

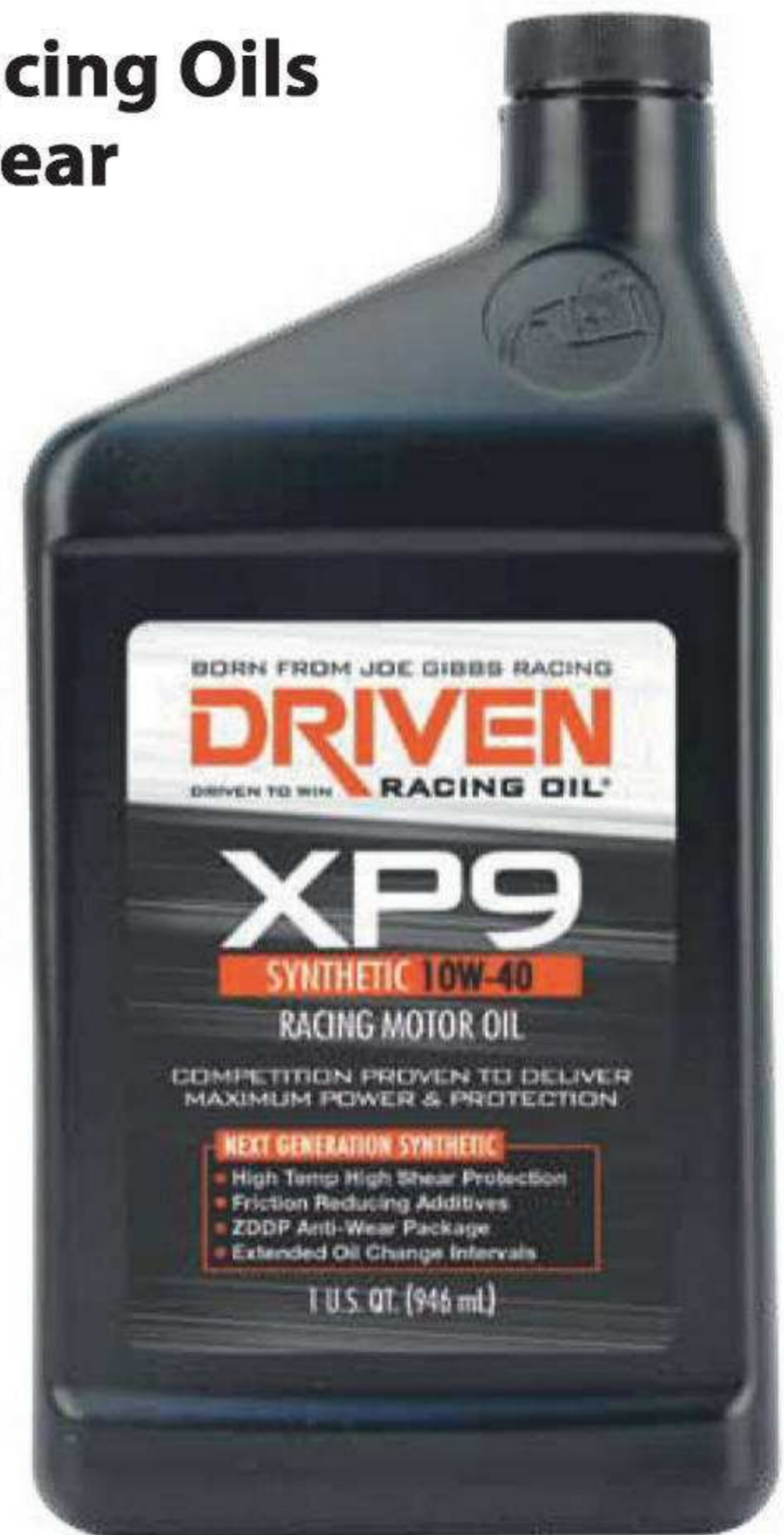
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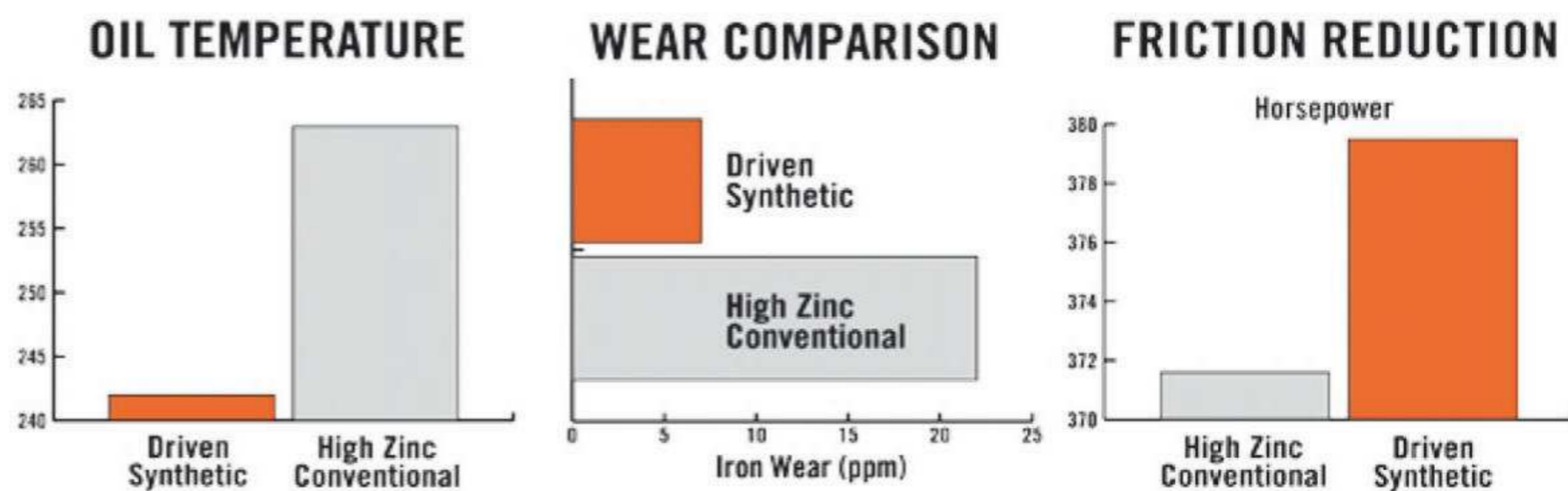
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MOTORSPORT NEWS



UNDER THE SKIN OF ELECTRIC JAGUAR P24

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Public get the chance to watch WRC 2019 kick off

FANS KEY TO 2019 AUTOSPORT SHOW'S WORLD RALLY LAUNCH



By David Evans

Motorsport News readers will be offered unparalleled access to the stars of the World Rally Championship when it is unveiled at January's Autosport International.

The series is being launched in Birmingham for the second year in succession, but next year's reveal will be organised with fans as well as the world's media in mind.

Full story, p2-3

MOYERS DOUBLES UP

WALTER HAYES TROPHY SHOWDOWN P26



PROCTER NETS MN VICTORY

CIRCUIT SERIES KICKS OFF P19



PLUS! INSIGHT INTO KRIS MEEKE'S NEW HOME AT TOYOTA P20



MOTORSPORT NEWS ISSUE MJ3154 NOVEMBER 7 2018

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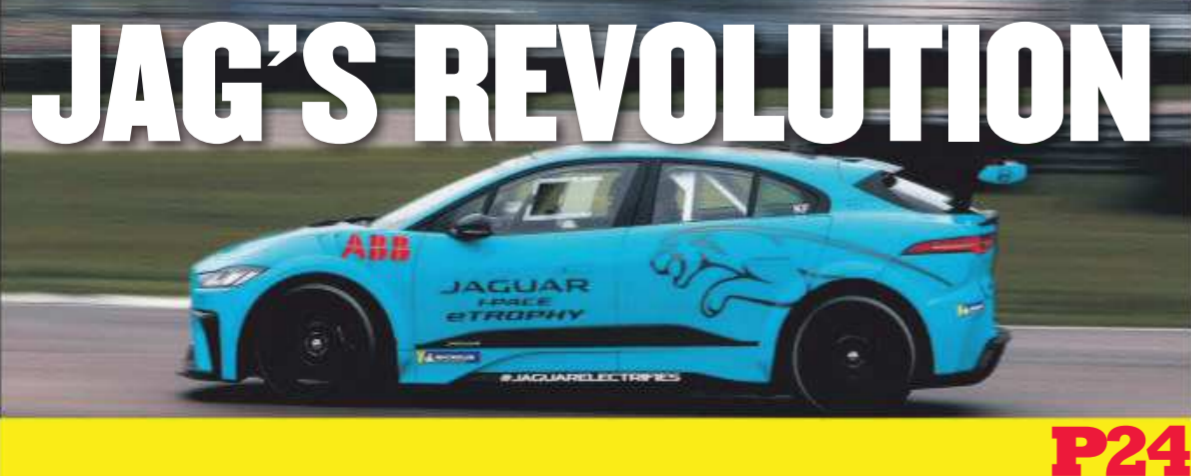
MEEKE IS BACK ON TRACK IN THE WRC

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JAG'S REVOLUTION

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Public will be able to get access to the

WRC AIMS TO WOW AUTOSPORT SHOW FANS WITH 2019 LAUNCH

By David Evans

Next year's World Rally Championship will be launched in front of tens of thousands of British fans in Birmingham on Saturday January 12.

Following feedback from this year's Autosport International Show and working in conjunction with WRC Promoter, the decision was taken to bring the teams, cars and crews to the NEC on Saturday rather than one of

the trade-targeted weekdays.

Show director Kate Woodley told *Motorsport News*: "Launching the FIA World Rally Championship was one of the highlights and biggest moments in the history of Autosport International. It was a real coup for us this year. Next year, we want to make it bigger, better and more fan-friendly."

World Rally champion Sebastien Ogier was one of the key drivers who led the call for change in the launch date.

The Frenchman told *MN*: "We did the launch on the media day at the show, but it could be an idea to bring more people and do it on a day when the public and the families could come in as well. It could be tough for the media if we do this, but it's better for the fans."

That sentiment was echoed by M-Sport's world championship-winning team principal Malcolm Wilson, who said: "Definitely it's worth looking at moving the launch, we've all seen how many

thousands of people come through the doors at the weekend. It would be nice to show those people our sport and our championship."

Woodley said those comments made the decision to move the launch date easier.

"When people like Sebastien Ogier and Malcolm Wilson talk to us, we listen and we listen very carefully," said Woodley. "As it happens, we were completely of the same mind here."

"We want the public to come in and meet their heroes, that's what this show is all about, and what we're offering in January is an unparalleled opportunity for rally fans to come and see their heroes for the first time in 2019."

As was the case this year, the entire series, including all drivers, co-drivers and cars in their new liveries – as well as representatives from WRC2 and Junior World Rally Championship – will be present in Birmingham for Saturday January 12.

WRC Promoter managing



Ogier wants to meet fans

HEADLINE NEWS

Photos: mcklein-imagedatabase.com, LAT

star cars and drivers

AUTOSPORT
INTERNATIONAL

**THE RACING
CAR SHOW**



The top names from the world of rallying will be present in Birmingham

The world's media will be focused on the WRC launch

director Oliver Ciesla said ASI offered the perfect place to launch the series. "We are delighted to launch the 2019 WRC at Autosport International on Saturday in front of the thousands of public visitors," he said. "Ahead of what is lining up to be another exceptionally competitive year, there is no better way to launch next year's FIA World Rally Championship than at the show, which kicks off the start of the new motorsport season. With all the 2019 cars, drivers and team principals at the show, fans will get their WRC fix ahead of the season-opening Rallye Monte Carlo."

As usual *Motorsport News* will work alongside sister title *Autosport* at the show and *MN* editor Matt James is looking forward to showcasing the best the WRC has on offer.

"It's fantastic to be involved in this," said James. "Coming on the back of another very, very strong Wales Rally GB, the news

that British rally fans and *Motorsport News* readers are going to have the chance to come to our show and be the first in the world to see everything that's new-for-'19 in the World Rally Championship really is something special.

"If, for example, you're a Kris Meeke fan and you want to see what he looks like in Toyota kit, you'd better go and buy a ticket to ASI - he'll be there in his new threads."

Tickets are available for the show from autosportinternational.com.

● *Motorsport News* will once again present the British Touring Car Championship stand at the Autosport International Show. A selection of leading cars from the category will be on display and top drivers will be interviewed on a stage. Reigning champion Colin Turkington and 2018 runner-up Tom Ingram, along with 2013 title winner Andrew Jordan, are already confirmed to attend.



The wraps came off the 2018 World Rally Championship at the Autosport International Show at the NEC this year

RACING NEWS

F1 ROUND-UP

Downforce gains

Formula 1 cars should lose 10 per cent downforce when following other cars instead of the current 30 per cent next year, according to the latest predictions from the FIA. In the wake of difficulties cars have had overtaking since revised aerodynamic rules were introduced last year, teams and the governing body agreed a raft of aerodynamic changes for 2019 to improve the situation. A series of tweaks, including modifications to front and rear wings, are aimed at helping cars follow each other more closely. "With the current generation, the following car loses about 30 per cent of its downforce in this scenario," said the FIA's single-seater head Nikolas Tombazis. "We hope to reduce that by 10 per cent."

Deletraz test

Haas will hand Formula 2 racer Louis Deletraz his first Formula 1 run in the post-season test in Abu Dhabi later this month. The 2015 champion in Formula Renault 2.0's Northern European Cup, and runner-up in the now-defunct FR3.5 a year later, Deletraz is 11th in the standings in his second full season in F2. The Swiss racer, son of former F1 driver Jean-Denis, will pilot the team's current-spec VF-18 on the second day of the three-day test. "I'm grateful to both Gene Haas and Gunther Steiner for giving me the opportunity to test with Haas F1 team," he said. "It's the perfect way to end my 2018 season, one in which I've continued to develop and showcase my credentials."

Kubica to Ferrari?

Robert Kubica could take up a development role at Ferrari next season. The one-time grand prix winner has not given up returning to the F1 grid with Williams in 2019, having missed out on a sensational comeback this year, and is on the team's shortlist. But Williams needs to commercialise its second seat and, while Kubica is believed to have access to more funding than before, it is not enough to plug a gap. Kubica is understood to have had discussions over a simulator position with Ferrari, which needs to replace Antonio Giovinazzi and Daniil Kvyat because its 2018 development drivers have secured '19 F1 drives with Sauber and Toro Rosso, respectively.

Sauber impresses

Racing Point Force India team boss Otmar Szafnauer believes Sauber has "outdeveloped the top teams" over the course of this season. The Swiss squad started the year towards the very back of the grid, with both cars slowest in China, but now regularly qualifies in the top 10. "I don't know how they had such a steep development curve," said Szafnauer. "But we've got to figure that out, because they're smart guys. I am impressed with their development rate."

RED BULL-HONDA CAN POWER A TITLE BID

Team sets target of Verstappen becoming youngest F1 champion



Marko (r) confident of title chal-



Honda could boost Red Bull next year

By Adam Cooper

Red Bull is now so confident in the Honda engine that it has set a target of making Max Verstappen Formula 1's youngest-ever world champion in 2019.

Sebastian Vettel holds that record, having secured his first title with Red Bull in 2010 aged 23 years and 134 days.

That means Verstappen, currently 21, has until 2020 to take the honour – but Red Bull motorsport advisor Helmut Marko said there are "no excuses" not to try to achieve it in 2019.

He sees the team's form in Mexico, where the altitude put

Renault on a par with rivals Mercedes and Ferrari, as a sign of how strong the Red Bull chassis is and is confident 2019 engine supplier Honda is already superior to Renault.

"We're really looking forward to next year," Marko said. "The aim is to have the youngest world champion. Two years we have, but we'll go for it next year."

"We know the first year with a new engine manufacturer is not easy. But the aim, and the goal that I've told all the people, is that we have to go for the championship from the beginning. No excuses."

Marko admitted that Honda reliability could be a concern,

but he stressed that the high number of engine changes current Honda team Toro Rosso has accrued in 2018 is related to a strategy of wanting to test new developments.

"It's tactical to get the best for next year," he said. "Toro Rosso are sacrificing their season for next year. It's part of our concept that we have with Honda."

"The figures are already ahead of Renault. But even so if you have one or two starts from the back, with Verstappen there's some excitement."

"On the radio he's talking like he's sitting with a cup of tea. The sort of information he is asking for... He's unbelievable. There is no limit yet."

Red Bull team principal Christian Horner agreed after Verstappen's commanding Mexican Grand Prix win that his driver can take on the established title contenders next year.

"You've seen this weekend if we've an engine that's anywhere near the ballpark of our opponents then we've got a strong enough team and strong enough driver package to take the fight to them," Horner said.

"We're obviously hopeful that Honda, with the progress they're making, will put us into the situation that we're more regularly able to compete like we are here [in Mexico] – with the optimum downforce and setting on the car."

Haas loses appeal against exclusion

Haas has lost its appeal against Romain Grosjean's disqualification from the Italian Grand Prix back in September.

The US-owned team went to the FIA's International Court of Appeal to argue it was not correct for the team to have lost Grosjean's sixth-place finish for running an illegal floor, a decision that followed a protest from Renault.

A technical clarification from the FIA before the summer break had made the design of the floor of the Haas in breach of regulations that demand there must be a radius of 50mm at each front corner of the reference plane.

Haas argued that, due to the F1 summer shutdown there was not enough time to make modifications to its design before the Singapore Grand Prix, so had wanted special dispensation.

After a hearing in Paris on Thursday, the FIA has confirmed the appeal court upheld the original stewards' verdict, and asked the "competent sporting authority to draw, as appropriate, the consequences of this ruling".

Haas team boss Gunther Steiner said: "We simply move forward and look to the final two races of the year to continue to fight on-track, earn more points, and conclude our strongest season to date in Formula 1."

Renault's chassis technical director Nick Chester said: "Technical regulations – especially those introduced for safety reasons – must be observed strictly."

"We are satisfied with the decision and I would like to thank the court and the FIA for their work on this matter."



Grosjean lost his sixth place



Mexico was a 'horrible' race

Hamilton admits to having 'no idea' why Mercedes has struggled in recent races

Lewis Hamilton says his focus cannot slip after winning a fifth Formula 1 title because he has "no idea" why he has struggled in the last two grands prix.

Hamilton won four races in a row to put himself on the brink of the championship

but Mercedes then had problems in the United States and Mexican GPs.

He clinched the crown by finishing fourth in Mexico, the first time he failed to stand on the podium since the Austrian GP at the start of July.

Hamilton said: "I still have work to do. I've still got to get back to the factory and rally the troops to figure out how we can come back and win these next races."

"I have no idea why I struggled so much in these

last two and we all feel the pain of not winning those races.

"We still have the constructors' championship to win, which I know will mean even more to all the guys back at the factory. So that's the focus."

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Photos: LAT



F1 time has run out for Ericsson



Swede will partner Hinchcliffe in '19

SAUBER'S ERICSSON SWITCHES TO INDYCAR WITH SCHMIDT PETERSON

Sauber Formula 1 driver Marcus Ericsson will switch to IndyCar in 2019, driving for Schmidt Peterson Motorsports as full-time team-mate to James Hinchcliffe.

Ericsson has raced with Sauber for the past four seasons, and should have made 97 F1 starts when he competes in the season-closing Abu Dhabi Grand Prix later this month. Sauber is making a complete line-up change for 2019, with 2007 F1 champion Kimi Raikkonen joined by Antonio Giovinazzi as Charles Leclerc moves to Ferrari and Ericsson is demoted to a reserve role.

The 28-year-old Swede quickly made clear that he wanted to combine that F1 link with a full season racing elsewhere and will now join the IndyCar grid.

"It feels like a perfect step for me and my career after five years in F1," said Ericsson.

"I can't wait to start work with SPM and all the people in the team which I've heard a lot of good things about. They've had some great success over the years, and I'm looking forward to working hard to continue and improve on that path."

Ericsson believes he can get up to speed quickly, but there will be added pressure due to the fact he is an F1 driver crossing over.

"Definitely there will be high expectations on me," he said of his IndyCar move.

"I would expect nothing else. I come from almost 100 races in F1, five years there. I've built up a big experience which I think will benefit me making this step.

"So I definitely feel that there will be high expectations, which is something that I think is right. And that comes

with pressure as well, but that's something that I'm used to.

"Being in F1 for five years, you always have that big pressure on your shoulders to deliver so that's nothing new. I come over here expecting myself to be up there and getting to it quickly. But I also know it's going to be requiring a lot of hard work from me because everything will be new."

SPM fielded Hinchcliffe and Robert Wickens as its full-time 2018 line-up until Wickens was seriously injured in a horrific crash at Pocono.

Penske protests rival in Australian Supercars

Scott McLaughlin will take a 14-point lead into the Australian Supercars finale at Newcastle after his team's protest of title rival Shane van Gisbergen's race one win at Pukekohe last weekend failed.

A controversial decision not to penalise Triple Eight driver van Gisbergen for his Holden's wheels spinning during a pitstop led to a Penske Ford protest, with a hearing held on Sunday morning ahead of race two.

While van Gisbergen was immediately cleared over an initial wheel movement when engaging first gear, allowed by the regulations, a secondary movement as the car came off the jacks led to an inquiry that went well into the night.

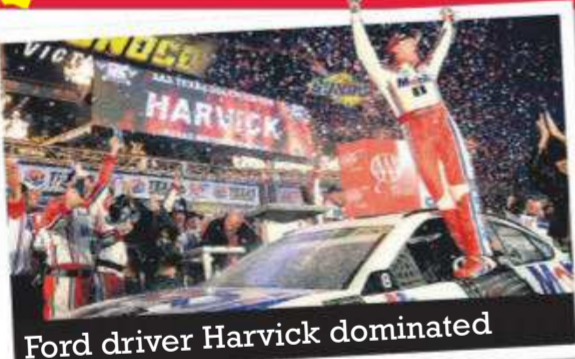
The stewards stuck with their original decision not to impose a penalty on van Gisbergen.

McLaughlin went on to win the second race last weekend while Triple Eight used team orders to promote van Gisbergen into second. With 300 points on offer at the last round of the season on November 23-25, McLaughlin holds a narrow lead.



Penske's McLaughlin leads

QUICK LAPS THE FASTEST NEWS ROUND-UP



Ford driver Harvick dominated

Kevin Harvick secured his place in the four-way fight for the NASCAR Cup Series with victory at Texas last weekend. The Stewart-Haas Racing driver beat Ryan Blaney despite a late restart to take the honours. Harvick joins Joey Logano in the final four, with one race – at Phoenix – remaining before the

Miami finale... European Formula 3 frontrunner Alex Palou is a late entry into the Macau Grand Prix on November 14-18. The Spaniard was seventh in Euro F3 this year with Hitech, but joins crack Japanese squad B-Max Racing for Macau. Hitech's line-up was filled by Enaam Ahmed, Charles Leong and Jake Hughes... **Formula E has announced**

a new partnership with YouTube that means races will be streamed live in the UK for the first time from the opening round of the 2018/19 season. FE previously broadcasted practice and qualifying sessions on YouTube and made full event reruns available on the platform, but races were not screened live...

