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19/20	DEC	ASCARI /E
16/17	JAN	ASCARI /E
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23/24	JAN	AUTODROMO PORTIMÃO /P
25/26	JAN	AUTODROMO PORTIMÃO /P
30/31	JAN	ASCARI /E
02/03	FEB	CIRCUITO IBERIA 9KM /E
13/14	FEB	ASCARI /E
16/17	FEB	AUTODROMO PORTIMÃO /P
27/28	FEB	ASCARI /E
03/04	MAR	MOTORLAND ARAGÒN /E
(tba)	MAR	BARCELONA CATALUNYA /E
(tba)	MAR	CIRCUIT PAUL RICARD /F



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23/24 JAN	2021	AUTODROMO PORTIMÃO/P
16/17 FEV	2021	AUTODROMO PORTIMÃO/P
03/04 MAR	2021	MOTORLAND ARAGÒN/E

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AUTOSPORT

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15 OCTOBER 2020

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'I never thought I'd be anywhere near Michael. It's an incredible honour'

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- How the record has been broken
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Hamilton's finest F1 achievement yet?

Did you ever think that Michael Schumacher's Formula 1 wins tally of 91 would be matched? All records are there to be broken, of course, but Schuey's (then) unprecedented period of domination with Ferrari, combined with longer seasons (and careers) than in the past did make the victory benchmark look like one of F1's toughest.

When Schumacher took his final win in the 2006 Chinese Grand Prix he had 40 more than the driver in second (Alain Prost) and Fernando Alonso, the next-highest active driver, had only 14 wins.

Lewis Hamilton arrived the following year, just as Schumacher left (the first time). Although it was obvious from his first race in F1 that he was going to be one of *the* talents of his generation, his trials and tribulations at McLaren meant it didn't look like he would be challenging the record. Sebastian Vettel seemed set to at Red Bull.

But Hamilton's switch to Mercedes and the arrival of the turbo-hybrid era heralded a period of sustained success that seems set to surpass Schumacher. It's a remarkable achievement, one deserving of our traditional green cover for outstanding British achievement.

Kimi Raikkonen surpassed another milestone in Germany. The 2007 world champion made his 323rd F1 start, overtaking previous record-holder Rubens Barrichello. In next week's issue we'll catch up with the Finn to ask how he feels about F1 after nearly two decades – and pick out his best races with some of those that know him best.





Kevin Turner
Editor
kevin.turner@autosport.com

NEXT WEEK
22 OCTOBER
Kimi Raikkonen special
We speak to F1's most experienced driver, 323 races and counting

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Andy Hone/Motorsport Images

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Will it be the rolling Welsh hills, as seen here? Or will it be the rolling Northern Irish hills?

RALLY GB BACK FOR 2021, BUT IT COULD BE IN IRELAND

WORLD RALLY CHAMPIONSHIP

Rally GB has been given hope of returning to the World Rally Championship calendar for 2021 after being awarded a provisional August date, but it will require approximately £2million of local government funding.

Britain's date on the 12-round schedule is pencilled in for 19-22 August, but its long-term backer the Welsh government has cooled its support for the event in recent years, and the economic impact of coronavirus could see the break clause in its contract triggered one year early. Meanwhile, a vigorous campaign has been fought to move the rally to Belfast, led by local rally kingpin Bobby Willis and North Antrim MP Ian Paisley.

With Paisley's intervention, conversations have been ongoing between the Department of Culture, Media and Sport, the Northern Ireland Office and the Northern Ireland Executive but remain confidential.

Motorsport UK CEO Hugh Chambers said: "Motorsport UK is very grateful to see the United Kingdom is included in the 2021 WRC calendar and thus given more time to secure more funding for next year's event which, in the current climate, is inevitably taking longer than we hoped to resolve. We hope to make an announcement as swiftly as possible, however as you might imagine, government time and resources are currently focused on many more urgent priorities."

Croatia is on the schedule after narrowly missing out on an event in the revised 2020 calendar. Estonia's efforts to revive the WRC's 2020 season last month, when the event was given world championship status in the wake of the coronavirus-enforced reshuffle, are rewarded with a date pending confirmation of government support.

The provisional schedule remains Eurocentric, with flyaway rounds held back to the end of the year. WRC Promoter managing director Jona Siebel said: "In developing the 2021 FIA World Rally Championship calendar, we had to take pragmatic and strategic decisions on the continuing impact on global travel next year. We could not foresee any long-haul events being held in a safe manner for the public, or for our large group of travelling staff, suppliers, competitors and media, for the first five months of 2021. I'm confident the 12 rallies chosen for next year will not let us down."

In order to preserve a full calendar, a reserve list of European events has been drawn up led by Turkey, Latvia, Belgium, Greece and Monza, with an additional flyaway possible in Argentina.

RALLY MONZA ADDED TO 2020 SCHEDULE

Meanwhile, this year's WRC will conclude with a short additional round based at the Monza Rally Show — the ACI Monza Rally will be held on 4-6 December.

The Monza Rally Show, which was founded in 1978, is traditionally a star-studded event for the close season. Regular performers include MotoGP superstar Valentino Rossi, who is also the most successful driver in its history with seven wins.

In order to meet the minimum distance for a WRC short-format schedule of 200km, the first and third days will be based within the Autodromo Nationale


McKLEIN

HAMILTON WANTS INTERLAGOS, NOT DEAD TREES

FORMULA 1

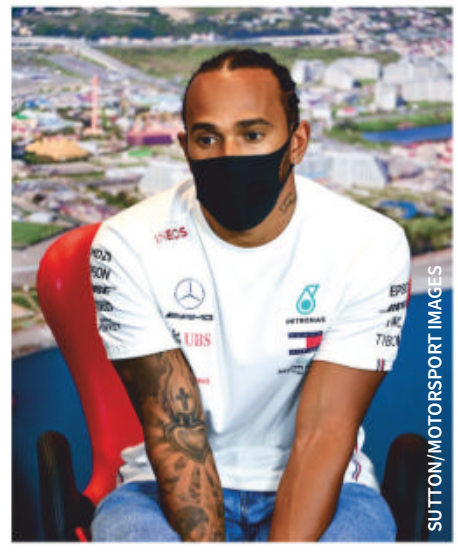
Lewis Hamilton has spoken out against the deforestation of an area of Rio de Janeiro to build a new Formula 1 track.

F1 is planning for the venue to replace the historic Interlagos facility as the home of the Brazilian Grand Prix, and the project has the support of environmentalist-enraging populist ultra-right-wing president Jair Bolsonaro. The construction of the new track at Deodoro, a disused military base, would involve the felling of 70,000 trees, resulting in mounting public opposition to the proposal.

Hamilton has been vocal in recent years about the importance of environmentalism. "My personal opinion is that the world doesn't need a new circuit," he said. "I heard that it's potentially going to be sustainable. But the most sustainable thing you can do is not tear down any trees, particularly in a time where we're fighting a pandemic, and there continues to be a global crisis around the world. With deforestation and everything, I don't think it's a smart move. It's not something I personally support."

Race promoter Rio Motorsports said in a statement: "The felling of these 70,000 trees will be compensated by planting another 700,000 trees, part of them within the land itself, which will make the area with vegetation larger than it is today."

LUKE SMITH


SUTTON/MOTORSPORT IMAGES

2021 WRC CALENDAR

RD	VENUE	DATE
1	**Monte Carlo Rally**	21-24 January
2	**Rally Sweden**	11-14 February
3	**Rally Croatia**	22-25 April
4	**Rally Portugal**	20-23 May
5	**Rally Italy**	3-6 June
6	**Safari Rally**	24-27 June
7	**Rally Estonia**	15-18 July
8	**Rally Finland**	29 July-1 August
9	**Rally GB**	19-22 August
10	**Rally Chile**	9-12 September
11	**Rally Spain**	14-17 October
12	**Rally Japan**	11-14 November


Wales Rally GB 2019
McKLEIN


McKLEIN

di Monza, while the second will be spent on closed road stages in the local area.

"In the current situation, we're developing new approaches and ACI Rally Monza Italia is a great illustration of this," said FIA Rally Director Yves Matton. "This new concept could eventually help bring the WRC to countries or regions where new formats are required."

Six-time WRC champion Sebastien Ogier (above) gave his qualified support for the addition of Monza to the schedule. "Well, I think we have had a short season so every event we can have is good news," said the Toyota star. "Hopefully that will be confirmed and that will really happen because we see worldwide that the situation is not that easy right now."

NICK GARTON



Mercedes rules out Red Bull engine supply

FORMULA 1

Mercedes has ruled out supplying Red Bull with Formula 1 engines following Honda's planned exit at the end of 2021.

With Honda announcing its plan to exit F1 at the start of this month, Red Bull and sister team AlphaTauri are now in search of a new engine supplier from 2022. The teams appear to have limited options, as just three engine manufacturers remain in F1.

Renault has said that it would be open to rekindling a partnership with Red Bull, but Mercedes has categorically confirmed it would not be interested in working with its closest on-track rival.

When asked by Autosport if a deal was of interest, Mercedes F1 boss Toto Wolff ruled it out for "various reasons".

"The main [reason] being that we are supplying four teams including us," said Wolff. "We are almost in a state where we cannot make power units for all of us, so there is no capacity. But I have no doubt that Helmut [Marko] will have a Plan B, as he said, and probably doesn't need to rely on any of the current power-unit suppliers."

This would entail Red Bull and AlphaTauri continuing with the existing Honda engines, but with a different badge.

Red Bull team boss Christian Horner said that Wolff had "made it clear that Mercedes is not keen to supply an engine", therefore limiting the team "to two current suppliers in the sport". He added that Red Bull had to "take time to do the necessary investigation and due diligence" about its options.

Mercedes was previously in talks with Red Bull about an engine supply when it was trying to cut ties with Renault back in 2015, only for the move to be rejected by the German manufacturer's board.

LUKE SMITH

P18 EIFEL GP ACTION

Alonso returns to cockpit for Renault F1 test

FORMULA 1

Fernando Alonso made his first Formula 1 track appearance since the announcement of his Renault return at Barcelona on Tuesday of this week.

The two-time world champion was driving the current Renault F1 car in a promotional/filming day, with 100km of running allowed.

"It's going to be an amazing feeling, after two years not driving an F1," said Alonso – whose last outing came with McLaren in April 2019 – before the test.

"I think it's going to be like a new beginning, getting surprised about the speed of the car, the braking performance, the cornering speed, a lot of things that will surprise me once again.

"It is very special to be back in Barcelona. I remember my first test with Benetton in the year 2000 was in Barcelona, and it's going to be in the same circuit 20 years after that first test, it's going to be one of the last opportunities with the car name on the Renault brand, because next year it's going to change."

Alonso, who has spent time at the Renault factory in recent weeks, returns to the F1 grid in 2021 alongside Esteban Ocon, with the team renamed Alpine.





Schumacher, Ilott in FP1 limbo

FORMULA 1

Ferrari is set to wait until December's Abu Dhabi Grand Prix before handing Mick Schumacher and Callum Ilott their Formula 1 free practice run-outs after poor weather forced the cancellation of their planned debuts at last weekend's Eifel GP at the Nurburgring.

Ferrari Driver Academy members Schumacher and Ilott were set to drive for Alfa Romeo and Haas respectively, but rain and fog meant the medical helicopter was unable to take off from the Nurburgring and all Friday running was cancelled, dashing their hopes of getting out on track.

The wait for their belated FP1 debuts will be a long one for Formula 2 championship leader Schumacher and title rival Ilott (below), because the roster of upcoming circuits complicates practice running for teams. All of the next three races are taking place on tracks that have not hosted F1 recently — the Algarve Circuit, Imola and Istanbul Park — while Imola's Emilia Romagna GP weekend will also take place across just two days. As a result, Ferrari F1 boss Mattia Binotto does not expect to be able to reschedule their planned running until the end of the season.

"It's obviously a shame for them, it would have been a great opportunity here to make their debuts in F1," said Binotto. "Obviously we may try to rearrange in the next races, but it will be very difficult. I think the next one, Portimao, a new circuit for everyone, for F1, so I think our top drivers will need to practice as well.

"We've got Imola, which is only a Saturday and Sunday, and then to Turkey again, 'new' circuit. And then it's Bahrain, where they've got their F2 races, and to conclude the championship, so they need to be focused. It is very likely the next opportunity now will be Abu Dhabi and not earlier."

LUKE SMITH



IN THE HEADLINES

VETTEL'S ASTON SHARES

Four-time Formula 1 world champion Sebastian Vettel has acquired shares in Aston Martin ahead of his move to the marque for the 2021 season, when Racing Point will adopt Aston nomenclature. "If you're asking whether I have shares in the company, I have, but how much I think it's a secondary thing, and I won't talk about it," he said.

GRAVEL TRAPS FOR SPA

Belgian Grand Prix venue Spa is to undergo an €80million renovation in time for the 2022 season, which will mean gravel traps being installed in place of the existing asphalt runoff areas. The project is to prepare for the return of motorcycle racing to the venue, with the gravel traps set to be put in place at La Source, Raidillon, Les Combes, Stavelot and Blanchimont. Current runoff areas will be extended in several places.

WESTBROOK FOR AM ASTON

British sportscar star Richard Westbrook will remain with the factory Aston Martin Racing squad for the final round of the World Endurance Championship in Bahrain next month, but it will be in the GTE Am class. Westbrook joined Nicki Thiim and Marco Sorensen in their Vantage GTE at the Le Mans 24 Hours, but the Danes will revert to being a duo for Bahrain. Westbrook now joins Ross Gunn and Paul Dalla Lana in the Am Vantage, because previous car occupants Augusto Farfus and Darren Turner have clashing commitments in the rescheduled Sebring 12 Hours.

W SERIES RACER IN BTCC

W Series racer Jess Hawkins will make her British Touring Car Championship debut at Snetterton next week behind the wheel of the Power Maxed Racing Vauxhall Astra. Hawkins has already tested the car at the Norfolk venue, with the team reporting to be impressed. Ex-Ginetta and Radical racer Jac Constable occupied the car last weekend at Croft, but was taken ill on Saturday night and did not make it to the grid.

CINDRIC GETS CUP CHANCE

Current NASCAR Xfinity Series runner-up Austin Cindric will graduate to the Cup in 2022. The son of Penske president Tim Cindric will replace Matt DiBenedetto at Penske satellite team Wood Brothers Racing.


SRO/DIRK BOGAERTS PHOTOGRAPHY

Porsche stars back together in bid for repeat Spa success

SPA 24 HOURS

Porsche factory drivers Kevin Estre, Michael Christensen and Richard Lietz will return to the Spa 24 Hours in a bid to become the first repeat winners of the Belgian enduro for more than a decade. The World Endurance Championship regulars will race for Hong Kong entrant KCMG after winning last year's event with GPX Racing.

The trio have been called up to drive one of two Porsche 911 GT3-Rs fielded by KCMG (above), which also contested last month's Nurburgring 24 Hours with factory backing. They will contest the double-points round of the GT World Challenge Europe Endurance Cup on 24-25 October alongside Alexandre Imperatori, Edoardo Liberati and Josh Burdon, who all raced for the team at the 'Ring.

"It's good to be back to defend our crown at Spa with the three of us," said Estre. "We said at the beginning of the year that we'd like to go back together, and Porsche always likes to keep its driver line-ups together."

The preparations for Estre and his team-mates have been limited, just like last year, as they bid for the first back-to-back victories at Spa since Eric van de Poele and Michael Bartels triumphed in a Vitaphone Maserati MC12 in 2005-06, sharing with Timo Scheider in 2005 and Andrea Bertolini in 2006. Not since 1979-80, when brothers Jean-Michel and Philippe Martin won driving for Ford, has the same line-up triumphed at Spa in consecutive years.

"It's going to be very similar to last year when we only had one test day to prepare for the race with a team we didn't know," said Estre, who drove together with his team-mates on one day of the official pre-event test last month. "It's definitely one of the hardest races in the world but we can fight for the overall win."

Estre, Christensen and Lietz have joined an eight-strong line-up of Porsches in the pro class at Spa, which makes the marque the strongest numerically in the top division.

Dubai entrant GPX is now a regular in the top category of the GTWCE enduros and will field a familiar-looking line-up. Works drivers Patrick Pilet, Mathieu Jaminet and Matt Campbell will share one car as usual, while Louis Deletraz will make his second appearance of the season alongside Romain Dumas and Thomas Preining. Dennis Olsen, who drove for GPX at the Nurburgring GTWCE enduro in September, has moved across to the Frikadelli Porsche squad and will drive alongside Timo Bernhard and Frederic Makowiecki.

Two-time Le Mans 24 Hours winner Bernhard, who back in June scratched plans for his own team to race at Spa, will be making his second GTWCE appearance of the season despite announcing his retirement from the cockpit at the end of last year.

Rowe Racing also takes two Porsches to the race, with Nick Tandy – runner-up in 2019 with the squad – partnering fellow factory drivers Earl Bamber and Laurens Vanthoor in one of the cars.

The pro class comprises exactly half the 56-car Spa entry this year, with cars from 10 of the 11 manufacturers represented in the race. A total of 39 cars are registered to score points in the Intercontinental GT Challenge, of which the race is round three of four.

GARY WATKINS

The rule change that wasn't...

WEC

New rules on driver gradings in LMP2 for the World Endurance Championship were revealed last week – only for the announcement that followed the latest meeting of the FIA World Motor Sport Council to turn out to be incorrect.

Existing regulations that mandate just one silver or bronze-rated driver in each P2 line-up will remain unchanged, whereas the WMSC bulletin suggested that from next year either two silvers or a bronze would be mandated. A WEC spokesperson confirmed that the announcement was "premature" and that "there is more news to come".

It appears certain that there isn't going to be any change, though an amateur class or trophy will be instigated for next year's WEC and the sister European Le Mans Series based, it seems, on the configuration of the line-ups stated last week.

What exactly happened at the WMSC isn't entirely clear, but the WEC organisation has been pushing for a mandatory bronze for some time. The proposal was voted down by the teams for a second time at the Spa round in August, at which point the silver-silver idea was raised. The idea gathered some support and was then put to the ELMS P2 teams ahead of last weekend's Monza round and was rejected on an email vote.

Maintaining the status quo makes sense, according to Richard Dean, whose United Autosports squad added the ELMS crown in Italy on Sunday to its WEC P2 title. "Limiting the driver permutations would limit the market, and limiting your potential pool of customers is not good for any business," he explained. "Putting all the pieces of the jigsaw together is hard enough. It doesn't look like there is anything wrong with a class that had 24 cars at Le Mans this year."

New rules, including the introduction of an amateur trophy, should be firmed up at the next WMSC in December.

GARY WATKINS


EHRHARDT/MOTORSPORT IMAGES

Thompson's Croft scare

BTCC


JEP

British Touring Car Championship Audi driver Bobby Thompson walked away from an enormous barrel-roll at Croft last weekend, and is planning to be back on the grid for next week's Snetterton round pending the all-clear from medical checks.

Thompson had made a breakthrough in form at the North Yorkshire circuit. He drove his AmD-run Trade Price Cars Racing Audi S3 to a time that would have been good enough for pole position in a wet qualifying session, only for that lap to be deleted for track limits. His second best was good enough for fifth on the grid, and he held his own among the BTCC heavy-hitters to claim eighth in each of the first two races.

Third-year BTCC racer Thompson was battling for eighth again in the final race with the Hyundai of Senna Proctor when the accident began to unfold on the run to the Jim Clark Esses. The Audi went onto the grass on the right-hand side of the track, slid sideways, and was then launched into the roll when it hit a ploughed section.

"I tried to get a nose on the Hyundai, and he was coming across," Thompson told Autosport. "I had to take to the grass, tried to get back on the circuit, and found myself in the farmer's field knee deep in mud.

"I've had some medical checks, but I'm not cleared yet for Snetterton [the next round on 24-25 October] – I'll need to get checked and scanned this week."

AmD boss Shaun Hollamby explained that the car is undergoing surgery this week at BTCC bodyshell specialist Willie Poole Motorsport. "Bobby had the best weekend I've ever seen him driving," said Hollamby. "He was very relaxed, not getting stressed, and it was good to see him smiling all weekend."

Despite the crash, Thompson retains the lead in the Jack Sears Trophy sub-class, for drivers who have never stood on an overall podium before the current season, with two rounds remaining.

MARCUS SIMMONS

P50 BTCC CROFT DRAMA


JEP

Foster steps up to Euroformula Open

EUROFORMULA OPEN

BRDC British Formula 3 Championship contender Louis Foster is to make his Euroformula Open debut at Spa this weekend.

The Briton, who competes in British F3 with Double R Racing, will remain with the Woking team for the step up to the Dallara 320, and his season-long team-mate Benjamin Pedersen will join him in the sister car in Belgium.

Double R began the season with Ayrton Simmons, but the Brit has run out of budget.

Foster, third in last year's British F4 Championship, has never driven at Spa, but he has had a test in the 320 and also had an outing in its F317 F3 predecessor last winter.

Double R's EFO team manager Piers Hunnisett is excited about the new recruits. "It's great for us to be back to a two-car line-up at Spa, especially as the drivers are progressing from our British F3 team," said the 1992 Formula Vauxhall Lotus champion. "Obviously it's in at the deep end for both drivers with only the Friday test to adapt to the new car and circuit, but they are looking forward to a new challenge."

MARCUS SIMMONS



Hoggard stars in maiden FIA F3 test outing



FORMULA MOTORSPORT LIMITED

FORMULA 3

Johnathan Hoggard, the 2019 Aston Martin Autosport BRDC Young Driver of the Year Award winner, proved one of the stars of last week's two-day post-season FIA Formula 3 Championship test at Barcelona when he topped one of the sessions and set the fastest time of any category debutant over the four sessions.

Hoggard turned out for Swiss team Jenzer Motorsport, and went quickest on the second afternoon, when most teams concentrated on race runs. But in the morning session, when the majority went for qualifying-style efforts, he was fifth fastest, and ended the test in the same position overall on combined times.

As preparation for the test, he had a runout with Double R Racing's Euroformula Open team at Pembrey.

"I struggled quite a lot in the first day – the tyres are so difficult to try and learn and understand in such a short amount of time and obviously Barcelona is a track that kills the tyres quite quickly," said Hoggard. "So you have two push laps on a qualifying run and it was always going to be your first push lap that was the best. It's just making sure you maximised all the potential out of the car and the tyres on that lap without making the mistakes.

"It was a case of looking and learning where I could improve and then we went out and did really well on the second day."

Fastest time overall was set by Hoggard's former British F3 rival Clement Novalak with Italian team Trident, while Matteo Nannini headed the opening day with Campos Racing before switching to ART Grand Prix. Jack Doohan (Trident) also topped a session.

Category dominator Prema Racing ran Red Bull Junior Dennis Hauger and Formula Regional points leader Arthur Leclerc, while David Schumacher and Roman Stanek did one day each in the Italian squad's other car.

MARCUS SIMMONS AND STEFAN MACKLEY

TOP 10 TIMES

POS	DRIVER (TEAM)	TIME
1	**Clement Novalak** (Trident)	1m31.989s
2	**Jack Doohan** (Trident)	1m32.147s
3	**Matteo Nannini** (Campos)	1m32.170s
4	**Igor Fraga** (Hitech)	1m32.290s
5	**Johnathan Hoggard** (Jenzer)	1m32.328s
6	**Olli Caldwell** (ART)	1m32.332s
7	**Jake Hughes** (HWA)	1m32.427s
8	**Victor Martins** (ART)	1m32.457s
9	**Dennis Hauger** (Prema)	1m32.472s
10	**Calan Williams** (Jenzer)	1m32.478s

Bowyer calls time on his racing career

NASCAR

NASCAR Cup veteran Clint Bowyer will retire from racing and switch to TV commentary when his Stewart-Haas Racing contract expires at the end of this season.

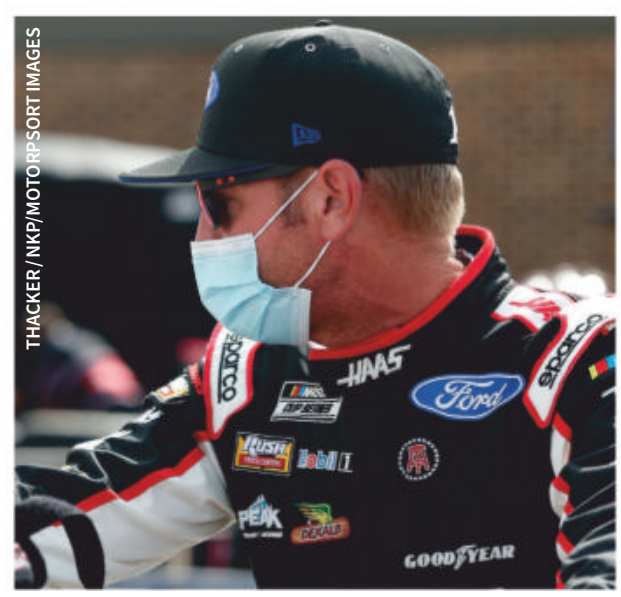
The 41-year-old has raced full-time at the Cup level since 2006, winning 10 times in 537 starts with Richard Childress Racing, Michael Waltrip Racing and SHR. He was third in the Cup in 2007 and second in 2012, and has been a regular playoff finalist. He last won a race in 2018.

In a statement posted on social media, Bowyer said: "In 2021 my suit will no longer be fireproof" and paid tribute to the people who have supported his career.

"I've sat in race cars prepared by some of the very best men and women the sport has to offer, for world class organisations," said Bowyer. "Sharing Victory Lane with the people representing Richard Childress Racing, Kevin Harvick Inc, Michael Waltrip Racing and Stewart-Haas Racing is what it's all about!

"The opportunity to have won races with all three manufacturers [Chevrolet, Ford and Toyota] is something I'm proud of.

NICK DEGROOT AND JAMES NEWBOLD



THACKER / NKP / MOTORSPORT IMAGES



Huff wins tin-top title in Sweden

SCANDINAVIAN TOURING CAR CUP

Newly crowned Scandinavian Touring Car champion Rob Huff says he is happy to stay where he is for 2021, but that he and the Lestrup Racing Team with which he claimed the title last weekend are also eyeing race events further afield.

Huff was forced out of the World Touring Car Cup for 2020 owing to VW's withdrawal, but found a berth in Sweden with the Lestrup squad's Golf GTIs, and entered last weekend's Knutstorp finale in a tight three-way title battle against Robert Dahlgren and Tobias Brink.

Huff won the opening race, before Dahlgren took his PWR Racing Cupra to victory in race two, leaving the two level on points for the finale — and together on the fourth row of the reversed grid, with the Audi RS3 of outside title shot Brink right in front of the pair of them.

"It's been incredibly tough this season, and that last race was a real nailbiter," Huff told Autosport. "But I made the best start of my four years in the Golf — I've finally learned how to do it! — and I left Dahlgren standing still."

Eventually Huff fought through to second, trailing only Lestrup junior driver Kevin Engman (who was driving an Audi), but things got nervous again when Dahlgren lifted himself into third place.

"I had our junior driver in front of me, but I couldn't take anything for granted so it was head down, I had to pass him," said Huff. "I managed to get a three-second gap before Dahlgren overtook him, and then it was the longest 10 laps of my life."

Huff, the 2012 World Touring Car champion, said he is grateful for Sweden's strategy in dealing with the coronavirus pandemic. "I'm so glad to have been able to race there," he said, "and the organisers did well to put on four events but expand them from double to triple-headers. Sweden has taken the least precautions as far as COVID is concerned, but they have some of the lowest numbers around and we don't have to wear facemasks [at the track].

"Have I had a thoroughly enjoyable year being a racing driver rather than having to be a politician [in the World Touring Car Cup]? Very much so. But venturing out is very much on the cards. The team would like to expand, perhaps to do some TCR Europe and other things. That's the beauty of the TCR regulations — you can go anywhere with the car."

MARCUS SIMMONS

STONEMAN LEADS THE WAY IN LAMBO SERIES



LAMBO SUPER TROFEO

Versatile Briton Dean Stoneman has moved to the top of the Lamborghini Super Trofeo Europe standings thanks to a pair of top-five finishes at Barcelona last weekend.

Partnered by British GT regular Patrick Kujala at Bonaldi Motorsport, Stoneman led both of the 50-minute races, but time penalties in each meant the pairing finished second and fourth over the weekend.

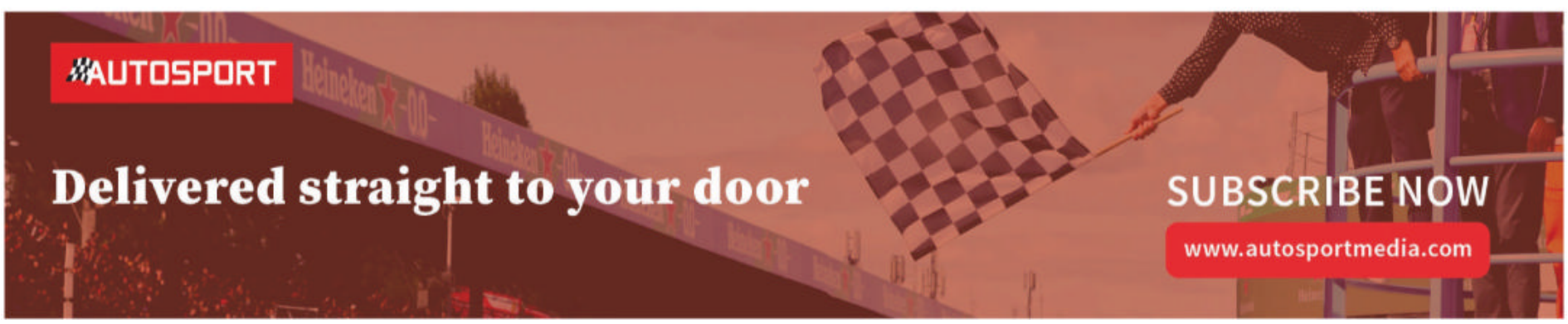
Kujala was penalised three seconds for contact with ex-F2 driver Dorian Boccolacci at the start of race one, before receiving a drivethrough penalty for pitlane speeding in the second.

Despite this, Stoneman (above and below, with Kujala) leads the points ahead of the next round at Spa thanks to a non-start for title rivals Milos Pavlovic and Raul Guzman.

Boccolacci claimed both wins at Barcelona for Oregon Team alongside team-mate Kevin Gilardoni, with ART F3 driver Sebastian Fernandez finishing second in race two.

STEPHEN BRUNSDON





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Will Hamilton's record be broken?

Having drawn equal with Michael Schumacher, the reigning world champion can be expected to set the bar ever higher. Beating him is a big ask

ALEX KALINAUCKAS

Formula 1 statistics rather mirror the endeavour itself – the emotion of sporting success and human achievement matched with cold, hard facts. It's the former that makes motorsport so interesting, but the latter that sums up success. It often does this distortedly – given that opposition level, strike rate and car quality must be added for consideration of 'greatness'.

Nevertheless, Lewis Hamilton's triumph in the Eifel Grand Prix put him level with Michael Schumacher at the top of F1's all-time win list, with 91 apiece. It's the achievement we will consider – and whether it will ever be scored again.

As things stand, Hamilton does not hold the record outright. But, although it would be wrong to assume anything given the state of the world these days, he will surely go on to take it for himself in the remaining six races of 2020. It is entirely likely that he will extend the outright record considerably, too. After all, with no other top F1 seats available and Hamilton knowing exactly how good he has it with a team that recognises his exceptional abilities, there is little chance he will not be racing for Mercedes into 2021.

Next year, thanks to the coronavirus cost-saving measures, the current machines will be essentially carried over – other than tweaks to cut downforce levels by 10%. Given that the W11 is the class of the field, there is no logical reason to assume it will not be again next year, with the downforce-slashing regulation overhaul of course postponed to 2022.

> **"You have to be grateful for all that you have. Of course, I can set goals and see what's possible"**

"Ultimately I think you just have to be grateful for all that you have to this point," Hamilton said after winning at the Nurburgring. "Of course, I can set goals and I'll continue to charge on and try to see what is possible. I think I've got the best team behind me, who continuously inspire me."

So, will the all-time win record ever be held by another F1 driver? Obviously, the cliched 'never say never' must apply. Of Hamilton's current rivals, including the returning Fernando Alonso, eight have won F1 races. Sebastian Vettel is third on the all-time win list with 53, but right now seems unlikely to add to his tally, let alone in huge numbers – given his age and the quality of his current car. The same goes for Alonso (32 wins) and Kimi Raikkonen (21).

Valtteri Bottas will surely add to his nine victories, but his presence at Mercedes is continually under threat. Daniel Ricciardo will not be moving into a frontrunning car with McLaren in 2021 (although it remains possible a 2022 competitiveness revolution will take place) and Pierre Gasly is not guaranteed he will ever get back to 'Class A', even with his brilliant Monza win.

There are really only two drivers that we might consider having the combination of age and car quality on their side (and one of them doesn't even have that in 2020): Max Verstappen and Charles Leclerc, with nine and two wins respectively. Verstappen reached that tally in 107 F1 races, Leclerc in 35, while Hamilton took 34 and seven races to take those scores.

It's also important to keep in mind 2022 when considering the all-time win record. If F1 gets its way and the new cars produce close racing with multiple victors, that will dilute the concentration of winners and mean it will likely take longer for anyone to reach the ultimate total, which will probably still be being extended by Hamilton. It's the same reason why Niki Lauda retired for the first time in 1979 with 'just' 17 wins – F1 then was more competitive.

Returning to the possibility of the record not being matched, Mercedes proved in 2017 that it can win through regulation changes. This is what stopped the dominant eras that came before – Ferrari in the early 2000s, Red Bull in the early 2010s.

But, of course, it remains possible that another driver will claim the record. Hamilton will stop eventually – and from the outside it's hard to see him racing on for the sake of it. He has plenty of other interests going on, which in 2020 extend to Extreme E team ownership.

The rivals we've highlighted are much younger (Verstappen 23 and Leclerc 22) and it seems ever more likely that when normal times return F1's calendar will be expanded towards 25 races per year. The (unscheduled) Nurburgring and Imola two-day weekends will go some way to showing if this is possible – even if last weekend rather proved that it won't shake up the competitive order in isolation...

And then there's F1's nature. It has always had periods of domination – from Alfa Romeo and the initial world championship win record holders Giuseppe Farina and Juan Manuel Fangio, through Lotus and Jim Clark, McLaren and Williams, Ferrari with Schumacher and Vettel's Red Bull.

The intention behind F1's delayed rules revision is to reset the competitive order. But given that the teams are out to achieve perfection at every event, it would be unwise to assume that even if this aim is successful, another squad, armed with an exceptional driving talent, won't come along and eventually encroach on the patch of history Hamilton is establishing with Mercedes.

P34 HOW F1'S WINS RECORD HAS BEEN BROKEN

"THE TRACK IS MY CANVAS, THE CAR IS MY BRUSH"

GRAHAM HILL



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A midweek proposition

In the main, racing has been the preserve of weekends. But does a pandemic-enforced experiment show that international motorsport is missing a weekday trick?

MATT KEW

Sport is a distraction, and one that takes place at weekends. The first race of the 1931 European Drivers' Championship — distant forebearer to Formula 1 — was the Italian Grand Prix at Monza on 24 May, a Sunday. Precedent set, motorsport has overwhelmingly taken place at a weekend.

There are fleeting exceptions. Occasionally NASCAR Truck Series races stray onto a Thursday or Friday, national club events can occupy a bank holiday Monday or, in the case of the Plumb Pudding meeting at Mallory Park, whichever day Boxing Day falls on. The Marathon de la Route on the Nordschleife would run from Tuesday through until Saturday.

Still taking place at Zandvoort is the Zomeravond Competitie. Roughly translated as 'Summer Evening Competition', these events continue to run midweek 25 years after their inception, with Assen adopting a similar format.

There's one (or perhaps four) more recent and notable example that comes from Formula E. Searching for a conclusion to the 2019-20 season amid the pandemic, the solution was six races held over nine days all at Tempelhof Airport in Berlin. Taking place across three double-headers, the first and last of these were split over a Wednesday and Thursday evening.

As many nations regress to a second state of lockdown, and more countries are added to the UK's list of 'only for essential travel', there's no guarantee that next year's F1, FE, World Endurance (and so on) calendars won't be subject to further disruption.

> **"Because Formula E is like a small start-up, they're willing to take risks, do things differently"**

If that's the case, and organisers are left scrambling for substitute dates, could midweek races provide a solution?

For FE, that's absolutely something to be explored. The provisional 2020-21 calendar has already been approved by the FIA, with FE returning to its usual Saturday slots (plus two Sundays for the Diriyah and London double-headers). But as championship chief executive Jamie Reigle tells Autosport, the Berlin finale has been an eye-opener for the flexibility that might be required.

"We're going to work really hard to deliver the [2020-21] calendar," he says. "But of course, we have an obligation to have a plan B and plan C... Do I think we'll do six races at the same venue in the space of a week again? No. Do I think we might do some double-headers or triple-headers if necessary? And could those happen on a weekday? Yes."

There are complications. One of these is commercial. Some FE team sponsors requested up to a 50% discount from their original contracts. But part of that is down to their logos being plastered on a car that raced in seven fewer countries than originally expected.

To what extent TV viewing figures would dictate retaining a weekend schedule is open to debate. Although live numbers will remain king, the proliferation of on-demand services means people watching on 'catch-up' can bolster the ratings. FE estimates that only a quarter of its total audience tunes in for the actual race. The remainder is people watching highlights across social media and other less traditional platforms.

