



FEDERATION INTERNATIONALE DE L'AUTOMOBILE

2010 GERMAN GRAND PRIX

POST-RACE PRESS CONFERENCE – July 25, 2010

1. Fernando ALONSO (Ferrari), 1h27m38.864s
2. Felipe MASSA (Ferrari), 1h27m43.060s
3. Sebastian VETTEL (Red Bull), 1h27m43.985s

TV UNILATERALS

Q: Fernando, as the team told you at the end you have indeed been very quick this weekend. Frustration though for much of the race and you said on the team radio at one stage 'this is ridiculous' but in the end it ended very well for you.

Fernando ALONSO: Yeah, I think it was a good weekend overall. We did improve the car a lot and immediately from Friday we felt very competitive. The car behaved very well and all the set-up adjustments worked really well here in Hockenheim. We know that some circuits will be better, some circuits will be worse. In the race as well we were competitive. We performed really well. Some parts of the race we were fighting very close for first position and it was a little bit dangerous but in the end I think it was a little bit more space between all the cars and we finished the laps with no more risky manoeuvres.

Q: It certainly wasn't a risky manoeuvre when you managed to get past Felipe. It looked rather easy from where we were watching.

FA: Well, I think I don't know what happened, but at the exit of turn six I saw Felipe a little bit slow and tried to overtake. You have to take every opportunity you have as it is a very difficult circuit to overtake and you only have one chance into turn six. I was never close enough to do an attempt, so at that point I overtook the other car and then it was 15 or 20 laps to the end. Some more cars to lap. That was some risk at some times as it is a very narrow circuit, especially the last sector, so it was not an easy race but very interesting.

Q: We heard in Australia this year you saying to the team 'look I am faster than Felipe, let me pass him'. At any stage were you saying that this afternoon?

FA: Well, I think sometimes you are quick, sometime you are slow depending on what stage the tyres are. Sometimes you have a little bit of graining and sometimes you have some other problems. In some parts of the race maybe I was quicker than him. Some other parts of the race Felipe was very quick and pulling away from Sebastian and me, so it is very difficult to judge but it is a very strong result for the team. Top three in qualifying and top two in the race and the best thing as well is that the car keeps improving. It is not a result down to the weather conditions or to anything like that. It is a good performance from the team and hopefully next week in Hungary we can do a good weekend as well and score some strong points for the team.

Q: Felipe, a year to the day since your accident in Hungary. A win would have been the perfect way to mark that anniversary. Did you feel you deserved a win this afternoon?

Felipe MASSA: Well, I think so. The start was just fantastic and also the pace on the soft tyres was really great. Then I was struggling a little bit on the hard, but anyway it was a very good race for us.

Q: You were told by Rob Smedley, your race engineer, that Fernando was the faster car than yourself. A couple of laps later, turn six at the hairpin, talk us through what happened?

FM: Well, I don't think I need to say anything about that.

Q: Fernando managed to get past you. Did you make a mistake? Was it under braking?

FM: He passed me.

Q: Then Rob Smedley said 'Good lad, sorry'.

FM: Yeah.

Q: Did you feel that you weren't allowed to win that race?

FM: No, the only thing I feel is that we are working for the team and we are doing a very good job for the team and that is the most important thing.

Q: How pleasing is it for you that Ferrari are back up there competing with Red Bull?

FM: Well, I think it was a great job for the team during the last month I would say. We were pushing hard. This was a very good track for us but anyway I think we did a good job, good working inside the car, so the car became faster and faster race by race and I think that is very important for sure when you get to the track that you see your car is very, very competitive, so the best you can do is to do first and second on the track. This is what's happened today, so I think as a team we achieved the maximum that is possible for this race.

Q: Sebastian, another pole that sadly for you, you could not convert into victory. It was the start once again?

