



# CONFERENCE NEWS

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**BALANCING ACT**  
MARK WEBBER ON THE TRADE-OFF  
BETWEEN SPORT AND ENTERTAINMENT

# TECHNOLOGY AND THE FUTURE OF MOTOR SPORT

*AN EXPERT PANEL OF DRIVERS AND ENGINEERS YESTERDAY DEBATED THE COMPLEX RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN MAN AND MACHINE*

The second plenary session of the FIA Sport Conference in Geneva tackled one of motor sport's most interesting and complicated issues – the relationship between the human element and the technology of a racing car, and how engineering innovation is changing the global landscape of the industry as a whole.

Opening the session was former Williams F1 test driver and now Dare to be Different founder, Susie Wolff, who spoke about how new technologies can be a fantastic tool for reaching not just potential young fans, but also inspiring new competitors, engineers, and other talented individuals to pursue a career in motor sport.

"The power of technology these days means there are so many more ways to reach young people," she said. "For example, with Dare to Be Different, we came up with the concept of delegates attending our events and then going back to their schools and spread the message."

One of the most inspirational people in motor sport, Frédéric Sausset, who competed at last year's 24 Hours of Le Mans the Garage 56 entrant, was then welcomed to the stage. Sausset is a quadruple amputee, and thus technology played a crucial role in making his dream of racing at Le Mans a reality.

"To start with it was difficult because nobody believed it was possible," he said. "But particularly thanks to the support of Jean Todt and Gérard Neveu, I was able to prove that I could do the lap times that would allow me to compete."



An expert panel of motor sport specialists then took to the stage to discuss the current relationship between sport and technology. The panel was designed to offer a variety of perspectives from technology companies to engineers and drivers.

Patrick Head, Williams Formula One Team Co-Founder, identified the complexity of the question of technology, and commented: "I think motor sport is at a dividing point between road car technology and entertainment. The new technology may not always be that beneficial to the entertainment side, but on the other hand, many people thought Formula E wouldn't last, and now it is going from strength to strength."

Pirelli Motorsport Director Paul Hembery then gave some unique



insight into the changing habits of motor sport participants using the data Pirelli is able to gain by being a tyre supplier to a wide range of different series. "The technology interest is great for us to develop new products – there is a lot of technology we have today that we wouldn't have if it wasn't for motor sport – but a lot of the championships Pirelli is involved in are all about people going out and enjoying racing," he said. "Historic disciplines are growing in popularity all the time, which is something we can identify through our sales figures."

Jean-Eric Vergne represented the perspective of a current racing driver on this issue, and was well placed to discuss the latest developments as a driver in the FIA Formula E Championship and also the FIA World Endurance Championship.

He argued that while technology might be changing the traditional landscape of the sport, that does not necessarily detract from its appeal. "Season 5 of Formula E is going to be a breakthrough," he said. "The cars will be sexier, with new batteries, other new technologies, and all while being twice as efficient. We will be the championship with by far the most manufacturers – it sends a very powerful message that Formula E is the future of motor sport, and shows how successful we can be if we embrace this new direction."

McLaren Applied Technologies is one of the leading companies driving development of technology both in motor sport and in its related industries. Rodi Basso, its Motorsport Director, suggested that one way forward would be to change the way new technologies are presented. He said, "Our technological DNA can actually help with providing an entertaining and prosperous future, but in order to do that we need to change our perception and look at data not as a tool but as a form of media content."

The final talking point of the panel dealt with how technological



developments can fit in with grassroots levels of competition. One of the areas of discussion in motor sport currently is hybridisation, and on this subject, Hembery added, "Almost every new vehicle we are working on now has a hybrid element to it. It's something we're sure to see more and more in motor sport and it will end up at the grassroots in the future. What's coming in battery technology is very exciting, and it's a question of when, not if, it becomes universal."

Basso said: "If we want to improve the access to motor sport, we have to prepare the grassroots with solutions and technologies that will be there higher up the pyramid. If we can help the younger series to be more representative it will be helpful for the accessibility of motor sport."

