



# 2015 SEASON REVIEW

- ★ Mighty Max Verstappen
- ★ Ferrari fight back
- ★ Power unit power play



## The history of Formula 1

First in a 12-part series

## New Brit Jolyon Palmer

Why he's the business



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are: Urban 34.9 (8.1); Extra Urban 55.4 (5.1); Combined 44.8 (6.3). The official CO<sub>2</sub> Fuel consumption and CO<sub>2</sub> may vary with driving styles, road conditions and other factors.





COVER STORIES



64

92

86

42



42 **LEWIS V SEB** An era-defining battle is in the offing as the two square up



64 **SEASON REVIEW** A race-by-race look at the stories that defined 2015



86 **JOLYON PALMER** Stepping up to a race seat for his first season in F1



92 **HISTORY OF F1** Looking back at the sport's humble and chaotic origins

FIRST SECTOR: THE REGULARS

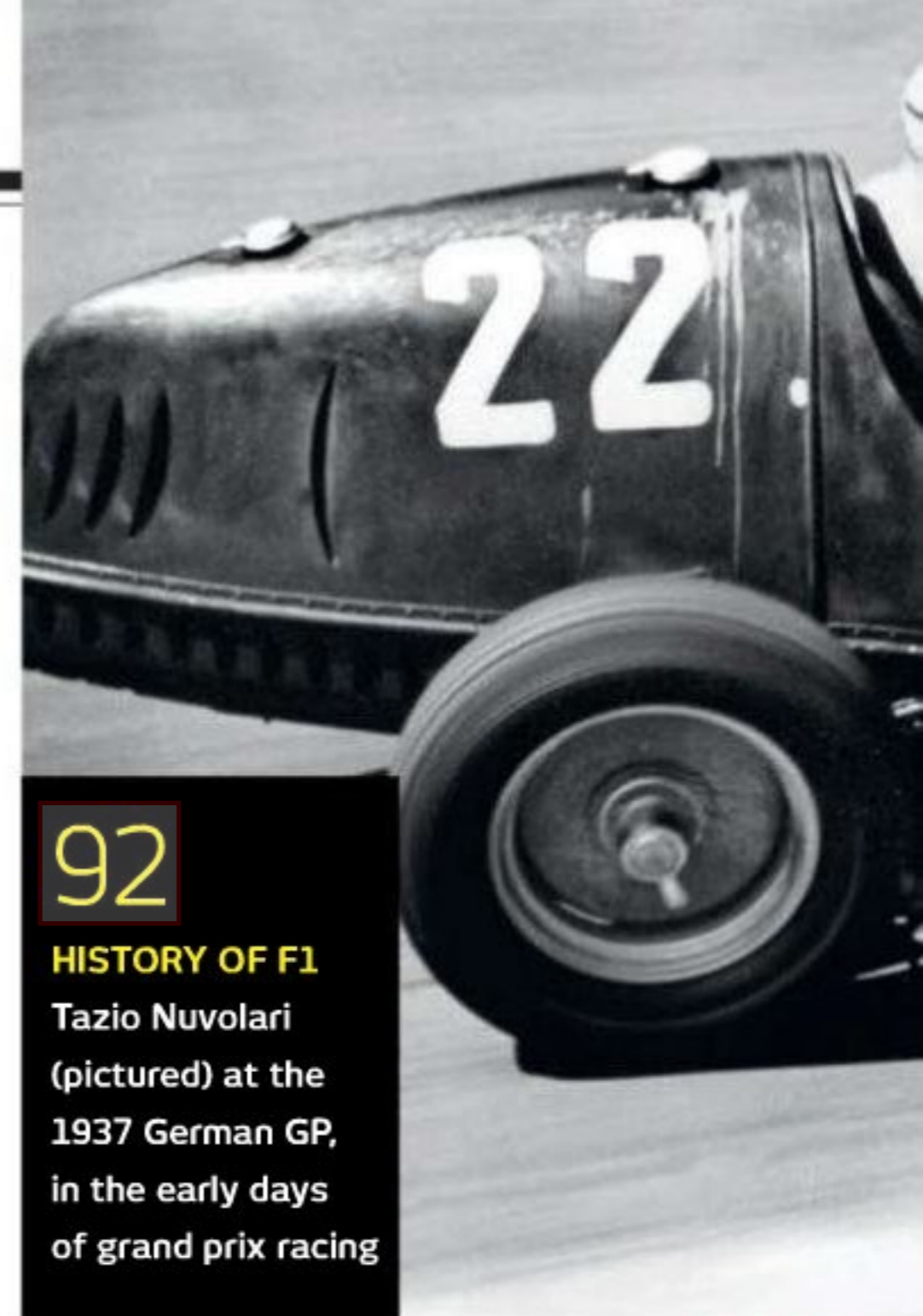
- 10 **IGNITION** RENAULT RETURN TO RESCUE TEAM ENSTONE
- 12 **PARADES** FANTASTIC PHOTOS OF THE SEASON FINALE
- 18 **F1 INSIDER** NEWS, OPINION AND ANALYSIS
- 32 **INSIDE TECH** F1 PITSTOPS EXPLAINED
- 34 **PETER WINDSOR** ONLY ONE TITLE REALLY MATTERS
- 37 **DAMON HILL** WHY IT'S SO HARD TO STAND OUT IN F1
- 39 **DIETER RENCKEN** McLAREN MUST FOCUS TO SUCCEED
- 40 **NOW THAT WAS A CAR** THE McLAREN MP4/5B
- 91 **SUBSCRIBE AND GET FREE SOUNDMAGIC HEADPHONES**

SECOND SECTOR: THE FEATURES

- 42 **SILVER VERSUS SCARLET**  
It's the clash of the titans as Lewis Hamilton and Sebastian Vettel prepare to do battle in equally matched machinery
- 54 **LEWIS JOINS THE LEGENDS**  
F1's five surviving British world champions give their opinion on the world's newest triple champ, Lewis Hamilton
- 58 **CRASH, BANG, WALLET!**  
We look at the mishaps to have befallen F1 machinery over 2015 – and the eye-watering costs of repairing the damage
- 64 **F1 RACING'S 2015 SEASON REVIEW**  
The year was dominated by Lewis as he stormed his way to a decisive third title. But that wasn't the only story of note...
- 78 **WAFFLES WITH STOFFEL**  
We catch up over breakfast with GP2 champion Stoffel Vandoorne, McLaren's new test and reserve driver
- 80 **FELIPE NASR ANSWERS YOUR QUESTIONS**  
The young Brazilian on an upbringing steeped in motorsport, and why two seasons at Sauber was always the plan
- 86 **ENSTONE'S NEWEST RECRUIT**  
As Lotus prepare for the Renault takeover, we meet test driver Jolyon Palmer who graduates to a race seat for 2016
- 92 **THE HISTORY OF F1: PART 1**  
The conception of the sport in the pre-war era

THIRD SECTOR: FINISHING STRAIGHT

- 104 **BRAZILIAN GP DEBRIEF** ROSBERG IS RESURGENT
- 108 **ABU DHABI GP DEBRIEF** SEASON FINALE IN THE DESERT
- 112 **INBOX** YOUR OPINIONS ON ALL THINGS F1
- 114 **MURRAY WALKER** OUR SPORT ON THE SILVER SCREEN



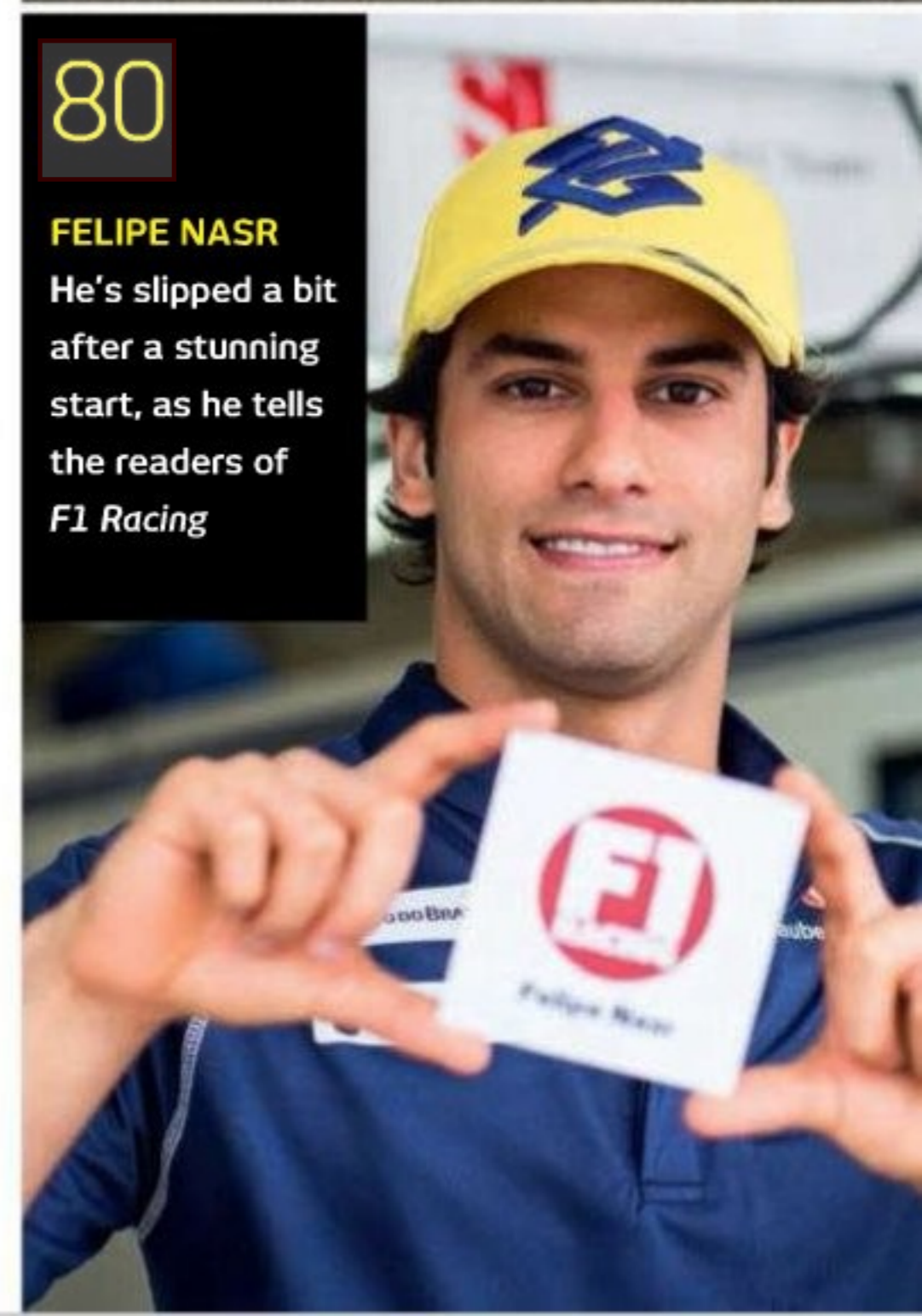
92

**HISTORY OF F1**  
Tazio Nuvolari (pictured) at the 1937 German GP, in the early days of grand prix racing



64

**SEASON REVIEW**  
We take a look at the highs and lows from another exciting season of F1



80

**FELIPE NASR**  
He's slipped a bit after a stunning start, as he tells the readers of F1 Racing





58

**WEAR AND TEAR**

Crunched carbon and mangled metal, ahoy. Those of a nervous disposition look away now...



42

**KING LEWIS III**

Peter Windsor evaluates the triple champ's chances against Ferrari's Seb Vettel in 2016

86

**JOLYON PALMER**

Renault return, and new Brit on the grid Jolyon Palmer will be moving into a full-time race seat





# A warm welcome back for Renault



Follow Anthony on Twitter: @Rowlinson\_F1

**You might not know** the name Paul Seaby, but you will almost certainly be familiar with his presence at the centre of one of the most famous F1 images. Remember that shot of a Benetton mechanic wreathed in sheets of orange flame? It's Seaby in the eye of the firestorm – a terrifying moment captured by *F1 Racing* principal photographer

Steven Tee, as Jos Verstappen's car lit up during a refuelling malfunction on lap 15 of the 1994 German GP.

'Seabs' – singed but unhurt in the blaze and nowadays team manager of the same squad (in the guise of Lotus F1) – is one of those guys who are part of the very fabric of F1. And there are plenty of his ilk at the Enstone operation known variously over the years as Benetton, Benetton-Renault, Renault, Lotus Renault and Team Lotus. The likes of Seabs, Alan Permane (trackside ops director), and ex-Enstone émigrés such as Jonathan Wheatley and Paul Monaghan at Red Bull, Pat Symonds and Steve Nielsen at Williams, Eric Boullier at McLaren, James Allison at Ferrari and others too numerous to mention, are the grit behind the glamour. It's no coincidence that many of the key personnel peppered throughout the paddock are 'Team Enstone' graduates. This is a classic zero-nonsense race team, high on spirit, low on fuss, entirely focused on the job at hand: going racing. Even in a year as tough as 2015 has been for them, with hand-to-mouth funding

and a reduced staff, they were still able to pull off a deserved podium in Spa: step forward Romain Grosjean for one of the most brilliant drives of the season.

So it's with no little delight that we report that this embattled squad look *at last* to have received the lifeline they so thoroughly merit, in the shape of a takeover by Renault and the promise of a full 'works' F1 entry for 2016 (see *Insider*, p20). A team with this much racing DNA in their veins need to be in the thick of the action (see also McLaren) and with Renault backing, there's every prospect they will return to the sharp end soon.

Why are we so confident? Well, Team Enstone have always punched above their weight, whether in winning back-to-back title doubles in 2005-06 with Fernando Alonso, or delivering smart-strategy wins with Kimi Räikkönen in 2012 (Abu Dhabi) and 2013 (Australia). *They know how to win* and when teams like this are healthy, so is Formula 1. As Seabs tweeted on the day the Renault takeover was announced: "I've learnt that if you needed a team to stick together through thick and thin, I have it. Every last one I would take into battle and feel confident they would stick with me. Enstone and Renault are back together. We will be strong again."

*Chapeau*, Renault, for doing the right thing. And to all at Enstone: *bonne chance*.

Gosh. It's almost Christmas. So before you log off for the year, may we draw [www.themagazineshop.com](http://www.themagazineshop.com) to your attention? It's here that you'll find all the best subscription offers for *F1 Racing* and our sister titles. There's no better Christmas gift!



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### THE TEAM

Group Editor Anthony Rowlinson  
Group Managing Editor Stewart Williams  
Associate Editor James Roberts  
Executive Editor Stuart Codling  
Chief Sub-Editor Vanessa Longworth  
Art Editor Frank Foster  
Designer Jack Woolrich  
Principal Photographer Steven Tee  
Office Manager Joanne Grove  
Editorial Tel +44 (0)20 8267 5806

### ADVERTISING

Global Partnerships Director Chris Gowland  
Partnerships Manager LeAnne Foley  
UK Sales Manager Ben Fullick  
Advertising tel +44 (0)20 8267 5179/5916

### MANAGEMENT

Haymarket Specialist Media Group Director Tim Bulley

### LICENSING

Licensing Director Alastair Lewis  
Licensing Managers Lisa Vernall (Asia) Ian Porter (ROW)

### CONTRIBUTORS

Columnists Peter Windsor Dieter Rencken Damon Hill Murray Walker  
Technical Consultant Pat Symonds  
Photo Agency LAT Photographic

### PRODUCTION

Production & Group Publishing Manager Sunita Davies

### SUBSCRIPTIONS

Subscriptions Marketing Executive Maria-Luisa Fernandez

### PUBLISHING

Group Publisher Stuart Williams

### Missed an issue?

Back issues hotline: 08456 777 818

Email [F1racing@servicehelpline.co.uk](mailto:F1racing@servicehelpline.co.uk)  
Fax 01795 414 555  
Customer Hotline 0844 848 8826

## Contributors



### Glenn Dunbar

Getting to grips with yet another F1 Brit

With the ink still wet on Jolyon Palmer's race seat contract for 2016, Glenn went to snap the man who'll be the newest Brit on the grid in Brazil (p86)



### Peter Windsor

Eagerly anticipating next season's biggest battle

Our respected columnist believes an era of Lewis and Seb duking it out is on the cards and he explains why with his usual brilliant analysis on page 42



### Stuart Codling

Our executive ed goes all 1930s on us this month

Codders kicks off with the first in his 12-part series on the history of F1, by looking back to the birth of the sport in the post-war years (p92)



### Perou

The man in charge of snapping our cover star

Lewis's third title was ably captured by the inimitable Perou, whose new photobook, *coulrophobia*, is available now. For details, visit [www.perou.co.uk](http://www.perou.co.uk)



Thanks to Deborah Armstrong, Matt Bishop, Stephen Carpenter, Tim Clark, Jamie Coley, Steve Cooper, Nicki Dance, Russell Day, Fiona Fallon, Will Hings, Sivia Hoffer, Darren Jones, Bradley Lord, Adrian Myers, Mr Perou, Marleen Seilheimer, Andy Stobart, Jason Swales, Will Taylor-Medhurst, Steven Tee, Martin Turner, Fabiana Valenti, Tabatha Valls Halling

Editorial director Mark Payton  
Strategy and planning director Bob McDowell  
Managing director David Prasher  
Chairman and managing director Kevin Costello

*F1 Racing* is published monthly in Australia, Germany, Greece, Hong Kong, India, Indonesia, Malaysia, Mexico, Middle East, Philippines, Poland, South Africa, UK, USA, Formula One, Formula 1 and F1 (trademarks of Formula One Licensing BV, a Formula One Group company) are used under licence.

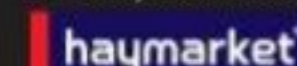
Circulation queries Frontline Ltd, Midgate House, Midgate, Peterborough, Cambridgeshire, PE1 1TN. Tel: +44 (0)1733 555161. ISSN 13614487. EAN 07713614480012

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*F1 Racing Subscriptions* PO Box 326, Sittingbourne, Kent ME9 8FA. Tel: 0844 848 8826. Fax: 01795 414 555. Overseas: +44 (0)1795 592 990. Email [F1racing@servicehelpline.co.uk](mailto:F1racing@servicehelpline.co.uk)

*F1 Racing* (ISSN number 74597X) is published monthly by Haymarket Media Group, Teddington Studios, Broom Road, Teddington TW11 9BE, United Kingdom. Airfreight and mailing in the USA by agent named Air Business Ltd, c/o Worldnet Shipping Inc., 156-15, 146th Avenue, 2nd Floor, Jamaica, NY 11434, USA. Periodicals postage paid at Jamaica NY 11431. Subscription records are maintained at Haymarket Media Group, Bridge House, 69 London Road, Twickenham, TW1 3SP.

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# Parade

**Room with a view** The Yas Viceroy Hotel, which straddles the Yas Marina circuit, is one of the most spectacular places in the world to watch F1. The bridge over the track is the bar, but Kimi Räikkönen (pictured) must finish the weekend before he and his fellow racers can unwind after a gruelling season

**Where** Yas Marina, Abu Dhabi **When** 2.39pm, Saturday 28 November 2015

**Photographer** Steven Tee/LAT

**Details** Canon EOS-1DX, 8-15mm Fisheye lens, 1/1000th at F5.6













# Parade

**You see, I can do it** Nico Rosberg climbs from his Mercedes after his third consecutive win from pole ahead of triple world champion team-mate Lewis Hamilton. So what chance of him giving Hamilton a much closer fight for the 2016 title when they do battle again in less than 100 days?

**Where** Yas Marina, Abu Dhabi **When** 7.45pm, Sunday 29 November 2015

**Photographer** Vladimir Rys

**Details** Canon EOS-1DX, 200mm lens, 1/800th at F2











# Parade

**Lights, camera, action** Under the floodlit glare of the Yas Marina circuit, Sebastian Vettel brings to a close his first year as a Ferrari driver. And what a year he's had. When he won the race in Sepang, he gave the Scuderia their first win since the 2013 Spanish Grand Prix – and went on to take two further victories in Hungary and Singapore.

**Where** Yas Marina, Abu Dhabi **When** 6.15pm, Sunday 29 November 2015

**Photographer** Lorenzo Bellanca **Details** Canon EOS-1DX, 85mm lens, 1/6th at F10







RENAULT RETURN 20



BBC F1 COVERAGE 24



McLAREN-HONDA 26

# F1 INSIDER

NEWS ■ OPINION ■ ANALYSIS

## NEWS

### Alonso won't rule out a sabbatical

The double champion might take a year out if McLaren's 2016 car isn't up to scratch – according to his own boss

**McLaren chairman Ron Dennis** has raised the prospect of Fernando Alonso taking a year away from Formula 1 in 2016. Dennis made the comments during a news conference at the season-ending Abu Dhabi Grand Prix, when asked whether there was any possibility Alonso might not race next year if Honda's engine remains seriously uncompetitive.

The question arose from the events of the Japanese GP, after which Alonso said he "didn't know" if he would race for McLaren next season, but later put out a series of Tweets, ending with: "Nobody should be under any doubt I have three years with McLaren and will end my career with this team, hopefully winning everything."

The fact that Alonso did not specify *which* three years left open the possibility of a year off. This was pointed out to Dennis, who replied: "He will definitely finish his career in a McLaren. I have an open mind to anything."

"Some of the ideas have involved those sorts of considerations, sabbatical years, etc, but at this moment in time I would say we believe we know where we'll be and we navigated a difficult weekend in respect of our drivers."

"I took a high level of flak out of that weekend. It was a challenge to navigate through it."







Ron Dennis: "We have a number of driver options... When we take the decision we will take it together"

"We have a number of driver options. We have two of the best drivers in the world in our cars. When we have to take the decision, we will take it together and at this moment our drivers next year are Fernando and Jenson Button."

The mention of a year off, and the equivocal tone, caused an inevitable storm – and huge

consternation within McLaren, where senior team members wondered what on earth Dennis was playing at. The way Alonso responded to the issue being raised hardly dampened down speculation either. He described Dennis's comments as "weird", and said it was his "intention" to race in 2016. But he also admitted that he and Dennis had discussed what he described as a "crazy" idea "three or four months ago" and when invited to completely rule out the idea of a year off, he refused.

Confusing the matter further, the following day Alonso absolutely ruled it out, saying: "I will be racing, that is 100 per cent. It's very clear."

Dennis, meanwhile, also engaged reverse gear. On Sunday in Abu Dhabi, he gave a BBC TV interview in which he blamed the media for "spinning" his comments, and claimed he had said things in the news conference that he had not – namely that other drivers had taken sabbaticals, and that he had finished his answer by saying "there is no question that Fernando and Jenson are our drivers for next year".

So what was going on? By character, the McLaren chairman is no strategist, but rather a tactical opportunist. He must have seen a chance to put the idea out there, and the only reason to do that could be that he thinks it is a possibility, however distant. Plus Dennis never likes to appear as if he is not in control. So the most likely explanation is that Alonso and Dennis *did* discuss the idea of a sabbatical given that Alonso admitted it when asked directly.

So when did this take place? In Abu Dhabi, Alonso said: "All our intention and our minds are into next year and we feel now much more positive than three or four months ago with the recent pace of the car. So it is something we didn't discuss for four or five months already."

That suggests mid-summer – an awfully long time ago for Dennis to be bringing it up now. So



Alonso: "Nobody should be under any doubt I have three years with McLaren and will end my career with this team"

## NEWS DIGEST

### The month's big stories at a glance



4.11.15 Williams test driver Susie Wolff announces her retirement from motor racing

- 10.11.15 Lewis Hamilton is involved in a minor road accident in Monaco
- 11.11.15 State funding cuts cast doubt over future of the Circuit of The Americas
- 17.11.15 TAG Heuer move to Red Bull, ending their 30-year partnership with McLaren
- 19.11.15 Force India sign Mexican Alfonso Celis as 2016 development driver
- 19.11.15 Williams drop appeal against Felipe Massa's exclusion from Brazilian GP
- 29.11.15 FIA closes loopholes in aero parts and testing rules
- 4.12.15 Red Bull confirm that they will run Tag Heuer-branded Renault engines in 2016

they must have discussed it more recently than that. And the suspicion has to be that was at the Japanese Grand Prix.

For a start, that was the last race Dennis attended before Abu Dhabi. Furthermore, it was a weekend when there was speculation swirling about Alonso's future – which the driver himself only heightened with his post-race comments.

Could Alonso have raised the idea with Dennis, then said something along the lines of: "I'm still committed to the McLaren-Honda project, but I can't face another year of this. If the car's still uncompetitive in 2016, why don't we delay the final two years of my contract until 2017 and 2018 instead?"

That may never come out, of course. But if nothing else, McLaren's pre-season testing programme is now guaranteed even more attention than it would already have received.





Vitaly Petrov in the Renault R30 in 2010 – Renault's last season in F1 as a works team

**NEWS**

# Renault confirm full factory return to F1

'Team Enstone' comes back under Renault ownership once again in what is believed to be a nine-year commitment to the sport

After six months of negotiations, which were very nearly derailed at the last minute during wrangling with Formula 1 ringmaster Bernie Ecclestone, Renault have finally confirmed their buyout of the troubled Lotus team. The terms of the deal were being finalised as this issue of *F1 Racing* went to press.

"Renault had two options: to come back at 100 per cent, or to leave," said Renault CEO Carlos Ghosn. "I have decided that Renault will be in F1, starting in 2016. The details supplied by F1's main stakeholders gave us the confidence to accept this new challenge. Our ambition is to win – even if it will take some time."

Ghosn is known both for his ruthless pragmatism and his lack of sentiment for F1. So what led him to decide to return? When he sold the team in 2010, Ghosn believed that remaining in F1 as an engine supplier would provide a useful profit centre.

What actually happened was that of the four teams supplied by Renault, two (Caterham and Lotus) could not afford to pay for the engines, while a third (Red Bull) had an engine-naming deal with Infiniti, now part of the Renault group following a merger with Nissan, so in effect Renault were paying themselves. The shortfall came from Renault's marketing budget. Mercedes, meanwhile, acquired a team, became a constructor, and therefore raked in a share of F1's commercial revenues.

Renault tacitly admitted as much: "As a full team, Renault will take maximum benefit from its victories. Payback as an engine supplier proved to be limited. The return on the investment necessitated by the new engine regulations and the return in terms of image were low."

It is understood that the final hurdle, cleared during the Abu Dhabi weekend, was the matter of Renault's share of F1's commercial revenues and their entitlement to historic payments. Renault are believed to have committed to F1 for nine years – but with much work to do on the engine side, and a team that has suffered considerable brain drain over the past two years, can they achieve their aim of winning again?

**QUIZ**



## F1 Mastermind

Your chosen specialised subject: the world's greatest sport



**CONNECTIONS**

- |  |   |   |  |
|--|---|---|--|
| <p><b>Q1</b> Which senior engineer connects the Williams, McLaren and Mercedes teams?</p> <p><b>Q2</b> Which driver connects the Mercedes, McLaren and Manor teams?</p> <p><b>Q3</b> Which designer connects the Lotus, Eagle and BRM teams?</p> <p><b>Q4</b> Which commentator connects Radio 5 Live and Sky Sports F1?</p> | <p><b>Q5</b> Which fly-fishing enthusiast connects the Mercedes, Ferrari, Beatrice-Haas and Williams teams?</p> <p><b>Q6</b> Which engineer connects the Williams, Beatrice-Haas and McLaren teams?</p> <p><b>Q7</b> What specific item of research hardware connects the Ferrari, Force India and McLaren teams?</p> | <p><b>Q8</b> Which driver connects the McLaren, Theodore, Ferrari and Renault teams?</p> <p><b>Q9</b> Which circuit designer connects Zolder, Jarama and Suzuka?</p> <p><b>Q10</b> What connects Josef Peters, Graham McRae and Marco Apicella?</p> <p><b>Q11</b> Which world champion connects the Lotus, Ferrari and Honda teams... as well as BRM?</p> | <p><b>Q12</b> Which driver connects the Jordan, Minardi, McLaren and Brabham teams?</p> <p><b>Q13</b> Which driver connects the Jaguar and Caterham teams?</p> <p><b>Q14</b> Which factory connects Caterham, Super Aguri and Arrows?</p> <p><b>Q15</b> Which designer connects the March and McLaren teams, and Concorde?</p> |
|--|---|---|--|

**1** Paddy Lowe **2** Lewis Hamilton **3** Len Terry **4** David Croft **5** Ross Brawn **6** Neil Oatley **7** Toyota windtunnel **8** Patrick Tambay **9** John Hugenholtz **10** Retired on first lap of sole GP **11** John Surtees **12** Andrea de Cesaris **13** André Lotterer **14** The Leafield Technical Centre **15** Robin Herd



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**NEWS**

# Budget engine proposal blown out of the water

The idea made Jean Todt and Bernie Ecclestone unlikely allies, but their bid to curb the power of the manufacturers has failed

**Mercedes and Ferrari** have won the first stage of their battle with Bernie Ecclestone and Jean Todt over engine supply. The F1 bosses had wanted a cheaper, alternative engine to run alongside the turbo hybrids in 2017, but the plan was rejected at a meeting of the F1 Commission before the Abu Dhabi GP.

