



FAN APOCALYPSE; FROM NEW ROAMING GAZETTE REPORTER EVA KOSINSKI*

On a mission to see some Formula 1 drivers up close and potentially score some autographs, we made our way bright and early post-shift to Melbourne Walk. Just as the gates opened we positioned ourselves first row at the barriers. Pleased with ourselves we did not account for what was coming next.

At 9:32am crowds of fans came running towards us and the best analogy is a fan apocalypse similar to every zombie movie you have ever seen. Out of breath and completely exhausted they arrived, crashing into the barricades, and scoring the few prestigious spots that would hopefully bring them up close with their idols for two valuable seconds.

We met Abby standing next to us who knew, not only every Formula 1 driver, but also the names of support team members, Formula 2 drivers, the guy who apparently commented the F1 Netflix series, and, and, and...!

Apart from getting squished more and more into the barriers as time went on, with Abby's support we identified drivers as they came along.

Amongst others, we scored autographs from Yuki Tsunoda and Nyck de Vries (speaking to him in Dutch certainly got his attention!).

Plus we took pictures and videos with Daniel Ricciardo, Carlos Sainz, Oscar Piastri, Lando Norris and Logan Sargeant.

We vacated our spots in time for the Q&A sessions at the Fan Forum and made some hardcore fans very happy.

Volunteering as a race official definitely has some perks and let's you experience Formula 1 and Albert Park in a behind-the-scenes-atmosphere that is worth the very, very early start each morning.



*One of the morning Muster Team, this is Eva's second attempt as a first year official after missing out in 2020.

122,927 RECORD FRIDAY CROWD & 129,748 RECORD FRIDAY CROWD



OFFICIALS GAZETTE – 2023 FORMULA 1 ROLEX AUSTRALIAN GRAND PRIX





**FROM NEW ROAMING
GAZETTE REPORTER –
BEE COCHRAN**

It has been a privilege to meet the Grand Prix Officials by handing our lunches and being part of the volunteer community.

Seeing so many smiling faces at 5am in the morning has been the highlight of my weekend. Trevor our team manager coordinates our team efficiently and we all work well together as a cohesive team.

My role also provides an opportunity to get to know volunteers from a wide variety of roles at Albert Park with many based in Victoria, but a large number from interstate and around the world and I would not have met them if I was a spectator.

It was an honour to meet one of the motorsport chaplains this morning talking about their experiences.

Over the last few days, I have got to know other volunteers in our team from Cassandra, Eva, Meagan, Paul, Mitch, etc.... and it has been fantastic to learn from their enormous experience. Volunteering has been a lot of fun and I look forward to volunteering again in 2024.





HAVING A BALL AT ALBERT PARK

The Formula 1 Rolex Australian Grand Prix is often a bucket-list item for many motorsport fans in Australia, none more so than West Australian Christian Ball.

A dedicated volunteer official for the Motorsport Australia WA Rally Championship and Supercars events for almost a decade, it was always a dream for him to see Formula 1 cars up close at Albert Park. Having never been able to attend an Australian Grand Prix after growing up on the other side of the country, it wasn't until 2020 when Ball would finally get the opportunity to achieve a long-time dream thanks to a close friend of his.

His friend, David Masefield, a veteran official who has travelled around the world as a flag marshal, was the inspiration behind Ball's decision to sign up an official for the Grand Prix and make his way to Melbourne. Unfortunately, Ball's dream was cut short when the event was cancelled due to COVID-19, which ultimately put an end to his long-team dream.

With uncertainty around COVID and personal matters preventing him from returning last year, Ball had no idea of when a return to Albert Park would be on the cards again, until his good friend delivered once again. "When the 2020 event got cancelled, I left in tears after my dream was missed," Ball said.

"Last year I was worried about COVID-19, and I was caring for my mum back home, so I had to hold off coming back. I didn't know when the next opportunity would be, until I got a surprise on my birthday when my partner gave me a birthday card with tickets to Melbourne. "She had paid for my flights and David had paid for the accommodation and honestly, I was so happy - I'm still pinching myself that I'm here. "I am so excited that I am here for what will be my first real first time. I have come a long way and it's been a long time, but it's been a dream come true to officiate at an F1 event." Although the 2020 event ended in disaster for the passionate motorsport fan, there were a few positives to come out of his only day here – further justifying his decision to be an official.



"Last time I was here, there was a young girl officiating with me and she said her dream was to be part of a race team. I encouraged her that she could achieve that dream if she worked on it," Ball explained. "Ahead of this year, I reached out to see if she was coming and she told me that she will be here working for a Supercars team, which was amazing. "To know that someone I was working with and inspired in a roundabout way is now working at Supercars team is an inspiration for me and that's what I love about being an official."

"A lot of people in the public don't realize the joy in volunteering that goes around with being an official. "People might not do it because it's not a paid gig, but it is paid in my eyes because we get to do things other people don't and interact with drivers at times. So, there is so much more to get out of it than being paid a salary."

