

[Transcript] Sky Sports F1 Podcast / UK radio DJ Greg James reveals which F1 driver would make the BEST Radio DJ!

My brother-in-law died suddenly, and now my sister and her kids have to sell their home. That's why I told my husband we could not put off getting life insurance any longer. An agent offered us a 10-year \$500,000 policy for nearly \$50 a month. Then we called SelectQuote. SelectQuote found us identical coverage for only \$19 a month, a savings of \$369 a year.

Whether you need a \$500,000 policy or a \$5 million policy, SelectQuote could save you more than 50% on-term life insurance. For your free quote, go to SelectQuote.com. SelectQuote.com. That's SelectQuote.com. SelectQuote. We shop. You save.

Full details on example policies at SelectQuote.com slash commercials.

Hello, everyone. Very warm welcome to this week's episode of the Sky Sports F1 podcast. I hope you are well. Joining me for this one, someone I'm very excited about getting on our podcast. He's a Formula One podcaster, but he's also a cricket podcaster, host of a hugely successful radio show, a breakfast show here in the UK. He's also an author, presenter. I mean, the list goes on, Greg. I've tried to fit as many in there as possible, but please welcome Greg James. How are you?

I'm really well. Thanks Matt. Thanks for having me. It's a real pleasure.

And yeah, I really have made all my favourite things into work, which is a huge problem.

It's a fantastic thing to be able to do. I also, by the way, want to give you a shout out for an incredible audio setup. We've had on the podcast across the year variable people join drivers, our own presenters in fact. And this just goes to show you can do it at home. You know, a radio presenter is probably what was expected.

Well, I can't, I can't let the side down. This was a, this was a very like a knee jerk instinctive decision when the lockdowns happened. I thought, what am I without a microphone?

And so I made the spare room into the podcast room. And that's where I'm broadcasting from today. And the podcast room is, is something that I call it. My wife Bella does not refer to it as the podcast room, which is like, it's not that it's the spare room.

Get over yourself.

Everyone needs a podcast room. Everyone needs a podcast room. Yeah, fair enough, fair enough.

Anyway, Greg, really excited to get you on. There's so much we want to get into talking about. We're going to talk about the Fast and the Curious, which is your F1 podcast and how that all came about. But I also want to get into talking about your Cricut podcast.

And I think there's some really interesting conversations to be had around where Cricut is at the moment and attracting new audiences, that sort of stuff. So, so plenty, plenty to get into. But let's start by talking about the Fast and the Curious.

And we did a little job swap, didn't we? So, Crofty came on your podcast. You've come on ours. Tell me, how was Crofty? Is he welcome back?

He is absolutely welcome back. Yeah, the Fast and the Curious celebrates all aspects of the sport, the off air, the on air, the on track, the off track. And Crofty is, is one of those figures that transcends the sport really. And I met him maybe about 10 years ago. And we nerded out on radio. And we sort of did the same thing on the latest episode of the Fast and the Curious, because I personally think that great commentators have learned a lot of their craft while doing radio, because obviously they are describing the pictures.

[Transcript] Sky Sports F1 Podcast / UK radio DJ Greg James reveals which F1 driver would make the BEST Radio DJ!

Doesn't make a genius to work that out. But Crofty did start out in hospital radio, which is what I did back when I was a teenager. Then he did local radio, BBC local radio, which I did a bit of at BBC Norfolk. And so we have, I have a sort of a real respect for him and with it and his career and his craft, I guess, without sounding too pretentious. But it is a craft. It's a real skill to be that good at commentary. And we just had a really fun chat and we, we, we nerded out about radio things and fast things. And, and also we got him to do some commentary of mundane things that our listeners have sent in.

This was great. Really? This was so good. It's, it's, it's all in the tone with a commentator.

If you, if you, if you pitch it correctly, then suddenly everything can sound exciting.

And there we go. That's it. Lights out and away we go.

Like you, it's, it's, that was a terrible Crofty impression.

Crofty watch out.

No, no, no, no, no. But the, I find it so interesting, the pacing of commentary, the way that you draw in the viewer or the listener with a, with just a little bit of description of the, of the place or the weather or the, or the view that they have.

So we talked about sort of fantastic commentary because that's kind of what got me into radio, I think, listening to sports commentary. Test match special was obviously a huge influence on me because I could just listen to my favorite thing. And I think it was just on quite a lot because my mum and dad would listen to the cricket. And I've always been obsessed with, with sports coverage,

I guess, probably as much as I'm obsessed with the sport itself.

I really love the way it's presented to packaged up. And, and we talked a lot about that.

And I think the team at sky, particularly brilliant, you're brilliant at bringing the Grand Prix to life.

The sky cricket team is the same. The BBC five live sport team, like the football team,

I think they're, they're amazing as well. Like John Murray and Juliet Farrington, all these characters. I think they're so, I'm really in awe. That's, that's when I, when I listen to the radio and I hear sports commentary,

that's the thing I go, wow, I just, I don't, I don't know how I, how you do that.

I think it's, it's such a brilliant underappreciated skill. So it was, it was amazing.

Short answer is loved having Crofty on. He's welcome back.

Yeah. Well, particularly radio commentary for sport. I always think that's one of the most remarkable skills

to be able to let people into the story and vision, help them visualize it.

But also, you know, you've got to get in all the facts and the stats and get people into the game as well.

So there's a whole host of things you have to do.

And a formula one race is so fast at the, particularly the beginning.

I mean, it's a bit much like horse racing, whatever you, the clarity of thought to see it from a strange angle.

Because it's very difficult to see perspectives, isn't it? You can't really get a good angle of cars that are going that fast.

So he's, he knows every single thing, every move and you can work out who's nudging ahead on a corner.

[Transcript] Sky Sports F1 Podcast / UK radio DJ Greg James reveals which F1 driver would make the BEST Radio DJ!

