

FORMULA 1 2017 HOTS UP AT BARCELONA

 **AUTOSPORT**

**“THAT’S HOW
RACING
SHOULD BE”**

**How breathless Lewis beat Vettel
in dramatic Spanish GP duel**



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Wheel-to-wheel Spain was a big boost for F1

THE SPANISH GRAND PRIX FINALLY DELIVERED THE duel that we'd been waiting for in 2017. Lewis Hamilton and Sebastian Vettel went wheel to wheel in a tense encounter, which *just* stayed on the right side of hard-but-fair.

The final DRS-assisted pass that helped Hamilton to victory might not have been the most spectacular, but the Mercedes and Ferrari had already rubbed wheels. And even after the final pass, no-one was quite sure that Hamilton's soft tyres would last to the end of the race.

Even more important than the fight between the multiple world champions – now separated by just six points – is that Ferrari and Mercedes remain evenly matched. The raft of updates seen in Barcelona could have swung the pendulum decisively in one team's direction. But a 0.051-second qualifying gap and a winning margin of 3.5s suggests Ferrari can keep development pace with Mercedes.

That's crucial because everyone else was miles behind last weekend. Red Bull looked closer in qualifying, but third-placed Daniel Ricciardo came home over a minute behind the championship protagonists, and the rest were lapped.

The other disappointment was that Fernando Alonso was rudely pushed aside by Felipe Massa on the opening lap after pulling out two of the best laps of the season to get his McLaren-Honda into Q3 and then seventh on the grid. He'll of course be absent from Monaco at the end of the month, but the Ferrari-Mercedes fight looks set to continue, which can only be good news for F1.



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NIGEL ROEBUCK

Intense, but good-natured

BARCELONA LAST WEEKEND WASN'T packed the way it used to be in those far-off times when Fernando Alonso had a competitive car, but still the crowd was a healthy one. Doubtless it was padded by the local hero's showing in qualifying, when he produced the lap of the year so far, setting seventh best time – behind only Mercedes, Ferrari and Red Bull – in a McLaren-Honda slowest of all through the speed trap.

When one considers that Alonso had missed FP1 in its entirety, and much of FP2, this was an amazing performance, but if he was clearly elated on Saturday afternoon, he was under no illusions about race day: "If I can make up some places at the start, it could be fun – but if I lose some, it will be a long afternoon..."

It turned out to be the latter. At the first corner Valtteri Bottas nudged Raikkonen into Verstappen, and as Kimi and Max, their cars damaged, came back on the circuit, Felipe Massa was obliged to swerve right, which in turn put Alonso briefly off the road. For both it would indeed be a long afternoon, but for Verstappen and Raikkonen – who fought for the win at Barcelona a year ago – quite the opposite. Both were out on the spot, and Bottas, winner last time out in Sochi, didn't make the finish, either.

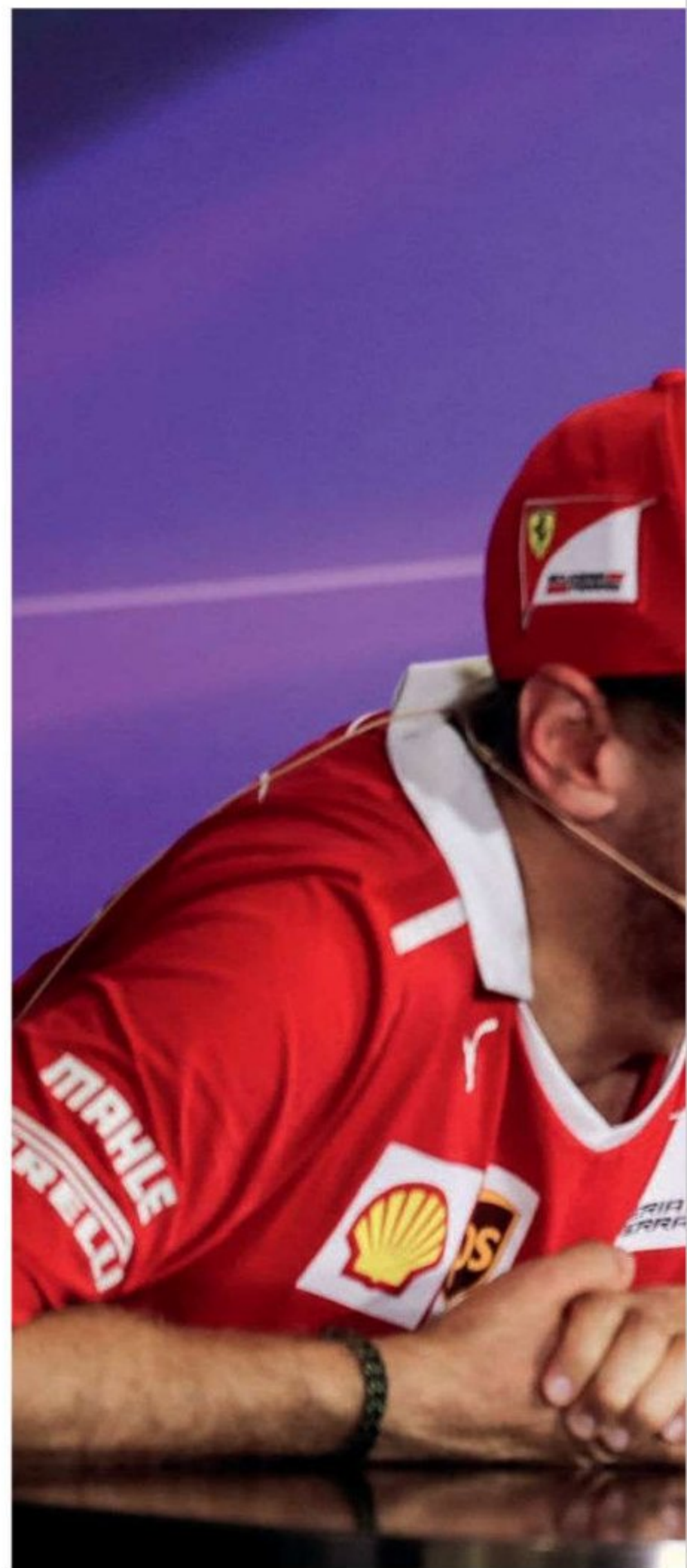
As has been the way of it in 2017 thus far,

the Spanish Grand Prix quickly distilled to another two-hander between Lewis Hamilton and Sebastian Vettel, and it must be said that for the moment this duel, for all its intensity, remains remarkably good-natured.

A cynic might suggest that ultimately this will change, because these things always do, but as of now the behaviour of both men is unfailingly genial. They are not, as Lewis said, 'best friends', like he and Nico Rosberg once were – but then it was the baggage of those youthful days that subsequently caused so many problems. Instead he and Sebastian, never too close, have an uncomplicated respect for each other.

You can say, of course, that at present it's easy for them to be this way. We are only a quarter of the way into the season, far from the gravy strokes of the closing races, and there is a lightness of manner about both men not apparent in 2016, when they glowered their way through the season, Vettel ill-tempered and distracted by a disappointing Ferrari, Hamilton invariably surly and off-hand whenever his team-mate was around.

If Lewis occasionally has off days, Seb takes it a step further, and apparently has off seasons. In 2013 he won his fourth consecutive world championship – and after that season's summer break, let's remember, no-one else



Losing places at the start cost Alonso dearly

won a race. Nine on the trot he reeled off, and I recall his joy on the radio as he did his trademark donuts at the now defunct Indian Grand Prix: "We have to remember these days, boys – it won't always be like this..."

He was right. In 2014, with the 'blown floor' gone, Vettel swiftly concluded that he didn't like new 'hybrid' Formula 1 at all. For one thing, a different team – Mercedes – was suddenly dominant; for another, he was comprehensively outdriven by his new Red Bull team-mate, Daniel Ricciardo. Didn't sit well, that, and when Marco Mattiacci – Sergio Marchionne's inexplicable choice as Ferrari team manager – approached him with a view to replacing Alonso, Seb was only too happy to come on board as Raikkonen's team-mate for 2015.

At the time I thought back to something Mark Webber, Vettel's erstwhile team-mate, had said to me the previous winter. "You know what? I reckon Seb will do everything

There is respect, if not friendship, between the title protagonists



early in life: he's got his championships and his results early, he's going to have a kid early, and I think he'll retire early – probably a blast in the red car, and then sayonara... It'll be just his luck to go to Ferrari when they have one of their golden periods!"

At the beginning it certainly looked that way. After an atrocious 2014 season, Ferrari came out of the blocks impressively the following year, Vettel winning in Malaysia, only his second race with the team, then taking another victory in Hungary before dominating in Singapore. If Mercedes remained the team to beat, Seb was well in the vicinity, revelling – like all new Ferrari drivers – in life at Maranello.

Last year, though, fell way short of his expectations. In 21 races Mercedes lost only twice – each time to Red Bull – and it must be said Vettel didn't cope well. As in 2014, the schoolboy grin was rarely to be seen,

“Plainly Hamilton is savouring the novelty of a scrap with someone other than his own team-mate”

while in the car he was never off the radio, growling contemptuously if some hapless soul inadvertently delayed him by a tenth or two.

In Mexico, infuriated that Verstappen had not been penalised for cutting across a corner, Sebastian completely lost it, offering four-letter advice to Charlie Whiting, at which point Maurizio Arrivabene firmly intervened, suggesting he calm down and concentrate on his driving. Frequently outpaced by Raikkonen, a driver considered past his best, he was letting petulance get the better of

him. One hesitates to imagine his behaviour had he been in a McLaren-Honda.

This year it's all change again. Ferrari's progress over the winter has confounded the paddock, and Sebastian is once more back to his best, in the car and out of it. Plainly Hamilton, the breathless winner at Barcelona, is savouring the novelty of a scrap with someone other than his own team-mate, and the two of them gave us the best Spanish Grand Prix for years. Now all we need is Ricciardo, Verstappen and Alonso in the mix. ✎



INDYCAR

Alonso focus on Indy 500

FERNANDO ALONSO REGARDS QUALIFYING position for his debut Indianapolis 500 as “not very important”, with his focus during practice on building experience for race conditions.

The Spaniard ended the first day of practice for the race 19th fastest with a best lap of 223.025mph, compared to pacesetter Marco Andretti’s mark of 226.338mph. After missing out on completing a traffic-simulation run with his Andretti Autosport team-mates in the final hour of the day to a suspension problem, Alonso said his lack of experience means he must focus on race preparation.

“In my case, qualifying is not very important,” said the double world champion. “When you are out there, you want to feel fast so it’s a question of enjoyment, not only the final position. But I think the priority for us in my garage is to set up the car for the race, to feel comfortable in traffic, to learn as much as I can, the way to overtake, the place to overtake, how you lose the minimum momentum in those manoeuvres.

“There are many things that I don’t know now and I need to learn quickly, so let’s see what we can do in qualifying. But definitely, the race preparation will be the first priority.”

Alonso has been keen to stress how much he has to learn about the Indianapolis 500 at every opportunity, and is not underestimating the challenge. He has already watched multiple Indianapolis 500 races, including at least one complete race from an onboard camera, as well as preparing in the Honda and Dallara simulators.

He sees being part of a six-car team, which includes Indy 500 winners Ryan Hunter-Reay and Alexander Rossi, as key to short-cutting the learning process. This is thanks to the way the data is shared throughout the team.

“All the mechanics, the engineers, the drivers are working together under the same garage and sharing all the information,” said Alonso. “Every single lap, whatever happens to one of the cars, the other five know immediately, so it’s very useful. At this point of the week, whatever they test and whatever is positive, I trust them more than myself. So I will keep all those changes.”

The race, in particular, will pose a huge challenge to Alonso and he’s focusing on the need to understand how the car changes with varying track conditions during his practice running.

“The most difficult thing will be the race itself,” says Alonso. “All the things that happen



LAT IMAGES



EBREY

FORMULAE

KUBICA COULD RACE IN NEW YORK

THE ONGOING CONCERN over how DS Virgin Racing and Renault e.dams fill their vacant seats for Formula E's New York double-header in July has taken a new twist that could result in a debut for Robert Kubica.

The 2008 Canadian Grand Prix winner's FE test at Donington Park earlier this month was shrouded in secrecy – so much so that even people within the series who are usually in the know were completely in the dark about it.

And Kubica's prior GP3 test makes more sense in the context of an FE run – and speculation linking him to a New York outing.

With a clashing World Endurance round at the Nurburgring, Renault needs to replace Sebastien Buemi, while DS Virgin has the potential headache of Sam Bird and Jose Maria Lopez being absent.

Alex Lynn is DS Virgin's official reserve and will replace Lopez, but the jury is out on whether Bird will race or not. One theory is that if he does not score well for Ferrari at Le Mans and is out of the realistic running for the WEC GTE title, he could be freed up to race in New York.

F1 and its supports are at Silverstone that weekend, so any F2 contender is also off-limits. Kubica would be a bold choice for either party, but in the absence of any more logical candidate that could be a good thing.

SCOTT MITCHELL AND SAM SMITH

100 race over qualifying

in a race like this one, running in traffic, learning all the little tricks to overtake, all these little things that you can only learn with experience.

"I don't have that experience and I don't have that time, so I know I will be weaker in some of these aspects. I need to learn as quickly as I can and I need to try to use other things that are not experience to try to close that gap."

One aspect that surprised Alonso early in practice was that, even though the track temperature was higher than his previous test at Indy, and the wind was stronger, it did not have a big impact on the car. He described it as "handling perfectly OK" throughout the conditions.

But as Autosport closed for press, Alonso still had some way to go. His pace so far would put him last on the grid for the 2016 race, for which James Hinchcliffe took pole with a lap of 230.946mph. While Alonso will be satisfied with a solid qualifying performance, he still has yet to feel the car on the limit as it will need to be if he is to be a factor in the battle for victory.

"Whatever they test, I trust them more than myself"

Late deals mean 'magic' 33-car field

The Indy 500 is set for a full field, with 1996 winner Buddy Lazier confirming during the build-up to the start of practice that he will be attempting to start the race for the 20th time in his Chevrolet-powered Lazier Racing entry. This followed confirmation from the new Juncos Racing squad, which acquired the assets of the defunct KV Racing over the winter, that it will run Ed Carpenter Racing's road-course racer Spencer Pigot (whose regular seat is occupied by team owner and oval specialist Carpenter for the 500) and sometime Chip Ganassi Racing driver Sebastian Saavedra.

Qualifying takes place this weekend, based on the traditional average of a four-lap run. The contenders for Sunday's 'fast nine' shootout, which will decide the first three rows of the grid, are set based on Saturday's times. The slowest 24 cars on Saturday will get a single attempt on Sunday, which will dictate positions 10 to 33.

EDD STRAW



MCKLEIN

WRC TEAMS AGAINST MORE RALLIES

PLANS TO EXPAND THE calendar for the World Rally Championship from 13 to 16 rounds have come unstuck, with the teams not keen on footing the bill.

Next year's schedule is expected to rise to 14 rallies, with a staggered increase to 16 by 2022 at the earliest.

"We tried running 16 rallies before," said Hyundai team manager Alain Penasse. "It worked, it's possible. But that was 10 years ago, when the teams had a lot more money than we have now. I think 14 is probably the right number."

M-Sport's Malcolm Wilson was of a similar mind, adding: "Purely because of our financial situation, an increase in the number of rallies doesn't suit us. That might well change if Ford came back in or we got a sponsor and I would be interested to look at proposals from events offering good support."

In terms of the extra event for next season, New Zealand has found favour. Penasse said: "New Zealand is the only option. OK, it's a small market, but this doesn't matter: the drivers love the roads and the scenery will give great pictures for the television."

"There's some talk about Turkey, but we know about the political instability and then there's this idea about Croatia. I'm not sure where that dream came from."

DAVID EVANS



BLANCPAIN GT SERIES

Blancpain GT boss clamps down on 'BTCC' driving

A NEW ZERO-TOLERANCE POLICY ON CONTACT resulted in a wave of penalties in last weekend's Endurance Cup round of the Blancpain GT Series at Silverstone.

No fewer than 17 penalties resulted from the clampdown on all driving infringements introduced in the wake of the multi-car pile-up at the start of the Endurance Cup opener at Monza last month.

BGTS boss Stephane Ratel explained that the new policy resulted from a desire to clean up the racing in both the enduros and the Sprint Cup arm of the series. "GT cars are not touring cars; they are way too expensive to play at touring car racing," he said. "The message is, if you want to pass someone by pushing them off, go to the British Touring Car Championship or the World Touring Car Championship."

"From now on any contact will result in a penalty and the severity will be graduated according to the consequences of the contact. If you hit a car and it goes off the track and comes back on, you get a drivethrough, but if it hits the wall, you get a stop-go."

The most significant penalty was a one-minute stop-go awarded to the pole-winning Auto Sport Promotion Mercedes-AMG GT3 started by Felix Serralles.

It was penalised for hitting Mirko Bortolotti's Grasser Lamborghini Huracan GT3 on the formation lap and being out of position as the cars approached the start. The #333 Rinaldi Racing Ferrari 488 GT3 was excluded after the team failed to bring the car in for a drivethrough for an unsafe release.

GARY WATKINS



FORMULA 1

Ferrari reworks start system

SEBASTIAN VETTEL'S SPANISH Grand Prix start, which propelled him from second on the grid into the lead, came after Ferrari overhauled the start system on the SF70H.

In the wake of the Russian GP, Ferrari used a filming day at Mugello for both its drivers to work on start improvements, and the results of that work made it onto Vettel's race car.

Ferrari has effectively done away with the long wishbone clutch lever

it had used successfully since the start of 2016 – this increased the distance drivers were able to move the paddle, improving the chances of finding the perfect biting point. But new rules for this year wiped away that advantage, stipulating a limit of 80mm of movement for the paddle, which now has to be 50mm away from any other control on the steering wheel.

In response, Ferrari appears to have adopted a philosophy pioneered by

Mercedes of using two shorter clutch paddles that feature finger holds to help the drivers get a better feel of what is needed. This is in metal, although could be replaced by carbonfibre.

The finger holds mean that teams do not have to comply with the 50mm exclusion zone around the clutch paddle, and could in theory allow the movement of the paddles closer to the drivers' hands, helping with precision.

GIORGIO PIOLA AND JONATHAN NOBLE



FORMULA 2

F2 car plans revealed

THE NEW FORMULA 2 CAR SET TO BE introduced in 2018 will feature the same aggressive styling as the current Formula 1 machines and use the same engine base as the GP3 feeder category.

F2 and GP3 boss Bruno Michel explained that the replacement for the current Dallara, first introduced to GP2 in 2011, will retain high-degradation Pirelli tyres for entertainment purposes, and will use parts from the current car to keep costs down.

“We’re trying to keep as many common parts from this car as possible to save money for the teams because costs are very important at the moment,” Michel told Autosport. “But the car is going to look completely different – it’s going to have the same type of look as F1.”

The current six-cylinder, 3.4-litre GP3 engine is produced by Mecachrome, which will develop the new F2 engine. GP3 will remain normally aspirated, while the F2 version will be turbocharged and produce more power, but will not feature any hybrid parts on cost grounds.

“[We have] an objective of having the first assembly of the car sometime in June and starting to test it mid-July,” said Michel. “The engine is now doing a lot of dyno endurance and stuff like that, and we’re on time.”

When asked if the high-degradation tyres are unfair on up-and-coming drivers, because sensitive rubber requires them to perfect the art of tyre management, Michel explained his

belief that it was a skill all racers should learn.

“We are asking for a certain type of degradation from Pirelli to make sure that we do races that are very entertaining,” he said. “The F2 [sprint] race in Bahrain – it was absolutely amazing and that’s exactly what we want to achieve. This kind of degradation is between two and a half and three seconds over a lap between the start of the race and the end. I don’t think it’s unfair – it’s a learning curve; they have to learn to race with the material that they have.”

DRS proves a winner in GP3

Meanwhile, the GP3 Series’ first use of the DRS overtaking aid on a race weekend proved to be a hit with many drivers and team personnel at Barcelona last weekend.

“The DRS is incredibly efficient,” said ART Grand Prix driver and Mercedes F1 junior George Russell. “The closing speed in the last 300 metres of the straight is incredible compared to the guy you’re behind.”

The system is limited to six uses in the feature race and four in the sprint, and Arden International general manager Julian Rouse explained that this constraint added a tactical element for the teams. “From a racing perspective it looked like it gave drivers more opportunities, but also having a limited usage puts a bit more of a strategy into the race on how the drivers are using it, which makes it a lot more interesting,” he said.

ALEX KALINAUCKAS

IN THE HEADLINES

STIRLING MOSS HOME AFTER ILLNESS

Sir Stirling Moss returned home last week after almost five months in hospital. The 87-year-old fell ill with a chest infection on holiday before Christmas and was admitted to hospital in Singapore, before flying back to the UK and continuing his recuperation in a London hospital. A statement read: “He still has a substantial amount of recovery to undertake but says that he has determination and a great pit crew.”

TODT TO STAND FOR THIRD FIA TERM

FIA president Jean Todt has announced that he will stand for a third term this December. The ex-Ferrari F1 team boss originally took the post in 2009.

TOYOTA SWITCHES LOPEZ AND SARRAZIN

Jose Maria Lopez and Stephane Sarrazin will swap cars in Toyota’s line-up for the Le Mans 24 Hours next month. Lopez is moving over to the third entry to share with Nicolas Lapierre and Yuji Kunimoto as a result of his lack of race laps in the World Endurance Championship this year. He crashed on his fourth lap at Silverstone in April and the resulting injuries ruled him out of the Spa round. Sarrazin renews the partnership with Kamui Kobayashi and Mike Conway that yielded second at Le Mans in 2016.

STEVENS AND YELLOLY FOR LE MANS...

A raft of quick British drivers has been added to the GTE Am class for Le Mans. Ex-F1 racer Will Stevens will share the JMW Motorsport Ferrari with his Blancpain GT WRT Audi team-mate Dries Vanthoor as well as JMW regular Rob Smith. Force India F1 simulator driver Nick Yelloly, who currently races in the German Carrera Cup, joins Stephane Lemeret and one driver yet to be nominated in a Proton Competition Porsche. Aston Martin protege Ross Gunn will drive the Beechdean AMR Vantage he races in the European Le Mans Series, sharing with Olly Bryant and Andrew Howard.

...WHILE SIROTKIN LANDS DEAL TOO

Renault F1 reserve and ex-GP2 star Sergey Sirotkin gets his first taste of the Le Mans 24 Hours next month. He joins IndyCar racer Mikhail Aleshin and Viktor Shaytar in an all-Russian line-up in SMP Racing’s LMP2 Dallara.

MAINI GETS HAAS F1 JUNIOR ROLE

GP3 racer Arjun Maini has been signed up by the Haas F1 team as a development driver. The Indian celebrated by taking his maiden GP3 win at Barcelona last Sunday.

MERHI MAKES HIS F2 DEBUT

Maverick ex-F1 and DTM racer Roberto Merhi made his Formula 2 debut at Barcelona last weekend, replacing Stefano Coletti in the Campos Racing team with which he drove in pre-season testing. Merhi (below) got hit by Antonio Fuoco in the feature race. He could drive in the next round supporting the Monaco Grand Prix.





F1's latest mystery

This year's Pirellis are meant to reduce the degradation that made drivers pussyfoot instead of push, but even top stars are flummoxed

By Ben Anderson, Grand Prix Editor

[@BenAndersonAuto](#)

THE BIG UNKNOWN FOR ALL FORMULA 1 TEAMS

coming into 2017 was how the new Pirelli control tyres would perform. After six seasons of extreme thermal degradation, requiring careful management through under-the-limit driving, this season Pirelli was tasked with producing bigger and better tyres that degrade far less than they used to.

Broadly it seems that it has achieved its target. Drivers report that they can push harder for longer, and bring the tyres back from the brink if they overheat. Lap times have also reduced at every track visited so far, though drivers say the tyres feel harder than they did last year.

The changes Pirelli has made have created other knock-on effects, and new materials in the compounds have meant a reset in terms of understanding how to extract the best from the rubber. Some drivers are struggling to understand how to make the tyres work, which is creating significant variations in pace between team-mates, and some teams are reporting that the working temperature ranges for each compound have narrowed.

Rookie Lance Stroll has got nowhere near Williams team-mate Felipe Massa's pace so far this season, and he has identified the peculiar nature of the Pirellis as the main problem. Stroll's leap from F3 to F1 means he has bypassed the junior single-seater categories that could have given him a reference, but interestingly 2015 GP2 champion Stoffel Vandoorne has also found this new breed of Pirelli tricky to get on with in his first full F1 season.

This is perhaps to be expected with inexperienced drivers, especially when the changes have meant a data reset for the teams. But even drivers who should know better are getting into trouble.

Valtteri Bottas was nowhere in relation to Mercedes team-mate Lewis Hamilton in the Bahrain Grand Prix, despite starting on pole, and the only reason the team could find was an inability to put the tyres into their correct working range.

In Russia the roles were reversed, with Hamilton struggling all weekend and unable to pinpoint an obvious reason why.

"It's more difficult to master every compound for every asphalt, and how they behave," says Bottas. "But my thinking in the future is it's going to be less and less about the tyres. Once teams learn more about getting everything out of the tyres in the right windows in different conditions, then I think everyone is going to be equal in how they handle the tyres. There is going to be less speaking about tyres and it's going

to be more about the cars, set-ups and car development."

The tyres are also behaving differently under load compared to in 2016, so degradation is substantially reduced, and this is likely catching some teams and drivers out.

"It is a bit different to last year, because this family of compounds is different," says Pirelli racing manager Mario Isola. "Last year we had a warm-up phase, grip increasing, peak of grip, then going down and degrading. This year this curve is much flatter, so you have a warm-up phase, and in some cases they don't feel the real peak of grip because the compound is quite consistent and degrading in a much higher number of laps.

"The feedback from the drivers is they can't feel the peak of grip. In reality, it's because of the stabilisation [of degradation].

"We were designing the compounds with a wider working range, but I had this feedback [that the working range is narrower]. Everything is also new for us. All the information we collect at each race is important to better understand the behaviour of the compound. We see some cars that are quick in qualifying but struggle a bit in the races; some cars are

strong with race pace but maybe they don't have a strong qualifying lap. They are learning. It's a big technical change. I think it isn't easy to set up the car in a proper way."

It seems the point at which it is possible to extract the

best from the tyres has become vaguer. Previously, the peak of grip was easy to find, and it was more about managing the extreme drop-off. Now, it's about finding a peak that is more difficult for the driver to feel, because the tyres are more durable, and trying to stay there. It is likely that this requires greater precision in terms of tyre preparation and set-up.

"They are consistent, but it's still important to manage the tyres and understand what's happening with them," says Force India's Sergio Perez, an acknowledged master of tyre management in the previous Pirelli era. "It's so difficult to figure out what's going on sometimes with these tyres. Not putting them in the window at the right moment can make a huge difference to your qualifying lap and your race performance."

There is also the issue of the hard tyre, which Perez described as "just for the pictures" in Barcelona, and teams essentially abandoned it. Pirelli is considering changing its allocation for Silverstone and not taking the hard, as previously planned.

Extreme degradation and go-slow driving may well be a thing of the past in F1 now, but it seems that the black arts of tyre science are still as important as ever. ❄

"Even drivers who should know better are getting into trouble"

FEEDBACK

Remembering a unique, gifted driver



Whitmore relished his 2005 Revival outing in a Mustang

A big thank you to Paul Fearnley for his touching, colourful obituary to Sir John Whitmore (May 11). I'm so glad that it included much to give us a picture of the man and not just the racing legend. We met in 2004 and immediately found much in common, such that it took us two hours to even mention motor racing!

Though he claimed to have "moved on" from the need for "competitive expression", motor racing remained dear to his heart. I will always remember his exploits at the 2005 Goodwood Revival. He flew in from Australia on Thursday, put the Alan Mann Mustang on pole on Friday, led four past and current F1 drivers on Saturday before spinning off ("My fault," he typically admitted), eventually finishing third, raced a Cobra on Sunday, then flew back down under on Monday... at the age of 68!

He told me a great Steve McQueen anecdote. He was relaxing in his motel room in California when there was a rumpus outside, bright headlights shining into his room. It was Steve, who dragged him out in his underpants and convinced him to ride spreadeagled on the car's roof.

They rode off into some canyon and were stopped by a cop on a bike who

asked the driver what the hell he thought he was doing. Steve answered: "We're just looking for coffee...", at which point the cop, realising who he was talking to, changed his tone completely, gave John his jacket, suggesting he ride inside, and then escorted them to the nearest coffee shop. When they arrived, the car park was full of police who had all been alerted to the imminent arrival of the star...

Sweet memories of a gifted individual: unique, bright, strong-willed, a little eccentric, but with great depth and kindness.

Tim Hain
Lower Kingswood, Surrey

Formula 1 finds its heart

It was refreshing to see Liberty Media working to bring F1 into the 21st century at the Spanish Grand Prix. Whose heart wasn't melted when the TV cameras captured images of the little lad dressed in Ferrari gear crying his eyes out because his hero was out at the first corner, then seeing the lad meeting Kimi Raikkonen, having his picture taken with him, and watching the podium ceremony from the pitlane?

Kudos Ferrari, Liberty and the

organisers for this. It was great to see and hopefully there'll be a lot of this to come.

Perhaps at the British GP, when Fernando Alonso's McLaren fails him again, the camera will zoom in on my distressed face and I'll get to meet my hero as well!

Richard Guy
Shaftesbury, Dorset

Visibility counts for fans

Congratulations to Liberty Media for the drive to make names visible and driver numbers larger on the cars. Even on TV it makes a massive difference identifying who's who. It's just a shame Force India feels the numbers are more visible on the top of the sidepods. Still, great use of the shark fins in most cases.

Richard Nunney
Byemail

King of the Hill

Since Graham Hill won two world championships, five Monaco GPs, one Indy 500 and one Le Mans, I think he qualifies on all counts whatever the Triple Crown combination, and we can be almost certain nobody else will ever top that. I think that says it all!

Julian Nowell
Byemail

Kerbs curb infringements

Just been watching the Northwest 200 bike races. No track-limits issues there! Put a kerb there and, funnily, everyone stays within track limits. Maybe the way forward is to look back!

Jonathan Moorhouse
York

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Hamilton: harder, faster,



LAT IMAGES

closer, tenser

By Ben Anderson, Grand Prix Editor

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Vettel coped better with initial wheelspin...

THE SPANISH GRAND PRIX AT BARCELONA WAS ALWAYS LIKELY TO BE the acid test of whether the powerhouses of Mercedes and Ferrari really can go toe-to-toe for the title throughout the rest of the 2017 Formula 1 World Championship.

Barcelona is *the* circuit for testing the veracity of major aerodynamic upgrades – it stretches F1 cars to their limits, exposes any weaknesses, and brings clearer resolution to the competitive picture. This picture has been a delicate blend of silver and red over the first quarter of the season, with Mercedes holding a narrow edge in qualifying (when it can get the Pirelli tyres working properly) and Ferrari possessing a more driveable and consistent car that has generally been slightly faster over a race distance.

Mercedes brought a massive upgrade package to Spain, and F1 held its collective breath. Would all these obvious component changes, plus the addition of a new and more reliable engine, upset the delicate equilibrium of the thrilling 2017 title fight by lifting Mercedes clear of Ferrari at the front? Or would Ferrari’s subtler alterations maintain the prevailing balance of power between these two F1 titans? As it turned out, things did not change dramatically, though Ferrari arguably had the fastest car in qualifying for the second race in succession, thanks to the second instalment of a two-stage upgrade it began bolting to the SF70H ahead of the previous race in Russia.

Lewis Hamilton took pole position, but without a costly mistake under braking for the final chicane in Q3 that honour would have easily fallen to Sebastian Vettel instead.

Ferrari’s messy display in Friday practice made race form

difficult to predict, but the Italian team was consistently excellent in this regard over the first four races of the campaign, so there was no obvious reason to expect it to suddenly struggle in Spain.

Fine details continue to make all the difference in what is fast turning into an epic F1 title battle. And although Vettel again had the fastest car on balance, and probably should have won this race, Hamilton’s relentless driving, coupled with that upgraded W08 and smart strategy from his team, helped Mercedes turn the tables on Ferrari and transform a losing position into a winning one.

All signs pointed to a Ferrari victory right after the start, with Vettel taking full advantage of developments of the clutch paddle on his steering wheel to jump Hamilton’s wheelspinning Mercedes off the grid, immediately making up for that qualifying setback. “I saw Lewis struggling with wheelspin and so did I,” said Vettel. “But I pulled the clutch in immediately and reacted and tried to set off a second launch phase, which worked excellently.”

But this reversal of positions at the start also inadvertently made Vettel’s life more difficult. From third on the grid, Valtteri Bottas got a much better launch than Mercedes team-mate Hamilton and Vettel, but found himself hemmed to the inside as the cars swarmed towards Turn 1. Bottas braked early, keen to avoid rear-ending Vettel’s car, but this allowed the sister Ferrari of Kimi Raikkonen to attack around Bottas’s outside



LAT IMAGES



through the first right-hander. With Red Bull's fast-starter Max Verstappen also fancying his chances to Raikkonen's left, there came an inevitable squeeze at the apex. Bottas clipped Raikkonen's right-rear wheel, which bounced the Ferrari into Verstappen. Bottas survived the contact, but Raikkonen pulled off the track with broken left-front suspension. Verstappen crabbed back to the pits, but broken rear suspension ended his race too.

Not only did this incident leave Vettel facing the prospect of fighting two Mercedes single-handedly, it also indirectly tricked Ferrari into thinking that Mercedes was still suffering from the tyre-management problems that have hampered it so heavily in previous races. Bottas struggled badly for speed through the first phase of the race on the soft compound, picking up understeer and suffering from an overall lack of grip too, most likely because

of that collision. This convinced Ferrari that it would also be difficult for Hamilton to hang on to the tyres.

Hamilton worked hard to stay within 2.5 seconds of Vettel through the first stint, and Ferrari called its driver into the pits for the first time at the end of lap 14 of the 66-lap race to deny Mercedes the opportunity to leapfrog Hamilton past Vettel by making an earlier first stop. Vettel emerged behind Daniel Ricciardo's Red Bull and lost time bottled up behind it through the final sector, but breezed by with the help of DRS on the main straight at the start of lap 16.

