ISSUE 15, GP FRANCE, FRIDAY, JULY 1, 2005

THE RED BULLETIN

AN ALMOST INDEPENDENT F1 NEWSPAPER



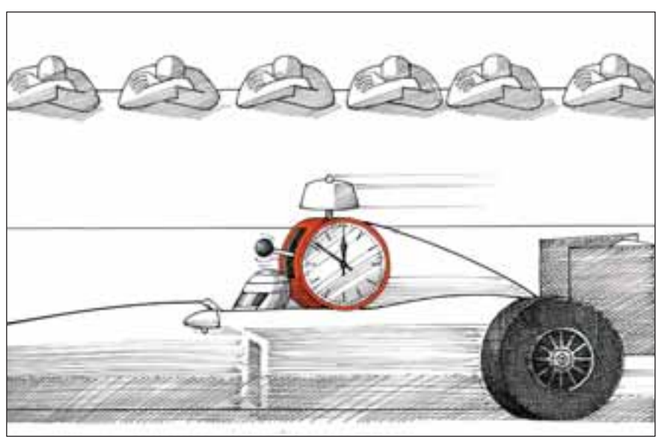
PACESETTER



WOULD YOU BELIEVE IT there they were, the world's media all assembled at the FIA headquarters in the Place de la Concorde awaiting the decision from the World Council and an even bigger story escapes their notice. When a fleet of cars pulled up next door at the Hotel de Crillon – the plushest hotel in Paris – and started ferrying suitcase after suitcase through the doors, all it needed was a simple question. Had they asked the doorman who the owner was, they'd have discovered that a certain Michael Jackson had just slipped in through the back door.

Weirdly, there was another F1 connection to Jacko's Parisian jaunt. The star was in the French capital talking to film-makers about proposals to relaunch his career with a new image-repairing documentary and while there he apparently met Mark Stewart, son of Sir Jackie, and, wait for it, a documentary maker. There's no paddock debut likely for Jackson, however, as he is said to simply have 'bumped into Stewart' while in Paris.

F1 KAINRATH



Not the most stimulating of circuits

RED BULL

SPARE A THOUGHT for David Coulthard. Having had one miraculous escape from death when his plane crashed in Lyon a few years ago, what must he have been thinking when his private jet started filling with smoke on a flight to London after testing in Jerez. Our DC, and his old mate Jenson Button, were on their way to a party but the pilot opted to make an emergency landing at Madrid Airport where they then caught a commercial flight. Relief all round then when the cause was discovered to have been faulty wiring on the coffee machine.





TOYOTA

WHATEVER HAPPENED to the gold watch or the bone china tea cup as an anniversary present? Formula One being what it is Toyota have presented their much-loved son Olivier Panis with one of the 2004 TF1104 chassis he raced last season, worth, on the open market at the moment, around 222,000 euros. After 158 Grands Prix, Ollie is apparently also held in high regard by the FIA because, Toyota say they have 'relaxed' their rules about using experienced drivers as test drivers to allow the Frenchman to make a 'one off' appearance in the third car at his home race today.

PHOTO: REX FEATURES, SUTTON IMAGES

Red Bulletin
The bulls in the china shop

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PACESETTER

THE ASSEMBLED MIGHT OF GRAND PRIX racing faces the biggest challenge in its history later today... No, we don't mean the continuing ripples from the United States Grand Prix debacle but something far more dangerous...10-year-old boy scouts. Organisers of the French Grand Prix, the FFFFFSA (sorry, too many Fs), have provided each team with a block of wood, four nails and four tyres (with working sidewalls) and they are to compete against the youngsters along a pre-determined section of track. I wonder how many teams used million euro lathes and wind tunnels? And how many others are running scared of the scouts?



JORDAN

YOU DON'T HAVE TO BE a star driver with a big team to experience a jet-set lifestyle. Jordan's third pilot Robert Doornbos had a fun time between the race in Montreal and Indianapolis, and he brought some great memories with him back to Europe. He spent a couple of days in the state of Minnesota visiting a friend who restores old airplanes and has a building full of hot rods and exotic cars as well.

"It was fun to chill out between the weekends and do some training and some running around with some hot rods," Doornbos recalls. "I went to a shooting range, so it was an all American experience." To top it all off, they flew to Indy in a restored twin-prop, 12-seater Howard 500, a luxury private aircraft used in the late 1950s.

PACESETTER



IF YOU THOUGHT this season's race schedule was bad enough, have you seen next year's draft calendar. Twenty races – and all back-to-back! Well, as good as. Might as well consult the divorce lawyers now, because the significant other is not going to be happy. As well as five back-to-back races, if it goes ahead the biggest calendar in the sport's history will include the first ever triple back-to-back. Three races in three weekends and all likely to be in North America or thereabouts. That's if Indianapolis welcomes us back and if Mexico goes ahead, which hasn't been ruled out despite rumours to the contrary.

FOUR COMMENTARIES

CROCKED, MONSIEUR?

BY CURT CAVIN

1 IT'S A JUNGLE OUT THERE

Pity the poor people of Magny-Cours. The circus is in town, F1-style, but by Sunday night all the lions, tigers and bears will be gone. Oh, sure, F1 is glamorous with its money, its Michael and its Monaco. But when it leaves town, the mess left behind includes hard feelings.

Take Indianapolis, for example. First Bernie took the local organisers to task for not knowing how to market the US GP. That's strange coming from a man whose company might be the only sports organisation in the world that does not have marketing staff. It's also fair to note that IMS CEO Tony George is (was?) supposed to be one of Bernie's best friends.

Bernie likes to blame America, particularly the journalists, for not promoting his series. But it's hard to make an impact in the oval-track world. In a sports market dominated by NASCAR and the NFL, F1 offers no media guide, no access to its drivers prior to an event and officials control virtually every video that's released from the paddock.

In Indy, Bernie also found himself entangled in a verbal mess involving IRL driver Danica Patrick. She's young and cute and Americans have taken to her. But Bernie told the media that women should be "dressed in white like all the other domestic appliances". What? He compounded the matter by saying much of the same to the racer during a cell phone call. Bernie left town, but America spent a week sorting out the mess. Danica was confused. Had he betrayed their confidence? Was he picking on her intentionally? What did he mean by it?

Bernie was 5,000 miles away when he got whiff of Patrick's concerns, so he called her back. Got her voice mail, in fact. This time, he explained his position a bit better, she said, and sort of apologized. Sort of, that is. "It's an odd statement by an odd man," her team's general manager said.

But I digress. What everyone in the States wants to know is, why should F1 be invited back? Yes, the circus hands pay an exorbitant wine bill at the local haunts, and their high-class guest list helps build bigger hotels. But after that, what is there?

Indy is still reeling from Schumi's decision to pull over on the final straight of the 2002 US GP. That was a slap in the face to the crowd that invested plenty financially, physically and emotionally to see a competition. This year's mess will take months to clean up even if US GP customers get their money back.

The people of central France need to ask themselves: Is it worth it? Here in the States, we're not sure.

Curt Cavin writes for the sports desk of the Indianapolis Star

F1 FUNNIES



BY JEAN MICHEL DESNOUES

2 OU EST SONT LES BLEUS?

Is France wallowing in nostalgia for past glories? Judging by the fuss the country has caused within the EU recently, then the answer is a resounding yes. And yes again if we are talking F1 as this is the first time in 40 years that there is no French driver on the grid. Whatever happened to the heady days of the '80s and '90s when "les Froggies" frolicked in F1. French was the language of the paddock and of the FIA. Of the 35 countries that have fielded F1 drivers, France has sent 66 drivers to the series. The likes of Depailler, Pironi, Arnoux, Lafitte, Tambay, Prost and Alesi are strong in the memory. How did we go from an abundance of riches to this famine?