After the panel, two leading companies in motor sport technology, Enel and Brembo, participated in the break out session. Enel – which is a partner of FIA Smart Cities and the FIA Formula E Championship – is driving the development of electric energy generation and charging. Its Head of New Technologies, Frederico Caleno, said: "The charging infrastructure we are developing in Formula E gives us an opportunity to expand our work into the cities that host the championship, allowing them to exploit this technology and generate cleaner energy.

"In New York City we will deploy storage solutions during the race, and the goal is to be able to leave this as a legacy solution for the host cities."

Mario Almondo, General Manager for Brembo Performance, ended the session by saying, "Motor sport tests technology, process and materials in a way that isn't possible in anywhere else. This is fundamental for us to develop new technologies – if you are at the peak of what is technologically possible, you inspire the rest of the world."



# MEET THE FIA FAMILY

*SPORT CONFERENCE DELEGATES YESTERDAY HAD THE OPPORTUNITY TO ENGAGE WITH ALL OF THE FIA'S KEY DEPARTMENTS IN A BID TO FOSTER CLOSER TIES AND GREATER CO-OPERATION*

The fifth edition of the FIA Sport Conference in Geneva brings delegates from 115 ASNs around the world closer to the heart of the Federation than ever before. As part of this welcome, directors of each of the FIA departments presented their roles and those of their staff within the organisation.

Peter Bayer, FIA Secretary General for Sport, began the session by saying, "This week is all about you – the FIA family. I am delighted to be here and be at your service – it is fantastic at the end of every week of work to be able to watch the most amazing motor racing in the world.

"We will be strengthening our organisation to ensure that there are FIA people in your regions, speaking your language, who are there throughout the year, not just at the sport conferences."

Introducing 'New ASNs' Relations', Director of ASNs' Relations and Development Programmes Frédérique Trouvé was the first departmental representative to present to delegates, before Kate Robson, Head of Grants Administration and Accreditation, explained that the latest round of FIA Sport Grant Programme applications has just opened. "Our role is to ensure that the funds available through the FIA Sport Grant Programme are managed in an efficient way to maximise the benefits for the ASNs," she said.

Directors of the sporting departments then presented the structures of their teams and their strategies for working together with ASNs: Frédéric Bertrand, Director of Circuit Championships, Vincent Caro, Director of Historic, Hill-



Climb and Off-Road, Kay Oberheide, CIK-FIA Executive Secretary, and Jarmo Mahonen, Director of Rally.

Bernard Niclot, Director of Technical Department next explained that the FIA is responsible for technical aspects of all championships with the exception of the single-seater pyramid, before Director of Communications, Olivier Fisch, informed delegates of the FIA's role in press, digital and social media across all pillars and departments of the organisation.

Alexandre Gueschir, Director of Marketing and Events then discussed a number of the projects undertaken by his department, before the FIA's Director of Legal, Shaila-Ann Rao, explained the legal duties and responsibilities of the Federation.

Nuno Costa, Head of Safety Equipment Homologation told delegates about the two main pillars of the Safety Department and the Global Institute. He explained the process of homologating safety and medical requirements – including the FIA's anti-doping initiative Race True – as well as what is involved in granting safety licences for circuits and rally events. He also explained the World Accident Database and proposed a new ASN Safety Reward Programme, which is designed to encourage ASNs to mandate increased safety levels in their competitions.

