

[Transcript] Sky Sports F1 Podcast / Does Ferrari's epic battle in Monza cause Vasseur problems? | Rosberg: He needs to manage them

Hello, all. Very warm welcome to this week's episode of the Sky Sports F1 podcast with me, Matt Baker.

I hope you are well and enjoyed a brilliant Italian Grand Prix to help me break that down and look into the big stories.

I'm joined by Formula One World Champion Nico Rosberg, an F1 content creator, Aldous.

Hello to you both, Nico. I'll start with you. How was your weekend in Monza?

Yeah, hi to both of you and hi to everybody who's listening. It was very cool.

I mean, it's always a highlight to be in Monza, you know, the tifosi, the history of the track, the track itself.

It's always a big challenge for the drivers and the race was so exciting. I mean, it was amazing fun to watch.

So, all in all, Ferrari on pole, that was perfect, giving Max first up in the challenge. I think it was a great weekend.

Aldous, what about you? How was your weekend? Did you enjoy the race?

Oh, it was fantastic. I think, despite the Red Bull domination, we kind of knew what was coming, I think, on Sunday,

especially with Ferrari being a little bit better in qualifying, but Monza is always such a special event with the fans and just the atmosphere.

You can't help not root for Ferrari when you get to Monza, but, yeah, I think actually the last two races,

especially have been, I think, incredible, you know, with Zandvoort, kind of the mixed conditions in Monza.

We did get a bit of a battle for the lead, which is always amazing. Loads of great battles as well.

So, yeah, definitely lots to talk about, which is great. Nice to have Formula One back, definitely.

Definitely. Yeah, we've had two cracking races, haven't we, since the summer break?

So, 10 wins in a row for Max, but perhaps somewhat overshadowed by the incredible Ferrari performance in front of the tifosi.

So, we'll get into all of that, but before we do, I want to do our one-word race reviews.

Now, Nico, I'm nervous about doing this this week, because last time we did this, you ridiculed me for having a rubbish word.

So, I'm still going to go last, but I'm going to come to you first.

What's your one-word race review for the Italian Grand Prix?

I've put you on the spot.

Do we have an Italian word that is understandable by English people for, like, thrilling?

Let's go for thrilling.

Yeah, perfect, perfect. And why have you picked thrilling? Just because of all the overtaking?

The atmosphere from the fans, and then the battles on track. So many battles on track.

Yeah, incredible. What about you, all this?

I think I'm going to have to go with the history, just because it's difficult to appreciate it in the moment in terms of what Red Bull and Max have done.

You know, 10 wins straight, beating that record that was set by Sebastian Vettel, and quite poetic as well.

Obviously, you know, said being a Red Bull, obviously now surpassed by Max.

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But yeah, my word is history because, you know, always, regardless of what happens in the future, you know, this will be the weekend where Max broke the record.
And it still feels surreal because to do something like that is just crazy.
But the reliability and the speed and the consistency that he's had, yeah, just 10 wins straight, it just seems crazy.
So yeah, history is my one.
I think your word is nicer than my one.
Because also the track is so historic and everything.
It was a layered word. I had lots in it.
OK, right, drumroll then.
Hopefully, Niko, you're impressed with this.
Do you also have the possibility to skip it if you want, Matt?
No, no, no, don't give him that out.
We can also move on.
Oh, God, I'm nervous.
I've gone for competitive, which it still seems underwhelming.
I feel there should be more wordplay.
But I thought it was competitive throughout the weekend, which I don't think is something we've said all season or for a lot of this season in Formula One.
I thought competitive between Carlos and Max for the first 15 laps, but also competitive throughout the field.
And I want to give a special mention to Alex Albon in the Williams.
Because I think when after Quali, we heard both McLaren drivers say, you know, oh, we're not going to be able to overtake the Williams of Alex in the straights.
And they were right.
It was very, very competitive in that midfield and battles everywhere.
So yeah, competitive.
Niko, I think you're going to give me like a five out of ten or something for that.
At first I was like, OK, no, this doesn't work.
But now you explained it well.
And I think it was a nice word as well.
OK, thank you very much.
Thank you.
All right, let's let's start by talking about Ferrari, because I think Ferrari with a big story yesterday, despite the records for Max.
Niko, could they have asked for a better weekend in the context of this season in the context of the domination by Red Bull?
Could they have asked for a better weekend?
Well, I don't know.
I mean, of course, in the context of the season, they would probably have taken a fight with Red Bull in the third place and the fourth place at Monza.
But then once you get into the weekend and you're seeing their speed and they get pole,

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probably they would have wanted a little bit more than to be beaten by both Red Bulls, you know, coming through and all of them overtaking them.

So but in general, yes, I think they should be quite pleased with the weekend that they had.

Aldous, do you think it was the best Ferrari performance of the year so far?

I think so, because I think Baku was quite close.

