

[Transcript] Sky Sports F1 Podcast / Ted's Podbook | Belgian GP - the wettest Podbook so far!

Hello everybody and welcome back to the Sky Sports F1 podcast feed and to Ted's pod book from well do I need to say where I'm coming from can you hear the water cascading off the roof of our hotel in the background do I need to get closer here the sound effects the water sound effects and this has to be the wettest pod book I know I've only been doing these for half a season so far this has to be the wettest pod book I've ever done it's chucking it down and it's windy sorry for the wind I'll try and shield the microphone from the wind it's chucking it down it's Thursday in Spa we've been here well since Wednesday yesterday was okay actually it was not so bad and the whole of Thursday has just been soaking wet the paddock has been pretty deserted as people have been shuttling from motor home to garage to press conference to to interview pen haven't been many fans out in force the campsites have been slowly filling up about half full as I think people can see that the forecast is for it to dry out tomorrow so why pitch your tent or your RV or whatever you've got in the pouring rain when you can actually do it in the relative dry tomorrow but it's still going to be muddy I think we're some way off sort of quagmire because it does drain quite well around here it has to and so it's been a bit of a weird day really combined with it being a back to back so everyone's kind of you know making their way from a few days a couple of days at home or the ones who've been straight come straight here are kind of taking a bit of a day off but there's been plenty going on and that's the point I want to tell you about and I probably will keep it 10 minutes today I'll try to because well I'm getting slowly rained on now the rain first of all the weather it is meant to dry up for Friday it's a sprint weekend of course here at the Belgian Grand Prix 2023 so we've got first practice tomorrow on Friday only practice really then we go into qualifying for the Grand Prix on Friday evening remember that there's qualifying for the Grand Prix on Friday evening European time and then on Saturday we have sprint qualifying in the morning and then we have the sprint race so Saturday is its own little sprint weekend in one day and then the Sunday is the Grand Prix for which we qualified on a Friday get it good now I know you regular listeners will know that it's just worth reiterating it if anybody's forgotten so given that Spa are in its seven kilometre five mile track is the longest one of the hardest to master on the whole calendar the biggest of big daddy tracks that's quite an ask to go in with just one practice session straight into a qualifying session for the race and then expect to get it right so who was it who described it as a run what you bring I think it was Daniel Riccardo who was saying this is really just a sort of you know run what you have prepared in the simulator and hope that it's somewhere near a good balance because you're not really going to have a chance to change it so yeah what should we go through first well should we go through one of the home races for Max Verstappen and I put it to him given his half Belgium and actually half Dutch his mum's Belgium Sophie and this is the kind of second home race he actually corrected me we said but no this is probably my home this is probably my home race because it's closest to where I was born where I grew up in Holland and my mum's Belgium so this is a home race and make no mistake about it if hungry you know qualifying was a bit difficult the car wasn't particularly well balanced over one lap given the way that the Red Bull heats up its tires I have no doubt that Max is thinking this is my weekend wet or dry preferably dry because there are less random things that can happen this track is made for the Red Bull we've

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seen that of the previous Red Bulls over the last couple of years and I think Max has just had the sort of glint in his eye here in a way that I didn't really see in Hungary I thought he felt he came into the Hungarian Grand Prix weekend a bit apprehensive didn't know how the weird qualifying experiment was going to go then you know it didn't go well for him on Saturday he was annoyed but then of course there was the rocket ship winning guy over 30 seconds half a minute on Sunday and he carried that positivity with him into this weekend a contrast to Lewis Hamilton who I will tell you about in a minute who has not looked like he's carried any kind of joy in over the Hungarian Grand Prix weekend even though he was what P3 into this weekend but what's Max saying yeah he was saying look it's a pleasure to be here want to put on a good show for the for the for the for the Orange Army the Dutch fans expect to go well there might be a compromise in between whether we set up the car you know for the wet or the dry we'll have to see what happens in sprint qualifying is no reason we can't do well and then I asked him about the trophy that Lando broke and I suggested that it would be quite cool given the you know the breadboard trophy cabinet I'm sure you've seen pictures of it in Norton Keens is all these you know pristine trophies that look like they get a buff up every couple of days that actually they should put the broken porcelain or pottery trophy in that cabinet and it would be a sort of almost like you know the way they don't clean Le Mans cars after they've won they stayed dirty with tire rubber and everything for quite a while for well forever afterwards I like that I think Red Bull should display the broken trophy in two or three pieces in their trophy cabinet I think that was a cool thing to do unfortunately it's not going to happen so I suggested this to Max and he said no no the organizers have already said they're going to make a new one and anyway we could