Representatives of IndyCar have been invited to Australia as part of a plan to return the series to the Surfers Paradise circuit on the Gold Coast. The event has already been linked to NASCAR. The last time an American single-seater series visited the track was CART in 2007 having been a staple at the venue since 1991 when it opened the season.



Stewart and Hamilton in 2011, inset: Montoya and Gordon

Alonso and Johnson will swap Formula 1 and NASCAR in Abu Dhabi later this month

Two-time Formula 1 world champion Fernando Alonso will swap cars with NASCAR superstar Jimmie Johnson at the end of this month.

The car swap will take place at Bahrain's Sakhir circuit on November 26, the day after the F1 season finale in Abu Dhabi.

Motorsport News has learned the plan is much more extensive than a typical

car swap which has taken place before, including most recently in 2011 between F1 champion Lewis Hamilton and three-time NASCAR Cup champion Tony Stewart at Watkins Glen, and previously with Jeff Gordon and Juan Pablo Montoya in 2003.

Following the NASCAR season finale at Homestead, Johnson will depart for London to spend time at McLaren's factory, where he will spend several

hours using the team's F1 simulator.

Johnson, a seven-time Cup champion, will then join his Hendrick team members in Abu Dhabi for the F1 season finale.

His NASCAR crew will be matched with their counterparts on Alonso's team for a couple of days before departing for Bahrain, where they will set up one of Johnson's #48 Chevrolets, which is already being transported via sea freight.



Photo: LAT

Tatiana Calderon made her Formula 1 debut in Sauber's current C37 racer, and said she found the car easier to drive than her regular GP3 machine. Calderon drove the car at the Mexico City circuit in a filming day, and said: "In some ways I found it easier to handle than the GP3 car. I hope I can continue to show that there is no physical disadvantage [for women]. Now that this day has passed, I do not want to go back to my GP3 car, I want to stay here!" Calderon is 16th in GP3 this year with Jenzer Motorsport.

RACING NEWS

Photos: Jakob Ebrey, Ollie Read, LAT

MGs will be run by third different team



MINI TEAM EXCELR8 TO RUN MGs IN BTCC NEXT YEAR

Squad purchases cars and licences from AmD to field two cars



Team ran Harrison in JCW Minis

By Matt James

Excelr8 Motorsport will join the British Touring Car Championship grid next season with two MG6 GT machines.

The Norfolk-based team, which built the cars for the Mini Challenge and operates several entries in the series, has taken over the TOCA BTCC Licences to compete and the cars from AmDTuning.com.

Excelr8 is assessing opportunities with other suitable automotive

brands for the future, with a focus on British marques.

One driver has already signed up for the programme, and the team is in talks with others regarding the second car.

Team manager Oliver Shepherd said: "We've been looking towards the BTCC for a few years now and when we got the chance to get hold of the MG GTs it was an opportunity that we couldn't pass up, especially as it fits with our 'Great British' theme.

"The BTCC is the highest-profile

championship in the country, with some incredible drivers and very high-calibre teams, so we know we will have our work cut out to learn about the racing and the new cars. However, we have no doubt that we can compete at this level, and we're currently working hard to finalise an exciting driver line up for 2019.

"This is a sizeable investment for Excelr8, and we're acquiring all-new specialist equipment to make sure we have everything we need to hit the ground running next season."

GT4 Supercup to return to Thruxton and Knockhill circuits during 2019 season

The Ginetta GT4 Supercup will return to Thruxton and Knockhill next year after not visiting those venues in recent seasons.

The series will continue to feature on the support bill at eight of the British Touring Car Championship's meetings in 2019, with the GT5 Challenge again taking its place at the other two.

This year the Supercup skipped the Thruxton and Knockhill rounds while next year the first of the two Thruxton meetings and Snetterton don't feature on the calendar. But as the series will make the second trip to Thruxton in August it will be the first time the Hampshire venue has been included

since 2015. Knockhill last featured in '16.

"It's a few different tracks [for the drivers] – they haven't been to Thruxton or Knockhill for a few years," explained Ginetta motorsport manager Ash Gallagher. "There are three clashes between TOCA and British GT so it's been difficult to sort [as GT5 runs with British GT]."



Series last raced at Knockhill in 2016



Ladell could swap Ginetta for Porsche



Rockingham starts soon to be history

Rockingham 'send-off' event reduced to one day

Rockingham's farewell meeting – the last race event to be held at the venue before it closes to motorsport – has been reduced to a single day after receiving a lower than anticipated entry.

The event will now run on November 24 only, with races for single-seaters, Ginettas, Caterhams, Sports/Saloons and a one-hour enduro. Organisers are asking for entries sooner rather than later for the one-off event.

"The entries weren't quite what we'd hoped, or certainly not what the expressions of interest led us to believe, and rather than stringing it out, we wanted to put on one big day for everybody," said Michael Galjaardt – head of sales and marketing at the Corby circuit.

"It should still be a good party for all and we're hoping [once] some of the other races are out of the way, with the Walter Hayes at the weekend, and we have Race of Remembrance next weekend, hopefully we'll pick up some more entries."

Demonstration cars and race entries are still being accepted, via the circuit website.

Jordan hopes Goodwood will avoid unpopular BTCC date clashes in 2020

Andrew Jordan hopes that Goodwood "realises what they are missing", to ensure that the 2020 Revival and Members' Meeting avoid a repeat clash with the British Touring Car Championship.

Both the April 6-7 Members' Meeting and the September 13-15 Revival have been pushed back a week for 2019, meaning both fall across BTCC weekends – the Brands Hatch season opener and Knockhill.

It is hoped that a later date for the MM will avoid another snow-hit event, while the Revival's date change is to prevent a clash with the Italian Grand Prix.

BTCC champions Jordan, Matt Neal, Jason Plato and more recently Ash Sutton are all regular competitors at Goodwood meetings.

Jordan said: "I am obviously really disappointed [about the dates] as the Members' Meeting and Revival are my two favourite events of the year.

"I presume they are trying to miss the MM bad weather which is fair enough as last year we had dreadful conditions for the spectators. That said though I have qualified at Brands for the BTCC opener and it has been snowing so it's never a given.

"I do think it's a real shame as

over the last few years the BTCC drivers have stolen the show and proven how well we can race hard and fair. Hopefully they will realise what they are missing and make sure it doesn't clash in 2020."

The Duke of Richmond, who is the owner of Goodwood, added: "Deciding on the dates for our motorsport events is always a challenge. Inevitably there will sometimes be clashes and this September is particularly tricky with F1 fixtures and BTCC rounds.

"We'll miss our BTCC friends very much but look forward to welcoming them back to Goodwood very soon."



Jordan is one of the BTCC's Goodwood regulars



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Photos: Jakob Ebrey, Michael Chester, Gary Hawkins



Strong form from Brits in France Young beats Coates for Clio International win

British drivers finished first and second in the Clio Cup International Final at Paul Ricard last weekend with Jack Young beating Max Coates to the crown.

Northern Irishman Young, last year's Renault UK Clio Cup Junior champion, has impressed since switching to senior car racing in the middle of this term but had struggled to translate his strong pace into results.

But that changed in France as he qualified on pole and led throughout, successfully maintaining his advantage over UK runner-up Coates after a late-race safety car, caused by the other Briton in the race, Brett Lidsey, tangling with Frenchman David Pouget.

Young has received a 280bhp Renault Megane RS as a prize for winning the race.

"It's amazing, Max pushed me throughout the race, as he had done earlier in the weekend," said MRM driver Young, who topped the 37 cars that started the race. "Gradually, he regained ground but I managed to pull away as soon as the safety car was cleared. Therefore, I only had to manage it to the finish. It's great and a bit surreal, but I hope to defend my crown next year!"

Coates said he was "both delighted and disappointed with this result" having earlier shared the Central European race spoils with Young.

DAVIDSON SWITCHES TO TF SPORT WITH JONNY ADAM IN BRITISH GT



Davidson (l) Joins TF with Adam

Graham Davidson has targeted the 2019 British GT title ahead of a switch to TF Sport alongside three-time champion Jonny Adam, billing it as an "all or nothing year".

The 2017 GT Cup champion stepped up to the category with a Jetstream Motorsport Aston Martin Vantage this year, and took a first win at Spa alongside Maxime Martin, but was a magnet for bad luck and only finished seventh in the points.

After moving to partner defending champion Adam, who switches from Optimum Motorsport back to the team he won the 2016 title with,

Davidson is determined to make the step to championship contender with Aston's new Vantage GT3.

"The aim is to do a lot of simulator work, a lot of testing and to get pole positions and win races – it's an all or nothing year for me," Davidson told *MV*.

"I want to give myself the best possible chance – I don't want to increase the budget a little bit to find out that we were runner-up and if I had just put in a bit more testing or a bit more simulator time that we might have won.

"I don't want to leave anything to chance, so I will

employ the approach that Flick [Haigh, 2018 champion] did last year and give it everything I can to give me the best chance.

"I'd like to think we're starting on the front foot with the strongest package. I'm ready for it, I just wish the season could continue on from the last one!"

● Connor O'Brien will step up from the Ginetta GT5 Challenge to make his British GT debut in GT4 with 2016 class champion Optimum. The 18-year-old will race one of the squad's two new Aston Martin Vantage GT4s and join the revamped AMR Young Driver Academy.



Adam (r) with TF in 2016

Customers to race new GT3 Aston

The new Aston Martin Vantage GT3 will be raced in customer hands for the first time at the Gulf 12 Hours in Abu Dhabi next month, with three cars respectively entered by TF Sport, Beechdean AMR and the Swiss R-Motorsport squad that will field the Aston Martin-badged DTM effort next year.

Jonny Adam and Ahmad Al Harthy will reprise the combination that sealed the 2017 Blancpain Endurance Pro-Am title at TF Sport, along with Aston stalwart Darren Turner, while Beechdean AMR patron Andrew Howard will share with 2016 BGT team-mate Ross Gunn, two-time American Le Mans Series champion Chris Dyson and Emirati driver Humaid al Masaood.

Team regular Jake Dennis will share the R-Motorsport car with Marvin Kirchhofer and an unconfirmed third driver.

The car debuted in the VLN Endurance Series at the Nurburgring Nordschleife in October with Turner and Maxime Martin claiming pole position and finishing fourth in VLN8.



Team Barrable took victory in the Fiesta 6 Hours after late safety car

Ex-Formula 1 drivers Tommy Byrne and David Kennedy join Fiesta 6 Hour grid

The annual Mondello Park Fiesta 6 Hour Endurance race attracted some high profile names to take on the regular class pacesetters last weekend, with ex-F1 drivers Tommy Byrne and David Kennedy competing.

The pair teamed up with Kevin McGarrity and Niall McFadden in a Murray Motorsport car, with their main opposition expected to come from team-mates Michael Cullen, Dave Maguire, John Denning and Rod McGovern – all former saloon car champions.

Last year's winner LOH Motorsport was also confident of challenging with Vee drivers Dan Polley and Patrick O'Dwyer alongside former Fiesta racer Ronan McHale.

At the end of qualifying though, it was the local MTR team of Lloyd Murphy/Damien Murphy and former team owner Brendan Travers who claimed pole position. Unfortunately for them though, they were late leaving their garage and the pitlane had closed, meaning they, among

others, would have to start the race from the pitlane.

In the closing stages, the Barrable team of father Michael and sons Peter and Robert were in the lead with the Murray team of Cullen/Maguire/Denning/McGovern on the same lap, and closing.

At the final stop, with the rain falling, Robert Barrable took the wheel and Murray Motorsport responded by putting Cullen in their car, and fitting a new left front tyre too.

Cullen immediately

began to slash the gap but Barrable responded and when Cullen tangled with a backmarker, the safety car was dispatched, followed by the chequered flag a few laps later.

A great comeback meant the MTR equipe took second, just from the SPCF team of Alan Auerbach, Mark Meenaghan, Mark O'Donoghue and Shane Murphy, who were in contention throughout.

Byrne/Kennedy/McGarrity/McFadden finished sixth in their Team Bristol Mallory car.

American Legends racer and world champion Jordan O'Brien makes UK return at Brands

Legends double world champion Jordan O'Brien made his second British appearance after a last-minute offer from Matt Roach Racing to drive a spare car in the UK championship finale at Brands Hatch last weekend.

The American made a big impact on his first transatlantic visit, recording two wins at the Anglesey track in May. He

received the invitation to Brands a week before the event and saw the track for the first time when he took part in Friday testing, later topping the times in both qualifying sessions.

"In America Brands Hatch is seen as one of the world's top tracks, so to come here and look around at all these people is pretty crazy," he said.

Sadly the weekend didn't live up to hopes, as a number of minor problems on a car not used for some time plagued his efforts. Seventh place from 24th on the grid in Sunday's final race demonstrated what might have been.

O'Brien moved into Legends at the age of 14 and celebrated his 20th birthday last month.

His sights are set on the Lamborghini Supertrofeo North America for 2019. He added: "I would certainly like to spend other weekends racing in the UK and elsewhere in Europe."

O'Brien comes from Maine, but is currently based in Las Vegas where he works as an instructor for an organisation which provides exotic car experiences.

O'Brien wants UK Legends return



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RACING NEWS

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SHP TO RUN THREE CLASSES

Pickups organiser takes over Intermarque and will create US-style sprint series



New package to focus on entertaining racing

PROVISIONAL CALENDAR

SHP series in 2018

DATE	CIRCUIT
April 21/22	Brands Hatch
May 11/12	Pembrey
June 1/2	Brands Hatch (American SpeedFest)
June 29/30	Thruxton
July 28	Mallory Park
Aug 10/11	Donington Park
Aug 26	Mallory Park
Sept 7/8	Snetterton
Sept 21/22	Croft
Nov 2/3	Brands Hatch



New Ginetta has been built



Intermarque to be renamed

By Stephen Lickorish

The organisers of the Pickup Truck Racing Championship are planning to create a mini-package of three series to run at the popular British Truck meetings next year.

In addition to its successful Pickup series, SHP Engineering will also run a Super Silhouettes championship and a series for American-style sprint cars at truck meetings, with the focus on providing entertaining racing for spectators.

SHP will take over organising the

British Automobile Racing Club-run Intermarque series and will rename it to reflect the category's original title—although the existing Intermarque organisers still intend to have their own separate series too.

“We had a meeting with the Intermarque drivers and they seemed on board for it,” explained SHP founder Sonny Howard. “Carl Boardley had a new Ginetta out at Brands Hatch [built to the new series' regulations] and he's got two or three others on order and Ricky Hunn had a new Mazda RX-8.

“We have rewritten the rules so it

will be for spaceframe chassis, front-engined, rear-wheel drive cars. I think it relates it back to what it was in the first place [when the series was founded off the back of short oval racing]. We've also changed the name to Super Silhouettes and it's now what it says on the tin. By rewriting the regulations, we've ended up bringing them in line and they will use the same points system and qualifying [format] as the trucks.”

Richard Smith, a long-standing Intermarque racer, along with his brother Simon and sons Lewis and Daniel, welcomed the change. He

believes it will help attract new entries and added: “We want it to be run professionally and to race at some bigger meetings so we have to be prepared to travel a bit more.”

Super Silhouettes won't join the Pickups at Thruxton, with Howard describing the Hampshire circuit as “not really suitable for them”, but will appear at the other rounds.

Howard is also launching a third series for American-style sprint racers—and cars from all three categories will be at Autosport International in January.

“It's a new concept with entertainment

value and it's something different,” said Howard. “It will be quirky. But they don't run big engines so haven't got the big top [section]. We've got six in build and they will also be at the Autosport show.

“There's lots of kids and families that go to the big truck events and I think these cars will appeal to these people.”

Howard also plans to create a special event for the classes at Croft in September.

“We are hoping to go into Darlington shopping mall and end up putting the trucks and Super Silhouettes on show,” he said.

Additional reporting by Brian Phillips



Safety car was called in final after earlier live snatch angered some

Drivers slam “dangerous” use of a live snatch recovery during Walter Hayes Trophy

Leading Formula Ford drivers and teams slammed Walter Hayes Trophy officials over the use of a telehandler to conduct a live snatch recovery during the second semi-final at Silverstone on Sunday.

Scottish driver Logan Hannah's car was stranded at the side of the circuit after contact with Stephane Lemeret before the first corner. The clerk of the course deployed the telehandler to retrieve the car under yellow flag conditions, with the process taking a number of laps to complete.

Three-time Walter Hayes Trophy winner Joey Foster was unhappy with the decision. “It was the most dangerous

situation I have ever seen one of those used,” he said. “It was very slippery into Copse, you could easily lock up on the downshift, even when you're not pushing.

“A safety car would have been absolutely fine in those conditions. They have to understand that it can't happen. If a car is off two-thirds of the way around Luffield, right in the gravel at the back, fair enough. But not when you are approaching at 120mph, with marshals and the snatch vehicle just off the track.”

Hannah's Graham Brunton Racing team was also unhappy with how the incident was handled. “The track is licensed to

do it, but any MSVR-administered championship doesn't use live snatches, no BRSCC open-wheel series uses them,” said Craig Brunton. “Here we're told it's a trophy event [and they're allowed]. A group of us spoke to the clerk of the course and he said he would take it to the stewards.”

The remainder of the event passed without the need for further live snatches in exposed positions.

A spokesperson for the organising Historic Sports Car Club said: “The clerks in conjunction with the circuit safety team will ultimately decide what is the most appropriate way to deal with

an incident, and on this occasion, live snatch was employed.

Silverstone is licensed for live snatch and all teams were briefed this would be in operation. We as a club will use live snatch where it is licensed.

“The stewards and the clerks of the course at this race meeting confirmed that the safety team conducted the recovery promptly and efficiently within the licence requirements. Overall the event produced excellent racing with only one race being halted by a red flag across 17 races. Our thanks go to all marshals, officials and competitors, for their assistance throughout the event, for achieving that result.”

Fenton eyes full National campaign

Irish Supercars winner Cameron Fenton is targeting a campaign in the British Racing and Sports Car Club's National Formula Ford 1600 Championship after making his Walter Hayes Trophy debut last weekend.

The 2017 Ginetta Junior Ireland runner-up received a late call to compete in the Hayes in Niall Murray's regular Van Diemen RF99, with the 2016 Hayes winner busy with the Mondello Park Fiesta race.

Fenton is a contender for the Sexton Trophy prize in Ireland—with the winner receiving 50,000 euros (£43,787). Should



Irish Supercars ace Fenton raced Murray's car in the WHT

he win the prize, Fenton would put it towards a season in National FF1600.

“I got a phone call last week saying would I want to race,” he said. “Thursday testing was wet so really it [Saturday] is my second day and I think I did well. This is completely different to Irish supercars!

“If I get that £50,000 I want to

do a full season next year with Team Dolan, and that money would [help] make it [happen].”

Fenton had previously contested a couple of FF1600 races in Northern Ireland but was delighted to finish sixth in his heat and was 17th in the final.

“That feels like a win as it's my first Walter Hayes Trophy,” he added.

Tom Brown competed in two different cars in the Walter Hayes Trophy at Silverstone, either side of a hospital visit necessitated by rolling his Van Diemen RF79 on the final lap of his heat at Becketts, after clashing with Paul Mason's Swift SC94. Brown was taken to Northampton General Hospital, but was discharged with only bruising to his knee. He got back out into the Sunday Progression race in his father Dave's second car, a Van Diemen RF91, and finished eighth. He retired from the Last Chance contest after damaged wing mirrors left him with no visibility.

Photo: Rachel Bourne





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HISTORICS

"Thurston won the Pre-'82 finale"

Walter Hayes report, p26



Photos: Ben and Paul Lawrence

DOWN THE PUB WITH

MATTEO FERRER-AZA

Historic F1 newcomer
Age: 23 Lives: Lausanne, Switzerland

He started in junior single-seaters

"I started off with the Intersteps single-seater category in the UK and then moved on to BARC Formula Renault and did two years of that. At that stage I was living in England as I was born and bred here, in London and then Suffolk. So it is a home away from home. When I was 15 or 16 I did a day of karting at Buckmore Park and caught the bug. I did Renault in Europe and some Formula 3 testing and that was about as high as it went."

He was attracted to historics

"Whenever we went to Donington Park for open testing I used to go on the pitwall and watch the old F1 cars. They had to drag me away to get into my car for the next session because I was so taken by these old cars. I developed a passion for the history of the sport and my manager Peter Collins was in F1 in that period."

He decided to make the switch

"I wanted to give it a go in the modern side of the sport but got a bit sick of it and in the end I didn't enjoy it. I wanted to try my hand at historic racing so I decided to try and find something to drive, which is hard if you are unproven and not known in the historic scene."

He tried some GT cars

"I drove a 1969 Alfa Giulia Sprint at a trackday in France and then a Shelby GT350 Mustang, which was my first taste of driving historic cars. I'd tried a round of the Porsche Supercup, but didn't like it. As I'd enjoyed driving tin-top historics, I wondered how the single-seaters would be."

Historic F1 beckoned

"I wanted to race in Historic F1 and looked for a car for my family to buy as an investment and we were very lucky to find the Ligier JS11 at the beginning of the year. I went to see it in Paris with Rob Hall and it was love at first sight. It is unlike anything else and it is a dream come true. The plan for this year was to see how it goes and get the car set up. Next year, hopefully, we'll have a proper crack at it."



Ferrer-Aza is a Ligier fan

F5000 ICONS JOIN AUTOSPORT DISPLAY

Legendary single-seater monsters head for the NEC in January



The ex-Horst Kroll Lola will be on show

By Paul Lawrence

The 50th anniversary of Formula 5000 will be celebrated in a feature display at Autosport International at the NEC Birmingham on January 10-13.

The Historic Sports Car Club will honour the spectacular single-seater category with a six-car display of the mighty five-litre monsters, which

arrived in the UK for the 1969 season. Cars from Lola, McLaren, Surtees, Gurney and McRae will be on show from the club's Derek Bell Trophy race series and former F5000 drivers will be invited to attend on the Friday of the show.

Based on the US Formula A class, Formula 5000 was introduced to the UK by John Webb from Brands Hatch and the inaugural race at Oulton Park over the

Easter weekend in 1969 was won by Peter Gethin in a McLaren M10.

At its peak in the early 1970s, Formula 5000 was active in America, Canada, New Zealand, Australia and Europe.

