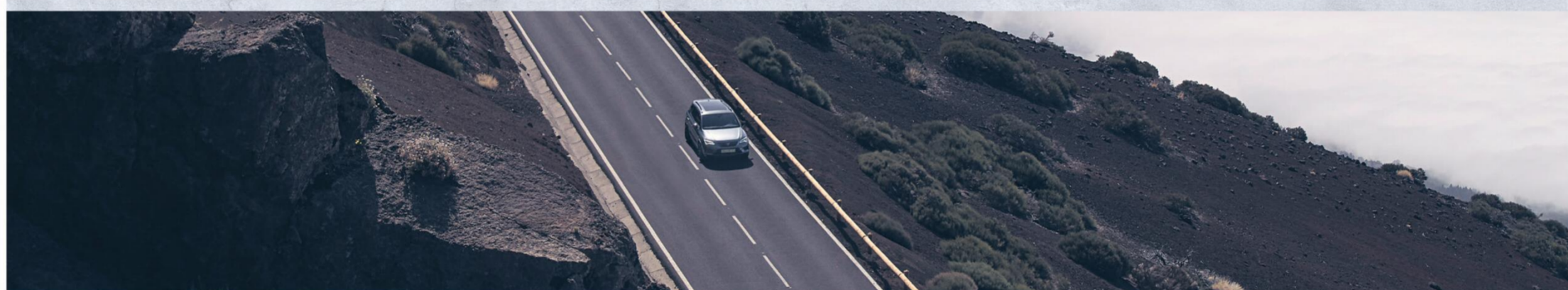


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WHAT CAR? SPORTS SUV WINNER 2019.

#### CUPRA ATECA. CREATE YOUR OWN PATH.

When we created a sport SUV with 300HP, DSG Automatic Gearbox and 4Drive, we were not following the crowd. When we crafted each detail, inside and out, we were not taking an easy road. When we chose to have 19-inch alloy wheels in aluminium and carbon fibre details, we didn't settle for the standards. We only knew. Not what we would find along the way, but exactly where we wanted to go. And here we are. The What Car? Car of the Year 2019 Sports SUV winner.

Made for those who create their own path.

Official fuel consumption for the CUPRA Ateca mpg (litres/100km): 33.6 (8.3) – 34.0 (8.4). CO<sub>2</sub> emissions 168 (g/km) (model year 19 vehicles only). For model year 20 vehicles, fuel consumption figures and CO<sub>2</sub> emissions are not yet available.

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Figures shown are for comparability purposes; only compare fuel consumption and CO<sub>2</sub> figures with other vehicles tested to the same technical procedures. These figures may not reflect real life driving results, which will depend upon a number of factors including the accessories fitted (post-registration), variations in weather, driving styles and vehicle load. There is a new test used for fuel consumption and CO<sub>2</sub> figures (known as WLTP). The CO<sub>2</sub> figures shown, however, are based on a calculation designed to be equivalent to the outgoing (NEDC) test cycle and will be used to calculate vehicle tax on first registration. For more information see [cupraofficial.co.uk/wltp-ateca](http://cupraofficial.co.uk/wltp-ateca).

# MOTORSPORT NEWS

DECEMBER 4 2019

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# LEWIS STARS IN THE NIGHT

Mercedes man rounds out season with 'perfect' win **P4**



New Toyota recruit ready to fly, says team-mate

# OGIER: EVANS CAN SHINE AT TOYOTA



Evans (left) will get to grips with a Yaris WRC

By David Evans

Six-time World Rally champion **Sebastien Ogier** has tipped his Toyota team-mate **Elfyn Evans** for more wins when they join forces again next season.

As predicted by Motorsport News last week, Toyota Gazoo Racing announced the Welshman alongside Ogier and Kalle Rovanpera in a trio of factory Yaris WRCs for 2020. Ogier told MN: "Elfyn has shown good progression. He should have won in Corsica this year and, in terms of performance, we can see he's still progressing."

Full story, p2-3



## HOW PORSCHE UNEARTHS THE NEXT GENERATION OF TALENT

THE SCHOLARSHIP SCHEME THAT HITS THE RIGHT NOTES **P20**



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**Hamilton ends the season on a high**

P4



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**HOW BUTCHER AND COOK'S BTCC SEASONS STACKED UP**

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**Reflections from the Roger Albert Clark**

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**FOR MOTORSPORT NEWS STAFF CONTACT DETAILS PLEASE SEE P31**



Evans will get behind the controls of the Yaris WRC

# EVANS STARTED

## Welshman fired up by new challenge

By David Evans

**Elfyn Evans will test a Toyota Yaris WRC for the first time this week at the start of what the Welshman described as a "massive opportunity" with the Japanese firm.**

Evans and co-driver Scott Martin will get their first taste of working with Tommi Makinen's team and driving the car, which powered Ott Tanak to this year's drivers' title, in the French Alps as they prepare for next year's season opener in Monte Carlo.

Evans, who was announced as a Toyota driver last week, told Motorsport News: "I'm looking forward to see what the feeling is like with the car. Inevitably, there will be differences, but the feedback from the team made it sound very easy to adapt to in terms of driving the car. I'll find that out for myself this week.

"It looks like a very reactive car, but I'm trying not to guess or predict too much on what it's going to be like. I'm going in there with an open mind. Clearly it's a very competitive machine, I don't have any concerns on that side at all. It's just a case of getting used to it as quick as possible and then understanding how to get the best out of it."

As the 2017 Rally GB winner prepares to drive a World Rally Car built by somebody other than M-Sport for the first time in his career, he took time to express

his gratitude to the British team for the last seven years.

"I really can't stress enough how there's no ill feeling or anything like that towards M-Sport," he said. "I lived on site in M-Sport for three years and the team felt very much like home. It's going to take a period of adapting to the new team.

"The opportunities I had with M-Sport were really second to none, especially since 2017 with this new generation of World Rally Cars. Since then, I've had the chance to drive alongside the guy who won the championship in the same car. There's never been any holes in anything M-Sport has provided me with."

Asked about the thinking behind the move, Evans added: "I'm at the stage in my career where I felt a change would be nice. It's just that, it's purely time for a change. It's never straightforward to take such a big decision, there's a lot to

take in and consider. Toyota has the backing of a huge manufacturer and that commitment is a big factor in making this decision.

"We've seen that commitment all the way through the development [of the Yaris] and that's what makes this a massive opportunity for me."

Evans added joining forces with Sebastien Ogier was another attractive proposition for 2020.

"Seb has wealth of experience and huge amount of success under his belt," he said. "Having that experience is definitely not wasted on me."

Ogier was equally complimentary about Evans and his chances of winning more WRC rounds while the pair work together for what could be the Frenchman's final season (see page 14).

Ogier said: "It's good to have him and I was happy to hear the team decided to take him, it's deserved for him after many years in the sport. Elfyn has already shown good progression, he should have won in Corsica this year and, in terms of performance, we can see he's still progressing. It's always good to have team-mates who can push the limit and compete at the top. It's nice to have him, but we both have a lot to learn now."

While Ogier is clear on his intentions to challenge for a seventh title, Evans' expectations are more

**"I felt like a change would be nice"**



**Elfyn Evans**

**OGIER TARGETS ANOTHER TITLE WITH TOYOTA**

# HEADLINE NEWS

Photos: Toyota Gazoo Racing, mcklein-imagedatabase.com



Evans (above, left) will join Ogier and Rovaniemi (r)

# EAGER TO GET WITH TOYOTA

## with Japanese manufacturer – and he’s alongside Ogier again

conservative for the year ahead. “I definitely hope my career’s on the incline,” said Evans. “That’s the perception from my side and that’s the target. I don’t think I’ve shown the consistent level of performance in terms of winning rallies to say I’m realistically going to challenge for the title, but I’m going to do all I can to perform as well as possible and more rally wins and regular rally wins are the focus [for 2020].”

M-Sport managing director Malcolm Wilson has overseen Evans’ development from winning the WRC Academy in 2012 at the wheel of a Ford Fiesta R2 all the way to his maiden WRC victory in Wales five years later – via the 2016 British Rally Championship title.

“I have watched Elfyn develop into a world-class driver over the past 10 years,” said Wilson. “And that’s all been behind the wheel of our Ford Fiesta rally cars. He’s the perfect example of how a young driver can progress through Ford’s ladder of opportunity and we wish him the very best of luck for the future.”

“We wanted to retain his services for 2020, but unfortunately that’s not been possible. Having said that, I remain extremely proud of all we have achieved together and the part M-Sport has played in his development. Elfyn has become a key player at the sport’s highest level, and it goes without saying that he will always be part of the M-Sport family.”



Wilson has been full of praise for his protege Evans’s progress



Welshman turned heads with a maiden WRC win in Wales in ’17



Evans contested a part-season in 2019 after injury, but finished fifth in the final standings

# ABU DHABI GP REPORT



BY JACK  
BENYON

# LEWIS LIGHTS UP THE NIGHT AT YAS MARINA

World champion delivers a perfect performance in Abu Dhabi

## FIVE KEY TALKING

### 1. An old-school Hamilton masterclass

Ferrari has made Mercedes look good this season. Especially after the summer break, the Prancing Horse came out swinging, but reliability issues or strategic incompetence has cost it dear.

Before the Abu Dhabi Grand Prix, Lewis Hamilton had 10 wins from just four pole positions all season long, his lowest tally since his single pole at Korea in 2011.

Hamilton is not the kind of driver to let that go lightly: he is old school when it comes to the need to prove outright speed in the session that is dedicated to just that.

And he delivered in earnest at one of his favourite grands prix in Abu Dhabi, 0.194 seconds clear of team-mate Valtteri Bottas – heading to the back of the grid for engine penalties – and 0.360s clear of the closest non-Merc of Max Verstappen (Red Bull-Honda) who inherited the spot in Bottas's absence.

It was clear from the beginning that Hamilton was in a class of his own as he streaked away at the front of the field in one of his most masterful and dominant performances of the year to win by over 16s. Perhaps rammed home by the fact he set the fastest lap of the race while on the hard compound tyre on the antepenultimate lap of the race. He really was peerless.

“Who would have thought that at the end of the year we would have this strength in the race and even though we had the championships won we just really wanted to keep our heads down and try to see if we could learn and if we could extend and if we could extract more from this beautiful car that they’ve worked [on],” said Hamilton just after emerging from his W10 after the race. “It’s a piece of art.”

Both he and Verstappen went long in the opening stint but, even if Verstappen could have reeled in some of the time to Hamilton following the stop, he couldn’t because of a throttle problem.

Still, in typical fashion, the prodigious talent forced his way past Charles Leclerc’s Ferrari at Turn 8 – the end of the first main straight – to retake second despite suffering with the issue which he described as a “handbrake effect”, but admitted it didn’t make a difference to the overall result as “Lewis was too quick”.

Ferrari were not in the same ball park as Hamilton in Abu Dhabi. After being 0.4s off in quali, Leclerc almost fell into the clutches of Bottas at the end of the race as the Finn scythed his way through the field and ultimately needed just one or two more laps to get within pouncing distance. The young Monagasque was lucky to keep his podium as the team was pinged €50,000 as the FIA discovered a “significant difference” between how much fuel was in the car and how much fuel Ferrari said was in it. This season the FIA has stepped up its efforts to clamp down on fuel-related performance gains. For 2020 it has added an extra sensor to its checks.

Ferrari has long been the recipient of claims of cheating with its engine this year, but this is the first time it has been found in breach of a relevant regulation or technical directive.

Leclerc and his team-mate Sebastian Vettel had pitted 13 laps earlier than Hamilton and Verstappen – the former on lap 26 and the latter on lap 25 – which made them vulnerable later on in the race as their rivals had fresher tyres.

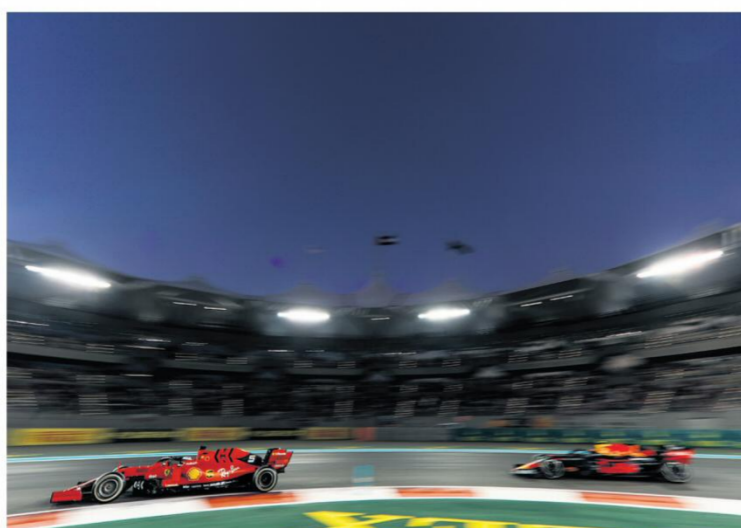
Vettel had to pass Red Bull’s Alex Albon with two laps to go to secure a top-five finish, and said what everyone was thinking: that he and Ferrari must do better next year.



Hamilton bolted from pole position



Max Verstappen put a pass on Charles Leclerc



Sebastian Vettel leapfrogged Alex Albon late on



Where were the rest of them? Lewis was unmatched

Photos: LAT

## POINTS FROM YAS MARINA

### 2. Latifi in, Kubica out and Russell sick

In one of the worst kept secrets in Formula 1 history, Nicholas Latifi was finally announced last weekend as Williams's 2020 F1 driver alongside George Russell.

During Friday practice, Russell appeared to have a mystery illness and there were questions if he would be able to race, leading some to speculate if Latifi could be parachuted in.

However, there was one key point overlooked for those engaging in shop talk: Latifi didn't have a superlicence!

Russell was able to take part in FP1 anyway and completed the race weekend from there taking 17th in the race. F1's favourite reserve driver Sergey Sirotkin – who holds the job for McLaren and Renault – was on stand-by after Esteban Ocon's legs were reportedly too long for the



Kubica signed off Williams career

Williams after he was initially trialled in clandestine fashion on Thursday evening.

Latifi's superlicence would be secured over the weekend as he competed in the finale of the Formula 2 Championship in Abu Dhabi, where he finished second in the championship.

The Canadian driver has taken four wins in F2 this year and may be the only driver to finish 11th in the Porsche Carrera Cup GB to make F1, following a rollercoaster junior single-seater career.

However, the 24-year-old has

impressed with his self-critical approach in recent years and is tipped to make a good F1 driver.

His introduction means Robert Kubica is on his way out of Williams, the Polish driver admitting he is nearing a deal to combine an F1 test role with a DTM drive next year.

Kubica ended the race last of the classified finishers and two laps down, although it wasn't uneventful after a clash with Alfa Romeo's Antonio Giovinazzi at Turn 12 where the two banged wheels and Kubica was sent airborne.

Kubica said: "In many ways it has been a very useful year from my side which has given me another boost to acknowledge that, although I have been away from the sport for very long, I can still be racing at race tracks in high categories so I'm looking forward for probably new challenges next year."

### 3. Life isn't such a drag at Yas Marina

Ever heard of switch-it-off-and-switch-it-back-on-again solution to a technical problem? A server issue caused the Drag Reduction System to be disabled for the first 17 laps of the race, receiving a mixed reaction from viewers of the race.

The overtaking aid has always been a controversial addition to F1 and it is so rare to have it taken away. Overtaking was still possible without it, but the device is significantly potent in Abu Dhabi and proved so when it was reactivated.

"It was a data server crash," said race director Michael Masi. "Immediately we disabled it and it wasn't until we were 100% confident



No DRS made passing tough

that it was all not only back up and running, but back up and running with the correct data available.

"There is a back-up. But the first part is to actually identify what the first issue was. And as we all know, with any back-up systems, there's a lag with things clicking over."

The issue was detected just before DRS was due to be enabled on lap two, and switching it off was a choice made to make sure that no one car or small group of cars got the benefit of DRS and others.

Perhaps 'Delayed Reaction from the Server' is a better use of the term.

### 4. Bounce back from Bottas

Having taken a grid penalty for engine changes, Valtteri Bottas fought his way back through the field in Abu Dhabi, and came sickeningly close to the podium from the very last spot on the line-up.

Bottas – who was deplorably forced by more questionable media to announce his divorce shortly before the weekend – was already due to take a grid penalty for damaged parts in his engine as a hangover from Brazil, but a practice crash in FP2 with Romain Grosjean meant more new parts.

The two collided at Turn 11. Grosjean explained: "I spoke with

Valtteri, and he apologised, which is nice, he said 'look, I'm starting last Sunday so I'm trying overtaking manoeuvres, and that one was probably from too far away'."

Bottas went long in the first stint in a bid to work his way through the field. He was hampered by the almighty DRS not being available for the first 17 laps of the race, but still made a typically sensible charge to the front.

He closed to the tail of Charles Leclerc's Ferrari for third place but narrowly missed out, one more lap likely would have given him a chance. Still, it was a genuinely solid comeback drive, beating Sebastian Vettel and Alex Albon.



Bottas battled back strongly

### 5. McLaren pass and passed on the last lap

In a season where he has impressed the top teams ahead of 2021, Carlos Sainz made a crucial overtake on the last lap of the Abu Dhabi Grand Prix to seal sixth in the drivers' championship.

Sixth place may not be celebrated normally, but it means Sainz wins the Class B championship for best of the rest after Mercedes, Ferrari and Red Bull.

He passed the outgoing Nico Hulkenberg on the final tour to seal the position after having been forced to pit and change to a two-stop race after his tyre wear proved high during

his second stint. Sainz called it the most exciting final lap he'd been involved in, and confirmed 2019 has been his best season in F1 yet.

Unfortunately Sainz's team-mate Lando Norris suffered a heartbreaking end to the event. Norris – racing with a picture of his outgoing performance engineer Andrew Jarvis on the back of his helmet – delivered "sensational" tyre management in the race to one stop in contrast to Sainz.

He held the best of the rest spot in seventh until the last lap, when Racing Point's Sergio Perez steamed past as Norris admitted to being a "sh\*t driver" during the fight.



