



## Episode 48 – We Got Told to Call Him Kubica, so That’s What We’re Trying to Stick to

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### Coming Up

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**Chris:** This is Sidepodcast, Episode 48 – We Got Told to Call Him Kubica, so That’s What We’re Trying to Stick to. Coming up on today’s show, we talk engine penalties, budget caps, and two completely different launches.

### Intro

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[Audio FX: “Let the dancing begin, music, well, I didn’t see that coming, let the dancing begin.”]

**Chris:** What is that?

**Me:** Do you like it?

**Chris:** No.

**Me:** Oh, I’ll stop then.

**Chris:** Yes.

**Me:** My new little toy.

**Chris:** You’ve got a new keyboard, haven’t you?

**Me:** It’s a sample thingy that plays sample thingies.

**Chris:** Wow, and you’re the techie one.

**Me:** Yea, it’s for the theme tune, but I’ve been playing around with it for so long, I haven’t done much with the theme tune.

**Chris:** So, are we going to be hearing these things all through the show?

[Audio FX: “Uh, would somebody please answer that?”]

**Me:** No. Yes.

**Chris:** Okay.

**Me:** I might stop if you don’t like it.

**Chris:** My advice is to ignore him, hopefully he’ll grow out of it one day.

### Good Week/Bad Week

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**Chris:** It's been a good week for the FIA who have been recognised by the EU for their attempts to encourage green technologies. This makes Max Mosley very happy, including the bit where they pledge to do more, because that's all he ever wanted anyway.

**Me:** I think he's spun this a bit, hasn't he? Because surely his ideas for a ten year engine freeze, they fly in the face of what the EU are asking him to do. To suggest that he's come out of this well is just some good PR on his part, I might say.

**Chris:** It's been a bad week for drivers as the price of the superlicence has gone up. It used to be roughly 2,000 Euros, plus an extra 500 for every point, but now it's gone up to 10,000 Euros basic, with an extra 2,000 Euros per point. Top drivers are forking out some serious cash this year.

**Me:** At the moment, only Autosport magazine has reported this, but presumably the FIA will make some kind of announcement at some point. I don't understand the reasoning behind this other than the FIA to make lots and lots more money. And what are they gonna do with lots and lots more money? Like \$100 million wasn't enough for them.

**Chris:** Maybe they're using the extra money on Max's PR people.

**Me:** What doesn't make sense is if the rumours are true and this is to dissuade inexperienced drivers from applying for these kind of licences, why, the more successful and more experienced drivers get to pay more. It doesn't make any sense at all.

**Chris:** It's been a good week for Lewis Hamilton and McLaren because they have signed a deal that sees him with the team until 2012. It means good money, and security and everything, but I always worry about long term deals like this. Anything could happen.

**Me:** What I do find strange about this deal is, when Jenson Button signed a long term deal with Honda, people said Honda were crazy, and he was crazy and long term deals never work in Formula 1. Lewis Hamilton does exactly the same thing, everyone thinks it's wonderful.

**Chris:** It's been a bad week for ITV as they appear to have lost Honda's sponsorship for the TV and the website. Brand Republic are reporting that ITV wanted to increase the deal from £2.5 million to £4 million and Honda weren't interested. That leaves them only a couple of months to try and find replacement sponsors and it's thought that they're struggling because the audience for Grand Prix coverage is high but usually made up of the same people week in, week out.

**Me:** This does raise the question of what Honda's plans are for this year, and whether they have some kind of bigger marketing plan or whether they just didn't want the additional cost levied by ITV. Because in theory, it should be worthwhile because the number of viewers and listeners and subscribers have all gone up as a result of Lewis Hamilton. So the financial increase does make sense on paper, but I'm curious why Honda decided not to stick with it. Maybe they didn't get enough return last year.

### *News and Views*

**Chris:** It turns out the FIA do actually listen to sensible suggestions and this budget cap thing might take off.

**Me:** It wasn't so long ago we were saying how completely unworkable Max's original plans for wind tunnel caps and constraints on aero and computer usage, was never going to work, and how useless and how unpoliceable an idea it



was. So this is the only sensible and workable idea. It's not entirely clear how it's going to be policed but at least with this idea there's just one thing to police instead of lots and lots of little things going on that no one has any control of. You've just got one thing to look after which is the teams have x amount and we don't know how much it is yet. But the teams have x amount to spend, and they are not allowed to go over that, and let's see what they can do with a limited budget.

