# Formula One faces backlash at season launch event



At the recent season launch event held at the O2 Arena in London, Formula One faced backlash as reigning world champion Max Verstappen and Red Bull team principal Christian Horner were met with boos from some of the approximately 15,000 fans in attendance. The incident, which has been described as "tribalist" behaviour, occurred earlier this week as the new F1 season was officially unveiled.

In response to the negative reception directed at Verstappen and Horner, the FIA (Fédération Internationale de l'Automobile) released a statement condemning the crowd's reaction. An FIA spokesperson commented on the situation, saying, “Great rivalries throughout the history of motorsport have contributed to making it such an exciting experience for fans. But what underpins sport at all levels is a culture of respect. As such, it was disappointing to hear the crowd’s tribalist reaction to FIA Formula One World Champion Max Verstappen and his Red Bull Team Principal and CEO Christian Horner, at the F1 launch in London.”

The spokesperson went on to emphasise the significant contributions both Verstappen and Horner have made to the sport, indicating that the focus should remain on their achievements as the season progresses. Additionally, the FIA highlighted its commitment to addressing issues of online abuse through initiatives like the "United Against Online Abuse" campaign, urging the sporting community to reflect on the impact of their actions in both online and offline contexts.

Following the incidents during the launch event, it is expected that this matter will be addressed at the upcoming World Motor Sport Council meeting scheduled for next week. As the F1 testing kicks off in Bahrain on Wednesday, teams and drivers are preparing for the season opener set to take place in Melbourne on 16 March.

Source: [Noah Wire Services](https://www.noahwire.com)

## Bibliography

1. <https://www.formula1.com/en/latest/article/f1-75-live-all-you-need-to-know-about-the-spectacular-launch-event-at-the-o2> - This URL supports the claim about the F1 75 Live event at The O2 in London, where all teams and drivers gathered to launch the new season.
2. <https://www.theo2.co.uk/events/detail/f1-live> - This URL provides details about the F1 75 Live event at The O2, including ticket information and the immersive experience for fans.
3. <https://www.skysports.com/f1/news/12433/13309148/f1-75-live-2025-season-launch-at-londons-o2-on-sky-sports-date-car-liveries-drivers-and-celebrity-performances> - This URL corroborates the information about the event's date, venue, and the presence of all 20 drivers, as well as live music performances.
4. <https://www.fia.com/news/fia-statement> - Unfortunately, there is no direct link available to an FIA statement on this specific incident. However, this would typically be where such a statement would be found.
5. <https://www.formula1.com/en/latest/article/f1-75-live-all-you-need-to-know-about-the-spectacular-launch-event-at-the-o2> - This URL also supports the claim about the event being part of F1's 75th anniversary celebrations.
6. <https://www.fia.com/news/fia-launches-united-against-online-abuse-campaign> - This URL would typically provide information on the FIA's initiatives against online abuse, though it may not directly address the specific incident at the O2.
7. <https://www.theguardian.com/sport/2025/feb/22/fia-condemn-tribalist-booing-of-verstappen-and-horner-at-launch> - Please view link - unable to able to access data