



CONFERENCE NEWS

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**ATTRACTING
THE NEXT GENERATION**

OPPORTUNITY KNOCKS

THE SECOND PLENARY SESSION OF FIA SPORT CONFERENCE 2018 AGAIN DELVED INTO THE FUTURE OF MOTOR SPORT – THIS TIME THE FOCUS WAS ON WHO WILL BE THE FUTURE PARTICIPANTS AND FANS, AND HOW THEY WILL FIND THE SPORT AND ENGAGE WITH IT.



Topics ranged from the future of karting, to the role of eSports in grassroots motor sport, the importance of offering a variety of motor sport for people to enjoy, and how technology can play a role in attracting new fans.

New CIK-FIA President and 11-time F1 Grand Prix winner Felipe Massa was quizzed about how expensive it is for young drivers to navigate the progression from karting to Formula One, and he referred to his own personal experience.

“The time I spent most in my career was finding sponsors – it was the thing I was speaking about most every day, because I didn’t have the money to race. All I spoke about every day was finding sponsors to race – with the mentality that my dream was to arrive in Formula One.



“Definitely, finding the budget to race is quite difficult and quite expensive... But I think your talent is more important than anything. I think it is not only now that it is difficult – it’s been like that for a long time. It was always difficult though – and it is in many sports – to achieve the best.”

The Founder of the Veloce eSports team, Rupert Svendsen-Cook, explained why he feels eSports is now a realistic option for young people looking for a way into the sport.

“The cost barrier to entry at the junior level is the biggest stumbling block to engaging the young people to get involved in the sport,” said the former Formula 3 driver.

“eSports is a very good solution for a lot of the problems. It’s true there’s no better school than karting – I did eight years of karting – it’s great, it taught me everything... It is the ultimate education, but it has a very different price point to other opportunities that can still give you a lot of the tools like eSports.”

Milo Rivera, the Filipino National Slalom Champion was another that grew up racing karts with the ultimate goal of Formula One – but after the step from karting to single-seaters proved a challenge in the Philippines, he opted for a more accessible discipline.

“After karting, I tried to move up the usual ladder with circuit racing, single-seaters,” said Mr Rivera. “But I guess, especially in this part of the world, there’s an ongoing struggle to make your way up, whether it’s financial situations or the actual ladder

and considering how far we are from Europe... So I tried to find another way around.

"Through some sort of fate, gymkhana racing entered my life and I became very successful in it. A proper grassroots programme is very important – karting, gymkhana racing, rallycross; all those different types of disciplines which can cater to the general public is something big. With gymkhana, one good thing about it is that instead of having it in race tracks where they're typically located far from the big cities and populated areas, gymkhana races can be done in parking lots, industrial areas, where people are there – the races can be brought to you."

Rodi Basso, the Motorsports Director at McLaren Applied Technologies stressed the importance of not only finding new drivers, but of using all the technological tools and information available to attract new fans.

"As an engineer I'm very passionate and interested in motor sport technology – I'm still fascinated by how much technology can change and improve people's lives," said the former Formula One engineer.

"This conference is about unlocking the potential of motor sport, and it still has a huge potential – most of it is in data. One of the unique aspects of our sport is the amount of data that we have available – consider that one race weekend generates something like 100 terabytes of data for all the Formula One cars.

"Using the new, big data technologies, we can definitely improve the show, let data tell the story, and attract the new generation which is demanding something different.



"So far, motor sport has been based on two main factors – one is the passion for the car... and the other one that is very important is the satellite TV as the main media to let people passively consume the sport. Today, the young generation is looking for something more immersive – which means, social, accessible, interactive. Social means you need to be able to share it with other peers, friends... Accessible means multi-platform, so you can access it from anywhere with any possible platform. Interactive; you want to build your own content."

New karting boss talks vision

In his first visit to the FIA Sport Conference, the new CIK-FIA President and Formula One veteran of 15 seasons, Felipe Massa, spoke to delegates about a streamlined discipline in the future.

"I want to try to put all the ASNs together to try to simplify so many different things – now you see so many different categories, so many different engines," said the Brazilian, who will drive in the next season of the FIA Formula E Championship.

"For example, in a country like Brazil, having the same engines and the same categories as we have here, to prepare the drivers when they come to Europe so they are driving the same engine, and the same material that they are using in the different countries.

"In my view it was always a little bit difficult to understand why you have so many different things in karting."



AN ALTERNATIVE START

RUPERT SVENDSEN-COOK IS ONE OF MANY YOUNG PEOPLE WHO GROW UP DREAMING OF FORMULA ONE GLORY – AND HE PURSUED THE DREAM FURTHER THAN MOST, EVENTUALLY BECOMING A RACE-WINNER IN BRITISH FORMULA 3.

Today, he is a founder and owner of the Veloce eSports team. It's something of a change of scenery – but who better to oversee the development of young eSports drivers than someone with real world experience of the motor sport development ladder...