Since 1999, when Stephane Sarrazin tried his luck, around 30 new drivers have come into F1, with not a single Frenchman among them. Lack of talent? Are you kidding? France has a strong karting infrastructure, but the tortuous tracks are not so much roads to success as boulevards of broken dreams. In the past, all the French young bloods could rely on backing from Elf, but not a single French firm has picked up the baton dropped by the oil company. The day when a French constructor takes the brave decision to take three or four hopefuls under its wing and bring them into F1, we will once again see the blue, white and red back on the grid. It's what Honda did with Takuma Sato.

I believe the national car companies have an obligation to take on this role. In France, thousands of youngsters dream of making it big, because there are so many promotional formulae, but none offers an infrastructure to go on to a higher level. It's not fair and amounts to nothing less than sporting prick-teasing.

In the past, French drivers were criticised for having too much support, being too insular, for not speaking English. That is no longer the case. I haven't noticed Sebastien Bourdais having to communicate by sign language in the US and Franck Montagny lives in Spain.

I haven't lived in the land of my birth for a while now, so I think I can say that France still means something in the rest of the world. That's why I can't understand the reticence of a firm like Renault, when it would be in its best interest to play the French card via a French driver. But that's probably because I don't understand F1 where, as we know, talent is far more important than politics and money... isn't it?

ILLUSTRATIONS: FARRIS, KAINRATH



3 IS MICHELIN'S GOOSE COOKED?

PIT BITCH BY HELEN PARADYCE

4 COURS CELEBRE?

Several of the Americans whom I met on Sunday night in Indianapolis felt that coming to France, although an insufficient punishment, was definitely a suitable initial penance for F1 to make for the US GP fiasco.

Most American tourists fall in love with Paris, but leave in a huff when they realise Parisians are far too snobbish to return their affection. Of course the picture was different around 60 years ago, when the French were only too happy to see the Yanks walk up the Champs Elysees. This is what really riled the Americans when the French recently refused to join in as various American Presidents decided to go in for a bit of Desert Dictator Bashing. "Cheese-eating surrender-monkeys" soon passed into common US usage as a description for the French. To this, we can now add, "cheese-eating, tyre-shredding surrender-monkeys."

I admit, I used to think American politicos and military leaders were a humourless bunch, but their row with France proved they were fitting descendents of Mark Twain. General 'Stormin' Norman Schwarzkopf, on hearing the French military would not back him up during Desert Storm, shrugged it off with: "Going to war without France is like going deer hunting without your accordion." When President Chirac excused his nation from action by saying, "as far as I am concerned, war always means failure," Rush Limbaugh responded: "and as far as France is concerned, you're right".

Going to war without France is like going deer hunting without your accordion

What the Americans failed to realise is that they could easily have persuaded the French to head for the Middle East by spreading rumours that truffles had been discovered in Iraq.

In France, culture, politics and sport are intertwined as can be seen in the case of marathon novelist Marcel Prost, whose grandson Alain Proust went on to win four world F1 championships.

Sadly, Magny-Cours seems to manage to miss out on all things that make France tolerable. One can get decent food and drink, but it takes some finding. As for the accommodation, if you see F1 folk frantically scratching themselves in the morning, it is because of all the bed bugs in the horse-hair mattresses – well, if you've eaten the meat, you might as well use its coat! And if you see engineers sporting Afro hairdos, it's probable they've simply failed to spot that the shaver socket was handily placed under a leaky water pipe.

A long time ago, I was even put up in a Wildlife Park. Checking in late at night I wondered why there were bars on my window. It was only in the morning that I realised the courtyard was home to a pack of lions and the roaring noise that kept me awake had not been an F1 PR man pleasuring a motorhome girl in the next room.

The following night, I was walking back up the gravel drive in the dark. It was raining but I could still hear the crunch of my feet and of someone else's. Suddenly, what I took to be a tall thin girl materialised at my side. She kept staring at me and I assumed she was one of those wretched, rude, skinny Parisiennes and she appeared to be wearing a feather boa. I am very shortsighted but vanity means I have never worn glasses and back then, contact lenses were horrible glass things. So I resorted to squinting to improve my vision. I did this as we emerged into the light from the door. It was only then I realised I had been making polite conversation with one of the park's emus.

It gave me a fright, as I prefer my animals on my shoulders (sable or mink) or on my heels (kitten or mule.) So I was in a bit of a state when I bumped into the lady of the house. As 'emu' sounds like the French for overwrought, she thought I was a frail English flower having a fit of the vapours and gave me a large Armagnac. Since then, I have added emus to my list of useful beasts.

LIFE IN THE FAST LANE

A ONCE AND FUTURE KING

Magny-Cours will struggle to be the headline sports event in France this weekend. The Tour begins tomorrow, and for the first time in ages it promises to be a close run thing. **Gunther Wiesinger** rates the chances of perennial challenger Jan Ullrich

You are frequently voted Germany's favourite sportsman, your team is built around you and your team-mates are required to put your success ahead of their own. Your face is on billboards and you're mobbed everywhere you go.

You are not Michael Schumacher.

Jan Ullrich starts the Tour de France tomorrow knowing this could be his year. The former Olympic and World Champion has one last chance to unseat Lance Armstrong, before the Texan hangs up his helmet for good. Ullrich acknowledges that winning in the post-Armstrong era would be hollow. It has to be now.

Jan Ullrich was Germany's biggest sporting hero after winning the Tour de France in 1997. Since then, a string of second places and a near career meltdown have held up what was supposed to be a graceful inheritance of the crown vacated by Miguel Indurain.

Ullrich's glory year came when he was just 23, the first German ever to take the yellow jersey to Paris and win the biggest bicycle race in the world. The year before he'd finished a dutiful second to his captain in the Telekom team, Bjarne Riis. Some team-mates still believe Jan was the stronger.

Since 1997, Ullrich has claimed a lot of big wins. He won the Olympic Gold in 2000 in Sydney, won the Spanish Vuelta in 1999, the Time Trials World titles in 1999 and 2001, the German Championship in 1997 and 2004, and the prestigious Tour de Suisse in 2004.

But Ullrich would give away a lot of those for a second Tour de France win. "In 2003, I found the weak points of Armstrong. I know I can beat him. I would not even get on my bike if I did not feel the chance of winning the Tour. I am not torturing myself for a second place," Ullrich says. "2005 will be the last time Lance is taking part. A win without him would not mean that much."

I know I can beat him. I am not torturing myself for second place

From his first wins, the Rostock-born supercyclist has been feted as the new Bernard Hinault or Eddy Mercx. The readers of Spiegel magazine voted Ullrich the greatest German sportsman of all time. Ahead of Beckenbauer, Schmeling and Becker. Ahead of Schumacher. He was expected to accumulate Tour victories for many years to come. Instead, he failed many times. Now 31, he has yet to repeat his success at the great race.

This list is disheartening. In 1998, Ullrich messed up while leading, losing seven minutes on a mountain stage – because of undereating. "I was wearing the yellow jersey, and close to dying of hunger," he wryly explains. Marco Pantani won.

In 1999, Ullrich missed the Tour with a serious knee injury. That was the Lance Armstrong's first win.

In 2000 and 2001, Ullrich finished second to Armstrong. Then came the disaster of 2002. Rather than cycling in triumph along the Champs Elysees, Ullrich spent July sequestered in a remote mountain hideaway rueing another missed opportunity. A string of problems and the attention of the German press had driven him into seclusion at the Snoqualmie Mountain Lodge, in the middle of a National Park some 50km north of Seattle-Tacoma International Airport.

What had happened? Ullrich, well known for pushing very hard gears, had complained all spring about a painful knee. The pain persisted after withdrawing from several events. A racer from the age of 10, Ullrich knew it was serious, and the knowledge triggered a growing depression. He took to drinking more red wine than he should have. One night in Freiburg he was caught driving his Porsche while drunk – after damaging a cycling stand.

By that time Ullrich had moved south to Merdingen in the Black Forest, for the weather, and for other reasons. It was home to his team-mate Dirk Baldinger, and through him Jan met girlfriend Gaby Weiss. The area is known for its fine red wine. And they already had a special vintage from the year of his Tour de France win, named "Jan Ullrich 1997".