F1's car manufacturers have, however, agreed to look into ways of resolving ongoing concerns about some aspects of the hybrid engines. These will be: a guarantee of supply to teams; the need to reduce the cost of engines; simplification of specification; and more noise.

The manufacturers have undertaken to "present a proposal by 15 January 2016 that will seek to provide solutions to the above concerns", the FIA said in a statement.

The rejection of the alternative engine plan will be a relief to many in F1. Even those who were publicly backing the idea conceded that

**Ecclestone and Todt joined forces to push through budget engines, but their plans have been rejected by the F1 Commission**

running two different engines to an equivalency formula would have been "a disaster".

Interestingly, Todt and Ecclestone had joined forces on the idea for very different reasons.

Todt, who backs the hybrid engines and was instrumental in their introduction, was using it as leverage against the manufacturers to get them to reduce the cost of customer engines. Ecclestone opposes hybrids but insiders say he was motivated more by a desire to reduce the power of the engine manufacturers – and in particular of Ferrari president Sergio Marchionne and Mercedes F1 boss Toto Wolff.

Despite setting up the current governance structure, including the relatively new Strategy Group, Ecclestone has found it difficult to push his ideas through. This underlines the power of Mercedes and Ferrari within F1 at the moment.

The question now is how the manufacturers will simplify current engines without removing the MGU-H, the power-unit component that is key to the current efficiency formula and which is the main development route of relevance to road cars.

**F1 BANTER**

## PASSNOTES

Your essential F1 briefing  
#No 22 Secrecy



**Name** Secrecy  
**Age** Shhh!  
**Appearance**  
It wears its nature like a veritable cloak of invisibility

**Pssst...**

I am not!

**Keep it down. We're talking about secrets.**

Secrets? Sounds like the name of a provincial nightclub. Or that garden centre with the café that charges the thick end of six quid for coffee and a slice of cake.

**Enough of your bourgeois Home Counties preoccupations – this could be a matter of life and death...**

I bet it isn't.

**You're right. It's not.**

Well I'm glad we got that settled. So, what news?

**From now on, teams' tyre choices for each grand prix will remain a secret until two weeks before each race.**

Ye gods! Is this that new batch of tyre regulations? The one where I read two paragraphs and then had to lie down in a darkened room for an hour?

**The very same. Pirelli are introducing a fifth dry-weather compound, the 'ultra-soft', and they will select three of them for each weekend rather than the current two. The teams then nominate which two of the three they intend to use – not necessarily making the same choice for both drivers – and communicate that choice to the FIA, who tell Pirelli, so they know how many tyres to produce.**

I can see your mouth moving, but all I can hear is: "Blah blah blah blah blah."

**And if a team misses their deadline, the FIA will choose for them.**

I'm past caring. Can't we play a game with simpler rules? Agricola? Stratego? Nude charades?

**If anything I'd say this was more like rock, paper, scissors.**

Don't you mean scissors, paper, stone?

**You say tomato, I say tomato...**

Let's call the whole thing off!

**Do say** Get a grip

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## NEW PEUGEOT 308 GTi

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**COLUMN**

# MOTOR MOUTH

What we're talking about at F1 Racing Towers

## ON THE EDGE OF EUROPE

The confirmation of the 2016 Formula 1 calendar means that the European Grand Prix in Azerbaijan *should* go ahead, although there has been some uncertainty of late. Not over whether it's actually in Europe – study your geography textbooks for that one – but whether, as a nation whose wealth is built on oil exports, Azerbaijan would actually want the expense of holding a grand prix now that the black stuff is trading for 60 per cent less than it used to.

I visited Baku in 2014 to cover a sportscar race, so I can predict what you'll be reading about on social media in the run-up to the grand prix. There will be plenty of complaints about the cost and faff of securing a visa. Someone will be condescending about the big flag. Above all, media, drivers and engineers alike will harp on about the wind. This is a particularly windy city. At least no one will guffaw, though, if Nico Rosberg blames any on-track mishaps on a stray gust here...

**Baku: get ready for snark about its very big flag**



**Tyres: top-secret test of Pirelli's new compound**

## PIRELLI'S (SUPER) SOFT SELL

We'd love to tell you about the 12-hour tyre test held in Abu Dhabi the Tuesday after the race, but it took place under conditions of utmost secrecy. The media were forbidden, adding a delicious note of intrigue – although you have to wonder what the point of the blackout was. F1 tyres, after all, are black and round, and the chemical differences between the compounds are as invisible to the naked eye as they are to a high-definition camera. That's why they're marked with different colours on the sidewalls.

Pirelli's main aim was to try "several different potential variations" of the new ultra-soft compound. Since the FIA World Motor Sport Council rubber-stamped proposals for Pirelli to bring three rather than two different compounds to each race, giving teams a freer hand, it's unlikely Pirelli will be out of the spotlight for long.

*Stuart Codling*

**NEWS**

# BBC cuts could drive Formula 1 off terrestrial TV

Embattled corporation has to make savings, and the sports broadcasting budget will be cut

The future of BBC F1 coverage is in doubt after the corporation was forced by the government to make £150m of savings.

The BBC want to save £50m of that amount from their sports rights budget, putting F1 in the firing line. Bernie Ecclestone confirmed the BBC had approached him to renegotiate their deal, which runs to the end of 2018, under which they broadcast around half the races live and the rest as highlights.

"We had a chat with them," Ecclestone said. "What they would like to do is not spend as much money. They want to know if they can schedule it in different ways or pay a bit less now. They don't have a lot of choice because they've got a contract with us. They're there for another three years. Beyond then, I've no idea. Definitely we want them to carry on."

Ecclestone is now trying to resolve the situation. This could mean a cut-price deal for the BBC, with highlights retained but a reduced number of live races. Or it could mean a switch of free-to-air coverage to another channel, such as ITV or Channel Four.

Equally, Ecclestone could force the BBC to stick to their contract, playing for time as he works on the best combination of financial income and audience figures. But he has to weigh the higher audiences the BBC commands against the higher fee he could negotiate with another broadcaster.

There are suggestions that Sky, who show all the races live in a split deal with the BBC, might pay more money if they could show more races exclusively live. It's also believed that BT may bid to cover Formula 1 from 2019, following their success in winning other high-profile sporting events from Sky.

**The BBC and Ecclestone are looking at ways to maintain coverage and cut costs**



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NEWS

# Honda find solution to performance woes

After a humbling return in 2015 – and outright rancour with their McLaren partners – Honda claim to have found a way forwards

**Honda believe** they have found a technical solution that will enable them to make a significant leap forward in 2016 after a disastrous return to Formula 1. Works team McLaren have lagged about 2.5s off the pace for much of the season, the vast majority of the shortfall accounted for by the lack of performance from Honda's turbo hybrid V6.

The engine's main weak point is its hybrid system, which runs out of electrical boost before the end of long straights. Honda have traced the problem to an inefficiency in the compressor, part of the turbocharger system, which is hampering the ability of the related motor generator unit (MGU-H) to salvage energy.

The 2015 Honda engine has a relatively small compressor. This restricts its ability to compress

the air needed for the turbo, but Honda had hoped to circumvent that by making it spin faster than a standard compressor. Since they failed to make that idea work, their solution is to design a bigger and more efficient compressor for 2016.

Honda F1 boss Yasuhisa Arai said: "Efficiency of the compressor is the first objective. In other words, at the moment it is inefficient, therefore it has to run fast to make up the efficiency. My

**Yasuhisa Arai: "The team – McLaren and Honda – must close the gap. That is the target"**



way of thinking is that if we can get the efficiency up, we can keep the revs lower. But to do that we need to increase the size to maintain the intake."

Arai says he expects the compressor to increase to around the size of the one used by Mercedes in 2015. Despite this, Honda will retain their compact packaging approach in which both the turbo and the compressor are sited within the vee of the cylinder block.

Other than this compactness, the Honda layout is similar to that of the Mercedes, with the compressor in front of the turbine and separated by an elongated shaft, on which the MGU-H sits to recover energy created by exhaust gas. Mercedes' compressor is in front of the engine.

Fernando Alonso has heaped pressure on Honda, saying he believes it is "realistic" for them to close the gap to Mercedes and win races in 2016. Arai responded: "It's Fernando's wish, his take on the situation. We think he is trying to encourage the whole team and the project itself. We think his perception of the gap to the top teams is correct. So the team – McLaren and Honda – must close the gap. That is the target. A car 2.5 seconds faster than us already exists. So in that sense it isn't a miracle. You can do it with the technology."

PHOTOS: ALASTAIR STALEY/LAT; GLENN DUNBAR/LAT



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**NEWS**

# Mercedes defeated in 2017 rules battle

Moves to add downforce, boost speed and cut lap times will go through in spite of champion constructor's protestations

Rival teams and the FIA have rejected Mercedes' arguments that Formula 1 might be going too far with its plans to speed up the cars for 2017.

The sport is working towards new technical regulations with the aim of making the cars five seconds a lap faster. But Mercedes argued at a meeting of the technical working group in November that the changes were unnecessary and that much of the step could be accounted for by much smaller changes. They also raised concerns about Pirelli's ability to design tyres that could cope with the increased speeds.

Mercedes say current cars are approaching or have reached historic highs in terms of downforce and power, and that lap times are slower than in the past only because the cars are heavier and the tyres are not as good. The paper they presented also claimed that Pirelli were already struggling to cope with the forces created by current cars, so there was a risk of problems if aerodynamic loads increased by 50 per cent, as some estimates suggest.

"We have to be careful about putting on more downforce," Mercedes executive director Paddy Lowe said. "We have never done that before. All previous rule changes have been about keeping it in check."

However, Mercedes' concerns about the rules were dismissed by rivals, who felt that the world champions were simply trying to protect a competitive advantage. McLaren racing director Eric Boullier went as far as to say the move was "pretty desperate from Mercedes". Insiders at Mercedes rejected this claim, insisting their concerns were genuine.

Nevertheless, teams and the FIA are now pressing ahead with plans to change the cars as previously agreed. This will include widening the car's track from 1.8m to 2m, adding a wider front wing swept back from a central forward point, a lower and wider rear wing, bigger diffuser and wider floor and wider tyres.

It has been estimated that lap times will drop by 3-3.5s from aerodynamic improvements, and up to 2s from the tyres.



Mercedes argued that downforce levels must be kept in check. Their rivals claimed they were merely trying to preserve their advantage

**NEWS IN BRIEF**

**2016 CALENDAR CONFIRMED**

The 21-race Formula 1 calendar for 2016 has been ratified, with one change that makes the Mexican and US GPs run back to back:

- Australia** 20 March
- Bahrain** 3 April
- China** 17 April
- Russia** 1 May
- Spain** 15 May
- Monaco** 29 May
- Canada** 12 June
- Europe (Azerbaijan)** 19 June
- Austria** 3 July
- Britain** 10 July
- Hungary** 24 July
- Germany** 31 July
- Belgium** 28 August
- Italy** 4 September
- Singapore** 18 September
- Malaysia** 2 October
- Japan** 9 October
- USA** 23 October
- Mexico** 30 October
- Brazil** 13 November
- Abu Dhabi** 27 November

**CLEAR FINALLY CLEARED FOR FERRARI**

Ferrari's technical department will undergo a reshuffle over the winter following the belated arrival of Jock Clear from Mercedes. Ferrari recruited Clear at the end of 2014 but were forced to wait a year when Mercedes refused to release him before the end of his contract. And sporting director Massimo Rivola will move to head up the Ferrari Driver Academy.

**HILL VISITS AUTOSPORT INTERNATIONAL**

The 1996 Formula 1 world champion and *F1 Racing* columnist Damon Hill will kick off the 20th anniversary of his title-winning season by appearing at the Autosport International Show at Birmingham's NEC from 14-17 January 2016. Tickets are available from [www.autosportinternational.com](http://www.autosportinternational.com)

**MANOR IS RYAN'S NEW GIG**



Former McLaren sporting director Dave Ryan is back after a six-year hiatus from F1, having been taken on as racing director of Manor Marussia.

The F1 veteran, who spent 30 years with McLaren, carried the can for the 'Lie-gate' controversy at the 2009 Australian GP.

PHOTOS: STEVEN TEE/LAT; ANDREW FERRARO/LAT



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The centrepiece of *Autosport International* 2016 is a tie-up with Williams that brings all of the glamour of a Formula One race weekend to the Autosport Stage. For the first time ever, the eight-metre-tall Williams Martini Racing motorhome will be constructed away from a race circuit to form part of the exciting new Autosport Stage, which will be packed full of insightful interviews and features with famous faces from motorsport.

What's more, Williams will be bringing an incredible selection of its most famous Formula One cars to the NEC, from the very first Williams-Ford FW06 to this season's Williams-Mercedes FW37. Among them will be the team's greatest ever car, the Williams-Renault FW18, which won 12 of 16 races in the 1996 season. As well as interactive features focusing on Williams' F1 activities, visitors will also get an insight into the world of Williams

Advanced Engineering, the division that transfers technology from Formula One to market sectors as diverse as defence and renewable energy.

Elsewhere at *Autosport International*, the 5,000-seat Live Action Arena gives showgoers the chance to experience all of the raw sights and sounds of pure racing machines. Reigning FIA World Rallycross Champion, Petter Solberg, is just one of the highlights, drifting his Citroën Xsara WRC within centimetres of the track barriers. Fans will also be able to see incredible driving stunts and insightful interviews with legendary racing drivers across the weekend.

*Autosport International* features every form of motor racing from karting to Formula One, allowing visitors unrivalled access to racing machines from across the world. The MSA Dunlop BTCC and F1 Racing displays immerse fans in a gridwalk of current racing cars from each championship, while a new historic racing display entitled 'When We Were Kings' brings together some of the most iconic models from the golden eras of racing.

Tickets to *Autosport International* are on sale now, and can be purchased from [www.autosportinternational.com](http://www.autosportinternational.com) or on **0844 581 1420**.



The Williams Martini Racing Motorhome



Damon Hill: 1996 Formula One World Champion





## Pat Symonds explains **THE SCIENCE BEHIND...** **Pitstops**

### **F1 TECH**

#### **What is regarded as a good pitstop these days?**

For a standard tyre change, a team should aim to be averaging 2.5 seconds. The important thing is consistency. It is no good doing one stop at 2.2 seconds and three others at 2.9. The best stops this year have been around that lower target, although there is always a little discrepancy between the times shown on the TV and the numbers the teams work with.

#### **Why are pitstops so much faster these days?**

Until refuelling was banned, there wasn't much emphasis on the tyre-change aspect of a pitstop. Since refuelling took anything from six seconds upwards, there was plenty of time to change the tyres. It was hard to speed up the refuelling because the flow rate of fuel was regulated, so the only time that could be shaved off came from a clean connect and a rapid disconnect of the fuel hose when the fuel flow stopped.

#### **What are the secrets of a good pitstop?**

Having good equipment, lots of discipline, and practising over and over again until the process becomes second nature. That said, it is impossible to recreate the nervous tension of waiting for a car to arrive at the pitstop area, knowing that the actions of a few seconds can put your driver out with an improved situation, or conversely lose that hard-won track position.

#### **How do teams practice and how often?**

There are two training regimes, those done at the factory and those done during a race weekend. At the factory, regular practice is organised in a special area that replicates the pitlane area where a stop is made. A dummy car will be used, which will have all the latest hub details so the crew can train in a realistic mode. The car may rely on human power to propel it into the pitstop area, although some teams use low-power engines to provide the drive. In addition to this, teams have various rigs for practising aspects of the pitstop and to check and calibrate their equipment.

#### **Do you practise for unusual events, or is it better just to deal with these as they occur?**

There are many scenarios that differ from the routine single-car pitstop and all of these have to be practised because although they may occur infrequently, they can still make the difference between achieving a good finishing position and losing it. The most frequent non-standard stop is a nose change. This can be quite tricky to perform, since the nose assembly is both heavy and unwieldy. Often these tend to occur on the first lap when the pit crew have just run back from the grid and are still in the process of readying the equipment. Even so, we would hope to be changing the nose and all four wheels in well under ten seconds.

#### **What about the equipment used in pitstops – is that being developed all the time?**

The engineering behind pitstops is both detailed and sophisticated. All F1 teams use wheel guns developed by Italian company Paoli, but they will often strip and modify these to their own exacting requirements, attempting to improve the gas flow that runs through them. Indeed, until it was banned, many teams used helium rather than compressed air to drive the guns in the search for improved performance. The detail design of the hub and wheel nut is also fundamental to a good pitstop, with most current designs using a very coarse pitch but a very 'loose' thread. The nut itself, and the socket that engages it, are multi-drive devices rather than the traditional hexagonal nut, so the socket can engage with the nut first time.

#### **How do the lights on the pitstop gantry work?**

Time was when the driver looked solely to the lollipop man. The lollipop man controlled the pitstop, and when he was satisfied that all work had been properly completed, he would lift the 'lollipop' to allow the driver to launch. These days we could not accept the multiple sequential human reaction times involved in such a process,

and so a system of lights is used. The driver holds the car in first gear with the clutch pulled. The men with the wheel guns will have followed the car in and will be engaging the nut before the car comes to a halt. With the wheel nuts captive in the wheel, the process of loosening the nut also starts to pull the wheel off. One mechanic removes this wheel as another one positions the new wheel. During this time the gun man will have reversed his gun and will follow the wheel on to tighten it, a process that takes just half a second. As soon as the wheel is tight he hits a button on his gun. When the computer detects two 'tight' signals, it automatically drops the jack. Once it detects that both jacks have been dropped, it changes the lights to green to allow the driver to launch.

#### **It sounds like expensive equipment.**

It is. Each wheel gun costs around £3,000 and there are two at each wheel station (plus extras for the garage itself and for use on the grid). The sockets cost £1,000 and a complex auto-release swivelling front jack will cost many tens of thousands of pounds. Even the wheel nuts cost over £300 and around 24 are made new for each race, so, as ever, the search for speed does not come cheap.



#### **What of the human element: how do you go about transforming a mechanic into a wheel-change guru?**

A pitstop mechanic primarily needs to be strong and fit. The wheel guns weigh 3.5kg and produce a torque of over 3,000ft/lbs, so just handling these devices requires a certain degree of athleticism. Couple that with the nimbleness needed if the car stops slightly awry and you can see that the human performance element is all-important. At Williams we employ a qualified osteopath to train our crew in the search for perfection. **F1**





Practice, consistency and having the strength to operate the heavy wheel guns are key to getting pitstops right







PETER WINDSOR

## RACER'S EDGE

Authority, wit and intelligence  
from the voice of *F1 Racing*

**Quick quiz.** Who won the 1958, 1973, 1976, 1982, 1983, 1986, 1994, 1999 and 2008 world championships?

Correct. Mike Hawthorn (Ferrari), Jackie Stewart (Tyrrell), James Hunt (McLaren), Keke Rosberg (Williams), Nelson Piquet (Brabham), Alain Prost (McLaren), Michael Schumacher (Benetton), Mika Häkkinen and Lewis Hamilton (McLaren).

Yet also wrong. You could also have said 'Vanwall, Lotus, Ferrari (in '76, '82, '83, '99 and '08) and Williams: all these teams were big winners in the years their drivers *didn't* win.

We're talking here of the constructors' championship, the dampest – and richest – squib in all of sport. The championship that isn't about the racing.

We saw it in some of the closing races of 2015. With both titles won, Mercedes operated purely as a team. They provided two very nice and very equal racing cars for Lewis Hamilton and Nico Rosberg, but set tighter limits than we'd seen for most of the year: the first corner kind of decided it; there was no room for the other Mercedes driver to adopt a revised strategy born of superior tyre, fuel and/or brake wear (or not). Beyond that, as I mention in my analysis of Lewis Hamilton on [page 42](#), a strong Nico in 2016 will make it substantially

# All eyes are on the *main* prize

harder for Lewis to beat Ferrari's Sebastian Vettel (assuming the new Ferrari is on a par with the Merc W07).

I get the Mercedes policy. Having managed Williams for a while, I know how hard it is to win an F1 race – never mind finish one-two. If there's no need to play around, the last thing a team wants is to jeopardise a one-two finish in any way. With Nico leading from the pole, but Lewis on a longer middle stint, who knew what could have transpired in the closing laps?

Nothing is of itself, however. There are always bounce-backs. For every race in which Mercedes do not deviate from the straight-and-narrow, there will be days when they will *have* to do so to beat a Vettel or perhaps a stray Red Bull. And the more they run as two equal number ones in pursuit of constructors' points, the harder those switches will be. Like Jackie Stewart, and Niki Lauda in the Ferrari years, Michael Schumacher redirected the energy of his team. He requested a quick driver for the other car – a Rubens or a Felipe – while he, Michael, maximised any points that would be scored on any given day. Seb Vettel has more or less duplicated this system by running with Kimi in the other Ferrari. Kimi is still good enough to score points and to win a race or two; he isn't, though, going to nibble into Seb's slice of road. Lewis, meanwhile, has first to beat Nico. And vice versa.

So here's the big question: if running Seb and Kimi means that they *won't* win the constructors' championship in 2016, will Ferrari nonetheless be satisfied if Seb wins a fifth drivers' championship? Conversely, what will be the mood at Mercedes if they win the constructors' title but Lewis and Nico are individually beaten on points by Vettel?

Answers: 'Yes'; and 'Dark'.

Get it? The constructors' title *isn't* up there with the drivers', despite what they tell you in the press statements. Yes, it earns money



for the team. But if you're Ferrari or Mercedes, that money will at least be matched by the global rewards of producing a championship-winning driver. Obviously the object is to win both titles. Given one, it has to be the drivers'.

None of this is new: there have been disconnections between the two championships since 1958, when the latter was introduced (eight years after the first drivers' championship was instigated). Mike Hawthorn became the tragic hero of British motorsport in 1958/9 but it was actually Vanwall, featuring Stirling Moss, Tony Brooks and Stuart Lewis-Evans, who that year won the constructors' title (or 'Manufacturers' Championship' as it was then known). Hawthorn-Collins was

“The constructors' championship is the dampest – and richest – squib in all of sport”





Lewis Hamilton has to beat a strong team-mate in Nico Rosberg to win the drivers' title, potentially compromising Mercedes' chances of winning the constructors' championship. But Seb Vettel will be untroubled by solid team-mate Kimi Räikkönen, which, conversely, could boost Ferrari's chances of winning the constructors' title



not too far away from Vettel-Räikkönen; Moss-Brooks, though, was much more in the direction of Hamilton-Rosberg. And on it goes.


Emerson Fittipaldi and Ronnie Peterson snatched points from one another in 1973 to win the constructors' title for Lotus, but in so doing lost the drivers' title to Jackie Stewart (who dominated within Tyrrell). What a thing it would have been for Lotus to have run, say, Tim Schenken alongside Ronnie Peterson in 1973. Almost certainly, Peterson would have won the drivers' title – just as Emerson would have won another championship had Wilson Fittipaldi raced the other Lotus 72.

Constructors' title already clinched, Williams in 1981 nonetheless fielded four cars (two

racers, two spares: equality for all!) in the drivers' championship finale in Las Vegas. The complexity of the operation cost them the title. And while 1976, 1982 and 1994 were accident-and/or incident-filled anomalies, 1983 was no fluke: Nelson Piquet won the drivers' championship while his team, Brabham, finished third in the constructors'. Three years later, Alain Prost calmly led McLaren to the drivers' title, while Nelson Piquet and Nigel Mansell squabbled at Williams.

Mercedes are thus in a difficult position. Their two drivers – despite pitwall exhortations – could still easily run into one another, given enough pressure. Equally, given the intensity of the race between Lewis and

Nico, one driver's ability to beat the other will inevitably be compromised by the importance of both of them being given an equal chance. The truth is that nothing is equal in racing – or in any form of athletic endeavour. Lewis's strong points aren't the same as Nico's, and the same can be said of their weaker sides.

When F1 was *really* dangerous, and the odds of finishing the year with the same drivers were small, the constructors' title made sense. These days, I think the choice is clear. Assuming equal-ish cars amongst the top few teams, the Stewart/Lauda/Michael/Seb system is the way to go: the drivers' title is everything; the constructors' championship, by contrast, a mere measure of points won... and lost. 

PORTRAIT: BENJAMIN WENCHEVJE. PHOTOS: GLENN DUNBAR/LAT. JED LEICESTER/LAT.



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DAMON HILL

# KING OF THE HILL

Cockpit savvy from the 1996 world champ, exclusively in *F1R*

**W**ell, how was it for you? The season I mean. Not a classic, perhaps, but I think we can say that a star was re-set in the heavens where it rightfully belonged. Lewis's season was pretty much untroubled by mechanical failures, accidents, political issues or undue pressure from his team-mate. Sure, Nico stepped it up a notch in the closing races, spurred, no doubt, by the sting of finishing second and that humiliating cap-tossing incident in the Austin green room. But we shall have to see whether a winter of snowboarding in the Rockies and celebrity partying will restore Hamilton's enthusiasm for another title tilt, going for four against arch-nemesis, Sebastian Vettel. Three is nice alright, but four is just that little bit extra special. Having just the one, I am an F1 commoner, by comparison. It blows my mind that a man can win *seven* championships, as Michael Schumacher did: put that in your crash helmet and smoke it.

Lest we forget, it's nearly two years since Michael's life was changed forever. Right now I'm sure he would trade every championship to get back to a normal life. But he's still top of the tree and some way off being toppled. Which puts Fangio's record – five titles, 1951, then 54-57 – into sharp relief.

# It's tougher than ever to stand out in F1

Imagine. Not Senna, not Prost, not Stewart, not Clark, not Fittipaldi (I could go on, so I won't) managed to beat Fangio's record. Was racing in the fifties less dangerous? Certainly not. Were the cars more reliable? Not by a long chalk. Was the competition less intense? Hmm... perhaps?

Some statistics to consider:

There were almost half as many people on the planet. Even fewer could ever contemplate a life as a racing driver, especially a South American. We live in more affluent times, despite all we hear. More people in Europe and around the world fly in aeroplanes, take foreign holidays and own cars. Last year, roughly 90 million vehicles were produced globally. In 1955 it was only a little over 10 million, and 70 per cent of those were in the USA. Amazingly, though, at the British Grand Prix of 1952, there were 35 entrants for 32 places on the grid and 22 of them finished the race. The start must have been bonkers! But there were only eight rounds in the championship then. Each season now is almost 2.5 times as long.

If F1 were a pyramid, the base would be at its widest right now. The logic goes that competition strengthens the breed. I think it was Lotus founder Colin Chapman who said that somewhere in China was a driver better than Jim Clark – except that he'd never sat in a car. It must be true that if we increase the pool of talent, the chances of finding two Fangios increases and the differential between the very best decreases. If the internet has proved anything, it is that one individual is not so unique. Being different is getting harder. So, perhaps the value of being first is greater now?

