Beat: Sports

Mercedes AMG Petronas Motorsport team launch

F1 W09 EQ Power Plus

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USPA NEWS - More than a machine: Mercedes-AMG Petronas Motorsport unveils its most advanced Formula One car ever, the F1 W09 EQ Power+

Keen to start racing again next month, an excited Mercedes-AMG Petronas Motorsport team launched its new car today at the Silverstone International Circuit with a multimedia reveal show, live online broadcasts and shakedown runs

New F1 car completes its first laps at Silverstone

Toto Wolff: “This is always a very exciting time because what has been designed is coming together and coming alive.“

Lewis Hamilton: “I´m just looking forward to racing again"

Valtteri Bottas: “As a driver you feel really special to be able to drive that machine.“

With only a little over a month to go until the first race of the 2018 FIA Formula One season, Mercedes-AMG Petronas Motorsport today took the wraps off the all new Mercedes-AMG F1 W09 EQ Power+.

Team partners, guests and media joined the team for the reveal show at Silverstone, while Mercedes fans around the world took part in the action and watched the unveiling of the new F1 challenger live online. For one fan in particular, shakedown day turned out to be a once in a lifetime experience. Having won the team´s launch contest, he and his stepdaughter were invited for a VIP experience on-site at Silverstone. The main reveal show paid tribute to Mercedes´ long motorsport history, featuring emotional footage of some of the team´s most painful defeats and most thrilling victories.

As the most advanced machine ever conceived by Mercedes-AMG Petronas Motorsport, the 2018 car aims to write its own chapter in that long racing heritage while at the same time pushing the technological boundaries of motorsport. The F1 W09 EQ Power+ is improved in every area over its predecessor and will become the fastest Mercedes Formula One car in history.

Christened Mercedes-AMG F1 W09 EQ Power+, the new car proudly carries the “EQ Power+“ designation which was launched to the world on last year´s car. As part of the naming strategy of Mercedes-AMG, “EQ Power+“ stands for the brand´s future performance hybrid models. The Formula One team is proud to have led the way that was followed by the Mercedes-AMG Project ONE show car revealed in Frankfurt last year. The EQ Power+ designation places the F1 car and its state-of-the-art hybrid power unit at the forefront of the future Mercedes-AMG line-up, showcasing how F1 technology is accelerating the future of motor racing and automotive technology in general.

The launch was part of the team´s official 100 km filming day, during which the F1 W09 EQ Power+ completed its first laps of Silverstone´s 2.98 km International Circuit with Valtteri Bottas behind the wheel. Lewis Hamilton´s run in the car is scheduled for the early afternoon.

More than a machine: 1,000 years of working hours, the hopes and dreams of the entire Mercedes family

“It is always a very exciting time because what has been designed is coming together and coming alive,“ said Toto Wolff, Team Principal & CEO of Mercedes-AMG Petronas Motorsport, describing the atmosphere in the team prior to launch day. “It´s never going completely seamlessly or smoothly when you´re trying to push the boundaries. We´ve had a good winter, I would say, no real drama. But it was a lot of hard work for everyone in the team.“

Since Mercedes-AMG Petronas Motorsport started working on the new car nearly 7,000 drawn parts have been created, over 40,000 components have been through non-destructive testing inspection. In total, 3,150 Saturday morning breakfasts have been served in the team´s on-site restaurant...

“The winter is intense,“ continued Technical Director James Allison. “The planners have got thousands of lines of plans to deliver on, the design group have got to deliver several hundred new designs per day in order that they can be made. The test and development group and the team running the dynos have to stand ready as the pieces come in hot from the machines, to assemble them and put them on all the in-house testing kit. This allows us to be reasonably sure that everything is strong enough and has the right shape and will perform reliably.“

While working on different areas of the car, the approach to developing and building the new car is the same in Brackley and Brixworth. Last year´s Championships don´t impact the way the two factories prepare for the season. Every team member knows that the points reset to zero for 2018 ““ and that even greater challenges await in 2018.