Football and, most notably, the Premier League should also be considered. From Saturday 1500hr kick-offs, there's been an explosion of Monday, Tuesday and Wednesday night games. Although it has a much bigger audience than motorsport, an annual £1.7 billion TV rights package proves that moving away from weekend slots is an economically viable model. As the former commercial director of Manchester United, Reigle knows this well.

Even if F1 remains steadfast in its commitment to Sundays, this offers other series a massive opportunity. Rather than being lost to a crowded schedule, should a high-profile GT series, for example, move to a midweek slot, it might just be picked up by a broadcaster and tap into a wider live audience. Not to mention, a more diffuse running order could help avoid the WEC/FE/IMSA SportsCar clashes that require drivers to be at multiple tracks at once.

Perhaps, this is where FE comes in once more. All-electric cars, predominantly street circuits, fanboost, attack mode — these now core elements of the championship might not be to everyone's taste, but it shows a willingness to defy motorsport convention. Why not extend that to the calendar? That's the sentiment of Venturi Racing FE team principal Susie Wolff.

"What Formula E have been great in is, because they're like a small start-up, they're willing to take risks and they're willing to do things differently," she says. "So, if they see that there's been advantages to racing midweek then why not? It's something that we can definitely be open to. We don't need to be traditionally racing on weekends."

When Autosport asked various FE drivers and teams for their view on the adoption of midweek events, the overwhelming consensus was positive — with a smattering of more ambivalent 'why not' responses. In the wake of Berlin, like Reigle, their main concern is avoiding a repeat of six races in just nine days.

Like so many industries affected by COVID-19, the pandemic has presented motorsport with a need to innovate in certain areas. The calendar needn't be immune to this.

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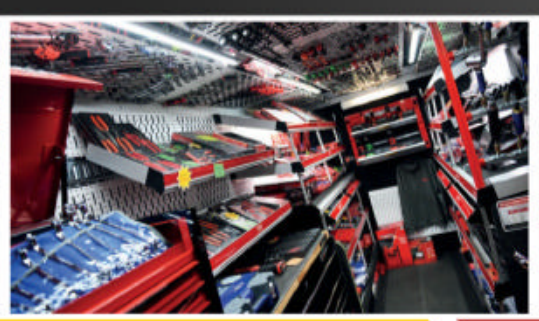


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YOUR SAY

What F1's powerbrokers have to do is make sure it's possible for independent manufacturers to be able to design and run a competitive engine

MICHAEL SKEET

F1 needs a new vision for the future of its engines

Honda withdrawing from Formula 1 at the end of next season (Pit+Paddock 8 October) will hopefully kick-start, once and for all, the powers that be in terms of where they see F1 in the future.

Everyone knows the current F1 power units were lamented when they were introduced back in 2014. The clamour for high-revving naturally aspirated engines is growing again.

Treading the fine line between technology and entertainment will not be easy for F1's powerbrokers. What they have to do, however, is make sure it's possible for independent engine manufacturers to be able to design and run a competitive engine.

Being reliant on OEM corporations is not the way forward in any way. Surely they must know this by now.

Could high-revving V8s, V10s, V12s, or a more basic turbocharged hybrid unit similar to what IndyCar is going to run in 2023, all running on a carbon neutral synthetic fuel be the way forward, or something else entirely? Whatever it is, it needs to be completely affordable for everyone who wants to be able to enter.

Such is the importance of getting the next generation of engine/power unit regulations right, it could ultimately define F1's whole existence. Let's get this right please.

Michael Skeet
Lordswood, Southampton

Sayonara Honda. Again

Despite home being the Land of the Rising Sun, Honda does seem to have developed a habit of disappearing into the sunset...

Graeme Innes-Johnstone
Elland, West Yorks

Doing the sport a disservice

It is high time past champions stopped denigrating the efforts of those currently participating. While I do not agree with everything Lewis Hamilton does off-track, his amazing achievements on track combined with his high profile outside the world of F1 must surely be seen as a positive for the sport.



I have been spectating at GPs around the world since the 1970s and every era has its stars. Hamilton is undoubtedly now in the pantheon of greats that goes back to the days of Nuvolari and Rosemeyer via Fangio and Clark to the present day. Who was the best no one can ever say, but for a star of the past to keep taking pot shots at the man who has just equalled Schumacher's win record is tiresome. It does the sport I love a disservice while tarnishing the reputation of that past champion.

Simon Scott
By email

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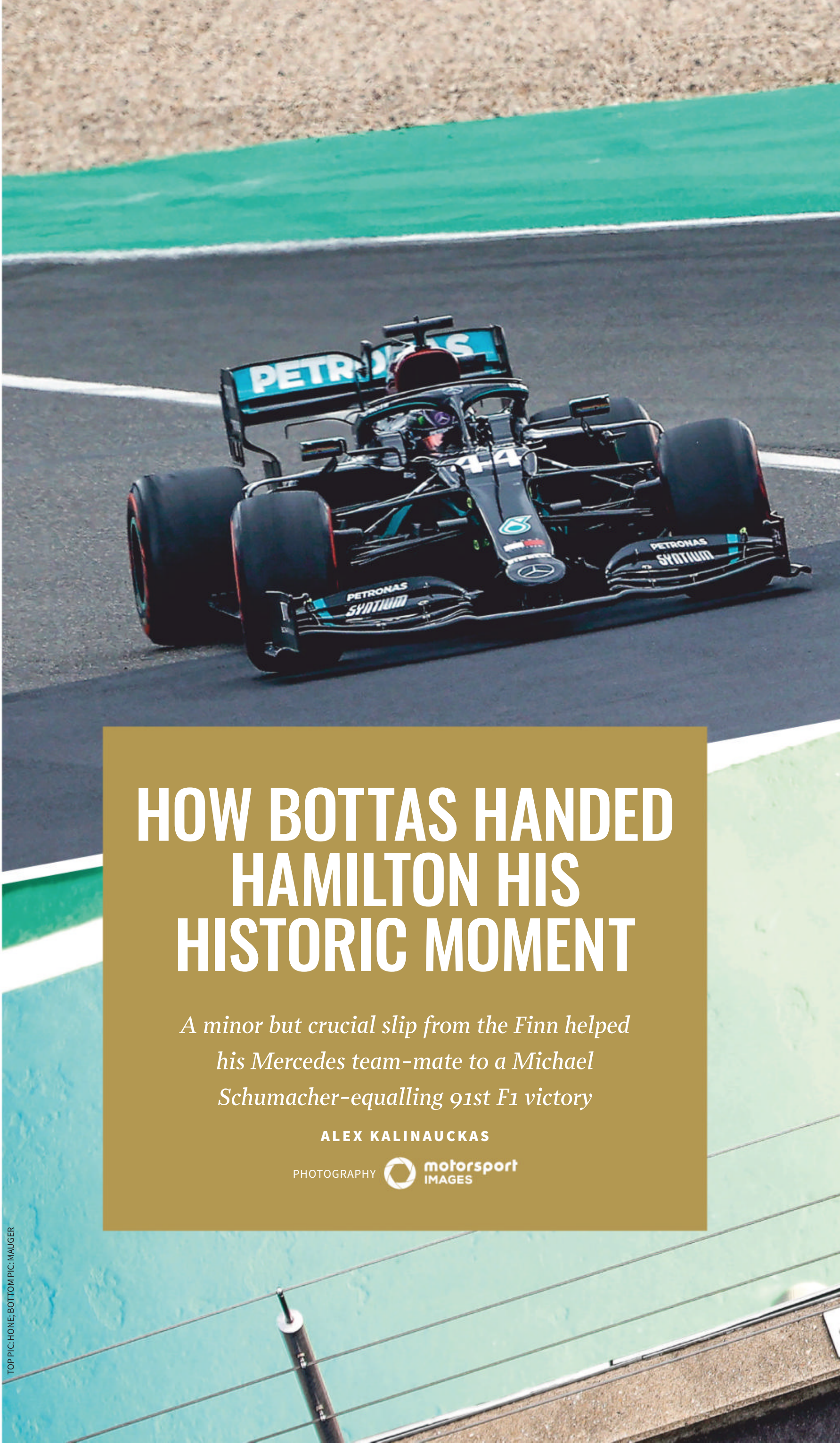
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HOW BOTTAS HANDED HAMILTON HIS HISTORIC MOMENT

A minor but crucial slip from the Finn helped his Mercedes team-mate to a Michael Schumacher-equalling 91st F1 victory

ALEX KALINAUCKAS

PHOTOGRAPHY motorsport IMAGES

TOP PIC: HONE; BOTTOM PIC: MAUGER



He'd done everything right. He'd taken a storming pole position against a resurgent Red Bull threat and in the process seen off his illustrious team-mate. He'd done enough at the start to stay in the fight at the first corner, which became an off-track shoving match that, in the words of his team boss, he won in the style of a "rally driver". He'd prevailed there with a muscling move into the second turn and then led for 12 laps, staying out of DRS threat against the other Mercedes.

And then it all went wrong for Valtteri Bottas. At the start of the Eifel Grand Prix's 13th lap, the Finn locked up his right-front tyre heavily into the Nurburgring's first corner and slid off the road, his soft rubber ruined.

Lewis Hamilton wasted no time — he nipped around the outside of his team-mate at the long Turn 2 left-hander, and was through into a lead he would never lose. The chequered flag brought Hamilton's 91st Formula 1 victory, bringing him level with the legendary Michael Schumacher in the all-time win stakes.

Things would get worse for Bottas, but that lock-up was a gift to Hamilton that helped make history.

And it was, said Bottas, all down to a smattering of precipitation. Nothing like the constant fine rain that had fallen from the low cloud and cancelled the practice proceedings last Friday, but enough to force another costly mistake in a title battle where, really, considering his opposition, only perfection will do.

"It was mainly the drizzle," explained Bottas. "I really had less grip under braking and it was a sudden lock-up. And of course, being the first car out there who is approaching that corner, I'm sure Lewis saw pretty quickly that I locked up, so I'm sure he had a chance to react. It was a mistake, but also tricky conditions."

Bottas managed to hang on to second place ahead of the ever-present Max Verstappen, who joined the Black Arrows in being the only drivers able to lap in the 1m32s during the laps before Hamilton took the lead. Mercedes called Bottas in at the end of lap 13 and switched him onto the medium tyres. That was always the plan given the durability of the C3 rubber Pirelli had brought to Germany, where the cold conditions meant it was easier for the drivers to keep the tyres alive, assuming they could also maintain the required temperature.

But Bottas emerged behind Renault's Daniel Ricciardo, who by this time was already nearly a whole pitstop adrift of first place after he'd spent the opening eight laps stuck behind Charles Leclerc's Ferrari. Bottas nipped past the Australian after nearly two laps spent running in his wake, but then the second of three strikes of misfortune hit.

In the race where he became F1's most experienced driver of all time, Kimi Raikkonen made a clumsy mistake a few moments after Bottas's off. It sent him sideways into George Russell as they both chased Sebastian Vettel, who was trying to recover from yet another unforced spin, into the first corner. The Alfa Romeo driver had to catch a snap of oversteer as he ran through the tight right-hander, and in doing so speared left into Russell. This sent the Williams onto its

Polesitter Bottas got his elbows out to keep Hamilton at bay – but it wasn't to last

MAIN: MAUGER







Most-experienced F1 driver
Raikkonen punted off
Russell in clumsy error

PIC SEQUENCE: HONE

"IT WAS MAINLY THE DRIZZLE, AND IT WAS A SUDDEN LOCK-UP. A MISTAKE, BUT ALSO TRICKY CONDITIONS"

left-side wheels, punctured its left-rear and appeared to damage its suspension. Russell drove on, but the damage soon forced him to stop on the run to Turn 7, which triggered a virtual safety car.

This gave Hamilton and Verstappen the chance to come in and gain further time on Bottas. The VSC ended just as Hamilton had reached Turn 2 on lap 17 following his pitstop, and at the end of that lap Bottas was 18.8 seconds behind Verstappen, having been ahead when he stopped. Then it got much worse.

Bottas reported he had "no power" and quickly started losing ground. He dropped behind the long-first-stinting Lando Norris and Sergio Perez, his MGU-H – part of an all-new Mercedes power unit fitted for this event – the suspected cause of the problem.

Mercedes issued a string of instructions in an attempt to rectify the problem, but it was no good. On lap 18, having fallen to eighth, Bottas coasted into the pits and retired.

"It looks like [the problem] was around the MGU-H," Mercedes team boss Toto Wolff said after the race, "but we haven't found the root cause yet. We retired the car also – not only because he wouldn't have scored points, but also because we didn't want to damage the power unit. I said sorry for the failure." »



Hamilton nails the restart as Verstappen comes under attack from Ricciardo

Wolff reckoned Bottas still had a chance of being in victory contention on what would have been a two-stop strategy (assuming the race had played out without any further interruptions, which it did not), but the damage, quite clearly, was already done.

Hamilton appeared to have been unleashed when his team-mate gifted him the lead. The pair had lapped at an average of 1m32.063s (for Hamilton) and 1m32.100s (Bottas) before Bottas's off, and a string of three subsequent 1m31.7s meant he was 4.348s ahead of Verstappen when they both pitted. A 4.2s stop for Hamilton handed the Red Bull back two seconds of this advantage, as Mercedes was forced to wait for Verstappen to come past before releasing Hamilton, and for a short while on his new mediums the world champion was concerned.

"The tyres were not working for me, particularly when I came out after the pitstops," he said. "I had a good gap to you [Max] but then you nearly had me [after the VSC pitstops]. You were catching me and I was struggling so much on the newer tyres."

The result was a 3.713s slower out-lap, two seconds of which were down to the long stop, as Hamilton really wrestled his car to bring the tyres up to temperature. But he then got into the 1m30s on the next tour — two laps before Verstappen could follow suit. From there, he reasserted his lead, and extended it to a maximum of 12.224s. Between the end of laps 17 and 45, Hamilton edged clear to the tune of 0.378s per lap.

By this stage in proceedings, the fight for the lead was seemingly over, and attention turned to the final spot on the podium. Given the Red Bull RB16's pace, this probably should have gone to Alex Albon, but he was already out after debris had punctured his radiator and caused his team to retire the car. In any case he'd already spoiled his afternoon by locking up heavily while fighting Ricciardo on the first lap, and then taking off Daniil Kvyat's front wing as they scrapped over 10th place exiting the final chicane at the one-quarter mark.

These developments, combining massively with Bottas's mechanical drama, had given Ricciardo a golden chance to take his first podium with Renault.

He had rejoined from his VSC stop — which didn't work out quite as well for the Australian as it did for Hamilton and Verstappen, given the neutralisation ended while he was still in the pitlane — in ninth. From there, he had 44 laps to go to the flag, but without the pace advantage of the leaders. His time stuck behind Leclerc had cost him 19.392s to Hamilton, but in any case the top three (while they were a trio) were in another class of lap time, as Ricciardo could not run in the 1m32s/1m31s they had been setting across the race's first quarter.

Ricciardo worked his way back up to third as Norris and Perez stopped on laps 29 and 28 respectively, with the Briton then falling out of contention — and eventually out of the race — as a suspected ignition problem kept sending the Renault engine in his McLaren into safety mode. The problem caused his retirement just before

"I WAS TRYING TO MANAGE THE TYRES, BUT HE STARTED TO CATCH ME – ON SOME LAPS A SECOND A LAP"

three-quarters distance and made things a touch easier for Ricciardo's silverware quest.

By stopping so far from the finish, Ricciardo was vulnerable to a late attack, which looked to be coming from Perez.

The Racing Point driver had risen from ninth on the grid to sixth behind Norris, helped by muscling past Esteban Ocon on lap one, with them both gaining when Red Bull pitted Albon on lap seven for safety reasons following his opening-tour lock-up. After his stop on lap 28 to take the mediums, ending a long first stint on the softs, Perez passed Norris, by then battling that reliability drama. Perez was then held up passing Leclerc (the Ferrari driver had cycled back towards the higher points places following his early first stop) and, when he eventually got past, he faced a 16.619s





deficit to Ricciardo. Over the next 11 laps, Perez reduced this to 10.073s, which put the Renault driver and his team in a bind.

"It was going to be tight," Ricciardo said of the threat of losing third to a late Perez attack. "I was trying to manage the tyres a little bit to have something at the end, but he started to catch me — on some laps a second a lap. So, I was then trying to pick up the pace and not to be vulnerable too early. There was a discussion: 'do we pit or not?'"

In the end, after Ricciardo and Renault had agreed it was not worth sacrificing track position and preferring to gamble on being able to rebuff a passing attempt, the circumstances played out in their favour.

Norris came to a halt at Turn 6, with his right-hand sidepod smoking, before climbing from his MCL35 and taking a Fernando Alonso-style sitdown at the nearby marshals' post. At first glance this didn't appear to be too much of a problem, but by stopping beyond the gravel trap of the downhill right that precedes the Nurburgring's Turn 7 hairpin, Norris's car was still in the firing line, and its condition also gave the FIA a problem. To solve this, it turned to the safety car.

"Lando's car had some smoke and fire, so that was one point [why its recovery couldn't take place under another VSC]," said F1 race director Michael Masi. "The other was at first glance we weren't confident that the car could actually be recovered into the opening that was there, due to its tightness. So, rather than having to react along the way, it was determined to go for a safety car — that way it could be dealt with all at once immediately. It was the safest action in that circumstance."

The safety car remained out for five laps after Norris had stopped, a long period that had the two leaders worried, and which Masi explained was simply down to all the lapped runners (10 by this point) having to pass by and close back up, per F1's sporting rules.

But Hamilton and Verstappen were alarmed. Thanks to the cold conditions at the Nurburgring all weekend, they were worried that the lengthy safety car period would leave them vulnerable at the restart. They had both pitted as soon as they could once the safety car was called into action and gone back onto the softs.

Ricciardo did likewise and, while Racing Point initially left Perez »



In recent years, as the to-and-fro battle over Formula 1's sporting soul (the dreaded 'spectacle') has persisted, an argument has developed that suggests removing the Friday practice sessions. This would mean a much-reduced chance for the teams to understand everything they typically do ahead of qualifying and the race, and this would therefore shake up the competitive order.

The short gap between the Portuguese and Emilia Romagna races meant F1 was always set to test this theory, with the Imola weekend a designated two-day event. But thanks to low cloud at the Nurburgring last Friday, it got a bonus chance to see what would happen with reduced practice running – actually 30 minutes less than the teams will get in Italy – with FP1 and FP2 called off as the medical helicopter could not reach its hospital options as a result.

There was more intrigue at the head of the field in qualifying, with Max Verstappen pushing Mercedes duo Lewis Hamilton and Valtteri Bottas throughout, but this was more down to the charging Dutchman and Red Bull running a new design for the RB16's rear-suspension upright, an updated brake duct, as well as some new minor aerodynamic parts. In the end, the result was as it always has been so far in 2020: one of the Black Arrows on pole.

Essentially, taking away track time from all the teams favours the bigger squads. In the two-hour gap between FP3 and qualifying, those with bigger and better data analysis tools, rigs and dynos, and highly paid drivers in their simulators, would have set them to work and had more data available heading into the sessions that matter.

"WE'D RATHER HAVE THE TRACK TIME. IT HELPS US MAKE UP FOR RESOURCES WE DON'T HAVE"

"We'd rather have the track time," said Williams head of vehicle performance Dave Robson, whose drivers George Russell and Nicholas Latifi felt they both could have made it into Q2 with perfect laps, but a combination of driver error and inadequate tyre warm-up prep confined them to 17th and 18th. "That suits us better because it helps us make up for resources we don't have."

At the front, Verstappen looked delightfully threatening for pole, leading Q1 and splitting the Mercedes in Q2. He even led after the first runs in Q3, where he and Hamilton failed to recreate their session-best times from the middle segment.

This left Bottas, who had been 0.581 seconds off his team-mate in Q2, with a chance. And he took it, pole by 0.256s over Hamilton, with the Red Bull eventually vanquished to its typical-in-2020 third place on the grid.



TRACKSIDE VIEW

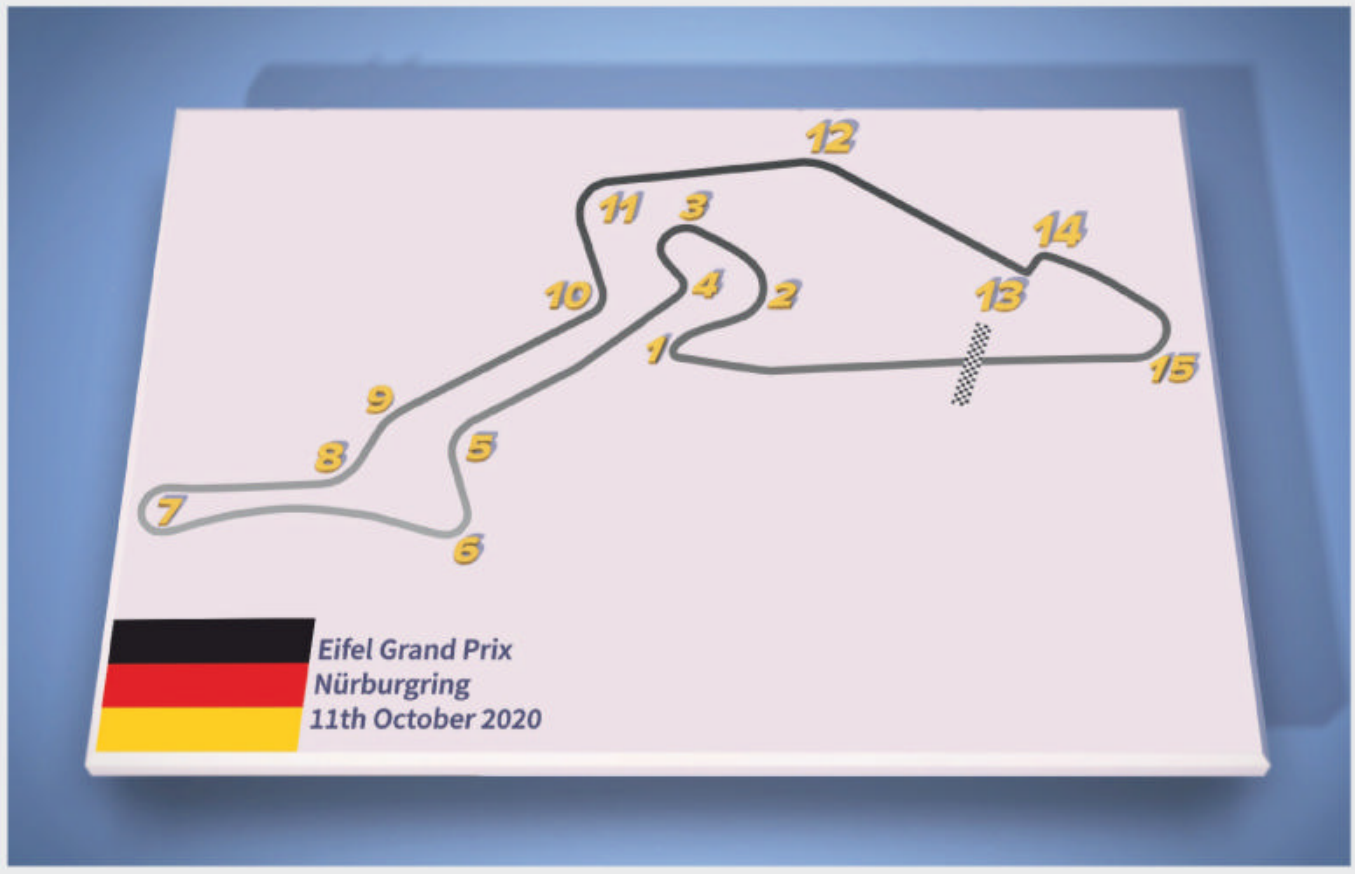
The cancellation of the opening two practice sessions at the Eifel Grand Prix had left Autosport frustrated. Not because of the reasons why. There were legitimate safety concerns, and anyone comparing Formula 1's past of racing in worse conditions with fewer safety precautions on the Nurburgring Nordschleife, and insinuating that's better than racing without a proper medical evacuation plan, needs to urgently address their priorities.

No, this was because going trackside – even further removed than normal thanks to the COVID-19 protocols – is simply the highlight of the job.

So, having arrived at the Nurburgring in glowing sunshine but freezing wind, we were keen to get out into the elements. Never so thankful for our facemask, we layered up and headed out to a car park overlooking the track's final chicane for 'FP3'.

The cars were out in droves right from the off and, after some initial early sighter tours, the drivers began finding the limit at the critical left-right sequence heading into the final corner.

The kerbs here are high, there to punish those taking too much on the way in, as well as catch out anyone trying to ride over the top. Momentum is key. Greed at the left will cost speed and time gathering things up in a split second before the right – as Renault's Daniel Ricciardo demonstrates during a late flying effort.



The Mercedes drivers generally look planted throughout the sequence, but not every time. Lewis Hamilton appears to be struggling more often than Valtteri Bottas, twice cutting across the muddy runoff, the second time after a small lock-up. There are fewer errors as FP3 wears on, although AlphaTauri's Daniil Kvyat seems to be taking longer to adapt than most,

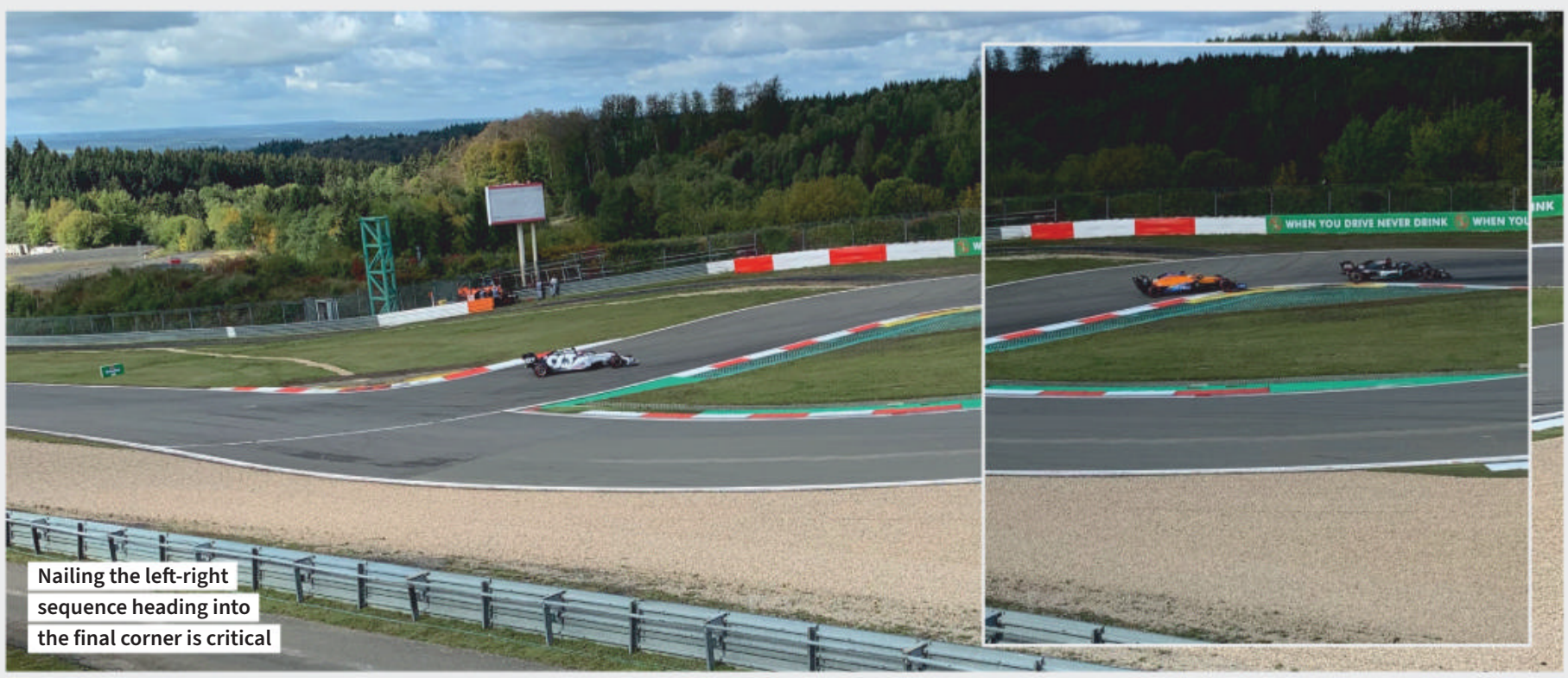
"GREED AT THE LEFT WILL COST SPEED AND TIME GATHERING THINGS UP BEFORE THE RIGHT"

It's not just the turns that are causing problems. Even Hamilton's W11 is squirming as he plants the throttle out of the right apex, admittedly much earlier than any other car. But the exit is costly for others, with Sebastian Vettel's Ferrari looping around here after 20 minutes, and the Williams of George Russell having a more spectacular moment 15 minutes later.

The sudden loss of the FW43's engine noise alerts Autosport to Russell's issue – he's lost the car running wide on the kerbs on exit and speared left onto the grass as he's tried to gather it up. We turn in time to see him sliding a long way onto the grass behind the final corner (where road cars are lapping the Nordschleife behind the GP layout's boundary).

One hour is all we've got again in the company of these amazing machines. But, with a strong, freezing breeze blowing towards us, and sideways into the cars at the chicane, possibly contributing to Vettel's spin, it's enough. We need to get the feeling in our fingers back…

ALEX KALINAUCKAS



Nailing the left-right sequence heading into the final corner is critical



Win number 91 extends Hamilton's points advantage to 69 ahead of his team-mate

TEE



Gift of Schumacher helmet left Hamilton "incredibly humbled"

ETHERINGTON

P34 F1'S RISING WIN RECORD

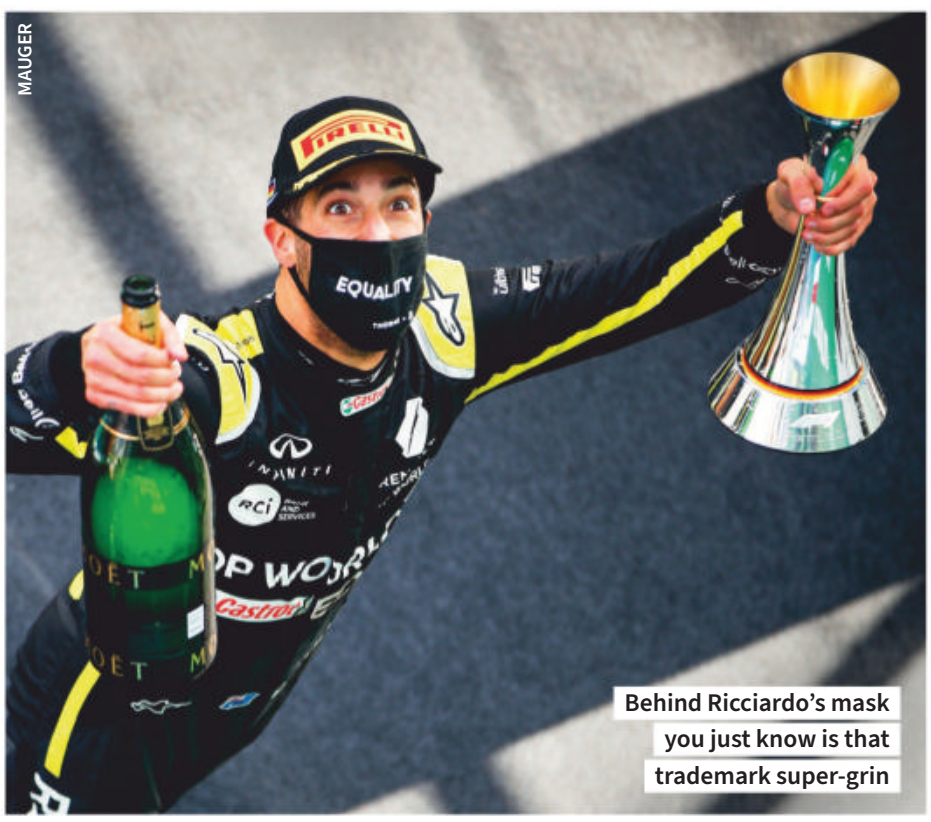
"I GREW UP WATCHING MICHAEL. IT'S BEYOND MY WILDEST DREAMS TO BE HERE HAVING EQUALLED HIM"

out, which briefly put him ahead on the road under the race suspension, it then called him in to take the red-walled rubber too.

The safety car finally peeled off to leave an 11-lap sprint to the end, with Hamilton nailing the restart despite his tyre temperature concerns. In fact, he did it so well he had a 1.063s lead by the start of the first full tour of resumed green-flag running on lap 50, and Verstappen came under attack from Ricciardo.

But the Red Bull driver was able to shrug off his former team-mate as they exited the first turn, while Ricciardo was able to stay in front of Perez, despite the Racing Point racer having a look to the inside of Turn 4, in the shadow of the giant Mercedes grandstand, on the first lap after the restart. He held on to take his first podium since winning in Monaco in 2018, by 1.457s over Perez.

Hamilton never looked threatened to the end, coming home 4.470s ahead after lapping at an average of 0.31s per lap faster than Verstappen over the final tours. It wasn't quite the perfect Sunday for the Briton, though, as Verstappen stole the bonus point for fastest lap right at the last.



MAUGER

Behind Ricciardo's mask you just know is that trademark super-grin

All that was left was for Hamilton to return for his moment of history. After he had climbed from his car and conducted the parc ferme-side television interviews, he was given one of Schumacher's Mercedes helmets, presented by his son Mick. It was a touching moment, with Hamilton taking the glowing red helmet with him onto the podium.

"I grew up watching Michael win all of those grands prix and I couldn't have fathomed equalling him," Hamilton told the post-race press conference. "I think getting to Formula 1 was the first step of the dream and obviously emulating Ayrton [Senna, his childhood hero]. But Michael was just so far ahead. It's beyond my wildest dreams to think that I'm here having equalled him.

"To have his family honour me, I'm just incredibly humbled. You know his son is such a great bright talent and just a really genuine human being, so Michael's obviously raised a great man in him, and I look forward to seeing how his career will look moving forwards. Now I'll have two special helmets from Michael [the other he had received when Schumacher retired from F1 for the second time, in Abu Dhabi in 2012, after Mercedes had confirmed Hamilton as his replacement for the following year] in my small living room!"

The date of 11 October 2020 will always belong to Hamilton's record-equalling moment. But it seems ever more certain that another date in the coming weeks will belong to the moment he matches Schumacher's haul of seven world titles.

Hamilton's victory, allied with Bottas scoring nothing, puts him onto 230 points — 69 ahead of his team-mate. Wisely, Hamilton is taking nothing for granted in these most turbulent of times. As he pointed out: "So many different things in this crazy pandemic can still happen so I've got to focus on staying healthy."

But the gap is now enormous. As Bottas acknowledges, it seems it will indeed take a major intervention to deny Hamilton the championship. "The engine thing, I couldn't believe it," said Bottas. "Now I understand the gap to Lewis is pretty big in terms of points. Definitely would need a miracle."

NEXT F1 REPORT

PORTUGUESE GP
29 OCTOBER ISSUE

Will the Lewis Hamilton streamroller continue when Formula 1 arrives at the Algarve International Circuit? A new win record is there for the taking.


SUTTON

McLaren loses spot after Norris woes

Despite the lack of practice time available after Friday's washout, McLaren decided to equip both cars with its new aerodynamic upgrades to press on with its development.

Lando Norris, running fewer new-spec parts than team-mate Carlos Sainz Jr, was able to make good progress in the race's early stages and fought with Daniel Ricciardo and Sergio Perez – which became the battle for third after Valtteri Bottas's retirement.

Norris then began to report issues with his power unit, which was new for this race. First, he struggled with energy deployment while trying to keep Perez at bay, and then began to lose progressively more from the engine, which helped Perez pass at the chicane after the two had pitted.

Norris continued to drop back, relinquishing fifth to Sainz but hanging on until his car gave up just before three-quarters distance, forcing him to pull over at Turn 6. His McLaren proved difficult to clear, which meant the safety car was called out.

After overcoming Charles Leclerc following their stops, Sainz was momentarily close to Perez, but didn't have an answer to the Racing Point's pace and he came home fifth. McLaren dropped a place in the constructors' table down to fourth as Racing Point moved into third.


TEE


ALL PHOTOGRAPHY motorsport IMAGES

DUNBAR

Hulkenberg returns again as Stroll falls ill

Nico Hulkenberg once again came to Racing Point's rescue, this time as a last-minute replacement for Lance Stroll in the Eifel Grand Prix after the Canadian was ruled out through illness.

Following his two-race stint in place of Sergio Perez at Silverstone, Hulkenberg had only been due to be at the Nurburgring to complete TV duties for a German broadcaster. But when a stomach bug left Stroll unable to "get off the toilet for long enough to get in the race car", according to Racing Point team boss Otmar Szafnauer, so Hulkenberg again got the call requiring him to stand in.

"It was even wilder and crazier than last time," said Hulkenberg, who was in Cologne, over an hour away by road, when he received the news just before final practice was set to begin.

After completing a rapid COVID-19 test and getting a negative result, Hulkenberg got into the paddock and quickly changed into Racing Point overalls, with his appointment confirmed less than an hour before qualifying.

Racing Point had Hulkenberg's seat ready from his last appearance, which meant he could venture straight out in Q1. He qualified last, but was within half a second of advancing to Q2.

"We're just thankful that he got within the 107% rule," said Szafnauer. "He's got a decent race car underneath him."

