

INSIDE MASSIVE WALES RALLY GB PREVIEW

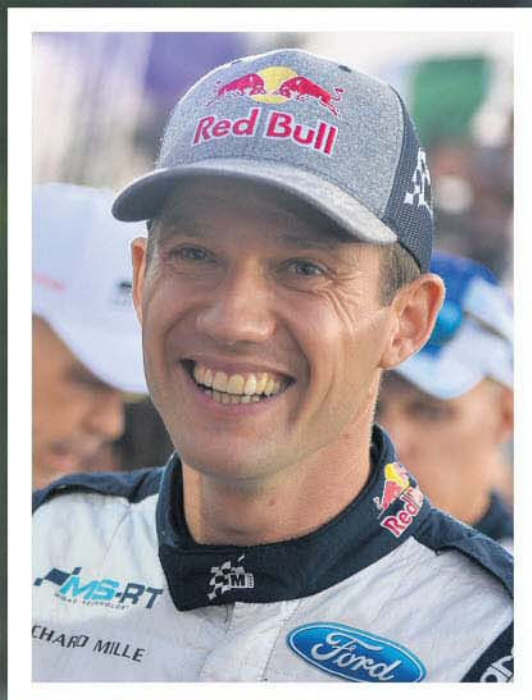
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British firm is ready to gun for major

M-SPORT BIGGEST



Wilson knows that a few vital points in Wales will put M-Sport into the WRC history books

By David Evans

Malcolm Wilson's M-Sport World Rally Team needs just a handful of points from this week's Wales Rally GB to become the first team to lift the world championship with a genuinely privateer car.

Having accumulated 358 points from 11 rounds of this year's series, the Cumbrian squad needs just four more in Wales to write a new page in World Rally Championship history.

David Sutton's team won the 1981 world championship with a Rothmans-backed Ford Escort RS1800 driven by Ari Vatanen and David Richards. But that Escort had been developed by Ford when its competition department in Boreham was at the height of its power. It was the same in 2006, when Sebastien Loeb took the drivers' crown with private firm

Kronos Racing—the Citroen Xsara WRC he was driving remained a factory-specification car.

M-Sport's Ford Fiesta WRC is, however, all its own work, without any significant engineering input from the Blue Oval.

Wilson admits that the season so far has already turned out better than he expected.

M-Sport's team principal told *Motorsport News*: "When we signed Sebastien [Ogier] at the end of last season, I thought we had to be in with a very good chance of the drivers' title. If that didn't work out, it had to be down to us after we'd got the best driver. But I'll be honest, when we spoke at the start of the season I really didn't think we would be so strong in the manufacturers'—not when you looked at the competition, which had strength and depth in Citroen, Hyundai and Toyota."

Wilson is quick to pay tribute to his drivers' efforts this season, adding: "Obviously, Sebastien has gone really well, but Ott [Tanak] and Elfyn [Evans] have both been fantastic as well."

"But now we just want to get the job done. I've always said that reliability would play a big part in this year and we've seen that. I just hope we get through. It would be

fantastic to do this thing in front of the home crowd and with so many of the people from the M-Sport factory coming. We don't want to have this hanging over until [the final WRC round in] Australia.

"This is a real chance for us to make history, for us to become the first to really do it with our own car. It would be very special."

Ogier echoed those sentiments. The Frenchman arrives in Deeside 37 points ahead of his own teammate Tanak (with Hyundai's Thierry Neuville a further point behind) and he wants to nail his own fifth world title, but at the same time he's keen to deliver for his team.

"If we would secure this one, it would be a great performance and it would mean a lot for me," said Ogier. "I remember last year when the decision was coming for my future and some of my rivals were saying: 'I hope he goes to M-Sport...' because they were thinking, they were pretty sure I would not be able to defend my title in this way. If we do it, this would make me very happy. It would also close the mouth of some people who said we made it only in the easy conditions before."

"There's plenty of examples of big companies with the big budget



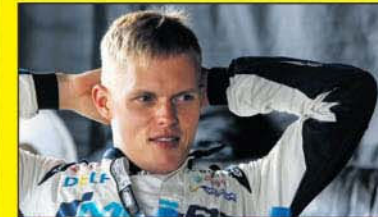
Evans: been strong in Fiesta

spoils in Wales

ON THE BRINK OF ITS SUCCESS YET



French star Ogier could land a fifth title in Wales



Tanak is now Toyota-bound for '18

Wilson keen to retain his star man Ogier

Ott Tanak's departure from M-Sport to Toyota has increased pressure on Malcolm Wilson to retain Sebastien Ogier for next year.

M-Sport has been the dominant force this season and the loss of the two-time rally winning Estonian will be felt in Cumbria in 2018.

"It's a tough one," said Wilson, "but we saw it coming. Tommi [Makinen] was chasing him hard even last year. I can understand Ott's decision, M-Sport's all he's ever known, so I've wished him well and told him he'll be back here in two years anyway!"

Wilson said negotiations with Ogier were progressing, but no news is expected during Rally GB week.

"There's no movement at the moment," said Wilson. "I'm trying very hard to keep him. I'm not 100 per cent confident, but I'm hoping we will be OK."

Asked if he was worried about the loss of Tanak as a safety net, Wilson said: "There's no doubt it changes things and gives a bit more pressure, but I'll say what I've always said: I won't take risks with the company for this [driver line-up]."

who have not made it in motorsport and I am proud of what we achieved with Volkswagen [winning four titles in successive years]. But after that finished, I was looking forward to working with Malcolm and I have not been disappointed.

"I like to work with Malcolm and Elaine [Wilson's wife] – they both made things very easy. Immediately they did everything they could for Julien [Ingrassia, co-driver] and I and for us to take the manufacturers' title in the home rally would be very special."

For his own title success, Ogier knows exactly what he's got to do. More of the same.

"The approach is the same this year as it's always been," he said. "There has been less domination and there were less wins earlier in the year, but in the 11 rallies we have done so far, I think we've been on the podium eight times. OK, sometimes we have not had the pace or the performance we might have wanted, but I have still tried to be clever and make the points."

Wilson has ruled out any changes to his three factory Fiestas in an effort to trade performance for reliability in Wales. But he will be offering Tanak some advice: for the



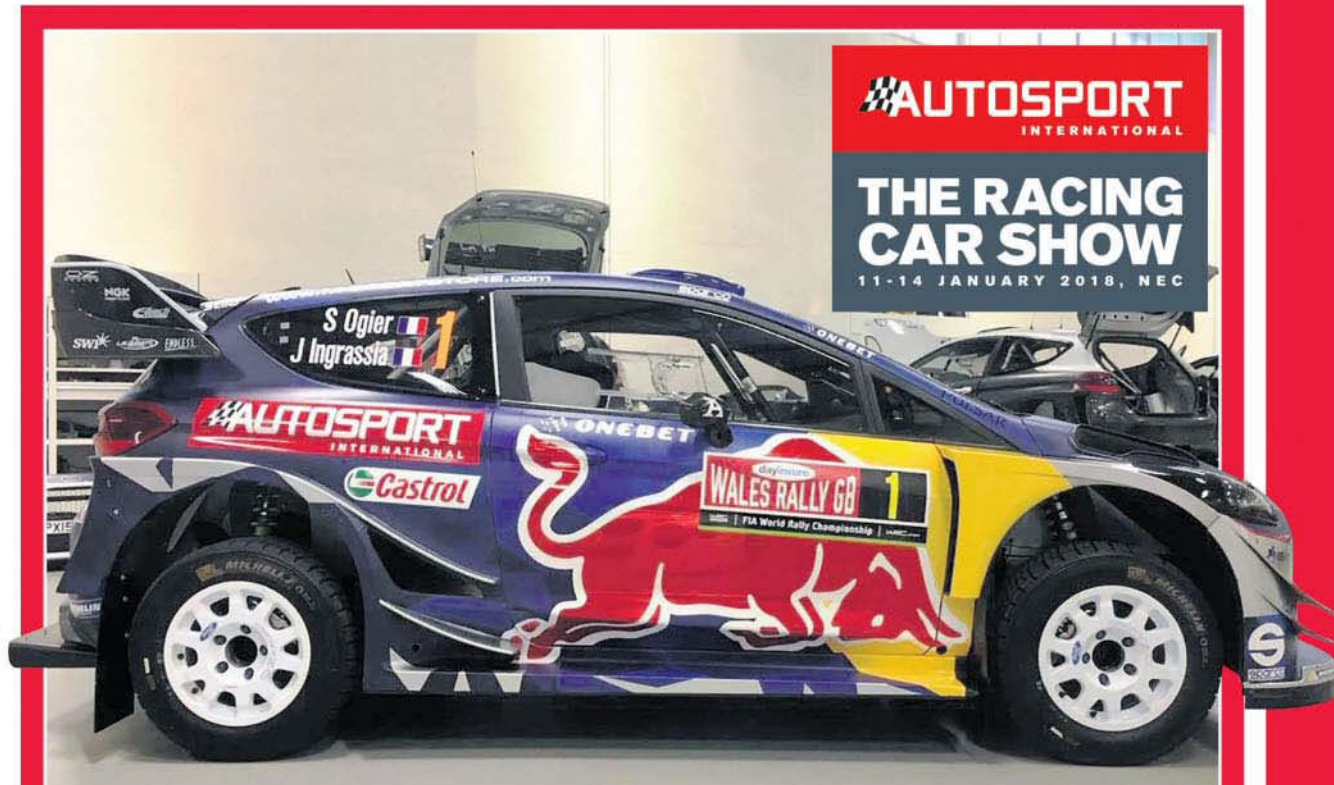
Ogier won't change approach

Estonian to keep his title hopes alive, he needs to beat Ogier and ideally win.

"But first and foremost, he has to be at the finish," said Wilson. "If he's to stand any chance of taking Seb to Australia to fight on the last round, he has to finish in Wales. We'll have a chat and I'll remind him of that point."

WHAT DOES OGIER HAVE TO DO TO BE CHAMPION?

- Win the rally
- Finish second on the rally and win the powerstage
- Finish ahead of both Tanak and Neuville, regardless of the positions
- Drop less than seven points to Tanak and eight to Neuville



The factory Ford Fiesta WRCs of Sebastien Ogier and Ott Tanak will carry Autosport International branding during next week's Dayinsure Wales Rally GB. The show runs from January 11-14, 2018.

RALLY GB PREVIEW: THE BRITS

It's been a roller coaster ride for the two top Brits in the WRC. By **David Evans**

MEEKE AND

TIME TO SET THE RECORD

This season hasn't been an easy one for you and I, has it? Start of the year, two Brits in box seats and back to the good

old days of the World Rally Championship. For McRae and Burns, read Meeke and Evans. Happy days. Let the wins roll in.

Wins? There've been two of them. Could have been three: give Evans one second and he'd have taken a first in Argentina.

But there's also been the odd rock and the odd roll from Citroen driver Meeke. Not to mention the occasional hard place for M-Sport's Evans. In short, Brit-watching so far this year hasn't been dissimilar to taking a ride on the Kingda Ka roller coaster. Or hanging out with Stephen Fry.

We've been from the highest of highs to Meeke being dropped for Poland, from second in Finland to nowhere in Spain for Evans.

For Meeke, Spain brought redemption. And that second win.

And now to Wales. Home. Home-ish for Meeke. And some refuge from what, at times, has been a brutal season.

"Coming to Wales on the back of a win in Spain is great," says Meeke. "It's good for the confidence, for me, for Paul [Nagle] and the whole team. There's no denying this has been a hard year and that last result was very welcome. Listen, I've made too many mistakes this year and we've had some issues with the car, but none of those issues are insurmountable. A lot's been made of this whole technical side of the car, but fundamentally we have a good car which needs some work and some refining in a few areas."

For Evans, the reverse is the case. There's no denying the pedigree and pace of M-Sport's Ford Fiesta WRC. It's the car that's won the most rallies this season and it's the car that looks set to land the Cumbrian team its first world title in 10 years in Wales this week.

"There's no doubting the ability of



Meeke and the C3 click, on and off

this car," says Evans. "It's fantastic – we've seen that all year."

As has been the case for much of the season, you sense a 'but' coming at the end of most sentences from the outgoing British Rally champion. And that sentence ends with a question mark, and that question mark is centred on the four corners of his Fiesta: the DMACK tyres.

Evans is far too professional to be caught pointing the finger, but you only have to look at the consistency of his inconsistency. That might sound odd, but in specific conditions, Evans is miles away and in another set of conditions, he's bang on the pace. Take the season opener in Monte Carlo as a case in point. Day one brought zero grip on the ice and he struggled to break into the top 10 times. Fast forward 24 hours to the end of the bone-dry Breziers stage and it's a different story. Evans has just clocked his third scratch of the day's five stages and he's flying.

Round one has basically been his entire year in microcosm.

DMACK decided to bring in a new tyre for the final three rallies of the season, a new compound and construction gravel tyre. In reality, the new boots

were aimed squarely at Rally GB; the soft is that bit softer than Michelin and the pattern that bit more open. If it's wet, wet, wet in Wales, this could make the difference. But if the surface cleans on a dry second run, there's a good chance the blocks will start to move – and a lack of precision on some of these super-quick stages is the last thing a driver wants.

"Let's wait and see what the weather does," says Evans. "I think it's fair to say our chances are pretty dependant on the weather. But still, it's home and that's a really nice feeling. I've got to be honest, it is pretty surreal at times to be driving the same World Rally Car so close to my house. The week after the event, I'll likely be coming down the same road to go and buy a loaf of bread or something..."

Twelve months ago, Evans had been dropped from M-Sport's frontline team and he spent his home round of the championship on the sidelines.

"The weather played an important role in my decision on last year's Rally GB," he says, "but that decision was whether or not to go out and spectate! I did go and watch. I actually worked as one of the weather crews, feeding

information back to the team about temperatures and road conditions, that kind of thing – but I can honestly say, missing last year's [Rally GB] was one of the hardest parts of my career."

The Irish Sea might be in the way of Meeke and his Dungannon home in Northern Ireland, but he'll still feel the warmth of the welcome in Wales this week.

"I've always said the same: coming to Wales does feel like home to me," he says. "I competed in Wales a lot in my early career, my first event was there and I love the roads, the conditions, the fans and the atmosphere. There's something special there and coming into Wales on the back of the win gives us a lift that's for sure. But at the same time we have to remember nothing has changed overnight. There's still work to do and, like Elfyn's said, we'll be pretty reliant on the weather."

The nature of the roads on Britain's round of the world championship are such that, if it's a typically damp autumn (the kind already underpinned by a typically damp summer...), they will offer the best grip at the front of the field. Twelve-hundred kilos of World Rally Car thundering down the stage

tends to stir the surface, soften it and bring the mud to the top. Five or six cars in and the edge has definitely gone. Evans is sixth down the road on day one, and Meeke is ninth.

"When you come out and see the home support in Wales, it definitely gives you a lift," says Meeke. "When we come through Irish Corner in Dyfnant it's incredible to see the fireworks, you can almost hear the klaxons and the atmosphere is amazing, really amazing. You feel it. And that can raise your level again. But after that corner, you're away and into a dark forest again and you have to contain everything. As soon as you start over-driving, you start losing time. You start to slide wide, you push harder, you slide wider. It's a vicious circle."

Evans agrees and adds: "GB and the RAC before it had this reputation for being the sort of rally where you took it by the scruff of the neck and forced the car down the road and really pushed as hard as it would go. You can't do that. Now it's the same as every rally: you have to be technically perfect in the way you drive."

That probably doesn't sound very exciting. Don't worry it will be.



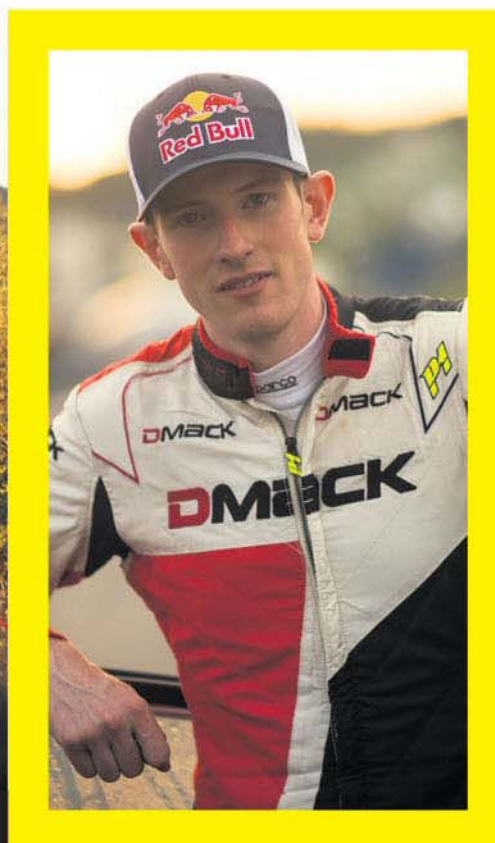
Meeke's Mexico win was huge

EVANS:

BOOKS STRAIGHT



Evans has bespoke tyres to aid his bid



"Oh, it will be," says Evans. "These new cars are incredible. They're more spectacular, noisier, better to look at and so enjoyable to drive for us. And, from the reception they've had around the world so far this season, they're pretty special to watch out on the stages too."

Neither Meeke or Evans is interested in dwelling on what might have been this season. Both are in superb form ahead of this week's penultimate round of the world championship season. Meeke brushes aside concerns that his pre-event test took place in France and not Wales, pointing out that there's an area of south-west France which is very similar to the rolling hills of mid-Wales. He's learned that certain things – usually budget-related – aren't going to change and fighting against them is nothing but a waste of energy.

Meeke will push this week, make no mistake about it, he'll leave nothing in the locker, but at the same time he knows where his and the car's limits are, and risking everything for a corner of glory's not what he's about. It's bigger picture time and that bigger picture is about further refining the C3 WRC in changeable conditions. In

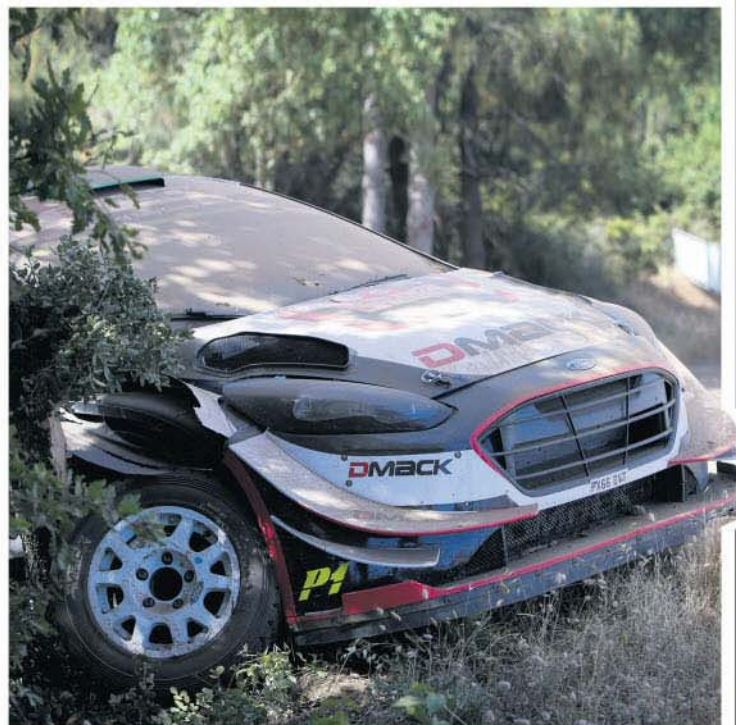
Poland this year – with weather similar to what we can expect in Wales – the Citroën was shocking. There have been improvements since then. But this isn't about eureka moments.

"We know where we are," says Meeke quietly. "We know where we're strong and where we need to work. Just because this is Wales, it doesn't change anything. If everything comes together we've seen the car can be quick, let's just see what we get this week."

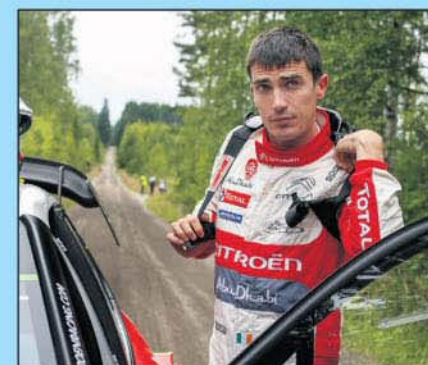
So speaks the man who's been through the wringer this season. Meeke remains at the forefront of Citroën's plans next year and he's well aware that miles and experience on a new car's first outing at an event are just as important as stage wins and outright glory.

For Evans, the position is slightly different. Not for him the pressures of leading a team. Instead, he's got the joker up his sleeve. Statistically, he's got the best car out there under him and, if the stars align, he could have a peach of a tyre as well.

So, forget the trials and tribulations of the season so far. Focus on Wales this week. The Brits are back and they're heading in the right direction. ■



Evans has had his ups and his downs. This shunt in Italy was a down



Breen knows GB well, like a home event

Breen looks for divine inspiration

As the crow flies there's not really a lot in it, but Wales Rally GB probably edges the Circuit of Ireland in terms of proximity to Craig Breen's hometown of Waterford.

Or it did until the Citroën star moved to Italy. Now it's anybody's guess which is the closer. Wales will, however, always have a home in Breen's heart after his Carmarthen co-driver Gareth Roberts died in their Targa Florio crash in 2012.

Roberts is never far from Breen's thoughts, as was evident from his arrival at the end of the first stage of last year's event.

"I drove like an idiot in there," he said after pulling his DS3 WRC to a halt at the end of Myherin. "Somebody up there was looking after me."

And smiling down on him. Driving like an idiot or not, he was fourth fastest.

Unfortunately, second time through that stage, he rolled and retired. This time he wants to finish the job.

"That was so frustrating last year," he says. "The driving wasn't the best and we were able to make the time before we went off. It's not ideal going back to Wales having not driven the car competitively since Germany and not on the gravel since Finland at the end of July, but I'm just so happy to have this chance."

And, let's face it, it's a whole lot more ideal than turning up in that terrible Peugeot 208 T16 he ran in 2015. Or with the radio mic' he had in his hand working as a WRC Live reporter the year before.

"Yeah," he smiles. "Put it that way and it's not a bad job, is it..."

Second in Finland last year demonstrated Breen's prodigious pace and this year has shown his ability to play to the strengths of the car beneath him. He might not have won this season, but he remains Citroën's biggest point-scorer, even though he's competed on one less event than Meeke. Six fifth places this season demonstrate consistency and patience – even if that patience has worn thin at times.

His quote about being "petrified" of the car in Poland remains at the forefront of most minds. And a repeat of that changeable weather and fluctuating grip levels will test the post-summer development of the C3 WRC.

For Breen, as for his English co-driver Scott Martin, coming to Wales is always a pleasure.

"It's funny," he says, "I suppose it is closer from where I grew up to the stages in Wales than it would be to the Circuit – so it's like a home event. Especially with all the support we get from fans travelling over for the event. And I won the [WRC] Academy in 2011 and SWRC [Super 2000 World Rally Championship] the following year on this rally. You don't forget those kind of results."

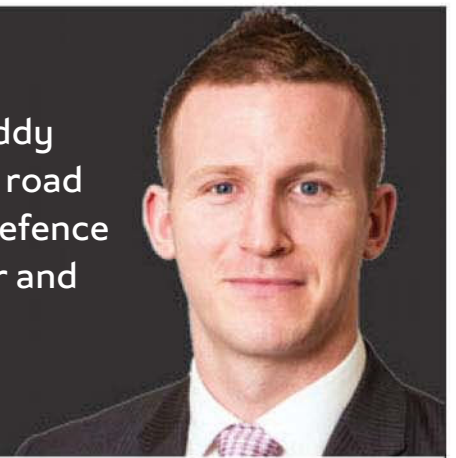
And you certainly don't forget a co-driver like Jaffa.



Breen has impressed with consistency

Road traffic defence – Falling foul of the law?

Paul Reddy
Head of road
traffic defence
at Slater and
Gordon



Most of us consider ourselves to be law abiding citizens and good drivers. However, anyone who has a driving licence and a car is potentially at risk of falling foul of the law at some point in their life, and even appearing before the criminal courts for a road traffic offence.

Road traffic offences vary significantly in seriousness, from minor speeding offenses punishable by attending a speed awareness course, to offences of causing death by dangerous driving, punishable by a custodial sentence of up to 14 years.

It's easy to ignore the suggestion that this could happen to you. It can happen to absolutely anyone and the consequences can be life changing. Even the accumulation of penalty points can result in a disqualification from driving for a minimum period of six months, which can have a devastating effect on your career, finances and family life.

The most obvious advice is to drive safely, thoughtfully and always within the law. If, unfortunately you have fallen foul of the law we've provided some general advice to ensure that you know what to do in the first instance if you ever find yourself in need of representation for a road traffic offence.

What are the most common road traffic offences?

Speeding offences

Speeding offences are increasing common due to the different methods of speed detection, including formal police checks, average speed cameras and temporary speed restrictions (to aid traffic flow on "smart motorways"). All of these require the maximum attention of the driver at all times. If you enter a 40mph speed zone on a motorway at 70mph, you could find yourself with six penalty points or a disqualification from driving of up to 56 days. Speeding cases can often lead to totting up disqualifications; if you receive 12 penalty points within a three year period then the courts must disqualify you for a minimum of six months, unless you can convince the Court that to do so would cause you exceptional hardship.



Drink driving cases

Drink drive cases are very common including morning after cases, where somebody's had a lot to drink and got up early the next day to go to work or do their weekend chores and not realised that they're still over the legal limit. There are other drink driving offences such as being 'in charge' of a vehicle (as opposed to driving it) when in excess of the prescribed alcohol limit and failing to provide an evidential specimen when required. This is a very technical and complex area of law and requires expert advice from the outset.

Documentary offences

The most common documentary offences are failure to furnish driver identification and allegations of driving without insurance. Ensuring that you are insured on an annual basis is as important as responding to a Notice of Intended Prosecution (NIP – speeding ticket). If you do not properly respond to the Notice of Intended Prosecution or if you accidentally fail to renew your insurance you will be sentenced to six penalty points for each offence. Two offences within a three year period can put you at risk of a six month disqualification.

Common mistakes

The process of responding to road traffic offences is very important and can alter the outcome. For example:

People often complete the Notice of Intended Prosecution in a manner

that falls foul of the law. For example, if you're unable to be sure who was driving at the time of the offence, it's common for responses to the police request for driver identification to state they cannot be sure it was either "myself or my wife". This is not an adequate response in law and would result in six point endorsement on your driving licence for failing to furnish driver details. You must provide all the information that is within your power to provide. This means the name, address and date of birth of each potential driver.

Another common mistake is defendants attending Magistrates Courts unrepresented on a case they consider to be a minor matter and expecting the court to treat them reasonably. The courts often do not have the power to do anything other than disqualify defendants in certain circumstances. We are frequently instructed after a person had been disqualified from driving as they expected the court to give them a fair hearing but find out the hard way that this is often not the case.

Are there loopholes for road traffic law?

No. There is no trick to properly representing defendants in road traffic defence cases. It's simply a case of thorough knowledge of the law, correct application and having the experience to know how a case will progress.

What should you do?

For the following offences we suggest that you contact us as soon as possible for expert advice.

- Notice of Intended Prosecution
- Speeding offences/ Stopped at the roadside
- Summon received straight away (no Notice of Intended Prosecution)
- Arrest/interview
- More serious driving offense

We offer a free initial telephone consultation and this will provide you with the basic information as to what you need to do and how seriously you need to take the case.

If the consequences are a fine (i.e. parking fine) or points that don't lead to loss of licence it may not be necessary or appropriate to seek legal support.

Offices throughout the UK
Call 0808 175 8000
slatergordon.co.uk

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RALLY GB PREVIEW: THE ENTRY

STARS AND CARS HEAD TO WALES

David Evans takes a look at the big names set to create a thriller

M-SPORT WORLD RALLY TEAM



Evans could provide an upset at home

CAR: FORD FIESTA WRC TEAM PRINCIPAL: MALCOLM WILSON



1 SEBASTIEN OGIER

Nationality: French
Age: 33
Co-driver: Julien Ingrassia
Rally GB starts: 9
Rally GB wins: 4 (2013-2016)
WRC starts: 121
WRC wins: 40
WRC titles: 4

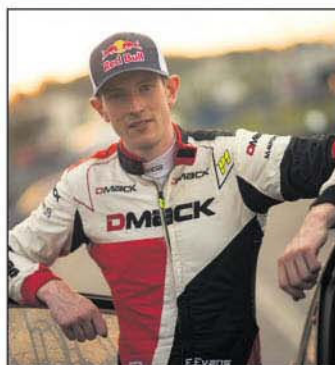
There's nothing particularly newsworthy about a Frenchman called Sebastien breaking records in rallying, but this could be a special one for Ogier... Victory in Wales this week would make him the first driver ever to take five straight Rally GB wins. And the last four years would indicate he's more than up for the task. In many ways, he's better equipped than ever, running in a British team that knows these woods better than anybody.



2 OTT TANAK

Nationality: Estonian
Age: 30
Co-driver: Martin Jarveoja
Rally GB starts: 6
Best Rally GB finish: 2nd (2016)
WRC starts: 77
WRC wins: 2
WRC titles: 0

Tanak has come of age this year. He's shown exceptional pace – most often in Poland – in the past few years, but this season he's strung it all together and blended speed and consistency. The new Fiesta suits him perfectly; the comfort in the car is reflected in wins on rallies as diverse as Sardinia and Germany. Tanak's a genuine contender in Wales this week: he loves the roads and is at home on fast gravel, whatever the weather.



