



FEDERATION INTERNATIONALE DE L'AUTOMOBILE

**F1 COMMISSION PRESS CONFERENCE
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WITH

**MAX MOSLEY, FIA PRESIDENT
BERNIE ECCLESTONE, FOM PRESIDENT**

Opening statement by FIA President, Max Mosley

I'll go straight to what has come out of today's meeting.

First of all, qualifying. At Formula One races from now on there will be two qualifying sessions on Friday and Saturday from 13.00 hrs to 14.00 hrs. Qualifying will be one flying lap for each car, cars will run one at a time. The running order on Friday will follow the Championship (at the first race of 2003 we will use the 2002 Championship) with the Championship leader going out first and second in the championship running second and so on. The running order on Saturday will be determined by the Friday times which do not count for the grid so that the fastest on Friday will run last on Saturday, the second fastest second last and so on.

This is a completely new system for qualifying which is going to put pressure on drivers to get the job done in just one single flying lap, each of them going out individually, one at a time.

The practice schedule will stay the same as it is at present. That is to say from 11.00 hrs to 12.00 hrs on Friday, and then of course the qualifying session. On Saturday from 09.00 hrs to 9.45 and 10.15 to 11.00 hrs. But, if by December 15th at least three teams undertake to the FIA to run no more than 10 car-days of private testing between 1st March and 1st November, the teams which have given this undertaking will be able to test at each event from 09.00 hrs to 11.00 hrs on Friday morning. They may use their spare car and their test driver during this period, so it becomes a complete test session from 09.00 to 11.00 and then a normal practice session open to all the teams from 11.00 until 12.00.

We're going to do this provided of course at least three teams undertake to restrict themselves to 10 days of private testing during the period 1st March to 1st November.

Next we are changing the Formula One points system.

Instead of the present 10, 6, 4, 3, 2, 1, it will be 10, 8, 6, 5, 4, 3, 2, 1. So down to eighth places, with everybody except first getting two more points than they get currently, and then the seventh and the eighth respectively getting two points and one point. That will have the effect of making it more difficult for a championship winner to emerge quickly.

Then team orders: team orders which interfere with the race result are prohibited. There will be no more team orders which can interfere with the race and the result of the race.

The Belgian Grand Prix. There was not unanimous agreement by the teams to run at the 2003 Belgian Grand Prix without tobacco advertising. This event has, therefore, been removed from the championship calendar for 2003.

Finally, on tyres, each team will be allowed two different dry tyres at each event. Previously, as you know, each tyre company would provide two tyres only for all its teams and each team had to choose a tyre from the same two tyres. They will no longer have that restriction.

Those are the important points to emphasise. Apart from that, we've discussed a number of other issues, including the problem of overtaking and it was agreed that we need to look not only at the chassis but also at circuit configuration to increase the ease with which teams can overtake. But everyone recognises that before you can overtake a car, first you have to catch it.

We also discussed the HANS system which is a big change for the drivers and we decided that everybody will have to wear the HANS system in 2003, but they can modify it if they have physical difficulty fitting it, provided the Safety Commission agree the modification.

That is a very brief outline of what was decided. A press release setting out the points that I've just been through will be available very shortly. In fact, as you leave the meeting you'll be able to pick it up. Now, both Bernie and I will be happy to try and answer any question that anybody might like to put.

QUESTIONS FROM THE FLOOR

Q: Two questions for you both, please. Could you just clarify when they run in qualifying on Friday, will they run for the whole season in the previous season's World Championship order or will they run in the running world championship order, race to race?

MM: It will be the World Championship running order. In the very first race we will use the previous year's Championship. After that, as the Championship progresses, so will the running order.

Q: And the other question was will the car going out on its second run, on its 'out lap', actually be running at the same time as the first car coming in on its 'in lap', because of the mathematics of running 20 cars, you're not going to quite get it done in an hour, are you?

MM: It will be done well within the hour. The scheme will vary from circuit to circuit as the lap times vary but in principle as the first car crosses the line at the end of its flying lap the next car will go out. The precise schedule and the way it will all be arranged with a slot for each car will be sorted out circuit by circuit, but the essence of it is that when a car is on its flying lap there will be no other car on a flying lap at the same time.

