MOTORSPORT

FUTURE OF THE BRITISH GP; CELEBRATING THE DAYTONA 500; LUNCH WITH ROY SALVADORI

VOL.84 NO.2

THE ORIGINAL MOTOR RACING MAGAZINE

MOTORSPORT

SINCE 1924

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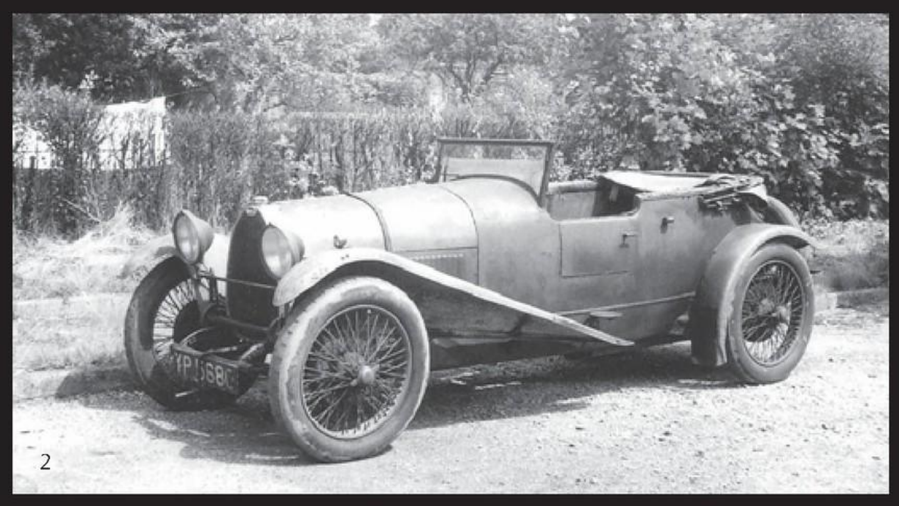
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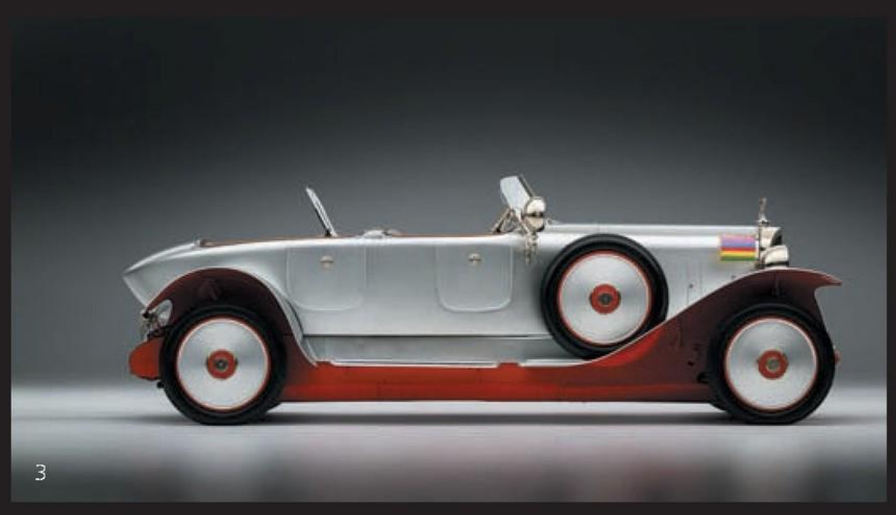


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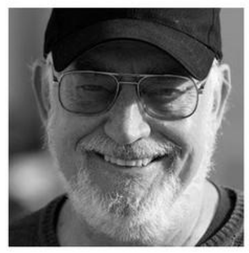
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GORDON KIRBY
He's been there and seen it all, but GK's finger is still very much on the pulse of modern US motor racing. After over 30 years as the American editor of *Autosport*, he remains one of the most outspoken and authoritative voices on the US scene. This month he tackles NASCAR for us, both past and present: the history of the Daytona speedway and the new and controversial Car of Tomorrow.



ADAM SWEETING
Adam confesses to a "misspent youth chasing pop groups", but it's stood him in good stead: he now writes about rock and classical music for the *Daily Telegraph*. But our new correspondent is no motor racing rookie. He's profiled the likes of Frank Williams, Bernie Ecclestone and Lewis Hamilton for *The Guardian* and *The Times* magazine, and now for *Motor Sport he* skilfully tackles the thorny subject of the British Grand Prix's future.



ADAM COOPER
Not content with attending every Grand Prix of the year, Adam took a trip to Monaco for the Motorsport Business Forum in December. He not only came back with a cold (it's not all that glamorous at this time of year), he also returned full of F1 news (p10), from the lowdown on the spy saga to new wind tunnel regs. Next stop, the F1 team launch season. Wonder how many times he'll hear "this season will be much better than the last..."

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Volume 84 Number 2
EIGHTY-FIFTH YEAR OF PUBLICATION

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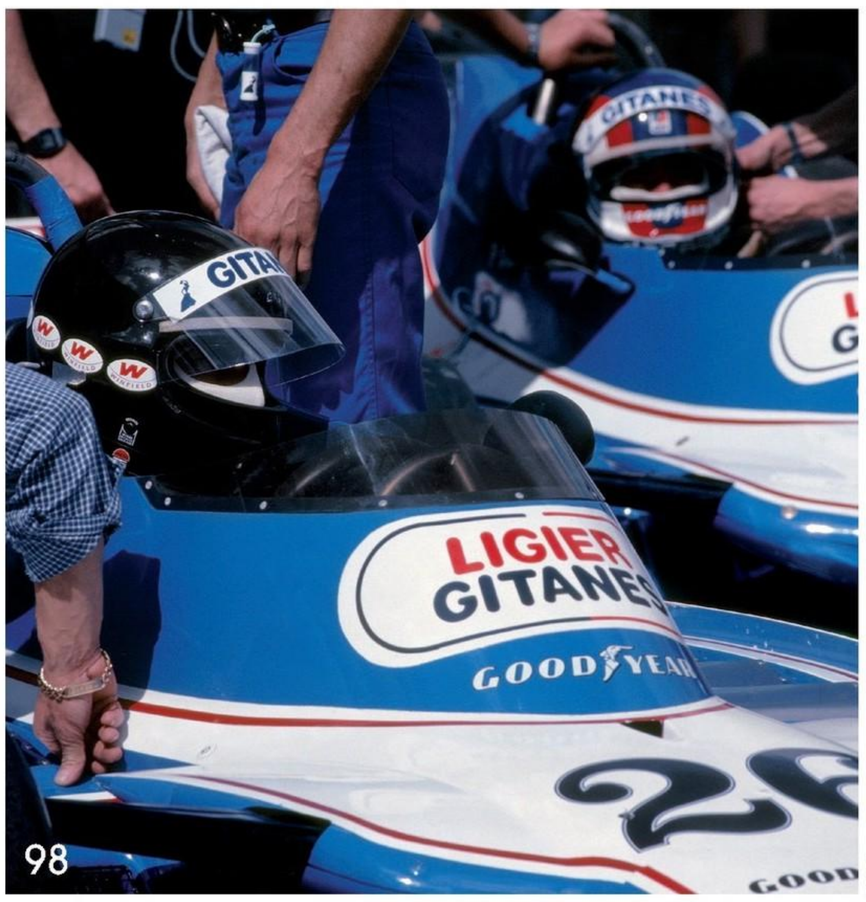
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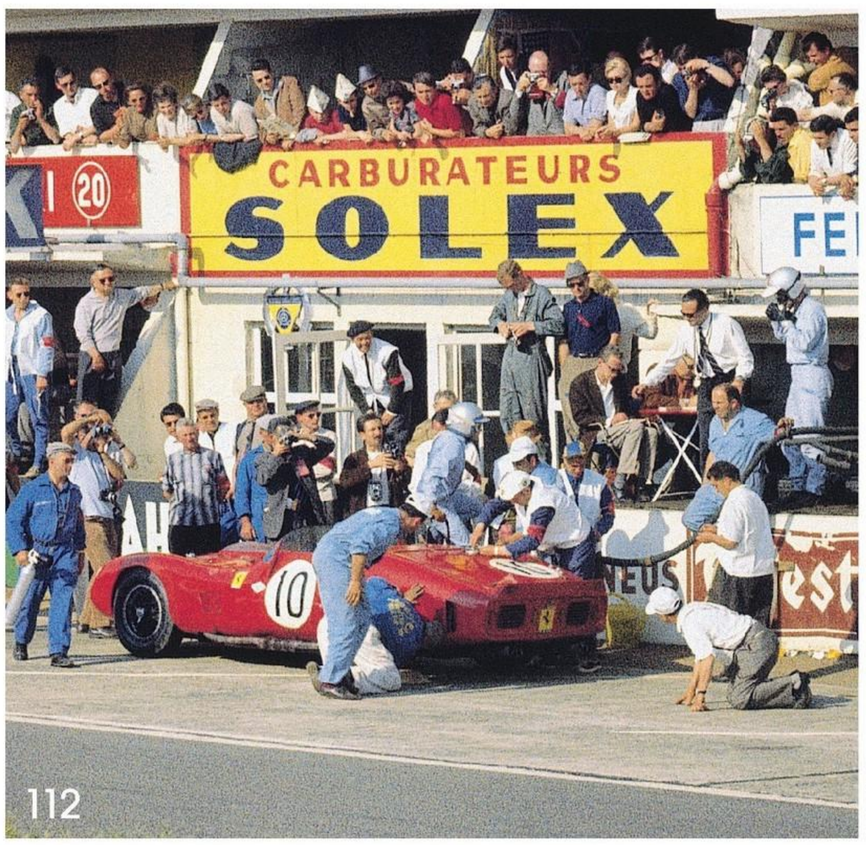
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JOHN DAVENPORT

This month our 'man in the mud' reports back from the sand and dust of the Classic Safari Rally. He sent his copy after a mammoth journey "lasting some 24 hours in total – taxi, plane, plane, train, coach, car and lots of hanging about". No sign of fatigue in the copy, John! But no surprise there: as a famed co-driver, journalist and team manager, no one knows more about stage stamina than Mr Davenport.



DOUG NYE

Funny how things work out on this magazine. In the same month we run an article about the old rectangular Phillip Island track, Doug tells us about his own recent Antipodean adventure on the Classic Adelaide Rally. And his journey home beats yours, John: a brain-frazzling 36 hours! Doug also brings us "everything you never wanted to know" about a winning Williams (his words, not ours!) and stories of crashing Ford Galaxies.



ED FOSTER

First time out for our keen young editorial assistant, and what does he get? A wet and windy clubbie at Pembrey? Not quite. Try a five-day hooley around the continent in an Aston Martin DB9. The rest of us are not bitter. But let's put it this way: it's all downhill from here, Ed... Check out Foster's Beaujolais adventure on page 108. The DB9 has been returned, by the way, and Ed's back on his scooter.

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Matters of Moment



Back in the chair

Last month, outgoing editor-in-chief Andrew Frankel signed off on this page by saying the future of *Motor Sport* has never looked brighter. Now the torch has been passed to me to uphold the values, standards and passions of this wonderful magazine as it enters its 85th year. It's a responsibility I accept (once again – I've been here before!) with a small pinch of trepidation, and a large dose of excitement.

Andrew has played a significant role in leading the magazine in a new direction and, although his hand is no longer on the tiller, he will continue to write and be associated with the title. Andrew, thank you for all your hard work. We won't be deviating from the current path – but we will be quickening the pace in the coming months.

Actually, 'new direction' is something of a misnomer to describe our current evolution. It's not new at all. For just under 10 years the magazine concentrated solely on the history of the sport, but previously it was very forward-thinking and no one encapsulated that spirit more than *Motor Sport's* Continental Correspondent, Denis Jenkinson.

How fitting then, that it should be his old friend Nigel Roebuck who is charged with reaffirming our position as the true voice of the sport. Our new editor-in-chief is respected around the world for the quality and weight of his writing, and if anyone could be said to have inherited Jenks's position in racing, it would be Nigel. Read his words on Formula 1 and beyond exclusively in these pages every month.

There's more good news. The number of pages in the magazine is to increase to accommodate extra content. So there will be no dilution of our acclaimed stories about the past; just the addition of more cutting-edge coverage of the contemporary sport. The best of both worlds – and exciting times, indeed.

A 'root and branch' investigation. It's one of those modern business-speak phrases we have got used to hearing of late. Every organisation, from the spectacularly incompetent Football Association to the English primary school system, seems to be humbly promising a spot of self-analysis in the wake of public humiliation. But in our little corner of the world, don't expect any hint of self-abasement from a body in dire need of critical introspection.

The FIA answers to no one, ruling the sport to its own agenda. Forget the team owners, the major car manufacturers, the sponsors who plough millions into the sport. They are patronised and coerced into playing to the tune demanded by an organisation that rules by intimidation. And woe betide anyone who shows any sign of mutiny.

But finally, patience is wearing thin. At every level.

Both McLaren and Renault fell foul of the FIA regulations in 2007 in separate espionage cases. Both were bang-to-rights cases, as they were caught in illegal possession of information from rival teams. They were guilty. But are we really to believe McLaren was one hundred million times more guilty than Renault?

The FIA has backed itself into a corner on this subject, and its response is to attack. First Sir Jackie Stewart was verbally abused for daring to speak out, now a column written by Martin Brundle has resulted in a writ being issued to *The Sunday Times*. Both men are respected; both only stated exactly what many paddock insiders were thinking.

Stewart has publicly called for an investigation into the running of the FIA. He is quite right to do so. He wants a process of wholesale structural change, from top to bottom. So do many who are too afraid to say so. And so do we.

Damien Smith

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Sutton

FLAVIO BRIATORE and Ron Dennis have both faced spy scandals in 2007, but with very different consequences

No Renault fine, but McLaren still sweats

Renault was found guilty of possessing McLaren data but has avoided punishment, while McLaren's trials continue

The Formula 1 spy scandal is set to rumble on after FIA president Max Mosley scheduled another World Motor Sport Council hearing concerning McLaren for February 14.

The news came the day after the WMSC found Renault guilty of possessing confidential McLaren information but chose not to apply any penalty, as there was no evidence that it had been used to improve the performance of the R27.

The February hearing is the direct result of an in-depth investigation by the FIA into the design of McLaren's new MP4-23. A team spent several weeks at the Woking factory, and lawyers were even called in to question engineers.

Mosley has made it clear that the report which was compiled for him by the FIA technical department indicates that the team has questions to answer about the possible use of Ferrari intellectual property.

"We very much hoped that the investigation of McLaren would be an end of the matter," said Mosley, "but as you will have gathered it isn't, or wasn't. We've received a report that makes it necessary to have another hearing.

"We wouldn't have another hearing and go through all this again, and bring people from all over the world, unless there was good reason.

"I should tell you that the technical department was assisted by a very big firm of international lawyers plus a team of forensic computer experts from Deloitte."

McLaren has received a copy of the report, whose appendices detail the FIA's causes for concern. Mosley has indicated that the team still has the opportunity to address those areas and make relevant changes before February 14.

If, however, McLaren is found guilty of using Ferrari intellectual property, the consequences could be severe. Last September the WMSC chose to punish only the team and protect the battle for the drivers' World Championship, but this time there would be no such separation, and thus any punishment would also apply to Lewis Hamilton and his team-mate.

"If there was any negative finding about 2008, and it's a very big if, it would apply to everybody," said Mosley. "It would only be based on an unfair advantage, and that applies to both [team and driver], which was my view in the last case. I was wrong, as it turned out, for the championship outcome."

In contrast, the FIA has accepted that Renault did not use any of the information taken by engineer Phil Mackereth when he moved across from McLaren in September 2006. Two days before the Monaco WMSC hearing, Charlie Whiting visited Renault's Enstone factory to study the design processes involved in the R27, and his report played a key part in the evidence that helped to exonerate the team.

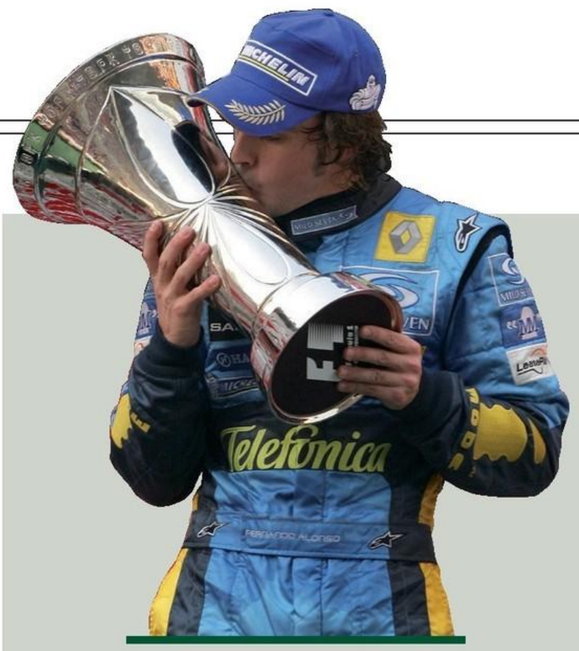
The WMSC agreed that there "was insufficient evidence to establish that the information was used in such a way as to interfere with or to have an impact on the championship".

In the light of McLaren's $100 million fine the lack of a penalty generated considerable criticism, although in fact the outcome mirrored that of the original McLaren hearing in July, when there was found to be no evidence that Ferrari information had been used by the team.

In addition Mosley stressed that only four drawings were deemed to have been shown to his design colleagues by Mackereth, and that the amount of information involved was considerably less than the 780 pages obtained from former Ferrari employee Nigel Stepney by Mike Coughlan at McLaren. Renault's willingness to co-operate with the investigation also helped.

As with the original McLaren verdict, the FIA left the door open for further punishment by stating: "It should be noted that in the event of new information coming to light which calls into question the WMSC's conclusions in this decision, this matter may be re-opened by the FIA."

• *Nigel Roebuck on the case, p32*



"I chose Renault in the end considering the commitment to the sport and because of the strong track record"

FERNANDO ALONSO

Alonso, Piquet for Renault

Fernando Alonso was finally confirmed as a Renault driver for 2008 just four days after the team escaped any censure from the WMSC in the spy affair.

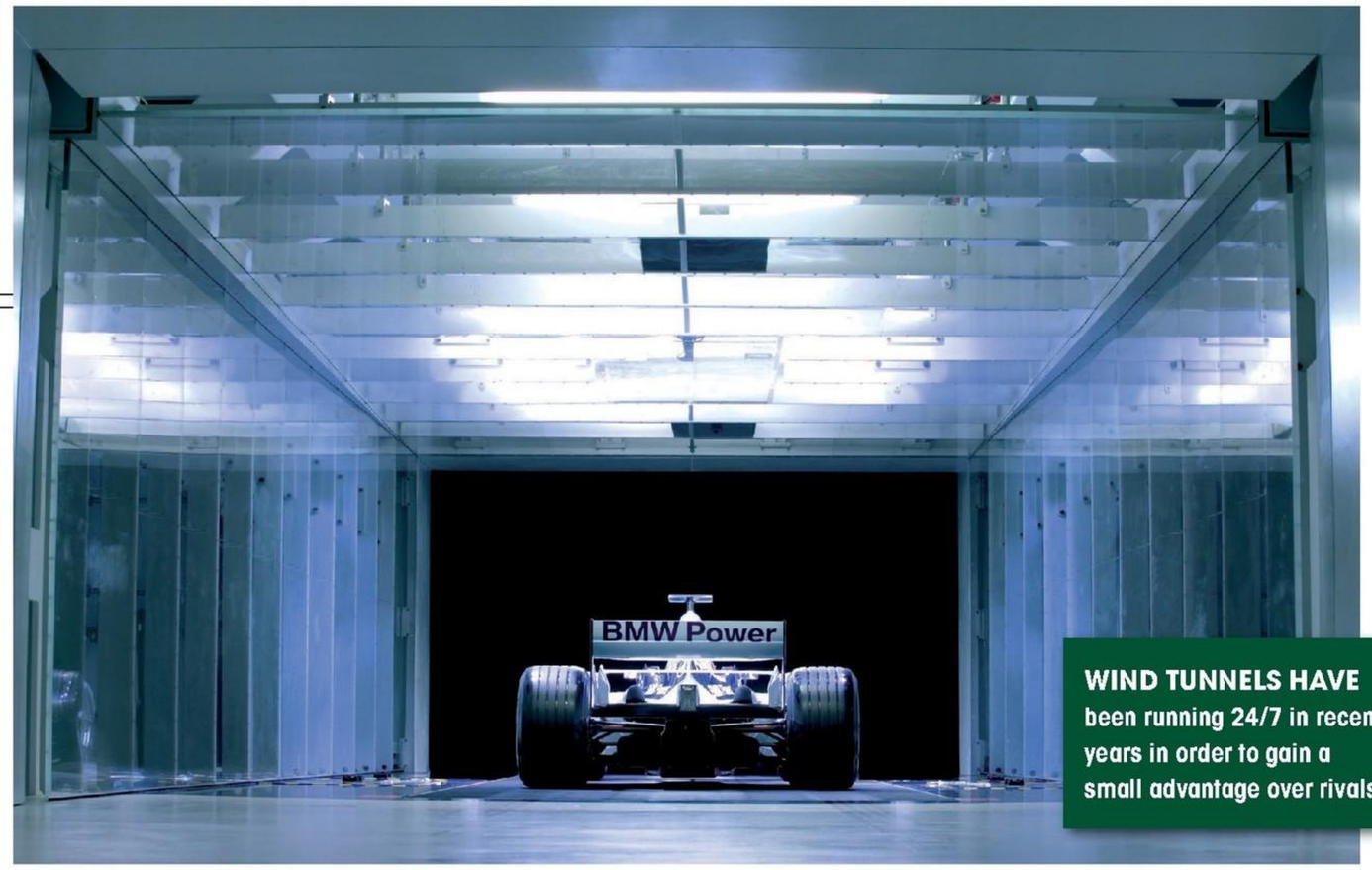
Team and driver had been unable to commit to each other until it was clear whether the Anglo-French outfit would suffer a penalty.

Alonso seems also to have capitulated on his demand for a one-year deal that would free him up to join Ferrari in 2009, should the opportunity arise. The Renault main board had been demanding a three-year arrangement, but a compromise of two years has been reached.

The Spaniard had also talked to Red Bull Racing and Toyota among others, and was reported by some sources to be getting a little desperate until the Renault deal was finally concluded in mid-December. Afterwards he said: "I chose Renault in the end considering the commitment to the sport and because of the strong track record."

He will be partnered by Nelson Piquet Jr, who has been promoted from the role of third driver. The departing Heikki Kovalainen, who is managed by team boss Flavio Briatore, has been linked with drives at McLaren and Toyota.

LAT



WIND TUNNELS HAVE been running 24/7 in recent years in order to gain a small advantage over rivals

Wind tunnel clampdown

A strict clampdown on wind tunnel usage was at the heart of a comprehensive package of cost-cutting measures for 2008 outlined by Max Mosley at the World Motor Sport Council in December. The details will be thrashed out at a meeting between Mosley and team bosses in Paris on January 11.

FIA president Mosley wants teams to use just one wind tunnel which would operate for only eight hours a day, five days a week. It has become common practice in recent years for teams to employ extra staff so that tunnels can run 24/7. Among those with two on-site tunnels at their disposal are Williams, BMW and Toyota. There will also be a ban on using full-size cars in tunnels, with a cap on the model size of 60 per cent.

In order to stop teams from diverting resources into replicating tunnel work with Computational Fluid Dynamics, there will be controls on both the equipment and personnel available for CFD. There will also be restrictions on practical aero testing in terms of straight-line running.

"We think this is all very realistic," said Mosley. "It's desperately necessary now to get some of the costs under control. People are talking about making 1:1 wind tunnels and getting super computers on super computers, and somehow we've got to get a grip on this or we're going to lose teams.

"We've had quite a lot of dialogue. Ferrari support it, and so do some of the other teams."

Although only the aerodynamic cutbacks have been explained in detail so far, the FIA says that it also intends to place wide-ranging restrictions on "rig testing, design and manufacturing, suspension and brakes, hydraulic systems, bodywork, weight distribution, circuit testing and the number of personnel at races."



Sutton

Stewart queries FIA role

Jackie Stewart has launched a stinging attack on the way the FIA governs the sport, questioning the scope of the role of the president.

Although Stewart didn't name Max Mosley in his speech at the Motor Sport Business Forum in Monaco, this was the latest chapter in a war of words between the two.

"I honestly want to avoid any unpleasantness between individuals in what I'm now going to say," Stewart told the audience. "There's been more than enough in past weeks. But for the future stability of motor sport, and F1 in particular, I believe there has to be the removal of any concern about the genuine independence and transparency of the governance of the sport by the FIA." He went on to suggest that the next FIA president should not be a motor sport insider, but should be headhunted from business.

The day after Stewart's speech the FIA revealed that it is taking legal action against *The Sunday Times* in respect of a column in which Martin Brundle had described the McLaren spy affair as a "witch-hunt." A furious Brundle replied to the charge in print that weekend, and in turn drew a withering response from the FIA.



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PORSCHE

NEWS IN BRIEF



Two-time Indianapolis 500 winner Hélio Castroneves recently won America's most popular TV show, *Dancing with the Stars*. Hélio beat Spice Girl Mel B in the final in front of 22.8 million viewers.

Almost 40 years after his last race, Jim Clark is to be celebrated on screen. A film festival will take place at Eynsham Hall, Oxfordshire on February 23. For more information go to www.jimclarkfilmfestival.com

British driver Ed Tilley has been given the chance to take part in the 2008 ARCA series and hopes to make the step up to NASCAR's premier division in the future. If successful Tilley will become the first British driver in the NASCAR series.

Michael Schumacher won the International Challenge of Go-Kart Champs in November in Florianopolis, Brazil. The seven times F1 champion finished two points clear of second-placed Luciano Burti and 11 ahead of last year's winner, Felipe Massa.

Juan Pablo Montoya was confirmed as the 2007 'Rookie of the Year' in the NASCAR Nextel Cup series. Montoya admitted that the term 'rookie' should be considered a loose one considering the amount of experience he has.

British racing driver Richard Westbrook won a brand new Porsche Carrera road car after being crowned Champion of the Porsche Supercup. Westbrook has now won the title twice in a row.



FORMULA 1 WILL reintroduce slicks and ban tyre-warmers at the start of 2009

Slicks back in groove

It was a case of back to the future in post-season Formula 1 testing as drivers prepared for 2008 by running without traction control, while at the same time experimenting with Bridgestone slick tyres, which are due to return in 2009.

In 2008 all teams have to run with a common ECU supplied on the FIA's behalf by McLaren Electronic Systems. As part of the package, traction and launch control has gone, and for many younger drivers the tests at Barcelona and Jerez represented their first opportunity to drive an F1 car without such aids. Teams not only had to adjust their cars to make up for the lack of traction control, but also adapt to the MES system, a process that some have found tricky.

In the event, braking for rather than accelerating out of corners provided the key change, as the new rules also outlaw the engine braking systems that in effect replicated ABS. It took drivers some time to adjust to the lack of support from the systems, and it's anticipated that mistakes under braking will be far more common next season.

At Bridgestone's behest, teams ran with slicks for the first time since 1997. In a straight swap they proved to be some 2sec faster than grooved tyres, but when cars ran with lower downforce to replicate the 2009 rules, they were slower. Some also ran the slicks without using tyre blankets, which are outlawed in '09.

Timo Glock had his first run in a Toyota TF107 at the Jerez test, while Sébastien Bourdais logged more miles for Scuderia Toro Rosso. The dearth of available seats was underlined by the appearance of veterans Ralf Schumacher and Giancarlo Fisichella at Force India, although after driving the car the German indicated that he does not want to race for the team.

Schumacher top in testing

Michael Schumacher continues to insist that he has no desire to race a Grand Prix car again, despite his astonishing speed on his return to testing with Scuderia Ferrari.

After a brief demo run at Fiorano whetted his appetite, Schumacher asked if he could have a proper outing, and the team obliged by giving him two days at Jerez. Some 13 months after his last race, the German was back in the groove within a handful of laps, and astonishingly topped the times both days. Early indications suggested that he wouldn't drive again, but he returned for another two days at Barcelona, where he ran with slicks and embroiled himself in a development programme.

The team insisted that Michael's huge experience provided a valuable insight into running without traction control, and with slicks and 2009 downforce levels. Schumacher himself implied that he would take a back seat once the new car arrives and the race drivers need all the miles they can get, but didn't rule out having another go. "It needs to make sense for the team to make me drive," he explained.



JOHN SURTEES demonstrates the Mercedes W125 at last year's Brooklands Centenary Festival

LAT

The return of the Double Twelve

The Brooklands Motoring Festival is to feature a competition named after the famous Double Twelve meetings run by the Junior Car Club from 1929. The event, on June 28-29, will combine a Concours d'Elegance and a series of driving tests.

The Brooklands Double Twelve was created as a solution to complaints about the noise of the circuit's proposed 24-hour race, with cars in the Double Twelve running for 24 hours over two days in order to avoid night racing. In these events the elegance of the car (and indeed its crew!) was seen as equally important to the skill of its drivers.

As with the Brooklands Centenary Festival of last year, cars and motorcycles from the Brooklands era will feature, but there will also be classes for more modern classics. In addition, there will be displays from the Mercedes-Benz Silver Arrows Team, Formula 1, Formula 3 and other modern cars.

Obituary
Art Arfons (1926-2007)

Art Arfons was famous for his 'scrapyard approach' to land-speed record-breaking. When others spent $250,000 on a car, he managed to beat their speeds by spending as little as $10,000. His 'Green Monster' was made by that philosophy: the parachutes were released by two shotguns, while the J79 jet engine he found on a scrap heap for $625. A day after calling General Electric to ask for a manual, a Colonel from Washington arrived at his door to tell him it was classified and he couldn't have it. Unperturbed, he stunned the military by rebuilding the engine unassisted; he went on to create a car that helped take the land-speed record from 400 to 600mph.



Arfons was buried in his home town of Akron with a spanner in each hand, a jar of salt from the Bonneville salt flats and a J79 manual.

Obituary
Tony Fall (1940-2007)

With the death of Tony Fall, rallying has to mourn one of its most versatile and charming characters as well as a raconteur who enlivened many a gathering. At the age of 67, Tony was doing what he enjoyed most, working with fellow rally men as an official on the East African Safari when, at the night halt in Arusha, he passed away in his sleep.



His rally career started while he was working as a car salesman for Ian Appleyard in Bradford and his first international success came when he won a Coupe des Alpes in 1965 at the wheel of a Mini Cooper. With works assistance, he won the Circuit of Ireland the following year and then the Polish Rally in a factory car. He won the Three Cities Rally with a BMC 1800 in '67 and then did his first Safari in one in '68. He also drove an 1800 on the London-Sydney, finishing 24th.

When BMC closed, he moved to Lancia, getting disqualified from first place in Portugal in 1969. He subsequently drove for Datsun, Ford, BMW, VW and Peugeot. With Ford he won the Rally of the Incas in '69 and came sixth on the 1970 World Cup with footballer Jimmy Greaves. With Datsun he won the Welsh Rally and the Ethiopian Highland Rally in '71.

In 1974, he started up his own business running and preparing Opels in England and was sufficiently successful that three years later he was invited to run the whole European operation. He moved to Germany and commenced a long struggle with General Motors management that finally resulted, among other successes, in Walter Röhrl winning the World Rally Championship in 1982 and Ari Vatanen the Safari in 1983. Tony tried to persuade GM to go down the 4x4 route by developing special Kadetts for the Paris-Dakar of 1986 but the death of Group B brought his tenure at Opel to an end.

He subsequently returned to Britain and took over Safety Devices, building it up gradually into a company that did more than offer rollcages. He had kept a Datsun 240Z from the old days and, often accompanied by Yvonne Mehta, demonstrated it exuberantly everywhere from Goodwood to Chatsworth. Perhaps the fondest memories that the rally world will have of Tony are his duologues with co-driver Mike Wood, describing their incidents and scrapes rallying together during the '60s and '70s.

John Davenport

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Rally winners mark 75th

Eight former winners of Britain's biggest rally were present when the 2007 Wales Rally GB celebrated the 75th anniversary of the event formerly known as the RAC Rally.

Three winning drivers and five co-drivers came together at the event's ceremonial start in Cardiff last November, including 1965 winner Rauno Aaltonen, 1989 winner Pentti Airikkala and Juha Kankkunen, three-time winner in 1987, '91 and '93.

Jimmy McRae drove the Subaru Impreza that his son Colin used to win the 1995 World Rally Championship over the start ramp, and was joined by Colin's former co-driver Derek Ringer, a double Rally GB winner.

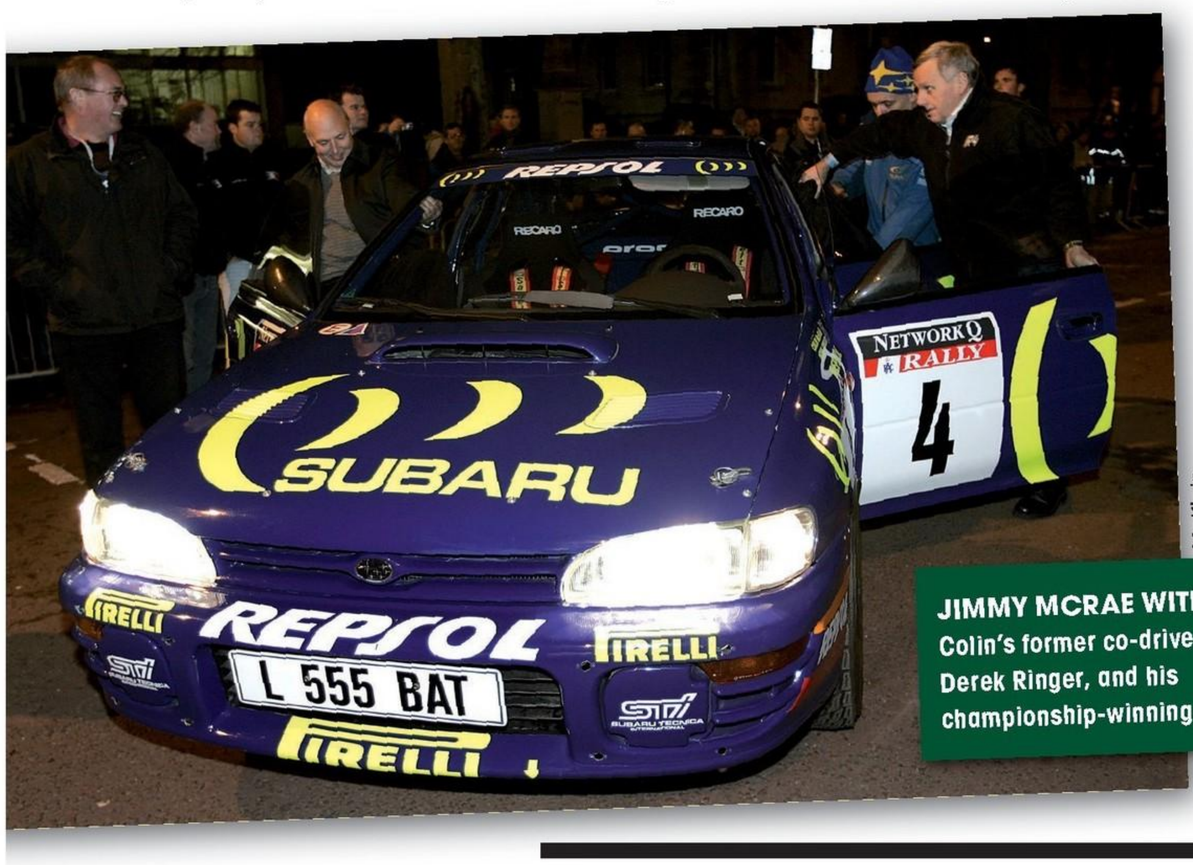
Other winning co-drivers present included Stuart Turner (1960), Tony Mason (1972), Robert Reid (1998, '99 and 2000) and Nicky Grist (1993 and '97).

The cars on show included an original 1932 Lanchester, identical to the car that won the inaugural RAC International Rally, and the Jaguar XK120 driven to victory in 1953 by Ian Appleyard.

Jimmy McRae recently returned to the wheel of a Ford Escort Mk2 to finish second in the Roger Albert Clark Rally in November, his first event since the death of his son Colin and grandson Johnny in a helicopter accident in September.

McRae drove the Escort he used during the 2007 British Historic Rally Championship to battle for victory with the similar car of Steve Bannister, only to lose out when he was hit by two punctures on the final day.

"It was Jimmy's decision to compete," said co-driver Andy Richardson. "It's what Colin would have wanted – for Jimmy to get back out there and do what he loves."



McKlein

JIMMY MCRAE WITH Colin's former co-driver, Derek Ringer, and his championship-winning car

A historic first for Castle Combe

For the first time in its 58-year history, the Castle Combe circuit will host a two-day historic racing festival in 2008 when the weekend of August 2/3 is turned over to classic action. The new event will bring together the traditional Top Hat races, which have run on Easter Monday in previous years, with the regular early August visit from a number of HSCC championships. The Top Hat races will be held on Saturday, with the HSCC action on Sunday.



LAT



LAT

GP MASTERS COMES TO AN END

The short-lived Grand Prix Masters race series for ex-Formula 1 stars seems to be at an end after the company behind the series was officially wound up in London's High Court. Chassis supplier Delta Motorsport and sponsor Altech brought the action, which came more than a year after the last event for the series at Silverstone in the summer of 2006. Races were planned for the second half of 2007 in South Africa in September and Qatar in November, but neither went ahead.

NEWS IN BRIEF

To cope with overflowing Formula Junior grids in Britain, the Formula Junior Historic Racing Association is creating a new 'Junior Junior' series for 2008, the category's 50th anniversary season.

The Coppa Supercortemaggiore sports car races at Monza in 1954, '55 and '56 will be remembered on June 7/8 when a race for the Woodcote Trophy for pre-56 sports is run at the Italian track.

The Brabham BT38 that became the base for the 1975 British Hillclimb Championship-winning Pilbeam of Alastair Douglas-Osborn will return to racing next season in the hands of Michael Hibberd.

A new championship of European navigational rallies will run over six events and be known as the European Classic Rallye Cup. Challenging navigation is promised and the opening event is the International Coppa d'Europa in Holland in early April.

The Vintage Sports-Car Club has expanded the list of pre-1941 post-vintage thoroughbred cars that are eligible to compete in club events. Marques brought into the PVT list include Crossley, Daimler, Franklin, Lanchester, Rover, SS, Tatra and Triumph.

Women from rallying have produced a Pacenotes & Pearls calendar to raise money for the Richard Burns Foundation. Michele Mouton, WRC co-driver Gemma Price, Natalie Barrett and Pauline Gullick have all been photographed. Order online at www.pacenotesandpearls.co.uk

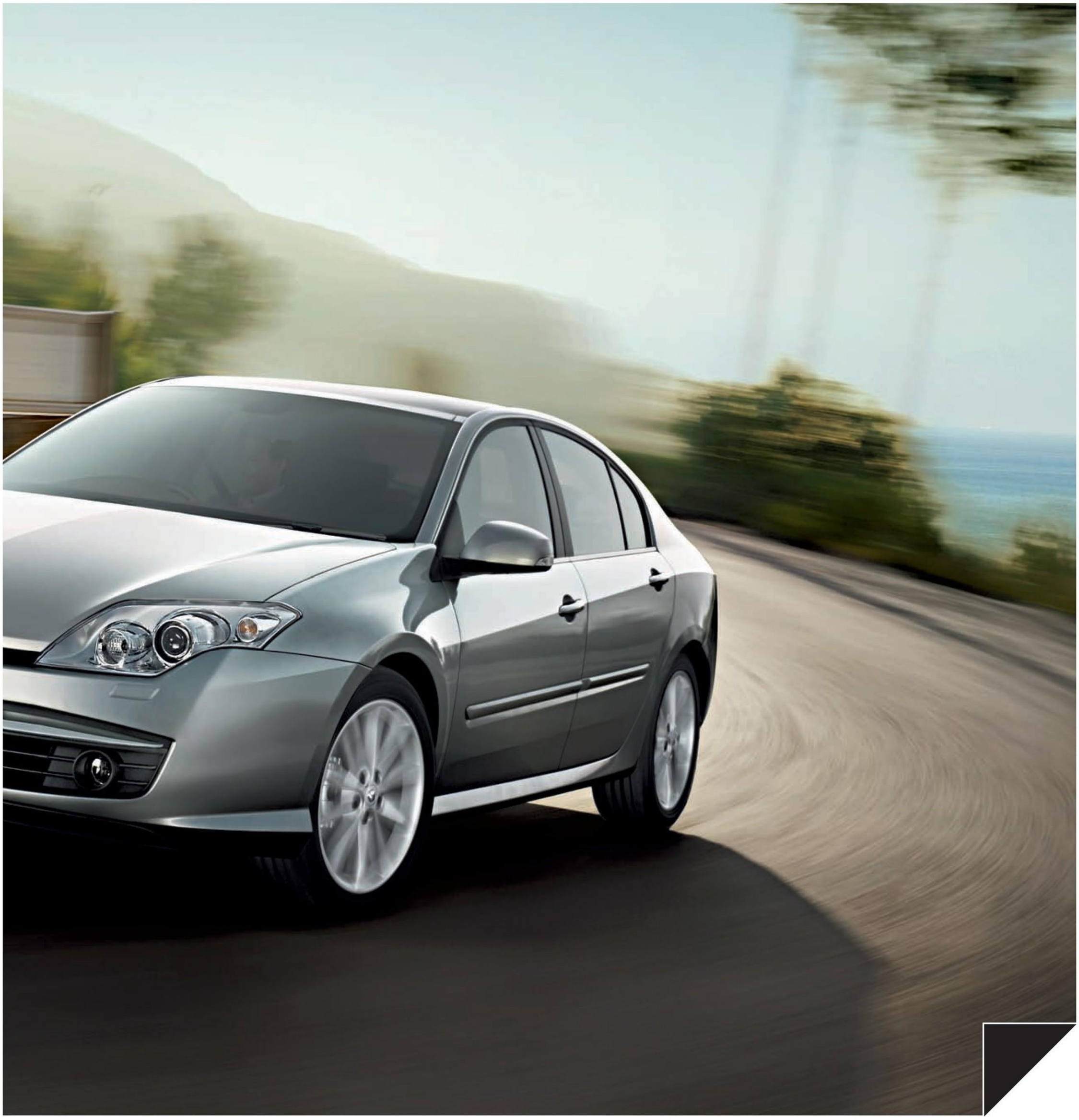


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Price record broken

Sometimes you can't predict what sole-survivors will sell for

When extremely rare cars come up for auction, it is usually quite hard to put an estimate on them. The final price is decided more by how many people are bidding rather than what the car is really worth. Bonhams recently sold the world's oldest surviving Rolls-Royce for a record £3.9 million when their estimate was a paltry £1m. The auction house isn't to blame – how could they predict how keen bidders will be?

To most of us, paying such a sum for four wheels, which may or may not be driven, seems ludicrous. It depends entirely, however, on how you look at it. A Gulfstream G550 private jet will set you back $60m (£29m) and there are more than 124 of those. The Rolls starts to look affordable, until of course you learn that the entire Roman Empire was sold at auction in 193 AD for 6250 drachmas – an extremely rough calculation takes that to about £700,000 in today's money. Admittedly there was probably more upkeep with the Empire and the highest bidder, Didius Julianus, was killed two months later.



1956 Ferrari GT Boano 0553 was fully restored in 2006



Glöcker's third, and heaviest, Porsche weighed only 1133lb

The moral of the story? Take a car's estimate with a large pinch of salt and never underestimate what a one-off or a rare car might fetch. Certain makes of car are well known for doing exactly this. Obviously Rolls-Royce springs to mind but also that Italian marque, *la Ferrari*. One car which might and hopefully will surpass its estimate in the coming weeks is a 1956 Ferrari GT. Number 0553 is featuring in the Gooding and Company auction on January 19 and is one of the seven pre-production 'low roof' all-alloy cars bodied by Boano. Although the 250GT was conceived as a road car, 0553 has been race and rally prepared and houses the original engine earning it the Ferrari Classiche Certification (whereby Ferrari certifies that the car is original and correct for a substantial sum). For this piece of Italian history, the estimate is $950,000-1.2m (£460-580,000).

The day before, RM Auctions is selling a 1952 Glöcker-Porsche Roadster by Weidenhausen. This, the third of the Glöcker Porsches, won the 1952 German sportscar championship with Walter Glöcker's cousin Helm behind the wheel. The car has been raced on and off over the past 50 years and has recently undergone a full restoration. This player in Porsche's early story has an estimate of $1.6–1.9m (£775-920,000).

This same auction also features the third of three factory competition Cobras. The »»



This brace of ex-Paddy Hopkirk Minis go under the hammer on February 28

1963 Shelby AC Cobra, chassis number CSX2011, was the first of the trio to be sold to the public and went on to race from 1963 through to 1971. It is estimated to achieve somewhere between $1.75m and $2.25m (£848,500-1m).

Perhaps one of the most interesting auctions in the coming months is the H&H sale on February 28. A 1967 works Austin Mini Cooper S, a 1964 works Morris Mini Cooper S and a 1935 Alfa Romeo 6C 2300 Pescara Spyder are all due to go under the hammer.

The '64 Morris Cooper S, registered CRX 90B, was raced in that year's RAC Rally by Paddy Hopkirk and was rebuilt by the works in 1966. It is described as being in excellent overall condition and is expected to fetch £40-45,000.

The Austin Cooper S, registration OBL 45F, was a circuit racer which competed in the 1969 Brands Hatch International Meeting and was then rebuilt for the 1969 Tour de France where, driven by Hopkirk, it finished first in class and 14th overall. The car has been restored to its Brands Hatch 1969 specification and has an estimate of £30-35,000.



The body of Il Duce's Alfa is widely held to be a one-off

The Alfa Romeo was built specially for Benito Mussolini and was delivered to Il Duce in August 1935. The car raced in the Mille Miglia the following year where, despite fuel troubles, it finished third in class and averaged 93.111kph (57.858mph). The general consensus is that Alfa Romeo made only 60 6C 2300 Pescara cars, of which this is the sole known surviving Spyder. The estimate on this one is £600-800,000.

Other cars of interest in the coming weeks include a 1966 Lola T70 Spider (£200-250,000) and a 1970 Porsche 911 Carrera 3.0 RS to RSR specification (POA), which are featuring in the January 12 Coys auction.

There is certainly no lack of machinery coming up for sale over the next few months, and don't be surprised if particularly rare cars go for well above their estimate. Some of them might even be more interesting than a Gulfstream and easier to handle than the Roman Empire.

