

**Interview with FIA President Max Mosley and FOM President Bernie Ecclestone  
Conducted by Michael Schmidt (Auto Motor und Sport)**

**In May 2001 GPWC declared war on the Formula One Establishment. How do you see the last five years?**

**BE:** Let me speak about the commercial aspects. We have agreed the commercial terms, agreed on everything we are responsible for. In the end everyone was very helpful and wanted to get the job done. Mr. Dassas from Renault was the one who accelerated the process. I can't speak for the FIA.

**MM:** Firstly, we never thought in reality there was ever the slightest prospect of a rival series being set up. All we want to do was make sure that the rules were fair and equal, and that the cost-level was such that we could get a reasonable number of teams which were able to compete on equal terms.

The difficulty was that when we invited the teams at the start of 2005 to discuss the rules for 2008, a number of them didn't turn up. In one way, this was a pity, but in another way it made it easier for us to decide what we thought was right.

**Do you feel like winners now?**

**MM:** I don't think you can ever talk in terms of winning. There are clichés one could use, that it was a victory for common sense, but I would say that what has now finally happened is in the best interests of the sport and the outcome was inevitable from the start.

**BE:** I don't think there are any winners I think we are all losers. We've done a lot of damage to Formula One.

The FIA is a loser, because they were forced to adopt a position. We are losers because we were forced to defend our position. The manufacturers and the teams have suffered more than anybody because the sponsors started putting a question-mark against Formula One where there had never been a question mark before.

We destabilised a sport which had been one of the very few which had been really stable.

**Was it necessary to have this aggravation over five years. Wasn't there a shortcut?**

**BE:** The shortcut would have been for them not to have had this silly fight. From the financial point of view they would have got more than they'd ever got. From the FIA's point of view, all they tried to do was to keep the teams alive and well.

**MM:** Bernie is right, obviously from a commercial point of view everybody lost. But from an FIA point of view what we and also the teams lost was a lot of time. That time could have been used for doing something constructive.

**The manufacturers argue, that they won, because they got 50 percent.**

**BE:** Maybe they would have got even more if they had acted differently.

**What broke the ice finally?**

**MM:** Mr. Dassas from Renault broke the log-jam. He saw that there was nothing to be gained by going on and much to be gained by stopping. He then pushed the others into stopping.

**Were you ever concerned that it could have gone the wrong way?**

**MM:** No, because I know the practical difficulties of trying to set up a rival championship. It would have been possible to set up a rival series, but that would not have had the same credibility.

Perhaps I am oversimplifying it but to me it's very simple. When they first wanted to set-up a structure they got two groups to give them quotes. Both groups, IMG and iSe, said that the success of their entire plan was contingent on having just one championship. Their assumption was, that they could simply take over Bernie's business so that he could not guarantee to us the 20 cars necessary to run the Formula One World Championship. That was obvious nonsense.

They could have set-up a rival series but there still would have been a Formula One World Championship. At that point they would have got into a position, where Bernie had all the contracts with the promoters and the TV companies. The promoters and TV people may not have been happy with that, but there were contracts in place to respect. So then the manufacturers would have asked the promoters and broadcasters, will you run a race for us and will you televise it? In both cases the promoters and the TV companies would have asked them to pay, with the argument that these were huge car manufacturers who were using racing to market their products.

At that point the entire business plan would have collapsed, because it was predicated on the assumption that they could generate not only the income Bernie had, but actually improve on it. The whole thing could not possibly work unless the manufactureres were prepared to put up jointly approximately a billion dollars a year until the whole thing got going. I didn't think there was the slightest chance of them doing that.

**BE:** One thing I would like to add. In one of the meetings we had, the manufacturers told us that they could not commit for more than two years. Ferrari at first said ten years, then Luca called me and said that he could only commit to four years but why should he commit for four when the others were only committing to two?

Imagine you are going to start a brand new championship, and you go to the promoters and TV companies and tell them, 'small problem, we can only guarantee that we are going to be doing this for two years. After that I'm sorry we don't know what's going to happen'. Can you imagine the promoters and the TV people saying 'that's alright don't worry about it'?