Q: Clearly you've got some changes here but they are not nearly as radical as some of those that were mooted. How confident are you and why are you confident that these changes will be enough to bring viewers back to Formula One?

MM: Well, I'm going to ask Bernie in a moment to give his view on this, but what we have to achieve is a fine line - on the one side not doing enough and on the other side doing too much. There were some very radical proposals being discussed during the last three or four weeks and even quite recently we were talking about perhaps reversing the first 10 places on the grid and giving them championship points for qualifying. But on balance it seems that what we're doing is likely to produce a significant change and it would have been a mistake to do too much in one go. But, Bernie, what's your view?

BE: Firstly, I don't really know why there's been a decline in the television audience for sport in general, most programmes have declined. We've held up much better than lots of other sports, we're talking about worldwide apart from just Formula One. And we hope that what's

happened will liven up things - not that I think it needs it. We are Formula One, not touring car championships, so we don't change the regulations, we want to stay as we are and make racing racing. And I'm quite sure that both Ron and Frank who are obviously competitive teams are not happy being where they are, they're not used to losing, they're winners by heart and I'm sure that they're going to chase Ferrari next year.

Q: Is there any way back in for Spa if the Belgian Government changes its tobacco legislation? And there's also some speculation that if F1 doesn't happen, maybe a chance of a Champ Car race there? Is there any possibility of that?

BE: What is going to happen I think is the Government is quite convinced that the laws will be changed for next year and that we will be back in 2004. I don't believe we are going to see CART racing there at all.

Q: Could you explain the decision regarding Spa?

MM: The decision on Francorchamps is very simple. The World Motorsport Council decided that unless all the teams were prepared to agree to race there without tobacco sponsorship then it could not be in the calendar because that would have been a breach of the arrangements that have been made with the teams.

Our proposed tobacco ban doesn't come in until 2006. The teams said 'no we're not prepared to race without our current sponsorship' this is because sponsors who were paying for the teams to race would not have been given what they had paid for. Therefore this event comes off the calendar. It could come back on in 2004 if there's an exemption.

As far as the EU is and the rest of the world is concerned the date that is being talked about for a complete ban of tobacco sponsorship in Formula One is 2006, not 2003.

Q: What about swapping with the Austrian Grand Prix. Is that not possible?

MM: We can't change the calendar around in that way for various reasons.

Q: What does this do for your costs - what kind of financial impact does it have for you?

MM: The biggest financial impact on the entire Formula One field is the testing change because the provision that teams that don't want to test extensively have the option to have an extra two hours on the Friday is very valuable.

We think that will induce a large number of teams not to go for unlimited testing as they do at the moment. This will save a great deal of money and we hope that the advantages of following the test scheme where they run for two hours on Friday will be so great that eventually all the teams will adopt it. The saving then would be between two and three hundred million dollars a year for Formula One as a whole.

BE: Max, I think it's better to point out it's nothing to do with whether the teams are rich or poor, or big or small or whatever they might be, this is open to everyone and as Max quite rightly points out probably when they go away and have a look at things they'll realise that perhaps the best thing to do is abandon all this expensive testing and concentrate on what's being proposed.

MM: Absolutely.

Q: What about the proposals to reduce to number of engines and all the cost-saving proposals that were being discussed in Japan?

MM: The only cost saving proposal that we've got through so far is this reduction in testing and even that is voluntary, but we think that testing was the biggest single item. And we'll keep on plugging away with the engines but at least we've got the single engine through for 2004. We'd like to see more, but it's the testing that's the really big, big cost saving.

Q: Two questions. Why was the idea of adding ballast thrown out and also will there just be 16 races next year or is there another circuit coming?