The HSCC display will include an ex-Mike Hailwood 1971 Surtees TS8 and the 1970 McLaren M10B raced by Gethin for Sid Taylor's team. The 1969 ex-Horst Kroll Lola T142 will

represent the early cars, while the 1975 Lola T400, now raced successfully by Michael Lyons in the Derek Bell Trophy, is one of the ultimate F5000 designs.

Grahame White, boss of the HSCC, said: "Formula 5000 played host to so many iconic names that we recognise to this day. It was a category which came to the UK in 1969 and thrilled fans with some extraordinary works of engineering and raw power."



Porsche 356 leads entry

Crosby and Pullan look to land back-to-back Rally of the Tests wins

Former Formula 3000 team manager Paul Crosby and co-driver Andy Pullan will bid to repeat their 2017 victory on the Rally of the Tests when this year's rally starts in Harrogate on Thursday evening.

The Porsche 356 of Crosby and Pullan is among a 90-car entry for one of the toughest UK classic

rallies as the route runs from Harrogate to Bristol via mid-Wales.

Crosby worked for March Engineering, Dave Price and Eddie Jordan in F3000 in the late 1980s and early 1990s.

After Thursday evening's prologue in Yorkshire, crews face three long days before the Sunday afternoon finish in Bristol. The

route takes in 30 special tests and 17 regularity sections in an event that recreates the RAC Rallies of the 1950s. The overnight halts will be at Sutton Coldfield on Friday and Newport on Saturday. Entries feature cars up to the early 1980s, but the main awards are for pre '68 cars. Spectator information is available at heroevents.eu.

Harris and Suter make Mini history in Corsica

Northampton accountant Phil Harris and co-driver Richard Suter recently took their Mini Cooper to success on the four-day Tour de Corse Historique by winning the Index of Performance.

Harris and Suter finished 40th overall and second in their category. "My first aim was to get to the end of day one, as in 1967 the three BMC factory Minis did not

get that far," said Harris.

The 500-mile route tackled Corsica's narrow, twisting roads over high mountain ranges in rapidly changing weather.

"Not only were we the only British crew on the rally," said Harris, "but we were also in the oldest car with the smallest engine, and it was our first time in Corsica!"

One-make Porsche series expanded for '19

The one-make series for two-litre pre '66 Porsche 911s from the French-based Peter Auto organisation will be expanded in 2018 following the success of this year's inaugural series.

A number of British teams and drivers supported the new concept and grid levels ranging from 26 to 36 cars

have prompted Peter Auto to develop the 2.0L Cup for 2019. "Boosted by its success, the 2.0L Cup will be part of all six meetings organised by Peter Auto," said a spokesman.

The season will start at Barcelona on April 5-7 for the annual Espiritu de Montjuic historic festival.

Clare beats the hordes in the Vintage Sports-Car Club's speed championship

Gary Clare, competing in the one-off Grannie Special from 1928, has been confirmed as overall winner of the Vintage Sports-Car Club's hugely successful speed championship.

Across a season of sprints and hillclimbs, Clare scored

in eight of the nine rounds

and was a clear champion. He capped his campaign with the best vintage time at Loton Park in September. Jo Blakeney-

Edwards, wife of prolific historic racer Patrick, finished overall runner-up in her 1929 Frazer Nash Super Sports while out-going champion David



Clare was crowned

Furnell (1930 Austin 7) completed the top three.

Peter Batty (Frazer Nash) won the Young Driver Award for those under 30 and James T Roberts (1917 Vauxhall 30-98) won the Novice Award in his first season of competition.

IN BRIEF

Irish crew's success

Irish crew Ray Cunningham and Jared Gill sealed the HRCR Old Stager Championship and the Mini Sport Cup Challenge on the recent final round, the Cheviot Stages over the Otterburn ranges. The event was marred by a serious accident for Mini crew Ian Clare and Antony Elkes who were both hospitalised with back injuries. They were taken to Newcastle for treatment and later reported to be making good progress.

Himalayan woe

Landslides, closed roads and biblical storms hit the inaugural Himalayan Challenge from the Endurance Rally Association, which was one of the first classic rallies to run in India. From 40 classic and vintage crews, Michael Velasco and Peter St George took victory on the 21-day event in their 1971 Mercedes-Benz 280S. The event finished in the shadows of the Taj Mahal in Agra.

Enduro voyage

French promoter Peter Auto will break new ground by fielding one of its categories in the Middle East later this month. The Sixties Endurance grid will join the programme at the Bahrain GT Festival (November 30-December 1) to race alongside modern GT grids from the SRO Motorsports Group. A grid of period sports and GT cars will contest two races on the Sakhr circuit in the Bahrain Classic Challenge.

Boucles boggles

The Legends Boucles of Bastogne, the biggest Belgian historic rally of the season, will feature a new category in 2019 for cars built up to the end of 1990. The Super Legends category on the February 2/3 event will be for period correct two-wheel drive cars including the BMW M3, Ford Sierra RS Cosworth, Opel Kadett and Peugeot 205. Four-wheel-drive cars will not be permitted.

Arctic party

Twenty years after the first Arctic Circle Classic Rally, the second edition will be held in June 2020. The 4300-mile route will start in the Netherlands and finish just north of Oslo, taking in the Baltic States and Scandinavia. The Arctic Circle 2020 (June 12-29, 2020) will only be open to vintage cars produced before the end of 1949 and classics from before the end of 1967.

Stage masters

Welsh crew Ken Davies and Alan Jones were crowned overall winners of the HRCR Stage Masters Challenge after the cancellation of the planned final round, the Wydean Rally. They used a Volvo Amazon and a Lotus Cortina during a busy 13-rally season and will now end the year by contesting the Silver Fern Rally in New Zealand in a Ford Escort Mk2.



Davies and Jones won title

RALLY NEWS

Photos: ERC Media, mcklein-imagedatabase.com

CIRCUIT OF IRELAND RETURN NEARS REALITY FOR 2020

Tourism chiefs and MP visit Rally of Spain for pointers



Craig Breen was the last Circuit winner

Ireland last hosted the WRC in 2009

By David Evans

A potential Circuit of Ireland return moved a step closer after event organiser Bobby Willis was joined by government officials on a 'fact-finding' mission to Rally of Spain.

North Antrim Member of Parliament Ian Paisley and two representatives from Tourism Northern Ireland were in Spain with Circuit of Ireland event director Willis.

Willis told *Motorsport News* his priority remains to return the Circuit of Ireland to the international rally calendar.

Willis said: "Two representatives from the event's side of Tourism Northern Ireland came for a site visit to see the potential of a motorsport event. I know this rally very well and it can be fascinating for people of a non-motorsport background to come and see what happens with a major event like this."

"The Circuit hasn't run for the last two years and it's not going to happen next year, but we're targeting 2020 to bring the event back."

Willis' presence in Salou sparked

speculation of a possible WRC round in Northern Ireland.

Asked about WRC ambitions, Willis said: "I've never denied that my ultimate ambition would be to get the Circuit to the highest level of world rallying – that would be an incredible achievement for the team and it's a level at which I think our event would sit comfortably. But we're talking to the European Rally Championship, we're talking to lots of people right now, but, like I said, collectively we're working towards getting the Circuit of Ireland back on the calendar."

Britain's round of the WRC, Wales Rally GB, will return to Wales for the 20th season in succession next year, but MSA chairman David Richards has admitted the event could rotate from region-to-region from 2020 onwards.

Richards said: "They're [the Welsh Government] willing to support Rally GB for another three years, but they also see that if the event has to expand and go to other regions of the UK as part of that process, they're willing to support that as well – so long as we're willing to come back again. It's a win-win for everybody."

It's through such an agreement that the move to Northern Ireland could be on the cards.

Democratic Unionist Party member Paisley accompanied Willis in Spain as chairman of the Northern Ireland's Motorsport Task Force.

Willis said: "It's great to have Ian in Spain to see an event running at this level. The Task Force is key to the future of motorsport in our part of the world and having Ian on side with that is vital in areas such as developing the volunteer base and realising the economic impact and value of motorsport in the province."

"When you're out here on a WRC round like this, it becomes obvious how much work goes in from the marshals and organisers – for Ian to see this first-hand is invaluable."

The event also gave Paisley an insight into what a WRC round could mean to Northern Ireland.

"I'd love to be able to say we can get it to Northern Ireland," said Paisley. "That's one of the reasons why I'm here this week, to look at the potential for a big motorsport event like this. And do we have the hunger and the capacity to take on something like this? This is Formula 1

standard and this is Formula 1 for the working man and it's [about] trying to make sure we could cope with this. I think we could and I think we'd do it brilliantly, but obviously it costs money and Bobby has to persuade the government [of the benefits]."

"The potential return on investment is good and that's a positive. If Bobby can sell that to the boffins calculating the numbers then maybe we can get them to look favourably on the possibility of getting a WRC round to Northern Ireland. That's a conclusion Bobby, his team and, I'm sure, all motorsport fans like me in Northern Ireland would love to get to."

Paisley also paid tribute to Willis' hard work and dedication to return the Circuit of Ireland to former glories and possibly beyond. "This man's a rock star," he said. "The intellectual property and knowledge he brings is a fantastic asset and I think we'd be mad if we don't capitalise on that sooner rather than later."

The WRC has been seen twice in the Northern Irish lanes when a cross-border Rally Ireland ran out of Sligo in 2007 and 2009.

Liverpool City chiefs visit Rally Spain too

The Northern Irish delegation wasn't the only region visiting Rally of Spain last month – Liverpool was also represented.

MN understands Liverpool is the favoured option for the start and Thursday night superspecial at next year's Wales Rally GB.

A member of Liverpool council flew out to Spain on Thursday to visit the Salou service park and Barcelona superspecial stage. Neither the council or Rally GB had any comment to make on the visit, but *MN*'s sources have confirmed the trip was a successful one.

Liverpool is no stranger to closing roads for motorsport events with the Red Bull Drift Shifters running in the city centre in August. The route for a city-centre superspecial would be expected to run along a similar, high-profile route in and around the docks.

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'Pryce wants to topple Rovnanpera'
Welshman's big plans, p14



Photos: Oregon Trails Rally/Robert Mahony, Red Bull

LOEB CONFIRMS A DAKAR RETURN



Loeb will tackle Dakar

Inspired by his Rally of Spain victory, Sebastien Loeb has decided to take another shot at a maiden Dakar win next year.

Earlier this year, following Peugeot's withdrawal from its Dakar programme, Loeb told *Motorsport News* he couldn't imagine himself returning to the South American marathon. Now, however, fresh from a 79th World Rally Championship win, he's back and chasing victory in Peru in a privately-run PH Sport Peugeot 3008 DKR.

In his efforts to become the first non-factory driver to win Dakar since Jean-Louis Schlesser in 2000, Loeb will face the full force of X-raid's Mini-based squad – a team which includes three of his former Peugeot colleagues, Carlos Sainz, Stephane Peterhansel and Cyril Despres.

"Throughout my career I've always been considered to be a favourite," said Loeb. "While I'm obviously motivated by winning, having fun is important too, so taking part in the 2019 Dakar with Daniel [Elena, co-driver], as private

outsiders, is a fantastic challenge. I'm ready to give it a go: a little bit like my three WRC appearances this year, where success was far from being guaranteed."

A regulation change for the January 6-17 event means Loeb won't be able to drive the latest wider-track DKR Maxi he used this season. Instead, he will drive the 2017-spec car he used to finish second on last year's Dakar. Because of his late decision to commit to the event, he has missed the traditional warm-up rallies and will complete his own private test next month. Much of that time will be focused on getting the best out of himself, Elena and the car in the dunes. More than 70 per cent of January's route runs through the Peruvian dunes.

"I only made the decision to go to Dakar again at the last minute, but I'm still hungry for the win," said Loeb.

"We're probably lacking some preparation but I didn't forget everything I learned over the last three years. It's going to be an adventure."

Thumbs up for Japan after candidate event

Japan's future in the World Rally Championship looks secure following the successful running of the Shinshiro Rally candidate round last weekend.

The two-day event included 15 all-asphalt stages, three of which were superspecials through Shinshiro Park. FIA safety delegate Michele Mouton attended along with manufacturer representatives and WRC Promoter's Oliver Ciesla. Rally Japan had been widely expected to return to the WRC calendar next season, but that has now been put back to a likely 2020 date.

Ciesla said: "From a promotional point of view,

this rally met our expectations. Obviously, we can't speak for the FIA, but the sporting challenge from this rally was very good."

Ciesla said the appetite for the World Rally Championship remains as strong as ever, despite the fact the series hasn't visited since a final visit to Hokkaido for the Sapporo-based 2010 event.

"The fanbase is very, very strong," said Ciesla, after more than 50,000 turned out for the Shinshiro Rally. "This will be a rally for the fans. The organisers will view next year as a warm-up year [for a proposed calendar return in 2020]. It's already a great achievement to have



The campaign gathers pace

brought this rally back and now we have to wait one more year to come back to Japan."

Neither Saturday nor Sunday ran to full WRC length, but the stages used were some of those

which would be intended for the nation's first WRC round held on the main island of Honshu. The route for the WRC counter would run close to Mount Fuji between Tokyo, Yokohama and Nagoya.

Toyota to boost Katsuta's experience

Toyota has confirmed a 'massive programme' of testing for rising Japanese rally star Takamoto Katsuta.

The 25-year-old and his countryman Hiroki Arai have been part of the Toyota Gazoo Racing Rally Challenge Programme for the last two years – but only Katsuta will move forward to the next level phase of the scheme.

Katsuta, who took his maiden WRC2 win on Rally Sweden this season, will continue to drive at that level, using a Ford Fiesta R5 (Toyota doesn't have an R5 car), but as well as that he has been linked to outings in a Yaris WRC.

He tested a Yaris WRC for the first time after Rally Finland in the summer.

TGR team principal Tommi Makinen confirmed his plan

for Katsuta to *MN*, saying:

"We have a plan to give him some testing in a World Rally Car. I would like to see if we can organise him a massive programme from the beginning of the season and organise a test drive for him in [the Yaris] WRC. We would like to see him behind the wheel."

The original plan was for Katsuta to run a fourth Yaris WRC at Rally Japan, but when the Honshu-based event failed to make the 2019 calendar, the team was forced into a rethink.

"It would have been good to have had him in the car in Japan," said Makinen. "It would have been a good story. Now we want to coach him, give him lots of support and advice then we look again at what's going on."

Kovalainen suffers car woe on Shinshiro

Juho Hanninen and Heikki Kovalainen were the highest profile drivers at last weekend's Shinshiro Rally in Japan.

Toyota Gazoo Racing driver Hanninen was present in Japan to drive the Yaris WRC on demonstration runs, while former Formula 1 driver Kovalainen was competing in a Toyota GT86.

Kovalainen's event went awry when his car suffered gearbox problems. The Super GT driver said on social media: "Gearbox went on the third stage and we had to retire for the day. Lost fourth gear first then subsequently all the others. Felt good but the times weren't good on the first two stages, bit puzzled there. Anyway, it's so much fun to be driving a rally car for a change."



Kovalainen's rally went south

Hanninen's presence came as no surprise given Toyota's support for the event and Japan's potential return to the world championship.

While overshadowed by the presence of WRC officials, the Shinshiro Rally was also the final round of the Japanese Rally Championship and the event was won by local hero and former Subaru factory driver Toshi Arai in an Impreza WRX.

GROUP RALLYING EDITOR

DAVID EVANS

"Who will be unveiled at the Autosport Show?"



I don't often tell you what to do, but I'm going to do that today. Go and buy a ticket for Autosport International and make sure it's for Saturday January 12 (other days are available and will, of course, be epic – but that day will be double-time epic, if not better).

Don't waste time. Don't delay. In fact, put *MN* down (I don't say that very often, either) and go and do it now.

Done it? Good. Now you can relax, safe in the knowledge that you're going to be among the first people in the world to see the new livery for M-Sport, Hyundai, Toyota and Citroen's 2019 World Rally Cars together and in the flesh before anybody else in the whole wide world. And, on top of that, you'll be the first to hear Sebastien Ogier talking about why he went back to Citroen and what he expects from his second stint as part of the Parisian workforce.

Next year's World Rally Championship launch at Autosport International is going to be something special. This year's was great, but there was frustration from everybody involved that so many of you missed out on it. Not next time.

So who will be announced where, and what's going on with Hyundai? Last I heard, Dani Sordo's deal was done and he was on the verge of being announced for seven rallies next season, with Hayden Paddon bound to drive the i20 Coupe WRC on the other events.

Then it went all quiet. Hayden had nothing to say. And no news. As of earlier this week, there was no definite plan for an announcement from the German-based squad. I'll keep digging and come back to you on that one.

In the red corner, there's more and more talk that Sebastien Loeb's Spanish win will be enough to keep Citroen running three cars next year – and possibly even a fourth if Sheikh Khalid Al Qassimi brings Abu Dhabi back to the table again. If that happens, Loeb is reckoned near certain to be in the C3 WRC for five or six rounds, with Craig Breen taking the controls for the rest of the rallies.

Such a move would surely secure Elfyn Evans at M-Sport alongside Teemu Suninen for another season. And that would be that. Finally, the driver (and co-driver, we shouldn't forget their part in all this) line-up would be done and sorted for 2019.

Do any of us really believe that's the end of it? Not a chance. Just like this thrilling season of world championship rallying we're enjoying, there's plenty more mileage in the who goes where story yet.

Just before I go, huge congratulations to Osian Pryce for his second place at Saturday's Rally Ciudad de Granada in Spain. The Welshman has succeeded in reawakening the world to R4 rallying. There's half a chance the former BRC frontrunner could do a bit more of that in the future, but for now it'll be fascinating to see if this apparently already forgotten formula can ever take off.

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

RALLY NEWS

Meeke halted on tragic Condroz Rally

Kris Meeke's return to competitive rallying ended prematurely when the engine on his Skoda Fabia R5 failed at last weekend's Condroz Rally.

The Northern Irishman retired from third place after the car, run by Italian team Metior, hit problems on the fifth stage.

The event was won by Meeke's former Citroen team-mate Stéphane Lefebvre. The 26-year-old Belgian moved into the lead on SS2 and kept the C3 R5 out front to give it its highest profile win yet.

Like many, Meeke's thoughts were elsewhere following an accident involving the Skoda of Steve Matteredne and co-driver Rik Vanlessen.

Vanlessen died in the accident, but it remains unclear whether he was killed in the impact or suffered a heart attack. Matteredne was hospitalised with non-life-threatening injuries.

Meeke's Facebook page read: "We all love motorsport and rallying because of how exciting it is – for the drivers and navigators in the cars, for the team members who work so hard to keep the cars going, and for the fans who watch the action. But it's dangerous and sometimes it reminds us of that."

"Today, sadly, was one of those occasions. I want to send my condolences to Rik Vanlessen's family and friends."

Al-Attiyah rewrites the record books

Nasser Al-Attiyah became the most successful driver in the history of the Middle East Rally Championship with a 12-minute win on last weekend's Kuwait International event.

The Qatari driver's 14th MERC title came at the wheel of a Ford Fiesta R5 prepared and run by British firm Autotek. Al-Attiyah's latest championship win moves him past Mohammed bin Sulayem, who won 13 titles – his 14th came in 1989 when only half the rallies were held due to the Gulf War. The FIA declared 66 per cent of rallies must run for a title to be awarded.

Despite his result, the 47-year-old Al-Attiyah has no intention of stopping. He said: "This a fantastic result for me and the whole team after another excellent season. To break the long-standing record is very satisfying. There have been many memories along the way and many battles with some great drivers. Now we can look to the future and pushing ahead with more records of our own."

Al-Attiyah's win was his seventh in Kuwait and his 69th in the MERC.



Pryce was second on his R4 outing



Pryce is ready to step up in 2019

PRYCE: ROVANPERA IS MY MOTIVATION

Brit targets Finn's successful impact as a benchmark for 2019 WRC2

By David Evans

Welshman Osian Pryce has set his sights on toppling Kalle Rovanner as a way back into the World Rally Championship.

Former Drive DMACK Cup winner Pryce has missed much of this season due to a lack of sponsorship, but is working on a four-round WRC2 return targeting the 18-year-old Finn next season.

Pryce returned to international rallying with a sensational second place on the Spanish gravel event Rally Ciudad

de Granada. Giving the Toyota Etios R4 its competitive debut, Pryce and co-driver Dale Furniss won three stages on their way to second place. Much as Pryce appreciated the run in Spanish team ASM's R4 car, his sights remain higher.

"We've got to target Kalle," Pryce told *Motorsport News*. "He's the guy that everybody's talking about, he's the driver every team wants, so if we can get past him then that's going to help get us back up there."

"Tom [Cave] showed it's possible to get near to him on Rally GB this year, so we're

looking at four rallies where we've been before to see what we can do. Kalle's a young lad, but he's got a lot of experience and he's spending a lot of time driving a car – he's become the benchmark and that's why we've got to get out there and try to beat him."

Pryce is putting together a WRC2 programme including Portugal, Germany, Spain and GB.

Pryce has only started four WRC rounds in an R5 car, but has set times close to or at the front of the WRC2 pack on each occasion. Two of his outings came in an

M-Sport-run Fiesta R5 courtesy of winning the DMACK series. The 25-year-old is keen to retain those M-Sport links.

"M-Sport has been really good to me and I want to work with them going forward," he said. "At the same time, I want to keep the good Ford links with [sponsor] Hills Ford. Having said that, if a Skoda's coming in a lot cheaper for the four rallies then I'd be mad not to consider it – the priority right now is to get back into the WRC and get people talking about us again."

Simpson tempted by more European outings

A successful outing on last weekend's Condroz Rally could be enough to tempt former British Rally Championship frontrunner Neil Simpson back to rallying next season.

Absent for two years, Simpson guided the Toksport Skoda Fabia R5 driven by Chris Ingram on Rally GB to 13th place in Belgium.

"I'm chuffed with the result," Simpson said. "It took me a couple of stages to get back into it; it takes time to get the confidence, but we got there. I love this rally. You feel privileged to come and drive these roads and compete on a rally with enthusiastic organisers and so many fans making you feel



Simpson was 13th in the Skoda Fabia

so welcome. The stages were muddy in places and every corner was a judgement call on how much we wanted to risk."

Simpson returned to rallying in 2014 after a 13-year absence. Now after two more years away he's thinking about another return. "I'd love to do more," he said. "It's just time and being so busy with work, but I'm going to think about it and look at next season."

M-Sport offers chance to own some WRC history

M-Sport is selling off its fleet of Volvo recce cars, offering fans a rare opportunity to buy sensibly priced cars driven by some of the sport's biggest names.

The defending World Rally champion team is overhauling its fleet of recce cars, meaning the Volvos – some of which have been in service since 2004 – are being made available to the general public.

