



Episode 55 – Do You Think They’ve Got a Better System This Year than a Guy With a Felt Tip Marker?

Coming Up

Chris: This is Sidepodcast, Episode 55 – Do You Think They’ve Got a Better System This Year than a Guy With a Felt Tip Marker? Coming up on today’s show testing news, tyre news and Trulli news.

Intro

Me: Are you excited yet?

Chris: Yea.

Me: Only one week to go. This is the last podcast before we go racing.

Chris: The long, cold winter is over.

Me: Time to get to work.

Good Week/Bad Week

Chris: It’s been a good week for ITV as they have found a sponsor to replace Honda for their F1 coverage this year. The deal with Sony is reportedly worth £3 million.

Me: That’s not as much as they wanted. I heard they were after £5 million after the increased popularity due to Hamilton.

Chris: Are you saying it’s not a good week for them?

Me: Well, it is a good week because they’ve got a sponsor, it’s not a great week because it’s not the sponsor they were after.

Chris: Sony wants to use the deal to promote it’s high definition televisions, amongst other things.

Me: That’s slightly amusing, given that ITV only broadcast Formula 1 in standard def. Buy our really, really nice looking television and watch Formula 1 in worse quality than you’re used to.

Chris: I want a new TV.

Me: Well, putting adverts amongst the racing is not going to convince you to buy one.

Chris: Ok. It’s been a bad week for Force India because Spyker have said they haven’t actually finished up the deal with them yet. Along with some massive losses, Spyker announced there were a few details still to be sorted out with Force India.

Me: I’m sure it’s something and nothing this. I wouldn’t be surprised if it’s all done and dusted by Melbourne.



Chris: I thought this was quite surprising news though, because Force India have the whole new team, they've got the livery and everything, you wouldn't actually know that Spyker was still involved at all.

Me: I guess they were keen to get started as early as possible and weren't so worried about all the contractual obligations imposed upon them.

Chris: It's been a good week for Mercedes who have announced their new Safety Car. They've been supplying F1 since 1996 and this new car is powered by an AMG 6.3 litre V8. It was presented at the Geneva Motorshow, and it looks kind of flashy.

Me: You say flashy, I saw Photoshopped.

Chris: What?

Me: Have you seen those pictures? They're a bit over the top! How to make a dull car look interesting.

Chris: It is just a safety car, they've got to try and make it look exciting.

Me: Yea, but have you seen the sign on the back of it? The one that says medical car? It looks like it's powered by kryptonite, it's green and glowing. The tarmac is blacker than black and the white lines look like they're irradiated.

Chris: It's been a bad week for Nigel Stepney because although the FIA have said they won't take any direct action against him, they have warned the entire motorsport industry not to work with him. They recommend teams don't collaborate with him until the summer of 2009.

Me: that's not a recommendation, that's an order. It has an end date. What kind of recommendation has an end date?

Chris: 1st July 2009.

News and Views

Chris: Before we get on to the news this week, a quick update on Jarno Trulli's mood – he's happy.

Me: Glad to hear it.

Chris: This week he said: "I wouldn't be shocked if we turn out to be the surprise of the year, finally we see the light at the end of the tunnel and we have the sensation something is changing."

Me: And join us next week to find out Trulli's mood after he fails to make it into Q2.

[Sweeper]

Chris: I thought all the testing was over but a few sneaky teams have been doing a bit of last minute preparation. First up, Honda were at Jerez.

Me: Yea, they booked a private three day test, which is quite extensive considering the season starts next week.



Chris: I think they need it though. They claim that every single bit of the bodywork was updated.

Me: Sounds like it probably could have been.

Chris: I think it probably was, but that's a bad state of affairs when you've got to change every bit of your car.

Me: It's only a bad thing if you didn't plan to change every bit of your car, which you know they may have been.

Chris: They had quite windy conditions over the three days, so they're not entirely sure of any improvements and they didn't release any times.

Me: Wurz did say that the tyre usage had improved as a result of their work.

Chris: Well, Jenson said they'd made a good step forward, but he's feeling realistic about what they're gonna achieve at the first few races. Honda are also in the news this week because the chief designer Kevin Taylor has reportedly left, and Yasuhira Wada is probably going to be moved aside by the end of the month.

