



FIA WOMEN IN MOTOR SPORT
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AUTO+ WOMEN IN MOTOR SPORT



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seals CIK-FIA
Academy Trophy
win at Le Mans



CONTACTS:

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STORIES FOR THE NEXT ISSUE, WE
WOULD LOVE TO HEAR FROM YOU.
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Welcome to the latest edition of the FIA's Auto+ Women in Motorsport newsletter.

If this edition has a theme it is that of launching bold initiatives, either for the purpose of promoting existing female racing talent or aimed at discovering the next generation of motor sport stars.

We start with talent spotting at entry-level, in the CIK-FIA Karting Academy Trophy. There, our cover star, Marta Garcia, sealed the title and closed out a great season with an assured performance at the final round in Le Mans.

Also in karting we feature the latest young racer to receive support from the FIA Women in Motorsport Commission, Hamda Al Qubaisi, who is about to begin her second season in the competitive UAE Rotax Max Challenge.

Further up the motor sport ladder we focus on the Commission's partnership with the Qatari Motor and Motorcycle Federation to search for future cross country rally talent and we look at how senior female race team personnel are helping to encourage the next generation of technical experts.

Finally we talk to Commission Ambassador Katherine Legge and Beth Paretta about the ambitious launch of their female-focused race team Grace Autosport.

We hope you enjoy this latest edition and as always we welcome your feedback.

Your AUTO+ team



CIK-FIA Karting Academy Trophy

Marta marches to Academy glory

FIA Women in Motorsport-supported racer Marta Garcia took the first major trophy of her young motor sport career earlier this month, winning the CIK-FIA Karting Academy Trophy.

The Spanish racer, who was selected by the FIA Women in Motorsport Commission to receive a funded drive this season, sealed the title with a strong showing in the Qualifying Heats and third place in the final race at the last round in Le Mans having already built up a strong lead in the overall standings with victory in the opening two rounds of the competition.

"This is very important for me, this CIK-FIA title is very good for my career results," she said afterwards. "I also think that this may help me to secure some sponsorship for next season. After winning the Academy Trophy I was in all the newspaper for several days at home, so it's very exciting."

FIA Women in Motorsport Commission President Michèle Mouton was among the first to salute the 14-year-old driver's achievement.

"What an absolutely outstanding result by Marta; we are all incredibly proud of her achievement," she said. "From the three rounds of the CIK-FIA Karting Academy Trophy she has won two outright and finished third in the final event. She has shown a consistently high race pace and thoroughly deserves this title. When every competitor races in identical machinery it is a great platform to show your talent and against a field of 50 competitors Marta has proved to be the best across the season. She has more than rewarded the belief we had in her."

Marta began her campaign in style with a commanding win at the opening round at the Circuito Internacional Zuera, near Zaragoza. Starting the final from row two of the grid, Marta took the lead on the first lap and thereafter controlled the race to cross the line 2.8 seconds ahead of Britain's Alfie Brown and 6.6s clear of third-placed Russian Zakhar Slutskiy. The Spanish girl also set the fastest lap of the race with a time of 1:05.500.

The victory meant Marta went to round two with a narrow

lead in the standings, sitting a point clear of Brown, with Slutskiy third ahead of Spain's Xavier Lloveras Brunet.

She quickly set about consolidating her advantage at Belgium's Genk circuit. Pitted against 48 other karters, Marta was again amid the pace-setters during practice and qualifying but raced to the head of the field in the final to take her second win of the campaign, 4.2s ahead of Lloveras Brunet and seven seconds in front of third-placed Alejandro Lahoz Lopez. Once again Marta set the best lap of the race on the way to the flag with a time of 57.202s.

With an almost unassailable title lead Marta went to the final round in Le Mans simply needing a smooth weekend and she ensured she could not be overtaken in the standing with a solid performance in Saturday night's Qualifying Heats. She then drove a wise final race to third place behind winner Lloveras Brunet and second-placed Brazilian Murilo Della Coletta to seal her Academy Trophy win.

"I wasn't too nervous," she said of the Le Mans event. "My objective was to win the title on Saturday and that's what I did. I had a good qualifying session but later I had a problem with my chassis in rain and I finished tenth. Then in the second heat I won. Finally, I finished fourth and that was enough."

She added that winning the trophy on Saturday had taken the pressure off for Sunday's final.

"I was definitely more relaxed because I knew that I already had won the championship but I still wanted to win the race," she said. "However, some changes in the weather made it difficult for us to find the right set-up so it was tough, though I managed to get third place in the last corner."

Having tasted glory in karting, Marta now hopes to progress to single seaters in 2016.

"My plan for next year is to go to formula racing, participating in German and Italian Formula 4," she says. "I'd like to begin in the world of formula cars as fast as possible."



