

GP3

AN INTERVIEW WITH VICKY PIRIA, THE YOUNG DRIVER FROM PERUGIA WHO THIS YEAR BECAME THE FIRST FEMALE COMPETITOR IN THIS CATEGORY. AFTER SUCCESSFULLY COMPLETING HER FINAL EXAMS AT SENIOR SCHOOL, THE NEW DALLARA REPRESENTS A NEW CHALLENGE ON HER ROAD TO A CAREER AT THE TOP

NEW MARKETS

INDIA, CHINA, THE PERSIAN GULF: JOS CLAES EXPLAINS THE DIFFERING NEEDS AND THE CHALLENGES THAT LIE AHEAD FOR DALLARA FORMULINO IN TOMORROW'S MARKETS: «INDIAN MOTORSPORTS ARE COMING ON IN LEAPS AND BOUNDS; CHINA WILL FOLLOW»

INDIANAPOLIS

A MONTH AT THE SPEEDWAY. ENGINEER MONTANARI RELIVES THE THRILL OF THE QUALIFICATIONS AND RACE DAY AT THIS YEAR'S 500 MILES, WHERE DALLARA CONTINUED TO CEMENT A PLACE IN THE HEARTS OF AMERICAN RACING FANS, THANKS ALSO TO THE INAUGURATION OF THE NEW INTERACTIVE MUSEUM



A MONTH LONG DREAM



ENGINEER MONTANARI, THE DALLARA INDYCAR PROJECT MANAGER, DESCRIBES THE EMOTIONS, BEHIND THE SCENES ACTIVITIES AND COMMITMENT INVOLVED IN PREPARING FOR THE MOST FAMOUS RACE IN THE WORLD. THE THRILL OF THE QUALIFYING COMPETITION AND THE SPECTACLE OF THE FANS CONFIRM THE MAGIC OF THE SPEEDWAY. AND THE POPULARITY OF THE ITALIAN FACTORY ON THE OTHER SIDE OF THE ATLANTIC





Engineer Montanari, can you tell us about your experience in Indianapolis? Let's start with the reason for your visit...

"Dallara strives to provide its customers with all the technical assistance possible, whether it be "in house" or trackside, in fact we are in daily contact with Indycar and the teams and always ready to resolve and respond to every type of problem and request. This is the reason: to be present in person in order to respond as rapidly as possible whenever an issue arises".

Can you describe a typical day at Indy?

"The whole day is spent on the track.

From early morning, until the evening when the shutters come down on the garages. Dallara has an office inside the speedway, and this was our base camp. You have to monitor the tests in the pit-lane, keep an eye on the pits to make sure that there are no problems there, and all the while people approach you for explanations, advice or opinions. There's also at least one meeting to attend with Indycar every day to ensure that everything is progressing well. The large number of new features we introduced on this model meant that we were on tenterhooks, with our fingers crossed a lot of the time; that was until we realised we had already more than

completed trip round the world, at the rate of 2000 laps a day, without so much as a problem! All things considered, apart from the tension it was a very peaceful experience".

What strikes makes the biggest impression on the spectators/fans when they arrive at Indy?

"The grandeur of the event. Indy is "The" race. When you arrive in Indianapolis you see posters that say: "More than a day in May". It's not just the race day, but a whole month of events, shows, and tests in preparation for the 27th. The fans' party lasts the whole month, building up to the day of the race. Tents, caravans, motor-homes,

“The fans’ party lasts the whole month, building up to the day of the race. Tents, caravans, motor-homes, camped all around the circuit, and in the gardens that the local residents open up for the fans. Everyone with their barbeques lit as they wait for the gates to open at 4 in the morning”

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camped all around the circuit, and in the gardens that the local residents open up for the fans. Everyone with their barbeques lit as they wait for the gates to open at 4 in the morning. Race day is impossible to describe: 450,000 people, and when you reach the pit lane before the start you are literally surrounded by the crowds”.

What are the places that you absolutely must see?

“First of all the Speedway museum, it’s incredible. You can admire all the cars that have made history at Indianapolis from 1911 to the present day. Also, to coincide with the 2012 edition of the 500 Miles, we finally inaugurated the

exhibition and interactive section at our Technological Center in Main Street, a short walk away from the Speedway. We strongly advise anyone who finds themselves in that part of the world to pay us a visit, it contains the entire history of Dallara. It even impressed us, and we work here!”.

