

SPORTS

Formula 1: Robert Kubica named Williams reserve driver to



Sergey Sirotkin Robert Kubica has taken a significant step towards his ambition of making a return to Formula 1 with a role as reserve driver at Williams in 2018. The Pole, 33, has not raced in F1 since suffering life-changing injuries in a rally crash seven years ago. Williams have signed Sergey Sirotkin as a race driver to partner Canadian Lance Stroll after deciding the Russian out-performed Kubica in a test last autumn. But Kubica will work on

development and take part in some practice sessions. The former BMW Sauber and Renault driver, who won the 2008 Canadian Grand Prix, said: "I feel in the best physical shape that I have ever been, but it has taken a lot of work to get to where I am now, so I'd like to thank Williams for the opportunities they have given me so far, and for putting their faith in me with this appointment. "I have enjoyed being back in the Formula 1 paddock over these past few months, and I now look forward to working with the Williams technical team, both at the factory and at the track, to really help push forward the development of the FW41 (car) and to make a real difference to their 2018 campaign." He added: "My ultimate goal is to race again in F1 and this is another important step in that direction." Williams said Kubica would drive the car in pre-season testing, in-season testing and "a number of race weekend practice sessions". Why did Kubica not get the race seat? Kubica has only partial movement in his right arm as a consequence of the injuries he suffered in a rally in Italy in February 2011 and it has been a long road back. He took part in three tests for both Renault and Williams last year and was hoping he had done enough to convince Williams to give him a race seat in 2018. But the team felt that Kubica did not show the required performance level for them to take what they saw as a risk on giving him a full season, especially given his physical limitations. Sirotkin tested at Abu Dhabi alongside Kubica and the team decided that, once all the variables had been removed, the former Renault reserve driver was quicker. Sirotkin's abilities with regard to technical feedback also impressed Williams. Money was a secondary factor in the decision, the team insists, but at a reputed €15m (£13.3m) the budget Sirotkin brings to the team is twice what Kubica was able to muster. But they recognise that Kubica is a special talent - he was regarded as on a similar level to world champions Lewis Hamilton and Fernando Alonso in his previous time in F1 with BMW Sauber and Renault - and did not want to risk losing him. So once the decision to take Sirotkin instead was taken, Williams began to explore a significant role for Kubica that left open the possibility of a return at a later date if he managed to erase their doubts over his performance, which were particularly focused on his speed over one qualifying-style lap on the softer tyres. Deputy team principal Claire Williams said: "All of us at Williams have been immensely impressed at what he has achieved, and it is a great credit to his strength of character and commitment to return to F1." Chief technical officer Paddy Lowe said: "First and foremost, we'd like to congratulate Robert on what he has achieved so far. To overcome his injuries, return to fitness, and drive an F1 car again is a remarkable achievement, and one that few considered possible. "We anticipate Robert will make a strong technical contribution to the team, using his wealth of experience in track testing, simulator work, and support to the race drivers and engineers at every race. "He is a driver I have admired for many years." What about the Sirotkin-Stroll pairing? Sirotkin makes his F1 debut for Williams this year, after a year as Renault reserve driver which followed two years in the GP2 feeder series in which he won three races. He and 19-year-old Stroll, who made his debut last season, together make the least experienced driver line-up on the grid. Williams said she was "confident" about the pairing and "excited to see what next season brings". The line-up of Sirotkin and Stroll is likely to draw criticism as being made up of two 'pay drivers' - competitors who owe their position to the amount of money they can bring to a team. Both men have budgets reputed to be worth well over £10m each. But Williams have sought to emphasise the credentials of both drivers. Chief technical officer Paddy Lowe said: "We have conducted a rigorous and exhaustive driver evaluation process. "Ultimately, Sergey impressed the team with his driving pace and talent, technical feedback and work ethic, both at the factory and trackside in Abu Dhabi. I'm delighted he will be joining the team to partner Lance next season. "Lance will be going into his second season with us, after notable achievements in his rookie year. We have an exciting line-up for 2018 which we believe will help us to maximise the potential of the FW41 (car)." Sirotkin said: "To say I'm happy and proud to join such a famous team like Williams is an understatement. "It took a huge amount of work to get where I am, and I'm really happy and thankful to everyone involved. "The result of our combined efforts has helped me achieve my dream, and rest assured the team can rely on me to deliver my best." *BBC*