MM: Answering the second question first, there will be just 16 races. The ballast was thrown out because people felt that it was probably better to try and find a solution where we didn't put anyone under any sort of difficulty. There was an evolution of the ballast idea which was to make people who got points in the world championship to run with more fuel in qualifying. But in the end I think we all felt we'd really like to see whoever it may be, Schumacher or whoever, running in the best possible condition, going as fast as he possibly could, without any form of restriction. We hope the new qualifying system will shake the grid up so that we'll see some of the top drivers a bit behind and having to overtake which could lead to quite a bit of interest.

BE: I think it was thrown out, basically, because it was too heavy so they decided to throw it overboard. But what we're trying to do is to encourage the teams that are capable of beating, if we're talking about Ferrari, to beat Ferrari rather than trying to give them a handout. They don't want a handout. They want to beat their competitors fair and square.

MM: It remains to be seen whether they succeed.

Q: How quickly will the FIA police the team orders ban, because obviously it's fairly easy for a team to deliberately botch a pit stop or delay a car mechanically rather than instruct them to pull over on the last lap?

MM: We will watch them very carefully and if there is suspicion then we'll take it in front of the stewards and invite the stewards to draw an inference. But the teams themselves I think have realised that going on with team orders as we've seen them this year is completely against the interests of everyone in Formula One so I don't think we'll see that in the future.

BE: I think as Max has pointed out to the teams, if it's possible for you (the questioner), as you've just said, to see what somebody's just done, then, for sure, it's possible for the Stewards.

Q: There might be a slight perception with sporting fans, certainly in this country, that Grand Prix is just getting boring. Is that fair?

MM: Bernie's the expert ...

BE: I've been around regrettably people think much too long and I haven't seen an awful lot of changes. All this business about overtaking. It's never been that. This year, I suppose, we've had a team and a driver that's quite outstanding and it's a pity there was not somebody else in the team that was just as outstanding as Michael, but I wouldn't say it's boring by any means. Nobody watches 125 motorcycle racing where they overtake 50 times a lap so Formula One's still Formula One and people that understand Formula One appreciate how it's run.

MM: I think we've been a bit spoilt, this is one of the problems we've had. Of the last seven years we had five that went to the last race before the championship was decided, so people got used to that sort of very close racing. I think with what's happening now, with the qualifying plus a substantial advantage to those teams that follow our test procedures plus this liberalisation of the tyres, it will be surprising if we don't see close racing next season. In the end, as I've said many, many times, it's something outside the control of the governing body. Close racing, competitive racing depends on the leading teams all doing a good job, and not just one of them. But they seem very confident they're going to. It remains to be seen whether they succeed, but I think they probably will.

Q: Have you any reason that the big three, the richest three, teams will actually sign up for the deal with testing on a Friday morning or will they continue to go their own way and test as much as they like?

MM: At the moment they're not showing any desire to sign up to it but we believe that when the system evolves and they see what happens I think you'll find that they will sign up to it. Everybody for this year has to sign up by 15th December if they want to so once they've committed they'll be stuck out in the cold for the whole of the season if they don't sign up for the Friday morning testing by 15th December.

Q: But it may suit them to continue to do their 100 days' testing out in Fiorano or wherever.

MM: It may well do if they can afford it. It's the other teams that can't. What we hope is that the system will demonstrate such an advantage for the teams that have signed up that the following year even the richest teams will sign up. But the immediate priority is to look after the teams that really shouldn't be wasting a great deal of money or don't want to waste a great deal of money.

Q: Can I just ask as whether you think this will have any effect on the manufacturers' idea to go their own way and have the GPWC?

MM: I really think that it's difficult to take that too seriously. I don't want to be unkind, but the thing is that they're talking about going their own way in 2008. Now I don't know if I'll be here in 2008 or Bernie will be here in 2008. The only certainty is that none of the current members of GPWC, the individuals, will still be in their jobs in 2008, with the possible exception of Luca di Montezemelo.

On top of that, we've had all this talk for two years, but we have no sporting regulations from them, we have no technical regulations, there is nothing to show that there is any serious intention to do anything even in 2008. In any event it is all so far into the future it's difficult to predict what is really going to happen so it's difficult to get too interested in what they say. They don't appear so far to be serious.

BE: They've all got super navigation equipment in their cars, they just don't seem to have plotted which way they want to go.

