



MARÍA REMEMBERED

Paying tribute to the remarkable and inspirational María de Villota PG 4

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AUTO+ WOMEN IN MOTOR SPORT

FIRST LADY OF LE MANS

New FIA Women in Motorsport Commission Ambassador Leena Gade on progress, pressure and winning in the WEC





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Welcome to our third Women in Motorsport newsletter and the final edition of 2013.

It's been a year of both triumph and, unfortunately, tragedy and in this issue we take time out to remember María de Villota, whose passing in October left a deep void not just in motor sport but in all our hearts.

María's bravery following her F1 testing accident and the dedication she displayed afterwards - not only in promoting female involvement in motor sport but also safety on the road and track - will be missed.

Elsewhere, it was a year of great success for women competitors and in this edition we look at Lucile Cypriano's victory in the VW and commission-supported shoot-out for a place in next year's VW Scirocco R-Cup and reveal how the FIA European Rallycross Championship has become a haven for female racers. It's been a great year for women in all forms of motor sport and we look forward to even more in 2014!

Your AUTO + team

Remembering María

In October, motor sport, the FIA and the Women in Motorsport Commission lost one its brightest and most dedicated talents with the passing of María de Villota.

The Spanish former Formula One driver died in Seville as a result of injuries sustained in an accident during testing for the Marussia Formula One team in July 2012.

Despite sustaining life-threatening head injuries, María made a heroic recovery and in the year following the crash devoted herself to promoting women's involvement in motor sport and also to tackling road and track safety issues. Her tireless efforts in these regards were acknowledged by FIA President Jean Todt, who led tributes to her.

"María was a fantastic driver, a leading light for women in motor sport and a tireless campaigner for road safety," he said. "Above all, she was a friend I deeply admired. Through her courage, strength and determination she transformed her personal misfortune on the track into a powerful message for road safety that was heard at race tracks and beyond around the world. María was a beloved member of the FIA family."

The FIA President's thoughts were echoed by Michèle Mouton, President of the FIA's Women in Motorsport Commission, to which de Villota had been appointed an Ambassador in June 2012.

"María was such a great person," she said. "When you are able to go through such a terrible tragedy and transform the negatives into such positives, it is truly remarkable. María was able to do this and was more radiant than ever; that requires an amazing spirit and deserves respect and admiration. I was close to María and it is a real privilege to have known her."

"We worked together in the Women in Motorsport Commission and María was an inspiration not only to our members, but also the wider motor sport community. As one of our Ambassadors she strived to get more young women into our sport, to help them achieve their goals and have belief in themselves. She was a dedicated supporter for road and motor sport safety and was very involved with our Action for Road Safety campaign; this is something María was incredibly passionate about."

Born into a racing family, María's father Emilio took part in 14 grands prix weekends between 1976 and 1982, starting twice. It was no surprise, therefore, that the young María pursued a racing career.

After initially competing in karting, she moved up to single-seater racing in 2000 in the Spanish Formula Toyota series. She raced full-time in Spanish F3 from 2002-2004 and then moved to saloon and sports car racing, competing in the World Touring Car Championship, Superstars, Spanish GT and Germany's ADAC Procar series, in which she won at the Nurburgring in 2007 and finished third in the standings.

Following a stint in the Superleague Formula in 2009, her break into Formula One came in 2011, when she tested a Renault R29. In 2012, she secured a full-time role as Marussia's test driver.

Later the same year, she was named as one of the first five Ambassadors by the Women in Motorsport Commission and embraced the role with gusto. Following her accident she broadened the scope of her involvement with the FIA, becoming a leading advocate of road and track safety.

In May of this year she played an integral part in the FIA's contribution to the second UN Road Safety Week's Long Short Walk campaign, leading calls for pedestrian road safety during a march of F1 stars at the Spanish Grand Prix.

María's legacy can perhaps best be summed up in the words she spoke following her appointment as an Ambassador for Women in Motorsport.

"It is very important to let other women know that with enough belief and application, you can overcome any hurdle," she said. "If I can be an F1 test driver, I am sure a lot of women can do it too. It is purely a question of talent, hard work and commitment. I gave my life to motor sport and just kept the faith that my optimism would be rewarded."

It is that unshakeable optimism, as well as her generosity of spirit, dedication and incredible courage, that will be remembered most.

María de Villota
(13 January 1980 – 11 October 2013)



Karting

Prudent targets F4 for 2014

FIA Women in Motorsport Commission-supported kart racer Adeline Prudent is targeting a switch to the federation's new F4 category after a successful first test in the single seater class in October.

The teenage karter, who had never driven a single seater before, was given the opportunity to test the F4 car at the Bugatti Circuit in Le Mans thanks to the FIA and the Fédération Française du Sport Automobile (FFSA).

