



Feet Up Friday – There aren't enough bobbleheads in the world

Christine: We've just had two back-to-back races and now we've got back-to-back Feet up Friday's, this almost never happens anymore.

Mr C: It feels like we are underway, the season is go and it's been non-stop from the first green flag of the year. This is the first break we've had, a little bit of downtime for Sidepodcast, but still we are recording a new show for you, that's how hard we are working this year.

Christine: But after two races in a row we've got three weeks off now and then there's another two races and then there's another three weeks off, it's just weird scheduling this calendar.

Mr C: It's a crazy calendar, but it makes sense for the people who have to endure it. If you are a Formula 1 team who has to pay personnel to go off overseas, back-to-back races makes a lot of sense. You can cram in a lot of action, you can cram in a lot of racing in a fortnight, and then you can get back to base and save yourself a lot of money and in these troubled economic times, that is essential, so you can't hold in against... you cannot hold the calendar against the people who have to go out there and live it.

Christine: No. And having three weeks off gives us plenty of time to ponder everything that happened in Malaysia because my goodness that was a controversial race.

Mr C: Did something happen?!

Christine: I think we may have something to talk about this show. There was like a team orders row, I don't know if you noticed, that bit I think went quite under the radar.

Mr C: F1 on the down-low I think that was. I don't know if you spotted... only the most eagle eyed of fans would have picked up that there was some consternation within the Red Bull camp. What is Christine's take on what happened in Malaysia?

Christine: I am so conflicted on this, on pretty much every level because on the one hand I don't want to be mad at Vettel because he ignored team orders and team orders are rubbish, and so as a fan it's good to see them racing at the front. But then on the other hand it just wasn't fair to Webber and Webber was quite rightfully annoyed throughout and it's all awkward because people are now making fun of F1 because there's this big storm that, oh my god, a driver was overtaking!

Mr C: Mmmm, there was a headline I caught this week that F1 was investigating the unfixing of a race as two drivers were told to hold station and one of them thought better of it. I'm with you on this conflict because Sebastian Vettel is the big... with the exit of Michael Schumacher this season he is Dick Dastardly of Formula 1.

Christine: He's the villain.

Mr C: He is the villain of Formula 1 and we like Mark Webber, there isn't anybody who follows Formula 1 regularly who doesn't like Mark Webber, who doesn't want to see him do well. The guy's been through a lot.

Christine: There's always someone.



Mr C: C'mon. He's come back from injury after injury and he's had all that bad luck and now he's... Anyway, I can understand that, it's nice to see Sebastian Vettel held to account and being told to hold station and Mark Webber to go on and take a victory, a deserved victory because up until the final stops he had out-raced Sebastian Vettel and he deserved, on those grounds he deserved to take the win. The team asked him to conserve his car, which he was doing, like the good driver that he is. And Sebastian Vettel had other ideas. If it wasn't for Vettel's decision to do what he did towards the end of the Malaysian Grand Prix it would have been a dreadful end. It would have been boring as hell to watch four cars follow each other to the finish in procession. So we have to thank Sebastian Vettel for doing what he did to make the occasion interesting.

Christine: It spiced it up and I love the drama. We haven't had proper, proper drama like this for ages and it's not stupid political, you know, nonsense, its real relationship trouble. And it's really, really interesting. It's interesting to see how Horner's lost control of his star driver if he ever had control, and how Vettel he was cheering his victory until suddenly he realised actually I may have done something a bit wrong and then he back-tracked very quickly and then he was saying that he didn't realise that it had been a team-order situation and then he made a mistake but every step of the way you just thought – yeah, you just regret that now, don't you?

Mr C: Sebastian Vettel was never under any illusion that Mark Webber was genuinely that much slower than him. He knew the situation and it is was a calculated move. Any pretense to have made a genuine mistake is the one thing that I would hold against him. I think that was wrong to pretend that it was an accident and he didn't mean to make the pass and somehow he got pushed off-line by Mark Webber, that's not on. I'm not taking that from him.

Christine: Also we should hold against him very early in the race when he said that he was on the radio saying Mark is slow get him out of my way. And that was early on in the race when they were racing for position there weren't any team orders until after the final stop or whenever it was. And if he needed to get past he should have just gone and got past, there shouldn't be a situation where they can say yep Mark get out of the way at the beginning of a race when it's all still to play for.

Mr C: The person who came out of this the worst has to be Christian Horner because he is now, he has lost control of his well he's lost the trust of Mark Webber, he's lost control of Sebastian Vettel and to all intents and purposes he has lost control and respect of the team because nobody within the Red Bull camp will now look at Christian Horner as the team boss. Because where does the buck stop in that team now? Is Sebastian Vettel calling the shots, is that how it works? The driver says this is what I'm doing and to hell with the strategy to hell with whatever you tell me on the radio?

