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By Doug Nye

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By Mat Oxley

We meet Britain's greatest 'Vette vet…

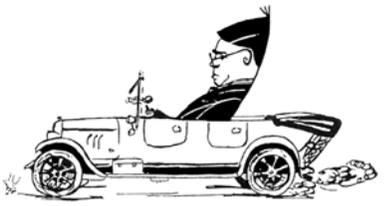
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Why Lewis wasn't the only winner at Austin's GP



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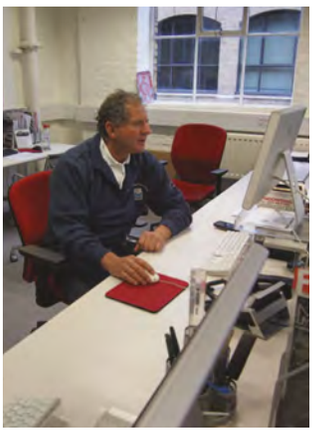


MARCH 2013 ISSUE ON SALE JANUARY 25

Matters of Moment

As I say elsewhere in this issue, the urge to drive Formula 1 cars did not disappear the moment I retired from motor racing at the end of 1980. It was a gradual process as I became deeply involved in my business in America. As it turned out, I didn't even go to a race for 10 years.

But recently I have sampled F1 as it is today and the experience really took me back. I was asked to drive a Red Bull at *Top Gear* Live at Kyalami during 2011, and I must say it was fantastic. The conditions were a mix of wet and dry, so I went out on treaded tyres and couldn't feel the car at all. Then they put slicks on. Now, we weren't taking times but I felt absolutely like I did when I was racing, as good as I'd ever felt. That was disturbing because now I wanted more of a go!



Jody Scheckter
Guest Editor

Then I did the 2012 *Top Gear* Live event in Durban, drove a Mercedes F1 car and spun at the end of the first lap. But anyway… You know, it gave me back the taste. I'd love to get into one of those Friday practice sessions at Grands Prix, where they sometimes run the young drivers. Give me a go! It's got to be in a competitive scenario like that, otherwise you can't get your head into it. If it's just for fun you think, 'What am I doing? I've got everything to lose'. You've got to take it to the limit, thinking nothing else counts, that damaging the car is immaterial. That's what you do when you're racing…

The Mercedes experience was good. They treated me as though I was a new driver and took me to the simulator beforehand. I got to work with data for the first time, which was fantastic because in my day we didn't have any. That was very exciting for me, to be able to adjust everything on a computer. I'd be well suited to racing today, but then I always was too involved in the technical side.

With Red Bull, they just stuck me in. I didn't even know there wasn't a rev counter. There were some lights on the dashboard – I had no idea what they were for! I soon found out they were to tell me when to change gear and I wasn't getting anywhere near the limit, thinking this thing's not very fast. If you rev the car to only 12,000rpm, these cars are only just reaching their powerband. So I kept going and found out just what it could do…

I don't think I've changed much since my racing days. Like everyone as they get older, I'm probably a bit more easy-going. When I was racing I always felt I couldn't do more than one thing at a time – and I'm still like that today. Everything else is put to one side because I have to concentrate on the one thing I'm doing. When I was in F1 that attitude meant people thought I was being rude because I could only concentrate on the car, and I didn't want to talk about anything else.

Now I find myself guest editing *Motor Sport*. 'Back then', I was famous for winning the 'lemon' prize three years in a row, which was awarded by the media to the most difficult person they had to deal with. There were some journalists I disliked terribly – but I was friends with some of them…

I hope you enjoy this special edition of *Motor Sport*, with my reflections on racing in the 1970s, my cars and the story of what happened next, when I walked away from racing.

Speaking of which, organic farming is my world these days and I'm pleased to announce plans for a special 'gourmet and cars' event that we're running in association with *Motor Sport*. More details will follow, so keep an eye on future issues of the magazine and on the website (www.motorsportmagazine.com). But for now, save the date: **May 18**. This exclusive event, for limited numbers, will take place at the new-look Saracens rugby stadium in north-west London. You'll have the chance to enjoy an eight-course banquet of all the best award-winning produce from Laverstoke Park Farm, while eight of my racing cars, as seen in this issue, will be on display. I'll be talking about the cars and showing some great archive film. It promises to be quite an occasion.

MOTOR SPORT
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Matters of Moment

On a recent trip to Maranello, I took a welcome diversion into Modena on the way back to Bologna airport. I'd heard great things about the Museo Casa Enzo Ferrari, which opened just last March. It was all true.

Firstly, the building is magnificent. The giant moulded structure in bright Modena yellow blends into the earth, the twin skylight ridges supposedly evoking the bonnet air intakes of a classic sports car. They look more like gills to me, as if the flank of some giant fish buried under the city is poking its way through the ground. Whatever, the contrast to the traditional red-brick building dwarfed beside it is striking. This house and workshop is where Enzo Ferrari was born in 1898 and contains an interactive display of his life, within a modern sculpture. Brooklands this is not.

Inside the giant yellow 'fish', cars are displayed like pieces of art in masses of white space. Each is mounted on a plinth, with information printed clearly in both English and Italian. An audio tour guides you past each and around the walls, where a chronological story of Ferrari's working life includes rare photographs and artefacts.

The cars displayed are on loan from private owners all around the world. Until March 20, the theme is 'The Great Challenges Ferrari-Maserati', celebrating the rivalry between the city's two great constructors and featuring a jaw-dropping range of 1950s and '60s sports racers and single-seaters from both.

The museum has no official ties to either Ferrari or Maserati – and is all the better for it. But there are organised tours in which you can take in both this and the official Museo Ferrari in Maranello, as featured in last month's issue.

To those paying a pilgrimage to Maranello, you should also visit this museum in Modena, about 20 minutes away. It'll complete your trip. *www.museocasaenzoferrari.it*



Damien Smith
Editor

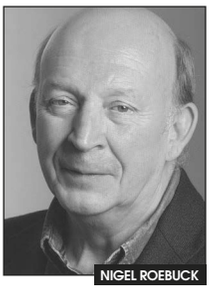
As awards season kicked off in London, Sebastian Vettel was in town to bask in the afterglow of his incredible achievements. And why not? At the age of just 25, he has matched the title achievements of Jack Brabham, Jackie Stewart, Niki Lauda, Nelson Piquet and Ayrton Senna. For someone with Vettel's admirable appreciation of F1 history, this will actually mean something.

On such occasions, it always strikes me just how fresh-faced our new three-time champ really is. Red Bull's golden boy is an engaging character, too. But the schoolboy charm should never be mistaken for naivety. Cold, hard ambition is the fuel behind Vettel's huge natural talent. On track, we'd argue he's not yet quite a match for Fernando Alonso. Off-track, Sebastian's the most clinical operator out there – witness his close friendship with 82-year-old Bernie Ecclestone. What do they have in common? It's perhaps the most intriguing relationship in F1 today.

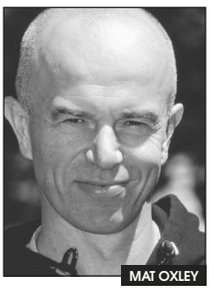
Well, this made a change. At one awards dinner, we weren't just politely applauding others as another trophy was dished out. This one was for one of our own. Yes, we've won an award, too. Congratulations to associate editor Ed Foster, who has been honoured by the Guild of Motoring Writers with a 'new media' award for our website audio podcasts. Now, as Ed was quick to point out, the podcasts are a big team effort and we were all delighted at the recognition. More guests will join us each month in 2013, but if you haven't yet listened in, log on to **www.motorsportmagazine.com** to hear past shows featuring the likes of Christian Horner, Patrick Head, Damon Hill, Derek Bell and many more. They're fun to record, and they're pretty good to listen to as well.

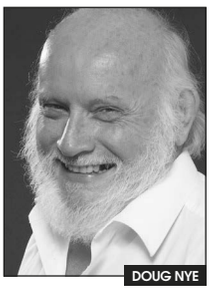
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NIGEL ROEBUCK


ADAM SWEETING


MAT OXLEY


DOUG NYE

CONTRIBUTORS

Ken Tyrrell with a cup of tea, listening to a Test match… That was one unlikely memory stirred in **NIGEL ROEBUCK'S** mind – in Texas! Nigel loves US racing and while there are places he would happily never return to, he's always pleased to be heading west, whether to Daytona, Indy or Montréal. Now he's fallen for the liberal atmosphere of Austin too; but will we ever crowbar him on to a plane bound for Korea? Don't hold your breath.

A race is only a success if the fans love it. With F1's chequered history in the States **ADAM SWEETING** took on the task of meeting the fans in Austin to find our what they thought. He writes on rock and classical music for the heavyweight papers, so Austin's live music choices made him feel at home.

Our late Continental Correspondent Denis Jenkinson was another with strong feelings about F1 venues; when the Hungarian GP began he refused to go to the then-Communist country. But he might have been tempted to join **DOUG NYE** on one socialist sojourn, given the prize – a lost pre-war Grand Prix car. Doug brings us the story of his trip into unreconstructed Rumania to confirm the car's identity – if he could find it, that is…

Elsewhere, our TT-winning two-wheel columnist **MAT OXLEY** reflects on a different sort of battle: Yamaha vs Honda, since 1983. Mat also samples a 'bike that made him feel old – and he enjoyed the sensation. He spends all summer reporting on MotoGP, and all winter digging into the past, when "racers lived like rock 'n rollers, not like pro athletes. I prefer living in the past!" A big admission, Mat…



FORMULA 1

Fresh talent ready to start

Valtteri Bottas and Esteban Gutiérrez look set to be the star rookies of 2013 after being promoted to race seats at Williams and Sauber respectively.

Managed by Mika Häkkinen and Williams co-owner Toto Wolff, Bottas (above) drove Bruno Senna's car in FP1 sessions last season, and has not raced since he left GP3 at the end of 2011.

Gutiérrez (below) has been associated with Sauber since its BMW days, but has done relatively little test mileage. The team's ongoing Mexican backing helped to ensure that he graduated from GP2 as replacement for Sergio Pérez.

In a sideways move at the back of the grid, Charles Pic has left Marussia for Caterham. The latter just won the tight battle between the pair for the crucial 10th position in the constructors' championship.

The failure of HRT to register an entry means that only 22 cars will be on the F1 grid in 2013, and as we went to press only the second seats at Lotus, Force India and Caterham were still open.



All images LAT



FORMULA 1

Pressure grows on Ecclestone

Bernie Ecclestone heads into 2013 with twin legal threats hanging over his head. The situation has inevitably brought renewed focus on the 82-year-old's role as commercial head of the sport, especially in relation to the planned flotation of part of the Formula 1 business, which is currently on hold.

In Germany the Gerhard Gribkowsky affair continues to rumble on. There have been ongoing suggestions from Munich prosecutor Thomas Steinkraus-Koch that Ecclestone might yet be charged in connection with the $44m payment made to Gerhard Gribkowsky, who is currently serving a jail sentence in Germany.

The former banker claimed that it related to the sale of F1 to CVC, while Ecclestone says it was to stop Gribkowsky creating a problem by making false allegations to the British tax authorities.

Ecclestone has always denied any wrongdoing in connection with the Gribkowsky affair and has so far laughed off any legal challenges, but it seems that the matter is not going away.

Meanwhile, a related case in America could prove even more challenging for Ecclestone. In November Bluewaters Communications Holdings, a New York-based financial company, launched a $650m legal action in the Supreme Court of New York State. It names Ecclestone alongside CVC, Ecclestone-run companies Alpha Prema, Alpha Topco and Delta Topco, Gerhard Gribkowsky and Bayerische Landesbank.

"ECCLESTONE PAID THE BRIBE TO PRESERVE HIS STATUS AS HEAD OF FORMULA 1"
BLUEWATERS ACTION

In essence Bluewaters says that it was a potential buyer of the F1 business, and lost out because of the Gribkowsky bribe, which it claims was part of a larger sum paid to Ecclestone by Bayerische and CVC as a 'finder's fee'.

Its 27-page action documents in fascinating detail the negotiations that

went on over the course of 2005. Bluewaters offered $1bn for Bayerische Landesbank's share of the business, while adding that it could beat any rival offer by 10 per cent. However, in November 2005 the sale to CVC was confirmed. Ecclestone reportedly told Bluewaters that CVC was a more attractive bid.

The introduction to the action sums it up thus: "This case arises out of a $44 million bribe paid by defendant Ecclestone to defendant Gribkowsky using money supplied by defendants CVC and BayernLB.

"Gribkowsky was prosecuted and convicted of taking the bribe and is now serving an eight-and-a-half year prison sentence. Ecclestone orchestrated and paid the bribe to preserve his status as head of a racing empire known as 'Formula 1'.

"Plaintiff was the high bidder for the purchase of Formula 1, but Ecclestone bribed Gribkowsky – using CVC's and BayernLB's money – to steer the sale of Formula 1 to CVC for CVC's and Ecclestone's benefit. Plaintiff has been damaged in an amount exceeding $650 million."

After detailing the chronology of the affair, it concludes: "Each of CVC, Alpha Prema, Alpha Topco, and Delta Topco extracted billions of dollars from Formula 1 that do not rightfully belong to them. CVC, Alpha Prema, Alpha Topco, and Delta Topco have profited enormously from CVC's wrongful acquisition of Formula 1, which is currently valued at $10 billion.

"Ecclestone was unjustly enriched by receiving an improper 'finder's fee'. Gribkowsky was unjustly enriched by accepting an improper bribe. CVC, Alpha Prema, Alpha Topco, Delta Topco, Ecclestone, and Gribkowsky must disgorge the profits rightfully belonging to Bluewaters."

Meanwhile Luca di Montezemolo created some waves when he claimed that at his age, Ecclestone was getting too old to do the job properly. Bernie countered by telling the Italian media that not so many years ago he happily dealt with an 88-year-old Enzo Ferrari... *Adam Cooper*



■ FORMULA 1

Cost control key to new-era regulation tweaks

The FIA continues to tinker with the 2014 F1 turbo technical rules, noting after the December World Motor Sport Council meeting that changes have been agreed with "the aim of limiting technology in some areas in order to reduce costs".

One of the key decisions is that the requirement for cars to be driven solely under electric power in the pitlane has been postponed until 2017, which will represent a huge cost saving, at least in the short term. Proposed bodywork changes have also been abandoned and the current rules will remain in force.

Meanwhile for 2013 the FIA will introduce more stringent front wing deflection tests, while crucially in practice and qualifying DRS can now only be used in the zone or zones in which it will be used in the race, whereas previously it could be operated anywhere.

Teams can no longer claim 'force majeure' when a car stops on the track at the end of qualifying. Instead the FIA will simply determine how much fuel the car would have used to get back to the pits, and add it to the one-litre sample minimum, in order to determine whether sufficient fuel was still in the tank.

In a further clampdown on teams who bring new parts at the last minute the personnel curfew will be extended from six to eight hours on Thursday night, and only two exceptions will be allowed during a season, instead of four.



■ FORMULA 2

Early bath for Palmer's F2

The Formula 2 series, which has been run by Jonathan Palmer's MotorSport Vision enterprise since 2009, will not continue into the final year of its contract with the FIA.

The series was launched as a low-cost championship, which would sit below Formula 1. MSV ran the cars as one large team and despite various power upgrades it became a stepping stone to GP2 rather than F1.

"It has progressively become clear that the single operating team concept involves compromises that have reduced its appeal to drivers," said Palmer, a former champion in the old European F2 series. "We and the FIA are in agreement that any future F2 should operate on a more conventional, multi-team basis."

■ FORMULA 1

Date chaos for 2013 calendar

The 2013 Formula 1 calendar remains in a state of flux as Ecclestone attempts to find a 20th race to replace New Jersey, which has been postponed until 2014.

The FIA World Motor Sport Council has agreed to move the German GP from July 14 to July 7 in order to free up July 21 for another European race.

Ecclestone had been trying to get a French GP off the ground, but his attention turned instead to Turkey, which was dropped from the 2012 calendar for financial reasons. The Turkish ASN is keen to put the race on, but says it needs government funding, seen as unlikely.

An Austrian GP at the revamped Red Bull Ring, formerly the A1-Ring, is an outside bet, although selling tickets for a race just a fortnight after the German GP – and only a week before the round in neighbouring Hungary – could prove to be a challenge.

If the July 21 slot ultimately remains unfilled, Budapest will be the only F1 race to take place in the six weekends between Germany on July 7 and Belgium on August 25.

The German date change has created a headache for Goodwood, as the Festival of Speed was scheduled for the same weekend. A new date will be announced.



Red Bull Ring is an outside bet to host a 2013 F1 race



Huff sealed the title for Chevrolet in the team's final race in the series

WTCC

Huff's last-chance incentive

New World Touring Car Champion Rob Huff redoubled his efforts to win the title when he learnt of Chevrolet's withdrawal from the series at the end of 2012.



The 33-year-old Briton has revealed that he changed his mentality after it emerged that 2012 would be the last season for the RML-run Chevrolet squad. He told himself that winning the title after his near-miss in 2011 was the best way of ensuring that he landed a drive for the new season.

"I changed my mentality and put myself under extra pressure after the decision in the summer," he told *Motor Sport*. "I told myself that if I didn't win the championship, I wouldn't have a drive in 2013. As it turns out, I was kidding myself because I still don't have a drive, but I think that added pressure inspired me."

Huff, who becomes the second British winner of the WTCC after three-time champion Andy Priaulx, sealed his achievement at the Macau finale in November, despite crashing his Chevrolet Cruze out of the lead of the opening race on the street circuit in southeast Asia. Second place behind RML team-mate Alain Menu in the second race gave him the crown by a 12-point margin.

ROB HUFF Q&A

Do you think you drove better in 2012 than in previous years?
"If anything I think I drove better in 2011. I believe I was the fastest driver and had the same number of poles and victories as Yvan, and ended up losing the championship by three points. "

What were your thoughts after you had crashed out of the opening race at the Macau WTCC finale?
"I said some things to myself that can't be printed. I was upset and angry with myself, but I knew that I'd gone into the weekend with a healthy 37-point lead and had put the car on pole by more than half a second. I knew I could dig deep and bang some fast laps in, but I also knew that it was important to monitor where I was and assess what I needed to do to clinch the title."

Is there any sadness that you won't be defending your title?
"My dream was to stay with RML and Chevrolet in the WTCC for ever, but I know that touring car programmes come to an end. I'd love to defend my title in 2013, but if I can't, I want to come back and try to regain the crown in 2014. There are new rules coming, which perhaps means that some of the manufacturers who might be building cars for the coming season are going to hold off a year. That's just something that life has thrown at me, and I will have to deal with it.

What further ambitions do you have in other areas of motor sport?
"I'd love to get into some kind of sports car, and the Le Mans 24 Hours, but I'd also love to try the DTM and V8 Supercars in Australia. I wouldn't have a problem going back to the British Touring Car Championship. I only did one year (with SEAT in 2004), and I consider it unfinished business."



Touring car performance boost for 2014

The World Touring Car Championship is likely to become more spectacular from 2014.

New regulations are set to be introduced for the Super 2000 category that will increase performance. December's FIA World Council rubber-stamped a plan that will result in a lighter, more powerful breed of touring car with greater aerodynamic freedom.

The greater freedoms will mean the FIA will be able to abandon the technical waivers that are given to some cars and its Balance of Performance system, which is designed to maintain a level playing field in S2000.

The FIA stated its intent to keep costs under control and to maintain the balance between front- and rear-wheel-drive machinery.

■ SPORTS CARS

Works Porsches to make Le Mans return

Porsche will have its most overt factory presence at the Le Mans 24 Hours this June since the year of the last of its 16 overall victories in the big race in 1998.

The German manufacturer has announced it will field a factory squad at Le Mans and in the full FIA World Endurance Championship in conjunction with Team Manthey. They will develop the latest 991-shape 911 RSR GTE class contender in competition before it goes on sale to customers for the 2014 season.

Porsche Motorsport boss Hartmut Kristen said: "The new 911 RSR is currently being developed by our engineers and tested by our works drivers. What better time could there be to introduce the new car than in the 50th anniversary of the Porsche 911?"

Manthey performed a similar role in developing other Porsche 911 racers. It was one of two teams to field the new 911 GT3-R at Le Mans in 1999 and ran the first GT2 version of the 997-shape at the 2006 Spa 24 Hours.

Porsche has confirmed it will field an in-house factory team when its all-new LMP1 hybrid comes on stream in 2014.

Wide Porsche plans include new-shape 911 racer for GT3



BMW plans ALMS Z4

BMW is developing a GTE version of its BMW Z4 GT3 to replace its E92-shape M3 in the American Le Mans Series in 2013.

The German manufacturer finally confirmed the switch, which had been something of an open secret since the beginning of the season. The new V8-powered Z4 will be run in the ALMS, like its predecessor, by Rahal Letterman Lanigan Racing.

BMW Motorsport boss Jens Marquardt said: "This change in model shows that we are focussing fully on the BMW Z4 as an all-encompassing GT car."

New GT class option

Plans to create one class to combine the GTE and GT3 classes have radically altered.

The manufacturers on the GT Convergence Group set up by the FIA and the Automobile Club de l'Ouest have come up with a counter-proposal that retains two classes but brings GTE and GT3 closer together.

This would mean that manufacturers could develop one basic design which could be turned into a GT3 or a GTE contender with a parts kit. Stephane Ratel, who opposed the FIA/ACO initiative, described the new plans as "the obvious move".

■ HISTORICS

'Other' Austin F1 race blooms

A grid of 30 1966-83 Formula 1 cars from the Historic Grand Prix group proved a popular support to the revival of the United States GP at the Circuit of the Americas in November.

The 10-lap HGP event was won by former Formula Atlantic star Dan Marvin aboard Phil and Kathy Reilly's 1974 Brabham BT44 (below left).

Marvin qualified fourth, took the lead on lap four, and pulled away to win from poleman David Martinez in Rudi Junco's 1980 Arrows A3. Third went to Charles Nearburg's 1980 Williams FW07B with two-time Indy 500 winner Arie Luyendyk finishing sixth in a 1979 McLaren M29.





■ HISTORICS

Classic event to tour Iberia

Spain and Portugal get a new classic race and rally tour with the announcement of Targa Iberia in late October and early November.

The brainchild of Spanish motor sport promoter Jesus Pozo, Targa Iberia will be run for GT, sports cars and touring cars from up to 1986 and the tour will capitalise on growing interest in historic motor sport in the region.

"This will be something new for competitors," said Pozo. Four race tracks are on the schedule, with a regularity rally running alongside.



■ SPORTS CARS

Full Toyota squad for WEC

Toyota is planning for a two-car assault in this year's FIA World Endurance Championship.

The budget for two 2013-spec Toyota TS030 Hybrids to race in the full eight-race WEC is understood not to have been signed off, but Toyota Motorsport GmbH is working towards running a pair of cars. To that effect, it has re-signed all six of its drivers from this year's programme.

A fall-back option should the funds not be available for two cars for the full season would be for TMG to run two cars at the Le Mans 24 Hours and the two rounds beforehand at Silverstone and Spa. Toyota fielded two TS030s on the hybrid car's debut at Le Mans in June. It subsequently fielded one entry in the remaining five races of the WEC.



Easter meant F2 at Thruxton. Now HSCC will turn back the clock

LAT

HISTORICS

Thruxton F2 races revived

A race for Historic Formula 2 cars looks sure to top the bill at a new classic racing festival at Thruxton over the Easter weekend in 2013.



Jeff Bloxham

The event on March 30/31 is intended to be the first in an annual series of classic race meetings at the Hampshire track, where the European Formula 2 Championship was an Easter tradition through the 1970s and 1980s. Pre-1978 1600cc and 2-litre F2 cars will feature in a highlight race, while other series will likely include the Martini Trophy for 1970s 2-litre sports cars.

The Thruxton event is the most significant new development for the Historic Sports Car Club's busiest ever season, which includes high-profile meetings on the Silverstone and Brands Hatch Grand Prix circuits.

"I'm delighted with the 2013 calendar," said HSCC boss Grahame White. "I'm particularly excited about the new event at Thruxton as it is a track that has a very special place in my memories."

BTCC to be celebrated at Birmingham show

The story of British Touring Car racing will be celebrated in a special display at Autosport International at the NEC Birmingham (January 10-13).

Organised by the Historic Sports Car Club, the display will be a focal point in the historic motor sport arena and will include cars from the late 1950s through to the Super Touring era of the late 1990s. It is planned to have at least one significant car from each decade and already confirmed are an ex-Bill McGovern Hillman Imp and a car from Alan Mann Racing.

In addition, the club is inviting all surviving former BTCC champions to attend, along with other leading drivers from the popular tin-top series. The drivers are being invited to visit the stand during Friday morning.

"We hope to have up to eight cars spanning five decades," said Grahame White of the HSCC. "We've also located the Austin A105 Westminster that Jack Sears used to win the first championship in 1958."

Rally champs to go on Safari

Two of the greatest Swedish rally drivers of all time will team up to contest November's Safari Classic Rally as part of a six-car Porsche team run by Banbury-based Team Tuthill.

Björn Waldegård will defend his 2011 victory in a classic 911 on one of the toughest rallies in the world and will be joined by Stig Blomqvist in a similar car.

Waldegård and Blomqvist will head Team Tido, which is raising funds for African charities.

Team principal David von Schinkel will drive another of the cars, while Roger Samuelsson, Christer Johansson and a sixth driver yet to be announced will complete the line-up.

Track day plan for Montlhéry

Classic cars will return to the famous Autodrome de Montlhéry in March for a track day for classic sports, saloon and GT cars.

Though no longer used for racing, the banked track in the Paris suburbs remains one of the most evocative venues in French motor racing history. Montlhéry opened for racing in 1925 and finally closed just 10 years ago.

The annual 'Coupes de Printemps' will run on Saturday March 23 using the full circuit, including the banking. It is open to all pre-72 cars, but there is no element of competition. More details are available by e-mailing flavienmarcais@hotmail.fr



Jeff Bloxham

Lotus theme for Race Retro

The 50th anniversary of the first World Championship title for Jim Clark and Team Lotus will be celebrated during the 10th running of Race Retro, the annual Historic Motor Sport Show at Stoneleigh Park, Coventry, from February 22-24.

In 1963 Jim Clark dominated the World Championship with his Lotus 25 and Lotus also won the first of seven constructors' titles. That landmark achievement will be marked with a display of cars from Classic Team Lotus. Pride of place will go to the ex-Clark Lotus 25 chassis R4, now owned by John Bowers, and chassis R5, now owned by Nick Fennell. Other cars from the Jim Clark story are due to be present.

To celebrate 65 years since he started commentating on motor sport, Murray Walker OBE, will make his Race Retro debut to visit the show on Saturday and Sunday. He will appear on the interview stage for Q&A sessions as well as signing autographs.



Rakish BMW goes it alone

BMW has released images of its new 4-series concept. 4-series? That's the new name for what has always in the past been known as the 3-series coupé, and while BMW is calling the car a concept, it's fooling no one. In all bar the fine detail, this is the car that will go on sale in the autumn, filling precisely the boots of the now defunct 3-series coupé.

The change in strategy is for two reasons. First and in line with current thinking, BMW wants to expand the number of different cars that can be spun off one platform and it allows both greater clarity and a sense of additional prestige if the glamour models – the coupés and convertibles – have an identity of their own. Secondly, BMW has decided to put far more conceptual air between 4-series and the four-door 3-series than in previous generations, and would argue therefore that the 4-series deserves to be thought of as a model in its own right.

Certainly the facts seem to support this. The 4-series shares no major panels with the 3-series and is longer, wider and significantly lower than its four-door stablemate. Underneath, however, they are close cousins, utilising the same platform and, it is believed, powertrains.

Inside the concept are lashings of wood and artfully stitched leather but this kind of detail is bound either to be moved to the options list or omitted altogether.

There will, of course, be an M4 version that is likely to take the bulk of sales away from what will now be the four-door-only M3, a choice that has always been of minority interest among M customers. Nevertheless it does free up space in the 3-series range for an M3 Touring estate, the one M-car many have called for but that BMW has to date resisted. Like all other M-cars these days, the new M3 and M4 will be powered by downsized turbocharged engines in place of once non-negotiable multi-cylinder units. In this case expect a twin-turbo 3-litre straight six with more power and torque than the outgoing 4-litre V8.

Italian deal set to benefit Aston Martin

After weeks of press speculation, a substantial stake in Aston Martin has been sold to an Italian private equity fund called InvestIndustrial, best known as the former owner of Ducati motorcycles.