Another small thing. Max and I, a hundred years ago, tried to start a rival championship to run against the FIA, when perhaps Jean-Marie (Balestre) was the only one at the FIA who was very strong. We decided not to do it. Can you imagine what chance the manufacturers had trying to do that now?

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**You were dealing all the time with Presidents of world wide companies. Are you surprised, how they misjudged the reality?**

**MM:** I don't think the Presidents of the companies were ever involved. If you're running a huge global concern like BMW for example, if you're the CEO or even someone like Mr Göschel, you have a very limited time to think about it and so you listen to the competition manager. The only time it went to the big bosses was when someone would go to them and say can we sign for five years? Then they said no because it would have been a contingent liability on their balance sheets and probably half of the board is against Formula One anyway so there was no chance of getting it through.

**BE:** We do not know what kind of information the CEO's of these companies were given. They may have been asked to give a decision based on information which could have been completely wrong.

**Why didn't the manufacturers buy the Formula One business? It would have been the easiest way.**

**BE:** Absolutely. That's what they should have done.

**MM:** When we were doing the famous \$300 million deal with Bernie for the TV-rights over the next 100 years, I got a call from Mr. Cantarella, who was at that time in charge of GPWC. He told me that they were interested. I said, sure, make a bid. If they were prepared to offer more, we would have been obliged to look at it.

We had a meeting in June, where Cantarella told me, that they were not able to make a decision before September. I then said to the World Council 'we have Bernie's firm offer on the table, or we can wait until September and maybe the manufacturers will offer more, but we can't be sure'.

We weren't talking about a billion dollars a year for five years. If they had offered \$400 million, Bernie would have either had to match it or we would have had to take it. The thing is, that they could not even agree to offer \$400 million to buy all the rights from 2010 to infinity.

More recently some of the number two people in these companies would then try to tell me that they could run outside the FIA structures. I asked them how they were going to do that? How they were going to get the circuits? They said that they would buy the circuits. Well at that point you just give up. To be fair none of the CEOs ever talked like that, but some of the number two people did...

**The key seemed to be the signature of Ferrari on the new Concorde Agreement. How did you convince Luca di Montezemolo, who in the early days was one of the GPWC's biggest supporters?**

**BE:** I've known Luca now for 30 odd years, and he has always been the biggest supporter of what is good for Ferrari.

**MM:** Whatever Luca did or didn't do with Bernie it was always in the interests of Ferrari. There is also a fundamental tradition in Ferrari to never run outside the Establishment. They would always be with the FIA. Sooner or later it was bound to end in the way that it has. The only question was the amount of time and aggravation it took.

### **Does Ferrari deserve any extra-rights?**

**BE:** That's what was agreed. Whether they deserve it or not doesn't make any difference. The bottom line is that is what was commercially agreed and it is completely fair. The company that bought the commercial rights is happy and certainly the teams should be more than happy.

**But the manufacturers wanted to have 60 percent of the income. You gave them only 50 percent.**

**BE:** The offer of 60 percent had been made on the assumption that the manufacturers signed as manufacturers. But they didn't want to do that and they sent their relevant teams. The new owners are business people who have to value the risks. For them a signature from BMW is worth more than the one from BMW-Sauber. They could have had 60 percent at any time, had they signed in their own names. But they didn't, they said that they couldn't make the commitment.

**MM:** Because they couldn't even commit for the next five years, or even for two. With everything clarified: with only one championship, no split, no division, even then they couldn't sign with Bernie for the extra 10 per cent. For me that provides conclusive proof that they could not run their own series.

### **How far away is the Memorandum of Understanding from the final Concorde Agreement?**

**BE:** From our commercial point of view everything is clear. Now it's up to the regulator, the FIA.

**MM:** The entire structure is now in place. We may or may not end up with another Concorde Agreement. Probably we will in the end but we have a deal with Bernie that he will show up with 20 cars. Bernie has a deal with the teams that they will come with 20 cars. We have a deal with Bernie that we regulate the championship in the traditional way, so at the moment the entire structure is in place so we don't have to have a Concorde Agreement.

We may need one because at the moment there is a championship in 2008 with regulations which everyone has entered. Those teams do not have to enter in 2009. Equally we could change the regulations completely after 2008 consistent with our deal with Bernie. But then Bernie has a deal with the teams that they will enter after 2008. So we could leave it as it is but we will probably do a longer term deal.

