

Hello everybody and welcome back to the Sky Sports F1 podcast feed and to Ted's pod book from Silverstone and it's a very special edition of the pod book because you are actually joining us myself and Craig Slater at the new Aston Martin factory or as we should call them by their full name the Aston Martin Aramco Cognizant Formula One team I believe Craig is the official name and this is quite a factory. Would you like to do the the descriptive bit or should I join you in it? What kind of building are we in? Like one of those 1950s radio broadcasters we can talk about the miles of corridors leading into chambers where great decisions are made but I mean it is significantly more opulent than the previous building which still exists but which might crack the team principle has just announced that the wrecking ball will soon be active upon so I would say that for example that the entrance hall in which we're sitting in at the moment is probably five times the size of what they used to have in their own facility their old facility they've got a kind of sparsely filled trophy cabinet which signals that the expectation is that many more podium trophies are going to be arriving here over the next few years and I think that's part of what this is for sure a lot of it is the ergonomics of efficient development of Formula One materials having the appropriate spaces for drawing areas and engineering rooms and race bays and so on part of it as well is surely a kind of demonstration of the power and potential of this team so that every time people arrive for work they understand that they're not in a midfield team anymore in the old Jordan factory they're in a what expects to be a front-running team from here on so yeah just to just to further those descriptions from Craig if you know Silverstone you'll know the Dadford Road it goes from the A43 down to the Silverstone main entrance and on the on the side of the road that's not the Silverstone Innovation Park with the sort of light industrial units on the other side of the road where it used to be so behind the Jordan factory and some campsites is now I would say probably a 250 meter long building maybe even topping 300 meters with a car park in the end of it so it's quite it's very long pale pewter in color a sort of a pale shade of greenness this is that sort of fashionable shading yeah we have around here obviously British racing green is Aston Martin's color but it's a kind of paler trendier hue it is and very long and not quite as wide as it is long such are the constraints of the site not constraints it's just the way the site is so I'd say it's probably about what 80 meters wide and then about 200 meters long so it's very long and running the whole length of the factory there is this rather beautiful sort of light well so you've got all the light coming in from from the sides obviously with the with the big windows and one of the race bays looks out onto the almost onto the end of the Dadford Road when it gets the roundabout where you go right for the M1 and left for the M40 and the running through the middle of it is this light well that goes down onto some concrete a concrete floor very nice the rest of it very nice porcelain wide big porcelain tiles there's lots of wood everywhere there's lots of polished brass yes polished brass banisters and then sort of a deep colored oak staircase

so this is a what the reason I'm describing this to you dear listener is that this is a world away from the sort of plastic you know cable covered and tattered tiles and old carpets of the Jordan Spiker Midland Force India Factory so this is the epitome of what Lawrence Stroll was talking about when he took over this team when he renamed it Aston Martin and you would argue it now has a it can hold its own this factory and we've seen the race bays we've seen the machine shops we see not not everything is moved in here yet but it will be soon the design office upstairs this is to rival for my money this is to rival right up there with the best this is to rival Mercedes alright it's not as big as Mercedes but Endstone certainly Williams I think it's much more modern than Williams looks like a nicer place to work or not that's a difficult difficult word to say looks like a more inspirational place to work I'd say than Williams and they're a factory at Grove that's starting to show its age a little bit and McLaren I mean is a whole different building so it's difficult to compare it doesn't have the kind of grand concept of the McLaren Technology Center it's there is a functional functionalism here to balance the nice decor interestingly they call the long passageway which which runs that the whole length of the this sort of long thin building as you're kind of describing it has the streets rather than McLaren has the Boulevard but there are echoes of that so I think that they they want to maintain what you previously described as their their feet on the ground attitude and sort of plucky underdog spirits and fighting capabilities and sort of upstart ambition with these these much better facilities they have chief among them I think is the wind tunnel which is not yet online it's going to be available next year to them but which spares them this 10-mile drive up to someone else's in brackets Mercedes facility and I suppose in that sense along with their their Honda partnership which is coming up this is a team standing very firmly on its own two feet independently and doing as it pleases not least because they've got a lot of money behind them they've got a lot of sponsors there is a new sponsor when I say new I'll put it in inverted commas on the car this weekend it's Valvoline which is the American oil and petrol concern it's actually part of a Ramco so it's not really new it's entirely owned by Ramco the Saudi existing title sponsor of the team but if you see it on the car and you think oh that's new it might not be new money but it's certainly a new brand coming to the car just pick up on what you would you you're comparing this place to all the other factories and what's very interesting is despite the MTC the McLaren technology center is this incredibly futuristic building a lot of their facilities have had to be overhauled or are being in the process of being overhauled at the moment not least the wind tunnel there as well Williams you spoke about I had dinner there last night and they as I think is quite well publicized now really do feel that they are being held back by being prevented from investing serious money in what they think is fairly ancient technology particularly the wind tunnel at Grove which was one of the first relatively modern wind tunnels but which is now way out of date but they