AROUND THE DEALERS

Competition cars currently for sale here and abroad



BENETTON B190-04

Chassis B 190-04 was driven by Nelson Piquet in 1990 and left the factory in 2000 when Benetton disposed of its Formula 1 cars. In 2005 it was completely rebuilt to its original specification with a Cosworth HB 3.5 V8 engine, and has been tested extensively. The car is race-ready and is eligible for various historic Formula 1 championships, where it would be a serious contender for honours. A large selection of spare parts can be bought at extra cost, the price depending on the parts required. 145,000 euros. Tel: 0033 477 200 190. Contact: Florent Moulin, www.florentmoulin.com



FERRARI F93A 3.5 V12

Chassis 113 was campaigned by Jean Alesi in 1993, finishing second at the Italian GP and third in Monaco. It comes with everything needed to run the car, a spare set of wheels and an entry to the official Ferrari demonstration at the Monaco Historic Grand Prix in May. POA. Tel: 020 7591 0127. Contact: Jonathan Kaiser, www.carsinternational.com



BIZZARRINI 5300 GT

Fully restored in 2005 by Foxcraft Engineering as an FIA Appendix K period F historic racer. With a 460bhp, 327cu in Chevrolet V8, it has been raced across Europe by Bill Wykeham and John Bendall and won the GD Masters series. It is in pristine condition and ready to race. POA. Tel: 020 7385 3377. Contact: Bill Wykeham, www.wykehams.co.uk



ASTON MARTIN DB4

This well-known front-running DB4 Lightweight, chassis number DB4/129/R, is complete and ready to race. The car has a 4.5-litre engine producing 400bhp and 350lb ft of torque, and is equipped with a full harness, T45 rollcage, dry and wet tyres, and an integral fire extinguisher system. POA. Tel: 020 7401 8008. Contact: Peter Stratford, www.astonlondon.com

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AUCTION DIARY

JANUARY 12/20 Barrett-Jackson, Greatest Collector Car event, Scottsdale, Arizona. *Tel: 001 480 421 6694*

JANUARY 12 Coys, Autosport, Grand Prix, competition, touring and rally cars and collectors items, NEC, Birmingham. *Tel: 020 8614 7888*

JANUARY 16/20 Russo and Steele, Scottsdale, Arizona. *Tel: 001 602 252 2697*

JANUARY 18 RM Auctions, vintage motor cars, Phoenix, Arizona. *Tel: 001 519 352 4575*

JANUARY 19 Gooding and Company, Scottsdale, Arizona. *Tel: 001 310 899 1960*

FEBRUARY 9 Bonhams, Retromobile, Paris, France. *Tel: 020 7468 5801*

FEBRUARY 15/17 RM Auctions, The Florida Collector Car Auction, Greater Fort Lauderdale, Florida. *Tel: 001 519 352 4575*

FEBRUARY 26 H&H, Automobilia, The Centaur, Cheltenham Racecourse. *Tel: 01925 730630*

FEBRUARY 26 BCA, Classic Cars, Blackbushe, Surrey. *Tel: 01252 877137*

FEBRUARY 28 H&H, Cars, The Centaur, Cheltenham Racecourse. *Tel: 01925 730630*

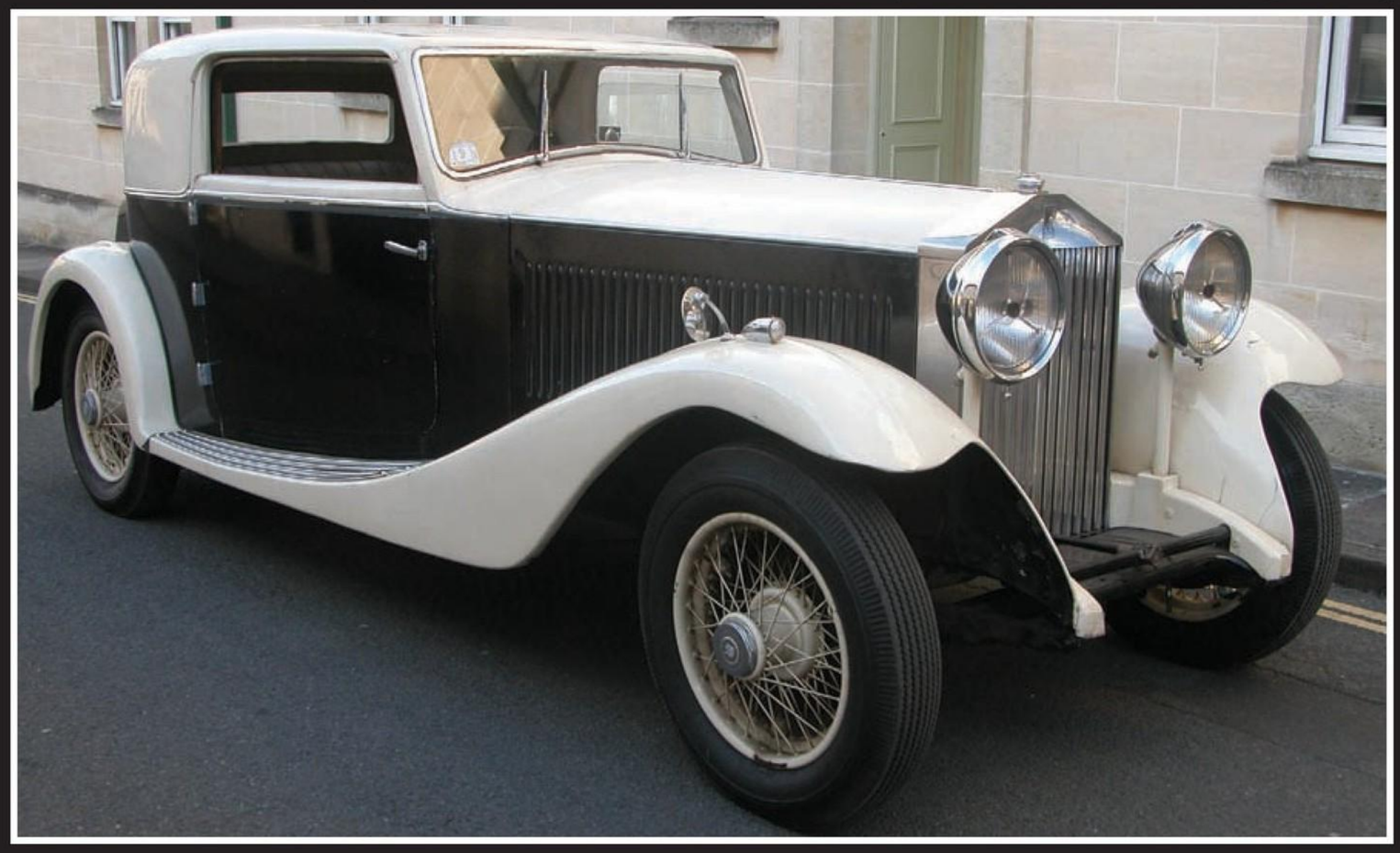
MARCH 8 RM Auctions, Vintage motor cars, Amelia Island, Florida. *Tel: 001 519 352 4575*

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1933 Rolls-Royce 20/25 Two Door Sportsmans Coupe by Freestone & Webb



There are many body variants on the 20/25 chassis, with coachbuilders creating individual and unique body styles. Freestone and Webb was responsible for many private orders on Rolls-Royce and Bentley chassis during the 1930s, with this particular example, the Sportsman Coupe, being one of its most stunning and simple creations with the contrasting two tone black and white paintwork highlighting the striking lines of the bodywork.

Delivered new to The Car Mart at 40-50 Park Lane, one of London's top car showrooms, on the 4th April 1933, the car was bought by a city gentleman residing at 33 Arkwright Road in Hampstead. This genuine, un-restored car has plenty of character with the interior and the white leather seats showing a lovely worn patina. GLZ 7 is a matching engine and chassis numbers car (engine number X60) that is in running order and also drives well. Under the bonnet the original wheel brace and jack are present, as is the rare and desirable tool kit located in the boot. To find an important motor car such as this in an original condition is a rare find indeed, and an opportunity not to be missed.

1936 Bentley 4¼ Drophead Coupe by Park Ward



One of the most stylish and practical bodies fitted to a pre-war open tourer, the Park Ward body fitted to chassis B246GA is one of only a handful built in this style. Delivered new on the 15th June 1936, the first owner was Sir G. Stanley White Bt., the Managing Director of Bristol Aircraft who guided the company through the First and Second World Wars. B246GA was purchased by Mr. Granter of United Homes in 1966 and remained with him for over 40 years. Supplied with the car is a written document stating the cars history while with the Granter family, the car being used for summer holidays, weekends away and as Mr. Granter's wedding car in 1971 A history file accompanies the car, including old MoT test certificates, and a V5 registration document is supplied with the original registration number.

This matching numbers car (engine number G4BB) starts 'on the button' and drives very well, and presents a unique opportunity to purchase a very original Bentley with outstanding ownership history. It is without doubt a car for the true connoisseur of two of Britain's most famous marques, Bristol and Bentley.

For further information or to arrange a private view please contact Christopher Routledge at COYS

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Letters

AN OPPORTUNITY TAKEN

Sir,

I am disappointed at the amount of correspondence you have received criticising Lewis Hamilton and ITV's Grand Prix coverage. Lewis was given an opportunity many years ago by Ron Dennis and he and his father, through hard work and determination, have made the best of that opportunity. There have been many other youngsters over the years who have had support from an early age, only to disappear. Lewis could have easily let it all go to his head and wasted that opportunity.

I agree that ITV have been hyping up Lewis – what else would you expect? TV coverage has to appeal to all sections of the audience, not just us petrol heads. How many times have we watched a Grand Prix under the control of a local director only to see the local 'star' plod around on his own? As for Christine Potts' comments [Hype pressure, January], I do not recall ITV covering GP racing when Moss and Fangio were driving.

Let us celebrate Lewis for what he is – a young, level-headed, gifted British racing driver. OK, so he was in the best car, but he still had to use it to his advantage; witness some of the overtaking manoeuvres he pulled off. As for the situation behind the safety car in Japan, surely the leader is the one controlling the pace, and it is up to the other drivers to control their pace to suit? You don't get to be World Champion by holding the door open and being polite.

As for Christine Potts saying that McLaren were found guilty – guilty of what precisely? As far as I recall, all the hearing found was a lot of 'likely' scenarios. I hope she is as damning of Ferrari, who won the Australian Grand Prix with a car later to be declared illegal. All this has been perpetrated by Messrs Coughlan, Stepney and now Phil Mackereth. They have brought our sport into public disrepute; they should be banned for life by the FIA and put in the stocks on the inside of Copse at this year's British Grand Prix.

Ben Dickens, Ryhall, Stamford, Lincs

A LEGEND TO BE CELEBRATED

Sir,

I am writing in response to letters in your December issue about Lewis Hamilton. Having also read less than complimentary comments about Lewis in the national and sporting press, it is apparent that those criticising him have very little understanding of his natural talent.

It appears we have a legend in the making of the same calibre as Jim Clark and Stirling Moss. I feel that it is a once-in-a-lifetime experience for all of us. Is it possible that he appears to be more than perfect, because he has a balanced personality and very good manners?

Columnists, reporters and members of the public should remember that Lewis has served a very lengthy apprenticeship with Ron Dennis and McLaren, who obviously could see the potential. Had they been true motor sport fans, or enthusiasts, they would have watched his very lengthy and successful rise through the formulae culminating in GP2 in 2006, and realised this hidden talent was waiting to be shown to a wider audience through Formula 1.

Andre C Wells, Lewes, East Sussex

TRUE OR FALSE?

Sir,

Your January letters pages raised that age-old question: are these letters real or are they written by the editors? The idea that 'true' enthusiasts should be happy that that 'big-head' Lewis Hamilton lost and the FIA showed him favouritism is truly a celebration of the diversity of mankind. Presumably he is one of the 'boys' who will suffer without traction control. Your correspondents are in for a miserable few years, I think.

Ian Mann, Divonne les Bains, France

[*Those were the opinions of readers – Ed*]

JUST DESSERTS

Sir,

Mr Bondoni (Letters, January) may be correct in saying that he speaks for the majority of F1 enthusiasts in stating that "the team and driver who deserved to win actually won", but this is a total misconception. There is no such thing as any driver deserving to win, there is only the driver who *has* won. Saying that a driver deserves to win is an opinion, not fact; the fact is Kimi Räikkönen won the championship. Tribunals aside, I wonder if we would be saying that Lewis deserved to win if the stewards had disqualified Williams on the fuel temperature issue, which could have happened if the FIA had its checking criteria/procedure up to speed.

As for national chauvinism, I am all for it, whether it be Michael Schumacher's fervent German support or the *tifosi* backing anyone who drives a Ferrari. This is great for the sport – it is passion, it is a national differentiator. National pride is an essential ingredient in motor sport and every other sport. I love Le Mans every year because it has all the fans showing their national pride on everything they wear or carry to the event. Long may it continue, and long may the Finnish come to motor sport and show us all what national pride is about.

Martin Cotton, Letchworth Garden City, Herts,

IT TAKES TWO

Sir,

The ludicrous farce of the recent spying rows has all the air of a High Court decision and totally blames and unfairly penalizes McLaren for the Byzantine power plays which Ferrari has long been known for.

Of course Mr Coughlin was wrong to take the Ferrari documents but he had them at his home, something McLaren was not in a position to do anything about. Getting text messages from Mr Stepney about classified aspects of Ferrari procedure should not switch the verdict from a suspended sentence to an eye-watering fine. If anything, Coughlin and Stepney should face life bans from the sport and the $100 million fine should have been shared between Ferrari and McLaren – it takes two to tango.

How Max Mosley, who once said he would not stand more than twice for FIA president (I guess because it was too easy to become like JM Balestre), can switch from being president to head judge in this matter is beyond me, especially as I am led to believe Ron Dennis and Mosley are not great pals. However, I suspect as soon as Ron had called him regarding Alonso's demands, Max saw an opportunity to fund some of his own pet projects.

The episode of name-calling and threatening libel action between Max and Jackie Stewart offered some comic relief to the situation. Unfortunately this has faded as the idea of both parties bringing episodes of sharp practice to court would not do either any good.

But this is a poor example for the future, and now Renault has been up for the same offence. If the FIA had extracted the same penalty from them as McLaren (and not doing so has surely totally discredited them) it would make Carlos Ghosn, already lukewarm on the idea of F1, wonder why he continues to lose millions on it.

Incidentally, I wonder what kind of car the clerk working at the copy shop where Trisha Coughlin put the Ferrari documents onto disks is driving now?

Heath Newland, Lombard, Illinois, USA

Write to: Motor Sport, 26-30 Old Church Street, Chelsea, London SW3 5BY, UK or e-mail: editorial@motorsportmagazine.co.uk *(please include your full name and postal area)*

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RM AUCTIONS

Letters

LEGAL THIEVING

Sir,

This is getting absurd! At what point is 'spying' actually 'spying'? Is looking at, photographing, or studying published photos of rival teams' cars technically not spying?

This has been going on since the beginning of F1 – why start this regulation now? All it's doing is making it look as though the sport is run by petty-minded bureaucrats.

Is it really sensible to believe that when Colin Chapman introduced ground effects, the rest of the teams independently 'discovered' the same principles? Rubbish! They copied them after looking at the car itself and at public-domain pictures – in other words, 'spying'.

This is going to destroy the sport: every team will sue or be sued over some such trivialities on a weekly basis. I have a suggestion for the FIA – allow the teams to go at it as they always have, pinching ideas left, right and centre, but make each team keep a log of what they have 'liberated' from competitors. Then, at the end of each year, publish a compendium of all the logs for the sporting public – it'd make fascinating reading! And, when read in conjunction with a team's performance, it'd give a pretty direct insight into what the major improvements were.

John Lillicrap, Eden Prairie, Minnesota, USA

COMPENSATION CULTURE

Sir,

In reference to your Renault factory visit, don't forget that Super Aguri and Force India are also within "an easy drive from the dreaming spires of Oxford". I frequently speak to all the local teams as part of my job plus some of the outside sub-contractors – I would have thought that the forgotten two teams will be most upset for not receiving a mention!

Like I say, I won't be the only reader to notice this, so I think an apology is due or maybe a few million pounds compensation would go down better. If you talk nicely to Max, I'm sure he may have some of the McLaren fine still available – but you'll have to be quick.

I would like to say that Andrew Frankel appears to have had a good stint. It may not be all down to the editor, but collectively *Motor Sport* is much easier on the eye. I have only just received my copy, but I'm sure that by the time I've finished with it, it will be in a pretty poor state like all the others I've read.

On an unrelated matter, I have to agree with your letter 'Special K', from January's edition, regarding the Goodwood Revival meetings. I am glad to hear that I am not the only one who has noticed something other than the original engine is powering many of these cars.

Matthew Aust, Sutton Courtenay, Oxfordshire

AN EVEN LARGER MARGIN

Sir,

I take exception to your claim that Jackie Stewart's 1968 German Grand Prix win was the "biggest-ever margin in Grand Prix history".

Actually, it was Jim Clark at the 1963 Belgian GP who holds this honour. Clark was almost five minutes ahead of Bruce McLaren, who finished in a total time of 2hr 32min 41.6sec compared to Clark's 2hr 27min 47.6sec. All drivers used the same Dunlop tyres and Clark managed to take the lead at the first turn from the third row on the grid! Near the end of the race Clark allowed McLaren to unlap himself.

In the 1968 German GP, Jackie Stewart finished in 2hr 19min 3.2sec compared to the 2hr 23min 6.4sec of second-placed Graham Hill.

It must be noted that Stewart used wet-weather Dunlops with custom grooves, which proved a significant advantage in pouring rain. Hill used wet-weather Firestones, which were definitely not competitive in the wet during the 1968 season. Hill spun at one point but was able to get out of the car, push it back in the right direction and get it restarted to finish in second place. This spin contributed greatly to Stewart's winning margin.

Jim Kinder, via e-mail

OFF AGAIN, ON AGAIN

Sir,

Having been an 'on-off' reader of *Motor Sport* for some 55 years I found the January issue particularly interesting. The reason for my 'on-off' purchases of the magazine, to which I now subscribe, are related mostly to the equally 'on-off' approach of the magazine to contemporary Grand Prix racing, wonderful in the days of DSJ but tending to be less well reported since his time until recently when there seems to have been a resurgence, fuelled, no doubt, by such circumstances as the Hamilton phenomenon.

Nonetheless, the magazine's concentration on the historical side of motor racing has got its appeal for me – not surprisingly, I suppose, as I now approach 80! My attention was caught by the article about Froilán Gonzalez and his first GP win for Ferrari over the previously dominant Alfa Romeos in 1951. I was there, having just been demobbed following my National Service. I had no car of my own so my girlfriend and I journeyed to Silverstone by coach.

But the meeting was historic, in my view, for more than Gonzalez's win in the GP. Two of the original BRMs competed, driven by Whitehead and Walker. They didn't shine, coming in fifth and seventh as I recall. I think it was the first GP, if not the first significant race of any sort, that they had entered. But it was probably their most successful race ever, bearing in mind the competition they were facing.

The other reason to remember the meeting arose with the 500cc F3 supporting race. A new car to challenge the dominant Coopers appeared. It was a Kieft and it was driven by a young up-and-coming driver, Stirling Moss. He won convincingly and went on to greater things!

James Dallaway, Sydenham Hill, London

TERRIER BLOODLINE

Sir,

In your January issue, in the footnote on page 60 to Doug Nye's "Mechanics Tales" article, it is stated that "Len Terry started out with his own 750 special, the JVT". The JVT was a Ford-engined Austin Seven special built by John V Teychenne (hence the name of the car), the founder of the Progress Chassis company that built all the early Lotus spaceframes, and a close friend of Colin Chapman. It was built at the same time as Colin and the Allen brothers built the Mk III Lotus, and owed much to that design. He later sold it to Len Terry, who raced it with some success in the 1172 Formula. Then Len used all the components in a new chassis so that it became the Terrier, and was so successful it used to beat the Lotus Sevens!

Peter Ross, Cuckoo Mills, Falmouth, Cornwall

LOCAL HERO

Sir,

I recently read the October issue of *Motor Sport* and being a motor racing and Jaguar enthusiast I enjoyed your tribute to Tony Rolt in your editorial. As you rightly state, the word 'hero', like 'great', is a much-overused word in the English language today.

I have in my possession a copy of the 'Official 6d Programme' for the first Blackpool Rally in June 1936, and among the 222 entrants from six starting points is AP Rolt, who started from Manchester in a Triumph. I think he would have been just 17 at the time and it would have been one of his first events. The event was won by a Fiat 508S Balilla driven by Stanley Tett, my father.

Peter Tett, Brisbane, Australia

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GUEST COLUMN

MARATHON EFFORT IN NEW YORK

I had the opportunity to compete in a new form of racing in November at the New York City Marathon. Along with Boston, Chicago, Berlin and London, the New York marathon is one of the sport's 'big five' events.

When Barilla invited me to be involved in the pasta party for all 35,000 competitors the night before, to help them pack carbohydrates, I said, 'I would love to be involved, as long as you're not going to hand me the cheque for 35,000 people.' The second thing I said was that as long as I am there I may as well do the marathon. They said, 'Are you crazy?' I told them I had heard about this hand-powered bicycle and that there was a category for them in the race. They said, 'Yes, but you're not trained. It's impossible. You can't do 42km.' Up to that point it had just been a joke, but when they said 'impossible,' I said, 'OK, we'll go to New York and see if it's possible or not.'

You can't go to your local bicycle shop and buy a hand-bike, but fortunately the Maddiline bicycle company read of my plans and was kind enough to supply me with a hand-bike. Still, I didn't take delivery of it until the WTCC race at Monza in October. I pedalled it for the first time on the roads around the shop and found that I not only enjoyed it but that it gave me a very good cardio workout, which is not easy to achieve without your legs.

I was able to do some good training in October, covering the marathon distance five times, and arrived in New York knowing I could do the distance. The lap time was another question...

In New York many people were very complimentary about me competing, for the way I have faced my... let's call it adversity. Which is very nice, of course, but I don't think I've done anything special. I've just tried very hard to live my life in the best possible way.

As I was riding my bike from the hotel to the start, I realised the steering damper had broken. It wasn't like in Champ Cars, Formula 1 or the WTCC where the mechanics could just go to the transporter for a new part and replace it. My only choices were to compete in the race knowing the steering would be difficult, or to withdraw, which was not really an option.

At the start I was in doubt as to whether to push really hard to be behind the fastest competitors. I was scared that I could try to chase a train which would prove to be too fast later in the race. Once I saw the top three guys had gone I picked up a kind of collaboration with a guy from Florida. He wouldn't talk much. I kept saying, 'Tell me what I have to do. I know nothing about marathons, this is my first one.'

"Three weeks before the race I didn't even know how a hand-bike was made"

Once or twice he said, 'You're doing a good job.' That's all he said. At about three quarters of the distance we entered some uphill parts where he definitely tried to pull away. I did my best to stay with him and then in the last part I realised he had given his all. He knew how to pedal but he didn't know how to take turns, which is where I think I have *some* talent. In the last corner he took a very strange line and I came out of the turn much faster, so I got ahead of him and when I looked back, he was gone.

Then it was just a few metres to the finish and I have to say I was very happy when the race was over. Because of the broken damper the bike was shaking like crazy, and if you hit a bump – wow! Going downhill, I was scared I would lose control of the bike. That was definitely dangerous and I was glad when it was over. When I did 230mph at Michigan Speedway I wasn't that scared.

I finished fourth out of 53 competitors in the hand-bike category. Although my time of 1hr 33min 17sec was 15 minutes behind the winner Alejandro Albor, I was 12 minutes faster than my target. I was really happy, considering that three weeks before I didn't even know how a hand-bike was made!

The marathon reminded me of when it all began for me, driving go-karts as a little kid. I never lost my passion even when I was able, thanks to some luck, to turn it into a profession. It became routine when I was driving F1 cars; even in Indy cars, when I experienced the biggest glory, I never felt that nervous. The night before the marathon I only got a couple of hours of sleep because I was so excited.

I will definitely be doing the hand-cycling more seriously, and I intend to race in New York this year. But that doesn't mean I'll quit racing cars – I send that as a direct message to the drivers who are hoping to be in line for my seat with BMW!

The 2007 WTCC season was a little disappointing for me because I was unable to win a race as I had in each of the two previous seasons. Still, I finished on the podium at Brno, my team-mate Felix Porteiro won that race and Andy Priaulx secured the championship for BMW. With the help of BMW and the BMW Italy-Spain team we are continuing to make improvements to my car to help me compete on a level playing field. At Macau, for example, we used a new device mounted on the steering wheel that enabled me to slip the clutch to keep the engine revs up exiting the Melco Hairpin. I will continue developing my hand-bike skills, too. After all, that 15-minute gap from fourth to first is a long one, but one I intend to overcome when I return to New York City next November.

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Andrew Frankel



ROAD CARS

WILL THIS CAR SAVE JAGUAR?

By the time you read this, but not as I write, it is possible you will already know the identity of Jaguar and Land-Rover's new owners. If not, the announcement is but weeks away. For a while, the running has been headed by the Indian company, Tata. Were this to come to pass I'd be hopeful for the future of the marques not only because Tata has the money to invest in them properly, it is also likely to listen to advice concerning how the brands can best be managed. But now a consortium headed by Jac Nasser, a former Ford CEO who resigned amid some considerable controversy in 2001, appears to be making a late charge for the winning post.

Whoever wins will have been paying even greater than usual attention to the media over the last few days, for the global press reception to the new Jaguar XF will have a substantial impact on the success or otherwise of a car that is generally acknowledged to hold the future of one of our proudest marques in its hands. Nor is Jaguar's current chairman, Mike O'Driscoll, being coy about it. When it was first introduced to a small number of media in the Arizona desert in the middle of December, he described the last decade as "seriously traumatic" for Jaguar and described the success of the XF as "critical".

The XF is Jaguar's new mid-sized saloon, the replacement for the slow-selling and little-loved S-type. Given that it is certain there will be no direct successor to the smaller and even less lovable X-type, its importance is clear. While the wildly successful XK coupé is a great device for making people feel good about Jaguar again, it is the XF that needs to sell in sufficient quantities to turn around a business which has been in decline since the start of the century.

I'll say now that disappointment tinged my first impressions. I'd always thought the XF looked odd in photographs but hoped that, just like the XK, it would all make sense once I saw it on the move. But it doesn't. From the front wheels rearward, it's an excellent piece of work, as you'd expect from Aston DB7 designer Ian Callum. The shape is clean, taut, modern and purposeful, which is everything you can hope for from a 21st century Jaguar. But the nose is substantially spoiled by an incongruous choice of ugly headlights that seem simply not to belong to the rest of the car. Headlights may seem like minor components in the overall scheme of things, but as the eyes of the car, they affect its look more than anything else.

I was disappointed to see, too, that while Jaguar claims a great improvement in rear leg and headroom, it is still too cramped in the back for an executive express. I happened to have a BMW 5-series on hand – a car I've never thought of as particularly spacious – and it offers those in the back substantially more leg and headroom.

But once you're settled into the driver's seat, the XF starts at once to make a case for itself, for you don't need to do much more than look around to know you're in the best cabin in the class. The dashboard architecture is particularly appealing, and Callum's team has been able to make wood, leather and aluminium co-exist in a harmony I've not seen in any similar car. There are some real theatrical touches here too: press the starter button and air vents rotate out of the dash as a transmission controller rises up from the centre console. Some will doubtless regard this as needless gimmickry and more things to go wrong, but I'm only slightly ashamed to say I enjoyed the whole sense of occasion this unique greeting imparted.

There's better news still in that most of the major mechanical components, including the two 4.2-litre V8 motors, transmission and





suspension have been taken straight from the XK coupé and tuned to suit the XF. When sales begin in the spring there will also be a 2.7-litre diesel that will account for the vast majority of UK sales, and a 3-litre V6 petrol model, but out here in the desert, the choice was V8, with or without supercharger.

It should be said now that one of the few things no one ever criticised about the old S-type was the way it went down a road, and the XF, which still retains a lot of S-type underpinnings, has taken its already high dynamic standards and moved them on to a new plane. Both the normal and the blown Super V8 flowed across the state with that same relaxed yet controlled gait that makes the XK such a superlative long-distance weapon. The ride is firmer than you'd expect, but so well damped it never becomes harsh, however horrid the road surface may be.

Both models steer exceptionally well for cars weighing over 1700kg but, of the two, it was the standard V8 – at £45,500 costing £9400 less than the supercharged version – that I preferred. It may have a mere 294bhp compared to 410bhp with forced induction, but it revs beautifully, sounds gorgeous and thanks to quite the best conventional automatic transmission I have ever encountered, covers its relative lack of low-down torque exceptionally well. And it's hardly slow, as its 6.3sec 0-60mph time and limited 155mph top speed attest. And while its skinnier tyres and softer springs will doubtless mean it won't corner quite as fast as its more powerful sister, I preferred its steering feel, ride quality and, on those rare occasions when you can drive on the limit in Arizona, its balance, too.

The truth is that both are fine cars, but flawed. Some will like the way the XF drives but won't be able to cope with the lack of interior space, while others may stay away simply because it looks rather strange from some angles. But both groups will be passing by a fine car; it's probably not quite as great an achievement today as was the XK two years ago, but while there are cars in the XF's class that are clearly better by objective measurement, I can't think of another with quite so much charm and character. Its aim was best summed up by the man who knows it best, its chief engineer, Mick Mohan. "We're not in the transportation business," he said to us. "If you just want to get from one place to another, buy something else. We are in the entertainment business." And after a long day in the XF, all I can add to that is that the mission seems to have been accomplished.



FARBIO GTS

The recent and very sad death of Marcos Cars prompted me to wonder what its former boss, Chris Marsh, had been up to. I knew he'd been involved in the Invicta project but for the past two or three years there has been silence. Now I know why. Many of you will remember Arash Farboud and the pretty Farboud GT he created a few years back. Well, Chris has taken on the project, re-engineered the car around a spaceframe chassis with a carbon-fibre body and renamed the result the Farbio GTS. Powered by a 262bhp, 3-litre V6 motor, it weighs just 1048kg, despite being equipped with satnav, climate control, leather upholstery and electric windows and mirrors. It's not only beautiful, it also drives well, thanks to an excellent chassis providing first-class ride and handling. In fact, it's a bit too good for the Ford-derived engine, so it's just as well there's one with a Rotrex supercharger on its way that will up the power to 384bhp. That should knock a second off the 4.8sec needed to reach 60mph and raise its top speed from around 160mph to over 175mph. The basic car costs £59,925, the blown one £71,625. I'm not sure about the name, but I am about the car: if production versions match the prototype, every success will be deserved.



VAUXHALL ASTRA VXR NÜRBURGRING EDITION

Are any of you as annoyed as me at the new Vauxhall Astra VXR Nürburgring Edition? You might think it has 500bhp, race suspension and a full aero package to help it tame the world's most challenging track, but no – it has white paint, big wheels, dark windows and, spare us, carbon-fibre-effect wing mirrors. Calling it the Astra VXR Chelmsford Edition would be a more honest reflection of its aspirations. My beef is not with Vauxhall – it's a cynical marketing ploy but it's not as offensive as the 1999 Rover-BRM, which was little more than a Rover 200 with a yellow gob and horrid seats. The guilty party is the Nürburgring, in allowing its name to be devalued in this way.

ALL CRIMES ARE EQUAL...

...but some are more equal than others. How the Renault verdict has cast even more of a shadow over Formula 1

BY NIGEL ROEBUCK

One Formula 1 luminary said it reminded him of the Simpson verdict. "It was just like OJ," he said. "You knew what was going to happen – but you still didn't believe it when it did..."

On December 6, in Monaco, the World Motor Sport Council concluded that Renault, being in unauthorised possession of confidential material from another team (McLaren), was in breach of Article 151(c) of the International Sporting Code, which deals with 'Any fraudulent conduct or any act prejudicial to the interests of any competition or to the interests of motor sport generally'.

On September 13, in Paris, the same WMSC had reached a similar conclusion about McLaren, who had been supplied with confidential material by a disaffected Ferrari employee. But while McLaren was stripped of its constructors' points for 2007 and fined an extraordinary $100,000,000, Renault went quite unpunished. The discrepancy has left the F1 community »»



McLaren and Renault – both guilty of 'spying', but there's no $100m fine for the latter



LAT

disquieted, to say the least.

In the weeks coming up to the Renault hearing there was much speculation as to how it would go, for in punishing McLaren so savagely the powers-that-be had set a potentially dangerous precedent, presumably in the belief – hope, anyway – that such a situation was unlikely to occur again.

At Spa, two days after the McLaren hearing, FIA president Max Mosley fatuously described the fine imposed as, "A very minor punishment. A hundred million dollars is a large sum of money, but in such a serious case any fine has to be large enough to deter similar behaviour in the future. Anything less than that would have no effect at all."

Strong words. Any team contemplating using another's confidential information, the message seemed to be, should understand that, in the event of detection, it was going to be nailed to the cross.

"Besides," Mosley went on, "the sum of money is less than the difference between McLaren's budget and those of teams like Williams or Renault. All we're doing is bringing McLaren's budget down to the level of some of the other top teams. It's actually a very modest penalty, and when the history of this case is written, the FIA may well be reproached for doing too little…"

Too *little*? Mosley went on to say that, had it been his decision alone, not only would McLaren have lost all its points, but so, too, would the team's drivers, Fernando Alonso and Lewis Hamilton, "On the grounds that there is a suspicion they had an advantage they should not have had".

A *suspicion*, surely, is something you have when you bring a case against someone, rather than when you have punished them to the tune of $100,000,000.

On the one hand, Mosley now appeared to be suggesting that a deterrent tariff for such misdemeanours had been set – "Anything less than that would have no effect at all" – while on the other, his reference to the size of McLaren's budget, relative to those of, "Teams like Williams or Renault", rather implied punishment according to means.

Whatever, very shortly after the McLaren case had been decided word surfaced that Renault was to face a similar investigation, and this time the wronged party was… McLaren. Soon we learned that when engineer Phil Mackereth left for Renault in September 2006, he took with him a considerable quantity of McLaren material, including drawings covering the entire blueprint of the '06 and '07 cars. This was acknowledged by Renault – indeed, witness statements from company employees admitted to the loading of 33 files of McLaren technical information onto Renault's mainframe IT system – but it was of course denied that it had played any part in the design of their own cars.

On the face of it, the evidence against Renault was rather weightier than anything that had been levelled at McLaren. Even before the WMSC hearing, it was clear that the team was in breach of Article 151(c), as McLaren had been, and we knew what had happened to them, so… what was coming the way of Renault?

A ticklish problem for the FIA, this, because Renault – as Mosley had pointed out at Spa – had nothing like the budget of McLaren, and if they, too, were to face a nine-figure fine, there was just the chance that it might not sit too well with the mother company, the *Regie*.

Sutton

"Mosley may hold Stewart in low esteem, but the great majority of people in the sport value him"

This was apples and pears, after all. Where the core business of McLaren is racing, that of Renault – and BMW, Toyota *et al* – is building road cars. Major manufacturers do not get involved in F1 for reasons of altruism: as Bernie Ecclestone has said, "They disappear when it suits them – always have, and always will."

To some degree, major manufacturers need constantly to justify their participation in F1, both to their shareholders and their employees. In the early 1980s there was much discontent within the Renault unions about money being 'wasted' on motor racing, not least on the retainer of Alain Prost. So unpleasant did the attacks on Prost become, indeed, that eventually he took himself and his family off to live in Switzerland.

By 1985, when the company was not in great shape and redundancies were rife, the decision was taken to continue to build engines (for such as Lotus and Ligier), but to withdraw the Renault team from F1. In times of financial difficulty for a major manufacturer, racing will always be first in line for the red pencil.

These things being so, the conclusion of the F1 community was that a fine for Renault – if comparable with that imposed on McLaren – was something the powers-that-be dare not contemplate. If Renault, stung for a hundred million bucks, upped and left F1, what effect would that have on the other manufacturers? At the same time, though, based on admissions made even before the hearing, the team was bang to rights, so – what to do?

In defending the WMSC's decision not to punish Renault *at all*, Mosley has cited the first McLaren hearing, in July, in which it was concluded that no penalty was appropriate because there was insufficient evidence that McLaren had benefited from the Ferrari material smuggled out by Stepney, and handed over to Mike Coughlan. A similar conclusion had been reached with regard to Renault, he said. But even after the second McLaren hearing – the one which resulted in draconian punishment – few could see any concrete proof that the team had benefited: whatever else, it was clear that no 'Ferrari intellectual property' had been incorporated into the cars. The gist of the WMSC's findings was that McLaren *must* have benefited simply by having knowledge of what Ferrari was up to, and on that basis it was only right and proper to lower the boom on them.

What strikes one, reading the WMSC's findings into the two cases, is the difference in wording, that dealing with Renault being notably more conciliatory. Item 5.11, for example: 'The WMSC finds that Renault's senior management acted responsibly after it became aware of the issues, and took an open and cooperative approach with both McLaren and the FIA'.

In light of the fact that the investigation took place *after* severe punishment had been meted out to McLaren, that would seem to have been no more than common sense. And it's worth remembering, too, that when Ron Dennis was made aware (by Fernando Alonso at the Hungarian Grand Prix) that there was more to the 'Spygate Affair' than he had previously realised, his immediate response was to call, and inform, Mosley.

Item 8.9 offers more of the same: 'The WMSC considered it significant that Renault approached the investigation with an open and transparent attitude. The WMSC also notes that Renault cooperated fully with the FIA's technical department's investigation'.

So, for that matter, did McLaren.


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doing too little"

LAT

Item 8.8 appears to be an attempt to put clear distance between what Stepney and Coughlan did, and the actions of Mackereth. 'The McLaren confidential information brought to Renault was in the context of an F1 engineer changing teams. It was not 'live' information in the sense that there is no evidence of a flow of current information between competing teams. After leaving McLaren, Mackereth had no further access to current or updated McLaren information. Nor is there any evidence that Renault encouraged Mackereth in any way to bring the confidential information from McLaren'.

I can remember no evidence, either, that McLaren encouraged Stepney to slide a Ferrari dossier out of Maranello. The information was offered, not solicited.

According to item 8.12, the WMSC 'concluded that there was insufficient evidence to establish that the information was used in such a way as to interfere with or have an impact on the World Championship'. Given that Renault scored but 51 points this year, that much is probably true – but where was the *evidence* that the championship had been 'interfered with' by McLaren?

As Renault 'walked free' from the court, there was a last sting in the tail for McLaren. During his outpouring at Spa, Mosley had said that, "McLaren were extremely lucky that we didn't simply say, 'You've polluted the 2007 championship, and you've probably polluted the '08 championship, so you'd better stay out until 2009 – if you're still around – because that's the only way we'll know it's completely clear."

That – mercifully for the World Championship – is not going to happen, but still McLaren needs to convince the FIA that its 2008 car, the MP4-23, contains no element of 'intellectual property' from Ferrari.

As the designs of the car have been rigorously examined by FIA-appointed officials at the team's HQ, McLaren had hoped to get the all-clear at the meeting in Monaco, but the WMSC decided to hold off on delivering a verdict until February 14, when another meeting will be convened, at which – as well as McLaren – Ferrari and other teams will be allowed to make presentations.

While declining to go into the reasons for the delay, Mosley said the governing body had 'good reasons' for it, of which McLaren had been made aware. "Should the doubt be confirmed," he added, "they have sufficient time to react."

It should be pointed out that the meeting is to be held just a month before the car is due to make its racing debut, at Melbourne.

For those of us in the press, though, perhaps the most disturbing aspect of the events in Monaco was what came after – the day after, in fact. It was an announcement that the FIA was to sue *The Sunday Times*, in response to a piece, published on the day of the Italian Grand Prix, in which Martin Brundle suggested that the governing body was engaged in a witch-hunt against McLaren.

I had lunch with Brundle at Monza that Sunday, and already he had been informed that his piece was before the FIA's lawyers. This he took, as much as anything else, to be a warning not to come out with something similar in the course of his ITV broadcast that afternoon.

The WMSC's decision, in December, not to punish Renault for what was ostensibly the same crime as that for which McLaren had been hammered of course served to strengthen a widespread belief in the paddock that Brundle had been on the mark, and thus the timing of the announcement that the FIA was indeed to sue *The Sunday Times* – the very morning after Renault had escaped punishment – was about as subtle as a headbutt. I hesitate to suggest that it would have made Alastair Campbell proud, for there's always a danger of that being taken by some as a compliment.

Pour encourager les autres. That was the message we took from it, and in response Brundle came forth with another column for the paper, commenting on the Renault situation, relative to what had befallen McLaren, and defending his right to have opinions about the sport and to express them honestly, as he saw fit.

Again, the FIA lost little time in responding, and in criticising Brundle – not least for his timing! "It is regrettable," said a spokesman, "that, instead of applauding the achievements of motor sport's international champions, who were recognised this week in a gala prize-giving ceremony in Monaco, Martin Brundle chose to continue his campaign against motor racing's governing body, and to call into question the integrity of the FIA World Motor Sport Council."

One thought of Gordon Brown, droning on endlessly about umpteen months of consistent growth while Rome burns about him. Not really Brundle's way.

The fact is that we appear to have reached a point where disagreement – publicly expressed – with any action taken by the FIA is not to be tolerated, and that cannot be a healthy situation. At Monza Jackie Stewart made clear his feelings about the McLaren situation, and Mosley's response was to describe him at a press conference as a 'certified halfwit'.

Not only was this patently absurd, it was also remarkably short-sighted, for what kind of a sport is this when the president of the governing body chooses wilfully to denigrate one of its greatest champions? Mosley may hold Stewart in low esteem, but the great majority of people in the sport value him – and his opinions – highly. JYS doesn't miss much.

What angered Mosley was that Stewart suggested that 'exchanging information between teams' had always gone on, and always would: it was the nature of the business, so why had it suddenly become a hanging offence? Adrian Newey recently said the same, adding that in times past there had been far worse examples of it which had gone unpunished – and, in many cases, undetected. Anyone who has been around F1 a while knows that to be the case.

Probably Newey had it right, though, when he added that, in his opinion, anything in your head was acceptable, anything written down, in any form, not. What no one can quite understand, though, is why only McLaren has been punished – crucified – for it.

It is somewhat ironic now that in June, when McLaren escaped sanction at the first 'Spygate' hearing, Flavio Briatore of Renault was outraged: "I don't understand what happened," he said. "If the FIA admits to having established possession of Ferrari material by McLaren, then why is there no retribution?" A line of thought that has been in many a mind since December 6.

Max Mosley has often spoken of the need for the FIA's governance of F1 to be 'transparent', but in the minds of most within the sport, it has become more than a little opaque. On several occasions, too, when questioned about his own future as FIA president, he has spoken of the dangers of 'staying in this job too long'. At the moment, it must be said, there are not too many in the paddock who would take issue with that.


Sutton

"We appear to have reached a point where disagreement with the FIA is not to be tolerated"



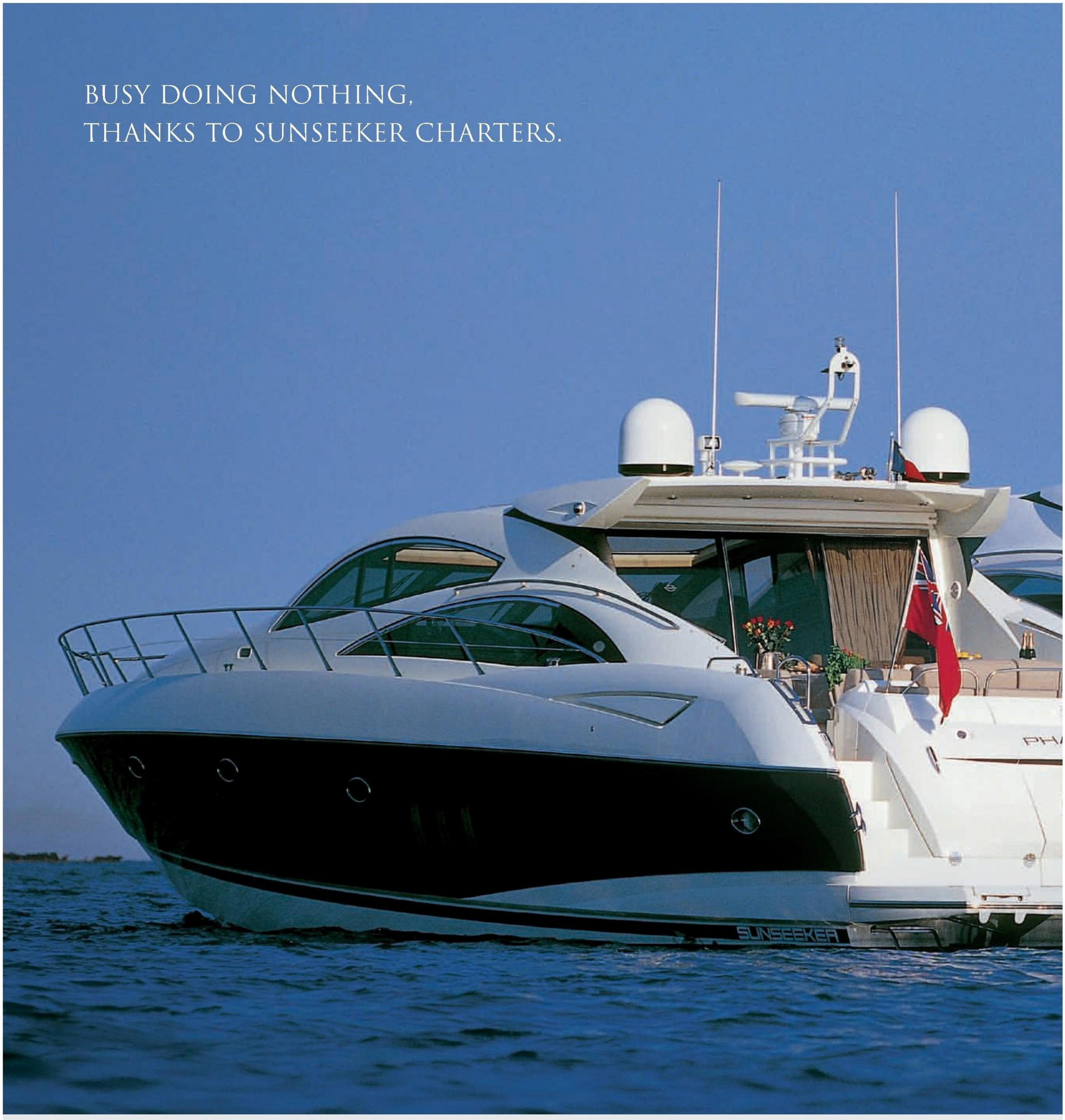
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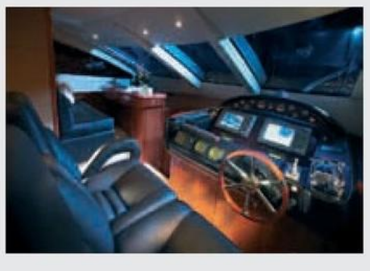
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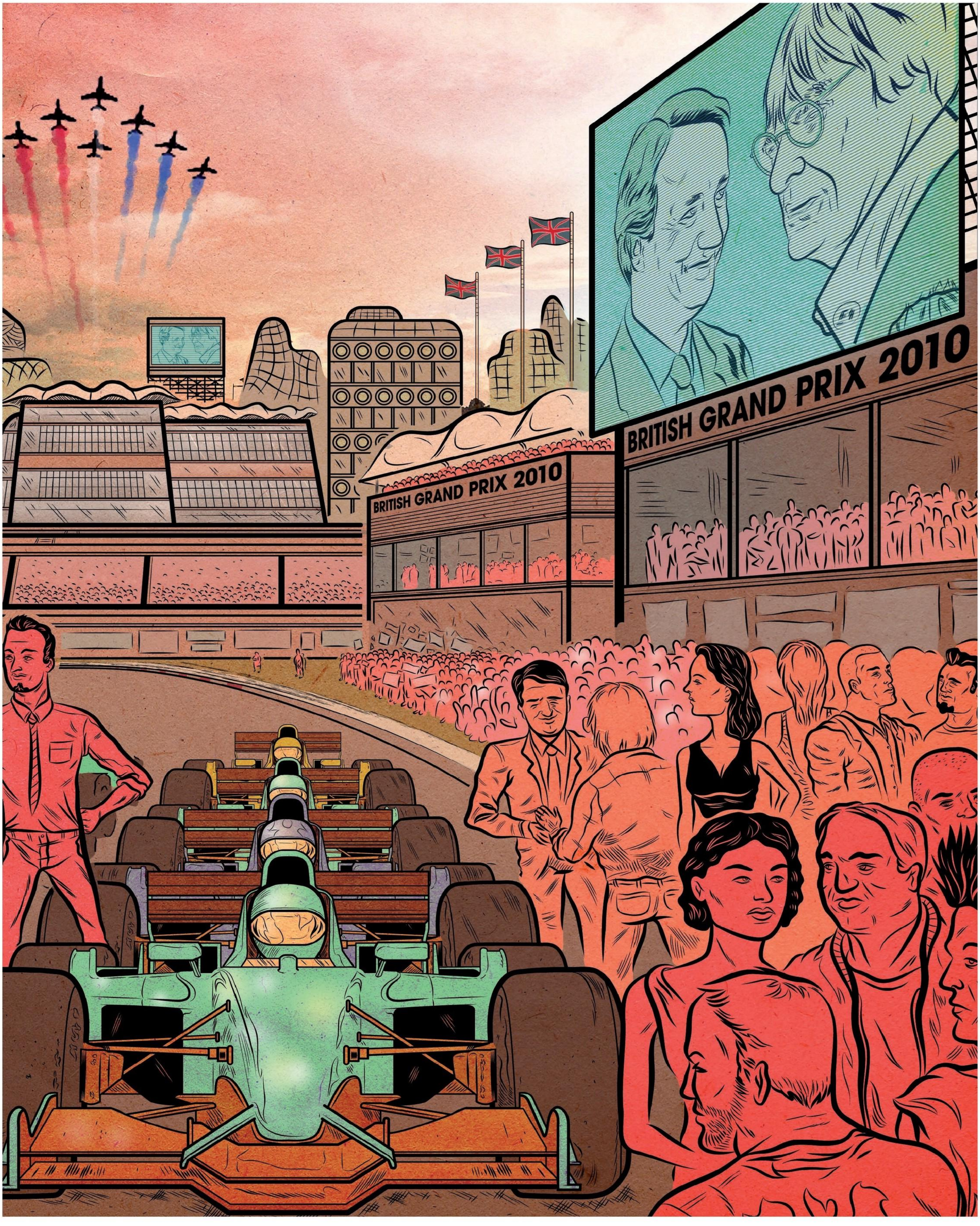


BY ADAM SWEETING

PICTURE THIS:

It's a gorgeous Sunday afternoon in July, 2010. The Red Arrows scream down out of a brilliant blue sky in a climactic bomb-burst manoeuvre before streaking away over the treetops of the Northamptonshire countryside. An expectant buzz rises from the sell-out crowd, as they debate the chances of British superstar Lewis Hamilton increasing his lead in the drivers' championship and marching on towards his third straight title. In the McLaren garage, at the top end of the award-winning new pitlane structure, Prime Minister David Cameron chats with Lewis, Sir Ronald Dennis and Lord Ecclestone of Knightsbridge, key architects of this exhilarating new golden age of British motorsport. The international media is hailing the British Grand Prix as the new jewel in the Formula 1 crown, thanks to the bold and imaginative refurbishment plan which has transformed the once-rickety Silverstone into a futuristic centre of excellence.

Illustration Dave Curd


BRITISH GRAND PRIX 2010
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SAVING THE BRITISH GP

Nice dream, and we must hope not an entirely impossible one. Motor sport watchers will be aware that the future of the British Grand Prix after 2009, when Silverstone's contract to run it expires, is currently unclear. Formula 1's commercial overlord, Bernie Ecclestone, thinks Silverstone is a bit of a dump which has been laggardly in updating facilities for racing teams and the public alike. The British Racing Drivers Club, which owns the circuit, is struggling to meet Ecclestone's fees and to refurbish the facilities. But thanks to the sport's progressive globalisation, Bernie can convincingly threaten to ship out the race to the next boomtown in the world's latest emerging market.

"The BRDC have known for many years exactly what they have to do," says Ecclestone. "There is no mystery about it, nobody's trying to screw them, quite the opposite. We want exactly the same terms and conditions that we have with Germany. England has the same sort of population as Germany, it's got the same sort of popularity, except they've got more manufacturers in Germany I suppose. But the BRDC know exactly where they are."