Me: He would probably call it a promotion. He's being moved up in the world of Honda and apparently that's normal. They tend to rotate their staff more than you would expect in motor racing.

Chris: Big management reshuffle, though.

Me: Yes, as a result of Brawn do we think?

Chris: Well, it's either bad news for Honda that everyone's deserting them or Brawn's working his magic. FIX

Me: He's found out they're hopeless.

Chris: Ferrari spent Thursday at their test track at Fiorano with Luca Badoer doing pit stop practices. I don't understand why, because he's not going to have to do a pit stop.

Me: You don't, the practice isn't for him, it's for the pit crew to make sure they're sharp for Melbourne.

Chris: Like they need the practice. Have you ever seen Ferrari pit crew make a mistake?

Me: That'll be all that practice paying off then.

Chris: According to motorsport.com, both Red Bull and Honda were spotted at Silverstone this week.

Me: Honda again, a second test team in action?

Chris: I've not seen this story anywhere else, but Ian did comment on our blog and say that Red Bull would be at Silverstone so it's at least half true.

Me: You raise a good point.



Chris: Apparently, they weren't using the main circuit and the pit lane, they had set up makeshift awnings on a different part of the track. The Red Bull car looked very similar to the launch car, but the bargeboards were a bit more like Honda's.

Me: They're the ones that you called Lego bricks a couple of weeks ago, right?

Chris: That's the ones, and the Honda looked basically the same as it's launch car, except it had a different rear wing.

Me: So let me get this straight, they're running an entirely different aero package in Jerez, which is completely unique and every part is different, and then in England, they're running the same aero spec as the car that launched except they have a completely different rear wing on it. What on earth is going on there?

Chris: I don't know. Clearly they are trying to maximise their track time as much as possible.

Me: I guess we'll find out very shortly.

Chris: I can't find anyone else mentioning that Williams were testing this week, so the pictures you took were a bit of an exclusive.

Me: Albeit unenlightening, it was just a couple of trucks. The car did go out and about a couple of times, but I can't believe they learnt too much from the work they were doing out there.

Chris: They also launched their new livery this week.

Me: Lovely looking car.

Chris: People seem to approve.

Me: I'll tell you what the designers have done, which is a really smart decision and I'm not sure any other teams have figured this out, but they've started with the wheels. They can't change the colour of the black rubber and then they've designed everything else around that and it looks gorgeous.

Chris: I thought it was black to start with, but it's just a really dark blue.

Me: Best looking car on the grid?

Chris: Perhaps.

Me: I think it is.

Chris: And in more Williams news...

Me: Oh, they're stealing all the headlines this week.

Chris: Makes a change from McLaren. Prodrive boss David Richards has had a real go at them saying they are running an outdated business and clearly are only in it for the sport.



Me: Shame on them.

Chris: It's a bad thing, you know.

Me: Absolutely terrible, although I think the new deals they're striking up with Bauger mean they're really in it for the business too.

Chris: I think he's just bitter.

[Sweeper]

Chris: Bridgestone announced this week that they were going to put a white line on the extreme wet tyres to distinguish them from the regular wets, like they do with hards and softs.

Me: Right, so in wet races, nobody's talking about the tyres, and they don't like that.

Chris: Apparently it's as per the request of teams and the FIA. I don't understand why teams would want this because surely they want to hide what they're using from the other teams.

Me: I'm imagining it might have something to do with Fuji, when Ferrari went out on the wrong tyres.

Chris: Oh, it might stop that happening?

Me: It might. But in the rain, you know that guy with the pen who has to paint? Do you think they've got a better system this year than a guy with a felt tip marker?

Chris: It would just wash off, wouldn't it?

Me: It would, wouldn't it? It's not going to help at all.

Chris: I don't really see the point because they don't seem to use extreme wets very often and only when the weather is extreme.

Me: Yea, I don't need no white stripe.

Chris: We've got to take a short break but stay tuned for our predictions, you're feedback and next week's plans.