"We hoped that Ricciardo would make his life quite difficult, but Sebastian's pace was so much faster and he got past quite easily," said Mercedes team boss Toto Wolff. "From then on we were on the back foot. There wasn't a lot to do, so we tried to extend the >>



stint and hopefully towards the end of the race have a better tyre.”

But there was something else Mercedes could do – use the struggling Bottas to delay Vettel and buy Hamilton valuable time. Hamilton made his own first stop at the end of lap 21, Mercedes switching him to the slower medium compound to offset strategically against Ferrari, which had put Vettel back on soft tyres for his second stint.

Bottas was instructed to extend his difficult first stint on the soft compound, and by Turn 10 of the 22nd lap Vettel found his charge halted by Bottas’s slow-going Mercedes. Vettel tried to pass into Turn 1 at the start of lap 24, but Bottas defended the inside and Vettel’s Ferrari bucked underneath him as he tucked back in behind through Turn 2. Vettel regrouped and, despite a lock-up under braking for Turn 10, managed to get close enough to take another crack with the aid of DRS at the start of the next lap. Vettel sold Bottas two dummies by feinting to the inside then the outside, before diving back inside the Mercedes approaching the braking zone for Turn 1.

“He was all over the place with his tyres so they used him a bit to block me,” Vettel said. “He somehow managed to get a decent exit [from corners], so I didn’t quite make it the first time. The second time I thought, ‘Now I have to find a way, even if it’s over the grass’. I faked it on the inside, went back on the outside and then the inside to surprise him, which worked, but I nearly lost the car because I had DRS open and it was quite an aggressive move on the wheel.”

Vettel’s cut across the grass added dramatic effect in a move that

“I wanted to stay ahead but was guessing at the braking point. It worked”

was reminiscent of Nigel Mansell’s famous pass of Nelson Piquet for the lead of the 1987 British Grand Prix at Silverstone. He’d lost four seconds to Hamilton trying to fight his way past the second Mercedes, but began to stretch his legs again once clear. Mercedes told Hamilton that he needed to match Vettel’s pace and wait for the Ferrari’s tyres to go off, but Hamilton suggested that wouldn’t be possible on the slower medium compound.

At this stage, with Hamilton trailing by almost eight seconds, it looked as though Mercedes’ only hope of upsetting Vettel was to use the softer tyre to attack at the end of the race. But then Stoffel Vandoorne broke his McLaren-Honda’s front suspension by

bouncing off Felipe Massa’s Williams at Turn 1 while the leaders were midway around their 34th lap. Officials neutralised the race with a virtual safety car and Mercedes sensed a chance to seize strategic advantage. Many of the midfield cars

immediately grabbed the chance to make a second pitstop under safety car conditions, but Mercedes waited until the end of lap 36 to call Hamilton in, making an educated guess that the VSC period was about to end and realising that pitting just beforehand would leave Ferrari no time to respond in kind.

“At a certain stage we planned to do the opposite to Sebastian, and the magic call was the one to take the pitstop at a time when it looked like the VSC would end soon,” explained Wolff. “We timed it perfectly. I take my hat off to James [Vowles] and his strategists.”

By the time Ferrari could respond, the race was back under way properly. Vettel’s in-lap began while the race was still under VSC.



LAT IMAGES



Top: Raikkonen and Verstappen have just had their accident. Massa and Alonso are about to have one
Above: struggling Bottas played his part holding up Vettel

This certainly cost him time – around four seconds – at the start of lap 37, but that wouldn't have made the difference had Hamilton not also taken extra chunks out of the Ferrari by blitzing it through the second and third sectors while Vettel headed for the pits.

Vettel's stop at the end of lap 37 was decent enough, but the time lost through the transition from VSC to racing again meant he emerged side by side with Hamilton approaching Turn 1. Hamilton attempted to sweep around his rival's outside, but was squeezed off the road before the entry to Turn 2 as Vettel defended aggressively. "I wanted to stay ahead but I was just guessing on the brake point," said Vettel, whose tyres were naturally colder than Hamilton's. "It worked, but there was no room for him. He reacted well, because he avoided the contact. It was really close."

Hamilton sounded perturbed by the incident over team radio, >>

QUALIFYING



SEBASTIAN VETTEL WILL LOOK BACK ON QUALIFYING FOR THE Spanish Grand Prix as the one that got away. He should have taken the 48th pole position of his Formula 1 career at Barcelona, but one crucial error gave it away to title rival Lewis Hamilton.

Windy conditions played a crucial role, with many drivers struggling with unpredictable handling. Ultimately, Hamilton's slightly conservative approach paid off, while Vettel paid the price for choosing a more aggressive path.

But to some degree it was a miracle that Vettel took part in qualifying at all. Ferrari fitted a new engine to his car for final practice, but it sprung a leak in the closing minutes. F1's V6 hybrid-turbo engines are so complicated that you'd do well to change one in less than three hours ordinarily, but Ferrari went all hands to the pumps to get Vettel's swapped for his older one in under two.

Vettel encountered a few gremlins at the start of Q1 – what he described as a "programming issue" – but when that resolved itself he lapped within half a second of Hamilton's pacesetter Mercedes.

"Conditions were very tricky in the wind. I got caught out"

Sebastian Vettel

Vettel reduced that gap to less than a tenth in Q2, but suffered a de-rating of his engine's energy-recovery systems on his first run in Q3 and trailed Hamilton by more than half a second.

Hamilton turned in a 1m19.149s lap on his first run to take provisional pole and

looked set to dip below 1m19s on his final run, but dropped 0.260s compared to his earlier best in the final sector.

Vettel went faster through the early part of his final lap, and would have taken pole comfortably had he not locked up under braking for the chicane. Ferrari said that mistake cost him four tenths, yet he still came within 0.051s of stealing pole from Hamilton. "Conditions were very tricky with the wind, never knowing what to expect, and I got caught out a bit in the last sector," Vettel said. "My favourite place, where Mark Webber taught me many lessons over the years, and I still haven't got it. I need to go back to school maybe!"

Hamilton wasn't delighted by his own performance, suggesting he undercooked his final lap trying to compensate for those unpredictable Catalan winds, but his banker run at the start of Q3 proved enough.

Hamilton's team-mate Valtteri Bottas was third fastest, recovering from a wild slide exiting the chicane on his first Q3 run to ultimately lap 0.173s slower than Vettel with a small improvement on his final run. Bottas struggled to keep the rear of his Mercedes in check and described his performance as "not good enough", but it was still enough to confine the second Ferrari of Kimi Raikkonen to fourth. Raikkonen suggested he simply needed to "drive better" after once again failing to hook a proper lap together at the crucial moment.

Max Verstappen was well clear of Daniel Ricciardo in the private Red Bull battle to be fifth, but the star of qualifying was home hero Fernando Alonso (above), who maximised the updated McLaren-Honda to make Q3 for the first time in 2017 and qualify seventh.



“THERE’S A PARTICULARLY SHARP CONTRAST BETWEEN THE WILLIAMS DRIVERS HERE”



Stroll looks all at sea, and there'll be no let-up in pressure

BARCELONA'S CATALUNYA circuit always highlights the strengths and flaws of Formula 1 cars. This track is all about downforce, and yet still features cornering challenges that often catch drivers out – even though, as Fernando Alonso puts it, everybody has done 10,000 laps of this place.

The connected sequence of Turns 1, 2 and 3 is everything rolled into one. You need lots of downforce and

good braking to get the car stopped and turned in properly for the first part; you require decent grunt to pull you up the hill through 2, and good traction to not waste it; and you need a strong, stable aerodynamic platform to get through the long arc of 3 without leaking lap time.

The Mercedes is dynamite on the brakes into Turn 1, but looks more on a knife-edge than the Ferrari through 2 and

3, where Sebastian Vettel and Kimi Raikkonen have greater options in the line they can take. Looking at the lap times though, it becomes clear that they are not pushing as hard as their rivals in first practice.

Speaking of contrasts, there is a particularly stark one between the two Williams drivers here. Felipe Massa looks properly on top of his car, able to take any sudden snaps of oversteer in his

stride, while rookie team-mate Lance Stroll struggles to make the apex at Turn 1, always too wide at the entry, which compromises his line through 2. He is also hesitant on the throttle, which costs him more time. Massa is hustling his car, while Stroll's looks more like it's driving him.

That impression remains when Autosport heads to the chicane during the final practice session. Stroll

struggles to take a consistent line and that continued hesitancy on the throttle costs him twice – when he attempts to slingshot out of the chicane to start his flying lap and when he returns to finish it.

Stroll looks as though he's struggling to get on top of F1. He lacks experience, of course, but the pressure will increase by the race in a world where there's never any place to hide.

BEN ANDERSON



Hamilton worked hard to score his 55th F1 victory



calling Vettel's move "dangerous" in the heat of the moment, but he reconsidered after the race. "The respect stays the same," Hamilton said. "I think he was tough and hard, just to the edge and no more. I think if he'd hit me that would have been a bit different."

This presented Vettel with the chance to break away and seal victory. But although the medium tyre performed much better than anyone expected, it was still too slow for him to drop the Mercedes, so Hamilton homed back in on his target. Vettel defended position successfully at Turn 1 on lap 39 and Hamilton had a couple of tentative looks down the Ferrari's inside on laps 41 and 42, before finally managing to breeze past with DRS open at the start of lap 44.

Vettel bemoaned the fact that he had "no chance" to defend as Hamilton stormed past "like a train", and you wonder, given that Raikkonen found it impossible to pass Verstappen for the lead of last year's Spanish GP, if Hamilton would have overtaken Vettel without the FIA's decision to extend the DRS zone on the main straight by 100 metres. "It would've been harder but still possible," reckoned Hamilton. "I think I went past Seb at the end of the pitlane and right by the exit, not far past that."

"The engineers said it was between four and five metres difference that 100 metres gives you – something like that. All it meant was that the pass would have been a few metres down the road. It [the move] was still a good 200 metres to the turn. Usually it's so hard to overtake here, so they did a good job. In the past we've had DRS too late, so people just follow and follow and follow."

Once ahead, Hamilton was asked to build a buffer to counter any attempt by Ferrari at 'Plan C', which dictated bringing Vettel in for a third stop, fitting soft tyres and trying to hunt Hamilton down over the final 22 laps. "We tried to have a pitstop gap of two and a half seconds to be able to react," explained Wolff. "It was

balancing on the knife edge, as you want the gap to avoid the undercut but you also need to be able to make the tyres last 32 laps."

It took Hamilton until the end of lap 52 to build a margin of more than 2.5s over Vettel. But given that Ferrari was not convinced Hamilton could make the flag without a further stop, owing to Bottas's earlier struggles, it elected to leave Vettel out. That meant Vettel's only remaining chance of winning the race was to see Hamilton's tyres fall apart before the flag. As it turned out Hamilton's fears that his rear tyres might overheat proved unfounded. He set the fastest lap of the race with two to go and kept Vettel at arm's length to the finish, scoring a second victory of the season that narrowed Vettel's championship lead to just six points.

Hamilton suggested that Mercedes' upgrades had allowed him to

perform more consistently through the race, but this impression is offset by the fact that Mercedes has performed well on the soft compound since the first race. It would also have been interesting to see how Vettel fared without that interference from Bottas

and the VSC period. Adding the four seconds Vettel lost under VSC to the four he lost fighting Bottas swings the race back to him by 4.5s, but perhaps Hamilton would always have found a way past by being on the quicker tyre at the end.

Regardless, Hamilton certainly knew he'd been involved in a real battle once again, pushing so hard that he was literally breathless inside the car. "I was very much on the edge," he admitted. "I was pushing. I couldn't push any more."

"What I loved about the battle and racing with Vettel is [this]: I love tennis, and watching Djokovic and Federer in the finals I really admire the consistency – every hit of that ball, one misplaced shot can mean the game, and I admire the concentration. It's awesome. Today I felt I had that battle."

“Watching Djokovic and Federer is awesome. Today I had that battle”



ALONSO THINKS THAT POINTS WERE NOT POSSIBLE

FERNANDO ALONSO DOUBTS that he could have turned his Spanish Grand Prix qualifying heroics into McLaren-Honda's first points finish of the season, even if he had avoided a first-lap collision.

McLaren brought a substantial upgrade package to the MCL32 for Barcelona, including new wings and a new floor. Honda also updated the intake and fuel system on the engine to improve driveability and boost power by 10bhp.

Alonso delighted his home crowd by claiming seventh on the grid in a car that had not previously reached Q3, but his race immediately went awry. Contact with Felipe Massa at Turn 2 sent Alonso through the gravel and down to 11th.

Alonso was then cut adrift when he got trapped behind Daniil Kvyat. Others on Alonso's strategy overtook the Toro Rosso, which started on the slower medium tyre, but Alonso could not.

After an additional stop for fresh soft tyres, Alonso charged from 15th to 12th in the closing laps. But felt that was about the best result possible.

"In terms of race pace we knew we couldn't match the cars in front," he said. "And even if we had it, we lost all our chances behind Kvyat."



Verstappen and Raikkonen blame

KIMI RAIKKONEN AND MAX Verstappen believe Valtteri Bottas caused their first-corner collision in the Spanish Grand Prix, but Bottas insisted that he did not cause the incident "on purpose".

Bottas's Mercedes made a good start from third on the grid, but he braked earlier for Turn 1 than his rivals, enabling Raikkonen and

Verstappen to move around the outside. As the field squeezed into Turn 1, Bottas clipped Raikkonen's right-rear wheel, which bounced him into Verstappen. The impact damage put both the Red Bull and the Ferrari out of the race.

"It [the car] jumped a little bit and then obviously you cannot control a lot after that," Raikkonen said. "Then

we came together with Max, but it all started from the first touch. What can you do? I made a good start, got blocked by Bottas on the straight once, I had to lift already, and then we touched and my race ended there."

Verstappen added: "You can clearly see what happened – Valtteri hitting Kimi and then of course it was difficult for Kimi to control

Bottas: 'It was my job to hold up Vettel'

VALTTERI BOTTAS SAYS IT WAS his "mission" to hold Sebastian Vettel up in the middle phase of the Spanish Grand Prix, so he could help team-mate Lewis Hamilton make up time.

Bottas played a key role in the outcome of the Barcelona event as early race leader Vettel lost valuable seconds behind him. This enabled Hamilton to stay close to his Ferrari rival, despite running on the slower medium tyre at that stage.

Vettel was frustrated by the situation, but Bottas said his

approach was understandable – because he is paid to help Mercedes win races.

"I was doing everything I could to keep Sebastian behind and make him lose time," explained Bottas. "That was my job and mission at that point. But the pace difference was too big and eventually he got past. But I think I helped the team."

After surviving first-lap contact with Kimi Raikkonen's Ferrari, Bottas eventually retired from the race with an engine failure.

Both Mercedes were fitted with

new engines ahead of the weekend, upgraded for reliability, but Bottas had to revert to his old unit after the team discovered a water leak while fixing an electrical fault.

He struggled for pace after the lap-one contact, before retiring on lap 39 of 66 when the engine, which Mercedes felt had enough life left in it to complete the race, expired. "We took a risk going to the old engine," Bottas admitted. "We knew it was running out of mileage but that was the only option to qualify, so that's life."





me Bottas for clash

the car, so he slammed into me. Normally three cars [into Turn 1] is doable; it's always very tight. It was unfortunate. When you're on the outside you know it's a bit tricky, I was just giving a bit of space."

The collision was investigated by the stewards, who decided to take no further action.

Bottas said of the incident: "It was

not on purpose, it was just a small touch really. The start again was good and I was catching up pretty quickly on the guys in front, but there was nowhere to go.

"I think it was unlucky that me and Kimi collided. It was just all a bit too tight and close, but in racing when it's close sometimes you hit and that's how it goes."



Red Bull downplays deficit

RED BULL CLAIMS THAT THE 75-second gap between Daniel Ricciardo and the front of the Formula 1 field at the Spanish Grand Prix was not representative of its car's true pace.

Max Verstappen qualified within six tenths of pole position in the updated RB13 at Barcelona, the closest the team has been all year. But after Verstappen was taken out of the race at the first corner, his team-mate Ricciardo endured a lonely and unchallenged run to third place once Valtteri Bottas retired with engine failure.

Ricciardo finished 1m15.820s adrift of race winner Lewis Hamilton, but team boss Christian Horner said that circumstances masked the true picture.

"Daniel had a pretty lonely race and pretty much from halfway through we turned the engine down to save engine life," Horner explained. "The pace [gap] to the frontrunning cars was significant, so we still have plenty to do.

"It has given us a very clear development direction and we hope to be able to capitalise on that in the coming races."

Force India moves clear in midfield fight

FORCE INDIA TOOK A SEASON-BEST RESULT OF fourth and fifth in the Spanish Grand Prix.

Sergio Perez and Esteban Ocon qualified eighth and 10th respectively in Barcelona. They then took advantage of clashes ahead of them and the retirement of Valtteri Bottas's Mercedes to head the midfield fight in their upgraded VJM10s.

The results move the team 32 points clear of Toro Rosso in the constructors' table. Force India is the only squad to have had both cars finish in the points in all five races so far this season.

Q&A

OTMAR SZAFNAUER FORCE INDIA COO



Five races down and 19 points behind Red Bull, how eagerly would you have taken that after testing?

We have come close to maximising what we can do, which is satisfying. That doesn't happen by luck; it's because if the car isn't where you need it to be, the guys here extract what they can from it. If you have that depth you can do it. And you need two good drivers.

Beyond the points haul, is the qualifying performance the most encouraging thing from the weekend?

It could have been better – Esteban did his lap without DRS by hitting it one hundredth of a second early. But even if we qualified better, I don't think we could have finished any better. We didn't have the pace to beat Red Bull and we also made some mistakes in the pitstops. We think it's a wheelnut design issue, so we've got to fix that.

What's your take on the new race numbers? Why were you called to the stewards?

I don't know what the problem is. We comply with the sporting regulations. And we went through scrutineering – they should have pointed it out on Thursday, not after the race. Force India is a team that does pretty well on the track, but doesn't do so well financially from the way the [F1] income is distributed, so we need to maximise sponsorship. To do that we need space on the car.





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Wehrlein scoops Sauber's first 2017 points

PASCAL WEHRLEIN SCORED SAUBER'S first points of 2017 in Spain, despite incurring a penalty for a pitlane infringement.

The German qualified 15th and completed the first lap in 12th. He moved forwards as others pitted, and his race came alive when the team called him in for his single stop during the virtual safety car period, allowing him to return ahead of some of the earlier stoppers.

That lifted Wehrlein to eighth, which became seventh when Valtteri Bottas retired. He then held off Carlos Sainz's Toro Rosso for the rest of the race and was only demoted to eighth by a five-second penalty for not keeping to the right of the pit-entry bollard.

"I got the call when I was already there on the last corner, but I knew it was important to come in," said Wehrlein. "I missed the bollard, but if I hadn't stopped that lap everyone behind would have overtaken me so this was my last chance to score points. I expected the penalty."

Sainz, who inherited seventh, believes his failure to pass the Sauber highlights an issue for his Renault-powered Toro Rosso. "It's a bit of a desperate situation to have a 2016 Ferrari engine faster than us on the straights," Sainz said. "He was doing a good job, but we need a bit more power."

LAT IMAGES



Late-race collision decides Magnussen-Kvyat battle

KEVIN MAGNUSSEN LOST HIS chance to score points after a late-race clash with Daniil Kvyat.

Magnussen's Haas qualified 11th and ran eighth in the early stages. Like Carlos Sainz, Magnussen got trapped behind Pascal Wehrlein's Sauber after the virtual safety car period, allowing the Force Indias and Nico Hulkenberg's Renault to escape.

The Dane started to struggle on the medium tyre in the closing stages and came under attack from Kvyat's Toro Rosso. Having been overtaken, Magnussen lunged back inside Kvyat into Turn 4 on lap 63 and the two clashed. Kvyat

continued to finish ninth, but Magnussen had to pit with a puncture and fell to 14th.

Kvyat, who struggled for pace in qualifying and started 19th, blamed Magnussen: "He drove into me and got a puncture for himself. I was one car ahead and he tried to get back the position and he drove into me."

But Haas team principal Gunther Steiner agreed with the stewards that no action should be taken. "It was just a racing accident," he said. "If it is not clear-cut, why should he get a penalty? Kevin's penalised already, he's out of the points. Kvyat didn't have any damage — no harm, no foul in my opinion."



Vandoorne hit with grid penalty for Massa clash

McLAREN ROOKIE STOFFEL Vandoorne will serve a three-place grid penalty at the Monaco Grand Prix after clashing with Felipe Massa's Williams in Spain.

Vandoorne, who started last after receiving a grid penalty for taking a new energy store and control electronics on his Honda engine, was running 15th after 32 laps.

Massa, recovering from a lap one clash with the other McLaren of Fernando Alonso, attacked on the inside into Turn 1 and Vandoorne

turned in. The resulting contact caused Vandoorne to retire with damaged suspension, leading to a virtual safety car period.

"I think we're lacking a little bit of straightline speed," said Vandoorne. "I wasn't expecting Felipe to be there because he was quite far behind at the beginning of the straight. For him to be there was quite embarrassing."

Vandoorne has also been handed two penalty points on his licence, bringing his total to three.



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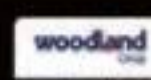
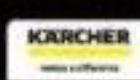
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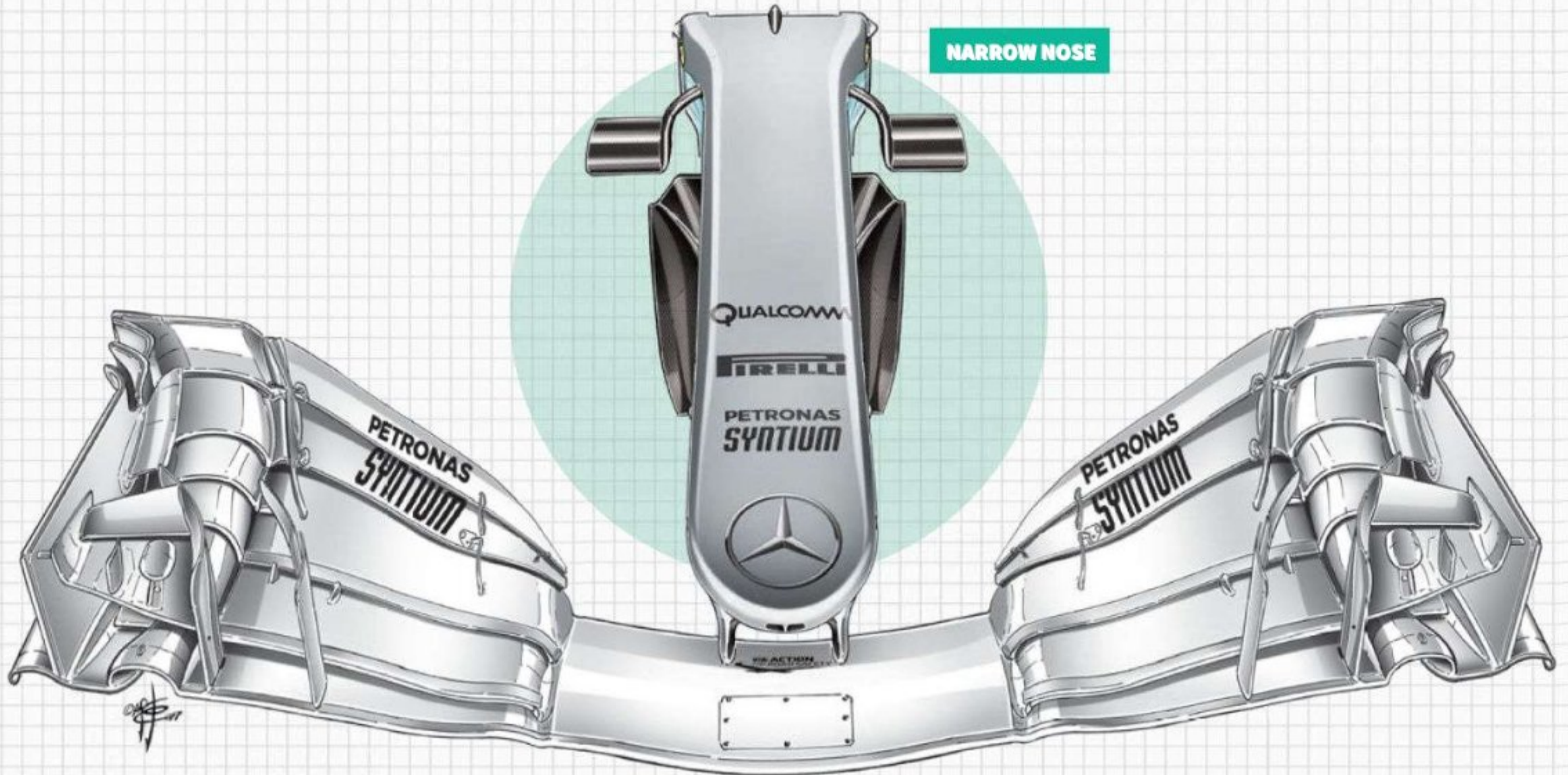
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NARROW NOSE

ANALYSING MERCEDES' MASSIVE UPGRADE

Mercedes brought a drastic and very visible update package to Barcelona, and the most obvious new component was the shell-shaped vane on the underside of a new, much narrower nose profile.

Up until now, the teams have used the S-duct to help keep the airflow attached to the underside of the nose. Since the current regulations require the forward crash structure at the tip of the nose to be very low, it has meant that the underside of the nose sweeps upwards at a greater rate than is

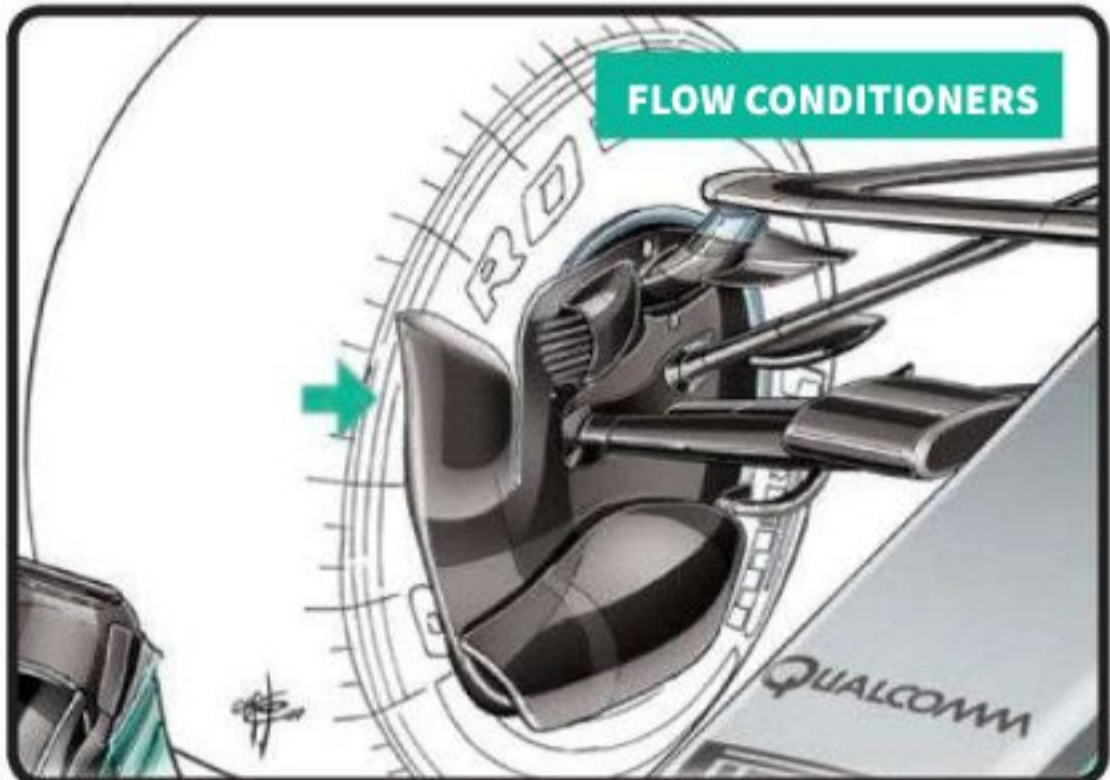
optimal for the airflow. Fitting this shell-like device has separated the airflow, where it comes off the trailing edge of the flat FIA-mandated central section of the front wing, from the airflow coming around the sides of the nose.

These two flows will reattach at the trailing edge of this component, and its flow direction will be more sympathetic to what the bargeboards require.

To make the best use of this improved airflow coming through from the underside of the nose, Mercedes has

also added some more intricate detail to the bargeboards. These have become major downforce-producing devices and, since they are more-or-less bolt-on components, I'm sure it's an area where we will see continued development.

The front suspension is also slightly different, as are the brake ducts. These two components also act as flow conditioners for the air finding its way around the wider front tyre. Optimising and tidying up this airflow improves the performance of the sidepod outer-corner



FLOW CONDITIONERS



SHELL VANE

vertical turning vane, which in turn improves the efficiency of the undercut sidepod and Coke bottle.

The floor in front of the rear tyre has also been modified with even more slotted vanes. The objective of the undercut sidepods and Coke bottle is to pull as much airflow around the sidepod as possible.

As the tyres rotate and meet the ground, the airflow becomes displaced around the rear tyre's contact patch, creating a squirting effect. By getting these slotted vanes connected to this, it helps pull airflow from the

top surface of the floor. This will improve the overall efficiency of the sidepod and underfloor.

Mercedes has also joined the monkey-seat brigade. This may only be for high-downforce tracks, but it also helps slightly with improving the pressure differential across the hot side of the turbo. This reduces the turbo's back-pressure, which will enable the turbo to spin faster for the same exhaust-gas pressure, which in turn means you will get a little bit better performance from the MGU-H.

