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# AUTO+ SPORT WEEK

RACING FOR THE  
NEXT GENERATION



## PLENARY SESSION 3

# WINNING THE RACE TO ENGAGE NEW GENERATIONS OF ENTHUSIASTS

*Appealing to the next generation of fans and competitors is no easy task, but yesterday afternoon's plenary session offered some crucial tips on how to get young people involved in motor sport*

To racing purists words such as gaming, social media and fan activation might seem to have little to do with traditional motor sport but following yesterday afternoon's plenary session on methods of making motor sport appealing to new generations of fans, such terms are likely to pass into the lexicon of motor sport organisers around the world.

Opening the discussion was Alex Trickett, Head of Sport at Twitter UK, who gave a presentation on how the fast-growing world of social media can have a major impact on fans and participants alike.

He first detailed how social media has grown in recent years, with Twitter now home to 255 million active users and with more than 1 billion tweets being posted every two days. He added that 80 per cent of these were posted via mobile devices.

He then outlined how motor sport organisations can leverage social media in encouraging people to follow or participate in the sport.

Advocating that ASNs be brave in their use of social media he said that the environment provided a perfect opportunity for organisers to break news, offering the example of English football club Manchester United, which revealed its signing of midfielder Juan Mata on Twitter. He added that the club had no presence on the platform a year ago but now has 2.6 million followers. He added that image-led posts are by far the most successful.

He went on to outline the value of social media as a promotional and brand-building tool before saying that in social media interaction it is important to be part of a conversation with fans, reacting and responding to their input to engender goodwill. Finally, he said that social media is a good tool for offering exclusive content to fans, granting them access to material and offers they would be unable to obtain elsewhere.

Lorenz Beringer, former Head of Social Media at Bayern Munich then offered insights into how the world of football uses social media to talk to fans.



Delegates were also offered a case study in the shape of the new Bushy Park circuit in Barbados. Barbados Motoring Federation (BMF) President Andrew Mallalieu and Apex circuit design managing director Clive Bowen explained how the track, which was aided by the FIA's Motor Sport Safety Development Fund, had been launched with a music festival that was wholly promoted via social media.

Former Ferrari team principal Stefano Domenicali then related his experiences with the team's young driver development programme and the launch of the team's online presence, before Darren Cox, the head of NISMO, Nissan's racing arm, explained to the audience how the manufacturer had got involved in computer gaming to encourage youth involvement and to discover new talent.

## PLENARY SESSION 1



He explained how the GT Academy, which began in 2008, utilises the Gran Turismo game, with which the FIA has just partnered, as a driver discovery/development tool.

One of the programme's winners, Jann Mardenborough, was on hand to explain how his gaming pastime had led to a GT Academy place and this year to a drive with Arden International in the GP3 series.

Also representing young drivers were Ferrari development programme graduate Jules Bianchi, now racing for Marussia in Formula One, and Stoffel Vandoorne, who graduated from the FIA Institute's Young Driver Excellence Academy and who is now a development driver with McLaren, racing in the GP2 series with Art Grand Prix.

The second half of the afternoon session was given over to a discussion of how to encourage new competitors by making racing affordable.

FIA Single-Seater Commission President Gerhard Berger

explained how the FIA is redefining the racing ladder, first through the reshaped Formula 3 European Championship and most recently with the Formula 4 Championship for young drivers making an affordable step up to single-seater racing from karting.

Nicolas Deschaux, President of France's FFSA, gave a presentation on the success of the ASN's karting academies and afterwards, responding to a question submitted via the FIA's Twitter feed, he offered advice to a group attempting to set up a motor sport academy in the Middle East.

Yoshiki Hiyama, Secretary General of the Motor Sports Department of Japan's JAF highlighted the importance of drifting as a youth-participation discipline and explained how the ASN has set about regulating the emerging sport.

Michael Smith, from CAMS in Australia pointed to the success of its Motorkhana programme, in which participants are given a first taste of motor sport in their road car.





## CONFERENCE Q&A

# KAZUNORI YAMAUCHI

*The head of games company Polyphony Digital explains how the FIA's input has made Gran Turismo a more accurate racing experience*

**Q How did the collaboration with the FIA begin?**

**A** I think it was around two years ago that we heard that the FIA was interested in doing something with us and I went to their headquarters in Paris and I heard there that Mr Jean Todt had a great interest in the project as well. From then on a lot of ideas came up and we've shared and traded information.

The people from the FIA came to

Polyphony twice to compare their data with ours. We were surprised because they are incredibly detailed about the things they check. It was very comprehensive.

**Q How important is it for Gran Turismo to have the FIA seal of approval through using fully homologated circuits?**

**A** To Gran Turismo there are a number of objectives. Of course, one of them is to enjoy controlling really fast cars on the track. At the same time I race myself and I understand the importance of safety in motor sport. I totally understand the FIA's point of view in placing a heavy emphasis on the safety of the tracks that are used in racing. Reflecting that concern is important for us.

**Q When you examined the information about those tracks, was there more information available that helped build more realistic circuits?**

**A** When we actually take data from the tracks we go into a severe amount of detail in recreating and surveying everything that exists at a track, photographing everything. However, we

didn't realise until we got the input of the FIA why things are structured the way they are, why circuits are laid out in a particular way, why corners are profiled a certain way and what influences the shape and layout of the kerbs. In that respect we learned a lot about the protocols that go into circuit design.

**Q You mentioned that you race yourself?**

**A** I raced the Nurburgring 24 Hours recently. I've done that several times [he has won his class twice] and I race in the VLN Endurance Championship.

