



Media Information
ABB FIA Formula E Championship
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An interview with António Félix da Costa: “With the BMW iFE.18 we’ve created something very exciting”.

- **António Félix da Costa is entering his fifth season in Formula E.**
- **In an interview Félix da Costa talks about the impressive development of Formula E and the new challenges with the BMW iFE.18 and the BMW i Andretti Motorsport team.**
- **Félix da Costa: “Being able to develop a new project within a company like BMW is great”.**

Munich. On 15th December, the opening race in Ad Diriyah (KSA) sees the BMW i Andretti Motorsport team get its first season in the ABB FIA Formula E Championship underway. BMW works driver António Félix da Costa (POR) has known the series from Season 1. Now, together with BMW i Andretti Motorsport, he opens a new chapter. In an interview he talks about the impressive development of Formula E and the new challenges with the BMW iFE.18 in Season 5.

António, Season 5 of the ABB FIA Formula E Championship will mark your fifth season in the series. How has it developed since the beginning?

António Félix da Costa: “Being there from the start, it’s been really impressive to see the growth and the changes in Formula E over the course of the last four seasons. It started as something people didn’t really believe in, including myself, and now it is something every driver wants to be a part of. But not only that, look at how professional it is, how many top manufacturers have entered, how many fans attend, and the level of sponsors involved. It’s really captured the interest of the motorsport world. It’s been a really massive journey for all of us and it’s now a series that everyone takes seriously. It’s become really, really big.”

What changes for you personally with BMW entering as a manufacturer?

Félix da Costa: “Being a BMW works driver in Formula E is something I aspired to from the beginning. I hoped from season one that BMW would be involved one day and now, in season five, they are entering properly. It’s actually all of the pieces of the





puzzle coming together. It's nice when you have a plan and it works out. I'm really looking forward to this season – I'm hoping we can achieve a lot together."

How much can the championship improve with the entry of BMW and other manufacturers?

Félix da Costa: "One big factor for the success of the championship was how many manufacturers would come along. BMW is a hugely successful manufacturer around the world and in seasons five and six they will be joined on track by other big players including Porsche, Mercedes, Audi, Nissan and Jaguar. For any series to have this level of interest and commitment from industry leaders is very exciting and suggests we have a very strong future."

How exciting is it to be part of a whole new project like the BMW iFE.18?

Félix da Costa: "It's really exciting to be part of something new. I'm still young and quite fresh with a manufacturer, so being able to develop a new project within a company like BMW is great. There are a lot of top people involved in Munich who are very excited to see this new baby being born and grow as quickly as possible."

How does it feel to drive the BMW iFE.18?

Félix da Costa: "The new car felt great from day one. The driveability is really good. Of course, like everyone on the grid, we were worried about how we would perform against our competitors but we turned up at the Valencia test and showed we have a well-performing and reliable car. With the BMW iFE.18 we've created something very exciting and I can't wait to race it in season five."

How much can your work at the racetrack contribute to the next generations of electric production cars?

Félix da Costa: "For BMW, having the Formula E project allows them to challenge themselves more. The race programme gives them a test-bed, a lab, for the development of the electric drivetrain. We encourage the road car developers to really push and go as aggressive as they can with their development tools. I think Formula E has already helped BMW to set the bar with e-mobility and I think it will help to raise it even higher in the coming years."



How much fun are electric road cars to drive?

Félix da Costa: “Electric road cars are cool, fun and exciting and I think Formula E is a fantastic way to showcase this. In Formula E we do have to manage our energy to get to the end but this is additional motivation to us. Our goal is to reduce energy consumption and if we are learning new driving styles to do so then this is something we can take into the way we drive on the roads in everyday life.”

Coming back to racing: What are the main technical differences between the BMW iFE.18 and the Gen1 car?

Félix da Costa: “The generation two car looks a lot nicer – it’s a big step forward with how futuristic and aggressive it looks. On a technical side, we have more power and more range, which makes the car change during the race unnecessary. Also, we have got the brake-by-wire system. This is a big step forward for us as it allows the software side to control all of the braking and deceleration of the car, and when we brake how much regeneration goes back into the battery.”

Can you please explain the new rules concerning power modes?

Félix da Costa: “During the races we will now run at 200 kW throughout, which was our qualifying power from last year. In qualifying we will even have 250 kW available now. This year we will also have ‘Attack Mode’: you have to go slightly off-line to trigger it, then you have a certain amount of time that you can run with 225 kW. This will allow us to go faster, attack, defend and will encourage people to run different strategies throughout the race.”

What are the special challenges you as a driver and the car face on the narrow and often bumpy street circuits?

Félix da Costa: “Street tracks are always a big challenge for racing drivers. Traditionally, we only got to race on one or two a year, but with Formula E almost every race is a street track, which is an incredible new challenge. I always loved street circuits and even before Formula E had great memories of winning the Macau F3 Grand Prix twice and being on the podium in Monaco. I really enjoy going to bumpy tracks with no room for mistakes.”



What are your expectations for Ad Diriyah and Season 5 in general?

Félix da Costa: “The test in Valencia went well for us. Topping the timesheets gives us a lot of confidence but we need to stay humble. Our competitors are extremely strong so we are taking a cautious approach to Ad Diriyah. We’re not really sure what to expect from the event but we approach it with as much strength and motivation as we can and then we will build our goals and expectations for the season from there.”

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