The inaugural British Grand Prix was held at Silverstone on May 13, 1950, in the presence of George VI and Queen Elizabeth, Princess Margaret, and Earl and Lady Mountbatten. It was the first race in the new Formula 1 World Championship, and has since become a fixture of British sporting life, a seasonal milestone alongside Wimbledon, Ascot and the Lord's Test. The race has in the past rotated between Silverstone, Aintree and Brands Hatch, but since 1987 the windswept Northamptonshire airfield has been its permanent home. Its loss would be a painful historical and commercial blow.

FIA president Max Mosley, often depicted as the other half of a double act with Bernie, says merely that "we are waiting to see if they do a commercial deal with Bernie, which is a condition precedent to the FIA putting an F1 event on the calendar." He will be well aware that the prospect of losing the race fills many F1 insiders with horror. Sir Frank Williams, who says he is "a strong supporter of Silverstone, being an Englishman", points out that "most F1 teams believe there really has to be a British GP because it's one of the core races in the World Championship, and has been for more than 50 years, but also nearly all the teams are based in Great Britain. Most of F1's suppliers are based in Great Britain. It would be a setback for Williams for several reasons, one of which is morale and team-building – our staff need a weekend with their wives, to see their product racing. It would destabilise the home industry far too much to remove the Grand Prix."

Eddie Jordan, whose own F1 team was based across the road from Silverstone (where it is now reincarnated as Force India), concurs.

"I don't even want to think about losing the Grand Prix, because it could be devastating. The Grand Prix is, if you like, the showcase. A lot of teams are based around Silverstone, and these teams would go. When I was running Jordan I had unbelievable offers to set up a team in a different country. It would have been far more beneficial financially to me, but to retain the high-quality level of suppliers and support staff and technological expertise you need to be in the area where that's most available. If one goes then another goes, and soon you've got nothing. Look what's happened to our own motor industry – it's gone."

Under the presidency of Damon Hill, the BRDC has put forward its own redevelopment 'masterplan'. This envisages the sale of packets of land outside the circuit but owned by the BRDC (or its subsidiary Silverstone Circuit Holdings), the proceeds from which will be used to redevelop the pitlane and paddock facilities to standards acceptable to Bernie.

"There's land on the other side of the A43, the Silverstone village side, which is potentially very attractive," Hill explains. "We know land will be developed because there is huge pressure for housing at the moment in the UK. It was sensible to realise that and to turn it into cash now which



"The problem has always been that the members of the BRDC have different opinions of what should happen"



"My wish is to see Silverstone produce a magnificent venue, but to do that you have to make a profit"

All images LAT

could be reinvested within the circuit, for a new pit and paddock complex and associated revenue-generating projects such as universities and other industries involved in the sport to be located at Silverstone."

Cautious optimism is being expressed by those involved, alongside a sense that this plan could be the last opportunity to establish a sound, self-financing basis for the Silverstone race. Previous rescue efforts have demonstrated an alarming propensity to disintegrate. There was the complicated scheme involving financial input from Octagon Motorsports (which had acquired the rights to run the GP at Silverstone), the BRDC and Bernie's Formula One Management, which would have given Silverstone a £45 million overhaul between 2001-06. The project ended with Ecclestone angrily accusing the BRDC of wasting the money and merely looking after its own interests, and a chastened Octagon washing its hands of the whole affair. At least then-BRDC president Jackie Stewart managed to talk Tony Blair into finding £8m to finish the A43 bypass, improving road access to the circuit considerably.

In 2004, a consortium called Brand Synergy, including Nigel Mansell as one of its directors, emerged to save the Grand Prix after Ecclestone had dropped it from the 2005 calendar, but little was subsequently heard of its £200m plan to develop Silverstone with a 'fun factory', casino and leisure complex. In '05, after Bernie and the club had reached an agreement for Silverstone to keep the race until 2009, the BRDC invited tenders for a joint venture to develop the circuit, with St Modwen Properties being declared the winner in January 2006. However, a revolt by BRDC members sent St Modwen's plans to the bottom. Further development bids in 2007 by Oliver Speight's Spectre company and a joint effort by Bill Archer from Wickes DIY and property developer Mike Rockall were also unceremoniously hoofed into touch by the club.

Speight, who hasn't abandoned all hope of resurrecting his bid, has a grand vision for the circuit. "I'm very much on the side of F1 and the BRDC, but most of all the British public," he insists. "The point is to try to get Silverstone to be the heartbeat of F1, not the outsider, then everyone will cluster round it. If Lord's is the home of cricket, Wembley the home of football and Wimbledon the home of tennis, Silverstone ought to be the home of Grand Prix racing."

Indeed, but the BRDC's stewardship of the Grand Prix will always cause complications. While rich in historical character, the venerable institution is the polar opposite of a professional commercial business. It was founded in 1928 by the fabled Bentley Boy and hero of Le Mans, Dr J D Benjafield. Originally a dining club for Benjy and his pals, the BRDC evolved into an organisation promoting the interests of motorsport generally and British drivers in particular. It took over the lease of Silverstone in 1952, and purchased the freehold from the MoD in 1971. In 1966 the club formed a wholly-owned subsidiary, Silverstone Circuits Limited, which redeveloped the circuit into – for a time – one of the world's premier facilities.

However, while the global economy has subsequently galloped ahead, Silverstone's development has been stuck in the bus lane. Although the F1 paddock is transformed into a multi-millionaires' convention every summer, the BRDC has been trapped in a permanent struggle to find the cash to upgrade the track's facilities. The Silverstone set-up is a classic specimen of the great British amateur tradition, soldiering on gamely against the odds. A world-class sporting event steeped in the glories of Britain's motorsport heritage is in the hands of a not-for-profit private club prone to bickering and infighting, on an ageing circuit buried in the Northamptonshire countryside miles from the nearest railway station. Meanwhile, governments from Turkey and China to India and Bahrain happily pour cash into bespoke new tracks to make ostentatious statements about their burgeoning status in the new world order, and don't baulk at Ecclestone's premium rates for the rights to hold a race.

Former BRDC board member and 1981



"The British GP is the showcase. A lot of teams are based around Silverstone, and these teams would go"



"Most F1 teams believe there really has to be a British GP because it's one of the core races in the World Championship"



Large 1950 British Grand Prix crowd sets the standard

British Grand Prix winner John Watson, who drove for Brabham when Ecclestone owned the team, has had a ringside seat at most of Silverstone's travails.

"I respect what the current board is doing because they're working tirelessly to move forwards, but the issue has always been that it's a members' club handling this, as opposed to elsewhere when you deal with the head of a motorsport organisation or a government or whatever. I think Bernie has had difficulty with the members' attitude that it was their God-given right to have a Grand Prix. But there is no given right. When you reach the levels of business you need to attain to put on the show, it cannot any longer allow the veto of members. You have to view it from a proper business perspective, and people are too emotionally wrapped up in the club and the circuit. No business or PLC can run on that basis."

This is a fact that Damon Hill has grasped. "I can sort of understand Bernie's position on this," he says, "because there's a sense that F1 and Bernie have taken the ball and run with it in developing the sport, and perhaps they feel that the BRDC have drifted along in the wake rather than being committed partners in the process."

With a view to presenting a streamlined and businesslike posture, the club has appointed a specialist team to negotiate renewal of the post-2009 Grand Prix contract with Ecclestone. Their point man is Neil England, an erstwhile member of the FIA Commission and previously involved with tobacco company Gallaher's F1 sponsorship.

"He's not, shall we say, sullied or tainted in any way by a connection with the BRDC," says Hill. "There have been many problems with this relationship historically, and I think we've solved all those by acting as trustees and guardians rather than being directly involved in the business decisions."

Hitherto, the BRDC's defiance of commercial realities has made Ecclestone bristle, particularly since he has successfully persuaded the rest of the F1-watching world to be reasonable and see it his way. "I think the club is their own worst enemy, the way they operate," he says. "It's difficult for them because they've got so many people and they've all got different ideas and different agendas. The BRDC is non-profit making and always will be, because they couldn't make a profit if they tried. There's a guy there called Neil England who I know quite well, who's trying to put it all together."

Will it work? Bernie is tight-lipped.

"I've no idea. I haven't got a clue."

Other sporting bodies have found their own solutions to fund-raising problems. Arsenal FC helps pay for its new Emirates Stadium with luxurious hospitality boxes and its elite Diamond Club scheme, where wealthy patrons pay a £25,000 fee and £25,000 per season for a pair of seats plus free Raymond Blanc cuisine and flights on the team's aeroplane. The All England Lawn Tennis Club and the MCC issue debentures – a species of bond – to fund the refurbishment of Wimbledon and Lord's. However, they all have a season of events to sell rather than a one-off weekend, and their London location eases concerns about travel and access. They also enjoy the luxury of control over their own product. Bernie Ecclestone designed the commercial structure of contemporary F1, and if you can think of a revenue stream, you'll find Bernie got there first. Silverstone's financial plight could be eased if income from trackside advertising and the exclusive Paddock Club corporate hospitality operation wasn't already flowing into Allsport Management, now part of



If you can't find a good spot trackside these days, there's always the big-screen TVs

Ecclestone's Formula One Group of companies. Pleas for Bernie to reduce his fee for hosting the Grand Prix, about US$15.5m, only seem to make him dig his heels in more firmly.

"Bernie could solve this problem by knocking 10 per cent off the bill for Silverstone tomorrow," suggests motorsport writer Alan Henry, a former BRDC board member. "That would make the difference between it being marginal and making a bit of profit. Basically, on a good day Silverstone could make US$600,000, or on a bad day it could lose US$1.4m. The problem is that the race promoter has only got the gate to make his profits from. Bernie takes the TV rights, Bernie takes the track advertising rights et cetera."

As Hill puts it: "I would be in complete agreement with Bernie that Silverstone could be a lot better, but it can only do what it can do with what it has. My wish is to see Silverstone produce a magnificent venue, the best in the world for spectating or providing a fantastic experience and for all the other ancillary things that go together with the circuit, but to do that you have to make a profit, and a significant one. You don't have to do too much maths to work out how much money is generated by 80,000 people paying in excess of £100 a head."

Henry adds: "I think the problem is that Bernie can't help himself. He's not programmed to do anything less than the best deal, and the best deal is most likely to be the one that bankrupts the BRDC. Bernie now has obligations to CVC Capital Partners, which own F1's commercial rights, so he has an added incentive to do the best deal."

> "Bernie could solve the problem by knocking 10 per cent off the bill for Silverstone tomorrow"

Extra spice is sprinkled into the mix by the lingering suspicion that personal animosity underpins the fractious relationship between Bernie and the club. Ever since the BRDC's foundation by Benjafield and his troupe of wealthy, fast-living Bentley drivers, it has enjoyed a reputation as a bastion of Lord Snooty-ish toffs, a bunch of Bertie Woosters shooting the breeze over the Remy-Martin and cigars while casting a faintly disapproving eye over the unwashed masses teeming onto the Silverstone terraces. Apocryphal of course, and the club's membership today represents a wide social cross-section, yet... Even Hill isn't immune to the myth.

"It's very easy to start talking with a plum in your mouth when you become a member of the BRDC," he says. "If you're not careful it does throw back a little bit to a wonderful era that's passed. The Bentley Boys era was then, it was part of the history. We've really got to put that behind us, put it in the display cabinet and start looking forward."

It's not difficult to believe that an aggressive self-made entrepreneur like Ecclestone, a trawlerman's son from Suffolk, could represent the Great Satan as far as some of the more traditionally inclined members of the club are concerned. The more control he gained over the shape and direction of Formula 1, the more



Land around the circuit has been earmarked for possible development

his power was liable to be resented. There is a story – one of those ones which various people have heard but which nobody will confirm – that Bernie (himself a life member of the club) once offered to lend the cash-strapped BRDC some money at a favourable rate to help out the Grand Prix,

only to have it contemptuously flung back in his face by the Blue Blazer contingent, shouting "we don't want your money".

"The place is always awash with different opinions as to what should and shouldn't happen," says Frank Williams, "and getting a straight answer to a straight proposal has always, I think, been difficult for Bernie. Plus because he charges so much money, it's extraordinarily difficult for the club or the circuit to make more than half a million pounds if it's lucky for the Grand Prix. And I think also they've refused to sell to him, which really gets up his nose. But I'm only saying this as an observer, and you never really know with Bernie."

So what does Bernie say? Has he had personal issues with people in the club?

"No, not at all, no," he says, in an incredulous tone. "I can't have fought with everybody, there's been so many of them."

There is a theory that they're a bunch of blazer-wearing toffs who regard you as… "Not any more," he cuts in. "Originally the club consisted of people who had raced or were racing. It's sort of gone a little bit away from that now, and if you happen to have raced it's a bit of a coincidence rather than being how you become a member. That's nothing to do with it anyway. As you just mentioned, the problem has always been that the members have different opinions of what should happen."

> "Bernie offered to lend the cash-strapped BRDC some money, only to have it flung back in his face"

Did the idea of promoting the British Grand Prix yourself ever cross your mind?

"For two or three minutes it did, yeah."

So why would you decide it wasn't a good idea?

"I don't want to lose money, that's all."

If you did it, couldn't it make money?

"Why could I make money and the BRDC couldn't?"

Because you're a single businessman with a clear vision of how to do it.

"Well, I'd rather not."

Government funding has often been discussed as a potential solution to Silverstone's problems, and it was an objective relentlessly pursued by Jackie Stewart during his tenure as BRDC president. The key argument in its favour was the sustenance of Britain's world-leading motorsport industry, whose annual worth is estimated at around £5 billion and which could be irretrievably damaged by the loss of the Grand Prix. But others view the idea of taxpayer subsidy for a super-wealthy sport, in which the FIA considers it a rational option to fine McLaren £100m dollars for industrial espionage nobody has proved the team committed, as absurd.

A UNIQUE OPPORTUNITY



Built to the special order of Benito Mussolini and delivered in August 1935, chassis 700635 is believed to be the last seventh series 6C 2300 chassis made and the body is widely held to be a one-off.

It competed in the 1936 Mille Miglia driven by Ercole Boratto and factory mechanic Mancinelli and finishing 13th overall and 3rd in class. The car remained in Mussolini's possession until 1939 when it passed to a minor party official. It is believed to have only had two keepers since being relinquished by the latter's family in 1972. Restored by Dino Cognolato the car finished 2nd in class at the 2005 Pebble Beach Concours and won its class at that year's New York Concours meeting.

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"I don't know where Jackie thought he was coming from, frankly," says Watson. "It's totally unrealistic to think that the government is going to put tens of millions of pounds of public money in to the benefit of a private members' club. The new sports minister, Gerry Sutcliffe, finally said they're not going to fund it, and I said thank God, not before time."

Jordan agrees. "Silverstone, the BRDC and race fans should be able to generate enough income and revenues to be able to keep on track with the current requirements in terms of a proper place to put on a Grand Prix. Once you start putting government money in it's like a crutch. You can never then get rid of that crutch, and I'm sorry, but then you make it worse for everybody in the future."



"If you gamble with Bernie you've got to be prepared to lose a lot of money"

Hill doesn't expect government hand-outs either, yet two new recruits to the taxpayer-subsidy cause are Ecclestone and Mosley (ironic, since in 2004, Jackie Stewart complained that Ecclestone was undermining him by urging the government not to support the Silverstone race). It's New Labour's splash-the-cash approach to the London Olympics that has apparently provoked Bernie and Max. Bernie says he can't see why the government can't view support for Silverstone as a normal business investment that would bring money into the UK.

Mosley comments: "I always used to say no [to government funding] but, having regard to the amount being put into the Olympic Games and the importance for the UK of an annual World Championship Grand Prix, the government should quite clearly do whatever is necessary to bring Silverstone up to the highest world standards."

A spokesman for sports minister Gerry Sutcliffe puts the government's case.

"For a cash-rich sport like motor racing it's not justified to put public money into it, but what is justified is to do everything we can to influence decisions around planning and development of infrastructure around the Silverstone circuit, and that's what Gerry Sutcliffe has said he will do. He is fully supportive of the BRDC."

But people see £9.5bn and rising going into the Olympics (a project castigated by Labour MP Don Touhig as "the most catastrophic piece of financial mismanagement in the history of the world"), and they might wonder why you can't dredge up a measly few million pounds for Silverstone?

"The Olympics is very much a public project and it's a one-off opportunity to bring the biggest sporting event in the world to Britain, so you put public money into it and you get public benefit from it. Obviously we're not going to start putting money into a private company."

So could it be the case that the Silverstone masterplan is the Last Chance Saloon? Surely Ecclestone would feel some qualms about if it came to letting the race finally leave the UK?

"Not at all," he says. "Don't forget I raced there for the first Formula 1 race there was in England. In 1950 I raced a Cooper. So I should have some sentimentality, but I don't."

Not everyone believes him. Frank Williams will always remember the way Bernie pulled out all the stops to help him after his terrible car accident in 1986, and says "there's a soft core to him – hard to find, but it is there."

A final word from John Watson: "I think Bernie would do everything that he possibly can to keep the British Grand Prix. But what I would say is that Bernie is a very good poker player, and if you want to gamble with him you've got to be pretty rich and be prepared to lose a lot of money. He thinks he's got a lot of very good cards in his hand, and I think he's right. But you have to offset that against what he really wants, and he's not going to tell you what he really wants."



COMMENT

DSJ ON...

Change at Silverstone hasn't always produced expected results

When Formula 1 was last at Silverstone, in 1985, Rosberg had made the fastest qualifying lap at an average speed of more than 160mph, and when asked how fast he had been going down the straights, replied "Straights? What straights?" At that sort of speed Silverstone is one long series of corners.

Those who are responsible for our enthusiasm were getting anxious about cars exiting Woodcote at 162mph, in case one got away and flew off into the grandstands.

A major decision was taken, to effectively make F1 cars virtually stop once a lap, just to cool down the pace. The chicane was abandoned totally, and a whole new complex built between the bridge at the top of the rise from Abbey Curve, to the apex of Woodcote corner. A new 90-degree turn to the left called for some heavy braking before the bridge, and having come down to second gear for this sharp corner to the left, there was a little squirt and into an opening-out right-hand bend.

All the power of the turbocharged engined cars could now be used on a fair old run at Woodcote corner, with everything nicely settled and balanced. The result? A speed-trap reading of 189mph for the front runners as they crossed the start/finish line, in place of a relatively slow 162mph when they had had to negotiate the old chicane.

This meant 195mph under the bridge and into the braking area for Copse Corner. If speed is what Grand Prix racing is all about, then this was Grand Prix racing.

By the end of Saturday's qualifying, Nelson Piquet was on pole position, a mere seven-hundredths of a second ahead of his Williams-Honda team-mate Nigel Mansell, and they had both averaged over 159mph for the complete lap. I am glad they have slowed Silverstone down – it is much more exciting! *August 1987*

MOTOR RACING INTERNATIONAL

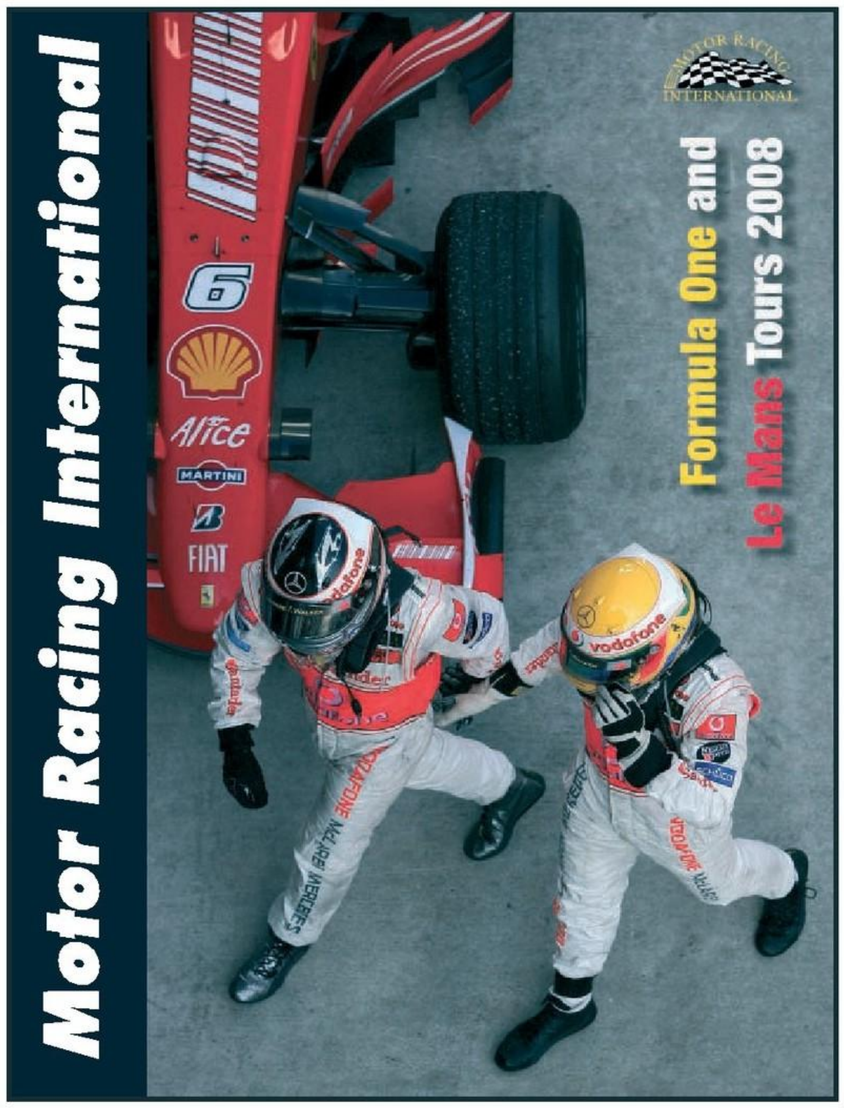
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AN AME BANKING

This year will mark the 50th running of the Daytona 500, a race that has grown

Through most of 1958, 'Big Bill' France worked flat-out to build his long-planned dream of a race track called the Daytona International Speedway. France spent more than five years trying to pull together the support and finance to turn his vision of a 2.5-mile high-banked superspeedway into reality, but time and again his hopes of finding the money turned to dust. Most people would have given up, but France stuck to his guns and eventually made it happen in partnership with J Saxton Lloyd, a former president of the USA's National Automobile Dealers Association.

In the end, France mustered only US$750,000 to spend on the project, but by working hard, side-by-side with his 25-year-old son Bill Jr, the Frances were able to get the new-style track built and ready for action in February 1959. France and his son helped clear the land, drove the bulldozers and supervised the paving operation. Midway through the building project France ran out of money and in order to complete the job he had to engineer a US$600,000 loan through Clint Murchison, a wealthy Texan.

Working uninterrupted through the winter of 1958-59, the Frances and their construction crews were able to complete the giant, high-banked oval in time for practice to begin on February 1 1959 for the inaugural Daytona 500. Nobody had seen anything quite like it. The

RICAN DYNASTY

beyond even the ambitions of its founder and promoter 'Big Bill' France. BY GORDON KIRBY

Ford

Indianapolis Motor Speedway, opened in 1909, was a four-cornered speedway with long straightaways and only nine degrees of banking in the corners. But since the demise of America's legendary board tracks from the 1920s, no major league, high-banked ovals had been built in America. Daytona was the USA's first modern superspeedway with a tri-oval shape and the corners banked at an impressive 31 degrees.

The NASCAR stock cars of the time – true 'stock' cars with safety rollcages welded to stock chassis – took to the track for the first time at 2pm on February 1 and by the end of the day local hero Glenn 'Fireball' Roberts had turned the fastest lap at 145.7mph. A new era had arrived, with the cars lapping the big track some 30mph faster than any other NASCAR track. "The only limit is on how fast the car will go and how fast you've got the nerve to drive it," Roberts remarked.

The man who created the new superspeedway and ushered American motor racing into the modern era was also the driving force behind NASCAR. Bill France Sr grew up in Virginia, Washington DC. He was a mechanic and budding race driver who set out in 1934 to start a new life. France and his wife Anne drove south and settled at Daytona Beach in north-eastern Florida, a small town by the Atlantic Ocean. Almost immediately, France started racing stock cars and promoting races before taking control of NASCAR 10 years later when the organisation was founded near the end of 1947.



"The Daytona 500 would come to far outstrip the Indy 500 in TV ratings and prestige"

Photos: Getty Images, Ford, Motorsport Images and Archives

France competed in the first race run in 1936 on a combined beach-road course at Daytona Beach, and by 1938 he was promoting the Florida coastal town's beach-road races as well as competing. He won one of the two races he promoted in '38 and promoted four stock car races on the beach in 1941. World War II interrupted the string of races but France was back at it after the war and continued to promote an annual February beach race into the 1950s.

But the beach race was difficult to organise and police. Crowd control was hard to maintain and the race created horrendous traffic jams and caused more and more inconvenience for the residents of the rapidly growing little city. In April 1953, France announced his plans to build a new speedway a few miles inland. His original goal was to open the new purpose-built speedway in February 1955, but he would go through many travails before he could find the money and obtain both city and state government approvals to move ahead with his dream. Through 1958 France continued promoting the beach race, but in 1957 and 1958 he finally found the backing for the new track and got the project moving along so that he was committed to running the first Daytona 500 on February 22, 1959.









Top to bottom: Fireball Roberts won '62 500; Freddie Lorenzen (28) edges Junior Johnson in '65; building work in '58; Curtis Turner (26) heads fellow Ford of Joe Weatherly at beach course in '56

'Big Bill' was a tall man with a looming frame, measuring 6ft 5ins, and he knew how to use his physical presence to get what he wanted. France took control of NASCAR at its creation from a handful of other key figures involved in stock car racing across the American Southeast. One of these was Raymond Parks, a whiskey runner and gambling and slot machine operator from Atlanta. In the 1940s, Parks ran what was considered to be the first professional stock car team with legendary drivers Lloyd Seay and Roy Hall, who were also whiskey runners. Parks reputedly helped save France from bankruptcy at least once and vied with France for control of NASCAR, only to find himself adroitly sidelined from having any financial or controlling interest in the organisation by France's canny manoeuvring, legal and otherwise.

In the wild world of stock car racing in those days many small, regional sanctioning bodies promoted their own races, often in direct competition with each other. Most of these little groups, NASCAR included, were considered outlaws by the AAA (American Automobile Association), which had ruled all American motor racing since the first decade of the century with the Indy 500 as its unrivalled centrepiece.

In May 1955, France – the 'outlaw' stock car promoter – was thrown out of the Indianapolis Motor Speedway's Gasoline Alley by AAA officials. France was wearing a borrowed garage area credential and some AAA people spotted the 'outlaw' promoter with his illegal credential and asked the chief steward to escort him out of Gasoline Alley.

France always maintained that it was the AAA, and not track owner Tony Hulman, who had thrown him out of the IMS's garage area. Hulman and he were always on good terms, France insisted, but it was an interesting day in the life of the man whose organisation would ultimately, after his death, stage the biggest annual race at the Indianapolis Motor Speedway – NASCAR's Brickyard 400 in August each year – and whose own Daytona 500 would far outstrip the Indy 500 in TV ratings, prestige and commercial value.

Less than four years after his embarrassing moment at Indianapolis, France was fully occupied launching his new superspeedway. Fireball Roberts and his peers immediately showed that the high-banked track would produce speeds for NASCAR stock cars that were equal or better to those turned by Indy cars at the comparatively flat, four-cornered Indianapolis oval. And as practice, qualifying and the preliminary races took place for the Daytona International Speedway's first 'Speedweeks' it also became clear that the track would produce a new and exciting kind of spectacle. It would earn the nickname 'drafting'.

Legend has it that Junior Johnson discovered the 'draft' at Daytona a few years later but the truth is all the top drivers experienced the 'draft' during practice for the first Daytona 500. They discovered their cars would pick up speed while running in the slipstream of a car or pack of cars ahead and with the right timing you could pull out and 'slingshot' ahead of your competitor. Running at sustained speeds they had never previously experienced the drivers tried to understand the phenomenon better and take advantage of it in the race.

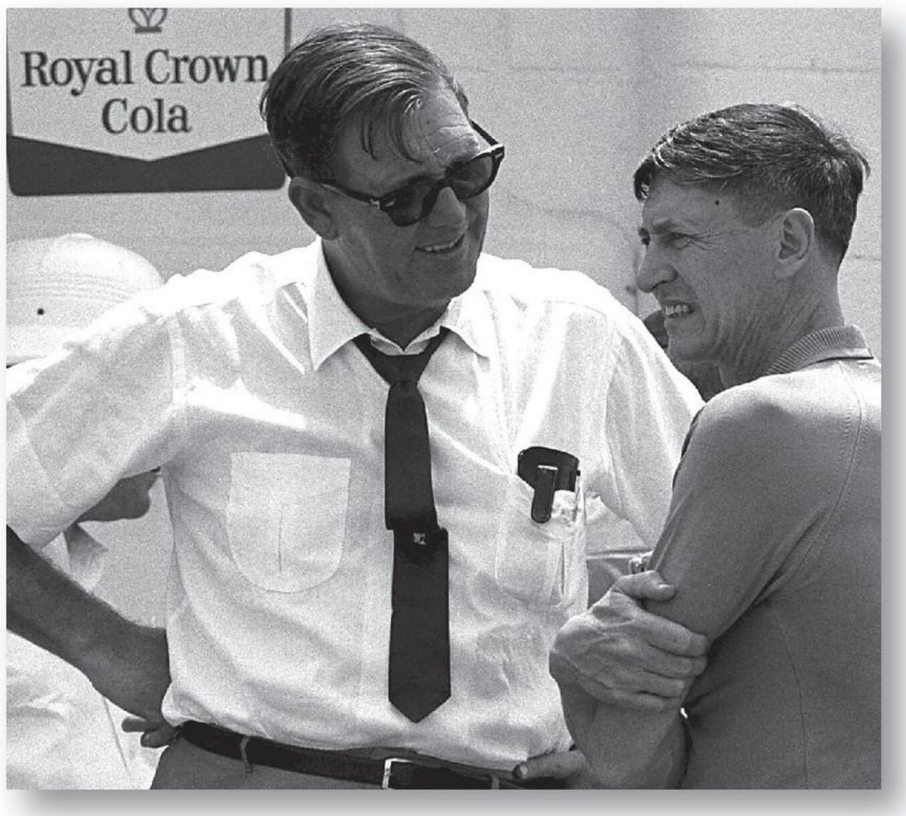
The first race at Daytona was run on February 20 1959, two days before the inaugural 500. The track's maiden race was a 100-mile event for open-roofed 'convertibles', followed directly by another 100-mile race for 'hardtop' Grand National cars. The convertible race was won by 'Shorty' Rollins, who drafted past Marvin Panch and Richard Petty's cars on the run off Turn 4 down to the chequered flag. The Grand National qualifier was won by Bob Welborn's Chevrolet from Fritz Wilson's Ford Thunderbird.

Two days later, the 500 drew more than 40,000 paying spectators, including 18,500 seated in the only grandstands along the tri-oval section at the start/finish line. The longer race turned into a grind with many front runners dropping out with blown engines or losing time because of chunking tyres. In the end, it came down to a duel between Lee Petty, the 1954 and '58 Grand National champion who would go on to win his third title in 1959, and Johnny Beauchamp, a generally unknown driver from Iowa who raced in the Midwest IMCA stock car series. Petty and Beauchamp engaged in a furious drafting match over the final laps, joined by Joe Weatherly's lapped car. The three cars flashed beneath the chequered flag in tandem, and Beauchamp's T-Bird was originally given the victory. But three days later, after viewing »»

still photos and newsreel footage, Big Bill France announced that Petty's Oldsmobile was the winner by three feet.

The speedway's successful debut gave NASCAR a grand, season-opening 500-mile race on a spectacular track and helped France solidify his already dominant role at the helm of NASCAR. If there were any challenges to his supremacy, Big Bill was not averse to using whatever force was required.

During the 1961 season, for example, many of the drivers, led by front runners Curtis Turner, Fireball Roberts and Tim Flock, attempted to form a drivers' union. A furious France met with the drivers and told them he would tear down his speedway and plant corn in its place before he would countenance such a thing. He handed out forms he'd prepared for each driver to sign, swearing that they would never join a union. And he told them that anyone who refused to sign would never race at his track or in another NASCAR race again. "And if that isn't enough," France added, "I'll use a pistol to enforce it. I have a pistol and I know how to use it."



Big Bill France (left), talking to Leo Beebe of Ford in 1965, ruled NASCAR with an iron fist and twice acted angrily against drivers who threatened to form a union

Eight years later, in 1969, at the debut race of the 2.66-mile Talladega superspeedway in Alabama, no less a man than Richard Petty led a drivers' strike which failed miserably after France banned all the strikers from running. It led to a famous race of unknowns, won by Richard Brickhouse, and since then there's never been even the smallest whiff of the words 'union' or 'strike' in the NASCAR lexicon.

From the start in 1959, Bill Sr aggressively courted the FIA's approval of the Daytona 500. He wanted the race to stand on the international calendar with the Indy 500 and United States Grand Prix, and as part of his quest for worldwide recognition France built an infield road course which included a good deal of the banked oval. On this road course-cum-oval in 1962, two weeks before the 500, France staged a three-hour international sports car race called the Daytona Continental. Famously, the race was won by Dan Gurney in Frank Arciero's Lotus 19, beating a NART Ferrari co-driven by Formula 1 world champion Phil Hill and young Mexican phenomenon Ricardo Rodriguez. Jim Hall finished third in an early Chaparral, with Stirling Moss taking fourth in another NART Ferrari. Two years later the race was increased to 12 hours and in 1966 the first Daytona 24 Hours took place with a trio of Ford MK IIs sweeping the first three places.

For many years France and his sons, Bill Jr and Jim, maintained a close link between the Le Mans 24 Hours and the Daytona enduro, working with the ACO's rule-makers as best as possible so that teams and drivers could take part in both races. All this enabled France to call his track 'The World Center of Racing'. Today, the younger of Big Bill's two sons, Jim, remains the quiet man behind the Daytona 24-hour race and the Grand-Am sports car series, both sponsored by Rolex.

> "Big Bill told the drivers that anyone who refused to sign would never race again"

Big Bill handed the keys over to Bill Jr at the start of 1972. Bill Jr was just as tough as his dad. He learned the business from the ground up and knew everyone in the garage area. He ran NASCAR with an equally iron fist for 30 years and his tenure at NASCAR's controls coincided with a 33-year stint by the RJ Reynold's Tobacco Co's Winston cigarette brand as the sponsor of the France family's premier division. Known from the start back in 1948 as the Grand National series, it was rebranded the Winston Cup series in 1986.

In 2004, Nextel replaced Winston as the series' sponsor and following Nextel's corporate takeover by Sprint last year, the series becomes the Sprint Cup in 2008.

Times have changed in many ways, of course. Today's NASCAR Sprint Cup cars are a world away from the stock cars of 50 years ago. Today's cars are purpose-built around tube frame chassis and the top teams spend many millions of dollars on engineering, development and wind tunnels. And the 'slingshot' pass has all but vanished following the introduction in 1988 of 'restrictor plates' for the Cup races at Daytona and Talladega. Severe restrictions by these plates on the amount of air that can be drawn into an engine have cut power from close to 900bhp for most races to a mere 450 at Daytona and Talladega.

Introduced after Bobby Allison crashed heavily at Talladega and pieces of his car flew into the grandstands, the restrictor plates are intended to keep any accidents within the confines of the race track, which they surely do. But it means the cars run around in massive packs, two and three-wide, and the only way to pass is by working with a drafting partner or three. To a man, the drivers hate restrictor-plate racing, but it produces an eye-filling show for the TV audience, including huge, multi-car accidents.

Big Bill France passed away in 1992 and Bill Jr died last year after a long battle with cancer. Bill Jr retired in 2003 and his son Brian moved into NASCAR's chairman and CEO seats. The International Speedway Corporation is a separate, publicly traded, track-owning company, founded by Bill Sr and run now by Jim France and Bill Jr's daughter Lesa France Kennedy. ISC owns 12 race tracks across the United States including the Daytona, Talladega, Darlington, California, Homestead-Miami and Michigan Speedways, and the Watkins Glen road course. Twenty of the 36 Sprint Cup races are run at ISC tracks.

Today, the Daytona 500 is known as 'America's Race' and pulls TV ratings three and four times larger than the Indy 500, while NASCAR as a whole defines motor racing to the average American. Most of NASCAR's 36 first division Cup races are run at Daytona-like superspeedways in almost every region of the USA and draw big crowds and strong TV ratings. NASCAR's current television contract with the ABC/ESPN, Fox and TNT networks is worth US$4.8 billion over eight years, and in 2006 the 36 Cup races paid more than $US220 million in prize money to drivers and teams.

In the past year, a stream of former Indy 500 and F1 race winners, lured by the increasing prestige and money to be made in NASCAR, have turned their backs on open-wheel racing to tackle stock car racing – a historic first. Indeed, the dreams, ambition and drive of Big Bill France and his oldest son Bill Jr have entirely and forever transformed the American motor sports landscape.



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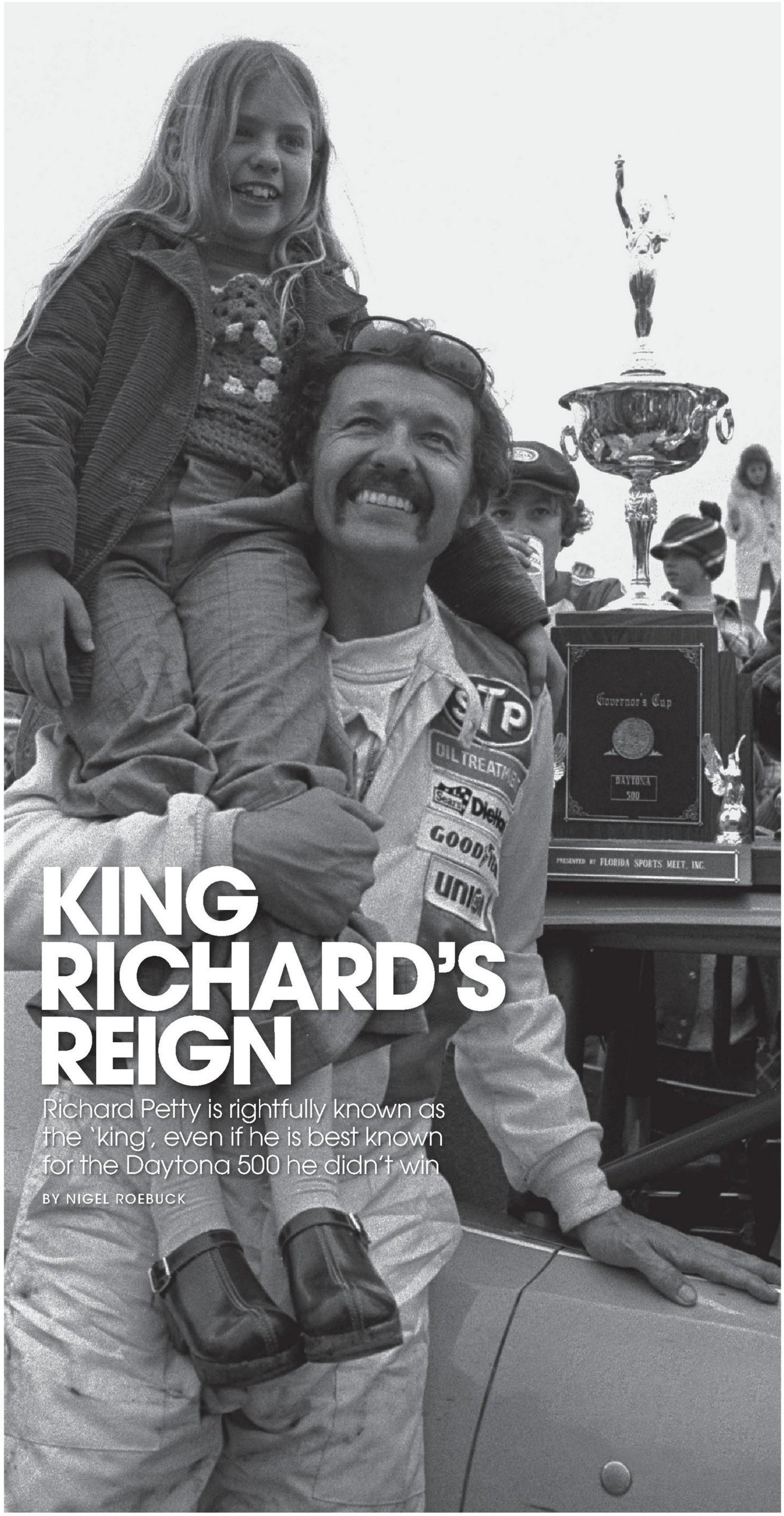
Rayda Sinni —

CEO of The Car Experience (E.N.P. Inc.)

KING RICHARD'S REIGN

Richard Petty is rightfully known as the 'king', even if he is best known for the Daytona 500 he didn't win

BY NIGEL ROEBUCK



PA Photos

It was not the way Richard Petty would have wished to take his leave of the sport he had so long graced. On November 15 1992, in his familiar number 43 STP Pontiac, Petty raced for the last time, in a 500-miler at the Atlanta Motor Speedway: on lap 96 he got caught up in someone else's accident. There may have been a championship to be settled at this final race of the season, but *everyone* was there to witness the last time around for the man still known, 15 years on, as 'The King'.

Damage to the car looked devastating, but a hauler got it back to the garage area, and crew chief Dale Inman and the boys went to work. It was important, everyone felt, that Richard was running at the end of this race, and eventually out came the Pontiac again, *sans* front bodywork, but mobile. When he took the flag, Petty was cheered to the rafters, but many were in tears. "The end of an era," said the commentator, and he spoke no lie.

"I went out in a blaze," Petty smiled. "I just forgot the glory part. When I hit Darrell Waltrip's car, it broke the oil line, and caught on fire. I figured I'd better find me a fire truck, so I drove on round the track until I found one – and when I did, the guys just wanted autographs!"

Why was he retiring? "Well, I'm 55, so age has somethin' to do with it." A pause. "And not winnin' races has somethin' to do with it..."

For Petty's numberless fans, the last years of his career were bitter-sweet. On the one hand, they loved to see him still doing his thing, but on the other they hated to see him in midfield, just another driver in an ever-more-corporate and expensive sport. At the end of 1971 STP did a deal with Petty to sponsor him 'for life', and at the time such a thing was unheard of in NASCAR circles. The money was good, and the guarantee even better, but as the years went by, and the costs escalated, Petty Enterprises became relatively one of the poorer teams, locked into an agreement overtaken by time.

Petty carried on because he still loved to drive, but he was aware that not everyone cared to see it. "If I'd looked at what the fans thought," he said, "I'd have quit in 1986. You know, when I was born, I guess God said, 'You've got 25 years of good luck'. I just tried to stretch it to 35..."

Atlanta in '92 was the 1184th race of Petty's NASCAR career, a number which falls into startling perspective when you consider that Michael Schumacher drove in 249 Grands Prix. His 200 victories (and seven NASCAR championships) mean that, statistically, he will

never be matched, and many believe him to be the greatest stock car driver there has ever been. Certainly he remains the most revered, and also the most beloved, behaving with the fans in a way only Mario Andretti and Jackie Stewart would understand.

These days Daytona is a 'restrictor plate' race. Introduced some years ago, the plate has a hole of specified diameter which reduces the air flow into the carburettor (none of that fuel-injection nonsense in stock car racing) in an attempt to peg back ever-escalating speeds at the fastest superspeedways, and no one can doubt that it works. In the mid-'80s the pole position lap at Daytona was around 210mph, but nowadays it is always around 190.

"The plate lets in just enough air for the motors to run 190," said Petty sorrowfully. "Every time the speed sneaks up, they just put a smaller restrictor in and of course the insurance people have played their part – you mention 200, and they go crazy!

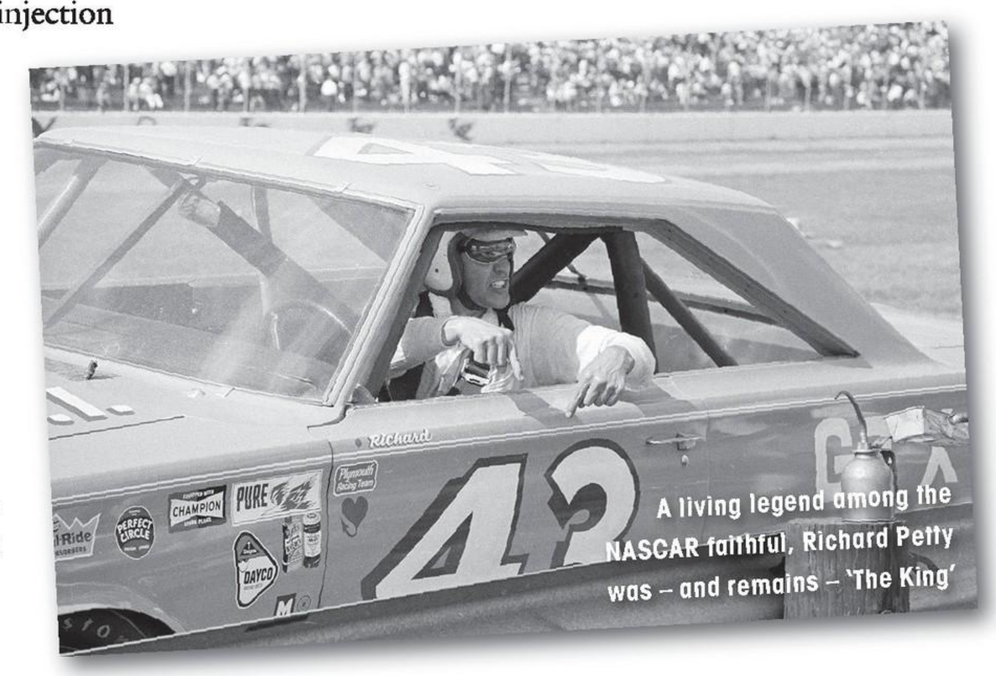
"It all changed after Bobby Allison had a big accident at Talladega in '87. He got up in the wall and into the debris fence, which broke: it didn't come in, but it broke. Now it didn't hurt nobody, or nothin', but NASCAR went to Panic City, sayin', 'Man, what if that thing had got into the crowd...' They doubled and tripled up all the cables holding the fence – and they slowed the cars down."

The restrictor plate utterly changed the nature of racing at the superspeedways. Previously you had power to spare, now you needed to be 'wide open' the whole time, and this led to huge groups of cars circulating in close formation, and no one daring to lift for fear of being overwhelmed. As a consequence, there have been some fearsome accidents in these circumstances, and while the speeds may be lower, many a driver has said he feels less safe than before.

As well as that, the restrictor plate has done away with the 'slingshot pass', once the calling card of NASCAR. "Nowadays," said Petty, "you want to be in the lead on the last lap – because there ain't nobody going to pass you. Back then, though, bein' in front was the *last* place you wanted to be, because for sure someone was goin' to draft you.

"It's all a lot different now. See, these days NASCAR's in show business – not *racin'*, OK? The new fans are eatin' it up. The old race fans don't like it, but the new ones don't know anythin' better – they never saw it when it was pure racin'. I guess it's very similar in Formula 1, from everything I hear..."

These days NASCAR drivers come from all over the place, but back then they were all Southern boys, and 'country', too. Petty has lived all his life in the hamlet of Level Cross, North Carolina. "I've been all over the world, and seen a lot of things I liked, but I've never seen one place where I liked everything better. Wild horses couldn't drag me to live in a city."



"David Pearson was so relaxed. We'd be runnin' under a caution and he'd light up a cigarette!"

Petty may have won an unrivalled seven Daytona 500s, but, as he will smilingly admit, he is likely best known for a race he *didn't* win.

For the fans, the 1976 Daytona 500 was the race that had everything. Back then, the cars were still 'unbridled', as Petty calls them, with power to spare, and the closing laps came down to a fight with David Pearson, whom he regards as the greatest driver he ever encountered.

"Pearson was a pure driver – he had every bit as much car control as someone like Curtis Turner – but without the need to be fancy. He just got there *quick*, man! He was a winner, that was the thing.

"David was probably the most relaxed race driver there's ever been – I mean, when we was runnin' round under caution, he'd light a cigarette! You'd be runnin' behind him and see this smoke and think maybe he blowed up – and then the cigarette would get thrown out! Mind you, that was only under caution – when he was racin', he got serious...

"In the last few laps at Daytona that time, it came down to him and me, with each of us knowin' what the other was goin' to do. I was leadin', and couldn't get him to pass – back then, like I said, you did *not* want to lead into that last lap.

"So what I did, I cut back my revs. I'd run seventy-eight hundred, then the next lap seventy-seven hundred, seventy-six, seventy-five, like that. Now he's sittin' back there, not realisin' that – he's just in the draft? So when we got to the last lap, I just floor it – and he does, too, and on the backstretch he's suddenly runnin' 10mph faster than he had been. He passes me into three, but now that car doesn't stick – it rides high up the wall, and when that happened I cut down underneath him, and thought I'd cleared him.

"On a big old track like that, when you come off a corner you want the car to be free: if you hold it down too low, it bogs down, and then the other guy has a chance to come back at you. So I thought I'd cleared him – just – and I was about 100 yards away from winning. But I hadn't quite missed him, and we both lost it and, you know, when you lose a stock car, it stays lost..."

Pearson's battered Mercury finally crept over the line to win the Daytona 500, while Petty's crew pushed the remains of number 43 into second place.

He finished second, too, in what he considers the greatest drive of his life. Again it was the Daytona 500, in 1962, and the major opposition was the legendary Glenn 'Fireball' Roberts.

"Fireball," said Petty, "qualified at 157mph, which was pole, and I qualified at 149-150. We ran the whole 500 miles, with me sittin' right on his bumper, but we didn't have any cautions in that race, and we *averaged* almost 153mph!