And I, I try and practice. I try and do it. If I'm at home watching it on, on telly, I'll go, how would I do this?

How would I, because I don't know who that, who is that? Is that check out? Yeah. Is that, is that Carl? I don't know if that's Carl.

Oh, hang on, Lando. Oh no, that's Oscar. So you do that bit of that. And the same with tennis. I find that extraordinary tennis on the radio.

Because you've got quite long, long named tennis players.

Yeah.

Medvedev, Djokovic, Kroskan, Krosko, Fohan from Djokovic.

And you've just suddenly, you've completely lost the thread.

So I'm nothing but respect for people that bring sport to us. I find it so interesting.

Yeah. Yeah. Very, very difficult job, but when done well, absolutely brilliant.

So let's talk about the Fast and the Curious.

Because that was a podcast that you, that you launched at the start of this year.

Chloe on Instagram. We've got a few questions in for people at people at home.

So Chloe on Instagram would like to know what got you into F1 and why did you start your podcast Fast and the Curious?

I got into F1 mainly because I was, I've always been obsessed with cars and I love everything to do with cars.

And it's, I wouldn't say it's a secret passion of mine, but I don't go on about it too much.

I know that I've now got a format on podcast, but it was always a thing which ever since I was a kid, I would always want to drive something, be in a thing that was moving, make a thing move.

Anything with wheels, whether it be a little tractor that I had when I was a kid that was a pedal thing,

or changing the gears in my mum's car on the way to school, all of that stuff.

I was completely obsessed with driving and that was the only thing I ever wanted to do as a grownup was get in a car and drive.

So I would do the thing at Brands Hatch, I don't know if they still do, I'm sure they do.

It was like an early, it's called early years or early drive or something where you could go and drive the horseshoe at Brands Hatch.

We lived in Bromley and Kent, so quite near.

And so I did that on my, I think my 15th and 16th birthday.

I was like, please, I just want to drive a car.

And then so when I was 17, obviously my only present was a driving lesson.

And it was sort of it, really, it was the only thing I ever wanted to do.

And I've always been fascinated with video games that are either Colin McCray Rally, World Rally Championship,

having an actual steering wheel and pedals when I was a kid.

That's really all I did.

It was just like Grand Theft Auto, just anything that had a car.

But with Grand Theft Auto, I'd hate the missions and I would just drive a bus around for a couple of hours.

Yeah, very much the same.

[Transcript] Sky Sports F1 Podcast / UK radio DJ Greg James reveals which F1 driver would make the BEST Radio DJ!

Yeah, I remember that.

And there's a whole load, and I know I'm not unique at all in that way,

but there's a whole load of people that just could not wait to drive.

And I got obsessed with everything, everything from like quite boring family cars to sort of like really nice executive cars to like sports cars.

And at Jaguar XJ220s that you could collect from shell service stations with the right amount of vouchers.

Anything, remote control cars, anything I could make move was kind of it.

And then I just therefore graduated onto, oh, Grand Prix.

They're like, they're the fastest cars in the world, and they're extraordinary.

And they're like rocket ships.

And I suppose it was the time of Damon Hill, really, that I was like, oh, and then Jensen Button.

I thought, oh, these people are quite fun.

And then obviously Schumacher and all those sorts of complete legends.

So it was around that era.

But I've never pretended to be and never said that I'm the world's biggest Formula One fan or know everything about it.

And I compare all my sporting knowledge to my cricket knowledge, which is really, really good.

And then everything else is kind of pretty good that I really like.

And part of the reason to do the Fast and the Curious was because I wanted to dive into it even more.

And Christian, who's one of the hosts alongside Betty, so Christian Hugel and Betty Glover.

He is a complete Formula One racing addict.

He is an encyclopedia.

He knows it all.

He's got all the notebooks.

He's written everything down.

He's been obsessed since he was about eight years old.

And he's got all the details from every single race since about 2005.

And we just got chatting.

We met at Radio One when he was on Newsbeat and he would do the sport and he did the news a bit on my show.

And we just got chatting and became friends.

And he was the person I would message during a Grand Prix because I'd go, why, what's happening here?

Tell me more about the tyre compounds.

Just try and explain to me from scratch, DRS.

All of those sorts of things.

And I really love the granular detail of a sport.

I think it's brilliant.

If you've got time to dive into a sport, then you really should.

I've got so much out of cricket.

It just sounds so tragic.

[Transcript] Sky Sports F1 Podcast / UK radio DJ Greg James reveals which F1 driver would make the BEST Radio DJ!

But I get so much out of the stats and the history and the form of players and the internal battles of each player

and why they're getting picked, why they're not getting picked.

Why is that person's action more economical than that person's action?

The development of some of the shots, like Joe Root suddenly changing his whole game to add new shots to do scoops and ramps and all the rest of it.

I find that so interesting.

So really, I needed someone to help me do that with Formula One and Christian was the perfect person.

And then he had left Newsbeat and I'd said to him, oh, we should make a podcast at some point.

You'd be brilliant and I really love hearing him enthuse about it.

In fact, I heard him do a piece on the radio from the Abu Dhabi Grand Prix, but he was in the pit lane.

And he was trying to present Newsbeat's sport bulletin from the pit lane.

With cars.

With the cars.

And all you could hear was,

And it's Newsbeat's Christian's logo.

And you could just hear him going, I'm going to the US Open, jock of it.

And I found it so funny that I messaged him and said, well, that was brilliant because I didn't hear anything you were saying,

but I knew you were excited about the Grand Prix.

I knew that he wanted people to love it as much as him.

And that's what I thought. That's what I love about doing.

My cricket podcast, TailEnders, is that you hopefully find people who want to love it as much as you do.

They might never get to that level of obsession.

And I probably will never get to the level of obsession of Christian Hugo.

