

# A win-win partnership

By **BRETT SOSO**

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**BRETT SOSO** was appointed Managing Director – Middle East, Africa & Latin America at McLaren Automotive in August 2018. Prior to joining McLaren, he held a number of executive management positions within the automotive industry, including most recently Regional Director – Middle East and Africa for Rolls-Royce Motor Cars. In his current role, based in Bahrain, he leads a motivated team working across twelve markets overseeing sales strategy and performance, the retail network, aftersales, parts and accessories, brand and product marketing, as well as communications and PR.

The story of McLaren Automotive is quite unprecedented. The company was officially established in 2010, with a heritage rooted in racing and a vision to be an iconic supercar manufacturer.

Despite being a newcomer in the world of high-performance supercars, our history goes back to 1963 when Bruce McLaren founded his Motor Racing team in Woking, England. Our founder was born in New Zealand and is today remembered as one of the great motorsport pioneers of his era. In addition to being a fearless racing driver, Bruce was also a savvy entrepreneur and a talented engineer. He had a long-held dream of starting his own road car company, culminating in a road-going prototype called M6GT. Powered by a Chevy V8, it was meant to be the company's first ever street car. Unfortunately, the dream was not fulfilled as Bruce tragically died whilst testing a Can-Am racing car at Goodwood in 1970 and only three M6GTs were ever built.

His spirit, determination and values remain alive at McLaren and have been guiding us from when we started our automotive operations in 2010. Since then, McLaren has been growing from strength to strength with an award-winning product portfolio and firm foundations for a sustainable future. We achieved this through our focus on creating the best drivers' cars and using technology to enhance the driving experience. We have also remained true to our values and our ongoing commitment to mid-engine carbon fibre sports and supercars. As a result, we have come to rival the establishment in a very short space of time.

2018 was another milestone year with the groundbreaking McLaren Senna and 600LT launched to the highest of critical acclaim. Our global sales have increased to a record 4,806 vehicles delivered to discerning customers around the world. We have also received a number of prestigious awards, not least for being Britain's Most Admired Car Company. All of these are astonishing achievements for a company which sold its first car in 2011.

Determined to build upon our success, we are not resting on our laurels and have set out a clear road map for future vehicles, production and technology under our Track25 Business Plan. This £1.2 billion investment will see an astounding 18 new models or derivatives by 2025. These exciting new products will

further enhance our position as a global player in the supercar market and set us on a path to an exciting and successful future.

None of this success would have been possible without a dedicated network of retail partners that support our global operations with their local understanding and expertise. McLaren Automotive entered Kuwait in 2012 through partnership with Ali Alghanim & Sons Automotive, one of Kuwait's most eminent families and renowned for the highest standards of business operations. The brand opened doors to a phenomenal reception and gained a strong market share, as well as a loyal customer base of automotive and racing enthusiasts.

Since then, the number of McLaren vehicles in the market has exceeded 150 examples and we are humbled to challenge our established competitors. To recognise the importance of the market and to express our gratitude, we took the decision to host the regional debut of the new McLaren 720S Spider in Kuwait. This latest Super Series model combines the thrill of open-air driving with unparalleled dynamic performance, luxury, driver involvement and usability. The car took centre stage at the Kuwait Motor Show in January, and I am fully convinced that it will delight our discerning customers in the country.

We are also very excited that our local clientele can now experience the thrill of driving a McLaren at the new world-class Kuwait Motor Town Race Circuit. This state-of-the-art FIA Grade One race-track brings some great opportunities and will further enhance the remarkable automotive culture and infrastructure which already exists in the country.

To conclude, I want to thank our customers and fans in Kuwait for their passion, trust and enthusiasm for McLaren. I would also like to recognise our exclusive retail partner Ali Alghanim & Sons Automotive for their entrepreneurship and unparalleled initiative in delivering outstanding customer experience throughout all areas of the business. With a growing line-up of breath-taking supercars and an excellent local partner, our operations in the country look bright. I believe that we have built strong foundations for sustainable future and that our partnership will continue to set new standards for driving and ownership experience in Kuwait for many years to come.