



Fans roar on Hamilton at yesterday's qualifying day



HE loves the fame and wealth but Lewis Hamilton has a far bigger reason to win today's British Grand Prix... and every other race.

Watching from the stands at Silverstone will be younger brother Nicholas, who inspires the determination that has brought the Formula 1 newcomer such amazing success.

The 15-year-old has cerebral palsy, which makes every day a battle, and Lewis says: "He fights so hard - and if he can fight every day then so can I."

The racing ace, 22, counts half-brother Nicholas as his biggest fan.

He says: "Nicholas is my greatest inspiration. I look at him and that puts my life into perspective. He comes to all my races - we are very close. I race for him. He's what keeps me up there and keeps me motivated."

The rest of the family are part of the power behind Lewis. Before the race at Silverstone he will have a quiet breakfast and compose himself in his dressing room.

And afterwards he'll have a takeaway Chinese with his family. He says: "I'm not into all those lucky charms or voodoo routines before a race."

"I just talk to my family and get into the dressing room, focus and get out there. I'm lucky to have such a tight family supporting me."

In fact he admits to having just five close friends because he finds it so hard to trust people.

He says: "Trust needs to be earned. I can count my friends on one hand and I keep those closest to me."

Lewis sees Nicholas most weekends - and the two spend much of their time playing PlayStation games and racing remote-controlled cars.

They were brought up in a council house in Stevenage, Herts, by his father Anthony and step-mum Linda. Nicholas is Anthony and Linda's son. Lewis's mother Carmen lives 20 miles away in London.

Anthony, whose parents came from Grenada in the 1950s, gave up his job with British Rail in 1985 to dedicate himself to the racing sensation's career.

Lewis has also been supported by girlfriend Jodia Ma, whom he met four years ago when both were students at Cambridge College Of Arts And Sciences in Stevenage.

Jodia watched as he became the world's number one go-karter in 2001. When Lewis stepped up to the British Formula Renault Championship in 2003, she watched every race.

However, since September, Lewis has not had much spare time to see his girlfriend. Last week he was spotted with pop singer Natasha Bedingfield in the back of a taxi.

And he does not mention Jodia when I ask him about stunning blonde Natasha. He says jokingly: "Natasha is lovely - a beautiful girl. She has a boyfriend, sadly. If she didn't then... who knows?"

He admits he has been too busy to see Jodia, or any other friends, since September when he started preparing for the F1 season.

Talking at a party hosted by Swiss watchmaker and new sponsor Tag Heuer, Lewis says: "I have had my head buried in books for the past nine months. When I'm not looking at books, I am watching DVDs or talking to the McLaren team about the car."

"The cars have so much software these days. It's not just mechanical. You don't just get into a car and drive it around the track - you have to learn about the aerodynamics."

"I've been studying from September to March to make sure that I have had it in my head. Then I have had to study each individual track. The advice I would give to other drivers is never give up. Even if you spin off. I think once I spun off and I got back and focused and ended up coming second. So you just can't lose focus."

"When I am driving at 200mph, if I lost focus then I could die, so it kind of puts it into perspective." Lewis loves music and is into hip-hop stars including Pharrell Williams and Kanye West.

P Diddy is another hero - Lewis had the rapper's tunes pumping on the stereo of his first car, a Mini Cooper, bought after passing his test for the first time at the age of 17. They met at last week's Concert for Diana at Wembley. "P Diddy said if I win at Silverstone he's going to