I'll probably be divorced if that happens.

But that was it.

I thought, well, this person clearly loves the sport, gets why lots of people don't understand it.

And I think that's crucial in the Fast and the Curious's success so far,

which is not pandering to people and not dumbing down too much,

but just appreciating the fact that people learn at different rates

and will find different parts of it interesting and therefore different parts of it boring.

So the Fast and the Curious was supposed to be a place to hang out.

If you really like Formula One, you can get access to the drivers and to people behind the scenes,

whether it be Randy Singh, who's one of the McLaren strategists,

or to Toto Wolf or to all these sorts of amazing characters,

or the lesser-known people who are the engineers or working on different bits of strategy

or working in the garage or whatever,

and alongside celebrating the fans of the sport and welcoming them in

and using them as the hosts and using them for games and using them for ideas.

[Transcript] Sky Sports F1 Podcast / UK radio DJ Greg James reveals which F1 driver would make the BEST Radio DJ!

A bit like I do on The Breakfast Show because The Show is hosted by me on Radio One, but really, the listeners are supposed to be the star of it.

So we've got the drivers, we've got the listeners, and we want to marry those two worlds together to demystify certain parts of the sport. So that's essentially the Fast and the Curious.

Yeah, lovely explanation.

And I think one of the things you do so well is you get beneath the surface really wonderfully because obviously when we speak to drivers, particularly at a race weekend, you know, they are head down, or they are there.

Their purpose that weekend is to drive that car as fast as they can.

And we get them, you know, if we're lucky we get them on a Thursday,

but even then their head, you know, they're in meetings,

they're in strategy meetings, engineering meetings,

their head is still in the game.

You know, the best way to speak to a Formula One driver is not at a race circuit.

It is away from a race circuit, either on Zoom or if preferable in person.

And I think, yeah, what you guys have done so wonderfully is just get beneath the surface, ask the questions that, you know, perhaps aren't the questions that get asked on a Sunday after the race.

They're like the ones that everyone wants to know,

but maybe on a Monday or a Tuesday, you know, and that's kind of the interesting thing.

So it's a really wonderful podcast.

I'm intrigued to know what you've learned from the podcast this year.

What's maybe taking you a bit by surprise and that you've gone,

oh, wow, I didn't know that happened, or that's become a lot clearer now, for example.

The circus of it, which everyone talks about,

I guess the circus has become a bit of a cliché, actually,

but I guess the calendar of it and actually getting your head around the logistics of it

and having to move that wholesale all around the world,

learning that there are European sort of trucks

that only take the big motor homes to the European destinations,

and then there's a whole one for the Asian Grand Prix

and those ones will be used for the Australian ones.

There are little boring bits like that which I find quite interesting in going,

how come there's this huge mansion for every single team?

Who's building this? Well, this is mad.

So all of that I find brilliant.

And then getting to know some of the teams,

so we've been working closely with, well, most of the teams really,

but we got invited to the British Grand Prix at Silverstone with McLaren

and seeing how they work, what their week is like,

what's their race week like, what's their race weekend like,

and we actually bumped into Randy, Randy Singh, their chief strategist,

[Transcript] Sky Sports F1 Podcast / UK radio DJ Greg James reveals which F1 driver would make the BEST Radio DJ!

on the Saturday evening.

We were just leaving the paddock, we just recorded some stuff around the corner and we were just leaving the paddock and we bumped into Randy coming out of the toilet and I really love behind the scenes of anything and there was a really lovely moment where we just bumped into a man at work, essentially, and away from all the glitz and the glamour of the most extraordinary motorised vehicles that ever created, literally around the corner, in the back of the garage, away from the glitz and the glamour and the photo shoots and the whatever else, and the pomp and the fireworks and Cavanases performing all that stuff, there was a man who is stressed out but pretty together just going, yeah, we asked him how he was and he just went, yeah, I'm really nervous about this moment, sort of thinking about, you know, are we going to do a one-stop, a two-stop, just thinking about the tires, have a chat to Lando a bit later, and yeah, I'm alright though, I'm just, sorry, I was about to go to the toilet, I was just going to have some dinner and then just try and sleep a bit later and then just have a think about it and I love the juxtaposition of that, I think, and I just thought, well of course, of course that happens because it's a job for people, but you don't really see that, you don't think, but there's a Randy in every team and there's departments full of people that are just going, yeah, I mean we're going to try and drive as fast as possible tomorrow, but I really don't, I don't know what we're going to do, there might be a bit of rain and he was talking about how they spot for rain and who's going to be telling everyone stuff, so I love all the detail of it, I guess my answer is, they all go to the toilet like normal human beings, that's the most surprising thing about Formula One, but the most surprising thing about the drivers is how calm they are at all times, I mean it's not a huge surprise, but actually seeing it is extraordinary, they are not like you or me, they are not like every other human being really, they are wired differently, there's a stillness, there's an interviews when they're being interviewed, we interviewed Oscar Piastri quite early on, I just couldn't believe how still he was. He is the stillest potentially of the lot. Calm, yeah, just calm, measured, unflappable, but of course you have to be, and then very relaxed, walking in and out of the home, the motor home all weekend, saying hi to fans who are in there, special guests who have been brought in by McLaren, stop and talk to them, have a photo as someone's kid, chat to us and pretend to be interested in everyone else, but actually all they're thinking about is driving that car as fast and as smartly as possible, I find that incredibly impressive, seeing top level sports people is something that, I mean it is like meeting a superhero, you just can't quite believe that that is the same person that then goes and sits in that car and drives it that fast for that long, I find that quite special actually, there's a real magic to that, that they managed to just empty their brain completely of the meet and greets, the photo ops, the

[Transcript] Sky Sports F1 Podcast / UK radio DJ Greg James reveals which F1 driver would make the BEST Radio DJ!

sponsors things,

oh I've signed this hat for this person, and then half an hour later they're on the grid at the British Grand Prix

in front of hundreds of millions of people.