"That Pontiac of his made such a big hole in the air. You could almost knock it out of gear, and just ride along behind him! I always felt like I got the most out of a car that day than any other – we were *so* short of power, compared with him. If I'd ever lost the draft, man, I wouldn't have seen him again. And in my mind that was the best day I ever had in a race car – just because we ran second in somethin' that wasn't even close. Sometimes you can lose, and feel good..."



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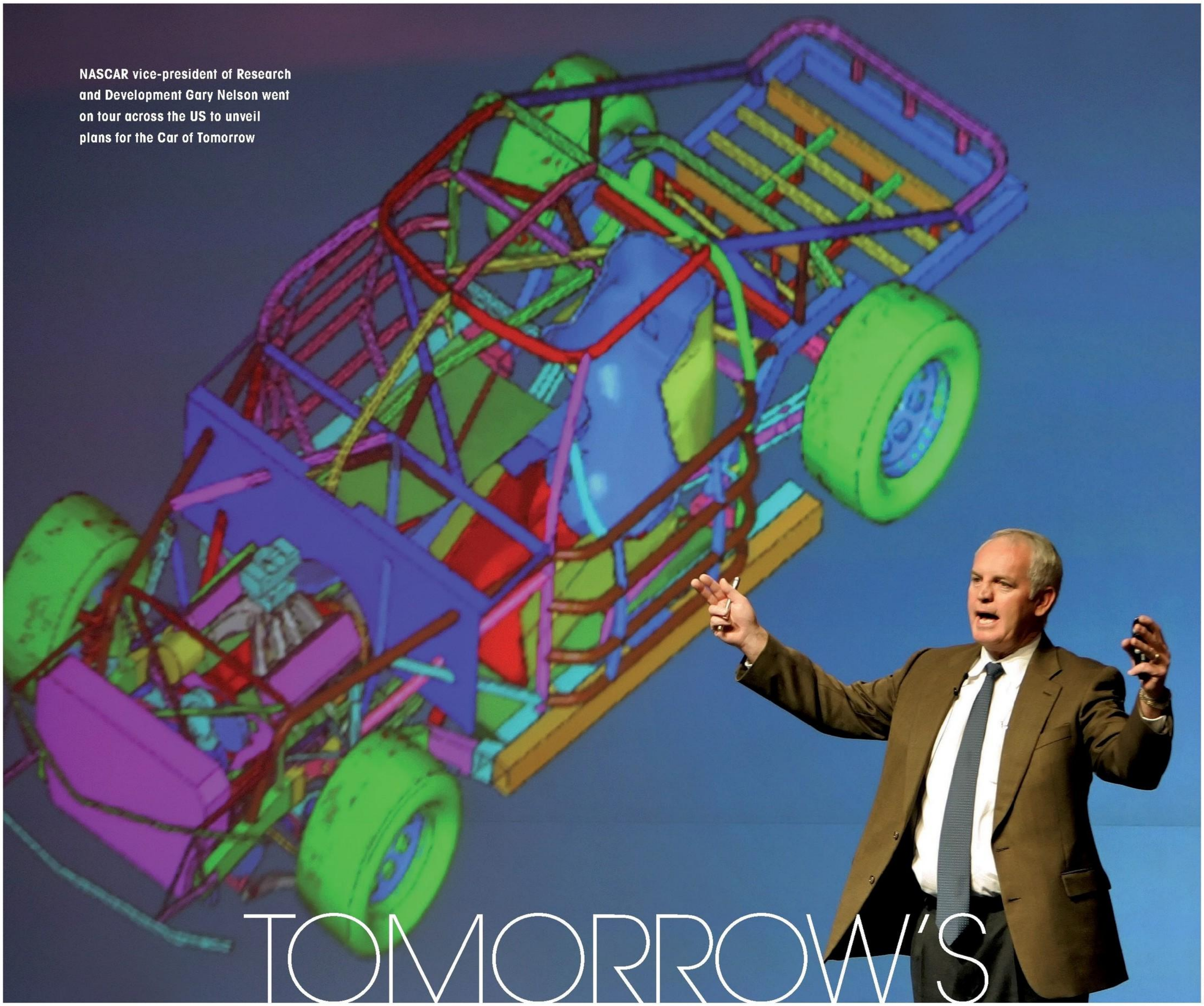
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NASCAR vice-president of Research and Development Gary Nelson went on tour across the US to unveil plans for the Car of Tomorrow

Empics

TOMORROW'S WORLD

For better or worse, stock car racing's unloved 'spec car' has arrived

BY GORDON KIRBY

Over the course of last season, NASCAR phased in a new standard 'spec' car, called, to amusement from some quarters, the 'Car of Tomorrow' (CoT). Its arrival probably represents the biggest single change in NASCAR's long and successful history, yet the move to the larger, taller car has been criticised by everyone from drivers and teams to the fans and media.

Although the new car is a spec car, there's no one manufacturer. Any team can build its own cars as long as they conform strictly to the specifications, and a giant universal template has been designed and built by NASCAR's R&D division to check each car.

As soon as the first prototypes began testing many people started joking about the 'Car of Yesterday' and many have complained about the arrival of 'spec' cars in major-league motor racing. Most people seem to agree that the new car is less attractive than the tried-and-true NASCAR machine, and of course any visual differences between manufacturers have been essentially eliminated. Nor do many drivers like the feel of the new car, and it may not race

as well as the old one because it creates only half the downforce. Last year's experience suggests it's even more difficult to pass with the new car than the old.

"It just doesn't have the feel of the old car," commented 2003 champion Matt Kenseth, lead driver for the four-car Roush-Fenway Ford team. "It doesn't give you the same confidence and it doesn't feel as secure, and that makes it tough to race and pass other cars. Maybe it'll get better as we get it figured out."

The new NASCAR Car of Tomorrow made its debut at the half-mile Bristol bullring last March and was mandatory for 16 of last season's races, plus the two road circuits at Watkins Glen and Sonoma and the autumn race on the superspeedway at Talladega. For the 2008 season, the Car of Tomorrow will be used in all races, including the 50th running of the Daytona 500 on February 17.

NASCAR's leaders – CEO Brian France, president Mike Helton and competition director Robin Pemberton – believe that the taller, wider, chunkier new car will substantially improve safety, reduce costs – at least for the smaller teams – and assist in achieving a level playing field.

"It's been a big step," admits Pemberton, part of the team based at NASCAR's R&D centre in Concord, North Carolina. "It's been a challenge at times, but a lot of the teams and drivers have been very open. A lot of very positive things have been said. Most of the time the things that get written are negative, but that's just the nature of the beast."

On its inception, the new car represented the first major technical change in NASCAR in 25 years, since the cars were shortened by five inches to a 110-inch wheelbase in 1981. At the time, Pemberton was working as a chief mechanic for Petty Enterprises and he recalls how the team decided which General Motors brand it would race to the new short-wheelbase specifications.

"Richard Petty, Dale Inman and Maurice Petty came wheeling in the parking lot, one driving a Buick, one driving a Pontiac and one driving an Oldsmobile," Pemberton says. "They'd taken them straight off the floor from local dealerships and we took a good look at them to choose what car we were going to build for the following year.

"It was definitely different back then. There wasn't anybody getting together to talk to Bill France or discuss anything. In those days a big meeting would have been a dozen people. This last year, we had meetings every week with 40 or 50 people."

Certainly, you cannot fault NASCAR for not putting the time and effort required into the Car of Tomorrow project. "We started early in 2006 with weekly meetings and weekly conference calls," Pemberton says. "There were probably 30 or 40 groups on the call every Tuesday. There was one call with all the teams and manufacturers and we followed up with another conference call with the manufacturers. We've been pretty proactive in involving everybody and shame on anybody if they had an opinion and didn't share it with the group, or had a solution to a problem and didn't share it."

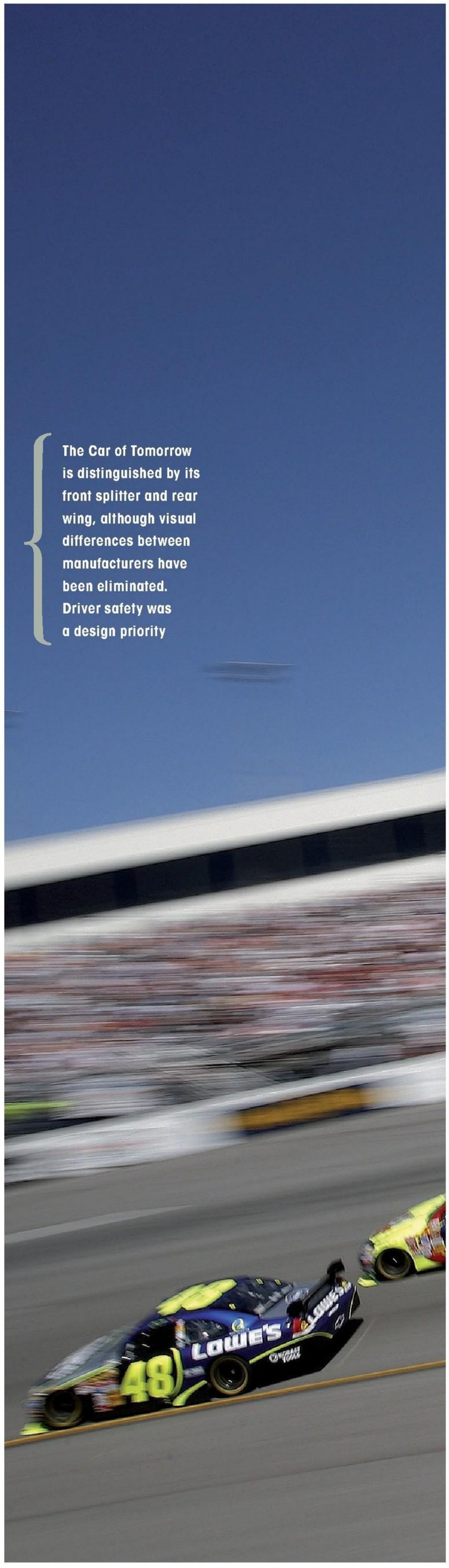


"The new car is NASCAR's first major technical change in 25 years"

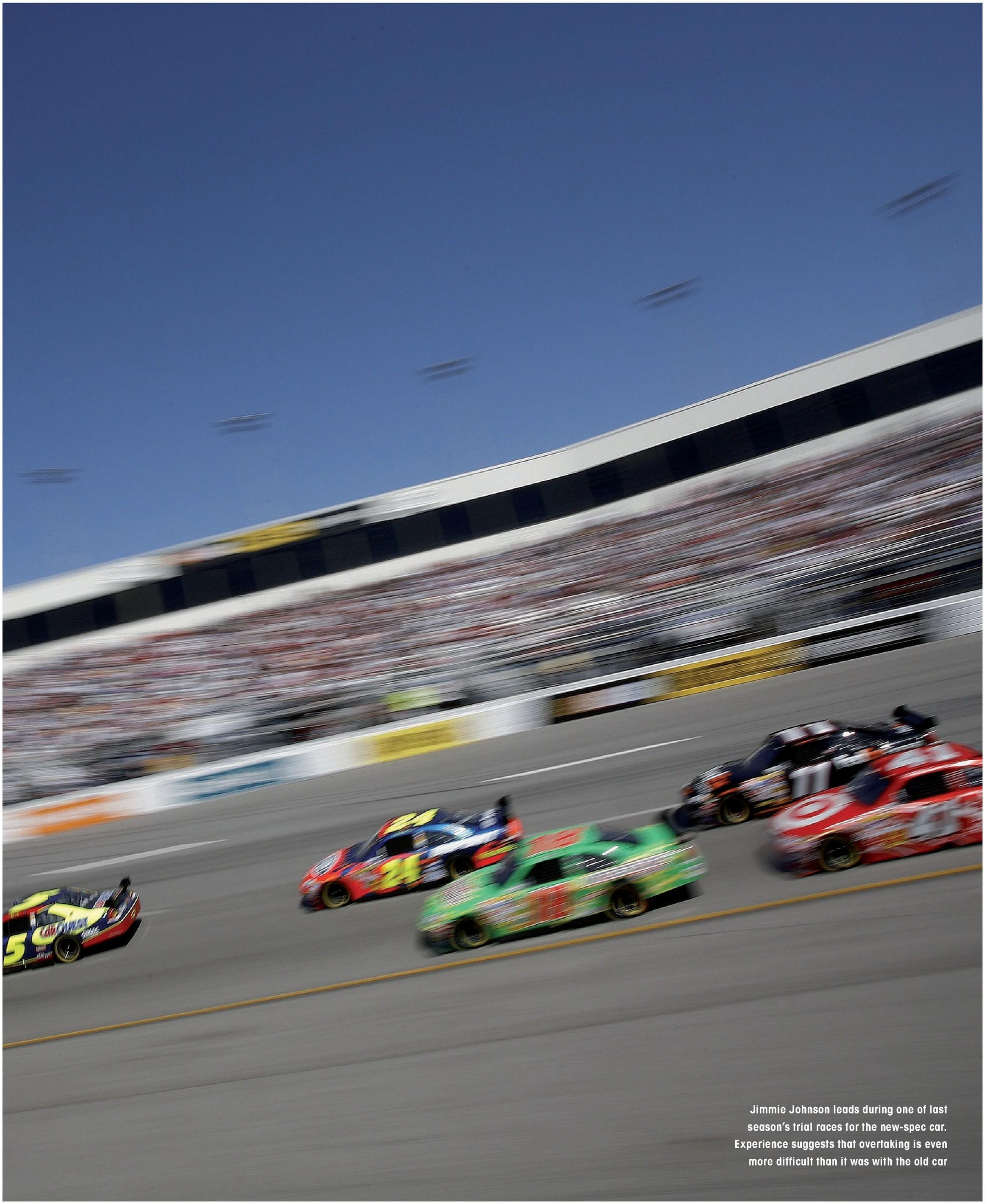
Dale Earnhardt's death on the last lap of the 2001 Daytona 500 was the trigger for the creation of the new car. Following such a high-profile fatality, NASCAR became increasingly obsessed with safety. "The main thing that's driven this has been the safety aspect," Pemberton explains. "Everyone has to realise that without safe race cars we might not be racing at all. If you look back to how dangerous it was in the 1960s and '70s, that would not be tolerated in today's world."

NASCAR decided to retain the basic existing elements of the suspension and steering geometry, engine, transmission and drivetrain. "We wanted to use those pieces that we're used to working on for the last number of decades," Pemberton says, "but move things around so we could get the room to integrate high energy-impact foam into the sides of the cockpit and fit modern carbon-fibre seats."

The driver sits closer to the centre-line of the new car and the 'greenhouse' surrounding him is both taller and wider. "We wanted a safe environment for all sizes of drivers," Pemberton explains. "Even though the suspension geometry is similar, we've gained space for the driver inside. The symmetrical left suspension



The Car of Tomorrow is distinguished by its front splitter and rear wing, although visual differences between manufacturers have been eliminated. Driver safety was a design priority



Jimmie Johnson leads during one of last season's trial races for the new-spec car. Experience suggests that overtaking is even more difficult than it was with the old car

LAT

means the leftside is wider by an inch. We've gained an inch with the suspension and the driver is moved over two inches."

A more symmetrical car theoretically means there will less playing around with weight distribution. "It shouldn't be too different across the new car," Pemberton says. "With the old car, you had quite a bit of difference in weight distribution between the teams; now everybody is in the same boat."

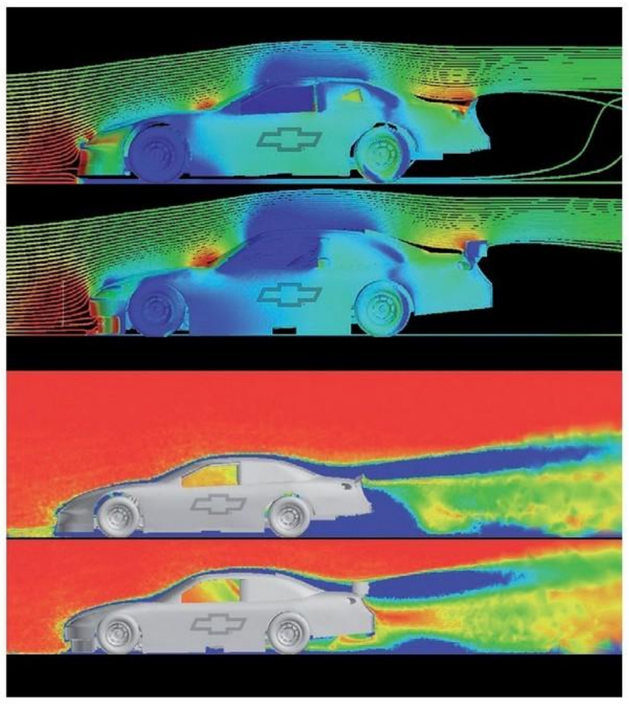
NASCAR has learned a lot about energy absorption in developing the car. Liberal use has been made of high-impact foam. "It's probably one of the best things we've done," Pemberton remarks. "In the old cars, the door bars were right out against the skin but they're in from the skin on the new car, and that gives us room to insert the foam with its composite backstop."

Pemberton believes the new design will reduce the number of cars the teams will have to build to suit different tracks. "When you look at the economics, it makes very good sense on the number of vehicles you need to build due to the sheer demands of the racing schedule," he observes. "Going from coast to coast a few times as well as testing, building, maintaining and also repairing cars means that a dozen or more cars are needed.

"The opportunity to have fewer cars in your stable will be there more than ever," he adds. "We suspect that it won't have an effect on the larger teams, but we think it will allow teams to make aero adjustments with the splitter, the wing and the curved end plates on the wing." Can they get the right aero balance for their particular driver without changing the body location and configuration as much?

"Today, fabricators, crew chiefs and aero guys do such a good job of having a car that fits a driver's style. But one driver may not like the aero fingerprint that another driver likes."

The new car is tuned aerodynamically by a large front splitter made from bullet-proof, nylon-fibre composite material rather than the traditional vertical air dam at the front, and there's now a small wing at the back, rather than a spoiler. "The wing should help with the competition," Pemberton says. "It should in theory produce less wake than the old spoiler. There should be more air on the nose of the car behind, which should help them race closer and maybe have more of an opportunity to pass." The teams are also allowed to run different combinations of specified flat or curved rear wing endplates on the CoT to vary side force.



"The Nextel Cup's top drivers have provided invaluable input to the CoT"

Meanwhile, the big teams – Hendrick, Childress, DEI, Roush, Gibbs, Evernham, Penske and Ganassi – will do everything in their power to challenge NASCAR's theses. Many former F1, CART and IMSA engineers are enjoying life working in NASCAR these days and are among those being unleashed on the Car of Tomorrow. Rule changes in racing historically cost the teams money and usually result in the richer teams pulling away from the little guys, and many people say the same thing will happen with the new car, that the big, multi-car teams will spend massive amounts of money in testing, development, simulation and wind tunnel time, investigating every tiny detail. And, of course, all the teams, big and small, have had to spend many millions of dollars on building or buying fleets of new cars.

"To be honest, it wouldn't be right if somebody wasn't complaining," remarks Pemberton. "There are teams that have a large advantage over the rest of our world in technology and chassis and handling. If we can close up the development room a little bit we can help some of the groups that only periodically hit the right combination, those guys that every half a dozen races might hit the top five."

The logistics of the switch to the CoT appear to have gone much better than predicted. Pemberton says a healthy working relationship between the organisation and its teams and drivers is the key to this successful process. "There's a mutual respect between the teams in the garage area and us," Pemberton says. "A lot of times it gets played out in the media as something other than that, but for the most part there's a mutual respect. They understand what we're trying to do and we understand how they try to compete and get an advantage. Everybody voiced their opinions and had their little fixes.

"We've made some changes at the request of the teams," he adds, "small things to help the cars in the building process. We've moved the tailpipes to a different location, for example, because it was hard to maintain them when they were running through the frame rails. We've redesigned the exhaust bracketry, changed a couple of sheet metal parts to make it easier to make the body panels."

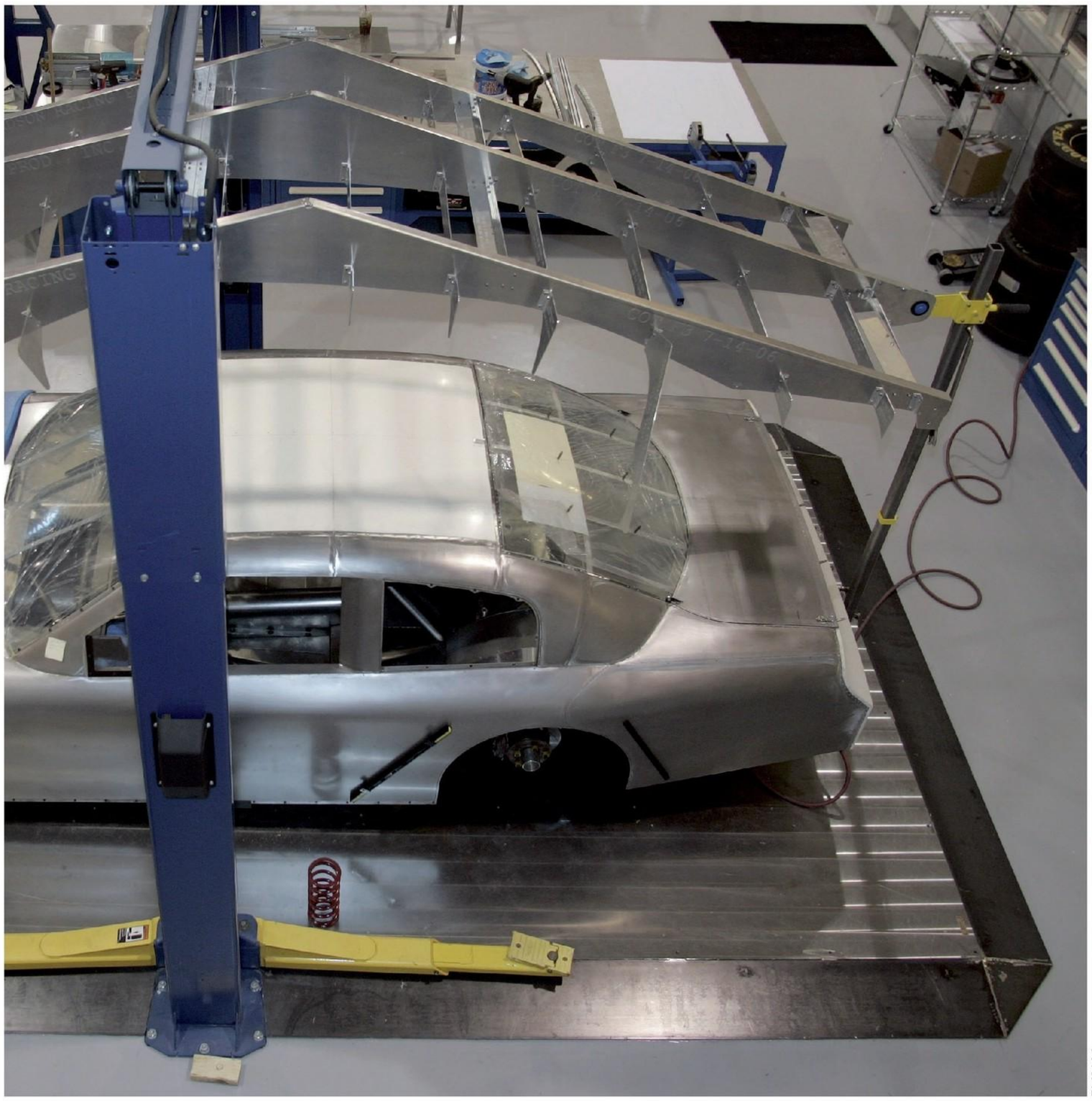


NASCAR's template ensures each car conforms to the regulations. Left: aerodynamics (CoT is bottom in both graphics) are tuned for close racing

Pemberton says the Nextel Cup series' top drivers have provided invaluable input into the development of the Car of Tomorrow. "You go to different racetracks and drivers say what they're working on, what it's doing, what they think is important," Pemberton explains. "Whether it's a Jeff Gordon or a Jimmie Johnson or a Matt Kenseth, or any of those competitors, they've all given us their input.

"Now that we have this good working relationship on this car, we take what they say and we go to work on it. We look at everything, but if it's something that we think is valid and deserves a good look, we will do it."

Pemberton is proud of how well the new car has worked in the face of predictions about shattered splitters littering the tracks and suggestions of other reliability problems. "A lot of people underestimated the work that all the people at the R&D centre did ahead of time," he says. "We did a lot of homework and I think that was a surprise to some people. Our guys did



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a really good job and the competitors did a great job of taking it seriously when it was time. Everyone made a good go of it."

He points to the inspection templates as another thing that required refining. He adds that the new car's brakes have worked much better than critics predicted and says that the real difficulty in stopping the new car is adapting to its higher centre of gravity.

"There was a concern that the brakes were going to run hot, but they flow more air than ever," Pemberton points out. "We've allowed the car to take in more air, even though it was an over-compensation, because with a higher CG [centre of gravity] the car is harder to stop and hard to make handle.

"It's been a good learning process. People have been able to tune their cars quite differently with bits and pieces rather than the entire car being scrapped. That's a good point with this car."

The failure to manage changing technology and its effects has been a major reason for the demise of so many racing series from the original CanAm through IMSA's GTP championship to the much-lamented CART Indy Car World Series. The same basic set of problems, allied with unrivalled arrogance and avariciousness, are prevalent in Formula 1 these days. But by its very nature, stock car racing did not encompass or encourage new technology, a key fact which always made NASCAR's job much easier. The new car aside, incremental change has always been and will continue to be NASCAR's mantra.



"To be honest, it wouldn't be right if somebody wasn't complaining"

ROBIN PEMBERTON, COMPETITION DIRECTOR

So everyone will be watching closely to see how NASCAR's new Sprint Cup car fares on its 2008 debut at the 50th Daytona 500. That race and the season to follow will tell us if the CoT is going to be as successful as NASCAR's previous Cup car of the past 27 years. The new car may be a big, ugly brick – the antithesis of the time-honoured concept of sleeker, faster, better – which rakes the souls of some people, but the fact is it's here. Whether you're a driver, crew chief, team owner, or fan, the time for complaining is over. Ⓜ



COMMENT

US SUCCESS

Single-seater star Juan Montoya is NASCAR's rookie of the year

Former F1 and CART superstar Juan Pablo Montoya's move at the end of 2006 to Chip Ganassi's NASCAR team was a first for the series, and his pair of wins to date have paid off for Ganassi and NASCAR as a whole. Other former open-wheel stars such as Jacques Villeneuve, Dario Franchitti, Sam Hornish and Patrick Carpentier have followed suit.

Montoya took last year's Rookie of the Year award and couldn't be happier with his move into the 900bhp, 3400-pound beasts.

"I'm having fun," Juan says. "The races are awesome and the cars are a handful. I wouldn't change it for anything."

"In open-wheel you get frustrated because you can't pass people. Here, if you don't you can try again and again, and you will pass. There are always different patterns and grooves, every week it's a different track and a different set-up."

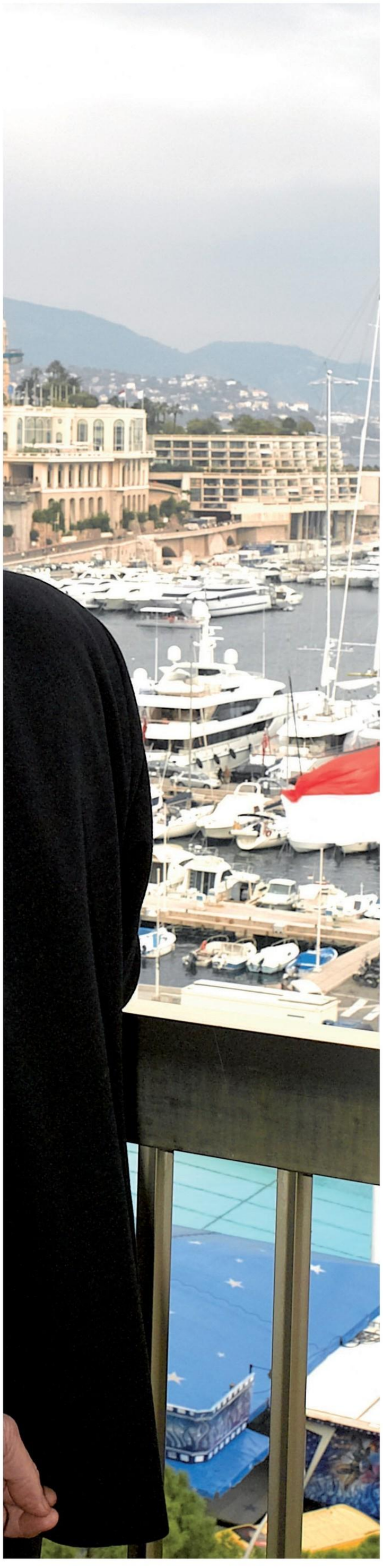
Juan admits there are politics in NASCAR, but nothing like F1: "There are some politics, but I think it's a well-balanced environment.

"The biggest thing you've got to learn when you come from open-wheel racing is that some weeks you're going to run 30th or 35th. That is so hard to understand, especially when you ran 30th and did a good job! It's hard to explain because there are races where you did a worse job and you finished fifth."

Juan says there are more details for the driver and team to dial in than there are in F1. "In open-wheel, you've got bars and springs and the front wing, and that's it. Here, you've got shocks and steering and suspension geometry that you're always messing with – more things to either get right, or screw up."

Montoya finished 20th in the points last year and hopes to make this year's top 12 and therefore qualify for the Chase for the Cup championship play-off. **GK**





James Mitchell

Lunch with...
ROY SALVADORI

Britain's busiest 1950s racing driver remembers the battles and the parties

BY SIMON TAYLOR

When I was first taken, as a small boy in the 1950s, to Goodwood, Silverstone and Castle Combe, Stirling Moss was of course the man we all wanted to see. But probably the second biggest draw in British motor racing, the darling of the crowds for his flamboyant speed and the ruthlessly determined way he drove to win, was Roy Salvadori. A typical national meeting would have separate races for F1, Formula 2, sports-racing cars big and small, saloons and *formule libre*. As likely as not the tall, debonair Englishman with the Italian name would be in all of them, in a variety of cars: invariably he would be challenging for the lead, and frequently he would be taking it.



Roy earned his living by racing other people's cars, and the combination of a strong work ethic and generous start, prize and bonus money meant that, by the standards of the day, he made a lot of money. But it also meant that he would usually opt for a busy British weekend with half a dozen races at two circuits, rather than an overseas Grand Prix that might offer international glory but less cash.

He invested his racing earnings shrewdly in his own motor businesses, ending up with both a BMW and an Alfa dealership, and when he sold out in 1971 he retired to Monte Carlo. So it's in his superb apartment on the start-finish straight of the Grand Prix circuit, overlooking the harbour, that his wife Sue serves us an excellent lunch. Sue, incidentally, must be the only girl in the world who is both the daughter of and the wife of a Le Mans winner: her father John Hindmarsh won for Lagonda in 1935.

Roy was born in Essex, of Italian parents, in 1922. In 1946 he went to look at an MG he'd seen advertised: he thought it was a sports car, but it turned out to be an R-type single-seater. He bought it anyway, took it to the first post-war British race meeting, at Gransden Lodge, and came second in his first race. "Maybe I should point out," he says modestly, "there were three starters and two finishers." The MG was followed by the ex-Dobbs Riley Special. He got it checked over by Monaco Motors of Watford and was horrified when the manager, one John Wyer, presented him with a bill for £15. But in those immediately post-war days old racing cars were cheap, and in 1947 he bravely bought, in half-shares with a friend, the ex-Nuvolari, ex-Kenneth Evans Alfa Romeo P3 Grand Prix car. "It scared both »»»



Sartorial contrast: crash helmet and flapping shirt in the 1952 Connaught, and bare-headed and be-suited in the Dobbs Riley in 1946

of us. The first race I did with it was Chimay, a very dangerous circuit, partly with a loose surface. The Alfa weaved all over the place, took up the entire width of the road. When you overtook another car you were never sure which side you'd pass it. Everything was very new to us: we didn't have any experience. The gearbox was playing up, so I did the whole race, start to finish, in top gear. I finished fifth. But it made a nice holiday."

A 14-year-old Maserati 4C followed, which Roy ran in the 1948 British GP at Silverstone, and in 1949 he campaigned a more modern 4CL Maserati which was prepared by Prince Bira's White Mouse Garage in Hammersmith. That car was destroyed in a fiery accident during the Wakefield Trophy in Ireland, and financial constraints kept Roy out of racing until 1951. By now competitive single-seaters were more expensive, so he bought a Le Mans Replica Frazer Nash.

"My first meeting with it was the May Silverstone in 1951. I was leading, a big thing for me then, ahead of Bob Gerard, Tony Crook and the other Frazer Nashes. So I was feeling pretty good about life. At Stowe we came up to lap a group of slower cars which were having their own battle. I tried to overtake them all, but it couldn't be done. I got on the loose stuff."



Thanks to a newsreel cameraman who happened to be on the spot, the horrifying accident that followed was later seen in cinemas up and down the country. The marker drums that delineated the airfield track were filled with concrete. The Nash hit them and cartwheeled into the air, over and over. Roy was half thrown out but caught his feet in the steering wheel and was flung around like a doll, with the car rolling over him. Among other injuries, he sustained a triple skull fracture and brain haemorrhaging.

"Crash helmets weren't mandatory then. I didn't wear one: they were expensive, and you saw the Italian stars like Farina in their leather caps, and you thought, that's the thing, that looks good. Anyway, at Northampton hospital they decided they could do nothing for me, and pushed me into a corner. They rang my parents, but told them I was unlikely to be alive by the time they got there. A priest was summoned and gave me the Last Rites.

"But I proved them wrong. I slowly recovered. My face was pretty bashed about, and I had a dreadful persistent ringing in my right ear. I've had to live with that ever since: I'm completely deaf on one side. In all my racing after that I could never really hear what the engine was doing. I just worked off the rev-counter and the gauges, and the vibration through the seat of my pants. I was never any good at Le Mans starts, because I couldn't hear the starter or when the engine caught. Once I brought my Aston into the pits complaining of a misfire, and when they opened the bonnet they found there was a rod out the side."

Three months after the Silverstone crash Roy was racing again, in an XK120, and during 1952 he raced that and the repaired Frazer Nash. The accident hadn't slowed him, but costs were mounting, and from then on he raced other people's cars. Wealthy Irishman Bobbie Baird offered Roy his Ferrari Tipo 500 for the 1952

British Grand Prix. This led to several more races in Baird's 2.7-litre sports Ferrari, which they shared in the Goodwood Nine Hours. The rules said that no driver should do more than two hours without a break, so every two hours Baird was sent out to do one lap before Salvadori got in again. He got the Ferrari up among the works Jaguar C-types and Aston Martins, and then into the lead. A dead battery and a black flag for a faulty rear light dropped them to third by the end, but John Wyer, now Aston Martin's racing chief, was impressed.

"Bobbie Baird was such a nice chap. His father owned the *Belfast Telegraph*, a very big paper in those days. Bobbie had a drink problem, but they dried him out a couple of times, and the second time it worked. He married his nurse, Isobel. Then he bought a new 4.1 Ferrari, a terribly nasty car. In morning practice for a Snetterton meeting he turned it over. I was in the same session, so I stopped. He'd been thrown out, but he seemed to be all right, just winded. The marshals were looking after him, so I got back in my car and went back to the paddock. Then I heard he was dead: a broken rib had punctured a lung."

In 1953 Roy signed for Connaught in F1 and F2 events, and Aston Martin in major sports car races. When these commitments allowed he also drove for Ecurie Ecosse in its C-type Jaguars, and for Syd Greene in the Gilby Engineering 2-litre Maserati A6GCS. Syd was a tremendous enthusiast who was prevented from racing because he'd lost an arm in an accident. His teenage son Keith was as keen as he was, and went on to a life-long career in racing, first as a driver and then as a brilliant team manager. In 1954 Gilby added an F1 Maserati to the stable, and the green 250F was Roy's main mount in single-seater races for three seasons. Much of the money for the Maserati's purchase came from Esso, which also paid Roy a £10,000 a year retainer to remain loyal to its fuels and oils. A typically busy day was the June Snetterton in 1954, when Roy ran the two Maseratis and a C-type in six races and scored four wins, a second and a third.

"Sometimes I raced four or even five cars in one meeting. Some had left-hand changes, some right-hand changes. The 250F had a central throttle pedal. Torque curves, rev ranges, braking points, gearchange points, they were all different. I'd try not to talk to anyone between jumping out of one car and into another, to keep my concentration, but basically it was instinctive. I don't know how I did it, really.

"I'd clear about £27,000 in a good year, which was a lot of money in those days. I had a simple deal with Syd Greene: the mechanics got 10 per cent of all start and prize money, and we split the rest 45/45. But Esso would pay a big bonus for a win, because they liked to use it in their press advertising. Second place was no good to them, so it really mattered if you won. But at Aston Martin John Wyer would pool the start and prize money and split it equally between the drivers, so we all got the same amount whether we won, or finished fourth, or retired.

"I did have a reputation as a hard driver with certain people. I wouldn't be hard with most of my team-mates, but there were some tough drivers about, and you just had to hit back. If



"There was a very tense atmosphere in the pits until John Wyer calmed us down"

you were being deliberately baulked, you had to let them know you were quite prepared to put your car where there might be a shunt. If you did that often enough they'd respect you."

A memorable confrontation was Roy's tussle with Ken Wharton's V16 BRM at the 1954 Easter Monday Goodwood. The BRM was chucking out oil and fuel, and Roy in the Gilby 250F was being badly held up, but he couldn't get past. Getting angrier and angrier, he tried to force his way past at Lavant Corner. "Ken was a hard driver too, and he wasn't going to let me through. We collided, and we both spun. We both restarted, but my clutch exploded a lap later, bits of shrapnel came out through the bodywork, and Ken won the race. We didn't have a nasty scene afterwards or anything like that. We just didn't talk to each other – which in the friendly atmosphere of motor racing then meant just as much, really. Later the Duke of Richmond & Gordon sent me a silver cigarette box and on it was engraved 'In acknowledgement of a splendid show at Goodwood'. So I thought, well, he realises I was robbed of that race – until I found out he'd sent exactly the same box, with the same inscription, to Wharton!"

A stand-out Ecurie Ecosse drive came in the 1953 Nürburgring 1000Kms. Roy did the first stint, with the C-type not particularly happy over the bumps, but soon after his co-driver Ian Stewart took over he came in to say the car was handling so badly that it should be retired. Roy got in again and drove to the end. "It was completely falling to pieces. Every 14-mile lap I'd come round thinking, I'll stop this time, but then as I approached the pits I'd say to myself, I'll just try one more lap. I wouldn't say I liked the Nürburgring. I respected it. You'd look forward to a race there, and once you got there you'd wonder why you'd been looking forward to it. Anyway, we finished second, and then as Wilkie Wilkinson of Ecurie Ecosse was taking the C back to the paddock the front suspension collapsed. The fuel tank had come adrift, too, and was only being held in place by the body."

Roy's contract with Aston Martin, having started in 1953, endured more than a decade. He had a great relationship with the often terrifying John Wyer. "He was marvellous. You really wanted to do well for him. He was very methodical, kept detailed notes of every race, with extremely frank comments about the performance and behaviour of every driver. It was a wonderful team – drivers like George Abecassis, Peter Collins, Reg Parnell. We used to party pretty hard. I can't believe what hooligans we were. At one hotel a sofa got pushed through a plate glass window and the police were called. Fortunately the copper who interviewed me didn't seem to know much about motor racing, so I gave my name as M. Hawthorn of Farnham. Parnell was the instigator of a lot of it. He was bloody quick, too, such an under-rated driver – he could sort out most of the Aston team. George was great company. He used to say, 'When I crash an Aston Martin, I get a bollocking from Wyer. In the war, when I crashed my aeroplane, I got a medal.' You can never replace these people.

"At Le Mans in 1955 the rule was that, whatever order the Astons were in at the end of the first lap, we should stay like that, so we didn't race each other and wear our cars out. Well, Peter Collins and I had the most terrific dice, swapping places all round the circuit, and then when we approached the pits we would sort ourselves into the right order so it looked like we were behaving ourselves. On one lap I was trying so hard I spun at Arnage, and Peter waited for me while I got going again, roaring with laughter. Peter was such a nice chap.

"The sports car race at the 1956 May »»

Silverstone was a bit of a story. There were four DB3S Astons for Stirling, Peter, Reg and me. There were six D-types, including Mike Hawthorn and Des Titterington. My DB3S was actually my own car, which I'd bought from the works on the basis that they could borrow it back when they wanted. Des and I made joint fastest practice time. Stirling's contract gave him the pick of the cars, but when he asked John Wyer to try mine John pointed out that he would have to ask me, as it was my car. Well, he didn't ask me: if he had I'd have let him have it. But he asked me to try his car in practice, and I told him I preferred it with the 6.50 tyres – he'd opted for the 6.00s. He was changing down for Stowe, and I was taking it in top. The downside of that was that unless you got it right you'd be understeering off the circuit, whereas in third you'd be right in the power band and you could just floor it to get some pull from the back.

"Stirling led away from the Le Mans start, but I screwed myself up and went by on the inside under braking for Stowe, and unfortunately I pulled two works D-types through with me. Then at the next corner, Club, a D-type came nosing up the inside. I assumed it was Mike, so I moved to the right, so he would have to go round on the outside. I knew Mike would know the score, he'd know Salvadori wasn't going to let him through on the bloody inside. But he kept coming and I thought, 'Oi, Hawthorn, you're making this a bit dangerous.' What I didn't realise was that it wasn't Mike, it was Titterington. Then the Jaguar spun in a cloud of rubber smoke, and Collins and Parnell in our Astons and an Ecosse D-type crashed into him. It was a four-car pile-up."

Moss (21) leads Salvadori away at the controversial '56 May Silverstone meeting. Roy was fourth in the 1959 F1 World Championship for Cooper, including this third at Silverstone

Salvadori went on to win from an aggrieved Moss, and there was an enquiry afterwards, as some felt that Salvadori had squeezed Titterington at Club. "The only verdict they reached was that we should all be more careful on the first lap. Well, it's no bloody good telling a racing driver that, is it?" But Roy took no part in the enquiry because, having also won the small sports car race earlier in the day in a works Bobtail Cooper, he was once more in Northampton hospital. Fighting for second place with Archie Scott-Brown's Connaught in the Formula 1 race, the Gilby 250F had broken a driveshaft, locking up the rear wheels, and the car hit the bank at Stowe and overturned.

The high point of Roy's Aston Martin career was of course the 1959 Le Mans 24 Hours. "I didn't really like Le Mans, but I loved the week we'd have there, staying at Aston's hotel at La Chartre. In 1958 I'd been partnered with Stuart





Lewis-Evans, who was probably seven inches shorter than me, but for 1959 I was with Carroll Shelby. We were the same height, so we could make ourselves comfortable in the car. But Carroll was suffering from a stomach bug, so I drove for 14 of the 24 hours. We were in the lead by 10pm, but four hours later the car developed a dreadful rear-end vibration. I stopped at the pits but they could find nothing wrong, so I continued, but it got worse and the car was bouncing all over the road. I went slower and slower. I thought it was probably transmission, which was always the DBR1's weak point. When I came in for my fuel stop they discovered that the offside rear tyre had lost part of its tread. We'd now lost the lead to the P Hill/Gendebien Ferrari, and I had a terrific row with Reg Parnell, who said, 'You silly bugger, why didn't you realise it was the tyre?' That upset me and I must have said something, because there was a very tense atmosphere in the pit until John Wyer calmed us all down.

"The Ferrari was now three laps ahead, and we needed to make up the lost ground. What you have to do if you want to drive as fast as possible at Le Mans is stick rigidly to the rev limits and not make any duff gear changes, but be absolutely flat out as far as braking and cornering are concerned. That's because brakes and tyres can be replaced, but the engine and gearbox can't. If you look at the lap times, even while we were saving the mechanicals, you'll see we were going like hell. We whittled away, kept the pressure on, and then at 11am on Sunday the Ferrari blew its engine."

After 10 years of trying, Aston Martin had won Le Mans. If it could win the Tourist Trophy at Goodwood, it could take the World Sports Car Championship from Ferrari. Roy was paired with Stirling Moss for this race: Stirling led from the start, Roy consolidated that lead during his stint, and when he brought the DBR1 in to hand back to Stirling they were three minutes ahead of the sister car of Carroll Shelby and Jack Fairman. "I made sure I'd left the car in first gear for Stirling, and then as I was about to get out of the car I felt wet on my back. The fuel was coming out of the hose before the mechanic had got the filler cap open. Then we were on fire. I leapt down the bonnet, kicking the mechanic who was changing the front wheel on the head, and rolled over and over on the little strip of grass between the pitlane and the track. Then an ambulance man wrapped me in his coat and got the flames out." Stirling took over the Shelby/Fairman car, drove it for the rest of the race and won. His burns bandaged, Roy watched from the pits as Aston took the title.



"We didn't have a nasty scene. We just didn't talk to each other"

He began the 1957 F1 season with a BRM contract. "Raymond Mays could really lead you up the garden path. He was very charming when he wanted to be, made you believe he could make you World Champion. Because BRM had had a lot of braking problems, I specifically agreed with Ray that only Lockheed should be allowed to develop and modify the brakes. First time out at Goodwood I spun in practice when a brake locked. Then on the warm-up lap they all locked on. It happened again on the first lap of the race. The marshals couldn't push the car and had to heave it off the track. Ray promised me Lockheed would be summoned to sort out the brakes before the next outing, which was Monaco. In qualifying there the brakes were still jamming on and I failed to qualify. At the hotel I bumped into the Lockheed rep, who said BRM had made their own modifications to the braking system and had not involved Lockheed. I found Raymond Mays, told him what I thought about it, and left the team forthwith."

He had a couple of Vanwall drives at Rouen and Reims, and then concentrated on his rides with Cooper, which was doing more and more F1 events with 1500 and 2-litre Climax power. He and Jack Brabham made a good team, and in 1958 Roy's little 2.2 Cooper was second in the German GP, third in the British GP and fourth in the Dutch. Any pleasure he might have felt from the second place at the 'Ring, his best-ever Grand Prix finish, was wiped away by the death of his friend and former team-mate Peter Collins; but that season he was fourth in the World Championship behind Hawthorn, Moss and Brooks. "In the Cooper team old Charlie Cooper kept it all together. He was the businessman, the disciplinarian, and he always told John what to do. When we got back from a race on Monday, Charlie would ask John to hand over the start money, then he'd go through John's pockets to see if he'd kept any back."

Aston Martin was now developing its DBR4 Grand Prix car, and Parnell approached Roy and Jack Brabham to drive it. They agreed verbally, but then Coventry Climax told Cooper that it was preparing a full 2.5-litre engine for the new season, and John Cooper tried to get Jack and Roy to stay. Jack agreed, and of course went on to be 1959 World Champion. Roy, having given his word to his old friends at Aston Martin, stood by his verbal agreement.

But the nimble little rear-engined Cooper made the Aston out of date almost before it appeared. Apart from second place in its first outing at the 1959 May Silverstone, the DBR4 was never competitive. Nor was its 1960 replacement, the lighter, all-independent DBR5. In 1961 Roy drove for the Yeoman Credit team of F1 Coopers, and in 1962 for the Bowmaker-backed Lola team alongside John Surtees, which produced a string of retirements. But he was as busy as ever in British racing. At Crystal Palace he raced four cars in four races – Yeoman Credit Cooper and E-type, Cooper Monaco and Jaguar 3.8 for Coombs – and won all four. Then at Oulton, in the 3.8, a tyre burst at Cascades and he went upside down into the lake.

"When I undid my seat harness I was floating inside the car. My chest was exploding and I started to swallow water. I thought, what a way for a racing driver to die, by drowning. I was trapped until a marshal got one of the back doors open and pulled me out." Soaked and black with mud, he was given a lift back to the pits by 3.8 rival Graham Hill, put on some clean overalls and went out to practise the F1 Lola for the Gold Cup. He qualified on the third row, but a broken throttle cable put him out of the race.

"When we raced at Oulton Park we used to stay at the Chester Country Club. You never booked in those days: you just arrived. One year [private entrant] Tommy Atkins told me I had to behave myself and get a decent night's sleep before the race. So I took a single room and went to bed early. I'd just got to sleep when there was a knock on the door, and the hotel manager said, 'I've got a young lady here who says she does your timing, can she sleep on your floor?' In she came, and I'd just got off to sleep again when there was another knock. It was Jim Clark, complete with girlfriend, with nowhere to sleep. They squeezed in, too. I got no more sleep that night because Jimmy snored.

"Another time we were having a bit of a party and I counted 41 people in one hotel bedroom. The lady in the next-door room was knocking on the wall saying, 'My husband's a racing driver, he needs to sleep. If you don't quieten down I'll send him in to sort you out.' After a while there was a knock on the door and Graham Hill came in, very pompous, but in no time at all he was having a beer. In the end a tearful Bette came in and asked him to come back to bed."

Having driven privately-entered DBR1s at Le Mans in '60 and '61 – he finished third in 1960 with Jim Clark – Roy was offered Briggs Cunningham's Tipo 151 Maserati for the 24 Hours in 1962. But he couldn't squeeze his tall frame into the Maserati's coupé body, so he shared Briggs' E-type instead, and they finished fourth overall and won their class. In 1963 he was in a Cunningham E-type again.