Hulkenberg went on to deliver points, advancing up the order with a long first stint on soft tyres as a number of cars ahead either retired or got caught up in incidents. The late safety car allowed him to pit a second time and exchange his mediums for another set of softs, with which he passed Romain Grosjean to secure eighth place.

"I don't know what happens from here on," said Hulkenberg when asked about further outings. "I guess you just have to be ready in a way. It will be nice if we have some preparation time and take part in the weekend at an earlier stage."

2

BIG NUMBER

The number of top-eight finishes Sebastian Vettel and Nico Hulkenberg have scored so far in 2020


SUTTON

Record-breaker Raikkonen ruins Russell's race



TUSOLI

George Russell's wait for his first Formula 1 points continued at the Nurburgring after a clash with record-breaker Kimi Raikkonen, who became the most experienced driver in F1 at the weekend, brought his race to an early end.

After Raikkonen's slip at Turn 1 he clattered into Russell, popping the Williams car into the air and leaving it with damage on its left-hand side that brought Russell's early bath.

"It was obviously frustrating," said Russell. "I left plenty of space but I think Kimi just locked up and then lost the rear. Sometimes it's racing, we are all pushing hard. The way the race went, I think we could have scored points. It's all gone against us at the moment unfortunately."

Raikkonen served a 10-second penalty for the collision at his second pitstop, and finished his 323rd F1 race in 12th, two places behind team-mate Antonio Giovinazzi.

Q&A

MATTIA BINOTTO
FERRARI TEAM PRINCIPAL



Why was Leclerc's pace so different Saturday to Sunday?
We will analyse the data. But we were not heating up the tyres sufficiently for the right pace in the race.

What have you learned from the two-day format?
It has been an interesting experience. Imola will be another one. Certainly, from the engineering point of view, [having] only one free practice session on Saturday morning is too short – especially if you need to test new items. So, if you're only going to have two days looking ahead, by increasing the number of races, in that case [on] the Saturday morning they should have a longer session.

Did the upgrade package work as expected?
We were not expecting a lot of difference. It was a small upgrade and it was completing a package we started introducing in Russia. The positive is that it was correlating well with what we saw in the windtunnel and back in the factory. And that somehow means we are moving the car in the right direction. There will be some further upgrades during the remainder of the season, which will also be important. And for us, what's key is the team is developing the car. More important is to make sure the direction we are taking the car is the right one.

How do you assess Lewis Hamilton's 91 wins?
It's something outstanding that he has achieved. I have a lot of respect. For myself, Michael [Schumacher] is still Michael – I worked with him. He achieved the records he made at the time. But certainly what has been achieved by Lewis is outstanding.

What made Schumacher different to other champions?
He was a fantastic leader – really demanding, pushing the team to make progress. And when you were working so closely to him somehow you were always learning day-by-day. It was a fantastic experience. I learned a lot from him – about the mentality and the approach to the work after the races. I think his mentality was outstanding.

Star points for Grosjean and Giovinazzi

The attritional nature of the Eifel Grand Prix handed opportunities to Alfa Romeo and Haas, which have both found points tricky to come by in 2020.

Romain Grosjean finished an excellent ninth to score his first points of the season, tripling Haas's tally for the season, but it was a painful road to that result. Early on, an errant piece of gravel flew off Kimi Raikkonen's car and struck Grosjean's left index finger, leaving him worried it was broken. Having dropped to the back on lap one, he soldiered on and was able to make his way up the order in the early stages after starting on the medium tyres, which allowed him to stay out as others pitted.

After stopping at the end of lap 28 for hard-compound tyres, he stayed out when the safety car emerged, which left him in seventh place for the restart. Pierre Gasly and Nico Hulkenberg got by, but Grosjean was able to hold on against Antonio Giovinazzi, who took his third point of the year.

From his season-best grid slot of 14th, Giovinazzi climbed up to 11th on the opening lap and stayed amid the cut-and-thrust of the midfield battle thereafter. He made a conventional two-stopper work, and crucially safeguarded the final point from Sebastian Vettel. A good day for both drivers running customer Ferrari engines.



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DRAWING BOARD

GIORGIO PIOLA

A 'HOLE' LOT MORE FROM RED BULL

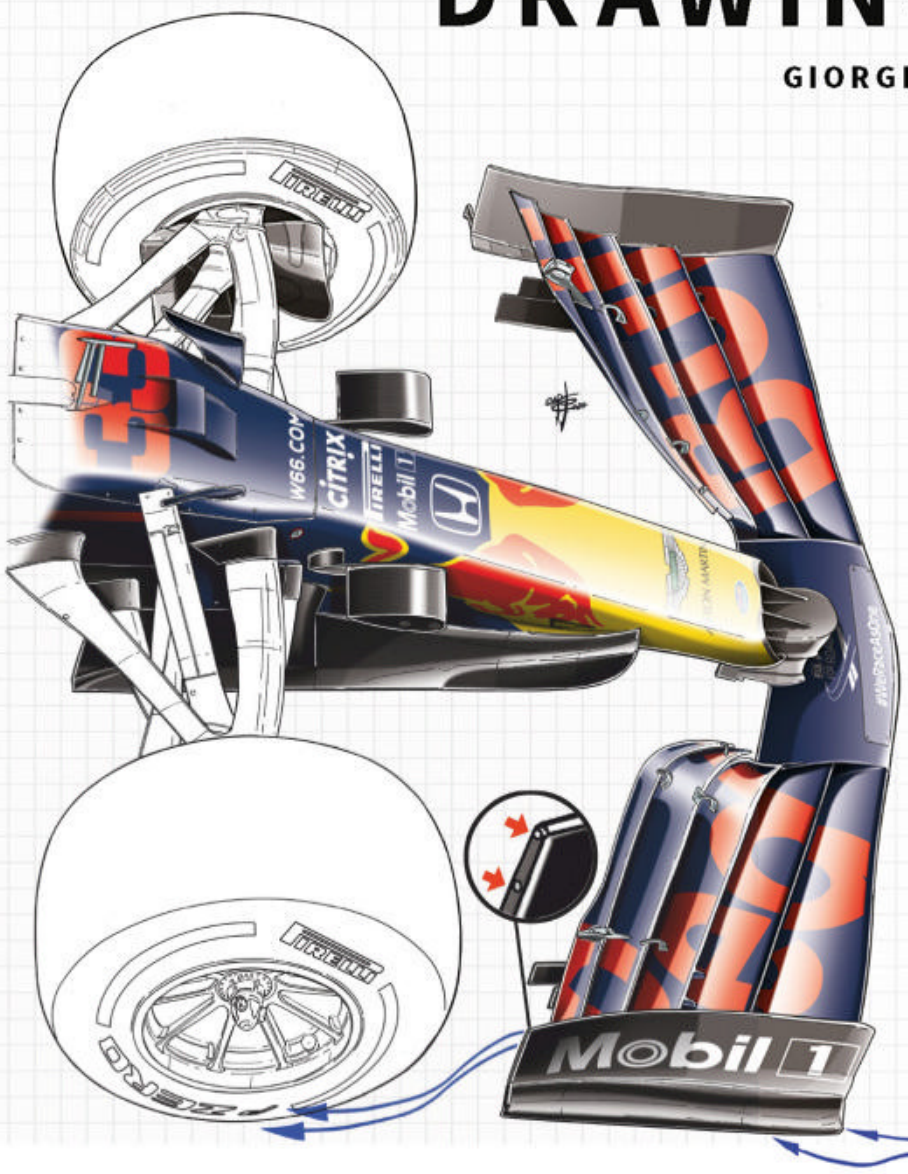
Red Bull's Eifel Grand Prix weekend was a story of holes: Max Verstappen filled the hole left by the retiring Valtteri Bottas to claim second; Alex Albon's radiator ended up with a hole in it to prompt an early retirement; while the aerodynamicists added four extra holes to the front wing to boost the front-end performance.

Two tiny outlets (inset) were set into the trailing edge of each front-wing endplate, fed by a large slot within the underside of the wing. This draws air through the construction of the wing and releases it at the point where air is being turned around the front of the wheel. By transferring the airflow from a larger inlet underneath to a smaller outlet, this will accelerate the airflow coming out – as per Bernoulli's principle. In response, the fluid pressure within will drop.

This seems to be a way of strengthening the airflow released off the top corner of the endplate, which will further assist the outwashing characteristic that t he curvature of the endplates provides. Although the holes are tiny, this is a novel approach to Red Bull's aerodynamic development, and sidesteps many of the restrictive regulations governing the front wing's shape and size by using the internal construction.

Red Bull appears to have closed the gap to Mercedes in recent weekends, and this attention to detail appears to be a good starting point in getting back on level terms.

JAKE BOXALL-LEGGE



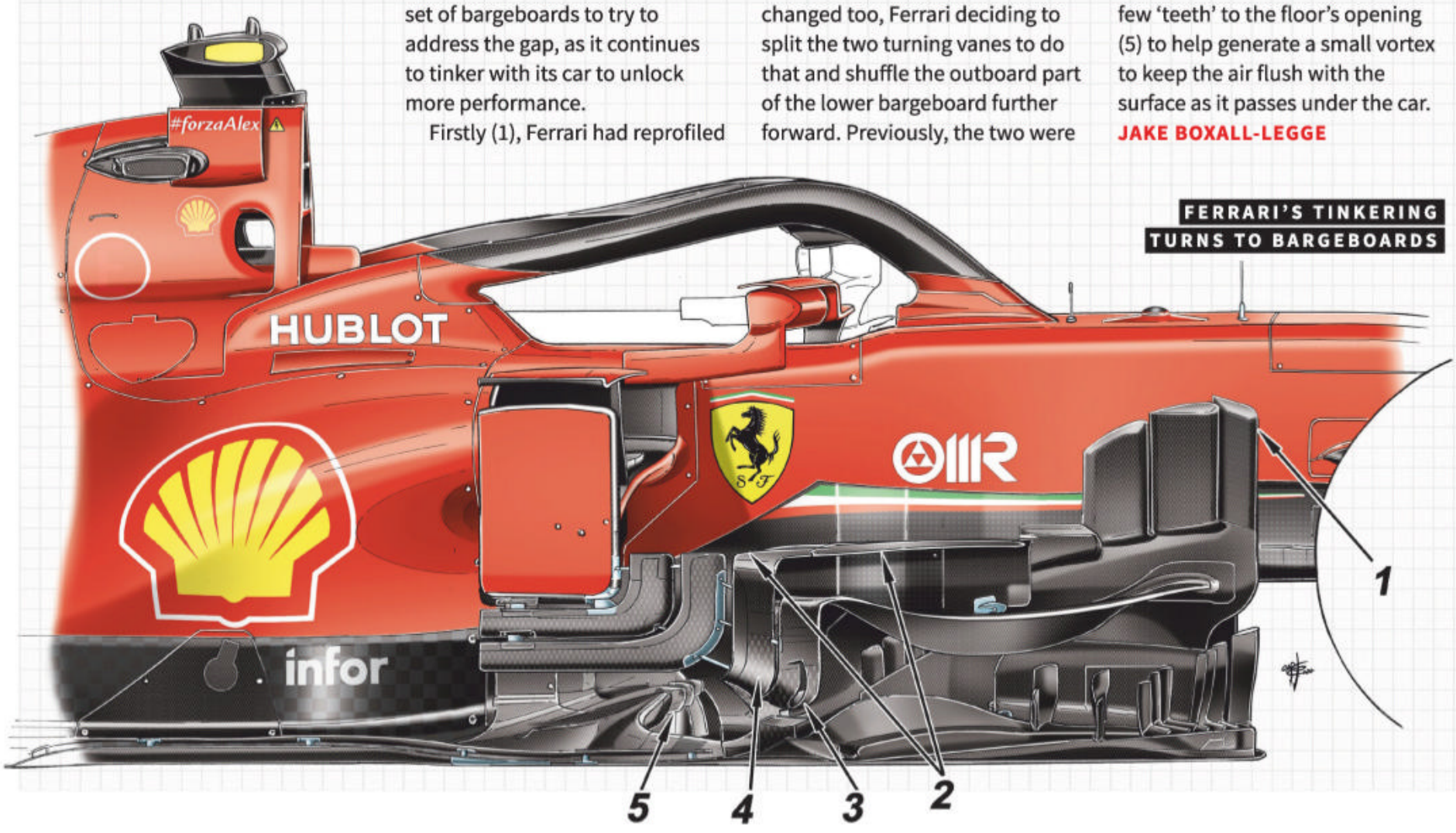
FERRARI STILL LOOKING FOR PERFORMANCE IN BID TO MATCH MIDFIELD RIVALS

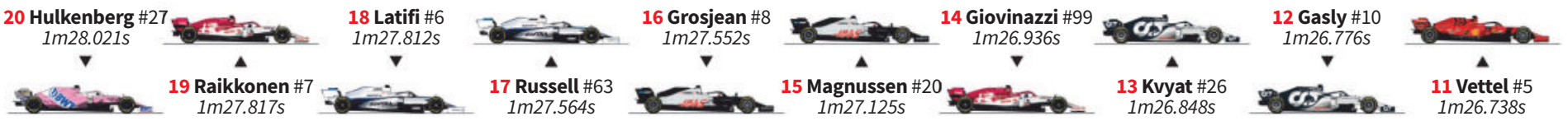
Throughout 2020, Ferrari has thrown a lot at its recalcitrant SF1000 and received relatively little pay-off. The team seems to be treading water in the lower reaches of the points, but has not received the jumps in performance that midfield rivals Renault, Racing Point and McLaren have had.

The team arrived at the Nurburgring with a redesigned set of bargeboards to try to address the gap, as it continues to tinker with its car to unlock more performance.

Firstly (1), Ferrari had reprofiled the leading edge of the bargeboard package to perhaps pick up airflow more adeptly from the suspension components. At (2), (3) and (4), the mounting point for the boomerang elements had changed too, Ferrari deciding to split the two turning vanes to do that and shuffle the outboard part of the lower bargeboard further forward. Previously, the two were stacked one on top of each other, and changing the shape also allows the slot at (3) to break up the elements and keep the airflow attached over a sensitive area of the car. Ferrari has also added a few 'teeth' to the floor's opening (5) to help generate a small vortex to keep the air flush with the surface as it passes under the car.

JAKE BOXALL-LEGGE





FREE PRACTICE 1



WEATHER Wet, foggy

FREE PRACTICE 2

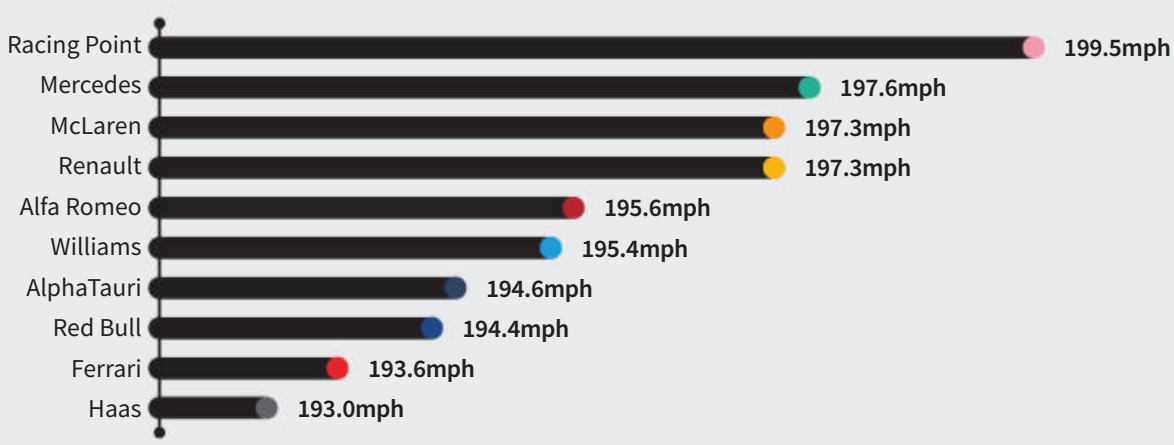


FREE PRACTICE 3

POS	DRIVER	TIME
1	Bottas	1m26.225s
2	Hamilton	1m26.361s
3	Leclerc	1m26.681s
4	Verstappen	1m26.896s
5	Vettel	1m27.038s
6	Norris	1m27.167s
7	Perez	1m27.245s
8	Ricciardo	1m27.392s
9	Albon	1m27.449s
10	Gasly	1m27.528s
11	Ocon	1m27.634s
12	Kvyat	1m27.795s
13	Sainz	1m27.924s
14	Raikkonen	1m27.956s
15	Grosjean	1m28.115s
16	Magnussen	1m28.293s
17	Russell	1m28.343s
18	Giovinazzi	1m28.370s
19	Latifi	1m28.941s
20	Stroll	no time

WEATHER Dry, sunny air 7C track 12C

SPEED TRAP (QUALIFYING)



QUALIFYING 1

POS	DRIVER	TIME
1	Verstappen	1m26.319s
2	Bottas	1m26.573s
3	Hamilton	1m26.620s
4	Norris	1m26.829s
5	Ricciardo	1m26.836s
6	Leclerc	1m26.857s
7	Gasly	1m27.072s
8	Ocon	1m27.086s
9	Vettel	1m27.107s
10	Perez	1m27.120s
11	Albon	1m27.126s
12	Magnussen	1m27.231s
13	Kvyat	1m27.285s
14	Sainz	1m27.378s
15	Giovinazzi	1m27.532s
16	Grosjean	1m27.552s
17	Russell	1m27.564s
18	Latifi	1m27.812s
19	Raikkonen	1m27.817s
20	Hulkenberg	1m28.021s

QUALIFYING 2

POS	DRIVER	TIME
1	Hamilton	1m25.390s
2	Verstappen	1m25.467s
3	Bottas	1m25.971s
4	Ricciardo	1m26.096s
5	Leclerc	1m26.240s
6	Albon	1m26.285s
7	Norris	1m26.316s
8	Perez	1m26.330s
9	Sainz	1m26.361s
10	Ocon	1m26.364s
11	Vettel	1m26.738s
12	Gasly	1m26.776s
13	Kvyat	1m26.848s
14	Giovinazzi	1m26.936s
15	Magnussen	1m27.125s

QUALIFYING 3

POS	DRIVER	TIME
1	Bottas	1m25.269s
2	Hamilton	1m25.525s
3	Verstappen	1m25.562s
4	Leclerc	1m26.035s
5	Albon	1m26.047s
6	Ricciardo	1m26.223s
7	Ocon	1m26.242s
8	Norris	1m26.458s
9	Perez	1m26.704s
10	Sainz	1m26.709s

WEATHER Dry, sunny air 10C track 16-20C



SEASON STATS

	DRIVERS' CHAMPIONSHIP	PTS	BEST FINISH	BEST QUAL
1	Hamilton	230	1	1
2	Bottas	161	1	1
3	Verstappen	147	1	2
4	Ricciardo	78	3	4
5	Perez	68	4	4
6	Norris	65	3	4
7	Albon	64	3	4
8	Leclerc	63	2	4
9	Stroll	57	3	3
10	Gasly	53	1	7
11	Sainz	51	2	3
12	Ocon	36	5	5
13	Vettel	17	6	5
14	Kvyat	14	7	11
15	Hulkenberg	10	7	3
16	Giovinazzi	3	9	14
17	Raikkonen	2	9	13
18	Grosjean	2	9	14
19	Magnussen	1	10	15
20	Latifi	0	11	15
21	Russell	0	11	12

CONSTRUCTORS' CHAMPIONSHIP

1	Mercedes	391
2	Red Bull	211
3	Racing Point	120
4	McLaren	116
5	Renault	114
6	Ferrari	80
7	AlphaTauri	67
8	Alfa Romeo	5
9	Haas	3
10	Williams	0

QUALIFYING BATTLE

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

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

WINS

Hamilton	7
Bottas	2
Gasly	1
Verstappen	1

POLE POSITIONS

Hamilton	8
Bottas	3

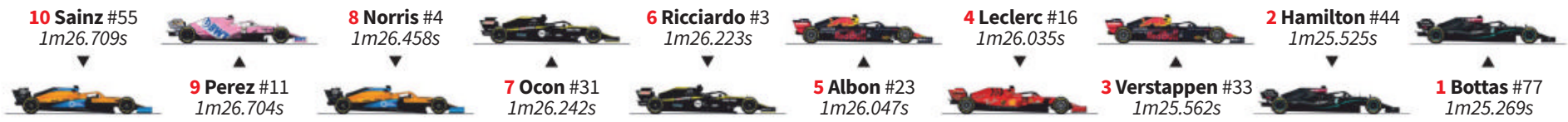
FASTEST LAPS

Hamilton	4
Bottas	2
Verstappen	2
Norris	1
Ricciardo	1
Sainz	1

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STARTING GRID



RACE RESULTS ROUND 11 (60 LAPS – 191.77 MILES)

POS	DRIVER	TEAM	FINISH TIME	LED	TYRES
1	**Lewis Hamilton** (GBR)	Mercedes	1h35m49.641s	48	**S**u, **M**n, **S**u
2	**Max Verstappen** (NLD)	Red Bull-Honda	+4.470s		**S**u, **M**n, **S**u
3	**Daniel Ricciardo** (AUS)	Renault	+14.613s		**S**u, **M**n, **S**u
4	**Sergio Perez** (MEX)	Racing Point-Mercedes	+16.070s		**S**u, **M**n, **S**u
5	**Carlos Sainz Jr** (ESP)	McLaren-Renault	+21.905s		**S**u, **M**n, **S**u
6	**Pierre Gasly** (FRA)	AlphaTauri-Honda	+22.766s		**M**n, **H**n, **S**n
7	**Charles Leclerc** (MCO)	Ferrari	+30.814s		**S**u, **M**n, **M**u
8	**Nico Hulkenberg** (DEU)	Racing Point-Mercedes	+32.596s		**S**n, **M**n, **S**n
9	**Romain Grosjean** (FRA)	Haas-Ferrari	+39.081s		**M**n, **H**n
10	**Antonio Giovinazzi** (ITA)	Alfa Romeo-Ferrari	+40.035s		**S**n, **M**n, **M**n
11	**Sebastian Vettel** (DEU)	Ferrari	+40.810s		**M**n, **H**n, **S**n
12	**Kimi Raikkonen** (FIN)	Alfa Romeo-Ferrari	+41.476s		**S**n, **M**n, **S**n
13	**Kevin Magnussen** (DNK)	Haas-Ferrari	+49.585s		**S**n, **M**n, **M**n
14	**Nicholas Latifi** (CAN)	Williams-Mercedes	+54.449s		**S**n, **M**n, **M**n
15	**Daniil Kvyat** (RUS)	AlphaTauri-Honda	+55.588s		**M**n, **H**n, **S**n
R	**Lando Norris** (GBR)	McLaren-Renault	42 laps-power unit		**S**u, **M**n
R	**Alexander Albon** (THA)	Red Bull-Honda	23 laps-radiator		**S**u, **M**n
R	**Esteban Ocon** (FRA)	Renault	22 laps-hydraulics		**S**u
R	**Valtteri Bottas** (FIN)	Mercedes	18 laps-power unit	12	**S**u, **M**n
R	**George Russell** (GBR)	Williams-Mercedes	12 laps-accident damage		**S**n, **M**n

FASTEST LAPS

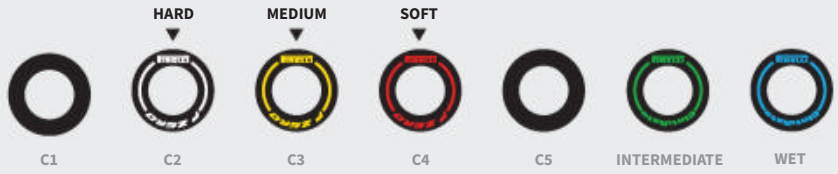
POS	DRIVER	TIME	GAP	LAP
1	**Verstappen**	1m28.139s	-	60
2	**Hamilton**	1m28.145s	+0.006s	58
3	**Ricciardo**	1m29.584s	+1.445s	53
4	**Perez**	1m29.700s	+1.561s	58
5	**Gasly**	1m30.110s	+1.971s	53
6	**Sainz**	1m30.129s	+1.990s	53
7	**Vettel**	1m30.408s	+2.269s	43
8	**Magnussen**	1m30.456s	+2.317s	37
9	**Raikkonen**	1m30.512s	+2.373s	54
10	**Leclerc**	1m30.712s	+2.573s	54
11	**Hulkenberg**	1m30.733s	+2.594s	58
12	**Giovinazzi**	1m30.909s	+2.770s	38
13	**Latifi**	1m31.377s	+3.238s	39
14	**Grosjean**	1m31.562s	+3.423s	54
15	**Bottas**	1m31.884s	+3.745s	8
16	**Kvyat**	1m32.214s	+4.075s	41
17	**Norris**	1m32.328s	+4.189s	40
18	**Albon**	1m32.330s	+4.191s	9
19	**Ocon**	1m33.189s	+5.050s	21
20	**Russell**	1m34.526s	+6.387s	6

WEATHER Dry, apart from a few rain spots, overcast, air 9-10C track 15-19C

WINNER'S AVERAGE SPEED 120.07mph **FASTEST LAP AVERAGE SPEED** 130.66mph

TYRES

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



RACE BRIEFING

RACE PENALTIES

ALBON Five-second penalty and two licence points for causing a collision with Kvyat

RAIKKONEN 10s penalty and two licence points for causing a collision with Russell

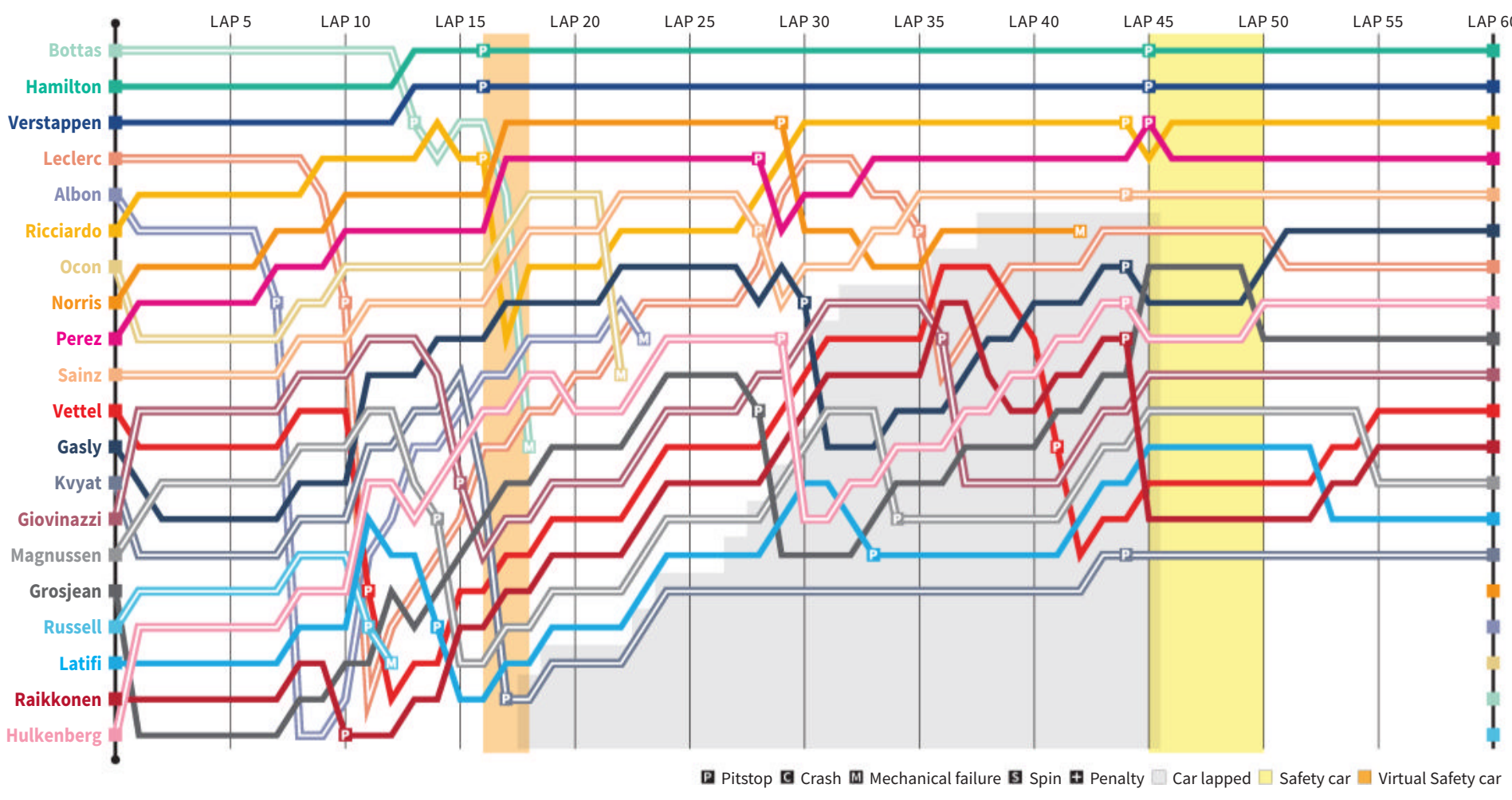
STAT 30

Ricciardo now has 30 F1 podium finishes, the same as Juan Pablo Montoya

STAT 323

The Eifel GP was Raikkonen's 323rd start in F1, surpassing the previous record held by Rubens Barrichello

LAP CHART What happened, when

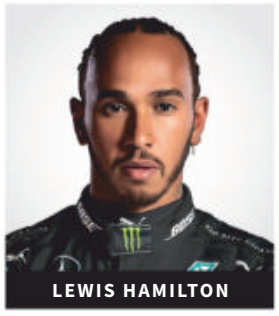


FULL MARKS FOR RICCIARDO AND COMEBACK KID GIOVINAZZI

The podium-finishing Renault driver and point-scoring Alfa Romeo ace earn a maximum score apiece on Formula 1's return to the Nurburgring

ALEX KALINAUCKAS

MERCEDES



LEWIS HAMILTON

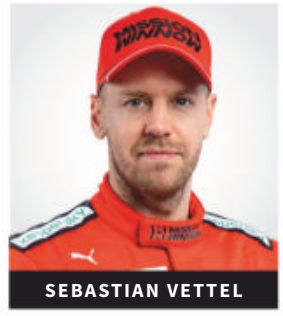
9 Couldn't repeat his fastest lap of qualifying when it mattered in Q3, but that still would not have stopped Bottas taking pole. The qualifying defeat costs a mark, but he was basically faultless in the race, taking advantage of Bottas's slip off the road after being outmuscled exiting the first corner.



VALTTERI BOTTAS

7 Can't score higher because his weekend contained a major error – that lap 13 lock-up into the first corner. Although his car was destined not to finish the race, this was a gift for Hamilton that Bottas should not have offered. Can at least look back on a fine Q3 lap that earned his 14th F1 pole.

FERRARI



SEBASTIAN VETTEL

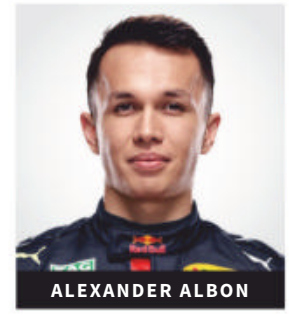
4 Yet another disappointment. Nearly jumped the start, then his spin while running behind Giovinazzi cost him the benefit of starting on the mediums, having been dumped out in Q2. Recovered to finish where he started – poor considering all the retirements ahead of him.



CHARLES LECLERC

9 Losing out to Gasly late on costs Leclerc a mark given it meant he lost to a slower car, but he earns the right to a high score with his brilliant qualifying lap. His effort put him fourth on the grid, ahead of a Red Bull, and he then displayed great defensive driving in the race.

RED BULL



ALEXANDER ALBON

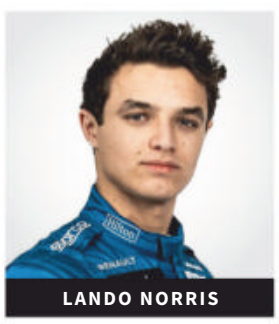
3 There are two major reasons for Albon scoring so low. He failed to get close to the maximum of the car given Leclerc beat him in qualifying, and in the race he made two errors, one of which was massive (the drift over on Kvyat). But he'd already cost himself by locking up on lap one.



MAX VERSTAPPEN

9 Like Hamilton, he too failed to recreate his Q2 form in Q3, which just costs him a mark. In the race he yet again showed his sheer class – the only driver able to stay anywhere near the Mercedes duo. He got dropped at the safety car restart, but overall another brilliant display.

McLAREN



LANDO NORRIS

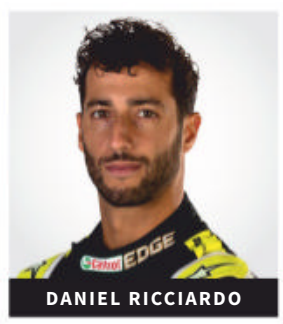
8 Given where Perez ended up, and Norris was running ahead of him approaching the halfway stage when his power unit problems first struck, the McLaren driver might have been on for a great result. Did well to keep his pace despite battling the problem. A case of what might have been.



CARLOS SAINZ JR

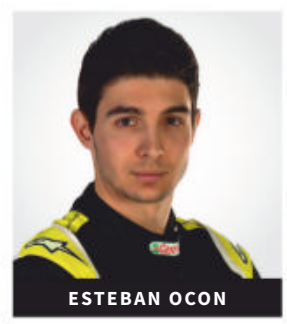
7 Fifth is a decent result after a tough couple of races. He "never felt completely comfortable with the car" in the race, which is a concern given he was running McLaren's latest upgrades. Felt these contributed to bad tyre graining and wear throughout the race, which he called 60 laps of "suffering".

RENAULT



DANIEL RICCIARDO

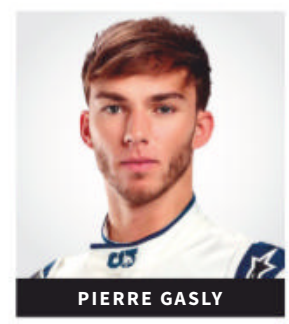
10 We're using our discretion to give him a maximum score as he too failed to recreate his best lap time from Q2 in Q3. But in any case, this didn't cost him anything as he would still have qualified sixth. He then raced superbly to give Renault its first podium since Malaysia 2011.



ESTEBAN OCON

7 Put his Renault where it deserved to be in qualifying, just behind his team-mate in seventh. Was in the hunt with the Perez/Norris battle, having been edged out by the Racing Point into Turn 6 on the first lap. Never got the chance to see where he'd have ended up thanks to hydraulic issue.

ALPHATAURI



PIERRE GASLY

8 Took home another armful of points with sixth, which pleased him after he was disappointed to qualify 12th – not exactly bad for an AlphaTauri. Showed well in battle during the race, including a great DRS-less pass around Leclerc's outside at Turn 1 just after the late restart.



DANIIL KVYAT

6 Loses a mark for qualifying behind his team-mate, but otherwise drove well considering the amount of damage he said he sustained in the clash with Albon. Had he not cut the chicane things might have been different, but nevertheless was blameless for the collision.



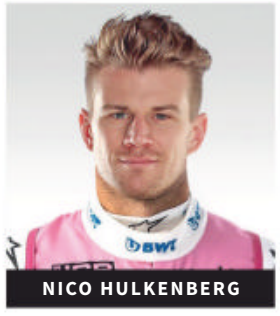
Gasly (10) acquited himself well again, but Giovinazzi delivered a star turn

RACING POINT



SERGIO PEREZ

7 Drove well, making a key pass on Ocon, but his score is lowered by his poor qualifying. He started ninth after only having one set of softs for Q3, so was vulnerable to track evolution, but this was still lowly. Looked like he would have pushed Ricciardo close without the safety car.



NICO HULKENBERG

9 This score could be considered harsh given the circumstances of Hulkenberg's call-up for a third unexpected F1 start in 2020. He misses a maximum by a fraction, and this is down to qualifying last, albeit with no practice, in a car that has the pace to challenge Red Bull on occasion.

ALFA ROMEO



KIMI RAIKKONEN

3 Had his work cut out to recover a good score given his poor qualifying pace left him 19th and his team-mate escaped Q1. Then came that costly slip while chasing Vettel, which turned him left into Russell and sent the Williams driver out of the race. Was penalised 10s and came home 12th.



ANTONIO GIOVINAZZI

10 Earns his maximum score for delivering when the pressure for his F1 future is really on. He produced a brilliant lap to make it out of Q1 for just the second time in 2020 to take 14th on the grid, then capitalised on plenty of faster cars retiring to score the final point.

HAAS



ROMAIN GROSJEAN

8 Doesn't lose a mark for failing to make it out of Q1 while his team-mate progressed, because he drove well in the race to take his first points of 2020. The only driver to make a one-stopper work, he recovered from running off at Turn 2 on the first lap to rise up the order, aided by the safety car.



KEVIN MAGNUSSEN

7 Haas opted for split strategies, with Magnussen given the softs at the start compared to his team-mate's mediums. Felt this was the wrong move in hindsight as he only gained two spots on his grid slot over the duration. Said he picked up early front-wing damage, which won't have helped.

