



F1 Korea Blog – Thursday press conference in Korea

It's been a long hard road to Mokpo, and my alarm is due to go off in a few short hours. Here, in full, is the Thursday drivers' press conference from Korea.

Present were Jaime Alguersuari (Toro Rosso), Fernando Alonso (Ferrari), Lewis Hamilton (McLaren), Pastor Maldonado (Williams), Sergio Perez (Sauber), and Sebastian Vettel (Red Bull).

Q. Sergio, a good race last weekend, finishing eighth. Can we expect the same this weekend?

Sergio PEREZ: Well, it was a very special race for me. It was quite a good race, very good race, starting on P17. We had a hydraulic problem. We thought the race was lost and our pace was very strong in the race. We managed very good strategy and it was very good to score some good points and hopefully we will keep up the momentum in the last races.

Q. Presumably you have sent a birthday card to Peter Sauber if you want to keep your drive for next year, as it is his birthday today?

SP: Yes, of course. It was his birthday and we all congratulated him. It is a very good atmosphere in the team, everybody is very happy, and we are looking forward to the last four events.

Q. This is a new circuit for you and I believe you have driven it on the simulator. Now you've seen it for real what are your initial impressions?

SP: I went for a walk this morning and, of course, it looks very dirty. The track, the layout, looks very promising. I have driven the circuit on the simulator already and I am looking forward to doing a good job this weekend. It is a very challenging circuit.

Q. Jaime, you started 15th last year and drove up to 11th. Similar or better this year?

Jamie ALGUERSUARI: I hope better. We had a problem in the pitstop last year and I think a top-seven position was possible here. It was a chaotic race with the rain, a very difficult one for all of us. I expect a lot from this year and especially now we are not far away from Sauber. I think we can manage to score some points in the last four events and hopefully to finish the race in the top 10. That would be awesome.

Q. You are not doing FPI at this race. How much does that potentially upset the weekend?

JA: At the moment, not much. Tomorrow it is raining at the moment. That's the prediction that we have. We know that on Sunday possibly the race will be in the dry conditions and also the Saturday, so at the moment it is not a bad job. Also the fact I know the track so it is also fine and it is not bothering me so much.

Q. One other story is all about your music CD. How much does that take up your time. It sounds as though it is very successful.

JA: Yeah, at the moment the first release has been quite good. It was number one in the chart of iTunes in Spain and top five in the UK, so working a lot in the studio and hopefully with more releases for the winter and next year. Keep on working at that as well. It's a part of my life, what I love. I obviously cannot do it when I'm here but I try to do it at home. I have my studio there in Barcelona so I spend a lot of time there having fun.

Q. So a good second career?

JA: Yeah, absolutely.

Q. Pastor, first time here. Have you driven it on the simulator? What are your first impressions of this circuit?

Pastor MALDONADO: No, I've never driven it on the simulator. It will be my first time tomorrow. The track looks really interesting; challenging. I think especially the second sector will be quite technical. I hope to improve our last results and be a little bit more competitive here. Even if it will be my first time here, I think after P1 I will be competitive.

Q. You have got a new technical leadership in the team. What are your thoughts about that?

PM: I think the team now is having many changes and important at the same time, but we are really happy, we are pushing, concentrated, focused on improving even this year's car. I hope to do well, especially in this last part of the season and even working so hard with the team. I think the changes are really important. All the people feel comfortable in the team, so looking forward to this end of the season.

Q. And your thoughts about your first grand prix season?

PM: I think it was really difficult, especially at the beginning. We didn't run a lot because of so many problems in the car. But now we are getting the pace, more confidence, more experience, so I think I am doing good. I feel good in the team, with the people. As I mentioned before the team is really compact. It is a big family and I hope to improve and score some more points in the last part of the season.

Q. Fernando, the championship is over but what are your goals for the last four races? And obviously you won here last year.

Fernando ALONSO: Try to win one race if possible. We know it will be difficult. Red Bull will remain favourites for the remaining races. McLaren is very strong at this part of the championship as well, so we know it is going to be difficult. But we will try every Sunday, we will try to enjoy racing, with obviously not the pressure of the championship position or whatever, as I think finishing, second, third or fifth in the Drivers' Championship is not a big difference. Once you cannot be World Champion it is not any more a big interest on that. And then in the Constructors' Championship, which is maybe more important, McLaren are still quite a long way ahead of us, so we need to do the maximum, but we know it is also going to be difficult to catch them. As I said try and enjoy racing like we did at Suzuka last weekend, when you can be aggressive on the starts, you can play a little bit with the strategy. We can enjoy Sundays, try do good races, maximise the potential of the car and if we do that then we know a podium is very possible and as I said if there is one opportunity to win one of the remaining grands prix we try to take it.

Q. Suzuka was a very good result. You were right there with the leaders, but Singapore say wasn't such a good performance. How do you explain those ups and downs?

FA: I think this year there has been some up and downs for everybody which no-one can understand 100 per cent. We can have some ideas of what happened in Singapore to us and we are quite convinced that we know the problem. We are also quite convinced we know why we were a little bit better in Suzuka. Obviously, I will not tell you now. I think it is the same for everybody. I think everybody was expecting a strong Red Bull in Suzuka and they finished third so more and more difficult to understand Formula One for everybody in these days.

Q. Have you got more bits and pieces coming here? Is there a new wing, maybe a development for 2012?

FA: I know some things but I plan not to tell you what we have new in the car, [this would] give you an easy life.

Q. Sebastian, I expect you have had a fairly busy week. Tell us about it, well not even a week, five days.

Sebastian VETTEL: Yeah, we had a very busy Sunday to be honest. After the race there were a lot of things to do but once we got beyond that and once I found myself in the bar with the boys we enjoyed that night very much. We had a very good time. Did some karaoke, which I think is traditional in Japan. It was a very good night, very special, and after a couple of drinks everyone was quite happy so we definitely had a good time and it was quite special as some time in the night Michael [Schumacher] came as well and joined us and we had a couple of drinks together. I think after he came I felt much worse as I started mixing a little bit, which wasn't the best strategy. No, all in all, it was a fun night. We continued going straight to Tokyo. I had an event there with Infiniti and saw a lot of fans there so it was good. We weren't as fit as usual maybe, so still quite tired but it was quite a nice day as well. Tuesday, I had a bit of time for myself and allowed myself to let things sink in a little bit more. I had a good time in Tokyo and then got here yesterday.

Q. So the second World Championship, has it sunk in as the first one jumped up on you? This one has crept up on you more?

SV: Yeah, it is obviously a big difference. I think last year we did it the last minute and we always kept believing and got it done in the very end of the championship. We never led the championship. This year it has been a different story. We led it from start to finish so it is obviously a different year. Even though it was likely and the championship got closer and closer in the last couple of races we always tried to focus on that particular race. In some ways when I crossed the line, of course we knew we could have done maybe a little bit better and always you have the freshest emotions in your head and we knew what we could have done better for that race on Sunday. We got beaten by Jenson (Button) and Fernando. We would have loved to win, but we are out again this weekend and try to get another win. Surely the championship in that regard is decided but it doesn't change anything to our approach really.

Q. Lewis, this weekend marks McLaren's 700th World Championship event, which you may or may not know. How does it feel as a World Champion to play a part in that history and such an important part in that history?

Lewis HAMILTON: It feels great. My dream was always to race for this team so to have become a part of the history of the team and to be here now representing them on their 700th grand prix, I am very proud of that. I am very proud to be a part of it. I have got some incredible people behind me supporting me within the team and I think I am very blessed to have that.

Q. Jonathan Neale said that the team had given you a standing ovation. Not awfully certain where it was, but how does it feel to have that support when you are trying to refocus on your season in 2011.

LH: I don't really know anything about that. I've not had a standing ovation for a while. I have been with the team since I was 13-year-old. I think I have quite a unique relationship with the team and regardless of how tough a year it has been or how many problems we have had I stay very close to their hearts and I think the same with me. They continue to support me and it is great to see that when they are having tough times us as drivers, me and Jenson, are able to lift them and vice versa.

Q. And you must have been very heartened by the fact that Vodafone McLaren Mercedes won the grand prix last weekend?

LH: Well, I wouldn't say heartened is the word. I think I was very proud as we had worked very hard to beat the Red Bulls this year and to beat them on such an important weekend, when Sebastian won the World Championship, I think was quite significant for us. It is quite an achievement and as always we celebrated in the same manner as we always do and I think that continues to show strength in our team.

Q. Fernando, Stefano Domenicali said in the future you could accept Sebastian in Ferrari. Is it true? And do you think that Ferrari has the ability to manage two World Champions in the same team?

FA: Well, I am extremely happy with any team-mate I have alongside me. I think now I am extremely happy with Felipe (Massa). I think we have a very strong team at the moment. We are different rivers with different styles that we can help each other with a way of driving and a way of approaching the weekend. I am constantly learning from Felipe in these two years and I am extremely happy. In the future, nobody knows. I have a long-term contract with Ferrari for the next five or six years so I don't know, if we can keep going with Felipe or if there will be a change in the future. If someone else is coming we will try to work as close as we work now as we do with him and try to help Ferrari in as many races as possible so it will be good.

Q. May we know the opinion of Sebastian about that?

SV: Well, I think, I mean I have a contract as well. I am very happy where I am. I think we have just won the second title together, now we are focused on the Constructors' Championship and not really thinking what is happening in, I don't know, five or six years. As I said I am very, very happy where I am and I think if you look in everyone's face in our team we are having a good time, we are very competitive, we are very focused when it comes to racing. But the proof of last Sunday was we also know how to have a good time so I am very happy.

