Formula 1 is reportedly forcing some F1 creators to change their names

Creators whose online identities center around Formula 1 racing have been changing their handles lately, and they seem to be reluctant to say why. But the reason may be because they're being asked to by F1 itself, who's rumored to have been sending cease and desist orders to certain creators with monetized accounts that use its branding.

Among the abrupt branding changes was Paddock Project (formerly F1r the Girls), an F1 fan podcast. Paddock didn't mention receiving a cease and desist letter when announcing the change, instead writing that the new name "reflects where we are and where we're headed."

F1 influencer Mikaela Kostaras, who also recently changed her name (from "shelovesf1" to "shelovesvrooms") seemed to hint at receiving a cease and desist order in a video asking viewers to "imagine" being told they can't give away tickets they bought, something she's recently done. Replying to a comment on the video, she said, "There's a reason everyone is rebranding rn and it's not just for funsies."

F1 commentator Toni Cowan-Brown said in a video that she's been "hearing rumblings" about the cease and desist letters for "at least the last six months." She added that Formula 1 is targeting those "who are using F1 in their branding and who are capitalizing on it," as well as creators who pretend to somehow be associated with the organization.

Formula 1 did not immediately respond to *The Verge*'s request

for comment.

Cowan-Brown contrasted the approach to the NBA, which doesn’t really go after those who post NBA content online, even when that content includes actual footage from games. League commissioner Adam Silver once said that “for the most part, highlights are marketing.”

Still, Formula 1 has been especially aggressive in protecting its branding in the past, including when it sent a “stack of legal letters” to star driver Lewis Hamilton demanding that he stop posting F1 clips to social media. Later, Liberty Media acquired F1 and relaxed guidelines that forbade drivers and teams from posting clips from the paddock.

https://www.theverge.com/2024/8/18/24223039/formula-1-f1-cease-and-desist-letters-creators-name-change