



## Ancillary F1 – Philips Lighting

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Welcome to Ancillary F1, the mini series from Sidepodcast that takes a closer look at supporting companies, those that are involved in the sport but not directly competing. Today we're looking at Philips Lighting.

This year saw the introduction of Formula 1's first ever night race, and Philips Lighting got the chance to illuminate the event. The company has great experience in brightening up sporting events, with their first foray into stadium floodlights about 60 years ago. Philips, based in the Netherlands, but a multinational corporation, are involved in all aspects of technology, including healthcare, electronics and as we now know, lighting. The company already has some involvement in Formula 1, as Philips Shavers are a prominent sponsor of the Williams team. They have recently announced an expansion of the sponsorship, meaning the entire Consumer Lifestyle section will be on board, their name will appear on the teams clothing, and they'll have promotional rights with Rosberg and Nakajima. However, the company has more to offer the sport than money alone and thus Philips Lighting took the next step.

For the Singapore race, the company supplied almost 1,500 lighting projectors, a brand new concept, specially designed and produced to reduce glare and be super bright. They lit the entire 5 kilometres of track and the pitlane. Philips wouldn't let slip how much the project cost but the CEO would only say it was "some millions." The manufacturer also supplied the corporate boxes in Singapore with massive flat-screen televisions, but that's just showing off.

The Singapore race organisers appointed Valerio Maioli as official consultants regarding the lighting, and the Italian company partnered with Philips to design the new projector, a custom-made solution to tackle the unique problem of Formula 1 night racing. Maioli also wouldn't comment on how much it cost to bring Philips on board, but said theirs was a competitive tender. One of the other advantages Philips projectors had over their rivals was a solution that was 16% more energy efficient.

That's pretty surprising, actually, because the new lights are a long way from Philips first stadium job half a century ago. These lamps are four times brighter than a normal football stadium, not for the drivers, as you might expect, but for the High Definition television camera's. An F1 driver doesn't need bright, he just needs consistent lighting, so the 3,000 lux provided by these projectors was for those TV viewers lucky enough to receive race broadcasts in HD. In comparison, a football stadium is about 800 lux, and your regular street light is about 30.

The lighting system took just a few months to put in place, once developed, and lined only one side of the track. Projectors were raised 10 metres above the ground and spaced 4 metres apart. Any pre-race fears about backup generators failing remain unfounded.

That's it for this penultimate ancillary company. Please leave your feedback on Sidepodcast.com or the voicemail at 0121 28 87225. I'll be back tomorrow with the last episode for this series.