probably fix that one I was like no no don't so a message to Christian Horner if you're there if you're listening to seriously doubt but you never know wouldn't it be cool if you just put the broken one in the because that's a that's a moment of time isn't it that is a moment of history where Red Bull can put the broken one in and that would be a good sort of talking point for anyone who visits the visits the amazing trophy cabinet at Tilbrook at their factory in Milton Keens but Sergio Perez on the other side and the Red Bull garros was talking about how his improvement has come how it's nice to be on the podium again he wants to be on the podium every race now to the end of the season talking about how a setup change at the Spanish Grand Prix worked against him and

it's taken them a while to figure that out then he had the crash in Monaco that really put him on the back foot and only now has he kind of recovered from that he felt so that kind of explains what happened to Sergio Perez but that setup direction that started at Spanish Grand Prix has now been reversed and he feels much more comfortable with the car he looked much more like the old Checo there was a little smile on his lips there was a little glint in the eye there were he I tell you it's night and day Checo this weekend amazing what that podium can do never thought it would be like

that but you know his shoulders weren't sort of depressed and relaxed and and sort of hunched forward like they have been at previous races his shoulders were back sorry to go on about shoulders

and he just looked like the old Checo so it's nice to have him back was also talking about overtaking at the Hungara ring where you have to go offline and then you pick up a load of

tire marbles and it just loses you significant grip and that's why he couldn't close up on Landau Norris sorry Lewis wasn't on the podium of course Sergio was on the podium sorry mistake quickly corrected so yeah that's why he couldn't close up on Landau for P2 in the end and had to settle P3 because that pickup he's done so much overtaking he'd got some sort of rubber marbles on his tires and has started to lose grip so that explains that going on to Lewis Hamilton so apparently in the press conference I didn't see the press conference because I was in the pen at the time he didn't seem full of the joys of spring I think the weather probably might have something to do with getting him down or maybe had an annoying journey where something went wrong

I used to see this with Michael Schumacher so Michael Schumacher always used to say you take your journeys with you to the track sometimes in Formula One and if you have a bad journey and miss your plane or there's a problem then you can often take your journeys with you think about that for a bit and think of whether it's true in your in your lives as well I truly believe that I do think you take your journeys with you a lot of the time and so it is in F1 so maybe Lewis had a bad journey or something has happened because he wasn't in a great mood compared to the the good mood we normally see him in still he was very positive about the track he says he loves this track's been coming here many many years and is just looking forward to doing his job around here didn't want to get drawn into any of the sort of safety discussions people having about visibility in these wet conditions and whether the FIA is going to have to really be make some strong decisions that Carlos Sainz particularly one of and George Russell were talking about um about how oh a bit of water just fell on the microphone I hope it's still working yes it is um that Lewis was like look that's not my decision if the green light goes on team one meter run we could go out on track I'll go out on track that's my job my job is not to think about the safety of everybody involved now of course safety has been high on everyone's list everyone's list because of the events at Oruj and Radeon and the tragic death of Antoine Oba and Delano Vantoff so of course everybody is thinking about that it's the first time we've been here since the passing the accident of Delano Vantoff and so everybody is thinking look you know what are you going to do what are you going to do if we have these wet conditions and Carlos Sainz's answer is look the FIA have to say we will not run and if anybody is tuning in wanting to see qualifying or sprint qualifying or the sprint race or whatever it's not going to happen it won't happen we won't with you know we won't go out George Russell the same trust we trust the FIA he said uh to make the right decisions to protect driver's safety nobody was really saying that they need to change that sequence of corners I kind of half expected coming here that somebody might say oh well you know we could go back to what we had in 94 when they put a tire chicane at the bottom of Oruj so you have to slow down going down from La Source down into Oruj then take this you know silly sort of flick-flack oh not silly silly this the slow chicane and then you're accelerating up Oruj so it just takes away any of the speed first of all you couldn't do that either we have to re-homologate the state the the the circuit and secondly I just don't think anyone is really going there if it has to change I don't want to say if we have another fatality of course you know one is too many but if it has to change it will change in some other big way I don't know but no one not one of the drivers was saying even Lance Stroll who previously had been very very tough on uh strongly spoken on on this and how you know Belgium had Spa had some questions to be