Matching herself against more experienced racers such as Lotus F1 Junior Team driver Dorian Boccolacci and Coupe de France winner Pauline Pourchaire, both of whom have single-seater experience, Adeline performed admirably.

On a tricky, wet-drying track she was initially 11 seconds off the benchmark set by Boccolacci. However, by the end of the day's running she had closed that gap to just five seconds and finished ahead of Pourchaire.

The Saint-Etienne youngster is now aiming to put together a budget sufficient to race in the nascent series in 2014.

Prudent's recent karting exploits have been no less successful. Having won the X30 Junior National in Ariège in France, she then competed in the last event of the 2013 CIK-FIA Academy Trophy, at Varennes-sur-Allier. Securing two seventh places, Prudent finished in fourth place in the Trophy's overall classification, behind winner Maxime Potty from Belgium, Spain's Arturo Melgar and third-placed Berkay Besler from Turkey.

Finally, on 19 and 20 October, Adeline finished seventh in the Iame International Final, the major annual meeting for owners of X30 engines. Of the 61 drivers on the starting grid in the X30 Junior category, Prudent set the best time in practice for the series, and fourth best in the general classification. She won one qualifying heat and finished a respectable third in another.

Although she was in third place at the start of the pre-final, Adeline's hopes of reaching the podium were dashed when a sudden downpour upset the order. Nevertheless, she clawed her way back to seventh place in the final.



Adeline Prudent, who is attempting to secure a budget to compete in Formula 4 in 2014, following a successful test in the category.

FIA World Rally Championship



The lady scrutineers of Rallye Deutschland take time out from their duties to pose with Sébatien Ogier's VW Polo R WRC.

Running the rule over Rallye Deutschland

It's an often thankless and technically demanding task but scrutineering at any motor racing event is crucial in ensuring the safe and fair running of a race or rally. And at this year's German round of the FIA World Rally Championship six female scrutineers were on duty to keep the teams and drivers legal and make sure the cars complied with the series' regulations.

In August, Eva-Verena Ziegahn, Franziska Bast, Melanie Köhler, Maike Zetzl, Nicole Brandt and Michele Klein could all be found in the Trier service park of the ADAC Rallye Deutschland or at the special stages.

Ziegahn was on duty as the deputy chairman of the scrutineers. "I got my licence as a scrutineer from the German federation, the DMSB [Deutscher Motor Sport Bund], in 2009," she explains. "Since then I have worked at a great variety of events, from circuit races like DTM, GT Masters and the Porsche Sports Cup to this rally at world championship level."

Bast, meanwhile, is also a fully licensed scrutineer and among other events this year worked at the ADAC Truck Grand Prix. The other ladies in her team are still working to obtain their licences.

"In order to achieve that, DMSB requires that you gain experience in all kinds of motor sport: rally, circuit, slalom and hill climbs," Ziegahn explains.

"Working at a rally is quite different from at a circuit," she adds. "There, you have everything in the pits or in the paddock, but at a rally, we work in the service park and also carry out random checks at special stages, so everything is much more spread out. Moreover, there is a much wider variety of cars, which is very interesting as well."

Ziegahn visibly enjoys her work as a scrutineer. "It is still very much a man's world," she says, "but we were accepted right away. I can only encourage other women to become involved as well. Of course, you need some technical interest, but knowing how to deal with people is just as important. On top of that, you are in a position to get really close to the action. Sometimes, we work long hours, but it's cool!"

Fédération du Sport Automobile de Madagascar

Madagascar launches Women in Motorsport initiative

Since its launch the FIA's Women in Motorsport initiative has brought awareness of women's roles in motorsport to new heights, but as with so many endeavours, high-profile success has been concentrated in regions where racing and rallying already have a traditional presence.

That is changing, however, and the efforts of ASNs from every region to promote female involvement in motor sport are now beginning to produce results. Nowhere is this more true than in Madagascar.

The Fédération du Sport Automobile de Madagascar's Women in Motorsport programme, led by its Secretary General Sandy Solofonirina, is going from strength to strength and the country now has 10 licensed female racers, ranging in age from 17-45.

To encourage female participation prizes are now being awarded to the top three female drivers in all national events.

Since FIA President Jean Todt's visit to the country in 2012, the programme has also involved the female drivers in road safety initiatives across the country, with the racers acting as safety ambassadors and promoting the importance of the FIA's 10 Golden Rules for Safer Motoring.

The Women in Motorsport programme in Madagascar also works towards finding opportunities for female drivers to develop, seeking out opportunities for the drivers to improve their skills by giving them training on safety, driving skills and fitness.



Madagascar's female racers also act as ambassadors for FIA Action for Road Safety.