are they are angling politically to in a way similar to how Premier League football clubs can operate they are allowed to build up infrastructure out with the cost cap if they can show that it's it's a kind of investment in the general business rather than just a cheap trick to gain a short-term advantage capital expenditure isn't one thing I have noticed is that the one trophy that is out that everybody can have a look at and perhaps to inspire is the best result they've had so far which is second from the Canadian Grand Prix Fernando Alonso second it's right in front of us I think that's the small one they get to take away I think maybe they are just that quite that small it looks like a bit of a replica size to me but in any case Fernando Alonso was feeling optimistic more optimistic than he was in Austria about a positive weekend and I think this is going to be crucial they have a good upgrade package to here to us then Martin and even though you've got the others with the Mercedes they've got a front wing Ferrari still take advantage of the upgrades they had at the last race in Austria that works so well for them Red Bull I mean you'd say it's probably out there and by all measures is sort of you know everyone talks about what they're out by themselves but is this the place and Fernando Alonso seemed to be determined to give the people and everybody and this facility a good debut by by getting back onto the podium where they weren't able to do in Austria so I think they've got every chance of doing very well here Aston Martin I think this circuit is really up there up there Boulevard or is it Street well so high speed you think is there has been has been the advantage of this car and obviously that's what we have around here so yeah you would hope they have had that little plateau because the they were heralding the upgrade package that came a couple of races ago as there's something quite significant and it didn't really seem to to give them the lift that I suppose the expectation was that it would deliver but yeah I mean it's they've had a great start to the year even this little plateau that you they've had it would appear over the last couple of races the ambition to drive things on here is quite clear Dan Fallows was at the reception this evening and he's got regular updates in the pipeline without question and yes they would be I think they're every bit as capable of making steps over the course of the season as as the teams which have been the rivals thus far you know Ferrari and Mercedes yes it was quite a nice reception I was late unfortunately because I was still doing the F1 show but the reserve drivers stop of Van Dorn and well Pedro de la Rosa is not really a reserve driver but is a driver we're here and Jessica Hawkins as well and did we hear from Mike Craig yes he did he came in and cracked a few not quite jokes he was really he's the least overtly witty man I can think of in the paddock he has this slightly austere German four-spring duoch technique way about him I say that I do but he I kind of figure him as a kind of fourth member of craft work a little bit slightly mysterious figure you know right creative but he kept it like tonight did he yeah he did but he sort of came up the loop to rounds and wow this is this is a big gathering this evening I think I think there are