3 ELFYN EVANS

Nationality: British
Age: 28
Co-driver: Dan Barritt
Rally GB starts: 5
Best Rally GB finish: 5th (2014)
WRC starts: 61
WRC wins: 0
WRC titles: 0

The car's beyond question this season. What could make or break the event for Evans is the DMACK tyres beneath him. The Cumbrian firm has cooked up a new cover, including a new tread pattern, tailored to the damp, wet demands of Wales in late October and this week will reveal just how successful it's been. Evans came within 0.7s of winning in Argentina this year, a home win would certainly make up for that disappointment this week.

Mikkelsen is quick in Wales and in an i20



HYUNDAI MOTORSPORT

CAR: HYUNDAI i20 COUPE WRC TEAM PRINCIPAL: MICHEL NANDAN

4 HAYDEN PADDON

Nationality: New Zealand
Age: 30
Co-driver: Seb Marshall
Rally GB starts: 7
Best Rally GB finish: 4th (2016)
WRC starts: 70
WRC wins: 1
WRC titles: 0
Paddon needs to put a shocking season so far out

of his mind and drive. He's grown up on wet-dry-wet gravel rallies running through the forests and the fact that they've been on the other side of the world shouldn't make too much difference; on paper, the Kiwi should be right on the money for this one, but strangely he's never managed to get it all hooked up in Wales. How he'd love to this time around.



5 THIERRY NEUVILLE

Nationality: Belgian
Age: 29
Co-driver: Nicolas Gilsoul
Rally GB starts: 5
Best Rally GB finish: 3rd (2013 and '16)
WRC starts: 82
WRC wins: 5
WRC titles: 0
Ogier's biggest threat this season. After a couple of years

in the doldrums, he's got his head around life at Hyundai and has certainly found the i20 Coupe WRC's sweet spot this year. He's shown superb speed – and has consistently set the most fastest times all season – but he's also made mistakes and suffered a real off week in Finland, the last full gravel rally before here. A contender for the win, but needs to be mistake-free.



6 ANDREAS MIKKELSEN

Nationality: Norwegian
Age: 28
Co-driver: Anders Jaeger
Rally GB starts: 7
Best Rally GB finish: 3rd (2015)
WRC starts: 85
WRC wins: 3
WRC titles: 0
Only his second event in the Hyundai since he joined the

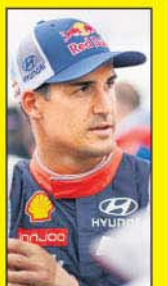
Korean squad in September. Mikkelsen's a fast learner and expect him to be in and among the pace of his fellow i20 drivers. Like so many, his chances in Wales will depend heavily on the conditions and his place on the road. He does, however, know the area well, having lived in Ruthin from the age of 17 when he started out in the discipline. He's since moved to Monaco.



16 DANI SORDO

Nationality: Spanish
Age: 34
Co-driver: Marc Marti
Rally GB starts: 9
Best Rally GB finish: 3rd (2008 and 2009)
WRC starts: 151
WRC wins: 1
WRC titles: 0
It's fair to say this isn't one of Dani's favourite events. When

he's got good grip and firm faith in the car beneath him, he's a genuine contender for a podium spot on most rallies. In Wales this week, the grip will vary on a metre-by-metre basis and he'll struggle to dial the car into the set-up to get the best out of the limited traction available. A top six would be a sensible target for the likeable Spaniard.



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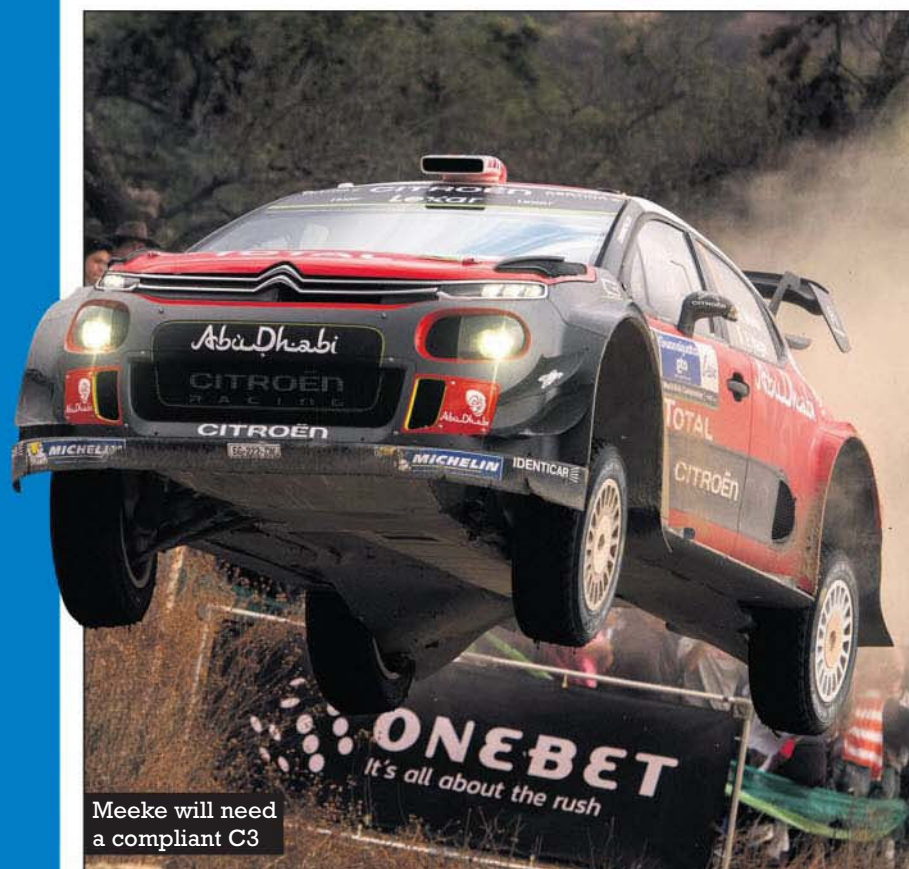


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RALLY GB PREVIEW: THE ENTRY

Photos: mcklein-imagedatabase.com, Red Bull Content Pool, Hyundai Motorsport



Meeke will need a compliant C3

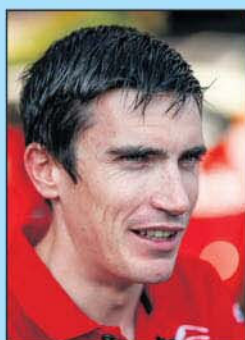
CITROËN WORLD RALLY TEAM

CAR: CITROËN C3 WRC
TEAM PRINCIPAL: YVES MATTON



7 KHALID AL QASSIMI

Nationality: UAE
Age: 45
Co-driver: Chris Patterson
Rally GB starts: 3
Best Rally GB finish: 11th (2010)
WRC starts: 68
WRC wins: 0
WRC titles: 0
Hasn't competed on Rally GB since 2010, but the Sheikh is an adaptable driver who will find his feet and his rhythm quickly. If it's wet and muddy, he will struggle with the worst of the conditions, but the good news for him is sitting alongside him: Chris Patterson first started this event in 1993 and twice finished on the podium while co-driving Petter Solberg. CP's one of the best in the business.



8 CRAIG BREEN

Nationality: Irish
Age: 27
Co-driver: Scott Martin
Rally GB starts: 6
Best Rally GB finish: 12th (2010)
WRC starts: 46
WRC wins: 0
WRC titles: 0
Showed brilliant pace early on last year (when he was driving a World Rally Car on his 'home' round of the championship for the first time) and needs to focus on that and pick up where he left off, shortly before he rolled in Myherin second time through. Breen's development over the last two years has been rapid and there's more speed to come from both him and the C3 – providing the car does its thing...



9 KRIS MEEKE

Nationality: British
Age: 38
Co-driver: Paul Nagle
Rally GB starts: 9
Best Rally GB finish: 2nd (2015)
WRC starts: 83
WRC wins: 5
WRC titles: 0
His Mexico and Spain wins show that Meeke remains one of the fastest drivers in the world championship. He knows the Welsh woods and these conditions as well as anybody, but the big question for home fans in the forests is: what's the Citroën capable of? In changeable conditions, it's been a bit of a pig from time to time this year (Poland, anybody..?), but when it works, it works well. Fingers crossed. Everything crossed.

TOYOTA GAZOO RACING



Lappi won in Finland

CAR: TOYOTA YARIS WRC
TEAM PRINCIPAL: TOMMI MAKINEN

10 JARI-MATTI LATVALA

Nationality: Finnish
Age: 32
Co-driver: Miikka Anttila
Rally GB starts: 15
Rally GB wins: 2 (2011-2012)
WRC starts: 180
WRC wins: 17
WRC titles: 0
Latvala cut his stage rallying teeth in Britain as a 17-year-old and treats this event as a second home rally. He knows it, he's won it twice and he's one of the favourites for more success this season. If his Toyota runs without trouble, Latvala will definitely be in the thick of the fight; the Finn has come alive again this year after four troubled seasons chasing his French team-mate in a German car he clearly couldn't figure out.



11 JUHO HANNINEN

Nationality: Finnish
Age: 36
Co-driver: Kaj Lindstrom
Rally GB starts: 4
Best Rally GB finish: 14th (2007)
WRC starts: 54
WRC wins: 0
WRC titles: 0
Toyota's chief tester from last season has failed to make the kind of impact he would have wanted in his first – and more than likely last – full season in a factory world rally team. Hanninen has the credentials to go well here and there's never been more of an incentive... Third at home in Finland (the last all-gravel round before Wales) was a career-best and an indicator of what he's capable of when everything works.



12 ESAPEKKA LAPPI

Nationality: Finnish
Age: 26
Co-driver: Janne Ferm
Rally GB starts: 1
Best Rally GB finish: 11th (2016)
WRC starts: 27
WRC wins: 1
WRC titles: 0
Hit the headlines with a quite extraordinary victory on this year's Rally Finland – only his fourth start ever in a World Rally Car. Shone during last year's Rally GB when he came to these roads for the first time and took a WRC2 win to seal the title for Skoda. Could he win this year? Common sense says no, but with Lappi, clearly, anything is possible!



Britain set for first visit of 2017 WRC monsters

For the past 10 months, these pages have been filled with news of how the 2017 World Rally Car is rallying's equivalent to the Second Coming. Well, this week you get to judge for yourself. And we're pretty sure you won't be disappointed.

As a quick reminder, here's what to look out for with the new motors.

More dramatic aerodynamics. This is the first thing you'll notice with the cars. The pictures just don't do these cars justice; today's World Rally Car has real and genuinely intimidating presence. Think hardcore DTM German touring car between the trees. Covered in mud and on gravel tyres. And that aero will really work as well. Once they're north of 60mph, the downforce generated plugs these things into the road like never before. Forget the Group B tea trays, these are windtunnel-tuned, CAD-fiddled devices aimed at making the absolute most out of that airflow.

And then there's the power and weight: more of one and less of the other; music to our ears, yours too. Talking of music, these things sound sensational. Loud and lairy, they're also very, very fast. The best place to pay homage to a turbo restrictor three-mil bigger than last year (36mm rather than 33mm) is in the medium- to high-speed corners. Hairpins are great, but last year's cars were pretty sprightly up and away from the slow stuff too.

No, find yourself a big, ballsy corner, stand safe and watch as the best drivers in the world dial these very special cars into these very special roads. One of the key areas for development which will help in Wales will be the re-introduction of an active centre differential. The return of active transmission means another switch on the steering wheel, but this is the one which allows the drivers to radically alter the handling of their cars when they go from section to section through conditions varying from slow corners and deep mud to motorway-smooth quick bits.

And it's not just factory drivers in factory cars that will be enjoying these new toys. As well as the men and machines listed on these pages, Mads Ostberg and Henning Solberg will be at the wheel of a privately entered Ford Fiesta WRC each.

Ostberg starred the last time the WRC was on gravel, earlier this month on day one of Rally Spain, where he wrestled Andreas Mikkelsen for the lead.

Ostberg will be a threat to the established order once again in Wales. As for Solberg, he's always quick and hugely entertaining. A bit like his car.



Big aero is impressive up close

RALLY GB PREVIEW: McRAE '97

Despite myriad WRC wins afterwards, McRae's last GB triumph was in 1997. By **David Evans**

HOMEHERO'S FINAL WIN



McRae was rapid... when he could see



Brilliant in the fog, but Mitsubishi driver Burns lost out with a puncture



Grist (r) had to rein in McRae after he became flustered in the fog

At the time it was almost inconceivable that this would be Colin McRae's last win on his home round of the World Rally Championship. How could it be? In 1997, the Flying Scotsman was at the height of his power and apparently winning for fun.

But 20 years ago, McRae celebrated his final RAC Rally win. He'd done three on the bounce – admittedly interrupted by Armin Schwarz's non-championship win in 1996 (McRae didn't enter) – and hadn't looked seriously troubled by anybody on his way to that famous hat-trick.

The most serious threat in 1997 came from the Briton who would take on the home hero mantle and win the next three: Richard Burns.

Two decades ago, Burnsie was coming onto McRae's radar as a serious threat, not that he'd have admitted as much. But on the Cheltenham-based event, Burns landed some serious shots and, briefly, had his Subaru-driving rival on the ropes.

Two decades ago, the RAC was following its then-traditional format of a Sunday morning start and Tuesday afternoon finish. The day one spectator stages were dispatched without drama, but all that changed first thing Monday morning. The run up to mid-Wales was broken up by an early morning dash through the Radnor test. Just over the

border, the 10-miler climbed to around 2000 feet and, running at just after 0700hrs on a late November morning, daybreak arrived shrouded in fog.

Fog was McRae's nemesis. His pacenotes were written with sight and speed in mind; compromised conditions hit the Scot harder than most things.

McRae's co-driver Nicky Grist remembers that stage well. "If there was a kink in the road and Colin could see straight through it, he wouldn't necessarily put it into the notes," he says. "That was a problem in the fog..."

Conversely, Burns' notes were incredibly detailed, describing the road ahead in detail. McRae was lost, quite literally.

"Colin was getting really frustrated," says Grist. "He just couldn't see and then he started trying to drive with the lights on, then off, then on. In the end, I said: 'Leave the lights off and concentrate on getting us to the end of the stage!'"

McRae followed the advice, but was livid at the end of the test. And that was before he discovered he'd dropped a minute and a half to RB.

Burns had been sublime, catching and passing Didier Auriol's Toyota. At

the end of the stage, the Frenchman jumped out of his factory Corolla and opened Burns' door – congratulating the Mitsubishi star on being the first man ever to catch him on a stage when he was running without problems.

A fuming McRae took some calming down as he and Grist journeyed north. The good news for Colin was that the next stage was Hafren, the very same test where he retook the lead on his way to an RAC win and the 1995 World Rally Championship.

The mood was still dark at the start of the stage. Eighth overall and 1m19s off the lead, McRae reckoned he'd lost interest. What was the point?

Nothing less than a win would do for him to take the championship, and what were the chances of that?

Did anybody really believe that? Giving McRae an on-song Subaru and 25 miles of Hafren is like handing Pablo Picasso a paintbrush and a piece of paper and telling him to get on with it.

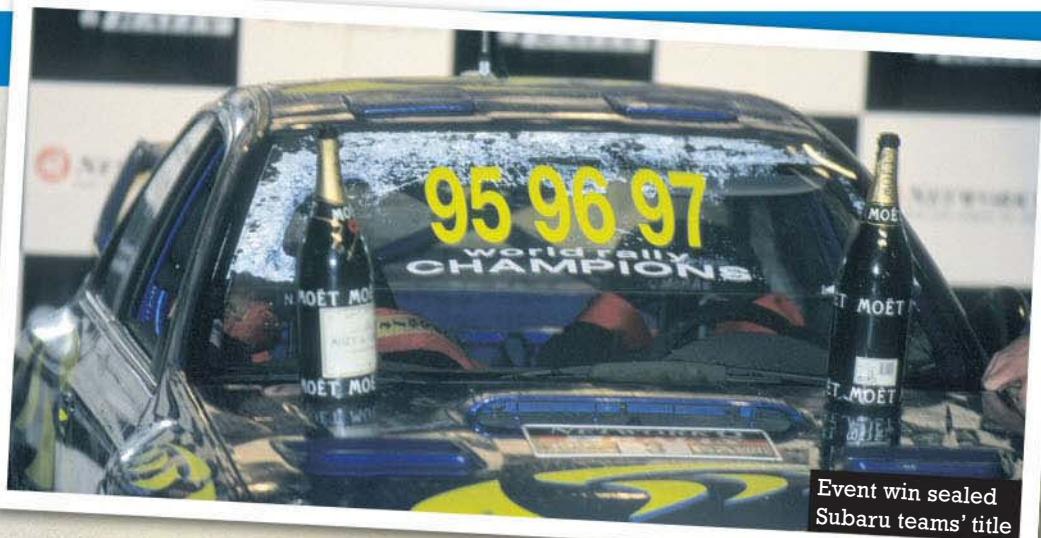
McRae produced a masterpiece of a drive, tearing through the woods to take 28 seconds out of everybody. It would have been more had he not spun halfway through. Pantperthog, Dyfi, Gartheiniog went the same way. A lack of visibility – this time caused by a



"Concentrate on getting us to the end of the stage"

Nicky Grist

Photos: LAT, mcklein-imagedatabase.com, Jakob Ebrely



Event win sealed Subaru teams' title



Victory wasn't enough to deny Makinen the title by a point

misted up windscreen – meant he dropped a second to Burns, whose lead had been slashed by a minute and four seconds in four stages.

By now, even Burns had accepted his fate and expected the Impreza WRC97 to be leading his Carisma GT back to Cheltenham that night. In the end, they went in tied on time, partly thanks to a botched rear suspension change, which cost Burns a 10-second penalty.

So, to South Wales for one last blast. St Gwynno opened proceedings, where half-light and full fog returned to haunt McRae. This time he 'only' dropped 17s to his rival and immediately pulled three of those back on the following Tyle stage.

In those days, the final day of a WRC still meant something in terms of mileage and the top two Brits set about 23 miles of Rhondda with a minute and a half in hand over the best of the rest. This one was about home rule.

Halfway through and disaster struck for Burns. He clipped a stone and the front-right Michelin on his Mitsubishi went flat, forcing him and Robert Reid to stop and change. Gutted didn't come close. And fourth was zero consolation.

Unaware of his rival's problem, McRae pressed on and finished the stage fully 40 seconds quicker than his nearest rival. Two minutes in the lead and with only four meaningful stages remaining, the



McRae was a lone wolf at Subaru as both Liatti and Eriksson retired

Subaru star's side of the deal was done. And he would duly head Finland's Juha Kankkunen over the ramp with a lead of close to three minutes.

In doing so, McRae became the first Briton to win the RAC three times and the first driver to complete a hat-trick on Britain's round of the world championship since Timo Makinen in 1975.

But none of that really mattered. In terms of the score across the spread of the season, McRae had come up short by the most painful of margins: a single point. Tommi Makinen had to finish sixth to secure a successful defence of his 1996 title. And he did that. Just. Mitsubishi's flying Finn had been

well and truly grounded by the 'flu, but he managed to do just about enough to stay on the road and in the hunt.

Subaru and McRae had hoped Kenneth Eriksson might have been able to intervene, possibly even Piero Liatti as well. But when the Swede's engine failed on stage one (something of a running theme through Subaru's 1997 season) and the Italian upended his car in Hafren, McRae was on his own.

But still, we told ourselves, there would be another year. And another. And there was. But there wouldn't be another McRae win on the RAC. Unbeknown to the masses, an era had ended with glorious success, and global failure. ■

McRAE'S RAC YEARS



Sierra was ruined in 1989 crash

1987 Colin McRae/Derek Ringer (Vauxhall Nova Sport): crashed

A 19-year-old McRae makes his home WRC debut in a 1300cc Vauxhall Nova, but goes off the road before the finish.

1988 Colin McRae/Derek Ringer (Peugeot 205 GTI): holed radiator

McRae's first official drive comes as one of Peugeot's Young Lions. A holed radiator in Penmachno marked the end of Colin's second RAC outing.

1989 Colin McRae/Derek Ringer (Ford Sierra RS Cosworth): crashed

A full Group A Sierra was readied for 1989, but McRae went off the road early, returning only to land his Ford on top of teammate Franco Cunico, who had departed Kielder on the same corner minutes earlier.

1990 Colin McRae/Derek Ringer (Ford Sierra RS Cosworth 4x4): 6th

His first RAC finish and the big break. Plagued by problems – and with Ringer's door kept shut by a bolt liberated from a farmer's gate – McRae pressed on and scored his first ever fastest times at WRC level. The world took notice. McRae had delivered.

1991 Colin McRae/Derek Ringer (Subaru Legacy RS): crashed

Colin arrived at the RAC on the back of his first British Championship title and led for the first time. Unfortunately, he rolled after failing to make a right-hander over a crest in Grizedale.

1992 Colin McRae/Derek Ringer (Subaru Legacy RS): 6th

Led the event again, but this time hopes were dashed by being

forced into a ditch by a spectator driving down the middle of the road on the liaison section, damaging his car's suspension and transmission.

1993 Colin McRae/Derek Ringer (Subaru Impreza 555): holed radiator

Led the event into Kielder, where a branch pierced the front of the Impreza, holed the radiator and cooked the flat-four in Kershope.

1994 Colin McRae/Derek Ringer (Subaru Impreza 555): 1st

Finally! The win Britain had been waiting for came to end an 18-year wait since Roger Clark's second RAC success.

1995 Colin McRae/Derek Ringer (Subaru Impreza 555): 1st

McRae overcame a puncture in Pundershaw and broken suspension in Newcastleton with staggering speed through Wales. Demolished Carlos Sainz on his way to a second home win and first world title.

1997 Colin McRae/Nicky Grist (Subaru Impreza WRC97): 1st

Overcame a sweary run through two fog-bound stages to take a third win on the bounce.

1998 Colin McRae/Nicky Grist (Subaru Impreza WRC98): engine

Ended his time with Subaru watching the Impreza go up in blue smoke in a Builth Wells cowshed.

1999 Colin McRae/Nicky Grist (Ford Focus WRC): crashed

Struggled to make much of an impact on the rally, then crashed out in the dark on the second run through Myherin.

2000 Colin McRae/Nicky Grist (Ford Focus RS WRC): crashed

Leading the event by 45 seconds, the good times were surely back for McRae and his legion of home fans. Unfortunately, it wasn't to be – he crashed out on the second run through Rheola.

2001 Colin McRae/Nicky Grist (Ford Focus RS WRC01): crashed

Led with a blinding turn of speed through the opening forest stage, but crashed heavily after mishearing a pace note and cutting an un-cuttable corner in Rhondda.

2002 Colin McRae/Derek Ringer (Ford Focus RS WRC02): 5th

This was a difficult end to a troubled year – one in which he and Grist split – and his final season in the Ford Focus. An unusually subdued McRae finished fifth without scoring a single fastest time.

2003 Colin McRae/Derek Ringer (Citroen Xsara WRC): 4th

With an enforced retirement from the sport looming large, Colin's final Rally GB as a full-time driver was a world away from the swashbuckling stories he'd written a decade earlier. The car didn't suit him and the time had come to say goodbye.

2005 Colin McRae/Nicky Grist (Skoda Fabia WRC): 7th

Two years after his GB finale, super-Mac was back again. And also back on form. On a rally forever remembered for the tragic loss of Michael 'Beef' Park, McRae guided a Skoda to some impressive stage times, which kick-started talk of a longer-term return to the sport.



The last hurrah: McRae in 2005

RALLY GB PREVIEW: SUPPORTS

A revamp has helped the National event, Rovanner makes WRC debut. By **Jack Benyon**

NEW FORMAT HAS BOOSTED WALES

Less is more is a cliché of blandest order, but that has been the case with the WRGB National Rally and its format for 2017.

The event became irrelevant in its old three-day format almost overnight when, thanks to an FIA rule change, cars that are not homologated were allowed to enter the full International rally.

That meant Joe Bloggs from South Wales can enter his Ford Escort Mk2 from 1981 into the full International event using the same stages, doing the same recce as Sebastien Ogier.

That rendered a three-day National rally useless, so it was back to the drawing board.

What the organisers have come up with is a 60-mile rally, down from 100, which just takes in Saturday and Sunday. It is a boiled-down version of last year's event, which ran one loop of the roads on all three days.

The change has produced a number of benefits.

"We've come across issues with timing which means we've had to cut the itinerary short for the Nationals in order to preserve the start time for the Internationals," says Ben Taylor, Rally GB managing director. "That's not fair."

Friday was the problem child in terms of scheduling and, with that struck from the National Rally, the event has more room

to breathe. "I think the chance of losing stage miles is slim compared to previous years," adds competitor Brynmor Pierce. "The event seemed to be losing Hafren/Sweet Lamb almost every year."

There are less stage miles, but those that are planned are more likely to be completed.

The big gain (or saving in this case) is cost. Although the entry fee is only £250 cheaper than the 100-mile event last year, the running costs, and more importantly, time away from work for the competitors is significantly reduced.

"It means more people take less time off work and the cost is massively reduced," continues Pierce, who is local to the event. "I think it's positive and that's been reflected in the entries."

The entries are up by nine from last year to 88. And, according to Taylor, it's because the event provides value thanks to the lower mileage, but the continuation of competing on some of the world's best stages, without a strong likelihood of stages being cancelled.

The one criticism is the Sunday, when only 15 of the 100-plus total miles are competitive.

That's bizarre, but the event has to take into consideration TV timings for its international event, and there isn't an obvious alternative to this.

Joe Evett, 1400 competitor, sums up the mood when it comes to this perfectly.

"The Sunday is only 15 miles or so," he says. "It seems stupid

in terms of how many road miles to competition miles there are. But it will be a laugh and good fun either way."

So, it's not a game-changing issue for the National. They're still going to have fun and competitors do their talking through their feet (with entries) just as much as they do with their mouths. And the entries are record-breaking.

The organisers could run on the Friday and Saturday instead of the Saturday and Sunday, but that would risk the aforementioned problems with scheduling on the Friday, and it could take away from the fact that on the Sunday, all competitors celebrate the end of the event in Llandudno together.

Back to the International event, take-up on non-homologated cars has been slim. Only 12 cars have taken on the International, which justifies the change the National entry has made. It's not like 79 competitors from last year's National rally have switched to do the three-day International.

There's now a genuine choice for the clubmen.

They could either do the National and experience the stages on a budget, or go whole hog as an end-of-season blowout and share the stages with the stars.

Starting with that awful cliché, we'll finish with another. Variety is the spice of life, and that's what's on offer to the clubmen competitor at Wales Rally GB in 2017.



ENTRY LIST

Wales Rally GB National

NO	DRIVER/CO-DRIVER	CAR
200	Bruce McCombie/Michael Couatts	Mitsubishi Lancer E9
201	Roger Duckworth/TBC	Subaru Impreza WRC
202	Tom Preston/TBC	Skoda Fabia R5
203	Dylan Davies/Lion Williams	Subaru Impreza
205	Andy Davies/Max Freeman	Subaru Impreza
207	Barry Jordan/James Gratten-Smith	Citroen DS 3 R5
211	Ieuan Rowlands/Emyr Hall	Ford Escort Mk2
212	Shawn Rayner/Declan Dear	Ford Escort Mk2
213	John Rowlands/Glenn Latham	Ford Escort Mk2
224	Joe Evett/Rob Gilham	MG ZR
225	Carl Tuer/Robin Tuer	MGZR
227	Alasdair Currie/Steven Brown	Ford Fiesta R2
234	Zak Hughes/TBC	Suzuki Swift
239	Rikki Proffitt/David Alcock	Datsun 240Z
247	Seb Perez/Steve Smith	Ford Escort Mk2
255	Gary Wright/Chris Pattison	MG ZR
259	Bob Beales/Mike Leflay	VW Oettinger GT
268	Gordon Alexander/Ian Clark	Vauxhall Nova
270	Ken Davies/Alan Jones	Volvo Amazon
273	Ian Linford/Bart Lang	Landrover Freelander

CHANGES

Wales Rally GB National

	2016	2017
Days	3	2
Stages	12	8
Stage miles	108.03	59.78
Entry fee	£1000	£750
Entries	79	88

ROVANPERA JOINS WRC2 R5 REGULARS TO FIGHT IN THE FOREST



Rovanpera makes first WRC appearance

The WRC2 title is wrapped up so it's all eyes on 17-year-old Finn Kalle Rovanpera, who passed his driving test just 24 days ago.

Expectations will be high for the youngster labelled everything from future WRC champion to rallying's Max Verstappen. If *MN* had a pound for every time that was said...

But, let's not forget, this is Wales Rally GB. Alright, rookies in Wales can win – Esapekka Lappi did so last year, despite crashing his Skoda Fabia R5 en route to the WRC2 title. Rovanpera has a lot to prove.

A few warm-up events in the ERC and his native Finland allied to three seasons of Latvian rallying won't be enough to ensure Rally GB victory. But his talent is undeniable and he'll be eager to announce himself onto the world scene. Watch this space. His descriptive pacenotes will help if there's fog. His commitment and M-Sport Ford Fiesta R5 will do the rest.

Teemu Suninen is well among the favourites this year

Champion Pontus Tidemand



and team-mate Eric Camilli will be right there with him. Camilli trails Suninen by eight points in the standings, but the Finn can still go to Australia to score more points (even if that's unlikely), whereas this event is Camilli's last chance to score.

With Lappi now in a Toyota, Skoda's hopes lie with 2017 WRC2 champion Pontus Tidemand. He went well and took a clever second last year, realising he couldn't cope with Lappi's outright pace, he set about being consistent to secure a strong result.

Also in a Skoda, Ole Christian Veiby trails Camilli by nine points making that battle a heated one – and the Norwegian has been strong in his second year of WRC2. Veiby won the class in Poland, but his most impressive form came at

Rally Finland where, although not registered for WRC2 points, he was the R5 pacesetter until he rolled spectacularly out of Pajjala.