Six Nations 2018: Wales name James Davies and Josh Adams in squad



Wales have named uncapped pair James Davies and Josh Adams in their squad for the Six Nations. Flanker Davies, 27, has been rewarded for his excellent form with Scarlets, while Worcester wing Adams is the top try scorer in the English Premiership. Bath number eight Taulupe Faletau is included despite being ruled out of the first two rounds of the Six Nations with a knee injury. Harlequins centre Jamie Roberts and Bath lock Luke

Charteris are left out. The 39-man squad is larger than usual, partly because of fitness concerns over a handful of players. Northampton wing George North is included after picking up a knee injury, although he is expected to be fit to return to action this weekend. Bath fly-half Rhys Priestland injured his hamstring last Friday and Dragons back Hallam Amos suffered an ankle injury in the Christmas derby match against Cardiff Blues. Gloucester back-rower Ross Moriarty, who deputised for Faletau during last year's Six Nations, returns to the squad having missed the bulk of this season with a back injury. His is a timely return because flankers Sam Warburton and Dan Lydiate are out for the season, as is centre Jonathan Davies, the brother of the uncapped James. "It is an exciting opportunity for the two new caps," said Wales head coach Warren Gatland. "James' form over the last couple of years has been impressive, he's in a competitive area but we look forward to seeing what he can do. "For Josh it's a great opportunity, he's been on great form and the back-three is somewhere we are looking to create depth in. "We have selected a larger squad and it is an opportunity for us to work with a wider group and continue building for the next 18 months. "We have included a couple of players who are carrying injuries. With Taulupe we are hoping he will be available towards the end of the campaign and Rhys [Priestland] picked up a knock at the weekend so we will see where he is at. "It's useful to have these experienced guys around camp and to have them included and to work with them." **Still in our thoughts** Gatland insisted it was not the end for Roberts and Charteris. "For those players like Jamie and Luke there is still an opportunity for them," said Gatland. "We picked some youngsters in the autumn and it was a chance to work with them again. "The message to Jamie and Luke is you are not out of the picture and are still part of our plans. "Bradley Davies has come back into the squad with the injury to Jake Ball. "His form has improved and we will see how he goes in the squad but Luke is very much part of our thinking process." Gatland also hopes Faletau can return to his form and fitness later in the tournament as he looks to Moriarty, Josh Navidi or Ellis Jenkins to fill the number eight jersey against Scotland on 3 February. "We have spoken about the lack of depth at No.8," said Gatland. "Taulupe is potentially going to be fit towards the back end of the tournament which is positive. *BBC*

SICENCE

Employers urged to 'normalise' menopause in the workplace



Employers need to do more to "normalise conversations" about the menopause in the workplace, say experts. The comments came after a BBC survey found 70% of respondents did not tell their bosses they were experiencing symptoms. Some firms have brought in menopause-specific policies but experts said for many it was still a taboo subject. GP and menopause expert Louise Newson said it was a "silent issue for too many organisations". The menopause is when a woman stops having

