

F1 How Ferrari handed Bottas the Japanese GP

AUTOSPORT

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17 OCTOBER 2019

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TURKINGTON**



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Cammish and Turkington put on an incredible show at Brands Hatch (see page 30)

Autosport note to readers

You won't have failed to notice the unprecedented price increase of Autosport magazine this month. Like all publishers we are facing the harsh economic realities of our audience shifting to digital, combined with the increasing costs of maintaining a print product.

We know many of our readers and supporters value the print publication and we think it has significant value given the broad coverage – from Formula 1 to club racing via rallying and endurance events – and deep analysis, some of which is not offered elsewhere.

If you believe the print version is now too expensive then we do have a great value alternative in Autosport Plus, for which there is currently a special offer (see left and page 44). A lot of the content in the magazine, and much more, already appears on autosport.com. There are, of course, some magazine sections that do not feature online, but that will be reviewed in the coming months and, where there is significant demand, plans will be put in place to make sure fans are still catered for.

In the very first issue, which came out on 25 August 1950, Autosport set out its stall to provide “news that is bang up-to-the-minute” and “feature personalities, their activities and their cars”. We will continue to do this – and a lot more – but it will be in other ways, whether via autosport.com, podcasts, videos or other products. Other things associated with the brand, such as the Autosport Awards, Autosport International and the Aston Martin Autosport BRDC Young Driver of the Year Award will also continue to lead the way in the industry.

We hope that you, our readers, continue to enjoy Autosport in its various forms and we thank you for your support.



Rob Paterson
EVP Racing Motorsport Network
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**NEXT WEEK
24 OCTOBER**

We pick out motorsport's greatest shocks and report from Formula E testing in Spain



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JEP/Motorsport Images

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Williams of George Russell is chased by Lewis Hamilton's Merc at Paul Ricard. A sign of things to come?

F1 EARMARKS RACES FOR REVE

FORMULA 1

Formula 1 is lining up Paul Ricard, Spa and Sochi for experimental reversed-grid qualifying races next year, although scepticism from teams could lead to the trials being put back to 2021.

The mooted format is understood to be based on the grid being formed for what would be a sprint race to decide the line-up for the grand prix proper using a reverse order of world championship positions. But this would require unanimous support from the teams to change the 2020 sporting regulations at so late a stage – something that is not a foregone conclusion given ongoing opposition from more than one team. Should those objections remain, F1 and the FIA – which both back the move – could not force it through until the following season.

As Autosport closed for press, the teams were due to vote on the proposal in Paris yesterday (Wednesday), with Mercedes among those sceptical about the idea.

Teams met at last weekend's Japanese Grand Prix to discuss the practical implications of such races, with team strategists attending. With no pitstops and a short distance, the fear among teams is that it will be more difficult for frontrunners to make progress through the field than when they drop to the back in a grand prix that features many more variables. While cars that drop down the order often clear the midfield runners very rapidly, the quick cars would be starting directly behind those who are only marginally quicker, so the

fear is that passing will be difficult.

"If it's not unanimous, it will not happen – and I don't know if these people will be convinced, but that is a decision for Wednesday," said Haas team principal Gunther Steiner after the Japanese GP. "You know, there was more than once that somebody didn't want something, and then still it happened. So I wouldn't get ahead of myself and say it is not going to happen. There are people who have got opinions, concerns about it."

"I am not opposed to it. If the majority wants it, I am OK with it, because sometimes you have to try things differently. If it doesn't work, we should say, 'Hey, it didn't work, let's go back to what we had before.'"

"I am happy to try that out and then see how it actually works, what impact it has got. What are the costs, and also, do we attract more spectators? Again, my biggest thing is do we make actually the show better? If you don't make it better, [if it's] just for us to please ourselves, there is no point to do it. Because it's all more work."

The proposal is part of F1's desire to trial modified race formats, and even if it proves a success there's no plan for such a Saturday race to be universally adopted. But if it works it could be used more regularly.

As well as the teams, many drivers have objected to the proposal. Notably, Lewis Hamilton and Sebastian Vettel hit out at the idea after the Singapore Grand Prix and suggested that F1 has other, more pressing problems to take on. But it is not surprising that top teams and drivers, in particular, are against the proposal given how

Renaults protested by Racing Point at Suzuka

FORMULA 1

Controversy struck the Japanese Grand Prix after the race when the points-scoring Renaults of Daniel Ricciardo and Nico Hulkenberg were protested by Racing Point after finishing sixth and 10th respectively.

The FIA was directed to seal and impound both Renaults' electronic control units and steering wheels to allow the protest to proceed. Racing Point questioned the legality of the Renaults over an alleged pre-set lap-distance-dependent brake-bias adjustment system.

Representatives of both teams and one from the FIA technical department convened with the Japanese GP stewards on Sunday evening, and the stewards determined that the protest satisfied all relevant parts of the International Sporting Code and is admissible.

Renault has agreed to this point, but the next step will take some time to establish.

This is because the stewards have directed the FIA technical department representative to seal and impound the FIA standard ECU of both cars, plus their steering wheels, to conduct "a detailed analysis of those pieces" and the "hardware, software and data associated with them". They may call upon "outside technical assistance", including Renault and Racing Point team members,

while conducting the analysis.

When the analysis is complete, the representative must provide a written report to the stewards with their findings. Those findings must be matched against the "potential technical infringements detailed in the protest".

The chairman of the stewards will be notified when the likely submission date of the assessment can be determined, "so that the next meeting time to assess the claims made in the protest can be scheduled".

The FIA document relating to the original protest only referred to an alleged technical and sporting regulations – and ISC – breach without specifically referencing what that could be.

As things stand, the Renaults are still included in the results, although the Racing Points of Sergio Perez and Lance Stroll would move up from ninth and 11th respectively to eighth and ninth if the protest is successful.

Renault said in a statement that it "acknowledges" the protest from Racing Point concerning its brake-bias system. It claimed Racing Point had prepared a 12-page dossier and the "complexity" of this was the reason for another meeting to be required on a yet-to-be-defined date. "Renault F1 Team intends to use this recess to prepare an equally detailed case to rigorously defend its position," the statement said.

SCOTT MITCHELL

REVERSED GRIDS

much more difficult the race weekend will become.

While the weekend will be structured to ensure that there is no extra mileage required, with the race taking place as a substitute for Saturday afternoon's qualifying session, there are also concerns about the increased risk of damage. The qualifying race is likely to feature significant amounts of overtaking given the inverted grid, meaning there is greater chance of collisions with drivers taking risks. Ranged against that, there's no doubt that teams will rapidly get on top of the best way to approach the races and mitigate the unpredictability.

Despite the objections, there are merits in the proposal, even though it goes against the tradition of setting grids by practice pace established at the 1933 Monaco Grand Prix. It would not be possible for, say, a Williams to hold on to victory in a qualifying race – but that is not the objective. The main impact is that it will create significantly more opportunity for the grid for the grand prix to be scrambled, while drivers in the quickest cars will also be able to fight among themselves as they come through the field. With increased peril for the top teams, it will make winning a grand prix more difficult and guarantee mixed-up grids. It would also pose a technical challenge, with those cars that are less critical aerodynamically when running in turbulent air having an advantage.

While the reversed-grid experiment goes against almost 90 years of tradition, there's no doubt that, should it happen, many fans will watch to see the results.

EDD STRAW



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Hulkenberg leads
Perez during the
Japanese GP

MOTORSPORT IMAGES/SUTTON



Citroen pulls out the stops for Ogier's rally title bid

WORLD RALLY CHAMPIONSHIP

It's not often that testing images stop the world of rallying in its tracks, but Citroen did just that with a radical aero update to the C3 WRC seen for the first time last week as it pulls out all the stops to win the World Rally Championship with Sébastien Ogier.

Desperate to get rid of the chronic understeer and absence of asphalt pace on the C3's last Tarmac outing on Rally Germany during the summer, Citroen worked extensively on its transmission and suspension set-up in Spain last week. But it was a set of new wings, splitters, spoilers and endplates that got everyone talking after seeing the car running for the first time.

Citroen tested for three days on asphalt, with Esapekka Lappi completing the first before Ogier took over for the remaining two, while test driver Eric Camilli ran a development day of testing on gravel on Saturday.

Citroen technical director Olivier Maroselli was happy to talk about everything except the car's latest appendages, which look remarkably similar in places to those on the Toyota Yaris WRC.

Speaking ahead of the day on the gravel, Maroselli told Autosport: "So far so good. We mainly worked and improved on the differential side. We found some interesting ideas on that side already on Satory [the team's test track] and we could go further here on representative roads.

"It's also the first time that we use on Tarmac the new front geometry introduced in Finland [in August].

We also worked on the dampers side. Everything combined, we solved the understeering issue, which was our main issue on the last Tarmac rounds. We clearly improved the balance of the car and the drivers' feeling confirms it. But nothing replaces the race itself. What we don't know yet is if it will be enough or not in terms of performance. But we will keep working flat-out until the rally to be as competitive as possible."

In terms of the new aero, he added: "All I can say on this subject is that we are working flat-out."

The need for speed on asphalt in Rally Spain next week is vital for Ogier to maintain any kind of challenge for this year's championship. The reigning title holder is 28 points behind Toyota's Ott Tänak going into the Salou-based penultimate round.

Last time out on asphalt, Ogier described his Citroen as undriveable on his way to a forgettable seventh in Germany, and he declared the pre-Spain test as crucial in his bid for a seventh straight title.

Exactly how much of the new aero will make it to Rally Spain remains to be seen, but last week's running was a pre-event set-up test, when it's rare for the teams to run anything other than the same specification with which they intend to start the rally.

Citroen will be keen to avoid a repeat of Rally GB, for which it had tested and planned new suspension parts for the C3 WRC in Wales, only to be told they couldn't be homologated until next season.

DAVID EVANS

FE nod for Sims and Turvey

FORMULA E

British racers Alexander Sims and Oliver Turvey will stay with the BMW Andretti and NIO 333 squads respectively for the 2019-20 Formula E season.

Sims and Turvey have each been confirmed on the eve of pre-season testing kicking off at Valencia on Tuesday of this week, while Ma Qing Hua joins Turvey at NIO, meaning the field is set.

Sims (below) made his FE debut with BMW last season, but his position remained uncertain over the summer while the team reviewed its driver line-up. He will race alongside new BMW recruit Maximilian Günther.

Turvey continues to race for the same team at which he made his FE debut in 2015. The squad is now known as NIO 333 since the Chinese EV manufacturer stays as the team's title sponsor, but has new investment from Shanghai Lisheng Racing, which has added the 333 moniker to its official entry and now operates the team and conducts its R&D work.

ALEX KALINAUCKAS

2019-20 FORMULA E LINE-UP

TEAM	DRIVERS
DS Techeetah	Jean-Eric Vergne, Antonio Felix da Costa
Audi	Lucas di Grassi, Daniel Abt
Virgin	Sam Bird, Robin Frijns
Nissan	Sébastien Buemi, Oliver Rowland
BMW	Alexander Sims, Maximilian Günther
Mahindra	Jerome d'Ambrosio, Pascal Wehrlein
Jaguar	Mitch Evans, James Calado
Venturi	Edoardo Mortara, Felipe Massa
Mercedes	Stoffel Vandoorne, Nyck de Vries
Dragon	Brendon Hartley, Nico Müller
NIO	Oliver Turvey, Ma Qing Hua
Porsche	Neel Jani, André Lotterer





FORMULA 1 Max Verstappen got a run in the Honda RA272 driven to victory in the 1965 Mexican Grand Prix by Richie Ginther during the build-up to last weekend's Japanese Grand Prix. Verstappen visited the Tochigi R&D test facility of Red Bull engine supplier Honda, getting to grips with the car on the 'road' course and on the oval. Honda hero Takuma Sato also drove the ancient bolide, with both taking turns in a 2011 Red Bull RB7. **Photograph by Red Bull**

Subaru makes swansong as BTCC deal ends

BTCC

Title-winning British Touring Car Championship team BMR Racing has paid tribute to Subaru as its four-year deal to field the Levorg model in the series has come to an end.

Ash Sutton took a BMR-run Levorg to the BTCC drivers' title in 2017. The factory team has taken 21 race victories over the past four campaigns, with Sutton claiming the Subaru's sole win of the 2019 season on its swansong appearance at Brands Hatch last weekend. Of those 21 successes, Sutton has scored 13, Colin Turkington five, Jason Plato two and James Cole one. Levorg drivers have appeared on the podium on 55 occasions during the same period.

The team says that changes to the technical and aerodynamic regulations of the series mean that it is getting harder to remain competitive with the flat-four-style boxer powerplant in the Subaru, and that

the estate-shaped car does not have the same advantages as some of the models from rival manufacturers.

BMR team principal Warren Scott said: "We've been on an incredible and highly successful journey with Subaru in the BTCC. It was a unique car when we built it and we've taken the team and the Levorg to the very pinnacle of UK motorsport."

"The landscape of the BTCC has shifted over the course of the past four seasons and that means we have both evaluated where we're at right now."

"It's been a pleasure to represent Subaru, and to share the spotlight of success with the brand has been a fantastic achievement for us both."

BMR Racing is committed to a future in the BTCC, and Scott (right) said that plans about the squad's forthcoming activities would be revealed soon.

MATT JAMES

P30 BTCC ACTION





Enna-Pergusa returns to international calendar

EUROFORMULA OPEN

Sicily's historic Enna-Pergusa circuit is to return to the international motorsport calendar next year with a revival of the Mediterranean Grand Prix.

The 3.08-mile track, which runs around Lake Pergusa in the shadow of the active Etna volcano, rose to prominence by holding non-championship Formula 1 races under the Mediterranean GP name in the 1960s. The race then became part of the European Formula 2 and International Formula 3000 schedules for three decades.

Now the venue, which is often remembered for the 1996 plague of frogs from the lake that interrupted the F3000 round, has been added to the schedule for the Euroformula Open series for Formula 3-style cars, which next year will use the new Dallara 320 chassis. The event means EFO now has two historic grands prix, with the Pau GP joining the schedule in 2018.

Pergusa had its FIA licence removed in the mid-2000s, but this was reinstated in 2011 after renovations, and since then it has hosted various touring car series.

"In its 61 years of existence, Pergusa

circuit had a lot of bright days and some darker periods," said circuit president Mario Sgro. "Today is a great day, as we announce our return to the international motorsport scene. I can assure you that the next Gran Premio del Mediterraneo will be a stellar event and that Euroformula Open will be welcomed warmly in Sicily."

The Mediterranean GP was won in its F1 days by Lorenzo Bandini, John Surtees and Jo Siffert, while Jackie Stewart, Jochen Rindt and Keke Rosberg are among those to have won the race during its F2 era.

ELLIOT WOOD

Ericsson gets extra Ganassi seat for IndyCar

INDYCAR

Chip Ganassi Racing has expanded to a three-car IndyCar Series line-up by adding Alfa Romeo Formula 1 third driver Marcus Ericsson to join Scott Dixon and Felix Rosenqvist.

Ericsson switched to IndyCar in 2019 with Schmidt Peterson Motorsports, scoring a best result of second in Detroit and impressing on ovals.

While team-mate James Hinchcliffe was retained by SPM for 2020 for its new alliance with McLaren, Ericsson's IndyCar future was thrown into doubt. But the move to Ganassi to drive the #8 entry keeps him in the Honda engines fold.

Team owner Chip Ganassi said: "Marcus brings a lot of unique experience with him having competed in several championships around the world. When you have

someone with that type of background, it gives him other points of reference that help his ability to develop and add to the overall racing programme."

Much of the human resource employed in Ganassi's successful Ford GT programme is expected to switch across to IndyCar as the sportscar team winds down following last weekend's IMSA finale.

DAVID MALSHER



MOTORSPORT IMAGES/LE PAGE

IN THE HEADLINES

BLANEY PIPS NEWMAN

Ryan Blaney pipped Ryan Newman in a photo-finish to the rain-delayed Talladega NASCAR Cup race, which ran on Monday night after our race-report pages had gone to press. Team Penske Ford driver Blaney prevailed against the Roush Fenway Ford of Newman in a thrilling last-lap battle to book his place in the next round of the playoffs, with Denny Hamlin third. A late pile-up, triggered by brothers Kyle and Kurt Busch colliding and culminating in a flip for Brendan Gaughan, had caused a red flag and set up a late sprint to the finish.

NISSAN OUT OF AUSTRALIA...

Nissan will disappear from the Australian Supercars grid in 2020, with Kelly Racing switching to the Ford Mustang. The team has run the Altima since 2013, and has recently fielded a four-car line-up, but will downscale to two next year, tipped to be steered by Rick Kelly and Andre Heimgartner. The freed-up slots on the grid are thought most likely to be taken by enlarged efforts from Matt Stone Racing and what is currently known as Tekno Autosports...

...NEW TEAM GETS COURTNEY

...and it's a new-look development of the Tekno squad that has hired 2010 champion James Courtney for next season. The new team, based at Sydney Motorsport Park, plans to run a pair of Triple Eight-built Holden Commodores. Existing Tekno driver Jack Le Brocq is understood to be on his way to the Tickford Ford squad, to replace Chaz Mostert.

BTCC TO RUN ON GOODYEARS

Goodyear will become the control-tyre supplier for the British Touring Car Championship next season, bringing to an end a 17-year association for the series with sister company Dunlop. Goodyear has already returned to international motorsport this year in the LMP2 class of the World Endurance Championship.



EUROFORMULA OPEN

Old F3 car bows out at Monza

FORMULA 3

The life of the 2012-19 Dallara Formula 3 car drew to a close last weekend with a pair of slipstreaming thrillers in the Euroformula Open finale at Monza (above).

The car was supplanted on the governing body's ladder for 2019 by the new FIA Formula 3 Championship machine, but continued to race on for one more season in the Japanese F3 series and EFO – the latter introducing the Spiess and HWA powerplants used previously in FIA-spec F3 competition, while its spec Toyota engine used up to 2018 was phased out. Both Japan and EFO will switch to the new

Dallara 320, which sports a halo but which continues the philosophy of the old F3, for the 2020 season.

Max Verstappen, Charles Leclerc, Esteban Ocon, Lando Norris, George Russell, Carlos Sainz Jr, Alex Albon, Antonio Giovinazzi, Daniil Kvyat and Lance Stroll are current Formula 1 stars for whom the car played a crucial role in developing their talents at a formative stage in their careers.

The table below shows the most successful drivers in the F312-19 Dallara in races run to FIA-specification engine rules from the same period.

MARCUS SIMMONS

ALL-TIME WINNERS IN 2012-19 DALLARA F3 CAR

DRIVER (TEAMS)	WINS	DRIVER (TEAMS)	WINS
1 Felix Rosenqvist (Mucke/Prema)	33	9= Max Verstappen (Van Amersfoort)	10
2 Sho Tsuboi (TOM'S)	26	9= Maximilian Gunther (Mucke/Prema)	10
3 Raffaele Marciello (Prema)	21	9= Joel Eriksson (Motopark)	10
4 Yuichi Nakayama (TOM'S)	17	9= Ritomo Miyata (TOM'S)	10
5 Mitsunori Takaboshi (B-Max)	16	13= Esteban Ocon (Prema)	9
6 Lance Stroll (Prema)	15	13= Lando Norris (Carlin)	9
7 Kenta Yamashita (TOM'S)	14	13= Callum Hott (Van Amersfoort/Prema)	9
8 Antonio Giovinazzi (Double R/Carlin)	12	13= Sacha Fenestraz (Carlin/B-Max)	9
		13= Marino Sato (Motopark)	9

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GIORGIO PIOLA

RED BULL TRIES OUT SMALLER S-DUCT TO IMPROVE AIRFLOW OVER TOP OF CHASSIS

Red Bull brought a dramatic new S-duct for its RB15 to Suzuka, with the aim of cleaning up the front-end aerodynamics and assisting with the passage of air over the chassis bulkhead.

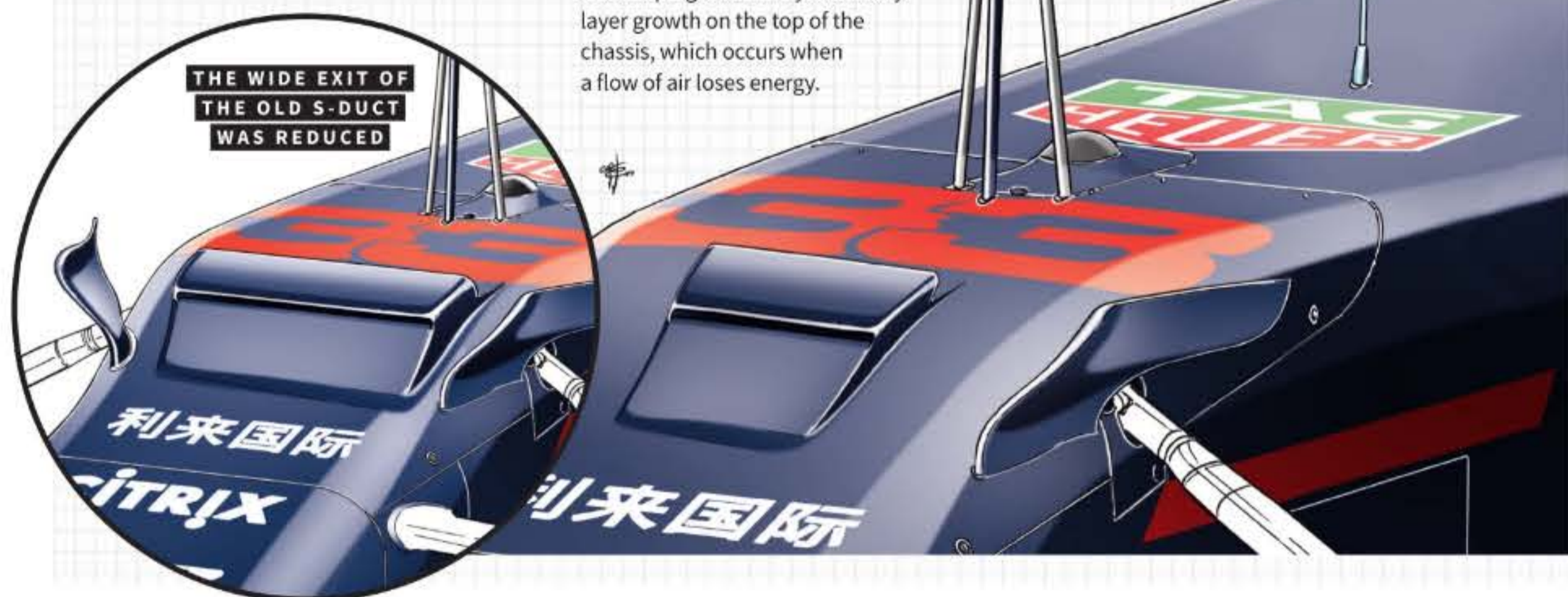
During Thursday's scrutineering, Max Verstappen's car was spotted with a smaller S-duct outlet at the point where the nosecone transitions to the chassis bulkhead. But expected back-to-back testing didn't take place,

as Alex Albon also ran the new design in FP1.

The S-duct, which has become common in Formula 1, takes a supply of turbulent airflow from underneath the nose, channels it upwards and redirects it to the top of the chassis. This is to minimise the effect of the turbulence underneath the nose, which can affect the aerodynamic performance further down, while also helping to trim any boundary-layer growth on the top of the chassis, which occurs when a flow of air loses energy.

Red Bull has retained the slot on the top, which guides further airflow on top of the air expelled from the outlet to manage its path over the top of the chassis. There will be a small drag penalty associated with this, but Red Bull's smaller outlet seems to be an answer to reducing this.

JAKE BOXALL-LEGGE



RENAULT FURTHER DEVELOPS FRONT WINGS TO REDUCE TURBULENCE

Rather than buying into the latest 2019 wing trends, Renault has gone its own way with front-wing development, although it has pulled a little bit of inspiration from Red Bull in how it operates the inboard part of the wing.

Creating a small cut on the third element of the front wing can change the way the all-important vortex forms at the tips. This vortex is fired behind the

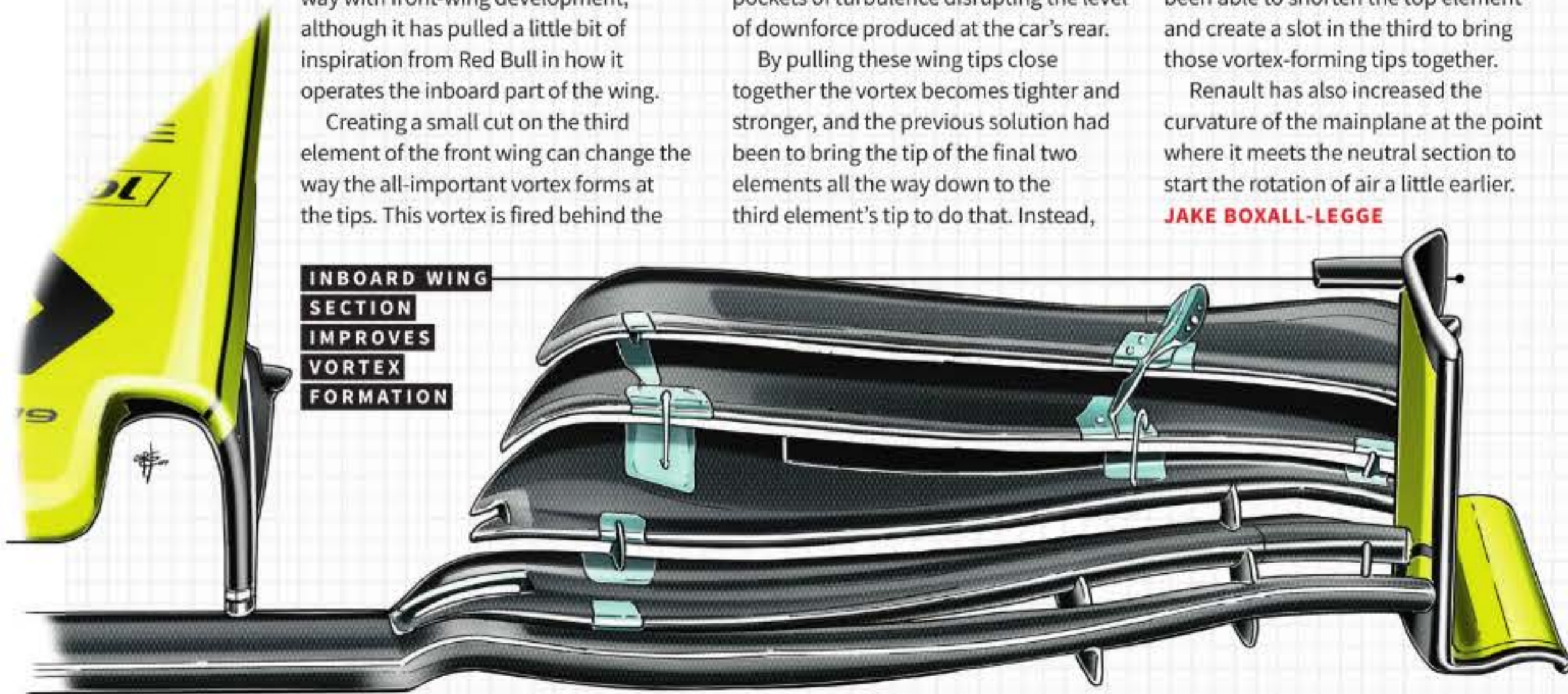
wheel to drive the turbulent wake away from the front of the floor. It stops little pockets of turbulence disrupting the level of downforce produced at the car's rear.

By pulling these wing tips close together the vortex becomes tighter and stronger, and the previous solution had been to bring the tip of the final two elements all the way down to the third element's tip to do that. Instead,

as the rules permit five elements within a cross-section of the wing, teams have been able to shorten the top element and create a slot in the third to bring those vortex-forming tips together.

Renault has also increased the curvature of the mainplane at the point where it meets the neutral section to start the rotation of air a little earlier.

JAKE BOXALL-LEGGE



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Driving lessons

An F1 racer's driving style is a key part of what makes them a success. In his new book, Jenson Button candidly shares what he's learned about his own strengths and flaws

EDD STRAW

Formula 1 drivers don't like discussing their driving style. That's particularly true when it comes to limitations that they either understand but do not want to accept publicly, or have not yet got their heads around. But it's a significant factor that can explain why even the drivers capable of being world champions can be superhuman one day, average the next.

For some drivers, though, it is a fascinating topic, particularly once they've reached a little distance from their grand prix career. In his latest book, *Jenson Button: How to be an F1 driver* – a broad and fast-paced look at what it takes to be a grand prix topline – the 2009 world champion touches on how car characteristics interacted with his default driving style and what conditions he needed to get the best out of himself. Given the chance to interview him about the book, this is the obvious topic to seize on.

Button became regarded as a driver who was brilliant at his best, but with what may be termed a narrow performance window – a characterisation he accepts. Given a stable and predictable rear, he could attack the corner as he wanted, keep the minimum speed up and carry that through to the exit. Then he was as good as anyone, perhaps even better. It is an ultra-precise style, one instilled in him during his early days karting with father John.

But often, Button would struggle if the car could not be persuaded to offer those characteristics, something occasionally

“Button was seen as a brilliant driver at his best but with a narrow performance window”

compounded by the fact that he would struggle to energise the tyres when they needed to be worked hard to 'switch on'. It's what makes him a fascinating case study.

“I try to be so precise in the way I drive – that's the case since I was a kid in karting,” says Button. “It's always been about precision. If I have oversteer, I struggle to place the front on turn in. I don't like the oversteer because it's not consistent, but it's more that I can't place the car on entry with the steering wheel.

“If I brake in a straight line and the car is settled I can really pick my line and be precise at turn-in, get the apex right, then I will get the best exit, whereas a lot of people will pile in with massive oversteer. They might miss the apex by a few inches but they are positioned well for the exit, get on the power and get out of the corner, a bit like Lewis Hamilton. But I

have just never been able to do that.”

Button mentions in the book that he arrived in F1 believing he was the finished article, but had to face a very steep learning curve. He suggests it wasn't until he was at McLaren, which he joined in 2010 as world champion, that he really started to understand the limitations of his style in depth. After thriving in a compliant Williams in 2000, he struggled badly at Benetton in 2002 and eventually came to understand that his smooth, early-braking style wasn't loading up the front axle enough and giving him the bite he needed at turn-in. But as his career progressed, up against some formidable team-mates, he developed greater understanding of himself and of the qualities that allowed Hamilton and Fernando Alonso to excel in a wide range of machinery.

