

Thursday April 30, 2020

### Triple world champion Solberg lands Renault F1 ride for Virtual Dutch Grand Prix

- Petter delighted to be making his virtual F1 debut with the Renault team
- Three-time champ looking to blend aggression with racecraft at Interlagos
- All-round rally hero slightly concerned at the lack of a handbrake aboard his new motor

The brave dive down the inside, the calculated undercut and lights-to-flag wins are all part of Petter Solberg's Formula 1 circuit repertoire. He's competed at some of the world's best grand prix venues, including Silverstone, Barcelona and Hockenheim before. But he's never gone Dutch.

Until now.

On Sunday (May 3, 1800 BST), Petter starts the Virtual Dutch Grand Prix at Brazil's Interlagos Circuit (used because Zandvoort doesn't feature on the 2019 Formula 1 game – a fan vote resulted in the South American circuit replacing the Dutch track) with the Renault DP World F1 Team.

He's going to bin the idea of turning the car in on the handbrake and get back to the super-smooth style which helped him take some of his most memorable wins – like the all-asphalt Tour de Corse he won on his way to the 2003 FIA World Rally Championship title.

Petter comes into his first modern Formula 1 race off the back of a maiden win in The Race Legends Trophy, where he took victory at the Nurburgring race on Saturday.

Petter said: "It's a real honour for me to be invited to join the Renault DP World F1 Team for the Virtual Dutch Grand Prix. Rallying has always been everything for me, but I did have the chance to drive a Formula 1 car earlier in my career. I better not say what car because it wasn't a Renault. It was a red one.

"So to make my debut in a Formula 1 race at this stage of my career is something really nice. I have some good experience from winning many races and two world titles in rallying. I don't think I will take the RX-style on Sunday, but hopefully I will remember some of the racecraft which helped me win when I switched from rallying to racing. This style of really smooth, no sliding, Formula 1-style of racing is pretty tricky and finding where is the last bit of grip is not so easy. But it is very good fun!

"Seriously though, this is very cool. We are all changing the way we do things while the world is like it is and I'm really looking forward to driving with Christian [Lundgaard].

"You know, me and his father Henrik we were competing against each other when we were younger. So I'm happy my team-mate is coming from a good rallying family. Like everything I will give this 110% and do my best. When we do something, we do it with just one aim: to win. But I have one question: it's definitely too late to get a handbrake fitted to my car?"

Petter's F1 switch can be watched on <https://www.youtube.com/user/Formu1a> and <https://www.twitch.tv/formula1>, as well as on Facebook @Formu1a from 1800 (BST) on Sunday (May 3).

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