Obviously Leclerc was on pole there, but Sainz was kind of nowhere that weekend relative to Leclerc.

This was this was a strong weekend by the entire team.

I think Charles was a little bit on the back foot.

He went a little bit wrong on setup.

He said, but I think they are going to leave happy in the context of the season.

I mean, again, Max passed them on lap 15.

I was honestly, I was surprised it even took that long.

I think Max was kind of biding his time and I think GP kind of had to hold him back a little bit to be honest at one point.

But yeah, I think again, they have to be happy.

But it's frustrating is like Nico said, when you get pole position, when you get, you know, especially when you have such a quick car on that track, you you want to believe that the win is there.

And especially for Ferrari at Monza.

So yeah, I think there will be a small part of them that will be disappointed.

They almost threw it away actually with some really both amazing and also scary battling by both of the drivers at the end of the race.

But I think again, context of the season and where they are moving into third in the championship as well,

I think they're going to leave the weekend quite happy if not a little bit disappointed because the win, you know,

they always would have dreamt of that, especially after Saturday.

Nico, what about that battle between Carlos and Charles at the end there?

I mean, I saw footage of Charles going up to Fred Versailles in the paddock and checking his pulse after the race because it must have been

nervy for the Ferrari pit wall.

But do you think it was the right decision to allow them to race and to go as hard as they did in those final few laps?

Right decision.

I mean, that's a difficult question.

For us fans, obviously, yes.

For us fans, obviously, yes, probably for the Ferrari team.

Not sure.

I mean, Toto might have said, you know, just hold position now.

Because are they in a close championship fight in the constructors?

Also, I think they are no against.

So Ferrari at the moment on 228 and then Mercedes on 273.

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So, you know, 50-40 points in it, plenty to go.

So it's a close fight.

And they just overtook after Martin.

So from that point of view, you might have said you might have said hold position because it's such important points today in the attempt to still try and beat Mercedes.

But anyways, for us, it was great.

But it was so close to crashing.

I actually saw the last one with a big lock up from Charles.

Wow.

That is so close to crashing.

So I was telling Fred Rasser after the race that I really highly recommend that he like asked both drivers to sit down with him because he has the most authority.

You know, that it's not the team manager or something, but that it's really the boss.

And really goes perhaps even first with one, then with the other and then combined.

Because then you really get the open story from one the other.

Because it's so important to be proactive.

Because if one driver or the other, in this case, it would most to be Charles has a bad feeling here.

You can quickly spiral that he will think that a next race.

Hey, I'm not going to yield next time or I'm going to do the same next time.

I'm going to get payback.

So he definitely has to practically manage that and try and be supportive and neutral.

And so he said he was going to do that today.

It would be nice to be in that room, but not possible.

Be a fly on the wall in that room.

Yeah, be incredible.

Nico, what's it like?

I mean, I thought from the onboard footage, it looked so close.

You know, when you're going at 200 miles an hour down those straights, wheel to wheel with your teammate.

What is that like?

Take us inside the cockpit.

No, it is really, really nail biting in the car as well.

Because imagine crashing out your Ferrari teammate at Monza.

That would have been like, whoa, and it was so close.

Oh my goodness.

So it's proper nerve wrecking in the car as well.

But at the same time, you're a racer and you don't want your teammate to end up the race in front of you at Monza when you're quicker.

So yeah.

Yeah.

What if all this had gone the other way?

What if they had have crashed out?

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Because I think we'd be doing a whole different podcast today, wouldn't we, about how Fred Viserra has lost control of the drivers, the drivers are leading the Ferrari team. I mean, to be honest, they almost did. For me, it wasn't necessarily to turn one. It was with about two or three laps to go into turn four. You know, Carlos Sainz out-braked himself and overcooked the corner and almost took Leclerc with him. I thought that was a very kind of close call with both of those two. Maybe even over the line by Sainz a little bit because he didn't even make the corner. But I think Charles was kind of ready for that. So it was so close to being a disaster. And again, we talk about the pressure on Ferrari. If that had happened at Monza, they'd be having a very different debrief right now in Maranello. But again, that's the responsibility of the drivers. They have two very high class drivers. I think for Carlos Sainz, he was working so hard at the beginning of the race to kind of stay ahead of Max that he wanted that podium. He was just going to hang on to it, you know, for anything. But Leclerc did find that pace. But I think that, again, it's down to the drivers. That is your responsibility. And in the end, you know, they were kind of both, you know, really happy Leclerc. I was actually surprised, you know, he was loving the battle after the race and, you know, talking up about their great relationship. But I guarantee if they crashed, he wouldn't be talking about their great relationship. And I mean, this is actually, I want to know from, from Nico's side, when you did have those battles with Lewis, what was it like, you know, after the race in the debriefing? Was there any conversation about, you know, things going over the line with teammates? Well, I also, I remember myself in Bahrain, I then sat on the, I sat after the race. Wow, that was the most fun I've ever had in a racing car. But actually the truth that was the most far from the truth possible, because the truth was I was, I was seriously angry and seriously hurt from finishing second to Lewis. And it was zero fun. So, because we always had, we have to, as race drivers, have to be a bit of Hollywood, you know, to, you can't always say the truth, obviously, because it's going to backfire otherwise. And so that's why I was watching Charles. He was just, he just got beaten by his teammate, who also ran him off the track once in the chicane where he, where Carlos locked up and Charles had to do avoiding action and had to go straight as well. And then Charles is sitting there and saying, yeah, that was super fun, happy days, having a beer with Carlos.