InvestIndustrial has paid £150 million for a 37.5 per cent stake in the company and four of the nine seats on the board. This deal is very different to that rumoured in recent weeks, which speculated that the Indian tractor company Mahindra & Mahindra was about to drop £250 million into Aston Martin in return for half of the company.

Although InvestIndustrial brings less money, the tie-up is attractive to Aston Martin because of its new partner's connections in the motor industry. Aston Martin needs a long-term relationship with a major car maker in order to be able to access the technologies, economies of scale, facilities and purchasing clout it currently lacks, and Mercedes-Benz is the company thought most likely to assist. Not only has it links to InvestIndustrial and Aston Martin (its GL-class provided the structure for the 2009 Lagonda concept), but unlike its Audi and BMW rivals it is now without a 'halo' brand after closing its Maybach operation.

Kuwait-based Investment Dar remains the majority shareholder in Aston Martin.

Cayman tops show in LA

The Porsche Cayman was undoubtedly the star of the Los Angeles Motor Show.

Lower, longer, wider and sitting on the extended wheelbase of the new Boxster, the 20kg lighter Cayman and Cayman S share their 2.7- and 3.4-litre engines with the Boxster, but now tuned to give 275bhp and 325bhp respectively, a 10bhp rise over the Boxster's outputs. Performance ranges from 5.7sec for a manual Cayman to reach 62mph to the 4.7sec for a Cayman S using the optional PDK double-clutch auto transmission. UK sales start this spring with the Cayman costing £39,694, the S £48,783, a rise of £477 and £1137 over the current cars.



Also making its public debut in Los Angeles was the Jaguar XFR-S, whose existence was one of the worst kept secrets of 2012. Powered by the same 542bhp supercharged V8 found in the XKR-S, it is easily the fastest saloon in the British marque's history, topping out at an electronically controlled 186mph. Extensive retuning of the suspension means it is likely also to feel like the most sporting Jaguar saloon to date, though the firm's bosses insist it remains an eminently usable and comfortable everyday car.

Sales of the XFR-S will start in May, priced at £79,995, a hefty premium of almost £15,000 over the already potent 503bhp XFR.



Sporting list for COTY

By the time you get this, the shortlist for the 2013 Car of the Year award will have been announced.

This year's selection of candidates includes an unusually large number of sports and sporting cars including the Toyota GT86, Porsche Boxster, Mercedes-Benz SL and BMW 3-series, though history tells us that none of these has very much chance of outright victory.

Of the 49 awards granted since its inception in 1964, Fiat has won nine, Renault six and Ford five. By contrast BMW has never won and has not even troubled the podium for 25 years. Surprising, then, that Porsche does have an award on the shelf, but seeing as it was given in 1978 for the 928, it will now be looking a little dusty.

Audi sharpens super-estate

Anyone who experienced the previous Audi RS6 is unlikely to have lamented its lack of get up and go. Even so, and in the spirit of *Vorsprung durch Technik*, Audi has decided to take the world's fastest estate and make it much, much faster.

At first the new RS6 seems a step back: eight cylinders instead of 10 and a mere 552bhp instead of the 580bhp of its predecessor. However, because the car has a little more torque and, crucially, a lot less weight, it's actually substantially quicker out of the blocks, reaching 62mph from rest in just 3.9sec. In the context of an estate car, that is about as ridiculous as it gets. Top speed is what you want it to be and what your wallet can cope with: 155mph is standard but cross Audi's palm with enough silver and they'll let it do 174mph. Keep handing it out and they'll retune the management to extend play all the way to 190mph, which should be adequate for most tastes.

The engine is based on that used not only by the extant S6, S7 and S8, but also the Bentley Continental GT V8. As in all its other applications it is equipped with cylinder deactivation technology, one reason that it claims to use a staggering 30 per cent less fuel than the previous RS6.

The old one was the ultimate blunt weapon – a straight-line projectile with little enthusiasm for changing direction. But it's to be hoped that the 100kg weight chop and the broadly encouraging direction taken by recent Audi R and RS products will mean the RS6 turns out to be not only the world's fastest estate, but also an enjoyable and capable driver's car too.

'Black' plan is on for Mercedes SLS coupé

Proving that what it learns on the race track really does have at least some relevance to a few of the cars it sells in showrooms, Mercedes has announced details of the fifth 'Black Series' model, this time its focus falling on the SLS supercar.

Taking not only inspiration but some of the concept and many actual components from its massively successful SLS GT3 racing car, the SLS Black features a 622bhp V8 based on the race car engine but far more powerful on account of not having to breathe through a restrictor. Many carbon-fibre parts including the transmission tunnel, rear bulkhead, bonnet, front spoiler, rear diffuser and wings contribute to a weight reduction of some 70kg compared to the regular SLS, though its top speed is actually 3mph lower, entirely because of the extra aerodynamic drag caused by the high-downforce bodywork.

In addition the transmission and suspension have both been modified to deal with the extra power, while carbon-ceramic brakes – outlawed on the SLS GT3 – are standard.



Like all Black Series cars, the SLS Black will exist as a limited-edition standalone product, meaning Mercedes will produce no other Black Series models until production has ceased. Mercedes is not yet saying how many it will make, or indeed what it might charge for each one, though with the standard car retailing for £168,425, a price of about £250,000 (where it can meet both the Ferrari F12 and Lamborghini Aventador head-on) looks most likely.



AND THAT REMINDS ME...

Surely everyone dreams of that record lap of the Targa Florio course...

SOME THINGS ARE SO TEMPTING, YOU'LL PUT UP WITH serious compromises to do them. Being the wrong shape for the job, I usually emerge from track-testing cars for this magazine bruised and sometimes bleeding. Who cares? Wounds heal, memories remain. Which is why doing a lap of the Targa Florio seemed a good idea even with my young family on board.

This misconceived plan wobbled further off course before we'd left the airport. Avis had promised a Ford Focus 'or similar'. We got a Fiat Stilo estate, probably my least favourite Italian car. I should have given up then, but once I'd found the pits at Cerda I was unable to stop.

I explained to the family how important this was, that from two weeks of holiday I was asking for two hours to do one 72km lap. I suggested they found coffee and chocolate while I indulged my pathetic fantasy in a hired estate, but it would not be countenanced. Even though they thought Vaccarella sounded like food poisoning, I was told their place was by my side, where they'd derive vicarious pleasure from watching my dream come true.

I shut out the first whimpers and early bleats from the back. I was too busy trying to understand how anyone could race around these hills, let alone complete a lap in little more than half an hour. But 'Daddy, I'm going to be sick' proved harder to ignore. I stopped to allow the children to inhale fresh mountain air before charging on, all 95bhp hauling four people, their luggage and a heavy Fiat uphill at speeds sometimes nearing 40mph.

Then my wife turned green and looked imploringly at me. Brian Redman didn't have to put up with this. I pulled over again and when everyone felt able to continue, completed the lap at little more than walking pace. The whole circuit took a fraction less than four hours, an average speed with stops of just over 11mph. The slowest lap of the Targa Florio ever completed? Unless you know differently, that's a record I'm claiming for myself.

TO READ ANDREW FRANKEL'S LATEST ROAD CAR TESTS, TURN TO PAGE 116



Martin McCormack charged on final day to claim victory



Roger Albert Clark Rally

Dalby to Kershope, GB

FOR TWO AND A HALF DAYS, **MARTIN McCormack** and **Steve Bannister** enacted a ferocious battle for the 2012 Roger Albert Clark Rally – and McCormack won by just 17 seconds after 160 flat-out stage miles across Yorkshire and the Scottish Borders.

For thousands of enthusiasts, it was definitely the rally of the year. The ninth edition of the event that recreates the RAC Rallies of the 1970s delivered on all fronts. The biggest entry yet was headed by most of the current star names in historic rallying, but ultimately it came down to a pair of Ford Escort MkIIs as two drivers went head to head through the forests.

At 27, Irish ace McCormack had 34 years in hand over Bannister, a man simply known as 'God' in his native Yorkshire, where he has rallied for 35 years. From the outside, you could never have known the age difference, for both drove at the limit from the start in a battle that was as sporting as it was competitive.

It all began in Dalby Forest on Friday evening. Bannister did not really expect to match McCormack, but knew his best chance was to build a margin in his own back yard. But on the very opening stage, Bannister and **Kevin Rae** were dealt an early blow with a late puncture. It could have cost as much as 15 seconds, which was critical.

After the opening leg, Bannister led by 28sec, and remarkably the gap was exactly the same when they arrived in Carlisle 24 hours later. But it was the daunting Sunday leg that McCormack and **Phil Clarke** awaited with relish. A whopping 85 stage miles, with a 17-miler in Kershope to finish, delivered more than half of the rally in eight hours.

McCormack went on the attack



Late spin cost Steve Bannister. Above: it's a '70s flashback…





Paul Lawrence





Bob Bean blitzed Category 1 in Cortina

and was soon closing the gap, but it was a pair of runs through Craik Forest that shaped the outcome. In 12 miles, McCormack slashed 15sec from Bannister's lead and then dived ahead by just two seconds going into Kershope. Bannister arrived at the stop line knowing that a late spin had been a costly mistake. When McCormack arrived 45sec later, victory was his for the sake of 17sec.

"The battle with Steve has been absolutely fantastic," said McCormack. "I've lost my heart to this rally," he added, having returned to it both faster and more controlled after a two-year climb up the international rallying ladder. Bannister readily congratulated his rival. "There was no letting up, but he pushed that bit harder," he said.

Somewhat over-shadowed by the contest for the lead, **Will Onions** and **John Millington** claimed third despite a last-stage gearbox scare, though **Matthew Robinson** and **Mick Gilby** had run a strong third until fuel problems struck on Sunday morning.

Jeremy Easson and **Alun Cook** finished fourth overall and won Category 2 in their Ford Escort Mkl, while 74-year-old **Bob Bean** and co-driver **Malcolm Smithson** dominated Category 1 in their Lotus Cortina. *Paul Lawrence*



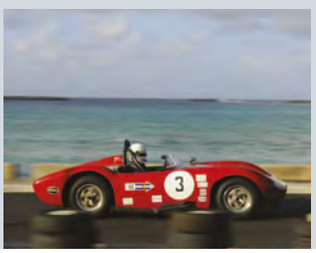
Bahamas Speed Week Revival

Nassau, Bahamas

THE SECOND EDITION OF THE Bahamas Speed Week Revival in Nassau attracted a group of more than 40 classic sports and racing cars in early December. The group, embracing machinery from the 1950s to the '90s, included several from the original event. A 1959 Bocar (spare car in the Scarab team of 1960, below) returned for the second time, while a very original 1953 Ferrari 375 Pinin Farina Spider (above) continued the red roadster theme. A welcome and striking sight was the 1959 Cooper Monaco in blue and white John Coombs colours that Jack Brabham carried in the Nassau Trophy race before going on to take his first World Championship at Sebring. Sir Stirling Moss, himself a Speed Week veteran, returned as patron of the event for the second year, bringing with him his own 1956 OSCA FS 372DS.

The racing was relaxed but animated, with a hillclimb up from the seafront to Fort Charlotte on the Saturday, and a sprint time-trial (the course extended this year) around the colourful Arawak Cay area on Sunday.

The event can't yet boast the hoped-for dedicated circuit, but Speed Week President Jimmie Lowe said that next year he wants to see "some actual side-by-side racing". Let's hope so. *Rob Scorah*





Local man Buist took win. Below: Brit Shand gave his all

Silver Fern Rally

North Island, New Zealand

BRITISH CREW **GRANT SHAND** and **Chris Parsons** came within three special stages of scoring a remarkable second place overall on the week-long Silver Fern Rally in New Zealand. However, their dreams were shattered on the final day when they put their Ford Escort MkII off the road and dropped to sixth place.

Widely regarded as the finest gravel rally in the world, the Silver Fern covered more than 600 miles of special stages on the North Island. Unfortunately, heavy rain on day three forced the cancellation of three stages as river crossings were simply too deep to be safe.

Having finished third overall and first historic car back in 2008, Shand and Parsons turned in a well-measured drive to move up the order in the later stages as fancied local crews hit problems. They held a secure second place going into the final day, but less than two miles into the 26-mile Ngapaenga stage they slid off. They had to miss the final two stages and the time penalties incurred put them down to sixth among the 26 finishers. Local crew **Deane Buist** and **Andrew Bulman** won the event in their Escort MkII.

Fellow British crew **Vince Bristow** and **Jane Edgington** led the rally on day one but suffered gearbox problems towards the end and fell from fifth to seventh in their locally entered Ford Escort MkII. British crews **Peter Egerton/Alun Cook** and **Peter Smith/Ryland James** both made it to the finish, in two more Ford Escorts from Shand's Rally Xtreme squad. *Paul Lawrence*







Euan Fuge (Mazda RX-3) and Stuart McFarlane (911, above) push on

Geoff Ridder



MOTOR SPORT SINCE 1924 HALL OF FAME 2013

in association with Audi

A change of venue and a special Formula 1 charity auction will give our fourth annual event a new flavour this February

The *Motor Sport* magazine Hall of Fame, in association with Audi, is back for a fourth successive year, and preparations are under way for what promises to be another memorable night as we honour some of racing's greatest names.

Our Hall of Fame is an awards gathering with a difference: no 'black tie' formalities, just a stylish and relaxed atmosphere easing our invited guests into the new season. Since its launch in 2010, the Hall of Fame has become established as the ideal curtain-raiser for another action-packed year.

A change of venue gives the Hall of Fame a new flavour this time, as we head to the Royal Opera House in Covent Garden, London on Monday February 25, when more great names from the sport's past and present will be added to the roster of legends included in our exclusive club.

In addition to the new members of the Hall of Fame, we will also be welcoming bids for a very special charity auction held on the night. A unique collection of Formula 1 auction items has been gathered, to be sold for the benefit of the Grand Prix Mechanics Charitable Trust.

Sir Jackie Stewart established the trust in 1987, together with his old team boss Ken Tyrrell and Ford's Walter Hayes, to provide medical and financial aid to F1 mechanics and their families who have need of it. Trustees include drivers David Coulthard and Martin Brundle, and Williams co-founder Patrick Head.

The lots consist of original F1 parts donated by the teams, and are displayed on stylish mounts as pieces of art. Special memorabilia items and a number of once-in-a-lifetime 'experiences' also go under the hammer at a sale that should raise a significant amount for a cause which has a natural affinity with this magazine.

Donations have been received from Red Bull Racing, Vodafone McLaren Mercedes, Scuderia Ferrari, Mercedes AMG Petronas, Lotus F1, WilliamsF1, Bernie Ecclestone, charity trustee Jo Ramirez, Pirelli and Motor Passion.

Bonhams auction house will host the sale on the night, but bids are accepted online, allowing all *Motor Sport* readers to take part.

AUCTION LOTS INCLUDE:

- 2013 F1 British GP VIP Paddock Club and paddock passes (for two guests Friday, Saturday and Sunday)
  Donated by Bernie Ecclestone
- Sebastian Vettel's steering wheel
  Donated by Red Bull Racing
- Ayrton Senna's racing gloves worn in 1991 when he won his third World Championship
  Donated by Jo Ramirez
- Cylinder head from ex-Fernando Alonso F1 engine
  Donated by Scuderia Ferrari
- Kimi Räikkönen's wheel and tyre
  Donated by Lotus F1 Team; tyre donated by Pirelli
- Hydraulic manifold
  Donated by Lotus F1 Team
- Mercedes F1 suspension upright
  Donated by Mercedes AMG Petronas
- Jenson Button's McLaren race seat from his 2012 Australian GP-winning car
  Donated by Vodafone McLaren Mercedes
- Differential gear
  Donated by WilliamsF1
- Visit to the Ferrari factory at Maranello including a drive round the Fiorano track. Travel and accommodation included
  Courtesy of Motor Passion

Online bids can be made until midnight of Sunday February 24, 2013
www.motorsportmagazine.com/halloffame/charity-auction

Grand Prix Mechanics Charitable Trust

Bonhams 1793

TAG Heuer

HALL OF FAME
THE MEMBERS

FOUNDING MEMBERS
Enzo Ferrari
Tazio Nuvolari
Juan Manuel Fangio
Sir Stirling Moss
Jim Clark
Sir Jackie Stewart
Ayrton Senna
Michael Schumacher

2010
Mario Andretti
Jacky Ickx
Tony Brooks
Ron Dennis

2011
Sir Jack Brabham
Sir Frank Williams
Dario Franchitti
Jody Scheckter

2012
Colin McRae
Giacomo Agostini
John Surtees
Adrian Newey

WIN TICKETS
TO THE HALL OF FAME!

Five pairs of tickets are up for grabs to give you a chance to join us at the Royal Opera House on February 25 for the fourth *Motor Sport* magazine Hall of Fame. To enter, log on to the *Motor Sport* website and answer the following question:

Which of the Hall of Fame founding members won the most Grands Prix during their career?

A. Jackie Stewart
B. Michael Schumacher
C. Ayrton Senna

To enter, go to: **www.motorsportmagazine.com**

The winning entries will be drawn on Monday February 4, 2013



SIR JACKIE STEWART & THE CHARITY AUCTION



On December 5, 2012 Hall of Fame founding member Sir Jackie Stewart attended a special *Motor Sport* readers' evening to launch the Hall of Fame charity auction, in aid of the Grand Prix Mechanics' Charitable Trust.

The three-time World Champion addressed an audience of more than 100 readers at the Landmark Hotel, Marylebone in London, then participated in a Q&A session, answering a wide range of questions from the guests. He was joined on stage by former mechanic and McLaren team co-ordinator Jo Ramirez, *Motor Sport*'s editor-in-chief Nigel Roebuck and editor Damien Smith.

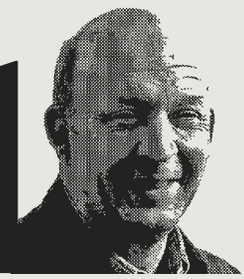
You can listen to the Q&A session on our website: www.motorsportmagazine.com



"If I hadn't had the best mechanics in the world when I was racing, I wouldn't be here today. I think mechanics are the true professionals in the business, totally dedicated to the sport. It is not just a question of helping Grand Prix mechanics though hardships they might face, but a question of access to the right help, for example helping them with recovery from injury.

"What *Motor Sport* is doing, in connection with its Hall of Fame night, is aiming to raise enough money to help the Trust significantly by allowing the public to also bid on the auction items that have been donated to us. It's perhaps the most spectacular auction I've ever seen of F1 jewels which could never be bought anywhere else."

Nigel Roebuck



REFLECTIONS

– Formula 1 receives warm welcome in Texas
– Fate gives Vettel a helping hand... or two
– NASCAR promoter Smith requires maths lesson

Over the years veteran US race promoter Bruton Smith has frequently been given to loud-mouthed, ill-advised, proclamations. As the founder of Speedway Motorsports Inc, a company that owns eight tracks and hosts 11 of the NASCAR Sprint Cup races each year, his life has fundamentally revolved around stock car racing, and everything else must find its place.

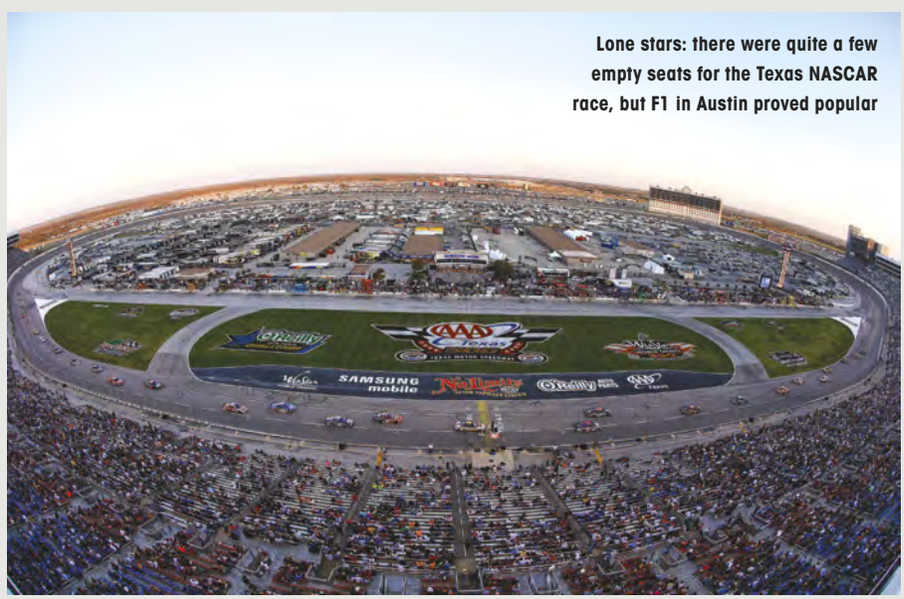
Following the catastrophic multiple accident at his Las Vegas Motor Speedway in October 2011, which cost the life of Dan Wheldon, Mr Smith expressed remarkably insensitive contempt for the many IndyCar drivers who said they had not wanted to race at the 1.5-mile high-banked 'NASCAR' oval in the first place and now wished very profoundly never to go there again.

Las Vegas, mercifully, did not figure on the IndyCar schedule in 2012, but – rather to my surprise, given what some drivers had said – Mr Smith's Texas Motor Speedway, a track of similar configuration, was again included.

NASCAR is its main thing, though, and the second of its annual Cup races was run on November 4, just a fortnight before the inaugural Grand Prix at the Circuit of the Americas, a couple of hundred miles to the south. That weekend Mr Smith – 85, thus three years older than Bernie Ecclestone – said he had no concerns that the race would have an impact on either the NASCAR or IndyCar events at his oval. "Formula 1 has never done anything in this country," he said, perhaps unaware of a small town in upstate New York called Watkins Glen. "We've checked and about ten people we know are going to this race, so I'm not really concerned…"

Well, perhaps not – but I couldn't help but notice, as I watched the Texas NASCAR race on TV, that the place was rather far from full. While we must take Mr Smith at his word that apparently only ten of his customers were beguiled by the prospect of F1, it didn't really matter, for on race day in Austin, a couple of weeks later, they were joined by 116,990 others. Perhaps there are gaps in Texas Motor Speedway's customer database. Whatever, the proprietor has subsequently been silent on the subject.

It was in May 2010 that Bernie Ecclestone announced the return to the World Championship schedule of the USA. Not since the days of the Glen had F1 cars raced in America on a permanent road circuit; now, he said, in Austin, a 'world-class facility' was to be built specifically for



Lone stars: there were quite a few empty seats for the Texas NASCAR race, but F1 in Austin proved popular

All images LAT

Nigel Roebuck



American bygones: F1 ran at Indy from 2000-2007 and at Dallas, below right, in 1984

the hosting of a Grand Prix.

I confess that, while delighted at the prospect of an F1 return to North America, I rather shrank from those words. In the past 15 or 20 years, after all, we've been overrun with new 'world-class facilities' in Grand Prix racing, and the majority – while abounding in superficial glitz – have had about as much charisma as Ed Miliband. Ask F1 regulars to name their favourite venues and they rarely come forth with 'Shanghai' or 'Bahrain'. Flashy buildings alone don't do it.

Prior to November's race in Austin, F1 last appeared in the USA in 2007, at Indianapolis, where the last of eight races was run. If you had no feel for a city with racing in its very bones, you were left unmoved by the races at Indy. Although the track took in part of the celebrated oval, its infield section – like the covered pits, built specifically for F1 – was uninspiring. And with DRS still years away the races lacked overtaking, not an easy thing to accept for spectators accustomed to the 500.

For all that, though, if the spectator attendance at the inaugural race – 225,000 – was never approached thereafter, the Grands Prix at Indianapolis continued – even after the six-car fiasco in 2005 – to attract crowds to make other F1 race promoters drool. As one imbued with the heritage of the place, I loved going there and was mortified when, over that final F1 weekend, a shell-shocked Tony George told me he had failed to agree terms with Bernie Ecclestone for the continuation of the deal: "Jesus Christ, can't Bernie understand that other people need to make a profit, too?"

Anyway, that was that, and when we left Indianapolis I doubted that F1 would return to America any time soon. This, after all, was the most fabled race track on earth, with all the facilities anyone could want – if a Grand Prix couldn't be made workable here, what were the chances anywhere else? Inevitably, we remembered Indy's short-lived predecessor, the dreary street circuit in Phoenix, where Bernie had to schlep to a local DIY store to buy tables and chairs (at a very good price, according to others present) for the press room, where 15,000 people came through the gate, where rather more ventured down the road to watch a competing race. For ostriches.

Even if Indianapolis lacked the nine-star hotels required by F1's A-list, many felt as I did and were furious that the race was allowed to disappear from the calendar. It was all very well to take F1 ever more eastwards, often to countries where they didn't give a toss about motor racing, where the sole criterion was a governmental willingness to sate CVC's fiscal appetite: for many manufacturers and sponsors, the USA remained a *huge* market, and – apart from anything else – the country's absence from anything calling itself a *World* Championship was an absurdity.

> "Can't Bernie understand that other people need to make a profit, too?"

Then… enter Austin. And as we listened to Ecclestone speak about the plans for the Circuit of the Americas there seemed to be good reason for optimism, not least because it was in Texas.

Over time Bernie has for some reason had particular difficulties with race promoters in the US, for whom his tolerance level appears to be especially low. It's a fact that there were… financial problems to do with the Dallas Grand Prix in 1984, which is why we never went back there, but for those of us present that scalding July weekend it was evident that the event, *per se*, was a considerable success.





The temporary track was far from safe – as I arrived there, my friend Pino Allievi animatedly described it as 'Francorchamps in the streets!' – and parts of the surface became molten in the heat, but the race undeniably pulled a hell of a crowd, which saw such as Niki Lauda and Alain Prost hit the wall, while Keke Rosberg and René Arnoux, chargers both, finished first and second.

Perhaps because it was something new – foreign and therefore exotic – Texas, unlike Michigan (Detroit) or Nevada (Vegas), appeared to embrace F1, but it would be 28 years before it ventured back and there were times when this latest venture began to look like a pipedream. As recently as November 2011, indeed, Ecclestone sounded one of his warnings, muttering at the Abu Dhabi Grand Prix that he wouldn't put money on the Austin project coming to fruition.

The path – for reasons of both finance and changing personnel – was indeed rocky at times, with work on the circuit starting, then stopping, then restarting in earnest in December '11. Given the scope of the scheme, time seemed very short if a race were to be run less than a year later.

Still, Charlie Whiting made periodic visits and always expressed satisfaction with the progress being made. Inevitably, though, given the pressure of time, some wondered if the first visit to the Circuit of the Americas might be a little like that to Korea's Yeongam, where the actual track was finished, but not much else.

As it turned out, they could not have been more wide of the mark. The mechanics murmured that the pit garages might have been a little larger, but otherwise none could find a critical word for the place, and not for countless years – if ever – has a new Grand Prix been such an unqualified success. It might have been first time around for the Circuit of the Americas, but the slickness of the organisation made you wonder why other F1 venues – not least one in business for going on 70 years – don't do it this way.

"Amazing, isn't it?" a team principal murmured. "A new race – in a country you might actually want to go to…"

True enough, but amazing, too, was that the race had been scheduled on the same day as the final, championship-deciding, round of NASCAR's Sprint Cup season, run at Homestead. More extraordinary still is that the two events will again clash in 2013 – and on top of that Austin will also that weekend host a football match, expected to pull a crowd of over 100,000, between the University of Texas and Oklahoma State.

Fears that the city will be over-run, hotel rooms impossible to find, have led COTA chairman Bobby Epstein to request a different date for the race, and one hopes he will get it. They have, after all, recently changed the date of the German Grand Prix – to July 7, so that it now unfortunately clashes with the Goodwood Festival of Speed – so it can be done. In the opinion of many, there are too many Grands Prix nowadays, »»

Nigel Roebuck

anyway, so how about dumping dread Yeongam for a start?

Before we left for Texas, the suggestion was that, while we would be impressed by the circuit, further work was needed on the access roads – getting in and out, in other words, might revive nightmarish memories of Silverstone in the old days. Not a bit of it. I stayed in Round Rock, 35 miles away, and the journey was a breeze.

What I found especially appealing about the Circuit of the Americas – apart from the track itself, emphatically the best to come from Hermann Tilke's pen – was that it seemed instantly familiar. The buildings were functional, rather than elaborate, and the paddock felt intimate and welcoming.

F1 paddocks you might expect to be essentially the same the world over, but, believe me, they are not. Some lack atmosphere, some have it in spades. Some feel like industrial estates, others like natural meeting points. The old Silverstone paddock had a beating heart; the new one does not. There is something unique about Monza that encourages people to linger and chat. Autumn sun, I suppose, and soul.

