

[Transcript] Sky Sports F1 Podcast / Australian Grand Prix CHAOS: Are F1 putting show business before sport?

One look at the result from the Australian Grand Prix and you might be forgiven for thinking this was an easy win for Max Verstappen. The race, however, delivered absolutely everything - chaos, confusion and three red flags. But are F1 putting show business before the sport? Who were the winners and who were the losers from the madness in Melbourne? This is the Sky Sports F1 podcast.

I feel bad complaining about the one night getting up early. I wasn't actually creating content.

Good to have you both here. I want to start by doing our one word race reviews, one word to describe the race. Ted, after you.

Well, I thought about gravel, seeing as I had to say. Gravel, it should be said in that way. Gravel.

Gravel.

But I've decided not to go there because it was fair enough. I'm going to go with red.

Am I allowed to steal red?

Yeah, that's fine.

You can take reds.

No, you can take reds.

That's fine.

Because flying back from Australia, from Melbourne as I did yesterday, I looked down and if it was in the daytime, I would have seen the red centre. It wasn't, it was at night, so I couldn't see anything.

But if there had been light, I would have seen the iron ore rich red earth of Australia.

They like to call a lot of things they have over there red. We also had Red Bull, not quite dominating the weekend in the way that they have in that they didn't get a 1-2 for the first time this season, but they did win and talk about the traps, the bare traps that are the possum traps or the Tasmanian devil traps or the other marsupials.

Yeah, other marsupials.

Don't call them bears. They're not bears.

Traps that Max Verstappen managed to avoid. So it is, you know, Red Bull, but obviously red flags.

Yeah.

That's why I'm going with red. Oh, and I'm going with red because I've got a little friend for you, Matthew.

Oh, God.

I've got a little friend for you, Matthew.

Straight off the plane.

What?

You're making me nervous.

My red Japanese bag. I've got a little friend. He's little red.

Oh, cute.

There you go.

For those of you listening.

Hang on. He's lost his hat.

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Ted has just produced a kangaroo with a... Now, what do you call the smaller kangaroo, the baby kangaroo?

Joey.

Joey.

That's the one.

Come on.

Sorry.

I am sorry.

What are you talking about?

He doesn't know what a kangaroo's little kid is.

I knew it.

Something important.

Joey.

Hang on. His hat's coming. Look, I've got my little hat.

Oh, the holes in the top as well for the years.

The holes for the years.

Beautiful.

And the fly repellents. Brilliant. The little Australian hat for you.

Oh.

So there you go, Matthew.

Wow.

They're beautiful creatures, although they can be... Kangaroos can be quite intimidating in person.

Yeah.

Some of them can be like six, seven-foot built, stacked.

Really?

Yeah, yeah, yeah.

Much experience with confronting kangaroos.

I went traveling a few years ago and we pulled over to this stop overnight and you look at the back window, see all these cute little joes and then there's two, like the enforcers, the big kangaroos, keep them safe.

Okay.

My wife was like, oh, can I go in and stroke it?

I'm like...

You won't come back alive.

There we go.

There we go.

Wow.

It's camera three got it.

There you go.

There with his fly, his typical Australian hat, Matthew, is my present to you.

Lovely.

Do I get to keep it?

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Wow.

What is a present to you?

It's a gift.

It's a gift.

It's a gift.

It's a gift.

It's a gift.

It's a gift.

It's a gift.

It's a gift.

It's a gift.

It's a gift.

It's a gift.

So red bull, red flag, and my little, little mate, red, oh, red earth, red earth and red the kangaroo.

Thank you so much.

And it's a little joey.

Lovely.

That is a really lovely gift.

Tommy, what have you bought for me?

My presents.

Yeah.

I think that's enough of a gift.

And your one word race review.

Which is chaos, ties in kind of with yours, Ted, in terms of red flags, but in terms of all the shenanigans that went down, particularly on that final safety car.

And how, I guess there's a conversation there, how much of it is, are we sending these cars standing start out late?

You've got a lot of drivers scrapping for position.

How much of that responsibility is, I guess, on the drivers as well?

There's a lot of complaints of, oh, you know, cold tires and all that.

But these are 20 of the best motorsport racing drivers in the world.

And for me, you drive appropriately to the tires and the car that's underneath you.

So difficult.

We saw a lot of what eight cars didn't finish that race.

Eight DNFs from the race.

Mad.

Yeah.

I think chaos is quiet.

Slightly confused, chaos is apt.

Slightly confused that they did classify some of them.

So you're right, eight didn't finish.

Then I went through the timing and I saw, hang on, what, Magnuson's 15th?

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Yeah.

Ocon on Gadsley would have classified as well, weren't they?

Yeah.

You're right.

Those cars are in no state to be classified.

Mine, similar to yours being chaos.

Mine is Krikey.

Krikey.

Krikey.

With the amount of DNFs we had with the red flags, with the three red flags, with the fire for Russell, Magnussen's tire, or Magnussen hitting the wall and the big crash for Ocon and Gadsley.

I thought, you know what?

A lot of people in the crowd would have said Krikey.

Great.

They would.

It's true.

Yeah.

In my head, anyway, I wasn't there.

But anyway.

All right.

Let's, let's sort of get onto our big question for today.

And I think the key one that a lot of fans are asking, particularly after having three red flags is, and this is from Matt on Twitter, is F1 now putting entertainment over sports in order to put on a show rather than a motor race?

What do you think the consensus is?

Just getting at my notes.

So I wasn't aware of this being a storyline.

In fact, I'm looking to see whether I had any of this kind of post.

And I tried to, when I'm doing post race, sort of see, you know, what the zeitgeist is.

What's the feeling around the place?

Maybe the kind of the Monday line or the Tuesday line as we are here.

And I didn't really expect it to be, were there too many red flags?

And what about, you know, starting this?

What's the alternative?

What's the premise behind the question of what we should have carried on with safety cars or there shouldn't have been standing starts, there should have been rolling starts or.

I think both of those questions and I think the, the desire to have a red flag, particularly if, I mean, we can look at the first red flag of Albon's crash, you've obviously got a huge amount of gravel all over the track.

But I think the point is you could have, in theory, obviously, because behind a safety

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car, you slow all the cars down when they go through that part of the track, right?

So you would have slowed all the cars down.

Surely that would have meant the danger of being in that area was mitigated.

You wouldn't need to put on a red flag.

Is it fair to put in a red flag at that point?

Because there's so many factors.

You've got the cherry picker, which didn't need to go on the circuit, but was in, in the gravel itself.

You've got all of the gravel on track and you had the big, the big sweeper machine that came out.

And it's, it's one of them.

I think Alex's crash, the immediate eye test watching anyway, you think, oh, they can probably clean that up because, you know, damage to the barrier seemed pretty minimal.

But then you've not just got gravel on track.

There's probably bits of carbon fiber because Alex hit the wall fairly hard, but it was a glance in blows.

So it didn't cause, you know, there's certain crashes we see a track like Saudi, for example, if you go straight on at turn 22.

That's a pretty obvious red flag straight away because that's a touch point for crashes quite consistently.

You need to repair the tech pro.

I think it's one of them that, yeah, the immediate eye test for, I think, particularly Alex and Kevin's crashes wasn't immediately, oh, that's definitely a red flag.