**BE:** I guarantee if you walk down the pitlane and speak to all the team principals, and the managers for that matter, and ask them questions about the Concorde Agreement, they wouldn't be able to answer you. Because they haven't read it and it's so out of date now that we do very few things that the Concorde Agreement says we should do.

### **You wanted to modify the decision making process, is it too dangerous to give too much power to the teams?**

**MM:** The ideal is that we should have to consult with the teams but the idea that the teams should be able to make the rules is crazy, because they can never agree. And they only think of the teams, whereas we have to think of the promoters, the rightsholders, we have to think of everybody. We should consult with the teams closely but they should not have the right to dictate what the rules are.

**Do you expect further problems until the rules for 2008 are finalised?**

**MM:** The rules are finalised. The only thing that can happen is somebody can propose a change and we may or may not change it. If all the teams proposed a change unanimously and there were no fundamental problems for the promoters or the commercial rightsholders, I am sure we would do it but that's unlikely.

At the moment we have the rules, people can make proposals but there are different conditions for different things to be changed. Technical regulations require unanimity. A sporting regulation that changes the way the cars are built, after the 30th of June, requires unanimity. A sporting regulation that does not affect the cars, could go right up to October 2007 with a simple majority.

**BE:** And then everything has to go to the Formula One Commission and the World Council.

**MM:** Both of them have the right of a veto.

**BE:** And ultimately the General Assembly.

**MM:** Exactly. He knows the structures better than I do.

**In the old payout system the successful teams got more money, which made the strong teams even stronger. Will you stick with this system?**

**BE:** It's been going for 30 years. If you do well you get rewarded.

**MM:** In my opinion we ought to have a system where everyone gets the same money and ideally a little bit more for the ones at the back.

**BE:** We do that Max in Column One. In Column One the same percentage of prize money goes to each team. So Toro Rosso gets the same as Ferrari. The Column Two money is based on results. People who score more points, get more money. That is only fair.

**MM:** And also the travel, the teams get the same refund for their travel expenses. You're right, that is relatively new and came in with the current Concorde Agreement. Up to 1997 it was much more complicated.

**Are you in a way responsible for the five year long battle? You invited the manufacturers to enter Formula One. You gave them all sorts of presents, for example you allowed electronic driver aids, because high technology was attractive for the car companies. Perhaps you gave them too big a taste of power?**

**MM:** I don't think that's entirely fair. The regulations were the regulations all the way through. Then at the end of 1993 we started to get worried by the electronics. In fact I got a Christmas card from Senna, saying, that you must get rid of electronic driver aids. Which we did for 1994. We even asked for the right to read their source codes. That was accepted by the manufacturers at the time. Since then we haven't cut back in any significant way. We just allowed the traction-control to come back in order to stop the allegations, that someone was cheating with it. There remained always some doubts.

Now we start to cut the costs, because there is no way that they could go on like this. It would put them out of business. If we want a successful series, we have to make it possible for Bernie to turn up with 20 cars. The manufacturers were never lured in they came in with the regulations as they were.

**Now they say, that you want to get rid of the manufacturers by imposing a low-tech formula and freezing all developments.**

**BE:** Rubbish. Why would we do that?

**MM:** Complete nonsense.

**BE:** I would lay down and die to keep them in. The manufacturers are the people who have the money and spend it for the good of the sport. Midland don't spend much money and Toro Rosso aren't spending a fortune. We need the BMWs and Hondas.

**MM:** If you look at what's happening at the moment they are collectively spending more than a billion euros a year in order to make the engines run a little faster each year. It's impossible for that to be sustainable. Some manufacturer has got to be in ninth or tenth or eleventh or twelfth - only one can be first.

The price has to come down to a point where it's worth it even if you are going to be fifth and sixth or seventh and eighth. At a billion euros a year it's not worth it. Sooner or later the Board will stop it.

The way to get rid of the manufacturers is to let it continue as it is. The only way to keep them is to get the costs down.

**BE:** Just looking at what I do with broadcasting. Broadcasting today is completely different compared with ten years ago. It's the same with the technical regulations. Who had heard of traction control when we were running teams? Our traction control was what kind of rear springs we used. Things have moved on and you have to keep in line with what's happening.

