

## 2016 Sahara Force India Press Pack

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## Q&A with Vijay Mallya

### Team Principal and Managing Director

#### **Vijay, 2016 will be Force India's ninth season in Formula One. What can we expect?**

"Off the back of our best season ever I want us to begin 2016 in the same way that we ended 2015. If you think back to the last race in Abu Dhabi, we were the third fastest team that weekend and took the fight to Ferrari in qualifying and the race. I'm not saying we can do that in Melbourne, but we set the bar high in 2015 and we should try and push it higher in 2016. At the very least our target must be to maintain fifth place and target fourth place as a stretch objective."

#### **There's an unchanged driver line-up for a third consecutive season. That's good news...**

"I'm very happy with my drivers. They both fit well with our approach and racing philosophy, and they enjoy racing here. We treat our drivers equally; we give them freedom to be themselves, and I think this environment brings out the best from both of them. Having two quick drivers has always been our philosophy because it creates healthy competition within the team, which helps to drive us forward. I expect more of the same in 2016."

#### **There's also consistency with the car colours too...**

"I really like the livery we introduced last year. The car looks smart and contemporary, and reflects our partners and heritage. Although I'm biased, I think our car is one of the best looking on the grid and that's why I wanted to keep a consistent look for 2016. As they say, if it ain't broke, don't fix it."

#### **Who do you see as Force India's main opposition this year?**

"I'm always wary of making bold predictions so early in the season, but I'm optimistic we can stay at the front of the midfield battle. If you look at the second half of last year, after the summer break, we outscored Red Bull Racing by six points and were only nine points behind Williams - so we've got to begin the new season with those teams firmly in our sights. At the same time, we are conscious of the threat from McLaren, Toro Rosso and Renault. All those teams have the potential to make big steps over the winter and will be scoring points. I think it's fair to say the midfield has never been more competitive and we need to work hard to stay at the front of that fight."





**Has the team's growing competitiveness had a positive impact on the team's fortunes off-track?**

"I think our results over the last few years have demonstrated that we are a credible Formula One team capable of challenging the biggest names in the sport. We have all the ingredients in place to keep improving and that makes us an attractive commercial proposition for brands looking to get involved in the sport. We already have a strong portfolio of blue chip brands supporting us and it's no secret that both Renault and Aston Martin showed interest in the team last year. However, I've always stressed that any partnership needs to be for the long-term benefit of the team, the shareholders and our supporters."



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## VJM09

### Technical Specifications

<b>Chassis</b>	Carbon fibre composite monocoque with Zylon side anti-intrusion panels.
<b>Front suspension</b>	Aluminium alloy uprights with carbon fibre composite wishbones, trackrod and pushrod. Inboard chassis mounted torsion springs, dampers and anti-roll bar assembly.
<b>Rear suspension</b>	Aluminium alloy uprights with carbon fibre composite wishbones, trackrod and pullrod. Hydro-mechanical springs, dampers and anti-roll bar assembly.
<b>Wheels</b>	Motegi Racing forged wheels to Sahara Force India specification
<b>Power Unit</b>	Mercedes AMG High Performance Powertrains V6 Turbo 1.6-litre
<b>ERS</b>	Mercedes AMG High Performance Powertrains
<b>Transmission</b>	Mercedes AMG F1 8-speed, semi-automatic seamless shift
<b>Fuel and Lubricants</b>	Petronas
<b>Tyres</b>	Pirelli
<b>Brake system</b>	AP Racing
<b>Brake material</b>	Carbon Industries
<b>Dampers</b>	Koni



## Q&A with Otmar Szafnauer Chief Operating Officer

**Otmar, how would you sum up the last couple of months in the factory – has it been a relatively straightforward winter?**

“The stability in the technical regulations has made things a bit easier this year. Some of the designs can carry over from 2015 into 2016, but we’ve had to manufacture a couple of new chassis, suspension components, and all the mechanical parts, which has kept the factory very busy. There’s also a new aero package, which is an evolution from 2015, but still requires a lot of production work over the winter to be ready for the first test.”

**Does the strong performance in 2015 put extra pressure on the team?**

“It does, but we take the increased expectation as a positive. We must consolidate our fifth place and target teams such as Red Bull Racing and Williams – teams we were matching in the second half of 2015. Seeing our drivers on the podium more regularly is another goal for 2016.”

**The success of the b-spec car was the surprise of the 2015 season. Can we expect big aero steps in 2016 as well?**

“The wind tunnel programme in Cologne is maturing nicely and I’m encouraged by the gains we have made over the winter. We’ve found our rhythm with the tunnel and adjusted our working practices to improve efficiency. The same is true of our CFD tools in Brackley, where we invested heavily in 2014, which means we are making better use of our supercomputer capacity. The first major aero updates should be on the car in time for Melbourne and we also plan another big step for the start of the European season.”

**2016 sees consistency with drivers, technical personnel and regulations – that’s a real positive...**

“Stability in any area of the team normally brings benefits and performance, so an unchanged line-up is good news. Nico is beginning his fifth season with us and Checo his third, and that means they both know the team very well and vice versa. I think that counts for a lot because it’s not easy to build



harmony and get a team gelling well together. We've worked hard to achieve that in most areas and it's not something you can build overnight. It's definitely one of our strengths."

**The team has recruited some young development drivers. What hopes do you have for them in 2016?**

"Alfonso Celis joined us at the end of 2015 and tested the VJM08 in Abu Dhabi. He's a development driver who will spend time on our simulator and take part in seven practice sessions at Grand Prix events. Our most recent recruit is Nikita Mazepin, a young Russian who will begin a comprehensive development programme as part of a long-term association. As a team we've always tried to give opportunities to young talent and nurture their raw abilities to lead them to success. I hope Alfonso and Nikita make the most of this opportunity."