And I guess it's a balance because I think Fernando and Max both mentioned post race that they were somewhat confused about, you know, the deployment of a red flag.

First one.

Yeah.

Well, at least the first.

Yeah.

Right.

And I mean, Magnussen's was, that was a sketch one because you had a bit of a debris go over the fence as well.

Yeah.

And actually cut fan on the arm as well.

Which obviously that's a bit of a freak accident that I don't think you can do too much about.

But yeah, I guess it's one of them that the use of a red flag, what's the dial down to what is actually the point of a red flag, you know, is it purely a safety thing or is it being used to artificially create these standing restarts which do often more often than not give drama, particularly towards the end of a race.

We saw what Azerbaijan last season with, sorry, 21 with the break magic to Lewis, that was, that was, you know, that was a race that had kind of peaked out a little bit.

And then you had this really exciting finish.

And so are they artificially inserting that?

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I think that's where the, the fan sentiment.

So the second or the third is where, maybe where were they, maybe almost the third, even though the third red flag never was going to enable another laps racing, it was always a pointless one.

Hence why I asked the question in the commentary.

Why?

Why are we doing, given that this is the order in which the Australian Grand Prix is going to finish, why are we restarting this?

And then Crofty said, well, you don't know what's going to happen.

And I basically got shouted down by Crofty and Karuna and Jensen and said it was ridiculous to say that.

Well, and they were right.

And the after about 10 seconds after I said that, then Carlos Sainz had his penalty.

And so that wasn't the order.

He was going to shuffle down the order, but I mean, I don't think anybody expected not least Carlos Sainz or George Russell, that red flag number one for gravel was going to be a red flag.

Now, this is always something the strategists have in their mind.

They think, okay, right, it's a, it's a, there's an accident.

Is this going to be a safety car?

Yes, it's probably going to be a safety car or is it going to be a red flag?

And we shouldn't come into the pits because we're going to get that free pit stop underneath the safety car.

And I think on balance, the reason that likes of Verstappen, Hamilton, the McLarens didn't pit under that first gravel or rather album incident, not red flag for gravel is not because they didn't think there was not because they thought there was going to be a red flag was because it was too early in the stint to put them on the hard tire to go to the end, which would have been marginal.

It was a nice tire, the hard tire, but it required a lot of managing and it was difficult to get it to the end from lap nine.

Okay, they might have thought, you know, right, maybe we can have another VSC or something. We can get off it, go on to another medium or something like that.

But I think that was more their thinking, which is why only science and Russell actually did it.

But I can understand what people are thinking in terms of, you know, are we sure we're going to do this just because, and is it based on previous events?

But I don't actually, I think on this case, there were sound reasons for red flag, certainly red flag number two and three, that there was a lot of stuff that needed an awful lot of clearing up and metal, both from the Alpine Carnage and the Magnuson tire wheel rim, it was we it was wheel rim, a debris, wasn't it?

Yeah, it wasn't just the carbon fiber, it was metal on the track, right rear wheel disintegrated. So that can be dangerous metal, carbon fiber, a bit of gravel, you know, you could argue maybe in the past, we haven't needed red flags for that, but lots of metal on the track.

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And I think the drivers are divided somewhat.

I know Lewis was mentioned after Kevin's, Kevin hit the wall, he said like there was a lot of debris on track.

Yeah, it came on the radio, didn't he?

Almost quite pointedly.

Yeah.

And I guess, you know, obviously it's in the driver's best interest to push for something that is going to benefit them, however, I don't think in that instance, I think also there's just, you know, probably differences in opinion and differences to what like extent. So for example, the album one at the start, you know, that took, it was quite a bit of the time between the incident and the red flag dropping.

I mean, the cherry picker was pretty much already on the car when the red flag came down. So you know, what extra information was required from the race director, what did they need to then make that decision?

Why couldn't that decision have been made sooner?

Maybe it could have.

Maybe it couldn't have.

And that's where obviously George missed out.

But even in hindsight, George was like, the team made the right call.

Even though he missed out, he was, you know, which I thought was, you know, quite impressive and quite unusual for the driver to actually be like, you know what, I'm happy actually with that call.

Sometimes you win.

Sometimes you lose.

Yeah.

Yeah.

So go back to that question.

Can you read it again?

Question from Matt on Twitter.

Is F1 now putting entertainment over sports in order to put on a show rather than a motor race?

Because I mean, when you think about that, now we've actually done that.

I mean, we are entertainment and sport.

Very much so.

But there's a final answer, right?

We might, the answer to Matt's question on Twitter might be yes, but I don't think it's necessarily referring, you know, if we really sat down and think of thought about it, we could think about some other things, you know, crazy qualifying formats we've had in the past, which never worked, but we're meant to be more entertainment for sporting.

Yeah, we might have done, but not this one.

Well, sport is entertaining, isn't it?

Like, hopefully.

That's why we watch it.

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If we're doing it right.

No, and it is a fine line.

It is a very fine line.

You've got the integrity of the sport and you get a lot of, you get a lot of, there's another word, when you're kind of, again, artificially creating drama in a sporting context.

WWE, for example.

Yeah.

I mean, I used to think that was real when I was a kid.

No, I think how stupid I was.

The drivers were quite interesting to listen to on this, because obviously we had the Stappen who has got a huge advantage when he's out in front, obviously a red flag for him is a disaster, you know, having the ability to change tyres, everyone coming out and then being able to race him, essentially, it is a disaster for him.

Suboptimal.

Suboptimal.

Disaster, maybe not.

Yeah, I was going to say.

All right.

But he's, but my point is, is he's built up the lead.

So all that work he's put in has now been, been rendered, you know, useless.

Norris, this is what he had to say, he said, we come all the way to Australia, but it's such hard work to drive 55 laps perfectly.

And because they try to put in a show, you just get unlucky and everything can get taken away from you all of a sudden.

So I just think that side of it, I just think it needs a small rethink.

Hang on.

This is Lando Norris who finished a very, very creditable P6 and didn't seem, was he going to be higher up with any kind of this?

Without the red flags.

No.

He did all right.

He did.

He very much was on the right side of it this week.

It was a good weekend.

Yeah.

It's, it's funny, isn't it?

Cause you know, Lando's, well, I think he was advocating for a rolling start as well.

I think I saw additionally in that quote, he's talking about potentially doing a rolling start instead of, this is one of the things I've kind of seen people talking about online is, you know, having a standing start right at the end is that too risky versus a rolling start, which is probably more of an equitable, it gives less opportunity for over, because obviously a standing start is going to give you more of a chance to make up a position.

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Look, Yuki Sonoda.

Yeah.

He shot through.

He had an incredible start.

He had a world of the start.

I mean, I love Yuki.

So I was, I was super happy for him.

And then obviously him and Niko went back up both having had good starts, but I think yeah, there's, there's a question around that and you know, it's tire change.

There's there's pros and cons.

There's no perfect solution.

This is the thing.

There's no perfectly even equitable solution.

You look at other motorsports, NASCAR, IndyCar, when NASCAR ads laps, IndyCar allows everyone to, I think before you can, on a safety car, before you can change tires, you have to wait for the field to kind of bunch up so that you can't gain an advantage somewhat.

You know, there's no perfect solution.

We've got a solution now where again, if you pit just before a red flag, you miss out massively.

And you know, you've got these standing restarts and like you said, Lando can drivers might take each other up.