Cross Country Rallying

Commission and Qatari club complete first stage on road to finding new female rally stars

The FIA Women in Motorsport Commission and the Qatar Motor and Motorcycle Federation (QMMF) have taken the first steps towards identifying new female cross country rally stars with the announcement of their choice of nine drivers and nine co-drivers from which a fully-funded new crew will be formed to compete in next year's Sealine Cross Country Rally.

Earlier this year the QMMF revealed that in association with the FIA's Women in Motorsport Commission it would host a worldwide selection process for new rallying talent. Having received 85 applications from across the globe the search has now been narrowed to 18 hopefuls who will take part in an intensive training programme aimed at whittling the field down to just one driver and co-driver to take on the gruelling Sealine event.

The drivers chosen are Charlotte Berton from France, Jonna Lisa Eson Bradhe from Sweden, Emma Gilmour from New Zealand, Cristina Gutiérrez Herrero from Spain, Klaudia Podkalicka from Poland, Germany's Melanie Schulz, Yara Shalaby from Egypt, Australia's Molly Taylor and Sara Williams

from the UK. The co-drivers are: Lisette Bakker from the Netherlands, Tania Cardoso Sequeira from Portugal, Yasmeen Elmajed from Jordan, Norway's Veronica Engan, Rhianon Gelsomino from Australia, South Africa's Sandra Labuscagne, Jasmeen Singh Bhandhair from Zambia, Natalie Solbach-Schmidt from Germany and Belgium's Lara Vanneste.

In November the 18 women will journey to Qatar where they will undertake an intensive programme presided over by Jutta Kleinschmidt, the first woman to win the legendary Dakar Rally, and FIA World Rally Championship and FIA World Cup for Cross Country Rallies event winning co-driver Fabrizia Pons.

"We were impressed by the calibre of applicants, which made this selection process very difficult," said FIA Women in Motorsport Commission President Michèle Mouton. "Our ASNs got behind the project and it has demonstrated that there are a lot of women who want to come and try a different discipline. Our great thanks to QMMF President Nasser Al-Attiyah for supporting this project and giving women this opportunity."



Trained by the desert duo

Dakar Rally winner Jutta Kleinschmidt and Cross Country rally specialist Fabrizia Pons speak about their training role in the QMMF initiative, the demands of desert navigation and what's in store for the chosen crews

How big is this project, in terms of the opportunity it will provide to a driver and co-driver?

Jutta Kleinschmidt: It's a great opportunity for talented young female drivers and co-drivers. I think this may be the first time such an intensive training programme has been organised for cross-country rallying utilising proper cars.

Over the five days of the programme the girls will learn everything that is important to race successfully in this sport, including driving skills, dune and sand training, navigation and more. The best pair will then go on to compete in next year's Sealine Cross Country Rally where they'll have the chance to show their talent against all the other cross country stars.

How tough do you think the training in the desert will be?

JK: The conditions in the desert are hard. You are alone during the stage, there is no service team who can help. Sometimes you get stuck in sand or dunes and you have to work hard to remove your car at outside temperatures above 40 degrees. Therefore the training has to be also a bit tough to see if the girls are able to do it.

Talking about being alone in the desert, how tough is navigation in the desert?

Fabrizia Pons: It's very, very difficult. First of all you have to have the feeling for the desert and the nous to understand which

is the best piste to take. I had a fantastic teacher in Jutta; her desert experience is second to none!

How different is it to stage rallying and why?

FP: There's no comparison – they are totally different. It's encapsulated in a phrase that's very popular nowadays although we'd have to change the wording slightly: "to co-drive in rallies is for boys, to co-drive in raids is for men."

Do you think you can teach navigation, or do people naturally have an aptitude for this type of thing?

FP: I was teaching rally navigation for years at my ASN's school, to some very important co-drivers. I think because I'm very open and because I love what I do so much, I can transmit my knowledge to others co-drivers and/or drivers.

Do you think cross-country rallying is suited to women and why?

JK: I think it's very suited to women, because it requires a lot of different skills. Driving is only one. It's obviously a very important one, but it also requires endurance, navigational skills, tactical awareness and good technical understanding. Women are very good at combining these attributes.

How excited are you about the prospect of seeking out new talent in the discipline?

JK: For a long time now there have unfortunately been very few women able to race in the top 10 in Cross Country Rallying. We hope we can find a really talented new female team.

Rally stars Jutta Kleinschmidt (right) and Fabrizia Pons, who will train and select a new female rally pairing to compete in the Sealine Cross Country Rally next year.



