

Hello, or should that be Howdy? Good day. Good evening. Hello, partner. And welcome back to Sky Sports F1 podcast feed and to Ted's Podbook from Austin, Texas. Yes, we're full of all the cliches from the Lone Star State. Howdy, partner. And my partner for this pod book is Rachel Brooks. Rachel, would you like to describe where we are and what we're doing and total, total truth for everybody. Full disclosure.

Full disclosure. We're in a cab. We are on Congress Bridge on South Congress and we are heading to a shopping mall. We are. I'm going to buy the shorts which I wear on TV. They are made by a company that does organic and sustainable clothing and all the cotton is organic and sustainable and that's the shorts I wear. I'm going to buy some t-shirts as well. What are you going to buy? I'm sure the listeners are interested. I'm going to buy some gym leggings that I get in America because they're really comfortable and I have worn them on out. I wore the same ones when I did the feature with Carlos Sainz in Singapore about how hot it was around the track. Excellent. So we're here to tell you what has happened on the first day of what is going to be a sprint weekend media day here on the Thursday at the circuit of the Americas. I should also tell you for proper full disclosure being driven by Alfredo in a nice grand Jeep Cherokee. Thank you very much Alfredo. Alfredo is a Fernando Alonso fan for a very long time and well maybe we should start off with the news about Fernando Alonso because Alfredo you'll be keen to hear this. Aston Martin are going to have a faster car this weekend than they've had recently. They have an upgrade. Nice. Yep. They have the last big upgrade. A couple of teams actually that have the last big upgrade of the season. Mercedes being the other one and you know Aston Martin, Rachel, haven't they for the last few races while they've been sort of scratching around waiting to see where their pace went have been saying well we do have things that are coming and this is the race we're going to see them. Now Fernando seemed to be resigned to the fact that they're going to lose that place in the Constructors' Championship to McLaren but he was saying look it's not important. We've scored almost 200 points more than we scored last year. We've had more podiums than I've actually forgotten about and you know we might get another podium. I think they probably will before now in the end of the season but that's not the point. The point is how far we've come with the most improved team in the pit lane in Formula One and that's certainly true. You can't take that away from Aston Martin. You can't at all. I think the only reason it sort of stands out to us is because they started so well and when that form dipped I think the surprise with how well they did at the start was followed by the surprise by how much that formed it and everyone else caught them and not only that overtook them as well and also I think because we saw different people on the podium so we loved seeing Fernando up there. It was brilliant to see him up there and I think we lost that element as well and it was a little bit too predictable so I'm very happy that they've got an upgrade and yeah let's battle and recommence. It would be great to see more battles between second, third, fourth and fifth in the Constructors. Alfredo were you willing Fernando on? Did you love seeing him on the podium this year? Yeah in the beginning of the year was amazing. It was. There was that race Marco where he possibly could have won. That was so bad. At least we got like maybe one different driver like not Red Bull on the podium like winning all the races this year. Yeah well that was where was the other one where I was willing willing Alonso. I think it was Holland actually. It was Zandvoort do you remember on the there was the restart and yeah we all thought he'd make a lunge didn't we we might go for it and oh I'm sure he thought about it. Well let's see let's see whether whether Fernando can do anything

more. Lance Stroll was in the press conference, was asked about the shove to his trainer of course he was by the media but he said effectively what he said to you after the last day in Qatar which is you know we're cool. I'm cool with my trainer. Haven't really gone over it again and I think dismissed. There was some rumour out there that he wasn't gonna you know this was enough to put him off Formula 1 for good and wanted to you know hang up his racing helmet same kind of room of Sergio Perez dismissed by both of them. Perez I came out I actually asked Perez first of all I said so you know just to just to clear things up you're not retiring in next race in Mexico are you? He said no no I'm not definitely not so yeah I mean I don't know but what do you find when you see some of these stories that are you know made up for clicks or whatever online or it's come from a source that no one can confirm or whatever do you tend to think we shouldn't ask the drivers about it or because it's out there you think people have seen it and you think it's our duty Rachel to ask them about it. I think it's really hard I think so many people have access to the internet which is obviously a good thing however like you say you can't find the original source of a story and it used to be that you know you had your trusted sources or somebody spoke to somebody

and and you could trust it. I think we do have a duty to put it to them like Max today I put to him the line about Helmut Marco and that Max had allegedly reportedly said if Helmut leaves I'm leaving it wasn't true it was he said it was completely made up but it also gave him the opportunity to say that neither Helmut or Christian are leaving the team which is what he said to me today and he said and I said what because you want them there and he said no because you don't break