Comparing drivers from different eras is fun but somewhat meaningless. I tend to think that a championship today makes lower demands of courage. Today's drivers have to contend

with danger, of course they do, but not nearly as much as their Fangio-era forebears. The chances of a nasty, violent, fiery death in the '50s, '60s and '70s was considerably greater than it is today. Thank the FIA for that.

Nowadays the psychological pressure comes from the business side, the press and 'fame'. The modern F1 driver is more worried about his Twitter account than his chances of survival. And well he might be. For without it, his chances of keeping his seat are vastly diminished. But to win today against a solid batch of proven world champions and grand prix winners (and with well-budgeted GP2 drivers from nations desperate for a slice of the action snapping at their heels), the pressure



Arch-rivals Lewis Hamilton and Sebastian Vettel, hold three and four titles respectively. Can Lewis make it four-all in 2016?

at the top is greater than ever. Perhaps we cut them less slack because they appear to have a more cushy job, with less risk to life and limb? Perhaps our admiration is diminished?

As self-knowledge increases exponentially, boundaries between individuals are eroded. Computers reveal the smallest differences for all to see. What would Sir Stirling have given to see Fangio's data? All he could do was hang onto his rear axle, listen to the gear changes and watch his lines. Harder to get an edge when your team-mate can see all your tricks.

Nope. The margins of differential today are measurable only in hundredths of a second per lap. It's getting harder to stand out from the crowd. You need a whole season to discern the smallest differences. Don't worry. Another one will be along, right after the break... **F1**

"Being different is getting harder. So, perhaps the value of being first is greater now?"

PORTRAIT: BENJAMIN WENHENE; PHOTO: CHARLES COATES/LAT



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DIETER RENCKEN

# POWER PLAY

The stories F1's bigwigs would rather you didn't know...

**T**AG Heuer might only have been a watch sponsor for McLaren, but the recent loss of this longstanding and prestigious partner hit McLaren where it hurts most: in the ego. The pain of that blow was compounded by simultaneous news that the brand was headed for, in the words of their CEO, the “young, dynamic and go-getter team” that is Red Bull.

Like Boss, lost last year, TAG Heuer had seemed an integral part of McLaren: always there, somewhere, on cars, drivers and backdrops. Both brands partnered this proudest of teams for three decades. They were synonymous with the likes of Ayrton Senna and Lewis Hamilton; with race wins and championships; with style, precision and quality. Now they are gone, joining upstart grid rivals with barely a backwards glance.

Forget lost revenue, for that can be recovered eventually: luxury partners provide prestige, not profit. The pain lies in the abrupt rejection by longstanding friends, and forces introspection as to which brands will follow them out of the door. When, or where, will it all end? And how?

Falls from grace can be rapid: within a decade of winning titles Brabham were gone; ditto, to all intents and purposes, Lotus.

# The key word for McLaren is 'focus'

Renault were champions in 2005-06, but a shamed shadow of their former selves by 2009. Cooper survived their titles by less than a decade.

By such measures McLaren have done well, last winning the drivers' championship in 2008 – albeit in the last corner of the last lap of the last grand prix. They also survived the traumas of 2007's 'Spygate' scandal and its associated \$100m fine.

Two years ago, after then-McLaren boss Martin Whitmarsh was replaced by the returning Ron Dennis, the team were promised a title sponsor within “the next few events”. Yet today both drivers sport more tattoos than their cars or overalls bear stickers.

Put aside, for a moment, 2015's Honda travails: 2014 was also fraught, as the team achieved only P5 in the constructors' chase. Some blamed non-works Mercedes engines – down on power compared to their 'works' counterparts. But Williams (P3) trounced McLaren, while Force India (P6) ran them close using identical power units – both on half McLaren's budget and without having a world champion in their cockpits. Now, it seems, Vijay Mallya's colourful team is on track to snare Johnnie Walker. So how and where did it all go so wrong?

Consider that McLaren last won a constructors' title in 1998, when operating from a hotch-potch of factory units spread

**A returning Ron Dennis promised a title sponsor within “the next few events”. It's yet to happen**



across Woking's industrial estate, not the space-age McLaren Technology Centre. A sobering thought: this massive site, once Europe's biggest privately funded building project, has so far failed to deliver a single constructors' title.

Therein lies a coincidence – or maybe not. A year after that 1998 championship, as McLaren lost the 1999 constructors' fight to Ferrari, the first sods were turned on the brownfield sites that today house the MTC, plus the equally futuristic structures that are McLaren Automotive's Production Centre, the McLaren-GSK Centre for Applied Performance, and McLaren Applied Technologies. Saliently, none of these operations existed back in 1998.

Once before McLaren had endured a winless patch: 1994-96, when they were deserted by a long-standing sponsor, Marlboro, who had partnered the team for almost 30 years, yet transferred their dollars to Maranello. The switch set in motion Ferrari's hegemony, which culminated in six straight constructors' titles during a period that coincided precisely with MTC construction operations.

Back, though, to the 1990s. Is it coincidence that during that winless three-year period McLaren launched their sublime F1 road car, with production commencing in late 1993, and then won Le Mans in 1995? And then as road-car production wound down, so McLaren returned to winning.

Williams last won titles before opening their Advanced Engineering business, and the ill-fated technology centre in Qatar and slumped to ninth in the order. WAE downsized, Qatar closed, and – *voilà!* – up to third. Ferrari could up road car production from 5,000 units to 7,000 annually, or win F1 championships – but not both.

The message is obvious: McLaren – and they're certainly not alone in this – for all their many talents, are unable to multitask. Build title-winning Formula 1 cars, Le Mans winners even? A given. Construct *the* stand-out automotive factory? No problem. Best road car ever? Sure. A veritable competitor for Ferrari and Porsche supercars? Of course. Do all of this simultaneously? Clearly not. But, then again, who could? **F1**

“The message is obvious: McLaren, for all their many talents, are unable to multitask”

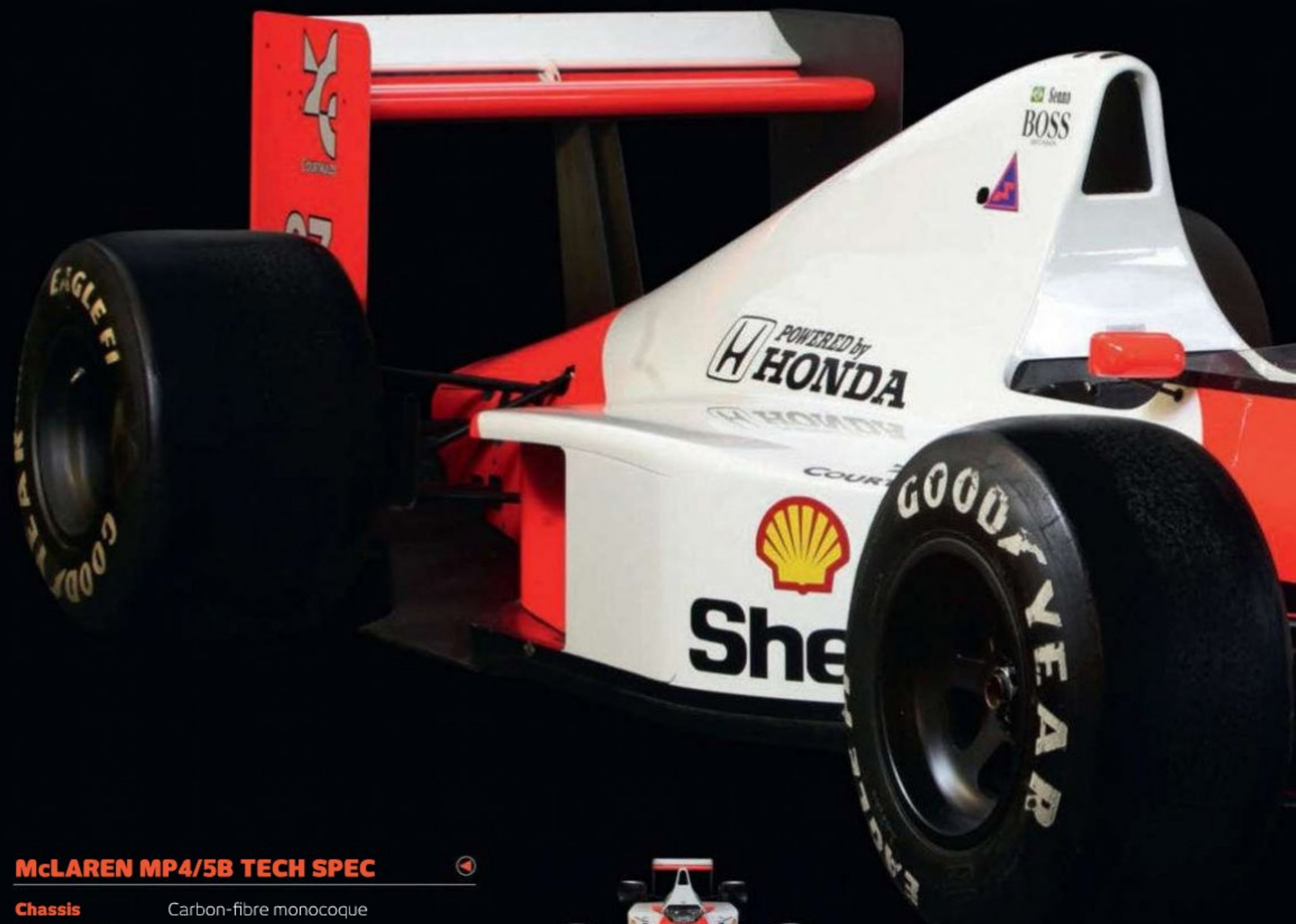


# Now *that* was a car



## No. 46: The McLaren MP4/5B

The principal weapon in the war between Ayrton Senna and Alain Prost



### McLAREN MP4/5B TECH SPEC

<b>Chassis</b>	Carbon-fibre monocoque
<b>Suspension</b>	Independent via double wishbones and pullrod (front) and pushrod-actuated coil springs/dampers
<b>Engine</b>	Honda V10
<b>Engine capacity</b>	3,493cc
<b>Power output</b>	700bhp @ 13,000rpm (est)
<b>Gearbox</b>	6-speed manual
<b>Weight</b>	500kg
<b>Wheelbase</b>	2,160mm
<b>Tyres</b>	Goodyear
<b>Notable drivers</b>	Ayrton Senna, Alain Prost, Gerhard Berger



WORDS STUART CODLING PICTURES JAMES MANN



Even as McLaren and Honda were dominating 1988, famously winning 15 of the season's 16 grands prix, they faced a challenge that went beyond managing the simmering tension between drivers Alain Prost and Ayrton Senna. The end of the turbo era loomed: having taken several seasons to get their turbo package exactly right, could Honda manage a seamless transition to natural aspiration?

McLaren had sufficient engineering strength to transition to a new car for 1989 with few carry-over elements. Overseen by Neil Oatley and Steve Nichols, the neat-looking MP4/5 resembled its predecessor, bar the overhead air intake, but the carbon-fibre monocoque was new, as was the suspension geometry. Honda's 3.5-litre 72° RA109E V10 proved powerful enough straight out of the box, but suffered some initial teething troubles with its lubrication system.

Despite misgivings about the MP4/5's weight, Prost and Senna set about dominating the season once again, although not quite to the same extent as in 1988. Senna took pole at the first race of the year, in Rio, but fluffed the start and spun at the first corner, while Prost finished second; Senna would rue those lost points come year's end.

With 38 cars vying for 26 places on the grid, F1 had quantity, if not quality. McLaren's chief opponents on pace were Ferrari and Williams, but Ferrari's technically advanced car (designed by ex-McLaren man John Barnard) wasn't yet reliable enough and

Williams were still bedding in with a new engine partner, Renault. Over the year, McLaren created the B-spec, paring weight from the car and swapping the longitudinal Weismann gearbox for a new transverse one, while Honda delivered more performance.

Prost took four wins to Senna's six, but scored more consistently, and the title was decided in Prost's favour at a dramatic Japanese Grand Prix in which the feuding team-mates collided. Senna restarted and fought back into the lead, but was controversially disqualified.

The rancour continued even as Prost departed, taking the number one and Steve Nichols to Ferrari; a year later the title would be decided at Suzuka again. Oatley's team redesigned the MP4/5's monocoque to take advantage of a new high-modulus carbon, letting them hit the weight limit and improve the car's balance even after increasing the size of the fuel cell. New front suspension geometry, a revised diffuser and radiator layout and a new engine completed the launch spec of the MP4/5B, but the team had to fast-track upgrades, including a new floor, as Ferrari and Williams showed a more consistent and reliable turn of speed through 1990.

Senna and Prost won six races between them, but at Suzuka Senna infamously ran Prost's Ferrari off the road, taking them both out of the race and sealing his second world title in the process. It was an unedifying moment that divides F1 fans to this day. **F1**





LEWIS HAMILTON



SEBASTIAN VETTEL



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A  
RIVALRY

TO

MARK

THE  
END

OF

DAYS"

Now Ferrari have refound their mojo, the fight between comeback kid Sebastian Vettel and newly crowned triple champ Lewis Hamilton could be 2016's hottest story. **Peter Windsor** anticipates an epic contest

PICTURES LAT PHOTOGRAPHIC





"A RIVALRY TO MARK THE END OF DAYS"

IT COULD BE STEWART-RINDT ALL OVER AGAIN. OR SENNA-PROST. OR SCHUMACHER-HÄKKINEN. IT COULD BE ALL OF THESE AND MORE. IT COULD BE A RIVALRY TO MARK THE END OF DAYS.

**Hamilton-Vettel. Mercedes-Ferrari.** Silver-red. England-Germany. As of the time of writing, prior to the 2015 Brazilian GP, they have a combined total of seven drivers' championships (Vettel 4, Hamilton 3) and 85 wins (Hamilton 43, Vettel 42).

So on the one hand we have Lewis Hamilton. Global superstar. A loner among his peers; a genius behind the wheel. On the other, Sebastian Vettel. The next German to take Ferrari by the neck and make it a winning machine. Informal and urbane, a Michael he is not.

There have been no slanging matches and nor, to date, has there been any ill-feeling – no past history over which the paparazzi can stir



Checking out the competition: loner Lewis with the Ferrari; and quadruple champ Seb with the Mercedes





the brew. Sure, Sebastian played with Lewis's ego after the 2015 Russian GP, asking him, provocatively, about who had set fastest lap – ha, ha. If they do genuinely think about one another, however, it is in terms of another enticing car/driver package there to be beaten. Just another notch in the wood. They are both that clinical.

This is, though, merely the overture – merely the start of it all.

The best is yet to come.

## THE TIMING



**Both are approaching their primes.** Both arrived in F1 at around the same time. And both made immediate impacts. Seb breezed into a BMW Friday F1 drive from Formula BMW and F3, scored points on his F1 debut and won for Toro Rosso in his first full season (2008). He collected the first of his four world titles two years later. Lewis dominated GP2 before almost winning the world championship in his debut year (2007) and winning it for the first time in 2008.

Both, too, have had unsettled years. For Seb, it was 2014, the first year of the hybrid era, when he was stretched by his team-mate at Red Bull, Daniel Ricciardo. Outqualified (7-12) and outpointed (167-238), Seb had no answers to Daniel's superior ability to manipulate the rear of the car, particularly when the front was →

**Nico outqualified Lewis 12-7** in 2014, although it wasn't always clear cut. In Abu Dhabi, for instance, where he needed only points (rather than the win), Lewis clearly backed away a little. Still, though, there was a pattern – and an obvious message: had Lewis secured more pole positions he would perhaps have won even more races. True, he outraced Nico 11-5 and, of course, secured the 2014 championship in that final race of the season. But 2015 would be another story. Lewis couldn't assume that things would again fall his way. He needed to cover all the bases.

Thus his work for the winter was clear: he needed to improve his consistency in qualifying. That meant eliminating the mistakes that cost him, for example, pole position in Austria. Easy to say; more difficult to execute.

Many drivers face this issue by leaving slightly more margin. They're unaware of doing so, but the stopwatch tells the story. Alain Prost was one good example; Kimi Räikkönen is another. Going into 2015, the big question was how Lewis was going to approach Q3. Would he, too, give himself a few extra millimetres in which to work?

Friday in Melbourne was all Nico Rosberg. Lewis didn't seem completely at home in the new W06; he locked up the inside-front

a couple of times and ran wide as the track slowly picked up grip. By the end, he was a tenth behind Nico.

Saturday morning continued the pattern. Lewis again made mistakes. He was quickest, but it was inconclusive. Nico found traffic; Seb Vettel was second fastest in the Ferrari. For qualifying, all bets were off.

Lewis, though, was breathtaking. In Q1 he was 0.4s quicker than Nico (who was P2). In Q2, the margin was 0.2s. Then, in Q3, Lewis drove as quick and composed a lap as you'll ever see this side of total perfection. Margin? The only margin that mattered was Lewis's 0.6s gap over Nico...

Lewis's new system was suddenly clear: make your mistakes – but make 'em when it doesn't count – on Fridays, on Saturday mornings. Chill. Relax. Prove nothing.

And then, for qualifying and the race, just be yourself. Be Lewis. So it was that the pattern was set.



ACE QUALIFIER





"A RIVALRY TO MARK THE END OF DAYS"



also wayward. Seb compensated for this with renewed determination: with four world titles behind him, at a time when his talents could have been left to stagnate, he gratefully accepted a Ferrari drive and a new challenge for 2015. The slate was wiped clean.

On pace, Lewis had no major problems with his team-mates at McLaren, with Fernando Alonso, Heikki Kovalainen and Jenson Button. But Nico Rosberg posed a few questions for him at Mercedes in 2013. In the W04, Lewis, for the first time, found himself a little behind the beat. He couldn't *feel* the back end; couldn't always tame it. If he was going to progress, going into the new F1 technical era, he was going to have to maximise a new, less organic brake pedal. He was going to have to master brake-by-wire.

Lewis did. He worked at it. He looked at what Nico was doing and took the process a step further, multiplying Nico's brake shape with his own ability to release the brake-pedal pressure at precisely the correct rate. This was no simulator thing: this was Lewis, thinking deeply over the winter, and finding, to his delight, a much-improved W05 back end for the 2014 season.

Results flowed. Over the past two years, Lewis has become the first Briton ever to win back-to-back titles, and has become one of only ten drivers ever to have won three championships or more (joining Fangio, Brabham, Stewart, Lauda, Piquet, Prost, Senna, Schumacher and Vettel). Nor should we forget that Lewis in the McLaren years won races like Fuji in the wet in 2007, or the torrid British GP of 2008. Both were classics, as was his drive to fifth in Brazil, 2008, when he won his first world title; his first win (Canada, 2007); many of his Monaco GPs; and his four wins in America (2007, 2012, 2014 and 2015).

In James Allison, meanwhile, Seb found just the right replacement for Adrian Newey. Where Adrian was becoming increasingly detached from the ever-more draconian F1 technical regulations, culminating in Red Bull's front-wing deflection skirmish in Abu Dhabi, 2014,



**In terms of team-mates, Lewis has the harder job. He has the ruthless, calculating Nico Rosberg to overcome at Mercedes, while Seb has Kimi, now in the autumn of his career, playing merely a supporting role**

Allison was eager to produce a car with four wheels on the ground. Downforce, on the Ferrari SF15-T, would be secondary to balance, and that compromise would dovetail nicely with Seb's philosophy. Months before, Maurizio Arrivabene had listened to Seb's exhortations about Allison and had accordingly promoted Allison into a position of overall control. Everything at Ferrari seemed to be heading in a new, logical direction.

Still, Seb was unsure as January turned to February. He was now the Big Name at Ferrari, but there was the question mark: could he drive the new Ferrari the way he had driven the 2013 Red Bull? All became clear at Jerez, when Seb first drove the car. He had a back end! He had a front end! Seb celebrated by setting fastest time and dazzling them in the wet. His garage stood and applauded as he climbed from the car. Kimi was already reduced to a supporting act.



## THE INTRA-TEAM TACTICS

Both have had their intra-team brawls. Mark Webber usually set high qualifying benchmarks for Seb – and was sometimes right there in the race, too, occupying road that Seb, wished to use. The apogee came in Turkey, 2010, when the impenetrable barrier (Webber) was confronted by the inexhaustible force (Vettel). Seb lunged for a narrow, high-speed gap... and on that occasion lost. Webber recovered to finish third.

There was more tension. Webber would speak often of Seb's tantrums; and, after winning at Silverstone in 2010, Webber icily declared his own performance was "not bad for a number



two driver". Then, in Malaysia 2013, Seb defied orders by passing Webber when both were supposedly lapping within rigid parameters. Webber and Adrian Newey were incensed.

Daniel Ricciardo also posed challenges for Seb: the difference was that Red Bull were not consistent frontrunners in 2014. Seb thus remained relatively quiet and withdrawn that year, even if his nirvana for 2015 was easy to see: as well as a car that sat square on the road, he wanted a team-mate who wouldn't run into trouble. Kimi Räikkönen, now in the autumn of his career, would be the perfect foil.

Lewis right from the start proved to be a match for Fernando Alonso at McLaren, but was unprepared for the backlash: incensed to have been "held up" by Lewis early in qualifying in Hungary, 2007, Fernando refused to leave his pitbox in Q3, thus killing Lewis's pole attempt. Heavy stuff – particularly from a double world champion – but Lewis's reaction was exemplary. He stayed quiet and won the race on Sunday.

That year, Lewis the rookie was rocked by aggression from all quarters: from the Spanish race crowds, from the FIA, from his peers, from Fernando Alonso. Racism bubbled below the surface. McLaren were fined \$100m for possessing drawings stolen by a Ferrari employee. Lewis seemed stunned – a newcomer who would never in a million years have imagined that Formula 1 could be like this. Yet he kept his head and stretched his championship to the final round, in Brazil.

Alongside Jenson, Lewis found harmony. Even when Jenson arguably forced Lewis into the wall in Canada, 2011, Lewis defused the mood as Jenson awaited the restart. As F1 gestures go, this was sportsmanship of the highest calibre.

It wasn't until 2014, alongside Nico in a championship-winning car, that Lewis again had to fight intra-team. Nico contrived to lock the rears going into Mirabeau at Monaco in Q3, thus depriving Lewis of his pole attempt; Lewis filed away the incident for further reference. →



**Nigel Mansell and Jim Clark** knew what it was like not to win at Monaco, to take the pole at Monaco, to lead and then to run into serious trouble. Lewis Hamilton has not felt that agony. His win in 2008 will always be a palliative for the traumas that would follow.

Until 2015. If you'd drawn up a list before that year's race under the heading of "reasons why Lewis Hamilton will again not win at Monaco" you would never in a million years have considered "screw-up on the radio; bad call for tyres" as an option.

Yet that is what happened. Quickest in two of the three practice sessions and on pole for the first time at Monaco – by the margin of nearly half a second – Lewis finally looked to be in with a chance.

Until the advent of the Safety Car. Lap 65, with only 13 to go. On the big TV screen near the swimming pool, Lewis thought he saw the Mercedes crew in the pitlane, ready for Nico (he assumed); in the temporary office above the pits, the

Mercedes strategy team calculated the time. Yes, came the answer: there was just enough room for Lewis to stop for fresh tyres without losing the lead.

Wrong on both counts. Lewis was a victim of Too Much Information. He uniquely stopped for tyres and thus lost not only the win to Nico but also second place to Seb Vettel. Had there been no TV screens, you mused – had there been no radio – then Lewis would have won the Monaco GP.

The latest making of Lewis came even as the strains of *Das Deutschlandlied* filled the Royal Box. The Mercedes team immediately admitted their error; Lewis immediately focused on Canada.

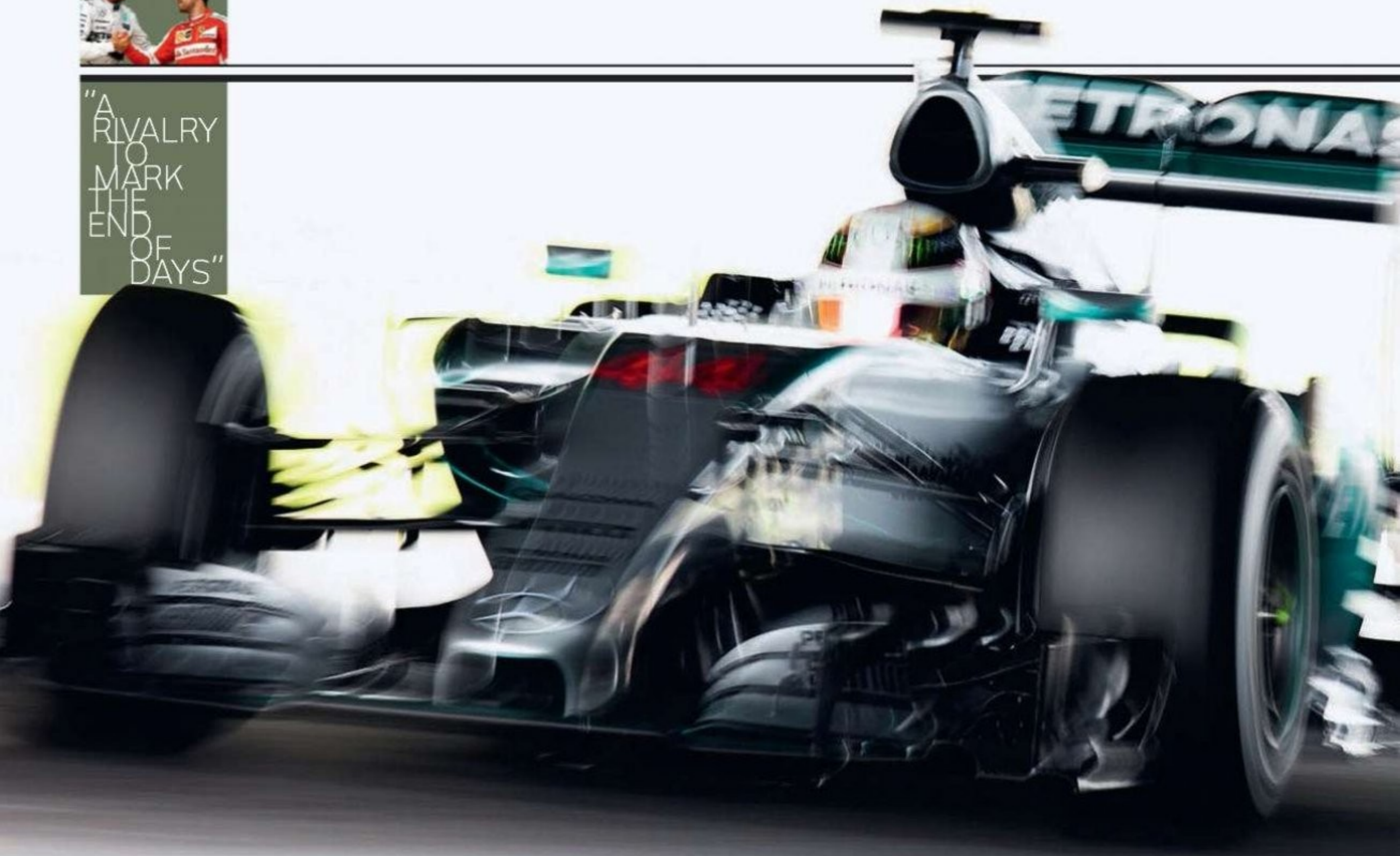
His Montréal victory, two weeks later, on the back of what happened in the Principality, was perhaps his best of the year, and epitomises the famous quote by Aldous Huxley: "Experience is not what happens to a man; it is what a man does with what happens to him."







"A RIVALRY TO MARK THE END OF DAYS"







“Both Lewis and Seb will have powerhouses behind them – it’s likely that the red cars will be right up there with the Silver Arrows”



PHOTOS: VLADIMIR RYS

**TRIPLE TITLE**  
KEY MOMENT #3

**TURN 1, SUZUKA AND AUSTIN**

**Our final key moment** is a double: Japan, Turn 1; Austin, Turn 1. They were identical in their execution – and in their effect.