Deputy team principal Rich Millener told *MN*: "The response has been amazing, we've sold a few of them already. As you can imagine, they're in various states, but all people want to know is who's driven them."

"We've got cars driven by Colin [McRae], Carlos [Sainz], Marcus



M-Sport has some Volvos to offload...

[Gronholm], basically most of the sport's biggest stars have been through M-Sport and they've been in these Volvos. I think most of them are going to collectors, but a few are going to be doing some more recces in the future. It's a chance to buy a real piece of the sport's history."

Anybody interested in one of the cars should contact Neil Robinson on 01900 828888.

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'Higgins seals first
British Rallycross title'

Silverstone BRX, p29



Photos: William Neill, Lightning House, Martin Walsh

CREIGHTON STICKS WITH R2

Prestone Motorsport News Junior British Rally Championship frontrunner William Creighton has confirmed he has no plans to switch classes after making his R5 debut on the Tyrone Stages Rally earlier this month.

Creighton was given the opportunity to drive a Citroën DS3 R5 on the sealed surface event after coming to an agreement with the car's owners – David Greer Motorsport and Race and Rally.

The former UK Young Rally Driver of the Year recorded a string of top three stage times in the dry to finish second overall, despite having had limited seat time in the French car beforehand.

"I got asked if I would like to drive the car, I said yes, and DGM and Race and Rally put the whole thing together for me," he told *Motorsport News*. "At the minute it is purely a one-off for me. What I found interesting was the similarities that exist between the Peugeot R2I drive and the R5 car. The main differences are obviously the speed, the grip and power. It's a beast!"

"The chance to compete in an R5 and get some experience of what they are like was a good one but it was a bit of fun at the end of a hard season in the British Championship."

Creighton confirmed that he will return to the Junior British Rally Championship in 2019. This year he was a distant fourth to eventual winner Steve Rokland, with his Ypres crash not helping. He had moved into the lead of the R2 field before going into a ditch with the finish line in sight.

"The plan is to do another season in an R2 car in the JBRC," he said. "After what we achieved in 2017, this year wasn't great. The cancellation of two rounds didn't do much for our cause this year, either. Once we get the budget together, we will try and win it."



Creighton quick in R5

Kirkistown Rally axed due low entry

Mid Antrim Motor Club abandoned plans to hold the Kirkistown Stages Rally last weekend following a poor response from competitors.

At a cost of £185, 13 crews put their names down for the single venue event which would have consisted of six stages totalling 20 competitive miles.

Those who entered included Kilrea's Brian McCloskey in a Ford Fiesta R5+, Gareth Sayers in a S8-specification Subaru Impreza World Rally Car, and Dominic McNeill in a Ford Fiesta World Rally Car.

In a short statement, Mid Antrim Motor Club said: "Unfortunately, we had to take the decision to cancel the rally due to a severe lack of entries."

"Thanks to everyone who made the effort to put their entry in, and thanks to the army of volunteers who gave their time to organise the rally, and who committed their time to help us set-up and run the rally on the day."

With 2018 being Mid Antrim Motor Club's opt-out year from the Northern Ireland Rally Championship, a single-venue event was thought to represent better value to teams and cost the club less financially. However, the entry level did not support that theory.

Consultation soon for closed roads

The Motor Sports Association and Scottish Motor Sports have confirmed that a public consultation for developing closed-road legislation has taken a step closer.

Motorsport events cannot currently be held in Scotland due to the fact that any such event would suffer insurance difficulties under the 1990 closed road act. Therefore a new act needs to be drafted, but before the wording of the act can be created, a 12-week consultation period must take place first.

Both the MSA and SMS attended a recent meeting of the Motorsport on Public Roads Advisory Group in Scotland.

England and Wales passed legislation last year which enabled the MSA to grant closed road permits to events, with the approval of the relevant local highway authority.

MSA chairman David Richards said: "This is a further step towards reinstating some iconic motorsport events in Scotland, that have brought so much to their local communities, while providing the potential for new events to join the motorsport calendar in the future."

Charity co-driving for rally ace Chris Evans at Oulton

Rally fan, volunteer and competitor Chris Evans made a return to rally competition after 16 years out after winning a charity auction to join Brynmor Pierce in his Ford Fiesta ST on the Neil Howard Stages.

Evans, 47, is a paramedic, but has been working in rally control on various events for 15 years.

He is also a talented photographer, known for his company Chimera Photographic.

He bid £300 for the seat with Pierce, who auctioned

the seat for the Welsh Air Ambulance through the Rally Forum at Wales Rally GB, which he organises.

The pair joined for the Oulton Park event last Saturday, finishing 57th overall.

"The day was fantastic and it was an absolute pleasure to be sat with Brynmor on his first outing in his newly acquired ST," said Evans.

"We used SS1 to get to know each other and the car, then pushed from SS2

onwards. On SS6 the inevitable motion sickness kicked in...but got back to service and cleaned myself and car up and headed out for SS7, 8 and 9.

"Obviously the main aim of the day was to finish, which we did, and to raise money for the Wales Air Ambulance. The Just Giving page will remain live until the end of November. Donations are still welcome."

You can donate to Evans' page here: justgiving.com/fundraising/summit6.



Brynmor Pierce (l) auctioned a rally seat to Chris Evans (r)

Hamilton nominated for Billy Coleman Award

Michael Hamilton has earned a nomination for Young Rally Driver of the Year for the months of September to October.

The 23-year-old Honda Civic driver has earned a place in the final of the Billy Coleman Award which hands €50,000 to the winner, decided by a special panel.

Hamilton impressed with class wins on the Sligo Rally and the Clare Stages, finishing 12th and 15th on those events respectively.

Hamilton joins Opel Adam driver Jordan Hone, National junior champion Jason Black and Vauxhall Nova driver Derek Mackarel in being nominated for the award. A wildcard entry can also be selected to compete alongside the finalists.

The Billy Coleman Award has helped to launch the careers of the likes of Craig Breen, Keith Cronin and Rob Duggan.

Austin MacHale back in a Ford Escort after 37 years for Carrick Rally Sprint

Five-time Irish Tarmac Rally champion Austin MacHale was back behind the wheel of a Ford Escort Mk2 last weekend for the first time in 37 years.

Driving the same car that Donagh Kelly drove in the

Carrick on Suir Winter Rally Sprint, MacHale won Class 3.

The event, which attracted over 80 entries, was a fundraiser for Our Lady's Children Hospital in Crumlin, Dublin.

MacHale's sons, Gareth

and Aaron, were also competing – double driving Aaron's Citroën DS3 R5 – but a broken driveshaft on the penultimate run ended their bid.

Cashel's Pat O'Connell, in a recently acquired

Mitsubishi Lancer E10, took a start-to-finish victory.

He was 11.7 seconds in front of the Lancer E9 of Waterford's Keith Power.

James Bradley (Honda Civic) was 3.9 seconds further behind in third.

Motorsport Ireland clamps down on WR cars in Class 20

Motorsport Ireland has acted to clamp down on drivers modifying homologated cars with a change to its Class 20 regulations.

Homologated WRC and R5 cars are supposed to sit in Class 7 and 5 respectively, but drivers have been increasing the size of restrictors, for example, and running them in Class 20. MI has stated that is not what

Class 20 was intended for.

A Motorsport Ireland statement read: "At a recent meeting of the Motorsport Commission, the following changes were approved for Class 20. The changes will come into effect for cars competing in Class 20 on all MI events for 2019.

"Competitors that, up to now, competed in Class 20 with the following cars; currently homologated

WRCs, RRCs, S2000 Rally 1.6T and R5s and modified versions of these cars will no longer be eligible to enter Class 20 from January 1."

The 2019 changes follow last month's meeting of the Motorsport Ireland Commission where some 84 rule changes were passed and will be incorporated in next year's rules and regulations.

WRCs move to Class 7



RALLY NEWS

Richards: Club events need help

Motor Sports Association chairman David Richards believes clubmen-style events like the Neil Howard Stages need to be celebrated more than top events in order to keep motorsport alive.

The Prodrive boss and 1981 World Rally champion co-driver competed on his first stage rally in 10 years on last weekend's Oulton Park event, having been invited by the Motorsport News Circuit Rally Championship.

"It's so good to see the club events like this doing well, and you look at the enthusiasm of everyone involved and taking part," said Richards, who has highlighted stimulating the grassroots of UK motorsport as a key target of his reign at the sport's UK governing body.

"That's what it should be – it should be stimulating. They've looked after me well and it's a really well organised event.

"We should celebrate this sort of event, rather than focus on the professional higher events that we're used to. We would lose motorsport otherwise."

Richards co-drove Graham Coffey's Ford Fiesta RS WRC and the pairing took seventh overall. Coffey added: "We've enjoyed it. But, there'd have been a spotlight on me if I'd have crashed it with David Richards alongside you!"



STONE MAKES FIESTA WRC SWITCH FOR MN SERIES

Blackburn rally man debuts new challenger at Oulton Park

By Jack Benyon

John Stone made a shock car change for last weekend's Neil Howard Stages at Oulton Park, fielding a Ford Fiesta RS WRC which he will use in future Motorsport News Circuit Rally Championship rounds.

In the first MN round of the season at Oulton Park, Stone narrowly missed out on fourth place in the car. He has

swapped to the WRC car from a Fiesta S2000 with a 2.5-litre Millington engine.

The new car was purchased from Kieran Graffin in Ireland, and Stone is planning visits to Ireland and the Isle of Man in the next year.

"I'd love to take the car to Monaghan in April and I'd love to do the Manx National," said Stone of his plans for next year. "It's a proper tool for that.

"At the back of my mind I also have

the North West Stages and I want to have a super-competitive car for that. It's a learning thing now, we have to start from the beginning."

Stone sponsors the North West Stages through his Legend Fires concern in Blackburn, and the event is particularly significant next year as it is set to use closed roads in competition for the first time.

Stone was usurped late in the rally by

Fiesta R5 driver Steve Simpson, but was happy with the general performance.

"It was great to battle with Steve Simpson," he said. "We started rallying at the same time 20 years ago, battling in my Peugeot 205 and he had a 306, which he was using on circuit events even then."

Stone could give his Three Sisters Championship-winning son Alex a debut in the car at the Glyn Stages at Anglesey in late November, and has entered.



Lee Holland Memorial Stages win on his R5 debut – Kirkaldy

Kirkaldy will debut his new Ford Fiesta R5 at Knockhill in Motorsport News Circuit series

Lee Holland Memorial Stages winner Alan Kirkaldy has bought a Ford Fiesta R5, and hopes to make his debut in the car on the Motorsport News Circuit Rally Championship's Knockhill Rally in December.

Kirkaldy has regularly competed in a Millington-powered Ford Escort Mk2, but won the Lee Holland – also a round of the MN series – after being

loaned an R5 car by Peter Smith.

"My dad was going to buy a Ferrari but he decided he'd never drive it and it would just sit in the garage," said Kirkaldy. "We had a look for an R5 and got one, it's Evo2, it's chassis number 100 which was on display at the Autosport show. We saw it advertised in Milan. It was quite cheap but it needed a bit of tidying up."

Kirkaldy is in the process of

deciding on events to compete in next year, but is hoping the Jim Clark Rally – which is waiting for a rule change on closed-road events from the Scottish government – will return.

"I'm hoping the Jim Clark comes back because, as much as I enjoy single-venues, I really enjoy proper closed-road events," he said. "When I did the Pokerstars [Isle of Man] last year it shows how much

of a team effort you need to win.

"I can't commit to a championship due to work. I want to do Knockhill to get back into it as it's been a while since I've been in one of them [an R5]. Then we'll decide about next year."

Entries are still open for the event. Although it was set to be a two-day rally, it has been reduced to one to keep costs down for competitors.

North of England champion Morrison to Manx Pokerstars Rally

Newly-crowned North of England Tarmac Rally champion Gordon Morrison will head to the Pokerstars Rally this weekend after what he says is his best performance of the season on the recent Cheviot Stages.

Morrison – driving a TEG Sport Subaru Impreza co-driven by Calum MacPherson – has won three events in the championship this year and topped that off with a brilliant third overall on the

Morrison's TEG Subaru Impreza

Cheviot in treacherous conditions against strong MSA Asphalt opposition.

After wrapping up the title he set out to win at the start of the year, Morrison hasn't decided on what he will do next year.

"I've not set my mind on any championship, I just want to do more bucketlist events," he said. "I've got an entry in for

the Pokerstars and I'm first reserve now having started at 16th, so I'm getting there.

"We went to Ireland this year and did the Donegal Harvest. It was amazing. I had a great time, the atmosphere is great and they really want you to be there. I want to try and do the big Donegal. Hopefully Mull and the Jim Clark will be back too."

Morrison has ordered a new Skoda-based car from TEG which is currently in development, and will likely arrive halfway through 2019.



Photo: Ewan Tindall

After giant-killing results in his 1600cc Peugeot 106, Barry Lindsay looks to have done enough to seal another SG Petch ANECCC Rally Championship title. In incredibly tough conditions and in a field brimming with World Rally Cars, Lindsay finished eighth on the Cheviot Stages over Otterburn last month. Last weekend he took a strong 34th overall on the Malton Rally in the forests near Pickering. Last year the prize for the title was a drive in Stephen Petch's Ford Fiesta S2000 turbo, which he used to win the Jack Frost Stages.

RALLY REPORTS

Photo: Kevin Money, Black Mountains Media, Joseph John Gilbertson

PAYNE WINS A FOURTH MALTON RALLY



Unstoppable: Payne's Fiesta

Malton Forest Rally

By Peter Scherer

Organiser: Malton MC & Clitheroe & DMC When: November 4 Where: North Yorkshire Championships: Northern Historic, ANCC, ANECCC, ANEMMC, EMAMC, SD34 Stage & Inter League Stages: 6 Starters: 89

For the fourth successive year, Charlie Payne and Carl Williamson proved unbeatable on the Malton Rally, but their Ford Fiesta had to see off a strong challenge from Ollie Mellors and Ian Windress' Proton Iriz R5 first.

On the opening Cropton stage, Mellors pulled out a five-second lead over Payne, who shared second place with Stephen Petch/Michael Wilkinson's Fiesta RS WRC.

All three are past winners of the rally, and soon began to ease their battle away from the pursuers. But Mellors had increased the lead to seven seconds after Gale Rigg, before Payne responded. "We just changed tyres after the first two and it made all the difference," said Payne.

Payne was quickest through Langdale as they completed the first leg, reducing Mellors' advantage to three seconds as the lead pair edged away from Petch, although the latter was safe in third.

Behind, the Subaru Imprezas of Richard Hill/Steffan Evans' and Ian Bainbridge/Daniel May tied fourth, after both had ousted Dan Mennell/Tom Rodgers' Impreza. "I was taking too many risks but then backed off too much," Mennell admitted, after dropping to seventh behind Matthew Robinson/Sam Collis' Escort too.

With two more seconds off his lead on the return to Cropton, Mellors' gap was down to a solitary second. "I was going as fast as I could, the car was fantastic and we had no problems at all," he said. But by the end of the second Gale Rigg

stage the lead had been turned into a seven-second deficit, with Payne finally taking victory by 11 seconds.

Petch also had a trouble-free run to retain third but, having gone clear in fourth, Hill joined the retirements on stage five, which handed the place to Bainbridge.

Despite a puncture on stage four, Mennell reclaimed fifth, while Robinson completed the top six and was first two-wheel drive and Historic entry. Matt Edwards/Hamish Campbell's Fiat 131 had an early clutch problem, but having solved that a later exhaust malady was joined by the car "jumping out of gear". He still closed on Robinson in the last couple of stages, having demoted Steve Bannister/Callum Atkinson's Escort on stage four. Peter Smith/John Millington's Fiesta and Petr Krizan/Lukas Sintal's Mitsubishi Lancer E9 completed the top 10.

Steve Black/Paul Morris' Suzuki Swift was never headed in Class 1, but the duel for Class 2 between Ben Cree/Shawn Wilson's Peugeot 205 GTI and Barry Lindsay/Caroline Lodge's Peugeot 206, finally went in Lindsay's favour, aided by Cree collecting road penalties.

Despite a rear puncture on the last stage, David Crossen/Aileen Kelly's Escort still retained the daylong lead in Class 3, while Nigel Cay/Fred Roberts' Vauxhall Chevette topped Class 4.

Results

1 Charlie Payne/Carl Williamson (Ford Fiesta RS WRC) 37m08s; 2 Ollie Mellors/Ian Windress (Proton Iriz R5) +11s; 3 Stephen Petch/Michael Wilkinson (Fiesta RS WRC); 4 Ian Bainbridge/Daniel May (Subaru Impreza); 5 Daniel Mennell/Tom Rodgers (Impreza); 6 Matthew Robinson/Sam Collis (Ford Escort Mk2); 7 Matt Edwards/Hamish Campbell (Fiat 131); 8 Steve Bannister/Callum Atkinson (Escort Mk2); 9 Peter Smith/John Millington (Fiesta R5); 10 Petr Krizan/Lukas Sintal (Mitsubishi E9).
Class winners: Steve Black/Paul Morris (Suzuki Swift); Barry Lindsay/Caroline Lodge (Peugeot 206); David Crossen/Aileen Kelly (Ford Escort Mk2); Nigel Cay/Fred Roberts (Vauxhall Chevette); Stuart Cariss/Linda Cariss (Escort Mk1); Robinson/Collis.

ROAD RALLY ROUND-UP

Victory on the **Powys Lanes** gave Kevin Davies/Dale Bowen two wins in successive weekends in the Welsh Road Rally Championship, however unlike last week's Cilwendeg win, this wasn't a clear-cut triumph.

At the halfway point it appeared that the night would go the way of many previous events with Davies/Bowen having built up a healthy lead of 27 seconds. However, in the second half, they just failed to make their time at a control timed to the minute, in contrast two of their nearest rivals reached the control on schedule; the one minute difference in penalty was critical. Reian Jones/Cadog Davies took the lead at this point and appeared initially to have won the rally. Unfortunately they had failed to get a code board counter signed, the fail for this offence dropped them down the order.

Kevin 'Penclaw' Jones/Alan



Davies's red four-door Escort has been at the front plenty

James also cleaned the vital section and finished the rally just three seconds behind the winners. Andy Davies/Michael Gilbey took third, which was enough to secure the Welsh Drivers' title for Davies in his Subaru Impreza; the first time a four-wheel-drive car has won the Welsh Road Rally Championship. Gilbey had wrapped up the co-driver's title on the Cilwendeg.

Ian Mills

Results

Organiser: Epynt Motor Club When: November 3/4 Where: Mid-Wales Championships: WAMC, ANWCC & ASWMC Route: 120 Miles Starters: 75.
1 Kevin Davies/Dale Bowen (Ford Escort) 6m26s; 2 Kevin 'Penclaw' Jones/Alan James (Toyota Corolla) +3s; 3 Andy Davies/Michael Gilbey (Subaru Impreza); 4 Dewi 'Dai' Davies/Nathan Davies (Vauxhall Astra); 5 Mark Lennox/Ian Beamond (Escort); 6 Steve Knibbs/Gerwyn Barry (Proton Satria); 7 Paul Morgan/Jamie Mills (Honda Civic); 8 Chris Hand/Aled Richards (Ford Cortina); 9 Steve Davies/Matthew Maidment (Escort); 10 Daniel Williams/Shawn Richards (BMW 318Ti).
Class winners: Jones/James; Williams/Richards; Owain Llywelyn Morgans/Daniel Reid (Ford Fiesta ST).



Davies's second win in a row

Davies wins in Builth as he and fellow Nova man Evans tie on times

Builth Showground Stages

By Simon Gronow

Organiser: Herefordshire MC When: November 3 Where: Royal Welsh Showground, Builth Wells Stages: 14 Starters: 55

After 14 stages over mixed surfaces at the Royal Welsh Showground, there was no separating the Vauxhall Novas driven by Sam Davies/Martin Lasper and Ian Evans/Justin Brooks.

Last year's winner Davies moved into a one second lead after the first two stages, and he continued to lead until the sixth stage when Evans equalled his time. Evans then moved to the front, only to lose time when his brakes jammed on when a stone got stuck in the pedal box on SS10.

Going into the last stage, Davies led by one second, and both drivers gave it their all. Davies had a big moment at

high speed and dropped a second to Evans, who had overshot a junction in the dark. With the first-stage tie-break applied, victory went to Davies.

Behind them, Kevin Davies, with Annie Green alongside, was delighted to finish third in his Cilwendeg-winning Ford Escort, and grateful that his car was problem-free as he headed off to contest that evening's Powys Lanes road rally event, which he duly won (see *Road Rally round-up*). Nigel Mee/Reg Davies were lucky when they hit a rock just after the flying finish of stage 10, damaging their Subaru Impreza's suspension. After repairs, they overtook class leaders Theo Bengry/Les Forsbrook for fourth position, though the Escort crew were thoroughly enjoying the event.

Dan Evans/Jessica Hockly dropped over a minute when

their Suzuki Swift broke a driveshaft on stage three, but pulled back to a class-winning sixth overall ahead of Phil Jones/Clive Jones. The latter crew dropped a place following a stage 11 spin. Conrad and Sophie Law took their Escort Mk1 to a two second class win from Wayne Lloyd/Bryan Barrell, who received a time penalty for a wrong direction at a split junction. So did Damian Cole/Michelle Shaw although they still won their class in their Escort.

Results

1 Sam Davies/Martin Lasper (Vauxhall Nova) 42m24s; 2 Ian Evans/Justin Brooks (Nova) +0s; 3 Kevin Davies/Annie Green (Ford Escort Mk2); 4 Nigel Mee/Reg Davies (Subaru Impreza); 5 Theo Bengry/Les Forsbrook (Escort Mk2); 6 Dan Evans/Jessica Hockly (Suzuki Swift); 7 Phil Jones/Clive Jones (Escort Mk2); 8 Conrad Law/Sophie Law (Ford Escort Mk1); 9 Wayne Lloyd/Bryan Barrell (Escort Mk2); 10 Gary Thomas/Linda Thomas (Escort Mk2).
Class winners: Evans/Hockly; Evans/Brooks; Law/Law; Damian Cole/Michelle Shaw (Escort Mk2); Steve Ellis/Steve McPhee (BMW 325i); Davies/Green; Bengry/Forsbrook; Mee/Davies.

Photo: SMJ Photography



The car that finished second on the last round of the World Rally Championship, Rally Catalunya, last month made a surprise appearance at Oulton Park last weekend. M-Sport – which was running Neil Howard Stages podium finisher Alex Laffey's Ford Fiesta R5 – brought the car driven by Sebastien Ogier and Julien Ingrassia and put it on display for the opening round of the Motorsport News Circuit Rally Championship. For a full report on the event turn to page 19.