Christine: Yeah, and if he's not going to listen to what they say, what's the point in them saying anything, what's the point in them coming up with a strategy at all, just let them go out there and go figure it all out for himself, I guess.

Mr C: I guess that's how it's going to be. You have to look at Christian Horner and say, I mean his radio call was pathetic after Vettel had made the move and I forget what it was, just on the radio, this is silly, Sebastian let's stop this now. He's not a child, the guy is...

Christine: Don't be silly Seb.

Mr C: ...yeah. He is not eight years old he's an adult he's a grown man and you make the call to tell him to give the position back and he gives the position back. That is how authority within a team works.

Christine: Well it is except I guess you get treated how you act.



Mr C: Well indeed. But, they were conversely as this was all playing out at Red Bull a similar situation was unfolding in the Mercedes camp but with different results.

Christine: Well it was actually like the opposite situation, they gave out some team orders and they were obeyed and in this situation I thought they really shouldn't have been.

Mr C: Well ok, what's Christine's thoughts on the Nico Rosberg situation?

Christine: I just thought Ross Brawn came on the radio and he was saying we've got a big gap in front we've got a big gap behind just hold station, get to the end of the race, it's fine, stay behind Hamilton, you know, we're doing this on purpose. And that is not good to hear as a fan because you'd rather see drivers going for it but obviously they have to conserve their cars where they can but I just thought if they did have that much space and Hamilton himself was, he admitted that he didn't feel like he should have been in that position, so he wasn't exactly going to get in the way. Their relationship is a bit better than the one at Red Bull at the moment, why couldn't they have just let Rosberg pass and finished the same three and four but in a different order?

Mr C: By the looks of things Mercedes made a major strategic error when they made the decision on how much fuel to put into Lewis Hamilton's car. I don't know where the blame lies in that...

Christine: Hamilton had to go painfully slowly at the end.

Mr C: Almost from a third of the way through the race the guy was told to save fuel and so he was racing with one hand tied behind his back. Mercedes didn't want to make him give up the place to Rosberg because they'd made the mistake, Lewis was just driving his car so there was... I can see that they didn't want Lewis to take any more pain than he had to take because of their mistakes. So making him hold position was a wise thing to do but Nico Rosberg looked to have enough pace and enough fuel to take the fight to Red Bull. YOUR WEEKLY F1 FIX

Christine: Well afterwards Lewis said "you have to be able to look at yourself in the mirror and say you won fair and square, in Malaysia I don't feel as if I'd won my spot fair and square although I did drive a decent race. I don't feel spectacular about it." So Ross Brawn he said they had nothing to gain by switching positions. Nothing at all except the respect of the drivers, better racing, a happier set of team-mates, same amount of points – nothing to gain.

Mr C: Well if you were watching the Red Bull race unfold from the pit wall you would have seen and Ross Brawn would have known, he would have got information back from what we were hearing of what was going on at Red Bull so he knew that they were on the back foot, he knew that they were vulnerable and if it wasn't for the fact that he was trying to keep Lewis Hamilton in front of Nico Rosberg, you know, he could have sent his one race-ready car into the fight. And he could have pushed them, and that could of... I don't understand, I know Mercedes haven't got the best car this year and bagging a three-four points position finish is a good thing from where they are right now. He made that tactical call and he decided he was going to stick by it come what may. But they potentially threw away an additional podium position and you know, one more one place higher.

Christine: Yeah, and I thought that the reason that these team orders exist particularly between Vettel and Webber is because they came so close to crashing when one was trying to overtake the other but, you know, they don't want that to happen, you don't want to lose out on all these points but it became that Hamilton was so slow at the end that Rosberg couldn't help but get close up behind him and I thought it was more dangerous keeping him there.



Mr C: Yes. The cars were very close, I mean the finish was a Le Mans, classic Le Mans style finish where both cars cross the line side-by-side effectively, a nice great press shot. But I would of, I think, in Ross Brawn's seat, if I was sitting in his chair for the day I would have let Rosberg go because they would of, you know, they had more to gain than they had to lose I think. There was such a big gap to those behind them, yeah I'd have gone that way. We must give credit to the race director on Sunday though because we were spoilt with team radio messages. Team radio was absent in the first race and there were complaints that we weren't getting enough information fed back from the teams during that broadcast. But it became essential during the Malaysian Grand Prix, it told the story of the race.