Lewis made quick starts to both races from the dirty (P2) side of the road, and on both occasions found himself on the inside of Nico as the first corner approached. As sophisticated as F1 can be, there are still moments when inalienable truths come to bite. To wit: no one is going to turn until Lewis Hamilton decides to turn.

On the Mercedes pitwall, and in the garage, they gasped. Lewis perfectly controlled the corners, braking late (but not too late), turning in wide (but not too wide) and exiting expansively (but not too expansively). Nico, unwilling to concede until the track width dictated no other alternative, inevitably ran uncomfortably over the kerbs, losing yet more track position – and momentum.

In Japan, Lewis powered away to another decisive win. In Austin, troubled by understeer and flick-oversteer on the intermediate tyres, Lewis conceded the lead first to Daniel Ricciardo and then to Nico. Then Daniel faded, Nico caught an edge... and Lewis won his tenth race of the season (and the 2015 championship). Those moves will live long after the 2015 season is over: they’ll stay with Nico Rosberg over the winter – and they’ll be within his psyche as they line up again in 2016. What happened in Japan and Austin defined Lewis Hamilton also as the racer of 2015.

The opportunity came in Japan and then in Austin this year: on both occasions Lewis made brilliant starts from P2, giving himself the inside run into the first corners. On both occasions, Lewis hung Nico out to dry.

Lewis has the harder team-mate to beat, so here Seb has the advantage: if there’s to be a Ferrari win on any given day, the chances are that it’ll be Sebastian’s. If, by contrast, Mercedes have the edge, Lewis will still always have the Nico factor to overcome... and that will never be easy. There may be races, for example, when Lewis can beat Nico only through superior tyre management when Mercedes decide not to put their drivers on different strategies.

Lewis has dealt calmly with McLaren and Mercedes politics when they have arisen. Seb’s hope is that Ferrari’s team politics will be minimal: his influence is already that profound.



**THE RACERS WITHIN**

Seb remains a question mark. Think Silverstone, 2014, when he was racing wheel-to-wheel with Fernando, or any of the three races he’s won with Ferrari in 2015, and you have the perfect, racing counterpart to the super-organised Red Bull clone who won four world championships in a row. He’s the winner who now also *races*...

What, though, was Seb thinking on the opening lap of the 2015 Mexican GP? This was Turkey 2010, revisited; this was Seb still showing an unusual degree of assumption. Bear in mind also that it was Daniel Ricciardo he drove into and a few more pieces fall into place: the dominant, all-consuming winner in Malaysia, Monza and Singapore still has a red-mist side →





## "A RIVALRY TO MARK THE END OF DAYS"

to him – and it isn't pretty. *It's my road, and I'm Seb Vettel. Even at the opening corner I'm entitled to every millimetre of it.*

Afterwards, Seb blamed Daniel, explaining that he, Seb, was ahead and that everyone else should have filed in behind him. Excuse me? How does that square with Niki Lauda's title-winning philosophy of always avoiding someone else's accident? And what was with all the other mistakes that ensued in Mexico?

Lewis, by contrast, has in recent years been forceful and aggressive to the limit of the rules and of what is acceptable. He ran Nico wide at Suzuka and Austin – but he did so to perfection. Nico, on both occasions, was still left with the option of tucking in behind for the undercut or running wider still. It was pure, open racing.

There's another thing, too: the Ferrari pitwall these days exhorts its drivers into gaps that exist only partially. *"Pass him Kimi! Go for it!"* Jock Clear may straighten this out in 2016, but, until then, the Mercedes boys can relax in the knowledge that Lewis seems to know precisely when to push... and when not to.

**All smiles for now, at the end of 2015. But the stage is now set for 2016 and one of the most exciting battles the sport will have seen in many years, between two compelling and ferocious competitors. Who will come out on top? Thrillingly, it could go either way...**



"Seb has the talent of being able to mould a team around him – something Lewis wouldn't be interested in doing"

He's a racing driver. Guidance from the pitwall he doesn't need.

Given a straight race, then, Lewis versus Sebastian, both running on equal strategies, you'd give the nod to Lewis.

## THE PROSPECTS

Both drivers are low-key people who have not lost touch with who they are and where they come from: Seb loves his F1 history, his retro bikes and his classic sportscars. Lewis has a strong spiritual faith and draws a clear line between racing cars for a living and living a life beyond racing. As much as the media like to blur the two, and as much as Lewis is sometimes bored with the finer details of the technology, he is the racer's racer on Sundays. He breaks down the complicated and makes it look simple.

As good as Nico Rosberg is, for example, Lewis can usually find an opening around

mid-race, when the track is evolving and tyre compounds assume different levels of grip. Lewis is Formula 1's most natural, most adaptive world champion – and if that is clear in the context of Nico Rosberg and Mercedes then it will also be true in the context of Sebastian Vettel and Ferrari. This may be the decisive factor.

Both are devoted to and spend a lot of time with their fans, although Seb's personal visage is now very much consumed by the huge brand that is Ferrari. Like Niki and Michael before him, Seb has the rare talent of also being able to mould a team around him: this is something that Fernando was unable to achieve at McLaren or at Ferrari, that Kimi wasn't able to do at Ferrari – and which Lewis wouldn't be interested in doing in the first place. It's not merely the question of swaying people into 'your' side of the garage. It's the ability to know *which* people you need to sway and making it happen.

Like Frank Sinatra, Lewis doesn't need to write his own music: he's good enough merely to be a part of a great team; he will then take that team and win. For Seb, it's a different thing. He has the ability to make his job as uncluttered as possible. Thus he has only Kimi to beat at Ferrari; Lewis has Nico.

## THE VERDICT

In terms of overall pace, track craft and adaptation to the variables, Lewis has the advantage; in terms of avoiding the complications of a very quick team-mate, Sebastian has the cleaner route. Both will have powerhouses behind them: in James Allison's second full year at Ferrari, it's likely that the red cars will be right up there with the Silver Arrows.

So how will it unfold?

The heart says Lewis... but the head is inclined towards Seb... →



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2015



2014



2008



**So Lewis, how does it feel to win three world titles?**

I can't find the words to tell you how amazing it feels. I couldn't have done it without Mercedes, who have empowered me for the past three years and helped nurture me with the car. And then my family. I love them all.

**There must be a great mix of emotions?**

There really are. I'm overwhelmed. I've been thinking about my first British championship where my dad and I drove home singing 'We are the Champions' – it's crazy to think that now I'm a three-time F1 world champion. I owe it all to my family who supported me and sacrificed so much for me to be here. And the really positive energy I get from my fans.

**What does it mean to win multiple championships?**

It's the pinnacle. Your ultimate goal is to win in everything you compete in. When I got my first one I was just grateful for it. I told Ron Dennis when I was ten that I wanted to be world champion in his car – and it's crazy to think that ten years after he signed me, I was.

**What does a third title mean for the Hamilton legacy?**

Well, I'm not the only one who's achieved great things in the family. My dad, coming from nowhere, never wanted his kids to struggle the way he

## In conversation with Lewis Hamilton


did, so the effort he put in was remarkable. My brother, Nick, who's seven years younger, is one of the first disabled individuals to race cars and he's inspiring young kids to exceed expectations, so hopefully I can be a mascot for him. To be able to add to that, to know that our

Hamilton name will be here past our lives... I'm super proud about it.

**How different does it feel to clinch a title with three races remaining, instead of at the last round?**

The first two titles were climactic. In 2008 it was something like 17 seconds before the end of the race, and in 2014 it was amazing but it took a lot out of us because it was a double points race so anything could have happened. This year feels just as special, if not more so, because I have equalled Ayrton Senna's three titles.

**Over the past couple of years you seem to have gone into a more spiritual zone with your driving and your private life. Do you feel that way now?**

Definitely. I've always had that, but I express it more now. Having that freedom to express myself in the way I want, and be who I want to be, lets me drive better than I have ever driven. It's difficult to describe the power I feel from within. I'm blessed to be able to do what I do and in the way I do it, and to have the experiences and opportunities I've had in my life. 





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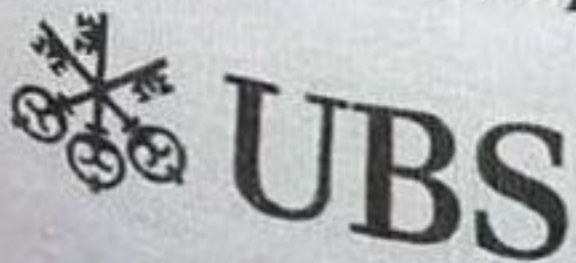


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# LEWIS

## JOINS THE LEGENDS

Winning three titles grants Lewis Hamilton entry into an exclusive club, with just nine other members. We asked Britain's five surviving world champions to share their opinions of Lewis and his achievements...

**Lewis Hamilton has now established** himself as the most successful British F1 driver. His third world title, following his first in 2008 and his second in 2014, makes him only the second Brit to win three, after Sir Jackie Stewart – but he has long since passed Stewart's mark of 27 grand prix wins (Hamilton has registered 43 at time of writing).

And by way of honouring Hamilton's rare achievement, *F1 Racing* invited the five living British F1 champions – John Surtees, JYS, Nigel Mansell, Damon Hill and Jenson Button – to offer their thoughts on his success and talent.

All note Lewis's sheer speed, alongside his relentless determination and the rock-solid self-belief that underpins his ambition. As his legend grows, their praise rings ever more true.



THE LEGENDS



**Juan Manuel Fangio**  
1951, 1954, 1955,  
1956, 1957



JOHN SURTEES

Age 81    Champion 1964    Wins 6    Starts 111

**“The way he comes together with a car** really impresses me. He has a tremendous *feel* that lets him maximise its potential. I also like his controlled aggression, the way he can unleash his speed at just the right moment, and his ability to overtake. That must have come from growing up in karting.

“Obviously he has the best car, but you cannot let that detract from his achievements. He's a person who, once he sits in a car, is dedicated to one thing only: trying to win. He's a champion because he has that complete focus. →



"I don't like, shall we say, a lot of the things he does out of the car, and perhaps his general presentation, but that's just a factor of my age compared with his. We live in very different times. When I was racing we didn't have as many managerial programmes for young talent as there are now, and we certainly didn't have the same kind of rewards and avenues of income. You didn't have social media or television delving into your business, and since we earned money purely through racing we were kept very busy doing that, competing in sportscars and Formula 2 as well as Formula 1.

"Drivers like Lewis now have to spend much more of their time, as a percentage, engaging with media and sponsors than we did. That's a whole extra layer of distractions that you have to shut out when you get in the car, and I think he does that incredibly well."

**SIR JACKIE STEWART**





Age 76    Champion 1969, 71, 73    Wins 27    Starts 99

"Records are there to be broken and there would be something wrong if Lewis doesn't win more championships with Mercedes. It wouldn't be hard for him to match Fangio's five world titles. The Silver Arrows are spending more money in F1, and they have the power, the skills and the talent, so I expect them to continue to deliver.

"Every good driver wants to align himself with the best team but you must be careful to not get too complacent. I always felt vulnerable. The moment you start thinking you're the best is when you're likely to trip up. Lewis has very good equipment and it's true: you do have a relationship with your car. Your ability to interpret motion and behavioural aspects of so many different component areas of the car needs to be acute. You develop your skills to the point where I would have known if the team had given me my team-mate's car.

"There's a lot of talk about putting pressure on someone else by what you say and what you do. But that's baloney. How you go about your business in the cockpit, how you deliver, and how well you can overcome issues without getting upset or throwing your toys out of the pram is much more important. There's no doubt about the power of television today and Lewis is the latest product of that. There's more exposure now, so he's going to be used for promotion much more than my peers or I were. I had a lot of media attention because of the Scottish thing, and the cap, and the long hair, but all sportsmen are so much more exposed today."

THE LEGENDS CONTINUED



**Sir Jack Brabham**  
1959, 1960, 1966



**Sir Jackie Stewart**  
1969, 1971, 1973



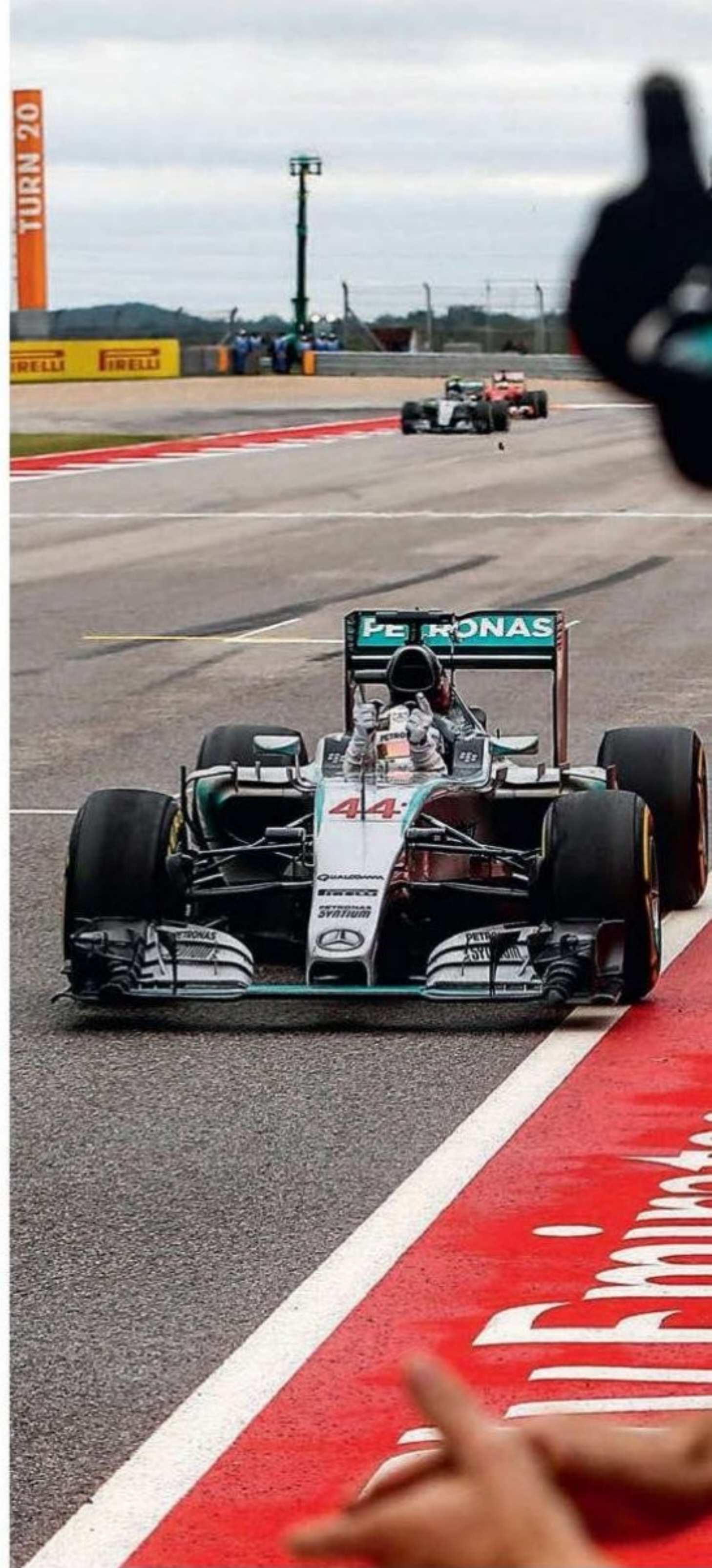
**Niki Lauda**  
1975, 1977, 1984



**Nelson Piquet**  
1981, 1983, 1987



**Alain Prost**  
1985, 1986,  
1989, 1993



**NIGEL MANSELL**





Age 62    Champion 1992    Wins 31    Starts 187

"I will be very surprised if in another few years, Lewis isn't a four- or five-time world champion. He's got a three-year contract now with Mercedes and they're head and shoulders above everybody else. He is unquestionably the outright number one. He's a racer, he's got tremendous talent, and his confidence is growing. I don't think anyone, other than Sebastian Vettel, can hold a light to him.

"Few drivers can lift their game mentally and physically, and all the great champions of the past, to a smaller or larger





degree, had that ability. That's what separates world champions from drivers who win races. I don't think it's God-given, I think it's something you tap into, and the more you tap into it, the more you want it, and the clever ones identify how they get it and how to get into that state of mind.

"Jackie Stewart said a few years ago, that when you win ten grands prix, you go to a different plateau. When you win 20, you go to a different plateau again, and so on. I only got to 31, but he's spot on. The more you win, the more you tap into those things. You build up your own momentum.

"Bernie Ecclestone said Lewis is crossing more boundaries than any other driver in the past has been able to, and within the realms of sensible parameters I'd say good luck to Lewis. He's exploring life and he's been given a passport of freedom to express anything he wants. It wouldn't surprise me if he did a rap song soon. He's on a magic carpet ride and he's making the most of it: I say good luck to him."

## DAMON HILL



Age 55    Champion 1996    Wins 22    Starts 115

"I think Lewis has matured this year in a way that is truly good to see. Finally, now, he believes how good he is. When a driver starts out, they're a wannabe, fighting to make their mark. It seems to me he has got to a place where he now thinks, 'I've already done that.' His performance this year has been a step above last year and you're seeing a guy truly at his zenith. I mean, I'm sure he is going to get better, but he hasn't got to that point yet. It's really impressive and I'm relieved to see it, because I think there were times when it looked as if he was going to have a wobble in the career path.

"Compared with some of the recognised greats, such as Michael Schumacher, Ayrton Senna and Alain Prost, I think you now have to include Lewis in that category. Having raced closely against people such as Michael, I do fully appreciate how enormously talented people like that are.

"There is a difference in style between each of those guys; they have all gone about it differently. Because they are separated by time it's not possible to compare them in that sense, but they are all part of the same group. Lewis's hallmark is that he can drive with the seat of his pants and he enjoys that. His best performances have been in the toughest conditions. He also has strength of character in that he knows when the time is right to assert his position off-track."



### Ayrton Senna

1988, 1990, 1991



### Michael Schumacher

1994, 1995, 2000,  
2001, 2002, 2003,  
2004



### Sebastian Vettel

2010, 2011,  
2012, 2013



### Lewis Hamilton

2008, 2014, 2015

## JENSON BUTTON




Age 35    Champion 2009    Wins 15    Starts 284

"I know he's a very talented driver because we were team-mates for three years. And not only is he very quick, he's focused, determined and smart. I would say he was one of the fastest team-mates I've been up against. Rubens Barrichello could sometimes pull it out of the bag in qualifying and be quick over one lap, but Lewis does that every qualifying session and he's very competitive during the race.

"Of course it's not just about being quick, it's about getting the best out of the people around you and getting the best out of yourself. Lewis is probably stronger now than he ever was, and he's been getting better and better.

"He's also found himself in the right place at the right time – which a lot of drivers don't. There's a lot of talent in F1 but only one guy can win it. Putting yourself in a position where you have the right people around you and then making the most of that opportunity, is a key element of success in F1. He wouldn't have won these last two championships without Mercedes, because they've been formidable. But as well as having the best package, you have to make the most of it.

"The most important thing, once it's just you out there in the car, is to beat your team-mate. Lewis has certainly done that. He's supremely competitive and very hard to beat." 





# BUSTED!

It's enough to make any race engineer weep: exquisitely crafted Formula 1 car parts shattered, crushed, wrecked and ruined by the rigours of the race track. And that's before they tot up the cost of the new bits...

**WORDS** ROBERT HOLMES

**PICTURES** STEVEN TEE/LAT; ALASTAIR STALEY/LAT; CHARLES COATES/LAT; SAM BLOXHAM/LAT





Marshals oversee the aftermath of the epic, car-wrecking shunt between Kimi Räikkönen's Ferrari and Fernando Alonso's McLaren at the 2015 Austrian GP







◀ **Car** Ferrari SF15-T  
**Pilot** Kimi Räikkönen  
**Cause** First-lap jostling in the 2015 Austrian GP led to a shunt in which Fernando Alonso's McLaren became collateral.  
**Estimated time/cost of repair**  
 The power unit and transmission were salvaged, but the rest of the car was beyond repair. Cost was in the region of £1.4million.

▼ **Car** McLaren MP4-30  
**Pilot** Fernando Alonso  
**Cause** Cosmetic damage from stones thrown up during first practice at the 2015 Bahrain GP.  
**Estimated time/cost of repair**  
 All teams bring sufficient equipment to grands prix to make non-structural repairs. A touch-up job such as this is cheap and quick, but no doubt Ron would prefer a full respray...



▶ **Car** Lotus E23  
**Pilot** Romain Grosjean  
**Cause** A failed fixing meant a section of engine cover worked loose during FP2 in Barcelona 2015. On the main straight, the entire cover disintegrated.  
**Estimated time/cost of repair**  
 Non-structural carbon bodywork of this size costs £16,500. Replacement and other checks took 55 minutes.



▼ **Car** McLaren MP4-30  
**Pilot** Fernando Alonso  
**Cause** First-lap accident in the 2015 Austrian Grand Prix.  
**Estimated time/cost of repair**  
 Alonso needed a new chassis, and development components were destroyed along with the engine. Total cost, including building new parts and flying them to Austria for the post-race test, was around £1.8m.



PHOTOS: ALASTAIR STALEY/LAT; STEVEN TEE/LAT; CHARLES COATES/LAT; SAM BLOXHAM/LAT





◀ **Car** Force India VJM08  
**Pilot** Nico Hülkenberg  
**Cause** The front wing mountings failed in the 2015 Hungarian GP, resulting in a loss of control and impact with the barrier.  
**Estimated time/cost of repair**  
The damaged nosecone, wing and front suspension had to be replaced between races, at a cost of around £113,000. →







◀ **Car** Mercedes W06  
**Pilot** Lewis Hamilton  
**Cause** A spin in the wet at Montréal 2015 put Hamilton into the wall, nose-first; the recovery crane damaged his rear wing.  
**Estimated time/cost of repair**  
 The nose and front wing needed to be replaced (£80,000) – a simple bolt-on job taking seconds. The damage to the rear was repairable within hours.

✔ **Car** Lotus E23  
**Pilots** Pastor Maldonado, Romain Grosjean  
**Cause** Daniel Ricciardo tried for the inside line at the start of the British Grand Prix, pushing Grosjean into his team-mate.  
**Estimated time/cost of repair**  
 Neither car could continue in the race so the damaged parts were replaced ahead of the next race at a cost of £266,000.



◀◀ **Car** Toro Rosso STR10  
**Pilot** Carlos Sainz  
**Cause** Sainz lost control after adjusting his brake mapping in FP3 at the 2015 Russian GP  
**Estimated time/cost of repair**  
 The 'tub' survived the 46G impact and the team worked overnight to fit new wings, floor, suspension, engine and transmission at a combined cost of £1.3million. 🏎️



PHOTOS: ALASTAIR STALEY/LAT; STEVEN TEE/LAT



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# ANNO DOMINATION

Chinese GP  
1st place

Russian GP  
1st place

Belgian GP 1st place

At Suzuka, equals Ayrton  
Senna's tally of F1 wins 41

US GP 1st place

Australian GP 1st place

Bahrain GP 1st place

British GP 1st place

Italian GP 1st place

Canadian GP  
1st place

Japanese GP  
1st place

PHOTOS: STEVE ETHERINGTON/LAT; STEVEN TEE/LAT



Such was the superiority of Lewis Hamilton in 2015, he rendered the rest of the F1 field mere support to his starring role. But the ensemble cast still managed to put on a darn' good show....

Nico Rosberg  
 Sebastian Vettel  
 Kimi Räikkönen  
 Valtteri Bottas  
 Felipe Massa  
 Daniil Kvyat  
 Daniel Ricciardo  
 Sergio Pérez  
 Nico Hülkenberg  
 Romain Grosjean  
 Max Verstappen  
 Felipe Nasr  
 Pastor Maldonado  
 Carlos Sainz  
 Jenson Button  
 Fernando Alonso  
 Marcus Ericsson  
 Roberto Merhi  
 Alexander Rossi  
 Will Stevens  
 Kevin Magnussen

WORDS STUART CODLING



AUSTRALIAN GP 15/03/15

**Off-track dramas dominated** the agenda in the run-up to the Australian GP, to the point where the race came close to starting with more than a quarter of the field missing. Former Caterham driver Giedo van der Garde took Sauber to court over their decision to run Felipe Nasr and Marcus Ericsson, claiming that he had a valid contract to race for the team. Swiss and Australian courts ruled in van der Garde's favour, dismissing an appeal by Sauber, and the team missed the first track session as the row escalated to a point where their assets were on the verge of being seized. Van der Garde eventually settled out of court.

Kevin Magnussen substituted for Fernando Alonso, who had suffered a concussion in a crash in winter testing, but his McLaren broke down as he drove to the grid. So, too, did Daniil Kvyat's Red Bull, while only one Williams started because Valtteri Bottas had been ruled out by a back injury. Manor Marussia didn't run at all, owing to software problems, leaving just 15 cars on the grid. And then neither Lotus made it to the end of the first lap, owing to a no-fault



Max Verstappen (above) impressed on his debut, aged 17 and Formula 1's youngest race entrant to date. He looked set for a points finish with Toro Rosso, following a mature drive, but engine gremlins put paid to his hopes

collision involving Pastor Maldonado and a power-unit failure for Romain Grosjean.

Just 11 cars finished the race, making this an unpromising start to the season for all but eventual winner Lewis Hamilton, although Sebastian Vettel's third place sparked hopes that Ferrari *might* be able to take the fight to Mercedes this year. →

AUSTRALIA PODIUM

1. Lewis Hamilton
2. Nico Rosberg
3. Sebastian Vettel







Strong in Saturday qualifying, Seb surprised everyone by splitting up the Mercs and taking the win – Ferrari's first since the Spanish Grand Prix in May 2013, 35 races previously



Tension simmered at the post-race press conference (above). Rosberg accused Lewis of compromising his race by only thinking about himself. Lewis replied: "If Nico wanted to get by he could have tried – but he didn't"



MALAYSIAN GP 29/03/15

In the aftermath of the Australian Grand Prix, where it became clear that Renault had not made enough of a competitive leap during the off-season, Red Bull made what would be the first of many threats to quit the sport. Their motorsport advisor, Helmut Marko, claimed that Red Bull's star technician, Adrian Newey, had been "castrated by this engine formula". Team principal Christian Horner also publicly lambasted Renault, who fired right back by accusing the team of "lying".

Off-track manoeuvrings continued as the German GP was struck from the calendar. Pirelli, meanwhile, signalled disquiet over the sport's future technical rules, pointing out that since the tyre contract for 2017 and beyond was up for tender later this season, they would like F1's other stakeholders to reach firm agreement on all the proposed radical changes so that they would know what they were signing up to when entering the tender process.

On track, Manor Marussia finally stuttered into life, securing permission to start both their drivers in spite of them being outside the 107 per cent cut-off in practice, although Will Stevens was withdrawn on the morning of the race. Further up the grid, Vettel took advantage of Ferrari's apparent strength in hot conditions to smash the Mercedes hegemony, only just losing out to Hamilton in qualifying and then using a two-stop strategy to his advantage in the race.

- Nico Rosberg
- Sebastian Vettel
- Kimi Räikkönen
- Valtteri Bottas
- Felipe Massa
- Daniil Kvyat
- Daniel Ricciardo
- Sergio Pérez
- Nico Hulkenberg
- Romain Grosjean
- Max Verstappen
- Felipe Nasr
- Pastor Maldonado
- Carlos Sainz
- Jenson Button
- Fernando Alonso
- Marcus Ericsson
- Roberto Merhi
- Alexander Rossi
- Will Stevens
- Kevin Magnussen

- MALAYSIA PODIUM**
1. Sebastian Vettel
  2. Lewis Hamilton
  3. Nico Rosberg



CHINESE GP 12/04/15

Not for the last time this season, security came under scrutiny after a spectator crossed the track on the main straight during practice.