The Austin paddock was brand new, yet at once I felt I knew it, that I'd been going there forever, and others said the same. Of course it didn't hurt that the weather was sublime, or that, being out of Europe, there were no forbidding motorhomes in which so many hide away for the weekend. Instead, as in Montréal, each team had a cabin, with tables and chairs out front, which always makes for a more sociable ambience, reminding one of gentler times, of Ken Tyrrell sitting in the sun with a mug of tea, listening to a Test match.

It was a pleasure, of course, to come across old friends one rarely sees, like Dario Franchitti, but rather less of one, I must say, to bid farewell to Gary Hartstein, who joined the FIA's medical team years ago at the behest of Sid Watkins, and got the top job when the Prof stepped down at the end of 2004.

Eight years on, Hartstein was told – a month after the death of Watkins – that, as of the end of the 2012 season, his services would no longer be required. In Austin I asked him if he knew why. "Not a clue," he shrugged. "I was asked to put in a bid for the job, which I did – but it can't be anything to do with that, because it was for the same amount I've been paid for years. They haven't told me a thing…"

Quite apart from being astonishingly discourteous to a charming man who has well served the sport, the FIA has taken an apparently unfathomable decision, for Hartstein – a New Yorker based in Liège for nearly 25 years – has long been well liked and respected by the drivers, who invariably stress the importance, in the event of an accident, of having on hand a doctor both familiar and absolutely trusted. Strange are the ways of the Place de la Concorde.



"Hartstein was told that his services would no longer be required"

My experience of Texas previously, as I say, had been limited to that single visit to Dallas nearly 30 years earlier, and I never forgot the ad in the lift of my hotel there, extolling the attractions of one of its several restaurants: 'A wonderful place to see – and be seen'. Austin, I had been told, was very different from Dallas – indeed, from anywhere else in Texas – and so it proved. As well as being the State Capital, it is known as 'The Live Music Capital Of The World', and feels like a university town, a liberal sort of place, where they tell you with some pride that they did *not* vote for George W Bush. Fighting talk, this, in the Lone Star state.

It was with pride, too, that the locals spoke of this new association with F1, in a way that rather reminded me of Adelaide. While everyone likes Melbourne, the Australian Grand Prix is merely another major sporting event there and the city doesn't get behind the race in the way of smaller and more relaxed Adelaide, which was plainly thrilled to bring F1 to Australia. For a few days the place *became* the race, as does Montréal to this day. Who knows whether Austin will follow the same path, but this was more than a promising beginning: "Be sure and come back next year, honey," said the hotel receptionist as I checked out. "Formula 1's the best thing that's happened to Austin in my lifetime…"

A Silverstone-size crowd came in on race day, but even on the Friday – when there was an attendance of 55,000 – it was apparent that the reincarnated US Grand Prix was going to be a success, not least because the track is readily accessible to Mexicans, who have always been besotted with F1, have no home race at the moment and now have one of their own – Sergio Perez – to cheer for. The estimate was that 40 per cent of the crowd was from Mexico, and next year, when Esteban Gutierrez will also be aboard and – more to the point – Perez will be in a McLaren, the clamour for race tickets will presumably be all the greater.

Sadly for his adoring countrymen, Sergio – who curiously has not had a decent race since signing his new contract – was a middling 11th in Texas, but at the front there was an engrossing scrap between Vettel and Hamilton, and that was good because everyone had recognised the importance of putting on a memorable first show. One thing to get them in, after all, another to get them back.

This was Lewis at his absolute best. He had started alongside Sebastian on the front row, but although he gave relentless chase one had the feeling that the Red Bull would need to falter if it were going to be passed. On lap 42, with 14 to the flag, this duly came to be: through the flat-out swerves (modelled on Becketts) early in the lap, the leaders came upon Karthikeyan's HRT.

Narain was driving as fast as his hapless car would allow, but he had qualified seven seconds away from Vettel's pole time and the track layout at that point offers no opportunity to move over. It was therefore

inevitable that Hamilton would close up, and once they were into the DRS zone he jinked by into the lead.

Vettel angrily communicated his feelings over the radio, but really there was nothing whatever Karthikeyan could have done. Later he said he'd had about enough of the World Champion's ranting insults, having already borne them earlier in the year, at Sepang.

And when you thought about it, it wasn't as though Sebastian had *always* suffered at Narain's hand. Why, only a fortnight earlier, in Abu Dhabi, the impoverished HRT's hydraulics had failed (again), precipitating the accident with Rosberg's Mercedes, which brought out the safety car, which closed up the field, which wiped out a 24-second deficit for Vettel, which helped him on his way to an unexpected place on the podium, which gave him 15 points, which…

Some you lose, some you win. Bruton can tell you all about it.





Red Bull used rules to Vettel's benefit in Abu Dhabi (below), as did Ferrari for Alonso in Austin

Before the race in Austin the big talking-point, of course, was Ferrari's decision to change the gearbox of Felipe Massa's car – or rather not to change it, but, simply by cutting an FIA seal, to incur the five-place grid penalty for doing so.

It occurred to me that someone landing that morning from Mars might have had a problem in understanding this curious behaviour: why would a team *volunteer* for a penalty – and how could that penalty be beneficial?

Well, because the track was brand new, rendering the dirty side of the grid even more of a disadvantage than usual. The Ferraris of Massa and Alonso had qualified seventh and ninth, but a five-place penalty for Romain Grosjean (whose Lotus really did need a gearbox change) moved them up to sixth and eighth – and to the slippery side of the grid.

Ferrari, it will be remembered, was at the time rather keen on trying to help Alonso win the World Championship, and someone twigged that a five-place penalty for Massa would move Fernando up to fifth, while the selfless Felipe would also be on the clean side, albeit now back in 11th.

Thus, after Charlie Whiting had been advised of the team's intent, it was the work of a moment to cut Massa's gearbox seal – and at once a torrent of abuse came Ferrari's way. What they had done was unsporting, not in the spirit of motor racing, and on and on. I could see the point people were making, even if I somewhat doubted the indignant protestations of some team principals that they would *never* countenance doing anything of the kind. Heaven forfend…

Did I like it? No, honestly – but nor was I surprised by it. For one thing, this is the age of expediency, and if ever there were an Olympian spirit in our sport, it long ago drowned in the commercial sea. For another, in recent years the rules and regulations in F1 have multiplied, sometimes in damn silly ways, one of which is that if a car's gearbox needs changing there is a penalty, and the only one to suffer is the blameless driver.

On this occasion Ferrari – positively wishing to incur the penalty – turned the rule around to suit its own needs. Article 28.6 (e) of the Sporting Regulations reads thus: 'A replacement gearbox will also be deemed to have been used if any of the FIA seals are damaged or removed from the original gearbox after it has been used for the first time'. Out came the tin snips.

I couldn't really understand the strength of the opprobrium hurled Ferrari's way, I must say, for at the previous race, in Abu Dhabi, Red Bull had employed similarly lateral thinking, the only difference being that the driver of its other car did not suffer as a consequence.

Vettel, it will be remembered, was required to start from the back because, after he had stopped his car out on the circuit at the end of qualifying, it was discovered by the scrutineers that less than a litre of fuel – the amount required for testing – remained in the tank, a shortcoming that automatically wipes all a driver's qualifying times.

Back to the Sporting Regulations. Article 34.5 states that, 'If a competitor modifies any part on the car or makes changes to the set-up of the suspension while the car is being held under *parc fermé* conditions, the relevant driver must start from the pit lane'.

Coming at that from a different angle… accept the penalty of starting from the pitlane (rather than the back of grid) – and you can make changes to the car. Given that Vettel was anyway going to be starting 24th, it was surely a no-brainer, and thus – almost uniquely in this era of F1 – Seb was able to go into the race with a car *very* different from how it had been in qualifying. Among the wholesale changes, for example, was a much longer top gear, which made for a Red Bull muscular on top speed – something we haven't seen for years, »»

Nigel Roebuck

because it doesn't fit in with the team's qualifying philosophy.

Not much, curiously, was said about Red Bull's action at the time – certainly not in a critical sense, anyway – but the logic surely was no different from Ferrari's in Austin: take a 'new era' rule and turn it around to your own advantage. Like it or not, on both occasions it worked a treat.

A text from Keke Rosberg: 'You journos should put pressure on the FIA to homologate helmet designs for the season!!!'

I'm not sure that the governing body has ever been terribly interested in the opinions of the press, but I couldn't agree more with Keke's sentiment. One of the reasons why, in childhood, I was originally drawn to Jean Behra was that I loved his helmet design. In those days Grand Prix drivers' helmets tended to be the colour in which they had left the factory, but Behra's white one had a black chequered band around it, and that made him instantly identifiable. In 1958, for reasons I have never been able to discover, he took occasionally to wearing a plain brown helmet. I didn't like that at all: it wasn't *him*.

Innes Ireland also admired Behra's chequered design, adopting it himself after Jean's death in 1959 and gradually 'individual' helmets began to proliferate in the sport. Almost from the beginning of his life as a racing driver, for example, Graham Hill had adopted the colours of the London Rowing Club, a tradition carried on by Damon and now by Josh. A helmet colour was synonymous with a driver: Michele Alboreto's, for example, was metallic blue in honour of his hero Ronnie Peterson, and Lewis Hamilton's is yellow because he idolised Ayrton Senna.

Throughout a driver's career, therefore, his fans could recognise him at a glance, but of late it has increasingly become the custom – among some, anyway – to have a different helmet design for virtually every race, and I am at a loss to understand from where this has come from, and why. Given that the race numbers of F1 cars today are tiny, and difficult to spot in the morass of sponsors' names and logos, the colour of a driver's helmet – itself less easy to see in this era of high cockpit sides – has long been the spectator's way of keeping track of the order. Red helmet? Michael…

At Interlagos we saw it in a racing car for the last time, but whereas Schumacher's first finale, at the same circuit in 2006, had been memorable, involving a stunning comeback drive after a puncture, this time around his retirement race was more a subplot than the main event.

Six years ago Michael went to São Paulo knowing he had only the flimsiest of chances to beat Fernando Alonso to the World Championship, but well aware that, whatever else, he could go out on a high, with victory in his last race. It didn't happen, though: after being fastest in Q2, he missed Q3 altogether with a fuel feed problem and thus started 10th. Team-mate Felipe Massa took pole position and duly ran away with the race, while Schumacher, puncture and all, charged back to fourth, overtaking Kimi Räikkönen's McLaren with three laps to go.

It was a beautifully incisive pass into the first turn, simply obliging Räikkönen to yield, and symbolically it was important to Michael, too, for Kimi's signing was the reason he was being ushered out of Ferrari, and into – what? Three years of insupportable boredom, as it turned out, during which he desperately missed driving Grand Prix cars. Having retired before he was done with racing, Schumacher was always going to be more susceptible than most to a comeback.

This time around Michael's retirement race was rather quieter than before. As in 2006 he started back in the pack, and as before, too, he picked up a puncture. In the treacherous conditions he then put in a fine drive back to seventh – which perhaps could have been sixth, had he chosen to resist Vettel in the late laps. In 20 years surely no one ever 'overtook' Schumacher as easily as this.

Christian Horner described the gesture as 'gracious': others had a different word for it. Probably we shouldn't have been surprised, though, for Michael was taking his leave, after all, and he and Sebastian are close. Obviously he wouldn't have wanted to jeopardise his friend's World Championship prospects in any way, and of course another couple of points could come in handy. In the end Vettel scraped it by three, but 30 seconds into the race it looked as though he had thrown it away.

'Yes – but is he lucky?' The words are traditionally attributed to Napoleon when considering promotions in his army, when the qualities of this or that general were trotted out to him. Beyond question Vettel is a Grand Prix driver from the very top drawer, but it's undeniable, too, that good fortune tends to ride with him. In Abu Dhabi, for example, he drove a strong race





from his pitlane start, but only a couple of safety cars – which each time wiped out a 20-odd second deficit to the leader – allowed him to make the podium.

After the first lap in Brazil, though, the chances of Sebastian's finishing at all seemed slim, for he came by dead last and in a plainly damaged car. Even so, the more you studied the chaotic events at the fourth turn, *Descida do Lago*, the more you came to realise just how many bullets he had already dodged.

Uncharacteristically tentative, Vettel arrived at the corner seventh, having already lost three places. There Räikkönen locked up under braking, and charitably went off the road to avoid him. Kimi didn't miss the Red Bull by much.

Vettel then made contact with Senna, who had made to overtake him into the turn. Coming out of it, the Red Bull spun, then again ran into Bruno, this time sizeably, which pitched the Williams into Perez's Sauber. Both were eliminated on the spot, while Sebastian went down the middle of the track backwards, somehow avoided by the following pack.

If still mobile, his car was all too evidently damaged. Several times, at the end of the lap, he kept to the left as he passed the pits, enabling his crew to get a look at the sidepod and rear corner. Soon they came back to him, reporting that it was nothing they could fix, but, fearing that the broken exhaust might set the bodywork on fire, they instructed Seb to change the engine mapping in the hope that a richer mixture would keep the exhaust temperature to a manageable level. At his first stop they also made an aero adjustment.

> "Contemporary F1 has become absurdly complex in so many ways"

Extraordinarily, the Red Bull kept going. It might have been fortunate for Vettel that for most of the afternoon the surface was at least damp, for his car had lost a chunk of downforce, and when the track was at its driest – around mid-race – he was a second off the pace, but altogether Sebastian adapted superbly to its deficiencies and thus a third World Championship was won.

Napoleon would have hired him like a shot, mind you. If he was fortunate to have come through the chaos on the first lap, he was also mighty lucky not to have been investigated by the stewards – and given a 'drive-through' penalty – for causing the shunt with Senna in the first place. Bruno, not at all amused at being punted out on the opening lap of his home Grand Prix, rightly pointed out that he was on the correct line in turn four, that Vettel had chopped across him.



Friendly foes (left). Schumacher bows out, Brazil 2006 (below left). Vettel in a muddle, Brazil 2012

In the course of the race there were suggestions that Seb had passed Kobayashi's Sauber 'under yellow', but these were swiftly and correctly dismissed. During the following week, though, a clip from Vettel's cockpit came to light, suggesting that he had passed Jean-Eric Vergne illegally, and indeed there was no disputing that the yellow lights on Seb's dash were on as he went by the Toro Rosso.

It was surely unthinkable to change the result of the World Championship days later – and indeed the controversy in any case came to light too late for a protest to be made. Nevertheless Ferrari sought 'clarification' from the FIA, which predictably brought condemnation from far and wide, but which, as Stefano Domenicali explained, was thought necessary to quell the howls of outrage from fans bombarding the team's website.

An FIA statement absolved Vettel of any offence, pointing out that, no matter what lights were on (at trackside or on the Red Bull's dash), Seb had passed a green flag before passing Vergne, that flags had precedence over lights and so on. Nobody doubted the governing body's findings, and Ferrari declared the matter closed, but it struck me – yet again – that contemporary F1 has become absurdly complex in so many ways: it was easy to understand why – on a murky afternoon, when trackside flags were difficult to spot on a TV screen – those who noted yellow lights in Vettel's cockpit initially presumed him guilty.

The affair necessarily precipitated a frenzy of internet activity, of course, and I'll confess to finding quite disturbing much of the reaction to sundry blogs and the like. In fact, this has been the case for quite a while: many 'fans' seem to *hate* Alonso, to *hate* Vettel and so on: I don't know where this virulence has come from, but the tone of many comments smacks more, I'm afraid to say, of football than motor racing.

During his ongoing battle with Ayrton Senna, 20 years ago, Alain Prost once told me he'd noticed a similar phenomenon. "I want to say to people, 'By all means, support Ayrton if you want to – but don't hate *me*!' For God's Sake, this is supposed to be sport, not war…" Ⓜ

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DISPATCHES



Rex Features

MOTHS AND RATTLESNAKES

"DO YOU KNOW THIS BLOKE RICHARD NOBLE?" SAYS THE news editor. "Yes," I say, "he's about to go for a new Land Speed Record and…" "Yeah, we know. We need you to get out there and cover it for us and ITN." "Right," I say.

"We'll get you on a flight to San Francisco, then it's up to you to get to Nevada. We'll find a local camera crew."

That's how it started, my sojourn in the tiny hamlet of Gerlach in the Black Rock desert. And now Mr Noble is gearing up to do it all again, this time on a desert in South Africa, with his driver Andy Green and a rocket-powered car called Bloodhound.

Back in the autumn of 1983 Noble himself did the driving, strapped into a 'safety cell' alongside a Rolls-Royce Avon jet engine. But that wasn't all he did, as I quickly discovered.

Having found a room in a motel, my first port of call was the grandly-named Bruno's Country Club, the operational headquarters for the Thrust team. Noble's leadership qualities were immediately apparent. The man is a whirlwind, never standing still and, it seemed, never sleeping. Soon after my arrival, an engine problem was threatening to derail the project. Noble gave his friend John Griffiths of the *Financial Times* an exclusive story about the engine problem in return for which John would somehow obtain the private fax number of Rolls-Royce chairman Sir William Duncan. Noble's message from Gerlach was clear: "If you decide not to help us, we will have to come home." The chairman was outraged at being put on the spot but Noble got his way, and an engineer was dispatched from Atlanta.

With the car out of action, Noble soon had me out on the desert for some last-minute 'fodding', a term devised by the USAF to describe 'foreign object damage'. This entailed walking the course in temperatures approaching 100 degrees, picking up anything that could be sucked into the jet engine. By the end of the day I was hallucinating and saw tiny stones in my sleep.

Late nights playing pool with the locals in the Miners Club were the only recreation. My daily reports back to ITV were done from a neon-lit call box, giant moths in my hair and rattlesnakes crossing the road. I was glad of my knee-high desert boots on dark nights.

The man from Atlanta, a happy Lancastrian called George Webb, soon had the engine back on song and on September 29 Noble did a single run at 622.837mph to equal Gary Gabelich's record. But he needed to do two runs to establish a record and the sponsor contracts were due to expire the following day. In his room along the corridor from mine, Noble began a series of persuasive phone calls, one of his specialities. My news editor was also becoming restless. "When's he going to do this thing?" he kept asking me. To relieve the tension a few of us went skinny-dipping in a hot pool in the desert and were promptly sent packing by the local sheriff. Time was running out.

Then, on October 4, in perfect weather conditions after three days of high winds, there was a feeling that this would be the day. We stood in the desert and held our breath as Noble prepared for his first run. Not a time for Thrust's ignition system to fail, but that's what happened. We couldn't take much more of this. Then finally it happened, the huge gold-painted car streaking across the desert at 624.241mph, the return run producing 642.971mph to give an average through the measured mile of 633.468mph, a new World Land Speed Record. As Noble climbed from the cockpit I asked him why he'd put himself through years of graft and turmoil to do this. "For Britain, and for the hell of it," he replied. My cameraman flew back to Reno and later that day these words would be broadcast all around the world.

In 1997 Noble and his driver Andy Green were back in Gerlach, Thrust SSC taking the record to 763mph. Next year they will do it all again, this time aiming for 1000mph. I would dearly love to see that. Note to editor: I still have my desert boots.

Mat Oxley

ON TWO WHEELS



HRC

MOTOGP'S OLDEST FOES

UNLESS AUDI WORKS SOME INSTANT MAGIC AT DUCATI, THE contest for the 2013 MotoGP crown will be a straight duel between Honda and Yamaha. The precedent is no less than the past 30 years. Since 1983, the sport's oldest foes have been beaten only once to the championship for constructors.

That's quite a duopoly, but perhaps more surprising is that after all these years both manufacturers play the game the same way: Honda has more horsepower, Yamaha better handling. With a couple of exceptions it has always been thus.

Remember last summer's epic Brno duel between Jorge Lorenzo and Dani Pedrosa? The helicopter shots clearly illustrated the contrasting characteristics the companies' bikes have carried for so long, almost as if Japan's love of tradition demands it.

Pedrosa frequently ran crazily wide in Brno's sweeping curves as he fought to overcome the Honda's traditional understeer. And then they got to the straights, where Lorenzo's fine-handling YZR-M1 showed off its traditional lack of speed. On the final straight Pedrosa happily rode past to win. There's a reason it's called the Honda Motor Company.

Always more technically adventurous, Honda uses a screamer engine that creates more power in a wilder style than Yamaha's big-bang counterpart. The anger is tamed with a torque sensor that measures chain force so the ECU can tell the engine exactly how much torque to produce at any given moment. The RCV's 'torductor' and slick-shifter gearbox are two technologies taken from car racing and miraculously shrunk to motorcycle size. HRC's MotoGP chief Shuhei Nakamoto once ran Honda's F1 operation...

Yamaha is more cautious in its technical ambitions. The first YZR-M1 of 2002 used antique fuelling technology – carburettors – while everyone else was forging ahead with fuel injection.

However, Yamaha seems to have a better understanding of MotoGP chassis technology. The company is very good at building rider-friendly frames that are subtly flexible in all the right places to deliver excellent grip, steering and feedback at 65 degrees of lean; an engineering conundrum that's hellishly difficult to solve.

It's also rather neat that the exhaust notes of the two machines exactly describe their contrasting characters: the aggressive RCV emits a spine-chilling yowl, while the cool, calm M1 burbles along.

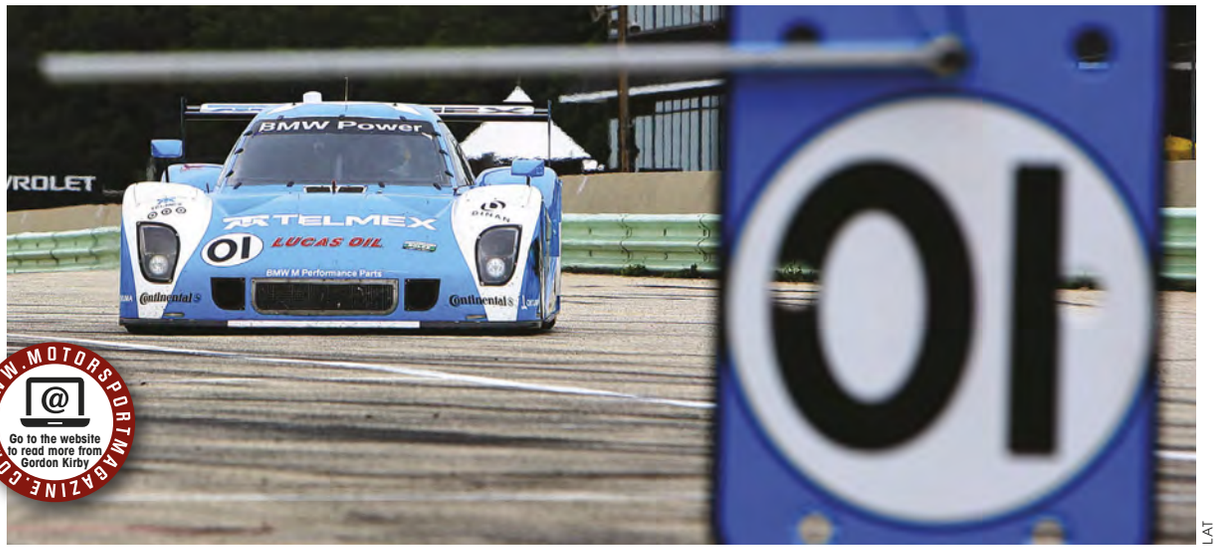
Most peculiarly of all, these characteristics don't apply only to the bikes, they also run deep in the culture of each company. Honda's race department has always been a bigger, brasher deal than Yamaha's. Over most of the past few decades HRC has been led by men who make sure you are aware of their power and their genius for creating it.

Youchi Oguma – the architect of Honda's stunning GP successes in the 1980s and 1990s – was a charismatic Samurai warlord with a fondness for donning a Banzai headband. He made his opposite numbers at Yamaha seem like Taoist monks.

Honda's race department has always been robust with its riders. Valentino Rossi quit after winning three world titles because he felt his contribution wasn't fully appreciated. He switched to Yamaha, vowing to prove that man is more important than machine. His remark cut deep at HRC: when Rossi was floundering around on the Ducati, Nakamoto quipped, "Now is the time for him to prove what he said." He had a point.

Contrast that with a bizarre situation that arose at Yamaha when Rossi beat Max Biaggi to the final 500 title in 2001. Biaggi liked to blame his YZR500's front end for his inability to beat Rossi's NSR500, so towards the season's end Yamaha staged a press conference to admit culpability – that Biaggi was a genius and they were engineering dunces. This was wrong, of course; the YZR500 was a great motorcycle, but the firm had been bludgeoned into self-flagellation by a rider's grossly swollen ego. It is inconceivable that HRC would ever be hoodwinked in this manner.

THE US SCENE



LAT

WWW.MOTORSPORTMAGAZINE.COM
Go to the website to read more from Gordon Kirby

GRAND DAYS FOR PRUETT

THE ROLEX 24 HOURS AT DAYTONA KICKS OFF THE AMERICAN racing season. Coming in the middle of the northern hemisphere's winter, Daytona's long-distance grind attracts drivers from many disciplines and is equally attractive to fans looking to break out of winter's cold and snowy grip. But over the past few decades the race has lacked some of its original lustre because American sports car racing has been divided into two series – the Grand-Am and the American Le Mans Series.

In 2014 the rival series will come together and for the first time in many years both Daytona and March's Sebring 12 Hours will feature the same field of cars and drivers. It remains to be seen how the different formula will work as one, but everyone hopes that American sports car racing will enjoy stronger fields and a wider range of interest from fans and the media.

Meanwhile, this winter's Rolex 24 will continue to feature the rather boxy, unattractive Daytona prototypes led by Chip Ganassi's six-time champion team and its star driver Scott Pruett who stands today in a class of his own as America's quintessential sports car racer. Pruett, 52, has raced everything from Indycars to NASCAR stock cars, IMSA GTP, GTO and GTU cars, Trans-Am cars and even Aussie V8s, and of course Daytona prototypes.

Scott won two IMSA GTO and three Trans-Am championships before moving up the ranks. His record includes 38 Daytona prototype wins, four outright Daytona 24 Hours victories and five more class wins, plus two Indycar victories – the Michigan 500 in 1995 and Surfer's Paradise in '97 – scored during CART's heydays.

Pruett is proud of beating more powerful Ford and Chevrolet-engined prototypes to last year's Grand-Am title with Ganassi's Riley-BMW. The new Corvette Daytona prototype in particular made more downforce than the Riley, and Chevrolet won the manufacturer's championship. Pruett feels Grand-Am rules allowed the Ford and Chevrolet prototypes to outpower his car.

"I think everybody in the paddock agreed that Ford had the best powerplant, without a doubt," Pruett says. "The Chevy was probably the most efficient and made the highest amount of downforce and it showed. We were lacking in downforce and we were lacking in power, without a doubt."

Scott hopes the Grand-Am officials will create a more level playing field in 2013. "Grand-Am told us they know things are askew and they're going to come up with an equalising formula for next year, which they need to. Quite frankly, BMW is frustrated and why wouldn't they be? Car-wise, we'll just have to wait and see. The Riley cars need help on short, high-downforce circuits, no question. So we'll see what the governing body comes up with and how they can equalise things."

He's also quick to give credit to lesser-known Mexican team-mate Memo Rojas. "Memo has done a great job. He's really come along well and Telmex activate their sponsorship programme very aggressively in Mexico, so there's huge visibility for the programme which has helped make Memo a big star in Mexico."

Looking further down the road to 2014 Pruett is bullish about Grand-Am's merger with the American Le Mans Series. "It's going to be huge for the sport," he declares. "Absolutely a great thing."

Scott believes the only way forward for the new combined series will be to apply NASCAR's formula for setting a level playing field rather than trying to encourage factory teams and high-tech machinery. "Will there be some heartburn in 2014?" he asks. "Without a doubt. Not everybody is going to be happy.

"But I am very optimistic that Grand-Am will do the right thing and stay with the mission statement of NASCAR: hard, close, competitive racing at a reasonably affordable price. I'm confident they'll get it right and they need to. The sport needs it."

For all of us, Pruett included, it will be intriguing to see the results of the combined formula for 2014 and beyond.

Letters

Dirty talk

Sir,

What a charmless swipe from Sebastian Vettel, alleging "dirty tricks" by his rivals – by which he is presumably referring to Ferrari's grid strategy in the US and its deliberate hobbling of Massa's gearbox.

Before he next speaks out, Vettel should learn the history of his sport. It has long been accepted practice for a driver to assist his team-mate when the latter retains a slim chance of winning the championship. In 1956, when Fangio retired at Monza, his team-mate Peter Collins (who himself was still in the title hunt) came into the pits and handed over his car to Fangio, who duly went on to take the title.

