

## Ecclestone denies take over bid of Grand Prix racing

Formula One supremo Bernie Ecclestone has written a letter to all FIA club presidents, denying all accusations that the Formula One commercial right (CRH) holders are trying to take over the sport.

Ecclestone, whose letter was published Friday on the official Formula One website (formula1.com), said that the CRH had no intention of taking over Grand Prix racing.

He was reacting to a letter in which the beleaguered president of motorsport's governing body FIA Max Mosley said that he would not stand down as president unless asked to do so by a clear majority of FIA club presidents.

Mosley had earlier called an extraordinary FIA general meeting for June to discuss revelations in an English tabloid that he had paid several prostitutes to engage in sexual acts with him, which allegedly involved Nazi role-playing.

The tabloid posted a video of the incident on its website. The 68-year-old has not denied being the man in the video, but said that there were no Nazi connotations. In a letter sent May 17, Mosley said that FIA was involved in delicate negotiations, from which he could not step away.

'The CRH has also now asked for control over the Formula One regulations and the right to sell the business to anyone - in effect to take over Formula One completely. I do not believe the FIA should agree to this,' he wrote.

Ecclestone responded in the letter published Friday by saying that they support FIA. 'We recognise that it is, and should remain, the sole body governing international motor sport.

'We recognise the obligation conferred upon the FIA by you, its membership, to safeguard its authority over all safety, sporting and technical matters relating to the championship, as well as its traditional values.

'We intend to continue to manage exclusively the commercial exploitation of Formula One within the established frameworks of the existing FIA Formula One Commercial Agreement and, in due course, the 100 Year Agreements.'

Ecclestone said that he had raised some issues with Mosley hoping to clarify some issues in an agreement between the two organisations.

'We have also raised with him a number of other issues which we considered would improve the agreements without damaging the FIA's interests, but we accept that is a matter for the FIA to judge, it is not obliged to make those concessions to us and should it consider it is against its interests to do so, we would be content to leave the agreements in their present form and when the time comes, to operate within their existing scope, without amendments.

'The FIA should be solely responsible for policing and enforcing the Formula One regulations fairly, transparently and without bias.'

He said that there was no financial problem in the sport. 'There is no financial crisis in Formula One.

On the contrary, Formula One is in robust health, it enjoys the support of most of the world's leading automotive manufacturers and is sponsored by many of the world's other most prestigious brands.

'Formula One continues to be of tremendous benefit to the FIA. It derives in excess of 25 million dollars each year from Formula One (not including fines, which are often substantial sums) which subsidises other aspects of the sport.

'We have no reason to undermine the FIA or its President, on the contrary we believe a strong FIA led by a respected President is good for all key constituents of Formula One: the fans, the teams, the sponsors and suppliers, the promoters, the media companies and us, the CRH.'

Ecclestone ended his letter by saying that they were looking forward to: 'continuing our long-standing and constructive relationship with the FIA and its President in pursuit of a stable and successful Formula One.'

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