

Pole-Gazing

The latest on the women driving motorsport forward

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Nº1

The paddock Beat

Sebastian Vettel has hung up his helmet ... but not his ideas.





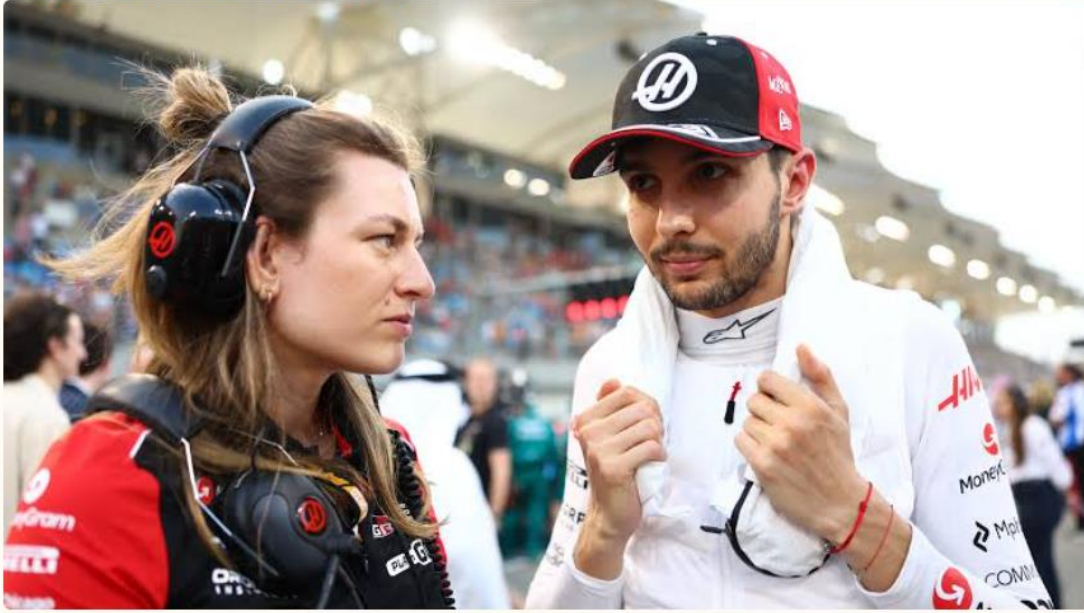
Retired from the paddocks? Yes. But surely not from the asphalt! This weekend in Jeddah, Sebastian Vettel relaunched *Race 4 Women*, his 100% female karting initiative, with a clear objective: putting women at the heart of the race.

Twenty Saudi drivers had the opportunity to take to the track alongside the four-time world champion at "The Track Jeddah." It was a unique experience for these enthusiasts in a country where driving is a very recent right for women. "Change doesn't happen in a day —but I want to see more women at the top of motorsport," declared Vettel.

And this isn't an isolated splash: the F1 Academy, the official women's series, was also in Saudi Arabia this weekend, with local driver Farah AlYousef on the grid. The message is clear: women are taking the wheel, and this is just the beginning.

At the heart of the circuit

Laura Müller, the engineer who whispers in Esteban Ocon's ear.



In the highly codified world of F1, there are those who drive... and those who whisper in the ears of those who drive. And starting this season, for the very first time, that voice belongs to a woman: Laura Müller, Race Engineer at Haas.

The translation? She is the one guiding Esteban Ocon during Grand Prix weekends, making decisions, adjusting settings, and staying cool when everything hits top speed. In short: a central role in a driver's performance.

It's a role Laura has always dreamed of. "She is super motivated, fully committed, and she worked hard to get here," Ocon highlights in an interview with *AutoHebdoF1*. Their collaboration? Fluid, complicit, and already well-oiled. Between testing, intensive training, and team building (including a detour into spelunking to learn how to manage stress), the duo has taken the time to get to know each other, on and off the track.

At 33, the German engineer hasn't just reached a milestone in her career — she has shattered a glass ceiling. "Being the 'first' is a bit sad... But if it can inspire other girls to believe it's possible, then all the better," Laura confides in an interview with *Le Dauphiné Libéré*.

But there's no question of reducing her promotion to a simple "first." At Haas, the message is clear: Laura was chosen for her talent, period. "We don't care about nationality or gender. What matters is the work," recalls Ayao Komatsu, Team Principal, in an interview with *Le BlogAuto*.

Her transition from Performance Engineer to Chief Strategist on an F1 car happened naturally. With method, ambition, and a true sense of team spirit: "This role requires a bird's-eye view, organization, the ability to listen... and to decide," Laura explains.

And the best part? She isn't alone. Other women, like Carine Cridelich, the new Head of Strategy at Haas, are also rising through the ranks behind the scenes.

Laura Müller: Pioneer? Yes. Role model? Clearly. And if her face inspires the next generation of engineers, then F1 has just won a race far more important than the one on Sunday.

Track highlights



Laura Kraihamer – GT2 European Series, Paul Ricard

The Austrian made a strong impression this weekend with a spectacular comeback from 5th to 2nd place in the rain during Race 1. Unfortunately, fickle weather and a technical issue put an end to her hopes in Race 2, forcing RTR Projects to retire. Despite the disappointment, her initial performance showed she has the potential to shine this season.

Mathilda Paatz – F4 CEZ, Red Bull Ring

The young German scored her first single-seater points by finishing 9th in Race 3 after a solid but obstacle-filled weekend. Despite a collision in Race 2 and having to climb from the back of the grid in the first, she proved she could convert her consistent pace into a Top 10 finish.



She is racing this season with the family-run team, Mathilda Racing.



Cindy Gudet & Gabriela Jilková – GT4 European Series, Le Castellet

The all-female Matmut Evolution crew climbed the Pro-Am podium in the second race of the weekend, thanks to their fighting spirit in the rain. After a tougher first round (P9 in class), Gudet and Jilková grabbed a well-deserved 3rd place after a frantic and strategic race.

It marks their first podium of the season in a highly competitive 42-car field, confirming their excellent progress as a duo.

Arianna Casoli & Happinessa – NASCAR Euro Series, Valencia

In her 10th season, Arianna Casoli secured a double win in the Lady Trophy at Valencia and equaled her best result since 2022 with a solid 13th-place finish. Rookie Happinessa impressed in her NASCAR debut with a strong Top 15 finish and a lot of learning at the wheel of the #99 Bremotion car.



Both drivers will meet again in Vallelunga in mid-May for the next round of the championship in the Open category.



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