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STEPPING ON THE GASLY

AlphaTauri man takes a shock win in bonkers Italian Grand Prix P4

THE VOICE OF BRITISH MOTORSPORT

MOTORSPORT NEWS

SEPTEMBER 10 2020 ■ EVERY THURSDAY ■ £3.60 ■ FORMERLY MOTORING NEWS



Irishman gives his Hyundai bosses a headache with stunning pace as top-flight rallying returns

BREEN STAKES HIS CLAIM WITH ESTONIA WRC PODIUM



Two fastest stage times turned heads



Breen feels like he has 'started again'

By Graham Lister

Craig Breen has thrust himself into contention for a full-time World Rally Championship drive following a standout second place on Rally Estonia.

Co-driven by fellow Irishman Paul Nagle, Breen was never outside the top five on the high-speed gravel event's 17 stages.

His performance as the WRC restarted included two fastest stage times and the final power stage point.

But it remains unclear if Breen, 30, will get another opportunity to drive for Hyundai in the WRC this season with Sebastien Loeb set for the third entry in Turkey and Dani Sordo in the frame for Sardinia.

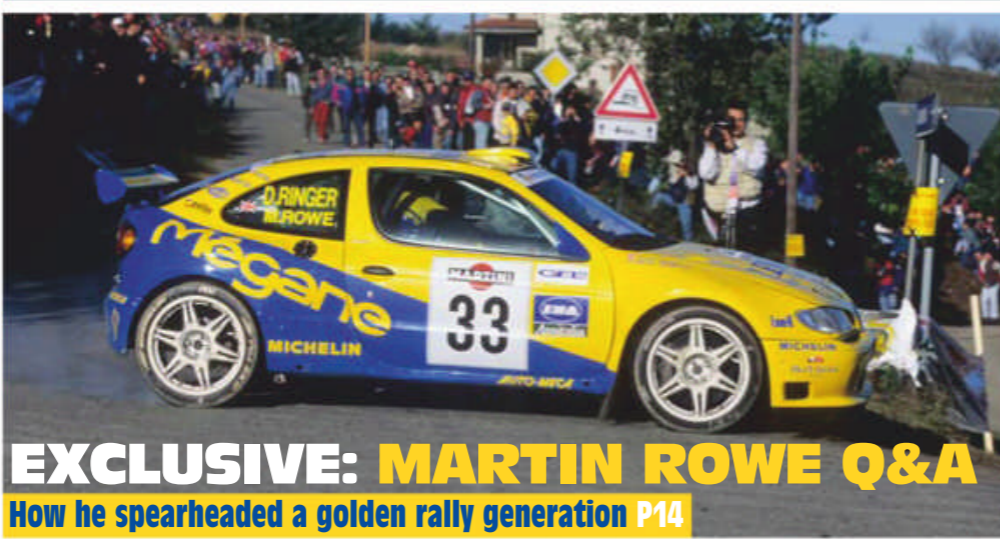
"I feel like I'm starting my career all over again and I want to do it even more," Breen said afterwards.

Ott Tanak, the reigning world champion, registered his first victory for Hyundai following his switch from Toyota for the 2020 season. Sebastien Ogier completed the podium with his Toyota team-mate Elfyn Evans in fourth place.

Full story, page 8

THE VOICE OF BRITISH MOTORSPORT
MOTORSPORT NEWS

INTERVIEW



EXCLUSIVE: MARTIN ROWE Q&A
How he spearheaded a golden rally generation P14

REPORT

HATCHING A NATIONAL RACING TREASURE

How Hot Hatches appeal to the club racing masses, P18



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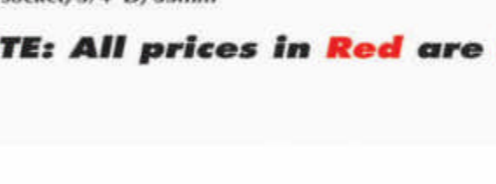
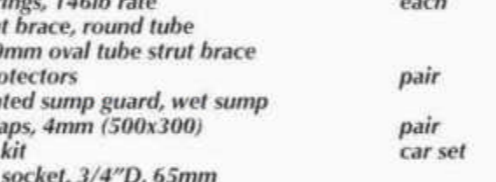
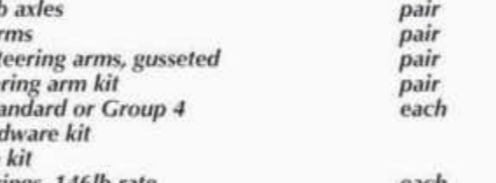
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COMMENT

Photo: mcklein-imagedatabase.com



As expected, Hyundai's Ott Tanak was in command as the WRC restarted in Estonia

TANAK KICKS OFF IN STYLE

For months, there have been question marks surrounding what this year's World Rally Championship might look like. Even now, there is some uncertainty around the remainder of the calendar. Although it has been rubber-stamped by officialdom, it is still fluid.

It was with some great relief, in that case, that the contest was able to restart and it did so in style in Estonia. Ott Tanak was able to control the pace over the latter part of the high-speed event, which was just as well as he probably needed to rest his heart rate after nearly dropping it into a ditch. He made it to the end to score his maiden win at his new home with Hyundai.

That mid-rally scare for the reigning champ was a chink of light for his team-mate Craig Breen. The Irishman, who was effectively driving to show his team bosses that he deserves more than the one shot he has been pencilled in for in 2020's second part, performed perfectly to demonstrate that he truly does deserve a much longer stay at the top table.

Elfyn Evans's sensible points-paying drive for Toyota means the Welshman is still right in the heart of the title fight too. There was plenty to smile about as the World Rally Championship stepped on the gas again.

Formula 1 driver Pierre Gasly probably thought his time at grand prix racing's top table was coming to an end when he was axed by Red Bull halfway through last season's competition. But his dramatic win in a truly bonkers Italian Grand Prix was retribution, and was widely welcomed by most up and down the pitlane (apart from, maybe, the penalised Lewis Hamilton). It was one of those grands prix that come along once in a few years where nothing goes right for the usual suspects, and that is when the minnows need to be in the right place at the right time to capitalise. There was some justice that it was AlphaTauri (nee Toro Rosso) and Gasly that were the ones who picked up the baton when it fell from the pockets of the regular frontrunners.

Elsewhere, Luke Barry poses the readers' questions to British Rally champion Martin Rowe, a man whose talent never got the big chances it so clearly deserved. He speaks honestly about the challenges he faced.

Deputy editor Graham Keilloh lifts the lid on a national racing success too, the 750MC Hot Hatch series. It is bucking the trend with a bulging grid and new entries.



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While Hamilton hits the skids, AlphaTauri man shines at Monza



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How the rear is hitting the front

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Making the most of the chances

How Martin Rowe grabbed his share of the spotlight

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How simple rules create a showstopper

We run the rule over the national racing hit, the Hot Hatch Championship



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Reports: The national heroes

RACING NEWS

Williams to step down from race team control

Team principal Sir Frank and his deputy and daughter Claire Williams will quit the family outfit as new investors have taken over the British squad.

Dorilton Capital took control of the squad two weeks ago and now it has been confirmed that the Williams family will step aside from control. Claire Williams said: "This feels like the appropriate time for us to step away from the sport."

"As a family, we have always prioritised Williams. We have demonstrated that by our recent actions with the strategic review process and we believe now is the right time to hand over the reins and give the new owners the opportunity to take the team into the future."

Williams driver George Russell said the legacy of the team's founder Sir Frank would remain: "We'll still remain under Williams Racing, and still continue to fight and represent the family name."

Matthew Savage, chairman of Dorilton Capital, chief executive Darren Fultz and James Matthews – the 1994 Formula Renault UK champion and chief executive of investment advisory firm Eden Rock Group – will now form Williams's board of directors.



Sir Frank is no longer at the helm

IN BRIEF

No more copying rows

Ferrari and Racing Point have both withdrawn their appeals in the copying row which erupted in Formula 1. Racing Point had been docked 15 points and fined 400,000 euros after it was found to have copied the Mercedes 2019 brake ducts. Ferrari had appealed against the penalty, while Racing Point protested its innocence.

Schuey wins in F2

Mick Schumacher scored his first Formula 2 win of the season in the feature race at Monza, helped when Brit Callum Hogg, stalled during the mandatory pitstop. DAMS driver Dan Ticktum started the sprint race second and then dominated it but was kicked out for not having enough fuel left in his car for a technical check. Hogg worked his way up to second, which became the win, to regain the points lead.

Logan's troubled F3 run

Dane Frederik Vesti took his second FIA Formula 3 race win in the opening race at Monza. The Prema driver profited from a safety car to zero in on leaders Theo Pourchaire and Jake Hughes, taking the lead with three laps remaining. Hughes responded in race two when he passed leader Liam Lawson to prevail. Contact thwarted points leader Logan Sargeant both times, but his title rival Oscar Piastri was also involved in a collision in race two. Piastri has an eight-point lead over Logan.

Young joins 2020 WTCR

Teenaged Northern Irishman Jack Young will drive for Vukovic Motorsport in the WTCR category this season. The former Renault Clio UK Cup winner took part in a one-off TCR Europe race for the team in its Renault Megane R.S. in Barcelona last season and impressed with a brace of fourth places. The WTCR series will be held this season over six rounds contained within Europe. The opening rounds are at Zolder in Belgium this weekend.



A red flag helped Gasly to maiden win



The team had not won a race since Monza in 2008

ELATED GASLY HAILS HIS 'NEVER SAY DIE ATTITUDE' AFTER ITALIAN GP TRIUMPH

AlphaTauri man profits in crazy race as points leader Hamilton is penalised

By Matt James

Pierre Gasly says his remarkable victory in the Italian Grand Prix last weekend was down to his determination to succeed at the top level.

The 24-year-old, who became the first Frenchman to win a grand prix since 1996, was demoted by Red Bull last season from its top team to return to the feeder squad, which was then called Toro Rosso.

Gasly took his first F1 podium with Toro Rosso in the Brazilian

Grand Prix last year before prevailing at Monza on Sunday in an interrupted race.

Lewis Hamilton was leading comfortably for Mercedes but darted into the pits during a mid-race safety car period. He took his halt when the pitlane was closed, while Gasly had already stopped and leapt up the order to third on the road.

After Hamilton's error, the race was red-flagged as Ferrari's Charles Leclerc had a huge crash at the Parabolica. Hamilton was forced to take a 10-second stop-go penalty after the restart, while

Gasly leapfrogged Racing Point's Lance Stroll to steer clear to victory. "I've been through so many things in the last 18 months and [winning is] better than anything I ever expected," said Gasly, who is eighth in the standings.

"[AlphaTauri] gave me my first podium in F1 and they gave me my first win in F1 in Italy at Monza for an Italian team. It's just unbelievable.

"I'm not someone who gives up on anything. I've had to fight for everything I wanted in my life since I was in karting until

now in F1. My drive to be better, to be stronger, is so strong."

Carlos Sainz took a career best finish of second for McLaren-Renault after passing the grip-limited Stroll early on after the restart. Stroll came home in third place.

After taking his 10-second stop-go penalty for the pit error, Hamilton powered back through the pack to seventh place to limit the damage in his hunt for a seventh crown. He was helped by a lacklustre performance from team-mate Valtteri Bottas, who finished in

fifth place, and a retirement from Red Bull's Max Verstappen with a power unit issue.

Results

1 Pierre Gasly (AlphaTauri-Honda) 1h47m06.056s; 2 Carlos Sainz (McLaren-Renault) +0.415s; 3 Lance Stroll (Force India-Mercedes); 4 Lando Norris (McLaren-Renault); 5 Valtteri Bottas (Mercedes); 6 Daniel Ricciardo (Renault); 7 Lewis Hamilton (Mercedes); 8 Esteban Ocon (Renault); 9 Daniil Kvyat (AlphaTauri-Honda); 10 Sergio Perez (Racing Point-Mercedes). **Championship:** 1 Hamilton 164; 2 Bottas 117; 3 Max Verstappen (Red Bull-Honda) 110; 4 Stroll 57; 5 Norris 57; 6 Alex Albon (Red Bull-Honda) 48. **Next race:** Tuscan Grand Prix, Mugello, September 13.



The yellow of Renault will not be in F1 for much longer

RENAULT F1 TO BE REBRANDED FOR 2021

The Renault Formula 1 team will race under the Alpine name from 2021 and will revert to the French racing colours of blue next year.

Alpine is the traditional competition arm of Renault and has experienced success in rallying and in sportscars. The name was bought back to long distance racing recently with the Signatech Alpine LMP2 attack.

The F1 decision has been taken by Luca de Meo, the new chief executive of the Renault Group, who has completed a review of the various brands that sit under the French marque's umbrella.

Alpine will field current driver Esteban Ocon and returning two-time world champion Fernando Alonso next season.

Renault F1 team boss Cyril Abiteboul said: "This change

comes at a key moment in the trajectory of the team and the sport.

"Alpine brings a new meaning, new values and colours to the paddock with the spirit of competition from other worlds and French creative agility. These will be assets in the preparation of [new rules in] 2022. Alpine has its place in F1 and can challenge for victory."

TEAM HARD SWITCHES TO NEW BTCC CUPRA FOR NEXT SEASON

Team Hard will field two new Cupra Leons in the British Touring Car Championship next season in its fight for Independents Trophy spoils.

The Kent-based squad, which has been on the BTCC grid since 2012, runs three older-spec VW CCs for Jack Goff, Ollie Brown and Nic Hamilton, plus a BMW 125i M Sport for Carl Boardley.

Team principal Tony Gilham said the team had assessed options to replace the long-in-the-tooth VWs over the lockdown period and had settled on machines from the Spanish manufacturer, which is the sporting arm of the Seat brand. He added that the cars will be built with an eye to the BTCC's



Team Hard will build up Cupras

new hybrid generation, which is being introduced in 2022.

Gilham said: "The VW CC has enjoyed a great deal of success over its life, but it's time for change as we look to the

new hybrid era of touring cars. We have done a lot of research and we believe that the dimensions and overall shape of the Cupra Leon will work perfectly with the current

NGTC regulations that are in the BTCC."

BTCC chief executive Alan Gow added: "It's always fantastic to see more new cars join the BTCC, this time with

Team Hard. We set out the [current] NGTC regulations to allow for great diversity and having the Cupra Leon on the grid is further proof of the strength of those regulations."