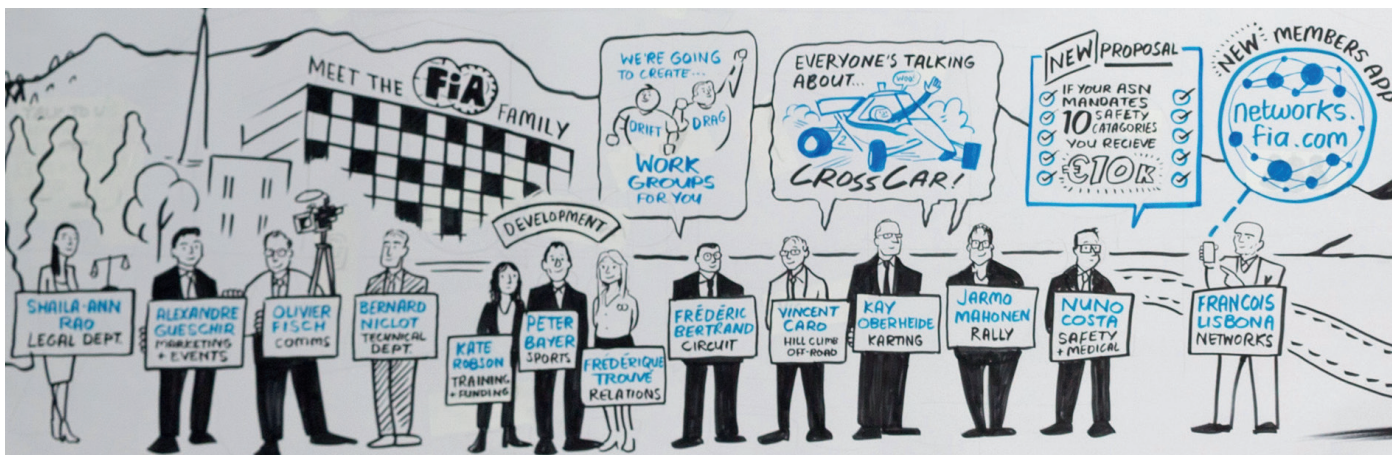
Finally, the FIA Head of IT, François Lisbona, informed delegates of the FIA Networks platform, designed to facilitate and optimise communication between Clubs, members and the FIA in the context of work tasks.

Following these presentations, all of the directors as well as representatives from their departments were made available to delegates to answer direct questions and offer advice to parallel departments within their own organisations.

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**Peter Bayer,**  
FIA Secretary General for Sport



# ACTION FOR ENVIRONMENT: BUILDING SUSTAINABLE RACING

*AS THE WORLD MOVES TOWARD A MORE SUSTAINABLE FUTURE, MOTOR SPORT HAS A GREAT STORY TO TELL, AS YESTERDAY'S OPENING SESSION IN GENEVA REVEALED*



Opening yesterday morning's first session, FIA Environmental Delegate Garry Connelly launched a new initiative to give ASNs the tools they need to drive forward the Federation's Action for Environment campaign and grow sustainability in motor sport.

Outlining the key themes of the campaign, Connelly said: "There are two pillars in our environmental strategy. The first is to Measure and Improve – so to act responsibly and minimise our footprint. The second pillar is Innovate and Promote and this is where our sport has a great opportunity to be different."

He pointed out, however, that while FIA surveys of ASNs

revealed a strong willingness to achieve sustainability, there exists a knowledge gap in how to proceed.

"Ninety per cent of ASNs say they are willing to participate in the FIA Action for Environment campaign. However, almost 60% don't have a supply strategy, which is potentially the greatest environmental impact area. More than 90% said it's important to know what their environmental footprint is, but more than 90% don't know how to calculate it."

In a bid to assist ASNs with engagement on environmental issues, he then announced a new initiative, a presentation pack to be included in the ASN Toolkit, highlighting motor sport's achievements in the area of sustainability, such as the advancement of hybrid technologies in Formula One and the FIA World Endurance Championship and the development of the FIA Formula E Championship.

"We have great story to tell and we now have the tools available for you to do this," he said. "We have developed a presentation that will go with your ASN toolkit that will enable you to explain to governments, sponsors, your community and to your member clubs what the FIA and motor sport are doing in the area of the environment. It demonstrates your corporate social responsibility. It shows how we innovate and promote, it gives great examples of technology transfer that benefit all of society and how we measure and improve."



The presentation, which includes script cards, is being made available in English, French and Spanish.