Volkswagen Scirocco R-Cup

Cypriano wins Scirocco R-Cup shoot-out

French teenager Lucile Cypriano is the latest female racer to win the Volkswagen/FIA Women in Motorsport shoot-out, beating 11 other determined girls at Germany's Oschersleben circuit to claim the prize of a fully funded drive in the highly-competitive Scirocco R-Cup competition in 2014. Lucile, who also won the

FIA's karting academy in 2011, will line-up next year in the Junior Cup, and if she proves as talented as her display in the shoot-out suggests she could then graduate to a Pro Cup seat in 2015.

"I'm absolutely delighted," said Cypriano after it was revealed that she will follow in the footsteps of Michelle Gattling in the series. "The Volkswagen Scirocco R-Cup is an excellent opportunity for me to develop and advance my motor sport career."

Prior to the shoot-out, Cypriano had raced karts and in the 2013 French Formula 4 Championship. However, despite not having driven saloon cars before the 17-year-old showed no nerves when pitted against the 11 other girls chosen by the FIA Women in Motorsport Commission and through their ASNs, as well as three additional female racers chosen by Volkswagen and the 15 boys competing on day one of the three-day test. By the end of the second day, the

French teenager was right up among the lead competitors, with the male first-placed competitor recording a lap time of 1m43s and the next best-placed boy logging a time of 1m45s. In between came Cypriano and her three main female rivals, Malgorzata Rdest from Poland, and the South African duo of Robyn Kruger and Tasmin Pepper, all of whom had more experience than the French teenager.

On the final day, when the action moved to two practice and two qualifying sessions at Oschersleben, Cypriano was in a class of her own among the girls, however, with the instructors unanimously choosing the 17-year-old as the winner of a drive in next year's Junior R-Cup competition.

"I never thought I would actually get picked," said Cypriano afterwards. "Being one of the final four on the penultimate day was great in itself. I was up against some really tough competitors, especially as I don't have any experience in the area of touring car sport."



All the girls who competed in the Women in Motorsport VW Scirocco R-Cup shoot-out, with winner Lucile Cypriano second right.

FIA Institute Young Driver Excellence Academy

Gattling earns FIA Institute Academy wildcard entry

Denmark's Michelle Gattling recently lined up alongside nine other of motor sport's finest young driving talents at the opening workshop of 2013/2014 FIA Institute Young Driver Excellence Academy, after being handed a wildcard entry to the programme.

In July, Gattling took part in the European selection event, perhaps the most competitive shoot-out, and though she narrowly missed out on overall victory, she was singled out for particular praise by the judges.

That praise turned into a confirmed wildcard place at the end of the selection process and earlier this month Michelle joined the five regional winners and four other wildcards at the first Academy event, focusing on sport science, fitness training and education, at the University of Edinburgh in Scotland.

Commenting on the 10 drivers chosen, Academy instructor Alex Wurz said: "The 10 drivers we selected are truly gifted and talented, so I see them again following in the footsteps of previous academy participants, to the pinnacle of motor sport. Now as we start with polishing these diamonds, their talent and skills will be developed over five intensive workshops."



Michelle Gattling, who this month began her training at the FIA Institute Young Driver Excellence Academy.

Norges Bilsportforbund

Norway powers ahead with Girls with Speed

Norway's ASN, the Norges Bilsportforbund, mandated by the Royal Norwegian Automobile Club (KNA), has launched a new initiative designed to get more girls and women involved in motor sport.

Entitled Jenter I Farta ('Girls with Speed') the scheme involves female racers already taking part in motor sport encouraging others to get involved, as Vera Bakke Andresen, National Co-Ordinator of the programme with the NBF, explains.

"Our goal is to tell other girls that motor sport is an environment in which girls can compete at exactly the same level as boys, and the best way to do this is by the already active female drivers," she says. "By highlighting the achievements of our most successful competitors and also those of upcoming young competitors we hope to inspire others to give motor sport a try."

NBF Secretary General Hallgeir Raknerud adds that female participation in motor sport in the country is growing fast.

"This year Norway had its first female karting champion, while in junior rallycross almost half the participants, including the winner, are female," he says. "Our vision is that motor sport is for everyone and by that also girls. Not only as drivers but also as mechanics, volunteers, organisers and marshals."

Ten female racers have joined the programme in a bid to spread the word, with representation coming from all forms of competition, including karting, circuit racing, rallying, rallycross and drag racing.

Molly Pettit (29), one of the initiators of the project and a member of the American Car Club of Norway, races a 500hp Ford Mustang and confirms that female involvement in motor sport in the country is on the rise.