As for what he is looking forward to most at the first ever Grand Prix, it was an obvious choice. "I have never heard an F1 car in real life and this year will be the first time,"

Ball added. "Last time I heard the passenger ride car (Minardi two-seater) going around, but then everything got cancelled before the F1 cars came out, so I missed out. "It's also sad that Daniel Ricciardo's not here racing, but we'll go ahead and support Oscar and hope he has a great first Australian Grand Prix like me."





ROB MCLENNAN

F1 Pit Lane Marshal, Rob McLennan is the product of a successful PIARC pilot project to recruit new marshals. As a long-time lover of motorsports, he looked around after retirement to see what he could do.

He found the PIARC presentation and attended the 90-minute session, which covered the various specialties available at Phillip Island. Rob was impressed by what he saw and was invited to attend a race meeting.

He was taken by the warm, friendly welcoming attitude of the motorsport community, and willingness to accommodate his interests in where he wanted to work. For the most part, he has worked as a Grid Marshal, but has helped out with other specialties if the need arose.

Rob has worked 17 events the past 15 months. He was mentored by Rhys Carlton-Carlos, AGP Deputy Chief Pit Marshal, and invited to work AGP.

He signed up and was ultimately assigned to work Pit Lane Grid. Rob said he's really been enjoying his weekend so far, working on the Pit Lane Grid for several support race groups.



He especially enjoys being up close with the people and cars. “It’s like being in a lolly store.” Everyone has been helpful and supportive, and he’s looking forward to coming back next year. Rob is learning that his experience of working Australian races including the F1 would qualify him to work other motorsports events overseas. He attended the first Formula E race in Long Beach several years ago and wants to go back to work the Long Beach Grand Prix, as well as an overseas F1 race once he gets some more races on his resume.





PIRELLI'S POSITION ON TYRES

The FP1 times were around a second faster than they had been last year, in similar weather conditions. Furthermore, the softest tyre nomination in 2022 was the C5, with a step between the medium and soft. The C5 wasn't used as part of the race strategy by the teams, who focused instead on the hard compound. This year, the three nominated compounds are consecutive, in order to offer a wider range of strategic options.



While Verstappen was quickest on the soft in FP1, Aston Martin's Fernando Alonso used the medium tyre to go quickest in FP2. The fastest time on the P Zero White hard (1m 19.672s) was set by Mercedes driver George Russell in FP2. When the track was wet, McLaren's local hero Oscar Piastri was quickest on the Cinturato Green intermediate, setting a benchmark of 1m 28.110s.

Mario Isola, Motorsport Director at Pirelli noted "it's been a variable day. As always at Albert Park, the asphalt conditions change very quickly, especially in the early sessions, and today was no exception. It started raining shortly after the start of FP2 in the afternoon and that complicated the picture even more, as it wasn't possible to carry out the long runs needed for a full assessment of the tyres.

This means that all the preparation work done before Melbourne takes on extra significance, especially when it comes to strategies. From what we can see up to now this weekend's trio of compounds are behaving as we expected, also in terms of performance gaps. All three types of tyres are valid options for the race, offering a wide range of possible strategies. We saw a bit of graining on the medium and soft in FP1, with a 'green' track and relatively low temperatures, while FP2 meant that the drivers were able to get at least an initial impression of the intermediates.

There's one free practice session left before qualifying that will give drivers a chance to carry out the long runs that have been missing so far, in weather conditions that should be better. That's another interesting factor to consider as the Australian Grand Prix weekend continues."

The time taken to make a pit stop in Melbourne is around 21 seconds from start to finish; one of the fastest in the entire championship. That's largely because the Albert Park pit lane is only 281 metres long. Being a street circuit, there's also a relatively high safety car probability at 67%. So, it's going to be important to evaluate the total time loss from pit lane entry to exit (including time stationary, which is around 2.5 seconds) under the safety car as well this weekend.



Championship is running at the Formula 1 Rolex Australian Grand Prix for the first time this year, and there are four Australian drivers flying the flag this weekend.



JOHN SNOW SAYS “WINTER IS HERE”



AGP STALWARTS – 2023

MARKING A MILESTONE - 37 YEARS OF SERVICE TO THE AUSTRALIAN GRAND PRIX - No race in 2020

Terry Bebe
Rae Begg
Raymond Begg
Angus Black
Terry Buxton
Rhys Carleton-Carlos
Roger Chirnside
Henk Duncan
Don DeGiglio
Peter Green
Daryl Karlsson
Kevin Kidsley
Paul Martin
Mario Napoleone
Greg Piggott
Warren Reid
Geoff Rothberg
Tim Schenken
Lawrie Schmitt
Ken Smith
Robert Styling
Tony Thorne
David Turnbull
Tony Van den Dungen