"On Saturday evening I was going through the Mulsanne kink, which was just about flat in the E – you had to feather the throttle just a bit – and suddenly I felt the car sliding. Oil." Bruce McLaren's Aston Martin had blown its engine comprehensively moments before. "Several people had already gone off, so I was a late comer, so to speak. There were cars up the bank and in the trees. An Alpine was on fire on the other side of the track – that was a Brazilian called Bino Heinz, he was burned to death. I hit the bank with a huge impact, and somehow I was shot out through the E-type's back window onto the road. I was lying on the tarmac and there was another driver nearby, unconscious [Jean-Pierre Manzon, whose René Bonnet had also gone off]. I was drenched in fuel because the tank had ruptured, and I remember the E-type's horn going off, this weird sound, and then it all flared up. I was lying in the road soaked in petrol, my car was burning and the flames were coming along the trail of petrol towards me. But I literally couldn't move. Finally I stretched my hands out, managed to get my fingernails into the grass verge and pulled myself up this little earth mound. That's all I remember. In the early hours Sue came to the hospital and sneaked me out, drove me home to England."



"Graham Hill came in, very pompus, but in no time he was having a beer"

Through the early 1960s the hectic British racing schedule continued in cars as diverse as Ferrari 250LM, Cooper-Maserati and AC Cobra. His last works Aston Martin drive came with the team's swansong in the Coppa Inter-Europa at Monza. Roy's Project 214 Aston battled wheel-to-wheel throughout the three-hour race with Mike Parkes' Ferrari GTO until, in the closing laps, Roy outfumbled Mike among the backmarkers and won what Wyer regarded as the finest victory of his career. Wyer then left Aston for the Ford GT40 programme, and asked Roy to be involved in its development. "The early GT40 was a big disappointment. There was something peculiar about it: it wasn't a nice car, and I had no confidence in it," says Roy. "We eventually discovered the aerodynamics were all wrong, and the back wheels were coming off the ground. I reeled off all my complaints to John Wyer, and he sighed heavily and said, 'Anything else, Salvadori?' I said, 'You don't believe me, do you? I'll give you a demonstration.' So I took him round MIRA, and I showed him how the doors were lifting so much at 150mph that I could put my hand through the gap. He said hastily, 'Put your hands on the wheel, Salvadori, drive the thing.' I said, 'Look at the bloody bodywork, it's swelling.' Then there was this explosion and the front bodywork disintegrated, all there was left were shreds of fibreglass and the remains of the wire fixings. But I did drive a GT40 in my last race, at Goodwood in 1965. I finished second to a CanAm McLaren, and won the GT category."

In 1965 the Chipstead Group, with which Roy was involved, bought Cooper, and he found himself racing manager of the Cooper F1 team. It was the twilight of the team's F1 days, but they had young lion Jochen Rindt, and when John Surtees fell out with Ferrari in the middle of the 1966 season they had him, too.

"We managed to get on with John Surtees, which was an achievement in itself. He was so angry with Ferrari, so determined, that he went well for us. So did Jochen, so did Pedro Rodriguez. Some of Jochen's races with the car were fabulous. But John Cooper couldn't bear it that we were paying Rindt £50,000. He didn't understand that by having Jochen, who was a brilliant driver and a rising star, we were much more attractive to sponsors. We weren't paying the money, the sponsors were. If we'd run an unknown driver we wouldn't have got that backing."

Talking to Roy evokes an era of motor racing that has disappeared: the friendships, the rivalries, the parties, the accidents. Roy himself is surprised that he's still here to tell the tales.

"I never reckoned I'd be around to retire. I was sure it was all going to come to an end with a big accident. All of us used to think that. We wouldn't have been human if we didn't. I'd given myself a span, I thought I knew exactly when I was going to buy it. I just hoped my accident was going to be a big one so I didn't have to linger. You knew it was bloody dangerous, but you didn't want to stop.

"Anyone who can come back from a painful accident and still be as fast as he was before must either be brave or thick. I suppose in my case it was a bit of each."



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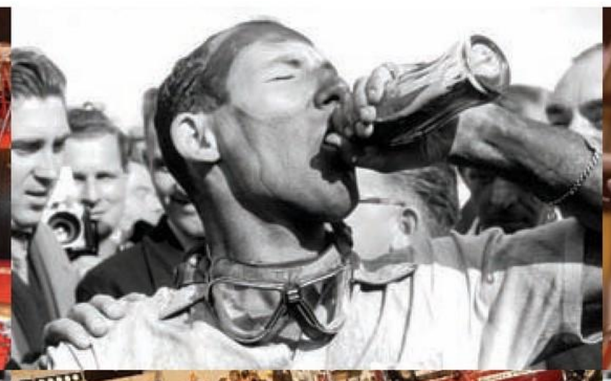


Force to be reckoned with

Billionaire Vijay Mallya has injected some much-needed cash and passion into his new Force India team in a determined effort to achieve success in F1

BY ROB WIDDOWS

Peter J Fox/Crash Media









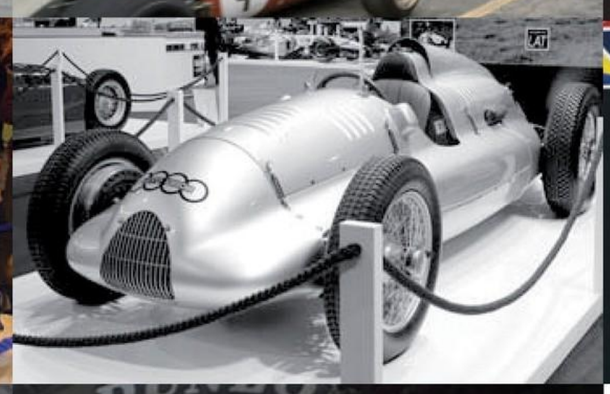














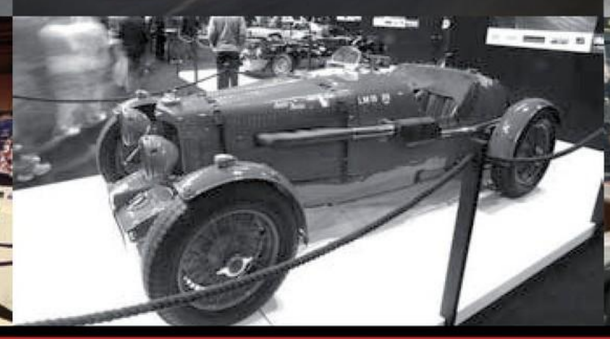























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Vijay Mallya is very much the modern Indian man. An entrepreneur, a politician and a standard bearer for a fast-emerging economy. He owns a football club, of course, and he's the MP for Karnataka in Southern India. He is, it goes without saying, enormously wealthy. Diamond studs in both ears, sparkling rings on three fingers, a well-cut suit and expensive shoes. To show your wealth has been very much part of the Indian culture, since before the Raj in fact. But is any, or all, of this enough to take the old Jordan/Midland/Spyker team towards the front of the Grand Prix grid?

He doesn't know the answer and neither does anyone else. But he most certainly means business and his track record rather suggests a bet on the affirmative.

We spoke in Monaco, where Vijay merged with ease into the surrounding opulence. But this is no rags to riches saga. Vijay's father bought United Breweries in 1947, soon after India's independence from the British, his son inheriting the beginnings of a fortune. He is now chairman of the company and, having bought the Whyte & Mackay whisky label in a deal worth £595 million, he controls the third-biggest alcoholic beverage business in the world. Not to mention two airlines in India and a portfolio of other industrial and service industries.



Peter J Fox/Crash Media

"This is not another toy, this is a business deal that will put India firmly on the motor racing map"

"He was a very hard taskmaster, my father," says Vijay in the educated tones of a privileged and well-schooled man, "and I learnt a lot from him, about business and about taking risks. My father was still buying breweries when the government was trying to push through prohibition, but I believe there is no reward without risk. I did not buy the Spyker team without first having a strategy and a business plan in place. I finally did the deal at four o'clock in the morning on the Friday of the Chinese Grand Prix – it was complex as Spyker is a public company and there was consideration for the shareholders. This is not another toy, another rich man's indulgence, this is a business deal that will put India firmly on the motor racing map at the highest level."

An enthusiast since childhood, Mallya was always fascinated by speed. He started out racing specials, hybrid machines constructed from components taken from Fiats and Austin Ambassadors, the only two cars available in India in those days. Import restrictions prevented amateur racers getting their hands on anything more sophisticated and there were no permanent circuits on which to race.

"This was back in 1971 and we just made the best of it," he says. "We souped up the engines as best we could and raced on makeshift tracks and on disused airfields. There were only old Fiats and Austins so we used the best bits from each until the import bans were lifted. I bought my first single-seater special, called a Cobra, from an Englishman in Calcutta – the engine was from a Fiat Millecento and it had a fibreglass body. Then when you could buy imported cars, I got hold of a second-hand Porsche 911 and later I went to England and bought two Formula One Ensigns from Mo Nunn – MN08 and 180B – and we won what was known as the Indian Grand Prix twice, in 1978 and '79." Both cars are part of Mallya's large collection, which as well as classic road cars includes F1 machines, the Dennis Poore Alfa 8C35 and the Sunbeam V12 'Tiger'.

"I remember racing on an old airfield at Chennai. There were bamboo grandstands and 75,000 people turned up to watch – bloody incredible! So I guess the passion, the spirit, had always been there for racing in India but it had never been unleashed until the early 1980s. This was well before the Madras Motor Sports Trust built a permanent circuit and held the Madras Grand Prix for Formula 3 cars. You have to realise that very few people could afford to go racing, the import duties on cars were prohibitive, and so racing took off very slowly. India was nowhere near the booming economy that she is today – motor racing was just too expensive. But there has been a huge liberalisation of the economy, duties have come right down, and young people are buying sports cars and racing cars right, left and centre. Can you imagine, Lamborghini is now established in India – I mean, I am driving through the Bombay traffic in my Merc at 20kph and there are young people in their Ferraris, Porsches and Lamborghinis stuck in this traffic. Crazy, incredible."

Mallya is not new to Grand Prix racing. He was a sponsor at Benetton in 1995, with his Kingfisher beer brand, and more recently at Toyota, so he knows a thing or two about pouring his cash into what is considered by many to be a notoriously bottomless pit.

"Yes, I am seeing Formula 1 from both sides, as a sponsor and now as a team owner," he says, peering over the top of his red designer spectacles. "At Benetton I learnt a lot from Flavio Briatore, watched how he ran his business, and I am using a lot of that knowledge in Force India. I've made it clear that while there isn't money to throw around, there will be the money for investing in the right people and in the very best equipment and technology. Already we're running two wind tunnels, one of them at AeroLab in Italy and the other at Brackley, both running 24/7 with half-scale models, and this is something the team has not had in the past.

"Look," he continues, "I have people in my businesses who know how I operate, know what I expect, and it will be the same with Force India. It will be the same approach as with Kingfisher, the beer and the airline, in that I will spend time getting it right, making it work and making it a desirable product for sponsors.

"I have already had Indian businessmen wanting to take a share. They know what this will do for India, the potential of putting these cars in front of hundreds of millions of eyeballs in a country which is developing very fast and which has a huge middle class earning, and »»

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pictured: Ex-Parnelli Jones 1970 Bud Moore Boss 302 Mustang (Harry Lipetz) • Ex-Mark Donohue 1968 Penske/Sunoco Camaro (Tom McIntyre)

wanting to spend, good money. We established Kingfisher as an international brand with our sponsorship at Toyota, using F1 as a platform for launching promotional programmes for the business within India. At that time I was not even considering buying my own team. Even a year ago it just wasn't on my radar."

Mallya has called his team Force India Formula One, something of a mouthful for commentators, but all part of his strategy to build awareness of his booming business empire on the subcontinent. But the team will remain in England and rely on proven skills.

"Look, there's not going to be Indianisation at the cost of professionalism," he says firmly. "I want the best professionals and that's precisely why I am conducting such extensive driver testing at the moment. Before, you paid to drive a Spyker; now you will not pay to drive at Force India. You're either good or you're no good, that's it. I will retain [Adrian] Sutil because I believe in him and that he has the talent. The other seat is not for sale, we'll put the best driver we can in there and we are testing Ralf Schumacher, Giancarlo Fisichella, Vitantonio Liuzzi, Franck Montagny and Christian Klien. That's the proper way to go about getting the best we can."

Word is that Klien has impressed and that the Austrian goes into the Christmas break as the favourite to race alongside his compatriot next season.

"We've already squeezed half a second out of the car by having these drivers test for us, simply because they've driven other cars and they've brought some improvements from their experience of quicker cars. Of course it won't be Fernando Alonso driving," he laughs [*not now, anyway! - Ed*], " I need to learn to walk before I run – and I've learnt that in business as well. We will do things properly, there will be a robust budget, the team has cash in the bank, and I have given Mike Gascoyne [the technical director] a pretty free hand, all the resources he needs. And then of course I will leverage my connections with Airbus – I am one of their biggest customers with the new airline – and they will help us with CFD development. They know a bit about aerodynamics, and then there's their super-computing power.

"So yes," – he leans towards me, a glint in the eyes – "we are going in the right direction. I have told them that at the Indian Grand Prix in Delhi in 2010 we need to be on the podium, period. Go figure it out."

The cynics will say that here we have yet another billionaire who will parade around the paddock, lose a lot of money and head off home again. Vijay Mallya emphatically denies this and is aware of the risks.

"Richard Branson is supposed to have said the best way to become a millionaire," he says quietly, " is first you become a billionaire, then you start an airline, then you will wind up as a millionaire. Well, my experience is different. I started an airline – and as of today its stock market valuation is £1.6 billion – so I have made a billion in the process, not lost a billion. Look, people will say that as soon as there is a shortfall in the budget then I will simply write a cheque. That is most certainly not the case. I am not in the business of losing money. I intend to do it properly and to make a profit, ."


Sutton Images

"At Benetton I learnt a lot from Flavio Briatore, watched how he ran his business, and I'm using that knowledge"

The new team's director of business affairs is veteran deal-maker Ian Phillips, a man who has seen it all, done it all and got the team jackets from Jordan, Midland and Spyker to prove it. Now he's in the front line for yet another boss and his first impressions are positive.

"The real difference this time is passion, his total and utter passion for motor racing, for his country and I don't think he understands the word failure," he says. " I think he will be very good for the team, he will motivate the team and that's important. He's a dynamic character, a man who wants to be involved, and a man who wants to win. He has brought some much-needed investment to the team already and that means our engineers will be motivated, they will have better equipment, more to work with. For the last few years we just haven't had that kind of investment. We have a solid core of very good people and they will respond to a man with so much passion. There's a buzz around the team again, and we haven't had that since Eddie [Jordan] left. We've had what you might call invisible bosses recently but this guy has his finger on the pulse, he's going to make us motor. It's too soon to make a judgement but I like what I see so far. This man is serious about going motor racing and we will rattle a few cages. We're not going to challenge Ferrari but Vijay will restore our pride and our will to succeed."

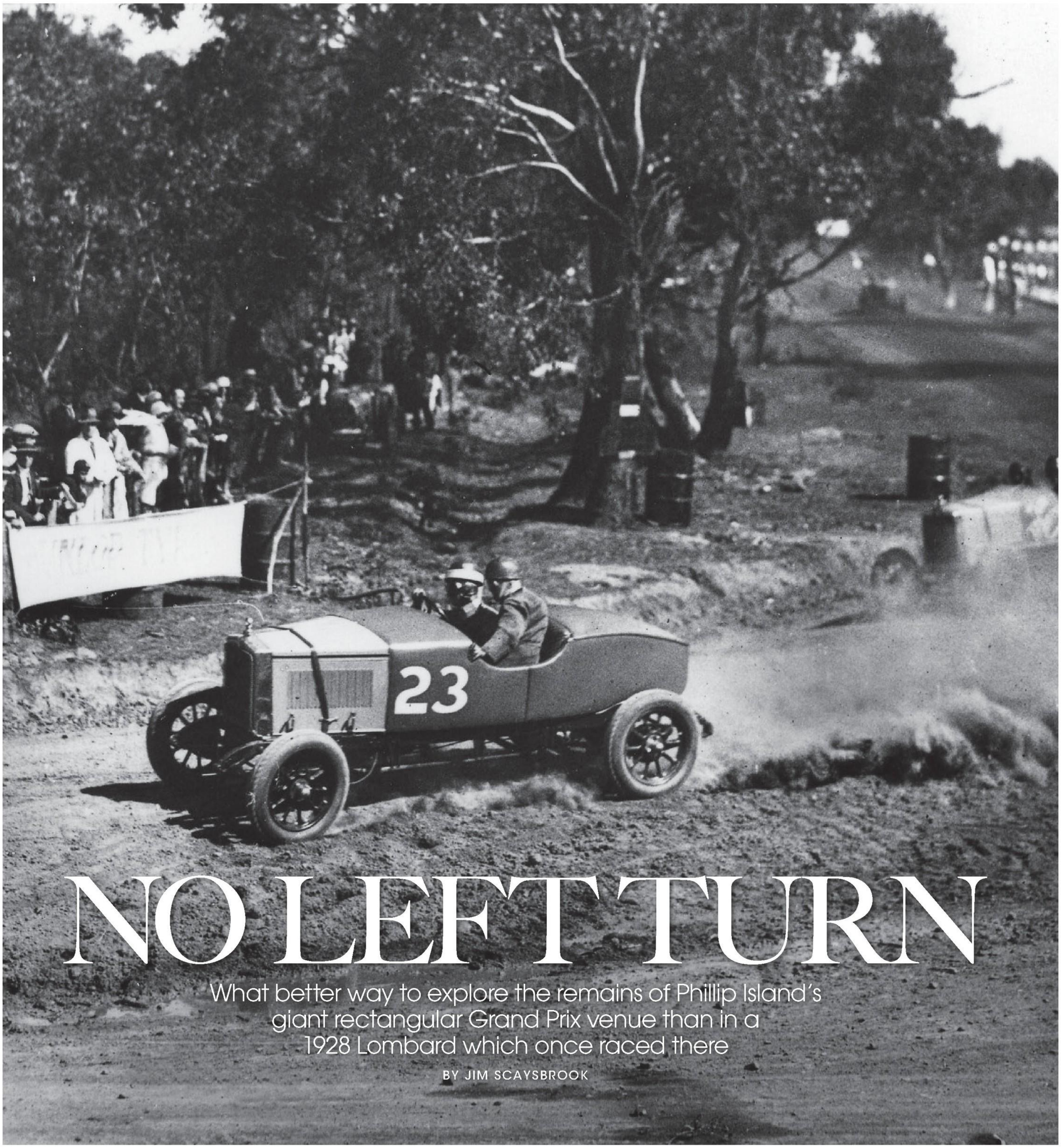
One of Mallya's dreams is to find an Indian Lewis Hamilton, to pluck a superstar from the vast population of his homeland. "It's going to take time," he says, "but it would be a bonus, not a necessity, for the success of the team. But I tell you, if we cannot find a world-class driver out of 1.2 billion people then something is wrong. We will set about this task sooner rather than later. I told the president of our Olympic Association that out of all these people we can surely find some athletes to bring home some gold medals," he laughs loudly.

What is certain is that Force India will bring huge attention upon a rapidly emerging nation, and TV viewing figures for F1 in India are expected to explode, a marketing opportunity that has not escaped the attention of Mr Mallya. "It is already a reality. We will have more than a hundred million eyeballs following our car," he says. "It is the most compelling cocktail for us, for our fans and for our sponsors, that chance to make an emotional connection with so many people, not just in India but all over the world.

"And the prospect of a Grand Prix in Delhi in 2010, well that's just a bonanza and I am helping all I can to make that happen. I wear three hats for this project, as chairman of the FIA ASN in India, as a motor racing enthusiast and now as a team owner. I will be working hard to help produce a world-class circuit there. You wouldn't recognise the infrastructure around Delhi from even 10 years ago: we've cleaned up the pollution, we are ahead of European rules on carbon emission and the city now has some excellent hotels."

Force India Formula One could be just the beginning of some fresh, new energy from canny entrepreneurs arriving from the emerging nations, keen to benefit from the worldwide reach of modern Grand Prix racing. It might be the first Indian team, but it surely won't be the last, and there is much talk of interest from China and from Russia.

Yes, there will be lavish parties aboard Mr Mallya's yacht, the Indian Empress, and arrangements have already been made with the Monte Carlo harbour master for the summer of 2008. Yes, there will be flashing jewels and colourful action as this new member of the club finds his way around the paddock. But there's also a steely determination to make this work. The old Jordan team is more optimistic than has been the case for many a season. Ⓜ



NO LEFT TURN

What better way to explore the remains of Phillip Island's giant rectangular Grand Prix venue than in a 1928 Lombard which once raced there

BY JIM SCAYSBROOK



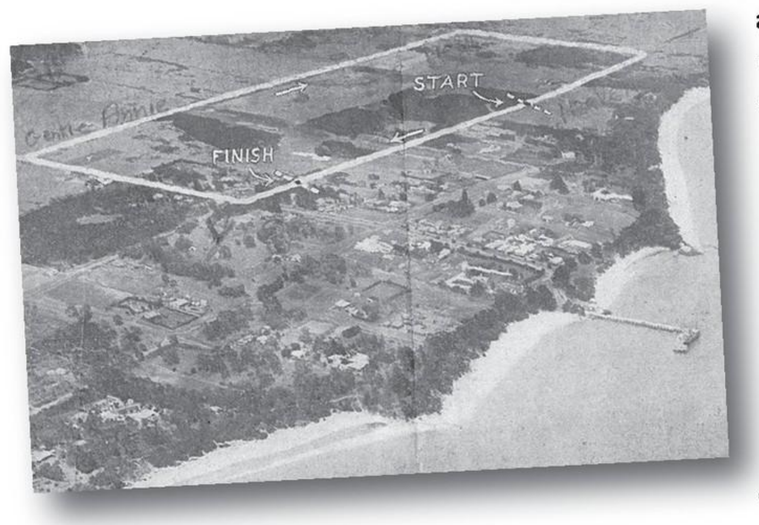


Young and Jackson's Corner
2006, now a roundabout

Victoria, in the 1920s, was about as British as it got out in the colonies. Melbourne was the financial hub of Australia with fine shops, theatres and restaurants. Then, as today, Melburnians were besotted with sport, notably cricket and football. But while motor sport, and road racing in particular, had been enjoyed for many years in other states, Victoria clung to the belief that racing cars and motorcycles should be confined to purpose-built speedways, be they made from concrete, or serving dual purposes with the equestrian fraternity.

The state's first motor race meeting had taken place back in 1904 at Aspendale Racecourse on the site of the present-day Sandown Park circuit. The main event was won by Harry James, the great-great-uncle of touring car superstar Peter Brock.

But apart from rushing around in circles, or flouting the law in the popular but incredibly dangerous 'time trials' between cities, there was no outlet for organised racing in Victoria. Racing on the roads was specifically forbidden, and this was rigidly enforced under the Highways and Vehicles Act. Then in 1927 the tiny Phillip Island community in Westernport Bay, controlled by the Phillip Island and Woolamai Shire, voted to sever the island's local government from that of the mainland. This raised the possibility that motor racing could be legally conducted on the island, and a delegation from the Victorian Motor Cycle Union (which was later joined by the Light Car Club of Victoria) tabled a proposal to stage events in March 1928. The new shire's head councillor, Mr Sambell, had little difficulty in convincing the residents of the economic benefits that motor racing could bring to the island. They voted overwhelmingly to defy the existing law and announced that a 100-mile race for cars would take place on March 26, 1928.



With the ink hardly dry on the letter of agreement, a group of enthusiasts set out for the island to survey the proposed track, taking Jack Day's Grand Prix Bugatti with them.

The seven-strong group included Day, Bill Scott and the president of the LCCA, Arthur Terdich. After several reconnaissance runs, the group retired to the Isle of Wight hotel to discuss the project, which seemed at first to be totally unworkable, given the state of the roads and the short time available before the scheduled running of the first event on the Eight Hours' Day holiday. It was Scott who suggested the names for the corners; he said that the luncheon gathering reminded him of Young and Jackson's, the famous pub in Melbourne. Gentle Annie was named after a country maid of British folklore, the following narrow cutting christened Needle's Eye, Devil's Slide likened to falling into hell, which »»

then became the name for the third corner. Scott admitted to heaving a huge sigh of relief at negotiating the narrow bridge halfway along the next straight, so this became the Bridge of Sighs, and the final bend reminding him of peace after torment became Heaven Corner.

Scott also undertook to measure the circuit. Borrowing a horse and cart, he nailed a strip of rubber to the inside of the wheel and counted the number of times it flicked his boot. Multiplying this by the wheel circumference produced the figure of 6.569 miles per lap.

Despite the quaint corner names, the circuit itself presented far more serious problems. The road was very narrow, with a high crown, and extremely dusty. The surface was partially consolidated by blue metal rolled into the gravel, but mostly was entirely unsealed.

The feature event was to be The 100 Mile Road Race, but when it was discovered that the rights to stage the Australian Grand Prix – which had been held for the first time at Goulburn in New South Wales in 1927 – had not been taken up for 1928 the organisers began to apply the AGP term to Phillip Island, and it stuck.

Setting a precedent which would become all too familiar at Phillip Island, the original date was washed out by a huge downpour that turned the circuit into a quagmire and forced a one-week delay. When the field assembled on March 26, 1928, it was without Ed Hussey-Cooper's Frazer Nash, which burst into flames while parked in the main street of Cowes, and utterly destroyed itself despite attempts to extinguish the blaze. The three Bugattis in the field, belonging to Jack Day (Type 37), Sid Cox (Type 39) and Arthur Terdich (Type 40), looked to be the class of the field, although Arthur Waite's supercharged Austin Seven could not be discounted. The field was split into four classes: A – for cars up to 750cc, B – 750-1100cc, C – 1100-1500 and D for 1500-2000. One stipulation was that all competitors were required to race on Australian-made tyres.

By the time the racing actually started, eight more cars had been withdrawn, including Cox's Bugatti which ran its main bearings in practice. The morning's race, for Classes B and D, got under way at 11am, with a maximum of two hours 30 minutes allowed to complete the 16 laps. John McCutcheon's Morris Cowley ran out the winner from a fast-finishing Cyril Dickason's Austin 12 in a time of 1hr50min10sec – the mark that the afternoon cars would have to beat. The second heat, for Classes A and C, left the line at 3pm, with Waite making the early running. Gradually the Bugattis of Day and Terdich got into their stride, with the latter drawing out a lead of nine minutes as it entered the 15th lap, only for the car to stop on the course seemingly out of fuel. A frantic Terdich hitched a ride to the pits, returning to the track soon after with tins of fuel only to find that his mechanics had retrieved the car and coaxed it back into the pits! Finally Terdich and his car were reunited and refuelled, and sped off in pursuit of Waite having lost 20 minutes. Day too was really motoring after an excursion early in the race had put him through a hedge, but time ran out for the Bugattis. Waite took the flag in 1hr46min40sec and was chaired from his vehicle to the victory dais by jubilant supporters.



The circuit's most successful driver Bill Thompson (left) and his mechanic with some exotic fuel

"The police were incensed by what they saw as flagrant flouting of the road laws"

Five thousand spectators went home covered in dust but happy – the largest influx of people in the island's history. Amid the celebrations plans were laid for a bigger and better meeting in 1929, with the race distance doubled to 200 miles. Significant changes to the circuit, reflected in the lap times, were made by rounding off the corners at Gentle Annie, Hell and Heaven, while the Bridge of Sighs and most of the back straight was widened. The narrow Needle's Eye was still deemed a no-passing section. The previous 12 months had been exceptionally dry and the road surface simply broke up into loose sandy patches after the first few practice sessions. Thousands of gallons of oil were sprayed around the track to quell the dust menace and this seemed to help until, right on cue, the heavens opened on Saturday afternoon. By race day on Monday morning great pools of oily water lay around the track, but blue skies opened up with a strong wind that soon dried the circuit.The Class B cars got away at 12.30 pm, followed 30 seconds later by Class A, with a further four-minute gap to Class C and D. The lap scorers and course commentators faced a difficult time in sorting out who was in what position, but gradually Terdich established himself at the head of the field, 15 minutes ahead of Reg Brearley to make it a 1-2 for Bugatti.

The Victorian Police were increasingly incensed by what they saw as flagrant flouting of the road laws, and threatened legal action against the organisers should any member of the public be injured. Luckily, the 1930 AGP went off without a hitch and was convincingly won by the man who would become the circuit's master, Sydney driver Bill Thompson in a supercharged Type 37A Bugatti. The 1931 event was run as a handicap for the first time, although the Australian Grand Prix trophy was still awarded to the fastest car to complete the 31-lap distance. Roads had been widened and graded, spectator areas enlarged, and the whole place generally spruced up in an effort to enlighten the overall gloomy economic mood as the Depression bit hard. Cyril Dickason's supercharged Austin Seven made the most of six laps' start to win on handicap, while Carl Junker's Type 39 Bugatti won the GP trophy with a time of 2hr54min50sec. It was a curious situation, and destined to become a one-off. From 1932, the GP would be decided on handicap alone.

The 1932 race started in the most dramatic fashion. With the scratch men still in the pitlane and the majority of the field hard at it on the track, Carl Junker (off four minutes) shot out of the pits to begin his race just as Drake-Richmond's Bugatti and Albert Edwards' front-wheel-drive Alvis shot past. Catching a glimpse of Junker through the dust, Edwards swerved, hit a bank and rolled several times, throwing the driver and mechanic out and ending up in a prohibited area where LCCA official Dick Wilkinson was standing. The impact virtually severed one of Wilkinson's legs, which was amputated on the spot by medical staff. Bill Thompson controlled the race in his 37A, winning easily in 2hr40min.

By 1933 the annual Grand Prix was the feature event on the national calendar, »»



Austin Sevens of Dickason and May pass the start to complete their first lap before the faster cars have left the line (1931). Our test Lombard is No.9



The Lombard in its 1931 starting position



Winner Carl Junker's Type 39 Bugatti brakes for Heaven Corner in 1931. The biplane is returning from Melbourne's Essendon Airport where it picked up medical supplies



The Lombard crests the rise about halfway between Hell and Heaven corners



Hope Bartlett's Type 37A Bugatti (Bill Thompson's winning car from 1930) rounds Heaven Corner in 1931



Traffic island ruins the racing line today



Prior to hitting a tree and retiring, Jack Clements slides his Type 30 Bugatti through Hell Corner in 1931



Approaching Hell Corner today, which has been obliterated by a large roundabout

attracting competitors and spectators from far and wide. A contingent of 12 racing identities set out from Sydney to drive to the island for the race, among them John Sherwood in a Bugatti and Mrs J Jones in her supercharged Alfa Romeo. With apparently little regard to the job the cars were required to do later on, a private race developed, and one by one the cars blew up or crashed. Mrs Jones and her daughter careered off the road near Euroa, the Alfa somersaulting five times before bursting into flames, miraculously leaving the two ladies unhurt. Only one car made it – Sherwood's. Thompson abandoned his Bugatti for a bright red ex-works Brooklands Riley, which was having one Australian outing, tended by factory mechanics, before being shipped to its new owner in New Zealand. In conditions that included heavy rain and hail, Thompson hunted down 68-year-old Harold Drake-Richmond, who spun under pressure and left the Riley with a comfortable lead. Thompson set the fastest race time as well as winning on handicap, but it had been a lucky result. Just past the finish line the car stopped, out of fuel and with all the bearings gone. On New Year's Day 1934 another race was held, the Phillip Island 100, and Thompson won that as well setting a new lap record of 4min42sec. The dust was so severe that Thompson remarked that he navigated by "watching the tree tops".

MG dominated the 1934 entry list, with eight cars including an ex-works six-cylinder supercharged K3 Magnette for triple champion Bill Thompson. After breaking a con-rod in practice, Bob Lea Wright's Singer Le Mans was rebuilt overnight in Melbourne. Taking the start with only minutes to spare, Lea Wright made the most of his 35-minute handicap to run with the leading bunch for the first quarter of the race as Thompson continued his usual charge into second from the back mark. Lea Wright was still ahead going into the final lap, but Thompson swept past, only to overshoot the very last corner and lose the handicap race by 14 seconds. An elated Lea Wright revealed he had driven the last half of the race with only top gear.

In May an extra meeting was scheduled, 'The Winter 100', but it was thinly patronised by drivers and spectators. In October, the Australian Racing Drivers Club arranged a race titled the Centenary Grand Prix, won by a standard Ford V8 roadster. Enthusiasm for racing was at an all-time high, so for the second running of the New Year's Day races in 1935 the Light Car Club arranged what was termed "the longest race ever held in the Southern Hemisphere", the Centenary 300. It was a day of carnage, as C Graham and his riding mechanic were killed when their car overturned, while star attraction Bill Thompson rolled his K3 at Heaven Corner, fortunately without injury to himself or his regular riding mechanic Bill Bargarnie.

Phillip Island's eighth and final Australian Grand Prix took place in March 1935. It had been decided to rotate the GP with another state, with the 1936 event moving to Victor Harbour in South Australia. Once again, Lea Wright made the early running until a seizure sidelined him, with Thompson's K3 MG scything through the field in pursuit of new leader Les Murphy's P-type MG. Murphy was a narrow winner, but once again the fastest race time belonged to the remarkable Thompson.

The loss of 'their' event was seen as a crushing blow by the LCCA, but it was not entirely unexpected. Racing on potholed unsealed roads may have been acceptable in the 1920s, but by 1936 it was out of the question, and so was the prospect of sealing the Phillip Island track.

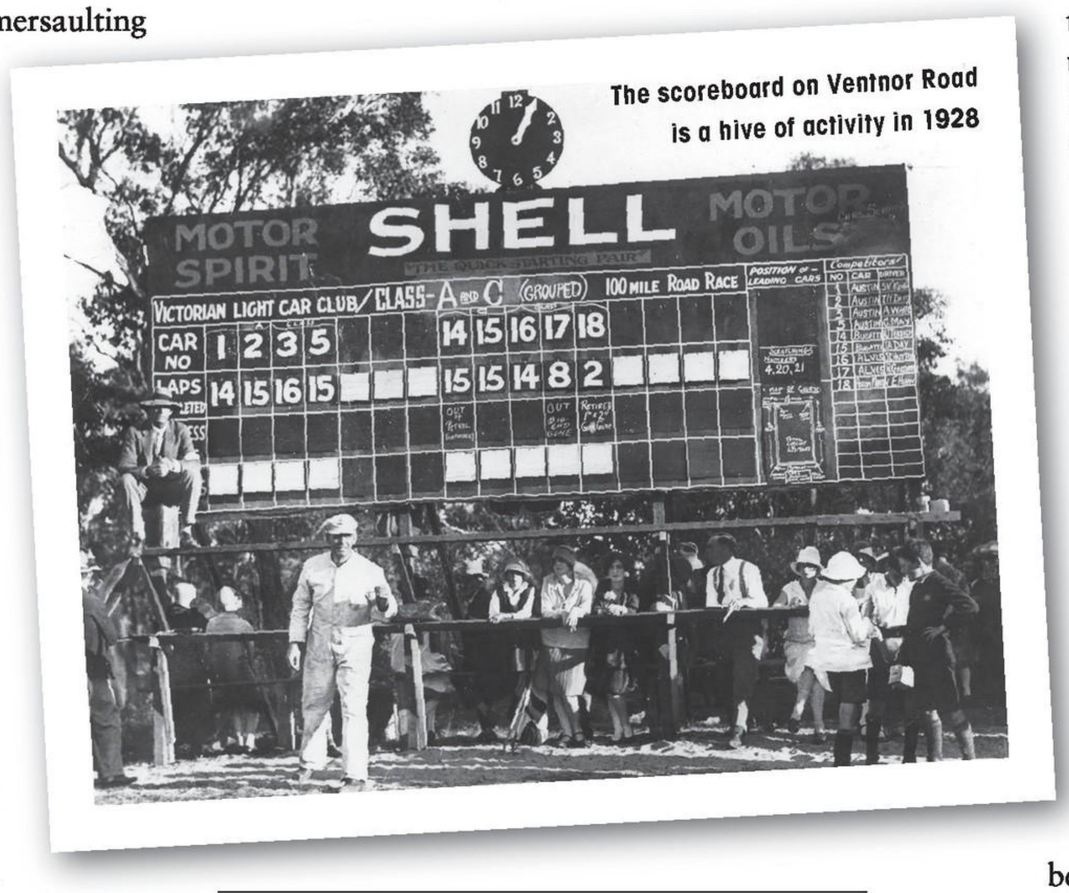
A new promoter, the Australian Racing Drivers Club, conducted racing on a shorter 3.3-mile circuit that used only the original start/finish straight (Berry's Beach Road) but by 1938 the cars were gone, although motorcycles ran their annual TT until 1940.

It would be December 1956 before the island saw motor racing action again, this time at a new purpose-built circuit south west of Cowes.

Our test vehicle is a car that has pounded the Phillip Island lap virtually from the moment it left the Paris factory in 1928. From 1927-32, Automobiles Lombard made 132 1093cc DOHC cars, most designed for supercharging. Bill Lowe's AL.3 (chassis number 34) was the first of two Lombards to come to Australia. The Lombard, in unsupercharged form, made its Phillip Island debut in 1929, finishing third outright and winning Class B (under 1100c). Lowe sold the car in about 1950. Melbourne barrister Neil Murdoch acquired it in 2002 and the old warrior is now regularly used in historic racing, including the annual early-year meeting on Phillip Island's new Grand Prix circuit.

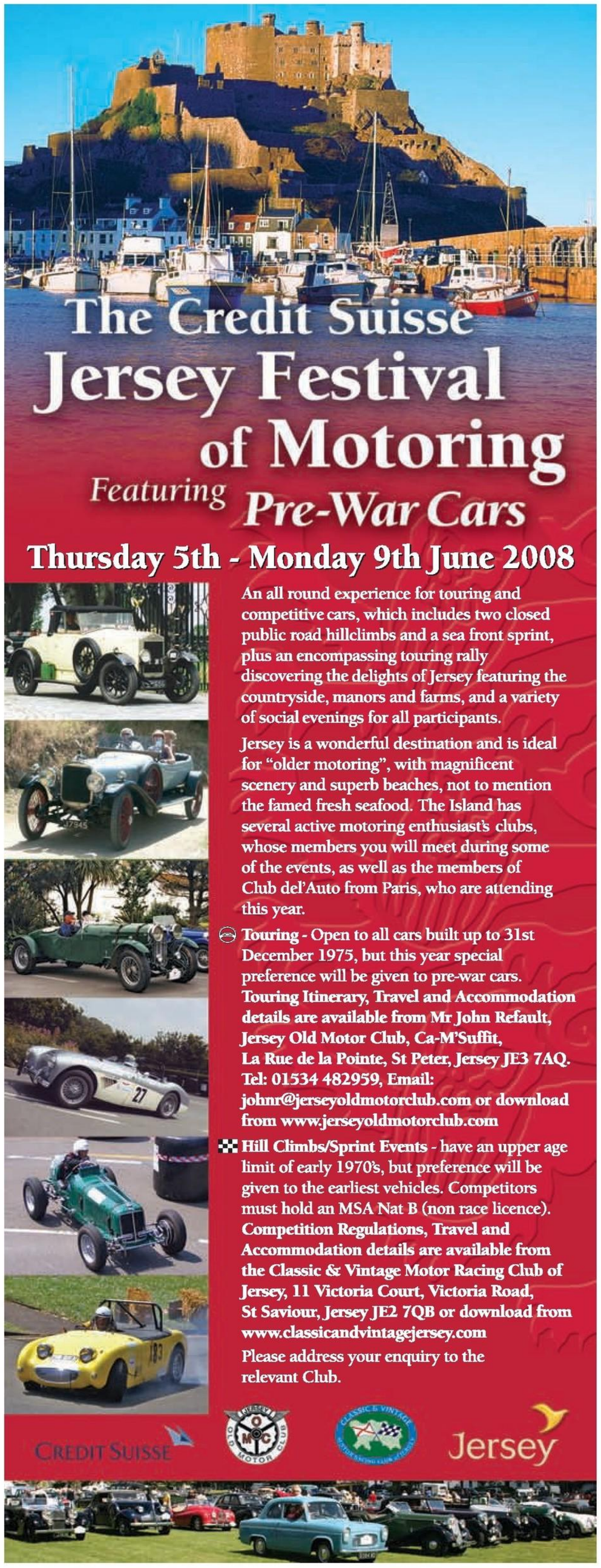
The roads that made up the Phillip Island road circuit are still substantially intact. The original start/finish area is located on Berry's Beach Road. The pits used to be located in a large paddock, which today is still a large paddock. From the start, the road rises slightly to Heaven Corner, the first of the four right-hand, right-angle bends. From here it's a flat-out blast along the still-narrow undulating high crowned road, past a small monument which has a map of the original track inset to the stone, to Young and Jackson's Corner, almost two miles away. On your left, a timber plaque displays the corner name, although the original bend is now a large roundabout. Once this is negotiated, another straight (the main road from Cowes back to Melbourne) takes you to within 400m of Gentle Annie Corner.

The highway now swings left, so the approach to Gentle Annie is not the original straightforward 90-degree corner, but is clearly signposted and easily found. From here it's another two-mile roller-coaster ride over the hillocks and humps, encountering The Needle's Eye at the halfway point, which is no longer a needle, nor an eye. Hell Corner has recently been obliterated by the rampant local-planning disease that seemingly requires roundabouts on every intersection. Once you're through the maze the road stretches out ahead over more gentle rises, with the former Bridge of Sighs at about half distance and the old pits on the left. And that's it. In the 1930s the landscape was more barren, caused by the penchant to denude the landscape to allow the maximum number of sheep per acre. And, of course, the road is fully tar-sealed, unlike the days when vast quantities of black sump oil laid the dust. Ⓜ



The scoreboard on Ventnor Road is a hive of activity in 1928

"The dust was so severe that Thompson navigated by watching the tree tops"



FISKENS

FINE HISTORIC AUTOMOBILES



1953 Pegaso Z102

One of only four Spyders to be bodied by Touring and the only example in this configuration, chassis # 0118 was despatched to America in 1952. Returning to Spain in 1955, this rare Pegaso has been enjoyed by only one fastidious owner for the last twenty five years.

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1961 Aston Martin DB4 GT

1966 Bizzarrini 5300 (7 Litre)

1963 Cooper T61M

1952 Ferrari 340 America

1961 Ferrari 250 Short Wheel Base

1965 Ferrari 275 GTB (Comp Spec)

1973 Ferrari Daytona

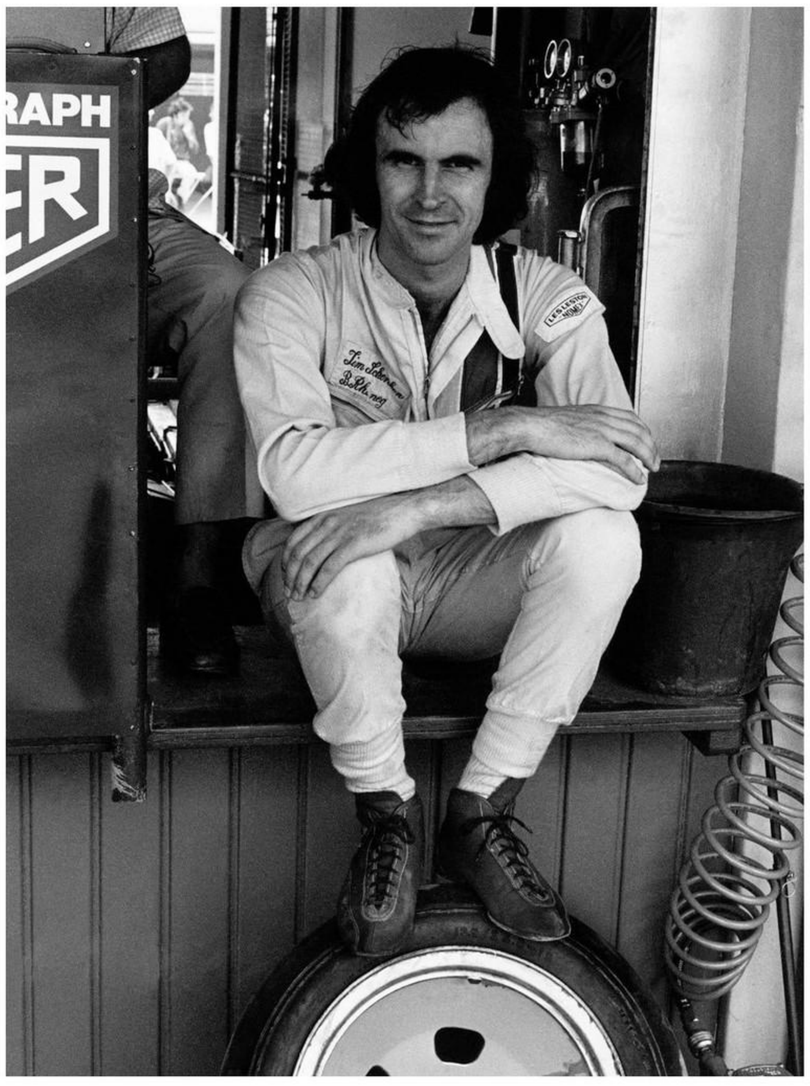
1964 Lotus 30

1953 Pegaso Z102 Touring Spyder

1973 Porsche 911 2.7 Touring

1972 Porsche 911 S/RSR 3 Litre

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ALMOST FAMOUS

You can be a champion in Formula 3 and a top runner in F2, but that doesn't ensure success in Formula 1...

BY ROB WIDDOWS

Tim Schenken is an ancient pilot – and proud of it. A big wheel in Australian motor sport, the former racer, constructor and team owner is one of a group of old boys determined to preserve and nurture the health of the *Anciens Pilotes*, a club that accepts only Grand Prix drivers as members.

Along with Derek Bell, Howden Ganley and Jochen Mass he is canvassing for new members among the younger Grand Prix drivers, and those who have recently reached the end of their careers. And he has good reason to appreciate the heritage of a sport that brought him from his home in Australia to sit amongst the greats on the Grand Prix grid. He was the first man to race for Ron Dennis in Formula Two, his mechanic on the Broadspeed Jaguars was one Nigel Stepney, and at Tiga he and Howden Ganley gave a man called Mike Coughlan his first chance at the drawing board.

"I'm told there are only three hundred people in the world who have raced a Grand Prix car. That's why the club is worth looking after for the future and why it shouldn't become just a few old codgers who will eventually disappear," he smiles ruefully, "and I've always thought there's something special about the men, and the women, who made it to that level.

"Then there's the few truly gifted ones like Moss, Clark, Stewart, Senna, Schumacher and now Lewis Hamilton – they are the ones with an extra something, that natural gift for the job. So if you want to get there, you can get there, and that's true of all the people in the little club we call the *Anciens Pilotes*."

What about the new generation, the billion dollar wonder-boys of modern Formula 1? Not many are known for their desire to reflect on the past. "Well, it's a new generation, a new way of thinking and yes, the money is better, and of course it's a hell of a lot safer. People constantly talk about the good old days – well, these are the good old days – in 40, 50 years people will look back and say these were great days. When we were racing we thought we were pretty professional, pretty commercially minded and certainly we were compared to the guys who came before us – it's a generation thing, the sport changes with every new generation."

Schenken has seen and learnt a lot in his long career, and tragedy played its part in his struggle to reach the top, as it so often did in those days.

"Yes, it's true." He casts his mind back to the events of 1970. "When Piers Courage was killed at Zandvoort in June of that year I spoke to



Sutton

Frank Williams, as many others did, about getting a drive with the new team. It sounds callous but I'd won the British Formula Ford and Formula Three Championships two years earlier, I was up at the front of European F2, but I hadn't broken into Formula One. And I was very determined to get there. We all were. So I was in touch with Frank after the accident at Zandvoort and he signed me up for the last few races of the year in the de Tomaso. It wasn't a great car and there was never any money; apparently Frank used each year's sponsorship to pay the previous year's bills. Anyway, I retired in Austria, Italy and America but we managed to get to the finish in Canada. So I'd got into Formula One in tragic circumstances.

"I was at Monza when Jochen Rindt was killed – he was a hero of mine and it was all very confusing. There I was, doing what I'd always dreamed of doing, and then a tragedy like that comes along. I had nobody to turn to that weekend, and I just walked around in a daze. Of course, once I was back in the car, it was all put to one side – we all believed that it would never happen to us.

"The following year I was still there, in the Brabham BT33. And it wasn't so bad; we got sixth at the Nürburgring and third at the Osterreichring, up there on the podium with Jo Siffert and Emerson Fittipaldi. And the Brabham was by no means the fastest thing out there."

Not content with simply being one of 25 drivers on the Grand Prix grid, Schenken hankered after getting more involved in the team, in the engineering and design of the car. And this desire probably explains why things didn't go too well when he joined Team Surtees for the 1972 season.

"Well, I guess it was never going to work," he smiles. "John will have his own views on this. I think his ideal driver was one who just turned up, drove and left immediately. John always did the bulk of the testing but I did lots of laps at Goodwood and that was a role I enjoyed. I wanted to be more involved than that, more closely involved with the team. It was just absolute opposites with John and me.

"I was already driving for Ron Dennis in Formula Two and he had this vision of building a car and going Grand Prix racing so I decided to throw it all in with Surtees and hang in there with Ron Dennis. But as it turned out his plans took some time to come to fruition and I never did get to drive a Formula 1 car for him."

In the end, 1972 was a good year for the man from Sydney, despite the ups and downs at Surtees. He won in Formula Two at »»





Far left: Jaguar XJ12C at Monza 4 Hours, 1977. Above: F2 Motul M1 at Rouen, 1973

LAT







Hockenheim and stood on the top step at Buenos Aires and at the Nürburgring in the World Sportscar Championship, sharing the works Ferrari 312P with Ronnie Peterson on both occasions. The sister car, in the hands of Ickx and Mario Andretti, won a further six races and Ferrari completely dominated the championship. "Great days," says Schenken, "and it was fantastic to share that car with Ronnie.

