“We definitely had our chances this season”

20/08/2021 The TAG Heuer Porsche Formula E Team wrapped up season 7 of the ABB FIA Formula E World Championship with a good performance at the Berlin E-Prix last weekend. Amiel Lindesay, Head of Operations Formula E, sums up the season in our interview.

He talks about the team's positive development in the competitive environment of the world's first electric racing series, the missed opportunities in the fight for the 99X Electric's first victory, and the main tasks ahead to prepare for season 8.

One pole position and two podium finishes: What conclusions have you drawn after the second Formula E season?

Amiel Lindesay:We have what it takes to be competitive at the top level. And we've proven this. However, looking back at the season, we also have to admit that at the end of the day we didn't quite meet our own expectations. There were several races where we simply weren't good enough. Especially in the first half of the year, we threw away points, which was very costly. On the other hand, we were one of the most consistent teams in the second half of the season and we regularly scored points. Our position in the points table doesn't truly reflect where we currently are with the team. We have the potential to win races. We've learned a lot this season with all the ups and downs, and we'll take these experiences to come back even stronger in season 8.

How much higher was the pressure to perform on the team compared to your debut season?

Lindesay:Expectations were much higher, but that's normal, it's what we have to cope with every day. But we mustn't forget the fact that our first Formula E season was seriously affected by the pandemic. We lost five races that would've given us a chance to learn and we were able to consolidate more as a young team. Some of the lessons had to be learned the hard way in a shorter time this year.

What did these special circumstances mean for the development of the team?

Lindesay:Our team came a long way this season. We made huge progress given the tough competition in this world championship. You don't build a good team in one year. It's a long and very complex process. But we're on a good way. The team spirit and motivation that I see and experience every day make me very confident going forward.

André Lotterer is a veteran in the team and Pascal Wehrlein is a young driver. How do you rate their performances?

Lindesay:Pascal joined our team before the season and immediately felt very much a part of the Porsche Motorsport family. He is one of the quickest qualifiers out there. And his performance in the race is impressive as well. We are very happy with him and we are looking forward to a successful future together. It was a tough year for André. He didn't earn points in the first five races. The way he overcame this difficult start and finished second on the podium at the sixth race shows his wealth of experience and his class. We have two very strong drivers and we'll use every chance to take further steps forward with them.

The competition in the ABB FIA Formula E World Championship is very high. How do you see yourselves after this season compared to the strong opposition?

Lindesay:At the last event of this season in Berlin, 18 drivers were still able to win the championship. That's says everything about the strengths and the even playing field of this world championship. In qualifying, the first 15 drivers were sometimes within just two-tenths of a second. That's incredibly close. One small mistake from the driver and team throws you to the back of the field, without a chance for a top result. However, such fierce competition is also a great challenge that pushes us to always give our best. When you do achieve a good result in such an environment, it's particularly satisfying. The most important thing is to be consistent over the whole season and also score points, even if things don't work out perfectly in qualifying. This ABB FIA Formula E World Championship is a great series. We're pleased to be part of it.

Why did the targeted first victory not materialise this season?

Lindesay:We were very close on many occasions, not much was missing. It's unbelievable how tight the competition is. One or two positions further up in qualifying can make all the difference. A thousandth of a second in the Super Pole can determine whether you start from the clean side of the track or watch how the competitor next to you uses the advantage instead. I don't want to talk about Puebla at this point, where we crossed the finish line first and our victory was taken off us due to an irregularity – but it's simply that we definitely had our chances this season. We have the potential it takes to win. We just have to put all the pieces of the puzzle together.

How satisfied are you to have Pascal and André as your drivers next season?

Lindesay:We're very pleased to continue with them. It's important for the team to have consistency with the drivers, not only on the racetrack. A fundamental requirement for successful teamwork is trust, and we have that. We're now focussing on preparing for season 8 and we're looking forward to pushing on to the next level with Pascal and André.

You have 23 weeks until the first race in Diriyah. What will happen until then?

Lindesay:There is no offseason in racing, as banal as that may sound. There isn't a lot of time to put your feet up. We'll take a few days off to recharge our batteries before throwing ourselves into preparing for season 8. The break isn't as long as it might seem at first glance. We have a plan that consists of further

extracting our potential and making up the gap to the top. We'll implement this step by step, with many hours of sim work and the optimisation of various details. That's simply business as usual for a racing team.

Despite the pandemic, Formula E has managed to put together an attractive racing calendar. How do you rate this achievement?

Lindesay:It was a hard year for the organisers and the teams. They did a fantastic job in putting together a full season with 15 races, especially given the sometimes very tough restrictions caused by the pandemic. A huge thank you to everyone who contributed.

When you look ahead to season 8, what are you most looking forward to?

Lindesay:Very clearly the huge sporting challenges that await us in the ABB FIA Formula E World Championship. And I'm looking forward to us tapping our full potential and turning that into race victories.

Facts and figures: the TAG Heuer Porsche Formula E Team in season 7

After 15 races at eight different venues, the TAG Heuer Porsche Formula E Team wrapped up its second season in the ABB FIA Formula E World Championship in 8th place in the team classification. The Porsche 99X Electric achieved one pole position (race 8 in Puebla) and two podium results (race 4 in Rome and race 6 in Valencia).

At least one Porsche 99X Electric finished twelve races in the points. Both cars scored points at three races. At least one of the Porsche 99X Electric made it into Super Pole in nine races, and both cars qualified for the hunt for pole position at one race. Porsche achieved its best team result in race 11 in New York City: Pascal Wehrlein finished 4th in the Big Apple, with André Lotterer in 5th place.

Pascal Wehrlein ranked 11th in the drivers' classification with 79 points, making him the best German in the field. He started from pole position once (Puebla) and climbed the podium once (3rd in Rome). The German qualified for Super Pole five times and earned points from nine races. This was his first season driving for the TAG Heuer Porsche Formula E Team.

André Lotterer concluded the season on 17th place in the drivers' classification with 58 points. He claimed a podium spot (2nd in Valencia), qualified four times for Super Pole and took home points from six races. For Lotterer, this was his second season in the TAG Heuer Porsche Formula E Team.

During season 7, the Porsche 99X Electric covered a total of 6,045.06 kilometres (2,342 laps) in the practice sessions and races.

Porsche in Formula E

In November 2019, André Lotterer achieved a successful racing debut for the TAG Heuer Porsche Formula E Team, finishing second at the season-opening race in Diriyah: a dream start and proof that Porsche had a competitive vehicle right from the outset with the Porsche 99X Electric. This was impressively underlined by the first pole position in Mexico City and another second place on home turf in Berlin. Pascal Wehrlein joined the squad before the 2020/2021 season. He claimed pole position in Puebla and came third in Rome. André Lotterer crossed the finish line in second place in Valencia. Formula E is the world's first fully-electric street racing series and, as an accelerator for innovative and sustainable mobility technologies, it has brought thrilling motorsport to people living in major cities since 2014. In the 2020/2021 season, in which a driver and team world champion was crowned for the first time, more automobile manufacturers competed than in any other racing series. As such, the races were fascinating and fiercely contested. Porsche again relies on its regular drivers André Lotterer and Pascal Wehrlein in 2021/2022.

MEDIA ENQUIRIES



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