answered about its inherent safety he wasn't saying that today they were all saying they trust in the FIA so yeah we'll see what happens there moving on to what else was Lewis having to say oh yeah about the um the pole position um I asked him uh just to kind of give us a bit more on how that was last Saturday obviously the first pole position for quite some time Saudi 2001 and how uh how it felt and he's it was it's quite an interesting answer he said Saturday was full of emotion he got back to the motorm soaked it all in his dad called him he had a nice chat with his dad about about how it was and then when he lined up and then he said how's this for a buzzkill then he said he went into the engineering briefing and his Mercedes engineer said well you're not going to win the race Lewis because Max's half a second per lap quicker on race pace and he gave he gave a kind of look about you know how's that for a buzzkill and then he said well I then I had to sit then I had to think overnight on Saturday going Sunday last week about how I was going to prove the engineers wrong I do like that and it's something we've heard so many times isn't it come on Mercedes engineers where's James Allison giving it the the big we can do this you know that'd be so boring you're all boring um sorry that's my Kerry Condon by the way uh impression they're not filming uh this weekend no sign of the uh as yet untitled uh Brad Pitt Joseph Kozinski directed a fun movie they are not here maybe they're still in hungry not quite not quite sure uh but yeah there Lewis had to think about ways that he was going to um prove the engineers wrong but in the end of course that didn't happen even though he was happy with the pace and the time management towards it but they need a little bit more performance uh George Russell was also saying that uh he said all the effort is there but they just need a little bit more performance to actually get enough closer to Red Bull to pressure Max in some kind of way otherwise it's just not really going to happen uh Charlotte Claire talking about how Ferrari really need to get back to a sort of circuit science were saying this um like Austria I suppose like Canada where eliminate the mistakes solid performance and they didn't really know what science were saying they didn't really know why they were so poor in Hungary and at Silverstone uh I think this I know I always say this but this track will tell I think kind of will they need to go into the uh into the summer break with something positive because there aren't very many positives uh at the moment for Ferrari we have

the confirmed departure of Laura McKee so the uh chap who was their sporting director you might have seen him on the pit wall or seen him in interviews he's off to Alf Tari as team boss Peter Bayer so joint team boss team principal he is the team new team principal of Alf Tari and Ferrari and Red Bull now finally agreed a release for Laura McKee so he is gone as of this race from Ferrari not here um and uh I don't know when he'll be starting at Alf Tari but they did name the new sporting director and that is Diego Ioverno who has made his way up from I think he's chief mechanic actually has made his way up the Ferrari management ladder and well deserved Ioverno is a good guy well known respected amongst the paddock good relationships with the FIA so I'm kind of um you know thinking he's Ioverno's been doing the sporting director job for a while anyway it kind of feels like that but uh yeah he's the perfect replacement so good good hire there uh from Ferrari a good internal hire um right let's move on to uh McLaren and Lando Norris on the trophy naughty boy was uh full of apologies actually today he just I don't know whether he's been told by his PR people to come out and just look Lando just apologize lots okay but he said I'm sorry you know didn't mean to do it blah blah blah um as I say it's it wasn't really you know he was just doing his podium champagne thing he didn't know that it was going

to tumble off uh it's not like he picked up the trophy and smashed it so I'm not sure all the apologies were really no that needed but uh yeah uh you know we don't want any of the fun place stopping uh stopping Lando's podium celebrations but um otherwise uh Oscar Piastri was talking um about how he thinks McLaren can be fast everywhere and uh Spa really doesn't hold many apprehensions uh for him it's the first time Oscar will have raced here for three years since F3 three years ago so he's looking forward to that even though he's only got one run at it same for Logan Sargent he loves this track and even though as an F1 rookie like Oscar Piastri uh going straight in with only one run at practice straight into qualifying didn't seem to really phase them or bother them they seemed quite confident about it uh so yeah so hopefully Oscar uh and Logan can have a uh good weekend it wasn't really anything else from Williams on the Logan Sargent side oh yeah he said it's just his execution that he needs to do executing like a computer program that rather than the other one um and the pieces are coming together