"My experience from motor sport is entirely positive," she explains. "Girls are welcome and there is no problem competing against the boys, but I hope for more girls in my class. There are about 400 active female drivers in Norway, competing in every class against the boys and doing well in karting, rally, rallycross and racing. In rally we have many female co-drivers and several are co-driving the most successful drivers in Norway."

According to Bakke Andresen the project, launched in September, has already generated much interest.

"We have had a lot of attention from the Norwegian media," she says. "One of the biggest newspapers in Norway wrote about it when we started and that gave the initiative a real kick start. The Norwegian Broadcasting Corporation (NRK) made a report about it on their main Saturday evening news bulletin and filmed some of the girls driving and talked about the purpose of the programme. Following that we've had a large number of requests for interviews with the girls involved. Other than the exploits of Petter Solberg I can't remember anything in Norwegian motorsport getting more attention."

The club has established a Facebook page for the initiative and has undertaken a number of activities in relation to the programme, including taking a stand at the Oslo Motor Show in late October and sending one of the youngest participants to talk to a large motor sport organisation seminar. More events are planned, says Bakke Andresen.

"During the winter we will hold a camp for all the girls, with workshops, and also find a place where girls can meet and learn from each other," she says.



The racers of Norway's 'Girls with Speed' initiative

Swedish Rally Championship



Ramona Karlsson, with co-driver Miriam Walfridsson. Karlsson is set to make a switch to rallycross for 2014.

Karlsson takes Rally Driver of Year award in Sweden

Ramona Karlsson has been named Rally Driver of the Year by Swedish motoring and motor sport magazine *Bilsport*. Ramona's co-driver Miriam Walfridsson was honoured with the top prize in her category.

In presenting Karlsson with the award, the magazine's jury said: "Ramona Karlsson and Miriam Walfridsson have scored historic results in this year's Swedish Championship, including a silver medal in the highest class and an overall victory in the Swedish Championship final. No female driver has ever succeeded like this before. Ramona and Miriam were the obvious choice for the jury's selection of Rally Driver and Co-driver of the Year."

Commenting on the award, Karlsson said: "It feels really great. I'm very honoured and happy." The prize comes hot on the heels of her first event win in the Swedish Rally Championship, the first time a female driver has won such an event. The pair's victory was achieved at the season-ending Rally Uppsala.

The historic result was hard won, with the female duo toughing it out against rivals Jerker Axelsson and Fredrik Åhlin. As they entered the final stage, Ramona and Miriam were lying second but during the stage Åhlin and Axelsson suffered a puncture, which handed the historic victory to the ladies.

The triumph followed three other podium finishes during the course of the season, results which coupled with their season-ending victory earned the pair a silver medal in the Championship overall.

After her 2013 successes in the Swedish Rally Championship, Ramona will in 2014 switch to the new FIA World Rallycross Championship, and based on her results this year she will receive financial support in the endeavour from the Women in Motorsport Commission.

"I like the arena format, which attracts a lot of media, audience, and sponsors," she said of her choice to switch disciplines. "I also like the explosive nature of the sport. It's tough and extreme and I think it will suit me. I think my background and experience in rallying will be a major benefit, and I look forward to taking the next step in my career. I competed in rallycross as a junior, and became a two-time Swedish Championship medallist."

FIA Women in Motorsport Commission

New Women in Motorsport Ambassadors appointed

The FIA Women in Motorsport Commission has announced the appointment of two new Ambassadors, with FIA Formula One race steward Silvia Bellot and Audi Team Joest race engineer Leena Gade joining commission president Michèle Mouton, Sauber team principal Monisha Kaltenborn, Williams F1 development driver Susie Wolff and IndyCar racer Katharine Legge in helping to promote female involvement in all areas of motor sport.

FIA steward Bellot joins the Ambassadorial programme with special responsibility for encouraging girls and women to become volunteers and officials.

"It's an honour for me to be one of the Women in Motorsport Commission Ambassadors," said the Spanish official, who won the Outstanding Official award at the 2012 FIA Prize-Giving and who recently officiated at F1's Korean Grand Prix. "During the first four years of the commission, we have been focused on attracting and promoting female drivers in different motor sport disciplines. Nowadays we want to broaden the scope of our actions to promote other roles in motorsport as volunteers, officials and engineers.

"I am grateful for the opportunity to represent the female officials and volunteers," she added. "Finally, I hope that my work as an Ambassador will help to increase the number of women involved in our sport."

Gade, meanwhile, is the number one race engineer at Audi's works FIA World Endurance Championship-winning team. In 2011, she scored her first Le Mans 24-Hours victory, guiding Marcël Fassler, Benoît Tréluyer and André Lotterer to the chequered flag in the team's Audi R18 TDI.

You can read our exclusive interview with Leena Gade on page 22.



F1 steward Silvia Bellot, who has been made a Women in Motorsport Ambassador.

