



My girls and me

Bernie Ecclestone has been in charge of Formula One for 30 years, a career that's made him a fortune. Now 81, he speaks candidly about daughter Tamara's TV show (oh dear), daughter Petra's wedding (yes, it did cost £12m) and the art of spending money wisely.*

The Saturday interview By Richard Williams

As a doting father, Bernie Ecclestone supplied his elder daughter with the money to fund the recent purchase of her £45m London house. But the Formula One supremo could not bring himself to sit all the way through a single episode of the free-spending 27-year-old's recent three-part Channel 5 reality show, Tamara Ecclestone: Billion \$\$ Girl.

"I watched one of them," he says with a despairing sigh [...], frowns at the memory of what he saw, and explains how Tamara had ignored his advice. "I told her: 'If you portray yourself really as you are, it's wonderful. But they aren't going to let you. They're going to wind you up, for sure. There'll be things that you'd rather they didn't show that they'll show, and all the things

you'd rather they showed, they won't.' [...]. But I think she got talked into it. She believed the show was going to be about Tamara in normal life."

Hang on a minute. This is a girl with 200 Hermès handbags and a turntable set into her front drive, to save her the trouble of doing a three-point turn in her Ferrari. Can she be said to have a "normal life"?

"Yes. But I think they pushed her into not being herself and in the end she got carried away and thought: 'I'm a superstar, I'm rich, and now I've got to show I'm rich and a superstar.' But, you know, she'll be in the kitchen like everyone else. Yes, for sure, she goes and buys loads of shoes and bloody clothes. Unnecessary. Completely unnecessary. I suppose it's because ... one wonders ... and this is not in her defence – how many other girls her age would do the same if they could?"

[...] Tamara's 22-year-old sister Petra had a wedding this summer costing £12m and lives in a £54m pad in Los Angeles, which changed hands for cash (a typical Bernie deal).



Surely it must be hard for the daughters of such a generous billionaire father to retain a sense of proportion?

“I think so. But, as I say, most girls would like to do the things they do, probably.”

And then, with an air of mild exasperation, he raises the subject of “the trust” – something called

Bambino Holdings [...] registered in the name of his Croatian ex-wife [...] Now his lack of control over all that money is clearly irritating him.

“I gave to my wife the things that she put in a trust for herself and the kids, and the kids have had access to that money,” he says.

“The idea was that they’d buy property that would be long-term, for their kids and everything else. Didn’t happen. They haven’t done that. So they’ve had access to money which they’ve spent. And Tamara’s programme just wound everything up, because that’s what they wanted.”

Adapted from an article in *The Guardian*, Saturday 10 December 2011

* Formula One: championship that consists of a series of international car races

- How does this text present the character and viewpoints of both interviewer and interviewee?