for him and the Williams he just needs to actually put it all together and deliver it in a bit more of an effective way so uh his first points surely can't be too far off um but Daniel Ricciardo who also hasn't scored any points uh this year so far because he's only driven one race was full of optimism for what he can do with the Alcatari and what I thought was crucial was that he has saying that the Alcatari doesn't hold any big vices I kind of thought you know brackets like the McLaren so actually that's quite encouraging he wanted to say and once he gets to know the car better he can actually do some things and uh and change it and make some improvements there Zhou Guangyu explained what the problem was off the start line in Hungary that really made his great p5 and his great qualifying completely meaningless and that it was a brake rear brake temperature sensor had issued an alert and the engine had shut itself or put itself into a sort of safe mode which had only delivered 5000 revs rather than 9000 revs which is what you need to do the start so that was why no fault of his own which kind of he was happy about but still meant that he was absolutely swamped at the start and wasn't able to capitalize on his great qualifying position but frustrated nonetheless I did suggest slightly mischievously to Zhou that his engineer should chill out a bit and if Zhou wants on the team radio you know F1 does the radio at the end of everybody's race uh I think it's on uh it's on youtube uh you can listen to it and Zhou often starts to say you know to debrief after as he said after 70 laps I wanted to you know get off my chest why I'm at the start and the engineer immediately itself but no we won't discuss it after do not say anything nothing and Zhou was like no but I want to no so I sort of cheekily suggested well the Alfa Romeo salboard press officer kind of looked at me like what are you saying uh that his engineer might want to chill out a bit and uh let Zhou you know let off some steam and Zhou kind of said yeah yeah I'd like to let off some steam but uh I'm very quickly told not to say it at the back of the uh once we get back the motom which I suppose was fair enough um Lance Troll uh Aston Martin finally Fernando Alonso kind of said the same thing which was that uh we think we've gone with a setup direction recently that has led us down the wrong path and we're going to try and change that but uh they're still looking for reasons as to why as to where their pace has gone they acknowledge it now I think which is good um that's part of the uh the problem to actually acknowledge that they have you know a bit of an issue whereas before they were just saying oh well you know we're just the same it's just that everybody else has filled the gap in between us and Red Bull I think that's true but they have lost some pace and uh yeah they

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they need it back pretty desperately because where has gone the prospect of another Fernando Alonso podium especially around Spa that should on paper suit their car right um that is about it Lewis Hamilton said something so they had some nice words say about the fact that F1 Academy the F1 backed series for female racing drivers is going to expand not only to follow the F1 season next year or some of it in Europe in Europe and internationally for all I know haven't set the calendar yet but that 10 of the 15 cars will be liveried one for each of the F1 teams I did ask Lewis who whether he knows who's driving the Mercedes um Formula 4 car next year we don't know whether whether it's Luna Fluxer who's the Mercedes young driver but I think she's probably a bit young to get straight into a F4 car uh he didn't know I know Marta Garcia I think is Mercedes sponsored in F1 Academy but um yeah we'll see he didn't know but he was full of uh support for that series so it's quite interesting and he was actually saying look it's better it's going to be on F1 build it'll be colored covered and televised properly and I'm sure we will cover it on Sky Sports I might do it myself um next year uh because at the moment you can't find it and you can't watch it I don't think that's I think that's true first of all but I'm not sure that's entirely accidental or I think it might be by design while they let the series sort of bed in for a year that it's not you know front and center in the way that we used to do w series front and center on with with great television coverage I would say that as part of it um but uh yeah maybe F1 Academy is just letting themselves bed in for a year before they start to show the world what they are all about right having said I would do 10 minutes in the rain I think I've done double that so it's about time I say uh goodbye thanks for watching and join us for the sprint weekend remember if you're listening to this uh on Friday it's practice it's Friday this it's qualifying this evening or this afternoon and then it is uh tomorrow sprint qualifying and then we've got the sprint race on Saturday and the Belgian Grand Prix wet or dry on Sunday thanks for listening hope to have your company throughout the weekend on Sky F1 bye bye