



## Feet Up Friday – RoGroMan sounds like weedkiller

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**Christine:** It's been a little while since we've did one of these shows so there's a lot to catch up on and this is the last opportunity we're going to have to talk pre-season stuff because I don't know if you've noticed but the season starts next week.

**Mr C:** The countdown has depleted.

**Christine:** My countdown to F1... single digits now.

**Mr C:** That's all we've got left, it's so, so very close. Are you feeling the 2013 vibe. Are you ready for racing?

**Christine:** I wish it would hurry up and get here

**Mr C:** Yaaay. Let's bring it on! I have loved, I genuinely have loved this winter break, I've loved the off-season and got plenty of things done. But I'm ready to watch some cars go round in circles.

**Christine:** I feel that this was the perfect off-season and that it leaves you nicely refreshed to what is going to be a perfect season.

**Mr C:** And is it going to be a perfect season?

**Christine:** Well it's impossible to say yet.

**Mr C:** I think it's going to be a blinding season because Pirelli, they have mixed up Formula 1 once again.

**Christine:** Again?

**Mr C:** In testing all the talk has been about how Pirelli's are not lasting anywhere near as long as drivers would like and as long as the teams would like. Testing has been colder than it will be for the first race of the season so things will change. The situation may not be quite as severe as it was in Barcelona for this last test. But, you know, this is what we're looking for. We're looking for mixed up. We're looking forward to going to the first race with no real idea who is going to come out on top. Right now it really does feel like it could be any one of four teams that can finish on the top step in Australia.

**Christine:** And with that in mind I must ask for everyone to send in their predictions. Now we're doing this show on a Friday and the deadline's actually Saturday so you've not got very long left to do it, but I need your predictions because I'm going to do one of my excellent audio megamixes of everyone's thoughts, feelings, hopes, dreams of this season coming. I have some, I would like some more, you can call them in to the Skype voicemail 012128 87225. Or you can just email me an mp3 at christine at sidepodcast dot com. Like I said the deadline is Saturday because I'm hopefully doing the show on Sunday. So if you're listening to this in time, get them in.

**Mr C:** And let's not forget, this is obligatory. If you are listening to Sidepodcast, if you are demanding more podcasts from us this year then we are demanding things from you in return and we are saying if you are listening to this show, do not think that you will be a passive listener in 2013 your job is to ring up and tell us exactly what you think



will happen and there will be many more opportunities this year and we expect to hear from everybody who's listening in.

**Christine:** if you're listening to this show then you're likely to have an opinion on F1 and we want to know about it. You were talking about testing a bit there but we need to rewind just a tiny bit because just before the second week of testing in Barcelona, Williams became the last team to launch their new car. We have been rating the launches and we do need to just cover this quickly 'cause it needs a rating score but to be honest it may as well not have happened.

**Mr C:** Can I remember what happened with the Williams launch? I'm not sure it even appeared on my radar. Was it a major launch?

**Christine:** No. They wheeled the car out ahead of Barcelona testing and that was it, in the pitlane. They released some pictures which were quite confusing because they've got an odd nose and the tip of it was white. So the side-on picture looked like the nose cut off very early.

**Mr C:** Because the picture was on a white background.

**Christine:** Yeah. And that's it. They don't have a stepped nose, so that's good. But the launch it was late, it was two weeks after everybody else and we'd pretty much forgotten what launches were like by then. Not that interesting.

**Mr C:** And so what do you give this very poor example of a launch?

**Christine:** Well they didn't do anything wrong but...

**Mr C:** They didn't offend anybody so that's a good sign.

**Christine:** It may have well have been non-existent so probably a 3.

**Mr C:** 3 out of 10

**Christine:** And then to recap all the launches. Sauber were my top rated and they're my number one team this year.

**Mr C:** What did you give Sauber, remind me.

**Christine:** They got 9. Swiftly followed by Lotus with 8 and Ferrari and Mercedes both with 7. And then at the other end there is Marussia and now Williams on 3. McLaren have 2 and Red Bull have 1. Let's not forget how rubbish that launch was.

**Mr C:** That was a desperately awful launch where they refused to let anybody take any pictures and they hassled the media. That's not a good start to your season.

**Christine:** the launch led straight into the first week of testing in Barcelona which was the second week of testing overall because we had one week in Jerez but Barcelona gets two weeks. Like you mentioned it was all about the tyres and they got all the testing headlines really. Pirelli were under fire for the high levels of degradation. In Jerez the drivers were complaining and we put it down to the track surface being not very good.