Sainz sealed sixth in the points

## RACE FACTS

Results © 2019 Formula One Administration Ltd

**ABU DHABI GRAND PRIX**  
**Circuit:** Yas Marina **Laps:** 55  
**Race distance:** 189.75 miles **Lap:** 3.50 miles  
**Lap record:** 1m39.283s (Lewis Hamilton, 2019)  
**2018 winner:** Lewis Hamilton (Mercedes)

**TYRE CHOICE**

Option **SOFT**

Prime **MEDIUM**

Option **HARD**

## RESULTS

### FIA Formula 1 World Championship, round 21/21

POS	DRIVERS	NAT	CAR-ENGINE	TIME
1	Lewis Hamilton	GBR	Mercedes	1h34m05.715s
2	Max Verstappen	NLD	Red Bull-Honda	+16.772s
3	Charles Leclerc	MCO	Ferrari	+43.435s
4	Valtteri Bottas	FIN	Mercedes	+44.379s
5	Sebastian Vettel	DEU	Ferrari	+1m04.357s
6	Alexander Albon	THA	Red Bull-Honda	+1m09.205s
7	Sergio Perez	MEX	Racing Point-Mercedes	-1 lap
8	Lando Norris	GBR	McLaren-Renault	-1 lap
9	Daniil Kvyat	RUS	Toro Rosso-Honda	-1 lap
10	Carlos Sainz Jr	ESP	McLaren-Renault	-1 lap
11	Daniel Ricciardo	AUS	Renault	-1 lap
12	Nico Hulkenberg	DEU	Renault	-1 lap
13	Kimi Raikkonen	FIN	Alfa Romeo-Ferrari	-1 lap
14	Kevin Magnussen	DNK	Haas-Ferrari	-1 lap
15	Romain Grosjean	FRA	Haas-Ferrari	-1 lap
16	Antonio Giovinazzi	ITA	Alfa Romeo-Ferrari	-1 lap
17	George Russell	GBR	Williams-Mercedes	-1 lap
18	Pierre Gasly	FRA	Toro Rosso-Honda	-2 laps
19	Robert Kubica	POL	Williams-Mercedes	-2 laps
R	Lance Stroll	CAN	Racing Point-Mercedes	L45/brakes

Winner's average speed: 120.987mph Lap leaders: Hamilton 1-55

**FASTEST LAP | LEWIS HAMILTON 1m39.283s**

ON LAP 53 (AVERAGE SPEED: 125.142MPH)

## QUALIFYING

POS	DRIVER	TIME	POS	DRIVER	TIME
1	Hamilton	1m34.779s	11	Gasly	1m37.089s
2	Verstappen	1m35.139s	12	Stroll	1m37.103s
3	Leclerc	1m35.219s	13	Kvyat	1m37.141s
4	Vettel	1m35.339s	14	Magnussen	1m37.254s
5	Albon	1m35.682s	15	Grosjean	1m38.051s
6	Norris	1m36.436s	16	Giovinazzi	1m38.114s
7	Ricciardo	1m36.456s	17	Raikkonen	1m38.383s
8	Sainz	1m36.459s	18	Russell	1m38.717s
9	Hulkenberg	1m36.710s	19	Kubica	1m39.236s
10	Perez	1m37.055s	20	Bottas	1m34.973s*

\* = required to start from the back due to additional power unit elements



Kvyat finished off the season with a ninth-place finish for Toro Rosso

## CHAMPIONSHIP POINTS

DRIVERS			CONSTRUCTORS		
POS	DRIVER	PTS	POS	CONSTRUCTOR	PTS
1	Lewis Hamilton	413	1	Mercedes	739
2	Valtteri Bottas	326	2	Ferrari	504
3	Max Verstappen	278	3	Red Bull-Honda	417
4	Charles Leclerc	264	4	McLaren-Renault	145
5	Sebastian Vettel	240	5	Renault	91
6	Carlos Sainz Jr	96	6	Toro Rosso-Honda	85
7	Pierre Gasly	95	7	Racing Point-Mercedes	73
8	Alexander Albon	92	8	Alfa Romeo-Ferrari	57
9	Daniel Ricciardo	54	9	Haas-Ferrari	28
10	Sergio Perez	52	10	Williams-Mercedes	1

# RACING NEWS

## F1 ROUND-UP

### Honda commits

Honda has committed to staying in Formula 1 until at least the 2021 season after extending its deal with Red Bull by one more year. It was waiting for the publication of F1's range of new regulations for 2021 before pushing forward with a decision, so it could begin evaluating the cost of being part of the next rules cycle, amid demand for the manufacturer to cut its spending. Honda's longer-term commitment to F1 has still not been clarified but Red Bull motorsport advisor Dr Helmut Marko has described it as "a great relief for us" in an interview with Red Bull-owned ServusTV.

### Vettel mocking

Four-time world Sebastian Vettel has mocked a rumour he has heard that he will quit F1 now the 2019 season has ended. The Ferrari driver has a deal that runs until the end of 2020 but there has been speculation over his future since the start of this year, ahead of his first campaign alongside rising star Charles Leclerc. When asked what he would like to do from 2021 onwards, once his current deal has expired, Vettel smiled and said "holiday" and then, unprompted, added: "I think I was already doing a holiday next year. I heard before that I'm stopping. I don't know who was the one [to start the rumour], but seems they know more than me."

### Instrumental Hulk

Renault paid tribute to its "instrumental" driver Nico Hulkenberg ahead of his final race before being replaced by Esteban Ocon. Hulkenberg joined the team in 2017 and played a key role in its rise to sixth in the constructors' championship, then fourth in 2018. Team boss Cyril Abiteboul called Hulkenberg "instrumental" in the team's progress. "We needed a driver who had the experience and maturity to help us take the next step and we couldn't have asked any more of him," said Abiteboul. "He has many strong attributes: he's a great driver, always motivated and pushing for more, which has spurred us on."

### Domingos Piedade

Domingos Piedade, a leading light in Portuguese motorsport and a long-time boss of AMG, has passed away at the age of 75 following a battle with cancer. Piedade held several key roles over the years, and was regarded the most prominent motorsport figure in his native Portugal. He worked with or was close to many top drivers, including Emerson Fittipaldi, Nelson Piquet and Michele Alboreto. He was also part of Ayrton Senna's management team in the early part of the Brazilian's career, and got to know Michael Schumacher when he was still in karting. He was best known for the huge contribution he made at AMG, where he rose to be vice-president.

# HAMILTON DISMISSES FERRARI COMPLIMENT

## Champion says it's "all talk" amid speculation that he could join Ferrari for 2021

By Scott Mitchell

**Lewis Hamilton says he is "grateful" for Ferrari boss Mattia Binotto's comments about his ability but thinks the Formula 1 team's "first compliment in 13 years" is "all talk".**

Ferrari team principal Binotto was asked ahead of the Abu Dhabi Grand Prix if Hamilton, one of several drivers whose contract expires next year, was of interest to the team for 2021 and beyond.

His response included calling Hamilton an "outstanding" driver whose availability after next season could "only make us happy", while a report from Italy claimed Hamilton has met with Ferrari chairman John Elkann twice this year.

Asked for his thoughts on Binotto's comments, six-time world champion Hamilton said: "Well, this is the first time I've heard of that. I think that's the first compliment I've had from Ferrari in these 13 years!"

"I honestly don't remember them ever mentioning me so thank you, I'll take it."

"It doesn't really mean anything, it's all talk but yeah, it's nice."

"It's taken all these years for him to recognise maybe, but I'm grateful."

Hamilton, his Mercedes teammate Valtteri Bottas, Ferrari driver Sebastian Vettel and Red



Wolff and Binotto want Briton

Bull's Max Verstappen all need new deals beyond 2020.

The nature of the long-term deal Ferrari's other driver Charles Leclerc signed for this season is not explicitly known, but he may also be available.

However, staying with Mercedes is considered Hamilton's most likely decision.

Hamilton joined the Mercedes works team in 2013 and has won five of his six drivers' titles since then, playing a key part in its domination of the V6 turbo-hybrid era.

He has also contested every one of his 250 grands prix with the manufacturer, having spent 2007-2012 driving for McLaren when it used Mercedes engines.

Asked if Binotto's words were a waste of time, Hamilton said it was "never a waste of time to be nice to someone".

He added: "It has been a long, long time and a team that I've always appreciated over the years, so to earn their respect from someone from there who's obviously very high up

is obviously not a bad thing.

"I think they've got two great drivers as is so, who knows what the driver market's going to be doing over the next year."

"If I'm really honest, I'm not really focused on that right this second: I'm trying to make sure I finish off strong."

"I've got this incredible group of people where I am and I feel like I just continue to owe it to them to give my heart to them and my energy 100% to them, particularly as I'm still in contract and negotiations haven't started yet."

"I honestly don't know how the next phase is going to go when it comes to contracts."

"It's very odd that you have to do it almost a year before it ends and it can't be done towards the end, but that's just the way it goes."

Mercedes team boss Toto Wolff says he's "totally OK" if Hamilton meets with Ferrari.

"I think this is a free world and I recognise that everybody needs to explore career options, and make the best decision for themselves," Wolff said. "Drivers and everybody else included."

"So, I have zero problem, a racing driver will always try to be in the quickest possible car, and the quickest possible car is always going to try to have the best racing driver in there."

"So there is a good consensus between us [over] what we are trying to achieve."



Hamilton's current Mercedes deal runs out at the end of next year



Williams driver last tested Mercedes at Bahrain back in April

## RUSSELL DUE TO COMPLETE THREE DAYS OF MERC TESTING

Williams Formula 1 driver George Russell is due to complete the first of three days of testing with Mercedes today (Wednesday).

Russell was set to drive for his regular team on Tuesday morning at the start of the two-day Abu Dhabi 2020 tyre test before handing the FW42 over to ex-F2 driver Roy Nissany for the afternoon.

He was then due to drive the Mercedes W10 on Wednesday, after Valtteri Bottas drove it the day before. World champion Lewis Hamilton was not available as he has team sponsor commitments.

Russell will return to Abu Dhabi next week for two further

days of 2021 18-inch running in Mercedes' mule car.

Mercedes boss Toto Wolff insisted Russell does not have to worry about impressing the works team amid talk about Lewis Hamilton's long-term future.

"I've said to George this test is not benchmarking him," said Wolff, "because we are absolutely certain that he has the qualities of a potential future Mercedes driver."

"He has the raw speed, he has the talent, he has the intelligence. There is a reason why he's won F3 and F2 as a rookie. That hasn't been done many times before."

And he has a flawless record in F1. "It is more about the

experience. So there's nothing to prove during the during these upcoming tests."

"George is under contract with Williams and we will always honour all contracts because they have given him the chance to step into F1."

Russell's most recent running for Mercedes was in the post-race Bahrain test earlier this year.

"They're not going to judge me based off one test," said Russell. "I'm there to do a job, I'm there to give them data, I'm there to learn as much as I can and bring back the experience I have in that car for the guys back here, and when I did it in Bahrain it was hugely beneficial and hopefully it will be the same again."

## BTCC'S TOP INDEPENDENT DRIVERS REFLECT ON THEIR SEASONS

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## 'How Porsche chooses its Junior' Inside the GB shootout, p20



DAMS won F2 crown in year Driot (r) passed away

# DAMS BOSS DEDICATES F2 TEAMS' TITLE TO FOUNDER

## Latifi will become 31st graduate from the late Driot's squad to reach F1

By Jack Benyon

**Sergio Sette Camara's Formula 2 feature race win in Abu Dhabi was enough to give DAMS an emotional teams' title just months after the prestigious outfit lost its founder and junior single-seater supporter Jean-Paul Driot.**

Since the late 1980s, 30 drivers have graduated to Formula 1 having previously raced for DAMS – which will become 31 when the squad's F2 runner-up

Nicholas Latifi graduates in 2020.

DAMS team boss Francois Sicard told MN: "The level in F2 is very high, and for us we are even more emotional after the season, and the passing of Jean-Paul. We have big thoughts of Jean-Paul.

"He was such a competitor, the only way to honour Jean-Paul was to carry on with the momentum, carry on winning and clinching the title. Jean-Paul has done so much for the team. Everyone was happy, everyone was thinking of him tonight."

Sette Camara's win came after

acing the middle stint while Carlin's Louis Deletraz drove into the distance, as the tyre came to Sette Camara later in the race. The Brazilian will be re-signed by McLaren – probably as its test and development driver again – for 2020 but his racing future is unclear as he has been linked with IndyCar and an F2 return.

Luca Ghiotto signed off his fifth and last season in the F1 support paddock by winning the Abu Dhabi sprint race after passing Jean Alesi's son Giuliano in the first half of the action.

Virtuosi Racing – the Norfolk-based squad that Ghiotto drives for – sealed second in the teams' championship alongside its other driver, Renault junior Guanyu Zhou, earning the honour of top rookie in the championship in seventh.

Latifi signed off his last F2 race with second for DAMS, also taking second in the championship ahead of Ghiotto and Sette Camara.

Nyck de Vries had already wrapped up the title win at the previous round in Russia.

## Five Ferrari juniors land top Formula 2 seats for 2020 as Ilott changes teams

Shortly before he sealed the title of top Ferrari junior in the Formula 2 championship, Callum Ilott was one of a number of drivers announced in plum seats in the series for next year, with five drivers including Mick Schumacher announced in the category.

Ilott raced to a pole position and two podiums in his rookie year in F2 with the Sauber Junior Team – but the squad has struggled this season, especially

with tyre degradation.

Ilott will join top F2 outfit Virtuosi Racing, the Norfolk-based squad taking second in the championship this year. Schumacher – son of Michael – did win a race in 2019 at the Hungaroring but struggled to 12th in the standings, and will remain with the Prema Racing team he competed for this year.

Joining him at Prema will be the FIA Formula 3 champion, Russian Robert Shwartzman,

while F3 runner-up, Kiwi Marcus Armstrong, will join ART Grand Prix. The French squad has won the drivers' title the last two years, with George Russell and Nyck de Vries.

"Being the top FDA [Ferrari Driver Academy] driver in this year's Formula 2 standings is definitely a good foundation for me to build on next year," Ilott told MN.

"I've just turned 21

and I'm still relatively young but it's now important to focus on 2020 and show that I can do what George, Alex [Albon] and Lando [Norris] managed to do last year [reach F1]."

The F2 post-season test takes place at Abu Dhabi later this week, from December 5-7.



Ilott will join Virtuosi

Raghunathan picked up 24 penalty points



## Todt: FIA looking at junior superlicence

FIA president Jean Todt says the governing body is discussing the introduction of a Formula 1-style superlicence system for junior single-seater championships.

The superlicence points system was introduced for the 2015 F1 season, partly in reaction to a 17-year-old Max Verstappen securing a race seat at Toro Rosso.

The system offered a table of points awarded for finishing positions in a number of major championships and mandated F1 drivers must be at least 18 years of age and have competed in two seasons of junior single-seaters before obtaining the licence.

Todt was speaking after MP Motorsport F2 driver Mahaveer Raghunathan received his 24th penalty point of the season.

When Todt was asked if he

felt something needed to be done in relation to Raghunathan's accruing of penalty points, he said: "I do believe that what we did with the superlicence for the drivers – it's something we need to apply for the lower categories, starting from Formula 4, Formula 3, Formula 2.

"It's something that we need to address, but it's cars that are very competitive, very quick, it's a lot of wheel-to-wheel racing."

The idea received a mixed reaction when in the F2 paddock.

While most were in favour of raising the standard of drivers in the series, some pointed to the fact that the teams were businesses and can require a less accomplished driver who brings financial backing.

## AMABA finalist Chadwick to tackle Asian F3

Inaugural W Series champion and Aston Martin Autosport BRDC Award finalist Jamie Chadwick will contest the 2019-20 Asian Formula 3 Championship.

The 21-year-old, who has also taken on a Formula 1 development role with Williams this year as well as winning the MRF Challenge, will contest the winter series with Absolute Racing.

The opening round takes place next weekend at Sepang, with four further events taking place in Malaysia, Dubai, Abu Dhabi and Thailand.

"It is important for me to use

this series as part of my testing and development programme to ensure that I am race-fit for whatever 2020 throws at me," Chadwick said.

"I expect it to be a very competitive series, as there are some top-level drivers and teams entered, so there will be a lot of hard work involved – but that is why it will be of such value.

"I can't wait to get back out on the track."

Chadwick contested the opening three races of the 2019 season, when the category ran across the spring and summer, taking a best result of fifth.



W Series champion will participate in five-event Asian series

AUTOSPORT GRAND PRIX EDITOR

# EDD STRAW

## "Abu Dhabi isn't the right place for finale"



**T**he Abu Dhabi Grand Prix felt more like race 20+1 than the Formula 1 season finale. None of the big prizes were at stake, even if there

were minor places to be decided, but that's only part of the problem. Fundamentally, Yas Marina simply isn't the kind of circuit that produces dramatic races. Even if the title fight were live, scheduling an Abu Dhabi denouement is stacking the odds against a finale for the ages.

There are some circuits that have a real knack for creating dramatic races, be it for incidents or on-track action. For example, there's Interlagos, which hosted two of the most sensational title deciders in F1 history in 2008, when Lewis Hamilton claimed the crown by passing Timo Glock for fifth at the last real corner, and 2012, when Sebastian Vettel recovered from a first-lap clash and damage to beat Fernando Alonso to the championship. Things just happen there.

As Sunday's race reminded us, Abu Dhabi rarely produces spectacular races even though there were some interesting subplots in this year's race – although the TV director didn't let us see the dramatic last-lap passes by Sergio Perez and Carlos Sainz.

From F1's perspective as a business, Abu Dhabi is a great place to end the season because it pays big for that privilege. That's fantastic for the balance sheet, but less so for the overall composition of the calendar. The 11 races so far staged there have been relatively straightforward, perhaps the chaotic 2012 race being the most memorable – and even then only thanks to incidents.

Abu Dhabi has staged three title deciders on the eight occasions it has concluded the season. The famous four-way 2010 showdown was remarkable for the circumstances of the race and Ferrari's catastrophic strategy that cost Fernando Alonso the title, but as a race it was flat.

In 2014, F1 avoided an own goal in its one and only double-points finale, with Lewis Hamilton sealing the title after Mercedes team-mate Nico Rosberg was slowed by an ERS failure. Had it been the other way round, the race would live in infamy, so Abu Dhabi and F1 dodged a bullet. The 2016 finale was the most tense, with leader Hamilton backing up the field in the hope Rosberg would drop back, but the blue touch paper was never lit.

Given a cut-and-thrust title battle with a dramatic denouement is what F1 is gunning for, it's worth considering for future calendars what the ideal place to finish would be. There are many constraints dictating the calendar but it shouldn't just be about who pays the biggest bucks.

None of this means Abu Dhabi isn't a very worth presence on the calendar. It's a committed and laudable host for F1, one that will continue to build a history over time and, another decade down the line, will probably feel like F1 couldn't exist without it. But it's not the right place to see out the season.

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



# RACING NEWS

Photos: Jakob Ebrey

## Bortolotti swaps Lambo for Audi

Blancpain GT Series champion Mirko Bortolotti has departed the Lamborghini factory set-up after five years to join sister brand Audi's works roster.

The 2017 Endurance Cup and overall Blancpain GT champion – alongside Christian Engelhart – joined Lamborghini after impressing in its single-make Trofeo Series, winning the marque's World Finals in 2014, and was key to the development of the original Huracan GT3 that debuted in 2015.

The 29-year-old will now move across to join Audi's pool of drivers to be deployed in works and customer racing activities next year.

Swiss Patric Niederhauser, who together with Kelvin van der Linde beat Bortolotti and Engelhart to this year's GT Masters title in an Audi, joins Bortolotti as a new member of the expanded factory line-up, which now counts 12 drivers.