**Chris:** A financial working group is going to be set up to come up with ways of measuring and organising the scheme but they've only got until July otherwise the big bad wind tunnel regulations will be introduced.

**Me:** Yea, Max is still holding that over their heads, even though it's entirely unworkable. It's not really a great threat, if you don't do this, you're gonna have this unworkable solution. They're gonna have to do something very soon, that's not a lot of time to turn something like this around, but it doesn't have to be a unanimous decision, does it? It's just a majority rule.

**Chris:** It's not clear what's going to fall under the budget cap as well, I think team bosses wages doesn't, and marketing and promotion doesn't.

**Me:** I like the way they all got together and said we want a budget cap but we don't want our wages included in it. We don't want people knowing how much we earn. Apparently it's too complicated to work all that out.

**Chris:** Well, then you have to think, why wouldn't they just go: oh yea, of course, this is marketing and this is promotion, and this is wages. They might as well just lump everything under there, they could get away with all sorts of things.

**Me:** Yea, there's still lots and lots of question marks around but something has to happen and it looks like things are moving in the right direction. Ferrari appear to be the only team dragging their heels on this, as they prefer the wind tunnel restriction.

**Chris:** Big surprise.

**Me:** Well, they only have one wind tunnel, and they're set to gain more from that. So there's more arguments to come out yet.

[Sweeper]

**Chris:** There's a new rule for this year, where you won't get an engine penalty for the first time your engine blows up.

**Me:** What a ridiculous concept. Explain this to me?

**Chris:** Well, I didn't understand it to start with because it's so pointless that I couldn't actually figure it out.

**Me:** You couldn't believe it was a real rule.

**Chris:** Exactly, well, last year the rule was you could have as many engines as you want, but every time you changed one you got a ten place grid drop. Now there's an engine freeze in place, you can still have as many engines as you want but there's no development on them. And the first one that breaks down is a freebie.



**Me:** Yea, we think they've brought this rule in for what reason?

**Chris:** Who knows?

**Me:** How complicated is it going to be to track this throughout the year? Already, fans need to know who's on a first engine and who's on a second engine, who's out of sync with everyone else, which is already hard enough for the average armchair fan to figure out. Now, when something goes wrong, the fan has to figure out is this the first time his engine's blown up? I can't remember if he's had an engine blow up before. When he broke down before was that an engine problem or a gearbox problem?

**Chris:** Is he gonna get a penalty, is he not?

**Me:** Absolutely, after all that, we're gonna have to keep track of this. I don't want to keep track of this, do you?

**Chris:** Definitely not, and you know James Allen is going to explain it to us every single race.

**Me:** It's a horrible idea, it's a stupid idea, it's never going to work. I tell you what they've come to the conclusion that they've got this homologation in place, the idea of a ten place drop doesn't really make sense anymore, does it? Because you can't push the engine to the limit anymore, you're restricted by what you can do. So why don't they just admit that the rule doesn't make sense anymore and just bin it? Instead of bringing out this get out of jail free card for engine manufacturers. And for example, look at Ferrari, they've got six engines on the grid at any given race. They can essentially use one as a test engine. Let's just try turning this up and see what happens. That one blows up, okay, we've got five more, we can gain some kind of advantage with this now. What a silly idea.

**Chris:** After this short break, we'll be talking about the testing in Jerez and Valencia, and more 2008 car launches.

*[Break: "If you've got any comments or feedback, why not leave us a voicemail? It's free if you're a Skype user, find us under the username Sidepodcast, or you can ring us in the UK on 0121 28 TRACK, internationally, it's +44 121 28 87225. If you're the more shy and retiring type you can always email m: Christine @ sidepodcast.com.]*

**Chris:** We saw the first official testing of 2008 this week with surprising results. The biggest story was Fernando Alonso topping the timesheets in his Renault.

