

[Transcript] Sky Sports F1 Podcast / Imola cancellation fallout and will Hamilton join Ferrari?

Hello, everyone. Welcome to this week's episode. Ahead of a busy week in Monaco, I've managed to pin down Naomi Schiff, Ted Kravitz, and Simon Lazenby. Welcome along, everyone.

Hello, Matthew.

Thank you for having us.

Thank you for coming, and happy birthday, Naomi, for last week.

Belated now, but thank you.

Belated.

Thank you.

A week later.

A year older now.

Simon and I feel like we're in the presence of a reunion here.

Yes.

The on-screen...

The on-screen...

My old mucka.

It's actually deactivated my past. That's how long I haven't been here.

It's good to be invited back.

I know. It's good to be back in a studio. I feel like I should be addressing this presenter, Matthew.

Yeah, it's going to be confusing.

I'm a guest, mate. You've got to get used to it.

You've got to get used to it.

But you know the studio well, so...

I do. This is where we did the Rugby Club for ten years.

Wow.

Back in the day.

Back in the day.

Back in the good old days.

It's used for podcasts.

No, it's used for podcasts.

There we are.

A very interesting podcast about a race that didn't happen.

Yes.

Let's tell you what the plan is then.

So I want to talk a little bit about the events in Imola over last week and what it means for the sport going forward before getting into a story that broke on Monday of this week in the mail that Ferrari are set to offer Lewis Hamilton a £40 million a year contract to lure him away from Mercedes.

And I think that officially opens the keys to silly season.

What?

That's it?

It opens the door to silly season.

That's the topic.

[Transcript] Sky Sports F1 Podcast / Imola cancellation fallout and will Hamilton join Ferrari?

We're officially in.

But let's talk about Imola.

And of course we should be sat here talking about, you know, the Grand Prix that happened this weekend.

We're not.

And that's because the race was cancelled due to the devastating flooding in the Emilia Romagna region of Italy.

Simon, I think the right decision.

I don't think anyone would argue it was the right decision to cancel the Grand Prix.

Yeah.

Funnily enough, I was reading an article.

My old friend of mine writes for the Guardian now.

She's the Italy correspondent.

She was out there and she was, you know, I spoke to her about what it was like out there or what it's still like out there.

Obviously it's the right decision.

I don't think there's really much to say about this in that, you know, 36,000 people, homeless, 14 lives lost.

Just huge devastation across the region.

I think in 36 hours, it was six months rainfall fell, wasn't it?

There was only one option for Formula One.

And yes, OK, people will have lost money.

Are they going to look for another weekend where they could fit it?

There's talk potentially the first week of the summer break.

I don't think it's going to happen.

I think, you know, it's just, it's a tragedy for everybody involved.

And there was only one thing for Formula One to do and they took the right decision.

I think the only reason to have it on again would be to bring the money that was going to go into the Emilia-Romagna region in hotels, restaurants, you know, services, all of that back.

But yeah, when you faced with a looking at the, not only the devastation, but, you know, the practicalities of it, you know, the Grand Prix demands a lot from a region.

It demands police.

It demands doctors, ambulance staff, medical people.

You know, I stand in the pit lane most of the time next to a doctor or a few doctors who are ready if there's an accident or someone gets run over by a car or a tire comes loose.

They were busy doing other stuff, understandably.

It just wasn't possible to have it.

So, you know, people talk about, well, did Formula One learn from the mistakes of Melbourne 2020 with the pandemic and not knowing whether to cancel it before Friday practice, you know, and all of that.

Not foreseeable.

Spa 2020, 2021.

[Transcript] Sky Sports F1 Podcast / Imola cancellation fallout and will Hamilton join Ferrari?

2021 was it?

Yeah.

The, you know, the rain came all right.

Not foreseeable.

It wasn't like that.

This was foreseeable, actual and totally the right decision.

I agree with you guys that it couldn't, I don't think it could have gone forward, even if the rains would have settled.

It's just when there is, as you said, so much devastation going on, it's just, it's not a good look to put on an event that's, you know, mostly there for entertainment.

So, yeah, I think they made the right decision.

And, you know, and good that Formula One's donating a million, aren't they?

And Ferrari.

And Ferrari.

Yeah, we saw Yuki Snow, didn't we?

Helping out and friends are where Alphatauria based.

Yeah.

It was on the streets helping out.

Ted, is this, would you say this is kind of the first time in Formula One's history that we've had to cancel a race due to the climate crisis?

Yeah, I think it is actually.

Now you mentioned it.

You know, climate change is a thing.

And Simon talks about the rainfall, six months rainfall happened in the space for a few days.

He's right because there had been a drought in Amelina, Romania, up until that point.

January, February, March, April, there was no rain.

And there was no snow on the mountains, I think, as well.

And reading about it before I came here, that's where a lot of the irrigation

and the natural way that the soil works and the climate works,

they rely on a lot of the snowfall to then come through and make the ground ready for rain.

And the ground wasn't ready for all of the rain that they had.

It just went straight, didn't, wasn't absorbed by any of the soil.

It went straight into the rivers, the Sant'Erno River.

And then what with the Sant'Erno River being right next to the circuit.

And even though the track itself was only sort of lightly flooded,

I mean, you saw the devastation of people's houses.

That's the other thing we should possibly talk about.

A lot of the infrastructure wasn't in place. TV compound was flooded.

A lot of our stuff was flooded. It's having to be dried out and hosed out.

You know, a lot of the infrastructure just wasn't possible.

So, yeah, no, with the climate crisis, which we'll talk about,

for me, the one's part of the solution in a minute.

[Transcript] Sky Sports F1 Podcast / Imola cancellation fallout and will Hamilton join Ferrari?