Q: Has there been any discussion at all about the reduction in the electronics and the influence that that has on the car and giving a bit more back to the drivers?

MM: Yes. Those items require the unanimous agreement of the teams. The most obvious example would be that the two-way telemetry with the cars ought probably to be got rid of. And what we've arranged is that the teams will meet at the beginning of December and try and reach unanimous agreement on a whole list of measures of that kind that won't make any particular difference on the outside but which could save money and make things easier, more and economical for them.

Q: At the last race in Suzuka there were five teams talking about taking the FOA to arbitration over money paid to Minardi. Is there any development on that? Was that discussed?

MM: Whether that actually goes all the way remains to be seen. I think it's highly undesirable that it should but it's not actually a matter over which we have any control.

BE: In short what actually happened was we paid Minardi because the FIA told us we had to, but anyway, we did pay them, and at the time most of the teams agreed this is what should happen. They've thought about it and thought maybe they should have had the money. As they can't agree they decided to seek arbitration to find out what happens. That means in the worst case we'll have to pay twice if we lose.

Q: What do you say to the ordinary racing fan who isn't into the technical details of the sport about tyre strategies or the braking. I don't understand any of that. What do you say to those people who want to sit down on a Sunday afternoon, watch a car race, not a car procession and not really a chess match on Tarmac?

MM: What I'd say to them is they ought before they watch on Sunday if they spare the time watch the qualifying on Saturday because they will see a completely new form of qualifying which in all probability will result in several of the fastest drivers in their efforts to get at the front of the grid making a mistake and being much further back than they would normally expect to be.

On Sunday that will result in those drivers being forced to overtake a number of cars before they can get to the front if indeed they can get to the front at all. At the moment, those drivers would start on the front of the grid and probably just drive away. On top of that I would say to that fan that, listening to the teams that compete at the front, other than Ferrari, they're all very confident they're going to be able to take Ferrari on next year. They've done it in the past, and they point out that it took Ferrari 21 years before they started winning like they have this year.

You've got several teams that have won repeatedly and won World Championships in the last 10 years currently behind Ferrari who've every intention of getting in front. So, obviously, the fan that you're talking about will make his judgement at the first two or three races, but I think he will find that, having watched the first two or three races and the qualifying, he'll find it very difficult not to watch the rest of the season.

BE: The answer is, I think, well, quite simple. If I watch golf, I know who to put my one on. The best people win. If I watch tennis, it's the same thing. The same people keep winning. If I watch any of the major sports, generally there's a superstar amongst them and you can guarantee that's the one that's going to win. I don't know any World Championships at the moment that have gone down to the wire like, as Max said, we've had five out of seven in the past, you think of motorcycle racing when Valentino (Rossi) won the championship before the season finished. As I said, it goes for almost everything.

Q: Again, it's technical detail. Watching qualifying is not sitting down on Sunday afternoon just watching the race. You have to be an enthusiast ... I'm speaking for someone who just wants to watch a car race, rather than being involved in tyres, qualifying and that kind of thing.

BE: Fifty per cent of the race viewing audience watch qualifying. Don't forget that's on a Saturday when people are perhaps shopping or doing something else. So I think you'll find there's a big, big interest in qualifying. As Max said, this new change is probably going to make it a lot more exciting than it was in the past.

MM: I think you'll get a big audience on the Saturday and, interestingly, the television companies are now talking about covering the Friday qualifying, the one that determines the order of running on the Saturday. And that shows that they think people are going to want to watch, so, hopefully, they're right. But we shall see. Most people work on Friday, but it's still good if it's shown for those that are not working.

BE: And, hopefully, we're going to be able to be effectively the host broadcaster so you'll get a lot more cameras. We've got about 80 cameras at a race, all the cars have two or three on-board cameras, which at the moment you don't see on free-over-air television. You have to subscribe to one of the pay companies and in England it's obviously Sky. So we can make it a lot more exciting because there are a lot more things go on that you don't currently see so I think you'll see a big, big, big increase in viewing audience for free-over-air television.

Ends

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