WILLIAMS



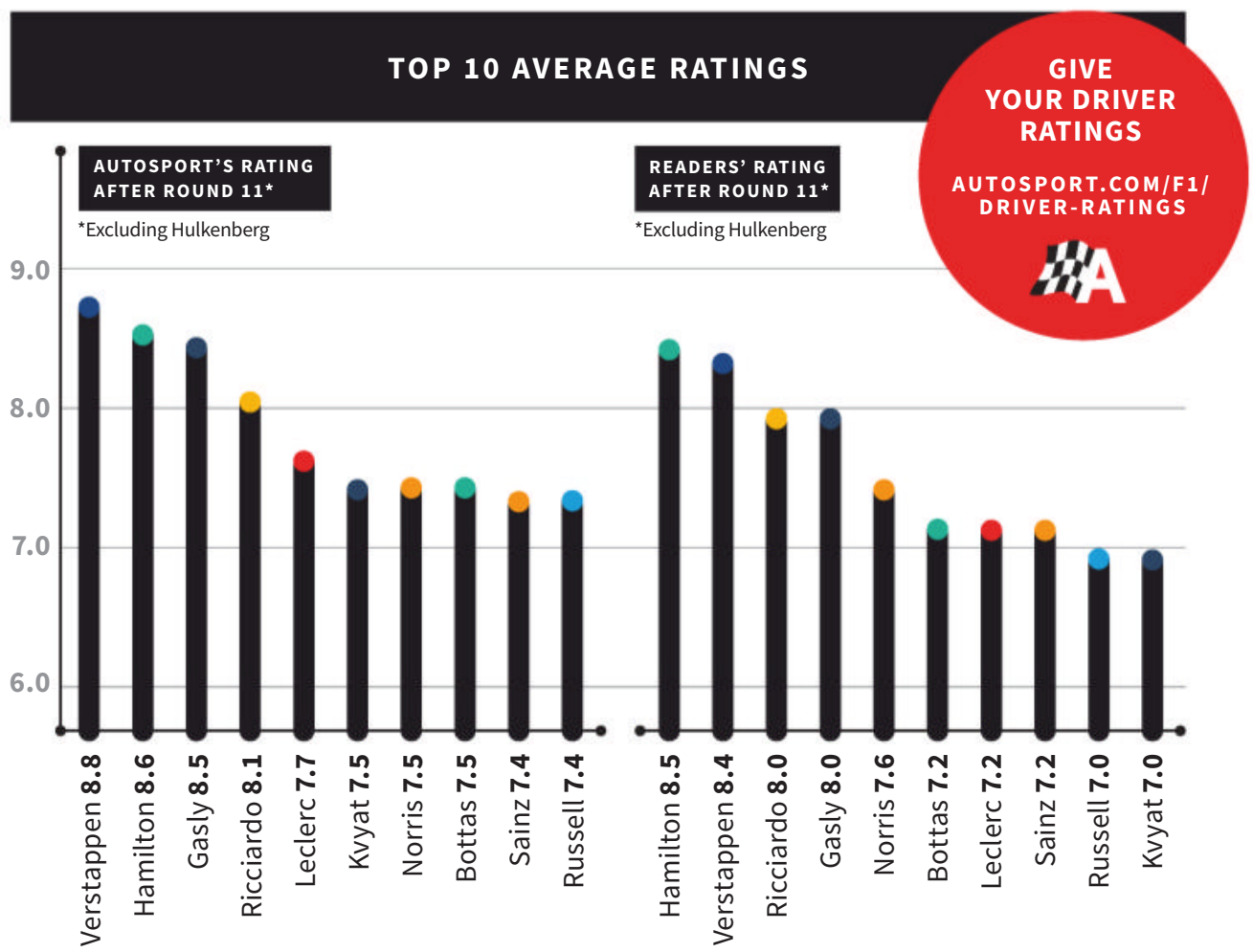
NICHOLAS LATIFI

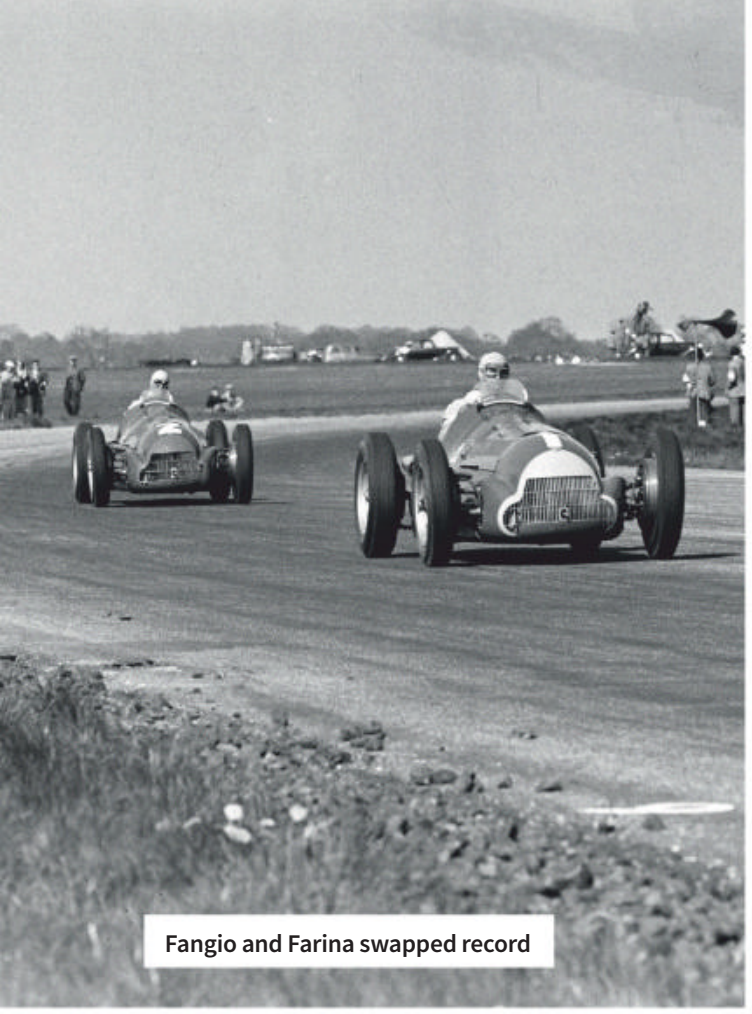
6 Felt he had the pace to reach Q2, but couldn't string together the lap he needed, and then in the race he struggled for pace compared to the Alfas and Haases. Could not hold back Vettel and Raikkonen on their fresh softs after the safety car, but did rebuff Kvyat to avoid finishing last.



GEORGE RUSSELL

6 Like Latifi, felt he had the pace to challenge for another Q2 appearance if he'd nailed the perfect lap in his FW43, and in fact conducted a Q1 run plan with that expectation in mind, but failed to pull it off. Was blameless in the collision at Turn 1 with Raikkonen that ended his race after 12 laps.



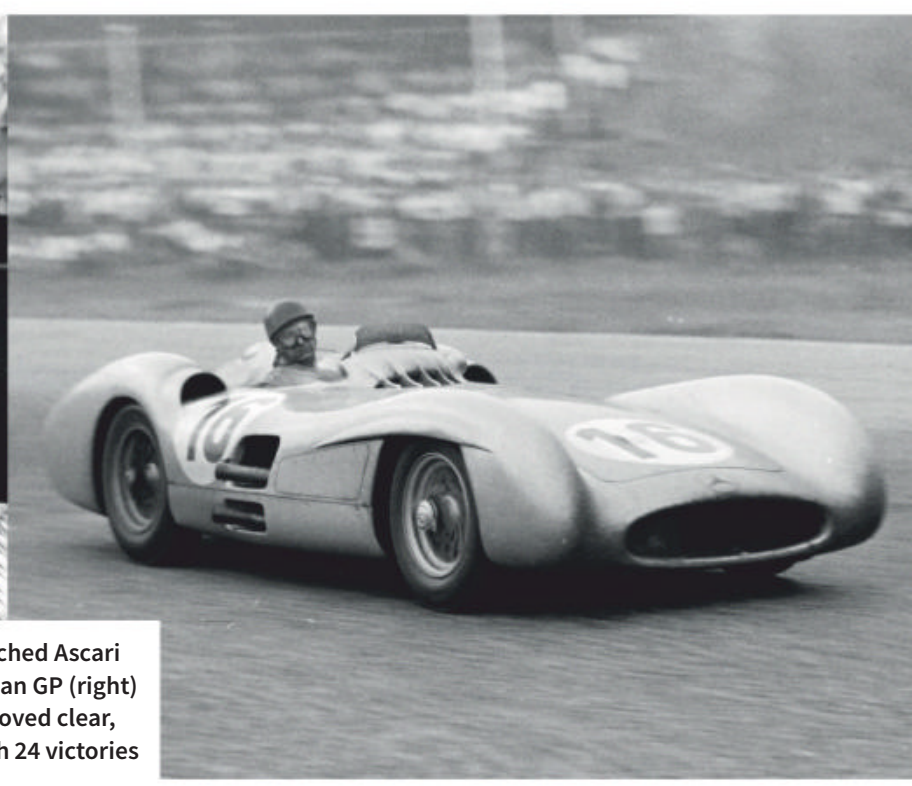


Fangio and Farina swapped record



Ascari took over during 1952-53 domination





Fangio matched Ascari in 1954 Italian GP (right) and then moved clear, retiring with 24 victories



Clark's final win moved the record to 25

PHIPPS/SUTTON



Stewart hit 27 at 1973 German Grand Prix

SUTTON



Prost moved mark to 28 at the 1987 Portuguese GP (left) and on to 51 at 1993 German GP (right)



HOW F1'S WINS RECORD HAS BEEN PUSHED UP AND UP

Lewis Hamilton has finally matched Michael Schumacher's Formula 1 world championship race wins tally of 91. It's a record that has risen hugely

KEVIN TURNER

PHOTOGRAPHY motorsport IMAGES

It has taken 14 years and 260 races for Lewis Hamilton to match Michael Schumacher's tally of 91 world championship Formula 1 victories. The wins record is a benchmark few drivers have held over the years, but those who have topped the list have a special place in motorsport history.

Number of wins is, of course, not the only (or even best) way of assessing drivers. Strike rates, the level of opposition and the machinery at a driver's disposal are just some of the factors that need to be considered for a true picture. But it is safe to say that the names who have held the record are among the greatest F1 has seen, and now seems the right time to look at how the mark has been pushed up over the past seven decades.

For the first two years of the world championship Alfa Romeo stars Juan Manuel Fangio and Giuseppe Farina took it in turns to top the chart before Ferrari's Alberto Ascari took over. His 11 victories during the F2 era of the world championship, combined with the two he scored in 1951, kept him ahead until Fangio's 1954 Italian Grand Prix success moved him to 13.

When he won the 1955 Argentinian GP in sweltering conditions for Mercedes Fangio edged ahead, a position he would maintain for over a decade. Ascari was killed following that year's Monaco GP and Fangio continued as F1's top talent. His 1957 German GP win, almost certainly his greatest, moved Fangio to 24.

When the great Argentinian retired the following year, Ascari was still second and no other driver had reached double figures. Fangio's great friend Stirling Moss was the next to do so, taking his 10th success in his ultimately futile attempt to win the 1958 drivers' title at the Moroccan GP finale. Moss overtook Ascari for second, but the Easter crash at Goodwood in 1962 that ended his career left him on 16. That was a mark that Jim Clark, armed with Colin Chapman's Lotus 25 and 33 monocoque gamechangers, surpassed during his second title-winning campaign in 1965.

Clark matched Fangio's tally with victory in the 1967 season finale in Mexico. The Scot, with the now reliable Cosworth DFV-engined Lotus 49, started 1968 as clear title favourite and duly recorded his 25th world championship success in the South African GP.

But by the next round in Monaco Clark was dead and the driver who would ultimately take his record soon filled the void. Having been hamstrung by poor BRM equipment for two years, Jackie Stewart had only two victories at the time of Clark's death, but he became the benchmark in Ken Tyrrell-run Matras and his first title-winning campaign took him into double figures in 1969.

Despite running a March for most of 1970, the rise of the Lotus 72, and his own illness in 1972, Stewart kept scoring victories. In his final season in 1973 he matched Clark's tally of 25 with his third Monaco GP success, and left his final figure at 27 when he won that year's German GP at the Nurburgring.

F1 now entered one of its most competitive eras and Stewart's mark seemed well out of reach as the wins were shared around. Even Niki Lauda, the most successful driver of the immediate post-Stewart era, had 'only' scored 17 victories at the time of his first retirement in 1979.

That was enough for fourth in the table, the position Lauda was still in when he returned with McLaren in 1982. He started winning again and, with his last victory in the Dutch GP, finally matched Clark in 1985. It had taken him 168 starts, compared to Clark's 72 and Stewart's 91, to reach the same level.

By now, however, Lauda's team-mate was closing in on all of them. Alain Prost scored his 25th success in the dramatic Australian GP season finale in 1986, and he finally took the record with his 28th victory in the following year's Portuguese GP, after forcing Gerhard Berger into a late error.

Stewart's record had stood for 14 years but, by now, the increased number of races per season meant the records set earlier in world championship history were more vulnerable.

Prost and Ayrton Senna did most of the winning over the next few years. Senna surpassed Stewart during his successful 1991 campaign and, while Prost took a sabbatical the following year, the Brazilian moved to within eight victories of Prost's record of 44. The third big name of the era, Nigel Mansell, moved into third during the course of his dominant 1992 title run with Williams.

Prost's return with the advanced Williams FW15C yielded seven victories, moving him to 51. When he retired at the end of 1993, Prost was 10 clear of Senna. Given his rival's move to the pacesetting Williams team, Prost's record looked vulnerable. But the death of Senna in the 1994 San Marino GP left the three-time champion on 41, while Mansell only added one more victory — at that year's Australian GP — after his successful switch to Indycars.

With the 'big three' gone, no active driver »

FORMULA 1 DRIVERS WITH 20 WORLD CHAMPIONSHIP RACE WINS OR MORE

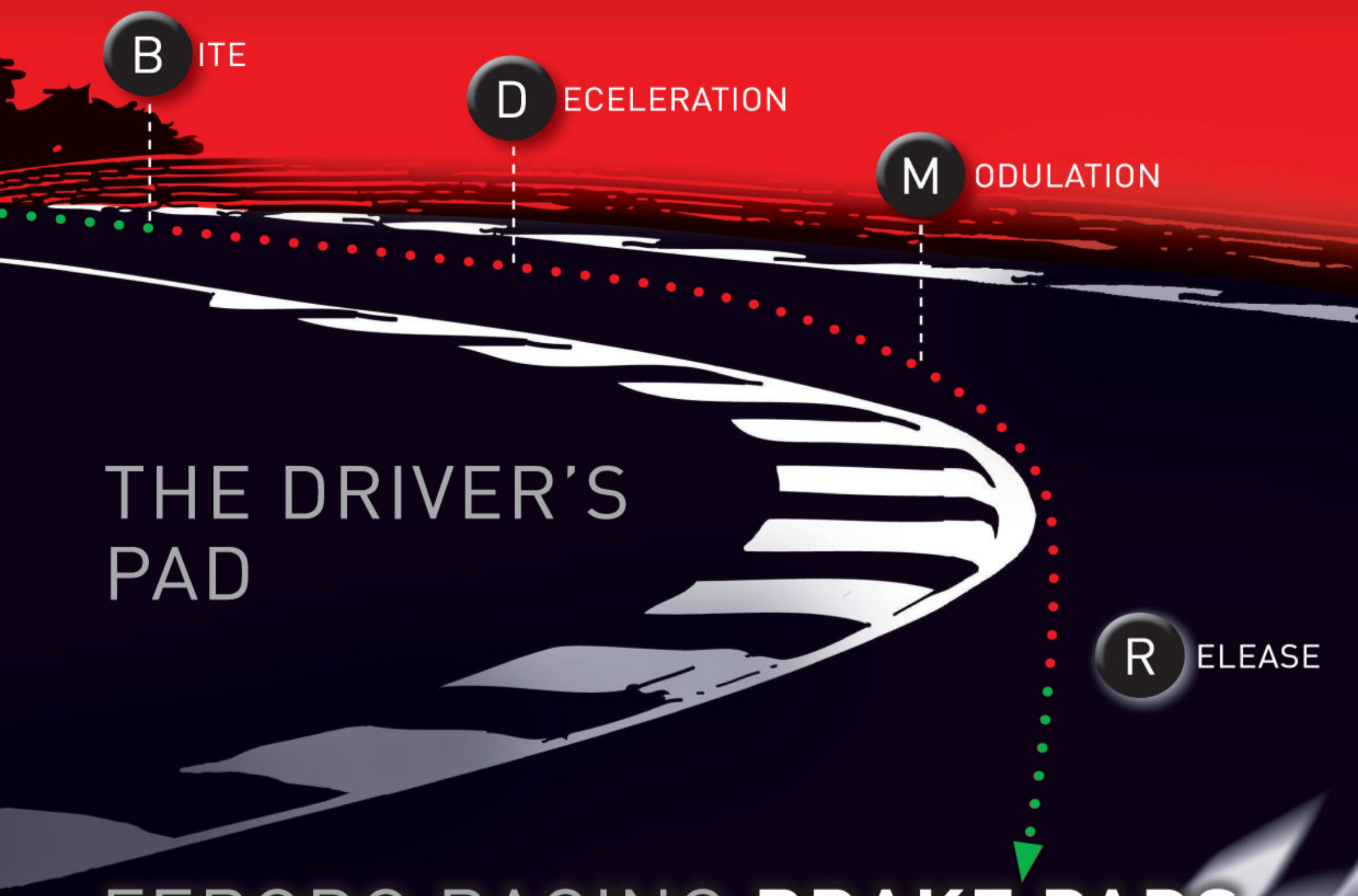
	DRIVER	WINS	TITLES
=1	**Michael Schumacher**	**91**	**7**
=1	**Lewis Hamilton**	**91**	6
3	**Sebastian Vettel**	53	4
4	**Alain Prost**	51	4
5	**Ayrton Senna**	41	3
6	**Fernando Alonso**	32	2
7	**Nigel Mansell**	31	1
8	**Jackie Stewart**	27	3
=9	**Jim Clark**	25	2
=9	**Niki Lauda**	25	3
11	**Juan Manuel Fangio**	24	5
=12	**Nelson Piquet**	23	3
=12	**Nico Rosberg**	23	1
14	**Damon Hill**	22	1
15	**Kimi Raikkonen**	21	1
16	**Mika Hakkinen**	20	2

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was anywhere near the records. Schumacher didn't score his 10th victory until the 1994 European GP. Damon Hill actually matched Schumacher's score of 20 at the 1996 German GP, but the Ferrari driver soon edged clear.

When Schumacher finally ended Ferrari's long wait for the drivers' crown with victory in the 2000 Japanese GP, it moved his personal score to 43. He matched Prost at the following year's Hungarian GP (meaning that Prost had also held the record for 14 years), having taken 156 races to get there to Prost's 193.

Schumacher's dominant run in the Ross Brawn/Jean Todt/Rory Byrne Ferrari era took him into uncharted territory, reaching 91 at the 2006 Chinese GP, his 246th world championship F1 start.

Fernando Alonso overtook Mansell for fourth on the list with his final victory for Ferrari in 2013, but his infamous second move to McLaren proved futile. He was overtaken by Sebastian Vettel that same season, and the Spaniard is still waiting for win number 33.

With Hamilton's time at McLaren also proving inconsistent, Vettel seemed the most likely to get into the big numbers during his time at Red Bull. When he finally left the team as a four-time champion he was on 39, and he overtook Senna at the 2015 Singapore GP, his third success for Ferrari.

But by then, Hamilton was at Mercedes and racking up big numbers as the Silver Arrows started their domination of the turbo-hybrid era. He had overtaken both Senna and Vettel by the end of 2015, and won at least nine races each season between 2016, the year he surpassed Prost, and 2019.

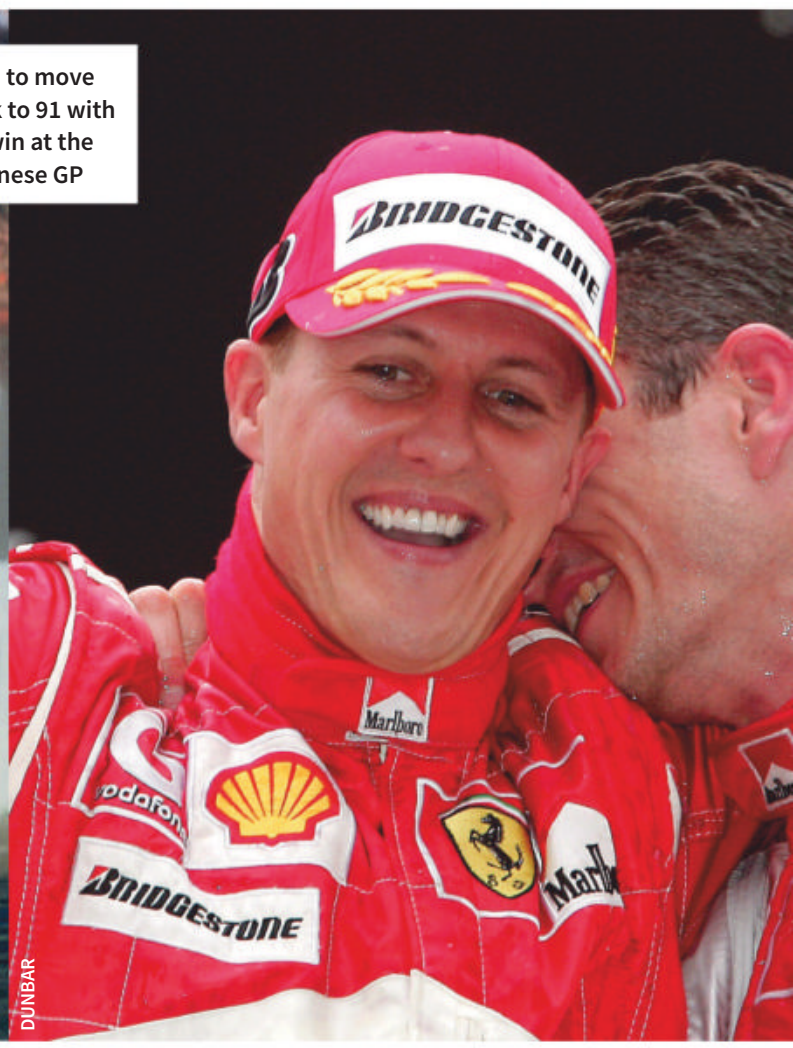
Vettel overtook Prost in 2018, but it looks extremely unlikely that he'll rise any higher than third. Hamilton started this season with 84, and the consistent quality of both him and the Mercedes machinery has taken him to a record that previously seemed unreachable.

Hamilton isn't finished yet, either, so it's easy to imagine him becoming the first F1 driver to score 100 world championship wins. Records are there to be beaten but, aside from Vettel and Alonso, no other active driver is even at a quarter of Hamilton's tally. It will be many years before the record is challenged, whoever becomes F1's next benchmark driver.

P38 HAMILTON'S 10 GREATEST WINS



Schuey matches Prost: 2001 Hungarian GP



Going on to move the mark to 91 with his last win at the 2006 Chinese GP

DUNBAR



Hamilton matches Schuey's 91 wins record at 2020 Eifel GP

ETHERINGTON



SUTTON

HAMILTON'S TOP 10 F1 WINS

Lewis Hamilton has now matched Michael Schumacher's remarkable record of 91 world championship grand prix victories. Here's our pick of his greatest successes

KEVIN TURNER

PHOTOGRAPHY motorsport IMAGES



2018 GERMAN GP

HOCKENHEIM

MERCEDES W09

Most of the greats have at least one blast through the pack on their CV, and this race at Hockenheim is Hamilton's only win from outside the top 10 on the grid. Hydraulics issues in qualifying meant his Mercedes had to start 14th.

Poleman Sebastian Vettel's Ferrari led as Hamilton started a charge that got him through the midfield runners and, thanks to Daniel Ricciardo's Red Bull being even further back, into fifth on lap 14 of 67.

As those ahead pitted, Hamilton rose to third, while Kimi Raikkonen's early stop allowed him to jump team-mate Vettel into the lead. The status quo was restored with some team orders so, after Hamilton's stop, the order was Vettel-Raikkonen-Valtteri Bottas-Hamilton.

Then conditions changed. "I knew there was the possibility to win when it started to rain," said Hamilton. Although Hamilton became the fastest man on the circuit, Vettel continued to build his lead as Raikkonen struggled – Bottas closed in and grabbed second in traffic.

The moment of high drama came on lap 52. Vettel was nine seconds ahead of Bottas when he locked up into the Sachskurve and slid at slow speed into the gravel – and out of the race.

The safety car was called. Bottas came in, but confusion over the radio meant Hamilton aborted his entry to the pits, driving across the grass to continue. When Raikkonen pitted on the next lap, Hamilton took over at the front, with team-mate Bottas second.

The job wasn't done yet, because Bottas now had fresh ultrasofts and attacked at the restart, Hamilton forced to go defensive. Mercedes then instructed the Finn to stay put. Hamilton had needed some luck, but had played his part to take one of his most remarkable wins.





2013 HUNGARIAN GP

HUNGARORING

MERCEDES W04



Hamilton's move to Mercedes, following frustrations at McLaren as Sebastian Vettel racked up win after win, seemed bold at the end of 2012. It now looks like a masterstroke, but during the combination's first season there were plenty of dramas, such as the tyre failure in the 2013 British GP.

Somewhat surprisingly, Hamilton's first win for the Three-Pointed Star came at a baking hot Hungaroring, when his W04 did not eat its rear rubber as anticipated. Even Hamilton had seemed underwhelmed after taking pole. "If we win tomorrow it will be a miracle," he said, expecting a tough race.

Crucial to his success, other than the tyres lasting, was a no-nonsense pass on former team-mate Jenson Button's McLaren immediately after Hamilton had pitted from the lead. Main rivals Vettel and Romain Grosjean (Lotus) found Button a harder nut to crack. By the time the McLaren pitted, 13 laps after Hamilton had gone past, Vettel was 13.4s behind, having been 1.7s adrift earlier.

Hamilton was similarly firm in passing Mark Webber's Red Bull after the Mercedes' second pit visit. Kimi Raikkonen's Lotus won a multi-layered and exciting battle for second, but Hamilton finished 11s clear as he scored his first Mercedes success and his 22nd F1 victory.

After an awful first lap, team-mate and established Silver Arrows driver Nico Rosberg was battling for ninth when his engine let go. His best lap was almost half a second slower than Hamilton's.

Autosport gave Lewis 10/10 and said: "This was a weekend in which he was consistently fast, error-free and executed the race perfectly."

2012 UNITED STATES GP

AUSTIN

McLAREN MP4-27





By the time F1 headed to Austin for the first time, Hamilton was already out of the 2012 title fight and Sebastian Vettel was well on his way to his third consecutive crown. But Hamilton is often one of the first drivers to get on top of a new circuit and he duly qualified on the front row, alongside Vettel's Red Bull.

Mark Webber (Red Bull) initially relegated Hamilton to third, but following one failed attempt the McLaren moved back into second on lap four of 56 and pulled away.

After both Vettel and Hamilton made their single stops, the McLaren was only two seconds behind, but with Kimi Raikkonen's yet-to-stop Lotus splitting them.

Hamilton DRS'd his way past on lap 24, just before Raikkonen came in, by which time Vettel's lead was 2.4s. Hamilton closed Vettel down, but the Red Bull was quick enough in the crucial places to keep it just out of overtaking range.

That was until lap 42, when Vettel caught the slow HRT of Narain Karthikeyan in the snaking and narrow section from Turns 3 to 7. Now Hamilton was in range and, as they headed down the back straight, he simply blew past on the outside with the help of DRS.

"I knew I had to grab my chance, so I turned the engine up to maximum revs and pushed like crazy," said Hamilton, who was rewarded for his dogged and relentless pursuit.

"He had one chance to pass, and he took it," agreed Vettel, who was unable to respond even though he finished just 0.7s behind.



2011 GERMAN GP

NURBURGRING

McLAREN MP4-26

TEE



Another swashbuckling racer's performance helped Hamilton beat Mark Webber and Fernando Alonso at the Nurburgring in 2011.

A stunning qualifying effort – 1.2s faster than team-mate Jenson Button – secured Hamilton a surprise front-row start, after he'd switched from Carbone Industrie brakes to Brembos.

He then grabbed the lead from Webber at the start, while Alonso's Ferrari soon got the better of Sebastian Vettel, setting up a three-way battle for victory. The McLaren held off Webber until a small mistake into the chicane on lap 12 of 60 allowed the Red Bull to pass into the final corner. But Hamilton ensured he got a good run onto the start/finish straight and retook the lead on the blast down to Turn 1.

Webber's earlier stop then allowed him to jump Hamilton, but the Red Bull driver couldn't shake off his pursuer.

At the second stops, Webber came in first and was hung out to dry when he tried to pass Hamilton as the McLaren emerged from its tyre change. Hamilton then showed how it could be done by passing Alonso, who had emerged just ahead after his own stop.

The leaders had to change onto the unfavoured medium tyre for the final stint, but Hamilton opened a small gap over Alonso before the crucial stops.

He was immediately able to lap faster than Alonso's Ferrari after the McLaren's final pit visit and came home 4s clear. "Vintage Hamilton, 10/10," said Autosport's driver ratings.



DUNBAR

2008 GERMAN GP

HOCKENHEIM

McLAREN MP4-23

The revised MP4-23 and Hamilton were the quickest combination around Hockenheim in 2008, as proved by a comfortable pole position, but McLaren's strategy forced him to pull out a great drive.

Things started well. Hamilton led from the off and was 11.8s clear of Felipe Massa's Ferrari after 35 of the 67 laps. But then Timo Glock's Toyota suffered a suspension failure and crashed, bringing out the safety car.

Strangely, McLaren decided not to bring Hamilton in, even after the rest of the field peeled off. The team thought that the safety car period would be short, and that Hamilton would have enough time to rebuild a gap before he had to pit.

Wrong. Hamilton had just nine laps between the race recommencing and having to make his second stop. He thus emerged fifth with 17 laps to go, despite having charged off into the distance at the restart.

Team-mate Heikki Kovalainen, who had struggled for pace all weekend, didn't pose too much of a problem. Nor did Nick Heidfeld, who was trying a similar strategy in his BMW and soon pitted. But ahead lay Nelson Piquet Jr, there by virtue of a perfectly timed stop and leading a GP for the first time, and championship contender Massa.

Massa was struggling with his brakes and Hamilton dived past into second on lap 57. He was now 2.1s behind the leading Renault. Hamilton was on Piquet's gearbox within two tours and, on lap 60, returned to his rightful place at the front after going down the inside of the Renault at the Spitzkehre hairpin (pictured, right).

"That dazzling pace had regained him the victory the tactical call had almost lost him," said our report.





BRATIC



ETHERINGTON



SCHLEGELMILCH



FERRARO

2011 CHINESE GP

SHANGHAI

McLAREN MP4-26

Hamilton only just made it out in time to line up third in China after his McLaren initially failed to fire. That didn't stop both McLarens jumping poleman Sebastian Vettel's Red Bull, Hamilton following team-mate Jenson Button as the top three broke clear. But McLaren lost out during the first round of pitstops, Hamilton falling to fifth.

With the frontrunners employing a range of two and three-stop strategies thanks to the fragile Pirellis, things didn't unwind until the closing stages. And Hamilton had a lot of work to do on track.

Hamilton dived down the inside of Button at the first corner before his third and final stop. Once everyone had pitted, Hamilton thus found himself fourth. He caught and passed Nico Rosberg's Mercedes and then overcame the Ferrari of Felipe Massa with 12 laps to go. At that point he was still 4.6s behind leader Vettel.

It took six laps for the McLaren to catch the Red Bull. Vettel defended hard, but Hamilton took the lead on lap 52 of 56 with a bold move into the high-speed Turn 7.

"It was another beautiful – and highly unconventional – move that took Seb completely by surprise," said Autosport's report.

Hamilton took the flag over 5s clear, and reckoned it one of his best. "This race is in my top three of race wins, up there with Silverstone and Monaco in 2008," he said.



DUNBAR



ETHERINGTON

2019 MONACO GP

MONTE CARLO

MERCEDES W10

In the wake of the death of Niki Lauda, who had been so instrumental in persuading Hamilton to join the Silver Arrows, emotions were high at Monaco. And this time it was a strategic error from Mercedes that made life tougher for Hamilton.

He had led from the start after taking a fine pole, and all looked normal until a safety car period brought the leaders in on lap 11 of 78. Mercedes opted to put medium Pirellis on Hamilton's car, while Red Bull and Ferrari went for hard tyres for Max Verstappen and Sebastian Vettel respectively.

Racing went green again on lap 15, giving Hamilton the task of conducting a mammoth 64-lap stint on the softer compound. Not for the first time Hamilton expressed his frustration over the radio, but that didn't prevent him putting in a well-judged drive, looking after the rubber and not making mistakes, while keeping arguably the most aggressive driver on the grid – Verstappen – behind him.

Verstappen had extra motivation to pass Hamilton, thanks to a 5s penalty for a clash with Valtteri Bottas during the pitstops. His big attack finally came on lap 76. Verstappen was close enough to the struggling Mercedes to try an ambitious move down the inside into the chicane (left). Hamilton demonstrated his sixth-sense-like racecraft by straightening up as the Red Bull arrived, taking the sting out of the inevitable contact and allowing the Mercedes to come out still ahead. It was easy to imagine a more destructive clash had any other driver in the field been in the lead car.

"I think it was one of the hardest races I've had," said Hamilton. "It was one of the most strategic drives that I think I have ever had to do in terms of finding that balance around the track to try to keep the gap. I definitely touched the barrier a lot of times."



2014 BAHRAIN GP

BAHRAIN

MERCEDES W05

The third round of the 2014 season is high on this list because it demonstrates that Hamilton can win even when he isn't the fastest. He outraced team-mate Nico Rosberg in a way that helped set the tone for their subsequent battles.

Rosberg arrived leading the championship, qualified on pole and set fastest lap, but came away second best. "Rosberg had the strongest hand in a dramatic Bahrain GP, but didn't play it right and lost out in a thrilling head to head," said our report.

Things started going wrong for Rosberg – and right for Hamilton – when the #44 Mercedes was able to claim the lead on the inside on the run to the first corner. Once they were clear of the field, Rosberg launched an assault on Hamilton. On lap 19 he dived underneath Hamilton into Turn 1, but couldn't get it stopped and Hamilton repassed on the exit before pitting.

Rosberg took the slower medium tyre for the second stint, but underlined his pace by only losing minimal time to his soft-shod team-mate. That meant he would come back at Hamilton when they pitted for the final time and effectively swapped compounds.

Rosberg was even helped by a safety car period around the time of the second stops. Instead of having to use some of his tyre advantage to eat into Hamilton's lead – which had risen to nearly 10s – he had 11 laps to find a way past.

There was also energy deployment from the hybrid systems to use, and several times Rosberg attacked, only to be rebuffed. His big effort came with six laps to go, diving up the inside into Turn 1 and duelling all the way to Turn 4. He tried again on the next tour, but each time Hamilton was able to position his car in the right place to emerge ahead, albeit narrowly.

"It felt like one of the best-calculated races I've ever had – how I was using my power and how I was positioning my car," said Hamilton. "He'd catch me down the back straight, still be with me at the last corner and have DRS. So I had to accept he was going to come past. I couldn't come to the inside and then block, I had to get him back. I don't know how I did it all the time."

Rosberg wasn't entirely happy with some of Hamilton's driving, contributing to tension that would lead to a clash at Spa and, arguably, the issues between the duo that lasted until Rosberg's retirement as world champion at the end of 2016.









2018 ITALIAN GP

MONZA

MERCEDES W09

Despite having the fastest car, at least in qualifying, all was not well at Ferrari on home ground. First of all, it was the 'wrong' driver on pole position – Raikkonen instead of title contender Sebastian Vettel – and the team also chose to tell the Finn that his services would not be required for 2019 prior to the race. It was perhaps not a surprise when Raikkonen decided not to make life easy for Vettel at the start to hold the lead.

Apparently perturbed, Vettel was still focusing on his team-mate into the second chicane on the inside line. With typical opportunism, Hamilton moved to the outside entering the left part of the chicane and went the long way around the Ferrari (above). Vettel appeared to be taken by surprise and understeered into the Mercedes, the slight contact being enough to spin him around.

Hamilton then breezed into the lead following a safety car period, but Raikkonen was in one of his more combative moods. He picked up the tow and went back into the lead around the outside approaching the second chicane. It was good, clean racing.

Hamilton hounded Raikkonen for the rest of the stint and made his stop much later – lap 28 to the Ferrari's lap 20. He rejoined 5.7s behind but with fresher rubber.

Mercedes left Valtteri Bottas out and he now held Raikkonen back, helping Hamilton to close in. Perhaps even more importantly, the Ferrari also started suffering with a blister on the left-rear tyre.

Hamilton had some front blistering, but it was less severe and he remained in Raikkonen's wheeltracks even after Bottas finally made his stop. At the end of lap 44 Hamilton got a run on the Ferrari down the start/finish straight. Raikkonen defended on the inside, but Hamilton braked later and completed the move around the outside into the first chicane (below). The Mercedes then raced clear to take the chequered flag 8.7s ahead of Raikkonen. Vettel took fourth and fell yet further behind in the championship fight.

"This was Hamilton's victory, because he forced errors and made the vital passes when he had to," said Autosport's report. "Mercedes did an impeccable job at Monza, but the brilliance of Hamilton was the key ingredient that made all the difference."