Q. Fernando and Lewis, do you think Sebastian with his young team could be a serial winner in the future as well?

FA: I think Formula One is very difficult to predict. We have seen in the last two years, or two years-and-a-half, that Red Bull dominate the sport and they were the best prepared guys and they did a better job than anybody else so we need to congratulate them on these two championships and this very good performance. But next year we all start from zero again, we all try to improve and I think no-one here can say that next year who will be the fastest car or fastest guy. It will be pretty close I think and Red Bull, Ferrari, McLaren, Mercedes will start again like the most powerful teams as they are maybe the best teams now. All of them will start like favourites and Sebastian will be one of them next year, I am sure.

LH: I agree with what Fernando said. You cannot really predict what is going to happen, but they have been very competitive the last two-and-a-half-years so we have to assume they are going to be competitive next year but we all start from scratch and have another chance to win again. I think one thing is for sure is that we are all determined to win the championship so whatever the case it won't be easy for any of us.

Q. Sebastian, have you and the team already analysed what the problem was with your tyre wear, because it was much higher than at Ferrari and McLaren?

SV: Maybe Lewis had even a little bit more? It's true that in other races we always had – in a way – the luxury to go maybe a lap or two longer but had to pit for strategy reasons, so we were never really limited by tyre wear, whereas in Suzuka we were the ones pulling into the pits first – well, Lewis was – we were quite early, earlier than we expected and earlier than we wanted and we suffered more degradation than we thought, especially after the strong performance we had on Friday. We have a couple of ideas. Obviously on Sunday everything turned out to be a little bit different. You know the race is long, so you have to look after the car and not only the tyres as well. I think, to some extent, we understand why tyre wear was more excessive than we thought, or we need to come here and confirm that I think we have another good chance in that regard, to understand more about tyres as the tyre approach for this weekend is very, very aggressive. So I'm not sure how many stops we will see but surely more than two, maybe even up to five. I don't know – we don't know yet. It all depends tomorrow – on the other hand, if it's wet, it doesn't really give us an idea, so we could be surprised on Sunday, we will see.

Q. Sebastian, I'm just wondering if you could tell us what you sang at the karaoke on Sunday, and also, if you've had a chance to explore South Korea?

SV: You wanted to know which songs? We had Yellow Submarine, Hey Jude, My Way – no Japanese songs, our Japanese is not so fluent. I think the funny thing is that whereas I might usually be quite in control of not showing the German accent too much, I think after a couple of drinks it was quite obvious where I come from. It was a fun night and then, as I said, I spent a day in Tokyo on Tuesday and came here yesterday, so I didn't see much of Korea. I think really to judge the country you have to go up to Seoul which I have heard a lot of good things about. It should be a nice city. It's a shame that we are so far away. Obviously it's a bit different down here, a bit more quiet but tomorrow we start the engines again and we will create our own action.

Q. Question for Lewis: this was an interesting and demanding new track last year which you did really well on. Are you looking for a particular result this weekend, a particular experience here this weekend to help you get back in your groove?

LH: My approach every weekend is obviously to have a good weekend but for some time now it's not been the case but I always come back, I always come back and give it another shot and hope for a better result. I've prepared myself in the best way I can, with the situation that stands, and I hope that... clearly Jenson showed that we're competitive, so I think that if he can do it then I can do it, so I really need to get on with things this weekend. Hopefully we will have our timing a little bit better in qualifying and get our second run in and hopefully we will be able to compete with the two guys here. I've got two-time World Champions next to me and my goal in life is to emulate those, but really I think I have to catch up with them so I'm working on that.

Q. Could you talk a little bit about the track for us?

LH: The track's fantastic, it's a nice track to drive. Last year there were obviously some difficult conditions but I believe this weekend is going to be dry. You've got a couple of very long straights which enable you to follow and to overtake. With the DRS zone I think it's going to be quite a challenging circuit and I think staying ahead of people is going to be tough when they're right behind you, of course. But I think our car will be quite quick here as well as the two guys next to me, so it's going to be very close but fingers crossed, we show some positive performance as we did in the last race.

Q. You keep saying that you're going to keep trying, for Fernando and Lewis to win some races and to keep on winning; I was wondering how hard it is to still have motivation when everything is done. Racing for fun can't be as good as winning when races count.

FA: I think we all want to win, in any race we participate in. Even when we do the Race of Champions in December, for fun, if we finish second it's a very bad feeling, and a very bad night. Even here, in Formula One grand prix, in four different countries, racing for our teams, for our sponsors, for our fans, it's impossible not to be motivated to win that grand prix.

SV: Yeah, I think we love racing and I think the moment you come to a race thinking that it doesn't really matter where you finish it's the moment when you should probably stay at home. Of course, the championship was the ultimate target. Reaching that, before the end of the season, is not usual, but nevertheless we come here with pressure, even if people don't put pressure on us as usual or as much as usual, we put pressure on ourselves because we love racing, we will enjoy racing as usual, but we will make sure that we do the best we can and we will not be happy leaving this track

knowing that we could have done better. That's what I said: the approach will remain the same. This has been a tough venue for me last year, we have been in very good shape until ten laps to the end, so obviously there is still something to be done. Obviously I've never been on the podium and I'm looking forward to a good race but first of all we need to focus on Friday to prepare our car as much as we can, to be in good shape. I think that's for the whole team, we're not lacking motivation.

LH: I think no matter who you are, every challenge, every competition, every race or obstacle that you come across in life is important and every race that I come across... every race is important. To me, racing is the biggest part of my life apart from my family and it doesn't matter if it's a practice race or whatever, it still holds significant value to me. Whether or not the championship is still up for grabs, I think there are still some fantastic races ahead of us and there's always another chance to revive yourself, so I'm excited for that.

Q. Lewis, the last few races have not been very exciting for you. What's your explanation for this, is it linked by the tyres, just bad luck or something else?

LH: I think the last... I think it's been more than two races, it's been since... at least since Hungary, so that's quite a few races, but even before that we had some... yeah, so it's been a good five bad races. I think it's a combination of things. I put most of it down to myself and of course, there are times that you find yourself a little bit unfortunate but whether it could be a yellow flag or something like that or traffic, it's not really any excuse, we all have to do it, we all have to do the job. Others are able to do it, so I think it's just been a lack of some pace, a lack of some being in the right place at the right time so that's what we're working towards improving.

Q. Fernando and Jaime, this is the first time that we see you in the same room after Singapore; how is your relationship, is everything OK after the problem during the race?

FA: First of all, we have no problem. I think we were in the same plane after Singapore, today we were in the gym in the morning, so we don't need to tell everyone with whom we are at any moment. And in Singapore, as I said, maybe Jaime agreed, that there was no problem. We were lapping cars in front of us after the restart. They took very long to let us pass, 13 corners and whoever took the opportunity. This is normal, the restarts are always different and difficult, especially in Singapore on a street circuit, but we said it there, no problem, but after three weeks now, you keep talking about that, so the problem is not in us, it's maybe in you.

JA: I agree with everything that he says.

Q. I have a question for Lewis; is it possible that you have again become a friend of Felipe Massa?

LH: I think so. Of course the situation has not been great for some time now. I've always had respect for Felipe and still do today, regardless of the negative comments that he's constantly coming up with. It's easy, in this sport, when you're competitive and in the heat of the moment, to say things that perhaps you don't mean, whether or not he does mean them. But regardless, I've tried to show respect, particularly in the last race, I'm very, very sorry for that. I really didn't see him. I've just seen the replay today and he was quite far up the outside of me but out of my mirrors, I can't see a thing, and I was looking to the right and I couldn't see him, so by the time I realised he was on the left it was too late. I think I've been in the wrong place in the last few races. We've had the car to be quite a bit further ahead as Jenson showed and so perhaps if I was doing the right job I wouldn't be in this situation with Felipe but again, just all due respect and I hope that in the future we can put our guards down and he can be cool with me again. I'm cool with him, so I have no problems with him.

Q. Sebastian and Fernando: last year the track was nearly ready for the Grand Prix, have you seen any improvements to the track this year and are you happy with them, if there are any?

SV: I think generally there hasn't been a lot going on since we left, but they obviously made some changes, for instance, at the last corner they moved the wall so it's a little bit better to see, a bit easier for us. The pit entry becomes a bit more visible – things that were a little bit borderline last year are a bit better this year but other than that... The circuit was ready just in time last year. Obviously they've had a year break to finish everything if there were some things still to be finished. As I said, it looked unchanged in many ways. I don't know how much racing has been going on so for sure we will see a lot of track improvement throughout the weekend.

Q. Sergio, I think you played a bit of a practical joke on your team over the last few laps at Suzuka: I wonder if you could just explain what happened and how they reacted to it?

SP: They were very excited that we were getting into the points. We had a problem, we had some vibrations and in the last part of the track, the last corner, I told them that I was losing power and they were quite afraid about it and when I crossed the line, it was a just a few seconds after they realised that it was just a joke.

Q. There's been a lot of talk about races, but since you're in Korea, I would like to ask a question that is specific to Korea. The Korean interest in motor sports is not that high, unfortunately, so a lot of the F1 driver hopefuls are struggling to become professional drivers. Sebastian, Fernando and Lewis, you all became World Champions despite difficult conditions so can you say a word of encouragement to F1 hopefuls in Korea, based on your experiences?