Sebastian VETTEL: Yeah, usually we have very good starts. Yesterday I was told Ferrari have good starts but I think up to today we had better ones. Not really sure what happened. I had quite a lot of grip, dumped the first clutch, so I had a bit of a bog, so the first five to 10 metres of the acceleration were very poor. I was lucky I didn't stall the engine. I could get going again but lost the momentum, so I knew that it would be very tight with Fernando who was already side-by-side, so there was no way I could stay ahead of him. Then I was a little bit surprised when I saw Felipe come from the left. But still after that I think we had a good race. We knew it would be very tight. The closer you get you start to feel the tyres losing a bit of grip, starting to have a bit of graining but I think the majority of the race the Ferraris were probably just that tenth or two quicker than us, so it was difficult for us to keep up the pace. Towards the end we were able to push again a little bit but it is very tricky. You cannot really do your own rhythm as then you get so many lapped cars and depending on where you find them on the circuit, especially the last sector where it is very narrow, you can drop a lot of time and lose a lot of time but the race is done, so we finished third. I think we can be proud of that. We achieved our maximum today, so congratulations to Ferrari and I am pleased to be on the podium. Very special for me for my home grand prix to see the people here, be on that podium and see everyone cheering. It is very nice and emotional.

Q: Fernando, you needed a win before the summer break to re-ignite your championship challenge. Do you feel you have done that this weekend? You are back in business?

FA: I think apart from the win the most important thing is to feel confident with the car again, to feel that we are going in the right direction in terms of developing the car. The new parts on the car we introduced in the last couple of races seemed to work really well, so despite the win the better news for us in the last two or three races is that we are competitive. There were some grands prix that we were not quick enough to fight for pole positions, for wins, for podiums and we had to be conservative and now I think we can push a bit more, be more aggressive and try to score points. There is one race in one week. We did nothing today. I think we cannot go too low when the things were not very good for us and we need to be very calm after this strong result. We are happy, but we did nothing. This is the first step.

PRESS CONFERENCE

Q: Fernando, your feelings of a Ferrari one-two. I think it is a certain amount of frustration over the last few races but now you have finally done it.

FA: Yeah, I think we deserved this result for the team. No points for Felipe and me in Valencia and Silverstone with a competitive car for different reasons and very bad luck. We came back here with some upgrades in the car and with some new parts and they seemed to work really well. From Friday morning we felt competitive. We felt happy with the car, so we just were concentrating on finishing and doing a good Sunday with no mistakes and no problems and everything went fine. To win a race is always special, but to win a race for Ferrari is even more special. Two races we did well this year we were first and second, so this is a very strong result for the team. We just need to continue like this. I think we are going to go down when we have some disappointing races and we cannot be too excited after a strong result. This is a very long championship and we need to remain very focused for 10 months. Today is very important for the team, for the motivation of all the guys and especially for the technical people that keep working day and night to improve the car and this result is thanks to them. This is a good motivation for everybody in Maranello as well but as I said in four days we are in Hungary, so there is no time to really be too excited.

Q: How important is this win here but do you feel the car will be similarly suited to the Hungaroring?

FA: I think so. I don't see any reason to be pessimistic for Hungary. The car was competitive in Valencia and Silverstone, more competitive here, so in eight days hopefully the picture doesn't change so much, very strong competition with Red Bull and McLaren, but at least we are in the fight. There were some races this year when we were very close to Renault, to Mercedes and very far away from Red Bull and McLaren. Now I think we feel strong enough to fight with them for important points, so hopefully we can do a good weekend again in Hungary.

Q: Tell us about the start as you were a bit worried about being on the dirty side. There was a certain amount of pressure from Sebastian.

FA: The start was very good. We felt good grip already in the formation lap and then in the start itself it was okay. I felt I had a better start than Sebastian who lost a little bit of ground in the first metres. Then I was very close to the wall. Unfortunately I think this battle we lost a couple of metres close to the wall and we lost one position both to Felipe who started very good in third, so we arrived at the first corner quite close but enough to overtake Sebastian, so it was a super start, I think.

Q: Your view of the start. You must have been interested watching what was going off to your right.

FM: Well, I think the car first of all did a fantastic start. I think I prepared the tyres very well and then I just had a good grip, Sebastian not pulling away like I expected. He was a bit slower than I expected in terms of wheel spin or whatever. Then I just saw him coming to the right, so the only possibility was to go to the left, so I went to the left and then were fighting each other, so I took the chance to pass both, so it was a great start.

