



FEDERATION INTERNATIONALE DE L' AUTOMOBILE

PRESS INFORMATION

EXCLUSION OF CAR NO.1 (SCHUMACHER / BENETTON) AND CAR NO. 6 (COULTHARD / WILLIAMS) FROM THE RESULTS OF THE BRAZILIAN GRAND PRIX.

The following questions were raised by the media during the last 48 hours.

1. Why was the result of the analysis of the fuel samples taken on Friday, not given to the relevant teams until Sunday morning?

The Brazilian Grand Prix was the first time the new equipment and procedures were used at a race. The technicians analysed fuel from car 6 on Friday and, to begin with, did not believe the results. Then they got the same result from car 1 after the first practice Saturday. They then tested car 28 (Berger / Ferrari) during Saturday qualifying and its fuel was perfect. By the time all had been checked and re-checked, it was late on Saturday. A report was given to the Stewards when they arrived Sunday morning. The teams were verbally informed by the Stewards a few hours before the start of the race, and subsequently notified in writing.

2. Why did it take so long to analyse the fuel from the Friday practice and only a few hours to analyse the fuel from the race?

To analyse one sample takes about 45 minutes. After the race, fuel from three cars was analysed.

3. Why did the FIA change the fuel checking procedure?

This procedure was finalised in conjunction with the oil companies. It was the then president of ELF, Mr. Guillon, who, in 1993 proposed the new procedure of approving the sample and then comparing its "fingerprint" with that of the sample taken from a car at an event. This process was agreed unanimously by the oil companies. The objective is to obtain an immediate result. Previously, delays of several weeks occurred.

4. How does the procedure work?

The "fingerprints" are compared using a Hewlett-Packard gas chromatograph. This is a standard piece of equipment and is used in laboratories all over the world. The equipment is operated by a highly qualified and very experienced chemist who will be travelling to all the races in 1995. If there is a discrepancy, a report is submitted to the Stewards.

5. Were Benetton and Williams the only cars whose fuel was checked at Interlagos?

No, Ferrari and McLaren were also checked and the "fingerprint" of their fuel matched their approved fuel samples perfectly.

6. Could the ELF fuel have changed its characteristics during transportation, just like an open bottle of wine, due to temperature, humidity, etc.?

ELF would take every precaution to avoid this because the performance of their cars would suffer. Fuels from two other companies presented no problems.

7. In your opinion, were the teams or ELF trying to gain an unfair advantage by using a fuel which was not the same as the one approved?

No. Assuming the FIA's technical equipment functioned perfectly, the most probable explanation is that an incorrect batch of fuel was sent to Brazil by mistake.

8. Is the equipment used by the FIA reliable or is it a "palaeolithic" piece of equipment as certain persons claim?

It is a standard piece of high-technology equipment for chemical analysis. Only a technologically illiterate person would describe it as "palaeolithic".

9. Can the International Court of Appeal overrule the decision of the Stewards?

Yes.

10. Could the Stewards of the meeting take any other course of action, such as ignoring or holding back the results of the analysis, or consulting another laboratory?

If the Stewards believe that the rules have been infringed, they must take action.

11. What is happening now?

Each time fuel is taken from a car, three separate cans are filled. One is used by the FIA for analysis, one is given to the team, and the third is kept in case of dispute. Prior to the appeal, the FIA will repeat its analyses and the teams, and/or the fuel company will almost certainly conduct their own. At the same time the third sample, plus an unopened can of the original, approved fuel, will be sent to an independent approved laboratory in a country unconnected with any of the participants. The Court of Appeal will be given the results of the FIA's test and the independent tests. The teams will be invited to submit their own results.

The Court of Appeal, which consists of independent lawyers from major motoring organisations in countries unconnected with any of the parties, will examine all the evidence and take a decision. The hearing is scheduled for the 13th of April.

Paris, 29th of March 1995

FOR MEDIA INFORMATION PURPOSES - NO REGULATORY VALUE

For further information on the FIA, please consult our Internet site:

www.fia.com