SV: As you described, I think it's the same for all of us. We know pretty well what is going on in our own countries in terms of what possibilities there are because we've run through the system ourselves, therefore it's hard to judge what's going on over here. I think that generally we are very open for new races to come onto the calendar, so this one was spectacular in terms of the race we had last year. Unfortunately, as I said, I think there's a lot more going on in the area around Seoul, there are a lot more people. Down here it seems to be a bit too quiet but we obviously hope that our appearance here helps the interest in motor sport in this country and therefore maybe the chance that one day we will have a Korean driver in Formula One. I came across a couple of kids – not many to be honest – from Korea, one or two, I remember, I forgot the names, a little bit hard to pronounce for us. There's nothing that speaks against a Korean driver but I think it's a bit difficult to judge, as we don't know really, especially in karting, how much support there is and how much opportunity there is for people here.

FA: The first thing to improve motor sport in Korea is to host a Grand Prix, and that's already done, and this will be a huge improvement for the future in Korean motor sport and for the young kids, watching the race here. For us, and I think for Korean kids or whatever, when we started we all moved to Italy to race in go-karts because Italy was and still is the best place to race in go-karts and to improve your talent and your driving. So we all made some sacrifices to get into Formula One and we all tried to dedicate our lives and our careers to motor sport. So if any young Korean guy wants to grow up, he needs to enjoy, to love this sport and then I'm sure that at one point he will have to sacrifice something in his life.

LH: I agree with both the drivers, and particularly Fernando's comment there. I was going to say the same. I think it's definitely possible to have a Korean driver in the future and I think it just appears that the formula for proving a young driver's talent is to go to Europe to race. The majority of the drivers that you see here in the paddock would have gone to Italy to race as that's generally where the... they have great weather, they have great circuits, generally most of the greats went racing there. That's the place where you will be seen, that's the place where you will really have your skills and your talent challenged and so it's about making... it's quite a big sacrifice to move countries all the way from Korea to Europe, but if you feel

confident in yourself, believe in yourself enough then you should do that.

F1 Korea Blog – F1 in Yeongam

It's like 2010 all over again. Wet, wetter, and wettest, with a whole lot of waiting around.

It took the best part of an hour before any times were posted on the boards, and it was only in the last fifteen minutes that the majority of the times you see below were posted.

And while it's a great boost to Michael Schumacher's confidence to top the timesheets for the first time since his F1 return, unfortunately the session as a whole was more than a little meaningless.

After all, with dry conditions predicted for both qualifying and Sunday's race, no one wasted any time perfecting their Yeongam set-up on Friday morning. And that was never the plan anyway.

With the championship already settled, Friday practice for the final races of the season will be pre-pre-season testing. Sort of. Next year's cars are – by and large – going to be evolutions, not revolutions, thanks to the minor changes to the FIA's technical regulations for 2012. That means that certain elements can be tested out now without attracting too much attention from rivals or the media.

At least, they could have been if track conditions weren't more like a swimming pool than a circuit.

Be that as it may, the boys did their best. Sort of. Three-quarters of the grid set timed laps, and there was remarkably little in the way of incident given the heavy traffic that was circulating in the dying minutes of F1.

Pace-setter Michael Schumacher had a dramatic moment on the grass on his way back to the pits; the German driver went so wide he was nearly back at Suzuka before he regained control of the car. But no damage was done, except to his ego.

Jean-Eric Vergne acquitted himself well, given the conditions. Toro Rosso's test pilot was dramatically slower than his teammate, but kept the car on the road at all times and finished ahead of more experienced drivers. You can't really ask for much more in the wet.

F1 times (unofficial)

1. Michael Schumacher (Mercedes) 2.02.784s [10 laps]
2. Sebastian Vettel (Red Bull) 2.02.840s [8 laps]
3. Paul di Resta (Force India) 2.02.912s [12 laps]
4. Adrian Sutil (Force India) 2.03.141s [12 laps]
5. Sebastian Buemi (Toro Rosso) 2.03.182s [9 laps]
6. Kamui Kobayashi (Sauber) 2.03.292s [13 laps]
7. Lewis Hamilton (McLaren) 2.03.391s [6 laps]
8. Nico Rosberg (Mercedes) 2.04.311s [12 laps]
9. Sergio Perez (Sauber) 2.04.797s [8 laps]
10. Mark Webber (Red Bull) 2.05.183s [5 laps]
11. Karun Chandhok (Team Lotus) 2.06.350s [11 laps]
12. Pastor Maldonado (Williams) 2.06.852s [11 laps]
13. Jean-Eric Vergne (Toro Rosso) 2.07.541s [9 laps]
14. Rubens Barrichello (Williams) 2.08.218s [5 laps]
15. Narain Karthikeyan (HRT) 2.08.832s [14 laps]
16. Daniel Ricciardo (HRT) 2.09.232s [14 laps]
17. Jerome D'Ambrosio (Virgin) 2.12.658s [7 laps]
18. Timo Glock (Virgin) 2.14.508s [4 laps]

NO TIME SET:

Felipe Massa (Ferrari)
Fernando Alonso (Ferrari)
Bruno Senna (Renault)
Vitaly Petrov (Renault)
Heikki Kovalainen (Team Lotus)
Jenson Button (McLaren)

F1 Korea Blog – FP2 in Yeongam

While FP2 saw significantly more running than F1, don't let it fool you – there was nearly as much rain in Yeongam this afternoon as there was in the morning.

McLaren had a very successful session, with Lewis Hamilton and Jenson Button spending much of second practise almost two seconds quicker than their rivals, Sebastian Vettel and Mark Webber.

Fernando Alonso gradually improved during the session to eventually finish fourth.

Light rain at the start of the session receded during the first half-hour, leaving a drying circuit for the remainder of the session. Cars started work as soon as the session began in an attempt to make up for the very wet first practise session. However, there was little opportunity for representative running.

But where the morning saw teams choose to stay in the pits rather than waste chunks of carbon fibre in likely wet collisions, the afternoon paddock chatter concentrated on the possibility of more wet sessions this weekend.

While the smart move had been to stay in the pits when it looked as though the bulk of the weekend would be run in the dry, the growing prospect of a wet qualifying or race meant that technicians needed to start harvesting all the data they could, for all conditions.

Nico Rosberg collided into Jaime Alguersuari 25 minutes before the end of the session. He understeered into the Toro Rosso driver at Turn 1 when the latter was emerging from the blind pit exit and deposited a piece of front wing at the next corner along. Nico parked his Mercedes at the side of the track, and the ensuing debris was collected under yellow flags.

The FIA have since announced that pit exits will be flagged by a flashing blue light for the remainder of the weekend, to prevent similar accidents from taking place.

Several drivers understeered off corners, making use of the liberal asphalt to resume running. Drivers going off included Senna (three times), Webber, Hamilton (twice), Pérez, Alonso and Massa. Alonso, Massa and Senna also spun during the later parts of the session.

Several drivers took on soft tyres towards the end of the session. Buemi spun and the other drivers could not get sufficient heat into their tyres.

All 24 drivers set times.

FP2 times (unofficial)

1. Lewis Hamilton (McLaren) 1.50.828s [26 laps]
2. Jenson Button (McLaren) 1.50.932s [19 laps]
3. Sebastian Vettel (Red Bull) 1.52.646s [30 laps]
4. Fernando Alonso (Ferrari) 1.52.774s [25 laps]
5. Mark Webber (Red Bull) 1.53.049s [27 laps]
6. Jaime Alguersuari (Toro Rosso) 1.53.402s [25 laps]
7. Felipe Massa (Ferrari) 1.53.707s [24 laps]
8. Nico Rosberg (Mercedes) 1.53.914s [18 laps]
9. Sebastien Buemi (Toro Rosso) 1.53.948s [27 laps]
10. Paul di Resta (Force India) 1.53.957s [32 laps]
11. Vitaly Petrov (Renault) 1.54.200s [26 laps]
12. Adrian Sutil (Force India) 1.54.392s [26 laps]
13. Rubens Barrichello (Williams) 1.54.831s [30 laps]
14. Michael Schumacher (Mercedes) 1.54.965s [21 laps]
15. Bruno Senna (Renault) 1.55.187s [28 laps]
16. Sergio Perez (Sauber) 1.55.203s [24 laps]
17. Kamui Kobayashi (Sauber) 1.55.544s [23 laps]
18. Pastor Maldonado (Williams) 1.56.067s [22 laps]
19. Heikki Kovalainen (Team Lotus) 1.56.669s [20 laps]
20. Jarno Trulli (Team Lotus) 1.57.173s [19 laps]
21. Timo Glock (Virgin) 1.58.269s [25 laps]
22. Jerome D'Ambrosio (Virgin) 1.59.458s [26 laps]
23. Daniel Ricciardo (HRT) 1.59.958s [19 laps]
24. Tonio Liuzzi (HRT) 2.00.165s [20 laps]

Additional reporting by [Alianora La Canta](#).

Fl Korea Blog – Friday press conference in Korea

Another day, another press conference. This time, it's the senior team personnel lining up for the media grilling.

Present were John Booth (Virgin), Ross Brawn (Mercedes), Paul Hembery (Pirelli), Christian Horner (Red Bull), and Martin Whitmarsh (McLaren).

As tends to be the case with the team personnel press conference, this baby is worth reading in full. Questions about the RRA, name changing, and Q3 tyre allocations were asked, and the responses need to be understood in context.

Q: Paul, can you tell us what is the thinking about the tyre choice here and in India as well?

