what it's going to look like and that is the fact of the matter. We're going to have to wait until next year to actually see what the implications are – because of course ten teams will come up with ten solutions, some of which we won't even have thought about and then that may well move the goalposts slightly. I think we are attacking the right areas. We are looking at the fact that close racing doesn't necessarily mean everybody can overtake easily – but it does mean that cars can follow each-other and they can pressure each other – and I think that's the thing we're targeting. Just allowing cars to maybe be close battling in the future.

Rob?

RS: The only thing I would add to what Nick and Jock said is that yeah, I think Nik Tombazis summed it up quite well... I read an article last week and I think he said you'll never get a Formula One car – which is essentially an aerodynamic formula – following like a touring car. It just won't happen. Physics won't allow that to happen. So you have to accept that cars are difficult to follow – especially with this generation of cars and the amount of downforce that they generate. So, y'know, it will be a little bit better, it will go in the right direction but we'll all iterate to solutions to get us back to where we are in about six months.

Jonathan, anything to add?

JE: I think these guys have covered it. Obviously we haven't ourselves done full overtaking simulations with the new regulations so I guess it would be unfair to say how much we think, as a team, it's going to make a difference – but for sure, the start of next year will be a bit of a development race when we see all the different ideas and concepts that the teams come up with.

Ayao?

AK: A lot depends on other factors as well, such as tyres. So, we'll see. I've got nothing to really add.

Q: (Nate Saunders – ESPN) A question for Jock. You mentioned at the beginning, looking at the season as a whole, and not pinpointing one position. It seemed that the common consensus around the middle of the season was that Ferrari had taken quite a decisive step ahead of Mercedes in terms of performance around Silverstone, Germany. Do you agree it was that significant? And if it was, how big a loss were those 25 points in Germany from Sebastian?

JC: Well, I can only say again that the value of points is the same throughout the year. Yes, I would say our car was at its strongest at around about that time and then we go on to Russia and Japan where we struggled in pure performance terms and we weren't really in a position to take the fight to them. So, as I said, or as you're saying, if you pinpoint specific areas, certainly you can highlight where they were stronger than us and we were stronger than them. But again, over the course of a season, we would like to now be in a position where we could win the next two races and win the championship for Seb. Or the Constructors'. Unfortunately, what's gone before, the points are the points – but again, just to reiterate over the course of this season, we haven't quite got it spot on at every race. The positive is we understand why. As I say, those couple of races where we did have a slump, we came back in Austin, we were brave enough to go back on some of the development, and that's the kind of culture that we want to have now. That people are brave enough to say "OK, I think we've made a mistake." We go back, we relearn what we thought we understood, and we come back in Austin and we win the race, and we were competitive again in Mexico. So that's the positive to it. The championship position we all know.

Q: (Julien Billotte – AutoHebdo) Question to Jonathan, with James Key on gardening leave, how is next year's Toro Rosso being designed and who is in charge of leading the process?

JE: Obviously within Toro Rosso, luckily we have very good succession planning across all departments, so already before James left, we had a deputy technical director, Jody, and for the minute, he's the deputy technical director so he's filling that gap for us at the moment.

Q: (Stuart Codling – F1 Racing) Apologies for pitching another one to the entire panel – but there you go. Calendar expansion. Looks like we're going up again in size next season. The commercial rights holder has talked about maybe even going up to 25 in the future. For you guys as engineers, you thrive on creativity, attention to detail, all the types of factors that start to slip when fatigue creeps in. And you also have to deal with a travelling group of engineers and a group of permanent staff at home that are also looking at things. So, my question is, what is the effect of calendar expansion on your side of the business, and what sort of strategies can you come up with to mitigate those effects in the near-future?

AK: Yeah, obviously especially for small teams like us, increasing the number of races is quite tough. We don't have so many people to substitute or rota in. And also in terms of process and procedure we're still getting on top of what we've got now, so it's not going to be easy – but it's going to be the same of everyone. We're happy to compete in this championship so whatever comes along we have to accept and take it. But yeah, it doesn't really change what we try to put in place. But yeah, I expect the challenge for us to be a bit tougher than for bigger teams.

Jonathan?