But again, I feel like there's a responsibility on the drivers, no?

Like, you know, that they have to understand the car that's underneath them and they don't have as much tire.

I know it was hard to get tire temperature in Australia, but I'm not, I'm not an F1 driver, but I don't know.

I just feel like you drive the car that's underneath you.

And if you don't have the tire temp, you have to drive accordingly.

And yes.

And you know, Lando's bosses are the ones who said, you know, let's do the standing starts again.

They've agreed to all of these in the F1 commission meetings.

So you know, if he doesn't like it, and if there is a move from the drivers to think, you know what, this is too much of a risk.

I don't know what flying coming all the way to Australia has to do with it.

I mean, this could happen in Silverstone.

Yeah, I traveled three 12 miles down the road and all this has been in traffic for two hours.

And, but you know, that's what we have.

I'm not sure whether that's been communicated particularly effectively to the fans.

Is there ever, do we all know?

I mean, there was some sort of question is like, okay, right, it's a standing start.

Is there a rolling start after reflag?

Well, there can be.

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When does that happen then?

When we think, oh, you know, we can't trust them to start on the start line from the lights off again.

Is that when it's like in wet conditions?

Is it?

Sometimes they, I think.

The fact that we're not even sure when on the red flag restart, when it does come behind a safety car or a rolling start, the safety car goes off and they all start themselves.

And when it's a standing start, maybe that's the confusion is that we don't all know.

Oh, it's a red flag.

Right.

What that means is that it will definitely be a start on the grid again after.

I think one of the issues for me after the second red flag was the delay in time of not knowing what was about to happen.

Tweet here from Freeman, there needs to be greater transparency regarding red flag safety car decisions at the moment, it's confusing because decisions made are opaque.

This leads to a suspicion, rightly or wrongly, but the procedure is being abused to improve the show, especially if it's late in the race.

No, it's not being abused to improve the show.

It's being open to sporting managers from teams to lobby and then open the FIA up to protests, which I think is still going on as we're recording.

Democrats have appealed, I believe, the turning down of their protest and they might withdraw it, but they are exactly the same as, who was it, Freeman, thinking, well, hang on, how did we arrive?

What kind of metric have we said that we're not going to use the timing information that had the two Aston Martins out and Nico Alkenberg and P4?

There was timing information.

I mean, I had it.

I've got it on my phone.

It was on the app.

So they passed some beams.

So why are we not relying on that and why are we relying on the grid before with the Aston's still in the race?

So the teams are questioning that as well, because it's not hard and fast.

We had Omar Safnar on the pit wall, the Alpine team principal, I think Crofty asked him, what do you expect to happen?

He didn't know.

No, they were all waiting for the FIA to click on the match.

The audience at home don't know, and also another point is what about the people in the stands?

Surely the people in the stands or the other part of the circuit are wondering, how much information do they get?

They can obviously see the screen.

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They can see the feed, but there's not one system that's telling everyone what is going on.

Yeah.

Again, transparency is the key thing.

I mean, exactly what you said, Ted.

Why can't that, you've got this gap where nothing's happening, nothing's being communicated.

You're saying it gives time for team principals to lobby and all that.

Tell us that.

At least we know, okay, what are we waiting for?

It's when it's, again, it adds to that whole, I think because they're, I feel that so often, particularly in the last few years, there's been a lot of press around the FIA, how the sport's been managed, safety cars, all this.

When there isn't that transparency, when there isn't that clarity, it does make people speculate.

And again, it's why I can't, I'd rather a decision be made, you take time, but make the right decision, then rush and make the wrong one.

I'm all for that.

I don't mind if it's going to take 10 minutes, but tell us why.

That's all we want to know.

We just want to understand why as fans so that we, then it just adds to the speculation mill because nothing's going on.

Then exactly what you said, Ted, it just adds to this whole, are they going to...

So the first thing the crowd knew about it, because I had one of the big screens that all the crowds saw, was when the FIA graphic came up and said, order will be 1.44.

Which is so unclear to a crowd, you know, you're trying to work out what the numbers are.

Do you not know the numbers?

No, I know the numbers.

Excuse me.

Formula one has the most learned intelligence.

Absolutely.

I'm just saying, would it not be better for the graphics to at least say the driver's name?

You know?

Yeah.

All right.

Okay.

But can I say?

A few Aussie beers to the wind as well, you might ask for the names.

Not a Blinder, Aston Martin have played, and the last two races, they've managed to get two sporting decisions go their way.

Yes, no, the jack didn't touch the rear crash structure.

Okay, it did.

But if it did, then it wasn't working on the car, went their way.

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And let's start from the grid.

Just ignore the fact that our cars spun and even though they may have passed some kind of timing.

Yeah.

They've played a Blinder, haven't they?

Yeah.

I mean, people call it luck.

No luck about it.

It's lucky.

Aston, absolutely, playing a Blinder on these, getting these decisions go their way.

And again, I think that just added to the confusion, right, where you've got the orders being taken back, yet Colours Science's incident is still being penalised, and it's just one of them things where, you know, I'm saying it's right the wrong way, it's just the confusion, right?

Yeah, because what you're saying, that's right.

What you're saying, maybe Science thought about this, is that never happened.

You're putting the Aston's back in like what happened with Science never happened, yet you're penalising Science for the thing that happened, but didn't happen because the Aston's are still there and there's no foul.

So if there's no harm, Science is thinking, well, there's no harm to a Fernando, then there's no foul on me.

Which is understandable, because all of Yuki's great work that he did moving through the field, Niko up to P4, which could have been a podium, which would have been his first.

You know, all of that, and again, I'm not saying like, because I think, I mean, in my opinion that Science Penalty was fair, that's just, that's my take on it, but as an incident in itself, however, whether that should have, you know, you step back some things, but they're not that, and I think there's understandably, again, it just adds to this confusion.

It's just a lack of clarity from fans, and I get, look, this is the most complicated sport arguably in the world.

I think to write down every potential eventuality in these regulations is going to be incredibly difficult, and it's just taking these instances.

This was a chaotic race towards the end.

It was a madness, and it all came from Kevin Magnussen's incident, and it's like, what can we learn?

How can we improve this going forward?

How can we just make it clearer to people watching?

Because especially when you've got new fans coming in, it's, you know, you get to an end of a race, and we saw it with Fernando getting his podium taken away, but then returned, and it's just like, we shouldn't have, well, I don't want this every race, like no one wants this, especially.

We're two in two, isn't it?

It just makes the sport more intimidating, I think, to watch.

Yeah.

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It's like, well, what's going on?

If I don't understand, if I go to bed and then wake up, and then my driver's had it taken away, but then it's confusing.

Should I pick up on Tom?

Go on.

I can see it.

I can see it.

Can I?

Can I just read you what he said?

Yeah, go on then.

I didn't feel for him.

He was so sad.

He was so upset.

He was in tears.

You listened to the team radio drivers at the end of the race from F1.

There's more of it.

He was crying.

Really?

On the radio, after the race.

You can hear it.

Sorry.

This is what I was going to say.

This is what he said after the race, that it's the biggest disgrace I've seen in the sport for many years.

It's the most unfair penalty I've ever seen in my life, or his life.

Strong words from Carlos.

Strong words from Carlos.

I mean, you think it wasn't a fair penalty.

No.