For Britain, Gus Greensmith did this event last year and has a season of learning in WRC2 under his belt. The podium would be a fantastic result for the Fiesta R5 driver. Finland podium finisher Tom Cave switches from Hyundai i20 R5 to Fiesta R5 and has set his sights on a win (*see rally news*).

The winner in Finland, Jari Huttunen, is starting his first event in an i20 R5 after winning a shootout for a works-supported WRC2 drive with Hyundai for next year. He has one start and one win in the class. Rally GB will be an equally large step, but put nothing past this youngster.

Photos: Jakob Ebrey, Writtle Photographic, ERC Media

RALLY GB NATIONAL

ITINERARY

Wales Rally GB National

STAGE	MILEAGE	FIRST CAR DUE
SS1 Cholmondeley Castle	1.11 miles	1100hrs
SS2 Aberhymant	8.61 miles	1245hrs
SS3 Dyfnant	11.12 miles	1337hrs
SS4 Gartheiniog 2	7.83 miles	1449hrs
SS5 Dyfi	16.06 miles	1518hrs
SS6 Gwydir	4.60 miles	1208hrs
SS7 Alwen	6.46 miles	1311hrs
SS8 Brenig	3.99 miles	1415hrs



National event is unlikely to lose Hafren/Sweet Lamb

McCombie returns to head National rally entry

Last year's winner Bruce McCombie enters the newly-formatted WRGB National Rally as favourite aboard his Mitsubishi Lancer E9—a position strengthened by the absence of his closest challenger last year, Luke Francis.

Scotsman McCombie hasn't finished in the top five in any of the five events he has completed this year, but it was a similar story last year and that didn't turn out too badly when he came south to end his season in Wales. He knows the car inside out and the stages well enough to win here before.

Subaru Impreza WRC driver Roger Duckworth finished third behind McCombie last year. Duckworth, a former stalwart of national rallying has great experience of these woods and will be well worth keeping an eye on.

In the 1600-2000cc class, John Rowlands (Ford Escort Mk2) is easily the highest seeded, although Charlie Jackson and his interesting Ford Fiesta ST kit car could upset the formbook.

Carl Tuer leads the B2 class entries for 1401-1600cc cars in his MG ZR, but he'll struggle to keep teenager Alasdair Currie at bay. The BTRDA Fiesta ST Trophy frontrunner will drive a Ford Fiesta R2 on this event as a prize for finishing second in the championship. For entertainment value, Alan Desbois and his mental rear-wheel-drive Peugeot 306 will be good to watch on the stages. Keep an eye out for Suzuki Shining Stars (one-make series for Swifts) frontrunner Zak Hughes too.

Joe Evett is a class frontrunner on any event he takes part in, and this event will be no different in the up to 1400cc category. He drives a ZR and reliability is likely to be the only thing stopping a class win for him.

Of the historic entries, Shawn Rayner is seeded inside the top 10 and will almost certainly take overall honours and the H3 class. H2 is headed by Rikki Proffitt's stunning Datsun 240Z, and H1 will be fought out by Ken Davies' Volvo Amazon and Brian Ferreday's VW Beetle. It certainly won't be the fastest battle on the event...



Jimmy McRae drives a Vauxhall Adam Cup

NATIONAL CARS TAKE ON THE MAIN EVENT

Thanks to an FIA rule change, cars not homologated by the FIA can now enter the full three-day Wales Rally GB rather than just the national previously.

There's 12 cars that have done just that, but there isn't an obvious frontrunner among them.

Jimmy McRae is the highest seed, but even with his five British titles he will struggle to beat the others in his Vauxhall Adam Cup, which is a step down from an R2 car.

Welsh Rally Championship frontrunner Wug Utting could be the pick to place highest here in his Subaru Impreza, while Paul Walker (Impreza) and Dan Moss (Mitsubishi Lancer E9) could challenge.

Scott Partridge, BTRDA B13 class champion last season, could feature, but might struggle for match fitness with this being only his second event in 2017 in his Impreza.



Rookie Creighton could surprise in the R2 class



Ingram (1) enters GB as a European champion

ENGLAND'S HOPES LIE WITH EURO CHAMP INGRAM

After securing a brilliant win in the European Rally Championship's Under27 category this year, Chris Ingram is after another R2 class win on Wales Rally GB in his Vauxhall Adam R2.

It didn't go to plan last year after he was hit on the road section by a passing car, but after

his ERC success this year he's full of confidence.

It's difficult to see who can beat Ingram if he stays on the road. Raphael Astier (one of two WRC3 entries, Enrico Brazzoli is the other, both in Peugeot 208 R2s) could take second in that championship, but with Brazzoli the only other WRC3

regular attending there's little to gain by going all out. Three class points will give him second in the championship.

William Creighton is an interesting proposition after narrowly missing out on the Prestone Motorsport News Junior British Rally Championship this

year. He'll be joined by a host of BRC drivers including fellow frontrunner Marty Gallagher, a team from the Harper Adams University (James McDiarmid and Max Haines-Messenger) and world cup mountain bike champion Gee Atherton who returns for a second year.



BRITISH CHAMPIONSHIP REGULARS MIX WITH WORLD COMPETITION

Cave: frontrunner

The top two drivers in the British Rally Championship, Keith Cronin and Fredrik Ahlin, won't tackle Wales Rally GB, but some of the BRC's fastest gravel competitors in 2017 will be present in Wales.

Scott David Bogie, 2011 champion, won 10 of 22 loose surface stages he competed on this year, a table-topping win percentage of 45.45 per cent.

Local driver Tom Cave has a 100 per cent conversion rate after he switched to a Hyundai i20 R5, winning the four stages he managed before suspension troubles ruled him out of the Pirelli Carlisle and RSAC Scottish Rally. Whether that's Cave pushing too hard or a brittle i20, he backed up the pace with an impressive WRC2 podium at Rally Finland.

The interesting entry comes from Bogie. He showed an improvement in 2016 after switching

from a Ford Fiesta to a Skoda Fabia R5. Now he's had two full seasons in the car, there's no excuse there. Bogie needs to put a full event together without any mistakes. Only a perfect rally will be enough to challenge for the WRC2 win.

Matt Edwards took third in the BRC and while he's won events on gravel and that's his favoured surface, his pace has been poor on the surface at BRC level this year. A switch to the DMACK tyre, which works well in Wales, and the M-Sport works team will prove if the gravel struggle was down to the Hankook tyres he was using in the BRC this year.

Rhys Yates, who performed well on his overseas WRC debut in Spain earlier this month, and James Slaughter, will also be competing. Both will be looking for increased experience on the difficult stages rather than a class win.

Dayinsure: Title Sponsor of the GB Round of the World Rally Championship 2017

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the 1980s when it was known as the 'RAC Rally', so sometimes I still have to pinch myself when I see it being called the 'Dayinsure Wales Rally GB'. However, on top of my personal history, another reason we're involved is because

Working within this industry also means that the team at Dayinsure take a keen interest in all-things motoring. This interest and expertise however goes beyond their day-to-day work, as they are also the proud title sponsor of the GB round of the World Rally Championship. The firm had previously sponsored the WRC back in 2016 and have continued this partnership into this year's round.

it's also held near our base in Tarporley near Chester. We also know that many of our customers, advocates and go-to people for car advice are also big fans of the event.

As well as this, I'm proud to say that this sponsorship has brought national and international recognition for the brand. Ultimately, in life I follow the belief that you should always look for 'win-wins', and to me, being able to sponsor an event I love, while at the same time getting the name Dayinsure out there, certainly falls into this category.'

Dayinsure Chairman, Dennis Ryan, offered his thoughts on the sponsorship and explained a little more about why Dayinsure chose to get involved in this important date on the British motorsports calendar: 'I'm a motoring man and a true petrol head at heart, so when people ask me why Dayinsure became the title sponsor of the GB round of the World Rally Championship, the answer is simple; it was impossible not to.

The Dayinsure Wales Rally GB, is the 12th and last stage in the European leg of the WRC and this year promises to be the most exciting and thrilling in the event's history. This means that as well as Mr Ryan, everyone from diehard petrol heads, to those getting their first taste of what Rally has to offer are sure to enjoy an experience they won't forget.

I have a passion for Rally and I've followed this particular event since



Left: Ben Taylor (Managing Director of Dayinsure Wales Rally GB) Middle: Dennis Ryan (Chairman of Dayinsure) Right: Ken Skates (Welsh Government Economy Secretary)

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RALLY GB PREVIEW: STAGE GUIDE

We run the rule over the tests that will face the Rally GB field. By **David Evans**

THE CHALLENGE THAT AWAITS THE WRC CHARGERS



The WRC stars will be out en masse

The stages of Wales Rally GB offer some of the most demanding competitive mileage on the entire World Rally Championship schedule. It also offers some of the most exciting spectating opportunities for some of the most passionate fans. *Motorsport News* has been to all corners of the route to check out what is going to challenge the drivers to the maximum. Here is our guide to the 2017 route.



Shakedown – Clocaenog (2.06 miles)
The last chance to finalise the set-up of the car before the start. This is one of the best shakedowns of the season because it runs in an actual stage and is representative of what's to come in the next three days. Having said that, this is the only time Clocaenog is used during the rally – but Brenig and Alwen are both in on Sunday and they're just down the road. There are plenty of corners and junctions to watch in here.

Shakedown will be held at Clocaenog



Sweet Lamb has an iconic backdrop

4 SS3/6 Sweet Lamb (2.63 miles)
People call this a spectator stage, which technically it is, but it's not your average spectator stage – it's the best spectator stage in the world! Watching the cars tearing down that famous hill into the watersplash (where you have to be careful to get the car into the water absolutely square on or it can throw you off and spit you out) and into the main bowl area, is brilliant fun. And it's some challenge for the drivers as well.

2 SS1 Visit Conwy Tir Prince (0.99 miles)
This is a new one for this year. This stage is based around a trotting track and a couple of link roads with a jump and the chance to do a doughnut. Nobody's going to make a load of time on this stage, in all honesty it's one to drive as neat and tidy as possible – but you know what drivers are like when they see a load of spectators: almost impossible not to do some skids. It'll be a very entertaining start for the fans.

3 SS2/5 Myherin (11.30 miles)
Running in the same direction, albeit with a different configuration. Unfortunately, some of the best hairpins on the route (the ones known as Pikes Peak near what was the start) is now a car park – good for fans' access, but a shame for the drivers. New for this year is Elfyn's Corner, established by a group of fans of the local hero. If you're up for giving the M-Sport star a cheer surrounded by like-minded folk, car park B's the place for you. This corner is right in the middle of one of the fastest and most flowing stretches of route through the windfarms.

5 SS4/7 Hafren (21.83 miles)
Kris Meeke's favourite this one. And it's not hard to see why – especially when it's running at the full length like we are this time. Looking at the map, you'll get a good view of the cars for a long time from car park D, while E will take you to an uphill hairpin left. There are so many surface and grip changes in this stage, reading the road and interpreting the colour of the mud is vital. You've got to be on your mettle in here. This stage isn't as quick as Myherin: there are a few more corners and junctions to slow the pace down a little bit.



Hafren will test grip availability



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RALLY GB PREVIEW: STAGE GUIDE

Photos: David Evans, mcklein-imagedatabase.com

Saturday, October 28

SS8/15 Aberhirnant (8.61 miles)

A very, very fast start to Saturday morning. One of the fastest sections of the stage is now being used as a car park (with some great views from N), but the rest of the road is far from slow. There are a few surface changes in there and, from what we've been told, there's been quite a bit of logging activity in the middle. Wherever there's been a lot of work done in pulling the trees out of the forest, the road can be

quite badly affected. Fully loaded, these logging trucks weigh around 40 tonnes, so it's not hard to see how they stir the mud up and, almost regardless of the weather, can make a bit of a mess. The crews will note these sections on the recce, but if the mud's quite deep you have to slow down or there's a real risk of going off and into the pile of logs. As well as being one of the quickest, this stage is also one of the highest on the route. If the fog comes in, especially for the second run through at night, it'll make the thing really interesting!



Dyfnant: fan favourite

7SS9/16 Dyfnant (11.12 miles)

One of the most famous and visited stages on the route, with the hairpin right in the middle (accessed from car park I) a really popular place to watch. If you walk away from that junction in the same direction as the cars – always following the marshal's instructions – you'll come to a fast right-hander which has

become known as Irish Corner in recent years. Dyfnant flows nicely, but the surface can change quite a lot second time through. This one tends to polish a bit, which makes it a bit more slippery on the re-run. Having said that, in 2015 it rained so hard the mud was washed away, exposing the stone base beneath, and the grip got better.



Dyfi offers a challenge



Gartheiniog is flowing

8SS10/12 Gartheiniog (7.83 miles)

Elfyn's favourite. Even though there are a couple of really tight hairpins in the stage, it still flows very nicely. And there's good news for this year, the organisers have

extended the stage at the start by about 800 metres, which means the cars will come charging up the road into a tricky right-left sequence with some great spectating on offer there, accessed from car park H.

9SS11/13 Dyfi (16.06 miles)

If it's been raining, this road will be really slippery – especially near the start where there's always the risk of a bit of standing water on the inside of some of the corners. But the worst place for grip is on the bedrock, which comes in the

middle of the stage. After that, once it starts to climb, this one just gets better and better with plenty of medium and high-speed corners. Not dissimilar in nature to Garth, which is no surprise because both roads are pretty much under the same – massive – bunch of trees.



Cholmondeley: family fun

10SS14 Cholmondeley Castle (1.11 miles)

The only stage on the route that crosses the border into England. Great place to bring the family with loads going on before and after we get there. As you might have guessed from the name of the stage, this one's a stately home-style stage – and it's a very

entertaining one with the cars all required to do a 360 in the middle of the straight. Don't forget, this RallyFest stage is the only one on the route where there will be an autograph session straight after the leaders have been through – but this time the stage will keep running while the signing takes place.

Sunday October 29

11SS17/20 Alwen (6.46 miles)

This is the first of the north Wales forests and it's more like the Clocaenog stage used as shakedown. There are a few more junctions in here and the grip's not

always the best – especially when it's been raining and you can get this kind of black mud, which has no grip at all. It's a great challenge and nice and quick in places. And, like Brenig, there's plenty of spectating off the B4501.



Quick test: Brenig stage

12SS18/21 Brenig (3.99 miles)

This is the powerstage again this year, but it's been shortened and changed around a little bit. The road alongside the lake is really quick and open to the elements – you can watch the

cars in this section standing on the dam – but then we go into trees and the road will get more slippery and a bit narrower. After that there's a Tarmac section which takes the crews to the finish of the stage and the event.

13SS19 Gwydir (4.60 miles)

Gwydir stands out from the others a little bit in that you feel you're driving through more of a parkland-type forest rather than some of the denser woods in mid-Wales. The surface changes quite a lot, which means the drivers have to be on guard

for varying grip levels. In the right weather there are some lovely views from up on the top of this stage – then again, the trees have grown a bit since the event was there in 2013. And you wouldn't have seen the view then, because it ran in the dark!

TIMETABLE

Thursday, October 26

TIME	STAGE
0800	Shakedown, Clocaenog
1900	SS1 Visit Conwy Tir Prince (0.99 miles)

Friday, October 27

TIME	STAGE
1020	SS2 Myherin 1 (11.30 miles)
1100	SS3 Sweet Lamb 1 (2.63 miles)
1115	SS4 Hafren 1 (21.83 miles)
1431	SS5 Myherin 2 (11.30 miles)
1511	SS6 Sweet Lamb 2 (2.63 miles)
1526	SS7 Hafren 1 (21.83 miles)



Rally GB: ready for blast off

Saturday, October 28

TIME	STAGE
0755	SS8 Aberhirnant 1 (8.61 miles)
0847	SS9 Dyfnant 1 (11.12 miles)
0959	SS10 Gartheiniog 1 (7.83 miles)
1028	SS11 Dyfi 1 (16.06 miles)
1208	SS12 Gartheiniog 2 (7.83 miles) (Live TV)
1237	SS13 Dyfi 2 (16.06 miles)
1548	SS14 Cholmondeley Castle (1.11 miles)
1855	SS15 Aberhirnant 2 (8.61 miles)
1947	SS16 Dyfnant 2 (11.12 miles)

Sunday, October 29

TIME	STAGE
0834	SS17 Alwen 1 (6.46 miles)
0908	SS18 Brenig 1 (3.99 miles)
1109	SS19 Gwydir (4.60 miles)
1218	SS20 Alwen 2 (6.46 miles)
1715	SS21 Brenig 2 (3.99 miles) (Power Stage)

WALES RALLY GB CO-ORDINATOR

ANDREW KELLITT

"The cars will be special in the dark"



It's the question I get asked regularly and often this week... where should I go and spectate? Well, here's what I'd be doing with a World Rally Pass.

Shakedown is a must. These 2017 WR Cars are spectacular and you should make the most of every chance to see them.

Thursday morning, Clocaenog, car park A just west of Ruthin. Get there early, the first car's in 0800hrs.

Tir Prince (off the A55, just east of Abergele) is a great addition this year. As well as the autograph session and ceremonial start, there's the chance to see the first competition. It isn't the longest, but it does include a jump and two very long corners on gravel – and it runs in the dark.

Friday is into Myherin (SS2) first thing: head for car park B off the A44. The viewing is great, with a chance to see the cars for a long time.

I'd be heading to Newtown for the regroup and a chance to catch up on what's been going on.

Where I go in Hafren (SS7) would depend on the weather. If it's sunny, I'd be heading into car park D for the more open moorland stretch. But if it's raining, I'd follow the road along to car park E and get in among the trees at the hairpin.

Saturday depends on whether you want to include the RallyFest stage at Cholmondeley. If Cholmondeley's on the menu, I'd have a bit of a lie-in and head to Dyfnant (SS9). Spectator access is off the B4395 north of Llangadfan. Car park J is the overnight car park, whereas car park I only opens Saturday morning – so you might be better taking the second left into the forest, which takes you to I. This takes you to a fast approach into a hairpin, which runs away down to 'Irish Corner.'

If you want a full day in the forest, it means an earlier start to get into Aberhirnant (SS8). You'll come into the woods on the north side with car park L taking you to a square left with a quick approach while M offers a longer view. It starts before 0800hrs. Don't hang around too long. I'd recommend Dyfi 2 (SS13) next, but if the traffic's not too bad and you can get around to Aberangell, then you could head into Gartheiniog (SS12) via car park H, with access to three very good corners.

Now you can either stay and watch the WRGB National runners (due through at 1518hrs) or you could dive into Machynlleth for a bite to eat on your way to Dyfnant (SS16) in the dark.

On Sunday all roads lead to the B4501, which becomes car park O for the day. Heading north, you'll have Alwen (SS17/20) on the left and Brenig (SS18/21) on the right. Alwen first time through and then heading to the Brenig Visitors' Centre for the finish of the powerstage (SS21) would probably be my choice. You'll get to see the cars in action first time through and then you can watch as the drivers and co-drivers wait to find out who's going to bag the five bonus points.

If you want the more formal podium celebrations, watch the cars in action in Brenig first time through, then Alwen on the second loop and head straight for Llandudno once the cars are through SS20.

Visit the Rally Village on Deeside and please listen and act on what the marshals tell you. They are all volunteering their time for your safety.

RALLY NEWS SPECIAL

CHAMPIONS LINE UP TO HONOUR MCRAE

World beaters and WRC heroes gather to celebrate the Scotsman's life

By David Evans

History was made last weekend, when 10 world champions came together in San Marino to remember Colin McRae a decade on from his death in 2007.

Crowds of close to 80,000 lined the 24-square miles, almost tripling the republic's population for the weekend, for the RallyLegend event, which was organised to remember McRae.

The drivers and co-drivers present numbered 30 world titles between them, but it was McRae's family which drew the biggest cheer and most emotional response. The 1995 world champion's brother Alister drove the Subaru Legacy RS Colin used on the 1992 Swedish Rally, while his parents Jimmy and Margaret and daughter Hollie were all welcomed by a once-in-a-lifetime turnout.

Hollie, 19, told MN: "It's amazing to come here and see all of this. After all these years you expect it to... not die down, but maybe be less of a big deal. You forget what a big deal it was. It's amazing, there was an eight-year-old who came and asked gramps for his autograph. People who weren't even alive back then are so enthused by it all. It's really good that we can relive those days with events like that. And I got asked for my autograph! That was really nice, I got to sign a picture of my dad.

"I went to a few rallies dad was competing on, but I don't know if the memories I have are my own or if they're things I've been told by other people. What's been really nice is the stories I've heard this weekend that I'd never heard before: there was so much stuff my dad did that I didn't know before they mentioned it. Everybody's here for one reason and that's so nice. It's

nice that a few people have brought Johnny [McRae's late son] up as well. Johnny wasn't really part of this, but it's nice when people remember him."

Asked if she had intention of following in her father's footsteps, Hollie replied: "I enjoy it, but I think my mum and gran would have a heart attack if I said yes!"

As well as the competition itself, the centrepiece of the weekend was a press conference attended by the family, the 10 champions and McRae's two co-drivers, Derek Ringer and Nicky Grist.

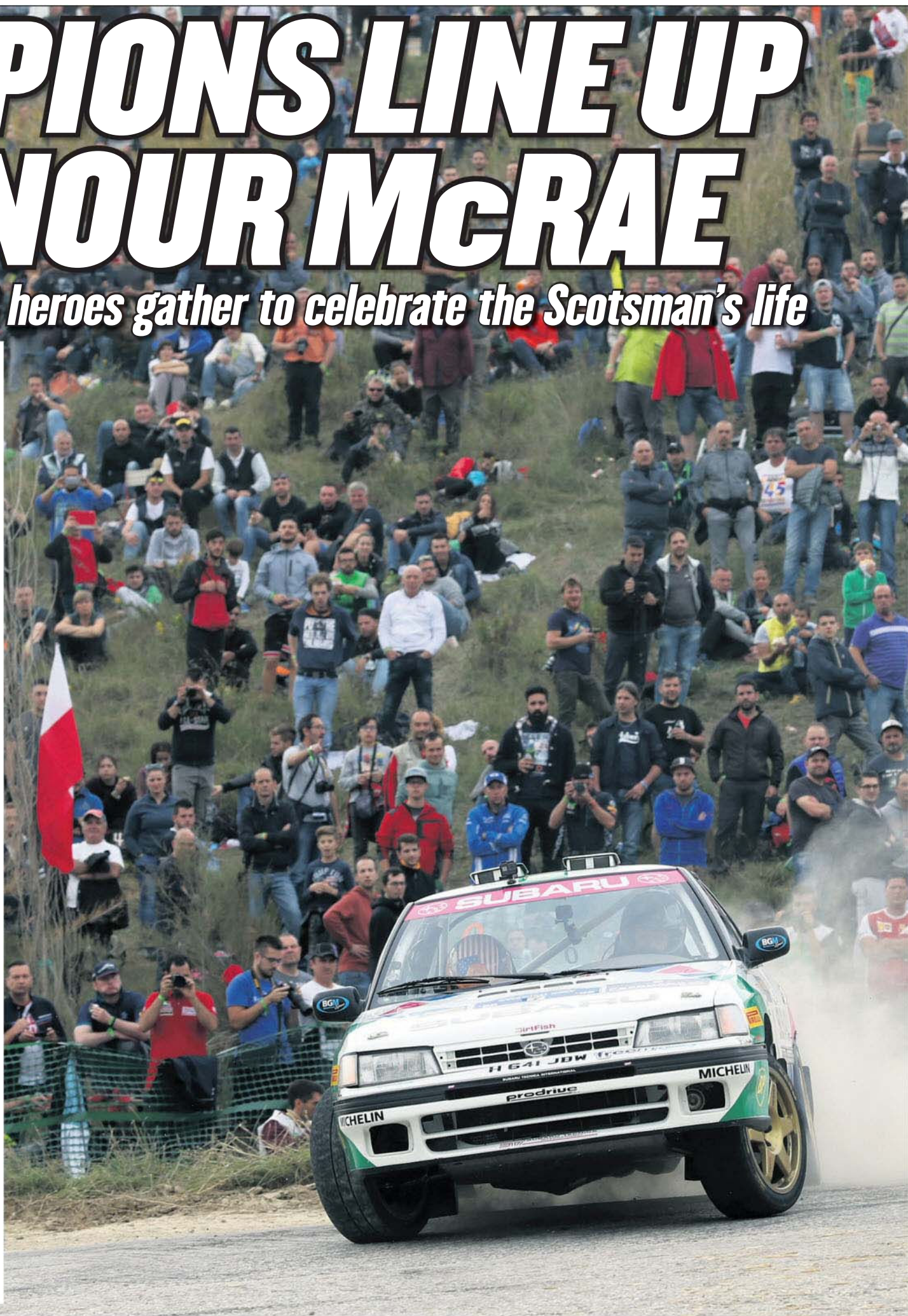
Following an emotional standing ovation, Alister admitted the names in the room took some comprehending.

"It was incredible wasn't it?" he said. "To see that number of world champions in one room, for one reason. I don't think we'll ever see that again."

Alister helped recreate the McRae and Ringer partnership, with Derek co-driving him as they ran the Legacy as course car for the RallyLegend competition.

"Derek [Ringer] reckoned the car had 380bhp and weighed 1100 kilos in '92," Alister said. "Well, it's put a bit of weight on and lost some of its power since then! And, I'll be honest, my eyesight's not what it was – but I wasn't as bad as Derek, he couldn't see a thing in the dark! But it's been fantastic to be back in one of these cars again. We'll not forget this weekend."

Those sentiments were echoed around the San Marino Rally Village. Kris Meeke added: "The response for Colin has been just incredible. I've had guys coming to me to talk about Colin, their memories and they've had tears in their eyes. That was the sort of emotional response Colin could draw, he was simply one on his own. The best."



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Photos: Massimo Bettiol



Smiles: Alister McRae and Hollie McRae



Kris Meeke honoured his former mentor



Alister McRae got to drive Colin's 1992 Subaru Legacy

WHAT THE DRIVERS SAID



Blomqvist wowed the crowds in a spectacular quattro

Stig Blomqvist (1984, drove Audi quattro E2)

"It's always good when you come to drive the quattro again. The power is still a little bit crazy. I like this and I like the time to remember Colin with so many drivers and friends."

Juha Kankkunen (1986, '87, '91, '93, drove Toyota Celica Turbo 4WD)

"It's incredible to see Colin's family here and so many people coming to remember him. I think he would have enjoyed this weekend and the cars. Like Timo [Salonen] said, we've been lucky because we had the best car at the time when we were fighting in the sport. One thing I am very happy for is taking the title during the Group B years – these cars were really special."

Luis Moya (1990, '92)

"Colin was special. When the organisers [of RallyLegend] ask me to help I said to them: 'OK, I will make some calls.' I did that and everybody came for Colin. It's fantastic to see so many of these drivers here. Unbelievable. But that was Colin. I was team-mate to this guy and I love him, he is an amazing guy and one we will never forget."

Nicky Grist (McRae's co-driver)

"One memory? Seriously? I can't do that, but I can tell you one thing: Colin McRae was one of the most naturally gifted drivers ever. And, like everybody like that, he made what he did look very easy. But he was so spectacular and so committed, and it made him unbelievably popular."

Derek Ringer (McRae's co-driver)

"People would say to me: 'It must be crazy inside the car.' It wasn't. I would have trusted my kids' lives with Colin. He was the most fantastic driver. We had a lot of victories together, but they weren't always the rallies with the best stories – they were usually the ones where we had the biggest accidents and we would get ourselves to the end of the stage and then Colin would inspire this spirit into the mechanics and they would just keep pushing; rallies like the 1,000 Lakes in 1992, when we rolled about 13 times,

these events will live longest in my memory."

Petter Solberg (2003, drove Subaru Impreza WRC)

"I was team-mate to Colin [in 1999] and I was always asking questions. When we were at the Monte Carlo test that year, I was asking all the time and I was desperate – always trying to get in the car to go for a ride with Colin. In the end, he said to me: 'Alright Petter, enough questions now please! Shut. Up.' I was quiet for maybe 10 minutes, but then I couldn't help it and I was asking again. In the end he put me in the car and drove. Flat. Out. Honestly, I almost sh*t myself. And then sometimes I was not so popular with Malcolm [Wilson] when I had some crashes. Colin helped me through those times, he made things better for me with Malcolm. I miss him."

Sebastien Ogier (2013, '14, '15, '16 drove Volkswagen Polo R WRC)

"Unfortunately, I was the generation a little bit after Colin McRae, so I never got the chance to meet him. But for me, he was an icon. Like so many, I grew up playing his computer game, but you know for this guy to have a computer game named after him was something really incredible. I definitely got some inspiration from this and from him."

Sebastien Loeb (2004-2012, drove Citroen C4 WRC)

"I was the generation between, so I grew up with Colin's game, but then I also got to know him. I will never forget when I was talking to [then Citroen team principal] Guy Frequelin about who was coming to the team in 2003. He said to me: 'It's Colin, he will be your team-mate.' Immediately, I thought to myself: 'OK, now we're really going to see where I am...' This brought a lot of pressure early in my career, could I prove myself or not? In the end it turned out not so bad. To have Colin with us in the team was such a good time, he was a nice and really funny guy – I have a lot of happy memories for Colin."

Marcus Gronholm (2000, '02)

"When I was coming to the sport, Colin was always the driver who



Solberg: happy memories

was a little bit better. You look at the times and think: 'Oh, sh*t...! I always looked up to Colin in the sport, he was one of the biggest names in the sport. And when I came to fight against Colin, it was incredible – he was a really tough competitor."

Didier Auriol (1993, drove Toyota Celica Turbo 4WD)

"He was so special driver. Some times in some places you would look to the time and just ask yourself: 'How did he do that?'"

Miki Biasion (1988, '89 drove Lancia Delta Integrale)

"We all remember Colin and we all remember his family – it's nice, so nice, to see them all coming in San Marino. This RallyLegend is great for the memory for all of us."