DUNBAR

STATS
STARTS 261
WINS 91
POLES 96
FASTEST LAPS 51

2008 BRITISH GP
SILVERSTONE
McLAREN MP4-23



DUNBAR

"It's performances of that calibre that make legends," said Autosport after what remains Hamilton's most dominant performance in F1. In appalling conditions at his home grand prix at Silverstone, Hamilton – in only his second F1 season – put on one of *the* virtuoso wet-weather drives. And one that, unlike his 2008 Monaco success, did not require a big dose of luck.

After a couple of poor races – including his infamous pitlane gaffe in Canada – Hamilton had slumped to fourth in the points and needed a good weekend at his home race.

From row two Hamilton made a fantastic start and nearly overtook team-mate and polesitter Heikki Kovalainen at Copse, the duo touching. While experienced hands Mark Webber and Felipe Massa rotated on the first lap, Hamilton pressured his team-mate. Clearly quicker, he made it past on lap five into Stowe as Kovalainen started to struggle with his tyres.

Hamilton, who was having trouble with a misting visor he kept having to clear, was faster and kinder to his tyres. He drew away, but faced a new challenge when Kovalainen spun. Kimi Raikkonen's Ferrari moved into second and started closing the gap. The top two came in together. Ferrari kept Raikkonen on the same set of inters, McLaren fitted Hamilton a new set and gave him a bit more fuel, but still got its driver out ahead.

As they exited the rain returned, playing into Hamilton's hands: new intermediates were better than old ones when water levels increased. Raikkonen was 22s behind just five laps after the stops.

And that was the last anyone saw of Hamilton, despite a brief off at Abbey when the rain intensified again. At the second stops, McLaren fitted new intermediates at a time when the fastest on track were on extreme wet tyres. For a while, Hamilton was three seconds slower than the best on the extreme rubber but *much* faster than others on intermediates. He didn't have to stop again to change back to inters as the track dried, so his lead grew and grew.

The result was that Hamilton lapped everyone up to and including Raikkonen in fourth, finishing 1m08.6s ahead of second-placed Nick Heidfeld.

"There's every chance that his seventh GP win could stand as his best," said Autosport. *Eighty-four* victories on and our view hasn't changed.



ETHERINGTON



SORDO STARS AS HYUNDAI DEFEATS TOYOTA

The Spanish supersub took his second win in Italy, while Thierry Neuville brought himself back into title contention with the runner-up spot

NICK GARTON

PHOTOGRAPHY **McKLEIN**


Suninen's searing pace and initial lead sparked expletive-laden celebration

Four months later than planned, Rally Italia Sardegna played host as the sixth round of this year's World Rally Championship. Dani Sordo, Hyundai's 'supersub' for the weekend, took a thoroughly deserved victory; his third career WRC win and the second in his last two visits to Sardinia.

As the WRC continues to proceed cautiously out of lockdown, this final gravel round on the 2020 schedule felt much more like a full WRC event than either of the preceding events in Turkey or Estonia. Spectators and ceremonial events may have been absent (officially at least), but six timed stages on the opening day felt like business as usual.

Four of the six would be complete before the day's service halt, which meant that many crews took a measured approach early on. Championship leader Elfyn Evans had the job of running first on the road, thereby doing the lion's share of sweeping the loosest sand and gravel for everyone else's benefit. He was followed by his six-time champion Toyota team-mate Sebastien Ogier. The third Toyota driver, Kalle Rovanpera, was also circumspect after his mechanics had worked through the night to rebuild his Yaris after a roll at the end of Thursday's shakedown stage. The Hyundai i20s of reigning drivers' champion Ott Tanak and perennial runner-up Thierry Neuville were also running well within themselves.

This left the M-Sport Ford Fiestas of Esapekka Lappi and Teemu Suninen to claim the spotlight early on. Both Finns have expressed frustration in recent weeks as the heavy financial toll of COVID-19 upon M-Sport has affected the team's progress. Suitable attitude adjustment was enforced by team principal Richard Millener prior to the start of the rally and it paid off with dramatic effect. Lappi came through the 12km (7.5-mile) opening stage a full second in front of Evans. And his benchmark was immediately smashed by Suninen, a previous winner in Sardinia in both WRC3 and WRC2 and runner-up overall in 2019. He took a colossal 12.4s lead and then treated the world to an expletive-laden celebration.

"That was probably the best comment we've ever heard, I reckon," Millener enthused. "Not the swearing, the other bit about 'sending it'. I think he's definitely been hanging around English people too long!"

M-Sport's jubilation was tempered on the next stage, however, when Lappi's Fiesta coasted to a halt in a cloud of steam. Its engine had boiled dry and would prove too badly damaged to restart the event.

There was no cloud of steam around Tanak's Hyundai, but something was clearly amiss and he would lose roughly half a minute per stage for the morning loop.


Tanak was in no mood to share his feelings on his early mechanical woes

HYUNDAI MOTORSPORT GMBH / HELENA EL MOKNI

What ailed him nobody was saying, least of all the Estonian. As his chances ebbed away, Tanak sat in grimacing silence rather than discuss the issue even with co-driver Martin Jarveoja, lest an enterprising countryman translate his words and post them on social media.

Undoubtedly the happiest man on the morning loop was Sordo, who took full advantage of starting each stage at the back of the pack and benefited from a much cleaner road surface as a result. The Spaniard also discovered that he had gone the right way with his tyre choice of mediums all round with just one spare, the same as the Toyota drivers.

Sordo won the second stage, came third behind the Toyotas on the third, and then won the final stage of the opening loop to sweep past Suninen. After the break, Sordo won both of the day's remaining stages and took a 17.4s advantage from Suninen overnight. Neuville sat unhappy in third, penalised by the weight of a second spare tyre – and his car stalling twice on the fifth stage.

A feverish battle had broken out between Neuville and Ogier, who were separated by just 0.8s after the entire first day's running. If anything Ogier was even less happy than his Belgian rival, directing his frustration towards the road order and his displeasure towards gravel sweeping. "It's just ridiculous but nothing new," he snapped. "Rally is amateur sport; it will stay amateur sport. It cannot be managed in a professional way."



"RALLY IS AMATEUR SPORT. IT CANNOT BE MANAGED IN A PROFESSIONAL WAY"

Saturday's switcharound in the running order alleviated that problem for the fastest drivers. Another six-stage schedule beckoned and Ogier duly set the fastest time on four of them. Despite Ogier's revived pace, Sordo managed to extend his lead to 36.5s after stage eight, and still held a 27.4s advantage at the end of what proved to be a day of very mixed fortunes throughout the field.

Suninen cut a troubled figure as his Fiesta proved unable to withstand the charge of the Hyundais and Toyotas. M-Sport took heart from a hugely impressive outing for Gus Greensmith in the team's third car, which looked set to at least equal his career-best fifth place in Turkey. Even this hope was denied, however, when the alternator belt was knocked off on stage nine and the battery was rendered inoperable soon afterwards.

By then, one of the five potential champions who arrived in Sardinia had gone out: Rovanpera. The young Finn had been complaining that his car felt loose from shakedown onwards, and on stage eight »

ADAMO DEALS WITH THE INEVITABLE QUESTIONS



The helicopter shots that opened each broadcast of this year's Rally Italia Sardegna showed the beauty of a hillside town and the rustic charm of the island. Whether intentionally or not, the sequence mirrored the credits to Italy's celebrated TV export, *Inspector Montalbano*, tales of a police detective who navigates the grey area in which the law does not always favour victims or the community. The delicacy with which Montalbano must think and act is often undermined by the constant badgering of local press and the inability of his team to perform their tasks to his satisfaction. Several parallels could be found with Hyundai team principal Andrea Adamo over the course of the weekend, as the fortunes of his drivers ebbed and flowed.

Toyota's Tommi Makinen was unequivocal: no team orders, even with the manufacturers' title so delicately poised. Adamo could not afford such directness when his fastest car was the only one not fighting desperately to stay in the drivers' title race. "You know, we always manage the strategy to get our objectives," he said. "We always say the manufacturers' championship is our main objective."

It was the honest answer of a man navigating the grey area of his drivers' expectations. Ott Tanak, with the most points coming into the event, languished after the opening morning while Thierry Neuville played snakes and ladders with his tyre strategy. "Maybe the problem will sort itself – maybe we have to do something, maybe not…" Adamo mused publicly. "Whatever it will be I will do."

For his part, Sordo greeted the news that Neuville had ended day two in second place by mentioning only the pressure being applied by Sebastien Ogier. Neuville, though, cheekily dropped his face mask to show his elation. "If I do the job, they will do the job," said the Belgian brightly, which sent the press pack back to Adamo with renewed vigour.

"I know what you are going to ask me, 'Do-you-will-switch-position-and-and…'" the Italian said, imitating his pursuers. "And if you don't mind, I would answer the same as the others."

He weathered the storm in a manner that would have brought a tear of pride to Montalbano's eye: ever courteous and occasionally explosive: "You don't need to be Einstein to understand that is difficult to play a bit, huh?"

And, like the fictional policemen, his team conjured a result with no losers. "I don't know if I deserve them or they deserve me," Adamo concluded.



Neuville sent the press pack into a tizzy over team-orders heavy hint

disaster struck. The rear end stepped out just a little too far and snagged a tree, spinning the Yaris through 180 degrees. It then hit another tree square on at the rear, ripping off the right side of the car, making a mess of its rollcage and the rest of the structure, but its crew escaped unharmed. Team principal Tommi Makinen looked shaken when inspecting the wreckage.

Rovanpera's crash left championship leader Evans battling with Suninen just out of the potential podium places. The Welshman stands atop the championship table thanks to consistency rather than outright speed, and he was sticking to the gameplan once again as tyre management became a major preoccupation. "We had a lot of movement in the tyre but actually the wear was not as bad as we thought it would be," he said. "So we probably had a little bit of margin to go a bit harder."

No such margin was available to either Neuville or Ogier, both of whom were on the ragged edge. Neuville was kicking himself for running a less-than-optimal tyre choice once again. Although he had abandoned the second spare, he had chosen to stick with mediums all round in the afternoon when Toyota had worked out that a medium/hard mix was the way to go.

"WE PROBABLY HAD A LITTLE BIT OF MARGIN TO GO A BIT HARDER"

All of this dropped him back behind Ogier to the tune of 1.5s at the overnight halt. For Sordo, having Ogier behind him was no problem as it avoided the potential question of having to slow down in order to assist Neuville's championship chances. "I will try to help myself to win in the rally, and the team, you know?" he said. "I don't think these people need help. I just come here to do a rally like the others and I'm happy."

After two days of sunshine in the mid-twenties, cooler conditions greeted the runners on Sunday morning, an overcast sky dropping ambient temperatures by 10C from the first two days.

A single loop of just two stages awaited, which was to be run twice through the day. Ogier and Neuville made the leap into hyperspace from their very first kilometre. Ogier took first blood, 0.2s faster than Neuville but 12.1s faster than Sordo. Neuville then won the next from Sordo by 0.8s and 1.6s faster than Ogier. The Frenchman claimed the penultimate stage 1.6s in front of Neuville, closing to just 9.2s from Sordo.

"It's never safe and I don't know, I don't understand the times," Sordo said. "They are really, really fast in this stage. I am really surprised."

Then came the powerstage and Tanak played his joker. He had kept a low profile since the opening day, but the five bonus powerstage points offered a lifeline to his title defence and he grasped it with both hands.

Neuville was faster than Tanak on the split times, and desperately needed a full score both to help pull clear of Tanak and to close on the Toyota drivers' scores, but brake issues intervened, dropping him 0.7s behind Tanak and costing him a point.

Ogier came next with his Yaris WRC, which was several yards past the limit as he wrestled it like a 1980s Group B car. It was mesmerising to watch but was only third fastest and dropped him back into third overall.

Sordo then closed the stage carefully but his time was just fast enough: 5.1s was the final margin of victory over Neuville. It pushed Hyundai back past Toyota in the manufacturers' standings, and that was mission accomplished as far as Hyundai team boss Andrea Adamo was concerned.

Muted celebrations then followed out of respect for the loss of Sordo's countrywoman, co-driver Laura Salvo, in competition on the Rally Vidreiro Centro de Portugal on Saturday. Sordo,



State of Rovanpera's wrecked Toyota left boss Makinen looking shaken

POWERED BY motorsport STATS



Ogier was on the ragged edge – and on the rev limiter over running-order 'road sweeping'

the leading light in Spain's close-knit rally community, had carried her name on his car throughout the final day.

A final twist lay ahead for Hyundai in post-event scrutineering when Sordo's rear subframe was found to be 24.5g below its homologated weight: enough to be outside the permitted tolerance. The FIA accepted that this was a quality-control issue on Hyundai's part and the results were finalised, but Hyundai had to pay a €10,000 fine with a further €20,000 suspended in case of a similar breach in the next 12 months.

In WRC2, Sweden's Pontus Tidemand turned the championship tide in his favour with another win earned by taking a cautious approach at the wheel of his unsponsored Skoda while his rivals hit tyre and reliability problems. Chief among them was fellow WRC refugee Mads Ostberg, who lost four minutes on Friday after being forced to run with only rear-wheel drive. His Citroen then picked up numerous other issues throughout the weekend, ruining his 100% wins-to-starts ratio in 2020.

Victory in WRC3 also fell to a driver who chose to trudge through a puncture-strewn event when Jari Huttunen took honours for Hyundai. The Junior World Rally Championship also completed its penultimate round for the season. Sweden's Tom Kristensson took his second win of the year.

RESULTS ROUND 6/8, RALLY ITALY, 8-11 OCTOBER

POS	DRIVER / CO-DRIVER	TEAM / CAR	TIME
1	**Dani Sordo** (ESP) **Carlos del Barrio** (ESP)	Hyundai Shell Mobis WRT / Hyundai i20 Coupe WRC	2h41m37.5s
2	**Thierry Neuville** (BEL) **Nicolas Gilsoul** (BEL)	Hyundai Shell Mobis WRT / Hyundai i20 Coupe WRC	+5.1s
3	**Sebastien Ogier** (FRA) **Julien Ingrassia** (FRA)	Toyota Gazoo Racing WRT / Toyota Yaris WRC	+6.1s
4	**Elfyn Evans** (GBR) **Scott Martin** (GBR)	Toyota Gazoo Racing WRT / Toyota Yaris WRC	+1m02.3s
5	**Teemu Suninen** (FIN) **Jarmo Lehtinen** (FIN)	M-Sport Ford WRT / Ford Fiesta WRC	+1m33.9s
6	**Ott Tanak** (EST) **Martin Jarveoja** (EST)	Hyundai Shell Mobis WRT / Hyundai i20 Coupe WRC	+2m27.5s
7	**Pierre-Louis Loubet** (FRA) **Vincent Landais** (FRA)	Hyundai 2C Competition / Hyundai i20 Coupe WRC	+4m43.8s
8	**Jari Huttunen** (FIN) **Mikko Lukka** (FIN)	Hyundai i20 R5	+8m41.7s
9	**Kajetan Kajetanowicz** (POL) **Maciek Szczepaniak** (POL)	Skoda Fabia Rally2 Evo	+10m02.9s
10	**Pontus Tidemand** (SWE) **Patrik Barth** (SWE)	Toksport WRT/Skoda Fabia Rally2 Evo	+10m20.9s
OTHERS			
15	**Martin Prokop** (CZE) **Zdenek Jurka** (CZE)	Ford Fiesta RS WRC	+12m44.8s
25	**Gus Greensmith** (GBR) **Elliott Edmondson** (GBR)	M-Sport Ford WRT / Ford Fiesta WRC	+33m07.1s
R	**Takamoto Katsuta** (JPN) **Daniel Barritt** (GBR)	Toyota Gazoo Racing WRT / Toyota Yaris WRC	SS14-accident
R	**Kalle Rovanpera** (FIN) **Jonne Halttunen** (FIN)	Toyota Gazoo Racing WRT / Toyota Yaris WRC	SS8-accident
R	**Esapekka Lappi** (FIN) **Janne Ferm** (FIN)	M-Sport Ford WRT / Ford Fiesta WRC	SS2-engine

STAGE TIMES

STAGE	FASTEST	LEADER	SECOND
SS1 **Tempio Pausania** 1 (7.51 miles)	Suninen 9m59.8s	**Suninen**	Lappi +12.4s
SS2 **Erula-Tula 1** (13.53 miles)	Sordo 16m50.0s	**Suninen**	Sordo +5.4s
SS3 **Tempio Pausania** 2 (7.51 miles)	Evans 9m49.0s	**Suninen**	Sordo +5.0s
SS4 **Erul Tula 2** (13.53 miles)	Sordo 16m33.1s	**Sordo**	Suninen +7.5s
SS5 **Sedini-Castelsardo 1** (9.15 miles)	Sordo 10m56.7s	**Sordo**	Suninen +9.5s
SS6 **Tergu-Osilo 1** (7.96 miles)	Sordo 8m16.5s	**Sordo**	Suninen +17.4s
SS7 **Monte Lerno 1** (13.72 miles)	Ogier 12m46.9s	**Sordo**	Suninen +22.6s
SS8 **Coiluna-Loelle 1** (9.32 miles)	Sordo 8m52.5s	**Sordo**	Ogier +36.5s
SS9 **Monte Lerno 2** (13.72 miles)	Ogier 12m29.6s	**Sordo**	Ogier +31.3s
SS10 **Coiluna-Loelle 2** (9.32 miles)	Neuville 8m42.9s	**Sordo**	Neuville +31.6s
SS11 **Sedini-Castelsardo 2** (9.15 miles)	Ogier 10m39.3s	**Sordo**	Neuville +27.0s
SS12 **Tergu-Osilo 2** (7.96 miles)	Ogier 8m03.4s	**Sordo**	Ogier +27.4s
SS13 **Cala Flumini 1** (8.74 miles)	Ogier 8m35.5s	**Sordo**	Ogier +15.3s
SS14 **Sassari-Argentiera 1** (4.28 miles)	Neuville 4m51.3s	**Sordo**	Ogier +16.1s
SS15 **Cala Flumini 2** (8.74 miles)	Ogier 8m23.2s	**Sordo**	Ogier +9.2s
SS16 **Sassari-Argentiera 2** (powerstage) (4.28 miles)	Tanak 4m45.7s	**Sordo**	Neuville +5.1s

DRIVERS' CHAMPIONSHIP **1 Evans 111**; 2 **Ogier** 97; 3 **Neuville** 87; 4 **Tanak** 83; 5 **Rovanpera** 70; 6 **Suninen** 44; 7 **Lappi** 38; 8 **Sordo** 26; 9 **Craig Breen** 25; 10 **Sebastien Loeb** 24.

MANUFACTURERS' CHAMPIONSHIP **1 Hyundai Shell Mobis WRT 208**; 2 **Toyota Gazoo Racing WRT** 201; 3 **M-Sport Ford WRT** 117; 4 **Hyundai 2C Competition** 8.



NEXT EVENT

YPRES RALLY
26 NOVEMBER ISSUE

Can super-consistent Evans stay out front in the chase for the title as the World Rally Championship heads to Belgium next month?

It's a BTC BTCC: Cook profits as favourites fail

This year the BTC Honda ace normally has a tale of woe. But last weekend that applied to everyone else as Cook claimed a double win

MARCUS SIMMONS

PHOTOGRAPHY JEP motorsport IMAGES



This may be a slightly embellished tale from last weekend's visit to Croft, but let's go with it anyway, because it illustrates the scarcely believable developments in this hugely unpredictable British Touring Car Championship season.

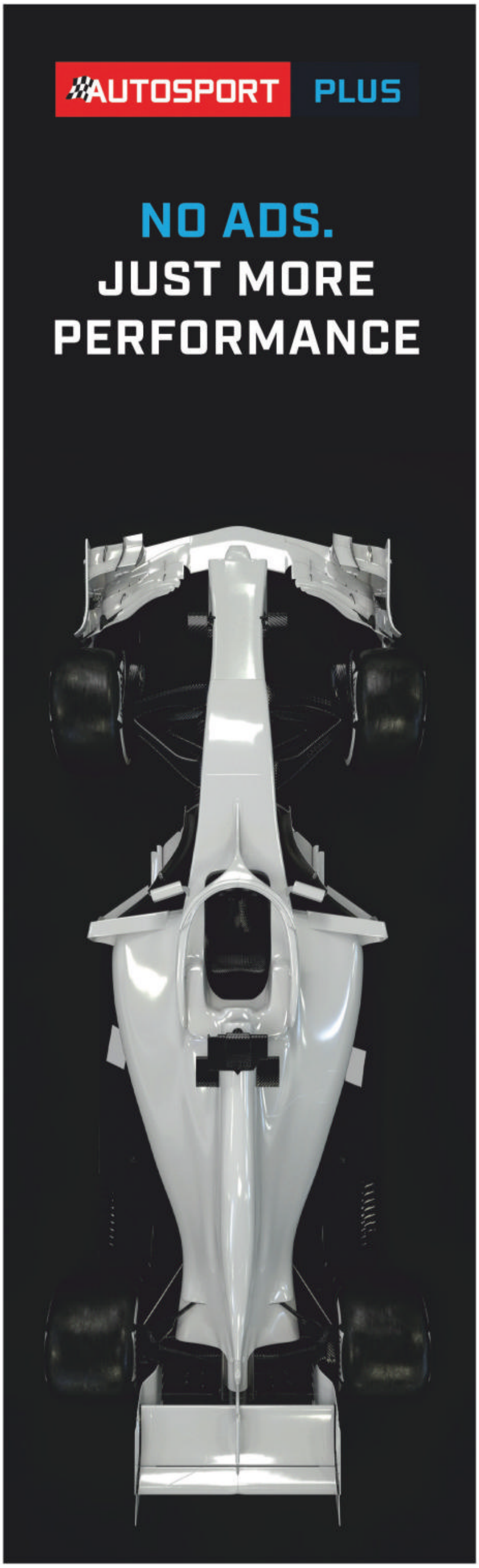
According to one team principal, moments after Colin Turkington had slithered his BMW helplessly into the barriers with the most uncharacteristic of mistakes at the beginning of race two, series supremo Alan Gow wandered up to our unnamed boss and said: "All we need now is for Ash Sutton not to finish." Moments later, Turkington's main title rival Sutton looked his gift horse in the mouth, fumbled a move on Jake Hill that he'd been succeeding in pulling off with monotonous regularity in race one, and inflicted a puncture upon his Infiniti. Gow returned to our storyteller, and remarked: "How the hell did you manage that?"

This was a weekend where Sutton and Turkington should have harvested a huge haul of points, as Croft is historically rear-wheel-drive territory. But heavy rain an hour before qualifying turned that on its head and brought the front-driven machines into play — a fantastic opportunity for title longshots Dan Cammish, Tom Ingram and Rory Butcher. Only for all three to drop the ball — or have the ball dropped for them — in spectacular fashion.

Then Turkington and Sutton, in conditions that were dry for all but a slippery opening few laps of race one, had the same happen to them on Sunday. Cammish didn't win, but he is suddenly a very serious title threat; Ingram produced a sensational comeback from the back of the grid to end the day a winner; and it was Josh Cook — Mr Unlucky to date in 2020 — who was last man standing for pole position and a double victory in the opening two races, one of them on a stewards' verdict after the finish.

It was no less than Cook deserved. Thanks to his tribulations to date, his BTC Racing Honda Civic Type R carried no success ballast on its arrival in North Yorkshire, and he was instantly in the mix in free practice, second only to the West Surrey Racing-run BMW 330i M Sport of Turkington. Then, in that wet qualifying session, he set only the fourth fastest time — and even that was one of many deleted across the field for breaching track limits at the Jim Clark Esses. Yet crucially, his second best was good enough for pole once the chart-topping Toyota Corolla of Ingram failed the post-session rideheight test — exactly the same thing that cost Cook a win at Oulton Park back in August.

Somehow, the older-spec AmD-run MB Motorsport Civic of Jake Hill shared the front row on a time set in the first nine minutes. Then the Audi S3, run by AmD's sister Trade Price Cars team for Bobby Thompson, came out of the pits... "Bobby realised I was coming at a million miles an hour, attempted to get out of the »





Turkington prangs it into the Clervaux tyres at start of second race…

way and… it's still my fault but I missed my braking point and it put me off," recounted Hill of his wild slide through the Clervaux gravel. "We took two left tyres off the rim so we had no more new wets to throw at it. So we went on slicks to see if it would dry." It didn't.

Hill put Cook under massive pressure at the start of the opening race as the track dried out – "Me and Josh did some tandem drifting," laughed Hill – before the BTC machine pulled out a small gap. Hill closed again towards the end, "but I was just a little bit too far behind in the middle of the race" to catch up.

One Honda that did catch up Cook was the Team Dynamics version of Matt Neal in race two. The tall veteran was seventh in the opener, but demoted Hill for second with six laps remaining in the sequel. Now Cook, struggling on 60kg of ballast, was in his sights, and Neal slashed the gap. It came to a head at Sunny on the final lap. Neal saw a gap: "He didn't cut me off, and as I was committed he went for the apex." Cook was pushed wide, magnificently held the slide, but Neal had scampered through for his ill-gotten gains, only for a time penalty for the move to demote him to second.

"Credit to Matt – he put his hands up," said Cook, who had spoken in the immediate aftermath of being "mugged" of the win. "We've turned a corner; the team's been working really hard," he added of his breakthrough to top form. Of the first win, he said: "In damp conditions, leading the way is always tough. You don't know how much speed to carry into corners, and on top of that we had a really lairy set-up, so I was pleased to bring it home."

A broken front rollbar consigned Cook to eighth in the reversed-grid finale, but this was a great day for BTC, with Tom Chilton adding a third in the last race to his pair of sixths from earlier. "There's been a massive growth in performance this weekend," approved team



…while Sutton recovers from a Butcher-triggered spin in the opener



“There’s been a massive growth in performance and Josh was awesome, absolutely awesome”

boss Bert Taylor. “Josh was awesome, absolutely awesome.”

That final race went to Ingram, a marked contrast to the gloom that had enveloped Speedworks Motorsport 24 hours earlier. A broken right-front wishbone, possibly from riding the chicane kerbs, was the culprit for failing the post-qualifying rideheight test. Ingram then played it softly for 13th in the opening race, and used that as the launching pad to burst through to fourth in the next one, the car sporting damage from hitting a tyre stack. On a normal Ingram day that would likely have caused a race-ending wound, but the prevailing winds of fortune had completed a U-turn from Saturday.

That continued into the finale, where he beat the Dynamics Honda of front-row starter Cammish away from the grid, pulled off a wonderful move on polesitter Chilton at the Jim Clark Esses to lead, and then hit trouble. “I had a huge vibration from lap four on the right-front,” said Ingram. “Before that the car felt insane, absolutely phenomenal, but after the safety car [called due to an enormous barrel-roll for Thompson at the Jim Clark Esses, from which he emerged under his own steam] I picked up something, whether that was damage or a cut to the tyre I don’t know. I was convinced I wasn’t going to finish.”

Luckily for Ingram, Cammish took until five and a half laps from home to pass Chilton. “I was stuck behind him for too long,” related Cammish, “but once we cleared him, God we were fast. I’m disappointed not to get the win, because it was in us.”

This was a comeback for Cammish too. A differential problem at the end of FP1 preceded a change of the entire subframe, setting the Civic back for FP2. Then he set a blistering time — fastest of all in the session — in qualifying, only for that to be deleted for track limits, and his next best was good for a dismal 14th on the grid. “I was just getting a feel for it, and then the intercooler pipe came off, and it took us a while to trace it,” he said. “By that time, after the red flags I only had one lap and that was taken off me. It was a massive kick in the teeth — I was only a couple of feet over on track limits. I could have lifted and it would only have cost me a tenth.” The other problem, repeated throughout the field, was the high-grip Croft surface. Incredibly, lap times in soggy conditions were only five seconds off a dry pace, but the knock-on was that the wet-weather tyres had a tiny window of peak performance. “The drop-off is »





MIRACLE REBUILD AND ANNOYING TECHNICAL TWEAKS

The miracle story in the build-up to Croft was the Motorbase Performance squad's rebuild of the Ford Focus in which Rory Butcher had suffered a horrendous shunt just two weeks earlier at Silverstone. But it was a grim Croft for the team, with Butcher's progress inextricably intertwined with the mishaps of title favourites Ash Sutton and Colin Turkington.

First, Butcher qualified 10th, but Motorbase team manager Oly Collins pinpointed a lap that was half a second up – in other words, good for the front row – when the red flags appeared for Sutton's crash. Then the Scot, already up to fifth on the opening lap, nerfed Sutton into a spin at the complex. Although he scarpered away to finish fourth, he was penalised back down to fifth behind the recovered Sutton. "There was no malice in it – as I arrived at the apex Ash was cutting across and our paths crossed," he explained.

Then Butcher was collateral damage in Turkington's second-race mistake: "With Colin going straight on I had to take avoiding action. It then put me back in the pack, and I had a slight touch with Adam Morgan, and that spun me off at high speed at the chicane – it's fortunate there's not a tyre barrier there…"

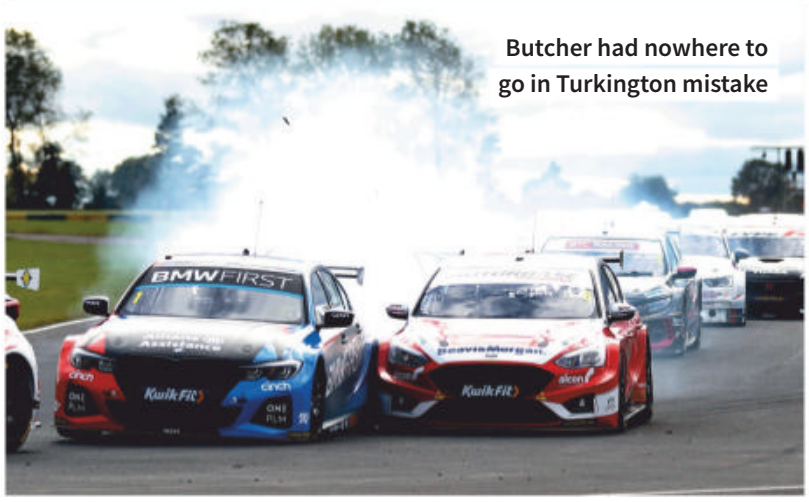
"FRONT-WHEEL DRIVE IS FASTER ON THE FIRST TWO LAPS AND BETTER ON THE BRAKES"

The other talking point was TOCA's tinkering with the starting-boost restrictions for rear-wheel-drive cars. Before the two September rounds, the BMWs and Infinitis were restricted by 6.5% up to 125km/h, but this was almost doubled to 11.5% up to the same speed. From Croft, it stayed at 11.5%, but the speed for the restriction to take effect was cut to 110km/h. BMW squad West Surrey Racing arrived at Croft having tried it out in a shakedown at MIRA, and was unimpressed, with the team's Tom Oliphant particularly vociferous.

"It's a token gesture," he fumed. "We've got good traction – that's physics. But front-wheel drive is faster on the first two laps, better on the brakes, and better in difficult conditions. I agree we had to be pegged back, but I feel it needs to be looked at again."

As a purist, it's hard to disagree with Oliphant. What next? Compulsory failure of rideheight tests (as happened to qualifying topper Tom Ingram and the Hyundai of third fastest Senna Proctor) for RWD cars to even things up? Motorsport has always been – and should always be – about the advantages and disadvantages of various machines and concepts playing out naturally across a season.

MARCUS SIMMONS



Butcher had nowhere to go in Turkington mistake



Ingram was mighty in winning finale, despite a severe vibration

massive and the track got greasy," continued Cammish.

Still, 10th in race one and fifth in the follow-up prior to his end-of-day runner-up spot have put Cammish just seven points adrift of championship leader Sutton, and he's now five ahead of Turkington after what was a weekend of wasted opportunities for the rear-wheel-drive elite.

Sutton, lugging the full 60kg of success ballast on the Infiniti, was in the frame in free practice, and was on a qualifying flier when the sister LTR Infiniti of Aiden Moffat went off at Clervaux, causing a red flag. "Ash's lap was good enough for pole by two tenths, but he crossed the line 12 seconds after the red flags," grimaced his engineer Toni Carrozza, who then explained that it was this that caused his charge to get rattled and cause another red flag by shunting at the same spot on his first flying lap after the session restarted. "It was an instant lock of the brakes — I couldn't do anything to stop it," confessed Sutton.

Sutton's previous lap time should still have put him on the front row, but it was deleted for causing the red flag. And there was an earlier flier that was quick enough for pole, but *that* was scratched for track limits. Somehow, his *third* fastest lap still placed him sixth on the grid. And it all meant that BMW pilots Turkington and Tom Oliphant, despite setting the ninth and 10th fastest times, filled the second row. "It was one of those sessions I could have been on pole or I could have been 15th," sighed Turkington. "It was about getting a lap in when it was quickest, and I think mine was when it was wettest."

In traditional Turkington fashion, he pursued the Hondas of Cook and Hill in the opening race until he found he was overdriving and settled for third; in traditional Sutton fashion, he got stuck in immediately to rise to fourth, then got inadvertently punted into a spin down to 14th by Butcher, screamed through to finish fifth, and got handed fourth when Butcher was given a penalty for the move.

In most *un*traditional Turkington fashion, he crashed at Clervaux on the opening lap of the following race: "I was tucked up behind Jake Hill, and by the time I saw his brake lights come on and I reacted it was too late. It just locked the right-front and there was no way back from there." Remarkably, Sutton levelled the score when his patented late dive at the hairpin failed to come off as he tried it on Hill. The front-right tyre was damaged, and that sent him off track at the chicane. "Down the Honda there's a sharp edge for the exhaust shroud, and there's a sharp cut in Ash's tyre," explained Carrozza.

Sutton then went on another mission in the finale, sledgehammering his way up the pack from 20th on the grid to fifth, and almost pipping Neal to fourth. By contrast, Turkington was out of contention again, sustaining a broken left-front toelink from contact with the Ford of Ollie Jackson as they jostled between Clervaux and Hawthorn on the opening lap. "I had a good overlap, but Ollie was avoiding an incident on his left and he swerved right and probably hadn't seen me there," said Turkington, who rejoined four laps down after a pitstop. "At least the boys got the car fixed and we got a point for fastest lap. But you know when a day's going your way or when it's not going your way…"

Philosophical stuff, but not quite true at Croft last weekend. No one knew from minute to minute how this one would pan out.

POWERED BY motorsport STATS

RESULTS ROUND 7/9, CROFT (GBR), 11 OCTOBER RACE 1 (15 LAPS – 31.875 MILES)

POS	DRIVER	TEAM / CAR	TIME
1	**Josh Cook** (GBR)	BTC Racing / Honda Civic Type R	20m58.839s
2	**Jake Hill** (GBR)	MB Motorsport (AmD) / Honda Civic Type R (6kg)	+0.653s
3	**Colin Turkington** (GBR)	West Surrey Racing / BMW 330i M Sport (54kg)	+3.573s
4	**Ash Sutton** (GBR)	Laser Tools Racing / Infiniti Q50 (60kg)	+10.348s
5	**Rory Butcher** (GBR)	Motorbase Performance / Ford Focus ST (36kg)	+10.592s
6	**Tom Chilton** (GBR)	BTC Racing / Honda Civic Type R (24kg)	+13.245s
7	**Matt Neal** (GBR)	Team Dynamics / Honda Civic Type R (12kg)	+13.436s
8	**Bobby Thompson** (GBR)	Trade Price Cars Racing (AmD) / Audi S3	+16.909s
9	**Adam Morgan** (GBR)	Ciceley Motorsport / Mercedes A-Class (18kg)	+17.248s
10	**Dan Cammish** (GBR)	Team Dynamics / Honda Civic Type R (48kg)	+17.663s
11	**Tom Oliphant** (GBR)	West Surrey Racing / BMW 330i M Sport (30kg)	+17.890s
12	**Chris Smiley** (GBR)	Excelr8 Motorsport / Hyundai i30 N	+21.148s
13	**Tom Ingram** (GBR)	Speedworks Motorsport / Toyota Corolla GT (42kg)	+21.553s
14	**Ollie Jackson** (GBR)	Motorbase Performance / Ford Focus ST	+23.441s
15	**Stephen Jelley** (GBR)	Team Parker Racing / BMW 125i M Sport	+23.748s
16	**Aiden Moffat** (GBR)	Laser Tools Racing / Infiniti Q50	+25.347s
17	**Jack Goff** (GBR)	Team Hard / Volkswagen CC	+27.187s
18	**Senna Proctor** (GBR)	Excelr8 Motorsport / Hyundai i30 N	+27.663s
19	**Mike Bushell** (GBR)	Team Hard / Volkswagen CC (45kg)	+28.220s
20	**Carl Boardley** (GBR)	Team Hard / BMW 125i M Sport	+40.219s
21	**Andy Neate** (GBR)	Motorbase Performance / Ford Focus ST	+55.454s
22	**Michael Crees** (GBR)	BTC Racing / Honda Civic Type R	-1 lap
R	**Jack Butel** (GBR)	Ciceley Motorsport / Mercedes A-Class	11 laps-steering clevis
R	**Nicolas Hamilton** (GBR)	Team Hard / Volkswagen CC	6 laps-gearbox
R	**Sam Osborne** (GBR)	MB Motorsport (AmD) / Honda Civic Type R	4 laps-mud damage
NS	**Jac Constable** (GBR)	Power Maxed Racing / Vauxhall Astra (45kg)	driver taken ill

Winner's average speed 91.15mph. **Fastest lap** **Cook** 1m22.464s, 92.76mph.