Mercedes sought to prove that the Malaysian result was just a blip as Hamilton won from his third consecutive pole position, ahead of teammate Nico Rosberg. Vettel finished third, ahead of the second Ferrari of Kimi Räikkönen, to render the podium identical to Melbourne's.

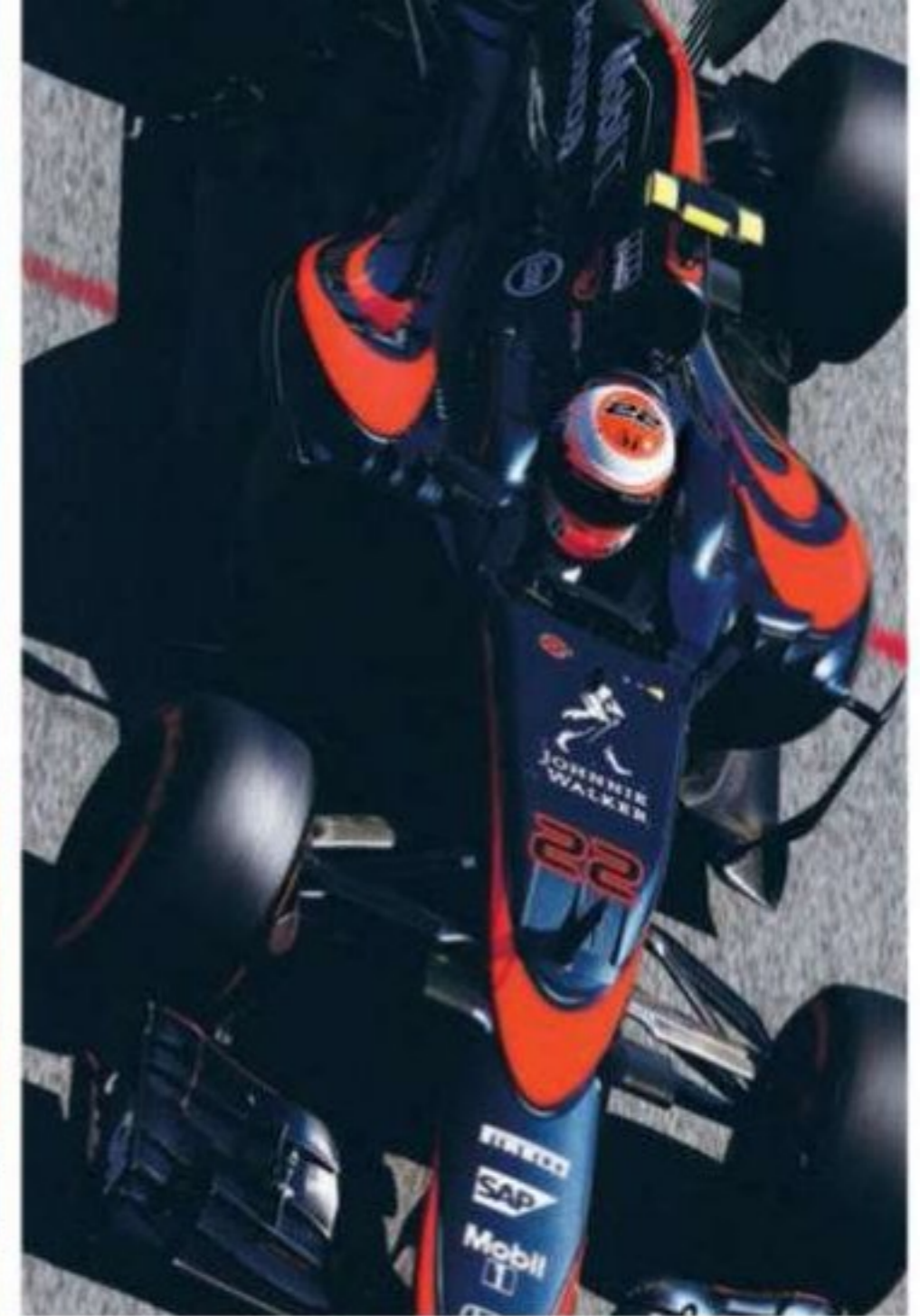
But, as was often the case in the previous season, there was evidence of tension within the Mercedes camp as Rosberg complained over the radio that Hamilton wasn't pushing hard enough, leaving him vulnerable to the pursuing Ferrari of Sebastian Vettel. He repeated the complaint during the post-race conference, adding a degree of spice to what is often an occasion for platitudinous waffle.

Just three grands prix into the season, it was becoming clear that Mercedes and Ferrari were some way clear of their rivals on race pace. This race finished under yellow-flag conditions (owing to Max Verstappen's smoky retirement in an inconvenient spot), disguising in the final results the size of the gap from Räikkönen to the Williams pair of Felipe Massa and Valtteri Bottas. Red Bull, renewed threats to quit by no less a figure than Dietrich Mateschitz echoing in their ears, were out of contention again; Kvyat was an early retirement and Daniel Ricciardo couldn't summon the pace to escape the midfield after a bad start. Reverting to the 2014 brake spec pre-weekend suggested that the team's problems weren't confined to the engine bay...



- CHINA PODIUM**
1. Lewis Hamilton
  2. Nico Rosberg
  3. Sebastian Vettel





## BAHRAIN GP 19/04/15

**Bernie Ecclestone** chose the beginning of the Bahrain weekend, and an interview with the influential and widely quoted Italian paper *Gazzetta dello Sport* to roll a political grenade under the door. Blaming the hybrid engine regulations for declining TV viewing figures, he called for the sport to return to V8 engines with simple KERS, modified to produce more power – namely 1,000bhp. Following a meeting with Ecclestone, Mercedes motorsport boss Toto Wolff spoke for the manufacturers, saying V6s would remain, although they would explore ways of making them louder and more powerful ahead of the new formula in 2017.

Manor Marussia claimed that they would have their 2015 car ready by August. Their close rivals at the back of the grid – McLaren – faced yet another weekend in which technical problems meant limited running in practice, crippling both their efforts to find qualifying and race pace and to learn enough about the MP4-30 to develop it. An energy-recovery system failure forced Jenson Button to withdraw before the start, having failed to set a time in qualifying.

Hamilton won from pole, but Ferrari's pace on the soft tyre was impressive and Vettel would have finished much higher than fifth but for two mistakes, one of which damaged his front wing. Kimi Räikkönen was more clinical this weekend, mugging Rosberg for second when both Mercedes suffered brake problems.

### BAHRAIN PODIUM

1. Lewis Hamilton
2. Kimi Räikkönen
3. Nico Rosberg



### SPAIN PODIUM

1. Nico Rosberg
2. Lewis Hamilton
3. Sebastian Vettel

An ERS failure forced Jenson Button to withdraw without setting a qualifying time in Bahrain (above left) and despite their shiny new livery (above right), introduced in Spain, McLaren's woes continued

## SPAIN 10/05/15

**During the three-week gap** between races – and perhaps more important politically, ahead of an important F1 Strategy Group meeting in early May – former FIA president Max Mosley reappeared on the scene, giving an interview in which he called for significant changes in the sport. He would repeat several of his ideas (such as the principle of giving teams more design freedoms in exchange for them signing up to a budget cap) in a joint TV interview with Ecclestone later in the year.

Meanwhile, the promoters of the Australian Grand Prix sprang a surprise on everyone by announcing a 3 April slot for their 2016 event, suggesting an even more compressed calendar with additional double-header events.

As usual, many of the teams introduced major technical updates to their cars for this first race of the European season. McLaren also changed their livery, dropping the chrome effect. But Force India admitted that their B-spec car would be delayed, owing to the knock-on effects of winter financial shortfalls.

Behind the scenes, Renault and Honda continued to push for drivers to be allowed five power units each rather than four, and the driver 'silly season' got under way early as rumours circulated that Ferrari were courting Valtteri Bottas for 2016. The FIA also wrote to the teams outlining further procedures to police the use of 'accumulators' to flout the fuel-flow regulations.

Rosberg won from pole as Hamilton spent much of the race trying to unseat Vettel from second place, having lost ground at the start. →



Verstappen's collision with Grosjean in Monaco brought out the Safety Car, resulting in Lewis being brought in for an unnecessary pitstop that handed his certain victory to Nico Rosberg



### MONACO GP 24/05/15

Between races, the Strategy Group met at FOM's Biggin Hill facility and agreed a series of measures to improve the spectacle of Formula 1 from 2017 onwards, from reintroducing refuelling and making the cars look more aggressive to slashing lap times by as much as five seconds through aerodynamic changes.

It was subsequently rumoured that cost-saving proposals had been vetoed in favour of the privileged 'Constructors' Championship Bonus Teams' (Mercedes, Red Bull, Ferrari and McLaren) running third cars, or supplying independent teams with 'customer' cars. Crucially, though, the Strategy Group has no executive power, and these measures remained subject to ratification from bodies higher up.

At Monaco Pirelli demonstrated a set of 18-inch tyres on a GP2 car, while in the run-up to the race Bernie Ecclestone poured scorn on the detail of Michelin's pitch for the F1 tyre-supply contract, saying that nothing needed to change.

Lewis Hamilton announced a new three-year contract with Mercedes – which he had negotiated himself – but it was speedy teenager Max Verstappen who stole the limelight out on track, going second fastest in first practice and then showing a brisk turn of speed during the race – until clumsily striking the back of Romain Grosjean's Lotus. That incident would have a profound impact on the outcome of the race, tactically wrongfooting Mercedes, costing Hamilton what had promised to be a dominant win – and leading to allegations of favouritism as Rosberg inherited the victory.



The reintroduction of refuelling (left) had been proposed by the F1 Strategy Group for 2017, but this was roundly rejected by team managers in a meeting with FIA race director, Charlie Whiting



### CANADIAN GP 07/06/15

An enduring off-track image from the Canadian Grand Prix was the sight of senior figures from McLaren, Mercedes, Ferrari and Red Bull meeting behind closed doors but, unfortunately for them (this being a temporary circuit with temporary hospitality suites), not closed windows. This helped fuel concerns from the independent teams that the 'gang of four' were conspiring to exercise more control over the sport. The power games continued as Bernie Ecclestone added his weight to criticism of the F1 Strategy Group, building on comments in Monaco from Force India's Bob Fernley that the group was "not fit for purpose". Meanwhile, one of the Strategy Group's proposals for 2017 – that refuelling be introduced – was unanimously rejected by team managers in a meeting with the FIA's Charlie Whiting.

The FIA also flexed its muscles, issuing a rules clarification regarding front-wing deflection ahead of the grand prix, and drawing oil samples from Hamilton and Vettel's cars afterwards to check for performance-enhancing additives. Nothing was found.

The race itself seemed uneventful as Hamilton won from pole position ahead of Rosberg, with Valtteri Bottas 40s adrift. Comments from the midfielders, however, revealed torment: Daniel Ricciardo described Red Bull as 'lost' after a batch of technical upgrades appeared to yield little effect, while Fernando Alonso responded angrily to a mid-race instruction to save fuel: "I don't want to! Already I have big problems. Driving like this, looking like an amateur..."

#### MONACO PODIUM

1. Nico Rosberg
2. Sebastian Vettel
3. Lewis Hamilton



#### CANADA PODIUM

1. Lewis Hamilton
2. Nico Rosberg
3. Valtteri Bottas



Red Bull had already used up their entire season's supply of Renault power units by the eighth race of the year in Austria following a series of failures, including Ricciardo's spectacular blow-out metres from the finish line in Bahrain (below)



## AUSTRIAN GP 21/06/15

**Michelin confirmed their entry** into the tender process for the next Formula 1 tyre-supply contract, but, crucially, their proposal hinged on driving through a series of technical changes – chief among which was a move to 18-inch wheels – before reaching a commercial settlement. Their pitch received the FIA's blessing, but would founder later when it reached the desk of Bernie Ecclestone.

Red Bull magnate Dietrich Mateschitz used the platform afforded by his home grand prix to fire another shot at Renault: "Besides taking our time and money they have destroyed our enjoyment and motivation." Daniel Ricciardo and Daniil Kvyat, already on their fourth engines of the season, incurred ten-place grid penalties in Austria when they were forced to use fifth units; McLaren were also in grid-drop hell over engine-component changes (Alonso 20; Button 25).

Sensing blood in the water, perhaps, Ferrari chairman Sergio Marchionne floated the notion of supplying Red Bull with engines; behind the scenes, unknown at this time, Red Bull were also talking to Mercedes via Niki Lauda.

Williams brought an upgrade package to Austria but while Felipe Massa finished third behind the Mercedes of Nico Rosberg and Lewis Hamilton, he lacked pace to challenge for outright honours as he had at this circuit last season. Valtteri Bottas finished fifth, hobbling to the flag after cooking his brakes running in the wake of Force India's Nico Hülkenberg, who had leapfrogged him during the pitstop phase.

### AUSTRIA PODIUM

1. Nico Rosberg
2. Lewis Hamilton
3. Felipe Massa



### BRITAIN PODIUM

1. Lewis Hamilton
2. Nico Rosberg
3. Sebastian Vettel



The future of Lotus (above) in F1 seemed uncertain after the British Grand Prix, when the debt-ridden team were faced with a winding-up order on the Monday



## BRITISH GP 05/07/15

**Jean Todt has chosen** to keep a lower profile in F1 than his predecessor, Max Mosley, so many took it as a sign of increasing intensity in the backstage power struggles when he popped his head above the parapet to defend the current 1.6-litre hybrid engine formula from its critics (led by Bernie Ecclestone, with cheerleading from Red Bull team principal, Christian Horner, who had called for a return to V8s). Todt also suggested that the race weekend format could be radically overhauled, and threatened to take action over the cost to customers of the current engines, a notion scorned by Mercedes' Toto Wolff, who said cost controls would cause his company to suffer a huge loss.

CVC chairman Donald Mackenzie also tends to be a rare sight in the Formula 1 paddock, perhaps out of dread of an encounter with fearless *F1 Racing* columnist Dieter Rencken. However, he appeared at Silverstone to deny that the sport was up for sale after rumours emerged that a US/Qatari investment consortium was interested in purchasing CVC's stake.

On track, Ferrari introduced a new wheelnut system after the pitstop delay that cost Sebastian Vettel a podium finish in the Austrian Grand Prix, but it was Williams who looked most likely to upset the balance of power at the front, seizing the lead early on. Rain nixed their hopes and restored the Mercedes balance of power.

Lotus faced a winding-up order on the Monday after the grand prix as their various creditors began clamouring for payment. →

Nico Rosberg  
Sebastian Vettel  
Kimi Räikkönen  
Valtteri Bottas  
Felipe Massa  
Daniil Kvyat  
Daniel Ricciardo  
Sergio Pérez  
Nico Hülkenberg  
Romain Grosjean  
Max Verstappen  
Felipe Nasr  
Pastor Maldonado  
Carlos Sainz  
Jenson Button  
Fernando Alonso  
Marcus Ericsson  
Roberto Merhi  
Alexander Rossi  
Will Stevens  
Kevin Magnussen





### HUNGARIAN GP 26/07/15

**Between races**, the FIA World Motor Sport Council ratified the simplification of the engine and gearbox restrictions, eliminating the unloved in-race sanctions against those who had incurred greater grid penalties than there were available slots. They also announced a 21-race calendar for 2016, which was immediately the subject of complaints, and amended the points system for superlicence qualification.

Jules Bianchi's death in hospital, where he had remained in a coma since his crash in the 2014 Japanese Grand Prix, inevitably cast a shadow over proceedings. Nerves were jangled still further when a wishbone failure caused Sergio Pérez's Force India to roll during practice. Amid all this, almost unnoticed, 2013 GP2 champion Fabio Leimer made his practice debut for Manor Marussia.

Valtteri Bottas said he was going to wait to announce his future as rumours continued to link him with Ferrari. His current employers, Williams, introduced a new front wing in the hope of closing the gap to Ferrari and Mercedes.

Vettel won the grand prix – later declaring it “game on” in the title race – after Hamilton briefly went off on the first lap, damaging his front wing, with Rosberg fluffing his opportunity to capitalise. But an MGU-K failure for Räikkönen denied the team their first one-two since Germany 2010. Daniil Kvyat was the beneficiary, boosting his morale after a troubled season by recording his best finish yet.



**Vettel takes the win in Hungary (above) while in Belgium, Ferrari finally confirmed that Kimi Räikkönen (top) would be kept on for 2016**



### BELGIAN GP 23/08/15

**Those pining for a shake-up** in the competitive order pinned their hopes on the FIA's new restrictions governing the starting procedure, specifically the ban on drivers being coached by their engineers on clutch settings. The governing body also published a prescriptive list of topics that would be permitted in driver-pit radio communications during 2016.

The parlous financial state of some F1 teams made the agenda once again as Lotus, having begun to pay off creditors and having entered negotiations with Renault for a buy-out, faced fresh legal action. Former test driver Charles Pic took the team to court over the amount of running he had in 2014 and, for a time, it looked as if the team's equipment (such as was left after Pastor Maldonado had a 17G impact with a kerb during the race) might be impounded.

Ferrari re-signed Kimi Räikkönen, removing one fulcrum from the ‘silly season’, and leaving the new Haas team as the focus of speculation. Red Bull, meanwhile, had a potential vacancy *behind* the cockpit as news emerged that they were considering an early termination of their Renault contract.

Engines remained a sore topic at McLaren, who had to change so many power unit components that their drivers took a combined grid penalty of 105 places. Pirelli also received unwelcome attention as Nico Rosberg and Sebastian Vettel suffered blow-outs.



### BELGIUM PODIUM

1. Lewis Hamilton
2. Nico Rosberg
3. Romain Grosjean

### HUNGARY PODIUM

1. Sebastian Vettel
2. Daniil Kvyat
3. Daniel Ricciardo



PHOTOS: STEVE ETHERINGTON/LAT; SAM BLOXHAM/LAT; STEVEN TEE/LAT; CHARLES COATES/LAT; ALA STAIR STALEY/LAT; WILL TAYLOR-MEDHURST/LAT





Relations between McLaren and Honda become even more strained, as Honda chief Yasuhisa Arai (pictured above with McLaren's Ron Dennis) endured a bruising encounter with the press in Monza



### ITALIAN GP 06/09/15

**Pirelli announced new** minimum tyre pressures after a post-Spa investigation revealed “a significant number of cuts” in their tyres. But they were irked by Vettel’s criticism after the Belgian GP, pointing out that his one-stop strategy had been risky. Bernie Ecclestone supported his allies in old-school style, summoning the drivers for a dressing down and telling them to stop criticising Pirelli.

Mercedes brought a new engine spec that rivals described as “scary”, even though Rosberg had to revert to an older unit (which blew up during the race) after a leak contaminated his new one. At the other end of the power and reliability scale, relations between Honda and McLaren reached a nadir when engine boss Yasuhisa Arai was brutally tag-teamed by Fleet Street during McLaren’s press conference. His F1 future floating in the ether, Jenson Button remained unconfirmed for 2016 as the team dithered over exercising an option to keep him.

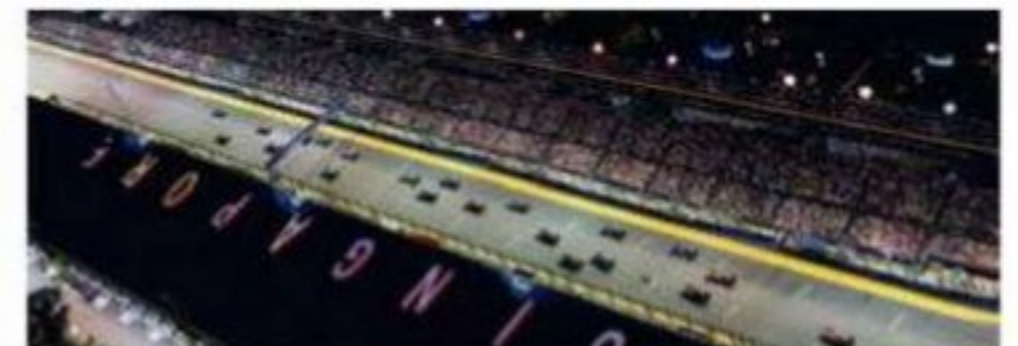
Beleaguered Lotus had to borrow tyre blankets from rivals after overnight rain damaged theirs, and with the future of the Italian GP once more under threat, Sebastian Vettel made an emotional appeal for Monza to remain on the calendar. Runaway winner Hamilton later escaped sanction after his tyre pressures were measured below the mandatory limits on the grid. A day later, and having served notice on Renault, Red Bull learned that Mercedes had ruled out supplying them with engines in 2016.

All in all, this was not a weekend in which the sport covered itself in glory.

- Nico Rosberg
- Sebastian Vettel
- Kimi Räikkönen
- Valtteri Bottas
- Felipe Massa
- Daniil Kvyat
- Daniel Ricciardo
- Sergio Pérez
- Nico Hülkenberg
- Romain Grosjean
- Max Verstappen
- Felipe Nasr
- Pastor Maldonado
- Carlos Sainz
- Jenson Button
- Fernando Alonso
- Marcus Ericsson
- Roberto Merhi
- Alexander Rossi
- Will Stevens
- Kevin Magnussen



An intruder (above) walked out onto the track at Marina Bay and darted in front of Sebastian Vettel, bringing out the Safety Car



### SINGAPORE GP 20/09/15

**Fears that this race** would be disrupted by smog caused by Indonesian forest fires came to nothing, but what arboreal clearance failed to bring about was achieved by a man who took a short cut across the track during the race. The British national was later jailed for six weeks.

Roberto Mehri arrived to learn his place at Manor Marussia would be taken for five of the remaining races – including this one – by Alexander Rossi. His was not the only unpleasant surprise, for the Mercedes team endured a stinker when they couldn’t get their tyres to work and were at a loss to explain it. Sebastian Vettel benefitted from their slump, and while Daniel Ricciardo closed in at the end of each stint, two Safety Car periods frustrated his challenge.

It emerged over the course of the weekend that the much-maligned F1 Strategy Group had agreed a cost cap for engines (£8.5million a year, where teams are believed to be spending up to £14.2m), as well as a ban on windtunnel testing. These would then be advanced to the FIA World Motor Sport Council for ratification. Seasoned Strategy Group watchers agreed that they would believe it if and when they saw it. →

### ITALY PODIUM

1. Lewis Hamilton
- 2 Sebastian Vettel
3. Felipe Massa

### SINGAPORE PODIUM

1. Sebastian Vettel
2. Daniel Ricciardo
3. Kimi Räikkönen





Great Brits: Jenson Button (below) ends speculation by confirming he will stay at McLaren for 2016; and in Austin (right) Lewis Hamilton takes his third F1 world championship



### RUSSIAN GP 11/10/15

Ahead of the Russian Grand Prix, the FIA released a substantially rejigged version of the 2016 calendar, moving the early grands prix forward to make the schedule less compressed, but positioning the new European Grand Prix at Baku on the same weekend as the Le Mans 24 Hours. The governing body also announced new exhaust regulations, with a view to making the cars louder, and a clarification on track limits – but there was nothing about engine cost caps or windtunnel bans. Jean Todt later accused Ferrari of exercising their veto to kill the former concept.

Sochi's organisers announced that the race would take place in the evening, under artificial lights, from 2017. F1's participants simply hoped for an increase in organisational efficiency – first practice was delayed after a track-cleaning vehicle leaked diesel over the circuit.

As the sport turned its collective eyes towards 2016, Jenson Button finally announced a year's extension to his McLaren deal, while Manor Marussia formalised an engine-supply arrangement with Mercedes and a gearbox deal with Williams. But attention quickly returned to the here-and-now when a brake failure pitched Carlos Sainz into a 46G impact with a Tecpro barrier, a stark reminder that for all the talk of business, the sport cannot afford to become complacent about safety.

- Nico Rosberg
- Sebastian Vettel
- Kimi Räikkönen
- Valtteri Bottas
- Felipe Massa
- Daniel Kvyat
- Daniel Ricciardo
- Sergio Pérez
- Nico Hülkenberg
- Romain Grosjean
- Max Verstappen
- Felipe Nasr
- Pastor Maldonado
- Carlos Sainz
- Jenson Button
- Fernando Alonso
- Marcus Ericsson
- Roberto Merhi
- Alexander Rossi
- Will Stevens
- Kevin Magnussen

### RUSSIA PODIUM

1. Lewis Hamilton
2. Sebastian Vettel
3. Sergio Pérez



### US GP 25/10/15

It seemed that the outcome of the US GP would be a foregone conclusion, as Ferrari opted to give new engines to both their drivers and swallow the subsequent penalty. Renault also announced that they had spent development 'tokens' on a new power unit specification that would be available from Austin onwards, although both Red Bull and Toro Rosso gave a lukewarm response. Honda, too, had made changes, placing a 'phase four' engine at Fernando Alonso's disposal.

Freak weather battered the Circuit of The Americas, forcing second practice to be cancelled and qualifying to be postponed until Sunday morning. There were signs of storms off-track, too, as Bernie Ecclestone dropped spoilers to the press concerning the FIA's plans to open a tender process for a low-cost engine – all part of the greater wranglings between the governing body, the commercial rights holder, and the increasingly powerful engine manufacturers.

Had the track remained wet Daniel Ricciardo – still uncertain as to whether his team would participate in Formula 1 next year – could have sprung an upset, but on slick tyres Lewis Hamilton regained the initiative – and, having already disposed of his team-mate, claimed his third world championship. →

### US PODIUM

1. Lewis Hamilton
2. Nico Rosberg
3. Sebastian Vettel



PHOTOS: STEVEN TEE/LAT; STEVE ETHERINGTON/LAT; GLENN DUNBAR/LAT





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- Le Mans 24hr
- WEC - SPA - Nurburgring - Sakhir

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HISTORIC EVENTS	MONACO HISTORIC MILLE MIGLIA GOODWOOD FESTIVAL LE MANS CLASSIC GOODWOOD REVIVAL	Escorted Tour Package By-Air Coach Tours Self Drive

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A minute's silence in Brazil (above) for the victims of road accidents was revised to also honour the victims of the Paris terror attacks; in the race, Max Verstappen proved overtaking hadn't gone out of fashion (right)



#### MEXICAN GP 01/11/15

**Mexico City's return** to the F1 calendar after a 23-year absence met with great excitement, but the slippery track surface – caused by late application of the asphalt, owing to poor weather – proved a hindrance throughout the weekend.

Off-track, the sport's stakeholders digested the FIA's dual bombshell in which the governing body announced the tender for a low-cost engine from 2017 and pointed the finger at Ferrari for shooting down cost-cap proposals. Mercedes revealed what had scuppered their talks with Red Bull: namely the need for agreement with Renault, owing to road-car partnerships between the two, and Red Bull's inertia when invited to suggest joint marketing initiatives that might offset any loss Mercedes' F1 team might suffer through supplying a strong rival. This left Red Bull with just two options to continue in the sport: kiss and make up with Renault, or arm-wrestle with Ron Dennis over Honda.

Three key figures in the Manor Marussia organisation – technical consultant Bob Bell, team principal John Booth and sporting director Graeme Lowdon – all handed in their resignations. Bell had only joined in June. Rumours suggested a disagreement with owner Stephen Fitzpatrick over the team's direction.

The Haas team finally confirmed F1's worst-kept secret, announcing Esteban Gutiérrez as their second driver for 2016.

#### MEXICO PODIUM

1. Nico Rosberg
2. Lewis Hamilton
3. Valtteri Bottas



#### BRAZILIAN GRAND PRIX 15/11/15

**Staff changes at Manor Marussia** continued as former McLaren sporting director Dave Ryan (who departed amid the fallout from 'Lie-gate' in 2009) joined the team as racing director. Tavo Hellmund, the businessman who was one of the prime movers behind the construction of the Circuit of The Americas, revealed himself as part of a consortium interested in buying the team.