“Lewis didn't mind having oversteer at any point of the corner,” says Button. “That was his driving style – he would just control it with the steering and basically throttle and brake were like switches to him. Fernando was a bit different because he didn't like oversteer on entry either.

“Remember back in his Renault days, we were all struggling because the front tyre was so wide it made the car too neutral on entry. He would arrive at the corner and immediately add a massive amount of steering lock to the car, taking it over the peak of the tyre, if you like. He purposely did that so he could control the rear of the car better, so he was good at working his way around situations. I remember we sat there watching, thinking, ‘This is the ugliest driving style we've ever seen, but he's just won the race.’ Others couldn't do this as they liked to be more precise.”

Seemingly at odds with Button's obsession with precision is how effective he was in wet conditions, especially on slicks in the wet. Seven of his 15 grand prix wins came in rain-affected races. The wet requires improvisation and accepting the imprecision of constantly changing conditions. Button himself is aware of that contradiction, but it is perhaps in the low-grip conditions that his underlying feel and judgement come to the fore.

“I find it strange to get my head round why my driving style in the dry and wet are so different but they both work,” he says. “A lot of drivers think, ‘Oh, it's wet there, I'll slow down,’ but for me it's more feel than what I see. Wet driving is another thing altogether.”

A contradictory driver, perhaps, but also an outstanding one who is one of only 33 drivers to have been crowned world champion so far. He is a reminder that driving is a three-dimensional challenge that goes far beyond whether a driver is simply 'fast' or 'slow' in a sport that, as Button's latest book reminds us, is far more complicated than meets the eye. ✎

Jenson Button: How to be an F1 driver
Released by Blink Publishing, available now



Did the best driver win?

One braking zone decided the fate of the BTCC title in Colin Turkington's favour. Other than the points table, do the numbers support his crown?

MATT KEW

There are few exercises in life that are more time-consuming, more fun, and more fruitless, than plotting 'what if?'. But let's entertain that idea here just for a moment.

Andrew Jordan will argue that had it not been for his non-score at Donington Park in the second round of the 2019 British Touring Car Championship season then he would be the newly crowned champion.

Dan Cammish can make the case that had his brakes not failed on the penultimate lap of the final race at Brands Hatch then he would have converted his last-minute points lead into the title spoils last weekend.

And the driver who ultimately lifted the crown, Colin Turkington, can bat both of those cases off by pointing to his collision with Matt Neal in the second race at Brands, or being spun around by the duelling Rob Collard and Adam Morgan in the first Silverstone race. Without either of those, the championship might never have slipped in Cammish's favour at the 11th hour.

But that's all based on hypotheticals which, as interesting to debate as they might be, can never be proven one way or the other. If that is the case, although it may create only a two-dimensional picture, then what of the statistical analysis – did the right driver win the BTCC this year?

A purist, or a traditionalist, might argue no. For those who

“Jordan ends the year with the most wins – six plays Turkington's five and Cammish's brace”

consider the partially reversed grid for race three at each BTCC meeting as contrived, or lament the introduction of a third race from 2004 onwards altogether, arguably Jordan is their champion.

Of his eventual 318-point tally – just two shy of Turkington's haul – 259 were accrued during the 'purer' first two races of each meeting. That equates to 81.4% – 0.3% greater than Cammish and 6.1% ahead of Turkington. If it wasn't for the lottery of the race three grid then Jordan would have been top dog.

And let's reconsider his Donington non-score. Jordan was spun by Collard on the opening lap and an unsighted Morgan and Stephen Jelley smashed into the BMW 330i M Sport. It put Jordan out of the race, in hospital and left on the sidelines for two races.

That means, of the nine rounds he properly contested, Jordan scored on average 35.3 points. Add one more of those onto his

eventual figure. Or, with 4050 points up for grabs this season, split by 30 drivers, the average score per driver at each race was 4.5 points. Add in just one of those. Put simply, the numbers say that had Jordan finished any one of those three Donington races then, more than likely, he would have defeated his WSR team-mate.

Not to mention that Jordan ended 2019 with the highest number of wins – six plays Turkington's five and Cammish's brace.

The numbers don't support Cammish's claim to the throne quite so strongly, however. He finished and scored points in every race of the season bar one – when it really counted. After a tame start to the year, Team Dynamics and Cammish in particular kicked on with the FK8 Honda Civic Type R and he bagged 19 top 10 finishes from the first Thruxton meeting onwards. He never really dropped the ball at any point, but nor did he knit together many race-winning performances. What's more, he only led 15 laps all season. Turkington and Jordan were tied at the top on 87 laps, but Cammish was way down in 11th.

A combination of running in too close a proximity to Ollie Jackson's Motorbase Ford Focus, and not in cooler air, plus Cammish's tendency to left-foot brake – which in turn generally exerts greater force – means his dramatic and gut-wrenching brake failure wasn't entirely a freak occurrence.

What of the champion? To be emotive, Turkington draws level with Andy Rouse as a four-time champion. For that alone he must be considered a BTCC great. And owing to his calm mannerisms, there's a case to be made that Turkington is still underrated as a driver – people seem to underestimate his ability to pull out the perfect qualifying lap or be ruthlessly efficient in overtaking.

Turkington, as the points leader for 23 races, also entered no fewer than seven rounds with the maximum 54kg of success ballast to haul around in qualifying and each opening race. Added to his five wins, for which he carried his ballast into the following bout, it means that for 12 of the 30 races Turkington was laden with the largest weight penalty. That's more weight than Jordan had to carry following his Donington disaster.

That Turkington still achieved pole at Oulton Park in the dry despite the handicap shows how quick he has been this year.

Some will maintain that the new BMW 3 Series held a performance advantage – despite having its power reduced, a centre of gravity change and all non-BMWs getting a 4bhp boost increase. After qualifying at Brands Hatch last weekend Cammish even called BMW out for its "DTM" machinery.

Above all of the arguments, however, what remains indisputable is that Turkington withstood everything the BTCC threw at him this season. He is the man who should be king. ✎

P30 BTCC REPORT

YOUR SAY

The size of the crowds and the feedback from the fans goes to show that this is a world-class event and the contribution of volunteers and officials is recognised by all

HUGH CHAMBERS

Open letter to the Rally GB marshals and volunteers

As Ott Tänak and Toyota celebrate their first British win, one of my main reflections is how the 2000 marshals, motor club members and volunteers once again helped deliver an amazing Wales Rally GB. You make such an extraordinary contribution and the event simply couldn't happen without you. It never ceases to hit home just how your hard work and dedication can make a difference at motorsport events.

This year saw record crowds in attendance since the revival of the rally as the British leg of the World Rally Championship. The new route naturally presented challenges but the size of the crowds and the feedback from the fans goes to show that this is a world-class event and your contribution as volunteers and officials is recognised by all.

While the fact that three stages were compromised is frustrating, we must always put safety first. It was absolutely the correct decision in each case, and there is quite rightly a growing emphasis on safety in the delivery of these events.

We've been awarded a date for next year at the end of October, which is another fantastic opportunity to inspire motorsports fans, but for now, you should be very proud of the success of Rally GB 2019. As volunteers you certainly deserve as much recognition and plaudits as those behind the wheel.

Hugh Chambers

Motorsport UK CEO

Touring cars entertain to the final moment

A remarkable final British Touring Car race at Brands Hatch. With Dan Cammish's front brakes glowing for most of the race it was hardly surprising that they finally failed – but what drama! And what a gentleman Colin Turkington is, especially when following Cammish, he could easily have taken him out. Matt Neal please note.

Good to see Jason Plato finally getting back on the top podium spot – all looks good for 2020! In fact, taking the GP into account, last Sunday was mega!

Steve Woolfe

By email



Hamilton holds key to Ferrari breakthrough

With regards to last week's cover story, 'Is Ferrari finally ready to topple Mercedes?', I have come to the conclusion over the past couple of seasons that the only way Ferrari can win the world championship is if one of the following events happens:

1. Lewis Hamilton retires from F1.
2. Lewis Hamilton decides to move to Ferrari.

I am not a Hamilton fan by the way, just a general motorsport fan and an Autosport subscriber for 25 years!

Tim Parrett

By email

We received a number of emails concerning the magazine's recent price rise and, if we have not done so directly, we'd like to thank those who have shown their support for the editorial staff and the magazine. It is no secret that these are turbulent times for print magazines and our audience is increasingly reading our magazine digitally, which has led to the weekly price rise. After 70 years as the go-to source of information on our sport, we will continue to invest in the Autosport brand so it remains an authority on motorsport and best serves its customers. We will continue to share updates as early as we can.

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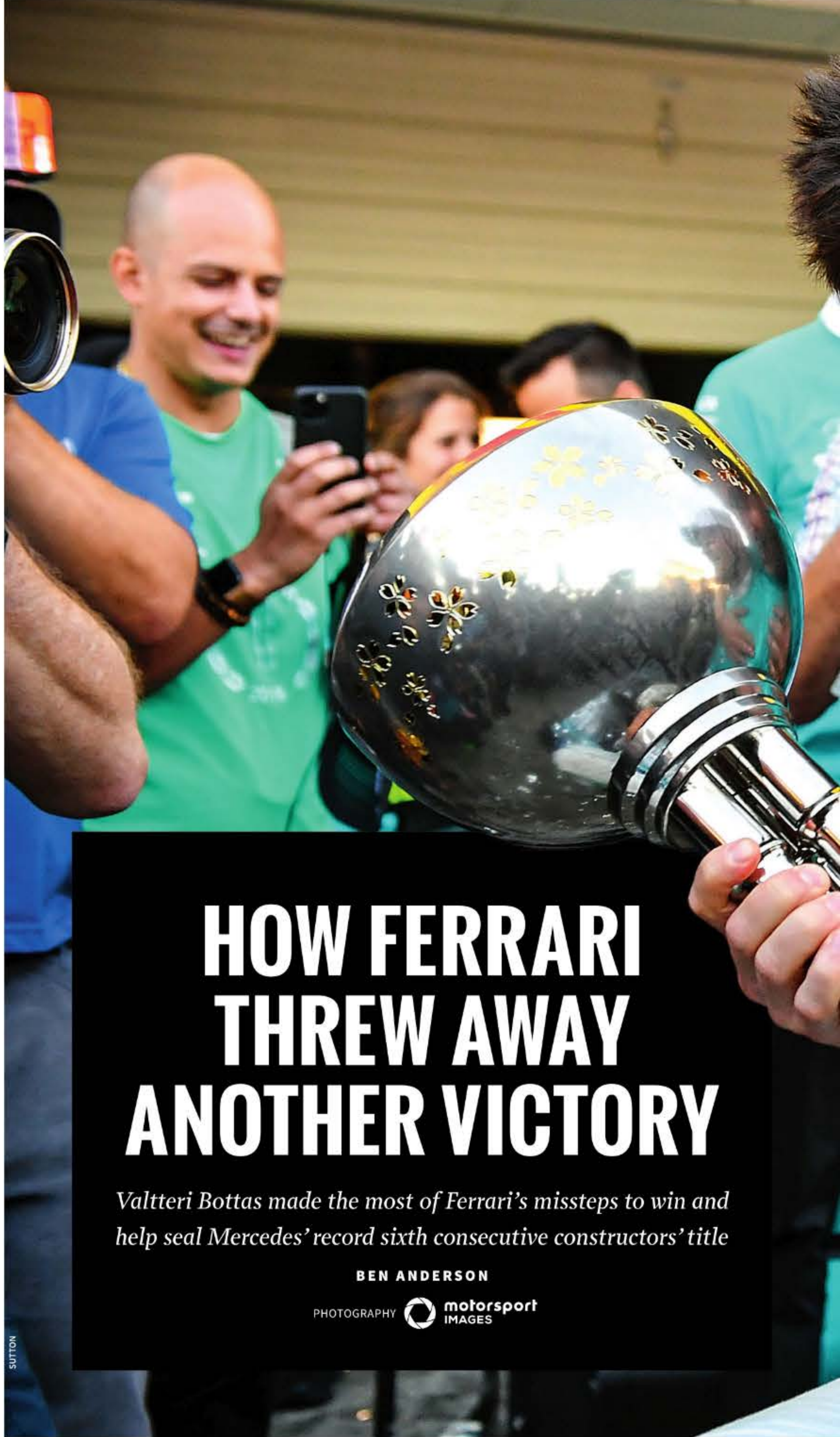

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HOW FERRARI THREW AWAY ANOTHER VICTORY

Valtteri Bottas made the most of Ferrari's missteps to win and help seal Mercedes' record sixth consecutive constructors' title

BEN ANDERSON

PHOTOGRAPHY  motorsport
IMAGES



The mood in Ferrari's camp after Friday practice at Suzuka was downbeat. Having finished 0.356 seconds off the pace, in a session that doubled up as a back-up for qualifying due to Typhoon Hagibis forcing cancellation of the Japanese Grand Prix's Saturday running, Charles Leclerc – Ferrari's form man since the August break – declared Ferrari to be lacking grip, saying his deficit to the Silver Arrows was "more or less the real picture of the weekend".

Except it turned out to be far from the real picture. Yes, Mercedes ultimately won the race – the team's 12th victory in 17 races – thanks to Valtteri Bottas nailing the start and Sebastian Vettel fluffing his, but that result misrepresents the true picture of Sunday in Japan.

Ferrari turned Friday's form on its head to lock out the front row of the grid in Sunday morning's rescheduled qualifying session. Vettel took his first pole since the Canadian GP in June, and the Scuderia should have converted that into a 1-2 result in the race, but conspired to throw victory away for the second grand prix in succession.

This time it was a confluence of mistakes that were to blame – individual lapses in judgement the reasons for Ferrari's capitulation to Mercedes, rather than any misguided stage management of proceedings from the pitwall, or any simmering tension between the drivers causing pre-race agreements to be disrespected.

Mistake number one came from Vettel, who blew his pole position advantage immediately by moving before the start lights went out. Vettel managed to stop again before the sequence finished, but was then slow away and immediately overtaken around his outside by Bottas.

"I was doing what I normally do," said Vettel, who refuted a suggestion that his foot had slipped off the brake, but admitted to an error he wouldn't specify. "I had a very poor start because I moved a little bit, stopped, then lost all the momentum. So, overall I lost compared to a normal start. It was a mistake. There was a reason, but not a great reason."

The fact that Vettel got away with a jumped start without being penalised by the FIA raised an important question about how F1's rules are being interpreted and applied – and caused Lewis Hamilton to mock Vettel for "lying" in the post-race press conference when Vettel tried to insist there was nothing wrong with how things played out.

The FIA said Vettel's movement was "within the acceptable tolerance of the jumped-start system", and although moving before the lights go out usually automatically carries a penalty (as Kimi Raikkonen received in Russia), the transponder system implemented to prevent a repeat of Bottas's lightning-fast anticipation of the lights going out in Austria in 2017 ultimately saved Vettel's bacon.

This allowed Vettel to salvage second from this race – much to the chagrin of Lewis Hamilton, more of which we'll come to later – and prevented Ferrari suffering an even worse day.

That's because the other Ferrari had a disastrous race. Having been



Ferrari's form man coming into Suzuka, Leclerc lost his way a bit here. His nine-race streak of beating Vettel in qualifying was finally broken, as Leclerc struggled to nail the chicane, and he made two significant blunders before the race was even two corners old.

First, the start. "I got a little bit distracted," Leclerc admitted. "I saw Seb moving a little bit and then my reaction time was very poor. The start [itself] was not so bad but the reaction was very poor."

Shortly after, Leclerc piled into Max Verstappen's Red Bull-Honda as Verstappen attempted to drive around the Ferrari's outside at Turn 2. It was a risky move, yes, but the Red Bull was fractionally ahead as they turned in, and there was clearly space enough for both cars to make it



"THE FACT THAT VETTEL GOT AWAY WITH A JUMPED START WITHOUT BEING PENALISED RAISED AN IMPORTANT QUESTION ABOUT HOW F1'S RULES ARE INTERPRETED AND APPLIED"



Bottas surges into lead after Vettel and Leclerc make poor starts

QUALIFYING



SUTTON

through the corner – except Leclerc understeered into the Red Bull and knocked Verstappen off the circuit, in a move Verstappen called “irresponsible”. “With Max I just did a mistake, clearly,” Leclerc added. “I was on the inside and being behind Seb and Lewis I lost the front [end grip] a little bit. Normally you need to anticipate those things and I didn’t. I’m the one to blame.”

This was not Leclerc’s finest hour, but good on him for owning up to his mistakes so openly. Such humility is admirable from a young driver refining his craft in such a pressure-cooker environment.

The stewards initially elected to chalk the incident up to unintentional first-lap shenanigans, prompting Verstappen to furiously complain: “He just understeered into my car!” Upon reviewing further TV angles, the stewards eventually reconsidered and decided to launch a post-race investigation.

Verstappen’s race lasted only 14 laps before Red Bull elected to retire his car because of damage that cost “20-25% of the downforce of the car”, according to team boss Christian Horner.

Leclerc continued in third place, but with a deranged left-side front-wing endplate that eventually detached itself on the run to the final chicane at the end of lap two. It damaged Leclerc’s left-side mirror as it went, and then obliterated Hamilton’s right-side mirror in an explosion of carbonfibre.

Hamilton rightly called this situation “dangerous”, and it turned out the FIA agreed. Ferrari ignored an initial edict to bring Leclerc in before the endplate detached, and in fact Leclerc waited until the end of lap three before heading to the pits for a new front wing and medium tyres.

This also hurt the race of McLaren’s Lando Norris, prompting an angry reaction from team principal Andreas Seidl. “We obviously strongly disagree with competitors leaving cars out on track with entire front-wing endplates hanging down, putting everyone at risk,” he said. “Unfortunately when this endplate then exploded, we caught debris in our front-right brake duct. Brake temperature went through the roof so we had to box him [Norris] to clean it. And then the race was over.

“We will definitely speak to the race director after this race, just to >>

The turnaround was quite remarkable. Ferrari trailed Mercedes by three and a half tenths after Friday practice. Charles Leclerc wasn’t driving well, while Sebastian Vettel was closer to six tenths off the pace, struggling to get the Pirelli tyres working properly.

With no Saturday session to correct the balance, thanks to Typhoon Hagibis forcing organisers to pre-emptively cancel Saturday’s track action, Leclerc was resigned to this gap being representative of Ferrari’s deficit at Suzuka, particularly so considering everyone had to treat FP2 as a back-up qualifying session in case Sunday morning’s running was also cancelled.

But it all turned around on Sunday morning, as Ferrari set the pace in every segment of qualifying. Leclerc was ahead in Q1 and Q2, but Vettel came to the fore when it counted in Q3, setting a provisional pole lap that Leclerc never bettered, before Vettel pulled almost two tenths clear on his final run to claim his first pole since June’s Canadian GP.

“I think we are quite surprised to be honest,” said Vettel. “We didn’t expect to have the front row. It was unbelievable the car being so light on fuel and new tyres. We had a headwind up the Esses, which is just what you want because then the car feels even better. I don’t think I used the brakes other than Turn 2. It was unbelievable. I really enjoyed it.”

Vettel’s success ended a streak of nine straight qualifying defeats to Leclerc, who mainly lost time to the other Ferrari through the final chicane.

“Seb did an amazing lap and just deserved to be on pole,” Leclerc said. “I’ve been struggling a bit since the beginning of the weekend, but to be honest I was pretty happy with my lap in qualifying, apart from the last sector, where I did some mistakes – but pole position was not possible. Seb was just too quick.”

Mercedes was always playing catch-up through the qualifying, although Valtteri Bottas and Lewis Hamilton both ended Q3 within 0.1s of Leclerc’s pace. Mercedes boss Toto Wolff described Ferrari as coming “out of nowhere”, while Hamilton said the red cars simply “turn up and go to another level we can’t really compete with, power-wise”.

Bottas, who beat Hamilton to third by less than a hundredth of a second, felt he “got everything out of” Mercedes’ upgraded car in lapping 0.229s off the pace.

“I THINK WE ARE QUITE SURPRISED, TO BE HONEST. WE DIDN’T EXPECT TO HAVE THE FRONT ROW”

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Verstappen heads off circuit after Leclerc crashes into him, ruining both their races

understand what the general view is on that. Our view is pretty clear: if a part of that size and that material is hanging off the car, there should be no tolerance in being allowed to go flat out."

Leclerc dropped to the back of the field after his early stop and, although he recovered to finish sixth on the road (despite also losing his wonky left mirror for good measure, having tried desperately to hold it in place with his hand), a five-second penalty for the clash with Verstappen, coupled with a 10s penalty for driving his car in an unsafe condition following that incident, meant Leclerc dropped to seventh behind Daniel Ricciardo's Renault in the results. We now await the outcome of Racing Point's post-race protest regarding how Renault is allegedly managing its cars' brake-bias systems (see page 5).

Leclerc's race unravelling so spectacularly meant he was unable to provide any support to Ferrari's remaining car in the battle with Mercedes at the front. Regardless, Vettel was unable to rediscover that sparkling qualifying pace in the race, so struggled to put Bottas under any kind of serious pressure.

Vettel lost around four tenths per lap to the leading Mercedes in the first 15 laps, before diving into the pits for a fresh set of soft tyres at the end of lap 16 of 52 (one lap fewer than scheduled thanks to a 'system error' with the chequered-flag lighting), committing Ferrari to a two-stop strategy. Mercedes reacted by bringing Bottas in at the end of the following lap and fitting medium-compound rubber. This allowed Bottas to protect his lead and potentially hedge his bets between one or two stops later in the race, depending on tyre degradation.



Leclerc soldiers on with disintegrating endplate shedding carbonfibre



"LECLERC'S RACE UNRAVELLING SO SPECTACULARLY MEANT HE WAS UNABLE TO PROVIDE ANY SUPPORT TO TEAM-MATE VETTEL IN THE BATTLE WITH MERCEDES AT THE FRONT"

As it turned out, Vettel's Ferrari was burning through its tyres far too aggressively, so Bottas comfortably maintained a 10-12s advantage through Vettel's second stint. "You could see I was dropping off in terms of pace so the two-stop became more appealing than the one-stop," Vettel said. "I didn't have the pace at the end of the stint compared to Mercedes."

There are several theories as to why Ferrari's pace swings so drastically from day to day. There is a definite feeling that Ferrari's straightline-speed advantage has grown since the introduction of its 'spec 3' engine at Spa at the start of September, and the Singapore upgrades a few weeks later have helped close the gap to Mercedes in the downforce department, but there is still work to be done. Team boss Mattia Binotto revealed Ferrari made wing adjustments for Sunday morning's qualifying session at Suzuka, which brought the car to life over a single lap but perhaps compromised its ability to use the tyres well over a race distance – something that Ferrari also struggled with over the longer runs in Friday practice.

"We had some car issues on Friday; quite high degradation," Binotto explained. "And we worked through the set-up for quali and the race. We dropped the rear wing for quali and the race, which helped the front balance, and the car today felt better. We've got the right pace in quali but not in the race. We've got degradation, higher at least than our competitors. How it was compared to Friday is difficult to judge. We just simply tried to address the issues we had on Friday and the car improved."

"They [Mercedes] had a better pace than us in the race. Seb was ahead of Hamilton at the end of the first lap and then remained ahead at the end of the race. Even if you've got a good pace it's always difficult to overtake. If you would have been 1-2 at the start it would have been difficult to overtake two cars instead of only one. But I don't think that's something that's important, honestly. We need to review what was wrong, why we did some mistakes, why the pace was not good enough. At the end, we need to simply be the best on pace."

The "best on pace" ultimately in the Japanese GP was Hamilton. His 19-lap middle stint on the medium tyre was half a second per lap faster than the equivalent 17-lap effort from Bottas – struggling with traffic – on the same compound. Even over the comparative four laps Hamilton did on worn mediums compared to Bottas on fresh softs, just before Hamilton made his own second stop on lap 42, Hamilton was only a tenth and a half per lap slower. His fastest lap of the race was over six tenths clear of the next best, and almost a second faster than Bottas's.

Hamilton was so fast once unleashed from behind Vettel's Ferrari that Bottas was genuinely concerned that Hamilton would make it to the end without stopping again and steal victory away. Hamilton felt Mercedes should have given him "better guidance" on how to manage his pace >>

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TRACKSIDE VIEW

Karun Chandhok's assessment of Suzuka starts as it means to continue. "It's mega," he says as he floors the throttle in an Aston Martin Vantage that has an unashamedly excited Autosport journalist in the passenger seat. With Chandhok on Pirelli Hot Laps duty and kind enough to offer Autosport a ride, it's time to see why Formula 1 drivers speak so highly of Suzuka.

"The circuit's much narrower than you think," Chandhok says as he flicks the car into the Turn 1 right-hander, slowing aggressively for the tightening Turn 2. "But because the cambers in the road are so good, you can carry much more speed through the corners than what it looks like."

Indeed. Into Turn 1, our foot slams on an imaginary brake pedal. We should have more faith. Chandhok, ex-F1 driver and long-time Autosport friend, was recently entrusted with shaking down Lewis Hamilton's race chassis at Silverstone. We relax, to enjoy the ride – and succeed.

"It's so cool, the Esses," as Chandhok hustles the Vantage left, then right, left, and right again. "In anything, really. Even in a road car. It's just a mega track..."

After the long left-hander, Chandhok clips the kerb at Degner 1, which narrows more than



expected – he was right! – and glides through 2. Almost immediately we're kinking right and suddenly there's a hairpin.

"Even here, you've got this little camber in the road, just to help you," says Chandhok. "There's a lot of subtle camber in the road."

Autosport recounts its on-track experience to Romain Grosjean later in the day. The Haas driver gleefully makes the same camber point. He likens it to skiing: "When

you hit some ice, and then you hit the powder, and get grip again – it's just great!"

The marriage of track design and area topography is exquisite. Even the arcing run from the hairpin is much more of a corner than expected (especially in a road car). At the double-left Spoon Curve, Chandhok notes it is "such a long turn, then you forget how much it dips away" at the exit.

Next we're into the famous 130R.

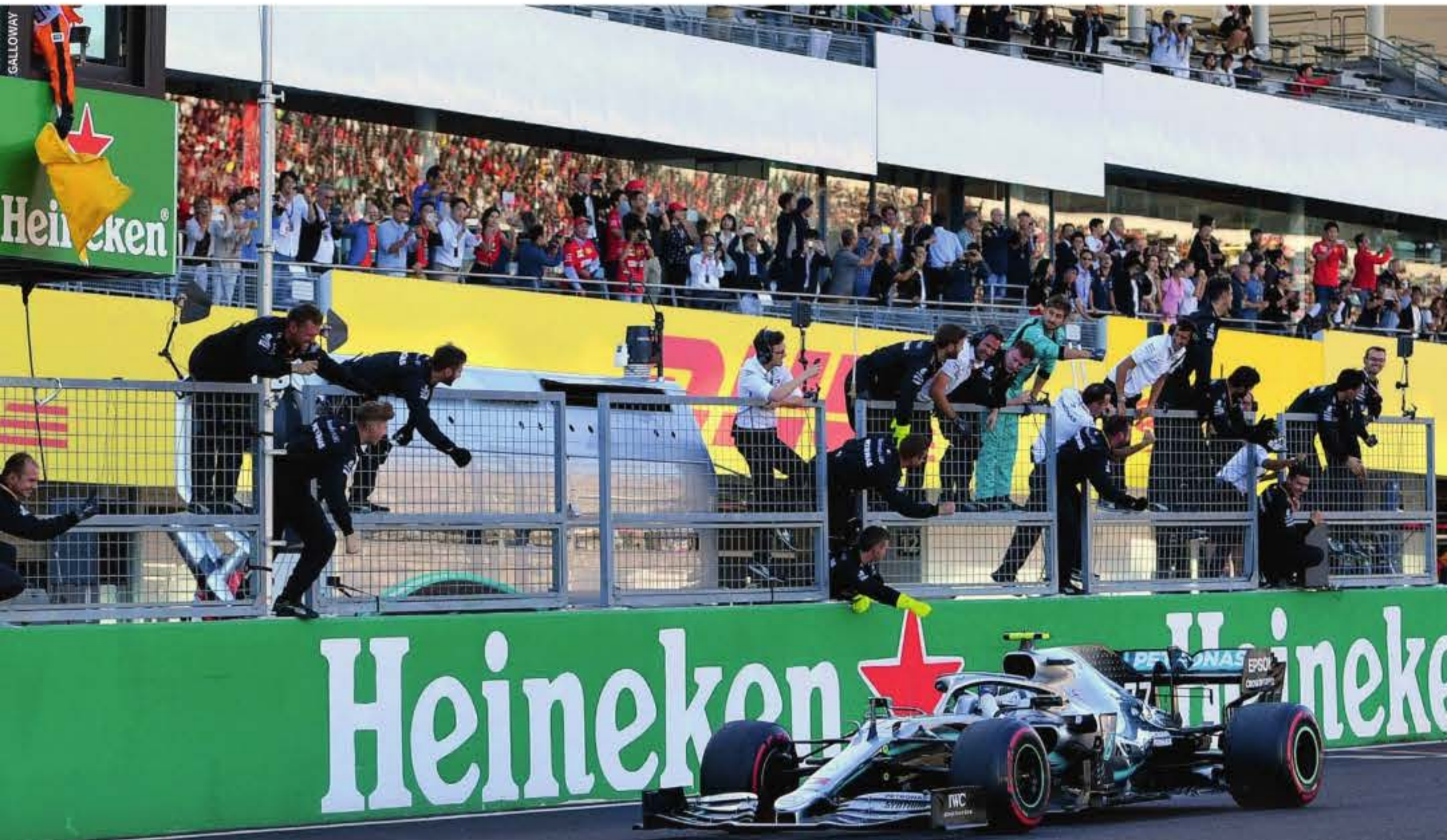
The speed of an F1 car on approach is almost unfathomable. Then Chandhok dives onto the brakes for the chicane, a much faster corner than it looks on TV, and the track falls away dramatically on the exit.

All too quickly, the experience is over, and the acclaim Suzuka has won reaches a new level of understanding. Chandhok's final summary is spot on: "The TV just doesn't do it justice..."