The other 10 drivers are unchanged; van der Linde and this year's Nurburgring 24 Hours winners Frank Stippler, Pierre Kaffer, Dries Vanthoor and Frederic Vervisch are again joined by Christopher Haase, Christopher Mies, Markus Winkelhock, Mattia Drudi and Rahel Frey.



Clio Cup will feature new fifth-generation car



Ginetta squad Assetto Motorsport is also set to join series

# BTCC SQUAD POWER MAXED EYES CLIO CUP

## Frontrunning touring car outfit among several teams planning entries to new-look series

By Matt James

**The Power Maxed Racing British Touring Car Championship team is looking to expand into the Clio Cup UK series next year.**

The Bidford-on-Avon crew fields the two factory-supported Vauxhall Astras in the BTCC and won the final round of the season in 2019 with Jason Plato at the controls.

A step into the Clio Cup UK competition is a new foray for the PMR team, which also operates cars in the VW

Racing Cup. It will align the Renault campaign with the BTCC programme and will offer driver training as well as the possibility to test the Astra at the end of the season.

Team principal Martin Broadhurst said that the team could field a brace of the French hatchbacks in 2020.

Broadhurst said: "We've seen the car and what the championship offers in terms of value for money and driver progression – it's cost-effective and ticks all the right boxes.

It would be an expansion for PMR and it is a great stepping

stone to be involved with.

"It would be a natural progression for PMR to campaign cars, especially for drivers ultimately looking to enter the BTCC with a frontrunning team. We've always been big supporters of bringing talent to the forefront, and in four years have had two drivers win the coveted BTCC Jack Sears Trophy for best rookie. We would love to hear from drivers who want to follow in that path."

The refreshed Clio Cup UK will run over seven events in

2020 and will support the British GT Championship at five rounds. There are two overseas rounds at Magny-Cours in France and Barcelona in Spain.

PMR was formed in 2015 and the squad finished fourth in the BTCC Teams Championship. It has yet to confirm its drivers for the 2020 British Touring Car Championship campaign.

Another team interested in joining the Clio Cup next year is Assetto Motorsport. The team is run by two-time Clio Cup champion Jim Edwards Jr and his son-in-law Simon Traves and powered Chris

Salkeld to the Ginetta G40 Cup crown this year.

"The championship fits very well with Assetto Motorsport's plans as it works for new, young drivers looking to get going in cars and also those looking to race purely for fun," said Edwards. "They are going to get experience of UK and European circuits in a fun environment without the big pressure."

Existing team Westbourne Motorsport has already confirmed it will run cars in the series next year and a number of other squads have also registered interest.



Cook and Smiley took BTC to second in Independent Teams'

## BTCC Racing to run three cars in 2020 as BTCC licence allocations are revealed

The entrants' permits for next season's British Touring Car Championship have been revealed, with 30 issued for the 30-race contest.

The only significant change for the 2020 line-up is the addition of a third car under the BTC Racing banner. The team ran Josh Cook to three race wins and fourth in the points this term alongside Chris Smiley.

BTCC Racing, which is run by Steve Dudman and Bert Taylor, has purchased the ex-Laser Tools Mercedes-Benz and a licence from BMR

Racing. Taylor said that the team was in the process of finalising its plans for 2020.

He added it was unlikely that it would use the ex-Aiden Moffat Merc, which will be utilised for its RML control parts, but that the licence will enable the squad to grow.

"We had a lot of interest in the team about running with us in 2020, and we wanted to expand," said Taylor.

"We have some very exciting plans in the pipeline, and there are a huge number of discussions going on at the moment about exactly what

we will be up to in terms of cars and drivers in 2020. There is a lot happening at BTC Racing."

Teams are required to hold a TOCA BTCC Licence (TBL) to guarantee a spot on the grid and, in turn, it requires commitments from the teams including presence at every round of the competition.

Every transaction between teams on changing or swapping TBLs has to be approved by BTCC bosses. There are a further two licences retained by TOCA for its use.

## ALLOCATIONS FOR 2020

### TOCA BTCC Licences

TEAM	NO
Aiden Moffat Racing	1
AmD/Cobra Exhausts	2
AmD/Trade Price Cars	2
BTC Racing	3
Ciceley Motorsport	2
Excel8 Motorsport	2
Motorbase Performance	3
Power Maxed Racing	2
Simpson Racing	1
Speedworks Motorsport	1
BMR Racing	1
Team Dynamics	2
Team Hard	4
Team Parker Racing	1
West Surrey Racing	3

## Bushell to make full-time return to the BTCC next season with Team Hard VW CC

Mike Bushell will return to the British Touring Car Championship next season at the wheel of a Team Hard VW CC.

The 30-year-old, a two-time Renault UK Clio Cup title winner, was set to race for Team Hard this year, but a deal fell through just before the start of the season and the seat was taken by Jack Goff instead.

Bushell will now team up with Goff in what will be a four-car

line-up, with the other 2020 drivers yet to be announced.

Bushell joined the AmDTuning squad this term working as an engineer for Rory Butcher. He then stepped into a race drive alongside Butcher when his team-mate Sam Tordoff stood down for the final three meetings of the year due to the death of his infant son.

"Unfortunate circumstances meant that I was unable to take part in the 2019 season and

instead I spent my time helping engineer Butcher to the Independents Trophy," said Bushell. "[My] short spell as a substitute for Tordoff for the last three rounds in the Honda Civic rekindled my desire to race.

"A year on the sidelines has helped with my technical understanding, and I look forward to extracting the most out of the VW CC once again."

Team boss Tony Gilham

said that the work away from the racetrack was important to help the cars improve throughout the campaign and that Bushell's input would be vital.

"I'm a firm believer that everything happens for a reason and to have Jack and Mike as a two-car pairing in 2020 is just fantastic," he said. ● AmD boss Shaun Hollamby has revealed that Butcher will also not remain with the team next year.



Two-time Clio Cup champion drove for Team Hard in 2018

# RGB CHAMP WESEMAEL TO JOIN BRITISH GT4

## Dominant 750 Motor Club title winner will drive a McLaren for HHC next season

Photos: Jakob Ebrey, Steve Jones, Peter Scherer



Wesemael was unstoppable in his Mittell in RGB Sports 1000



HHC switched to McLarens for 2019

By Stefan Mackley

**Reigning RGB Sports 1000 champion Chris 'Chippy' Wesemael will move into British GT next season with HHC Motorsport at the wheel of a McLaren 570S GT4.**

He has spent the last two years driving a Mittell MC-53 in the 750 Motor Club's RGB championship, finishing runner-up in 2018 before dominating this year with 11 wins from 14 races.

After testing the 570S GT4 at Snetterton across two days last month, Wesemael will join HHC for the 2020 British GT season.

"The car was awesome, credit to the team and McLaren, it's very good," said Wesemael after his first test in GT machinery.

"Coming from RGB they are very lightweight and not running a slick tyre, you're forced to work the car yourself which I think helps moving to something like this which has

a much bigger engine, traction control, ABS. I think it's just [a case of] getting used to moving the weight around.

"I was very comfortable with my two days and I think the team were impressed that I adapted quickly.

"The original plan was for it to be one day but you gain a lot being able to leave the circuit and process the information, it's much better than doing a single day."

HHC spent its first season with the 570S in 2019, taking a win at the opening round of the season at Oulton Park with Dean Macdonald and Callum Pointon.

Prior to that the team won the GT4 drivers' and teams' title with Stuart Middleton and William Tregurtha in 2017 – its first year in British GT.

Despite leaving the RGB series, Wesemael is keen to continue working alongside Mittell in the future.

"I wanted to move away from RGB mainly because there's more exposure in the British GT Championship, it's a massive series that's much more nationally recognised," he added.

"Don't get me wrong the cars in RGB are incredible and I will carry on working with Scott and Ian [Mittell] potentially doing some driver work. I think it's just a step forward and a new challenge."



**Mike Simpson and Charlie Robertson gave the all-new Ginetta LMP3 its first public test at Donington Park last week. Ginetta was one of the original trailblazers of the LMP3 concept and will now return to the category with a new G61-LT-P3 machine that features aerodynamics inspired by the manufacturer's LMP1 project. "We had been at Blyton all week with the car and this was our first time in public," said Simpson. "It's our challenger to Ligier and Norma for next year. The car has run faultlessly despite the wet conditions, and we have more tests planned for potential customers to try it."**

## F1 design legend Murray's new T.50 sports car could join World Endurance Championship grid

Formula 1 design legend Gordon Murray is evaluating an entry into the World Endurance Championship's hypercar class with his new T.50 sports car.

The former Brabham and McLaren technical guru has revealed that Gordon Murray Automotive, the company set up to produce the £2million T.50, has already met with WEC promoter and Le Mans 24 Hours

organiser the Automobile Club de l'Ouest as well as the FIA.

Murray says the company has received interest from customers wanting to race a car billed as the spiritual successor to his McLaren F1, which in GTR form won Le Mans in 1995.

"The people who run the series are very interested in having us back after our history at Le Mans with the F1 GTR – I spoke to the

ACO and the FIA in February," Murray said. "We are about to announce a tie-up with an F1 team for the use of a windtunnel in the development of the T.50, so we are a step closer to racing."

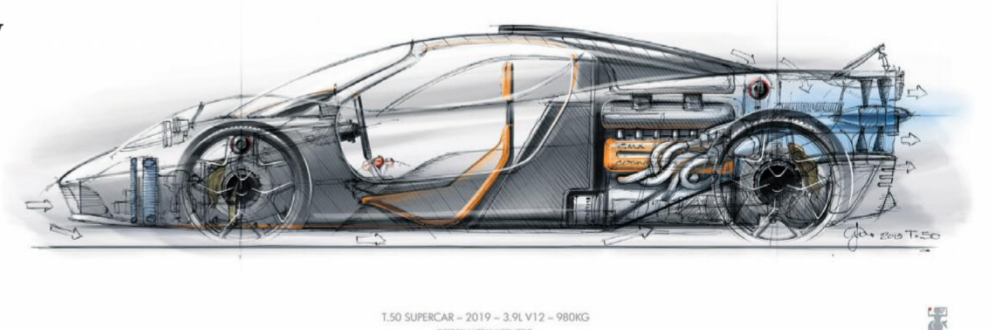
Murray conceded the active aerodynamics of the road car, comprising a six-mode electric fan, almost certainly would not be allowed on a race version.

"I don't think they'd let us use

the fan; I don't think I'd get away with that one again," he said in reference to his 1978 Brabham-Alfa Romeo BT46B F1 'fan car'.

Murray explained that he also had interest in a one-make series for the T.50.

"If it turns out that we don't really fit into the hypercar class or any other category, we have the option of a one-make series with our trackday car," he said.



New T.50 could be used in one-make series if WEC bid fails

## QUICK LAPS

THE FASTEST NEWS ROUND-UP

British Formula 4 driver Alex Connor claimed his maiden car racing victory in one of two non-championship UAE F4 contests that supported last weekend's Abu Dhabi Grand Prix. Connor, who took ninth in the F4 standings this season after being too young to contest the opening round at Brands Hatch, won the second race at Yas Marina having finished third in the opener for Xcel Motorsport. Amna Al Qubaisi won the first race but crashed out of the second... The MTEK team is aiming to return to the World Endurance Championship in 2020-21 after confirmation of its split with BMW. MTEK team boss Ernest Knoors and BMW have revealed that they are no longer working on continuing a relationship that spanned four seasons in the DTM in 2013-16, and then the M8 GTE project that culminated in a WEC superseason campaign in '18-19. MTEK had looked likely to continue with BMW in some capacity in the wake of the announcement in May that the German manufacturer was pulling out of the WEC after a single season... **The two Toyotas will race at this month's Bahrain WEC round with different levels of success handicaps. The #7 Toyota TS050 HYBRID has been handed a 2.51-second penalty and the #8 sister car has 2.72s. The three-point gap between #8 and #7 in the standings explains the 0.21s differential in the handicaps between the two Toyotas. The 2.72s penalty for #8 is slightly down on the 2.74s penalty that both Toyotas carried at Shanghai last month, which reflects the slightly shorter lap in Bahrain.**



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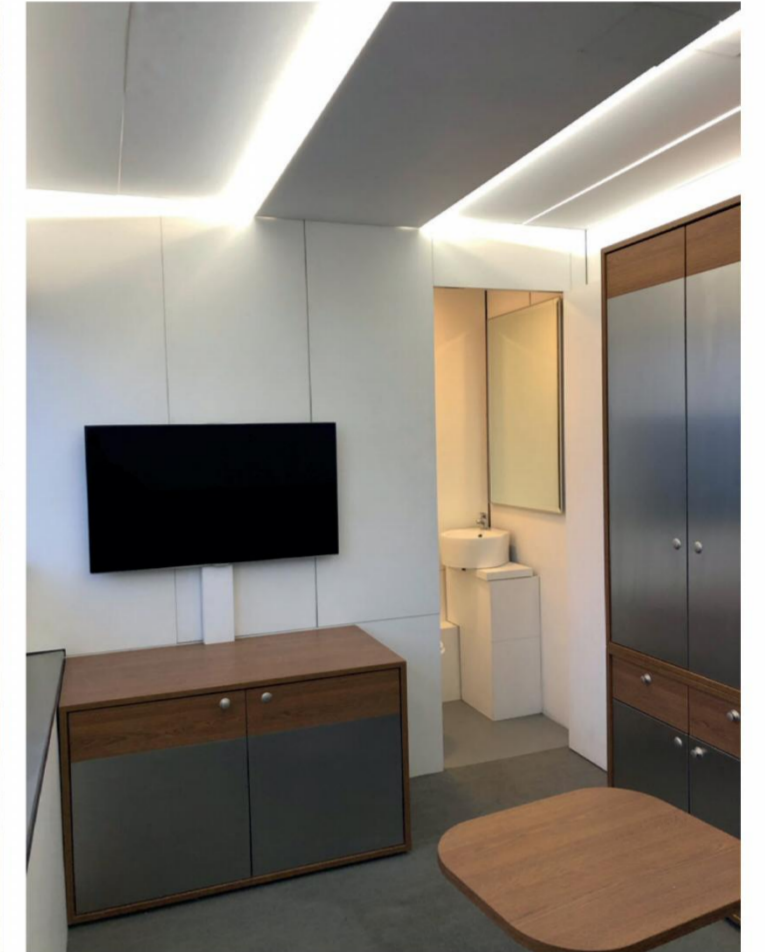
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# RACING NEWS



Photos: Gary Hawkins, Steve Jones, Mick Walker

Mini Miglia and Se7en races were popular at DTM round

## MINI 7 RACING CLUB TO SUPPORT DTM AGAIN

Club is invited back to Brands Hatch event after successful first appearance this season

By Stephen Lickorish

The Mini 7 Racing Club has again been offered a space on the DTM support bill when the German series visits Brands Hatch in 2020, following a successful first appearance this year.

The club's Mini Miglia and Se7en categories had two races in Kent alongside the DTM in August as a replacement for its original MG Live date, after that event was cancelled due to Silverstone's resurfacing work.

Now the Minis have been invited back to Brands again on August 22-23 next year.

Achim Kostron, managing director of DTM organiser ITR, said: "The DTM weekend

at Brands Hatch is one of the highlights of our season – almost all the DTM driver's cite the classic grand prix layout as their favourite circuit of the year. For 2019, it was fantastic to welcome the Mini 7 Racing Club onto the support package – and their huge fields and close, frantic racing definitely entertained the crowds across the weekend. It's fantastic to be able to welcome them back again for 2020, and we look forward to putting on another spectacular weekend at Brands."

The Mini 7 Racing Club's commercial manager Colin Peacock says the club is delighted to be invited back.

"It's a real pat on the back to have the likes of ITR/DTM saying such nice things about

us," he said. "It's great because people take notice so we're very lucky. The membership seems really happy to be invited back and are delighted to be part of it."

As well as the Brands DTM date, the club's 2020 calendar also features its traditional visit to Zandvoort, MG Live and an appearance at Castle Combe's popular Autumn Classic event.

"It's a fantastic calendar and we just can't wait," added Peacock. "We've never done a two-day meeting at Combe before – there's lots and lots of wows."

The club will also run an O-Plate Winter Challenge next year with three races held at Silverstone in March and another three, including a night race, back at Brands in November.

### CALENDAR

#### Mini 7 Racing Club 2020 season

DATE	VENUE	EVENT
April 25-26	Croft	DDMC
May 10	Donington Park	BARC
June 13-14	Silverstone	MGCC MG Live
July 3-5	Zandvoort	CKF British Race Festival
August 8-9	Brands Hatch	MSVR Mini Festival
August 22-23	Brands Hatch	ITR DTM
October 3-4	Castle Combe	CCRC Autumn Classic

#### O-Plate Winter Challenge

DATE	VENUE	EVENT
March 21-22	Silverstone	BARC
November 14-15	Brands Hatch	BARC

"We're pleased to put it all together and race for the O-Plate," said Peacock. "We've got special dispensation from

Motorsport UK to run with the O-Plate [a title often used in karting competitions] and it's a bit of fun."



Caterham-style racers will no longer feature in Open Series

### CSCC to combine Jaguar Saloon & GT cars with its Open Series in 2020

The Classic Sports Car Club will expand its Open Series grid to include the Jaguar Enthusiasts' Club Saloon and GT Championship for the 2020 season.

Since its first meeting in 2003, the CSCC line-up has continually been supported by the Jaguar series and now organises the races on the JEC's behalf.

The Open Series, which caters for cars that are ineligible for other CSCC series, has averaged a strong 32-car grid in 2019.

But it is hoped that the addition of the Jaguar XJSs

and XJs will boost numbers and reduce the cost for competitors.

The format for the Open Series will change as a result, with the usual 30-minute race format being replaced by two 20-minute bouts to allow for a two-driver or two-car team.

However, the Open Series and Jaguar competitors will start separately via a timed interval.

A statement from the CSCC read: "By combining both groups it will encourage strong grid numbers, making financial sense and giving more rounds than we have ever been able to do in the past.

"All CSCC drivers competing in the Open Series as a second race will receive a £100 discount on their race entry."

The change means Seven-type cars will no longer be able to compete in the Open Series, but instead Magnificent Sevens competitors will be offered a second race at all 2020 rounds.

A two-race format has been trialled before and proved popular with entrants. The second race will be optional and discounted, ranging from 15 minutes through to 40 minutes depending on popularity and timetable constraints.

### British Formula 4 race winner Skelton eyes possible Porsche Carrera Cup GB campaign next year

British Formula 4 race winner Josh Skelton is evaluating a move into the Porsche Carrera Cup GB next season.

Skelton finished fourth in this year's F4 standings in his second season in the championship but is

considering a switch to GTs for 2020. He has tested In2 Racing's Porsche 718 Cayman GT4 Clubsport – as the team will also expand into the new Porsche Sprint Challenge next year.