Well Martin Brundle put that point to Pep Guardiola at the British Grand Prix and he said, imagine if you're coaching Manchester City and whenever we speak to Lando often just after the anthem,

so he's about to get in the car, that's about T-minus 5-10 minutes till he gets in the car, imagine speaking to a Premier League footballer at that point, you wouldn't even get close, they are so in the zone

and you're right, it gives you almost more respect for what they do because they're able to be someone like Lando

who's incredibly affable, so happy to have a chat and gives you so much interesting insight at that point

but then he literally gets in the car and drives over 200 miles an hour.

We were in the garage, as he walked past he had his little ear defenders dropped out of his ear and I just went,

go well, he was like, cheers.

And then just jumps in the McLaren and then spun off to go and do the formation up.

I mean it's mad, it's really, it's very, very exciting.

It's a very exciting sport and I've always been drawn to it and this season more than ever really because I've been following it closely for work purposes but it's really helped me really dive into the calendar.

I'm intrigued to get your thoughts then on Silverstone and races as an event

because obviously this year, I don't know if this was the first, I imagine you might have been on the grid before

but you're on the grid at Silverstone, just take us into what it's like to be on the grid before a Formula One race.

Try and put that into words because I don't think I can.

The chaos, because I'm an interloper on the grid, I'm not working with the team, I'm not helping out, I'm not part of the official coverage, you feel a little bit like, I felt a bit like a lost child on the first day of school,

big school, so I was looking around, I was looking around in the playground,

sort of going, oh god look at the sick formers, they're massive, oh my god I'm never going to be that tall

and then sort of looking at the teachers and being like, I don't know if that's, I don't know who any, not that I didn't know who anyone was but you just kind of go, oh god is that, that's the coverage for whatever.

So I felt a little bit, it's very intense, I mean it's loud, you've got celebs walking past you and I've obviously encountered a few of them doing my job, so I knew of Hannah Waddingham from Ted Lasso

and I think she knew of me so I went, oh hello, hello, hello, hello, hello, hello, hello.

So it's all good, it's all good, it's like hello, hello, hello, how you doing?

[Transcript] Sky Sports F1 Podcast / UK radio DJ Greg James reveals which F1 driver would make the BEST Radio DJ!

But it's all loud so you go, yeah, good, and I saw Gordon Ramsay, I think I'd met maybe once, ten years, you know, a few years ago. And I go, oh, I go, go, no, yeah, you're doing.

And so it's all very weird, mad interactions. And then you've got Cara Delevingne, who's but I saw the moment where she was interviewed by, by Martin Brunner. It's sort of like a wears wallet. Imagine if you're in a wears wallet picture. And I'm the wallet in the middle. But you, you can't see for people. And then in the background, the even madder thing is madness surrounding us. So all these famous people, photographers, all the teams, all the mechanics just crowding around the cars, keeping everyone happy and cool and everything. And then in the distance, we saw Brad Pitt walking towards his Formula One car because they were filming the, the, the film that he's in at the actual start line of the British Grand Prix. So then you saw the fuss, the fake mechanics, the fake Formula One team, the film crew, the fake film crew. And then the actual film crew following Brad Pitt. So the whole thing was a complete mess. It was an extraordinary thing. And then you got Damien Lewis singing the national anthem, then the red arrows fly over. And it's, it's, it's actually too much for a brain to comprehend how bizarre it is. And so I was freaking out thinking, I don't know how I'm going to get back to the, to the garage here. The drivers have to deal with all of that and then go and drive at 200 and whatever miles an hour. So it's a, it's a, it's a, it's a real mess. And I, and you know, I think Martin Brundle brings it across perfectly. That is exactly what it is like.

Where do you, I mean, you've obviously been to, you know, big sporting events, but also big entertainment events all around the world, I'm sure. So where do you rank that kind of atmosphere? Because I think in recent, in recent years as well, F1 have really made an effort to increase the music, you know, to increase all that kind of buzz around it. And I was, I was at Zandvoort this year and you honestly can't hear Paul, Paul Nasserley is trying to interview Steve Carell at the front of the grid. They can't, they just cannot hear each other. They are just conducting an interview based on, we think we might be saying this. And but, but the, the, the tree is like a trance, the trance orchestra I loved particularly. I really enjoyed that. That was, I mean, we need more, more of that, I think.

Yeah. Yeah. It was brilliant. But, but, but for the people in the stands, it's, it's phenomenal. It, the atmosphere is incredible. And yeah, I'm just intrigued to know where you pitch it across other things. Yeah.

Very luckily, I've been to, I've been to two or three British Grand Prix now. And I've been to, I've been to spar a couple of times as well. And it's, there's really nothing like it. And you're just totally engrossed in this mad spectacle, which is essentially a very simple spectacle, which is who drives fastest around this circuit. But there's so much more to it. And there's so many different factions as well, which I, which I think really adds to it. There's so many teams and there's so many drivers that the crowd is obviously divided, but weirdly united. They just want it to be really fun and they want it to be a great, close race. And I think that, that gives it a certain spice as well. Cause you've obviously in the British Grand Prix, you've got your, you've got your George fans, your Lewis fans and your Lando fans, but you've also got a load of Ferrari fans. You've got people who just love Mercedes. You've got people who were cheering for Valtteri Bottas, you know, cause they just love him. You've got people who were just shouting cause they,

[Transcript] Sky Sports F1 Podcast / UK radio DJ Greg James reveals which F1 driver would make the BEST Radio DJ!

they spot Gunter Steiner and they're like, I know you from trying to survive. And there's so much you can latch onto with, with Formula One that you can't help but be excited at the, the madness of it. And it is sort of, it's a sort of beautiful nonsense Formula One really. I mean, I love that they just really press the button and they go, yeah, well it's kind of a mad stuff. Should we just send the red arrows over?