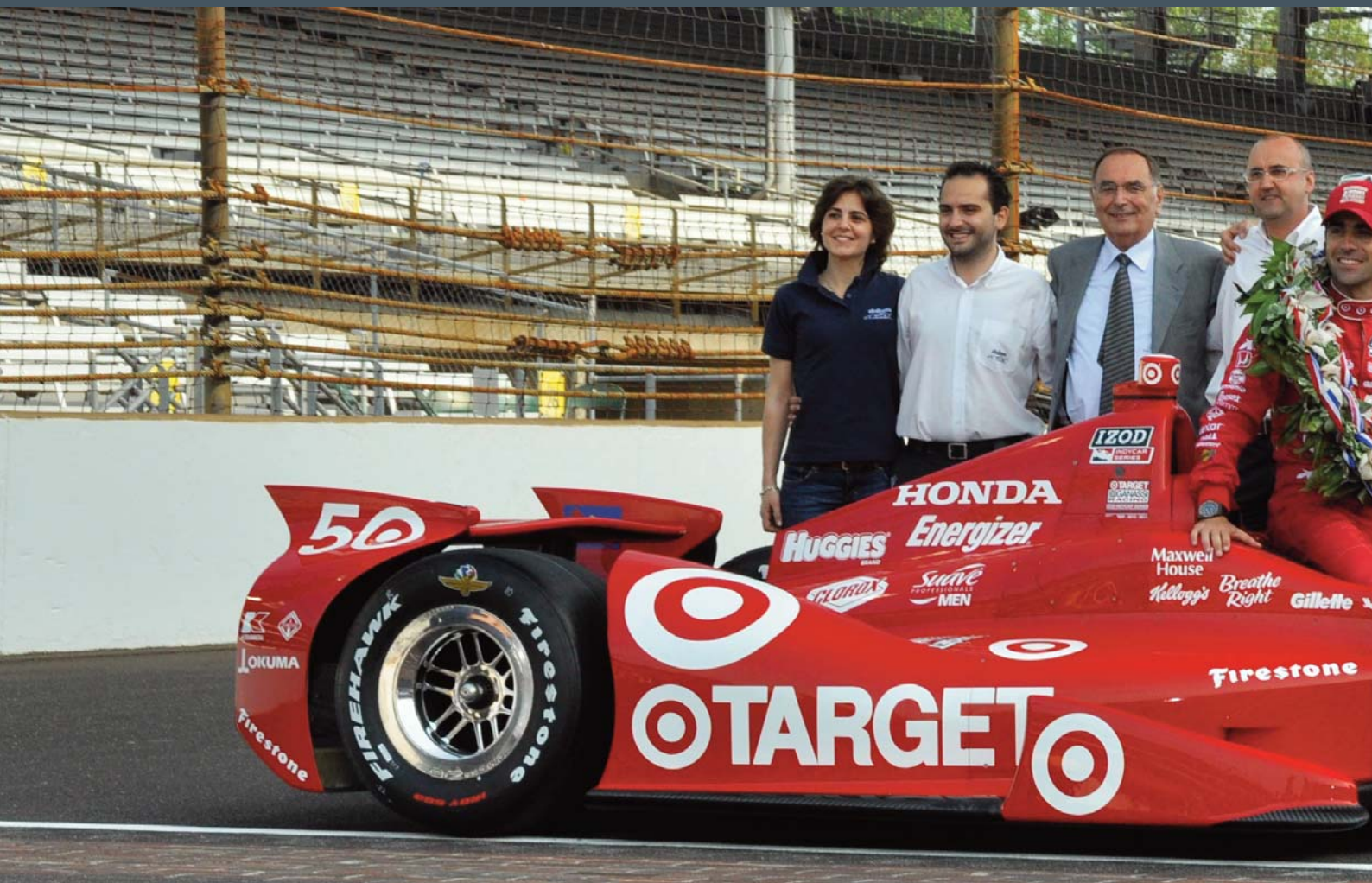
How does Indy differ from the other races in the IndyCar championship?

