

RALF SCHUMACHER



One of Germany's best known sport's stars

Ralf Schumacher is one of Germany's best known sport's stars. During his Formula 1 career which spanned 11 seasons, he achieved no fewer than six race wins and 27 podium finishes. Ralf now is an expert pundit for Sky Sports Germany thus remaining a familiar figure in the Formula 1 paddock.

Born in Hürth, Ralf is the younger brother of seven-time Formula 1 World Champion Michael Schumacher, and together they created a memorable era in the sport's history. When Ralf was three years old, he started karting with his brother at their parents' go-kart track in Kerpen. After a several seasons of karting success, including winning the 1992 German Junior Kart Championship, Ralf moved into car racing. He initially competed in Formula BMW before graduating to Formula 3 where he won the prestigious Macau Grand Prix and finished 2nd in the German F3 Championship, the Monaco F3 race and Masters of Formula 3 event. In 1996 Ralf secured a seat in the Japanese Formula Nippon Series and became the first driver to win this major domestic championship in their debut season. This led to him testing for McLaren and, the following month, it was announced Ralf had signed a contract with the Silverstone-based Jordan Grand Prix team.

In only his third Formula 1 race, the 1997 Argentine Grand Prix, Ralf scored the first podium of his career and, at that time, became the youngest ever driver to achieve an F1 podium. In 1999 Ralf signed a contract with Williams and would ultimately drive for the team for six seasons. He achieved his first Grand Prix win with Williams in 2001 and picked up two further victories that season. At the 2003 French Grand Prix, Ralf and teammate Juan-Pablo Montoya delivered a triumphant victory for Williams, finishing first and second respectively. To date, this is the last time Williams achieved a one-two finish. Between 2005 and 2007 Ralf drove for Toyota's F1 team, scoring three further podium finishes, the last coming at the 2006 Australian Grand Prix.

After leaving Formula 1, Ralf explored several areas of motorsport. He joined the German Touring Car championship (DTM) and competed for five years before becoming a shareholder for Mücke Motorsport and entering into a managerial role. In this position, he has acted as a mentor to young drivers signed with Mercedes-Benz. Ralf has also ventured into broadcasting and currently works with Sky Sports Germany.