RJN McLaren lost lead in pitstops



O'Brien: reckons win lost

BRITISH GT APOLOGISES AFTER RECOVERY VEHICLE PITLANE ERROR

The championship's race director 'holds his hands up' after the vehicle's pitlane appearance

By Graham Keilloh

British GT race director Peter Daly has apologised after a recovery vehicle drove down the pitlane as the GT3 pack pitted under caution in the recent Brands Hatch race.

The pitstop round proved

crucial as when the bunched GT3 field made their mandatory stops the Barwell Lamborghini of Sandy Mitchell and Rob Collard leapfrogged the long-time leader Jenson Team Rocket RJN McLaren of James Baldwin and Michael O'Brien for first place, and they stayed in that order until the end.

O'Brien told Motorsport News he believed the vehicle cost him the race: "We didn't know whether to release or not, complete mess up from Brands Hatch. That cost us the time in the pits so we came out second. That shouldn't happen and it's Brands Hatch's fault completely."

Daly told MN: "As I said to all

of the team managers in my race report, I apologise profusely. I'm multi-tasking [during a safety car]. The tow-truck driver was being told to go back to his base after his task, I was not aware he was going to drive down the live pitlane. I hold my hands up."

When asked about O'Brien being potentially held in his

pitbox, Daly added: "That's one of those things. It could have been another car going by, it could have been a fire truck going by [to get to a fire]."

"When I recall what happened, he [the recovery vehicle] was [also] travelling a similar speed to the cars in front of him so I don't believe he held anyone up."



Series returnee Green bagged second place

GREEN NOT SURPRISED BY CENTURY BMW PACE

Ben Green has said he was not surprised by his pace in taking Century Motorsport's best British GT GT4 result since 2018 in his last-minute Brands Hatch outing.

Green was 2018 GT4 runner-up with Century and this season is competing in DTM Trophy, winning a race last month at Spa. He returned to the Century team at Brands' recent British GT round as a one-off, partnering Andrew Gordon-

Colebrook in an expanded two-BMW M4 effort. In the second half of the race Green rose to fight in the multi-car GT4 lead pack and was classified second after the TF Sport Aston Martin ahead of him was penalised post-race.

Green told Motorsport News: "There was a call on Monday, so minimal prep, just straight into the weekend. Top job by everyone."

"When I last raced here in

2018 I did the first stint and we led every lap, so I was expecting us to be even more competitive [than we were] to be honest with you. We couldn't live with the Aston Martins in qualifying, but we knew we had a good car for the race, we'd worked a lot on the set-up for that."

When asked about possible further British GT appearances, Green said: "Not at the moment, [this is] just the one-off."

TF RETURNS TO ASIAN LE MANS SERIES WITH STELLAR LINE-UP

TF Sport will return to the Asian Le Mans Series next season with an all-champion line-up of Jonny Adam, Ahmad Al Harthy and Tom Canning sharing an Aston Martin Vantage GT3.

Prior to the Covid-19 disruption, the trio was due to compete with TF this season in

British GT's GT3 category. TF, which also has capacity for a second 2021 ALMS entry, last competed in the Asian series in 2018-19 with Johnny Mowlem and Bonamy Grimes driving.

The 2021 ALMS season consists of a quartet of four-hour races, all in January, split between Thailand's

Buriram circuit and Malaysia's Sepang track.

Al Harthy said: "Jonny and I have won so much together, all three of us make a very strong line-up. If things work out well in Europe with less restrictions on travel in the weeks and months to come, we'll probably do some one-off races as well."



The TF Sport team is returning to the Asian series

RAM AND DE HAAN TO MAKE INTERNATIONAL GT OPEN AUSTRIAN DEBUT



De Haan and RAM seek European future

RAM Racing and Sam De Haan are eyeing a regular assault on European competition as they make their International GT Open debut at the Red Bull Ring this weekend.

RAM will field a Mercedes-AMG GT3 in the Austrian double-header, and welcome back Callum Macleod to drive alongside De Haan. De Haan with RAM sits second in British GT's GT3 standings, and the driver last season finished runner-up in that category.

De Haan said: "It's all about progression and assessing some options for the future. The plan this year was to fight for the British GT title, and then see where that can take me. Europe is probably the next step, and the gap in the schedule opened up nicely. I enjoy new challenges."

RAM boss Dan Shufflebottom added: "Sam was really keen to drive the Red Bull Ring and the GT Open is one of the series we're evaluating for the future."

SMELT: TOYOTA GT4 JUST NEEDS LUCK

Sam Smelt has said only luck is required to get the new Speedworks Toyota GR Supra GT4 its British GT debut victory after again missing out at Brands Hatch.

The Supra led but lost several places by doing an extra lap before pitting under a mid-race safety car as the team was unsure if the pit window had opened.

Smelt told MN: "The pace is clear to see. Just that last little bit of luck is lacking. Donington is next and we were strong there last time. I feel like [the win] is just round the corner. It's a good thing that we're disappointed."

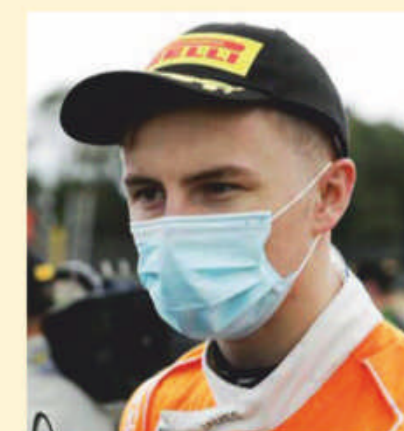


Supra's British GT win is near

BALDWIN: McLAREN F1 ESPORTS TO KEEP HIM "INSANELY SHARP"

British GT and Esports ace James Baldwin reckons being in McLaren's Esports driver line-up ahead of the 2020 Formula 1 Pro Series will benefit his real-life racing. Baldwin was recently confirmed in the McLaren Shadow Esports roster.

Baldwin told MN: "It's going to be pretty intense doing this [British GT] with that [Esports], because that is a serious grind, the practice you need is insane, you're playing the F1 game eight to 10 hours a day so trying to fit that in is pretty tough. It keeps me insanely sharp mentally for this [British GT]. I think I could do well in both."



Baldwin: virtual reality



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RACING NEWS

Photo: Jakob Ebrey, Steve Jones



Simmons took F3 spoils twice



Simmons expects to concentrate on Euroformula Open for the rest of 2020

SIMMONS SURPRISED BY STUNNING BRITISH F3 BRANDS COMEBACK

BRDC young driver finalist only expected 'top six or seven' after making last-minute return to British F3

By Graham Keilloh

Rising star Ayrton Simmons was surprised at his success in his recent last-minute BRDC British Formula 3 Brands Hatch appearance,

taking two wins from pole.

Simmons, who is competing in Euroformula Open this year, returned to Chris Dittmann Racing as a one-off at Brands to replace Nico Varrone. Simmons with CDR finished third in the

British F3 standings last year and got onto the BRDC Young Driver of the Year shortlist.

On his Brands return Simmons immediately claimed two imperious wins and might have got a third victory but for a

clutch failure in the final race.

Simmons told Motorsport News: "It was a bit surprising, my expectations were to just be in the top six, top seven would be good.

"It was a bit last minute, got the

call on Wednesday. I haven't driven this car since last race I done last year. It was a bit tricky in the first session, I had to adapt quickly.

"At the moment it's a one-off. Nico was not very satisfied with

the car and decided to drop out, and then Chris rung about in trying to get someone that's going to be quick.

"We have proved the point that Chris has got a fantastic car and an amazing group of people."



Smith: racing in FF1600

FESTIVAL WINNER SMITH EYES GT RETURN

British GT race-winner Josh Smith is eyeing a return to GT racing for 2021.

Smith as part of the McLaren Driver Development Programme raced in British GT for Tolman Motorsport last year, winning in GT4 at Brands Hatch.

The 2018 Formula Ford Festival winner was back racing a FF1600 Van Diemen for Oldfield Motorsport in the recent British GT-supporting Champion of Brands race, finishing third despite

a gear linkage breaking in qualifying. He told MN: "I've been doing quite a bit of driver coaching for Oldfield Motorsport and they had a free car for this weekend and asked me if I wanted to jump in and see if I can get a half-decent result for them.

"[I'm] just trying to make plans for 2021 and see if I can get back in a GT car. Nothing conclusive yet [on which championship], just keeping options open. I'm not actively searching to race FFord."

PEMBREY POISED WITH COVID PRECAUTIONS

Pembrey circuit has had Covid-19 safety precautions in place at the venue since the start of August as the racing resumption timescale for the Welsh track still remains unclear.

Wales has stricter Covid rules than England and while Wales's first post-lockdown race meeting took place at Anglesey last weekend as a small trial event, as Motorsport News went to press there was no confirmation regarding the country's wider

motorsport resumption.

Pembrey circuit manager Phil Davies told MN: "If they [government decision-makers] came here and see how we can run things and see what we can do and see what we've already set up [it would help]. We were set up ready to go from August 1, with the PPE and the toilets set up with systems and the sanitisers everywhere and screens in race admin. We've got a big marquee to old people for takeaway



Pembrey: made changes

lunches because that was before the restaurants were open. So we have invested a lot of money in opening up and up until now it's been a total loss."

REPORTS

ANGLESEY 750MC BY IAN SOWMAN

SEPTEMBER 6

MORGAN'S HOME WIN IN WALES RACING'S RETURN

Photos: Steve Jones

Wrexham driver Ryan Morgan provided a home victory in the first race of the Welsh motor racing season, a test event at Anglesey on Sunday.

His Ford Fiesta XR2 emerged at the head of the Classic Stock Hatch field on lap three after Pip Hammond and early leader Andrew Thorpe fell over each

other at Rocket. Morgan and Hammond pulled away from the rest, spending half a lap side-by-side mid-race but Morgan prevailed over his Vauxhall Nova-mounted rival.

Thorpe's Citroen AX briefly led race two as well but Hammond and Morgan both passed it on the sweep towards Rocket on

the opening lap. The lead two circulated closely, but Hammond remained ahead throughout.

Richard Morris overcame a frustrating start to win the first Sports 1000 race in his Spire GT320S. He'd climbed from fourth to second but his need to pursue runaway leader Ryan Yarrow's GT3 fell away when his

rival suffered pushrod failure. Yarrow won a restarted second race, with poleman Morris again left to rue his poor getaway.

Historic 750 Formula completed the programme, with Centaur drivers Martin Depper and Trefor Slatter sharing the spoils, although Lyndon Thruston's DNC showed early pace in both races.



Morgan and Hammond were Classic Stock Hatch stars

BRANDS HATCH MSVR BY BRIAN PHILLIPS

SEPTEMBER 6

FOUR FRANTIC RACES MAKE UP PORSCHE EVENT

Photo: Gary Hawkins

Four hard-fought Porsche races made up Sunday's Porsche Club race day at Brands Hatch, an event scaled down from the originally planned festival. The day also contained previews for a new-for-2021 series.

James Dorlin and Tom Jackson traded the points lead in the Porsche Sprint Challenge GB

races. Jackson headed race one, leaving Theo Edgerton to fend off fellow teenager Ethan Hawkey. Dorlin lost touch in fourth, but things were very different in race two. Dorlin was in the lead by lap five with Jackson clinging on, and they finished in that order.

Simon Clark earned a win and a second place in the Porsche Club

championship with main rival Mark McAleer taking second and third places. Kevin Harrison was the other winner. Harrison led from lap one of race one, and in the second encounter Clark resisted massive pressure from McAleer.

The preview sessions were for air-cooled pre-1989 Porsche 911

models which are scheduled to have races lasting an hour each, providing opportunities for driver and cost-sharing. This is the brainchild of Chris Pruden, who has worked long-term with Porsche Club GB and plans to have the non-championship series up and running for 2021, the club's 60th anniversary year.



Tom Jackson was the Porsche Sprint race one winner

RALLY NEWS



Solberg: ERC target

SOLBERG BACKS HIS SON FOR ERC TITLE CHALLENGE

Petter Solberg wants his 18-year-old son Oliver to finish the 2020 European Rally Championship season.

Solberg Jr is second in the standings, four points behind 2018 champion Alexey Lukyanuk, following his victory in Latvia last month.

Although he had been due to tackle the third round in the Azores, the rally's late cancellation raised doubts about his ERC programme.

But Solberg Sr has confirmed Oliver's plan remains after Rally Fafe Montelongo replaced Rallye Azores on the calendar.

"We drive as much as we can," said Solberg Sr, the 2003 WRC champion. "It's looking good for the championship also. It will be a bit tough to win the main championship because [Oliver's] experience on Tarmac is not so high but for the ERC Junior [the title is realistic] for sure."

"The ERC is very good TV, for the young guys to build their names and it's good publicity. They need to be seen more and the ERC is fantastic for that to get sponsors to continue further. For sure Oliver's dream is to do more world championship rallies but this championship works well for him and his sponsors are happy and that's the main thing."

Irishman Aaron Johnston co-drives Solberg Jr.

OGIER CALLS TIME ON HIS WORLD RALLY CHAMPIONSHIP CAREER

Six-time title winner declares he is ready to stand down after 2021

Photos: Toyota Gazoo Racing, mcklein-imagedatabase.com



The six-time champion wants one more shot at world glory



Ogier made his debut in 2008

By Graham Lister

Sebastien Ogier will make the 2021 WRC season his last at the rallying's top level.

The six-time world beater had intended to make 2020 his first and only campaign with Toyota and then bring to an end a WRC career that began on Rally Mexico in 2008 and includes 48 wins from 153 starts.

Ahead of Rally Estonia getting underway last Friday, Ogier was quizzed on his plans as the season resumed following a six-month halt.

"I'm ready to step out and do something else because I really enjoy the break, to be honest," said Ogier, 36. "But at the same time I don't want to stop in such a strange season and a short one. Doing another one and fully more normal [season] would be nice."

Although the Frenchman is keen to continue for one final year, he confirmed he'd yet to ink an extension to his Toyota contact. "We didn't make any agreement, yet, but the wish is there on both sides, for the team and myself," Ogier said. "Let's hope that we can do that soon."

In July 2019, Ogier was appointed an official ambassador and advisor to the Extreme E off-road electric SUV racing series.



Frenchman plans one more season



Breen laid his claim to more outings with his speed

BREEN IS READY FOR MORE IN PERFECT HYUNDAI i20

Irishman Craig Breen said the ease with which he could adapt to driving his Hyundai i20 Coupe WRC on Rally Estonia's super-fast gravel stages played a huge part in his Baltic podium.