But the reason why it's potentially not a fair penalty is because if you apply a five second...

The fair is the wrong word, appropriate.

Yeah, why it's a stronger penalty is because under a safety car, obviously the five seconds that you get, because you're all bunched up as cars, it means that that five seconds actually equals like 10 or 12 places compared within a normal race where you might have five seconds might be only the difference between one or two spots.

No, but they can't, hang on, but they can't take into account the effect of the penalty.

Of course they can't.

Of course they can't.

Otherwise that will confuse everything.

No, I think I think the scientist's point was it was lap one where there's always a little bit more leniency.

And if you penalize me for that, then you have to penalize Lance Stroll for taking out my

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teammate, even though it wasn't really Lance's fault, but he's saying it wasn't really my fault, and you have to penalize Pierre Gasly for taking out Esteban Ocon, which wasn't really either of their fault because it was a racing incident, because Gasly came on, didn't see Ocon, et cetera, et cetera.

That scientist's point was that there is a fundamental inconsistency.

I think he's putting it quite strongly, but he was emotional, you can understand why.

And crucially, they didn't listen to what he had to say, and he wanted them to be able to go to the stewards, explain what was going on, to hear from Fernando, and then do that.

But yeah, it would have depended if science was still in it, and if it was a happy Fernando, because it was a happy Fernando.

Fernando was still on the podium.

Carlos was going P4, then I think Fernando said, well, I see a point, and maybe there's no arm there particularly.

If they had decided to do the Hülkenberg favoring podium, restarting order for Red Flag 3, still with us, everybody, then you would have still had the angry Fernando.

Yeah, of course.

Who would have sunk science and said, absolutely, he deserves a penalty, given the penalty.

So that was why he was so...

We're forgetting the most egregious one, which is when Sergeant took out the Vries.

Yeah.

Which kind of just went under the radar.

That was like, I'm sorry, if you're going to penalize Carlos...

It was late the Stewards, you know, they had a flight, but it didn't.

No, it has seemed to be gone completely.

And again, I understand that.

If Carlos is, you know, I get it, because yeah, why isn't that being punished?

Like, for sure, that one, the Gazli Okham one, you know, Gazli's gone off track, and I still think he's responsible, but I think there's more nuance to that one.

Logan's, you know, breaks later, he's not got the break performance that he thought he would, and he's quite significantly hit to Vries up the backside, and he's not got a penalty for it.

So, yeah.

Again, consistency is so often consistency.

We want consistency in this sport, and it's like, I get it, it's a difficult sport to manage.

Of course it is.

It's the most complicated sport in the world, again, but consistency.

I think that's all we're as fans and the drivers and everyone watching is asking for.

Ted, just try and take us through the process that happens here.

Yeah.

In terms of, we've got a race director, Nils Vitech, by himself this year.

It's not joined by anyone else.

How does this happen?

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How are these decisions made?

So sometimes, let's say there is a, the Verstappen Hamilton, you know, something on track whether nobody goes off, but there is a call in there, and Verstappen, we went on to the radio and said, did you see Lewis push me off, I was ahead of the, and they say, we're on it.

So what they do, they'll get on the radio and they'll say to the race director, what did you think?

And the race director will offer an opinion.

He'll say, well, I think that was fine.

Or he'll say, I'm going to put it to the stewards.

And then he will say that there's a driver leaves track to gain position and gains position.

The race director, if that happens, will then go back to the other team and say, I'm going to put this to the stewards unless you choose to reverse the positions and give the guy behind.

The place back.

Now that was the great, do you remember the offer?

That's fine.

That's always been done.

And the race director can offer to a team and can say, look, if you want to reverse the thing of your own accord, then please do that, then it won't go to the stewards.

It'll be resolved and we can carry on.

The team then will think, okay, we're probably going to lose less if we do that than if we wait for the stewards decision, who's going to give us a five second penalty and drop more.

I remember that.

It's like a episode of deal or no deals.

Yeah, but that's always happened.

It's just that we heard more of it.

And it's resolved there and then.

And quite clean.

Going forward.

It doesn't have to go to the stewards.

It's the fair result.

It's what I'm saying.

And so other things.

So with these incidents that we're talking about, the race director prompted by a team or the team asks questions, which is all they're allowed to do, the race director.

Now, Niels Wittich will say, yes, I think that's worth the stewards looking at it.

We'll go to the stewards and say, okay, I'd like you to look at this and then they'll do it.

So it's quite a quick decision for Carlos Sainz for them to do.

Although no, they had the, I guess they had the red flag stoppage, didn't they?

They had that to do it because the stewards need to be able to look at all kind of the angles, every angle and review telemetry and GPS traces if they want to.

So that's the process they go to.

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And you can't, sorry, I was going to say you can't pause F1 unless there's a red flag. It's not like you can just hit the pause button, make a decision, say, unlike football, where you just pause the game, go, right, let's have a look at it all, make a decision, go on from there.

In F1, it is, you know, it's moving.

Yeah, it's not like a drop ball situation.

No, it's not.

Because I just wonder that, you know, you've got all these different angles of looking at it.

And I don't know, it felt to me like, what's the difference when we say lap one, drivers are given a bit more leniency, yet you can still get a penalty.

So what is the, what is the understanding of that?

Like when they say leniency, is that still just up to human interpretation?

Is what, what made them make that call on Carlos, it was a, it was a lap one incident?

I think it was that, unlike, unlike with Lance and Charles, it was just the two cars there and one was turning in and one went off.

And they judged, if I remember the script, the, the steward's decision correctly, was that Charles, there was that Carlos did not make enough of an attempt to avoid the collision. Right.

And he had space on his inside that he could have gone into, but kind of didn't, was already going through the corner, Fernando were off there where, where whereas Lance was in the middle, Charles was, Charles was coming in from the side and then Lance didn't really have anywhere to go because Fernando was there as well.

So I think that, that's where the leniency comes in, is that they understand there are going to be more track, more cars on track together on the first lap than in something like that.

Do you know what I like?

I think, I think Lance missed a trick here on the final, let's see how many people we can get to benefit from Carlos Sainz's red penalty, wouldn't it have been really sneaky if Lance had dropped back to 4.8 seconds behind Carlos to have made sure that he was the only one that would have benefited from the five seconds, but if Lance was feeling particularly naughty, he could have, which he isn't, he could have dropped back to 4.9, can you imagine? And then all those people behind him would have said, Lance, we didn't get any points.

What are you playing at?

What are you playing at?

Go right behind him so we can get some points.

He was like, well, it's my priority, I can do that.

That restart at the end, and I know you mentioned it earlier, it was strange to have this formality of them going out behind the safety car for no, will you say that, Hülkenberg had issues.

Yeah.

He almost didn't make it.

Yeah.

He really actually came really close to not making it, which would have been a hue because

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we've got six points on the board.

So I guess, yeah, that does kind of prove the point.

I guess it's like you've got to get, you've got to get your car around under its own, which obviously why the Alpines couldn't, because they were destroyed.

To go back to your point as well about sporting integrity, you've got to have a car that can finish the 58 laps of the race.

Well, look, and again, this is another thing that we know this was talked about, I think it was last season or maybe 21, that there's this kind of unwritten rule that there's always going to be this attempt to try and finish the race in green flag conditions, which on the face of it, yeah, everyone, no one wants to see, maybe Lawrence Stroll because he has to mind safety car, you know, great exposure for that, but no one wants to see a race finish under safety car.