Ullrich lost his driving licence, but still tried everything to get in shape for the Tour. Until June, when he had to accept that a knee operation was the only solution.

Growing up behind the Iron Curtain in East Germany, Ullrich was used to constant care and attention in his career. Now he found himself cast into a kind of solitude as the Tour got under way, with Alexandre Vinokourov of Kazakhstan taking his place and heading the Telekom team (he finished third). Ullrich was sent away to a rehabilitation clinic in a quiet part of Bavaria, for weeks of the most tedious kind of therapy, aqua-jogging.

Left alone, the depression grew worse. He felt useless. One night some young patients from the clinic took him to a disco in Munich. There, they decided to lift his mood by giving him a couple of party drugs.

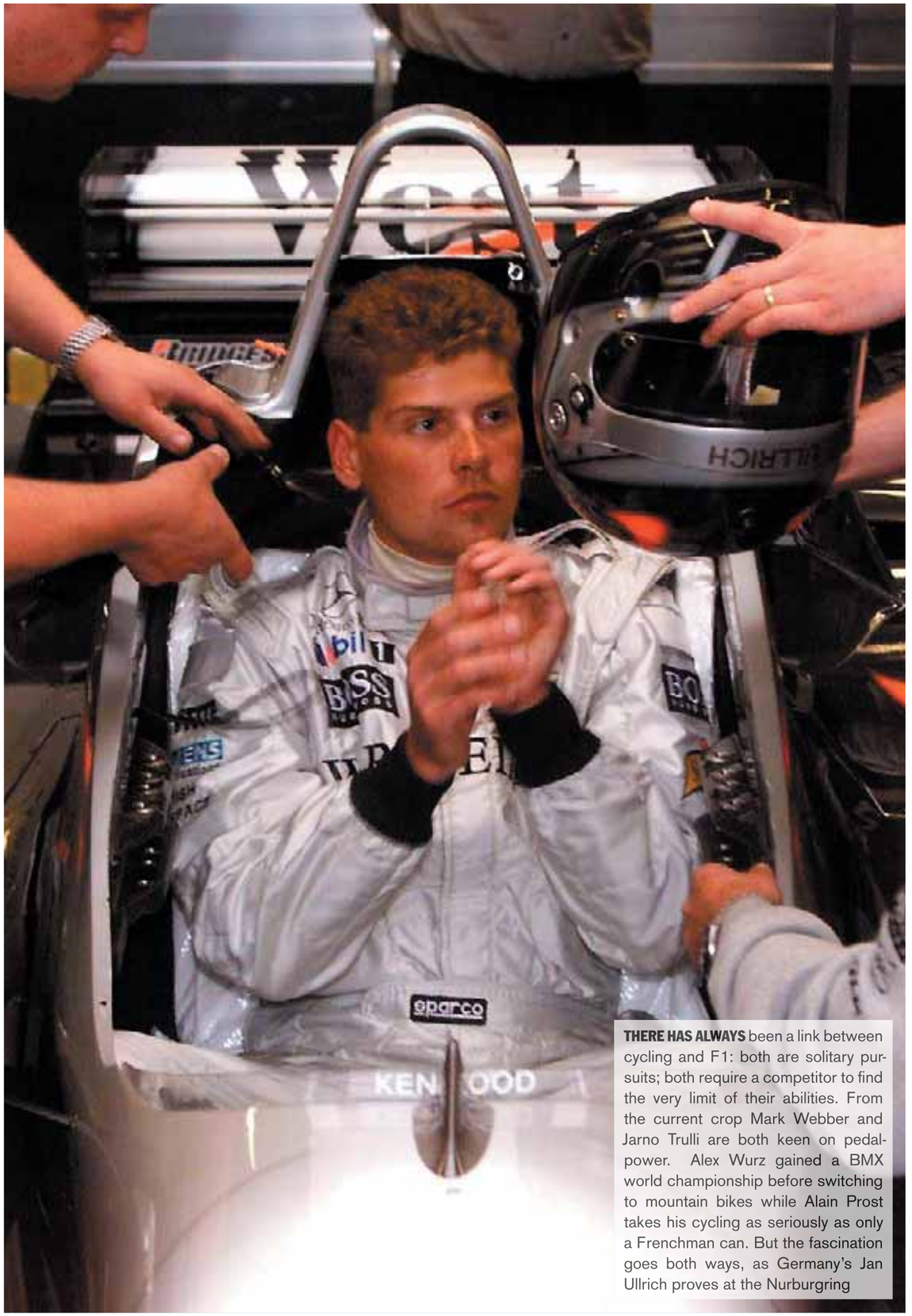


PHOTO: GETTY IMAGES

THERE HAS ALWAYS been a link between cycling and F1: both are solitary pursuits; both require a competitor to find the very limit of their abilities. From the current crop Mark Webber and Jarno Trulli are both keen on pedal-power. Alex Wurz gained a BMX world championship before switching to mountain bikes while Alain Prost takes his cycling as seriously as only a Frenchman can. But the fascination goes both ways, as Germany's Jan Ullrich proves at the Nurburgring

The pills would have dramatic consequences. Two days later the out-of-competition drugs testing squad came calling. Ullrich naturally tested positive and was banned for eight months. He lost all his private sponsorship, including Adidas, and was sacked from the Telekom team.

While the crime was of a social rather than a performance-enhancing nature, the mere mention of a positive drugs test has been known to kill cycling careers. Ullrich faced his first scandal bravely, giving a short press conference in Frankfurt, televised live nationwide. "If I had been given the choice of cycling 25,000km or attending this press conference, I would have happily done the former."

JAN ULLRICH: BACK IN THE SADDLE



But some quiet days in Canada convinced Ullrich that his devoted fans deserved a comeback from the most successful German cyclist in history. For his 2003 return, he signed with the little Bianchi squad, trained harder than ever… and destroyed the Telekom team at his first appearance in Germany, with a runaway victory in the 'around Cologne' race. Jan was back.

Like all top cyclists, Ullrich covers more than 40,000km per year, but his training regime is tailored around a desire not to have to count calories 365 days a year. With a well-documented enthusiasm for chocolate and biscuits, he has a reputation for gaining weight in winter, then fighting through the spring to get rid of it again.

He is never in good shape before June. Rival Armstrong looks fit all year, and usually starts to ride at full strength in April. Ullrich laughingly defends himself, claiming that Rostock's reputation of producing the podgiest Germans is "because they must eat a lot of eels to protect themselves from the strong wind off the eastern sea".

Jan's Tour return in 2003 saw a brilliant performance. With a few days to go he was only 15 seconds down on Armstrong before a crash in the rain-soaked final time trial confirmed his fifth second place. Even so, L'Equipe ran the headline: 'The Comeback of the Wunderkind.'

This was enough to persuade the CEO of the German Telekom group to get him back into the wealthy German pro team, now called T-Mobile. Ullrich signed a three-year deal worth around 3 million euro per season, but only finished only fourth at the Tour, even beaten by his young team-mate Andreas Kloeden. The cause was an infection picked up from his daughter which damaged his performance in the high mountains.

So can Ullrich, now 31, do it in 2005? The team commitment is in his favour – Telekom decided to drop sprint star Erik Zabel, to concentrate all their tactics, resources and assistance on Ullrich.

Even so, it is not necessarily looking too good. In May at the Ruta del Sol tour in Spain he lost three minutes to local hero Inigo Cuesta on a uphill time trial of 17 km. At the Tour de Suisse in June Ullrich was beaten by surprise overall winner Aitor Gonzalez and Michael Rogers. But Ullrich insists he is well prepared.

There are other strong candidates for this year's biggest cycling prize – like Iban Mayo, Roberto Heras, Aitor Gonzalez, Alexandre Vinokourov, Santiago Botero or Ivan Basso. As for Armstrong, he has lost two strong water-carriers from the renamed Discovery Channel (formerly US Postal) team: Russian veteran Viatcheslav Ekimov is injured and Floyd Landis has joined the Swiss Phonak team. Ullrich should be seeing a golden opportunity.