The launch of the presentation pack was followed by a panel discussion on the pressing need for motor sport to become more sustainable, featuring Jean Todt, FIA President, Maria Luisa Silva, Development Director of the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), Michelle Lemaître, Head of Sustainability of the International Olympic Committee (IOC), and Helena Molin Valdés, Head of Climate and Clean Air Coalition for the UN Environment Programme (UNEP).

Explaining the UNDP's role, Ms Silva said: "At UNDP we work at the field level and spearheads the promotion and implementation of the UN's Sustainable Development Goals, a global agenda to combat poverty and make the planet more liveable for us all."

She continued by saying motor sport has the potential to play a major role in advancing awareness of the goals. "What we hope is that we can link with you so that you can use your strength in awareness raising and fund raising to contribute to achievement of the SDGs.

"You are role models for million around the globe and you understand very well what it means to try to attain a very difficult target. This is what we are doing with the SDGs – we are trying to reach environmental and social standards that seemed unattainable a few years ago."

Ms Lemaître added: "Sporting has a very important role to play. You can do that in three ways: obviously through the vehicle itself but then through the event. This is not always visible but it's in how your event is run. Simple things such as where is the location. Can you get there by public transport? Has energy been reduced? Are there recycling facilities? Then of course there is the engagement part, which has been alluded to, where the sporting world uses its athletes to communicate as role models."

According to Ms Molin Valdés, Formula E is a prime example of motor sport's great ability to promote sustainability.

"Formula E races, with races in downtown areas, attract a



lot of the non-converted," she said. "Giving an opportunity to see how the switch of technologies is managed; how the charging works, and also speaking to younger generations are definitely relevant. This [motor sport] community has a great role to play in innovation and making it affordable and, to be honest, in making it a little bit cool."

Closing the session President Todt said: "For the coming years there are two major priorities for our motoring organisations – road safety and the environment. The duty of every organisation is to work closely with UN agencies and governments, work as a team and demonstrate the influence of our organisation by taking leadership around the environment and road safety."

# GETTING THE BALANCE RIGHT

*YESTERDAY'S SECOND PLENARY SESSION EXPLORED WHERE THE LINE BETWEEN ENTERTAINMENT AND SPORTING PURITY SHOULD BE DRAWN*

The fine balance of preserving sporting integrity and delivering entertaining drama to motor sport fans was the subject of yesterday afternoon's second plenary session.

FIA World Endurance Champion and two-time Formula One Monaco Grand Prix winner Mark Webber spoke about the different view of motor sport a new career on the media side of the sport has given him, explaining that for him the task of engaging fans is one that motor sport often fails to get completely right.

"For me it's about trying to talking to the people at home – how are we going to get this sport across to them? We can lose them so fast these days by being 'in the bubble' in terms of our treatment and what we deliver at an event. We have to put a lot of meat on the bone for the consumer at home. We are trying to keep the original customer and we're trying to convert new people. If you start talking about DRS and MGU-Ks, all of a sudden you can get bogged down.

"Personally on Channel 4 in the UK it's a different audience. It's quite young, it's quite pacey and for us to keep them engaged is not easy. We have done it quite well but there have been a lot of lessons for me."

The session then moved on to a panel discussion involving F1 Managing Director, Commercial Operations Sean Bratches, Gérard Neveu, CEO of the FIA World Endurance Championship and Arnaud de Puyfontaine, Vivendi CEO.

Asked whether declining audiences for motor sport in recent years were a cause for concern in Liberty Media's takeover of the commercial rights of Formula One, Bratches



insisted the opposite was the case and that F1 was rich in fan engagement possibilities.

"Formula One is a fantastic global brand with half a billion fans around the world that are champing at the bit for more content," he said. "There's an opportunity on multiple fronts to engage not only the next generation of fans but also to spend time better serving the incumbent fans.

"We are actively looking to enhance our broadcast," he added. "We're focused on speed and sound, we're going to be developing and acquiring technologies that better illustrate the sport to fans. We are very focused on digital platforms. We are going to build a responsive web platform, as well as non-live, over-the-top, direct-to-consumer platforms that sit above F1. We're looking for creating content that F1 fans can consume outside the 20 or 21 grand prix weekends."