From the FIA's point of view they have to ask what could happen in the next five years. If you don't adapt you can be caught out very easily.

**The other allegation is that the problem only started when Bernie sold the Formula One business to the banks.**

**BE:** I didn't sell anything. If I had control over our family trust I never would have sold it.

When the trust realised, and I have nothing to do with the management of the trust, that perhaps I had to have a heart operation they started to get a bit nervous. They asked, what would happen if I die. So we better get out and sell some shares, because if he does die, maybe the shares wouldn't be worth as much. They did a deal and it was a good one as it happened at the time, but they put themselves into a position they never thought they would be in. Where it was more than 50 per cent that was being sold. They couldn't foresee that Kirch would take over the shares from the banks and that he would take another 25 percent option. That's what caused all the problems.

**MM:** Again these were two or three billion dollar deals. The manufacturers could have bought all the rights for less than 400 million dollars back in 2002. But they didn't. The truth of the matter is that they came into Formula One because they thought it would be good for their marketing and good for their company and it was completely immaterial whether Formula One was owned by Bernie or the banks or whoever. It was a good thing to be in. Just like when they advertise on television they don't care who owns the television company.

The truth of it is that some of the number two people in these companies started to see themselves replacing Bernie, they all saw themselves sitting in the motorhome behind the smoked glass running the show. When that got less likely because they realised the banks had bought it they started to resent it.

**BE:** I would never disclose the numbers, but the manufacturers could have done the deal before CVC came. They could have done a super deal. They should have done it, it would have put them in control and they could have fired me. They could have done all the things they say they wanted to do.

**MM:** They could have done all of it for a fraction of what they are spending every year on engines just to make them run a little bit faster.

### **Another complaint from the teams is that Bernie takes too much money out of the sport?**

**BE:** Years ago I offered to the teams that we all share the risk. I would run the company and take 30 percent out of the profit. Everyone without exception said, "you do what you want. You take the risk and the money as long as we get a guaranteed amount back. We are racers and all we are interested in is to race our cars."

Once it turned out to be a profit centre, all of a sudden they wanted to have a much bigger share.

One thing I would like to point out, the teams always got paid exactly the money which was agreed. I sometimes was left with no money, when Brazil forgot to pay for example. And Watkins Glen still owe us money.

**MM:** It is like somebody else develops a business on your land and when he turns it into a success you come along and tell him that you want his business. That's not correct.

### **Now you have given them twice as much money. With the new rules the cost will come down. What will they do with so much? Is there the danger that they will just buy bigger boats or jets?**

**BE:** What difference does it make? Nothing wrong with it. If all the mechanics come in a private plane what difference does it make to us. It's none of our business.

**MM:** The problem at the moment, if you take BMW's engine department as an example, they are spending each year more than 50 percent of what they give to their shareholders. So if we save the big car companies money they should give it back to their shareholders or spend it on interesting new technologies that we may allow into the rules - but that's another story.

### **What kind of budget will be necessary to fight for the championship in 2008?**

**MM:** I would guess, 150 million euros should be more than enough.

### **Do you ever see the possibility in the future, that a private team like Williams or Red Bull can win a race?**

**MM:** If you have a really good team manager, a well run team, a good driver - and there are several - with a reasonable budget, then there is no reason not to.

**BE:** Let's take McLaren. They have got, in my opinion, the best looking team, always incredibly well turned out. They've got a very very experienced guy who runs the company, Mr Dennis, who has been around a long time. They've won a lot of championships so he's got a good CV. They've probably got

as good an engine as most of the others, and now they've got a guy that's won the world championship, Alonso.

I cannot understand why they are fighting to get more technology than Renault are fighting for. They've got all the ingredients they need plus the one that Renault had to win the championship. Why do they need more?

**MM:** I completely agree with that. The other interesting thing that you notice is that people who are asking for more technology are the people behind. But the moment they get the technology what are they doing? Losing. So they've got more chance of winning if they don't have it.

**One point of discussion is the engine homologation. Your critics argue that freezing the development for three years is like telling Real Madrid to play for three years with the same players.**

**BE:** They can change their staff if they want to.

**MM:** It's more like saying that the players have to wear the same type of boots for three years. I don't think the public is interested in the development of football boot technology. They're more interested in goals.