*[Audio FX: "Well, I didn't see that coming."]*

**Chris:** I know we can't really tell anything in testing compared to other cars but he took that Renault and he got it to the top and you've got to be impressed with that.

**Me:** Yea, it was last year's car. That car was hopeless the entire of last season, and look what he did with it? Although, presumably he was running light, very, very light. He may or may not have cut some chicanes along the way, however, you're right, it did send out exactly the correct message for people to see. I really liked his new helmet, too. Did you see that?

**Chris:** It's got some playing cards on it.

**Me:** Yea, and the Spanish flag, and he looked a lot happier. A lot happier at the team, he looked a lot happier with his helmet, and he just seemed far more at ease than he has done for at least the last 12 months.



**Chris:** It just all seemed right, didn't it? He came out of the garage in his new overalls, and it just looked right.

**Me:** Yes, it made me smile. And a long time ago, I said I'm fed up with the man, he's an idiot, he's had a terrible season and he's gone right down in my estimation. Then he got right back in that car, in those Renault clothes and I thought ah, it looks right. It's just the way it should be.

[Audio FX: "Ah, it's like a breath of fresh air."]

**Chris:** Also of note, Hamilton seemed to spend more time off the track than he did on the track.

**Me:** Sounds like last year.

**Chris:** Actually, that's probably a bit harsh but he does seem to struggle in testing.

**Me:** Last year, he totalled the car and put McLaren's testing schedule well back, but this year, just a couple of spins, bit of gravel in the sidepods, nothing too drastic, was it?

**Chris:** He didn't appear to make any headlines though, unlike Toyota who on the last day, came top with Timo Glock.

**Me:** Yea, running light we think? Last gasp attempt, right in the last dying seconds?

**Chris:** It's got to be something.

**Me:** A bit of headline grabbing news, maybe, our new cars exactly what we're looking for and it's doing exactly what we think it is. Not that I'm a cynic.

**Chris:** You've got to say that Ralf Schumacher wouldn't have done that though. What happened to Super Aguri? They just sat around and did nothing.

**Me:** I dunno, the car overheated or something, and they needed to fly some new bits out and then there was all sorts of delays, like the plane didn't land somewhere, they had to drive somewhere and there were roadworks. A comedy of errors, and a huge disappointment to the team because they effectively achieved very little.

**Chris:** BMW didn't play well with the others and had their own test in Valencia. They got lots of rain though.

**Me:** It was terrible weather, wasn't it?

**Chris:** I think they tested for four days and basically had a little bit of decent weather on the last day.

**Me:** Right and got some running in, a few laps.

**Chris:** So have we learnt anything from this test?

**Me:** Not really, it's good to see a couple of the new 2008 challengers out on the track, but we haven't really gleaned anything we didn't already know.

[Sweeper]



**Chris:** There's been a couple of launches this week, BMW and Red Bull. First up, BMW in Munich.

**Me:** BMW's has been my favourite launch of the year so far.

**Chris:** Really?

**Me:** It was quite exciting. It was great setup inside their car delivery centre, and they have a little test track just outside it where Heidfeld went and did a lap in the new car. I thought it worked quite well.

**Chris:** The car appears to have a kick-ass front wing.

**Me:** A kick-ass front wing? Yea, it's a bit big, something to do with bringing weight distribution forward, I no doubt suspect. But it does look massive, doesn't it?

**Chris:** And while the front is perhaps overdone, the back seems to be a bit missing.

**Me:** Unfinished? Yea, basically the bodyworks sort of tails off, towards the back, and they haven't covered anything up. I presume it's by design, it's almost as if they ran out of material.

**Chris:** Isn't there something dodgy going on with the wheels?

**Me:** Well, they've got front wheel bins as brought in by Ferrari last year but theirs are a little bit different to everyone else's. There's a small lip that protrudes over the wheel rim, over a little bit of the tyre, and that's unusual and it may or may not be within the regulations. It's certainly within the width regulations of the car, but whether aerodynamic devices are allowed to cover the wheels, not entirely sure if that's allowed.