FIA European Rally Championship



Australia's Molly Taylor in action in the Croatian round of the European Rally Championship, where she secured the Ladies' Trophy.

Molly Taylor wins ERC Ladies' Trophy

Australia's Molly Taylor has been crowned Europe's top female rally driver after winning the inaugural Ladies' Trophy in the FIA European Rally Championship.

Taylor and her British co-driver Seb Marshall wrapped up the title at September's Rally Croatia, two events from the end of the ERC season. The pair battled a faulty fuel pump, a broken steering rack and the drama of Taylor almost passing out due to fuel vapour in the cockpit to take second place in their class to win the title ahead of chief rival Ekaterina Stratieva of Bulgaria.

"Winning the championship was our goal coming into the season and we are really excited to have been able to achieve it," said Taylor. "In some events we've had quite a lot of competition, which has been really good. With Ekaterina Stratieva we get on really well; many people were joking and trying to instigate some sort of catfight but it was really friendly and we very much enjoyed the competition." Her final route to the title couldn't have been more incident-packed, however.

"We had a problem with the fuel tank on the super special stage and then a problem with fuel vapour on stage four when there were a lot of fumes coming into the car," explained Taylor. "It was quite scary. We made it to the end but to say we were not feeling very good is a bit of

an understatement. "In between the problems we had some good stage times and we savoured every moment and learned a lot. Overall we're very happy with the result and we achieved what we needed to."

Taylor followed up her ERC season by taking on the final round of the World Rally Championship at the Wales Rally GB last month. Competing in her Citroën DS3 R3T, she finished fourth in the two-wheel-drive class, 23rd overall and third privateer. She also won the prestigious Richard Burns Trophy, awarded to the highest placed non-priority driver and co-driver competing in Wales Rally GB.

"We're really happy with what we achieved [at Wales Rally GB]," she said. "It was a really tough event but we managed to keep going and posted some fast stage times in between the various issues we had, so we are taking away a lot of positives from the experience. It was a great way to finish what has been a very challenging but ultimately very rewarding year.

Taylor is now hoping to tackle the full two-wheel-drive category in the 2014 European Rally Championship.

"We know where we're good and where we can improve," she said. "We know we have a lot to improve on but to focus on the ERC 2WD Championship next year would be fantastic."

FIA European Rallycross Championship

A thrilling rallying point for female racers

Short, explosive races over mixed surfaces, aggressive tactics and furious action mark rallycross out as a tough environment for racers to get to grips with, but it's one in which female competitors have been successful in the past, and where young women are taking on and matching their male counterparts in the formative categories.

Most prominent among this group is 15-year-old Swede Magda Andersson who raced in the JRX International Series that appeared alongside the FIA European Rallycross Championship at six events in 2013. Andersson is also part of the Swedish National Team, the youth development and training scheme run by the Swedish ASN.

"Taking part in the training camps with the national team last winter was a great experience and a perfect way to prepare for the season," says Andersson who went on to place third in the JRX series, which uses a controlled-specification 600cc car.

Already working hard to make the next step in her career, Andersson says she will take her time to decide on the best route.

"We have not made any decisions yet about 2014, except that we will stay in rallycross," she explains. "I have tested a Super1600 car with [multiple championship winning team] Set Promotion. The Super1600 was quite different to drive compared to the Junior Rallycross Championship. It has a lot less traction, with front-wheel drive instead of four-wheel drive, and of course there is also a lot more power. It was really fun to drive though, every lap went faster and faster as I started to feel more comfortable."

Andersson also plans to test a rear-wheel drive TouringCar category machine soon. "I want to try a TouringCar so that I understand about the difference in the two classes, front-wheel drive and rear-wheel drive, and what my options are with teams. So far, I've raced with my father as my engineer and team manager but he is quite open to me going to another team and learning to work with other people, so I have to think about that too. The future is very exciting and I want to progress, so that I can race a Supercar in the world championship in the next few years."

A regular driver for a number of years now, Mandie August races in the Super1600 category alongside her partner and WTCC team owner René Münnich in one of a pair of

Škoda Fabia. Normally, she is the lone woman in the entry list but at the round in Sweden, the balance shifted with a number of other women taking part.

Stepping up from national classes and driving a rented Super1600 car, 20-year-old Swede Sandra Hultgren made an outstanding debut to place tenth of the 22 starters in the category, a result that has led her to make a bid to race in the European Championship in 2014.

The popular Swedish event also drew competitors from neighbouring Norway, with Malin Gjerstad (23) and 17-year-old Lina Maria Holt driving in Super1600, while 16-year-old Ada Marie Hvaal chose to drive in the Junior series in both Norway and Sweden, switching from her national series and making a strong impression among the regulars.