JE: I think Ayao's covered it. I think the key thing that we will need to do is look at more rotation. Some of the roles within the team, there is already a minimal amount of rotation. But I think that will need to expand to nearly all of the roles within the team. Probably the race engineer would stay the same throughout the season but almost all of the other positions, trying to do that many races with tests etc., just becomes too much. As you say, the fatigue is too high. It's just not going to be possible. So I think we would have to cope.

Rob?

RS: Nothing to add really.

Jock – does it affect the big teams less than the smaller teams, the calendar expansion?

JC: Yeah, I would have to be honest and say it probably does. We have more strength in depth, we have more resource available to us. I think the only thing I would echo, as Jonathan said, we do have to actually look at how we're using our people – because we want people to enjoy this. One of the great things about doing this sport, being involved in this sport is that it's a passion for all of us. There's very few people in this pitlane who wouldn't be doing this on a Saturday and a Sunday if it was just their hobby. That's the honesty of it. We would be doing this because we just love going racing with cars. And you want people to enjoy it. You don't want people to be ground down after three years, saying, "it's no good, I can't do any more of this," because people have come to this from six, seven, eight years old. They want to do it, and they're passionate about it, and we don't want to kill that passion. So, we'll find ways to keep it enjoyable to keep it practically doable, and the racing will go on and hopefully it will continue to grow the sport.

Nick?

NC: Yeah, I think once you get towards 25 races you have to find a way to rotate a bit. People are already under pressure with 21 races. It's a long season. The other thing is, it also puts pressure on the factory. You make bits for a lot longer through the year. So, there's budget pressures and there's factory pressure from making parts and obviously more freight to go with it.

Q: (Andrea Cremonesi – La Gazzetta dello Sport) Couple of questions, one for Jock, one for Rob. For Jock, I would like to ask you... we understood that you are changing the rules next year. I would like to know in which way that you are maybe working closer with Leclerc and how important is it for an experienced technician to work with a young guy? And for Rob, if one of your options on the table is to come back to Italy?

RS: Andrea, Andrea, Andrea...

JC: Do you want to answer yours first, Rob? Or have you?

RS: Go on, Jock.

JC: I think it's no secret that with a change of driver line-up, we, as a team, are just going to cut our cloth accordingly, as we say in English, so I'm part of the team, I've recently made a longer term commitment to the team, and as such, I will use my skillset wherever we feel that's best. I have a lot of experience with young drivers and a lot of experience with experienced drivers as well so with Charles coming in, I will help in any way I can to make his life easier, to ease some of the pressure

and to make sure that we get the best out of Charles and out of the team as a whole over the next few years.

Q: Jock, just to be more specific on that, are you going to be Charles's race engineer?

JC: It's not all finalised at the moment but at the moment yes, I will certainly have a strong influence on his side of the garage and whether that is the job title or not we'll finally decide upon but certainly I will be taking a closer attention to him than maybe I would have done on either of the individuals we've had – either Kimi or Seb – up to now.

RS: I'm going on holiday there (Italy) in January if that helps! I would say at this moment in time I'm not closing off any options. As I said earlier, I'm in a really fortunate lucky position that people want to talk to me so I'm talking and, as I said, there's absolutely no avenues closed off. What I actually need to do is to at some point, towards the start of next year, is to get all the options on the table and after having spent a little bit of time away from it and being able to look at things with a clearer head, slightly less fatigued, then I will make a decision but until that point I will see what the options are as they come in and go from there.

Q: (Andreas Lopes – Motorlat) For Jock Clear: with Ferrari testing a new floor in previous races and then not used on Sunday in the race, can you explain what kind of problems you had or is it testing for next year?

JC: Well, there's nothing really to explain. This is a process we go through at many events. I think we brought pretty much an aerodynamic upgrade to every race this year so we have various options open to us, depending on the circuit to circuit, we try and find the best combination. The positive is that we are producing these options, that the wind tunnel is continuing to produce effectively tools for us to use from race to race and that's our job as race engineers on the operational side, is to make the most of the bits we've been given and that's the process. For example, you've seen this morning, in FP1, we'll do a comparison between two floors, two front wings, bargeboards, those sort of things and then from then on, we'll decide which combination is giving us the best performance for this track. And that's just a normal process for us.

Q: (Frederic Ferret – L'Equipe) Do you already have numbers for next year's cars' lap times and how much slower are they compared to this year's ones?