"I did the Porsche taster

and Ginetta GT4 Supercup test in 2018 but I have never raced a GT or saloon car," Skelton said after his test at Donington Park last month.

"The route was always to get to GT, but then I had the offer for F4 and it was too

good not to take it."

As well as Skelton, a number of other drivers have sampled In2's Cayman machine, including former British GT racer Steve Clark and Mini Challenge competitor Jac Maybin.



Skelton has tested Cayman

### IN BRIEF

#### Radical's new tracks

The 2020 Radical SR1 Cup calendar features two circuits that the series has not previously visited. The category is due to have races at both Castle Combe and on the Snetterton 200 circuit next season, venues that are new for the championship. The season will again begin with an appearance alongside British GT at the season-opening Oulton Park event in April.

#### Duggan steps up

Ginetta G40 Cup racer Ian Duggan will graduate to the GT5 Challenge next year, remaining with the Fox Motorsport squad. Duggan finished third in the Chairman's Cup class of the G40 Cup this year, in his second season of racing. "Compared to the Cup car, the GT5 has more power and a sequential gearbox, and it just feels like a proper racing car should," he said.

#### F1000 2020 drivers

Two former Monoposto champions are among a number of drivers to sign up to race in F1000 next year. The 2006 and 2009 1400 class champion Chris Woodhouse – who has more recently competed in rallies, including Wales Rally GB National – has signed up along with 2018 Moto 1000 winner Dean Warren. Also joining the 750 Motor Club series' grid in 2020 will be 16-year-old European karting graduate Jack Tomalin, while this year's champion Matthew Booth (below), Clubmans Cup class winner Rob Bailey and Invitational Cup victor Peter Lague will all compete again.



### American Aron targets full FF1600 season

American Bryce Aron is aiming for a full season of National Formula Ford 1600 in the UK next year, after sampling the Formula Ford Festival.

Aron graduated from karting at the end of 2018 and this year finished third in America's F1600 Championship Series.

He took part in the Festival at Brands Hatch with Oldfield Motorsport less than a month after his 16th birthday, though failed to reach the final following a semi-final throttle failure.

"I'm really hoping to do another season of Formula Fords, I'd love to do it in England – a full season of the National championship," Aron said, "and hopefully come back here [to the Festival] again next year and do the Walter Hayes.

"We'll have to see what funding [we have] but that's definitely what my family and I are trying to do.

"I don't think there's any better competition in the world [than in the UK], especially bang for your buck. I want to make myself the best driver and this is the place to be."

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# HISTORICS

'Bean lifted R.A.C. class victory'  
Ford Cortina man's success, below



Photos: Paul Lawrence

## DOWN THE PUB

### MARTY McCORMACK

Roger Albert Clark winner  
Age: 34 Lives: Draperstown



McCormack: event fanatic

#### The Roger Albert Clark is a challenge

"It's a very tough event. When you're in the middle of the event and its long hours and fast driving, it's hard on the body and the arms and shoulders. It's long hours in the car and you have to dig deep and get a bit of resolve now and again and keep going."

#### He had strong pace

"It's a very rewarding rally and you know it's the big one and the special one and that's what it is all about. I'm really happy to have won it for the third time and we were really pleased with our pace all weekend. We kept the pace on and kept our heads down. Maybe I was always known for my pace but maybe not consistency and two years ago we struggled with Jason Pritchard on the Friday in Wales. We dropped a lot of time."

#### He led after the Welsh leg

"I was aware not to let that happen this year and the Pirelli tyres were very good. Coming out of Wales with an advantage was a big positive for me. That was very important because I knew our pace would be OK when we got up north."

#### Fog was a big issue

"Then we got the fog thrown in and we all know that Jason's co-driver Phil Clarke is very experienced in the fog. They took 30 seconds out of us in 12 miles in Harwood. Barney Mitchell and I went down the road after that and said we had to do something about it. Barney got his head down and away we went. This rally is all about the variables and never more than this year. Barney really dug deep and came up a level on Saturday night."

#### Monday was a difficult day

"The last day on Monday was so tough because you're watching for punctures and trying to keep yourself right and just keep driving the stages to the notes. [I was thinking] don't cut too much and risk a puncture."

#### He won for the third time

"It takes a while for it to sink in and it's a brilliant feeling. I must say a special thanks to the organisers and all the marshals: it's a fantastic event and Colin Heppenstall is always thinking on his feet and really on point. It was a really top-class rally. It's an absolutely fantastic experience."



The tin-top field will be extended

# NEW FORMAT FOR GERRY MARSHALL

## Goodwood showpiece tweaks to allow up to 60 cars in the line-up

By Paul Lawrence

#### A record field of Group 1 Touring Cars of the 1970s and early 1980s is expected at the 78th Goodwood Members' Meeting on March 28-29.

A new format for the Gerry Marshall Trophy race will increase the entry to 60 cars. The first 15 finishers from each of the two heats on Saturday will go into Sunday's final.

This will mark the biggest entry of these cars since they raced in period and will allow entries from cars that

have not previously been accepted into the event.

The two-driver-format race will move to the Pierpoint Cup for pre '66 V8 touring cars, which will be the last race on Saturday, running for 45 minutes into the dusk. The driver line-up will include former Formula 1 racers and sportscar stars sharing Ford Falcons, Mustangs and Galaxies with the owners.

One of the key celebrations of the event will mark the 50th anniversary of the Lotus 72, which made its grand prix debut in Spain in April 1970. Just nine chassis

were built and seven are believed to have survived. Through the support of Classic Team Lotus, Goodwood intends to have as many of those seven cars as possible running in demonstration sessions at the Members' Meeting.

Other confirmed races for Goodwood include the SF Edge Trophy for Edwardian Cars, with one race each day, and 500cc Formula 3 cars from the late 1940s and early 1950s. The fastest rear-engined disc-braked Formula Juniors will make their Members' Meeting debut to compete for the Arundell Cup.



Prodrive will look after its legends

#### New division of Prodrive set up to look after its rally icons

Prodrive has launched a new Legends division to concentrate on the authentication, restoration and support of its historic race and rally cars.

Since its formation in 1984, Prodrive has built more than 1100 race and rally cars, including 700 Subaru rally cars. In the 1980s it built nearly 40 BMW E30 M3s and, more recently, nearly 50

Aston Martin GT cars based on the DB9 and a further 180 of the previous generation Vantage.

Paul Howarth, head of motorsport operations, said: "With the formation of Prodrive Legends, owners can now bring the cars home to the same company – and even many of the same people – who originally designed and built them."

#### Rally Revival evokes Network Q memories

The famous Network Q brand will return to rallying as headline sponsor of the Chester Rally Revival on February 28-29.

The revival will feature demonstration stages across a range of venues in the Chester area and will now include a visit to Oulton Park during the Saturday loop.

Other venues to be visited include Chirk Castle, Weston Park, Rednal Circuit and Cholmondeley Castle. The event will start on Friday evening with a ceremonial start at Chester Race Course, replicating the finish of the 1995 Network Q Rally and Colin McRae's win.

"Network Q reaches its 30th anniversary in 2020 and what better way to celebrate than to relive all of the fantastic memories we've shared with rallying," said Clare White of Network Q. "We're thrilled to be supporting Rally Revival and the return to Chester Race Course really is the icing on the cake!"



Barry McKenna was confirmed in sixth place on the Roger Albert Clark Rally

#### RESULTS SET IN STONE AFTER ROGER ALBERT

Due to print deadlines, our Roger Albert Clark Rally report had to be completed before the event results were finalised at 1845hrs on Monday, and there were two significant changes to the results.

United States-based Irishman Barry McKenna and co-driver Arthur Kierans had an up and down rally in

their Ford Escort Mk2 but showed frontrunning pace when all was going well. They went off on the last stage but were later classified sixth overall.

Meanwhile, the MG Midget of Bob Seager and Geraldine McBride suffered clutch dramas on the final day but they were classified as finishers and duly took the awards for Class B2.

## IN BRIEF

#### Bean on the boil

Veteran rally driver Bob Bean, his co-driver Captain Thompson and their Ford Lotus Cortina had a combined age of 207 years when they finished the Roger Albert Clark Rally last week. Bean, 82, came back from rolling out of the Trackrod Rally in September to win Category 1. He first competed on the original RAC Rally in the mid-1960s.

#### Northern finale

Saturday's Grizedale Stages rally in the Lake District includes the final round of this year's Northern Historic Rally Championship. Leading historic entries include John Lowe/Dave Robson (Ford Escort Mk2), Andrew Robinson/Kev Wilson (Ford Escort Mk2) and Ian Barnes/Emma Morrison (Ford Escort Mk1).

#### LeJog's party

LeJog, the Land's End to John O'Groats Classic Reliability Trial, will start at 0730hrs on Saturday. After overnight halts in Chester and Gretna Green, the finishers are due at John O'Groats from 1030hrs on Tuesday. Over 80 cars will start the 25th anniversary edition, which features a mix of tests and regularity sections.

#### Bentleys to the fore

Nine Pre-War cars, including six Bentleys, will head the field away on this year's LeJog. Over 30 of the entries are from mainland Europe, while leading contenders for coveted gold medals include Paul Dyas (Volvo Amazon), Paul Wignall (Alfa Romeo Giulietta) and Thomas Bricknell (VW Golf GTI).

#### Malins: a busy man

Simon Malins successfully completed two major rallies in a fortnight in November when he contested the Rally of the Tests in his Hillman Hunter and, two weeks later, the Roger Albert Clark Rally in his Vauxhall Firenza. He finished 86th overall on the R.A.C. and was third in class C4.

#### HRDC diary

The Historic Racing Drivers' Club calendar for 2020 features five key dates, starting with the Vintage Sports-Car Club Silverstone meeting on April 19. The Donington Historic Festival on May 1-3, Thruxton (June 6-7) and Castle Combe (October 3-4) also feature along with a return to Lydden Hill on July 4.

#### Cobra's sting

The championship-winning AC Cobra of Kevin Kivlochan will greet visitors to Race Retro next February by taking pride of place in the main entrance. The car was brought to the UK and prepared for racing by RW Racing Services. Kivlochan duly dominated this year's Historic Road Sports Championship in the 1965 car.



AC Cobra will be on show

# RALLY NEWS

Photos: mcklein-imagedatabase.com



Frenchman will tackle final season



Ogier won in Monte Carlo this year

## OGIER READY TO EMBRACE HIS FINAL SEASON WITH TOYOTA

French ace thrilled to be under the wing of "hero" Tommi Mäkinen for 2020 attack

By David Evans

Sebastien Ogier says he's not interested in the politics behind Ott Tänak's departure from Tommi Mäkinen's Toyota team, and he's looking forward to working with his childhood hero.

Tänak departed the Finnish-based team under something of a cloud after he was unable to agree terms with the outfit with which he won this year's title. The Estonian will defend his title at the wheel of a Hyundai i20 Coupe WRC – a decision which opened the door for Ogier to be announced as a Toyota driver last week.

Asked how he intended to survive his season with Toyota, Ogier told Motorsport News: "I'm not sure we need to use this word, 'surviving.' I don't see it like this. I had some quick discussion with Ott, like everyone we all got a bit surprised to see he was leaving this team where he got the championship for the first time. But, at the end of the day,



Ogier remembers Mäkinen (above) winning events like the 1999 Monte

you cannot share all of that. You have to make your own experience.

"For me, honestly, I'm looking forward to working with the team. Tommi was my childhood hero from the end of the 1990s. That's my first real memory from rallying and Monte Carlo, I mean this red car dominating this event with Tommi at the wheel and to work with him today is exciting."

Toyota will be Ogier's fourth team in

five years and his first experience of a Japanese manufacturer.

"Working with such an iconic brand like Toyota is something special," said Ogier. "They have a lot of history in rallying and I really have a lot of respect for the Japanese mentality and the way they are, very respectful regarding people. I'm interested to learn more about their culture."

Ogier has started the Monte Carlo

Rally in a new car on two of the last three years and won each time – he's not concerned about starting another new partnership on one of the most complicated events of the season. In fact, Ogier insists the unpredictable nature of the event makes the French Alps a more straightforward place to start.

"It's always a challenge to change team," said Ogier. "But this is something we have been practising a little bit in the last few years! I have been able to adapt pretty quickly in the new environment, so I definitely hope to do it again this time."

"Starting with Monte Carlo seems like a harder challenge but, at the end of the day, the characteristic of this event is so particular, so difficult and so different from the others that the most important thing is to have a car where you feel comfortable. If you don't know the car it's harder: you hardly know the limit of the car."

"But it's also an event where you don't need to extract 100% of the performance of the car. It's more being clever with the

tyres and managing the conditions. Somehow it's maybe better to start with a new team and new car on this type of event – go somewhere where you fight for the last second and last tenth of a second, somewhere like Finland, then maybe it would be even more challenging to do this as your first event in the new car."

One thing Ogier did clear up with MN last week was his intended career timeline. There was talk of a possible two-year deal with Toyota Gazoo Racing, but he said that's not the case. "It's a one-year contract," said Ogier. "My plan hasn't changed."

"And, of course, I would still love a last title, especially with a third different brand, but that's not really the thing I have in mind when I start the season. What I have in mind is, yes of course I am a fighter and a winner and when I start the competition, I start it to win it. I'm not thinking this is the last chance or anything like this. I had already an amazing career and anything I can add on to that would be great."

REFLECTING ON THE ROGER ALBERT CLARK SHOWPIECE

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The Strength of Experience



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*'There really isn't another rally like it'*  
McCormack's R.A.C. reflections, p27



## TEENAGER ROVANPERA COMPLETES TOYOTA YARIS ATTACK FOR 2020

Finnish star ready to face his steepest learning curve yet alongside icon Ogier



Rovanperä aims to learn from team-mates Evans and Ogier

By David Evans

**Kalle Rovanperä will become the World Rally Championship's youngest driver to start a full-time factory programme when he drives for Toyota in 2020, but team-mate Sebastien Ogier has warned all to give the 19-year-old time to develop.**

The Finn was announced alongside Ogier and Elfyn Evans as part of Toyota's all-new line-up last week.

Asked about Rovanperä's chances, Ogier told Motorsport News: "For sure, we need to leave him. The best thing we can do for Kalle is give him time to learn – but for sure we have seen already that he is a really exciting talent."

Jari-Matti Latvala, the driver Rovanperä replaces, was the previous youngest driver to start a WRC round as part of a works team. Latvala drove a Ford Focus RS WRC 02 to 10th place on the 2003 Acropolis Rally when he was just 18. Latvala tackled a mixed programme of World and British Rally Championship events that season and then stepped back to a Super 1600 and Group N effort the following year.

Some have suggested including Rovanperä as the team's third driver could compromise Toyota's chances of challenging for the manufacturers' crown, while also denting Ogier's hopes of pushing for a seventh drivers' crown.

Ogier added: "It's never my approach to start a season thinking about how can my team-mate help me? My target is always to try to focus on myself and get the job done myself – that's the most important. We all deserve the same chance at the start of the season, depending on what can happen in the season, then the strategy can happen in the second half. But in the first half we need to focus on ourselves and bring the best to the team."

Team principal Tommi Makinen has never been concerned by Rovanperä's age – he gave him the chance to test a Yaris WRC for the first time when he was just 16. It was his performance then and his success since then, including this year's WRC 2 Pro title, that convinced him the time is right.

"I've known Kalle since he was very young," said Makinen. "It's always been clear that he has something special. He still has lots to learn, but I believe that he is ready for this step now."

Rovanperä added: "I think the goal for any young rally driver is to have a seat in a World Rally Car. It has been great for me to see how Tommi has [trusted] me already when I first tested the car a few years ago and it's now really nice to be fully a part of his team."

"Next year is going to be quite demanding. The beginning will be all about learning the car and the speed and everything that comes with it."

### Latvala wants more than two outings

Jari-Matti Latvala has insisted his career at the top of the World Rally Championship is not over – despite losing his full-time seat with Toyota for next season.

The Finn, who was urged to "keep in touch" with the team by Toyota president Akio Toyoda, has already landed a Yaris WRC drive on round two in Sweden and at his home round in Finland. He hopes to add three more events to that schedule as he makes his play for a full-time return to the series in 2021.

"It's very important for me to keep driving next year," he said. "This year has been a difficult one, it's been quite a stormy season for me in my

private life too, but I see next year more like a pause than stopping. I am 34 now and I still think I have another good couple of years in me.

"I can confirm those two rallies in Sweden and Finland, but I am working to get some sponsorship to add in Sardinia, Portugal and Rally GB as well. If I was to say the dream, that would include New Zealand as well, but that one is too expensive."

If Latvala could land a five-round deal it could be enough to reignite enthusiasm for a B team at Toyota Gazoo Racing, with the Finn potentially running alongside Takamoto Katsuta, who will start all eight European WRC



Latvala could end up leading a Toyota Gazoo B team

rounds and Rally Japan.

Sources in Toyota confirmed earlier this year that a second team was under consideration for 2020. The original thinking was to include Kalle Rovanperä and Katsuta, in an effort for the two youngsters to learn out of the spotlight.

Registering and running a second, point-scoring manufacturer team could be beneficial for Toyota's

ambitions of a second makes' title in three years.

Latvala admitted he's ready to help countryman Makinen and the Toyota team.

"Maybe it could make sense to join [Katsuta] in a second team and try to score points. I did this already in my career when I was with Matthew [Wilson] in the Stobart team and we were battling with Subaru for the third place in 2007."

### Meeke faces an uncertain future as WRC seats disappearing

Sources inside Toyota have confirmed there's potential for Kris Meeke to carry out some testing work for his former employer, but the Northern Irishman's chances of another full-time programme in the World Rally Championship look to be fading fast.

Meeke has remained tight-lipped on his plans for the future. He's one of eight drivers who could be in with a shot at the single Ford Fiesta WRC seat left with his former employer

M-Sport, but he wouldn't be the most natural fit for the Cumbrian squad ahead of next season.

Meeke was unavailable for comment when Motorsport News contacted him last week, but sources close to him have hinted he's unwilling to bring sponsorship to buy a seat with another team.

Talking about this year's drivers while communicating news of the changes in his team last week, Tommi Makinen said:

"I want to say thank you to Ott [Tanak] and Martin [Jarveoja], Jari-Matti [Latvala] and Miikka [Anttila], and Kris and Seb [Marshall] for all they have done for our team. I wish them all the best for the future."

Toyota Motor Corporation president Akio Toyoda added: "Kris, you have worked hard for Toyota. You always attacked to the maximum and pushed the car to the limit, and gave a lot of advice from the viewpoint of a former engineer."



Meeke might take a test role

GROUP RALLYING EDITOR

# DAVID EVANS

"Elfyn Evans is now a much different driver"



**W**hat did I want Elfyn Evans to say? It was a fair question from the man himself. I wanted him to get excited. I wanted him to talk

about what might have been; how it felt to have landed a career-best result in the World Rally Championship. I wanted him to smash the cover of Motorsport News with a line about taking on the world and beating it next time out.

