



# F1 Champions gather in Paris as FIA opens Hall of Fame

Paris, 4 December

The FIA last night inaugurated the new FIA Hall of Fame in Paris with nine FIA Formula One World Champions in attendance as all 33 winners of motor sport's most prestigious title were honoured by the sport's regulator.

In association with official partners Michelin and Rolex, the FIA Hall of Fame was launched at a glittering ceremony at the headquarters of the ACF in Paris, with champions Jackie Stewart, Mario Andretti, Alain Prost, Nigel Mansell, Damon Hill, Jacques Villeneuve, Fernando Alonso, Sebastian Vettel and Nico Rosberg joining representatives and family of F1's other title winners in becoming the first drivers honoured by the new initiative.

FIA President Jean Todt said: "The FIA Hall of Fame has been created to highlight the values that run through motor sport and the champions who have been and who still are the exemplars of the FIA's values of commitment, integrity, respect and sportsmanship. This is the first stage of an ambitious project: the FIA Hall of Fame will soon expand to the FIA headquarters in Geneva, and other champions and other disciplines will be in the spotlight in the coming years. In this way we will celebrate all the FIA champions who have made, and who still make the history of motor sport so incredibly rich and inspiring."

The inaugural ceremony, held in the library of the ACF, where Formula One's regulations were first drafted in the 1940s, first inducted the 17 champions with single titles to their name, starting with Formula One's first champion, 1950 winner Giuseppe Farina and ending with 2016 champion Nico Rosberg.

Among that group was 1992 champion Nigel Mansell, who said: "I'd like to thank the FIA for making this evening possible for all of us. It's such a special evening. I'd also like to congratulate all the other drivers here, truly they are all tremendous."

Damon Hill, who in 1996 followed in the footsteps of his double title winning father Graham, added: "It was always very difficult to get it through my head that I'd become a world champion at all, so the thrill continues, and it just an amazing honour to be included. You see the people who are here and the names mentioned – Mario Andretti, Nigel Mansell, Alain Prost and Jackie Stewart and it's hard to believe I'm in the same gang. So, congratulations to the FIA for instigating the Hall of Fame and thank you for including me."

The ceremony then celebrated two- and three-time champions, including 2005 and 2006 winner Fernando Alonso who commented: "It has been a fantastic night. I'm very honoured to be here with these great champions. All of them inspired me to become a Formula One driver, they inspired all the kids of my generation, so I feel very proud."

Alonso, who this year raced at the Indianapolis 500 and who will contest the 24 Hours of Daytona sports car race in 2018, added: "I'm trying other series now and trying to imitate some of the idols I had when I was a kid. The Indy 500 experience this year, maybe Le Mans in the future. President Todt mentioned that the Hall of Fame for endurance racing will be in 2019, so I have two years!"



The Renault R25 driven to title glory by Alonso in 2005 was displayed outside the FIA headquarters along with the Alfa Romeo 158 of Nino Farina; the Ferrari 156 of Phil Hill; the Lotus 25 of Jim Clark; the McLaren MP4/5 of Ayrton Senna, and the Ferrari F1-2000 of Michael Schumacher.

After honouring three-time winners such as F1 legends Sir Jackie Stewart and Jack Brabham, the evening moved to the sport's most successful drivers, beginning with the induction of four-time champions Alain Prost, Sebastian Vettel and Lewis Hamilton and then five-time winner Juan Manuel Fangio.

Of the evening, 2010-2013 winner Vettel said: "It's been incredible to see all these names, all these faces. Obviously a lot of them I only know from what I have read, what I have seen, but I think it's a great idea. There's so much history in the sports, it's still so alive, and thanks to events like tonight's, we'll keep it like that. I love racing but as you get older you change your way of thinking and I think your appreciation for things and definitely for things like tonight grows."

Finally, the sport's most successful competitor, seven-star driver Michael Schumacher, was inducted, with long-time manager Sabine Kehm on hand to accept his award.

"We all know Michael should be here and I am totally sure he would love to be here," she said. "He always had the highest respect for everyone in this room and he would be very honoured. What made Michael so special, what made him so successful was, as with everybody in this room, a love and passion for this sport."

The inauguration also saw the launch of the FIA Hall of Fame website, where the achievements of those inducted will be celebrated in order to help inspire the legends of the future.

The FIA Hall of Fame gallery in Paris has been created by Wilmotte and Associates, a prominent global architecture firm headquartered in France, and will be open to the public upon reservation. Details will be available on the FIA Hall of Fame website.

The launch of the FIA of Hall of Fame has been supported from the start by official partners Michelin and Rolex. Both brands are also involved with the FIA's flagship Championships, from the FIA Formula One Championship (Rolex) to the FIA World Rally Championship, the FIA World Endurance Championship and the FIA Formula E Championship (Michelin). LAT Images and INA (Institut National de l'Audiovisuel) become Media Partners, providing a hugely rich resource of incredible still and moving images of motor sport's greatest heroes.