“We are trying to stay humble and just keep doing the fundamental work we have always done,“ explains Andy Cowell, Managing Director of Mercedes-AMG High Performance Powertrains. “ There is no secret formula to what we do. It is plain, honest engineering work. If there´s an idea of how to reduce friction or improve combustion efficiency, we discuss it in our forum in a very forthright way. The sources of all ideas are human creativity, passion and enthusiasm.“

The outcome of roughly a millennium´s worth of working hours, the new car is more than a machine. It´s a demonstration of teamwork and represents the hopes and dreams not just of the drivers, the team, its partners and the entire Daimler family ““ but of Mercedes fans all around the world. The first shakedown run was watched with excitement not just by the team members at the circuit, in Brackley and Brixworth, but also by colleagues and fans around the globe.

“It´s really amazing to know how many hours have been spent on designing and manufacturing the new car and how much effort people have put into it,“ said Valtteri Bottas. “As a driver you feel really special to be able to drive that machine.“

“It´s very humbling to see everything coming together,“ agreed Lewis Hamilton. “People have worked so hard on this car, committed for such a long period of time. I´m just keen to get out there and take it to its limits. I´m one of only two people who get to drive it and there´s this proud feeling because I know how much work has gone into getting the car ready.“

An all new car with some familiar DNA

The all-new F1 W09 EQ Power+ shares some of the DNA of its predecessor. Affectionately dubbed a “diva“ for its occasional lack of predictability, the 2017 Mercedes F1 car was nevertheless the most successful car of the past season. The aerodynamic regulations remained largely stable for the 2018 season, with the introduction of the Halo and the ban of both monkey seat and high T-wings being the biggest changes. So the team chose to follow a similar design philosophy, aimed at developing the many strengths of the 2017 car and improving its weaker areas.

“We like some of the character traits from our diva,“ explained Toto. “The W08 was the fastest car on the grid, scoring the highest number of pole positions and winning the most races last year. So we were careful not to lose the car´s many strengths just to overcome the difficulties.“

“Last year´s car was never easy to work with, even at the tracks where we were strong,“ added James. “We could find our way through the weekend to a competitive outcome, but it was never easy. We hope that we have made some inroads into that and that this year´s car will speak to us as engineers and to the drivers a little more clearly so that it is more obvious what to do to dial it in.“

The new car stays true to the general design principles of its championship-winning predecessor, retaining the same wheelbase and running slightly increased rake. However, working with a well-understood set of regulations meant the team could push the design to greater extremes in every area.

“Across the board, this design is more elegant than last year,“ said James. “Last year´s regulations were brand new and we weren´t quite sure which direction they would take us in. So last year´s car had a certain amount of wiggle room to adapt if we had found that we needed to move around certain aspects of the car. This year, being a little more confident of what we´re aiming for, we´ve been able to commit more fully to certain concepts. So we have the packaging much tighter and have taken things to more of an extreme.“

Significant updates to the power unit

The new power unit M09 EQ Power+ has been developed to meet substantial changes in the Sporting Regulations for the 2018 season. The reduction in the number of power unit components that can be used per driver per season without incurring grid penalties meant that durability had to be extended to withstand the higher distances the hardware now has to run.

“The amount of change on the power unit for this year is quite considerable and driven by a number of requirements,“ explained Andy. “The biggest challenge we´ve got is lifting our durability limit with the challenge of racing just three engines per driver per championship and two ERS systems. That´s a 40 per cent increase in the distance that the hardware needs to do for this year compared with last year. We focussed on trying to increase the life of the hardware without losing performance.“

In addition to the changes coming from the new Sporting Regulations, the team of Mercedes-AMG High Performance Powertrains sought to improve the power unit in other areas as well.