periods and is no longer able to get pregnant naturally as oestrogen levels decline. It usually affects women between the ages of 45 and 55 and includes symptoms such as poor sleep, hot flushes, anxiety, and poor memory. Experts said employers did not necessarily have to make costly adjustments, but changes such as flexible working or having a desk fan could be helpful. Professor Amanda Griffiths, a psychologist specialising in mid-life and older people's health and wellbeing at work, said: "Employers can help by communicating to their workforce that health-related problems such as the menopause are normal. "I have heard of cases where women have not admitted the cause of their problems until matters have reached disciplinary stages at work." She said organisations could access online guidance and advice on the issue from the Faculty of Occupational Medicine and also from trade unions. **'Stay at home'** The BBC survey asked 1,009 women aged 50 to 60 how their experience of the menopause had affected their work and relationships and what their symptoms and treatment were. The poll, by Comres for BBC Radio Sheffield and Radio 4's Woman's Hour, found 70% of women did not make their employer aware they were experiencing symptoms, while nearly a third said they had not visited their GP. Nearly half of respondents said the menopause had affected their mental health, while a quarter said it made them want to stay at home. **Sue's story** Former Nottingham Police chief constable Sue Fish was responsible for introducing the force's menopause policy. "I was horrified to find out women were leaving early because of the severity of their symptoms. "Some had been rebuffed by line managers or they'd chosen not to talk about what they were going through. "It was such a waste of all that talent and experience that these women had in serving the public. "Bringing in a policy was absolutely the right thing to do. Talking about it helped build a culture of openness. "I also had my own experiences of the menopause to draw on and I talked about it very candidly. "There was me, at the top of an organisation making difficult decisions, and I didn't want anyone blaming those decisions on irrationality. It was quite a challenge to overcome." Ms Newson works with West Midlands Police and the fire service to give advice and support on the menopause and its impact on work. She said: "Is enough being done to address it in the workplace? No. It's still a silent issue for too many organisations. "We don't talk about the menopause. We don't get taught it at school and it's not standard to learn about it in medical training either." She added: "Things are improving but there needs to be much more openness and understanding not just from employers but doctors as well." An ageing population and an increasing number of women in the workforce means in the future there will be a higher proportion of working women at menopausal age. A similar study is being carried out at Kings College London in collaboration with the University of Nottingham, looking to improve the menopausal experience for working women. Dr Claire Hardy is the lead author. She said: "It might be possible to make some adjustments at work, things like having a desk fan, or moving to a desk that is near a window that can be opened to cool down. "Or even having some flexible working. The woman might have been having difficulty sleeping so having a later start to work might be feasible for some women, or just to miss the rush hour as well." "Thirty years behind" Employment lawyer Jenny Arowsmith from Irwin Mitchell said greater openness in the workplace would help women feel supported. She said: "Just as many employers now have a stress policy, some employers have brought in a menopause specific policy which provides guidance for managers and reassurance for employees on how menopause related issues will be managed and what support is available." Professor Jo Brewis, who authored a government report on the issue, said: "I feel like we're 30 years behind where we should be. "The menopause needs to be normalised in the same way that it is standard to talk about pregnancy. "Every woman will experience it differently so there is no one-size-fits-all solution. "Not all women will want to talk about it at work and that is fine. The main thing they need is understanding and flexibility and an awareness that the support is there if needed." *BBC*

London's January air quality 'best in 10 years'

London's air quality is within legal limits in mid-January for the first time in 10 years, City Hall has said. The capital breached limits for nitrogen dioxide (NO₂) by 6 January every year for the last decade, Mayor Sadiq Khan said. So far this year, London's NO₂ has not exceeded limits - although it is likely to later this month, Mr Khan admitted. The Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs said despite recent progress, there was still more to do. "While we have come a long way since 2010, we recognise there is more to do which is why we have put in place a £3.5bn plan to improve air quality and reduce harmful emissions", a Defra spokesman said. "We will also end the sale of conventional new diesel and petrol cars and vans by 2040." A recent NO₂ study found Marylebone Road and Hyde Park Corner were the most polluted postcodes in Britain. For London to breach legal limits of NO₂ there needs to be a recording of 18 hours of at least 200 micrograms per cubic metre at any individual site. By Monday, London's NO₂ hourly average had exceeded the limit for only up to eight hours. The mayor attributes the cleaner air in part to the introduction of Low Emission Bus Zones and the T-Charge for dirtier cars in central London. "At long last we are seeing some improvements in our toxic air. But I can't stop this health crisis without more help", he said. "Londoners deserve a government that wakes up to the scale of this problem and delivers tough new air quality legislation so that legal limits are met all year round." Other data released last year revealed every area in London exceeded World Health Organisation (WHO) limits for PM_{2.5}. PM_{2.5} particles can increase the likelihood of respiratory and cardiovascular diseases. 'Diabolical to terrible' Friends of the Earth clean air campaigner Oliver Hayes said: "The windy start to 2018 is likely to have had as much to do with the reduced number of pollution spikes as anything else, but it's clearly good news for Londoners that their air isn't as filthy as usual this January. "However, with the entire year's quota of pollution breaches due to be used up within the month, London's pollution can at best be downgraded from diabolical to terrible. "The Mayor has introduced several good initiatives but much more needs to be done." *BBC*

From the Comedians Quote Book

I flew to London on the Concorde. It goes faster than the speed of sound, which is fun. But it's a rip-off because you couldn't hear the movie until two hours after you got there.

Howie Mandel