SCOTT MITCHELL



Our correspondent before buckling up to ride shotgun with Karun Chandhok



Bottas did enough to make his two-stop strategy work

through that second stint. Stopping again condemned Hamilton to third, behind Vettel, and Lewis pointedly suggested Mercedes could easily have scored a 1-2 finish had it managed the race differently.

“What’s done is done – naturally we’ll go and sit and talk to the engineers and strategists,” said Hamilton, who finished a whopping 45.7s clear of the remaining Red Bull-Honda of Alex Albon. “Today could have been done better. There are multiple scenarios during the year when that’s been the case but nonetheless, Valtteri did the job. I’d have had to have driven differently in that second stint, stretch out as far as you can... naturally when I was in the lead I thought about staying out, but by that time I’d already pushed so much to close the gap to Seb. We should have at least got a 1-2 today, but I think the strategy wasn’t optimum for me. We can do better as a team, to make sure we score more 1-2s.”

Mercedes team boss Toto Wolff said Hamilton was “a bit stuck between a rock and a hard place” given that tweaking his strategy to get ahead of Vettel could have inadvertently hurt Bottas, such as Hamilton’s pace. And although Mercedes considered allowing Hamilton to one-stop before asking him to hand position back to Bottas, the team decided the safer bet was to keep Hamilton on a two-stopper.

“There were lots of tricky calls in this race,” Wolff said. “We protected the lead with Valtteri and we took the pace out of his race once Sebastian pitted for his second stop. It was always clear it would always go towards Valtteri – we are not playing team-mates against each other with strategy. But then you could say we could have [assured] second place [by doing something different].”

“Pitting Lewis again at the end again was a fifty-fifty call. We could have left him out and tried to ask the drivers to change position to give the result back, and maybe protected against Sebastian. But on the other side, maybe not protected against Sebastian. So, pitting and giving him [Hamilton] a new set of tyres felt like the right decision.”

Hamilton’s frustration was understandable, in that he clearly

“HAMILTON’S FRUSTRATION WAS UNDERSTANDABLE, IN THAT HE HAD THE PACE TO WIN BUT NEEDED SOME HELP TO DO SO THAT WAS NOT FORTHCOMING GIVEN MERCEDES’ CURRENT RULES OF ENGAGEMENT”

felt – and demonstrated – that he had the pace to win, but needed some help to do so that was naturally not forthcoming given the current rules of engagement at Mercedes.

To at least turn this 1-3 result into a 1-2, Mercedes would have had to ask Hamilton to hand victory back to Bottas by moving aside late on, perhaps something the team is not quite ready to tell its soon-to-be six-time world champion to do without fear that he would just ignore the instruction. Champions are a ruthless breed, after all...

That said, Mercedes has now beaten its own driver to the punch by clinching that record sixth consecutive championship in a row, while Hamilton must wait at least one more race to put the seal on his.

Mercedes has done the deed thanks to two consecutive race victories stolen against the run of play. Ferrari is clearly back in the game in terms of speed, but still has many wrinkles to iron out before it can claim to be ready to properly threaten the silver hegemony. ✎

NEXT F1 REPORT

MEXICAN GRAND PRIX 31 OCTOBER ISSUE

Can Valtteri Bottas win again to close the gap on championship leader Lewis Hamilton, or will the English driver take another step to his sixth title?

Kubica criticises Williams for wing decision



The simmering tension behind the scenes between Williams and Robert Kubica boiled over at Suzuka, as he criticised the team post-race for removing its upgraded front wing from his car before qualifying.

Both Kubica and team-mate George Russell ran the sole example of Williams's upgraded front wing during Friday practice, and Kubica expected to keep using it after outpacing Russell in FP2, but Williams decided not to run it on either car.

Kubica then crashed heavily on his out-lap in Q1, before finishing last in the race having started from the pits in a spare chassis.

"Friday was very good," Kubica told Polish television. "First time for a very long time. We changed the front wing. It wasn't supposed to be better and on the second car

it did not give any advantage or was even worse. But my car felt a lot better. However, for strange reasons, the wing was taken from my car this morning before qualifying. Some boundaries were probably crossed."

When Kubica's comments were put to Williams, it said there had never been any intention to race with the wing on either car in Japan.

"As always, we discuss the most effective strategy ahead of each race weekend but make adjustments where necessary," said a team statement issued to Autosport. "Our new front wing was always intended as a test item for this event, with a view to running in a race at a future date.

"With the potential impact of Typhoon Hagibis forcing the cancellation of all running on Saturday, combined with the inclement wind conditions today

[Sunday], the team made the decision not to risk running the new front wing and potentially suffering damage before we had conducted further testing in Mexico [at the next GP].

"Given the incidents in qualifying, this proved to be the correct decision."

The Japan wing controversy follows Williams retiring Kubica's car in Russia as a precaution against a parts shortage following Russell's damaging incidents in Singapore and Russia.

The team's Polish sponsor PKN Orlen publicly questioned that decision, and Kubica also hinted at frustration over it at the start of the Japanese GP weekend.

Kubica argued the Suzuka wing decision was made "without even letting me know and I think this is not the right way".



Kubica made it no further in Q1 than his out-lap



Gasly and Perez clash undone by race-finish error

Japanese Grand Prix stewards ruled that there should be no penalties for Sergio Perez and Pierre Gasly's collision on what should have been the last lap of the race, the ramifications of which were undone by the result being taken back to lap 52 of 53.

Perez's Racing Point was tapped into a spin after colliding with Gasly and came to a rest in the barriers, after Perez had tried to pass the Toro Rosso for eighth place around the outside of Turn 2.

The FIA is investigating the error with the chequered-flag light panel that meant the race results were ultimately taken at the end of the previous lap, allowing Perez to retain

ninth, while Gasly finished eighth.

Although the incident had theoretically happened after the race was officially over, the stewards investigated and ruled that no driver was "wholly at fault" for the collision, because both took aggressive lines through the corner.

Perez called Gasly's driving "stupid" and "unnecessary", while Gasly was reluctant to accept blame, saying he "expected a bit more space".

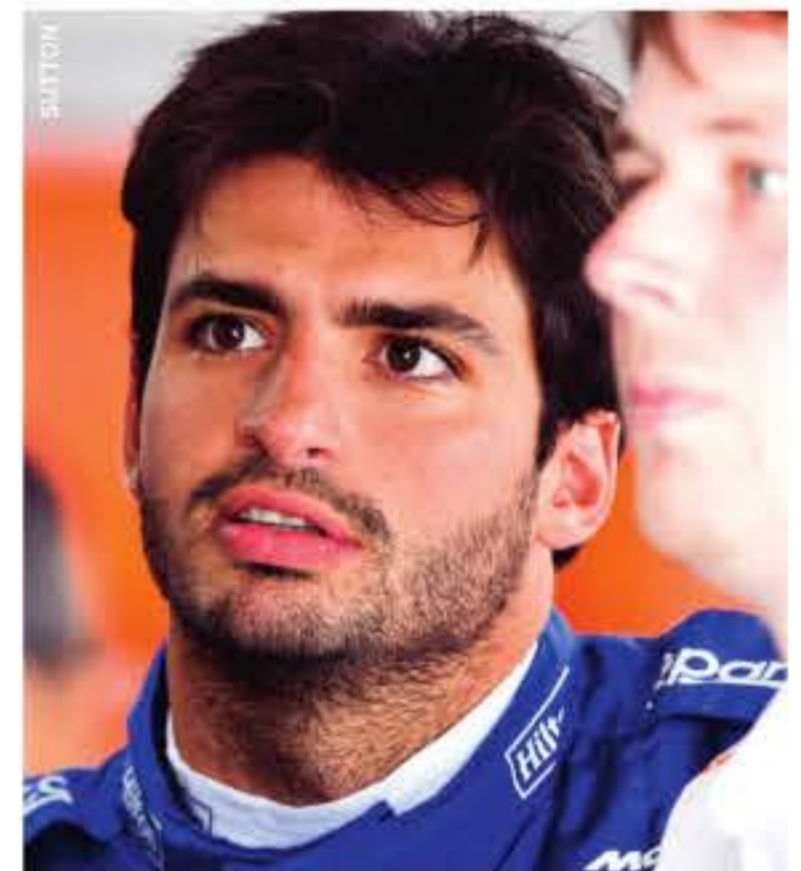
It is not the first time in recent F1 history that a race has been officially declared early – model Winnie Harlow waved the flag two laps before the scheduled finish of the 2018 Canadian GP.

Sainz forces Ferrari to 'give up'

Carlos Sainz Jr called his latest fifth-place finish "a bit more special than others" after being so quick that he forced Ferrari and Charles Leclerc to 'give up'.

Leclerc damaged his front wing hitting Max Verstappen on the opening lap, but was unable to get within five seconds of Sainz's McLaren during his recovery and aborted a long stint to change tyres.

"When you have a Ferrari 10 seconds behind, you think you're not going to make it," said Sainz. "But I had been saving my tyres at the beginning and when I was required to push I was able to find half a second. His tyres degraded and I kept up the pace, and he gave up. It was nice!"



Q&A

CHRISTIAN HORNER RED BULL TEAM PRINCIPAL



Red Bull had high hopes for engine partner Honda's home race. But a disappointing qualifying session set the tone, and Max Verstappen's race unravelled when Charles Leclerc hit him at the first corner. Alex Albon provided a silver lining with fourth place, making wheel-to-wheel contact with Lando Norris in the process.

Let's start with the positives... that was Alex's best result in Formula 1. Yeah, absolutely, and I think Honda's best [at Suzuka] since they've come back into Formula 1 with the hybrid era. They're the positives today. Even after a bad start, Alex drove very well and made it work.

What did you think of Alex's move on Lando?

I thought it was firm but fair. They touched front wheels but it was totally up the inside. It was good, hard racing. It was good to see the stewards make the right decision.

Lando thinks the same.

Respect to him. Whenever there's contact it's inevitable that there

will be an aggrieved party.

You had to retire Max. A legacy of the damage?

It was a huge amount of damage to the floor. He lost almost 20-25% of the car's downforce. There was no point running around just putting mileage on components, so we retired the car to save the mileage.

What's your take on the incident?

I think it was right they have a proper

look at it. In that incident there was enough space to be left. Max was clearly ahead.

Where do you draw the line on first-lap clashes?

They're trying to let them race, but sometimes things get a little too far. It was a shame because essentially it took both of them out of the race. And it would have been good to see both of those guys fighting at the front.



Albon's move on Norris judged to be tough but fair – by the drivers and stewards



FREE PRACTICE 1

POS	DRIVER	TIME
1	Bottas	1m28.731s
2	Hamilton	1m28.807s
3	Vettel	1m29.720s
4	Leclerc	1m29.912s
5	Verstappen	1m30.046s
6	Albon	1m30.375s
7	Sainz	1m30.702s
8	Perez	1m30.810s
9	Stroll	1m30.959s
10	Norris	1m31.001s
11	Grosjean	1m31.283s
12	Raikkonen	1m31.307s
13	Hulkenberg	1m31.426s
14	Ricciardo	1m31.563s
15	Magnussen	1m31.785s
16	Kvyat	1m31.920s
17	Yamamoto	1m32.018s
18	Russell	1m32.800s
19	Kubica	1m33.484s
20	Giovinazzi	1m36.887s

WEATHER 26C, sunny

FREE PRACTICE 2

POS	DRIVER	TIME
1	Bottas	1m27.785s
2	Hamilton	1m27.885s
3	Verstappen	1m28.066s
4	Leclerc	1m28.141s
5	Vettel	1m28.376s
6	Albon	1m28.402s
7	Sainz	1m29.051s
8	Perez	1m29.299s
9	Gasly	1m29.354s
10	Norris	1m29.358s
11	Raikkonen	1m29.477s
12	Kvyat	1m29.512s
13	Grosjean	1m29.553s
14	Stroll	1m29.597s
15	Giovinazzi	1m29.651s
16	Magnussen	1m29.749s
17	Ricciardo	1m29.859s
18	Hulkenberg	1m30.334s
19	Kubica	1m30.916s
20	Russell	1m31.071s

WEATHER 29C, sunny

FREE PRACTICE 3



SEASON STATS

DRIVERS' CHAMPIONSHIP	PTS	BEST FINISH	BEST QUAL
1 Hamilton	338	1	1
2 Bottas	274	1	1
3 Leclerc	221	1	1
4 Verstappen	212	1	1
5 Vettel	212	1	1
6 Sainz	76	5	6
7 Gasly	73	4	4
8 Albon	64	4	6
9 Ricciardo	42	4	4
10 Hulkenberg	35	5	6
11 Perez	35	6	5
12 Norris	35	6	5
13 Kvyat	33	3	6
14 Raikkonen	31	7	5
15 Magnussen	20	6	5
16 Stroll	19	4	9
17 Grosjean	8	7	6
18 Giovinazzi	4	9	8
19 Kubica	1	10	18
20 Russell	0	11	16

CONSTRUCTORS' CHAMPIONSHIP

1 Mercedes	612
2 Ferrari	433
3 Red Bull	323
4 McLaren	111
5 Renault	77
6 Toro Rosso	59
7 Racing Point	54
8 Alfa Romeo	35
9 Haas	28
10 Williams	1

QUALIFYING BATTLE

Hamilton	11	6	Bottas
Vettel	7	9	Leclerc
Albon	0	3	Verstappen
Gasly	1	10	Verstappen
Ricciardo	9	7	Hulkenberg
Grosjean	7	9	Magnussen
Norris	8	7	Sainz
Perez	15	2	Stroll
Raikkonen	9	7	Giovinazzi
Gasly	2	0	Kvyat
Albon	5	5	Kvyat
Russell	17	0	Kubica

Scores ignore sessions if a driver didn't participate in qualifying or had a serious technical problem

WINS

Hamilton	9
Bottas	3
Leclerc	2
Verstappen	2
Vettel	1

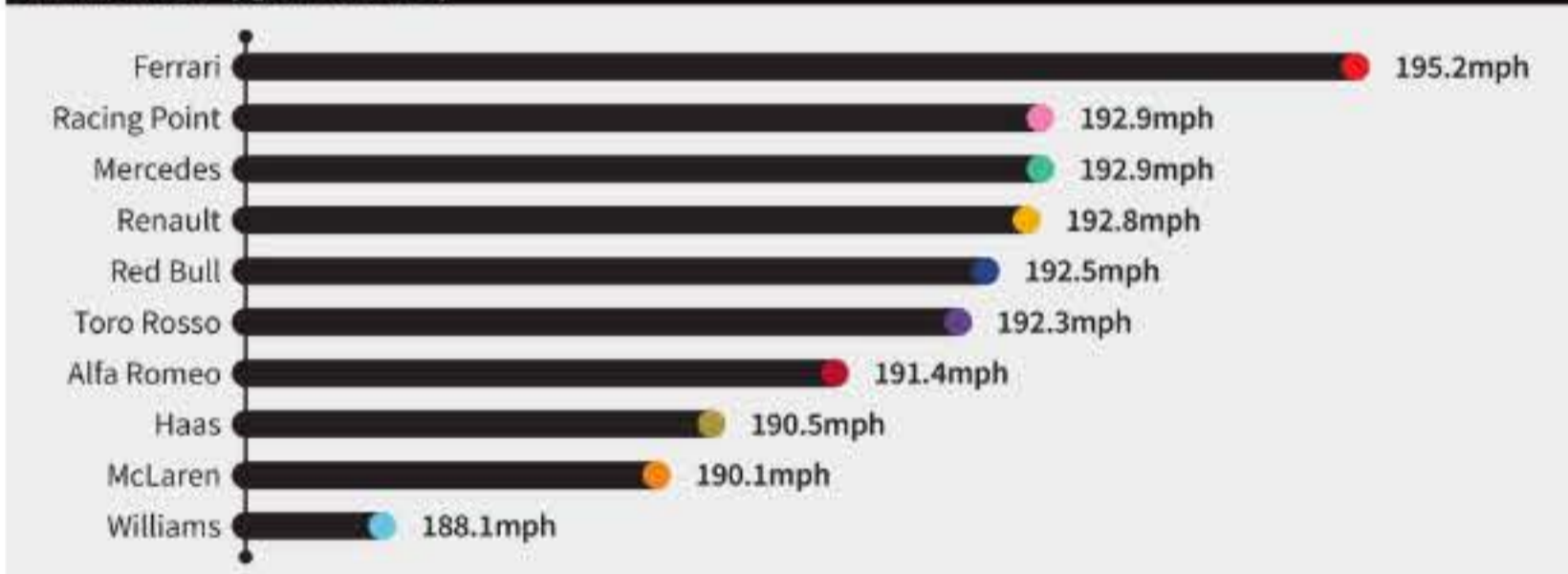
FASTEST LAPS

Hamilton	5
Verstappen	3
Bottas	2
Gasly	2
Leclerc	2
Vettel	2
Magnussen	1

POLE POSITIONS

Leclerc	6
Bottas	4
Hamilton	4
Vettel	2
Verstappen	1

SPEED TRAP (QUALIFYING)



QUALIFYING 1

POS	DRIVER	TIME
1	Leclerc	1m28.405s
2	Hamilton	1m28.735s
3	Verstappen	1m28.754s
4	Norris	1m28.873s
5	Bottas	1m28.896s
6	Vettel	1m28.988s
7	Sainz	1m29.018s
8	Albon	1m29.351s
9	Gasly	1m29.411s
10	Grosjean	1m29.572s
11	Stroll	1m29.594s
12	Giovinazzi	1m29.604s
13	Hulkenberg	1m29.619s
14	Raikkonen	1m29.636s
15	Kvyat	1m29.723s
16	Ricciardo	1m29.822s
17	Perez	1m30.344s
18	Russell	1m30.364s
-	Magnussen	no time
-	Kubica	no time

QUALIFYING 2

POS	DRIVER	TIME
1	Bottas	1m27.688s
2	Hamilton	1m27.826s
3	Albon	1m28.156s
4	Vettel	1m28.174s
5	Leclerc	1m28.179s
6	Verstappen	1m28.499s
7	Norris	1m28.571s
8	Sainz	1m28.577s
9	Gasly	1m28.779s
10	Grosjean	1m29.144s
11	Giovinazzi	1m29.254s
12	Stroll	1m29.345s
13	Raikkonen	1m29.358s
14	Kvyat	1m29.563s
15	Hulkenberg	1m30.112s

QUALIFYING 3

POS	DRIVER	TIME
1	Vettel	1m27.064s
2	Leclerc	1m27.253s
3	Bottas	1m27.293s
4	Hamilton	1m27.302s
5	Verstappen	1m27.851s
6	Albon	1m27.851s
7	Sainz	1m28.304s
8	Norris	1m28.464s
9	Gasly	1m28.836s
10	Grosjean	1m29.341s

WEATHER 27C, windy





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STARTING GRID

10 Grosjean #8 1m29.341s	8 Norris #4 1m28.464s	6 Albon #23 1m27.851s	4 Hamilton #44 1m27.302s	2 Leclerc #16 1m27.253s
9 Gasly #10 1m28.836s	7 Sainz #55 1m28.304s	5 Verstappen #33 1m27.851s	3 Bottas #77 1m27.293s	1 Vettel #5 1m27.064s

RACE RESULTS ROUND 17/21 (52 LAPS - 187.45 MILES)

POS	DRIVER	TEAM	FINISHTIME	LED	TYRES
1	Valtteri Bottas (FIN)	Mercedes	1h21m46.755s	43	Su, Mn, Su
2	Sebastian Vettel (DEU)	Ferrari	+13.343s		Su, Sn, Mn
3	Lewis Hamilton (GBR)	Mercedes	+13.858s	9	Su, Mn, Su
4	Alexander Albon (THA)	Red Bull-Honda	+59.537s		Su, Mn, Su
5	Carlos Sainz Jr (ESP)	McLaren-Renault	+1m09.101s		Su, Mn
6	Daniel Ricciardo (AUS)	Renault	-1 lap		Mn, Sn
7	Charles Leclerc (MCO)	Ferrari	-1 lap		Su, Mn, Sn, Su
8	Pierre Gasly (FRA)	Toro Rosso-Honda	-1 lap		Su, Mn
9	Sergio Perez (MEX)	Racing Point-Mercedes	-1 lap		Sn, Mn, Sn
10	Nico Hulkenberg (DEU)	Renault	-1 lap		Sn, Mn
11	Lance Stroll (CAN)	Racing Point-Mercedes	-1 lap		Sn, Mn
12	Daniil Kvyat (RUS)	Toro Rosso-Honda	-1 lap		Sn, Mn
13	Lando Norris (GBR)	McLaren-Renault	-1 lap		Su, Mn, Hu
14	Kimi Raikkonen (FIN)	Alfa Romeo-Ferrari	-1 lap		Mn, Hn, Sn
15	Romain Grosjean (FRA)	Haas-Ferrari	-1 lap		Su, Hn
16	Antonio Giovinazzi (ITA)	Alfa Romeo-Ferrari	-1 lap		Mn, Hn, Sn
17	Kevin Magnussen (DNK)	Haas-Ferrari	-1 lap		Mn, Hn, Sn
18	George Russell (GBR)	Williams-Mercedes	-2 laps		Mn, Hn
19	Robert Kubica (POL)	Williams-Mercedes	-2 laps		Mn, Hn, Mn
R	Max Verstappen (NLD)	Red Bull-Honda	14 laps-accident damage		Su

FASTEST LAPS

POS	DRIVER	TIME	GAP	LAP
1	Hamilton	1m30.983s	-	45
2	Leclerc	1m31.611s	+0.628s	48
3	Magnussen	1m31.732s	+0.749s	49
4	Bottas	1m31.862s	+0.879s	49
5	Vettel	1m32.122s	+1.139s	38
6	Giovinazzi	1m32.369s	+1.386s	51
7	Perez	1m32.621s	+1.638s	46
8	Albon	1m32.775s	+1.792s	36
9	Raikkonen	1m33.190s	+2.207s	50
10	Kvyat	1m33.239s	+2.256s	47
11	Ricciardo	1m33.481s	+2.498s	48
12	Sainz	1m33.563s	+2.580s	46
13	Norris	1m34.116s	+3.133s	31
14	Stroll	1m34.713s	+3.730s	26
15	Hulkenberg	1m34.921s	+3.938s	47
16	Grosjean	1m34.988s	+4.005s	18
17	Gasly	1m35.321s	+4.338s	43
18	Russell	1m35.458s	+4.475s	27
19	Kubica	1m36.332s	+5.349s	44
20	Verstappen	1m37.249s	+6.266s	10

WEATHER 28C, sunny

WINNER'S AVERAGE SPEED 137.53mph FASTEST LAP AVERAGE SPEED 142.78mph

TYRES

KEY: H - Hard M - Medium S - Soft I - Intermediate W - Wet n - New set u - Used set



MOTORSPORT IMAGES/HONE



RACE BRIEFING

FP1
NAOKI YAMAMOTO replaced GASLY at Toro Rosso

of survival cell, and five-place penalty for replacement gearbox

GRID PENALTIES
MAGNUSSEN Five-place penalty for replacement gearbox
KUBICA Required to start from the pitlane for change

RACE PENALTIES
LECLERC Five-second penalty and two licence points for causing a collision and 10s penalty for continuing to drive the car in an unsafe condition

LAP CHART What happened, when



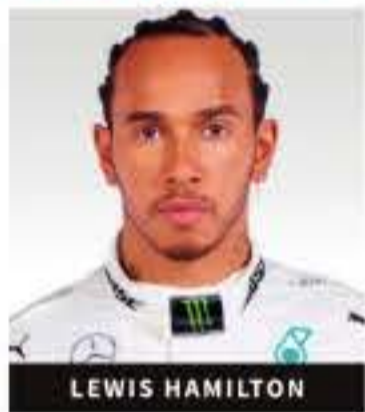
P Pitstop
 C Crash
 M Mechanical failure
 S Spin
 Pen Penalty
 L Car lapped
 SC Safety car

MIDFIELD HERO SAINZ TAKES THE ONLY PERFECT SUZUKA SCORE

Sebastian Vettel got pole, Valtteri Bottas won the race. But it was the Spanish bloke in the orange McLaren who impressed the most either side of the typhoon

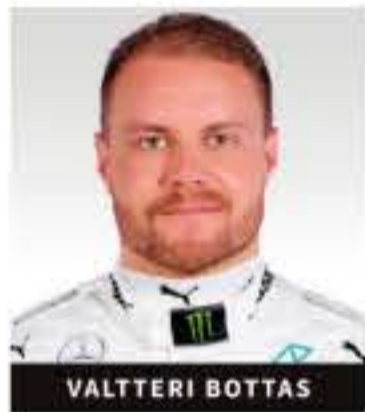
BEN ANDERSON

MERCEDES



LEWIS HAMILTON

7 Hamilton admits Suzuka is not one of his better circuits and he trailed Bottas through practice and qualifying. By far the quickest driver/car combo in the race, he insisted Mercedes' strategy cost him second, but getting boxed in on lap one after a so-so qualifying did the damage.



VALTTERI BOTTAS

8 Bottas raised his level after a disappointing recent run, as reflected by his "James, it's Valtteri" post-race team-radio victory message. His advantage over Hamilton narrowed over the weekend, but qualifying ahead and nailing the start set Bottas up for a steady run to victory.

FERRARI



SEBASTIAN VETTEL

7 Vettel says he's more comfortable since Ferrari's Singapore car update, and his form since reflects that. Nailing Q3 to take pole and prevent a 10th defeat in a row to Leclerc was huge. Sadly, Vettel spoiled his own race with a silly mistake at the start and was lucky not to get penalised.



CHARLES LECLERC

5 This was arguably Leclerc's worst performance of the season. Admitted to driving poorly on Friday, couldn't match Vettel in qualifying, and made two key errors at the start of the race. Did well to carve through the field before penalties dropped him back, but we expect more of him.

RED BULL



ALEX ALBON

7 Doing Pirelli's 2020 tyre test pre-Suzuka helped Albon get more comfortable with the RB15 and he was more competitive, matching Verstappen to the thousandth of a second in Q3. Started the race poorly and had to fight back past the McLarens, finishing well adrift of the leaders.



MAX VERSTAPPEN

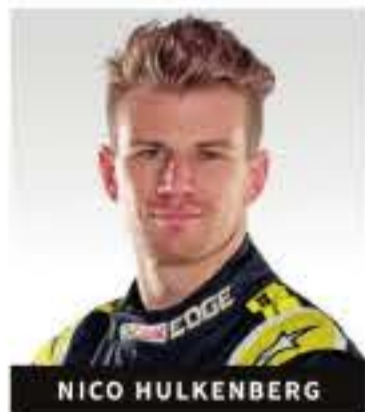
6 Expectations were high for Verstappen coming into Honda's home race, but he was never in contention thanks to a scruffy qualifying (including a brief loss of engine power) and first-lap collision with Leclerc, which cost the Red Bull 25% of its downforce and caused Verstappen to retire.

RENAULT



DANIEL RICCIARDO

8 Would usually get marked down for failing to escape Q1, but the Renault had a rear-suspension imbalance Ricciardo called "fundamentally wrong". Recovered brilliantly in the race (where the car showed its speed) with monster first stint on mediums, sharp passing and Hulkenberg's help.



NICO HULKENBERG

7 Hulkenberg's race was the inverse of Ricciardo's. Made a slightly better fist of qualifying and a great start to leap into the top 10 on the first lap, but thereafter got stuck in a "DRS train" behind Gasly and Stroll. Cleared Stroll finally, but gave up places to Ricciardo and Perez late on.

HAAS



ROMAIN GROSJEAN

6 Grosjean said he "overdelivered" to make Q3, as he felt Haas was missing 0.3s to "be in the train" on Friday, but was also helped by an awful session for the Renaults and Perez. Said he executed his start fine but had "no grip" so lost four places. Made his one-stopper work, but it was heavy going.



KEVIN MAGNUSSEN

4 "Showed everyone what not to do" with "embarrassing" crash in qualifying and things didn't get much better in the race. The start was the only highlight - he gained six places on the first lap - but trying to one-stop using the hard tyre backfired and he was beaten by Grosjean and the Alfas.

MCLAREN



LANDO NORRIS

7 Qualifying within 0.2s of Sainz, given Sainz's form and the fact that Norris was a Suzuka rookie, was very respectable. His race unravelled through no fault of his own, thanks to debris from Leclerc's Ferrari lodging in the brakes. Worked hard to recover, but was missing a tenth or two.



CARLOS SAINZ JR

10 Sainz was a cut above the rest of F1's midfield at Suzuka and would have been further clear in qualifying, but a battery problem cost him 0.2s per lap. Nailed the start, led Albon through the first stint, and was so fast late on he forced Leclerc's Ferrari to give up chasing fifth.



RACING POINT



SERGIO PEREZ

7 A terrible qualifying for Perez, who went out in Q1, was a massive eight tenths off Stroll, and only just qualified ahead of Russell's Williams. The race was much better, as Perez built on a brilliant first lap to pass Hulkenberg and Stroll and bag ninth. Flag mix-up negated needless Gasly clash.



LANCE STROLL

6 Stroll showed flashes of real speed at Suzuka and near enough matched Grosjean in Q2, but couldn't find the crucial couple of tenths to beat the Haas into Q3. Stroll's race was decent, but he got stuck behind Gasly for most of it and faded from the points as Perez and the Renaults surged.

ALFA ROMEO



KIMI RAIKKONEN

5 Raikkonen was at the back of a tight group of four battling for the final Q3 spot, so his Alfa possessed decent pace, but Raikkonen struggles without front-end grip. Only once medium and hard tyres were switched for softs near the end did he come alive, but by then it was far too late.



ANTONIO GIOVINAZZI

5 Giovinazzi continued his strong qualifying form since the summer break relative to Raikkonen, and wasn't far away from beating Grosjean into Q3. Giovinazzi was "nowhere" in the race, suffering more than Raikkonen as Alfa tried different aero packages on each car in a bid to understand it better.

TORO ROSSO



PIERRE GASLY

8 Gasly felt this was "definitely the most complete weekend" since his return to Toro Rosso. He missed FP1 so Naoki Yamamoto could drive for Honda, but he was on the case in FP2 and stayed in the top 10 the rest of the weekend, coping with a suspension problem in the race.



