

Formula 1 Be

■ **By Cyril Nikitenko**

Photos by LAT Photographic

Jerez is like a second home to me; I've been going to the circuit for the past ten years and have come to love and respect F1 testing, despite the current ban on any in-season activity.

Just to give you a basic idea of how chic things used to be compared to now, back in 2004 they'd hire a sprinkler truck in order to simulate wet conditions for the Michelin test (the tire war was big on the agenda). The air shook at the sound of thunderous V10 engines (resembling

Gabriel's horn – or at least what I think it might've sounded like), the teams would often have 3 cars running at the same time; test drivers were in huge demand. These days, with 20 races on the calendar, there's no space for any of that ultimate petrolhead fun. The F1 fraternity is too tired to go testing; real life experience is replaced by simulators, while test drivers are increasingly becoming extinct species.

Motorsport Illustrated News was invited to spend some time in the paddock and I was the lucky punter who got the magic shiny ticket to ride past the security

Motorsport Illustrated News was invited to spend some time in the paddock and I was the lucky punter who got the magic shiny ticket to ride past the security guards.

With Testin in Jerez