"He was quite amazing. He only knew two gears – flat out, or at home in the garage. One night in Daytona we'd been out to dinner and Ronnie suddenly suggested we go for a drive along the beach. So of course we did, leaving the highway at enormous speed and sliding sideways all the way down to the edge of the ocean. Unfortunately, we failed to observe that all this occurred right in front of a police car. The speed limit, apart from anything else, was 25mph and we must have been doing over 80mph when we hit the beach. They escorted us to the police station, threw us in the cells with a load of drunks, and that's where we stayed until we somehow persuaded them to let Ronnie go back to the hotel to retrieve our identity papers. Well, he was well and truly pissed off by now and left the car park in a cloud of smoke, rear wheels alight. The cops were not at all impressed and set up road blocks to catch him, which they did, and he came back looking very sheepish.

"In the end, Peter Schetty, the Ferrari team manager, bailed us out. We got a pretty frosty reception at the circuit the next day."

Over the next couple of years he did another race for Williams again, and then came Trojan. There followed an outing with the new Lotus 76 at Watkins Glen at the end of '74 and that was it for his Grand Prix career. Then came Broadspeed and the Jaguars.

"Yeah, it's funny how things turn out," he laughs. "That was 1977, and my mechanic on the Jag was Nigel Stepney. He was just a new kid on the block – I think it was his first proper job in a race team. It was a great car but we had all sorts of troubles with it and the engine was always suffering from oil surge. But by this time I was wanting to stop the driving and move on to running a team, become a constructor."

Schenken formed Tiga Racing Cars with Howden Ganley, a New Zealander who'd raced for BRM and who'd come to Europe as a mechanic for Bruce McLaren.

"I reckon Howden taught Mike Coughlan all the basics of racing car design," says Schenken. "He was just another young designer when he came along and I never identified him as anyone special, or particularly talented. Not like Adrian Reynard, who came to Tiga fresh from university and full of bright ideas. He helped to design a Sports 2000 car for us but he was keen to go his own way and, of course, the rest is history."

Schenken was competing in F1 during an era that threw up some of the sport's great heroes.

Clockwise from left: in the Williams IR01 at the 1973 Canadian GP, where he came 14th; Trojan T103 at 1974 Spanish GP, which yielded another 14th; British F3 in Brabham BT28, 1969

He was on the grids with Jochen Rindt, Ronnie Peterson, Emerson Fittipaldi, Jackie Stewart, Jacky Ickx, Graham Hill, Jo Siffert – the list goes on and on. So which of his former racetrack rivals really stood out for him in those early years of the Seventies?

"It would have to be Ronnie," he says without hesitation. "His car control was just fantastic. I'm not sure exactly what he had, but I know I never had it," he laughs. "His balance, his sense of balancing the car, was incredible. But it's funny, he was pathetic on the tennis court; he could hardly hit a ball, he was all arms and legs,. It was terrible to watch. But then you saw him in a racing car, it was wonderful, he had such beautiful car control. Jochen Rindt was very much the same. But Ronnie was always so unaffected by it all, none of the success ever went to his head."

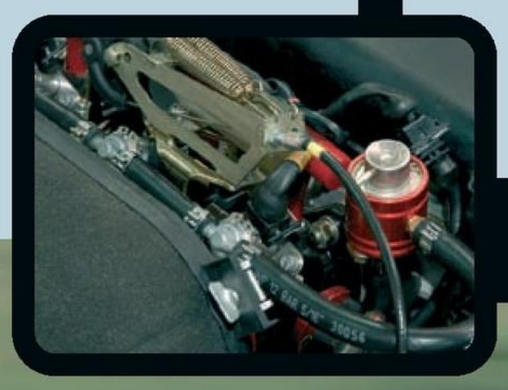
Tim Schenken is rarely given the recognition he is due. Mechanic, designer, engineer, constructor, and of course *Ancien Pilote*. He's also a driving force within the Confederation of Australian Motor Sport, Clerk of the Course for the Australian Grand Prix and Race Director for the V8 Supercars series. Not content to sit back and polish the badge on the blazer, he remains energetically enthusiastic for the future of the sport that made his name. His old mate Howden Ganley is writing his memoirs, so no doubt we shall learn a lot more about Mr Schenken once the Ganley diaries appear on the shelves.

Meanwhile he wants to hear from both past and present Grand Prix drivers who have not yet signed up for the *Club Anciens Pilotes*. You know who you are. Ⓜ

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Flamin' deflation

PETER BRYANT REMINDS US WHY FINISHING A GRAND PRIX IS ONLY HALF THE BATTLE

Erstwhile Shadow designer Peter Bryant is a fount of fascinating tales, and fondly recalls his days as a Taylor & Crawley Lotus mechanic at the Nürburgring 1000km in 1960, a race won by Stirling Moss and Dan Gurney in a Camoradi Birdcage Maserati.

"On the journey home we didn't make very good speed up the mountain road towards Blankenburg and, as we came down the other side considerably faster, I had the brakes on almost continuously. My first warning of impending doom was frantic banging on the bulkhead behind from 'Mahogany Boots' Malone (so called when he repaired a hole in his shoe by cutting and shaping a piece of plywood). The bus was filling up with choking smoke – to my horror, I saw the left rear wheel arch on fire!

"We jumped out and I saw a little stream alongside the road. There seemed to be a sort of well, where someone had put a 55-gallon barrel into the ground as a catch basin. We grabbed a bucket each and ran to the well. I pushed mine under the water and Mahogany pushed his past mine – and let it sink. I threw my water over the fire, expecting Mahogany to be right with me, then ran to refill my bucket.

"As I got there, Mahogany surfaced from beneath the water! It turned out there were three 55-gallon drums with the ends removed. Mahogany had jumped in to retrieve the bucket and had sunk several feet before he hit the bottom and could push himself up again. I told him not to go swimming while we were working.

"The outside tyre had gone flat and caught fire from the overheated brakes, and that had set fire to the wooden frame of the wheel arch. We could have lost three cars and the bus.

"After we had calmed down, we fitted the spare wheel but noticed that the inner wheel and tyre of the dual rear wheels were severely damaged. Between us, we barely had enough for the fuel to get home. I figured we had to stay well below 30mph to avoid tyre problems, and we set out again.

"We eventually got to the Jabbeke highway that ran from Brussels to Ostende when Mahogany was banging on the bulkhead again. We had two flat tyres on the right rear. We sawed off both tyres, removed the outer left rear, put it on the outer right rear, and used the two empty rims as spacers. It took three hours to get rolling again.

"We crept exhausted into Ostende at about 4am. I parked outside an all-night cafe and went in for coffee and a large cognac. Mahogany went to sleep in the bus. Some guy decided to see what he could steal from the bus. Mahogany was 6ft 2in tall and now looked like a madman, with a dirty face and clothes, dark rings around his eyes and wild hair. The guy screamed at the sight of him and ran away.

"We drove off at Dover as slowly as we could but as we started up the London road at 8mph, the right front tyre blew. That was it! I was exhausted, physically and mentally. I found a phone box and left a message for the senior Mr Taylor [team owner Mike was in Monaco].

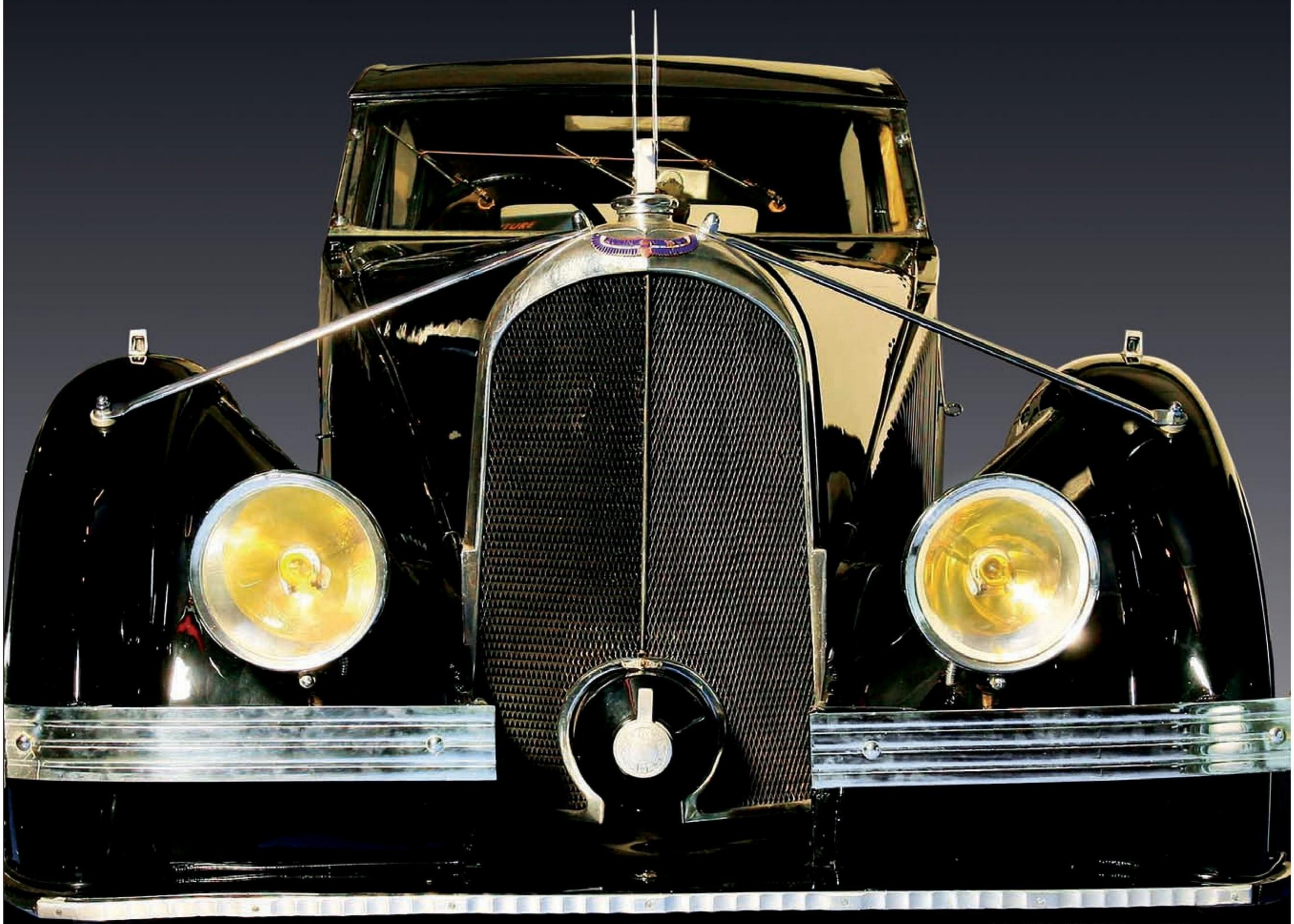
"My message said, 'We've had to park the bus in a layby on the side of the Dover-London road about 10 miles from the port. We have no money, and the bus has blown right front and two blown rear tyres. The keys are hidden in the left rear tyre well. Please have your people take care of the bus.' We hitched a lift to London on a Guinness delivery truck." Ⓜ

Peter Bryant cut his F1 teeth as a fabricator for Lotus before becoming one of the sport's top mechanics. He later moved to the US where he made a name for himself as a designer of Can-Am cars. This story, and many more, feature in 'Can-Am Challenger', reviewed on page 119.



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THE EDGE OF REASON

The angular new body and quadrupled price of Lamborghini's amazing Reventón barely make sense – yet all 20 are already sold

BY ANDREW FRANKEL

What you are looking at here, and for reasons I shall explain shortly, is in many ways simply a ridiculous car. It is surely coincidence that if you write 'Reventón' backwards it spells 'Not Never', but that would perhaps be a more apposite title for a car costing £840,000 of which there will be just 20, every one of which was sold before an owner ever flipped up one of its carbon-fibre scissor doors, flopped down into its cramped cabin, spotted the intergalactic instrument display and wondered what on earth to do next.

Then again, if Lamborghini can't produce a car like this, who can? The one constant in the life of every car enthusiast for the past 40 years is that in a small factory in a little town on the outskirts of Modena called Sant'Agata Bolognese, a small collection of charmingly unhinged Italians have pondered just how far they can push the limit of supercar design before descending into self-parody.

We've seen a few. While Ferrari conspired with Pininfarina to ensure that many of the most beautiful things man made in the late 20th century were cars, Lamborghini on the other hand, through the likes of Nuccio Bertone, Giorgetto Giugiaro and, most notably, Marcello Gandini, was able to think more freely. So while your reaction to catching your first glimpse of a Dino, Daytona or Boxer was simply to stare at their sheer pulchritude, the first sight of an Espada, Silhouette or Countach was more likely to make you blink, shake your head and look again. Of all the cars ever to wear the raging bull, I'd argue the Miura was the only true beauty among them.

And I wouldn't have it any other way. I don't need a Lamborghini to be beautiful, all I require is that, in this age of legislation-constricted, risk-averse car design, it possesses the ability to make pedestrians walk into street furniture. And that the Reventón does better than any other Lamborghini I've known.

There are certain cars – a new Jaguar XK coupé, most vintage Bentleys and a BMW 507 to name just three – that only look right when you see them moving in real life. Imprisoned on a motorshow stand or a magazine page, they can look unremarkable, awkward even. The Reventón is one of these. Look at its image here and it will appear as a slightly more stealthy Murciélago, but actually watch from another car as it moves around you at speed and it seems not of this earth.

Sit inside, drive it yourself and you can see the reactions of others for yourself. The usual broad grins and upwardly mobile thumbs that you spot when driving some other slice of Italian exotica through the home town of the supercar are nowhere. Instead they grab furtive glances, keen not to let you see them gazing at your wheels. If the look of a car reflected the character of its driver, you'd forgive them for thinking there was a serial killer at the helm.

There is only one answer to give anyone who asks why Lamborghini built the Reventón, and that is simply because it could; on paper it makes no sense at all.

It is true that while the bodywork recalls ➤➤➤

the basic geography of the Murciélago, every last carbon-fibre panel of it is unique. Lamborghini cites Lockheed-Martin's F22 'Raptor' fighter as its inspiration, and amid its crazy confusion of lines and angles you can almost see the influence. The miracle is that they all converge to create a cohesive, magnetically interesting whole. No one could call this car beautiful, but in its matt paint and for sheer get-out-of-the-way presence, I'm not sure it has an equal.

But look beyond that shape and you'll see the rest of it is really pure Murciélago with the occasional twist. Sit in the cockpit and you'll get the same sense of a cabin wider by far than it is long. There's pathetically little leg-room in here, not much headroom, yet your passenger seems in the next province.

Ahead you'll find the obligatory E-gear gearshift paddles (which operate in a manner at least two generations behind Ferrari's equivalent) but you'll squint when you look at the instrument dial which, at first, appears to have nothing whatever to do with monitoring the vital operating systems of a road car. The screen uses the latest TFT-technology to bring readouts similar in appearance and operation to those of a military jet. It takes a while to realise that the two mirror-image graph lines that rise and fall in sympathy like the beating of a bird's wings are, in fact, tachometers. Plural. No, the Reventón does not have two engines; they're there simply to look cool. Or contrived, depending on your point of view.



Striking aerodynamics – but the Reventón's 211mph is no more than the Murciélago

"The Reventón possesses the ability to make pedestrians walk into street furniture"

Lamborghini Reventón

ENGINE: V12 petrol, 6496cc
POWER/TORQUE: 650bhp at 8000rpm, 487lb ft at 6000rpm
GEARBOX: Six-speed manual
TYRES: 245/35 ZR 18 (f), 335/30 ZR 18 (r)
FUEL/CO2: 13.7mpg, 495g/km
ACCELERATION: 0-62mph: 3.4sec
SUSPENSION: four-wheel independent quadrilateral system, hydraulic shock absorbers and coaxial coil springs
BRAKES: four ventilated discs, dual independent hydraulic circuits, one for each axle, with vacuum servo, ABS and DRP
PRICE: £840,000 approx
TOP SPEED: 211mph

Behind you lurks a 6.5-litre 48-valve V12 which can reputedly trace its lineage straight back to the 3.5-litre, 24-valve V12 designed by Giotto Bizzarrini to power the very first Lamborghini, the 350GT, back in 1963. Then it was said to produce a probably highly optimistic 280bhp. In 2007, you can be sure every last one of its 650bhp are certified and accounted for.

It is, of course, magnificently fast. There are any number of ways of achieving Reventón-grade performance using small-displacement, high-output engines, but there's still no matching the sense of occasion imparted by having a colossal quad-cam V12 doing the talking just inches behind your right ear. The sound and the throttle response are so similar to those that have wowed two generations of Lamborghini owners and lucky motoring journalists, all that's changed is the accompanying thrust, which now fills the space between explosive and apocalyptic depending on which one of its six gears you decide to let it run with.

The problem – and it's a serious one – is that you can have exactly the same engine in a Murciélago which also has a carbon-fibre body, not to mention the same chassis, suspension and carbon-ceramic brakes. Which means that despite Lamborghini claiming an extra 10bhp for the Reventón (you feel it had to make some distinction), it is absolutely no lighter than a Murciélago and apparently no faster either.

It is, of course, simply magnificent cannoning away from a third-gear curve, the engine's glut of torque directed to all four wheels so that there's no suggestion of a loss of traction – but you can say the same of a Murciélago. Indeed it is more unkind than unfair to call the Reventón a Murciélago in fancy dress, for that is precisely what it is. And the premium for this is over £600,000. Or was. As previously mentioned, they're all sold.

It's a purchase that I struggle to understand. It costs over four times as much as a Murciélago when, for five times as much, you could have a Bugatti Veyron. And while the world's fastest, most powerful production car has faced fair criticism for its weight and profligacy, no one can claim it's a thinly disguised version of an existing and wildly cheaper product. The Veyron is unique and one of the most extraordinary feats of automotive engineering since the birth of the car. The Lamborghini Reventón is a Murciélago on its way to a Star Wars convention.

Then again, Lamborghini weren't thinking of me when they gave the Reventón the green light: there are 6.5 billion people on this planet, and Lamborghini identified just 20 of them as being both of a mind and in a position to buy a Reventón. Each would have been called and offered the honour of spending a million euros plus local taxes to have a Reventón built for them.

Its value bears no relation to the material cost of its components, nor how much it cost Lamborghini to turn them into a car: to those 20 people, its worth is that you'll never see another on the road, never meet a person who has one too. You will have something they can never have, however wealthy they are. It is haute couture on wheels.

The result is a vanity project, designed to fill the coffers of Lamborghini as it puffs the pride of its owners. But I'm not going to condemn here, even if nothing makes it seem more ludicrous than the simple thought of a Murciélago plus the change. The fact is we should be happy that, in this era of Audi-ownership, Lamborghini is not only still producing entirely mad cars, something it has done with unconcealed glee all its life, but is also making money out of them, a trick it has proven less adept at in the past. For it means that with any luck, the small collection of charmingly unhinged Italians at Sant'Agata Bolognese will be encouraged to go on doing it for a while yet. And who among us could argue with that? Ⓜ

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My God, I had so many! Which one will I choose, huh?" Jacques Laffite is talking about his myriad team-mates, recalling a long racing career that brought him many accolades as well as painfully broken legs in a crash at the British Grand Prix which ended it all. Now he hobbles around the F1 paddocks as a commentator for French television. A keen fisherman and golfer, Jacques is one of the good blokes of Grand Prix racing.

"Patrick Depailler was my friend and also my enemy. He was very quick, you know," he says forcefully. "He came to Ligier when I was used to being on my own there, so I was not so happy at the start. But he was a very quick driver."

We are going back to 1979. Jacques had been with Ligier since 1976, the French team running a single car until Depailler joined from Tyrrell during the winter of '78. Guy Ligier, encouraged by Bernie Ecclestone to field two cars as FOCA began to develop the show that has become the F1 we know today, had found the money and wanted another French driver.

"He was one of the fastest drivers in France at that time and so it was more interesting for the team to take someone like that. And anyway, Pironi wasn't available and Jabouille was with Renault. I had been on my own at Ligier since the start but I knew Patrick very well and it was interesting for me. We had travelled together a lot when he was driving with Tyrrell so we were familiar, and I think Guy thought it would be a good comparison to have another driver. I mean, he knew I was quick, but we never had any comparison with another man in the same car and the money was now there to do that."

It was difficult for Jacques to adjust, and to accept that the team no longer revolved around him. He'd had plenty of team-mates at Williams but the Ligier team had become his own. "It was not because it was my team so much, it was more that I was worried we did not have enough money to run two cars, so I said to Guy, 'We've made a mistake, not because we take Depailler, but because there is not enough money to make it work.'

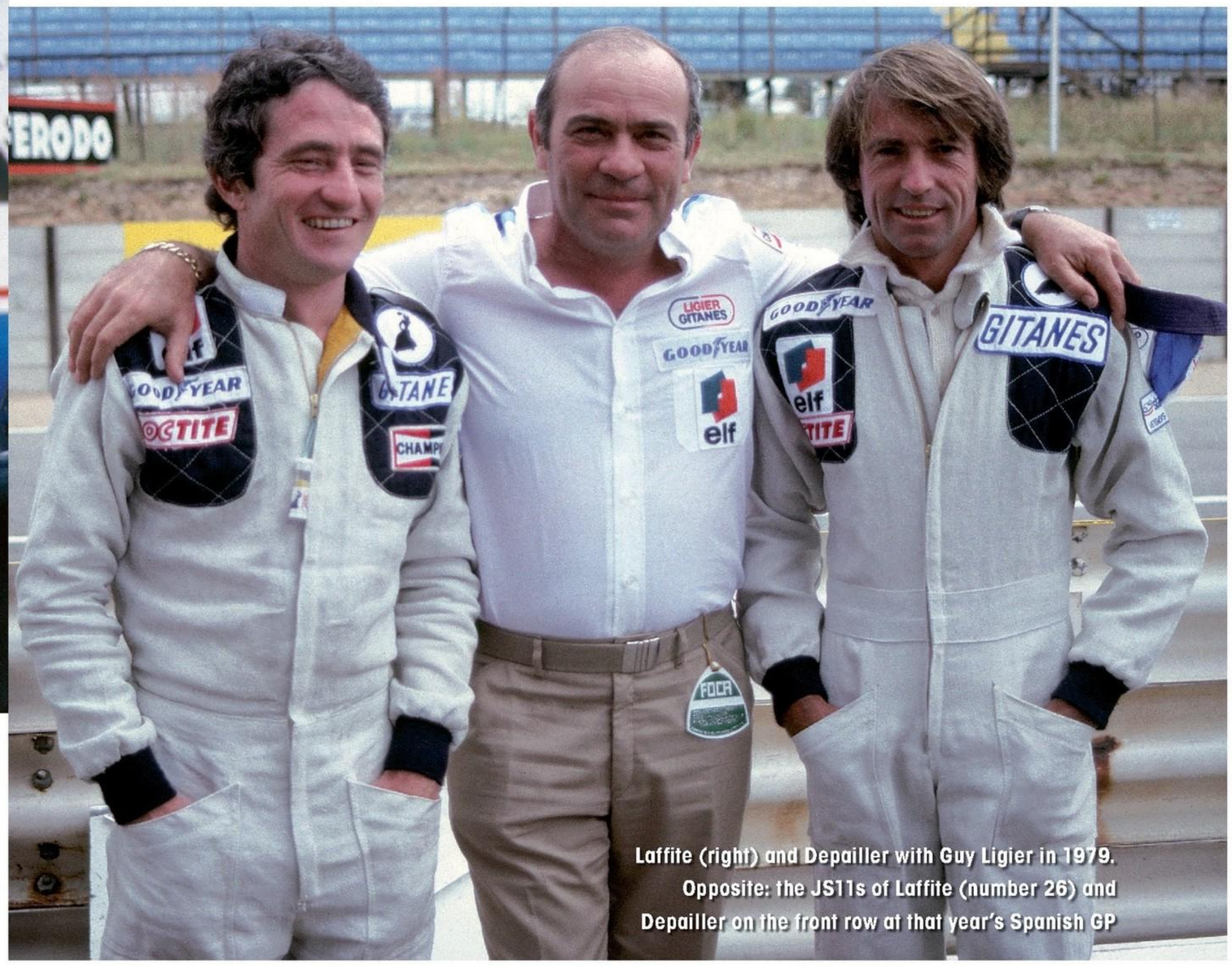
"We had so many new things: more mechanics, a T-car which we never had before, and it was very different with three cars and so many more people. But we took the JS11 to Ricard in the winter of '78 and straightaway it was bloody



LAFFITE ON DEPAILLER

After three years of being the sole driver at Ligier, Laffite was suddenly faced with an equally fast Frenchman

BY ROB WIDDOWS



Laffite (right) and Depailler with Guy Ligier in 1979. Opposite: the JS11s of Laffite (number 26) and Depailler on the front row at that year's Spanish GP

quick; the second lap through Signes I was flat, so I felt better after that. The ground effects were working well and I could see why the Lotus had been so fast during the previous season."

But now, with a good car, he had to form a working relationship with Depailler, wanting to make sure they worked as a team, especially as he knew that the other Frenchman would be right on top of the game.

"I said to Patrick, 'We are not here to fight, we are here to work. The car already seems really good and we will have success as long as we develop the car together, as a team.' I told him, I don't care who wins, you or me, and he said 'OK', and we started the season with a very quick car. But we were not totally prepared; we didn't really have enough people for two cars. But we started fantastically – I won the first two races, and Patrick was not happy at all because he felt his car was not so good as mine, did not have so much downforce, even though he was qualifying at the front with me," Jacques recalls,."But I told him it was not so simple, there were so many variables with the skirts and the downforce, and that he would win some races. We had a chat about it and I told him to concentrate on the car and not to blame me, or the team. Like all drivers coming into an established team, like Alonso at McLaren, he wanted to prove that he was the quickest."

By the end of April, at the start of the European season, Depailler had got himself organised and won the Spanish Grand Prix at Jarama, starting alongside Laffite on the front row and leading all the way. Things were looking good for the Ligier team, with Depailler and Laffite now fighting Gilles Villeneuve for the world championship. But Jacques thought he should have won at Jarama.

"I made a bad start from pole and Patrick got away in the lead," says Jacques, "but we were a second a lap faster than anyone else. We »»

were leading the championship and I thought the team would let me pass. It was crazy, we were racing each other, but the order never came. So I thought, OK, I will try to pass him and it all went wrong. I made the move on the inside of a corner – I should have waited until the exit – and the g-forces in the cockpit caused me to make a mistake in the gearchange, I went to third instead of fifth, and WOOP the engine blew up. I thought, shit, I am stupid, and I just wanted to pack up and go home. But I wanted to be there for Patrick's victory – it was difficult, he was my team-mate but we were very competitive also."

Jacques pauses for thought, then goes back a step. "When Patrick was with Tyrrell we spent a lot of time together, with my wife, with his girlfriend, and we were good friends. But when he came to Ligier the relationship was different. We were still friends, but it's strange because on the track I wanted to beat him, to get the better of him, and then when we had dinner later it was another kind of friendship. He was very nice with me but he wanted to prove that he was quick. Maybe it was a little strange after the race at Jarama, and I told him it was not necessary always to fight with each other, that we had to try and win the championship for the team as well as for ourselves. Then later we had problems with the car and we were not winning any more."

A couple of days after the Monaco GP at the end of May, where Depailler finished fifth, he went home to Clermont-Ferrand. There was a month's break before the next race in France and he wanted to practice his new-found passion for hang-gliding. Circling in the valleys of the Puy de Dome, he crashed into the side of the mountain and broke both his legs and his ankles. His 1979 season at Ligier was over; even his career looked in jeopardy. Little support was forthcoming from Guy Ligier, who claimed that the hang-gliding was a breach of contract. Depailler loved the adrenalin of danger. He'd already had a huge accident while riding a motorcycle, and there were those who questioned his commitment to racing. But he was sorely missed by Ligier which took on Jacky Ickx, by now at the end of his powers, to see out the season with Laffite.

"Maybe I did not need such a quick driver as Patrick as my team-mate; maybe I thought I should have been team leader, and I know I was good enough to win the Championship that year," says Jacques. "But Ligier and Gitanes did not see it that way and they wanted Patrick. I will not change my mind on that: I was confident I could do the job. But, yes, we did miss Patrick in the team after Monaco. He was always pushing, always trying to be quicker – like Hamilton with Alonso – but Ickx did not know the car so well and he was a very different style of driver. So really, after Patrick's accident, I was left alone in the team. Unfortunately, it would have been better to have had Patrick still in the team, rather than Jacky, but there it was..."

> "He was very nice with me but he wanted to prove he was quick"

So how was their friendship at this time? How had they worked each other out as team-mates?

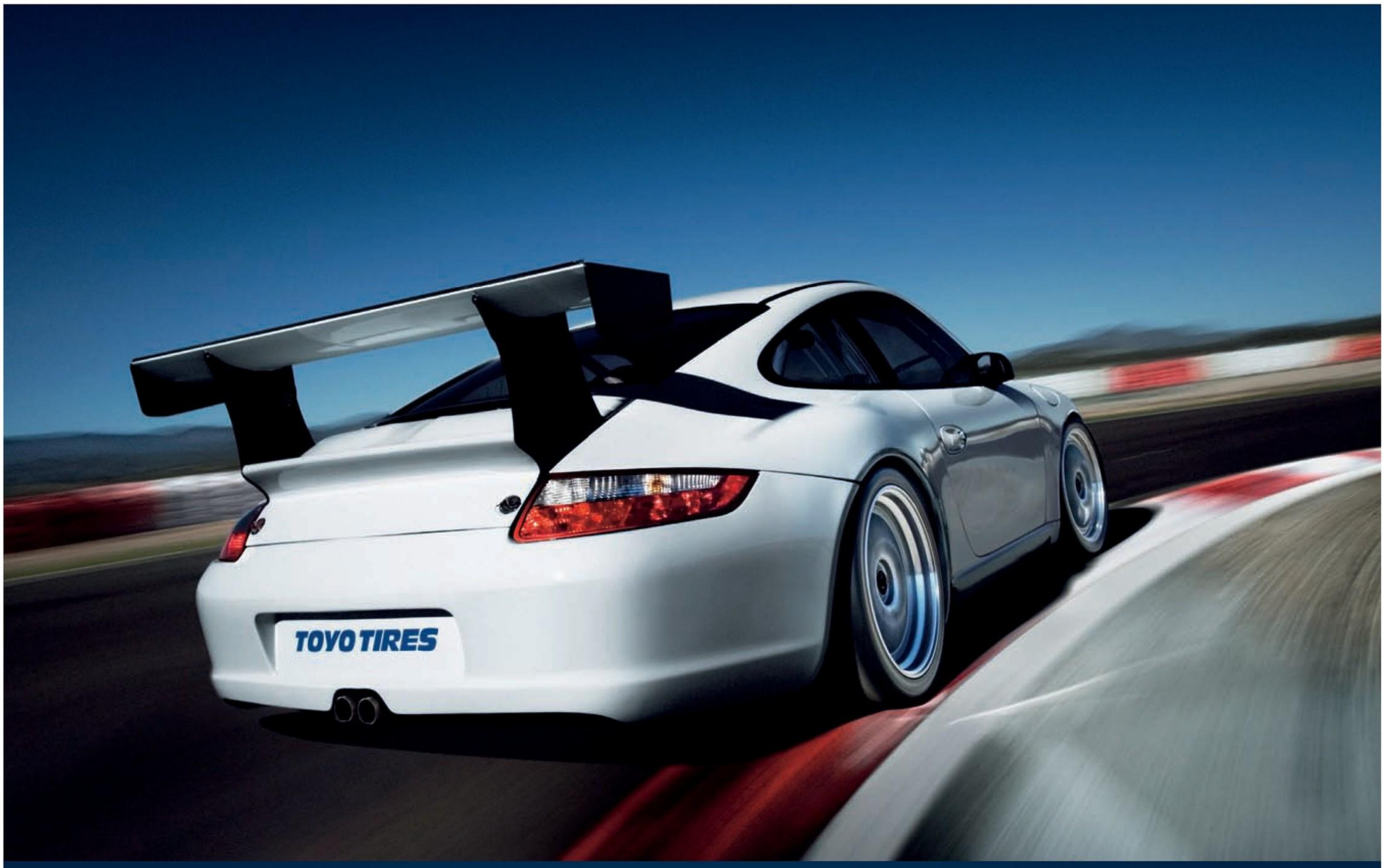
"It was OK. Patrick was an intelligent man, and we had a good relationship. No, it was not so bad, it was still a friendship," smiles Jacques. "We had been cycling together, travelling together. But he was very motivated, always quick. We had the same approach to driving, the way we used the brakes, how we made the entry into the corner, and my style was not so far from his, so we could work together. Not like with Keke Rosberg at Williams. That was difficult because Keke always loved the car to oversteer while I hated that, and with Pironi it was always very hard, he was so political. But with me and Patrick we had very few problems like that, and we could communicate. I was never political, that was the difference between me and most of the others at that time. Patrick was a little bit political with the team, and with the sponsors, but not in such a bad way."

The two Frenchmen were never to be re-united as team-mates. While Jacques stayed with Ligier for the 1980 season Depailler went to Alfa Romeo where he struggled with an uncompetitive car until he lost his life in a horrible accident while testing at Hockenheim in August of that year. Too many lost their mates in this way. Ⓜ



Depailler leads Laffite in the 1979 Argentine GP. Patrick came fourth, Jacques won

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The great Björn Waldegård claimed his fifth Safari rally success on his first visit to the Classic event

BY JOHN DAVENPORT

THE BJÖRN

With almost baffling ease, the great Björn Waldegård won his fifth Safari Rally in the first week of December. Driving an Historic Motorsport Ford Escort RS1600 navigated by his son, Mathias, he led for most of the way and was only headed for a single day of the nine-day event by the charging Gerard Marcy in a Porsche 911. Waldegård won the old Safari four times, the first in an Escort RS1800 in 1977 two years before he became the first ever World Rally Champion, and then three times in Toyota Celicas. This was his first win on the Safari Classic and brought to an end the domination of this new event – first held in 2003 – by local drivers.

Waldegård and Marcy shared the majority of the fastest times on the competitive sections between them. Marcy came out on top with 10 fastest times out of the 21 stages followed by Waldegård with seven. Next in the FTD league was local driver Ian Duncan, who was entered with Amaar Slatch in a fearsome-looking Ford Mustang. He set three fastest times before breaking his gearbox just before the halfway point and retiring. Earlier, Duncan had been delayed by having two punctures in one section and severing a brake pipe. Punctures too had delayed both Waldegård and his team-mate, Stig Blomqvist, so that by the end of day two Marcy led from Waldegård with Frédéric Dor third in a Porsche 911. He was just ahead of Blomqvist, with Duncan in eighth after his problems. But on the third leg, up into the infamous Kerio Valley, Marcy's experienced co-driver Alain Lopes made an unfortunate navigational error. He was now running first on the road thanks to





SUPREMACY

the re-seeding and it was thus an easy thing to do on an un-reccied event.

This brought Waldegård back into a lead that he was not to lose. Marcy had further problems on the last day of the rally when the Porsche stepped out of line in a slow corner and hit a rock, ripping the front suspension away from the body. When the road was opened, the Tuthill service got to him for repairs and he went on to finish a comfortable fourth despite a maximum penalty. For Blomqvist, things had not looked too bad until he entered Tanzania. He promptly broke a driveshaft and collected a maximum penalty, while the following day he was stuck for some time – with many others – in soft sand. He and co-driver Ana Goni eventually finished sixth and had just one fastest section time with which to console themselves.

Three British drivers distinguished themselves on their first visit to Africa. Steve Perez, partnered by Mike Stuart in a BTR-prepared Datsun 260Z, got to grips with the conditions well but was unfortunate enough to hit a large rock hidden in deep sand while doing about 80mph on a Tanzanian section. The driver's side of the car took nearly all the shock and, while Stuart emerged unscathed, Perez damaged his neck. He drove some 60 miles out of the section but then was whisked off to hospital. Less misfortune troubled Geoff Fielding, who with Preston Ayres managed to keep their Tuthill Porsche 911 in the top 10 right from the first day. The odd puncture and broken damper towards the end of the rally was less than most of the entry suffered and resulted in Fielding finishing third overall. Considering that his objective had been merely to finish in the top 10, the smile on his face will probably not fade for several months. Equally impressive if slightly less fortunate in the



All cars must have been built before 1974 in order to avoid the turbo and 4WD era

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Wayne Kieswetter and Rob Hellier finished in eighth place overall in this Datsun 180B

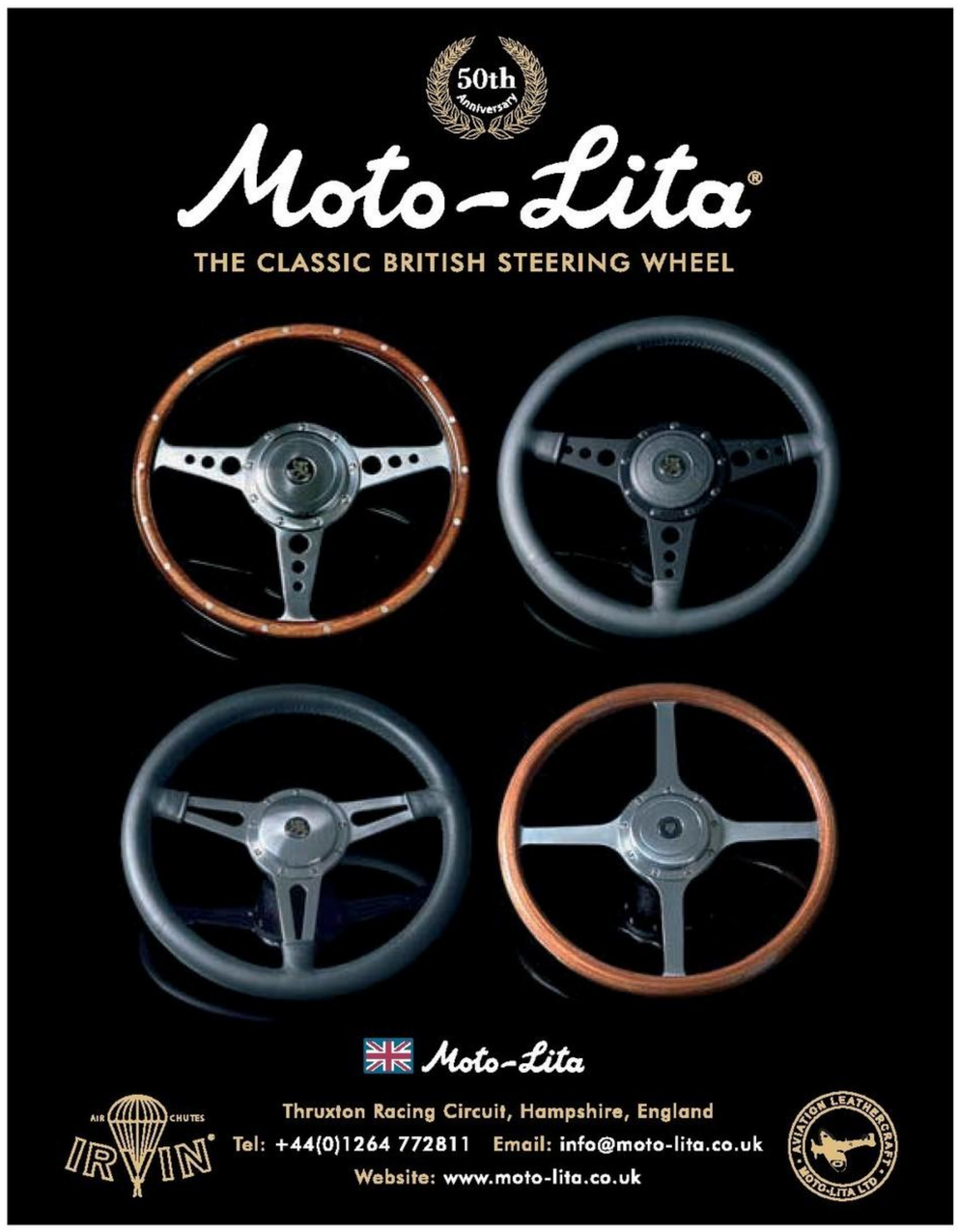
matter of wayside troubles was Steve Troman. Accompanied by Martin Rowe – the third former world champion on the event after Waldegård and Blomqvist as winner of the 2003 Production Car WRC – Troman drove another Tuthill Porsche to finish 12th after an excursion on day six resulted in him collecting a maximum penalty thanks to a broken front suspension.

Englishman and Safari fan John Lloyd drove the ex-Mike Kirkland Datsun 240Z with Adrian Cavenagh and was running in sixth place when, in Tanzania, the big car went out of control and rolled. No one was hurt but the same could not be said for the car, which retired on the spot. Also rolling out of the event but much earlier than Lloyd were Iain Freestone/Rod Maclean in a Ford Escort RS2000 and Stefano Rocca/Piers Daykin in a 260Z, again with nothing but minor injuries. Freestone had some consolation since his two Escort Mexicos both finished with Jeremy Bennett/Tim Chesser bringing their example home in 11th place overall, showing you do not need oodles of power to do well on a Safari. One last roll was reserved for father and son, Jonathan and Quentin Savage, who had an end-over-end in their Datsun 260Z on the first day in Tanzania. They took the next day out to rebuild the car and finished the event in 20th place.

It was steady driving that netted second place behind Waldegård for Dor and Didier Breton in yet another Tuthill Porsche 911. They had their troubles after chasing Waldegård and Marcy in the early stages and finished the rally very short of fully operative dampers but still with a tidy motor car. The Porsche 911 line-up behind Waldegård was completed by Paul-Eric Jarry and Craig Redelinghuys in fifth place. Unlike Dor, Jarry was never trying to race at the front and his progress up the field was pretty steady, almost perfectly matching that of Fielding.

Behind Blomqvist came two South African-entered, Australian-prepared Datsun 180Bs driven by Roddy Sachs/Peter Young and Wayne Kieswetter/Rob Hellier. Sachs is an old Safari hand who drove and prepared cars back in the 1970s, so it was perhaps hardly surprising that he finished as best of the 180Bs in seventh »»»



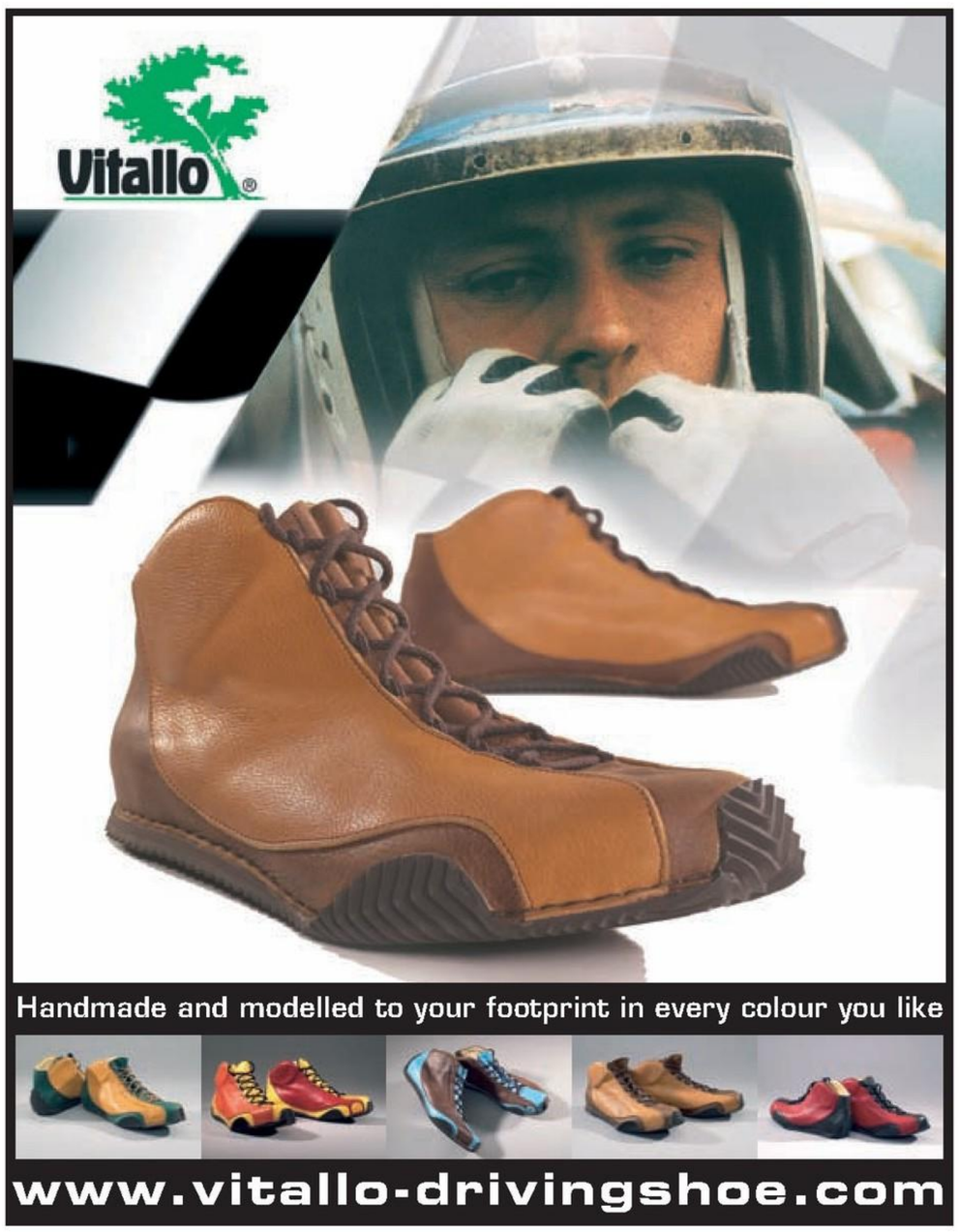


Francis Tuthill would like to congratulate all his team for a tremendous effort on the East African Safari Rally.
The courage and commitment shown by all his drivers to finish 2nd, 3rd, 4th, 5th, 12th and 14th in Tuthill prepared Porsche 911's on the toughest event in World Rallying was exceptional.
Congratulations on a job well done.

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place despite hitting a water buck and smashing his windscreen on a transport section just before leaving Kenya for Tanzania. A third 180B from the same team, that of Geoff Bell/Steve Harris, suffered some accident damage and carburettor trouble that saw them come home 17th, but the three Datsuns won the team prize, finishing with a grand total of some eight hours less than their nearest rival.

The best local crew were ninth-placed John Rose/Michael Borrisow in their Datsun 240Z, which had been specially built for Rose's 60th birthday and presented to him at the beginning of November. And 10th was another 260Z, this time all the way from southern Australia and driven by Graham Alexander and Ross Runnalls. The final drama of the rally was provided by the Porsche 911 of Iqbal Sagoo and Jurgen Bertl, which caught fire on the penultimate transport section and resisted all attempts by those armed with fire extinguishers to control the blaze until Historic Rally Sport mechanics emptied 30 bottles of mineral water over it. It limped in to finally finish 13th.

The third running of the Safari Classic had proved to be at least as tough as its predecessors and had certainly delivered on its promises to competitors. And the good news at the finish was the announcement from Kenya Airways that it is continuing with its sponsorship for the 2009 event. Ⓜ



EAST AFRICA CLASSIC SAFARI RALLY RESULTS

	DRIVER/CO-DRIVER	TIME
1.	Björn Waldegård/Mathias Waldegård Ford Escort Mk1	15h34m08s
2.	Frédéric Dor/Didier Breton Porsche 911	16h04m45s
3.	Geoff Fielding/Preston Ayres Porsche 911	17h05m02s
4.	Gerard Marcy/Alain Lopes Porsche 911	17h14m18s
5.	Paul-Eric Jarry/Craig Redelinghuys Porsche 911	17h29m11s
6.	Stig Blomqvist/Ana Goni Ford Escort Mk1	17h39m47s
7.	Roddy Sachs/Peter Young Datsun 180B	18h13m20s
8.	Wayne Kieswetter/Rob Hellier Datsun 180B	18h36m22s
9.	John Rose/Michael Borrisow Datsun 240Z	19h02m20s
10.	Graham Alexander/Ross Runnalls Datsun 260Z	19h06m05s



COMMENT

RICH PICKINGS OUTSIDE THE WRC

With the WRC blowing hot and cold on the subject of private entries, many people have gone elsewhere to compete

At the same time that the Safari Classic was wending its sunny way round Kenya and Tanzania, the 2007 World Rally Championship was coming to an end in rather different climatic conditions at Rally GB in South Wales. It is no surprise therefore that those involved in the Safari had at least a passing interest in events 4000 miles away and that, in the evenings, there were discussions about the differences between the two events.

While both are international rallies and both have a distinguished past, there the similarities end. The Safari Classic has evolved most closely from its ancestor, the East African Safari, and runs over nine days covering 4400km of which 1500km are competitive sections. By contrast, Wales Rally GB has a total mileage of some 1200km of which 300km are competitive and it takes three days to complete. Its ancestor, the RAC Rally, at one time ran over five days and covered 3500km of which 870km were competitive.

If one casts one's mind back 12 years or more to when the FIA and ISC started to get to grips with the WRC, one of the principal ideas was to restrict the number of entries in a WRC event to 60 of which 30 would be works entries – three or more cars from each of the nine or 10 teams – with the remaining places going to 'coming men' and local champions in Group N cars. This packaging of the events would enable multi-use of stages, better control of spectators and better value at any one viewing spot, as well as making it much easier to cover for television. All excellent ideas, especially as it provided a major opportunity to the national sporting bodies which hosted a WRC event to run a lesser 'qualifying' event six months beforehand in order to select the lucky people who would get the 30 places.