DANIIL KVIAT

6 Despite an extra practice session, Kvyat was not at Gasly's level and couldn't explain why he was nearly eight tenths behind his team-mate in Q2. Blamed a gear-sync issue for a poor start and falling behind everyone except Verstappen and the Williamses, although recovery was strong.

WILLIAMS



GEORGE RUSSELL

9 Russell was delighted with his qualifying effort. He came within 0.02s of Perez's underperforming Racing Point in Q1 and called it his "equal best qualifying of the year", so on a par with Hungary. He drove well in the race too, but stopped after a constant battle with iffy brakes.

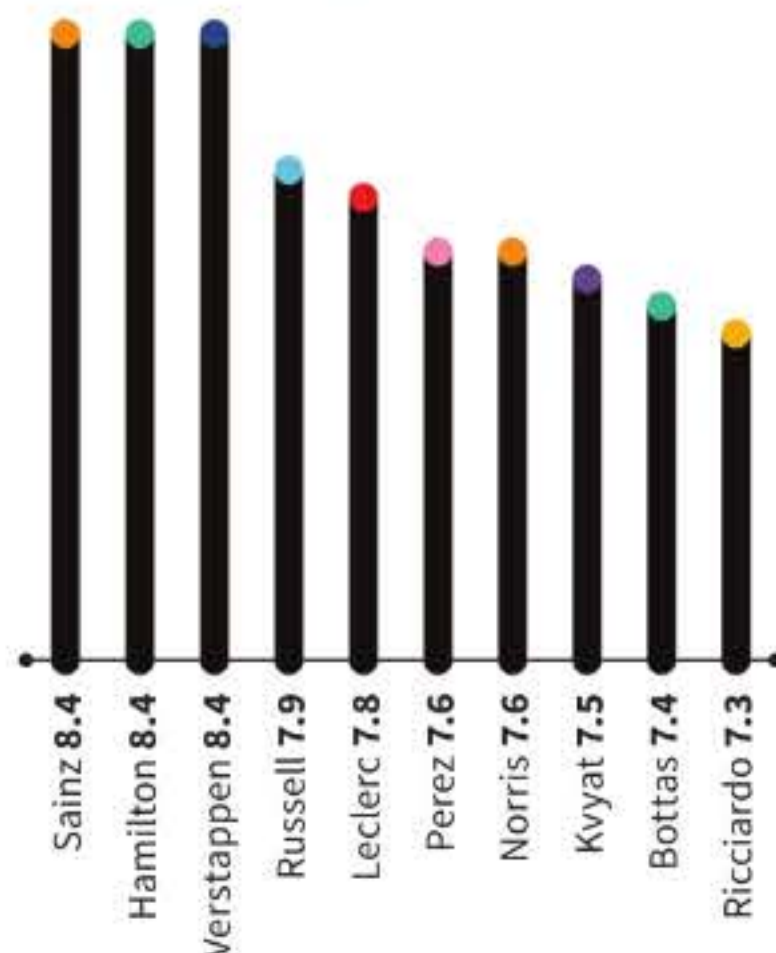


ROBERT KUBICA

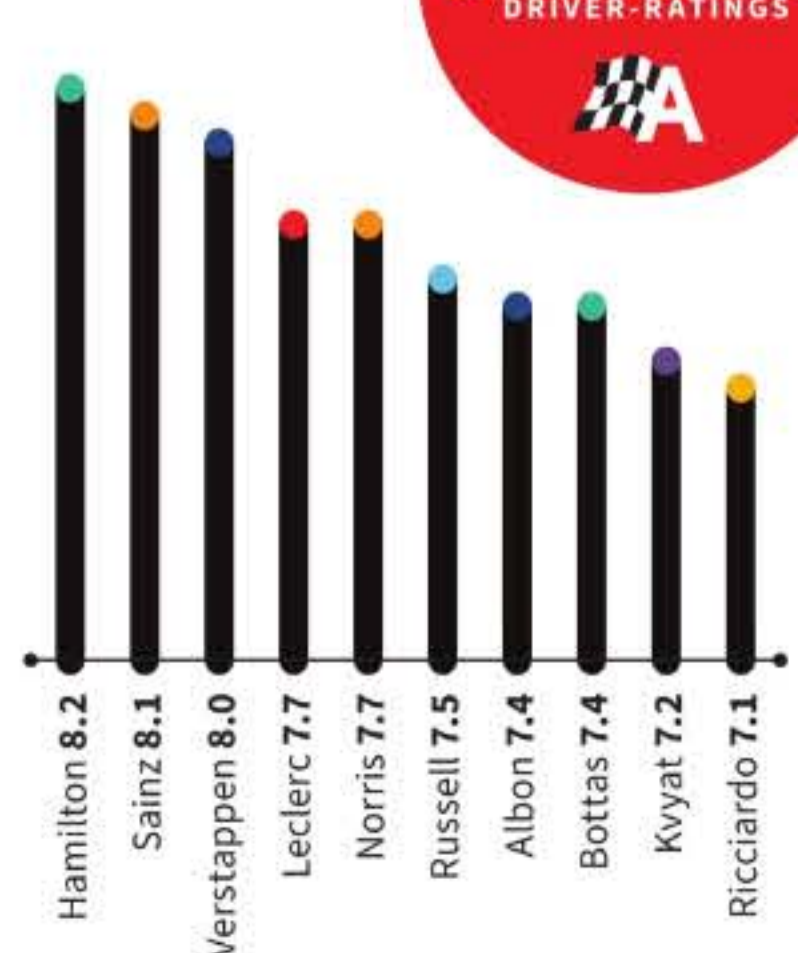
3 Was slightly faster than Russell on Friday, using the team's experimental new wing, but grew frustrated when the team took it off for qualifying, against what Kubica felt had been agreed. Needless Q1 shunt suggested he was right, and his race in the spare chassis was also disappointing.

TOP 10 AVERAGE RATINGS

AUTOSPORT'S RATING AFTER ROUND 17



READERS' RATING AFTER ROUND 17



GIVE YOUR DRIVER RATINGS

[AUTOSPORT.COM/F1/DRIVER-RATINGS](https://www.autosport.com/f1/driver-ratings)

Turkington triumphs in crazy season showstopper

From points leader to declaring his title over, and now a four-time BTCC champion. Turkington once again avoided winning it the easy way at Brands Hatch

MATT KEW

PHOTOGRAPHY JEP  motorsport
IMAGES





Take your pick: a rollercoaster of emotions, it can't be scripted, the stars aligned, it had to be seen to be believed, it isn't over until it's over.

Regardless of whichever cliché you assign to the 2019 British Touring Car Championship season finale on the Brands Hatch Grand Prix layout, nothing comes close to encapsulating the drama that unfolded for Colin Turkington to win the title.

This was a driver who had lost his lead in the standings to Dan Cammish ahead of the final race. He was eight points shy of the Team Dynamics pilot and was staring at 24 cars in front of him on the grid after being hit by Matt Neal into a spin on the opening lap of race two. Even the WSR driver himself said that he was "out of the championship" ahead of the final contest.

And yet he is now the BTCC's joint most successful driver with Andy Rouse, having clinched his fourth series crown last weekend, and he only moved into that position with one lap to go.

It's impossible not to feel desperately sorry for race one winner Cammish, whose late brake failure sent him careering backwards into a tyre wall to record his only non-finish of the year. Equally, no one can deny that Turkington is a worthy champion.

The weekend had got off to a perfect start, as Turkington stormed to pole by 0.316 seconds over Ash Sutton in a rain-hit qualifying to score a bonus point. But the BMW 330i M Sport doesn't like mixed conditions – it's the class of the field on a fully wet or dry track, but suffers on a greasy surface.

In the opener, he was faced with just that. A sluggish start dropped him behind Sutton from the off, but Turkington fought off an attempt from team-mate Andrew Jordan and then retook the lead at Druids on the inside. As rain fell, however, the slick-shod BMW began to drop back behind its front-wheel-drive rivals.

After getting stuck behind Jason Plato and sliding wide in qualifying, Cammish lined



"I don't feel anything. I don't feel sad. I don't think it'll dawn on me just how close I came"

up only 12th. But he soon bolted to seventh, bumped passed Sutton, inherited a place when Jake Hill slid wide and devoured Rory Butcher with a stunning move around the outside of Paddock Hill Bend for first place.

A second win of the season, on the Brands Hatch Grand Prix layout where he racked up his two wins last year, meant Cammish slashed Turkington's standings advantage in half to just eight points. Such was Cammish's lead, even a 5s time penalty for passing Tom Oliphant at the safety car line – the race paused when Matt Simpson thumped the tyres at the top of Paddock

– didn't knock him from the top step.

Sutton left it late to bag his first win of the season in race two, but it was Neal who hogged the limelight. He and Cammish made laboured starts from the front row as fifth-starting Turkington hooked his car up well. He shot ahead of Neal into the first corner and then caught up with Cammish, who was slow through Druids. That allowed Neal back onto his six.

As Turkington took a defensive line into Graham Hill Bend, he came across the front of Neal's Honda Civic Type R and was sent spinning onto the grass. TOCA put the blame on Neal, dealing out a five-place grid drop for race three and adding three points to his licence.

"I think it's clearly a professional foul and a red card offence," Turkington said. "I'm sure when he saw me up front and behind Dan he was pretty keen to reverse the situation. If it had been a Honda in front of him I bet he wouldn't have hit it. A BMW is a much easier target."

Neal, on the other hand, was far more clear cut: "If I wanted to do Colin [in] then I would have done it in the first place. My car was clearly down his inside and he just turned across me."

To add insult to calamity, it meant Honda won the manufacturers' championship – with Oliphant, not Jordan, the other BMW driver nominated by WSR to score towards that title battle.



Sizeable race two shunt allowed WSR to gamble on Turkington's strategy



Great Turkington start put the title challengers side-by-side into Paddock

Turkington eventually got the car pointing in the right direction and rejoined in 28th. He was given a lifeline through the intervention of the safety car, as Jack Goff slid his Volkswagen CC and tagged the rear of Oliphant, which left an unsuspecting Adam Morgan with nowhere to go – T-boning the 3 Series as a result.

WSR called Turkington in to try and salvage his race by fitting the prime compound slick tyre. But it was only on the final lap that fellow dry tyre runner Jake Hill clocked the fastest lap as the conditions never came to the defending champion. He was consigned to finish 25th.

As Turkington was in strife, early leader Cammish put up little by way of a defence against Sutton into Clearways and the Subaru Levorg GT driver romped home by 5s. Jordan, meanwhile, outdragged Cammish for position down the main straight but the Honda driver fell no further down the order. With only the final 15-lap race remaining, Cammish led the way on 318 points compared to Turkington's 310 and Jordan's 305.

In a not unsurprising turn of events for the BTCC, it all came down to the final race of the season for the title destination to be decided. But with Cammish starting eighth on the partially reversed grid, compared to Turkington's 25th, the engravers must have been chomping at the bit to begin carving Cammish's name onto the trophy. >>

CHAMPIONS LEAVE IT LATE



By some margin, Jason Plato has the most victories in British Touring Car history. But his pursuit to become the first driver in the series to chalk up a century has been derailed over the past few seasons.

He had scored just two in the past four campaigns, and came perilously close to making it two winless years in a row. In the final race, however, he put things right.

The two-time champion has looked more competitive since returning to front-wheel-drive machinery in the Vauxhall Astra, after a torrid time at the wheel of the Subaru Levorg GT. But there have been silly mistakes – including twice getting a drivethrough penalty for overshooting his grid box at the race start.

At Brands, though, he was imperious up front. With the fortune of the partially reversed race three grid, Plato was drawn on fifth. He made a fantastic start and was soon challenging polesitter Senna Proctor – who fell behind Stephen Jelley at the off – for second place.

Plato dispatched the Team BMR driver through Surtees and reeled in Jelley down the home straight.

With clear air in front, Plato was at times 4s to the good before consolidating win number 97 over Rory Butcher – who wrapped up the Independent drivers' title.

Plato knew he and the Power Maxed Racing squad had finally stitched everything together.

"It is great because we have had the pace this year and I have made a couple of mistakes with parking issues," he quipped. "It's a bit of a monkey off the back but I have had such a brilliant year and I have thoroughly enjoyed myself. My mojo is back and I am back in the [TOCA] bus getting told off, so that means I am competitive again. It's a nice way to end the year.

"We can start to think about lifting the team again now. We need to develop our own engine, we need to get some more investment. Now the work starts for next year. We want to come back in 2020 and kick some butt."

His former team-mate Ash Sutton gave the Subaru Levorg GT a fitting send off, for what is expected to be its last outing in the BTCC. The 2017 champion made an uncharacteristically strong start to the season but fell back as rear-driven cars took performance hits following the reintroduction of the Infiniti Q50.

For one of the finest talents on the grid, a winless campaign would have been unbecoming but fortunately a race two triumph put paid to a barren year.



Sutton came through for race two spoils

With rear-drive traction and no success ballast, Turkington enjoyed a strong launch but it almost didn't seem to matter. Impressive as it was, nor did it seem to matter that he climbed a staggering 10 places on the opening lap. But on the next tour he found another two spots, and then another three and soon Cammish was in his sights. He still had to overhaul the Honda driver, but at least it made for good TV.

Turkington's superior traction out of Surtees took him past Tom Ingram on the run into Hawthorns for eighth. And then, as Cammish sought to make progress past Ollie Jackson, Turkington dived up the inside into the Druids hairpin and past the Civic Type R.

Jackson then ran wide, allowing Turkington and Ingram to go by, but not Cammish. All the while, the front brakes on the Civic were a pulsating orange – notably more than any other car. But the double Porsche Carrera Cup GB champion still retained his points lead.

As the field snaked through the high-speed middle sector on lap 14 of 15 it looked as though, as valiant as Turkington's drive had been, that Cammish had done enough. But then his chances were snuffed out.

Cammish is hard on the brakes, and as a left-foot stopper – unlike Turkington – the pedal travel was starting to extend as the front anchors cried mercy. The worse it got, the more he had to stomp on the controls to slow the car.

Barry Plowman, the co-owner and technical director of Team Dynamics, reckoned running close to Jackson had exaggerated the issue with a lack of clean, cold air to cool the brakes. Either way, Cammish hit the pedal into Hawthorns with such force that the rear wheels locked and the car swapped ends. He shot backwards across the gravel and mounted the tyre wall.

Fortunately he walked away unscathed from a big hit, but the greater impact lay in the fact that he was barely 2.5 miles from becoming a BTCC champion in only his second season.



Neal and Turkington come to blows in race two at Graham Hill Bend

An hour after the chequered flag had been waved for Jason Plato's first win of the year and 97th in the BTCC, losing the title by two points hadn't begun to register.

"I don't feel anything," said Cammish. "I don't feel sad. What's just happened there? I don't think it'll dawn on me just how close I came and just what's happened. I came within one and a half laps of being the touring car champion.

"I gave it everything, I gave it my best and at the end of the day it just wasn't to be. I don't know what to say. I am heartbroken that I have lost it, but it

hasn't really sunk in yet."

For the next few weeks it will be of little consolation to Cammish, but, with Team Dynamics showing its faith by giving him a two-year contract, he has every opportunity to come back and take the crown in a much more domineering fashion.

It probably won't make all that much difference to Cammish's feelings, but his crash means he didn't even finish as the 2019 runner-up. Jordan signed off his year with fourth-place finish, drawing level on 318 points with Cammish. But with the highest season tally of six wins, compared to Cammish's two, it meant Jordan edged ahead in the table. Remarkably, despite 23 years in the series, it is WSR's first ever championship 1-2.

Josh Cook and Ingram retained a mathematical chance of winning the title ahead of the final round but they were little more than rank outsiders. Jordan, entering the weekend third, still faced long odds, which weren't helped when he qualified third behind his team-mate.

Alongside the calm demeanor of Turkington, it was Jordan who was keen to stoke the in-house rivalry in the pre-match build-up. But slipping to eighth in race one, with Turkington fifth, dented his chances of a revival. But then second in race two, a slot ahead of Cammish, and with Turkington skidding around on slick tyres in 25th, offered a glimmer.



Cammish began to cook his front brakes in the finale

“I put in my notebook that I was going to win the title in style. I’ve lived up to that”



the championship all the way through until race two at Brands Hatch thanks to five wins – and Jordan’s pivotal non-score at Donington Park, when he crashed out of race one and then spent the rest of the meeting in hospital.

Turkington is not the BTCC’s most exuberant character – he lets Plato and Neal fight for that honour – and yet he never seems to be able to wrap up the title in a quiet and straightforward manner. In 2009 he became a champion for the first time before being dumped from the series after WSR title sponsor RAC pulled its backing. In 2014 Plato punted his BMW 1 Series into a spin at Paddock Hill Bend in the season finale. Last season, it was another tense final race decider. But 2019, reckoned Turkington, will take the prize.

“That was the toughest one,” he said. “2018 was such a tough year personally. I just wanted it to be over, I just wanted to win the championship and go home.

“I never felt that I’ve won the championship in style – even in 2014 I won after race one but then got taken out in race two. I’ve always left after race three not feeling great about myself. To have actually won the championship in style – I put that in my notebook coming into the weekend, that I was going to win it in style this weekend, and I’ve lived up to that.

Whenever you’re not expecting something and it happens, it means a lot.

“There have been some amazing finals before but for me personally I could never replicate that. You would have to try really hard to hype up another BTCC final like that. I’m just glad it’s over.”

After the loss of his mum during the 2018 season, and having won the title with just the sole race win, Turkington and his family marked the occasion in muted fashion – a Chinese meal on the way home from the track. But 12 months on, it’s a safe bet that after such a dramatic climax, his celebration will be far more exuberant. ✎



Jordan was valiant and super clean in his fight up from ninth to fourth in race three, but no amount of theatrics from the other side of the WSR garage could come close to the way in which Turkington scored the ultimate spoils of glory.

He was in tears before he’d even made it to the chequered flag and was more animated than ever, shouting and fist-pumping his way around the cooldown lap.

“It’s definitely been the race of my life,” Turkington said. “During race two, when the slick tyres didn’t switch on, that’s when my heart sank and I thought ‘That’s me out! I’d haemorrhaged so many points. My chin was definitely down but

I was prepared to see what I could do. Somehow we did it. I knew lap one was going to be crucial to leapfrog my way back into the race. At the end of lap one I could see both Dan Cammish and Andrew Jordan, so I was like, ‘Hey, we’ve got a chance here’. Whenever I got behind Matt Neal I thought, ‘Oh, well this is going to be hard! I knew I could put pressure on Dan because it was all for him to lose.’

When the new BMW 330i M Sport rolled out for the pre-season test day, Turkington admitted that the partnership had got off to a rocky start and that he couldn’t drive his natural style in the new saloon. And yet, from the first race at Thruxton, he had led

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RESULTS ROUND 10/10, BRANDS HATCH, 13 OCTOBER RACE 1 (18 LAPS - 43.797 MILES)

POS	DRIVER	TEAM / CAR	TIME
1	Dan Cammish (GBR)	Team Dynamics / Honda Civic Type R S (48kg)	34m22.508s
2	Matt Neal (GBR)	Team Dynamics / Honda Civic Type R S (12kg)	+2.882s
3	Tom Chilton (GBR)	Motorbase Performance / Ford Focus RS (6kg)	+3.306s
4	Rory Butcher (GBR)	AmD Tuning / Honda Civic Type R S (24kg)	+3.624s
5	Colin Turkington (GBR)	WSR / BMW 330i M Sport S (54kg)	+5.370s
6	Mike Bushell (GBR)	AmD Tuning / Honda Civic Type R S	+6.057s
7	Stephen Jelley (GBR)	Team Parker Racing / BMW 125i M Sport S	+6.916s
8	Andrew Jordan (GBR)	WSR / BMW 330i M Sport S (42kg)	+7.634s
9	Jack Goff (GBR)	Team Hard / Volkswagen CC S	+9.878s
10	Ollie Jackson (GBR)	Motorbase Performance / Ford Focus RS	+10.919s
11	Ash Sutton (GBR)	BMR Racing / Subaru Levorg S (6kg)	+14.416s
12	Michael Caine (GBR)	Motorbase Performance / Ford Focus RS	+20.511s
13	Aiden Moffat (GBR)	Laser Tools Racing / Infiniti Q50 S	+21.312s
14	Jason Plato (GBR)	Power Maxed Racing / Vauxhall Astra (18kg)	+22.361s
15	Rob Collard (GBR)	Power Maxed Racing / Vauxhall Astra S	+24.571s
16	Tom Oliphant (GBR)	WSR / BMW 330i M Sport S	+26.589s
17	Carl Boardley (GBR)	Team Hard / Volkswagen CC S	+28.187s
18	Daniel Rowbottom (GBR)	Ciceley Motorsport / Mercedes A-Class	+28.518s
19	Adam Morgan (GBR)	Ciceley Motorsport / Mercedes A-Class	+31.676s
20	Rob Smith (GBR)	Excelr8 Motorsport / MG6	+40.436s
21	Bobby Thompson (GBR)	Team Hard / Volkswagen CC	+40.831s
22	Mark Blundell (GBR)	Trade Price Cars Racing / Audi S3 Saloon	+47.080s
23	Tom Ingram (GBR)	Speedworks Motorsport / Toyota Corolla GT S (30kg)	+1m44.546s
24	Michael Crees (GBR)	Team Hard / Volkswagen CC S	-1 lap
R	Jake Hill (GBR)	Trade Price Cars Racing / Audi S3 Saloon S	17 laps-loose turbo pipe
R	Chris Smiley (GBR)	BTC Racing / Honda Civic Type R	14 laps-overheating
R	Senna Proctor (GBR)	BMR Racing / Subaru Levorg S	13 laps-spin
R	Josh Cook (GBR)	BTC Racing / Honda Civic Type R (36kg)	11 laps-low fuel warning light
R	Sam Osborne (GBR)	Excelr8 Motorsport / MG6 S	10 laps-spin
R	Matt Simpson (GBR)	Simpson Racing / Honda Civic Type R	4 laps-crash

Winner's average speed 76.44mph. **Fastest lap** Oliphant 1m33.384s, 93.80mph.
S = nominated soft tyre.

QUALIFYING

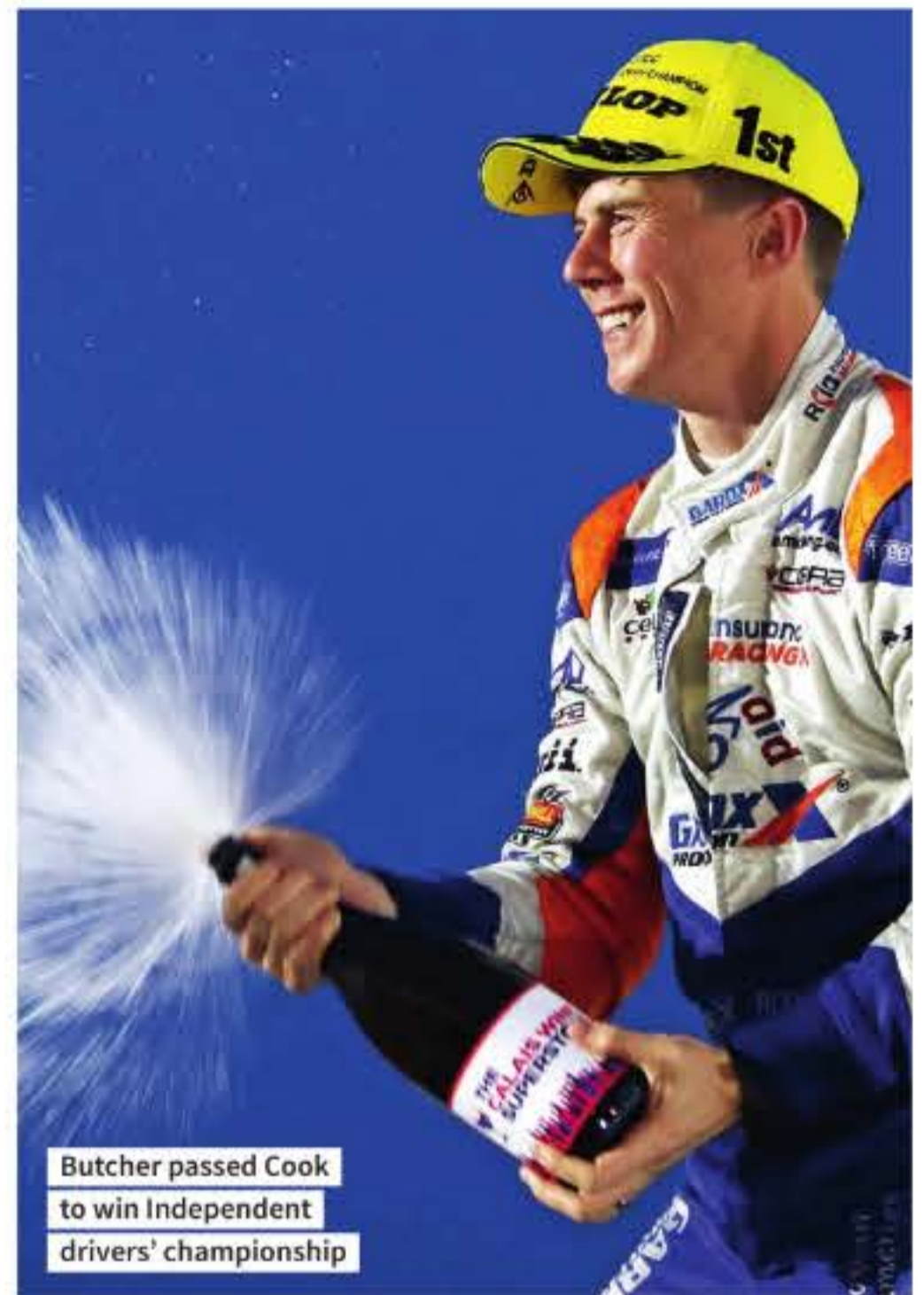
1 Turkington 1m40.752s; 2 Sutton 1m41.068s; 3 Jordan 1m41.520s; 4 Oliphant 1m41.626s; 5 Butcher 1m41.637s; 6 Hill 1m41.913s; 7 Smiley 1m42.084s; 8 Cook 1m42.151s; 9 Bushell 1m42.157s; 10 Moffat 1m42.166s; 11 Morgan 1m42.169s; 12 Cammish 1m42.215s; 13 Neal 1m42.240s; 14 Caine 1m42.405s; 15 Proctor 1m42.427s; 16 Plato 1m42.444s; 17 Ingram 1m42.482s; 18 Thompson 1m42.655s; 19 Chilton 1m42.834s; 20 Jackson 1m43.027s; 21 Blundell 1m43.359s; 22 Goff 1m43.366s; 23 Collard 1m43.627s; 24 Smith 1m43.746s; 25 Jelley 1m43.781s; 26 Boardley 1m43.967s; 27 Rowbottom 1m44.027s; 28 Crees 1m44.574s; 29 Osborne 1m45.516s; 30 Simpson no time.



NEXT REPORT

SEASON REVIEW
31 OCTOBER ISSUE

How Turkington pieced together a remarkable fourth title, plus Autosport picks the top 10 drivers of the 2019 British Touring Car Championship season.



GRID RACE 2 Decided by result of Race 1.

RACE 2 (18 LAPS - 43.797 MILES)

1 Sutton 35m18.719s; 2 Jordan (12kg) +5.223s; 3 Cammish (54kg) +7.158s; 4 Neal (48kg) +9.901s; 5 Chilton (42kg) +10.225s; 6 Jackson (6kg) +11.173s; 7 Plato +11.451s; 8 Caine +11.895s; 9 Butcher (36kg) +12.177s; 10 Jelley (18kg) +12.259s; 11 Proctor +12.722s; 12 Moffat +13.416s; 13 Cook +14.555s; 14 Boardley +14.935s; 15 Rowbottom +16.186s; 16 Thompson +17.462s; 17 Collard +18.192s; 18 Bushell (24kg) +18.959s; 19 Hill +19.772s; 20 Smith +21.085s; 21 Ingram +21.364s; 22 Osborne +25.597s; 23 Crees +27.631s; 24 Smiley +30.438s; 25 Turkington (30kg) +30.952s; 26 Morgan +1m04.978s; 27 Simpson -2 laps; R Blundell 8 laps-spin; R Goff (6kg) 0 laps-crash; R Oliphant 0 laps-crash.

Winner's average speed 74.42mph.
Fastest lap Hill 1m40.920s, 86.79mph.

GRID RACE 3 Decided by result of Race 2, with top 11 reversed, and five-place grid penalty for Neal.

RACE 3 (15 LAPS - 36.498 MILES)

1 Plato **S (18kg) 23m19.614s**; 2 Butcher (6kg) +0.958s; 3 Sutton (54kg) +1.767s; 4 Jordan (48kg) +4.248s; 5 Cook **S** +5.333s; 6 Turkington +13.598s; 7 Ingram +14.103s; 8 Jackson **S** (24kg) +16.810s; 9 Morgan **S** +17.346s; 10 Oliphant +17.653s; 11 Jelley (6kg) +18.758s; 12 Hill +19.409s; 13 Neal (36kg) +19.786s; 14 Moffat +19.931s; 15 Thompson **S** +23.307s; 16 Bushell +23.724s; 17 Caine **S** (12kg) +24.171s; 18 Collard +24.800s; 19 Boardley +31.345s; 20 Blundell **S** +32.646s; 21 Proctor +32.916s; 22 Smith **S** +34.070s; R Cammish (42kg) 13 laps-brake failure; R Osborne 13 laps-broken wheel; R Rowbottom **S** 12 laps-tyre failure; R Simpson **S** 5 laps-misfire; R Crees 3 laps-gearbox; R Chilton **S** (30kg) 1 lap-crash; R Smiley **S** 0 laps-driveshaft; NS Goff damage.

Winner's average speed 93.88mph.
Fastest lap Cook 1m31.783s, 95.44mph.
S = nominated soft tyre.

CHAMPIONSHIP

1 Turkington 320; 2 Jordan 318; 3 Cammish 318; 4 Cook 278; 5 Butcher 266; 6 Ingram 245; 7 Plato 237; 8 Sutton 233; 9 Neal 232; 10 Chilton 200.