Monza.

I was going to say Monza last year was so disappointing behind the safety car.

It almost felt like we were robbed of a race really at the end.

And again, I think the argument was like, you had the cherry picker on the track for Daniel's car.

And look, I just think it's one of them things that I think more from what I've seen now, I think more old school motorsport fans are more open to seeing a race finish under a safety car.

Yes.

However, even, you know, I've been watching this sport my entire life, like when there was this prospect of this two lap sprint and maybe another lap right at the end just on its own.

Well, of course, I'd want to see that from an entertainment point of view more, but at the expense of sport and integrity, that's where this conversation is.

That's where there's this balance.

I think it is, I mean, they stuck to the rules and that's what happens.

It would have been stranger to argue just to say the race will not resume, which is one of the options that I think I said on air that they could do.

They could say, but that's it.

And it was over 75% at this point.

Yeah.

So it would have been full points.

They could do that.

Yeah.

It would have been a bit odd.

And you would have then the stewards and the race director would have been open to teams saying, well, hang on, why did you say this to which the answer the race director was being well, you know, you lads can't really, you know, keep it together and not cannon into each other.

So I thought you've had you a lot.

It's time to call it a day.

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Well, Esteban said this after he was like, the drivers have to take responsibility.

I think for a lot of the, the chance happened, but also like, I know in NASCAR, they had laps now.

Obviously we have limited fuel.

You can't really feel during a race, but I don't know, is that, is that a solution?

If you've got a red flag within, I don't know, so far, like towards the end of the race, can you like top everyone up with a bit of fuel and add a couple of laps?

I don't know.

Like there's no, there's no perfect scenario.

There's no perfect way of doing it.

But again, I think it's just, it's important to talk about this and have these conversations and understand from a driver's point of view, a team point of view, they've got their own vested interests, but also the product has to work for us because if the fans aren't there, then the sport doesn't exist.

I don't mind it.

I mean, I, I'm a bit of an older, I'm older than you whippers.

I don't, if one or two, one race a year finishes under safety car, I haven't got a problem with it.

Do people need to have that photograph of the guy crossing the line and is that like an important thing or, you know, or just for formula one, you need to have, does it get in the way if the safety car's kind of there, but then the safety car goes off and the guy just goes slowly, you need to have a person waving the checkered flag rather than just

Is it any different to someone winning by 20 seconds, like is the excitement any different?

Because, you know, when someone dominates wins a race by 20 seconds and then there's a 10 second gap between second and third, for example, like, is that any more or less exciting than finish under a safety car?

It's probably about equal, right?

I think it's the, the, when you drop, when there's an incident towards the end, there is this kind of, oh, what's going to happen now?

Like you're going to bunch the field up, you're going to potentially get some overtakes.

And it's that potential excitement, I think that then as fans, we get carried away with and you can't deny the standing starts are exciting.

Of course, because, because we didn't know whether, whether Red Bull had some sort of issue.

They, they'd lost out on the first start.

Yes, of course.

Quite considerably.

Yeah.

Russell had a fantastic start.

Great start.

You think, oh, no, no, no.

Is this, you know, that was quite interesting for me.

Is this a, is this a weakness of this all conquering Red Bull that actually they're all,

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on this day in history, they're not getting great starts.

And if there's another one, and another one, is that going to be the, the bear trap that I spoke about at the beginning where Max Verstappen doesn't come through and exorcise the demons of Melbourne.

And that's why actually I felt it was such a crucial win for Verstappen.

Maybe I should ask him a question that you're about to ask later, that he avoided all of these things.

He avoided all the restarts, maybe Red Bull doesn't have a great car off the line.

He avoided all the red flags.

He avoided all of that.

And actually that was as much of an achievement as his wins by 30 seconds.

Yeah.

Is that there were lots of things out there to trip him up and to make the tantalising Melbourne win that's been denied him for so long, actually achievable.

And there was relief you could sense from Red Bull after, but they'd done it.

They came there, they came to Melbourne to win that race.

Do you remember I spoke to Max on Thursday and he said, and I said, if I was to offer you second now, would you take it?

And he was like, no, no way, no way.

I'm here.

I've had terrible luck here.

I've had DNF, so the best of my finish has been third.

I want that win.

And there were, and he was, all right, between laps nine and 50, whatever it was, 50, he was going to get that win.

No problem.

But then at the end, there were the little gremlins coming out to steal the win away from him.

But, you know, all credit to Max because he managed to avoid all of them to win.

That's why I think it was such a crucial win for him.

And not even for Max, like, Red Bull won this.

Red Bull had 2011.

Yeah, 2011, yeah.

So, as Christian Horner said on the radio afterwards, do you think he has the Statman's list of statistics?

Do you think he gets the email?

To let people in on a production thing.

We have a Statman who sends an email just before, what, five laps before the end of the race saying, this will be, sorry to give away Crofties, I'm sure he has it all in his head.

Red Bull's first win since 2011, this order is the most champions we've had in a top three or whatever.

But then Christian's always ready with a little stat, isn't he, on the radio afterwards.

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Maybe he's giving him a line to say in the interviews afterwards.

I'm very happy at Red Bull's first win since 2011.

Since we're on Red Bull, let's just talk about their weekend and their pace, because obviously Perez had, let's call it a shocker, on Saturday, it was not a good day for him.

However, I do wonder, with all the madness and the chaos that we've just gone through with the red flags, did that hide the fact that Verstappen was actually still super fast?

I mean, there was a point where he was two seconds, after he overtook Hamilton, by the end of the lap, he was two seconds in front of him.

Yeah, that's the thing, isn't it?

Max didn't have to take big risks at the start.

I think, depending on the context of the season, Max didn't fight Lewis making that move up the inside as hard as he probably would have in the past, because he knew he had the car underneath him to make the way, and you don't need to take those risks, it would be silly to make that pass and, yeah, obviously, opening up two seconds in a sector on the face of it.

Now, again, I'm not sure how quick Lewis was in that second sector as well.

I think maybe, I think Lewis went a bit slower in that sector, so that maybe amplified how big that, but that's still huge.

I mean, the way that Red Bull shifts with the RS over is unreal.

It looks like a Formula 2 car, but it's crazy, and again, you've got to say credit to Red Bull for developing such a package, because you look through the rest of the field, everyone scored a point now as well in the constructors with free races in.

In terms of the rest of the field, I think there is a degree of kind of parity there when you look at the gap between P2 and P10, but Red Bull just done an absolute worldie at the minute.

What's fascinating for me is that we now have, with Max Verstappen with a championship to think about, a complete flip of the Mercedes-Lewis Hamilton seasons from 2014 to 2021.

When Hamilton's been going for the championship, he knows he's got the fastest car, he needs to play it safe, and you've got the upstart, Max Verstappen, challenging him and wanting to get in there, and, you know, it's completely flipped, hasn't it?

So now you've got the upstart, Lewis Hamilton, challenging Max Verstappen, saying, I'm not going to take, you know, no cares given, I'm not going to, I'm not, I'm out there to take all the risks, as Hamilton says, and putting it on, you know, the championship defender Max Verstappen is like, oh, I've got to think about my championship here, you know, and you've got Lewis Hamilton.