Timo Salonen (1985)

"This is a special weekend and we remember good times for Colin and as well for the cars and the sport in those days. I was lucky for my time, I had the best car for the championship [in 1985] and I was able to make good success in that year."

Ari Vatanen (1981 drove Ford Escort RS1800)

"I think Colin and I found, in each other, a mate. To have a Vatanen and a McRae in the same team was very special – and sometimes busy for the bodyshop! One of the things we have to remember in this life is that people are not perfect; people make mistakes and this can happen. Colin, like me, made some mistakes and people could understand that."

Kris Meeke (drove Colin McRae's 2003 Citroen Xsara WRC)

"I was working at M-Sport as an engineer and I got talking to Colin and telling him about what I was doing. Not long after that, he offered me this chance to work with him. He allowed me to give up my day job and focus on the rallying. It was at this time that I went to live with Colin and Alison. This was when I got the know Hollie and Johnny – I would babysit them. These were special times and a special moment. I wouldn't be where I am now without Colin."



Ogier was a star attraction



Loeb returned to a Citroen



Meeke drove a Xsara WRC

WRC's finest ready to make RallyLegend event an annual pilgrimage

Kris Meeke, Thierry Neuville and Petter Solberg are all ready to sign up for next year's RallyLegend on the back of last weekend's event.

The format of Friday night stages, a Saturday lunchtime restart and a couple of runs through Sunday in some of the world's finest rally cars

has made them all want more.

"We did two stages in the dark on Friday night," said Meeke, "we had a chase car waiting at the end of the stages and then we had a van out at a small service point. We went out of service at 2330hrs on Friday night for more stages. That was fantastic.

After those two stages, I told Luis [Moya, RallyLegend ambassador] put me down for this again next year. I loved it."

Neuville wasn't even supposed to be driving. He called the organisers for some tickets and was offered the chance to drive. He's coming back to

compete next season. As is Solberg.

"Fantastic event," said the 2003 champion Solberg. "I really enjoyed being back in the Subaru, but this event is so good. Luis has done an incredible job to bring the people and the cars together – he deserves a lot of credit, but next year I have to

come back and do this race properly."

Some of the champions drove the cars they won their world championships in at a parade stage on Sunday. Current world championship leader Sebastien Ogier was reunited with the Volkswagen Polo R WRC he used to lift his 2016 title.

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ROUND 3 OF THE MOTORSPORT NEWS CIRCUIT CHAMPIONSHIP

RALLY NEWS

ROVANPERA, 17, READY FOR RALLY GB DEBUT

Young Finn samples Welsh stages in WRC2 machinery

By David Evans

Aged 17 years and 26 days, Kalle Rovanpera will make his World Rally Championship debut in a Ford Fiesta R5 at this week's Wales Rally GB.

The Finn's arrival in the WRC is one of the most talked about and eagerly anticipated in the history of the sport. Rovanpera tested his M-Sport-run Fiesta in Sweet Lamb on Monday and admits he's feeling apprehensive ahead of the event.

"There are some nerves," he said. "My dad told me this is a tricky event in Wales. Normally now he's not saying so much, just coming to the races with me, but this time he told me the grip

and the weather can be tough – I saw this from the previous years, of course."

Asked what he thought would be a good result, Rovanpera offered a candid response, saying: "First place! But I have to be realistic and a good rally for me would be on the podium, but with all of the WRC2 drivers coming, I think somewhere in the top five would also be good."

Rovanpera will face fierce competition from regulars, including this year's WRC2 champion Pontus Tidemand in a factory Skoda Fabia R5.

Rovanpera will have to go some to beat his father's debut on the 1997 RAC Rally. A 31-year-old Harri finished ninth overall and won Formula 2 in a factory SEAT

Ibiza, beating Renault driver Robbie Head by 15 minutes.

Rovanpera Sr told *MN*: "I always liked that rally in Britain. When the car was working, it was a really nice one. But I tell Kalle that something always happens on this rally. It's foggy, dark, wet and then very wet! Look at Friday, all day with no service and then Saturday in the night. It's tough and long and difficult and, like every rally, every result is waiting at the finish."

Harri admitted the Rovanpera family was relaxed and ready.

"Kalle is OK and I am too," he said. "There are no dramas and anyway, I can't do anything to help him now – I have to sit in the service park and drink coffee!"



Rovanpera will face his biggest career test so far

Bumper broadcasts for Wales action

British rally fans will be treated to unrivalled television coverage of this week's Wales Rally GB.

Channel 5, BT Sport, Welsh station S4C and Red Bull TV will combine to produce close to 50 hours of coverage. Channel 5 will screen a nightly highlights show (Saturday 0005hrs; Sunday 0120hrs and midnight) along with the 90-minute powerstage.

BT Sport screens both runs of the Brenig stage live on Sunday, with Red Bull TV's Saturday lunchtime live slot focused on SS12 Gartheiniog 2.

Former Rally GB winning co-driver Nicky Grist will join presenter Mike Chen.

S4C's English-subtitled *Rallio* show can be found on Thursday 2200hrs; Friday 2025hrs; Saturday 2135hrs; Sunday 2030hrs and Monday 1830hrs.

Cave: Wales Rally GB is 'make or break'

Tom Cave won't be satisfied with anything other than a WRC2 win when he returns to a Ford Fiesta R5 for Wales Rally GB this week.

The Welshman has returned to a Fiesta R5 after failing to agree terms to run the Hyundai he used to clinch a class podium on Rally Finland in July. With the car sorted, Cave is now fully focused on landing a result on an event he admits is "pretty much make or break".

The 25-year-old told *Motorsport News*: "I had a good run in Finland using a car [the i20] that I think everybody knows isn't the most competitive in its category and we managed to get a podium. I think we're expected to produce a good result in GB, which I know we can."

Cave said his knowledge of his



Cave will be back in a Ford Fiesta after Finnish Hyundai outing

native stages stands him in good stead for the October 26-29 event.

"I was in Hafren, Myherin and Sweet Lamb on the Mid-Wales [Stages]," he said, "then I won the Plains Rally, which uses Dyfi and Gartheiniog and I did the Cambrian with Alwen, Brenig and Clocaenog. I've got to put the pace down. I'm not going to build this thing up, but I know my capabilities and we've seen that in the BRC; I won every gravel stage I competed on in the Hyundai and people are expecting that

form to continue into Rally GB."

Cave has competed on his home round of the WRC seven times previously, with his best result being his debut class win in 2008.

"I guess the driver you have to look out for is Pontus [Tidemand, in WRC2]," said Cave, "and Gus [Greensmith] is going well this year, but do I fear anybody? I've got to be honest and say no. Look at 2013 when Elfyn [Evans] did Rally GB in an R5 car for the first time, we beat him on five of six stages on Friday."



Rally Turkey will find out if it has WRC slot on Wednesday

Rally Turkey on the brink of WRC return

Rally Turkey will find out this week if it has done enough to seal a World Rally Championship return in 2018.

The Marmaris Rally Turkey event ran on Saturday and Sunday was observed by FIA and WRC Promoter officials. A decision is expected from the sporting and commercial sides today (Wednesday). President of

TOSFED, the Turkish governing body, Serkan Yazici wouldn't be drawn on his country's chances of a first return to the WRC since 2010. "My father says without finishing a job it is not finished. This race is a good beginning for our international level of racing. The drivers say it was a big pleasure to drive the stages. We hope WRC will come here."

GROUP RALLYING EDITOR

DAVID EVANS

"How will the story pan out this weekend?"



Sebastien Ogier is the delivery man. When VW needed a title bringing home, the Frenchman won the rally. That's what happened for the last four years. How Cumbria would like more of the same this week in Wales.

And how M-Sport has earned it. It'd be hard to imagine a more popular result, or a more deserving one. But that's enough of that. Let's reconvene next week and see what Sunday brought.

As for Ogier's title hopes, the omens don't look too bad either. In the last four years, nobody but Ogier has even had a sniff of the lead of Britain's round of the WRC. Before Seb, Jari-Matti Latvala was the last man to lead GB. And that was September '12.

Ogier is in the best position on the road – certainly on the first loop of Myherin, Sweet Lamb and Hafren. He'll go hard and then look to control things thereafter. Don't forget, however, once the classification order's reversed for days two and three, the rally leader will be in the worst place of the priority drivers on Saturday and Sunday.

Ogier's plan for the rest of this week will have options and outcomes. The plan for Ott Tanak and Thierry Neuville is straightforward: they need to win if they want to take the title to the wire down under.

As if that's not enough, there's the British and Irish angle with Kris Meeke, Elfyn Evans and Craig Breen all well up for a fight at – or near – home. More spice? Try Hayden Paddon's return to the Hyundai team. The Kiwi would love to put one over on his new team-mate Andreas Mikkelsen.

Still not enough? OK, let's look at Toyota and the news that this is the end of the road for Juho in a Yaris. Hanninen is strong and quick on gravel and the thought of him looking to go out on a high is a fascinating and potentially very entertaining one.

And what a stage rally chiefs Ben Taylor and Andrew Kellitt have set us: a service-less Friday and into the night on Saturday. Classic. Thank you.

But now, back to another topic which has raged this week: Tanak and Toyota. Despite our story (September 27) with him insisting M-Sport remained an option, I can think of millions of reasons why Ott would want the move to Puuppola.

Tommi Makinen is going to have his work cut out keeping Jari-Matti Latvala, Esapekka Lappi and Tanak on the same page when it comes to any manufacturer title intentions Toyota might have.

There's always a sadness when a driver departs, and that's true for Tanak and M-Sport. This partnership has known some highs and lows... from a maiden win in Italy to the bottom of a lake in Mexico. Good luck Tanak.

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RALLY NEWS

IN BRIEF

R2 class for BTRDA

The BTRDA will have a cup specifically for R2-specification cars next year. The Rallye R2 Cup has been set up "in recognition of the increasing number of R2 cars" according to a club statement. Previously the cars ran in the B10 class, of which there were five cars in total last year. A Rally First two-litre class has also been created. The championships will count six scores from eight events in total.

MN Knockhill entry

Entries for the Knockhill Stages Rally (December 3), joining the Motorsport News Circuit Rally Championship for the first time in 2017-18, are now open via the championship website msnrallychamp.co.uk. The second round, the Cadwell Stages Rally, has six reserves after filling its entry.

Swift new round for '18

The Suzuki Swift Shining Stars series will take Wales Rally GB as one of its scoring rounds after dropping the Pokerstars Rally on the Isle of Man. The Pokerstars has garnered a strong take-up this year and the Swifts struggled to get an entry. Zak Hughes, Jonathan Hodgson and Martin Thayne are all entered for Rally GB.

MSA co-drivers revealed

The Motor Sports Association has revealed the navigators that will form part of its co-driver development programme led by Nicky Grist and Paul Spooner. Aaron Johnston (22) and Keaton Williams (22) remain from last year and will be joined by Peredur Davies (24), Jon Hawkins (25), Tom Murphy (19), Chris Sharpe-Simkiss (23), Harry Thomas (21), Osian Wyn (22) and Sinclair Young (26).

Robinson in rally return

GwynneSpeed Challenge co-ordinator Holly Robinson made a return to rally driving in the series after 11-years out. Robinson was co-driven by younger brother Charlie on the Peter Lloyd Stages and drove the championship's Max-spec car. After struggling with rear-end grip early on, the duo set a top-two class time before propshaft damage ended their day. The series is still to visit the Wydean Rally in November and Rockingham in December.

Tejpar and Cadets set for continued battle

Nabila Tejpar will join two fellow crews from the British Rally Championship's Cadet Class in making their debuts on Wales Rally GB.

Tejpar and co-driver Richard Bliss will be joined by fellow Ford Fiesta R2 duo Alex Waterman and Harry Thomas, and James McDiarmid and Max Haines-Messenger in the Harper Adams University Fiesta R2T National.

"Once the [pre-event] test was finished I was happy and the set-up of the car is good," said Tejpar. "It's given me confidence going into next week."

"There's a lot of mileage, so I want to get through and gain the experience from completing the event, which will be the longest I've done."

Another driver from the class in the BRC this year, Tom Williams – who finished second overall – will step up to an up-to-date Fiesta R2T for the event, a quicker variant that the R2 and National eligible for the Cadet class.



Tejpar is ready for Rally GB assault

CLOSED-ROAD RALLY IN ESSEX

First event to take advantage of new UK legislation is planned



Chelmsford Motor Club event will be based around Tendring



CMC organises Brands Hatch event

By Jack Benyon

The first event to take advantage of the UK's new closed-roads legislation will be a 45-mile rally in south east England, run by the Chelmsford Motor Club.

A change in the Road Traffic Act back in April means that events no longer need to go through expensive and time-consuming legislation to obtain a closed-road stage permit. The right to

hand out closed-road stage permits now lies with the Motor Sports Association – the body responsible for governing motorsport in the UK. The relevant local highways authority then has to issue a 'Motor Race Order', which has also been applied for.

The CMC event – which is yet to be named – will be based in Clacton-on-Sea, near Colchester, and will run stages in the Tendring Peninsula on April 22.

"It's roughly 45 stage miles, three

loops of five stages, 15 stages in all," said event director Tony Clements. "For the first running we've not gone for as many miles as we may have wanted to, we didn't want to be over ambitious. We would like to get the event established in the area with a view to developing it further in the future."

Clements confirmed that the rally wouldn't be a round of any championship while the club looks to establish the new event.

The club already runs two rallies, the Brands Hatch Winter Stages in January and the Wethersfield Stages at a Wethersfield Ministry of Defence facility in August.

It has worked closely with the MSA and made changes to the route on its recommendations. The latter has surveyed the route of the rally and assigned an MSA Safety Delegate, of which one is required for all stage rallies in the UK.

Devine to Rally GB in Fiesta R5

In a dramatic U-turn, Prestone Motorsport News Junior British Rally champion Callum Devine will enter Wales Rally GB in a Ford Fiesta R5 bought from China.

Irishman Devine had intended to pull his entry, originally in his title-winning Opel Adam R2, but a late purchase of the 2014-spec car means he will contest the event.

The car doesn't have either the Evo1 or Evo2 engine upgrades from M-Sport, and he has no expectation of a result on his World Rally Championship debut. "I just want to get the feeling in the car and experience in the R5 and in four-wheel-drive," said Devine. "It's more

experience on gravel as well as I've only done that in the BRC this year. I usually go in optimistic, but this time I just want to get around and learn the car."

Devine isn't sure which championship he will use the car in next year, but is aware that GB is a round of the British Rally Championship next year.

"We weren't even certain about doing GB last week!" added Devine. "If it's part of the BRC next year and we do the BRC, then this will be an advantage to get the mileage."

Junior BRC champ in U-turn



O'Riordan is back to rallying

O'Riordan to return on Fastnet Stages Rally

After an absence of almost a year and half, four-time event winner Daragh O'Riordan is set to return to rallying on this weekend's Fastnet Stages Rally, the final round of the Irish National Rally Championship.

O'Riordan – who has won the Cork '20' four times – hasn't competed since he crashed his Ford Fiesta RS WRC out of fourth place on last year's Cavan Rally.

Over the last few months his Fiesta has been converted to right-

hand drive by Tom Gahan, the man that runs Sam Moffett, who has already been crowned national champion. "This is the longest time I have been out of rallying in about 17 years and I've missed it," said O'Riordan. "I'm looking forward to getting back out again."

Daniel Cronin, brother of 2017 British Rally champion Keith, has also entered what will be his third event in a Fiesta R5 and leads away the County Cork event.

Easter Stages Rally joins Irish Tarmac series

The Easter Stages Rally is set to make a comeback next year and will form part of the Irish Tarmac Rally Championship.

The event will be run and organised by the Ulster Automobile Club, filling the void left by the Circuit of Ireland Rally, which is not taking place as the funding usually offered by the Northern Irish government can't be confirmed while it isn't sitting.

The Circuit of Ireland is run and organised by Bobby Willis and the Circuit of Ireland Management Team, meaning the Easter Stages event has no relation to the Circuit of Ireland other than it will use the same

road-closing order which belongs to the UAC.

It is scheduled to be run over April 6/7 and will become the third round of the ITRC. The exact route and venue for the service area are yet to be confirmed. Stages in County Antrim are being evaluated.

UAC spokesperson Chris Beck said: "Event planning started in July when the Circuit of Ireland Management Team informed the Ulster Automobile Club they would not be in a position to promote the Circuit of Ireland Rally next season."

"The Ulster Automobile Club felt, as there was again no Circuit



Irish Tarmac to Easter event

of Ireland Rally, that they should step in and fill the void."

The Easter Stages was due to run last in 2013, but heavy snow before the event forced its cancellation.

The rest of the ITRC calendar is yet to be confirmed.

RALLY REPORTS

Photo: Chicane Media, Lorcan Barron

Grandson beats grandad to Pembrey victory

Peter Lloyd Rallying Stages

By Simon Gronow

Organiser: Camarthen MC **When:** October 22 **Where:** Pembrey Circuit, Camarthenshire **Championships:** Welsh Tarmacadam Championship; Junior 1000 Rally Championship; Formula 1000 Stage Rally Challenge; Gwynnespeed Rally Challenge; FMP Rally Challenge **Starters:** 70 **Stages:** 5.

Following the exclusion of early leader Bob Fowden on the third of five stages, there was a family battle for outright honours on the Peter Lloyd Rallying Stages. At this point, it was Phil Turner/Simon Anthony who held two-second advantage over Thomas Cooper/Derrick Walters, both crews driving Mitsubishi Lancer E9s.

However, over the last two stages, a better tyre choice enabled Cooper to overhaul his grandfather Turner and take his second overall win, Turner joking that "he'll have to buy his own tyres from now on!"

Behind the battling Mitsubishis, Ceri Davies/Eifion Page had a good run in their Subaru Impreza, just holding off the Nissan Sunny of leading two-wheel-drive crew Carl O'Grady/Ellie Williams in the slippery conditions to secure the final podium position.

Dan Evans/Jessica Hockly took a fine eighth overall in their class-winning Suzuki Swift, as William Mains lost time with a broken driveshaft in his Vauxhall Nova.

Mat Wheeler increased his chances of winning the Gwynnespeed Rally Challenge title with two rounds left after winning the series for Citroen C2s at Pembrey.

With the Junior 1000 Rally Championship already wrapped up in Ewan Tindall's favour, Tom Llewellyn/Paul Morgan took their Peugeot 107 to victory, with the hard-charging Elliot Payne/Simon Rogers just six seconds behind in their Citroen C1. Llewellyn made the long trip from Croft, where he was competing in a rallycross event, to Pembrey for the Sunday Junior event.

Results
1 Thomas Cooper/Derrick Walters (Mitsubishi Lancer E9) 1h00m16s
2 Phil Turner/Simon Anthony (Lancer E9) +27s; 3 Ceri Davies/Eifion Page (Subaru Impreza); 4 Carl O'Grady/Ellie Williams (Nissan Sunny F2); 5 Carl Davies/Evan Davies (BMW 3 Series); 6 Chris Simmons/Andy Moss (Darran T90 GTR); 7 Darren James/Dafydd Sion Lloyd (Lancer E9); 8 Dan Evans/Jessica Hockly (Suzuki Swift); 9 Terry Clarke/Ronnie Roughead (Ford Escort Mk2); 10 William Mains/Aled Edwards (Vauxhall Nova).
Class winners: Stuart Andrews/Ryan Jones (Nissan Micra); Evans/Hockley; Aaron Jones/Owen Evans (Honda Civic Type R); Leighton Smith/Mark Powell (Peugeot 205 GTI); O'Grady/Williams; Davies/Davies; Turner/Anthony; Sean Jones/Jac Sheen (Ford Escort Mk2); Tom Llewellyn/Paul Morgan (Peugeot 107).

DAMIAN COLE DOMINATES OVER OTTERBURN



Cole is on form in Ford Fiesta this year

Cheviot Stages Rally

By John Fife

Organiser: Whickham & District MC/Hadrian Motor Sports Club **When:** October 22 **Where:** Otterburn Training Area, Lincolnshire **Championships:** North of England Tarmacadam Rally Championship; HRCR 'Old Stager' Asphalt Rally Championship; Mini Cup and Junior Mini Cup; HRCR Northern Historic Asphalt Championship; ANCC Stage Rally Championship; Border Rally Challenge **Starters:** 61 **Stages:** 14.

Damian Cole and Den Golding staged a dominant display in their Ford Fiesta RS WRC on Sunday's Cheviot Stages Rally.

They finished almost a minute clear of the Subaru Impreza of David Hardie and John McCulloch, who just held off the Proton Satria of David Tinn and Giles Dykes by 11 seconds at the end of 60 miles of tortuous Tarmac on the MoD's Otterburn Ranges.

Although mainly dry, the stages were 'green' and slippery for the first runs, but when the sun poked out from behind the grey overcast skies in the afternoon, conditions dried out and speeds duly rose.

There was no catching the man at the

front, although after four stages it initially looked as though Cole was holding seventh place overall.

"It's alright," said Cole. "They gave us a wrong minute. They know about it." And so it proved, shortly afterwards, he was reinstated to the top of the leaderboard, and there he stayed.

Over the first four stages, John Stone had been holding second place ahead of Hardie, but in the fifth test, the Fiesta S2500 Millington showed signs of overheating and Stone pulled over and retired. Hardie inherited the spot ahead of Tinn.

Gordon Morrison's fourth place in his Subaru was mighty impressive.

The Subarus of Adrian Spencer and Peter Stephenson rounded off the top six, although Spencer was lucky emerging from the second loop of stages with a front nearside wing missing. His explanation? "Somebody left a huge bale in a stupid place!" He was of course referring to a chicane marker.

Tristan Pye retired his Subaru when the car lost drive and Bob Grant was out with a gearbox malfunction in his Hyundai WRC.

Top two-wheel-drive runner was Mark Jasper in seventh overall in his Escort Mk2, although a puzzling intermittent misfire over the last four stages was giving cause for concern. Greg McKnight was initially leading Jasper in his Mk2, but started to drop back with serious brake fade and then had to retire when the rear axle link bar mountings started to break up.

Stevie Irwin had to content himself with a class win in his 1600cc Vauxhall Nova after losing out on the North of England Tarmacadam Championship title. He and Rob Snowden started the day's event one point apart. All Snowden had to do in his Escort Mk2 was finish ahead of Irwin and the title was his. Even so, it was still close, Snowden finished 12th and Irwin 13th. Neil Prior clinched third place in his Subaru finishing 19th.

In the 1400cc class, Stephen Bethwaite

took the win by half-a-minute from James Thomson. Bethwaite was fortunate to finish when the tie-bar bearings on the front brackets broke making the Vauxhall Nova snatch at inopportune moments, but still managed to keep out of the clutches of the Thomson Nova.

There was a whole horde of Minis taking part in the Mini Sport Cup, with Ray Cunningham and Jared Gill in their Austin Cooper S clinching the title with a storming 17th place overall on their first ever visit to Otterburn.

Results
1 Damian Cole/Den Golding (Ford Fiesta WRC) 55m 07s;
2 David Hardie/John McCulloch (Subaru Impreza) +59s;
3 David Tinn/Giles Dykes (Proton Satria); 4 Gordon Morrison/Calum MacPherson (Subaru Impreza); 5 Adrian Spencer/Matt Daniels (Subaru Impreza WRC S11); 6 Peter M Stephenson/Patrick Walsh (Subaru P2000 WRC); 7 Mark Jasper/Don Whyatt (Ford Escort Mk2); 8 Ross Brusby/Sam Collis (Ford Escort Mk2); 9 Liam Harkness/Harry Marchbank (Subaru Impreza); 10 Murray Grierson/Mark Grierson (Subaru Impreza)
Class winners: Stephen Bethwaite/Ann Forster (Vauxhall Nova); Stevie Irwin/Ian Middleton (Nova); Brusby/Collis; Jasper/Whyatt; Cole/Golding; Ray Cunningham/Jared Gill (Austin Cooper S); Clive King/Anton Bird (Austin Cooper S); Nigel Hart/Lyndon Moulton (Mini Cooper).

Photo: Songasport



Birchall earned second win of '17

Birchall wins again as Gould takes another Cross Country crown

British Cross Country Championship: Walters Arena

By Gary Simpson

Organiser: Marches 4x4 **When:** October 21/22 **Where:** Glyn Neath, Port Talbot **Championships:** BCCC; Freeland Challenge **Starters:** 29 **Runs:** 11.

Justin Birchall won his second British Cross Country Championship round of the season as Martin Gould retained his championship title with third place.

Birchall made a flying start in horrendous weather conditions,

setting fastest time on run one by 18 seconds over Andy Degiulio. Despite having to change his gearbox, Birchall continued to head the leaderboard throughout day one with Degiulio in second and Gould, who needed to finish in the top nine to guarantee the title, in third.

The top three positions remained the same on day two although Birchall suffered further dramas when a propshaft broke early on leaving his car with front-wheel drive only.

"We've had a tough season but

it's good to end with a win," said Birchall. "Fortunately we had enough time in hand to retain the lead when the prop snapped. I love the Walters' Arena course, I thoroughly enjoyed the event."

Results
1 Justin Birchall/Jonny Koonja (Lofthouse Freeland) 1h44m02s; 2 Andy Degiulio/Paul Jones (Milner R5) +2m30s; 3 Martin Gould/Simon Kerfoot (Buxton 4x4 Rivet); 4 Richard Wynne-Williams/Matt Lowe (Lofthouse Freeland); 5 Mark Jacques/Adam Nicholson (Lofthouse Freeland); 6 Rob Bool/Aaron Burch (AT Challenger); 7 Paul Myers/Martin Myers (Land Rover Tornado); 8 Steve Smith/John Griffith (JRG Clio V8); 9 Ian Bartlett/Gary Bartlett (3M Challenger); no other finishers.

Enda O'Brien is best of the Ford Escorts

GSMC Mini Stages Rally

By Martin Walsh

Organiser: Garda Siachana MC **When:** October 22 **Where:** Baltinglass, County Wicklow **Championships:** Midlands East Rally Championship **Starters:** 93 **Stages:** 6.

Enda O'Brien led a trio of Millington-engined Ford Escort Mk2s home on the GSMC Mini Stages Rally in County Wicklow.

The winner finished 18 seconds ahead of Limerick's Ed O'Callaghan with Carlow's David Condell 51 seconds further adrift.

Barry Meade crashed out on the opening stage, taking a wheel off his Escort and broke a steering arm while John Lynch (Darrian) retired with overheating issues. O'Brien eked out a one-second lead over O'Callaghan on the opener – a margin that became nine seconds after the second stage.

On SS3, O'Callaghan had a spin but still trimmed the gap to four seconds. But that was as close as it got as O'Brien pulled away. Condell was a distant third followed by the Escort trio of



O'Brien headed a trio of Ford Escorts to win Baltinglass event

John Doogan, Keith White and Welsh driver Wayne Evans.

Brian O'Keefe (Mitsubishi Lancer E9) won the Group N category and Michael Cunniffe (Peugeot 106) netted the Junior class.

Results
1 Enda O'Brien/John Butler (Ford Escort Mk2) 44m.59s;
2 Ed O'Callaghan/Raymond Scott (Escort Mk2) +18s; 3 David Condell/Eugene McGrath (Escort Mk2); 4 John Doogan/Ciaran Marrow (Escort Mk2); 5 Keith White/Damien McCabe (Escort Mk1); 6 Wayne Evans/John Smithwick (Escort); 7 Fintan McGrady/Cornac

McGrady (Escort Mk2); 8 Rodney White/Sam McMullan (Talbot Sunbeam); 9 Jason Roche/Noel Coogan (Escort); 10 Alan Anderson/Thomas Wedlock (Ford Fiesta).
Class winners: Barry Hennessy/Stephen Scallan (Honda Civic); Thomas O'Rourke/John McGrath (Civic); Emmett Lyons/Tommy Cuddihy (Honda Integra); Brian O'Keefe/Sean Hayde (Mitsubishi Lancer E9); Francis Kelly/Charlotte Egan (Vauxhall Nova); Martin O'Dowd/Shane O'Dowd (Talbot Sunbeam); Michael Hamilton/Dylan Donoghue (Civic); James McCarville/Emmett Sherry (Escort Mk2); Mikey Walsh/Niall Keane (Escort G3); Doogan/Marrow; White/McCabe; JF Showelin/Emmett Brosnan (Subaru Impreza WRC); Michael Cunniffe/Cian Irwin (Peugeot 106); Ross Forde/Sean Hassett (Ford Sierra Casworth); Atcheson/Wedlock.

British ace on the verge of historic fourth title after American glory



Fourth title seems a formality for Merc man

HAMILTON'S AMERICAN DREAM



Hamilton battled to his ninth 2017 win



Hamilton was chasing Vettel's Ferrari for five laps after opening corner



Verstappen, from 16th, fought back for third. Then he was penalised...



Carlos Sainz was competitive on his debut outing with new team Renault

The dazzling pre-race build-up to the 2017 US GP revealed much about how Formula 1's new owners intend to build the sport as a 'global racing spectacle'. But the race itself, though entertaining, told the same old story: Mercedes domination; Ferrari capitulation.

Qualifying

"It felt for a moment like I was dancing with the wind," said Lewis Hamilton as he described the intensely intimate sensation of caressing his W08 Mercedes downhill from the Turn 1 peak of the Circuit of the Americas through those thrillingly fast Turns 2 to 9.

Then he caught himself, momentarily embarrassed at how easily he'd reached for lyricism in trying to explain quite how it is that he and his car have attained a peak of performance beyond the reach of any rival. A coy smile and a nervous laugh: this was the kid from Stevenage still unable to reconcile his most unlikely upbringing with an ever-growing stature as a global sporting icon.

"The tyres," he continued, "they feel like living tissue. That's why we have to treat them so carefully to bring out their performance and maintain it."

There was no artifice to Hamilton's declamation of how it had felt to set his 72nd career pole position; this was sportsman-as-artist expressing himself in as pure a manner as he knew, in a moment of joyous exhilaration. Just as there is a beautiful fluency to a Hamilton pole lap, so, too, is he effortlessly articulate when describing what he experiences while driving... so long as he is happy.

