

Mercedes takes control of Brawn GP

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In confirmation of rumours that have become increasingly widespread in recent weeks, car manufacturer Mercedes-Benz has bought a controlling stake in the Brawn GP Formula One team. In partnership with Aabar Investments, Mercedes has bought a 75.1 per cent stake in Brawn GP, which will be rebranded as Mercedes Grand Prix.

The move is expected to see world champion Jenson Button switch to McLaren, alongside fellow Briton Lewis Hamilton, while Brawn GP will be rebranded as a Mercedes team and have an all-German line-up of Nico Rosberg and Nick Heidfeld. "We are speaking with Nick Heidfeld," said Norbert Haug of Mercedes Sports to German news agency DPA at the weekend. "Mercedes-Benz supports the idea of signing an experienced and capable German driver. There is however no reason to finalise the driver situation too hastily."

Brawn GP secured both Formula One world championships in its debut season, after a group led by Ross Brawn took control of the team following Honda's exit from Formula One. Brawn is expected to continue as team principal. He and Nick Fry will own 24.9 per cent of the team. Aabar Investments will own 30 per cent of the team, while 45.1 per cent will be owned by Mercedes.

"Mercedes-Benz will enter the Formula One World Championship with its own team, beginning with the 2010 season, and Daimler AG and McLaren Group will change their form of cooperation with effect as of 13 November 2009," said a statement on Brawn GP's website. "Daimler AG together with Aabar Investments PJSC will take over 75.1 per cent of the Brawn GP team, with Daimler taking 45.1 per cent and Aabar 30 per cent. The rest of the 24.9 per cent will remain with the current stakeholders."

Meanwhile, the McLaren Group will buy back the 40 per cent of its team owned by Mercedes, but Mercedes is expected to continue supplying free engines to McLaren for the next six years.

FRASER, Adam. Mercedes takes control of Brawn GP. **SpostsPro Media**, 16 nov. 2009. Disponível em: <www.spostspromedia.com>. Acesso em: 17 nov. 2009.