Female drivers have been successful in rallycross in the past, the most notable being Susann Hansen who, under her maiden name of Bergvall, won a European Championship in a class for 1400cc Group N cars in 1994. Although her driving days are done, she remains actively involved in rallycross as an equal partner with husband Kenneth, a 14-time FIA European Rallycross Champion in Hansen Motorsport, the most successful team in the paddock. Hansen's role is mostly one of team management but she also steps in to help run data acquisition on the team's five cars when needed. She keeps a keen eye on the girls coming through the ranks.

"There have not been enough women in rallycross in recent years so I am really pleased to see that more young girls are finding rallycross and beginning to make progress through the classes," she says. "I actually don't see any more difference in a boy or girl than I do between a French or Russian, for example, everyone is equal if they get an equal chance."

Elsewhere, race engineer Caroline Carlsson is forging a career with Swedish squad Marklund Motorsport, which she joined when the team began to run Supercars in 2013.

"I do get a few stares sometimes when people realise I'm a girl, covered in dirt, working under a car and I suppose it's probably a shock for some people to see a female mechanic but it's great that this sport has given me the opportunity to do what I love," she says.



Singapore Motorsport Association

Singapore hosts Women in Motorsport seminar

In the run-up to this year's Formula One Singapore Grand Prix the Singapore Motorsport Association hosted a special Women in Motorsport event, at which the guest speakers were Williams F1 Deputy Team Principal Claire Williams and the team's Development Driver Susie Wolff.

Held at the city's Command House, the event, attended by leading Singaporean businesswomen, prominent motor sport companies, and local racers such as Singaporean karter Gabriella Teo and Malaysia's number one female racing driver Natasha Seatter, saw the two Formula One team members quizzed on their careers by Peter Burns of local motor sport website Pit Talk Asia.

Asked about the opportunities that now exist for women in Formula One, Claire Williams responded that more and more women are becoming involved in a wide range of areas.

"While there are not as many women as men [in the F1 paddock], the numbers are growing," she said. "At Williams, for example, 290 of our 550 employees work in engineering roles. Five years ago none of those were female, but today we have eight women. I know that is not a huge proportion, but within five years we have grown significantly."

"We also have an internship programme at Williams. Normally all of the applications come from boys, but this

year we had more women applying for and taking up those internships, so I think the balance is really changing in Formula One."

Speaking about her role on the FIA's Women in Motorsport Commission, Susie Wolff explained: "In the commission, our role is to show women what are the possibilities in motor sport. That may be as an official at a race weekend and I found it inspiring to hear how many women are involved in running the [Singapore] Grand Prix, on the race track, or in management. There are so many opportunities for women in motor sport and we want to show what's possible and be the support network should women want to come into motorsport. It is about supporting each other," she added.

Lynn Tan, FIA Women in Motorsport Commission National Coordinator for Singapore and Chair of the SMSA's Women in Motorsport Commission, afterwards branded the meeting a great success.

"The turnout was encouraging and the attendees from various industries and professions further illustrate the broad spectrum of possible engagements for women in motor sport," she said. "Many women expressed how inspired they were by some of the things that Claire and Susie shared and which they can apply in their respective fields."



Lynn Tan, Chair of the SMSA Women in Motorsport Commission (centre) with Williams F1's Claire Williams (left) and Susie Wolff.

Women of Australian Motorsport



Members of the WAMS and the SMSA's Women in Motor Sport Officials Exchange Programme.

WAMS and SMSA join forces on officials' exchange programme

The Women of Australian Motorsport arm of the Confederation of Australian Motorsport has joined forces with the Singapore Motor Sports Association to create the inaugural Women in Motor Sport Officials Exchange Programme aimed at promoting the education and training of women in motor sport.

As part of the new initiative, Singaporean official Nurulaini Ariffin was selected to represent Singapore in various roles and activities featuring Women in Motor Sport, including officiating at this year's Formula One Australian Grand Prix.

In return, WAMS selected Michelle Luke to represent Australia and work alongside Singaporean officials at the country's grand prix in September. "The exchange programme is a tremendous initiative that provides an exciting opportunity for an official to

work at an overseas Formula One Grand Prix, further develop their skills and knowledge and bring them back to events in Australia," said WAMS Chair Belinda Taylor. "WAMS hopes that more women will be encouraged to progress through to senior officiating roles and participate fully in the sport as a result of the programme."

Lynn Tan, Chair of the SMSA Women in Motor Sport Commission, agreed, adding: "Besides providing women with the opportunity to develop their skills and further their training in motor sport-related fields, the exchange programme is also a great platform for like-minded women to share with and support one another in the pursuit of their passion. Hopefully, this will inspire more women to come forward."