CONGRATULATIONS

SAM DAVIES & MARTIN LASPER

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MN RALLY REPORT

Photos: SMJ Photography

CLASS ROUND-UP

While consistency was key in the overall fight for victory, attrition was the decisive factor in most of the remaining classes.

Class A in particular became a race to finish. Rookie Gethin Sharp gave himself a pleasant surprise as he was victorious in his Nissan Micra, despite sitting third in class for much of the event.

Stage seven was the turning point, as disaster twice struck the leading contenders. Runaway leaders Joe Cunningham and Marc Fowler had their hopes – and a healthy 1m38s lead cushion – dashed by battery failure in their rapid Vauxhall Corsa.

"It just stopped without warning, which is the most frustrating problem to have," said Cunningham, his misfortune handing the class lead – briefly – to championship regular David McMullan.

The new leader's joy was shortlived, as McMullan's Vauxhall Nova failed to finish the stage with driveshaft failure to hand Sharp "a bit of a lucky win", according to co-driver Kate Bann. Dale and Andrew Lawson (MG ZR) took maximum MN Championship points in class.

Class B staged another event-long pressure cooker between vastly different machinery. A Vauxhall this time did have the last laugh, after Ryan Burns's Corsa survived an unusual scare in pipping Chris Woodhouse's Citroen C2 for class honours by 13 seconds.

The fright came from a bizarre collision with the Ford Escort Mk2 of Chris Berry, which reversed into his path in the tricky infield section that caught out many drivers during the day.

Despite a bent steering rack from the altercation, Burns clung on, although despite Paul O'Neill threatened to make it a late three-car showdown.

The British Touring Car race winner's chance ended on the penultimate stage when a battery lead popped out of the Mazda MX-5.

Ashleigh Morris was also victim to mechanical problems, unable to put her Ford Fiesta into gear on stage two.

Class C became a battle between classic Ford machinery. Mark Roberts was victorious in his updated Fiesta Mk3, brought across from rallying in South Africa. While Roberts looked at home on the circuit stages on the way to finishing 11th overall, a late surge from Stephen Beck in his elderly Escort Mk2s was brave, but not enough as night descended.

Mike English waded in on the battle throughout the afternoon, but stage seven was also his undoing. A spin at Old Hall put him into the barriers, giving him a maximum stage time and cosmetic front bumper damage.

While overall winner Procter also claimed **D2** class honours on the event, Alex Laffey was the highest registered MN Circuit Rally contender. **D1** victory went to Chris West and Robbie Hannah after a turbulent build-up to the event.

The Peugeot 306 Maxi was a significant doubt for the event after engine problems, the reigning champion's only glitch being an overzealous gravel-spraying entry to the watersplash on his first attack at it.

Dan Mason



Class B: Rapid Ryan Burns



Micra pair headed Class A

PROCTER TAKES AN OULTON HAT-TRICK

Fiesta driver on top, Laffey takes top MN points. By **Dan Mason**



Stage three was the turning point

MOTORSPORT NEWS
CIRCUIT RALLY CHAMPIONSHIP
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Laffey earned a podium on his first trip to Oulton

Kevin Procter has made a habit of winning the Neil Howard Stages. Although it might not have come as a surprise that he completed a hat-trick of successive Oulton Park wins in the Motorsport News Circuit Rally Championship opener, his third triumph was arguably one of his toughest.

The feat matched Rob Barry, who last completed the treble of consecutive Neil Howard wins in 2000 when the event was held at Park Hall, but Procter's latest required a determined final-stage push in the dark to fend off a chasing James and Rhys Yates by just six seconds.

The latter chose to adopt a different role on this occasion. British Rally Championship frontrunner Rhys handed driving duties of their Skoda Fabia R5 to brother James, who gradually found confidence and feel for the car as the afternoon progressed, having finished second on the event in 2016 in his last rally outing.

A sticking point for Yates came on the third stage of the nine, one which played into the hands of the consistent Procter and co-driver, Derek Fawcett, who sat second at the time.

While Procter's Ford Fiesta – an S2000-spec car with a turbocharged two-litre engine – navigated the watersplash section without difficulty, an approach "too cautious" meant Yates briefly stalled into a tricky square left following the splash. Regardless of the stall, only five seconds was lost.

An alternative attacking approach on the same stage, SS3, proved the undoing of 2015 winner, Steve Simpson. "We've blown it" was his reaction after spinning out of the early lead, losing 18 seconds as well as the CA1 Sport-run Ford Fiesta's front bumper in the off after collecting the barriers. "We could have even won that," he lamented.

His rivals faltering, Procter's

confidence was high, and he extended his lead to as high as 17 seconds after stage six. As darkness loomed the tides soon turned, James Yates' confidence growing by the mile.

The battle intensified as seven seconds vanished from that lead with a rare traffic-free run through stage seven for Yates. Procter responded on the re-run to enter the last stage with nine seconds in hand, as light rain threatened to throw one final variable into the picture.

Despite three seconds to the good for the Skoda man in the final stage, it was not enough to overturn Procter, the lead falling from nine to six seconds at the finish.

"A few early mistakes cost us, but we don't mind getting beat by someone like Kevin," said James Yates. "He's top class and knows this place well. I've enjoyed driving today. Every corner you learn something new."

The Yates brothers intercepted what was otherwise a dominant display by Ford, Fiestas locking out four of the top five spots. BRC driver Alex Laffey was best of the rest in his M-Sport-run Fiesta, surviving cosmetic damage from striking a misplaced chicane water barrel to come home third with Michael Gilbey, who rushed off to do the Powys Lanes road rally afterward.

A recovering Simpson grabbed fourth at the death from John Stone, the latter bedding in a brand new Fiesta RS WRC at Oulton Park. "I felt my hands still shaking after the first stage, so it must be quick," quipped Stone.

One of the major headlines prior to the season opener was the potential absence of its reigning champion.

Battling budget and mechanical troubles, Chris West did arrive in Cheshire but with finishing the only goal on his mind. Armed with a Peugeot 306 Maxi that had only done 17-miles on the road with a new engine, West still salvaged sixth overall.

Alongside him was a more unfamiliar name in co-driver Robbie Hannah, who flew in from Jersey to compensate for the mid-week cancellation of West's regular navigator, Keith Hounslow.



James 'JJ' Yates and brother Rhys were rapid but lost time with a stall

RESULTS

Motorsport News Circuit Rally Championship, round 1/7, Oulton Park, Cheshire, November 3

POS	DRIVER/CO-DRIVER	CAR	TIME
1	Kevin Procter/Derek Fawcett	Ford Fiesta S2000 Turbo	58m04s
2	James Yates/Rhys Yates	Skoda Fabia R5	+6s
3	Alex Laffey/Michael Gilbey	Ford Fiesta R5	+26s
4	Steve Simpson/Patrick Walsh	Ford Fiesta R5	+1m6s
5	John Stone/Jack Morton	Ford Fiesta RS WRC	+1m8s
6	Chris West/Robbie Hannah	Peugeot 306 Maxi	+2m30s
7	Graham Coffey/David Richards	Ford Fiesta RS WRC	+3m07s
8	James Self/Nick Vigors	Ford Fiesta R5	+3m54s
9	John Griffiths/Nigel Wetton	Subaru Impreza	+4m21s
10	Stephen Tilburn/Jack Tilburn	Ford Escort Mk2	+4m49s

Event class winners: Gethin Sharp/Kate Bann (Nissan Micra); Ryan Burns/Steve Hallmark (Vauxhall Corsa); Mark Roberts/Stephen Landon (Ford Fiesta S2000); West/Hannah; Simpson/Walsh.
MN Championship class winners: Class A: Dale Lawson/Andrew Lawson (MG ZR); Class B driver: Ryan Burns (Corsa)
Class B co-driver: Jamie Mactavish (Ford Fiesta R2); Class C: Rob Cox/Dylan Thomas (Ford Escort Mk2); Class D1: West/Hannah;
Class D2: Laffey/Gilbey; MX-5: Paul Gorge/Geoffrey Maine; Michelin Cup: Stone/Morton.

The pair gelled, but not with Oulton Park, West left looking to Cadwell Park after a tricky shakedown. "It's just a test session," he admitted. "It's slippery out there, but I just want to get through this one then go away and get it back to 110 per cent for the next round at Cadwell. We'll be back."

Ford could have had eight Fiestas inside the top 10 but for the departures of both Peter Smith in his ex-Ott Tanak Fiesta, and Andy Scott. The latter was forced out of the rally with structural damage, caused by an

impact with the scenery on stage four.

Another Fiesta in the top 10 gathered plenty of scrutiny from the avid fans. Graham Coffey grabbed seventh place after clawing back ground from a sluggish opening stage, sharing with Prodrive owner, MSA chairman David Richards. James Self (Fiesta R5) kept his nose clean to come home eighth ahead of the Subaru Impreza of the returning John Griffiths, while best of the Ford Escorts was that of Stephen Tilburn and Jack Tilburn as their Mk2 completed the top 10.

INSIGHT

MEEKE'S RIGHT CONNECTION



Northern Irishman has instantly settled into his new Toyota surroundings

His WRC career appeared over after his Citroen

You couldn't help but feel a bit sorry for Esapekka Lappi at Rally of Spain last month. Imagine a position where you're wheeling your new partner out to meet the folks when the current one walks in from their day at work.

That was pretty much Toyota Gazoo Racing in Salou on the Friday night. Awkward.

The reality of the matter is, of course, different: Lappi wants away and is off to Citroen and he and Kris Meeke have absolutely no issue with each other. As well as Toyota's new recruit, there were a few elephants around in the room.

As one onlooker sagely put it: "Could you imagine locking those two in a room for five minutes and asking them to talk about their current or previous employer... all bets would be off!"

Understandably, Meeke would find it hard to put his finger on the positives on offer at Citroen, while Lappi, if rumour is to be believed, doesn't have much to say about life in Puuppola.

Beyond the perfunctory, there wasn't much for either to say. Kris had popped down from his place in the hills in Andorra to meet his new team and put faces to emails. And the

welcome couldn't have been warmer. "It's great to see Kris here," says team principal Tommi Makinen.

"Of course, we saw him in the factory last week, but it's nice for him to say hello. We are excited for next year."

There's no doubt Meeke's return to the service park added a certain something. Conveniently, PSA Group CEO Carlos Tavares was also on the Costa Daurada, so the Dungannon driver's arrival offered an opportunity to try to find out more about the decision process which led to his departure from Citroen.

Tavares says: "We are pragmatic people. If we have asked Mr Meeke to stop during the season, it's because we wanted to avoid the drama. And it was obvious, accident after accident, at one point in time something serious could happen and it is our ethical responsibility to make any decision that could avoid that from happening. And I'm happy we could make that decision before a drama happened."

"That's why we made that decision and I think it was the right decision from a pure responsibility stand point. By the way, I consider that Kris Meeke is a huge, huge champion and I hope he will find his balance and I hope that everything that will happen to him is good things. I hope him well. We like him very much."

Yeah... I'm not sure that feeling is entirely mutual. But this story's one to look forwards, not backwards.

Certainly, Meeke had zero interest in raking over the coals of his past career. But there was plenty to be read between the lines.

When he was announced as a Toyota driver last month, one line stood out from him.

"If I can just enjoy my driving and the connection with road, then the speed will take care of itself."

The connection reference could be interpreted physically and metaphorically. Physically, we've seen the way geometry and suspension changes have improved the performance of the C3 WRC – Citroen took it from nowhere in Finland 12 months ago to Mads Ostberg almost delivering a win this time around.

But metaphorically, the connection with the road encompasses everything a driver needs to do his job; he needs the confidence in – and from – the team behind him and he needs total faith that everything has been maximised and no corner cut as he aims his car at an apex. When he has that, the connection is complete because there's nothing else for him to think – he stops worrying about what's around him and thinks only about what's beneath him.

That's what Meeke wants from Toyota. He's done with second-guessing which direction the corporate wind will blow or how best to juggle testing budgets.

While I was talking to Meeke, one of the team was trying to finalise details of his next test. Snow and ice had arrived in Jyvaskyla, complicating matters from a tyre perspective. But what came across loud and clear, though, was the desire from Toyota to do what was right for Meeke. The car was there, if he wanted to drive it.

This scenario drew an obvious and stark contrast to Meeke's last Rally GB test, conducted in south-west France to save money.

Fighting against that sort of decision had starved Meeke of the two things he craved most: success and job satisfaction.

"When I departed the championship in May it started to really hit home how much I wasn't enjoying my job," says Meeke, "and to do one of the best jobs in the world and to realise you weren't

actually enjoying it for many, many reasons which we can't speak about... My only goal is to enjoy my driving."

Meeke's enforced absence from the championship has given him time to go home and think – the one thing he hasn't spent a lot of time on is watching the World Rally Championship.

He continues: "I haven't watched any coverage, any footage for three years – that was probably a signal I wasn't enjoying it. But when I was coming down here [to Salou], I was up, texting my Michelin engineer to find out who was on what tyres and following the splits. The hunger's back. The sport's still my life, but when you get a situation like the one that happened in May, you need to go and disappear for a while; you need to go and reset."



Meeke's last WRC win was on Rally Spain 2017, before his Citroen split

Photos: Toyota Gazoo Racing, mcklein-imagedatabase.com, Petr Fitz

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Meeke has already had first Toyota test

en sacking but Kris Meeke's already enjoying life at Toyota. By David Evans

Reset and ready to go, Monte Carlo can't come soon enough. And with it will come a shot at genuine redemption. Meeke's irked by references to last-chance saloons, but that's where he sits right now. Mid-way through his first season with the Japanese manufacturer, he'll be 40 years old and it's difficult to see another chance coming along after that if this one goes south.

Then again, we said that when we read what appeared to be a career-ending communication from Paris in May.

Meeke's been around for a long time, his maiden WRC outing was the 2002 Rally GB; 16 years ago, another driver made his debut at the sport's highest level: Jari-Matti Latvala. The fully-funded Finn has enjoyed plenty of seat time since, racking up 194 world

championship starts. That's 101 more than Meeke.

J-ML has contested a full campaign for the last 12 years, Meeke's only done three complete seasons in his entire time in the sport.

Three years. Meeke's career has been ridiculously stop-start. Anybody who's started 93 rounds of the world championship would appear to have had a good shot at the thing, but that's not the case here. For whatever reason, every time he's built some momentum, the thing has fallen down and his career stalled.

Now, he has everything he needs. He's got arguably the best and fastest World Rally Car ever created, a well-funded and very enthusiastic manufacturer team behind him and

the ear of a man who knows what it takes to turn potential into points and prizes.

"We know what Kris can do as a driver," says Makinen, "we know how fast he is. Next year is going to be an exciting one, I think we can have a strong team."

Back to Friday night in Salou and not long after turning his car into the end of day service, Latvala has an arm around Meeke and the pair are engaged in a discussion which would have started with empathy and ended with them trading ramp angles.

"I wanted to know his feeling about the car," says Latvala, "and it was a good feeling. I can see he is excited. It will be good next year. He's a good guy to have in the team and it's a nice opportunity for Kris after what happened with Citroen. He can get the feeling and come back to the sport, this is nice."

Nice or not, Meeke and Latvala both know only one thing will matter when it comes to extending their contract with Makinen in 12 months' time: results.

Toyota has a line-up with the potential for world domination; every one of its three drivers can win any one of next year's 14 rallies. But, as strong characters with their own influence inside a team which hasn't been without internal strife of its own this season, they will take some managing.

And Meeke knows, if he wants to succeed then he's going to have to get

on the wave Ott Tanak's riding pretty quickly next year. The Estonian can do no wrong right now.

"He's hit a sweet spot," says Meeke of his new team-mate. "He turns up at any rally and he can win it. And Jari has proven the pace of the car again. Let's see... I can't pre-empt anything; I've only driven the Yaris WRC in Finland and it was born and bred on those roads. It's won the last two Rally Finlands, so I knew it was going to be quick there, but I haven't tested it for the Spanish gravel or in a Sardinia or Portugal set-up, so I can't make any comment."

"What I can say is that the atmosphere is great coming into the team - I can feel it from just walking in here. It's so refreshing from what I've had in the past, it feels good."

For the umpteenth time, our discussion is halted by another well-wishing Toyota Gazoo Racing team member. The appreciation from both the Finnish and Japanese side of the team is huge.

But what about the man of the moment, what does Tanak think? He's interested, possibly excited, but definitely pragmatic.

"I know what he can do," says Tanak, "I know what he can bring to the team and definitely he can help take us forward - it's always good to have something new from some different teams. Citroen is doing things in a professional way, so hopefully there's something useful from there."

Meeke's time at Citroen has taught him plenty. When Yves Matton offered him a seat in a DS3 WRC in Finland five years ago, teams weren't exactly queuing around the block for his signature. Things have changed now. Meeke's a man in demand and he couldn't be happier with the way things have played out.

History has shown the Northern Irishman has little time for the politics or the executive level corporate comings and goings of a manufacturer team. His real interest and his real ability is in bringing those on the factory floor around him and with him. Meeke's a man of his people who starts every stage with his heart on his sleeve and the mechanics and technicians in every team he's worked with are more than happy to buy into that.

Some around the service park reckon Meeke has jumped out of the frying pan and into the fire in terms of internal team dealings. We'll see. The biggest and most obvious gripe at Citroen was born out of Tavares' determination to turn the sport's second most successful make ever into budget world champions. His constant sighting of M-Sport's ability to win on a shoestring was warped and twisted to his own ends.

Shoestrings aren't much in vogue at Meeke's new place of work - Toyota's all about bonhomie and good connections. ■



Latvala is pleased for his new team-mate



Meeke made his WRC debut back in 2002

RACING REPORTS

BRANDS HATCH: BARC BY BRIAN PHILLIPS
NOVEMBER 3/4

Photos: Gary Hawkins, Steve Jones

SMITH SEALS TRUCK TRIUMPH AS TITLES ARE DECIDED

Championships were up for grabs for heavyweight trucks, nimble Legends and jousting Pickups at one of Brands Hatch's most popular meetings – not only because of the racing action but for MotorSport Vision's firework display and entertainment programme.

On the track, Ryan Smith wasted no time confirming his third BTRA truck championship by dominating Saturday's Division 1 race. The only driver who could have challenged for the title, David Jenkins, finished second and paid tribute to Smith. He was echoed by multiple champion Stuart Oliver, who joined them on the podium and said Smith had raised the competitive bar and it was up to the rest to catch up.

Smith chased from last on a reversed grid to finish second on Sunday morning, a length behind Jamie Anderson – but Smith was later handed a 10-second penalty for being out of position at the start. Jenkins and Martin Gibson were even closer in third and fourth, but all eyes were on Richard Collett and Oliver, who completed the final lap with their trucks locked together.

Smith's luck ran out when his MAN had suspected clutch failure in race three, helping Oliver to only his second win in 2018. Anderson was next, with Jenkins third after being elbowed off the road early on.

The truck let Smith down again in the final, and other incidents helped former Division 2 champion John Newell to record his first Division 1 win under pressure from Simon Reid.

Luke Garrett arrived as favourite for the Division 2 crown, but didn't do quite enough on day one to be sure. Brad Smith kept the contest alive by winning their first race with Garrett eighth, but a meteoric getaway gave Luke race two.

Garrett needed a single point on Sunday and duly clinched a championship earned in the past by his late father, though it



Smith (1) secured the crown with a win

WINNERS

British Truck Racing Championship, Division 1	Legends National Championship
Race 1: Ryan Smith (MAN TGA)	Saturday heat 1: Miles Rudman
Race 2: Jamie Anderson (MAN TGX)	Heat 2: Marcus Pett
Race 3: Stuart Oliver (Volvo VNL)	Final: Miles Rudman
Race 4: John Newell (MAN TGS)	Sunday heat 1: Miles Rudman
	Heat 2: Marcus Pett
	Final: Will Gibson
Division 2	Pickup Championship
Race 1: Brad Smith (DAF CF)	Race 1: Lea Wood
Race 2&4: Luke Garrett (MAN TGX)	Race 2: Michael Smith
Race 3: Erik Forsstrom (Sisu RSM)	Race 3: Scott Bourne
	Junior Saloons Winter Cup
	Race 1: Steven Chandler
	Race 2: Lewis Saunders



Mickel (r) secured a fourth title

happened by default when both he and Smith were excluded for yellow flag offences meaning Smith couldn't score. The race was won by former Finnish champion Erik Forsstrom. Garrett won race four.

John Mickel's record-breaking fifth Legends national title was confirmed with a day to spare with fourth, fifth and sixth place finishes on Saturday. Miles Rudman won the first heat and the final. A mishap in the second heat, won by Marcus Pett, gave Rudman a favourable starting position for the final.

Rudman and Pett were again heat

winners on Sunday, but the final went to Will Gibson in the tightest of finishes with Sean Smith and cross-Channel visitor Sebastien Kluyskens. Rudman was fourth.

Another championship to be settled brought 23 Pickups to Brands, and Lea Wood kept the pressure on Scott Bourne in the first of three races. Wood battled with David O'Regan before winning, while Michael Smith, George Turiccki and Bourne contested third.

Smith enjoyed his first win of the year in race two, while Bourne secured back-

to-back titles by finishing third, right behind Wood. All the pressure gone, Bourne drove to an impressive race three victory over O'Regan and Smith. Wood was involved in a first corner incident and recovered to eighth.

Steven Chandler achieved his first Junior Saloons win in front of what must have been the biggest audience of the year on Saturday in the Winter Cup contest, but crashed before the first corner in race two. This came down to a tense contest which fell to this year's champion, Lewis Saunders, after several changes of lead on the final lap.

Colin Brown never reached the big time but has made a winning return to racing. By **Kyran Gibbons**



Brown (inset) took a win on racing comeback



HAMILTON'S CLOSE RIVAL BACK ON TRACK

Eighteen years ago, two very talented racers were battling for a title at the head of a competitive field.

Today, one of those drivers has just claimed his fifth Formula 1 championship crown in Mexico, while the other has recently made a winning return to racing – in rather less illustrious surroundings.

Former world karting champion Colin Brown returned to competitive action last month, racing in the F1000 championship finale at Donington Park in his first single-seater appearance for 15 years.

But back in 2000, Brown triumphed over both Lewis Hamilton and Nico Rosberg en route to the Formula A karting title.

Despite the early success, his career stalled at the end of a brief spell in Euro F3000 in 2003, due to a number of personal and contractual factors.

However, an invite to join the F1000 field for the season finale provided the opportunity for Brown to retake to the track in single-seater machinery.

Having qualified fourth, Brown battled into second place during the opening race of the weekend before storming through from sixth on the grid to claim victory in the second race.

"I've been doing a bit of karting this year just to get my body and mind back into it and then I got an invite to come and do this race," says Brown. "I just felt that I was ready for it."