It's so weird, it's funny, isn't it, that we've got that.

Hamilton knows he's not going to win the championship this year, not unless something really weird happens.

So he can go in there, be aggressive with Verstappen, and know that Verstappen's probably going to have to give way, which is exactly what happened, 21, 20, 21, something like that.

Yeah.

Also, with the Perez point, are we going to look back on this weekend?

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I mean, he's now 15 points ahead of Perez in the championship, but I know, look, we're three racers down, over 20 race season, over 23 race season, but this was the weekend where Perez after Saudi looks like, you know, I mean, if he's here, if he's here to stay, and he keeps putting in those performances, are you about to say this is the weekend where the wheels came off Checker Perez's championship challenge?

Not quite.

I don't want to say it like that.

I just, I just wonder if this was one of those that we'll look back on in, say, three or four races time.

Was it clarified?

No, it was never clarified.

The team couldn't find anything wrong with the car.

Because I know Karuna had a theory, didn't they, because we've seen that in the past where, you know, you turn in and there's still a degree of throttle on it, so it kind of pushes the car out.

They changed the brakes in Park Fermi, if anything else just to rule that out.

So the brake material, calipers, and I don't think it changed the calipers, but the pads and the discs, because we get a list of everything that's changed in Park Fermi.

So they did change Checker's brakes and some other little things.

But Checker said straight away, it was just, it was like, it's the same issue, it's not fixed.

It's not fixed yet.

But they didn't, they couldn't find.

There certainly didn't, which is why they didn't say publicly, yes, this is what we found after qualifying for Checker.

Which if they haven't found it, that's pretty concerning.

Yeah.

I mean, like...

Could just be one of those.

Well, that's the, I think each race so far, at least one of the drivers has complained of some sort of issue, like I have a, well, particularly during the race in Saudi, I don't know, Max was talking about the gear shifts and that, so again, that's the one kind of, if you're looking for a multi-team championship fight, I think, you know, Red Bull's car and performance is so clear at the minute, but will the reliability bite them?

Again, you can say that about any team.

We had Lance, Mercedes-powered car, Concat in Saudi.

We had Russell, another Mercedes-powered, which Mercedes, that was their thing last year.

You know, it wasn't about ultimate performance.

It was about consistently being up there, consistently finishing, consistently getting good points.

And yeah, I think with Checo, you know, he's blind in start to the season, of course.

I think that it's maintaining that.

You know, Valtteri's talked about this when he was alongside Lewis, you know, winning

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in Australia.

They have a strong start to the season, but having that ability to go toe-to-toe with someone like Lewis Hammond, and Checo's got this same challenge with Max now, to do that week in, week out and maintain a title fight is, it's a lot to ask.

And I hope Checo can do it because there's nothing more I'd love to see than a Checo championship fight.

That would be phenomenal.

He'll win another race or two, but I mean, Max Stappers just said, okay, Saudi, forget about Saudi.

Yeah.

Yeah, even with the koala, not a bear.

Traps.

What I would also say is, despite, you know, and this is great for the rest of the season, despite having a race that for Stappen won, and for Stappen won at a canter, what an amazing weekend we had, and what a competitive field we had, and there's so much of interest that happened across the race.

Well, and this is great.

Until Max stunk to what, four tenths in qualifier and everyone else, the gaps in Q3 from the top five were within 10th and a half, two tenths, whatever, like, again, there is, there's a lot to be, as much as, yes, Max Red Bull looks very ominous, looks very like it's going to be a walk away season potentially.

It depends on how much, you know, Aston Martin, what it's up until June 30th.

They've got all this ATR time, this 100% ATR Aston Martin have got relative to Red Bull.

That's going to come down after then.

Can they capitalize?

Can they make the most of it?

You know, I know Red Bull have been quite vocal in that they're quite worried about how the other teams catching up, so they want to strike while the iron's hot now, and I guess it's in their, like, of course they're going to do that, you know, do we think everyone's going to catch up by the end of the season, maybe, but I mean, they have to just, Red Bull have to act like that, don't they?

Well, yeah.

They have to act like they're going to lose their advantage.

Yeah, but they had some nice upgrades this race, they had a new front wing, new front wing end plates, new rear brake ducts as well, but no, you're right, Matthew, because they were just, you know, it was good to see McLaren get points, because, you know, we were all very worried about them, they were the team most under pressure going into Melbourne.

Sorry, are we going to do Melbourne later on?

No, no, no, please, yeah, yeah.

And, you know, Zach Brown did this big interview with Rachel about what's going wrong, and he made the good points.

Look, Saudi was compromised because of the front wing and front wing debris.

Melbourne, Bahrain was compromised because of Landau with the air, and Oscar with, he

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had an electronics problem, didn't he, it was a DNF?

Yeah, yeah, so, you know, it was, they just needed a clean weekend and McLaren got points.

I thought that was critical for them.

I thought it was good to see Zhou Guangyu get the first points for himself as well, and because Vow3 already has points.

And to back up what you're saying, Tom, all the teams have points now, good points for Hulkenberg, even though Kevin Magnuson already scored good points for Haas.

And so happy, as he says to Yuki, get points as well, because, you know, he's just needs, he needed that.

He should have been, should have been more, should have probably got a point before he got taken off one in Saudi by Kevin Magnuson.

So yeah, with Williams already having the points, yeah, it's quite rare for all of the teams to have scored points by only lap, round three.

Where's that man when you need him?

Oh, well, where are my emails?

So every team, apart from Alfa and Alfa Tower, they've gotten to Q3 in three races.

Oh yeah, wow.

It's only those two teams who haven't had a presence from at least one driver in Q3.

So yeah, again, that speaks to somewhat the, and again, yes, Red Bull are clear, but when you look at the rest of the field, I feel like there has been some degree of convergence.

And look, for me, if we're going to talk, you know, regulations, it was always going to be a big ask for after one season for the whole field to converge.

I think it was always going to be something you have to wait two seasons, you know, the historical, you've got all the historical kind of personnel talent, as well as the money that Red Bull, Ferrari, Mercedes, all the big teams had relative to the bottom teams.

It's going to take time.

The budget cap's not going to, you know, change that overnight.

It's still giving a degree of merit to these teams.

I think, you know, Haas, for example, I think their pace is really good.

Look at Gazzley's pace in the race.

He was right up there with, you know, Carlos and Lance, and it wasn't a mile off at all.

And then those pace was pretty good.

So I think your point on McLaren Ted, it's like that backer upgrade.

Yeah, that's the next race, of course.

I tell you who will be happy about this weird sort of early term, half term, four weeks.

Spring break.

Spring break.

Yeah.

Yes, spring break.

And then the next team, because it was some thought that both those cars were write offs.

The significant damage to the chassis.

That is an expensive weekend.

It was very expect to have two cars.

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And if we had a back to back race, Alpine would have been really up against it.

Really?

Really?

I mean, we never got close enough to have a look.

Yeah.

But it was remarked to me by a couple of other teams that they think that might have been two Alpine write offs.

And just, just explain against the wall there.

How many spare parts and cars these teams have?

Well, they would have said that they'd have, for the first couple of races, they would have chassis one and chassis two.

They'd probably have chassis zero, which would have been the crash test chassis.

Or maybe they name it differently, is one, two, and three.

So they would have had three chassis, because one, you have to do the crash test on to your race.