And here, perhaps, lies a key to understanding why it is that Hamilton seems currently so untouchable, why he has taken this championship by the

throat since the summer break and almost strangled the life out of it; why records set by legends such as Senna and Schumacher all suddenly seem within his grasp.

"He's enjoying himself like never before," observed Damon Hill. "He doesn't have a team-mate who needles him and everything's in place for him at Mercedes. He deserves a great deal of credit for being able to create that situation around himself and it's taken his performance to a new level."

Certainly, no-one else was going to get a look-in this Austin weekend, if Hamilton had anything to do with it. He set a new outright lap record during Q2 of 1m33.560s, then laid down what would be pole time with his first flier in Q3 – a 1m33.108s on Pirelli ultrasofts. He spoke of a "de-rate" towards the end of the lap, prompting suspicions that he might have been able to crack the 1m33s. But no matter, P1 was his and a platform secured for what could be a title-clinching race (were Lewis to win, with Vettel no higher than sixth).

But Sebastian Vettel, the man who led the championship from Melbourne right through to Spa, wasn't going down without a fight, no matter how forlorn his title hopes looked ahead of the Austin weekend. He'd been not-quite-there during practice and qualifying, edged at different times by Max Verstappen, then team-mate Kimi Raikkonen. When it mattered though, on his all-or-nothing final Q3 run, he found half a second when both Mercedes were unable to improve their times, to force himself onto the front row, ahead of Valtteri Bottas.

Vettel, less poetic than Hamilton in his description of his best lap, though no less expressive, said he'd been unable to find an early rhythm around COTA's sinuous curves – particularly with the transition from swoopy sector one to the more 'pointy' sector two, "but finally I got it right".

And he was optimistic for his Sunday prospects: "Our race pace is really good," he said. "In qualify all year we have been a little bit behind, so let's see what happens tomorrow. We've actually had the car for the last four races but it just hasn't happened for us. The task ahead is simple: we have to win all the races!"

His do-or-die effort was all the more commendable for having been set in an SF70H that had undergone an overnight chassis change. He'd described the previous one as "feeling like a Gummy Bear".

Behind these two, times were sliver-close from P3 to P6. Bottas – not in Hamilton's league around COTA – bagged third with a 1m33.568s lap; Ricciardo was P4 with 1m33.577s; Raikkonen in P5 set an identical time, then came Verstappen with 1m33.658s – though Max was engine-penalty-demoted to P16. This was a meagre return for a driver who's been scalpel-sharp since Singapore and he described his qualifying performance as "one of his worst".

Both Force Indias again made Q3 – Ocon (sixth after Verstappen's demotion) ahead of Perez (ninth) – while Fernando Alonso stormed his McLaren Honda to ninth-fastest time (a P8 start), declaring "there's not much more to come" after a typically balls-out effort.

And there was a quietly stellar performance from Carlos Sainz in his first Renault weekend. He'd start seventh in a car he'd not driven before Friday first practice, to validate immediately Renault's decision to fast-track his switch from Toro Rosso in place of Jolyon Palmer.

"For the rest of this season," he said, "my job will be to adapt to the car, rather than adapt the car to me, so there will be a lot more to come." Encouraging for Renault and a sharpener for Nico Hulkenberg, who languished in 18th place after an engine-troubled practice that led to grid penalties.

ROUND

Photos: LAT



RACE FACTS

Results © 2017 Formula One Administration Ltd

USA GRAND PRIX

Circuit: Circuit of the Americas **Laps:** 56
Race distance: 191.643 miles **Lap:** 3.422 miles
Lap record: 1m37.766s (Sebastian Vettel, 2017)
2016 winner: Lewis Hamilton (Mercedes)

Date: October 22
Weather: sunny, dry

TYRE CHOICE

Prime SOFT

Option SUPERSOFT

Option ULTRASOFT

RESULTS

FIA Formula 1 World Championship, round 17/20

POS	DRIVERS	NAT	CAR-ENGINE	TIME
1	Lewis Hamilton	GBR	Mercedes	1h33m50.991s
2	Sebastian Vettel	GER	Ferrari	+10.143s
3	Kimi Raikkonen	FIN	Ferrari	+15.779s
4	Max Verstappen	NED	Red Bull-Renault	+16.768s
5	Valtteri Bottas	FIN	Mercedes	+34.967s
6	Esteban Ocon	FRA	Force India-Mercedes	+1m30.980s
7	Carlos Sainz	ESP	Renault	+1m32.944s
8	Sergio Perez	MEX	Force India-Mercedes	-1 lap
9	Felipe Massa	BRA	Williams-Mercedes	-1 lap
10	Daniil Kvyat	RUS	Toro Rosso-Renault	-1 lap
11	Lance Stroll	CAN	Williams-Mercedes	-1 lap
12	Stoffel Vandoorne	BEL	McLaren-Honda	-1 lap
13	Brendon Hartley	NZL	Toro Rosso-Renault	-1 lap
14	Romain Grosjean	FRA	Haas-Ferrari	-1 lap
15	Marcus Ericsson	SWE	Sauber-Ferrari	-1 lap
16	Kevin Magnussen	DEN	Haas-Ferrari	-1 lap
R	Fernando Alonso	ESP	McLaren-Honda	L24/engine
R	Daniel Ricciardo	AUS	Red Bull-Renault	L14/engine
R	Pascal Wehrlein	GER	Sauber-Ferrari	L5/accident
R	Nico Hulkenberg	GER	Renault	L3/oil pressure

Winner's average speed 122.515mph Lap leaders: Vettel 1-5; Hamilton 6-19; Raikkonen 20; Verstappen 21-22; Hamilton 23-56

FASTEST LAP SEBASTIAN VETTEL 1m37.766s ON LAP 51 (AVERAGE SPEED: 126.14mph)

QUALIFYING

POS	DRIVER	TIME	POS	DRIVER	TIME
1	Hamilton	1m33.108s	11	Kvyat	1m35.529s
2	Vettel	1m33.347s	12	Grosjean	1m35.870s
3	Bottas	1m33.568s	13	Ericsson	1m36.842s
4	Ricciardo	1m33.577s	14	Wehrlein	1m37.179s
5	Raikkonen	1m33.577s	15	Stroll	1m36.868s*
6	Ocon	1m34.647s	16	Verstappen	1m33.658s**
7	Sainz	1m34.852s	17	Magnussen	1m37.394s*
8	Alonso	1m35.007s	18	Hulkenberg	No time***
9	Perez	1m35.148s	19	Hartley	1m36.889s****
10	Massa	1m35.155s	20	Vandoorne	1m35.641s*****

*3-place penalty for impeding another driver **15-place penalty for using additional power unit elements ***20-place penalty for using additional power unit elements ****25-place penalty for using additional power unit elements *****30-place penalty for using additional power unit elements



CHAMPIONSHIP POINTS

DRIVERS			CONSTRUCTORS		
POS	DRIVER	PTS	POS	CONSTRUCTOR	PTS
1	Lewis Hamilton	331	1	Mercedes	575
2	Sebastian Vettel	265	2	Ferrari	428
3	Valtteri Bottas	244	3	Red Bull-TAG Heuer	315
4	Daniel Ricciardo	192	4	Force India-Mercedes	159
5	Kimi Raikkonen	163	5	Williams-Mercedes	68
6	Max Verstappen	123	6	Toro Rosso-Renault	53
7	Sergio Perez	86	7	Renault	48
8	Esteban Ocon	73	8	Haas-Ferrari	43
9	Carlos Sainz	54	9	McLaren-Honda	23
10	Felipe Massa	36	10	Sauber-Ferrari	5

NEXT RACE: MEXICAN GP, OCTOBER 29

it to a peak of excellence that's allowing Hamilton always to dance with its music.

Not that Ferrari is a spent force, nor that Vettel is anything but a gallant combatant: his bold start from P2 at COTA showed pure racing spirit – and millimetre-perfect skill – that allowed him to pass Hamilton into the first corner and lead for six laps before succumbing to the inevitable Hamilton DRS pass at T11.

That was it as far as the win was concerned, though the supremely fit-for-purpose layout of the Circuit of the Americas helped ensure there was spice aplenty to entertain a throbbing race day crowd. True, this one didn't live up to the fever-pitch levels of anticipation built by compere extraordinaire, Michael 'Let's Get Ready to Rumble' Buffer, but there was no shortage of action.

Both Red Bulls could be thanked in part for that, at opposite ends of the race. In the early laps, Daniel Ricciardo's harassing of Bottas through Turns 1 to 11 allowed both to flaunt exceptional wheel-to-wheel race craft, even if Danny Ricc's ultrasofts were cooked after 15 laps. His power unit proved unequal to its driver's demands, too, and he cruised silently into retirement on lap 16, shortly after a stop for fresh ultras that allowed him to set what was then fastest lap. A likely podium gone.

But the cudgels were taken up by Verstappen who attacked the latter stages of the race like a man possessed. He'd risen in electrifying fashion from P16 to P4 – all attack and car control – to be right on the tail of Raikkonen on the final lap. Told by race engineer Gianpiero Lambiase he had "one chance" to pass Kimi, he set about doing just that through the left-hand swoops of Turns 16-18. Max, on fresher tyres, hugged a massively tighter inside line as Raikkonen cruised a wider arc, seemingly unaware of the Verstappen threat. Max was through with what seemed like one of the passes of the

season, but race stewards were having none of it: Verstappen was immediately slapped with a five-second penalty for passing with all four wheels off the track. Surely as measly a victory for pedantry over valour as there has ever been.

Carlos Sainz, on his Renault debut, was another to star. The bald facts of a P7 finish from a P7 start tell nothing of the energy that went into his race. His lap 34 move on Sergio Perez was a particular highlight. In a car he'd not driven before Friday's FP1 session, he lined up Perez out of T12, then proceeded to carve him up, inside and out, all the way through to T19, before finally making the move stick for T20. Perez tried to re-take the place into T1, but Sainz had it covered. Fifteen laps later he was lining up the Force India of Esteban Ocon, but Force India's young charger had enough in his tyres to resist the Sainz attack, having nurtured his rubber more carefully.

Sainz's six points, on a day when his perennially unlucky team-mate Nico Hulkenberg retired early with low oil pressure, lifted Renault to seventh in the constructors' table, edging the team past Haas. If both drivers can capitalise on the obvious pace of their R.S.17, then vaulting Williams – only 20 points ahead – for fifth in the constructors' championship looks entirely feasible.

Such hopes must, though, seem like distant trifles for the mighty winning machine that is AMG-Mercedes F1. Its position as the dominant constructor of the 'hybrid' F1 era was cemented in Austin, as a 35-point haul put it beyond the reach of Ferrari. Four consecutive makes' titles tell their own story of excellence: it's a feat that has only previously been achieved by Red Bull (with Vettel) and Ferrari (with Schumacher).

Even dauntless Seb, eased through to his eventual P2 by a compliant team-mate, was forced to admit: "We simply didn't have the pace."

RACING NEWS

Photos: LAT

F1 ROUND-UP

Live streaming

F1 races are set to be streamed live in the 2018 season, while extra data and behind-the-scenes footage are also likely to feature according to F1 commercial chief Sean Bratches. "We have an obligation to our fans, quite candidly, to ensure that they are able to access our content in any means they want," he said. "We would be derelict if we pursued a path for anything other than that."

Halo, goodbye

F1 bosses are considering renaming the Halo device ahead of its introduction next year. It is understood that it will be discussed at the next Strategy Group Meeting next month. A senior F1 source said: "We're supposed to be a gladiatorial sport, and then we give the device an angelic name. We have various options, but it could be something like 'safety cage'..."

Williams' choice

Williams wants to have its driver line-up finalised by the Brazilian GP next month, with several drivers still under consideration. Robert Kubica tested again with the team at the Hungaroring last week, as did Paul di Resta. Felipe Massa is also still fighting for the seat. "Our consideration remains completely open," said Paddy Lowe. "Robert is on a journey to find out whether he can make an F1 return and drive to a level he did before. We're exploring that with him."

Hartley in Mexico

Brendon Hartley will continue with the Scuderia Toro Rosso Formula 1 team for Mexico this weekend, as Russian driver Daniil Kvyat has again been dropped. Hartley will be joined by Pierre Gasly in the Renault-powered car. Hartley's last minute call-up yielded a 13th place finish in what was his F1 debut in Austin, and his first single-seater race since 2012.

'Remarkable' Sainz

Carlos Sainz Jr's Formula 1 debut for Renault at the United States Grand Prix was "remarkable", according to the team's managing director Cyril Abiteboul. Sainz joined Renault for the final four races of the season from Toro Rosso, replacing Jolyon Palmer, and beat team-mate Nico Hulkenberg to qualify eighth. He finished the race seventh, Hulkenberg retired. "He did a remarkable job," said Abiteboul. "It's not easy to change teams in the middle of a season."



Verstappen has hit out at the US GP race stewards

By Stephen Lickorish

Mercedes boss Niki Lauda has slammed the five-second penalty given to Max Verstappen for leaving the track when passing Kimi Raikkonen in the US Grand Prix as the worst decision he has ever seen.

Verstappen was rapidly closing on Raikkonen in the latter stages of the race with the Ferrari struggling on significantly older tyres. On the final lap, Verstappen managed to squeeze ahead of Raikkonen on the inside of the Turn 17 right-hander. But the stewards ruled that he had all four wheels off the track and slapped him with a five-second penalty that dropped him to fourth.

Lauda said: "This decision is the worst I've ever seen, he did nothing wrong. We're racing drivers, we're not on a normal road, it's ridiculous to destroy the sport with this kind of decision."

"Next strategy meeting we need to bring it up to the agenda and start it all over again, because we cannot do that, it's going too far. There was nothing to interfere with, it was normal overtaking."

Red Bull team boss Christian Horner agreed that the rules regarding track limits need to be looked at, citing the inconsistency of stewards applying penalties over the weekend.

"It [racing] is what fans want to see," said Horner. "If you don't want cars to go there, put a bigger kerb or put some gravel, or something else there."

"I think what is annoying is the lack of consistency. Where do you draw the line? For fans, for casual viewers, it needs to be clear."

Verstappen said: "We had a really great race, but with those stupid decisions you really kill the sport. It's one idiot steward up there which always makes decisions against me."

"At the end of the day everybody is running wide everywhere, there are no track limits."

"It's the same with [Valtteri] Bottas - I went for a move, and he continued outside the track; he came back, I really had to pass him, and nothing has been done against that while he definitely gained advantage."

"It's not good for the sport - they have to be really clear on the rules that it's not allowed."

VERSTAPPEN PENALTY CALL DRAWS CRITICISM

Lauda labels it "worst decision I've seen"



Max Verstappen was pinged for track limits

Warwick hands BRDC presidency over to Hopkirk

Derek Warwick has stepped down as president of the British Racing Drivers' Club to be replaced by Monte Carlo Rally winner Paddy Hopkirk.

Warwick had been president since 2011 and had been instrumental in trying to keep the British Grand Prix on the calendar.

The 63-year-old ex-F1 driver has also played a key role in developing the careers of young British drivers, including Renault junior Oliver Rowland.

Warwick has not only assisted the

winners of the McLaren Autosport BRDC award but also supported many of the finalists.

A BRDC statement said Warwick "received a standing ovation from members in recognition of everything he has done for the club" and that the 63-year-old has been "elected as a vice president".

Hopkirk, 84, first became a BRDC member in 1965. He will now oversee the BRDC's talks to save the BGP beyond 2019.

Derek Warwick has stepped down



Alonso has Daytona 24Hrs on his radar for next year

Fernando Alonso is eyeing a seat in next year's Daytona 24 Hours as he continues his push to race at Le Mans in the future.

Alonso said he was keen to race at Daytona, and he could find a seat through McLaren head Zak Brown, who co-owns the United Autosports sportscar team.

"The first priority was to finalise the F1 deal, and now that is done, I will look at other options too," said Alonso, who signed a new one-year deal with McLaren last week. "If I want to prepare for Le Mans maybe there are other possibilities to prepare a little bit better than I prepared for the Indy 500. It [Daytona] is definitely something that if it comes

up, I will try to exploit that opportunity."

Brown added: "If Fernando wants to do Daytona and we have a spare seat [at United Autosports], we will put his name on it happily. We've started joking about it, and we saw where our jokes can lead from where it got us last time [to the Indy deal]!"

● Max Verstappen also signed a new contract with Red Bull Racing during last week's US GP. The new deal keeps him at the team until the end of 2020 and comes amid interest from both Mercedes and Ferrari in the young Dutchman.

Alonso has new McLaren deal, and perhaps more



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Photos: LAT



Double points and
double distance

Simpson heads back to his roots

Double champion Matt Simpson will return to the BARC Intermarque field for the final rounds of the championship at Brands Hatch on November 4/5.

Simpson, who took back-to-back Intermarque crowns in 2013 and 2014, will be driving Malcolm Harding's Vauxhall Tigra.

"I was offered the car for fun by Malcolm, and I thought why not?" said Simpson. "Qualifying will be my first time in the car and I don't want to get in the way of the title protagonists."

Since then, the boss of Simpson Race Exhausts has moved on to the BTCC, and finished 24th in the standings in a Team Dynamics Honda Civic.

Ricky Hunn will run his new Mazda RX-8, while his VW Corrado will be handled by Simon Smith. Hunn's son, Jason, will drive the team's Peugeot. Former Hot Rod racer Ben Taylor, son of BTC Norlin boss Bert Taylor, will race a Vauxhall Tigra.

BTCC TO RUN FEATURE RACE

The British Touring Car Championship will feature a special one-off 60-mile double points race at Snetterton next season to highlight the 60th anniversary of the series.

Race three on the Snetterton 300 circuit, on July 29, will be contested over 20 laps, meaning the race could last for more than 40 minutes. The sporting regulations will be tweaked for that weekend. A separate qualifying session will be held for the showpiece, and none of the

cars will carry success ballast. For the race, all machines will be fitted with medium tyres.

Series director Alan Gow said: "As well, there will be a number of additional activities to celebrate our 60th anniversary throughout 2018 which will be revealed over the next few months. We believe this 60-mile race will add a further sporting twist to what will be a fantastic and memorable season."

Double champion Gordon Shedden said he was in favour

of the different format, but thought that series could have done more. "It's good idea to do something different. I love that it will be a pure race with no ballast," said Shedden. "However, it is going to be a struggle to get through the distance with a front-wheel-drive car: we are going to have to be careful with the tyres."

"I would love to have seen a pit stop race where you could change a couple of tyres, because that involves the team as well. Or how about a two-driver race?"

THE FASTEST NEWS ROUND-UP



After missing the United States Grand Prix with Toro Rosso to try and win the Super Formula crown, Pierre Gasly was scuppered as the two races were cancelled due to a typhoon over the Suzuka circuit. A pole position for one of the races could have given him the crown...

Kyle Larson fell out of contention for the NASCAR Cup Series at Kansas as perennial 2017 rival Martin Truex Jr won the race. Larson entered the event third in the points, but engine trouble for the Chip Ganassi Racing driver meant he plummeted to ninth. After the event, the top 12 drivers were reduced to eight that go through to the next round

Gasly had ghastly
luck at Suzuka



to compete for the championship, eliminating Larson... **G-Drive Racing's Memo Rojas and Leo Roussel clinched the European Le Mans Series title with fourth place in the season finale at the Algarve circuit. The race was won by Graff's James Allen, Richard Bradley and Gustavo Yacamán (ORECA 07), while G-Drive's title rivals, United**

Autosports' Filipe Albuquerque, Will Owen and Hugo de Sadeleer, finished second but needed to win... In the same race, United Autosports successfully defended its ELMS LMP3 crown, with American duo John Falb and Sean Rayhall taking the spoils. Team-mates Wayne Boyd/Christian England/Mark Patterson won the race...

Norris tops Macau Grand Prix entry

European F3 champion Lando Norris headlines a meagre Macau Grand Prix entry list, with just 22 cars due to take part. The event has never featured less than 25 cars since it started in 1983, 34 years ago.

Norris will drive for the Carlin team he has raced with this year, and will face the likes of rivals Joel Eriksson (Motopark) and Callum Iloft (Prema). Red Bull Junior and Briton Dan Ticktum will also race for Motopark alongside Eriksson for the November 16-19 event.

● Reigning Formula E champion Lucas di Grassi will compete in an Audi R8 LMS GT3 car for the first time in his career when he contests the F3-supporting FIA GT World Cup in Macau. He will be partnered by Brijncain Sprint champion Robin Frijns and DTM driver Nico Muller.

Ferrari academy chooses Brit Iloft

Briton Callum Iloft has been signed to the Ferrari Driver Academy.

The 18-year-old, who finished fourth in the FIA Formula 3 European Championship this season, has been given the slot after impressing FDA boss Massimo Rivola, who attended F3 races to oversee Iloft's Prema Powerteam stablemate and Ferrari protege Guan Yu Zhou.

The Academy aims to help drivers progress through developing driving technique, nutrition, media and marketing. It contains GP3 race-winner Giuliano Alesi (son of Jean), Italian F4 champion Marcus Armstrong, Enzo Fittipaldi – grandson of Emerson, Yu Zhou



Iloft has earned an FDA slot

and F2 pair Antonio Fuoco and champion Charles Leclerc.

"You hear drivers talking about how special Ferrari is, so I feel privileged," said Iloft. "The family feeling you get with Italian teams and the support that brings is great, so I'm glad to be staying 'Italian.'"

Iloft, who will move to Italy to be close to Maranello, is tipped for a GP3 move in 2018.

American F3 series to run with halo

A new FIA-spec Formula 3 championship has been launched in America that will become the first junior single-seater series to run with the halo cockpit protection device in 2018.

The F3 Americas Series will launch its season at Virginia International Raceway in April.

It is part of a push to create a new junior single-seater ladder in the US, and will exist alongside the Mazda-backed Road to Indy programme, which comprises USF2000, Pro Mazda, Indy Lights and IndyCar.

The new American F3 category is designed to offer a series to graduate into from the Formula 4 United States Championship.

The car will be a Ligier Crawford chassis developed by Onroak, and will use a 270bhp Honda engine.

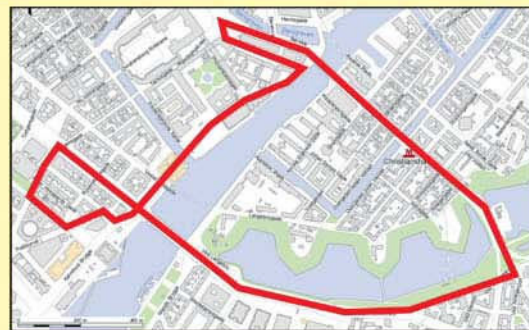


● The new Pro Mazda Championship Tatuus-Mazda PM18 hit the track in its first official test last weekend. USF2000 champion Oliver Askew will stick with Cape Motorsports as he earned a scholarship for Pro Mazda through winning USF2000. The 2017 Pro Mazda champion Victor Franzoni will join Juncos Racing for his scholarship in Indy Lights. Reigning Indy Lights champion Kyle Kaiser will also stick with Juncos for his scholarship in IndyCar.

F1 RACING EDITORIAL DIRECTOR

ANTHONY ROWLINSON

"This is a very
'on brand' vision"



The Copenhagen circuit has the potential to stun

If you build it they will come. Or, in the case of a mooted Formula 1 street circuit for Copenhagen, if Jan Magnussen and Hermann Tilke sketch out a layout for a fast course through one of the most picturesque cities in Northern Europe, people will start to get excited.

MN's sister title *Autosport* broke news of a proposed Copenhagen Grand Prix earlier this month and it quickly became apparent that this plan is much more than a 'back-of-the-fag-packet' sketch.

A carefully drawn course would take drivers right through the heart of the Danish capital, skirting the Parliament building (the Borgen – familiar to any fans of the Scandi political drama of the same name), shooting under the dark glass panels of the national library (The Black Diamond), before blasting on to the fringes of Copenhagen's 'free love and drugs' quarter, Christiania.

The layout is two almost mile-long straights joined by a couple of hairpins and MN can confirm from a visit there 10 days ago that it would be *extremely* fast. A few laps on a bicycle revealed the circuit to be almost flat (in every sense) and largely uninterrupted by impediments to speed. It's reminiscent of Baku.

Denmark has never staged a round of the world championship (though the Roskilde circuit did host F1 races in the '60s), but the booming home popularity of Haas driver Kevin Magnussen would surely guarantee ticketing success, with fans likely attracted from across Scandinavia, Germany and northern Europe.

K-Mag grins as he talks us round a map of the circuit. "It would be flat everywhere," he says, "apart from the 90-degree section after the parliament building. Other than that it would be super-fast, but with two big braking areas, so there would definitely be some passing."

He pauses, then shakes his head, still chuckling: "I can't imagine racing my car around here. I mean, this is where I walk to the shops."

In UK terms it would be the equivalent of a track based on this year's 'London Live' layout while also looping in Parliament Square and Westminster Bridge. This could hardly be a more 'on-brand' vision in terms of Liberty's ambition to 'take F1 to the fans'.

It's no coincidence that the Danish bid makes the Parliament building a key landmark: it has cross-party (though not unanimous) political support, and the would-be promoters are led by ex-government minister Helge Sander. None of this, of course, means the grand prix – tipped for summer 2020 – is nailed on, although a financial consortium, led by Lars Seier Christensen, of Saxo Bank (former investors in the Lotus F1 team), is already attracting private-sector funding which the government has pledged to match.

And if the money's in place, then, as anyone familiar with F1 will know, wheels tend to turn...



AGREE/DISAGREE?
letters@motorsport-news.co.uk

RACING NEWS

IN BRIEF

Clark is champion

After a calculated drive, Dan Clark secured the 2017 MSA British Superkart Championship with third in the opening race at Oulton Park. Polesitter Matt Isherwood led at the start while Clark's rival Gavin Bennett was the man on the move and, after a fifth-row start, was up to fourth place by the end of lap one. He chased down Clark and then took the lead after three laps. Layton inherited second when Isherwood's fuel pump failed while Clark was happy to sit in third knowing it was sufficient to get the Number 1 plate. Clark sat out the second race, which was abandoned after an off for Layton.

Davidson to graduate

Newly-crowned Fiesta Junior champion Jack Davidson plans to graduate to the senior championship next year. BRSCC Fiesta Championship regulations allow Davidson to use the Jamsport-prepared car he took to seven wins this year with minimal changes. "I'm used to the car," said Davidson. "The only change is the tyres, so I just need to see how that goes." It is a route recently followed by Lewis Kent and Danny Harrison who scored a combined six race wins in their senior debut seasons this year.

Tom Dooley 1927-2017

A minute's silence was held prior to the start of the Formula Ford Festival final at Brands Hatch to honour the life of the BRSCC's president Tom Dooley, who died last week. Dooley had also been chairman of the North Western Centre and gave more than 60 years of his life to the club.

Braving the shave

Formula Ford racer Keith Wood has raised almost £2,000 for Macmillian Cancer Support by shaving his hair off. The 38-year-old has also been raising awareness for the Braintrust charity this year, including running with the name on his Swift SC93 after his wife, Emma, died from a brain tumour last year. For more information visit braintrust.org.uk

Mansell family race

Scott Mansell admitted it was "an emotional time" for him as he competed against his father, Kevin, for the first time in the Classic Formula Ford 1600 double-header at Brands Hatch. Mansell Jr, a former EuroBoss champion and current lap record holder on the Kent circuit's Indy layout, steered his Crossle 35F to a last-gasp win in race one. He said: "We've only been preparing the car for 10 days and need to keep developing it but to win the race and compete in the same race as my dad for the first time is special."

Tom Pryce Trophy

The Tom Pryce Memorial Trophy has been awarded to the Anglesey Circuit. The prestigious award, decided by the Welsh Motoring Writers, is presented annually either to an individual or a group in Wales which has made a significant contribution to the country. This year, the award recognises the achievements of Anglesey Circuit as it celebrates its 25th anniversary and £4 million reconfiguration. Pryce is the only Welshman to ever win an F1 race, starting 42 before his death in 1977.

Birkett Six Hours

Fox Motorsport will contest the 750 Motor Club's Birkett Six Hours this weekend at Silverstone. Drivers include Nick Halstead, Richard Evans and Stefan Nadarajan, who have raced in Ginetta G40 GT5s this year, as well as Gary Wager from the Ginetta Racing Drivers' Club. The race will take place this Saturday.

Photos: Richard Styles, Jakob Ebrey, LAT



PROVISIONAL CALENDAR

DATE	CIRCUIT
April 6-8	Brands Hatch Indy
April 27-29	Donington Park
May 11-13	Monza
June 8-10	Oulton Park
July 27-29	Snetterton
August 24-26	Knockhill
Sept 14-16	Silverstone
Sept 28-30	Brands Hatch GP

MONZA RACES FOR CARRERA CUP GB

British championship will support European Le Mans Series

By Stephen Lickorish

The Porsche Carrera Cup GB will visit Monza next season as it supports the European Le Mans Series fixture.

MN reported last month that series bosses wanted a race at the historic venue and they have now secured two races as part of the May 11-13 event.

The series has regularly held an overseas away round in recent seasons, with trips to Le Mans and Spa, but this is the first time it will visit Monza.

Porsche GB motorsport manager James

MacNaughton said talks had been ongoing since June and he was delighted to now secure a place.

"It's been a long time coming – we started talks when we were in Le Mans as it's the same group of people who organise ELMS and Le Mans," he said.

"Our options were reducing a little because of the way the World Endurance Championship [which the series has supported at Le Mans and Silverstone in the last two years] is formed now.

"The paddock is very excited about going. For the Am drivers it's a big box for those guys to tick to race at a circuit like

Monza. For the Pro drivers, although I'm sure they don't mind as much where they race, it's great to give them the chance to race on those big circuits that they may compete at when they graduate from the Carrera Cup."