But the six-times Tour de France winner from Austin has replaced the pair with strong 2005 Giro d'Italia winner Paolo Savoldelli and Yaroslav Popovych from the Ukraine. "We have the strongest team ever," says a confident Armstrong.

A great champion, dominant since the beginning of the century, his crown suddenly threatened, pretenders gathering around the throne. It all sounds very familiar doesn't it? But in the battle of the signature sporting events the Tour de France outdoes F1 in a key aspect: however good his team, however complete his preparation, Jan Ullrich will rely on no-one but himself in the time trials and the long and lonely climbs of the Alps and the Pyrenees.

He remains undaunted: "I'm going to fight like a lion. I want to beat the best of the best."

Gunther Wiesinger is chief editor of Motorsport Aktuell and can usually be found on a bicycle

PHOTO: GETTY IMAGES

ILLUSTRATION: ISABEL KLETT, PHOTO: PAOLO FOSCHINI, SUTTON IMAGES

BET AND WIN WITH BENOIT

How many laps will Schumi finish on Sunday? It's not Roger Benoit's concern as he's off on his annual 'boycott Magny Cours' leave. So we'll have to entertain you with a choice of other sporting chances currently on offer



OUTTA HERE?

GIVE ME A BREAK! Seven-times world champion Michael Schumacher might be back in the hunt for the 2005 title with the 18 points won at Montreal and Indianapolis but as far as Benoit is concerned he might as well be hunting for quail for this is the race that the betmeister has decided to ditch in favour of a hard-won holiday. In fact, Roger has boycotted the race since the French GP made the the move from Paul Ricard and shows no sign of stopping his protest. Good choice given the edgy politics and pouring rain. So what happens with the bet this weekend? There is none but it will be up and running again in Silverstone with the Bet and Win bonus being topped up to 600 euros here and climbing right up to 900 for the British GP weekend. How's that for an incentive to get the cash lined up in the UK.

YOU BET!

WHAT ARE THE ODDS?

So, Mr Benoit is taking a break but you've still got wads of cash burning a big hole in your pocket. You need a fix of gambling. Let the Bulletin and Bet and Win be your guides...

FASTEST LAP:
The short odds are with the obvious choices – Raikkonen and Schumacher. But better can be found on a couple of likely lads who might just bang one in during the closing laps in chasing down a good finish. Try Juan Pablo at 4.5, Fernando at 5.5 or even better, Rubens at a whopping 16.

DRIVERS FROM SAME TEAM ON PODIUM:
This is a tough one with Ferrari at 4.3 and McLaren at 3.8. We'd plump for Renault though at an attractive 5.5. Fisi's luck has got to change sometime, though Magny-Cours has never been that kind to him. About time it was then.

HEAD TO HEADS:
Now here's an interesting one. Take two drivers, slap odds on them to see which comes out on top in a private duel and see how much cash you can earn. For this race we'll take the match-up of Massa (1.65) v Coulthard (1.95) we'll go for Uncle Dave.

MICHAEL'S MAGNY MOMENTS

- Strangely, Schumi's always won this race in double doses – '94 and'95, '97/'98 and '01/'02. Ominously he won last year.
- If Michael has won pole position but not won the race it has always been a British driver who has profited. It was Damon Hill in 1996 and David Coulthard in 2000.
- Over the past decade Schumacher is the only driver to score multiple wins at Magny-Cours. The other single winners were Damon Hill, Heinz-Harald Frentzen, David Coulthard and Ralf Schumacher.
- The only drivers to beat Michael here were either driving for Williams at the time of their win or drove for Williams in the past: Nigel Mansell (twice), Alain Prost, Hill, Frentzen, Coulthard and Ralf Schumacher

betandwin.com

K RAIKKONEN 2.60	M SCHUMACHER 4.50	R BARRICHELLO 15.00
F ALONSO 4.50	J P MONTOYA 10.00	N HEIDFELD 25.00





1999



1967

CONSOLATION PRIZES The Le Mans Bugatti circuit on which the 1967 French GP ran was unpopular with the drivers. Bruce McLaren failed to finish but was consoled by the Goodyear girls. At the Hungaroring, a track just as disliked by drivers, Eddie Irvine, lends his support to something fizzier and full-bodied in 1999



1969

THE WHEEL DEAL It was all pretty rough and ready at a Monza sports car race in 1969. If you wanted new wheels on your wagon then you had to find a handy length of steel pipe and slot the tyres on kebab-style. By 2004 things had got a little more hi-tech with Ferrari mechanics able to chauffeur new boots out to their race cars, the tyres wrapped in protective blankets to keep them at optimum temperature levels



2004

PHOTO: RAINER SCHLEGELMILCH



PHOTO: STEPHEN HARVEY

FORMULA UNA

MAGNY-COURS

Ten ladies, one honour: Formula Una. A top secret paddock jury will decide which of these French fillies will fly to Shanghai for the Una World Cup

WHO'S THAT GIRL?

Let's take a sneaky peaky at les Unas Francaise, chic to the hilt, sophisticated to the full, and hungry for Magny-Cours madness



NAME: **BIANCA GIRARD** AGE: **27** STAR SIGN: **PISCES** OCCUPATION: **MODEL**
Where were you born? Nice
What sports are you into? Motor racing, snowboarding, swimming and wakeboarding
Who is your favourite F1 driver? Rubens Barrichello, because he's Brazilian



NAME: **MARIE LAURE DAILLUT** AGE: **25** STAR SIGN: **LEO** OCCUPATION: **MODEL**
What music are you into? Metal and punk. I'm quite into punk fashion too but sometimes I prefer to dress with sophistication.
Favourite meal? Chocolate mousse
If you were an aminal what would you be? A tiger
Have you been to an F1 race before? Yes, Monaco last year. Loved it



NAME: **ALEXANDRA LESNOFF** AGE: **24** STAR SIGN: **SCORPIO** OCCUPATION: **DRUMMER AND MODEL**
What country would you most like to visit? Bolivia.
Favourite meal? Warm goat's cheese salad. **Do you prefer to be beautiful or intelligent?** Intelligent but maybe you prefer me to be beautiful.
If you could date any driver, who? Actually I'm a lesbian... only joking!



NAME: **MELANIE GRAVAGNA** AGE: **20** STAR SIGN**: AQUARIUS** OCCUPATION: **STUDENT**
What do you always take with you when leaving home? My keys
What are your hobbies? Dancing and painting
Dream car? Convertible Mini
Have you got a boyfriend? I'm engaged



NAME: **LYDIE OCCHIOLINI** AGE: **23** STAR SIGN: **GEMINI** OCCUPATION: **MODEL / EVENTS ORGANISER**
Favourite Group? Massive Attack
If you were an animal what would you be? A guide dog for the blind
First F1 experience? I've been a grid girl at the Monaco GP and worked on the Monte Carlo Rally and at the FIA Gala



NAME: **JULIE CARCIANI** AGE: **22** STAR SIGN: **SCORPIO** OCCUPATION: **INTERNATIONAL TRADE**
Have you ever lived abroad? Yes, I spent two years in Miami
If you had to date an F1 driver, who? Fernando Alonso, I admire his fighting spirit



NAME: **NATHALIE PAYOT** AGE: **26** STAR SIGN: **TAURUS** OCCUPATION: **HAIRDRESSER AND SECRETARY. WAS IN THE ARMY FOR FOUR YEARS**
Favourite Song? 'Wicked Game' by Chris Isaak
Biggest Vice? Pastries
Dream Car? Aston Martin DB9
If you were an animal what would you be? Hedgehog
What country would you most like to visit? Egypt



NAME: **CAROLE MILLAS** AGE: **26** STAR SIGN: **PISCES** OCCUPATION: **HOSTESS**
Do you have any pets? My cat, Chipie
If you were an animal what would you be? Cat
What's your dream car? Mercedes SL
Why aren't there women driving in F1? Men don't trust us



NAME: **TIPHAINE SKENDER** AGE: **23** STAR SIGN: **CAPRICORN** OCCUPATION: **MODEL**
What's your most embarrassing moment? I was doing a catwalk show when the seam of my dress ripped and I was suddenly half naked.
If you could date any driver, which one would it be? None, but if I had to choose, it would be Mark Webber, he's the cutest



NAME**: SABRINA WHEST** AGE: **23** STAR SIGN: **CAPRICORN** OCCUPATION: **HOSTESS / MODEL**
Where are you from? Raised in LA, moved to Senegal and now live in Cannes. **Know any celebrities?** I was at school with Paris Hilton. She's not that exciting. **Favourite Movie?** The Fifth Element

PHOTO: STEPHEN HARVEY

IT'S WRITTEN IN THE STARS

On Earth as it is in Heaven. On the race track as it is in the Milky Way. Ancient wisdom. Star astrologer Boro Petricelli interprets Heaven's tyre marks for us and he already knows one thing at least: the Moon in Gemini over Magny-Cours will ensure speed and motion. In the land of Michelin, the tyres shall screech and roll again. Even the French ones.