F1/SPANISH GRAND PRIX RESULTS

STARTING GRID



Race results / 66 laps – 190.834 miles

Fastest laps

POS	DRIVER	TEAM	FINISH TIME	LED	TYRES	TIME IN PITS	POS	DRIVER	TIME	GAP	LAP
1	Lewis Hamilton	Mercedes	1h35m56.497s	31	●●●	43.266s	1	Hamilton	1m23.593s	-	64
2	Sebastian Vettel	Ferrari	+3.490s	32	●●●	44.806s	2	Vettel	1m23.674s	+0.081s	43
3	Daniel Ricciardo	Red Bull-Renault	+1m15.820s		●●●	43.729s	3	Ricciardo	1m23.686s	+0.093s	40
4	Sergio Perez	Force India-Mercedes	-1 lap		●●●	48.189s	4	Alonso	1m23.894s	+0.301s	64
5	Esteban Ocon	Force India-Mercedes	-1 lap		●●●	45.259s	5	Bottas	1m24.696s	+1.103s	28
6	Nico Hulkenberg	Renault	-1 lap		●●●	44.852s	6	Palmer	1m24.843s	+1.250s	44
7	Carlos Sainz	Toro Rosso-Renault	-1 lap		●●●	44.366s	7	Perez	1m25.755s	+2.162s	51
8	Pascal Wehrlein	Sauber-Ferrari	-1 lap		●●●	23.445s	8	Kvyat	1m25.976s	+2.383s	37
9	Daniil Kvyat	Toro Rosso-Renault	-1 lap		●●●	44.352s	9	Sainz	1m26.186s	+2.593s	61
10	Romain Grosjean	Haas-Ferrari	-1 lap		●●●	45.507s	10	Ericsson	1m26.213s	+2.620s	60
11	Marcus Ericsson	Sauber-Ferrari	-2 laps		●●●	45.770s	11	Ocon	1m26.276s	+2.683s	40
12	Fernando Alonso	McLaren-Honda	-2 laps		●●●	1m08.967s	12	Magnussen	1m26.371s	+2.778s	15
13	Felipe Massa	Williams-Mercedes	-2 laps		●●●	1m25.970s	13	Massa	1m26.472s	+2.879s	64
14	Kevin Magnussen	Haas-Ferrari	-2 laps		●●●	1m11.569s	14	Wehrlein	1m26.476s	+2.883s	58
15	Jolyon Palmer	Renault	-2 laps		●●●	1m10.671s	15	Hulkenberg	1m26.703s	+3.110s	56
16	Lance Stroll	Williams-Mercedes	-2 laps		●●●	44.171s	16	Stroll	1m26.838s	+3.245s	50
R	Valtteri Bottas	Mercedes	38 laps-power unit	3	●●●	21.689s	17	Grosjean	1m26.871s	+3.278s	50
R	Stoffel Vandoorne	McLaren-Honda	32 laps-collision		●●●	22.547s	18	Vandoorne	1m27.554s	+3.961s	14
R	Max Verstappen	Red Bull-Renault	1 lap-collision		●●●	-	19	Verstappen	no time	-	-
R	Kimi Raikkonen	Ferrari	0 laps-collision		●●●	-	20	Raikkonen	no time	-	-

WEATHER Dry, sunny; track 44C, air 24C WINNER'S AVERAGE SPEED 119.338mph FASTEST LAP AVERAGE SPEED 124.567mph ● New ○ Used | ● Ultra-Soft ● Super-Soft ● Soft ● Medium ● Hard ● Wet ● Intermediate

0

Vandoorne is the only driver to have not progressed to Q2 at any race in 2017

3

Only three drivers finished on the lead lap, the fewest since the 2008 British GP

5

Ocon's fifth place means he has improved on, or matched, his best F1 finish in all five 2017 races

7

Alonso's seventh on the grid equalled the best qualifying performance of his 'second' career at McLaren

8

Wehrlein's eighth place is the best of his F1 career. His previous best result was 10th

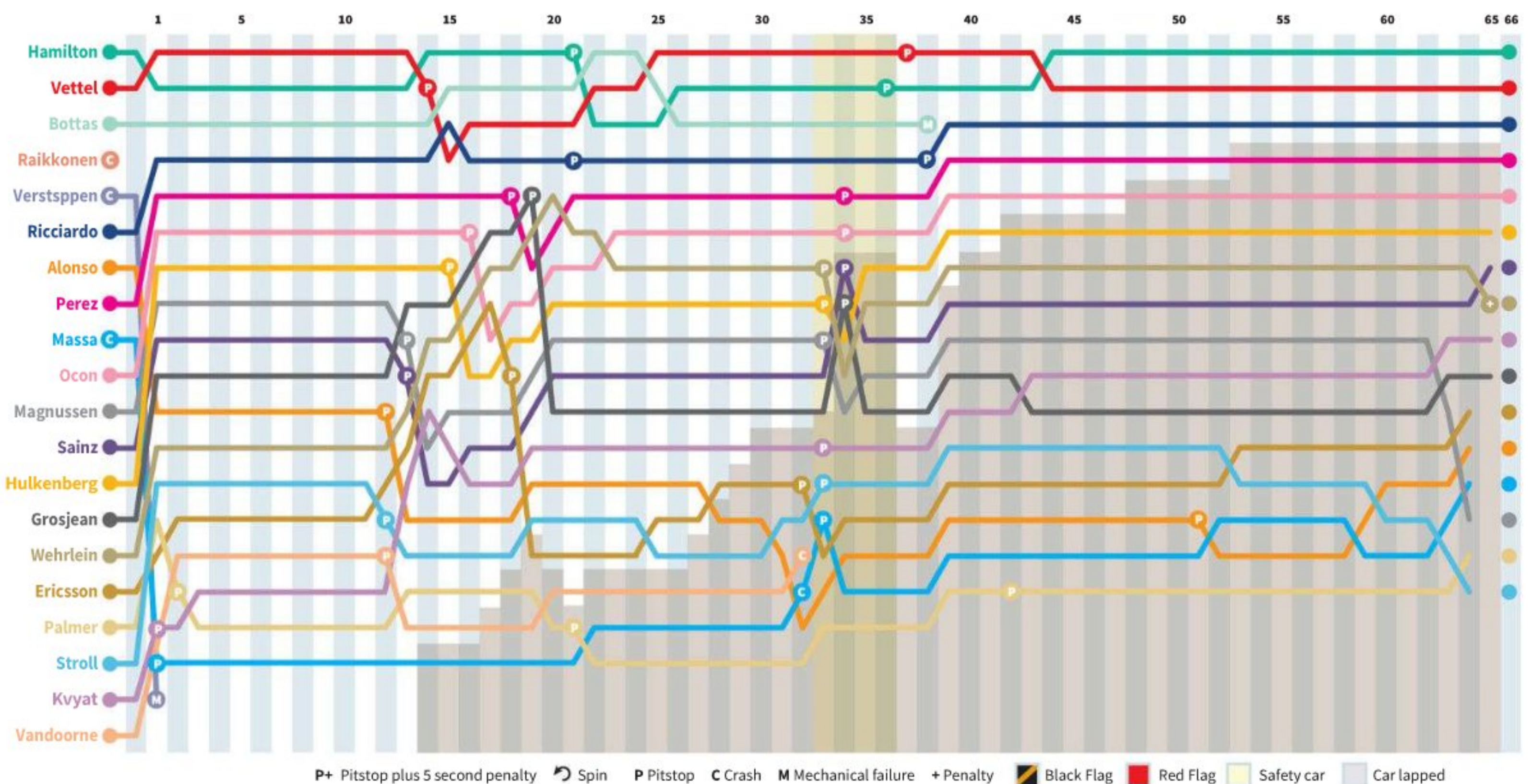
25

This was Vettel's 25th podium finish for Ferrari. Only six drivers have more

250

Hamilton's pole position was the 250th for a British driver in the world championship

Lap chart / What happened, when





Qualifying 1

POS	DRIVER	TIME
1	Hamilton	1m20.511s
2	Raikkonen	1m20.742s
3	Vettel	1m20.939s
4	Bottas	1m20.991s
5	Verstappen	1m21.430s
6	Ricciardo	1m21.704s
7	Grosjean	1m21.822s
8	Ocon	1m21.901s
9	Sainz	1m21.941s
10	Magnussen	1m21.945s
11	Perez	1m21.998s
12	Alonso	1m22.015s
13	Hulkenberg	1m22.091s
14	Massa	1m22.138s
15	Wehrlein	1m22.327s
16	Ericsson	1m22.332s
17	Palmer	1m22.401s
18	Stroll	1m22.411s
19	Vandoorne	1m22.532s
20	Kvyat	1m22.746s

Qualifying 2

POS	DRIVER	TIME
1	Hamilton	1m20.210s
2	Vettel	1m20.295s
3	Bottas	1m20.300s
4	Raikkonen	1m20.621s
5	Verstappen	1m20.722s
6	Ricciardo	1m20.855s
7	Ocon	1m21.148s
8	Massa	1m21.222s
9	Perez	1m21.239s
10	Alonso	1m21.251s
11	Magnussen	1m21.329s
12	Sainz	1m21.371s
13	Hulkenberg	1m21.397s
14	Grosjean	1m21.517s
15	Wehrlein	1m21.803s

Qualifying 3

POS	DRIVER	TIME
1	Hamilton	1m19.149s
2	Vettel	1m19.200s
3	Bottas	1m19.373s
4	Raikkonen	1m19.439s
5	Verstappen	1m19.706s
6	Ricciardo	1m20.175s
7	Alonso	1m21.048s
8	Perez	1m21.070s
9	Massa	1m21.232s
10	Ocon	1m21.272s

Race briefing

FRIDAY PRACTICE
SERGEY SIROTKIN replaced Palmer at Renault

GRID PENALTIES
VANDOORNE 10-place penalty for additional power-unit elements used

RACE PENALTIES
WEHRLEIN Five-second penalty for pitlane-entry infringement

WEATHER Dry, sunny; track 44C, air 26C

SEASON STATS

Drivers' championship

1	Vettel	104
2	Hamilton	98
3	Bottas	63
4	Raikkonen	49
5	Ricciardo	37
6	Verstappen	35
7	Perez	34
8	Ocon	19
9	Massa	18
10	Sainz	17
11	Hulkenberg	14
12	Grosjean	5
13	Wehrlein	4
14	Magnussen	4
15	Kvyat	4
16	Ericsson	0
17	Stroll	0
18	Alonso	0
19	Giovinazzi	0
20	Palmer	0
21	Vandoorne	0

Constructors' championship

1	Mercedes	161
2	Ferrari	153
3	Red Bull	72
4	Force India	53
5	Toro Rosso	21
6	Williams	18
7	Renault	14
8	Haas	9
9	Sauber	4
10	McLaren	0

Wins

Hamilton	2
Vettel	2
Bottas	1

Fastest laps

Hamilton	3
Raikkonen	2

Pole positions

Hamilton	3
Bottas	1
Vettel	1

Qualifying battle

HAM	3	2	BOT
RIC	3	2	VER
VET	5	0	RAI
PER	4	1	OCO
STR	0	5	MAS
VAN	0	5	ALO
KVY	2	3	SAI
GRO	2	3	MAG
HUL	5	0	PAL
ERI	0	3	WEH
ERI	2	0	GIO

SPEED TRAP

Fastest for each constructor in qualifying



Free practice 1

POS	DRIVER	TIME
1	Hamilton	1m21.521s
2	Bottas	1m21.550s
3	Raikkonen	1m22.456s
4	Vettel	1m22.600s
5	Verstappen	1m22.706s
6	Ricciardo	1m23.084s
7	Magnussen	1m23.670s
8	Grosjean	1m23.758s
9	Hulkenberg	1m23.993s
10	Sainz	1m24.004s
11	Perez	1m24.188s
12	Ocon	1m24.324s
13	Vandoorne	1m24.400s
14	Massa	1m24.618s
15	Kvyat	1m24.642s
16	Ericsson	1m24.966s
17	Wehrlein	1m25.182s
18	Stroll	1m25.919s
19	Sirotkin	1m26.293s
20	Alonso	no time

WEATHER Dry, sunny; track 24C, air 20C

Free practice 2

POS	DRIVER	TIME
1	Hamilton	1m20.802s
2	Bottas	1m20.892s
3	Raikkonen	1m21.112s
4	Vettel	1m21.220s
5	Verstappen	1m21.438s
6	Ricciardo	1m21.585s
7	Hulkenberg	1m21.687s
8	Palmer	1m21.992s
9	Massa	1m22.015s
10	Sainz	1m22.265s
11	Grosjean	1m22.371s
12	Ocon	1m22.520s
13	Vandoorne	1m22.693s
14	Perez	1m22.722s
15	Magnussen	1m23.007s
16	Ericsson	1m23.082s
17	Stroll	1m23.221s
18	Kvyat	1m23.236s
19	Wehrlein	1m23.599s
20	Alonso	1m24.077s

WEATHER Dry, sunny; track 43C, air 25C

Free practice 3

POS	DRIVER	TIME
1	Raikkonen	1m20.214s
2	Vettel	1m20.456s
3	Hamilton	1m20.595s
4	Bottas	1m20.868s
5	Verstappen	1m21.025s
6	Ricciardo	1m21.249s
7	Hulkenberg	1m21.670s
8	Massa	1m21.746s
9	Sainz	1m21.835s
10	Alonso	1m22.093s
11	Grosjean	1m22.128s
12	Magnussen	1m22.214s
13	Perez	1m22.237s
14	Ocon	1m22.297s
15	Kvyat	1m22.391s
16	Ericsson	1m22.513s
17	Stroll	1m22.574s
18	Palmer	1m22.755s
19	Vandoorne	1m22.853s
20	Wehrlein	1m22.974s

WEATHER Dry, sunny; track 31C, air 23C

Wehrlein: eighth wonder

Battling points finish also earns the Sauber driver top marks from us

By Ben Anderson, Grand Prix Editor

[@BenAndersonAuto](#)

MERCEDES



9 LEWIS HAMILTON
Reckoned Ferrari and Mercedes remained within a tenth, which led to "intense" qualifying battle. Got away with a middling final Q3 run thanks to Vettel's error, and, although he botched the start, he recovered to victory thanks to a Bottas roadblock, sharp Mercedes strategy and relentlessly fast driving.



7 VALTTERI BOTTAS
Bottas was discombobulated by loss of a new engine before final practice. Couldn't tame oversteer in qualifying and made mistakes on each Q3 lap. Started well, but braked too early for Turn 1 and collided with Raikkonen. Survived that but had no pace, so played a dutiful team game until the engine let go.

RED BULL



6 DANIEL RICCIARDO
This was a pretty underwhelming weekend. Ricciardo trailed Verstappen in every session, and in Q3 he struggled through Turn 13 and the chicane and ended up nearly 0.5s down on his team-mate. First-corner shenanigans and Bottas's engine woes left him with just a Sunday drive home in the race.



8 MAX VERSTAPPEN
Felt that the updated RB13 was the best he's driven all season and put it to good use to crush team-mate Ricciardo in qualifying and lap within 0.3s of Raikkonen's Ferrari. Sadly, his race ended after one corner. Blamed Bottas for the collision, but three-wide through Turn 1 was never going to work.

FERRARI



9 SEBASTIAN VETTEL
Has the bit between his teeth this year, but loses marks for gifting pole to Hamilton. Strong start was undone as Mercedes threw everything it had at beating him. His pass on Bottas was brilliant; defence against Hamilton was hard; but resisting DRS move on slower tyre just wasn't possible.



7 KIMI RAIKKONEN
Was honest enough to admit that his own messy driving cost him again in qualifying, when Merc looked there for the taking. Was blameless in the Turn 1 collision that ended his race, but put a smile back on the face of a very unhappy young Ferrari fan by posing for photos with him afterwards.

FORCE INDIA

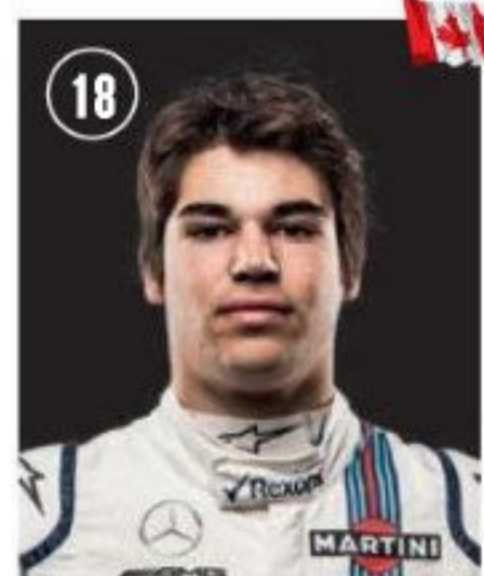


9 SERGIO PEREZ
He was set to be fractionally slower than Ocon in qualifying, after sacrificing the early part of the lap to nail the end, but then Ocon didn't quite deliver. Perez, of course, is the midfield's most reliable operator. Made a poor start but attrition boosted him to fourth; race pace compared with Ocon was impressive.



8 ESTEBAN OCON
Force India felt he would have beaten Alonso to seventh in qualifying, but for failing to engage DRS at the correct moment, costing at least 0.2s and two places. Drove another tidy race, although he trailed Perez by an average of 0.175s per lap. Still, another impressive effort given his lack of experience.

WILLIAMS



4 LANCE STROLL
His struggles continued in Spain, where he looked to be lacking confidence, but was still happy to lap within 0.3s of Massa in Q1. Wasn't happy with his race, and with good reason. He was more than 50s up on Massa after lap two, but finished more than 11.5s down despite making one pitstop fewer.



6 FELIPE MASSA
Looked in danger of dropping out in Q1 until he twigged the need to drive like a grandma on his out-laps, which saved his rear tyres from overheating. Threw away time in Q3, but recovered with a great start until a touch with Alonso exiting Turn 2 punctured a tyre. Fruitless chase after that.

McLAREN



4 STOFFEL VANDOORNE
Underwhelming start to the season continued in Spain. Despite his first clean Friday of the year he got dumped out in Q1 again. The gap to Alonso was large and it seems he is struggling to adapt his technique to this new breed of F1 car. Needless collision with Massa ended his race. Needs to raise his game.



8 FERNANDO ALONSO
Absolutely maximised the heavily updated MCL32 to qualify seventh, but race unravelled thanks to the first-lap touch with Massa. Got stuck behind strategic gamblers Wehrlein and Kvyat, overtaken by Ericsson, and finished well outside the points. A disappointing race after Saturday's heroics.



Wehrlein scored points in F1's slowest car



TORO ROSSO



7 DANIL KVIAT
Was embarrassed to qualify the updated Toro Rosso last, given that it was potentially capable of the top 10, saying his car was "driving on its own". The team reckoned the only problem was Kvyat... Salvaged things with a strong race, executing an alternative strategy and passing both Haas drivers.



7 CARLOS SAINZ JR
Felt he got everything he could out of the STR12 in qualifying, but Toro Rosso didn't agree considering there was nothing wrong with the car and Sainz was top-10 fast until the final Q2 runs. Won battles with both Haas drivers in the race, but couldn't clear Wehrlein until a time penalty intervened.

HAAS



6 ROMAIN GROSJEAN
Complained about inconsistency in his Haas after qualifying, but also overdrove again at the crucial moment in Q2. Delayed by Massa/Alonso incident and got locked into a duel with Sainz. Matched Magnussen's pace, but Haas couldn't work the medium tyre and got strategically outfoxed by Wehrlein and Kvyat.



7 KEVIN MAGNUSSEN
Endured a messy Friday, but pulled things together for qualifying where he drove with discipline and was quicker than Grosjean, though narrowly missed Q3. Was on for a decent points finish, until he tried to come back down the inside of Kvyat and suffered a puncture after slight contact.

RENAULT

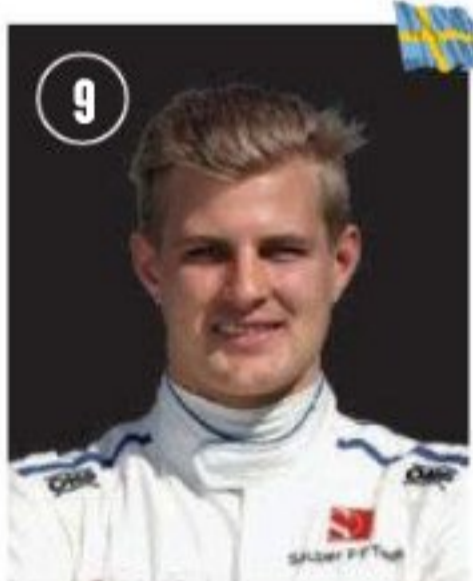


7 NICO HULKENBERG
Qualifying pace wasn't great and Renault was at a loss to explain why. Whatever, Hulkenberg drove a decent race, gaining six places on lap one thanks to a storming start and chaos ahead, and staying ahead of Wehrlein during the VSC pitstop phase. Race pace is still lacking though.

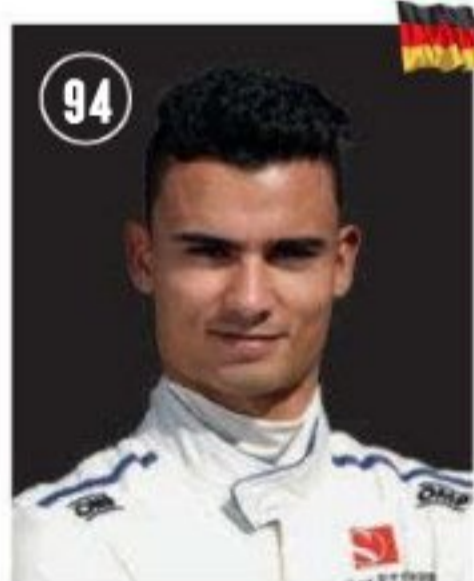


4 JOLYON PALMER
A disappointing weekend again. Complained about understeer in qualifying, where he took another early bath after lapping 0.3s off Hulkenberg. Tried alternative strategy but admitted to struggling to extract pace from car and was overtaken by Vandoorne. At least he beat Stroll to avoid the wooden spoon.

SAUBER



7 MARCUS ERICSSON
Was only 0.005s away from beating Wehrlein into Q2. Got delayed a bit by the mess at the first two corners but kept it together, showed reasonable pace compared with Wehrlein, and even overtook Alonso. Making a stop just before VSC period cut him adrift, but he was never in points contention.

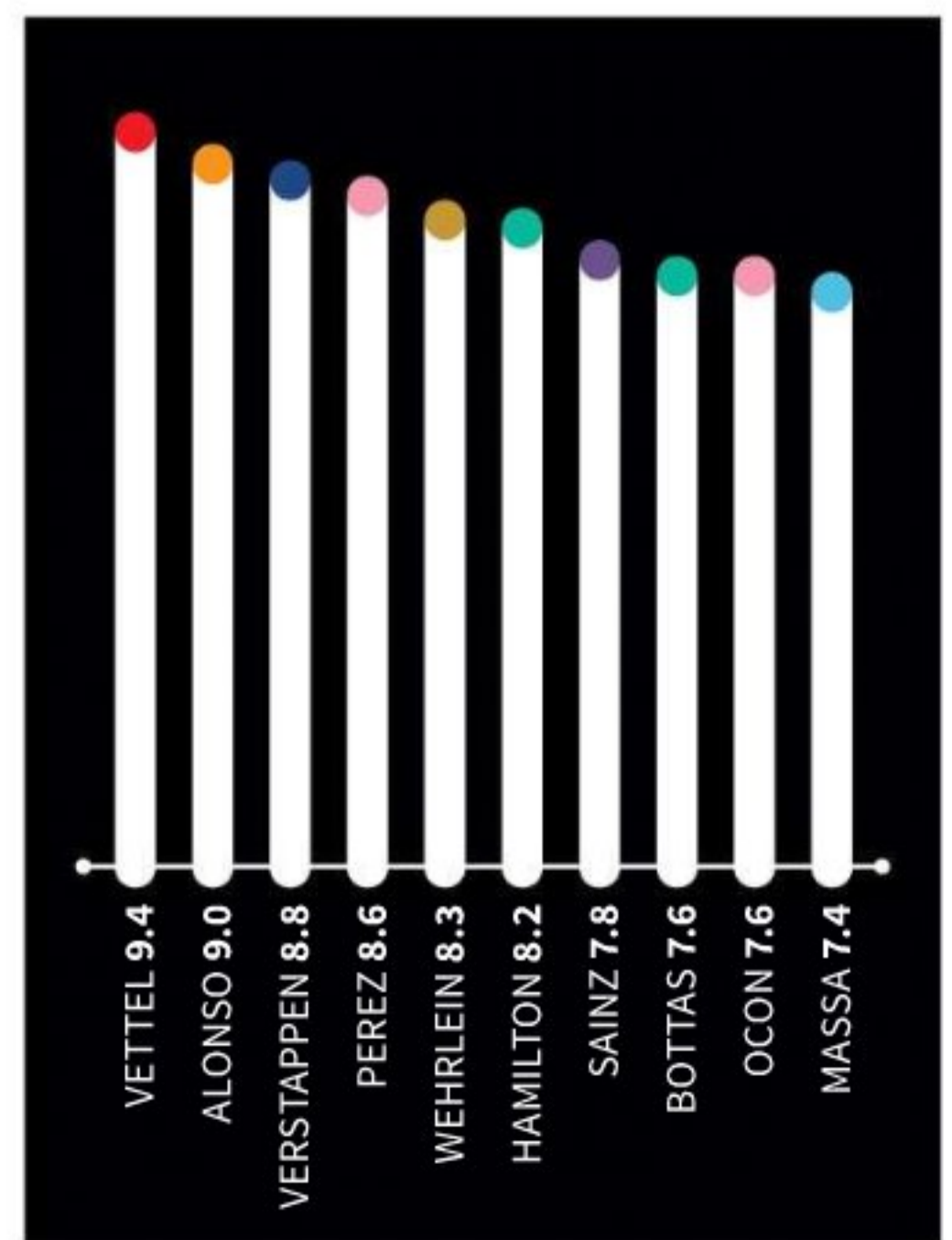


10 PASCAL WEHRLEIN
Outqualifying a Renault, McLaren, Williams and Toro Rosso was unexpected, but not as much as his outstanding race. Perfectly timed pitstop under VSC was key, but his pace was also respectable, so he deserves great credit for scoring points. Sauber took blame for the pit-entry penalty.



Perez got the better of team-mate Ocon

TOP 10 AVERAGE RATING



Q&A

The Piquets

A family business

By Stuart Codling,
Executive Editor

[@CoddersF1](#)

Racing dads' rightfully come with a fierce reputation for being overly competitive and, dare we say it, elbowing their offspring out of the limelight whenever an opportunity arises. And yet Nelson Piquet has kept as low a profile as possible while backing the racing careers of two of his sons, Nelson Jr and Pedro.

How low a profile? Well, there's the fact that he hasn't granted a single interview to Autosport's sister title *F1 Racing* in the 21 years it has been in print.

Nelson Jr has been his own man for the past several years, pursuing an eclectic career through rallycross, stock cars, sportscars and Formula E, in which category he was the inaugural champion. Nelson Sr's racing attention has been focused on shepherding Pedro from karts to Brazilian Formula 3 – a championship he won twice – and now FIA European F3.

The World Endurance Championship opening weekend at Silverstone thus provided a rare opportunity for all three to get together – Nelson Jr racing a Rebellion ORECA in the main event and Pedro on the undercard.

Nelson, your family was against you taking up motor racing, so you didn't get any support at the start of your career. How important was it for you to support your sons' careers?

NELSON PIQUET SR Well, Nelson Jr lived in Monaco with his mother, but he was very keen on racing and he decided to leave, to come to Brazil and race in karts. The first time he sat in a kart he never wanted to do anything else – just to drive, drive, drive. So we started our own team [Piquet Sports].

He won in every category up to GP2. He didn't win that [he was runner-up to Lewis Hamilton in 2006], but Hamilton was tough to beat and we left Nelson without fuel a couple of times. Formula 1 – well, we know what happened there, but in every other category he's raced in he's been successful.



“The first time Nelson Jr sat in a kart he never wanted to do anything else”



Now Pedro is starting out in Formula 3. He was the Brazilian champion, but the European championship is much harder for drivers who are just beginning. You have two 40-minute practice sessions next to one another, then straight into qualifying – you have no time to fix or change anything on the car, which is pretty stupid. As a result it takes more time to get up to speed, two or three years, because you cannot test. It's crazy, but for sure Pedro's time is coming.

Pedro, when did you decide on a career in motor racing?

PEDRO PIQUET It was as soon as I started driving the big cars – the formula cars. Karting is fun but you never know how quick you'll be in an actual car. Once I got in the big

cars I realised I enjoyed it so much I wanted to continue – to do it for the rest of my life.

Do you think there's too much expectation placed on young drivers now, after Max Verstappen's success? He's quite unusual because he matured very quickly.

PP Yeah, I remember after he raced in F3 a lot of other drivers tried to go straight from karting to the FIA F3 championship because they wanted to do the same as him. With a couple of exceptions, that never used to happen – you'd do Formula Renault or a national F3 series first.

Now the FIA doesn't let you do what he did anymore. When Nelson [Jr] was racing in junior single-seaters, it was >>

hard to see someone 17, 18 or 19 years old going straight to F1. Max was a big step, now there's Lance Stroll as well – we'll see if anyone else makes it.

Has the economic situation in Brazil been a problem in securing sponsorship?

NPS [laughing] Daddy sponsors you!

PP [also laughing now] We've got some help, so I don't need to worry about the economic situation at home. Obviously if I got some more sponsors that would be OK as well!

This may seem like a ridiculous question, but how planned has your career been? Is Formula 1 the goal or has your brother's success in Formula E and other categories inspired you to look beyond that?

PP We want to do a path of single-seaters as long as we can. We started in the Toyota Racing Series because there are a lot of races in it – it's a great series for learning and it's been really good for me. Then we did two years in Brazilian F3 [he was champion in 2014 and '15]. Maybe I could have just done one, but I wanted to stay another year to finish school.

I'm really focused on doing well in [FIA] F3 right now, after that... of course, every driver here wants to [do F1] but there aren't many chances. First I need to be really good in F3 then move on from that. The challenge in F2 is that there are so many older drivers there now, with a few seasons' experience; maybe not the fastest drivers but they can win races because they know how to work with the Pirelli tyres.

NELSON PIQUET JR Yeah, it's tough for rookies to show their real potential.

Nelson, when you were starting out in single-seaters, could you have imagined that within 15 years you'd be the world champion in an all-electric race series?

NPJ At that time, I didn't even imagine that there would be electric cars – certainly not electric racing cars. And I didn't

expect to have done rallycross or NASCAR either. Obviously when I was Pedro's age, my dream was to be in Formula 1 and I didn't see beyond that into all these other categories.

Like my dad said, I just enjoy driving – whether it's a rallycross car or a kart. If I *had* to pick one series, one to do for the next 20 years or so, it would probably be NASCAR because you're racing every weekend, you're testing a lot, and you're always inside the car.

That's what I like. I don't like to spend weekends not doing anything, especially with the new regulations in a lot of categories where you don't test. Hardly any of them test anymore, which is a shame, because that was something I enjoyed. In NASCAR we were on the road a lot together as a team, racing every weekend, and it was real hardcore racing.

I love racing in Formula E, but give me a choice between 14 races a year and 35 and I'd do the 35, even for the same salary.

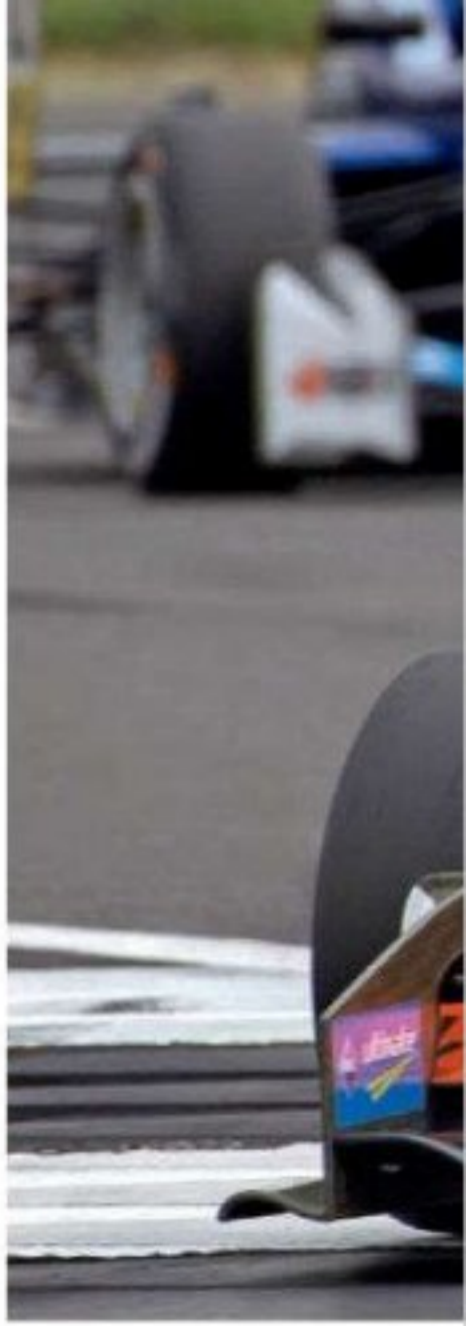
With the way Formula E is set up, it's probably feasible to do more races if there was enough will.

NPJ I'd say yes, but then I'm a driver, not a promoter!

And the problem that even NASCAR will have to face eventually is that the mechanical concept is quite old-fashioned – gas-guzzling big-block engines...

NPJ Yes, motorsport is suffering because of that, certainly in comparison with the late 1990s and early 2000s when it was booming. Knowing what direction to go is the challenge

“I feel I've been treated the same as anybody else”



Nelson Jr is racing in the WEC with Rebellion





Euro F3 ace Pedro is eyeing path trod by Stroll and Verstappen

LAT IMAGES



LAT IMAGES



Piquet Sr won second of three championships in '83

LAT IMAGES

Piquet Sr with sons Nelson Jr and Pedro; five additional Piquet progeny not pictured...

because the manufacturers are really what keep series alive.

Even Formula E is in its early stages – it's still being invested in – but it has eight manufacturers behind it. F1 has solid manufacturer backing as well, but if one of them pulled out and went over to Formula E, what would happen then?

Formula E is unusual in that the rulebook is being opened up, whereas many others are making it tighter or even going totally to spec parts.

NPJ You can't convince manufacturers to join a series if they can't develop their own parts. That's why in Formula E the powertrain and software is open. But that makes it expensive.

NPS When you drive an electric car, you understand where we are going. I have a Tesla and a BMW i3. With the Tesla you can go 400 miles [between charges] and it beats most other cars on top speed and acceleration. When you drive one you have a different idea of what an electric car is. The new Tesla can do 0-60 in 2.2 seconds [the quoted 0-60mph time for a Model S is 2.5s, but *Motor Trend* magazine recently clocked one at 2.28s].

You can host electric races closer to urban centres, which might attract more spectators and maybe even non-fans. How important is that to Formula E's appeal?

NPJ It's fun and interesting to be racing in city centres. But the part I like most, personally, is that the tracks are always new, and I'm able to pick up new tracks quickly.

At street tracks, even when you've been there before, there's only half an hour's practice so you need to be on top of your game very quickly. Being able to drive close to the walls is a fear that I've overcome. When I was Pedro's age and driving in F3 and GP2, street tracks weren't my strong point – even later, when I started in Formula E and they said all the races would be on street circuits, I thought, 'We'll just have to see what happens.' For some reason I got better and better, more confident, and I just love it now.

Would you say that all the extra experience has made you a complete driver?

NPJ I'd say it's age – you learn how to deal with different cars, different situations in your life. It just helps you understand things better. At Pedro's age, he's mainly just driven F3 cars, so if he sits in something else it takes more time to get used to. The more I drove, the more I learned and the more flexible I got. Whatever car I sit in now, I can get used to it quickly because I've had a bit of everything – single-seaters, stock cars, sportscars, rallycross cars.

One final question to Pedro and Nelson Jr, and with due respect to your father of course – has being the son of a Formula 1 world champion been a good thing, or with the expectations it brings can it sometimes be a millstone?

NPJ [to Pedro] You first!

PP In Brazil a little bit more because of the name, but when you go abroad – karting and single-seaters in Europe and New Zealand [home of the Toyota Racing Series] – there are other people who have famous surnames too. So you get used to it. My feeling is that I've been treated the same as anybody else.

NPJ In my case, when I was younger I felt it a little bit more. But you start growing and you develop your own identity. My name is always going to be Piquet, but I have my own career. I've built my own reputation. And I feel I put more pressure on myself than anybody else does, let's say – more than from journalists, fans or whatever. The pressure I put on myself is much higher because I want it more than anything else.

And unlike some other famous fathers and karting dads, your father has kept a low profile throughout your careers.

NPJ We're quite a big family, too – only the seven kids! If he came to everything that all of us did he wouldn't have time to work himself. Now that my brother's racing in Europe, I'm looking forward to seeing more of him. ✨



DREW GIBSON



Buemi edges clash of the E-kings

The tense finale to the Monaco ePrix was a ringing endorsement for the quality of Formula E's most decorated heavyweights

By Scott Mitchell, Formula E Correspondent

[@ScottAutosport](#)

Much has been said about the rising quality of the Formula E field in its short history. What started as a series with – in some circles – a reputation for housing Formula 1 rejects, has-beens or never-weres has become a category arguably bettered only by the DTM in terms of its professional status. None of the 20 drivers on the grid are paying to be there, even if one or two who are

struggling may be on borrowed time.

You may ask, 'Where is this going?' It's simple. In Formula E's most impressive season so far in terms of driving talent, and the convergence of powertrain quality, competition has intensified – but two names are still standing out.

Sebastien Buemi held off Lucas di Grassi to win in Monaco for the second time and claim his fourth victory of the season. It was said of Buemi, by Sam Bird after Marrakech, that the Renault e.dams driver was in a league of his own. He is not, but – alongside di Grassi – is a bona fide star of electric single-seater racing.

Let's make a colourful comparison. In F1 there are very good drivers

Buemi beat di Grassi in Formula E's closest on-track finish

throughout the field – Daniel Ricciardo, Valtteri Bottas and Nico Hulkenberg, to name three. Would you, hand on heart, put them on the same plane as Lewis Hamilton, Sebastian Vettel and Fernando Alonso? Or would you say they are drivers who have peaks that match those top-tier guys on a regular basis, but aren't quite ever-present in their excellence, even if they may be one day?

You'd most likely say the latter. And so it is with Buemi and di Grassi versus the remainder of the Formula E field.

"We are fighting for the championship and we are the only drivers fighting for the championship since season one," says di Grassi. Like in F1, it helps that Buemi



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and di Grassi have had the machinery to put themselves in that position. But take the Monaco ePrix as a case study: the race was reset by a safety car that meant a gap of nothing when racing resumed on lap 26 of 51. By the chequered flag they were 13 seconds clear of the next-best finisher, Mahindra's Nick Heidfeld.

"Thirteen?" asked an incredulous Buemi afterwards. "I didn't expect 13 seconds; that is massive..."