Christine: Yes, absolutely.

Mr C: And the information that came from team radio really paved the way for everything that we saw on the ... well prior to the podium ceremony post-race. And without that I think we would of, fans would have been short changed. It's nice to see having lacked that in the first Grand Prix, the race director made up for it in the second.

Christine: You have to wonder if anything untoward was going on in Australia as well that we just don't know about.

Mr C: I cannot believe, I cannot believe anything as dramatic as that. There were team orders in Australia we did manage to catch some, if you recall Paul di Resta wasn't allowed to pass Adrian Sutil at the end of the Grand Prix so we did manage to get a bit of radio traffic and there is now a pit-lane channel we can tune into to get the most from that. But all credit to those concerned.

Christine: The Mercedes pair seemed to have got over their disappointment on Sunday quite quickly. Rosberg was on the radio saying "remember this one", which sounded quite ominous. You owe me, basically. So we have to keep watch for that later in the season see if the tables are turned, if they repay the favour, which I'm sure they will 'cause they seem... they seem to be.

Mr C: Lewis genuinely seemed like he didn't feel he should have been where he was and I can see that in the future if he's not fighting for a championship, a world championship and if it's purely for points positions and not for a win then I can see them repaying that favour, yeah.

Christine: At Red Bull things are a little bit trickier, apparently Vettel has apologised to everyone, he's apologised to Webber, he's apologised to each and every person at the team, probably not individually, and people were quickly speculating whether Webber would see out the season at Red Bull or, you know, I mean, we know that his time at Red Bull must be drawing to a close so he's not got much to lose in terms of staying friendly with everyone so it could have repercussions later in the season but I think he will stick out the year with them because it's a good car and he's got nowhere else to go.

Mr C: Well he's got a contract, and a contract works both ways, the team can't just fire him and he can't just walk away if the team don't want him to do that, so I don't have any doubt that Mark Webber will return to Red Bull for the next race and for the remainder of the season.

Christine: It's just going to be interesting to see how... if more situations arise where Vettel needs a hand or if Webber himself is up there fighting for the championship which could happen. Yeah he's, Vettel's not going to get much help anymore, is he?

Mr C: It is fabulous that it happened at this point in the season, it is so early in the season and there's so many more races to come, we've got what another 17 races of those two drivers going at it. They may not be unchallenged in the same way that they were in Malaysia, again. They may not have quite as big a buffer and therefore not quite as



bigger advantage but we've got now the remainder of the season to see how this plays out and it's going to be incredible. I mean who is in charge at Red Bull that is the number one question? Does Christian Horner have any authority, can he regain any respect from those in charge? One thing I did want to pick up on actually before we move off this subject, the lamest and most pathetic move of the entire weekend, perhaps of this season is Christian Horner sending Adrian Newey up to the podium to pick up the trophy. That is without a doubt the most useless piece of management in the world. I mean there was a shot of Christian just standing beneath the drivers on the podium as they were doing the post-race interview, looking just bewildered and for all of the world like he had no idea what had happened to him, and at that point he should have been up there, he should have been on that podium he should have been overseeing things instead of being down on the ground where he was, it was useless.

Christine: I felt so bad for Newey as well because he's just stuck right in the middle, it's not his job, he doesn't make the decisions about strategy I assume, he just builds the car.

Mr C: Well we assume, but then who does because, you know, who is in charge?

Christine: And then there's a moment where Sebastian says something like, oh it was obvious that this had to happen and Newey was like, well it wasn't that obvious. 'Cause he's just, you know, trying to be diplomatic, stuck in the middle – it's none of my business I'm just here to pick up a trophy.

Mr C: Poor Newey, he just wants to make fast cars and he ends up in the middle of this political nightmare. Nobody wanted to be Adrian Newey on Sunday afternoon and Christian Horner should be ashamed of himself for sending Newey into the lion's den.

Christine: Although if Horner had gone in to the green room thing there may have been more fireworks which would have been entertaining for us, probably not so good for the team relations because it was all so, you know, the heat of the moment, it was really strong, you could have seen a punch-up.

Mr C: Do you think so? Well, so staying away from that you think it may have helped the situation. I think it made it worse.

[Sweeper]

Christine: The team orders kerfuffle came towards the end of the race for both of those teams, but there was also a bit of consternation at the beginning of the race when Ferrari and Alonso, one or other or both of those decided not to pit despite the Spaniard having a broken front-wing and he crashed off in quite a spectacular way.