CAPRICORN (22 Dec-20 Jan)

ANALYSIS: Fisi's run of bad luck seems to be over. Venus, the goddess of love, is smiling at him once again. And the god of motors, Mars, is once again really stepping on the gas for Giancarlo.



CONCLUSION: The only danger: Mars, being excessive, might act out angrily. That could cost Giancarlo a few points and a spot on the podium.

GIANCARLO FISICHELLA | 14.1.1973 | RENAULT

PROGNOSIS: Wants too much, gets too little. A good race with bad results. The spectators will be satisfied. But he won't. Maybe fourth place.

VIRGO (24 Aug-23 Sep)

ANALYSIS: What's in Juan Pablo comes out today: his will. And his weaknesses. And what Juan Pablo's in comes out today: his car. And its strengths. Looks like ideal conditions. And like Juan-Pablo can't make the most of them.



CONCLUSION: The tail wags its dog. And the car drives its driver. Montoya doesn't seem to be able to tame his McLaren-Mercedes this weekend.

J.P. MONTOYA | 20.9.1975 | MCLAREN-MERCEDES

PROGNOSIS: The co-ordination between driver and vehicle is off. It will become critical shortly after 1500h. There's danger of a braking mistake and a standstill.

AQUARIUS (21 Jan–19 Feb)

ANALYSIS: Takuma's horoscope could be mistaken for Barrichello's. It's the same cosmic declaration of war: Mars attacks! The only question is: who will knock whom off. Taku, Rubens or the other way around.



CONCLUSION: Takuma and Rubens should steer clear of each other, at least early on. But perhaps not even all the distance in the world will be of any use.

TAKUMA SATO | 28.1.1977 | BAR-HONDA

PROGNOSIS: The way things look, Takuma's in for it first. Early failure. Probably an accident. Some time around lap 13. Unlucky.

CANCER (Jun 22–Jul 22)

ANALYSIS: Trulli's in trouble! The only constant is the difficulties that await Jarno. And they keep going on and on. As well as the season started, it's hitting a tricky patch. Frustrating!



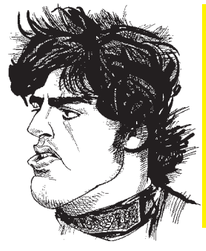
CONCLUSION: In France, Jarno should treat himself to a glass of Champagne, so he realises you don't always have to win to enjoy something.

JARNO TRULLI | 13.7.1974 | TOYOTA

PROGNOSIS: Jarno is trying too hard. But the great gods are defiant like little children. They simply don't react to force. In neutral!

LEO (Jul 23–Aug 23)

ANALYSIS: Joyous day! Even if Alonso doesn't completely comprehend his luck yet. He's like a newly-wed who asks his wife: "Will you marry me?" In response, she rubs his nose in her wedding ring: "Again?"



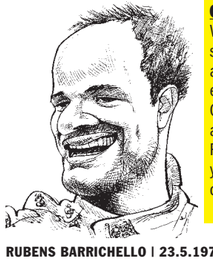
CONCLUSION: The stars and all are gathering together for a victory celebration, as if the championship's outcome had already been decided.

FERNANDO ALONSO | 29.7.1981 | RENAULT

PROGNOSIS: On the podium for sure. Probably at the top. In any case, far ahead of Kimi and Schumi.

GEMINI (22 May–21 Jun)

ANALYSIS: Mars is provoking Uranus: the planet of war is opposing the planet of sudden events. The French Revolution broke out under this constellation. That brought about a lot of rolling heads.



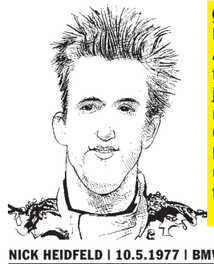
CONCLUSION: We could speculate about a possible failure: engine; accident? Or the time: around 2:22pm. Rubens, be sure your helmet's on tight!

RUBENS BARRICHELLO | 23.5.1972 | FERRARI

PROGNOSIS: Even if it doesn't change the world like the French Revolution: out with a bang!

TAURUS (21 Apr–21 May)

ANALYSIS: Nick and Magny-Cours, it's like the perfect dialogue: for every curve Nick has the right answer. His words are like arrows. Today they'll hit the target, till someone takes his bow away.



CONCLUSION: Perfect driving. A sure way to the podium. It's just that Nick will never get there. Completely illogical, completely undeserved: trouble ahead!

NICK HEIDFELD | 10.5.1977 | BMW-WILLIAMS

PROGNOSIS: The dialogue after the race will go like this: "Who told you life would be fair?" Nick won't get a word in.

ILLUSTRATIONS: OLIVER SCHOPF

PHOTOS: THOMAS BUTLER

WHO IS WHO?

Our guide to the circus characters who work their fingers to the bone and their brains to the point of meltdown, all just to keep the show on the road and the trophies stacked up and shiny. But who is the mysterious F1 player?



CLAIRE ROWNTREE
A chemist by trade and lubricants expert, Rowntree is the Castrol fuels technologist for Red Bull. Away from F1 races, she develops BP's cleaner diesel fuels for trucks



???
This mystery powerbroker began his career in the unlikely surroundings of a dental surgery, just like his father who used to fix the teeth of Romanian president Nicolae Ceausescu



VINCENT CROVISIER
Formerly of Prost and Ligier, Crovisier manages Michelin's hospitality. Their tyres may not like banking, but you can always bank on their first-class service and gastronomy.



PAT SYMONDS
Symonds career with Renault F1 goes all the way back to the beginning, having joined the forerunning Toleman team in 1981. He's now Executive Director of Engineering



MATT GOODWIN
The tyre man for Albers, Goodwin spends much of his time down at Minardi's Faenza HQ. It's a long way from his Grimsby home, which he proudly refers to as 'the Monaco of the north'



ANNOUCK HEINRICHS
Heinrichs, from Geneva, was appointed press officer for Jordan earlier this year, having worked as a press delegate for the FIA during the second half of last year.



DAVE STUBBS
Red Bull's highly respected team manager, Stubbs assisted Sir Frank in setting up Williams in 1979. He was also key in starting Paul Stewart Racing and Stewart GP in the '90s



GILL HALL
Electronics system engineer for BAR, Hall oversees Sato's car. A Newcastle-native, she was with Toyota and Jaguar Racing previously



SAM DOWNE
Hailing from the little Suffolk village of Hoxne, and originally qualifying in electronics engineering, Downe now engineers hospitality. A Jaguar turned Red Bull man, this is his fifth year of F1



MARC 'ELVIS' PRIESTLEY
Raikkonen's front-end mechanic is known as Elvis, because his surname sounds a little bit like the King's. Before McLaren called five years ago, he did F3



STEFANO SORDO
Sordo started out as an Italian F3 engineer, before moving over to the British series and rising through the ranks. The F1 big-time came in 2000 with Arrows, before Jaguar



WILLY RAMPF
Technical director for Sauber Petronas, Rampf has had a career-long relationship with BMW, dating back to 1979. This will do him no harm when the manufacturer takes over next season

Answer: Colin Kolles

MOTORMOUTH

"Stoddart is a sad case. I helped him tremendously when other teams were trying to steal his money"

MAX MOSLEY

"I don't think it makes any difference. We would be testing anyhow between races if we don't have back-to-backs"

KIMI RAIKKONEN ON THE 20-RACE DRAFT CALENDAR WHICH WILL INFLICT 13 BACK-TO-BACK WEEKENDS

"When you are on the edge of research, as we are, you will always try something that doesn't work"

PIERRE DUPASQUIER



RIO, 1985

THE BRAZILIAN GP invariably spells a night out with the girls and Jacarepagua in 1985 was no different, though the outfitting might be less than regular. Bernie Ecclestone didn't seem to object to the attention, so much so that he didn't notice Niki Lauda's gesture behind him, while Keke Rosberg gets the same treatment from Nelson Piquet. But what's Leo Sayer doing on the right?