**Mr C:** Indeed. Yes. It was falling to pieces.



**Christine:** And no one really seemed to mind because we're not going to race there anyway. We're just going to sweep that under the carpet. But here in Barcelona, there is going to be a race here, and although they said it was because of the lower temperatures. I think there was quite a lot of concern about how quickly the tyres were going off.

**Mr C:** I do recall the very same complaint being raised this time last year and the season worked out perfectly fine. In the beginning of the season there were mixed up results and the teams struggled to come to terms with exactly what Pirelli had given them. But by the end of the season the races had calmed down significantly as the engineers and the designers got on top of the data that they had to work with and learnt all about the Pirellis so there may be a lot of fuss right now and they may be claiming all of the headlines and may be the talk of the town but I'd give it two or three races and things will settle down and these complaints will have been forgotten very quickly. As soon as the drivers understand them and can make the most of what they've got, these complaints will go away.

**Christine:** And of course, they are heading straight to Australia where it is going to be a bit warmer because all it did in Barcelona was rain really. There was at least three days of rainy testing and the drivers did try out the wet tyres a little bit. Some did go out but I thought it was quite telling. The specific example I can think of is Williams who decided to use the afternoon to practice pit stops for a whole afternoon with both their drivers. They had the full race crew in and they did pit stop after pit stop after pit stop. That's all they did.

**Mr C:** Williams have err...

**Christine:** I didn't know their pit stops were that bad.

**Mr C:** It's not that they're bad I think there were rumours that they have some kind of special wheel nut on the Williams that requires more experimentation and they have more to learn. Because this season is likely to see more tyre changes and there will be more pit stops, especially at the start of the season, the speed of the pit stop is becoming ever more crucial. This is going to be where races are very much won and lost and if teams have found a way to reduce the already lightning fast pit stops even further. I think McLaren have the ultimate all time pit stop record but that may even be broken in 2013. Teams are looking at things like the wheel nuts and the way that the rims are removed and replaced in order to gain some pit stop time. And if Williams have found something that no other team has that may require more practice and more rehearsal then it could be a wise move to put that practice in during the testing.

*[Sweeper]*

**Christine:** I don't think there was anything major to be read into testing really. In the first couple of weeks lots of teams had some gremlins and then got over them. Lotus seemed quite fast. Everyone in the paddock seemed to be saying Mercedes had quite a lot of surprising speed, or a surprising amount of speed. One thing I did think was interesting was Räikkönen, when he called in sick. Now, some people were saying what conspiracy theories can we read into this. I don't think so, I think Kimi was probably just a bit ill and decided not to come in. What was amazing about it was Grosjean having to jump back in a plane. He'd gone home to Paris the night before but super-subbed his way back in and was in the car in the afternoon. What a hero.

**Mr C:** Really.

**Christine:** Yeah!



**Mr C:** I don't have Grosjean down as the Superhero type.

**Christine:** Grosjean to the rescue! The problem I do have is his name is not snappy enough for super-hero status. I was thinking Super-Grosjean and that doesn't work. Or RoGroMan!!!

**Mr C:** [Hysterical laughter!]

**Christine:** The best I can come up with

**Mr C:** RoGroMan???

**Christine:** The best I can come up with...

**Mr C:** It sounds like weedkiller.

**Christine:** ...is Romain-Man, because it's a bit like main-man. But it's not.

**Mr C:** He's Romain-Man. I like that.

**Christine:** It's just not snappy enough. That's the problem. Did you know by the way. We'll get on to the specifics later but I have four French people in Formula 1 this year. Amazing.

**Mr C:** Yeah, you have. How are you going to decide between them, that's the bigger question.

**Christine:** Yeah, that's tricky. Back to testing though, there was one specific complaint that I wanted to make. The teams all do the running out of fuel on purpose thing. They call it fuel system testing.

**Mr C:** A necessary evil.

**Christine:** I can see why they have to do it. They need to know the levels and when they're going to run out, especially because there's no refuelling so you need to make sure your car's topped up to the specific amount. But, they go out on track and then they run out of fuel and then it brings out a red flag and they do it all in opportune moments throughout the day and I just think it's really unfair on everyone else 'cause it takes up their time it stops them in their own momentum, their own schedules. I understand they have to do it but can't they have their own separate ten minutes of testing time or something? There must be a better way of doing it?

