

Mercedes-AMG Petronas Motorsport: New season, new livery, new colour

In the Formula One™ off-season, continuous development of the cars and creating new liveries in time for the new season are key priorities. Mercedes-AMG Petronas Motorsport added another objective in the run up to the 2019 season: a brand-new green for its new livery.

Mercedes-AMG Petronas Motorsport, the reigning FIA Formula One™ Constructors' Champion, had a good idea of how the livery for the race cars would evolve for 2019 during the 2018 season. And critical to this plan was a new, more vibrant and exciting PETRONAS green.

From perfectly fine to positively popping

The responsibility to create the new green for the Mercedes-AMG F1 W10 EQ Power+ fell to Andrew Moody, Head of Paint and Graphics for Mercedes-AMG Petronas Motorsport, at the team's Paint Shop in Brackley, England. He knew exactly what was needed so started discussions early with a team from Official Team Supplier Axalta, a leading global supplier of liquid and powder coatings, and its global refinish brand Spies Hecker, including Ann De Clerck, Axalta's EMEA Colour Marketing - Colour Service Manager and Joachim Hinz, Spies Hecker Brand Manager for Europe, Middle East and Africa.

"The green we had been using didn't always have the same impact on TV as it did in real life. We wanted a PETRONAS green to pop from every camera angle, even from the roving helicopter shots at races, and look as good on a sunny day as it would in the rain. And of course we wanted the speed of application, reliability and durability we have come to know and to trust over the last five years from Permahyd® Hi-TEC 480 Basecoat," Andrew says.

Ann says, "On the face of it, it sounds very easy to develop a colour. And our close relationship meant we understood the processes that Andrew and his team go through when painting. We drew on many of our Axalta team's in-house expertise, including Spies Hecker of course, to put all our efforts into delivering exactly what Andrew needed."

At the beginning of November, the final colour was chosen from an original pool of nearly 30 samples. A luxurious, dynamic, stunning pearl green, created with the clear-over-base system, really captured the imagination of everyone on the development team and perfectly met the brief to look great on the track and on screen.

New green, new livery

Andrew says, "working with our designers in Brackley and Stuttgart, we gave our advice on how workable and reproduceable each of the 15 or so overall livery proposals were. The livery you saw on the car at the shakedown on 13 February at Silverstone and at the tests in Barcelona is certainly more complicated than last year's."

That's one of the reasons why, in the run-up to the unveiling of Mercedes-AMG F1 W10 EQ Power+, the Paint Shop worked through at least 50 different test processes to find the most efficient way to paint the various components.

Stars in their eyes

For the 2019 livery's striking colour gradients there's the main Permahyd Hi-TEC 480 Basecoat silver - called Stirling Silver – plus four additional silver tones, graded one to four, moving into black. Stirling Silver also coats the cars' halo for the first time.

The new green, whose formula is highly confidential and not commercially available, features in a bold glow line. Two concentrations of the PETRONAS green sandwich a bright, white-centred glow line that runs the entire length of the car, starting on the front wing, and ending on the rear wing. None of the colours on the car are commercially available.

And this year sees the addition of over 1,000 painted Mercedes-Benz stars on the chassis and engine cover in numerous different sizes and in two different silver tones.

Perfection every time

But the huge task of painting what looks like a constellation on each car doesn't concern Andrew and his Paint Shop team. He says, "The time between race weekends doesn't get longer, so no matter how complicated or complex the livery is, we rely on Spies Hecker to deliver."

In addition to Permahyd Hi-TEC Basecoat 480, the Paint Shop uses a variety of Spies Hecker products, including Priomat® Wash Primer 4075, then either Permasolid® HS Vario Primer Surfacer 5340, a high solids primer surfacer, or Permasolid® HS Performance Surfacer 5320, a fast drying 2K HS sanding surfacer.

"We have just started using the Permasolid HS Race Clear 8700. It's fast and reliable – just like all the Spies Hecker products – and its low viscosity means it is easy to work with," Andrew adds.



Buckle up!

As the 2019 season gets underway – 21 races from March to December – teams will already have their sights set on forward-planning for 2020. “The rollercoaster never seems to stop,” says Andrew. “But we’re used to that, and we wouldn’t have it any other way.”

About Spies Hecker

Spies Hecker, one of the global refinish coating brands from Axalta, develops optimum and practical paint system solutions that can make bodyshop work easier and more efficient. With over 135 years of success behind it, Spies Hecker’s high-quality product systems, customised service and targeted training demonstrate its partnership with the refinish industry. The Cologne paint brand is one of the world’s leading vehicle refinish brands, and is available in over 76 countries worldwide.

Spies Hecker – simply closer!



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PR Photo - Mercedes new season (2) (jpg | 1.44 MB)

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