PHOTO: CRISPIN THRUSTON

PHOTO: REX FEATURES

NEVERSLAND

After the hedonism of Monaco, we had the Nurburgring to bring us back down to Earth with a bump, and the same is true of Magny Cours. We got blotto in Canada and bladdered in Indiana, but around these parts the best time to be had is grape mushing and bull milking. Hungry for a challenge, we've scoured literally several websites to see what fun there is to be hand. Our advice is to head 250km north and check out Paris

FRIDAY

8.30PM LE CIRQUE DE BAT-TAMBANG, PLACE DES REINES DE POLOGNE

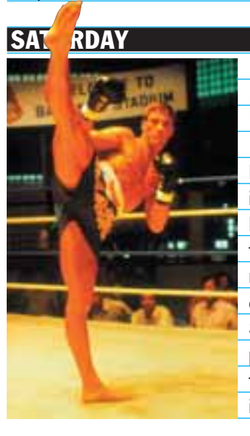
Nevers gets exotic tonight, as a Cambodian circus comes to town to kick off Nevers' 6th Festival des Arts de la Rue. Head for the Place des Reines de Pologne to hear traditional Khmer music and watch jugglers, contortionists, fire eaters and assorted oriental high-jinks.

FRIDAY

10.30PM GP2 PARTY, CLUB LE ZAPPING, 16, RUE CHARLE-VILLEPOLOGNE

Trust those fun-lovin' GP2 racers to conjure up just about the only high octane hedonism at Magny Cours. Piquet jr, Lauda jr, Rosberg jr; all the juniors will be getting down with their bad selves. And the Formula Unas are expected too. Party till you drop. Formule One who?

SATURDAY

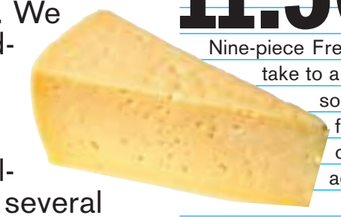


6PM GRAND TOURNOI DE KICK BOXING, BERCY, PARIS

Motorsport can get bloody frustrating at times, so if you're staying in Paris on Saturday night you may find watching a bunch of heavy-set men kick the daylights out of each other strangely comforting. The Stade de Bercy plays host to eye poking and testicle whacking courtesy of some of the biggest names in street mugging and ritual killing

SATURDAY

11.30PM BRASS FANFARE / CHEESE, PLACE CARNOT



Nine-piece French electro-disco-funk group, Cheese, will take to a fire-engulfed stage at Place Carnot, just as soon as they've kicked a brass band off it. Le fanfare des Beaux Arts de Clermont-Ferrand open the proceedings for those crazy from-age kids.

SATURDAY



12AM PIGALLE ROCK PARTY, LE DIVAN DU MONDE, PARIS

Nevers a bit on the quiet side for you? Paris' nightlife is legendary at the worst of times, and perfect antidote to Nievre ennui. The Parisians enjoy their 'fetes de la musique', and on Saturday night Montmartre will have its amps turned up to 11 for the Pigalle Rock Party. Le Divan du Monde club is celebrating its anniversary of holding this regular headbanging-fest, which mixes punk and metal with electronica and new wave. Expect a feisty pierced crowd. Entry is 10 euros on the door, 75 Rue des Martyrs.

WHENEVER

Throwing a booze-fuelled party in you dingy hotel room this weekend? Email secret.service@theredbulletin.com, as we'd love to come along. There's not a lot else to do around here, you see. We'll even bring TVs from our hotel rooms to chuck out of yours...



WIN A REALLY BIG CAR

TOUAREG TEASER

Join the season's trickiest F1 challenge. Over the weekend we'll be setting you six questions. Collect your overall score, pick up the pieces of the puzzle, and in China you'll be in with a chance of winning a VW Touareg SUV

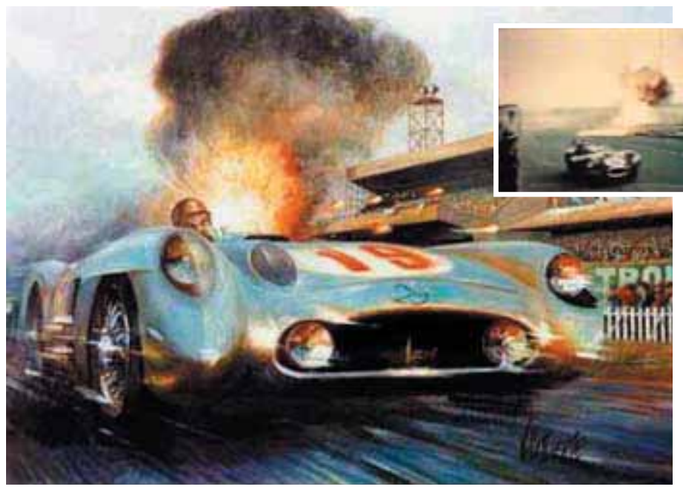
QUESTION 1

In these streets a famous race comes to an end – which race?

- ☐ **1)** Rallye Monte Carlo
- ☐ **2)** Iron Man Hawaii
- ☐ **3)** Midnight Run
- ☐ **4)** Tour de France



QUESTION 2



Since this tragic day at Le Mans, auto racing is forbidden in Switzerland. When did the last F1 Grand Prix of Switzerland take place?

- ☐ **1)** 1982
- ☐ **2)** 1969
- ☐ **3)** 1955
- ☐ **4)** 1954

RULES OF PLAY

There are 19 rounds of the 2005 F1 championship. Identify the missing 20th racetrack and you'll have a crack at the grand prize.

HERE'S HOW IT WORKS:
Correctly answer our six questions over the weekend, and make a note of the number associated with each. Sunday's edition will feature pieces of our mystery track jigsaw puzzle. Match your total score with the corresponding piece of circuit, to be featured in our Sunday edition. Cut it out, tape it to your paddock pass, and by Shanghai you should have a complete track.
If it's the map of a real track, then the Touareg could be yours!
If somebody steals your copy of Red Bulletin, back issues with previous questions will be available from our office, near the GP2 compound.

YOUR MAGNY-COURS NUMBERS

sum Friday	points
sum Saturday	points
sum Sunday	points

FRENCH (NOT SO) FANCY

Lynden Swainston searches for the magnificent in Magny-Cours and ends up opting for a nice Sancerre and spot of lunch

Ah, Magny-Cours. The bane of so many F1 lives. When the French race was shifted from the Cote D'Azur to the vast, open and pretty empty spaces of central France you could hear the wailing and gnashing of teeth from Ricard to Reims.

Nevers might be a lovely town, this might be the home of Sancerre but apart from that France is the race everyone seems to love to hate. Everyone moans about the poor standard of accommodation and the paddock is dominated not by talk of engine deals and driver contracts but of haunted chateaux, dirty hotels, greedy hoteliers and rip off prices.

Indeed, I remember meeting Jim Rosenthal at his first French GP on Friday morning after a night at a dank motel in Moulins, reeling with shock, having recently returned from Caesars Palace in Las Vegas on ITV business. The magic of Magny Cours had struck. It hit others too.