Paul HEMBERY: Here we have come with the soft and super soft. From the information that we saw it is a track that needs compound grip. It is an aggressive choice, we don't deny that, but from what we saw with the inters running today, the surface is not very aggressive. The wear rates were quite low. That's the reasoning for that. India, being a new track, we have gone with the soft compound and the hard compound. The soft that we have used throughout the season, in every race in fact, and the hard because it is an unknown and it gives us a back-up. It also helps us to prepare for next year. We do need some more data to ensure that we make our choices correctly for next year. These guys are a moving target. They do improve the

cars a lot during the season and what maybe was true at the start is certainly not true now. We are seeing they are lighter on their tyres from some points of view and more aggressive in others so it is a pretty good challenge.

Q: If tomorrow is going to be dry and Sunday is going to be dry, first of all we haven't had any running on dry tyres, and there were predictions of multiple pit-stops in the race on Sunday. So what do we know?

PH: I think some people were mentioning five or six stops, I doubt that is going to be the case. I am willing to do a private bet on that one with Martin. I think three, four stops yes. It's unfortunate, but we cannot control the weather. It would have been ideal for everybody to have run today in some dry conditions. We didn't manage that. We ran another wet race, a wet morning and more or less afternoon. Martin reminded me quite rightly that we did make a change to the rules this year that the teams do get an extra set of intermediate tyres for use over the Saturday and Sunday and that has proven this year to be a correct move as we have had a lot of wet running. We have made a change for the better from that point of view. Going forward, what can you do, as you can't control the weather? I know last year as well it was a lot of wet weather here so it has been a tough one for the teams for sure.

Q: Finally, the burning question. The Q3 tyres. What's your idea. How can you make sure that everyone runs in Q3.

PH: Well I don't know about idea. We understand why people have maybe not wanted to run, from a sporting point of view, trying to obtain a better result by holding onto a set of tyres. From a fans' perspective it is clearly not ideal. From our point of view, if we can do something we are happy to sit down with the teams and try and find a solution that works for everybody.

Q: Have you got any ideas of your own?

PH: Have we?

Q: Yes.

PH: Well, we have some ideas but those are obviously imperfect when you haven't had a two-way discussion. We need to have a two-way discussion and if we can do something then we will try and do the best we can to find a solution going forward for next season.

Q: When's that discussion likely to happen?

PH: We have had a couple. We are having a chat tonight as well with Oliver (Weingarten) and representatives of the Sporting Working Group so that's a starting point for going forward.

Q: John, I don't know how much is happening in the garages themselves but there is quite a big push going on back in the UK for next year isn't there?

John BOOTH: Yes, absolutely. Pat is back at base building his design team, well finalising his design team, for development of the 2012 car and, of course, the partnership with McLaren is getting stronger and stronger as we go forward and learn more about each other.

Q: How is that developing? How does that move forward?

JB: Well it is a very, very positive thing for both sides. Both sides are very keen to make it work as well as possible and it will get stronger and stronger. It covers most aspects of race car, not the design obviously, but the theory behind design and the testing facilities and, of course, the wind tunnel eventually.

Q: Do you have a programme of what you ask them or is it ad-hoc? What happens?

JB: I am sure Pat is on the telephone every five minutes asking something. There is a programme in place and structures are starting to form and it's becoming a very good relationship.

Q: Is it purely chassis? Is it suspension, aerodynamics?

JB: It covers the full spectrum of the car. Not engine, of course.

Q: I was going to ask about driver line-up, but I've been told there is an answer but it will be fairly short, even shorter than the previous ones?

JB: Same as. We will make that decision towards the end of the year. Jerome (D'Ambrosio) is doing a fantastic job and the more races he has like the last two, the better for him.

Q: Is that the end of the year or the end of the season?

JB: End of the season.

Q: Right, so we can expect something before Brazil?

JB: Ask me in Brazil.

Q: Martin, 700 grands prix for the team. It must be something you are very proud of.

Martin WHITMARSH: Obviously we are very proud. I think our friends at Ferrari have been around longer than us, but 700 is still an important milestone. I think it is something we are recognising within the business. It is nice to look back on the 100th, 200th, 300th, 400th cars. It is just a moment of reflection. Apart from that clearly we have got to look forward. It would be nice to think we'll be here, still alive and competitive in another 700 grands prix time, but it is a great achievement for the team and for the brand.

Q: After last Sunday at Suzuka, is there sort of renewed confidence within the team?

MW: Well I don't think our confidence was lacking, our pace was on a few occasions, but we always thought we could win. We set out, rather belatedly, to try and catch our friends at Red Bull. We felt we could go into the last five races with an opportunity to potentially win some of those. Delighted, of course, to do so particularly on a great circuit like Suzuka. It was a fantastic win from Jenson (Button). He is driving better than ever so that was great. We've only had a few days to celebrate it, that's the trouble with winning the first of a back-to-back but hopefully we will move on from there and be successful here.

Q: This is a question for both you and Christian, looking back at Suzuka. In the press conference on Saturday afternoon, Jenson said 'looking at Red Bull Racing's long runs on the Friday, I think we are in major trouble' and yet it didn't seem to turn out that

way.

MW: Well, again, you never know fuel loads so we try to be realistic or we always assume they are lugging about 150 kilos of fuel on their long runs. I don't know if they were or they weren't. I think also as you improve the balance of the car, as a driver learns how to drive that circuit, I think Jenson in particular did a good job of looking after the tyres. It was a circuit where the tyre degradation wasn't linear, they fell off when they were worn. That is an interesting thing. That is not a criticism of our friends from Pirelli. I think it is fact, just as we have here. The challenge for the engineers and drivers now is 'it's the same for all of us, now we have got to try and exploit that the faster cars will tend to put more load, more potential to wear the tyres, but, between us, when we have to try and get the right balance, look after the tyres, and see how we can exploit that strategy in the race'.

Q: Christian, what's your reply to that?

Christian HORNER: Certainly on the Friday in Japan, McLaren's single lap performance looked mightily impressive and the opposite on the long run. Our long run pace looked as impressive as McLaren's short run pace. Of course, you are trying to find a trade off between qualifying and the race and the tyres have been a challenge this year. A good challenge for the engineers and certainly the behaviour of the tyre on Sunday wasn't quite perhaps what we expected certainly from the lessons learned on what we had seen on Friday. It is always finding that trade off and at the end of the race it was fascinating to see three cars split by nothing really once the rate had settled down into that final stint. There was plenty of data, feedback and information to go through following the weekend but it has been a trait of this season that you can sometimes think of a Friday that we are looking in really good shape, or vice versa, and things on Sunday can be quite a bit different.

Q: Going back to the result on Sunday which gave you your second Drivers' Championship, which is fantastic, but what has been the reaction within the team and even from Red Bull themselves?

CH: Well it's phenomenal. Sebastian (Vettel) thoroughly deserves the championship and to have done it so early, with four races to go, is a fantastic achievement. The level at which he has performed this year has been absolutely huge in terms of the performance, the consistency that he has managed to achieve. Nine grands prix victories, he has had I think four or five second places, one third, one fourth place, it has been a massive performance rate that he has been scoring at week in and week out. Not all of those victories have been runaway victories. If you think back to Monaco, if you think back to Barcelona, there have been a lot of tough victories that he's had to earn there. But he has been the stand-out driver. The team are hugely proud to have defended his drivers' championship. Of course we celebrated and enjoyed that result in Suzuka with a few fairly poor renditions of various karaoke, but your focus immediately changes to the next target and that target is winning the Constructors'. Both championships carry equal weight to us. I think to the public the prestige sits with the drivers' championship, but I think amongst the teams the Constructors' in many ways is ranked with equal weight. Immediately focus turned following the Japanese race to Korea after a few bleary eyes appeared on Monday morning.

Q: Does the approach change?

CH: No, not at all. I think our approach this year has been very strong. Operationally we have been very strong. I think tactically we have been strong. Our rate of development has been strong. We have won races where we haven't expected to be competitive at, such as Monza and indeed Spa, and going into Japan we had won three on the trot so our approach this weekend will be the same as it has been at the previous 14 or 15 races. That will continue all the way through to the chequered flag in Brazil.

Q: Ross, I don't often spend races in the press room but I was amused to see journalists actually taking pictures of the screens during the Japanese Grand Prix of Michael Schumacher leading a grand prix. The performance oddly enough seems to have improved, in spite of the fact that you have said there wasn't a huge amount of development coming. But have you been heartened by the performance over the last few races, not necessarily from him but from the team?

Ross BROWN: We are not where we want to be and that's a fact but the guys at Brackley and the team put in a huge effort to maintain where they are. I think from our analysis we are still about the same gap behind Red Bull that we were at the beginning of the season. Now, Christian just talked then about the development rate and the fact that we have managed to maintain that gap I think is a credit to all of our staff as it is not easy and you have seen that some of the teams haven't done that and have fallen further behind. There is a tremendous rate of progress in Formula One and we have managed roughly to keep up that rate of progress but we have got to make a step change in performance to get where we want to get to. It was heartening to see, slightly artificially of course because of the pit-stops, Michael leading a race, but it was nice to see and certainly from Michael, the last four or five races he has had quite a good run, the incident with (Sergio) Perez in Singapore excepted. But he has done a very, very solid job. It just confirms my view that with the right car both of our drivers can win races and mount challenges so it is for us to produce the car they deserve and we need to produce.

Q: The next grand prix is India. A brand new circuit and no-one knows anything about it. How does a team go about preparing for that?

RB: You do gather a lot of information beforehand. We have got circuit maps, we have got as much information as we can. We are doing simulations, we are doing models. We have got some rough work going on, on the driver simulator. Of course, there is not a huge amount of information available yet about the circuit so we are doing all the prep and all the simulations and modelling that we can do so we can go as well prepared as possible. What you can't anticipate is the surface roughness, the bumpiness of the circuit. There are various things that you just can't know about until you get there and you experience it. So just all the normal prep and very similar to what we do at all the other races, except we are lacking a bit of information so we have to make some assumptions.