**Chris:** It doesn't cover the wheel, it just sticks out a bit, I don't see why it would be illegal.

**Me:** Well, no, we shall see. No other team has done it yet, and no doubt someone will have something to say about it in Australia.

**Chris:** So, you liked the BMW launch, how does that compare to the Red Bull launch? Not very well.

**Me:** Night and day. Red Bull basically wheeled their car into the pit lane, said there you go, take a picture of it. Then the drivers stood by it and they said take a picture of them too.

**Chris:** Yea, David Coulthard, Mark Webber, just in front of the press. Take a picture of me, I'm fine, and then they buggered off back into the garage.

**Me:** Yea, they did a couple of laps. The good thing was, because it was at a track, the car got to run on the same day, which is always good to see. However, lacking pizzazz, I think. Especially from a team like Red Bull, who are party animals, allegedly. Not a great launch, I would say.

**Chris:** But then, the car doesn't look that different anyway, so I don't know if they had much to say about it.

**Me:** Well, that's true. It's supposed to be an evolution and it's very hard to tell from the outside that there's been much improvement. Presumably, they're keeping their powder dry and they're going to release all the new changes come the first race. However, at the moment, not the most exciting thing you've ever seen.



## *Housekeeping*

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**Chris:** Last week, we talked about Mark Blundell at Autosport International, and we seemed to cause a bit of a stir over the pronunciation of Kubica.

**Me:** Quite a stir.

**Chris:** Which wasn't really the point at all.

**Me:** No. I think it was our fault, we didn't exactly explain it too well.

**Chris:** We've managed to dig out the clip of him talking.

**Me:** Yea, we might have taken our personal voice recorder along, and we might have accidentally recorded every word he said.

**Chris:** Yea, don't tell anyone though.

**Me:** No, no, no, shh. Anyway, do you want to hear the clip?

**Chris:** Go for it.

**Me:** Okay, this is Mark Blundell at the Autosport show discussing the pronunciation of Kubica on ITV.

[Audio Clip]

**Mark:** But to answer your question, for me, I think Kovalainen will pull a win off this year. I think he'll win a Grand Prix, and I think one of the BMW guys will, Kubica or Heidfeld. I think they'll be the guys. I'm gonna go with Kubica, I think, or Kubica, whatever you want to call him, but we got told to call him Kubica, so that's what we're trying to stick to.

[End Audio Clip]

**Chris:** I think the point I was trying to make is not however he says it, but the fact that he didn't really sound too impressed about the way ITV were bossing him around.

**Me:** It was quite an enlightening conversation though, because until now I've always assumed that you say names how you want to say them, you know, so if I want to call him Kubica, I will. However, the general consensus seems to be you should try to pronounce them correctly. And now I'm supposed to call Vettel, "fettle".

**Chris:** Does that upset you a little bit?

**Me:** Well, I sound silly, "fettle"? Isn't that something you do with a throttle?

**Chris:** Personally, I prefer Vettel but whatever.

**Me:** Yea, I think I lost that argument well and truly. So from now on, must pay more attention to correct pronunciation. And talking of pronunciation, we should correct ourselves, last week, we incorrectly referred to Ian as Ian Growler when his real name is Ian Lockwood, and we should have known that.



**Chris:** Growler is the name he uses on forums and suchlike.

**Me:** Yes. I think he's emailed me and I think I knew that was his real name and I forgot. So, apologies Ian.

**Chris:** We also have another clip from Mark Blundell, which is perhaps my favourite clip ever, ever, ever, and we might have to play it on every show always and ever.

**Me:** Is that the clip where he says it was Lewis' fault?

**Chris:** Yea, play it, play it.

**Me:** Before we set this up, we should just explain that Mark Blundell never, ever criticises Lewis Hamilton on ITV. He never has said a bad word about him all year, so to hear this coming from his mouth was quite a revelation.

[Audio Clip]

**Mark:** Um, to answer your question, who do I blame for losing the world championship for McLaren? For the driver's title or for the constructor's title? Who do I blame? You have to blame Lewis. There's no, you know, the bigger percentage, you have to blame Lewis.

[End Audio Clip]

**Chris:** So, we're gonna have to start taking everything we see on ITV with a pinch of salt, cos it may be them and not the actual presenters opinions.