It should be noted that the crash that eliminated Jean-Eric Vergne and delayed Nelson Piquet Jr (see panel, right) contributed to that baker's dozen of seconds to the rest of the field. But it's no coincidence that Buemi and di Grassi occupied the front row and, even before his incident with Vergne, Piquet had fallen 10s behind Buemi.

Asked if he feels they are at their respective peaks, Buemi replied: "It could be. We have a good car, a good team, both of us. Maybe we have the energy saving understood slightly better..."

It's not that Buemi and di Grassi have been without errors. Buemi should have been the inaugural champion instead of

Piquet, but he and his e.dams team blundered at times in that campaign. Last season Buemi had some qualifying woes and clumsily rear-ended Robin Frijns in Long Beach, while a spin in Mexico City just last month helped throw away a big championship lead. Di Grassi, meanwhile, has crashed in two of the five qualifying sessions this season.

They are not perfect. But few would be in a series as quirky as Formula E. We could lose a lot of time and words diving into the nuances of qualifying, tyres, brakes, energy harvesting and other factors, but let's focus on the Buemi-and-di Grassi show instead.

Several drivers have had impressive peaks this season: think Vergne's increasing threat with the Renault-powered Techeetah team; Sam Bird in Hong Kong, before a pitstop problem ruined his victory bid; or Felix Rosenqvist on pole in Marrakech. There was three-time World Touring Car champion Jose Maria Lopez's race-leading effort in Mexico City before a spin too.

The problem is these have been >>



VERGNE HURT IN CRASH

IT WILL BE NO SURPRISE TO YOU TO READ that Jean-Eric Vergne and Nelson Piquet disagreed over the crash that left Vergne's car in the wall and his right hand in a bandage.

Vergne tried to pass Piquet for third around the outside into Turn 3 on lap 21, but Piquet did not back out. They made contact and ran side by side through the corner, then banged wheels on the exit, which forced Vergne into the barriers on the left-hand side. Piquet went on to finish fourth, but Vergne retired on the spot and complained after the race that he could not move his right hand properly and needed an X-ray.

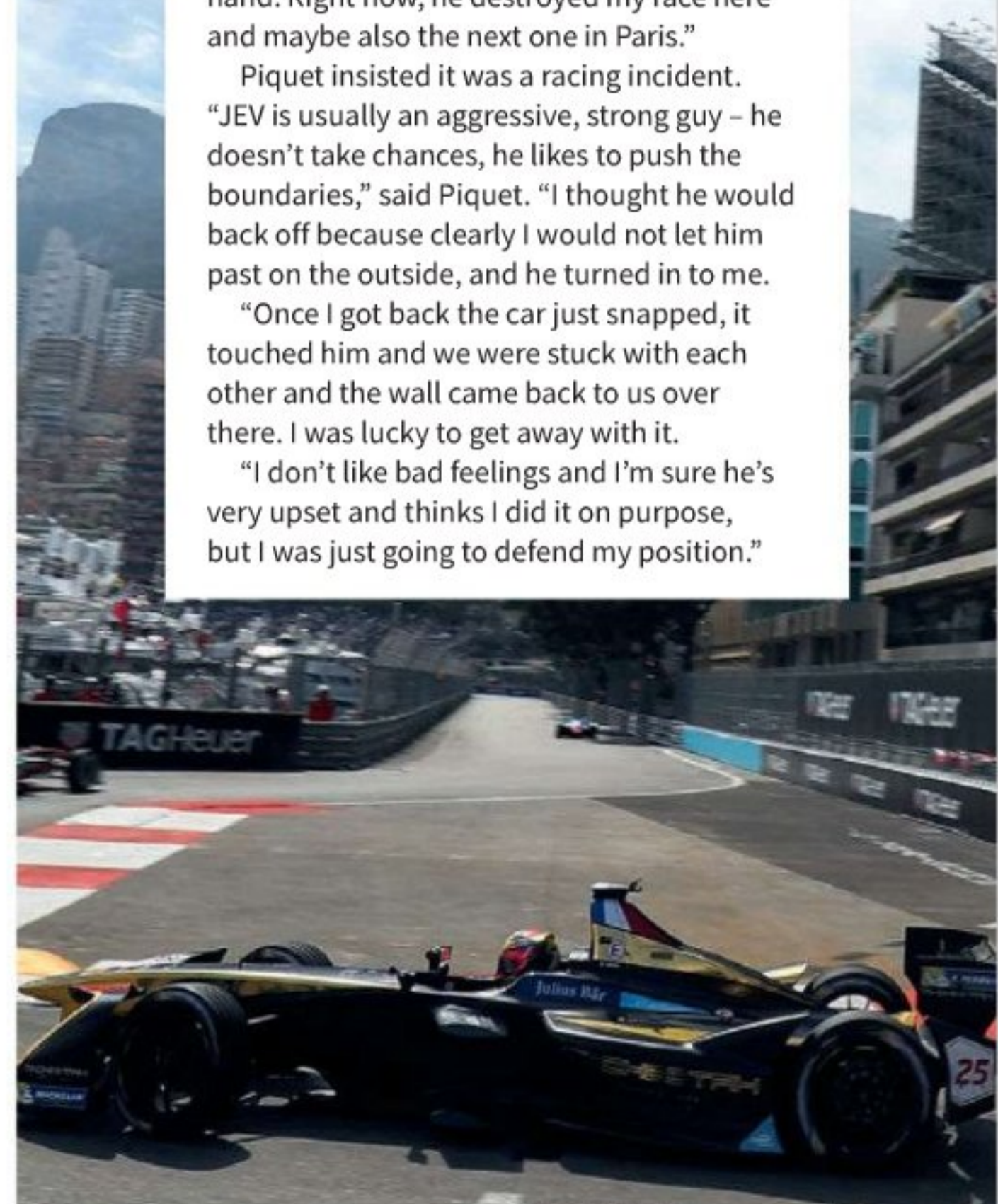
Asked to give his account of the crash, Vergne was frank: "It's not my perspective, it's what happened, it's fact. I'm not exaggerating anything. I passed him on the brakes and he outbraked himself totally and used my car to stop and rotate.

"I received two big hits in the middle of the corner and we were side by side on exit. He squeezed me on the outside as the wall comes back and I ended up in the wall and hurt my hand. Right now, he destroyed my race here and maybe also the next one in Paris."

Piquet insisted it was a racing incident. "JEV is usually an aggressive, strong guy - he doesn't take chances, he likes to push the boundaries," said Piquet. "I thought he would back off because clearly I would not let him past on the outside, and he turned in to me.

"Once I got back the car just snapped, it touched him and we were stuck with each other and the wall came back to us over there. I was lucky to get away with it.

"I don't like bad feelings and I'm sure he's very upset and thinks I did it on purpose, but I was just going to defend my position."



IN THE HEADLINES



ENGEL STARS ON VENTURI TURF

Venturi celebrated a top-five finish at its home race by virtue of Maro Engel's best result of his debut season. The German (above) made it into the superpole for the second time, but unlike in Mexico he did not serve a grid penalty and took full advantage to finish where he started: fifth.

TROUBLE COMES IN PAIRS...

Sam Bird hit the wall and team-mate Jose Maria Lopez picked up front and rear-wing damage in a nightmare opening stint for DS Virgin. Faraday Future Dragon Racing pair Jerome d'Ambrosio (powertrain) and Loic Duval (energy harvesting) also lost time after the car swaps – all four were unclassified as they pursued fastest lap.

...JUST ASK ANDRETTI

Andretti pair Robin Frijns and Antonio Felix da Costa left empty-handed for the fourth consecutive race. Frijns ran out of energy with a lap to go while running eighth, which promoted da Costa to ninth – but he was dropped to 11th by a post-race time penalty for an unsafe release.

JAGUAR BAGS SECOND TOP-10

The late Andretti woe promoted Mitch Evans to 10th, handing Jaguar a second consecutive points finish and rewarding Evans for another drive that eclipsed team-mate Adam Carroll.

CALL FOR FULL F1 LAYOUT

The full Monaco Formula 1 track layout could be used for future Formula E visits. The FE version turns sharp right at Ste Devote and rejoins the F1 circuit via a hairpin at the chicane on the exit of the tunnel. Sebastien Buemi said it is "important" to use the F1 circuit, while Lucas di Grassi thinks it would make for "better" racing.

BRITS LEFT IN RESERVE

Alex Lynn and Alexander Sims kept one another company after both were left on the sidelines. Lynn looked certain to replace Lopez at DS Virgin, but the Argentinian recovered from a back injury, while Sims was there as a precaution in case Frijns's (leading Lopez, below) knee injury created difficulty swapping between his Andretti cars.



flashes at the front rather than sustained threats, whereas Buemi-versus-di Grassi has been a key dynamic over the past 18 months of Formula E. And the evidence in Monaco suggests that's only going to continue.

Pole and victory boosted Buemi's points lead to 15, and lifted him past the 100-point barrier after just five races, but di Grassi made him work for win number four of the season. As far as di Grassi and the Abt Audi Sport team are concerned, the manner in which the Brazilian pressured Buemi in the second half of the race should be cause for optimism.

Yet again, the Renault Z.E.16 (in Buemi's hands) was out of reach on raw pace. Converting the fastest lap times into percentages for the event gives Buemi a 0.472% advantage over di Grassi, 0.516% over Vergne (who has the same powertrain as Buemi) and 0.963% over his team-mate Nico Prost. A Renault with a Swiss at the wheel is a formidable weapon and, for the first time this season, Buemi converted that into pole position in Monaco.

In the race, it looked like Buemi had things sewn up early on. Once he'd navigated the first corner without any drama, he knuckled down into his familiar routine: fastest laps or personal bests, sensible energy usage, and constant lead-building. By lap 21, his advantage over di Grassi was more than five seconds. Piquet, in third, was the same distance again further back. It was trademark Buemi, but rather boring.

Piquet's collision with Vergne gave di Grassi a second chance. When the safety car was required to clear up Vergne's stricken Techeetah car, Buemi's lead was eradicated and the race was reset. Green flags flew at the start of lap 26 of 51, and the chase was on.

But not at first. Buemi gradually edged clear, just not to the same degree as before. In the opening stint he was adding 0.2s, 0.3s, 0.4s per lap to his advantage, averaging over two tenths quicker than his pursuer. This time, progress was slower. The biggest the gap got was 1.8s, and it took Buemi 10 laps to build that.



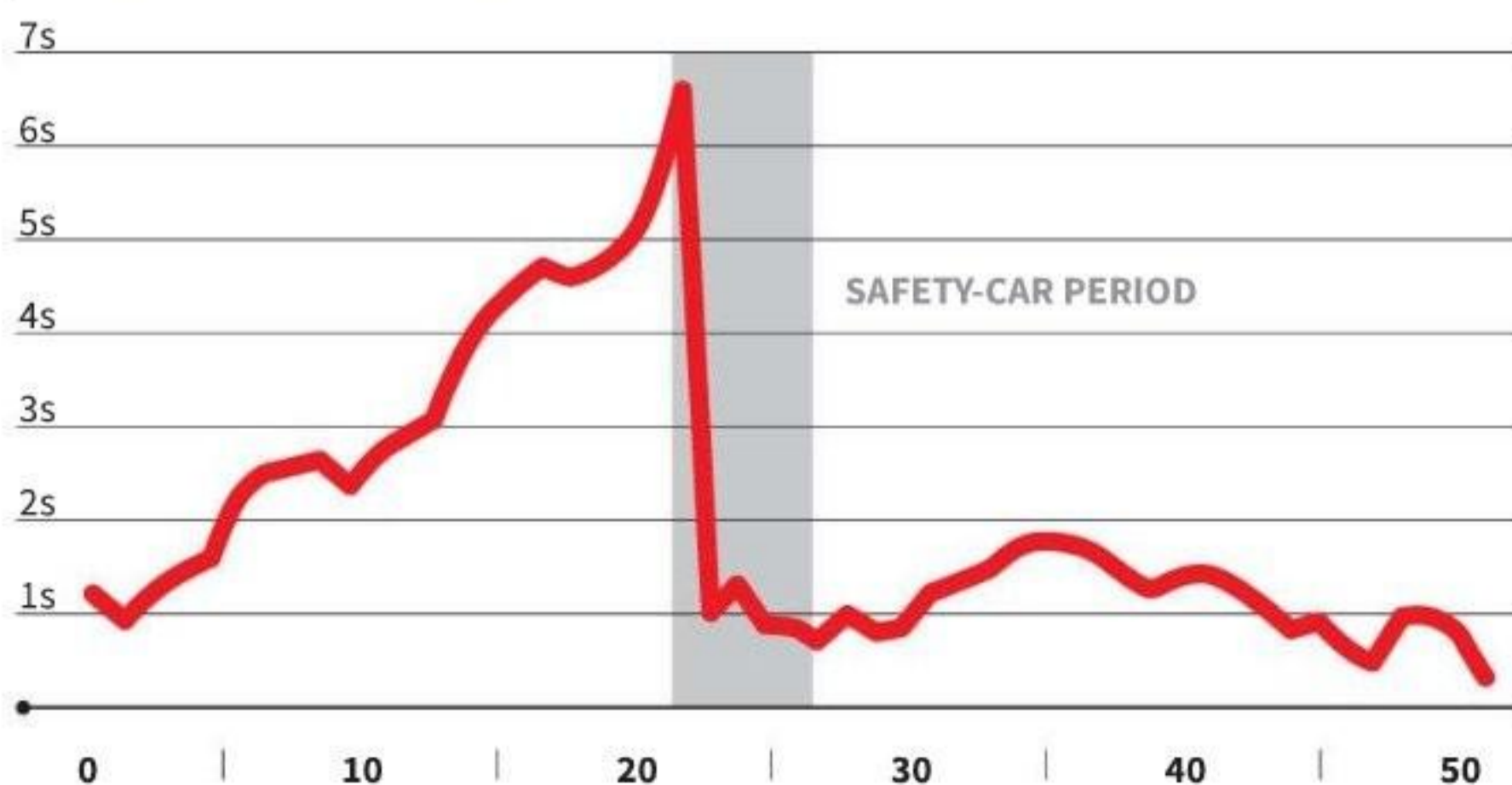
"The first half I was quicker, I had it under control," said Buemi. "But the second stint I was struggling so much."

The first flashpoint was lap 37, when di Grassi posted a then-personal-best lap of 55.037s. This took three tenths out of Buemi's advantage immediately, and di Grassi chipped away more and more until the Renault was only half a second in front with five laps remaining. "My first car didn't feel really good; it was sliding quite a lot," explained di Grassi. "I optimised my software for the second car, it felt really good and I was pushing 100% to try to stay close to Seb."

The 47th lap, though, would prove key – Buemi doubled his lead as di Grassi backed off to save energy for one final, last-lap assault. This crucial buffer meant Buemi just had to defend the final time through the Swimming Pool and Rascasse, which he did to keep di Grassi at bay by three tenths of a second.

"He was playing, consuming a bit much, then less – I was always looking

Buemi's gap to di Grassi/First stint versus second stint





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in the mirrors,” said Buemi. “We need to understand why the second car we don’t have the pace. In general we change the set-up a little bit in order to use the extra grip of the circuit, because you build up rubber and if you want the perfect car you need to make an adjustment.

“I don’t know if that worked out. It was hard. Maybe we had too much downforce, which made it difficult in terms of saving energy.”

Di Grassi’s tactics had given him an extra 1% of energy, but he knew that “Monaco is almost impossible to overtake.” “He is a good, experienced driver,” said di Grassi of his rival, “and knew how to close the door here.”

It was a tense end to a rather dull race, particularly by Formula E’s standards, and it plastered over an otherwise uneventful encounter. Buemi’s margin of victory was the smallest real gap in the series’ history. Technically Jerome d’Ambrosio ‘won’ by a tenth in Mexico City last season, but on-track that was actually his margin over Buemi (he inherited the victory when di Grassi was excluded).

The Abt car wasn’t the second-quickest in Monaco. DS Virgin driver Bird was closest to Buemi in practice, but didn’t string together qualifying well enough and hit the wall in the race, forcing him to pit early.

Di Grassi, though, continues to excel in the role of keeping Buemi on his toes and giving the series an element of intrigue in a period that would otherwise be defined by Buemi brilliance and Renault dominance. With nobody else coming close consistently – Vergne should not have been behind Piquet on the grid or in the early laps, and he only has himself to blame for not mixing it with the leading duo – Formula E should be thankful that Buemi has an equal on-track. 🏆

Mid-race safety car bunched the field up and gave di Grassi a second chance to attack Buemi



Buemi and di Grassi are the class of the field

RESULTS ROUND 5/9, MONTE CARLO (MC), MAY 13, 51 LAPS – 55.933 MILES

POS	DRIVER	TEAM/CAR	TIME
1	Sebastien Buemi (CH)	Renault e.dams · Renault Z.E.16	51m05.488s
2	Lucas di Grassi (BR)	Abt Audi Sport · Abt Schaeffler FE02	+0.320s
3	Nick Heidfeld (D)	Mahindra · Mahindra M3ELECTRO	+13.678s
4	Nelson Piquet Jr (BR)	NextEV · NextEV TCR002	+19.074s
5	Maro Engel (D)	Venturi · Venturi VM200-FE-02	+19.518s
6	Felix Rosenqvist (S)	Mahindra · Mahindra M3ELECTRO	+19.599s
7	Daniel Abt (D)	Abt Audi Sport · Abt Schaeffler FE02	+20.430s
8	Esteban Gutierrez (MEX)	Techeetah · Renault Z.E.16	+32.295s
9	Nicolas Prost (F)	Renault e.dams · Renault Z.E.16	+35.667s
10	Mitch Evans (NZ)	Jaguar Racing · Jaguar I-type 1	+38.410s
11	Antonio Felix da Costa (P)	Andretti · Andretti ATEC-02	+1m08.330s
12	Robin Frijns (NL)	Andretti · Andretti ATEC-02	+1m14.053s
13	Oliver Turvey (GB)	NextEV · NextEV TCR002	-1 lap
14	Adam Carroll (GB)	Jaguar Racing · Jaguar I-type 1	-1 lap
15	Stephane Sarrazin (F)	Venturi · Venturi VM200-FE-02	-2 laps
NC	Jose Maria Lopez (RA)	DS Virgin Racing · Virgin DSV-02	43 laps
NC	Jerome d’Ambrosio (B)	Faraday Future Dragon Racing · Penske 701-EV	43 laps
NC	Loic Duval (F)	Faraday Future Dragon Racing · Penske 701-EV	40 laps
NC	Sam Bird (GB)	DS Virgin Racing · Virgin DSV-02	36 laps
R	Jean-Eric Vergne (F)	Techeetah · Renault Z.E.16	20 laps-accident

Winner’s average speed 65.685mph. Fastest lap Bird 53.822s, 73.356mph.

SUPERPOLE

1 Buemi 53.313s; 2 di Grassi 53.550s; 3 Piquet 53.606s; 4 Vergne 53.756s; 5 Engel 55.013s.

QUALIFYING

1 Vergne 53.286s; 2 Engel 53.397s; 3 Buemi 53.413s; 4 Piquet 53.421s; 5 di Grassi 53.556s; 6 Rosenqvist 53.609s; 7 Lopez 53.666s; 8 Heidfeld 53.687s; 9 Abt 53.725s; 10 Bird 53.729s; 11 Sarrazin 53.846s; 12 Frijns 54.034s; 13 Gutierrez 54.097s; 14 Evans 54.115s; 15 Turvey 54.522s; 16 da Costa 54.631s; 17 Carroll 55.031s; 18 Prost 55.081s; 19 d’Ambrosio 1m00.636s; 20 Duval 53.929s*. * grid penalty.

CHAMPIONSHIP

1 Buemi 104; 2 di Grassi 89; 3 Prost 48; 4 Vergne 40; 5 Bird 34; 6 Heidfeld 32; 7 Rosenqvist 28; 8 Piquet 27; 9 Abt 26; 10 Turvey 15.

Penske's Power play rules at Indy

After an unlucky start to the season, the Australian is back on winning form

By David Malsher, IndyCar Correspondent

[@David Malsher](#)

Congrats brother!!! Perfect drive! So read the Instagram note that Paul Tracy sent to Will Power following last weekend's Indianapolis Grand Prix on the road course at the famed Indianapolis Motor Speedway.

Power, as a perfectionist, wouldn't quite agree with his old rival from back in the Champ Car days, but he'd have appreciated the sentiment. The 2014 champion appeared as much relieved as exultant after his latest triumph. For once this year, fate had dealt him a fair hand. There wasn't the frustration of seeing a caution flag knock him out of the lead, as at Phoenix, nor was there a tyre failure that robbed him of victory, as at Barber Motorsports Park. This time he had taken the event by the throat, and all had gone to plan. He topped the two practice sessions on Friday, earned pole by the preposterous margin of over four tenths of a second, went fastest in

raceday warm-up and led 61 of the 85 race laps, including the last one.

Power thus earned his 30th victory in IndyCar competition, finally breaking the 29-win tie he'd shared with two Penske legends – Rick Mears and his own team-mate Helio Castroneves. And appropriately, it would be the Brazilian three-time Indy 500 winner's pace and strategy that would prevent Power from describing his race as totally perfect.

Castroneves was a genuine threat for the first half of the race. Having qualified second, he elected to start on new reds (Firestone's softer compound), while most of those around him – including Power and Chip Ganassi Racing's Scott Dixon – elected to use scrubbed reds for the first stint. Having made a good start alongside the identically liveried silver Penske Dallara-Chevrolet, Castroneves clearly considered trying around the outside of his team-mate at the first-gear right-handed Turn 1, but Power discouraged such a notion by braking a nanosecond later and not quite allowing enough room at the exit.

But although Power only gently eked out his advantage to three seconds by



Power leads the scrum at Turn 1 – amazingly, they all got through

lap 10, well aware that his tyres were going to lose their edge faster than Castroneves's, he was nonetheless surprised towards the end of the first stint when he saw the #3 car looming into view in his mirrors. Castroneves was barely a second behind him when he ducked into pitlane for used reds on lap 22, having delivered a very quick in-lap.

Power, like Dixon, would switch to the harder primary tyre for the second stint, just to get them out of the way on a weekend when there was a 1.5s disparity in their ultimate pace. But Power wasn't even close to retaining his lead after making his stop a lap later. Castroneves, using rubber that quickly reached its ideal operating temperature, had delivered a strong out-lap and came flying past the #12 into Turn 1 as Power was still accelerating out of pitlane.

"In the first stint, I pushed way too hard early on, and Helio was all over me," said Power. "I'd pulled a gap but then struggled at the end of the stint and



Power's first victory of 2017 pushes him up to fifth in the points table



“Castroneves came flying past into Turn 1 as Power was still accelerating out of the pitlane”

he ended up jumping me.”

Hitting the push-to-pass boost to try to lessen his disadvantage, Power ended his out-lap 1.2s behind Castroneves, but now it was Helio's time to gently pull away, getting the margin out to 4s by lap 39. But when he reached a couple of lapped cars, that advantage fell to 2.5s, which Power's team chose as its opportunity on lap 42 to make his second stop, switching back to used reds. Castroneves left it until the end of lap 45 to take on his next set of reds, and by that time Power was up to speed, laying down his fastest laps of the race so far. They were enough to flip the silver Penske order once more, with car #12

holding a 3.2s advantage.

Castroneves did well to pare that down to 1.5s, but never looked like threatening to make a pass, and his prospects for the final stint were gloomier still: Power had saved a set of new reds, whereas Castroneves would have to finally use his black tyres. After their third and final stops, Power's lead was out to 5.2s, and from that point it was only going to get bigger. In fact, Castroneves's tyre strategy would render him incapable of even retaining a runner-up finish, as he still desperately seeks his first IndyCar win in almost three years.

Dixon had been the strongest threat to the lead Penske pair throughout the >>



MONTOYA RETURNS

SINCE TAKING PART IN THE SEASON FINALE AT Sonoma last September, Juan Pablo Montoya had driven an IndyCar only in March's test at Barber Motorsports Park and on the Gateway oval at the start of May. In other words, it had been eight months since he'd last felt the adrenalin surge provided by an IndyCar Series qualifying session.

The part-timer, back to drive the Indy GP and the Indy 500 for two races in a fifth Team Penske entry, even surprised himself by reaching the Firestone Fast Six in qualifying. Yes, he was half a second slower than fastest team-mate Will Power, but he was only a tenth behind Helio Castroneves and Josef Newgarden, and he started ahead of reigning champion Simon Pagenaud.

In light of IndyCar's reduced practice time in 2017, Montoya remarked: “When they [Penske] said we were going to run the Indy road course, I remember last year here you got the open test and you got two hours on Thursday and long sessions. I thought I was going to have time to build up.

“Then I looked at the schedule, and it's two 45-minute sessions. I'm like, 'OK'...”

In the end, little errors on his flying lap cost him a place on the second row of the grid, and on raceday he burned off the softer tyres too quickly, reducing him to a 10th-place finish. But he admitted he'd considered the IndyCar GP merely a dress rehearsal.

“Anything we do – the laps we do and pitstops we do – are a bonus for the 500,” he remarked. “I've got a really experienced crew of guys but they haven't done it in a while, so I think [this weekend] we get the pressure on people just to practise. Let's leave the screw-ups this week, know what I mean?”





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race. Not only had he qualified his Ganassi Dallara-Honda fourth – just ahead of Juan Pablo Montoya, making the first of his two Month of May appearances in a fifth Penske car, and three places ahead of Penske’s 2016 Indy GP race winner Simon Pagenaud – but the Kiwi also zapped a third member of ‘The Captain’s’ team, Josef Newgarden, into Turn 1 on the opening lap.

Running third, Dixon had emulated Power’s tyre strategy – red, black, red, red – and, although Honda’s aero kit gave him greater drag on the two long straights on this course, the Ganassi #9 team had attempted to reduce this disadvantage by trimming out a little more, knowing that Dixon is well capable of dealing with a tail-happy car.

But this countermeasure had a price – higher tyre degradation – so that by the end of each stint the four-time champion was around 8s behind the leader. Castroneves’s final stint on blacks did more than neutralise Dixon’s disadvantage, and the Penske veteran became tethered prey. On lap 69 the blue Ganassi machine was past and away, trying to close the 7.8s gap on Power over the final 16 laps.

He made a good go of it too, so Power’s team kept him abreast of the potential blue menace that reduced his lead to 3.9s at one point. “Yeah, I was very conscious of the gap that Dixon was closing,” said Power. “I was thinking, ‘He’s going to burn his tyres off, the way he’s closing.’ But he kept coming.

“Then suddenly, boom, the gap started to go the other way. I was like, ‘All right, we’re in good shape here.’”

And he was too. Power reeled off the 85 laps at an average speed just over 120mph, his margin of victory over his fellow Antipodean being 5.3s. Considering the race had run caution-free and those

long straights were always going to hurt Honda-equipped teams, that was a fine effort by Dixon, who has yet to win a race this year but lies second in the championship, just 10 points behind leader and reigning champion Pagenaud.

The Frenchman, one of the most technically astute drivers in the field, is also someone who needs to feel at one with his car in order give of his best, and he had struggled to get a feel for the tyre compounds Firestone had brought for this race. After losing a feisty battle with Ryan Hunter-Reay’s Andretti Autosport Dallara-Honda in the early laps, he had fallen towards the bottom of the top 10 in the first stint. But Pagenaud kept his composure and, assisted by some fine pitstops from the #1 Penske crew, he kept moving forward thereafter and was able to pick drivers off. These finally included Castroneves, whom he demoted to fifth with fewer than five laps remaining.

He never did catch back up to Hunter-Reay though! The 2012 champion drove his heart out all afternoon to finish 5s clear of Pagenaud, and 7s behind Dixon. Considering how his luck has gone this year, the American was happy to score

Dixon shrugged off draggier Honda aero kit to wrest second

his first podium finish of the season.

Team-mate Alexander Rossi was less content. He had qualified less than 0.01s slower than Hunter-Reay, and in the opening stint got as high as fifth, benefiting from the demise of Sebastien Bourdais’ Honda motor. But Rossi’s car had been trimmed out a little too far, the tail was sliding too much and his rear tyres were finished long before the first stint was over. He would finish eighth.

Having been passed by Dixon on the opening lap, Newgarden ran fourth for much of the race, just out of reach of Hunter-Reay, but he was issued a drivethrough penalty for speeding in pitlane and, in serving his punishment, he repeated the crime. He furiously stormed through from near the back of the field, setting fastest lap in the process. But without a full-course caution to aid his progress, 11th was all he could salvage.

The hero of the day was perhaps Graham Rahal, who suffered fuel-pressure issues in practice and was unable to get a read on the red tyres, which since the start of this year are now given to the teams to sample in second practice. He thus qualified an abysmal 20th, but by Sunday morning warm-up was looking fast, and proved it with a charge through to sixth – a very strong performance in a race without caution periods.

Another American who gave a good account of himself was Spencer Pigot, who was disappointed to qualify his Ed Carpenter Racing car only 16th after being fast in practice. He made up six places on the first lap – aided by Marco Andretti taking Tony Kanaan and himself off-track – and Pigot was tracking Hunter-Reay closely until stalling during a pitstop. Eighth, behind the impressive and aggressive Max Chilton in the second Ganassi car, was not a reflection of Pigot’s latent pace. ❄



Pagenaud leads Rossi and the impressive Chilton



Hunter-Reay was on a mission as he rose to third for Andretti



Power: have I overtaken Marcus Marshall yet?

WHEN STATS GET TASTY

WILL POWER NEVER USED TO BE PARTICULARLY interested in his racing statistics. His priorities were winning the IndyCar championship, which he finally achieved in 2014, and winning the Indianapolis 500, something he's desperate to do. Where he sat on the all-time list of IndyCar achievers was something that only fleetingly and on rare occasions could hold his interest.

But over the past couple of seasons Power's been fascinated by how tantalisingly close he's come to the figures racked up by his veteran team-mate, Helio Castroneves (below). Power's 30th win sets him 11th on the all-time victory leaderboard, now one ahead of Rick Mears and Castroneves. His 47th pole position, also scored last weekend, leaves him two adrift of Bobby Unser and Castroneves, who share third behind Mario Andretti (67) and AJ Foyt (53).

Castroneves and Power have shared the five poles this year, but Power said it was now time for their alternating sequence to end, in order that he could take pole for the 500.

"It's been me, Helio, me, Helio, me, and then we're going to switch it up; it's going to start with me again... I'm going to stop the alternation here in, like, a week or so."

Providing Honda hasn't retained or stretched its superspeedway advantage in the battle with the Ilmor-Chevrolts used by Penske, Power should be a pole contender at Indy. He's started the past seven 500s from the front two rows, and has twice started second. Ultimately, though, he's unlikely to care about improving on this, so long as he can grab his 31st victory a week later. That would draw Power level with Paul Tracy and his old enemy Dario Franchitti on the all-time list. And it would also mean he was an Indy 500 winner.

RESULTS ROUND 5/16, INDIANAPOLIS (USA), MAY 13, 85 LAPS – 207.315 MILES

POS	DRIVER	TEAM/CAR	TIME
1	Will Power (AUS)	Team Penske · Dallara-Chevrolet	1h42m57.6108s
2	Scott Dixon (NZ)	Chip Ganassi Racing · Dallara-Honda	+5.2830s
3	Ryan Hunter-Reay (USA)	Andretti Autosport · Dallara-Honda	+12.0296s
4	Simon Pagenaud (F)	Team Penske · Dallara-Chevrolet	+17.0668s
5	Helio Castroneves (BR)	Team Penske · Dallara-Chevrolet	+20.6072s
6	Graham Rahal (USA)	Rahal Letterman Lanigan Racing · Dallara-Honda	+25.1039s
7	Max Chilton (GB)	Chip Ganassi Racing · Dallara-Honda	+25.7054s
8	Alexander Rossi (USA)	Andretti Herta Autosport · Dallara-Honda	+29.3214s
9	Spencer Pigot (USA)	Ed Carpenter Racing · Dallara-Chevrolet	+36.5878s
10	Juan Pablo Montoya (CO)	Team Penske · Dallara-Chevrolet	+41.8238s
11	Josef Newgarden (USA)	Team Penske · Dallara-Chevrolet	+48.3846s
12	Takuma Sato (J)	Andretti Autosport · Dallara-Honda	+56.2212s
13	James Hinchcliffe (CDN)	Schmidt Peterson Motorsports · Dallara-Honda	+1m02.6805s
14	JR Hildebrand (USA)	Ed Carpenter Racing · Dallara-Chevrolet	-1 lap
15	Carlos Munoz (CO)	AJ Foyt Enterprises · Dallara-Chevrolet	-1 lap
16	Marco Andretti (USA)	Andretti Autosport · Dallara-Honda	-1 lap
17	Conor Daly (USA)	AJ Foyt Enterprises · Dallara-Chevrolet	-1 lap
18	Mikhail Aleshin (RUS)	Schmidt Peterson Motorsports · Dallara-Honda	-1 lap
19	Ed Jones (GB)	Dale Coyne Racing · Dallara-Honda	-1 lap
20	Tony Kanaan (BR)	Chip Ganassi Racing · Dallara-Honda	-2 laps
21	Charlie Kimball (USA)	Chip Ganassi Racing · Dallara-Honda	32 laps-mechanical
22	Sebastien Bourdais (F)	Dale Coyne Racing · Dallara-Honda	3 laps-engine

Winner's average speed 120.813mph. **Fastest lap** Newgarden 1m09.3888s, 126.539mph.

Q3 1 Power 1m07.7044s; **2** Castroneves 1m08.1169s; **3** Newgarden 1m08.1622s; **4** Dixon 1m08.2454s; **5** Montoya 1m08.2478s; **6** Bourdais 1m08.3973s.