And one of those would have been the test car as well.

And they would have been busy at this point, building up chassis number four or three, depending on how you number them.

And then, so now, the Alpine will have to get that new chassis in, definitely, and then probably repair, hope that either Gasly's or Ocon's isn't damaged beyond a sort of good chassis repair.

And how long, how long does it take to build that, to build a chassis, as it were?

About a month.

Really?

Wow.

Isn't it about half a million dollars?

I've seen that number checked around.

Oh, yeah.

No, you've got to put everything together.

Yeah.

In amongst all of the, the tub, you've got to put all the metal bits for all the fixings and everything like that.

I mean, they would have, they would have been in production because they'd know they would have needed another tub, spare tub, but so they'll need the four weeks, definitely.

One team that had a really good weekend was Mercedes.

And I think aside from the Russell Fire that happened, you know, he was running really, really well, was going to have a good race.

Hamilton was also leading the Grand Prix.

And then the qualifying pace, P2 Russell, P3 Hamilton, got a tweet here that says, do you think Mercedes problems are a little overstated, or is their car really that unpredictable?

One week they want to bin the concept, next week they say they could have won the race.

Could they, could they have won the race?

Well, if a staff member dropped out, they could have won the race.

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Yeah.

Yeah.

True.

And they can now.

Yeah.

I mean, they're still six tenths behind Red Bull.

Yeah.

That's what I mean.

I think this is a product of Mercedes and Mercedes being this, you know, eight constructive championships on the trot, you know, they're not interested in being third or second, you know, being second, yeah, in the moment, it's a win because of relative where they were looking at the start of the season, but if they're not fighting, if they're not on par with Red Bull, they're not going to be satisfied, so they're going to be unhappy with the car.

And it doesn't, you know, no one reflects in, in, in the history books, no one looks back who finished second and third.

It's not going to make a massive difference to a team like Mercedes that, that they're conditioned to win.

And if they're not winning, then they're not going to be happy.

So I don't, I don't think it's them personally.

I don't think it's them blowing their problems out of proportion because they're still, you know, over half a second behind Red Bull, that is a problem.

And then look, I've just got my notes from, from qualifying where George said on the radio, hang on, I thought we were one second off the plan.

And that's, that was why I went to Toto and the first question with Toto was a rather cheeky.

Oh, she's not such a bad car, then is she?

Toto was like, I put myself in the, in the, I have this romantic image that somewhere in Mercedes, there's the person who's in charge of W14 original concept, who's basically been whacked around the head with a wet fish by everybody else saying, I told you the concept was bad.

We're going to go to a Red Bull RV 19.

Why did you make us do this?

And that person in Australia was saying, excuse me, not bad, not such a bad car.

It's relative because they're still up in the top, you know, it's relative.

McLaren would kill for that car right now.

That's what I mean.

Yeah.

It's relative to expectations.

It's not bad by their standards, but it's still not, it's obviously not a bad car.

It's just, is it the right, has it got the ceiling?

Indeed.

And also because they have this problem with the rear of the car, with rear grip, and Hamilton

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says he's not happy with the rear of the car, the characteristics of Melbourne penalize that much less than Bahrain or Saudi.

And did you see Corinne's piece at the sky pad where he did the thing about the seating position and where they are very good explains it, you know, that's, that's been something they need to fix.

And as soon as they can get the rear of the car sorted out, I mean, when they go to Spain or where else you need a strong rear of the car, yeah, what's the next race in Baku ish, then it might be a bit further back just explain what you mean by strong rear of the car.

So when you turn in, that you're going to actually have some kind of load on the back and it's not going to get away from you, you'll constantly be having going in there.

So Lewis isn't like Max where he similar, but Max can turn in and then can judge it so perfectly on the throttle and on the steering wheel and everything else.

Even if the back does step out a little bit, he can go off and power through and it's very quick.

Czecho likes a bit more understeer maybe so the story goes, Lewis is a bit more precise in George as well with that car and that Mercedes has worse rear grip than the Red Bull. So Red Bull is great.

And as long as, as well as the super duper DRS, which gives Red Bull all of their, their pace at the moment, Lewis looks at that and says that car has got so much downforce that we just don't, the Mercedes doesn't.

But it was penalized less at Melbourne than it will be.

Do you think the seating position thing is an example of, you know, when Lewis has said, you know, he didn't necessarily feel like the team listened to as much of his input as he'd have liked and something like it, because, you know, a driver is not an aerodynamicist.

There's going to be limits to the input a driver can meaningfully have, but they are the one driving the car and it feels like the seating position relative to the front axle is something that, yeah, like a driver's feel, because Lewis has complained particularly about, you know, he feels like he's too far forward.

Do you think that's one of those metrics where a driver's input needs to be considered more?

Because then, you know, if Lewis is talking about the underfloor, I doubt his input is going to, you know, you know what I mean?

Yeah, I'm not sure because I did ask, do you remember we did development corner at the beginning in testing and our special guest for that was Mike Elliott.

And the piece didn't go quite as well as I'd hoped because I had all these ideas about Mercedes and then I put them to Mike and he said, no, basically, one of them was I said, I said, have you moved the cockpit forward because there's something online, I can't remember what it was.

Yeah, I remember seeing that.

So the cockpits move forward.

I said, have you moved the cockpit forward?

He said, no.

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I said, well, bang goes that theory then.

And so I'm all a bit confused, I think we need to, I don't know, so answer your question.

I don't know, I don't know whether that's something Lewis can go and say, see, I told you we were too far and they said, well, you know, more forward than you were before.

So yeah, needs to be, that will come out in the fullness of time.

Yeah.

And just a word on George outqualifying Lewis in every race this season.

The gaps haven't been that big though.

I think you look at, you look three nil when you think, oh, wow, but I think it's the, the gap.

I mean, I know Hülkenberg's quite significantly outqualified Magnussen in terms of the actual deltas.

So I don't think that, I mean, they are, you look last season they were, there was nothing in it between them in qualifying.

I don't read too much into that.

I don't think Lewis does either, like I, if the gap was significant, if it was, you know, three, four, five cents, okay, that's a different conversation, but I think Mercedes have got two drivers who are very similar level.

And because they're not fighting at the front for a championship, I think all is, all is well.

If they were fighting for a championship, then that might be a bit different.

Yes, but Tom, it's very reserved of you.

You're not biting on Matthew's question.

He's basically asking you, wanting you to say that George Russell is a quicker driver than Lewis Hamilton.

He wants you to say that, but you're not going to say it.

I'm not going to say it.

You're not going to say it.

I'm not going to say it.

I mean, that's what you're saying.

Is George Russell quicker driver than Lewis Hamilton in qualifying, which is when you measure these things?

Yeah.

And last year, I think we, it was widely accepted that Lewis did a lot of the hard work on the car.

There were lots of many reasons.

Yeah.

There were many reasons why Lewis couldn't say the laps in that George could.

This year, is that still the case?

We don't know.

Maybe he is.

I mean, when George Russell is a faster driver than Lewis Hamilton, Matthew, what do you think?