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And I was looking, I was like, is this now genuine or is he pulling a Nico, you know, and saying the complete opposite of what he's feeling.

But I think it was pretty genuine.

And in which case I was thinking, it's a little bit too, seems a little bit too nice guy somehow.

Because he already, on the strategy already, he lost out the day before by allowing the team to give Carlos a slipstream twice in the end of qualifying, rather than it being split.

You know, it should have been one person, one first run, the other person, the second run.

And yet he allowed Carlos to have double slipstream in the qualifying already.

So I'm not sure, maybe either he's a super, maybe he's just a super nice guy, but that would be a little bit too nice, I find.

I think it's actually all about pressure really quickly in terms of Ferrari.

They're trying to, especially after the last, I don't know, four or five years, even when they were battling for championships, I think everyone in that team is just trying to do their best to kind of lower the pressure on every single level,

whether that's, you know, any tension in the drivers that squashed straight away, any kind of talk about Ferrari struggling with any kind of crisis.

You know, Fred Vassar is very quickly to kind of, you know, support the team.

So I think it's just that, that kind of, that, yeah, they're trying to kind of lower the pressure as much as they can, because at Monza, there's enough of it already on Ferrari.

There certainly is, yeah, understatement maybe, there seems all the pressure.

Speaking of pressure, I thought it was interesting what Fred Vassar was saying across the weekend.

He came into the weekend saying he was just going to treat it as any other normal weekend.

You know, it doesn't matter that it's Monza.

I think he very quickly realized that that's impossible to do as a Ferrari team principal.

Nico, do you think this was a big weekend for Fred Vassar in terms of getting the Tafosi on side, giving them something to cheer about this season?

Do you think this is almost where perhaps the Tafosi maybe like really sort of fell, not fell in love with Fred Vassar, but became more of a fan of him and his methods?

Probably yes, I think he's building his reputation, yeah.

But it's the ultimate challenge, isn't it, to be in his position, my goodness, to rebuild the Ferrari team with that pressure that's on his shoulders.

It's really the biggest challenge there is, so I think he's doing well so far, yeah.

But a big step to get the Tafosi on his side, a big step I think should be to get the Italian learned, so you can speak to them in Italian.

And I challenged him on the Sky Sports microphone, and all you could say was breakfast, so he still has some way to go.

Probably starting with the most important words first.

He's taking Italian lessons, you know, so.

Maybe he needs you, Nico, to give him some Italian lessons.

Because how weird is that? I mean, for a French guy to be speaking English to Italian guys and leading the team, that is a bit weird.

But on that, I mean, do you think that's a genuine issue?

Do you think that's a real problem that he has to sort out quick if he's going to get the Tafosi on

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side?

I think so, yes. I think it would be of high importance to be able to speak Italian from time to time. Goodness, that's a lot of pressure to also learn a language and, you know, take Ferrari back to the top of Formula One.

Aldous, how do you rate Fred Versailles' time in the job so far?

You know, obviously, we're sort of nearing two-thirds of the way through the season.

What would you give him out of ten?

You know, that's actually a really difficult question, because it's still very early.

So much about what's happening this year is based off last year, because of how late Bernardo left the team.

I think he's done a good job so far, but again, Ferrari, you know, Ferrari wants to win.

Even he said, I think after the race, yeah, third is great, but they're not looking for third as a result. They're looking to win. So I think he's done a good job so far.

I definitely think, you know, even on the language front, you have to kind of assimilate to the culture of Ferrari,

because so much, you know, a lot of teams are very multicultural, but Ferrari is a team where everyone's Italian, you know, especially there.

So I think the language thing is definitely important.

I'm actually surprised he doesn't speak kind of more Italian yet.

In terms of how, you know, if you, you know, I think you said out of ten, I'd give him, you know, a six out of ten so far,

because he's done a good job, but nothing more, you know, this team is still struggling.

Let's not forget this result is great.

And I think a lot of people are going to forget what happened last, you know, the previous race in Zandvoort,

which was a horrible weekend for them.

You know, I think what Carlos Sainz did to get to sixth in Zandvoort was actually a really good result.

So it's an up and down, it's an up and down kind of season for them there.

