



Q3A

PACE SETTER

Men's Style chats with charismatic former F1 world champion Lewis Hamilton about racing, fine timepieces and what he's playing on Xbox.

The story of Lewis Hamilton's rise to the top of Formula One, becoming the sport's youngest ever world champion in 2008 the year after he'd made his debut, has been an oft told one.

A prodigy who at age 10 told McLaren team principal Ron Dennis he wanted to race for his team and win the world championship. Signed to McLaren and Mercedes-Benz's Young Driver Support programme while still in his early teens. Then his inexorable progress through the British Formula Renault, Formula 3 and GP2 championships before his Formula One debut with McLaren in 2007.

Since winning the world championship his track fortunes have been mixed as other teams have improved the competitiveness of their cars, and yet he has still managed to win races with the aggressive, daring racing style that often attracts criticism.

Off track, Hamilton is the attractive face of a number of brands, making up to a hundred appearances in a year to speak eloquently about the sponsors with which he is associated. One of his most important relationships since he came into F1 is his global ambassador role with TAG Heuer, who organised *Men's Style's* chat with Lewis ahead of his winning performance at the Abu Dhabi GP back in November...

• **We hear you've been playing golf, Lewis?** Oh, really? I play off 16. My handicap's just come down. That's the best I've been.

BOY RACER

NAME: Lewis Hamilton
BORN: January 7, 1985, Stevenage, UK
CAREER: British Kart Champion at 10 years; Karting World No.1 at 15 years; 2005 Formula Three EuroSeries champion; GP2 champion, 2006; Formula One World Champion, 2008.



ALSO LIKES: Chicken fajitas; Bob Marley; Hugo Boss suits; *Cool Runnings* (his favourite film).



The Carrera Calibre 16 Day-Date Automatic Chronograph (above) – a Hamilton favourite.

I haven't had any lessons... or a hole-in-one yet, either.

• **How would you characterise your 2011 season?**

It's been a season of a lot of downs... and a few ups. I know what I need to work on for next season now... It's just a matter of implementing it and understanding what changes need to be made.

• **Do you ever miss the more frequent overtaking opportunities you had in Formula Three or GP2?**

I think I still always try to do that in Formula One. They just seem to be unhappy that I'm doing it in F1 sometimes and then I get in trouble for it. Sometimes natural desire gets you in trouble because it causes you to have collisions but... if it gets me in trouble it gets me in trouble. It's not my intention.

• **Can you nominate your best performance in a race you didn't win?**

I've done quite a few now. The race in Brazil last year was a pretty good race for me. I came from 18th and finished 3rd. You enjoy those more sometimes – the dicing for position, losing positions before taking them back. When you eventually get towards the front, it feels like you've won.

• **Let's talk about watches – what are you wearing at the moment?**

At the moment I'm wearing my Grand Carrera with the white face, but I often wear my rose gold one, which is probably my favourite watch. They're tremendous watches. I'm fortunate to have a few of them.

• **How many would that be, Lewis?**

I probably have about 20 now. I just find them fascinating, particularly considering my life and what I do is governed by time. I've got to make sure I'm on time to do whatever it is I have to do, and make sure I'm not wasting time [laughs].

CAUGHT OUR EYE

Critter Cuff Links



Boardroom discussions about projected revenues, or lack of them, will pale into insignificance when those in the room spot these Stenmark Gecko cuff links in 14-carat white gold, tsavorite garnets and diamonds.

Stenmark is the creation of well-known former model, presenter and PR personage of note, Susie Stenmark. Now creative director of her own fine jewellery house for men and women, Stenmark's collections include rings, earrings, brooches, necklaces, bracelets and cuff links such as the Gecko pair above.

Measuring 27mm x 22mm each, the Gecko cuffs are \$4,200 a pair and are guaranteed to make a bold – and distinctly Australian – impression.
www.stenmarkjewels.com

• **Do you find you wear different watches for different occasions now?**

That's pretty cool to me – to have a watch to wear with a certain suit, or to wear with your training kit or your casual wear or the colours you like to wear, or even what car you're driving. I've got different colours and different styles and I like to be able to mix it up and wear them for different occasions.

• **Are you into any other accessories?**

I'm into jewellery. And I do like diamonds. At the moment I've got a couple of different bracelets and some Cartier diamond earrings which I like to wear.

• **What about gadgetry?**

I have the iPad, an iPhone... I'm probably maxed out on that side of things. I'm not into phone apps. There's only one game I'm into and that's *Call of Duty: Modern Warfare* on the Xbox. I play that with my friends, just to have a shoot-'em-up time; it's funny. ♣