Mr C: There were question marks following the decision not to pit Alonso as to whether or not it was a safe thing to have done because as soon as Alonso's wing detached itself completely it buried itself underneath the front of his car and he completely lost control of his destiny. The car beached itself thankfully in the gravel and the gravel trap did what gravel traps are supposed to do and Alonso came to no harm. But trapped wings under the front of a chassis is a very dangerous thing to happen in Formula 1 and the team clearly could see the nose was... would eventually fail, but they took the gamble that they would see if Alonso could string it out for a few more laps until a tyre window opened, until the track dried enough to run slicks and without losing too many places. And I think it's commendable, I mean Alonso damaged the wing at the third corner and he managed to complete the entire of that lap and start the next lap before he lost a single place. Now I don't know any other driver who could put in that kind of drive even though it was wet, even though the cars weren't going at full speed. The team obviously saw how well he was defending and decided that, well it's probably worth leaving him out there.



Christine: It's crazy because at this point in the season it's like, oh ok he's retired it doesn't mean anything, the championship is still wide open. Later on in the season when he loses it by a point again, they are going to regret this so much. Alonso knows, for the last few years he knows what it is to retire from a race and have that be the difference in winning or losing a championship. If they'd of pitted him and then brought him back out, Alonso in that car he could have got himself back up into contention for something and I just think it was just a risk they didn't need to take.

Mr C: Yes. Fine. It was a massive gamble, a huge gamble, the biggest gamble and they lost spectacularly but let's play out Ferrari's ideal situation, Alonso lost a place to Webber on the main straight after lap one. If he'd have retained third place until the end of lap two losing one more place on that straight, if he'd have come into the pits on the next lap the track a dry line was forming. He could have ended up, I think Sebastian Vettel pitted on lap, was it lap four or lap five, for his tyres and Vettel obviously went on to win the race. Alonso could easily have won that race just by driving an incredibly defence strategy if the wing had held on and the pit call could of come at a decent time, a more optimum time and he could have gone on to win the race, that's twenty-five points they were going for as opposed to if he would have had to pit after lap one it would have been a small... it would have been the lower points than they would of got.

Christine: Yeah, ok he would of ended up at the back of the grid but this is a race in which a Marussia finished thirteenth so how far back would Alonso really have been by the end?

Mr C: Yes. I mean we can only guess but I don't think he would have been inline for a win whereas if they guy could have held on for just two more laps, just two more laps without losing a significant number of places he could have still been in contention for the win.

Christine: Yeah. But plus it would have been far more entertaining to see him fight through the field and the fact that he crashed out so early on meant we had all those issues with the drivers and teams at the end because Alonso wasn't up there in between them.

Mr C: Mmmm, well I think post-race Alonso was laughing, he was tweeting away that he was chuffed that this was going on and he was keeping out of the way of everything.

Christine: He'd missed out on that. Team orders at a team that isn't Ferrari.

Mr C: Absolutely, he was well away from it and loving every minute of it.

Christine: But also it wasn't just Alonso being out of the fight that didn't help. Button... McLaren had another pit stop failure that they...

Mr C: A pit stop drama.

Christine: ...and that dropped Button out of the fight as well, and so that's why we ended up with all these teams at the front with their team-mates next to each other.

Mr C: Well it was amazing that Jenson was in any position to score a podium, given how bad that car was in testing and in the first race, to have made those kind of gains was quite spectacular actually, I mean yes they threw it away, McLaren threw it away on a silly mistake...

Christine: A wheel nut.



Mr C: ...which they were prone to doing last year and haven't managed to resolve yet. But equally it was unbelievable to see Kimi Räikkönen so far back, yes he had a silly qualifying penalty which put him out of position but this was the race winning car from Australia, had no pace at all. It was going wheel-to-wheel with a Sauber and coming off worse.

Christine: Yeah, Eric Boullier said that they weren't surprised that their pace was inconsistent and they're expecting it to be like that all this year and they're putting the blame squarely on the tyres and the temperature. But surely if you're a team principal you shouldn't be revelling in the fact that you are inconsistent you should be saying ok this is something we need to work on.

Mr C: We don't have a clue, yaaaay.

Christine: Exactly.

Mr C: And we know we don't have a clue, yaaay.

Christine: We won a race and now we're almost falling out of the points, that's ok, we'll live with that, that's just the way it is. No! Work harder! I don't understand.

Mr C: Yeah, I mean the Mercedes is a consistent car, it's not consistently fast but it's consistently within range of a podium. The McLaren was faster than it had been but the Lotus definitely took a major hit. I thought Romain put in a good drive, you know, in a car that wasn't ideally suited to conditions, he put in a strong drive. But Kimi definitely failed to impress compared to his highs the week before.