Q: After that how was the pace of the car? Did you feel it was pretty perfect?

FM: Yeah, I think it was very good on the soft tyres. It was really good, so I could manage to put a good pace lap by lap. The tyres behaved even better than I expected, the soft in terms of degradation, especially rear degradation. Then I arrived at the time to change to the hard and I was struggling a little bit more on the hard tyres, so it was no news about that. Anyway the car was behaving after but I think I lost a little bit of pace on the hard tyres.

Q: Then Fernando got past you. Was that your decision to let him past?

FM: Yeah, definitely.

Q: Yes, definitely?

FM: (No verbal answer)

Q: Sebastian, what was your feeling about the pace of the Ferraris today?

SV: Not a nice one. I lost two positions at the start. I think the formation lap start was fine, then coming to the race start the lights came off I released the first clutch lever and the revs dropped a lot. The first five to 10 metres the acceleration was very poor, so I lost a lot of momentum. Then it was difficult to recover. You lose that most crucial phase. I knew it would be tight with Fernando. I think he didn't have a great start either. Obviously he had to start from the dirty side, so I was trying to defend my position. But then he was side-by-side and as soon as I saw that there was no reason to go any further. The guy I am focused on is the guy closest to me at that stage and it was Fernando. Then Felipe came around the outside. It was tight then going with more or less three cars into the first corner but not a big deal. I lost two positions after turn one and that was it. After that I think our pace was fine. I felt comfortable in the car. But we were just this tenth or two slower today than the Ferraris. Both of them were pulling away at the first sting a little bit and then the gaps were consistent around I would say three to five seconds. Very difficult then to say as you never really get into a rhythm with the lapped cars. You lose out more than the others, sometimes less. It is tricky. In the end we were never close enough. In the end I think we were a bit quicker again but they had no reason to keep pushing that hard. I was getting closer to Felipe, but he didn't do any mistakes. None the less I am happy to be on the podium. It is special for myself, my home grand prix. Nice to be on the podium even if not the top step and see all the people. Very nice. Lots of energy and big boost for next week. I think we have a very competitive car and today our maximum was finishing third which we did. I would have loved to take a bit more points, but 15 points is still a lot looking at the championship. A lot of race left, so I am happy today.

QUESTIONS FROM THE FLOOR

Q: (Ian Parkes – The Press Association) Fernando and Felipe, via a coded message it appears that we've just witnessed a clear case of team orders being handed out. To Fernando, do you feel embarrassed about taking such a win, and to Felipe do you feel angry about having to give up such a win?

FM: For sure, you always want to win. That's always what we're working for. For sure we don't have team orders, so we just need to do the race that we can and if you see that you cannot do the race that you can, you need to think about the team. I think that's the most important thing.

FA: Yeah, same. What's important is the team result, so I'm happy.

Q: (Fredrik Af Petersens) Felipe, you said earlier that you lost out to Fernando on the hard tyres. How come that after you were passed, that you were doing more or less exactly the same lap times, a couple of times even faster?

FM: I was pushing hard as well but maybe I think he slowed down, I don't know. He was controlling the pace.

Q: (Alan Baldwin – Reuters) Felipe, after this afternoon, do you now think you're the number two driver at Ferrari?

FM: Well, I cannot say that I'm there fighting for first position in the championship. I've lost many points, important points, and the only thing I can say is that I know what I can do, I can win races, that's what counts and everybody saw today that I can win races and I can be competitive. For sure, what happened today is something that has happened in many races this year: when I put on the hard tyres I struggle. This is exactly what happened in the race. On the soft tyres, I was very strong and then when we went onto the hard, I was struggling again, so there's no news about that. So I know why sometimes I'm a little bit penalised, it's just because of the very hard tyres that we have this year. I don't think it's a good thing, to be honest, because you don't have strategies any more. Then also the grip level on hard tyres for me was always a little bit of an issue this year, and most of the races that we used these tyres I was struggling. And this is another one where I was very good on the soft tyres in the first part of the race, and then we put on the hard tyres and I was struggling again. It's a similar issue that we have had in some races.