In 1991 a few of the British journalists clubbed together and bought a hotel for £20,000 near the track thinking they were set to make their fortune. Fawlty Towers, as it became known, was the talk of the Paddock. Rip off prices for wine and dinner, overbooking on their very nasty rooms and worst of all the hacks found they had no time to write as they were inundated with work and complaints. The hotel is still there, in the village, in a dilapidated state, much as it was then. They also lost all their money.

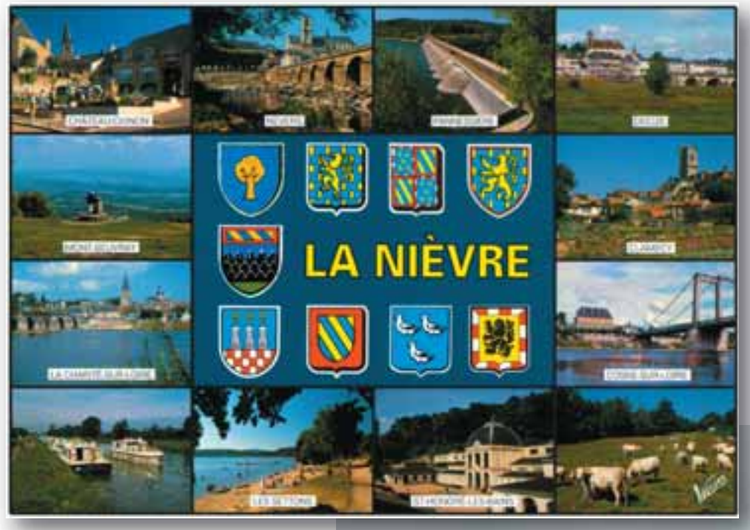
This is not exactly a party race and any team that hosts a dinner and drinks in the Paddock is inundated, Hotels are spread over a vast distance and people tend to eat near their own hovel-of-choice However, the town of Nevers becomes very lively over the weekend and is dinner reservations should be made. Try going up to the main square on Saturday night as they usually have a stage and live music. Plenty of little bars around and good value restaurants and bars.

Beware of mosquitoes! When the weather is warm they come off the river and bite anyone in sight. Worth getting some repellent as most hotels seem to have a problem.

So we hate Magny Cours, right? Well yes and no. Everyone howls about having to go there – and yes, it's a pain to get to – but once installed in a grubby motel or tumbledown chateau, there's something rather relaxing about the long weekend dozing in French countryside.

Excellent rustic food, some fabulous wine, a chilled out paddock that almost dozes through the weekend – Magny Cours is almost like a mid-season break with a race thrown in for good measure. Find yourself a half decent restaurant, order a few bottle of excellent Sancerre and make like a tourist. Look out for the famous Nevers Blue pottery in many of the shops, try Nougat and chocolate – specialities of the region – buy the famous local dry white wine, Sancerre or Pouilly and try the amazing eggs poached in red wine 'Oeufs en Meurette' and The Charolais steaks.

If you feel adventurous its worth driving 20 minutes or so to the beautiful village of Apremont and dine near the Chateau and its wonderful park. Try Le Restaurant du Parc +33 (0)2 48 80 41 52.

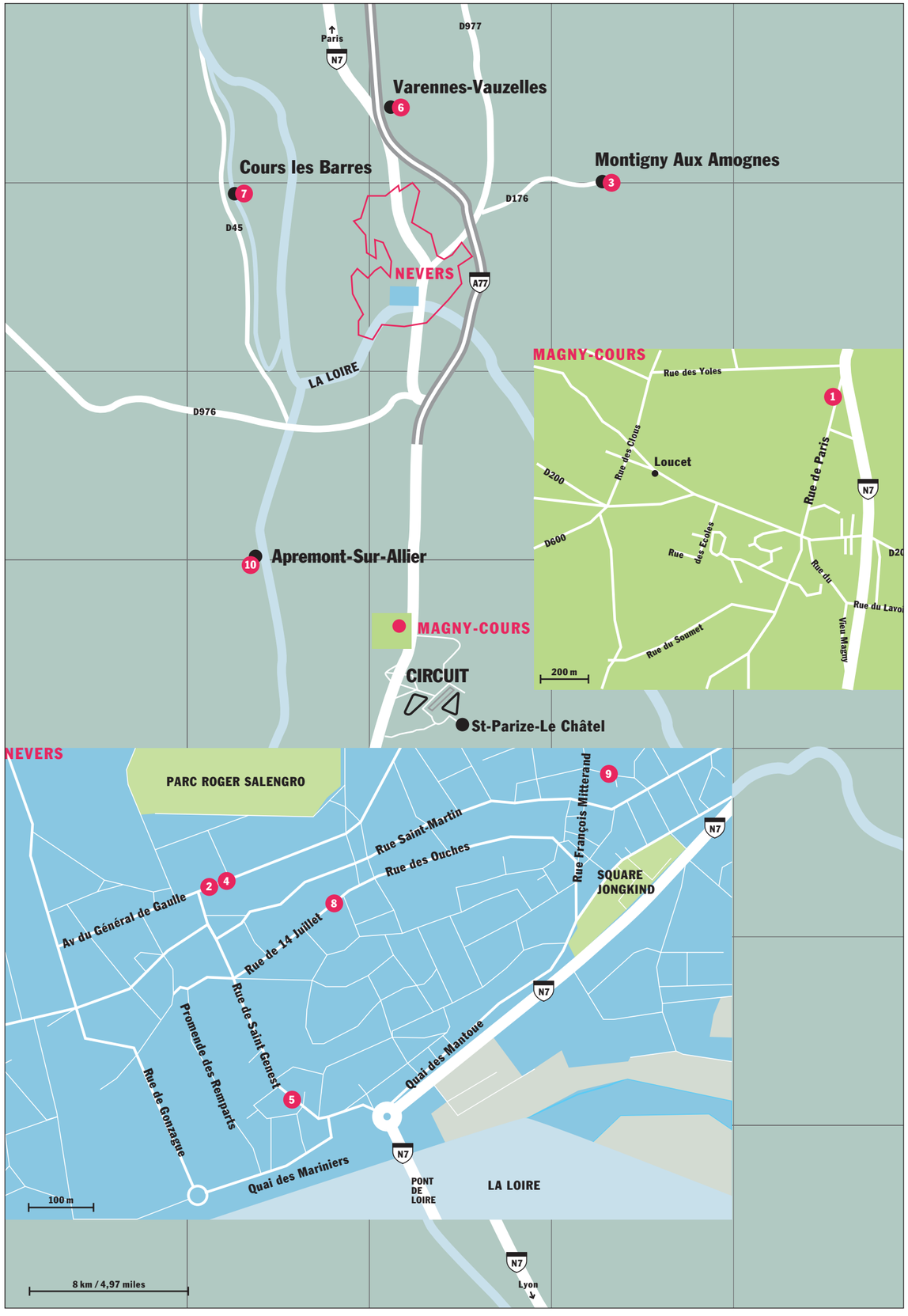


THE SIGHTS, SOUNDS AND SMELLS at Magny-Cours are a far cry from the bright lights of Paris. Enjoy!

The paddock is dominated not by talk of engine deals and driver contracts but of haunted chateaux, dirty hotels, greedy hoteliers and rip off prices



PHOTOS: THOMAS BUTLER



MAP: VON-ROTWEIN FOR WWW.ESJOTTES.COM

PHOTOS: THOMAS BUTLER, REX FEATURES

USEFUL INFORMATION

WHERE TO GO

Wanna get out there and party? Go wild in the country? Well, head elsewhere then. Magny Cours and its surroundings are not designed for hardcore clubbing, barhopping or much else in the way of nightlife.
This is a place to sit back, relax over a long dinner and get over the frenzy that was the North American jaunt. Consider it a rest stop before the inevitable dullness of next week's 'Silverstone must die' stories and Hockenheim's Schumacher-inspired mayhem. Garcon, un autre Pouilly s'il vous plait!