"As for the 15 years [away] – a lot of it was [caused by] people who had promised me the world and let me down, a lot of it was me hiding away dealing with my own problems having not raced for so long."

"But then, when I had my daughter a few years ago, I just became a little more focused again with life in general. I started feeling better

and I just thought I'd go for it.

"I felt connected to the [F1000] car straight away. It felt great. The first few laps in the car, I was just laughing, putting your foot down and going through the corners, it's like a new buzz and is something I'd really missed."

Brown's karting credentials make for an impressive resume. His Formula A title in 2000 was sealed by a win during the final race of the season at Braga in Portugal, in which Brown lined up on a grid featuring the likes of Rosberg, Robert Kubica, Giedo van der Garde, Pastor Maldonado, Mike Conway, Jamie Green and Susie Wolff.

However, it was Hamilton, who stepped up to Formula A for the 2000 season, who was Brown's main rival. In the Braga decider, the pair exchanged the lead throughout the race before a camshaft failure in the closing stages forced Hamilton to retire.



Karting champion enjoyed racing in F1000 finale after tough years away

Asked whether he expected Hamilton to make it to the top of motorsport, Brown says: "It did seem like that straight away."

"Whenever I was on track he was always right near me which was a bit irritating at times because I just wanted him to go away."

"I can say that he was the most talented driver I came up against when I was growing up. Rosberg

was there as well but he wasn't in the same league. I hate to say it but that was the case."

Despite his impressive early years, a successful return and renewed focus on racing, Brown does not have a plan in place for his future.

"At the moment, I'm just living on a prayer as far as where I'm going next," he says. "Just hoping that someone gives me a shot." ■

SPORTING TRIALS

Photos: Paul and Ben Lawrence

Trialling with the Vintage Sports-Car Club is proving more popular than ever, as **Paul Lawrence reports**

A stop-and-start test provides drama



Ben Collings uses a 1903 Mercedes-Benz

HOW GOING UPHILL IS RAISING THE BAR



Competitor Simon Diffey gets stuck in

Trialling has been around for most of the UK's motorsport history and the wonderful Vintage Sports-Car Club hosts an annual season of trials for Pre-War cars. Just as has been the case since trialling started more than 100 years ago, the desire to pit cars against muddy hills burns as strong as ever.

The ethos is simple. Set out up to 15 hills on muddy slopes, on forest tracks or old lanes and try and climb them from a standing start. Public road sections link the hills. The VSCC is slightly quirky in that it generally scores the hills from 1 to 25, so that the day's highest score is the best. To make things even harder on some hills, a stop and restart can be added, requiring cars to stop and then start again on a marshal's instruction and some hills can even feature more than one route to suit the climbing capabilities of different classes of car.

On a perfect trial, one car will successfully climb, or clean, every hill. Along the way the drivers and passengers will bounce up and down to try and find elusive grip and maintain essential forward motion. In cars with four seats, or even more, synchronised bouncing has become an art form. It is all done in a spirit of sportsmanship, camaraderie and fun that is so often lacking in contemporary motorsport.

Considering that all of the cars are at least 80 years old, and the oldest go back 115 years, it is remarkable that the VSCC trialling movement is booming. Demand for places is such that if competitors don't enter on the day that entries open, they will probably not get a slot.



Philip Milne-Taylor uses a rare AJS

All of the events are either over-subscribed or full and that's probably the only one of the VSCC's varied disciplines where that applies. Of the seven events that run each year, most have a capacity of between 100 and 110 cars. Only the Scottish Trial has a smaller field.

Tania Brown is a director of the VSCC and heads up the trials sub-committee. "It's the best way to have fun in an old car," says Brown. "The VSCC is all about competition and we have 300 people competing on some trials. It is the soul of the club. It's a huge thing for families to come and do, because the kids can take part as bouncers. They need to be over 12 years of age to be in the front, but can be in the back of the closed cars at a younger age."

The season starts in the south-west in February with the Exmoor Trial and takes in the John Harris in Derbyshire, the Herefordshire Trial and the Scottish in the spring. After the summer break, the season resumes with the hugely-popular Welsh Trial in mid-October and

concludes with the Lakeland and Cotswold events in November. They all have tradition and history and such events have long been a big part of the VSCC's sporting calendar.

Importantly, the trials draw business to the host towns and the Welsh Trial brings the sleepy Welsh borders town of Presteigne to life over a mid-October weekend. The town traditionally welcomes the trial with open arms and local traders have a bumper weekend. Scrutineering takes over the main street and the overnight stay on Saturday night fills the hotels, pubs and restaurants.

"Trials are generally non-damaging and not designed to break cars," says Brown. "But we do need some testing sections and more ground clearance is sensible. The cars of the 1920s and 1930s were



Presteigne hosts a popular event

built for rough and un-surfaced roads so they cope really well and it is a hugely competitive branch of the sport."

A decent starter car, like the ever popular Austin 7 or Ford Model A, should be no more than £10,000 and running costs are limited to fuel, entry fees and the occasional breakage. Costs of getting started beyond the initial car purchase are also pretty modest. Licences are inexpensive and there is no mandated safety kit for the crew, although decent waterproof clothing is essential, particularly at the top of the Honister Pass in the Lake District in mid-November.

Of course, there are cars that are worth considerably more than £10,000 and it is to the credit of those who support this branch of the sport that Bugattis and Bentleys are still taking to the hills. Cars from manufacturers like MG, Vauxhall, Alvis, Lea Francis, Riley and Singer are all out there getting muddy.

Away from the common marques, there are some real rarities in action.

The 1923 Helix two-seater campaigned by Susan Hill from Newtown in Mid-Wales has been in the

family for many years and is the only known surviving example.

Almost as rare is the 1930 AJS two-seater made by the company better known for its motorcycles. It is one of two such cars owned and used by Philip Milne-Taylor, who competes alongside his two daughters.

"It is great to do these events alongside my daughters," he says. "It's all about the camaraderie, the fun and the scenery."

The oldest of the lot is the amazing 1903 Mercedes 60HP of Ben Collings, which is remarkably agile for a chain-driven 115-year-old car. It is also incredibly adept at climbing hills as the nine-litre engine chugs along at unfeasibly low revs.

Michael New is a regular competitor in his 1928 Morris Oxford Special. "It is great fun, with fantastic camaraderie," he says. "But you have to enter on the day that entries are released. If we don't get an entry, we go and marshal. Trials take us to some of the most beautiful parts of the country and to places we'd never normally get to. It's not terribly expensive to compete and we drive the car to most events. This is the best kept secret in motorsport." ■



A Bentley pushes on hard

TRACK TEST: JAGUAR I-PACE

British Touring Car Championship racer Rob Austin slid into the cockpit of the new Jaguar I-PACE eTrophy machine

Jaguar is the first fully electric tin-top racer



LEADING THE CHARGE FOR

It is very rare that there is a total revolution in motorsport, particularly in tin-tops, but Jaguar has grabbed electric racing by the scruff of the neck. The new Jaguar I-PACE eTrophy, which will support Formula E, is set to charge into life in Riyadh in Saudi Arabia in a month's time and I was lucky enough to go to a wet Rockingham last week to get my hands on one of the new machines on behalf of *Motorsport News*.

The main thing I *thought* I knew about electric cars was that the torque was going to be there straight away. I figured that I was going to have to be gentle on the throttle initially and the power pick up would be harsh.

Although it is quite a heavy car at two tons, it still has a decent amount of power with 400PS and 700Nm of torque which all comes from the

Williams Advanced Engineering-developed powertrain.

I was interested to find out what it would be like to drive a car with no noise. I have had an incident in the past where I was racing in British F3 and Ginetta G20s on the same day at the same track, and I accidentally left my earplugs in when I got from the single-seater into the Ginetta. In the Ginetta, it was totally silent and it was the weirdest feeling, because you can't hear the engine on downshift and things like that. It almost knocked me off kilter.

It is amazing how much a driver uses those senses when you are racing – sound helps you judge. You would have thought it was all down to feel, so you don't realise you are reliant on the sound until you have lost that sense. I thought I was in for an interesting experience in the Jaguar.

On first glimpse of the I-PACE, I could tell it is a proper car: the boffins at Jaguar Special Vehicle Operations, who have built the chassis, have

done a really good job of it. The driver is sat a little bit higher up than I am used to. It sits at 1.525 metres – but the engineers have to fit the battery under where the seat is. That leads to a bit more elevation in the cockpit. Even if my touring car was set to the same ride height as that, I would still have to look up to see over the

dash, because I am sat as low as possible. You simply can't get that low in the Jag.

The layout inside the car is very familiar – it is the same dashboard as the BTCC with the Cosworth datalogger. It feels like a racing car. There were lots of buttons, and that was the additional thing that I had to get used to. I have never raced a car with adjustable Anti-lock Braking System before so I had those settings to play with. Also, because it is a four-wheel-drive car, there was another dial which could shift the way the power is delivered from 50-50 per cent front and rear axle split to 65-35 towards the rear. There was also a regeneration map that we didn't use when I was running.

In competition, the drivers will be able to vary the car's regeneration levels throughout the race. The I-PACE guys were telling me that they won't need to regenerate throughout the race although some drivers are already preferring driving with a level of regeneration to help with the retardation and stability under braking.

Once I got up to speed, the first thing I noticed was that there was not a lot to do! There are no gears – I was sat there in a straight line feeling like I should be doing something. All I could do was wait. The power delivery was nowhere near as aggressive as I had pictured it. Yes, there is good torque, but it feels pretty gentle in the way it is delivered and that is down to the way the traction control works in conjunction with an electric car. It is part of the car's brain, and it all works in unison.

It is so smooth that it almost feels like it has not got a lot of power, but that is down to the fact that each part

of the car is talking to the other bits all the time in terms of traction control and things like that. It was a damp track too so on the initial power pick-up it was trying to control itself.

Again, considering its weight, it was extremely nimble. It is tall too so you would expect lots of body roll, but there was none of that. The battery is on the floor, so although it is heavy, it still has a very good centre of gravity: probably not quite as good as a Subaru Levorg British Touring Car Championship car though...

With no body roll, it was harder to get the car to pitch into corners. If I was setting up a car for members of the press and anyone else to drive, I would certainly make it understeery and nice and safe. That is maybe what's happened here. If it was me, I would like to be able to transfer the weight on the front more. You want to load up that front tyre and I like a bit of oversteer – there was none to be had.

The braking was really good. The regeneration, where it is working, is exactly the same as engine braking. I was expecting the braking to be very numb because you had lost the sound, you had lost that sense, but it really wasn't. It surprised me how it didn't feel odd to me. It felt right, natural, and I didn't miss the sound. If anything, it increased the feedback for me because in the corners and on the drier parts of the circuit we were running on, I could hear the tyres. If I went off line in the wetter parts to find some grip, I could hear the pick-up and the hiss because you are on the dirty part of the circuit. I was getting a different kind of feedback. It was a surprise how natural it felt.

I know Formula E uses treaded tyres and that is one of the calling cards with electric championships. It is about road tyres, and road circuits. It was very hard to judge the level of grip from the rubber because of the conditions we were running in and I think the car will be a lot more fun in the dry. Around a very greasy Rockingham – and Rockingham when it is in that in between, slippery stage – is a nightmare. It would have been better in full wet. It would be unfair to judge the Michelins.

They even work off-road. I will get the driver excuses out of the way first... Having never dealt with adjustable ABS before, I came into the Tarzan hairpin hammering on the ABS – that was fine. Then, after a few laps, I decided to try it on a lower setting: it was doing less intervention. I hit the brakes at the same point at Tarzan and I didn't even get to the ABS and I was able to pull the car up quite a bit shorter than I needed. So, on the next lap, I left it on that setting and I braked a little bit later... I just touched the ABS and once it kicked in it did its job and it released the brakes – and therefore it just kept going into the gravel.

It was maybe a little run through the gravel but I will tell you what: that thing handles a lot better than my HMS Racing Alfa Romeo Giulietta BTCC car in the gravel trap! Four-wheel drive, nice ride height, Michelin treaded tyres – it was beautiful in the stones.

Despite that little slip, it is a really nice car and an easy one to handle and I think that will make the racing very close. Although it does feel like a proper racing car, it's still on treaded tyres and there is a bit about it that makes it quite



The I-PACE has an adjustable rear wing

Photos: Jakob Ebrey Photography



The seating position is higher up than usual



Jaguar I-PACE is an easy racer to get to grips with



The car returns to the pitlane – plus some gravel

THE NEXT GENERATION

like a road car. That makes it quite easy to drive initially, so therefore I think a relatively inexperienced driver would be up to pace quite quickly.

Ten years' worth of experience isn't going to buy you one second on lap pace. Maybe a tenth or two, so the grid will be quite close.

On street circuits, I think that brings a unique element to it, particularly because it is a touring car-type car. Also, when you have got to apex a wall, it is a different feeling. It is hard to judge. I am not sure that inexperienced drivers would take to that straight away and might spread it out a bit further.

You have to applaud Jaguar for embracing electric motorsport the way it has. It is the future, and I would love to get involved with it. It is going to be a good championship to watch. The cars aren't trying to bite you.

Although the cars look big, the dimensions are similar to a Formula E single-seater. The I-PACE is not that wide – it is just over 2.1 metres across – so the racing and overtaking should be feasible and it is not going to just be a train of cars unable to pass each other.

It will be interesting to see how much of an effect the slipstreaming has. With a touring car, when you are in a slipstream, you lose the resistance of the air but you also lose nice cold fresh air into the intercooler which slows the car a fraction. That will not happen in an electric car. Slipstream could be a major part of this, which will be very interesting to see. I can totally picture myself lunging someone in one of the I-PACE cars.

The guys at Jaguar told me that if the battery is above 75 per cent, the

CALENDAR

Jaguar I-PACE eTrophy calendar

DATE	TRACK
Dec 15, 2018	Riyadh, Saudi Arabia
Feb 16, 2019	Mexico City, Mexico
March 10, 2019	Hong Kong
March 23, 2019	Sanya, China
April 13, 2019	Rome, Italy
April 27, 2019	Paris, France
May 11, 2019	Monte Carlo, Monaco
May 25, 2019	Berlin, Germany
July 13/14, 2019	New York, America*

* = double header

regeneration doesn't do anything. It automatically starts working – gradually – when the battery goes below that level. So nobody will have regeneration initially, so if drivers like running it with that system on, they will not have it to start with. Then they will have to balance that with the ABS, which does make a big difference – especially on treaded tyres – on the initial turn in.

Keeping your tyre temperature right is going to be crucial. Treaded tyres on a track with a two-ton car could end up melted by the end. Are you going to want to start on brand new tyres? Ideally, you want buffed tyres. Either way, tyre management is going to be an interesting one.

The events will be 25 minutes plus one lap, and that is a decent length of race and there will be plenty to keep the drivers occupied.

It might seem all serene and quiet on the outside, but there will be loads going on inside the cockpit. ■

TECH SPEC

Jaguar I-PACE eTrophy

Chassis: Built by Jaguar SVO; length: 4.85m; width: 2.15m; FIA rollcage

Powertrain: All-wheel drive, 400PS maximum power output, 700Nm maximum torque, two synchronous electric motors

Battery: Lithium-ion battery, same as in the Jaguar I-PACE, 90kWh power output

Charging: Custom-made, compact Terra fast chargers, powered by ABB

Wheels and tyres: 265/35 Zr22 Michelin Pilot Super Sport tyres, bespoke 22-inch forged rims, treaded tyres for all conditions

Brakes: Bespoke AP Racing brake system, Bosch Motorsport ABS management system with 11 settings to suit driver preference

Suspension: Race specification knuckles and springs; spring rates increased by 225 per cent front, 75 per cent rear

Data acquisition: Cosworth dash display, datalogger, data analysis system including video synchronised overlays

Electrics: Lightweight full-race loom; system adapted from Jaguar's Formula E racer

Aerodynamics: Front and rear splitter, rear diffuser and adjustable rear wing. Additional air intakes to help with cooling

Body: lightweight, all-aluminium structure, modified from the production-spec to allow the fitment of the rollcage; some production aluminium body panels to be exchanged with composite panels to save weight

0-60mph: 4.5 seconds

Top speed: 121mph



Austin got to grips with the car in the tricky conditions in the test



The cockpit felt familiar for Austin

WALTER HAYES TROPHY

Last year's victor was the man to beat again. By **Matt Beer**

MASTERFUL MOYERS TAKES ANOTHER WIN



Moyers has taken consecutive wins



Foster (r) was Moyers's main challenger

Until halfway through the 2018 Walter Hayes Trophy final, '17 winner Michael Moyers looked like a man with serenity to spare. A dominant heat poleman and winner on Saturday, a relatively comfortable semi-final winner once Kevin Mills Racing team-mate Michael Eastwell had misfired his way backwards, and then swiftly past yet another KMR Spectrum team-mate – Julian van der Watt – to lead the final from second on the grid.

The potential mishap of a too-dry set-up for the quite-wet track was averted with a last-gasp change completed just as the whistle blew in the assembly area. Moyers had the lead and the pace. Back to back wins looked predestined.

Then coming into a fiendishly slippery Brooklands just before half-distance, Moyers had his only blip of the weekend.

"I screwed up. I probably braked five feet too late. Literally just too late," he said. "The fronts locked and I had a bit of a wobble and I knew I had to go straight on. And my heart just sank."

Even as Moyers was slithering over the run-off area, good news for him was unfolding behind. Jordan Dempsey, another member of Kevin Mills' WHT super team, had been a huge threat early on – quickly recovering from a poor start

to hack through into second by the end of the first lap and then hounding Moyers. Dempsey's overtaking ambitions were only stymied by yellows at the complex after team-mate Roger Orgee was sent spinning into Team USA Scholarship winner Jake Craig's Cliff Dempsey Racing Ray. Once that was cleared with a safety car, two thirds of the race remained and Dempsey's "yes, I can have a go at him now!" intentions were made very clear with a big look down the inside at Brooklands.

But next time around, Dempsey was attacked for second by a charging Joey Foster just as Moyers went off in front of them.

"He [Foster] just understeered into me and biffed me off," said Dempsey. "But it's the Walter Hayes final, I can excuse it."

With Dempsey following Moyers across the run-off, and others losing momentum behind the incident, Moyers rejoined the track to a pleasant surprise: rather than having tumbled down into the midfield, "it was just Joey in front of me".

Moyers also had time to think "where's Joey come from? That's typical Joey..." when he remembered the new leader had started way down in 11th, before quickly deciding he had to immediately attack to avoid getting drawn into a battle that would allow the pack to swamp them.

Foster thought he had Moyers

covered "for a fraction of a second" but "knew I had a fight on my hands" when he saw how much the Spectrum gained on him through Copse.

Onto the back straight, Foster thought "he's not going to go for it straight away, surely?" but that was exactly what Moyers did – diving to the inside at Brooklands and reclaiming first place precisely where he had lost it just one lap earlier.

Still learning about the quick but set-up-sensitive Firman he has recently taken on, Foster's pace would fade as the race went on. He also fell down the order when taken wide at Brooklands by Festival winner Josh Smith, who had charged through from ninth while grappling with tricky brake bias on his Oldfield Van Diemen that led to the brush with Foster and an eventual exit backwards into the Copse gravel.

Foster and Smith going off-course together opened the door for Matt Cowley to appear in second. Back from America to lead the charge of the Dolan team that had dominated the National Championship with the absent Niall Murray, Cowley had already made epic progress from the Last Chance race and was benefiting from a Van Diemen with a dry-leaning set-up on an improving track.

But Moyers had things in hand. Giving himself "take a deep breath every lap, keep calm, I've got it under control" instructions in the cockpit,

he inched into a small advantage as Cowley found himself very busy with the recovering Dempsey.

"I was so close to the dream weekend," said Cowley, having fallen 0.978 seconds shy of victory. "But considering we weren't even in the semi-finals at the start of today to be battling for the lead in the final and coming second was great."

Third-placed Dempsey was left "a bit annoyed" as he – rightly – felt he had the pace to win, but readily conceded that Moyers had been "top class all weekend".

While Mills's crew celebrated a fourth WHT win in eight years, it was quiet next door at Cliff Dempsey Racing – so often KMR's main rival at this event. With Craig taken out, Nico Gruber retiring with damage, and the very rapid James Clarke a disconsolate last after spinning, CDR's best finisher was Team USA's Colin Mullan in 12th.

Two of the three drivers with the best victory shots had scooted straight on at Brooklands on lap one – final polesitter van der Watt and the ever-combative Oliver White. Van der Watt's weekend eventually ended in the pits straight gravel after a tap on the rear through Woodcote, but the South African was still ecstatic about his performance. Promising but low-key on his UK FF1600 debut in last year's Festival, van der Watt returned emboldened from a rookie season in USF2000 and shone.

White's Souley Motorsport Medina was in the thick of things up front all weekend but was beached at Luffield after a collision with Luke Cooper.

Foster made it back to fourth ahead of Cowley's Dolan team-mate Chris Middlehurst and Cooper – who was stymied during the whole event by an engine generously loaned by Swift Cooper team-mate Alan Slater, but originally prepared for recent racing returnee Slater's Historic Nike and not up to challenging for a WHT win.

Scottish champion Ross Martin, last year's WHT runner-up Josh Fisher, Eastwell and lead B-M driver Tom McArthur completed the top 10. McArthur had starred all weekend and spent the early laps as Moyers and Dempsey's main chaser before "a rush of blood to the head" after losing ground at the safety car restart sent him wide and down the order. He also had a slowing-down lap brush with Middlehurst that was investigated by officials, but over which no action was taken.

Fisher was "over the moon" with eighth given that he had started the day near the back of the Progression race grid, but Eastwell couldn't decide how he felt about ninth. That was understandable, his team boss Mills reckoning Eastwell was potentially the fastest of all his drivers in the Sunday afternoon conditions had he been able to start up front.



White's final ended in disappointment as contact with Cooper left him out



Orgee (r) was sent spinning by Craig

'Felix Fisher won after huge slice of luck'

WHT heat report, below

Photos: Steve Jones, Jakob Ebrej



Unexpected names top the heats as Saturday races feature surprising results

If you were going to pick possible heat winners before the weekend, Felix Fisher, Julian van der Watt and Rory Smith were perhaps not at the top of the list. But all three triumphed as the Saturday races produced some surprising results.

Fisher did benefit from a huge slice of luck to win heat two in his TM Racing Ray. Jordan Dempsey and Matt Cowley had a close battle for the lead, with Dempsey holding the advantage into lap seven of the eight. But then into Brooklands the pair collided and spun.

Dempsey described Cowley's move as "stupid", saying: "Matt just went for a gap that wasn't there. An experienced driver would know that it's going to close. I don't know what he was thinking."