Breen and co-driver Paul Nagle in their fourth outing at world level for the Korean firm completed a Hyundai 1-2 behind home heroes Ott Tanak and

Martin Jarveoja.

They had been drafted in to fill Hyundai's third factory entry in Estonia having originally been lined up for the role on the cancelled Rally Finland.

"The car was doing everything I asked of it, everything came together from the opening kilometres" said the 30-year-old from Waterford. "Taking two

stage wins was an incredible feeling. I have to thank everyone who offered me the chance."

Despite equalling his previous best WRC result, which he recorded in Sweden in 2018 driving for Citroen, Breen will now have to wait for his next Hyundai opportunity. But although there's no confirmation if that will come this season, he at

least impressed Hyundai team chief Andrea Adamo, who said: "It's important for Craig and Paul to show what they are capable of, matching the pace of the others."

There are three WRC rounds remaining. Hyundai has nominated Sebastien Loeb for Turkey later this month while Dani Sordo is set for the third Sardinia entry.

PORTUGAL BACK ON THE EUROPEAN SCHEDULE

The European Rally Championship will include a round on Portuguese soil in 2020 after all.

Following the cancellation of the Azores Rallye last month due to Covid-19 restrictions, it seemed certain that the ERC would not visit

Portugal this season.

However, championship promoter Eurosport Events has secured Rally Fafe Montelongo in the north of the country as a late replacement after FIA president Jean Todt personally gave the Fafe-based competition the green light to join the ERC.

The event, which uses all-asphalt rather than gravel stages like the Azores, is scheduled from October 2-4 and will incorporate the Portuguese Historic and Northern championships.

With the Azores Rallye contracted to form part of

the ERC schedule in 2021, Portugal could host two rounds of the regional championship next season.

ERC boss Jean-Baptiste Ley said: "The agreement is for one year but all parties are open to expanding the partnership into future years."



Fafe stage is always a huge hit with rallying spectators

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RALLY NEWS

WORLD RX AND WRC TO SHARE SPA FRANCORCHAMPS AFTER ALL

Two FIA world championships will take place at the same venue on the same weekend in November at Spa-Francorchamps as the World RX of Benelux moved from its October 3-4 date to November 21-22.

The Ypres Rally, which was confirmed last month as the World Rally Championship's final round for the first time, is due to take place on the same weekend. While the two events had been set to take place on the first weekend in October, Ypres was eventually moved to fit into the WRC's 2020 roster. It will be joined by World RX on the same weekend because, World RX organisers say, by moving its round it gives more hope for spectators to be able to attend.

A championship statement said: "The move to November is being made in anticipation of being able to welcome a larger number of fans to Spa. Current restrictions on the size of public gatherings in Belgium mean that only 400 spectators would be admitted to the event in October. This decision has been made after careful consideration and consultation with the FIA, the Belgian ASN and the local event organiser."

The first two days of competition on the Ypres Rally will be held in the Flanders region before heading to Spa, with Sunday's stages using the famous Eau Rouge and Raidillon corners of the Formula 1 layout.



Eau Rouge for WRC and World RX



Skoda Fabia has been developed since 2019

NITISS IMPRESSED WITH FABIA AHEAD OF WORLD RX RETURN

Rallycross-turned-rally driver returns for one-off World RX drive

By Hal Ridge

World Rallycross round winner Reinis Nitiss says qualifying for a final on his return to the series next week in Riga would be a good result for him and the ESmotorsport team.

Nitiss switched to rallying for 2020, having contested a partial

World RX programme last year in a third car for Gronholm RX, but will return for his home double-header in Latvia in a Skoda Fabia.

The event will mark the Lithuanian team's first start of the season.

Nitiss tested the Fabia at Kouvola in Finland for a day-and-a-half last week,

just days after the World RX round at the venue.

"The car worked well, it handled well and I liked it," Nitiss told MN. "For sure there are still some small details to be done before the race, but the potential is certainly there."

"The bad thing is that we were not able to compare the lap

times with the race laps from the [World RX] event because after the heavy rain the track was dry but so dirty. I was not able to clean it as the only car on the track, but anyway we were happy."

The deal for Nitiss to race came about relatively late in the day, the Latvian having expected to miss his home World

Rallycross round this year.

"To make the final would be perfect, that would be more than good I would say."

"We need to go there, see what the track conditions are like and what the speed of the other cars is."

"We don't have expectations, no pressure, just clean and free minds to do our best."

TOHILL AIMING FOR KNOCKHILL BRITISH RX RETURN

Double European Rallycross champion Derek Tohill is hoping to return to the series for the second round at Knockhill later this month.

With his Olsbergs MSE-built, C-Sport-run Ford Fiesta Supercar having undergone a complete rebuild in the extended off-season, Tohill and his PFCRX squad had planned to race in the British RX 5 Nations Trophy opener at Lydden

Hill but travel restrictions for the squad's return to Ireland put paid to hopes of competing.

Tohill, who was runner-up in the British Rallycross Championship last year, told MN: "It was sickening that we couldn't attend Lydden. We had hoped Covid-19 travel restrictions to the UK would be eased by the Irish Government, but the timing

was bad as Ireland was right in the thick of a second surge.

"We could have quarantined for two weeks, but all the team have jobs to go to on a Monday and families to consider so that was never an option."

Tohill came close to winning the British RX series at his first full-time attempt last year, but was just pipped to the crown by

Julian Godfrey, who finished second in the 2020 season opener to Mark Donnelly.

"Our car has been fully rebuilt and we are ready to go as soon as the situation improves," Tohill added. "We'll be in Knockhill to support the championship if travel is permitted. In the meantime we can get all those more difficult jobs completed on the car."



Covid-19 travel restrictions a concern for Tohill



Packed entry will descend on Lydden Hill this weekend

BTRDA CLUBMANS SEASON SET FOR STRONG START

The BTRDA Clubmans Rallycross Championship will get underway this weekend at Lydden Hill, where a number of 5 Nations British RX drivers have joined the strong field of 67 cars.

Junior driver Luke Constantine will begin his

quest for a third straight overall BTRDA crown while Supernational campaigner Stuart Emery will be hoping for better fortune in the Super Modified category following gearbox problems aboard his Peugeot 206 that put him out of the opening British RX event.

Swift Sport racer Phil Chicken will also compete in the diverse class, where former champion Tony Lynch will start among the favourites in his Ford Ka. Chris Baker and Aaron Shaw will race a brace of Subaru Imprezas in the Production 4x4 division, with a

range of new and returning competitors filling the grids in the Production, Junior and Classic categories.

Barry Stewart returns to racing with the Porsche 911 that carried Rolf Nilsson to British Rallycross Grand Prix victory at Brands Hatch in 1982.

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MN CIRCUIT CHAMPIONSHIP ATTRACTS TITLE WINNERS

Tarmac expert Damian Cole among the new crowd entering Motorsport News series

By Luke Barry

Six-time Asphalt champion Damian Cole leads an impressive array of drivers registered for the Motorsport News Circuit Rally Championship for the first time, and says he's in the series to win it.

Covid-19 has destroyed the UK rallying calendar. Several rallies and championships have been axed, meaning the MN Circuit contest offers the only realistic, consistent series for several competitors.

As a result, when MN went to press over 160 people had registered for the 2020-21 season with a lot of drivers, like Cole, newcomers to the series.

Cole told MN: "I'm not usually a massive fan of single venues, I prefer pacenote events but it's sort of a case of just being able to do something in the car this year.

"The last rally I did was a year ago this month, it was the Cheviot, which

is probably the longest period I haven't done a rally in 25 years. We're going there to win it, we're not going there to come second."

Other notable entrants include reigning champion Barry Morris, in-form Frank Bird, John Marshall in his Ford Fiesta Rally2, series returnee Mark Kelly, rallycross driver Andy Scott and potentially Tom Williams, who MN understands is interested in doing select events if budget allows.

John Stone, who did a full campaign in 2017-18, has also registered and thinks some of the series newcomers might be in for a surprise.

"You get a lot of people that look down their noses at it," Stone told MN. "It is a different style of driving compared to pacenote events but you've got to be fast and if you're fast on a circuit you'll be fast on a pacenote event. I think they'll be surprised at the pace of quite a few of the lads. [But] we'll be trying our hardest, make no bones about it."



Stone warns others that winning won't be easy



Cole is looking for top spot in his Ford Focus WRC05

Photos: SMJ Photography, Rally Gallery

YOUNGSTERS AIMING FOR SEAT TIME AHEAD OF 2021 CAMPAIGNS

Zak Hughes, Ed Fossey and Junior BRC pilot Eddie Lewis have all also registered for the MN Circuit Championship. Renault Twingo driver Hughes

told MN that the series acts as a perfect opportunity to get seat time before 2021.

"I wanted to do Tarmac rallies this year in the Twingo but

obviously that hasn't happened, so it's just a case of I want to do some rallying to be honest with you," the 21-year-old said. "I know they're only single venues

but they'll iron out any reliability issues we've got with the car and give everyone a bit of a better insight and a head start for next year."



Wright enjoyed both the car and the rally at Melbourne

WRIGHT EXCITED TO UNLEASH NEW R5 ON CLOSED ROADS

BTRDA Gold Star winner David Wright was left "really impressed" with both how quick and how comfortable his Ford Fiesta R5 felt to drive after winning the recent Melbourne Rally Time Trial.

Wright – who took the crown in 2009 – bought the ex-works

R5 in the summer after selling his rebuilt Ford Escort Mk2. He plans to enter next year's Asphalt Championship.

"I was really impressed with it and after the first stage [of Melbourne] we felt really comfortable to start pushing," Wright told MN. "The car gives

you so much more confidence to push just with braking distances and the way it stops. I can't wait to use it on a proper closed-road event, it'll be good fun."

Wright won the Melbourne Time Trial by eight seconds from Matthew Hirst after competitors dropped their worst

time from each of two stages that were run five times.

"It just felt exactly the same as a rally but there was just less contact with marshals," Wright added. "It was just run like a rally, the only thing was you could drop your worst time on each stage. I really enjoyed it."

MONDELLO RALLYSPRINT WILL REMAIN FOUR-ROUND SERIES

Organisers behind the new Rallysprint Championship at Mondello Park have confirmed that it will remain a four-round series.

Just days before the opening meeting due to take place on August 16, fresh lockdown measures were introduced by the Irish government in

County Kildare. Last week these Covid-19 restrictions were lifted, paving the way for the start of the competition on October 18. There'll be further rounds on November 1 and December 6 as planned, with the fourth date yet to be decided.

Championship spokesman Leo

Nulty said: "We will get an extra date but Mondello's calendar at the moment is quite condensed because everyone involved in bikes, drifting, rallycross, rallsprints and car racing are looking for alternative dates now that we are open for business again. But I would be confident

that we can find another date for the Rallysprint Championship."

A bumper entry had been attracted for the original opening round, with Daniel Barry, Robert Barrable, Enda O'Brien, Frank Barrett and Cal McCarthy all entering in R5 machinery.



New Mondello series will remain a four-round affair

SRC FRONTRUNNER PEARSON BUYS MITSUBISHI TO STAY SHARP



Pearson: staying match fit

Scottish Rally Championship regular Garry Pearson has bought a Mitsubishi E9 but isn't necessarily intending to compete in it, instead looking for a way to stay sharp without competition.

He told MN: "What we've

decided to do is buy an E9 to keep us in a car for the rest of the year. We're just going to try and do a bit of testing and keep fresh really. Whether that car ever sees a stage in my name I don't know."

Pearson had hoped to mount

an SRC title charge in 2020 in a hired Ford Fiesta R5 but failed to find the required budget. It's a series he feels he has "unfinished business" with after missing out on the 2016 title by a single point with a final-round mechanical failure

and battling Euan Thorburn hard in 2019.

"Against Euan last year was very difficult in a World car, certainly in the faster stages we really struggled and Euan's one hell of a driver in a WRC," Pearson said.

"We know we can win it. Last year on the Scottish [Rally] between me, Euan and [David] Bogie we were trading times all day and for me to be right in amongst them, trading times, with their experience, that's where I want to be."



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HISTORICS

DOWN THE PUB

DAVID TOMKINSON

Just built a TVR Vixen
Age: 34 Lives: Macclesfield



Tonkinson is a TVR builder

He's been racing a Triumph Spitfire

"I've raced the Spitfire for eight years, always in 70s Road Sports. I spent five or six years developing it and learning what you should and shouldn't do with them. It's not cheque book racing, which helps a novice have an inkling that you could do well in it. Very quickly you realise that everyone in the championship is really nice as well, so it is good off the track as well as on. I wouldn't do it if it wasn't fun."

He's now built a TVR Vixen

"The Vixen came about from a little whisper from Andy Honey, who helps TVR racer Steve Bellerby. He told me a Vixen would be good for me and planted the seed. This was a road car but it had not been on the road since 1993. It had no wheels and there were plastic boxes full of bits. It had been stripped down and someone had repainted the chassis but everything else was a mess. It was under a cover on someone's drive and it had been outside for years."

Help was available

"The Vixen was challenging because I hadn't taken it apart and didn't know how to put it back together. But you only have to ring Steve or someone else and they are straight there with help and advice. That makes it possible."

Lockdown helped the project

"It's a 1971 car and is the very last Vixen S2 to come off the production line. It has a 1600cc Ford cross-flow engine. I've always liked lightweight smaller-engined cars. I started rebuilding it on Christmas Eve when I decided to have a look at the gearbox. Then lockdown happened and I decided this was the time to push on."

He's keen for the cars to be used

"It's been really nice to get a car and think, right, I want it like this. This is how I want to sit in the car; I don't want a wiring loom with things sticking out that I don't know what they are. I like historic racing because it gets these cars out of garages, being used instead of sitting there just being polished."



Photos: Paul Lawrence

Richards has fallen in love with the Lotus

CATERHAM CHAMPION RICHARDS TO TACKLE FORMULA JUNIOR

Recently acquired ex-hillclimbing Lotus 22 for circuit challenge in 2020

By Paul Lawrence

Former leading Caterham racer Clive Richards has joined the Formula Junior grid this season in a Lotus 22 once hillclimbed by Spencer Elton.

Richards switched to historic racing last season in a Merlyn Mk20 in Historic Formula Ford but has subsequently acquired the 1960 Lotus and had his second

weekend of Formula Junior racing at the Oulton Park Gold Cup, taking two second places behind the Brabham of category pacesetter Cam Jackson. On Sunday he kept Jackson in sight as the runaway leader eased his pace.

