
SIGNATURE TALK: “BEING A PILOT”

ABOUT SIR LEWIS HAMILTON

Sir Lewis Hamilton is a Seven-Time Formula One™ World Champion racing for Mercedes-AMG Petronas Formula One Team and considered the sport's most successful driver in history, having broken the record for race wins.

A fierce advocate for greater global equality, and the first and only Black working-class F1 driver, Lewis continues to excel in a sport where the odds were stacked against him. In the gilded paddocks of a sport that is often the preserve of the rich, his father held down as many as three jobs at a time, keeping his promise to support his son's racing career as long as he worked hard at school. As he rose through the ranks, Lewis learned to embrace his role as an outsider and use it as a catalyst for his creativity.

Constantly challenging himself to grow and realise his potential in new ways, Lewis's passion for innovation has long drawn him to fashion and its capacity to enable people to express themselves. Throughout his career, Lewis has acted as a global ambassador for leading brands and collaborated with fashion partners to create his own capsule collections – from eyewear to sustainable clothing. In 2013, Lewis became an IWC ambassador and the Swiss Manufacture launched the first of several special editions dedicated to him, including The Ingenieur Chronograph Edition Lewis Hamilton (IW379602), Pilot's Watch TOP GUN Perpetual Calendar “Boutique Edition” (IW502903) and the “Lewis Hamilton” Big Pilot's Watch Perpetual Calendar Edition (IW503002), co-created by IWC's designers and Lewis. For the 2020 season, IWC custom-designed the IWC Black ceramic Big Pilot's Watch Perpetual Calendar for Lewis, in keeping with the Mercedes team decision to create all-black livery and uniform in support of the Black Lives Matter movement.

ABOUT VALENTINO ROSSI

Motorcycling legend Valentino Rossi was born in Urbino, Italy, in 1979. Also known as “The Doctor”, charismatic Rossi started racing from a very young age, following in the footsteps of his father, Graziano, a former motorcycle racer. After winning a regional kart championship in 1990, he switched to two wheels and the minimoto series. In 1993 Rossi rode a 125 cc motorcycle for the first time to compete in that year's Italian Sport Production Championship. Winning the series the following year, Rossi then stepped up to the Italian 125 cc Championship, taking the title just a year later in 1995 and claiming third place in the European Championship. 1996 marked the Italian's debut season in Grand Prix motorcycle racing, during which he scored a maiden podium, pole position and victory before thoroughly dominating the 1997 season to become 125 cc World Champion. The following year Rossi moved up to 250 cc, finishing his rookie season second in the Championship for Aprilia and his second season as Champion. In 2000 he moved up another class with Honda to the 500 cc. The result was another rookie season ending in second place, followed by total domination of the 2001 Championship. 2002 was the inaugural year for MotoGP and, still racing for Honda, Rossi won eight of the first nine races and 11 overall to clinch the title. He would stay in MotoGP for the next 19 seasons, competing for Honda, Ducati and Yamaha before retiring at the age of 42 in 2021. The most successful motorbike racer of his generation, Rossi called time on his glittering 26-year career with an unbeatable 235 podiums, 115 race wins and nine world titles under his belt. A much-loved global icon, famous both on and off the track, he is the only rider in history to win championships in 125 cc, 250 cc, 500 cc and MotoGP. As Rossi looks ahead to a new chapter in 2022, the Italian hasn't forgotten his love of racing. Not only is he still in the MotoGP paddock as the owner of the Mooney VR46 racing team, he also runs the VR46 Riders Academy for up-and-coming talent and will switch to four wheels to compete in the GT World Challenge Europe in 2022 for Team WRT.