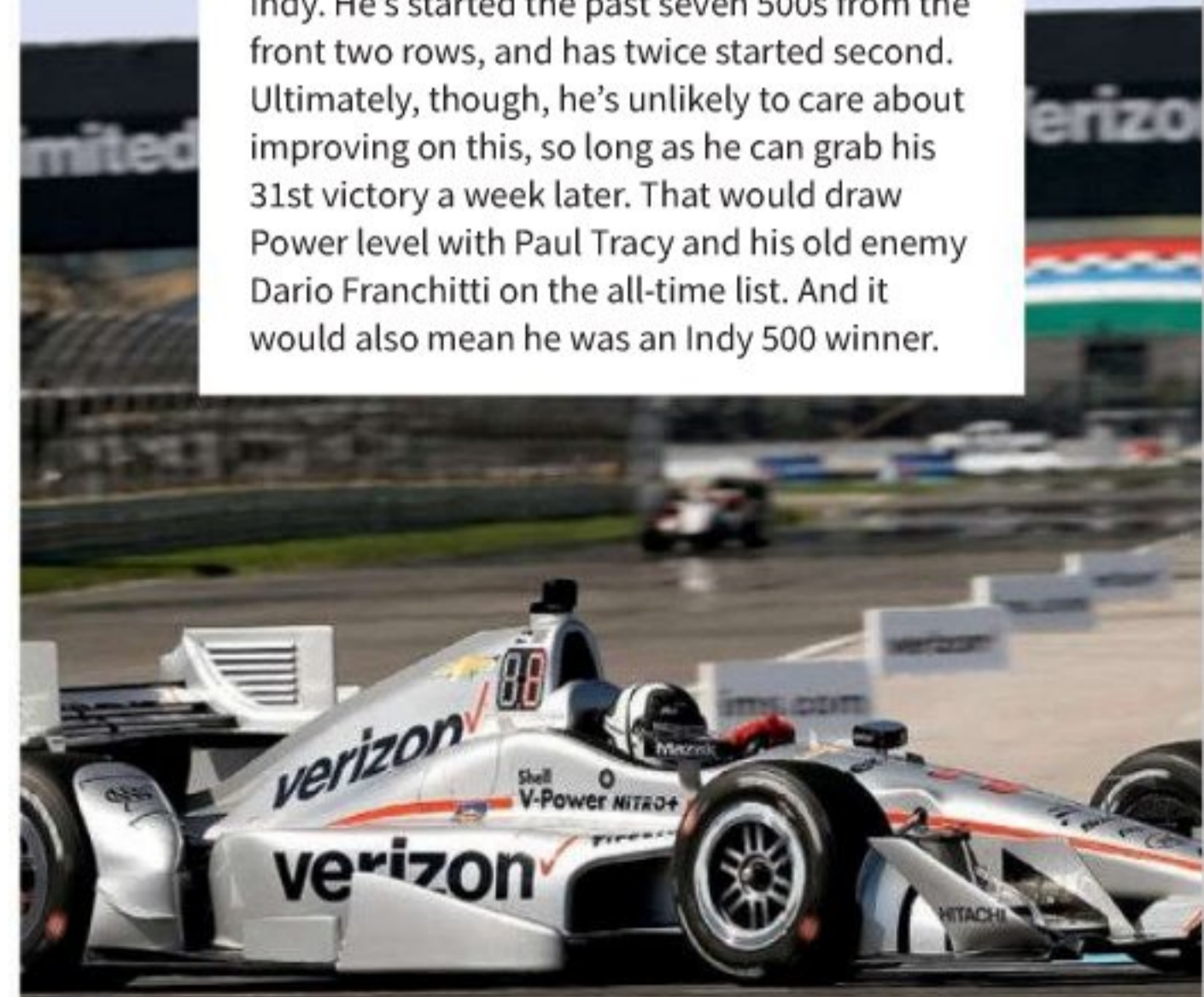
Q2 Power 1m07.9823s; **Montoya** 1m08.0158s; **Castroneves** 1m08.1428s; **Newgarden** 1m08.1526s; **Dixon** 1m08.3560s; **Bourdais** 1m08.3921s; **7** Pagenaud 1m08.4461s; **8** Hunter-Reay 1m08.5735s; **9** Rossi 1m08.5824s; **10** Hinchcliffe 1m08.8668s; **11** Andretti 1m08.9151s; **12** Kanaan 1m08.9853s.

Q1 - GROUP 1 Power 1m08.1894s; **Castroneves** 1m08.2619s; **Bourdais** 1m08.3497s; **Dixon** 1m08.3653s; **Montoya** 1m08.4167s; **Hunter-Reay** 1m08.4490s; **14** Chilton 1m08.6675s; **16** Pigot 1m08.9484s; **18** Munoz 1m08.9937s; **20** Rahal 1m09.0985s; **22** Sato 1m09.3134s.

Q1 - GROUP 2 Newgarden 1m08.1223s; **Pagenaud** 1m08.3435s; **Rossi** 1m08.6134s; **Andretti** 1m08.6686s; **Kanaan** 1m08.9358s; **Hinchcliffe** 1m08.9403s; **13** Jones 1m09.0025s; **15** Daly 1m09.0557s; **17** Aleshin 1m09.1777s; **19** Kimball 1m09.1796s; **21** Hildebrand 1m10.9218s.

CHAMPIONSHIP

1 Pagenaud 191; **2** Dixon 181; **3** Newgarden 152; **4** Castroneves 149; **5** Power 145; **6** Hinchcliffe 137; **7** Bourdais 136; **8** Hunter-Reay 117; **9** Rossi 99; **10** Sato 97.



NACIONAL

AL

BOSS
HUGO BOSS

When Senna (almost) did an Alonso

A McLaren driver disillusioned in F1 fancies giving Indycars a try... sound familiar? This is the story of Ayrton Senna's 1992 Penske test in Arizona, told by the men who were there

By Bruce Martin, Special Correspondent

🐦 @BruceMartin_500



Paul Tracy was in pole position for a full-time drive with Team Penske for the 1993 Indycar season. But when he arrived for a test at Firebird International Raceway in December '92, he still didn't have the deal confirmed.

Just days earlier the legendary Rick Mears had announced his retirement from the cockpit at the Penske

Christmas party, so Tracy, who had raced Mears's car on occasions in '92 as part of a schedule that took in 11 of the 16 events, was optimistic. Then two limousines arrived at Firebird, and out stepped Formula 1 world champion royalty.

"I was already in the car — the test had already started," says Tracy today. "I'm in the pits and I see these limos show up outside the track. They had to open the gate for them to come across, and I thought it was weird. Then out of the limos come Emerson Fittipaldi and Ayrton Senna.

"Senna had a helmet bag with him and I thought, 'Oh Jesus, here we go.' They had another car and pulled it out of the truck ready to run. I was on eggshells because I hadn't been told I was going to run the full season — I was the test driver doing a partial season. There were all these rumours that Senna was going to sign with Penske and I was waiting to find out if I was going to get the seat or not."

Senna spent that off-season disillusioned with F1, where his once-dominant McLaren team was becoming less competitive in the face of fierce competition from Williams as high-tech cars — in the Brazilian's eyes — took away from the level of skill required from the driver. To make matters worse McLaren had lost Honda power for 1993, and would be using Ford engines that would be a step behind those supplied to the Blue Oval's works partner Benetton. Without a McLaren deal in place for '93 yet, and in the wake of world champion Nigel Mansell's shock move from F1 to Indycars with Newman/Haas Racing, Senna turned to countryman, friend and Penske driver Fittipaldi to arrange a test.

"Emerson called me and asked if Ayrton could have a ride and I said absolutely," says team boss Roger Penske, who adds that Senna "had some interest in running the Indy 500". Sound familiar? Penske acknowledges that "Michael Andretti is doing a great job taking on Fernando Alonso this year at the last minute", a decision his team didn't quite have to make following Senna's test.

"You saw these Formula 1 guys have an interest coming to



the Indianapolis 500. They looked at it as another big race. Of course, today, when you think of the number of people [in attendance] it's the world's number-one race. To have some of these stars come over and participate makes the competition better and, if you win, an even better trophy to have."

While Mansell's Newman/Haas deal was already in place by December of 1992, the newly crowned F1 world champion hadn't driven an Indycar yet, so the Penske crew took great satisfaction in stirring the pot when word started to get out about Senna's run.

"The high point of the day was a call I got from Ed Nathman, who was running Newman/Haas at the time," says former Penske team manager Chuck Sprague. "The grapevine was in full swing. He heard Senna was out there. Mansell hadn't even been in a car and here was Senna driving for us with no warning from anybody that it was happening.

"Personally, I took a lot of glee out of this because there had been a whole lot of media attention to Mansell's coming, but Senna was going to be in one first. We knew it was going to set





From left: the two legends, Senna and Fittipaldi; getting comfortable in the PC21; (top) he beat Mansell in race to try an Indycar; (bottom) at speed at Firebird

the fox among the hens when it came to the rumour mill.”

While Penske took pride in keeping the test under wraps – much like the secrecy that would surround the famous Mercedes-badged Ilmor pushrod engine with which it would dominate the 1994 Indy 500 – Sprague did have to keep a lid on things when his crew found some suspicious cargo in one of their cars as they unpacked the trucks at Firebird.

“As the guys were unloading the new car they pulled the bag out of the cockpit that had all of Senna’s [1992 McLaren F1] gear in it so the questions started to flow,” he adds. “I informed them, just as I had been told, we were doing this as a favour to Ayrton and there was nothing definitive one way or another.”

The primary purpose for Penske at the test was to see how its 1993 car compared to the ’92 machine, and it was a version of the latter that was made available to Senna. Mears started life in retirement as a consultant and driver coach for the team, although he accepts that he didn’t have to do much on that day.

“You could tell immediately he was ahead of the car, even though it was a car he had never been in,” says Mears. “I

remember watching him come onto the front straightaway in a semi-tight right-hander. He started hustling it and it stepped out on him. Usually, guys that are new to a car, when it steps out like that and they catch it, they overcorrect it and they have a ‘tankslapper’; they chase it for a few wobbles, straighten it out and go on.

“He did the ‘good-driver’ thing: it stepped out, he did what he needed to do to stop it, kept it in a nice, smooth drift and feathered it out on the exit like he had done it 100 times. Obviously, he didn’t need to prove anything to me, but when you

see that it reconfirms his talent.

“He was a nice guy, level-headed and quiet. It was all about business. I remember him talking about driving the car and [in F1] they were already into the active ride and paddle-shifting and he said, ‘This is fun. I get to drive the car again.’ That’s what a driver wants to do.

“I thought it was him wanting to branch out a little bit. A driver wants to drive anything. It’s like when I had my test in the Brabham F1 car [in 1980, before turning down a contract from then-team boss Bernie Ecclestone] – it satisfied the curiosity in my mind that if that was the direction I wanted to go we should be competitive. Ayrton wanted the opportunity to see what it felt like.”

Even after one run of roughly 15 laps in the car, Senna’s feedback suggested there was more to this than simply wanting to satisfy a curiosity about Indycars. “The debrief was fascinating to me because he identified the strengths and weaknesses to me that we had been dealing with all season,” says Sprague. “I remember some initial hesitation at turn-in before the car would react. He was very complimentary of the brakes and we had a really comprehensive brake programme to make sure we could put good brakes under Rick, because with his feet [Mears had badly injured them in a crash in 1984] there was a loss of strength and loss of sensitivity that made it tougher for him to modulate brakes, because those were heavy cars.

“It was good feedback. He enjoyed manual shifting and said that it was a well-balanced car overall. Immediately, Ayrton was comfortable and hooked-up in the car – just what you would expect from a guy with those credentials.”

Then-Penske crew chief Rick Rinaman was another to be blown away by the level of feedback Senna could offer so quickly. “The main thing that I remember is when he did his run he came in and was able to tell us when the aerodynamics of the car stopped performing, at what point, slowing down for a turn,” Rinaman remembers. “It was pretty amazing, something that we hadn’t heard too often.

“It wasn’t where the wings gave up but he could tell you when the underwing stopped working. He could differentiate it from the [top-surface] wing downforce. That was amazing.”

By this time, word was already getting out about the test, with Arie Luyendyk making an appearance “hanging on the fence”, according to Sprague, trying to find out what Senna was up to with Penske. But even if the test itself was creating fanfare, the team was impressed by how understated Senna was throughout, even down to the fact that he arrived with “no entourage.” >>



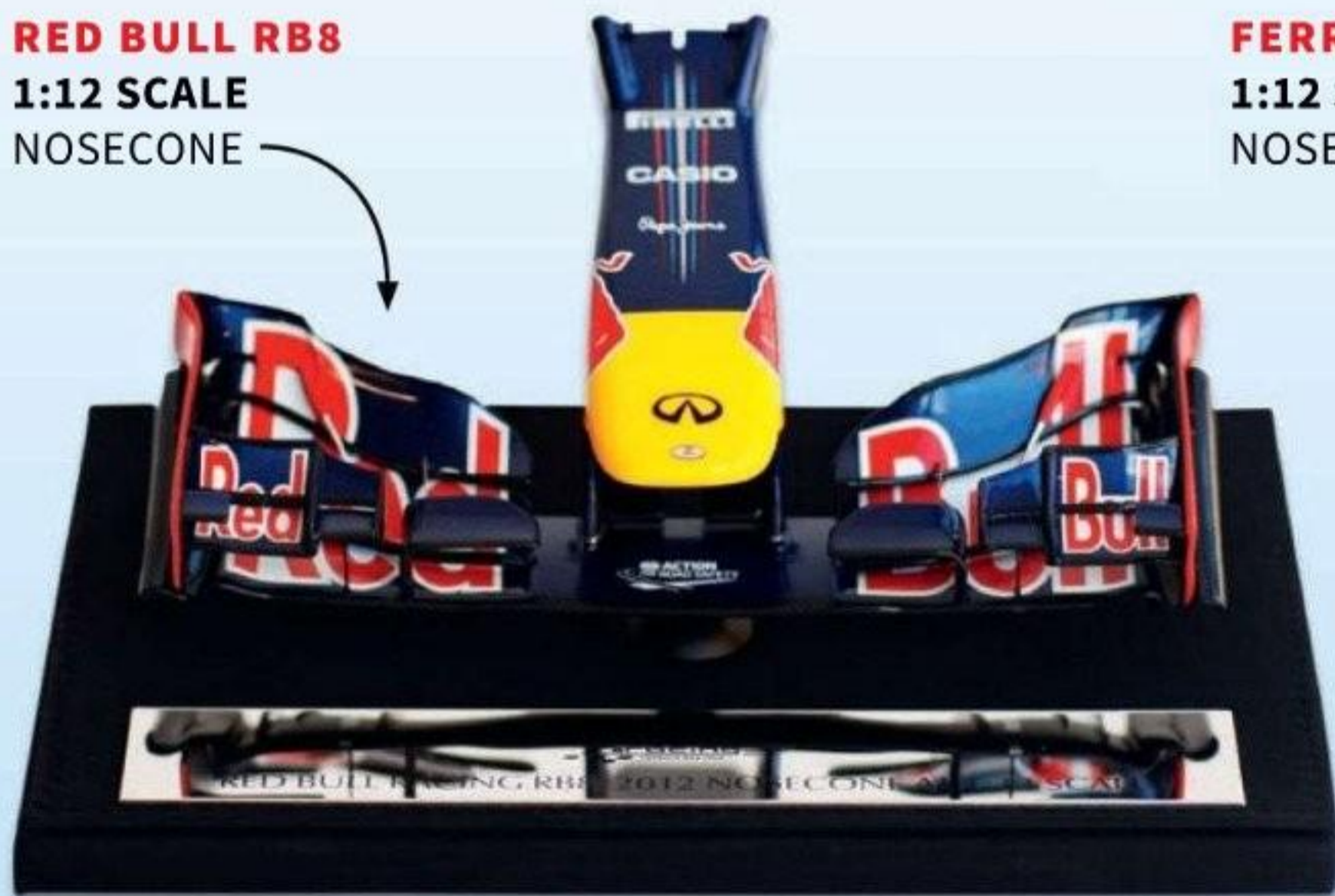
Famous helmet in an unfamiliar car got the Indycar rumour mill running in overdrive in December 1992

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SUTTON

Youthful Paul Tracy (left) and Penske's Sprague get Senna's "amazing" feedback

Rinaman had been tasked with getting Senna properly fitted into the car and, despite being prepared to make a series of adjustments once Fittipaldi had shaken the car down, he wasn't called into action to make any changes when swapping one Brazilian for another.

"Senna came out and we had to do a driver fit because Emerson was taller," he says. "I remember he sat down in that seat and I'm looking at the footwell and he is toeing to get to the throttle and the brake. He either needed the pedals moved back to him or the seat moved up. He said it was fine.

"He was flopping around in the seat and I thought we would get padding for him. He was, 'No, this will work! He went out in that car in the same driver fit as Emerson and had to stretch

"He was up to speed right away and was a terrific young man. He had a great feel for the car"



Senna went back to F1 for '93, here battling Prost and Schumacher

LAT IMAGES

his foot to get to the throttle. All the drivers I've ever worked with if they are an inch uncomfortable it's a major deal, like moving the seat back or cutting the steering down. He jumped in the thing and drove."

Senna ended the day with a best lap of 49.09 seconds, 0.61s faster than Fittipaldi managed on his shakedown run, while Fittipaldi's best time in the 1993 car was a 48.5s. He stayed with the team for a few days, including spectating as it carried out an oval test at Phoenix. Sprague tried to get him to "give it a whirl," but Senna declined, saying, "I want to watch a lot more before I try this."

Before he left, Senna personally thanked each member of the Penske crew for his Firebird test, and Sprague was touched a year later to receive a Christmas card from the three-time world champion, which he has kept to this day. "You could see an underlying intensity that makes a driver successful," he adds. "He was coming off a season that tried his patience at McLaren.

"Clearly, Ayrton was one of the very, very best. It was a treat to be able to work with him a bit and see him in action, particularly when you throw him in the deep end. To me that is the acid test: here is a track you've never seen, a car you've never been in – go!"

Nothing more came of the test (much to Tracy's relief), with Senna eventually agreeing to start the 1993 F1 season on a race-by-race deal with McLaren, where he did his best to take the fight to the superior Williams-Renaults, now led by his arch nemesis Alain Prost. Mansell took Indycars by storm, winning on his debut at Surfers Paradise and defeating Fittipaldi in the battle for the championship. But how close did Penske come to running two Brazilians that year?

"You never know – we had a lot of drivers at that point and it's not easy to click it on and off," says Penske, who had ordered Sprague to put together a basic one-page contract for the test, that allowed Senna to turn up "at his determination".

"To have Senna drive one of our cars was a special day," the legendary team boss adds. "He was up to speed right away and was a terrific young man. He had a great feel of the car – the feedback was good, and the test was a success.

"We were so happy to have him in our car when we did. It's just a shame he never got to drive for us." ❄



Leclerc won opening race without a radio

Silence is golden at Bar

FORMULA 2
BARCELONA (E)
MAY 13-14
ROUND 2/11

“THERE’S ALWAYS BEEN IDEAS THAT YOU need a lot of experience to work the tyres in GP2 and now in Formula 2, but Charles Leclerc is showing that is complete bullshit.”

That was series boss Bruno Michel’s frank assessment of the Prema Racing driver’s early performances this season, and during the two F2 races in Spain Leclerc held true to it.

The reigning GP3 champion topped free practice and qualifying – taking pole with a superb last-gasp effort – and extended his championship lead with a first career F2 feature-race win and a solid fourth in the sprint event.

But it was Leclerc’s improvement in tyre management (the challenges he faced keeping the Pirelli rubber alive in the high temperatures of Bahrain were a fascinating element of that weekend) that caught the eye at Barcelona.

“It’s a good surprise,” he said after race two. “but I still need to keep working to be even better from this point of view, because many

drivers are experienced in this category and are really good on this point. I think we’ve got a lot better than in Bahrain – we did a big step forward, not from the car but from me – but we need to keep going in this direction.”

Things didn’t start so smoothly for Leclerc in the feature race. A radio failure on the way to the grid, caused by a broken connector in the cockpit, prompted Prema to start him on the soft Pirelli rubber and make an early stop, on lap seven of 37, to keep things simple with no communications available.

At the start, he defended hard against fellow front-row starter Luca Ghiotto, but held the lead on the run to the first corner. The Russian Time racer briefly stole the lead at Turn 4 but locked up and slid wide, allowing Leclerc back through to reclaim first place.

Leclerc pitted with a 2.1-second lead over ART Grand Prix’s Alexander Albon, and Ghiotto followed him in two laps later, which left Albon, DAMS’s Oliver Rowland and Rapax driver Nyck de Vries at the front.

The subsequent retirement of Sergio Canamasas with an electrical problem handed Leclerc and Ghiotto an advantage as the virtual

AT A GLANCE

RACE 1

- 1 Leclerc Prema
- 2 Ghiotto Russian Time
- 3 Rowland DAMS

RACE 2

- 1 Matsushita ART
- 2 Rowland DAMS
- 3 Latifi DAMS

➔ P57 RESULTS

Gaffe of Latifi (right) handed win to Matsushita



Rowland is up to second in the championship

celona for super-rookie Leclerc

safety car became a full safety-car deployment when marshals had to retrieve the stricken Trident car from the approach to Turn 7.

The field was therefore bunched up when the race resumed on lap 14, and while Albon and Rowland – both yet to shed their hard tyres – leapt clear, Leclerc had to wrestle with Ralph Boschung, who had pitted under the VSC and got ahead. Boschung was later hit with a 20-second penalty for flooring the throttle as he left the pits; he said he'd been unaware that the VSC had been activated.

Leclerc dispatched Boschung with a sweeping move around the outside at Turn 1 on lap 17. Back at the front, Rowland pressured Albon before moving into the lead on lap 21 after getting a better run out of Turn 5.

The Briton quickly established a gap over Albon but was only 13.5s clear of Leclerc – now up to fifth – by the time he came in to take the soft tyres with nine laps to go, falling to seventh.

As the final hard-shod runners stopped, Leclerc eased back in front and went on to win by 3.7s over Ghiotto – who had shadowed the championship leader despite dropping away while they battled through the pack.

Rowland charged back to finish third – at times going 2s per lap quicker than the leaders – but did not think stopping earlier would have made much of a difference after the safety car had been brought out.

Nobuharu Matsushita finished fourth, ahead of Albon and Nicholas Latifi, who would become the main story of race two.

Latifi roared into the lead from third place in the reversed-grid encounter and the DAMS man looked to be on course for a comfortable first F2 victory when he suddenly went off at Turn 5 with just four tours of the 26-lap event remaining.

The Canadian had been managing the gap to Matsushita's ART car in second, but then became distracted when he noticed that the object that had glanced his helmet a lap earlier had been his right-hand wing mirror. The sudden realisation that it was missing caused him to brake too late and skate across the gravel.

He escaped but lost the lead to Matsushita – who took his third second-tier win by 3.3s – and fell behind team-mate Rowland too, eventually finishing third.

"The win was mine," he said afterwards. "I'm going to try and forget about it quickly

because it isn't going to do me any good. It's a huge disappointment."

Leclerc rose from eighth to fourth after a long and entertaining battle with Albon – who crossed the line eighth after fading late on – and finished ahead of final points scorers Jordan King, Gustav Malja and Ghiotto.

Antonio Fuoco endured a disappointing weekend in the other Prema car. He collided with Artem Markelov and former F1 driver Roberto Merhi in the feature race, incurring a 10-penalty for the Merhi clash, which left him down the field for the sprint event. That race ended early as he retired following a lap-one clash with de Vries at the inside of Turn 7, which brought out the safety car. De Vries was blamed for causing the incident by the stewards and he was handed a three-place grid penalty for the next round, which he accepted philosophically.

Leclerc's championship lead is up to 26 points over Rowland, with Ghiotto a further nine adrift in third place. In the teams' standings, Fuoco's disastrous weekend – and the fact that he has so far only scored two points to Leclerc's 73 – means Prema and DAMS lead on 75 points each.

ALEX KALINAUCKAS



Fukuzumi leads
Aitken before sensor
problem hit the Brit

LAT IMAGES

Fukuzumi ushers in GP3's new era

GP3 SERIES
BARCELONA (E)
MAY 13-14
ROUND 1/8

GP3 BROKE NEW GROUND AT ITS first round of 2017 by introducing the Formula 1-style DRS overtaking aid.

The third-tier category had occasionally suffered from a lack of passing action and, with no mandatory pitstops to add strategic variations, positions were often locked in early on. So while Nirei Fukuzumi's win in the opening race at Barcelona came from second on the grid, the arrival of DRS produced a more entertaining race than that fact alone suggests.

The Honda-backed ART Grand Prix racer grabbed the lead from his team-mate, polesitter Jack Aitken, on the long run down to the first corner and began to edge clear of the Briton as they raced away from Arden's Leonardo Pulcini and ART man George Russell.

The drivers can use DRS six times in the feature race and four times in

the sprint, and this constraint created an additional tactical element for the much-maligned overtaking aid.

Russell, a GP3 rookie whose unexpected heavy wheelspin dropped him from fourth to eighth at the start, and Jenzer's Alessio Lorandi opted to begin using their allocation early and carved through the pack to finish third and fourth in the Italian's favour.

At the front, Aitken waited until the 15th tour of the 22-lap race to use his DRS to gain ground on Fukuzumi. That brought him right onto the tail of his team-mate's car. But shortly after using it again on the following lap, the Renault F1 academy starlet suddenly lost drive and was forced to retire after a sensor problem effectively shut down his engine. "There was nothing the team could do," he said dejectedly afterwards.

Aitken's retirement ended any chance of a thrilling battle for victory – which had been on the cards – and Fukuzumi claimed his first GP3 win, 7.4 seconds clear of Pulcini, who without the benefit of DRS pleased the Arden team by

resisting Lorandi's late advances to defend second place on his GP3 debut.

Russell had used it to protect his position while fighting in the pack and was thoroughly pleased with system's efficiency and effectiveness.

Anthoine Hubert, Dorian Boccolacci – who had run third for much of the race before fading with tyre-degradation problems – Arjun Maini and Raoul Hyman completed the top eight and sealed the top four spots for the reversed-grid sprint race.

In that event, Maini shot past Hyman off the line and was challenged by the equally fast-starting Boccolacci at the first turn. But the Frenchman slid wide going around the outside of the corner and Maini moved clear in first place.

Boccolacci stayed in touch with the Jenzer Motorsport driver during the early stages and used his first DRS activation at the start of lap five of 22. He then mounted an attack the next time around and the pair bashed wheels going through Turn 2, which cost Boccolacci crucial momentum and allowed Maini to break free and take his first GP3 win by six seconds.

"It felt amazing to cross the finish line," said the Indian victor.

Rookie Boccolacci resisted the advances of first Hubert – who finished fourth – and then Lorandi, who took his second third place of the weekend with another battling display.

Russell was also forced to scrap it out in race two after making another slow getaway, but fended off Fukuzumi to take fifth, with Hyman fading to seventh.

ALEX KALINAUCKAS

AT A GLANCE

RACE 1

- 1 Fukuzumi ART
- 2 Pulcini Arden
- 3 Lorandi Jenzer

RACE 2

- 1 Maini Jenzer
- 2 Boccolacci Trident
- 3 Lorandi Jenzer

➔ P57 RESULTS



Haas F1 junior
Maini won after
rapid getaway

LAT IMAGES

Palmer on top with Shwartzman

FORMULARENAULTEUROCUP
SILVERSTONE (GB)
MAY 13-14
ROUND 2/10

WILL PALMER SHARED THE FORMULA Renault Eurocup spoils with team-mate Robert Shwartzman at Silverstone.

The R-ace GP pair repeated their triumphs from the opening round at Monza, with Palmer victorious on Saturday after another of the French squad's drivers, Max Defourny, suffered a clutch problem getting away from pole position. This forced him to stop further around lap one after Palmer had got the jump off the line.

After a safety-car period to clear up a startline shunt between Jarno Opmeer and Neil Verhagen, Palmer pulled a six-second gap over first-time podium finisher Henrique Chaves – the AVF-run Portuguese managed to keep Shwartzman at bay for second.

Russian Shwartzman claimed pole on a drying track on Sunday morning. And although he was passed into Copse at the start by Dan Ticktum, he soon got back in front at Club. Ticktum ran wide and slipped behind Palmer, who remained on Shwartzman's tail until the end and now has a 15-point championship lead to carry into this weekend's Pau round.

Sacha Fenestraz also passed Ticktum at the end of the first lap, only to slice his left-rear tyre against the Arden driver's front wing as they entered Copse. Ticktum eventually held off Max Fewtrell for his first podium, forcing his fellow British



rookie to settle for a pair of fourth places.

Vito Postiglione and Jonathan Cecotto won both Lamborghini Super Trofeo races after Postiglione passed Raphael Abbate with three minutes left in race two, and the duo had controlled race one throughout. Abbate and Yuki Nemoto ended up with two second places after Loris Spinelli and Mikael Grenier were excluded from the opener for a technical infringement.

British GT Championship leader Jon Minshaw won on his Blancpain GT Sports Club debut in his regular Barwell Motorsport-run Lamborghini, keeping the similar Huracan of Cedric Leimer at bay throughout the qualifying race and much of the main event. The Swiss driver did squeeze past with five minutes left, but received a penalty for exceeding track limits, meaning Minshaw won after battling BMW driver Karim Ojeh.

PETER ALLEN

Palmer grabbed the lead of race one after Max Defourny suffered a clutch problem

RESULTS

Race 1 1 Will Palmer 12 laps in 27m03.705s; 2 Henrique Chaves +6.217s; 3 Robert Shwartzman; 4 Max Fewtrell; 5 Sacha Fenestraz; 6 Alex Peroni. **Race 2 1 Shwartzman** 12 laps in 27m37.149s; 2 Palmer +0.860s; 3 Dan Ticktum; 4 Fewtrell; 5 Raul Guzman; 6 Richard Verschoor.

Points 1 Palmer 80; 2 Shwartzman 65; 3 Fenestraz 46; 4 Fewtrell 32; 5 Max Defourny 25; 6 Chaves 24.

Lamborghini Super Trofeo Race 1 1 Vito Postiglione/ Jonathan Cecotto 23 laps in 51m09.512s; 2 Raphael Abbate/Yuki Nemoto +9.484s; 3 Rik Breukers/Axcil Jefferies; 4 Sergey Afanasiev/Gerhard Tweraser; 5 Jan Kisiel/Seb Morris; 6 Niels Lagrange/Pieter Vanneste. **Race 2 1 Postiglione/Cecotto** 22 laps in 50m09.099s; 2 Abbate/Nemoto + 1.777s; 3 Afanasiev/Tweraser; 4 Breukers/Jefferies; 5 Loris Spinelli/Mikael Grenier; 6 Kisiel/Morris.

Blancpain GT Sports Club 1 Jon Minshaw (Lamborghini Huracan GT3) 20 laps in 41m47.697s; 2 Karim Ojeh (BMW M6 GT3) +0.206s; 3 Anthony Pons (Mercedes SLS AMG GT3); 4 Nicolas Vandierendonck (Lambo); 5 Cedric Leimer (Lambo); 6 Alexis de Bernardi (Ferrari 458 Italia GT3).

Kristoffersson wins as Hansen suffers puncture

WORLD RALLYCROSS
METTET (B)
MAY 13-14
ROUND 4/12

JOHAN KRISTOFFERSSON BECAME only the second different winner in the 2017 World Rallycross Championship as he took victory in the fourth round, but only after a last-gasp puncture for long-time leader Timmy Hansen.

VW driver Kristoffersson was the dominant force in the qualifying stages of the event to secure the top spot in the intermediate classification, but dropped to the second row of the grid for the final after being beaten in the first semi-final by Hansen.

The Team Peugeot-Hansen man lined up alongside semi-final-two winner Petter Solberg and followed the three-time champion's VW for the opening two tours of the six-lap final.

After Solberg made a small mistake at the end of lap two, Hansen got alongside his rival and made a move for the lead going into the first corner. Solberg was forced to avoid a tyre barrier on the outside and ended Andreas Bakkerud's race when they came together.

Hansen extended his lead as Mattias Ekstrom – winner of the opening three rounds in his Audi – ran second until he took his joker on the final lap, which released Kristoffersson and Solberg.

At the front, Hansen picked up

a puncture going over the jump on the last lap, handing the victory to Kristoffersson, but Hansen just remained ahead of Solberg to finish second. Ekstrom ended up fourth, ahead of Kevin Eriksson.

Kristoffersson's win means he is now just three points off the championship leader Ekstrom.

RESULTS

1 Johan Kristoffersson (Volkswagen Polo GTI) 6 laps in 4m02.316s; 2 Timmy Hansen (Peugeot 208) +0.924s; 3 Petter Solberg (VW); 4 Mattias Ekstrom (Audi S1); 5 Kevin Eriksson (Ford Fiesta); 6 Andreas Bakkerud (Ford Focus RS). **Points 1 Ekstrom 101**; 2 Kristoffersson 98; 3 Solberg 87; 4 Hansen 72; 5 Sebastien Loeb 62; 6 Bakkerud 52.



The great Grasser run rumbles on

BLANCPAIN ENDURANCE CUP
SILVERSTONE (GB)
MAY 13-14
ROUND 2/5

LAMBORGHINI MADE IT TWO ENDURANCE Cup wins from two starts in the 2017 Blancpain GT Series at Silverstone last weekend. Factory drivers Mirko Bortolotti, Andrea Caldarelli and Christian Engelhart followed up on their Monza victory aboard the 'works' Grasser-run Huracan GT3, but this time they were made to sing for their supper.

On home ground in Italy they waltzed to a half-minute victory. But on this occasion the #63 Lamborghini crossed the line after three hours of racing only three tenths to the good. It might have been different but for an early period of yellow flags that undid the six-second advantage Bortolotti had built up over the opening stint, turning this into a three-way battle between the Grasser crew and a pair of Mercedes entries.

A full-course-yellow virtual safety car morphed into a proper safety-car period just before the pit window opened at the end of the first hour. The Auto Sport Promotion Mercedes-AMG GT3 started by Edoardo Mortara dived into the pits while the race was still neutralised with the 80km/h speed limit, whereas the cars right at the front came in after the safety car had been deployed onto the track.

The seconds gained by ASP meant that Michael Meadows emerged in front after the pitstop cycle. The Briton was able to keep the lead despite constant pressure from Caldarelli and then Jimmy Eriksson after the Swede had nipped past the Lamborghini at Luffield in the HTP Mercedes started by Franck Perera.

The race turned back in Grasser's favour at the final round of stops. The HTP and ASP cars, now with Maximilian Buhk and Raffaele Marciello respectively strapped in, were both briefly held in the pits by teams keen to avoid sanction under a new zero-tolerance policy on driver infractions.

Engelhart came out with Marciello glued to his tail. His lead never hit two complete seconds before Buhk dived past to take second position at Brooklands. There were just 20 minutes to go and, when the Mercedes got bottled up behind a lapped car, the race appeared to be over.

Engelhart stretched his lead to 3.5s before Buhk inexorably closed the gap down over the final 10 laps. They were together for the final couple of times around the 3.67-mile track, but the Mercedes man opted against any heroics and followed the Lamborghini over the line.