CoTA itself suffered another blow – on top of the storm damage that occurred in the week following its grand prix – when the state of Texas reduced its annual funding for the facility. Lewis Hamilton was also in the wars, claiming to be suffering from a fever, and arriving late at Interlagos after enforced bed rest following a minor car accident in Monaco.

The tragic events in Paris on Friday inevitably had an impact, but when FIA president Todt refused to budge on the issue of a minute's silence – there was already going to be one for the victims of road accidents as part of Todt's global road-safety drive – the result was an unseemly fudge. Romain Grosjean pointedly held a French flag during the silence.

After a largely uneventful grand prix, many drivers lamented the lack of overtaking in modern F1. They should perhaps watch a replay of Max Verstappen's race... →

#### BRAZIL PODIUM

1. Nico Rosberg
2. Lewis Hamilton
3. Sebastian Vettel







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Floundering Manor and Sauber both sought advances on their 2015 constructors' prize money




ABU DHABI GP 29/11/15

Between races, Williams dropped their appeal against Felipe Massa's exclusion from the Brazilian Grand Prix on account of it having no bearing on their finishing position in the constructors' championship. Fighting the case would, they said, be an unnecessary expense.

Costs, not for the first or last time this season, came to the forefront once more as it emerged that both Manor Marussia and Sauber had sought advances on their share of F1's commercial revenues. Embattled Lotus, meanwhile, found themselves caught in the horse-trading between putative new owners Renault and F1's commercial rights holders, having to wait once more while their equipment was held at the airport awaiting payment of an overdue bill.

Not everyone was on the same page regarding cost controls, though; the F1 Commission voted against the FIA's proposed 'budget engine'. The governing body did manage to assert its authority elsewhere, though, clamping down on loopholes in the aerodynamic rules that might enable the larger teams to use partner teams to aid their own aero development.

Mercedes ended the year in a position of dominance as Nico Rosberg led another one-two ahead of a frustrated Lewis Hamilton, and all eyes quickly turned to 2016 as a 12-hour tyre test got under way on the Tuesday following the grand prix. Pirelli's capacity to engineer more unpredictability could be the key to other teams building a more regular challenge to Mercedes over the coming season. 

Nico Rosberg took a third consecutive victory in Abu Dhabi. Title-wise will it be third time lucky for him in 2016?



ABU DHABI PODIUM

1. Nico Rosberg
2. Lewis Hamilton
3. Kimi Räikkönen

F1 2015

DRIVERS' CHAMPIONSHIP

1st	<b>Lewis Hamilton</b>	381pts
	Mercedes	
2nd	<b>Nico Rosberg</b>	322pts
	Mercedes	
3rd	<b>Sebastian Vettel</b>	278pts
	Ferrari	
4th	<b>Kimi Räikkönen</b>	150pts
	Ferrari	
5th	<b>Valtteri Bottas</b>	136pts
	Williams	
6th	<b>Felipe Massa</b>	121pts
	Williams	
7th	<b>Daniil Kvyat</b>	95pts
	Red Bull	
8th	<b>Daniel Ricciardo</b>	92pts
	Red Bull	
9th	<b>Sergio Pérez</b>	78pts
	Force India	
10th	<b>Nico Hülkenberg</b>	58pts
	Force India	
11th	<b>Romain Grosjean</b>	51pts
	Lotus	
12th	<b>Max Verstappen</b>	49pts
	Toro Rosso	
13th	<b>Felipe Nasr</b>	27pts
	Sauber	
14th	<b>Pastor Maldonado</b>	27pts
	Lotus	
15th	<b>Carlos Sainz</b>	18pts
	Toro Rosso	
16th	<b>Jenson Button</b>	16pts
	McLaren	
17th	<b>Fernando Alonso</b>	11pts
	McLaren	
18th	<b>Marcus Ericsson</b>	9pts
	Sauber	
19th	<b>Roberto Merhi</b>	0pts
	Manor Marussia	
20th	<b>Alexander Rossi</b>	0pts
	Manor Marussia	
21st	<b>Will Stevens</b>	0pts
	Manor Marussia	
22nd	<b>Kevin Magnussen</b>	0pts
	McLaren	

F1 2015

CONSTRUCTORS' CHAMPIONSHIP

1st	<b>Mercedes</b>	703pts
2nd	<b>Ferrari</b>	428pts
3rd	<b>Williams</b>	257pts
4th	<b>Red Bull</b>	187pts
5th	<b>Force India</b>	136pts
6th	<b>Lotus</b>	78pts
7th	<b>Toro Rosso</b>	67pts
8th	<b>Sauber</b>	36pts
9th	<b>McLaren</b>	27pts
10th	<b>Manor Marussia</b>	0pts



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# CV

## STOFFEL VANDOORNE

**Born** Kortrijk, Belgium

**Date of birth** 26 March 1992

**2015** Wins the GP2 drivers' championship with ART Grand Prix

**2014** Finishes second in GP2 with ART

**2013** Finishes second in Formula Renault 3.5 with Fortec, taking four wins

**2012** European Formula Renault 2.0 champion with Josef Kaufmann Racing

**2011** Finishes fifth in the Formula Renault 2.0 European championship with KTR

**2010** Wins the F4 Eurocup series

**2009** Wins the RACB young driver programme



"When I was at school I competed in loads of sports, such as football, tennis, judo, karate and handball," says Stoffel. "But karting was the one I was most interested in, and that's the one that I wanted to do above everything else."

As the years progressed, he was able to raise the money to compete in both the Belgian national championship, KF2, which he won, in 2008, and also the world championship, in which he was runner-up in 2009. At the end of that year the Belgian Motorsport federation, the RACB, held a shoot-out at Le Mans for six up-and-coming Belgian racers, in identical 1.6-litre Formula Renault cars. Three days of running culminated in a 20-minute qualifying session, in which the fastest driver would be given the

McLaren have promoted their Belgian protégé **Stoffel Vandoorne** to the role of Formula 1 test and reserve driver for 2016. Can he build a future where Kevin Magnussen missed out?

**WORDS** JAMES ROBERTS

**PORTRAIT** STEVEN TEE/LAT

**It's early Sunday morning** in Interlagos and Stoffel Vandoorne is sitting outside the McLaren hospitality unit in the sunshine, shades on, checking his mobile phone as he waits for breakfast. It's a sad reality that test and reserve drivers spend rather a lot of time in solitary contemplation during grand prix weekends.

Vandoorne, 23, has stepped into the role recently vacated by Kevin Magnussen when McLaren chose not to renew the Dane's contract. Magnussen had done little wrong during his tenure at Woking; it shows just how fickle Formula 1 can be when racers don't have the chance to prove themselves every fortnight.

"A number of drivers have won everything on the way to Formula 1 but haven't been given a proper shot when they got there," notes Vandoorne as *F1 Racing* follows him inside the McLaren hospitality unit for a breakfast of Belgian waffles. "It's the way F1 has been for a couple of years. It's always been very competitive and there have been a number of talents that haven't made it, which is a shame."

Vandoorne has been on the team's radar for a few years now, having first visited Woking in early 2012. He was formally placed on their young driver programme when he scooped the 2-litre Formula Renault title at the end of that season. He's an intelligent, conscientious young man who fell into motor racing almost by accident. He grew up in the small Belgian town of Kortrijk, close to the French border. His father – an architect – was working on a project at the local kart track one day; he took his young son along with him, and Stoffel spent the afternoon driving on the indoor kart track. He was hooked.

Soon, with the help of a motorsport-mad uncle (who would go on to become his mechanic in karting), Stoffel began to display his talents in more powerful machinery and started to climb the karting hierarchy.

budget to progress to cars. Vandoorne's victory paid for his graduation into F4 Eurocup, which he won first time out. Victory followed in 2-litre Formula Renault, and he put those winnings towards a year in Renault 3.5 World Series.

"In my first year I battled closely with Kevin Magnussen and finished second to him in the championship," admits Vandoorne. "But he was in his second season in the category and I was in my first. That was an important and very successful year for me, because it was also my first as a McLaren junior driver."

Vandoorne became part of the FIA Young Driver Excellence Academy in 2011, headed up by former racer Alex Wurz whose influence in Formula 1 extends far and wide. Wurz used his contacts at McLaren to arrange introductions for Stoffel to McLaren's then sporting director Sam Michael and chief engineer Phil Prew.

"I had an informal meeting with them, where we talked mainly about cars, but they wanted to understand about my technical ability and my way of thinking," recalls Vandoorne. "After I won the Renault championship, Sam Michael asked if I wanted to join McLaren's young driver programme. Obviously, I didn't hesitate."

Just as they did with Lewis Hamilton, McLaren helped place Vandoorne at ART in GP2 where he instantly set the 2014 series alight, qualifying on the front row and winning his debut GP2 race in Bahrain. Despite a few inevitable rookie hiccups, he was well into his groove by season's end, taking four wins and four poles in a row, to pip Felipe Nasr to the runner-up spot behind Jolyon Palmer. And at the time of our chat, on the morning of the Brazilian GP, he'd dominated his second season of GP2, winning the title with two events remaining.

"It's been everything or nothing for me this year," he says. "There is always pressure because I knew after coming second last year I *had* to win it in 2015, but I feel that I've handled it well. I've broken almost every record in GP2, so that shows how strong my season has been."

To avoid him spending an entire year on the sidelines, Honda are looking to position Stoffel in Japan next year. At the end of this season he tested a Super Formula car, a machine similar in speed and downforce to a GP2 car. "And there's only one or two clashes with F1, so it would be possible to do both," he notes.

"I don't have a race seat in F1 for next season, but hopefully I can get one in 2017 – that's what I'm working on, flat-out. I've done everything right, everything that has been asked of me, and I'll continue to work hard. Unfortunately, there are no guarantees in this sport." **F1**



# Felipe Nasr

The Sauber racer opens up about his slip down the order after his brilliant debut, support from Kimi... and his all too similarly named compatriot

WORDS JAMES ROBERTS PORTRAITS ALASTAIR STALEY/LAT

**Some drivers have** a trademark look: Lewis Hamilton has his chains, Pastor Maldonado has his braces and Fernando Alonso a bushy beard. For Sauber's Felipe Nasr, it's a vivid yellow cap emblazoned with the logo of sponsor, Banco do Brasil, which he wears constantly.

The cap is firmly in place as we huddle inside the Sauber hospitality unit in Suzuka. Japan in autumn can go one of two ways: hot and humid, or a constant deluge of freezing rain. Today, it's the latter. Yet despite the miserable weather, Nasr, 23, is in high spirits, flashing a bright smile when he spots the stack of question cards from the readers of *F1 Racing*.

After a quick re-positioning of the cap for the cameras, Nasr turns over the first card – and immediately recognises one of our readers...

**Would you like to try other types of racing in the future? Like rallying? We have nice roads here in Finland.**

*Sini Salminen, Finland*

This is from Sini?

**FIR:** Do you know her?

**FN:** I recognise her. She's a big fan, I tell you.

She's been in touch with me many times. Yes, I've always enjoyed racing and it doesn't matter what it is. Not long ago I drove in the Daytona 24 Hours and I had a podium finish on my debut. I'd like to do it again and I believe that you can learn something from new experiences. But rallying? I don't know if it's my thing. I have a big respect for the guys doing rallying because it's something very different. Maybe I'll try it in the future, I don't know.

**FIR:** And in Daytona, at night, in the rain on the banking, how is it?

**FN:** It's quite grippy, actually, much more than you would imagine. Obviously it depends on how heavy the rain is, but from what I remember it's not too bad. We go fast on the banking, 185mph, which is an amazing experience.

**Have there ever been any funny instances where you've been mistaken for another F1 driver with a very similar name?**

*Stuart Morrall, Australia*

There is a lot of confusion about Felipe Massa and I; sometimes people can't get the surnames right, but any funny instances? Once I arrived

at the track and had people calling me 'Carlos Sainz' and I had to say, 'That's not me, mate!'

**How did you get into racing?**

*Kirsty Bayliss, UK*

My family have been involved in motorsport for over 30 years. They have a racing team back in Brazil, run by my Uncle Amir and his three brothers, and they have run stock cars, touring cars, prototypes and single-seaters. I was born into the middle of all of this, but I never imagined that I was one day going to be a driver.

I enjoyed watching the races and I was in contact with the mechanics, engineers and truck drivers. I grew up in that environment and by the time I was seven or eight I had my first kart. It was very different from anything I'd done before. I enjoyed the experience and realised I wanted to do this for myself.

**FIR:** And now you're the quickest in your family?

**FN:** Should be!

**Which car do you drive on the road?**

*Kerstin Popp, Austria*

It's a BMW M4. →







## YOU ASK THE QUESTIONS

### Describe your driving style.

*Francisco Meireles, Brazil*

This is difficult to do. Some people think that all you need to be a driver is to be fast, but it goes beyond that. It's about knowing when to attack, when to defend, how to position the car and understand what it is doing. There are so many things that go beyond just being a driver and the thing I try to work on most of all is consistency.

### A few years ago, you said you needed to run only five laps to learn everything you needed to know about any circuit. How about now? Has that changed?

*Simone Vestidello, Italy*

I don't think it has changed much. In five or six laps you can get a very good idea of where to place your car. You gain a good understanding of kerbs and bumps over the track. The more you run, the more you see and the more you try. It's easier to get to know a track now in F1 because we have three practice sessions. In all the series I'd done before, like Formula BMW, we had just half an hour of free practice before qualifying.

### Some people might describe you as a 'pay driver'. What's your answer to that?

*Alan Stoner, UK*

That's your opinion but if you look at my career, I won one of the most significant championships

before entering Formula 1. When I came to Europe at the age of 16, I competed in the Formula BMW championship and won it straight away, in my first year. I had five or six offers to guide me to Formula 1. One of them was from Red Bull, and I had Gravity and people from



### What's your favourite corner, and why?

*James Manzano, USA*

I like the Parabolica at Monza (below) because it's very challenging. You arrive with very low downforce on the car. So it's always on the edge and it's tricky: as you come out of it, you feel the rear going light in the car and you need to be very brave to get it right.

McLaren looking. I had interest from many people and I chose to be managed by Steve Robertson, Kimi Räikkönen's manager and he supported my career financially and looked after me when I was 17. Back then I had my own car and my own salary. I was paid to drive a racing car and not many people get that opportunity at such a young age. All my career I've won in every series I've raced in. The only one that I was missing was the GP2 championship – but I came close to it.

### Sauber gave you your start in F1, but what was it about them that made you choose them, and then stay with them for 2016?

*Lucy Carr, UK*

Sauber are the ideal place to begin a career in Formula 1. You look at the history of the team and so many drivers came into F1 with Sauber first. They have a good background and a good approach for new drivers. You need the right people surrounding you, so when I got to my first race in Australia, I knew exactly what I had to do. Two years with Sauber was always the plan. I never intended to change teams after one year.

### Which famous person would you most like to have a meal with?

*Pam Berryman, UK*

I would say Michael Schumacher, to be honest. →

PHOTO: GLENN DUNBAR/LAT







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**YOU ASK THE QUESTIONS**



**Of all the F1 circuits you've raced at so far, which one has proved to be the most challenging?**

*Lewis Wells, UK*

Monaco. I can put that on the list, for sure. It's very challenging and there is no margin for error. Because of its flow, if you don't have your mind focused completely on the driving you aren't going to go anywhere.

**FIR:** Is it harder than Singapore?

**FN:** What makes Singapore tricky is the race length and the heat and humidity. But the most challenging circuit is Monaco.

**Would you like to have stayed on at Williams?**

*Paul Finch, UK*

[Chuckles] All I would say is that I had a really good time at Williams and most of the experience I got there was very useful. I learnt a lot from the engineers and the people I worked with. I had the option to stay another year as a reserve driver, but when the option came to have a race seat at Sauber I didn't want to miss it and I think I made the right choice. If you look back at the fifth place in Australia on my debut, I wouldn't have changed that for anything.

**Given the recent tragic death of Jules Bianchi, what are your feelings about closed or protected cockpits? Do you think this goes against the very essence of Formula 1, or do you believe it is a natural safety progression?**

*Steve Durney, UK*

I think it's a good idea to have this. Of course we need the right people to design and study these cockpits, but we cannot control parts once there

is a crash, because cars fly apart and if you're unlucky you might hit one of them. I'm fully supportive of the idea of having closed cockpits for better safety. For us it's just a case of getting used to it, there isn't a problem with driving it. For example, if you look at prototypes, they have fully enclosed cockpits and if we move in that direction, then, for us, it's just a case of getting used to the view inside the car.

**What qualities does a female boss bring to the team?**

*Adrian King, UK*

I think that I'm the only driver to have worked with two female team bosses, Claire Williams [as Williams reserve driver in 2014] and Monisha Kaltenborn. It's been really good to work with them. They've both paid extra attention to things that maybe others wouldn't. F1 should not be closed to women and we should have not only female team bosses, but engineers and mechanics, too.

**Is it true that Kimi Räikkönen is, or has been, one of your personal sponsors?**

*Agne Lazauskaite, UK*

That is correct. Back in 2010, Kimi and Steve Robertson were the ones who were involved in my management programme. Financially and personally, Kimi came to support me over the years. He has given me quite a few tips and when Steve came up with the idea of managing my career, Kimi was the first one to get involved with that.

**FIR:** Do you chat much now?

**FN:** We do. Kimi appears from the outside to not talk much, but he's a human being and we get on very well together.

**After a fantastic start to your debut season, can you pinpoint why the car's performance seems to have tailed off?**

*Sandy Coutts, UK*

At the beginning of the 2015 season, most of the teams were still not performing at 100 per cent. We took the most out of the car at that time. It had been strong during winter testing, so we were able to score early points, most notably in Australia, where our car was especially competitive compared to the others. But if you don't develop the car from race to race, you're not going to be competitive. After the Australian Grand Prix, we didn't bring any major updates until Singapore, so that's why the car has been underperforming so far. We haven't been competing up at the front because it's a matter of investment. This team didn't score any points in 2014 and that left us with very little to invest in it this year. But I think that over the 2016 season, we'll be able to invest further. **F1**

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# GO!

After a season spent waiting on the sidelines, while gathering valuable experience in Friday practice sessions for Lotus, 2014 GP2 champion **Jolyon Palmer** will make his F1 race debut in March 2016. We caught up with him just after the announcement

**WORDS** JAMES ROBERTS  
**PICTURES** GLENN DUNBAR/LAT

**It's an overcast afternoon** in Mexico City and Jolyon Palmer suddenly finds he has a little time to himself to take a stroll around the Magdalena Mixhuca Sports City, which houses the newly revised Autódromo Hermanos Rodríguez.

Opportunities to walk a track in relative peace come more frequently to test drivers, but since Palmer was confirmed as a Lotus race driver for 2016, his time is coming under increasing demand from engineers, sponsors and the media. *F1 Racing* has managed to get a slot this afternoon to accompany Palmer on an anticlockwise walk around the newly laid start/finish straight and into the stadium section of the new Mexican GP track.

But before we head off, Lotus's PR chief Andy Stobart issues a stern warning: "He must be back in the paddock for 4.15pm for a live interview with the BBC." Jolyon himself is no stranger to the →





microphone, having played a role in GP2 comms throughout 2015, while his father, Jonathan, followed a decade-long career racing in F1 with a stint as Murray Walker's sidekick at the BBC after the death of James Hunt in 1993.

We pause so Jolyon can be photographed on pole position. When he makes his debut next March, he will be hoping he is closer to the front of the grid than his father was when he last started a grand prix. The records show that JP Senior lined up 26th and last for Tyrrell at the 1989 Japanese Grand Prix.

Jolyon spent 2015 as a reserve driver for Lotus, but a race seat became available following Romain Grosjean's departure to the fledgling Haas F1 team. Jolyon's relaxed demeanour should provide a calming counterbalance to the exuberance of team-mate Pastor Maldonado in the Lotus garage for 2016.

For now, Palmer is in Mexico and poised to make his 11th Friday morning practice run of the year. From the outside, FP1 might seem routine, but for a rookie these sessions are invaluable in terms of learning the complex procedures that are a part of modern F1.

"There is no substitute for driving an F1 car," says Palmer as we look down the long straight towards Turn 1. "To be out in FP1 gives me a chance to prove what I can do. I'm not trying to set a new lap record, but equally I'm not hanging about. It focuses me to prove myself as it's my only session of the weekend."

In the latter half of 2015, Palmer's seat time in a couple of the 90-minute sessions on Friday morning has been curtailed for reasons beyond his control. FP1 in Hungary was thwarted by the team's financial difficulties and the related late delivery of their tyre allocation. Then heavy rain struck in both Suzuka and Austin. But in Mexico the apprenticeship to his full-time drive will continue without hiccup.

Prior to F1, 24-year-old Palmer spent four years in GP2, culminating in championship success. Before that, he raced in championships run by his father: T Cars, Formula Palmer Audi and Formula 2. As with GP2, the longer he's spent in a category, the more proficient he has become in that series, which inevitably left some of motor racing's cynics opining that he was benefiting thanks to his family connections.

"In F2, I had a tough first year; it was a big step up from FPA," says Palmer. "The second year I did a lot of homework and really worked

"There is no substitute for driving an F1 car. To be out in FP1 gives me a chance to prove what I can do. I'm not trying to set a new lap record, but equally I'm not hanging about"

on it. I had five wins and another five podiums. So it might have seemed strange that a guy struggling the year before was suddenly doing well. But people in the know knew it was the same story with FPA – there's no way my dad would favour me because that would be suicide for the whole championship. Could you imagine if word got out that I had preferential treatment? But I was beating people, and people don't like to be beaten so they were finding excuses."

Jolyon was less than a year old when his father competed in his final season of racing – in the 1991 British Touring Car championship – two years after he'd retired from F1. Palmer Sr then bought his son a kart to drive around the garden of their family home just south of Horsham in West Sussex. But it wasn't until ten years later that the racing bug finally bit. By other drivers' standards it was a late start, but Palmer Jr's determination and hard work have enabled him to progress through the motor racing ranks to reach Formula 1.

And he came very close to not getting this far: in fact, is lucky even to be alive.

When Jolyon was 16, he was racing quad bikes with friends through the family estate. At full-chat, he looked back over his shoulder, lost his balance, the quad toppled and he hit a tree. The handlebar of the bike ripped into Jolyon's body, causing major internal injuries. One of his kidneys was split in two, he broke a number of ribs, damaged his liver, punctured his lung and chipped his spine. He was airlifted to hospital and spent a week in intensive care.

"I was conscious in the aftermath of the accident, but I couldn't stand up and knew I was in big trouble," says Palmer today. "At the time I was thinking this wouldn't be good for the rest of my season [in Formula Palmer Audi], but it soon became clear it was a lot more serious. After a

month in hospital I had lost a lot of weight and was really weak. I was so lucky, because things could have been different and I could have died.

"I've made a full recovery [as he speaks, he shows us the scars on his torso] and was lucky to survive. It hasn't motivated me more, because I've always been ambitious – but it was a life experience that most people don't have. I'm certainly more careful on a quad bike now..."

Remarkably, Jolyon lost none of his appetite for speed and was back racing the following spring. That determination was once again evident when he was competing in GP2. →





## In the footsteps of his father



**Jonathan Palmer** made his F1 debut in a third Williams at the 1983 European GP held, appropriately, at Brands Hatch. Palmer would later

rescue the ailing Kent circuit, slotting it into a portfolio that includes Oulton Park, Snetterton and Cadwell Park.

Palmer was the Formula 2 champion in 1983. Many years later he would renew his association with that category, since his MotorSport Vision company managed the revived championship in 2009-12.

His Formula 1 career was characterised by drives in small-

budget teams, such as RAM, Zakspeed and Tyrrell. In 1987 he won the Jim Clark Cup, the F1 championship awarded to drivers racing normally aspirated machinery.

At the end of his Formula 1 career, he worked first as a pitlane reporter, and then joined Murray Walker in the commentary box at the BBC until he was replaced by Martin Brundle as UK coverage switched to ITV in 1997.

Two years later, Palmer founded a corporate driving facility at Bedford Aerodrome, the success of which opened the door to the running of various motor-racing championships, and he subsequently acquired some of Britain's best national racing circuits. He currently owns the commercial rights to British Superbikes as well as the new BRDC F4 championship.





“Renault coming in is huge. It’s good for the sport and exciting for me next season”

After racing in glamorous locations such as Monaco or Barcelona on a Sunday, he would then make his way back to the UK to sit a university exam on a cold Monday morning in Nottingham, later graduating with a degree in business management.

In GP2, he gained a reputation as a level-headed racer, who benefits from experience and uses his amassed knowledge to great effect. Combined with his instinctive ability to overtake, this has often enabled him to surprise his rivals on track. He memorably overtook Felipe Nasr twice in one weekend in Hungary last year, invoking the Brazilian’s ire on the podium.

“We were team-mates at Carlin the year before and didn’t end on great terms,” Palmer recounts. “He crashed into me at Spa and I beat him in a straight fight in Singapore. The next year we

were title rivals and I knew I had to beat him in Hungary. I came from a long way back and lobbed it up the inside and we nearly crashed. He wasn’t happy; we had words afterwards.”

With his former GP2 team-mates Marcus Ericsson and Nasr having established themselves at Sauber in F1 in 2015, Palmer is also relishing his chance to prove what he can do. While he had some financial help from his father in GP2, he’s been able to raise funds for F1 from other personal sponsors, including Comma, an oil company based in Kent. But aside from short-term help (which is much needed in Enstone),

## Palmer: the next Jenson Button?



**You have to go back 14 years** to find the last Brit to race for the F1 team based in Enstone – and that was when Renault took over Benetton. Jenson Button raced for them in 2001-02, but struggled due to the horsepower deficiencies of the wide-angle engine. In his second race, in Malaysia, he finished a distant 11th – two laps down. Button described that year as his “most difficult season in motor racing.”

Things barely improved for his second year. Jenson was all set for a podium at Sepang until suspension failure dropped him to fourth, and by Monaco he had been informed by team boss Flavio Briatore that his services would not be required for the following season.

Despite fallow years at Renault and Honda, Jenson’s resilience paid off when he became world champion with Brawn in 2009. There’s a message there for Jolyon Palmer, the next British racer heading for Enstone...

there is greater long-term stability coming, as Renault continue (at the time of *F1 Racing* going to press) their takeover of the squad.

“Renault coming in is huge, because this team would be insecure without them,” says Palmer. “It’s been tough going, but the shareholders have been working through things. Renault coming in is good for the sport and exciting for me next season. I don’t think there’ll be fireworks straight away, but they’ll secure the team financially and will be fully motivated to do a good job.”

As he prepares for his first season as an F1 racer, Palmer is looking to cut his commute by moving from Sussex to Oxfordshire “because the M25 is hell”. It seems sensible: we make it back from our stroll at the appointed hour, but as he strides off to speak to the Beeb, it’s clear that, increasingly, his time is much in demand. **F1**



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The 1937 German Grand Prix, held at the Nürburgring in July. Tazio Nuvolari takes fourth place in his Alfa Romeo 12C in the early days of grand prix racing



THE HISTORY OF F1 PART I



We'll  
call it...

# FORMULA 1

The ritzy, glitzy, precise world of modern F1 has origins that were far more ragtag and bobtail, as the first in our new 12-part series on the history of Formula 1 recounts

WORDS STUART CODLING PICTURES LAT ARCHIVE



**W**e raced horses. We raced chariots. So it was inevitable, even as Karl Benz phut-phutted out of his Mannheim workshop for the first time atop his Patent Motorwagen in 1885, that people would seek to race this curious new invention: the 'auto-car'.

Fast-forward 60 years to 1945. The top level of motor racing had evolved from multi-day time-trial events on public roads to something more akin to the wheel-to-wheel combat that we recognise today. Commercially, though, grand prix racing – Formula 1 wouldn't be codified until 1947 – had been a work in progress even before war brought it to a halt.