**Mr C:** Ok. I agree. I can see why it would bug you. I can see why it would bug the teams. I would love anybody in the comments, anybody listening to come up with a better system than they currently have. Here's where I think the problem may lie. You could say at the end of the day there will be a half-hour session where everybody can run out of fuel. But if you're desperately trying to see exactly the moment your car fails to pick up what's left in the tank and another team stop on track whilst you're at the very, very limit the red flags going to come out and you're going to have to come back in. Then you're going to have to top up your car again with another batch of fuel and send your car out and just as you're running on fumes another team's car will stop so the red flag will come out. This is going to go on and on and on and on. It's going to take an awful long time for every team to do their fuel test.

**Christine:** What if they all ran behind the safety car and then if they run out of fuel they get out of the way and the safety car just takes them round?



**Mr C:** There isn't a safety car in testing.

**Christine:** Well there should be one. They can bring one. I don't know. I can understand the reasoning why they do it and it is an important test but it just seemed really unfair and stopping and starting everybody else's. 'cause you don't know what other people are doing. They might have been doing a race simulation.

**Mr C:** Absolutely for sure there will be teams on a race simulation who have their simulation messed up. But when you go testing that's what you would expect and it could be that you're in the midst of a race simulation and somebody throws it into the barriers. You cannot account for that you just have to deal with it. That's the same for every single team that takes part in testing in that manner. But you are correct. I think that this is a problem that could be solved. It must be a solvable.... It's not a major problem within the grand scheme of the whole Formula 1 season but if anybody out there has a creative mind and felt they can resolve this problem do let us know. Let us know how you would solve this minor hiccup that happens occasionally during testing. I can't downplay how insignificant it is.

**Christine:** It's the middle-class problems of Formula 1, okay?

**Mr C:** [Laughter].

**Christine:** I didn't say it was important, I just said it annoyed me. If people want to get in touch with us you can email me christine at sidepodcast dot com or you can use the contact form sidepodcast dot com slash contact.

**Mr C:** Smug face.

**Christine:** Along with Pirelli the other headline grabbing news during the two weeks of testing was the reappearance of one Adrian Sutil.

**Mr C:** Aww god. He's back.

**Christine:** Now the former Force India driver was back in the frame for the rogue Force India seat. We all thought it was going to Jules Bianchi and we've been talking about that for ages and how they've just been holding out to negotiate with Ferrari. But then it seems suddenly there was this shootout between both Sutil and Bianchi. So we adapted our conspiracy theories and decided that they were just negotiating harder and saying that we'll have Sutil back on. And then the next day there he was, announced second chance in F1. Sutil is the other Force India driver this year.

**Mr C:** I'm guessing you're not glad to see the guy back.

**Christine:** Well, no.

**Mr C:** Formula 1 really is the second chance saloon isn't it. There are so many people who've done so many bad things in this sport and they all get to come back in. All of their misdemeanours are instantly forgotten the minute they walk back in the paddock and Sutil is just one of many.

**Christine:** Well yeah. On the one hand it's second chance saloon and then on the other hand it really isn't because there are loads of drivers who aren't getting the chance. People are getting second chances others aren't getting first chances. It's an argument that we've had over and over again. Sutil was very happy, exceedingly grateful to get his second chance. He said "If you never make mistakes you will never grow. I don't think there's a single person





here who never made a mistake. My one was maybe a different one and was very public but the other one's are probably even worse but no one is even talking about it." Worse!? I'm not sure about that.

**Mr C:** Even in Formula 1 you would have to go some to find a person who'd overstepped the mark more than Adrian Sutil. The real question is, is this the best decision for the Force India team? Is Adrian Sutil going to provide them with more points come the end of the season than Jules Bianchi would have? You'll probably have to say he will do.

**Christine:** Yes. I think he will do. I don't know what the money situation is. Sutil had some quite high profile sponsors. He still has Capri sun on his hat.

**Mr C:** On his hat?

**Christine:** His hat.

**Mr C:** Formula One driver's hat.

**Christine:** Medion. Does he still have those? Maybe he does come with a shed load of cash. And the team says they wanted the history and the experience and he knows what he's doing and he can fit right in. I guess if you're leaving it this late for a driver to jump in the car you're going to need a bit of experience.

**Mr C:** I think one thing to keep in mind is that Adrian Sutil's one saving grace in this is Kimi Räikkönen. Because if you look at the previous comeback king prior to Räikkönen's successful return last year it was Michael Schumacher and he had not had a great run and there were question marks over whether a Formula 1 driver could ever return successfully after time away from the sport. Kimi Räikkönen was away for a period, he came back and he hasn't lost any of his pace. He's probably got more pace than when he left. He has proven that missing out on a year of racing doesn't slow you at all. So therefore when Force India were looking at Adrian Sutil, they could say he's lost one season but that may not slow him down.