**Where does the team need to improve in 2016 compared to previous years?**

"We missed some opportunities last year with too many retirements in the races – whether through mistakes, failures or bad luck. So we need to address that this year and improve our finishing rate. We also need to bring improvements to the track faster. We saw last year the significant step we made with the b-spec car and it's definitely a regret that we had the technical capability but not the resources required to introduce it earlier in the season."

**How is the relationship with Mercedes?**

"This year marks the eighth year of our collaboration with Mercedes. They look after us incredibly well and there are absolutely no complaints from our side. The strength and reliability of the powertrain has played an important role in our competitiveness."

**What can we expect from Formula One in 2016?**

"Given the stability of the rules, there's every reason to believe we can carry the momentum of last year into 2016. I think the entire field will close up – that always happens with stable rules – and the battle to get inside the top ten will be fierce. So from a fan perspective I think 2016 is going to be very entertaining with good racing throughout the field and especially in the middle of the pack."



## Q&A with Andrew Green Technical Director

**Andrew, now that the VJM09 has been unveiled, can you tell us more about how it came to light?**

“The build process for the VJM09 has been relatively smooth; the consistency in regulations between 2015 and 2016 has helped, and so did the fact that we brought out last year’s updated car quite late in the season. We were able to continue the process of development that went into our b-spec car for the second part of 2015, which was a very good one: it was as close to a seamless transition between seasons as we could ever get, quite a marked difference compared to some years.

“This year, we will also fully reap the fruits of our full-time switch to the wind tunnel in Cologne, which had a significant impact on our on-track performance in the second part 2015. Since we started developing our car at TMG full-time, we have seen a big change in the quality of data correlation. The ability to develop in a tunnel that represents reality so closely was key and it will continue to play a big part in 2016.”

**Just how much of the strong VJM08 is there in the philosophy of the VJM09?**

“You can say the b-spec car from last year formed a basis on which to build our 2016 one. We were in a situation in which the performance on track was improving, and in which the data we were getting correlated well to what we were expecting, so we knew we could continue to develop on a solid platform. Both drivers had positive feedback on last year’s update, and every time we brought an improvement, it produced more performance on track.

“With the regulations highly likely to change for 2017, it didn’t really seem like an efficient use of our resources to start from scratch on a project that would have such a limited lifetime; we are happy with the direction we took last year, we think there is scope for further improvement so we made the decision to maximise the performance and potential of the current concept.”



**It's still very early days, but what can we expect from this new car?**

“There is no way to tell where we stand compared to everyone else at this stage, before a wheel is turned in testing. All we know is that we have made a good improvement and we are happy about our work so far. We have got some very good signals from Mercedes HPP as well – the team in Brixworth have made another step forward, for which we are really excited about.

“Pre-season will be a busy time as we are looking to bring several items to the car in a manner that allows us to test them individually, effectively building up the specs of the Melbourne car. We are planning to build a launch specification for the tests in Barcelona and an updated one for Australia – it will be a gradual process to bring the car up to the specifications we want for the start of the season. We think we can be in a really good place by the time we get to Melbourne and we have some very exciting updates already lined up and signed off for the early races.”

**Over the winter, there has been a lot of talk about tyres, with new compounds joining the offering and more changes brought by Pirelli...**

“We always relish testing any new tyres that Pirelli have developed, which this year feature a dual-layer compound design. We didn't have a chance to run them in the final test in Abu Dhabi as unfortunately they were not allocated to us, so we will have our first outing with them in winter testing in Barcelona. It will obviously be crucial to understand how they work in Grand Prix conditions ahead of Melbourne; it will be a very interesting time for us.

“There are also new rules in regard to the selection of compounds, but ultimately I do not believe they will bring much additional flexibility to the strategies or make a marked difference to the races. Unfortunately these new rules are not the most obvious to understand and will potentially make it more complex for the fans to understand what's going on during the race weekend.”

**2016 will be the third season with Nico Hülkenberg and Sergio Perez behind the wheel. How valuable is a stable line-up from a technical perspective?**

“The contribution of a stable driver pairing cannot be underestimated, especially when you have two drivers of the calibre of Checo and Nico. Their consistency is an asset, as it allows us to develop the car in a confident manner. We know that if we bring the characteristic updates they requested to the





car, they will go quicker. We see in the data, and on the stopwatch, that their feedback is pointing in the right direction and this is critical in a climate of resource restriction, where you have to focus on bringing to the track those developments you know will produce extra performance. The interaction between drivers and the team is crucial and the fact that we can trust the feedback our drivers give us is crucial.”

**Finally, with the big changes expected to take place in 2017 on the horizon, how will this influence the work you are going to do this year?**

“First of all, it depends on the scope of these changes – they are yet to be fully defined. We already have a small team of engineers working on our 2017 project and, as the year progresses, more and more people will be moved across to join them. The speed at which this transfer happens will depend on the magnitude of the changes in the rules and our performance in 2016. We will assess the situation in the first few races of the season before finalising our 2017 strategy.

“As a team, we enjoy the opportunity to start with a relatively blank sheet of paper and a new set of rules. The more restrictive and entrenched the rules are, the harder it is to find something that gives you an edge over your rivals. With new rules, it is a good reset for all teams and it gives us an opportunity to potentially take a lead on some of the bigger teams, at least in the short term. Everyone is back on the starting blocks – it’s a new race and we are very excited as we believe we are in a position to do a good job in these conditions.

“We have a group of fantastic engineers in our team; people with great ideas and now we have the hardware and tools to develop them in the areas we feel are important. We love having the chance to develop new concepts and throw fresh ideas at it. It is how we live and breathe in this sport.”



## Q&A with Nico Hulkenberg

### Race Driver

**Nico, the winter season went very quickly and now it's time to get back to action. How did you enjoy the break?**

“It was really cool to have some time off and recharge my batteries. It's very important to have the chance to relax, especially during such a busy season when the opportunities to have some days off are few and far between. Winter is a time to catch up with friends, spend time with my family and take the mind off motorsport for a bit, but now I can't wait to get back in the car.”