**But a good engine will stay a good engine, and a bad one a bad one. Are you not afraid that the ranking will stay the same?**

**MM:** At the moment they are all on more or less the same level. Therefore we have to freeze them as quickly as possible. If we give them time, than the people with a lot of money will have the opportunity to pull out a bit of a lead.

**BE:** I'm becoming a Ron Dennis supporter. Ron always wants to have a level playfield. What Max wants to create, is exactly that.

**Do you remember the day when you first met?**

**MM:** I think we met in 1968, when Bernie was looking after Jochen Rindt and ran in a Formula 2 team called Winkelman. I was a driver at the time. But we first really got together when Bernie bought Brabham.

**What was your impression?**

**MM:** To me he was a really capable businessman which was like a breath of fresh air in those days. You've got to understand that before Bernie took over, the team owners all went together to the organisers to negotiate the terms. They took me along because I was a lawyer and they thought I could be helpful.

When I was sitting there, I just couldn't believe that a world sport was run like that. When Bernie appeared in 1971, we suddenly had someone who understood how the world works.

**BE:** I'll give you two examples of how it was in those days. When I started to talk to the Canadian organisers, I was asking for three free hire cars per team. They all said that it was impossible because they had never had that before.

The other example is when John Surtees wanted to have a basket of currencies - whichever currency was going up at the time, we should go for it.

**MM:** When it was the Swiss Franc, we would make the deal in Swiss Francs, if it was the dollar in dollars.

**BE:** That would have meant that we would have had to change the contracts every month.

**MM:** We used to have a joke about one of the main negotiators at the time. Somebody would say to him 'I'll give you \$500' and he would reply 'no, make it \$490'.

### **What would Formula One be without you?**

**MM:** Without Bernie it would probably be still like it was in 1969. Something less successful than Sports cars, in the best circumstances something like the World Rally Championship.

In 1969 in some of the races only thirteen cars entered and five out of them were only interested in getting the start money. Sports car racing was massive in that period with Porsche, Ferrari and Alfa. In 1970 Porsche gave us 30 percent of our total Formula One budget in order to take Jo Siffert for March. They only wanted to prevent Siffert going to Ferrari. Formula One was nothing. But look where sports cars are now compared to Formula One.

**BE:** Before Max became the FIA President, the authority was very weak. I remember, that we solved most of the issues amongst ourselves.

In Kyalami once, Colin Chapman told me that the McLaren front wing was illegal. We had a little argument with Teddy Mayer, who refused to change the wing. Finally Colin and I jumped on both sides of the wing and cracked it. We told Teddy, "you see, it's not legal now."

There was no FIA as such then. The scrutineering was done by local officials, who didn't understand very much about it. Without a strong FIA it would be anarchy today.

### **You were both racing drivers and team principals. Does that help today?**

**MM:** Enormously. When people are telling you things you know exactly when they are telling you complete rubbish.

**BE:** For 30, 40 years we have served an apprenticeship.

### **Are you friends?**

**BE:** I would trust Max with whatever I have. He could have an open cheque from me. That's about as much as I can say.

**MM:** I tell my family, if I fell under a bus and if you have any problems then go and see Bernie. Not to get anything, but for advice.

### **To what extent does the one need the other?**

**MM:** We have different talents...

**BE:** ...and common interests.

The worst thing is that the teams don't understand that they have the same interests that we do. They behave like a person who goes to a doctor about a medical problem but refuses to take any advice.

They need to be looked after. What has Max got to gain by doing anything bad to a team? Zero.

**Max, are you jealous of Bernie's money?**

**MM:** I have different objectives in life. What I do, is more political. For Bernie politics are a nuisance. The fact that some people in Formula One make a fortune doesn't bother me. I am happy for them. For me it's important to say that the whole machine runs well. Money doesn't mean too much for me. I have inherited a little bit but I'm nothing like as rich as many of the Formula One people.

**BE:** I wouldn't say that, not according to some of the things I've heard.

From my point of view money measures your success. For business people once they have achieved what they wanted it has nothing to do with money any more.

