

## F1 People – Adrian Newey

Welcome to the penultimate episode of F1 People, a second series of seven short shows dedicated to profiling the important names in Formula 1. So far this series we've looked at both drivers, commentators, and the brains behind the car. Today we return to the latter subject, with Adrian Newey.

Adrian Newey was born on December 26<sup>th</sup> 1958 in Stratford-Upon-Avon, in the UK. He did not enjoy school, but worked hard enough to attend the University of Southampton. He gained a First Class honours degree in Aeronautics and Astronautics at the age of 22. His final thesis was on ground effects. Newey immediately joined the Fittipaldi Formula 1 team straight out of university and began working in motorsport. In 1981, he joined March and began to design the cars. His first was the March GTP sports car that won the GTP title two years in a row. Then he moved to March's Indycar team, and worked on the 1984 car. Another successfully designed car took seven victories in its first year, and the title for the next two. Newey worked as both a designer and a race engineer, becoming close friends with his title winning driver Bobby Rahal.

Despite his success in the States, Newey wanted to return to F1, so he joined the FORCE team to try and revive their flagging prospects. The team withdrew at the end of 1986, and Newey returned to March as chief designer for their F1 team. He immediately began to innovate, finding the loopholes in the aerodynamic regulations, and striving for perfection across the car. When the March team became Leyton House, Newey was promoted to technical director, but relations did not stay so good for too long. Questions were asked whether his constant quest for complete aero efficiency was causing problems elsewhere, and whether this was the case or not, the team's fortunes began to fall. They let Newey go in 1990.

He wasn't out of work for long, however, as Patrick Head at Williams saw what a talent he was and signed him up. With many more resources available to him, and a like-minded technical partner in Patrick Head, the pairing flourished, and Williams became a success. They took two driver and constructors championships with Nigel Mansell and Alain Prost respectively.

In 1994, things started to go sour. The performance of the Williams dropped off and Benetton took full advantage to take the constructors lead, although they did eventually manage to pull back a third title. When the newly signed Ayrton Senna died that year, and legal investigations took place, the strain began to tell between Newey and his managers. He was ready to move on and be technical lead again, but the strong Williams/Head bond would never be broken. 1995 saw the team lose their consecutive title dominance, and by 1996, Newey was on gardening leave.

He joined McLaren the following year, and revived another old design to bring the team two titles over the next four years. He now had 10 titles from cars he had designed, and although the next few years saw dominance pass to Ferrari, no one questioned Newey's abilities in the engineering field. In fact, his old friend Bobby Rahal, who was now managing the Jaguar F1 team, tried to persuade Newey to join them and turn around another struggling constructor. Newey was tempted, but ultimately stayed with Ron Dennis and McLaren. The embarrassment for Jaguar meant Rahal left the sport a few months later.

Towards the end of his career with McLaren, speculation mounted year on year over whether he would return to Williams or retire, but Newey signed with Red Bull Racing for 2006 – the team that used to be Jaguar. He remains there now, with the team a competitive mid-field runner.



Not content with being a mastermind in aerodynamics, Newey also likes to get behind the wheel. In 2007, he took part in the 24 Hours Le Mans race, finishing 22<sup>nd</sup>, but fourth in his class. Could do better, I suppose, but at least he can be happy in the knowledge that he's one of the best designers in the sport.

Thanks for listening to today's F1 People. We have only one more VIP to talk about but you'll have to wait until tomorrow to find out who it is. Join me then for the last in this series of F1 People.

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