up a winning team. That's the crucial line for me I mean I never heard of the Christians not leaving the team he's instrumental in their success but Helmut Marco is 80 you know 80 pushing 81 and he says that he's got a contract for next year he's going to see that out and then see where he is but you know you can't I mean I suppose he could carry on I guess if he wanted to beyond

there's no reason I couldn't but he's just enjoying the fruits of his labour I guess you know he developed Max Verstappen he's part of that and yeah yeah I think he's they're all saying why break up a winning team it doesn't really make sense the end of next year maybe it might be a different matter but anyway what else was Max Verstappen saying about actually the racing do we expect like has been the case recently in the coast circuit the Americas the Red Bull should go pretty well around here I think so and I also asked him if it's flat out till the end of the season and he said yes absolutely I think they just want to really stamp their dominance on this season don't they they're not letting up at all it'd just be interesting to see whether checker can join him up on the podium and it's one twos the rest of the way I think we'd like to see it but I think Perez needs it Sergio needs it well Sergio did say that he spent a couple of days with Hubert his engineer at Red Bull Racing in Tilbrick and Milton Keynes for the last since Qatar and has found some setup directions once they actually went through the data and said aha right we changed this it made the car do this that was wrong so at least they know what not to do now and interestingly I mean I go back to what he said to me in in Qatar that every time this car has changed direction slightly it's towards Max the way Max drives and it's away from the way he drives and he's had to almost learn the car all over again and he said that's what's been holding him back not you're going to build the car around Max let's be honest that's what Red Bull have done and he knew that when he joined the team but he said I

have felt that every time they've taken a step it's a step that's away from how I like to drive and I've had to get up to speed again and when I do it changes again and that's part of being a racing driver I guess okay that's Red Bull by the way it is another one because I think this race is sponsored by the computer firm like the last one it is another one of the trophies that lights up in the national flag when you kiss it oh so when you okay great okay well they programmed it now for the Dutch flag oh I would assume so I mean the the promotional material said that they'd taken a lip print of all 20 drivers and then the trophy will recognize the lip print of the driver when he kisses it because it's as unique as your fingerprint and that will light up but to be fair I mean the top three in Qatar was it all red white and blue anyway I think there was something about I mean they only needed to program in red white and blue really didn't they well no I think it would have displayed the Union flag or the Australian flag on it had Oscar Orlando won the race as well George Russell by the way today we'll get on to Mercedes now George Russell was quite flat out in saying that Lando Norris was the fastest driver in Qatar a couple of weeks ago now put this to Lando and he said well first out it's very nice thank you George both celebrating the 100th Grand Prix in Formula One this weekend but also yes once Lando cleared the traffic he was doing faster lap times than Max but Max was probably just protecting his lead from Oscar behind but yeah that that McLaren well let's put let me put it as question do you think that McLaren is going to win a race between now and Abu Dhabi even with Max in competition I'm going to say no Alfredo says yes out the front in driving us what do you think I'm going to say yes the McLaren can but only if there is a reliability fault with Max's car no I just said I just qualified that with even still Max with Max in the race I think you're I think Alfredo I think you're out on your own on this one I think Max has still got some pace in the pocket but hey let's see let's see but will you say that I want to know Ted whether you think we have seen the full potential of that Red Bull this year have they ever turned it up to 100% oh yeah yeah yeah there have been there have been times I can't quite remember the moment but there have been times where Max has had to push 100% listen Suzuka he wanted to win by 20 seconds I think he was pushing for the whole of Suzuka but the gap is so huge he hasn't needed to no I know but he wanted to after the pain of Singapore Max wanted to make a statement and he told everybody in the team and there all the boys in the garage I'm going to win this by 20 seconds in the end and he lost out by he lost out by seven tenths of a second yeah pretty much anyway um Lewis Hamilton was saying was saying