**Christine:** Well one season isn't the end of the world. I mean, there's lots of drivers who've done it quite recently. Glock had some time out and came back didn't he. And Grosjean had some time out and came back I think. But I'm not sure that Sutil has done any racing in his year off. I assume that he was preoccupied with other things.

**Mr C:** I haven't actually heard anything. What you're saying is Kimi Räikkönen continued rallying – he continued rallying and continued racing.

**Christine:** He kept his eye in. I'm not sure that Sutil has.

**Mr C:** So do you think Adrian Sutil will give Paul di Resta a run for his money?

**Christine:** Well, I'm not convinced that Paul di Resta's heart is in it any more. I think he wants to...

**Mr C:** Leave?

**Christine:** Yeah. He really wants to leave. He doesn't like the team any more and I think that he's either going to overdrive it and therefore not do very well. Or he's just going to get frustrated very quickly and not do very well. Either way that's sort of a lose-lose situation in my mind. I'm sure I'm going to be wrong I always am. But Adrian isn't worried about being back with Paul di Resta because they were teammates back in 2011. He referenced that the fact that he finished ahead of him in that season so umm...



**Mr C:** Wasn't that Paul's first season in Formula 1, so that's hardly a surprise. I would say the upper hand is definitely with Paul di Resta. I would like to allocate some post-podcast homework to all of the listeners. I would like anybody out there to find one truly complimentary thing that Paul di Resta has said about Force India since the end of last season. Just find me one example of anything when he's gone out of his way to say something nice about them. Because after being overlooked for the Sauber seat in favour of Hülkenberg the guy has not been pleased. He's not been best pleased with where he is.

**Christine:** No. I mean I think it was only one or two comments that I saw and then I've just got it into my head that he's in a really grumpy place. I just like the image of that. I mean it's an interesting story. But also whenever they've asked him how it has affected you not having a teammate. He's like – I'm just concentrating on what I'm doing me, it doesn't bother me at all. Because you kinda get the feeling he's not in it for the team game.

**Mr C:** He doesn't care. He's out to prove himself. He's out to show all of the other potential faster teams that he is somebody that needs to be picked up. In that area, Adrian Sutil is a better benchmark for Paul di Resta to prove himself than Jules Bianchi would have been. Because obviously against a rookie you'd expect Paul to completely dominate the guy. Against Adrian Sutil you'd expect him to have a slightly harder time of it. That could work in Paul's favour.

**Christine:** I think I upset Steven with that. Not that his heart is not in Formula 1. His heart is not in it where he's at. Who can blame him. That team's bizarre beyond belief.

**Mr C:** It is a bit of a disastrous team...

**Christine:** Lucky coconuts...

**Mr C:** [Laughter]

**Christine:** It all went wrong.

**Mr C:** What... No. his heart is definitely in Formula 1.

**Christine:** He wants bigger and better and who can blame him.

**Mr C:** McLaren I imagine, or Ferrari.

**Christine:** I think his heart was set on Mercedes.

**Mr C:** Do you?

**Christine:** That's what I think. And I think that went out the window

**Mr C:** When Hamilton...

**Christine:** Quite quickly...

**Mr C:** Yeah. You can see that Mercedes would want to go with Lewis Hamilton because of everything that Lewis brings but why would Sauber want to go with Hülkenberg. If I was Paul di Resta I would think that I am that guys



equal. I am every bit as fast as Nico Hülkenberg, why did they pick him over me. We were both in the same car last year. So I think the Hülkenberg thing is a bigger chip on his shoulder.

**Christine:** Sutil's sudden placement at the Force India team meant that Jules Bianchi was without a driver for all of 24 hours before he was snapped up by Marussia, who we thought already had their driver line up sorted. But it turns out Luiz Razia was ousted and Jules Bianchi was in. The rumour has it, or is it a known fact, that Razia's backers weren't paying up so they had to do what they had to do. Terminated his contract.

**Mr C:** I do not believe. I, Mr C of Sidepodcast, do not believe that it is any coincidence that the second Jules Bianchi wasn't given the Force India seat that he was snapped up by Marussia. Now if the seats had fallen differently, if Sutil hadn't got the drive and Bianchi had how much more time would Razia have been given to find funds that he promised. I totally get that he didn't do what he promised to do but at the same time he was working incredibly hard to resolve that situation and I don't think Marussia gave him as much time as he was expecting, the second that they heard Jules Bianchi who has some money behind him, a small amount of money from Ferrari, not as much as Force India would have liked. But he has backing. The second he was a free agent Marussia swooped in. They did not hesitate and I do not believe that's a coincidence. If he wasn't on the market then Razia may have had a longer time or an easier time of securing the seat.