They've been strong on the tracks where the car kind of suits the tracks like, again, Baku and Monza,

but how they're going to get in Singapore, you know, that's, that's a completely different type of track.

So I think Fred Vassers done a good job to kind of build a hopefully a better environment after, after Bernardo and kind of restart things,

but it's too early to say that he's a massive success or anything like that.

He needs two, three years in the job, I think.

But hang on, you called Fred Vassers, you gave him a six out of ten?

A six out of ten so far, yeah.

But that's not fair. What do you expect him to do in a couple of months?

Turn the whole Ferrari team from a P56 to dominating or what?

Like, I don't know.

At the same time.

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He's done.

They've definitely dropped results. I think they've definitely underdelivered on certain weekends.

And that's why I think for him, it's, I get what you mean in terms of what do I expect.

I'm not saying he should be winning the championship, but I think also with some of the reliability and some of the things that always handle the media,

I think there's just a little bit more because I'm seeing more of the excuses, you know, like there was last year,

there needs to be a bit more accountability. So, I mean, what would you rate him out of ten?

Do you think he's done a perfect job?

Well, at least an eight. I mean, he's only had a couple of months.

What can one expect?

And from what I see, I think he's really making good progress within the team and is establishing himself.

And I would give him an eight out of ten, yeah.

I think next year is the big one, though.

Next year is the big one. He's had an entire season.

Next year, we'll see what the car is like, but that's when he'll really have the influence on the team.

So, I think next year is the really big one to judge him, in my opinion.

Of course, we've only had a couple of months. He can't do miracles.

Although James Vowles at Williams has done miracles.

So, there you go.

So, maybe I'm going to tend more towards you again now, Aldous, for Fred Vassa.

No, but because James Vowles at Williams has been amazing.

So, what he's done is he's already like reorganized the whole communication within the team, within Williams.

Because the arrow was not really communicating well with the simulation, with the chassis construction side and things like that.

And he's just reorganized the communication and already that, apparently, has really had a big impact in their progress.

So, that's been lovely to see.

And brought in Pat Fry as well from Alpine.

So, you talk about, yeah, Fred Vassa has also only had kind of a similar time, but when you look at Vowles, he's brought key people from Alpine.

I think the way, the culture. Alex Alban has just been even better this year.

So, I do think a team principle, you know, even a short time can still have a big effect.

So, how much do you rate, what rating do you give James Vowles?

Oh, James Vowles, I mean, 9 out of 10.

I've got to leave a bit of room for perfection, but 9 out of 10 for the way he's kind of just the environment around Williams.

It's so great to see them. I think what he's done to build for the future, he's got a big decision to make with Logan Sargent,

which I think is also going to affect his future as well.

So, I'm looking forward to seeing what he does with Logan.

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Okay, I'll give him a 10 out of 10. I didn't see any, I don't see anything he could have done better. I'm a hard task master, clearly.

Rate the team principles so far for the season.

Fascinating, fascinating. Just to bring it back on to Ferrari.

I think, and I'm going to refer actually to a tweet you did all this over the weekend, that this potentially was quite a big weekend for Ferrari in that they now leapfrog Aston Martin in the Constructors' championship.

So, they're now on 228 points, Aston are behind on 217.

And it perhaps points to the importance of having two drivers who can consistently bring in points.

I'm going to tell you what each driver has got between the two.

So, Carlos is on 117, Charles on 111.

Alonso, though, is on 170 compared to Stroll on 47.

So, Nico, what do you think or how important is it to have two drivers getting points week in week out?

No, of course, it's fundamental.

And I'm not really sure what's happened to Lance Stroll there, because he's a very decent driver.

And he showed in the beginning of the season how he can stay close to Fernando.

When Fernando was third, Lance was fifth or sixth.

So, I'm not really sure what's happened to him there, but he's really in a difficult phase now.

And I think long-term for Aston, they can't really allow themselves to have one driver who's that far off.

So, either Lance gets back to where he can be and where he should be, or they're going to have to start thinking about changing things around there with the second driver. Because also, Fernando needs to be pushed.

The setup work is much better when there's two drivers who are on it.

It has a whole different dynamic, so it's very important to have two drivers who are very quick.

Can you see, Nico, a situation where, and obviously we know Lawrence Stroll, Lance's dad, does own the team? So, can you ever see a situation where Lawrence is outing his own son from the team?

It's very impossible for me to judge.

Probably it would more be Lance saying, hey, you know what, I think I should go and do something else or whatever,

if he continues to struggle the way he is at the moment.

It's a really difficult situation to judge from the outside.

I think the easiest would be if Lance somehow finds a way back to where he has been and where he can be,

which is not too far from Fernando.

Yeah, I listened to a lot of his interviews this weekend. He was really despondent.

I mean, he obviously had the FP1 session where Felipe was in the car, then had a mechanical issue in FP2, qualified 20th and finished P16.