The series will also appear at both Brands Hatch, Donington Park, Oulton Park, Snetterton, Knockhill and Silverstone British Touring Car rounds.

MacNaughton added that a number of orders have already arrived for the new 911 GT3 Cup car that is being introduced next season, with entries for the 2018 season opening this week.



Davidson is eyeing British GT after GT Cup

GT Cup champion Graham Davidson eyes British GT and a new McLaren

Newly-crowned GT Cup champion Graham Davidson is eyeing a move into British GT next year with a new McLaren 650S GT3.

The Scotsman, who won 15 races on his way to sealing the GTO and overall series titles at Snetterton earlier this month, has put his title-winning McLaren MP4-12C GT3 up for sale and plans to replace it with the newer 650S GT3 model.

"I've got a great relationship with

McLaren, so I want to stick with that. We'll get a newer 650 and try to pull together the right people to go to British GT," Davidson said. "I can't wait for the challenge and getting amongst the faster drivers. I used to race mountain bikes when I was much younger and you always improve when you're around faster guys, so I want to be doing that with the cars as well. I'm pretty sure we can do a good job there."

Davidson intends to step up with the Jetstream Motorsport outfit which ran him to the GT Cup title, rather than joining an established team.

"You see in some paddocks it's all too serious, guys just throwing money at it and not actually enjoying it, so if I'm going to do it then I'm going to enjoy it and do it with them," added Davidson. "We'll just have to pool in some experienced hands to challenge the big boys."

British GT champion Parfitt wins Sunoco award

British GT champion Rick Parfitt Jr has won a funded race at Daytona next year after topping the annual Sunoco 240 Challenge contest.

Parfitt, who steered a Team Parker Racing Bentley Continental GT3 to the British GT crown alongside Seb Morris this year, will get an outing in a GT4 car in the four-hour BMW Endurance Challenge race that supports January's Daytona 24 Hours.

Parfitt narrowly beat Mini Challenge champion Brett Smith in the contest, which awards points for claiming race wins, pole positions and fastest laps in a driver's respective series.

The car is yet to be decided, but last year's winner, Mini Challenge Cooper champion Max Bladon, drove a Racer's Edge Aston Martin Vantage.

"I'm over the moon, this is the icing on the cake on what's been an awesome season," said Parfitt.

"Needless to say I can't wait to race at the incredible Daytona International Speedway."

● British GT4 champion Stuart Middleton leads the sister Whelen Challenge contest, which rewards the winner with a funded seat in a Cadillac Daytona Prototype in the 24 Hours. Only Radical racer Stuart Moseley can beat him if he scores enough points across the European Masters event at Barcelona this weekend.



Parfitt won British GT and prize

Le Mans racers to Walter Hayes race

This year's Walter Hayes Trophy support bill will feature a range of Le Mans prototypes after a new push from Rollcentre Racing boss Martin Short.

Short will run his Judd V10-engined Dallara SP1 in the 20-lap Allcomers race that supports the Formula Ford knockout event, and will be joined by a Creation-AIM CA07 which qualified 10th at Le Mans in 2007. It will be driven by either car owner Bob Berridge or Le Mans ace Nicolas Minassian.

"I wanted to support James [Beckett, WHT organiser] so decided to run the Dallara as a bit of fun," said Short.



Short will drive his Judd Dallara SP1 at Silverstone

"I've run over-powered things there before, like the Pescarolo and an LMP Radical. It's just a chance to share the glorious noise of the Judd.

"I wanted a few more cars out so I spoke to Bob Berridge and next thing I know he's trying to recruit Minassian to race it! It'll be brilliant. We'll give

ourselves a very leisurely pit stop to even the field out and it'll be great fun charging through to catch the MGB that'll likely be leading!"

The last time the Dallara raced at Silverstone was in 2005, but Short did do a lap in it in 2014 as a tribute to his late team member Michael 'Cushty' Tallentire.

Freke, Farmer and Barnes to Dubai

Century Motorsport will enter two Ginetta G55 GT4s into January's Dubai 24 Hours, with one filled by a combined British GT team.

The team has firmed up its drivers for the first of the two cars, with team boss and GT4 regular Nathan Freke sharing with Mark Farmer and Jon Barnes – who both raced for the TF Sport Aston Martin GT3 team in the British championship this year – and Dominic Paul, who won this year's GT Cup GTA [GT4] title.

Farmer said: "I'm excited about it and working with Century instead of racing against them.

Their knowledge of the Ginetta is second to none and the team has previous form at Dubai too.

"We have a great driver line-up with a lot of guys who know each other already from British GT. What could possibly go wrong?"

Rockingham to host its first 24-hour race

Rockingham will hold its first 24-hour race in 2018 as the C1 Racing Challenge has added a second long-distance event to its calendar.

The C1 Challenge ran a 24-hour race at Spa last weekend to cap its inaugural year, and adds the May 11-13 event at Rockingham on the track's 17th birthday.

Meyrick Cox, chairman of the C1 Racing Club, said: "Rockingham has amongst the best facilities of any circuit in the UK, so we are thrilled that Rockingham and East Northants Council has been so supportive.

"The C1 Racing Challenge is going from strength to strength. Our first season saw grids building from eight cars at our first race to over 40 cars at the Spa 24-hour."

Peter Hardman, chief executive of Rockingham, who will be racing in the event as the circuit team have put in an entry, said: "This is the first 24-hour race to be held at Rockingham, so I am delighted the C1 Racing Club has chosen to hold its UK meeting at our circuit next season.

"The C1 Racing Challenge is one of the most successful new series the UK has seen, and I am proud to be able to be part of its growth."

Richard Dalton's Daltonator team won the race at Spa last weekend. Former 2CV champion Dalton had son Jake sharing the car with British GT champion Seb Morris, GT racer James Fletcher and Carrera Cup driver Lewis Plato. British Touring Car racer Josh Cook brought his Fats & Furious team in second, three laps down, sharing with cousin Ollie, Jon Maybin and Joel Shipton.



Citroen C1s will visit Rockingham

M3 Cup champion makes Ginetta debut

M3 Cup champion Adam Shepherd scored a podium on his debut weekend in Britcar at Oulton Park.

Shepherd was sharing a Team Hard Ginetta G55 GT4 with regular driver Darron Lewis, ahead of a possible move to the GT4 Supercup next season, and the pair finished sixth in the opener before taking second in a very wet race two.

"This was just such an amazing experience," said Shepherd. "I had 10 laps in the wet and eight in the dry before qualifying, it was my first time on proper slick and wet racing tyres too.

"The braking is unbelievable and the cornering too, I just had to get used to it and build my confidence. I think I picked it up quite quickly in the end, I had always wanted to drive a car like this.

"I want to go into the Ginetta Supercup next season. But as usual it's all down to budget, but with Tony Gilham's help Team Hard have got me this far."

Priaulx has starred in testing



Photos: Jakob Ebrey, Ollie Read, Steve Jones



Priaulx steps up from Ginettas

PRIAULX SEALS BRITISH F4 MOVE WITH ARDEN

Ginetta Junior runner-up Seb Priaulx will graduate to British Formula 4 next season, driving for the Arden squad.

The 16-year-old, son of triple World Touring Car champion Andy, had already tested an F4 car with JHR Developments last year and was quickest of a number of drivers Arden tested earlier this month.

He now joins his father – a Ford driver in the World Endurance Championship – in having Ford links. Priaulx is already the third driver

confirmed at Arden for 2018 with him joining Red Bull-backed karting graduates Jack Doohan and Dennis Hauger at the team.

"To make the step up to single-seaters and race in British F4 is a real milestone in my career," said Priaulx. "It's always been my aim to live the single-seater dream. Winning in British F4 opens doors and it is the starting point for Formula 1.

"Arden is a team that can take you from British F4 all the way up to F2.

"When I visited the workshop I could get up close and personal with their Formula 2 cars. As a young driver it's really inspiring to be able to see the next steps on the FIA single-seater pyramid right in front of you."

Arden team principal Garry Horner said: "We are delighted to have Seb joining our team at Arden. We have admired his dedication and ability throughout the previous season and are looking forward to a successful year in Formula 4."

Priaulx added that he was keen to move on from a chaotic Ginetta Junior season that featured him being docked over 100 points for an alleged engine irregularity. He later got the points reinstated before then having to switch teams to HHC Motorsport when JHR was suspended while Ginetta investigated its conduct.

"This year I showed determination," he said. "It was difficult but that's racing and it's definitely made me stronger. I'm really looking forward to next year now."

Dempsey to contest Hayes with Kevin Mills Racing

Jordan Dempsey will compete with Kevin Mills Racing in the Walter Hayes Trophy at Silverstone as preparation for possibly moving to race in America next year.

The 17-year-old has been racing in a Van Diemen RF00 run by his family in the Northern Ireland and BRSCC National championship this year, but is looking at Formula 4 US for 2018.

"I've always been running with my dad's team and he puts a great team together," said Dempsey, who will drive a Spectrum 011C in the Hayes.

"For me as a driver I want to move on and I want to get over to America in F4 as they are support to the Formula 1 and WEC.

"I need to get working with professional teams and Kevin Mills has a good track record at Silverstone."

Five cars will be entered for the Hayes by Mills, including Dempsey, Roger Orgee, Michael Moyers, John Ferguson and Michael Eastwell, with a possible entry for South African FF1600 champion, Julian van der Watt.

Dempsey has raced for his family team



An ex-John Cleland Vauxhall Vectra had its first shakedown test at Donington Park last week after a full rebuild. Cleland raced the car in the second half of the 1997 British Touring Car Championship season and it last raced in 2003 in Norwegian Touring Cars. It has been rebuilt from a bare bodyshell by Alex Scholedge, who plans to race the car in the Super Touring Challenge next year.

FF Corse Ferrari 458 Challenge duo Mowlem and Grimes take a Britcar Endurance double at Oulton Park

The FF Corse Ferrari 458 Challenge of Bonamy Grimes and Johnny Mowlem was a double winner in the Britcar Endurance races at Oulton Park last weekend.

Poleman Rob Wheldon had built a lead in excess of 20 seconds when his Radical RXC GT3 went off at Shell on the 21st lap. Jayde Kruger's Ginetta G55 GT4 became

the new leader, but after Chris Papageorgiou took over, he was caught by Mowlem.

Adam Wilcox followed Mowlem through in Michael Igoe's Porsche 911, with Ross Wylie taking third on the last lap in Witt Gamski's Ferrari 458 GTE.

Mowlem and Grimes were never headed in the second race, with Darron

Lewis and Adam Shepherd's G55 a lap clear of Papageorgiou/Kruger in third.

Joe Spencer clinched the CNC Heads Sports/Saloon title in his Locosaki after another double class win.

Paul Rose's Saker charged to the front on the opening lap of race one, with Steve Harris making it a Saker 1-2 despite a spin at Lodge. Luke Armiger's Vauxhall Tigra

managed to consolidate third over Spencer, while team-mate Dave Harvey snatched fifth at Knickerbrook on the last lap from Danny Bird's Spire GTR.

Harris was a comfortable race two winner, with Rose second after a pitlane start and late alternator problems. Spencer completed the podium from Armiger, Bird and Harvey.

FORMULA FORD FESTIVAL

FF1600 legend Joey Foster takes hat-trick of Festival wins. By **Stefan Mackley**

FANTASTIC FOSTER DOMINATES FESTIVAL



L-r: Donegan, Foster, MacLennan



Joey Foster claimed his third Festival victory

Those in the know say that to win the Formula Ford Festival you need a combination of speed, experience and a little bit of luck.

Joey Foster found he had heaps of all three as he took his third Festival win – 13 years after his last triumph – sealing it with an incredible overtaking move around the outside into Paddock Hill Bend which will live long in the memory.

The 35-year-old was the man to beat of the 75 entries at Brands Hatch from the outset, taking pole for heat one and romping to victory on a damp but drying track against a field containing 2017 National Formula Ford champion, Luke Williams, and current Scottish Formula Ford champion, Ross Martin.

Foster didn't have everything his own way in the semi-final, though, starting second behind the Van Diemen JL13 of Matt Cowley due to winning the slowest of the three heats.

The 2009 Australian F3 champion and ex-British GT racer soon found himself locked in a three-car fight with Cowley and Irishman Keith Donegan, dropping to third at the midway point.

But Foster proved he would be the man to beat in the final with two near-identical overtakes against Donegan then Cowley on the inside of Clearways to claim victory.

It was Cliff Dempsey Racing's Neil MacLennan who would start on pole though for the final and perhaps the only driver capable of challenging Foster having charged through to win his semi-final from third.

A strong start from MacLennan in his Ray GR09 ensured he held fellow front-row starter Foster at bay for the initial tours, with a gaggle of cars including Chris Middlehurst, Cowley and Donegan in hot pursuit.

Three cars finding the gravel at Paddock Hill brought out the safety car on lap five of the 20-lap affair, closing the field up even further.

Despite getting the jump on his rivals at the restart MacLennan was soon driving defensive lines and the decisive move came just prior to halfway. MacLennan kept to the inside into Paddock Hill as Foster risked it all and swept around the outside, coming within millimetres of the gravel in a pass that brought gasps and cheers from the crowd.

"He [MacLennan] was defending so heavily and I got a good slip stream," recalled Foster. "I'd tried it [the pass] in the semi-final and it didn't work but when I pulled it off I thought I'm going to remember that for a while.

"I was either going to make it or end up in the gravel."

As Foster tried to escape, a frenetic battle was taking place behind, with MacLennan losing second to Cowley at Paddock Hill and then third to Donegan seconds later into Druids.

The charging Donegan, who'd set-up his Van Diemen JL13K to come on strong in the latter stages, had battled his way through from sixth and was proving to be the fastest man on track, setting a 50.579s on lap 12, which would remain unbeaten.

His hunt for the victory came ever nearer as three laps from home Cowley took an excursion through the Paddock Hill gravel, rejoining down in sixth.

The luck that so many had said was needed to tame the Festival became evident on the final lap, as a popular win for Foster almost disappeared within sight of the flag.

An electrical problem was causing the engine aboard his Ray GR08 to

occasionally lose full power allowing Donegan to close on the final tour and finish just 0.107s behind at the flag.

"I lost a bit of power and it felt like one more lap and we would lose the lead," said a relieved Foster.

For 20-year-old Donegan, second place was a fantastic result, having only raced sporadically this year and he provisionally holds a ticket to the Mazda Road to Indy Shootout, but Mazda has yet to confirm his place.

"I have had three seconds this year and each time I've thought I just need one more lap," he said.

"If I had one more lap maybe I could have made a move."

A delighted MacLennan took third and was left to admire the pass which had seen him concede the lead and any realistic chance of victory.

"I take my hat off to Joey, that move he pulled there was pretty unreal," said MacLennan. "I thought at one point 'nah, you've lost it' and then no, when he got it back, when he got it to the bottom I thought 'he's got this.'"

Fourth went the way of Josh Smith who'd been left frustrated in his semi final after his car kept jumping out of gear, forcing him to come through from

10th on the grid in the final.

Former McLaren *Autosport* BRDC Award finalist Chris Middlehurst was muscled down the field from his starting position of third and finished back in fifth place, just ahead of Cowley who was left to rue his late off-track excursion.

The trio of Darren Burke, Noel Robinson and Matt Round-Garrido had been locked in a race-long battle and finished together in seventh, eighth and ninth.

Former Castle Combe Saloons champion Jason Cooper completed the top 10 in his Swift SC16 with an impressive drive, staying out of trouble and capitalising on others' mistakes. Younger brother Luke had shown great pace throughout the weekend, but contact with Burke heading up to Druids and then a spin in frustration at his lack of progress in the final dropped him to 14th at the flag when running strongly inside the top 10.

But the 2017 Festival belonged to Foster, now with the knowledge that he is the man to beat as the Formula Ford fraternity heads to Silverstone and the Walter Hayes Trophy. An event he has won three times already...



Foster wins, just, from Donegan



Race winning move: Foster goes around the outside at Paddock Hill to lead



Donegan battled hard on journey to final and stayed out of trouble

'What goes into an LMP1 car'

Ginetta P1 test, p34

Photos: Gary Hawkins



Hat-trick of Porsche wins for Hayes as Hammond clinches 924 championship

Ed Hayes confirmed his position as this year's star driver in the **BRSCC Porsche Championship** by securing a hard-fought hat-trick of race victories in the final round of the season at Brands Hatch.

The newly crowned series champion made a flying start in a sodden race one to leapfrog double Rockingham race winner and pole position holder James Coleman and lead the chasing pack on the opening tour. Behind the top two, Adam Southgate held third ahead of Garry Lawrence, but a wild spin at Graham Hill on lap two dropped the latter back several places. Southgate had a similar grassy moment at Surtees shortly after but maintained third, while Hayes and Coleman were able to break clear.

After hounding Hayes for the entire race, Coleman's hopes of victory disappeared on the last lap when he spun and slammed into the tyre wall exiting Druids. Hayes eased to victory thereafter ahead of Southgate and Richard Avery.

Coleman was in the wars again in the second race, hitting the rear of Lawrence's similar Boxster at Graham Hill as the pair battled over third. Lawrence emerged unscathed and held the position to the flag behind Avery and

the victorious Hayes. Avery looked set for race three glory after overcoming early pacesetter Southgate, but Hayes produced a demon pass at Paddock Hill on the penultimate lap to end his title season in fitting style.

In the 924 class, Pip Hammond erased the memory of a nightmare weekend at Rockingham to secure the title with victory in race one. David Jones recovered from spinning off in the opener to claim the spoils in races two and three respectively.

Adriano Medeiros was another driver to enjoy title success, claiming his second successive **Classic Formula Ford 1600** championship despite not topping the podium over the weekend. Scott Mansell narrowly beat the Royale RP26 of category legend Rick Morris to claim an emotional success in a wet first encounter in his Crossle 35F. Mark Armstrong won race two in his Van Diemen RF80 after Mansell and Medeiros tangled at Druids dicing for the lead on the first lap.

After a crash in his heat denied him a chance of appearing in the Festival showpiece, Jake Byrne hoped victory in the sole **Formula Ford Masters** event would offer some consolation. He gave his

all to overcome a superb defensive drive by the Spectrum 012 of John Ferguson but missed out by a mere 0.068s. Felix Fisher tried to do likewise in the **Historic Festival** for pre-90, '82 and '72 cars, but Klaus-Dieter Hackel emerged victorious in his Van Diemen RF88 after other potential race winners Mark Armstrong and Conor Murphy were eliminated in a first corner shunt.

Steven Dailly kept it clean to beat season-long title rival James Gornall in both **BMW Compact Cup** encounters, but two runner-up finishes confirmed Gornall's second consecutive championship win. Owen Hunter and Samuel Carrington Yates fought each other hard to claim a third apiece.

Peter Barrable was another champion to be crowned, finishing fourth in the first combined **Irish Supercar/Global GT Lights** event to wrap up the Supercar title. Graeme Colfer won the opener, while Bob Cameron fended off the GT Lights trio of James Thompson, Conor Farrell and Max Drennan to win race two.

Paul Trayhurn and reigning champion Michael Gibbins shared the wins in the two **Sports 2000 Duratec/Pinto** races.

Mark Libbeter

SUPPORTS



Start of one of three Porsche races, all dominated by Hayes (r)



Scott Mansell on his way to victory in Classic Formula Ford



Williams was out in heats after mechanical problems

Williams, Byrne and White fall foul of Festival's unforgiving format in heats

"I'm gutted, it's just one of those things but I just can't believe we did 400 laps in testing with no problems and then something that costs 20 pence breaks."

That was 2017 National Formula Ford champion Luke Williams' assessment of this year's Festival after he was forced out in heat one when a throttle linkage broke on his Firman RFR16 while sitting in fourth position.

The 25-year-old was one of a number of pre-event favourites who found that the

nature of the Festival can be unforgiving with even the slightest problem or mistake severely punished.

Williams' retirement from the heat meant he was unable to make it through to the semi-final and he was joined on the sidelines at that early stage by other notable names.

Jake Byrne, poleman for heat three, had been looking quick aboard his Ray GR13 and was leading until he went off line through Surtees and spun into

the barriers. Oliver White, a Mazda Road to Indy Shootout finalist last year, was another to fall by the wayside.

Having been excluded from qualifying for passing while red flags were being shown, he guided his Medina Sport JL17 through from the back of the field to sixth in heat three at the chequered, only to be excluded again for passing under yellows.

The format of the Festival meant they would only be reserves for the semi-final.

How Foster, MacLennan and co. made it through wind and rain to secure final spots

It was a lights-to-flag victory for Joey Foster in heat one, nursing his Ray GR08, which was using a wet set-up on a drying track in the closing stages. Neil MacLennan and Josh Smith comfortably completed the podium once Luke Williams retired with a mechanical issue five laps from home.

Jamie Thorburn finished a disappointing fourth in heat two having led before being blocked by backmarkers on two occasions at Clearways. Poleman Chris Middlehurst capitalised to win ahead of Keith Donegan and Darren Burke while Michael Eastwell dropped

from fifth to 13th after being tapped into a spin on the last lap at Clearways.

A crash into the barriers from polesitter Jake Byrne at Surtees as a result of going off-line gifted victory to Matt Cowley ahead of Matt Round-Garrido and Luke Cooper in heat three. Oliver White had charged through from 24th to sixth before being excluded for a yellow flag infringement.

Foster battled hard for victory against Cowley and Donegan in the slower of the two semi-final contests due to a safety car.

Jordan Dempsey finished seventh but

was excluded after colliding with Thorburn going up to Druids, which forced the latter into retirement.

MacLennan surged through from third to win the other semi-final with a late lunge on Middlehurst at Graham Hill Bend.

James Roe Jr, Ross Martin and Eastwell completed the top three spots of the last chance race after all three had excursions during their heats and semi-finals. Thorburn's charge from the back of the grid ended with a crash coming out of Druids following contact with Jason Down.

RESULTS

Formula Ford Festival Heat 1 (15 laps)

1 Joey Foster (Ray GR08); 2 Neil MacLennan (Ray GR09) +2.953s; 3 Josh Smith (Van Diemen JL13); 4 Ross Martin (Ray RGS17); 5 Jordan Dempsey (Van Diemen RF00); 6 Ben Hurst (Ray GR12). Class winners Mark Armstrong (Van Diemen RF80); Olaf Schulte (Van Diemen RF87). Fastest lap Foster 56.496s (76.97mph). Pole Foster. Starters 25.

Heat 2 (15 laps)

1 Chris Middlehurst (Van Diemen LA10); 2 Keith Donegan (Van Diemen JL13K) +1.958s; 3 Darren Burke (Van Diemen JL014K); 4 Jamie Thorburn (Ray GR15); 5 Noel Robinson (Van Diemen JL012K); 6 James Roe Jr (Van Diemen RF99). CW Oliver Playle (Hawke DL19); Henry Campbell (Reynard FF89); Ian Jeary (Elden Mk8). FL Donegan 52.575s (82.71mph). P Middlehurst. S 24.

Heat 3 (15 laps)

1 Matthew Cowley (Van Diemen JL13); 2 Matt Round-Garrido (Medina Sport JL17) +1.185s; 3 Luke Cooper (Swift SC16); 4 Rory Smith (Van Diemen JL15K); 5 Sebastian Melrose (Ray GR14); 6 Michael McPherson (Ray GR14). CW Conor Murphy (Mondiale M89S); Nicholas Gibson (Crossle 40F). FL Jake Byrne (Ray GR13). P Byrne. S 24.

Semi final 1 (15 laps)

1 Foster; 2 Cowley +0.241s; 3 Donegan; 4 Cooper; 5 J Smith; 6 Jason Cooper (Swift SC16). CW Klaus-Dieter Hackel (Van Diemen RF88); Gibson. FL L Cooper 50.436s (86.22mph). P Cowley. S 30.

Semi final 2 (15 laps)

1 MacLennan; 2 Middlehurst +1.146s; 3 Round-Garrido; 4 Burke; 5 R Smith; 6 Henry Chart (Van Diemen RF022). CW Armstrong; Kevin Bottomley (Reynard 88FF). FL Martin 50.789s (85.62mph). P Middlehurst. S 30.

Last chance race (8 laps)

1 Roe Jr; 2 Martin +0.091s; 3 Michael Eastwell (Spectrum 011); 4 Dean Venter (Ray GRS07); 5 Hackel; 6 Vincent Jay

(Ray GR10). CW Hackel; Armstrong. FL Eastwell 49.828s (87.27mph). P Martin. S 23.

Final (20 laps)

1 Foster; 2 Donegan +0.107s; 3 MacLennan; 4 Smith; 5 Middlehurst; 6 Cowley. FL Donegan 50.579s (85.97mph). P MacLennan. S 30.

BRSCC Porsches (17 laps)

1 Ed Hayes (Boxster); 2 Adam Southgate (Boxster) +5.378s; 3 Richard Avery (Boxster); 4 Alex Stocker (Boxster); 5 Kevin Molyneux (Boxster); 6 Garry Lawrence (Boxster). CW Pip Hammond (924); Andrew Baker (Boxster). FL Hayes 1m03.122s (68.89mph). P James Coleman (Boxster S). S 27. Race 2 (22 laps)

1 Hayes; 2 Avery +5.719s; 3 Lawrence; 4 Stocker; 5 Nick Hull (Boxster); 6 Molyneux. CW David Jones (924); Baker. FL Hayes 53.515s (81.25mph). P Hayes. S 27. Race 3 (20 laps)

1 Hayes; 2 Avery +0.455s; 3 Southgate; 4 Lawrence; 5 Molyneux; 6 Hull. CW Jones; Baker. FL Hayes 53.529s (81.23mph). P Southgate. S 25.

Classic Formula Ford (15 laps)

1 Scott Mansell (Crossle 35F); 2 Rick Morris (Royale RP26) +0.180s; 3 Adriano Medeiros (Van Diemen RF80); 4 Mark Armstrong (Van Diemen RF80); 5 Stuart Kestenbaum (Crossle 16F); 6 Simon Jackson (Javelin JL5). CW Kestenbaum. FL Mansell 1m02.770s (69.27mph). P Morris. S 20.

Race 2 (15 laps)

1 Armstrong; 2 S Mansell +9.107s; 3 Medeiros; 4 Kevin Mansell (Crossle 32F); 5 Jackson; 6 Kestenbaum. CW Kestenbaum. FL Medeiros 51.839s (83.88mph). P S Mansell. S 19.

Formula Ford Festival Masters (15 laps)

1 John Ferguson (Spectrum 012); 2 Jake Byrne (Ray GR13) +0.068s; 3 Miles Johnston (Ray GR16); 4 Keith Wood (Swift SC83); 5 Simon Jackson (Javelin JL5); 6 Peter Daly (Royale RP21). CW Jackson; Stuart Kestenbaum (Crossle 16F); Kevin Bottomley (Reynard SF88). FL Byrne 51.414s (84.58mph). P Ferguson. S 17.

Irish Supercars/Global GT Lights (15 laps)

1 Graeme Colfer (ASK Supercar); 2 Bob Cameron (Supercar) +0.640s; 3 David Parks (Supercar); 4 Peter Barrable (Supercar); 5 Philip Jones (Supercar); 6 Conor Farrell (GT Light). CW Farrell. FL Barrable 59.838s (72.67mph). P Barrable. S 21.

Race 2 (17 laps)

1 Cameron; 2 James Thompson (Light) +0.374s; 3 Farrell; 4 Max Drennan (Light); 5 Mark Braden (Light); 6 Jones. CW Thompson. FL Drennan 51.824s (83.91mph). P Cameron. S 20.

Sports 2000 Duratec & Pinto (26 laps)

1 Paul Trayhurn (Gunn TS11); 2 Michael Gibbins (MCR) +5.230s; 3 Tim Tudor (MCR); 4 David Houghton (MCR); 5 Lewis Kent (Ray); 6 Nick Bates (MCR). CW Gibbins; Steve Head (Van Diemen RF05); Peter Needham (Tiga SC80); Mike Dodd (Tiga SC79); Mike Fry (Lola T86/90). FL Trayhurn 47.551s (91.45mph). P Trayhurn. S 25.

Race 2 (37 laps)

1 Gibbins; 2 Houghton +7.187s; 3 Tudor; 4 Bates; 5 Giles Billingsley (MCR); 6 Mike Turner (MCR). CW Billingsley; Peter Brouwer (Lola T88/90); Needham; Dodd; Damien Griffin (Lola T598). FL Trayhurn 47.696s (91.17mph). P Trayhurn. S 24.

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RACING REPORTS

SILVERSTONE: HSCC FINALS BY PAUL LAWRENCE

OCTOBER 21/22

Photos: Mick Walker

Tarling took a crucial win in the second race



TARLING SEALS THE CROWN AS O'BRIEN'S BID IS PUNCTURED



This puncture proved costly for O'Brien



Lyons beat the odds to take DBT double

The Historic Formula Ford Championship ended as it had spent the entire season: locked in wheel-to-wheel combat. Richard Tarling was mighty under pressure to win both the second race and the title, but race one winner Michael O'Brien did everything right, only to be put out of the picture with a puncture.

"That was so close: I knew I had to win, whatever," said Tarling after winning the second race following an intense battle with Cameron Jackson. In the opener, contact with Jackson sent Tarling spinning back to sixth. With O'Brien winning from Callum Grant, the pendulum swung away from Tarling with just one race to go.

O'Brien did everything right and was strongly placed when debris pierced a rear tyre and his pace dropped away before retirement. It was a bitter end to a fine 2017 campaign. However, Tarling still needed to beat Jackson and worked the tow down the national straight to perfection to be in just the right place when the flag came out.

An epic performance from Michael Lyons, on slicks on a damp track, cut through gathering gloom on Saturday afternoon and netted himself an implausible **Derek Bell Trophy** victory.