Christine: Yeah, he was running all over the track. A lot of the strategy came from the fact that there were four pit stops for most of the drivers. Three or four was the choice really and when you have four pit stops you're bound to see a lot more action in the pit lane. We saw Button's issue as we mentioned, Vergne had an unsafe release that the team were penalised for, there were at least two other unsafe releases that the stewards didn't even bother looking at. And also Force India had a bit of a problem.

Mr C: Yes, a major problem for Force India actually.

Christine: I felt really bad for Paul di Resta because...

Mr C: The guy can't catch a break.

Christine: For the second race in a row he was stuck looking at the rear wing of his teammate.

Mr C: I think Paul di Resta was the only man I felt more sorry for than Mark Webber, because he was a guy who also did everything right, he did everything that he could do, he was screwed over by a delayed pit stop for his teammate, he was stacked behind Sutil when Sutil's first stop went wrong.

Christine: Yep.

Mr C: Then he had a fast enough car to haul himself back into the points and he was running incredibly well when his pit stop, his second stop then went awry and eventually so much time was lost in the pit lane and the cars generated



so much heat standing still because it was endless, I mean it was like... you thought for a minute that Force India car is never going to get going again. Eventually they had to retire both the cars which is a shame.

Christine: It was ... I was really disappointed to see them retiring because they really do look like they have some good pace, they can fight near the top of the mid-field, probably moving upwards even further. But they just... all these little bits keep going wrong and stopping them from doing it.

Mr C: Yes, it's looking like a pretty handy damn chassis. It's got an awful lot of pace in both of the drivers hands, obviously Adrian Sutil led the Grand Prix for the first time in his career at the last race and this time Paul di Resta was putting in some stunning pace and some stunning laps and it just is not coming together for them.

Christine: The investigation the team did into the problem, it's some kind of new wheel nut system they've got this year and they're not going to go back to the old one, they have pinned it down on the fact that it wasn't working in the hotter temperatures. Which is fine that you know that but we've got hotter temperatures again in two races time in Bahrain. So I hope they have it fixed by then.

Mr C: Well this is I guess the issue. Teams have been reluctant to increase the amount of testing they do pre-season and I think part of that is because the temperatures that they see during testing aren't representative of the entire year. Essentially it's too darn cold in Barcelona in February to...

Christine: It is winter testing.

Mr C: Well yeah, to get any kind of gauge of what they're going to come up against during the season and in Force India's case if it's heat related, if the problems are related to the temperatures that they found themselves in in Malaysia then there's something they couldn't have discovered during testing and that's unfortunate. Now that they've seen that, now that they've got that data they should have... and they've got this three week gap which is plenty of time to resolve a minor problem like a wheel nut, they should be fine for the next race I'm sure they won't see a reoccurrence of that.

Christine: Hopefully. We mentioned that Vergne had an unsafe release situation where his Toro Rosso crashed into a Caterham so that was an unfortunate moment but otherwise apart from that he did really well, he started seventeenth so qualifying still a problem but then he crashed into someone in the pit lane and I think he had to have a nose change because of that – possibly. So there was a delay there anyway and he still managed to finish tenth in the points picking up one point.

Mr C: And his teammate poor Ricciardo he didn't finish again, he's had two retirements in two races.

Christine: That is, yes.

Mr C: That is a shame, and is not good. So yay for Vergne and boo for poor Ricciardo.

Christine: Also doing well, Bianchi yet again. He is being super-impressive in a rubbishy old Marussia.

Mr C: What a guy. I would have loved to have seen what he could have done in that super-fast Force India, clearly he wouldn't haven't finished this Grand Prix regardless but if Adrian Sutil can lead a race in a Force India imagine what Bianchi could do.



Christine: Yeah, it's quite fun to see a fast driver at the back of the grid, I mean that's not fun to see but people like Alonso they all started in the lower teams and worked their way up and I don't think we've seen anyone recently in the backmarker teams that has had that amazing spark of – oh they're going to go far.

Mr C: I think there is a lot of correlation between Alonso's first year in Formula 1 and Bianchi's first year in Formula 1. Obviously Alonso was in the Minardi and he outdrove that car something rotten. And that's what Bianchi's doing in the Marussia and I can see Bianchi causing a lot of problems for Caterham this year. Huge problems.

Christine: It's still early days obviously but he finished fifteenth in Australia and thirteenth here. Which thirteenth place already from Marussia is going to be hard for Caterham to beat that.

Mr C: That thirteenth place is the magic number isn't it? That's the place the position that they're all aiming for and Bianchi has managed to secure that.