[Jingle: "If you don't have the time to trawl through website after website looking for Formula 1 news, let F1 Minute do the hard work for you. Delivered to your ears every weekday, F1 Minute is 60 seconds of headlines, keeping you up to date with drivers, teams, rules, regulations, testing, races, launches, results, quotes, anything you can think of. Visit F1Minute.com for all the details and to find the latest show.]"

Chris: Last week we shared everyone else's predictions so we thought it was about time we told you ours. I was going to use Autosport magazine this week, because it claims to have a comprehensive season guide, but I turned to the first page and I disagreed immediately.

Me: It's nonsense, absolute, complete, total and utter nonsense. They claim to have every single testing lap counted.



Chris: Yea, they've got a big grid and they've got the cars listed on there in order of some kind of percentage based on the average of all the laps.

Me: Minus the bits of testing they haven't managed to keep up with.

Chris: Well, they've discounted some of the fastest laps or some of the slowest laps if it was a certain percentage out, they haven't included that. It doesn't make any sense.

Me: No, I think they've just made it up.

Chris: It doesn't show us how they've worked it out really.

Me: Oh, they haven't shown their workings.

Chris: Exactly.

Me: So, what have you decided to use instead?

Chris: Well, it's kind of an unusual approach but I've decided to use my own brain and thoughts.

Me: Probably a more scientific approach.

Chris: So, unlike my example voicemail which had Button winning the race, these are my actual predictions for Australia. Third place, Heidfeld, second place, Hamilton and first place Raikkonen.

Me: I've done a bit of digging, because I think the weather may play an important part in this race. It looks like it could be overcast, therefore I'm discounting Massa. I've already said I think Sato's going to win it in his super car, therefore my top three are Alonso in third place, Raikkonen in second place, Takuma Sato for the win.

Chris: You're weird.

Feedback

Chris: I had no voicemails and only a few emails in the last seven days, so I think everyone is quite worn out for their efforts last week.

Me: Our plan is working though, because Michael left us a really good comment, didn't he?

Chris: Yea, he said: "I was somewhat afraid my accent as a non-native speaker would be dominant, but I have to say I am happy with what I heard. Will definitely call in again."

Me: Hallelujah, that's all we wanted to hear.

Chris: I'm expecting a lot more calls after the race, though, because you're either going to rant and rave about it or cheer from the rooftops and we want to hear it.

Me: And the number they need if they want to get things off their chest is?



Chris: 0121 28 TRACK.

Me: And that is?

Chris: 0121 28 87225.

[Sweeper]

Chris: We got some good feedback about the Fantasy Racers Sidepodcast League roll call that we did last week, and some new people have joined, so I think we might have to do so more.

Me: Oh lord.

Chris: Is the music ready?

Me: Ready in 3-2-1.

[Begin music]

Chris: The Nebakanezer.

Me: 11HillsF1.

Chris: Jam Motorsport.

Me: Scuderia Maranello.

Chris: Team GB7 F1.

Me: Vandelay Industries.

Chris: Niagara F1.

Me: Lemons For Oranges.

Chris: Late Apex.

Me: The Ferrari Killers.

Chris: The Lynch Mob.

Me: Team Hesketh.

Chris: Mullet Police.

Me: Double Apex.



Chris: JM Racing 14.

Me: Deeg Racing.

Chris: Hugh Jass Racing.

Me: This is not the Simpsons.

Chris: I don't think they're taking this seriously.

Me: Smurfs Anonymous.

Chris: See what I mean?

Me: Hmm.

Chris: Team Caladous.

Me: Made INGua.

Chris: Alsorans.

Me: TeamBack Marker.

Chris: Down Shift.

[End Music]

Chris: The couple of emails I did have this week were asking me how to join the league, so I think we might have neglected to tell you how to do that.

Me: We essentially overlooked that small part of it. Tell us now what we have to do.

Chris: The website is FantasyRacers.com. It's free to register, you just set up your team, and if you want to come and join our league, you just need to enter the Sidepodcast details.

Me: And where can we find those details?

Chris: They're on Facebook and they're on our blog, we'll put a couple of links in the show notes.

[Sweeper]

Chris: Also on Facebook, Dan Brunell has started a very fun discussion.

Me: I love this idea, tell us more.