Yeah, send them over. Yeah, why not? We can do what we like. We are Formula One. So it's, it's nothing like it to answer your question short in a short way. It is, it's unparalleled in terms of a sporting event. It's like nothing else.

I want to, I want to move on just to talk about one of your other roles. And that is, as part of your tail enders cricket podcast, which is sensational. And, and I, and I wonder if there are sort of some parallels between what you're trying to do with Fast and Curious and what you've done with, with tail enders in terms of creating a sort of inclusive space for old fans, new fans, maybe not even fans yet, people who just want to hear a great discussion or great entertaining podcasts. What, why, why have you, what parallels do you see between, between the two?

So yeah, there are lots of parallels. I am really interested in why people like sport and why, and what bits of it people really like. So the lucky thing would tell, or the reason, the reason we started tail enders was, was because we thought it'd be really fun and we wanted to get Jimmy to do some funds, Jimmy Anderson to do some fun stuff. But really, the, the, the other option about, if I wanted to do something with cricket, because cricket is one of my biggest passions, if I wanted to do cricket stuff, I would have to sort of be a cricket pundit or a cricket commentator or a cricket anchor. And I've done a bit of that, the cricket presenting and anchoring. And I didn't really enjoy it that much because it started making my favorite fun thing into quite a serious job. So tail enders was born out of that really, it was to shirk that responsibility of having to do the cricket line. What's, but what's the, but we need to hold these players to account for how badly they're doing in, in, in India.

Like it was, it was to try and negate that a little bit, which was just to say that is done brilliantly somewhere else. And you need all these things. Because if you don't have that, then our thing doesn't make sense. And if you have that, you might, you know, you need something for everybody, I guess, to a certain extent. So that's what tail enders was. It was our attempt to go, we don't think there's any, and if anyone really doing this on the BBC at the minute, TMS is obviously really fun, but they're hamstrung by the cricket, because they have to do the cricket, where sometimes we got sick of the cricket. And in the pandemic, there was no cricket. So we had to just have that podcast survive on its community and cricket stories from the past and looking to the future and all the rest of it. So it was really to celebrate the sport in the way that I've always loved it, which is to, when the cricket's on, be really obsessed with it. When the cricket's not on, look at all the stories around it. Look at celebrate village cricket and talk about all those sorts of stories. And it's bringing all those worlds together. And Jimmy was the is the linchpin of that. We all, we're all, we all love cricket for the same reason, even Jimmy, because you love the game at whatever level it's at. So I guess we have, I have sort of transported some of those ideas across to the fast and the curious, but it was to really get an insight into those drivers. Because there's always a bit of chat about, oh, if one drives a bit boring, and they

[Transcript] Sky Sports F1 Podcast / UK radio DJ Greg James reveals which F1 driver would make the BEST Radio DJ!

drive survivors really helped with that. But I've never believed in that really, because if you have chosen to do that with your life, you're definitely weird. You're definitely, you've definitely got a screw loose, and you're definitely interesting, therefore, because you've decided to get really hot in a very dangerous machine and drive it as fast as you can on the absolute edge of crashing, like a catastrophic accident. So I think there's low, I just thought, no, they've got to be interesting. There's definitely something going on here. And the other thing about the fast and curious is that we wanted to pitch it so that it wasn't sort of, it wasn't too pundity. I don't actually want to see it as a motorsport podcast, because there are some, as I said earlier, there are some brilliant ones that already do that. So this is much more of an entertainment lifestyle podcast where we don't have to ask Lance Stroll about his, you know, confidence levels. Do you think you're going to have a seat next season type thing? We don't have to ask that. We can, we can talk to them a little bit about racing and their process and where they started and all the rest of it and what they think of the world and things and traveling around and all those sorts of things. So that was, that was really key for me. And again, I don't, it's not shirking. It's just that those things are done brilliantly elsewhere. But I wanted to make the drivers feel as if they were the co-hosts, not the guests. I think that was the crucial thing about the fast and the curious and they, and they do seem to get it really. They like playing around with it and they know that they're not going to get a gotcha question. Yeah, if I was Lance Stroll right now, I probably would want to do an interview with you, Greg, and probably not with Sky Sports F1. Yeah, I'm dropping a gotcha question though. Yeah, yeah, yeah, yeah, yeah. Just when they're at their most. One last thing before you go. Are you worried about your future? I know your dad runs the team, but yeah. I'm very good. And then I, when I was doing some research for this chat, I found an article that you've written in the eye. And this was the headline from it said, I know how rubbish it feels to be marked down as not enough of a fan, but sport belongs to us all. And I thought that was a really lovely quote about fandom and sport and, you know, your own experiences. I mean, you tell me, but you mentioned the football example of when you were a little bit younger. Is that correct? Yeah, and now really, my friends still take the mickey out of me when I try and talk to them about football, because I'm not as big a fan as they are. They've got sort of draft leagues that they're in. I can't bother with that because I'm too busy doing my cricket draft leagues. But I really hope that I never, I hope I never make people feel unwelcome to talk to me about cricket, because I love it when someone comes up and goes, I watched, I watched Harry and Brooke the other day. Isn't Harry Brooke brilliant? And I'm going in. Yeah, I've known about Harry Brooke for ages. He's brilliant. But you just go, that's amazing that you know about that. Let's talk some more about it. Are you going to get down to the oval soon or whatever it might be. So yeah, the gatekeeping thing, you will always have this in every sport. And my article was not to try and fix the problem. But the podcast is not even to try and fix the problem, but it's to give people a destination. And to say this is a Formula One podcast for you, if you're open minded, and you want to hear about some silly stuff, and you want to have a laugh with a nice group of people. And also, we will go serious when we want to. Christian had a fantastic discussion very early on actually with Lewis Hamilton on the podcast. Christian is gay and found it very difficult to talk about being a gay man in Formula One who loved racing and love sport, which was a thing when he was growing up and he thanked Lewis