French Truck Racing Cup

Second French title for truck racer Halm

German racer Steffi Halm has taken back-to-back French Cup truck racing titles, sealing her second championship win at the final round in Le Mans in October. The Lion Truck Racing driver went into the final event of the six-round series locked in a tight battle for the crown with Team Crozier's Noël Crozier, but victory in the gruelling 24-hour race, in front of 51,000 fans, ensured that she finishes the year as a double champion. Halm also competed in the FIA European Truck Racing Championship, once again driving a MAN truck, and finished the season in 15th place overall.



Steffi Halm receives her champion's trophy at the FIA ETRC awards ceremony.

F1 in Schools

US girls collect F1 in Schools WIMC trophy

The Women in Motorsport Commission (WIMC) had a major presence at this year's F1 in Schools World Finals in Austin, Texas last month handing out a special FIA Women in Motorsport award to two US high school girls who formed part of the runners-up squad in the competition.

Alyssa Cote and Merritt Kendzior, both from Southeast High School in Manatee County in west Florida were part of the Allegiance Racing team that placed second in the finals behind the victorious A1 Racing team from Australia.

Cote took on the role of team manager and manufacturing engineer for Allegiance, while Kendzior was design engineer and resource manager for the outfit.

"I've been learning new programmes, meeting new people and have had opportunities that I never would have gotten before," Kendzior told her local newspaper, the Bradenton Herald, following the competition. "Doors opened that I never had in mind."

The teenager now plans to become an engineer, possibly in Formula One or at aerospace company Lockheed Martin.

At overall winners A1 Racing, the team manager was also female, and Jacqueline Cunninghame, was suitably thrilled to have taken victory. "We can't believe we won, it's just amazing," she said. "There were so many good teams, it was really tough, so we're really happy to have won this. It means everything to us."

F1 in Schools challenges students to create their own Formula One team, which is commissioned to design, manufacture and race the fastest miniature F1 car of the future; a 21cm long scale model designed using 3D solid modelling software and machined from a block of balsa wood, incorporating 3D print technology in its front and rear wings.

The F1 in Schools World Champions not only win the glass Bernie Ecclestone World Champions trophy but also coveted Motorsport and Automotive Engineering Scholarships for City University London.





FIA World Rally Championship

Minor's major success story

Ilka Minor's rallying career began in her native Austria as a teenager. Since then she has co-driven for Manfred Stohl, worked as part of Henning Solberg's crew and most recently co-drove Evgeny Novikov to seventh place in the 2013 WRC standings. Here she talks about "bumping into" her career and why she'd never consider swapping roles with her driver...

What attracted you to motor sport at the age of 19?

Before my first rally in 1994 I had nothing to do with any kind of motor sport. My then boyfriend started rallying and after two rallies with his first co-driver they split up and he began searching for a new one. He couldn't find anybody who wanted to go with a newcomer, so he asked me if I could help out for one or two rallies until he found someone to go with him. That was the start. I basically bumped into the sport!

Why co-driving and not driving?

It never came in my mind to change seats. I love my job. I believe I would be disappointed if I drove and found myself at the back of the field. A cobbler should stick to his last... that's what we say in Austria.

Did you go straight from school or college to co-driving?

Two months after I started co-driving I finished at a federal higher technical institute for manufacturing technology. So for a short time I did both things at the same time. I was working full time in an engineering office until 2010 and I'm still working as a freelancer for an office whenever I have time.

Is it important to be good at maths and have a head for numbers? Was maths 'your' subject at school?

It is not a must but I believe it is good to have some knowledge. Maths was one of my favourite subjects in school but then with a technical education you can't leave maths out.

There seem to be more and more female co-drivers in rallying, do you have any idea why?

In Austria I can say I was a role model for lots of the girls. They saw me doing it and I think they then also had the courage to enter into a so-called 'man's world'. But I can only say that for my home country, I don't know about elsewhere. For some girls it's maybe a chance to come into motor sport. Some drivers appreciate and enjoy the discipline of female co-drivers – the fact that they are always well prepared in order to survive in a man's world. Drivers don't need to worry about anything else than their job and that is the most important thing: driving.

You are a very petite lady, do you think this is an advantage in the car?

No. Maybe just for the weight distribution of the car but otherwise it makes no difference. Size is not important in the car. The most important thing is the harmony and the trust in each other.

What's your process for preparing for a rally?

First, you have to wait to get road books and maps for the event before you begin preparations. Then you start to compare the stages with those of previous years. If a stage is the same, I rewrite it. To prepare pace notes for each event takes me around eight to ten hours. Then, of course, you have to prepare yourself for the recce, which normally takes another three to four hours. All in all, I would say I spend two to three days on the preparation of each rally.

Do you mind that the driver always appears to get the glory?