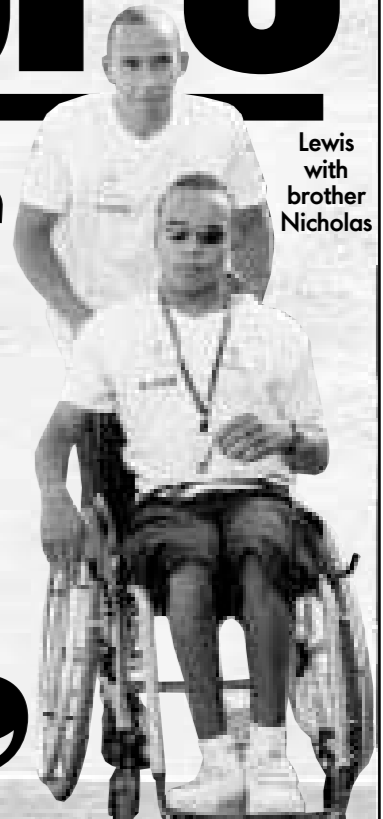


Determined Hamilton preparing for today's British Grand Prix

Picture: REUTERS

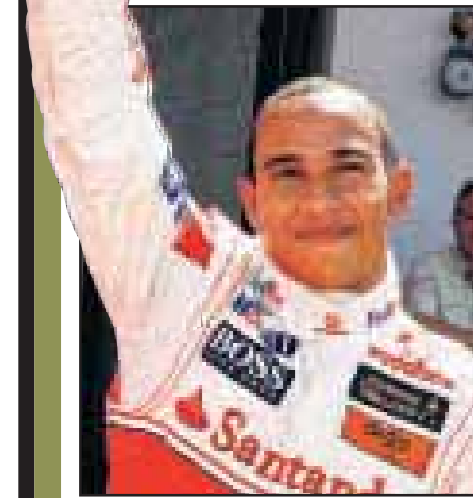
# All for my little bro

## NICHOLAS FIGHTS CEREBRAL PALSY EVERY DAY.. HE IS MY INSPIRATION. I RACE FOR HIM



Lewis with brother Nicholas

# LEW MANIA



Hamilton salutes his fans yesterday



Well done my son - triumphant Lewis with his dad yesterday



He's our boy, team's promotion girls

BY MICHAEL DUFFY

LEWIS Hamilton-mania gripped Silverstone yesterday as the race ace snatched a last-minute pole position to leave him poised to win today's British Grand Prix.

The star's father Anthony cheered and danced through the pit-lane to congratulate him as he returned to the garages.

With a beaming grin, the proud dad said: "He's loving it. Lewis is loving the job."

If Hamilton takes the chequered flag today, watched by a four billion world-wide audience, the 22-year-old will become the first British driver to win his home race in his first season.

About 78,000 people poured into

## Britain goes mad as he gets pole position

Silverstone's grandstands yesterday, clogging roads for six miles around. The crowd roared as Hamilton snatched pole position in his McLaren Mercedes from the Ferrari of Kimi Raikonen and team-mate Alonso in the dying minutes of qualifying.

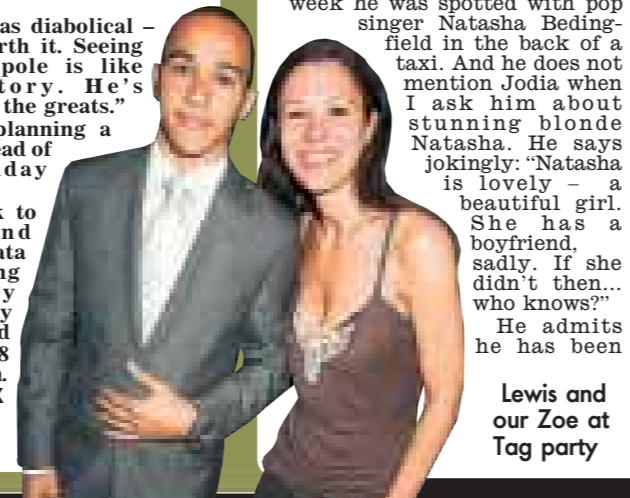
Lewis said: "I could hear them from my car - the support is fantastic, it's great to be home. You

see banners everywhere. I nearly lost my voice. As I came across the line I could hear the crowd. I was screaming as loud as them."

After climbing from the car Lewis told reporters: "I can't believe how many people are here today. It makes a huge difference."

Salesman Matt Goodwin drove from Wickford in Essex for yesterday's qualifying. He said:

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Lewis and our Zoe at Tag party

### ON HIS LOVE LIFE:

'Nat has a boyfriend. If she hadn't, ... who knows?'

Lewis on Natasha Bedingfield, seen with him in a cab

### ON MUSIC:

'I love hip-hop and have it belting out of my own car'

Lewis on a night out with rapper Pharrell Williams

### ON HIS HEROES:

'I feels I'm continuing the legacy of Ayrton by driving for McLaren'

Lewis on tragic Ayrton Senna and his team McLaren

dragged along in the slipstream of the one in front. Lewis says: "I don't think racing these days is as good as it was in the 1990s. They used to overtake a lot more. Now there is a bigger problem with down-force and it is harder to overtake."

"The 90s were the glory days of racing with Nigel Mansell. I would have loved to have been doing what he did in that era."

If Lewis wins at Silverstone, it will be the first time a British driver has won on home soil since David Coulthard in 2000. If he maintains his form, it will be the first time that a rookie driver has won the Formula 1 crown in his first season.

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