Alonso - Pressure to deliver

Spaniard says Ferrari switch brings high expectations

Last updated: 1st October 2009

Fernando Alonso has said he is fully aware there will be pressure on him to deliver Ferrari world championship success.

Speaking at Suzuka, venue for this weekend's Japanese Grand Prix, the Spaniard said that success will be expected from the partnership between a double world champion and Formula One's most successful team.

"There will be a pressure to win titles," said Alonso, who is joining Ferrari next season on a three-year contract believed to be worth £55million.

"At Ferrari it is not enough to win one race per year or anything like that. The pressure will be there to be champion again. In the next three years hopefully I can win one at least."

The 28-year-old predicted that Ferrari will be the last team he drives for in F1.

"Leaving Ferrari to change team is always a step backwards. It has to be a step backwards because Ferrari is more than a team and I want to finish my career with them," he said.

Alonso also anticipates a strong working relationship with new team-mate Felipe Massa.

The Brazilian, who is currently recovering from injuries sustained in an accident in July's Hungarian Grand Prix, has raced for Ferrari since 2006 and enjoyed links with them throughout his F1 career.

"It will work," Alonso said. "Felipe we know is a great driver, a quick driver but also a good personality. He will be absolutely fine."
Famous Firsts. Fernando Alonso

Unrivalled

Alonso joins Ferrari from Renault, where his status was unrivalled due to the world titles he won for the team in 2005 and 2006.

However, he had an ill-starred tenure at McLaren in 2007 where he felt he should have been given preference over then rookie Lewis Hamilton.

Of that experience, Alonso said: "It will not happen again. This is a very different history. I am also more prepared than I was two years ago. It will be fine.

"Ferrari is more important than any driver in the car. It doesn't matter if you are quicker or slower than your team-mate - the Ferrari people want to see a red car in front of the other cars, it doesn't matter which driver is driving."

Meanwhile, Bernie Ecclestone believes that Alonso's move will help set the stage for a vintage 2010 season.

He is replacing 2007 world champion Kimi Raikkonen, who is to be released from a contract that was due to expire next year.

Raikkonen is rumoured to be on his way back to McLaren alongside reigning world champion Hamilton.

Season to remember

Add current championship leaders Brawn GP and Jenson Button and up-and-coming German Sebastian Vettel to the mix and F1’s commercial rights controller is convinced the sport can deliver a season to remember.

"It's good for Fernando, good for Ferrari, good for Formula One," Ecclestone said.

"I think we will see Kimi in a good car, it would be good to see him in a McLaren wouldn't it?

"It looks good. I think next year will be a good year."
READING COMPREHENSION QUESTIONS

1. What is Alonso conscious of?
   a. His need for titles
   b. His team mate
   c. His winning compulsiveness

2. How long is he staying at Ferrari?
   a. A racing season
   b. Two races per year
   c. Three years

3. Changing teams after Ferrari
   a. Means moving up
   b. Implies being the definite champion
   c. Is not one of his thoughts

4. Why isn’t Felipe racing at the moment? Because he is
   a. On paternity leave
   b. Getting better after an accident
   c. Having a break

5. One of the advantages of working for Renault was that
   a. Alonso had no mate competitors there
   b. The state of his car was unrivalled
   c. Briatore was his boss

6. His past McLaren experience was
   a. Enjoyable
   b. Strengthening
   c. Poor

7. Bernie Ecclestone regards Alonso’s step towards Ferrari as
   a. An asset for the next F1 season
   b. A terrible decision, since he’ll be driving a vintage car
   c. An unforgettable move

8. Raikkonen’s contract is due to
   a. Go on until 2012
   b. End in 2010
   c. Be released soon

9. Sebastian Vettel has
   a. Close chance to put pressure on Button
   b. No chance at all to win the championship
   c. Come up to and end with his current team

10. 2010 F1 season will be one
    a. Not to take into account
    b. To record every week
    c. Not to miss