**How do you reflect on your 2015 campaign?**

“From a team perspective, we had our best year. The updates we brought to the car worked well and there were some great days. For me personally, it was a year in which I learnt a lot. I can honestly say it was not a season in which everything went to plan, but I've come out of it as a better driver. And of course, 2015 is the year in which I won Le Mans, which is as special a memory as you can get in this sport.”

**So what does 2016 hold in store for Nico Hülkenberg?**

“A lot of success, hopefully! We seemed to find the sweet spot with the car at the end of last year and we want to maintain this form in 2016. The car is similar; the team hasn't changed and I am ready for the challenge. I want to stand here in November, look back at the season and be happy because it has been my best season ever in Formula One. And if I can get a few podiums along the way, that's even better.”

**You mentioned the team's continuity. How important is it to be in a stable environment?**

“It is very important. Too often people look at the surface - the car, the drivers - without looking at the structures behind. When you work with people you know well, from the crew to the management, you're at ease and can concentrate on getting the best out of yourself and the car. I am lucky to be in a very cool team with some of the best people in the sport. Everyone is hungry to keep progressing and I think we can do that again this year.”



**What have you made of the new tyre regulations? Will it have a big impact on the sport?**

“It’s a bit early to say. More tyre choices will probably bring some extra flexibility with our strategy options, which should be good for the show. From our perspective, I am confident we will get on top of the new rules quickly: this team has often taken a step forward when new rules have been introduced, so if there is an opportunity, we will make the best of it.”



## Q&A with Sergio Perez

### Race Driver

#### **Sergio, did you manage to escape somewhere warm during the winter months?**

“I’ve spent the last few months in Mexico with my family, my friends and my dogs. It’s important to switch off for a few weeks and relax after an intense season of racing. I prefer to do my fitness training in Mexico in the warm weather. My trainer, Xavi, has been with me for the last few weeks to help me get ready for the start of the season.”

#### **You said 2015 was your best season in Formula One – what was the secret to such a successful campaign?**

“I think as a team we did an excellent job. There was no secret apart from hard work and taking the opportunities. It was around the time of Spa that I made an important breakthrough with the set-up. After that I felt very comfortable with the b-spec car and it gave me more and more confidence.”

#### **Can you carry this form into the new season?**

“I think this is the best moment in my career so far. I am confident; I am driving consistently and the results are coming. So that’s the best way to start the new season. I also think the experience I have counts for a lot. I’ve done nearly 100 races, which gives me the belief to make the right decisions at the track. Even when you have a difficult day in the car, you need to draw on that experience and remember that things can turn around quickly.”

#### **What are your first impressions of your new car, the VJM09?**

“The rules are the same this year so there are no big changes with the cars. I think that will really work in our favour. We did a lot of experimentation in the final few races of last year, especially in Abu Dhabi, to try some new directions with the set-up and that worked really well. I think this year we need to be brave and continue experimenting to unlock more and more performance.”



**You appear to be very comfortable at Force India. How important is that feeling of harmony...**

“It’s my third season with Force India – that’s the longest time I’ve spent with any Formula One team. I like the way we do things: it’s a very open environment and we work well together. There is a lot of respect from both sides and I can simply focus on my driving. When I think back to 2014, the disappointment of what happened at McLaren was still quite fresh and it took me half a season to refocus and put that behind me. Now I feel I’m in a very good place and I’m much stronger mentally. I’ve grown up as a person and a driver.”

**What do you think of the new tyres rules with three different compounds per weekend?**

“I think it will create plenty of opportunities during the race, especially in the beginning of the year when it’s something new for all of us. I think it’s going to be interesting for the fans because it will add something new to the race weekend to see if anybody can use the rules to their advantage. I think it’s important for Formula One to bring in this regulation to introduce an element of change and add something unpredictable.”



## Q&A with Alfonso Celis

### Development Driver

#### **Alfonso, you're a development driver for Sahara Force India – how exciting is that?**

"It's very exciting to be part of a Formula One team and the last few months have already been an amazing experience. All winter I've been looking forward to the start of the season and getting back to working with the team. I'm really keen to see the new car, to experience it, and to get to know the team better."

#### **What has impressed you most about being immersed in a Formula One team?**

"It's been fascinating to see the size of the organisation – both at the track and the factory. It's so different from any other kind of motorsport. It gives me a real buzz because so many people are involved and everybody just wants to make the car go faster."

#### **You got your first taste of Formula One power in Abu Dhabi last year – did it live up to your expectations?**

"It was a huge moment and I was really pleased with how things went. The car was amazing: the pure speed of Formula One really impressed me and by the end of the day I was feeling quite comfortable. I don't think anything can prepare you for the buzz you get from being in the Formula One environment – those memories will stay with me forever."

#### **You've already done simulator work for the team – how useful is that for your preparation?**

"It really helped me ahead of the test session. When I got in the real car it was almost as though everything made sense – it felt natural. I love the technology involved and learning about the buttons, switches and functions on the steering wheel – the simulator really helps you practice these things."



**You will drive in seven free practice sessions, including an appearance at the Mexican Grand Prix – how special will that feel?**

“Mexico is the event I’m looking forward to the most. Everybody in my country is passionate about Formula One because we love cars and we love sport. I think interest in the race will be even bigger this year with two Mexicans on the grid. I hope I can join them in the future.”

**What do you hope to learn from the team’s race drivers?**

“I met Nico and Sergio in Abu Dhabi, and they’ve both been friendly and helpful. My job this year is to learn as much from them as possible, both inside and outside of the car. There is also pressure on me to give good feedback because we are all working together to improve the car. They both have lots of experience so it’s going to be really valuable to be sitting next to them in meetings and listening to their feedback.”

