



Following four days of intense testing on and off the track, 18 drivers have been chosen for the 2012 FIA Institute Young Driver Excellence Academy. Brendan, and fellow Australian, racing driver Jack Le Brocq, are amongst them.

The 18 drivers are (in alphabetical order):

Mohamed Al Mutawaa, 18, UAE
Klaus Bachler, 20, Austria
Andrea Bate, 22, South Africa
Craig Breen, 21, Ireland
Andrea Caldarelli, 21, Italy
Gabriel Chaves, 18, Columbia
Jonas Gelzinis, 23, Lithuania
Michael Klitgaard Christensen, 21, Denmark
Jack Le Brocq, 19, Australia
Michael Lewis, 20, USA
Alexander Lynn, 18, UK
Jose Andres Montalto, 21, Costa Rica
Ramon Pineiro, 19, Spain
Brendan Reeves, 23, Australia
Pontus Tidemand, 20, Sweden
Timo van der Marel, 22, Holland
Sepp Wiegand, 20, Germany
Lewis Williamson, 21, UK

They will now be coached 'in the car' by former Formula One race driver Alex Wurz and his team from Test and Training International, and 'out of the car' by former World Rally Champion co-driver Robert Reid and his team from Elite Sports Performance.

The Final Day



All drivers headed to the track for a race-of-champions style shoot-out on the final day of the selection event.

Performance managers Alex Wurz and Robert Reid were quick to point out that the racing, while the pinnacle of the competitive element of the shoot-out, would only represent a part of their assessment of the drivers which has been ongoing through a series of tests over the last four days.

Yet this did not dim the competition on the track at the Wachau Ring in Melk, Austria. The itinerary was straightforward with practice and qualifying followed by a pursuit-style, knockout competition for the top 16.

In the final, the fastest qualifier was pitched against the ninth quickest; second fastest versus tenth down to eighth versus 16th. Starting alongside each other, one driver would take the quick outside track whilst the other went to the twisting inner part of the circuit and they swapped halfway through to complete two laps.

Armed with the data, the analysis and the results from four days, the judges - Robert Reid, Alex

Wurz, FIA Institute Director General Richard Woods and FIA Institute Director of Programmes Quentin Crombie – went through the thorough process of deciding on the successful drivers.

The Academy

Over the next year, the 18 drivers will attend a series of workshops covering all aspects of driver performance and safety. The driving elements of the course include the development of technical skills, safety training, attitudes and awareness. The human performance aspect will feature physiology, psychology, nutrition, media skills and career management.

The primary goals of the Academy are: to prepare young drivers to compete at the pinnacle of the sport, to increase skills in the area of driver and road safety; and to actively promote the principles of safety, fairness and responsibility both on and off the track.

Robert Reid, Performance Manager, FIA Institute Academy, said:

"It has been really good to meet these drivers, who have arrived here from around the world but have all demonstrated the same hunger to succeed. They've been through lots of rigorous testing which has given us a great understanding of what makes them tick. I'm really looking forward to working with the chosen Academy drivers over the next year."

Alex Wurz, Performance Manager, FIA Institute Academy, said:

"Over the course of the four days we have been looking at every area of driving skill. We have broken this down into its composite parts, such as steering input, braking input, throttle input, and into combining all of this behind the wheel. Overall, these guys have demonstrated a lot of talent. They are also all very coachable and they have a good understanding of what we are after. I'm really looking forward to a good cooperation with the new Academy drivers."

Richard Woods, Director General, FIA Institute, said:

"This selection event has demonstrated the breadth of young driving talent worldwide. We are

delighted to be able to help develop that talent further and in the right way, with the focus not just on performance but also on safety and excellence."

Brendan is delighted with his selection in the FIA Institute Academy. Speaking after the 18 winners were announced, he said, "Today went really well. We had the 'race of champions' and I reached the top four, so that was a real plus."

"The whole week has been a real buzz and I put 100 percent into every task, so I am thrilled to have been chosen for the FIA Academy."

Brendan will return home to Australia this weekend before returning to Europe for the first Academy workshop which will take place in Edinburgh, Scotland from December 10 to 14.

View more photos from the FIA Institute Academy [here](#)