I mean, Aldous, you're shaking your head at the very mention of Lance.

What have you made of his performance so far?

I guess in that race, but also across the season.

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I think this weekend, I totally understand him missing FP1 and FP2, but he shouldn't have been qualifying last. He's a really experienced Formula One driver. How many years have he been in Formula One? Maybe eight years or something? He's driven around Monza millions of times. He scored a podium start on the front row. He knows this track very well. He knows the car very well. Even with one practice session, just FP3, he should not have been qualifying last in that car. Especially when your teammate is getting into Q3. I'm probably not as high on Lance as perhaps Nico is at the beginning of the season. The gap to Alonso was still quite big. I know he was recovering from an injury, of course, but there's just something strange about the dynamic of that team, because for a long time, they've had seven podiums and now they've fallen behind. They've had more podiums than Ferrari and now they've fallen behind them in the constructors. They should be second with two good drivers. They still should be second in the constructors because of their amazing start with Fernando. What was it? Six podiums in five races or something? It's a weird dynamic because Nico says that perhaps it would be Lance who was coming and saying, maybe it's time for me to do something else, but that shouldn't be the case. Your boss should tell you you're not doing good enough and you need to improve. Otherwise, you're going to be out. That's Formula One. Unless you're obviously a world champion and you can say, I'm leaving the sport now like Nico did. He has that luxury. He's learning Lance should because he's not doing a good enough job. But again, who's going to make that decision? Who is going to walk into the boss's office and say, Lawrence, I know you own the team. I know that you've put so much into it and we do have a bright future, but your sign is now the limiting factor at this team because we should be second in the constructors with two drivers. I think the problem with Lance is that he is a good driver. Now, don't get me wrong, I think he deserves to be in Formula One. I think he was in an Alfa Romeo or a house or something. I think that's where his level has been. When he was given a car that was the second best car or the third best car in the grid, he wasn't able to raise his game. Going into those kind of cars asks you a very different type of questions when there's podiums on the table and he just hasn't been able to deliver at that level. I think that's the problem. He is the limiting factor at the moment at Aston Martin and how long is this going to continue until someone says, enough is enough. I don't know who that person is. No, but the problem is it's not from the one here. It's a father-son relationship also. That's the challenge. That's what matters here eventually.

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It's a very difficult one.

If Aston was second in the constructors, I think that's 30 million or so more in revenues from the TV money share.

Something like that number, if I had to guess now.

From second to fourth place in the constructors championship.

There's a lot of money at stake there as well.

It's an expensive business having a Formula One team, but then also having your son in it and not performing.

Actually, I think it was an incredible investment in hindsight from Lawrence Stroll in terms of timing because he buys a team where the teams were still very cheap and then the budget cap comes in and teams valuations multiply by almost 10 probably and suddenly almost all teams on the grid are profitable teams.

Which is an incredible change in F1 for F1.

Some of the top teams, the amount of money they're making is incredible.

Also, just quickly, what Lawrence did to buy Aston Martin, the car brand as well and connect that with the car side and the racing side.

There's a lot of exciting things going on at Aston Martin, just the brand and also with the Formula One team as well.

Again, there's bigger results on the track for them to have.

I know you said this is a father-son thing, but business has to...

This is Formula One, this is not a father-son play thing.

At what point does the business click into Lawrence's head and say,

I'm leaving so much money on the table because our drivers aren't good enough?

How long can this continue? That's all I'm thinking at the moment.

Time will tell. Certainly time will tell.

Let's move on to talk about Red Bull in the sense of now it's 10 wins in a row for Max Verstappen, which is just an incredible achievement.

Red Bull have won 24 out of the last 25 races, incredible numbers.

I think it's also a case of it doesn't necessarily look like that's going to change over the next few races. It looks like that number could creep up to 11, 12, 13.

Who knows after that?

I've got a tweet here that says,

which circuit is the most likely one where Ferrari and Co could beat Red Bull?

Nico, where do you think Red Bull are going to struggle?

We can start with Singapore because it's just such a challenging weekend and if it rains and things, it's such a difficult track.

A lot of mistakes. It's very easy to make mistakes, also qualifying to get that right.

So I would say Singapore is high downforce, complete opposite.

That's probably a good place to start.

And may I ask Matt, who got the 24 out of 25 wins went to Red Bull?

Who got the 25th?

It was Russell.

It must be George Russell.

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Yeah, Sao Paulo. Last year, that's it.

That's from Wendler.

Great.

From Wendler, Clare 1.

I mean, just thinking about that.

The last time, kind of, from Wendler, Clare 1 in Austria last year, that seems almost years ago now.

We've only had one non-Red Bull win.

And I think, yeah, in terms of tracks where they might get tripped up,

Singapore is definitely the right answer because tricky track.

Like you said, if weather comes into it, then it's a total unknown.

I think the only one maybe, again, is kind of maybe Sao Paulo, maybe Las Vegas because it's brand new.