**What about your plans away from Formula One? Will you be racing in other series?**

“I’m going to be competing in Formula V8 3.5. It’s my second year so I want to be fighting at the front, scoring podiums and challenging for the championship.”



## Nico Hülkenberg - Profile

One of the fastest drivers in the sport, Nico Hülkenberg has every right to feel at home at Sahara Force India. The German ace enters his fifth season with the team, his fourth as a race driver, ready to continue pushing the team towards the front of the grid.

Born in 1987, Nico made a huge impression in his karting career, winning the German Junior title in 2002 and the senior version the following year. In 2005, aged just 17, he graduated to the domestic Formula BMW series, taking eight race wins and beating Sebastian Buemi to the title.

In 2006 he competed in German F3, finishing fifth in the championship. By now under the management of Willi Weber – the man who discovered Michael Schumacher – Nico really made his mark in A1 GP, taking nine wins and earning the series title for Germany.

In 2007 he made a sideways move to Euro F3 with the ASM team. In his first year in the highly competitive series he finished a strong third, behind his teammate Romain Grosjean and Buemi. He also won the F3 Masters event at Zandvoort and experienced his first F1 mileage when he tested for Williams at Jerez in December. He remained with the renamed ART team in 2008, dominating the championship with eight wins.

In 2009 Nico contested the GP2 Series for ART, earning five wins and taking the title in his rookie year – a feat previously matched only by Lewis Hamilton and Nico Rosberg. He continued to impress the Williams team with his testing performances and duly earned a full-time seat for 2010, alongside Rubens Barrichello.

On only his third outing in Malaysia, Nico qualified fifth and scored his first point with 10<sup>th</sup> place. He finished in the points seven times in total, with a best of sixth place in Hungary. The undoubted highlight, however, was a stunning pole position on a drying track at the penultimate race of the season in Brazil.







For 2011, Nico switched to Sahara Force India to take up the role of reserve driver, sampling the car for the first time in Valencia in February. He subsequently took part in 14 Friday practice sessions on race weekends.

Nico impressed the team with his speed, feedback and approach, and in December 2011 he was confirmed as a race driver for 2012, alongside Paul Di Resta. The season confirmed Nico's talent as a driver, with 11 points finishes and a career-best fourth place in Belgium. During the last race of the season, he led the race under treacherous conditions for 30 laps before settling for fifth at the chequered flag.

A move to Sauber for 2013 saw Nico match his best-ever result of fourth in Korea, where he held off Hamilton and Fernando Alonso in the closing stages of the race. Returning to Sahara Force India for 2014, Nico continued his run of brilliance by stringing ten straight points finishes in the first ten races of the season – including a heroic effort to claim fifth place in Monaco.

In 2015, Nico claimed nine points finishes, including some outstanding performances in Japan and Brazil, and finished once again in the top ten of the drivers' championship. Having also triumphed in his debut appearance in the prestigious 24 Hours of Le Mans, the German reaffirmed his position as one of motorsport's brightest talents and was confirmed at Sahara Force India for 2016 and beyond.



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## Nico Hülkenberg CV

Date of birth: 19 August 1987 (28)  
 Born: Emmerich, Germany  
 Lives: Switzerland  
 Weight: 74kg  
 Height: 1.84m  
 Marital Status: Single

2001 – 2004	Vice European Champion Kart Cadets (2001) Italian Junior Champion (2001/2002) German Junior Champion (2002) 8 <sup>th</sup> , European Championship (2002) German Champion (2003) German Vice Champion (2004)
2005	Formula BMW-ADAC, Champion, champion Rookie-Cup, nine wins Winner, Speed Academy 3 <sup>rd</sup> , Formula-BMW World Final Bahrain
2006	5 <sup>th</sup> , German F3, one win, three poles
2006 – 2007	A1GP, Champion, nine wins Winner, Masters in Zolder (2007)
2008	F3 Euroseries, Champion 2nd, Masters in Zolder
2009	GP2, champion F1, test driver, Williams F1
2010	F1, Williams F1, 14 <sup>th</sup> place
2011	F1, Sahara Force India Formula One Team reserve driver
2012	F1, Sahara Force India Formula One Team, 11 <sup>th</sup> place
2013	F1, Sauber F1, 10 <sup>th</sup> place
2014	F1, Sahara Force India Formula One Team, 9 <sup>th</sup> place
2015	F1, Sahara Force India Formula One Team, 10 <sup>th</sup> place



## Sergio Perez – Profile

Two seasons at Sahara Force India saw Sergio ‘Checo’ Perez blossom into one of the most talented drivers on the Formula One grid, matching an innate speed with the experience of a seasoned veteran. Aged just 25, the man from Jalisco steps in the cockpit of the VJM09 to improve on his best ever season and bring more success to the team.

Born in 1990 in Mexico, Sergio comes from a motorsport family: having raced cars himself, his father Antonio was active in driver management. In this environment, it was natural for young Sergio to start his career in karting at the age of six, winning junior categories and quickly progressing to shifter karts.

A move to single-seaters at the age of 14 and the start of a long-standing partnership with Escuderia Telmex saw him take part in the Skip Barber National Championship in the United States; the following year, in 2005, Sergio moved to Europe to compete in Formula BMW.

After two years in this category, including a two-race stint in A1GP for Team Mexico, Sergio graduated to British Formula Three, dominating the National Class in 2007 and claiming four wins on his way to fourth in the International Class in 2008. A first appearance in the GP2 Asia Series saw him complete a lights-to-flag win in Bahrain and earn a call-up to GP2.

In his second year in the Formula One feeder series, Sergio won races in prestigious venues such as Monaco, Silverstone, Hockenheim, Spa-Francorchamps and Abu Dhabi to mount a title challenge and finish runner-up to Pastor Maldonado. His performance earned him promotion to Formula One with Sauber.