"I was surprised that I had quite a margin, but also surprised at how quickly he could catch up," said Engelhart. "Some lapped cars didn't make it easy for me and even on the last lap I didn't take full throttle onto the straight because I had to

pass a slow car. The pitstop was quite exciting, but that's where we won it today."

Marciello couldn't keep pace with Buhk over the final laps and trailed home in third a further three seconds in arrears on a day of 'what ifs?' for ASP. The quickest of its fleet of Mercedes, which took pole in Daniel Juncadella's hands, ended up down in 11th after Felix Serralles was awarded a one-minute stop-go penalty for a double startline infraction. He was adjudged to have hit Bortolotti on the formation lap and transgressed the rule that demands the cars are lined up with the grid boxes as they approach the lights.

"We didn't cause an accident and we didn't get any benefit, but our race was destroyed," said team boss Jerome Policand. "The penalty was a bit too tough."

The Russian SMP team's Ferrari 488 GT3 driven by Victor Shaytar, Miguel Molina and Davide Rigon took fourth, the position in which it had qualified, while Bentley claimed fifth with the Continental GT3 shared by Vincent Abril, Andy Soucek and Maxime



The winning crew now has a commanding points lead

AT A GLANCE

- 1 Bortolotti/
Engelhart/Caldarelli
Lamborghini
- 2 Buhk/Perera/
Eriksson Mercedes
- 3 Meadows/Marciello/
Mortara Mercedes

➔ P57 RESULTS

VISIONS SPORT AGENCY



The #63 car has now won four successive Blancpain GT races

Soulet. They were big winners during the first round of stops, as an early pitcall before the safety car was deployed vaulted the car from outside the top 20 into sixth position.

The British Barwell Lamborghini team claimed Pro-Am honours with 20th overall for Martin Kodric, Adrian Amstutz and Patrick Kujala despite two spins. The second gyration left Kujala just a couple of seconds ahead of the TF Sport Aston Martin Vantage V12 with Jonny Adam at the wheel, but the Finnish driver proved that he was equal to the challenge.

Lamborghini, or at least the Grasser car packed with works drivers, is in the ascendant in the BGTS right now. The Huracan was always a quick car over one lap – witness Bortolotti's Silverstone pole 12 months ago – but this year it is fast over a stint as well. Lamborghini and Grasser have undoubtedly got a handle on the latest Pirelli tyres at the same time as moving to a higher-profile front.

"Last year the biggest issue we had was consistency," said Bortolotti "Now the car is much more driveable over a stint."

Caldarelli, Bortolotti and Engelhart now have a comfortable 17-point cushion over Eriksson, Buhk and Perera at the top of the Endurance Cup drivers' championship standings. Alessandro Pier Guidi, Michele Rugolo and Pasin Lathouras – who finished sixth in the race at Silverstone – are a further six points adrift on 27, with Rigon, Shaytar and Molina in fourth.

The BGTS now heads to Belgium and the Zolder circuit in early June for the next round of the multi-race Sprint Cup, while the forthcoming endurance round takes place at the Paul Ricard venue in southern France over the weekend of June 23-24.

GARY WATKINS

Truex smokes Keselowski to win in Kansas

NASCAR SPRINT CUP
KANSAS SPEEDWAY (USA)
MAY 13
ROUND 11/36

MARTIN TRUEX JR WAS VICTORIOUS in a two-lap dash to the finish to win his second race of 2017 and his first at the 1.5-mile Kansas Speedway.

Brad Keselowski, who came back from two laps down after a penalty earlier in the race, finished second followed by Kevin Harvick, pole winner Ryan Blaney and Kyle Busch.

The race was halted for more than 30 minutes following a violent three-car crash involving Joey Logano, Danica Patrick and Aric Almirola at the 200-lap mark. Logano and Patrick were unhurt. But after Almirola was extracted from his car, he was transported by helicopter to a local hospital and held overnight for observation.

"They're all so special," Truex said after leading 104 of the race's 267 laps en route to his ninth career NASCAR Cup Series win.



Truex scored victory in Furniture Row Toyota

LAT IMAGES

"These races are so hard to win. On any of those restarts, we could have gotten beat or something could have happened. You just never know."

JIM UTTER

RESULTS

1 Martin Truex Jr (Toyota Camry) 267 laps in 3h24m16s; 2 Brad Keselowski (Ford Fusion) +1.100s; 3 Kevin Harvick (Ford); 4 Ryan Blaney (Ford); 5 Kyle Busch (Toyota); 6 Kyle Larson (Chevrolet SS); 7 Daniel Suarez (Toyota); 8 Jamie McMurray (Chevy); 9 Clint Bowyer (Ford); 10 Trevor Bayne (Ford). **Playoff qualifying 1 Truex 431/2 wins;** 2 Keselowski 408/2; 3 Jimmie Johnson 323/2; 4 Larson 475/1; 5 Ricky Stenhouse Jr 276/1; 6 Kurt Busch 246/1; 7 Ryan Newman 238/1; 8 Chase Elliott 361; 9 McMurray 354; 10 Harvick 347; 11 Kyle Busch 325; 12 Joey Logano 320; 13 Bowyer 317; 14 Blaney 291; 15 Denny Hamlin 289; 16 Bayne 250.



Binder's wins were his first in Formula V8 3.5

Nissany woes benefit Binder

WORLD SERIES FORMULA V8 3.5
MONZA (I)
MAY 13-14
ROUND 3/9

RENE BINDER TOOK A DOUBLE VICTORY with the Charouz-run Lotus team at Monza ahead of Roy Nissany, and heads to Jerez as the Formula V8 3.5 points leader.

Binder's first win – his maiden triumph in the series – came after Nissany, who had taken the flag first and led every lap of the race, received a five-second penalty for going wide at the first chicane. Polesitter Pietro Fittipaldi lost several places at the start of the race before making contact with Damiano Fioravanti and suffering a puncture. AVF team-mates Matevos Isaakyan and Egor Orudzhev had an early battle for third, in which Isaakyan prevailed. Alfonso Celis

eventually came through to split the pair in fourth in his Fortec Motorsport machine.

Another bad start from pole for Fittipaldi in the second race handed Nissany's RP Motorsport car the initial lead, before the Lotus team's quick-thinking pitstop just as a safety-car period was triggered put Binder into first.

The Austrian went on to take another win with a seven-second lead over Nissany, with Yu Kanamaru fending off Fittipaldi for third.

RESULTS

RACE 1 1 Rene Binder 26 laps in 42m18.590s; 2 Roy Nissany +3.120s; 3 Matevos Isaakyan; 4 Alfonso Celis; 5 Egor Orudzhev; 6 Nelson Mason. **RACE 2 1 Binder 24 laps in 40m34.981s;** 2 Nissany +7.065s; 3 Yu Kanamaru; 4 Pietro Fittipaldi; 5 Isaakyan; 6 Mason. **POINTS 1 Binder 98;** 2 Nissany 81; 3 Fittipaldi 76; 4 Celis 75; 5 Orudzhev 67; 6 Isaakyan 62.

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IN BRIEF

PORSCHE SUPERCUP

Australian Carrera Cup champion Matt Campbell dominated qualifying at Barcelona, but a dreadful race-one start dropped him to sixth and allowed Michael Ammermuller to escape to victory. Campbell overcame team-mate Josh Webster for fifth and closed on the three-car fight for second, which double Carrera Cup GB champion Dan Cammish lost to Dennis Olsen when he ran wide at the first corner with three laps to go. After being beaten away by Cammish in race two, Campbell found a way by at the hairpin, only to be jumped by Ammermuller. Olsen then snatched second and pressured Ammermuller, but could not prevent him securing a double.

TCR INTERNATIONAL

Roberto Colciago became the first double winner of the 2017 season in race one at Monza, edging Hungarian teenager Attila Tassi in a Honda one-two. Colciago charged from ninth on the grid to second in race two but couldn't pass two-time champion Stefano Comini, whose second win of the season in the new Audi RS3 LMS TCR lifted him to third in points behind Jean-Karl Vernay and Colciago.

INDY LIGHTS

Nico Jamin and Kyle Kaiser shared the Indy Lights wins on the Indianapolis Motor Speedway's Grand Prix layout. After taking pole for the first race, Jamin held the lead off the line and resisted the challenge of first Colton Herta and then Kaiser, who was deposed by Zachary Claman De Melo before the end, to take the victory. In race two, Kaiser converted pole to take his first win of the season and claim the championship lead.

JAPANESE FORMULA 3

Alex Palou and Mitsunori Takaboshi each won a race at Fuji. Palou claimed pole for both encounters in wet qualifying sessions and sprinted away to win race one. He was pushed hard by Sho Tsuboi, who challenged at the first corner on the final lap, but Palou survived to take the win. In the dry Sunday race Palou struggled for grip, enabling Takaboshi, Tsuboi and Ritomo Miyata to slip by and leave him struggling in fourth. It was Takaboshi's fifth win of 2017 and he leads the championship.



Huff left to rue penalty

WORLD TOURING CAR CHAMPIONSHIP
HUNGARORING (H)
MAY 14
ROUND 3/10

IN A WORLD TOURING CAR Championship season so different to the one that preceded it, the Hungaroring round bore a surprising number of similarities to the 2016 event.

From the fact that no driver stamped their authority on the weekend, to Rob Huff serving a drive-through penalty for an incident at Turn 2, Norbert Michelisz suffering more frustration at home and Mehdi Bennani once again winning a race, there were plenty of parallels.

Had the weekend belonged to anyone, Huff might have been that man. Fastest in the best of the dry conditions in practice, the Briton returned to the top of the pile in qualifying with an emphatic lap – tying up fastest times in all three sectors to seal pole by three tenths in his Munnich Motorsport Citroen C-Elysee.

A third place in the reversed-grid opener (thanks partly to an incident ahead of him, and some brilliantly opportunistic overtaking) was also as good as Huff could have hoped for from ninth. But the main act didn't go to plan.

From pole Huff was immediately outdragged by Bennani's Sebastien Loeb Racing Citroen, and any attempt to frighten the Volvos of Nicky Catsburg and Nestor Girolami by shepherding the pair towards the pitwall didn't work as they too found a way past.

That left Huff fourth, but moments later he was caught out by the Cyan pair braking early and knocked into Catsburg,

who in turn speared into his team-mate's side. That left Girolami in the barriers, the safety car made an appearance, and Huff was investigated.

The tap was innocent enough, but Huff nevertheless received a drive-through penalty that killed his victory hopes. He did get past Bennani on the restart, but achieved little more than to prove he had the pace before he dived into the pitlane.

Bennani gratefully reinherited the lead from Catsburg and managed early concerns about his brakes to become the fifth different winner from six races. His SLR team-mate Tom Chilton finished third to deny home Honda hero Michelisz a podium – the Hungarian had been wiped out in race one after a feisty flow of corners side by side with Thed Bjork that left him with a puncture – while Huff's recovery was limited to 10th.

But at an event where no single driver took control of the on-track proceedings, Tiago Monteiro's steady approach meant he left Hungary happiest – and in charge in the points. Fifth in race two, from ninth, the Portuguese had earlier become the first driver to land a second win of the season in the reversed-grid race one.

While the Civic looked average in qualifying, Monteiro needed no second invitation at the start as polesitter John Filippi stalled. And although he was chased all the way home by Chilton, he stayed clear throughout. With previous closest challenger Bjork slipping up, and Huff missing a chance to bag his first win of the season, Monteiro extended his lead to an authoritative 38 points.

JACK COZENS

AT A GLANCE

RACE 1

- 1 Monteiro Honda
- 2 Chilton Citroen
- 3 Huff Citroen

RACE 2

- 1 Bennani Citroen
- 2 Catsburg Volvo
- 3 Chilton Citroen

P57 RESULTS



Hirakawa, Roussel and Rojas survive late scare

EUROPEAN LE MANS SERIES
MONZA (I)
MAY 14
ROUND 2/6

RYO HIRAKAWA, LEO ROUSSEL and Memo Rojas made up for their Silverstone near-miss by taking victory for G-Drive Racing at Monza, despite serving a late drive-through penalty.

The DragonSpeed-run ORECA looked set for a routine victory after a storming middle stint from Roussel, but Hirakawa's comfortable 50-second lead was halved with 18 minutes to go when his team-mate was deemed not to have slowed sufficiently for an earlier full-course yellow. After he had seen a similar margin eroded in the closing stages at Silverstone, Hirakawa had good reason to wonder if lightning would strike twice, but the Japanese driver held on to win by 2s from a charging Ben Hanley.

Sharing with Nicolas Lapierre and Henrik Hedman, Hanley had taken second from Anders Fjordbach with two laps to go after he was caught out by traffic and forced up the Rettifilo slip road.

After qualifying on pole and keeping Lapierre at bay in the opening stint, Enzo Guibbert's Graff Racing ORECA, which he shared with Eric Trouillet and Paul Pettit, was fourth at the finish.

Ricky Capo and Erwin Creed became the first non-Ligier drivers to win in LMP3 since Estoril 2015, as the Yvan Muller Racing Norma M30 took a first competition victory. After Wayne Boyd's polesitting United Autosports car slipped back with Mark Patterson at the wheel and the sister car of Sean Rayhall tripping over the AT Racing Ligier at the first Lesmo, Capo fended off sometime Renault, Midland and HRT Formula 1 tester Giorgio Mondini in the EuroInternational Ligier

before handing over to Creed, who made no mistakes. YMR team-mates Alexandre Cougnaud, Romano Ricci and Antoine Jung overhauled Mondini and Davide Uboldi for second in their Ligier, while Silverstone winners Rayhall and John Falb could only muster ninth this weekend.

In GTE, JMW Motorsport was victorious in the final outing for its venerable 458 Italia before it's replaced by the latest 488 model at Le Mans. Jody Fannin, Rob Smith and Jonny Cocker took the lead after Duncan Cameron's Spirit of Race 488 suffered engine trouble shortly before half-distance and held on for a poignant victory over the TF Sport Aston Martin of championship leaders Nicki Thiim, Euan Hankey and Salih Yoluc. Beechdean AMR's Ross Gunn snatched third from Gianluca Roda in the closing stages.

RESULTS

1 Memo Rojas/Ryo Hirakawa/Leo Roussel (ORECA 07) 132 laps in 4h01m43.628s; 2 Nicolas Lapierre/Henrik Hedman/Ben Hanley (ORECA 07) +2.245s; 3 Anders Fjordbach/Dennis Andersen (Dallara P217); 4 Enzo Guibbert/Eric Trouillet/Paul Petit (ORECA 07); 5 Giorgio Sernagiotto/Roberto Lacorte/Andrea Belicchi (Dallara P217); 6 Hugo de Sadeleer/Will Owen/Filipe Albuquerque (Ligier JSP217). **LMP3 1 Ricky Capo/Erwin Creed (Norma M30);** 2 Alexandre Cougnaud/Antoine Jung/Romano Ricci (Ligier JSP3); 3 Matthieu Lahaye/Jean-Baptiste Lahaye/Francois Heriau (Ligier). **GTE 1 Jody Fannin/Rob Smith/Jonny Cocker Ferrari 458 Italia);** 2 Nicki Thiim/Euan Hankey/Salih Yoluc (Aston Martin Vantage); 3 Darren Turner/Ross Gunn/Andrew Howard (Aston). **POINTS 1 Hirakawa/Roussel/Rojas 43;** 2 Albuquerque/Owen/de Sadeleer 33; 3 Fjordbach/Andersen 30; 4 Hedman/Lapierre/Hanley 20; 5 Guibbert/Petit/Trouillet 19; 6 Lacorte/Sernagiotto/Belicchi 18. **LMP3 1 Lahaye/Lahaye/Heriau 33;** 2 Jung/Cougnaud/Ricci 28; 3 Wayne Boyd/Mark Patterson/Christian England 28. **GTE 1 Yoluc/Thiim/Hankey 44;** 2 Fannin/Smith 35; 3 Howard/Turner/Gunn 30.

RESULTS

WORLD TOURING CAR CHAMPIONSHIP

ROUND 3/10, HUNGARORING (H), MAY 14

RACE 1 (12 LAPS - 32.667 MILES)

1	Tiago Monteiro (P)	Honda Racing Team JAS • Honda Civic WTCC	22m28.644s
2	Tom Chilton (GB)	Sebastien Loeb Racing • Citroen C-Elysee WTCC	+0.768s
3	Rob Huff (GB)	Munnich Motorsport • Citroen C-Elysee WTCC	+2.296s
4	Nestor Girolami (RA)	Polestar Cyan Racing • Volvo S60 Polestar	+4.537s
5	Nicky Catsburg (NL)	Polestar Cyan Racing • Volvo S60 Polestar	+5.221s
6	Esteban Guerrieri (RA)	Campas Racing • Chevrolet RML Cruze TC1	+10.308s
7	Mehdi Bennani (MA)	Sebastien Loeb Racing • Citroen C-Elysee WTCC	+10.893s
8	Yann Ehrlacher (F)	RC Motorsport • Lada Vesta WTCC	+13.183s
9	Tom Coronel (NL)	ROAL Motorsport • Chevrolet RML Cruze TC1	+21.703s
10	Aurelien Panis (F)	Zengo Motorsport • Honda Civic WTCC	+37.886s
11	Ryo Michigami (J)	Honda Racing Team JAS • Honda Civic WTCC	+38.532s
12	Kevin Gleason (USA)	RC Motorsport • Lada Vesta WTCC	+38.808s
13	Daniel Nagy (H)	Zengo Motorsport • Honda Civic WTCC	+39.607s
14	John Filippi (F)	Sebastien Loeb Racing • Citroen C-Elysee WTCC	-1 lap
R	Norbert Michelisz (H)	Honda Racing Team JAS • Honda Civic WTCC	7 laps-acc damage
R	Thed Bjork (S)	Polestar Cyan Racing • Volvo S60 Polestar	3 laps-acc damage

Winner's average speed 87.198mph. Fastest lap Guerrieri 1m50.854s, 88.404mph.

GRID FOR RACE 1

1 Filippi; 2 Monteiro; 3 Bjork; 4 Chilton; 5 Michelisz; 6 Girolami; 7 Catsburg; 8 Guerrieri; 9 Huff; 10 Ehrlacher; 11 Michigami; 12 Coronel; 13 Panis; 14 Bennani; 15 Gleason; 16 Nagy.

RACE 2 (17 LAPS - 46.278 MILES)

1 Bennani 33m21.822s; 2 Catsburg +0.654s; 3 Chilton +3.553s; 4 Michelisz +7.309s; 5 Monteiro +9.532s; 6 Guerrieri +10.875s; 7 Bjork +11.865s; 8 Ehrlacher +14.547s; 9 Coronel +20.783s; 10 Huff +21.212s; 11 Filippi +28.110s; 12 Gleason +31.760s; 13 Michigami +36.852s; 14 Panis +51.021s; R Nagy 11 laps-overheating; R Girolami 0 laps-accident.

Winner's average speed 83.224mph. Fastest lap Huff 1m50.478s, 88.705mph.

QUALIFYING

Q3 1 Huff 1m48.264s; 2 Bennani 1m48.591s; 3 Guerrieri 1m48.896s; 4 Catsburg 1m48.941s; 5 Girolami 1m49.674s.

Q2 Huff 1m48.494s; Guerrieri 1m48.619s; Bennani 1m48.685s; Girolami 1m48.755s; Catsburg 1m48.822s; 6 Michelisz 1m48.970s; 7 Chilton 1m48.997s; 8 Bjork 1m49.103s; 9 Monteiro 1m49.148s; 10 Filippi 1m49.608s; 11 Ehrlacher 1m49.772s; 12 Michigami 1m50.012s.

Q1 Catsburg 1m48.995s; Huff 1m48.998s; Monteiro 1m49.071s; Girolami 1m49.111s; Guerrieri 1m49.231s; Bjork 1m49.429s; Michelisz 1m49.442s; Ehrlacher 1m49.698s; Filippi 1m49.704s; Bennani 1m49.839s; Chilton 1m49.861s; Michigami 1m50.446s; 13 Coronel 1m50.502s; 14 Panis 1m51.029s; 15 Gleason 1m51.372s; 16 Nagy 1m52.457s.

CHAMPIONSHIP

1 Monteiro 123; 2 Catsburg 85; 3 Chilton 81; 4 Bjork 77; 5 Bennani 73; 6 Huff 65; 7 Guerrieri 62; 8 Michelisz 62; 9 Girolami 52; 10 Coronel 20.



ROUND-UP

GP3 SERIES

ROUND 1/8, BARCELONA (E), MAY 13-14

RACE 1 (22 LAPS – 63.556 MILES)

1	Nirei Fukuzumi (J) ART Grand Prix	36m41.269s
2	Leonardo Pulcini (I) Arden International	+7.433s
3	Alessio Lorandi (I) Jenzer Motorsport	+7.889s
4	George Russell (GB) ART Grand Prix	+11.807s
5	Anthoine Hubert (F) ART Grand Prix	+12.159s
6	Dorian Boccia (F) Trident	+14.364s
7	Arjun Maini (IND) Jenzer Motorsport	+14.906s
8	Raoul Hyman (ZA) Campos Racing	+30.986s
9	Santino Ferrucci (USA) DAMS	+31.314s
10	Marcos Siebert (RA) Campos Racing	+31.357s
11	Julien Falchero (F) Campos Racing	+31.912s
12	Ryan Tveter (USA) Trident	+32.228s
13	Kevin Jorg (CH) Trident	+32.916s
14	Tatiana Calderon (CO) DAMS	+33.288s
15	Niko Kari (FIN) Arden International	+35.996s
16	Bruno Baptista (BR) DAMS	+37.783s
17	Giuliano Alesi (F) Trident	+38.240s
18	Steijn Schothorst (NL) Arden International	+39.412s
R	Jack Aitken (GB) ART Grand Prix	16 laps-engine sensor

Winner's average speed 103.941mph. Fastest lap Hubert 1m39.386s, 104.772mph.

QUALIFYING

1 Aitken 1m34.187s; 2 Fukuzumi 1m34.358s; 3 Boccia 1m34.380s; 4 Russell 1m34.468s; 5 Pulcini 1m34.602s; 6 Maini 1m34.685s; 7 Lorandi 1m34.720s; 8 Siebert 1m34.788s; 9 Hubert 1m34.866s; 10 Alesi 1m34.708s*; 11 Hyman 1m35.031s; 12 Schothorst 1m35.041s; 13 Ferrucci 1m35.070s; 14 Falchero 1m35.088s; 15 Tveter 1m35.224s; 16 Jorg 1m35.423s; 17 Calderon 1m35.613s; 18 Baptista 1m35.851s; 19 Kari 1m34.964s*. * = grid penalty.

RACE 2 (17 LAPS – 49.094 MILES)

1 Maini 28m05.908s; 2 Boccia +6.060s; 3 Lorandi +7.171s; 4 Hubert +8.268s; 5 Russell +9.335s; 6 Fukuzumi +11.309s; 7 Hyman +14.085s; 8 Ferrucci +16.638s; 9 Jorg +17.813s; 10 Falchero +20.265s; 11 Alesi +23.251s; 12 Aitken +23.511s; 13 Baptista +26.863s; 14 Kari +27.888s; 15 Schothorst +29.709s; 16 Siebert +31.093s; 17 Pulcini +1m06.654s; 18 Tveter -1 lap; R Calderon 11 laps-crash damage.

Winner's average speed 104.832mph. Fastest lap Pulcini 1m37.654s, 106.630mph.

GRID FOR RACE 2

Decided by result of Race 1, with top eight finishers reversed.

CHAMPIONSHIP

1 Fukuzumi 29; 2 Lorandi 25; 3 Maini 21; 4 Boccia 20; 5 Hubert 20; 6 Russell 20; 7 Pulcini 18; 8 Hyman 6; 9 Aitken 4; 10 Ferrucci 3.

FORMULA 2 CHAMPIONSHIP

ROUND 2/11, BARCELONA (E), MAY 13-14

RACE 1 (37 LAPS – 106.944 MILES)

1	Charles Leclerc (MC) Prema Racing	1h02m33.684s
2	Luca Ghiotto (I) Russian Time	+3.730s
3	Oliver Rowland (GB) DAMS	+11.146s
4	Nobuharu Matsushita (J) ART Grand Prix	+14.103s
5	Alexander Albon (T) ART Grand Prix	+17.319s
6	Nicholas Latifi (CDN) DAMS	+23.879s
7	Gustav Malja (S) Racing Engineering	+24.779s
8	Artem Markelov (RUS) Russian Time	+25.403s
9	Jordan King (GB) MP Motorsport	+30.967s
10	Nyck de Vries (NL) Rapax	+43.832s
11	Louis Deletraz (CH) Racing Engineering	+50.283s
12	Ralph Boschung (CH) Campos Racing	+58.201s
13	Antonio Fuoco (I) Prema Racing	+1m05.970s
14	Sergio Sette Camara (BR) MP Motorsport	+1m05.973s
15	Sean Gelael (RI) Arden International	+1m08.333s
16	Norman Nato (F) Arden International	+1m09.241s
17	Johnny Cecotto Jr (V) Rapax	+1m27.784s
18	Nabil Jeffri (MAL) Trident	+1m29.521s
19	Roberto Merhi (E) Campos Racing	33 laps-broken floor
R	Sergio Canamasas (E) Trident	8 laps-electrics

Winner's average speed 102.565mph. Fastest lap Markelov 1m34.294s, 110.430mph.

QUALIFYING

1 Leclerc 1m29.285s; 2 Ghiotto 1m29.478s; 3 de Vries 1m29.550s; 4 King 1m29.585s; 5 Albon 1m29.732s; 6 Rowland 1m29.744s; 7 Nato 1m29.790s; 8 Fuoco 1m29.834s; 9 Latifi 1m29.885s; 10 Matsushita 1m29.975s; 11 Deletraz 1m30.046s; 12 Boschung 1m30.065s; 13 Markelov 1m30.177s; 14 Sette Camara 1m30.231s; 15 Merhi 1m30.389s; 16 Cecotto 1m30.441s; 17 Gelael 1m30.772s; 18 Malja 1m30.814s; 19 Canamasas 1m31.148s; 20 Jeffri 1m32.303s.

RACE 2 (26 LAPS – 75.126 MILES)

1 Matsushita 42m20.450s; 2 Rowland +3.309s; 3 Latifi +4.621s; 4 Leclerc +9.177s; 5 King +15.333s; 6 Malja +17.987s; 7 Ghiotto +18.092s; 8 Albon +21.135s; 9 Markelov +21.552s; 10 Cecotto +30.744s; 11 Canamasas +31.549s; 12 Merhi +34.434s; 13 Nato +35.271s; 14 Deletraz +38.090s; 15 Sette Camara +39.446s; 16 Gelael +46.950s; 17 Boschung +50.226s; 18 Jeffri +59.912s; R de Vries 0 laps-accident; R Fuoco 0 laps-accident.

Winner's average speed 106.459mph. Fastest lap Boschung 1m34.670s, 109.991mph.

GRID FOR RACE 2

Decided by result of Race 1, with top eight finishers reversed.

CHAMPIONSHIP

1 Leclerc 73; 2 Rowland 47; 3 Ghiotto 38; 4 Markelov 34; 5 Matsushita 31; 6 Latifi 28; 7 King 26; 8 Albon 21; 9 Nato 18; 10 Malja 10.

BLANCPAIN ENDURANCE CUP

ROUND 2/5, SILVERSTONE (GB), MAY 14 (83 LAPS – 304.337 MILES)

1	Mirko Bortolotti (I) Christian Engelhart (D) Andrea Caldarelli (I) GRT Grasser Racing • Lamborghini Huracan GT3	3h02m00.635s
2	Maximilian Buhk (D) Franck Perera (F) Jimmy Eriksson (S) HTP Motorsport • Mercedes-AMG GT3	+0.344s
3	Michael Meadows (GB) Raffaele Marciello (I) Edoardo Mortara (I) Auto Sport Promotion • Mercedes-AMG GT3	+3.072s
4	Victor Shaytar (RUS) Davide Rigon (I) Miguel Molina (E) SMP Racing • Ferrari 488 GT3	+5.871s
5	Andy Soucek (E) Maxime Soulet (B) Vincent Abril (F) Bentley Team M-Sport • Bentley Continental GT3	+28.330s
6	Pasin Lathouras (T) Michele Rugolo (I) Alessandro Pier Guidi (I) Spirit of Race • Ferrari 488 GT3	+35.713s
7	Alexander Sims (GB) Maxime Martin (B) Philipp Eng (A) Rowe Racing • BMW M6 GT3	+36.898s
8	Lewis Williamson (GB) Oliver Webb (GB) Alvaro Parente (P) Strakka Racing • McLaren 650S GT3	+44.743s
9	Steven Kane (GB) Guy Smith (GB) Oliver Jarvis (GB) Bentley Team M-Sport • Bentley Continental GT3	+1m07.204s
10	Lorenz Frey (CH) Stephane Ortelli (MC) Albert Costa (E) Emil Frey Racing • Jaguar Emil Frey G3	+1m07.620s
11	Felix Serralles (USA) Daniel Juncadella (E) Tristan Vautier (F) Auto Sport Promotion • Mercedes-AMG GT3	+1m15.068s
12	Jonathan Hirschi (CH) Christian Klien (A) Marco Seefried (D) Emil Frey Racing • Jaguar Emil Frey G3	+1m18.209s
13	Stuart Leonard (GB) Jamie Green (GB) Jake Dennis (GB) WRT • Audi R8 LMS	+1m21.123s
14	Fabrizio Crestani (I) Gustavo Yacamán (CO) Nicolas Pohler (D) Lazarus • Lamborghini Huracan GT3	+1m21.740s
15	Andrea Piccini (I) Michele Beretta (I) Stefano Gattuso (I) Ombra Racing • Lamborghini Huracan GT3	+1m21.828s
16	Alex Buncombe (GB) Lucas Ordóñez (E) Katsumasa Chiyo (J) RJN Motorsport • Nissan GT-R NISMO GT3	+1m27.261s
17	Ezequiel Perez Compagnon (RA) Norbert Siedler (A) Raffaele Giammaria (I) GRT Grasser Racing • Lamborghini Huracan GT3	+1m30.539s
18	Nico Menzel (D) Christian Krognæs (N) Mikkel Jensen (DK) Walkenhorst Motorsport • BMW M6 GT3	+1m35.596s
19	Bertrand Baguette (B) Giovanni Venturini (I) Marco Mapelli (I) Attempto Racing • Lamborghini Huracan GT3	+1m41.039s
20	Patrick Kujala (FIN) Martin Kodric (HR) Adrian Amstutz (CH) Barwell Motorsport • Lamborghini Huracan GT3	-1 lap

Winners' average speed 100.325mph.

Fastest lap Bortolotti 2m00.906s, 109.177mph.

Pro-Am 1 Kodric/Amstutz/Kujala; 2 Jonny Adam (GB)/Ahmad Al Harthy (OM) TF Sport Aston Martin Vantage GT3; 3 Jules Gounon (F)/Nico Bastian (D)/Jean-Luc Beaubelique (F) Auto Sport Promotion Mercedes-AMG GT3.

CHAMPIONSHIP

1 Caldarelli/Bortolotti/Engelhart 50; 2 Eriksson/Buhk/Perera 33; 3 Pier Guidi/Rugolo/Lathouras 27; 4 Rigon/Shaytar/Molina 22; 5 Soucek/Soulet/Abril 18; 6 Mortara/Marciello/Meadows 15; 7 Fisichella/Cioci/Calado 12; 8 Al Harthy/Adam 6; 9 Eng/Sims/Martin 6; 10 Cressoni/Rizzoli/Broniszewski 4. Pro-Am 1 Adam/Al Harthy 44; 2 Kujala/Kodric/Amstutz 27; 3 Gounon/Bastian/Beaubelique 26. Blancpain GT Overall 1 Bortolotti/Engelhart 86; 2 Buhk/Perera 74; 3 Caldarelli 50; 4 Eriksson 48; 5 Abril 39; 6 Pier Guidi/Rugolo/Lathouras 27.