Cowley countered: "I darted right and then back on the inside and I think he thought I was on the outside still and didn't leave me enough room."

Cowley and Dempsey weren't the only ones in the wars, as Sebastian Job spun his B-M Van Diemen at Becketts on the opening lap while Tom Brown rolled his Van Diemen RF79 (see news) on the final

tour at the same corner after clashing with Paul Mason's Swift SC94.

Heat three didn't look the most exciting on paper, with it seemingly lacking major contenders, but it ended up being one of the most entertaining. South African van der Watt, Tom McArthur, Scottish champion Ross Martin and Carter Williams (Ray) were close throughout, with van der Watt eventually prevailing after Martin led initially.

"What a heat!" enthused Martin. "That was the first proper race I've had since I raced here last year. In Scotland you don't get races like that."

Smith also had to work hard for his win in heat five, just keeping Team USA driver Jake Craig and three-time Hayes winner Joey Foster at bay.

There was another slightly surprising victor in the final heat too. Festival winner Josh Smith was on a charge on the opening lap, passing Nico Gruber around the outside of Copse and Ollie White at Brooklands. But his lead only lasted until lap three when a missed gear on the pit straight cost him dear and allowed Roger Orgee, who has had

little competitive action this year, through to win narrowly from White.

A less unexpected winner was Chris Middlehurst in the opening heat. Michael Eastwell led the early stages but – just two weeks after his Festival heartbreak – a missed gear on lap four damaged his engine and allowed Middlehurst to get ahead, although the Team Dolan racer reckoned he had the pace to win anyway.

But in a worse position was Josh Fisher. Having already qualified at the back after an oil leak in qualifying, he then spun off at Becketts on the final lap having just passed the ailing Eastwell.

The most predictable heat winner of them all, however, came in the fourth contest as last year's victor Michael Moyers was dominant, with Ivor McCullough's Van Diemen snatching second from Stuart Gough's Oldfield-run machine with two laps remaining.

While Moyers was looking ominously untroubled, Josh Fisher, Job and Cowley all had plenty to do to reach the final.

Stephen Lickorish

HEATS



Cowley's optimistic move on Dempsey cost them both in heat two



Rory Smith was another of the less expected heat winners

To qualify on pole for the Walter Hayes Trophy is some achievement. And to do so when you've only got a fraction of the experience of racing in Formula Ford in the UK of your rivals, is even more impressive. That's what South African Julian van der Watt achieved last weekend. Yes, he has raced in USF2000 this year but it was still a fine result. It was just a shame his final ended in the gravel on the pit straight.



STAR OF THE MEETING

RESULTS

Walter Hayes Trophy

Heat 1: Chris Middlehurst

(Van Diemen LA10)

Heat 2: Felix Fisher

(Ray GR08)

Heat 3: Julian van der Watt

(Spectrum 011C)

Heat 4: Michael Moyers

(Spectrum 011C)

Heat 5: Rory Smith

(Medina Sport JL18)

Heat 6: Roger Orgee

(Spectrum 011C)

Progression race: Josh

Fisher (Van Diemen JL14)

Last Chance race: Matt

Cowley (Van Diemen JL13)

Semi-final 1: Michael

Moyers

Semi-final 2: Julian Van

der Watt

Pre '93 Final for the

Janet Cesar Trophy:

Callum Grant

(Van Diemen RF91)

Pre '82 Final for the

Carl Hamer Trophy: Ed

Thurston (Merlyn Mk20A)

Final: Michael Moyers

(Ray GR08)

HSCC Closed Wheel

Allcomers Race

Vic Nutter (Osella PA3)

BWRDC Ladies' Closed

Wheel

Scratch: Natalie McGloin

(Porsche Cayman S)

Handicap: Katie Milner

(Ginetta G40 GT5)

HSCC Open Wheel

Allcomers Race

David Thorburn (Ralt RT3)

Silverstone Allcomers

Closed Wheel

Richard Wise

(Chiron LMP)

Grant the master of older machinery

As well as finishing a strong 15th in the overall final, Callum Grant also won the Pre '93 final in his Van Diemen RF91.

Grant, who normally races a Merlyn Mk20, finished 12s ahead of Richard Tarling, despite only having driven the car a handful of times before the race. Tarling, in his new Jamun M92, made a superb recovery drive after dropping to the back of the pack from second place on the grid. He had struggled for grip off the startline and had contact at the first corner.

Further back, Pirelli engineer Doug Crosbie's Van Diemen RF89 followed Tarling past a scrapping Jaap Blijleven (Reynard 89F) and Nicolas Belouo (Van Diemen RF91). Crosbie had qualified fourth but was initially passed by the flying Blijleven and Belouo.

The Pre '82 final resulted in another dominant win, from Ed Thurston this time. This was Thurston's first time out in a Merlyn Mk20A, run by Classic Team Merlyn. He was followed quite closely by Mark Armstrong in his Van Diemen RF80 but the Irishman was unable to get within passing range. Rick Morris was third driving a patched-up Royale RP29, seven seconds behind having not quite kept in touch with the front two.

Vic Nutter won the HSCC Closed Wheel Allcomers race, capitalising on erstwhile leader David Wale missing a gear in his Mallock to sneak his red Osella PA3 into the lead on the penultimate lap. Natalie McGloin (Porsche Cayman) won the BWRDC Ladies' race on scratch after a spirited battle with Katie Milner's Ginetta, but Milner won on handicap.

Rachel Harris-Gardiner

Most of the main contenders successfully navigate eventful semi-final contests held in tricky conditions

For those who falter on the first day of the WHT, Sunday morning provides an opportunity for redemption. Unusually, only three drivers of note needed the get out of jail card afforded by the repechage system.

Josh Fisher and Sebastian Job made short work of getting to the front of the Progression race, and were making serene progress to the next stage until contact at Brooklands on the final lap caused Job to spin, but he retained second.

Job tracked Fisher through the Last Chance race, too, but this time behind Matt Cowley, who had earlier outbraked Jack Kemp's Ray at Becketts to take the lead.

The trio safely moved into the semi-finals, but Job's progress – and his first season of racing – ended in the first last-72 race, with an early off at Becketts causing gearbox damage.

One of the heat winners was also eliminated in that contest. A distributor issue prevented Felix Fisher from taking the restart of a race halted when Vincent Jay's Ray became stranded at Maggotts. Before the red flag he had survived a collision with Stuart Gough, who in turn had been touched by Luke



Brooklands spin for Craig allowed van der Watt to win the second semi-final

SEMI-FINALS

Cooper on the approach to Becketts. Gough was also ruled out.

In the first part of the race Michael Eastwell made rapid progress from row three to be second by the end of the opening lap, but he was stymied by a breakage inside a spark plug and he could salvage only 12th.

Meanwhile, Michael Moyers continued his strong campaign with a clear win over Jordan Dempsey – who started from row

six and did most of the hard work before the stoppage – and James Clarke, who was only one place ahead of the Irishman on the original grid.

Most impressive of all, though, was Cowley, up from 28th to take fourth position on the third of four laps in part two of the race, demoting heat one winner Chris Middlehurst, who was struggling for grip as the rain fell.

The second semi-final didn't

result in any high profile departures, but two of the three heat winners were left dissatisfied. The one that wasn't was Julian van der Watt, who sealed the lead at Becketts on the opening lap and held it until he lost it to Jake Craig there on the final lap, only for the American to spin down to 11th position at Brooklands, handing the South African victory.

Ollie White was runner-up from Tom McArthur, Nico Gruber and Josh Smith, but fifth heat winner Rory Smith had looked set to take second for much of the race. On lap seven he edged Joey Foster onto the grass at Copse, causing the Firman to jump out of gear and the Cornishman to drop back to seventh. Two laps later, Smith went wide there himself and spun, eventually recovering to 10th.

Two places ahead of him, Roger Orgee finished eighth having earlier made "the worst start of my career" to drop into the frantic scrap for the minor placings, from which he never emerged. Josh Fisher's progress stuttered, but he survived to take 14th after a bash from a remorseful Colin Mullan.

Ian Sowman

SPORTING SCENE

Photos: mkpics.net

NATIONAL HOT RODS

KEW WINS THE INAUGURAL ANGIE ROWE MEMORIAL SHOWDOWN

National Hot Rods: Hednesford Hill

By Graham Brown

Organiser: Incarace When: November 4 Where: Hednesford Hills Raceway Starters: 33.

Jason Kew swept to victory in the last World Series round of the year as well as lifting the magnificent new Angie Rowe Memorial Trophy to adorn his mantelpiece for a year.

Gavin Murray and Shane Bland followed Kew home in the final, while heat honours fell to Jack Blood and Ralph Sanders.

A packed grid took to the track for the opening heat, the entry swollen by a number of visitors. A steady drizzle made sure the wet track stayed that way, and most cars were on a mixture of slicks and wets.

Shaun Taylor was the first to show with Russ Wilcox, Alistair Lowe and Ivan Grayson all in the vanguard, but there were battles going on throughout the order with a 13-car pack scrapping over the minor places at one point. It was Blood who broke free of the rest to chase down the leaders, and the fired-up Vauxhall man barrelled around the outside to take Wilcox and then Taylor half a lap later.

With the leader pulling clear interest centred on the fight for second. Although well back in the

mix, Rob McDonald and Billy Wood were both charging up the order. With the passing of half distance, McDonald had made it through to sixth and just kept on going, eventually taking the flag second albeit a long way back from Blood, while Colin Smith took third about half a car length up on Andy Lane.

Heat two was just as crowded and equally frantic. Grayson got away first this time and quickly left the early opposition behind. But with the surface still treacherous, experience began to count and there aren't many Hot Rod drivers with more of that than Sanders. The West Countryman held off the other placemen to go second, and then carved into Grayson's lead before going ahead at the East bend.

There was a good deal of three-wide racing going on further back but it was Smith's BMW that broke away from the rest to chase the leader down. In fact, Smith is one of the few who rival Sanders in the experience stakes and he spent the rest of the race whittling down the gap. He was almost on terms starting the last lap but never got any nearer than that, the pair crossing the line well clear of third man Blood.

With Blood having garnered pole for the final, few were betting against him making it a brace of wins and sure enough he shot away

at the green flag, leaving Smith, McDonald, Sanders, Kew and Murray to decide who had correctly guessed the best set-up for the still grip-less and slimy track surface. Wood was going in the right direction for a while until his run stalled and he began to lose places again. Instead it was Kew who doggedly kept the pressure on Smith until he was rewarded with second.

Blood was still romping away at the front, picking off backmarkers easily and generally looking pretty secure. However, Kew inexorably began to close down the leader's advantage until he settled onto Blood's tail shortly before mid-distance. Kew continued his policy of steadily pressurising the opposition until he was finally able to slip down Blood's inside along the back straight.

The new leader had just started to pull away when he was interrupted by the only yellow flag of the whole meeting, Sanders having come to a stop in a very dodgy spot. The closed up order for the restart allowed Murray to get an immediate jump on Blood to snatch second, and had also now brought Bland into the mix, the track conditions seemingly coming to him as the laps ran out, with Smith, McDonald and Blood all falling victim to Bland's late charge.



Kew (above and inset) was the class of the field

RESULTS

Heat one: 1 Jack Blood (Vauxhall Tigra); 2 Rob McDonald (Vauxhall Tigra); 3 Colin Smith (BMW Z4); 4 Andy Lane (Ginetta G40R); 5 Shaun Taylor (Vauxhall Tigra); 6 Ralph Sanders (Vauxhall Tigra); 7 Billy Wood (Vauxhall Tigra); 8 Lewis Shelley

(Vauxhall Tigra). Heat two: 1 Sanders; 2 Smith; 3 Blood; 4 Gavin Murray (Vauxhall Tigra); 5 Jason Kew (Ginetta G40R); 6 Paul Gomm (Vauxhall Tigra); 7 McDonald; 8 Shane Bland (Vauxhall Tigra). Final: 1 Kew; 2 Murray; 3 Bland; 4 McDonald;

5 Smith; 6 Chris Haird (Vauxhall Tigra); 7 Blood; 8 Adam Maxwell (Vauxhall Tigra); 9 Wood; 10 Kym Weaver (Vauxhall Tigra). Standings (after 7/14 rounds): 1 McDonald 285; 2 Kew 269; 3 Haird 267; 4 Murray 248; 5 Wood 231; 6 Weaver 230.

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Photos: Howie Fowler, Tom Banks, Colin Casserley

Croft returns in 2019 as British RX sign-off

Croft will return to being the host venue for the final round of the British Rallycross Championship next season while Silverstone will hold just one round of the series.

The 2019 season will be held over eight rounds in seven weekends starting at Silverstone in March before visiting Lydden Hill for the traditional Easter Bank Holiday Monday round in April.

As with the World Championship, British RX will use the wing paddock for its 2019 round. A now customary double-header weekend will be held at Pembrey in June, where the circuit will be run in opposite directions across the two days.

The Lydden August Bank Holiday stop-off remains on the schedule for round five, before a single-day visit to Pembrey is sandwiched by a pair of Croft events at the conclusion of the season, with the final round taking place at the end of October.

CALENDAR

British Rallycross Championship

DATE	TRACK
March 24	Silverstone
April 22	Lydden
June 22	Pembrey
June 23	Pembrey
August 26	Lydden
September 8	Croft
September 22	Pembrey
October 27	Croft

SPEED SWAPS TO SUBARU FOR ARX

Ex-F1 driver joins Japanese firm for 2019



Speed will have fresh seat

By Hal Ridge

Former Formula 1 driver Scott Speed has switched from the Volkswagen Andretti Rallycross team with which he has claimed four straight titles to drive for Subaru's works rallycross effort in Americas Rallycross next year.

The former Toro Rosso driver won the first Americas Rallycross title in 2018 racing a Volkswagen Beetle, following a hat-trick of crowns in the now defunct American-based Global Rallycross Championship.

He will now join former World Rally Championship drivers Patrik Sandell and Chris Atkinson in the Vermont Sports Car-operated Subaru Rally Team USA squad.

"I'm excited to officially announce my racing plans for the 2019 season," said Speed. "I've raced all over the world—

Formula 1, NASCAR, Formula E, and a four-year rallycross championship run, including the inaugural ARX title this year—and I'm thrilled that the next chapter for me will be here in the US with the Subaru team in the Americas Rallycross series."

The 35-year-old Formula E podium-finisher appeared on the podium at each of the four ARX rounds this season, and won twice. He began his campaign with a second place finish at Silverstone in May to team-mate Tanner Foust, but will switch to a Subaru WRX STI with development led by British engineer Jonathan Carey for next season. The squad is yet to finish on the podium in the new series.

"Subaru is a team on the rise in ARX," said Speed.

"I'm also excited to join Sandell and Atkinson—two of the top drivers in the sport, who showed serious pace in the WRX STI this season."



Cars will return to Cornish roads

Watergate Bay hillclimb to become an annual event as 2019 date is revealed

Organisers of the closed-road Watergate Bay Speed Hillclimb in Cornwall have confirmed that it will become an annual fixture and take place for a second time in 2019.

After a successful first event in September this year, promoters Truro and District Motor Club, Newquay Auto Club and Plymouth Motor Club are also looking at making changes to the hill to offer a greater challenge for

competitors and better viewing for fans throughout the course. Next year's contest is scheduled to take place on September 14/15.

The inaugural event featured 90 drivers each day competing on the 720-metre course which uses the B3276 coast road between Padstow and Newquay.

Truro and District MC competition secretary Dave Brenton, said: "It's very exciting to be able to formally announce

a date for 2019 and the return of the Watergate Bay Speed Hillclimb.

"The entire committee worked tirelessly to ensure the debut event was a success and I was so very proud that we managed to do that considering it was the first event of its kind in the country. We learned very fast and that means we can now take our experiences into next year and make it bigger and better than before."

BRISCA F1

The Wainmans complete podium lock-out at Stoke

BriSCA F1: Stoke

By Colin Casserley

Organiser: Startrax When: November 3 Where: Stoke Starters: 35

Frankie Wainman Jr has one hand on the National Series Shootout trophy after a convincing final win at Stoke. Wainman Jr came to the event tied at the top of the standings with Stuart Smith Jr after last week's events. However, injury meant Smith Jr was forced to miss the meeting and he will not return for the remainder of the contest.

The Stoke result created a first in the 64-year history of stock cars when the top three places were filled by members of the same family. Wainman Jr was followed home by his brother Danny Wainman with Frankie's son Frankie Wainman Junior Jr completing the podium places.

The race was halted on the opening lap when Neil Scriven and Nigel Harray both rolled their machines. At the restart, Sam Jacklin grabbed the lead while the multi-car pile-up slowed the field. Wainman Jr was able to barge his way through the melee and track down Jacklin. He took the lead just after the halfway point.

Danny Wainman battled with Wainman Junior Jr before nudging his way into second in the closing stages.

"It was a hectic start; I had a little bit of luck getting through the pile-up," said winner Wainman Jr. "But when I got into the lead I just tried to drive conservatively and not take any chances. It's great to have the family take the top three spots, but when we get out on the track it is each man for himself."

Frankie Wainman Junior Jr added: "[Frankie] might be my dad but if I had caught him, I would knock him out the way like any other driver. It's just he is faster than me at the moment and I have not had the chance to beat him yet!"

Danny Wainman moves into second in the Shootout points chart ahead of Mat Newson, who had a disastrous meeting at Stoke, failing to qualify for the final. However, with 40 marks separating the top three and a possible 90 points on offer at the Shootout finale on Sunday at Belle Vue, the title is still up for grabs.

Results

1 Frankie Wainman Jr; 2 Danny Wainman; 3 Frankie Wainman Junior Jr; 4 Lee Fairhurst; 5 Karl Hawkins; 6 Paul Hines; 7 Mark Woodhull; 8 Phoebe Wainman; no other finishers.



Wainman leads the race for the silver roof ahead of the Belle Vue finale

BRITISH RALLYCROSS CHAMPIONSHIP

Higgins delivers the victory his title needed

British Rallycross Championship

By Hal Ridge

Organiser: BARC/LHMC When: November 4 Where: Silverstone Starters: 70.

Mark Higgins entered the final round of the British Rallycross Championship at Silverstone knowing victory was required if he was to lift his fourth MSA British title, and his first rallycross crown in his maiden season.

His event started well in Q1 as the Manxman passed both of his title rivals O'Donovan and then Julian Godfrey with two accomplished outbraking moves into the first corner on successive laps to set the best time.

That first turn was then the Albatec Racing driver's undoing in Q2 when he lost his Peugeot 208 as World RX regular Oliver Bennett set the fastest time.

Bennett was again quickest in Q3 as rain hit Silverstone's Stowe rallycross layout, with Higgins second to net a pole position start for the semi-finals.

It was that stage of the event where pace-setting Bennett's run would end as he was forced to stop with the rear of his Ford Fiesta on fire. Returning 2016 British RX champion Dan Rooke took the win.

In semi-final two, the three title protagonists lined up on the front row and it was points leader O'Donovan who made the best start from the outside to take the lead. In slippery conditions, the title contenders had elected for dry tyres and as each of the runners took their compulsory joker laps, Higgins climbed to the front as O'Donovan dropped to third.

That meant O'Donovan would line up on the second row for the final, with



Higgins won the BRX title in fine style

Higgins on pole. The three-time British Rally champion duly took the lead of the final at the start, as O'Donovan made the best launch but was hung out on the outside of the pack and dropped behind Pat Doran in the run to Turn 2.

Doran then climbed another position when Rooke spun at the loose surface hairpin. In an attempt to remove himself from the traffic, O'Donovan took his joker at the first opportunity, followed by Steve Hill, but the pair returned to the main circuit behind Mike Manning's Fiesta and began to drop time.

Having started on the outside of the front row, five-time champion Godfrey joked on lap two and dropped behind Doran as Higgins up front extended his margin with a commanding performance.

With a penultimate-lap joker, Higgins maintained his lead to win his third event of the season and wrap up the championship. Godfrey finished second and just missed out on a sixth crown while O'Donovan's fourth place finish was two places down on where he needed to be to stop Higgins taking the biggest prize of the year. Rooke finished fifth with Hill sixth and Manning father-and-son pairing Mike and Liam Manning completing the finalists. Former Supernational champion

Dave Bellerby made a one-off return to the class and beat regulars Jack Thorne and 2018 champion Tristan Ovenden for victory, while Tom Constantine bettered younger brother Luke to Junior class victory and the title.

Martin Hawkes and Tom Llewellyn claimed their first wins of the season in the BMW Mini and Swift Sport classes, while Ford Escort driver Ray Morgan won the Retro Rallycross final. Chrissy Palmer passed Leo Forster to win the RX150 buggy class and maintain his clean sheet in 2018.

Results

British Rallycross: 1 Mark Higgins (Peugeot 208); 2 Julian Godfrey (Mitsubishi Mirage) +6.075s; 3 Pat Doran (Citroen C4); 4 Ollie O'Donovan (Ford Fiesta); 5 Dan Rooke (Ford Focus); 6 Steve Hill (Mitsubishi Evo).

Supernational: 1 Dave Bellerby (Lotus Exige); 2 Jack Thorne (Renault Twingo) +0.582s; 3 Tristan Ovenden (Renault Clio); 4 Paul Coney (Vauxhall Corsa); 5 Darren Scott (Citroen C2); 6 Vincent Bristow (BMW E46).

Junior: 1 Tom Constantine; 2 Luke Constantine +1.378s; 3 Patrick O'Donovan; 4 Kristiane Hval Eng; 5 Ben Sayer; 6 James Constantine.

Suzuki Swift: 1 Tom Llewellyn; 2 Dominic Fitney +1.898s; 3 Simon Ovenden; 4 Christopher Scott; 5 Niketa Abramov; 6 Max Weatherley.

RX150: 1 Chrissy Palmer; 2 Leo Forster +1.178s; 3 Jami Kalliomaki; 4 Stephen Jones; 5 Hal Ridge; 6 Luke Woodham.

BMW Mini: 1 Martin Hawkes; 2 Dave Ward +1.764s; 3 David Bell; 4 Andrew Hawkes; 5 Bradley Durdin; 6 Frankie Hellwell.

Retro: 1 Ray Morgan (Escort); 2 Rob Gibson (MG Metro 6R4) +0.148s; 3 James Harrold (VW Beetle); 4 Gary Dixon (Vauxhall Astra); 5 John Cross (Lancia Stratos); 6 Paul Easterbrook (Toyota MR2).

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MN does not always agree with opinions expressed in letters

MN SAYS...

A good news week for rallying fans

Two significant steps will bring this branch of motorsport into sharp focus

This is certainly an interesting week for rally fans with two slices of very good news indeed. The first of these is the announcement that the official launch of the 2019 World Rally Championship will take place at the Autosport International Show at the NEC in Birmingham next January on one of the public days. Fans will be able to get up close to the stars and the cars.