Sadly none took up the opportunity, while at the same time the FIA Rallies Commission broadcast a clear message that the WRC would not be needing droves of private team owners in future. Thus quite considerable numbers of well-heeled rally people started to look elsewhere to compete and, as happens in a free economy, events were devised and created to satisfy the demand. You don't need to quote a long list of endurance events involving classic cars to prove the point. But this is where the big money in private hands has gone. You only had to look around the cars and service arrangements for the majority of the Safari Classic entrants – particularly for the Ford Escorts of Historic Motorsport, Historic Rally Sport and Freestone Rallysport plus the Porsche armada run by Tuthill Porsche – to realise that you were looking at WRC-type organisation and expenditure.

> "You only had to look around the cars to realise that you were looking at WRC-type expenditure"

For reasons that are obscure to anyone who is not a WRC event organiser, the WRC events would like to get the affluent private owners back and doing their rallies. But the truth is that they are unlikely to do so. With events having all the appeal of the Safari Classic, to pay the same, or more, to be an unimportant cog in a hi-tech sprint event somehow doesn't commend itself to those spending their own money.

BRINGING BACK THE BEAUJOLAIS

When 59 teams left Great Britain in a quest to be the first to taste the latest Beaujolais Nouveau, Motor Sport joined them in an Aston Martin

BY ED FOSTER

There is something weird and wonderful about the British make-up which makes a challenge, however ridiculous or pointless, something that we can't resist. Back in 1972 Alan Hall, the *Sunday Times* writer, set one to bring back the first bottle of Beaujolais Nouveau. The wine is well known for being released at midnight before the third Thursday in November (the French are keen to hand out a 1000 euro fine if this isn't adhered to) and for also being, by French standards, pretty repellent. The fact that driving over 500 miles to get your hands on one of these bottles is borderline psychotic didn't seem to worry those who set off in search of the admiration of Fleet Street over 30 years ago.

This glorious madness reached its zenith in the 1980s when the RAF touched down in Beaujeu with a Harrier Jump-Jet at midnight, picked up the wine and then landed 32 minutes later in London, waking the journalist and asking where he wanted the bottle. I believe he was somewhat startled.

In order to save driving licences and sponsors, the Beaujolais Run is now a much gentler five-day drive to Maçon and back. The ever-enthusiastic French police can now relax in the knowledge that the main reason behind it is the money it raises for charity; this year more than £150,000 was raised for Winston's Wish, the Richard Burns Foundation and the Downs Syndrome Association. To keep the *gendarmes* happy the words "*Ce n'est pas une course, c'est un tournoi pour les oeuvres charitables*" were emblazoned on the backs of all the cars, sadly small enough to mean that they couldn't be read until the police had pulled you over and were in the middle of attacking your wallet. Either this or the British policeman on the M26, who gleefully gave us three points for doing 91mph, couldn't speak French.

It was during a five-course *déjeuner* on the fourth day that I started to wonder, in between mouthfuls of *tarte flambée* and Chablis, how the competitors managed to persuade people to part with such large sums of money for what was seemingly a jaunt through France. Nowadays unless someone is planning to hop up Everest, twice, potential sponsors consider your hard-planned event 'too frivolous'. The advantage of the Hackett Beaujolais Run 2007, however, was that every single penny raised went to charity while none of it, sadly, funded the obscene drinking abilities of our car.

> "Driving over 500 miles to get your hands on one of these bottles is borderline psychotic"

This year the event was once again sponsored by Hackett and celebrated Aston Martin's 1959 victory at Le Mans. It is sad that the company is still revelling in that victory, especially since it won the GT1 class at Le Mans last year. One of its winning drivers, Darren Turner, was there at the Monday evening charity auction along with the class-winning 009 he drove. All good PR, as they say. On the back of this, however, we were lucky enough to be offered a DB9 to use. 1959 victory or not, I couldn't imagine a better car in which to spend five days.

After spending most of Monday afternoon applying the stickers and watching "money can't buy" items being auctioned for charity that evening, we set off, on Tuesday morning, up the Goodwood Hillclimb at a rather sedate 20mph. The Earl of March reminded us all that anyone who touched the grass during the Festival of Speed wasn't asked back, and those same rules would apply to us. If we came off the asphalt, we wouldn't be going to France.

From there it was a straight run to the Channel Tunnel and then on to Reims. The second day took us from Reims to Maçon and included the competitive part of the journey, while the final two days, Thursday and Friday, consisted of the return leg via the same route.

The competition comes in the form of a 'distance trial' between Reims and Maçon in which the car covering the shortest distance wins.

This is taken seriously by some (who quite happily straight-line corners where possible to shave a metre off their overall distance) and less seriously by others (who had to miss the last two checkpoints as their lunch ran on slightly longer than expected).

I was navigating in a 1989 Aston Martin V8 Vantage Volante in the morning and then driving the sublime DB9 in the afternoon. I must admit, I didn't quite take on board just how serious it all was; on arriving at the second checkpoint another car drew up and the driver mumbled that he had thrown it away. Slightly worried, I waited to hear a story of blowouts, driver illness and high-speed explosions but to my surprise he carried on by saying, "It really is a disaster – we got diverted for 2km."

I was rather bemused and indeed embarrassed as only seconds earlier I had worked out

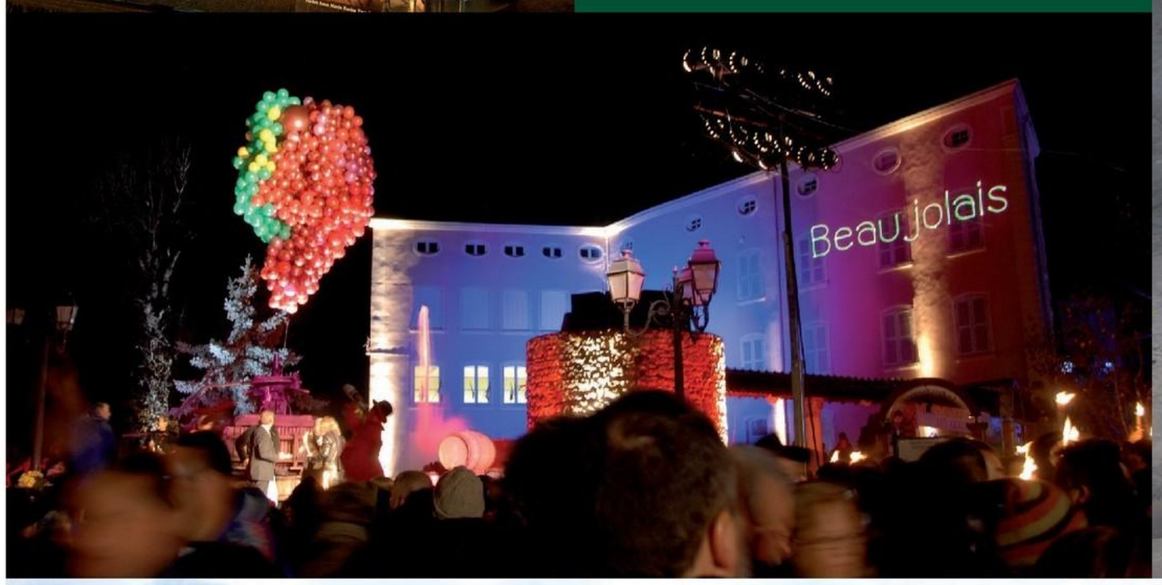




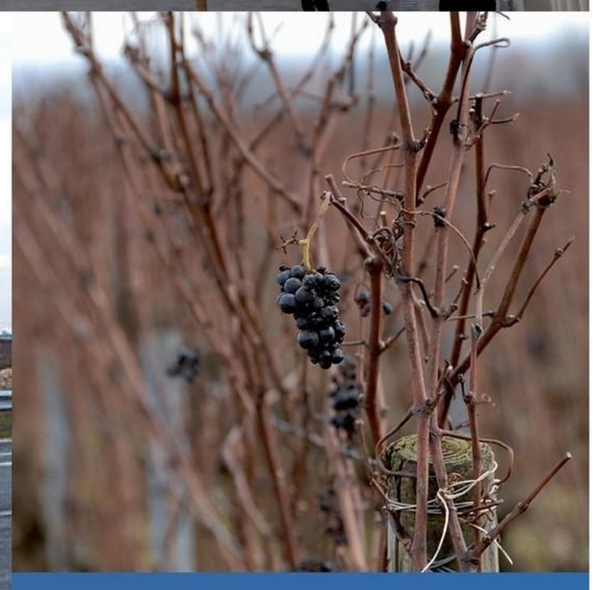


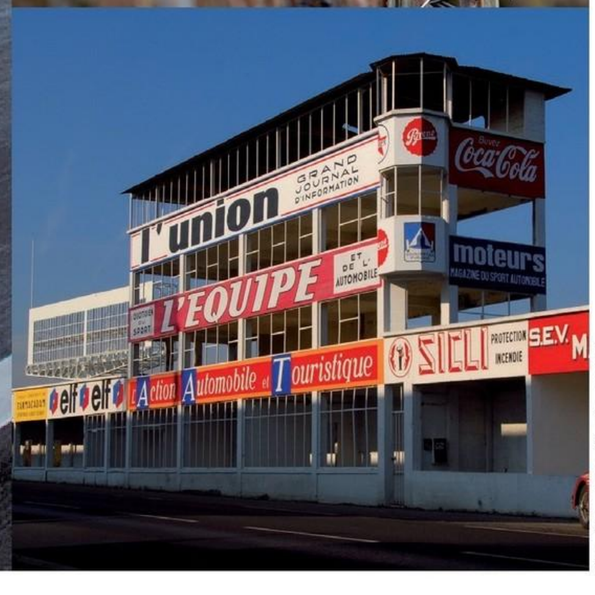
The auction raised £15,365 for charity while the trip south included the Château de la Marquetterie (above left), Reims centre (right), Reims circuit and Beaujeu for the launch of the wine at midnight. Bottom, the glorious DB9











Tim Newton Photography

that my 'rather genius' route that morning was 20km longer than it should have been. To my driver, I apologise, especially since I just couldn't bring myself to tell him.

The only way was up that afternoon, so having changed to the driving seat of the DB9 and armed with a seasoned navigator in the shape of Neil Bugler of Hackett, we set off. I was adamant that we should have used the satnav having seen various people with on-board computers 'streaming live information off the web' – apparently this has the same effect as using a satnav. Really? I certainly can't play solitaire on my Tom-Tom. Amazingly, even though we had to negotiate the most complex petrol station I have ever come across, and the fact that Neil insisted on using a map, the DB9 ended up in third place overall. Thankfully satnav has now been banned for the 2008 event so even I might be able to avoid 20km diversions.

It was difficult to work out exactly what attracted many of the participants to what is essentially an excuse for a blast through France. Anthony Reid, the well-known touring car driver, opted to do the event in a Jaguar diesel; Jason Dawe, the ex-*Top Gear* presenter, was in a Jaguar XKR; Hamish Gordon, the Radical Cup driver, was driving a Mercedes CLS 63 AMG; while the rest of the field was made up of 4x4s, Elises, DB9s and the odd classic in the shape of a Morris Minor (which arrived at and left each checkpoint to rapturous applause) and an MGB (which broke down). Reid's reason for coming was made pretty clear as he leaped up the stairs after the Champagne Tour and headed straight for the Taittinger shop; while others were either complaining of a hangover or asking for another drink.

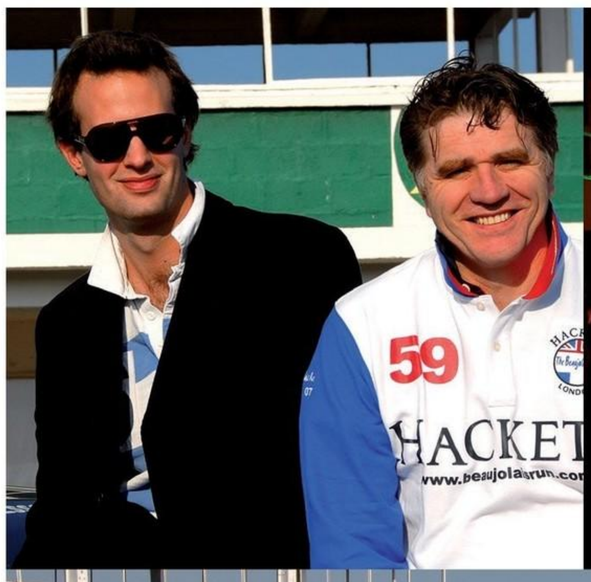
The epiphany for me came on the narrow and twisty D671 and D971, which run from Troyes down to Dijon, and the E15 down to Maçon. The DB9 is not used at its best in the UK. However gentle you are with your right foot you find yourself cruising at 3000 revs but quite comfortably doing 3000mph and that is why even a short journey on a French *autoroute* was enough to show me why anyone with a half decent/fun car needs only the smallest of excuses to drive through France. The lure of a simple fine rather than a precious points deduction is too good to resist. Besides the German *autobahnen*, there are fewer and fewer places to exercise a car's ability.

> "Even though we used a map, rather than a computer, the DB9 ended up in third place overall"

The aforementioned two roads are not the kind of route anyone would take if they were actually trying to get anywhere (the motorway to the east is much quicker and less tiring) but this is why people love doing these events. The organisers take time to find these roads and then make it look as though the navigators have merely 'stumbled' upon them. The D671 and the D971 provided some of the best driving I have had in a car. Having spent much of my life thinking that the only way to have fun was to drive everything on its door handles, for as long as possible, it was a pleasant surprise to find that the DB9 doesn't really like doing this (yes, it will cope well, but it is essentially a Grand Tourer) and that if the road is good enough, almost any car will do and certainly any speed will do.

The Beaujolais Run is no longer a testosterone-filled, let's-lose-our-licence event but after spending nigh on five days getting lost in France it is easy to see its enduring appeal. The opening of the Beaujolais at midnight on Thursday is accompanied by a typically French street party in Beaujeu from 10pm onwards and is certainly worth seeing. There may be a risk of being set alight by a slightly worse-for-wear French student pretending that her candle is Yoda's lightsabre, but seeing the effort that they go to for the launch is something special.

There are many other rallies, tours, meanders, jaunts and perambulations that you can join. But the Hackett Beaujolais Run has the advantage of a competitive day, a large sum of money raised for charity and, above all, a point to it – even if the stuff isn't worth drinking.





From right: the Morris Minor came home 10th, while the V8 Vantage encountered the police – on the M26! Fancy dress for the distance trial – Neil Bugler bemused the French as Isaac Newton. Astons at Reims, the author (left) and Bugler, Beaujeu street party









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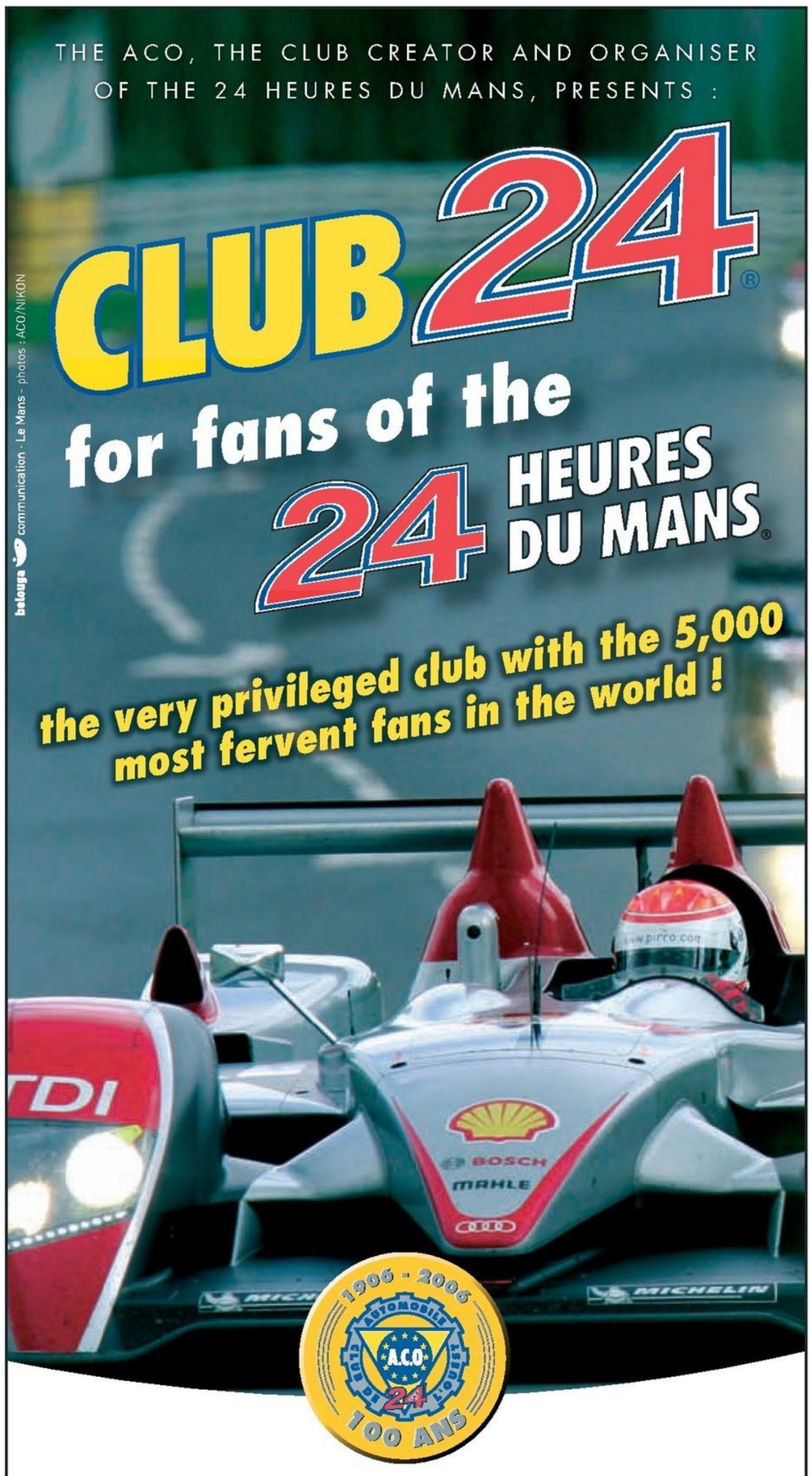
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YOU WERE THERE

Among the photographic hoards uncovered by readers, colour shots are rarer. These particularly caught our eye



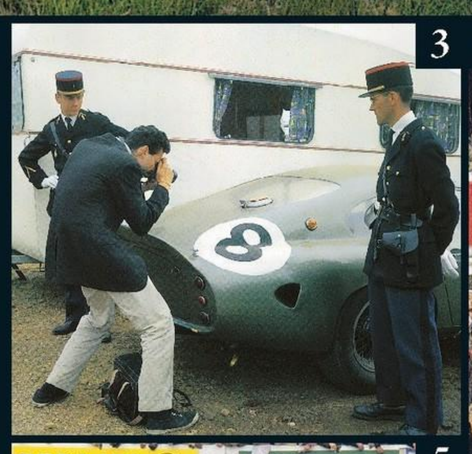
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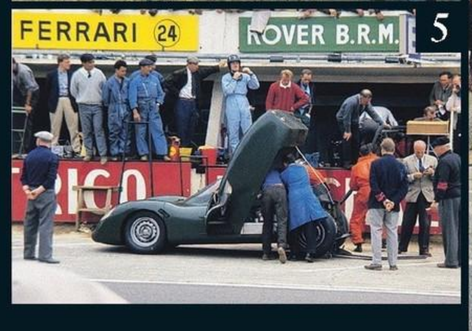


LE MANS

{1} Preparing for night practice on the Thursday before the race. {2}A besuited Stirling Moss making a film about the circuit on Friday. {3} Interest in the retired Aston Martin of Ireland/McLaren. {4} The Ferrari of Penske/ Rodriguez on Saturday. {5} A Sunday morning pit stop for the Rover-BRM with Graham Hill about to take over from Richie Ginther.

3 4





5



PHILIP SKELTON

Mr Skelton came over from Australia on a working holiday and managed to get to the 1963 1000 kilometres at the Nürburgring, and the Le Mans 24 Hours. At La Sarthe, having realised that the crowds made it hard to get respectable shots of the racing, Philip spent much of the time in the pits getting these photos. At the Nürburgring, the leading Porsche crashed out after lunch leaving the way clear for the two Ferraris, much to the annoyance of 100,000 German fans who left before the finish

1

2

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NURBURGRING 1000KMS

{1} The tailenders on the first lap of the race at Südkurve. {2} The Bonnier/Phil Hill eight-cylinder works Porsche, leading at this point, approaching the Südkurve before crashing out later on in the race. {3} The works Ferraris of Surtees and Scarfiotti at the start of the second lap, having just taken the lead from the Jaguar E-type of Peter Lindner. {4} Dick Jacob's Midget in Saturday practice at the Schwalbenschwanz curve. {5} Practice on Saturday: the number 54 Ferrari GTO heading towards Döttinger Höhe.

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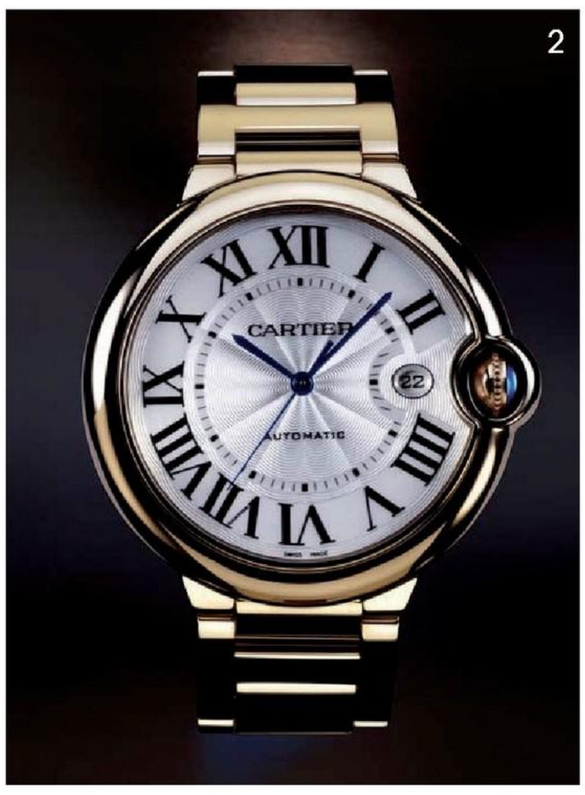
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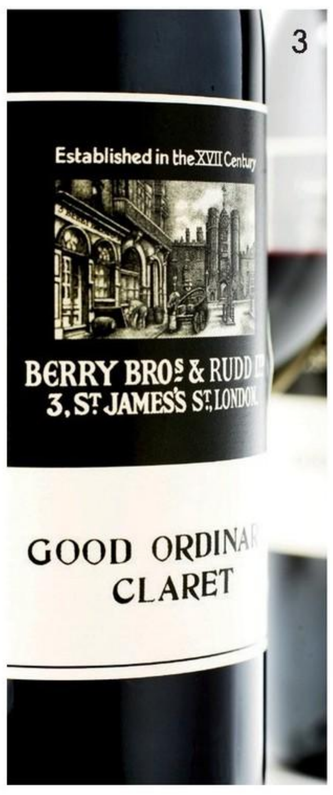
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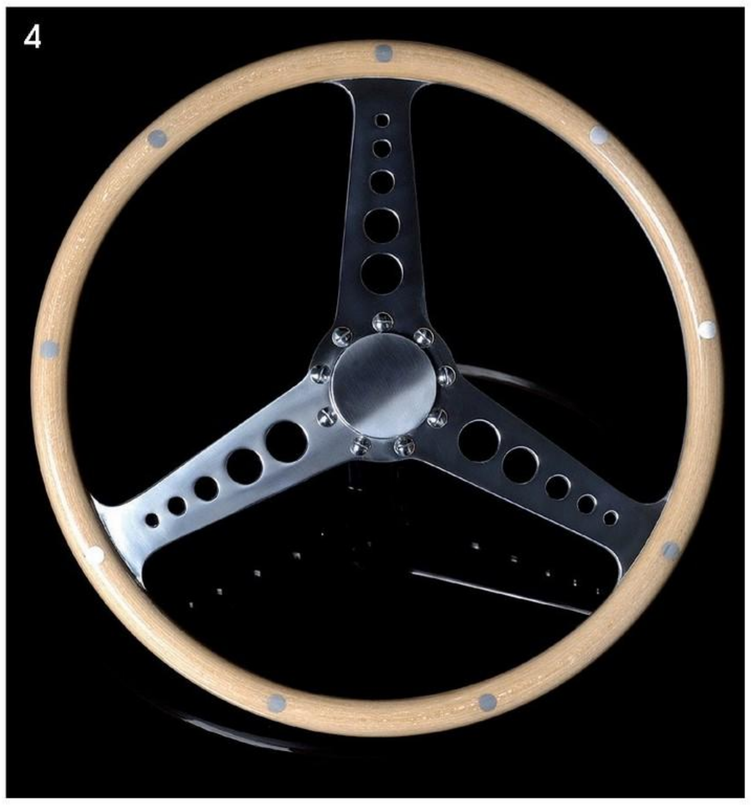
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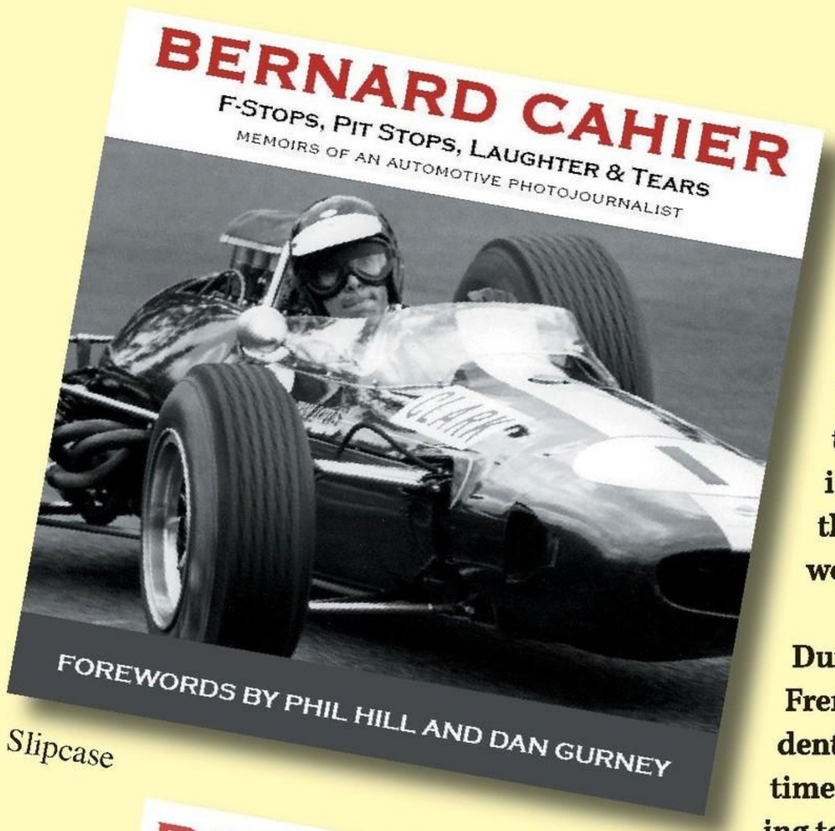
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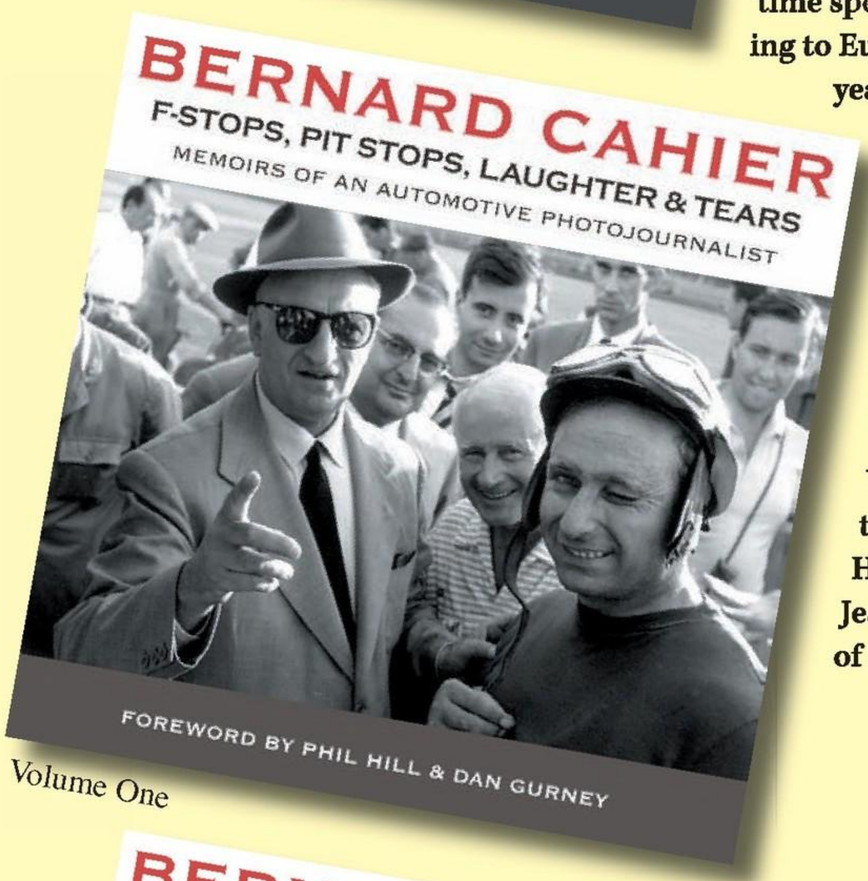
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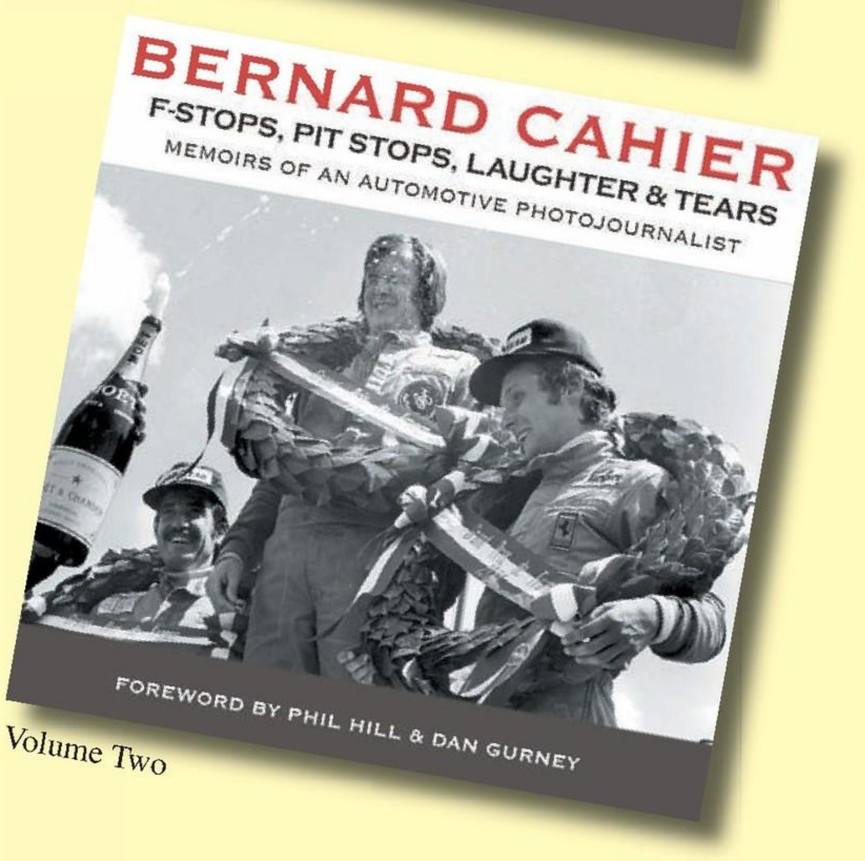
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During World War II, Bernard joined the resistance, then the tank division of the French 2nd Armored Division, earning a Croix de Guerre and the American Presidential Citation in the process. A year working in Camaroon was followed by some time spent in America where he would meet his wife of 50 years, Joan Updike. Returning to Europe in 1952, he attended his first Grand Prix at Monza in September of that year, taking photographs with a Kodak Retina II.

From that moment, he never looked back.

F-Stops, Pit Stops, Laughter and Tears—Memoirs of An Automotive Photojournlist is the story of Bernard Cahier's long and fascinating journey through the automotive world of the 50s, 60s, 70s and 80s, focusing on the sport of motor racing. You'll see that world as Bernard saw it through his vast collection of photographs.

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Every now and then among the plethora of books published about cars and auto sports, a gem floats to the surface. Bernard knew everyone who was anyone and was a friend to many. He is as good a writer as he is a photographer. The book is a must have for anyone reading this magazine and is also an excellent reference. ***Art Evans, Vintage Race Car***

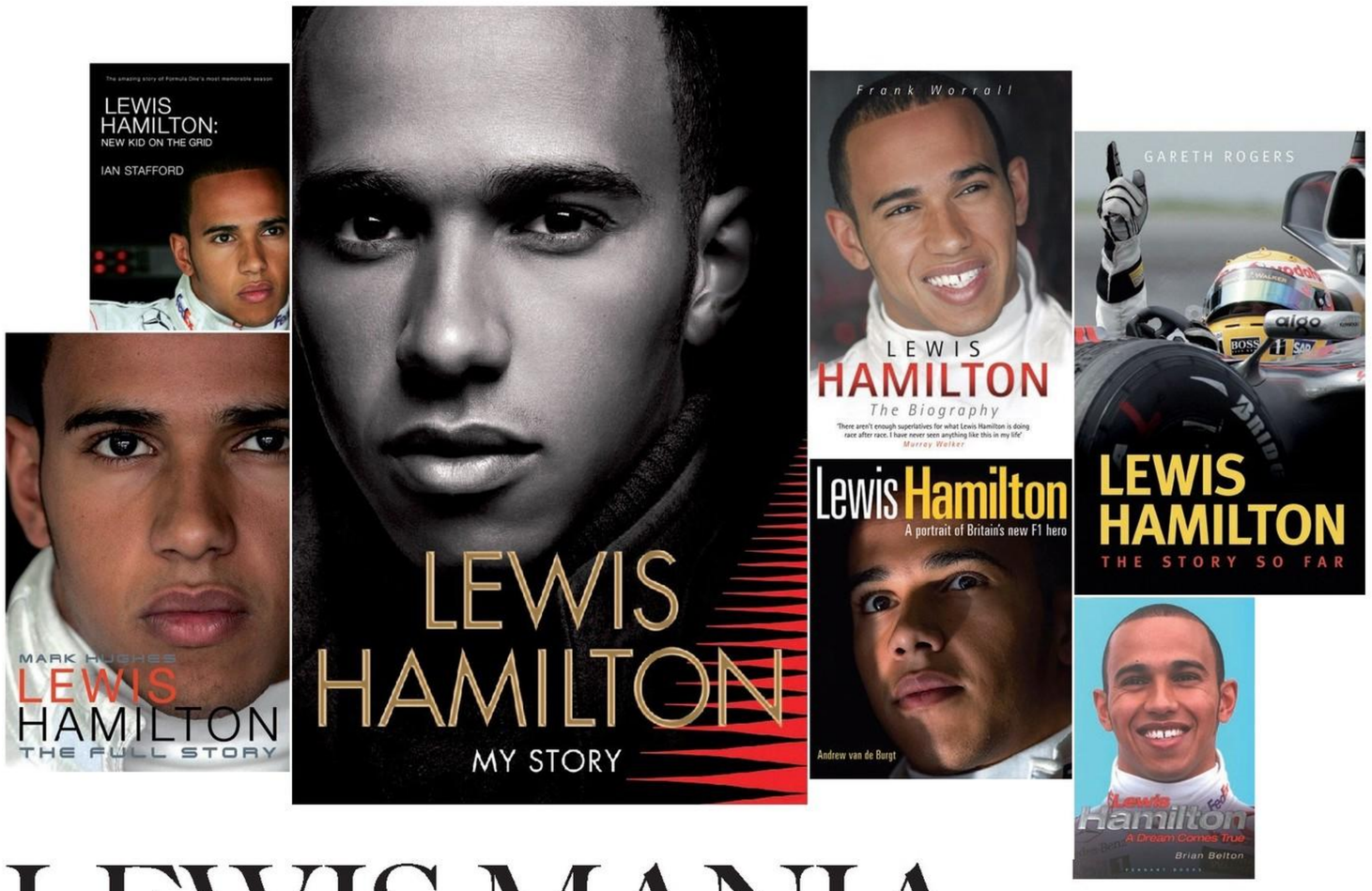
The combination of Cahier's colorful anecdotes, reports and photographs vividly brings the era to life. A highly enjoyable record of a blessed life in motor sport. ***Mick Walsh, Classic & Sports Car***

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LEWIS MANIA

In a bid to save us covering a Lewis Hamilton book every month from now until the summer, here they are all together...

You may find this hard to believe, but as Motor Sport went to press there were no fewer than seven books about Lewis Hamilton on sale, with another in the offing. Yes, seven works about the young man from Stevenage who nearly won the 2007 Formula 1 World Championship. So how to choose between them?

One is written by the man himself, with a little help from highly experienced Formula 1 journalist Tim Collings, and this will be the chosen tome for many. At the other end of the scale is the book by Frank Worrall, a contributor to *The Sun* newspaper, and the angle here is Hamilton's instant stardom.

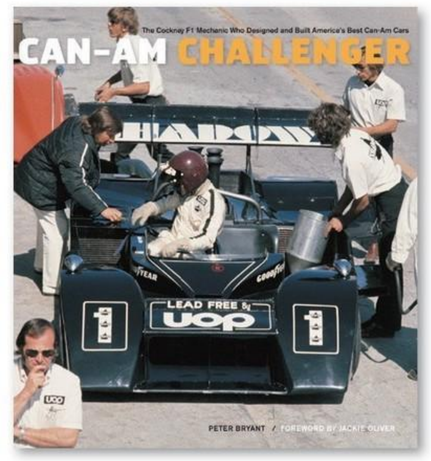
The clear winner from the other five, for me, is the offering from Mark Hughes, partly because it's well written, partly because he has done some research and because Hughes has attended every Grand Prix this year. The book, like his journalism, is very readable and tells a good short story. And this is the point – the story of Hamilton is short and it's early for a biography. That said, the chap has packed a lot into just 22 years and his impact on F1 cannot be underestimated. I enjoyed the early chapters, Hughes neatly setting the scene with some family background and some perceptive interviews with those who know Hamilton well.

The other four are much of a muchness, with Andrew van de Burgt the runner-up because he knew Hamilton before he reached the top level of the sport. The problem is, this book looks and feels like a compilation from *Autosport* magazine and dwells too much on the 2007 season. But van de Burgt has some interesting insights into Hamilton's career before he reached the highest echelon.

The remaining three, by Ian Stafford, Brian Belton and Gareth Rogers, don't really add very much to what we already know and certainly they have not the authority of my winner in this group. In their favour, Stafford's book has lots of nice pictures, Belton's is well written and put together while Rogers' contribution is a handy and reasonably priced paperback.

To have such a choice at this early stage seems a little over the top and creates an immediately crowded market. The book that will be interesting, and hopefully revealing, will be the one that Hamilton authorises after his retirement. For now, take your pick from seven. **RW**

The Full Story, by Mark Hughes, Icon Books, ISBN 978 1840468 55 7, £16.99
A Portrait Of Britain's New F1 Hero, by Andrew van de Burgt, Haynes Publishing, ISBN 978 1 84425 480 4, £14.99
New Kid On The Grid, by Ian Stafford, Mainstream Publishing, ISBN 978 1845 963385, £16.99
The Story So Far, by Gareth Rogers, Tempus Publishing, ISBN 978 0 7524 4480 2, £8.99
My Story, by Lewis Hamilton, Harpersport Publishing, ISBN 978 0 00 727005 7, £18.99
The Biography, by Frank Worrall, John Blake Publishing, ISBN 978 1 84454 543 8, £14.99
A Dream Comes True, by Brian Belton, Pennant Books, ISBN 978 1 906015 07 7, £17.99



CAN-AM CHALLENGER

THE COCKNEY F1 MECHANIC WHO DESIGNED AND BUILT AMERICA'S BEST CAN-AM CARS

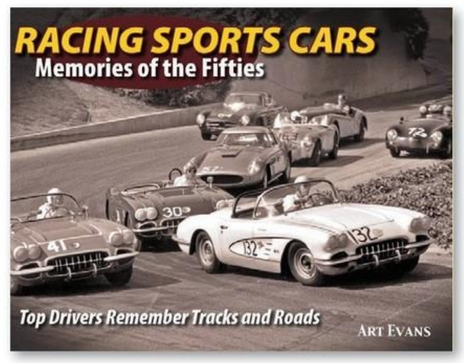
PETER BRYANT

If Pete Bryant's memoirs are anything to go by, racing mechanics three or four decades back had a riotous time. As an F1 mechanic to among others Salvadori, Amon, Surtees, Stewart and Oliver, Bryant criss-crossed the globe, and inevitably the long, hard hours in the pits were interspersed with japes, trials and dramas. Add in his time at Shelby, as engineer on Mickey Thompson's barking Indy cars and on Lolas and Shadows in the great era of Can-Am, and the tales are bound to flow. The book is packed with them, some funny, some tragic, such as Dave MacDonald's awful death at Indy. But the book centres around Ti22 – the titanium Can-Am car Bryant designed and built in 1969. At this point he gets more serious and the funny stories thin out, but it's a fine description of a small team with innovative ideas trying to make a mark, and the technical challenges facing a racing car designer. There's a lot which is of engineering interest, but what you'll remember are the tales of how Bryant saved three people from drowning in a quarry, was locked in a shed with Hill, Surtees and Ireland, how Carel de Beaufort made his father pay for his racing by threatening to jump from the walls of the family castle, and just why the wheels fell off the *gendarmes'* police car at Reims one year... **GC**

Published by Veloce, ISBN 978 1 84584 115 7, £24.99

Reviews





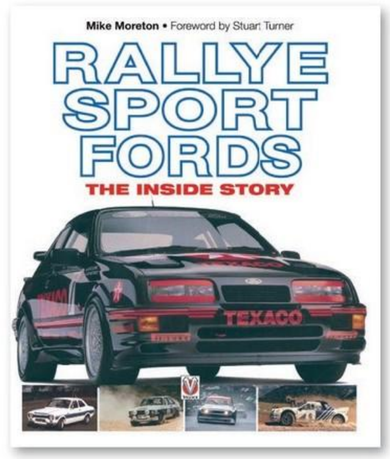
RACING SPORTS CARS

MEMORIES OF THE FIFTIES

ART EVANS

Art Evans' latest overview of US sports car racing is extremely thorough and covers 74 models, with drivers describing their personal experiences with the car in question. Each chapter also includes a short biography of a driver associated with that particular car; the likes of Enzo Ferrari, Ferry Porsche and John Cooper are all covered. Some of the photos on the 50 marques, from Abarth to Veritas, are press shots, but there are also some stunning on-track images. Although very cheap for the amount of information it offers, it's a shame the book is not better laid out; the text and images are put together in such a manner that you feel as though you are, at times, struggling through a school textbook. **EF**

Published by Photo Data Research, ISBN 0 9705073 4 8, £19.30



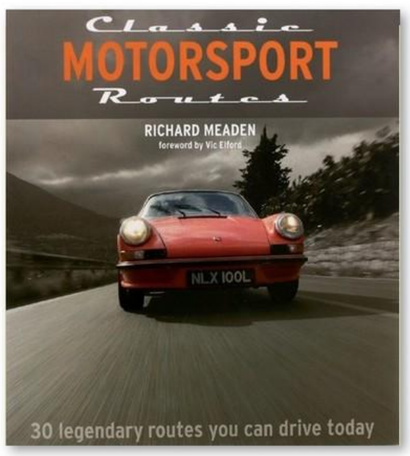
RALLYE SPORT FORDS

THE INSIDE STORY

MIKE MORTON

This is very much a personal story written by a sometime racer who spent 23 years project managing, planning and implementing the hottest of hot Blue Oval projects. Some of it will be familiar, but the insider view on the ill-starred RS1700T makes for compelling reading; same too for the RS200 – complete with some fantastic renderings from the Ghia studio. If there is a criticism, it's that it could have done with a more thorough edit. And better proofreading, as a few well-known names are spelt incorrectly (Jimmy McCrae?). That aside, this is a good overview of some fondly remembered Everyman performance cars, and a decent human-interest story of a life spent in the British motor industry. **RH**

Published by Veloce, ISBN 978 1 84584 115 7, £24.99

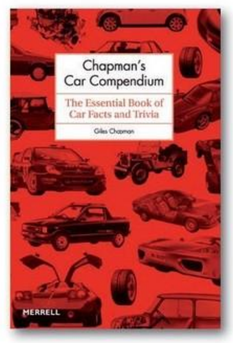


CLASSIC MOTORSPORT ROUTES

RICHARD MEADEN

This glossy hardback, written by motoring journalist Richard Meaden, is divided into six main sections covering road races, road circuits, rallies, Grand Prix circuits, hillclimbs and 'record breaking'. All the routes chosen are driveable today and include classics such as the Mille Miglia and also more obscure venues such as the Grössglockner hillclimb in Austria, now a mountain road in the middle of a national park. With roughly six pages dedicated to each route, their history and the best way to approach them today is covered in detail and accompanied by both historical and contemporary photos. If you have a European adventure planned, then this is certainly a book worth looking through, as each route is shown on a map meaning that hours aren't spent pouring over a 1:300,000 trying to work out where that elusive pit straight really was/is. Although many are now under strict speed restrictions it's still easy to get an idea of just how exciting these routes were, and indeed still are. Some, like the Isle of Man TT, are unhampered by such problems and can be tackled almost as they are supposed to be. Meaden does, though, rightfully warn drivers to apply common sense when tempted to boot it through a blind corner. The book itself is well written and the 30 routes, over four continents, are certainly approachable as a cover-to-cover read. **EF**

Published by The Automobile Association, ISBN 978 0 7495 5225 1, £25



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MARCOS

Although an instant success on the track, the Marcos had a far from trouble-free upbringing

BY RICHARD HESELTINE / PHOTOGRAPHY BY HOWARD SIMMONS

As bad an idea as it so often is to judge a book by its cover, with the Marcos coupé, it's hard to resist the temptation. That long, priapic nose, improbably low roofline and super-swoopy hind treatment coalesce into one of the most dramatic outlines ever to emerge from Britain's cottage industry of specialist sports car manufacturers. A shape that for more than 40 years would be pushed, pulled, tweaked and generally hacked about with haphazard élan. As the owner of this unmolested 1969 example, marque authority Richard Falconer, gleefully admits: "It's teetering on the edge of vulgarity."

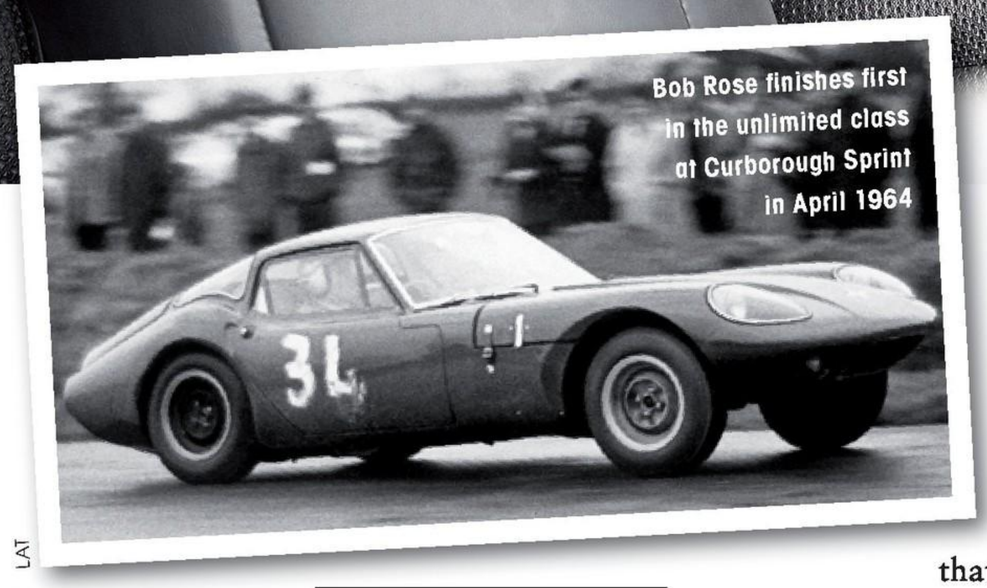
And that has long been part of the appeal: you have to *really* want a Marcos. With news that the latest incarnation of this calamity-prone GT has just turned turtle, and that Marcos Engineering is no more, it would seem those days have passed. Except history teaches you otherwise. Having used up its nine lives and more, Marcos has a habit of returning from the grave.

Much of this resilience was for so long down to the fortitude and pugilistic savvy of marque instigator, and former stuntman, Jem Marsh. Yet another product of the 750MC finishing school, the West Countryman in 1955 joined Dante Engineering, a Cambridgeshire firm producing tuning equipment for Austin Seven engines with a tidy sideline in kit car bodies. Concluding that he could do better, Marsh left to form Speedex Castings & Accessories two years later, offering a similar service from premises in Luton, Bedfordshire. Within two years he had established himself as the UK's foremost supplier of Seven go-faster parts along with a range of ally and glassfibre 'shells.