As light rain began to dampen the track, Lyons fired the family Eagle FA74 into the lead but then dived for the pits when the gear lever popped out. Swift work with a hammer sorted a temporary fix and Lyons charged back into the race, a lap down on Jamie Brashaw's March 73A. The task seemed insurmountable, but the slippery track played to Lyons' outstanding car control and, after un-lapping himself, he flew back up to Brashaw and scythed ahead at the final corner. In the dry on Sunday Lyons repeated the result but the hard-charging Brashaw gave determined pursuit and stayed within five seconds of the flying Eagle.

Andrew Hibberd featured prominently in two cracking races on Saturday and won one and lost one. His victory in the **Historic Formula 3** finale was a stunner as he went wheel-to-wheel with newly-crowned champion Jon Milicevic.

No one was more pleased to have Hibberd on the grid than Milicevic and their battle at the head of the pack was every bit as good as had been hoped. It was real cat-and-mouse stuff and they were side-by-side on the last-lap dash to the flag, where Hibberd got the nod by seven-hundredths of a second. Ahead of them in the concurrent **Historic Formula Libre** race was

Mark Goodyear in his Lotus 59.

Hibberd ran Cameron Jackson close in the opening **rear-engined Formula Junior** race and had to claw back time lost in mid-race traffic to attack the leading Brabham once more on the final lap. However, Jackson was not about to be rattled and won by a fifth-of-a-second.

Alan Cook scored an unexpected **Classic Clubmans** win when Mark Charteris went out with transmission failure and John Harrison had a late spin that bent his rear wing. Meanwhile, Charles Barter signed off his title season with a resounding **70s Road Sports** victory.

Mark Woodhouse claimed a brace of wins in the **front-engined Formula Juniors**, but in both races a slippery moment at Becketts – one from a rain shower and one from oil – grabbed his attention as Nick Taylor chased in his similar Elva 100.

Father and son Michael and Will Schryver emerged best of the Chevron pack in the **Guards Trophy** race. Meanwhile, the **Historic Road Sports** decider was full of intrigue once restarted after a fiery incident at Becketts when the fuel tank was detached from the spinning Elan of Barry Davison. An instant fire was quickly dealt with

and everyone emerged unharmed.

Will Plant needed a class maximum to be in the running for a shared **Road Sports** title with Peter Shaw, and both Plant and John Davison gave themselves an early handicap. Plant's Morgan was in neutral when the lights went out and Davison had a spin at Brooklands. Will's father Richard cut the early pace but did not defend when Will caught up. Davison dived through to second at the expense of his class rival Shaw, leaving it all to a tie-break also involving the Turner of Dick Coffey.

Peter Hallford oversteered his Ford Mustang to a double win in **Historic Touring Cars** but that was not enough to deny Steve Platts the overall title in his Singer Chamois. However, Platts had a massive late scare when he was unable to avoid clattering the spinning Ford Anglia 100E of Ed Glaister. The Singer was a little battle scarred but Platts survived to give the Imp family its eighth title in 16 seasons.

New champion Andrew Park reminded everyone of his pace in **Historic FF2000** to take a brace of wins while Gaius Ghinn bagged a **Classic F3** double as the evergreen Richard Trott and Ian Flux led the chase.

RESULTS

Historic Formula Ford (14 laps) 1 Michael O'Brien (Merlyn Mk20); 2 Callum Grant (Merlyn Mk20) +0.842s; 3 Ed Thurston (Elden Mk8); 4 Cameron Jackson (Lola T200); 5 Sam Mitchell (Merlyn Mk20); 6 Richard Tarling (Jamun T2). Class winner Neil Shinner (Merlyn Mk20). Fastest lap Mitchell 1m03.985s (92.22mph). Pole O'Brien. Starters 36. **Race 2 (14 laps)** 1 Tarling; 2 Jackson +0.636s; 3 Grant; 4 Thurston; 5 Max Bartell (Merlyn Mk20); 6 Benn Tilley (Merlyn Mk20). CW Rob Smith (Merlyn Mk20). FL Jackson 1m04.046s (92.13mph). P O'Brien. S 33.

Derek Bell Trophy (20 laps) 1 Michael Lyons (Eagle FA74); 2 Jamie Brashaw (March 73A) +1.782s; 3 Mark Dwyer (March 742); 4 Dan Eagling (Chevron B29); 5 Michael Bletoe-Brown (Chevron B27); 6 Steve Worrad (Chevron B49). CW Dwyer; Eagling; Adam Simmonds (Lola T142). FL Lyons 53.593s (110.10mph). P Lyons. S 12. **Race 2 (23 laps)** 1 Lyons; 2 Brashaw +5.841s; 3 Neil Glover (Chevron B37); 4 Dwyer; 5 Marc Mercer (March 73B); 6 Eagling. CW Dwyer; Mercer; Simmonds. FL Lyons 52.221s (112.99mph). P Lyons. S 13.

Historic F3/Historic Formula Libre (19 laps) 1 Mark Goodyear (Lotus 59); 2 Andrew Hibberd (Brabham BT18) +3.603s; 3 Jon Milicevic (Brabham BT21B); 4 Steve Smith (Chevron B15); 5 Mads Graven (Palliser WDF1); 6 Michael Scott (Brabham BT28). CW Hibberd. FL Goodyear 1m03.969s (92.24mph). P Milicevic. S 16.

Formula Junior rear-engined (14 laps) 1 Cameron Jackson (Brabham BT2); 2 Andrew Hibberd (Lotus 22) +0.238s; 3 Benn Tilley (Lotus 22); 4 Jack Woodhouse (Lotus 20/22); 5 Michael Hibberd (Elva 300); 6 Peter De La Roche (BMC Mk2). CW M Hibberd; Crispian Besley (Cooper T56); Clinton McCarthy (Lotus 18); Peter Williams (Brabham BT6). FL Jackson 1m04.440s (91.56mph). P Jackson. S 18. **Race 2 (14 laps)** 1 Jackson; 2 Hibberd +4.257s; 3 Sam Wilson (Lotus 20/22); 4 Tilley; 5 De La Roche; 6 Jim Blockley (Caravelle Mk2). CW De La Roche; Besley; McCarthy; Rudolf Ernst (PBA Mk2); Williams. FL Wilson 1m04.119s (92.02mph). P Jackson. S 20.

Classic Clubmans (20 laps) 1 Alan Cook (Mallock Mk20/21B); 2 David Wale (Mallock Mk20/21) +1.262s; 3 John Harrison (Mallock Mk21); 4 Mike Lane (Mallock Mk18); 5 Spencer McCarthy (Mallock Mk20B/21); 6 Steve Chaplin (Phantom P79). CW Clive Wood (Mallock Mk20B); Roger Waite (Royale S200M). FL Mark Charteris (Mallock Mk20/21) 57.912s (101.89mph). P Charteris. S 16.

70s Road Sports (22 laps) 1 Charles Barter (Datsun 240Z); 2 Daniel Pickett (Morgan Plus 8) +26.110s; 3 Richard Attwood (Porsche 928); 4 David Karaskas (TVR 3000M); 5 Mark Bennett (MGB); 6 David Hall (Vauxhall Firenza). CW Pickett; Hall; Steve Skipworth (Lotus Europa); Neil Brown (Lotus Eclat); Chris Fisher (MG Arkley). FL Barter 1m09.793s (84.54mph). P Barter. S 31.

Formula Junior front-engined (12 laps) 1 Mark Woodhouse (Elva 100); 2 Nick Taylor (Elva 100) +4.257s; 3 Charlie Besley (Elva 100); 4 Justin Fleming (Lola Mk2); 5 John Chisholm (Gemini Mk2); 6 Ian Phillips (BMC Mk1). CW Graham Barron (Gemini Mk2); Tony Pearson (Bandini); Richard Utley

(Caravelle Mk1). FL Woodhouse 1m10.237s (84.01mph). P Woodhouse. S 15. **Race 2 (13 laps)** 1 Woodhouse; 2 Taylor +2.575s; 3 Fleming; 4 Besley; 5 William Grimshaw (Moorland Mk1); 6 Phillips. CW Barron; Utley. FL Woodhouse 1m10.053s (84.23mph). P Woodhouse. S 14.

Guards Trophy (36 laps) 1 Michael Schryver/Will Schryver (Chevron B6); 2 Charles Allison (Chevron B8) +12.631s; 3 Mike Gardiner/Dan Cox (TVR Griffith); 4 John Spiers (TVR Griffith); 5 Philip Nelson (Chevron B8); 6 Simon Hadfield/James Hadfield (Elva Mk7S). CW Gardiner/Cox; Hadfield/Hadfield; Bob Brooks (Merlyn Mk6); Brian Casey (Lenham P69); John Davison (Lotus Elan); Andrew Hayden (Austin Healey 3000); Tim Jacobsen (MGB); Peter Illingworth (MGB). FL James Schryver (Chevron B8) 1m03.394s (93.07mph). P J Schryver. S 28.

Historic Road Sports (22 laps) 1 William Plant (Morgan +8); 2 John Davison (Lotus Elan) +0.629s; 3 Richard Plant (Morgan +8); 4 Peter Shaw (Lotus Elan); 5 Bruce Stapleton (Morgan +8); 6 Larry Tucker (Ford Shelby Mustang). CW Davison; Shaun Haddrell (Turner Mk1); Jonathan Rushton (Morgan +4); Nick Smith (MGB); Richard Owen (Triumph TR2); Paul Brown (MGB GT). FL W Plant 1m06.772s (88.37mph). P Davison. S 28.

Historic Touring Cars (13 laps) 1 Peter Hallford (Ford Mustang); 2 Alex Thistlethwaite (Ford Mustang) +4.583s; 3 Richard Belcher (Ford Lotus Cortina); 4 Jonathan Gomm (BMW 1800); 5 Jonathan Lewis (Mini Cooper S); 6 Philip House (Ford Lotus Cortina). CW Belcher; Lewis; House; Tom Bell (Mini Cooper S); Bob Bullen (Ford Anglia); David Hall (Ford Lotus Cortina); Steve Platts (Singer Chamois); John Marsden (Mini Cooper S). FL Hallford 1m09.409s (85.01mph). P Hallford. S 27. **Race 2 (13 laps)** 1 Hallford; 2 Thistlethwaite +2.328s; 3 Belcher; 4 Gomm; 5 James Clarke (Ford Lotus Cortina); 6 Lewis. CW Belcher; Clarke; Lewis; House; Hall; Dan Lewis (Mini Cooper S); Platts; Marsden. FL Hallford 1m09.923s (84.38mph). P Hallford. S 26.

Historic Formula Ford 2000 (15 laps) 1 Andrew Park (Reynard SF81); 2 Ian Pearson (Royale RP30) +3.769s; 3 Benn Simms (Reynard SF77); 4 Callum Grant (Delta T78); 5 Guy Sheppard (Reynard SF77); 6 David Walton (Royale RP27). CW Tom White (Osella FAF); John Stapleton (Tui BH2). FL Park 1m01.066s (96.62mph). P Park. S 29.

Race 2 (10 laps) 1 Park; 2 Simms +3.555s; 3 Grant; 4 Pearson; 5 White; 6 Matthew Dunne (Royale RP27). CW White. FL Park 1m01.349s (96.18mph). P Park. S 26.

Classic Formula 3/Classic FF2000 (15 laps) 1 Gaius Ghinn (Ralt RT3); 2 Richard Trott (Chevron B43) +0.788s; 3 Ian Flux (March 783); 4 Cameron Jackson (Euronacing 101); 5 Paul Smith (Ralt RT1); 6 Tom Smith (March 793). CW Jon Finch (Van Diemen FR82); Adrian Langridge (Dastle Mk10); David Mercer (Reynard SF78). FL Trott 59.895s (98.51mph). P Pat Gormley (Safir R.J.F3). S 27. **Race 2 (19 laps)** 1 Ghinn; 2 Trott +3.740s; 3 T Smith; 4 Ian Jacobs (Ralt RT3); 5 Flux; 6 Gormley. CW Finch; Adrian Langridge; Mercer; Andy Langridge (March 733). FL Jacobs 59.582s (99.03mph). P Ghinn. S 27.



Taylor and Woodhouse (r) had a close battle



Hallford claimed a brace in Historic Touring Cars

INSIGHT: GINETTA LMP1

Ginetta is flat-out developing its new LMP1 offering. **Rob Ladbroke** went to see how it was coming along

DESIGNING A

LE MANS



Car's build is being finalised in Leeds



Windtunnel test sessions have advanced a long way, even since 2009



Tunnel can replicate many different scenarios for complex model

Remember the days when Le Mans challengers were built in sheds? Whether it was somewhere in the French countryside, a London suburb or the wilds of Norfolk, many great cars were born out of rather basic premises.

Those days are now well and truly gone. When British firm Ginetta announced plans to design and build a new privateer LMP1 prototype, it had two options. Treat it like a true privateer project and do the work in-house – admittedly in Ginetta's modern, well-equipped 75,000 sq ft 'shed' – or go the whole hog and treat it like a works operation.

Reading down Ginetta's partners list for the P1 project makes it very clear that the Leeds firm has gone for the second option. While LMP1 will be merged into a single class next year, this project is still firmly aimed at privateers. But the level of detail and resource being thrown at the new P1 makes the development of the car nothing short of a full works project.

Ginetta plans to sell the P1 to customer teams instead of run it directly from the factory, keeping with the privateer ethos.

The concept behind the Ginetta P1 is to provide an off-the-shelf, turn-key prototype capable of winning Le Mans and the FIA World Endurance Championship for customers. That's a big ask, so Ginetta – already a major global sportscar brand itself, let's not forget – opted to go big with its partners list to get it right.

The monocoque is being fabricated by A.R.S Tech in Italy before it is shipped back to Britain for final assembly at Ginetta's HQ. But the actual design of the machine is very much British, as is the brains and facilities behind it.

Ginetta has also partnered with the Williams F1 Team, and has been

using its Oxfordshire technical centre to put the new P1 through its paces in regular aerodynamic windtunnel testing.

Before the new car hits the track next month for its first tests, it will have already undergone close to 300 hours of running in the windtunnel, where the team is refining every aspect of the design.

"This is a very exciting time in the P1 project," says its head designer Pete Smith, who has a strong history in prototype engineering and a stint with the all-conquering Audi Sport team on his CV. "We've chosen all of our partners in the project wisely, they're mostly people we've worked with before. Ginetta's ethos is to do as much in-house as possible, but it's about managing timescales and there's so much going on [with the firm's other GT and engineering ventures] that out-sourcing in some cases is the best option to match the deadlines to the workforce. Especially with a car that has a lot of bespoke parts that are made to our own design.

"We have the capabilities to do things like the structural monocoque chassis in-house, but it makes more sense to have A.R.S do it and we do the majority of the machining and parts design instead. Same with the [Mecachrome] engine and [Xtrac] gearbox. The engine will run direct injection to fit our efficiency needs and the gearbox casing is our own design, optimised to our suspension, our aero and our packaging. There aren't many off-the-shelf bits. It costs more, but we know we'll have the reliability from the custom design."

One thing Ginetta has done entirely in-house is the design of the car. The firm first dipped its toe into prototype design when it blazed a trail and made LMP3 a reality. Ginetta kick-started the P3 revolution and, while it has now largely stepped back from that arena, the project brought valuable experience to use as a foundation for the P1 programme.

"We learned a lot from the P3 project," says Smith. "It didn't just teach us about designing a car, it taught us about methods of manufacture, lead times, assembly and certain logistical things. There's a lot of knowledge there that can translate into the P1.

"Your base for a car is always the regulations. Your chassis must be a certain design and dimension, and things are scaled up from P3 for P1 in many respects. The regulations are a similar pattern and written to the same fundamental idea. The parts may all come from a different design, but they're from the same mindset."

With the chassis design largely formed by the regulations, it's over to Ginetta's design department – overseen by technical director Ewan Baldry – to give it the right bodywork, and that's taken a long and thorough process.

Ginetta made its choice of engine and gearbox early, meaning the skeleton of the P1 has been in place for a while, allowing the design team to work on tailoring the skin of the car to make it the best fit.

Chassis advisor on the project, ex-Peugeot 908 LMP1 designer Paolo Catone, says making the drivetrain choice early was key.

"Internal integration is the best thing you can do when designing a car," he says. "If you build the car around the engine, not the other way around, you can accurately predict the stiffness of each element. If you just say 'I have a hole here, put an engine in it' that's the most compromised thing you can do as you often allocate space you don't need."

The early choice doesn't just benefit the chassis either. It allows the car's bodywork to be optimised too.

"From an aero point of view, having things like the drivetrain decided early is massive," says Andy Lewis, Ginetta's head of aerodynamics, who formerly worked for Williams itself. "People don't realise how much revolves around the optimisation of



LMP1 car has been designed in-house

Many parts are a bespoke design

CHALLENGER

the engine and gearbox. Everything from the sidepod outlets to the cooling blockages and even the car's entire wheelbase is affected by it.

"When you develop aero for a car you basically have two targets – a downforce [or drag] target and a cooling target – and you have to find the best balance. The level of drag ultimately dictates your top speed, but you must also cool the car efficiently. You need shapes working in both ways.

"We'll design and simulate a surface in CFD [computational fluid dynamics] and then react and mould it and try to spot a trend in the data that shows a performance level. We'll send Williams the design and they'll build it into a surface for the windtunnel."

Ginetta's P1 windtunnel model is nothing short of astonishing. It is, in essence, a 50 per cent scale model of the entire final car, minus a working drivetrain of course.

The model must be advanced to get the most from the Williams windtunnel, which does a lot more than simply throw air at the model. The tunnel has an active floorplate, which acts like a treadmill and can simulate running at speeds of up to 112mph. Doesn't sound huge, but remember this is all to 50 per cent scale. Along with that it can reposition itself

Ginetta built first LMP3 cars



to simulate yaw, pitch and roll, meaning the computers can essentially simulate a full lap of a circuit at speed.

Ginetta's model runs full working suspension under the skin, as well as having 'masses' installed to act as the blockages of the engine, gearbox and radiators. Even the wiring is replicated to scale, complete with connectors. On the skin, the model runs close to 100 pressure sensors monitoring the airflow over, and through, the design. It even has real pneumatic tyres.

"A lot of work goes into the model, almost as much as the entire finished car," says Lewis. "We've fully replicated the suspension and the geometry from the full-size car. We have wishbones and flexions to make it as real as possible.

"As the model moves from one position to another on the rolling road we can make sure there's no hysteresis, or lag, in the process as we have the suspension and parts flexing as they should. We need to make sure that when we go from one position to another we ensure that the forces acting on the car remain constant and

return to exactly as they were before it moved. That isolates the aero forces and reduces the 'noise' in the system to make the results easier to find.

"Having pneumatic tyres is a big thing. Running scale versions of

what we'll actually be racing on means we can better understand how the tyre will behave on the real car. We can put a pressure sensor under a tyre and look at the contact patch initially, and then subject the model to varying forces and track how that contact patch changes. That way we can experiment with things like camber and set-up options and see the results. We can even track the shape of the sidewall by applying lateral load with the rolling road and see how the tyres will flex under cornering forces.

"Having the model's internals to scale too helps massively with judging things like cooling. We can place a blockage with sensors that represents a radiator and track how much air hits the surface of it to gain an accurate cooling level."

The windtunnel's computing power also helps Ginetta test multiple bodywork concepts much faster. Its systems are capable of completing 30-40 CFD runs in around 15 minutes, whereas a single run back at base can take more than an hour.

Of course, correlation is a concern. Even the best Formula 1 teams have complained about getting lost in numbers as their windtunnel testing has led them down a path that simply hasn't translated on to the track. Until the P1 tests in earnest, Ginetta is using combined computer and tunnel testing to guide its development.

"With the tunnel tests we're trying to see what the forces are doing around the car and where the flow is going,"

adds Lewis. "The key is finding where the differences are between those results and what we see in CFD. It's about understanding why a CFD design didn't match a windtunnel model and moving forward from that is the best way of troubleshooting. If you see something promising in CFD and the tunnel then correlates with it then you instantly have a confidence that whatever you're working on will work on track to some degree."

With LMP1 cars being allowed multiple bodywork configurations – from high downforce to low – Ginetta can test multiple iterations in the windtunnel and view the results. It's not a case of cobbling together one or two engine covers, it's hundreds of fine-tuned iterations across the board.

"We still have a lot of work to do to make sure the tunnel correlates to the track," says Smith. "The most important thing for us is to understand where the car is at any one time. So you know what every change does.

"Fortunately with the WEC and Le Mans we know where we're going track-wise. So we know that in Mexico, for example, it will be the worst-case scenario for us due to the altitude and the demands it places on cooling. We know what the targets are for there so we can tune the car toward them.

"Everybody always says Le Mans is a low-downforce track, but you can't label it as that as there are some sections of it, such as the Porsche Curves, where it's very important to

have good downforce. It's about finding that blend between drag, downforce and cooling to develop the best package."

It's currently difficult to benchmark the Ginetta P1's performance targets, due to the low entry in the privateer P1 class this year. As such a lot of the benchmarking is done against the improvements of the LMP2 class.

Engine and downforce upgrades have helped P2s lap faster than ever before. This year's field lapped almost as fast as the monster-powered LMP1 offerings of Peugeot and Audi from the late 2000s.

"We've worked hard to understand our competition," adds Smith.

"Granted there aren't so many direct comparisons out there right now, but we do have big comparisons to draw from LMP2 – from where they've come from to where they are now. You can tell a lot about engine and aero development from that performance gain and where the lap time is made. We've done a lot of simulation around our aero, weight distribution and weight limits, so we're confident we know where we'll be when we start testing for real."

With the future of the factory LMP1 category still up in the air with just Toyota remaining, the longevity of the class likely lies with the privateer entries. Ginetta is leaving no stone unturned to try and create the fastest turn-key car in the field, which may well wind up leading overall come Le Mans next year. ■

Why the man who penned the winning Peugeot is now working with Ginetta

Ginetta's partnership with A.R.S also brought with it a valuable introduction to Paolo Catone, the man behind the design of Peugeot's 2009 Le Mans-winning 908 HDi FAP LMP1. The Italian is working as a consultant to Ginetta's P1 project. He brings a wealth of experience, but even he has been impressed by the level of Ginetta's programme so far.

"What is good for me is that, with a project like this, I am always able to still learn something," says Catone.

"Peugeot was a great project, but it was just different. Here we continue to learn and push performance forward. The level of performance we have now is nothing to do with what we had at Peugeot, just because you progress so much every year.

"For me this type of testing [windtunnel] is amazing now. The kind of technology and quality of the model now is a big step over what we had two or three years ago, let alone what we had in 2009! The level has increased so

much both with testing and analysis. It shows on the track too as we now have LMP2 cars lapping almost as fast as the 908 did when it won Le Mans!

"For me this project appeals as I am not the head designer, I'm not the aero guy, I just bring my experience. I have people around me with much different experiences and we match them all together as best we can. It is a great experience to work like this. It is an open book. To have a car born from a process like this is a very special thing."



Catone designed the legendary 908

HISTORICS

'Teenager made impressive debut'
Danish visitor stars, below



Photos: Paul Lawrence

DOWN THE PUB WITH

RICHARD TARLING

Age: 38
Lives: Henley-on-Thames
New Historic FF champion

He never gave up

"I've learnt that you have to keep plugging away and don't ever give up. And don't overdo it, either, because it is easy to get carried away. I just knew I had to be there or thereabouts at the end, which I was. After the first race at Silverstone on Sunday I knew I absolutely had to win race two. I had the pace anyway, so it was a matter of not letting anyone else pass me."

His racecraft was strong

"We were all about the same pace and it just mattered where you were at any given time. Knowing what to do in a certain situation is probably my strongest point and being able to push people into doing things they maybe didn't want to do."

They worked on the car

"The Jamun T2 was new to us at the start of the season and a lot of the other guys have run their cars for several years. We spent half the year trying to get the car better and from Croft onwards I've won most of the races. I withdrew from the non-championship race at the Silverstone Classic because we had a problem and that was the best thing I did. We then re-focused on making the car right and at Croft it was night and day different."

Dave Morgan was key

"We did two weekends in the Macon and that car could be potentially quicker than the Jamun. Dave Morgan has put a lot of time into the Jamun and he's been involved in Formula Ford since 1974, so he knows what he is doing with the cars."

He has enjoyed the championship

"It has been a fantastic season. Everyone in the championship is so friendly and happy. There is a group camaraderie which is missing from a lot of other championships. The whole thing keeps together because of that and it makes the racing good as well. You give a bit and you take a bit. People give way when they should give way instead of ramming you off the track."

He'll probably be back

"I've still got the Jamun so in all likelihood I will either do the whole Historic championship or part of it again next year. It's been such good racing that I'd quite like to do more of it."



FFord champion Tarling



Gathercole's Ford Escort Mk1

CIRCUIT RACERS TEAM UP FOR R.A.C. RALLY

Gathercole and Donn swap Tarmac tracks for forest stages

By Paul Lawrence

Regular historic racers David Gathercole and Martyn Donn have teamed up to contest the Roger Albert Clark Rally in Gathercole's BDA-engined Ford Escort Mk1.

Although they're more at home on asphalt circuits, the pair will take on the challenge of the four-day forest rally and

Gathercole says it is a schoolboy dream come true.

As well as racing a range of historic single-seaters and sports-racing cars, Gathercole is a renowned engine builder in historic racing, while Donn has most recently raced a Formula Atlantic Lola T670 and won the Derek Bell Trophy last season.

"I used to watch the highlights [of Rally GB] on the TV as a youngster," said Peterborough-

based Gathercole. "Martyn is out of the same mould. He did a few forest rallies in a Hillman Imp a long time ago. But he'd never co-driven until we did the Woodpecker Rally last month and we got on really well, despite intercom problems and thick dust in places.

"I've done eight to 10 rallies over the last couple of years, but nothing on this scale and I'm really looking forward to

the Roger Albert Clark. I always thought rallying was totally beyond me and it really does make you realise how much talent the front guys have. The target is just to finish and we'll try for a steady start on Friday.

"Martyn is just blown away with it and he's really absorbed by the whole thing. He's been working really hard on the pacenotes."



Eagling won Derek Bell Trophy class in Chevron B29

Eagling gets to grips with new Chevron

Dan Eagling contested the Derek Bell Trophy races at Silverstone last weekend in an ex-Wheatcroft Racing Chevron B29.

The car is now owned by Paul Tonkin, who will run it in DBT and Historic F2 races next season with preparation by Eagling's Lifetime Racing squad. Eagling took a class-winning fourth on Saturday.

After being raced by Richard Morgan when new in 1975, the Chevron was taken over by Eddie Jordan, who won the Irish Formula Atlantic title in 1978. More recently, it has been owned and raced by Chris Sharples.

"It should be fantastic on tracks like Silverstone GP," said Tonkin who returned to racing this season in a 1600cc F3 Brabham.

Historic rally reunions planned for 2018

Two reunions for historic stage rally cars will be held next year, during Rally North Wales in March and the Red Kite Stages in June.

The pair of gravel rallies will run to the new Rally 2WD format and as many historic crews as possible are being urged to support the two Historic Reunions.

The plan is to bring back the atmosphere, camaraderie and fun in historic rallying. Unfortunately, the changes to event running order

brought in on safety grounds have fragmented and decimated the historic rally entry in many cases.

"We already have pledges from over 25 competitors to enter Rally North Wales in March," said Simon Wallis from Rally 2WD. "The idea behind the Historic Reunions is to ensure that this movement does not disappear with cars being left unused in garages and competitors finding other things to do with their time and money."

Wilkinson gets FF2000 debut



Wilkinson ran in his restored Reynard

After 25 years in a Formula Ford Van Diemen RF86, Yorkshireman John Wilkinson made his Formula Ford 2000 debut at Silverstone.

Wilkinson, who made his Silverstone debut in 1975 in a Mini, ran the Reynard SF79 he has spent the last two years rebuilding.

Wilkinson's chassis was originally used in Formula Super Vee by Dave Greenwood before reverting to FF2000.

"I stopped racing the RF86 at the end of 2015 to put the time into the Reynard," said Wilkinson, who used the final race of the season as a shakedown before the winter.

IN BRIEF

F5000 thunder

Formula 5000s will make their Goodwood public debut at next year's Members' meeting on March 17/18 when a gaggle of the thundering single-seaters take to the Sussex track for a demonstration session. Formula 5000 was very popular in the early 1970s and some of the cars will now run at the 76th Members' Meeting.

Gravsen's first run

Teenage Dane Mads Gravsen made an impressive car debut at Silverstone when he raced the Palliser WDF1 of his uncle Chris Sharples. The 18-year-old has done some karting in Denmark but had only driven the Historic Formula Ford in testing on Friday. Mads won his class in the Classic Formula Libre race.

Harrison misses out

Mini ace Andy Harrison was a day short of having his freshly-built Mini Cooper ready for its debut in the Historic Touring Car race at Silverstone. The latest car has been built up from a 'shell that Harrison has owned since he was 17. Instead, he switched to his Formula Junior Envoy for the HSCC Finals weekend.

Hibberd's Elva

Michael Hibberd gave the ex-Mark Donohue Formula Junior Elva 300 only its second race since 1972 at Silverstone over the weekend. The car, owned by Nick Grewal in the US, has been with the Hibberd team for a complete rebuild and was just finished in time for Andrew Hibberd to race it at Goodwood last month. Hibberd Senior took a class win on Saturday.

Holey in Mallock

Former Sports 2000 frontrunner Adrian Holew sampled a front-engined Mallock for the first time in testing at Silverstone on Friday. Holew drove a Mallock Mk20/21 under the wing of Mallock Sports ahead of a possible switch to Classic Clubmans next season. He came away impressed with the car's level of grip.

Engine halts Willie

Chris Willie fielded his Chevron B29 for only the second time this season during the DBT races at Silverstone. After a debut weekend at Donington Park in early May, Willie's schedule was derailed by engine issues, a truck breakdown in France and a family bereavement. The Cheltenham-based former karter now plans a full Historic F2 season next year.