Christine: Well they're aiming for twelfth now.

Mr C: Yeah, in the second race that's incredible, so keep an eye on him. Two races it's still too early to declare he's obviously a future star but he's not put a foot wrong yet.

Christine: He's doing well so far and yeah, he missed out on the Force India seat and because of that Force India have had to confirm Mercedes engines for next year and going forward.

Mr C: Well I thought yeah, the whole deal with the delay with announcing and then eventually not announcing Jules Bianchi was that they wanted some kind of Ferrari engine deal for 2014 and beyond and they didn't get that they didn't sign Bianchi and now they're going with Mercedes.

Christine: Yeah. I wonder what order things happened in. Did they decide the engine deal wasn't on so then they went with Sutil or did they really, really want Sutil and they sacrificed a whole engine deal for that?

Mr C: I don't know actually.

Christine: Is Sutil worth that much?

Mr C: Well it depends. Also if you were Force India and you were looking at how good Bianchi's been in his first two races you might also have a few pangs of regret there. I mean Sutil has done well, thankfully, which might mitigate some of that pain but you might be casting a wary eye down the pit lane thinking, darn it we threw that one away. We gave Bianchi away.

[Sweeper]

Christine: Those are the highlights and-or lowlights depending upon your opinion of the Malaysian Grand Prix, I think. It's worth mentioning that when there are races on you should be on Sidepodcast dot com following along in the live comments because lots of fabulous people watch the race and comment at the same time and there's insight and people spot things that you haven't spotted so that's always good fun. Also the Factbyte Factbox is there to guide you along the way with tweets and team radio and facts. So far I've done every qualifying and every race.

Mr C: And do you intend to continue?

Christine: That is the plan.



Mr C: That's awesome.

Christine: But as ever I'm not promising anything. And the other thing I was going to say is it's probably a good idea once the race is over and you've seen it and you've mulled over how it went to visit the Rate the Race page where you can give the race your choice of five stars. Whether you thought it was good – 5 stars. Whether you thought it was rubbish – 1 star. And we also do things like driver of the day and some other little rating things like for instance this week we want to know your opinion on Vettel's actions and Mercedes' team order.

Mr C: And thus far how have Sidepodcast readers rated the Malaysian Grand Prix?

Christine: Umm, the Malaysian Grand Prix sort of around between a three and a four out of five I'd say. Surging on about seventy-five per cent.

Mr C: I could not disagree with that.

Christine: I think I gave it a four for the drama, as a race it was more of a three, but that's always available and I will put a link in the show notes because I think the Malaysian one is still open if you haven't voted already.

Mr C: We should close that too but if you want to give people an extra day to vote than do so.

Christine: Yeah. One other thing I wanted to mention about the race weekend: There is an FIA memo going to teams ahead of the weekend that it's something about the DRS enabled/disabled messages and how they are not getting through from the FIA to the teams. Now I thought this was a problem in Australia because they had power cuts and it was a problem there, wasn't it, the rain got in the way.

Mr C: The TV compounds died, the power in the TV compounds went out prior to the race.

Christine: Yeah, I thought there was a problem there and the FIA issued a memo but it seems like it's an on-going problem because the memo was there again from Malaysia and it says "Due to continued reliability problems with the telemetry link between race control and the cars we will again be disabling this with immediate effect" and then it lists out all the ways that because they've disabled this link the ways they will get communicated for DRS on, DRS off, etc. etc. And I just, I don't know, I just found it a bit odd, something is broken at the FIA.

Mr C: I wonder if this is related to McLaren's new ECU or if it's another unrelated circumstance that's going on.

Christine: It also makes things just a bit more complicated because it feels like there's a whole other page of rules that the teams have got to learn.

Mr C: Yeah, well at least they've got a workaround, they don't have to switch the entire thing off altogether because that would be embarrassing the show does at least go on.

Christine: That's true.

Mr C: Even if there's a number of workarounds in place.

Christine: So, I just thought it's something to keep an eye on in future and see whether they ever get it fixed or not.



Mr C: This three week break is going to be a boon to everybody.

Christine: Yeah, there's a lot to work on.

Mr C: Force India and their wheel nuts, you've got Red Bull and their relationships to be repaired and also the FIA and their timing and telemetry links.

Christine: Talking of having a lot to work on didn't we find a bit of team radio from Nico Hülkenberg that was quite revealing.

Mr C: I do have that actually this hasn't been mentioned anywhere as far as I'm aware but F1 Pit Radio picked up on this.

Christine: So it was Hülkenberg's first race of the year because he had to sit out Australia so it was his first chance to really get to grips with the car.