“Indy is “The” race, it embodies American motorsports. They’ve been racing here since 1911. Everything is spectacular here. As I said before, it’s much more than just a race! In addition to the indycars, the date coincides with Memorial Day when the Americans

celebrate their armed forces and remember their war dead”.

What was the most entertaining part of your trip, and what was the most difficult aspect?

“Despite the length of the trip - the event lasts for the whole month of May - we didn’t have much time for fun. The most exciting part was the day of the race, leading up to the start. Walking between all the cars on the grid and thinking about all the work, sweat and effort we’d put into it. But what a feeling of satisfaction too! The most difficult part for us was handling the pressure throughout the test and qualification periods and on the day of the race itself”.



What's the difference between American and European races?

"The atmosphere, without a doubt. You feel so much more involved, the fans are not just figures on the stands, but part of the show. Open garages, cars always out on the track, drivers who are happy to autograph caps and t-shirts when the fans ask them. It's a completely different philosophy".

Qualification and race day: as an "insider" can you give us some advice on how best to appreciate what's going on on those days?

"The qualifications are really complicated! Not least because it's the car that qualifies, not the driver, you

sometimes find drivers taking part in the race who haven't taken part in qualification..... it's a far cry from our standards! There's a fixed number of 33 cars on the starting grid, which results in the drama of the qualifications and "bump day" when drivers may find themselves excluded from the starting line-up. To get the most out of the experience I would suggest you make sure you have a good knowledge of the rules before you arrive. As to the race, I suggest you just sit back and enjoy two and half hours of pure speed".

In your opinion, what is the image that American race fans have of Dallara?

"Dallara has been involved in Indycar

since 1997, and a lot has happened over this period. The results speak for themselves, and the Dallara name is well-known in the USA. There's a great deal of respect, and I think this extends to our constant commitment to making the cars, and hence the races, as safe as possible. The IR12 was designed by taking the best of both the European and American safety standards and introducing innovative new elements. Initially, the fans seemed a little uncertain about the new shape, but now they appear to have taken to it".

What impact does the 500 Miles have on the American media?

"It is held simultaneously with Memorial Day, as I mentioned earlier. Also, the

Dallara must do what it has always done; and the USA is no exception. Our motto is “The Pursuit of Excellence” and the process is infinite. Safety, cost containment, flexibility, performance research and honesty have always been our strong points, and are the reasons we are where we are today

.....



Coca Cola 600 is held in Charlotte on the same day, and for the same reason. There is a national aspect, but there's also a local impact for the State of Indiana”.

In your opinion, what should Dallara's next steps be in order to consolidate what is already a highly prestigious position in the United States?

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Photo Ravanetti

“EDUTAINMENT” IS THE NEW FRO





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Engineer Vecchi, can you explain how the idea for the Dallara interactive center at Indianapolis was born?

"Essentially, the idea was the fruit of an agreement between the state of Indiana, in the person of the governor Mitch Daniels, and Dallara, represented by our CEO Andrea Pontremoli, to go beyond introducing a company like Dallara, by creating an initiative designed to generate enthusiasm for engineering, especially in the younger generations. As a result, we formed a partnership with Scott Jasek from Indy Racing Experience (I.R.E.) to create an education-entertainment, or "edutainment" center".

What will it be called and when will it be inaugurated?

"Our American branch will be known as Dallara IndyCar Factory, while the part that is open to the public will be known as the "edutainment" zone. The inauguration is planned some time between the end of June and the beginning of July".

How were the activities divided between your partners at Indy Racing Experience, Dallara personnel in America and those in Italy?

"The initial concept is the result of a study carried out by Engineer Pontremoli, Scott Jasek and myself. The content was developed entirely at Dallara by specialists in the various areas (aerodynamics, vehicle dynamics and composites). The design was created by the Solares Arts Foundation in Parma, while everything was produced in America by our partners at I.R.E., who were responsible for the structural work and the show-cars for the driving simulators".

What is the target of the interactive center and how many visitors are you expecting per year?

"Our aim is to attract more than 100.000 visitors. Our target is fairly broad. In May, when the Indy 500 is held, we would expect to attract fans of all ages, whereas during the rest of the year we will mainly play host to middle and high school students,

introducing them to the various technical concepts in what we hope will be both an entertaining and stimulating environment. Finally, in the evenings we plan to hold a series of "corporate" events to tie in with the Indianapolis trade fair".