That was the first case.

Well, it came close to Miami, didn't we?

I mean, in April, they had the same thing and the paddock was flooded then.

Equally, it could have happened to Miami if we'd started a month and a bit earlier because they had the same.

They had an enormous amount of rainfall in a short space of time and they couldn't cope with it.

We know it's how close it is to sea level, having stayed on the coast there.

I mean, it's right on it.

And Miami, obviously, you saw Sebastian Vettel's t-shirt, didn't we?

In his last year there, which was warning against that and lo and behold, a year later, they have an issue with it.

And then we go on to Amelia Romagna and, yeah, I mean, obviously, we're going to get more extreme situations, whether it's droughts and floods and all that.

Just studying all my son at the moment for his exams and it reinforces it all.

It's just, you know, happening everywhere.

What about then Formula One being part of the solution to help this?

And I guess, you know, they've set their own targets, having to be net zero by 2030.

They're also aiming to have a 50% reduction in its own carbon emissions by 2030.

So how are Formula One doing that?

I like this subject because, you know, I bang on for a long time about how efficient these power units are

and that you've got a lot of internal combustion engines all around the world, only really delivering 30% of the fuel efficiency.

They're not particularly efficient.

70% of that goes out in heat and exhaust and all of that.

Formula One power units are 50% efficient, you know.

So we're already doing something like that.

Great gains in that area.

And then in three years' time, actually in two and a half years' time, when the 2026 season starts,

so we're now at 2023, the 2024 season, the 2025 season,

and then testing for the 2026 season,

all of the cars will be running on carbon neutral, sustainable fuels.

It's soon.

It's really soon.

Two and a half seasons.

And you could say, OK, well, that's only the cars going around, you know, they don't use much fuel.

All of the other stuff as well is moving very, very quickly to sustainable fuels,

[Transcript] Sky Sports F1 Podcast / Imola cancellation fallout and will Hamilton join Ferrari?

which will contribute to Formula One's net carbon zero targets for 2030.

Sky also has net carbon zero for 2030 as well, by 2030.

So that means the end of the 2029 season.

So you've got Mercedes announced today that all of their trucks, all of their haulage, all of their freight will be powered by sustainable fuels, meaning in hundreds of tonnes of CO2 not emitted and contributing to climate change, and 60% reduction in carbon, probably a bit higher actually, but they're aiming for a solid 60% reduction in CO2.

Yeah, I did a campaign about 2030 and actually that that's the target for everybody, not just Formula One, not just the teams.

There are actual goals set by the UN that we need to achieve by 2030 for this planet to still exist by 2050.

And you can see all these things happening in climate change.

We're talking about fires, we're talking about floods, we're talking about droughts.

It's happening and we are in a position where we don't have a choice anymore to ignore these types of things.

And I think one thing that's also a big issue for teams and for Formula One is that big corporates and sponsors are very conscious of where these teams are, like how they exactly, like you said, the team kit, the way they travel, all these things are being monitored because everybody has this responsibility now to do more, to be more involved in making better decisions for their teams and for their companies. So it does seem like a big issue to solve, but every little thing we do will make the difference.

Formula One is a global sport, right?

It is probably the sport that's going to feel ahead of some of the other sports, certainly like football in the UK is not going to feel it in the way that travelling around the globe and going around different places.

I mean, this will happen again.

Formula One will happen again to Formula One.

And that's what I love about the way that, you know, you've got these such clever people who work in Formula One, who when you think about it, all right, you know, powering cars to go around and round in circles, it's relatively unimportant, sorry, I know it's a little, you know, but it is relatively unimportant in motor racing as an activity that furthers, you know, human existence.

But that's getting those people.

We are going to get there, sorry.

Yeah, seven minutes in.

But if you're getting those, the brain boxes, the boffins,

Solution focused

into solving some of those solutions in sustainable fuels and helping to be part of the solution rather than part of the problem, then isn't that great?

From a sporting perspective, Naomi, obviously we've lost a race.

We're now down to 22 races for the season.

[Transcript] Sky Sports F1 Podcast / Imola cancellation fallout and will Hamilton join Ferrari?

Who will that have benefited?

And do we think Red Bull possibly have lost an opportunity there to get more points on the board?

Would it have been looking like a 1-2 for Red Bull in Imola?

There was a couple of teams coming with quite big upgrades, which have now been delayed by another race, which, you know, everything they would have learned this weekend, they would have been able to carry through to Monaco and also to potentially adapt what other packages they have coming from Barcelona. So I think there's a lot of teams actually that have suffered from it not happening, rather than teams who would have gained from it not happening.

Red Bull clearly are in a period right now.

I don't need to mention this.

We all know it's clearly in this case where they're very much dominating.

So I think any race where they can avoid potentially their competitors advancing their developments, then they would benefit.

I can't really think of who else would have benefited from it not happening potentially.

Ted, what are the knock-on impacts then of those upgrades coming to Monaco, particularly for Mercedes, I'm thinking?

Yeah.

No, you're right.

You know, Naomi's right.

I think had everything been the same and Imola was looking like a circuit built for the Red Bull, I'll be 19.

Yeah.

And they would have been looking for a 1-2

and they would maybe be sad that they won't go away with the 43 points.

How many points do you get for 1-2?

25, 18 and 1.

25, 18 and 1, yeah.

Is it 43?

44.

44, thank you very much.

I mean, they argue Red Bull lost, didn't they?

Not that they care, but they lost from not having Imola.

Because they're going to Monaco and they're faced with the Alonso potential, the Alonso threat, should we call it that, who is well, you know, he is well motivated.