NC: Well, we've got some initial estimates. Obviously we're only part-way through the tunnel programme and we've taken a bit of a hit back with the new rules and it's going to be a question of how fast we can develop. I'm not going to give you the actual number because obviously it's more interesting for us but yeah, I think the key is going to be how teams come back and how they develop over the next few months and into next year.

JC: As Nick says, any change, whether it be big or small, tends to impact the programme because these cars are so highly developed around what you actually have on the car. As soon as you change one part it does take a step back so I think we've probably all taken a step back, when we look at the new regulations and then gradually we will recover. What the lap time is, what the numbers say is absolutely irrelevant at this point because it's all relative. We will do our best, we will develop our best but if somebody else has done a better job it won't be enough. If everybody else hasn't, it will be enough and we simply don't know. All we do is we go through our process which is what we can trust.

RS: It's a reasonably big change, what we've done at the front end of the car that Nick talked about earlier. We've got rid of all the furniture on the front wing, it's a wider span, the brake duct winglets have gone, the bargeboard area is very different and what that does is it gives you much worse wheel weight control essentially. What will be really interesting is that there will be... there's some really clear directions with which to work and certainly we've found some really clear directions of where we need to work to recover the performance and it will be just very very interesting I think, at the start of the season, to see the different concepts that come out but then you'll probably find that there'll be a really quick convergence as usual as we take the best concepts from all the cars and blend that into the normal lookalike Formula One car.

JE: Nothing to add. I think these guys have summed it up very well already.

AK: No, not really. Nothing to add.

Q: (Scott Mitchell – Autosport) For Jock and Rob: Jock, how excited are you to work with someone like Charles next year? He's going to be so highly rated and how important is it to manage him as an individual, not just a driver, when there's so much expectation? And Rob, when you had the experience of working as Felipe's race engineer when he started with Ferrari, how important was, that managing all of that expectation and getting to know him as a person and building that relationship?

JC: Obviously we're very excited. We've known Charles for a while now. We've had a relationship with him over a few years, from his days in the Academy so he's not an unknown entity for us, we're not going into this completely blind and clearly in his first year in F1 he's showed some great potential, he's had some great races so I think everybody is excited about the prospect, everybody knows what kind of pressure he will come under, that racing at the very sharp end is going to be a very different prospect for him, but that's a challenge for us as well. One of the comments that many people made was 'is he ready?' Well, we have to be ready as well, Ferrari have to be ready to take this step. It is a brave step that Ferrari has made and we're all pleased about the fact that we're willing to make that step but we have to be ready to give him the opportunity and support him in the right way and hopefully he'll go on to great things and I think the relationship with Seb will be important. We need to manage that very positively and make sure the team as a whole grows, not just on Charles's side and not just on Seb's side.

RS: Well, we're breaking the ten year rule now so it's quite difficult for me to remember! I think that the world was probably a little bit different back then. We're all so much more aware of exactly what Jock's just talked about, that the expectations going from Sauber to Ferrari, which is exactly what Felipe did in fact, are enormous and even within the hierarchy of Formula One, the pressure increases as you go further up the grid. In Ferrari, to the Italian nation, Ferrari is a religion and therefore that just brings all its own issues, challenges, if you like, but I think we're all so much more aware of that now. If you go back to 2006 when Felipe came in, it was just... we kind of pushed him through the door and said to him get on with it. And we realised very early on that that wasn't going to work. We had a slight change of management on his car after about three races into the season and it was at that point trying to understand where the issues were and what we needed to do to solve them so we were being reactive if you like and trying to help him to integrate into this brand new environment. Even though he'd done some Formula One, he'd never done Formula One at Ferrari level. But again, to repeat myself, I think things have moved on so much now, we're so much more aware and I can imagine that Ferrari already have quite a lot of plans to be entirely proactive with Charles's entry into the team and then how he goes through winter testing, how he gets through those first races. Expectation management is a big thing in Ferrari and I think that they've been, ultimately, really intelligent with the communications that they've made over that, that Charles is there to learn, he's there to integrate himself well into the team and his future is not decided on 2019. He's a guy with a great talent, he's got a huge future in front of him, definitely probably the biggest talent we've had come into the sport in a while. It's a pleasure to watch him and he deserves it. As long as Ferrari manage it correctly then it will be a huge success.

Ends