Fancy some of that, Elfyn? "Maybe. Could do. Actually, not really me is it..."

He's never been one for the big statements. In fact, for a good few years, he was never really one for statements at all.

Everything's changed now. He's a different driver, a different person from the back end of that 2015 season when he scored that sensational second place in Corsica. Do you remember what had happened on the previous round?

We went to Australia and Evans was absolutely nowhere. His result from Coffs Harbour four years ago was comprehensively the worst rally I've seen him drive, quite possibly in his entire career.

He had no speed, no confidence and no fight. His career seemed to be on the edge of oblivion and he appeared powerless to pull it back.

But he did. Regardless of whether or not he agreed with Malcolm Wilson's decision to drop him from M-Sport's WRC assault, it worked. Sending him to win the British Rally Championship stoked a fire in Evans.

Putting him in a squad alongside Sebastien Ogier the following year fanned the flames and a maiden world win in Wales at the end of that season poured the petrol on. Yes, there was the odd event where the pace wasn't exactly where he wanted it to be, but he was learning from the best and it showed.

Ogier's departure from Cumbria at the end of last year was something of a seminal moment for Evans. His moment had arrived: there was a team to be led if he fancied it.

He did. I've watched and admired as he's grown and grown in stature over the last three years and what Toyota has bought itself is a well-rounded, confident and very, very quick rally driver.

Gone is the painfully shy fella who stood – and looked like he would forever stand – in his father Gwyndaf's shadow. Elfyn's domination of the Tour de Corse this year was a graphic demonstration of the stars aligning on a rally and him now being absolutely capable of handling the pressure, the speed and the commitment required to win one of the most complex rounds of the series.

That he didn't win on the French island because he overtook a car on the recce and, therefore, didn't spot a pothole in the road was pure bad luck.

But again, out of that adversity, he took triumph. He held his head high, got back on the horse and rode again. Just as he did when he came back from the back injury that kept him out of Finland, Germany and Turkey earlier this season. He came back at home and showed the pace to win a second Rally GB in three years.

Malcolm Wilson, Richard Millener and good people of M-Sport, your work with the Welshman's done – you've exported a fine, fine driver and person to Finland.



## RALLY NEWS

# HYUNDAI MAY INTRODUCE A SECOND TEAM

## Option being considered ahead of 2020 WRC campaign

By David Evans

**Motorsport News understands Hyundai is investigating the potential for running a second team in next year's World Rally Championship.**

Such practice was commonplace in the series until 2017, with Hyundai running its Hyundai Motorsport N squad from 2014 until 2016.

Hyundai Motorsport director Andrea Adamo told MN he is investigating all opportunities to continue working with Irish challenger Craig Breen and Andreas Mikkelsen into next season.

Both Breen and Mikkelsen will drive Hyundai i20 R5s – as will Dani Sordo – at this weekend's Monza Rally.

Adamo said: "We are working together with them, with Craig and with Andreas. We are working really hard to keep them with us.

"As we know, we will have less World Rally Cars in the WRC next season and all I can do is invent ways to make more.

"As you have seen this year, I have already been inventing and I want to go on inventing.

"I don't know how or when this can happen, but the most important thing is to have the idea and if you have the idea then you can have the target and the target is to try to put all of this together."

Asked if all of this added up to a second team in the WRC, Adamo replied: "I am talking about many things and many options."

Hyundai will announce its

WRC 2 team later this week, with Nikolay Gryazin and Ole Christian Veiby expected to drive the factory i20 R5s.

There's also talk that Hyundai could provide a test car should MRF succeed in landing the four-year control tyre deal from 2021.

The identity of the WRC's tyre supplier is expected to be known from today's World Motor Sport Council meeting in Paris.

Motorsport News's understanding is that the FIA has requested any new supplier – MRF, Pirelli or Hankook – of tyres to manufacturer World Rally Cars should make tyres available on selected events next season to demonstrate progression, performance and potential.



Hyundai Motorsport N ran between 2014-16 and was the second team for the manufacturer



Organisers of Rally Chile are hopeful the event can return in 2021 following cancellation

## Rally Chile dropped from 2020 WRC calendar following unrest

Just two months on from the reveal of a 14-round 2020 World Rally Championship calendar, the series has lost a round after Rally Chile was cancelled last week.

The organisers of the Concepcion-based event announced their decision amid political and social unrest that has left the country in a state of emergency.

Sergio Giacaman, mayor of the Biobio region through which the event runs, said: "We consider it prudent to postpone this date – it needs an adequate climate to perform. However, in Biobio we are all ralistas [rally fans] and, of course, we are going to work very hard for the 2021 event."

The organisers remain optimistic of a return to the calendar in 2021.

Rally Chile's Felipe Horta said: "The decision was to wait a year to take the world championship. We have talked with the FIA and the WRC

[Promoter], where they have fortunately understood very favourably what is happening and are allowing us to cancel the 2020 date and resume the contract we have established for three years."

There was no such commitment from the series' promoter, with WRC Promoter managing director Oliver Ciesla saying: "We were informed by the organisers of Copec Rally Chile that they considered cancelling their 2020 event and, therefore, withdraw from the FIA World Rally Championship next season.

"Together with the FIA we are observing further developments in the country, which hosted its successful inaugural WRC event in Concepcion this year, and are evaluating the implications for next year's championship, and also for future seasons."

There was a similar statement from the governing body with an FIA spokesperson adding:

"The FIA is advised by WRC Promoter that the event organiser for Rally Chile has asked them to cancel the 2020 round. We are engaged in discussions with the Promoter and they are assessing the situation and its implications."

The loss of Chile is a significant blow to the series, which had hoped to run more than 13 rounds for the first time since 2008.

Rally of Spain, dropped from the 2020 calendar against its wishes, is seen as a possible replacement, but it remains to be seen whether the Salou-based event can mobilise the finances and organisation for a mid-April date.

The teams have already pointed out the cost and logistical difficulties in bringing cars and kit back from Mexico to Europe for a possible replacement round before shipping them back out to Argentina a couple of weeks later.

## Champion Tanak to get first taste of Hyundai i20 Coupe WRC later this week in French Alps

World Rally champion Ott Tanak will get his first taste of a Hyundai i20 Coupe WRC when he starts his Monte Carlo Rally test on Thursday.

While the Estonian has visited Hyundai's Alzenau base for a seat-fitting and to meet the team, he still hasn't driven the car and won't get a shakedown before he sits in it for the first time in the French Alps.

Tanak's Hyundai team-mate Thierry Neuville will be the first of the factory drivers to put down any meaningful 2020 running as he starts his Monte preparations today (Wednesday). Sebastien Loeb will complete Hyundai's running on Friday.

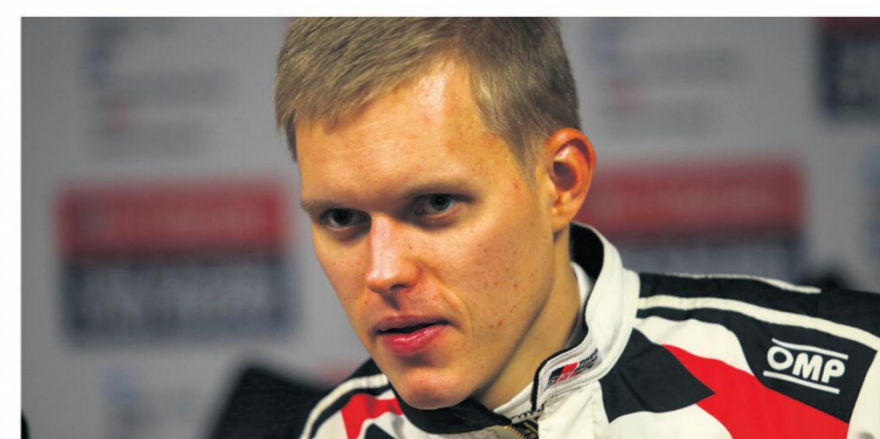
Hyundai Motorsport director Andrea Adamo told MN: "We are really focused to have the feelings from Ott from this test. We want to

hear his feedback, he didn't drive the car at all before this week. It's his first time and we want to discover how it is.

"We are all looking forward to working with him and it's great to get the input into the car from another top driver. We saw that when Seb [Loeb] came last year. Already, Ott has asked for us to prepare different things for the car – I won't tell you exactly what,

but you can trust me when I tell you it's not just the livery!"

Toyota has a more extensive test planned with the Yaris WRC running for five or six days between December 4-10. Sebastien Ogier will drive the Yaris for two days with Elfyn Evans, Kalle Rovanperä and Takamoto Katsuta likely to share the remainder of the time – Katsuta concludes the running on Tuesday.



Tanak won title with Toyota but has jumped ship to Hyundai

*'Duggan used his local knowledge'*  
Killarney win for Ford Escort driver, p23



# ONE-DAY KIELDER FOREST RALLY REPLACES PIRELLI

## New compact route will consist of 45 stage miles next year

Photos: Jakob Ebrey, Martin Walsh

By Stefan Mackley

The popular Pirelli International Rally will be replaced by a shorter one-day event next year – the Kielder Forest Rally – which will feature a compact route.

The Carlisle-based event had been sponsored by the Italian tyre manufacturer since 1992 but this year Pirelli decided to end its association with the rally.

As reported in Motorsport News in September, Cumberland Sporting Car Club – organiser of the event – had considered the idea of hosting a new one-day event in the Pirelli's place.

It has now confirmed a new rally will take place next year on April 25 and consist of 45 stage miles.

The route will be divided into two loops of three stages which will take place in the north and south around the Kielder Reservoir with a central service area located at Greenside.

It's hoped this will minimise the use of chicanes on the stages and keep road mileage to a minimum.

Clerk of the course Steve Waggett said: "Given that this is the first running of this new-



Event will run in the Kielder Forest

style event, we have planned a route which has variation from fast flowing to technical and demanding stages but one which is, above all, compact.

"We have made best use of the roads available to us within the forests and which are located close to the central service area at Greenside.

"The team, many of whom have been involved with the Pirelli International Rally, have been instrumental in sharing their wealth of knowledge to help put this event together and we are really excited with what we have to offer the competitors."

The Pirelli had previously been a mainstay of the British Rally

and British Historic Rally championships, and the new event will remain a round of the latter.

It will also be a round of the Motorsport UK English Rally Championship, Northern Historic Rally Championship and ANECC SG Petch Rally Championship.

## Breen and Nagle already plotting Killarney Historic return



Breen: Runner-up in 2019

Craig Breen was left to rue a small spin on last weekend's Killarney Historic Rally which prevented him from taking his maiden win on the event.

The Irishman and co-driver Paul Nagle finished 14.4 seconds behind winners Rob Duggan and Ger Conway in a Ford Escort Mk2.

"Unfortunately, the spin on Moll's Gap took any chance

away. We dropped the guts of 10 or 15 seconds there but that's the way it is," said Breen.

"To be fair to Rob [Duggan] he drove an incredible rally. We really enjoyed it, it's great that historic rallying has taken off with so many others taking part as well, it was great to be part of."

For Nagle, the runner-up spot is an incentive to return next year to try and win the Maurice Nagle Cup, which was presented

for the first time to the winners in honour of Paul's late father who was the prime mover behind of the event.

"We had a great year's rallying and to be fair, Rob was the quickest man here today," added Nagle. "You can't win them all in one year so it gives us a reason to return. It's been one of our most enjoyable days: no pressure, a bit of craic and these cars are absolutely fantastic."

## Pritchard praises Killarney Historic

Three-time British Historic Rally champion Jason Pritchard is hoping his first visit to the Killarney Historic Rally last weekend won't be the last.

The Welshman was full of praise for the organisers behind the eight-stage event after finishing sixth in the modified section alongside co-driver Phil Clarke in the Scott Williams Motorsport Ford Escort Mk2.

He was also quick to praise the stages on offer, including Ballaghbeama and Moll's Gap.

"I loved it, absolutely brilliant. Everyone, the marshals, the organisers, everyone, made us feel so welcome. Other competitors offered me help as well and I am looking forward to coming back," said Pritchard.

"Ballaghbeama [is great] because you can have a push on it, especially when it dried up, I could get the car to work in there.

"After a few years, I think it [Moll's Gap] will be my favourite when you get everything right."

## McERLEAN TO MAKE MONZA RALLY DEBUT IN HYUNDAI

Junior British Rally champion Josh McErlean will make his debut at the season-ending Monza Rally Show this weekend at the wheel of a Hyundai i20 R5.

The opportunity to take part in one of motorsport's highest profile events comes after he visited Hyundai Motorsport's factory in Germany last month with co-driver, Keaton Williams.

Prepared and serviced by Italy's Promo Racing, their car this weekend will share the stages with a number of big names, including World Rally Championship regulars Andreas Mikkelsen and Dani Sordo.

"It will build my profile being a part of something so big," said McErlean, who has already sampled an i20 on this year's Wales Rally GB event.

"We will test the car for the first time on Wednesday



Youngster already used i20 on Wales Rally GB

[today], there is a practice session around the Monza race track so there is no better place to learn how to drive the car to its maximum. We know it is the kind of event where each corner has to be 100% precise to have a good rally. That's the aim.

"There is going to be a lot of tough competition. It's not often you get the chance to line

up against World Rally regulars. It's a challenge but it's a challenge I'm really excited about."

Now in its 41st year, the Monza Rally Show begins with two special stages on Friday afternoon followed by four special stages on Saturday and a further two timed tests early on Sunday morning.

## REVELLING IN HISTORIC RALLYING

# PAUL LAWRENCE

## "This rally takes you out of real life"



**T**here's been a nasty bug doing the rounds this last week which I've been suffering from. It's called PRD, or 'post-rally depression', and it seems that I am one of many people to get it after the Roger Albert Clark Rally.

I've done every day of all 13 editions of this remarkable rally. I said after the 2017 rally that it had been the best yet, but last week's rally pushed the bar even higher.

From the moment I arrived at Leominster at 0900hrs on the Wednesday until we helped clear up after the awards ceremony in Carlisle 132 hours later, this rally consumed me. This was about BDGs signing through forests, heroic efforts to keep cars running, grabbing a word with crews at controls, cheering on the smaller and older cars, constant banter with mates and that awesome feeling of being part of something very special.

For almost a week, this rally takes you out of real life and into a near-fantasy world where everyone shares the same passion. The on-going sagas of Brexit and the election were cast aside and we all did what we love: driving, spectating, marshalling, servicing and organising. No ridiculous election promises, just proper motorsport in the style of a by-gone era.

Judging by the response at the awards ceremony, if there had been an election in Carlisle on the final day of the event, rally manager Colin Heppenstall would be Prime Minister and his cabinet would include Bob Bean, Marty McCormack and Stuart Cariss.

After an event, be it race, rally, hillclimb or trial, I usually get back to normal pretty much straightaway. But the Roger Albert Clark Rally is different and takes days to come down from. I know I'm far from alone in this.

My rally this year, covering it for Motorsport News and handling various media and photography projects, started in the thick fog of Radnor and the sad news of Alan Walker's fire. Friday was much brighter, albeit still wet in weather terms, and a fine day was had in Crychan before seeing the crews at the day's final control on Epynt. The five-hour drive to Carlisle was easier than I'd expected.

Saturday was all about Kershope with a fair walk to some cracking locations before an appointment with the laptop and then time at the service-in control back in Carlisle. Sunday was all about Scotland with visits to Greskine and Castle O'er before another visit to the end of leg service.

Monday took in Falstone, the re-group control at Kielder dam, the stop line of the final stage in Bewshaugh and then a dash back to Carlisle to meet the MN report deadline. After the awards and the organisers' dinner, it was time for a good sleep. It all entailed around 1000 miles, 5000 photographs, limited sleep and walking about 20 miles. Will I do it all over again in 2021? You bet.

● See page 27 for further reflections on the Roger Albert Clark Rally.

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V I D E O

# RALLY NEWS

## PEREZ TO GET BEHIND WHEEL OF M-SPORT'S FORD FIESTA MK2

Porsche Carrera Cup GB driver will use car on the Grizedale Stages this weekend

Photos: Jakob Ebrey, Chicane Media



Moffett won with Fiesta Mk2 on Jim Clark Rally

By Luke Barry

**Porsche Carrera Cup GB podium finisher Seb Perez will debut M-Sport's new Ford Fiesta R5 Mk2 on a UK gravel rally when he contests this weekend's Grizedale Stages.**

Perez, the son of 2010 and '14 BTRDA Gold Star champion Steve, is no stranger to rallying having contested events as recently as Rally Dijous Bo last month in a historic Porsche 911 Carrera RS.

The 20-year-old will test the Fiesta R5 today (Wednesday) in Cumbria

before being run by the M-Sport team on the event itself.

Josh Moffett is the only driver to have used the Mk2 specification on a national event, and duly took it to victory on last month's Jim Clark Rally.

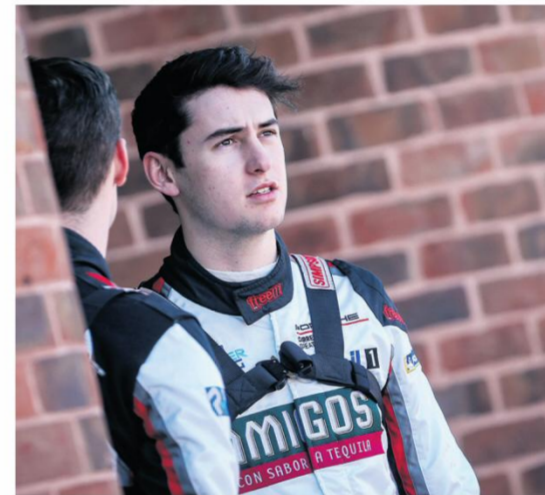
"I am really excited to take part in the event and to rally with M-Sport in the new Ford Fiesta R5 Mk2," Perez said. "It looks like a fantastic piece of kit and I cannot wait to get behind the wheel and see what the car can do."

Steve Perez rallied M-Sport Fords for a number of years in the BTRDA and the British Rally Championship, and his son is excited to continue that relationship.

"My dad has competed in a number of UK rally championships over the years," Perez Jr added. "He won the BTRDA twice in a Ford Focus RS WRC car, so he's had a long-standing relationship with M-Sport."

"My goal was always to do an event in an R5 at some point and that has come together for this rally, so it is fantastic to combine the family links with both Ford and M-Sport, as well as reuniting Alex [Lee, co-driver] and I in the car."

Before the Porsche Carrera Cup GB season restarts in 2020, Perez will contest two more historic rallies in Spain in his historic 911.



Perez will follow in father's footsteps

### Armstrong plots revenge for 2018 Grizedale failure

Double Scottish Rally champion Jock Armstrong will attempt to make amends on this weekend's Grizedale Stages after losing a podium spot on the event's final stage last year.

Then, the windscreen fuses failed aboard his Subaru Impreza, leaving Armstrong to battle through the final 15-mile test with a misted-up screen, dropping him from second to seventh at the finish.