And yes, Aston Martin are going to need everything to go perfectly for them in Monaco in order to beat Red Bull because that I'll be 19 will still be a good car in Monaco.

It's not, you know, like it's completely different.

It's very different, but it's not completely different.

And then you've got the Mercedes upgrades, which they are bringing to Monaco.

And that puts it to me again that, you know, everyone says,

[Transcript] Sky Sports F1 Podcast / Imola cancellation fallout and will Hamilton join Ferrari?

oh, you'd be crazy to bring your upgrades to Monaco.
Boom, bang, bang, bang, you know, bash, crash, all of that.
Well, they haven't got any choice because they've already redone the car with all the radiators and everything.
And B, you still need a good car around Monaco.
Yeah, I think there's four teams in it.
If we take Monaco to be, let's face it, all about Saturday these days.
Yes, I know things can happen in the race and maybe we'll get some rain.
Maybe we'll get something clever strategically, like we've seen before, but we've also seen strategic failures.
I think potentially there's four teams in on a Saturday around those streets.
Because I think Mercedes has struggled in a straight line, but they're okay.
They seem to be okay in the slower speed corners.
And this is obviously a high downforce track.
I think Ferrari's issues not being about rotation, it's being about rear instability in the high speed corners.
Aston Martin know they're strong in low and medium speed corners, and again, not in a straight line.
And the RB 19 is the RB 19.
You know, it's going to be strong.
So I think that we could be, and maybe we'll get a little bit of weather to throw things into it, I think we could have four teams in it on the Saturday.
Well, that's an exciting process, isn't it?
I mean, yeah.
But back to your point, though, I'm not entirely sure that in the grand scheme of things, the grand scheme of the season, that missing out on Imola is really going to...
Yes, there might be a threat from Fernando Alonso and Monaco, but in the grand scheme of the season, is it that much of a concern for Red Bull?
Do you think they're worried about the fact that Imola didn't go forward?
No, it depends on whether you believe Christian Horner.
We must get the points in early before everyone catches up with us.
Do you believe it?
Rubbish.
Rubbish.
Rubbish.
Well, he's got a point in that there are going to be, at some point, the aerodynamic testing restrictions post-Coscat breach is going to hurt them, it has to.
We just don't know when that will be.

[Transcript] Sky Sports F1 Podcast / Imola cancellation fallout and will Hamilton join Ferrari?

My instinct is that that will probably be more or less at the end of the season when everybody's given up and thought about next year. And then you'll have a slew, once Red Bull are close to wrapping up both championships, you'll have a slew of them getting beaten and them saying, look, look, it is hurting us, but they've already wrapped up both championships because everyone's concentrating on next year.

I don't know.

Maybe.

I mean, for me, for Aston Martin, we've got 100% of the wind tunnel and CFD time compared to 63% for Red Bull when you've applied their penalty to the 70% of that.

So maybe you could, you know, contra that with the fact that they need to get their points in early because they've got an advantage when it gets reset.

Is it June?

June, July, yeah.

Yeah.

June, July, it gets reset on where the championship standings are.

Aston Martin are currently second, aren't they?

So it depends on the lag time, doesn't it?

But I don't think it's going to bother Red Bull with that car that they've missed a race.

In fact, actually, when you look at the sprints to come and the toll on the engines with the extra engine now that's been brought into, they've lost the race for that, haven't they?

So maybe it benefits everybody and that there's not going to be the mileage on the engine.

Let's move it on and talk about this story then that broke this week,

reported in the mail here in the UK

that Ferrari are set to offer Lewis Hamilton the chance to win his eighth title at Ferrari.

It's understood to be in the region of £40 million a year.

Come on then, let's get into it.

Simon, what did you think?

You heard, you saw the story.

Yeah, I mean, I got called out.

I didn't know on the podcast a few weeks ago because I said I wouldn't rule out.

[Transcript] Sky Sports F1 Podcast / Imola cancellation fallout and will Hamilton join Ferrari?

I said, yeah, Lewis Hamilton moving to Ferrari.
However, having looked at the first five races of this season,
I just think, why would you bother moving at the moment?
It's not like anybody else, apart from Aston Martin,
have made the games Christian Horner,
he even said to us, didn't he, post-race in Miami,
he said, where are the others?
Where are the others?
So I understand the lure of Ferrari,
but when you look at them, for the last 15 years,
and this might sound harsh, but they have been serial underachievers,
they've been a teaming constant transition,
whereas Mercedes have the pedigree,
they made one philosophical mistake and now they're in transition.
And maybe that transition period will take last year, this year,
and they know they're already a year behind
if these upgrades get them to the point where they're then on a philosophy
or a track that can get them,
or they can play development war with Red Bull from the start of next season.
But it's almost Hobson's choice, I think, for Lewis.
Why not stay with a team that brought you all that success,
rather than risk it just to say I was a Ferrari driver
for one point of your career,
when really they've got a quick car on a Saturday,
but they don't on a Sunday.
So I don't think there's any justification.
However, what I will say is how about this,
2024, that's when Checo's contract runs out,
end of 2024, okay?
If you're Lewis Hamilton and you want to win an eighth world title,
there's only one team you want to be at until 2026,
and that is Red Bull, okay?
I'm not saying this is going to happen,
but I dare you, Christian Horner,
I dare you, for the sake of everything that's gone before,
and 40 million, 50 million, whatever,
if Max is like, well, you know,
I don't know if I want to stay in the sport,
Lewis is getting near to retirement.
We get to 2025, it's the last year of regulations.
Why don't we have a one-year shootout?
Well, yes.
It's not going to happen, by the way.

[Transcript] Sky Sports F1 Podcast / Imola cancellation fallout and will Hamilton join Ferrari?

