

Money could influence Haas F1 driver lineup for 2021



Haas' Kevin Magnussen and Haas' Romain Grosjean pictured ahead of the Spanish Grand Prix

Reuters | London

US-owned Haas will have a new Formula One driver lineup for 2021 after announcing the departure of Romain Grosjean and Kevin Magnussen, and money could play a part in deciding their replacements.

Team boss Guenther Steiner told reporters in a video conference at the Portuguese Grand Prix that the team had plenty of options but he did not want to talk about any names or numbers on the short list.

Frenchman Grosjean, 34, has been at Haas since 2016 with Danish driver Magnussen, 28, joining in 2017 but both are now looking likely to quit the scene with few openings elsewhere on the grid.

Asked whether the Ferrari-powered team, ninth in the standings, might look for a driver with financial backing, Steiner said talent was more important.

"But some people have got sponsorship they bring with them so we are looking at all the options out there as well," he added.

Russian Formula Two driver Nikita Mazepin is the son of a billionaire who tried to buy the Force India team, now Racing Point, in 2018 before the eventual sale of assets to Canadian Lawrence Stroll.

Mexican Sergio Perez, who is leaving Racing Point at the

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GUENTHER STEINER

end of the year, also has strong sponsorship and plenty of experience.

Ferrari are meanwhile looking to place some of their young drivers, with Michael Schumacher's 21-year-old son Mick leading the Formula Two championship and a strong candidate for Haas or Alfa Romeo.

Britain's Callum Iltot, another Ferrari Academy driver and second in the F2 standings, had been due to take part in Friday practice with Haas at the Nurburgring two weeks ago but that was prevented by bad weather.

Steiner said the decision to replace Grosjean and Magnussen at the end of the season was made two to three weeks ago and the drivers were informed last week.

Yesterday's announcement, he said, was timed to help them.

"We could have kept it for us for a while, and then just do it. But I think the guys were good with us in the last years," he said.

Bayern begin title defence in style, Real stunned

Coman dazzles as Bayern open Champions League title defence by routing Atletico

● **Real Madrid lose 2-3 to Shakhtar Donetsk in dramatic encounter**

AFP | Paris

Bayern Munich began their defence of the Champions League title in ominous fashion by crushing Atletico Madrid 4-0 on Wednesday, while Liverpool and Manchester City also won but Real Madrid suffered a shock defeat.

Madrid, the record 13-time European champions, went down to a 3-2 home loss against Shakhtar Donetsk, showing how far Zinedine Zidane's side are just now from the standards being set by Bayern.

Two months after scoring the winner in the final against Paris Saint-Germain in Lisbon, Kingsley Coman put Bayern ahead against Atletico in Group A and later scored a stunning individual effort to wrap up the victory at an empty Allianz Arena.

In between Leon Goretzka and Corentin Tolisso were also on target for the German champions, with the latter's strike a stunner from long-range.

"The winning goal in last season's final is a good motivator, but it's in the past now and we have fresh goals this season," Coman told Sky Sports.

It was Bayern's 12th consecutive Champions League win while the result for Atletico equalled their worst defeat under Diego Simeone.

Bayern next go to Russia to play Lokomotiv Moscow, who battled back to draw 2-2 at Red Bull Salzburg on Wednesday.

Eder put Lokomotiv ahead in Austria, only for Dominik Szoboszlay to crash in a brilliant equaliser.



Kingsley Coman (M) of Bayern Munich kicks the ball past Stefan Savic of Atletico Madrid (l) and goalkeeper Jan Oblak (r)

A deflected Zlatko Junuzovic goal put the hosts in front, but Vitali Lisakovich headed in to earn the Russian side a point.

Disastrous night for Real

Real were 3-0 down at half-time against Shakhtar at the Alfredo di Stefano stadium and fell short with a second-half fightback to get their European campaign off to a disastrous start.