McLaughlin masters the Great Race

It was a proper nailbiter, but the DJR Team Penske Ford star added Bathurst 1000 victory to his almost-certain Supercars title

ANDREW VAN LEEUWEN

PHOTOGRAPHY KLYNSMITH  motorsport
IMAGES



Scott McLaughlin is fast running out of things to win in Australian motorsport after claiming – alongside Alexandre Premat – a Bathurst 1000 crown he desperately coveted.

McLaughlin didn't leave much behind in central New South Wales. The Kiwi's weekend in his DJR Team Penske Ford included a provisional pole, a new fastest-ever lap in the Top 10 Shootout, and a well-crafted victory. The only thing he missed out on was the race lap record, Chaz Mostert nabbing that with a 2m04.760s in the closing stages of the 1000km classic.

Hollywood lap times were a feature throughout the weekend. With a drop in both aero and engine power coming for 2020, there was a keen sense that any new Mount Panorama benchmark could stand for a long time. That there were mid-2m04s being set in free practice one made it clear that McLaughlin would soon have some company in the so-called 'Threes Club'. And

by Thursday evening Jamie Whincup, Cam Waters and Will Davison had all dipped below 2m04s, while McLaughlin himself lowered his own fastest-ever lap to a 2m03.772s. On Friday morning Andre Heimgartner joined the club, as McLaughlin lowered the record to a 2m03.481s.

Then the rain set in on Friday afternoon, hobbling the pace for qualifying and rinsing plenty of the rubber out of the sparsely used surface. By Saturday evening's Shootout the weather was fine, but there was a risk that the blip in conditions had stopped the momentum required to see something really special in the single-lap dash.

McLaughlin, however, had other ideas. Only needing to beat Mostert's 2m03.7s for pole, he put on yet another qualifying clinic with an eye-watering 2m03.378s.

In the ultimate sign that nothing was being left to chance – or perhaps just to relieve the nervous energy – the team got straight to work after the Shootout fitting the #17 Mustang with a fresh V8 engine.

Starting from pole in the fastest car in the field, the last thing McLaughlin needed at 1130 on Sunday was a curveball or a distraction. But just as he pulled up to the line ready to take the start, the lights tower flashed orange. The start was delayed because Brodie Kosteci had rolled to a stop on the warm-up lap. A problem with his cool box, used to cool outside air to be pumped into the helmet fan, had left him breathing nothing but dry ice. He was taken to the medical centre to be treated for minor burns and carbon dioxide poisoning, and his Holden was dragged back to the garage, creating a 15-minute delay to the start.

When the race did finally go green, McLaughlin did enough to hold off a fast-starting Michael Caruso into Turn 1, before comfortably leading the field as it charged up over the Mountain. And just like that the safety car boards were out – Tim Slade had got caught on the outside of Scott Pye coming out of The Cutting, and that fired Slade's Holden into the wall.



It took four laps for the race to get back under way, and this time, finally, McLaughlin got a good crack at it with a full 96 laps of green running. It was an enthralling portion of the race, a classic battle of good drivers in good cars running nose-to-tail at the front.

For the first stint it was McLaughlin against Tickford Ford man Mostert, before they handed over to Premat and James Whincup, Shane van Gisbergen (both in Red Bull/Triple Eight Holdens) and Cam Waters (Tickford Ford) all took over from their co-drivers, creating a fascinating mix of primary and secondary star power.

It was during that stint that Premat showed his class, batting away suggestions of rustiness by soaking up laps and laps of pressure from Waters and Whincup, before Mostert, back in his Ford, joined the party.

With Waters having failed to rattle Premat, Mostert finally got the job done by forcing the Frenchman to lock a brake >>

DJR PENSKE IN HOT WATER FOR TEAM ORDERS



The official results of the Bathurst 1000 were still provisional as Autosport went to press, pending a hearing into a team-orders charge handed to DJR Team Penske.

Stewards launched a post-race enquiry into an instruction given to Fabian Coulthard to slow behind the safety car, which both backed up the field and created a bubble that meant he avoided double-stacking with the winning sister Ford of Scott McLaughlin. It was done under the guise of an overheating problem, mechanics even lifting the bonnet of Coulthard's Mustang during the stop to 'inspect' the engine.

Race officials weren't convinced, first slapping Coulthard with a drivethrough, before summoning the team to the post-race hearing regarding the matter.

"After interviewing [DJRTP boss Ryan Story], the driver of car #12 and car #12's engineer, and reviewing Hawk Eye footage of the incident, including in-car footage from car #12, the interview of Mr Story and Supercars telemetry data for car #12, the stewards, while making no findings, determined that the evidence was sufficient to call upon Racing Team (Aust) Pty Ltd to answer whether it breached Rule D24.1 and recommended to the

deputy race director that he consider laying a charge of a breach of that rule," read a CAMS statement.

"The charge will be heard by a panel of stewards prior to the commencement of track activities at the forthcoming Gold Coast 600. In the circumstances, the classifications remain provisional."

Coulthard, who finished sixth with Tony D'Alberto, was mortified to be embroiled in the scandal: "Whatever it is, I need to clear my name. It's not my style. I don't race like that, I'm a clean racer."

Team orders are something of a grey area in Supercars. According to CAMS: "Rule D24.1 prohibits team orders and provides that an instruction to a driver or team member, either verbal or otherwise, the effect of which may interfere with a race result is a team order." Unofficially known as the 'DTM rule', its purpose has largely been to prevent manufacturers ganging up on each other, rather than teams asking their own drivers to hold or switch positions.

Autosport understands that McLaughlin's win is under no threat, with a fine or a teams' championship points penalty the most likely sanctions should DJRTP be found guilty.



TICKFORD'S
CIVIL WAR

Chaz Mostert took full blame for the awkward team-mate tangle that ruled both him and Cam Waters out of the running for a podium finish.

The two Tickford Mustangs were running a genuine third and fourth on lap 123 of 161 when Mostert outbraked himself into The Chase, and contact with Waters left them both in the sand. They both got going again, but lengthy repairs meant Waters was classified 21st, while a drivethrough penalty for the clash left Mostert (above) in 16th.

It was the third Bathurst 1000 in a row in which the #6 and the #55 have made contact, after a restart debacle at Turn 1 in 2017 and a crash at the Elbow between Mostert and Waters's then-co-driver David Russell last year. It was also the second round in succession where Mostert and Waters have clashed, the pair engaging in not-so-friendly fire at Pukekohe last month.

In this case Mostert was quick to admit fault: "It was so tight up the front all day, we were just setting up for the last stint, I had a good run on Cam, and just got crossed up and we hit. I didn't need to pass him, shouldn't have tried, and it ruined both our races, which is the worst part."

Tickford boss Tim Edwards added. "No race driver deliberately does that – it's just a mistake and he recognised it. Chaz came and saw me straight after the race. What do you do when somebody admits that they screwed up? You can't chastise them.

"If there was a debate about who was right or wrong, that's probably where you need to sit people down and agree on a position, but if someone just makes a mistake, well then it's a mistake, isn't it?"



into The Chase. Once the bottle was uncorked Premat dropped around 10 seconds to the lead pack, his pace not helped by a flat spot from the lock-up. Still, he'd left the car easily close enough for McLaughlin to quickly catch back up after getting back behind the wheel. He ran third for that stint, before the co-drivers jumped back in for their final hit-out.

Again Premat held his own against more fancied competition, sticking to the bumper of Craig Lowndes (in the Whincup Holden) for the best part of 10 laps before soaking up the pressure from behind. Then the usually unflappable Lowndes lost his nerve, tagging the wall at Reid Park before running wide at the last corner. Neither incident damaged the car, but it was enough for Premat to take over the lead.

With McLaughlin and Whincup back in their respective cars for the next stint, an ongoing string of cautions was started when Todd Hazelwood went into the wall between Reid and Sulman Park. McLaughlin led Whincup again at the restart, before Jake Kosteci crashed at Reid Park and sparked a rush to the pits.

Whincup beat McLaughlin out of the lane, the seesawing battle going his way until Tickford team-mates Waters and Mostert – running third and fourth and very much in contention – clashed at The Chase (see panel, left). The restart lasted

only half a lap thanks to a jammed throttle sending Anton de Pasquale into the wall at Reid Park. Whincup then led McLaughlin before IndyCar star Alexander Rossi binned his wildcard entry at the last corner.

That sixth safety car of the race came just a whisker too early for a clean run to the flag on fuel, but the two leading runners had little option but to pit. It was at this point that the race unravelled for the second DJR Penske Ford of Fabian Coulthard and Tony D'Alberto. Having worked into a fine third place, an instruction to crawl to the pits to create a buffer between the lead two and the rest would lead to Coulthard getting a drivethrough – and have a knock-on to the final results (see panel, page 39).

Again Whincup beat McLaughlin out of the lane, a stall not helping the Ford, and again the pair kicked off the stint, running nose-to-tail when the race went green with 25 laps remaining.

There were a cagey few laps as the crews assessed strategic options, before the race split in two directions with 20 laps to go. Knowing Whincup still had the van Gisbergen/Garth Tander sister car as cover, Triple Eight told Whincup to drop the hammer. Perhaps he could build a gap big enough to be able to stop again and retain the lead; perhaps he'd forfeit the lead making an extra stop – but McLaughlin would run out of fuel. The one option Whincup didn't



RESULTS BATHURST 1000, AUSTRALIAN SUPERCARS ROUND 12/15, MOUNT PANORAMA (AUS), 13 OCTOBER (161 LAPS – 621.553 MILES)

POS	DRIVERS	TEAM/CAR	TIME
1	Scott McLaughlin (NZL) Alexandre Premat (FRA)	DJR Team Penske Ford Mustang	6h27m51.5260s
2	Shane van Gisbergen (NZL) Garth Tander (AUS)	Triple Eight Race Engineering Holden Commodore ZB	+0.6800s
3	James Courtney (AUS) Jack Perkins (AUS)	Walkinshaw Andretti United Holden Commodore ZB	+1.8769s
4	Jamie Whincup (AUS) Craig Lowndes (AUS)	Triple Eight Race Engineering Holden Commodore ZB	+2.6699s
5	David Reynolds (AUS) Luke Youlden (AUS)	Erebus Motorsport Holden Commodore ZB	+3.6431s
6	Fabian Coulthard (NZL) Tony D'Alberto (AUS)	DJR Team Penske Ford Mustang	+4.0686s
7	Mark Winterbottom (AUS) Steven Richards (AUS)	Charlie Schwerkolt Racing Holden Commodore ZB	+5.6227s
8	Scott Pye (AUS) Warren Luff (AUS)	Walkinshaw Andretti United Holden Commodore ZB	+6.6088s
9	Rick Kelly (AUS) Dale Wood (AUS)	Kelly Racing Nissan Altima L33	+6.6733s
10	Lee Holdsworth (AUS) Tom Randle (AUS)	Tickford Racing Ford Mustang	+6.9839s
11	Will Davison (AUS) Alex Davison (AUS)	23Red Racing Ford Mustang	+7.7034s
12	James Golding (AUS) Richard Muscat (AUS)	Garry Rogers Motorsport Holden Commodore ZB	+7.8562s
13	Richie Stanaway (NZL) Chris Pither (NZL)	Garry Rogers Motorsport Holden Commodore ZB	+11.2623s
14	Simona de Silvestro (CHE) Alex Rullo (AUS)	Kelly Racing Nissan Altima L33	-1 lap
15	Nick Percat (AUS) Tim Blanchard (AUS)	Brad Jones Racing Holden Commodore ZB	-1 lap
16	Chaz Mostert (AUS) James Moffat (AUS)	Tickford Racing Ford Mustang	-1 lap
17	Macauley Jones (AUS) Dean Canto (AUS)	Tim Blanchard Racing Holden Commodore ZB	-1 lap
18	Jack Le Brocq (AUS) Jonathon Webb (AUS)	Tekno Autosports Holden Commodore ZB	-1 lap
19	Alexander Rossi (USA) James Hinchcliffe (CAN)	Walkinshaw Andretti United Holden Commodore ZB	-2 laps
20	Garry Jacobson (AUS) Dean Fiore (AUS)	Kelly Racing Nissan Altima L33	-2 laps
21	Cameron Waters (AUS) Michael Caruso (AUS)	Tickford Racing Ford Mustang	-13 laps
R	Andre Heimgartner (NZL) Bryce Fullwood (AUS)	Kelly Racing Nissan Altima L33	157 laps-accident
R	Anton de Pasquale (AUS) Will Brown (AUS)	Erebus Motorsport Holden Commodore ZB	125 laps-accident
R	Brodie Kostecki (AUS) Jake Kostecki (AUS)	Kostecki Brothers Racing Holden Commodore ZB	111 laps-accident
R	Todd Hazelwood (AUS) Jack Smith (AUS)	Matt Stone Racing Holden Commodore ZB	98 laps-accident
R	Tim Slade (AUS) Ashley Walsh (AUS)	Brad Jones Racing Holden Commodore ZB	0 laps-accident

QUALIFYING

TOP 10 SHOOTOUT

1 McLaughlin 2m03.3783s; **2 Mostert** 2m03.7897s; **3 Waters** 2m03.9178s; **4 Whincup** 2m03.9505s; **5 van Gisbergen** 2m04.1136s; **6 W Davison** 2m04.3295s; **7 de Pasquale** 2m04.3830s; **8 Percat** 2m04.6705s; **9 Slade** 2m04.8395s; **10 Winterbottom** 2m04.9800s.

QUALIFYING

McLaughlin 2m27.6476s; **Mostert** 2m28.0484s; **van Gisbergen** 2m29.1880s; **W Davison** 2m29.2431s; **Slade** 2m29.3889s; **Percat** 2m29.4619s; **Whincup** 2m29.6973s; **Waters** 2m29.7038s; **Winterbottom** 2m29.8025s; **de Pasquale** 2m29.8288s; **11 Kelly** 2m29.8573s; **12 Stanaway** 2m29.9048s; **13 Heimgartner** 2m30.1249s; **14 Pye** 2m30.1690s; **15 Hazelwood** 2m30.2670s; **16 Coulthard** 2m30.2983s; **17 de Silvestro** 2m30.5723s; **18 Courtney** 2m30.6557s; **19 Golding** 2m30.7457s; **20 Holdsworth** 2m30.7643s; **21 Jacobson** 2m30.9051s; **22 Reynolds** 2m31.1510s; **23 Jones** 2m31.2474s; **24 B Kostecki** 2m31.5758s; **25 Rossi** 2m31.6046s; **26 Le Brocq** 2m33.8786s.

CHAMPIONSHIP

1 McLaughlin 3308; **2 van Gisbergen** 2686; **3 Coulthard** 2521; **4 Mostert** 2441; **5 Whincup** 2380; **6 Reynolds** 2306; **7 Waters** 2059; **8 Percat** 2014; **9 W Davison** 1955; **10 Holdsworth** 1860.

Winner's average speed 96.151mph. **Fastest lap** Mostert 2m04.7602s, 111.398mph

have, however, was nursing the car home even with safety car intervention. He was going to have to stop again regardless of what happened around him.

When the safety car emerged for a seventh time after Garry Jacobson and Richie Stanaway clashed at Turn 1, Whincup took his medicine. The splash-and-dash dropped him behind McLaughlin, van Gisbergen, and James Courtney in the #22 Walkinshaw Andretti United Holden.

For McLaughlin the caution offered a bit of a reprieve on fuel, but also brought renowned hard charger van Gisbergen into the game. And while the two Kiwis effectively shared a strategy, sitting behind the slippery Mustang gave van Gisbergen a slight edge on consumption. It also ensured McLaughlin couldn't be too conservative as he looked to save every last drop of juice.

The threat of Whincup doing any damage on pace alone was quashed when he couldn't find a way past Courtney quickly after the restart, with nine laps to go. For Triple Eight to win, McLaughlin was either going to need to run out of fuel, or van Gisbergen needed to pass him.

The final twist came three laps from the end when Heimgartner threw his Nissan into the wall at the Elbow. In that moment



McLaughlin's fuel concerns disappeared.

Rescue crews quickly carted the broken Altima out of the way, allowing for a restart on the very last lap. Everyone was good on fuel; the final question mark was tyre pressures in the cool evening conditions, particularly after a long stint of fuel saving.

It was a straight fight: McLaughlin versus van Gisbergen. The Holden driver picked up the restart perfectly, but couldn't quite get close enough into Turn 1. By the time the pair got to Turn 2 van Gisbergen realised McLaughlin wasn't going to be beaten. He stayed glued to the Mustang's huge rear wing in the faint hope of a mistake, but in reality that was never going to happen.

For the first time since 1994, when team patriarch Dick Johnson and John Bowe were at the wheel, a Shell-backed Ford from Staphylton had won the Bathurst 1000.

Behind the leading pair, Courtney held off a fully fuelled Whincup to take a somewhat unlikely third place, his first appearance on the Bathurst podium in 11 years. For his co-driver Jack Perkins it was a first podium finish at Mount Panorama – an emotional occasion for the son of six-time Bathurst winner Larry Perkins.

The win puts McLaughlin a near-unassailable 622 points clear of van Gisbergen in the Supercars standings with three rounds of the 2019 campaign to come. *W*

Cadillacs take Petit as Acura drivers wrap up IMSA title

**PETIT LE MANS
IMSA SPORTSCAR
ROAD ATLANTA (USA)
12 OCTOBER
ROUND 12/12**

Brazilian Pipo Derani and US road-racing veteran Bill Auberlen found the perfect way to celebrate their birthdays last Saturday – in Victory Lane after a thrilling 22nd edition of Petit Le Mans.

Derani was joined by countryman Felipe Nasr and Eric Curran in the Action Express team's triumphant Whelen Engineering Cadillac DPi-V.R, while Auberlen partnered youngsters Robby Foley and Dillon Machavern to a dramatic last-gasp GTD class triumph aboard their Turner Motorsport BMW M6 GT3.

Ex-Formula 1 driver Nasr slashed almost two seconds from the previous qualifying record on Friday, then simply rocketed away at the start. Ricky Taylor had qualified one of the two Team Penske Acuras only 0.1s slower but, surprisingly, trailed Nasr by almost 10s before losing second place to the sister AXR Cadillac of Filipe Albuquerque on lap 15.

The two Cadillacs thoroughly dominated the opening stages, held in warm sunshine in front of a bumper crowd. When the first of only four full-course cautions was called after 90 minutes, the #31 Cadillac led the sister #5 car by a full 20 seconds, with the two Acuras a similar margin behind in third and fourth. Only the two Mazda Team Joest cars and the Wayne Taylor Racing Cadillac remained on the lead lap. This was looking like a romp.

But then, as the afternoon wore on and some cloud cover rolled in, the complexion of the 10-hour race began to change. Curiously, the leading car elected not to make a pitstop during a caution on lap 121. Derani continued to lead when all of the other frontrunners headed for the pits before finally relinquishing the top position for the very first time after 135 laps when he was obliged to stop for fuel shortly after the three-hour mark.

A brilliant stint by Mike Conway, who had relieved Albuquerque in the #5 Cadillac, allowed him to stretch away to a 20s lead before handing over to Joao Barbosa after 178 laps. Then it was German veteran Timo Bernhard's turn to shine in the Mazda RT-24P he shared with Oliver



Risi Ferrari GTLM trio added Petit success to Le Mans victory

Jarvis and Tristan Nunez. Bernhard gradually whittled away at the deficit and was within two seconds of the Cadillac by the time both cars pitted for fuel 20 minutes before the halfway mark. The two Penske Acuras also worked their way into contention, and for several hours it seemed to be anybody's race.

As day grew into night, however, the Acuras faded away again and the race appeared to boil down to a straight fight between the two AXR Cadillacs and the sole remaining Mazda (the sister car had lost time and later retired with engine woes).

But the final caution with just over half an hour remaining suddenly brought both the Wayne Taylor Cadillac (with an inspired Jordan Taylor at the wheel) and the #7 Acura (Helio Castroneves) back into the picture. The caution was bad news for the Mazda, which looked like it might make the finish with one fewer visit to pitlane, although worse was to come when it too hit engine problems soon after the resumption and faded to an unrepresentative sixth.

There was also heartbreak for the #5 Cadillac, which led after the restart until a shattered left-front brake disc sent it to the pits. Derani then reasserted the #31 team's dominance as he edged clear of Taylor before easing off in the final laps to win by just under a second. Castroneves's Acura was the only other car on the lead lap, although the sister car of Dane Cameron and Juan Pablo Montoya clinched the championship with a conservative run to fourth, with assistance from IndyCar ace Simon Pagenaud.

A tremendous GTLM tussle ended with Ferrari factory drivers James Calado, Alessandro Pier Guidi and Daniel Serra ensuring a triumphant return for the Risi Competizione team (plus a rare Le Mans/Petit Le Mans double for the drivers), while Auberlen/Foley/Machavern only claimed GTD victory when the Riley Motorsports Mercedes of Felipe Fraga/Ben Keating/Jeroen Bleekemolen agonisingly ran out of fuel on the final lap.

JEREMY SHAW

RESULTS ROAD ATLANTA (USA), 12 OCTOBER (465 LAPS - 1181.155 MILES)



Fourth place was enough to secure IMSA crown for Cameron and Montoya

OVERALL

POS	DRIVERS	CAR	TIME
1	Felipe Nasr / Eric Curran / Pipo Derani	Cadillac DPi-V.R	10h00m40.809s
2	Renger van der Zande / Jordan Taylor / Matthieu Vaxiviere	Cadillac DPi-V.R	+0.996s
3	Ricky Taylor / Helio Castroneves / Graham Rahal	Acura ARX-05	+9.842s
4	Dane Cameron / Juan Pablo Montoya / Simon Pagenaud	Acura ARX-05	-1 lap
5	Simon Trummer / Stephen Simpson / Chris Miller	Cadillac DPi-V.R	-1 lap
6	Oliver Jarvis / Tristan Nunez / Timo Bernhard	Mazda RT24-P	-2 laps
7	Joao Barbosa / Mike Conway / Filipe Albuquerque	Cadillac DPi-V.R	-6 laps
8	Jon Bennett / Colin Braun / Romain Dumas	Nissan Onroak DPi	-8 laps
9	Misha Goikhberg / Tristan Vautier / Juan Piedrahita	Cadillac DPi-V.R	-19 laps
10	James Calado / Alessandro Pier Guidi / Daniel Serra	Ferrari 488 GTE Evo	-31 laps

GTLM

1	James Calado / Alessandro Pier Guidi / Daniel Serra	Ferrari 488 GTE Evo	10h01m46.632s
2	Ryan Briscoe / Richard Westbrook / Scott Dixon	Ford GT	+7.795s
3	Tom Blomqvist / Connor De Phillippi / Colton Herta	BMW M8 GTE	-1 lap

GTD

1	Bill Auberlen / Robby Foley / Dillon Machavern	BMW M6 GT3	10h01m49.262s
2	Christopher Mies / Ricardo Feller / Daniel Morad	Audi R8 LMS Evo	+0.510s
3	Scott Hargrove / Zacharie Robichon / Lars Kern	Porsche 911 GT3-R	+2.904s



Turner BMW took last-gasp victory in GTD class

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Champion Sato leads loyal Dallara send-off

EUROFORMULA OPEN
MONZA (ITA)
12-13 OCTOBER
ROUND 9/9

After eight years of use across Formula 3 competition, the 2012-19 generation of Dallara was retired by the Euroformula Open championship at Monza last weekend.

The popular car was given a fitting send-off in the first race; a slipstream classic with a seven-car lead battle.

Double R Racing's Linus Lundqvist took pole but started badly, handing the lead to Carlin's Teppei Natori. The Japanese driver briefly pulled away, but was soon reeled in.

Euroformula champion Marino Sato made his way to second and then traded positions with Natori for several laps. He made it stick on the final tour to score his ninth 2019 win.

His Motopark team-mate Yuki Tsunoda had started 12th, but made some stunning



Sato (middle) scored win number nine in race one

moves to join the lead battle, and slipstreamed past Carlin's Nicolai Kjaergaard at the finish to form an all-Japanese podium in third. Lundqvist recovered to fifth, while his rookie title rival Liam Lawson was hit out of the race.

Lawson responded with race two victory – beating fellow Red Bull junior Tsunoda – which was enough to secure second in the standings and the rookie title.

Tsunoda started from ninth, but he was

already leading the race when a scary crash between Carlin's Christian Hahn and the Double R car of Jack Doohan caused a mid-race safety car.

Doohan rolled twice but he escaped injury, further proving the car's safety credentials in its last appearance.

Lawson passed Tsunoda on the restart to win, with Natori finishing third. Cameoing American star Kyle Kirkwood was sixth.

ELLIOT WOOD

Files takes more TCR title glory

TCR EUROPE
MONZA (ITA)
12-13 OCTOBER
ROUND 7/7

Josh Files claimed the fourth crown of his TCR career in style by beating main title rival Julien Briche to victory in the final race of the European series at Monza.

Files, with two German TCR titles and one Middle East honour already under his belt, arrived in Italy with a strong points advantage over Briche, but he was ninth in qualifying as the Hyundais

struggled. Briche, meanwhile, claimed pole for the opening race in his JSB Competition Peugeot, towed to the top spot by the similar 308 of DG Sport driver Aurelien Comte. But with the top 10 in qualifying reversed on the grid for race two, that did give Files a front-row spot for the finale.

In the opening race Comte played tailgunner to Briche, who netted his fourth win of the season. But Files minimised the damage as he charged his Target Competition-run i30 N through to third, passing the WRT Audi of Santiago Urrutia just after mid-distance to get into a podium position.

It was Briche's turn to go on a charge in the decider. Files had little resistance as he took the lead from reversed-grid poleman Maxime Potty into the Roggia chicane on the opening lap, while Briche began an overtaking spree that put him into second place when he passed the Brutal Fish Racing Honda of Dan Lloyd with six laps remaining. Briche then engaged Files in battle, but the Briton prevailed. Lloyd regained third when Comte was penalised for straightlining a chicane on the final lap.



European TCR crown joins Files' German and Middle East titles

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WEEKEND WINNERS

EUROFORMULA OPEN
MONZA (ITA)

Race 1 Marino Sato
 Motopark
 (Dallara-Spiess)

Race 2 Liam Lawson
 Motopark
 (Dallara-Spiess)

INTERNATIONAL GT OPEN
MONZA (ITA)

Race 1 Miguel Ramos/Fabrizio Crestani
 SPS Automotive Performance
 (Mercedes-AMG GT3)

Race 2 Martin Kodric/Henrique Chaves Jr
 Teo Martin Motorsport
 (McLaren 720S GT3)

TCR EUROPE
MONZA (ITA)

Race 1 Julien Briche
 JSB Competition
 (Peugeot 308 TCR)

Race 2 Josh Files
 Target Competition
 (Hyundai i30 N TCR)

NASCAR TRUCK SERIES
TALLADEGA (USA)

Spencer Boyd
 Young's Motorsports
 (Chevrolet Silverado)



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SEASON
REVIEW

NEWGARDEN AND PENSKE FOIL ROSSI CHARGE

Whatever Alexander Rossi and Andretti Autosport threw into it, this year's IndyCar title was destined for Josef Newgarden. And Rossi even got jumped for the runner-up slot by the second Penske driver, Simon Pagenaud

DAVID MALSHER

PHOTOGRAPHY  motorsport
IMAGES



“**B**

loody hell, Tim Cindric is gonna win this championship, isn't he?” one reasonably unbiased media member exclaimed at Texas Motor Speedway, as Andretti Autosport's Alexander Rossi flashed past the chequered flag less than a second behind

Team Penske man Josef Newgarden. “That's the second time in two weeks that he's managed to pull something out of his ass that gets Newgarden ahead of Rossi.”

It's fair to say that Rossi shared that observer's sentiments, and it's not hard to see why. At Detroit, last year's championship runner-up had been leading race one when Penske president and Newgarden tactician Cindric had called in his man from third place... just a lap before the full-course yellow flew for second-placed Scott Dixon crashing out after making a rare error. The field bunched, Newgarden cycled into the lead as everyone else of significance hit the pitlane, and over the course of the remaining laps in a shortened race on a damp track, Rossi couldn't find an opening with which to make one of his typically bold passing manoeuvres on the 2017 champion.

The next day, in the second race at the Belle Isle track, it was Newgarden who blundered into the tyre wall, Dixon who won, but Rossi couldn't take full advantage, salvaging only fifth. A week later in Texas, Rossi appeared destined for at least a podium on a night when Newgarden seemed set to finish in the lower reaches of the

top 10. But having gone off strategy with an early pit visit, Cindric was able to delay Newgarden's final stop and, as everyone else pitted, the Penske driver suddenly had a clear track on which to set some searing times in clean air and was able to emerge ahead of Rossi and in the lead. Try as he might, the Andretti pilot could not find a way back around his bete noire.

At Road America, Rossi dominated just as he had in Long Beach back in April, but Newgarden took a podium, and the pair were just one place apart in Toronto. Then Newgarden dominated at Iowa Speedway while Rossi could finish no better than sixth.

In retrospect, it's pretty easy to say it was game over from that point, for Rossi never really gained traction thereafter. Sure, Newgarden exchanged fourth place for 14th and a trip to a gravel trap at Mid-Ohio after a ludicrous misjudgement on the final lap, but then Rossi was wiped out in an opening-lap crash at Pocono.

That is not to say that Newgarden is an unworthy champion; far from it. While he didn't impress quite as much as in his first title year, his consistency resulted in his racking up 12 top-fives (including four wins) from the 17 races – a near-Dixon-like accumulator of points. And if he uncharacteristically soft-pedalled in the final two races, well, *sotto voce* was what the occasion demanded and almost every driver would have done the same in those circumstances. >>

MAIN PIC: ABBOTT





Roger Penske congratulates Newgarden on his second crown



Master and pupil: Dixon pipped Rosenqvist in Mid-Ohio thriller

But Rossi was even better, despite leading 'just' seven races to Newgarden's 11, and 182 laps to Newgarden's 490. The ex-Formula 1 driver's bravery as he tried to compensate for a pace disadvantage to eventual winner Simon Pagenaud in the Indianapolis 500 was as breathtaking as his determination to salvage something from Austin, after the caution period denied him a certain win, given erstwhile leader Will Power's non-finish.

Rossi was criticised on occasion in 2018 for being overaggressive when making passes and running too near his own limit, therefore risking errors. In 2019 he seemed to get it just right, knowing exactly when and how hard to push and rarely leaving himself vulnerable to others' indiscretions. This was particularly admirable from Toronto (race 11) onwards, when Chevrolet, the supplier to the rival Penske squad, took a step forward in terms of torque and fuel efficiency (and possibly horsepower, depending whose opinion you sought) and became a match for the Honda used by the Andretti team.