Chocolate's a local speciality, race cars a sideline





And if you fancy pigging out, they're from Alice, Au Pays du Chocolat at Place Carnot, Nevers

RECOMMENDED FOR EATS

Hotel La Renaissance 1
2, Rue Paris,
58470 Magny Cours
Tel: 03 86 58 10 40
Fax: 03 86 21 22 60
Email: hotel.la renaissance@wanadoo.fr
Website: http://www.hotel-la-renaissance.fr/
Best local restaurant with 1 Michelin star

La Mange'oir 2
24, avenue du General de Gaulle, 58000 Nevers
Tel: 33 3 86 57 28 61
www.lamangeoir.fr.st
Best restaurant in Nevers serving fondues, raclette, local specialties and wonderful creperie, 90 tables

Auberge des Amognes 3
Montigny aux Amognes
Tel: 86 58 61 97, Great restaurant, 15 mins from track

Aux Choeurs de Bacchus 4
25, avenue du General de Gaulle, 58000 Nevers
Tel/Fax: 33 3 86 36 72 70
Traditional Food / 45 tables

Le Bec Fin 5
7, rue Saint Genest,
58000 Nevers
Tel: 33 3 86 570794
Traditional Food / 50 tables

Le Relais du Bengy 6
RN7, 58640 Varennes-Vauzelles
Tel: 33 3 86 38 02 84
Fax: 33 3 86 38 29 00
Traditional Food / 80 tables

Auberge a La Bonne Franquette 7
33 route du Val de Loire, 18320 Cours Les Barres
Tel: 33 3 86 58 80 13
Fax: 33 3 86 38 82 97.
Traditional Food / 100 tables

Le Goemon 8
9, rue du 14 juillet, 58000 Nevers
Tel: 33 3 86 59 54 99
E-mail: le.goemon@wanadoo.fr
Creperie / 30 tables

Creperies Nivernaise 9
7, rue des boucheries
58000 NEVERS
Tel: 33 3 86 57 35 60
Creperie / 22 tables + terrace

OTHER PLACES TO EAT

Autour du Monde
11, place Carnot
58000 Nevers
Tel: 33 3 86 57 68 72
Fax: 33 3 86 21 58 93
Turkish/Greek / 48 tables

Le Pekin
39, avenue de Paris
58320 Pouges-Les-Eaux
Tel: 33 3 86 68 50 21
Ethnic food (Asian) / 60 tables



Le San Remo
12, rue du 14 juillet
58000 Nevers
Tel/Fax: 33 3 86 36 74 55
Pizzeria / 100 tables plus 150 on the terrace

Pizzeria Italia
19 rue de Vert-Pré
58000 Nevers
Tel: 33 3 86 59 23 03
Pizzeria / 100 tables

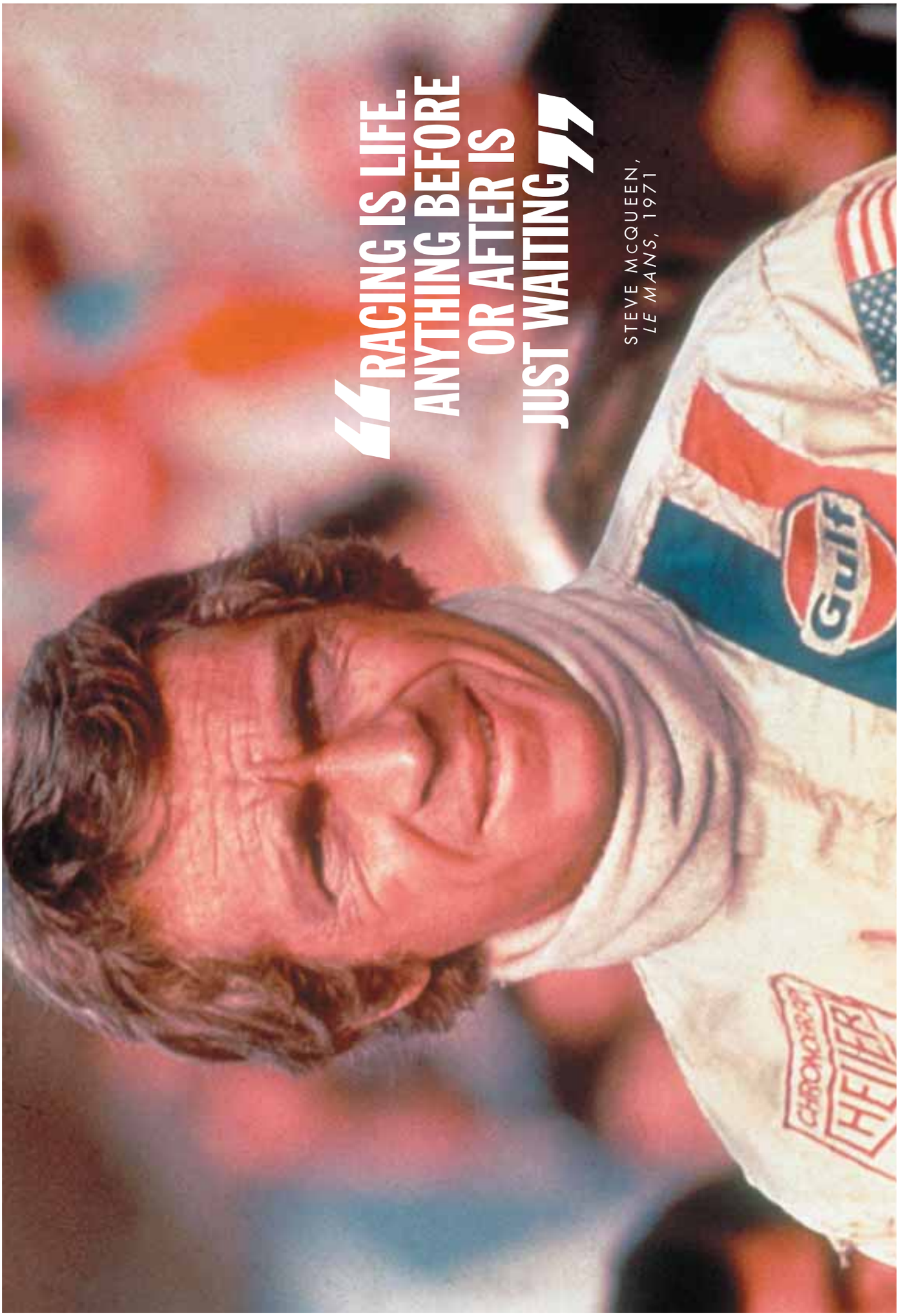
Le Relais Fleuri
42, avenue de la Tuilerie
58150 Pouilly-Sur-Loire
Tel:33 3 86 39 12 99
fax:33 3 86 39 14 15
Email: le-relais-fleuri-sarl@wanadoo.fr
Website: www.lerelaisf-leuri.fr
40-minute drive but worth it for the wine!

Le Relais Bourgogne
Le Bourg,
58270 Saint-Jean-Aux-Amognes
Tel/fax:33 3 86 58 61 44
Traditional French restaurant in pretty village about 15km from the track

SOMETHING WORTH WHINING ABOUT...

Wise old Henry IV of France once remarked that if everyone in the world drank Sancerre there'd be no more religious wars and a drop of the region's finest product can often be a heavenly experience.
Drink it young, about two years is right, though the best can hang on for up to five years and try and find a non-vintage year if you want to keep your credit card intact. Bottles to watch out for on a restaurant's wine list? Try Bailly-Reverdy, Bourgeois, Andre Dezat, Alphonse Mellot, Gitton, Laloue, Vacheron and Pascal and Nicolas Reverdy.
The reds ain't so hot but there are a few growers out there doing good things with the predominant Sauvignon and Pinot Noir grapes. Mellot and Nicolas Reverdy have conjured up decent reds, though most are merely cheap and often none too cheerful easy-drinkers.




"RACING IS LIFE. ANYTHING BEFORE OR AFTER IS JUST WAITING"
STEVE McQUEEN, *LE MANS*, 1971
Gulf