

News release
15.12.20

Oliver races around the world to help save the planet

- Oliver Bennett to compete in world motorsport's foremost sustainable series
- Formula 1 star Lewis Hamilton's team among Oliver's rivals in 2021
- Extreme E runs a unique format with female and male drivers in every team in every race
- "Competing on glaciers, in deserts and alongside some of the world's most endangered shorelines is powerful, meaningful stuff for 2021."
- Oliver to drive the Hispano Suiza XITE ENERGY Team HS Extreme E

Bristol driver Oliver Bennett will travel to five of planet earth's most challenged – and challenging – environments when he competes in the 2021 Extreme E series.

Ahead of its debut season in 2021, Extreme E is widely regarded as world motorsport's biggest step towards sustainable and relatable global competition.

Oliver will drive an all-electric SUV-type race car – known as HS Extreme E – delivering 400kW of power (550 horsepower in internal combustion terms) at the five events starting from Saudi Arabia in March. Among the competition for Oliver's Spanish-based Hispano Suiza XITE ENERGY Team will be X44, the team owned by seven-time Formula 1 world champion Lewis Hamilton.

Briton Oliver, 28, acknowledges the competition will be tough.

He said: "Some of the biggest and best names in motorsport are coming to Extreme E – the races are going to be so tight and so close, it's going to be amazing.

"The competition is a massive part of what Extreme E is about, but it's also a fantastic way of spreading the sustainable and renewable message in motorsport. Extreme E is leading the way and blazing a trail towards the future with this series.

"All the Extreme E race cars will be charged by a hydrogen fuel cell. This pioneering technology means the only by-product of us racing is the water produced by the hydrogen fuel cell. And, guess what? That water will be used elsewhere by the series organiser. Extreme E not only challenges the perceived impact of motorsport, but it's also helping to forge a new path in appreciation and understanding of climate change.

"To be involved in something that's a win-win from the get-go is an absolute dream for me."

Oliver is, of course, well-versed in racing at the highest level as a regular in the FIA World Rallycross Championship. That off-road, door-to-door competition is right up his street.

"My competition life started out in motocross on bikes. For 10 years I raced hard on two wheels, before moving into cars. On the bike and then in rallycross I am constantly pushing

and battling for position with cars all around me looking to dive into the same gap. I'm ready for Extreme E.

The identical cars will race off-road at five locations as diverse as the Amazon and the Arctic, completing a five-mile (eight-kilometre) lap before stopping to hand the car over to a female co-driver. All teams must include a male and female, with Christine Giampaoli Zonca driving alongside Oliver.

Running for two days with preliminary qualifying rounds, each event will build towards a four-car final on Sunday afternoon.

Few in the Extreme E field have the same sort of understanding of climate change as Oliver, who runs Bee Green Energy, a British-based firm delivering renewable energy solutions.

"Climate change is here," said Oliver. "It's happening. We can see that every day. Extreme E will take us to the incredibly compromised locations. To places like Lac Rose in Dakar or the Russell glacier in Kangerlussuaq, Greenland, where climate change has already had a major impact. From those locations, Extreme E's scientific research team will work on highlighting that impact, with the sport helping to shine a light on this incredible, planet-shaping issue."

To minimise its impact on these areas, Extreme E will utilise the former Royal Mail Ship RMS St Helena to transport the cars and kit around the world. Having been converted to run on ultra-low-sulfur diesel, the ship acts as a research base as well as a floating paddock for the teams and crews.

Oliver got his first taste of HS Extreme E power when he tested the car for the first time in France last month.

"The car is awesome," he said. "I'm used to a rallycross supercar, so 600 horsepower and insane levels of acceleration are nothing really new, but the way HS Extreme E delivers the power is phenomenal. The electric motors give instant torque and power, but at the same time the chassis offered good grip and traction. The prospect of racing these cars around the world in what's going to be one of the most eagerly anticipated race series for a generation is something which makes me very proud."

Further details of Oliver, the Extreme E calendar, the locations and a deeper technical analysis of HS Extreme E are available on request.

Extreme E 2021

Desert X Prix AlUla, Saudi Arabia March 20/21

Ocean X Prix Lac Rose, Senegal May 29/30

Arctic X Prix Kangerlussuaq, Greenland August 28/29

Amazon X Prix Para, Brazil October 23/24

Glacier X Prix Patagonia, Argentina December 11/12