Sacrificing a few places on the grid is small beer by comparison. Vettel's undignified sniping will simply confirm the belief of many fans that the more worthy World Champion would have been Fernando Alonso.

David Goddard, Hove, Sussex

Leopards and spots

Sir,

Michael Schumacher is leaving the sport just as he entered it, as a bully, as evidenced by his career-long on-track incidents and the arrogance implied by those manoeuvres – he seemed to think the rules did not apply to him, to wit his driving Button into the pit lane exit in Texas. I can't believe officials ignored it. I hope driver steward Emerson Fittipaldi put up a fight to penalise him, but I fear not. A Brazilian threatening Michael on the eve of his final GP in Brazil would be political suicide. It was a lost opportunity to hand out a one-race suspension, which would have been a perfect footnote to an imperfect career.

I would have been willing to buy Michael's ticket to Brazil, so he could watch the race from the cheap seats (if such things exist).

Locke de Bretteville, California

Tricks versus talent

Sir,

As a Ferrari fan since the days of Hawthorn and Collins, am I alone in voicing my concern at the team's tactical stance during the United States Grand Prix?

Over the years, many ways of gaining an advantage, by teams and drivers alike, have been viewed as unsporting, ungentlemanly and bringing the sport into disrepute. It pained me to hear what had gone on to give Alonso a better chance, and I know, before anyone reaches for their laptop or pen to remind me of the Schumacher era, that this is not new. To me it seems to highlight the 'win at all costs' ethic that has prevailed over the years, not only at Ferrari but at other teams as well.

The list of offences goes on: Coulthard's submission to Häkkinen in Australia, Barrichello's and Massa's similar moves for Schumacher, Schumacher's barge at Hill and Villeneuve and his near-miss last year with Rubens, Senna's barge at Alesi and his 'accident' with Prost, the deluge of water left on the grid as cars jettisoned their 'brake coolant', flexible wings, tricky exhausts, cute engine mapping. All examples of pushing the boundaries of the rules and regulations.

Had Fernando won the championship, it would not have sat easily in my memory; in fact all the fantastic drives he has made in every GP this year would have been erased by that.

I am not a stick in the mud, longing for days gone by, but I do wish the owners and directors of the teams, and F1's chiefs for that matter, would not treat us as idiots, without heart or passion for the sport we love. The attraction has already started to melt away at some of the venues – you only have to see the empty seats and bare bankings. Soon the die-hards will question spending hard-earned money to view a sport that can be won not by the best driver in a good car, but by those with no heart at all, just bags of trickery.

Tim Latham, Alrewas, Burton upon Trent, Staffs

Less is more

Sir,

Being a lifelong fan of F1 I feel compelled to put my view across concerning the length of the current F1 season. A wonderful season it has certainly been. Whatever arguments are presented about DRS and KERS etc, it has certainly improved the show and introduced an element of unpredictability that can only be a good thing.

It has been a massively long season, though. I am starting to wonder if 20 races is too many. Certainly it's the absolute most there should be. Part of what I love about Formula 1 is the mystique of it all and the excitement building up through the week for a race at the weekend. But seven races in 10 weeks is just too much, and for me some of that old excitement has been diluted.

I am not sure what the answer is. I appreciate the teams' need for the summer break given the strains of such a long season. I certainly know Korea, Abu Dhabi and a few others have no place on an F1 calendar – characterless Tilke-dromes with no atmosphere or passion and miles of that blasted tarmac run-off area that does nothing to punish mistakes.

John Edwards, Maidenhead, Berkshire



The right crowd

Sir,

While the US Grand Prix in Austin was the best I've been to in a while – such a great circuit – I was really impressed by the crowd. We had a great field for the historic F1 race, the last event on Saturday afternoon, and from my picture I hope you can get a sense of all the people that stayed for the race. This was taken on the banking by Turn 19. Hopefully this will remain on the US GP schedule and maybe the paddock can be brought closer, so we can see the cars as we did at Indianapolis in 2000.

If Christopher Hilton was still with us I'd tell him for the next edition of *Grand Prix Battlegrounds* that Austin is a great circuit with excellent sight lines and plenty of rest rooms; it just needed more food stalls. And the queues to buy T-shirts etc were more than an hour long…

David Corbishley, Skillman, New Jersey, USA

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

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15 Lots Road, London SW10 0QJ
or e-mail: editorial@motorsportmagazine.co.uk

(Please include your full name and postal area)

Letters

Title challenge

Sir,

Further to David Baxter's wonderful collection of slides in 'You Were There' in December's issue, I was one of his friends who travelled down from Edinburgh to Oulton Park in the 1960s for the superb Gold Cup meetings. Although latterly for Formula 2, the entries were amazing and we have often wondered whether the entry for the 1965 race was at the time a record for the most past and future World Champions in one race – between them they would amass no fewer than 13 titles: Stewart three, Brabham three, Clark two, Graham Hill two, and Hulme, Rindt and Surtees one apiece.

Roger Paton, Edinburgh

Sunbeam tiger

Sir,

In May 1982 I was fire marshal at an Oulton Park meeting. I was allocated the infield post at Cascades, at the bottom of the steep downhill section of the circuit after Old Hall.

At this time the short circuit meant that drivers finished the sprint from the start/finish line, negotiated Old Hall and then had to think about their approach to Cascades and Fosters, accelerating as hard as they could towards a brow followed by a steep downhill into a left and almost immediate right. It was a complex section where the temptation to lift was tempered by the need to maintain momentum through Fosters ready for the run up Clay Hill to Druids.

As a marshal you learnt to watch the cars carefully to try and anticipate the drivers who were likely to come unstuck, especially where a car leaving the circuit was likely to be heading straight for you. The post at Cascades was particularly hazardous if the short circuit was being used. As a marshal you had only two pieces of Armco, three feet high, between you and the oncoming cars, which came into view suddenly over the brow. If a driver lost control they were frequently heading for you.

This day was especially memorable for the astonishing way the winner of a seemingly tame saloon car race managed to negotiate Cascades in a Talbot Sunbeam hatchback.

It was a one-make race for standard road cars from the Brands Hatch Racing School, and we were fairly relaxed as the leading cars approached over the hill. It quickly became apparent that the driver of the first car had no intention of slowing down. He carried on at such speed that the car heeled over, sliding on two wheels down the hill in an oversteering attitude, with the driver applying a small amount of opposite lock, still in top gear.

As the car got to the bottom of the hill the two wheels in mid-air hit the track with a loud bang, and the driver recovered the car while immediately braking hard and revving the engine as he did so to enable the required downchanges.

"He's left-foot braking," I said to a marshal. "We'd better watch out, he's close to the edge."

Next lap the car did exactly the same thing, only this time there was a large gap between it and the following cars. It was incredible, I had never seen anything like it. Every lap the same. The wheels in mid-air hit the floor in the same place, brake lights full on as the driver doubled down the gears. We even relaxed a bit, once we realised that he was not likely to lose control.

He won that seven-lap race by nearly 10 seconds. We were gobsmacked. A year later he changed his racing name from Ayrton da Silva to Ayrton Senna.

Charlie Plant, Waterloo, Liverpool

North Yorks Grand Prix

Sir,

As the Grand Prix season finale loomed I was somewhat sceptical of my wife's plan to spend a long weekend in the North Yorkshire moors. We stayed in a picturesque, almost idyllic cottage, but the internet was not available and that meant watching the Grand Prix the old-school way on TV. Undeterred, the race was sure to be my highlight of the weekend.

That was until I walked into the local country inn, for a pre-lunch pint, and noticed a selection of beautifully painted portraits of Formula 1 drivers from the 1950s to modern day.

"Well?" came a voice from a gentleman in the corner of the bar, "how many can you name?"

The likes of Montoya and modern-day drivers were easy, as was Jim Clark.

"I want to say Surtees to that one," I said unsurely, explaining my knowledge starts really from the 1970s. I was told to guess again: "British Ferrari drivers". I wanted to say Hawthorn but there was no bow tie. "Peter Collins," came the reply.

Within minutes my new friend and I were talking racing. "Do you read *Motor Sport*?" I was asked. "Have done for years," I replied.

"What do you think of Nigel Roebuck?"

"Genius, been reading his work since a boy, with his Fifth Columns in *Autosport*."

"What do you think of Jenks?"

"Stubborn old legend."

The conversation was getting more and more captivating, and then it was suggested I look at the photos in the far corner. These were pictures of this fascinating gentleman racing sports cars in the 1970s on real circuits such as Nürburgring and the old Spa. I was engrossed. I asked for more about Spa. Then came the quote of the weekend…

"I touched the brake going into Masta and Pedro Rodriguez overtook me on the outside!" Brilliant.

By now my in-laws were suggesting we were going to be late for lunch, which was when my friend's wife asked me if I knew what 'the dog house' was?

"Which one? I know of two and my wife's in charge of the one I'll be in!" The other was of course the domain of racing wives. This was another conversation I was itching to have; however, the family won and I had to leave.

So if you're passing sleepy Rosedale Abbey, fancy a pint and see the White Horse, you might want to stop. I can assure you the conversation is truly first class. Thank you, Peter Smith.

Turns out the Grand Prix was a thriller, but not the highlight of my weekend after all.

Stan Wiles, Chesterfield, Derbyshire

KEEP IN TOUCH

The *Motor Sport* website is *the* place to discuss motor racing past, present and future. Don't miss the opportunity to comment on blogs, video and audio podcasts, and read Nigel Roebuck's newsletter and the editor's monthly letter. To get involved in the discussion simply log on to **www.motorsportmagazine.com** and tell our writers exactly what you think!
Also, don't forget that if you have any images which would be suitable for our You Were There feature in the magazine, please send them to the office (address on p42).

Keep two Chevrons apart

Sir,

As an avid reader since schooldays in the 1960s and, in period, a great fan of Peter Gethin I must humbly advise that the photo captioned as Geth in the Chevron article is in fact one of Brian Redman. I recall Geth was driving a brown car when my pals and I witnessed his great win. Notwithstanding this, keep up the good work – still a wonderful monthly read.

Jon Jeffery, Wooburn Green, Bucks

HIGHLIGHTS OF THE YEAR

GORDON KIRBY

The DeltaWing's birth pains... and gains

The DeltaWing went through a difficult birth – spurned by IndyCar, scoffed at by many vocal critics and discouraged in some political backrooms of American racing. So it was encouraging and even a little heart-warming to see the likes of Dan Gurney, Don Panoz and Nissan get their minds around the concept and put their collective time, effort and money into bringing the project to life.



ROB WIDDOWS

A reason not to leave dirty socks in Belgian hotels

I have long since reported on the Spa 24 Hours, so suffice to say that Audi got it right and was followed home by a BMW Z4, which had come from 49th on the grid. This was a thriller all the way, however, with no time to dwell on soaking wet feet. A few days later the Formula 1 teams were due in Spa for the Belgian Grand Prix. As I left my hotel on the Monday, Madame told me the next occupant of my room would be Bernie Ecclestone. That was a good moment. Hope I didn't leave anything under the bed.

WEB SPIN

What we're all talking about @ www.motorsportmagazine.com

As the 2012 Formula 1 season faded behind us and the festive season approached, the *Motor Sport* website looked back at a year of racing.

In this issue we review the Formula 1 season with 1979 World Champion Jody Scheckter – the full recording of which you can find online now – but on the website we looked beyond Formula 1 with a month-by-month review of all the major series. All our contributors wrote about their highlight of the year, which ranged from the success of the DeltaWing to the unique delights of experiencing racing in Japan. In addition, Ed Foster looked back at every team and driver on the Formula 1 grid.



As well as our seasonal review there's all the usual great content online: on the 60th anniversary of Water Speed Record hero John Cobb's death, Paul Fearnley's tribute feature is a particular highlight.

We've also just launched our new online directory, which we hope will soon become *the* place to find motor sport-related products and services. *Motor Sport* was world-famous for its classifieds and products in the back of the magazine – we hope the online version will go some way to reinstating that.

TOP TWEETS

@dariofranchitti
Well done @JensonButton what a drive!! Congrats to Seb and @alo_oficial (Fernando Alonso) on a great season battle

@Damien__Smith
Work just ceased at @Motor_Sport thanks to two new books arriving from Rainer Schlegelmilch on F1 and sports cars. Just AMAZING!

@matoxley
Plan is reduce proto performance & raise CRT performance so that they meet in middle. Then slow down WSB.

@Andrew_Frankel
Just had it confirmed by @SJohanssonF1 (Stefan Johansson) that he did do a sub 1 min lap of Goodwood. By my maths, that's 144mph ave. Unimaginable. Literally.

@Damien__Smith
He rode his luck - and how - but VET is special. A great champion. As for ALO, what a class act. Great to watch these guys at it all year.

@Ed__Foster
In case anyone was wondering: there are about 9000 words in a @Motor_Sport podcast. I only know that as I just had to transcribe one.

@olivergavin
@Huffsport (Rob Huff) Congrats fella!! WORLD CHAMPION!! I'm sure that sounds pretty good!

@matoxley
Rossi: You never lose talent, only the physical ability/mental choice to use it. He'll be competitive for sure, but how competitive?

@Ed__Foster
#Bottas trending everywhere. I guess everyone likes Williams/rates him as much as us here in the @Motor_Sport office. No pressure mate.

@Andrew_Frankel
Was Domenicali not just bending rules as far as they'll go, just as Newey does with every car he designs? Blame the rule makers, not them.

@Ed__Foster
Kimi Räikkönen was clearly using Apple Maps during the Brazilian GP.

@dariofranchitti
Great to see @pauldirestaf1 do his stuff today @circuitamericas. It looks like an amazing track.

TEAM-BY-TEAM REVIEW 2012

MARUSSIA

Marussia, né Virgin, is another team that entered the sport under the promise of a much stricter budget cap. That plan never materialised – although the team has operated largely as though such a thing were in force. There's hope on the horizon as the 2013 challenger will be the first Marussia/Virgin car to be designed from scratch using a wind tunnel as well as CFD – something that should have been done three years ago.

TORO ROSSO

The burning question is whether or not Toro Rosso made the right move when it unceremoniously dumped Alguersuari and Buemi. Team principal Franz Tost has made it clear that this is a training ground for young drivers, much like Sauber, and neither of the 2011 drivers has yet showed they have what it takes to sit alongside the likes of Vettel (let's be honest here – Toro Rosso team-mates are in a straight fight for a seat at Red Bull).

MONTH-BY-MONTH



ALEX HARMER

January/February 2012

Bruno Senna was confirmed as a Williams driver, bringing back some emotional memories for fans of his uncle. However, the team was coming off its worst season for years and, after shedding smart veteran Rubens Barrichello, there were rumblings that a mistake had been made... not least from Barrichello.

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52 FRIENDS, RIVALS & FIXERS
THE MEN I RACED FOR AND AGAINST

58 BETTER THAN TROPHIES...
THE CARS I RACED – AND COLLECTED

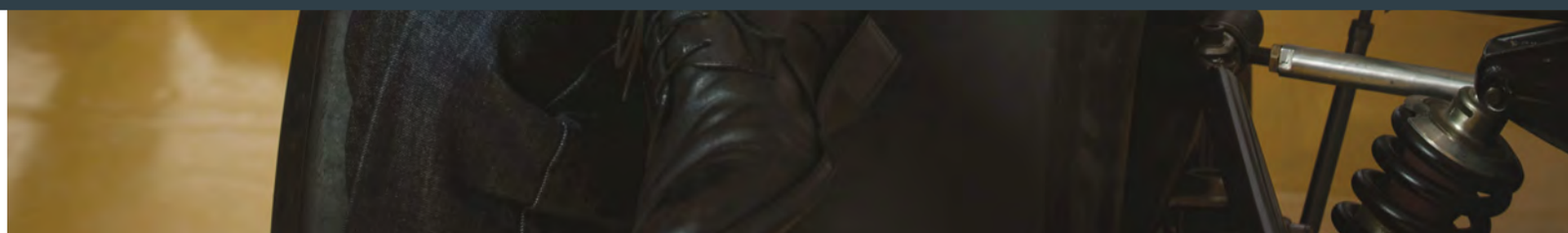
66 AND HE WALKED AWAY
MY LIFE AFTER I QUIT FORMULA 1



“It’s more than 30 years since I walked away from Formula 1. I’ve lived at least two more lives since my racing days, and today I’m more interested in the price of eggs than how to make the fastest lap time. But when I was asked to be guest editor of *Motor Sport* for an issue, it gave me a rare chance to reflect on my old life. So take a trip with me, back to the super ’70s, when I raced memorable cars against terrific drivers, in the sport’s most colourful decade.”

JODY SCHECKTER ON THE SUPER 70s

GUEST EDITOR SPECIAL



Friends, foes and fixers

"For a single decade, racing was my life. During my years in the cockpit I built friendships and rivalries with flamboyant drivers, eccentric team owners – and the odd character who was almost as difficult as me… Here's how I remember them"



JAMES HUNT

1976 WORLD CHAMPION – AND FRIEND

I liked James. We were in Spain together, when he was in a fancy place and I was down the road in a farmhouse. I was very friendly with him, but didn't agree with a lot that he did. When he was World Champion, it was all hip and great, whatever he did and however badly he behaved. When he stopped being World Champion it was just bad manners, and he didn't get away with it so much. He lived more in a short life than most do. He had a very short, good career, but it was the stuff he was doing off the track that made you nervous.

KEN TYRRELL

TEAM OWNER AND JODY'S 'FROTHY' BOSS FROM 1974-76

When I came back from the US in the 1990s I became more friendly with him than when I drove for him. It was a nice family atmosphere at the team, but Ken could be difficult. The race that stands out is one at the Nürburgring when the race was stopped after a lap and the nose of my car had a bit of damage. Ken went off at me, and he always spat a bit… The first lap at the 'Ring was always like a war, and it was wet. Did I know who touched my nose? Absolutely not.

After my third year, when they had the six-wheeler – which I didn't like, I didn't believe in the theory – it got harder. And my team-mate Patrick [Depailler] was saying it was fantastic. It reminds me a bit of the situation Hamilton found himself in this year. When I moved from Tyrrell was I thinking about whether I'd do better at another team? No. It was just the fact that I had to go somewhere else. It was a personal thing. It wasn't that I didn't like anybody at Tyrrell, it was just that my time was up there.

A thing I admired was Ken's relationship with his wife Norah. She was lovely. They were always like a couple on honeymoon, which was lovely after so many years together. I thought I could never last that long in a marriage. But I have.





All images LAT



RONNIE PETERSON

10-TIME GP WINNER, AKA 'SUPERSWEDE'

A lovely chap. He lived in Monaco when we were down there. Naïve, I suppose, is how I remember him. Some drivers used to talk about how much they were earning, and I'm sure there was a lot of bullshit, but at least you could gauge the market. But he would never do that. He was very talented. I remember him telling me some of the stories about Colin Chapman, and from what he told me [in '78] they just wanted Mario [Andretti] to win. They were very tricky, Lotus.

MARIO ANDRETTI

1978 WORLD CHAMPION – AND NEMESIS

Mario never ever came in to help when we were fighting for safety, and I don't respect that. You're not only fighting for yourself in that situation, but also for others in the future. Drivers were getting killed at that time, so when I was going for the championship, and the year after, I worked very hard on safety. Few people know that. When I retired, Gilles [Villeneuve] presented me at Watkins Glen with a medal for helping the drivers. Well, he gave me the box and said the medal would come later. I never got it!



GILLES VILLENEUVE

FERRARI TEAM-MATE (AND MATE) IN 1979 AND '80

I had a really good relationship with him. We had good fun at Ferrari and we worked very closely together. The press were always trying to make it into a fight. Before my time, the drivers there tended to be like that, but we both lived in Monaco and were friendly off and on the track. He was naïve in a way and older than he said he was. He wanted to be the young, small guy. But he was not as mad as they all thought he was. That was an image he wanted to project. He was very serious and worked hard at his racing.

He worried about safety, which might surprise people. The thing with René Arnoux at Dijon in 1979, the sponsors loved it and wanted more of that. I said he was mad and that he'd get killed. Today, people get away with banging wheels like that. But he agreed and understood what I was saying.

PATRICK DEPAILLER

'LOUCHE' TYRRELL TEAM-MATE

He was a fun guy to be with. We got on quite well together at Tyrrell. He was a typical French driver from those days. It took Alain Prost to change that stereotype later. In those days they were all 'looseheads'. On one day Patrick would say the car was fantastic, and the next day he'd be doing the same lap times and it would be 'sheeet!' because everyone else was now going faster. One of the funny things, in my first year at the team, concerned a corner I couldn't take flat. But he would say it's 'quite flat'. I just couldn't understand how. Then halfway through the season I realised he'd meant '*not* quite flat'… Another time, he was arrested at one of the French circuits for overtaking loads of cars on the way into the track, and they took him to jail. Ken had to go and get him out.



EMERSON FITTIPALDI

1972 AND '74 WORLD CHAMPION. EVEN BIGGER SIDEBURNS THAN JODY'S

A lovely guy. The first time I came upon him was Paul Ricard '73, when I was leading the race and we collided when he tried to pass me. It was only my third Grand Prix and afterwards we had words. I said to him, 'If the same thing happens again, I will do the same'. And he stormed off. But I became very friendly with him after that and would go to his house when we were in Brazil and so on. A great champion.

NIKI LAUDA

1975, '77 AND '84 WORLD CHAMPION – AND QUICKEST EVER RAT

A total professional. Some drivers you can take any corner next to them and feel comfortable, and some drivers you know you never would. The worst ones are the least predictable. Those were mainly French at that time – the likes of [Jean-Pierre] Jarier and so on. But Niki, he was great. A straight guy. On the track, I don't know if I was faster than him, but I certainly pushed harder. But he probably set up the car a lot better than me and got things organised in his teams better.

JOHN SURTEES

LOOKED FOR JODY AT SILVERSTONE '73 – BUT NEVER FOUND HIM (LUCKILY)

My first memory of John was racing against him in Formula 2 in Sweden. We went wheel to wheel down the straight and he was a tough guy. Then again, so was I. Thank goodness I didn't drive for him. When I finished my first year, when I'd done Formula Ford and Formula 3, both McLaren and Surtees offered me a drive. I took McLaren, which he wasn't best pleased about. But you've got to give him his due for what he achieved, being World Champion across two different disciplines. That hasn't been done by anyone else. As for Silverstone 1973, I don't know about John, but Andrea de Adamich still hasn't forgiven me. I met him at Ferrari's 60th year celebrations and he's still upset with me! He was the only one who was hurt that day [he suffered leg injuries in an accident that ended his F1 career].







JACKIE STEWART

THE MAN WHOSE BIG (SMALL) SHOES JODY HAD TO FILL IN '74

Jackie has been a good friend for many years. The first time I met him was in South Africa when I won the Driver to Europe competition. Ford introduced me to him and I didn't know who this short guy with a funny voice was. Then the next time I saw him was at Brands Hatch when I was doing Formula Ford. He came up and spoke to me. I was impressed he'd remembered who I was. The thing about Jackie is he'll talk to anybody – he'll talk to 'nobodies', if you understand what I mean. I admire that about him, he's a genuine, good-hearted guy – although he talks too much sometimes.

FRANÇOIS CEVERT

HIS TRAGIC DEATH LEFT A LASTING IMPRESSION

I didn't know him really. I had a big argument with him in Canada at the race before he died. Then we made up and shook hands at Watkins Glen. The next time I saw him he was dead. I was the first one on the scene, but I don't remember what I saw. Jackie said, 'you're lucky' because he stopped at the accident, too. He never told me what he saw that day.

MAURO FORGHIERI

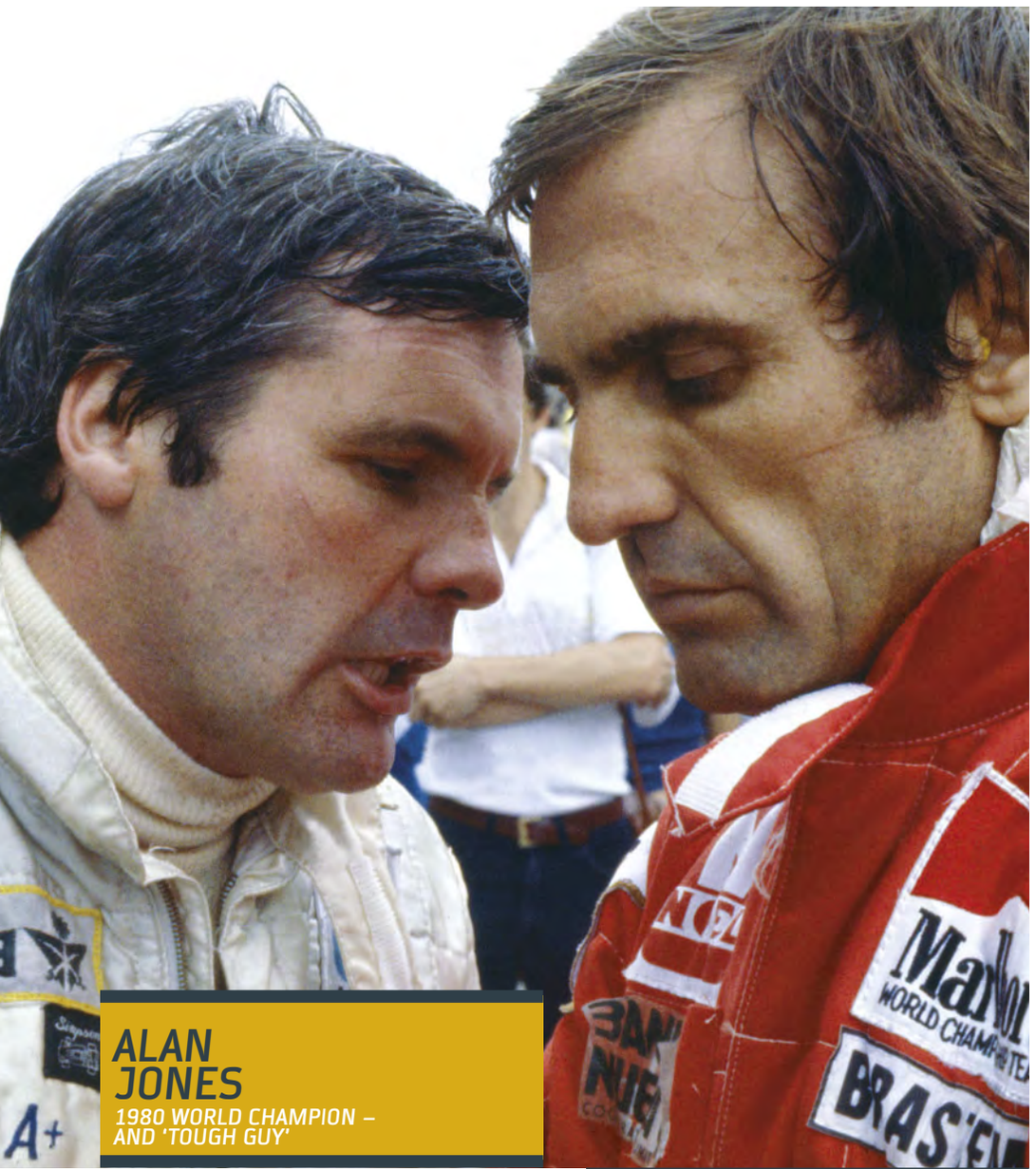
BESPECTACLED FERRARI TEAM MANAGER AND INGEGNERE

A difficult guy. A better team manager than an engineer, although he had some cars that did well. But things like the 'wing' cars, he didn't accept that very much. Our engine was wide and every millimetre was critical, but he put exhaust pipes into that whole critical area under the car, so we didn't have any downforce tunnels. But to give him his due, he made things happen.

WALTER WOLF

GREGARIOUS CANADIAN F1 BOSS FROM 1977-78

After three years at Tyrrell I knew I had to move on. Walter Wolf was a loud guy, whose team in 1976 hadn't qualified for half the races. I asked, 'Can I get this and this?', and he said 'OK, for this amount of money'. It was great. It was a tight unit and the first year was wonderful. Walter had a Lamborghini with a siren that went off when you opened the door: Walter Wolf has arrived. That summed him up. He talked a lot and delivered about 80 per cent of what he said, which is more than most people.