So they don't have as much kind of information around that track.

But I mean, we're kind of clutching at straws here because Red Bull are so strong.

They're so smart.

Max is so consistent.

And also, just in terms of the way the team operates,

forget about the drive for a second,

they're just really good from top to finish in terms of strategy, in terms of pit stops.

Make sure they have all of the data that's available.

So yeah, if anything, it's going to be, I think, those tracks.

The likes of Singapore, Sao Paulo, maybe Vegas.

But yeah, we're going to have to wait and see, aren't we?

We are.

I thought Niko, your old boss, Toto, was pretty interesting yesterday

when he was talking about the records that Red Bull had broken.

He said, those numbers, it is for Wikipedia and nobody reads that anyway.

So Niko, take us inside the Toto's office.

Did he really care about records?

Oh, I think, yeah, that was, I think Toto was got in a moment there

where he was not too happy about his own race team's performance on the weekend

because of course, where do they finish 5th and 5th and 6th, no?

5th and 6th, yeah.

So finishing 5th and 6th and miles behind Ferrari and Red Bull is not really the goal.

So I think Toto was just a bit down there and that made his answer a bit darker

and not quite as gracious as perhaps he would normally be

because I think the right answer would have been,

yeah, I mean hats off in respect to Red Bull for these achievements.

But did he care about records when you were racing with him?

Of course.

As you were breaking records, yeah.

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We all care about records, of course, and we think a lot about records.
So even Max, who always says, no, I don't care about 10 races,
what does he do when he comes out the car?
He puts both of his hands up and points to the world that that's 10 in a row, yeah?
And just before he's been saying, oh, no, I don't care about 10,
I just want to do a good race weekend.
So even Max cares about records.
Yeah, surely, surely every driver does.
I mean, it's a chance to write yourself in history, isn't it?
Okay, a couple more tweets.
This one from Antony, which Niko, I'm sure you got this a lot this weekend.
Niko, can you take a selfie with Max in Singapore before the race?
Oh, yes.
This is referring to the...
This is the curse thing.
I even tried this weekend, I tried to do a neutral background
because I thought I don't want to cause any problems here.
Yeah, but you put fours of Ferrari in the caption.
Yeah, okay, fours of Ferrari because the whole weekend was about that
and all of us are wishing for Ferrari to win.
So I thought, yeah, so maybe I'm not even allowed to do that then apparently.
So, yes, I understand that I should be taking a picture,
but that would be a bit like, that would be a bit aggressive
if I then take a picture with Max before a race.
That would not be cool, I think.
But I'll do it anyways.
There we go, there we go.
That's the spirit, are you in Singapore?
No, no, no, I think just one more, Katar now.
Oh, okay, fine, all right, well there we go.
We'll see what happens in Katar, who you're going to take a photo with.
Another tweet, this is from Das to Niko.
If you got offered a drive in Red Bull next year,
would you take it even if you were the Red Bull second driver?
Well, I mean, would I take it?
No, because I'm very happy with where I am in my life,
but if I was...
Hypothetically.
But if I was someone like Alex Albon, it really depends.
It depends, it's a difficult one,
because you know that you're just not going to have a chance against Max,
because no one in the world will have a chance against Max.
So, yes, you have the best car, you can win races,

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you can be in the best team,
but do you really accept to put yourself into a place
where you're going to be a number two?
That's a decision that you have to ask yourself,
because someone like Daniel Ricciardo,
who, like a couple of years ago, would never have accepted that.
Now, by now, he's in a place where he says,
okay, listen, Max is going to be one of the top five of all time
in line with Senna, Schumacher, Hamilton, Fangio,
and it would just still be lovely to be back at Red Bull
and kind of accept that I probably will be more of a number two there.
So, it depends on you as a driver.
I personally would not do it,
because he has so much experience in that team.
It's almost impossible for me, even in my prime, to go in there
and then expect to be able to dominate him.
That's like not realistic,
so I would probably not have done it, if I don't think.
I do actually just to quickly ask Niko,
if you were in that Red Bull, though,
how do you think you would do relative to Perez then?
How would you, in terms of what he's been able to achieve?
Well, I mean, I put Max on the same level as Lewis,
so that's how I would do.
I mean, you went to a title of decider with Lewis and won, so...
Yeah, so that's how I would do. That would be my best guess.
Not bad.
Yeah, I think some of us would love to see that.
If you do fancy coming out of retirement, Niko.
Let's forget about that. That's a long time ago.
If you do fancy it, I'm sure there'd be a fair few fans who'd want to see it.
OK, let's move on and just talk about Mercedes.
I've got a tweet here from Jude.
What are the expectations regarding Mercedes for the rest of the season?
Aldous, I'll come to you on this.
What are you expecting to see from the Silver Arrows?
I definitely expect them to lock out P2 and the constructors.
I think their driver lineup is very strong.
I think their car works on a decent, kind of a nice amount of tracks.
The Ferrari's kind of up and down,
and that's kind of all they can because they're focusing on next year
for sure, but I think that's the only expectation.
More podiums from Lewis, but they've got to secure that P2 and the constructors