"I'm hopeful," Armstrong told Motorsport News. "You've just got to be straight out the box and get the right frame of mind. Our times will be there and there's loads of competition [but] we've got to go

for a win, we've got to see if I've still got it. That's the big question."

Fighting Armstrong for top spot will be Ollie Mellors, who headlines the final forest rally entry list of the year. A previous Grizedale winner in 2015 and '17, Mellors is targeting four straight wins from as many events in his Proton Iriz R5.

But a trio of Ford Fiesta RS WRCs pose a serious threat, with BTRDA champions Stephen Petch and Charles Payne likely to be in the mix. Thomas Preston meanwhile will be hoping for a clean run following a string of reliability issues on recent rallies.

### TOP SEEDS

#### Grizedale Stages, December 7

NO	DRIVER/CO-DRIVER	CAR
1	Ollie Mellors/Ian Windress	Proton Iriz R5
2	Stephen Petch/Michael Wilkinson	Ford Fiesta RS WRC
3	Thomas Preston/Carl Williamson	Ford Fiesta RS WRC
4	Jock Armstrong/Cameron Fair	Subaru Impreza
5	Charles Payne/Patrick Walsh	Ford Fiesta RS WRC
6	Ian Bainbridge/Tom Woodburn	Skoda Fabia R5
7	Daniel Hiorns/Chris Purvis	Subaru Impreza
8	Fred Milne/Mark Glennerster	Ford Fiesta R5
9	Phillip Pickard/Simon Pickard	Subaru Impreza WRC
10	Simon Bowen/Richard Robinson	Ford Fiesta S2000T

Ian Bainbridge is another driver heading to Grizedale on the back of a disappointing result and has enlisted

the services of 2018 Junior British Rally champion co-driver Tom Woodburn for this event.

### ROAD RALLY ROUND-UP

Northerners Bevan Blacker/Niall Frost made a highly successful raid on the south west last weekend when they won both the **Bustard Targa** on Saturday and the **Barbara Carter Memorial Rally** that same evening.

The Bustard ran at the Glastonbury Festival site at Worthy Farm, giving crews 30 miles of tests. Blacker/Frost led from the halfway point and finished ahead of Dan Morris/Geth Johnson, who snatched the runner-up spot from early leaders Owen Turner/Rachel Vestey on the last test.

Overnight the action moved down to Exmouth. Here Blacker/Frost decimated the opposition, finishing over three minutes ahead of the field on a highly-demanding event. James How/Nic Jones led briefly but retired with a broken gear linkage.

In comparison to the winners, John Davies/Jamie Mills had a dismal weekend. They retired from the Bustard with a broken driveshaft while in the lead, then withdrew from the Barbara Carter after a misplot meant that they missed a timing point.

**Ian Mills**

#### Bustard Targa

**Organiser:** Salisbury & Shaftesbury Car Club **When:** November 30 **Where:** Somerset **Championships:** ASWMC **Route:** 30 miles **Starters:** 53

#### Results

1 Bevan Blacker/Niall Frost (Peugeot 106) 1h01m54s; 2 Dan Morris/Geth Johnson (Ford Puma) +37s; 3 Owen Turner/Rachel Vestey (MG ZR); 4 Huw Morris/Alan Williams (Ford Focus); 5 Chris/Jamie Woolley (BMW E30); 6 Lewis Ayris/Simon Lassam (ZR).

**Clubman winners:** Simon Ayris/Kim Bannister (ZR).

#### Barbara Carter Memorial

**Organiser:** Exmouth Motor Club **When:** November 30-December 1 **Where:** Devon/Dorset **Championships:** ASWMC **Route:** 140 miles **Starters:** 44

#### Results

1 Blacker/Frost 29m07s; 2 Rich Millener/Michael Gilbey (Toyota Corolla) +3m16s; 3 Dave Webb/Shawn Layland (Daihatsu Sirion); 4 Brendan Wellman/Dafydd Evans (Peugeot 206 GTI); 5 Adrian Beer/Paul Hoad (ZR); 6 Simon Harris/Dan Middle (VW Lupo).

**Class winners:** Semi-experts: Dave Berry/Ryan Swain (Ford Escort); Novices: Rob Bolt/Carwyn Roberts (Peugeot 306).

### Rallying return double for Milne in Fiesta R5

Freddie Milne is set to compete for the first time since the Scottish Rally in May as he ramps up his preparations for a 2020 Scottish Rally Championship title bid.

Milne has entered both the Grizedale Stages and the Knockhill Stages that take place on Saturday and Sunday respectively this weekend, with Mark Glennerster and Patrick Walsh sharing the co-driving duties.

The Ford Fiesta R5 Milne will use is hired from McKInstry Motorsport, but the Scot admits he is looking at buying his own car for 2020.

"I'm trying to get back into the swing of things," Milne told MN. "I'm doing Knockhill the day after [Grizedale] so hopefully there's no damage to the car."

"[R5] is probably the fastest thing to go for but I'd want to buy one for the Scottish season next year. But when I've been looking, I keep finding myself going back to the World Rally Championship Subarus."

### TOP SEEDS

#### Knockhill Stages, MN Circuit Rally Championship, round 3/8, December 8

NO	DRIVER/CO-DRIVER	CAR
1	John Marshall/Scott Crawford	Skodaru V1
2	Frank Bird/Jack Morton	Ford Focus WRC07
3	Joshua Davey/Tamsyn Davey	Darrian T90
4	Barry Groundwater/Sean Donnelly	Subaru Impreza S11 WRC
5	Barry Morris/Tom Hutchings	Darrian T90 GTR+
7	Richard Wells/Calvin Houldsworth	Mitsubishi Lancer E9
8	Tony Robinson/Phil Clarke	Proton Satria Millington
9	Brian Watson/TBC	Subaru Impreza S11 WRC
10	Kyle Adam/Fiona Moir	Ford Escort Mk2
11	Mike Taylor/Martin Haggatt	Talbot Sunbeam Lotus

### Crews prepare for third MN Circuit Rally Championship round at Knockhill Circuit

The Motorsport News Circuit Rally Championship heads north for its annual visit to the Knockhill Stages this weekend.

Last year's runner-up John Marshall heads the seeded entry list in the Skodaru – one of three TEG Sport-built machines that combines a Skoda Fabia R5 shell with a Subaru Impreza engine and transmission.

Formula Renault driver Frank Bird returns to the championship after missing the previous Cadwell Park round, following his retirement on

the Oulton Park opener after a mechanical failure.

Missing Cadwell Park might not have hurt Bird's championship aspirations though, as both Josh Davey and Steve Tilburn retired from the previous round.

Misfortune for the frontrunners could play into the hands of those in other classes.

The Vauxhall Corsa always goes well at Knockhill, so double class B winner Chris Ruck will fancy his chances of a hat-trick in his similar Opel, especially

with the potential absence of rapid Scottish junior, Steven Hay, who dominated the class last year.

The local contingent is still well represented though, with former British GT champion Andrew Kirkaldy returning after finishing a close third in a Ford Escort Mk2 last year recovering from a wrong tyre choice in changing conditions.

Class B runner Ashleigh Morris will be hoping to banish memories of her barrel roll at Knockhill 12 months ago.

# INSIGHT



Every lap the finalists completed was analysed

# CHOOSING A FUTURE

## The intense shootout that decided Porsche GB's 2020-21 Junior driver. By [Name]

**I**t's 0800hrs at Silverstone and the Porsche GB Junior shootout is already well underway. Not that the four finalists have been eased gently into a potentially career-defining day. A series of rapid-fire questions from Louise Goodman in front of a camera at that time in the morning is certainly not an easy start.

And this was not the smiling Louise Goodman that the finalists had previously encountered for live ITV4 interviews after finishing on the podium in one of the British Touring Car Championship's support series. This was a very different sort of interview with a succession of quick questions about the drivers themselves, the Porsche Carrera Cup GB and the German brand. Naming the manufacturer's two drivers for its upcoming Formula E campaign proved a challenge too far for all but one of the contenders when put on the spot.

"I don't think I've ever done an interview at 0800hrs before!" admits Ginetta GT4 Supercup champion Harry King, who was one of the final four. "But it's all part of the process, being able to perform under that sort of pressure."

It was certainly a sign of what was to come for the four finalists as Porsche analysed every aspect of

their driving, fitness and media skills over a gruelling 12-hour day. But for King, British Formula 4 race winners Louis Foster and Luke Browning, and Ginetta Junior frontrunner Lorcan Hanafin to have even got this far, they had already successfully emerged from a formal interview with members of the Carrera Cup organising team.

Porsche GB motorsport manager James MacNaughton explains that these interviews are used to get an initial idea of what the drivers are like and whether they think they could work with the applicant. After all, as well as getting £85,000 towards their budget for each of their two seasons as the Junior, and a wealth of support, the chosen driver is also expected to represent Porsche at major motorsport events.

"First impressions count for a lot," says MacNaughton. "These drivers are representing the brand and if they're only going to meet people once, they need to make a good first impression. At that stage we also want to know the [rest of the] budget is there for two years and see what the drivers are like and understand if we can work with them."

"We try to put them at ease. We work hard not to be intimidating as some people thrive in situations like that and other people get really nervous."

"At that stage we're looking for whether they can engage with people in a pressure situation. Those four



An intense interrogation from Goodman made for a tough start to the day

were the best with the impression they left and how they presented their budget to us, it was all taken into consideration."

Being granted a place in the final was no mean feat for King, Foster, Browning and Hanafin. They were up against some serious opposition, with some very quick drivers failing to make the shootout as they struggled to make such a good initial impression.

And, after those final four were selected from 40 applications, Porsche was certainly going to make sure it chose the right driver from the Silverstone shootout. Nothing would be left to chance.

Take the driving element of the assessment. Both newly-crowned Carrera Cup champion Dan Harper

and three-time runner-up Dino Zamparelli were on hand to support the finalists. But they also gave the two cars an initial shakedown each to make sure everything was equal between the two. The attention to detail even extended to spotters being placed at various points around the Silverstone International circuit to make sure no-one was abusing track limits.

"There's no point someone going a second faster but not going around the same track as everyone else," explains MacNaughton. "If it did come down to one flying lap, if they were all the same in every aspect, we have to make sure it's fair."

"Obviously, we're looking at how they perform in each of the different

areas of assessment but really we're looking at how they go about learning through the course of the assessments. It's not just to test people, every single element is designed to see how people improve over the course of the day."

Each of the finalists first had a run on older tyres to get themselves familiar with the second-generation 'Type 991' 911 GT3 Cup machine. After all, Browning had never tested the car before and the other contenders had only conducted minimal running. With that complete, and after a debrief with Porsche engineers and driver coaches Harper and Zamparelli, it was back out for a new tyre run, followed by a final stint where consistency was sought.

"It wasn't a huge lot of track time, which meant every lap mattered," says King. "The first run is on old tyres and the engineers say 'just get a feel for it' but you know they're going to analyse every lap. Therefore every lap you're gritting your teeth, trying not to snatch a front brake or make a little error which can cost you valuable time. That was pretty intense."

But the on-track action was far from the only intense part of the day. The fitness tests carried out at Porsche's Human Performance Centre were extensive too. There was the fairly standard press ups, planks and side

planks but there were also grip tests, hand/eye coordination

tests and the gruelling tests and the gruelling tests which looks at the rate of consumption during

"Porsche takes their seriously – it's a really of being an all-rounder King. "I knew all the e going to be tough but t test was absolutely br gain so much informa

Once all the differen were finally complete then had the very har choosing a winner. Ev four finalists were rev predicting a winner w enough impossible gi had such impressive C while it took a matter Harper to be chosen t was very different th

"It was really difficu harder than in previo admits MacNaughton years, we had a good i had got all the judges t the end of the shooto one it took us nearly a up our minds. It was v On-track, the driver even with only just ov separating all four. Ki quickest, but that was a surprise given he ha relevant previous exp was 18, while the othe "He was the quickes



Harper (pictured) and Zamparelli had the first runs to check cars were equal



MacNaughton (l) was seeking a new Junior to replace the outgoing Harper



A variety of fitness tests were carried out, including press

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The finalists (l-r): Hanafin, Browning, King and Foster



# THE KING

## Stephen Lickorish

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to look past that because he should've been the quickest," says MacNaughton. "When you're 18 you're a lot more mature than 16 – there's a lot of maturing and learning that people do at that age, it's not like the difference between someone who's 52 and someone who's 50. "Also, Harry did already have two years of experience in a heavy GT car on slicks, so we were expecting him to be quickest."  
And there wasn't much between the quartet in the other skill tests, either. But eventually it was King that was crowned the new Junior at Porsche's 'Night of Motorsport' awards event.  
"It was little things in every single area [that made the difference]," MacNaughton adds. "It wasn't just so much about the pace, it was his feedback with the engineers, his fitness levels were better and he had a good desire to learn."  
"But all four drivers did a very, very good job – I would welcome all of them into the Carrera Cup if they choose to go down that path."  
As for King, almost a month on, he says it still hasn't really sunk in that he's the 2020-21 Junior.  
"I doubt it will until the first round next year at Donington Park sitting on the grid waiting for race one to start," he says. "I knew I did my best and I hadn't made any mistakes on the day, which is a really important thing. I was quietly confident with

my performance but I kept it all to myself and told nobody! It was satisfying knowing that I was the chosen one over the other finalists in such a tightly-contested year."  
He also admits that he didn't consider himself at an advantage going into the shootout, despite having already raced a GT car.  
"I knew I had the experience of a heavier car [Ginetta G55] but the two cars are completely different," King says. "A lot of people mentioned leading up to the event 'you're the only championship winner' and saying I had an advantage, but with the nature of these cars and how unique they are it was like starting over fresh for all of us finalists."  
Now King will follow in the footsteps of some successful drivers. Each of the last three Juniors (or Scholars, as they used to be called) won the title during their spell on the scheme – Josh Webster was victorious in his opening year, while Charlie Eastwood and Harper triumphed in their second seasons. King will now be looking to make it a quartet. But he will also want to prove that Porsche was right to put its faith in him.  
And, in case you were wondering, it was King who successfully named one of the two Porsche Formula E drivers in that breakfast-time interview with Goodman. It was just another of the areas where he had the tiniest of margins over his rivals. ■



King described the VO2 Max test as "absolutely brutal"



ups and planks



The finalists' grip strength was assessed and hand/eye coordination tested



Spotters were positioned to check for track limit abuses





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# RALLY REPORTS

Photos: Martin Walsh, Trevor Coulson

## DUGGAN TOPPLES DIZZY BREEN IN KILLARNEY CLASH

Escort man beats World Rally Championship star through the classic stages

### Killarney Historic Rally

By Martin Walsh

**Organiser:** Killarney & District Motor Club **When:** November 30 **Where:** Killarney, Co. Kerry **Championships:** Irish Tarmac Historic Rally Championship; Southern 4 Historic Rally Championship; NRRC Historic Rally Championship; Kingdom of Kerry Rally Championship **Stages:** 8 **Starters:** 160

Growing up in Killarney gave Rob Duggan the opportunity to climb plenty of mountains and, from a rallying context, the summit at Moll's Gap was always a special target.

Last weekend, his impressive journey through the iconic stage paved the way for a famous victory on the Killarney Historic Rally.

Co-driven by fellow native Ger Conway, they took their Ford Escort Mk2 to a 14.4-second victory over Craig Breen and another of Killarney's sons, Paul Nagle, also in an Escort Mk2.

An eight-second lead on the first run over 'the Gap' was the foundation for victory, even though Breen was fractionally quicker on the two remaining stages of the opening loop to trim the margin to just 6.6s.

Jonny Greer/Kirsty Riddick (Ford Sierra) were best of the rest but already 34.8s off the lead as top seeds Owen Murphy and co-driver Anthony Nestor sat fourth, 36.7s in arrears after their Escort Mk2 lapsed on to three cylinders.

Another leading contender, Mark Falvey slid down the order when an axle bolt snapped on his Escort Mk1 on SS3.



Duggan used his local knowledge

Duggan gained more time on the second run through Moll's Gap, where Breen spun and lost over 10s. Ironically, he was only 10s adrift by the end of the second loop as Duggan experienced some understeer and an exhaust issue.

With fastest times on the closing two stages, Duggan claimed the spoils and the Maurice Nagle Cup as well as second overall on the event.

Breen, meanwhile, acknowledged the time lost with his spin but emphasised it was all about having fun as he took the runner-up spot and third overall on the event. Greer

retired with transmission woes leaving Murphy, who spun on stage six, to finish some two minutes further behind in third.

The untroubled Welsh driver Neil Williams was next followed by Robert Barrable, who admitted his tyre choice was too conservative after he also spun on SS6. On his first outing in a left-hand-drive Escort Mk2, Ryan Loughran finished sixth from the BMW M3 of Alan Ring, who had brake troubles and suffered from tyre restrictions.

Martin Doherty, Denis Cronin and Johnny O'Connor completed the top 10 all in Escort Mk2s. Cathan McCourt suffered a hand

injury when he crashed his Escort Mk2 on a part of Moll's Gap that had traces of oil.

### Results

1 Rob Duggan/Ger Conway (Ford Escort Mk2) 1h03m54.5s; 2 Craig Breen/Paul Nagle (Escort Mk2) +14.4s; 3 Owen Murphy/Anthony Nestor (Escort Mk2); 4 Neil Williams/Anthony O'Sullivan (Escort Mk2); 5 Robert Barrable/Damien Connolly (Escort Mk2); 6 Ryan Loughran/John McGrath (Escort Mk2); 7 Alan Ring/Adrian Deasy (BMW M3); 8 Martin Doherty/Kevin Flanagan (Escort Mk2); 9 Denis Cronin/Helen O'Sullivan (Escort Mk2); 10 Johnny O'Connor/Tommy Hayes (Escort Mk2). **Class winners:** Ring/Deasy; Colin McDowell/Brynmor Pierce (Austin Mini); Tom/Helen Slattery (Ford Cortina); Tom/Scott O'Brien (Austin Mini); Mike Smith/Brian Commons (Hillman Avenger); Pat Looney/Ronald Riordan (Escort Mk1); Mike Simpson/Dale Gibbons (Escort Mk1); Declan Jackson/J Barry McCarney (Escort Mk2); Williams/O'Sullivan; Huw/Elle Williams (Peugeot 205); Paul Lietaeur/Marc Noppe (Opel Manta 400).

O'Donoghue:  
tour de force



### O'Donoghue boosts his pace for glory

The Modified category of the Killarney Historic Rally also provided a local victory as Colin O'Donoghue/Sean Collins (Ford Escort Mk2) finished 19.3 seconds ahead of Gary Kiernan/Darren O'Brien, with Martin/David McGee a further 26.5s back in third position.

Top seed Chris Armstrong made a hasty exit as his Escort Mk2 took to the scenery after he approached a left-hand bend too quickly on SS1. The impact with the Moll's Gap scenery ripped off a front wheel and rearranged the location of the rear axle.