ALAN JONES

1980 WORLD CHAMPION – AND 'TOUGH GUY'

I once went to a shady place with him (not a brothel) in Brazil. I was trying to keep a low profile, hoping no one would recognise me. As he came in everybody shouted 'Alan, hello!' They all knew him. A tough guy. It's not that you couldn't trust him, but I remember him at Monza when I was going for the championship. The younger guys had no respect for that. I always felt if it was getting towards the end of the season and I wasn't going for the championship, I'd still race against them because that's what I'm there for, but I wouldn't race really hard. I certainly wouldn't put them in danger because I'd have hated to knock them off, especially if they'd been working for five or six years to be in this position. I knew how much that meant. But Alan – I remember going to him on the grid and talking to him about it. But I knew he would have done anything, whatever the circumstances.

CARLOS REUTEMANN

MERCURIAL 12-TIME GP WINNER AND UNLIKELY POLITICIAN

He was always getting psyched up. He'd walk around looking at your tyres, and this and that. He always thought Goodyear was giving him the wrong tyres, such a suspicious sort of guy. He still owes me money for an aeroplane trip we took, and I paid his share. Don't know how he was nearly president of Argentina. That's baffling. I couldn't have believed he would go into politics. He was quiet and kept to himself. But I suppose as you get older and you've been in the spotlight, you change. Like Denny [Hulme], towards the end of his career he spoke out more and grew in confidence.

ENZO FERRARI

IL COMMENDATORE

The first time I met him he'd asked me to come up and see him. I met someone on the edge of a motorway and followed them from there. I went into this door and there were guards all around. I was led into this dark room with old-fashioned white furniture, I sat down and he said, 'How much money do you want?' That was his first question to me. I said, 'I'm too young to talk about money.' I think I went up there a couple more times until 1978 when they came up to me after the second race and said they wanted to sign me. I said, 'No, not now, wait until the end of the season'. But they were insistent. So I agreed and told them how much I wanted. We worked on the contract and got it signed. Everyone said it would be a disaster because he was a difficult guy, but I got on very well with him.



DENNY HULME

FIRST F1 TEAM-MATE, AKA 'THE BEAR'

A good guy. He helped me because of his experience, but there were things he didn't tell me too. I remember I was taking a hairpin in second gear, he was taking it in first and didn't tell me. Somehow I found out.



BERNIE ECCLESTONE

BRABHAM BOSS TURNED F1 OLIGARCH

Bernie's a charming guy. I've always got on well with him, although I haven't always agreed with some of the things that have gone on. He's always been good to me. Well, nearly always. When I came back from America I said a few things about F1 and didn't get a ticket for the Monaco GP. Normal punishment. Like a lot of successful people, very charming but you don't know where they are coming from. When I left he was working for the constructors. When I came back he owned the whole thing. I've never liked that, because the sport was never owned by anybody. It was something bigger than that.

MAX MOSLEY

MARCH CO-FOUNDER AND FUTURE 'DARK LORD' OF THE FIA

A piece of work. What he did for F1 was disgraceful. It seemed like he was challenging to make the worst, most political decisions. He was so powerful, and thank God they got him out of there. Although I suppose he did a lot for safety.



PETER REVSON

FELLOW McLAREN DRIVER AND RIVAL IN '73

I don't remember much about him. I flew with him once. At that stage you'd be doing a lot of tyre testing. Goodyear would try a compound, then they'd find a better one and Revson would get it. Then Denny would find another which was better again, and I'd get Revson's tyres. Hand-me-downs. Then I'd go quicker and Revson would want them back.



Sutton

INSIGHT

JODY'S 'OTHER' CLAIM TO FAME...

A second 'world title' showed that fitness matters for racers too

He'd raced against – and beaten – the best of the decade. But for those who aren't motor sport fans, his greatest victory was yet to come. *Superstars* was a 1970s TV sensation that pitted sportsmen from different disciplines against each other in a kind of Decathalon, from cycling to swimming – to squat thrusts. It wasn't until 1981, after he had retired from racing, that Jody raised a few eyebrows in the competition – and not just because he was the first racing driver to win it…

"I've always worked on my fitness and did exercise from when I was very small. But for a race driver to win *World Superstars* was something else. I was against top athletes like (sprint hurdler) Renaldo Nehemiah and (rugby player) Andy Ripley, who played for England. I beat them over 10 sports. Yes, I used a bit of F1 engineering (he caused controversy by coating the soles of his shoes in oil for the squat thrusts). But I was very proud of winning it. I was quite good on the bars and the gym exercises, and I was good on the bicycle because I was handy in the corners. I remember an American footballer coming by me on a straight, but he went straight on at the corner. I was OK at swimming, too."

Better than trophies...

"Silverware doesn't mean much to me, but the cars I raced through the '70s do. They are prized relics of my old life and each has a story of its own. They're not a bad investment, either"

BY DAMIEN SMITH

The past is of little relevance to Jody Scheckter. He lives in the moment, so buffalo, mozzarella and ice-cream fill most of his waking thoughts – and probably his dreams, too. Laverstoke Park, his organic farm business, is an all-consuming passion.

But lack of enthusiasm for his racing past is patently an exaggeration. Bound volumes of motor racing magazines line the book shelves of his magnificent stately home, and while he's kept only one trophy – his 1979 title-winning silverware – there are jaw-dropping treasures to be discovered. Behind the house, in a converted stable block, sit 10 of the single-seaters in which he built a formidable sporting reputation, firstly as a wild youngster in a Merlyn Formula Ford and latterly as a wily old stager who could deliver a coveted championship for Ferrari.

The 312T4 is the obvious choice as his most prized racing 'relic'. "I bought the Ferrari after I won the title, and it was the only car I had," he says. "When I came back to England in the mid-1990s I started buying the others. Kerry Adams, who uses a workshop up the road, helped me collect the cars. They came up for sale, and Kerry would seek them out. But he'd keep quiet about the buyer's identity, to ensure I didn't have to pay too much.

"I thought they'd help my sex life!" he jokes. "Bring some young girls here to show them what I used to do… but it doesn't seem to have worked. I use them to show customers when they come around, and they seem to enjoy looking at them."

There's one car notable by its absence: the Tyrrell P34 six-wheeler in which Jody won the 1976 Swedish GP. His apathy for it is well known, although he says: "I wouldn't mind one. But I've spent all the money on the farm now. The cars are a good investment. I've also got the Porsche 917/10 I raced in Can-Am and that's nearly restored. It's just an incredible car. It's a seat put on an 1100 horsepower engine. I bought it for £500,000 and it's probably worth about £4m now. When I die the kids will probably flog them all off. The younger ones don't really relate all this to me."

As we walk around his collection, the familiar nonchalance fails to hide his connection to these machines. They do mean something to him. "Maybe I look back more as I get older," he admits. "I suppose I should write a book some time. But I'd find it very boring because I'd have to spend time looking back."

Still, he agrees to indulge us today. For a few minutes, he allows farming matters to take a back seat to reminisce on his old life and the cars in which he courted both fame and infamy.



MERLYN MK11A

In March 1971, 21-year-old South African Jody Scheckter pitched up in cold and wet Britain on the back of a 'Driver to Europe' scheme. He'd shown promise in Formula Ford at home, but now he'd really find out what he was made of. First, he needed a car. Step forward Colin Vandervell, who'd just come off the back of a successful season with this neat and tidy racer, built by the little constructor from Colchester.

"I bought the Merlyn from Colin Vandervell, second-hand. This is the 'Magic Merlyn', which Emerson Fittipaldi drove before Colin and I. Back in '71, I said to Colin, 'Deliver it to Brands Hatch, please'. I didn't have any spanners, nothing at all. We did the first race at the Race of Champions. I think I was on the second row, spun and came through the field to second. That was the first time I'd run in the rain. My style made people interested in what I was doing. I crashed a lot in the Formula Ford, and getting to the circuits was always a task. In South Africa you had such open roads. A journey that would take 30 minutes there would take two hours here. I was learning the circuits in 20 laps to get on the grid. It was all good practice."



All images Charlie Best & LAT



MERLYN MK21

Jody didn't hang around long in Formula Ford. Finding work at Merlyn's workshop, he was soon eyeing a step up into Formula 3. He'd already earned his wild man reputation, but there was no doubting his speed. Wins at Oulton Park, Mallory Park and Thruxton would follow.

"I was a bracket-maker for Merlyn, then became a welder. This car was lying around so I asked if I could use it. I borrowed a set of tyres from Firestone, Holbay lent me an engine, I put it together and it was very quick. I also raced an Ehrlich that year and won a heat at Silverstone, but then switched to this."



McLAREN M21

At the end of a promising first year in England, Scheckter was on the establishment's radar. Both McLaren and Team Surtees offered him Formula 2 deals, and he chose the former, attracted by the prospect of a quasi-works campaign that would concentrate on him alone. But the Ralph Bellamy monocoque design would prove a tricky proposition. Formula 1 aces Denny Hulme and Peter Gethin would be drafted in to help sort the car, but plans to put the M21 into production were shelved and Scheckter would win just a single race.

"It was my first car after joining McLaren's, and it was a big step for me. I have good memories, despite it not being an easy time. There was a guy who used to shine the cars every day, which was nice – but we weren't competitive. We went to test at Goodwood and they said I was taking the wrong line, that I was coming into the corners too early. Eventually they found that one shock absorber at the back was broken. But at least the car was very shiny…

Then Denny (Hulme) went out and did a 14.2sec lap. My best was a 15.5 or something. Then I got in, and did a 13.8. Boy, this car was much better now. He'd set it up properly, plus we'd found the broken shock. The next race was Crystal Palace, which I won.

Even in F1 I benefited from Denny's experience, although he didn't tell me everything. We had no data then, it was all on the driver. One of my skills was that I could drive around anything, but that was both good and bad, looking back."



McLAREN M19A

Jody's first F1 car enjoyed moderate success in 1971 and '72, in the hands of Denny Hulme. The Kiwi took one win and a string of podiums in the Ralph Bellamy design. At the end of '72 Lotus had come knocking at the door, and to prevent Scheckter opening it McLaren offered him an F1 debut at Watkins Glen. Barely 18 months after his UK Formula Ford debut at the Race of Champions, Jody conjured a third-row grid slot. He ran as high as fourth before a sudden shower caught him out. Still, he recovered to finish ninth – not bad. He'd reappear in a revised M19C at the start of '73 for his home GP at Kyalami, where he qualified on the front row.

"Watkins Glen, 1972. That was my first one, and nobody knew who I was, which was nice. This was a good car. I came in right at the end of its race life, of course. McLaren was one of the more advanced teams. At Tyrrell I felt they were behind McLaren. And if you look at the cars now you'll see how refined they were compared to cars that came even much later."

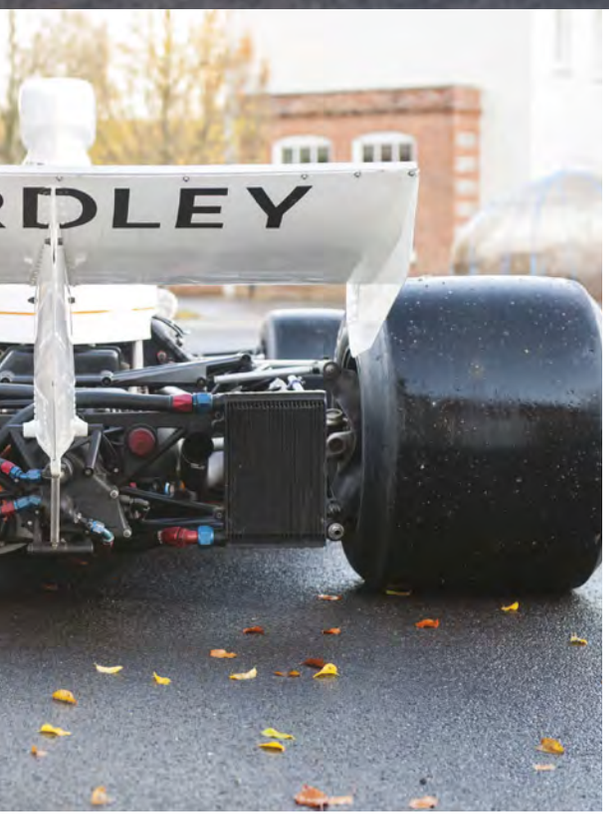




"It's sophisticated compared to the Tyrrell. See how the engine cover is flush to the block"









McLAREN M23

Despite the promise shown in Kyalami, Scheckter had doubts about how '73 would turn out. McLaren had canned its F2 programme, and with Hulme and Peter Revson the first choices in F1, only occasional GP outings were on offer. When opportunities arose, he needed to make the most of them.

At Paul Ricard – just his third GP – Scheckter found himself in Gordon Coppuck's new M23, a car that would turn out to be one of the most successful in F1 history. In France, Jody led sensationally until 12 laps from the end, when Emerson Fittipaldi made a move and the pair ended up in the catch fencing. If they hadn't already noticed before, they knew now: Scheckter had arrived.

But his rise would be pulled up short at Silverstone in July, when he triggered the infamous nine-car pile-up that decimated John Surtees' team. Jody hid in the team motorhome.

After a couple of late-season appearances, Scheckter moved on from McLaren, frustrated by the lack of opportunity. As for the M23, it would rack up 16 GP wins over four seasons and carry James Hunt to the '76 world title.

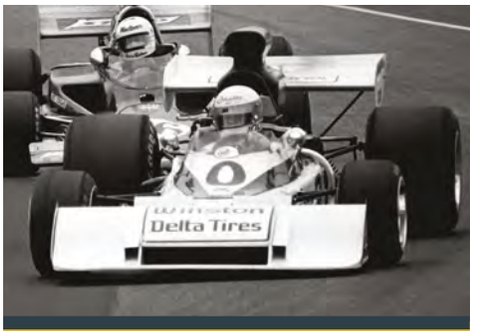
"People think of me in this car at Silverstone, with the big pile-up, but I prefer to think of Paul Ricard that year. I was competitive. It was the only time I had a senior driver in the same team as me, in Denny. When I got to Tyrrell in 1974, I *was* the senior driver. That didn't worry me at the time, but I wonder if I could have become more competitive by continuing alongside someone like Denny."



MOTUL M1

Perhaps the most surprising car to find in Scheckter's collection, given how brief his encounter would be with this pug-faced Formula 2. Without a full-time F1 deal, Jody signed to join Ron Dennis and Neil Trundle at Rondel Racing for some F2 in '73. The smart, ambitious multi-car team had performed strongly in previous years with customer Brabhams, but its step up to constructor status would prove Rondel's undoing. A lack of funding stymied Ray Jessop's design, named in deference to the team's title sponsor – which didn't pay up. Scheckter would withdraw after just two races, although Henri Pescarolo and Tim Schenken would win a race each. Bob Wollek, Tom Pryce and Jean-Pierre Jaussaud were also on the driving strength.

"It wasn't great. I don't really remember working with Ron, but I remember there were five cars and Tim Schenken was the lead driver. He was always joking around, which I thought was a pain in the arse. I wanted to be serious. The car never seemed to work, it had no downforce at all. I don't have any good memories. I thought it was horrible."



TROJAN T101

After the Silverstone debacle of '73, Jody flew out to the US, back to his dual campaign in Formula 5000 and Can-Am. The F5000 Trojan, run off the back of a trailer by Sid Taylor, would bring his first major international title after a season-long battle with Brian Redman. Scheckter's wild reputation would follow him across the Atlantic – and he didn't exactly dispel it with his antics in the big single-seater. In all, he would complete 19 races in the States during the most varied season of his career.

"You could really throw this car around. It was a time in my career when I was wild as hell, I suppose. I got to America and we won the championship, but crashed a lot too. At one race Brian Redman caught me up and I kept that thing sideways the whole time to keep him behind me. But a bolt had come out of the rear suspension, which was why it was sliding so much. And you had the tyres to do it in those days, too.

I didn't compare it to F1. I just drove it as fast as I could. American tyres seemed to be different from those in Europe. But with this, I was very fast in the opening laps. So I would pull 10 seconds ahead and it would stay like that for the rest of the race. That's how I won the championship."





TYRRELL 007

Without a permanent berth at McLaren in F1, Jody had welcomed Ken Tyrrell's advances for '74. It was all hush-hush, but Jackie Stewart was about to retire and Tyrrell wanted a promising youngster to join new team leader François Cevert. But after tragedy at Watkins Glen, everything would change. For Scheckter, the apprenticeship was over.

In the circumstances – following in the footsteps of a three-time champion and in the wake of Cevert's devastating loss – Jody was little short of brilliant in 1974. Victories in Sweden and Great Britain were the highlights and Scheckter finished an impressive third in the standings. A third win in 007 would follow in South Africa in '75, but little did he know that Tyrrell's long, slow decline to mediocrity had begun.

"Derek Gardner wanted to build a car that was easier to drive than the 006. Was that a mistake? I don't know. But we were competitive. We left Italy one point off the World Championship lead in that first year with Tyrrell.

Following Jackie Stewart wasn't easy. Ken would say 'Jackie did this, and Jackie did that', which I guess is normal. I was a young driver, after all. But look how sophisticated the M23 is compared to the 007. For example, how the engine cover is flush to the block compared to the Tyrrell, keeping the airflow to the back wing clean. And how the radiators are tucked away neatly on the McLaren. With what they know now about aerodynamics, I'm sure one of the modern guys could come and make a couple of tweaks and find a couple of seconds on either of these cars."



WOLF WR1



The six-wheeled P34 was the final straw for Scheckter at Tyrrell and by the end of ’76 he was ready for a change. Enter eccentric Austrian-born Canadian Walter Wolf.

He pieced together the equivalent of an F1 ‘superteam’. Peter Warr was hired from Lotus to run the operation, with former Hesketh designer Harvey Postlethwaite producing a conventional, but tidy, F1 car. A young Patrick Head assisted him, before leaving to rejoin Wolf’s ex-partner Frank Williams, who’d quit the team or been forced to leave, depending on who you believe (they went on to enjoy quite a bit of success at their next team). Jody completed the picture for a one-car attack, bringing with him Roy Topp, his mechanic from Tyrrell. None of them could have guessed what would happen next.

The striking deep blue and gold car caused a shock by winning on its debut in Argentina. Further wins in Monaco and Canada, plus a string of podiums, left him a distant runner-up in the championship to Niki Lauda’s Ferrari.

But in these early days of ground-effect F1 cars, Wolf was about to be left behind. Jody would be winless in ’78 for the first time since his maiden part-season with McLaren, five years earlier. Still, from the third race in, he had a new deal in the bag – the biggest and most important of his career.

> “It was fabulous in 1977, because there were just 20 people in the team. It was so tightly knit, but we were leading the championship halfway through the season. It was a lovely little car.
>
> We won first time out, but we were consistent rather than fast. I came up behind Carlos Pace, who was taking funny lines, but he’d been sick in his helmet. I was very fit and we won the race by keeping going. I remember James Hunt saying it didn’t matter, that those points wouldn’t make any difference. At Long Beach we were very competitive. We should have won there. We were leading most of the way, then I got a slow puncture eight laps from the end. The rubber squeezed over the hole, so I kept going but eventually Andretti and Lauda passed me. I had something like eight pounds of pressure in the tyre by the end.
>
> I worked really well with Patrick Head. He did quite a lot of the design for this car. I got along well with Harvey, too. We seemed to relate to each other.”





FERRARI 312T4

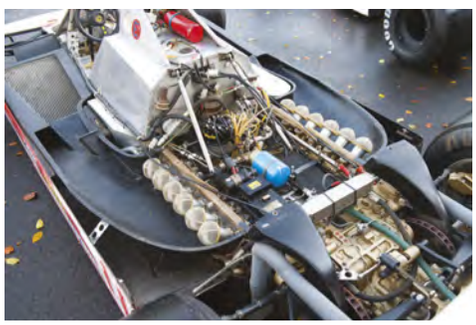
In the era of ground effects, Mauro Forghieri's T4 was forever compromised by its 'boxer' flat 12 engine. Still, it was effective. The combination of Jody, Gilles, the proven 312T series and, vitally, Michelin rubber proved the class of the field. Lotus lost its way after the dominance of '78 with its porpoising Type 80, Renault and Williams scored their first wins, but couldn't string together enough form to collar the championship, and Ligier started strongly with a pair of wins for Jacques Laffite, but then faded badly as the season progressed. Scheckter asserted himself over team-mate Villeneuve as Ferrari's title hope with back-to-back victories at Zolder and Monaco, while strong reliability allowed him to score regularly and well.

"Ferrari didn't have the magic for me when I came over, but it was something I discovered. I had a fantastic time and it was great fun. Everybody said I was a difficult guy and it would be the most disastrous combination, and it was the opposite. I suppose I'm as full of bullshit as they are. The food was fantastic, and Gilles (Villeneuve) and I got on really well together. It was hard work, but fun.

In Italy they try to make you fight each other, but Gilles and I were close enough to avoid that. We were mature, I suppose.

There was one time at Silverstone where they gave me one lap to go and it wasn't right. John Watson passed me because of it. I complained when I came in and the next thing, it was all over the Italian papers. So the Old Man called us all in for a team meeting on Monday morning. I'd spoken to Gilles and we used this meeting to our advantage. We didn't have much in the way of ground effects on the Ferrari – with the flat 12 any space under the car was taken up by the exhaust pipes. But (Mauro) Forghieri didn't want to listen. So I said to the Old Man that we shouldn't be fighting among ourselves. He asked what we needed and I replied 'ground effects'. No one else would say it because they were all scared of him. Then we went to Monza and found we had more revs and more downforce. People don't realise what that means to a driver – it's the most exciting thing you can get.

The feeling of being World Champion lasted all of a week because Ferrari wanted me to drive at Imola in a non-championship race, and I really didn't want to. I'd spent eight years trying to win the championship. Now I'd won it, there was relief more than anything else. But looking back today, I'm glad I bought the car."










BROOKLYN
Agip
11
MICHELIN

Sutton


FIAT
Jody Scheckter
11
Agip
MAGNETI MARELLI
speedline
SKF
arexons
brembo
CHAMPION
FERODO
AVON

And he walked away

"After my difficult final year in Formula 1, I quit the sport for good. But the influence of what I'd learnt in my competitive life would often echo as I built new businesses far away from the race tracks"

BY DAMIEN SMITH



As symbolic gestures go, it was hardly subtle. At the 1980 United States Grand Prix, reigning World Champion Jody Scheckter hauled himself out of his Ferrari, trod purposefully down its nose and directly into retirement. He'd qualified 23rd, nearly five seconds off the pace, and 'raced' to 11th, the last classified finisher and three laps down. It had been the same story, sometimes worse, all year. His mind had been made up months ago. After Watkins Glen, he'd never drive a racing car competitively again.

Scheckter's retirement became infamous. Like his friend Jackie Stewart, he was never tempted to return. The difference was, he not only walked away from the cockpit but also left the sport behind him completely, building a new life and business far away from his old friends and everything he knew. Then having done it once, he did it again. No other Formula 1 World Champion has turned his back on the sport so comprehensively. But as usual, the truth is a little more complicated than it might seem.



James Mitchell





"During 1980, I felt I was still trying at the races," says Jody. "But I always asked myself, when you wake up in the middle of the night, are you thinking 'Is the car doing this or that?'. I probably wasn't thinking like that by then.

"I wanted to win the world championship and I'd done that. The magic had gone for me. And at the time one or two drivers were killed every year. When you go into the sport, it sounds macho but you think, 'If I die, I die'. It's F1 and it's fantastic. Then you see things you don't like and you realise what it's all about. I thought to myself, 'I can't do it for the money. It's time to get out.' So I walked away.

"I'd had a great innings. With ifs and buts I could have done better, but no, it was a great career. And I came out alive."

At first, he didn't leave it all behind completely. After all, there was no grand plan for what he'd do next. "It wasn't about what I was going to do, but rather what I was *not* going to do," he says. "I just knew I wasn't going to carry on racing. In fact, Renault offered me a deal at my second to last race, in Canada – where I didn't even qualify. They offered 'any money you want'. I said no, I'd already made my decision. After I stopped I worked on promoting a few motorcycle races at Donington Park, and then I was trying to fit together a global version of something like the IROC [International Race of Champions] series, trying to get Ford to put Cosworth engines in a Capri. I worked for a year on that, but it didn't happen. I didn't know enough about what I was doing."

Like so many ex-drivers, he tried his hand at media work. "They asked me to do a TV documentary in Long Beach," he says. "Lying in bed I heard the cars going out and thought 'Am I late?' Then I relaxed, thinking 'This is great'.

"Over time the urge to go back got less and less. At first I wanted to do one race at Monaco. I probably felt that for five years. Then I got to a stage where I felt I didn't want to drive an F1 car because I knew I'd do three laps and my neck would be sore. Anyway, what did I still have to prove?"

Scheckter's life was changed by a magazine advertisement. "I was in Monaco when I saw it. The ad showed a simulator of a gun shooting at a screen. I thought what a great idea, to interact with a movie. The friend I was with said the company that made it was based in England, and did I want to go and see it? I said yes.

"I thought what a great concept, but how badly it was done. A friend did some research, to see if there was a business for this idea, and said law enforcement needed something to train police how to make key decisions under pressure. I'd been thinking of the games industry, but instead I ended up going to the FBI with this idea. I thought maybe they were being polite, but they said it sounded great."

The business that would become Firearms Training Systems, or FATS, "started on the kitchen table in a little place in Hilton Head, South Carolina. Before this, simulators were simply a friendly or unfriendly picture on a shooting range. But this was taking a movie, an actual incident that had been recreated, and using a laser detection system, so you knew exactly if you'd been accurate. We developed



Since he stopped racing Jody has been at the helm of two businesses and made a small fortune – out of a large one



James Mitchell



Charlie Best

that, made it more sophisticated and took it to the military as well."

Jody is telling me this as we sit in the spacious lounge of his 18th century stately home, Laverstoke House. Outside, the grounds stretch down to the wooded horizon. Beyond the trees and the river is Laverstoke Park, the 2500-acre organic farm that consumes Scheckter today. Racing didn't buy him all of this. It was the training systems business that made him a multimillionaire. But none of it came easily.

The back story behind FATS shows just how big a step he made by quitting racing in the way he did. "I always said I went from first class to stand-by in one year," he says. "When we went over to the States we started in a hotel that didn't even serve breakfast. Then we lived in a small apartment in Hilton Head, then on to Atlanta. Nobody knew my background. I would go to a show to talk about my idea and while I was talking to a guy, he'd just turn around and walk away. I was there with my cashmere jacket, which in those circumstances was completely out of place."

But his racing background stood him in good stead for life's biggest challenge yet. "We were taking technology right to the limit and we worked very fast, both things I learnt from F1," he says. "F1 is the fastest in the world for that, even more than wartime. What we did was combine different technologies. They weren't breaking new ground on their own, but we put them together to make this simulator."

But by the early 1990s, FATS was taking its toll. "It was a massive adventure for 12 years," he says, "in some ways as rewarding as F1, but nobody knew about it. We were in 35

different countries, we had 95 per cent of the world market and in the last three years the turnover rose from £29m to £60m to £100m. But my wife worked 13 weekends in a row. All we did was work. On a Friday you'd have half a glass of wine and fall asleep.

"At the end of those three years the shareholders said it was time to sell, because a bad year would have dropped its worth. My wife is English and she wanted to come home. So we sold it to a fund in New York that went public two months later. We were very lucky. We didn't get it all because there were other shareholders. But we did well. "

He won't be pushed on specifics, but Scheckter and his family arrived back in England worth tens of millions more than when they left. But at 46, such a man wasn't about to sit back. The question was what to do next.

"On our return I bought 530 acres and this place," he says. "I didn't want to go into the same business here. I didn't know what to do. So I said to myself, 'If I'm not doing anything else I'm going to produce the best-tasting, healthiest food for my family'." That phrase – 'best-tasting, healthiest food' – should come with a trademark sign. It crops up time and again as we discuss Laverstoke. It's the Scheckter mantra.

"I had a farm in America and my wife gave me a book on organics," he says when asked how it started. "I suppose it became a passion. I've always been a 'foodie' and I've always been fit and exercised. But then you realise you can't do it small. If you do, you can't do it well. The farm next door came up for sale, so I bought that and now we have 2500 acres.

"I suppose I drank a lot of whisky and got a lot of ideas. It's become a monster. I did too much. I started eight companies at once, all to do the same thing: to produce the best-tasting, healthiest food. There was a lab, a mozzarella factory, an abattoir, composting and so on. But I was playing somebody else's game and the meat market is the worst. In cars, you bring a thousand pieces together, you make one and you sell it. In an abattoir you bring in one, then cut it into a thousand pieces. But if you don't sell a few of those pieces you lose money because the margins are so small.