**Christine:** He might have actually started the season at least.

**Mr C:** It is hard to say. It is pure speculation but those two events no doubt Bianchi had been talking of Marussia before but was holding out for the Force India seat obviously that's a much better place to be.

**Christine:** According to some!

**Mr C:** As bad as Force India are, they're an awful lot... it's a faster car and the team are slightly better managed. I would assume slightly better off financially although there is an amazing fight going on to be who is the most broke team in Formula 1 right now.

**Christine:** The thing about Force India right now is that it's all a bit mysterious its all a bit whimsical you can't really tell whose bringing the money. What is going on there? People are having their assets frozen. Vijay Mallya is promising billions from nowhere. Whereas at least Marussia are being quite clinical and quite open about it and saying...

**Mr C:** We just don't have any money.

**Christine:** This is a business, we have an obligation to all the people in the factory. We need the money so we've done what we had to do. They have said we don't have a problem with Razia we'd have him back in a minute if we could. It's just that's how it had to be. And for his part it must have been a reasonably amicable split, as amicable as these things can be, because Razia said "I understand the position of Marussia and I like the team. They treated me very nicely there and to be honest they were trying to sort out the situation for me. It is also fair to say Bianchi had a difficult situation and to be honest he deserved the drive." Presumably he doesn't mean he deserved it over him but that he also deserves a place in Formula 1. So he is a nice guy.

**Mr C:** Ok. I'm down with that. But let's not forget that Marussia, in the space of three months, have breached two of their drivers contracts. They've cancelled Glock's long-term commitment to the team. That was torn up and thrown out the window.





**Christine:** I forgot that!

**Mr C:** Then along came Razia, that was torn up and thrown out the window. If you're pitching who is the most mismanaged team in Formula 1, it's a fight between Force India and Marussia, but I think you'll find Marussia are the more mismanaged.

**Christine:** In the comment,s Will has pointed out, in capital letters and bold, this is a positive tweet from Paul di Resta on the first of February 2013, Good to get back in the car today, short run ahead of Jerez, all my team are in good form at Club Force, thanks for all the support. Three exclamation marks.

**Mr C:** Damn that. Ok I take my criticism back. I rescind my complaints. Maybe we just forced that opinion on him.

**Christine:** Yeah. I think I'm projecting that on him.

**Mr C:** You are. You've projecting that, your own disappointment.

**Christine:** It makes for a fun story.

**Mr C:** Yes. With no evidence whatsoever.

*[Sweeper]*

**Christine:** The BBC recently announced their plans for the coming season. It is very much more of the same of what they've been doing. They've only got 9 races live this year, they have highlights for everything else. Radio 5 live are going to have every single race broadcast live. Oh, and they have for the races that the BBC are going to broadcast live they are going to have live practice as well. Which I thought they did already, so I'm not quite sure why that was exciting.

**Mr C:** No, it's very exciting. For this year in the UK, this is UK specific, but we must talk about NBC as well after this. Remind me, don't let me forget NBC. The BBC will be broadcasting free practice on BBC2 in some circumstances this year and that means Free Practice will be in HD. Not tucked away on some obscure channel in the upper regions of the bandwidth. And that means we get higher quality and because its more important I don't know whether we get a different commentary team or not, I haven't looked into that. But if we get the 5live commentary over Free Practice as we've had in previous seasons that means we get to hear Allan McNish, and Allan McNish as we know, as we've discussed for years and years and years and years and years is as good behind the microphone as he is behind the wheel. And he is very, very good behind the wheel.

**Christine:** It is always slightly disappointing when a driver ends up signing a long term contract to do broadcasting thing because it sort of means they don't have enough to do out on track. But equally it's Allan McNish so it's awesome.

**Mr C:** Anthony Davison remember used to do the same job for 5live and he managed to double that up with duties in endurance racing.

**Christine:** True.

**Mr C:** And therefore I'm assuming that Allan McNish has looked at that model and figured he could probably do the same. Endurance racing, although the races are very long, they are few and far between so therefore there is more



downtime between races in which Allan can contribute. The very good news often been an excellent co-commentator and a genius at explaining Formula 1 is that he is an ex Formula 1 driver. He is a current race driver, he has that experience, and he's not Jamie Alguersuari. Now I like DJ Squire I really do, I think he's a great guy, but I genuinely didn't understand a bleedin' word he said last year.