What type of support did you receive from the governor of Indiana and what are the initial reactions of the American market?

"We couldn't have asked for any more. Permissions granted in record time, and support and enthusiasm that ensured each stage of the project went as smoothly as possible!"

How is the tour of the interactive center structured?

"The center is completely free-flowing, which means that there is no set route. That said, it is divided into two areas: one area where the Dallara cars are on display, followed by the edutainment zone.

The edutainment section will feature:

- A cinema showing a film that tells the story





of Dallara and our expansion in the United States.

- Four themed areas: "History", "Aerodynamics", "Materials and safety" and lastly "Vehicle dynamics".
- Eight Dallara IndyCar vehicles fitted with the driving simulator game where our visitors can race against one another.
- A tunnel featuring original technical drawings of the Indycar vehicle (complete with the hand-written comments of our designers!)"

In addition to the areas themed around racing and the new Indy, will the center also include areas dedicated to Dallara's glorious history and interesting facts about the company?

"HP kindly supplied us with their new 132 inch Vantage Point touch screen! This will be used to provide visitors with information about Dallara's history, as well more unusual items, such as Engineer Dallara making a parachute jump!"

What is the "Pièce de résistance"? The part that leaves the most lasting impression?

"I would say the video shows. Visitors should definitely not miss the cinema with its original OMP racing seats, where they can relive Gian Paolo Dallara's formative years and the origins of Dallara, coupled with images from Indy races with the inevitable, spectacular crashes, and the 3D video featuring a walk-through of our headquarters in Varano de' Melegari".

What sort of experience have you got in mind for the spectators that come to visit?

Will they be able to access any of the cars?

"The center will be constantly evolving, we will be aiming to increase the interactive experience and convince young people, above all, that being an engineer is not so bad after all!"

Are you planning a "virtual", online version too?

"We're working on it".

Tell us something about the partnership with the Lino's Coffee chain?

"You might say that we hit it off with Lino's right from the start, and not just because of the excellent coffee! It was immediately apparent that we had a number of principles in common, based on product quality and customer satisfaction. In a few short months we established a relationship, and designed and built the restaurant so that the first Lino's in America opened its doors on May 23rd".

Are you planning to expand in the future? Is it true that you intend to build a copy of the simulator in Varano in America?

"The Dallara IndyCar Factory, together with its interactive center, will have to evolve in order to keep pace with, or even anticipate, the demands of the market, therefore I sincerely hope that we will be able to expand in the future: we are currently studying how to build the American simulator".

Will any personnel be transferred from the Italian company to the American branch, or will all the new personnel be American?

"Dallara currently employs fifteen people in the USA, three of whom have been transferred from Italy. The team leader is Stefano De Ponti who has been dealing with our American customers for over ten years. If you include Lino's and our partners at Indy Racing Experience, the Dallara IndyCar Factory will employ over 80 people".

In your opinion, how important are exhibitions that explain how a racing car is built, while seeking to entertain, to the motorsports world?

"The motorsports business, especially in Indianapolis, is vitally important for the local economy. By attracting young people, we can help to provide the economy with the young talent that will design and produce the cars of tomorrow. Another important role is providing the vast number of IndyCar fans with a little information about what goes in to building a racing car".

From an international engineering firm producing racing cars in Varano to a global company with an overseas manufacturing base that invests in edutainment and marketing. How are you dealing with these important challenges? What is the best mental approach for dealing with these changes?

"The same mental approach that we have always had at Dallara and has permitted us to arrive where we are today. Humility at work, the pursuit of excellence and attention to costs".

Alessandro Santini



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DALLARA I WILL BE LOOKING AT THE TRACK»

VICKY PIRIA MAY BE THE FIRST FEMALE DRIVER IN GP3, BUT RATHER THAN SIMPLY AIMING TO STAY AHEAD OF CARMEN JORDÀ AND ALICIA POWELL, SHE HAS ALREADY SET HER SIGHTS ON BEATING NIEDERHAUSER AND COMPETING FOR THE TITLE. AFTER COMPLETING HER FINAL EXAMS AT SENIOR SCHOOL, SHE IS NOW CONCENTRATING ON GAINING IMPORTANT QUALIFICATIONS IN THE WORLD OF MOTORSPORTS, AND THE CAR PRODUCED IN VARANO WILL BE AN EXCELLENT, IF DEMANDING, STUDY AID



