



On the 28th June 2023 I was fortunate enough to be invited to the Alpine Headquarters for a VIP tour of the factory due to finishing 3rd place in Super League Championship and having been recognised for my positive social media presence.



On arriving at Alpine we were met by our tour guide Paul Seaby. Paul introduced himself and explained that he had gained over 30 years' experience working at Alpine in a variety of different roles and the changes under each of the previous team names. The Alpine factory currently employs around 900 people with plans to grow and increase this to 1,200 staff. This seemed to be a huge amount of people but Paul explained that this was relatively small still for modern F1 teams.

Paul took us on a tour of many of the different departments and you could see how so many people were needed. We were shown what the departments typically work on and how they are run as well as what is involved to prepare for, and on, race weekends.

During the tour we got to see the following key departments:

- **Aerodynamics** – This was the first department we went to and Paul talked us through what the aerodynamics team do. The team at the time were experimenting with different parts of the car to see what was most effective, they would gather plenty of

information for this to help them go on to choose the best set-up for the upcoming races.

- **Race strategy** – Paul then went on to show us how the strategy team works on a race weekend and how many people are allowed at the track. It was extremely interesting to see how much data they analyse, what they look at and the amount of different strategy options they could use to plan out the race as best as possible.
- **3D Printing**- In this department we learned about 3D printing and how 3D printing helps manufacture new or similar components to use for upcoming races. We were told that a component usually takes around 20-50 hours to fully construct. Alpine had about 6 machines all constructing different parts to help make the car go faster and to try and speed up the building time by building multiple components at once with multiple machines, this means new parts can arrive quicker which then allows different parts to start being constructed.
- **Logistics** - Paul then talked us through the logistics of running an F1 team, we learned how for races outside Europe it takes around 6 weeks to transport everything needed for the weekend as these are either shipped or flown to the relevant country depending on the location. Alpine also had loads of trucks which were mainly used for European races to transport all the parts from England to the country where the next race would be taking place.



- **Wind tunnel**- For the final department we went upstairs to take a look at the wind tunnel. It was a huge piece of machinery which is really expensive to install and keep up and running. The tunnel is used to test the aerodynamics of the car and work out how to best improve it. We were even luckily enough to experience it start up

running while we were inside the building and got to hear the noise of it which was like being next to a jet engine.



To end the day Paul showed us some past F1 cars and talked us through the difference between a 2010's car compared to now, explaining how the shape, size and technology of the components used have changed between then and now.

A big thank you to everyone at Brentwood Karting for organising this event especially Dan who is so key to making these things happen and giving drivers in the race league the opportunity to understand more about all aspects of motorsport. Thanks also to everyone at the Alpine F1 Team for giving us this great opportunity and to Paul for taking the time to show us around the factory and making the day such an enjoyable experience.