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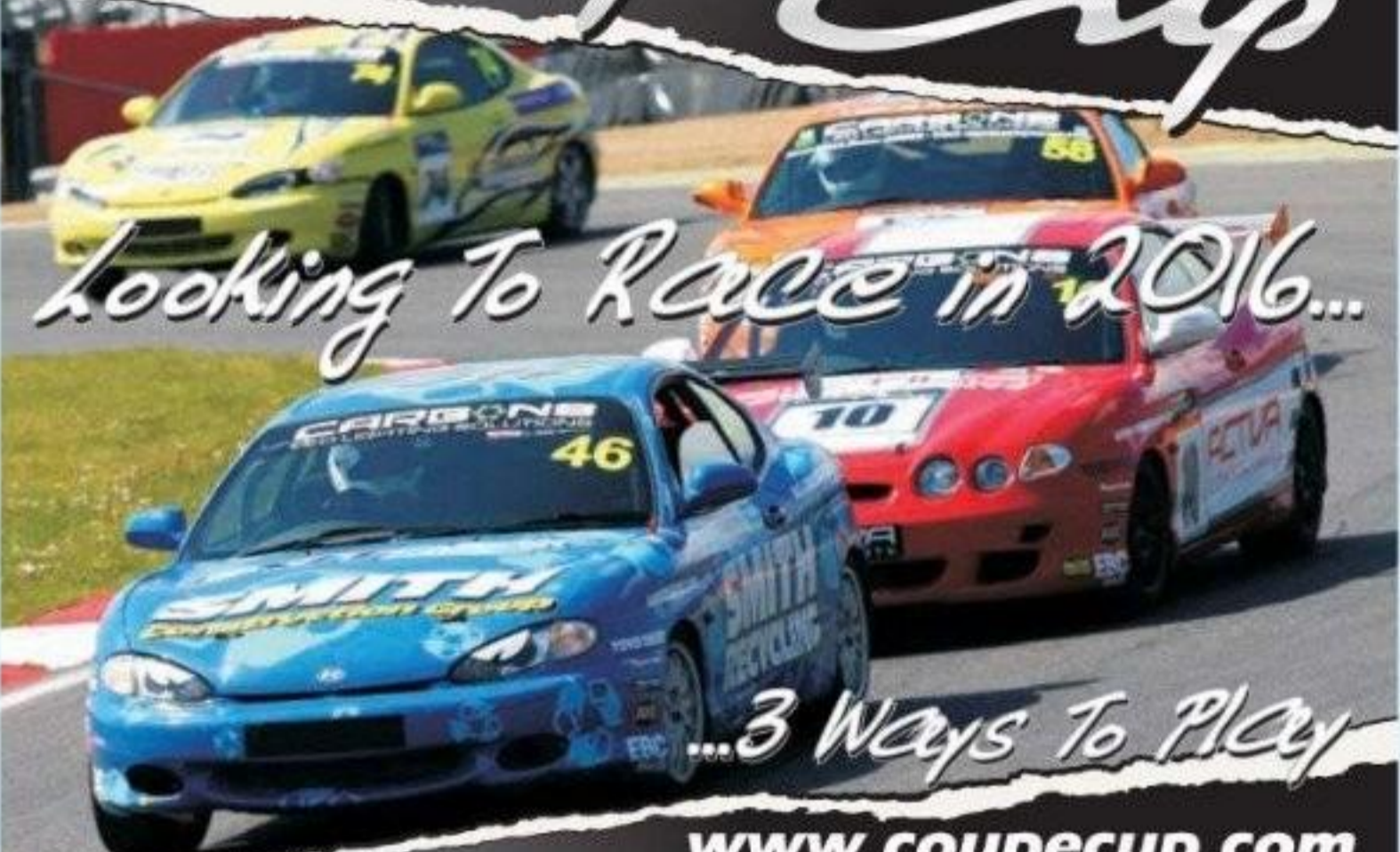


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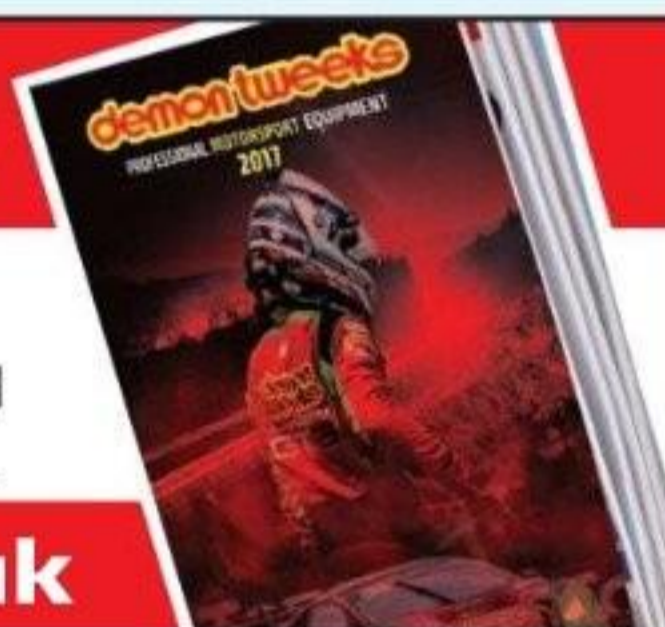
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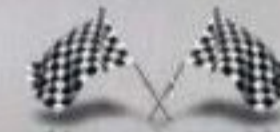
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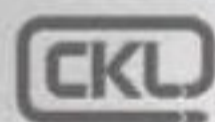


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EUROFORMULA OPEN

Scott gets Euroformula title shot with full-season deal

HARRISON SCOTT HAS SEALED A DEAL TO contest the remainder of the Euroformula Open season after winning the first two races of the year.

The Briton drove for the RP Motorsport squad at the Estoril season opener last month and established a comfortable lead in the points, but did not have an agreement in place to continue in the series, which uses the current-generation Dallara F3 car with a spec Toyota engine. Now the Formula Renault Eurocup race winner and 2014 McLaren Autosport BRDC Award finalist will carry on with Italian team RP, beginning next week at Spa.

“Having experienced the championship last year when I competed in a one-off race at Jerez, it soon became high on my list of priorities to compete in the series this year,” said Scott.

“I immediately felt comfortable in the F3 car, so I’m extremely happy to be able to confirm a full-time seat with RP Motorsport for this season.

“I’ll be proud to fly the flag as the only British driver on the Euroformula Open grid, and after the

first event my goals remain the same: to maintain momentum and, together with RP Motorsport, bring home some fantastic results.”

RP Motorsport team manager Niki Rocca added: “In addition to being a talented driver he is intelligent, and you need this to create that extra special something. We watched Harrison’s racing last year in Eurocup with interest and when he tested for us for the first time in the winter series we knew he would be a very good driver.

“What we expected we received – Harrison is totally motivated and dedicated to the job, following the data and videos to see where we can improve, and it is very nice to work with such an overall package in a driver.”

Scott, who twice finished runner-up in the British Formula Ford rankings, is competing against other drivers familiar from the UK scene, including BRDC British F3 graduates Tarun Reddy and Ameya Vaidyanathan, and ex-F4 men Petru Florescu and Devlin DeFrancesco.

IN BRIEF

JOHN SURTEES CELEBRATION

Cars and bikes raced by John Surtees will take part in a parade during the Henry Surtees Foundation Karting Challenge. This year’s event will be the first since Surtees Sr died and includes an exhibition in tribute to the 1964 world champion. A charity auction will also take place at the July 11 event, which will be held at Mercedes-Benz World at Brooklands.

JONES SR MAKES RACING BOW

Russell Jones, father of IndyCar driver Ed, made his race debut in the Porsche Club championship at Oulton Park last weekend. Driving a 3.2-litre Boxster S, he completed both races, finishing 15th and 13th.

FERRARI HONOURS SHARED

Lee Moulden and Peter Fisk shared Pirelli Ferrari Classic wins in the races that formed part of the Ferrari Festival at Knockhill last weekend. Moulden beat Fisk by three seconds in the opener before the positions were reversed in race two, but Moulden was back ahead in the finale.

MONGER BACK TRACKSIDE

A week after returning home from hospital, injured British Formula 4 driver Billy Monger was back at a racetrack last weekend. The 18-year-old was at Whilton Mill for the Super One karting round in his role as a driver coach for Virtus Motorsport. Monger had amputations to both legs as a result of a high-speed crash with Patrik Pasma at Donington Park on April 16.



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Carroll (right with trophy) returns to Van Diemen



JIM WALSH TROPHY

Carroll returns in Trophy-winning car

WALTER HAYES TROPHY WINNER GRAHAM Carroll will return to the car he used to win the 2015 event in this year's Jim Walsh Trophy.

The 2008 National Formula Ford 1600 champion has entered the Super Series FF1600 round on the Silverstone Grand Prix Circuit on July 2. This will be the first time Carroll has competed on the layout.

Reuniting with the B-M Racing team and the Van Diemen JL13 will rekindle fond memories after a difficult campaign last year driving Ralph Firman's then-newly developed RF16 chassis.

"I've done every track in Britain but never driven the Grand Prix circuit [at Silverstone]," Carroll said. "It would be good to win it. This year is Formula Ford's 50th anniversary so

I've got to give it a crack.

"It [the Van Diemen] is the same car I won the Walter Hayes Trophy in, with the same guys running it, so it should be good."

Carroll, who was the Scottish FF1600 champion in 2007, could also join B-M drivers David and Tom McArthur for the Knockhill round of the BRSCC's National series on June 3-4.

"The two boys haven't been there [Knockhill] before," he said. "I might do it, but if I do go there I'll want to win and my focus should really be to help them."

Since last year's unsuccessful campaign with Firman ended, Carroll's main focus has been on establishing a business installing home simulators – a legacy of his success in the

Formula E Road to Vegas competition, which led to Carroll competing in the American city in a huge eSports event back in January.

"The sim stuff is paying my wages," said Carroll, whose customers have included inaugural Formula E champion and ex-F1 man Nelson Piquet Jr. "I've got massive amount of work and coaching from it. It's changed my life."

- Current National Formula Ford Championship leader Luke Williams has yet to confirm if he will contest further races this season beyond the next round at Knockhill, owing to finances.

Williams has already taken two wins from five races this year and leads the championship by seven points.

US F1600

Cowley completes historic US hat-trick

BRIT MATTHEW COWLEY managed to achieve the unprecedented feat of winning three races in a day in the US-based F1600 Championship last weekend.

Cowley, the 2015 BRSCC Formula Ford 1600 National and Northern Pre-'90 champion, is racing with Team Pelfrey in the championship, and has moved into a share of the series lead after his record-breaking treble at Mid Ohio in his Mygale-Honda.

"I'm really pleased to set this record and to get two out of three fastest laps for the team," said Cowley. He completed a late move on Zach Holden to win the third race, beating the same driver in race two.

Cowley now sits joint top of the points standings with five rounds of the season remaining. The next round of the F1600 championship takes place at the Indianapolis Motor Speedway on June 10-11.



LE MANS CUP

Noble and AmD duo win at Monza

LMP3 CUP CHAMPIONSHIP LEADER COLIN Noble showed his domestic form was no flash in the pan as he took victory alongside Tony Wells in the Le Mans Cup opener at Monza.

The Scot, who won the UK-based LMP3 Cup opener at Donington Park a fortnight earlier, took over the Ecurie Ecosse/Nielsen Racing Ligier JSP3 in fourth, but pumped in a sequence of quick laps on fresh tyres to take the lead and went on to win the race by 52 seconds after penalties for pursuer Alex Toril's Norma.

Lee Mowle and Phil Keen inherited GT3 class honours in their AmD Tuning Mercedes-AMG GT3 when Flick Haigh's and Joe Osborne's Optimum Motorsport Audi R8 LMS was penalised for a pit infringement with five minutes of the race remaining.

FORD FIESTAS

BRSCC weighs up mixed Fiesta grid

THE BRSCC IS EXAMINING THE TIMETABLE for its Silverstone meeting next weekend in an attempt to incorporate additional Fiesta Championship races at its triple-header round.

Drivers have requested separate races for the two-litre ST model, which forms Class C, following a number of incidents at the opening rounds at Brands Hatch and Cadwell Park.

"There are proposals to try and find a compromise, bearing in mind the logistical restrictions of the timetable," said championship coordinator Steven Connor. "The drivers have said they accept compromises."

Competitors including class leader Lewis Kent (orange, pictured) have suggested that if given the choice, they would prefer to run combined qualifying sessions and split races instead.



PICKUPS

Collins rebounds with Rock victory

MEL COLLINS PUT THE DISAPPOINTMENT OF an earlier retirement behind him to come back and take victory in the Pickup final at Rockingham last weekend.

A misfire prematurely ended Collins's progress in the first of two 25-lap heats, which was won by Mark Willis from Paul Poulter.

Poulter went one better in heat two and held on for the win despite consistent late-race pressure from Charlie Weaver.

The pair clashed in the 35-lap final – both ended up in the wall and out of the race.

This caused a full-course yellow and it looked like Paul Tompkins would take the win behind the safety car, but race organisers attempted a 'green-white-chequer' finish over two final laps.

Tompkins, believing there was only one racing lap remaining, eased off crossing the line and was overtaken by Collins.

"They said it was a one-lap dash," a frustrated Tompkins commented afterwards.

But championship coordinator Sonny Howard countered that the correct information had been communicated to teams and spotters alike.



BARC

Online stream launched by BARC

THE BARC HAS LAUNCHED ITS OWN online television platform.

Unveiled at the end of April, BARC TV brings together highlights and interviews from a wide range of the club's series.

The new platform will feature some of the club's categories that are not currently televised. The BARC says it has introduced

the development as part of its multimedia strategy. It can be found at barctv.net.

- The LMP3 Cup and the GT Cup Championship have announced a new television deal for the two categories. They will be featured on the rebranded motorsport.tv and Front Runner channels.

CATERHAM GRADUATES

Endurance celebration for Caterhams

CATERHAM GRADUATES WILL stage a one-off four-hour endurance race at Donington Park next month to celebrate the series' 20th anniversary.

Based on the 750 Motor Club's annual multi-class Birkett Six-Hour Relay at Silverstone, the series will race to a similar format – a relay between teams of two to six

drivers – in the June 4 event.

Different versions of Caterham will be allowed within one team and a handicap system will be employed to keep the slowest Classic machines in line with the fastest Sigmax-engined cars.

The handicap system will be handled by the BARC, which will account for past results and

Saturday's standard races. To avoid sandbagging, the system can be altered in the race.

"We wanted to do something special for our anniversary," explained series chairman Roger Ford. "Many of our drivers have done the Birkett and enjoyed it. We wanted to do this for all types of Caterhams."



RACE OF REMEMBRANCE

RoR becomes 12-hour event for '17

RACE OF REMEMBRANCE ORGANISERS have changed the format of the Anglesey event for 2017, with a 12-hour endurance race replacing the previous 1000km distance.

The event, which this year takes place on November 10-12, has been run as a distance race since its inception in 2012, and will continue to be punctuated by the usual stoppages for Remembrance Sunday.

James Cameron, the chairman of race organiser Mission Motorsport, said: "One of the things that people enjoy is the opportunity to run cars into the dark with

lights on. It's quite special."

The first half of the race will run from 1500 to 2100 on Saturday, when competitors return to parc ferme, before resuming at 0900 the following morning to complete the final six hours, with a further break to respect the remembrance service. This will begin at 1045 on Sunday in the pitlane.

"It's a lovely thing and does attract a lot of attention, but it also takes a lot of effort on our part and the volunteers in order to run it," added Cameron. "What's clear is that every year it's just got bigger and more auspicious."



Attwood was a Le Mans winner in 1970 in 917

LAT IMAGES

FORMULA JUNIOR

BIRRELL CLOSE TO BAGGING 100 TRACKS

VETERAN RACER BOB Birrell is moving closer to his target of competing on 100 different tracks in a career that started in 1965.

"I've raced in all but three seasons since then," said the former army officer, who is racing his Lotus 20 Formula Junior in this season's Lurani Trophy.

"I'm now on 94 tracks, but there aren't too many new ones left now. I only added one new one last year and that was Sandown in Australia."

The Formula Junior Baltic series will offer the chance of three new tracks in 2018.

During 49 seasons of racing, Birrell contested the 1971 Singapore Grand Prix street race and the Penang Grand Prix, while he has also raced at Macau. He was 51st in the Lurani Trophy standings last season.



HSCC

Attwood to race Porsche 928

RICHARD ATTWOOD, PORSCHE'S FIRST LE MANS 24 Hours winner, is to contest the remaining rounds of the Historic Sports Car Club's '70s Road Sports Championship, starting at Silverstone this weekend, in a 928S.

Promoted by Porsche Cars Great Britain, the initiative celebrates 40 years since the launch of the marque's 4.5-litre V8-engined grand tourer.

The car was raced briefly by Chris Alford in 2015 but will now be supported and run at events by Porsche Classic Partners nationwide, starting with the Swindon centre.

Former Monoposto racing champion John Bradshaw, whose Road & Race Restorations team in Manchester rebuilt the 928, shook the car down at Silverstone last Friday. "I did 15 to 20 laps to bed things in," said Bradshaw.

"It's a heavy car, so managing the brakes will be important."

Attwood is likely to have an acclimatisation run on the Porsche Experience Centre's short test track at Silverstone before going into qualifying.

He previously raced a 928S in 1984, finishing 15th in the Daytona 24 Hours with Vic Elford and Americans Howard Meister and Bob Hagestad in a car entered by Brumos.

Among Attwood's rivals will be 2012 British GT champion and former British Touring Car Championship competitor Michael Caine, driving Jason Brooks's TVR 3000M – a veteran of previous championship campaigns with Christina Totty and Johan Denekamp.

Attwood's 1970 Le Mans win came in a Porsche Salzburg 917K, sharing with Hans Herrmann.

OBITUARY

Paul Wilson 1975-2017

REGULAR SPORTSCAR RACER Paul Wilson has died after a long battle with cancer at the age of 41.

Wilson was a champion in British karting and made a name for himself in UK competition, most notably in the Caterham classes.

He shone when he joined the Surrey marque's top-flight Superlight R300 Championship, winning

the title in 2012 and scoring seven race wins in addition to five pole positions in a season that led to Autosport's sister title *Motorsport News* ranking him as the third-best national racer of that year.

Having graduated from Caterham racing, Wilson went on to make a name for himself on the European GT stage, competing regularly in

both the German VLN series and the Blancpain GT classes.

His most notable result came when he won the Pro-Am class of the Blancpain Endurance Series at Silverstone in 2015 alongside Stuart Leonard and Michael Meadows in a Leonard Motorsport Aston Martin Vantage GT3. The trio finished 10th in the standings.



Wilson last raced in Blancpain

EBREY/LAT



Past master Attwood returns to racing roots

By Marcus Pye, the voice of club racing

[@autosport](#)

I ADORE CLUB RACING, SO AM ALWAYS DELIGHTED when past masters return to their roots, with no agenda beyond pure enjoyment and the love of competition.

At 77, Richard Attwood has nothing to prove to anybody, for his career as one of Great Britain's finest drivers stretches back 57 years, to 1960. That he is back in a Porsche, the marque he and Hans Herrmann painted indelibly into Le Mans history in 1970, should bring fellow enthusiasts through the gates at Silverstone this Saturday for the HSCC's International Trophy meeting. Attendance among BRDC members will be up!

Attwood started competing in a Triumph TR3, then – with raised tyre pressures, cross-taped headlights, numbers painted on the doors in plimsoll white and not much else – became an effective track racer at weekends.

A Formula Junior switch followed with the Midlands Racing Partnership. A win at the 1963 Monaco GP in a Lola Mk5A thrust Attwood towards the big time, via the first Grovewood Award (the McLaren Autosport BRDC Award of its day).

A one-litre Formula 2 win at Aspern in 1964 established Attwood's reputation in Austria (whose colours he would carry to Le Mans 24 Hours glory on the spectacular 917K), and he made his F1 debut the same season for BRM. While his top-line single-seater racing continued until '71 – with best finishes of second and fourth at Monaco in '68 and '69 – long-distance sportscar racing proved his forte, as major successes in Ford, Ferrari and Porsche machinery attest.

I've enjoyed watching Richard compete in historic racing for decades, marvelling at his artistry and versatility spanning many diverse cars. We invariably catch up at Goodwood, where

I've commentated on him winning the RAC TT Celebration (with Mark Hales) in an Iso Bizzarrini A3C, the Richmond Trophy in a front-engined Ferrari 246 Dino evocation, and the Glover Trophy in the BRM P261 he has owned in partnership with garagiste Mike Ostroumoff.

Richard's love of Porsche and the reverence in which the Stuttgart and Weissach faithful hold him always shines through at sporting and social events; indeed, there could be no finer ambassador. It's no surprise, then, that he jumped at the opportunity of piloting a 928S in the HSCC's '70s Road Sports championship. The big V8 coupe is not a natural race car, but Attwood and fellow Porsche legend Vic Elford led the team that completed the '84 Daytona 24 Hours in one.

Prepared initially by Road and Race Restorations, then tended by Porsche Classic Partner centres in Glasgow, Hatfield, Leeds and Swindon, the 928S will be used to develop the expertise of specialist technicians in the maintenance of older models. PCGB aftersales business development manager James Toye is excited about the programme: "Our classic section always links to motorsport, so Richard seemed like a natural fit. When he said yes it all came together really quickly."

• I'd like to close by paying my respects to American sportscar racer Mike Rahal, who died last week aged 93. Father of triple CART champion Bobby and grandfather of IndyCar racer Graham, Mike didn't reach their career highs but raced from the 1950s to the '70s, achieving successes in Elva Mk7, Porsche 906 and Lola T290. He was pre-deceased by his wife of 68 years, Barbara, last September. RIP Mike. 🌹

TOMLIN GETS SPA F3 DATE WITH MOTUL RONDEL

A Motul Rondel M1 that last ran in anger in 1975 – when, badged as a Safir RJ02, engine issues precluded Patrick Neve from qualifying for Silverstone's European F2 round – is to make its historic debut at Spa this weekend. David Tomlin, whose historic activities already span Lola T210, Ford Lotus Cortina and Escort RS1800, shook down the Ray Jessop-designed chassis RSJ209, prepared with a Cosworth BDG engine by Raceworks Motorsport, at Blyton Park last Friday.



Rondel last saw Formula 2 action in 1975

DAVID HIVES 1931-2017

David Hives, mastermind behind Grantura Engineering's TVR Griffith, passed away on Saturday. Having prepared TVRs for Tommy Entwistle, Keith Aitchison and John Woolfe, Hives designed the Ford V8 engine installation with Jack Griffith in the US, then returned to Blackpool to build them. In March David watched Mike Whitaker and Mike Jordan win Goodwood's Graham Hill Trophy GT race in Whitaker's 'Griff' BFR 400B (once road-tested in these pages by John Bolster), which he developed.



CADWELL PARK
BARC MAY 13-14

Power and Parker steal Legends lights

BEN POWER AND JACK PARKER proved themselves the men to beat in the Legends races at Cadwell Park.

Power won the first two races on Saturday, leading the opener from lap one, with Steve Whitelegg and Jack Parker inches apart behind.

Race two was more of a challenge for Power. John Mickel led the opening laps before Parker and Power got by, and then Power made the decisive move for the win at Park Corner with a lap to go.

During Saturday's final Power struggled to make progress early on, as Gary Whitelegg made an early escape and stayed there for four laps. Parker then snatched the lead into Hall Bends, and Robert King moved through into second a lap later. Whitelegg held off a last-lap challenge from Mickel and Power.

Despite only having fifth gear, Thomas Grainger led Sunday's opener until Barn Corner on the last lap, when Parker outdragged him to the line. Grainger still held on to second from Marcus Pett.

Parker led the second race from lap five but, once Power had battled ahead of Miles Rudman into Hall Bends, he closed in on Parker and passed him at Barn on the penultimate lap. Rudman retained third from the closing Steve Whitelegg.

Sunday's final had to be restarted after three cars went off. Early leader Robert King then spun at Hall Bends, and a five-car train battled up front. Parker took charge of this after Pett retired, but then his clutch developed a problem. He held on until the last lap, but he was

pipped by Mickel, with Power third.

Graeme Smith and Matthew Willoughby shared the Caterham Graduates Classic victory spoils after two race-long duels. Smith took the first win by 0.559 seconds, before Willoughby turned the tables in race two. Peter Tattersall was third in both races, but had to recover the place in the second one after contact from Mark Carter.

Gary Parkes won both Pre-2005 Production Touring Car races in a Peugeot 206 GTi. Brother Scott was second in race one until he spun his 206 on lap four, which left Steve Barber's Renault Clio second from Neil Bray's MG ZR. Barber just held on to second in race two from Scott Parkes, while Simon Horrobin and Daniel Turner each had wins in the concurrent 4Two Cup.

Power beat Parker (behind) over the Cadwell weekend with three victories to his rival's two



Robinson's flawless Falcon just beat Cutt's E36 M3

A five-car fight was the theme in the first Caterham Sigmax/Sigma Graduates race, which was restarted after a serious accident for Mick Whitehead. Harry Cramer was victorious when the race resumed, beating Jamie Ellwood and Oliver Gibson with little to spare.

Jamie Winrow led at the start of the second race and, although Ellwood and Gibson relegated him to third, he fought back to take the win. Gibson fended off Ellwood for second. Jon Harmer and Ian Anderson shared the Sigma wins.

AJ Owen was another double winner, heading both Pre-93/2003 Touring Car encounters in his Honda Civic Type R. He got the lead in race one when Karl Cattliff's BMW M3 got sideways at Coppice on lap four, and did it again in race two when Cattliff slid on oil.

Declan Dolan led for most of the first Caterham Mega/Super Graduate race, while Luke Cooper resisted the attentions of Glenn Burtenshaw for second. Cooper was a dominant race two victor, from Burtenshaw and double Super Class winner Toby Briant.

There was little to split Andy Robinson's Ford Falcon and Michael Cutt's BMW M3 in the first Classic Thunder race, while third-placed Steven Moss would have been closer in his Ford Anglia if he hadn't spun at Charlies on the opening lap after arriving side by side with Cutt.

Robinson beat Cutt again in the restarted race two, after Moss had crashed out at Coppice, while Robert



Burkinshaw's Honda Integra was a double winner in the concurrent VTEC Challenge races.

Stephen Primett mastered a wet Pre-66 and Group 1 Touring Car race with his Ford Escort, as Andrew Harrison (Jaguar XJS) and Mark Cholerton (Escort) held station behind. Primett was chasing Harrison in race two when his engine failed, leaving the XJS racer in the clear from Stephen Cripps (Escort) and Mark Osborne (Dolomite Sprint). Osborne had beaten Cripps to fourth in the earlier race.

The Golf of Dan Roberts-Jefferson was a winner in both Classic VW Cup races. Tony Absolom skirmished with him in his own Golf in the first race, before settling for second in both encounters. Alex Tait's Ford Fiesta topped the Blue Oval class in both races.

It was a lights-to-flag win for Joe Spencer and his Locosaki in the first CNC Heads Sports Saloons race, with Paul Rose's Saker a clear second after Garry Watson (Westfield) went off at the Mountain. Rose caught Spencer in race two, and nosed ahead until they tripped over each other on Park Straight and Rose spun out. Watson reclaimed second and Matt Spark (Caterham) matched his race-one result with another third.

2CV champion Lien Davies led from lap four of their first race, while Mick Storey emerged from the battling pack to take a close second from Sandro Proietti. Brian Heerey led race two all the way.

PETER SCHERER

RESULTS

LEGENDS (8 LAPS) 1 Ben Power;

2 Stephen Whitelegg +1.182s; 3 Jack Parker; 4 Marcus Pett; 5 Paul Simmons; 6 Thomas Grainger. **Fastest lap** S Whitelegg 1m42.660s (76.69mph). **Pole** Pett. **Starters** 20. **RACE 2 (8 LAPS) 1 Power;** 2 Parker +0.107s; 3 John Mickel; 4 Simmons; 5 Nathan Anthony; 6 Grainger. **FL** Power 1m43.158s (76.32mph). **P** Robert King. **S** 20. **RACE 3 (8 LAPS) 1 Parker;** 2 King +0.337s; 3 Gary Whitelegg; 4 Mickel; 5 Power; 6 Miles Rudman. **FL** Power 1m41.923s (77.24mph). **P** Zac Hughes. **S** 20. **RACE 4 (8 LAPS) 1 Parker;** 2 Grainger +0.110s; 3 Pett; 4 Mickel; 5 G Whitelegg; 6 Power. **FL** Parker 1m50.019s (71.56mph). **P** Pett. **S** 20. **RACE 5 (8 LAPS) 1 Power;** 2 Parker +0.398s; 3 Rudman; 4 S Whitelegg; 5 Mickel; 6 G Whitelegg. **FL** S Whitelegg 1m42.124s (77.09mph). **P** King. **S** 20.

RACE 6 (10 LAPS) 1 Mickel; 2 Parker +0.093s; 3 Power; 4 G Whitelegg; 5 King; 6 Neil Shenton. **FL** Power 1m43.943s (75.74mph). **S** 16.

CATERHAM CLASSIC GRADUATES

(BOTH 12 LAPS) 1 Graeme Smith; 2 Matthew Willoughby +0.559s; 3 Peter Tattersall; 4 Mark Carter; 5 Robin Webb; 6 Paul Hawker. **FL** Willoughby 1m46.455s (73.95mph). **P** Willoughby. **S** 11.

RACE 2 1 Willoughby; 2 Smith +0.314s; 3 Tattersall; 4 Carter; 5 Webb; 6 Hawker. **FL** Willoughby 1m47.158s (73.47mph). **P** Willoughby. **S** 11.

PRE 2005 PRODUCTION TOURING CARS/4TWO CUP (BOTH 9 LAPS) 1 Gary

Parkes (Peugeot 206 GTi); 2 Steve Barber (Renault Clio 182) +23.640s; 3 Neil Bray (MG ZR); 4 Paul Waterhouse (Peugeot 306 GTi); 5 Scott Parkes (Peugeot 206 GTi); 6 Mario Neophytou (Peugeot 106 GTi). **Class winners** Bray; Neophytou; Simon Horrobin (Smart ForTwo). **FL** G Parkes 1m47.453s (73.27mph). **P** G Parkes. **S** 21. **RACE 2 1 G Parkes;** 2 Barber +19.512s; 3 S Parkes; 4 Bray; 5 Waterhouse; 6 Neophytou. **CW** Bray; Neophytou; Daniel Turner (Smart ForTwo). **FL** G Parkes 1m46.682s (73.80mph). **P** G Parkes. **S** 22.

CATERHAM SIGMAX & SIGMA

GRADUATES (6 LAPS) 1 Harry Cramer; 2 Jamie Ellwood +0.025s; 3 Oliver Gibson; 4 James Russell; 5 Spencer Fortag; 6 Jonathan Stansfield. **CW** Jon Harmer. **FL** Gibson 1m38.582s (79.86mph).

P Jamie Winrow. S 21. RACE 2 (14 LAPS)

1 Winrow; 2 Gibson +1.784s; 3 Ellwood; 4 Russell; 5 Mark Johnson; 6 Fortag. **CW** Ian Anderson. **FL** Gareth Cordey 1m38.120s (80.24mph). **P** Winrow. **S** 20.

PRE '93 & 2003 TOURING CARS (6 LAPS)

1 AJ Owen (Honda Civic Type R); 2 Karl Cattliff (BMW E36 M3) +4.562s; 3 Mark Fowler (BMW E36 M3); 4 Simon Ward (Vauxhall Astra GTE 16V); 5 Roger Stanford (BMW E30 M3); 6 Luke Allen (Honda Civic Type R). **CW** Cattliff; Ward; Allen; Andrew Sheraton (BMW E30 325i); Brian Long (Ford Fiesta). **FL** Owen 1m39.420s (79.19mph). **P** Owen. **S** 19. **RACE 2 (9 LAPS) 1 Owen;** 2 Jack Stanford (BMW E30 M3) +13.226s; 3 Cattliff; 4 Ward; 5 Fowler; 6 Gareth Pilling (Honda Civic Type R). **CW** J Stanford; Cattliff; Allen; Sheraton; Long. **FL** Owen 1m39.608s (79.04mph). **P** Owen. **S** 18.

CATERHAM MEGA & SUPER GRADUATES (6 LAPS) 1 Declan Dolan; 2 Luke Cooper +0.736s; 3 Glenn Burtenshaw; 4 Christopher Benfield; 5 Toby Briant; 6 Andy Molsom. **CW** Briant. **FL** Cooper 1m38.868s (79.63mph). **P** Cooper. **S** 19.

RACE 2 (14 LAPS) 1 Cooper; 2 Burtenshaw +13.576s; 3 Briant; 4 Dolan; 5 Molsom; 6 Andrew Skinner. **CW** Briant. **FL** Cooper 1m38.789s (79.69mph). **P** Cooper. **S** 19.

CLASSIC THUNDER & VTEC CHALLENGE (7 LAPS) 1 Andy Robinson (Ford Falcon); 2 Michael Cutt (BMW E36 M3) +0.656s; 3 Steven Moss (Ford Anglia 105E); 4 David Matthias (Ford Escort); 5 Robert Burkinshaw (Honda Integra); 6 Stephen Sawley (Honda Civic). **CW** Moss; Burkinshaw; Sawley; Marc Kemp (Honda Civic EP3 Type R); Richard Askham (Jaguar XJR); Andy Smith (Honda Accord Type R). **FL** Cutt 1m34.255s (83.53mph). **P** Robinson. **S** 14. **RACE 2 (5 LAPS)**

1 Robinson; 2 Cutt +1.014s; 3 Burkinshaw; 4 Sawley; 5 Andrew Wilson (Ford Escort); 6 Kemp. **CW** Burkinshaw; Sawley; Kemp; Askham. **FL** Robinson 1m33.913s (83.83mph). **P** Robinson. **S** 10. **PRE '66 TOURING CARS & GROUP 1 TOURING CARS (8 LAPS) 1 Stephen Primett (Ford Escort Mk1);** 2 Andrew Harrison (Jaguar XJS) +3.264s; 3 Mark Cholerton (Ford Escort); 4 Mark Osborne (Triumph Dolomite Sprint); 5 Stephen Cripps (Ford Escort Mk2 RS2000); 6 Simon Jeffs (Alfa Romeo Alfasud). **CW** Harrison; Jeffs; Stuart Caie (Ford Capri); Roger

Stanford (Lotus Cortina); Alan Greenhalgh (Ford Falcon); Michael Sheraton (Ford Anglia); Samuel Goodwin (Ford Fiesta); Luc Wilson (Austin A40); Freddie Brown (Hillman Imp). **FL** Harrison 1m52.829s (69.77mph). **P** Primett. **S** 27. **RACE 2 (7 LAPS) 1 Harrison;** 2 Cholerton +6.757s; 3 Cripps; 4 Osborne; 5 Stanford; 6 Jeffs. **CW** Cholerton; Stanford; Jeffs; Alan Wilshire (Ford Capri); Greenhalgh; Neil Bray (Mini Cooper); Goodwin; Wilson; Brown. **FL** Primett 1m43.245s (76.25mph). **P** Primett. **S** 28.

CLASSIC VW CUP & BLUE OVAL (9 LAPS) 1 Dan Roberts-Jefferson (VW Golf); 2 Tony Absolom (VW Golf) +23.646s; 3 David Hickton (VW Golf); 4 Robert Gilham (VW Golf); 5 Nick Sanderson (SEAT Leon); 6 David Pinkney (VW Vento VR6). **CW** Absolom; Pinkney; Alexander Tait (Ford Fiesta); Demetris Neophytou (Ford Fiesta); Rory Baptiste (VW Golf GTi). **FL** Roberts-Jefferson 1m40.673s (78.20mph). **P** Roberts-Jefferson. **S** 17. **RACE 2 (8 LAPS) 1 Roberts-Jefferson;** 2 Absolom +30.106s; 3 Hickton; 4 Sanderson; 5 Gilham; 6 Pinkney. **CW** Absolom; Pinkney; Tait; Neophytou; Baptiste. **FL** Roberts-Jefferson 1m38.333s (80.06mph). **P** Roberts-Jefferson. **S** 15. **CNC HEAD SPORTS SALOONS (14 LAPS) 1 Joe Spencer (Stuart Taylor Locosaki);** 2 Paul Rose (Saker RAPX) +6.459s; 3 Matt Spark (Caterham C400); 4 Steve Harris (Saker RAPX); 5 Luke Armiger (Vauxhall Tigra); 6 David Harvey (Stuart Taylor Locosaki). **CW** Rose; Spark; Oliver Thomas (Subaru Impreza); Piers Grange (Ford Escort Mk2); Iain Gorrie (Raw Striker). **FL** Spencer 1m30.032s (87.44mph). **P** Spencer. **S** 28. **RACE 2 (13 LAPS) 1 Spencer;** 2 Garry Watson (Westfield SEW) +7.304s; 3 Spark; 4 Harvey; 5 Armiger; 6 Roddie Paterson (Caterham R400). **CW** Watson; Garry Wardle (Porsche 997); Grange; James Aukland (Ford Capri); Simon Sheridan (Honda Civic). **FL** Rose 1m28.587s (88.87mph). **P** Spencer. **S** 28. **2CVs (10 LAPS) 1 Lien Davies;** 2 Mick Storey +0.258s; 3 Sandro Proietti; 4 Nick Clarke; 5 Jim Henshaw; 6 Julie Walford. **FL** Clarke 2m07.074s (61.95mph). **P** Proietti. **S** 19. **RACE 2 (7 LAPS) 1 Brian Heerey;** 2 Ainslie Bousfield +0.145s; 3 Storey; 4 Steve Walford; 5 Luca Proietti; 6 Matthew Hollis. **FL** Hollis 2m07.793s (61.60mph). **P** Storey. **S** 19.