Vicky Piria is one of two female Italian drivers currently competing at international level in single-seaters. The 18 year old from Perugia, who has just completed her senior school finals, drives the GP3 for Team Trident, and this is her first experience in a single-seater racing car manufactured at the factory in Varano de' Melegari: «Before the Dallara GP3 I had the chance to drive a F.3. car. For someone like me, who was used to Formula Abarth, it was like another world. I had tests with Prema and BVM Target, with a view to competing in the Italian national championship, and achieved encouraging results».

But at a certain point your objectives changed...

"Yes, things changed, and the chance to race in GP3 with Team Trident came up,

an entirely different prospect: a high level, international competition held on the same weekends as F.1 and GP2, on fantastic circuits and with incredible media coverage. The car has a turbo-charged engine and reacts differently to the Dallara F.3. The latter features a high level of grip that is practically constant, whereas the GP3 rolls noticeably and you don't even notice the grip until you take a few fast curves for the first time. The engine response is different too since the GP3 is equipped with a turbo. In short, it's not easy to adapt straight away".

The Pirelli tyres are not easy to handle...

"They feature very high peak performance, but it doesn't last. I was used to Kumho tyres that practically never wear out, so it was quite hard to get used to that. I had to alter my driving approach during qualifying and races".



How is the season going?

"Our aim is to get as many kilometres under our belts as possible, to finish in all the races and to improve our performance each time. I have to admit that I'm pretty pleased with my times; I thought it would have more of a struggle, but I'm currently around the middle of the second group of drivers. The problem is that there's so little time available, you're allowed a 30 minute practice session, then it's straight into qualifying, which also only lasts 30 minutes. This means that you have to be ready to do your very best right from the start. I'm growing up very quickly, and I'm pleased to say that I'm making good progress. I feel more professional than before. The next step is to start getting into the points, which I have already come close to doing on a couple of occasions in Monaco and Valencia. One more small step forward and I'll be there".

At the start of the year you were the only female driver in GP3, but now Carmen Jordà and Alicia Powell have arrived to steal your limelight...

"I was convinced I was going to be the only female driver, so I was a little surprised. Maybe I opened up the door for the others; I hadn't heard anything at all about these

projects before. There's a tendency to lump us all together and see who's doing best in the classification, but I'm not worried about finishing ahead of Carmen or Alicia. Apart from anything else, I'm younger than the other two. Carmen already has experience in F.3 and Indy Lights, and Alicia participated in F.Renault for three years. Obviously I'd be lying if I said I wasn't bothered about where I finish, but my reference point is Niederhauser, my main rival in last year's Formula Abarth championship (which he won)".

Have you got any new projects for 2013, like trying out a Dallara GP2 or WSR for instance?

"No, I want to remain focused on GP3 for the time being, and not think about other categories or tests. The present is the consequence of my future; therefore I have to try to do my best while keeping my feet firmly on the ground. I don't want to start fantasising".

Have you ever visited Dallara or tried out the simulator?

"Not yet, but I hope to soon. I'm really looking forward to using your simulator since everyone speaks so highly of it".

Massimo Costa





AN INFORMATIVE CONVERSATION ABOUT THE DEVELOPMENT OF MOTOR SPORTS IN NEW MARKETS SUCH AS INDIA, CHINA AND THE GULF STATES WITH JOS CLAES, DALLARA'S F.3 AND FORMULINO MANAGER. VARANO SUPPLIES KNOW-HOW, SPARE PARTS — PREDOMINANTLY FOR THE SAFETY SECTOR — AND TRACKSIDE ASSISTANCE. FOR THE TIME BEING THERE ARE SIGNIFICANT LOCAL VARIATIONS: INDIA IS COMING ON IN LEAPS AND BOUNDS, WHEREAS IN THE GULF IT'S MORE A QUESTION OF NUMBERS, AND CHINA IS STILL A LONG WAY OFF. BUT WE'RE GETTING THERE

«HAPPY TO HELP A N

Jos Claes, as F.1. has shown us, the new markets are also crucially important for motorsports. Can you give us an update on Dallara's Formolino projects in India and China?