UAE Rotax Max Challenge

Commission to give backing to Abu Dhabi kart racer Hamda Al Qubaisi

The FIA Women in Motorsport Commission is to support one of the United Arab Emirates' most promising young racing drivers, Hamda Al Qubaisi, as she takes on a second season in the UAE's Rotax Max Challenge.

"Hamda is a very talented young driver with great potential; she has improved a huge amount in her first racing season and achieved some excellent results," said FIA Women in Motorsport Commission President Michèle Mouton.

"We are very keen to support female talent, especially at grass roots level and Hamda is a fine example of a young girl with drive and ambition. We wish her a lot of success in the upcoming season and will continue to follow her progress with great interest."

Al Qubaisi made her racing debut in the class last year and took her first win at the final round at Al Ain Raceway this April. She is the first Emirati girl to win a round of the UAE National Karting Championship. In all, the 13-year-old scored five podium finishes across the 12-round season.

The 2015-2016 challenge begins on October 9th at the Al Ain Raceway and Hamda is looking forward to competing with the FIA Women in Motorsport colours on her race suit.

"I'm so happy and proud to be the first Emirati girl to carry the Women in Motorsport Commission colours in the upcoming season," she said.

"The Commission does important work to promote and increase the participation of women in motorsports. I would like to thank everyone who supported me last season and also to Michèle Mouton, the President of the Commission, for helping me to show my support."

Hamda is a student of the Daman Speed Academy, a joint initiative between Abu Dhabi's national health insurance company 'Daman' and Abu Dhabi Racing launched two years ago.

Its objective is to prepare the next generation of Emirati track stars who through their performance and ambition, will inspire Emirati youth into harnessing their skills to reach their goals and aspirations in the future.

Hamda Al Qubaisi who will receive FIA support for her upcoming UAE Rotax Max season.



Australian Rally Championship

Molly makes history in Canberra as she chases Australian rally crown

Molly Taylor and co-driver Bill Hayes accept their winners' trophy at Canberra's National Capital Rally.



Molly Taylor made history in May as her Australian Rally Championship title bid saw her become the first woman to win a round of the series, with victory at the National Capital Rally in Canberra.

With experienced co-driver Bill Hayes alongside her, 27-year-old Taylor battled tough competition from her rivals, time penalties and a fragile Renault Clio R3, to claim victory in round two of the world's second oldest rally championship.

On Saturday (Heat One), the pair were leading by 15 seconds as they came into the midday service, only to find a massive hole in the sump guard. The damage was repaired by the service crew but the duo were seven minutes late out of service and were hit with a 35-second time penalty.

That put them 20 seconds behind Tony Sullens and Julia Barkley but over the next three stages they clawed back 18 seconds and on the following day they marched to victory.

"To take an outright victory in the Australian Rally Championship was incredibly exciting," says Molly of her historic win. "Competing against past multiple Championship winners I didn't underestimate their speed and experience and knew that I had a big challenge ahead of me to be competitive."

"After competing in Europe for the last few years I had no idea what to expect coming back to Australia, so to be on the pace from the beginning is very motivating and I'm really enjoying the battles. It's motivating for myself and all the people who are helping me to get a win and for sure this helps with the drive to keep pushing. So far in my career there have been many, many highs and lows but my passion for the sport in general, as well as continually seeing improvements, inspires and drives me to see what else I can achieve in the future."

There was barely time for the victory to sink in before Molly

and Bill were preparing for the next round, in Queensland in June. It was another challenging event with the pair having to contend with a water leak while running in second place and then windscreen problems on day two. They eventually claimed another podium finish with third place, behind winners Eli Evans and Glen Weston and the second-placed squad of Adrian Coppin and Erin Kelly.

With only eight points separating her from first place in the championship standings, Taylor went to the next round, the FIA World Rally Championship event [Rally Australia] in Coffs Harbour, with high hopes but it turned out to be another tough weekend for the young driver. She struggled for pace over the opening two days of the event, while championship leader Evans recovered from a potentially weekend-ending crash to leap ahead at the top of the timesheets.

However, Molly bounced back on the final day, which consisted of five stages. Evans initially controlled matters but on the second stage he took a narrow win just 1.6 seconds ahead of Taylor and on the third stage Molly surged ahead to claim the win.

It was too little too late, however, and Evans took the event win ahead of Ford driver Steve Mackenzie, with Molly claiming the final podium position.

Taylor now heads to the championship's final event, the Scouts Rally SA, which takes place in the Adelaide hills from 23-25 October, looking to erase a 36-point deficit to Evans. It's a tough task but Molly says she is happy to be taking the championship to a deciding last round.

"Unfortunately, Eli has a bigger lead on us than at the start of the [Coff's Harbour] weekend, but considering the problems we've had I'm still very happy to be second [in the standings] and even happier to still be in the title fight," she said.