"I love it," said the Sussex tree surgeon of the Lotus. "I bought it from Switzerland the week before lockdown began in March and it hadn't raced for a couple of

years. It's got a full history and we spent the lockdown period just going right through it."

The Lotus is known to have been used in hillclimbs in the 1960s, and Elton ran it with a Lotus twin-cam engine. Later, it was owned by Irish veteran single-seater racer Tommy Reid before being sold to Switzerland. "It is now back in very original specification," said Richards, who finished third in the 2001

Autosport Caterham Eurocup against some strong opposition. More recently, he finished runner-up in the 2015 Caterham Supersport Championship.

Richards still has the Formula Ford 1600 Merlyn and plans to race it in the Historic Formula Ford races at Cadwell Park in 10 days' time during the Wolds Trophy meeting as there are no Formula Junior races at that particular event.



Jaguar's E-type model will get an hour-long Silverstone race

SILVERSTONE SET FOR E-TYPE CELEBRATION

The 60th birthday of the Jaguar E-type will be celebrated by a special hour-long E-type race on the Silverstone Grand Prix circuit next May.

The Historic Sports Car Club has set a target of 60 drivers for the 60-minute race to celebrate the 60th anniversary of the model.

The first race in the history of the HSCC, in May 1966, was won the Neil Corner's Jaguar D-type and in 2011 the club organised the E-type

Challenge to mark the model's 50th birthday.

In April 1961 two E-types made the model's race debut at Oulton Park in the hands of Graham Hill and Roy Salvadori. Hill won the race to begin the E-type's motorsporting success story.

Andy Dee-Crowne of the HSCC said: "The Jaguar E-type is an iconic car and a field of 35-40 cars would make a magnificent spectacle at our International Trophy meeting next May."

TEENAGER PEARSON TAKES OVER DAD'S MERLYN

Tom Pearson, the 16-year-old son of Historic Formula Ford racer Ted, made his racing debut at Oulton Park in his dad's Merlyn Mk11/17.

With Ted recovering from a recent operation, Tom took the opportunity to make his car debut and finished well in both HFF races after qualifying 15th out of 22.

Tom has just finished the GCSE stage of his education and will shortly start at Millfield School in Somerset. Racing will fit around his education and he hopes to race a Van Diemen RF88 they also own in Heritage races next season.

Ted, well known in Alfa Romeo racing, plans to sit out the balance of 2020 but intends to be back racing next season.

SUMMERS SAMPLES FORMULA FORD AT OULTON

Alex Summers, the 2015 British Hillclimb champion, made his Formula Ford racing debut at the Oulton Park Gold Cup.

Summers raced in the Classic FF1600 Championship in the Van Diemen RF80 that he used to start his speed event career in 1980. His only previous race experience was in his father Richard's Formula 5000 Lola T140 at the end of last season.

"I drove the Van Diemen as a teenager," said Summers. "I used it for two years and then put it away. I've wanted to race it for a while," he added after the 2020 BHC was cancelled. He finished 11th in the race.



Former hillclimb champion has taken on Formula Ford

IN BRIEF

Spa races are off

The Historic Sports Car Club has cancelled its two half-hour races due to run within the Spa Classic Six-Hour meeting at the end of September due to the ongoing travel issues to and from the UK during the Covid-19 pandemic. The rest of the Spa Six-Hour meeting is going ahead as planned (September 25-27), albeit behind closed doors.

Shelsley fills up

The Harvest Festival Meeting, an extra date in the Shelsley Walsh calendar, will run at the Worcestershire hillclimb this weekend. Saturday's action includes a round of the Prescott-based Henney's Cider Classic Speed Championship, while the Paul Matty Lotus Championship is part of Sunday's programme.

Karter goes Junior

Suffolk-based former karter Nic Carlton-Smith has joined the Formula Junior grid this season in the ex-Michael Waller 1960 Kieft. The Oulton Park Gold Cup was only his third race in the car and his first time at the Cheshire track, netting two good finishes in the car tended by category expert David Abbott. Only six examples were built in period and five are still known to be active.

Formula 3 Wolds

Classic Formula 3 has been added to the schedule for the HSCC Wolds Trophy meeting at Cadwell Park (September 19-20). The added date may appeal to some of the UK-based F3 drivers impacted by the cancellation of the FIA F3 race at Zandvoort two weeks earlier. The Cadwell event features URS Classic FF2000, which sometimes shares a grid with Classic F3.

Sheldon's Oulton run

Former Le Mans racer John Sheldon raced at Oulton Park for the first time in more than a decade during the Thundersports races at the Gold Cup. Sheldon first raced at the Cheshire track on a kart in 1961 but had not been there since 2008. He took his Chevron B16 to eighth in the opening race.

Morgans flood grid

A dozen Morgans made a record Road Sports turnout for the marque during the Oulton Park Gold Cup. Split between the rumbling V8-engined Plus 8s and the four-cylinder Plus 4s and 4/4s, the top finishing Morgan was the 70s Road Sports-winning Plus 8 of Kevin Kivlochan.

Memories for Lane

Classic Clubmans racer Mike Lane returned to Formula Atlantic at the Oulton Park Gold Cup, 41 years after he last raced an Atlantic car. Lane raced in Atlantic in 1978 and '79 in a March 76B and has recently acquired the Chevron B49 raced by Keith Norris. He still has his Mallock Clubmans car and will race it at Cadwell Park later this month.



Mike Lane was back in Atlantic

COLUMN

MATT JAMES



MN editor knows that sometimes you can't keep everyone happy

Photos: Jakob Ebrey



Sutton's form at Knockhill was strong



Tom Oliphant took his BMW to a Brands victory

It is amusing how some arguments go in and out of fashion, and nowhere is that more apparent than in the British Touring Car Championship. It seems that some people in the pitlane are not happy unless they have something to grumble on about.

Of course, chucking stones at the rulemakers in Britain's leading tin-top series is easy. The boost level was a major bone of contention over the last couple of years as the technical team sought to equalise the performance of the powerplants. Then there is the dynamic advantage of the rear-wheel-drive cars away from the startline. The physics of a rear-driven machine mean it will always be faster as the clutches are dropped and the weight transfers over the driven rear axle. That has been mitigated, to a degree, by limited ratios for first gear for the cars which are likely to benefit from that advantage, but it is still clear that a rear-powered machine will make up yards as the lights flick off.

But the big beef this year, a season when the option tyres have been put on hold, is the domination of the rear-wheel-drive cars. After the harum-scarum start to the campaign, which put the teams and drivers through four rounds in five weekends at tracks as far apart as Brands Hatch and Knockhill, there is a clear pattern of grumbling beginning to emerge once more: are the RWD cars too dominant.

Let's look at the facts: wins in seven of the 12 rounds have been shared out by RWD cars, with Colin Turkington, Ash Sutton and Tom Oliphant all tasting the champagne at various

points. That is only just over 50% of the wins.

There is no question that the story of the season has been the pace of the rear-wheel-drive Infiniti Q50 of Laser Tools Racing. Ash Sutton has won four races himself, and it marks a return to form for the 2017 champion after a tough season in the ageing BMR-run Subaru Levorg in 2019. The Infiniti was specifically chosen by Laser Tools Racing and the engineering arm BMR because it mimicked the dimensions of the hugely rapid 330i M Sport BMW which WSR had introduced in the BTCC so successfully in 2019.

Make no mistake, the Infinitis bear no relation to the versions that first appeared in the British Touring Car Championship in 2015. Engineers set to work to totally redesigning the machines, with input from the Italian engineering brains trust Hexathron. In Sutton, who is partnered with Aiden Moffat, Laser Tools Racing has one of the acknowledged RWD experts too.

So with Sutton in a competitive car again and WSR continuing to operate at its usual



Turkington is an acknowledged RWD expert

high level, there are two competitive rear-wheel-drive teams, which wasn't the case in 2019. Back in 2018, when the Levorg was strong, WSR was in the final throes with its 125i M Sport. Even in that season, rear-motivated cars won nine of the 30 races.

Another thing that has slightly skewed the picture so far is the format of the calendar, with tracks in a mixed-up order on the schedule. We have just come off the back of two tracks that are traditionally RWD friendly. Oulton Park and Knockhill, with their heavy acceleration zones from slow corners, favour that layout of transmission. When the series visits places like Thruxton or Snetterton, the balance will even out some more: indeed, the first of those tracks is traditionally a front-wheel-drive benefit – although the BMWs are learning to cope with the high-speed track's demands in more recent seasons.

Once those tracks are in the record books in 2020, it might bring the picture of the season into sharper focus. But it is also worth acknowledging that four of the last six BTCC contests have been won by rear-wheel-drive machines. But three of those have been with the secret weapon, Turkington, at the wheel. To counter that, remember that the front-wheel-drive Team Dynamics Honda Civic of Dan Cammish came within 14 corners of winning the title last season.

The picture might not be clear yet, but that hasn't stopped those who want to have a moan doing just so. It's true what they say, you know: sometimes there are people in life who are just not happy however the rules are framed...

"The picture might be skewed at the moment given the tracks visited"

FEATURE

MARTIN ROWE



I DROVE THE BEST CAR IN THE BEST ERA

***Motorsport News readers grill the 1998 British and 2003
Production World Rally Champion. By Luke Barry***



Rowe was a Renault works driver in Britain

There are probably quite a few people who are incredibly jealous of Martin Rowe. Competing – and winning – in the British Rally Championship during the late 1990s meant he drove in one of the most revered eras of Formula 2 Kit Cars. And he arguably drove the greatest car of them all: the Renault Maxi Megane.

Rowe won the BRC in '98 and the one-off Formula Rally series in 2001 after an intense battle with Justin Dale that was decided by the stewards, and then went on to win a world title for production cars in 2003 and the Chinese Rally Championship in 2006.

Now enjoying life in Whistler, Canada, the Manxman took time to discuss topics such as his relationship with the late Richard Burns, why Derek Ringer might have regretted partnering him and Robbie Head's 1997 Manx International retirement as well as far more pressing issues like giving away toothpaste to strangers, stroking cars and roller coasters. Speaking of which...

Question: What three words would you use to describe your career?

George Butler

Via email

Martin Rowe: "Passion, as obviously it's a sport I'm passionate about; determination as you've got to be determined to keep on trying to get the results and then roller coaster! Because obviously sometimes you are right in the bottom of that dip and you're just coming down off a huge high off a rally and then thinking 'OK I'm not going to drive for the next month or longer' and you've got all the adrenaline or the lows from what you've just achieved or not, and then you start the climb back up to try and get back to that high point before you start off on the next event."

MN: What do you think would be the perfect blend?

MR: "The perfect blend would be success, fun and excitement, but it's never like that! You could put like trophies, champagne and five-star hotels but no, that's a lie."

Question: With the benefit of hindsight it's clear you were competing in amongst a golden generation of British drivers, but did it feel like that at the time?

Raymond Day

Via email

MR: "You didn't really sit back and think about it. You were just sort of swept along on the wave of everybody else being involved and it was good for the sport in Britain obviously because you can hear of some rally drivers with no following in their country: people say 'you do what?' and they go 'are you a valet driver? Valet parking?' No, no, rally. In the UK there was a big following, Burns [Richard Burns] and [Colin] McRae were doing very well and they gave you some glimmer of hope as a driver because we were in the BRC and Richard and Colin had taken that next step for a driver. You couldn't think there were no further opportunities up the ladder because they'd proved there was. It was a huge thing going on but at the time you just had your head down going to the next rally, you didn't really think about the effect for people or the drivers."

MN: You were very close with Richard Burns as well weren't you? How useful was that for your career?

MR: "Yeah, he was one of my closest friends and he ended up living just a couple of miles down the road so we hung out a lot. We did the training and gym stuff together and we were always just talking about cars and bikes and the sport, so yeah he was a couple of steps ahead of me in all ways and it was good. He sourced a sports

psychologist, we shared the same trainer and it was a big help. It was funny because Burnsie would be away on a World championship rally fighting at the top, if there was a road section my phone would go and it would be Richard ringing up just wanting a chat about normal stuff. He'd say 'don't talk about cars' and in his headspace it would just be a release of not thinking about where he was at that particular time. We'd spend 10, 15 minutes chatting about shite really, anything and then next thing he's got his helmet back on and he's focused to try and get another stage win. The good advice that I've told lots of other people that he used to say to me is 'pinkies out, concentrate like f**k'. So you'd just hold the wheel really, really gently, get all the feedback from the car and then concentrate like f**k on the notes."

MN: What was your relationship like with Colin McRae?

MR: "I knew him through other people and obviously if I saw him wherever we'd always stop and have a chat. I knew Alison his wife. I didn't know Colin as well as I knew Richard but you'd always have a chat with Colin and that's the whole thing about rallying as well. Even on road sections or if there's a regroup, those guys would chat to you as well and ask how you were getting on, so it was just a close family and everyone chats so it was a nice situation to be in."

Question: How big a deal was your opportunity with Renault in 1997? Was it the team you wanted to sign for?

Henry Lister

Via email

MR: "It was one of the best teams, probably the best team, and they'd come over with a Tarmac-spec Clio initially and tried to then develop it for the forests and the gravel roads and the bumpy lanes of UK rallying and even Irish rallying with Donegal. So that was the team to sign for and when that deal came together, I remember when Andrew Luck, the motorsport director, rang me to come down to a meeting and I was just sat there in silence 'oh my God what's this meeting' and that was a huge thing. The team was great but there was lots of things there were trying to do but they had open ears and an amazing engineer Andy Thorburn and they were all trying to re-engineer a very quick, European-spec Tarmac racing car. So yeah it was great to be part of that team and evolving with the team and the product as well."

MN: Were there any other offers on the table alongside Renault?

MR: "There wasn't much else at the time and I'd had a year off [in 1996]. So I'd literally done some development work for a couple of people and then the drive came up for the Manx [with Volkswagen], so when Andrew Luck rang it was like wow and I remember going down to have the meeting and it was all very proper and professional, it was amazing. My contract it was signed in that I was a number two driver to Robbie Head and there was potential for team orders [which did happen in 1997] and that sort of thing but at the time it was like 'wow I'm going to be driving a Renault'."

Question: Can you take us inside that epic five-way 1997 Manx International title battle please?