Q: (Livio Oricchio – O Estado de Sao Paulo) Alonso, in a normal race, do you think you could have overtaken Massa, and Massa, in a normal race do you think Alonso could overtake you?

FM: Well, I think I was holding in a good way anyway, but the race is long and you always have many laps, so you never know what can happen in 20 laps. So maybe yes.

FA: Yeah, I think there was one moment also on (I don't know) which lap it was but we were side-by-side into turn six, especially with the people we were lapping – always there is a better chance to overtake and even though we didn't see too many overtakings here today we've seen a lot in the past on this circuit but this year maybe with the new cars etc we didn't see too many.

Q: (Ian Gordon – News of the World) Fernando, you said after Valencia that the race had been manipulated in favour of Lewis. Those words seem a bit hollow now. Where will this victory rank in your career, is it up there with Singapore 2008?

FA: I think you have a very strong result from Ferrari today, one and two, a very strong performance all weekend and if the final thought of the weekend is your question it's because maybe you didn't see the whole practice, qualifying and the race, so maybe it's too early for you that Ferrari came back so strong.

Q: (Ian Gordon – News of the World) Team orders are banned in Formula One. They were banned in 2002, that was blatant team orders.

FA: Sure.

Q: (Ian Gordon – News of the World) Eddie Jordan just said that you two should be kicked out of the race.

FA: Again, if this is the final thought of the weekend for you, I think it is because you didn't see the performance of the team and the performance from our car this weekend.

Q: (Juha Päätaalo – Financial Times Germany) Fernando, I think we all know what happened on lap 48 and we don't need any fairy tales about tyres or anything to be clear of that. I just want to ask you, because in 2006 in Monza you said that Formula One is not a sport any more for you but was that which we saw today a sport?

FA: I think we tried to do our race, we tried to do as good as we can. We are professional drivers, we try to work in a team and we try to do the best we can every day, not only here on the track but also between the races, at the factory etc, preparing the races. Again, I think we've been doing a good job over the last couple of races and finally we got a strong Sunday with a strong result. I think we are happy with this, although there are things which are more for you if you want to write all these things.

Q: (Carlos Miquel – Diario AS) Fernando, do you feel that some people are worrying because you are back in the championship?

FA: Maybe it seems like this, yes.

Q: (Byron Young – The Daily Mirror) Fernando, what have you got to say to the people who would call this a dirty win and if you win the championship, a dirty champion?

FA: I have 19 races to... look at the overall races, there are a lot of points that we win sometimes and a lot of points that we lose sometimes. As I said, today was a good day, some other races were bad days for us, disappointing but as I said before, we need to remain focused, keep working, keep developing the car, not to be too excited when we win, not to be too down when we lose. In November, (we need to) try to be in the fight for the championship, not forgetting that Red Bull has so far been very dominant, not scoring many points on Sunday, or the points that they should have scored on Sunday, but remain very strong and McLaren as well, leading both championships, so there is still a long way to go for us.

Q: (Byron Young – The Daily Mirror) The reality is, though, that you couldn't beat him on the track, so you had to get the team to do it for you.

FA: If that's your opinion.

Q: (Byron Young – The Daily Mirror) I'm asking you, is that not your opinion?

FA: No.

Q: (Byron Young – The Daily Mirror) He had to give you this win, didn't he, Fernando?

FA: No.

Q: (Ian Parkes – The Press Association) Fernando, you've said that you're happy with this win but to be honest, I've never seen a driver look less happy in the middle of a podium there today, and in the middle of this press conference here. Why can't you just be honest with us for once, and just admit that this win was handed to you on a plate today?

SV: Can I go?

Q: (Ian Parkes – The Press Association) Go Sebastian! Sebastian, give us your thoughts?

FA: Hopefully the next question is for Sebastian. No, stay, stay. As I said, I think we were competitive on Friday, I was very competitive on Friday, first position. Finishing second in qualifying by 12 centimeters, I heard yesterday and today I think we scored the fastest lap of the race, so overall I don't think I was very slow this weekend.