Just so clickbait, it's not going to happen,
but it's fantasy stuff, right?
I must have been away from school that day
that they taught us about what Hobson's choice means,
because I genuinely don't know.
Isn't it Sophie's choice?
No, that was a film.
What was the other choice?
There are different choices.
Firstly, I think 40 million offer to Lewis Hamilton
is a bit of a lowball offer for Lewis Hamilton.
I think it's probably about 5 million less than he's on at the moment,
and maybe even 10 million less than...
No, but it's a measure of your value, isn't it?
Yeah.
So they keep telling me.
And it's something that Mercedes
are actually going to offer him as part of it,
not only the remainder of his driving career,
but also a longer-term association with the Mercedes brand
that is valuable to Lewis.
Number one, I think it's...
Number two, I think Ferrari are offering everybody a job
for anything at the moment.
I mean, it wouldn't surprise me if their replacement for Lauren McKeece,
they announced David Croft as their replacement
as a sporting director.
Well, you don't have to apply.
Ferrari are offering.
I always said this in Miami when I approached that Red Bull guy.
They are offering everybody a job in Formula One.
Everyone is on Ferrari's shopping list
because Frederick Vassar says,
I am going to put together a crack team of amazing people
around Carlos Sainz and Charles Leclerc
to make them realise, oh, wow, this is incredible.
Newey, Adrian Newey.
They offered him a job, didn't they, with big money?
Christian Horner, maybe they were talking to him.
Christian Horner, they are offering...
It shouldn't be a surprise or a story
that Ferrari are offering somebody a job.
They'll offer anybody a job.

[Transcript] Sky Sports F1 Podcast / Imola cancellation fallout and will Hamilton join Ferrari?

They are after the best and the biggest
in Formula One at the moment as they seek to rebuild.
So it shouldn't be a surprise that they offered Lewis Hamilton everything.
I think 40 million...
I don't know where that's come from.
If it was 80 million that John Elcan had said,
I will pay you 80 million, then that would get people's attention.
But anyway, I don't think he's likely to go.
Maybe if he wins the elusive eighth at Mercedes
once they get the car right eventually,
if he wins the eighth then...
Then potentially.
Then potentially he might go,
let's see if I can win another one for Ferrari,
but he might be into his forties by then.
And what about Charles Leclerc?
I mean, what are they going to do?
They're going to swap...
Yeah.
It's either a swap deal, isn't it,
for Leclerc or it's going to be Halton and Leclerc.
It seems he's what they're after.
I do think, and I'll come to you on this.
No, me.
I think a lot of Lewis's decision about his future
depends on this upgrade set.
Yeah.
Because hinges.
I do.
I think that when you look back to what happened last year,
the hopes for the W13 coming out of the simulator
were that it was going to blow the rest of them away.
It was going to blow Red Bull away.
It was going to blow Ferrari away.
And then the correlation between what happened there
and reality, well, we all know the story.
You know, Red Bull went with the undercut
side pod philosophy, which everybody's moved towards.
Whereas if Mercedes had this exposed floor
and then obviously the porpoising happened,
they had to stiffen the floor,
they couldn't raise the rear ride height enough
to turn into bouncing.

[Transcript] Sky Sports F1 Podcast / Imola cancellation fallout and will Hamilton join Ferrari?

And then all of these years, problems have come from the fact that they just, I think they were just tantalised by those figures that just said, we're going to completely and utterly destroy the field.

Let's stick with it.

Let's stick with it.

And then they, you know, they get into this year and all of the limitations that were created by having to try to solve those problems, including, you know, keeping Lewis further up front in terms of his seating position so he doesn't feel the rear of the car.

They just had to have a reset, didn't they?

They were literally changing horse midstream.

That's what they've needed to do.

They had to have a complete rethink of the philosophy.

If they've got it wrong this time,

what happens with the no-blame culture then?

Well, I mean, I think when you talk about

this Ferrari opportunity,

I guess this whole conversation we're having right now would have been so different had Imelope happen because we would have more of an indication on, you know, how much potential is now in that car, how it's going to potentially evolve going forward.

I personally am quite excited by the prospects of Lewis considering Ferrari.

I don't think it will happen,

but I think, you know, every driver,

every young driver, grows up wanting to be a part of the Ferrari team because it has such an incredible legacy.

So just thinking about Lewis in a red suit is like something, you know, he's obviously been at the same team for so long, and I think change is always exciting.

So on one hand, I'm like, it sounds quite exciting, but to your point, why would you do that now?

I mean, their two drivers are behind, you know, collectively they're further back in the championship at Ferrari than they are at Mercedes.

So go to Red Bull.

Well...

More exciting for everyone, wouldn't it?

I guess the question is though,

[Transcript] Sky Sports F1 Podcast / Imola cancellation fallout and will Hamilton join Ferrari?

when Lewis is looking at Ferrari,
is he seeing a better team than Mercedes?
That's why I think that at this point,
he's probably not considering it at all.
I think he's also been very vocal about the fact
that he wants to also leave his legacy with Mercedes
much like Nicky did.
So I think that's also potentially a reason
why he might end his Formula One days with Mercedes
as a driver.
And as you say, there's potentially an opportunity
for him to be a part of the team,
not as a driver going forward as well.
So I don't think he's considering it,
but as you say, if these upgrades don't live up to what
they're hoping that they will,
and potentially let's talk about next season,
if they start the season poorly again,
then I think he will be considering
in what manner he wants to end his career in Formula One.
Does he want to be struggling for fourth or fifth place,
or does he want to be back at the front?
And then I guess, yeah, Red Bull.
It's not going to happen, everybody.
I mean, I'll speak up for Ferrari.
I think if they do get the right people in the team
and with New Sporting Director David Croft in there,
and they're going to, by the way,
that is also not going to happen, it's just a joke,
then they can build themselves into a new group of
race winners and championship winners.
They can do, but you know what?
That's true, and maybe slightly quicker.
Although, I will say, you know,
I've got annoyingly good memory for lines
that come out in our program.
Do you remember when I joined you two in Bahrain,
when Toto Wolf had his slightly sort of surprising outburst
about how this is a worst day in his race?
It was after the qualifier.
I think he came out with more after the race.
No, that's after the race.
I said, why don't you wait for the Imola upgrade?