Q: Because it is an unknown does that give you a better chance of taking on the teams ahead of you?

RB: No. No. I think, if anything, the strengths of the teams come to the fore when they are faced with those sort of circumstances and I think we are pretty strong in that respect. But I think the top teams can all deal with those new challenges more effectively than the less strong teams.

Q: Christian, Red Bull won one title - or is it better to say one-and-three-quarter - and your drivers used at the moment six engines of the available eight. Are they going to close the year with seven?

CH: Well Renault don't give us a refund so we are planning to use all of the engines between now and the end of the year. It is testimony to the reliability, touching wood, that we have had throughout the season that we are in that situation so I think there will be a plan to utilise, probably, one of those engines here and the remaining engine at possibly Abu Dhabi. That's for the engineers to decide. It's at their disposal and we will see. Renault have done a great job this year and it is very different to the situation we were in 12 months ago.

Q: Martin, as chairman of FOTA you have been fairly upbeat about the RRA. That it is working, that it's not broken, and the teams are adhering to it. Yet there continue to be allegations that certain teams, more particularly Red Bull and Mercedes have been

pushing the bounds of the RRA. I wonder whether each of the four team principals could give us your views of the RRA, whether it is working and how to go forward on this thorny subject.

MW: I think, firstly, we have achieved quite a lot with RRA. We are pretty good at focussing on issues and concerns but I think RRA has in the way we've restricted testing, the way we have restricted the number of operational personnel we have at the circuit, wind tunnel time, CFD time... I know that within our business the spirit and nature of conversations between engineers now, talking about efficiency, the need to do things with a finite level of discourse, I think that is a very healthy level of discussion, very healthy debate, and undeniably RRA has saved money and had been to the benefit of Formula One. Is it perfect? Will it ever be without contention, challenge, suspicion and paranoia? Almost certainly no. Just as technical regulations, sporting regulations, particularly if a team is doing very well or doing a good job it is always a more comfortable assumption to assume they have got a dodgy wing or they have got something else. I think that is the nature and spirit of Formula One. I think we have got to continue to work hard together as teams to see that we can make, improve and refine the RRA. I think it would be a shame for the teams to say this is so difficult, we'll walk away from it and we'll turn to a spend-what-you-like culture or spend-what-you-can-lay-your-hands-on culture within Formula One. It is not perfect, there are concerns. What I can say is that I have been reasonably involved with the process, there has been no evidence other than, if you like, the normal paddock gossip or accusation, but there has been no evidence of a breach of the RRA. Each of the teams and team principals continue to assure FOTA that they are abiding by the limitations that are contained within the Resource Restriction Agreement. Bear in mind that although, clearly, there is a lot of media interest we are doing this for one reason. We are doing it for ourselves. We are doing it for the sustainability of Formula One. It is not intended to be part of the show or the spectacle of Formula One. It is an internal process, but I understand people are interested in it and like to speculate if there is some controversy behind it, but certainly my view is it isn't perfect, there will always be challenge. I think we have got to improve it, I think we have got to work together to enhance trust and mutual respect in the process. Will we ever reach a stage where everyone is very comfortable, has no concern, no accusation? I doubt [that], just as there isn't with technical regulations in my experience. But I think it has been the right thing for the sport and I think we have got to continue to persevere with it.

CH: I think Martin sums it up very well, in reality. I think that RRA has been a positive thing for Formula One, or a positive thing for our business. It's saved genuine cost, taking out testing cost, reducing engine costs to affordable levels, to all of the independent teams. Restrictions on personnel coming to the circuit, the ratio between CFD and wind tunnel time have all been hugely beneficial to driving costs down within the sport. Certainly for Red Bull to compete with teams such as Ferrari, McLaren, Mercedes, RRA is important with that. Now, inevitably there has probably been more speculation about our team than others, inevitably with performance does come paranoia. Red Bull does favour the RRA being around, but in a way that's clear, tangible, policeable and encompasses all of what Formula One is rather than cherry-picking elements of it. I think that all of the teams would agree that the RRA, which came out of the back of the financial crisis at the end of 2008, beginning of 2009, has been the responsible thing to do for the sport and I think that the stage now is that, as the first agreement draws to a close next year, we focus on a new more workable, more transparent agreement for a longer duration potentially, that is clear for all to understand and that doesn't involve commenting or politicking. That's the most fundamental thing for us and hopefully in the latter months of this year, the teams will be able to achieve that.

RB: I think for us, we're respecting the RRA but I think it's at a crossroads, I think it's at a crossroads because it's now starting to bite to those three or four teams who have to control their resource to comply. I think there's seven or eight teams for whom RRA means nothing because they're always going to be below the limit. Now we're at a stage where the targets that were set are starting to bite into the three or four teams and this is where it starts to get contentious and we haven't structured it well enough yet to have the controls and checks and reassurances in place that gives everybody comfort and [that] leads to the innuendo and accusations that get thrown around. We're total supporters of the idea of RRA, but for us, it has to be much more robust in how it's controlled, how it's monitored, how it's policed, because it is a performance differentiator. You can't deny that a team spending five million more each year will have an advantage over a team that doesn't do that, and therefore it has to be very well controlled, very strongly audited and it has to be done by a reference which is the same for all teams, otherwise we have no guarantee of parity, and I think for us, RRA is at a crossroads. We support it totally, but the teams have to come together to find a solution to make sure that we're all comfortable with the way we go forward or else we will have a continuation of the problems that we're having at the moment, all the comments, the rumour, the innuendo, the distrust that we have. Christian commented, quite rightly, that the agreement's coming to an end. Well, we're working on an agreement that we thought we already had, which doesn't end for several years, and that's the problem that we have at the moment. We don't have complete unity on RRA and we have to have it, because Mercedes are total supporters of the concept of RRA but it has to be a fair and proper, correctly policed, correctly monitored, correctly audited system which is the same for everybody.

JB: The RRA is very, very important to us. Remember we gave up a lot, together with the other new teams, we gave up a lot in the entry to the sport. We gave up the option B and we gave up the price cap and bought into the RRA wholeheartedly and it's very, very important to us that it continues and we work towards the agreement. I think a spending formula where three or maybe four teams could thrive is not what people want and we must work very hard to avoid that.

Q: I just wondered if Christian, Ross and Martin could talk about the pit lane exit; we saw Nico going into Alguersuari this afternoon. Obviously it's not a problem that can be resolved in the space of a weekend but does something need to be fixed on the track, is it safe at the moment?

RB: Well, we're obviously the ones that got involved in that - I don't know what's happened, but our driver and our team manager are up with the stewards at the moment, presumably having to explain the circumstances behind it. I have to say that it's a little frustrating that we have that problem on a brand new circuit like this, because if you look at the number of cars that went off at turn one during practice and of course, when we have wet conditions, difficult conditions, I think 20 or 30 cars went off. It was neither driver's fault, neither Alguersuari nor Rosberg's fault, but that is the consequence of that pit lane exit. That's what we will live with. Obviously, we will try and help the drivers, particularly during the race. It's a little more difficult during practice because cars stop and do practice starts from the end of the pit lane. You can't always anticipate where they are going to be, but we will try and help the drivers during the race but it's not ideal.

CH: I guess, as we saw today, as Ross has said, it's an unfortunate incident and a lot of cars will run wide into turn one and unfortunately when you exit the pit lane and it filters back in at that point, it was a law of averages that an accident was going to happen. It's a shame that that one hasn't been addressed. It's good to see that the visibility at the pit lane entry - the wall has been moved back so there's better visibility coming in to the pit lane or pit lane entry. It's probably impossible to do anything, certainly for this weekend.

MW: Well it can be improved upon and hopefully it will be by the time we come here next time.

Q: Ross, you were talking about there being two levels of team; that's also true in name changing. You have a bit of a problem going on at the moment with some teams wanting to change the names and others not wanting it to happen. How many brands do you think are essential to Formula One and how many teams should be allowed to change their names just to survive?

RB: We've been fairly ambivalent about the name change. Obviously, we're a team that has changed its name a number of times over the last 10 to 15 years. In fact - I know it's a slightly debatable point - but we are also one of the oldest teams in Formula One, because we started as Tyrrell and that is the same company all the way through to now, with some variations of our name. So we don't have any strong views. I think it would obviously be very very disappointing if a brand of the strength of Ferrari changed its name, but we know that's never going to happen and if it suits the

commercial purposes of teams to change their name and it helps them survive, helps them prosper, then we should consider it. So we don't have any strong views and we wouldn't stand in the way of a sensible proposal. We don't want anything that's perhaps derogatory to Formula One. We wouldn't want someone naming their team... I shan't make any suggestions as to what you could call it but we don't want that sort of thing going on but otherwise we have no strong views.

CH: I think the situation is a tricky one in many respects because there are two sides to it. On one side, it doesn't make any sense for a team to be called Renault when it isn't Renault, therefore a name change in a situation like that makes sense. I think that where Formula One needs to be a little bit careful is that the teams are brands and when the promoter is selling Formula One around the world, can sell Ferrari, can sell McLaren and now sell Red Bull Racing and Mercedes – they are all strong brand names. I think it's something to perhaps consider for the future, that there needs to be more careful consideration given to the names of teams and the mechanism by which they can be changed. As Ross says, if there's a logical, sensible reason then why not, but I think we also have to be careful that it just doesn't end up in a merry-go-round and companies that have the same company number just change effectively [the] entrant name on a yearly or biannual basis.