**Would you like to be the FIA President?**

**BE:** No way. I don't have the patience Max has and which is necessary for that job.

**The common opinion in the paddock is, that the combination of Max and Bernie is a 'kind of Mafia', which controls everything. Wrong or right?**

**BE:** Wrong. We are not 'a kind of Mafia'. We are 'the Mafia'.

**MM:** If the teams had to sit down and agree on anything there would be paralysis. The fact is, that professional racing teams are in this sport because they want to win the championship.

**BE:** The teams need somebody to tell them that these are the rules because they would never ever be able to agree otherwise.

**Jean Todt argues that the decision makers in the sport, including the team principals, are getting too old. Is he right?**

**BE:** When Max announced that he was going resign two years ago, at first everybody said "thank God, we've got rid of Max." Then they started to look around and came to the conclusion, "Christ, who is going to do the job now?"

Bring one of these young guys to me and let them tell me what we are doing wrong and I would change it immediately. The trouble is that everybody seems to know what is wrong but nobody knows what is right.

**In 1980 and 1981 we had the same kind of story as the one which has just come to an end. What are the similarities, what were the differences?**

**MM:** In those days the private teams and Bernie wanted to run their own championship. On the other side were the FIA, badly organised, and the manufacturers.

**BE:** Not quite right, Max. Nothing was written down by contract. We had grabbed some land which others didn't use. We were the only ones who did anything.

**MM:** That's right. Nowadays there is a structure in place, binding contracts, much more money involved and far fewer amateurs around. Today it's much more difficult to run outside the system. If we couldn't do it in 1980, there was even less chance of anyone doing it today.

### **How was the conflict solved back in 1980?**

**MM:** We had no money, no sponsorship, no tyres and the whole Establishment against us. Over the winter we were skiing in Kitzbühel, Colin Chapman, Teddy Mayer, me and some others.

At a dinner we saw a painting on the wall of the restaurant which had a cow in it. The cow was being painted by a group of people. Chapman asked the waitress what it was all about. She told him about an ancient siege and that the villagers were left with only one cow. So to give the impression that they had plenty of food the people painted that cow in a different way every day and took it to a place, where all their enemies could see it.

Chapman suddenly said, "that's it, that's what we need to do. Let's organise a race."

We all went up to my room and telephoned Bernie to tell him about our idea. There was a long silence on the other end...

**BE:** ...It was in the middle of the night and I could hear that they were all pissed.

**MM:** Which we were, but we still liked the idea the next morning.

We decided that Bernie should give us tyres from his old Avon warehouse. Then we put on a press conference in the hotel Crillon just next to the FIA in Paris to announce that there would be a race in South Africa.

Immediately Renault started panic. They called Balestre and then the FIA started to get worried. If Balestre had come to see us at breakfast at the Crillon and waited one more month we would have surrendered.

**BE:** Balestre would have seen what poor shape we were in. There was Mo Nunn from Ensign, who had mortgaged his house. I had to pay the airfare to Paris for Ken Tyrrell. I doubt that we were even able to pay the bill in the Crillon.

**MM:** It was a big bluff.

### **Did history repeat itself. It looks like the 2008 entry list, just open for one week, was a good way of making the manufacturers worry?**

**BE:** No way. I have to defend Max here, not that he needs to be defended. But the reason is simple, for the teams to have some say in the regulations they had to be in the championship. Otherwise the people who had already signed would have been the only ones to discuss the rules and the people outside would have complained that they had no vote.

**Can I test you both on how well you agree and where you disagree. Qualifying format, another change or stay the same?**

**BE:** Let's knock off 5 minutes from the last 20.

**MM:** The same.

**How much technical freedom, none, a little bit or full?**

**BE:** The ideal situation would be defining 'a box' in which you can do what you want with your car. Unfortunately we cannot afford that technical freedom anymore.

**MM:** As far as the engine is concerned, absolute maximum is the freeze which has been proposed in the Maranello agreement. On the chassis side there is still quite a lot to do.

**Sixteen or twenty races?**

**BE:** It's good to have twenty races, provided we spread them out over a longer period. These back to back races are a killer. And provided that we put on races in places which are good for the people who compete. I was called a lunatic to run races in China or Turkey. I put these Grands Prix on because they are good for the manufacturers.