In his first season in the pinnacle of motorsport, in 2011, five finishes in the points helped cement his position in Formula One. Confirmed at Sauber for 2012, he claimed three podiums, including two second places, on his way to tenth in the Drivers’ Championship (66 points). Sergio demonstrated an incredible ability to extract the best out of the car in changing weather conditions, pushing eventual





winner Fernando Alonso closely in Malaysia and performing incredible comebacks in Canada and Italy.

A move to McLaren for 2013, replacing Lewis Hamilton alongside former World Champion Jenson Button, gave Sergio vital experience of the workings of a top team: 11 points finishes, including four consecutive ones in the final four races in the season, set him up as a consistent driver, earning him a place in the Sahara Force India Formula One team line-up for 2014.

Checo's life at Sahara Force India started in the best possible way, with a podium in only his third race with the team; some memorable performances, in Canada, Austria and Singapore among others, saw the Mexican claim 12 points finishes on his way to tenth in the championship.

2015 turned out to be an even better season for the young driver from Guadalajara: an impressive string of points finishes in the second part of the season, crowned with a podium performance at the Russian Grand Prix, saw Checo clinch a career-best ninth place in the standings (78 points) while propelling the team to fifth in the constructors' championship.

It was a memorable year for Checo, who also experienced the emotion of taking part in his first home Grand Prix in Mexico and was rewarded with a multi-year contract extension by Sahara Force India, setting the stage for even more to come in 2016.



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## Sergio Perez CV

Date of birth: 26 January 1990 (26)  
 Born: Guadalajara, Jalisco, Mexico  
 Lives: Monaco  
 Weight: 64kg  
 Height: 1.73m  
 Marital Status: Single

2004	11 <sup>th</sup> , Skip Barber National Championship, 77 points
2005 - 2006	Formula BMW ADAC, three podiums
2006 - 2007	A1GP, Team Mexico, two races
2007	1 <sup>st</sup> , British Formula Three – National Class, 14 wins, 14 poles, 19 podiums
2008	4 <sup>th</sup> , British Formula Three, four wins, seven podiums
2009	12 <sup>th</sup> , GP2 Series, two podiums (GP2 Asia Series 2009-2010: four races)
2010	2 <sup>nd</sup> , GP2 Series, five wins, one pole, seven podiums
2011	F1, Sauber F1, 16 <sup>th</sup> place
2012	F1, Sauber F1, three podiums, 10 <sup>th</sup> place
2013	F1, McLaren, 11 <sup>th</sup> place
2014	F1, Sahara Force India Formula One Team, one podium, 10 <sup>th</sup> place
2015	F1, Sahara Force India Formula One Team, one podium, 9 <sup>th</sup> place



## Alfonso Celis – Profile

Alfonso Celis Enecoiz Jr. is the latest product of Mexico's rich vein of talented drivers, and joins Sahara Force India with the aim of following in the footsteps of the country's current Formula One hero Checo Perez.

Born in Mexico City in 1996, the young Alfonso took part in kart racing in his home country before making his open-wheel debut in the regional LATAM Challenge Series in 2011. The promise shown in this championship, paired with the storming success in the Campeonato Turismos de Velocidad, a touring series, prompted a move to Europe for 2012, a year in which he competed in the Formula BMW Talent Cup. In just five races, he was able to finish eighth in the finale at Motorsport Arena Oschersleben, clinching a podium, his second of the series, in the third race of the weekend.

Alfonso was signed by Fortec Motorsport for a 2013 programme which included full participation in the Formula Renault 2.0 NEC season, as well as entries in the British and European Formula 3 championships. The young Mexican acquitted himself well, with eleven points-scoring finishes, placing him 14th in the standings with the added bonus of a podium in the season finale in Zandvoort. The year also featured a good showing in the winter Panam GP Series, in which Alfonso finished third behind Ferrari Academy driver Antonio Fuoco, claiming two podiums in the process.

2014 saw Alfonso graduate to the global GP3 Series, joining Status Grand Prix. It was to be a transition season for the Mexican, who learnt a lot during the year and steadily improved as the season progressed, finally scoring his first points with a fine seventh place in the Sprint race in Russia. A move to ART Grand Prix in 2015 brought immediate results, with points in the first race in Barcelona and the highlight of a podium in Belgium on the way to 12<sup>th</sup> in the final standings. He also raced in Formula Renault 3.5 with AVF picking up a season-best fourth place finish at the Nurburgring event.

The big break for the Mexican driver came at the post-season Formula One Pirelli tyre test in Abu Dhabi, where Alfonso did a fine job in his first appearance for Sahara Force India. Getting to know the





VJM08 in the car's final official appearance, the man from Mexico City completed 65 laps without issues, showing his prowess with the powerful machinery at his disposal.

In 2016, Alfonso will alternate his programme as Development Driver with Sahara Force India, which will include work on the team simulator and participation in seven free practice sessions, with a full season in the Formula V8 3.5 Series.



[saharaforceindiaf1.com](http://saharaforceindiaf1.com)

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## Alfonso Celis Jr. CV

Date of birth: 18 September 1996 (19)  
 Born: Mexico City, DF, Mexico  
 Lives: Barcelona, Spain  
 Weight: -  
 Height: 1.83m  
 Marital Status: Single

2011	Campeonato Turismos de Velocidad 1800cc, Champion, five wins
2012	6 <sup>th</sup> , Formula BMW Talent Cup, 2 podiums
2013	14 <sup>th</sup> , Formula Renault 2.0 NEC, 1 podium
2014	21 <sup>st</sup> , GP3 Series
2015	12 <sup>th</sup> , GP3 Series, 1 podium 15 <sup>th</sup> Formula Renault 3.5





## Key Personnel

Team Principal and Managing Director	Dr Vijay Mallya
Chairman & Co-Owner	Subrata Roy Sahara
Shareholder	The Mol Family
Deputy Team Principal	Robert Fernley
Chief Operating Officer	Otmar Szafnauer
Technical Director	Andrew Green
Sporting Director	Andy Stevenson
Production Director	Bob Halliwell
Aerodynamics Director	Simon Phillips
Chief Designer	Akio Haga
Chief Designer	Ian Hall
Chief Engineer	Tom McCullough
Race Team Operations Manager	Mark Gray
Race Engineer (Car # 27)	Brad Joyce
No 1 Mechanic (Car # 27)	Will Vickery
Race Engineer (Car #11)	Tim Wright
No 1 Mechanic (Car #11)	Andy McLaren
Commercial Director	Stephen Curnow
Head of Communications	Will Hings



## Team History

Sahara Force India, as the team is now known, was born in late 2007 after Dr Vijay Mallya joined forces with the Mol family, co-owners of the then Spyker team.