A fearless driver himself, Marsh wanted more. A chance meeting with Frank Costin in a pub in Hitchin led to what became the first Marcos (the tag being a contraction of the two principals' surnames). In early 1959 the pair hatched a plan to build an ultra-lightweight clubmans car, but one unusually comprising a monocoque fabricated of plywood. The aerodynamicist »»


DRA 313G





Bob Rose finishes first in the unlimited class at Curborough Sprint in April 1964

LAT

waxed lyrical about the virtues of timber construction, pointing out that if it worked for aeroplanes such as the De Havilland Mosquito, it would be good enough for something as prosaic as a racing car.

The resultant device wasn't pretty – not even close – but with only a mildly tuned 1172cc Ford sidevalve unit it could top 110mph. In May 1960 the first car was sold, a new fully enveloping front end becoming standard. Customer Bill Moss was immediately successful, the former ERA pilot winning nine races from 10 starts. By the end of the year, Marcos had orders for six more cars, one destined for wealthy enthusiast Barry Filer who then installed an unknown driver: Jackie Stewart.

Costin left the firm in early 1961, having found himself at odds with Marsh over the marque's future direction. Production was relocated from Wales to Luton, with former Lister man Dennis Adams giving the car a minor makeover as brother Peter (a man latterly airbrushed out of Marcos lore) set about simplifying chassis construction for what became the production 'gullwing' Marcos. The first (of 18) went to future Le Mans winner Jackie Oliver who promptly crashed it, the second being entered in the 1962 Le Mans 24 Hours where John Hine and Richard Prior retired with engine problems. Then the money ran out.

The Adams brothers returned to their home village of Great Shelford, near Cambridge, to concentrate on their extraordinary Chevy Corvair-powered XP prototype with its central driver position and three abreast seating. Marsh meanwhile roped in the first of umpteen backers to get Marcos back on track, retired naval officer Greville Cavendish who also had a stake in 'specials' giant, Falcon Shells. From the new premises in Bradford-on-Avon, the newly formed Marcos Cars Ltd resumed production in late 1962 but a new model was needed. A Spyder variant was displayed at the following January's Racing Car Show at Olympia, but against expectations it didn't prove popular. A slab of polystyrene was then placed on top and whittled until it looked right, forming a mould for what became unofficially known as the 'fastback'.

"The Marcos was successful immediately, winning nine races from 10 starts"

With the Adams brothers back on board, the XP briefly seemed like becoming a production reality as a Marcos, but was still some way off. With sales of racing cars being largely seasonal, Marsh initiated a stopgap; something that would bring in much needed revenue – the same basic outline which would remain familiar for the next 40 years. Retaining the Costinian approach of a wooden hull, but one that was mainly the work of Peter Adams, and the unlikely Volvo B18 straight-four (having toyed with an in-house unit), the temporary fix was designed as a pure road car; one that could house Marsh's lanky 6ft 4in frame in comfort.

Unveiled at the 1964 Racing Car Show, the Marcos 1800 caused a sensation. Dennis Adams' outline was exuberant but not extravagant, appearing to have stepped out of some Latin *carrozzeria*. The beautiful people clamoured to land one. Prince Albrecht of Liechtenstein placed an order, as did Lord Lilford and Lord Cross. Yet for all the media hype and product placement (one car featuring in an episode of the hugely popular TV series *The Saint*), the £1500 asking price was so steep only the rich could apply, yet it cost more than that to build. In a bid to make it more affordable, the de Dion rear suspension was gradually phased out in place of a live axle (some 52 IRS cars were made), but the corresponding drop in price to £1340 brought no increase in sales. When matters reached a crisis in 1966, the Swedish unit was replaced by the much cheaper 1.5-litre 'pre-crossflow' Ford item. A tweaked 120bhp (up from 85bhp) LawrenceTune version was available as an option until 1967, when the Blue Oval's new 1599cc 'Kent' engine became standard.

Two years later, Marcos underwent a change of ethos: the wooden chassis made way for a Dennis Adams-conceived steel item

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partially owing to customer resistance to timber but mainly because the steel chassis was much quicker to build. Simultaneously, the arrival of a three-litre Ford V6 edition caused a marketable turnaround of fortunes: Rod Stewart bought one, as did TV presenter John Noakes and movie auteur Sam Wanamaker. One even went to president of the Ford Motor Company, Semon 'Bunkie' Knudsen.

Such prosperity couldn't last. As the 1970s dawned, a projected US sales drive was hampered by new emission regulations: the Ford unit flunked the tests, prompting the insertion of the heavier Volvo straight-six. These developments coincided with a move to a new, larger facility in Westbury. Further experiments with Ford's unlovely V4 unit and Triumph's 2.5-litre straight-six – along with the arrival of the new Mantis four-seater – were ill-timed. Disruptions with relocating were worsened when 27 cars were impounded by US customs in the belief that they didn't meet emission standards (they did). With no money coming in, Marsh was forced to sell out to Hebron & Medlock Bath Engineering. Six months later, the receivers were called in: the Rob Walker Group subsequently brought the factory only to hold a closing-down sale. By 1972 Marcos was effectively dead.

Marsh revived the marque in 1981, the first of many reincarnations under different ownerships, leading to an array of alliterated names – Marcoses called Mantula, Marcasite and Martina (but tragically no Marmoset) – and even a return to Le Mans but once again its future hung in the balance. Even if there isn't another renaissance, you can't argue that it has had a good innings.

What really appeals about this Marcos – any Marcos – is the sense of individuality. You might not like the styling, or the image of later variations on the theme (and some were ghastly) but it's a proper car and far removed from a great many period rivals.

> "You might not like the styling of this Marcos but it's a proper car"

That said, there is no graceful means of entering one: the roof is at waist level and the door aperture is narrow. Once you're in, though, you'll be amazed at just how comfortable and cosseting it is. Typical of the 'going our way' mentality is the driving position. The seats are fixed at a semi-reclined position but there's a cushion to bolster your back should you need one. The neat bit is the moveable pedal assembly, operated to and fro by turning a knob. This neat system, latterly seen on the Chrysler Viper and select Lamborghinis, makes absolute sense when in situ.

Armed with just about the longest bonnet in Christendom, you do feel vulnerable pulling out of junctions, and there's always a slight twinge of claustrophobia, but in general there's so much to like here. In 1969, *Motor* described the handling of the three-litre Marcos as being 'fantastic… probably the best of any production car we have driven.' Which, as praise goes, is pretty emphatic. And it's the way this car tackles testing switchbacks that still impresses most. With the fruity backbeat goading you on, hold the stubby gearlever and drop down a cog; the nose dips ever so slightly but there's never any sense of edginess. The steering loads up better than you can reasonably expect and it just tucks in with just a whisker of stabilising understeer.

More impressive still is that it doesn't leave you in need of an osteopath. Sure, there's the occasional clonk but overall the properly located suspension – Triumph-derived coils and wishbones up front, a five-link live axle out back – works remarkably well over rutted blacktop.

Looks-wise, the Marcos will always polarise opinion, and unfortunately many owners feel compelled to add spoilers and comedy wheelarch extensions; but in untainted original form, it's certainly compelling. Add in strong straight-line performance – around 125mph and 0-60mph in eight seconds – along with tenacious handling and you can see why owners tend to hold on to them. Get the impression that we liked it? You're not wrong. Ⓜ





Inset: Dick Prior raced the Marcos GT at the BRSCC Snetterton in March 1962 winning the 1-litre GT class

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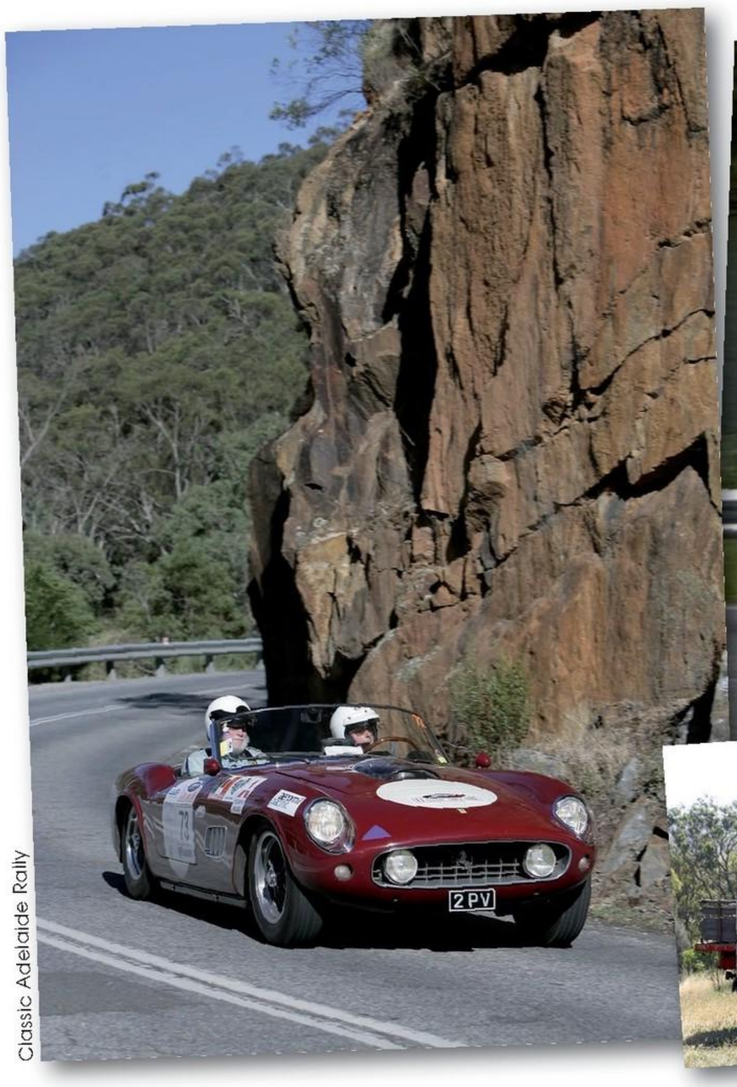
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Classic Adelaide Rally



Doug Nye and Paul Vestey in Ferrari 250 California. Left: Aussie VIP suite



CLASSIC VIEW OF AUSSIE TRACKS

A return to the Classic Adelaide Rally provided the perfect opportunity to explore the circuits that historically hosted the Australian Grand Prix

As I write I'm sitting here with heavy eyelids, lolling head, feeling decidedly peculiar. The plus side is that I understand the problem. This is what 36 hours travelling from Australia to England does for you. There's the usual feeling of unreality. Pinch – did I really run for the 11th time in the Classic Adelaide Rally last week in a Ferrari 250 California? Pinch – check the photos and video, aah yes, those whiskers, shoulders and no-neck are definitely (regrettably?) DCN. So it's true then. I really didn't dream it.

Competitive classic rallying is often conducted in deadly earnest. No Australian of my acquaintance would contemplate any other way. While we Corinthian Brits lark about on the basis of 'Who cares who wins?' others remain intent upon victory at any cost. Having given the civilised world so many sports, Britain seems now to be in the post-sporting stage of evolution, leaving ambitions of actual victory to the comparative primitives who still care. At least, upon inspecting their respective records, that's what one might expect our national teams to claim.

The Classic Adelaide included 33 fabulous special stages, all on closed public roads, contested over four days around the Adelaide hills and Fleurieu Peninsula. The area is dotted with past road racing circuits, one-time homes to the Australian Grand Prix. The nation's '100 Mile Road Race' which would subsequently become regarded as the inaugural AGP was run in 1928 on a bland rectangular circuit on Phillip Island, Victoria, not far from Melbourne [see p72]. That island course remained home to the AGP for seven more years, from 1929-35. On Boxing Day, 1936, the South Australian Centenary Grand Prix was then run on the state's first real road circuit – a 7.8-mile (12.55km) course called Victor Harbor on bitumen-topped coastal roads to the west of Port Elliot. Its roadways survive to this day, from Nangawooka Hairpin clean round to the Chilton Straight and Hell Bend. Look up the area on Google Earth and the old course's bathtub planform leaps out at you. This race – won by Les Murphy's MG P-type – was also lumped into history as an 'Australian Grand Prix'.

In 1938 what had become the formal AGP was moved to Mt Panorama at Bathurst, New South Wales, where it was won by England's Peter Neild Whitehead in his black ERA. But for 1939 the race returned to the beautiful farmland of South Australia, using a fabulous 8.6-mile (13.8km) road circuit at Lobethal, 24kms east of Adelaide. Allan Tomlinson won in his MG TA from a field including Jack Saywell's Alfa Romeo Tipo B Monoposto and Alf Barrett's Alfa 8C-2300 Monza. Lobethal was a fantastically challenging course. It continued in use until 1948, and a retrospective is now being organised there for 2008. Post-war, the AGP resumed at Bathurst in 1947, then on wartime aerodromes at Point Cook and Leyburn, Victoria 1948-49. For 1950 the AGP returned to South Australia, to another road circuit at Nuriootpa. This was a 4.375-mile (7.04km) circuit on the eastern fringe of the little town, 50kms north-east of Adelaide. Doug Whiteford won in his Ford V8 Special – his years as a stylish Talbot-Lago, Maserati 250F and 300S pedaller still ahead of him.

> "Lobethal was a fantastically challenging course and a retrospective is now being organised there for 2008"

The first AGP to fall to a rear-engined car was run in 1955 on a dreadful, barren artificial circuit built on salt-flats near Port Wakefield, SA. This 1.3-mile (2.1km) dead-flat travesty was a world away from the road racing glory of Lobethal, but it fell to Australia's first truly professional racing driver, Jack Brabham, in the enveloping-bodied centre-seat Cooper-Bristol which he had built for his own World

Championship debut in that year's British GP at Aintree.

Not until 1961 would the AGP return to South Australia, on the abandoned airstrip at Mallala 40km north of Adelaide. The arrow-shaped circuit was 2.1 miles (3.38km) long, and Les Davison won there from Bib Stilwell and David McKay – each of them a great Australian racing name in Cooper-Climax open-wheelers.

Still there was yet another great South Australian road circuit, this one at Woodside – close to Lobethal and a replacement for it; a 2-mile (3.2km) course running into the township and the 90-degree turn at Institute Corner. Our Ferrari wheeled round it… in non-competitive road section manner, of course.

But on those wonderfully challenging, fine-surfaced special stages the Classic was absolutely red in tooth and claw. There were Porsche 911s dangling from the eucalypts like Christmas-tree ornaments. Here a wildly spinning Ford Falcon V8, there a Ferrari 308 50 yards into a field, here a Mercedes-Benz SL perched at a crazy angle up a bank. And then, I kid you not, as we queued for the start of another stage a kind-hearted marshal held his index finger to his lips. "Ssshh" he said, "Don't wake the baby". And 30 feet above us with his fluff-covered bum jammed in the fork of a tree was a kipping koala. Not the kind of scene you often see at Snetterton.

Winning Williams in detail

From time to time I've been asked by fans of *Grand Prix Legends* – the computer race driving game – if I have any details of modern-era Formula 1 car technical set-ups. I was able to supply some data from the original set-up sheets for assorted BRM and Lotus F1 cars, but not every tattered document one finds from the team archives relates to a significant race.

I'm unashamed to admit that I have long been a Williams fan, ever since Frank first ran his Formula 1 Brabham BT26 for Piers Courage in 1969. A while ago I fell heir to a few examples of Williams Grand Prix Engineering team data, and among them I found the 'green form' set-up sheet for the car in which the late Clay Regazzoni scored the team's maiden World Championship-round victory, in the 1979 British GP at Silverstone.

LAT

Clay Regazzoni scored Williams' first-ever World Championship GP win in FW07/02 at Silverstone

Clay's car that day was Williams 'FW07/02', powered by Cosworth-Ford DFV engine '228'. For the GPL fetishists, the car was rolled out on 11-inch wide front wheel rims and 18-inch rears. Its front suspension was set up with zero degrees toe-in and castor angle, but while the left-front wheel had ¾-degree negative camber, the right-front had ½-deg neg. Front ride-height was just 2¾ inches. The rear suspension had 30 minutes toe-in, while the left-rear wheel camber was set at ½-degree negative in contrast to the right-rear wheel's zero setting. Rear ride height was 3¼ inches. Having set up his car to provide the bite and traction he preferred around Silverstone, Clay then ran matching ¾-inch diameter 16-gauge anti-roll bars front and rear, set to 'full soft' front and 'full stiff' rear. Front springs were rated at 800lbs, rears at 950. The nose wings were set at 2-degrees incidence, and the rear wing at "Hole 6 + ½-inch flap".

Indefatigable Clay started the race from 'P3' and his times were remarkably consistent, mostly in the 1min 15sec. Having started with 37 gallons of fuel, the crew removed just two gallons post-race. Fuel consumption for the winning 1298lbs of Williams FW07 had been 5.86mpg, oil consumption eight pints, and Clay had left the tachometer tell-tale at 11,050rpm. So there you go – everything you never wanted to know about the first Williams World Championship GP win…

Galaxie has always been a heavy-hitter – just ask Sir Jack

One of the more startling sights of the last Goodwood Revival Meeting was Richard Butterfield's majestic Willment-liveried Ford Galaxie cavorting about on its own oil and coolant in Woodcote Corner, having trailed a glittering spray of flame behind it down the latter half of the Lavant Straight. When the great car finally came to rest on the brand-new asphalt run-off apron everybody – not least its intrepid driver – heaved a sigh of relief. Crashing a Galaxie is seldom a fleeting instant, as no less a racer than Sir Jack Brabham recalled.

He was practising in entrant Alan Brown's car at Goodwood prior to the 1964 Easter Monday meeting when he sensed that all was not well leaving the chicane. He'd previously won in what he describes as "the two-tonner" at Snetterton in torrential rain, when on Dunlop R6 tyres the 7-litre monster actually won at a higher average speed than Innes Ireland's BRP-BRM in the Formula 1 feature race. But now as he thundered the Galaxie out of the chicane it felt simply queasy, and so he braked a little early for the next corner, at Madgwick. "Sure enough, I had a puncture", he recalled. The tyre collapsed and the car careered straight off into the bank, where upon impact it reared up and rolled over. I looked out the side window and found myself eye-to-eye with a group of white-faced spectators."



LAT

Jim Clark assesses the acres of damage to Brian Muir's Galaxie at Oulton Park

He clambered down from the rolled Galaxie's perch on top of the bank and was walking back towards the pits when he saw a concerned Alan Brown jogging towards him: "I said something like 'I'm all right', but without looking at me he ran straight past bawling 'How bad's my car?'. To be honest, it had been better…".

Subsequently, another Antipodean driver, the late Brian Muir, also mangled a Galaxie mightily at Oulton Park, while when a couple of the great cars ran in the touring section of the gruelling Tour de France Automobile, there was again a fair amount of damage done to those acres of Detroit panelwork. Seldom has the phrase 'The bigger they are, the harder they fall' seemed quite so apt.


Model A Ford was released to showrooms in December 1927. By 1929, nearly two million cars had been sold

'A' STANDS FOR ANTICIPATION

Now popular in VSCC trials, the Model A Ford was one of the most eagerly-awaited cars

Although the Austin 7 once predominated as the most popular car for VSCC trials, recently the A and B Fords have come into prominence in these events. I think the best ploy is to find a decent 2033cc Model B and install in it a 3285cc Model A engine, but I must ask Tom Threlfall about this. The smaller engine was introduced because the licence fee in this country was high for the Model A, rated at 24.02hp; the smaller power unit reduced this to 14.9hp, with a corresponding drop in tax.

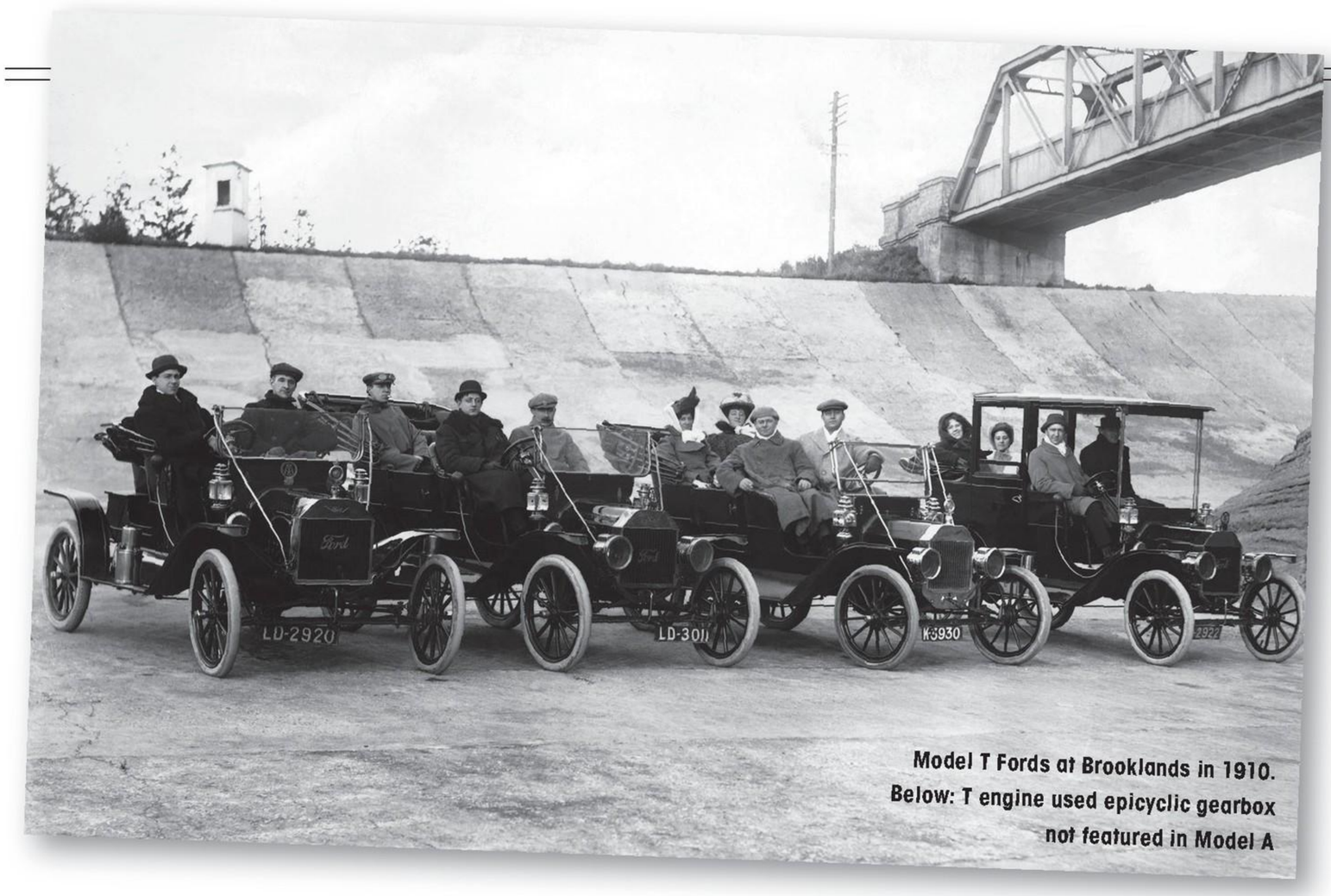
The Model T Ford with its 2896cc four-cylinder engine, flywheel ignition system, transverse road springs and simple pedal-operated transmission, used an epicyclic gearbox because at the time of the T's introduction in 1908 Henry thought that most drivers were unable to master changes of gear with sliding-pinion gearboxes. The immortal 'Tin Lizzy' became the universal car, with 15 million sold by 1926. (Henry Ford claimed that if every one had been used for an average distance, the total for the entire fleet would be over 1,185,000,000 miles!) When the T cost £125 in Britain, the Austin 7 cost £135 and Morris Cowley £198 10/-.

Model T sales peaked at 700,000 per year (more than all the other makes combined), but as more advanced rivals appeared sales began to drop. By 1925 the score had fallen by 350,000, and by 1926, the last year of full production, sales represented only a third of the industry total. Steps taken to meet Henry's insistence on keeping the T ahead had been fairly minor, such as abandoning the "any colour as long as it's black" policy of 1913-26, and in the last year optional balloon tyres and wire wheels were available, together with revised, smarter styling.

There had been sports and racing versions of the T by outside companies, with doorless, bolster-tank bodies to ape the lines of the Stutz Bearcat, and special OHV engines for racing Ford Ts. In 1912 Brooklands held two races for Ts, and Alfred Moss, Sir Stirling's father, had used his at Indianapolis, and won at Brooklands in 1925 (best lap 85.13mph) in his Ford Frontenac Speedsport (described in my Brooklands books). In 1928 Model As competed in the arduous Ards TT with full equipment including bumpers, driven by AS Wright and GE Masterton, and another entered the following year.

The main Ford plant was closed by early June 1927 while a replacement car was prepared, Henry's son Edsel trying with some difficulty to influence his father's outdated ideas. The forging for the new Model A cost $205,000. I wonder how many of today's owners of Model A Fords realise what a sensation the prospect of the new model caused. The T's replacement was not announced until December 27, 1927, and until then there were widespread speculative, but very uninformed, opinions. All manner of theories were rife including would it be called the Edsel, would it have four, six or eight cylinders, and so on.

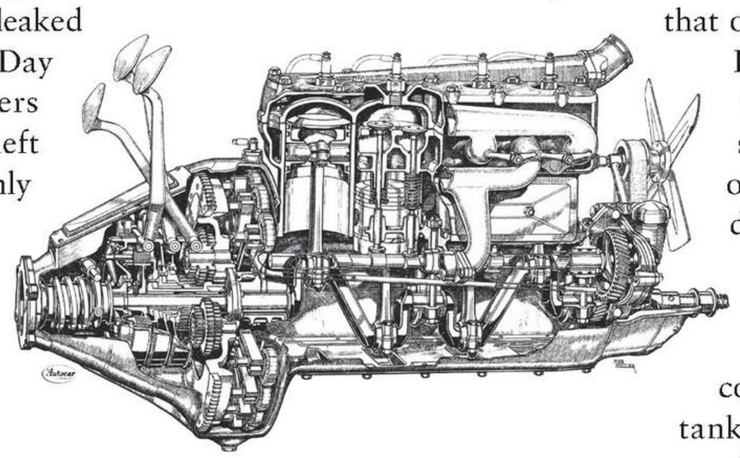
I remember, aged 14, when *The Autocar* was to divulge the solution. I found it very exciting – until I read that the specification may be stated "with confidence" as: hp –, cylinders –, engine size –, (– cc), clutch –, gearbox –, transmission –, final drive –, springs –, tyres on – wheels, wheelbase –, brakes –, price –.



Model T Fords at Brooklands in 1910.
Below: T engine used epicyclic gearbox not featured in Model A

It ended with a joke about possible recommendations for a black finish! Yes, really. All of which made the day when all would be revealed a very intense occasion.

In keeping with today, information from advertising agencies was leaked to the *New York News*. Day after day, photographers snapped anything that left the Dearborn factory (only two shots were actually of the new Model A) and these photographs appeared in the leading newspapers. On the actual release day in December 1927 people began lining up outside the New York Ford showroom, and in Detroit 75 policemen controlled similar crowds. It was estimated that 10 per cent of America's population viewed the new A in that first day. Every newspaper had the story on its front pages. Ford's advertising fees to their ad agent N W Ayer & Son were $1,300,000.



"It was estimated that 10 per cent of America's population viewed the new A in that first day"

Edsel had some difficulty in persuading his father what the new Model A should be like. Henry wanted to retain the epicyclic gearbox, saying that sliding gears were apt to quickly wear out, which was astonishing, but not so astonishing as that while he was making the low-priced car, Ford was also making the luxury 5.8-litre V8 Lincoln. In the end a three-speed conventional gearbox was used, based partly on that of the Lincoln's box. Henry insisted that the transverse road springs be carried over, and the Houdaille double-action shock absorbers.

Edsel produced a neat scuttle containing the petrol tank with an external filler, replacing the T's inconvenient underfloor petrol tank. A nice touch was that the Tudor and Fordor titles were retained for the two-door and four-door models.

By 1929 nearly two million As had been sold, leaving Chevrolet, Ford's only competitor, some 600,000 cars behind. They responded with their overhead valve 'Stove Bolt Six', but by 1933 Ford had introduced its £230 3.6-litre V8.

Think ye, those who are now driving some of the few A/B Fords left, and rejoice in their dramatic history.

A punishment to fit the crime

The man who set a new record for the fastest speed-limit transgression caught on camera has been released from prison. The Porsche 911 driver admitted to doing 172mph on a 70mph section of the A420. Previous 'records' included 175mph by the rider of a Honda Fireblade motorcycle and 156.7mph by a BMW M3 driver. The Porsche offender was jailed for 10 weeks, with a three-year ban. The others were jailed for six weeks and five months respectively.

But shouldn't prison sentences be imposed on motorists for dangerous driving only when someone has been killed or injured? Of course those who break the law must be punished, but heavy fines for

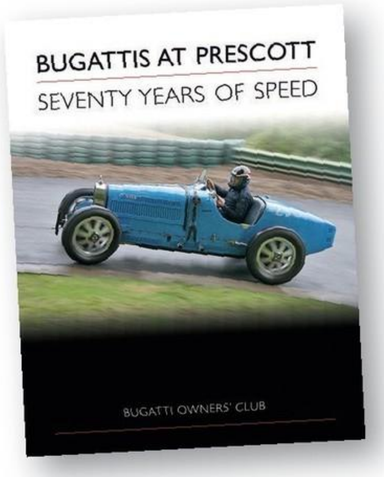


excessive speeding may mean little to those who indulge in this in today's fabulously expensive 170 to 200mph supercars. Impounding (not crushing) their prized cars for long periods, with equally long bans, could be imposed. Driving at high speeds (even the Rolls-Royce Phantom can do 149mph) can be safe when a road is clear and has no side turns, as on motorways.

Such exceedingly fast cars may have small sales, but they represent prestige for their manufacturers. The 253mph Bugatti Veyron (pictured), price £839,000, the McLaren F1 road car (priced at over £1m) and the bargain-basement Caparo T, which *Autocar* has driven at 205mph, fall into this category. I often wonder where those who own such rapid cars can legally exercise them to their full extent.

Prison sentences should be confined to murderers, terrorists and other criminals. Perhaps enhanced fines might be seen as reasonable by magistrates and judges who think that any speed over 70mph is lethal?

Bill Boddy



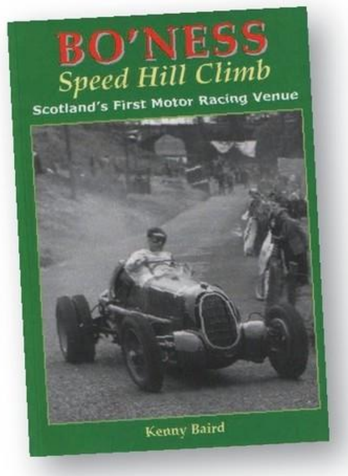
BUGATTIS AT PRESCOTT

BUGATTI OWNERS' CLUB

It is good that recently books have been published on the history of the Shelsley Walsh, South Harting and Bo'ness speed hillclimbs, and that another, about Prescott, has joined them; all very important and very much part of the British sporting scene.

Bugattis At Prescott – Seventy Years of Speed, by the Bugatti OC, contains 83 splendid black and white pictures at this pleasant venue, some of cars driven flat-out on the hill's curves and corners. The text describes events from 1931 to the present day at this deservedly popular place, how improvements to it were made and the notable drivers who contributed to the story.

The foreword is by BOC president Tony Rippon, who notes that "eight cylinders firing on full song never fails to raise the heartbeat". Sponsorship is from the Blockley Tyre Company, with the BOC and the Bugatti Trust. The book is available from the Prescott Regalia Shop, £9.99 plus £2.50 UK P&P.



BO'NESS SPEED HILL CLIMB

KENNY BAIRD

I remember reporting on Bo'ness with my boss, Mr Wesley Tee. He owned Motor Sport and I was his editor. I was alarmed at how dangerously close to the course he stood, but it produced wonderful photographs.

The Bo'ness story is now told by Kenny Baird in a fine little paperback costing £8.99 (Bookmark Publishing, ISBN 978 1 870519 73 1). The quality of some of the pictures is poor, but for me they are adequate as supporting a useful history of this important venue.

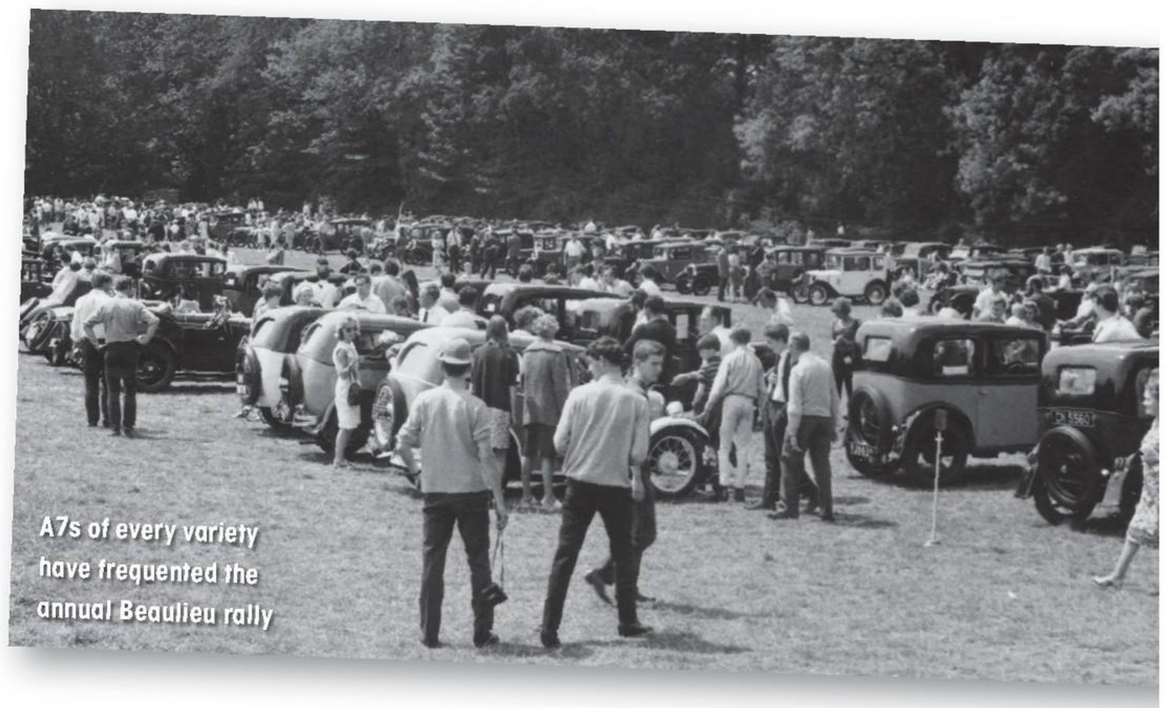
It was built in the Kenneil estate, which belonged to the local County Council! The hopes for a race circuit never materialised, but the hillclimb course made up for that with exciting corners and a downhill section.

Record tables from 1934 to 1964 are included, with a list of the lady competitors and short biographies of notable drivers. There are also instructions on how to walk the original course.

Trial and sprint successes

The popular VSCC Welsh Trial in October had a very healthy entry. The Presteigne Trophy was won by Keith Dobson's Austin 7, the Smatcher Trophy by David Leigh's Frazer Nash, and the Harry Bowler Memorial Trophy by Ben Colling's 3/4½ Bentley. The Judges' Gavel went to Christopher Dallas's A7 Ulster, while Anabel Jones navigated Martin Trenchard's 4½-litre Bentley, which won the Talyllyn Trophy in the road rally.

The VSCC had 109 entries for its Autumn Sprint at Goodwood on October 27. Fastest time was by Paul Richardson driving ERA R14B, in 101.03sec. Runner-up was Robert Cobden in the Riley Falcon Special (105.39sec). Best vintage time was set by Jonathan Cobb with the Super Sports 'Nash (108.29sec) and the quickest Edwardian car was the 1913 Th. Schneider of Nick Ridley (146.28sec). Best run by a modified sports car was Ben Collings' 4½-litre Bentley (116.89sec); Roger Collings chose a Frazer Nash Super Sports over his customary Bentley and was 8.84sec slower than his son.



A7s of every variety have frequented the annual Beaulieu rally

Austins everywhere

The most prolific car in vintage events is the original Austin 7, which says much for the good quality of Lord Austin's £165 baby from its appearance in 1922. It was soon establishing a noteworthy record in racing and record-breaking by the Austin Company and other entrants.

Just before war broke out in 1939 I had thought up the 750MC, for A7s only, with the idea of taking in other cars of up to 850cc such as the Singer Juniors and Triumph Super Sevens to give our A7s a more competitive field, but this never happened. However, the first trial and other events were held before Hitler stopped play.

Holland Birkett found that modern Ford engines could be shoe-horned into an A7, so after the war fast specials of this kind enlivened the 750MC's activities without lessening its interests in the ¾-litre cars for which it was formed (as emphasised by the number of A7s which assemble at the Beaulieu rally every year, etc).

Then the Pre-War A7 Club was started, also to cater for all aspects of the Longbridge 7s from 1922-39.

Today the A7 Clubs' Association lists 61 organisations for owners of the immortal Seven, including the 750MC, the Pre-War A7 Club, the regional ones in Britain and Ireland, and those in America, Australia, Canada, Holland, Japan, New Zealand and even Sri Lanka. There is accommodation for those with every type of A7, including vans and the additions of Bantams and Rosengarts, its generosity extending to all vintage models and to the Austin Ten Drivers' Club for the Seven's younger brothers.

Prominent among these is the Pre-War A7 Club, so it is opportune to give the results of the its popular Bert Hadley 13th Memorial Racing Championship, which this year had 30 entries with 12 qualified for the championship, which was contested at various hillclimbs and circuit venues:

- Bert Hadley Memorial Cup (championship winner): Stewart Arklay (1938 Gould Special)
- Murray Jamieson Trophy (best in opposite class and runner-up): Terry Griffin (1931 Single-seater)
- Kay Petre Award (best lady driver): Julia Constantinos (1934 Single-seater)
- Newcomers Cup: Colin Danks (1935 Ulster Special)
- Brooklands Handicap Award: Carol Woods (1931 Ulster Special)
- 'Nil Desperandum' Award: John Skeavington (1931 Ulster Special)

The 2008 series will start in April with the Gurston Down Hill Climb.





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2008 Fixtures

FIA FORMULA 1 WORLD CHAMPIONSHIP

TEAMS AND DRIVERS

SCUDERIA FERRARI	Kimi Räikkönen	Felipe Massa
BMW SAUBER	Robert Kubica	Nick Heidfeld
RENAULT	Fernando Alonso	Nelson Piquet Jr
WILLIAMS	Nico Rosberg	Kazuki Nakajima
RED BULL RACING	David Coulthard	Mark Webber
TOYOTA	Jarno Trulli	Timo Glock
TORO ROSSO	Sebastian Vettel	Sébastien Bourdais
HONDA RACING	Jenson Button	Rubens Barrichello
SUPER AGURI	TBA	TBA
FORCE INDIA	Adrian Sutil	TBA
MCLAREN-MERCEDES	Lewis Hamilton	TBA

2008 CALENDAR

MARCH 16	Melbourne	Australia
MARCH 23	Kuala Lumpur	Malaysia
APRIL 6	Bahrain	Bahrain
APRIL 27	Catalunya	Spain
MAY 11	Istanbul	Turkey
MAY 25	Monte Carlo	Monaco
JUNE 8	Montréal	Canada*
JUNE 22	Magny-Cours	France
JULY 6	Silverstone	Great Britain
JULY 20	Hockenheim	Germany
AUGUST 3	Budapest	Hungary
AUGUST 24	Valencia	Europe
SEPTEMBER 7	Spa-Francorchamps	Belgium
SEPTEMBER 14	Monza	Italy
SEPTEMBER 28	Singapore	Singapore**
OCTOBER 12	Fuji Speedway	Japan
OCTOBER 19	Shanghai	China
NOVEMBER 2	São Paulo	Brazil

** Provisional, ** Subject to circuit approval*

FIM MOTO GP CHAMPIONSHIP

TEAMS AND RIDERS

DUCATI MARLBORO	Casey Stoner	Marco Melandri
REPSOL HONDA	Dani Pedrosa	Nicky Hayden
RIZLA SUZUKI	Loris Capirossi	Chris Vermeulen
FIAT YAMAHA	Valentino Rossi	Jorge Lorenzo
HONDA GRESINI	Alex de Angelis	Shinya Nakano
PRAMAC D'ANTIN	Toni Elias	Sylvain Guintoli
KAWASAKI RACING	John Hopkins	Anthony West
YAMAHA TECH 3	Colin Edwards	James Toseland
HONDA LCR	Randy de Puniet	
TEAM ROBERTS	TBA	
JIR/TEAM SCOT HONDA	Andrea Dovizioso	

2008 CALENDAR

MARCH 9	Doha/Losail	Qatar
MARCH 30	Jerez de la Frontera	Spain
APRIL 13	Estoril	Portugal
MAY 4	Shanghai	China
MAY 18	Le Mans	France
JUNE 1	Mugello	Italy
JUNE 8	Catalunya	Spain
JUNE 22	Donington Park	Great Britain
JUNE 28	Assen	Netherlands
JULY 13	Sachsenring	Germany
JULY 20	Laguna Seca	United States
AUGUST 17	Brno	Czech Republic
AUGUST 31	Misano	San Marino
SEPTEMBER 14	Indianapolis	United States
SEPTEMBER 28	Motegi	Japan
OCTOBER 5	Phillip Island	Australia
OCTOBER 19	Sepang	Malaysia
OCTOBER 26	Valencia	Spain

FIA WORLD TOURING CAR CHAMPIONSHIP

2008 CALENDAR

MARCH 3	Curitiba	Brazil
MAY 5	Valencia	Spain
JUNE 1	Pau Ville	France
JUNE 15	Brno	Czech Rep.
JULY 6	Estoril	Portugal
JULY 27	Brands Hatch	Great Britain
AUGUST 31	Oschersleben	Germany
SEPTEMBER 21	Anderstorp	Sweden
OCTOBER 5	Monza	Italy
OCTOBER 26	Okayama	Japan
NOVEMBER 16	Macau	Macau

FIA WORLD RALLY CHAMPIONSHIP

2008 CALENDAR

JANUARY 24-27	Rallye Monte Carlo
FEBRUARY 8-10	Swedish Rally
FEB 28-MAR 2	Rally Mexico
MARCH 27-30	Rally Argentina
APRIL 24-27	Jordan Rally
MAY 16-18	Rallye d'Italia-Sardegna
MAY 29-JUNE 1	Acropolis Rally
JUNE 13-15	Rally of Turkey
JULY 31-AUG 3	Rally Finland
AUGUST 15-17	Rallye Deutschland
AUGUST 28-31	Rally New Zealand
OCTOBER 2-5	Rallye de España
OCTOBER 10-12	Rallye de France
OCTOBER 24-26	Rally Japan
NOVEMBER 28-30	Wales Rally GB

FIA WORLD RALLY CHAMPIONSHIP

MONTE CARLO — JANUARY 15-21

1	Sébastien Loeb	*Citroën*
2	Dani Sordo	*Citroën*
3	Marcus Grönholm	*Ford*
4	Chris Atkinson	*Subaru*
5	Mikko Hirvonen	*Ford*
6	Petter Solberg	*Subaru*
7	Toni Gardemeister	*Mitsubishi*
8	Jan Kopecky	*Skoda*

SWEDEN — FEBRUARY 9-11

1	Marcus Grönholm	*Ford*
2	Sébastien Loeb	*Citroën*
3	Mikko Hirvonen	*Ford*
4	Henning Solberg	*Ford*
5	Daniel Carlsson	*Citroën*
6	Toni Gardemeister	*Mitsubishi*
7	Manfred Stohl	*Citroën*
8	Chris Atkinson	*Subaru*

NORWAY — FEBRUARY 16-18

1	Mikko Hirvonen	*Ford*
2	Marcus Grönholm	*Ford*
3	Henning Solberg	*Ford*
4	Petter Solberg	*Subaru*
5	Jari-Matti Latvala	*Ford*
6	Gigi Galli	*Citroën*
7	Daniel Carlsson	*Citroën*
8	Jan Kopecky	*Skoda*

MEXICO — MARCH 9-11

1	Sébastien Loeb	*Citroën*
2	Marcus Grönholm	*Ford*
3	Mikko Hirvonen	*Ford*
4	Dani Sordo	*Citroën*
5	Chris Atkinson	*Subaru*
6	Manfred Stohl	*Citroën*
7	Jari-Matti Latvala	*Ford*
8	Matthew Wilson	*Ford*

PORTUGAL — MARCH 30-APRIL 1

1	Sébastien Loeb	*Citroën*
2	Petter Solberg	*Subaru*
3	Dani Sordo	*Citroën*
4	Marcus Grönholm	*Ford*
5	Mikko Hirvonen	*Ford*
6	Daniel Carlsson	*Citroën*
7	Gigi Galli	*Citroën*
8	Jari-Matti Latvala	*Ford*

ARGENTINA — MAY 3-6

1	Sébastien Loeb	*Citroën*
2	Marcus Grönholm	*Ford*
3	Mikko Hirvonen	*Ford*
4	Jari-Matti Latvala	*Ford*
5	Henning Solberg	*Ford*
6	Dani Sordo	*Citroën*
7	Chris Atkinson	*Subaru*
8	Manfred Stohl	*Citroën*

ITALY — MAY 18-20

1	Marcus Grönholm	*Ford*
2	Mikko Hirvonen	*Ford*
3	Dani Sordo	*Citroën*
4	Henning Solberg	*Ford*
5	Petter Solberg	*Subaru*
6	Toni Gardemeister	*Mitsubishi*
7	Manfred Stohl	*Citroën*
8	Juho Hanninen	*Mitsubishi*

GREECE — JUNE 1-3

1	Marcus Grönholm	*Ford*
2	Sébastien Loeb	*Citroën*
3	Petter Solberg	*Subaru*
4	Mikko Hirvonen	*Ford*
5	Henning Solberg	*Ford*
6	Chris Atkinson	*Subaru*
7	Jan Kopecky	*Skoda*
8	Manfred Stohl	*Citroën*

FINLAND — AUGUST 3-5

1	Marcus Grönholm	*Ford*
4	Mikko Hirvonen	*Ford*
2	Sébastien Loeb	*Citroën*
6	Chris Atkinson	*Subaru*
5	Henning Solberg	*Ford*
6	Xavier Pons	*Subaru*
7	Urmo Aava	*Mitsubishi*
8	Mads Østberg	*Subaru*

GERMANY — AUGUST 17-19

1	Sébastien Loeb	*Citroën*
2	François Duval	*Citroën*
3	Mikko Hirvonen	*Ford*
4	Marcus Grönholm	*Ford*
5	Jan Kopecky	*Skoda*
6	Petter Solberg	*Subaru*
7	Toni Gardemeister	*Citroën*
8	Jari-Matti Latvala	*Ford*

NEW ZEALAND — AUG 30-SEP 2

1	Marcus Grönholm	*Ford*
2	Sébastien Loeb	*Citroën*
3	Mikko Hirvonen	*Ford*
4	Chris Atkinson	*Subaru*
5	Jari-Matti Latvala	*Ford*
6	Dani Sordo	*Citroën*
7	Petter Solberg	*Subaru*
8	Urmo Aava	*Mitsubishi*

SPAIN — OCTOBER 5-7

1	Sébastien Loeb	*Citroën*
2	Dani Sordo	*Citroën*
3	Marcus Grönholm	*Ford*
4	Mikko Hirvonen	*Ford*
5	François Duval	*Citroën*
6	Petter Solberg	*Subaru*
7	Jari-Matti Latvala	*Ford*
8	Chris Atkinson	*Subaru*

FRANCE — OCTOBER 12-14

1	Sébastien Loeb	*Citroën*
2	Marcus Grönholm	*Ford*
3	Dani Sordo	*Citroën*
4	Jari-Matti Latvala	*Ford*
5	Petter Solberg	*Subaru*
6	Chris Atkinson	*Subaru*
7	Jan Kopecky	*Skoda*
8	Xavier Pons	*Subaru*

JAPAN — OCTOBER 25-28

1	Mikko Hirvonen	*Ford*
2	Dani Sordo	*Citroën*
3	Henning Solberg	*Ford*
4	Matthew Wilson	*Ford*
5	Luis Pérez Companc	*Ford*
6	Manfred Stohl	*Citroën*
7	Federico Villagra	*Ford*
8	Katsuhiko Taguchi	*Mitsubishi*

IRELAND — NOVEMBER 16-18

1	Sébastien Loeb	*Citroën*
2	Dani Sordo	*Citroën*
3	Jari-Matti Latvala	*Ford*
4	Mikko Hirvonen	*Ford*
5	Petter Solberg	*Subaru*
6	Guy Wilks	*Subaru*
7	Matthew Wilson	*Ford*
8	Gareth MacHale	*Ford*

GREAT BRITAIN — NOV 30-DECEMBER 2

1	Mikko Hirvonen	*Ford*
2	Marcus Grönholm	*Ford*
3	Sébastien Loeb	*Citroën*
4	Petter Solberg	*Subaru*
5	Dani Sordo	*Citroën*
6	Matthew Wilson	*Ford*
7	Chris Atkinson	*Subaru*
8	Manfred Stohl	*Citroën*

DRIVER STANDINGS

1	Sébastien Loeb	*116*
2	Marcus Grönholm	*112*
3	Mikko Hirvonen	*99*
4	Dani Sordo	*65*
5	Petter Solberg	*47*
6	Henning Solberg	*34*

MANUFACTURER STANDINGS

1	BP-Ford	*212*
2	Citroën Total	*183*
3	Subaru	*87*
4	Stobart M-Sport Ford	*81*
5	OMV Kronos Citroën	*45*
6	Munchi's Ford	*14*

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