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because their car, I think, is good enough.
I'm interested to see what Niko thinks about Mercedes for the rest of the year.
Well, they're fully focused all on next year now.
Therefore, it just is what it is now.
With the car they have, yes, they can secure second place and probably jump Alonso in the Drivers' Championship.
I think Lewis should be able to still get ahead of him.
That's it. I don't think we should expect much more because everybody's 100% on next year.
What's going on then, Niko?
Take us inside the factory at Mercedes.
What will be the conversations, what will be the process in order to get back to the front of the grid next year?
Well, certainly a lot of it has to be to keep analysing that Red Bull car because also Christian Horner was telling me after the race that he thinks everything is going to be much closer next year because everybody's just going to copy their car.
That was his thought after the race in Monza.
And I think all teams need to do that.
They need to understand exactly what Red Bull is doing there and probably just go down that route as much as possible.
Which is what McLaren has done to some extent.
It just worked wonders for them straight away.
Just switched on the car straight away.
So all teams are going to be trying to do that.
Also understanding what has McLaren done to make such a jump because that's been incredible.
What a turn of form they've had.
That's very rare to see that during a season to see such a big jump.
They've done an exceptional job.
What's the impact then of the new contracts for George and Lewis?
Do you think that allows Mercedes to have stability into next year?
It now grounds everyone within the team and says, right, we are fully focused on 2024.
We've got our drivers. We've got everyone around us.
Let's go for it.
Does anything just put stability, calmness?
Because it always leads to uncertainty.
Even in the leadership, Lewis has not signed yet.
It puts stress because what if Lewis suddenly decides or actually prefer to go surfing on the beach?
That would be a big problem then.
So it does put stress especially probably on someone like Toto.

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Even though he wouldn't show it because he's an incredibly good negotiator and pretty cold but inside certainly it puts stress.

A couple of other stories to wrap up.

Liam Lawson, I think we should have a quick chat about him because he finished 11th yesterday in the race which is the highest that second Alfa Tauri has finished all season.

The best De Vries finish was 12th.

Ricardo managed to get his best. It was 13th.

So, Aldous, what do you make of Liam Lawson's last two races, his debut in Formula One?

I've been really impressed the way he's hit the ground.

I thought Zandvoort was such a...

That was a tricky one.

That was one of those where if he went off the road, if he crashed out in the race because of his inexperience and obviously him making his debut, we could have been very easily saying, well, he's obviously a rookie, he's not had that experience and look, loads of the drivers went off.

But he had a really professional first race just focused on getting it home, learning what he can and then this was the weekend to really perform because again, he's been to Monza loads of times like all drivers have throughout their single-seater careers.

He knows the car a little bit more and he was with Yuki straight away.

If that was a Daniel Ricciardo or a negative reason, we would have been like, you know, that's what that kind of driver should be doing.

So, he looked really professional, really like he had been there all season and that's a problem for Ricciardo because obviously Ricciardo potentially wants to be in that red ball for next year if he can't, then he wants to be potentially in the Alpha Tawery and Lawson is really staking a claim that not only should he be in Formula One, but potentially in that team.

So, I'm really excited, he's a really good driver, obviously fighting for the championship but Formula currently second and he's going to have more races in that car whilst Daniel is still recovering.

So, there is no better place to prove that

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you should be in Formula One than when you're actually in the car whilst another driver is out and I think red bull have a really big choice to make out of who should be in their seats for next year and someone's going to get left out. Hopefully Lawson, even if he doesn't end up in the Alpha Tauri is still somehow in Formula One. Maybe there's a deal with Williams where they perhaps will take him instead of Sergeant, I don't know, but I've been really impressed, I think, yeah. That's a nice idea, Aldous. So, Tsunoda and Ricciardo at Alpha Tauri and then Lawson at Williams, that would make a lot of sense. I think that's a good one. The only thing with that, though, is I think Williams, I think they would take him because of how impressive he's been, but I think they would be cautious of are we just developing a driver that you're then going to put in the Alpha Tauri that's going to come back against us. That's the only thing, I'd want him to not be red bull associated if I was James Vowles and would take him in the Williams. That's not going to happen. Yeah, exactly. That's for the negotiating table, clearly. Nico, what do you think Liam Lawson's last two performances have done for Daniel Ricciardo? Where does that leave him now? No, Lawson, first of all, I agree with Aldous that it was really a good job, especially in Monza, incredible. Jump in the car and you're, how much was he behind? One and a half tenths or something from Tsunoda? I think one and a half tenths. That's really awesome because Tsunoda's fast, so that's a super drive. And then good race, good race pace and everything. How unlucky has that been for Daniel though? It's incredible. You get this chance to come back and you break your hand in a freak accident. So unlucky. So the latest from Christian Horner is that Daniel will be back

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in Qatar, so he still misses a couple of races
and then we'll be able to come back
because it's apparently quite a decent break
in the hand he's had there.