that they've also got they've also got an upgrade so they've got um what I think they're trying to play down but they're saying it's a small upgrade then it turns to a medium upgrade then it turns to a big upgrade it's the floor essentially and given that that's where you know most of the downforce generator from these ground effect cars I think that's quite a big upgrade I'm going to call that quite a big upgrade for Mercedes but it's the last one as Aston Martin before the end of the season and they've got high hopes as they head towards a sort of red bull way I'm not going to say a red bull are like car because I don't think it is it'll be a Mercedes car and they don't know what red bull are going to do next year with their car anyway but it's a red bull way of going racing with the design of their car yeah it's quite late isn't it in the season to make that call I remember sitting down with Toto in Saudi Arabia and then he'd be saying that the car's going to be completely different and for it to only now be as close to the red bull design as as it will be um that's taken a long time well let's ask Toto happily he's back both knees intact so let's see that um Lewis Hamilton also quite clear about the um were the drivers on the limit

physically for uh the Qatar Grand Prix now maybe you could say this is easy for him because he didn't race in it but he said let's not get too soft if I was in that race and I would have struggled to get out of the car too we are the elite athletes in motorsport we need to be the elite athletes you don't see anyone doing a marathon and stopping because they get too hot a bit of a different thing

because I suppose the marathon they're not running in 70 degrees effectively 50 60 70 degrees what it

is in the cockpit but Lewis said this is an extreme sport if uh if I had I don't feel good after the race I need yeah I want to feel like I've actually had a hard race and if I don't feel good at the end of the race then I need to train harder I want to feel pain in my body which is um I'm just steady on Lewis I just want to say here by the way I'm trying to read Ted's notebook I cannot make out a single word of it I thought my handwriting was bad when I write a speed but um no I was going to say Voucher apparently got out of the car and said he was absolutely fine and it's down to all his cycle training yeah yeah which I thought was fascinating well he is extreme he's very very fit he I'm not saying the others aren't but

but the only other thing I you know we were talking to one driver on the way over here actually and he was saying that the team were asking for information from him during that racing catter and they were asking for the information every lap and he had to say to them I can only give it to you every five laps because I'm trying to save every bit of energy every bit of mental capacity physical capacity everything to keep this car on the track and they felt it was really really on the limit yeah okay uh other tall drivers uh Alex Albin saying it was on the limit Esteban Ocon saying it was on the limit um even uh Yuki Sonoda saying it was very very tough so it's nothing to do with uh whether you're a tall driver or a uh more diminutive driver it's just that it was very very tough out there um Hülkenberg Magnussen very excited

about the car they've got uh it's again a more of a sort of red bull like upgrade and the interesting thing for me is that with Simone Resta who is the ex Ferrari and Haas uh designer he has friends in Ferrari even though they are separate entities now but he will be able to give Ferrari some kind of insight into what they've done at Haas building more of a red bull car which might help Ferrari next year especially if Ferrari take him back into the Maranello fold away from Haas to help them next year so lots of changes on the Haas this weekend we'll see how they go um and finally we should say welcome back Daniel Ricciardo that's the biggest story for me this weekend welcome back

Daniel Ricciardo the the the wound the stitches on the hand actually look like they have healed very nicely now I kind of expect them to look a bit more raw his leather glove of doom is gone yep did you see he had the leather glove that they were here he used to he was wearing a sort of single leather glove which was protecting his wound on his uh left hand yes it's on his left hand yeah uh and that's gone and he spent hours and hours in the simulator didn't feel it was ready for Qatar but does feel he's ready now so uh is all good and uh did you see the trousers and the boots he was wearing today no but I did some filming with him yesterday and he told me that he um he has special boots for this weekend yesterday's boots were black snake skin with uh honey badger on the side they were custom made for him and I said oh are you wearing those to the track he said I have another pair for tomorrow I said you've got a different pair for every day haven't you this weekend he loves this place and he um yeah just embraces

everything about it didn't arrive on horsey mcorff horse face no he said to me I'm going to have a much more low key entry to the paddock this year he said I I just want to get on with the job now and he said I'm not going to stop being fun but I'm getting my head down and knuckling knuckling down and getting on with it but I'm not going to arrive on the horse which he didn't but we hope that you can join us arrive however you like on a stagecoach on a horse whatever you want because as well as f1 we've got the f1 academy so uh the finale to their season fp1 if you're listening to this on friday which you probably are because we're recording it late on thursday evening 6 p.m for free practice one qualifying at 9 p.m saturday sprint qualifying 6 p.m sprint at 11 p.m to join us for that uh and the grand prix from 6 30 p.m on sunday evening lights out at 8 p.m rachel thank you very much alfredo thank you very much we are at the mall we are ready and look forward to having your company throughout the weekend for the us grand prix from austin texas bye rachel bye bye alfredo bye