RB: One thing I'd add that is unfortunate about Formula One is that if this becomes a judgement call, people start to make judgements on the merit then that's fine, you're entitled to a judgement. Unfortunately, if it becomes a trading position and I guarantee those teams that are trying to change their name will have had approaches from other teams who want different favours paid in order to agree to the name change, and that's not correct. I know that happened to us when we wanted to change our name. People sought to get favours from that decision. That's what we mustn't have. If there's a genuine reason why a team shouldn't change its name, because it's not in the interests of Formula One, that's correct, there should be a proper debate. It needs to be done in an adult way and not used in a divisive way.

MW: I agree with what Ross has just said. Philosophically, I can understand the desire to retain names and Ferrari, McLaren hopefully, proud brands, are not going to plan to change, so I understand that but I think also that we've got to recognise that we're in a commercial environment, I think it makes a lot of sense that for there to be two Lotus teams in the sport doesn't seem very sensible. The issue that Ross that just raised... I recall, within the last couple of years, when there was a desire to change the team name to Mercedes Benz, how a number of people conspired against that, which was a ridiculous position to take and very damaging to the sport. Hopefully, the established brands are just that, and they would have no motivation to change. I think if it was a small team and it's going to help them commercially... there are a lot of teams there whom we talked about there being two tiers, obviously it's not quite that simple but there are a number of teams for whom it's a reasonable struggle, to stay in Formula One, it's a reasonable struggle to generate the budgets to go racing. I think we should encourage them to remain in the sport. As we mentioned earlier, this is the 700th Grand Prix of McLaren, but in that time 107 teams have failed. Now that's a sobering thought. I think we should be doing, as a Formula One community, everything we can to help and facilitate teams and as Ross said, if they come up with a clearly silly, divisive name or a name that's damaging to Formula One, then we should be able to use good judgement to prevent it, but if it's clear that the name change facilitates the funding and the retention of that team within Formula One, then we shouldn't use the polemics and politics of Formula One to prevent it.

JB: Yeah, we are a team that has changed our name this year for commercial reasons, and it was very important for us to have that flexibility, so in general, we are in support of it.

Q: Christian, Red Bull have obviously come a long way since 2005; I was just hoping that maybe you could just speak a little bit about that journey and some of the struggles and highlights, also the importance of Abu Dhabi in that journey. In 2009, you won there, to set yourself up for a successful 2010 season and then you obviously won there again last year, to get Seb's title.

CH: It's been an incredible journey in a relatively short space of time. I think McLaren have done 700 Grands Prix, we've done about 120 odd. This is only our seventh car. When Red Bull bought what was the Jaguar team at the end of 2004, Dietrich Mateschitz had a vision of what he wanted to achieve and he set that out and spelled that out at a very early stage, internally, and it was a question of getting the right people in place, the right structures, empowering the right people and taking what was there already and developing that, and I think the first few years were building years for the team as we put the right infrastructure, the right facilities into place. Obviously Adrian was a key recruitment, together with other key placements within the team. When the 2009 regulations came along, which were probably the biggest regulation changes in the past 20 years, it was a perfect opportunity for the design team with a clean sheet of paper to demonstrate what they were capable of. Obviously 2009 was a strong year for the team, certainly the second half of the year was a tremendously strong period for the team and we managed to carry that momentum through into 2010 and at the same time saw the emergence of Sebastian, who had joined the team from Toro Rosso in 2009 into '10 and last year was a classic year in the sport, I think. For it to go down the wire on that evening in Abu Dhabi with potentially four drivers that could have won the World Championship that evening was phenomenal and our expectation, to win it with Sebastian, was quite low going into that race. It was quite a long shot, it was Fernando's championship to lose but it all panned out and Sebastian won the race, the results went his way and he became the youngest World Champion. And then obviously again, with more regulation changes, with the introduction of a new tyre supplier, with double diffusers being banned, with F-ducts going, with DRS being introduced, you've got some challenges to incorporate into a new car and what I'm especially proud of what the team has achieved is the continuity that it managed from the end of 2010 into 2011 and then throughout this season, to deliver at a consistent level. It's been a phenomenal journey so far, and a very exciting one and one that is testimony really to the people behind the scenes, the level of commitment, the level of effort. The super-human efforts that have gone in from each member of the team, men and women alike, has just been phenomenal to achieve the kind of results that we have. Obviously we're keen to build on that, not only in the remaining races of this year but obviously into 2012 and beyond.

Q: We're all aware of the culinary dangers of going to India – Delhi belly doesn't get its name for nothing. I was just wondering what you were all doing, health and safety-wise, above and beyond what you would normally do for a Grand Prix, what you are doing food and drink preparation-wise for that particular race. We hear that you're all taking your own produce rather than using local stuff, which you would normally do.

PH: I don't know what the Italian chefs have done but they seem to conjure up some sort of Italian food wherever we've been around the world so far. I think it's a bit of a mix: sometimes we do take some things with us and then the rest of it is sourced locally. It's a bit of a mix.

JB: I took (cricketer) Freddy Flintoff's advice at Silverstone. He's done 15 tours of the sub-continent: eat street curry and drink lots of beer was his advice so maybe we will follow that.

MW: We shouldn't overstate the issues there. I think there's a logistics challenge for the team to go anywhere in the world. I'm sure we're enjoying local supplies and there will be some taken, but that's very normal. I don't think we should single out India as a particular challenge in that regard.

CH: We've had a running show car team out in India for the past couple of weeks now. They've done show runs in Delhi and then they've gone off to the Himalayas where they drove up the highest road in the world, up to 18,000 feet. We've only had one incident of an upset tummy, but I don't think that had anything to do with the food, probably more to do with the beverage. No, we're not taking any additional precautions. We'll be buying local produce and obviously as a British team, curry is a relatively popular dish.

RB: I think the same as Christian's just described. We'll be using local supplies, really the same as every other race. We'll be relying on local produce.

F1 Korea Blog – FP3 in Yeongam

What a session that was. Teams had to squeeze four hours' worth of set-up and analysis into sixty short minutes, and they pulled off the feat with aplomb.

The strategy? Split. Where teams would ordinarily get both drivers to try out as many configurations as possible in the time allowed, this morning saw most teams send both drivers out with different set-ups from green light to chequered flag, as they tried to harvest as much data as possible in the limited time allowed.

While free practice isn't usually the most thrilling part of a race weekend – with any luck, that accolade belongs to the race itself – Saturday morning at the Yeongam Circuit offered all manner of thrills and spills for fans to enjoy.

Jenson Button set the pace for McLaren, but all was not as it seemed on the timesheets. While Button's 1.36.910s was a great lap to watch, teammate Lewis Hamilton was on course for a faster time until Michael Schumacher got in his way in the final sector and ate away at the vital tenths needed for Lewis to hold on to his P1 slot on the morning timesheets.

Button's morning might not have ended as well as it did. Mechanics working on an engine change damaged his usual chassis, and the British driver was quickly swapped into the spare. Good thing for all concerned that the damage was spotted in time.

Sebastian Vettel is way down the morning standings, sitting in P9 on the timesheets. But there is no sign of a loss of pace or performance from F1's youngest double champion. Instead, the Red Bull driver's final fast lap was hampered by the Toro Rosso of Jaime Alguersuari who was ahead on track – also on a fast lap – and refused to get out of Vettel's way.

While there were battles aplenty on track, the only real incident of note came courtesy of birthday boy Bruno Senna, who spun at Turn 13 and damaged his front wing in the process. While a jaunty angle works well with a trilby, it's not so great for an F1 car.

FP3 times (unofficial)

1. Jenson Button (McLaren) 1.36.910s [18 laps]
2. Lewis Hamilton (McLaren) 1.37.199s [18 laps]
3. Mark Webber (Red Bull) 1.37.723s [23 laps]
4. Fernando Alonso (Ferrari) 1.38.029s [21 laps]
5. Felipe Massa (Ferrari) 1.38.434s [18 laps]
6. Michael Schumacher (Mercedes) 1.39.559s [23 laps]
7. Vitaly Petrov (Renault) 1.39.612s [20 laps]
8. Adrian Sutil (Force India) 1.39.660s [22 laps]
9. Sebastian Vettel (Red Bull) 1.39.695s [22 laps]
10. Nico Rosberg (Mercedes) 1.39.743s [25 laps]
11. Paul di Resta (Force India) 1.39.847s [22 laps]
12. Jaime Alguersuari (Toro Rosso) 1.39.851s [20 laps]
13. Sebastien Buemi (Toro Rosso) 1.39.964s [21 laps]
14. Kamui Kobayashi (Sauber) 1.40.005s [17 laps]
15. Sergio Perez (Sauber) 1.40.030s [18 laps]
16. Bruno Senna (Renault) 1.40.451s [19 laps]
17. Pastor Maldonado (Williams) 1.40.529s [20 laps]
18. Rubens Barrichello (Williams) 1.40.711s [22 laps]
19. Heikki Kovalainen (Team Lotus) 1.41.909s [18 laps]
20. Jarno Trulli (Team Lotus) 1.41.945s [13 laps]
21. Timo Glock (Virgin) 1.43.275s [19 laps]
22. Jerome D'Ambrosio (Virgin) 1.44.377s [16 laps]
23. Tonio Liuzzi (HRT) 1.44.421s [22 laps]
24. Daniel Ricciardo (HRT) 1.45.143s [11 laps]

F1 Korea Blog – Q1 in Yeongam

As qualifying got underway at Korea's Yeongam Circuit, the skies were hazy but conditions dry. For now. Track temperatures are 29 degrees (fairly cool for F1), while the air is 23 degrees.