The team's debut in 2008 saw the new operation finish tenth in the championship, creating the basis for a rapid growth over the following seasons. A switch to Mercedes engines in 2009 helped the team clinch its first pole position, points and podium as Giancarlo Fisichella finished second in the Belgian Grand Prix.

The team's progression was emphasised by seventh place in the constructors' championship in 2010, a result improved in 2011 as the new driver pairing of Paul Di Resta and Adrian Sutil lifted the outfit to sixth.

2012 saw the team build on these strong foundations: points were scored in 80% of the races in a season that ended on a high note, with Nico Hülkenberg leading 30 laps in the Brazilian Grand Prix. The team's point total of 109 set a new record for Sahara Force India.

A wisely-planned pre-season testing period heralded a brilliant start of 2013. A series of double points finishes included a fourth place for Di Resta in Bahrain and fifth place for Sutil on the streets of Monaco. A strong end of the season resulted in the team cementing its sixth position in the standings.

The 2014 season brought many changes. The new pairing of Hülkenberg and Sergio Perez, together with the competitiveness of the VJM07, brought immediate results with Perez ending the team's five-year wait for a podium in his only third race with Sahara Force India. An impressive 10-race run of consecutive points placements ended mid-season, but the year progressed strongly and resulted in 10 double-point finishes: the team shattered the previous points record, amassing an incredible 155 points.

Having retained the driver line-up, 2015 held much promise for the team - and the season did not disappoint: a strong run of form with the b-spec VJM08, debuted at the home Grand Prix in Silverstone, brought one podium, with Perez in Russia, and a string of results that propelled the team to its first ever top five placement in the championship. In particular, the team ended the season as the third fastest on the grid, outscoring many highly-regarded rivals and setting the scene for an even more exciting 2016.



## Our Partners

### Kingfisher

With over 150 years' heritage, the support of the hugely successful UB Company and over 33 breweries across India, Kingfisher has firmly cemented their position as India's No.1 beer with a significant 54% market share. Ever since its inception, Kingfisher premium lager has not only succeeded in guarding its No.1 status amongst Indian beers, but has also been able to evolve into one of the most contemporary and aspirational youth icons of today.

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### Royal Challenge

Royal Challenge is India's first Premium whiskey and was the first to reach a millionaire brand status among its peer brands. In many ways Royal Challenge defined the category. Royal Challenge (RC) is a premium brand from the United Spirits portfolio. Launched in the 1980s, RC soon became the trailblazer in its segment and captured the hearts of millions of consumers. Today RC is a millionaire brand and echoes the values of winning and rising up to overcome all challenges in life. It's no surprise it is targeted at those who believe that "Real Winners Love Real Challenges".

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### Claro

Claro is a subsidiary of America Móvil, the largest telecommunications company in Latin America with operations in 16 countries. Claro operates in Argentina, Brazil, Chile, Colombia, Costa Rica, Dominican Republic, Ecuador, El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras, Nicaragua, Panamá, Paraguay, Peru, Puerto Rico and Uruguay.

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### Infinitum

Infinitum is the high-speed Internet leader in Mexico. It is a trademark of Telefonos de Mexico S.A.B. de C.V. For more information, visit [www.telmex.com](http://www.telmex.com).

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### Telcel

Telcel is a Mexican company with 25 years of experience in wireless telecommunications. Since 1989 Telcel operates with high standards in quality, customer service and innovation, and brings a competitive and comprehensive experience in service, entertainment and productivity. Always at the



vanguard, Telcel offers wireless connectivity for voice and data through the networks GSM/GPRS/EDGE and 3G UMTS/HSPA/HSPA+/4GLTE.

**Telmex**

TELMEX and its subsidiaries provide telecommunications services in Mexico. The Company’s service coverage comprises the operation of the nation’s most complete local and long distance networks. Additionally, TELMEX offers services like connectivity, Internet access, co-location, web hosting and interconnection services to other telecommunications operators.

**Inter**

Inter is Latin America’s leader insurance and reinsurance broker, boasting over 35 years of experience with International presence in more than 100 countries; our HQ are located in Mexico City. Inter believes in long-term relationships with clients, building tailor-made solutions and strategies with more than a 90% client retention rate. We are expanding our network around the world with strategic alliances, like Arthur J. Gallagher International, the third largest insurance broker worldwide and the private equity fund Evercore Mexico Capital Partners.

Inter is a proud partner of Force India F1 Team and looks forward to a great deal of success, both on and off the track.

**NEC**

NEC Corporation is a leader in the integration of IT and network technologies that benefit businesses and people around the world. By providing a combination of products and solutions that cross utilize the company’s experience and global resources, NEC’s advanced technologies meet the complex and ever-changing needs of its customers. NEC brings more than 100 years of expertise in technological innovation to empower people, businesses and society.

The NEC Group globally provides “Solutions for Society” that promote the safety, security, efficiency and equality of society. Under the company’s corporate message of “Orchestrating a brighter world,” NEC aims to help solve a wide range of challenging issues and to create new social value for the changing world of tomorrow.