"In America I was doing a contract with the Marine Corps worth £100 million. Then I came back and had to decide whether an egg would sell for 3p or 4p. You have to watch every single penny. I'm nine years into it and only now am I starting to realise how many things we weren't doing right. We've got too many products. They're fantastic, but if you make them by hand you can never make money. So we've got to make fewer products and more of them."

So how much of his vast fortune has he spent on Laverstoke Park? "I wouldn't want to say, it's too embarrassing," he mumbles. "It's *a lot*." But he does admit the business is not yet profitable. "I'm fighting like mad. In America we used to call it the paperclip theory – you want to save wherever you can, whatever size the business is. We did it well in America, but back here you knew in your subconscious you had money, and I wanted to move fast because I didn't have a whole life to create something new. It became a culture of money flying out everywhere. Now I have to make it work. After all, I can't go back and race! It's made me get off my backside."

Scheckter, who admits he is "the worst" to work for, is searching for a managing director to take over the day-to-day running of his business, allowing him the time to think strategically. And he already has a new member of the team, an internal recruitment.

"My son Tomas has retired from IndyCars, thank goodness. He's working here now. He was a star in Indy, and all he's ever known is speed: around a track, in a pitstop, in development. He's now bringing that to our business, armed with a stopwatch and helping the guys to become more efficient.

"For the past three years Tomas didn't have full-time drives, so from a mental point of view it was very tough. Coming back here, he feels like he's really needed and is achieving something."

> "What else would I do? Get a yacht, go to Monaco, get fat and get into trouble!"

But when you live where you work, and you've pushed hard through three separate careers, you don't just stop. Jody Scheckter, at 62, just won't quit. "What else would I do? Get a yacht, go to Monaco, get fat and get into trouble! People don't realise how much I've worked at this business. America was tough too because we started with nothing. But here, I still work until 10-11pm every night, answering e-mails and so on. And I enjoy most of it. I'd just love to see some more success coming in."

He's had his fair share, but Scheckter's an instinctive businessman. Losing money equals failure and that's not something he can accept. Success – as a racer, as an entrepreneur and now as a farmer – is all he understands. Ⓜ



INSIGHT

CHAMPION MECHANIC

When Jody's sons went racing, the World Champion had to pitch in

Jody Scheckter describes it as his "fourth career", and the one he enjoyed the least. On his return to England in the 1990s Toby and Tomas, sons from his first marriage, had got the bug. Jody became a racing dad.

"I said to them, 'If you're good enough, I'll take you to F1. If not, I want you to stop'. That was my worst career. Ah, it was horrible. When I first came over from South Africa in 1971 I was in the paddock at Brands Hatch changing gear ratios. Nearly 30 years later I was back there doing the same thing."

Toby (below, left) got as far as F3 before he realised he wouldn't make it, but Tomas was successful in IndyCar. Thanks to the boys, Jody found himself engaged with racing again. And as he admits, it wasn't all horrible.

"At the time I was still the last World Champion for Ferrari," he says. "I was more famous for that than actually being World Champion. That was fun for a few years. When I won it I didn't feel any different, I didn't suddenly have more money, it didn't change my life at all. And the next year I didn't do very well anyway. So this was an opportunity of sorts to enjoy it properly."



LAT


GIVES YOU WINGS
Red Bull
Red Bull racing
FORMULA ONE TEAM
BASTIAN
V3
2012 F1 DRIVERS'
WORLD CHAMPIO
Red Bull
GEOX
Red Bull
INFINITI



FORMULA 1 SEASON REVIEW 2012

The most exciting Grand Prix season in recent memory?

There's certainly an argument for it.

As teams struggled to get their heads around the narrow performance window of Pirelli's tyres, we watched a record-breaking seven different winners in the first seven races.

After the summer break in August, however, it became apparent that the trend wouldn't continue. You needed to be in a Red Bull or a McLaren if you wanted to win races – and that's precisely what two-time World Champion Sebastian Vettel and the McLaren drivers did. Reliability issues put paid to McLaren's title chances and, as Vettel wrapped up four victories and 100 points in consecutive races, it became clear that it was the German's championship to lose.

But Fernando Alonso, driving better than ever, kept the pressure on by dragging his slower Ferrari into unexpected places. It all came down to the Brazilian finale, where Vettel recovered from a first-lap nightmare to clinch his third title.

Nigel Roebuck, Damien Smith, Ed Foster and ***Rob Widdows*** were joined by 1979 Formula 1 World Champion ***Jody Scheckter*** to chat through the dramatic 2012 season.



ALONSO VS VETTEL

rw What a season. Nigel, did the right man win?

nr No. I think the outstanding driver of the year was Alonso. It was interesting that when I was in Texas, talking to people in the paddock, I would say 90 per cent of those I spoke to were of the same opinion. Alonso's not had the best car so he's been on the edge the whole time, trying to compensate for its shortcomings. He's made very few mistakes in light of that. Think about most of the other drivers and they've clattered into someone at some point during the year. Apart from Japan I can't remember a time when that happened with Alonso. I greatly admire the fact that he never gave up, despite having a patently slower car – certainly in the last few races.

js Alonso did a good job, but that doesn't mean I respect him for what he did at McLaren in 2007. I think he drove well and whether or not he deserved the championship is a matter of opinion.

ef I think Vettel deserved it. The thing with Alonso was that, OK he didn't have the fastest car in qualifying, but his car did have an amazing run of reliability. Think of the points that Vettel didn't get because of reliability problems – 25 went in Valencia, for instance.

ds I don't really talk in terms of who deserves what, you race with what you've got. Vettel definitely had the best car in the second half of the season and he made the most of it.



That run of four victories from Singapore to India was the key to it for him. You can't say he didn't deserve it, but I think everyone would feel that in terms of pure performance what Alonso managed this year was the equivalent of what we saw with Alain Prost in 1986. You just know he was up against it at every race.

nr It tells you something about the type of car you have when your race engineer is on the radio at the end of the race begging you not to set fastest lap…

js That would be really nice! Vettel's solid, and very good. He's got to get another four championships to beat Michael (Schumacher) and I'm sure that's what he wants to do. Not so easy because sometimes it looks straightforward and sometimes you're in the middle of the grid, driving as hard as you ever could, and it doesn't make any difference. Vettel's had the car; he's had the whole package these last three seasons. But winning just one championship is tough. I obviously could have won three... with the right tyres, the right engine, the right everything else. You know what it's like!

rw But some are saying that Vettel was lucky this year.

nr You've got to say that in Brazil he was extraordinarily lucky. Most of the field missed him after that incident with Senna and secondly he managed to continue. As Adrian (Newey) said, it was very marginal. But most of all I wonder why there was no investigation into the coming together in the first place. This is something that unsettles me a bit. At some races the stewards investigate every tiny little thing. Then at others, depending on who those stewards are, you think 'it's just passed them by'.

rw There was certainly some luck involved. But perhaps a better question is whether Vettel could win without Adrian Newey?

js You can't win without the right car, but whatever you say he's still one of the best drivers, or the best driver, there is.

nr I personally think Adrian is worth more than any driver.

js Are you sure about that…?



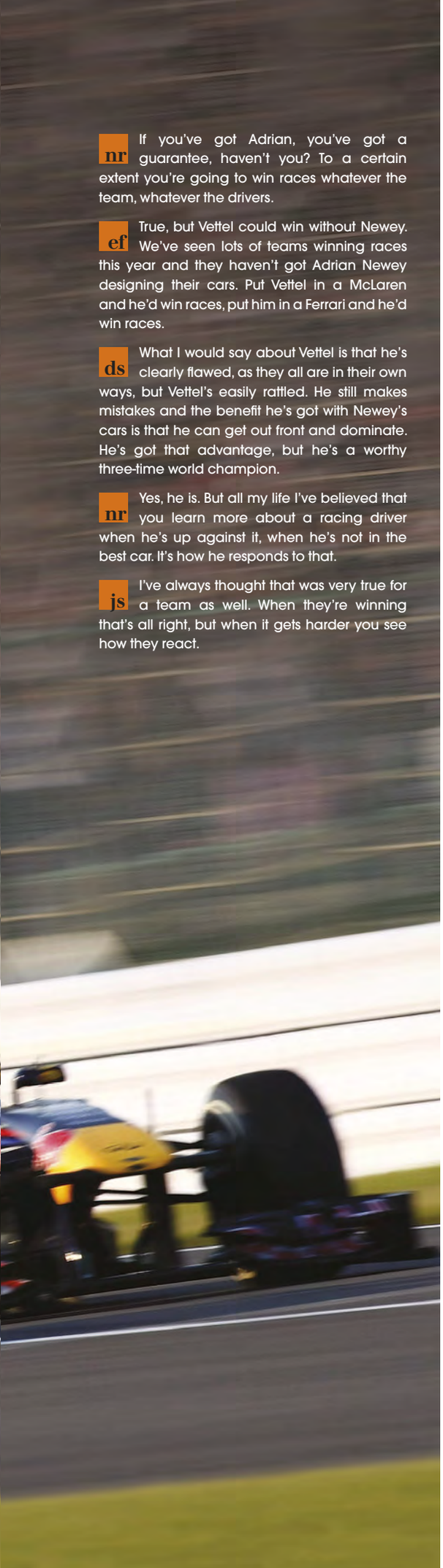
nr If you've got Adrian, you've got a guarantee, haven't you? To a certain extent you're going to win races whatever the team, whatever the drivers.

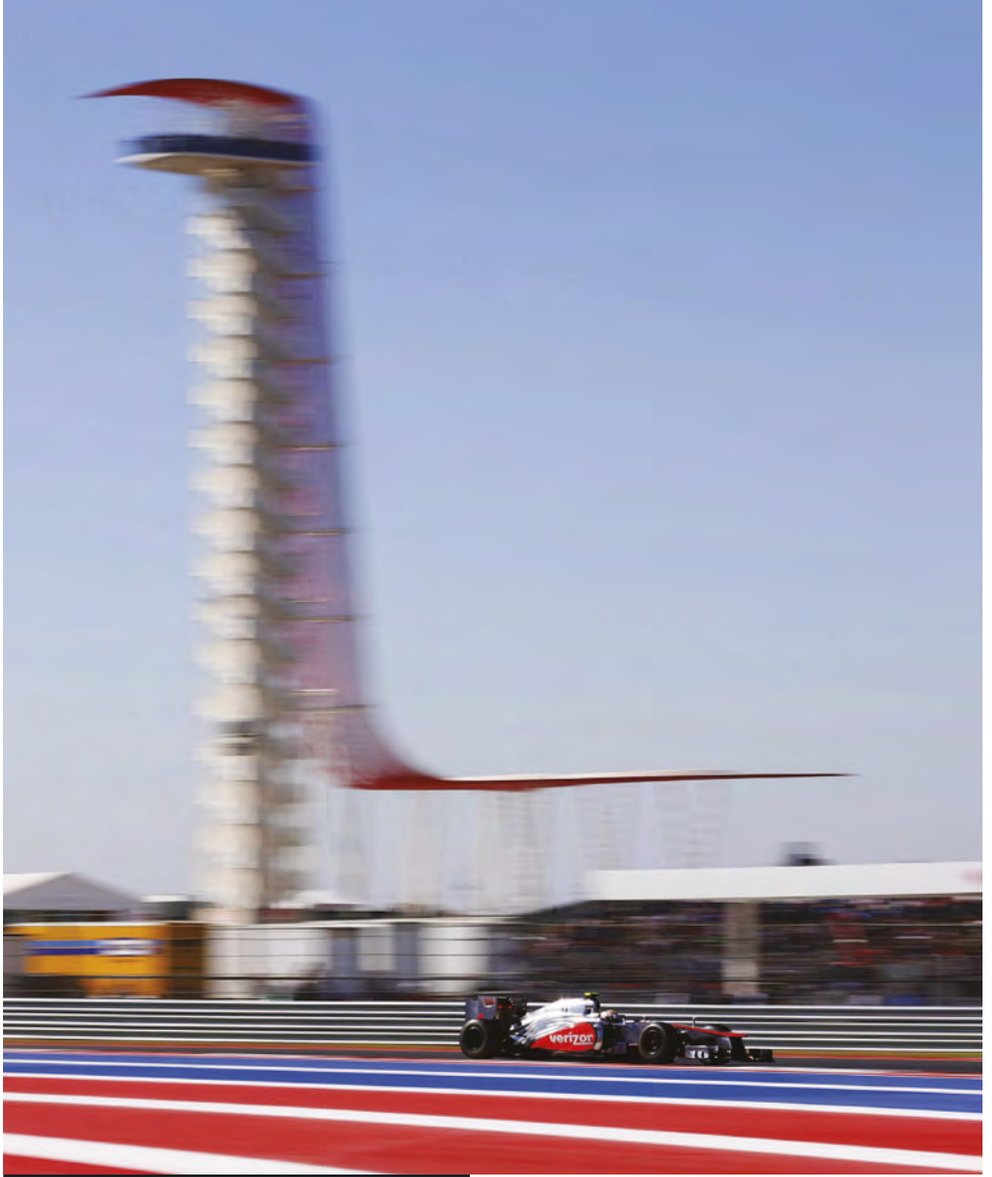
ef True, but Vettel could win without Newey. We've seen lots of teams winning races this year and they haven't got Adrian Newey designing their cars. Put Vettel in a McLaren and he'd win races, put him in a Ferrari and he'd win races.

ds What I would say about Vettel is that he's clearly flawed, as they all are in their own ways, but Vettel's easily rattled. He still makes mistakes and the benefit he's got with Newey's cars is that he can get out front and dominate. He's got that advantage, but he's a worthy three-time world champion.

nr Yes, he is. But all my life I've believed that you learn more about a racing driver when he's up against it, when he's not in the best car. It's how he responds to that.

js I've always thought that was very true for a team as well. When they're winning that's all right, but when it gets harder you see how they react.

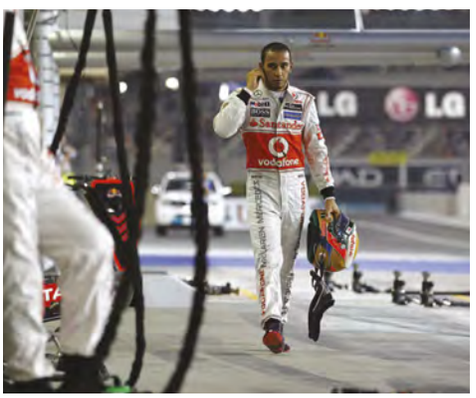




THE TRIALS OF LEWIS HAMILTON

rw Hamilton would have been close to fighting for the championship if it weren't for those retirements while leading in Singapore and Abu Dhabi. Not to mention the times he was taken out in Spa and Brazil. Nigel, how did Lewis do this year in your view?

nr Lewis was back to the Lewis that I remember from 2007. Until 2012 I always thought that his first year was his best. I thought he just drove beautifully then: no complications, he wasn't paid much money, he was still living in England, he had an uncomplicated life… and then he started to lose it in various different ways. Particularly in 2011 – he lost it in a big way.



In 2012 he appears to have been settled again from a personal point of view. I thought he drove brilliantly, particularly in the last half of the year.

js Absolutely, when he came to F1, it was brilliant. Nobody comes in and has that type of performance with so few things going wrong. It was incredible.

In 2011 he wasn't even making mistakes by being overly aggressive – he was just making mistakes that were completely stupid. I rate him as the best driver in heavy traffic. I used to rate Jenson as one of the worst, but he's become quite good in traffic now. For me, Lewis in those first two years was absolutely fantastic. He did some manoeuvres in traffic that were brilliant – and he got away with it most of the time. Last year he was just doing the wrong thing. I'm definitely a fan of his, though.

ds I think Lewis and Jenson are a great pairing because they complement each other so well and Jenson's maturity means it's probably the most workable pairing in Formula 1. I think it's a significant failure for McLaren that they haven't won a world title this year.

I know the competition's really strong, and that's great, but as a package, McLaren had it all this year. They've got a long winter ahead of them to look at where they lost it. It's a big disappointment.

THE RETURN OF RÄIKKÖNEN

rw I declare an interest here because I love Kimi Räikkönen. I think he's good fun and I was really pleased to see him come back. Nigel – did he look good because of Grosjean being… unreliable? Or was he as good as he looked?

nr First of all I don't think it was anything to do with Grosjean's eccentricities. I thought Kimi drove beautifully. I do suspect that the last little bit of edge is not there, but fundamentally he did a wonderful job. He made mistakes in qualifying, which compromised some of his races, and Kimi will always be Kimi. I mean, the Thursday before the Brazilian Grand Prix every driver was at the track apart from K Räikkönen... who was in Los Angeles with his mates.

rw Oh good, I'm pleased to hear you say that.

nr That's the way he is. I remember Martin Whitmarsh telling me about exactly the same thing, Kimi going from Montréal and not going straight to Indianapolis the weekend after, but going via Las Vegas for three days.

rw Sounds eminently sensible…

nr You're probably right, but as Martin said, 'I told him, "if you lose pole by five thousandths of a second, won't you kick yourself?"' He obviously agreed with me and then he got his plane to Vegas. That's Kimi!

js I used to think that of James (Hunt), if he didn't do all the extra stuff, how good could he really have been?

ef Yes, but then Kimi did finish third in the championship. To complete every single race, and to finish all bar one in the points, that's an amazing run of form.

ds The Lotus-Renault team was the perfect place for him to make a comeback. If he had gone back to Ferrari or McLaren, against those other world champions, he would have been in the shade. But being leader of a very good team, albeit not quite a championship winner these days, was probably the





best environment for him. He got better as the year went on. What's more, F1's so much the better for having him back.

js Kimi did better than I anticipated and I thought he drove really well. When he won the championship you got into thinking that he was very, very fast. Then the year after he wasn't very good at all. In fact, I think he did better this year than he did in his championship year.

rw It's interesting too that in terms of a comeback year it was a lot better than Schumacher's.

nr The only thing I'd say is that he's firstly a lot younger, secondly he was away for only two seasons rather than three and lastly while he was away he was rallying and driving competitively. I think he drove better this year than those last two years at Ferrari when he seemed to lose interest.







BUTTON, MASSA & WEBBER: SECOND BEST

rw So will Webber and Massa just be number twos next year? And what do we think about Button's season?

nr I thought Jenson had a fairly typical Jenson season, quite honestly. There are days that you don't know that he's in the race. At the same time it's not a surprise when he just takes the lead and disappears. I've said this before; I don't think it's a surprise that Jenson's hero was Prost because in many ways he drives just like he did.

js Yes, he does.

nr I don't think he's as good, but like Jo Ramirez used to say about Prost, when the car was absolutely right no one could beat him, if the car wasn't quite as good as it should be then Senna was the guy you needed. It didn't greatly surprise me when Jenson won in Australia – he can do that sometimes. Spa as well – he was fantastic and had the upper hand on Lewis all the way through.

ds Jody, you were saying about Jenson that your perception of him has changed in terms of the way he deals with traffic. As a driver, the perceptions of him have changed dramatically over the past 10 years or so, haven't they?

js Yes, they have. I don't think he was ready for Formula 1 when he arrived in 2000. I think I said that at the time because of how he interacted with the traffic. He's got better and better at it, and it's a strong point of his now. Nigel summed it up right – if the car's right he's really, really good. Lewis can take a bad car and drive around the problems, though.

rw What about Mark Webber? It seems to me to be a horrible position to be in – team-mate to Sebastian Vettel.

nr Yes, it's true. Mark was wonderful at Monaco, he was wonderful at Silverstone, but other races you thought 'where the hell is he?' He's a bit of a mystery to me, he always has been, but you know what he can do when he's really on it. In the early part of the year when Red Bull wasn't at the front it must have been a big comedown after the success of 2011. Interestingly enough, at that point of the season Mark was usually quicker than Sebastian.

js Driving with Vettel is difficult for anybody; you're talking about the best. Webber's had some races where he's really been fantastic and been faster, but can he keep it up at that level for the whole season? No. And you're against the best in the world.

rw What about Felipe Massa? Delightful guy, you can't help liking him. Again… he'll always be number two.

nr Let's remember that in 2008 he was World Champion for 20 seconds. You've got to say that he usually had the best of Räikkönen when they were team-mates and I suppose it's arguable that he will never again be the driver he was before his accident (in 2009). But I thought it interesting that he picked things up this year, particularly after a long drawn-out process with Ferrari re-signing him. That really seemed to trigger something and he started to drive like we know he can. But in the early part of the year, frankly, he was pretty dreadful, wasn't he?

js I suppose, and I'm going to be mean now, when he was doing badly Alonso wanted him to stay because why does he want some hot-shoe coming in? That was probably part of the decision. I wouldn't have rehired him for his performance earlier in the season, but he did come back and showed that he could beat Alonso. He hasn't done a consistently good job since his accident, really.

2012

NIGEL ROEBUCK'S TOP 10 DRIVERS

1 FERNANDO ALONSO

In terms of what he did with what he had, Alonso's campaign will stand among the very greatest, by any driver, ever. One thing to be constantly on it in an ultra-competitive car, quite another to be that way in a middling one. His Ferrari's average qualifying position was seventh, but when it rained Fernando was both times on pole. In 20 races there were 13 podiums and – while necessarily on the edge – very few mistakes. He is simply the best driver in the world right now, end of story.



2 LEWIS HAMILTON

While not the most complete driver in F1, Hamilton is out-and-out fastest. After a tumultuous season in 2011 he was this year back to his best. There remained lapses of judgment – it was foolish to scrap with Maldonado in the late laps at Valencia, and antagonising his team on Twitter was a reminder that maturity still awaits – but the sight of Lewis driving with joyful abandon is hard to beat. Only poor reliability kept him out of the title race – but now, out of the McLaren nest, what comes next?



3 SEBASTIAN VETTEL

World champion yet again, and almost unbeatable in the fastest car. Vettel was often brilliant, but early in the season Red Bull was not the dominant force of 2011 and his head seemed to go down a little. Always an ebullient winner, if rather less gracious in difficult circumstances, he laid to rest suggestions that he can't race – the drive from 10th to second at Spa was exceptional. Crucially, as we saw in Abu Dhabi and Brazil, his luck is almost a match for his consummate natural ability.



4 KIMI RÄIKKÖNEN

After two disappointing years in the forests, Räikkönen was back, quirky as ever, in F1, an environment in which he relishes nothing bar driving. It was anyone's guess how the comeback would turn out, but in the event Kimi – unlike Schumacher – was competitive from the outset. That last edge was perhaps not quite there, but he was consistently strong in the races. At Lotus they reasoned that a relatively laid-back ambience would bring out his best. They read him well.



5 JENSON BUTTON

In Melbourne, the opening race, Hamilton took pole, but Button snatched the lead at the start and had the rest of the afternoon to himself. At Spa, five months on, Button was similarly unapproachable, leading all the way at the ultimate circuit. In between times, though, he was often curiously off the boil. At times he seemed bewildered, but by Hockenheim again had the set-up to his taste – always crucial with Jenson – and in the second half of the season played a much stronger hand.



6 NICO HÜLKENBERG

Sergio Pérez had some fine results, but wasn't terribly consistent. Many were surprised – given Hülkenberg's availability – when McLaren signed the Mexican to replace Hamilton. In the long term Nico appears set for Ferrari, after a season of remarkably high quality that yielded fewer results than he merited. At Force India they liked his sunny disposition, pace and flair, as demonstrated at Interlagos. Signing for Sauber might seem like a sideways move, but it might be for one season only.



7 MARK WEBBER

If it seems odd to place only seventh a man who won superbly at Monaco and Silverstone, Webber made the podium on only two other occasions. There is no doubt about his pace or commitment – when the cars were less than fully competitive he sometimes outshone Vettel – but often he finished lower than expected. It says everything about Adrian Newey's genius that, despite being accustomed to being considered 'the other driver', Webber rejected Ferrari to remain with Red Bull.



8 NICO ROSBERG

In China he was on pole by half a second, made a bullet start and won conclusively. The breakthrough had been made and it looked as though Nico and Mercedes were finally due the season so long anticipated. Not so: there was a close second at Monaco, but no podiums thereafter. The team often flattered in qualifying, only to deceive in the race, thanks not least to its cars' appetite for tyres. Rosberg remains a talent, however, and might show better against Hamilton than many anticipate.



9 PAUL DI RESTA

Even after a great result, like sixth place in Bahrain or that fine fourth in Singapore, di Resta invariably comes across like the recent recipient of bad news, such as not being snapped up by a top team. This is unfortunate, for Paul is talented and sooner or later bound to drive for one of them. For much of the season he was on par with his Force India team-mate, before being shaded in the late races. He drives with innate class and his day will surely come – acknowledged, one hopes, with a smile.



10 FELIPE MASSA

For all his mistakes, Massa scrapes into the top 10 by virtue of his late transformation, which put this loyal and decent man up to seventh in the standings and allowed him to contribute significantly to Ferrari's season. Frankly lost in the first half of the year, his confidence in pieces, Felipe finally got a handle on the lacklustre F2012, whose later updates suited him perhaps better than Alonso and offered a glimpse of the man who almost beat Hamilton to the title four years ago.



HÜLKENBERG VS DI RESTA

rw I thought Hülkenberg had some fantastic races, but di Resta was a little disappointing.

nr Yes, although I wouldn't say di Resta was disappointing; all you can say is that Hülkenberg got the better of him. I'm not just going on the Brazilian Grand Prix when Hülkenberg led. I think a lot of people have seen something special about him for a while now. Frankly it amazes me that McLaren didn't take him rather than Pérez. For now you've got to assume that he's locked into Ferrari for 2014.

js I think what we forget about this last season is that the lesser teams were massively good compared to how they have been in the past. You normally had three teams at the front and everyone else was miles behind. Now you have five or six teams that could lead a race, that could win.

ef I think it's always interesting watching these midfield teams. It's very easy to say that they had a middling car and it's very hard to prove yourself. But then Hülkenberg did it in Brazil, Vettel did it at Toro Rosso, Alonso at Minardi, and that's what Hülkenberg's done this year. Di Resta, although I think he's performed very well throughout the year, hasn't had any of those races when you sit up and think, 'Wow, where did that come from?'

ds I've always thought highly of Hülkenberg, I saw him in his junior days and he seemed to have all the right ingredients at that stage. I think the signs are there that he's a top performer. But I'm not sure yet whether he's a top, top performer in the Vettel mould.

nr Hülkenberg has that spark, I feel, and it doesn't hurt either that he's immensely popular in the team. He's very, very well liked.

rw Jody, you pretty much set the world on fire when you came over from South Africa. Your rise to F1 was meteoric. What does it take for these guys towards the back of the grid to prove that they are something special?

js Well, I drove in a spectacular way because I slid the car a lot and I think that got me noticed. It was probably a disadvantage when the tyres got more and more sophisticated, though. You've got to come in and beat what you think the car can do. That's important. You have to put the car in a place it shouldn't be. »»





PENALTIES AND PUNISHMENTS

rw Nigel, blimey, we've seen this from the year dot – the odd madman comes along, does something crazy, but in Grosjean's case the number of mistakes he makes is a bit worrying. Maldonado's been wild on occasions, too.

nr You're right, but the thing they have in common is that they're both fundamentally blindingly quick. I don't think there's any doubt about that. If you look at Grosjean's qualifying times against Räikkönen's in the first part of the year he was blowing Kimi away regularly. I'm worried, though, about the kind of accidents Grosjean has had. If you play back the Spa start in slow motion you think 'What on earth was he doing?' It makes you worry whether his peripheral vision is quite what it should be. He just veered across the road into Lewis as if he had the place to himself.

rw What about Maldonado?

nr Christ, sometimes you think Maldonado should have his own personal steward, don't you? He does some very odd things, but on the other hand I think he's been blamed for things this year unfairly on occasion. I thought the coming-together with Pérez at Silverstone for example was just a plain motor racing accident. The problem is that once you get a reputation, it's very easy to be blamed ever after.

ef I think it's similar with Grosjean, but in terms of everyone being on his back so much he's driving scared. Every time he's got to negotiate that first corner, you think, 'How's he going to handle this?' Of course that's in the back of his head after that one-race ban. I think it's hard to drive like that. Jody, I'm sure you'll know better than me.

js I was lucky, I practised a lot with my peripheral vision, my first wife was very jealous…

rw Actually, you are the man to talk about this. After that shunt at Silverstone in 1973, people say you realised there was something you needed to change. Is that true, or is that bullshit?

js No, I don't think it's true at all. If anything it was when I joined Ken (Tyrrell) and he started pushing me to slow down. Maybe when I saw François Cevert's accident it came home to me as well. No, at that stage I was just driving as fast as I could and the car twitched out on me.

rw But these two? Is this something that will just get worked through their system?

js We'll see. You hope so. As Nigel says, they're blindingly fast and that's one of the most important things. Everything else can be sorted.

ds There are some interesting parallels here with Jody. Because of that accident at Silverstone it's easy to forget how great your start in F1 was and how competitive you'd been. The Silverstone thing dominated the headlines for some time and that's what people remember. Grosjean was sometimes superb at the start of the year, then he made these mistakes, pretty big ones at times, and they're the things that people remember. It's about character as well. With Maldonado you get the impression that all the barbs that come his way just bounce off. He doesn't care, it doesn't bother him. With Grosjean he's looked shaken at times this year and I don't think he's the same guy now that he was this time last year.

nr I agree with that. I think the one-race ban really shook him. I actually like Maldonado. I think he's a bit of a wild man at times. As John Wyer used to say, 'You can always tidy up speed, but you can't speed up tidiness.'