**Me:** It could be a producers ideal situation as opposed to what the commentators really think. Which is a shame, but, that's the way it is, I guess.

[Sweeper]

**Chris:** We've been starting to think about what GP's we're going to, how brilliant it would be to go to the new ones. Valencia, because it's enormous, and Singapore because it's at night.

**Me:** That coincidentally, brings me round to something else I was going to bring up. You know, obviously, just now we were talking about the subject of pronunciation? Do you happen to know if we should refer to it as the Singaporean Grand Prix, like the Italian Grand Prix, or the Australian Grand Prix? What's the term for that?

**Chris:** Personally, I say Singapore.

**Me:** The Grand Prix of Singapore.

**Chris:** No, Singapore Grand Prix, but I don't know if that's right, and I'm sure everyone will tell us that we're wrong.

**Me:** This is going to be another debate this week. Please let us know, if you know, is it called the Singaporean Grand Prix, is that how we should refer to it? Let us know in the comments, or Skype us: 0121 28 TRACK.

**Chris:** Anyway, the point I was trying to make is, I would love to know what Grand Prix everyone else is going to.



**Me:** Oh yea, sorry, sorry to interrupt. More comments, then.

**Chris:** Yes, more Skyping please.

**Me:** Okay, and what's the Skype number?

**Chris:** 0121 28 TRACK.

**Me:** That's...

**Chris:** 0121 28 87225.

[Sweeper]

**Chris:** We also had a comment a week or so ago where there was a bit of confusion about the RSS feeds. So we thought we would reiterate what you can get and where you can get it.

**Me:** Yes, the request was, can we have an audio only feed, and we do, it's just we don't promote it enough.

**Chris:** We're not very good at the whole promotion thing.

**Me:** No one had a clue. So we're gonna do that now, right? Please enlighten me.

**Chris:** Well, the main feed is the enhanced podcast feed. That gives you the audio shows, the video shows and if you have an iPod or you watch them on iTunes, you can see the chapters and the pictures and all the links and good stuff like that.

**Me:** So that is everything? Everything we do, the full bananas, audio, video and including chapters and enhanced shows. So that's the main one that most people subscribe to.

**Chris:** That's the best one if you ask me.

**Me:** That's the best one.

**Chris:** We have the audio podcast feed which is just the audio, no video, no enhanced bits, so everything in mp3 format.

**Me:** So, if you're not using an iPod, you're not subscribed to the entire Apple ecosystem, and you just want to hear us, that's the feed you want to subscribe to.

**Chris:** The video podcast feed has all the videos, perfect for watching on a high definition widescreen TV.

**Me:** Right, with a bit more confidence maybe?

**Chris:** Yea.



**Me:** High definition, wide screen televisions, perfect actually, for viewing these videos. Ideal if you're using the AppleTV.

**Chris:** Again with the Apple stuff.

**Me:** Well, yea, but they're going to update it in the next couple of weeks and it's going to be much better so it's worth buying now, whereas in the past it was just a bit of a brick. Also on that feed, we put high definition videos, so they won't play on iPods, so they don't go onto the main feed. So if you have a really big television, that's the feed you want.

**Chris:** And the final feed is for people who don't like to listen and don't like to watch. It's the transcripts feed, which is pdf documents so you can catch every word we say.

**Me:** And you can search it too, which is also useful. Which is what I use it for actually.

**Chris:** It's good for us when people go "You said horrible things about someone," and we go, "Did we?"

**Me:** When did we say that? Hold on, and then go back and search it. It was great when we did the 2007 review, wasn't it?

**Chris:** Yes, the best of stuff.

**Me:** When did we say that? Oh yea, the search engine tells you, so that's good. All of those feeds can be found on the feed link on our homepage, can't they? On the left hand side, navigation. Click on the feeds page and you can find links to the option that works best for you.

**Chris:** That's it for this show, keep your eyes peeled in the coming week for the Renault launch and the Williams non-launch. I'm sure we'll be talking about it on the next show.

**Me:** And I'm gonna have to go and work out how much this year's super licence is going to set me back.