Racing really demonstrated its power to capture the public imagination during the 1930s, when fascist governments in Germany and Italy pumped funds into manufacturer programmes that begat propaganda gold – and the first of many performance arms races. Between 1930 and '39, top speeds had risen from around 130mph to 200mph, driven mostly by increasingly exotic fuel cocktails and ever-larger engine displacements. Over the same period, power outputs tripled to over 640bhp as the governing body repeatedly tried and failed to impose rules frameworks on grand prix racing that would constrain the Mercedes, Auto Union and Alfa Romeo engineers' inventiveness. For the drivers, it was a matter of just holding on.

Post-1945, peacetime gave the rulemakers chance to start anew, but with a major problem: there were few racing cars left. You might think that the economic ruination of Europe would leave little appetite for a pursuit as frivolous as motorsport – especially since fuel was rationed – but the first peacetime race meeting was held just months after Berlin's fall. Pre-war racer Jean-Pierre Wimille won the Prisoners' Cup

"Racing really demonstrated its power to capture the public imagination during the 1930s, when fascist governments in Germany and Italy pumped funds into manufacturer programmes, which begat propaganda gold"



Hermann Lang was declared winner of the 1939 European Grand Prix season in Nazi Germany

feature race of the Coupes de Paris event on 9 September 1945, in a Bugatti Type 50 he had last driven six years earlier. Fittingly, given that the race was named to celebrate the lives of wartime soldiers, prisoners and guerrilla fighters, Wimille himself had eluded arrest by the Gestapo in 1944 over his ties to the Resistance and the Special Operations Executive. Reports from the day paint a picture of a ragtag selection of machinery with missing ancillary components, home-made exhausts and cracked old tyres.

Racing needed organisation, machinery and personnel. The pre-war governing body was reborn as the FIA, but since the only available racing cars were whatever had avoided being melted down for munitions during the war, the first peacetime races were run-wot-you-brung affairs, leading to skewed competition. Alfa Romeo's small fleet of supercharged 1.5-litre 158s, built for the 'Voiturette' sub-class (more or less equivalent to GP2) of grand prix racing in the late 1930s, proved to be the most competitive, and generally won whichever races Alfa entered. Most others were mopped up by Maserati's 4CLT, a tube-framed update of the company's pre-war Voiturette offering.

'Formula Libre' – free formula – events were a necessary evil in those first months and years as the FIA mulled over how to structure racing's pecking order. Finally, at the Paris Salon in October 1947, the judgement came down: from 1 January 1948 there would be a Formula A, or Formula 1, for naturally aspirated 4.5-litre and 1.5-litre supercharged cars (letting Alfa carry on racing the 158s); Formula B, or Formula 2, would be for naturally aspirated 2-litre and supercharged 500cc rolling stock. Clear enough, but the lack of new designs would bedevil the new Formula 1 throughout its formative years, no matter how many people flocked to watch, hungry for a brief escape from austerity.

And what of the racing personnel? Who would be the stars? The war had robbed many drivers of what could have been the peak years of their careers, while others had died during the hostilities. Wimille, for instance, had been 31 when Europe went to war. Likewise, Giuseppe Farina and Luigi Villorosi were pushing 40 when racing began again. Other heroes of the 1930s – Tazio Nuvolari, Achille Varzi, Rudolf Caracciola, Hermann Lang, Luigi Fagioli – were over the →

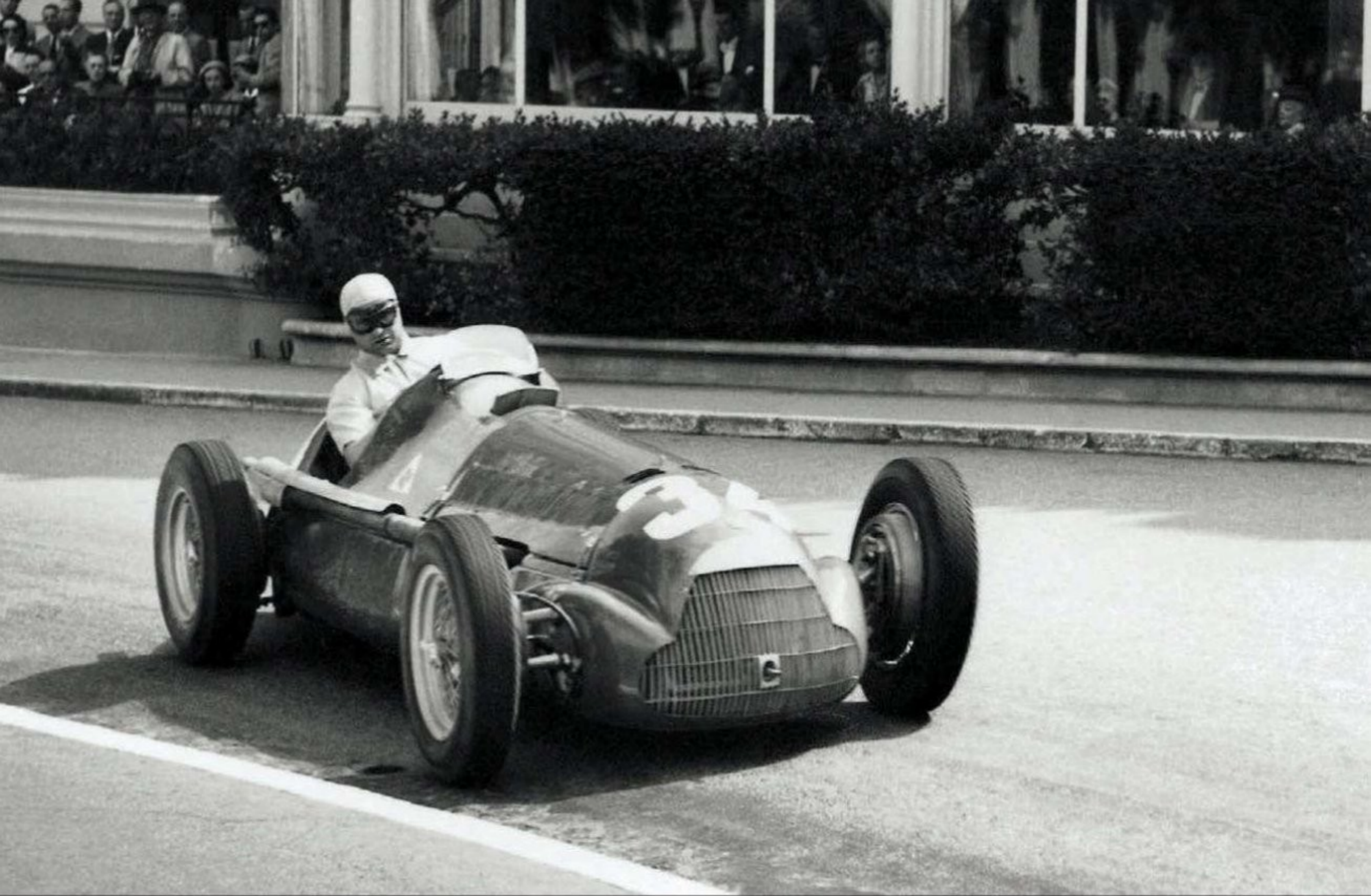




Clockwise from top:  
 Achille Varzi leads Alfa  
 Romeo team-mate Jean-  
 Pierre Wimille at Spa in  
 1947; war hero Wimille  
 wins the 1948 French  
 Grand Prix; Formula 1's  
 first world champion,  
 Giuseppe Farina;  
 Ferrari and Maserati racer,  
 Luigi Villorosi









“One other essential for motor racing, then as now: money. In the late 1940s ‘Formula 1’ was but a label, new and meaningless to the public at large. What gave events traction were names: exotic marques, famous heroes”

Era-defining machinery: Fangio driving the Alfa Romeo 158 (left) a car that dominated the first two seasons of F1; Alberto Ascari in a Ferrari 125 (below), the first machine to carry the Ferrari badge

hill. Thus at many post-war meetings, the fields were bulked out by a rich palette of peculiar characters, including assorted spivs who had made good, and ex-servicemen struggling to find excitement in peacetime.

For those used to living with danger or actively seeking it, motorsport offered plenty. Racing on public roads had always presented crowd-control and safety challenges. But the same post-war principles of expediency that dictated which cars were eligible to race also drove promoters in the late 1940s to hold events in cities, or their suburbs, that were easily reachable by the ticket-buying public, but potentially lethal to those steering rusty make-do-and-mend racing cars. Wimille, for instance, died in Buenos Aires in early 1949 when he crashed into a tree. Accounts differ as to the cause of Wimille’s accident, but the varying claims – that he was swerving to avoid children running across the track, that an axle sheared off, that he was dazzled by the sun as he came around a corner – offer a précis of just some of the hazards of the day.

One other essential for motor racing, then as now: money. In the late 1940s ‘Formula 1’ was but a label, new and meaningless to the public at large. What gave events traction were names: exotic marques, famous heroes. Participants could choose what events they entered, since that’s how racing’s embryonic commercial structure worked; individual event promoters negotiated individual deals with entrants, with starting money based on star quality as well as a prize fund for the winners. Often the money didn’t materialise; motor racing has always been a hunting ground for chancers and crooks...

So the structure remained shaky. Alfa Romeo, not for the first or last time, ran short of money and sat out the 1949 racing season. Former employee Enzo Ferrari, now building cars under

his own name, gleefully lapped up a number of wins with his new 125, powered by a high-revving 1.5-litre V12 designed by fellow Alfa refugee Gioacchino Colombo. Alfa were finally tempted back to the scene in 1950 by a great new promotional opportunity: there had been a European championship in the 1930s, but now the outcome of selected high-calibre grands prix, plus the Indianapolis 500 in the USA, would count towards a world championship for drivers.

In the early years, then, this was not the ‘Formula 1 World Championship’ (now claimed as a trademark by Formula One Management) we know today, but the ‘Drivers’ World Championship’, and the ambition was to encourage top-class entrants from either side of the Atlantic to mingle. But this was before the speed and convenience of the passenger jet, and without a swift means of switching continents the enterprise was doomed to fail. Long-distance travel was slow and resulted in missed races – and missed opportunities to earn. During the Indy 500’s ten-year tenure as a points-paying part of the world championship calendar, only Ferrari, with Alberto Ascari, would launch a serious attempt at the Brickyard.

A smattering of non-championship grand prix events in early 1950 set the tone for the inaugural world championship grand prix in May and the season to follow: the Argentine ace Juan Manuel Fangio, a newcomer to European racing at the age of 38, won the 110-lap, three-hour Grand Prix de Pau on Easter Monday in a Maserati 4CLT. Along the twisting streets of the city on the edge of the Pyrénées – still a challenging F3 venue today – Fangio fought a running battle for the lead with Raymond Sommer’s Ferrari until Sommer slipped back as Fangio proved more decisive in lapped traffic. Pitstops were chaotic; Fangio’s halt for oil and fuel took →





King George VI and Queen Elizabeth attend the inaugural F1 world championship grand prix in 1950

over a minute compared with Scuderia Ferrari's 30-second service for Luigi Villorosi, while Sommer went off to find a new pair of goggles and didn't return until after his car was ready to go. The next weekend, in San Remo, Alfa Romeo appeared, Fangio swapped steeds for a *rosso corsa* 158, and won again. Only six of the 21 starters made it to the chequered flag.

Throughout his career Fangio demonstrated utter ruthlessness in seeking out the most competitive machinery, and for the first two championship seasons the ancient 158, modified and hopped up with ever more exotic fuel blends and aggressive supercharging, was *the* car to have. For the first season, though, Fangio had to support Alfa's team leader, Giuseppe Farina, a 43-year-old survivor of the pre-war era, known to give no quarter on the racetrack.

It was a sunny day in mid-May at the former RAF Silverstone as the first world championship race got under way. King George VI and Queen Elizabeth were in attendance – contemporary reports noted that the Queen appeared startled by the noise as the cars roared away – but there were two notable absences: Scuderia Ferrari, who were dissatisfied with the starting money on offer and snubbed the event, and BRM, who had failed to get their Type 15 cars race-ready and could field only one example for a demonstration run early in the day. As a national prestige project – pamphlets and newspaper puff-pieces lauded the Type 15 as a latterday successor to the best of the pre-war grand prix cars from Germany – BRM would continue to disappoint the home crowd with conspicuous failures and non-appearances for months to come.

So Alfa Romeo dominated as Farina led Fagioli across the line by 2.6s, with Reg Parnell in a third 158 almost a minute down the road. Had Fangio not retired late on with an oil leak, it would have been an Alfa one-two-three-four.

As BRM continued to fail to turn up, and the motley assortment of private entries and pre-war clunkers failed to pose a threat, one team closed in on Alfa: Ferrari. For Enzo, it was personal: he had commissioned the 158s before being ousted from Alfa's racing programme in 1937. By mid-1950 he had introduced the first large-capacity, naturally aspirated V12s, stretching them in steps from 3.3-litres to 4.1, then finally – in September 1950, in front of the home crowd at Monza – to the 4.5-litre limit. Alberto Ascari qualified second to Fangio and briefly took the lead before the new engine blew. →

Eventual race winner Farina leads Fangio at the 1950 British Grand Prix at Silverstone



"There were two notable absences at the 1950 British Grand Prix: Scuderia Ferrari, who were dissatisfied with the starting money on offer and snubbed the event, and BRM, who had failed to get their Type 15 cars race-ready"



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## F1 HISTORY TIMELINE

1906

Ferenc Szisz wins the first international motor race to carry the 'grand prix' title, on a 64-mile course near Le Mans, completing two six-lap runs over two days in his 90bhp Renault 3B 90CV, at an average speed of 62.9mph. The competitors run in a time-trial format, setting off at 90-second intervals on day one. Controversy erupts over Michelin tyres with detachable wheel rims.

1933

At the Monaco Grand Prix, starting positions are determined by times set during practice, rather than by ballot, for the first time.

1938

Manfred von Brauchitsch wins the French GP at Reims in the 3-litre V12-powered Mercedes-Benz W154, averaging 101mph over 64 laps. Grands prix are now wheel-to-wheel events rather than against the clock, and run to around three hours.

1945

The first post-war motor racing event is held in Paris just four months after surrender of Germany, and a week after the official surrender of Japan.

1947

Formula 1's rules are announced by the FIA's sporting committee, the CSI.

1948

Scuderia Ferrari build their first Formula 1 machine, the 125 F1.

1950

The Alfa Romeos finish one-two-three in the first world championship grand prix, two laps ahead of the fourth finisher. Ferrari stay away after failing to agree with promoters about starting money.

1952

After Alfa's withdrawal, F1 verges on extinction as sanctioning bodies across Europe move to adopt Formula 2 as the world championship grand prix formula.

Ferrari and Ascari on record-breaking winning form using F2 cars in 1952 and '53, following the withdrawal of cash-strapped Alfa Romeo from the championship.



"Alfa withdrew from racing in early 1952, prompting a crisis. Promoters felt they would struggle to fill grids and sell tickets, if all that was on offer was a clutch of dominant new Ferraris with a bunch of old nails in pursuit"


Cash-strapped Alfa's only option was to develop the old car, squeezing more power out of the engine at a cost of even greater thirst. It was only a matter of time before Ferrari ended Alfa's supremacy. It happened at Silverstone in 1951, when José Froilán González, in a second-string Ferrari 375 with an old-spec engine, led most of the race and humbled Fangio by 51 seconds. Custom demanded he hand his car over to team leader Ascari, whose gearbox seized mid-race, but for reasons never explained, Ascari let him carry on. Further down the order the troublesome BRM Type 15s made a sole world championship appearance as Parnell and Peter Whitehead, burned by the cars' new internal exhaust routing, finished fifth and seventh.

Farina had won the 1950 title by three points from Fangio, but his star waned, and in 1951 Fangio exerted his supremacy, with two wins to Farina's one. Ferrari, though, by winning three races that season, tipped Alfa over the edge.

With no more resources to develop a new car, Alfa withdrew from racing in early 1952, prompting a crisis. Promoters felt they would struggle to fill grids and sell tickets, if all that was on offer was a clutch of dominant new Ferraris with a bunch of old nails in pursuit. France's sanctioning body lobbied for F1 to be shelved

and for grands prix to run Formula 2 cars instead. The FIA had announced a new F1 engine formula for 1954, but this provided a disincentive to develop new cars for 1952-53. Formula 1's immediate future therefore hung on BRM.

BRM boss Raymond Mays and his network of influential friends had fought against moves to drop Formula 1 from grands prix, but the team inadvertently provided the coup de grâce in April 1952 when they skipped a non-championship race in Turin to furnish a car for Fangio to test at Silverstone. Clubs all over Europe fell into line with their French counterparts and dropped F1 cars from their most prestigious events.

Enzo Ferrari couldn't have cared less. He already had a perfectly serviceable Formula 2 car in the workshop and one of the fastest drivers in the world on his roster. Ascari won nine consecutive grands prix over the course of 1952-53 (discounting the Indy 500), a record that would stand for decades to come. But would Enzo be ready for the return of Formula 1 machinery in 1954? 



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# FINISHING STRAIGHT

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## Nico makes it three in a row

How different the 2015 championship could have been, had Rosberg shown this kind of dominance – six consecutive poles; three consecutive wins – sooner

### REPORTS



#### 104 BRAZILIAN GP REPORT

Another one-two for Mercedes, with Lewis and Nico's positions reversed



#### 108 ABU DHABI GP REPORT

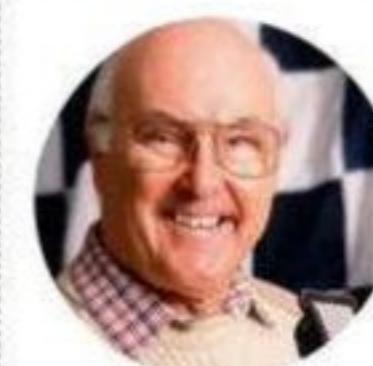
Nico finishes the season on a high, describing himself as "ecstatic"

### OPINION



#### 112 INBOX

Your views on the importance of fans... and the repurposing of leaf blowers



#### 114 MURRAY WALKER

His favourite F1 films, from the glitz of *Rush* to the grit of new documentary *The Green Hell*



# RACE DEBRIEF

by James Roberts

## Brazilian Grand Prix

15.11.15 / Interlagos



# Hamilton: fever or diva?

The world champion fulminates after Mercedes refuse to sanction an alternative strategy at Interlagos

**The question being asked** on Sunday night in Brazil was whether Nico Rosberg had raised his game, or if Lewis Hamilton's form had dropped? For this was Rosberg's second straight win from his fifth consecutive pole position. As for Hamilton, since he wrapped up the title in Austin he has twice been bested by his team-mate.

Just before the race weekend, Hamilton had been involved in a road-traffic accident in the early hours of Tuesday morning close to his home in Monaco, and he'd delayed his arrival in South America on account of suffering from a "fever". But whatever the reason for the current competitive order, Rosberg had the advantage in qualifying and maintained his position on race day. One suggestion was that a change to the car, or in particular the mandatory increase in tyre pressures post-Monza, might have had an effect on Hamilton's performance.

Rosberg, the winner of the Brazilian GP, didn't agree: "I've just raised my game, that's it," he

insisted, soon after taking the chequered flag. In contrast Hamilton replied: "Well, from Singapore onwards there has been a change to the car..."

And when Merc technical boss Paddy Lowe was asked whether Lewis was still determined to fight for victories this season, his answer was emphatic: "He really wanted to win here."

The duel Rosberg and Hamilton began in qualifying carried over into the 71 laps on Sunday afternoon, once Rosberg held the lead from pole position. Though they ran close, he had enough of a margin over Hamilton so that when they pitted to switch from softs to medium tyres on laps 13 and 14 respectively, Rosberg remained ahead – even though the team had to hold him fractionally longer in the pitlane as Sebastian Vettel passed by on the way to his own box.

When they resumed their fight, Hamilton was just 0.9s behind and took advantage of having DRS available to him on both the start/finish straight and the run down to Turn 4. On lap 17

he posted a blistering 1m 16.237s lap (compared to Rosberg's 1m 16.692s on the same tour), to bring the gap down to 0.5s, at which point Rosberg's engineer Tony Ross radioed to Nico to report the obvious: "Lewis is trying quite hard..."

Rosberg held his nerve and Hamilton could find no way past. After ten laps in his team-mate's wake, Hamilton found his tyres beginning to suffer, and he set about lobbying the team to switch to a strategy that might enable him to get ahead. However, Mercedes' policy is to give priority to their lead driver and ensure fairness by giving both of them the same compound tyres during the same period of the race.

"It's a shame," said Hamilton later, "because it's a great track, but you just can't get close enough to race unless you have a huge advantage over the guy in front. I was asking the team if there was another strategy, whether we could take a risk. And they said: 'look after the tyres.' My response was: 'No, I'm racing.'"



Hamilton dropped his pace to sit three seconds behind Rosberg. Then Ferrari pitted Sebastian Vettel, putting him on soft tyres again, and as soon as that happened, Mercedes realised he was on a three-stop strategy, so they covered that move the following lap, by pitting Rosberg and then Hamilton – thwarting the latter’s option to do something different. Not that the team were interested in doing that anyway.

“Between the two of them it was getting intense,” said Mercedes team boss Toto Wolff. “It was about making the right call between a two- and a three-stop strategy. With Lewis pushing hard behind Nico it was clear that his tyres wouldn’t last. At that stage his race was compromised. Then it changed in our favour when Ferrari changed to a three-stop. We then changed to a three-stop ourselves, and then strategy-wise it was a cruise.

“We have our principles in the team on strategies since 2013 and it’s worked well, and we will not change that. In the car you don’t have the full picture. That strategy [that Hamilton was asking for] would have been ten seconds down so it would have risked P2 to Sebastian [Vettel] – so it would have been out of the question.

“That a driver is being emotional in the car is understandable, but if the driver in the car wants to start calling the strategy then he is going to lose every single race because it’s instinct driven – he doesn’t have the full set of data.

“As a fan I can understand the frustration, but we don’t run a number-one and a number-two, and it’s sometimes difficult for us to manage the two fighting with each other. But the team comes first and we are not going to change things.”

Vettel and Kimi Räikkönen – the latter on a two-, rather than a three-stop strategy – remained a potential threat rather than close challengers as they ran out to third and fourth. Valtteri Bottas finished fifth for Williams, ahead of Nico Hülkenberg who confirmed Force India’s fifth spot, earning them their best-ever place under Vijay Mallya’s ownership.

Seventh was Daniil Kvyat (Red Bull), ahead of local hero Felipe Massa, who late on Sunday evening was excluded from eighth place. When his right-rear tyre was measured on the grid, its temperature was recorded at 137°C – 27°C more than the 110°C limit.

Williams’ Rob Smedley said after the race that they had independent measurements that recorded readings below 110°C, and initially planned to appeal the exclusion. It was perhaps expedient that the decision to exclude Massa was made after the passionate locals had made their way from the Interlagos circuit.

Indeed, after such a long season, late into November, most of the paddock had fled home in the hour after the race. **F1**

## The story of the race

▼ Carlos Sainz suffers a loss of power as he tries to make his way to the grid and starts from the pitlane

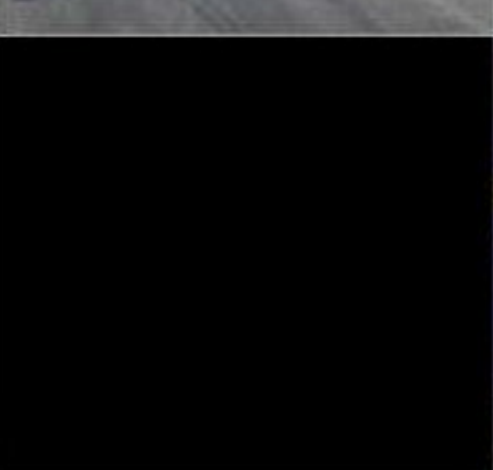
▼ A minute’s silence commemorates both victims of road accidents and those of the Paris terror attacks



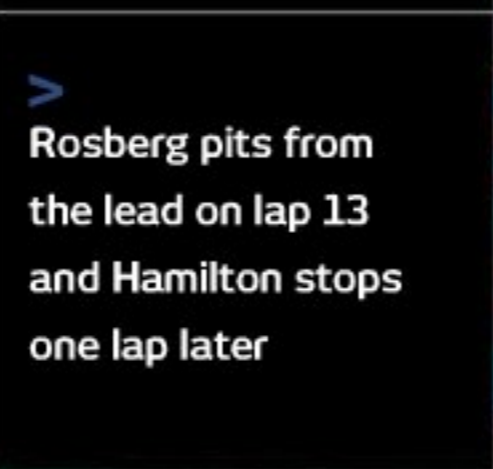
## INTERLAGOS



► Nico Rosberg leads team-mate Lewis Hamilton away from pole position



◀ Carlos Sainz retires his Toro Rosso with engine problems on the opening lap

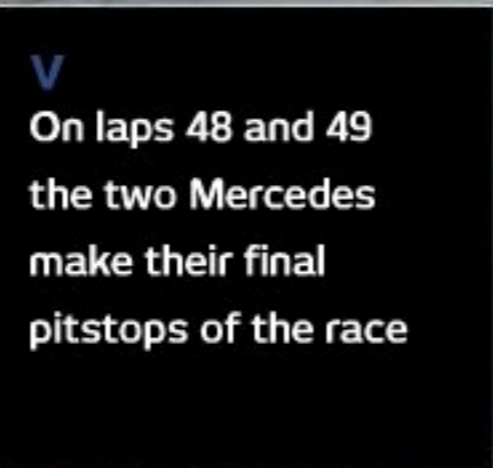


► Rosberg pits from the lead on lap 13 and Hamilton stops one lap later



◀ On lap 31, Maldonado strikes Ericsson at Turn 1 and is handed a 5s time penalty

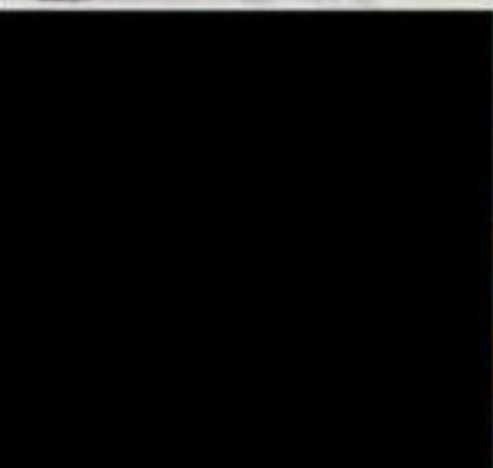
▼ One lap later at Turn 1, Verstappen passes Pérez in a great move to take ninth place



▼ On laps 48 and 49 the two Mercedes make their final pitstops of the race



► Nico Rosberg crosses the line to win the Brazilian GP, 7.7s ahead of Mercedes team-mate Hamilton



◀ After the race, Felipe Massa is excluded from eighth place over a tyre-temperature irregularity



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# Brazilian Grand Prix stats

The lowdown on everything you need to know from the weekend at Interlagos...