Q: (Miran Alisic – Korpmedia) I have a question for Sebastian. I think you had some not similar but close situations with Mark as well. Do you feel proud that what has happened at Ferrari today hasn't happened in your team?

SV: Don't you have another question maybe? Yeah, maybe they should have crashed. I don't know, I haven't seen the incident. I was too far back. I always saw them going into the hairpin when I was coming out of turn five, so I don't know what you're all talking about. I can guess but I don't know. For sure my advice would not be it's better to crash because also then you get a lot of questions that you have to answer so... Yeah, for me I was focusing on my own race and trying to do my thing, trying to stay close enough, trying to get closer, trying to put them under pressure. It didn't work, so I'm not pleased with that. No matter who you race, it's always difficult in Formula One to pass people and sometimes you have to take a lot of risk. When you don't have to race your team-mate, you're racing for the team, both of you, both drivers and on the other hand everyone looks for his own advantage. We had a couple of situations this year in our team, so it's quite a comedy that we are not in focus at this stage but life changes quickly, so... It's never wise to say anything that you might regret. Maybe in a week's time. I'm happy where we are now, as a team. Again, I can only repeat that from the outside there was more of a fuss made than there was inside. I can assure you that Mark and myself are always looking to do our best but on top of that, I think we understood many times this year that the team is the main priority and we are racing for the team, in the end. We don't get our cheque from you guys, we get it from the team. I think that's something we always have to respect.

Q: (Ralf Bach – R & B) Felipe, you said it was your decision to let Fernando past, so my first question is why did you take this decision, as a racing driver in Formula One, and my second question is do you have any idea why Rob Smedley said sorry to you?

FM: No. (Regarding your first question) As I said, because I was not so strong on the hard, so we need to think about the team.

Q: (Livio Oricchio – O Estado de Sao Paulo) Felipe, Rubens damaged his image a lot in Brazil when he did what you did today. Until now you had the support of the country; aren't you worried that now after you did what Rubens did you have deeply damaged your image in Brazil?

FM: For sure not, for sure not. I'm very professional and I've showed in my career how professional I am. You are professional as well, you work for a company. I believe you are doing what you have to do, so I'm professional and today I showed how professional I am. That's it.

Q: (Tony Dodgins – Tony Dodgins Associates) Fernando you're getting quite a bit of flak but as you say, you've been the quicker Ferrari driver for most of the weekend. We see it so often that the guy who is second on the grid gets beaten away by the guy who is third. Is there ever a case for actually asking to reverse the positions on the grid?

FA: I think there are some circuits where the clean side is an advantage. There are some circuits where it is not an advantage, for example in Hungary next weekend, it will be crucial to be on the clean side. There are other circuits like that. There's nothing we can do. We have a fifty percent chance of being on the clean or dirty side of the grid, unless you are the quickest which secures the clean side. The only thing we can do is to fight for pole position which allows you to be on the clean

side. If not, I don't see any other possibility. Maybe there should be more distance. Instead of eight meters, maybe 12 or whatever.

Q: (Tony Dodgins – Tony Dodgins Associates) Take today, if you'd been able to opt to start third instead of second and actually swap places, would you have done it?

FA: Maybe I would have done a bad start, you never know. I think it was a good start today, overtaking Sebastian and that was our target today. You never know.

Q: (Anne Giuntini – L'Equipe) To both Fernando and Felipe, we always talk about the show, the necessity of the show in Formula One. Can you conceive that race lovers and show lovers might be a bit frustrated today?

FA: Well, I think we try to put on a good show always for people, for spectators but as Felipe or Sebastian said, we work for companies, we work for teams. Sometimes, as we saw this year, there are crashes between team-mates and the loss of 42 points for the team. Today Ferrari has 42 in their pocket, so I think it's what we are here for.

Q: (Ted Kravitz – BBC Sport) Fernando, after the pit stop, when you were still behind Felipe, we heard a radio message, it wasn't very clear, but it sounded like you were telling the team guys 'think of the victory.' Did you say that?

FA: No.