First man out of the pits was birthday boy Bruno Senna, who ended his morning's running early when a spin led to contact with the wall and a dangling front wing.

But while first might mean fastest, it's only a temporary joy. With most of the session left to run, times at the top are set to change non-stop and it's the times at the bottom that count.

As the session approaches its midpoint, we have yet to see laps from seven drivers, meaning the dropout zone is all still in the pits. Again, hardly representative.

The main point of note so far this session is the fact that Sebastian Vettel has left the pits on supersofts, an unprecedented move for Red Bull in Q1 this season. It's highly unlikely that Vettel will drop out in this session, but it's not clear just why the team have gone straight for the softer rubber.

At the top of the timesheets, Lewis Hamilton is fastest, followed by his teammate. Behind the McLaren pair are the two Ferraris, the two Mercedes, both Red Bulls, and the Toro Rossos. The ants are marching two by two, hurrah!

Daniel Ricciardo might not be out at all this session – he had water leak troubles this morning, and the team are still doing their utmost to fix the car and get the Australian rookie out on track. It's not looking good at the moment.

With five minutes remaining of Q1, Tonio Liuzzi, Rubens Barrichello, and Pastor Maldonado are finally out of the pits. Joining them in the dropout zone are Jarno Trulli, Timo Glock, and Jerome D'Ambrosio.

Hamilton and Button are still fastest, with Vitaly Petrov in P3.

As the Williams pair cross the line, Kamui Kobayashi and Heikki Kovalainen are knocked down into the dropout zone. But Kobayashi saves himself on a flyer, and Maldonado is now in the danger zone as Adrian Sutil hovers on the edge.

Sutil crosses the line in P9, and the fight for P18 is now between the Williams pair. The chequered flag has fallen, but both men are out on track and in with a chance.

Dropout zone

18. Rubens Barrichello (Williams)
19. Heikki Kovalainen (Team Lotus)
20. Jarno Trulli (Team Lotus)
21. Timo Glock (Virgin)
22. Jerome D'Ambrosio (Virgin)
23. Tonio Liuzzi (HRT)
24. Daniel Ricciardo (HRT)

FI Korea Blog – Q2 in Yeongam

Seven men down, seventeen to go. As the second qualifying session of the Korean Grand Prix weekend gets underway in Yeongam, Paul di Resta is the first man out on track.

The track temperature has increased by two degrees since Q1 got underway; it is now 31 degrees centigrade.

While di Resta is the first man to put a time on the board, Lewis Hamilton pops up 2.3s faster with a 1.36.526s, the fastest time we've seen all weekend, and seven-tenths faster than Sebastian Vettel's first effort.

With Q2 now half run, the leaderboard is led by Hamilton, with Vettel in P2 followed by Mark Webber, Jenson Button, Fernando Alonso, and Nico Rosberg.

In the dropout zone are Adrian Sutil, di Resta, Sergio Perez, Bruno Senna, Kamui Kobayashi, Michael Schumacher, and Pastor Maldonado, although the latter four have yet to set times.

Teams are running out of time if they want to get a lap in before the chequered flag falls. Still no times from Schumacher, Senna, Kobayashi, or Maldonado, and only Schumacher is out on track giving it a go.

And give it a go he does, with a P9 on his first timed lap.

At long last there's movement from Senna, Kobayashi, and Maldonado, all of whom are counting on one run to save their skins.

Sutil pops up in P9, putting Schumacher on the edge of dropping out. Maldonado's first timed lap is only good enough for P14, but he is pushed down into P16 as Senna and Kobayashi complete their own laps.

Di Resta crosses the line in P10, putting Schumacher out of Q2.

Dropout zone

11. Jaime Alguersuari (Toro Rosso)
12. Michael Schumacher (Mercedes)
13. Sebastien Buemi (Toro Rosso)
14. Kamui Kobayashi (Sauber)
15. Bruno Senna (Renault)
16. Pastor Maldonado (Williams)
17. Sergio Perez (Sauber)

FI Korea Blog – Q3 in Yeongam

This is it, folks. It's the final run of qualifying for the Korean Grand Prix, and the main press room wager is who will choose to sit out in a bid to save tyres.

Everyone barring the Force India pair is out on track, so we should see at least eighty percent of the top ten giving it their best shot this afternoon.

The much-maligned Lewis Hamilton has been on fine form all day, and could be on course to secure the first non-Red Bull pole since Nico Hulkenberg blew us all away with an electrifying performance in Interlagos last year.

Hamilton's first timed lap sees the McLaren driver cross the line in 1.36.130s, three-tenths clear of Mark Webber in P2. Vettel crosses the line in 1.36.160s, and we could be in for a tight fight this afternoon.

Still no time from either Force India driver; the pair remain stubbornly in the pits.

With less than three minutes remaining, all drivers are in the pits. But there's just enough time for one last run, and the pits begin empty. Even Paul di Resta is getting in on the action, but Force India teammate Adrian Sutil has elected to stay in the garage.

Nico Rosberg is out of his car and striding down the pitlane; no final run for him.

But the action on track is about to get mega, and Korea's six fans are in for a treat.

Lewis Hamilton crosses the line in a blistering 1.35.820s, silencing all the doubters in one fell swoop. There is no way Vettel will beat that, sandbags or no.

Red Bull's run of endless poles has come to an end, broken by the allegedly broken McLaren driver. The British racer has found the most effective way to silence his critics – on the racetrack, where all the best talking is done.

Provisional grid

1. Lewis Hamilton (McLaren)
2. Sebastian Vettel (Red Bull)
3. Jenson Button (McLaren)
4. Mark Webber (Red Bull)
5. Felipe Massa (Ferrari)
6. Fernando Alonso (Ferrari)
7. Nico Rosberg (Mercedes)
8. Vitaly Petrov (Renault)
9. Paul di Resta (Force India)
10. Adrian Sutil (Force India)
11. Jaime Alguersuari (Toro Rosso)
12. Michael Schumacher (Mercedes)
13. Sebastien Buemi (Toro Rosso)
14. Kamui Kobayashi (Sauber)
15. Bruno Senna (Renault)
16. Pastor Maldonado (Williams)
17. Sergio Perez (Sauber)
18. Rubens Barrichello (Williams)
19. Heikki Kovalainen (Team Lotus)
20. Jarno Trulli (Team Lotus)
21. Timo Glock (Virgin)
22. Jerome D'Ambrosio (Virgin)
23. Tonio Liuzzi (HRT)
24. Daniel Ricciardo (HRT)

F1 Korea Blog – Saturday press conference in Korea

The plan was to turn the post-qualifying press conference into a coherent article. Then the potential penalty for Sebastian Vettel became big news and everything went mental in the paddock.

So here, for your delectation, is the full transcript of Saturday's press conference starring Lewis Hamilton (McLaren), Sebastian Vettel (Red Bull), and Jenson Button (McLaren).

Q: Lewis, congratulations, your first pole position in over a year. I would have thought that you'd have had a smile as wide as the sea between here and Japan. But you don't seem to be too happy? Is everything okay?

Lewis HAMILTON: No, I am happy. I am very happy. Happy to be here and very proud of what the team have been available to achieve over the course of the last few races and for Jenson to have won the last race and for us to be on the front two rows again and the only ones competing with Red Bull I am very, very happy about it. But tomorrow is the day that really counts.

Q: Sebastian, it seems a strange position to see you the right of Lewis and not sat in the middle here. No pole position for yourself. Did you expect this renewed challenge from McLaren today?

Sebastian VETTEL: Well to be honest I think McLaren looked very, very competitive yesterday. I know the conditions were completely different

but you could see that they were a fair chunk ahead of everyone else, including us, as well as this morning in the dry so they looked extremely quick. But I think, once again, we pushed them very, very hard in qualifying and got very, very close. I think closer probably than they expected and closer than we expected in some regards so I think we did a very good job in qualifying. Also we saved all our prime tyres, which I think will be crucial for tomorrow. We had only a rough idea this morning with a little bit more fuel in the car. I think we are in a good position. It is not a long way down to the first corner and then Turn Three is a little bit exposed so we will see. It is a long race, a lot of things can happen. I think tyre wear will be crucial. Jenson did a very, very good job last race in particular so I think that, again, will be very important tomorrow.

Q: Jenson, third place for you. If tyre wear is so vital and the teams haven't got as much data as they would normally expect at this stage of a weekend, how handily placed are you for another race victory?

Jenson BUTTON: Well it is not perfect, we all want to be on pole position and congratulations to Lewis for getting the pole. He has been pretty quick all weekend and tough to hold onto. I am reasonably happy where we are. It is not perfect, but we can race very well from here. As Seb said there is a lot to play for still and we really haven't got a clue what is going to happen tomorrow in the race in terms of tyre deg on high fuel, what the car is really going to feel like on high fuel, so really a bit of an unknown. But looking forward to the challenge tomorrow.

Q: Lewis, after all your disappointments in recent races and whatever does happen tomorrow, how much does it mean to you to be hitting the track running and being on pole position and being the fastest man out in the car this weekend?

LH: Well it is probably one of the first positives I have had for a while and to be back on pole is a great feeling. But, as I said, tomorrow is the most important day. I have had some difficult races in the past so hopefully will try to redeem myself tomorrow. As long as we can get some really strong points for the team as they have put an incredible amount of effort into getting us to where we are today so a big thank you to them and I hope that tomorrow me and Jenson can repay them.

Q: Lewis, first pole for you and McLaren this year. How much satisfaction do you get from this?