more people here than we sent out invitations to which I gained the sort of ripple of laughter but he is yeah he's the affable guy I mean you speak to Sebastian Vettel about him who I think he worked with him didn't he in his junior days and he's a good team builder he's got a bit of a sense of humor you know I think yeah he's settling well into the job here he's maybe slightly offsets the absolute the absolutely driven figure which is Lauren stroll which without question is is hastening on the developments here down a fellow is just coming down the stairs to leave leave the scene as well yes yeah he's just to describe the scene down fellas doesn't wear the the green Aston Martin shirts that everybody else does he can wear a white shirt but he's got his past evening down have a good have a good evening see you at the circuit he's leaving for the night right Craig let's just do the last couple of minutes on any standout lines that you got from the from the paddock this evening I'll give you Carlos Sainz and track limits I'll give you Lewis Hamilton and track limits I'll go on track limits tonight which Lewis Hamilton was effectively saying you know it was a bad look for formula you were one or two people pushed back on your suggestion in advance of the Grand Prix in Austria or it was the big at the beginning of the Grand Prix we're starting to accrue these penalties that we should have gone back to what Charlie Whiting used to do which was if you could see something that this milstrom of penalties coming then well let's let's have a kind of an amnesty on certain only for the race yes when it's the same for everybody obviously in qualifying it's not the same for everybody and you have to have a rule for qualifying because people can do their laps and you have to have some sort of standardization but if you make it the same well I mean I suppose you could do it of course fine but said that's what tonight wasn't it we never used to have problems here before in Austria and we didn't have track limits in the race before yeah in the right but but in the race like we've seen Toto Wolf made this point like we've seen at the US Grand Prix in Austin Texas before in the race it gets so ridiculous that you won't be able to do everybody as indeed they almost couldn't do everybody had to wait until 10 p.m. local or was it 11 p.m. no it's about 10 p.m. wasn't it to get the to get the result in Austria but you know what if it's the same for everybody there's no competitive advantage yes it is breaking the rules but if it's same for everybody then it's the most practical thing realistically reasonably to get the actual race done have a result everyone's happy with it it was kind of playground stuff wasn't it one driver after another dobbling the other one in I've just seen him go it became a bit dreary and and not very edifying the whole spectrum Hamilton as you can imagine was was harder was pretty hard on on actually letting it go was science as well you spoke to him I think he felt that they would be little points in in in he's very controlled anyway isn't easy he's he's he doesn't like to appear I think he's conscious of the fact that if he gets angry then it shows that he's in a sense vulnerable unable to control himself so I thought he was quite dignified today he also played down any notion that once again or his team had perhaps favored

Charles Leclerc over him because there were a couple of episodes in that race in Austria where he wasn't allowed to get past Leclerc even though he had demonstrably better pace and then there was the issue which I suppose resulted from that when he lost position when Ferrari came in to change tires and they weren't able to effectively double stack the cars I think he said at the time in the immediate aftermath he'd been made to look like a fool well he said he'd had interesting discussions with the team but ultimately he had reached a reasonable conclusion himself that that they were not trying to make to make it well yes to damage his race all right anything else I thought the best line today was Naomi Schiff's managed to get from Lewis Hamilton that he could race for another five years I was trying to trap Lewis around the sort of the 2026 engine change regulations to see if I could get him to say that because Mercedes build good engines then he might be inclined to at least stay in Formula 1 until we see how those perform especially as it seems that perhaps Red Bull might not be so well off in that department but Lewis signalling five more years yeah so you were trying to get tempted to say another two and a half more years and Naomi got a double that that's that sums me up good all right well listen we will leave it there we've we've gone five minutes over what I said you had to Craig you have to compile the thing about this I've thought about this a lot and you know particularly I think it applies to McLaren Mercedes are about to revamp their headquarters and I was speaking to the chief operating officer Rob Thomas and reminding him that Athens had much better intellectual and political life before the path and on was built so the actual surroundings and plush opulent offices do not necessarily deliver better results it's the people it's the people that matter is that what you're saying the people and simplicity and often compressed spaces where the work is the focus and people aren't spread around in in kind of in isolation cramped conditions I think can often be very fertile especially for creatives well if they get more people here at Aston Martin it won't be so spacious they'll have they'll be back to having cramped desks like they did when they were busting out of their old factory but certainly they have a car that they can do business with this weekend and for the rest of season and can only go on to greater strength from here and you get the feeling just being here as we wrap this up sitting in their lobby that this factory would not look out of place having a Formula One World Championship trophy somewhere amongst these shelves it's that impressive I think it's probably probably when not if after Red Bull well I was trying to yes that that would be a if you were to ask which team will win the championship next I mean 2026 will but then they're well placed there with Honda potentially as a as a works team with it with an engine manufacturer I think they'd be a good each way bet to be to succeed Red Bull as champions all right brilliant listen Craig thank you very much for your company thank you for listening and we look forward to having your company from the British grot from this at the home of British motor racing Silverstone throughout the weekend it's Friday Friday free practice it's the

normal European sorting it's the normal European timetable we have free practice one free practice two on Friday free practice three on Saturday and then qualifying and then the race from 1230 on Sunday listen thank you very much for listening we'll see you throughout the weekend bye bye