### Banamex

Grupo Financiero Banamex is the leading financial group in Mexico. Following a universal banking strategy, the Group offers a variety of financial services to companies and individuals, including commercial banking and investment, insurance, and investment management. Banamex, founded in 1884, boasts an extensive network of distribution of 1,540 branches, serving more than 20 million customers, making daily 17.5 million transactions through its infrastructure which consists of 7,100 ATMs, more than 102,000 terminals point of sales (POS) and more than 18,800 correspondents located throughout the country.

### Hype

Hype Energy is a functional drinks brand that was first launched in 1994 by Hard Rock Cafe founder, Barry Cox. The current CEO, former international Sportsman, Formula One racing driver and 24 Hours of Le Mans winner, Mr. Bertrand Gachot, has been involved with the brand since 1997. The Hype Energy range includes Hype Energy MFP, MFP Sugar Free, UP, Enlite, MOJITO, AfterDark and 60ml Shot. Hype Energy drinks are currently available in over 45 countries, with trademarks registered in more than 145 countries. The company head offices are located in Dubai, with branches in Europe and the USA.

### Quaker State

Quaker State motor oils have kept engines running smoothly for 150 years. From the engines that win NASCAR races to the engines that take you wherever you need to go, count on our durable motor oils to keep you—and your life—moving forward. Choose a motor oil that will not only keep your motor running under all kinds of road stress but will also keep it running for a long time. Choose a motor oil that is so durable, it still passes critical standards for brand-new motor oil—even when it's ready to be replaced. Choose Quaker State.

### Bonovo

BONOVO is a trademark of SRS Group, a 100% Mexican company, committed to family nutrition. Located in the city of Tehuacan, Puebla. It has a history of over 65 years in the production of table eggs and pork in Tehuacan and Egg brands, under the highest quality standards. It is the sales leader in many cities in Central and Southern Mexico.



To take control of the entire production chain of the products and incorporate the best and most modern technology in food, Bonovo guarantees the quality and freshness of its products.

### Canal F1 Latin America

Produced by MEDIAPRO, Canal F1 Latin America is the only channel to broadcast all the races in the calendar live and in HD across Latin America including free practices and qualifying. Other competitions such as GP2, GP3 and Porsche Supercup are covered over the course of the season. The most comprehensive F1 coverage in the history of Latin America and the first 24/7 channel focused exclusively on motor racing with 16 programmes all related to the F1 race calendar. After its first season, the channel was presented with the Formula One Management's award for Best Formula 1 channel of the season. A multi-device platform which allows viewers to see content with complete freedom, as well as the possibility to see the races via 6 customised feeds.

### Koni

With more than 150 years' experience in the area of shock absorber solutions KONI has the know-how to optimize a vehicle's driving feeling and handling. As a part of ITT Motion Technologies, KONI develops, manufactures and markets high class performance shock absorbers for all types of cars and commercial vehicles such as rail vehicles, racing cars, trucks and buses. ITT Motion Technologies is the world leader in the development and production of brake pads and friction materials for the transport and automobile industry.

### Pirelli

Founded in 1872, Pirelli is one of the world's major tyre companies. Present in over five continents, the company now has 22 tyre manufacturing facilities.

### Alpinestars

Alpinestars is the world's premier performance motorsport protection, apparel and footwear company. With over 50 years' experience in racing Alpinestars plays a leading role in every major series around the globe, from Formula 1, NASCAR, World Endurance Championship and Indycar to MotoGP, world motocross and the Dakar Rally. With extensive R&D facilities in the US and Europe and a global racing development program, Alpinestars provides the highest quality, track-tested products



incorporating the latest construction technologies for the benefit and enjoyment of both motorsports athletes and customers.

Through continuous R&D of innovative technologies, Alpinestars improves its race suits, boots, gloves and technical underwear, resulting in the lightest, most breathable and fit-specific products. Delivering unrivalled comfort and breathability in the cockpit helps reduce driver fatigue and improve concentration – both of which are vital in finding that extra tenth of a second in track performance and, ultimately, the competitive edge.

### Accelerate

Crash Media Group was founded in 1999 to service the increasing demands for digital expertise in the motorsports worlds. Our two main assets are Crash.net, the largest digital brand in the world for motorsports news and entertainment and Accelerate our Digital Communications agency. Accelerate was formed, initially, to help motorsports teams deal with the plethora of different options there were in terms of digital communications with their fanbase and other stakeholders. Since then we have gone on to build our own digital products and services which are used by some of the biggest teams and brands in the world.

### Motegi Racing

Through technical partnerships with leading professional racing teams, Motegi Racing competition and high performance tuning wheels are designed and engineered for performance. Motegi Racing is a Wheel Pros brand. Wheel Pros products are sold worldwide in more than 20 countries on four continents and through a U.S. Network of more than 10,000 active dealers. It is one of the world's largest suppliers of branded custom wheels, performance tires and related accessories for cars, SUVs and light trucks.

### Univa

Univa, the Data Center Automation Company, is the leading provider of automation and management software for computational and big data infrastructures. Our products and global enterprise support give our customers the power to manage all of their compute resources, no matter how big or where deployed. Many of the leading brands in the world depend on Univa's unsurpassed expertise, and premier services and support. Univa is headquartered in Hoffman Estates, Illinois, USA, with offices in Markham, ON, Canada, Munich and Regensburg, Germany.



### 3D Systems

3D Systems is a leading provider of 3D content-to-print solutions including 3D printers, print materials and on-demand custom parts services for professionals and consumers alike. The company also provides creative content development, design productivity tools and curation services and downloads. Its expertly integrated solutions replace, displace and complement traditional methods and reduce the time and cost of designing new products by printing real parts directly from digital input. These solutions are used to rapidly design, communicate, prototype and produce functional parts, empowering its customers to create with confidence. The partnership with 3D Systems allows Sahara Force India to take full advantage of their wind tunnel testing capacity and pioneer new full-scale manufacturing opportunities using 3D Systems additive manufacturing technology.