Shepherd and Tait got close in Classic VW/Blue Oval Saloons

SNETTERTEON
MSVR MAY 13-14

Team boss Dittmann leads the way with F3 brace

TEAM BOSS CHRIS DITTMANN, standing in for Phillip Jeans, grabbed two wins and a lap record at Snetterton during the F3 Cup round.

The victories followed a fifth position in the first encounter, a race of changing conditions in which James Heffernan's switch to slicks during the two parade laps paid off. He stormed through from the midfield to take his first win of the season as others, including Dittmann, stayed on wets. Championship leader Shane Kelly fought back to fourth from last after he was a lap late switching to slicks.

Dittmann got the tyre call correct in the wet second race, winning comfortably from Kelly, who had to fight back again after a dreadful getaway. Dittmann was then unstoppable in the dry final outing, winning from Kelly and smashing the lap record by four seconds in the process.

Jacopo Sebastiani and Robbie Watts also had trips to the podium throughout the weekend as Kelly's championship lead was reduced.

Jessica Hawkins excelled on her



Dittmann finished fifth in the F3 Cup opener, and then took two victories

Mini Challenge Cooper debut, winning the first two outings and grabbing third in the final to lead the standings. She held off Richard Newman and Matt Hammond in race one, somehow keeping them both behind as they went either side into the hairpin midway through. She stood firm again in race two, winning from Sam Weller in a photo-finish. That was before a three-second penalty for

Weller meant Owen Walton got second. A reversed-grid order left Hawkins fighting through for third in the final race as Hammond snatched the victory from Simon Walton.

Rupert Deeth won both Miglia races as he and Aaron Smith ran nose to tail and traded positions in both outings. Smith led on the opening lap of race one after storming up from ninth, but

RESULTS

F3 CUP (13 LAPS) 1 James Heffernan (Dallara F311); 2 Jacopo Sebastiani (Dallara F311) +8.800s; 3 Robbie Watts (Dallara F308); 4 Shane Kelly (Dallara F308); 5 Chris Dittmann (Dallara F312); 6 Cian Carey (Dallara F311). **Class winner** Malcolm Scott (Dallara F398). **Fastest lap** Kelly 1m07.511s (105.79mph). **Pole** Kelly. **Starters** 16. **RACE 2 (7 LAPS) 1 Dittmann;** 2 Kelly +14.875s; 3 Heffernan; 4 Sebastiani; 5 Carey; 6 Watts. **CW** Adrian Holey (Dallara F300). **FL** Dittmann 1m19.801s (89.50mph). **P** Kelly. **S** 16. **RACE 3 (18 LAPS) 1 Dittmann;** 2 Kelly +2.621s; 3 Sebastiani; 4 Carey; 5 George Line (Dallara F308); 6 Gino Ussi (Dallara F312). **CW** Holey; Scott. **FL** Dittmann 1m06.572s (107.29mph). **P** Dittmann. **S** 16. **MINI CHALLENGE COOPER PRO/AM (10 LAPS) 1 Jessica Hawkins;** 2 Richard Newman +1.783s; 3 Sam Weller; 4 Martin Poole; 5 Owen

Walton; 6 James Goodall. **CW** Stuart McLaren. **FL** Poole 1m31.077s (78.42mph). **P** Hawkins. **S** 18. **RACE 2 (8 LAPS) 1 Hawkins;** 2 O Walton +2.466s; 3 Newman; 4 Weller; 5 Matt Hammond; 6 Simon Walton. **CW** McLaren. **FL** Weller 1m38.582s (72.45mph). **P** Hawkins. **S** 16. **RACE 3 (10 LAPS) 1 Hammond;** 2 S Walton +0.145s; 3 Hawkins; 4 Newman; 5 Poole; 6 O Walton. **CW** McLaren. **FL** S Walton 1m30.905s (78.57mph). **P** S Walton. **S** 16. **MINI MIGLIA (BOTH 14 LAPS) 1 Rupert Deeth;** 2 Aaron Smith +0.258s; 3 Dan Wheeler; 4 Peter Baldwin; 5 Robert Howard; 6 Dave Drew. **CW** Peter Crewes (Libre); Jim Burrows (Miglia). **FL** Smith 1m24.541s (84.48mph). **P** Howard. **S** 18. **RACE 2 1 Deeth;** 2 Smith +2.900s; 3 Wheeler; 4 Tony Lemay; 5 Jason Porter; 6 Drew. **CW** Crewes; Burrows. **FL** Deeth 1m24.360s (84.66mph). **P** Smith. **S** 15. **MINI CHALLENGE OPEN**

(ALL 11 LAPS) 1 Scot Adam (Mini); 2 Jono Davis (Mini) +1.937s; 3 Ben Dimmack (Mini Cooper S); 4 Rob Austin (Mini Cooper S); 5 Andy Montgomery (Mini Cooper S); 6 Tim Bill (Mini). **FL** Dimmack 1m24.955s (84.07mph). **P** Adam. **S** 11. **RACE 2 1 Adam;** 2 Dimmack +7.509s; 3 Davis; 4 Austin; 5 Andrew Tsang (Mini); 6 Montgomery. **FL** Adam 1m25.080s (83.95mph). **P** Adam. **S** 11. **RACE 3 1 Davis;** 2 Adam +10.700s; 3 Dimmack; 4 Tsang; 5 Aaron Reeve (Mini); 6 Bill. **FL** Davis 1m25.364s (83.67mph). **P** Tsang. **S** 11. **MINI SE7EN (8 LAPS) 1 Andrew Deviny;** 2 Lewis Selby +0.161s; 3 Charlie Budd; 4 Kieren McDonald; 5 Ashley Davies; 6 Spencer Wanstall. **CW** Shaun Tarlton (Mini 7 S Class). **FL** Selby 1m34.186s (75.83mph). **P** Deviny. **S** 27. **RACE 2 (13 LAPS) 1 Davies;** 2 Budd +6.217s; 3 McDonald; 4 Paul Spark; 5 Gareth Hunt; 6 Selby. **CW** Tarlton. **FL** Davies 1m33.597s (76.31mph). **P** Selby. **S** 23.

SSANGYONG RACING CHALLENGE (ALL 10 LAPS) 1 Lewis Grant; 2 Harry Webb +0.449s; 3 Michael O'Brien; 4 Glenn Broster; 5 Gavin Pell; 6 Matt Smith. **FL** O'Brien 1m34.694s (75.42mph). **P** O'Brien. **S** 12. **RACE 2 1 Grant;** 2 O'Brien +1.576s; 3 Webb; 4 Smith; 5 Broster; 6 Pell. **FL** O'Brien 1m34.370s (75.68mph). **P** O'Brien. **S** 12. **RACE 3 1 Webb;** 2 Grant +1.402s; 3 Broster; 4 Pell; 5 Matt Kelly; 6 Smith. **FL** Webb 1m34.630s (75.47mph). **P** Grant. **S** 12. **MSVR ALLCOMERS & Z CARS (BOTH 12 LAPS) 1 Ian McDonald (Radical SR1);** 2 Keith Mizen (MCR Sports 2000) +0.598s; 3 Steven Owen (Caterham 7); 4 Jamie McHugh (Porsche); 5 Alex Di Donato (Peugeot 205 GTi); 6 Jamie Jeffrey (BMW Z4). **CW** Jeffrey. **FL** Mizen 1m19.006s (90.40mph). **P** McDonald. **S** 12. **RACE 2 1 McDonald;** 2 Mizen +0.564s; 3 Owen; 4 McHugh; 5 Alan Lee (Lotus Exige); 6 Jeffrey. **CW** Jeffrey. **FL** Mizen 1m19.869s (89.42mph). **P** McDonald. **S** 10.

MSVT TRACKDAY TROPHY (30 LAPS) 1 Colin Tester (Toyota MR2); 2 Gary Burstow (BMW 328i) +10.805s; 3 Richard Clarke/Mark Steward (Honda Civic Type R); 4 Dylan Brychta (SEAT Ibiza); 5 James Gunn-Carter/David Mennie (BMW Compact); 6 Chris Smith/Toby Hotston (Mini JCW). **CW** Gunn-Carter/Mennie; Jamie Jeffrey/Julien Jeffrey (BMW Z3); Liam Barnett/Ryan Lilleywhite (Mazda MX-5). **FL** Clarke/Steward 1m25.568s (83.47mph). **P** Tester. **S** 31. **MSVT TRACKDAY CHAMPIONSHIP (31 LAPS) 1 Darren Goes (SEAT Leon Cup);** 2 Kester Cook (Ford Fiesta) +6.502s; 3 David Gardner/Chris Mills (BMW M3); 4 Ryan Steel (Citroen Saxo); 5 Simon Clark (Porsche Boxster S); 6 Callum McDougall/Ben Simonds (Caterham 1400 Supersport). **CW** Steel; Tester; Russell Danzey/Jack Wood (Renault Clio); Dale Cooper (Caterham Seven); John Cooper (Ford Fiesta Zetec S). **FL** Goes 1m23.019s (86.03mph). **P** Gardner/Mills. **S** 36.



Deeth produced a fine move around the outside of his rival into Riches to take the lead late on. Race two was a carbon copy, with Deeth passing Smith for the win as Dan Wheeler grabbed third in both editions.

Scot Adam won the first two Mini Open races from Ben Dimmack and, while he weathered pressure from his rival throughout race two, he inherited the race-one win after Dimmack was handed a 5s penalty for exceeding track limits. In the final race they had to settle for second and third respectively as Jono Davis powered ahead for the win.

Andrew Deviny won race one in Mini Se7ens after a tight tussle with Lewis Selby, but he didn't have the pace in race two as Ashley Davies took the flag, emerging unscathed from a tight battle with Charlie Budd, Kieren McDonald, Paul Spark and Gareth Hunt late on.

Lewis Grant won the first two outings of the inaugural SsangYong Challenge, but couldn't hold off Formula 4 racer Harry Webb in the finale. Michael O'Brien and Glenn Broster were also on the podium over the weekend.

Ian McDonald (Radical SR1) and Keith Mizen (MCR Sports 2000) swapped the lead throughout both MSVR Allcomers contests, but it was McDonald who prevailed by half a second each time.

Colin Tester (Toyota MR2) took the MSVT Trophy win from Gary Burstow's BMW 328i in dominant fashion, while Darren Goes won the Championship race in his SEAT Leon Cup in similar style from the Ford Fiesta of Kester Cook.

JAKE JONES

OULTON PARK MSVR MAY 13

Stanley stars with Ferrari 430

HARVEY STANLEY EMERGED victorious from the 50-minute Aston Martin GT Challenge event around the testing sweeps of the full Oulton Park circuit in his Ferrari 430.

Polesitter Tom Andrew had led the opening charge to Old Hall in his Morgan Aero 8 GT, but ran wide and dropped down the order. Stanley hit the front on the second lap, chased by the BMW M3 of Mike Dowd and the Sunbeam Tiger of William Smallridge, and proceeded to establish a six-second lead. Smallridge moved up to second, but was unable to reduce Stanley's advantage. Meanwhile, Andrew fought his way back to second place before crashing out on lap 10, bringing out the safety car.

Stanley reacted instantly and dived into the pits to make his compulsory stop. He said afterwards: "I wondered if I'd missed an earlier flag, but knew what I was doing and came in."

After racing resumed Stanley was never threatened, leaving Edward Leigh to bring his M3 home in second place, 0.7s clear of Dowd, Smallridge having been forced into retirement two laps from the end with a left-rear puncture.

At the start of the AMOC 50s Sports Cars and Jaguar XK Challenge contest Rob Newall sprinted his XK120 FHC into an early lead and soon pulled clear of the field, with Robi Bernberg, Paul Kennelly and Steve Watton battling to his rear. Bernberg was on a charge in his Cooper T39 Bobtail as he closed the gap to Newall, and on lap seven he claimed a lead that he was to hold until the chequered flag, while Newall dropped to third. Second-placed Watton, pedalling his Turner Sports 'The Gurney Special',



had picked up a 10s penalty for starting out of position, but established a sufficient gap to finish runner-up.

Former Porsche Club champion Mark McAleer (996 C2) made it three wins from three starts this season in the initial Oulton Park race after his Brands Hatch double two weeks earlier. Mark Sumpter, the 2011 champion, had looked set for the victory, but a rare mistake exiting Old Hall dropped him to second ahead of Craig Wilkins.

Later Sumpter led from start to finish, with McAleer his closest rival until he accidentally hit his engine kill-switch exiting Old Hall on lap 10. This promoted Wilkins to second position, and he kept the victorious Sumpter honest to the close.

In the Innes Ireland Cup encounter the James Guess/James Hilliard pairing dominated in their Ginetta G10. Hilliard drove the first stint before handing over to Guess and they ended the race 24s clear of the chasing Mark Russell's E-type Jag.

Subsequently, Guess and Hilliard combined to take the honours in the AMOC Intermarque round in their Porsche 968 CS, as Peter Mangion followed them home.

As the stagger unwound in the Pre-War Team Challenge contest, it was Clive Morley who claimed the victory in his 4.5-litre Bentley. Anthony Fenwick-Wilson's Railton and Duncan Wiltshire's Bentley were in close attendance at the close.

GRAHAM READ

RESULTS

ASTON MARTIN GT CHALLENGE (23 LAPS) 1 Harvey Stanley (Ferrari 430 Challenge); 2 Edward Leigh (BMW M3 V8 GT4) +5.375s; 3 Mike Dowd (M3 GT4); 4 David Tinn (Aston Martin Vantage GT4); 5 Kevin Bird/Charlie Bird (M3 V8 GT4); 6 Guy Colclough (SEAT Supercopa). **CW** Leigh; Tinn; Nicholas King (Aston Martin DB4). **FL** Tom Andrew (Morgan Aero 8 GT) 1m48.780s (89.08mph). **P** Andrew. **S** 10.

AMOC '50s SPORTSCARS/JAGUAR XK CHALLENGE (14 LAPS) 1 Robi Bernberg (Cooper T39 Bobtail); 2 Steve Watton (Turner Sports 'The Gurney Special') +10.700s; 3 Rob Newall (Jaguar XK120 FHC); 4 Paul Kennelly (Jaguar XK150S); 5 Stephen Bond (Lister Bristol Flat Iron); 6 Graham Coles (MGA Coupe). **CW** Watton; Newall; Kennelly; Bond; David Wenman (XK120); Geoffrey Ottley (XK120). **FL**

Watton 2m09.582s (74.78mph). **P** Chris Keith-Lucas (XK150S). **S** 10.

PORSCHE CLUB (11 LAPS) 1 Mark McAleer (996 C2); 2 Mark Sumpter (996) +0.992s; 3 Craig Wilkins (996); 4 Mike Price (996); 5 Chris Dyer (Cayman); 6 Peter Morris (996). **CW** Steve Cheatham (Boxster). **FL** Sumpter 1m50.680s (87.56mph). **P** Sumpter. **S** 16. **RACE 2 (14 LAPS) 1 Sumpter;** 2 Wilkins +2.669s; 3 Gary Duckman (Cayman); 4 Dyer; 5 Richard Higgins (996); 6 Peter Erceg (Cayman). **CW** Cheatham. **FL** Morris 1m51.105s (87.22mph). **P** Sumpter. **S** 14.

INNES IRELAND CUP (22 LAPS) 1 James Hilliard/James Guess (Ginetta G10); 2 Mark Russell (Jaguar E-type) +24.400s; 3 Robert Farrell (E-type); 4 Stephen Bond/Keith Fell (Lotus Elan); 5 Robert Gate (E-type); 6 Simon Ham (E-type). **CW** Russell; Bond/Fell. **FL** Guess 1m59.026s (81.42mph). **P** Martin Melling/

Jason Minshaw (E-type Low Drag). **S** 8.

AMOC INTERMARQUE (23 LAPS)

1 James Hilliard/James Guess (Porsche 968 CS); 2 Peter Mangion (968) +5.898s; 3 Bob Searles/Tony Jardine (Porsche 944 Turbo); 4 Tim Bates (Porsche 911); 5 Gavin Dunn (BMW E36); 6 Simon Watts/Roberto Giordanelli (Aston Martin AMV8). **CW** Searles/Jardine; Dunn; Watts/Giordanelli; Martin Melling/Jason Minshaw (Aston Martin DB4 Lightweight). **FL** Guess 1m55.037s (84.24mph). **P** Guess/Hilliard. **S** 12.

PRE-WAR TEAM CHALLENGE (8 LAPS)

1 Clive Morley (Bentley 4.5 Litre); 2 Anthony Fenwick-Wilson (Railton Sport Tourer) +4.157s; 3 Duncan Wiltshire (Bentley 3 Litre); 4 Christian Pedersen (Austin 7); 5 Guy Northam (Bentley 4.5); 6 Richard Illiffe (Riley Kestral Sports). **FL** Pedersen 2m15.176s (71.69mph). **P** Pedersen. **S** 7.

WHAT'S ON



Single-seaters on TV – who's better,

FORMULA 1'S FEEDER SERIES WILL always struggle to attract anywhere near the level of attention of TV enjoyed by the sport's pinnacle. And while the coverage of single-seater racing this year has changed in certain places, there's still scope for improvement that would help viewer understanding and to champion lower-level racing.

The action from Formula 2, GP3, Formula V8 3.5 and Formula Renault Eurocup was all on the box last weekend and it was possible to pick out new details that have been added to the coverage of those series for 2017.

F2 has begun sporadically using picture-in-picture shots at moments that fit well with the action in qualifying sessions and pitstops. In Spain, it underscored the moment Charles Leclerc usurped Luca Ghiotto to take pole, showing the emotion on Ghiotto's face as he stood at the pitwall.

GP3's new addition – timed for its introduction of DRS – was a graphic that shows the level of usage of the overtaking aid throughout the

field. This was extremely helpful in understanding the race, and is something that should definitely feature during upcoming races.

Both F2 and GP3 have updated the face of their TV products well for this season. The new graphic sets are obviously geared to reflect F1's visual identity, using white and blue (F2) and white and red (GP3). For any viewer stumbling across this who doesn't realise that F2 and GP3 are part of the

The FV8 3.5 coverage doesn't cover up low grid numbers, while F2's broadcasts now include picture-in-picture shots that caught Luca Ghiotto's (below) reaction to losing pole in Spain

F1 support package, such a feature can only help reinforce this.

It's fair to say that most single-seater series could provide more consistent timing data during events, since the statistics on the tower graphics do occasionally disappear, leaving you momentarily wondering what the gaps are between drivers.

Most of the TV coverage in the lower categories relies on the work of lead commentators with no other presenters to act as 'anchors'. Interviews are only added into F2 post-race; since they take place on the podium and are primarily designed for fans in the stands, these won't be too interesting for TV viewers. A bona-fide presenter could offer more personality from the circuit, even if they were just in the paddock finding interviews.

The commentator in F2 and GP3 does insert information about the careers of drivers, while expert pundit Davide Valsecchi provides great insight in a highly amusing way – he's a born entertainer. In the Formula 3 European



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Championship – beamed via the live stream on the series' website, and which has a revolving cast of commentators, there is no ex-driver pundit but the skills of the men on the mic ensure that this is never a problem.

The FV8 3.5 broadcasters didn't shy away from mentioning the small grid of just 12 cars this season – everyone appreciates hearing an honest commentator, but it possibly won't have helped future viewing figures!

In Formula Renault Eurocup, more interviews within the paddock would be useful, and it would be helpful to show more replays to explain how collisions took place.

The problem with the TV coverage of junior single-seater motorsport is that it is never going to bring in the big numbers that F1 can. While this means there is little incentive for broadcasters to shell out for additional touches, the improvements on offer last weekend at least show that some people behind the scenes want to put on a good show.

CAMERON PATERSON



HOT ON THE WEB THIS WEEK

YouTube ALONSO'S MAGNIFICENT SEVENTH

Search for: 2017 Spanish Grand Prix: Fernando Alonso's Q3 Lap

Watch the scintillating qualifying lap that, despite the shortcomings of his Honda power unit, secured Fernando Alonso a remarkable seventh place on the grid at the Spanish Grand Prix. Shame his race didn't go so well...

INTERNATIONAL MOTORSPORT

RALLY PORTUGAL WORLD RALLY CHAMPIONSHIP

Rd 6/13
Matosinhos, Portugal
May 18-21

WATCH ON TV

Live BT Sport 2, Thursday 1900, BT Sport ESPN, Saturday 1500, Sunday 1200

Highlights Motorsport.tv, Friday 2235, Saturday 2235, Monday 2235

FORMULA E

Rd 6/9
Paris, France
May 20

WATCH ON TV

Live Channel 5, Saturday 1430

EUROPEAN FORMULA 3

Rd 3/10
Pau, France
May 20-21
WATCH ONLINE
Live fiaf3europe.com

FORMULA RENAULT EURO CUP

Rd 3/10
Pau, France
May 20-21

DTM

Rd 2/9
Lausitzring, Germany
May 20-21

WATCH ON TV

Live BT Sport ESPN, Saturday 1330, Sunday 1400

ADAC GT MASTERS

Rd 2/7
Lausitzring, Germany
May 20-21

SUPER GT

Rd 3/8
Autopolis, Japan
May 21

AUSTRALIAN SUPERCARS

Rd 5/14
Winton, Victoria, Australia
May 20-21



UK MOTORSPORT

OULTON PARK TOCA

May 20-21
BTCC, F4, Carrera Cup, Renault Clios, Ginetta GT4s, Ginetta Juniors

WATCH ON TV

Live ITV4, Sunday 1115

SILVERSTONE HSCC

May 20-21
Pre-1980 Endurance, Derek Bell Trophy, Classic Formula 3, Historic

Formula 3, Historic FF1600, Classic Racing Cars, Historic Touring Cars, Guards Trophy, Historic Road Sports, '70s Road Sports, Classic FF2000, GT and Sports Car Cup

BRANDS HATCH MSVR

May 20-21
GT Cup, LMP3 Cup, Radical SR1s, Monoposto, Racing Saloons, Production BMWs



FORMULA E PARIS

Channel 5
Saturday 1430

One week on from Sebastien Buemi's victory in Monaco, Formula E returns to Paris for the second ePrix on the streets of the French capital. Last year's race was won by Lucas di Grassi, who sits just 15 points behind his rival in the current standings, despite having just one race win this season to Buemi's four.

NASCAR ALL-STAR
Charlotte, North Carolina, USA
May 20

WATCH ON TV

Live Premier Sports, Saturday 2230

V8 STOCK CARS

Rd 3/12
Santa Cruz do Sol, Brazil
May 21

SUPER TC2000
Rd 4/12
Rosario, Argentina
May 21

MOTOGP

Rd 5/18
Le Mans, France
May 21

WATCH ON TV

Live BT Sport 2, Sunday 1245



PEMBREY BARC

May 20-21
Clubmans, Welsh Sports/Saloons, Formula Sheane, Irish Touring Cars, Irish Historic Racing Cars

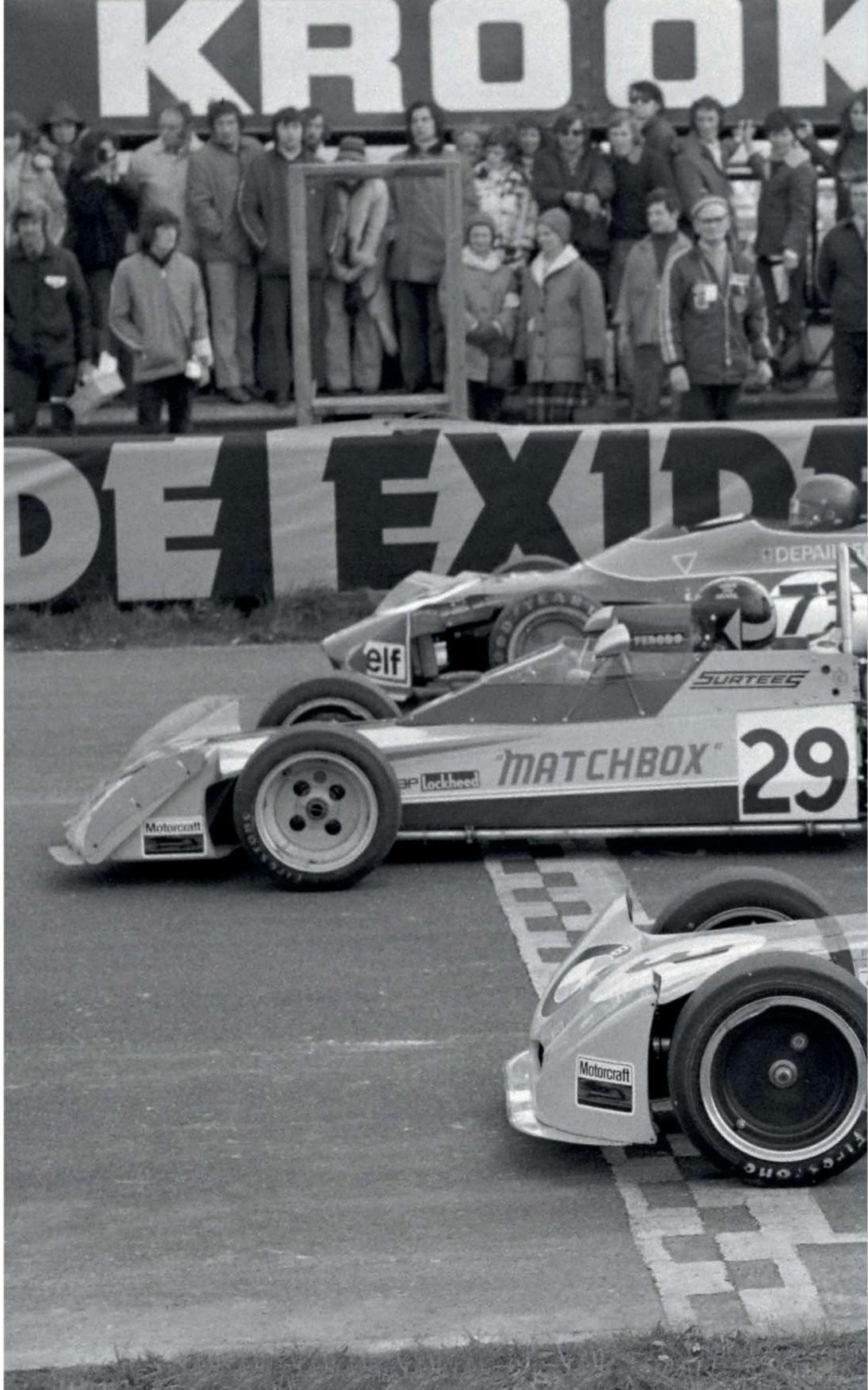
RSAC SCOTTISH RALLY DUMFRIES, GALLOWAY

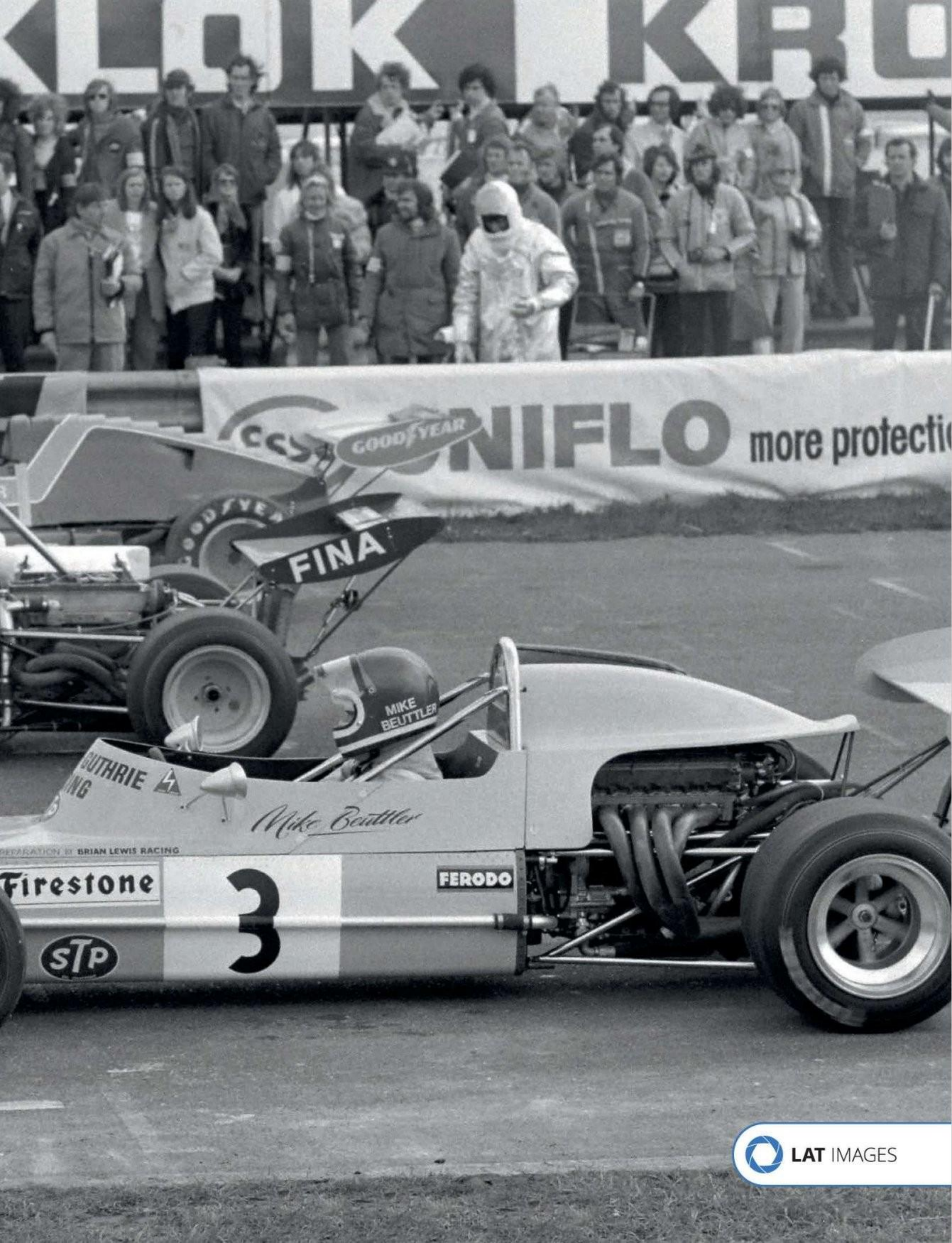
May 20-21
British Rally Championship

FROM THE ARCHIVE

Mike Beuttler (March-BMW 732), Carlos Pace (Surtees-Ford TS15) and poleman Patrick Depailler (Alpine-Ford A367) gun it off the line at the start of their heat at the Jochen Rindt Trophy, round three of the 1973 European Formula 2 Championship at Thruxton.

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OLIVER ASKEW

WALTER HAYES TROPHY RUNNER-UP TARGETS INDYCAR CAREER

Some drivers spend years trying to get onto the podium in the ultra-competitive Walter Hayes Trophy, but Oliver Askew did it at his first attempt – and what’s more in his first race in a car in the wet. Now he’s back home in the US and on a path to IndyCar.

The 20-year-old from Jupiter, Florida, followed up the Walter Hayes by winning a \$200,000 scholarship from Mazda to compete in the USF2000 championship, the first step on the Road to Indy. Pro Mazda and Indy Lights follow, and the champion receives the budget to compete in the next series up the ladder.

Askew has opened this season in excellent form. After six races with the Cape Motorsports team, he has five wins and a second place in a championship that usually favours returning drivers, not rookies.

“Everyone is working so well together and I’m sure there’s more success in the future for us,” he says.

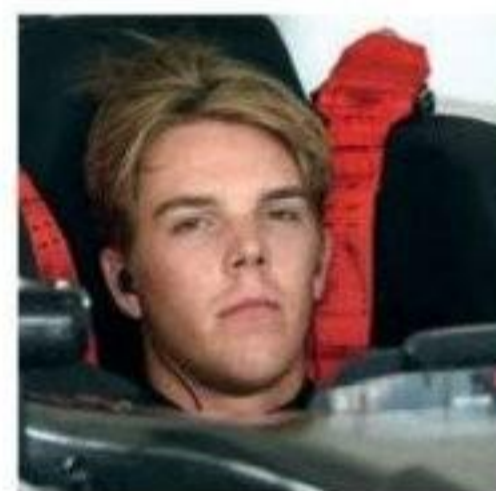
Despite being a driver notable for his modesty, there’s a steely determination to achieve his goals. “I was expecting to be competitive, just not this competitive,” he adds. “I’m surprised there’s no returning drivers in the top three; we’re all rookies.”

Askew’s path and target is clear: win each championship and get to IndyCar. “I want to stay on the Road to Indy,” he says. “The goal is to maximise our points and win the championship. If I’m given the opportunity to win races then that’s fantastic, but I’m not going to force the issue as it’s still so early.”

The Road to Indy path is already proven. Spencer Pigot blazed a trail for young drivers aiming for IndyCar by winning Indy Lights and Pro Mazda, and he was one of the judges on the panel that awarded Askew the \$200,000 cheque.

Askew’s short-term aims include getting better at car set-up, as he has little experience racing cars. “I’d like to become more technical, knowledge-wise,” he explains. “As I gain more experience and work with Dominik Cape [his Cape Motorsports engineer], I can learn to tell him exactly what I want for the car. That’s huge.”

JACK BENYON



CV

Age	20
2017	USF2000
2016	Mazda Road to Indy bursary winner; 2nd in Walter Hayes Trophy FF1600 as Team USA scholar
2015	Formula Masters China, selected races
2003-16	Karting: US Open Senior MAX champion; European BNL Rotax Senior champion; Florida Winter Tour Rotax Senior and Junior titles; Pan-American Senior Rotax MAX champ

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