

Florian Modlinger: "We have a winning package this season"

23/02/2024 Season 10 of the ABB FIA Formula E World Championship has kicked off with two victories for the Porsche 99X Electric. In an interview with the Porsche Newsroom, Florian Modlinger, Director Factory Motorsport Formula E, talks about the strong start to the season, the constant search for improvements and the current state of play in Formula E.

Florian, two wins in three races for the Porsche 99X Electric: An ideal start to the season?

Florian Modlinger: "Three one-two results would've been perfect. Still, Pascal's Mexico victory and Jake Dennis's Diriyah triumph for our customer team Andretti Formula E were obviously two strong opening races for the Porsche 99X Electric. We can be extremely pleased with that. We lost our chance of a third victory with a poor grid position. So let's call it a good start to the season."

Is winning the first race of the season more than just confirmation that you've worked hard in the off-season?

Florian Modlinger:"It's motivation and validation. However, even after this success, we're still working hard to improve our overall package. Our rivals are doing the same. In Formula E, the competition between all the teams and drivers is extremely close and it's often the track characteristics that determine success. The races in Mexico and Diriyah were confirmation for us that we're competitive on these types of circuits and that we have a good overall package for the season."

The cancellation of the race in India resulted in an unusually long break of seven weeks. How did you use this time?

Florian Modlinger: "I'm not a fan of longer breaks. We're used to working under pressure in a fixed rhythm. I don't think such a long time without a race is good for Formula E fans either. But sometimes changes to the original race calendar are unavoidable. Working to our standard procedures, we made the best possible use of the break with post-race work after Diriyah and preparation for São Paulo. With race events coming almost every two weeks after São Paulo, we gave the team a break to relax and spend time with their families. In addition to the technical and sporting regulations, there are also financial regulations in Formula E, for example, cost-capping, where team members' working hours are taken into account. For this reason, we've arranged things to make best possible use of this break to improve performance and also take the financial framework into account."

What's your evaluation of the first season with your customer team Andretti Formula E? How does the alliance work?

Florian Modlinger:"Right from the start, we wanted an open and transparent collaboration. We wanted to ensure that both teams start from the same baseline and that we can share data from our four Porsche 99X Electric cars, which benefits both teams. The exciting and fierce duels that Pascal from the TAG Heuer Porsche Formula E Team and Jake from Andretti Formula E experienced during the season underlined our approach and allowed us to further intensify this partnership. After our first season together, we had another candid discussion. We agreed to continue our open and transparent collaboration to enable both teams to achieve the best possible result in the world championship with the Porsche 99X Electric."

While Pascal Wehrlein won in Mexico and scored points in Diriyah, his teammate António Félix da Costa earned no points. How can you help him out of this slump?

Florian Modlinger: "We're working intensively with António. To be without points after three races is a disappointment for him and us, as well. We have a competitive car and António has proven in the past that he can win races with different cars in all kinds of championships. We're focussing on working with him specifically on his single-lap pace, which means that we have to get him qualifying further up the grid. Last year he drove some sensational races, where he demonstrated his skill in fighting his way through traffic and gaining positions. Overtaking proved very difficult in the first three races of the year, which is why he wasn't able to deliver a strong race performance."

How hopeful are you that he will regain his good form in São Paulo?

Florian Modlinger:"António achieved his best qualifying result last year in São Paulo with second place. That's sure to give him the motivation to demonstrate what he can do. It's also hugely important for the team because one thing is clear: we need to find those last two/three-tenths of a second on a qualifying lap. Afterall, as a team we need two cars to finish consistently in the points to be able to compete for all the titles in this highly competitive world championship."

How do you assess the current state of play in Formula E after the first season with the new Gen3 cars?

Florian Modlinger: "In such a close and incredibly competitive world championship with regulations that stipulate a broad range of standardised components, it's challenging to gain a technological edge. As a manufacturer, we can only develop a few elements of the cars in-house. Alongside Jaguar, we had the best package last year and we managed to pull ahead of the other manufacturers. The hardware this season is the same, so we're concentrating on optimising our systems and software from race to race. In this way, we're attempting to maintain our small advantage. The start of the season with two victories for the Porsche 99X Electric shows us that we're on the right track."

MEDIA ENQUIRIES



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