QUALIFYING

1 Cook 1m27.350s; 2 **Hill** 1m27.500s; 3 **Turkington** 1m27.510s; 4 **Oliphant** 1m27.574s; 5 **Thompson** 1m27.593s; 6 **Sutton** 1m27.635s; 7 **Chilton** 1m27.681s; 8 **Neal** 1m27.695s; 9 **Crees** 1m27.729s; 10 **Butcher** 1m27.760s; 11 **Jackson** 1m28.197s; 12 **Morgan** 1m28.308s; 13 **Smiley** 1m28.401s; 14 **Cammish** 1m28.494s; 15 **Moffat** 1m28.503s; 16 **Jelley** 1m28.771s; 17 **Osborne** 1m29.153s; 18 **Goff** 1m29.217s; 19 **Boardley** 1m29.377s; 20 **Bushell** 1m29.736s; 21 **Constable** 1m30.037s; 22 **Neate** 1m30.321s; 23 **Butel** 1m30.329s; 24 **Hamilton** 1m32.933s; EX **Ingram** 1m27.075s; EX **Proctor** 1m27.450s.



…that Neal will have to hand to him



Cook put his hand up for a trophy…

GRID RACE 2 Decided by result of Race 1.

RACE 2 (16 LAPS – 34.000 MILES)

1 Cook (60kg) 23m10.427s; 2 **Neal** (24kg) +0.171s; 3 **Hill** (54kg) +0.635s; 4 **Ingram** +1.087s; 5 **Cammish** (6kg) +4.673s; 6 **Chilton** (30kg) +8.164s; 7 **Oliphant** +8.346s; 8 **Thompson** (18kg) +8.960s; 9 **Proctor** +14.044s; 10 **Jelley** +14.944s; 11 **Moffat** +16.867s; 12 **Smiley** +18.523s; 13 **Morgan** (12kg) +22.306s; 14 **Osborne** +22.447s; 15 **Bushell** +22.740s; 16 **Neate** +27.451s; 17 **Butel** +28.371s; 18 **Goff** +30.616s; 19 **Butcher** (36kg) +46.106s; 20 **Sutton** (42kg) -1 lap; R **Crees** 12 laps-misfire; R **Jackson** 1 lap-suspension; R **Turkington** (48kg) 0 laps-accident; NS **Boardley** turbo; NS **Hamilton** gearbox; NS **Constable** still ill.

Winner's average speed 88.03mph.

Fastest lap **Butcher** 1m22.298s, 92.95mph.

GRID RACE 3 Decided by result of Race 2, with top six reversed.

RACE 3 (18 LAPS – 38.250 MILES)

1 Ingram (42kg) 27m32.909s; 2 **Cammish** (36kg) +0.278s; 3 **Chilton** (30kg) +5.001s; 4 **Neal** (54kg) +6.453s; 5 **Sutton** +6.472s; 6 **Oliphant** (24kg) +7.129s; 7 **Hill** (48kg) +8.099s; 8 **Cook** (60kg) +8.548s; 9 **Proctor** (12kg) +10.235s; 10 **Moffat** +10.435s; 11 **Butcher** +10.894s; 12 **Jackson** +11.438s; 13 **Morgan** +13.535s; 14 **Jelley** (6kg) +16.681s; 15 **Osborne** +16.825s; 16 **Neate** +17.677s; 17 **Bushell** +18.639s; 18 **Goff** +18.975s; 19 **Smiley** +25.669s; 20 **Butel** +29.487s; 21 **Hamilton** +31.497s; 22 **Boardley** +1m22.945s; NC **Turkington** 14 laps; R **Thompson** (18kg) 2 laps-accident; R **Crees** 2 laps-misfire.

Winner's average speed 83.30mph.

Fastest lap **Turkington** 1m21.781s, 93.54mph.

CHAMPIONSHIP

1 Sutton 261; 2 **Cammish** 254; 3 **Turkington** 249; 4 **Ingram** 232; 5 **Butcher** 209; 6 **Oliphant** 207; 7 **Chilton** 174; 8 **Neal** 160; 9 **Morgan** 147; 10 **Cook** 146.

NEXT REPORT

SNETTERTON
29 OCTOBER ISSUE

Cammish and Ingram are carrying title momentum, and both were strong on the Norfolk circuit last year.



WTCR

Coronel launches into title race as Girolami's bid crumbles

WTCR
SLOVAKIA RING (SVK)
11 OCTOBER
ROUND 3/6

Dutch veteran Tom Coronel claimed his first win at world level since 2016 and Nestor Girolami's bid for the title was effectively ended by a huge accident, as the World Touring Car Cup put on its first triple-header of the season at the Slovakia Ring.

Coronel, 48, won the reversed-grid race two in the wake of his Comtoyou Audi team-mate Nathanael Berthon claiming the opening encounter from pole position. Engstler Hyundai's Nicky Catsburg completed a hat-trick of maiden WTCR winners in race three.

Berthon claimed maximum points from qualifying by claiming pole for both the first and last races of the weekend. But he initially failed to capitalise in a damp race one when Catsburg got the drop on him from the drier side of the grid. Fortunately for the Audi driver, the Dutch racer was running on full-dry settings and struggled badly for pace. Berthon passed him on lap three to take a decisive lead, as the Hyundai slipped to an eventual 17th.



WTCR

Girolami fell from second to seventh in the points after massive race-two shunt

Gabriele Tarquini made a trademark strong start from fifth on the grid to finish second in his Hyundai on the South Korean manufacturer's WTCR return, after it missed the previous Nurburgring round over a Balance of Performance row.

Girolami started the dry second race from pole, on a weekend when points leader Yann Ehrlacher struggled with the success ballast his Cyan Racing Lynk & Co was forced to carry. But any hopes Girolami had of closing the gap were dashed. In race one, his Munnich Motorsport team-mate Esteban Guerrieri had controversially muscled past him for fourth after a "miscommunication" on team orders; then in the next race Girolami made a poor getaway from pole and dropped to fourth, as Guerrieri and Coronel surged to the front from fifth and seventh on the grid respectively.

Coronel's Audi was clearly quicker than Guerrieri's Honda and the veteran took the lead at the long final corner when the Argentinian left a gap. Comtoyou rookie Gilles Magnus followed him through to complete a team 1-2. "Mama Mia! Now I remember how it feels because it's been a long time," said an emotional Coronel. "I knew I had a chance, we have always been fast here. I saw the gap and boom!"

Then on the last lap, Girolami was inadvertently tapped into a horrifying impact with a barrier by Jean-Karl Vernay's Team Mulsanne Alfa Romeo. He was fortunate to escape injury, but his Honda was severely damaged and his day was done.

Berthon again failed to make the most of pole position in race three, as reigning champion Norbert Michelisz and Catsburg surged ahead. As Tarquini was nudged off for the second race in succession, the two leading Hyundais took Turns 1 and 2 side by side — until Vernay tapped the back of Michelisz's i30 N TCR, claiming the Hungarian had braked in a corner usually taken flat. Michelisz collected the half-spin to finish 10th, as Vernay chased Catsburg to the flag before a penalty dropped him to fourth.

Points leader Ehrlacher was in damage limitation mode, taking a ninth, a seventh and an 11th. He now leads the standings by 21 points from Coronel, who has shot into second, with Girolami plummeting to seventh. The Hungaroring is next up this coming weekend and Munnich Motorsport will be hard pressed to get the 31-year-old on the grid.

DAMIEN SMITH

WEEKEND WINNERS

WTCR
SLOVAKIA RING (SVK)
Race 1 Nathanael Berthon
Team Comtoyou (Audi RS3 LMS TCR)
Race 2 Tom Coronel
Team Comtoyou (Audi RS3 LMS TCR)
Race 3 Nicky Catsburg
Engstler Motorsport
(Hyundai i30 N TCR)

DTM
ZOLDER (BEL)
Races 1 & 2 Rene Rast
Team Rosberg (Audi RS5 DTM)

POWERED BY motorsport STATS

For full results visit **motorsportstats.com**

Rast triumphs through the Audi fire and smoke

DTM
ZOLDER (BEL)
10-11 OCTOBER
ROUND 7/9



Rast celebrates Zolder clean sweep to slash gap down to 10 points

DTM

Rene Rast put himself firmly back in DTM title contention with a double victory at Zolder, just as both his championship rivals Nico Muller and Robin Frijns endured their worst weekends of the season.

It wasn't that Rast had slipped completely out of the championship battle ahead of the seventh round of the season, but a 47-point deficit to Muller in the face of Abt Audi domination meant that there was a risk the German wouldn't be able to bridge the gap sufficiently to realistically remain in the hunt.

However, in a weekend that could play a defining role in deciding the destination of the crown, Rast was a class above the rest of the field, slashing the points deficit to just 10 and moving himself up to second in the standings.

The 33-year-old started off strongly in Belgium, qualifying his Team Rosberg Audi on pole in damp conditions and then streaking clear of the field in a dry race, taking the chequered flag with almost 19 seconds in hand — the second-biggest winning margin of the season.

Sunday's race two turned out to be trickier for the two-time champion, particularly after his Audi caught fire on the starting grid in an incident that could have led to a DNS. But after the mechanics managed to fix the car in time for the start, a daring Rast muscled his Audi between the BMWs of Timo Glock and Sheldon van der Linde that had locked out the front row of the grid, avoiding any contact with the duo to vault into the lead.

The stranded car of Frijns on lap 11 could have potentially put his victory chances under threat, but Rast was able to dive into the pits before the safety car was deployed and emerged with his lead intact. From then on, there was little that could have prevented Rast from scoring his fourth victory of the season, becoming only the second driver after Muller's Spa effort to complete a clean sweep of victories in a single round.

Rast's Zolder success was made sweeter by a troubled weekend for his title rivals Frijns and Muller, with neither in a position to threaten him across the two races. Frijns, in particular,



Ninth in race two marked Muller's worst result of the season

DTM



Rast was lucky to start race two after car caught fire on the grid

DTM

took a big blow to his title hopes when he crashed into the barriers in the narrow pit exit on Sunday, suffering terminal damage to his Audi. That incident triggered a safety car that caught out Muller, which meant he had to wait until later in the race to complete his mandatory pitstop, dropping to the lower reaches of the top 10. Ninth was by far his worst result of the year, having never ranked outside the top five in the opening six rounds of the campaign.

The root cause of Muller's frustrating weekend was a lack of one-lap pace, as he struggled to match the leading drivers in both damp qualifying sessions, qualifying seventh each time. In the opener, he was able to recover to third, but he was running down in fifth on Sunday when Frijns's pitstop led to a series of events that unravelled his race.

RACHIT THUKRAL



Weerts and Vanthoor guided Audi to first Sprint drivers' crown since 2017

SRO / PATRICK HECQ PHOTOGRAPHY

WRT crew sew up GT title amid penalties

GT WORLD CHALLENGE EUROPE SPRINT CUP
BARCELONA (ESP)
10-11 OCTOBER
ROUND 4/4

There were no fewer than 17 mathematical contenders for the GT World Challenge Europe Sprint Cup title heading into the Barcelona season finale last weekend. But it was quickly whittled down to four realistic protagonists, and then to just two over the course of three intriguing one-hour races.

Team WRT Audi's Dries Vanthoor and Charles Weerts would be crowned the eventual champions, and their mix of relief and exultation at the end of the third and final affair was clear. It had been a long, hard slog and not without controversy.

For some time, it looked like Haupt Racing's Mercedes duo of Maro Engel and Luca Stolz were going to avenge their narrow 2019 title loss before the outsiders, Emil Frey Racing's Lamborghini chargers Albert Costa and Giacomo Altoe, thrust themselves into the mix. But both crews fell out of the hunt, receiving a 35s penalty for the same pitstop infringement in race two.

Costa and Altoe were undoubtedly the form drivers throughout the weekend until that point, having secured two pole positions and two on-the-road race wins. Using the superior straightline speed of the Huracan GT3 Evo, Costa steered his way to victory in Saturday's damp opening race, although only after being waved through by the sister car shared by Ricardo Feller and Mikael Grenier in the closing stages. Costa was incredibly lucky his team-mate followed him over the line, after a bearing failed exiting the final corner. The victory margin stood at just 0.1s.

There were no scares in race two, on track at least, for Costa and Altoe who cruised to a 7s win from the impressive Attempto Racing Audi R8 of Fred Vervisch and Nick Scholl. The race-winning Lambo and the Engel/Stolz Merc were then deemed to have incorrectly positioned the HANS devices underneath the seatbelts during the driver changes. Vervisch and Scholl inherited the win and the penalty meant Costa/Altoe and Engel/Stolz – who had closed to within just 2.5 points of the lead – were out of it.

Staying out of trouble was the WRT crew of Vanthoor and Weerts. The Belgian pairing, promoted to second place in race two after finishing behind Engel and Stolz in the opening race, now found themselves with an 8.5-point lead over AKKA ASP's Timur Boguslavskiy heading into the final race. The task seemed to be straightforward, but the previous two encounters were proof enough that anything could happen.

Vanthoor and Weerts did everything they needed to, and in finishing second to the superb Boguslavskiy and team-mate Raffaele Marciello, they delivered the first Sprint Cup drivers' title for Audi since 2017. For 19-year-old Weerts, son of WRT co-owner Yves Weerts, it was the culmination of a topsy-turvy weekend in which the Audi was not the fastest car.

STEPHEN BRUNSDON



HANS pitstop gaff ruined Costa/Altoe's title aspirations

SRO / DIRK BOGAERTS PHOTOGRAPHY

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United duo recovers from gravel to glory

EUROPEAN LE MANS SERIES
MONZA (ITA)
11 OCTOBER
ROUND 4/5



Contact into chicane forces Hanson to run off the road

The potent United Autosports sportscar duo of Filipe Albuquerque and Phil Hanson appeared odds on to seal the European Le Mans Series title the moment they snared pole position by 0.1 seconds at Monza.

Even in the shorter five-round calendar – down from the usual six – third place in the season opener at Paul Ricard marked a happy low point as they headed to Italy with successive victories under their belt.

But the concertina into the first of Monza's tight chicanes looked to have been the undoing of the United crew's title bid when Hanson was tagged and his damaged LMP2 class ORECA-Gibson 07 careered over the gravel on corner exit.

An early pitstop was taken and an out-of-sequence Hanson recovered, aided when team-mate Will Owen ran deep into Turn 1 to gift a position. A safety car called to collect debris bunched up the field and helped further, meaning Albuquerque could begin his stint in second place.

Unleashing his pace, he reeled in High Class Racing pilot Dennis Andersen to pass around the halfway stage of the four-hour contest. After another driver change, Hanson dropped back to second place, but only had to wait for Andersen's team-mate Anders Fjordbach and Ben Hanley to make their final stops to be assured of the win.

Victors by 3s, Albuquerque and Hanson had secured an unassailable 37-point lead ahead of the Algarve season finale.

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Martins untouchable in Spain

FORMULA RENAULT EUROCUP
BARCELONA (ESP)
10-11 OCTOBER
ROUND 6/10

The pendulum of the title battle swung firmly towards Victor Martins and away from Caio Collet during the latest double-header at Barcelona.

Martins qualified his ART Grand Prix car on pole for Saturday's wet race, with the R-ace GP machine of Renault F1 Junior Collet alongside. But a poor start from the Brazilian allowed the Frenchman to ease away to victory by 17 seconds.

As Collet dropped to an initial 10th, Franco Colapinto ran in second place. But Collet did a great job of moving up the order. Once he took MP Motorsport racer Colapinto for second, he stabilised the gap to the dominant Martins.

A mistake a few laps home dropped Colapinto to sixth, and it was Ugo de Wilde who completed the podium in his Arden International car from Gregoire Saucy, Hadrien David and Colapinto.

Martins took another pole and win on Sunday in the dry. This time Colapinto lined up alongside him on the front row, but Collet grabbed second at the start.

Martins once again pulled out a comfortable cushion, only for a late safety car for an incident that put de Wilde out to erode his advantage. But still Collet couldn't get anywhere near him on the one-lap dash to the flag.

Colapinto this time kept it on the island for third, with JD Motorsport racer David Vidales claiming fourth. Dutchman Kas Haverkort, the Spanish F4 series leader, completed a fine Renault Eurocup debut to take fifth in an MP car.



Martins outpaced Collet and Colapinto in the second race

WEEKEND WINNERS

GT WORLD CHALLENGE EUROPE SPRINT CUP
BARCELONA (ESP)

Race 1	Giacomo Altoe/Albert Costa Emil Frey Racing (Lamborghini Huracan GT3 Evo)
Race 2	Nicolas Scholl/Frederic Vervisch Attempto Racing (Audi R8 LMS GT3)
Race 3	Timur Boguslavskiy/ Raffaele Marciello AKKA ASP Team (Mercedes-AMG GT3)

EUROPEAN LE MANS SERIES
MONZA (ITA)

LMP2	Phil Hanson/Filipe Albuquerque United Autosports (ORECA-Gibson 07)
LMP3	Martin Hippe/Dino Lunardi Inter Europol Competition (Ligier-Nissan JSP320)
LMGTE	Michal Broniszewski/David Perel/ Niki Cadei Kessel Racing (Ferrari 488 GTE Evo)

FORMULA RENAULT EUROCUP
BARCELONA (ESP)

Races 1 & 2	Victor Martins ART Grand Prix

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Corvette again the alpha amid Hurricane Delta

IMSA SPORTSCAR
CHARLOTTE (USA)
10 OCTOBER
ROUND 8/11



Polesitter Taylor starts aboard Corvette ahead of drenched night race

Corvette duo Antonio Garcia and Jordan Taylor secured their fifth IMSA Sportscar win of the season under the lights in an all-GT race on a sodden Charlotte 'roval'.

The night contest was delayed by an hour due to wet conditions brought about by Hurricane Delta, and it was still raining when the green flag was waved, with Taylor leading from pole.

His time in first place was short-lived however, as Jesse Krohn's RLL BMW took the lead on lap four. Taylor then lost second to Porsche's Fred Makowiecki, only for the French racer to spin the 911 RSR into the Turn 2 wall.

Although he made it back to the pits, the car was retired soon afterwards, capping a bad night for Porsche after Laurens Vanthoor had suffered damage in the sister car that also forced its retirement.

The four remaining GTLM contenders pitted under the resulting caution, after which John Edwards (in for Krohn) led Garcia, the second Corvette of Tommy Milner (started by Oliver Gavin) and the BMW that Connor De Phillippi had taken over from Bruno Spengler.

Fresh from his win in the Indianapolis 8 Hours, De Phillippi closed in on Milner to recover third on lap 26, and they remained in the same order until lap 47 when Garcia retook the lead from Edwards.

Milner's crash on the banking, later attributed to a part of the Corvette's right-rear suspension breaking, brought out a late caution.

Garcia was unfazed at the restart and escaped the clutches of the BMWs to consolidate victory over Edwards and De Philippi, in doing so extending his and Taylor's championship lead to 24 points over Milner and Gavin.

GT Daytona class honours fell to the Turner Motorsport BMW M6 shared by Bill Auberlen and Robby Foley. An early spin for Foley forced Auberlen to deliver metronomic speed to mount a recovery.

DAVID MALSHER-LOPEZ

Road course king Elliott wins as NASCAR Cup races on wet tyres

NASCAR CUP
CHARLOTTE (USA)
11 OCTOBER
ROUND 32/36

Chase Elliott is NASCAR Cup's resident road course specialist — a reputation the Hendrick Motorsports driver enhanced in last Sunday's race on the Charlotte 'roval'.

For the first time in the history of the Cup series, a race started with cars on wet tyres, thanks to Hurricane Delta lashing North Carolina, although thankfully the situation had improved greatly from Saturday night when the NASCAR Xfinity Series and IMSA SportsCar raced in monsoon-like conditions.



Elliott leads through treacherous infield

Elliott assumed the lead of the race on lap eight of what would become a 109-tour encounter, but stage one would be claimed by Ty Dillon — who was the first to swap to slicks under the lap 10 caution as the track quickly dried.

Stage two, won by Team Penske's Ryan Blaney, was crucial for reigning champion Kyle Busch and his hopes of advancing to the next playoff round. Winless all season, Busch was forced to pit on lap 64 owing to a puncture resulting from midfield contact.

This early stop cycled the Joe Gibbs Racing driver to the lead on lap 88 after a caution period when he elected not to stop, but he was soon swamped by team-mate Erik Jones and Elliott on lap 91, going on to finish 30th after a late stop.

Elliott swooped by Jones on the next tour to bag his fourth successive road course win, second on the roval and third of 2020, ahead of Joey Logano and Jones.

Busch was one of four eliminated at the Round of 12 quarter-final stage, with Aric Almirola, Austin Dillon and the retiring Clint Bowyer also dropping out.

JAKE NICHOL

WEEKEND WINNERS

IMSA SPORTSCAR
CHARLOTTE (USA)
GTLM Antonio Garcia/Jordan Taylor
Corvette Racing
(Chevrolet Corvette C8.R)
GTD Bill Auberlen/Robby Foley
Turner Motorsport (BMW M6 GT3)

NASCAR CUP
CHARLOTTE (USA)
Chase Elliott
Hendrick Motorsports
(Chevrolet Camaro)

NASCAR XFINITY SERIES
CHARLOTTE (USA)
AJ Allmendinger (below)
Kaulig Racing (Chevrolet Camaro)



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Ousted Petrucci stars as rain wreaks havoc for title favourites

MOTOGP
LE MANS (FRA)
11 OCTOBER
ROUND 9/14

The 2020 MotoGP French Grand Prix was already a finely poised affair before the race was even under way. Eventual winner Danilo Petrucci said after qualifying third that he expected a 10-rider battle for the podium.

The consensus was that if polesitter Fabio Quartararo could get the holeshot and deploy the blistering race pace he displayed in practice on Saturday, it was game over. If the Ducatis of Petrucci and Pramac's Jack Miller starting alongside could get the jump, then it was anyone's game.

Then the rain came and washed Quartararo's hopes of a home win away.

The Petronas SRT rider struggled in the wet FP1 on Friday, but the predicted dry weather for Sunday meant it was a worry he could put to the back of his mind. But as the skies above Le Mans opened moments before the race was scheduled to get going, Quartararo had to "risk a lot" with a wet set-up – based on what he'd learned on Friday – that he was yet to sample.

His wasn't a bad start, but he was jumped by Miller and LCR's Cal Crutchlow briefly, before chaos ensued at the Dunlop chicane. Valentino Rossi crashed his Yamaha, forcing team-mate Maverick Vinales and Quartararo's nearest title rival Joan Mir on the Suzuki to take avoiding action and run through the chicane.

Out of the melee, Miller led Ducati stablemates Andrea Dovizioso and Petrucci.



Rossi on the deck, which forces Vinales to take avoiding action

The two works-team Demosedicis then swapped places, before Petrucci seized the lead at the Blue Esses section at Turn 11.

Quartararo engaged in a nice battle with KTM's Pol Espargaro for fourth but struggled to get heat into his rear soft rain tyre and quickly plummeted to outside of the top 10 by the end of lap six.

This was Quartararo's first wet race in MotoGP – as it was for Mir, Tech3's Miguel Oliveira, Pramac's Francesco Bagnaia and 2020 rookies Brad Binder and Iker Lecuona on the KTMs, and Honda's Alex Marquez – and happened to come at a critical point in his championship bid. Though he was bleeding points early on to Dovizioso, both Mir and Vinales were still outside of the points at this stage. The following 20 laps would be a true test of the Petronas SRT rider's resolve.

The Ducati trio at the head of the pack, Petrucci leading Dovizioso and Miller, would be joined by a hard-charging Alex Rins on lap 11. The Suzuki rider was making the medium rain rubber work from 16th on the grid.

But Rins' challenge ended on lap 20 when he crashed out of second, Miller's a lap before when his GP20 expired. Crutchlow had crashed the lap before that, and Franco Morbidelli had also gone. The conditions were biting but struggling title challengers were being gifted points.

Petrucci was ousted from Ducati's 2021 line-up before the season had even begun and he later admitted this gave him the feeling "nobody trusts me". But in the wet,


Second for Alex Marquez proved he's more than just team-mate Marc's brother


Rain dashed polesitter Quartararo's chances

you can trust Petrucci to produce the goods. After quickly retaliating against his team-mate when he briefly took the lead on lap 18, Petrucci's advantage was over two seconds after Rins crashed.

Dovizioso, and then Marquez, would close this down to 1.3s in the latter stages. But Petrucci was unfazed, his second career MotoGP win a point well proven to his doubters after a lean period in which a top-six result had eluded him since last July.

Few would have put money on Alex Marquez giving Honda its first podium of 2020, but it's proof that he's more than just Marc's brother. KTM's Pol Espargaro sealed the final podium place. Dovizioso's soft tyres faded in the final 10 laps and he "almost crashed 10 times" but managed to secure an important fourth in his title bid.

Once Mir got heat into his tyres his pace was quicker than that of the leaders in the closing stages, but it proved not enough to beat Quartararo as they debated ninth on the last lap. Quartararo felt it was like a "fight for the victory", and the two points he gained over Mir to open his championship lead to 10 points after Vinales sneaked through for 10th could end up making all the difference come the final round at Portugal at the end of November.

The races when you have to simply bank points as events work against you are the ones that often show the true measure of a champion. Arguably, then, the French GP is where Quartararo has firmly assumed favourite status in the 2020 title race.

LEWIS DUNCAN

POWERED BY motorsport STATS

RESULTS ROUND 9/14, LE MANS (FRA), 11 OCTOBER (26 LAPS – 67.611 MILES)

POS	RIDER	TEAM	TIME
1	**Danilo Petrucci** (ITA)	Ducati	45m54.736s
2	**Alex Marquez** (ESP)	Honda	+1.273s
3	**Pol Espargaro** (ESP)	KTM	+1.711s
4	**Andrea Dovizioso** (ITA)	Ducati	+3.911s
5	**Johann Zarco** (FRA)	Avintia Ducati	+4.310s
6	**Miguel Oliveira** (PRT)	Tech3 KTM	+4.466s
7	**Takaaki Nakagami** (JPN)	LCR Honda	+5.921s
8	**Stefan Bradl** (DEU)	Honda	+15.597s
9	**Fabio Quartararo** (FRA)	Petronas Yamaha	+16.687s
10	**Maverick Vinales** (ESP)	Yamaha	+16.895s
11	**Joan Mir** (ESP)	Suzuki	+16.980s
12	**Brad Binder** (ZAF)	KTM	+27.321s
13	**Francesco Bagnaia** (ITA)	Pramac Ducati	+33.351s
14	**Aleix Espargaro** (ESP)	Aprilia	+39.176s
15	**Iker Lecuona** (ESP)	Tech3 KTM	+51.087s
R	**Alex Rins** (ESP)	Suzuki	+1m14.190s-crash
R	**Jack Miller** (AUS)	Pramac Ducati	19 laps-mechanical
R	**Franco Morbidelli** (ITA)	Petronas Yamaha	18 laps-crash
R	**Cal Crutchlow** (GBR)	LCR Honda	17 laps-crash
R	**Tito Rabat** (ESP)	Avintia Ducati	14 laps-crash
R	**Bradley Smith** (GBR)	Aprilia	8 laps-crash
R	**Valentino Rossi** (ITA)	Yamaha	0 laps-crash

WEEKEND WINNERS

MOTO2
LE MANS (FRA)
Sam Lowes (below)
Marc VDS
(Kalex)

MOTO 3
LE MANS (FRA)
Celestino Vietti
Team VR46
(KTM)



Winner's average speed 88.357mph. **Fastest lap** **Zarco** 1m43.301s, 90.624mph.

QUALIFYING 2 **1 Quartararo 1m31.315s**; 2 **Miller** 1m31.537s; 3 **Petrucci** 1m31.674s; 4 **Crutchlow** 1m31.686s; 5 **Vinales** 1m31.719s; 6 **Dovizioso** 1m31.722s; 7 **Bagnaia** 1m31.752s; 8 **P Espargaro** 1m31.795s; 9 **Zarco** 1m31.832s; 10 **Rossi** 1m31.889s; 11 **Morbidelli** 1m31.891s; 12 **Oliveira** 1m32.009s.

QUALIFYING 1 **1 Petrucci 1m31.952s**; 2 **Bagnaia** 1m32.054s; 3 **Nakagami** 1m32.179s; 4 **Mir** 1m32.187s; 5 **A Espargaro** 1m32.539s; 6 **Rins** 1m32.757s; 7 **Binder** 1m32.766s; 8 **Marquez** 1m32.774s; 9 **Smith** 1m32.833s; 10 **Lecuona** 1m32.859s; 11 **Bradl** 1m32.861s; 12 **Rabat** 1m33.610s.

RIDERS' CHAMPIONSHIP **1 Quartararo 115**; 2 **Mir** 105; 3 **Dovizioso** 97; 4 **Vinales** 96; 5 **Nakagami** 81; 6 **Morbidelli** 77; 7 **Miller** 75; 8 **P Espargaro** 73; 9 **Oliveira** 69; 10 **Petrucci** 64; 11 **Binder** 62; 12 **Rins** 60; 13 **Rossi** 58; 14 **Marquez** 47; 15 **Zarco** 47; 16 **Bagnaia** 42; 17 **A Espargaro** 24; 18 **Lecuona** 18; 19 **Crutchlow** 13; 20 **Smith** 11; 21 **Bradl** 8; 22 **Rabat** 8; 23 **Michele Pirro** 4.

MANUFACTURERS' CHAMPIONSHIP **1 Yamaha 170**; 2 **Ducati** 151; 3 **KTM** 125; 4 **Suzuki** 118; 5 **Honda** 92; 6 **Aprilia** 32.


Petrucci celebrates second top-flight win

NEXT REPORT

ARAGON GP
22 OCTOBER ISSUE

Marc Marquez has won the previous four races at the Motorland venue, but is still sidelined with injury – so can Fabio Quartararo reign supreme?

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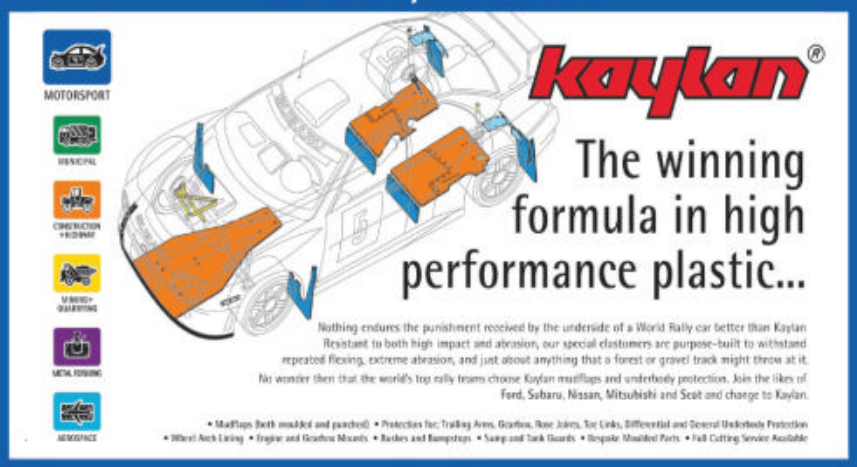
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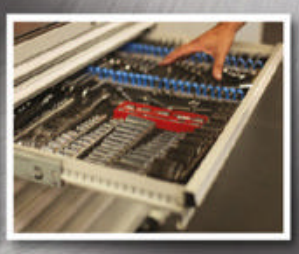
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Button will race at Silverstone for the first time since 2018 WEC round

WERNER

BUTTON SET FOR BRITISH GT DEBUT AT SILVERSTONE

BRITISH GT

Jenson Button, the 2009 Formula 1 world champion, is due to make a one-off appearance in the final round of the British GT Championship at Silverstone next month.

The 15-time grand prix victor will drive a McLaren 720S GT3 entered by the Jenson Team Rocket RJN squad he co-owns with RJN boss Bob Neville and lifelong friend Chris Buncombe, who will share the car with GT3 rookie Button.

Since concluding his F1 career with McLaren at the 2017 Monaco GP, Button has mostly raced in the Japanese Super GT Championship, winning the title in 2018, and made a DTM cameo at last year's Hockenheim finale in his Super GT Honda NSX.



Button will drive GT3 McLaren alongside Chris Buncombe

TRIENITZ/MOTORSPORT IMAGES

The three-hour Silverstone 500, which will be held behind closed doors on 8 November, will be Button's first race on home soil since the 2018 World Endurance Championship round at the same track in an SMP Racing BRE LMP1 car.

"This will be my first taste of a GT3 car but I'm really looking forward it," he said. "It will be lovely to join our team and lining up in the McLaren 720S with my best buddy Chris Buncombe. It's great to come back and race on UK soil again, and a big thank you to our partners that have made this possible."

Bronze-graded Buncombe, a Le Mans 24 Hours LMP2 class winner in 2007, told Autosport that the race "was [Button's] idea first and foremost" and the culmination of years of discussion about contesting an endurance race together.

"This was the first opportunity of getting on track and sharing a car together," explained Buncombe, who has previously contested off-road races with Button in the US. "He doesn't have any more grand prix commitments for TV this year, so it fitted on a weekend where he wasn't committed. It worked out well."

The pair will test at Silverstone later this month, and Buncombe said both would be taking the outing seriously, but stressed a full season in British GT next year is not on the cards. "We're purely seeing it as a one-off appearance," he said. "We're both coming at it fairly green but with the same aspect in as far as if we want to do anything, we do the best job we can."

JAMES NEWBOLD

GT3 Silver Cup class to be axed for 2021

BRITISH GT

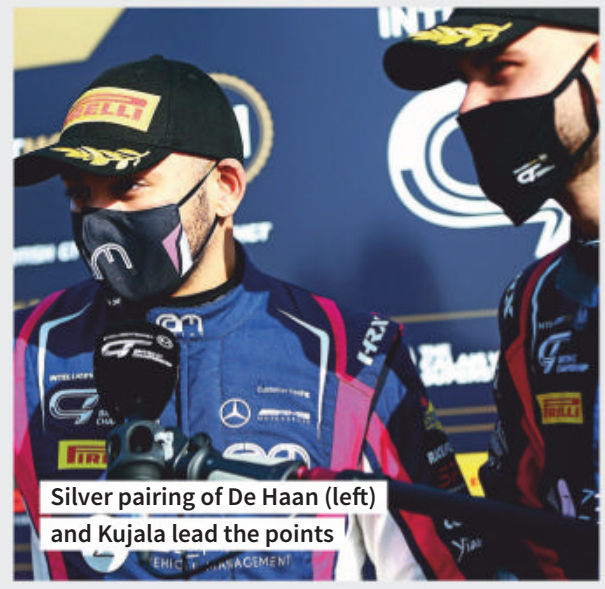
British GT will scrap the Silver Cup class in GT3 next year, with Silver-graded drivers able to compete only alongside a Bronze-graded amateur in a move that is designed to keep Pro-Am pairings competitive.

Six cars were entered in the Silver category this year, comprising over half of the GT3 grid after several withdrawals from Pro-Am entries amid the COVID-19 pandemic.

Of the eight races held so far in 2020, half have been won by Pro-Am pairings, while Silver crews Sam De Haan/Patrick Kujala (RAM Mercedes) and Sandy Mitchell/Rob Collard (Barwell Lamborghini) hold the top two positions in the standings with one round to go.

A championship statement confirmed that the change will be made "to redress the balance while maintaining a viable environment for young, would-be professionals to develop and prosper".

The proposed Silver-Am class will not admit all drivers that are encompassed in the FIA's broad Silver ranking, but "will typically comprise promising but less experienced young drivers, GT4 graduates or those likely to contribute some budget when paired with a Bronze-graded amateur".



Silver pairing of De Haan (left) and Kujala lead the points

JEP/MOTORSPORTIMAGES

GT4 will be unaffected by the changes, with all-Silver pairings allowed to compete against Pro-Am entries.

The championship has also announced its calendar for 2021, with the return of Spa bringing the schedule back to the nine races across seven events that were planned this year. The season is due to start with its traditional Easter weekend double-header at Oulton Park and is set to conclude with a two-hour race at Donington Park in September.

JAMES NEWBOLD



MORE THAN JUST LUCK FOR KHERA Lucky Khera finished the second season of the Ferrari Challenge UK category unbeaten after taking two more wins at Snetterton last weekend. Khera (above) has dominated the small field all season and was again in control in the Norfolk opener and triumphed in the wet second contest too, after Martin Smith and Paul Hogarth collided while battling for the lead. Three different F355 drivers took Ferrari Formula Classic spoils across Friday and Saturday as Wayne Marrs, Tristan Simpson and Tim Mogridge (inset) each won, Marrs and Simpson by less than a second. **Photographs by Richard Styles**

OPINION



Even before the announcement that a box-office Formula 1 world champion would be in the field for British GT's three-hour season finale, there was already plenty of anticipation surrounding it.

A topsy-turvy season that has produced seven different winners from eight rounds means there's everything still to play for, while several car combinations that dropped out of the full season due to the pandemic can be expected to make guest appearances.

But the addition of Jenson Button to the mix will provide another intriguing subplot and surely draw more eyeballs to an event that sadly will be held without fans in attendance.

In this strangest of years, Button's outings have been limited to the virtual arena in 2020 but, at the age of 40, he still has a passion for competition. And at a circuit where he famously had little luck in his F1 career – with just three fourth places to show from 17 British Grand Prix starts – Button will be eager to perform well.

In Chris Buncombe, he'll have an experienced and capable Bronze driver to share the car with, while there can be few doubts about his Jenson Team Rocket RJN squad, which has enjoyed a strong return to the championship with James Baldwin and Michael O'Brien winning the Oulton Park season opener and claiming three poles.