Commenting on the challenge of engaging with fans in a motor sport discipline conducted over a long timeframe – from six to 24 hours – WEC CEO Gérard Neveu said: "This is challenging. We all know the way to watch motor sport is changing fast. The way forward is to adapt content for digital. We have a huge strategy in digital over the past four years. Adapting different supports we have and capture the attention of the fans."

Talking about the balance between sport and entertainment, Neveu added that the task was to provide great racing on track coupled with ancillary entertainment to keep fans engaged.

"Sport with entertainment is a full part of the weekend. You don't spend just a few hours with the show. With endurance you have a long weekend and you cannot expect people to sit for 6-24 hours in a grandstand, and entertainment is a big part of that. The concept is for the full family, to keep

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**Sean Bratches,**  
Formula One Managing Director,  
Commercial Operations



them for the weekend, to have some entertainment around it and adapt that to the venue you are in.”

Focusing on the topic of the balance of sporting purity and on-track action Webber said: “In a lot of other sports – football, tennis, golf, basketball – there is a huge human component and that doesn’t change. With our sport we have a problem, because we have a huge motor sport and manufacturing component. What is the entertainment side? Why are people turning the TV on? This our problem. Someone can relate to Lewis Hamilton and love what he is doing but it is very hard to see what he is doing. That is the first challenge. Back the heyday my mum knew that Ayrton Senna in Monaco was doing something special. The whole emotional side was visible.”

Vivendi’s Arnaud de Puyfontaine, meanwhile insisted that the balance is correct.

“I do think it’s at the right place. If I had been asked about the title of this session I would rather have called it sport and entertainment or sport is entertainment,” he said. “This is an amazing world of competition and technology. The event has to be structured by rules and it’s even more important to have rules for safety and the perception of the sport in the global community and this is of the utmost importance to the FIA and fairly so. So, if you manage the purity of the discipline and the amazing aspect of sports event you have a winning formula.”

The Vivendi chief concluded by saying: “We are aligned with the path of Formula One and the passion and the vision of Jean Todt and his team at the FIA regarding what we can build in this sport. We are very proud to be part of it not just for business reasons but because we’re in the entertainment business and it really is very cool.”



# FIA ANNOUNCES WORLD'S FIRST INTERCONTINENTAL DRIFTING CUP

*EVENT WILL BRING SOME OF THE SPORT'S MAJOR STARS TO TOKYO IN SEPTEMBER*



The thrilling world of drifting is this year set to get its first global, FIA-regulated event following today's announcement that the FIA Intercontinental Drifting Cup will take place in Japan, the traditional home of the sport, on 30 September – 1 October at a Tokyo venue.

Earlier this year, the FIA set unified world regulations for drifting, and commenting on the launch of the first international competition to be run to a set of FIA rules, FIA President Jean Todt said: "This is the beginning of a very important category for the FIA. As we continue to develop motor sport around the world, drifting has a great appeal to young people and has a passionate core following which is only going to get bigger."

"With the creation of the FIA Intercontinental Drifting Cup, we are building the framework for a standard format that will help the sport continue to grow from grass roots level to more professional competitions globally. We are setting the standard for what I'm sure will be a hugely successful form of motor sport."

Following the FIA's appointment of SUNPROS, organiser of the successful Japan-based D1 Drift series, as the event promoter, the company's President Isao Saita added: "We are proud to be able to hold a world competition in Japan with a form of motor sport that originated here. At the same time, I want to contribute to the expansion of drifting competition all over the world – this is an exciting time for this discipline."





## GALA DINNER

The historic Bâtiment des Forces Motrices – a former water works which in 1997 became an opera house and now serves as a stunning venue for artistic and cultural events – last night hosted delegates from all over the world for the glittering FIA Sport Conference Gala Dinner.





GENEVA  
20-22 JUNE



RICHARD MILLE



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