**MM:** We should get rid of the back to back races apart from outside Europe, where it makes sense for logistical reasons.

**Spa or Shanghai?**

**MM:** Both of them. I like the extreme at one end of Monaco and at the other end of Spa. With all respect to Mr. Tilke, some of the modern circuits are a bit too similar. But he understands this as well.

**BE:** That's why we tried to do a modern Spa in Istanbul. It took us four years to find the land for it.

**What should the maximum be for test kilometres per year?**

**MM:** The real question is trying to get the cost per kilometre down. If we achieve that, certainly not more than 30,000, probably 20,000 is about right.

**BE:** I do not test. I mean, the problem is when forcing testing out, then people start using their simulation tools and test-rigs. Then the gap becomes even bigger, because the haves can use that more than the have nots.

**Are grandstand tickets too expensive nowadays?**

**MM:** If the grandstands are full then the price is right. If they are empty it's too expensive.

**BE:** Providing we put on a good show, the value for money is right. Try to think about how much it costs to put on a Grand Prix compared to other sports.

**As a show is Formula One attractive for everyone?**

**BE:** It is important to get more female interest. It used to be 80 percent males amongst the spectators, now it is more like 50:50.

**MM:** Counting the e-mails we receive, we are getting about 50 percent from women, which I find extraordinary. And they are very knowledgeable.

### **Michael Schumacher will he carry on or retire?**

**BE:** Carry on. No reason for him to stop. If he doesn't win the championship he has to continue. If he does win he has to as well.

**MM:** I am not sure he knows himself at the moment.

**BE:** I believe he knows.

### **Should the new owners of Formula One float the business?**

**BE:** We tried to do it and it didn't work. I don't think, personally, that I could work for a public company.

**MM:** It would have to be a completely different structure.

### **Which era did you enjoy most in Formula One?**

**MM:** For me 1971. March ended up third in the constructors championship and our driver Ronnie Peterson second, for a much smaller budget than our competitors.

**BE:** The 70's. In those days we had a much weaker federation, which allowed me to stop two races that March won. I did not stop them to prevent March winning. I stopped them for safety reasons like Austria 1975, when there was too much rain.

**MM:** The biggest risk of the day was, that our driver Brambilla would crash. What he finally did. We had taken a bit gamble on the set-up. We set the car up for full wet, although the forecast said, that it would dry out later. In fact it never stopped raining. Then Brambilla was in the lead and Bernie came down the pitlane and said, it can't last like this. Do You want me to stop the race now for half points? I said:Done.

**BE:** In those days there was no control, which was not correct. But it was a great time. When you had an engine problem, somebody else helped you out. Or a competitor borrowed you a gear. It was a much nicer atmosphere.

**MM:** We were all going on the same plane, staying in the same hotel. It was a big family. Once at the pool of the Sheraton in Buenos Aires we had an underwater swimming competition and Jochen Mass swam four lengths of the pool under water. By that time Bernie had stopped playing backgammon and said that he could do five and did anybody want to bet? After everybody had put their money on the table, Bernie said to me, right, where's my snorkel.

**BE:** Once Colin Chapman bet \$1000 that Mario Andretti wouldn't push me into the pool.

**MM:** Mario went up to Bernie and whispered to him, why not share the money?

**BE:** We had a little fight and we both jumped into the water and then, both went to Colin to ask him where was our \$500?

**MM:** There was a much higher level of trust.

**BE:** We didn't have any scales in those days, so we didn't know whether our cars had been under the weight limit. Frank Williams next door knew that we would run under weight as much as he would.

**MM:** There was the famous occasion, when Frank's team manager saw the Brabham guys putting some ballast in the car before scrutineering. He told Frank, but Frank was very relaxed. He just told his manager, don't worry that's our lead, Bernie's just borrowing it.

**Who is your all time hero in motor sport?**

**MM:** Enzo Ferrari. Because he was around since day one and he was a very wise man.

**BE:** Colin Chapman and Enzo Ferrari. More so Enzo Ferrarri probably. I once met him in Maranello and he said to me, "here pointing to the top of the table, here is the sport. Then his finger went underneath the table and he said, "and here, here is where we do business."