

Mercedes go black in stand against racism

● Mercedes unveils black-liveried cars for the 2020 season

AFP | Paris

Mercedes announced yesterday an all-new black liveried car for the 2020 Formula One season in support of #BlackLivesMatter with their six-time world champion Lewis Hamilton a vocal supporter of the fight against racism.

F1 emerges from its coronavirus-enforced three-month hiatus in Austria this weekend to a markedly changed world, with the killing of African-American George Floyd in US police custody last month triggering outrage and a global anti-racism movement.

Hamilton, the only black driver on the F1 grid, has established a commission which hopes to steer more black youngsters into motor racing.

Mercedes in a statement noted that "in our organisation, just three percent of our workforce identify as belonging to minority ethnic groups and only 12% of our employees are women".

"This lack of diversity shows



Mercedes' Lewis Hamilton in action during testing (file photo)

that we need to find new approaches to attract talent from many areas of society we do not currently reach," it added.

Whilst expressing pride at the team's "values and culture" the statement said "the Black Lives Matter movement has shone a searching light on how much we need new measures and actions in the fight against racism and all forms of discrimination".

"For 2020, we have chosen to race in an all-black base livery as a public pledge to improve the diversity of our team - and a clear statement that we stand against racism and all forms of discrimination."

Team Principal Toto Wolff

said "Racism and discrimination have no place in our society, our sport or our team".

The German added: "But having the right beliefs and the right mindset isn't enough if we remain silent. We wish to use our voice and our global platform to speak up for respect and equality, and the Silver Arrow will race in black for the entire 2020 season to show our commitment to greater diversity within our team and our sport."

Hamilton, who starts his quest for a record-equalling seventh title at Sunday's Austrian Grand Prix, said it was vital "we seize this moment and use it to educate ourselves whether you

are an individual, brand or company to make real meaningful changes when it comes to ensuring equality and inclusivity".

His Finnish teammate Valtteri Bottas said he was "proud to stand with the team, with Lewis and with Mercedes-Benz in making this important statement".

Since easing out of lockdown sports stars have been eager to take a stand against racism, whether by taking the knee, as footballers from the Bundesliga or Premier League have done, or wearing Black lives Matters on the back of their shirts.

Earlier yesterday the West Indies cricket team announced they would be wearing "Black Lives Matter" logos on their shirts during next month's Test series against England in a show of solidarity with the global movement.



Mercedes' Lewis Hamilton is the only black driver on the F1 grid

Kyrgios hits out at Zverev over partying video



Australian tennis player Nick Kyrgios (R) hugs German tennis player Alexander Zverev after winning the 2019 Mexico ATP Open (file photo)

Reuters | Sydney

Australian Nick Kyrgios has hit out at Alexander Zverev after a video appeared to show the German dancing at a crowded club on Sunday despite the world No. 7 pledging last week he would be self-isolating.

The video was posted on Instagram by German designer Philipp Plein and later deleted. There was no indication when the video was taken.

Zverev's team have yet to respond to request for comment.

Zverev, 23, took part in Novak Djokovic's Adria Tour exhibition event in Serbia and Croatia where Djokovic, Grigor Dimitrov, Borna Coric and Viktor Troicki all tested positive for the novel coronavirus last week.

The German said he and his team had tested negative but

would self-isolate and undergo regular testing.

"So I wake up and I see more controversial things happening all over the world," Kyrgios said in an Instagram post. "But one thing that stuck out for me was seeing Sascha Zverev again, again, again. How selfish can you be?"

Kyrgios previously criticised the organisers of the tournament and hit out at governing bodies for their plans to restart professional tennis during the pandemic.

Djokovic's event saw crowds packed into stands for the opening leg in Belgrade, while players hugged and posed for pictures, attended news conferences together and played basketball during the Croatia event.

Zverev was also pictured along with other players dancing at a club in Serbia during the event.

