

Formula One team forming for 2010 despite economy

by Bill Center

A pair of North Carolina businessmen announced Tuesday that they are planning to launch a United States-based Formula One team out of the NASCAR hub of Charlotte.

Ken Anderson and Peter Windsor, veterans of American racing enterprises, plan to have their team competing in the 2010 season.

"There are no books about how to build a Formula One team," Windsor said. "In the past, it's either been find an incredibly rich trillionaire or be invited by a large company to set up their Formula One operation."

Windsor admitted his group has neither in very difficult economic times.

"It sounds rather arrogant perhaps, but we have some experience and we have some things we want to bring into the sport. I am pleased to say we are two guys who can say we are going to do a Formula One team because we have the capital to do it.

Named USF1, the team has no physical headquarters or shop yet. Windsor said those things "will become visible as time goes on and as this year unfolds." They also have no drivers or engine agreements.

Windsor said he first told Formula One czar Bernie Ecclestone of his plans in 2006. "We've been in touch ever since and he has been supportive," said Windsor of his contact with Ecclestone.

Although most Formula One teams employ about 1,000 people, Anderson said the USF1 program would employ around 100 full-time workers and contract for technical support from the race support operations and wind tunnels in the Charlotte area.

Anderson said the recession would actually help the team because many components of Formula One cars, including carbon fiber used for chassis, "have become extremely less expensive."

"Forget the \$100 million budgets and \$30 million contracts for drivers," Anderson said. "Over the next couple years, things are going to change dramatically in Formula One, and that's our period."

The team has already aligned itself with the Speed Channel as, Windsor said, "A TV-led operation."

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