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for being so vocal about LGBTQ plus rights and inclusivity and making people feel welcome. And so we'd I love I love that things go serious sometimes and then they go light all of a sudden, because that's what life's like. But that's really it. Yeah, the gatekeeping in sport has always put me off certain sports and you get it a lot in Formula One. And you'll always get that there will be people who will think that I shouldn't be on this Formula One podcast. And that's absolutely fine for people to think that. But you wouldn't you never and there's lots of and when I started looking into the Formula One world, there's a whole load of people that are like, well, you're only a fan because I drive to survive. Good. Because you need you need people, you need new people to come into your favorite sport, whether you like it or not. And I have those feelings sometimes about cricket. When the hundred came along, I went, I was like, test crickets, the purest, the purest form of cricket is test cricket. But as long as all the things can coexist, then that's brilliant. But the reason why Formula One will survive is it own if it's only if new people come to it, which means, I mean, very cynically, these people that run sport are not stupid. They need new people because that's more money. They need to broaden it out to a younger, more female audience, because that is more money, it's more families through the door. And I know that's cynical, but that's sort of how it works. That's, that's, that's what happens with capitalism. You know, you need to broaden these things out in order for them to grow. And I do think it's really important for sport to appeal to lots of people. And also, the other thing is you don't need everyone to love it as much as the biggest nerds in the whole world. You don't need that. You just need an entry point to it and go, Oh, I like, I like Toto Wolf. It seems fun. I'm going to, I'm going to watch it. I'm going to go to a Grand Prix. I'm going to buy a hat or whatever it is. So there's lots of different ways you can get into the sport. You mentioned the hundred just there. Cricket has gone through, I think, an experience with obviously, as you mentioned, you've got the, the old school of test cricket and that being the very pinnacle of the sport. And then you've got T20, most recently, the hundred. And do you think there's anything F1 can learn from what cricket has gone through to try and make shorter formats, more family friendly formats, more evening formats, you know, not everyone has five days to sit and watch a test match. Of course they don't. So being able to go and go and watch an evening's cricket is one of, is a great thing to be able to do. So is there anything you could see that F1 is, is perhaps angling for or any opportunities that F1 could, could have for that? Well, the genius touch was to, to do, drive to survive and, and tell stories. That was, they're, they're, they're obviously very different sports, cricket and Formula One, but it's the, it's the stories and the battles and the drama within the teams and, and within the, within, within the, just the personalities really. So that was, that was the real genius move. And then actually at the Grand Prix himself, Silverstone is sort of trying to turn itself into an actual festival. So obviously you camp there, you stay there, you've got Calvin Harris performing, you've got Tom Grenin performing, you've got DJs all day, you've got events on the main stage. So you've got simulators, you've got, you know, the F1 2023 game was, was there. You've got all of those sorts of things, which make it more of a festival and make it more of a destination to hang out for the weekend. It's like, it's a theme park, essentially. And that's, I don't think there's anything wrong with that. As long as you've, as long as the sport itself is attractive to everybody at some point, and it needs to still be really good. And that's,

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I think what the breakthrough of the 100 was this year, is that the standard of the cricket, particularly in the men's game, was really brilliant. It was really world-class. And what you've seen with the, with the new formats of cricket, I mean, T20 is not even new anymore, but when it came in, you now see all the different formats of the game, coexisting, still scheduling problems and issues with money, but you've got transferable skills now. So you see the skills of the short form game coming into the test game, which makes that more exciting, innovates it, changes it again for another year. So I think all these things can help each other. So to translate that to Formula One, if it becomes a more attractive thing, then it's just going to get more and more exciting, because it's a great spectacle anyway. But when you are invested in the spectacle of the race or invested in the drivers or the teams, then you'll go, yeah, I'm going to come back and watch it again and again and again, because I'm really, I'm really into these people. I want to see them do well, or I want to see them crash. Yeah, that's what Drivers To Survive did so well, wasn't it? It created stories behind every driver, and you just got to learn their story and why it was important to them. Speaking of, I sort of want to kind of... Very quickly, sorry to be boring and wanging on, and I am wanging on, I realize that, but I'm very passionate about this sort of stuff. But I took my wife, Bella, to go and watch some Village Cricket. She has no interest whatsoever. She's never going to be a Big Cricket fan. But I sat with her for about half an hour, and she really, really enjoyed it, and she would tell me if she wasn't. But it's just explaining the basics and just saying, like, those two, they're batting. They cross over, that's a run. They hit it over the boundary, that's a four. These other people, they're all dressed in white. She was like, why are they dressed in white? Don't worry about that. But they're trying to bowl them out for this total. In half an hour's time, she just went, okay, I get that now. I understand why they're doing all that stuff. Things like various podcasts that are around, yours included. There's some brilliant stuff. There's some great YouTube channels doing some great work. Obviously, Drivers To Survive, your sky coverage. It's about joining the dots of it all and going, that's why that's interesting. How about this? Do you like this? What about that? Have you thought about this? And you can really build up a picture of the sport. And then you suddenly go, I know what I'm cheering for now. I get it. I understand why. That's important to Toto. That's important to Alonso. I think that's sort of a jigsaw puzzle, I guess. Yeah. And fundamentally, Formula One is the most simple sport in the world. It's whoever drives the fastest round a track over however many laps wins. It's so simple. That is obviously a very reduced form, a version of what it is. And no one knows everything about F1. There is always another level, isn't there? There's a strategist who just comes in with a new strategy. And there's always something developing or changing. And therefore, the thirst for knowledge or to move on is just extraordinary. You'll never get to the bottom of it, which I guess is why people love it, because you don't know everything. Don't tell everyone that. It's a bit like when you get too deep into, if you missed Game of Thrones and you start on Series 7. What I was going to ask you, with regards to the characters of Formula One, and through your, you've done obviously, what, six, seven months now of the podcast, who have been the big characters that have really, you've engaged with or you Christian and Betty have engaged with? Alex Albon and Logan were the first ones we met in real life. And I was immediately impressed