[Transcript] Sky Sports F1 Podcast / Imola cancellation fallout and will Hamilton join Ferrari?

And he said, I'm not interested in the four tenths or six tenths, he said.
I said the six tenths, he said,
he put a time number on this upgrade
that we're about to see this weekend.
And my memory is good that he actually said it,
but crucially falls down when I can't actually remember
what the time was.
Was it two tenths or six tenths?
I think it was six tenths.
I think it was a chunk, wasn't it?
I think it was six tenths.
It was after qualifying.
Yeah, I'm sure it was.
When he came in and he just said,
we're not going to...
Can I come and join you in your little presentation?
Well, maybe. Crescent.
Your head is bigger than mine.
And it can keep all this in.
I think Toto said, let's go back and check the tape.
I think he said, we can't rely on the six tenths
that Imola upgrade will give us.
We need a second.
And we need a second or more to catch Red Bull.
So let's not forget that when we get to Monaco,
and all right, maybe Monaco won't show
exactly what the full potential of what it was.
But if that Imola upgrade is only half a second per lap,
they will what?
I mean, that will put them into your
qualifying fight for pole, won't it?
That will put them in there.
But in the races, it won't,
when they're finishing 55 seconds behind, will it?
No, they need a second.
That's the problem, isn't it?
They need a second.
Which is the change of concept.
That's the whole point of the change of philosophy.
Yeah.
What about the other bits of disquiet,
if you will, coming out of Mercedes and Lewis?

[Transcript] Sky Sports F1 Podcast / Imola cancellation fallout and will Hamilton join Ferrari?

He obviously called the team out as well, didn't he?
He said they hadn't listened to him
over the design of the W14.
Are we seeing like a slight change in Lewis
with perhaps the way he's interacting with the team,
that maybe he's a little bit unhappier than he has,
but obviously when he was winning the World titles,
he was very happy.
But the last few years as it's not beginning to plan,
we are hearing different noises, aren't we,
coming out from the Mercedes?
Yeah, I guess that's only normal.
As you say, he spent such a long time
being very successful in Formula One with a car
that could help him to, you know,
generate those victories and now he's got a car
that isn't really, you know, worthy of the fight.
But I think, especially after everything that happened,
Abu Dhabi 2021, you come back in it,
you want to set the record straight,
you don't have the weapon to do that.
And then that continues for a second year after that.
So I guess you do start to run out of patience.
And I think that's a little bit of what we're seeing.
I don't know if running out of patience
is particularly the right way to put it,
but you can see why there's frustration
and you can see why they need to start
being a little bit harsher with their words
and potentially being more opinionated
about the changes that they want.
In order to generate that change,
we saw the same thing at Ferrari,
that they were kind of like,
oh yes, things are okay, things are fine.
No, things are not fine.
You need to just confront these things
for what they are, say the way you feel
and hopefully that will then spike that change.
And since then we have seen change.
We've seen the change with Mike Elliott and James Ellison.
And hopefully, you know, that will be the things
that make the difference for them.

[Transcript] Sky Sports F1 Podcast / Imola cancellation fallout and will Hamilton join Ferrari?

But I think it's only normal to be seeing reactions like that from Lewis.
It's not the position that you want to be in, particularly at this stage in your career.
How would you describe his character at the moment, Ted?
You've obviously known him and seen him and interviewed him in the paddock for his whole career.
So where would you kind of say he's at at the moment?
He's in the lion cuchon.
Is there a cuchon and rampant, the lion?
He's in the cuchon.
You're sort of resting.
He's in the resting lion.
He's having his two years.
He's having his two years before he's the rampant lion again, going for the championship.
That's how I see him.
And I think he's happy with that.
I think as you, did you say in Miami that Abu Dhabi 21 took...
Oh, it's Brundle, wasn't it?
Martin said I think he took it more out of him than maybe we realized, which is completely understandable.
I think he's in his sort of rest and recovery phase, charging maybe subconsciously.
He doesn't even realize it.
I imagine he probably does, but he's recharging his mental batteries for next year's car, which...
And I think what you're saying with the...
Why is he putting these things out?
You're right in that actually he's putting them out also for a reason and he wants to make it absolutely clear to James Allison and Mike Elliott and everybody else who's designing next year's car.
Can you just...
You know, these are my order of priorities, I think.
I'd like to be moved a bit further back in the car.
I know it doesn't affect George saying it was...
It's affecting me, but it does affect me.
If you put me back in the...
Further back in the car where I want to be, where I've got the connection with the rear axle, I'll feel better and go faster.
And then you can do all the things that make the car go faster.

[Transcript] Sky Sports F1 Podcast / Imola cancellation fallout and will Hamilton join Ferrari?

