

Man with your vast F1 experiences has certainly had many bids on the table. Why did you choose McLaren? Would your new role exclude engineering at all?

SAM MICHAEL: YES I DID HAVE OTHER OPPORTUNITIES, INCLUDING CONTINUING AS TECHNICAL DIRECTOR IN THE TRADITIONAL SENSE. HOWEVER, TO BE SUCCESSFUL A FORMULA ONE TEAM NEEDS TO HAVE A LOT OF STRENGTH IN DEPTH. IT IS ABOUT SO MUCH MORE THAN THE INDIVIDUAL NOW AND MORE ABOUT STRONG GROUPS. MCLAREN HAVE AN EXCELLENT TEAM OF ENGINEERS AND BEING PART OF THAT SENIOR TECHNICAL MANAGEMENT TEAM WAS BY FAR THE MOST IMPORTANT THING FOR ME GOING FORWARD. I WANT TO WIN WORLD CHAMPIONSHIPS AND THAT'S WHAT I'LL BE ABLE TO CONTRIBUTE TO AT MCLAREN.

Rubens Barrichello said you were overloaded at Williams. For work you did there are responsible at least three guys at McLaren. How did you spend the most of your time – working in CAD, with CFD or with pencil on paper like Adrian Newey who is refusing to work in CAD?

IT'S TRUE THAT MCLAREN HAVE A STRONG GROUP OF ENGINEERS IN PADDY LOWE, TIM GOSS AND NEIL OATLEY. SO IT IS BOUND TO BE MORE EFFECTIVE. ALL TEAMS WORK IN CAD THESE DAYS, EVEN RED BULL, BUT IT'S ALSO A FACT THAT ADRIAN STILL USES HIS DRAWING BOARD, BUT HE IS ALSO DAMN GOOD! HE IS THE ONLY GUY ABLE TO RUN THE ENTIRE TEAM BY HIMSELF. TO SEE HIM PUT RED BULL AT THE FRONT SINGLE HANDEDLY IS IMPRESSIVE.

We were admiring FW33 rear end: suspension (Z-link upper wishbone), lowline gearbox, drive-shaft angles (which I not suspected to be so reliable to be honest). Do you expect other teams will copy that next year? Why it did not bring the results? You seemed very competitive in pre-season testing. Was less effective exhaust blowing to be blamed?

THE LOWLINE GEARBOX AND EXTREME DRIVESHAFT ANGLES WERE CERTAINLY THE BENCHMARK IF YOU'RE PUSHING THE DESIGN IN THAT DIRECTION. I EXPECT TO SEE SOME ELEMENTS OF THE DESIGN ON OTHER CARS IN 2012, REGARDLESS OF THE FACT THAT IT WASN'T A BIG ENOUGH DIFFERENTIATOR TO MAKE THE WILLIAMS A STRONG CAR THIS YEAR. THE DESIGN WAS TO ENABLE THE REAR LOWER WING TO WORK MOST EFFECTIVELY. WE DIDN'T HAVE ANY MAJOR PROBLEMS WITH IT AT ALL, EITHER WITH STIFFNESS OR RELIABILITY OF THE DRIVESHAFT JOINTS. IT'S ALSO TRUE THAT IT PLACED A VERY HIGH LOADING ON THE WILLIAMS DESIGN OFFICE TO ACHIEVE IT, PERHAPS TOO MUCH.

REGARDING THE BLOWN EXHAUST, YES, WE DIDN'T DEVELOP THAT HARD ENOUGH OR FAST ENOUGH SO WE WERE ALWAYS PLAYING CATCHUP DURING THE YEAR.

What has been the major focus in FW33 development this season? Have you played also with the rake like Ferrari trying to copy Red Bull?

FRONT WING AND DIFFUSER. YES WE TRIED DIFFERENT RAKE A LOT, IT DEPENDS ON YOUR DEVELOPMENT PHILOSOPHY FOR THE DIFFUSER AND ALSO HOW YOU HAVE DESIGNED YOUR FRONT WING LOADING.

Christian Horner and Helmut Marko are sometimes complaining about Renault V8 power deficit and requests equalization. How do you see the engines – is Renault V8 less powerful than Mercedes? Can other factors (driveability, packaging, weight distribution, consumption) outweigh the power?

I HAVEN'T HEARD THIS COMMENT ABOUT EQUALISATION FOR QUITE SOME TIME NOW. IF YOU LOOK AT THE RESULTS FROM SPA AND MONZA – THE REAL POWER CIRCUITS – THERE IS LITTLE JUSTIFICATION. THE ENGINES ARE ALL A LITTLE DIFFERENT, BUT THE OVERALL EFFECT ON LAPTIME BETWEEN THEM IS NOT LARGE. FOR A LONG TIME NOW FUEL CONSUMPTION, WEIGHT AND GOOD DRIVEABILITY HAVE BEEN IMPORTANT FACTORS, SO YES THEY CAN HAVE AN INFLUENCE.

Are we going to see uglier cars next year? There is not much to be changed except periscope exhausts but rumour has it that the nose will be lower and cars could look like HRT F111.

WELL THERE ARE STILL WAYS OF MAKING THIS LOOK REASONABLE, BUT THIS ISSUE WITH THE NOSE COMES ABOUT BECAUSE THE CHASSIS CAN BE UP TO 625MM HIGH AND THE NOSE ONLY 550MM HIGH. IT ORIGINATES FROM THE FIA WANTING TO NOT HAVING THE CRASH STRUCTURE (NOSE) ABOVE THE 550MM HIGH SIDE OF THE COCKPIT NEXT TO THE DRIVER TO REDUCE THE CHANCE OF DRIVER INJURY. ORIGINALLY THE WHOLE CHASSIS WAS GOING TO BE LOWERED TO 550MM HIGH, BUT TEAMS WANTED THE ABILITY TO CARRY CHASSIS OVER FROM 2011 TO 2012 SO A COMPROMISE WAS PUT FORWARD AT TWG AND ACCEPTED.

Do teams already know exact 2012 rules concerning last 10 cm of tailpipe position? Could be vortices be used to emulate exhaust blowing?

YES, THE EXHAUST POSITION AND REGULATIONS FOR 2012 ARE FIXED. VORTICES ARE ALREADY USED TO IMPROVE DIFFUSER PERFORMANCE BUT THEY ARE NOT ENERGY ADDING LIKE THE EXHAUST SYSTEM BLOWING.

Have you ever been to Czech Republic? Do you have a Twitter account?

YES I HAVE BEEN TO PRAGUE IN 2009. IT'S A BEAUTIFUL CITY, I HAD A WONDERFUL TIME THERE AND I HAVE SOME GOOD FRIENDS THERE.

NO I DON'T HAVE A TWITTER ACCOUNT OR FACEBOOK.

Thank you very much, Sam.

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