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with both of them. It was obviously Logan's rookie year. And I think he's sort of finding his feet slowly, but surely, and it's been really interesting and sometimes heartbreaking being, you know, following him and being rooting for him. Alex has just had a phenomenal season. He is such a great driver and a really interesting guy. He talks to me a lot about his background, his upbringing, the funding that's needed, the luck he's had, the bad luck he's had. Very open guy, really open and smart and interesting. And it doesn't really take it too seriously until he's in the car and just goes, I know how to do this. I'm just going to do this really, really well. I'm going to blank everything out, but realises that it's an absolute nonsense job. What a mad job that they have to do. So I think he takes it all with a really appropriately sized pinch of salt. I really love George because he's like a sort of unflappable young James Bond actor. And he's just sort of suave and saunters around the paddock. And I really love his sort of exudes confidence. Lewis is just sort of, he's just glows with championship gold. I guess he's just obviously just glows. He just resonates and sort of a, I guess you do know if you're that much of a legend. I think you do walk around, but he never walks around sort of over confidently. He's just, he's like an aura around Lewis Hamilton, but a very approachable and a very lovely, lovely one, like a very warm character. And I'd say that the one that I've been most excited about was Oscar Piastri. And he was our first interview we recorded. And I didn't know much about Oscar because I hadn't really followed much formula two. And, but Christian knew a little bit about him, but had never met him. And then we, we went to a hotel just outside Heathrow airport where he's obviously flying into a media day. And we had about 25, 30 minutes with him. And we set up our mics and we were quite nervous. We'd never done this all together before. And he walked in and was a little bit nervous about doing this sort of thing, but immediately understood what we were after, which was like a co-host. And I just thought he was, I just thought he was brilliant. I thought he was so, so calm, so interested in what we were doing, willing to talk about how much he liked cricket, which really pleased me because he's an Aussie. We were taking them out of each other for the ashes or throughout the whole ashes really. And I was just really impressed with how mature he was and how calm he was. But he could tell he was very, very apprehensive about that first race. And I think he was just wanting to get it done. And to see how far he's come in such a short space of time is really, it's exciting for the sport, isn't it? You're no better than me, Matt, but that's a really good start to a, to an F1 career, what he's managed to do. It's the pace is good. His confidence is good. He's really going for it on the track, isn't he? He's not, he's not looking intimidated in any way. Helps that he's got a good car, but he must have impressed you as someone who's watched the sport for a while. Incredible. Absolutely. And you alluded to it there, that the mid-season turnaround, you know, imagine being in pretty much the slowest car in the grid. And then all of a sudden, halfway through the season, pretty much at Silverstone or Austria-Silverstone, you go, hold on, I've got a rocket ship underneath me. But then it's all very well that happening. But then you've still got to perform, you know, and Lando, who, who he's with is one of the, one of the best drivers on the grid. You know, he's obviously super experienced and stilled in that McLaren team, but to be neck and neck with Lando, you know, pretty much here or there, it's, I think it's incredible. I think it's an amazing, an amazing rookie season, for sure, for sure. And yeah, actually, funnily enough, I interviewed him at a cricket ground when we did

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a little Ashes thing with him in Lando. Right. Pre-season and yeah. Oh yes, I saw that. Yes, I saw that. I saw that. Yeah. His passion for cricket was, was very clear. He used to play cricket. I think he went to boarding school in the UK. So he used to play quite a lot of cricket there. But he, yeah, he just was the most chilled out, normal guy. He just, you know, you're like, you're a Formula One driver. You know, how is this happening? How, how do you, do you have a Formula One driver going to boarding school? Are you mad really? That wasn't a bit I was surprised about. Yeah. No, what? Yeah. But actually he, we had him on around the Ashes. And do you remember

the picture that he put up on his Instagram of him with Ricky Ponting when he was a kid? Yeah. Yeah.

So I, we questioned him about that. And I said, that looks like Photoshopped. It looks like AI. And he said, no, no, no, that was at the Melbourne Cricket Ground. And they needed a kid who loved cricket to go and stand with Ricky Ponting. He was the captain at the time. It was him. So we had a lot of chat about, about that. But I'm just excited for the future with him. I just feel like he's a potential future, dare I say it, world champion. And he needs to be looked after and, and encouraged and, and given all the toys to play with, because I just, he just feels like he feels like a superstar in, in waiting. He's just got that car, as I said, that calmness and the sort of unflappability of the, of the person. And so I'm really excited by him. And I'm so pleased. And it's kind of luck, I guess, that we, we, we, we attached our wagon to his horse. Is that the phrase? I don't know what I'm talking about. I'm quite tired. Yeah, you got in early before he, before he does become a world champion. He'll, he'll be a friend of the show for evermore. Yeah. Oh my God. Yeah, we're gonna, I tell you what, we are going to rinse that to death. Yeah. Yeah. Yeah. Remember that first interview in Heathrow. The other person I wanted to, or kind of two, two drivers I want to talk to you about is Lando Norris and Charlotte Clare, because you, you know, in your job as, as Radio and Breakfast House, you've interviewed probably every big megastar under the sun. And I think F1 is,

is just, it's just, it's changed hasn't it since Drive to Survive in that now Lando Norris is a megastar, you know, he can't walk through an airport in London, in Europe, in the US, probably without being recognised. And I just wonder if, what do you make of the fandom now that is associated