“We also wanted to change the packaging of the power unit for the benefit of overall car performance,“ Andy continued. “We´ve been working very closely with our colleagues in Brackley, trying to understand the best overall integration in the chassis, the transmission and the aerodynamic surfaces. We´ve also been working on combustion efficiency and hardware friction reduction in partnership with Petronas.“

A strong driver line-up for the 2018 season

Mercedes-AMG Petronas Motorsport will race with the same driver line-up that won a total of 668 points last year, winning the Constructors´ Championship by 146 points. The expectations for the new season are predictably high.

“Valtteri had a great start in 2017, having been drafted very last minute, with highlights in Sochi and Austria“, said Toto. “ After the summer, things became more difficult but he came back very strong. Valtteri has learned a lot, racing against the best Formula One driver of the current day and age.“

“I want to use all the things that I learned last year,“ explained Valtteri. “This year is all about executing and delivering the results. For me, consistency is the key. I had some really good races, but then I had races where I was not on the level I wanted to be. I want to be on a good level on every single race weekend “ that´s going to be the goal for me this year. I definitely want to fight for the championship.“

Lewis will start his sixth season with Mercedes-AMG Petronas Motorsport in 2018. His record with the team is impressive and includes four Constructors´ and three Drivers´ Championships as well as 41 race wins.

“Lewis is an incredible driver, the best of our time. What he has achieved together with Mercedes-AMG Petronas Motorsport is remarkable,“ said Toto Wolff. “In addition to his performance on track, he has become an important figurehead of the team outside the race car as well.“

“It´s hard to believe that it´s already our sixth year together,“ Lewis said. “It feels like it´s gone by so quick. I remember my first time coming to the factory in Brackley, doing my first seat fit and it´s just strange to think that now we´re here as far down the line. It has just been a dream experience “ working with the greatest team and extending my relationship with Mercedes who I first signed with when I was 13. It´s been an emotional rollercoaster together.“

What´s more, Lewis believes his relationship with the team can get even better in the future: “Mercedes already is the best team and it continues to grow ever stronger. The foundation is very strong and now they´re putting the right building bricks in place for the years ahead. I think the team is going to continue to grow and I hope that I can be a part of that for as long as I can.“

The team also announced its reserve drivers for the 2018 season. Duties will be shared between 2017 GP3 champion George Russell, who will compete in FIA Formula Two this year, and Pascal Wehrlein, who will combine his reserve driver role with a return to the DTM, where he won the title in 2015.

A full race calendar in 2018

The new Formula One season holds a busy schedule for the teams. 21 races make it the joint-longest season in F1 history. The calendar sees two addition compared to last year ““ the German GP at Hockenheim and the French GP at Paul Ricard. One event that always was very special to everyone at Mercedes-AMG Petronas Motorsport has been dropped from the calendar for the new season ““ the Malaysian Grand Prix.

“I´m going to miss Malaysia,“ said Toto. “It´s the home of our title partner Petronas and it´s sad that we won´t be going to Sepang this year. For the new races that will return to the calendar, I´m happy that we will go back to Germany. It´s just a two-hour drive from Stuttgart, so it´s a home race for Mercedes and we hope that many of our Daimler friends can join us at the race. And regarding Paul Ricard ““ there´s obviously worse places to be than in the South of France in the summer!“

The team is especially excited to go back to Hockenheim. The track is just a little over 100 kilometres away from the Mercedes-Benz headquarters in Stuttgart and the Mercedes-AMG base of operations in Affalterbach. In other words: Together with Silverstone, the team is looking at two home Grands Prix this year.

“The old Hockenheim circuit was one of my favourites back then,“ said Lewis. “But the track is still great as it is now. It´s quite small but it has that big long straight in the back which creates good racing. I´m excited to be going back, Germany has such a great fan base for motor racing.“

“I´ve raced so many times at Hockenheim, the first time was probably in 2007 with Formula Renault,“ said Valtteri. “And I´ve been racing there in F3 as well and GP3. It´s always been a great circuit to go to. And I have good memories from the 2014 F1 race, when I came in second with Lewis just behind me. Hopefully we can get the same result this year ““ just one place better. And it will be good to go back with Mercedes as it will be a home race for us.“

To watch the Launch video click on the 'More Information' link below

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