Chris: In his initial post, Dan says: “Back in college, our campus paper was right next door to the radio station. The staff of the two places spent time together playing jokes and games during the late night when we were supposed to be working. One of the games we would play with the DJs is that we would give them a name and they would have to play a song on the radio that fits that person. So, I’m going to bring it back. Match an F1 driver to a song, it’s easier than you think. Here’s an example: Jarno Trulli? Personality Crisis by The NY Dolls.

Me: Love it. Have you got any more?

Chris: There’s on reply so far, Chris Beattie suggests Kimi Raikkonen, Mr Roboto.

Me: This is a fab game, have we got anything we can add to this?

Chris: Well, first up I thought of Nakajima – Hit Me Baby, One More Time.

Me: Ah, this is for the garage mechanics, presumably. A bit of Britney.

Chris: Davidson.

Me: Davidson? And?

Chris: Don’t You Want Me? By the Human League. Bless him.

Me: I thought of one for Fisichella. How about Owen Paul, My Favourite Waste of Time?

Chris: That’s mean. I have another one.

Me: Oh enlighten me.

Chris: I’m not obsessed with Britney.

Me: Oh, you are.

Chris: No, I’m not. But, Trulli, You Drive Me Crazy.

Me: Ah, I see what you did there.

Chris: I came up with one for Button.

Me: Oh, is it going to be sappy?

Chris: No, actually, it’s Too Many Broken Hearts by Jason Donovan.

Me: Ah, because he split up with his girlfriend.

Chris: Yea.



Me: Another one. I can top that one though. For Mr Lewis Hamilton. Some Chesney Hawkes – I Am The One and Only.

Chris: I'm gonna go and post these on Facebook now, so come and join in the fun. If you haven't signed up to the group yet, there'll be a link in the show notes.

Housekeeping

Chris: We've got some new stuff coming up this week.

Me: Lots and lots of stuff, give us a rundown of what's coming up?

Chris: Well, last year we did the race preview videos.

Me: And they went down well.

Chris: People have been asking after them, so we're bringing them back.

Me: As part of our weekly Formula 1 video plans.

Chris: We're not abandoning the audio though, we're actually bringing you more.

Me: We received loads of feedback, following on from last season regarding our race coverage. Some people liked it and said they wanted more race coverage, whilst others didn't want to hear about a race they just watched in loads and loads of detail.

Chris: So the idea is we're taking the race coverage content out of the Sunday audio show and we're putting it by itself.

Me: There will be four shorter audio shows starting on?

Chris: Thursday.

Me: And then?

Chris: Friday, Saturday, Sunday.

Me: So, Thursday is going to be the race preview. The build up to the event. Then Friday, gonna be talking about Free Practice. So, if you haven't caught up with Free Practice, all the information you need about what's going on on the two practice sessions on Friday. Saturday will be?

Chris: Qualifying.

Me: And then Sunday is going to be all about?

Chris: The race itself.



Me: And then on top of all that, as if you couldn't possibly get enough Sidepodcast in your ears, we've still got the Sunday opinion show. This show, effectively, will still be going on on a weekly basis, whereby we'll look at all the important events throughout the whole weekend.

Chris: Seems like an awful lots of shows, I'm a bit confused.

Me: Yes, we're gonna have to put up a schedule probably later on in the week so people know exactly where we are. The idea is, if you liked the opinion bit and you liked the race coverage, you can listen to both. If you only wanted to know about the race coverage, just check out those shows. If you're only interested in opinion, it's on a show all by itself. Basically, exactly the same coverage, separated into little bits that come out more frequently. So, you don't have to wait until the end of the weekend to get all the information from the beginning of the weekend. That's about the long and the short of it, do you have any questions?

Chris: I'd like to see the schedule, please. It's not just for the people out there, it's for me as well.

Me: I think you're going to be hitting the Diet Coke particularly hard during race weekends.

Chris: So next week will be our first attempt, a sort of test run, and obviously we want as much feedback as possible, whether you like it, whether it works for you or not.

Me: And there'll be more information, I suspect, on the blog throughout this week.

Chris: That's it for this week, I'm gonna have to contain my excitement for another whole seven days, but we'll be back throughout the week with our race coverage.

Me: And I'm off to find us several crates of Red Bull.