THE OFFICIALS
UNITED STATES GRAND PRIX NEWSLETTER

CHATTING WITH CHARLIE WHITING

PART ONE IN THE SERIES BY LYNNE HUNTTING

Time for my annual post-track inspection chat with FIA F1 Race Director, Charlie Whiting, discussing matters of interest to the race officials and marshals.

After being around the COTA (Circuit of the Americas) track several times, he said everything looks as expected.

"This is the third year and everything happens more easily. The first race run in 2012 went extraordinarily well - really, really good. So it was quite difficult to improve on that, I would have said.

"But you can see now there's a little more maturity on a circuit that's used quite a lot. It needs some painting. But it's nice to see a track become slightly more mature, and it's well looked-after, obviously."

This year's Light Boards, managed by TSP operators on the corner stations, are much the same as last years, albeit provided by a new vendor - the 2012 vendor. Otherwise, no changes there.

There are no changes in the Yellow Flag procedures, nor with the Yellow Flag speed regulations.

"Other than checking quite vigorously how much a driver has actually slowed down, no changes. We have systems in place to tell us whether or not a driver has slowed down.

"We get alerts in race control that tell us if we think a driver hasn't slowed down based on the algorithms the system use. We then would revert to data to check to see if the driver did make a genuine attempt to slow down."

The USGP COTA corner marshals sometimes take a ration of grief over their blue 'Smurf' overalls. The question arose as to who chooses the overall color, and why the color isn't the same world-wide.

FIA does not select the color of the uniforms used by the corner marshals. There's no FIA standard. The most often-used color on the corners is orange. Uniforms for the various specialties are often color-coded, i,e. Green for Medical, Red for Fire, Orange for corners, Blue for Rescue,



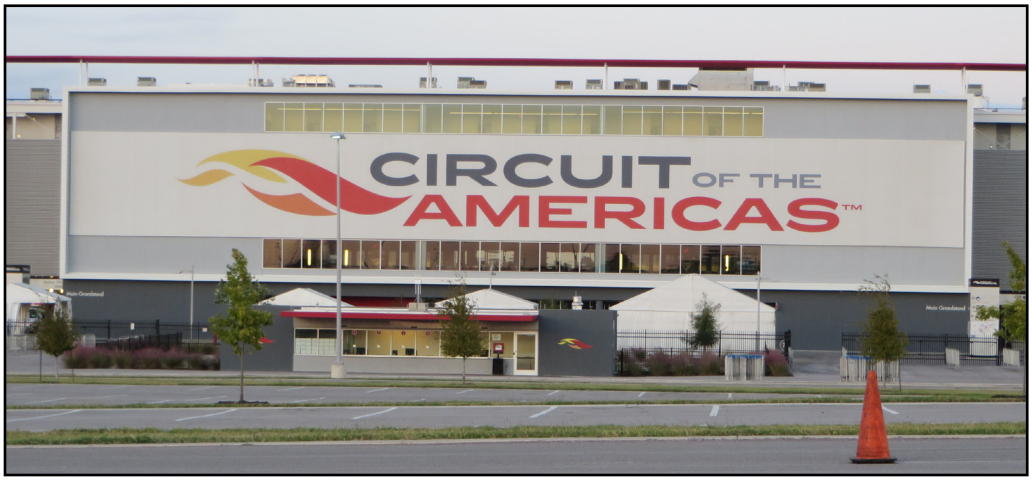
etc. In other countries there are promotors or the ASN. We have a different structure in the United States - we have sanctioning bodies for races.

The race organizers decide what they want to do. If they want to do something different, they would ask FIA. Charlie was unsure if any other country uses blue overalls for corners, but is sure Smurfs are very nice.

There are no changes in the procedures since last year regarding Pit Marshals and safety. FIA restricts the number of photographers in Pit Lane to 25 in any F1 session - after last year's accident in Nuremberg; and it has remained the same ever since.

The rules regarding Qualifying make provision for 26, 24 or 22 cars. The number of cars eliminated in Q1 or Q 2 varies according to the number of entries.

But no one foresaw the likelihood of going below 22 cars, so nothing is specifically written. Therefore the Stewards will decide Thursday once the Official Entry List is confirmed at 4pm. They will issue a notice on how Qualifying will be run and how many cars will be eliminated after Q1 and Q2.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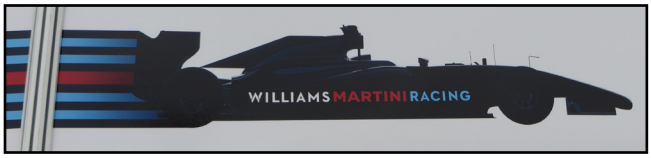
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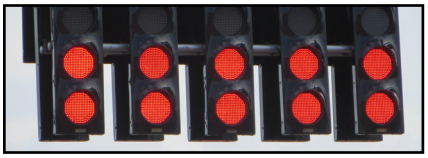


CIRCUIT OF THE AMERICAS
HOW THE WEST WAS FORMULA 1


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LEFT FRONT
RIGHT FRONT




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Fly Emirates
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MARTINI
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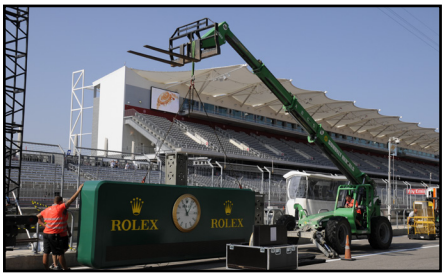
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