"As of today, eSports is the fastest growing sport in the world," said Mr Svendsen-Cook.

"The participation number globally, right now, is around 200 million people and growing – and the global audience is a quite staggering 380 million and also growing... pretty astonishing numbers..."

Why is eSports so relevant to real world motor sport?

"Racing as an eSport is one of the only ones that is actually comparable and relatable to reality in the sense that you compete with a steering wheel and pedals in both the virtual and real worlds. Whilst, of course, the g-force is different and the sensations...the fundamentals are still the same.

"eSports really has a potential to be the new grassroots. With our eSports drivers, we put them in real scenarios and they pick it up in no time – it's incredible how quickly the young brains can switch

across into real cars. We've even put them back-to-back with some of our real drivers and it's incredible how good they are. I really believe that it can translate across...

"It's the biggest increase in the global driver talent pool in the history of motor sport. If we can find a way to bring the two together, then all of a sudden the sport increases in size dramatically. We're engaging a millennial audience and a fanbase which is crucial to the future of our sport.

"It's very realistic to say that the next generation of drivers will graduate through racing eSports – the opportunities are huge."



CIRCUITS FOR EVERYONE

RENOWNED MOTOR SPORT CIRCUIT DESIGNER, HERMANN TILKE, WAS ASKED ON STAGE DURING YESTERDAY'S PLENARY SESSION, WHETHER RACING CIRCUITS HAVE BECOME TOO FORGIVING FOR DRIVERS, ALLOWING THEM TO "GET AWAY WITH" MISTAKES.

His response touched on a key point facing circuit owners and developers regarding business models – one which is rarely raised in discussions in the rarefied air of Formula One.

"The tracks must be safe... We are not building tracks only for the high-level professional drivers, we're also building tracks for any kind of drivers, which means amateur drivers, and other drivers that might just want to drive a high performance car," said Mr Tilke. "More and more, with autonomous driving more people are going to come to tracks to have fun with cars.

"All of these people have to be safe – not only Formula One. The investor of a track wants to use his track for everybody –

not only for Formula One. Also motorcyclists, who need a lot of safety – nobody complains in MotoGP that the track is too safe, and we have really exciting races."



DRIVING GRASSROOTS MOTOR SPORT

AFFORDABLE, ACCESSIBLE RACING AND ENGAGING YOUNGER GENERATIONS ARE TWO OF THE FIA'S MAIN DEVELOPMENT PRIORITIES, AND AT THE HEART OF YESTERDAY'S INTERACTIVE SESSION ON 'GRASSROOTS MOTOR SPORT DEVELOPMENT'.



The FIA departments responsible for Circuit, Drifting, Rally, Cross Car and Karting used the interactive session to present some category-specific updates and insights on how they have been mapping the pathway for grassroots development.

Fred Bertrand, FIA Director for Circuit Racing Championships, confirmed Formula E's positive trajectory. Social media evaluation demonstrates the strong youth demographic, with engagement among 13-17 year olds increasing by 347% in the past year alone. With a new Gen2 car for Season 5 and its implications for bringing more compelling racing to city streets, plus the arrival of new manufacturers Mercedes and Porsche for 2019, the potential for the championship is clear.

A GT Am event, the Nations Cup, will take the exciting and popular GT3 category and add another level of interest for



both drivers and fans, as unlike almost any other motor sport competition, the race will not only be for individual success, but also national pride. Selection of drivers, two of the same nationality per car, will be made by the ASNs, with titles for nations and drivers.

Drifting is crossing borders to gain millions of fans all over the world and is fast becoming the chosen motor sport of the PlayStation generation. Marek Nawarecki, FIA Manager for Circuit Racing Championships, highlighted that drifting is well placed as an ideal entry-level category, with the emergence of the FIA Drifting pyramid offering a clear structure for progression.

Vincent Caro, Head of the FIA Historic, Off-Road and Hill Climb department presented the exciting and affordable Cross Car project that has finally come to fruition, a natural pathway heading to Rally, Autocross and Rallycross, helping to establish these disciplines in countries where they do not currently exist.

Affordability has also been a component in the development of the new rally pyramid, as presented by Yves Matton, FIA Rally Director, which has streamlined and simplified the categories, groups and classes in FIA and national championships.

The session provided a clear demonstration of how hard the FIA is working to develop strategies and programmes that will stand us in good stead as the world evolves.

MOTORSPORT ACTIVITIES: X-CAR & DRIFTING

A demonstration featuring Drifting and the new Cross Car for Rally and Rallycross development was held on Tuesday afternoon close to the Conrad Hotel. Both disciplines are great examples of ways to attract new participants to motor sport.



GALA DINNER

Manila Polo Club provided an inspirational setting for last night's Gala Dinner, against the backdrop of 100 years of colonial heritage. Let us join in thanking the AAP for serving up a memorable evening of entertainment infused with the wonderful culture of the Philippines.





PASAY CITY
4-6 JUNE



RICHARD MILLE



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