Mr C: And this is during the cool-down lap.

Nico Hulkenberg radio: Thank you guys, I think it was not such a bad job. But I can't tell you, I don't know where to start with so many things to improve. I don't have to explain about the radio, I think. That is unacceptable. Unbelievable.

Christine: So there's a lot of things to improve on the car and also the radio is unacceptable, is he having a Kimi moment?

Mr C: That is unacceptable, unbelievable. We don't know what...

Christine: I know what I'm doing? We've got a little Nico diva on our hands.

Mr C: I don't know actually, you could maybe make a case for many things that could be wrong there. It's good though that he's obviously got a lot of ideas to improve the car because it's not... this year's Sauber is not proving to be as quick out of the blocks as last years, and much like the Williams there's pace to be found and things to be improved and Nico's on the case clearly.

Christine: Williams have someone new in charge who might help them, well not quite in charge but Claire Williams has taken over a new role, it's a newly created deputy team principal role so helping out her father with the day to day running of the team. Essentially she's stepping into the succession plan that Toto Wolf so quickly stepped out of.

Mr C: I remember Claire when she was just a PR person.

Christine: Yeah, I know. She used to sign the press releases. Ahhhh.

Mr C: Ahhhh, how she has climbed the ladder. It's good. We could be, well we almost certainly will be looking, unless you've already screws up her deputy role at having two female team principals in Formula 1 in the future.

Christine: It's good stuff. Williams are doing well on the whole bringing females into the sport thing with Susie as well.



Mr C: Mmmm, yes. A team to keep an eye on, they are moving with the times Williams, and it's good to see Claire move up the ladder. We love... I love her.

Christine: Yes you do!

Mr C: We love... at Sidepodcast we love Claire Williams, quite a lot!

[Sweeper]

Christine: In non-F1 news or tangentially related news Michelin are going to be the sole tyre supplier of Formula E.

Mr C: Formula E? I'm a big fan of Formula E, I like what I'm hearing about what's coming and I was a big fan of Michelin tyres in Formula 1.

Christine: Well I like it if it means we got to see more Bibendum because he's my favourite.

Mr C: Yesssss, yes. It's worth though pointing out that when Michelin dropped out of Formula 1 it was because they didn't see the value in being a sole tyre supplier, they wanted to be a competitive.

Christine: The last great tyre war.

Mr C: Yes, they wanted... they liked the tyre war, they wanted to prove that they could make better tyres than the competition. So there must have been a change of heart somewhere within Michelin management. Or maybe, just maybe they looked at the job Pirelli were doing with Formula 1, making a success of being a single tyre supplier and thought actually that's...

Christine: It is possible.

Mr C: ...a decent business model.

Christine: Yeah.

Mr C: We'd like a bit of that action.

Christine: They watched Bridgestone – let's not do it like that. They watched Pirelli – ooooooh.

Mr C: I suspect the people at Michelin watched the Bridgestone sole tyre supplier and went – yeah, told you so, yeah, knew that was going to happen. Did they, they may have competed also for the F1 bid but didn't... weren't given it, for whatever reason probably down to money.

Christine: Or for PR reasons, they aren't popular at the moment, it's still quite fresh.

Mr C: And so whatever happened, whatever changed, they are now the chosen ones within the FIA they are the sole tyre supplier for Formula E and maybe just maybe they might be interested in coming back to Formula 1. Who knows?

[Sweeper]



Christine: If you have any feedback about what you've heard us discussing today, there are several ways you can get in contact with us. Firstly you can leave a comment on the show notes and share your opinion with everyone, you can send us tweets to @sidepodcast or you can send me an email Christine at sidepodcast or a voicemail to Christine at sidepodcast or 012128 87225. Paul has sent me an email last week and it said "Just caught up with the last Feet Up Friday and thought I'd make a few comments. Firstly I love that you managed to mention both what a nice guy Sebastian Vettel is and how it was a shame that team orders had played a part in the outcome of the race with Force India. Priceless foresight."

Mr C: [Laughter]. Did we say that?

Christine: I think we must have done.

Mr C: Sebastian Vettel is a lovely guy until he gets into a Formula 1 cockpit puts on that helmet and closes his visor. Then he's no longer a nice guy.

Christine: "Secondly you also talked about how to get the practice sessions off to a quicker more interesting start. Well why not introduce some kind of fun event prior to practice where non-F1 cars use F1 tyres, maybe the used ones from the last race and do some drifting etc. to entertain the crowd. This would put some rubber down and clean the track up a bit. They could even make the cars F1 Race Stars style with oversize helmets and everything."