No, I don't mind at all. That's how it is and how it looks from outside – the driver does the job. But in the car we know that we can only achieve a good result together and that's what matters.

Are you as organised in your home life as you are in the car?

Yes. My job and my education go hand in hand. A technician or engineer always wants to have everything 'straight' and well sorted. I've always been like this.

FIA World Endurance Championship

First lady of Le Mans

New FIA Women in Motorsport Commission Ambassador Leena Gade talks openly about her path to being number one race engineer at Audi Sport Team Joest and how she nearly quit the sport just before one of her biggest triumphs.

How did you get into motor sport?

Directly out of university, I went to work for Jaguar Cars for six and half years, as I didn't have any relevant motor sport experience and couldn't just walk into a team.

In 2003, I started to help out a small team from Leicestershire in the UK called AHS Mechanical, preparing their 14 cars in the Formula Vee series as a mechanic and then in 2004 I became a data engineer for Soper Sport, which was running three Formula BMW cars in the UK series. Both of these jobs were done for free on my weekends and gave me a chance to make contacts I could use to negotiate my way into more race series during the following years.

I also worked in the LMS series with a team running an Aston Martin GT1 and then a team running an LMP1 Lola/AER, plus A1GP with Team Japan. By the middle of 2006, I had made enough contacts that I felt I could leave my full-time job and then work in multiple race series as a data engineer.

When you started were there any difficulties associated with being a woman on generally all-male crews? Do any issues persist?

People often ask me if it is hard being a female engineer on a race team where almost every member is a guy. The answer is always the same – it's as hard as you want it to be.

Actually, that is true in any form of motor sport whether you are male or female. Motor sport is a lifestyle that doesn't suit everyone, but once you get sucked into it, it's very hard to step away.

What's been the toughest challenge of your career to date?

My most challenging win was in Le Mans in 2011, when eight hours into the race, my Audi R18 [driven by Benoît Tréluyer, André Lotterer and Marcel Fässler], was the only one left of the three that had started.

One thing stood out at that race, something that sets us at Audi Sport apart from many other works teams, is that when one car goes out, the entire crew will back up the remaining cars and this is exactly what happened.

It could easily have ended up with everyone throwing in their opinion but it didn't – I was allowed to make the decisions and take advice but to use my judgement to make the calls we needed.

It was a huge step for me because in that same year, at Sebring in March and Spa in May, I had two disastrous races, which at one point really made me reconsider my career choice. In fact, I had decided that post-Le Mans, I would probably step back from being a race engineer and do something else on the team.

That was a radical change to consider. So what did you do?

Fortunately, there was still a month to Le Mans and that gave me some time to work out what I wanted to do to resolve the serious issues we had.

My mother has always said I take on too much but that one of my strengths is that somehow, with a little organisation, I find a way to make it all work. I was the same at school – why do three A Levels when you can do four, hold down a part time job and learn the clarinet and guitar? Why only use the textbooks that the school give you to research a topic when the local library has five times more research material so that it takes three times as long to finish a project?

However, looking back, that gave me a skill that's now one of my strongest qualities. In this job, time is everything, so you have to get organised and prioritise what needs to be sorted first. I also realised that I didn't have all the answers to every problem and that meant admitting if I didn't know something, I should go and find the person who could help me. Knowing this, I found the strengths and qualities in my team to make sure every one of my mechanics and engineers was given the confidence they needed to do their job.

Did that give the crew the major lift you felt was needed?

With my number one mechanic Ronny, we discussed radio protocol, we practised more parts changes than the other two crews and we checked and rechecked our work, even when it meant finishing later than the other cars. Possibly the biggest step, though, was trusting each other. Four weeks of long days, a lot of soul searching and totally readdressing our organisation brought us to Le Mans race week.

And in the end you did win but by a really close margin – just 13.8 seconds after 24 hours of racing. What do you remember of that moment?

My recollection is of pure relief that I made it through with the odd mistake but having believed it was possible. I turned around a team that a few months before looked incapable of making it through the first part of the weekend, let alone the race itself.

Looking back, the worst year of my race engineering career set me up for 2012 and 2013 and helped me understand what I have to do to turn around a bad race. If this job was easy, everyone would do it, but it isn't. Not many guys want it and even fewer girls do, but I hope that when I lead my team at any race, I show both that anyone, if they put their mind to it, can achieve so much in motor sport. It's hard but worth every bit of the sweat and tears.

FAST FACTS

Name: Leena Gade

Place of Birth: Perivale, Middlesex, UK

Qualification: M. Eng Aerospace Engineering with Materials Science

First motor sport job: Mechanic with AHS Mechanical in the Formula Vee series.

Current position: Race Engineer Car 1, Audi Sport Team Joest