SEAT Leon Eurocup

Lucile roars ahead in SEAT Leon Eurocup standings

After four rounds and with just three to go, Lucile Cypriano heads the standings in the SEAT Leon Eurocup Ladies' Trophy and sits 12th in the overall classification.

The 18-year-old Frenchwoman, who races for the JBS competition team in the series, made a solid start at the first round of the season at the Circuit Paul Ricard in the South of France, with eighth place overall in the first race and first in the ladies' class.

The second race wasn't as successful, with Lucile recording a DNF after 10 laps. That allowed rival Amalia Vinyes from Andorra to claim top spot, with 11th place overall, while Marie Baus-Coppens from France finished 15th ahead of Edina Bús in P20 and Switzerland's Andrina Gugger in P21.

Having found her feet, Lucile ramped up her performance by a margin in round two at Portugal's Estoril circuit and after taking pole position on Saturday morning she became the first woman to score a podium finish in the series by taking third place in the afternoon's first race of the weekend behind championship leader Pol Rosell and title rival Stian Paulsen.

"It was a fun race, especially towards the end as the fight with Stian [Paulsen] was very exciting," said Lucile afterwards. "I made a mistake, trying to shift up when I was in neutral, which meant I lost ground on the first lap.

"Still, I'm very happy with the result because it is my first podium in the SEAT Leon Eurocup and I hope it's not the last! Also I'm leading the Ladies Trophy classification ahead of the race tomorrow, and that's very good news."

The first race saw Gugger finish 13th with Vinyes 15th and Baus-Coppens in P20. Race two was a tougher contest and Cypriano could only manage 14th place, behind Gugger, who claimed her best result of the season thus far with seventh place and set fastest lap. Vinyes finished 12th, while Baus-Coppens was forced out of the race after eight laps.

The Portuguese result meant that Lucile went to the following round in Britain with a healthy lead over Gugger and at the Silverstone circuit she again led the ladies to the flag, with 11th place overall in race one and eighth in race two as Gugger finished 17th and 25th.

"We are still leaders of the Ladies Trophy despite hoping for a little more from this weekend," said Lucile. "The race today [race two] was a bit complicated because we set off from tenth and didn't get a good start... and I was penalised by that. Then a small run-in with another car didn't help but, in the end, we were still able to make it to the line in eighth.

The next challenge came at Austria's Red Bull Ring last month and there Lucile consolidated her position at the top of the Ladies' standings.

After qualifying a decent ninth in Spielberg she raced to 10th place in the first race as Gugger finished in 19th position, immediately ahead of Bus, while Baus-Coppens finished in 23rd place.

"It was a tough race and although I'm still leader of the Ladies Trophy standings I expected to finish further forward," said Lucile of her efforts in Austria. "I made some decisions which held me back so I'm not too satisfied. More racing tomorrow!"

Her racing on Sunday in Austria was abbreviated, however, as after 12 laps of race two she was forced out in an incident with Spain's Mikel Azcona.

Lucile now sits 12th in the overall standings and heads to the next round in Germany with a comfortable nine-point advantage over Gugger in the Ladies' Trophy standings, with the Swiss woman 16th in standings and Vinyes in 20th place.

Round five kicks off at the Nürburgring on 18 September, with the final two rounds taking place at Monza on 3 October and in Barcelona on 1 November.

For more information see: www.seat-sport.com



Andrina Gugger
at the wheel.



From left to right: Edina Bús, Andrina Gugger, Amalia Vinyes, Lucile Cypriano and Marie Baus-Coppens. Below, Lucile Cypriano in action.



Institution of Mechanical Engineers

Top engineers help to put girls on track to motor sport careers

As part of the UK's National Women in Engineering Day in June, the country's Institution of Mechanical Engineers hosted a seminar at the Institution's headquarters in London at which young women were given the opportunity to explore a variety of career opportunities in motor sport through the experience of a number of women working at the top level in racing.

Entitled, 'Beating the Competition; Making a Difference in Motorsport' the seminar, which was also streamed live to attendees across eight countries, saw almost a hundred guests share experiences, make new contacts and hear about the range of career paths the motorsport engineering industry has to offer.

The evening began with three short presentations from young women taking part in programmes aimed at schoolgoers with an interest in motorsport and university-level engineering students.

Rachael Matthews, Scrutineering Engineer from F1 in Schools world champions Colossus F1 and Helen Jarman, Team Manager of the UK champions Evolution F1 took participants through the value of the schools programme, while Aurelia Hibbert, a Master of Engineering Student Cambridge University, spoke about the World Solar Challenge and Hannah Sugrue a University of Warwick Engineering Student, told of her experience as the 50,000th competitor in the Formula Student programme run by IMechE.