2012 DRIVERS CHAMPIONSHIP STANDINGS

1st	281pts SEBASTIAN VETTEL	2nd	278pts FERNANDO ALONSO
3rd	207pts KIMI RÄIKKÖNEN	4th	190pts LEWIS HAMILTON
5th	188pts JENSON BUTTON	6th	179pts MARK WEBBER
7th	122pts FELIPE MASSA	8th	96pts ROMAIN GROSJEAN
9th	93pts NICO ROSBERG	10th	66pts SERGIO PÉREZ
11th	63pts NICO HÜLKENBERG	12th	60pts KAMUI KOBAYASHI
13th	49pts MICHAEL SCHUMACHER	14th	46pts PAUL DI RESTA
15th	45pts PASTOR MALDONADO	16th	31pts BRUNO SENNA
17th	16pts JEAN-ERIC VERGNE	18th	10pts DANIEL RICCIARDO
19th	0pts VITALY PETROV	20th	0pts TIMO GLOCK
21st	0pts CHARLES PIC	22nd	0pts HEIKKI KOVALAINEN
23rd	0pts JÉRÔME D'AMBROSIO	24th	0pts NARAIN KARTHIKEYAN
25th	0pts PEDRO DE LA ROSA		



THE MYSTERY OF MERCEDES AND SCHUMACHER

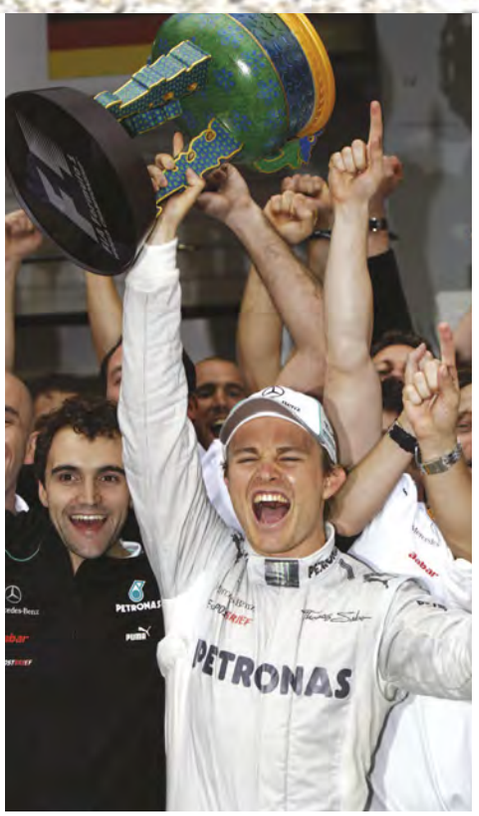
rw We must talk about Mercedes because it's really quite fascinating to me that a team of such size and resources has done so badly.

nr When you look at the technical personnel, some people have speculated that there are too many cooks. I'm not saying that's necessarily the case, but I'll admit it surprises me.

The car was OK sometimes and lamentable at others. On the other hand in Shanghai Rosberg not only won the race, but was on pole by half a second. He took off at the start and no one got near him. But that was one weekend in 20.

ef Does the fact that the Mercedes dropped off in performance so much after that win mean Ross (Brawn) has done as he did in 2008 and said 'forget this year'?

nr I think there's no doubt about that. As long as Michael was with any team there was always going to be a certain amount of focus on it, but next year with Lewis it's going to be a different deal altogether. If Lewis isn't competitive then the problem is not with him.



ds Jody I'm intrigued to hear what you have to say about Michael and his comeback.

js It must have been horrible sitting on the pit wall trying to look busy, as he did after he retired in 2006, it's probably the worst thing you can do. If you retire having won the world championship seven times, you feel like God. Now he's going to come out of this thinking differently. I think that's good for a person; it brings you down to earth.

nr That's probably right. You know when you've said that when you retired you didn't go to a Grand Prix for 10 years because you started the company in America and it took up all your time? Fundamentally that's Michael's problem. Down the road I really do wonder what he will find to do because you just get an impression that he doesn't have an interest in anything else.

rw Organic farming maybe?

js That would get rid of his fortune quite quickly! It's quite hard for some people to adapt to the change. I went from first class to stand-by in one year. Talking about feeling lost in a team, when I announced my retirement halfway through the 1980 season I already felt lost. I didn't feel like I was a part of the team two weeks later.



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THE OTHER GOODBYES

rw We're not just saying goodbye to Herr Schumacher, as we might not see Bruno Senna, Heikki Kovalainen or Kamui Kobayashi on the 2013 F1 grid. Who are we excited about seeing in an F1 car? I'll get the ball rolling by saying that I can't wait to see Valtteri Bottas in the Williams.

nr Yep, I agree. I will be interested to see how Esteban Gutiérrez goes in the Sauber, too. Actually down the road, and I'm not talking about next year or maybe even the year after, the really intriguing guy on the horizon for me is Antonio Félix da Costa. I think to come into Formula Renault 3.5 for the sixth round and just dominate the last quarter of the season was amazing.

ef I'm going to be really sad to see Kobayashi go. The fact his fans have raised more than €650,000 to try to keep him in the sport is an amazing achievement and a pretty good reflection on how he's viewed.

I'll also be sad to see Kovalainen go because he's driven better at Caterham than he ever did at McLaren. I think he deserves a seat somewhere.



nr Yep, I would agree with that, except I would say that there have been occasions this year when Petrov's been quicker. Looking at their reputations and their records, that shouldn't really have happened.

ds Petrov's no mug though, is he?

nr No, he isn't.

ds That's the thing, the quality through the grid is as strong now as it's ever been. What do you think Jody?

js I think it's stronger than it's ever been, certainly. The standard of driving right through the field has been very, very good.

ds But there are a lot of drivers out there who will be looking for world sports car drives next year by the looks of it. It's amazing, really, some of the quality that's being left on the sidelines. Of course the teams are having to look more and more at money.

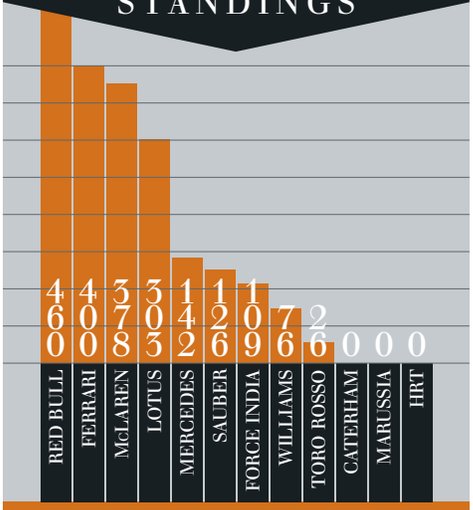
rw That seems to me to be the big factor here. It's become a lot more about money than it ever used to be. It's not just 'he's got great talent, he's really quick so we'll take him' is it? It's not like that anymore is it, Jody?

js No, but it hasn't been like that for years. If you get a driver that really stands out he'll still have to come with some sort of sponsorship.

Going back to Kobayashi – that's the guy I'll be sad not to see. I'm not so sure about the other guys. He was quicker in qualifying than Pérez quite a lot of the time, which is the speed thing again. He's been very brave and he hasn't crashed too much as far as I can remember. I can't believe that being a Japanese driver they can't come up with something that gets him in there. He's the first Japanese that I remember that is in the middle to top of all the drivers. I'd be very surprised if something from Japan doesn't come together.

2012

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Better from America

There may have been doubts about whether America would embrace Austin's Grand Prix – but it sure did...

BY ADAM SWEETING

Will Ferrell's NASCAR movie *Talledega Nights* featured Sacha Baron Cohen as gay French F1 driver Jean Girard, who was fond of listening to opera, drinking espresso and reading Albert Camus as he lounged pretentiously at the wheel. A farcical caricature obviously, but might the Girard character not have reflected a grain of truth about how the Americans see Formula 1?

He would doubtless have rung a bell with the local Austin radio presenter who described F1 as being "high class for snotty people" during the countdown to the inaugural Grand Prix at the city's Circuit of the Americas, a comment prompted by F1's chilly technological aura and the fondness of its protagonists for travelling by private jet. Yet as the race weekend progressed, what struck me most was the crowd's enthusiasm and determination to have a good time, greatly encouraged by fine weather and, fortuitously, what turned out to be one of the most gripping races of the season. It would have been no great surprise to hear choruses of "F1's Coming Home" booming from the stands.

"We're huge F1 fans," declared John Claybon on race morning. He'd travelled down to Austin from Oklahoma City with his wife Rocio. "So far it's been great. The whole atmosphere is wonderful, so hopefully F1 will continue to build from here. I know there are a lot of F1 fans in the States, and I hope it gains more traction because we want to come back next year."

Gauran Sardesai, who was introduced to F1 in India but now lives in Chicago, reckoned F1's US prospects looked bright. "I feel the demographics are shifting; there are enough people here who are interested. There are 120,000 people here in Austin and I think for Indianapolis in 2007 they had 250,000. I disagree when people say F1 won't make an impact in the States. It may take a while, but there's an audience."

"I've followed F1 for over 40 years," declared Allen Humphrey, a Home Counties Englishman transplanted to Austin, and clad from head to toe in Ferrari kit. "I still think it's exciting, even though it's not as competitive as I'd like to see it. But that's the nature of the sport." »»







All Images LAT

Humphrey is such a stoical F1 enthusiast that he has even managed to swallow his disgust over the 2005 debacle at Indianapolis, when flawed Michelin tyres resulted in only six cars contesting the event and left fans feeling righteously vengeful. Crucial to the favourable response to the Austin circuit from teams and punters alike is that it has been purpose-built for F1, in distinct contrast to some of F1's previous American haunts (car parks in Las Vegas and the like).

Humphrey's racing buddy Dan King was wildly enthusiastic about the new circuit. "I've been coming out here for the last year, watching the progress of the track," he said. "There was a question whether it would be built in time, but I think everybody's happy with the outcome. Generally speaking, Austinites have welcomed F1, and I think because the event is so well organised it's going to be seen as very positive. And once you come to an F1 race you're addicted to it. When you hear an 18,000 rpm motor it doesn't matter what you're used to, you're drawn to it. It's a technology laboratory."

As it happens, the words "technology laboratory" may also describe what Austin itself is morphing into. Traditionally, the city has prided itself on its bohemian-slacker attitude to life, reflected in the slogan 'Keep Austin Weird', and Austin's reputation as a home to all kinds of blues, country and rock'n'roll (dope-smoking country legend Willie Nelson is virtually the town's patron saint, and has his own bronze statue on Willie Nelson Boulevard). But while Austin's South by Southwest music festival has grown into a major international event, it's now dwarfed by the Interactive festival, a showcase for local high-tech industries and digital technologies. With companies such as Samsung, Dell, Sun Microsystems and Motorola based locally, the area has been dubbed 'Silicon Hills', and has been siphoning off brainpower from California's Silicon Valley. Austin may not be a giant metropolitan area comparable to the Manhattan-New Jersey location mooted for the currently delayed 'Grand Prix of America', but it's not a bad fit for the futuristic science of F1.

Meanwhile, COTA is being hailed as a cutting-edge F1 circuit, with its challenging topography, overtaking zones and replications of famous corners from other tracks including Silverstone and Turkey. Kip Kipple, visiting from Vancouver Island with his buddy Bob Mercer, found that it brought back Canadian memories.

"I've been watching F1 for years," Kip confided. "I used to watch the Villeneuves, and I remember seeing Stirling Moss at Mosport Park. This reminds me of Mosport a lot, up and down and hilly with nice hairpin turns. It's fun."

It's also notable for its fan-friendly layout. In the central area near the main gates, you find not only merchandising stalls and food and drink

WHAT FANS SAID...



"The whole atmosphere is wonderful, so hopefully F1 will continue to build from here."
John & Rocio Claybon



"Once you come to an F1 race you're addicted to it."
Allen Humphrey & Dan King



"This reminds me of Mosport a lot, up and down and hilly with nice hairpin turns. It's fun."
Kip Kipple



I think F1 is easier for girls to get into than NASCAR. You can listen to concerts and there's good food and drink, so I think it's a lot of fun.'"
Hilary McNamara



"Austin's doing a fantastic job. The Grand Prix is everywhere, you can't miss it."
Andrew & Amy Clark













Bohemian Austin leapt into Formula 1 with both feet, turning over the city centre to race-themed activities and proving that plenty of Americans get F1







outlets – lengthy queues for the latter was one legitimate cause for complaint – but an open-air amphitheatre designed for (free) live music. Thus on Saturday, the hordes were regaled by Georgia band Collective Soul, while country singer Clay Walker played old warhorses like Sweet Home Alabama while the sun sank gently in the west on Sunday evening. It was a real treat just to lounge around, soaking up the balmy atmosphere and mellow mood.

"This has a whole different atmosphere than NASCAR," said Hilary McNamara, who'd flown in from LA with her F1-loving fiancé. "It's a lot calmer and kinda classier, and it's a lot better to go and walk around. I think F1 is easier for girls to get into than NASCAR. You can listen to concerts and there's good food and drink, so I think it's a lot of fun.'"

Meanwhile Austin's reputation for laid-back hospitality and a wealth of after-hours entertainment makes it a magnet for tourists, and the visitors appreciated the proximity of downtown music bars and restaurants to the race track. It may sound inconceivable to habituees of Silverstone, but by most accounts the 500 free shuttle buses laid on by the Austin organisers took the crowds to the circuit and back again with the minimum of delay, and Austin's free downtown bus then whisked them to Sixth Street's clubs and shops. A chunk of downtown was made traffic-free, open-air stages had been set up for music, and Red Bull and McLaren had interactive exhibits where passers-by could experience simulated high-speed *g*-force or practise pitstop wheel-changes.



"Austin's doing a fantastic job. The Grand Prix is everywhere. You can't miss it"

I buttonholed Andrew and Amy Clark, natives of Adelaide but now living in Denver. Andrew was clad in Red Bull livery in homage to his favourite driver, Mark Webber.

"Yeah, I'm a fan of Mark and anti-Vettel, absolutely. But Austin's doing a fantastic job. The Grand Prix is everywhere, you can't miss it. Everyone's talking about it."

"We're from Adelaide so we've both grown up with the Grand Prix, and then it got stolen away to Melbourne," added Amy. "I guess we've got a connection with it because it was such a big thing for Adelaide. "

But Amy works in marketing, and her shrewd eye had noted that on the bus out to the track, "the crowd were all older, so there weren't people aged 20 or younger getting into it. It was either 40-somethings with their kids or people maybe in their 60s who perhaps remember the races from years ago."

Besides that, she felt that while the F1 word may have been resounding loud and clear around Austin, it might not have been spreading too far beyond. "People in Denver didn't know about it. We said we're going to the F1 and they were like 'what?' They're doing a great job in Austin, but outside I'm not so sure."

What remains baffling is how the ever-canny Bernie Ecclestone has taken F1 to the furthest-flung territories on earth, yet still hasn't managed to get the US market nailed down, even though F1 debuted in the States at Sebring as long ago as 1959 and raced for 20 years at Watkins Glen. It may be that the sport presents a daunting learning curve to the casual observer, as another fan I spoke to, Chicago-based Jordan Calloway, suggested.

"You have so many other sports going which are larger like NFL, NBA, and other sports Americans focus on because they can watch part of it and understand it. You're contending with a very short attention span. With F1 you need to be fully invested, you need to understand everything and how it differs from other sporting events. I don't think anybody knows the solution; all we can do as fans is support the venue and the city of Austin."

He still wasn't entirely convinced that Austin was the perfect location for F1. "Whether they'll be fully able to capitalise on this is hard to say, because this is not a major city. It's a big city but it's not like New York, Chicago or LA. The locals I've spoken to so far have either embraced the race or said 'we're getting out of town'."

With IndyCar and NASCAR running events weekly or fortnightly, F1 may need to up the ante and saturate the US market with sheer volume. If Austin were joined by F1 events on the east and west coasts, it would surely stand a better chance of breaking through into the wider consciousness. Besides, it's not hard to imagine that many of F1's chief playmakers would prefer additional races in the States to slogging away in the hinterlands of Korea or China. After the first practice session in Austin, Red Bull's team principal Christian Horner spelled out the significance of the American market to the sport.

"It's hugely important," he reflected. "America is Red Bull's biggest market, it is [Nissan luxury car brand and Red Bull partner] Infiniti's largest market. It's important for all our partners, so America is crucial for F1. We have more guests and corporate entertainment here than any other circuit. There's a real buzz and enthusiasm about Austin and I think this will be a very popular race on the calendar. If we can get another race in the USA as well, that would be fantastic."

Mercedes-Benz's Norbert Haug didn't beat about the bush: "Our target is to sell more cars and use the US F1 race as a platform."

An issue frequently raised is the importance of finding a home-grown driver whom American fans and media can get behind. Scott Speed spent a couple of erratic seasons with Toro Rosso before legging it back to NASCAR, while California's Alexander Rossi is currently a test driver for Caterham, but there's no immediate sign of the next Mario Andretti hoving over the horizon.

"An American driver would certainly help," said Christian Horner. "In Spain, the circuits were quite empty before Fernando Alonso's success and now they're rammed. Red Bull brought Scott Speed into F1 but just bringing a driver in isn't enough. He's got to be successful; at the end of the day everybody loves a winner."

I put the 'American driver' question to Chuck Aksland, VP of Motorsports Operations at the Circuit of the Americas. "Everybody's excited to have the US GP back here in Austin," he said, "and obviously the next step would be to try and have a following for an American world champion. My background was in MotoGP, and we've seen with American riders the popularity of MotoGP rising in the US. It's important for fans to have a driver to follow, but it takes time. There are some good American drivers coming up. Hopefully they'll get their shot."

There's some consolation for the Texan site in the fact that Mexican driver Sergio 'Checo' Perez is surfing a media wave, thanks to his upcoming move from Sauber to the vacated Lewis Hamilton slot at McLaren. The extensive Mexican population in Texas and the proximity of Austin to the Mexican border meant that a substantial chunk of tickets were sold to Mexican fans. I talked to a couple of them, Alex Contes and Christian Martinez, but they barely spoke any English, though they were able to convey their wish that either Perez or Alonso would win the Grand Prix. Plans are allegedly afoot to relaunch the Mexico Grand Prix, not staged since 1992, with Tavo Hellmund (who was involved in creating COTA until he had a falling-out with his partners) taking a leading role. Two or three GPs in the States and one in Mexico... Could an elaborate Bernie-esque masterplan finally be coming to fruition?

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No. 9
Petrol pump globes

Back when there were many rival suppliers of petrol, their main way of distinguishing themselves on the garage forecourt was through the illuminated glass globe which crowned every petrol pump. These grew very elaborate and varied, but being fragile have become increasingly rare. Tom Wheatcroft collected them for many years, and there are 29 on display inside the Donington Collection building, with others outside mounted on petrol pumps. Illuminated on a dark evening they make an atmospheric display.

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GUINNESS



James Mitchell

Lunch with...
OLIVER GAVIN

He accepted that he wouldn't make it to F1 early on, but since then he's claimed five ALMS titles and four class victories at Le Mans

BY SIMON TAYLOR







Formula 1 is naturally the summit of every young driver's ambition, the goal that spurs him on to scale each successive rung of the ladder. When his early efforts go well, when the pundits' plaudits start to include prognostications of future greatness, the goal creeps closer. But, unless he's a once-in-a-generation superstar, there will inevitably be a degree of lottery involved. Of a pair of drivers with apparently equal ability, one might make it to F1, one might not; and the deciding factor is not necessarily pure talent, but the way the cards happen to fall. Look through the race reports in the weeklies of 10 or 20 years ago: the odd name stands out that subsequently became a household word, but there are so many others then making headlines who are now totally forgotten. They have become ordinary blokes: businessmen, farmers, garage owners, property developers. Or, in a few cases, they have gone on to make an honest living in other areas of motor sport, continuing to display the ability that merited an F1 drive but did not achieve it.

Oliver Gavin is one such. In his first full season he won 11 out of 12 races, starting

every one from pole. Barely 12 months after his first-ever car race, he scooped the prestigious McLaren/*Autosport* young driver award. He went on to be British F3 Champion, following in the wheel-tracks of Emerson Fittipaldi, Nelson Piquet, Ayrton Senna and Mika Häkkinen. Then came a couple of unfortunate F3000 deals that turned out to have far less substance than promised, and suddenly Olly's career was going in the wrong direction. After a summons to compete in the Australian Grand Prix turned sour, Olly had to accept that he would never find himself on an F1 grid.

So he shifted his sights to a works drive in endurance racing. For 11 seasons now he has been a key member of Corvette Racing, and has been rewarded with 41 wins, five Drivers' Champion titles in the American Le Mans Series, and four class victories at Le Mans. Talking to him, I realise that the levels of fitness, dedication and intelligent professionalism he brings to bear on his race programme are in their way every bit as stringent as an F1 driver's.



1



3



2



4

[1] 2012 Le Mans was blighted by mechanical issues [2] Celebrating a third straight GT1 win at Le Mans in 2006 [3] Struggling to keep the safety car on track in 1999 French GP [4] Landmark US sports car debut in Lola at Homestead in 2000 [5] Receiving the 1991 McLaren *Autosport* young driver award from Ayrton Senna [6] F1 testing with Renault at Silverstone in 2002 [7] Last attempt at F3000 with Edenbridge in '99 [8] Chasing Kelvin Burt for the '93 Formula 3 title [9] Saleen drive in 2001 led directly to Corvette deal

Oliver is 40 now, and lives with his wife Helen and three young children in an idyllic country village, off the beaten track but within easy reach of Silverstone. His children go to the local school, where Helen is the chairperson and fundraiser, and social life gathers around a delightful village pub, the Rose & Crown. Not that Olly sees inside it that much: during 2012 he made no fewer than 18 return trips across the Atlantic. When we meet he has just jetted in from the 1000-mile Petit Le Mans race at Road Atlanta. It's at the Rose & Crown that we take an utterly British lunch: Arbroath smokie topped with fried egg, chicken stuffed with Lincolnshire sausage, and bread and butter pudding with custard. Olly looks as if he can take it: tall, slender and evidently very fit, he has already run five miles that morning.

"I genuinely enjoy running, and I try to do 40 or 50 miles in every week. The cars I race get very hot inside, and you need to retain your ability to concentrate and focus for a long time. Better fitness means you can drive faster for longer, and in testing you can keep working with the team and not get a drop-off in performance. Often with testing, practice, qualifying and then the race, an event will last a full week, which puts a lot of stress on your upper body and your neck, so you need to do plenty of core fitness and circuit training too.

"Endurance used to be just about driving at eight-tenths and keeping the car going. Now each stint is like a Grand Prix, over and over again. We'll do just under an hour between refuelling stops – at Le Mans the tank is limited to 90 litres – and we stay on the same tyres for two stints. So each driver will double-stint each time, and sometimes we may triple-stint, which means you're in the car for up to 2hr 45min. That's why for the long races you need three drivers. Like any professional athlete, you have a medical team behind you: not just to make sure you're getting the right fluids and reloading carbohydrates, proteins and minerals, but also to understand how you operate mentally. For years, whenever I got out of the car at Le Mans, day or night, I was so amped up I couldn't leave the garage. The crew chief, the engineers, the mechanics, the other drivers, they were doing their jobs, and there was nothing I could do to influence that. But I was using up a lot of mental energy that I could use in the car by worrying and watching what was going on, and by the end of the race I'd be completely spent.

"Now at Le Mans we have an American, Dr Andrew Heyman, who is brilliant at dealing with all that. He asked me to bring to the race pictures of the things that made me most happy. So on the wall above my bunk upstairs in the Corvette Racing hospitality unit in the paddock I stuck up pictures of my children, and the fields behind my house where I run. When I get out of the car after a stint I'll go up and lie there and look at them while Andrew performs acupuncture on me, particular trigger points to make you switch off: feet, hands, neck, a spot between your eyes. Within moments I'll have switched off, and sleep deeply for two hours. Then he has a process of waking me up, a drink of the right stuff, a squirt of ginseng extract up your nose, plus other herbal extracts like rhodiola, which junior surgeons use to keep them alert on long night shifts."

All this is a long way from Olly's first steps in karting, aged 11. His father wanted something to do with Olly and his older brother Marcus at weekends. "By the time I was 14 I was doing the British Junior Championships at Kimbolton, and I was on the front row with a Scottish boy called Coulthard just behind me. It was the biggest race I'd ever done, and it was pretty ferocious. DC passed me for third, went to take


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the second-place man, made a real mess of it and spun, and I went over the back of him. So neither of us did any good. I've reminded him of that a couple of times since!

"Then I did the racing school at Brands Hatch, and I met Graeme Glew who ran Team Touraco. He entered me in a Formula First in a five-race winter series at Brands Hatch, on a rentadrive basis. It was a cold and wet winter, racing in rain and sleet, and standing around in the cold. I won my second race, and I could maybe have won the series, but I got excluded from one round for overtaking under a yellow – it was so dark you couldn't see the flags.

"In 1991 I did a full season of Formula First with Fortec, still paying for the drive. We pretty much dominated the year. I won every race except one, when I was starting from pole but stalled on the line and collided with my team-mate coming back up the field. I also did a Formula Renault race – qualified on pole and finished third – and some Vauxhall Lotus with David Sears, finished second in the final race at Silverstone. Then I found out I was one of the six finalists for the McLaren *Autosport* award."

The others were Dario Franchitti, Guy Smith, Dino Morelli, Jamie Spence and Jonathan McGall. The Awards selection format called for each driver to be put into a car one formula above what he'd been driving, and because of Olly's brief experience in FR and FVL he was put into an F3 car for the first time in his life, an Alan Docking Ralt. "It wasn't easy getting my 6ft 2in into the cockpit with the standard seat, and I had no idea what to expect. It was very cold that day at Donington, and I got on the kerb on the way out of the first corner, needed full opposite lock to catch it. If I'd spun in the first corner, that would have been really embarrassing." But the judges were very impressed by his times, and his results in the fitness tests. On the night at the Grosvenor House Olly's name was called out, and Ayrton Senna presented him with his £20,000 cheque. "He said to me, 'I hope this will be one of many,' which is a memory I cherish. I gave all of the £20,000 to my dad, because he'd lent me the money for my racing up to then."

For 1992 Olly moved on to Formula Vauxhall with John Village – "he really taught me how to set up a car" – and his first race abroad was at Spa. He bought a video to learn the track, then put it on pole and won. Having finished second in the championship he moved on to Formula 3 with Peter Briggs at Edenbridge Racing. "We started with a Ralt chassis, which turned out not to be very good that year. After a few races Peter shrewdly realised the Dallara might be better, so we flew to Italy, brought one back, and the first race we did with it we won from pole. We won four races running, which turned the championship on its head, and made everybody else switch to Dallaras too. Once Paul Stewart Racing had got their heads around theirs, Kelvin Burt was the class of the field. I was still a bit too green to get the maximum from the car, so I finished second in the series.

"Then we felt we had to move on to Formula 3000, and that's where things started to go wrong. Keith Wiggins' Pacific Racing had run Coulthard in 3000 that year and done quite well. Keith told me he was starting his own F1 team, and I could be their F3000 driver and also F1 test driver. It all sounded great. But they didn't have the money to run the F1 team, let alone keep on with F3000, and it was naïve of me to think they could. In the end I scrabbled a drive with Roger Orgee and Omegaland, and we had a couple of half-decent showings, but I had a big crash at Pau, knocked myself out and broke the car in two. Then Lola wouldn't release the car because they were owed money. In the end the whole thing unravelled. As for the Pacific F1 test role, I drove the car once, for five laps at Snetterton, and it had F1 suspension on one side and F3000 suspension on the other, because they didn't have enough bits. That was my career as a Pacific test driver.