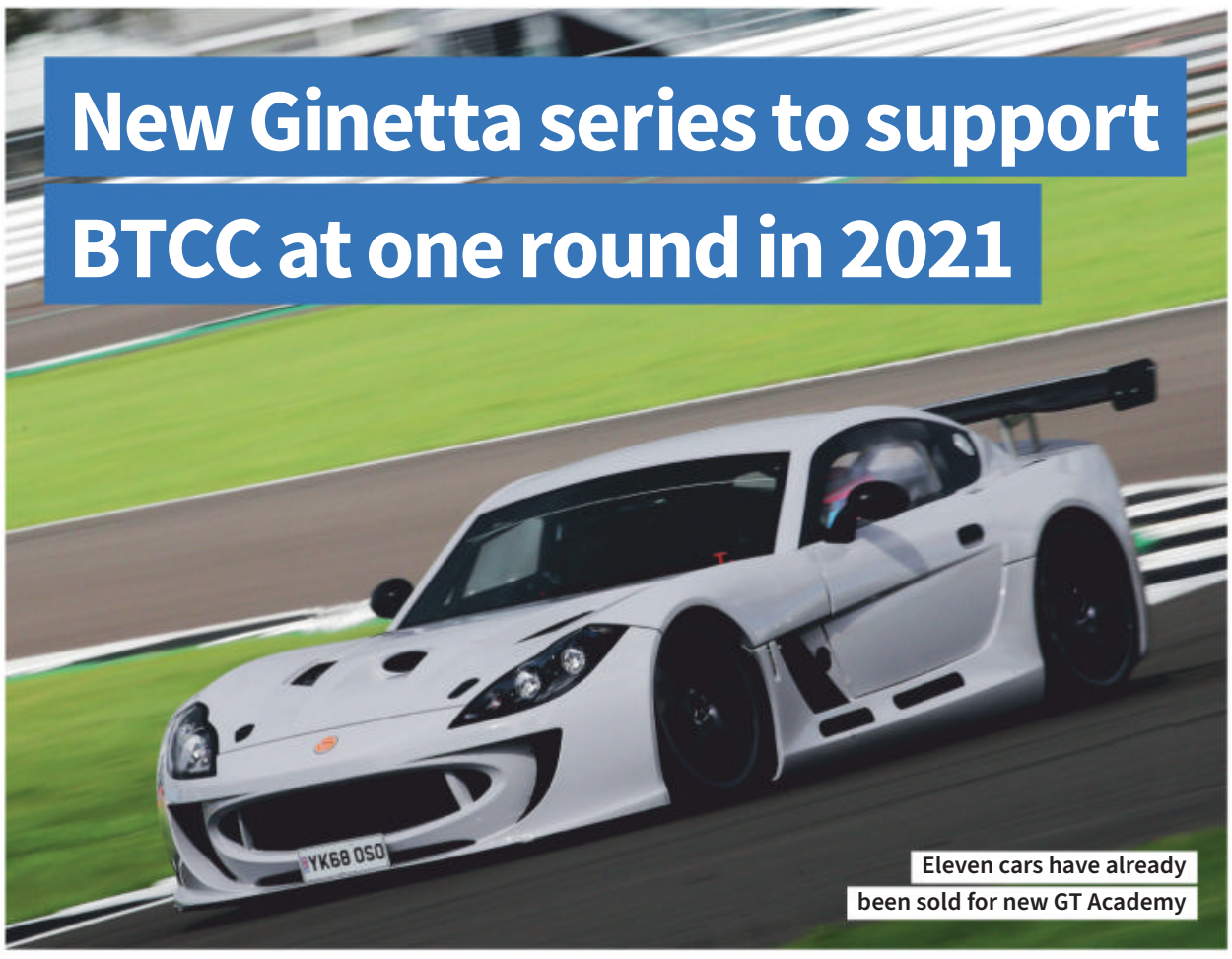
But even in a national championship, against drivers with significantly less bulky CVs, he can take nothing for granted. The new-for-2020 Pirellis have proven to be difficult to get into an operating window and, in November, what the weather will do is anybody's guess…

JAMES NEWBOLD



WERNER

New Ginetta series to support BTCC at one round in 2021


Eleven cars have already been sold for new GT Academy

GINETTA GT ACADEMY

The new Ginetta GT Academy series is set to appear alongside the British Touring Car Championship for one of its events next season, as 11 cars have already been sold.

The series was unveiled last month and is designed to replace the Ginetta Racing Drivers Club division as the entry point into racing with the manufacturer and features a modified version of the G55 car.

The GRDC category has shared a grid with the G40 Cup this season but the GT Academy is due to be a standalone competition, while the G40 Cup will again pair up with the GT5 Challenge in 2021.

"The plan is the GT Academy will have five events — four with British GT and one with touring cars," explained Ginetta motorsport manager Ash Gallagher.

"We've already sold 11 in the first month so we're pretty confident we will have a good grid. We've got a big pool of customers who have raced with us in the past and some of those are interested in it.

"Everyone who has driven the car has really raved about it. It's quite driver friendly — although it looks like the GT4 Supercup car, it has a lot less power and is on road tyres. It's a car you can learn in as it's not as big a jump [from the G40 used in the GRDC series] as you think."

Former Ginetta racer and Olympic cycling legend Sir Chris Hoy is among those to have sampled the GT Academy machine, which has a 3.7-litre engine that produces 270bhp.

He said: "I was really impressed with the new car. I've been very lucky to have raced and tested lots of cars on circuit and found the GTA both exciting and instantly approachable — the perfect entry point for aspiring racers or trackday drivers in a fit for purpose car."

● Ginetta has also reported strong interest in its annual Junior scholarship contest, despite the coronavirus pandemic. The Blyton Park shootout has been pushed back from its traditional October half-term date to late November, after the season is completed, and Gallagher says it is already three-quarters full.

STEPHEN LICKORISH

Porsche Club Championship joins the MSVR roster

MSVR

The Porsche Club Championship will be administered by MotorSport Vision Racing from next season.

The category has previously appeared at a number of different events, including at MG Car Club meetings.

MSVR has already collaborated with Porsche Club GB on the Festival of Porsche, which takes place at Brands Hatch. The event will return next summer for a special celebration of Porsche Club GB's 60th anniversary.

Joe East, competitions manager at MSVR, said: "We have worked with Porsche Club Great Britain and its team successfully for many years, welcoming its series to our race programmes from time to time, most notably at the Festival of Porsche events, which have always been a joint effort.

"It is fantastic to take that relationship to the next level now, by welcoming the Porsche Club Championship formally to the MSVR roster from 2021.


WALKER
Series will have new home in 2021

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The series has been given championship status for 2021

JONES

Type R Trophy gets new status and driver programme boost

750 MOTOR CLUB

Type R Trophy frontrunner Dan Thackeray has described the series' new Foundation Programme as "an amazing deal" for new drivers, which should bolster grids for next season.

The 750 Motor Club-run series, which is in its second year in 2020, announced earlier this month that a single-fee package would be available for both novices and existing licence holders to cover the full cost of a new-build car and race entry next year when the series becomes an official championship.

For licence holders, that includes full season entry, transponders, a second set of tyres and a 12-month 750MC membership, while the novice option features an ARDS test and helmet and overalls.

Just seven drivers competed at Mallory Park in the last round despite 12 having submitted an entry, although it is understood that around 25 kits for the series are currently in ownership.

Thackeray, who has won all six races this season, said the programme would help boost numbers for the category.

"It's an amazing deal — it includes a test day and ready-made car," he said. "I think they [series organisers] have had a lot of solid interest, but I am not surprised — to have a ready-made car and be really relaxed for the season is great."

The Type R Trophy is not alone in getting championship status as the club's Ma7da Locost series, which was also launched last year, has been handed the upgrade, too.

JASON NOBLE

Farmer makes Vee racing return

FORMULA VEE

Multiple Formula Vee champion Martin Farmer returned to the series at Oulton Park on Saturday for the first time this season.

He secured two third places on a wet and greasy track in his GAC, having refamiliarised himself with the car during a half-day of testing on the Friday before.

Farmer has taken a step back from racing in the past two years and has been concentrating on running his growing Torq Racewear business, with his last race prior to the weekend at the Vee Festival in 2018.

He decided to enter the Oulton rounds at the last minute and is undecided when he will get the car out again.

"As it stands, we'll just do this as a bit of a one-off," he explained. "I've heard that Donington Park [the next championship round] has already sold out with entries, so I'm not sure we'll be able to do that even if we wanted to."

RACHEL HARRIS-GARDINER



JONES

IN THE HEADLINES

McLAREN DRIVERS' MESSAGE

Irish racer and team owner Sean Woods, who was diagnosed with motor neurone disease last year, has received a special message from McLaren Formula 1 drivers Lando Norris and Carlos Sainz Jr. His daughter Aimee spoke with Autosport correspondent Leo Nulty and suggested Woods would love a message of support from his favourite drivers. A delighted Woods received a video message from both drivers before last weekend's Eifel Grand Prix, thanking him for the support and urging him to keep fighting.

MINI CHALLENGE DEBUT

Former Renault UK Clio Cup and Fiesta competitor Nathan Edwards made his debut in the Cooper class of the Mini Challenge at Croft last weekend with Excelr8 Motorsport as the series again formed part of the British Touring Car support bill. The 22-year-old finished seventh in race one but was sent into a spin at Tower in the second contest and eventually finished 22nd.

ALBUTT BACK AT THE WHEEL

Former Porsche Open and Club racer Mark Albutt has returned to racing after a 14-year absence. "My son Dale persuaded me, after me having spent years on the pitwall watching him racing in the Ginetta GT5 Challenge," he explained. They shared a GT4 Aston Martin and made their Britcar Endurance debut at Silverstone last weekend, taking fourth in class in both races. "We did the recent AMOC meeting with the car and then decided to try this," added Albutt Sr.

ESCORT SUFFERS BIG HIT

The pristine Ford Escort Mk1 of multiple Pre-'83 Touring Car champion Stephen Primett was badly damaged (below) in a huge accident at Silverstone last weekend. "I had caught Mike Luck's BMW and he nearly lost it at Stowe, but as I took avoiding action I ran out of track and crashed heavily," he said.



SCHERER

Turkington among BTCC aces heading to Goodwood

GOODWOOD SPEEDWEEK



BMW driver Turkington is set to share Brooks's Mini in Gerry Marshall Trophy

British Touring Car champions Colin Turkington and Matt Neal will be two of the leading lights from the 2020 series to race at this weekend's Goodwood SpeedWeek.

Turkington is set to race a Lotus Cortina in the St Mary's Trophy and a Mini 1275 GT in the Gerry Marshall Trophy, while Neal will drive an ex-Marshall Vauxhall Firenza in the race named after the tin-top legend.

Turkington will reunite with ex-West Surrey Racing BMW team-mate Andrew Jordan with the Cortina. Jordan Racing Team, run by Jordan and his father Mike, is prepping the Cortina that the four-time BTCC champion will share with Ollie Taylor. He will co-drive with Jason Brooks in the Mini, turned out in the livery used by Tim Goss in the BTCC's Group 1 era.

"I tested the Mini at Donington last Tuesday," said Turkington, who began his car competition career in an autograss Mini. "It was a bit of a throwback, an eye-opener, and I'm glad I got a few miles to get a feel of it. I really enjoyed it.

"I raced a Dolomite Sprint at Goodwood in 2017, and a Lister-Jaguar Knobbly which felt way too fast! I have limited experience there, but I'm really looking forward to it, although I don't think we'll be challenging the top boys in the Mini."

Neal is sharing the Firenza with Marshall's son Gregor, and was down to race a Jaguar E-type in the TT Celebration, only for clashing World Touring Car Cup TV punditry commitments to put paid to that. "It hasn't run yet so it'll be in at the deep end," he said of the Vauxhall. "It's going to be a challenge but we'll have a crack at it."

Two more winners from the 2020 BTCC field will compete. Adam Morgan is racing a Ford Capri in the Marshall Trophy, while Tom Ingram is sharing Marco Attard's Chevrolet Corvette Stingray in the TT race.

"It's an enjoyable car to drive, but the last time I competed at Goodwood was in 2016 in an Austin A35, so it's going to feel incredibly fast and scary," said Ingram. "I texted Jason Plato [who is entered in Craig Davies's Stingray] and we've got a £5 bet as to who will soil their racesuit more!"

MARCUS SIMMONS

Fittipaldi to reunite with Lotus 72 at Goodwood

HISTORICS



Chassis 7 has been restored and should appear at SpeedWeek

An iconic Lotus 72 has been restored and is set to be reunited with Emerson Fittipaldi at this week's Goodwood SpeedWeek.

The car, chassis 7, was raced in 19 Formula 1 grands prix by the Brazilian, and powered him to five wins across the 1972 and 1973 seasons (see 8 October Autosport for a special issue dedicated to the 72).

At the end of that season it was sold and was raced in South Africa, during which time its chassis number was swapped with that of 72/3, which had also been sent to South Africa. It wasn't until the latter chassis was brought back to Classic Team Lotus many years later for restoration work that its true identity was revealed.

The original 72/7 – which was brought back to the UK in 1989 – was given its correct number and has undergone restoration work to convert it back to period specification ahead of its demonstration appearance at Goodwood.

Classic Team Lotus team manager Chris Dinnage said: "We have now worked on all bar two of the eight surviving Lotus 72s, of which five are presently in our care.

"It really is a treat to be looking after so many of the greatest F1 cars of all time. Furthermore, whenever Emerson drives them again it gets even better."




Smith and Bellamy have tested the rebuilt Nomad at Mallory

JAVELIN TRACKDAYS

Unique Nomad FF2000 machine returns to action after 42 years

HISTORIC FORMULA FORD 2000

The unique Nomad Formula Ford 2000 is set to return to competition next season, having last been raced by its late designer/constructor Phil Lloyd in 1978.

Lloyd was 750 Motor Club F1300 champion — driving his Nomad Mk2, another self-build — when he joined the Pinto-powered slicks-and-wings category with its successor in 1977.

He evolved the Mk3 into lighter Mk4 spec with inboard rocker front suspension for 1978, but tragically became quadriplegic when his Frank Bradley-loaned Reynard rolled as a result of a clash of wheels at Mallory Park in 1979.

The bones of the Nomad were sold but were snapped up by 2015 Historic FF2000 champion Tom Smith from an eBay advert in 2016. His category specialist TS Historic team has subsequently rebuilt it.

"We got the chassis, bodywork and front suspension," said Smith, as Lloyd had cannibalised the engine, gearbox and rear end to build a Reynard show car for Bradley. "It took a lot of work, with photos and info from Phil's brother Peter, who owns the F1300 Mk2. I shook it down at Mallory in March."

Smith's partner Daisy Bellamy did a few laps then, but returned for the recent Javelin trackday. "It's very different to the kit car I've driven, but I really got into it," she said. "The Falcon has a little tantrum in the corners, but you point the Nomad and it goes where you want it to."

Novice racer Bellamy plans to compete in selected events in 2021.

MARCUS PYE

New support for David Leslie Trophy

FORMULA FORD 1600

Scottish Formula Ford's jewel-in-the-crown David Leslie Trophy is due to be held again this weekend despite not having its traditional Scottish Motor Racing Club billing.

Scottish FF1600 has run with the Knockhill Motor Sports Club this year as the renamed Scottish Renegades Cup, after the SMRC reduced its schedule due to COVID-19.

"It's amazing how far we've come from July, when the championship was effectively dead," said organiser and competitor Neil Broome.

The Trophy meeting will be open to competitors from the Heritage Formula Ford Championship, with whom the Scottish Renegades shared a grid at Oulton Park in August. There will also be a special Classic and Historic trophy awarded to pre-1993 cars.

"We had a fantastic round at Oulton, which paved the way for KMSC to agree to upgrade our September event from a sprint format to a proper race weekend," Broome added.

"It was really the success of that weekend that showed how much enthusiasm is out there for FF1600, and persuaded KMSC to pull out all the stops for the David Leslie Trophy."

The weekend will also feature an FF1600 'open day' to gather interest in the single-seater category for next year.

STEPHEN BRUNSDON

IN THE HEADLINES

LUTI MAKES C1 CUP DEBUT

MG Trophy regular Paul Luti made his first appearance in the Scottish C1 Cup at Knockhill last weekend for the second round of the Scottish Motor Racing Club season. Luti qualified fifth on the grid, despite not having tested the car, and finished seventh in the opening race, before recording a fifth place in race two. Luti admitted that his first experience of the championship had been "eye-opening", but added he "genuinely enjoyed" the second encounter.

RALLY OF THE TESTS IS OFF

The Historic Endurance Rallying Organisation has decided to cancel its planned Rally of the Tests event for this year, amid increasing coronavirus restrictions being imposed upon northern areas of England. The event is one of the UK's most popular classic rallies and was due to take place next month. HERO is instead working on plans to run the 'PER ARDUA AD INFINITUM' – which is Latin for 'through endless adversity' – Reliability Trial at the start of December.

GRANGE'S MUSTANG READY

Ford racing exponent Piers Grange debuted his Mustang in the Classic Touring Car Racing Club Pre-'66 Saloons contest at Silverstone last weekend. "I've been building it for 10 years and finally finished it," he said after finishing second in class in both races. "So now I have this, and the Mk1 and Mk2 Escorts race ready."

MASTERS' US SEASON BEGINS

Masters' American racing season began last weekend, after being delayed due to the coronavirus outbreak. It looked like John Reisman would win both Masters Endurance Legends races at Road Atlanta, but a gearbox failure on his Coyote Corvette Daytona Prototype machine (below) in the closing stages of the second contest allowed the Ligier LMP3 of Francesco Melandri/Hanna Zellers to triumph. Events at Daytona and Sebring are set to follow.


MASTERS

TOCA SUPPORTS CROFT 10-11 OCTOBER



This was as close as Lebbon's rivals got to him in race two as he streaked clear to win

ALL PHOTOGRAPHY: JEP motorsport IMAGES

Joy for Lebbon and Rattican as Voisin has weekend to forget

GINETTA JUNIOR

It's not very often that a Ginetta Junior race is won by 6.8 seconds. And it's not very often that a driver bounces back from losing a win, a roll into the gravel trap and a disappointing 13th place to catapult themselves back into title contention in the next event.

But that change in fortunes is what Tom Lebbon has enjoyed in recent weeks. After his miserable Silverstone event, he was 74 points adrift of leader Bailey Voisin and admitted he "lost all hope for a little bit". That despondency was replaced by confidence at Croft as he came very close to winning both races.

The opener featured two safety car periods and all came down to a one-lap shootout. Lebbon had briefly lost the lead to Tom Edgar around the outside of Tower on the first lap, but Lebbon got back ahead with a dive up the inside of the hairpin. Also on the move was fellow title contender Josh Rattican, who passed Edgar at Tower on the first of the safety car restarts. And Tower again proved to be a happy hunting ground for Rattican on that final lap as he made another great move to take the win.

Things were far less close in race two as Lebbon was left comfortably ahead of first-time podium finisher Freddie Tomlinson and Rattican at the flag as the pack squabbled behind.

"It was a bit of a strange race to lead from lights to flag!" said Lebbon, who admitted he found driving without the usual Ginetta Junior pressure a tricky balancing act.

While Lebbon and new points leader Rattican had strong weekends, it could all have been very different. Voisin had qualified on pole for both races by over half a second but his R Racing car was found to have a modified restrictor plate and he was sent to the back.

He fought up to 10th in the opener but got tangled up in an incident in race two, leaving him 22 points behind Rattican.

"It was just one of those weekends," said Voisin, devastated to have lost his poles. "The first race was a tough race – there were two safety cars so there wasn't much racing. I moved up 10 places, which was pretty decent.

"Today [race two] was one of those things. We've now got to throw this one [weekend] away and move on." Just as Lebbon was able to do after his own woes at Silverstone.

STEPHEN LICKORISH

Double delight for Dorlin, disaster for Jackson

PORSCHE SPRINT CHALLENGE GB

James Dorlin moved into the driving seat as the new-for-2020 Porsche Sprint Challenge GB made its debut on the TOCA package at Croft, thanks to his own vast superiority and an absolute disaster for pre-weekend series leader Tom Jackson.

Ex-Clio Cup runner-up Dorlin headed the 12-car field of 718 Cayman GT4 Clubsports in a wet qualifying session, while Jackson trailed in seventh. Things went from bad to worse for Jackson when he was excluded because his car had insufficient fuel for a sample, sending him to the rear of the grid.

Jackson went for slick tyres for the opening race, but took until the end of it to start matching the lap times of the leading runners, as he finished 11th. Up front, Ginetta Junior graduate Theo Edgerton got a slightly better start than Dorlin, but the In2 Racing man kept in front at Clervaux and splashed away to win by 12 seconds. W Series racer Sarah Moore ran a strong third, before Archie Hamilton outbraked her into Tower on the sixth lap of 15.



No one could get close to Dorlin all weekend



Edgerton bagged two second places at Croft

Dorlin dominated again in a dry second race, with Edgerton second, but there was chaos behind and only seven cars finished.

First, Jackson smashed into the pitlane barrier while battling Ambrogio Perfetti at the end of the first lap, causing a red flag. Then Moore lost it at the exit of the chicane and was collected by Nigel Rice, who wallowed into the mud. On the penultimate lap, Ethan Hawkey and Hamilton fought side by side into Hawthorn for third, and contact put Hamilton out.

MARCUS SIMMONS

Burns' title bid sparks into life

GINETTA GT4 SUPERCUP

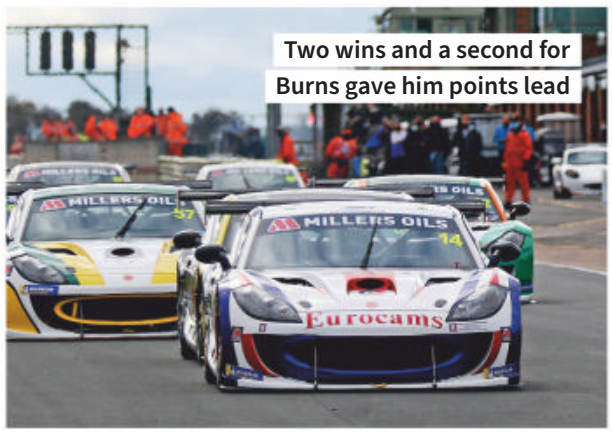
Will Burns, Gus Burton and Tom Hibbert had proved inseparable across the majority of the Ginetta GT4 Supercup season, but it was Burns who edged clear in the title race at Croft.

Burns bagged two victories over Adam Smalley and Burton in the largely uneventful opening two races to retake the championship momentum as Hibbert could only manage sixth and fifth. The second race was much closer at the front than the first, which was held in damp conditions, and Burton tried a move around the outside of Smalley at Tower but to no avail.

The partially reversed-grid finale was far more dramatic. As polesitter Falvey led away, Smalley ran side-by-side with Burton through the Esses and sealed the move into Sunny In. Burns also got ahead into the Complex as Burton tumbled down the order with suspension damage and back from Burns in the standings.

Up front, Smalley was not content with a third second place and made a bold move down the inside of Tower to take the win, as Burns finished second after also passing Falvey out of the Esses to give himself a 36-point advantage.

STEPHEN LICKORISH



Two wins and a second for Burns gave him points lead



Smalley grabbed impressive win in the finale after passing Falvey

Nunn is the Mini star at Croft

MINI CHALLENGE TROPHY

Harry Nunn was the star in the Cooper class of the Mini Challenge at Croft as he took his maiden win and a third to propel himself to the head of the points table.

Nunn grabbed the lead on the first lap of the opener, held in drying conditions, and stayed in front for the remainder as a dramatic battle unfolded behind him.

Polesitter Alex Nevill slightly overcooked it into the Complex on the opening lap and lost out to Dominic Wheatley, before soon dropping behind Lee Pearce and Lydia Walmsley too. But the driver on the move was James Hillery, having stormed up from 16th on the grid.

He grabbed third from Walmsley with a move up the inside at Tower with two laps to go, before passing Wheatley through the Complex. But it then turned to disaster on the penultimate tour as a brake problem into Clervaux put Hillery out, allowing Josh Porter and Wheatley to complete the podium, as Walmsley just missed out by three tenths of a second.

Race two was a disappointment as two safety car periods limited the contest to four racing laps, but it was still enough time for Nunn to surge from 10th on the partially-reversed grid to third. Up front, polesitter Andrew Langley was able to resist the pressure from Martin Poole to take the win.

STEPHEN LICKORISH



There was no stopping Nunn in opening contest

WEEKEND WINNERS

GINETTA JUNIOR

Race 1 (10 laps) 1 Josh Rattican; 2 Tom Lebbon +0.723s; 3 Tom Edgar; 4 William Vincent; 5 Will Jenkins; 6 Freddie Tomlinson. **Fastest lap** Rattican 1m43.808s (73.69mph). **Pole** Lebbon. **Starters** 20. **Race 2 (8 laps) 1 Lebbon**; 2 Tomlinson +6.817s; 3 Rattican; 4 Joel Pearson; 5 Jenkins; 6 Edgar. **FL** Rattican 1m39.397s (76.96mph). **P** Lebbon. **S** 20. **Points 1 Rattican 412**; 2 Bailey Voisin 390; 3 Lebbon 371; 4 Georgi Dimitrov 301; 5 Edgar 231; 6 Pearson 219.

PORSCHE SPRINT CHALLENGE GB

Race 1 (15 laps) 1 James Dorlin; 2 Theo Edgerton +11.953s; 3 Archie Hamilton; 4 Sarah Moore; 5 Ambrogio Perfetti; 6 Paul Donkin. **FL** Dorlin 1m28.168s (86.76mph). **P** Dorlin. **S** 12. **Race 2 (12 laps) 1 Dorlin**; 2 Edgerton +2.977s; 3 Ethan Hawkey; 4 Donkin; 5 Ian Humphris; 6 Perfetti. **FL** Dorlin 1m22.727s (92.47mph). **P** Dorlin. **S** 11. **Points 1 Dorlin 93**; 2 Tom Jackson 79; 3 Edgerton 56; 4 Hawkey 44; 5 Hamilton 42; 6 Alex Toth-Jones 20.

GINETTA GT4 SUPERCUP

Race 1 (10 laps) 1 Will Burns; 2 Adam Smalley +1.630s; 3 Gus Burton; 4 Joe Marshall-Birks; 5 Jamie Falvey; 6 Tom Hibbert. **FL** Burns 1m26.779s (88.15mph). **P** Burns. **S** 15. **Race 2 (15 laps) 1 Burns**; 2 Smalley +0.695s; 3 Burton; 4 Falvey; 5 Hibbert; 6 Marshall-Birks. **FL** Smalley 1m21.105s (94.32mph). **P** Burns. **S** 15. **Race 3 (15 laps) 1 Smalley**; 2 Burns +2.524s; 3 Falvey; 4 Hibbert; 5 Marshall-Birks; 6 Tom Emson. **FL** Smalley 1m21.064s (94.37mph). **P** Falvey. **S** 15. **Points 1 Burns 409**; 2 Burton 373; 3 Hibbert 370; 4 Smalley 329; 5 Falvey 322; 6 Marshall-Birks 246.

MINI CHALLENGE TROPHY

Race 1 (12 laps) 1 Harry Nunn; 2 Josh Porter +4.774s; 3 Dominic Wheatley; 4 Lydia Walmsley; 5 Alex Nevill; 6 Lee Pearce. **FL** James Hillery 1m43.756s (73.73mph). **P** Nevill. **S** 29. **Race 2 (10 laps) 1 Andrew Langley**; 2 Martin Poole +0.359s; 3 Nunn; 4 Pearce; 5 Wheatley; 6 Walmsley. **FL** Nunn 1m40.285s (76.28mph). **P** Langley. **S** 29. **Points 1 Nunn 319**; 2 Walmsley 309; 3 Wheatley 308; 4 Archie O'Brien 295; 5 Porter 286; 6 Ben Kasperczak 274.

BRITISH FORMULA 4

Race 1 (14 laps) 1 Zak O'Sullivan; 2 Casper Stevenson +0.448s; 3 Abbi Pulling; 4 Frederick Lubin; 5 Roman Bilinski; 6 Luke Browning. **FL** Stevenson 1m26.638s (88.30mph). **P** Stevenson. **S** 12. **Race 2 (15 laps) 1 Stevenson**; 2 O'Sullivan +1.246s; 3 Browning; 4 Pulling; 5 James Hedley; 6 Christian Mansell. **FL** Browning 1m19.521s (96.20mph). **P** Stevenson. **S** 12. **Points 1 Browning 314**; 2 O'Sullivan 301; 3 Stevenson 281; 4 Hedley 220; 5 Alex Connor 215; 6 Pulling 136.



Langley defied Poole in second Mini race

TOCA SUPPORTS CROFT 10-11 OCTOBER



Stevenson leads O'Sullivan, while Browning (far right) is being caught up in points

Momentum with O'Sullivan and Stevenson as Browning struggles

BRITISH FORMULA 4

Momentum counts for a lot in a championship fight and right now it seems to be slipping away from Luke Browning in British Formula 4, as his main rivals Zak O'Sullivan and Casper Stevenson again took a significant chunk out of his lead.

The first Croft race was held in the wet conditions that Browning normally thrives in. But that was not the case in North Yorkshire as he made a slight mistake at Clervaux at the start, running wide and allowing O'Sullivan and Abbi Pulling through. Browning then lost out further at Tower as the Arden machines of Frederick Lubin and Roman Bilinski got ahead to leave him sixth – and that was where he stayed to the finish.

Up front, polesitter Stevenson led initially but was soon under attack from O'Sullivan, who pounced through the chicane on lap two. O'Sullivan built a gap of a couple of seconds before Stevenson reeled him in and was right with the Carlin driver at the flag.

"I was just a bit tentative at the start and O'Sullivan passed me and then I ran out of laps," admitted Stevenson, while O'Sullivan said he struggled for pace a little as the track began to dry.

Perhaps one of the clearest indications that it was not going to be Browning's weekend came in qualifying. Stevenson and Browning's second fastest times were both 1m19.595s but, as Stevenson set his first, it was he who started from pole for race two, the reversed-grid race not taking place as each British Touring Car Championship support category has a reduced amount of track time at one of the final three scheduled meetings.

"It's crazy when you think about it," said Stevenson about the pole times. "One turn of the wheel could've been the one thousandth [Browning needed]."

Argenti Motorsport racer Stevenson managed to stay ahead throughout this time to bag his second series win and a record-equalling ninth consecutive F4 podium, while all eyes were on the battle for second. O'Sullivan made a brilliant dive down the inside of Browning at the hairpin on lap three of 15, only for Browning to fight back across the start/finish line, but he ended up cutting across the chicane and lost the place.

Browning remained right with O'Sullivan for the remainder of the contest, and did try a move around the outside of Tower late on, but he had to settle for third as Stevenson and O'Sullivan once again gained the upper hand to reduce his points lead to 13.

STEPHEN LICKORISH

HOW O'SULLIVAN'S SEASON IS FOLLOWING A FAMILIAR PATTERN

Zak O'Sullivan has already shown in his short car racing career that he can adapt to new machinery pretty quickly. He finished his maiden car race in second place in Ginetta Junior at Brands Hatch last year – no mean feat for a rookie in a competitive championship – and then took two podiums, including a reversed-grid victory, on his debut single-seater weekend at Donington Park this year.

But both of those seasons have followed a similar pattern. A strong start to the year, followed by a tricky spell in the early-to-mid part of the season before a resurgence in the second half of the campaign.

That resurgence took O'Sullivan to second in the Ginetta standings last year, albeit almost 100 points behind runaway champion James Hedley, and he is now closing in on points leader Luke Browning in British Formula 4 too.

O'Sullivan admitted earlier this year that he was surprised by quite how successful his opening two weekends in F4 were as he built an early lead in the championship.

"I didn't expect such a good start to the season – I was quite confident but through winter testing I wasn't that quick in the collective tests," said O'Sullivan, who added that he and his Carlin team worked hard before the start of the season to find that extra pace.

He did lead the standings by 18 points after those opening two weekends before difficult events at Oulton Park and Thruxton. In Cheshire, he made a poor start to race two and then spun after contact battling with Abbi Pulling, before being taken out by Browning at the start of the second race in Hampshire.

"We had some bad luck at Thruxton and Oulton Park, but everyone is going to have their fair share of bad luck [over the year]," said O'Sullivan.

He has since returned to the top step of the podium at Silverstone and Croft, and his bold move on Browning in race two last weekend proves he is not afraid of having a go, unlike some of his more cautious fellow F4 racers.



Carlin racer O'Sullivan has had two strong events

As Browning has struggled – taking just two podiums in the past eight races – O'Sullivan has come on strong, to the extent that Casper Stevenson (third in the points) is concentrating on beating him just as much as Browning.

"The front three are starting to establish ourselves a bit more now," added O'Sullivan. And he is very much in the thick of that fight.

STEPHEN LICKORISH



Card battled with Sheehan (right) but was free to win when his rival collided with a backmarker

WALKER

Card on the money in BMW battle

MALLORY PARK
BARC
11 OCTOBER

James Card set up an exciting conclusion to the Kumho BMW Championship by taking a double victory in two attritional races at Mallory Park.

Darren Morgan-Owen was giving chase to fellow E46 M3 driver Michael Pensavalle when his off at the hairpin brought out the red flags after six laps of the opener.

Pensavalle picked up where he left off at the restart but was caught and passed by Brad Sheehan on the seventh lap, losing several more places before retiring. Sheehan was being put under pressure by Card — both in E46 M3s — going into the final stages when he tangled with the backmarking Peugeot 308 of Terry Stephens, from the concurrent Saloons grid.

With Sheehan's battered car not running at the stoppage, Card was victorious from Jason West and Michael Vitulli, also in M3s. After a place-swapping battle with Steve Rothery's 308, Paul Nevill's Ford Escort RS2000 claimed the Saloon spoils.

Card led a depleted race-two field throughout. After second-position runner Vitulli found the barriers at Gerard's Bend just after half distance, West took up the pursuit of Card and got to within half a second briefly, but a grassy moment exiting Gerard's on the final lap put paid to his chances. Jasver Sapra — who climbed from the back of the first-race grid — hung on to third from the patched-up car of Morgan-Owen, who did likewise in race two.

In Class B, which was twice won by Russell Dack's Compact, Sunny Gill took a third and a second in his E36 M3 and thus goes into the Thruxton decider level-pegging with Card. Nevill topped the Saloons again, this time unchallenged.

Pete Sparrow dropped from pole to fourth on the opening lap of the first Citroen 2CV race, but then used the tow on the Stebbe Straight on lap six of 18 to get ahead of two cars and retake the lead. Nick Roads kept him within his sights, but the pair gradually eased away from the battle for third. James Dartiailh moved into the final podium position into Gerard's with four laps remaining, but Lien Davies dived back inside of him at Lake Esses on the penultimate tour.

Once he'd grabbed the race-two lead at the Esses on lap one, Sparrow dominated proceedings. What was a five-car scrap for runner-up spot was whittled down to three, with Alec Graham's move at the hairpin at two thirds distance proving decisive, and enough to secure the championship. Roads and Nick Crispin — having taken over the car from Dartiailh — were also involved.

A superb Historic Formula 3 opener was red-flagged after a clash between the leaders. Ian Bankhurst's Alexis Mk8 led at first, but Simon Armer took over at Gerard's on lap 11 in his March 703. Steve Seaman got his Brabham BT21 ahead of Bankhurst at Lake Esses on lap 15, and two laps later repeated the move on Armer before the race-concluding incident at Shaw's Corner. "Simon hit Steve, then Steve hit me," said Bankhurst, who was classified as the winner.

Bankhurst added another when Ewen Sergison retired his Merlyn from the lead of the second encounter late on, and thus wrapped up the championship.

Alex Cursley emerged on top of both Hyundai Coupe encounters, the second of which was an ultra-close contest featuring a quintet of cars at the front. Cursley stayed ahead throughout, but Mark Dicken came on strong towards the end, snatching second from Wayne Rockett on the line, having been fourth a lap earlier.

IAN SOWMAN



Armer (left) grabs the lead, but later contact with Seaman meant Bankhurst (right) won

WALKER

WEEKEND WINNERS

KUMHO BMWs
Races 1 & 2 James Card (E46 M3)

CITROEN 2CVs
Races 1 & 2 Pete Sparrow

HISTORIC F3
Races 1 & 2 Ian Bankhurst (Alexis Mk8)

HYUNDAI COUPES
Races 1 & 2 Alex Cursley (below)



WALKER

For full results visit: tsl-timing.com



Wilson (left) won twice but had to battle Robinson hard in the second race

Unstoppable Wilson doubles up in Holden Monaro

SILVERSTONE
BARC
10-11 OCTOBER

Andy Wilson's seven-litre Holden Monaro came out on top of both Classic Thunder races, held in vastly different conditions, on Silverstone's International layout.

In a wet opener, he blasted well clear on the first lap, leaving the Ford Sierras of Dan Brown and Bradley Gelman to fight Andy Robinson's Ford Falcon for second. But their battle allowed James Janicki (Nissan Skyline) to close and, by the end of lap four of 12, he had passed all three and consolidated second place.

Robinson briefly dropped to fourth but, after retaking Brown, he had reduced Janicki's hold on second to only 0.301 seconds at the flag, with Gelman demoting Brown to fifth a lap from home.

It was another lights-to-flag win for Wilson in the dry race two, but Robinson was just inches away over the final laps. Brown had an early battle for third with Gelman, before leaving his rival to fend off Janicki's challenge for fourth, until Gelman retired to the pits after nine of 13 laps.