Brashaw's back

Jamie Brashaw raced for the first time since July when he fielded his March 73A in the Derek Bell Trophy races at Silverstone last weekend. In late July Brashaw snapped his Achilles tendon while playing squash and, despite still walking with a limp, was just fit enough to race the Formula 5000 car to a brace of second places.

Junior title won

Peter De La Roche and Nick Taylor both clinched Formula Junior titles at Silverstone on Sunday. De La Roche, 20, took his first major title by winning the main Formula Junior crown in his BMC Mk2, while Taylor clinched the category's front-engined championship in his Elva 100.

SPORTING SCENE

Photos: Hal Ridge, mkpics.net, Colin Casserley

BriSCA F1

Smith Jr moving closer to F1 Shootout crown

BriSCA F1: King's Lynn

By Colin Casserley

Organiser: Trackstarx When: October 21 Where: King's Lynn Starters: 48

Stuart Smith Jr moved closer to clinching the National Series Shootout title with a dominant display at King's Lynn on Saturday night. Smith backed up his final win with a second place in the Grand National from a one-lap handicap and, with three rounds remaining, he leads by 105 points over Frankie Wainman Jr.

Smith said: "I have seen people lose the title at the last meetings before so I am still going to race as hard as I can in every race."

Mark Sargent led the final from the early stages before Smith broke away from a battle with Nigel Green to barge Sargent out of the way and into a race-winning lead just after the half way point. Sargent held on for second but was docked two places for jumping the start, allowing Green to claim runner-up spot.

"It's the best track in the country and tonight it was in great condition. I am just sorry it wasn't a better battle for the lead but I hope the fans enjoyed it," said Smith.

World champion Green said: "I think I was as fast as Smith in the early part of the race and I thought I would be able to nudge past him towards the closing stages, but my car kept the same pace at the end and Smith got faster, he got the set-up right tonight."

Result

1 Stuart Smith Jr; 2 Nigel Green; 3 Craig Finnikin; 4 Mark Sargent; 5 Frankie Wainman, Jr; 6 Ben Riley; 7 Chris Brooksopp; 8 Glen Scott; 9 Mark Gilbank; 10 Frankie Wainman Jr Jr.



Stuart Smith Jr is inching up on title

BRITISH RALLYCROSS CHAMPIONSHIP: CROFT

HEATHCOTE SNATCHES BRX TITLE AND GP GLORY

British Rallycross Championship: Croft

By Hal Ridge

Lap four of semi-final one in the last round of the British Rallycross Championship at Croft Circuit proved to be the pivotal moment in the outcome of the 2017 title race.

Five-time champion Julian Godfrey entered the season finale with a 10-point advantage over Supercar newcomer Nathan Heathcote and knew a top six finish in the final, even if Heathcote claimed his third win of the campaign, would be enough to secure his sixth crown.

Heathcote qualified on pole position for semi-final one after setting the fastest time in Q3 with an inspired tyre choice in worsening wet conditions, while Q1 and Q2 pacesetter Warren Scott spun.

Despite a slow start to his semi-final, Heathcote restored himself to first at the opening corner to take the lead. However, he ran wide at turn two, allowing Godfrey into the lead. For the following three laps, Godfrey pulled away, looking set to secure the front row grid position for the final that would keep him on course for the title.

But, on the fourth tour, Godfrey collected a course marker at the circuit's hairpin and dropped to third. While he did finish to make the final, Heathcote won to seal pole position for the last bout, knowing he needed to win to stand any chance of claiming the biggest prize.

The final took place on Sunday morning with Godfrey starting on the third row of the grid. Heathcote led into the first corner, followed by LD Motorsports team-mate Scott. Having made it onto the back row of the grid as one of two reserve drivers when Mark Watson withdrew with a gearbox problem and Andy Grant's Ford Focus refused to start, Pat Doran made a blinding start to climb to fourth after the first corner. He then cleared Oliver Bennett, the other man with a mathematical chance of claiming the title, for third. Doran then

caught LDM team-mate Scott at the hairpin, but ran wide.

Godfrey had been seventh after the first corner, but climbed the order on lap one and made a move to pass Doran as the pair exited the loose section at the end of lap one. Minor side-to-side contact damaged the right-rear suspension on Godfrey's Fiesta and, although he held on until the start of the loose section on the second tour, he half-spun and was collected by a number of cars.

As Heathcote powered away up front, Godfrey retired at the end of lap two. That meant Heathcote claimed the crown against the odds.

"My aim was to win, and then I had done everything I could do," said the new champion. "My starts hadn't been great all weekend, luckily I made a good one to make sure I was first at the first corner."

"I was coming down the back straight and I saw a tyre on the side, then I saw Julian's car, so I knew just to calm down and I had a big enough lead to keep to the finish. I hoped I would have the pace this season but never thought I would come out as champion; it's an awesome feeling."

Behind, Scott dropped down the order and then retired later in the race, while Procter passed Bennett for second on the penultimate lap when Bennett ran wide out of the loose chicane.

Steve Hill scored a best result of the season in fourth and Jake Harris was fifth. Doran finished the race in sixth with a puncture.

Tristan Ovenden finished third in the **Supernational** category final to secure the two-wheel-drive title in his first attempt with his Renault Clio V6 as returning driver Ash Simpson claimed victory.

Ovenden's brother Simon claimed the **Swift Sport** title that Tristan had previously won twice, while Junior Rallycross champion Tom Llewellyn made his debut in the Swift Sport category and stunned with an impressive performance to win convincingly.



Rookie claimed BRX crown

Heathcote doubles up with British GP success

British Rallycross Grand Prix: Croft

By Hal Ridge

Following his British Championship success, Heathcote dominated the 24th running of the British Rallycross Grand Prix that followed at Croft. He set the fastest time in the two qualifying races, winning his quarter final, semi final and final to secure victory. Tony Bardy's mechanics worked late into the night to repair his Ollie O'Donovan-owned Ford Fiesta car after he rolled in Q1 of the championship finale the previous day. The experienced driver ran second for much of the final until passed by double GP winner Kevin Procter in the closing stages. Bardy remained third to secure a podium finish, while Supernational champion Tristan Ovenden was top two-wheel-drive car in sixth.

Results

Organiser: BARC/LHMC When: October 21/22 Where: Croft, North Yorkshire Starters: 80
British Rallycross (6 laps) 1 Nathan Heathcote (Citroen DS 3); 2 Kevin Procter (Ford Fiesta)+9.361s; 3 Oliver Bennett (Ford Fiesta); 4 Steve Hill (Mitsubishi Lancer); 5 Jake Harris (Citroen DS 3); 6 Pat Doran (Citroen C4).

Supernational (6 laps) 1 Ash Simpson (Lotus Exige); 2 Guy Corner (Peugeot 206) +4.210s; 3 Tristan Ovenden (Renault Clio); 4 Paige Bellerby (Lotus Exige); 5 Allan Tapscott (Vauxhall Corsa); 6 Slawomir Woloch (Ford Fiesta).
Junior Rallycross (6 laps) (1.3 Suzuki Swift) 1 Ole Henry Steinholt; 2 Morgan Wroot +0.869s; 3 Tom Middleton; 4 James Constantine; 5 Tom Constantine; 6 Sebastian Hoidalén.
Suzuki Swift (6 laps) (1.6 Suzuki Swift) 1 Tom Llewellyn; 2 Morgan Bailey +6.032s; 3 Simon Ovenden; 4 Dominic Flitney; 5 Matt Macted; 6 Rob Shield.
RX150 (6 laps) 1 John Ward; 2 Chrissy Palmer +10.111s; 3 Marc Scott; 4 Mark Rennison; 5 Stephen Jones; 6 Georgia Shiels.
Super1600/Hot Hatch (6 laps) 1 Darren Scott (Citroen C2); 2 Paul Coney (Vauxhall Corsa) +23.247s; 3 Leigh-Anne Sedgwick (Citroen Saxo); 4 Dan Lukaszewski (Peugeot 106); 5 Lee Keeler (Citroen Saxo); 6 Craig Lomax (Citroen C2).
BMW Mini Rallycross Championship (6 laps) (All BMW Mini) 1 Martin Hawkes; 2 David Bell +0.944s; 3 Keifer Hudson; 4 Rob Methold; 5 Drew Bellerby; 6 Lee Freeman.
Retro Rallycross Championship (4 laps) 1 Barry Stewart (Porsche 911); 2 Gary Dixon (Vauxhall Astra) +1.149s; 3 Kevin Feeney (Ford Escort); 4 Paul Easterbrook (Toyota MR2); 5 Stewart Bowes (Mini Clubman); 6 Paul Smith (VW Polo).
MSA British Rallycross Grand Prix
British Rallycross Grand Prix (6 laps) 1 Heathcote; 2 Procter +5.336s; 3 Tony Bardy (Ford Fiesta); 4 Hill; 5 Doran; 6 Tristan Ovenden (Renault Clio).
Junior Rallycross (6 laps) (All 1.3 Suzuki Swift) 1 T Constantine; 2 Steinholt +9.156s; 3 J Constantine; 4 Wroot.
RX150 Rallycross (6 laps) 1 Ward; 2 Scott; 3 Jake Harris; 4 Jones; 5 Mark Rennison; 6 Ben Rennison.
Martin Schanche Trophy (4 laps) 1 Barry Stewart (Porsche 911); 2 Kevin Feeney (Ford Escort) +2.011s; 3 Lance Foster (Mini Clubman); 4 Stewart Bowes (Mini Clubman); 5 Gary Dixon (Vauxhall Astra); 6 Paul Easterbrook (Toyota MR2).

NATIONAL HOT RODS: IPSWICH

Bonus for Scot Bonnar

National Hot Rods: Ipswich

By Graham Brown

Organiser: Spedworth When: October 21 Where: Foxhall Heath Starters: 22

Scots racer Billy Bonnar made the long haul down to Ipswich worthwhile when he took the final honours, outpacing the field for most of the race before fending off a last-lap challenge from Billy Wood. Heat winner Gavin Murray was third.

Colin Hitch headed heat one away, setting a good pace. He was soon joined by Lee Pepper and Shaun Taylor. Taylor moved up to second at the expense of a black cross and was pressing the leader hard enough to attract a second such warning. He couldn't dislodge Hitch, but the arrival of Murray at the back of this bunch looked like forcing the issue.

Some cut and thrust racing put Taylor back to fourth and caused Pepper and Murray to swap places as Hitch put some distance between himself and the pack. Murray was still looking the quickest though and once back in front of Pepper, wasted no time darting past Hitch and away to the win. A superb late charge from Chris Haird carried him all the way up to a well earned second place by flag fall.

Hitch had another go at leading in the second heat, losing out this time to Steve Dudman. Dudman was just beginning to



Bonnar (844) heads table-topper Wood

look settled at the front when his race was spoiled by a yellow flag, thrown when several cars – one of them Haird's – collided on the back straight. Paul Frost's Ginetta got the jump on Dudman at the resumption and he was soon far enough ahead to be thinking about the win. Dudman had a solitary race in second while Bonnar served notice of his intentions for the final by battling his way through to claim third spot.

It was Frost who converted final pole into the lead at the off with Murray and Kym Weaver all over him. Frost clung on until he left a huge hole down his inside at Turn four and paid the price, getting railroaded back to fifth.

Murray took up the lead but with Wood having already lost out to Bonnar, Weaver too was relegated by the Scot, albeit at the cost of a black cross. Almost before Murray had a chance to realise that it wasn't Weaver in his mirror anymore, Bonnar had dived alongside and then pulled away steadily.

Wood also put Murray behind him, Murray looking likely to go down a further spot to Haird when he caught up as well. But the world champ's charge stalled at that point, and fourth was as far as he was going to get.

Nearing the finish, Wood clawed his way up to Bonnar's back bumper and was in with a serious shout at out-fumbling the leader in traffic on the last lap. But Bonnar clearly appreciated the danger and simply stayed alongside a lapped car, giving his pursuer nowhere to go.

Results

Heat one: 1 Gavin Murray (Vauxhall Tigra); 2 Chris Haird (Vauxhall Tigra); 3 Colin Hitch (Peugeot 206); 4 Shaun Taylor (Vauxhall Tigra); 5 Paul Frost (Ginetta G40R); 6 Kym Weaver (Vauxhall Tigra); 7 Billy Wood (Vauxhall Tigra); 8 Lee Pepper (Peugeot 206cc). **Heat two:** 1 Frost; 2 Steve Dudman (Vauxhall Tigra); 3 Billy Bonnar (Vauxhall Tigra); 4 Carl Waller-Barrett (Vauxhall Tigra); 5 Murray; 6 Weaver; 7 Wood; 8 Taylor. **Final:** 1 Bonnar; 2 Wood; 3 Murray; 4 Haird; 5 Weaver; 6 Adam Hylands (Vauxhall Tigra); 7 Frost; 8 Waller-Barrett; 9 Aaron Dew (Ginetta G40R); 10 Taylor. **Points (after 6/14 rounds):** 1 Wood 236; 2 Haird 231; 3 Waller-Barrett 206; 4 Weaver 189; 5 Stuart McLaird (Ginetta G40R) 186; 6 Dew 177.

KEN WHARTON AUTOTEST

Northern Ireland takes team Autotest spoils again

Ken Wharton Autotest: Alcester

By Paul Phelan

Organiser: Hagley and District Light Car Club When: October 21 Where: Arrow Mill, Warwickshire Starters: 32

Northern Ireland was favourite for this year's Ken Wharton Autotest, and the team duly chalked up its 36th win. The crew took the lead on the opening test and stayed in front all the way to the end.

For much of the day England provided the closest challenge, reducing the Ulstermen's lead from a high point of 36s shortly after half distance to 14.7s when double NI champion Paul Mooney collected a 20s wrong test penalty. However, the home team faded on the closing tests and Ireland went ahead of them to claim runner-up position at the end, 20.1s behind the clear winners.

Malcolm Livingston took his individual

lead to 7.3s over Ian White, with Paul Blair and David Thompson's class-winning Vauxhall Nova next in line. NI's Ashley Lamont drove his Westfield to victory in the reserves' competition ahead of Alastair Moffatt.

Results

1 Northern Ireland (Paul Mooney; Robin Lyons; Paul Blair; Mark King) 2264.5s; 2 Republic of Ireland (Ian White; Chris Grimes; Timmy Lynch; David Thompson) +20.1s; 3 England (Malcolm Livingston; Dave Mosey; Richard Pinkney; Mark Thornton); 4 Scotland (Stuart Perren; Mike Biss; Willie Keating; Warren Gillespie); 5 Wales (Dave Evans; Ash Slight; John Moffatt; Dafydd Roberts).
Individuals: 1 Malcolm Livingston (Lindsay Special) 546.2s; 2 Ian White (Mini Special) +7.3s; 3 Paul Blair (Striker); 4 David Thompson (Vauxhall Nova); 5 Dave Mosey (Mini); 6 Richard Pinkney (Caterham); 7 Mark King (Nova); 8 Paul Mooney (Mini-Nova Special); 9 Robin Lyons (Mini); 10 Chris Grimes (Mini); 11 Timmy Lynch (Westfield); 12 John Moffatt (Westfield). **Class winners:** Mosey; Thompson; Blair; White. **Reserves:** 1 Ashley Lamont (Westfield) 547.9s; 2 Alastair Moffatt (Mini Special) +7.5s; 3 Chris Chapman (Striker); 4 Peter Grimes (Mini); 5 Steven Ferguson (Mini-Nova Special); 6 Guy Foster (Mini Special). **Class winners:** Peter Grimes; Jamie McMillan (Nova); Lamont; Alastair Moffatt.

RESULTS ROUND-UP

Irish Rallycross

Organiser: Mondello Park Sports Club When: October 22 Where: Mondello Park, County Kildare Starters: 46.
Super Final: 1 Derek Tohill (Ford Fiesta); 2 Noel Greene (Mitsubishi Mirage) +13.04s; 3 Peter McGarry (Vauxhall VX220).
Supercar Final: 1 Tohill; 2 Greene +12.94s; no other finishers.
Modified Final: 1 Willie Coyne (Opel Corsa); 2 Michael Coyne (Vauxhall Nova) +5.33s; 3 McGarry. **Production Final:** 1 Derek Lenehan (Citroen Saxo); 2 Ciaran Murphy (Peugeot 106) +0.19s; 3 Damian Farrell (Peugeot 205). **Rally Cars:** 1 Dick Sheenan (Opel Corsa); 2 Thomas O'Rafferty (Vauxhall Nova) +6.67s; 3 Jason

Keogh (Peugeot 205). **Ford Fiesta Final:** 1 David Maher; 2 Sean Hession +1.13s; 3 Denis McCrudden. **Junior Final:** 1 Conor Kehoe (Ford Fiesta); 2 Jack Byrne (Ford Fiesta) +3.10s; 3 Ben Mullins (Nissan Micra).

Mercian Sporting Trial

Organiser: Coventry & Warwickshire Motor Club When: October 22 Where: Long Compton, Banbury Starters: 36.
 1 John Fack (MSR) 10 points; 2 Colin Flashman (MSR) 18 points; 3 Jerome Fack (MSR); 4 Ian Wright (Sherpa Indy); 5 Roland Uglow (Crossle); 6 Roger Bricknell (Facksmile).

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MN does not always agree with opinions expressed in letters

MN SAYS...

WRC spoils deserve to go to M-Sport

The British firm stands on the verge of a massive achievement this weekend

The waiting is over, the time is near. Tomorrow, the new generation of World Rally Cars will run in anger for the first time in the United Kingdom. Anyone who got a sneak preview at the recent Castle Combe Rallyday will attest that the latest specification of top flight cars is enough to make the hairs stand up on the back of your neck.

Those thrills will be shared throughout the M-Sport team too. While it isn't a complete rags to riches story, the fact that M-Sport has managed to find itself on the cusp of both the drivers' and the teams' championships is a fairy tale. The Cumbrian firm has taken on, and beaten Toyota, Hyundai and Citroen at the very top level of the sport. That is no mean feat. It is a testament to the belief, hard work and bravery of team principal Malcolm Wilson. When there was a chance of signing the sport's dominator, Sebastien Ogier, at the end of 2016, Wilson went full bore to make it happen. He knew that the Frenchman could prove the skill within the M-Sport team if Wilson was able to persuade the champion to park his backside in the cockpit of the Ford Fiesta. Wilson dug deep, took a risk and *made* it happen.

As a result, Wilson, Ogier and M-Sport are about to complete one of the most remarkable stories in recent WRC history. Credit must go to both of them for making it happen. Are you watching, Ford?

Matt James, Editor (Twitter: @MattJMNews)



YOUR PICS



LETTERS@MOTORSPORT-NEWS.CO.UK

Photographs must be of a good quality and please send no more than three images



ART EDITOR MIKE STOKOE'S FAVOURITE OF THE WEEK!

Robert Taylor enjoyed the warm-up for IndyCars at Watkins Glen



Gerallt Price crept into the woods to capture Sebastien Ogier's test run



There is a track there somewhere...by Sam Nudd



Chris Southcott's slip, taken by Neil Ormston



Mini Challenge battlers get friendly at Snetterton, by Hugh Doran



Josh Fisher at Castle Combe, by Neil Ormston



Tony Forrester caught Steve Hall's Castle Combe shunt



A recent Donington Park testing beauty, photo taken by Rich Cranston

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TV GUIDE

As you may have gathered from the previous 38 pages of *MN*, there's a rather large rally taking place this week. But if your interest in rallying extends beyond the current WRC cars, full highlights of the recent **Cork '20'** rally are on Friday night (2305-0010hrs, Motorsport.tv). It has been a remarkable season for Irish driver Sam Moffett, so tune in to find out if this event was another of his 2017 successes.

Continuing the rallying theme and the final round of the **British Rallycross** season may have been last weekend but this week



Scottish Legends action is shown this week

there's chance to catch all the action from the penultimate contest from Pembrey (Friday, 2100-2205hrs, Motorsport.tv).

But if all of that is too much rallying, why not catch some frenetic circuit racing instead? **Legends** races are regularly action-packed so be sure to watch highlights of a recent Scottish meeting from

Knockhill (Saturday, 1040-1140hrs, Motorsport.tv).

And finally, it's the Mexican Grand Prix this weekend. It may not be particularly likely that there's a first-time winner this time around, but 31 years ago there certainly was. To find out more, view the latest instalment of **Classic F1** (Wednesday, 2100-2145hrs, Sky Sports F1).

LIVE WRC

Wales Rally GB, BT Sport Friday

■ **End of day one review:** Saturday, 0000-0030hrs, BT Sport 1

Saturday

■ **SS12:** Saturday, 1200-1320hrs, BT Sport 2
 ■ **End of day two review:** Saturday, 1100-1130hrs, BT Sport 1

Sunday

■ **SS18:** Sunday, 0900-1000hrs, BT Sport 3
 ■ **SS21:** Sunday, 1200-1330hrs, BT Sport 3
 ■ **End of day three review:** Sunday, 2215-2245hrs, BT Sport 3

Red Bull TV

■ **End of day review:** Friday, 2200-2230hrs
 ■ **SS12:** Saturday, 1150hrs
 ■ **End of day review:** Saturday, 2200-2230hrs
 ■ **End of day review:** Sunday, 2200-2230hrs

Channel 5

■ **Highlights:** Tuesday, 1900-2000hrs

LIVE F1

Mexican GP Sky Sports F1 HD coverage

■ **Drivers' press conference:** Thursday, 1700-1800hrs
 ■ **FP1:** Friday, 1545-1800hrs
 ■ **FP2:** Friday, 1945-2200hrs

Team principals' press conference:

Friday, 2200-2250hrs
 ■ **The F1 Show:** Friday, 2250-2320hrs
 ■ **FP3:** Saturday, 1545-1715hrs
 ■ **Qualifying:** Saturday, 1800-2040hrs
 ■ **Race:** Sunday, 1830-

2130hrs

■ **Highlights:** Monday, 0000-0100hrs

Channel 4 HD Highlights

■ **Qualifying:** Saturday, 2200-2340hrs
 ■ **Race:** Sunday, 2230-0045hrs

LIVE TV

Porsche Supercup: Mexico City

■ **Race one:** Saturday, 2105-2200hrs, Sky Sports F1
 ■ **Race two:** Sunday, 1625-1720hrs, Sky Sports F1

World Touring Car Championship: Motegi

■ **Race one:** Sunday,

0445-0600hrs, Eurosport 1
 ■ **Race two:** Sunday, 0600-0700hrs, Eurosport 1

Formula Renault Eurocup: Barcelona

■ **Race one:** Saturday, 1115-1215hrs, BT Sport 3
 ■ **Race two:** Sunday, 0915-1030hrs, BT Sport 2
 ■ **Race three:** Sunday, 1430-

1600hrs, BT Sport ESPN

Euroformula Open: Barcelona

■ **Race one:** Saturday, 1345-1445hrs, BT Sport ESPN
 ■ **Race two:** Sunday, 1200-1300hrs, BT Sport ESPN

International GT Open: Barcelona

■ **Race one:** Saturday, 1445-1630hrs, BT Sport ESPN

■ **Race two:** Sunday, 1300-1430hrs, BT Sport ESPN

NASCAR Cup: Martinsville

■ **Race:** Sunday, 1830-2300hrs, Premier Sports



END OF DAY WALES RALLY GB WRC REVIEWS
 ■ **Day 1:** Friday, 2235-2305hrs
 ■ **Day 2:** Saturday, 2235-2305hrs
 ■ **Day 3:** Sunday, 2235-2305hrs

LISTINGS

Photos: Jakob Ebrey, Jim Moir, LAT



Wales Rally GB is not just about the WRC machinery

RACING SATURDAY

■ Oulton Park, Cheshire

MSVR meeting: Trackday Championship, Trackday Trophy, F3 Cup, VAG Trophy
Starts racing from 1115hrs (qualifying from 0830hrs)
Admission adult £15, under 13 free **Web** msv.com
Contact 0843 453 9000

■ Silverstone, Northants

Birkett Six-Hour Relay Starts racing from 1130hrs (qualifying from 0900hrs) **Admission** £10 **Web** silverstone.co.uk
Contact 08704 588260

■ Mondello Park, Ireland

Fiesta Endurance Race **Starts** racing from 1200hrs (qualifying from 0900hrs)
Admission adult Euro 15, child free **Web** mondello.ie

SATURDAY/SUNDAY

■ Brands Hatch, Kent

MSVR meeting: FF1600, Allcomers, SsangYong, Single-Seaters, Formula Vee, Victor Meldrew Trophy
Starts Saturday, racing from 1115hrs (qualifying from 0900hrs) Sunday, racing from 1055hrs (qualifying from 1000hrs) **Admission** adult £15, under 13 free **Web** msv.com
Contact 0843 453 9000

RALLYING THURSDAY-SUNDAY*

■ Dayinsure Wales Rally GB

Starts 1900hrs **Admission** 4-day pass, £99. More tickets available on the event website **Web** walesrallygb.com
 *Dayinsure Wales Rally GB National event starts on Friday with a ceremonial start in Chester at 1700hrs. The first stage is on Saturday at 1100hrs.

SUNDAY

■ Bantry, County Cork

Westlodge Hotel Fastnet Stages Rally **Starts** 0900hrs **Admission** free **Web** skibbdcc.com

SPORTING SCENE SATURDAY

■ Birmingham

BriSCA F1 **Starts** 1800hrs **Admission** adult £18, concession £16, children (5-14) £7 **Web** spedeworth.co.uk

SUNDAY

■ Northampton

BriSCA F1 **Starts** 1300hrs **Admission** adult £18, concession £16, children (5-14) £7 **Web** spedeworth.co.uk

Details correct at time of press but check before travelling

THE VOICE OF BRITISH MOTORSPORT

MOTORSPORT NEWS

Autosport Media UK Limited, 1 Eton Street, Richmond, TW9 1AG, UK

EDITORIAL

Tel: +44 (0) 20 3 405 8149
 Like us on Facebook: search 'Motorsport News'
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Editor

Matt James
 matt.james@motorsport-news.co.uk
 Managing Editor Robert Ladbroke
 robert.ladbroke@motorsport-news.co.uk

Group National Editor

Jack Benyon
 jack.benyon@motorsport.com

Junior Journalist

Stephen Lickorish
 stephen.lickorish@motorsport-news.co.uk

Junior Journalist

Stefan Mackley
 stefan.mackley@motorsport-news.co.uk

Group Rallying Editor

David Evans
 david.evans@autosport.com

Art Editor

Mike Stokoe
 mike.stokoe@motorsport-news.co.uk

Office Manager

Joanne Grove
 joanne.grove@motorsport.com

CONTRIBUTING EDITORS

Historics editor Paul Lawrence
Grand Prix columnists Anthony Rowlinson, James Roberts, Stuart Codling
Origination/Repro Dave Sternberg

Photography

LAT Images: Steven Tee, Glenn Dunbar, Sam Bloxham, Zak Mauger

SUBSCRIPTIONS/BACK ISSUES

Motorsport News, FREEPOST, 3 Queensbridge, Northampton NN4 7BF
 UK 0344 848 8834
 Overseas +44 (0)1604 251 457
 Email help@asm.secureorder.co.uk

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Sales Director Matthew Witham
Sales Manager James Robinson
Display Sales Executive Jonathan King
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Production Abbey Gunner

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Group Publishing Manager Sunita Davies

MANAGEMENT

Director of Subscriptions and Marketing Laura Paterson
Editor-in-chief Autosport Media UK Andrew van de Burgt
Publishing Director Stuart Williams
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OUT WEDNESDAY, NOVEMBER 1

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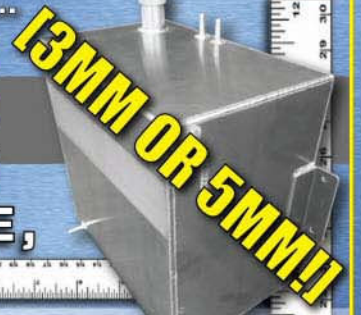
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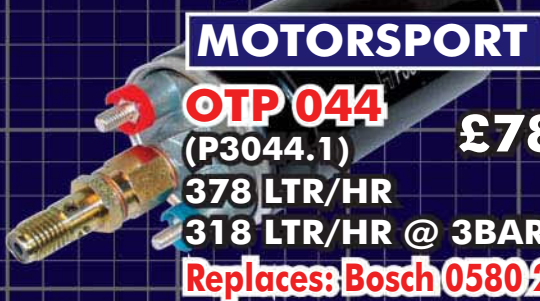
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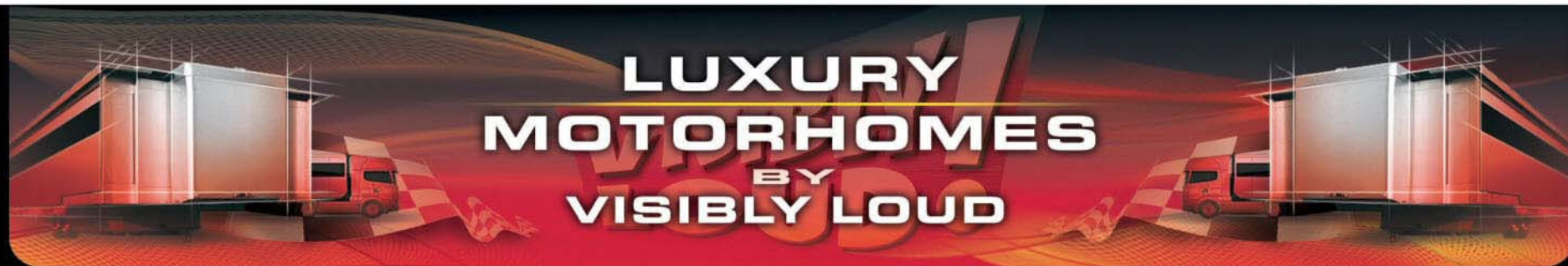
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