

MANAGING A RACE TEAM

A modern major race team is a sophisticated, complicated and, above all, expensive operation. Managing a successful outfit requires many attributes from careful man management, and astute strategy to clever negotiating skills and the ability to draw in large amounts of finance.



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AN EXPENSIVE BUSINESS

Motor racing costs and the higher one competes, the more expensive it gets. At the very pinnacle, in competitions such as NASCAR, and, especially, Formula One, teams spend tens of millions of pounds. The money goes on developing race vehicles and buying in incredibly expensive equipment, parts (see right) drivers and a large support staff often measured in hundreds. Richard Childress Racing, one of the most successful Winston/Nextel Cup NASCAR outfits, employs approximately 280 staff. Ferrari's staff levels are reputed to be more than double that. The logistics of moving a large, sophisticated race team and their vast quantities of equipment around the planet is also complex and expensive. In Formula One, teams may travel over 100,000 miles a year between testing and races. Airfares, accommodation and owning high-tech team motorhomes and a series of giant vehicle transporters, often costing over £600,000 each,



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are another cost alongside high driver salaries in excess of £10 million for the best racers.

TEAM BOSSES

Teams vary in size from smaller privateers (see below) to the works or factory teams which are financed and supported technically by major vehicle manufacturers. Some of these, such as Ferrari, with a budget reputed to be over £200

million, are giants. Other major race operations may not be works teams but may benefit from having a leading engine supplier as a partner such as McLaren and their F1 engine supplier, Mercedes. Whatever their size, at the head of most successful race teams is a highly-experienced team boss or principal. They may have a background as a racer themselves such as BP Ford's Malcolm Wilson in the World Rally Championship or Bobby Rahal at the Rahal-Letterman IRL team or in management such as Flavio Briatore, firstly head of Benetton and, since 2000, the Renault F1 team. Others started out on the engineering side. McLaren team boss, Ron Dennis, for example, began as a mechanic, working on Jochen Rindt's Formula One car. Race weekends are incredibly busy times for team bosses as they oversee team strategy and are frequently the centre of media attention. Away from races, they are frequently involved in complex negotiations with current and potential future sponsors, drivers, suppliers of parts and equipment and with the authorities, all with an eye to the future.



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TEAM CHANGES

The high costs of entering top-flight racing come with absolutely no guarantee of a visit to Victory Lane or a place on the winners podium. As a result, many teams find themselves under pressure from or losing sponsors, not making financial ends meet and are forced to withdraw from competition. In recent years, many teams in Formula One such as Minardi, Paul Stoddart and Jordan have left the scene whilst successful CART team, Patrick Racing, which moved to the Indy Racing League in 2004, was unable to obtain a sponsor in 2005 and folded. Team changes occur with manufacturer outfits withdrawing or dropping out for one or more seasons such as Citroen sitting out 2006 and Mistubishi's Ralliart team missing the 2006 and 2007 seasons. Entering a new team in the

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Rear wing £15,000 each 15 used per year £225,000	Brake pads £2,000 per set 100 used per year £200,000	Gear box £65,000 each 16 used per year £80,000	Engine £180,000 per race 170 used per year £30,600,000	Steering wheels £30,000 each 10 used per year £25,000	Fuel tank £10,000 each 8 used per year £80,000	Wheels £3,000 per set 12 sets used per year £36,000
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