with drivers like that? Well, how, how do Lando and Charlotte, people like that, how do they connect with their fans? Do you see any similarities with, with pop stars or movie stars? Yeah, I mean, they are pop stars. They are, they are, that is the, that is the closest comparison. They are, they are pop stars. But I, I don't look at that as a, as a negative, you know, people like these people for a reason and you're, you're a snob and, and you're short-sighted if you think it's sort of fluff. Because the people that love, I'll just do a comparison, people that love Harry Styles. If you're 14, 15, 16 year old girl, for example, my niece, Pia, 15 years old, incredibly smart, worldly, has got big dreams, big ambitions, she is obsessed with Harry Styles. And you are, it's, it's, it's dangerous and short-sighted to dismiss people that are obsessed with things, that really are passionate about things, because those people will grow up and they will, those things are really important to a human, like those first touch points of, that's my favourite Formula One driver. That's my favourite pop star. You never forget about that sort of thing. They help

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shape who you are. They, they help you shape what you like. I know that sounds a bit grand, but how amazing to have Lando Norris as your, as your favourite celebrity. That's a great person, because that is an incredibly talented person. That's an, that's a person who's worked really hard and is so great at their job. So there's a lot of, there's a, there's a lot of sort of, oh you're a lot of Formula One, because you fancy the drivers. Great. Whatever your way in is, whatever your way in is, that, that's fantastic. Pia, my niece, my niece, once, she told me the other day, she went, I want to marry a Formula One driver. And she's, she's, she's, she's being stupid with me. She's being silly. Yeah, yeah. But how fantastic, you know, this, this thing which is to a 15 year old, kind of mad to dive into the data of a Formula One car, who just kind of likes it. I just, I don't know how you could not just find that sort of charming and, and really sweet. And as I said, you can like any bit of sport that you like. No one is, no one is supposed to be gatekeeping this thing. I also would like to say, not to generalise, there will be as many 14, 15 year old, whatever, who would love to get into the sport and they want to get into the granular detail of a car and become the next generation of engineers. So whatever your, whatever your doorway into the sport is, amazing. That is, it's, it's, you've sort of won. If you're land of noise, you've, you've won because you've got people who know who you are and you're brilliant at your job. And that's sort of, that's how, that's how sport can make a difference in people's lives because these characters have to transcend the sport. Yeah, really well put. Speaking of jobs, I thought we'd finish the podcast on you naming dry, this is my attempt at coming up with a radio feature, which is I'm going to say poor at best. Your, your task, Greg, is to name the person in the paddock who would be best at the jobs that you have done. It needs a title, maybe we'll, we'll workshop that later on. But I have them here and some of these are, some of these have come from people at home. So who in the paddock, and this is from Claire on Instagram, would be the best host of a breakfast show? Alex Albon, because he really likes nonsense and loves animals and like sort of wacky ideas. So I think he would go for those sorts of ideas. Alex Albon. Okay, very good. I would love to listen to Alex at seven a.m. I think he'd, I think he'd be brilliant. The best chairman, and this is because you are of course chairman of the Overland Vincibles Cricket team. Yeah, who in the paddock? I mean, it doesn't have to just be, it could be team principles, could be drivers. Well, I'm co-chair of Overland Vincibles with Felix White that I do tell in his width. So I'm going to pick two chairs if that's okay. Very good. And I'm, I'm going to pick Toto and Gunter. Very good. Okay. You need a, you need a little bit of, a little bit of sweet with the assault. Okay. Yeah. That's what I'm saying. Yeah. Yeah. Bit of a hair dryer mixed with the tap on the shoulder and you know, yeah. Yeah. You need a fun time guy, a good cop, bad cop kind of thing. Okay. Final one. This is from Martha on Twitter. Who would you most like to team up with to do a Greg, Greg Athalon? Greg Athalon. Well, the Greg Athalon for those who don't know was a sport relief challenge that I did a few years ago, which was, I cycled between the three peaks and climbed them. So you need someone who's going to be really good on a bike. Oh, Valtteri Bottas. Yes. Very good. Without, without question. He is someone I really, really want to get on the podcast. I love him. He is absolute chaos. I think he just does, you know, in his, his, I'm sure you're well aware, but his summer break, he went off and raced. He did like a gravel race on his bike. He's in, he's mad. I love him. So him, he will keep up any,

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any dressed as Duffman from the Simpsons. Yes. And I really want to hang out with him. I think he is amazing. So Valtteri. Yeah. Since he's moved to Alfa Romeo, I feel like the shackles have kind of come off, you know, perhaps from the sages where you've sort of had to be a little bit more kind of corporate. And now he is just completely unleashed into this wonderful sort of slightly quirky character. And yeah, he's amazing. Him and his mullion is brilliant. Yes. That's his true, his true self though. But he, he zoomed past us in the paddock on a little electric scooter. And it was the most Valtteri Bottas thing ever. I was like, of course he's doing that. Of course, he's weaving it out of all the camera guys and stuff. Yeah. Yeah, brilliant. Okay. Well, that, that ends our game. I think you played along very well with that. I think the title and the concept needs work. So thank you very much. I don't think you'll be taking that anywhere further. But yeah, Greg, look, thank you so much for your time. Really appreciate it. Congratulations on the podcast because it's, it's brilliant. And it's, and it's, as we said, it's getting a whole new audience into, into Formula One. And that's only a good thing. So to you, Christian, Betty, Jimmy, your producer, just congratulations. It's been brilliant. Thank you so much. And thank you to you. And it's been a real pleasure. And I really, as a Sky subscriber, I love paying for the Formula One coverage. I really do. I think it's, I think it's fantastic. So keep going, everyone. You're doing great. Thank you, Greg. We will clip that up and we will be back next Tuesday to look back at the Singapore Grand Prix. How you can join us then? Bye for now.