LH: Well it is very early days and it is not the most important day but it is a great start. As I was just saying the team have worked incredibly hard all year to catch up the deficit that we had to the Red Bulls. Particularly the last few races, at least the last five races Jenson has been massively quick and we have been able to compete with them and constantly be on podium but not really finish ahead of them on the podium too often. Fortunately after the last race and here today we are as competitive as them and hopefully tomorrow we can continue with that performance.

Q: Just describe what sort of work you did this morning as you are virtually starting from scratch?

LH: No, we pretty much drove the same car as we had on Friday. Made a couple of changes as the track improved but I think we have made a big change to the set-up compared to the last race and that made a big difference.

Q: In terms of tyre wear what sort of programme was there this morning?

LH: I think everyone anticipated it would be quite poor the degradation of the tyres and looking at the Red Bull's long runs it doesn't look so bad. The performance over one lap is longer than what the specialists anticipated so I think tomorrow is going to be very, very similar to what we had in last race.

Q: After the problems that you have had the last few races you just seemed to nail Q1, Q2, Q3. Every single one you were fastest so that must have been a satisfaction as well.

LH: Yeah, I think we have had several Q1's and Q2's at the top of the leaderboard but never really been able to pull through in Q3 and particularly the last couple of races I have not had my last run so it was quite important that we got that today. It made a significant difference otherwise I don't really know if Seb improved, I am sure he did, so it was important that we got that lap.

Q: Sebastian, obviously you would have loved to have been on pole position but again it has been a pretty tough day today. I don't suppose you learnt that much yesterday and really all the work was done this morning?

SV: Well I mean yesterday was a different day. Different conditions. But we saw already that McLaren is very competitive this weekend. In the end it doesn't really matter the conditions. I think if your car is quick, if you feel the balance is there, then you are quick no matter what conditions and we were a little bit behind or quite a bit behind, including this morning. But again we pulled ourselves together and when it mattered most for today we were there, Q3, we were very, very close in the first run. I thought we would have a crack at pole. My second lap was very good again. There wasn't much left but, obviously, Lewis had a very good lap and deserves pole. It was close. Closer than many people thought or we thought as well as they were looking so, so strong this morning and the pace came so easy for them. At least by the looks of it. It is good that we made a fair step in the right direction and caught up so tomorrow should be an interesting day. A long race. We saved all our prime tyres so there is a little difference there. Whether we can use that to our advantage or not remains to be seen, but I think we are in good shape. It is a long race here. Tyres are reasonable soft, both compounds, so we will see.

Q: You predicted multi pit-stops yesterday, does that still stand?

SV: I think so. It did look a little bit better this morning than some people thought so I think five stops is too many. Two is impossible so somewhere in between. You know three or four stops is not a big secret. We know that if there is a lot of tyre wear we have seen races where we end up three stopping and races where we end up four stopping. All in all we should be in good shape and looking to tomorrow. Also considering that the last week wasn't the easiest, and preparation wasn't easy, but very quickly we refocused and as I said we were there when it counted. Not enough this time, but tomorrow is another day.

Q: Jenson said just now 'we don't know where we are'. What do you think of that quote?

JB: When did I say that?

Q: In the unilateral.

JB: Did I? Well, I will have to watch that back. I think if I did say that, in terms of the race, [I meant] running high fuel. We haven't done that yet, so we don't know how competitive we're going to be yet, but looking at the pace today, I would say that we would be reasonably competitive.

Q: Is that something you've done, Sebastian? Did you do high fuel runs today?

SV: Yeah, we did a little bit. You can't turn the world upside down. Yesterday, we had no preparation in dry conditions because it was wet. This morning we still had only one hour. I think we had a lot of work to do and we got most of it done, so we were very happy with this morning, gave us direction with the car, with the conditions, with the fuel. The runs we did didn't look too bad. We will see.

Q: Jenson, what are going to be the principal factors in the race?

JB: Being quick, and that's something we've been pretty good at for the last couple of races, in terms of consistency throughout the whole race. It's very difficult to know what to do in terms of strategy tomorrow because again, we haven't really run the tyres. We know that they've got a short life but how short and if you can make any difference by trying to look after them? It's very difficult to know, so a little bit unknown tomorrow so we will see. I should think everyone's looking forward to the race tomorrow especially us three at the front. It should be a lot of fun out there. Finding our feet is going to be the first thing on high fuel, to see how the car feels and acts with that much fuel on board. Today was a reasonably good day for me. I thought we would be able to fight for first but Lewis was just too quick today. All in all, a pretty good day and it looks good for tomorrow.

Q: Does the chassis change make any difference at all?

JB: No. I didn't think about it at all. It's got a number one on it now, so that's quite nice but no, it doesn't make any difference at all. At this high level, the tubs themselves are identical, so that's not an issue.

Q: (Andrea Cremonesi - La Gazzetta dello Sport) Sebastian, what tyres were you using on the last run, super soft but used or new, because you used one set in Q1?

SV: We used new tyres in both runs of Q3.

Q: (Andrea Cremonesi - La Gazzetta dello Sport) Jenson, why did you change the chassis this morning?

JB: There was a problem at the back of the chassis where the engine bolts on, so they couldn't fix the problem here and it wasn't worth risking trying to fix the problem here so that's the reason why they changed the chassis yesterday. The guys did a great job of turning it around, I think they left pretty early last night considering they had a complete chassis change, so thank you very much to them on both sides of the garage, so cheers.

Q: (Dan Knutson - National Speed Sport News) To any of you, lots of pit stops tomorrow, how much of a concern is the pit exit?

JB: If you look at how many times we've exited the pits over the last two days and also last year, there's been one incident and that was in wet conditions. It's very different in the dry; it's more unusual to lock up into turn one. It obviously does make it a little bit tricky if someone's exiting and you're racing that person exiting the pits, knowing where to really place the car through the apex but I'm sure everything will be fine tomorrow with the pit exit. I don't think we will see any issues.

Q: (Livio Orrichio - O Estado de Sao Paulo) Lewis, please understand this question; for a driver who broke a series of 15 poles of a competitor you look very sad, you haven't smiled. Is there any reason for that in your behaviour to the criticism you have received in the last few races?

LH: No, no. I am happy, I am happy. As I said, it's been a tough second half of the season and it's great to get pole. It doesn't really mean a huge amount because tomorrow's really what counts. As I said, I'm happy, I'm proud of... I am proud of my team, the support that I've had from them has been just incredible, so to be up here is kind of... it's a great feeling for that but tomorrow is the most important day so I look forward to that.

Q: (Michael Schmidt - Auto, Motor und Sport) Lewis, you were getting close to Mark Webber in the last sector, did it affect your lap time?

LH: No, I saw that he was backing off and my last sector seemed to be OK, to be honest. Through the last corner was a little bit slippery but I can't really say that was because of him. I think it was the tyres really falling off. I don't know how many seconds ahead he was but I think the gap should have been enough.

Q: (Joris Fioriti - Agence France Presse) Jenson, you were the fastest guy in Japan apart from in qualifying, where you missed pole by a very tiny margin. Your car, the McLaren, seems to be the fastest car here too. Should we see that as an indicator for the end of the season, McLaren becoming faster than the Red Bulls?

JB: If you looked at practice in Suzuka, yes, we were very quick and the same here. I think some of it is due to maybe us running less fuel than other people, especially compared to the Red Bull because they seem to be a lot more competitive in qualifying. But as a team, in terms of the car, yeah, I think we're in a great place right now. As I said, I really don't know how the race is going to go tomorrow but you'd think that it would be between us and the Red Bulls. So we will have to wait and see, but I don't think Ferrari are that far behind in terms of consistency. Over one lap they maybe don't have the pace but in terms of consistency we saw them very strong in Suzuka so they might also be there tomorrow. It's a great way to end the season. As a team, were obviously disappointed that we couldn't get this performance earlier in the year but I think we've done a great job through the latter part of the season and it can only be good for next year. Obviously there are rule changes but having a good base at the end of this year, going into 2012, it's something that we really need, I think.

Q: (Joris Fioriti - Agence France Presse) Sebastian, was there a sense of disappointment in the team not to score all the pole positions until the end of the season?

SV: It was never really the target, to be honest, because it's so far away, there are so many races, but the run we've had so far is quite impressive and even today we are still on the front row and we're not so far off. I'm very happy with that, but as I said, now you mention it, it would have been nice, but it has never really been our target. Tomorrow is more important for us.

Q: (Kate Walker - Girl Racer) Lewis, you said that you had problems with your tyres losing grip on the last sector in your qualifying lap; are you concerned that this might disadvantage you coming off the line tomorrow?

LH: No, no. Generally, when you're driving these cars, particularly in qualifying, you do quite a slow enough lap that you don't take too much out of the tyres on the first lap and when you do your lap, naturally you've extracted everything. If you've extracted everything from the tyres, they should start going off in the last sector. That's natural, but once they cool down again, as they will be for tomorrow, the grip will be back to exactly where everyone else has it.

Q: (Frederic Ferret - L'Equipe) Sebastian, you're second and Mark is fourth and the two McLarens are on the right side of the track. Does that bother you for the start tomorrow?

SV: Not really. I think our side is maybe not the cleanest side, but we've seen a couple of times this year that in the end there's not a big difference. I think the tyres are different to last year so... we are seeing different starts to the races. Jenson had a very good start at the last race from second, didn't you?

JB: Can't remember.

SV: So we will see. It's a bit tricky here because it's not a long way to the first corner or the first two, then there's a long straight after that, and another straight after that so it could be interesting.