### Branded

Branded designs, develops and distributes licensed merchandise that strengthens our customers' brand values, increases revenues and connects with the consumers. Our heart is in motorsport and we understand intimately what teams in this arena are looking for – from team requirements and the representation of a brand's image, to how to make fans feel more connected to their team or driver. We use these insights to inform every design we produce.

### STILL

STILL Materials Handling Ltd offers a full range of material handling equipment for all your needs. From hand pallet trucks and forklift trucks to fully automated warehouse solutions...STILL has the solution. With 7,000 employees worldwide and service centres throughout the UK, we have the infrastructure to support your every material handling requirement.

- Widest range from a single manufacturer.
- Warehouse equipment with industry leading performance.
- 2,000 short term rental trucks available for hire.
- Quality refurbished trucks readily available.

### Schroth

SCHROTH Safety Products manufactures and designs safety solutions such as seatbelt harnesses, HANS systems and seating for driver and occupant protection for racing, automotive, OEM, military ground vehicles as well as aircraft and helicopters applications.





### Condeco

Condeco is the leading provider of integrated meeting room, desk booking and space utilisation technologies. Our robust software and exceptionally designed hardware is the most feature-rich and versatile on the market. Condeco powers your business to change the way you work and manage your real estate more effectively. Millions of people are using Condeco worldwide, including some of the largest blue chip organisations across the globe. Condeco has offices across America, Asia, Australia, Africa, Europe and the Middle East as well as strategic partners across the world.

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### UPS Direct

For over twenty years, UPS Direct has specialized in supplying, installing and maintaining no-break power systems from 200VA (160W) up to 4.8MVA (3,840,000W). In addition to their standard Uninterruptible Power Supplies, they also design and build bespoke UPS equipment for use in extreme environments, and where standard 'off the shelf' kit does not suit the application. They initially became involved with the Team in 2005 when asked to investigate why the UPSs failed every 2-3 races. After analysing the failed UPSs, they designed and built a system that has since provided the team with many seasons of racing reliability.

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### STL Communications

STL Communications provides business telephone systems, lines, calls and mobiles as well as broadband data connections, hosted telephony and applications, audio and video conferencing and contact centre solutions to businesses and organisations of all sizes across London, Oxfordshire & the UK. Established in 1995, STL helps businesses to find communications solutions that enable them to work more effectively and efficiently using the very latest comms technology.

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### Skullcandy

Skullcandy is the original lifestyle and performance audio brand inspired by the creativity and irreverence of youth culture. Skullcandy designs, markets and distributes audio and gaming headphones and other accessory related products under the Skullcandy, Astro Gaming and 2XL brands. Skullcandy was launched in 2003 and quickly became one of the world's most distinct audio brands by bringing unique technology, colour, character and performance to an otherwise monochromatic space; helping to revolutionize the audio arena by introducing headphones, earbuds and other audio and wireless lifestyle products that possess unmistakable style and exceptional



performance. The company's products are sold and distributed through a variety of channels in the U.S. and approximately 80 countries worldwide, including the company's website.

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### Corporate Risk Systems

Formed in 1999, Corporate Risk Systems Limited (CRS) is one of the UK's largest health, safety and environmental (HSE) training and consultancy companies. Owned by Henderson, it provides training courses and qualifications from NEBOSH, IOSH, IEMA, City & Guilds, CIEH and CITB Construction Skills. CRS is the perfect place to start or develop your career in HSE and risk management - we're certified to ISO 9001, Investors in People and 100% Carbonfree; and we have been the HSE partners of Sahara Force India F1 and its legacy teams for nine years.

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### Apsley

Apsley Tailors offer bespoke tailoring of the highest calibre that has a worldwide reputation, gained one customer at a time. The 125 years of history in the Apsley brand are a source of pride, serving customers who have become friends over decades of dedicated service to their tailoring needs. Based in their London showroom on Pall Mall, Apsley's master tailors will guide customers through the process of creating a suit that is cut and created just for them. They are there to help choose the ideal fabric and lend an expert hand for the perfect design and fit. Apsley's clothes are not made for just anyone; they are made exclusively for discerning customers through their choices. However, one thing that each of Apsley's bespoke suits has in common is that they all come with Apsley's legendary style and levels of comfort and service.

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### Adaptavist

Adaptavist helps the world's most complex enterprises realise the full value of their applications and their application lifecycle. Adaptavist has clients in more than 60 countries, providing professional services, training, managed services and software.

Working with Atlassian software since 2005, Adaptavist is officially recognised as Atlassian's Most Technically Excellent partner.

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### VoIP Unlimited

VoIP Unlimited is a UK based company with nearly 10 years' experience in telecommunications. VoIP Unlimited provides a complete package of complimentary IP services for UK businesses that want to



realise the benefits of using new breed technology and improve the effectiveness of their company's communications. VoIP Unlimited has additionally operated a fully-fledged ISP, long before the company was providing SIP trunk services thousands of customers use VoIP Unlimited's broadband services to deliver reliable data and voice services to their work premises. VoIP Unlimited has the experience to deliver these to a first-class standard and for that reason gain the trust as a key supplier.

## ITEC

Now in its 28th year, ITEC has been supplying Managed Print Services and Document Capture and Workflow Solutions to organisations both large and small, situated across a wide range of industries. Headquartered in Bristol and with offices throughout the UK, ITEC is committed to helping organisations achieve more from their technology by providing smarter IT solutions. ITEC has expanded its product portfolio to include: Hosted and On-Premise Infrastructure, Unified Communications, Connectivity, IT Support, Business Continuity and Asset Finance. This expansion comes as an increasing number of UK businesses are viewing their IT infrastructure as a strategic priority in a bid to realise organisational-wide benefits.





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