Following their presentations the seminar heard from three high-profile engineers working at the top level of motor sport – triple Le Mans winning race engineer and FIA Women in Motorsport Ambassador and Formula Student ambassador Leena Gade of Audi Sport, Bernadette Collins, Performance and Strategy Engineer at the Force India Formula One Team and Gemma Hatton, a Data Engineer at British Touring Car Championship team Paras Racing and a Technical Writer for Racecar Engineering magazine.

After the event Bernadette and Leena spoke positively about the opportunities that exist for female students considering a career in motor sport.

Leena, how important do you think this kind of event is in inspiring young women to take up or even consider engineering as a career?

Leena Gade: I think these events are very important to not only support young women who may already be interested in pursuing engineering but also in helping their peers to understand what an engineering career involves. It also helps to put faces to names, so that people become more familiar with the women who have already followed this path and achieved various goals, showing that anyone can do this if they want to.

You are an ambassador for Formula Student as well as the Women in Motorsport Commission. You are obviously passionate about helping



Women in Motorsport Ambassador Leena Gade of Audi (top) and Force India's Bernadette Collins.



others and showing what opportunities are available?

LG: When I started looking for opportunities in engineering and specifically motor sport, there were no other females to guide me and though it wasn't difficult to find information it would have been easier to see that someone else had done what I wanted to achieve.

What I have realised over the last few years of being involved in this industry is that there are many organisations and individuals who want to promote women's roles in engineering and motor sport and it is important to support their work as an ambassador or as an example of someone who has achieved a career in these fields.

I also am encouraged by how many females are following the engineering path and meeting them fills me with hope that in future this industry will be filled with the best engineers both male and female. I never set out to be a role model but I guess that's just how things have turned out and it is only right that I put something back into an industry that has given me such an interesting and fulfilling career.

Were you surprised by the turn out and enthusiasm of the attendees at the Women in Engineering Day event?

LG: I am always surprised by the enthusiasm shown at these events from both females interested in the field but also those who attend to just learn about the careers many of us have followed. I was also honoured to see some of my peers at the event supporting not just me but also some of the other participants. It showed that the event was relevant to the industry and the people involved in it who want to also promote the role of women.

Bernadette, how important is it to take work experience placements or internships to understand different areas of motor sport?

Bernadette Collins: I think there are so many roles available within engineering and motor sport that finding the right one for you is important.

The roles are diverse and teams require a wide variety of people with different strengths to fill each role. They are challenging and interesting in very different ways, so finding the right one will help you enjoy the job much more.

It's a continual process as well, throughout your career you are always looking for the next opportunity and the next challenge.

Is it a massively high-pressured job or does experience overcome this and you make your own 'pressure' through motivation and the desire to succeed?

BC: There are roles within the team that are high-pressure and the people within these roles enjoy this aspect of pressure and responsibility. However motor sport is very much a team sport with resources directed towards the problem that needs most attention at any particular time so generally there is a lot of support. Everyone who works in motor sport is highly driven and wants to win and that comes with its own pressure to succeed as a team.

What would be your advice to young girls looking at engineering?

BC: Try to get as much experience as you can to discover the branch of engineering that most interests you and that is most suited to your strengths. If you look for opportunities within teams to learn and gain experience they are generally happy to get some help. Discovering where you would like to work in the future will help guide your education and career path more easily. It is hard work to get to a position you are happy with but it should be worth it if you know it's a role you will enjoy.

Bernadette Collins and Leena Gade (second and third from left, bottom row) at the IMechE seminar.



Beth Paretta (left) and Katherine Legge, who have launched female-led team Grace Autosport, with the intention of competing in the Indianapolis 500.



US Racing

Sisters, doing it for themselves

IndyCar star and Women in Motorsport Ambassador Katherine Legge has teamed up with top-level motor sport executive Beth Paretta to create an all-female race team to contest the Indianapolis 500, but as they explain, it's just the start...

Q How did the idea for Grace Autosport come about?

Beth Paretta: Grace Autosport started as an idea to put a team of women together to race the Indy 500. I got a call in late 2014 asking what I thought of the idea, because working as a woman in motorsport, being the motor sport director of FIAT-Chrysler, I got a call from a colleague, Adrian Sussman [director of motor sports firm GP Sports

Management], who was formulating the idea with Katherine and he asked me my opinion.

I thought about it for a few days and said I thought we could do a lot more for women in motor sport in general and that it could also be a great foundation to get more women involved in technology and engineering careers. It started from there and it snowballed and has become bigger and bigger and eventually became this exciting thing, this whole team we're now calling Grace Autosport.