**Q There are four circuits homologated in GT6, so what does the future hold?**

**A** Today is really just the beginning. I don't think we can include every circuit, some of them won't be possible because there are a lot of classic circuits in Grand Turismo that we simply can't do.

**Q So it's about making the current tracks as accurate as possible?**

**A** We want each and every circuit exactly as it is in real life and the collaborating with the FIA is a big part of it.



SPORT MOTOREX 2014

## MEDICAL MARVEL

*FIA Sport MotorEx 2014 yesterday saw F1 Medical Rescue Co-ordinator Dr Ian Roberts give delegates a guided tour of the F1 Medical Car and its equipment*

Delegates at Sport Conference 2014 were yesterday treated to a unique guided tour of one of motor sport's most high-tech racing machines – the FIA Formula One Medical Car.

On hand to guide club representatives around the 6.3-litre Mercedes C63 AMG estate car was F1 Medical Rescue Co-ordinator Dr Ian Roberts, who described in detail how he and Medical Car driver Alan van der Merwe respond to incidents at the world's grand prix circuits.

He then took spectators through the car's systems, including its on-board monitors and the communication systems that connect the medical team with race control during an event. Finally, he explained the comprehensive and tightly packaged medical equipment stored in the rear of the car, giving delegates a unique insight into how the FIA maintains the highest levels of safety at F1 events.







## WORKSHOPS

# MAPPING THE PATHWAY FOR MOTOR SPORT DEVELOPMENT

*Aimed at identifying methods of taking motor sport forward in the coming years, yesterday's workshop sessions produced some fascinating results*

Infrastructure, training and the affordability of competition were the chief issues raised by ASNs during yesterday's workshop sessions aimed at defining possibilities for global motor sport development.

With the results of the session set to be distilled into a document to be presented to today's World Motor Sport Council, club representatives delivered a fascinating set of proposals for development.

Opening the session, in which the workshop outcomes were revealed, Tim Mayer, leader of Group G, said that chief among the concerns of the ASNs in his workshop is training, with clubs seeking help from the FIA on how to present themselves as experts to government and industry.

He also pointed to the need for affordable competition, in particular raising the idea of four-stroke karting becoming a staple for developing countries. He added that the group had recommended that a global marketplace for affordable competition equipment be established to aid developing ASNs.

Michael Smith's Group F pointed to a need to correctly structure ASNs, saying that the FIA's ASN Development Task Force has a key role to play in facilitating this. The group also recommended that research into the value of regional motor sport industry sectors be undertaken in order to give ASNs powerful data to present to government when seeking support.

Group E leader Elie Sleeman echoed the call for infrastructural development and the need for cost-effective competitions but added more help was needed in training and retaining officials.

Andrew Papadopoulos, who chaired Group D, reported that the ASNs in his group were concerned about seeking expertise on funding and financial matters. "Many clubs don't have the expertise on board to identify new income streams," he said.

They also called for the FIA to write a letter to each ASN's government recognising the organisation as the official governing body of motor sport in that territory, as this would help in securing government support. "Educating government as to what we're about is crucially important," he said.

The group also pointed to a need for cross-border competition.

## WORKSHOPS



Rallying, said Papadopoulos, was a major activity in many countries due to a lack of circuits and the group called for the development of an affordable, uniform-specification vehicle that could be used by competitors in international and cross-border competitions.

Colin Hilton's Group C also called for rising costs to be tackled and recommended the simplification of classes and categories and the establishment of simple, long-term regulations in order to attract more people to motor sport.

Group B, led by Christian Schacht, also pointed to cost as a barrier and added that "motor sport must be customised to customer demands". He pointed to the affordability and popularity of drifting as an example of a discipline that could be adopted by ASNs and the FIA.

Finally, Group A, led by Garry Connelly, said that the FIA needs to develop a template for use by all ASNs defining the driver pathway in every discipline and particularly for young drivers and female competitors. A template should also be developed to guide ASNs on the recruitment of officials. The groups also called for informational material on advocacy, marketing and the training of officials.

Responding to the suggestions, FIA Secretary General of Sport Jean-Louis Valentin said the "work done here represents a very important step in building our motor sport development plan".

"I think this has created a new spirit and it will help enormously in defining a proper strategy for us to help you," he added.

FIA Rally Director Jarmo Mahonen agreed that rallying is over-regulated and said the creation of more affordable cross-border rallying was progressing. Vincent Caro, Head of the FIA Historic, Off-Road and Hill Climb department advocated that ASNs investigated rallycross and autocross as affordable and exciting forms of motor sport, while Frédéric Bertrand, FIA's Single-Seater department Director, suggested that in circuit racing ASNs look to affordable disciplines such as drag racing.

Drawing the session to a close, Deputy President for Sport Graham Stoker said that the FIA would collate the information into a document which will today be presented to the World Motor Sport Council for approval in principle. "We will then refine this document, take it before the WMSC in Beijing in September where it will be formally approved."





## GALA DINNER

### A feast of fireworks at Mercedes

FIA Sport Conference is rapidly establishing a number of traditions and none is more highly-anticipated than the event's Gala Dinner. This year's hosts were Mercedes, who opened up their flagship showroom and museum for a spectacular evening that will be hard to top for next year's hosts.

Following a cocktail reception amid a legion of classic, concept and modern vehicles, FIA President Jean Todt thanked Mercedes for its hospitality and Wolfgang Schattling of the company's F1 and DTM programmes explained Mercedes sporting involvement to delegates. Dinner was then served upstairs, where jazz band Lady Taxi entertained guests.

The highlight of the evening came after dinner when the lower level was the scene of an exclusive look at the 2015 S-Class Coupe, which was flown into the showroom in an explosion of fireworks and a shower of sparks.