From the streets and illegal rooftop fights to representing Pakistan in MMA: the story of BRAVE CF's Mehmosh

TDT | Manama

Mehmosh Raza's story is one of perseverance and determination; going against all odds and pushing one self to the limits.

"Growing up, I was bullied a lot", says Raza, who split his childhood between his home country of Pakistan and Ireland. "I did not fit in Pakistan nor in Ireland, I was made fun of constantly, for my looks, my accent and so on.

In Ireland, I would be involved in a fight everyday after school. It was always the same crowd of boys, sometimes some girls too, and there I was in the middle, getting into a fight with someone. Thankfully most of the time I would always win and then walk home with my sister like nothing had happened".

But not all stories ended up well for the young Mehmosh. "In Pakistan, I was pounded by 15 guys. I remember I went to defend a friend that was being jumped by a few guys and all of a sudden, I was surrounded by 15 guys, beaten like hell. They hit me in the head a lot, up to the point I wasn't even aware of what was going on around me anymore. A friend of mine who was into bodybuilding came blazing through all of them, hurled me over his shoulder, and carried me away. That was



Mehmosh Raza

probably fun to watch for a third person but definitely it wasn't for me at the time (laughs)".

The daily scraps turned into a real passion and artform when a cousin visited from Canada and brought with him some tapes of Mixed Martial Arts fights - until that point, three words that Mehmosh had never heard next to each other.

"My cousin showed up with a few tapes of old PRIDE and UFC fights, he also had some boxing tips videos. Those are definitely the first memories I have of

getting to know the sport and falling in love with it", he recalled. "It was love at first sight, I spent several days watching fights and those tutorials over and over again but one fight in special stood out for me and was the one I watched more and that really made me a huge fan, it was Wanderlei Silva vs Quinton 'Rampage' Jackson in Japan".

With a newly found love for MMA, Mehmosh now faced the obstacle of how to train in Pakistan, where the MMA scene was virtually nonexistent.

Through a friend, Mehmosh heard about illegal fights that used to take place on a rooftop and thought that would be a good way to start. This experience would change his life forever.

"They called those 'smoker fights' beatdowns, if I'm not mistaken. Every few months, people would gather on those rooftops and participate in these secret fights.

You didn't need experience, you just signed up; send them your name and weight, and they



My legacy is everything to me. I want to put where I come from on the map for the right reasons. It'd be a very strong message to say that the best in the world is here, he comes from Pakistan, and he's doing positive things

MEHMOSH RAZA

would match you with someone to fight. Knowing that, I went to a gym, hit a heavy bag for like a week and a half and said 'this might be enough, I'm gonna sign up now'", Raza told.

"I showed up with my friend at this rooftop, they checked my weight and matched me up with a guy who had fought over there a few times before", he continued. "Well, as you can imagine, I got absolutely smoked (laughs). The only good thing about it was that right after it I knew I wanted proper mentoring and training and that was when I joined Team Fight Fortress and haven't looked back since".

Under the guidance of head coaches Sultan Ali and Ehtisham Karim Shaheen, Mehmosh Raza grew into one of the most promising and talented pros-

pects not only in Pakistan but in the whole South Asia scene. He went abroad, fought in different countries and had the toughest experience he can recall inside the cage so far.

"I fought Igor Grytskiv which is probably my toughest fight so far. He was coming off seven back-to-back finishes all first-round arm bars and I remember being smashed in the first round. He destroyed my patellar tendon, kicked it so bad that I had a Grade 1 ACL injury but I managed to turn it around and ended up winning. It's a great story overall because the fight started with me being beaten up pretty bad and still won, it was a dramatic comeback", he labelled.

Still relatively young, at age 25, and already competing at the highest level of the BRAVE Combat Federation, Mehmosh Raza has big plans.

"My legacy is everything to me. I want to put where I come from on the map for the right reasons. It'd be a very strong message to say that the best in the world is here, he comes from Pakistan, and he's doing positive things. I want to leave a good message, help people become the best, and let them know that they can do good things, spread positivity and make the world a better place, inshallah", Raza finished.