A depleted Shakhtar were without 10 first-team players and nine members of staff due to coronavirus infections and had seven starters aged 21 or under. Strikes from Tete and Manor Solomon, either side of a Raphael Varane own-goal, gave the Ukrainian champions a three-goal half-time lead.

Luka Modric and Vinicius Junior pulled goals back and Fede Valverde thought he had grabbed an injury-time equaliser but his deflected shot was ruled out for an offside.

YOU KNOW WHAT
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Missing the injured Sergio Ramos, Real have now won just one of their last seven Champions League home games. This was also a second defeat in five days as they prepare to go to Barcelona for the Clasico on Saturday.

"We lacked a bit of everything, but above all our confidence, which is the most important thing," said Zidane.

Real are already up against it in Group B, even if rivals Inter Milan and Borussia Mönchengladbach cancelled each other out in a 2-2 draw at San Siro.

Romelu Lukaku scored twice for Inter, opening the scoring early in the second half and then turning in a late equaliser. In between Ramy Bensebaini netted a penalty for Gladbach and Jonas Hofmann scored what he thought was a late winner.

Liverpool shook off the absence of Virgil van Dijk to edge Ajax 1-0 behind closed doors in Amsterdam in Group D.

Van Dijk is set to miss the rest of the season with a knee injury but Jurgen Klopp's side kept a clean sheet and took all three points after Nicolas Tagliafico turned a Sadio Mane shot into his own net on 35 minutes.

Pep Guardiola's City made it three wins for English clubs this midweek as they came from behind at home to beat Porto 3-1.

F1 revises testing protocols, says Racing Point's Szafnauer

● **Hulkenberg on standby Portuguese GP**

AFP | London

Formula One has revised its protocols for managing Covid-19 testing after Racing Point driver Lance Stroll fell ill at the Eifel Grand Prix, but was not tested until he returned home, team boss Otmar Szafnauer said on Friday.

Szafnauer, who claimed Stroll was suffering from a severe stomach upset that led to him missing the race at the Nurburgring, where he was replaced by Nico Hulkenberg, said new rules were being introduced after an examination of that case.

Speaking ahead of this weekend's Portuguese Grand Prix, where Hulkenberg is on standby in case Stroll is unfit to drive, Szafnauer said: "The world is learning and the FIA (the sport's ruling body, the International Motoring Federation) are learning, we're learning."

"The FIA now, I understand,



Nico Hulkenberg and Lance Stroll talk in the Paddock (file photo)

have introduced a test you have to take 24 hours from (after) entering the paddock - that's new for everybody in the paddock.

"It's something they have changed. It's a good idea to add another test."

Canadian Stroll, 21, left the Eifel event early on Sunday, flying home to Switzerland, where he returned a positive test result on Monday.

Yet he had been unwell throughout that weekend without taking a test that resulted in proving he had the coronavirus.

Until now, all Formula One members have been required to return a negative test prior to travel and take further tests every five days.

The new in weekend test is designed to identify anyone who develops the virus while attend-

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dramatic late substitutions were made by Nico Hulkenberg for both Racing Point drivers this season

ing an event.

Szafnauer said he was confident the new protocol, coupled with Stroll's negative test results ahead of the Portuguese race, ensured the Canadian would return.

"He had a negative test coming into this weekend. The probability of now giving a positive is low. Is it zero? I don't know, I don't know that much about it, but it's low," he said.

"Nico is here as a precaution, but I'm confident Lance will be in the car."

Szafnauer said he tests employees twice at the week and has returned six positives in more than 15,000 tests.

India given all clear to quarantine in Sydney

Reuters | Sydney

Cricket Australia have been given the all clear for the India squad to quarantine in Sydney ahead of their blockbuster test series around the New Year.

The tourists had been scheduled to arrive in Brisbane and

undergo quarantine there before playing six short-form internationals in Queensland and moving on to Adelaide for the first test in early December.

The Indian and many of the top Australian players will be arriving from the UAE where the IPL concludes on Nov. 10.

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