**Christine:** The trouble he has is, he couldn't whether it was his accent or whatever there wasn't a lot of excitement and oomph in it and the combination of him and JA just didn't work. Ooh, two JA's. Umm, I must say better even than Allan McNish joining a commentary team is Sir Franck Montagny becoming a pit lane correspondent for the French channels.

**Mr C:** Yes. Franck Montagny is the French Ted Kravitz.

**Christine:** Amazing! My life is complete

**Mr C:** But we can't see any of it. How is your life complete? You cannot watch any of the French broadcasts.

**Christine:** Yes. But he has been invisible for about three years and now he exists again. This is a step up.

**Mr C:** I am noticing a trend here and that is endurance racers go on to become Formula 1 commentators.

**Christine:** That's true. Yes.

**Mr C:** Anyway, I have to say I have a lot of respect and a lot of love for Allan McNish. I think he's a great signing for Five Live. I thought when he was driving for Toyota his explanations of very technical things about Formula 1 were second to none. Every conversation was an enlightening lesson into the intricacies of motor sport and I hope he hasn't lost any of that and that he brings that to the season. And I will go on record and say he's so good his qualities outweigh James Allan's negatives and so I may actually tune in to some of that commentary. That would be a treat.

**Christine:** This is a dear diary moment.

**Mr C:** Indeed.

**Christine:** And so we have to mention NBC.

**Mr C:** You reminded me. Yes.

**Christine:** I did.

**Mr C:** It had already fallen out of my head.

**Christine:** I saw it go.

**Mr C:** NBC in America, it is all change in the States and this year I've seen some bits of what they are proposing to deliver. We have, there was a preview they put out this week they put out, Countdown to F1 I think it was called. Caught some bits of it, it looked very good, very polished, very well produced. I think America has got a lot to look forward to this season. It may even surpass what we can see in the UK. Especially in the UK, the BBC are only showing nine races this season and so you'll find in the states you get a much better coverage of Formula 1 than some people are able to get here. That is a first, that hasn't been the case for a while. So keep an eye on what NBC



are doing, it looks like they're putting more money into Formula 1 than America has seen in the past. It should be good, I have high hopes and, you know, it may end up in disappointment, you may come back at the end of the year and say what a terrible year of coverage, Mr C, I don't know what you were talking about, and for that I apologise. But just in case it isn't just in case it's brilliant I can say I told you so.

**Christine:** We would like our US correspondents to keep us up to date with what's happening and what it's like. We had a great post from Kai, didn't we, wondering what was going to happen and pondering the changes, whether they might be good or bad and we'd like to know when it does start how it is received.

**Mr C:** It's all change right the way across the globe, be it French coverage, be it British coverage, be it American coverage, I think Italian has gone pay-per-view recently as well. Formula 1 coverage is in upheaval across the globe. There is a lot of changes going on. Some people will win some people will lose. We'll see what comes out of it.

**Christine:** I would say we don't necessarily want to know, well I don't like this commentator and I don't like that one because people have always said when we've had the BBC coverage and the ITV coverage that we've been very lucky and it's some of the best coverage in the world. But what we really want is the mechanics of it because everything is changing and things are going digital and HD and all that. That's the bits that we're interested in, not necessarily the physical personnel, although Allan McNish – winner!

*[Sweeper]*

**Christine:** So it has been a really busy off-season for us. It's sort of been manic from the minute the chequered flag dropped in Brazil. I'd like to say I'm really forward to the racing to begin. Mostly just so we can have a rest.

**Mr C:** What?! You are resting during the season that's not going to happen Missy, listen.

**Christine:** Well, Ok.

**Mr C:** I know you've been busy. I'll give you a week off. I tell you what from now until Friday free-practice. Well it's not quite a week is it, it's six days.

**Christine:** No, and also that's going to happen because I can list off the things I have to do between now and then but I won't because that would be boring.

**Mr C:** Have a day off.

**Christine:** What I am going to do is...

**Mr C:** Take the afternoon off. Take tomorrow afternoon off. Have a lunch-break.

**Christine:** Ok. What I am going to do is tell you some of the exciting things we've launched on the site recently because where often we're working behind the scenes and it never really shows up on the site and you probably all think we're not actually doing anything and just lying in the sun drinking cocktails, actually all of it has been building up to well the last couple of weeks we've released at least three new things.

**Mr C:** Well, what happened is you released your book actually and that sort of, everything else flowed beyond that, I think that's ... let's talk about your book first because everything will follow after that. You have written another fifty thousand words during the off-season and you've released it and it's available to buy now. Am I correct?