At the top end, Chevy was already more than a match for Honda, as Rossi had discovered while trying to hang on to Pagenaud at Indy. After his desultory year of 2018, when he could rarely find a confidence-inspiring set-up for running his car on the edge in qualifying, Pagenaud and his engineer Ben Bretzman told people they'd made a breakthrough at the Sonoma finale last year, and eventually that did become apparent in 2019. That pace took a while to shine through due to errors and red flags caused by others in qualifying sessions, which initially consigned him to the lower half of the grid. But Pagenaud's beautiful yet aggressive drive in the wet at the IndyCar Grand Prix on the IMS road course was a confidence-building breakthrough, and his sheer composure in the Indy 500, despite Rossi's pressure, signalled that he was back in business.

There was clearly more work to do – he was slow in qualifying at Detroit, Road America and Portland and somewhat anonymous on race day at Mid-Ohio, Iowa and Gateway – but he was also brilliant in Toronto and fast at Pocono and Laguna Seca. On his best days, Pagenaud looks like the polished yet also aggressive performer we saw at Schmidt Peterson Motorsports and then in his 2016 title-winning year.

Dixon's attempt to win a sixth IndyCar crown was generally as impressive as you'd expect, and he relished being able to pool information with a genuinely fast team-mate, Felix Rosenqvist. Even though the Swede's speed initially gave him a little trouble, Dixon learned well and improved himself, as all the greats do.

"Felix is fast but we knew that ever since he first tested for us a few years back," Dixon said just past mid-season. "He's made a couple of rookie mistakes, but he's got a really good way of breaking

ROUND BY ROUND

St Pete'burg

1 J Newgarden
2 Scott Dixon
3 Will Power
 Polesitter Power is called to pit early in reaction to a caution that never comes, putting him off sequence. On reaching the front again, he is passed on a restart by Rosenqvist. But Newgarden is on the best tyre strategy and wins comfortably from Dixon, Power and Rosenqvist.

Austin

1 Colton Herta
2 Josef Newgarden
3 Ryan Hunter-Reay
 Power leads from pole, fending off Rossi for 45 of 60 laps, as Herta chases but uses up tyres too quickly. Power, Rossi and Dixon go a lap longer than their rivals in the second stint, but get hosed by a caution when Rosenqvist crashes at pit-entry. Power suffers a mechanical failure in the pitlane. Herta inherits the lead ahead of Newgarden and Hunter-Reay, and wins.

Barber

1 Takuma Sato
2 Scott Dixon
3 Sebastien Bourdais
 Firestone throws teams a curveball by bringing old and hardened tyres. Rahal Letterman Lanigan Racing adapts best, sweeping the front row before Sato goes on to dominate and win. Team-mate Rahal breaks down on track, allowing Dixon and Bourdais into second and third, Bourdais having taken just two stops. Newgarden recovers from Penske's terrible qualifying session to claim fourth.

Long Beach

1 Alexander Rossi
2 Josef Newgarden
3 Scott Dixon
 Rossi takes pole and goes on to dominate the race – even more so than at the same venue the year before. Newgarden jumps Dixon and Power in the first round of pitstops to claim second, where he remains. Power gets an overboost penalty and then makes an error, handing third place to Dixon, while Rahal takes fourth ahead of Hunter-Reay.

Indy GP

1 Simon Pagenaud
2 Scott Dixon
3 Jack Harvey
 Pagenaud scores his first win since 2017 after snatching the lead from Dixon in the wet on the penultimate lap. Newgarden and Hinchcliffe star in the first half of the race until their pit strategies fail, allowing Harvey to score Meyer Shank Racing's first podium. A tyre gamble pays off spectacularly for AJ Foyt Racing as Leist finishes fourth. Rosenqvist starts from pole, finishes eighth.

Indy 500

1 Simon Pagenaud
2 Alexander Rossi
3 Takuma Sato
 A torrid battle for victory sees polewinner Pagenaud prevail over 2016 winner Rossi, the Chevrolet having a slight edge over Honda. Sato charges through to third, ahead of Newgarden and 2018 victor Power, who serves a drivethrough penalty for knocking his fueler. Ferrucci earns Rookie of the Year after dodging a multi-car crash triggered by Bourdais squeezing Rahal far too hard.



“IT’S BECAUSE FELIX IS A ROOKIE THAT HE’S BEEN ABLE TO HELP THE TEAM. HE’S GOT A FRESH PERSPECTIVE”

Pagenaud claimed his maiden Indy 500 victory

MILLER

down technical areas he wants to focus on, probably because of all his experience in other series. I’d say it’s actually because he’s a rookie – but a really good one – that he’s been able to help the team and help me. He’s got a fresh perspective on it all.”

Dixon’s main problem was that most of his chief rivals learned from his amazing consistency in 2018, and did well to emulate it. So when he got caught up in someone else’s accident at Indy (double-points) and had to pit for repairs, and then made uncharacteristic errors in two of the next three races (hitting the wall in Detroit, squeezing down on Colton Herta in Texas), he rapidly fell from second in the championship to fourth. Thereafter, the Chip Ganassi Racing star was back to his consistent best, but mechanical issues at Gateway and Portland sapped any remaining momentum.

Power was wretchedly unlucky to miss out on wins in the opening two races (wrong tactics at St Petersburg, mechanical failure and a badly timed caution at Austin), but he then didn’t help himself with little errors at Long Beach and the Indy 500, both of which cost him top-three finishes. At Detroit he was scintillating on both days, but scored only one podium after a pitstop faux pas by the team in the other race, and then he made a complete mess of Toronto and blew at least two runner-up finishes at Iowa and Gateway... Power admits he should have been more canny and less desperate in seeking his first win of the season. If he can quell his tendency to allow frustration to induce errors, expect a very different 2020 from the 2014 champion.

With three poles and two wins in his rookie season, Herta >>

Detroit 1

- 1 Josef Newgarden
- 2 Alexander Rossi
- 3 Takuma Sato

A race shortened by 27 laps due to bad weather is won by Newgarden after he pits from third just before a yellow flag – caused by a rare crash from Dixon – bunches the field and puts him ahead of previous leader Rossi. Power scythes through to fourth from mid-grid, but is sent out of the pits with only three wheels, allowing Sato to take third.

Detroit 2

- 1 Scott Dixon
- 2 Marcus Ericsson
- 3 Will Power

Dixon bounces back to take the win ahead of rookie Ericsson. Power claims third despite stalling early in the race when his car gets stuck in gear, legacy of a first-lap fracas in which another car rammed his gearbox. Newgarden crashes out while battling with Hinchcliffe and Rossi. Rossi spins in avoidance and knocks Hinch into the stricken Newgarden.

Texas

- 1 Josef Newgarden
- 2 Alexander Rossi
- 3 Graham Rahal

Newgarden wins when strategist Tim Cindric springs him to the front of the pack in the closing stages with the perfect strategy for how the yellows fall. Rossi is again a frustrated second, ahead of Rahal, whose team-mate and polesitter Sato leads the early stages before a major misjudgment in the pitlane, the penalty for which drops him out of contention. Dixon crashes out with Herta.

Road America

- 1 Alexander Rossi
- 2 Will Power
- 3 Josef Newgarden

Herta scores the first pole of his career but immediately loses the lead to Rossi, who goes on to win by half a minute ahead of Penske pair Power and Newgarden. Herta wears through tyres too swiftly, ultimately falling to eighth, as Rahal claims fourth ahead of the two Ganassi machines of Dixon and Rosenqvist, which have risen from 12th and 18th on the grid.

Toronto

- 1 Simon Pagenaud
- 2 Scott Dixon
- 3 Alexander Rossi

Pagenaud dominates from pole position and Dixon is unable to catch him in the closing stages thanks to a new engine from Chevrolet that improves power, torque and fuel mileage. Rossi claims third, way behind the leaders, but content to beat Newgarden. After qualifying very badly, Power serves a penalty for a first-lap attempted pass on Rahal that goes badly wrong.

Iowa

- 1 Josef Newgarden
- 2 Scott Dixon
- 3 James Hinchcliffe

Poor weather delays the race until night, but at the green Power swiftly deposes polesitter Pagenaud to lead 49 laps before being passed by Newgarden. The 2016 Iowa winner goes on to dominate the event, while Power blunders on pitlane entry, and serves a penalty. A charging Dixon takes second while Hinchcliffe claims his first (and last) podium of the year.



crashed into IndyCar's old-boys club with the same impact as a 20-ton meteorite landing in a church hall on bingo night. Casualties in terms of reputation and value included certain long-time series veterans who suddenly appeared overrated and dispensable, and recent rookies who had hitherto been regarded as promising but now looked mediocre. Herta and eventual Rookie of the Year Rosenqvist immediately got with the programme, survived tricky spells where they were clearly trying too hard, and wound up seventh and sixth in the overall standings respectively.

Herta, of course, became the youngest ever IndyCar winner and

“CERTAIN LONG-TIME SERIES VETERANS SUDDENLY APPEARED OVERRATED AND DISPENSABLE”

EVERYONE ALLEGRO AT AUSTIN

As a straight swap for Phoenix's ISM Raceway, the 20-turn Circuit of The Americas road course was a successful addition to the IndyCar Series schedule, producing far more racing and far more intrigue than its predecessor. We can only hope COTA will find the race a sponsor to help secure its future.

It was hard for drivers to keep their red-sidewalled tyres alive when pushing for an 'ultimate' lap in qualifying, Felix Rosenqvist getting it just right in Q2 with the fastest lap of the weekend, and Will Power saving enough life in his rubber for Q3, doing one run, pitting for a splash of fuel and another set of used reds, and nailing pole. The penultimate turn each lap was an ugly farce however, so IndyCar needs to find a way to deter drivers from using the runoff.

The thing is, most of us expected COTA to produce a good race in a virtually spec series. Far more of a surprise to many was the quality of the show at Laguna Seca, where the track surface is so coarse it resists 'rubbering up', but where undulations and dusty runoffs can induce many a mistake while also offering enough track width for passes. The crowd was good too, and what they saw in the finale should entice them back. Let's hope the track owners resist the temptation to repave it.

while rumours swirled sporadically about the legality of his car (nothing illicit has been proven, incidentally) there are plenty who believe he really is that good. Certainly Michael Andretti does, which is why he's got him locked down for 2020 in Andretti Autosport 'proper' after a season as a 'satellite' entry with the Harding Steinbrenner Racing squad.

As for Rosenqvist, he had to be calmed down a little, but didn't allow himself to be fazed into driving too far within himself as he rebuilt his confidence, and by the end of the season he looked as fast as he had at the start, but now with a veneer of maturity.

Takuma Sato made some typical blunders but fewer of them, and drove a brilliant race at Barber Motorsports Park and a weird but impressive one at Gateway to chalk up two wins for Rahal Letterman Lanigan Racing, which still doesn't consistently perform as well as it should, given the squad's braintrust and the talents of Sato and Graham Rahal.

Good surprises came in the form of Santino Ferrucci's excellence on ovals and Jack Harvey's much-improved pace as his outings for Meyer Shank Racing became more frequent. Disappointments included how frequently Arrow Schmidt Peterson Motorsports looked anonymous without Robert Wickens in the cockpit, and how disrupted Carlin's season became due to driver changeovers.

Now it's time for the engineers and drivers to relearn their cars with the new weight distribution provided by the aeroscreen. The off-season could be as much fun as the season just gone... ✎

ROUND BY ROUND

Mid-Ohio

1 Scott Dixon
2 F Rosenqvist
3 R Hunter-Reay
 A sensational pole lap from Power isn't enough to help earn him his first Mid-Ohio victory as Ganassi employs superior tyre strategy to score a 1-2, Dixon on worn tyres holding off Rosenqvist by less than 0.1s. Hunter-Reay claims third, while Newgarden spins off on the final lap trying to pass him.

Pocono

1 Will Power
2 Scott Dixon
3 Simon Pagenaud
 Power scores his third Pocono win but his first victory of the season in a shortened event due to bad weather, beating Dixon and Pagenaud. Newgarden is an anonymous fifth, but that represents a good score on a day when principal title rival (at the time) Rossi is part of a five-car first-lap shunt along with Sato, Hunter-Reay, Hinchcliffe and Rosenqvist.

Gateway

1 Takuma Sato
2 Ed Carpenter
3 Tony Kanaan
 Newgarden dominates early, chased by Power, but the points leader's car fades in traffic while Power crashes out. Rookie Ferrucci leads most laps but has his strategy ruined by team-mate Bourdais' crash, leaving Sato out front fending off fellow veterans Kanaan and Carpenter. Carpenter passes Kanaan but comes up one lap short to challenge Sato. Dixon DNFs with a punctured radiator.

Portland

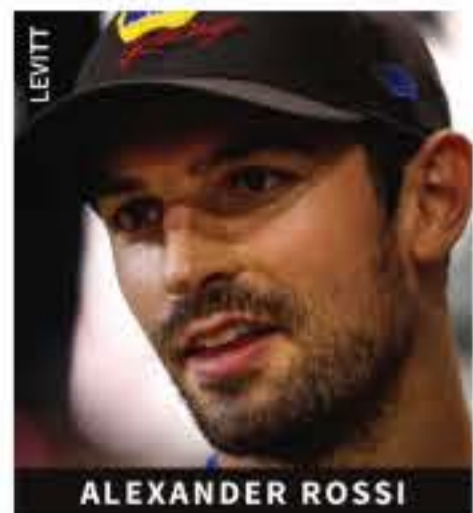
1 Will Power
2 Felix Rosenqvist
3 Alexander Rossi
 Herta takes pole but is stalked in the first stint by Dixon, who swoops for the lead as Herta's tyres go off. Power fend off the other Ganassi car of Rosenqvist and then inherits the lead when Dixon has to make a long stop for a new battery. Rossi claims third, while Newgarden recovers from a mid-grid start to take fifth, just behind Herta.

Laguna Seca

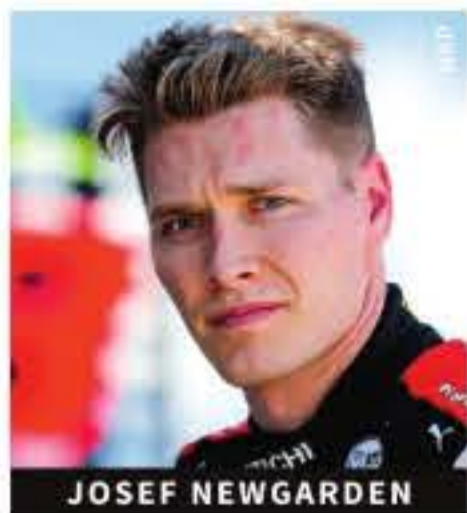
1 Colton Herta
2 Will Power
3 Scott Dixon
 Herta scores his third pole of the season and holds off Dixon for the first half of the race, Power for the second half, before claiming his second win. Newgarden initially paces himself based on title rival Rossi but both struggle, and Pagenaud's fourth vaults him past Rossi for second in the standings. Rosenqvist charges from mid-grid to claim fifth and Rookie of the Year.



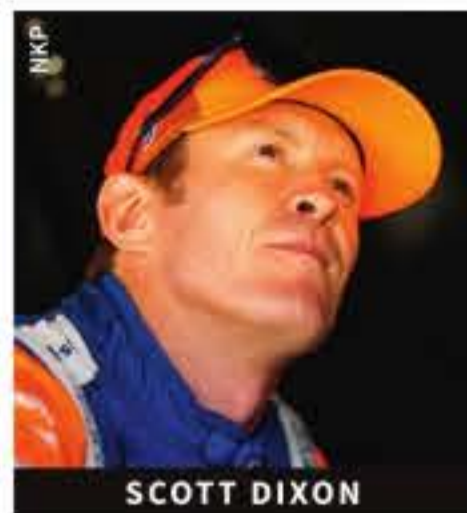
AUTOSPORT'S TOP 10 DRIVERS



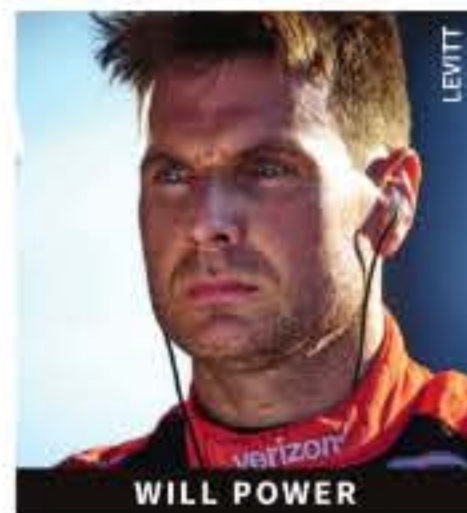
1 As Andretti Autosport's lead driver now, he must shoulder some blame for when his car set-up was lacking, but on pure driving he was the best. Had he been luckier, or Newgarden less lucky, he would be AA's first champion since 2012.



2 After inconsistency in 2018, Newgarden scored eight top-fives this year to back up four wins. The champion isn't our number one due to a couple of unforced errors and the fact that two victories owed much to superior strategy.



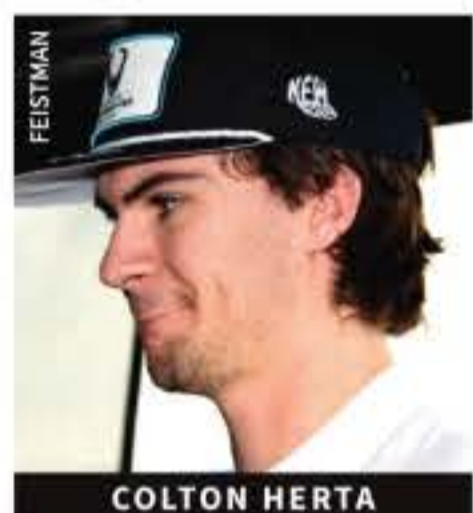
3 Initially caught off guard by pace of team-mate Rosenqvist, Dixon did what true champs do – he learned from the hotshot and regained the edge. But two driving errors and two mechanical DNFs blew up his hopes of a sixth crown.



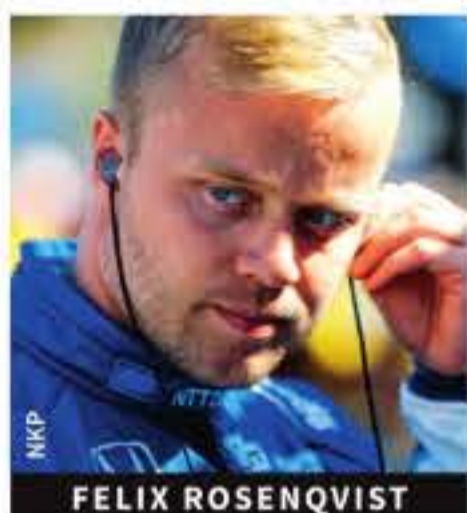
4 As befits IndyCar's fastest driver, he again turned the lap of the season (pole at Mid-Ohio), but frustration over misfortunes and team screw-ups snowballed into some silly errors until he recaptured his mojo late in the season.



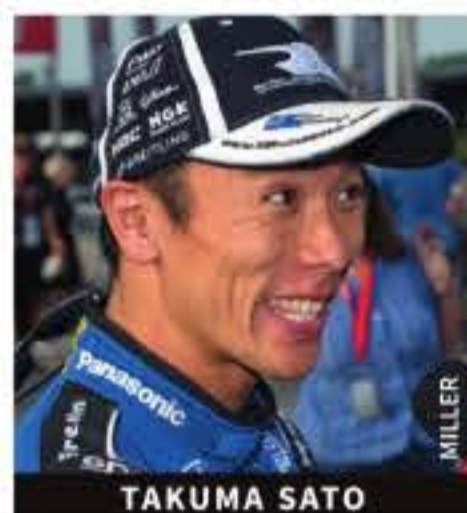
5 The 'proper' Pagenaud re-emerged, earning Penske its 18th Indy 500 win. He was also ferociously quick at Toronto (as ever) and faultless in the wet Indy GP. But too many echoes of his mediocre 2018 qualifying pace stunted his title bid.



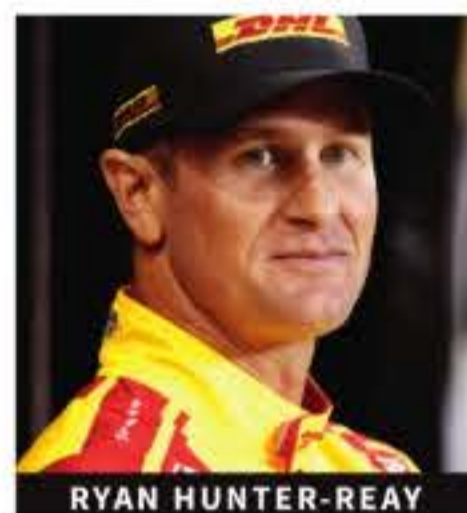
6 Two wins and three poles says most but not all you need to know about this remarkable teenager; equally impressive is the study he puts into his craft. Switching fully to Andretti Autosport may prove a challenge, however...



7 This rookie had three seasons in one year – superfast for five races, a difficult middle third and then a flourish in the final third as he stopped overreaching and found a way to keep his abundant pace within the limits of the car.



8 Everyone hailed the consistent Sato V2.0, highlighted by Barber domination. Then he dumped a possible win in Texas, made some daft manoeuvres and rebounded with a lucky Gateway victory. Lovely guy, complex driver.



9 Finally team-mate Rossi's consistency appeared to break his spirit, and arrival of Herta was a further blow. Looked a potential winner in Texas but led nowhere else and needs a major confidence boost to rediscover his raw pace.



10 He scored just a solitary podium, but matched team-mate Takuma Sato in qualifying, and Portland saw his only major mistake. His main problem was that whenever RLLR had a strong weekend, he suffered bad luck.

DRIVERS' CHAMPIONSHIP

POS	DRIVER	TEAM	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	PTS
1	Josef Newgarden (USA)	Team Penske	1	2	4	2	15	4	1	19	1	3	4	1	14	5	7	5	8	641
2	Simon Pagenaud (FRA)	Team Penske	7	19	9	6	1	1	6	17	6	9	1	4	6	3	5	7	4	616
3	Alexander Rossi (USA)	Andretti Autosport	5	9	5	1	22	2	2	5	2	1	3	6	5	18	13	3	6	608
4	Scott Dixon (NZL)	Chip Ganassi Racing	2	13	2	3	2	17	22	1	17	5	2	2	1	2	20	16	3	578
5	Will Power (AUS)	Team Penske	3	24	11	7	7	5	18	3	9	2	18	15	4	1	22	1	2	550
6	Felix Rosenqvist (SWE)	Chip Ganassi Racing	4	23	10	10	8	28	4	16	12	6	5	14	2	22	11	2	5	425
7	Colton Herta (USA)	Harding Steinbrenner Racing	8	1	24	23	23	33	12	12	18	8	7	18	8	16	9	4	1	420
8	Ryan Hunter-Reay (USA)	Andretti Autosport	23	3	8	5	17	8	5	4	5	11	16	17	3	19	8	18	10	420
9	Takuma Sato (JPN)	Rahal Letterman Lanigan Racing	19	7	1	8	14	3	3	13	15	10	22	20	19	21	1	15	21	415
10	Graham Rahal (USA)	Rahal Letterman Lanigan Racing	12	4	23	4	9	27	7	7	3	4	9	8	9	9	18	23	12	389

11 Sebastien Bourdais (Dale Coyne Racing with Vasser Sullivan) 387; 12 James Hinchcliffe (Arrow Schmidt Peterson Motorsports) 370; 13 Santino Ferrucci (Dale Coyne Racing) 351; 14 Spencer Pigot (Ed Carpenter Racing) 335; 15 Tony Kanaan (AJ Foyt Enterprises) 304; 16 Marco Andretti (Andretti Herta Autosport) 303; 17 Marcus Ericsson (Arrow Schmidt Peterson Motorsports) 290; 18 Zach Veach (Andretti Autosport) 271; 19 Matheus Leist (AJ Foyt Enterprises) 261; 20 Ed Jones (Ed Carpenter Racing) 217; 21 Jack Harvey (Meyer Shank Racing with Arrow SPM) 186; 22 Max Chilton (Carlin) 184; 23 Ed Carpenter (Ed Carpenter Racing) 161; 24 Conor Daly (Carlin/Andretti Autosport/Arrow Schmidt Peterson Motorsports) 149; 25 Charlie Kimball (Carlin) 117; 26 Patricio O'Ward (Carlin) 115; 27 Sage Karam (Dreyer & Reinbold Racing/Carlin) 39; 28 James Davison (Dale Coyne Racing with Byrd and Belardi) 36; 29 Helio Castroneves (Team Penske) 33; 30 Ben Hanley (DragonSpeed) 31; 31 Pippa Mann (Clauson-Marshall Racing) 28; 32 Kyle Kaiser (Juncos Racing) 22; 33 JR Hildebrand (Dreyer & Reinbold Racing) 20; 34 Oriol Servia (Team Stange Racing with Arrow Schmidt Peterson) 16; 35 RC Enerson (Carlin) 13; 36 Jordan King (Rahal Letterman Lanigan Racing) 12.

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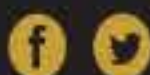
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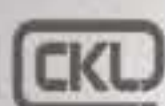


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HYBRID ENGINES FOR F4 AN OPTION AHEAD OF 2021

British Touring Car Championship is only other UK series known to be investigating hybrid power

Hybrid power is being explored

Hedley and O'Sullivan target single-seaters

GINETTA JUNIOR

Newly-crowned Ginetta Junior champion James Hedley is targeting a graduation to single-seater racing in 2020.

Hedley held a commanding lead in the Ginetta Junior points going into the final round at Brands Hatch last weekend and secured the title by winning Saturday's opening race.

He then helped Elite Motorsport clinch the teams' championship with a pair of fifth places in the

remaining races.

Hedley now plans a programme of testing in both BRDC British Formula 3 and British Formula 4 machinery before confirming his plans for 2020.

"I've got some tests lined up," he said. "If I'm honest, we're more likely to do F4 but we might test in F3 too."

Championship runner-up Zak O'Sullivan also looks set to switch to slicks-and-wings, with F4 – either in Britain or in Europe –

the most likely destination.

"Some sort of F4 series, but I'm not too sure which team yet or which country," said O'Sullivan. "I've seen some people I've raced in karts go to the Italian and German [championships] – they've got very strong grids, European teams and also you get to learn some of the circuits."

"But obviously there's more of a price tag on that so we'll see how it goes financially."

MARK PAULSON

BRITISH FORMULA 4

British Formula 4 could introduce a hybrid engine as soon as 2021 as a major testing and development programme will take place between series organisers and engine supplier Ford next season to assess whether the technology can be included in the championship.

The latest one-litre, three-cylinder EcoBoost engine, along with a 48-volt mild-hybrid system, has been fitted to a current Mygale F4 chassis ahead of a full year of evaluation in 2020.

Formula 1 is the only single-seater championship to use hybrid engines at present, although the new Olympics-style Motorsport Games event will feature hybrid-powered F4 cars.

“It’s a step in the right direction,” said Gerard Quinn, senior manager at Ford Performance Europe. “We’re going from four cylinders to three cylinders and we know the engine is good because it’s used in the R2 cars in rallying. But we’re under no illusions that next year is going to be a challenging year.”

New F4 regulations could be introduced by the FIA in 2021, and Quinn believes the engine is well positioned to adapt to these, for example to overcome the extra weight of a halo protection device.

“The power is much higher on this engine – we can go up to 200bhp if we need to,” Quinn said. “We have to keep the championship affordable – we wouldn’t like it to become any more expensive than it is. It’s important to have support from the FIA and Motorsport UK [with that].”

F4 promoter Sam Roach says 2021 would be a logical time to introduce the system, provided the test programme is successful.

“That’s when a new chassis is likely to come in and it gives us a full year of development and to make sure the new FIA regulations are built to allow hybrids [they don’t at present],” he said. “We’re going to be able to test it in all conditions. In the future, everyone is going to be driving electric cars in some form wherever they end up, so it’s great to introduce the technology to them at a young age.”

“There’s been lots of interested people, and they’re fascinated to see how this works.”

STEPHEN LICKORISH



Hedley (left) and O'Sullivan

Webster plans full campaign

PORSCHE CARRERA CUP GB

Former Porsche Carrera Cup GB champion Josh Webster is planning a full attack on the series next year.

The 2014 champion joined the grid for this season’s second event at Donington Park and, after taking a win and a third over that weekend, was hopeful of launching a title bid, despite missing the opening races.

But Webster only won two more races during the rest of the season and he finished second behind runaway champion Dan Harper in the standings.

Webster now wants to contest a full campaign in 2020 in an attempt to join Damien Faulkner, Tim Harvey, James Sutton, Michael Meadows and Dan Cammish in the ranks of two-time Carrera Cup GB champions.

“I think I’m going to come back next year,” said Webster, who spent the previous two years competing in the Formula 1-supporting Porsche Supercup. “I’m really enjoying it, which is the most important thing, and the sponsors are really enjoying it. Team Parker Racing are doing a great job.”

STEPHEN LICKORISH



Chadwick competed at WHT in 2017 with GBR

Chadwick and Harvey to compete at Walter Hayes



Chadwick hopes for a better result this year

WALTER HAYES TROPHY

W Series champion Jamie Chadwick and former British Touring Car title winner Tim Harvey will both contest the Walter Hayes Trophy Formula Ford extravaganza at Silverstone next month.

For Chadwick, who is a nominee for the Aston Martin Autosport Young Driver of the Year Award, it will be her second appearance in the event. As she did in 2017, she will drive with the Ray-equipped Graham Brunton Racing squad.

"I absolutely loved the first time I did it two years ago, and I always said I wanted

to make sure I raced in it every year," said Chadwick. "Unfortunately last year it didn't work out, but I'm really glad I'm able to be back with Graham this time around."

Chadwick made the final in 2017, but an engine issue on the grid meant she was unable to make an impression in the race.

"It was a no-brainer to come back with Graham," she said. "I feel like I can do better than the first time. I'm doing this for fun, essentially, but it's going to be very competitive and I can't wait."