Katherine Legge: It was the brainchild of Adrian and I, but we really didn't have anybody who was capable of putting the programme together and driving it forward from a business angle. Beth is that person and we were really fortunate that she was fully onboard with it. On a day-to-day basis there is nobody better, nobody with more experience to put the team together, to run the team, to do the business side, the marketing side – that's her forte. I'm just the driver! Yes, I want to have something to do when I finish racing but for now I think I'll focus on the driving bit and Beth will focus on the business bit.

Q How is the project progressing?

BP: It's been amazing. As we were getting closer to the announcement, which we made right before the Indy 500, there were a few moments a day or two before where we thought 'what if we announce it and it's like if a tree falls in the woods and there's no one to hear it' but it's been overwhelming. Everyone we talked to thought it was a great idea.

One of the things I'm proud of is that there have been men and women at the table from the beginning making sure we are doing this the right way and that it's authentic and it's the right women who are involved – women who are experienced and have had success in motor sport.

However, this is not meant to be for just one race; it's going to be a lot more than that. This is going to be a legacy team that will endure, ideally long after Katherine and I are both retired.

Q Have you identified the women you would like to work with?

KL: Through our time in racing we have quite a lot of experience, we know the key women and we have hand-picked some really great, experienced women.

The reason that Grace will be a success is that we've gone out and got all these accomplished women who are at the top of their field, and we've put them together to showcase something much bigger than any of us individually. Yes, we have some key personnel and we're still looking at CVs, but we have most of the key personnel.

BP: The reaction has been so positive. We've been getting emails daily with people sending in their CVs, which has

been amazing. And it's not only women who are already in racing but young women who are going off to college saying 'this is my dream and I'm so excited to learn about your team and can I possibly work for you someday'. That's been exciting and humbling and it's that moment where you realise 'oh my goodness, this is working'. It's exciting to be that role model or the beacon that maybe leads a woman to go into an engineering programme hoping that when she gets out she can be a part of this team.

The great thing about a race team in general is that it's broader than the racing. You can work in racing but then you can go on and have a career working for an automotive company. I like to say that you can play baseball and be a centre-fielder but when you retire you're not going to go and be a centre-fielder for Ernst & Young – it's a very finite set of skills – whereas if you are a mechanic or an engineer these are technical skills that you take beyond racing and that's unique and that's not something we talk about as much as we should. Since the announcement we've had a flood of positive reaction, so many people are so excited about it.

The people that we've hired are accomplished and are successful. A lot of people asked us where we are going to get these women but the reality is that there are already a lot of women working in racing. The thing is we didn't have to create a team of women because women are not welcome [in motor sport].

We're able to create this team because women are very much welcome in racing and we want people to see that. This team that we've gathered together are [largely] already working on racing, at different teams, but by creating this team it's much more visible and tells people that 'yes, [women] are here and you can be here too'.

Q Katherine, when you started racing, a female racer was something of a novelty and now we're talking about fielding a female-led team in the Indy 500? How have you seen the role of women in motor sport change?

KL: When I started there were very few women drivers across the board, but the role of women in racing has changed massively. There are now quite a few women drivers but what we're trying to do is showcase women engineers and mechanics, which we're lacking at the moment.

It's a pyramid but if you have a broad base, with more girls starting in karting, yes the drop out rate goes up but you also get more women sticking with it to the top echelons. We need to get more at grassroots level – more engineers, more mechanics, more PR people, we just need to make it accessible for them.

When you go to a race as a young girl or boy you can turn to your parents and say 'I want to be a race car mechanic or I want to be a driver' but the girls probably don't voice that as much as they don't see it as an opportunity open to them.

What we're trying to do is showcase the fact that yes, you can be a driver and it is one of the very few sports where women can compete with men equally – because it's not about outright strength, and I think I proved that by driving the Champ Car, which is probably the most brutal car you could ever drive – but [we are also trying to show] that women can be mechanics and engineers – whatever they want to be. That's what is so great about motor racing: women can do every role equally.

BP: We don't need our own league!

Bahamas Motor Sports Association

Competition and safety at the heart of Bahamian motor sport initiative

The Bahamas Motor Sports Association is driving both road safety improvement and female motor sport participation through its innovative EduKarting programme.

During his 2014 visit to the islands FIA President Jean Todt spoke with Prime Minister Perry Christie and Minister of Tourism Glenys Hanna Martin and the government officials agreed to pursue a target of zero road traffic fatalities in the future. As a response to this desire BMSA President David McLaughlin instituted a new EduKarting Initiative to encourage motor sport participation among the islands' youth and also the promotion of road safety.