Alex Lawson

Via email

MR: "It was gloves off and I don't think there's ever been a rally like that on the last round of the championship where five drivers potentially could win. Robbie downshifted instead of changing up and buzzed the engine and then denied everything – I think I can say that, there's always been a question of what did he do? Anyway, he put himself out the picture. Alister [McRae] and Gwyndaf [Evans] crashed on the same stage so that was a big fight and that was the first time we ever

continued on page 16

Photos: mcklein-imagedatabase.com, Jakob Ebrey



Renault was "the team to sign for" says Rowe



Left to right: Kaj Lindstrom, Tapio Laukkanen, Derek Ringer and Martin Rowe celebrate another success

FEATURE



Rowe was a Group N man in mid-2000s



WRC outings were a bonus with Renault



Formula Rally: Enjoyable, but not the same buzz as normal stages

used split times in the stages as well because it was such a close battle in the last few stages with Mark Higgins. [Rowe won the rally but Higgins took the title].”

Question: You were very lucky to be paid to drive a rally car, but did it ever actually feel like a job?

Allan Bellamy

Via email

MR: “It was great, in that it was your hobby, your passion and your goal and somebody paid me to do it but it does get serious. You don’t just turn up on a Thursday or whatever, recce and go and drive a car as fast as you can and leave. There’s a lot of preparation and I’d always try to go to the workshop and the factory to try and get to know people, the car and do that bit extra. Specifically with Renault, after each rally there was a full debrief and the guys there building the suspension, they’re there and taking notes because they want to make their suspension better. The gearbox builder’s there, the engine guy’s there and maybe somebody from Michelin. I remember after the Manx actually in ’97 Patrick Landon from Renault Sport in Paris had flown over for a full-on debrief. And if the engine’s down on power, that engine guy has got to defend his job and say why and sure enough if I’m 10 seconds slower than somebody on stage two, they ask me why. And then for sure it’s like a job and if you’ve got targets and goals and if you don’t match them there’s questions. I remember an Ulster Rally [1998], I only

came second and there were some of my mates from the Isle of Man there and they were like ‘have a beer, chill out, you’ve had a good weekend’ and I’m like ‘no I’m pretty pissed off with myself’. And they were going ‘you idiot you’ve got second place’ and I’m like ‘no because I could’ve done better’. There is a job and I didn’t achieve my goal so I was pressuring myself but for sure somebody’s paying you to do that so you have to do the best you can and if you’ve not done the right job they’ll sack you and get the next guy.”

Question: Whose decision was it for Derek Ringer to join you in 1998 and what was it like to work with a world champion?

Michael Stutt

Via email

MR: “Nicky [Beech] is a great co-driver, very experienced and calm and everything else in the car but I’ll be fairly open, we had some issues with the pacenotes and the delivery of the pacenotes and we’d worked a lot to try and improve that in between events. Even our gravel crew at the time was Terry Kaby who worked with Petter Solberg right until he stopped rallying and Mike Horner, who are both amazingly experienced guys in rallying so we were lucky to have those guys checking our notes and working with us. The four of us went out many times, just trying to see how I could change my pacenotes to help Nicky with the delivery and see how we could make it work together. So it wasn’t all plain sailing by

any means, and by Rally GB that year [1997] we said this will be our last event. After Rally GB we were testing something up at Sweet Lamb and my phone was out of signal and when it came back in I had a message from Derek saying that he heard I was looking [for a new co-driver]. And I’d never even spoken to Derek Ringer before and it was one of those like ‘oh my God’. He actually went down and did a deal with Renault. Normally the driver would do the deal for the co-driver but Derek ended up going down to Renault Sport and a deal was done, and he made a big impact on the team in every way, right the way down to how the vehicles were parked on tests and how the presentation and appearance of the team was so he was a good guy to have along.”

MN: That must have been a massive vote of confidence for you to have a world champion wanting to sit alongside you?

MR: “Derek’s massively experienced and obviously he sat in with Colin McRae so it was like ‘wow’. That first test it was quite funny because we went down somewhere in Wales and Derek was like, before we get in the car two things: I don’t do punctures and I don’t do pushing [laughs]. I remember I looked like a right idiot as I was driving down just warming the car up and nobody had set the brake bias up – you can put your brakes front to rear as you wish so maybe on a Tarmac stage you can put more braking to the front to get more grip at the front but nobody had set this up – so I was just driving down

this really narrow road on gravel with grass on the sides, grass in the middle. I just touched the brakes and the engine stalled and we slid off at 20mph, and I was thinking ‘gosh he [Derek]’s going to think I’m crap!’ It did improve from there obviously.” [The pair won the 1998 British title].

Question: It was a strange year for rallying in 2001 after foot-and-mouth disease like 2020 is with Covid-19. Do you think rallying could end up going back towards the single-venue style events that Formula Rally [which Rowe won in a Ford Puma] had back then? Is that a proper way to go rallying?

Dave Mulvaney

Via email

MR: “You still want to be as fast as possible and try and beat everybody else but it’s not the same as going through Welsh forests or any of the British forests. The rallies were down a bit and multi-lap things round New Brighton Promenade; they were still a challenge but it just wasn’t like the normal rallies. There’s rallies starting up again here in the States where there’s no spectators and things but I hope things can get back to normal [in the UK].”

Question: How does your PWRC [Production World Rally Championship] success rank among all your achievements?

Greg Murphy

Via email

MN: Surely quite highly given it was a world title?

MR: “Yes. It was a weird year in a way. There were six rallies, we sort of calculated what we needed to do on each event for the next event. Because you could choose six of eight rounds, there was different people doing different rallies. It was weird and the highlight of the year was Australia because we had to go out and win that rally and that was probably the best rally I’ve ever done from my [driving] performance and in the car between the crew, me and Trevor [Agnew]. It was only six events through the year, we were doing other events but that was our main focus and when we came to Corsica we just had to be within two places of Toshi Arai to win the championship. It was more of a mind game than anything else to get through that rally and when we did achieve what we needed to it was weird, we hadn’t had this massive battle we just did what we needed to do. We came over the finish ramp and there was just this huge deflation in a way because we were sat on tenterhooks for three days just trying to get through and get the points and it was like ‘yep, we’ve done it, what’s next?’ It was a huge thing but there was no what’s next, there was no step up from there. We’d achieved everything we needed to but then there was nothing secured for the next step up the ladder.”

MN: Was that next step ever possible, were you ever close or did you just have to accept it wasn’t going to happen for you?



Burns (l) and Rowe (r) enjoyed a close relationship



Ringer asked Rowe if they could be a partnership



In his wake: Rowe beat the best to win '98 BRC

MR: "At that point, there wasn't really anything. A long time ago somebody offered me a drive in a Toyota Corolla WRC when they were sort of competitive and it was one of those ones where if you come along and drive this car, sign this contract with me and I'll manage you for five years. And I often thought I wonder what would've happened if that had happened but you know there's never been any doors opening and I guess unless you can go along to one of the top teams with a big bag of cash, doors don't start opening."

Question: Rally GB in 2003: should that downhill left, five corners from the end of Rheola, have been flat?

Jonathan Suter
Via Facebook

MR: "I reckon if I had my suspension slightly different it would've been OK. I tried to take a left-hander flat out, the back of the car just got a bit of air and we went wide and clipped something with the back of the car and we ended up in quite a long accident. At that time in hindsight no, but maybe I should've softened the suspension a bit and we'd have got away with it. David Sutton who was running the car he said 'just go out, do what you need to do. If you crash, you better be leading at the time' and we were so technically that's OK! We were having a bit of a go because all year like I was saying it was a bit of a calculated long approach to how many points we need here and there and one puncture and one broken component on

the car and the whole championship would've been done so that one was just home ground, car was great, we'd had a season in it, we could push when we needed to and yeah unfortunately that one was just a little bit too much."

Question: When I pulled up at the finish ramp of the 1993 Manx National I saw my best mate and former co-driver Martin Rowe on the top step, it's still one of my best memories in rallying. Out of all the wins at club level up to international level, which one stands out the most to you and why? And how come you know so much about swallows?

Scott Bradshaw

Via Facebook

MR: "[Laughs]. That last bit, as I soon as I read that I was like, that's Scott [laughs]. That's a thing in *Monty Python and the Holy Grail*, that's why he's put that in. But yeah, I mentioned Australia in PWRC I'd say that was my best performance: we were so focused, the notes were perfect, we felt comfortable in the car and Trevor and I were just working amazingly well but that '93 Manx National, I remember doing the rally with Chris Wood co-driving and as he's adding up the stage times he's like 'yep we're leading' and I'm like 'what? How? You've got to be wrong, add them up again'. So he added them up again two or three times and was like 'nope, we're leading'. F**k. We'd never thought about winning or anything it was just a great car [Ford Escort Cosworth] and home event and I think we're still the

only Group N car to ever win that rally, the youngest driver to win that rally and a few other things. Winning that event put my name out there a little bit and showed what we could do."

Question: How does rallying in China and Canada compare to Europe? [Rowe rallied in China and in 2006 and '07 and Canada in '14]

Paul Shepherd
Via email

MR: "The team we were with [in China] KST; great guys, really enthusiastic, needed a bit of guidance in some areas but fantastic people and the roads were amazing. I remember one stage in Kaiyang for example you'd climb up these like 28 hairpins up the side of a mountain and it was one of those mountain roads that if you fell off on the top hairpin you'd roll all the way back down. There was no safety aspects and things like that, high consequence sort of stages but just amazing to drive. There was great competition, at that time David Higgins was out there with one of the top teams, throwing money at the car left, right and centre; Alister McRae was out there, Jarkko Miettinen the Finnish champion at the time, all the quick guys from their particular countries were going out there so the battles were fierce and there'd be two or three seconds between the top five. Culturally as well, obviously very, very different, I'd never been anywhere like that. I'd always go a bit early to the rally and just acclimatise and



2003 PWRC success was almost a "deflation" given how it was won

see places and how people lived. One of the tests we did in the middle of nowhere and there's this young family watching and then a cow walks out of their room where they'd been sleeping, they had their livestock in their house with them for warmth and just the stuff you'd see going round. I would stay in quite a nice hotel where they'd give you free soap and toothpaste and stuff so each day I'd take my stuff and give it to the kids who had nothing so it was amazing, a bit of an eye opener. You're there seeing these different levels of poverty and you're there getting in this £200,000 rally car and trying to dial in your suspension that's probably worth more than their house."

MN: And Canada?

MR: "Rallying here in Canada, it was a shame in a way. There was Subaru and Mitsubishi having a good old battle at the top and then there was a bit of a gap. There was probably four or five cars that were relatively competitive and then it would drop down to more club level so you didn't have the big range of entries that you would in the UK for example. The roads were amazing. It's such a huge country where you do a rally on the west coast and you're rallying through rainforest type situations and then you go out to the east coast and do a snow rally, like minus 20 degrees and everything in between. There was a big void, you'd get the guys at the back that were not even BTRDA level, I say not even as it was very, very grassroots doing their local rally and at the very top

you've got these amazing cars with active diffs and everything else so a big, big vast range of people."

Question: When are you buying a Renault Maxi Megane and doing some closed-road events in the UK?

Luke Harvey
Via Twitter

MR: "The Megane that I won the British championship in '98 with came up for sale recently and it was €175,000 which is still a huge amount of money. So I wondered how would I try and get that together? I'd love to have something like that in the garage. I think I'd just sleep out there with it and stroke it at night: the car that is! [laughs] They're nice but not that nice! But that car when I saw it someone sent me a link, I think it was Ryan Champion, and it just looked amazing and had all the right bits on but €175,000 I don't have that sort of money."

MN: Would you consider doing any rallies anywhere in anything?

MR: "I'd love to do some rallies. I've got my father-in-law's Ford Escort Mk1 down in the garage, I fired it up last week and Clare [my wife] has got her '03 Clio, like a Group N Clio, so we're trying to do something. You always say it'll be fun but once you get your helmet on you're trying to get competitive so I'd love to do it for the fun of it. Once you've been involved with the sport as you know it's pretty addictive, so if I did get the opportunity to do some rallies for fun I would definitely do that." ■

FEATURE

750MC HOT HATCH CHAMPIONSHIP: DON'T DREAM IT'S OVAL

The 750 Motor Club's Hot Hatch championship has been attracting in new racers, and from unlikely places. **Graham Keilloh** investigates



750MC Hot Hatch has got lots of new recruits



Frontrunner Ian Williamson benefits from Freeman's support



David Drinkwater is a strong contender in his BMW Compact



The Hot Hatch grids contain a wide variety of car brands

Universal motorsport is showing resilience in 2020's most trying circumstances. For all the Covid-19 disruption, there is also, for now at least, a common pent-up desire to go racing, manifested in healthy grids.

The 750 Motor Club's Hot Hatch championship is experiencing something similar. Its total of new drivers registered for this year is in double figures. But the reasons for its upswing have caught even the organising club on the hop.

The 750MC's James Winstanley tells Motorsport News: "There's been a real mixed bag this year of all sorts of different new cars and new drivers. Normally with any 750 formula, one of us will have spoken to somebody on the phone a couple of times over winter or one of us will have been [having a] longstanding email conversation, someone's come along to a race meeting last year and we know we've got their eye on it, so you're not normally too surprised by the list of registrations."

"But the influx of people in Hot Hatch, some of them that we didn't know anything about. And having met a fair amount of them they all seem very keen."

The Hot Hatch championship grew out of 750MC's Stock Hatch category, when the latter in Winstanley's words "came to its natural end" as the cars that fitted its rules became rare. Hot Hatch started in 2016 and became a championship in 2017.

And there is an intriguing nugget within the outlined increased participation. That Hot Hatch has been particularly prone to attract in people from oval racing, such as Autograss and Hot Rods.

Winstanley continues: "Suddenly there's been an influx from oval racing the last

couple of years. We've always seen a percentage of recruits moving into circuit racing from ovals but it's never been particularly large or to any one particular formula before. But we've had a few over the last few years, the likes of Paul Kaynes and Chris Woods and David Measday."

A good place to start in finding out what's attracting the oval racers is to ask one of them. Measday tells MN: "I was an oval racer for the best part of 35 years and I was ready to pack it up, stock cars were too much for me."

"I'd been working with a guy called Mark Freeman of MFRP, we toyed with the idea of having a go at circuit [racing] and [me] being that little bit later in life there's more money available. He said 'do you want to have a go?' We wanted to do something different, so we built a Vauxhall Corsa, because we knew Corsas from stock cars days. And it went on from there. I thought I'll have one year at it [Hot Hatch] then I'll retire. No way! I absolutely love it even now, and that's at 57!"