The former Ginetta Junior and BRDC British Formula 3 race winner also believes that more young drivers should try their

hand at FF1600, citing the cars' raw mechanical characteristics as an education for aspiring talent.

"The cars offer such great racing," said Chadwick. "They are cheap to run and they really do give you all the lessons you need to go racing. A manual gearbox, less aero, heel-and-toe and a clutch, so it's something I'd definitely recommend."

Chadwick will join Scottish championship regulars Steve Barlow and Logan Hannah (an Arden Young Driver) in GBR's line-up.

Harvey, meanwhile, will be taking part in his first WHT at the wheel of his Van Diemen RF81. The 57-year-old, who claimed the BTCC with BMW in 1992, returned to single-seaters this year when he bought back his original car to contest the Classic Formula Ford 1600 Championship, in which he is second in the points.

The final round of the series is at the Formula Ford Festival at Brands Hatch next week, and Harvey will aim to catch points leader Rick Morris.

"I've heard lots of great things about the Walter Hayes Trophy and I'm really looking forward to taking part," said Harvey. "I'm probably going to need some rain to give me a chance because of the age of the car – and me too. I'm taking this seriously – I've even cut down on the amount of cake I've been eating to negate any weight disadvantage I might have."

STEPHEN BRUNSDON & MATT JAMES



Harvey will be making his debut at the WHT

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Impressive debut at Brands for Blake-Baldwin prompts return

GINETTA GT4 SUPERCUP

Multiple Mazda MX-5 champion James Blake-Baldwin made his debut in the Ginetta GT4 Supercup at Brands Hatch last weekend, with a view to a 2020 programme.

In wet conditions, Blake-Baldwin qualified his AK Motorsport-run car fifth of the 20-strong entry before scoring a best finish of fifth in race two.

That was rewarded with a front-row position for the reversed-grid race three, but Blake-Baldwin was forced to start from the pitlane after suffering an intermittent cut-out on the way to the grid.

"The MX-5s are hugely competitive

but I feel like we've ticked that box," said Blake-Baldwin. "We haven't got anything more to prove, so this is something to get our teeth into.

"AK have done an amazing job to set the car up. We're just working on trying to give as much feedback as possible on how the car's handling and we're getting there slowly but surely, but at the same time I'm learning.

"I'd love to do [a full season] but it's all a money thing. I think some of the boys that are racing here this weekend are the best in the country, extremely talented, and they're certainly putting me through my paces."

MARK PAULSON



Mazda MX-5 champion took best finish of fifth

Neary father-and-son duo team up

BRITISH GT

Britcar and GT Cup race winner Sam Neary will graduate to British GT next year and join his father Richard in the Team ABBA Racing Mercedes-AMG GT3.

The 17-year-old started the year in a BMW M3 GTR and switched to the Mercedes for the Britcar meeting at Snetterton in August, when

the father-and-son duo took both victories.

Neary Sr has been a British GT regular since 2016, but missed much of the 2018 season due to fire damage at Spa. He took a first British GT podium at Oulton Park earlier this year with AMG factory driver Adam Christodoulou.

Meanwhile, British GT confirmed last week that 30 cars have been locked in for

next season, out of a maximum 35 permitted entries. Several GT4 teams have been put on a waiting list due to a greater-than-expected interest from full-season GT3 teams.

Fifteen spaces had initially been allocated for GT3 cars when the entry process was opened on 1 October, but this could change once potential entries have been evaluated.

JAMES NEWBOLD

IN THE HEADLINES

GINETTA SECURES NEW DEAL

Ginetta has signed a three-year deal with TOCA, organiser of the British Touring Car Championship, meaning its Ginetta Junior and GT4 Supercup categories will continue to feature at BTCC events until the end of 2022. "Competing on the TOCA package offers our drivers unrivalled broadcast and print media coverage, as well as great exposure to thousands of fans at each of the race meetings for themselves, the teams and their sponsors," said Ginetta chairman Lawrence Tomlinson.

COLBURN'S TRIBUTE

Renault UK Clio Cup driver James Colburn changed his race number and carried tribute stickers in memory of fellow Historic Racing Drivers' Club racer Marc Swaffer for last weekend's finale at Brands Hatch. Swaffer died after suffering a suspected heart attack at Castle Combe earlier this month. "It was really hard last weekend [at Combe]," said Colburn. "The HRDC drivers are a really close group and I wanted to go out and race for him in tribute." Colburn bagged both poles before finishing second and third in the Clio races.

PRIAULX WINS IN AMERICA

British GT4 runner-up Seb Priaulx won on his North American racing debut at Road Atlanta last weekend in the two-hour Michelin Pilot Challenge race for GT4 machinery. Sharing an identical Multimatic Motorsport-run Ford Mustang GT4 to the one he used in British GT this year, Priaulx qualified second and ran third before handing over to Austin Cindric, who grabbed the lead late on.

BACK BEHIND THE WHEEL

Former International GT racer David Gooding had his first race for 14 years when he shared with Nigel Greensall in last Saturday's Fun Cup finale at Oulton Park. They finished 14th in the four-hour race in mixed conditions, but went away with the team of the day award. Gooding last drove a Ferrari 360 in Grand-Am, and has six Daytona races under his belt.

YOUNG DRIVER NOMINATION

Monoposto racer Max Hart has received a nomination for Motorsport Ireland's Young Racing Driver of the Year award. The 18-year-old finished runner-up in the Mono Moto 1000 class at the wheel of a Leystone.



Low grid numbers prompt move from BRSCC to 750MC

ALFA ROMEO

The Alfa Romeo Championship will move across to the 750 Motor Club next season, having run with the British Racing and Sports Car Club since the series was founded 37 years ago.

The Alfa category has suffered shrinking grids in recent years and organisers hope that a change in club, along with other measures, will encourage more entries.

Grids have averaged 15 cars so far this year and, at some events, the Alfa Romeos have been paired up with the struggling Porsche championship.

In a bid to lower costs, entry fees will be reduced following the switch to the 750MC and there will be two fewer race meetings next year.

"We've had an issue the last three

or four years where our grid numbers have been going down," explained Alfa coordinator Andy Robinson. "We've been averaging 15 cars, which doesn't really make it viable.

"One of the main factors was cost. We looked at the cost structures that other racing clubs had and the 750 Motor Club stood out for us. Costs will go down significantly and we will reduce the calendar by a couple of rounds so we will now have 14 races from six meetings, instead of 16 races from eight."

Robinson says that drivers were consulted about the move and there was huge support for a switch to the 750MC.

"Thirty of our 40 registered drivers replied straight away and 100% were in favour [of moving to 750MC]," he said.

STEPHEN LICKORISH

PEARSON PLANS TO MOVE AWAY FROM CLIO CUP

MINI CHALLENGE JCW

Michelin Clio Cup racer Ronan Pearson will move to the Mini Challenge JCW class next year.

Pearson has spent the past two seasons in the Clio category, which features the third-generation car, but will now graduate to the Mini series as it is set to join the British Touring Car Championship support bill.

"To be part of a championship of this stature, especially in a very highly publicised year that 2020 will be, really excites me," said Pearson.

"I can't wait to get to grips with the car and maximise every lap that I have on track. There's no shying away from the fact that this is a huge step up, it's quite the different animal to the Gen3 Clio and I'll need to alter my driving style overall but it's a step I've been ready to make for the past season now."

Mini Challenge Cooper Am class frontrunner Josh Porter will also graduate to the Pro class next season.

The 17-year-old has had an impressive first season of car racing and retains an outside chance of winning the Am title at the Snetterton season finale this weekend. Porter will continue to drive for the Excelr8 squad in 2020.

Fresh start for Saloon drivers

CASTLE COMBE

Castle Combe Saloon Car championship rivals Simon Thornton-Norris and Matt Parr intend to race in other series next year.

Thornton-Norris clinched his third overall Combe Saloon title last month driving a Mitsubishi Colt Ralliart, and has also competed in the UK Time Attack Championship in a Mitsubishi Evo. Next year he plans to prioritise Time Attack.

"Primary would be Evo [and] Time Attack, and secondarily here [Combe Saloons]," he told Autosport,

"but if they don't clash at all then I'll do both."

Peugeot 106 GTi driver Parr, who dominated Class C as well challenging for overall championship honours before finishing as runner-up to Thornton-Norris, is keen to try his hand in national series.

"I'd love to move on and do something nationally, like Mini Challenge on the TOCA [programme]," Parr said.

"A dream is touring cars obviously, but I don't have the sort of budget to do that on my own."

GRAHAM KEILLOH





Return of the Mac

It's been 21 years since anyone has won a British GT crown driving a McLaren, but they came the closest this year since 1998. Surely another title isn't far away...

JAMES NEWBOLD

Mclaren fans remember the 1998 season with relish as the year Mika Hakkinen prevailed in dramatic circumstances over Michael Schumacher at Suzuka. But it was also a significant year for McLaren in sportscars, as Tim Sugden and Pink Floyd manager Steve O'Rourke gave the F1 GTR the perfect send-off by winning the British GT Championship's GT1 class.

Remarkably, it remains the last time that a McLaren won a British GT title, but this year the manufacturer came closer than ever to changing that – despite not scoring any points in GT3 until the fourth race of the year.

McLaren won the fiercely competitive Blancpain Endurance Cup in 2016 with its previous-generation 650S GT3, driven by an all-pro line-up comprising Rob Bell, Come Ledogar and Shane van Gisbergen, but the 650S never quite hit the same heights in pro-am racing and only managed two British GT wins, the most recent at Donington in 2016. Drivers frequently complained that it was skittish at the limit, so the comfort of amateur drivers was a key design consideration for its replacement, the new-for-2019 720S.

One example was entered this year in British GT by Balfe Motorsport for Bell and 2003 runner-up Shaun Balfe. But having received the car relatively late, Balfe was cautious about their prospects as a single-car team learning a virtually unraced car. That proved prescient when the 720S developed a mysterious

“1998 was the year Sugden and O'Rourke gave the McLaren F1 GTR the perfect send-off”

electrical glitch at the Oulton Park opener that could not be fixed on site, and appeared to have ended their title hopes almost before the season had even started.

Matters didn't improve in the next round at Snetterton, when Bell lost a potential podium in race one after Seb Morris's Bentley knocked Tom Jackson's GT4 McLaren into his path and resulted in a puncture. That was remedied with a first podium in race two but, having opened the year with three non-scores, Bell and Balfe were already 65 points behind table-topping double Snetterton winners Phil Keen and Adam Balon.

Few could have predicted that a final-round victory at Donington would put Bell and Balfe above the Lamborghini pair into third in the final standings and just five points behind the championship-winning TF Sport Aston Martin of Jonny Adam

and Graham Davidson. With four podiums in the final six races, the 720S outscored everybody during that period. But even including those disastrous early-season races, the seemingly impossible could still have materialised.

It was in the third event at Silverstone where the car's true potential first shone through, as Balfe qualified just 0.034s off the pace in the am session, and put Davidson under stern pressure in the race's opening stint. As the different strategies played out, Balfe was still in contention for victory approaching the final driver change when a problem with the door seal – which had been damaged by debris – meant Bell had to take a 10s stop-go penalty for refuelling with the door open.

That demoted him to sixth, and as concern mounted over a niggling fuel pressure issue, the team decided to retire the car with eight laps remaining. Balfe admitted afterwards that without the penalty they would have pressed on, but preserving the car for Donington two weeks later was deemed a bigger concern. He could have had no idea that Adam would then crash out of the lead or that the JRM Bentley would get disqualified from third for running underweight, which would have promoted Bell to fourth – and 18 points – had he kept going...

By contrast, the 720S's little cousin, the 570S, has been established in GT4 for several years, racking up its first of 12 British GT class wins to date with Sandy Mitchell and Ciaran Haggerty at Snetterton in 2016.

After falling just two points short in 2018 with Tolman Motorsport pair Charlie Fagg and Michael O'Brien, there was great expectation from the team upon the shoulders of Clio Cup runner-up James Dorlin and Formula Ford Festival winner Josh Smith this year. But their misfortune in 2019 could almost rival the travails of the Baudelaire children.

Second on their debut at Oulton Park, they were then incorrectly penalised (a case of mistaken identity) for pitlane speeding in race two. Second again in the opening race at Snetterton, Dorlin had charged from 20th to the top 10 in race two, only for Smith to suffer a gear-selection issue when he was pushed back into the fast lane and hold up a GT3 car, which resulted in another penalty.

And that's before the consecutive DNFs while leading at Silverstone, Donington and Spa – where Dorlin shot from fourth to the lead on lap one – are factored into the mix. Only at Spa could blame be attached to Smith who, understandably eager to stop the rot, was perhaps too aggressive in his defence on Tom Canning. Victory at Brands Hatch was a small consolation.

Both Dorlin and Smith are optimistic of remaining within the McLaren family next year and, if they do return to GT4 in 2020, it would be a brave man who would bet against them finally giving McLaren that long-overdue title. ✽

TOCA SUPPORTS BRANDS HATCH 12-13 OCTOBER

Young is number one as Coates just misses out



Young (62) dives past Colburn to take race two win and seal the title

ALL PICS: JEP
 motorsport
 IMAGES

RENAULT UK CLIO CUP

There has been no shortage of penalties during a frantic Renault UK Clio Cup season, but few had the significance of the one awarded to Jack Young in the first race at Brands Hatch.

Young was handed a drivethrough for overlapping Anton Spire on a safety-car restart, a move not permitted by the regulations. As he didn't visit the pits before the end of the race, it was converted into a 30-second time penalty. Suddenly, a solid fourth place behind Brett Lidsey, James Colburn and chief title rival Max Coates became a 12th. Suddenly, a decent lead over Coates became a one-point deficit.

After being hit by former team-mate

Jade Edwards at Silverstone, Coates knew it would be a tough ask to take the title and he was shocked by the change in fortunes. But his race wasn't straightforward either as he dropped back at the start.

"My clutch failed on the way to the line so the car was off at the start," he admitted. "My start was horrendous as I had my foot on the brake because of the clutch problem."

That left it all to play for in the finale but Young had a significant advantage – he was starting third while Coates was 10th as a chaotic qualifying session that featured multiple red flags prevented him from improving as the track dried.

Young made the most of his better grid position as he took second at Druids, while Coates was up to fifth. But a lengthy safety car was then needed to fix barriers after Ben

Colburn was punted off as the cars concertinaed out of Druids. During the caution, Coates was furiously gesturing as he believed that Aaron Thompson had passed him after the safety-car boards emerged and wanted the places to be swapped.

His frustration then grew because another safety car was needed instantly as Luke Warr and Ethan Hammerton tangled at Clearways, leaving just a four-lap dash to the flag and little time for Coates to pass Young.

While Coates quickly rose to second, Young was also on the move, grabbing the lead from double polesitter James Colburn at Surtees to seal the title with a win.

"I can't really tell you what it means, I can't describe it," Young smiled. "We won the championship and we won the final race, it's unbelievable. I nearly went off about 20 times but I managed to keep my head calm."

Coates lamented: "It's been barmy. Starting from 10th, it was never going to be easy. Everything that could've fallen into Jack's hands did in that race."

After a season of such tight margins, it was fitting that the final gap between the two was just five points as the Clio Cup departed the British Touring Car support package in style. And with another of its regular features over the years: a Clio on its roof, Thompson bowing to the crowd after a penultimate-lap incident.

STEPHEN LICKORISH



Despite Coates's best efforts, he just missed out on crown



Hedley took the title with a victory in opener



Martin stormed from 19th to win the finale

Hedley crowned but Martin stars

GINETTA JUNIOR

Will Martin produced a stunning drive from the back of the grid to win the final Ginetta Junior race, after James Hedley had wrapped up the title with victory in race one.

Martin, whose tally of nine wins is unmatched this season, crashed out of a wet and gloomy race two – won by Lorcan Hanafin – which finished after sunset on Saturday. That left him 19th on the grid for Sunday's encounter.

A couple of safety-car periods assisted Martin's progress as he joined the lead pack before performing a cutback on

Hedley at Paddock and taking the lead from Hanafin at Druids on the final racing lap before another safety car was replaced with red flags.

"The team [Richardson Racing] did a perfect job of getting the car back together in under three hours," said Martin. "I didn't think I was racing today but my sponsor said just try and get the car repaired and go out for a bit of fun. We went out with a joke: 'P1 would be nice!'"

Hedley had clinched the title with a win from pole position in race one, as Elite Motorsport team-mate James Taylor kept him honest throughout.

MARK PAULSON

WEEKEND WINNERS

RENAULT UK CLIO CUP

Race 1 (12 laps) 1 Brett Lidsey; 2 James Colburn +0.559s; 3 Max Coates; 4 Jamie Bond; 5 Ben Colburn; 6 Nathan Edwards. **Fastest lap** J Colburn 1m51.089s (78.85mph).

Pole J Colburn. **Starters** 14.

Race 2 (14 laps) 1 Jack Young; 2 Coates +2.800s; 3 J Colburn; 4 Edwards; 5 Anton Spire; 6 Lidsey. **FL** Young 1m50.348s (79.38mph).

P J Colburn. **S** 14.

Points 1 Young 362; 2 Coates 357; 3 Bond 312; 4 Lidsey 301; 5 B Colburn 241; 6 Ethan Hammerton 234.

GINETTA JUNIOR

Race 1 (7 laps) 1 James Hedley; 2 James Taylor +0.718s; 3 Will Martin; 4 Ethan Brooks; 5 Zak O'Sullivan; 6 Lorcan Hanafin. **FL** Martin 2m01.579s (72.05mph). **P** Hedley. **S** 23.

Race 2 (8 laps) 1 Hanafin; 2 Taylor +0.134s; 3 Brooks; 4 Joel Pearson; 5 Hedley; 6 Gustav Burton. **FL** Brooks 2m04.653s (70.27mph). **P** Hedley. **S** 23.

Race 3 (7 laps) 1 Martin; 2 Hanafin +0.581s; 3 Brooks; 4 Ethan Hawkey; 5 Hedley; 6 Taylor. **FL** Hedley 2m03.494s (70.93mph). **P** Hanafin. **S** 23.

Points 1 Hedley 680; 2 O'Sullivan 591; 3 Martin 530; 4 Hanafin 480; 5 Taylor 461; 6 Casper Stevenson 427.

PORSCHE CARRERA CUP GB

Race 1 (17 laps) 1 Josh Webster; 2 George Gamble +1.072s; 3 Tio Ellinas; 4 Dan Harper; 5 Ross Wylie; 6 Seb Perez. **FL** Harper 1m39.733s (87.83mph). **P** Webster. **S** 22.

Race 2 (17 laps) 1 Harper; 2 Ellinas +1.087s; 3 Gamble; 4 Webster; 5 Wylie; 6 Lewis Plato. **FL** Harper 1m28.301s (99.20mph). **P** Wylie. **S** 22.

Points 1 Harper 159; 2 Webster 114; 3 Gamble 113; 4 Plato 94; 5 Perez 57; 6 Dan Vaughan 51.

BRITISH FORMULA 4

Race 1 (10 laps) 1 Zane Maloney; 2 Luke Browning +1.172s; 3 Sebastian Alvarez; 4 Alex Connor; 5 Bart Horsten; 6 Carter Williams. **FL** Maloney 1m41.533s (86.27mph). **P** Connor. **S** 13.

Race 2 (10 laps) 1 Alvarez; 2 Horsten +3.506s; 3 Browning; 4 Connor; 5 Maloney; 6 Louis Foster. **FL** Foster 1m44.754s (83.62mph). **P** Horsten. **S** 13.

Race 3 (12 laps) 1 Maloney; 2 Browning +1.260s; 3 Connor; 4 Josh Skelton; 5 Horsten; 6 Foster. **FL** Williams 1m33.476s (93.71mph). **P** Connor. **S** 13.

Points 1 Maloney 427; 2 Alvarez 407; 3 Foster 353; 4 Skelton 326.5; 5 Horsten 275.5; 6 Browning 268.5.

GINETTA GT4 SUPERCUP

Race 1 (10 laps) 1 Harry King; 2 Will Burns +11.286s; 3 Carlito Miracco; 4 Tom Hibbert; 5 Reece Somerfield; 6 Simon Rudd. **FL** King 1m42.101s (85.79mph). **P** Burns. **S** 20.

Race 2 (15 laps) 1 King; 2 Burns +1.104s; 3 Hibbert; 4 Rudd; 5 James Blake-Baldwin; 6 Fin Green. **FL** King 1m41.180s (86.57mph). **P** King. **S** 20.

Race 3 (13 laps) 1 Hibbert; 2 Burns +0.364s; 3 King; 4 Rudd; 5 Somerfield; 6 Nathan Heathcote. **FL** Burns 1m31.397s (95.84mph). **P** Green. **S** 19.

Points 1 King 627; 2 Burns 614; 3 Hibbert 560; 4 Somerfield 422; 5 Miracco 369; 6 Rudd 266.

For full results visit: tsl-timing.com



The 2014 champion took third win of the year in race one

Webster ends season on a high

PORSCHE CARRERA CUP GB

Before the Brands finale, only George Gamble at Silverstone had denied champion Dan Harper a race-one Porsche Carrera Cup GB win. But Josh Webster joined that elite group with an impressive victory in Kent.

Webster qualified on pole and was never headed throughout a race held in tricky damp conditions, but had Harper right on his tail.

"I think we went a little too high on tyre pressures and a bit soft on rollbars, so we were really quick at the start, but I was trying to manage the tyres at the

end," Webster admitted. "It was really tough – even though it's not warm, I had sweat dripping down my eyes!"

Harper surged from seventh on the grid to second, surviving a moment after contact with Dan Vaughan at Hawthorn. But he was later demoted to fourth for a robust move on Tio Ellinas at Druids. "It was good just going out there to enjoy myself – and I definitely did that!" Harper said.

Harper enjoyed race two even more as he jumped polesitter Ross Wylie around the outside of Paddock Hill Bend to add one final win to a remarkable season.

STEPHEN LICKORISH

TOCA SUPPORTS BRANDS HATCH 12-13 OCTOBER

Maloney seals the title with Brands brace

BRITISH FORMULA 4

It was appropriate that the two leading British Formula 4 title contenders should share the spoils at the Brands Hatch finale. But two of those wins went to Zane Maloney, meaning it was the Barbados-born driver who left triumphant.

Given that Maloney and chief rival Sebastian Alvarez arrived in Kent tied on points, a nailbiting conclusion was always in prospect. And sure enough, the title pendulum swung between the two of them throughout the weekend.

Initially, it was advantage Maloney. The Carlin driver made a brilliant start and attempted a bold move around the outside of Alvarez's Double R Racing team-mate Louis Foster into Paddock Hill Bend. There was slight contact between the two as Foster attempted to defend the place, and that sent Foster off into the gravel. His slim title hopes were over.

From there Maloney controlled the race after a lengthy safety-car period to take a crucial win, from Luke Browning and Alvarez in third. Maloney therefore grabbed a 10-point lead.

"I got a really good start – and I thought I would just go for it," said a delighted Maloney. "I don't have anything to lose, well, I do, but if I raced like that [not going for moves] I wouldn't achieve anything. I think he tried to squeeze me a bit and I was in the gravel and had nowhere to go."

But in race two it was Alvarez's turn to make a strong getaway and he powered into the lead from the partially reversed grid. That race followed a similar pattern – Alvarez took the win but Maloney struggled



Maloney (31) has been the class of the field in F4 during 2019

to make any progress as he came home fifth.

It didn't initially look like Alvarez would get to keep the victory after he was awarded a 10-second penalty for a false start. That was soon rescinded, however, giving the Mexican a five-point advantage heading into the final race.

Again, Maloney made a brilliant launch in the finale, jumping from fifth to second, and that soon became the lead as Foster ran slightly wide, with the drivers struggling on wet tyres on a rapidly drying track, before going on to win the championship in style.

"I didn't want to win it in any other way than winning the race – it's amazing,"

said the delighted title winner.

"My tyres were completely finished and I was trying to keep it on the wetter bits. I was just trying to bring it home and not put it in the fence!"

As Maloney became the fourth Carlin driver to win the title in five years, Alvarez's race unravelled. He ran fifth initially before running wide at Stirlings and dropping to seventh. A few laps later his hopes were over as flames appeared from his car.

It was a disappointing end following a season that has featured no shortage of ups and downs for the leading contenders.

STEPHEN LICKORISH



Alvarez (94) managed to win the second race

ALL PICS: JEP

motorsport
IMAGES

King joins Ginetta GT4 royalty with championship

GINETTA GT4 SUPERCUP

The Ginetta GT4 Supercup title fight may have been close coming into the weekend, but its destiny was rarely in doubt as Harry King dominated the races.

King's closest challenger, Will Burns, boosted his own chances by claiming pole position by just 0.05 seconds on a drying track. But in worsening conditions, King pulled off a breathtaking outside pass at Graham Hill Bend

on the opening lap of the first race to take a crushing 11s win.

Burns was best of the rest but admitted he "had no answer" to King with too stiff a set-up, adding that the margin of victory was "a bit embarrassing".

The order was unchanged in race two, but Burns was at least able to keep his Rob Boston Racing car in touch with King's Elite Motorsport-prepared machine to set up a title decider in the finale.

Realistically, Burns needed to win the reversed-grid race with King outside

the top six. Starting together on row three, the pair benefited from the absence of front-row men Fin Green and James Blake-Baldwin but, perversely, that probably made Burns's job harder.

Behind leader Tom Hibbert, King dived inside Simon Rudd for second, with Burns also passing Rudd. On the resumption after a lengthy safety-car period, Burns latched on to King and passed him into Surtees on the final lap, but could not catch pre-weekend title outsider Hibbert.

"It feels awesome to finally get a car-racing championship to my name," said 18-year-old King.

"When you do get two or three wins on the bounce, it's easy to get distracted and think you can go into weekends without the same preparation and do well, but I've been putting in so much work outside the track."

For Burns, it was a second final-round defeat in four years after losing out to Tom Wrigley in 2016. But while Wrigley let his 24-point lead slip to just three, King was resolute.

"I was putting loads of pressure on Tom Wrigley and I think he was struggling a bit, but Harry seems to hold his head," said Burns, whose grace in defeat typified a hard-fought contest with no ill feeling.

MARK PAULSON



AM CLASS BOILS OVER AS HEATHCOTE AND WHITE COLLIDE - TWICE

The simmering battle in the GT4 Supercup's Am class reached boiling point in a tumultuous season finale as the title protagonists twice crashed into each other.

"He just went for a real last-lap, last-corner lunge and took us both out," said Nathan Heathcote after he and points leader Colin White ended race one in the Clark Curve gravel.

"He braked really, really early," retorted White, the champion in 2015 and 2016, "so I pulled across and went down the inside of him. But when I got halfway he then turned in on me."

The clerk of the course sided with Heathcote, slapping White with two penalty points on his licence and the loss of six championship points – a net result almost the same as if one-time British Rallycross champion Heathcote had won with White second.

The contest took a bizarre turn in race two as White edged the battle despite exiting his car following contact on the startline when he cut

across Heathcote's bows and spun into the barriers after a blistering getaway. Fearing his race was over, White got out to inspect the damage, before taking advantage of the resulting safety car when he realised he could continue.

"I just hopped in the car, started up and chased after the safety car!" said the three-time Hot Rod world champion. Benefiting from two more safety cars, White passed Heathcote for fourth in class on the final lap, as the pair ran side by side – cleanly – around Druids, Graham Hill Bend and Surtees.

White held a five-point advantage going into the final race. Thinking second place and fastest lap would be enough, he didn't resist Heathcote's pass at Surtees on the penultimate lap. But White had reckoned without a 10s penalty, dropping him to fourth in class, issued for a breach of starting procedure – he took up his grid slot despite being last away on the green-flag lap. When polesitter Fin Green hit trouble, White was caught out by the length of the delayed start, having jumped out to remove some blanking tape as his engine



temperature was dangerously high.

It was a fittingly strange finish to a chaotic tussle between the pair.

"I'm so glad I managed to get it done in the end," said a relieved Heathcote. "It's been a bit of an up-and-down weekend. I'm glad I managed to beat him fair and square on track, regardless of whether he had a penalty."

MARK PAULSON



Lisseter (71) took his first Locost win, then added a second

Maiden winners battle through tricky conditions

SNETTERTON
750MC
12-13 OCTOBER

Snetterton's sinuous 300 circuit played host as more 750 Motor Club 80th anniversary champions were crowned in largely damp and blustery conditions.

But breakthrough race victories for Locost and F1000 freshmen Jonathan Lisseter and Robert Welham made the weekend equally memorable. Confidence buoyed, they both doubled up for wins – in Welham's case in a sensational finale. Lisseter had previously bested at sixth, but his ability to make his SRB entry walk on water either side of Saturday's safety-car interlude stunned rivals.

"All those years of Club 100 karting on slick tyres have finally paid off," said the Romford man, who – following a grassy scare at Agostini before the hiatus – coolly denied poleman and title protagonist Louis

Wall in a one-lap dash to the chequer, becoming the season's seventh winner.

Tom Gadd needed a top-five finish on Saturday to clinch the title but, with the job seemingly done, slid off at Oggies and returned a deflated 11th. "I had a quiet night, talking to nobody," said the Lincolnshire lad, for whom eighth on Sunday would now be sufficient. That looked a tall order when, having swept into the lead from fourth on the grid, he careered off at Wilson hairpin seconds later.

"I thought, 'No, no, no', when I couldn't stop on the grass, but didn't hit anything and refocused," he said. Seventh at the end of the lap signalled Gadd's determination. Fifth by mid-race, he settled for sixth, punching the air as he crossed the line as champion. Meanwhile, Lisseter grabbed the lead from David Mason into Riches and stormed away. Murray Shepherd and Wall, recovering from a Riches moment, deposed Mason to join Locost Ma7da

aspirant Lisseter on the podium.

Avon control-tyre choice proved crucial across the F1000 triple-header. Dan Clowes and Matthew Booth on wets got the drop on Saturday's slick-shod polesitter Michael Watton. Clowes won from Booth, with Booth's vanquished title rival Lee Morgan third from Suffolk teenager Welham, whose slicks rapidly "turned on" towards the end.

Sunday's encounters were crackers too. Welham rounded Watton to score his first win in "proper tricky" conditions in the morning. Morgan and a clutchless Booth grabbed second and third after Agostini caught Clowes out. Welham's jaw-dropping outside pass on Morgan at Riches coloured the finale, for which slicks were de rigueur. "I knew I had the grip," said Welham, who resisted relentless pressure from Watton to win by 0.09 seconds.