Then there is the fact that organisers and officials who have the power to revive the Circuit of Ireland have been to visit a modern round of the WRC. The trip to Rally of Spain by leading personnel, including politicians, means that the door must be ajar when it comes to a willingness to make something happen in Ireland and Northern Ireland.

Given the strength of rallying in England, Northern Ireland and the Republic of Ireland, this is no more than the fans deserve. Each event will get the welcome reception they deserve and go to underline the passion of the home-grown fans.

Matt James, Editor (Twitter: @MattJMNews)



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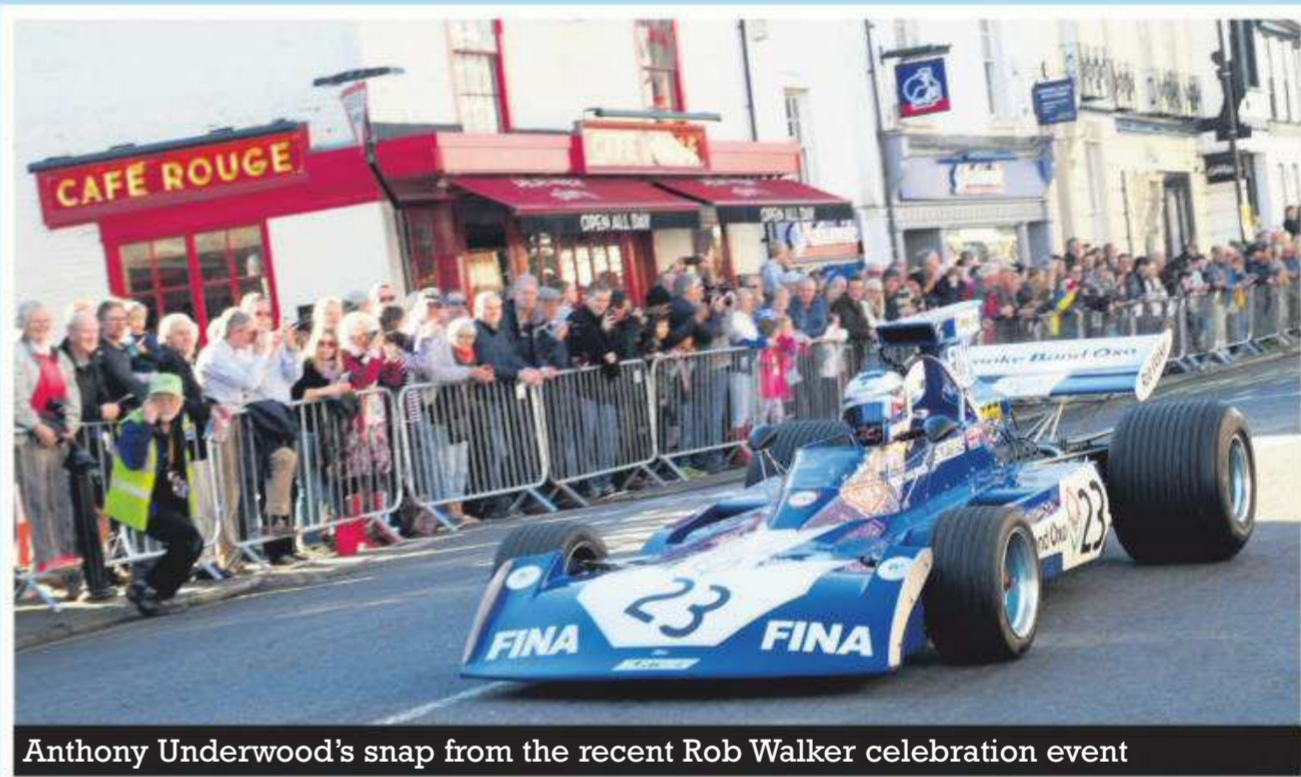
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ART EDITOR MIKE STOKOE'S FAVOURITE OF THE WEEK!

John Henderson captured this classic Jaguar pushing hard at Anglesey recently



Anthony Underwood's snap from the recent Rob Walker celebration event



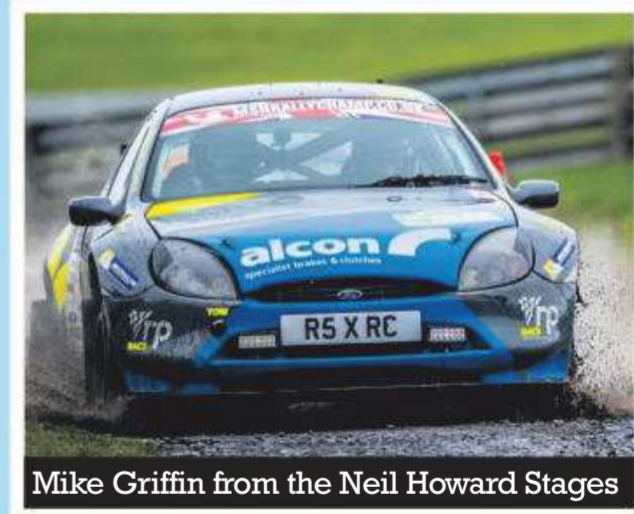
James Lomax's shot of a Fiat 131 flier



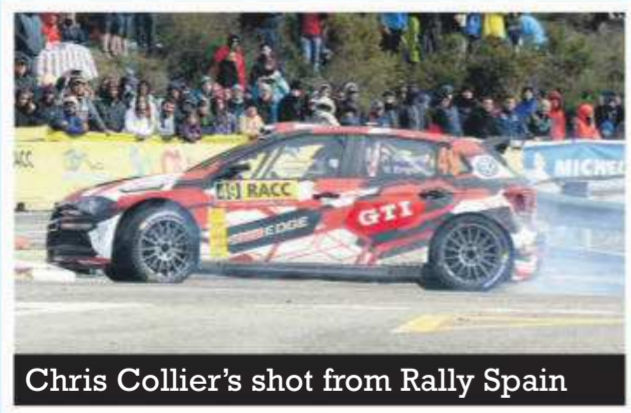
Bob Sketchly was at Bedford car trials



Snetterton action from Justin Ward



Mike Griffin from the Neil Howard Stages



Chris Collier's shot from Rally Spain



Josh Jones's shot from Wales Rally GB



Robert Ingham's Historic Formula Ford 1600 shot from the last round at Silverstone



Richard Salisbury's photograph of the Neil Howard Stages from the 2017 season

GOT AN OPINION?

LET US KNOW: LETTERS@MOTORSPORT-NEWS.CO.UK

TV GUIDE

It's the Brazilian Grand Prix this weekend – an event that has a history of producing some dramatic races. And, ahead of this year's instalment, you can watch a couple of **Classic Brazilian** encounters on Sky Sports F1.

There have been a number of wet races at Interlagos and the 2003 edition was one of the most entertaining and led to a very surprising result – eventually. Catch all the action from a day when even Michael Schumacher was caught out on Wednesday (2100-2315hrs).

Further back in time, there was another tense contest in 1991, as Ayrton Senna produced a herculean effort to win his home race despite severe gearbox woes (Thursday, 2100-2200hrs).

But if you'd prefer more historic cars than that, there's another chance to catch action from the **Grand Prix de Monaco Historique** earlier this year on Saturday (1645-1845hrs, Eurosport 2).

And finally, the **Porsche Supercup** season reached its conclusion in Mexico last month. To find out who took title glory, tune in on Saturday (1315-1345hrs, Eurosport 2).



Even Schumacher (r) was caught out during treacherous Brazilian Grand Prix in 2003

LIVE TV

NASCAR Cup: Phoenix

■ **Race:** Sunday, 1900-2330hrs, Premier Sports



NASCAR will head to Phoenix

Photos: LAT, Martyn's Fotos, Chicane Media, Jakob Ebrej

LISTINGS



Newby won Pokerstars Rally in '17

RACING SATURDAY/SUNDAY

■ Brands Hatch, Kent

MSVR meeting: Formula Vee, FF1600, Victor Meldrew Saloons, Trackday Trophy, Trackday Championship, Radical SR1, Allcomers **Starts** Saturday, racing from 1140hrs (qualifying from 0900hrs) Sunday, racing from 1220hrs (qualifying from 1000hrs) **Admission** adult £16, under 13 free **Web** msv.com **Contact** 0843 453 9000

■ Anglesey, North Wales Race of Remembrance

Starts Saturday, qualifying from 0900hrs, racing from 1500hrs Sunday, racing from 0900hrs **Admission** adult £12 child free **Web** angleseycircuit.com **Contact** 01407 811400

RALLY FRIDAY/SATURDAY

■ Isle of Man

Pokerstars Rally **Starts** 1800hrs **Admission** free **Web** manxautosport.org

SPORTING SCENE SUNDAY

■ Belle Vue, Manchester

BriSCA F1 **Starts** 1530hrs **Admission** TBA **Web** brisca.com

Details correct at time of press but please check before travelling

LIVE F1



F1's next stop is Brazil

Brazilian Grand Prix Sky Sports F1 HD coverage

■ **Drivers' press conference:** Thursday, 1300-1330hrs

■ **FP1:** Friday, 1245-1450hrs
 ■ **FP2:** Friday, 1645-1850hrs
 ■ **FP3:** Saturday, 1345-1515hrs

1345-1515hrs

■ **Qualifying:** Saturday, 1655-1845hrs

■ **Race:** Sunday, 1630-1930hrs

Channel 4 HD highlights

■ **Qualifying:** Saturday, 2045-2215hrs

■ **Race:** Sunday, 2230-0045hrs

NEXT WEEK

OUT WEDNESDAY, NOVEMBER 14

CAN HAMILTON ADD TO HIS 2018 SUCCESSES?



FULL BRAZILIAN GRAND PRIX REPORT

BILLY WHIZZES INTO RALLYING



F3 RACER MONGER TRIES SPECIALLY-ADAPTED RALLY CAR

A SEASON FULL OF SURPRISES



WE LOOK BACK ON THE BTCC SUPPORT SERIES IN 2018

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EDITORIAL

Tel: +44 (0) 20 3 405 8149

Like us on Facebook: search 'Motorsport News'

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Web: www.motorsport-news.co.uk

Editor Matt James

matt.james@motorsport-news.co.uk

Deputy Editor Stephen Lickorish

stephen.lickorish@motorsport-news.co.uk

Group National Editor Jack Benyon

jack.benyon@motorsport.com

Junior Journalist Stefan Mackley

stefan.mackley@motorsport-news.co.uk

Group Rallying Editor David Evans

david.evans@autosport.com

Art Editor Mike Stokoe

mike.stokoe@motorsport-news.co.uk

Office Manager Joanne Grove

joanne.grove@motorsport.com

CONTRIBUTING EDITORS

Historics editor Paul Lawrence

Rallycross editor Hal Ridge

Grand Prix columnists James Roberts, Stuart Codling

Origination/Repro Dave Sternberg

Photography LAT Images: Steven Tee, Glenn Dunbar, Sam Bloxham, Zak Mauger

SUBSCRIPTIONS/BACK ISSUES

Motorsport News, FREEPOST, 3 Queensbridge, Northampton NN4 7BF

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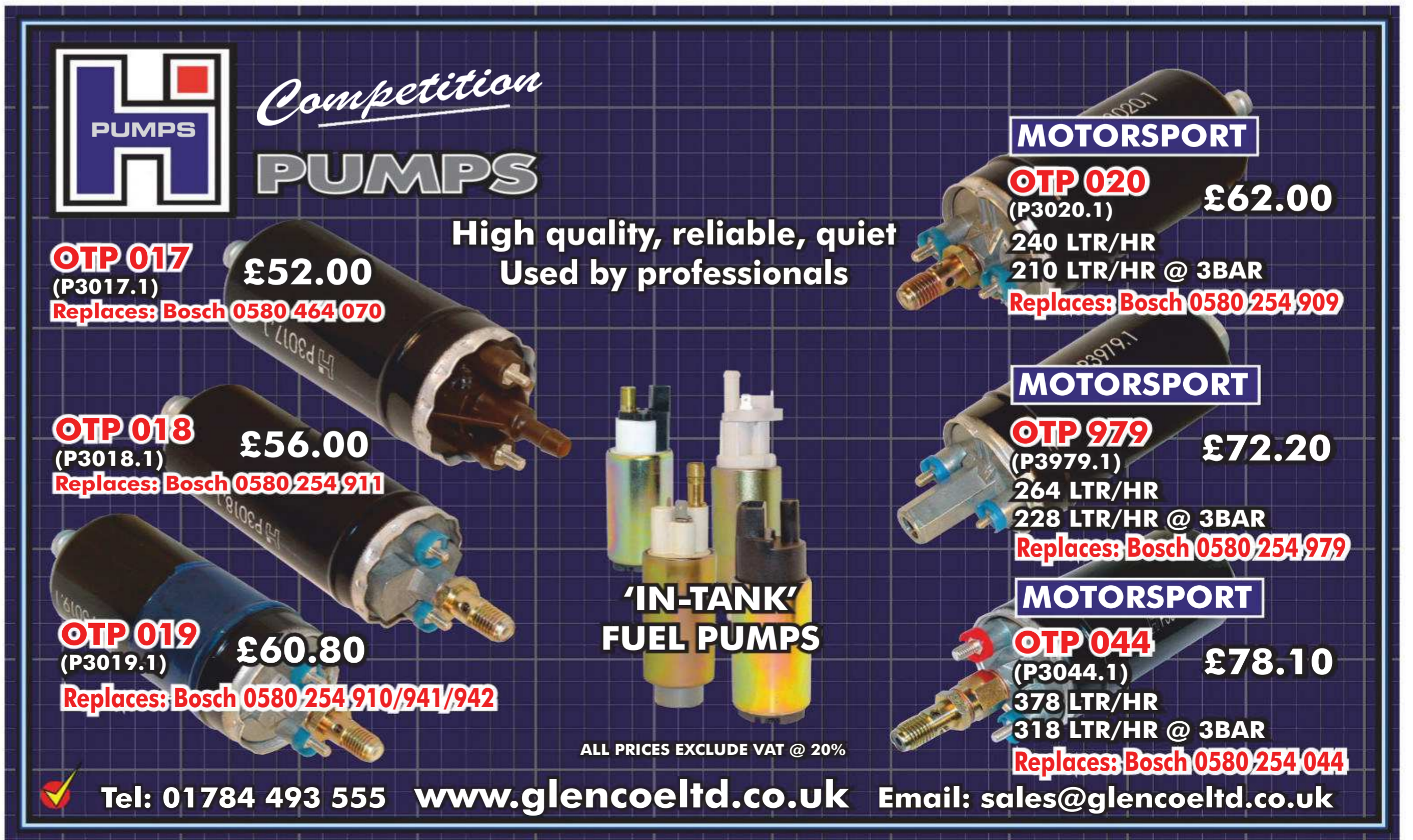
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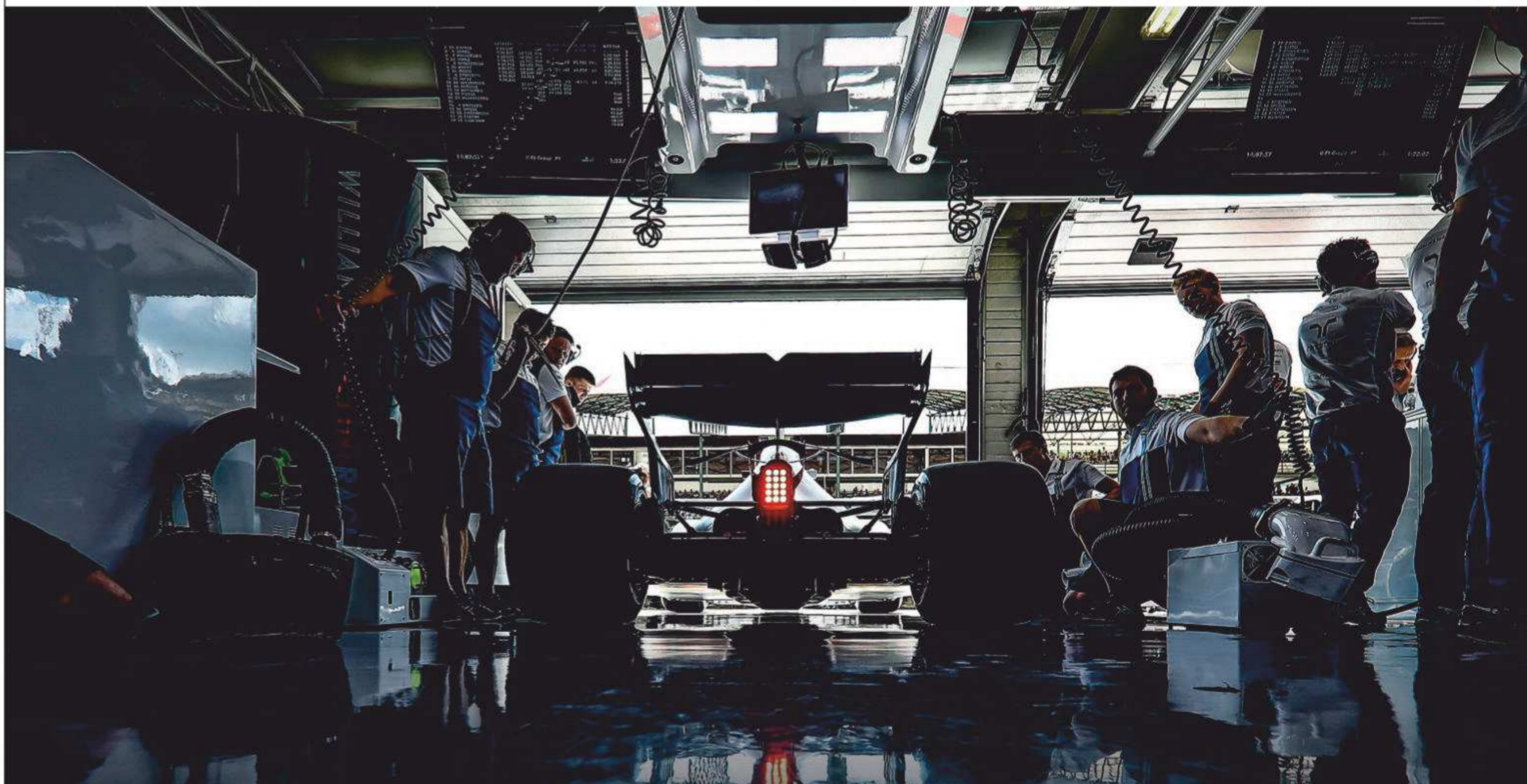
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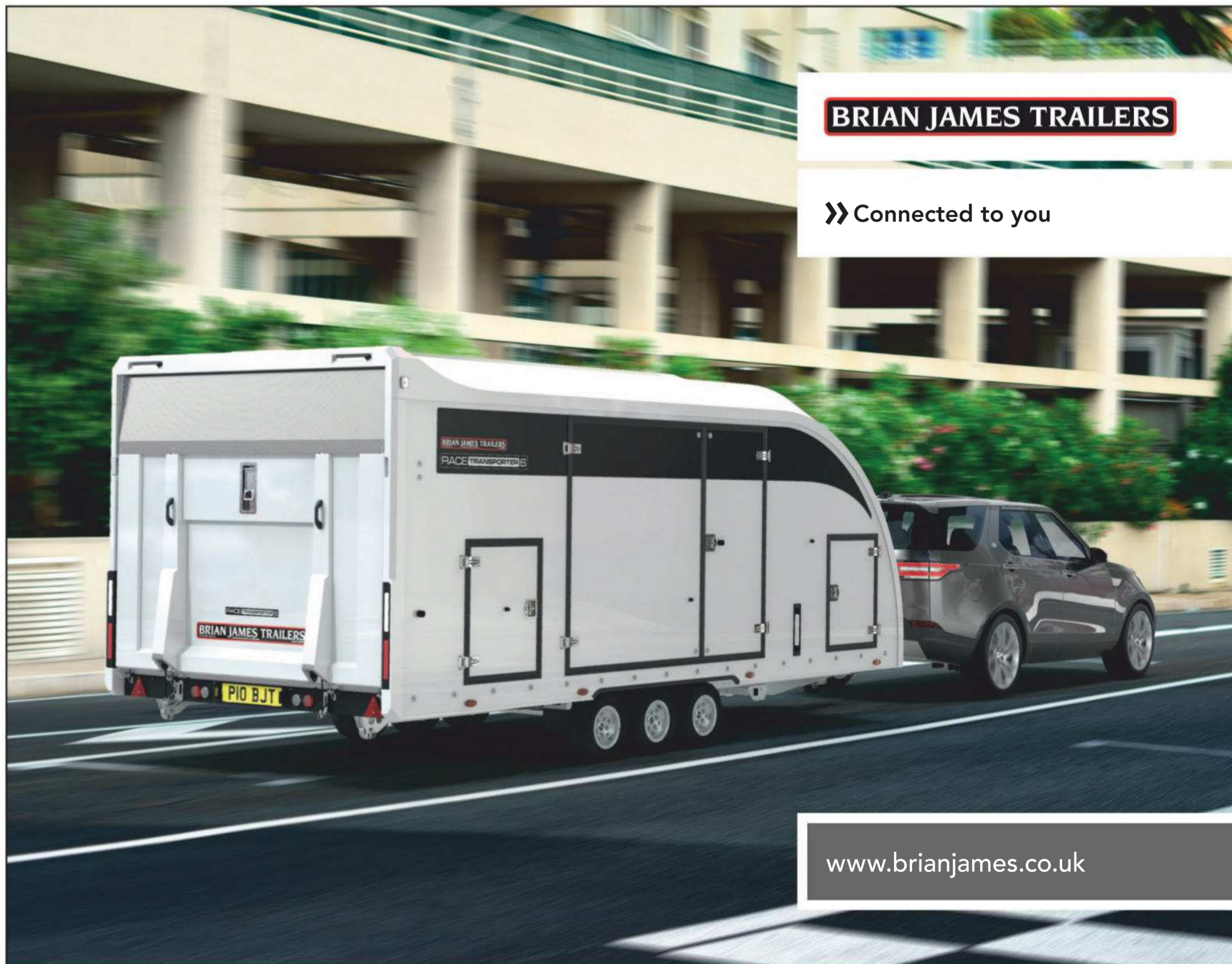
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THIS CLASSIFIED SECTION WAS BROUGHT TO YOU BY:

Ben Kavanagh
 Classified Advertising
 T: +44 (0) 20 3405 8109
 E: ben.kavanagh@motorsport.com

Ben Webster
 Senior Production Coordinator
 T: +44 (0) 20 3405 8131
 E: ben.webster@motorsport.com