There was a double winner in the Pre-'66 & '83 Touring Cars too, with Simon Jeffs's Volkswagen Golf GTI in command. While Jeffs led the opening race, Mike Luck (BMW E21) and Stephen Primett (Ford Escort Mk1) had an intense duel for second, before Luck almost lost it at Stowe and Primett crashed heavily in avoidance.

That promoted the Escort Mk1 of Mark Lucock to second, and he headed a seven-car train from which David Howard's Jaguar XJ12 battled through to clinch the runner-up spot a lap from home, ahead of Lucock and Stuart Caie's Ford Capri, with Luck recovering to fifth.

Howard made an early break in race two as Jeffs and Lucock battled over second but, once Jeffs had made his move stick, he reeled in Howard and led from lap six. After losing out to Luck on the following lap, Howard had a duel with Lucock for the final podium spot, which was settled in the Escort driver's favour on the last lap.

A double National Formula Ford victory for Neil Maclennan (Spectrum KMR) gave the Scot the title. Initially, he had to hunt down Ross Martin and Rory Smith in race one, and passed Smith's Medina JL18 into Stowe on the fifth lap.

Martin's lead began to decrease, and on the penultimate lap they came out of Club side by side, before Maclennan made the decisive move on Martin's Van Diemen RF99 down Hangar Straight. Smith retained a solitary third, while a four-car train for fourth featured Matthew Cowley (Van Diemen JL15) getting the better of Jamie Sharp (Medina) a lap from home.

The second race was split into two groups of three by the second lap, with Maclennan, Martin and Oliver White ((Medina) heading the Low Dempsey Rays of Jonathan Browne and Bryce Aron along with Joey Foster's Firman RFR20.

Just after White had tried for second at Club, Martin successfully challenged Maclennan for the lead, only to run wide and hand it back. It remained nose-to-tail to the flag, but it was Maclennan's race and title, while White fell back into a lonely third as Browne broke clear from the chasing pack to claim fourth.

The Praga R1T of Danny Harrison and Jem Hepworth won the first Britcar Endurance race, despite Hepworth causing chaos with a spin at the first corner. Steve Burgess and Ben Dimmack finished second



Senior (leading) and Ellwood (centre) shared the spoils in Caterham Graduates

ALL PICS: JONES

SILVERSTONE WEEKEND WINNERS

CLASSIC THUNDER/PRE-'93/PRE-'03/BOSS
Races 1 & 2 Andy Wilson (Holden Monaro)

PRE-'66 & PRE-'93 TOURING CARS
Races 1 & 2 Simon Jeffs (Volkswagen Golf GTI)

NATIONAL & NORTHERN FF1600
Races 1 & 2 Neil Maclennan (Spectrum KMR)

BRITCAR ENDURANCE
Race 1 Danny Harrison/Jem Hepworth (Praga R1T)
Race 2 Ben Dimmack/Steve Burgess (Radical RXC Coupe)

CATERHAM GRADUATES
Races 1 & 2 Harry Senior (Sigmax)
Race 3 Jamie Ellwood (Sigmax)

TIEDEMAN TROPHY
Races 1 & 2 Chris Woodhouse (Jedi Mk6)

MG OWNERS' CLUB & MAX5
Race 1 Dave Mellor (MG ZR)
Race 2 Fergus Campbell (MG ZR)

BRITCAR TROPHY
Races 1 & 2 Adam Howarth/Chris Boardman (BMW M3)

JUNIOR SALOONS
Races 1 & 2 Alex Solley

For full results visit: tsl-timing.com

in their Radical RXC after ousting Garry Townsend and Jack Fabby (Praga), who settled in fifth behind Ross Wylie/Paul Bailey (Ferrari 488 Challenge) and Mike Moss/Andy Schulz (BMW 1M).

Dimmack had the lead of the second race after Hepworth ran wide at Village on the opening lap, and Burgess retained their advantage after the driver swap, but was being caught by Harrison until brake failure left the Praga sidelined. Townsend/Fabby secured second from Wylie/Bailey.

All three Caterham Graduates races featured race-long duels between Harry Senior and Jamie Ellwood. Senior just won the first two, Ellwood dropping to third behind Stephen Clark in the opener, but Ellwood finally got his win in the third.

After snatching a last-lap victory over Chris Davison's Dallara F301 in the first Tiedeman Trophy Monoposto race, Chris Woodhouse (Jedi) was never headed in race two as the Dallara F304 of Tony Bishop claimed a late second.

Dave Mellor came out on top of the first MG Owners' Club contest after charging past Fergus Campbell's similar MG ZR on Hangar Straight, but couldn't breach Campbell's defence in the second.

Both Britcar Trophy races were dominated by the BMW M3 of Adam Howarth and Chris Boardman.

PETER SCHERER

SAUNDERS BEATEN AT LAST IN JUNIOR SALOONS



Solley (12) and Saunders battled in both JSCC races at Silverstone

There are many reasons for the strong levels of interest in the Junior Saloon Car Championship, but one of them is its scholarship competition to receive a funded season in the series.

The contest helps to engage the next generation of racers in the Citroen Saxo category, which has a long history as it was previously known as Saxmax and originated from the 750 Motor Club, but is now administered by the British Automobile Racing Club.

The first scholarship winner was Emily Glanvill in 2016, who then moved on to Mini racing. It wasn't awarded in 2017, but the following year it was revived and won by last season's champion Scott McIntyre, now a Team Hard driver. Harry Rice was the 2019 winner, while the current scholar is Deagen Fairclough.

"It's a chance for a lad or girl to have a real chance of racing and put them on their way," championship coordinator Dave Beecroft explained. "It's not always the quickest driver [who gets selected], it's the one who fits in with the JSCC family, as we are also supporting the Teenage Cancer Trust and National Autistic Society."

Fairclough admitted: "I didn't think I had a chance of winning as I was only 13 and thought about coming back to try in 2021, but it was a Christmas present to enter it. I was really shocked when they said I had won it."

Fairclough faced a mixture of success and disappointment in the latest round at Silverstone, while Alex Solley inflicted the first defeats of the year upon 2018 champion Lewis Saunders.

After a frantic couple of laps in race one, Solley got a break that proved decisive and Saunders had to settle for second. Fairclough had lost touch with the lead duo but was having a great duel for third with Charlie Hand until a wire came off the fuel pump on the last lap and he dropped to ninth.

It was a similar story in race two, with Saunders and Solley swapping and changing places before Solley broke the tow, leaving Hand battling to keep Fairclough at bay for third. They swapped positions until Hand's clutch went two laps from home, leaving Fairclough to complete the rostrum after a late duel with Ruben Hage.

PETER SCHERER



It was a mixed weekend for JSCC scholar Fairclough

Hiley shines in the rain to take title

OULTON PARK
750MC
10 OCTOBER


Two wins secured the Sport Specials crown for Hiley

Autumn was in evidence at the 750 Motor Club's Oulton Park meeting as intermittent heavy rain created highly challenging track conditions.

The Sport Specials title was decided in favour of Andy Hiley, who took the overall prize in his Chronos HR1S. He travelled to Oulton five points ahead of Class A rival Paul Collingwood (Eclipse SM1) and, when Collingwood struggled in the first race due to his lack of wet tyres and Hiley won, Hiley only had to finish the second race to secure the title.

Never unbeatable, Hiley was bested in qualifying for both races by Rob Johnston's Cyana Mk2, but Johnston was no match for him at the start of race one and was quickly overtaken. Within a lap, John Saunders's Caterham had also got past and Johnston lost the final podium spot on the last tour, when Stewart Mutch charged past him in his MEV MX150R. Mutch had previously been involved in a close battle with Stuart Thompson's Caterham Sigma, who eventually lost a place to Steven Wells's SEWC SubZero.

Johnston was denied another chance at beating Hiley by a blown engine in race two as Mutch kept close to the Chronos in the latter stages but was unable to make a move. He had to settle for second, although a class title was some consolation. Saunders was third, moving ahead of Mutch's MEV team-mate Micky Scott on the line.

There may still be one scheduled round to go, but Aaron Cooke took another step towards the Toyota MR2 title with a pair of wins, meaning only reigning champion Shaun Traynor can now stop him.

Race one looked to be between Cooke and Paul Cook, and the latter managed to pass his rival after a red flag but Cooke soon took the lead back.

Cook was then challenged by Alastair Topley, but the former short oval racer had a small off, dropping himself to fourth behind Traynor.

Cooke's rivals tried to crowd him out the first time they came to Old Hall in race two, but he still prevailed, snatching the lead from Cook. He fought back later on but made a mistake, eventually finishing fifth, behind Snetterton winner Paul Hinson, Traynor, and Nick Williamson. Topley had another off and came from the back to finish 14th.

James Harridge (Maverick) was another driver who wrapped up a title, although he was denied a clean sweep of Formula Vee wins by Daniel Hands's GAC. The multiple race-winner made a move on Harridge at the chicane on lap six and held on for the remaining two laps to take the victory.

Double champion Martin Farmer was third in another GAC, having challenged at the beginning but dropped back from the leaders. Harridge reclaimed his usual top spot in the second race, winning from Hands and Farmer.

There was a late season upset on the Locost grid, with Murray Shepherd netting a pair of wins, while championship leader Craig Land was fourth in the opener. The Locosts seemed particularly affected by



Cooke moved closer to the MR2 title after taking two victories

ALL PHOTOGRAPHY: JONES

OULTON PARK WEEKEND WINNERS



SPORT SPECIALS
Races 1 & 2 Andy Hiley (Chronos HR1S)

TOYOTA MR2
Races 1 & 2 Aaron Cooke (Mk2)

FORMULA VEE
Race 1 Daniel Hands (GAC Vee, above)
Race 2 James Harridge (Maverick)

LOCOST
Races 1 & 2 Murray Shepherd

ALFA ROMEO
Races 1 & 2 Graham Seager (GTV)

116 TROPHY
Andrew Woodbine/Samuel Carrington Yates (below)



For full results visit: 750mc.co.uk

the wet and greasy surface and the second race had to be restarted after a spinning car took out several others. Fortunately for Shepherd, Land was among those left on the sidelines, as he went on to take his second win.

Both Alfa Romeo races were decided by a game of cat and mouse between Graham Seager's GTV and Tom Hill in a GT. Hill was quicker in qualifying and led for the first part of both races, but Seager's more powerful Modified class car allowed him to reel Hill in and leave him behind as the GTV won twice.

Local drivers Andrew Woodbine and Samuel Carrington Yates were the winners of a topsy-turvy final 116 Trophy encounter of the year. Their BMW was easily the fastest on track, and they had qualified on pole, but they had to fight against a string of penalties as well as their on-track rivals.

They finished nearly 13 seconds ahead of Anthony Seddon and Alan Corfield, in spite of a whole minute of time penalties incurred during the pitstops. Seddon and Corfield led until the final 10 minutes but sheer speed won on the day.

RACHEL HARRIS-GARDINER



MUTCH MORE SUCCESS The MEV MX150R featuring spaceframe bodywork from Stewart and Sylvia Mutch may be small but it isn't the lightest car on the Sport Specials grid, although its power-to-weight ratio is still impressive. It has "no aerodynamics whatsoever" but this does not hold it back, as demonstrated by the fact the car managed to finish third in the opener in Stewart's hands, while he went one place better in the second race. A new MEV machine is the pipeline for next year.



NEW CLASS, NEW CHALLENGES Triple Alfa Twin Spark Cup class champion Tom Hill moved up to the Power Trophy division this season, and quickly established himself as a frontrunner. As well as a hike in power with his new GT, its lack of rear doors gives extra rigidity and therefore better cornering than last season's 156. Although Hill enjoys the challenge of a wet track, finding an effective set-up for the Island circuit took some doing during Friday testing. He was perhaps helped by his engineering background as he is a graduate engineer in Formula E.



IN A LEAGUE OF ITS OWN In contrast to the MEV, Andy Hiley's self-built Chronos prototype is extremely aerodynamic, as evidenced by the impressive plumes of spray it produced on a wet track. It is a devastatingly quick car that can lap a track seven seconds faster than its nearest rivals, even when it has just undergone drastic repairs. Hiley noticed brake issues during qualifying and found that the master cylinder was broken. He had a spare cylinder that fitted, with the only repercussion "a little bit too much front brake" in the first race as he went on to take a double win.

Tilley triumphs twice on sunny day for Nissan

BRANDS HATCH
MSVR
10-11 OCTOBER


Tilley (left) and Jennings were leading GT Cup contenders

Winning honours were shared when the GT Cup came to the full Brands Hatch circuit for a quartet of races forming what is due to be the penultimate round of this year's championship. Grahame Tilley probably had the most to celebrate, with two wins and a fourth, although he also suffered a mechanical retirement.

Saturday's races packed in plenty of drama. Shamus Jennings (Porsche 911) surged from last place to win the opening sprint after a first-corner spin, while Tilley's polesitting Nissan GT-R had looked comfortable in the lead until it shed a wheel. Jim Geddie's Lamborghini, another lap-one casualty, was third behind John Dhillon (Ferrari). Fourth, reinforcing his points lead, was class-winning Ginetta driver Simon Orange.

The pitstop race was effectively decided on lap three when a sudden downpour lashed the track and Dhillon made an inspired dive into the pits from fourth place. Others were committed to at least one more slow lap on slicks, and Dhillon was ably supported by Phil Quaife, who steered the 488 home ahead of Jennings/Greg Caton, Jim and Glynn Geddie and Tilley/Will Tregurtha. Orange and co-driver Josh Jackson won their class again.

The speed of the Tilley/Nissan combination was finally rewarded in race three, which brought a comfortable win over Jim Geddie and Dhillon, as Jennings's Porsche stopped at Westfield when its gearbox broke. The Porsche missed the finale, which also lost the Lamborghini when Geddie stopped on the green-flag lap with a suspected driveshaft problem. Tilley was in command until a caution period and the pit window coincided, and Tilley left his stop a lap later than almost everyone else.

This promoted the Alan Purbrick/David Brise Saker into a temporary lead, chased by Quaife, but both were easily overhauled by the Nissan after it rejoined 15th in Tregurtha's hands. A steady run in race three secured more points for the Orange/Jackson Ginetta, but the car came to grief at Sheene Curve on the final lap of race four.

The Radical SR1 Cup's first-ever visit to the Grand Prix circuit started badly with a red flag following two lap-one incidents. James Pinkerton won the first race and finished third later, beating his

Carey's the BOSS as past master Faherty also shines

MONDELLO PARK
CKMC
10-11 OCTOBER

A tactical masterstroke amid wet weather proved key to 2013 champion Fergus Faherty triumphing in the BOSS Ireland opener at Mondello Park last weekend, while race-two victory handed Cian Carey the 2020 title.

All of the cars headed to the pitlane for rain tyres when the red flags flew on the warm-up lap to signify a wet race. But, upon the start, Faherty dived for the pitlane a second time to return his Formula 3 Dallara to slicks. His choice didn't look good early on as he lost chunks of time but, when the track eventually dried, he hauled the leaders in at three to four seconds per lap.

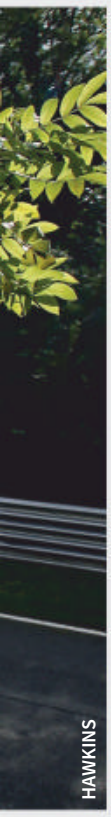

McDonnell won in hastily rebuilt Ford Fiesta ST
CHESTER

He reached the battling duo of Michael Roche and Sylvie Mullins in the closing stages. Having passed Mullins, he didn't attempt too hard to breach the stout defences of Roche, who had received a 10-second jumped-start penalty, relegating him to third and giving Faherty a superb tactical win. Carey won race two easily in his Dallara F317 from Roche and Faherty to clinch the title, with rival Paul O'Connell sidelined by a fuel-rail issue with his Dallara after qualifying.

Alex Denning drove superbly in the Fiesta ST opener to avoid the panel bashing and ease away to yet another win. In his wake, Kevin Doran and polesitter Michael Cullen really went at it for the runner-up spot, with officials harshly excluding Doran for his aggression, promoting Dave Maguire. This left Doran starting last for race two and, with the blood up, he charged to third, smashing the lap record in the process. Having severely damaged his car two weeks ago, Graham McDonnell was delighted to win in his hastily rebuilt machine.

Honours were also split in the Zetec category as James Fleming won the opener from 2019 champion William Kellett, with Kellett's father Alastair clinching the championship by completing the podium. The second race was a fraught affair, with poleman Andy Kavanagh holding on to win despite early pressure, as Michael Barrable was on a charge from eighth on the grid to finish runner-up.

There was no disputing who was the king of the Stryker competitors as Michael Cullen dominated proceedings on a wet track in the opener. As cars flew off in all directions, Cullen crossed the line well ahead of the battling duo of Adrian Deasy and Dominic Ryan. He was even more dominant in race two, breaking the class lap record to boot. The overall winner of both races was Shane Murphy from the


HAWKINS


A grid of nearly 50 Caterhams couldn't deny Jenkins a double
HAWKINS

nearest championship rivals both times. Will Hunt was a worthy race-two winner.

The 'junior' SR1s outshone their Radical Challenge cousins, which did little to justify two hours of race time over the two days. Mark Richards beat the other eight SR3s by more than a minute on Saturday, a dull encounter rescued by the next four gathering for a blanket finish.

Richards dominated again in Sunday's sprint race, but lost out to Shane Stoney in a chaotic 50-minute affair, which was interrupted by a short shower that was long enough to cause confusion.

Nearly 50 Caterhams gathered for the 7 Race Series, but each contest came down to a tussle involving five or six. Champion-elect Phil Jenkins won both and, after 40 minutes of the feature event, he was in front of Jon Mitchell, Alex Koeberle, Jake Swann Dixon and Anthony Barnes in a bunch covered by half a second.

Michael Gibbins completed his clean sweep of 2020 Sports 2000 races, achieving his 15th and 16th victories in succession in his MCR. His second win, as sunset and the curfew approached, nearly qualified as a night race.

BRIAN PHILLIPS


Faherty's gamble to change back onto slicks paid off
CHESTER

poorly supported SEAT Supercup class.

Jack Byrne took a well-earned Formula Vee win from pole, despite massive pressure from an impressive Jordan Kelly, with Philip Sheane snatching third from Gavin Buckley in the closing stages.

Another, unrelated, Jack Byrne took the opening Ginetta Junior race when early leader Karl O'Brien spun at Turn 3. Race two was a processional affair until the final lap when O'Brien piled the pressure on Byrne, getting up the inside out of the final corner, with Byrne hanging on for the double by three hundredths of a second.

Rob Barrable charged up from a lowly grid position to shadow the leading duo of his brother Peter and Geoff Richardson in the first Legends race. When they slid wide in unison at Turn 1, he drove by to a popular maiden class victory. In race two, Richardson just denied Barrable a double win on the drag race to the line, before Jamie Moylan triumphed in the finale.

LEO NULTY

WEEKEND WINNERS

BRANDS HATCH

GT CUP
Race 1 Shamus Jennings (Porsche 911 GT3)
Race 2 John Dhillon/Phil Quaife (Ferrari 488 Challenge)
Race 3 Grahame Tilley (Nissan Nismo GT-R)
Race 4 Tilley/Will Tregurtha (Nissan Nismo GT-R)

RADICAL CHALLENGE
Races 1 & 2 Mark Richards
Race 3 Shane Stoney

RADICAL SR1 CUP
Race 1 James Pinkerton
Race 2 Will Hunt

7 RACE SERIES
Races 1 & 2 Phil Jenkins (Caterham 420R)

SPORTS 2000
Races 1 & 2 Michael Gibbins (MCR S2)

TRACKDAY CHAMPIONSHIP
Luke Reade (BMW 130i)

ALLCOMERS
Races 1 & 2 Mike Jenvey (Gunn TS6)

For full results visit:
tsl-timing.com

MONDELLO PARK

FORMULA BOSS IRELAND
Race 1 Fergus Faherty (Dallara F3)
Race 2 Cian Carey (Dallara F317)

FIESTA STs
Race 1 Alex Denning
Race 2 Graham McDonnell

FIESTA ZETECS
Race 1 James Fleming
Race 2 Andy Kavanagh

SEAT SUPERCUP & IRISH STRYKERS
Races 1 & 2 Shane Murphy (SEAT)

FORMULA VEE
Jack Byrne (Sheane, below)

GINETTA JUNIOR IRELAND
Races 1 & 2 Jack Byrne

IRISH LEGENDS
Race 1 Rob Barrable
Race 2 Geoff Richardson
Race 3 Jamie Moylan


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Dunn still leads the C1 Cup standings after two podiums last weekend

Advantage Dunn in C1 thrillers

KNOCKHILL
SMRC
10 OCTOBER

Ross Dunn takes a 15-point lead into the final round of the Scottish C1 Cup championship at the end of the month after picking up a win and a second place at Knockhill last weekend.

Such has been the impact of COVID-19 on the motorsport calendar, the second round of the Scottish Motor Racing Club season was held on the weekend the club traditionally has its season finale. Rain usually features heavily on such weekends but this year the weather Gods in Fife behaved themselves, allowing for some close-knit racing among the C1s.

It was a bit too close in race one, as a three-car pile-up at McIntyres involving Tom Denham, Cameron Bryant and Elliot Lewthwaite brought out the red flags on the first lap.

Polesitter Dunn led the restarted race and had to break the C1 Knockhill lap record to keep fellow front-row starter James McCracken at bay throughout the nine-lap affair, the pair split by just 0.7 seconds at the end.

"It was tense throughout, [James] was right on my bumper the whole race," Dunn said. Race two was sensational, with McCracken coming out on top over Dunn by just 0.232s, with Dan Martin and Finlay Brunton also finishing within 0.9s of McCracken at the line.

Despite taking both Scottish Mini Cooper Cup wins, defending champion Robbie Dalgleish was made to work hard by Chad Little and 2017 title winner Mark Geraghty.

The concurrent Cooper S grid was expanded to two cars, with Adam Morrison joining Jamie Blake in the class. Morrison headed Blake in the opening race by just over a tenth of a second, while Dalgleish came out on top in the regular Cooper Cup race ahead of Little and Geraghty.

Mini Challenge regular Dalgleish then doubled up in race two, despite nearly hitting the back of Morrison's Cooper S at Duffus at the start, while Morrison again won overall.

The Scottish Ford Fiesta ST Cup grid continued to grow, with an extra two cars joining the field to take the total to 14. After admitting he "couldn't get anywhere near" race-one winner Steven Gray, David Colville ultimately maintained his championship advantage heading into the final round after inheriting victory in the second encounter.

Colville led race two until the final lap when there was a tangle with Liam McGill at the hairpin, allowing Gray to win. But both Gray and McGill were handed post-race penalties for gaining an unfair advantage, meaning Colville goes into the final weekend with a 14-point lead over Gray.

Just 20 points split the top five drivers in the Scottish Classic Sports and Saloons championship ahead of the season finale, as John Kinmond steered his Rover 3500 to both victories. Double champion Alastair Baptie is tied with Bruce Mitchell on 100 points, with Kinmond just 10 points adrift. Alasdair Coates and Mario Ferrari are also in contention for the crown.

STEPHEN BRUNSDON AND KEVIN PICK



Morrison joined Mini grid and won both races in the Cooper S class

ALL PICS: MOIR

KNOCKHILL WEEKEND WINNERS

SCOTTISH C1 CUP
Race 1 Ross Dunn
Race 2 James McCracken

SCOTTISH MINI COOPER CUP
Races 1 & 2 Adam Morrison (Cooper S)

SCOTTISH FIESTA ST CUP
Race 1 Steven Gray
Race 2 David Colville

SCOTTISH CLASSIC SPORTS AND SALOONS
Races 1 & 2 John Kinmond (Rover 3500, below)



For full results visit: speedhive.mylaps.com



Senna returns to the Suzuka pits sans front wing, watched by Prost after the two collided in the 1989 Japanese GP

CAPTURING A RICH HISTORY



BOOK REVIEW
FORMULA 1: THE OFFICIAL HISTORY

Written by eminent motorsport journalist Maurice Hamilton, *Formula 1: The Official History* acts as a gateway into 70 years of the world championship, tracking from Giuseppe Farina's victory at Silverstone in 1950 through to the 2019 Abu Dhabi Grand Prix won by Lewis Hamilton for Mercedes.

Each chapter of this book is broken down by decade, with the author picking up on major themes from the eras — the rise and fall of teams and drivers, the changing face of the championship, and the wider context of other seminal motorsport moments, such as the 1955 Le Mans 24 Hours disaster and its ramifications on racing across the globe.

It's not just what happens on track that gets attention — game-changing technical innovations are given column inches, spanning the switch from front to rear-engined cars to the 2018 introduction of the halo head-protection device.

Hamilton also includes amusing anecdotes and backstories along with the factual accounts, such as former FIA president Jean-Marie Balestre having "huffed and puffed" his way across the Silverstone track after the start of the British GP one year only to find Nicola Larini, who had started late, charging through Woodcote. As Hamilton writes, "the Osella driver lost favour with many by taking urgent avoiding action to miss the blustering president".

The book is awash with fantastic photographs courtesy of Motorsport Images. There are just short of 300 pictures, ranging from small insets to two-page spreads.

Some of the better known images have been seen countless times, such as Juan Manuel Fangio crossing the finish line to claim his most famous of wins in the 1957 German Grand Prix, or Ayrton Senna returning to the Suzuka pitlane minus the front wing of his McLaren MP4/5 as team-mate Alain Prost watches on, having collided with the Brazilian in the 1989 title-decider.

But there are some shots that are far rarer. One in particular shows Michael Schumacher standing alongside wife Corinna and manager Willi Weber, watching a replay of his 1994 title-winning collision with Damon Hill at Adelaide. Likewise, an image of a car being dragged through the mud at the 2000 British Grand Prix by a tractor is certainly not what you expect to see when flicking through the pages of an F1 book, but it all helps to embellish the championship's rich history.

The book doesn't hide from F1's darker side either: images of fatal accidents are here too, such as those suffered by Piers Courage and Roger Williamson. More recently, there is a photograph of Jules Bianchi's crash in the 2016 Japanese Grand Prix. While these images leave plenty to the reader's imagination by not including anything too graphic, it's surprising to see they've been included in a championship-sanctioned book. It would have been all too easy for an official F1 release to gloss over the horrific deaths and lives lost, but instead the book embraces the past — both good and bad.

At 272 pages, it's certainly not an in-depth analysis of each pivotal moment in F1, but nor is it trying to be — it would have been a near-impossible task to adequately describe every relevant moment.

Instead, Hamilton offers a concise yet detailed description of various moments and snapshots throughout F1's history that act as a timely reminder of just what has been achieved.

STEFAN MACKLEY

YouTube youtube.com/AUTOSPORTdotcom



Gordon Murray truly thought outside the box to beat rival Lotus when he penned the Brabham BT46B 'fan car'. In this video, Autosport takes a look at how the idea was developed, how it worked, and why it was withdrawn from the grid so soon. **Go to bit.ly/F1fancar**

AUTOSPORT PODCAST autosport.com/podcast



Lewis Hamilton scored a record-equalling 91st win, his team-mate Valtteri Bottas retired and Nico Hulkenberg was recalled to the Racing Point fold yet again. The Autosport team analyses the major talking points from last weekend's Nurburgring race in this podcast.

WHAT'S ON

INTERNATIONAL MOTORSPORT

Petit Le Mans
IMSA SportsCar
Round 9/11
Road Atlanta, USA
17 October

Bathurst 1000
Australian Supercars
Round 11/11
Mount Panorama, Australia
18 October
TV **Live** BT Sport 3, Sun 0130

World Touring Car Cup
Round 4/6
Hungaroring, Hungary
18 October
TV **Live** Eurosport 2, Sun 0800
TV **Replay** Eurosport 1, Mon 0100

DTM
Round 8/9
Zolder, Belgium
17-18 October
TV **Live** BT Sport ESPN, Sat 1215, Sun 1215

NASCAR Cup
Round 33/36
Kansas Speedway, USA
18 October
TV **Live** Premier Sports 2, Sun 1900

NASCAR Xfinity Series
Round 30/33
Kansas Speedway, USA
17 October

NASCAR Truck Series
Round 19/22
Kansas Speedway, USA
17 October

Brazilian Stock Cars
Round 5/8
Velo Citta, Brazil
17-18 October

World Rallycross
Round 4/6
Barcelona, Spain
17-18 October

TV **Live** Free Sports, Sat 1500, Sun 1400, BT Sport ESPN, Sat 1500

Super Formula
Round 3/7
Sugo, Japan
18 October
Livestream on Motorsport.tv, Sun 0600

Formula Regional European
Round 5/8
Monza, Italy
17-18 October
Livestream on Motorsport.tv, Sat 1310, Sun 1346, 1955

Euroformula Open
Round 6/8
Spa, Belgium
17-18 October

International GT Open
Round 5/6
Spa, Belgium
17-18 October

MotoGP
Round 10/14
Motorland Aragon, Spain
18 October
TV **Live** BT Sport 2, Sun 1230
TV **Highlights** BT Sport 3, Sun 1900



UK MOTORSPORT

Oulton Park BRSCC
17 October
Fun Cup, ST-XR Challenge, VW GTIs

Donington Park BRSCC
17-18 October
Touring Car Trophy, TCR UK, Caterham Academy, Caterham Roadsports, Caterham 270Rs, Caterham 310Rs, Caterham Sevens, VW Cup, BMW Compact Cup, Civic Cup, Clubsport Trophy, Fiesta Junior

Snetterton 750MC
17-18 October
Bikesports, BMW Car Club, Club Enduro, F1000, 750 Formula, Historic 750 Formula, Hot Hatch, Roadsports, Sports 1000

Silverstone HSCC*
17-18 October
Historic Roadsports, '70s Roadsports, Historic Touring Cars, Guards Trophy, Classic F3, Classic FF2000, Historic F2, Historic Formula Junior, Historic FF2000, Classic Clubmans

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TOP FIVE

UNSUNG NURBURGRING F1 DRIVES



With the Nurburgring returning to the Formula 1 calendar for the Eifel Grand Prix last weekend, it's time to recall the best lesser-known drives at the 'Green Hell' that didn't result in a win

JAMES NEWBOLD

ALL PHOTOGRAPHY motorsport IMAGES

5 TAKUMA SATO, 2004

A career-best second in qualifying meant Sato led in his high-flying BAR 006 after polesitter Michael Schumacher pitted his Ferrari. After his third stop, Sato resumed in third just behind the two-stopping Rubens Barrichello and wasted no time in attacking at Turn 1. Caught unawares, the Brazilian turned in and broke Sato's front wing. Shortly after pitting for a replacement and rejoining in fifth, Sato's engine cried enough.



4 CARLOS PACE, 1973

The Surtees squad was hardly a top-liner, and Pace qualified his TS14A 11th, but he climbed to a surprise fifth as Niki Lauda and Peter Revson both crashed. Pace then headed a queue stuck behind Carlos Reutemann – struggling with a slow puncture – for six laps until the DFV in the Argentinian's Brabham blew, moving Pace up to fourth. There he stayed to give Surtees its best result of the year, setting a lap record too.



3 KARL KLING, 1954

On only his third world championship start, 43-year-old Kling was faster than his mighty Mercedes W196 team-mate Juan Manuel Fangio. From the back of the grid after losing a wheel in qualifying, and despite a fuel leak that required an extra pitstop, Kling remarkably managed to lead the race. Fourth – and fastest lap – was the eventual result for Kling as the rear-axle mounting broke, while Fangio won.



2 CLIFF ALLISON, 1958

Last-starting Allison found an early affinity with his Lotus 16. He was up to eighth by the end of lap one and into fourth on lap four as Stirling Moss retired. After Peter Collins's fatal crash, Allison hung on to the tail of Tony Brooks in their battle for victory until a holed radiator on lap 13 put paid to his chances. Still, his performance proved strong enough for him to be signed by Ferrari for the following season.



1 MIKA HAKKINEN, 1997

Hakkinen was still in search of his first win at the 1997 Luxembourg GP, but the McLaren MP4/12 driver would start from a maiden pole position. His race lead was never threatened, either by team-mate David Coulthard or eventual winner Jacques Villeneuve's Williams. After Coulthard's Mercedes engine blew, Hakkinen was 17s clear when his own V10 followed suit one lap later, ending his 29th birthday on a sour note.




2
5

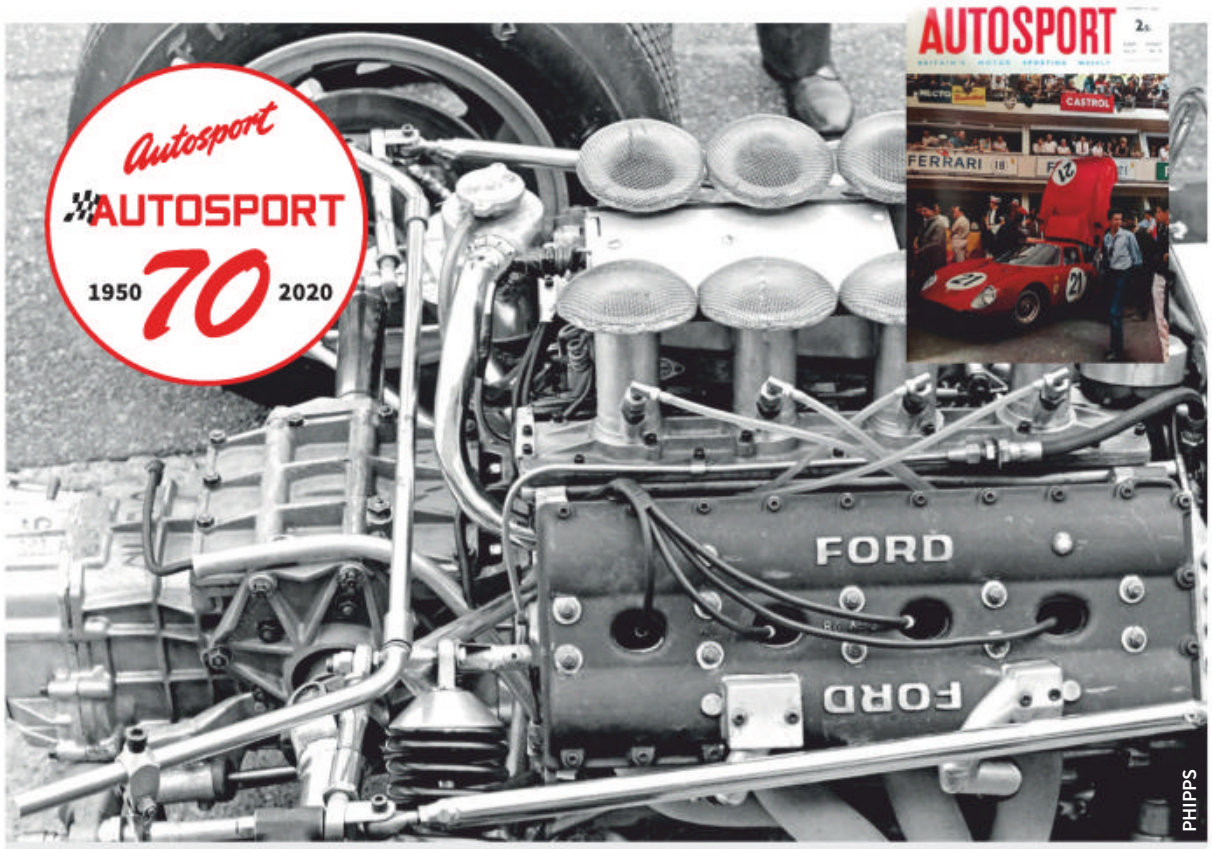


FROM THE ARCHIVE

Against the impressive backdrop of the Eifel topography and forests, Richie Ginther (BRM P57) leads Bruce McLaren (Cooper-Climax T66) and Graham Hill (BRM P57) during the 1963 German Grand Prix at the Nurburgring. Ginther finished the 15-lap race in third place, behind Jim Clark (Lotus-Climax 25), who'd started from pole but was hampered by a misfire, and John Surtees (Ferrari 156), who took his maiden grand prix victory. Neither McLaren nor Hill made the finish: the Kiwi crashed out when his steering broke, and the Briton retired with gearbox failure.

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The birth of Formula 1's greatest engine

15 October 1965

'Ford for Formula 1' was the lead headline in Pit & Paddock this week in 1965. After much speculation, Ford confirmed it would finance a series of racing engines for Team Lotus, to be built by Cosworth Engineering. "The man behind the scheme is Walter Hayes, Ford of Dagenham's director of public affairs, who has persuaded his board that such a venture must lead to immense prestige for Ford," said the story.

Autosport described the move as "a major step", and added: "The decision to enter F1 racing in conjunction with Team Lotus is not only a genuine desire by certain enthusiastic gentlemen, but part and parcel of a long-term scheme to project the Ford image in every acceptable phase of motorsporting activity."

Interestingly, Autosport suggested that among the requirements from Lotus boss Colin Chapman was that the F1 engine would "have at least 12 cylinders". But the result of the project was, of course, the Cosworth DFV V8.

The DFV would win first time out in the back of Jim Clark's Lotus 49 in the 1967 Dutch Grand Prix and would score 155 world championship race wins before *finally* being made obsolete by the first turbo era of the 1980s.

There was not a lot of international motorsport this week 55 years ago, but Autosport did report on the 'Armstrong 500', the early days of what we now call the Bathurst 1000. The privateer Ford Cortina GT500 of Midge Bosworth and Barry Seton (father of later Aussie tin-top star Glenn) won against factory opposition from Ford and BMC.

As if to encourage Ford further in motorsport, Autosport ran a cover of the Ferrari 250LM that had won against the big V8s at the Le Mans 24 Hours, four months earlier!



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