"Through this initiative in Government Schools we are starting to imbue in young people the FIA Road Safety Awareness Campaign and pointers for their future," says McLaughlin. "Youngsters' enthusiasm for Learning through Karting is really starting to take hold with the assistance of the FIA Sporting Grants."

As part of the initiative a Summer Camp, boosted by FIA grant-aid, is held each year, with this year's event being the third. The club has also added an Easter Camp and also After School Kart Clubs on Mondays and Fridays to keep the momentum going.

The Summer Camp, which has a core age range of 11–14, attracted 60 participants, split into teams of five people each with a specific area of responsibility, from crew chief to mechanics, to PR and marketing officer.

"Each team has to choose a name, design a logo, create a budget and raise the virtual money to purchase all the necessary items to race during the week, including a kart, racewear, safety equipment, as well as spare tyres and items which will aid them in their quest for sponsorship."

Among the participants was an all-girls team and after a slow start the crew managed to take overall victory.

"They were one girl short on the first day and had a lot of ground to make up early on but they came from some way behind and succeeded because they really worked as a team during the remaining days," says McLaughlin.

"What set the girls apart was their determination," he adds. "They started with four girls and didn't really take it too seriously. One of the trainers spoke to them and we were able to show them documents from the FIA Women in Motorsport initiative and they realised that they could do it and could beat the boys in what is a very male dominated society."

McLaughlin further explains that there is a strong road safety message attached to the week-long course.



Mya Curry, the first ever Bahamian Woman Kart Race License Holder receiving her license from FIA Task Force Director and EduKarting Founder David McLaughlin (left) accompanied by UK Instructor Craig (Cam) Camilleri.

"We have a large backdrop featuring the FIA's Golden Rules for Safer Motoring and when President Todt visited last August he asked the class to read off the chart... They turned their back on it and recited it as they had learned it by heart! We drum in to them that they must wear safety belts even when in the back seat of a road car and that it is a driver's absolute responsibility to ensure everyone wears them."

McLaughlin says that the programme has been a major success and that more schools are keen to participate.

"It has been extraordinarily successful, thanks to the FIA Sport Grant Programme, but funding is a constant problem. The Minister of Education is fully supportive as is The Minister of Transport but they have very little funding available," he says.

"I have more schools desperate to get on the programme but it depends on funding and resources. The next step is to move from driving around an athletics track to developing a permanent facility. The Government has provided land and we have obtained an investor, so we are determined to build a kart circuit within the next 12 months followed by a three kilometre road race circuit in 2017."

Fédération du Sport Automobile de Madagascar

Madagascan women take to the stages

The Women in Motorsport arm of the Fédération du Sport Automobile de Madagascar will this month carve out a small piece of history as it stages the first one-day rally event to be held in the country.

The event, which forms part of the country's national rally championship, will be wholly run by the club's women in motor sport department and in addition to providing competition for Madagascar's foremost drivers the event will also see a female contingent competing, thanks to an innovative development which allows free entry to the rally for female crews.

AUTO+ Women in Motorsport spoke to the club's women in motorsport chief **Sandy Yannick Solofonirina** to find out more about the event, which begins on 19 September.

How did the event come about?

We decided to organise the fifth round of the National championship to show our ability to do so, to take that challenge and put into practice what we have learned from FIA training, from our travels and the exchange of experiences that involves. We were lucky that Continental Auto, a car dealer, decided to support such a big project.

What is the format for the event?

It's a one-day event, composed of 70 kilometres of special



stages. There will be six stages on gravel. The challenge will be to maintain a good rhythm while trying to keep up with the 'sprint' format of the stages. We call it 'one day, one chance'. It's the first one-day event ever organised in Madagascar.

Who is the event aimed at?

It is for all licensed drivers competing in the National championship. But we're encouraging female participation by making the entry fee free of charge to female crews. We expect to have all licensed drivers in Madagascar, but we also hope to be able to host foreign drivers. The cars will be the FIA homologated cars (Group N), as well as group S cars.

What are your hopes and expectations for the rally?

The One-Day Event, which counts towards the National Championship, also aims to give a fair chance to all racers and will hopefully foster more participation from families.

We also hope to gain more attention from the public, our partners and government officials, not just to promote motor sport, but to focus attention on our future Road Safety campaigns. Women in Motorsport Madagascar already has the support of both the Minister of Population and Minister of Education in disseminating safety messages and is also in touch with the United Nations representative to prepare future campaigns.

How much progress do you think Women in Motorsport Madagascar is making?

Considering where we started, I would say that Women in Motorsport Madagascar is performing better than we imagined.

I was appointed in 2013 as Women in Motorsport Coordinator for Africa, and for one year I was the only WIM member in Madagascar, trying to convince my peers of the need for a Women in Motorsport chapter in the country.