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I think on the basis of this year and the first three races, it's in Algyville that George is, over one was quicker in qualifying.
But there are lots of reasons to explain that.
When the dealt was that little, I don't think that's, that's meaningful enough.
And George doesn't feel this handling imbalance that Lewis does or says that it doesn't affect him as much.
Yeah.
Because different brands have different styles.
Yeah.
He sounds a lot happier in the car.
Yeah.
Yeah.
Because they're not going to have identical drivings.
Every driver's got a slightly different approach.
Do you square off corners more?
Do you carry more speed for a used smoothe or whatever?
But the fact that they're so close, I think that's the, that's, that's the important thing.
They're so close.
And I think George has really stepped up into that team.
Which is why.
He's done a fantastic job.
Which is why we really, really want to see Mercedes challenging for the championship with Red Bull.
Because then we can get into championship challenging George Russell.
Yeah.
Again, championship challenging Lewis Hamilton.
Yeah.
Because we've got something to go for because, you know, I, I don't know this for sure, but I imagine if I was Lewis Hamilton and I wasn't in for the championship, I've won so many.
I'm like, well, I'm not going for the championship, you know, if George beats me, I don't really care.
And you could reflect on 2022 and say, George did beat him in the points and he said, well, I wasn't in the championship.
I don't care whether I'm third or fourth or fifth, if I'm not number one, that's what I want to see.
I want to see championship challenging Lewis Hamilton against championship.
To get the absolute best out of Lewis, he has to be the best out of Lewis.
Right, well, we've seen in the past that Lewis takes a step up in his championship.
Yeah.
I've got a question there Ted.
Like when, when you look at points, you look at points differences between teammates and they never tell the full story, like the context is so important.
And that's why it's, you know, when you look at seasons past, you then, over time, you

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forget, oh, this driver DNF door, there was, there was bad luck, someone got taken out. You know, within the paddock, is there that same emphasis that I think the broader fan base, because, you know, as the broader fan base, we, we, you know, working jobs, you don't, you can't fully consume F1, you're doing as much as you can, but I feel like points can be often used to like, as a baton to hit someone with or that Nico Alkenberg never get in a podium.

That's often like, he's often hit with that.

And I think I'm fairly, because when you look through the context of when he got close, yeah, some instances were his fault, some weren't.

Some were just factors completely outside of your control.

So it's when you're actually looking at driver performance, points don't tell the full story.

And I feel like people in the paddock, I would have thought, understand that a bit more.

Yeah, yeah, they do.

And, and people tend to have better memories, refreshed more often than from the drivers themselves to say, Oh, I remember my DNF and Melbourne with the, when the engine went, you know, and that's, that was leading the race.

That's lost George.

Yeah.

Okay.

You know, red flag went, went against him, but he would have scored multiple points, wouldn't he?

One level points with science, I think.

And Lance didn't score in Saudi.

And he was on for a possible P4, maybe there.

And again, all that, these will be forgotten.

These you see, you know, you go on Wikipedia and you look at the results and you see like DNF.

But like, what's the context of that?

Was it there for, did they get taken out?

We forget that over time.

So.

You mean you go on the skysports.com slash F1 website and you see the, and you see the skysports, yeah, very good.

Well, I think that's about what we've got time for.

Good.

Yeah.

It's a shame.

I think we've done everyone.

I think we've done everybody.

Did red, did red enjoy the, the podcast?

Did you enjoy the podcast there, mate?

How about you?

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I'm not going to do it.

I'm straight.

I've already done one today.

Have you?

Okay.

I think red.

That for me, red and his little Joey is like, red room.

Yeah.

It's like, I don't know.

It's like Christian Horner and Max Verstappen.

He just made sure that nothing was going to detract them from winning in Melbourne.

It was as safe as houses, wasn't it?

Yes.

No, it wasn't.

But they avoided all the traps.

Also.

And they plan to glad we've got through without talking about Alex's crashed it because

Alex is my favorite and Alex Alvin's your favorite.

Yeah.

I was so guided.

I know.

I was so guided because William's best qualifying performance for many a year PA and I think he, I think he went wide corner before didn't he?

And they said he got a temperature spike and that's the racing driver excuse if I buy that one or not.

I'm going to buy it.

I'm going to take it.

Got it.

But yeah, all in all, I think though, Williams, it's a good car.

Yeah.

It's not, it's not as nowhere near as off the pace as it has been in recent years.

So yeah.

Happy.

Yeah.

Before we go, plans for the spring break?

Well, you've got to do a podcast every Tuesday.

Every Tuesday.

Yes.

We've got some exciting guests though.

Have you coming on?

Yeah.

Do you want a hat?

Under red hat.

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You don't want to tease the listeners?

Unconfirmed.

Okay.

Just at this stage.

Exciting, yet unconfirmed.

But as soon as they're confirmed, we'll let you know.

Okay.

I may or may not have a shoot with George Russell that I'm very excited about, but I'm not going to tell you what that shoot is.

This is great.

This is incredibly cryptic from all of us.

I think I have a shoot with George Russell in the break, which I am beside myself with it.

I think I know what you're talking about.

Okay.

Well, is this a good opportunity from like a broadcasting point of view to get shoots in for more evergreen content, because what we've got five races in six weeks, like you're not going to have any, because it's just going to be race by race by race.

So this is just hard to get the good stuff in.

Yeah.

Yeah.

So I'll tell you about it probably at Silverstone when I think the piece is going out.

So to answer your question, Tomo, yes, we're giving him all the telly secrets today, aren't we?

Cash him in.

Yeah.

Cash him in.

Lovely studio.

Very good.

Well, thank you very much.

Thank you, Ted.

Thank you, Tomo.

Appreciate your time.

Yeah.

I was going to say one thing.

If you are listening on Spotify or Apple, please, if you can, leave us a review.

And there's been some very nice reviews, Ted, for your pot book.

Oh, right.

Yes.

The pot book.

Some very nice reviews.

Yes.

That's not going to happen every Thursday, because I won't be able to tell you anything

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that I've done.

When you're at a race.

No, when I'm at a race.

Yeah.

The idea behind that is briefly to essentially give you some sound effects of local flora fauna and public transportation.

That's the idea behind it.

So in Bahrain, we had the hotel pool and the singer doing some lovely cover versions of I think it was Genesis songs.

And we had the trams in Melbourne and the chaffinches and the cookaburras in the trees.

And you have no idea how many times I had to try and record that little Ted's pot book on the Thursday, waiting for the perfect tram to trundle by with a ding, ding, ding.

They've got this electronic bell, which sounds like an old tram bell.

It's not an old tram.

I think you passed a proper bell.

And I must have started that about 50 times, waiting for the perfect.

In the end.

Often in TV, we're trying to avoid the background noise.

You're very much wanting the background noise.

Yeah.

So that's every Thursday of a race weekend, where we give you some of the little tidbits, little golden nuggets from the paddock on a Thursday and just set your weekend up ready. Because something you realise when you're not at a race is that the Thursday and the Friday, people are still, you know, still got jobs to do, still got work to go to.

Absolutely.

And for the, a lot of people, it begins on a, on a Saturday with FP3, but we've already had Thursday press conferences and the driver interviews and anything else that's around the place.

And then you have Friday.

So that's just to give a little taster on a Thursday and a Friday.

The pod book.

The pod book.

Very good.

Well, we will be back next Tuesday.

We're going to try next Tuesday's episode.

Look back on the first three races, who's got the most work to do over the spring break.

So I hope you can join us then, but bye from Red and Ted and Tomo and Brunner.

Brunner.

Bye for now.