By the stage finish, a three-second margin separated Kiernan, McGee and O'Donoghue, but that was the closest it got as O'Donoghue stamped his authority on the event with the fastest times on five of the remaining seven stages.

By the conclusion of the first loop of three stages he was 6.2s ahead of Kiernan with McGee a further 2.3s in arrears.

At the end of the repeat loop, O'Donoghue had continued his tour de force and headed Kiernan by 25.2s, the latter admitting he had no answer to the leader's pace while McGee, another

14.4s adrift, reckoned age was a contributing factor for his deficit. Raymond Conlon (Toyota Corolla) was untroubled in fourth place as Aidan Buckley (Escort Mk2) had no brake pedal on SS6.

Jason Pritchard was enjoying his drive and the local hospitality in Scott Williams's Escort Mk2.

O'Donoghue eased off ever so slightly on the final two stages to take the laurels with Kiernan, McGee, Conlon, Buckley and Pritchard completing an unchanged top six.

Johnno Doogan (Escort Mk2) had some issues with the intercom during the day as he finished seventh.

The top 10 was rounded out by the Escort trio of Enda O'Brien, who struggled for confidence, Tomas Davies and Leonard Downey.

### Results

1 Colin O'Donoghue/Sean Collins (Ford Escort Mk2) 1h03m51.3s; 2 Gary Kiernan/Darren O'Brien (Escort Mk2) +19.3s; 3 Martin/David McGee (Escort Mk2); 4 Raymond Conlon/Damien Fleming (Toyota Corolla); 5 Aidan/Shane Buckley (Escort Mk2); 6 Jason Pritchard/Phil Clarke (Escort Mk2); 7 Johnno Doogan/Ciaran Marron (Escort Mk2); 8 Enda O'Brien/John Butler (Escort Mk2); 9 Tomas/Eurig Davies (Escort Mk2); 10 Leonard Downey/Mark Murphy (Escort Mk2). **Class winners:** John Barry/Eddie Byrne (Austin Mini Cooper); Colin Fitzgerald/Ian McCarthy (Escort Mk2); Tommy McDonagh/Paul Hickey (Escort Mk2); Damian O'Reilly/Martin McGarthy (Escort Mk2); Seamus Connolly/Gary McCrudden (Corolla); Conlon/Fleming; Kiernan/O'Brien.

## CONSTANTINE SLIPS UP AT THE END, BUT FORD'S WOES ARE WORSE

Hal Ridge looks back at the competitive BTRDA Clubmans Rallycross contest

### BTRDA RX REVIEW

Luke Constantine's job of defending his BTRDA Gold Star Clubmans Rallycross Championship title was made all the harder when he had to skip the very first event of the year due to a clash with the opening round of the British Championship.

With six of the eight rounds counting



Ford was thwarted at the last round



SuperModified title went to Ryan

towards the final tally, it wasn't the end of the world for the 15-year-old that he didn't contest the Blyton season opener but it meant he needed to deliver in the remaining rounds to fight for the multi-class overall crown.

And that he did, continuing an incredible run of six victories in the BTRDA's Junior division, several times through the year turning what appeared to be a difficult weekend in qualifying into final victory.

But, just like 12 months earlier when he and SuperModified racer Tony Lynch battled for the title in the final round, this time around it was Production ace Dale Ford who took the fight to within sight of the finish. Just like in the World and British Championships, the title fight went down to the very last race of the season.

Then, at almost the worst possible moment, Constantine made an error at the first corner in the finale at Knockhill in a bid to pass a rival with a more powerful car and ended the race fourth. That worst result in Constantine's BTRDA career history meant that if Ford finished in the top two in the Production final at the event, he would be crowned champion.

But, in another twist, and agonisingly for the Citroen Saxo driver, the throttle cable broke on his car as he launched away from the start line and he missed

out on the title. Ford did, however, claim the overall Production title, ahead of Joe Meskauskas. The top two were in the same order in the Production 1600 16-valve sub-class.

In the 1600 eight-valve category it was Ford Ka racer Jonny Chrisp who took the spoils ahead of father Tony, while Sue Lane claimed the Production 1601cc-to-2000cc title with her Honda Civic.

The SuperModified crown was secured by Irishman Patrick Ryan with his Vauxhall Nova, despite some mechanical gremlins through the campaign, while Todd Crooks took the up-to-1600cc SuperModified title and Leigh-Anne Sedgwick claimed the over-2101cc crown, along with the BMW Mini honours.

Marc Jones lifted the overall title in the Classic category for pre-1995 machines with his Toyota MR2, as Dave Martin drove a Peugeot 205 to take the Classic Modified title.

Subaru Impreza racer Simon Horton was the only points scorer in the Clubman 4x4 division, while James Phillips took the Production 4x4 title in another Japanese machine, although much less developed than Horton's.

With Constantine taking the overall title, it was final round winner Ben Sayer who took the Junior honours in another Suzuki Swift, ahead of Alfie Jeakins and James Constantine. ■



Luke Constantine missed the opening round but battled back for glory

## FEATURE

## KNOCKING ON THE DOOR

Josh Cook and Rory Butcher pushed the tin-top favourites all the way in 2019. They spoke to **Matt James**

**T**here was a touching moment after the final chequered flag of the British Touring

Car Championship's 2019 season. Rory Butcher collected his thoughts in the back of the AmDTuning.com truck and was admiring his Jack Sears Trophy.

The Honda Civic man had secured the silverware with a drive to second place and, in the process, had fended off an early threat from Josh Cook's BTC Racing Honda Civic FK8, his only serious rival for the second-tier crown.

Cook sought out his nemesis in the truck to congratulate the Scot and his words were warmly received. Both had won three races throughout the season and, due to the vagaries of the scoring system, Cook had narrowly pipped Butcher in the overall points race to finish fourth in the table.

There were hearty congratulations all around and the two drivers knew that they both had a season to be proud of.



Cook was fourth in overall points



It was an uncertain winter for Cook and meant he was on the back foot

**J**osh Cook did not have a happy Christmas in 2018. Indeed, things still looked bleak in January too as he headed to the Autosport International Show at the NEC.

"There was a very realistic chance that I would have to sit out the season," explains the 28-year-old. "The options were narrowing, I had lost a backer and it looked like I was on the sidelines."

That was a hammer blow for the Bath racer, who had made a serious impression on the title hunt with two wins and sixth in the overall standings with the factory-backed Power Maxed Racing Vauxhall Astra. He had built on the progress he had made since joining the series in 2015 with PMR. In 2018, he turned podium potential into on-the-road victories and the world was beginning to recognise his talents.

"I wasn't going to just jump at anything," says Cook. "I wasn't going to get a drive for the sake of it, and wherever I ended up, I wanted it to

be a step forward from where I had been before. That was my philosophy."

A meeting with BTC Racing bosses Bert Taylor and Steve Dudman brought salvation. Financial input from Dudman meant 2019 was a fresh start for the ambitious team with new premises in Brackley and two brand new Honda Civic FK8s to use.

"I knew some of the guys from teams I have been in before, and the workshop is just something else – the team is on such a high level, I would say it is better than some of the works teams I have driven for previously," says Cook. "Steve and Bert helped me make it happen, but we went into the year without any real testing to speak of so it was a journey. But the work ethic of the team is the strongest I have ever experienced."

That journey got off to a winning start at Brands Hatch in a wet-but-drying race due to a cute tyre strategy. That belied the lack of seat time, but there were some tougher times to follow.

"Everybody thinks that if you get yourself into a Honda, then you should

be winning all the time, but it is not as easy as that," says Cook. "The FK8 has a small operating window, and we worked hard to get ourselves into that and not drop out of it."

"On a number of occasions, we were working towards race three to try and haul in some big points. We knew that the one-lap pace was not our strongest point and we struggled in qualifying. We were going into most rounds with big weight in qualifying because we were doing so well in the points, and so we worked hard on bagging the most we could out of the reversed grid."

That proved to be a magic ingredient. Cook was on the podium in the reversed-grid races on five of the 10 events, and that was the bedrock of his campaign. Indeed, 48% of all the points he scored came from that tactic.

It meant he was in the title fight going into the final rounds at Brands Hatch, and that was a real step forward for him and for BTC Racing.

"You have to learn how to win this championship, there is a tactic to it," says Cook. "You have to know when to push and when to settle for what you have got, and I think that is something we managed very well throughout 2019."

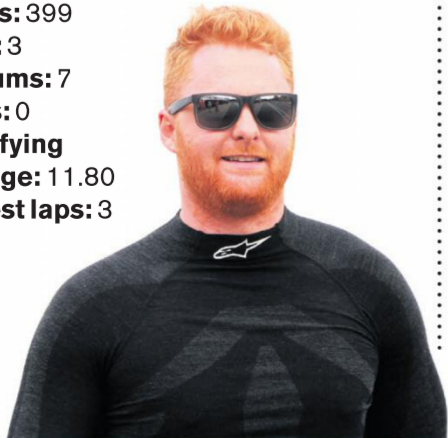
"To win more races than the works team with the same car showed how far we have come, and we can look back on the year with a lot of pride."

Cook, who has not contested back-to-back BTCC seasons with the same team, says he is determined to remain with the BTC Racing squad in 2020 and is working towards securing a deal.

"If we can get it across the line, we will go into the season with some testing and much more knowledge than 2019," he says. "We can push even further forwards, and that means we should be right in the thick of the title hunt again." ■

## JOSH COOK'S SEASON

**Car:** Honda Civic Type R FK8  
**Team:** BTC Racing  
**Championship position:** 4th  
**Points:** 278  
**Independents Trophy:** 2nd  
**Points:** 399  
**Wins:** 3  
**Podiums:** 7  
**Poles:** 0  
**Qualifying average:** 11.80  
**Fastest laps:** 3



## THE WINS



**Brands Hatch, April 7, race one**  
 On a damp circuit, most of the fastest qualifiers all opted for wet tyres on a track which quickly dried, that left Cook easily slicing up the order as the Tarmac became more grippy. On lap nine, he leapt from fifth to the lead – by overtaking Ash Sutton's Subaru – and then led home Jake Hill's Audi by more than 2.5 seconds.



**Thruxton, May 19, race three**  
 Finishing 10th in race two was not the result Cook wanted, but that turned to smiles when he was pulled on pole for the reversed-grid finale. Sutton's rear-wheel-drive Subaru got the best getaway, but Cook held his nerve and lunged for the inside into the Complex on the opening tour to grab a lead he was not to lose. He measured his pace to triumph.



**Thruxton, August 18, race two**  
 After a huge fight – notably with Rory Butcher's Honda – Cook finished fourth in race one to start on row two for the second race. He ran third initially before cleverly using a double tow from Sam Tordoff's Honda and Adam Morgan's Mercedes coming out of Church corner on lap four to power around the outside of his rivals and claim the lead – and then go on to the win.

Photos: Jakob Ebrey

# OF THE BTCC BIG TIME



AmD driver Butcher took Independents win

**R**ory Butcher had certainly made an impact in his first full season in the British Touring Car Championship in 2018. He was in the ageing MG, being run by the AmDTuning.com team and, despite the overweight car's venerability, he hustled it to a succession of top 10 finishes and the highlight was a stunning sixth place at Rockingham.

The Scotsman's pace and talent was obvious to anyone who had watched, and he made a step up to the AmDTuning.com Honda Civic FK2 for 2019. The car, the ex-Eurotech Racing machine, was certainly capable of winning, and Butcher knew it.

"With the MG, I always felt like there was something missing from the car in terms of its competitiveness," explains the 32-year-old. "It was OK, but I always felt like we were on the back foot.

"When [AmDTuning.com boss] Shaun Hollamby told me at Silverstone in 2018 that he had the Hondas, I knew that I had to get my bum in that car. It was all I wanted."

It reaped rewards immediately, with a victory in race three at Brands Hatch's opening meeting in April. He had finished second across the line but was promoted to victory when on-the-road pacesetter Tom Chilton (Motorbase Ford Focus) was stripped of glory following contact with Matt Neal.

"It was a win and I will take them any way they come, but it didn't feel great," says Butcher. "I think that is the same for any race three win. I had another one at Snetterton, but everyone was on different tyres, different strategies and I benefited when Jason Plato

[Vauxhall] and Ash Sutton [Subaru] collided towards the end.

"There isn't quite as much satisfaction when you do it that way. The win I had at Knockhill in September was a 'proper' win, if you like. I had earned it from pole position and controlled the race. Of course, it was special to claim a win at home, but it really felt like I deserved that one."

By that stage, Butcher had slipped down the championship table. That had been partly down to a painful and damaging shunt in qualifying at Croft in June, which consigned him to start on the final row of the grid. He powered back to claim just 11 points across the three races in North Yorkshire.

Butcher himself knows it was a watershed moment. "I guess you could point to that as a lack of experience," he admits. "Did I need to be pushing that hard that early on in the session? Probably not, but that is one of the lessons I am going to take away from this campaign.

"It was part of my season, and

sometimes people forget that this was only my second full year at this level. As well as the lessons from Croft, there were other things I took away from 2019.

"Sometimes it's the seventh- or eighth-placed finishes that are the important ones and you can shed a lot of points if you don't claim everything that you can. There might have been some situations during 2019 that I have run in those positions and made little mistakes and dropped to the fringes of the top 10. You simply can't afford to shed points like that because it all mounts up. Another 12 points would have given me a further spot up the championship table."

While Butcher knows that there are areas where he can improve, ironing out the little errors is only one aspect. Working with racer Mike Bushell on the engineering strength at AmD has given Butcher an extra insight into how to set a car up, and that is a skill that he will be able to take with him as his career flourishes.

Butcher will not remain with AmDTuning.com for 2020 and is



Hefty qualifying shunt at Croft hit Butcher's overall BTCC title aspirations

working on other plans, but he knows that the BTCC is the place he wants to shine. "I will be in the BTCC for the foreseeable future," says Butcher, who is brother-in-law of three-time BTCC winner Gordon Shedden. "I have done

the learning and I am still picking things up. With another step forward in 2020, I don't see a reason why I shouldn't capitalise on what I have put in place over the last 12 months. I can't wait to get started again." ■

## RORY BUTCHER'S SEASON

**Car:** Honda Civic Type R FK2

**Team:** AmDTuning.com

**Championship position:** 5th

**Points:** 266

**Independents Trophy:** 1st

**Points:** 401

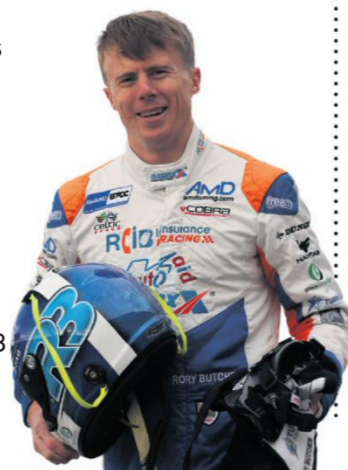
**Wins:** 3

**Podiums:** 6

**Poles:** 1

**Qualifying average:** 10.40

**Fastest laps:** 3



### THE WINS

#### Brands Hatch, April 7, race three

From fourth on the reversed grid, Butcher made a fighting start but was powerless to resist Tom Chilton's Ford Focus. Chilton went on to collide with Matt Neal's Honda while battling for the lead, prompting Neal's retirement and copping a post-race penalty in the process. Butcher, who had overtaken Stephen Jelley's fast-starting BMW, was second on the road but was then handed first spot.



#### Snetterton, August 4, race three

Starting 12th in the race and with no ballast, Butcher made strong early progress to battle up to third place on the road, which gave him a grandstand view of the epic tussle between Ash Sutton's Subaru and Jason Plato's Vauxhall ahead. Despite having to avoid the errant Sutton at one point, he pounced in a three-wide moment into Brundle to secure an unlikely win.



#### Knockhill, September 15, race one

Butcher shrugged home-town pressure off with a superb pole position for the opening race of the weekend in Fife. He maintained his lead into the first turn, and he even withstood the late-race pressure of Andrew Jordan. The BMW grabbed the lead on the final lap on the run to Duffus Dip but ran wide, handing Butcher his third win of the season.

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## INSIGHT



McCormack made history this year



Event is brutal test of endurance for crews



One forest section was badly cut up

Photos: Paul Lawrence

# ROGER ALBERT CLARK RALLY REFLECTIONS

The rally of the year: that's the view of many people after last month's Roger Albert Clark Rally, as Paul Lawrence reports

**T**here has been a tidal wave of love on social media for the biennial Roger Albert Clark Rally event and it seems last month's 13th edition has given a huge amount of pleasure and satisfaction to thousands of rally folk. Upwards of 1000 were involved in competing and supporting the crews, several thousand marshalled and many thousands were out in the forests. Many more followed it from the comfort of their home, such was the quality of the event's social media output.

Ford Escort Mk2 driver Paul Street tackled the event for the first time and finished 30 seconds outside the overall top 10. "I can remember going to watch the old RAC Rally as a kid way back," recalls Street. "It was a great experience to take part in, and I feel very privileged to have been there. Every part of the event was spot on."

Street was one of 126 starters, in itself a record for the rally. Incredibly, 91 of them were classified as finishers although quite a few took advantage of the Super Rally rules to rejoin after problems. In all, 203 crews lodged entry deposits, so another 77 potential competitors seriously considered entering.

Among the finishers was the only female driver, Lorraine Gathercole, who was classified 60th in her Escort Mk1. It was a first major rally for this experienced racing driver. "What an adventure I have had," says Gathercole. "I knew we had 32 stages and 300 stage miles. I didn't realise I would only get 12 hours sleep in three days and struggle to find time to eat or drink! I learnt to drive to



Facebook coverage was popular

the limit, and beyond, and I learnt to rally in the rain, at night and through thick fog. I discovered how supportive all the rally teams are and I witnessed selfless acts to get others going again. I saw how dedicated the marshals and organisers are."

After the problems of very thick fog and then a major fire for Alan Walker's Escort in Radnor on Thursday evening, there were no other stage cancellations and every crew got the miles they were due. It was a huge challenge for every one of them and just finishing was a massive achievement. For drivers like Bob Seager, getting his MG Midget through was the culmination of a 10-year dream.

This is a rally with a unique atmosphere. Marshals and fans follow the event for multiple days, sometimes sleeping in cars and bringing damp forests to life with the smell of bacon. Support crews work long into the night to keep cars running, working in cold and wet service areas to a soundtrack of generators and wheelnut guns. Paul Fry's crew worked through Friday night until 0600hrs to fix his Escort Mk2 and get it to Carlisle after an off on the Burma Road during the Welsh stages.

Others used the Friday night transport section from Epynt to Carlisle to good effect. The Mounsey brothers, Malcolm and Ronald, diverted to West Cumbria to get the axle changed on their Sunbeam, while Volvo 122 driver Drexel Gillespie dropped in to see Kevin Savage in Kirkby Lonsdale for a back axle change.