It makes it difficult,
but Daniel has such a value to red bull
and he's so liked by red bull
that they'll definitely be patient
in giving him a clear chance.

But I think this break could actually be the difference
between him getting the shot
and replacing Perez next year
and having another year in Al Fattari.

I think the hand break could have the effect
of putting him into one year more in Al Fattari.

Yeah, I find it fascinating that,

I mean, what, for example,

if Liam Lawson has an amazing result,
say he gets a P4, P5, P6 in the next race,
are they really going to bring Daniel Ricciardo back?

Would they still have that good will towards Daniel Ricciardo, do you think?

Yeah, of course. Come on, Daniel is Daniel.

And they would have the whole world against themselves.

They cannot not bring him back.

The poor guy broke his hand.

You cannot then, I mean, no way.

Or you say you're back in the car for next year,

but let's let Liam finish the season

because we need to evaluate him now or whatever, perhaps,
but you need to have Daniel back at some point.

Yeah, yeah.

Okay, quick look at Singapore before we go.

Nico, you won there, of course, in 2016

on your way to the World Championship.

What do you expect from Singapore?

I mean, you alluded to it earlier.

Kuala is important, but also it's a tricky, tight track
with, you know, we might get some weather.

What are your expectations ahead of Singapore?

Singapore is such a difficult track.

It has one of the tracks with the most corners,

I think, in the year as well.

Just never-ending corner after corner.

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Really difficult to get set up right,
to get your tires working properly.
And so I'm expecting maybe we can have some surprises also
with some teams suddenly going extremely well
a little bit in a surprising way.
And so now I think it's going to be refreshing.
All this looking forward to Singapore?
Yeah, absolutely, especially off the back of Monza
because maybe apart from Monaco
you could not have a more different track to Monza.
So I'm expecting Ferrari to not be as strong.
I think Mercedes, I'm expecting actually Aston Martin
and especially Alonso to be a lot stronger
on that kind of track, less kind of high downfall.
So I'm looking forward to it.
It's always a big challenge.
Last year we had the weather, which produced a crazy race.
I mean, Max off, Lewis off, you know,
overtakes and even a few crashes
and obviously a checker kind of holding on for the win.
Yeah, it's one of those tracks,
massive obviously challenge for the drivers.
I couldn't even begin to imagine
like how tough it is just physically.
Forget about the driving and the mental side.
So yeah, it's a big challenge and always an amazing venue.
So yeah, I look forward to it.
Yeah, it's such about the physical side that you just touched.
So I would lose four, so eight pounds,
eight pounds of body weight from sweating in the two hours.
And you're like in your skiing suit, you know,
and you're sitting on the asphalt, which is 40, 45 degrees.
And then you have the petrol right behind you,
which is at 65 degrees or something like that.
So it's just so extremely hot.
There's no fresh air coming in.
You have the seatbelts really tight.
You have your carbon seat molded to your body
so you can hardly breathe properly.
Corner after corner where you have to hold your breath
in the corners.
You can't breathe when you're cornering.
You're holding your breath.

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And I will remember that after like 10 laps,
I would then look at my pit board from my mechanics
and it would say 50 laps to go.
And I'm thinking, okay, I'm done.
I'm done.
I'm 10 laps in.
I'm done.
And it says 50 laps to go.
And it's also the longest race because unlike Monaco,
they keep it at 300 kilometers there.
So it's also very often close to a two hour race.
It's so horrible, like the feeling in the car.
It's like you're in a sauna on a spinning bike for two hours.
Yes.
It's horrible.
And then your head is starting to pump within the helmet.
Your sweat is dripping down into your eyes and burning.
And it's really incredibly tough.
But then when you win in that environment, Nico,
like you did in 2016, it must be even more special
to know that you've conquered that kind of challenge.
Yeah, of course.
Yeah.
And my 2016 win was ultra high pressure
because they pitted Lewis behind
to try and get him back on the podium.
And that caused a whole like Constantina effect
where everybody behind me pitted and suddenly went on soft new tires.
But I was the only one who couldn't pit anymore.
And so I had Ricciardo chasing me down
and he finished only four tenths behind me
after like it was a guaranteed win for me.
And so that was like a ultra pressure moment
on my way to the championship.
Yeah, it was going to be a fascinating race.
We've got a weekend off, of course,
but we will be back after the Singapore Grand Prix
to look back at that as well.
Nico Aldous, thank you so much for your time.
Really appreciate it.
Until next Tuesday.
See you then.
Bye for now.

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Bye-bye.

Bye-bye.