But he's saying it because he wants to make absolutely clear that that's kind of his number one priority.
And I've been into the press and said it.
So that's why he's saying it.
I'm not entirely sure it's a change of character, really.
It's just a change of situation when everything's going well.
You don't need to huff and puff about things that aren't going right, right?
So I think we're just seeing the situation around him has evolved.
That's potentially also why the team is changing.
The immediate people around him are slightly changing.
Things have changed and the situation is very different to what it was previously.
I think in general, he's extremely patient.
I mean, if he has radio messages and all of that,
he never really cracks under the pressure or when things aren't going well.
So I think the way that he's come about it is still, you know, words are words.
Simon might say something like, Red Bull should hire Lewis.
Those words become much bigger words.
So the version of what we're hearing is potentially not what ever was happened or what was said.
But I think it's still normal in this situation for him to be making,
shall we quote unquote them demands or at least make his priorities known?
I've got text from Daniel Ricardo to suffer you for Simon saying,
what are you on my phone here?
What are you talking about?
What are you talking about when Checo goes, that's my seat?
Exactly.
I will say about it.
I fully expect Lewis to, I think he's going to stay at Mercedes
for as long as the team keeps doing what he feels is enough to challenge.
Because I think there is a loyalty there and I think there's an underlying respect
for Toto and for everything he's trying to do.
But I think it is a team in transition.
It's a little bit like, you know, what Klopp's been trying to do with Liverpool this year.
It's about, you know, reshuffling the pack, bringing in a few new people
and making sure that you've got the team around you to go into battle.
I think getting James Allison back into the trenches was a good decision
because he seems to be character-wise and even he said it.
Mike Elliott, he's an Ideas man.
He's one for the future of Mercedes and concepts and everything.
Whereas I think James is one who just likes to roll up his sleeves, get in there
and even if you make a small difference on a weekend, it matters to him a tenth there,
a tenth there on set up and whatever they can do.
So I think that was a smart decision and let's see if that pays off going forward.
Can we entertain some of the driver pairings that might happen as a result of this?

[Transcript] Sky Sports F1 Podcast / Imola cancellation fallout and will Hamilton join Ferrari?

So Anthony on Twitter says Lewis and Charles would be one of the best driver line-ups of all time. Do we agree?

Yes, with respect to Colour Science, but yes, agree.

Not as good as Hamilton for Stafford.

I'm just doing it to wind you up.

It's true.

They wind who up?

Well, I don't know anyone.

Listen, they're good as a sport.

I think if Lewis and Charles together, could we see a swap?

Could we see Charles going to Mercedes and Lewis coming to Ferrari?

So it would be Hamilton and Science together and George and Charles.

I mean, Mercedes need an insurance policy if Lewis decides to either stop or leave.

And at the moment, that policy looks like Charles Leclerc until they wait for their juniors,

Kimmy Antonelli, who's a champion of the future, is a Mercedes junior.

Keep going.

I like this Anthony on Twitter.

What else does he say?

Well, I'll tell you what, Matt on Instagram actually had a very interesting point, because it was not me.

I've not replied to my own tweet.

Why would Ferrari replace a younger and a very talented prospect for someone with a mere two seasons potentially left?

He has a legacy at Mercedes.

Why would he tarnish it in red?

If you're thinking about the future, you're trying to future pre Ferrari.

Why would you go for kind of a short hit of Lewis?

Why would you, you know, Charles is the future.

Charles has got many, many years ahead of him, hasn't he?

So why?

Yeah.

I mean, why would you change?

I don't see that being the case, though.

I personally don't see that being the case.

Do you guys think that they would switch Charles for Lewis?

I don't.

I think if anything.

I mean, Fred Vassar has got a fantastic relationship, hasn't he, with Charles?

And what he's saying is that you need to build a team around one driver.

And the intimation was that that was, is Charles going forward.

Therefore, everything that we're talking about is just utter claptrap.

None of this may happen.

[Transcript] Sky Sports F1 Podcast / Imola cancellation fallout and will Hamilton join Ferrari?

We are just hypothesising.

I tend to believe that it would be more likely to be that dream line-up as, what is his name?

He put it of Charles and Lewis, rather than Lewis and Carlos staying at Ferrari.

If theoretically, hypothetically, this ever were to happen.

Let's not forget about George Russell, who beat Lewis on points last year.

Who, what, the stats this year?

Has he had it on points?

No, he's behind it.

4-1 in qualifying, 3-2 in the race, but I think 16 behind on points.

But, you know, George...

Well done, Simon.

He's got the numbers all right.

But he had the DNF, didn't he?

He had the engine DNF in Australia.

So let's not forget George, in terms of a Mercedes number one, if Lewis leaves.

And how would that work with a Leclerc coming in, if George is...

I think 2026 is the main factor here for what's going to affect everything.

Because if what we hear is to be believed, you know, Audi are obviously coming in.

Maybe Honda are going to partner up with Aston Martin.

And on all of a sudden, you've got six engine manufacturers within the sport.

You've got six works teams then.

And then you've got six top-level drivers, if you think it's one-two basis, to head up those teams.

There are rooms that Carlos Sainz might go and head up...

To Audi.

Yeah, Audi, you know, as Salba turning into Audi in 2026.

So I think there's different levels, aren't there, of drivers in the sport.

I think, personally, there's four or five or six that right now could lead those teams.

And I'm including all three Brits in those.

I think that they are all number one drivers.

They need the opportunity to potentially be in a works team, someone like Lando, for example.

McLaren must be making a push to get their own engine manufacturer.

Going forward, I see that as to have a chance to win a championship.

You've kind of got to be a works team driver, haven't you?

Can I be controversial, potentially, in the silly season debacle that we are?

I have started ourselves.

Lando Norris to Red Bull.

I mean, he's been moving before, hasn't he?

Yeah, possibly.

I think him and Max go on pretty well, don't they?

Not that that matters.

Yeah, maybe.

For now, anyway.

Matters to Red Bull, if they get on.

[Transcript] Sky Sports F1 Podcast / Imola cancellation fallout and will Hamilton join Ferrari?