Mr C: I am not against that idea.

Christine: So anything to get the rubber down I suppose, if that's the problem.

Mr C: Yes, it wouldn't if it was raining it would be a problem. I don't know what drifting is like in the rain I guess it's maybe better, that would be worth investigating. The issue is you wouldn't get current Formula 1 stars involved in that because obviously they're undergoing preparation for practice and looking at data and stuff like that.

Christine: But if they're wearing big bobbleheads it doesn't really matter who it is.

Mr C: I suppose not but what fans are paying to see is their favourite F1 driver on track and what's not happening in Free Practice is that they're not seeing that in Free Practice. If you are a Spanish fan and you're in Spain and you go to Barcelona and you turn up to Free Practice 1 on a Friday what you don't want to see is some guy with a bobblehead go round drifting. You want to see Fernando Alonso in his car doing what he does.

Christine: Yeah, you would see the bobbleheads first and then that would clear up the track enough so that the actual people you've come to see would come out straight away instead of waiting. That's the point. We're not replacing one with the other, one is happening before so that they put loads of rubber down on the track and then the current drivers have no excuse.

Mr C: That's perfect. Ok I'm with you Paul, is it Paul. Paul I'm with you on that suggestion but what do you do when it's anything other than dry weather. Because for example Silverstone last year nobody went out at all because it rained constantly. So that's still an issue that needs resolving, that's not acceptable, that's not giving fans value for money.

Christine: I think it's a genius idea, there aren't enough bobbleheads in the world!

Mr C: I done got some exciting technical stuff to discuss.



Christine: Yay [sarcastic].

Mr C: Which means if you're only here for the Formula 1 you may as well switch off now. But I'll be as brief as I possibly can. We may have found the ideal solution for archiving and distributing our audio shows, in the shape of SoundCloud. SoundCloud dot com is something we've been using for several years, I think 2009 was when we originally signed up to it. It was for a very long time too expensive for our meagre budget. We couldn't afford to pay their pro prices which is what the pricing tier we'd fall into for the amount of shows that we produce. Very recently SoundCloud have had a change of heart, they've reduced their prices and they've enabled unlimited uploads, and what that means is that this week we have switched over from our current service provider to SoundCloud so we've moved all of our shows over to their streaming service in order to test this out, and if you downloaded the last show there's a reasonable chance you actually used that service. It's a bit quicker actually which is good, it's good for listeners because they get the shows faster but it also is good for us because it costs us less money and it means we can produce more and more content without fear of hitting our download limits. For the last at least the last three or four years I think on average every month we distribute about a terabyte of downloadable content and that means once we hit that limit we have to pay money every time we go over it and that has been restricting the amount of things we can make, and as of now, as of this point onwards, assuming that our tests are successful, that's one restriction that's been lifted from us so we could make lots and lots and lots of lovely Sidepodcast audio shows this season without fear of bankrupting ourself.

Christine: In the comments Jordan has said now the return of video shows, well it paves the way for that kind of thing.

Mr C: No it doesn't Jordan, no Jordan wasn't listening, it's audio only.

Christine: No, but if we paid less money on that it paves the way for that kind of thing.

Mr C: Ummm, potentially. I think video is still a major, major problem we haven't, Vimeo is the closest thing to SoundCloud for video and that is still way too expensive for us. If Vimeo also have a change of heart and say actually you can upload as much video as you can possibly make for a fixed fee that you can afford, if they do the same thing effectively the same thing that SoundCloud has just done then sign us up and then we can do videos, but I think for the rest of this season it puts the spotlight firmly on audio – live audio, pre-recorded audio, any kind of audio show you can think of we can now, we can create it and we can release it without, without any problems.

Christine: So that just sounds like you're making us more work to do and yet at the beginning you said five shows we've done in two weeks, that's too much like hard work!

Mr C: Yeah, there is a limit on what the human body can take, what we're able to produce in our spare times and that hasn't changed.

Christine: Although I think we have been trying to get to the point where we are the limiting factor and not the technology...

Mr C: Or the cost.

Christine: We're moving there all the time.



Mr C: Yes, we are getting closer and closer. Do join us again there will be more Sidepodcast streaming ahead of the next grand prix which is in a couple of weeks. Where are we going, China, is that where we are next?

Christine: We're not going to China!

Mr C: No, Formula 1 is going is going to China.

Christine: Apparently it's quite hard to get a visa.

Mr C: We'll be staying right here.

Christine: Yes.

Mr C: And discussing it. Do join us.

[Transcript by Robyn]