**Christine:** Yes. The Pocket F1 Handbook that I released last year, a guide to the season, it has returned for 2013, a brand new edition all nice and shiny with twenty-two drivers, eleven teams, all the tracks covered, a little bit of a profile on everything really. Everything you can expect on the coming season and you can carry it in your pocket on your favourite device, be it a Kindle, something that can play a Kindle app. You can't play an app do you? Host an app? Have an app? On your iDevice, anything.

**Mr C:** It follows on the trend you started with last year. It is bigger and its better in every way and what I love about this particular edition of your book, because it's digital, because it hasn't gone to a printing press it hasn't had to be mailed out to bookstores all over the world, it isn't out of date despite some very last minute changes in Formula 1. Despite the calendar losing its rumoured twentieth race. Despite the fact that it's all change at Marussia and its all change at Force India, your book is absolutely bang up to date today and that is mega! That is highlighting the very advantages of ebooks over paperback books. You couldn't do that if you were going through the whole rigmarole of a printing press and I think despite the chaos and upheaval it has caused you and all of the extra stress and rewrites and all the work you've had to put in to keep up with Formula 1's ever changing lineup of races and drivers and allsorts. I think it really does highlight the true benefits of digital publications.

**Christine:** Yes. This pre-season has been absolutely ridiculous. There was a bonus race, then that bonus race disappeared. Then there was a Force India seat that no one had. Then we all thought Bianchi was going to have it and then Sutil got it in the end and then Marussia have changed their drivers seventeen times. It's been crazy. But I did like the comparison and it's not fair to compare because they do have to go to press. But was it the BBC season guide has HRT in there, twenty-four drivers. It's just dead awkward.

**Mr C:** We haven't bought a copy of it being a physical book but I think if you read on Amazon the preview, the sales pitch, it suggests the book contains information on twenty races, twenty-four drivers and twelve teams.

**Christine:** None of which is correct!

**Mr C:** Absolutely. I don't think if you read the blurb that goes with the book there isn't a single fact in there that remains correct at this time before the start of the season. Its been that chaotic and you can't fault the failures of print publications but side-by-side comparing your book to the BBC's efforts, it's a night and day comparison between what you can buy and what you can get for your money.

**Christine:** Yes. There's more information on the book at [christineblachford.com](http://christineblachford.com) or you can search on Amazon for my name. There's a nice little collection of books growing there, it's quite fun.

**Mr C:** Will there be a link in the show notes too?

**Christine:** You know there will and there's links in all kinds of sidebars you can't really get away from it. You just have to buy it to stop yourself feeling guilty.

*[Sweeper]*

**Christine:** So I was busy launching a book but you have been busy creating new features on the site, things that we've been working on for a while and finally they've come to fruition. First up being the F1 Encyclopedia which is sort of the same as the preview book, a lot smaller and its specifically tailored to our site, so every driver, every team, every circuit has a page and it picks up wherever we talk about them on the site.



**Mr C:** This is one of the longest development concepts we have ever worked on. The Sidepodcast Encyclopedia I think we worked out between us perhaps 18 months ago that we wanted to make this and so many changes were required across so many different parts of the site that it's taken all of this time just to get it to a previewable state that it's in now. And there's still so much more work to do on it. There's at least another 18 months worth of work to go to get it to where we want it to be. But it's viewable and its decent enough that people can make use of it now and they can delve into it. They can find things on Sidepodcast that otherwise would have been slightly harder to find in the past. So one thing that came to mind last year I was trying to find on which podcast we talked about Romain Grosjean and I couldn't... it was very hard to say we've talked about this driver in this context in this instance and the Sidepodcast Encyclopedia allows you to delve in. You pick the driver you can pick your favourite driver your favourite team. You can pick a circuit and you can see all the times that that's been mentioned across the site, be it in posts, be it in the rankings...

**Christine:** Factbyte Factbox. Podcast transcripts.

**Mr C:** ... all sorts of... every single facet of the site has been sort of amalgamated into this F1 Encyclopedia to give you a central point. When you know you're looking for a specific piece of information about a specific thing be it a driver or whatever, it's a great starting point to see what we've discussing, where we've been discussing it, in what context.

**Christine:** Which is what an Encyclopedia is for. To go and look up information.

**Mr C:** Indeed. You have to see it, it's very hard to describe in audio. We'll put a link in the show notes and if you've not checked out the Sidepodcast Encyclopedia I think it's a site to behold. Once you start using it you'll find things very, very quickly. It's very quick to find all the disparate pieces of information that would otherwise might be lost within the site that you can't really find by search. It's a different way of finding information than by the search box. If you know you're looking for something on a certain topic it's a great place to start. I'm really, really pleased with it, I'm pleased with how it's come about. It's taken so much time and so much effort and there's still so many improvements to be made but do take a look at it and see if you find it useful. Right now this week I've been using it more than ever. I highly recommend it.