But will they get on when they're racing against each other with the same car?

I mean, Zach Brown says that he's got the best driver...

I know, Zach Brown would say this, but he's got the best driver lineup in Formula One, potentially, which is for the future, Piastri, and then for the current Lando.

But yeah, there's all sorts of good driver pairings up and down there.

Silly season, May the 20th.

Well done, everybody.

He's to blame. He did it.

One point I wanted to raise on Lewis is what he could bring to Ferrari.

Obviously, as a seven-time world champion, he brings a whole wealth of experience of winning and winning world championships.

Do you think, possibly, that that would be a big reason to bring him in, would be all that experience, and he could maybe turn Ferrari into a championship winning?

He's really still flogging this prancing horse.

Well, I mean, you have to when you read one article on it,

and then the rest of the world's media pick up on it, and then we all get drawn into it.

I don't know, there's so many reasons to go to Ferrari, aren't there, for him,

and there's so many reasons for Ferrari to happen.

Red trousers? I mean, what do you want? Reasons to go to Ferrari?

Red trousers, there you go.

I think to answer your question, I would say the answer to that would be yes, because he's a seven-time world champion.

He's been in the sport for almost two decades,

and when you compare that to Charles and Carlos, who were still,

although they've been here for some time now, compared to Lewis, they're still wet behind the ears.

So maybe someone like Lewis would be more likely to take the reins

and maybe put a little bit more pressure from the driver's side.

So my answer to that would be yes.

Yeah.

Well, you could say as well with Charles, that if he's gotten a Achilles heel,

we've seen it recently, and that he can be prone to overdrive it,

and crash a little bit, he's still supremely quick on a Saturday.

We know that, but I don't know, though.

I mean, I think he's, again, he's in that top tier of drivers,

and why would you lose him when he's got so much potential?

Yeah.

He crashes it because the car's not quick enough.

He's trying to do amazing things with it.

Do you think so?

But it can't do. Yeah, of course.

But then why does Carlos not crash too much?

Because Carlos isn't on pole.

Yeah.

[Transcript] Sky Sports F1 Podcast / Imola cancellation fallout and will Hamilton join Ferrari?

Charles was on pole.

I mean, Charles gets, extracts the limits out of that car.

Baku.

Baku.

But even Baku, but even to go to Baku.

A fact man.

He was very close to not putting it on pole,
because he almost put it in the wall and qualifying.

Yeah, because he's out, but he's trying to do amazing things with a car
that the car can't do.

Yeah, but he's doing more than the car can do,
which is over-driving the car.

It's pushing it to his limit.

I mean, I respect him for that.

Well, you're the driver, so yeah, you would know.

I respect him for that, because he's really taking that car
further than it can go, really.

So that's respectable.

But you need to do that within the car's limits,
otherwise you don't finish races.

And if you think Charles Leclerc is quicker than Carlos,
and you look at how many races he's finished behind Carlos,
then something doesn't add up.

It's good to be fast, but you're there to back points.

So you need to be consistent for that and finish races.

So when you racing drivers, say, over-driving the car,
you mean that pushing it beyond what it can do,
and then just going, oh, look, I'm going.

It can be both.

It can be both.

It can be both.

Either you're doing a style that doesn't...

that the tyres don't necessarily respond to you
overheating things.

That can also be considered over-driving
rather than what the car's limits are capable of doing,
but pushing the car too far almost.

When we asked what we think Lewis might do next
on Twitter yesterday,

someone on Instagram said,

I'm a commentator for next year.

We'd take him.

Would we take him?

[Transcript] Sky Sports F1 Podcast / Imola cancellation fallout and will Hamilton join Ferrari?

We'd take him, yeah.
There's always that option on the tab.
If Ferrari employee Crofty.
Of course, there is actually a vacant swap deal.
There will be a vacant swap deal.
That's the swap deal that everyone will be talking about.
OK.
On that note...
What other questions have we got?
We flogged that prancing horse, haven't we?
We did.
Monaco Preview.
I'm going with 33.
I'm going with the 33rd win for Fernando Alonso.
I'm going to get aboard that car.
Really?
Yeah.
I just think, you know, I mean,
I know he's invested a lot into it,
but it's a bit of a draggy car,
but it's got great tyre performance.
Sorry, we're going to get in the tyre chat and all of that.
But, you know, and he's such a clever guy
who knows how to win around Monaco.
I know Max does.
I know Lewis does.
I just think it's the result that he's after.
And I think it would be...
It's kind of a result that maybe Formula One needs after him alone.
Yeah.
I think it needs it.
Not that counts for anything, but...
It's all been smiles, hasn't it,
between the Red Bull pairing this year,
considering how it finished last year.
But let's not forget how it started.
And it started at Monaco.
In Monaco?
Didn't it?
With Perez, little park.
Can we call it that?
Well, that's the other reason why Verstappen wants to win.
Yeah.

[Transcript] Sky Sports F1 Podcast / Imola cancellation fallout and will Hamilton join Ferrari?

And why I'm completely wrong on Alonso winning Monaco.

Verstappen will want to win Monaco.

Yeah, because of that.

Because of that, because of last year,
the disappointment of last year.

And I think that...

But Bart, you know, as I go back to it,
four teams in it, all about Saturday.

I love qualifying Saturday.

It's one of my favourite days of the year.

Because you just...

You know that everything's geared towards it.

And whoever comes out on top has got,

I don't know what the percentage chance is,
someone will know out there,
80% chance of winning the race.

So, tune in on Saturday.

What's it like to cover Monaco?

I still haven't been.

I mean, you?

No, still haven't been.

Are you going?

No, I'm not going this year either.

