Hollywood star Michael Fassbender: As a kid, I wanted to be a racing driver

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15/08/2020 Hollywood star Michael Fassbender is about to make his Porsche Mobil 1 Supercup debut. On Sunday, the German-Irish Hollywood star ("Inglourious Basterds", "12 Years a Slave", "X-Men") tackles round six of the international one-make cup on the Formula One racetrack near Barcelona at the wheel of the Porsche 911 GT3 Cup.

Fassbender became acquainted with the racing car, which sports the starting number 911 for the Barcelona round, at previous events and test drives. This season, he also contests the European Le Mans Series (ELMS) in a Porsche 911 RSR fielded by the Porsche customer squad Proton Competition.

In an interview, Fassbender shares how he got into motor racing, how he balances his acting profession with this hobby and what his next motorsport goal is with Porsche.

Practice is done, what are your first impressions with the Porsche 911 GT3 Cup on the Circuit de Barcelona-Catalunya?
Over the weekend, we share the track with Formula One and a couple of other series. These cars already left a lot of rubber from the tyres on the tarmac. That improves the grip dramatically, which makes a big difference. For example, I can brake a lot later.

What are your plans for your Porsche Mobil 1 Supercup debut on Sunday?
I'm trying not to put myself under too much pressure. The level of competition is really high. I have set myself modest goals: Try to stay out of trouble and not bother the guys who are driving for victory and the championship.

Where does your passion for cars come from?
My father was always a keen driver; he taught me how to drive. So at a young age, I was lucky enough to be allowed in the car. When I was twelve, I was allowed to play around on my own on a private road. There was a housing complex with a long straight and a kind of horseshoe bend at the end with another long straight. I always tried to go as fast as I could on the straight and take that hairpin as fast as I could.

Did that spark your interest in motor racing?
I guess. My first dream has always been to go racing. Even before the acting. It was always very clear to me from a young age. I always felt an affinity with cars, I felt a connection with driving and speed.

How did you get involved with Porsche Motorsport?
My first contact with Porsche Motorsport was actually Patrick Dempsey (Note: actor and co-owner of Proton Competition) on a flight from London to Los Angeles. I was following motorsports and I was congratulating him on a good result at the 24 Hours of Le Mans. We just started talking about getting into racing. And then he made the contact to Porsche Motorsport. My first step was the Porsche Track Experience. Then came the Porsche Racing Experience and a season in the Porsche Sports Cup Deutschland.

How do you manage to combine your hobby racing with your acting profession?
It's pretty hard to do both things because obviously it's difficult to get insurance on a film if I do racing at the same time. So for me, there is the race season and then there are months to do acting. But I always had a plan that at 40 I would sort of ease off the acting and try to get into racing.

Your dream is to contest next year's 24 Hours of Le Mans. How are you preparing for this iconic race?
This weekend's race in the Porsche Mobil 1 Supercup is part of my personal "Road to Le Mans". I also drive a Porsche 911 RSR for Proton Competition at the long distance races of the European Le Mans Series. I share the car with Porsche factory driver Richard Lietz and Felipe Fernández Laser.

What are you hoping to achieve?
What do I expect? Well, the goal is to win. To be as fast as I possibly can, and that's the goal. But the "24 hours of Le Mans" is a team effort, so together with the team to achieve a class win at Le Mans is the goal.

Info

Round six of the Porsche Mobil 1 Supercup takes off on Sunday (16 August) at 12.30 am local (CEST). Fans can enjoy the race via live stream on F1TV.formula1.com.

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