"At Dallara we don't mind whether we sell cars in Italy, India or China, therefore it's very important to establish a presence in the new markets. It's very interesting to observe the current boom in India, a country that already had a thriving karting scene, and has already produced a F.1. driver of the caliber of Narain Karthikeyan, but is now expanding very rapidly indeed. And at Dallara we are pleased and proud to be a part of this development. The Indians may lag behind us in a number of departments, but they have already understood the necessity to make a significant step forward in terms of quality: I'm firmly convinced that, within five years, we'll be talking about Indian motorsports in completely different terms. China is a far more complicated proposition, and not least because of the language barrier and the difference between time-zones".

What are the needs of markets such as India, China and the Gulf States?

"The aim of our Indian partners is to manufacture the parts themselves, so that they are not obliged to import finished cars. They have already started to do this, and to do it very well. The situation is different in China. A number of races have been organised, but the young Chinese who have the economic resources necessary to compete in motorsports have a different mentality to their European counterparts: they want to enjoy themselves, but they are not prepared to put in the 5 or 6 years of hard work that are necessary to build a career. There are some good circuits in the Gulf, but Dallara is not currently involved in any projects in that area. One of the reasons for this is the lack of co-operation between the various states, which can even make it difficult to get racing cars across the borders between one state and another".

What are the difficulties facing manufacturers when supplying cars for competitions in the new motorsports markets?

"It's more a question of novelties than difficulties. One of the great qualities of the Indians is their humility; they are aware of their limitations and are not afraid to ask for help or advice. I don't mean that they don't know how to build a car, or what a screwdriver is for. They want to learn how to build racing cars for themselves, and this is a very positive aspect. Our involvement doesn't end with simply sending off a manual, we also provide technical assistance, and not only on race days, but during the weeks and months leading up to it".

What kind of commitment would you expect Dallara to have in these countries? Do you envisage a F.3. championship in the future?

"Let's be clear about this: We are currently only talking about Formolino. If something else were to develop in the future no one would be happier than us. It's worth noting that, in India, they have gone for the version of Formolino that is mid way between the "Medium" and "Pro" versions, rather than the basic model. These cars generate 210 horsepower and use the same engine as Formula Renault in Europe. We are responsible for installing the engines and providing all the parts and assistance regarding safety aspects. We are also responsible for the assembly process and for getting the cars up and running on the track. In the Gulf and India everything is controlled by a single body, teams exist but find it hard to survive. There are a number of local managers and mechanics, but they lack experience".

Will Dallara's presence in these countries act as a stimulus for young, local talent?

"We hope so. Personally, I would like to see the drivers' ranks swelled by new talent from India, China and other developing countries. It would be a lot more difficult and stimulating struggling to emerge from a group of 120 drivers than from a group of 20. There's no reason why a

country like India couldn't produce the next Schumacher. Karthikeyan is a very good driver and achieved several excellent results during the early stages of his career. His experience will be very important, and when the number of local drivers starts to increase it will be easier to identify the talented ones".

Will China present another new challenge or is it too early to say?

"The main issue in China is the cultural problem I mentioned earlier: potential young drivers are not sufficiently well-motivated. I'm one of those at Dallara who have been pushing to develop this market for five years now, and I can assure you that China will get there one day; but I couldn't say when. For the time being, touring car competitions seem to be doing well and experiments have been carried out with Formula Renault and Formula Abarth, but they are not ready for single-seater racing yet, and not least because, as things stand, at least 50% of the drivers are "imported".

A part from the Middle and Far East, what other sectors are on Dallara's radar? Brazil possibly?

"Brazil is always an interesting prospect. We used to say that things would go well down there for seven years and then start going backwards again. But things have been going well in Brazil for well over 7 years now. What's needed, though, is a change of mentality. I don't think it's right that Brazilian drivers are shipped over to Europe to "cut their teeth" when they are 16 or 17 years old. Frequently they will simply burn out, and through no fault of their own. There's no shortage of good, demanding (although frequently hazardous) circuits in Brazil and the young drivers there have to understand that it's better to finish their schooling first, setting aside Sundays for racing, maybe in slightly smaller cars, before making the move to Europe at a later stage, around 19 or 20 years of age".

Stefano Semeraro

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NEW WORLD»



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