Since 2014, we have started to have a positive impact on Malagasy motorsport: we have conducted safety awareness campaigns, we have organised a fund-raising event to support our activities, we have promoted the participation of female drivers in national championship rallies, and the number of licensed female drivers has regularly increased. Last but not least, this September 2015, we are organising the first-ever Rally One-Day Event in Madagascar, inspired by the FIA.

What inspired the creation of a Women in Motorsport programme in Madagascar?

We believe African women can play a great role in promoting motor sport. We trusted in the value of these women, we relied on their passion and gave them the opportunity to play a role in it, as opposed to simply supporting sons or husbands.

Michèle Mouton was also such an inspiration, she proved that women can do it, and we would like to write a similar history on the African continent.

Do have you big plans for the future?

While we try to take it one step at a time, we do not exclude the possibility that the Madagascar Women in Motorsport organisation could organise a rally on an international scale in the future.

We also would like to have the opportunity to host a Women in Motorsport meeting in Africa. Finally, our long-term project would be to build a sports complex where young drivers could train themselves in a safe manner.

FIA Sport Conference 2015

On track towards sport for all

At this year's FIA Sport Conference in Mexico City, Women in Motorsport Commission President Michèle Mouton and Commission Ambassador Monisha Kaltenborn, Team Principal of the Sauber F1 team, presented the latest developments in the commission's efforts to encourage female participation in motor sport. They also took time out to explain to AUTO+ and FIA.com the steps currently being taken.

Michèle, the Commission has been active for over five years now, how is the campaign progressing?

Michèle Mouton: We have girls in nearly all disciplines today – in karting, rally and racing – this was the first part of our mission. The second was to have more women involved in engineering, as officials and volunteers and we have a big project in 2017 where we are hoping to organise a European selection for a young woman driver.

The search for a female star of the future sounds exciting; can you elaborate on those plans yet?

MM: Not too much for now! But it will be a big European project, at grass roots level, in the hope of identifying young girls who want to come along and have a go. By reaching out to a large audience and basing the search in various high profile locations across Europe – whether that is at an existing motor sport event, a county show, or even in a city centre – we have the opportunity to potentially find girls who have never even thought about racing. I'm very excited about the project, but we have a lot of work to realise this.

Monisha, you are one of the most high-profile women in motor sport currently, how do you as a Commission Ambassador leverage this visibility?

Monisha Kaltenborn: I hope my role in Formula One as a team principal serves as an important impetus for girls out there because one of the major roles of the Commission is to create awareness. We want to create this information base that they see that there are already, not many, but a few [women] out there.

If you look at young girls today they want to see that there are people at the top. They are no different to boys [in that regard]. They want to see people... you might not always be at the top but that you have made your way into that [top] group.

We hope that it gives them the courage to go down this way, because it is at the end of the day a matter of your will and a very strong will and I sincerely hope that they can do a much better job.



In terms of drivers, how close are we getting to seeing a woman at the top level?

MK: Women drivers in Formula One is a topic that has been very much discussed which is good because that's exactly what we need to start with – a discussion.

In my view what we really have to attack here is the way into Formula One. You're not born into Formula One, you have to make your way right from the bottom to the top – everyone has to do that.

Until now we have not created that solid basis, so we have to work where we are already doing our work, at the karting level, going to the next levels – we have seen how the FIA is streamlining the way to Formula One and that's exactly the way we can follow with girls as well. We can use that ladder in the same way and once you have enough girls at that level then you will definitely find some that will make the step up to Formula One.



MM: We have a successful driver in karting, for example, Marta Garcia, who is winning in the CIK Trophy. Molly Taylor recently won in the Australian Championship and we also have a girl in touring cars, Mikaela Kottulinsky, who won an event, beating 35 young men. So yes, we have successful girls and now they have to progress.

Michèle, you mention some notable successes, such as those of Marta Garcia, do you feel that in recent times we have made genuine progress in broadening the appeal of motor sports to young girls?

MM: I do, yes. I think we can see there are more women involved in motor sport and across all aspects and if we can continue to highlight this, and what people are achieving, it can only be an improvement. We come across many projects, organisations and individuals doing so much for women in our sport; there definitely seems to

be great momentum at the moment and we just must keep building on this.

Speaking of building momentum, we have had one regional Women in Motorsport meeting so far, are there others planned for the future?

MM: We have another international seminar in 2016, this time hosted by our colleagues in Portugal. There are no current plans for another regional seminar but I think the one held in Qatar demonstrated the value and importance of the programme on a regional level.

Certainly it is my wish to host more of these because I firmly believe they identify issues that are very country or culture specific, things that perhaps have not been identified or recognised on a more international level.

To see the video interview with Michèle and Monisha click [here](#).