And the mentioned Mark Freeman is vital in this tale. A former oval racer himself, he offers a Citroen Saxo Hot Hatch hire car for

people to compete in, as well as gives paddock support to a host of Hot Hatch competitors and does much to encourage oval racers to make the switch, such as via sharing the 750MC stand at motorsport shows.

Freeman tells MN: "Off the top of my head seven or eight of the guys that are now in the Hot Hatch championship have come through me from oval racing."

What's more, they are staying. Freeman continues: "I don't know of anyone that's come over within my time in Hot Hatch and gone back, a few guys have moved on to different series but still stayed with the circuits. A couple have moved on to the Clio championship, a couple have moved on to the Locost championship, but everyone that has made the jump from oval to long track racing has stayed with long track racing."

So what's driving it? "The big attraction for most of them is the timescales," Freeman says. "You still get decent racing but not doing three or four meetings a month like oval racing, you get to go away for two or three days for one meeting at the Hot Hatch championship,



Paul Warren is another who switched from oval racing to Hot Hatch

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Photos: Jon Elsey, CPe FOTO, Mark Freeman



David Measday is one of several oval converts



Mark Freeman offers hire car for Hot Hatch racing

[it] gives you a bit of free time back.”

Dan Gibbs, another Hot Hatch competitor with an oval racing background, identifies another factor: “The [Hot Hatch] cars are very similar to some of the championships in the oval racing, where there are slight modifications so there’s no crazy spending on the cars. It’s very very similar championship rules to the Hot Hatch, the knowledge and skills [are] there for the cars already, [it’s] just something a bit different rather than oval racing.”

Measday agrees: “We can do so much by adapting our oval set-ups into them [Hot Hatch cars], it’s worked a lot into our favour.”

“No crazy spending” is an important factor in Hot Hatch more generally, both for running costs and purchasing a car in the first place. Measday notes: “Some of the Saxos don’t seem to change hands for a great deal of money. If you shopped around you could probably find the right car for four, five grand and be competitive straight from the outset.”

Gibbs concurs: “With the rules set out you can pick up a car relatively cheap with little modifications, especially for the likes of Class C, so it’s pretty much an anyone’s game.”

Measday continues: “The entry fees are more [than in ovals] but we’re only doing 10 meetings a year and two or three races a meeting instead of running around the country. When you actually start working it out the cost that you thought was hugely different isn’t hugely different.”

The racing is good too. The championship seeks to ensure competitiveness with a set power-to-weight ratio in each of its three classes. Measday explains: “If you’re less horsepower you weigh less. It’s quite a leveller.”

Ian Williamson, a long-serving class frontrunner who benefits from Freeman’s

support and has recently stepped up a class in a Honda Civic, adds: “It’s really close racing. Because of you having that power-to-weight ratio, as long as you keep to that there’s a little bit of flexibility, but there’s not too much flexibility that you have to spend a fortune just to be at the front. Although we’ve got the new Civic we haven’t had to spend loads of money.”

The ratio has an added benefit, as Freeman notes: “The big thing for most people is the way the rules are, they’re quite open as long as the power to weight is right and the tyre sizes and bits are right, the rest of it is quite free so you’ve got good scope to try stuff and play with different stuff, play with different set-ups and essentially not worrying whether you’re within the rules. That’s why it attracts such a big difference in cars, there could be five, six, seven, eight different brands of cars on track at once. It’s just a good open rule book.”

Honda Civics – across a variety of generations – are common on Hot Hatch grids, as are Citroen Saxos, plus you’ll also likely find the Peugeot 205 GTi, a BMW Compact, the Mini Cooper S, Ford Fiestas and Renault Clios among many others. There also is front vs rear-wheel drive competition.

Gibbs, who entered Hot Hatch from racing in a one-make Mk2 Volkswagen Golf category, lauds the variety: “You’ve got your advantages and disadvantages in different parts of the track, rather than a one-make championship where you’re all very similar in every part of the track, so it gives it a different approach to racing.”

Freeman notes another element. “The biggest difference from competitive oval racing to competitive circuit racing is the damage factor. Oval racing, probably a good 30% or 40% of the time you spend meeting to meeting will be on race damage, whereas generally circuit racing is pretty

good. It’s about more preparation and making the car go faster rather than repairing it.”

Gary Prebble is more commonly known as a multiple Castle Combe champion, but he’s another to have joined 750MC’s Hot Hatch championship lately, and this year he’s won all four races so far in his Class A Honda Civic. He was tempted in by variety of a different sort.

Prebble tells MN: “It was purely just to do a lot of other circuits. I love Combe but there’s nothing like going off and doing other circuits as well. So we looked into a couple of the Hot Hatch races and saw that the [Peugeot] 205 was eligible and upon entering it last year we had [a] good turnout. Cadwell is one that sticks in my mind, that was brilliant. It’s another great little championship with a good standard of driving.”

And while many racing categories talk of the strength of their social side, this is another area where Hot Hatch distinguishes itself from oval competition. Measday attests: “The social [side] is outstanding. We have created almost like a little village on our own when we go, whereas in oval racing we didn’t used to get so much of that, there was a lot of backbiting and stuff.”

And greatest testament to the championship is that participants are virtually unanimous in their encouraging of others to get on board and boost the grids further. Prebble is persuading his Combe colleagues while Winstanley is focusing on those doing trackdays.

Winstanley says: “One thing we always try and get across at 750 Motor Club is people that are doing trackdays, it’s that things like Hot Hatch and Roadsports if you’ve got a car with a decent, proper rollage in it, the chances are you’re not really a million miles away from what you need to take it racing.” ■

Prebble dash at Castle Combe

Gary Prebble it seems cannot stop winning races in 2020. He has won all four 750 Motor Club Hot Hatch races so far in his Honda Civic. And in the recent late-August bank holiday meeting at his longer-established hunting ground of Castle Combe, Prebble not only took his Civic to another two Hot Hatch wins, this time in the Combe category, he also had his Seat Leon Cupra with him and in that won both Combe Saloon races too.

“It’s certainly a first for me and I can’t imagine many people doing that,” Prebble told Motorsport News of his victory quartet. “That was just one of those days like any driver would dream about, so brilliant, just absolutely cracking day.”

His Combe Hot Hatch wins were comfortable, but the Saloon victories were anything but as he had to prevail in competitive dices, including after dropping down the

order at race one’s get-go after struggling to select second gear.

“I’ve done it once before,” Prebble added of taking two cars to a single meeting, “it’s a lot of work physically, I had to rely on my uncle, he took the other car. Just mechanicing and fuelling two cars, and there’s not much turnaround time to physically get them all ready, including yourself of course, you’re coming out hot from one car, quick drink and then straight in another car, so it’s a very busy day. It’s not something you want to repeat that often!”

“The Civic’s been absolutely phenomenal. We had a guy called Frank Anderson who is from Anderson Racing Engines, he built me an engine this year for the Civic and literally every race we’ve entered we’ve won with the Civic this year, six out of six, 100% positive at the moment.”



Prebble took four wins from four in Castle Combe meeting



Simon Ward in his Astra is another who has just joined Hot Hatch



Even organisers struggle to explain Hot Hatch’s driver influx

WRC REPORT: ESTONIA

Photos: mcklein-imagedatabase.com



Tanak did what was expected



Reigning champ's Hyundai first

TANAK IS BACK IN THE WRC DRIVING SEAT IN ESTONIA

The hometown hero dominates on the super-fast stages on world rallying's return. By **Graham Lister**

Hundai, it's been widely suggested, vetoed Rally Liepaja joining the World Rally Championship trail because it feared a Baltic high-speed gravel double, completed by Rally Estonia, would favour Toyota in the title fight.

But as well as getting its own way on the Liepaja debate, Hyundai very much had its way when it came to the top two steps of the podium in the southern Estonian city of Tartu last Sunday afternoon.

As the WRC title battle resumed after sixth months of relative inactivity, Hyundai had outsmarted its Japanese rival on a route that also featured technical sections that were almost rough in places, particularly when used twice.

Ott Tanak, the local hero and reigning world champion, scored his first win for Hyundai since joining from Toyota for 2020, while Ireland's Craig Breen followed him home in a career-equalling best of second place.

And it could so easily have been a Hyundai podium lockout had Thierry Neuville made it through a rutted left-hander on stage seven (see separate story).

Instead, the Belgian's error let in Sebastien Ogier to claim third place and extend his title advantage, albeit by an extra point, over Elfyn Evans.

With three rounds remaining, Evans is now nine points behind Ogier who, crucially, will be forced to open the road on the opening leg of Rally Turkey next week. Tanak, meanwhile, climbs to third in the table, 13 points down on Ogier.

Tanak had a lot to be thankful for last weekend. Hyundai's summer of car-improving toil – with Tanak a guiding light on all things Rally Estonia set-up – gave him an i20 Coupe WRC that did “what I wanted”, the 32-year-old adding the “step forward has been impressive”.

But he also conceded that he'd got away with a moment on the penultimate stage when he swiped a bank that left his

RESULTS

Rally Estonia, September 4-6, 2020

POS	DRIVER/CO-DRIVER	CAR	TIME
1	Ott Tanak/Martin Jarveoja	Hyundai i20 Coupe WRC	1h59m53.6s
2	Craig Breen/Paul Nagle	Hyundai i20 Coupe WRC	+22.2s
3	Sebastien Ogier/Julien Ingrassia	Toyota Yaris WRC	+26.9s
4	Elfyn Evans/Scott Martin	Toyota Yaris WRC	+41.9s
5	Kalle Rovanpera/Jonne Halttunen	Toyota Yaris WRC	+1m18.7s
6	Teemu Suninen/Jarmo Lehtinen	Ford Fiesta WRC	+2m39.6s
7	Esapekka Lappi/Janne Ferm	Ford Fiesta WRC	+2m52.0s
8	Gus Greensmith/Elliott Edmondson	Ford Fiesta WRC	+4m53.8s
9	Oliver Solberg/Aaron Johnston	Volkswagen Polo GTI R5	+7m38.6s
10	Mads Ostberg/Torstein Eriksen	Citroen C3 R5	+8m17.3s

Championship: 1 Ogier 79; 2 Evans 70; 3 Tanak 66; 4 Rovanpera 55; 5 Thierry Neuville (Hyundai i20 WRC) 42; 6 Suninen 34. **Next rally:** Rally Turkey, September 18-20



Ogier suffered with tyre issues

Hyundai with cosmetic damage rather than something more severe.

“I went slower in that place and still the road put me a bit to the edge,” he explained. “Let's say during these two days, I definitely had more impressive surprises or moments than this one. But obviously, this one was on TV, so let's call it a moment.”

While Tanak's local knowledge gave him an edge, it wasn't the all-out advantage that had been suggested. “Big parts of the stages were new, the conditions were something we've never faced before,” he said, a reference to Sunday morning's slippery surface.

While Tanak was comfortable in front, Breen admitted he'd perhaps eased off a little too much on the closing powerstage in his bid to secure the runner-up spot as Ogier cut the gap to 4.7s.

“We absolutely had to deliver a result and I knew it was very important both for myself and Paul [Nagle] going forward,” said Breen. “We couldn't just fall at the last hurdle and for sure I didn't take any risks on the last stage. I would have perhaps liked to manage it a little bit better, not so many heart attacks, but it all worked out in the end.”

Ogier had inherited third from Neuville



Breen slackened his late charge

on SS7 but further progress was hampered by two tyres delaminating before a stall on Saturday's closing run.

“I knew fighting for victory would be a hard job,” said Ogier. “Second was definitely in our reach. We had some issues with tyres and we didn't play it right with the set-up.”

Kalle Rovanpera followed Elfyn Evans home in fifth but could so easily have finished on the podium. He took the lead by winning Saturday's opening stage, dropped to eighth with a puncture, demoted Evans for fourth in his fightback but was then handed a one-minute penalty after co-driver Jonne Halttunen was found to have removed the radiator blanking plate in the control area before the start of SS10.

“Perfect driving from me, I don't do any mistakes,” said the teenager at the end of the final stage.

Teemu Suninen was the best of the M-Sport trio in sixth followed by Esapekka Lappi and Brit Gus Greensmith. Lappi was quickest on Friday's superspecial but there would be no further heroics as the Cumbria squad's limited testing – the result of funding shortages – showed.

Oliver Solberg and Irish co-driver Aaron Johnston won WRC3 in style.

TITLE CHASER EVANS RUES SOME MISSING CONSISTENCY

It might be a solitary point but when there are just seven events in a dramatically reduced calendar, they count like never before.

Welshman Elfyn Evans left Estonia nine points behind Toyota team-mate Sebastien Ogier in his bid for a first world title. He'd arrived eight adrift.

Although Evans and Scott Martin weren't at the sharp end of the fight in Estonia, they took a stage win and placed second in the powerstage in their way to fourth.

“I'm not fully satisfied but there was obviously good pace at points but I was just unable to deliver it consistently,” the Rally Sweden winner said. “We made some changes overnight and in the slippery conditions [on Sunday] morning it seemed to be a bit better. Then I struggled when it

got quite rough. Like always, there's some things we can work on but at the end of it we're here after a difficult weekend with a decent haul of points.”

Evans completed SS7 with a delaminated Michelin on his Yaris WRC. He explained what went wrong. “We only lost a few seconds but we had to do the rest of the loop with no spare wheel, so we were trying to balance good speed with not taking crazy risks.”

Co-driven by Daniel Barritt, Takamoto Katsuta completed the four-strong Toyota effort in Estonia and was set for a career-high fifth until he rolled out on SS13.

Pierre-Louis Loubet's World Rally Car debut ended when the WRC2 champion broke his Hyundai's steering on a tree stump on SS13.



Evans struggled on the rough stages and got a puncture

WHEELS COME OFF NEUVILLE'S 2020 TITLE AMBITIONS

Thierry Neuville became the first World Rally Championship frontrunner to come unstuck in his bid to land the 2020 crown.

Neuville was in third position after winning stage six of Estonia's high-speed gravel event when he damaged his Hyundai i20 Coupe WRC's suspension and retired.

To add insult to injury, his pursuit of five powerstage points on Sunday was ended by mechanical failure prior to the closing test.

The Belgian had arrived in Estonia third in the points, 20 behind Sebastien Ogier, but his non-score has hit his title hopes hard. He's 37 points off the top with just the rallies in Turkey, Sardinia and Belgium to come.

“We were kicked off the line in [a] very fast and quite rutted left-

hander in SS7,” Neuville explained. “I tried to recover the car but there was something on the outside that broke the lower rear suspension arm and the wheel. It was not possible to fix the car, so we had no choice but to retire.”