Bikesports champion Joe Stables swapped his Class B Radical SR3 for father Richard's Class A PR6, but Josh Smith and Charles Hall – who clashed at Oulton Park last time out – won the races. Hall's SR3-replacement Spire was sidelined by a broken chain, which ceded the Class A title to Smith (PR6) in the opener. Hall howled away from Smith in race two.

Darren Berris won both packed Armed Forces Race Challenge bouts in his burbling Rover V8-powered Westfield. Fellow RAF stalwart Chris Slator (Peugeot 306) snatched the title on a complex index of performance calculation that rewards consistency. Renault Clio drivers chased Berris, with Ben Williams and local car dealer Ray Honeybone posting seconds.

Paul Boyd blitzed Sport Specials in his Eclipse. Cautious pursuer Andy Hiley (Chronos) secured the title in Saturday's



Welham (5) had to hold off Watton in the final F1000 race to win

ALL PICS: STYLES

SNETTERTON WEEKEND WINNERS

LOCOST

Races 1 & 2 Jonathan Lissester

F1000

Race 1 Dan Clowes

Races 2 & 3 Rob Welham

BIKESPORTS

Race 1 Josh Smith (Radical PR6)

Race 2 Charles Hall (Spire GT3)

ARMED FORCES RACE CHALLENGE

Races 1 & 2 Darren Berris (Westfield V8)

SPORT SPECIALS

Races 1 & 2 Paul Boyd (Eclipse SM1)

CLIO 182s

Race 1 Ryan Polley

Race 2 James Bark

BMW CAR CLUB RACING

Race 1 David Kempton (E36 M3)

Race 2 Niall Bradley (E46 M3)

CLASSIC STOCK HATCH

Race 1 Andrew Thorpe (Citroen AX GTi)

Race 2 Matt Rozier (Peugeot 205 GTi)

HOT HATCH

Race 1 Gary Prebble (Honda Civic)

Race 2 Ben Rushworth (Honda Integra DC2)

ROADSPORTS

Michael Price (Porsche Cayman GT4 Clubsport)

CLUB ENDURO

Carl Swift/Rob Baker (SEAT Leon Supercopa)

For full results visit: theresultslive.co.uk

contest, in which Isle of Wight commuter Steven Wells (SubZero) was a fine third. Stuart Thompson finally landed a Class B win, on countback, after a terrific Sunday scrap with David Winter and Chris Pyke.

The Clio 182 season ended disappointingly; both races were halted after lap-one incidents, then decided over three laps. Saturday's gave Ryan Polley the second chance he needed to claim the crown from James Bark after a poor initial getaway. Polley sat out Sunday, in which Bark beat Don de Graaff.

A big BMW field was an aural delight, Dave Kempton and debutant Niall Bradley winning in contrasting M3s as Cup class racer Matt Page (325Ti) emerged champion.

Hot and Classic Stock Hatch title fights will be resolved at Silverstone on 27 October. In the latter, Andrew Thorpe and his 1400cc Citroen AX prevailed in Sunday's soggy opener as 1600cc Vauxhalls, Peugeots and Fords scabbled for grip. Later, Matt Rozier's first win this term postponed Lee Scott's celebrations.

MARCUS PYE

ENDURANCE RACES PROVIDE THE DRAMA



Roadsports victory
went to Price in
Porsche Cayman

Endurance races have been part of the 750 Motor Club's sporting programme since the inaugural Birkett Six Hour Team Relay run at Silverstone in 1951.

In recent seasons, mini-enduros have peppered its championship meetings, large entries satisfying racing members and teams' aspirations of greater track time while offsetting the rising cost of circuit hire.

Saturday's Roadsports Series event attracted 40-plus entrants, ranging from a Vauxhall Nova GTE and Mazda MX-5s through SEAT Leons and a plethora of BMW M-series models to Michael Price's Porsche Cayman GT4 Clubsport, effectively the polesitter after Luke Sedzikowski/David Whitmore (BMW M4) used qualifying for Club Enduro practice.

There was drama at the start when David Drinkwater's VW Corrado on P3 stalled and was clipped by fourth-row starter Matt Wallis's SEAT, but the 45-minute race went on. Graham Crowhurst's "anti-camouflage" liveried BMW E46 M3 led from the start, but invitee Dave Kempton (E36 M3) and Paul Cook (E46 M3) growled ahead to their mandatory stops, whereupon Price steamed ahead. The green Porsche outran its German compatriots to the chequered flag, finishing almost 35 seconds clear of Cook, with Kempton and Crowhurst behind. Leon Bidgway upheld local



Swift and Baker won
two-hour Club Enduro

marque Lotus's honour with fifth in his Exige, pursued by Lee Pierce's BMW 328i.

Price's co-driver, 2011 British GT4 champion Marcus Clutton, planted the Cayman on pole for Sunday's two-hour Club Enduro, but Silverstone victor Joe Taylor discovered that dry tyres worked increasingly well on his Exige S3 as the drizzle abated. He qualified second, 3.06s adrift, with Carl Swift/Rob Baker (Area Motorsport SEAT Leon) and Darren Ball (E46 M3) well in touch. Taylor drove brilliantly on the same rubber to stay within 50s of Clutton over the first hour, knowing that Price would have to serve a 30s stop-and-go Pro driver penalty in the second half for Clutton's work.

Price initially stopped under a safety car, which contravened regulations, thus had to repeat the exercise. Taylor had carved several seconds per lap out of his advantage and had just passed the Porsche when he was hit with a similar imposition for a tight overtake under yellow flags. All the while Baker was growling round metronomically out front in the SEAT.

Taylor came up 15.76s short, crucially two places ahead of championship class rivals Sedzikowski/Whitmore in fourth. A lap down, Darren Ball (BMW E92 M3) was fifth from Paul Huxley (SEAT Supercopa).

Matt Maxted/Ben Salmon (E36 M3) – who had outpaced John La Master/Craig Denman (Lotus Elise) and points leader Steve Cheetham (Porsche Boxster) for Class B pole – enjoyed a superb run to seventh, clear of Pip Hammond (Porsche Boxster). Cheetham weathered a tyre nightmare, but charged back to third in class as the circuit dried. Darren Anderson/Philipp Nagel (BMW 330) won class C from Darren Kell (Mazda MX-5) by 0.84s after 44 laps.

MARCUS PYE

SEASON
REVIEW

ADAM TEACHES DAVIDSON TO MAKE THE DIFFERENCE

Faced with a new team-mate and a new car to defend his crown with, Jonny Adam coached both on side for a remarkable fourth title

JAMES NEWBOLD

PHOTOGRAPHY  **motorsport**
IMAGES

That the 2019 British GT championship ended in acrimonious fashion outside the Donington Park stewards' office was a shame. As everyone waited to find out whether Dennis Lind would be punished for punting champion-elect Jonny Adam's TF Sport Aston Martin out of fourth place with minutes to go – provisionally handing the title to Barwell Motorsport Lamborghini pair Jonny Cocker and Sam de Haan – the efforts of Adam and Graham Davidson to overturn a 54-point deficit in the final four races were temporarily overshadowed.

Rightfully, the stewards intervened to reinstate Adam and Davidson to fifth, which had the effect of giving them the championship by just 2.5 points. In a year of fine margins, the 0.082s by which Adam beat Cocker to third in race one at Snetterton's May

round was one of many small details that decided the outcome.

In the first year for the new Aston Martin Vantage GT3, which proved sensitive to slight changes in temperature and required much greater commitment than its predecessor from the drivers to get the most out of its aero, it was hardly surprising that results didn't come immediately. "It definitely needs a very gentle touch to get the best lap times out of it," explains Davidson. "I was confusing myself with what I should be doing and what the car could do." Davidson wasn't the only one, with team-mate Mark Farmer a shadow of his 2018 level all year after being concussed in a heavy Silverstone testing accident.

At the Oulton Park opener, TF made sweeping changes after every session in pursuit of a set-up that worked, but to no avail. Matters only got worse in race two as Davidson

Brands win put Adam/Davidson just six points off standings lead



crashed out of sixth on the final lap.

A first podium next time out at Snetterton hinted at things to come, but Adam's tangle with Chad McCumbee's Ford Mustang GT4 while leading at Silverstone – which put them out of the race – was another massive setback. That made Davidson's response at Donington Park all the more significant. Knowing that nothing but victory would do to keep his hopes alive, he converted his first am pole position into a lead they would never lose from the McLaren 720S of Rob Bell and Shaun Balfe.

"The big difference this year is I've got a lot more self-confidence and I'm a lot more relaxed in the way I approach a race weekend," Davidson says. "I've learned a lot from Jonny – he's very relaxed, doesn't let anything get him out of kilter and knows how to get me focused on the right things. Max [Martin, Davidson's former co-driver] was good at telling me how to drive fast, but Jonny has got my head in the right place."

Spa was another disappointing weekend for the duo, who came away an unrepresentative eighth after Davidson was penalised for minor contact with a backmarker and Adam had to nurse the car home with no rear brakes. But Davidson again responded well at Brands Hatch, crucially passing polesitter Balfe at the start, which put them just six points behind points leaders Phil Keen and Adam Balon heading to the finale at Donington. Once Barwell driver Balon was sidelined by a toe-link failure, Davidson just had to ensure that Adam emerged ahead of Cocker, and duly managed to create the 20s gap needed to negate their >>

AUTOSPORT'S TOP 5 GT3 DRIVERS



PHIL KEEN

1 Getting Balon to challenge for the title in his first year in GT3 machinery was a huge achievement. Keen was dominant at Snetterton, opportunistic when he needed to be – see Brands Hatch – and faultless all season. Not for the first time, he would have been a worthy champion.



GRAHAM DAVIDSON

2 Firing it off on the final lap at Oulton Park was clumsy and he picked up a potentially costly penalty for contact at Spa, but responded brilliantly to Silverstone disappointment with Donington pole, and won Brands by beating Balfe off the line. A far more rounded package than in 2018.



JONNY ADAM

3 Blotted his copybook with a rare accident at Silverstone while battling for victory, but was the only pro to make an am look completely comfortable in the new Aston Martin Vantage. Once again, he showed a calm head under massive pressure in the Donington finale, despite Lind's best efforts.



SHAUN BALFE

4 It's difficult to quantify his performance as the only McLaren runner, but Balfe was every bit a match for the other ams from Silverstone on. Ended the year with two poles and the most dominant stint of the year at Donington. A case of what could have been had the 720S worked at Oulton Park.



SAM DE HAAN

5 Earned his first series win at Oulton with well-judged moves on Farmer and Neary, and unlucky to lose big points through no fault of his own in first-lap contact at Silverstone and Spa, and being spun out at Snetterton. Ended the year as champion on the road, but the stewards ruled otherwise..

REVIEW BRITISH GT

pitstop penalty for their success at Brands.

De Haan and Cocker only won once, in the second race at Oulton Park, but consistent scoring kept them in the title hunt, despite de Haan being spun out at Snetterton by Dominic Paul's BMW, on the first lap at Silverstone (by Balon), and again at Spa (by Oulton winner Rick Parfitt Jr's JRM Bentley). But the real bodyblow to their hopes came on the final lap at Brands Hatch. With the Barwell Lambos running line astern in fourth and fifth, Keen passed Cocker around the outside at the fast Hawthorn Bend, which resulted in Cocker lifting and losing another three spots in one go, dropping to eighth. Even had he finished seventh, the extra three points would have given him and de Haan the title.

Two non-scores for Keen and Balon in the final three races, including a crash at Spa, dropped them to fourth behind Donington winners Bell and Balfe, who were just five points off the title despite an electrical glitch forcing them to withdraw from Oulton.

Although it ended disappointingly, it was still an impressive first year in GT3s for Balon, his undoubted highlight a double win at Snetterton alongside benchmark Lambo driver Keen, who didn't put a foot wrong all year but, as usual, couldn't buy any luck.

YOUNG FACE CANNING TURNS OUT TO BE A DAB HAND

Two non-scores at Oulton Park hardly sounds like the ideal start to a British GT title-winning campaign. But much like their GT3 counterparts, TF Sport pair Tom Canning and Ash Hand recovered from a rough start to seal a perfect double.

TF's expansion into GT4 with two new Aston Martin Vantage GT4s hit a few snags in the off-season. Hand, runner-up to Ash Sutton in the 2015 Renault UK Clio Cup, was the third driver announced to partner unheralded 17-year-old Canning after deals with Alex Toth-Jones and Rory Collingbourne fell through. Hand had only 10 wet laps of testing under his belt before round one.

"When we put them together, we didn't think it was a championship-winning pairing straight away," TF Sport chief Tom Ferrier admits. "But they soon turned into that."

While Canning instantly clicked with the Aston in his second season of GTs, Hand took a little longer to adapt his driving style.



But after collecting accident damage in both races at Oulton, they rebounded at Snetterton with the car's first podium in race two. Fourth at Silverstone – at the expense of the Multimatic Motorsport Mustang of Seb Priaulx and Scott Maxwell, docked 30 seconds for driving too slowly in the pits – and fifth at Donington was followed by a first win at Spa, after Canning doggedly tracked Josh Smith's Tolman Motorsport McLaren.

That would prove to be a turning point for their season. Even with a 20-second pitstop success penalty, Canning and Hand finished third at Brands Hatch. Again they benefited from a post-race penalty for Priaulx and Maxwell, which meant third was enough in the Donington finale as Priaulx failed in his attempts to pass the Steller Performance Audi of Sennan Fielding and Richard Williams. Fielding and Williams had also won on their debut at Snetterton before being bumped up from pro-am status to silver.

Ferrier likens Canning to a young version of IMSA SportsCar

GT3 TOP 6 POINTS



POS	DRIVERS	TEAM / CAR	PTS
1	Jonny Adam/Graham Davidson	TF Sport/Aston Martin Vantage	131
2	Jonny Cocker/Sam de Haan	Barwell Motorsport/Lamborghini Huracan Evo	128.5
3	Shaun Balfe/Rob Bell	Balfe Motorsport/McLaren 720S	126
4	Phil Keen/Adam Balon	Barwell Motorsport/Lamborghini Huracan Evo	122
5	Callum MacLeod/Ian Loggie	RAM Racing/Mercedes-AMG	100.5
6	Bradley Ellis/Oliver Wilkinson	Optimum Motorsport/Aston Martin Vantage	91.5

GT4 TOP 6 POINTS

POS	DRIVERS	TEAM / CAR	PTS
1	Tom Canning/Ash Hand	TF Sport/Aston Martin Vantage	140
2	Seb Priaulx/Scott Maxwell	Multimatic Motorsport/Ford Mustang	132.5
3	Dean Macdonald/Callum Pointon	HHC Motorsport/McLaren 570S	112
4	Jordan Collard/Lewis Proctor	Tolman Motorsport/McLaren 570S	99
5	Martin Plowman/Kelvin Fletcher	Beechdean AMR/Aston Martin Vantage	98.5
6	James Dorlin/Josh Smith	Tolman Motorsport/McLaren 570S	84.5





The new GT4 Aston won the title while the McLaren's wait for success goes on

Ford star Richard Westbrook – “He’s got a very mature head on a very young-looking body, he got into Glastonbury for free as an under-12 in the summer!” – and reckons he has a big future ahead of him in sportscar racing.

“I think he can go a very long way,” Ferrier says. “At 17 years old, when you look at the season he’s put together and the way he’s driven, he’s been fastest in every test and every qualifying – he’s been absolutely stand-out.”

In TF’s second Aston, Ginetta Junior graduate Patrick Kibble and British Touring Car Championship convert Josh Price lacked the consistency of their team-mates, but could have won at Silverstone without two penalties for pitlane speeding later attributed to a glitch in the car’s VBOX pit timers.

Multimatic was left to rue its penalty misfortune after finishing 7.5 points short – 19.5 were lost in one hit at Brands when the car was not properly earthed in the pits – in what was an impressive debut season. A Balance of Performance adjustment after Priaulx qualified a second quicker than anybody at Oulton meant the Mustang was no longer the class of the field, but it still won in the second Oulton race and on the first visit to Donington. Expect to see plenty more of them in the championship next year.

McLaren’s wait for a GT4 title with its 570S continues, despite Tolman having arguably the fastest pairing of the season in Smith and James Dorlin. After three successive DNFs while in winning positions – at Silverstone (engine), Donington (contact with a GT3 car) and Spa (contact with Canning) – their popular victory at Brands Hatch came too late to save their title hopes. Despite finishing ahead in the standings, team-mates Jordan Collard and Lewis Proctor rarely carried the same threat and inherited their only win at Snetterton when Team Parker Racing Mercedes pair Scott Malvern and Nick Jones were sidelined by a puncture with two laps to go.

Instead, the top McLaren was the HHC Motorsport example of Dean MacDonald and Callum Pointon, in Pointon’s and the team’s first season outside the Ginetta family. The combination won first time out at Oulton, and MacDonald set fastest laps at Snetterton, Spa and Brands, but an electrical glitch at Spa cost them big points and they were unable to overcome their 15s success penalty in the Donington finale to challenge Canning and Hand.

Malvern and Jones made up for their Snetterton heartbreak with victory at Silverstone, coming in 0.3s(!) under Malvern’s drive-time, but ultra-consistent Beechdean Aston Martin pair Martin Plowman and Kelvin Fletcher still ran out easy pro-am champions. ✪

AUTOSPORT’S TOP 5 GT4 DRIVERS

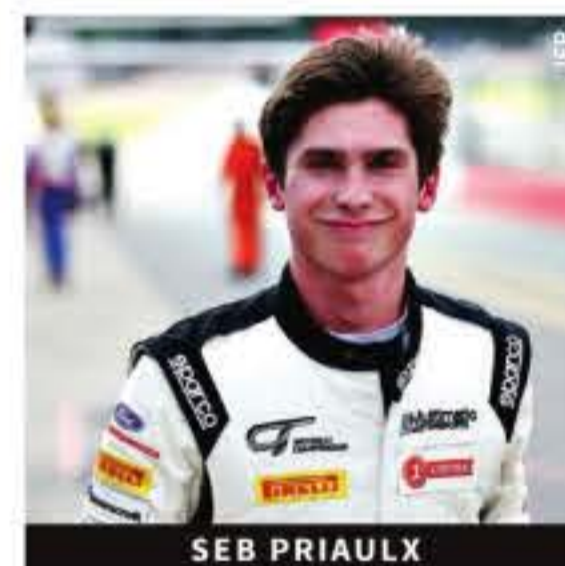


TOM CANNING

1 Surpassed expectations following an ordinary debut year in Toyota and Mercedes machinery. He also rebounded from a pointless start to become the benchmark Aston Martin GT4 driver. Mature beyond his years – seen in his patient stalking of Smith at Spa – and has the potential to go a long way.



JAMES DORLIN/JOSH SMITH



SEB PRIAULX

2 Dorlin was found wanting a few times in qualifying, and Smith culpable for the Spa DNF with an overly forceful defence on Canning, but otherwise superb. Dorlin was the year’s start king with ballistic opening laps. Surely favourites if they return together next year. Nothing to split the pair.

3 Andy’s lad lived up to the name in his rookie GT campaign. Soaked up co-driver Maxwell’s knowledge to extract the maximum from the Mustang where it wasn’t at the races and hunted down Mark Kimber’s BMW to win in style at Donington. Would have been champ without Brands penalty.



DEAN MACDONALD



KELVIN FLETCHER

4 On his return to McLaren after a bitty 2018 in Toyota/BMW machinery, he showed a new maturity after partnering Jack Mitchell in the title run-in last year. Shone in qualifying – three tenths up on anyone at Spa – and helped HHC in its learning curve with the 570S, taking race-one victory at Oulton Park.

5 Found another level this year in the new Aston Martin Vantage, qualifying third in the wet at Spa and fifth in the dry at Donington Park in June. Confirmation of his pro-am title was only delayed by pitstop issues at both races that cost him overall podiums. He’s ready to graduate to GT3.



Street circuits provide thrilling backdrop for GRID game reboot

BACK IN THE RACING GAME



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In the bombastic intro to the not-quite-a-reboot *GRID*, there's a knowing wink to

the rewind tool – which allows you to replay your mistake – that's become commonplace in racing games. It's easy to forget that the *GRID* series debuted this mechanic, considering the recent history of the series is convoluted and it's been unclear what it's trying to be.

That's why there's a new game this year and right off the bat it's keen to be seen as a true motorsport game – hence why the opening cinematics flash between a Chevrolet Corvette GTE car racing on the streets at night, switching to a NASCAR-esque oval race before finishing on what looks like a national meeting on the Brands Hatch Grand Prix circuit.

But this is still an arcade racer, the cars feel a little bit floaty and the single-seaters – the Jedi F1000 in particular – are tricky to tame, seemingly on or off-throttle with no middle ground. While it's far from realistic, it doesn't make the game, which often feels like a cross between the *Forza Motorsport* and *Need for Speed* franchises, any less enjoyable.

The career mode feels a lot like a standard racing game – beat X event to move to Y event. But there's the end goal of taking on two-time Formula 1 champion and game consultant Fernando Alonso and his Esports squad for ultimate glory, featuring his 2006 Renault R26 in a head-to-head challenge.

While the career mode might lose your interest over time, the AI will keep you coming back. The developers of *GRID*, Codemasters, rightly pointed out to Autosport that in pursuit of the perfect racing AI, the mistake has been that they are “too” perfect. More often than not, they stick to the ideal racing line and rarely make errors.

In *GRID*, the developers want to encapsulate the randomness of motorsport, so it's not unusual to see a car make a mistake and create a pile-up, or for a rival to misjudge an overtake and cause a collision. But you're not just a spectator to bad driving, you can influence the proceedings. Drive too aggressively, nudge a rival one too many times, and they will become your nemesis. Once a nemesis has been created, they will be less inclined to give you an inch and could retaliate. The success of the nemesis system is hit and miss, sometimes appearing to not affect racing, but the randomness will keep you returning whenever you fancy casual, madcap racing.

It helps that the backdrop is often spectacular, with the Havana street circuit one of the most thrilling – a challenging, fast course set to the backdrop of high-rises and the coast. Fan favourite San Francisco returns and the new Shanghai circuit is a strong addition.

One criticism is that the content can often feel a bit sparse. Yes, there are 60 cars, which compares reasonably well to rival games, but there are just 13 locations. With a career mode that often means replaying and grinding your way to the next car, it can become a bit tiresome.

But the exciting thing is that *GRID* is back – shaking off the malaise – and is heading in the right direction.

TOM ERRINGTON





youtube.com/AUTOSPORTdotcom



F1'S ONE-HIT WONDERS



Drivers only making one Formula 1 start in their career are a rare breed, and quite often those who appear just once have an interesting tale behind their fleeting presence on the grand prix grid. Autosport picks out eight varied stories. Go to bit.ly/F1wonders



autosport.com/podcast



JAPANESE GRAND PRIX REVIEW



Former Jordan, Stewart and Jaguar Formula 1 technical director Gary Anderson delves into how Valtteri Bottas won the race, why Sebastian Vettel's 'jump start' wasn't punished and what Ferrari's pace at a downforce-dependent circuit tells us about the team's progress.

WHAT'S ON

INTERNATIONAL MOTORSPORT

NASCAR Cup

Round 32/36

Kansas Speedway, USA

20 October

TV Live Freesports, Sun 1900

NASCAR Xfinity Series

Round 30/33

Kansas Speedway, USA

19 October

Formula Regional European

Round 8/8

Monza, Italy

19-20 October

Brazilian Stock Cars

Round 9/12

Cascavel, Brazil

20 October

MotoGP

Round 16/19

Motegi, Japan

20 October

TV Live BT Sport 2, Sun 1315

UK MOTORSPORT

Silverstone HSCC

19-20 October

XL Aurora, Historic FF1600, Guards Trophy, Historic Road Sports, 70s Road Sports, Formula Junior, Historic F3, Classic F3/Classic FF2000, Historic FF2000, Classic Clubmans, Historic Touring Cars

Donington Park BRSCC

19-20 October

BMW Compact, Mazda MX-5, Open Sports, TCR/Touring Car Trophy, ClubSport Trophy, Alfa Romeos, Porsches, Civic Cup, Track Attack

Snetterton MSVR

19-20 October

F3 Cup, MINI Challenge, Radical SR1, Production BMW, Racing Saloons, Z Cars



NASCAR Cup

MOTORSPORT IMAGES/NKP



Silverstone HSCC

WALKER

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FROM THE ARCHIVE

Mika Hakkinen employs the right-rear Bridgestone of his McLaren-Mercedes MP4/15 as a convenient footrest as he sits out the first practice session of the 2000 Austrian Grand Prix at the A1-Ring, his car having ground to a halt with a fuel-pump problem after managing a solitary lap. Things looked up from then on: the next day Hakkinen clinched his fourth pole position of the season, following this up with victory in the race, 12.535 seconds ahead of team-mate David Coulthard. Rubens Barrichello (Ferrari F1-2000) completed the podium a further 18.260s adrift.

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QUIZ



STALEY

2) Who is this?

This new town boy remains an iconic figure to this day.

He came in from the cold to tackle the big pond and was fast-tracked into the top tier.

At the champion's behest he was given a chance, but when they didn't take up his option it was left to an old man to ride to the rescue.

It was an inspired move and he brought home the bacon when opportunity knocked. Despite his pace he knew his place and played the role well. He was a class apart when times got tough and he drove a truck like a maestro and no one else could.

But it all fell apart just as it was about to click. He may have been forced to return to a former berth on top of the world, but fate intervened, leaving only a spectacular legacy.

3) On this day...

A Which Italian recorded his sole Formula 1 podium on this day in 1981?

B Derek Warwick made his F1 race debut in that race. He led two grands prix in his career. Name them.

C It's Kimi Raikkonen's 40th birthday. What was the best result he achieved during his stint in the World Rally Championship?

D Ex-F1 team boss Enzo Coloni celebrates his birthday today. What was the highest finishing position for one of his cars?

E Which British driver recorded their joint IndyCar best finish of seventh in the Texas season finale held on this day in 2004?



4) Name the helmet

LAST WEEK'S ANSWERS Who, what, where, when? Will Power, Dallara-Renault T05, Bilbao, 17 July 2005. Who is this? Patrick Tambay. On this day A) Warwick Brown. B) Jacques Villeneuve Sr. C) Michele Mouton scored the first female WRC win. D) Steven Kane. E) Phakisa Freeway. Name the helmet Ronnie Peterson.



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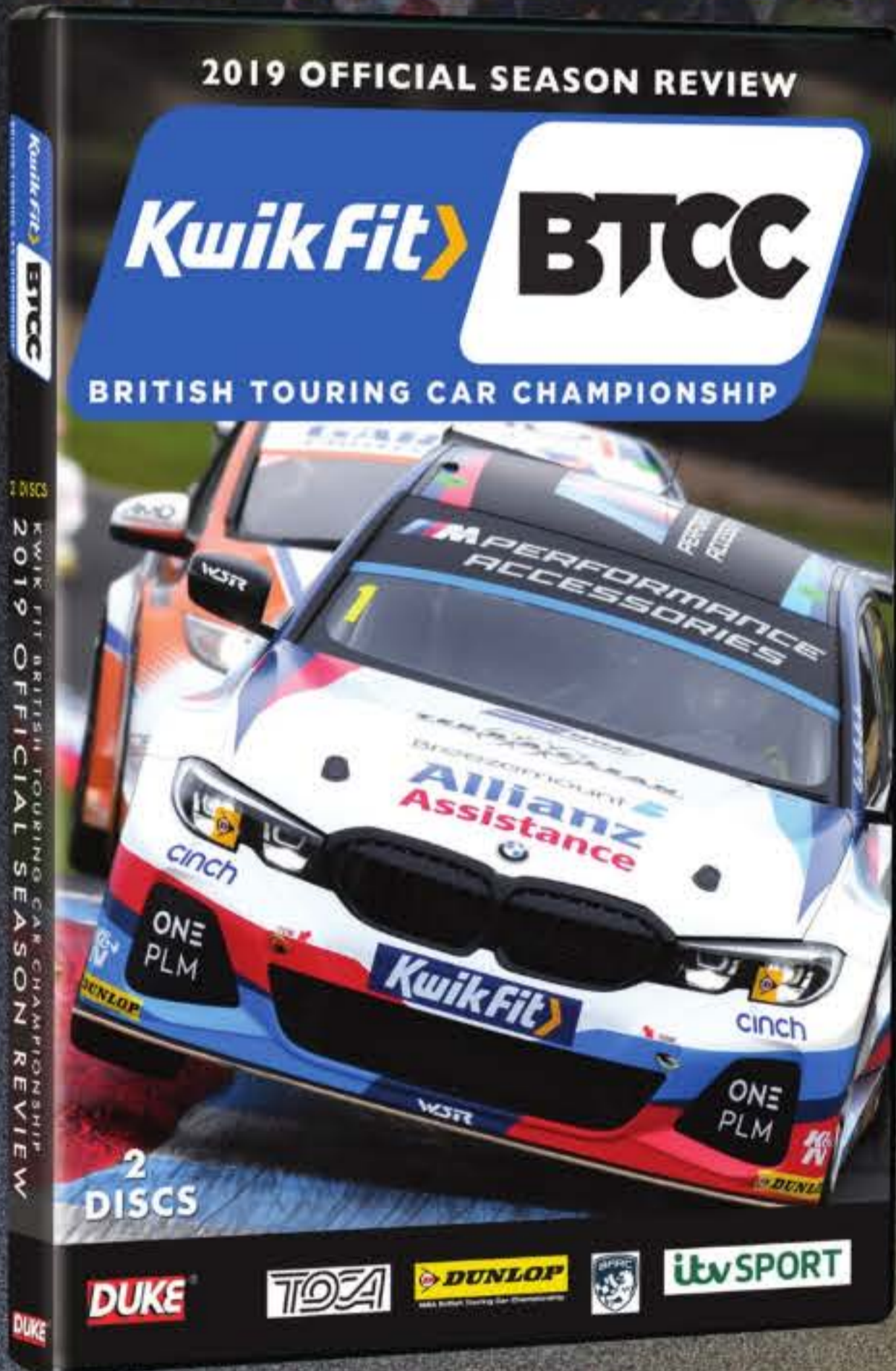


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