## THE GRID

	<b>1. ROSBERG</b> MERCEDES 1min 11.282secs Q3
	<b>2. HAMILTON</b> MERCEDES 1min 11.360secs Q3
	<b>4. RÄIKKÖNEN</b> FERRARI 1min 12.144secs Q3
	<b>6. KVYAT</b> RED BULL 1min 12.322secs Q3
	<b>8. MASSA</b> WILLIAMS 1min 12.415secs Q3
	<b>10. SAINZ**</b> TORO ROSSO 1min 13.045secs Q2
	<b>12. ERICSSON</b> SAUBER 1min 13.233secs Q2
	<b>14. GROSJEAN</b> LOTUS 1min 13.913secs Q2
	<b>16. BUTTON</b> McLAREN 1min 13.425secs Q1
	<b>18. STEVENS</b> MANOR MARUSSIA 1min 16.283secs Q1
	<b>20. ALONSO*****</b> McLAREN NO TIME IN Q1
	<b>3. VETTEL</b> FERRARI 1min 11.804secs Q3
	<b>5. HÜLKENBERG</b> FORCE INDIA 1min 12.265secs Q3
	<b>7. BOTTAS*</b> WILLIAMS 1min 12.085secs Q3
	<b>9. VERSTAPPEN</b> TORO ROSSO 1min 12.739secs Q3
	<b>11. PÉREZ</b> FORCE INDIA 1min 13.147secs Q2
	<b>13. NASR***</b> SAUBER 1min 12.989secs Q2
	<b>15. MALDONADO</b> LOTUS 1min 13.385secs Q1
	<b>17. ROSSI</b> MANOR MARUSSIA 1min 16.151secs Q1
	<b>19. RICCIARDO****</b> RED BULL 1min 12.417secs Q3

\*Three-place grid penalty for overtaking under red-flag conditions \*\*Started from pitlane  
\*\*\*Three-place grid penalty for impeding another driver \*\*\*\*20-place grid penalty for additional power unit elements used \*\*\*\*\*25-place grid penalty for additional power-unit elements used and permitted to start by stewards

## THE RACE



### THE RESULTS (71 LAPS)

1st	Nico Rosberg Mercedes	1h 31m 09.090s
2nd	Lewis Hamilton Mercedes	+7.756s
3rd	Sebastian Vettel Ferrari	+14.244s
4th	Kimi Räikkönen Ferrari	+47.543s
5th	Valtteri Bottas Williams	+1 lap
6th	Nico Hülkenberg Force India	+1 lap
7th	Daniil Kvyat Red Bull	+1 lap
EXC	Felipe Massa Williams	+1 lap*
8th	Romain Grosjean Lotus	+1 lap
9th	Max Verstappen Toro Rosso	+1 lap
10th	Pastor Maldonado Lotus	+1 lap
11th	Daniel Ricciardo Red Bull	+1 lap
12th	Sergio Pérez Force India	+1 lap
13th	Felipe Nasr Sauber	+1 lap
14th	Jenson Button McLaren	+1 lap
15th	Fernando Alonso McLaren	+1 lap
16th	Marcus Ericsson Sauber	+2 laps
17th	Will Stevens Manor Marussia	+4 laps
18th	Alexander Rossi Manor Marussia	+4 laps

\*Excluded for technical infringement

### Retirements

Carlos Sainz Toro Rosso	0 laps – electrical
-------------------------	---------------------

### THROUGH SPEED TRAP (QUALIFYING)



**Fastest:** Sergio Pérez, 211.32mph

**Slowest:** Alexander Rossi, 190.45mph

### TYRE COMPOUNDS USED



Soft Medium Intermediate Wet

### CLIMATE

Overcast 25°C

### TRACK TEMP

42°C

### FASTEST LAP



Lewis Hamilton, lap 51, 1min 14.832secs

### FASTEST PITSTOP



Lewis Hamilton, 22.936secs (entry to exit)

### DRIVERS' STANDINGS

1st	Lewis Hamilton Mercedes	363pts
2nd	Nico Rosberg Mercedes	297pts
3rd	Sebastian Vettel Ferrari	266pts
4th	Valtteri Bottas Williams	136pts
5th	Kimi Räikkönen Ferrari	135pts
6th	Felipe Massa Williams	117pts
7th	Daniil Kvyat Red Bull	94pts
8th	Daniel Ricciardo Red Bull	84pts
9th	Sergio Pérez Force India	68pts
10th	Nico Hülkenberg Force India	52pts
11th	Romain Grosjean Lotus	49pts
12th	Max Verstappen Toro Rosso	49pts
13th	Felipe Nasr Sauber	27pts
14th	Pastor Maldonado Lotus	27pts
15th	Carlos Sainz Toro Rosso	18pts
16th	Jenson Button McLaren	16pts
17th	Fernando Alonso McLaren	11pts
18th	Marcus Ericsson Sauber	9pts
19th	Roberto Merhi Manor Marussia	0pts
20th	Alexander Rossi Manor Marussia	0pts
21st	Will Stevens Manor Marussia	0pts
22nd	Kevin Magnussen McLaren	0pts

### CONSTRUCTORS' STANDINGS

1st Mercedes	660pts	9th McLaren	27pts
2nd Ferrari	401pts	10th Manor	0pts
3rd Williams	253pts		
4th Red Bull	178pts		
5th Force India	120pts		
6th Lotus	76pts		
7th Toro Rosso	67pts		
8th Sauber	36pts		



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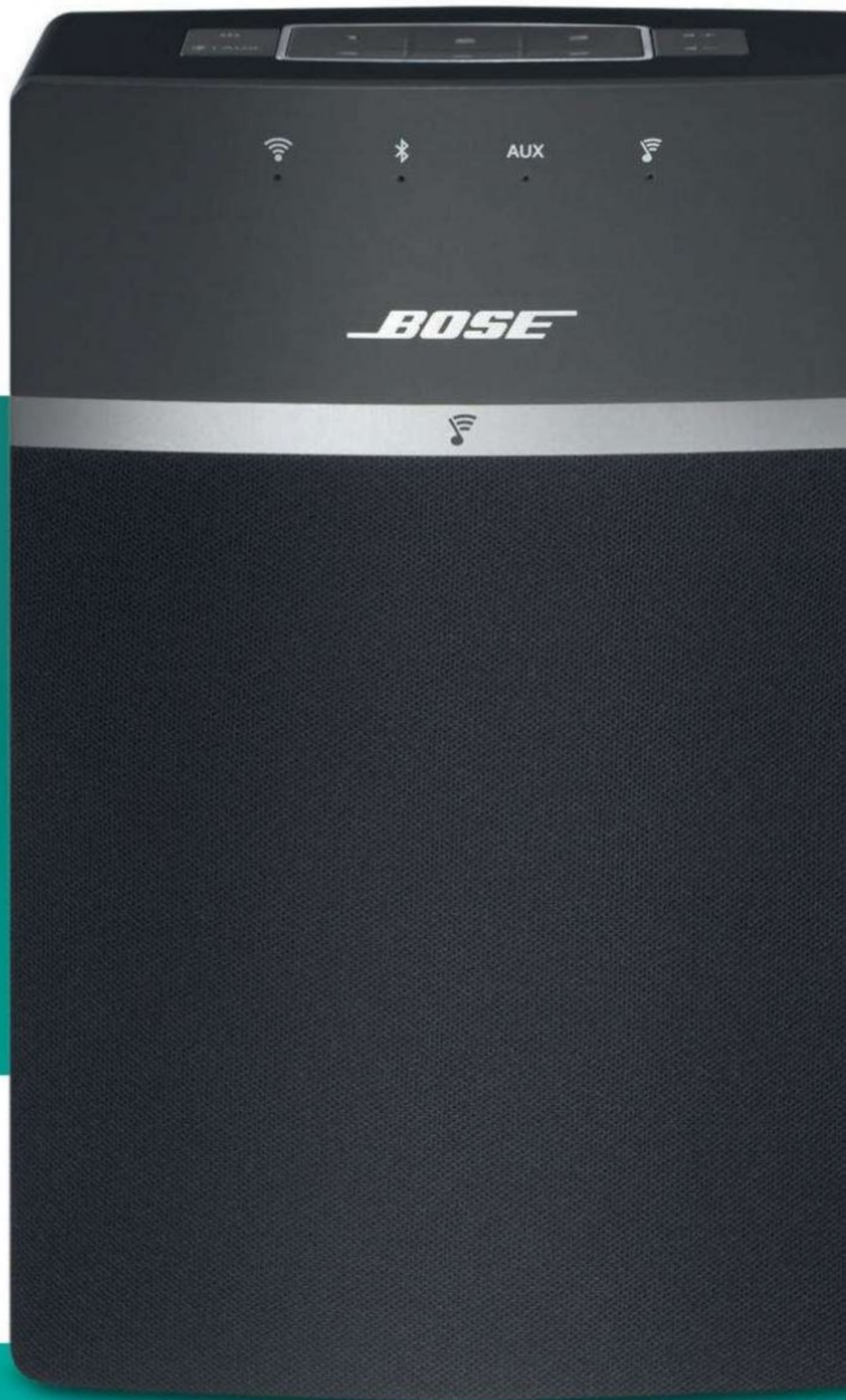
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# RACE DEBRIEF

by Anthony Rowlinson

## Abu Dhabi Grand Prix

29.11.15 / Yas Marina



# An easy day's night

Nico Rosberg romped to pole and held back a feisty Hamilton to win. Why couldn't he do this before?

**A duel in the desert**, much as we had 12 months ago. Except that this time, the bigger prize – the championship – had long since been settled, leaving only the minor, though not insignificant, matter of a grand prix win at stake.

In truth, this race result mattered an awful lot for one of the two men most likely to win it. For Nico Rosberg, who had face to save after taking a drubbing this year, beating Lewis for the third time in a row would be a huge prize – something to hold onto through the coming winter months, in anticipation of another likely slugfest in 2016.

But who knew, really, whether Rosberg had raised his game in the closing stages of the 2015 F1 season, or whether Hamilton had mentally checked out since winning the title in Austin?

Whatever the cause of the about-turn in form, the facts were irrefutable: Rosberg's Abu Dhabi pole was his sixth on the bounce (his career 22nd) and was achieved with a slammed-

down lap time of huge authority. Thanks to brilliant middle and last sectors around Yas Marina, Rosberg established a 0.377s margin to Hamilton, with a 1min 40.237s tour.

Rosberg was quick. And equally quick in rebutting suggestions that he had found the key to improving his performance just when it mattered least: "It's not a revival," he said. "I haven't re-invented anything. It's just progress and at the moment it's me that has the one-tenth edge. Qualifying has made the difference."

There was talk of car development following a direction that didn't suit Hamilton's driving style, countered by Rosberg's assertion that his Abu Dhabi power unit was older than Hamilton's so less 'prime'. But it's clear that towards the close of 2015 Nico found a new edge to his driving that let him *see* Hamilton, where previously he'd folded.

At various points in 2014 and early on in 2015, it seemed always that Lewis's sharper racing

instincts would enable to him to find a way past Nico, even when coming from behind. Think, for example, of Sochi 2015; of Turn 1 at Austin in 2014 and '15; of Suzuka's first corner this year. Each time, Rosberg appeared to outpsyche himself under the pressure of a Hamilton attack. Since Mexico 2015, however, Rosberg has been able to tap into a core of speed and resilience strong enough to keep Hamilton at bay.

The silver duo were closely matched and they raced on similar strategies: two-stoppers in supersoft-soft-soft sequence. That parlayed into a seven-second victory buffer for Rosberg, but on lap 40, it looked as if Lewis might manage to sneak a win with a marginal counter-strategy.

Rosberg pitted from the lead for his final set of softs on lap 32 of 55. At that point, Hamilton had been closing him down with a charge that cut his gap from more than six seconds to less than two in just ten laps. Would we witness a Rosberg



capitulation? Had he taken too much out of his Pirellis in his sprint out front? Was Hamilton's unhurried P2 simply down to tyre management and *now* we would see his true pace?

Nico rejoined 18.8s behind Hamilton, who had inherited the lead when Rosberg stopped. Immediately, Nico went purple as he was urged by his race engineer to "pick up the pace".

Hamilton, meanwhile, could be heard asking his crew "what's the other car on?" Yet to stop for his third and final set and comfortable in the lead, he was considering eking out his rubber to the flag. There was also talk of sticking on a set of used supersofts for a late sprint. Both strategies were risky and Lewis pitted for softs on lap 41 to emerge 12.5 seconds down on Rosberg. Game over. They ran one-two to the flag.

The victory was enough, Rosberg admitted, to send him into the winter season "ecstatic – very happy". Cattyly, Hamilton noted that he was "happier with winning the world championship than with winning the race." These two just about manage to play nicely, but since Spa 2014, and the contact at Les Combes (followed by an in-team dressing-down for Rosberg), there's been a raw edge to their relationship that's likely to endure for as long as they're team-mates.


Behind them came a Ferrari. Little surprise there, except that it was Kimi Räikkönen in third, after a swift, clean run from P3, with Vettel a rather impressive fourth from P15 – legacy of a Q1 comms blunder that left him without enough clock to set a time fast enough to progress to Q2.

Kimi mumbled something about his race being "a bit better", but it was clear he cared little about this result – his third podium of the season – nor the fact that it made him 'top Finn' in 2015. "It's not as if there's a Finnish championship within the world championship," he withered.

A happier result was the P5 of Sergio Pérez – top non-works Merc ahead of both Williams. Force India COO Otmar Szafnauer confirmed the race had been run largely as a test session for Nico Hülkenberg to bench-mark various aero and set-up developments against windtunnel results. This always has been, and remains, a sharp little race team who punch well above their weight.

Their cars were split by Daniel Ricciardo, whose RB11 was mighty in the final sector but unable to match the straightline grunt of any of the five cars ahead. Team-mate Daniil Kvyat trailed home tenth with brake woes behind Felipe Massa in eighth and Romain Grosjean, charging to the end in his last race for 'Team Enstone'.

For these battlers, the end of F1 2015 couldn't come fast enough. For Rosberg, though, it was over too soon. "I wish it was 2016 next week," he said. "I'll try to keep the current form going."

You suspect that Lewis Hamilton might have something to say about that. 

## The story of the race

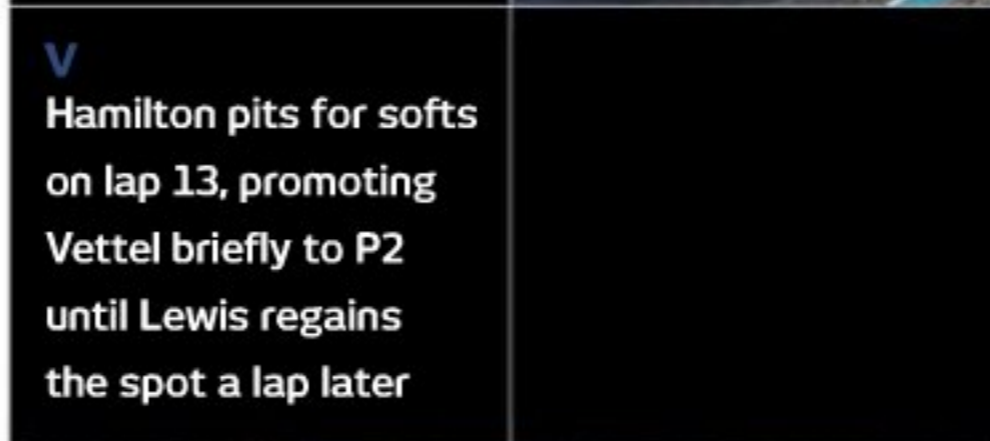
▼ Rosberg gets off to a flying start, while Hamilton hangs on to second despite a tardy getaway

### YAS MARINA



◀ Maldonado and Alonso clash, causing Maldonado to retire. Alonso pits with a right-front puncture

▼ A pitlane shunt between Bottas and Button on lap 8 leads to a five-second penalty for Bottas



▼ Hamilton pits for softs on lap 13, promoting Vettel briefly to P2 until Lewis regains the spot a lap later



▶ Hamilton puts in an incredible charge and by lap 28 has closed the gap to Rosberg by 4s in ten laps



▶ Rosberg pits for a second set of softs on lap 32 and Hamilton takes the lead



◀ On lap 41 Hamilton stops and then rejoins 12.5s behind Rosberg

▼ Button and Verstappen battle. Verstappen is handed a five-second penalty for exceeding track limits



▲ Grosjean passes Sainz and then Kvyat to rise from P11 to P9 over laps 53 and 54

▶ Rosberg is victorious – the first time he has ever won three consecutive F1 GPs



MAIN PHOTO: ALASTAIR STALEY/LAT; ILLUSTRATION: ALAN ELDRIDGE  
INSETS: GLENN DUNBAR/LAT; JED LEICESTER/LAT; STEVE ETHERINGTON/LAT;  
SAM BLOXHAM/LAT



# Abu Dhabi Grand Prix stats

The lowdown on everything you need to know from the weekend at Yas Marina...

## THE GRID

	<b>1. ROSBERG</b> MERCEDES 1min 40.237secs Q3
	<b>2. HAMILTON</b> MERCEDES 1min 40.614secs Q3
	<b>4. PÉREZ</b> FORCE INDIA 1min 41.184secs Q3
	<b>6. BOTTAS</b> WILLIAMS 1min 41.656secs Q3
	<b>8. MASSA</b> WILLIAMS 1min 41.759secs Q3
	<b>10. SAINZ</b> TORO ROSSO 1min 42.708secs Q3
	<b>12. BUTTON</b> MCLAREN 1min 42.668secs Q2
	<b>14. NASR</b> SAUBER 1min 43.614secs Q2
	<b>16. ALONSO</b> MCLAREN 1min 43.187secs Q1
	<b>18. GROSJEAN*</b> LOTUS NO TIME IN Q2
	<b>20. MERHI***</b> MANOR MARUSSIA 1min 47.434secs Q1
	<b>1. ROSBERG</b> MERCEDES 1min 40.237secs Q3
	<b>3. RÄIKKÖNEN</b> FERRARI 1min 41.051secs Q3
	<b>5. RICCIARDO</b> RED BULL 1min 41.144secs Q3
	<b>7. HÜLKENBERG</b> FORCE INDIA 1min 41.686secs Q3
	<b>9. KVIAT</b> RED BULL 1min 41.933secs Q3
	<b>11. VERSTAPPEN</b> TORO ROSSO 1min 42.251secs Q2
	<b>13. MALDONADO</b> LOTUS 1min 42.807secs Q2
	<b>15. VETTEL</b> FERRARI 1min 42.941secs Q1
	<b>17. ERICSSON</b> SAUBER 1min 43.838secs Q1
	<b>19. STEVENS**</b> MANOR MARUSSIA 1min 46.297secs Q1

\*Five-place grid penalty for replacement gearbox \*\*Five-place grid penalty for use of additional power-unit element \*\*\*Required to start from pitlane by stewards due to car being modified under parc fermé conditions

## THE RACE



### THE RESULTS (55 LAPS)

1st	Nico Rosberg Mercedes	1h 38m 30.175s
2nd	Lewis Hamilton Mercedes	+8.271s
3rd	Kimi Räikkönen Ferrari	+19.430s
4th	Sebastian Vettel Ferrari	+43.735s
5th	Sergio Pérez Force India	+63.952s
6th	Daniel Ricciardo Red Bull	+65.010s
7th	Nico Hülkenberg Force India	+93.618s
8th	Felipe Massa Williams	+97.751s
9th	Romain Grosjean Lotus	+98.201s
10th	Daniil Kvyat Red Bull	+102.371s
11th	Carlos Sainz Toro Rosso	+103.525s
12th	Jenson Button McLaren	+1 lap
13th	Valtteri Bottas Williams	+1 lap
14th	Marcus Ericsson Sauber	+1 lap
15th	Felipe Nasr Sauber	+1 lap
16th	Max Verstappen Toro Rosso	+1 lap
17th	Fernando Alonso McLaren	+2 laps
18th	Will Stevens Manor Marussia	+2 laps
19th	Roberto Merhi Manor Marussia	+3 laps

### Retirements

Pastor Maldonado Lotus 0 laps - accident

### THROUGH SPEED TRAP (QUALIFYING)



**Fastest:** Valtteri Bottas, 210.09mph

**Slowest:** Jenson Button, 192.75mph

### TYRE COMPOUNDS USED



Supersoft Soft Intermediate Wet

### CLIMATE

Night 27°C

### TRACK TEMP

29°C

### FASTEST LAP



Lewis Hamilton, lap 44, 1min 44.517secs

### FASTEST PITSTOP



Lewis Hamilton, 21.392secs (entry to exit)

### DRIVERS' STANDINGS

1st	Lewis Hamilton Mercedes	381pts
2nd	Nico Rosberg Mercedes	322pts
3rd	Sebastian Vettel Ferrari	278pts
4th	Kimi Räikkönen Ferrari	150pts
5th	Valtteri Bottas Williams	136pts
6th	Felipe Massa Williams	121pts
7th	Daniil Kvyat Red Bull	95pts
8th	Daniel Ricciardo Red Bull	92pts
9th	Sergio Pérez Force India	78pts
10th	Nico Hülkenberg Force India	58pts
11th	Romain Grosjean Lotus	51pts
12th	Max Verstappen Toro Rosso	49pts
13th	Felipe Nasr Sauber	27pts
14th	Pastor Maldonado Lotus	27pts
15th	Carlos Sainz Toro Rosso	18pts
16th	Jenson Button McLaren	16pts
17th	Fernando Alonso McLaren	11pts
18th	Marcus Ericsson Sauber	9pts
19th	Roberto Merhi Manor Marussia	0pts
20th	Alexander Rossi Manor Marussia	0pts
21st	Will Stevens Manor Marussia	0pts
22nd	Kevin Magnussen McLaren	0pts

### CONSTRUCTORS' STANDINGS

1st Mercedes	703pts	9th McLaren	27pts
2nd Ferrari	428pts	10th Manor	0pts
3rd Williams	257pts		
4th Red Bull	187pts		
5th Force India	136pts		
6th Lotus	78pts		
7th Toro Rosso	67pts		
8th Sauber	36pts		



For comprehensive F1 statistics visit [www.forix.com](http://www.forix.com)





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## NEXT MONTH...



### THE RETURN OF RENAULT

Can they rediscover their winning mojo as a works team?

**Plus...**

- > F1's youngest ever entrant, Max Verstappen, answers YOUR questions
- > Red Bull boss Christian Horner opens up about his toughest ever season in Formula 1
- > We present the very best F1 photography of 2015\*

**FEBRUARY ISSUE ON SALE 21 JANUARY**

## ★ STAR LETTER

The new stadium section in Mexico recognised the importance of F1's fans



### F1: it's a popularity contest

I enjoyed the fantastic atmosphere at the British GP at Silverstone this year, but Formula 1 received another stark reminder of where success really lies at the superb Mexican Grand Prix. Yes, of course we mourned the loss of the original Peraltada, but I think every fan rejoiced at the new stadium section – overt recognition that F1 relies on the admiration and adulation of its fans to be the worldwide phenomenon that it is.

For all the tinkering with the technical, sporting and commercial rules, it seems clear that the biggest need is to play to the core strength of fan enthusiasm and replicate what Mexico has done across the world. The simplest step would be to enable venues to charge lower ticket prices by reducing race fees, thus paving the way to grow new generations of fans and affection for the sport. The short-term cost would be more than repaid by long-term loyalty, and the opportunity to promote brands to a significantly larger fan base.

**Daniel Stafford**  
Oxford, UK

### Will the US embrace F1?

With American team Haas set to join the 2016 F1 grid, I wonder how the team would gain interest with the American public, given that NASCAR and IndyCar are the main motorsport categories in the country.

It leaves the team in a hole without much home support. Although I think the US Grand Prix is a success, only a small percentage of the people who watched the 2015 event on television were American. So next season I will be interested, from a fan's point of view, to see how Haas do in terms of the support they will get at home. But as the Eagle F1 team didn't exactly have the best time of it, based on F1 history, Haas will be up against it.

**Lewis Knox**  
By email

### A low-tech solution

I think leaf blowers are a noisy useless abomination. A friend recently bought one at a garage sale and uses it to blow-dry his motorcycle after washing it. Now that actually makes sense.

The F1 link here is: why not have a few high-powered leaf blowers at every corner marshal station so marshals can quickly and effectively blow carbon-fibre fragments off the track surface? It would definitely be quicker than a broom, and a sharp corner worker could clean off a whack of asphalt in short order.

Depending on the horsepower of the leaf blower, you might have to strap them onto the backs of your more 'Clydesdale-like' corner marshals – or you could pull the cord and see your corner worker lift off and fly over the grandstand.

Just trying to help!  
**James Armstrong**  
Powell River, Canada



### ★ STAR PRIZE

Daniel Stafford wins a pair of three-day general admission tickets to the 2016 Formula 1 British Grand Prix. For more details, visit [www.silverstone.co.uk/events](http://www.silverstone.co.uk/events). Hotline number: 0844 3728 300



**Friends and Family:**

From my heart to yours, thank you so much for your generosity in donating to the Wilson Children Fund.

I am thankful for your thoughtfulness and will always be grateful for your donations.

On behalf of myself, Jane and Jess I want to express how nice and caring everyone has been in supporting us through this horrible time.

Despite our grief, we are lucky to be surrounded by such a big family community, who are so loyal and caring. Your kindness means the world to us.

Again, please accept my heartfelt thanks for all your thoughts, emails, messages and everything that you have done.

With love,  
My Family to yours.

Julia Wilson.



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# MURRAY WALKER



UNLESS I'M VERY MUCH MISTAKEN...

**"Sylvester Stallone and a retinue of heavysset chaps in menacing shades were bearing down on me in Monaco..."**

Sly didn't seem to be anxious to be interviewed so I deferentially stepped aside. He was there to investigate F1 as a film subject, but it didn't work out, allegedly because the teams didn't want to play and because Bernie wanted too much money. So, instead, he produced US ChampCar-based *Driven*, which critics panned as one of the worst films ever. But there have been some brilliant productions about motorsport...

It's tough to rank them but, for me, *Closer to the Edge*, a superb documentary about the 2010 Isle of Man TT motorcycle races, and *Rush*, Ron

Howard's exciting drama about the season-long fight for the 1976 F1 title between Niki Lauda and James Hunt, are the best of them all. But they're only a whisker ahead of my other four.


You've probably seen *Senna*, the moving story of the great man's life, but you're less likely to have seen Bruce Brown's epic *On any Sunday*, about the 1970s MotoCross, Desert Racing and Grand National motorcycle racing scene in America. It features Steve McQueen, who also starred in 1971's *Le Mans*, another of my top six. And the sixth? It's John Frankenheimer's

*Grand Prix*, from 1966, starring James Garner as Formula 1 driver Pete Arron, and featuring real-life drivers of the day such as Graham Hill, Phil Hill, Fangio, Jim Clark, Jochen Rindt and Jack Brabham. Magic!

Like me you'll love them all. But now there's a seventh, a magnificent documentary, to swell my list. Its called *The Green Hell*, "The Green Hell" being the nickname given by Jackie Stewart to the Nurburgring Nordschleife. It's the world's greatest circuit, although I admit to being biased for several reasons. In 1927 my father, Graham Walker, won the first International Motor Cycle road race to be held there and repeated his victory in 1929. I did the commentary on the 1969 and 1974 Nurburgring F1 German GPs, won by Jacky Ickx (Brabham) and Clay Regazzoni (Ferrari), and, together with Sky F1's David Croft, I narrated the film. All of which contribute to my respect for a superb production about the history of this amazing place.

Consider the legendary races that have been held there. Tazio Nuvolari's defeat of the all-conquering Mercedes-Benz and Auto Union teams in his outdated Alfa Romeo in 1935. Bernd Rosemeyer's incredible drive through the fog to win in 1936. Juan Manuel Fangio's epic Maserati drive to beat Mike Hawthorn and Peter Collins' Ferraris in 1957. Tony Brooks' win for Vanwall in 1958 and Stirling Moss's Lotus defeat of the Ferraris in 1961. Jackie Stewart's four-minute victory in 1968 and the one that ended the Nordschleife's hosting of F1, Niki Lauda's terrible accident in 1976. But, thank heavens, it is still used for other motorsports, not least of which is a 24-Hour event for sportscars and touring cars.

Well, it's all there in *The Green Hell*. The construction of the circuit to soak up the massive unemployment that used to blight the Eifel region. The early years from 1927. The 1930s glory days of Rudolf Caracciola, Bernd Rosemeyer, Hermann Lang, Manfred von Brauchitsch, Dick Seaman and Hans Stuck in their awesome Mercedes-Benz and Auto Union Silver Arrows. Altogether a superb effort by Austrian production company Moonlake Entertainment: I highly commend it to you.

The Nurburgring may well have been a Green Hell to Jackie Stewart but it was and is a green heaven to the rest of us. 



"I did the BBC commentary on the 1969 Nurburgring F1 German Grand Prix, won by Jacky Ickx in a Brabham"





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