Despite his world championship ambitions imploding, Neuville insists he's not giving up on winning his first world title.

“We have to keep our heads high; there are some good events still to come and we are capable of taking important points,” he said. “We have seen that our car has improved a lot, which is very positive. The team has done an incredible job, it's just unfortunate we missed our chance this weekend. It's not over until it's over, so we keep pushing.”



Thierry Neuville is now a long way off the points summit



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RACING REPORTS

Photo: Richard Styles

SNETTERTON: MGCC BY GRAHAM KEILLOH
SEPTEMBER 5-6

NEAVES AND WILDMAN HIT THEIR MGCC RIVALS FOR FOUR AT SNETTERTON



Neaves was on form in Norfolk

Ollie Neaves made it four BCV8 Championship wins from four in 2020 driving his newly upgraded Class D MGB GT V8. And he continued to show imperious pace; in both races habitual pacesetter Russell McCarthy could only cling to Neaves' coattails.

Neaves said: "[It was a] fantastic weekend. My qualifying time is unbelievable to me, I've not been able to get anywhere near it in the race. Knowing Russ quite well I'm sure he won't be sitting watching the back of me very long."

Richard Wildman was another in Norfolk to accumulate four wins in 2020 without reply, in his case in the Midget and Sprite Challenge. Just like at Donington's round one though, Wildman benefited from rival David Morrison encountering technical problems, this time a broken stub axle.

Metro runners Mike Williams and Jack Ashton in MG Cup's second race had their long-awaited victory scrap, and it was intense and dramatic. Williams got home first but a five-second track-limits penalty handed Ashton victory. Ashton missed race one thanks to an oil seal coming off, but it wasn't easy for Williams as he proceeded to the win cautiously with his rear wheels not torqued fully.

In the opening MG Trophy race none of the three Class A pacesetters got beyond the opening lap. It appeared Tylor Ballard would take advantage, but he spun on dropped coolant which let fellow MG ZR 170 runner Adam Jackson by to win. In race two Class A's Fred Burgess and Ross Makar struck back, Burgess with a severe tyre vibration held off Makar.

Keith Egar had never won a race nor been to Snetterton prior to the

weekend, and he came away with two Cockshoot Cup wins. Mark Eales in the MG Metro Cup was another first-time double victor.

Mark Ashworth in his TVR Grantura took both Equipe GTS triumphs. He prevailed in the first after a place-swapping battle with Allan Ross-Jones's Triumph TR4, then in race two held off Mark Holme's MGB.

Holme in an Austin Healey was home second in Equipe's new Libre race but he and fellow Healey runner Jeremy Welch, who was first home, got three-lap penalties for pitting before the pit window. Robin Ellis in his Lotus Elite therefore got the win.

Holme had the compensation of winning the opening Equipe Pre '63/Pre '50 race; Bernado Hartogs won race two in a Lotus XV. Andrew Thompson claimed both Morgan Challenge wins in his ARV6, making it three 2020 triumphs from six.

RACE WINNERS
Morgan Challenge
Races 1&2: Andrew Thompson (Morgan ARV6)

Equipe GTS
Races 1&2: Mark Ashworth (TVR Grantura)

Equipe Libre

Robin Ellis (Lotus Elite)

Equipe Pre '63/Pre '50
Race 1: Mark Holme (Austin Healey 3000 MKII)

Race 2: Bernado Hartogs (Lotus XV)

MGCC BCV8
Races 1&2: Ollie Neaves (MGB GT V8)

MGCC Cockshoot Cup
Races 1&2: Keith Egar (MG Midget)

MGCC MG Metro Cup
Races 1&2: Mark Eales (Rover Metro GT)

MGCC MG Midget & Sprite Challenge
Races 1&2: Richard Wildman (MG Midget)

MGCC MG Cup
Race 1: Mike Williams (Rover Metro GT)

Race 2: Jack Ashton (Rover Metro GT)

MGCC MG Trophy
Race 1: Adam Jackson (MG ZR 170)

Race 2: Fred Burgess (MG ZR 190)

OULTON PARK: 750MC BY ANNA DUXBURY
SEPTEMBER 5

MORGAN IS THE CAPTAIN IN F1000 BATTLES

Photo: Steve Jones

Lee Morgan was on fine form at Oulton Park, making it two from two in the F1000 championship races. He chased down points leader Dan Clowes in the first race and passed him on the final lap and later in the day went from his reversed grid position of eighth to first in just over a lap, pulling out a significant lead on the way to victory.

In the Clio 182 championship the first win went Ryan Polley's way as Scott Edgar and Oliver

Waind battled for second, with Edgar eventually gaining the place. After Polley lost acceleration coming out of Shell Oils corner in the second race there was a three-way battle for the lead, with Edgar and Josh Larkin going on to cross the line in a near dead heat ahead of Waind. However, Edgar was later penalised 7.5 seconds for earlier contact, handing the spoils to Larkin.

Alan Henderson was victorious

in the incident-filled Club Enduro race, hunting down the Seat Leon Eurocup of Carl Swift and Robert Baker and taking advantage of Baker's battle with traffic to make the move.

In the first BMWCCR Championship race Michael Cutt dismantled Michael Pensavalle's six-second lead to take the win but in the second race the shoe was on the other foot when Cutt's car stopped on the final lap, handing

RACE WINNERS
Bikesports
Race 1&2: Charles Hall (Spire GT3)

Clio 182 Championship
Race 1: Ryan Polley

Race 2: Josh Larkin

F1000
Race 1&2: Lee Morgan

BMW Car Club Racing
Race 1: Michael Cutt (BMW E36 M3)

Race 2: Michael Pensavalle (BMW E46 M3)

Club Enduro

Alan Henderson (Lotus Elise S2)



Lee Morgan was on a march in F1000 at Oulton Park

the race victory to Pensavalle. Charles Hall made the most of myriad absences in the

Bikesports championship to win both races ahead of Joe Stables, although Stables

later lost his second place from the first race due to an underweight car.

BRISCA F1: SKEGNESS BY COLIN CASSERLEY
AUGUST 29

TEENAGER EVANS PROVES THAT HIS STEP UP TO BRISCA F1 WAS WORTH THE WAIT

Photo: Colin Casserley

BriSCA Ministox has long been the breeding ground for future talent. Drivers like Frankie Wainman Jr, Andy Smith and current world and British champion Tom Harris have all emerged from the formula for 12- to 15-year-olds.

The Evans twins, Tyrone and Lewis, turned 16 in January but have had to wait until Saturday

night to make their BriSCA F1 debut in this Covid-19-hit season. It was worth the wait as Lewis picked up his first race win in heat one and Tyrone chalked up first place in heat two and then backed that up with victory in the final at Skegness over the bank holiday weekend.

Eddie Collins led the opening laps of the final with Tyrone

Evans in pursuit. At the halfway point the young charger made his move. The duo swapped the lead for a couple of laps before Tyrone Evans pulled away for glory.

Further back, Luke Davidson was slicing his way through the field and moved into second place with a handful of laps remaining. Lee Fairhurst barged his way ahead of Collins into

third place on the final turn.

The winner Tyrone Evans said afterwards: "It's been a great day for my F1 debut, I can't thank my sponsors enough, and thanks to my dad for everything he does for me and my brother."

With heavy rain making conditions difficult, Davidson declared he was happy with second place: "The Evans boys

were getting away from the front, it's real hard to catch them but they have been driving good all night so credit to them for what they have done tonight."

Results
Round 3: 1 Tyrone Evans; 2 Luke Davidson; 3 Lee Fairhurst; 4 Eddie Collins; 5 Martin Spiers; 6 Mat Newson; 7 Lewis Evans; 8 Jake Harry; 9 Mickey Randall; 10 Mark Sargent.


Evans took his first victory

WORLD RALLYCROSS: KOUVOLA, FINLAND BY HAL RIDGE
AUGUST 29-30

Photos: fiaworldrallycross.com



Kristoffersson followed up round three win with fourth

KRISTOFFERSSON WINS THEN ERRS IN FINLAND

World Rallycross rounds in 2020 are like London buses. You wait months, then four come along all at once. Incredibly, nine days after the season-opener began in Sweden, the conclusion of round four in Finland means the series is almost halfway through.

What we do know, despite having the ultimate pace (even if it's marginal in his works-built Volkswagen Motorsport Polo), Johan Kristoffersson isn't having things all his own way.

He left the opening weekend with a victory and points lead, then dominated round three in Finland on the late-August weekend. While

he won every session on track, Kristoffersson's ultimate best lap was only 0.17 seconds clear.

The second-best single lap, once track evolution had stabilised, was held by Andreas Bakkerud while he learns his GCK Renault Megane.

On day two in Finland, the weather made a turn for the worse, and so did Kristoffersson's fortune. His Polo suffered a rare technical problem. He finished the second qualifier with a misfire, but all was resolved for Q3 and he again took the best time to remain undefeated in the Intermediate Classifications this year.

Fastest in Q2 went to Niclas

Gronholm. Increasingly confident in the 2020 Hyundai i20, now fitted with BOS suspension, Gronholm won his semi-final in challenging conditions, then made the most of an error from Kristoffersson at the first corner of the final to take the advantage.

Holding the lead throughout, first from Kristoffersson and then Mattias Ekstrom – who had retired from the semis in round three – Gronholm looked to have been too cautious. When he entered the joker detour on the final lap, Kristoffersson appeared set for another win. But, the VW man ran a touch wide on the main lap and

Gronholm stayed ahead. Ekstrom too made it up the inside of the Polo in the final turn, and in a scrum behind, Timur Timerzyanov took the last podium spot.

Results
Round 3: 1 Johan Kristoffersson (Volkswagen Polo) 4m04.669s; 2 Juha Rytönen (Hyundai i20) +3.110s; 3 Timmy Hansen (Peugeot 208); 4 Niclas Gronholm (Hyundai i20); 5 Timo Scheider (Seat Ibiza); 6 Kevin Hansen (Peugeot 208). Semi 1 winner: Kristoffersson. Semi 2 winner: Rytönen. **Round 4:** 1 Gronholm; 2 Mattias Ekstrom (Audi S1) +0.394s; 3 Timur Timerzyanov (Hyundai i20); 4 Kristoffersson; 5 T Hansen; 6 Andreas Bakkerud (Renault Megane). Semi 1 winner: Kristoffersson. Semi 2 winner: Gronholm. **Points:** 1 Kristoffersson 111; 2 Ekstrom 94; 3 Gronholm 76; 4 T Hansen 70; 5 K Hansen 64; 6 Robin Larsson (Audi S1) 59.

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OULTON PARK: GOLD CUP BY PAUL LAWRENCE

AUGUST 31

LIVINGSTON PRESUMES TO DOUBLE UP IN HISTORIC FORMULA FORD



Livingston has winning habit

After scoring his first major win on Sunday, rising Historic Formula Ford star Pierre Livingston did it again in style on Monday to complete a perfect weekend as the Cheshire track hosted the second day of the Gold Cup.

Livingston knew that if he could break the tow to his rivals, he had the pace to pull away and that's just what he did. By the time he reached Old Hall from the rolling start, Livingston had gapped the pack and he proceeded to drive away at the rate of more than a second a lap.

In the wake of the 20-year-old student, Linton Stutely, Cameron Jackson and Tom McArthur battled mightily but second place was the best they could chase and this time Jackson edged Stutely by a whisker.

Jackson later got his reward in

the second Classic FF1600 race after the planned opener was lost to two red flags. But this was just as close as then as Mike Gardner really took the fight to Jackson and it was only settled by a tenth of a second as Henry Chart and impressive 16-year-old former karter Samuel Harrison tagged along in the early stages.

It was a glorious day for rally convert Peter Smith who scored two impressive wins against tough opposition. As Smith raced at Oulton Park for the first time, he finished second on the road in the opener but inherited victory when Philip House was penalised for a false start. At the end of the day Smith won race two fair and square with a performance that belied his limited race experience, but was almost caught on the line by Richard Belcher, up from the back of the grid after his Cortina

shed its fan belt in the first race.

The hour-long Pre '66 Jaguar race delivered a class, race-long contest between the E-types of Jonathon Hughes and Jon Minshaw. "Relentless," said Minshaw after he finished second to his rival after a couple of moments on the brakes into Druids.

Single-seater racers Benn Tilley and Tom Smith both repeated their Sunday wins in 1974 Marches. Tilley had to work hard to overcome Steve Maxted (Ralt RT3) in Classic F3 and Smith was peerless in his F2 car in the Aurora Trophy. However, Tom Bradshaw was denied a second Thundersports win after his Chevron B19 suffered broken drive pegs early in the race. Instead, Goncalo Gomes (in the Chevron B23 raced by James Claridge on Sunday) swept ahead to win.

RACE WINNERS

Saloon Car Cup

Jason Hughes (Vauxhall Vectra)

Goncalo Gomes (Chevron B23)

Historic Touring Cars

Race 1: Peter Smith (Lotus Cortina)

Race 2: Smith

Pre '66 Jaguars

Jonathon Hughes (E-type)

Historic Formula Ford

Pierre Livingston (Merlyn Mk20)

Classic Formula 3

Benn Tilley (March 743)

Aurora Trophy

Tom Smith (March 742)

Classic Formula Ford

Cam Jackson (Van Diemen RF80)

Heritage/ Open FF1600

Jordan Gronkowski (Van Diemen JL012K)

Thundersports

Tom Smith (March 742)

MALLORY PARK: BARC BY PETER SCHERER

AUGUST 31

SAUNDERS LEADS WAY IN TRUNCATED JUNIOR SALOON BATTLES

It was four red flags that dominated the Junior Saloons rather than the on-track racing.

Lewis Saunders led race one from pole, but was under pressure from Deagen Fairclough, Ashley Gregory and Charlie Hand from the start. After Hand had two grassy excursions at the Esses, he lost ground on the leaders and came under

threat from Alex Solley.

They all closed up again, but it was red flagged when seventh-placed Harry Rice was defending from Ben Greenhill at the Esses and his front suspension broke. Matthew Cripps rounded off the top six but it was win number nine for Saunders.

The second race was red flagged three laps in and then again on the

fourth lap of the restart, after midfield collisions. Put to the end of the programme, the Junior Saloons were given seven minutes plus a lap, but failed to reach the first corner, as Cripps was turned over in chaos after Gregory stalled on the front row.

The race was declared at the previous two laps in the first restart, giving Saunders his

10th win, over Gregory, Solley, Harry Rice and Cripps.

