

Formula E World Champion and Porsche works driver Pascal Wehrlein in profile

23/07/2024 Rarely does motorsport deliver such thrilling title showdowns, and just as rarely has an athlete remained as cool under pressure as the new Formula E World Champion Pascal Wehrlein from the TAG Heuer Porsche Formula E Team.

The 29-year-old German would arguably have never experienced a performance like last weekend in London at any point in his career. “Give me more pressure,” he radioed, obviously pumped with adrenaline after his victory on Saturday in the Docklands of the English capital. And that's exactly what he got.

The nation's young hope

Pascal Wehrlein was born on 18 October 1994 in Sigmaringen, Germany – the son of a German father

and a Mauritian mother. Driving karts and single-seaters as a youngster, he quickly became one of the nation's great motor racing hopes, beating other German talents and turning heads. The Porsche neighbours at Mercedes-AMG supported him early in his career. As a Formula 1 test driver for the Silver Arrows, he was crowned the youngest DTM champion in history at just 20 years of age (2015). He then moved to Grand Prix racing – including regular stints at Manor Racing (2016) and the Sauber racing team (2017).

Despite strong performances, Wehrlein failed to make a breakthrough in Formula 1. From his role as a test driver for the legendary Scuderia Ferrari, he switched to the fledgling Porsche Formula E Team as a works driver – but not before notching up experience in the innovative electric racing series: for two seasons, he had given the competition a run for their money in the Indian Mahindra squad. What followed was the beginning of a new German motorsport success story.

"I'm not yet an old hand but I'm not a rookie anymore either," stated Wehrlein when Porsche was looking for a new driver for the 2020/21 Formula E season. This proved to be an attractive combination for the Stuttgart sports car manufacturer. And it didn't take long for success to come. In just his seventh race with Porsche, he climbed the podium, and the following season he handed Porsche its first victory – set to the spectacular backdrop of Mexico City and narrowly beating his then teammate and fellow compatriot André Lotterer.

Accomplishing the greatest achievement with Porsche to date

When Porsche made the decisive leap in performance with the introduction of the highly efficient Gen3 version of the Porsche 99X Electric, Wehrlein established himself at the top of Formula E. Alas, it was not enough to win last season's title, partly because of inconsistent qualifying performances, which, due to its knockout format, demands outstanding efforts, especially mentally.

For the season just gone, Pascal and the Weissach works team eliminated most of the weaknesses. Claiming pole position and a commanding lights-to-flag victory in Mexico, the season kicked off perfectly and the competition got the message – Porsche and Wehrlein were back stronger than ever. The performances at following race weekends showed that the qualifying shortcomings, particularly for the No. 94 car, had been sorted out: Wehrlein emerged as the best qualifier of the season. Fewer mistakes and, above all, a lot of bad luck due to shunts and collisions in the fiercely competitive Formula E field nevertheless resulted in a dramatic showdown in the World Championship.

"The whole team did a sensational job, extremely calm and focussed – especially Pascal," commented team principal Florian Modlinger after Saturday's nerve-racking race in London, where Wehrlein reclaimed the lead in the World Championship with an inspired drive and his third win of the season. In the pit lane on Thursday, Wehrlein joked about last year's extremely unfortunate title finale in London: "I like the airport best here."

"The greatest thing for me is to win in front of my family. When they're watching at the track, it always

motivates me a bit more." Indeed: After his sensational victory on Saturday, Wehrlein outpaced the New Zealand Jaguar duo Evans and Cassidy on Sunday – with an immaculate drive and under crushing pressure: All the more impressive given that the two New Zealanders had started ahead of him and had long held better cards in the World Championship. "Soleya, Daddy's world champion!" Wehrlein shouted with obvious relief over the team radio after crossing the finish line. Second place in the race was enough – a sporting and mental precision landing and a particularly emotional highlight for the quiet, introverted top athlete.

Family bliss in Switzerland

Pascal's Swiss partner Sibel gave birth to daughter Soleya just last year. Both are a source of strength for him. The young family also built a house in Kreuzlingen, Switzerland, where other world athletes not only enjoy the country's natural beauty and quality of life but also the respectful reserve of the people in the region.

Wehrlein is the first German single-seater driver to be crowned World Champion since Nico Rosberg in 2016. After a short family break in London, he and his two loved ones will return to Switzerland. Two days after his greatest triumph, as calm as ever, the champion explains in the slew of interviews: "I have to admit, I didn't celebrate for long after the race but once I'm home we'll definitely have another little party with friends and relatives."

Personal

Date of birth: 18 October 1994
Birthplace: Sigmaringen (Germany)
Nationality: German/Mauritian
Residence: Kreuzlingen (Switzerland)
Height and weight: 1.75 m and 70 kg
Hobbies: snowboarding, wakeboarding, fitness
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Porsche in Formula E

Porsche contests its fifth Formula E season in 2023/2024. In addition to the works-run TAG Heuer Porsche Formula E Team, the American customer outfit Andretti Formula E competes with the Porsche 99X Electric. The concept of the innovative electric racing car was developed at the net CO_2-neutral Weissach facility. With its commitment to the World Championship, Porsche underlines its commitment to take a leading role among traditional automobile manufacturers in the areas of

electrification, sustainability and technology. In Formula E, the brand gains valuable insights for its electric series-production sports cars.

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