At the head of the rally, Marty McCormack and Jason Pritchard pushed to the limit on every stage in a mighty lead contest that was only settled when McCormack arrived at the end of the final stage to a rapturous reception from his team and family. Throughout the rally, the drama, excitement, atmosphere and humour of it all was expertly captured by Matt Cotton and Bex Hinton via live Facebook broadcasts. Then, each evening, the Special Stage team delivered a rally report covering the day's action.

So was it perfect? Of course not! An event of this scale run by volunteers will always have a few issues and challenges. The section of stage in Newcastleton forest on Saturday morning was freshly built and cut

up very badly. Rally manager Colin Heppenstall says that, had he been aware, he would have moved the stage start around four miles in, as the Kershope section of the stage was in good order. "We're not going to use Newcastleton again for several years to give it chance to recover," says Heppenstall.

The Super Rally rules are vital to keeping crews running, but Heppenstall says he will look at the way penalties are calculated. He will also review how historic specification 4x4 entries like the Mitsubishi Galant of Wayne Sisson are handled in the results. A strong reminder about the rules concerning cars off the stage seems to be needed in some quarters. If a car is off and no 'OK' board is displayed, following cars must stop and anecdotal evidence suggests this did not always happen.

But these are relatively minor issues against an event that gave everyone involved a magical experience. It also gave several rural economies a major boost and estimates are that the start town of Leominster in Herefordshire had a half-million pound bonus in late November.

What comes next? Well the good news is that Heppenstall and his team will go again in 2021 with a late November date. He's starting to ponder a north to south route, but that's all in the melting pot just now. A cap of 130 entries is likely to keep the scale of the event manageable and workable within the available service areas. The day after the rally finished, Heppenstall fielded half a dozen calls from competitors wanting to place deposits for 2021, so a full house of 130 cars seems entirely likely.

The final words go to winner McCormack, who became the first driver to win the rally for a third time and move ahead of two-time winners Gwyndaf Evans and Steve Bannister in the roll of honour.

"The entire team has worked so hard all week long and the rally is just as tough for them, but I simply could not have done this without them," McCormack says. "It's been a true team effort and a huge thanks to all the fans and supporters out there cheering us on in the stages. There really isn't another rally like it." ■



McCormack says his third R.A.C. victory wasn't possible without his team



There were 126 starters this year, a record number of drivers for the event



Seager's R.A.C. finish was the culmination of a 10-year dream to compete

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## SPORTING SCENE

## SIX ROUNDS PLANNED FOR BRITISH RX CONTEST IN 2020

Shake-up for next year's British Rallycross Championship for fresh start

## 2020 SCHEDULE

## Five Nations British Rallycross Championship

DATE	ROUND	VENUE
April 12-13	Round 1	Lydden Hill
May 24-25	Round 2	Pembrey
June 20-21	Round 3	Valkenswaard, Holland
July 18-19	Round 4	Mondello Park, Ireland
Aug 30-31	Round 5	Lydden Hill
Sept 26-27	Round 6	Knockhill

\*Provisional Supercar calendar, dates subject to change

The series will make a return to Mondello Park



Photos: Hal Ridge

## By Hal Ridge

The provisional calendar for the rebranded Five Nations Motorsport UK British Rallycross Championship has been revealed by new promotor Lydden Hill Race Circuit and includes returns to Knockhill, Mondello Park and Holland.

The series has been revamped and restructured for 2020, with six rounds planned for top-class Supercar

racers. Pembrey, Mondello Park, Valkenswaard in Holland and Knockhill will all hold single rounds, with two events set to take place at Kent circuit Lydden Hill on traditional Easter and August Bank Holiday weekends.

The five nations moniker has been used in the name to represent the spread of the contest geographically.

The race format for Supercar will fall in line with the two-day FIA European and World Rallycross Championships of four qualifying sessions, semi-finals

and finale, with practice and the opening two sessions held on day one.

Lydden boss Pat Doran says that he has had verbal commitment from around 16 Supercar drivers about racing in the series next season.

Further details have also been revealed about the supporting categories, with additional classes for all modified 1600cc cars called 'Magic1600' and a three-round edition to the Retro Rallycross Championship for 1990s Supercars.

The support classes will be split

between the six Supercar weekends, running two events in one weekend on several occasions, while all classes except Supercar will finish their season at Pembrey on October 18 for a single-day event.

The series will run a control tyre, although final details are yet to be released. Other initiatives are being worked on including the Truck Rallycross plans released last year, celebrity driver appearances and a Junior academy.

## ROUND-UP

Ian Wright won the final round of the Motorsport UK and BTRDA championship at the historic Gloucester Sporting Trial, his fourth victory of the year.

Wright led all day in wet, slippery conditions in which he excels by travelling the ground quickly, with Julian Fack just a point behind after the first round.

A poor second round dropped Fack back, with brother Jerome becoming Wright's nearest challenger. But then, the best final round by Ian Veale enabled him to snatch second overall seven points back, but ruining a poor first round.

Jerome Fack completed the podium, with Julian fourth just ahead of the other brother John Fack, who has not won a trial in 2019.

Andy Wilks won the intermediate blue class with a sixth overall from Nick Speed. George Watson completed a busy year with seventh overall, a point ahead of Paul Price and Peter Fensom. Bob Packham completed the top 10 overall and best live-axle, with Darren Underwood second live-axle and best rookie prior to his class promotion.

Ian Fullwood won the blue live-axle class from Neil Martin. Sandy Veale won the clubman class and the newly 80-year-old Steve Courts the Post-Historic class.

Duncan Stephens

## Results

## Gloucester Sporting Trial

Organiser: Midlands Trials Car Club Where: Near Stroud When:

December 1 Starters: 35

1 Ian Wright (Sherpa Indy) 37 marks; 2 Ian Veale (Sherpa) 45 marks; 3 Jerome Fack (MSR); 4 Julian Fack (Crossle); 5 John Fack (MSR); 6 Andy Wilks (Crossle); 7 George Watson (Hamilton); 8 Paul Price (CAP); 9 Pete Fensom (Hamilton); 10 Bob Packham (Kincraft).



Prost and Dubourg will handle the electrically-powered Renault Zoes

## ANDROS RENAULTS ARE READY

Andros Trophy and rallycross team DA Racing revealed its new Renault-backed ZOE ice racer last week in Paris, ahead of the opening round of the Andros Trophy season this weekend at Val Thorens.

The car is powered by a pair of electric motors for the Andros Trophy's electric switch this winter, with four-time champion Jean-Baptiste Dubourg and Formula E race winner Nicolas Prost set to head up the campaign.

"I'm in a position where I can win races and be on the podium this year," Prost said. "To win the championship is going to be very hard because you have to be there every weekend and sometimes you can have one bad qualifying and you lose a lot of points."

"The team is accomplished, so I'm looking forward to this year. I feel I have a lot to learn, and to have J-B next to me is going to be a big help. Track evolution, managing the tyres, everything is a big key to winning in Andros Trophy. I know I'm going to have if not the most, one of the most competitive cars, so everything is on my side now to do well."

Sebastien Loeb Racing, Sinteloc Racing and Yvan Muller Racing are expected to be among DA Racing's biggest challengers this winter.

Dubourg said: "I believe we can do big things and I hope we can be on the top very quickly. There are a lot of new teams and drivers, I'm very excited to compete against them."



Holmen is set on Projekt E swap

## Holmen wants to step up after Nordic series win

Former RX2 Series podium-finisher Thomas Holmen, who won a round of the RallyX Nordic Supercar Lites class on his return to the discipline this year, is targeting a drive in the new Projekt E rallycross series.

The Projekt E series is set to get underway as a World Rallycross Championship support category next year. The class is a joint venture between World RX promotor IMG and Austrian firm STARD, which has developed a four-wheel-drive, three-motor kit to be retro-fitted to Supercar-type rallycross chassis.

"I'm super-stoked about Projekt E," said 20-year-old Norwegian Holmen. "I come from a country where electric cars are a regular sight on the roads, and it is something in which I believe very strongly. If manufacturers and the general public are increasingly thinking this way, there is no doubt that motorsport needs to do the same route."

"The future is definitely green, and I'm sure this is the right path for rallycross to go down and that it will create new opportunities for aspiring World Championship drivers."

## Real world racer Trogen claims virtual rallycross title

Former RX Academy champion and RX2 Series podium-finisher Sami-Matti Trogen claimed the iRacing Rallycross World Championship sim racing title last weekend in the ninth and final round.

The Finnish 17-year-old raced a Subaru WRX STI in the virtual series with the SET Esports team and finished ahead of former champion and actual rallycross Supercar racer Mitchell deJong, who won the last two rounds of the campaign, in the points.

Trogen only entered the season as a wildcard entrant with the SET squad, part of Finnish rallycross team SET Promotion. His team-mate and 2019 RX Academy driver Joni Heikkinen finished third in the standings.

"This is amazing. It's been a hard few weeks racing in both real and virtual world rallycross but we have been successful in both and it's amazing to win the iRacing Rallycross World Championship," said Trogen, who had finished his 2019 RX2 campaign with a pair of podiums in France and South Africa.

"I knew I could be fast coming into the season, but there are some big names in the iRacing series, so I always knew it would be tough. Some of the other drivers also get to do a lot of testing, but with racing in real World Rallycross and some circuit racing, and also being at school, I haven't had so much time, which makes this result even better."



Trogen raced with the SET Esports operation in a virtual Subaru WRX STI

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MN does not always agree with opinions expressed in letters

## MN SAYS...

# In with the new for Toyota's WRC attack

### A new driver line-up is full of exciting promise for the forthcoming season

As much as Ott Tanak's decision to switch to Hyundai for the 2020 World Rally Championship might have been an odd one, it did leave a huge opportunity for someone to step into his shoes in one of the fastest cars through the stages in 2019, the Toyota Yaris WRC.

So step forward Sebastien Ogier, Elfyn Evans and Kalle Rovanpera, the trio who will comprise the fresh line-up for the forthcoming campaign and it is a mouth-watering combination.

Ogier back in a top-flight car will be a sight to behold and he will surely be a multiple winner during the year ahead. Who would rule out another title challenge? It would mark him out as one of rallying's greats if he could claim a crown with a third manufacturer. And then there is Evans, who is ready to propel his career to the next level on his first step away from the M-Sport umbrella. Add into that teenager Rovanpera, who is in the best place to learn his craft from two of the best in the business and cement the impact he has already made. There will be plenty of envious eyes in the service park looking over at the Gazoo Racing camp.

**Matt James, Editor (Twitter: @MattJMNews)**



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Photographs must be of a good quality and please send no more than three images



ART EDITOR MIKE STONDE'S  
FAVOURITE OF  
THE WEEK!

John Stephens's muddy and dirty photograph of Dave Haizelden pushing on in his SS Scimitar from the recent Allen Trial



David Harbey's shot of Ashley Davies/Sam Fordham's Peugeot



A classic Toyota on the Roger Albert, photo by Brian Morgan



A Volvo searching for some grip, taken by Graham Lomax



David Greer's evocative Opel Manta, submitted by Robert Wall



A rare rallying Nissan on the R.A.C, sent in to MN by Mike Bouts



A Ford Escort Mk1 on the Wyedean Rally, from Richard Salisbury



Formula Ford 1600 battlers at Anglesey, from Yvonne Williams



Chris Collier's Time Attack photo from Snetterton recently

GOT AN OPINION?

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**LISTINGS**

**RALLY SATURDAY**  
**■ Ambleside, Cumbria**  
**Hippo Motor Group Grizedale Stages Rally**  
**Starts** 0930hrs  
**Admission** free  
**Web** grizedalestages.co.uk

**SUNDAY**  
**■ Knockhill Racing Circuit, Fife**  
**Knockhill Stages**  
**Starts** 0900hrs  
**Admission** adult £10, under 12 free  
**Web** dunfermlinecarclub.co.uk

*Details correct at time of press but please check before travelling*

**TV GUIDE**

If you still need a weekly fix of racing action then fear not as the **Australian Supercars** from Down Under has you covered (Thursday, 0830-1030hrs, BT Sport2).  
 The final two races of the season took place at the Newcastle Street Circuit as back-to-back champion Scott McLaughlin tried to end the season in style.  
 Tune in for a re-run of the 2019 F1 season finale from the **Abu Dhabi Grand Prix** and the Yas Marina Circuit (Saturday, 1100-1200hrs, Sky Sports F1).  
 Both titles may have already been decided, but there was

still third place in the drivers' standings up for grabs between Max Verstappen, Charles Leclerc and Sebastian Vettel, while an intense midfield battle was still to be decided between a number of teams.  
 And finally, there's a blast from the past with **F1 Classic Races**, which will be showing highlights from the 1987 British Grand Prix. Nigel Mansell scored his greatest victory on home soil, and arguably one of his best F1 wins, after hunting down Williams team-mate Nelson Piquet and passing the Brazilian with a memorable move into Stowe.



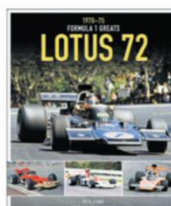
Piquet was chased by Mansell and passed in British GP thriller

**CHRISTMAS GUIDE TO BOOKS**

In the first instalment of Evro Publishing's new Formula 1 Greats series, former *Autosport* F1 correspondent Pete Lyons has delivered a treasure trove on the two-time world championship-winning Lotus 72, which scored podiums in six consecutive seasons. With a foreword from paid-up 72 fan Emerson Fittipaldi, *Lotus 72: 1970-75* is a captivating 320-page labour of love.  
*Group A: When rallying created road car icons* is the latest addition to the canon of McKlein rally history, following its Group 4, Group 6 and Group B tomes. Covering the 1987

to 1996 period in depth with its customary blend of quality photos and analysis, it's a must for bobble-hatters.  
 Collectors of the *Autocourse* annual can get a 15% discount and free postage when ordering the 69th edition of the book direct from its website. At 408 pages, it remains the ultimate chronicle of the year.  
 For stocking fillers, you can't go wrong with Will Buxton's *My Greatest Defeat*, Brawn GP CEO Nick Fry's memoir of the team's fairytale 2009 season or the frank autobiography of British Touring Car Championship legend Jason Plato.

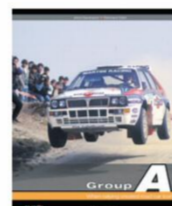
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### H/duty quick steering racks

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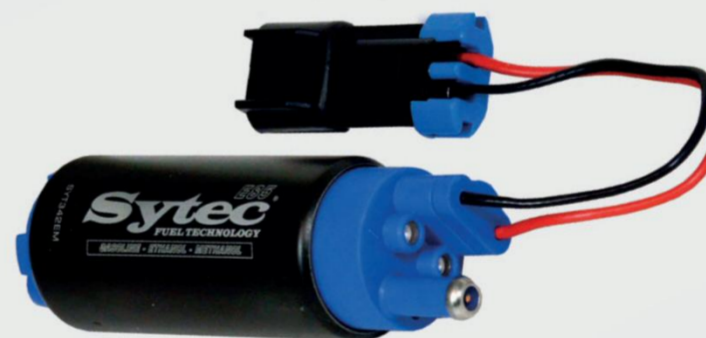
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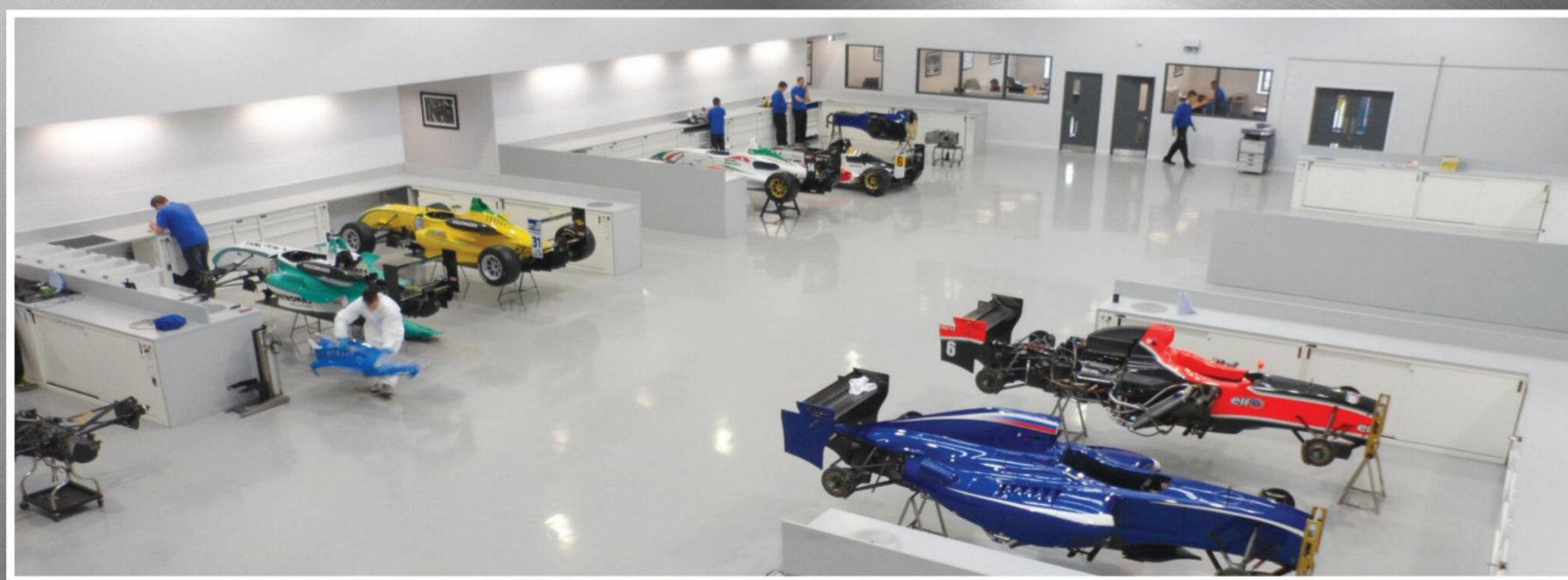


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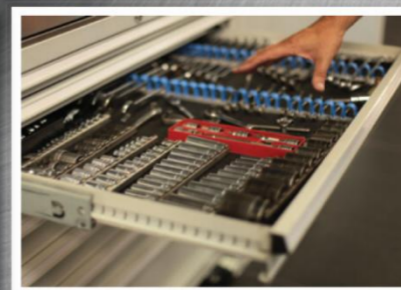
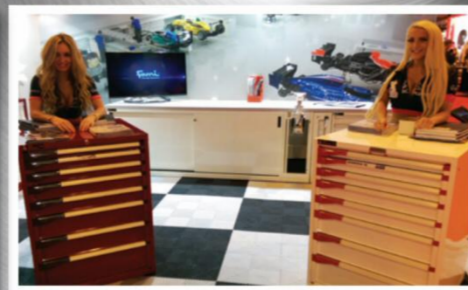


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