**Christine:** Two more things on the site we need to talk about quite quickly. The Scrapbook – it's amazing. We have been using various things over the past few years to just save links or pictures or just little scraps of information about Formula 1. Originally, we used drop.io we used to talk about that all the time until they got bought and closed. And then we used Posterous for a bit until they got bought and closed. There's a trend here, you can see that. You can understand why we might think about making our own place to do that, and that is where the Scrapbook comes in. It's a really sweet little place just for little snippets of F1 stuff. We've posted some YouTube videos, recently we had the Ferrari drivers, they were in a Ferrari car I imagine driving each other round track and looking quite terrified at the prospect of being a passenger which was quite fun. We have also been using it to highlight some of the smaller new things we've been doing on the site like the Factbyte Factbox graphics have been updated. Which isn't something we'd do a major announcement about but it's nice to note. And highlighting some of the new apps and things that teams are coming up with. There's even something about NASCAR in there because its only tiny, it's a good place to note these things.

**Mr C:** It's not the kind of thing that's going to get in your way on Sidepodcast. It won't bug you, it won't bother you. You're not going to stumble across it particularly unless you're looking for it but sidepodcast dot com slash scrapbook is the place to go if you want to keep up with lots of bits and pieces.





**Christine:** Plus it looks really nice. And the final thing we need to talk about is Features. We introduced these last year and had some excellent writers throughout the year and they are back. Or, still going really because we've had Adam in particular has been...

**Mr C:** He's been working very hard.

**Christine:** He's been writing things all across the off-season. But people like me are gearing up again for the New Year and we've got Will who's just launched a new feature called Tech-Spec where he looks in depth at some technical bits and pieces that go way over my head but I love it. It's good information to have there. And we've got some new ones coming soon. And at some point I'm going to write a post about if anyone wants to write a feature how they can do it what they need to collaborate on.

**Mr C:** Remind me what the differences are between features and posts? Why are we encouraging people to use features more and write features?

**Christine:** Well features they tend to be longer form content so it's a place where you can really get in depth with your topic. Each writer tends to have a specific topic in mind. For instance, I write the Midfield Monitor column which focuses on teams in the mid-field funnily enough. It's more personal, it highlights the author, links to other things that they do.

**Mr C:** And it's regular. That's the key thing. You know what the schedule is, you know when to expect content from the writers. And it's good to give the audience something to look forward to. We are not great at keeping schedules. We're not very good at keeping regular content but the featured articles have been incredibly regular. There is such a wealth of content there it's hard to keep up with actually, hard to keep on top of all the latest. You just have to set time aside to make sure you read them, undisturbed, the fantastic insight that they offer. And if you are interested and fancy having your own feature column on Sidepodcast how do people get in touch with you?

**Christine:** Well like I say I'm going to write a post but we already have a post on the site. But I'm going to update it about what we require for a feature writer. But if you want to, if you're thinking about it, start thinking of a good name for your title because the name is always fun, and then you can always email me christine at sidepodcast dot com if you can't wait until I get round to writing the silly post.

**Mr C:** Brilliant stuff. We have been busy.

**Christine:** Yes.

**Mr C:** Is that us up to date? Is that everything we've done? Is everybody now on the same page? Do people know where we are?

**Christine:** I don't think that's everything we've done but that's all the major points covered. Really you just need to visit sidepodcast dot com and f1minute dot com, browse around and see what you find and interact because that is what it's there for.

**Mr C:** And what are we going to be doing this year? Is there going to be more Sidepodcast's to look forward to? More shows? More of these things? More nonsense?

**Christine:** Well I promised all of those things last time and now it's been a month since we did our last show so that didn't work out very well but like I said once the season starts I'm anticipating having a rest so we might have more



time to do these things like shows instead of launching features and columns and encyclopedias and scrapbooks on the site. They will be there already.

**Mr C:** And be careful what you wish for because every time we do a show we will be asking more interaction. We will be asking more from our listeners than ever before. There will be...

**Christine:** Don't put them off!

**Mr C:** Oh no, no, no no no. This is the deal. If you want us to do more I insist that every listener contributes more. More of their time, more effort, more interaction. There will be no passive Sidepodcast listeners in 2013. We will root every single person out and we will make sure that you volunteer for something. I insist on it.

**Christine:** You sound a bit scary now.

**Mr C:** I'm serious.

**Christine:** Seriously scary!

*[Transcript by Robyn]*