With early MGOC leader Phil Walker blowing the head on his ZR's engine after it jumped out of gear, Fergus Campbell's ZR ousted Mark Baker's F at the Esses to take the first of his three race wins. He held off Dave Mellor's ZR and Walker in a processional second race, but

was playing second fiddle to Mellor in the third until they found a backmarker at the Hairpin and Campbell took the outside route to make it decisive and seal his hat-trick.

In the joint Sports Saloons and Max5 race, there were double wins for Joss Ronchetti's Talbot Sunbeam Lotus and Paul Roddison's Mazda MX-5 Mk4.

RACE WINNERS

Junior Saloons

Race 1&2: Lewis Saunders

MGOC

Race 1, 2&3: Fergus Campbell (MG ZR 170)

Max5 Championship

Race 1&2: Paul Roddison (Mazda MX-5 Mk4)

Open Sports and Saloons

Race 1&2: Joss Ronchetti (Talbot Sunbeam Lotus)

CASTLE COMBE: CCRC BY ANNA DUXBURY

AUGUST 31

COOPER ZEROES IN ON FORMULA FORD TITLE WITH A DOUBLE TOP

The Castle Combe Countdown produced an unusual sense of déjà vu, with all the winners, and almost all of the runners-up, going on to replicate their success in the second of their series' races.

Luke Cooper closed in on the FF1600 title with two wins in his Swift SC18 while championship rival Felix Fisher had a day to

forget. Cooper was virtually unchallenged in the first race while Fisher crossed the line last of a four-way battle for second. Later in the day the duo raced side-by-side until a broken suspension mount on Fisher's Ray GR06 forced his retirement. After taking two second-places at the meeting Bryce Aron

now sits runner-up in the title chase, 23 points behind 2018 champion Cooper.

Gary Prebble was victorious across all the Hot Hatch Series and Saloon Car championship races. He made it look easy in his Honda Civic in the Hot Hatch rounds, taking both wins by a significant margin, and beat his

brother Adam Prebble, whose Vauxhall Astra was suffering intermittent fuel pick-up issues, when the Saloon cars hit the track. Adam remains the championship leader with two second places from the meeting although Gary is closing in.

In the Sports Car Trophy, Mike Jenvey dominated while Nicolas

Lindberg took advantage of two speedy getaways from the line to take a brace of second places.

Kevin Jones got past the Vauxhall Tigra Silhouette of Oliver Bull at the start of the GT championship races, although in a thrilling pursuit the polesitter remained within a second of Jones throughout.

RACE WINNERS

Hot Hatch Series

Race 1&2: Gary Prebble (Honda Civic)

Sports Car Trophy

Race 1&2: Mike Jenvey (Jenvey/Gunn TS6)

Formula Ford 1600 Championship

Race 1&2: Luke Cooper (Swift SC18)

Saloon Car Championship

Race 1&2: Gary Prebble (Seat Leon Cupra T)

GT Championship

Race 1&2: Kevin Jones (Noble M12 RSR)

NATIONAL HOT RODS: BY GRAHAM BROWN

AUGUST 30-31

COOKE AND McDONALD SHARE BANK HOLIDAY WINS

In what felt like almost a return to normality the National Hot Rods got in two meetings over the August Bank Holiday, making their return to Yarmouth for the first time in a few years on the Sunday before a more traditional Monday outing at Ipswich.

Perry Cooke record his first final win in Yarmouth before Rob McDonald annexed a hat-trick the following day at Foxhall Heath.

Following the opening skirmishes in heat one in Yarmouth between Shaun Taylor and Mark Shelper, Cooke and McDonald caught them. Cooke darted under the two leaders at the same moment as McDonald

went outside. Cooke and McDonald survived the resulting three-wide charge to finish in that order only to be penalised for contact, handing the win to Shelper.

Taylor led heat two for a time as well before eventually losing out to Scott Bourne with McDonald and Cooke right in the mix again. Lee Carlin and his crowd-pleasing Peugeot 205 walked the third encounter, only to be docked for a jumped start, handing a second win to Shelper.

The final was another race to be dominated by one driver – Shane Bland – before a penalty for holding back on a restart gave the honours to Cooke as some

consolation for not getting the heat one honours.

McDonald, in a repaired car after a final smash in Yarmouth, was soon involved in what is likely to be finish of the season in Ipswich. Carlin had got well clear but McDonald worked through to second and then chased down the leader, taking to the outside of the final turn to win by a couple of centimetres.

McDonald's car was still proving more than good enough in the second race too. He soon stormed through the pack to take the lead and the win by a large margin.

With McDonald on pole, the final ought to have been a

foregone conclusion and so it proved once he'd beaten a determined looking Jack Blood into Turn 1.

Just as in the second race, interest in the final centred on the scrap for the places which featured Blood, Carl Waller-Barrett and Billy Wood.

The trio were tied together for a long while before Wood fell back just a touch, giving CW-B a free hand to try his luck with Blood. Forcing a path through the middle as they rounded a backmarker, Waller-Barrett managed to snatch second for a few seconds, but Blood stayed out wide and kept his foot in it to regain the spot.



McDonald (17) battled back for an Ipswich final win

Results

Yarmouth
Heat one: 1 Mark Shelper (Peugeot 206cc); 2 Bradley Dynes (Vauxhall Tigra); 3 Perry Cooke (Tigra); 4 Robert McDonald (Tigra); 5 Shaun Taylor (Tigra); 6 Lance Bowen (Tigra).
Heat two: 1 Scott Bourne (Tigra); 2 McDonald; 3 Cooke; 4 Taylor; 5 Tommy Miller (Peugeot 206cc); 6 Dynes. **Heat three:** 1 Shelper; 2 Bowen; 3 Lee Carlin (Peugeot 205); 4 Shane Bland (Vauxhall Tigra); 5 Aaron Dew (Ginetta G40R); 6 Chris Haird (Vauxhall

Tigra). **Final:** 1 Cooke; 2 Haird; 3 Bland; 4 Billy Wood (Vauxhall Tigra); 5 Jason Kew (G40R); 6 Stuart McLaird (G40R).

Ipswich

Heat one: 1 McDonald; 2 Carlin; 3 Terry Hunn (Ford Fiesta); 4 Carl Waller-Barrett (Tigra); 5 Jack Blood (Tigra); 6 Bourne. **Heat two:** 1 McDonald; 2 Blood; 3 Waller-Barrett; 4 Wood; 5 Gomm; 6 Andy Lane (G40R). **Final:** 1 McDonald; 2 Blood; 3 Waller-Barrett; 4 Hunn; 5 Wood; 6 Bourne. **Points:** 1 Haird 127; 2 McDonald 122; 3 Bland 118; 4 Kew 116; 5 Murray 102; 6 Wood 100.

WHAT'S ON

WHAT'S ON YOUTUBE

Our Motorsport News Q&A participant this week, Martin Rowe, has bagged many rally titles. For several reasons, his 2001 Formula Rally crown was one of the less likely.

Formula Rally was run that year after the British Rally Championship was called off due to the foot-and-mouth crisis. And, again for several reasons, it was no ordinary category. First, it had highlights on terrestrial television, and this coverage for all seven rounds is on YouTube. For our purposes though, we'll focus on the finale that resolved a season-long scrap between Rowe's Ford Puma S1600 and Justin Dale's Peugeot 106.

made up of fan-accessible single-venue events, and the footage makes plain the fervent atmosphere. The rally and title (spoiler alert) went to Dale by a scant margin. But (again, spoiler alert) some months later it passed to Rowe due to a homologation issue with Dale's 106. And Formula Rally sadly was no more, as it ran out of money...

You can watch the rally's 25 minutes of highlights at: [youtube.com/watch?v=XQpA3LPPYMM](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=XQpA3LPPYMM) or by searching for 'Formula Rally Championship 2001 Round 7 Prodrive Banbury Rally'. Plus if you fancy more, we explored the Formula Rally story in the April 1 edition of MN.

Graham Keilloh



Martin Rowe's Formula Rally bid is online

LIVE TV



F1 will head to Mugello in Italy

TUSCAN GRAND PRIX FORMULA 1

■ Practice 1: Friday, 1000hrs-1150hrs, Sky Sports F1

■ Practice 2: Friday, 1345hrs-1545hrs, Sky Sports F1

■ Practice 3: Saturday, 1045hrs-1210hrs, Sky Sports F1

■ Qualifying: Saturday, 1300hrs-1535hrs, Sky Sports F1

■ Race: Sunday, 1230hrs-1700hrs, Sky Sports F1

■ Race 2: Sunday, 1400hrs-1700hrs, Sky Sports F1

■ Race 3: Sunday, 1530hrs-1700hrs, Sky Sports F1

■ Race 4: Sunday, 1600hrs-1700hrs, Sky Sports F1

■ Race 5: Sunday, 1630hrs-1700hrs, Sky Sports F1

■ Race 6: Sunday, 1655hrs-1700hrs, Sky Sports F1

■ Race 7: Sunday, 1700hrs-1700hrs, Sky Sports F1

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■ Race 36: Sunday, 1700hrs-1700hrs, Sky Sports F1

Sky Sports F1

■ Qualifying: Friday, 1300hrs-1345hrs, Sky Sports F1

■ Race 1: Saturday, 0920hrs-1010hrs, Sky Sports F1

■ Race 2: Sunday, 0835hrs-0935hrs, Sky Sports F1

■ Race 3: Sunday, 0935hrs-0935hrs, Sky Sports F1

■ Race 4: Sunday, 1000hrs-1000hrs, Sky Sports F1

■ Race 5: Sunday, 1230hrs-1230hrs, Sky Sports F1

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■ Race 38: Sunday, 1700hrs-1700hrs, Sky Sports F1

■ Race 39: Sunday, 1700hrs-1700hrs, Sky Sports F1

LISTINGS

SATURDAY

■ **Oulton Park, Cheshire**
BARC meeting: Dunlop Endurance, Endurance Trophy, Caterham Graduates, Sports/Saloons, Kumho BMW Starts racing from 1115hrs (qualifying from 0830hrs) Admission adult £12, under 13 free Web msv.com Contact 0843 453 9000 Advance tickets only

■ **Brands Hatch, Kent**
MSVR meeting: Formula Ford, Minis, Lotus Elise, MSVR Super Cup, Racing Saloons, Production BMW, Track Attack Racing Starts racing from tba (qualifying from 0900hrs) Admission adult £12, under 13 free Web msv.com Contact 0843 453 9000 Advance tickets only

■ **Knockhill, Fife**
SMRC meeting: Citroen C1, Classic Sports/Saloons, Minis/Hot Hatches, Legends Starts racing from 1100hrs (qualifying from 0900hrs) No public admission

■ **Silverstone, Northants**
BRSCC meeting: Touring Car Trophy/VW, Mazda MX-5, Fiesta, Fiesta Junior, ST-XR Challenge, Civic Cup, Fun Cup, Clubsport Trophy Starts Saturday, racing from 1320hrs (qualifying from 0900hrs) Sunday, racing from 0950hrs (qualifying from 0900hrs) No public admission

■ **Donington Park, Leics**
MSVR meeting: F3 Cup, GT Cup, Radicals, Toyo Tyres 75,

Allcomers Starts Saturday, racing from 1215hrs (qualifying from 0905hrs) Sunday, racing from 0905hrs Admission adult £12, under 13 free Web msv.com Contact 0843 453 9000 Advance tickets only

■ **Mondello Park, Ireland**
Leinster Trophy: Formula Vee, Formula Sheane, Formula Libre, Stryker Sportscars, Legends, Fiestas, Touring Cars, Historic Racing Cars, Ginetta Junior, Future Classics, Supercars Starts Saturday, racing from 1300hrs (qualifying from 0900hrs) Sunday, racing from 1300hrs (qualifying from 0900hrs) Admission to be confirmed

■ **Snetterton, Norfolk**
750 MC meeting: BMW 116, Alfa Romeo, Formula Vee, Mazda MX-5, Toyota MR2, Sports Specials Starts racing from 1130hrs (qualifying from 0900hrs) Admission adult £12, under 13 free Web msv.com Contact 0843 453 9000 Advance tickets only

■ **Lydden Hill, Kent**
LHMC meeting: Jack Sears Trophy, Classic Alfas, HRDC AllStars Starts racing from 1320hrs (qualifying from 1030hrs) Admission adult £15, under 13 free Web lyddenhill.co.uk Contact 01304 830557 Advance tickets only

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ART EDITOR MIKE STOKOE'S
FAVOURITE OF THE WEEK!



Graham Lomax enjoyed some spectacular sights at Oulton Park



Rich Cranston's sportscar selection from the Gold Cup



Gary Hill captured this drama in British F3 at Brands Hatch



A Mercedes-Benz in flight, from Chris Collier



Richard Salisbury made a visit to Lydden



Flames: David Harbey was in the right spot

NEXT WEEK

OUT THURSDAY, SEPTEMBER 17

*Correct at time of going to press; this issue has been brought to you with help from the Royal Oak, Guildford

READERS' Q&A
TIFF NEEDELL
TV star and F1 racer answers MN readers' questions



MCLAREN'S GREATEST RACE CAR?
How the M8F is rumbling on today



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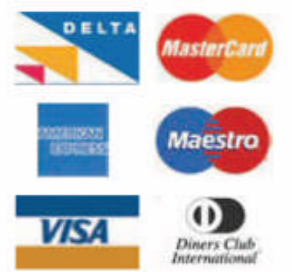


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6" x 12" Black	Each: £100	Set: (F) £579
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Mk5 - clear lamp '97-'01	£12

Side Repeaters

Clear type	£4
Amber type	£3

Rear Lights

Mk1 rear lamp RH/LH	Each £42
Mk2/3 rear lamp RH/LH	Each £53
Mk4 rear lamp RH/LH	Each £45
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Lamp Kits



Full kit: 2 drive lamps & 2 fog lamps	£389
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Lamp bar, wiring, 2 drive & 2 fog lamps



Works lamp bar kit	£171
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Cooper drive lamp (inc wiring)	£77
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Wheel Arches



Grilles

Internal or External Bonnet Release type

Cooper 8 blade (Internal)	£59
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Grille buttons	From £11

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O.E. spec stainless	£64
Chrome	£46
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Stainless	£62
Stainless Mk1	£68

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Cooper S Mk3 bonnet badge	£25
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Genuine Rear
Mini logo Pair £38 Cooper logo Pair £38

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Flat or dished spokes

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3 Clock	
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Alloy	

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Static type

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