Yeah.

Gosh.

All three of you are going.

What's it like to cover?

It's great.

It's my first one.

Oh, is it?

It's fantastic.

My first one, never been.

We used to, and I don't want to get into
first world problems here,

but we used to stay at the top of Monaco.

And then you could walk home at the end of
of an evening.

No, we never...

You cannot get taxis out of Monaco into France.

And where are we staying?

Cap for a...

Yeah.

Berlio Somer.

[Transcript] Sky Sports F1 Podcast / Imola cancellation fallout and will Hamilton join Ferrari?

Yeah, okay.

Which is beautiful.

It's great to cover.

I mean, I'm old enough to remember the narrow pit lane before they extended it.

And that was great because that was just a sort of personal physical challenge to escape the practice session without some broken toes or some legs.

That was great.

And I used to...

My spot between in the race was about half an inch next to a pine tree and the other one next to a stack of tires.

And there was just about space with my gargantuan head in between that spot.

I got it in through the...

I got it.

With about an inch to the side with my aerial coming out.

So, yeah.

No, it's great.

It's a challenge.

You know, there are two paddocks, but the water is there.

The grid.

I mean, the grid.

If you get onto the grid, it's fantastic.

You're so close to the cars.

So close, yeah.

And it's all under there.

Lovely.

And then you can walk the track afterwards and go out.

And everybody is there.

You know, everybody is there.

My first year, I was walking the track, 97, and I saw Norbert Haug, the mustachioed, all good times, head of Mercedes-Benz Motorsport with his great tash, having a pint outside the tip-top bar in his West McLaren Mercedes grey jacket and just relaxing.

And I thought, you know what?

That's Monaco.

Yeah.

Go for a little thing.

[Transcript] Sky Sports F1 Podcast / Imola cancellation fallout and will Hamilton join Ferrari?

And outside the tip-top bar, so beloved of Sir Sterling Moss and everybody back in the day, yeah, isn't it?
And, you know, you see Norbert Haug having a pint out there. I'm surprised so many people actually stack it at Raskas, bearing in mind the extra grip created by all the beer spilled on the Friday and Saturday nights on the track, because that's, you can go out and you can have a, you know, all the crowds can come down and they can do that after the programs of racing have finished. It's a special, special place.
And when you, I think, I was having this discussion, actually, as I was playing around with Golf the other day about the greatest sporting backdrops.
And I don't think there's much ahead of it.
I mean, you could say Augusta is a backdrop for Golf, because we were talking about it.
You could say Lord's for cricket.
You could say whatever.
But when you stood there on one of the pontoons going, hello, welcome to the Monaco weekend, and you've got the mountains in the background, the whole of the, you know, the principality laid out, and then you hear the, it's not quite the V8s when we first started, but when you hear these cars going round that track and you see them go through that swimming pool section, I think that's one of the best sections to watch as a spectator on any track, because it's just because of the proximity to the walls and the bravery, the guts you've got to have to go through that. It's a fantastic section, and you can see why so many people pay so much money to go and watch Formula One there, because it's all about that. It's just unbelievable, unbelievable.
But you did a piece, didn't you, a few years ago where you were able to just sit on the hill?
How to do it for 20 years.
Yeah, yeah, yeah.
Now I think my, how to do Monaco on the sheet weekend finished up at under £300, and Natalie did one how to do one the most expensive, and hers was about £400,000.
But it is possible to do it.
But yeah, no.

[Transcript] Sky Sports F1 Podcast / Imola cancellation fallout and will Hamilton join Ferrari?

I'd love to know, actually, I can't believe it,
it's your first time, so can you promise me,
you'll get a ride in the clock of the course,
or you'll take a course car out?

To go on the track.

They're a bit more, because it's the automobile club to Monaco,
they're a bit more, they'll let people go out,
so let's get you out on the course car.

I want you to drive it.

We won't stick you on the hill though, Names.

Don't go up on the hill where Billy with the loudspeaker goes
and heckles us as we're coming on air.

Because you think it's a really tricky track,
but I'm not sure how tricky a track is to drive.

I'd like you to tell me.

Tell me once you drive it.

I will, let me drive it and I'll tell you.

From everything I've done on the simulator and all that,
it is tricky.

Not the most fun.

Really?

It's like special because it's narrow, the tunnel, all that,
but yeah, there's not a lot of room to make moves
and do all the fun stuff.

I can see why they don't do the hot laps there.

Slow corners as well.

Slow corners, but that swimming pool section,
surely that would be fun to do.

Yeah.

Just hair through that at pace.

Yes, because I imagine you're constantly...

Well, qualifying lap, I think, yes, for a race,
as we know, no fun.

Yeah, I imagine you're constantly just on this early part
of the throttle really, and you're just...

Feathering, feathering the throttle.

Feathering the throttle.

Feathering the throttle.

Well!

Like feathering the throttle.

Take that, Anthony.

We look forward to hearing your thoughts on Monaco this weekend.

I'm looking forward to it.

[Transcript] Sky Sports F1 Podcast / Imola cancellation fallout and will Hamilton join Ferrari?

All three of you are going.

Sorry you can't come, Matt.

I know, spare a thought for me as I'm here in Sky.

Well, that's your petition to get Matt to the Monaco Grand Prix.

Well, it's okay.

Bring me back a bag of M&Ms.

Thank you.

From the airport.

Not even from Monaco.

Not even from Monaco from the airport.

Yeah, one of those ones in there.

Cluster Kim and M.

Can't wait.

Well, I look forward to seeing you guys on the coverage.

Safe travels, and we'll be back next Tuesday

to look back at the Monaco Grand Prix.

Hope you can join us then.

Bye for now.