"The only thing to do was to go back into F3 with Pete Briggs and Edenbridge – but if I did that I would have to win the title, otherwise I'd not be taken seriously any more. It literally was win or bust. I had the same engineer I'd had in 1993, Ian Morgan, who went on to be chief engineer at Red Bull when they won the World Championship in 2010 and 2011, a fantastic man to work with. It was really between Helio Castroneves and Ralph Firman, both of whom were with Paul Stewart, and me. If Helio had crashed less often in the early part of the season he would have walked it, but it all came down to the final race at Thruxton. Ralph and I had had quite a few run-ins that year, but in that final I concentrated on keeping ahead of him, so Warren Hughes won it, Jamie Davies was second, I was third, and Helio and Ralph were sixth and seventh. Job done.

"Four weeks after that final F3 round came the last F1 race of the year, the Australian Grand Prix at Adelaide. So I'm straight on the phone to Keith Wiggins saying, We should get something for the money we'd put into Pacific F1 – because we'd got them some sponsorship from GQ and a couple of other small sponsors, and we'd put in some family money too. So he says, 'OK, Olly, fly out to Australia, we'll get your Superlicence organised for you.' »»

"I'd still only done those five laps of Snetterton in the car with the wrong suspension, but I was raring to go. I get to Australia, I'm being fitted into the car, I've already been interviewed by Murray Walker as Britain's newest F1 driver. The story was supposed to be that Bertrand Gachot, who was usually the car's driver with Andrea Montermini, had hurt himself in a jet-ski accident on holiday since the Japanese Grand Prix. Suddenly there's Keith Wiggins looking like it's bad news, and Gachot standing there with a smirk on his face. I was told that there was a problem with my Superlicence, and I wouldn't be driving. So I went to see Bernie. I told him I'd come all this way, and how could it be sorted out? Bernie said, 'Oliver, here's the deal. You're obviously a very good driver, but the problem is that Pacific Grand Prix are going out of business. They won't be here next year. You haven't tested the car properly, you haven't driven at Adelaide before, you haven't done a Grand Prix before. Come back to us with a good team next year and we'll be delighted to have you.'

So I'd seen the man at the top, and he'd given me some time, hadn't just fobbed me off. You could see he was very busy and he had a lot going on, but equally he was absolutely aware of the situation. He didn't mess around, he was direct and straight to the point. I don't know to this day whether Pacific had ever intended to put me in the car or not. I think by that time Gachot's sponsors were pretty much keeping the team afloat. My father flew out to watch me race, and I met him at the airport and told him the bad news. He went to the track and had a not-so-quiet word with Keith Wiggins, because some of it was his money. But there was nothing we could do."

For 1996 Oliver found work driving for Opel in International Touring Cars. "I had some good races, but more often than not I was taken out. There was plenty of contact: Hans Stuck and Klaus Ludwig were pretty smart at that. I was rather green coming into touring cars for the first time, and I was sharing the track with some very astute, politically savvy team-mates like Manuel Reuter, who won the title that year. But it was a good lesson in dealing with a large manufacturer team. Then in 1997 I tried to raise enough money to go back into Formula 3000. It was on a real shoestring: the series had gone to a one-make Lola chassis, and we needed to go testing and spend time getting it right, but we didn't have the budget for that. It was just turn up, and perform. At Silverstone first qualifying was in the rain and I was second-fastest, but for the second session it dried out and I didn't even qualify. At Helsinki I crashed in practice. We didn't have the spares to fix the car, so we had to come home.

"That was when the F1 safety car opportunity arose. After the Adelaide fiasco I still hadn't given up on F1, and I was desperate to keep my face around. Pete Briggs told me Charlie Whiting was looking for somebody to drive the safety car, so I did a practice with Charlie at Silverstone before the 1997 British Grand Prix, and after that I was in. I had Peter Tibbetts in the right-hand seat communicating with Charlie and Herbie Blash in race control, and Professor Sid Watkins was with a driver in the medical car, with his No 2 Gary Hartstein sitting in the back with an anaesthetist and all the kit. We'd sit at the end of the pit lane for the entire race, strapped in, engine running. Then we'd hear on our radios, 'safety car stand by', and then 'safety car go!' They'd try to send us out at the front of the field, but sometimes we'd be waving cars by while we looked to pick up the leader. It was a real responsibility. At each race, whether we were at Monza, or Monaco, or Montréal, Bernie would come over to me, poke me in the stomach with his walkie-talkie aerial and say, 'No pressure, boy,' and walk off.



"When I first started I was taken aback by how loud the car was"

"The point is, an AMG Mercedes CLK 550 is a very quick car in road car terms, but out there with the F1 cars you had to drive at nine-tenths, you were really on it. Even then you'd only just be lapping quick enough for the F1 cars to keep their tyres warm. Charlie told me it was something that Ayrton Senna had brought up at a number of drivers' meetings before his accident – how important it was for the safety car to be driven fast and well enough so they could keep heat in their brakes, and temperature and pressure in their tyres. Our AMG CLKs arrived at the track with Mercedes engineers looking after them, and it was a very serious operation.

"The toughest one was the 1999 French Grand Prix at Magny-Cours. We knew bad weather was coming. Then it went dark, and suddenly it was torrential. 'Safety car stand by… Safety car go!' I leave the pits onto a completely flooded track, round the long right-hander, and on the back straight the wipers stop. I fumble with the switch, back and forth, and just as I get them working again, going up to the chicane there's a massive puddle, which I haven't seen. The car goes completely sideways, and all I can think about is what Bernie will do to me if I beach it in the gravel. The car goes one way, then the other, finally I manage to get it back, and then Herbie's on the radio saying, 'You've got to slow down, the F1 cars can't keep up.' The next lap, by that puddle where I'd nearly lost it, there were five F1 cars deep in the gravel. Unlike me they had no ground clearance, and they'd just water-skied off. I had to lead the field round for 11 laps until they got things sorted out.

"Driving the safety car I got to know well all the people who made a Grand Prix work – Charlie, Herbie, Jo Bauer the technical delegate, Max a little bit, Bernie every now and again. And of course Prof. Sid was so generous, he'd look after me. We'd go out to dinner, and he'd always know a couple of local characters to invite along and exchange outrageous stories. He was so down to earth, a marvellous man just happy to be living life and being around people. He treated everybody exactly the same, whether they were Bernie or Joe Bloggs."

Keeping his face around the circus actually did get Olly some F1 seat time. When Benetton signed up a new sponsor in FedEx, they wanted to paint a car up with the new livery and show it off to the FedEx executives at Silverstone. But it was between the Japanese and Australian Grands Prix and Jean Alesi and Gerhard Berger, the Benetton drivers, and the regular test driver Alex Wurz, were on the other side of the world. "I'd just fallen off the plane back from driving the safety car in Japan and was seriously jet-lagged, so when I got the call to be at Silverstone the next day I thought it was a wind-up. But they had Alex's seat in the car, he's 6ft 2in just like me, and it fitted me fine. I did 10 laps for the Fedex people, and they were happy, and then Benetton said, 'You did all right. Come back tomorrow and have a decent stint. But we can only pay you this much a day. No arguing, no negotiation.' Well, I didn't argue: it was far more than I'd ever been paid for a day's work in my life.

"I ended up doing three days for them, and from then on whenever they wanted to try something, mainly aerodynamics and other bits and pieces, they'd call me. I was a sort of journeyman, trusted to give them sensible feedback and not crash it. Later on I helped develop the Renault launch control system,



The Rose & Crown is Olly's local in between punishing schedule of long-distance races

which they reckoned was the best on the grid. They knew that if their car started on Row 3, it'd get to the first corner beside the cars on Row 2. I had a 10-year gig, on and off, with Benetton and then Renault, from 1997 to 2006. Great experience.

"It was about the start of 2000 that I finally had to accept that F1 wasn't going to happen for me. I had a few drives in Formula 3000 in 1999 in a car that Pete Briggs got together, and finished fourth at Monaco. But I'd just got married, Helen was pregnant, and I had to earn a living, so I decided to look to America and sports car racing. Keith Wiggins was now sales director at Lola, so I went to see him and told him I reckoned he owed me one. He put me in touch with an American called Scott Schubot who had bought a Lola sports car chassis, and he sold me a co-drive in his car at Homestead for $10,000 cash. I took out all the savings I had, and that paid for my first GrandAm race. It was the final roll of the dice.

"I get to Homestead, and I qualify the car on pole – only to be put to the back of the grid for some technical infringement. I start from the back, we're coming through well, and I come up behind this guy called Jack Baldwin, in a Riley & Scott. He doesn't want to let me past so I have a wheel-banging contest with him, he gets a puncture and has to make a pitstop. I do another lap, and he's ahead of me, waiting for me, and as I come alongside he gives me the biggest chop, spits me off the road, gives me a puncture. I manage to get the car in and hand over to Schubot. Then the team chief says to me, 'Olly, you want to be careful. Jack Baldwin's looking for you,' and I see this huge man with enormous hands coming towards me down the pitlane. So I go and hide in the truck. When I take the car over again I have more contact with another car and lose the nose, and we end up fourth. Not a bad start.

"On the back of that I got a drive with John Field in another Lola. Now I only had to pay for my flights, and then as we got some decent results he started paying for my flights and then even paying me a bit, too. After the fourth or fifth round we're at Three Rivers, I'm going down in the hotel lift and it stops at a floor and the doors open, and in steps a huge man with enormous hands: Jack Baldwin. He shuts the lift doors, then he's got me by the shirt collar, pressed up against the wall. 'You young limeys think you can come over here and mess with us good ol' boys in America. Don't ever do that to me again.' Since then we've got on pretty well, actually.

"I carried on driving for John Field in 2001, and we started winning races. There was a great group out there – James Weaver gave me a lot of advice and help, and Andy Wallace and Butch Leitzinger. Steve Saleen got in touch, and I did the Sebring 12 Hours for him with Franz Konrad and Terry Borcheller. I put it on class pole, but up to then no Saleen had ever run for more than three hours. We had a few dramas, but so did the Corvettes, and amazingly we won the thing. When I came in to hand over for the last time, looking forward to getting out, I see Franz and Terry standing there with no gear on, and they stuff me back in the car and send me out again to the finish. It was the first proper endurance race I'd ever done, and in those days I had no idea how to prepare myself for it. By the end I was completely finished. But that win really helped my standing in America.

"I continued with John Field for the rest of the season [he got three wins and five podiums], and I did my first Le Mans with Saleen. That year I think it rained for 14 hours. Going down the Mulsanne Straight the rain was coming in around the doors and pouring down onto my lap. Then it would get on the electrics and the thing would misfire, and the screen would be all misted up. But we kept on. After 20 hours we holed a piston, but Terry got the car going at the end and we chugged over the line for third in class. That autumn Doug Fehan met me in the paddock at Laguna Seca and offered me a seat at Corvette Racing. After 11 seasons, I'm still there."

At first it was just a drive in the long-distance races: Le Mans, Sebring and Petit Le Mans. Oliver won his class in all three, and thereafter he was a full member of the team. At Le Mans in 2003 he was second after a long delay for gearbox repairs, but he won the next three years on the trot. "From 2004 until 2010 my team-mate was Olivier Beretta, and we were joined in the longer races by Jan Magnussen. We were three different characters who generally drove the car the same way

and wanted the same things. Qualifying is always good to watch when Jan is in the car: he can roll his sleeves up and produce a lap time apparently from nowhere. It was always fun to drive with him. For 2012 he was in the other car, but we still talk and swap information, because that's what you do in endurance racing. It's a team effort. Olivier is a very aggressive driver, he always drove by the seat of his pants, arriving at a corner elbows out, really hard on the brakes. But when the team changed from the GT1 car to the GT2 car, with no carbon brakes and less downforce, Olivier was less happy, and he left during 2010. It was the team's decision to switch from GT1 to GT2. In GT1 there wasn't really anybody left for Corvette to race, and in GT2 we've been up against Porsche, Ferrari, Aston Martin, BMW and Viper, so the racing is much more meaningful.

"Having been part of Corvette for so long now, I have a huge passion for it, and I've tuned my driving style to suit it. It brakes exceptionally well because of the front engine and the front tyre we're using, and it puts the power down well, gets hooked up out of corners. But you have to remember it's just a great big front-engined push-rod V8 musclecar. When I first started driving it in 2002 I was taken aback by how loud the car was – not just the actual noise, but the vibration, which goes through your body and shakes you physically. The heat inside was pretty bad, but they now have an air-conditioning system which does drain a bit of power but circulates cool air not only on your face but also through the seat back. In 2012 I only really felt the effects of the heat at Mid-Ohio and Baltimore, and both of those were pretty humid races.

"The cars are built by Gary Pratt and Jim Miller, who as Pratt & Miller run Corvette Racing from a base in New Hudson, 40 minutes out of Detroit. They've developed the Corvette for 16 seasons now, and they've done Le Mans 12 times. That's a long time for a factory-supported programme. At the American races there's huge support from Corvette owners, with a Corvette Corral for them to park in and watch from, and we always have the longest autograph line. All credit to General Motors for having stuck with it through all the recent recessionary problems. In 2008, when the US Government bailed-out GM, they had 15 competition programmes running. They axed the lot except support for three NASCAR teams, and Corvette Racing. Le Mans remains hugely important to them. Last time we won there the president of GM North America, Mark Reuss, was standing with us on the top step of the podium, and he was just thrilled to be there.

"For my last race of 2012, Petit Le Mans at Road Atlanta, I decided that instead of flying down from Detroit I'd go in the truck with the boys, just to see what it was like. It was 800 miles, and we did it in 14 hours. About three hours in I was thinking, where's the nearest airport? But I stuck it out, and it gave me a good perspective on another part of the whole team effort. When they get there they have to get the truck washed and looking presentable before they can even get into the paddock, start unloading, and then start on the race cars. As is always the case in a team, you can't do your job without them doing theirs. That's what I love about sports car racing. The team is small by F1 standards: about 35 people go to each race, drivers, engineers, mechanics, support crew. The whole gang works together, eats together, plots together: set-up, strategy, pitstops, the lot.

"Pitstops are practised endlessly. In a 24-hour race you have more than 30, so saving fractions in the process, releasing the car just right, can make a big difference. For tyre-changing the ALMS rules allow two guys and one wheel gun per side, and they can change four tyres in about 7.8 seconds. While it's refuelled you can clean the screen and change the driver, but you can't do anything else.

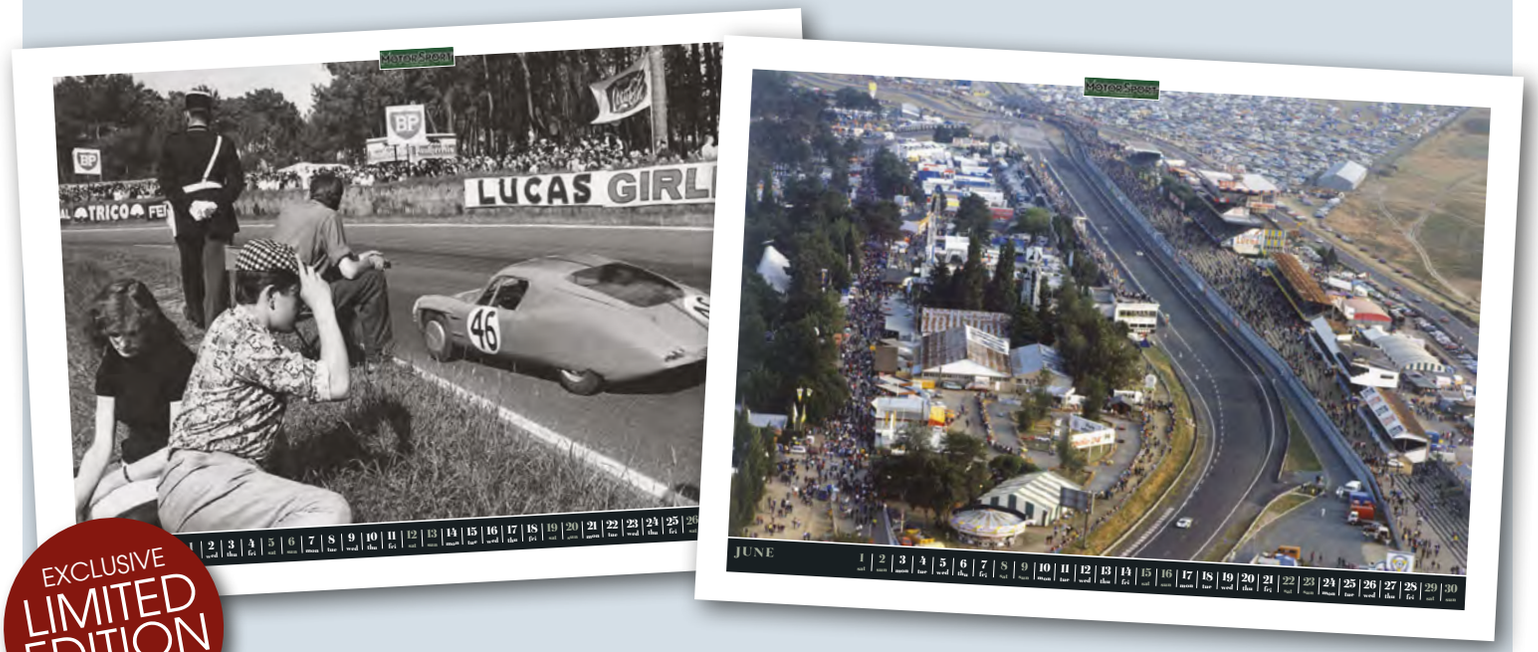
> "The day you think you know it all is the day you start going slower"

"There's something magical about Le Mans. On Saturday morning during the build-up the atmosphere is electric. Since 2003 I've always taken the start, and on the first lap, going down the Mulsanne Straight to the first chicane, it can get pretty crowded. Then you fall into a routine. The real work comes during the night and on into the morning, that's usually when the race is won or lost. The last four years it's gone wrong for me on Sunday morning: a lost wheel, a gearbox problem, a crash. In 2010 Jan was put on the grass by a slower car, and it was quite a big accident. And it's flat out the whole time, just qualifying laps, qualifying laps, never any let-up. It's all down to being properly prepared, properly focused."

Oliver Gavin is clearly stimulated and fulfilled by his hectic transatlantic sports car career: five drivers' championships and 41 victories in Corvettes, and counting. "I'm now the longest-serving driver in the team. I have another year of my multi-year contract to run, and naturally I hope it'll be renewed for 2014. But you can never feel complacent, because everything hangs on your performance. This is a results business.

"Of course I would have loved to have made it in Grand Prix racing. Racing against people who have been in F1, I've felt equal to many of them and quicker than some. But I consider myself very fortunate to have been able to earn my living driving racing cars, and it's made me determined to go on doing so for as long as I can: keep up my fitness, my professionalism, my competitive speed. And you never stop learning. The day you think you know it all is the day you start going slower."





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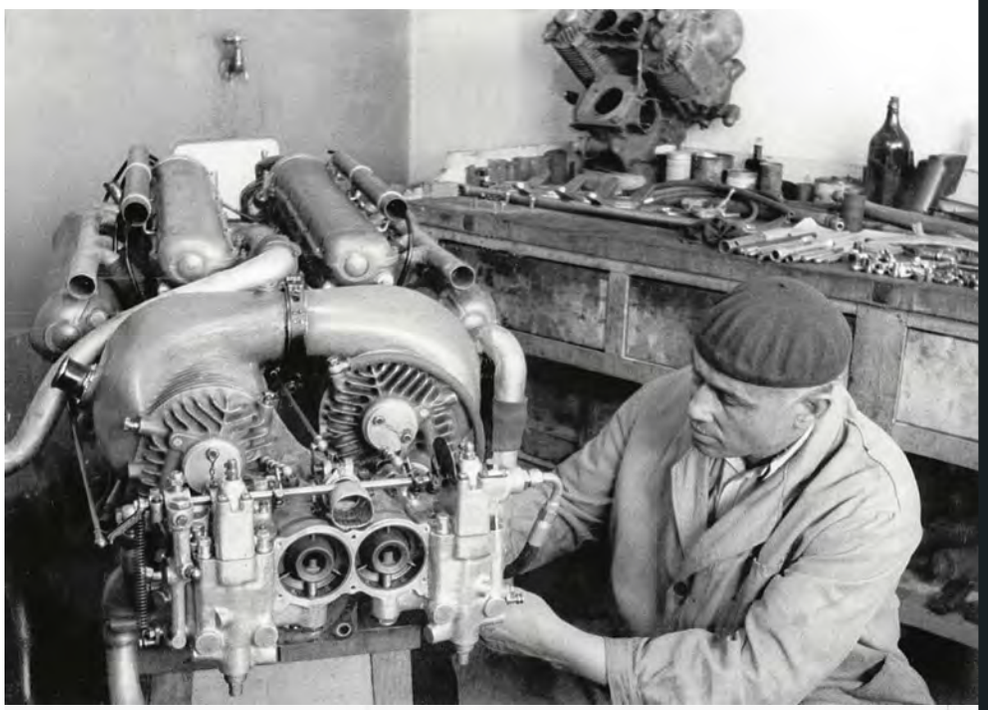
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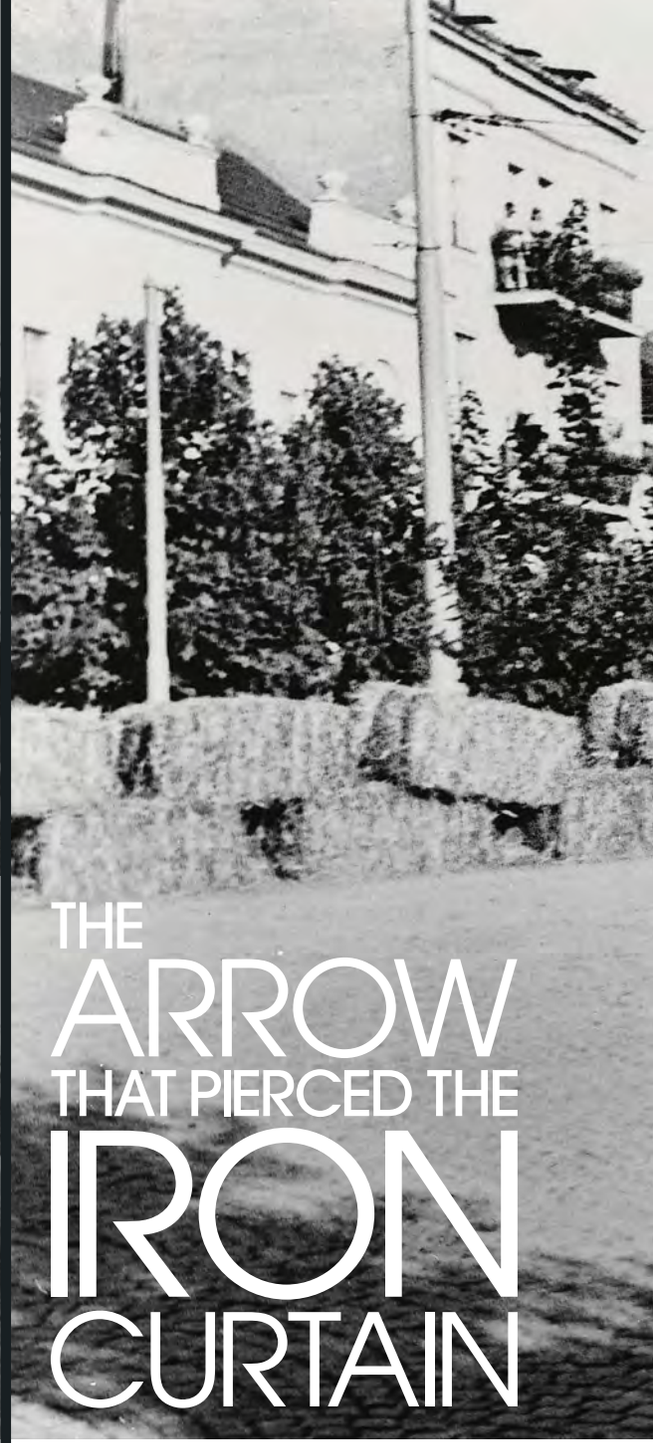
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Jozsef Roman in the car he saved from scrap, with son Tibor, left. Joszef sold a house to fund the repairs, above

GP Library



THE ARROW THAT PIERCED THE IRON CURTAIN

Rumours, gossip and bribes clouded the hunt for a treasure lost behind the Iron Curtain since WWII. But what a treasure – a genuine Silver Arrows Mercedes-Benz

BY DOUG NYE

Settle down now, this is complicated... It was like a John Le Carré novel. December, 1988, and three of us had just flown into a frail and tense Communist Rumania. We had realised just how frail by evident cost-cutting on the elderly Tarom airliner. The moment we boarded, the clues were clear. The cabin crew wore overcoats and scarves. Their in-flight menus were duplicated on a fold of rough and shoddy grey paper. Watery coffee was served from a single thermos. Then the taxi from Otopeni Airport into central Bucharest took us down broad deserted boulevards, dusted with early snow, lined largely by switched-off street lamps...



Daimler

We checked into the darkened, chilly Hotel InterContinental. At best every fifth light fitting had a bulb. Everywhere in the gloom stood vases of plastic flowers; quite irresistible. Leaning close to each vase we asked clearly: "One, two, three, four – testing, testing?". As western visitors, we felt we were being watched…

My auctioneer friend Robert Brooks had fixed the trip at zero notice. Evert Louwman, the great Dutch collector, was with us, while I knew a bit about the great car we hoped to see. RB had been tipped off by his collector friend Paul Kunkel, who had heard from a Washington contact that a 1939 Mercedes-Benz W154 Grand Prix car "could be bought" here.

It was one of a pair which had survived for many years in the care of Jozsef 'Jozska' Roman and his son Tibor in Cluj-Napoca, 200 miles northwest from Bucharest. In 1971-72, Jozska had sold a sister W154 through Dr Georg Ott of Munich to New York-domiciled Dieter Holterbosch, of Lowenbrau beer. Previously, in 1968, classic car dealer Rob de la Rive Box had become probably the first car-wise westerner to see Jozska's two Silver Arrows.

But under Communism, all property notionally belonged to the State, not any individual. Yet as we were to realise, dependent upon the individual, strings were pullable…

We were to meet the Vice-President of the American Compliance Corporation (ACC) a concern set-up notionally to export 'Roman' heavy trucks – built in nearby Brasov – to the USA. We were told ACC was also the only conduit through which 'patrimonial' property could legally be exported from Rumania. The VP proved to be a slight fellow in grey suit and dark glasses, Catanil Tutunaru. He provided a smoky-glazed people-carrier in which a couple of burly coves in bright red and blue quilted jackets would drive us around.

We saw quite a lot of the wintry country. Robert and Evert would talk endlessly with Tutunaru, to little positive effect, but we would never get to see our quarry – Jozska Roman's fabled W154 chassis No15, the car driven to second place by Manfred von Brauchitsch in the 1939 Belgrade Grand Prix, on the very day war broke out. Jozska, who had died in December 1986, was born in Budapest in 1907, an ethnic Hungarian who lived and worked most of

his life in Cluj (pronounced 'Kloozh'), where his son Tibor – or 'Tiberiu' – Jozsef was born in 1933. Both were strong, rugged toughies. Tibor became a competition weight-lifting coach for the national Rumanian team when they won eight medals in the 1984 Los Angeles Olympics. The State paid well, enabling him to part-fund his father's restoration of the W154s.

He recalled how Jozska had found them: "My father was an automobile and motorbike nut, a mechanic and a car racer. Around 1946 he learned there were two old Mercedes cars in a scrapyard in Braila" [near the port of Constanta, on the Black Sea]. Jozska talked the Bucharest authorities into allowing him to collect the cars. "They were the property of the Ministry but were assigned to the Cluj Railways Sports Club where my father was given the right to repair and race them. He invested a lot of money in them. I was able to help financially. If I remember, they came to Cluj in 1951… [and before] …1965 my father repaired one of them." This was No15, which Jozska ran in the local Feleaç hillclimb but he rolled it and the tail tank ignited. Fortunately its fuel load was minimal, but Jozska was hurt, recovery taking two years.

"At that time everything scrap was [normally] taken away for melting. My father wanted to donate these two vehicles to the University but it was not allowed. Then we went to Bucharest, and since I knew the people in charge, we told them the country could sell these cars and buy new motorbikes for the money. But the financial person in charge said 'Why don't you buy them?'. The Ministry of Culture and Sport then sold us the cars for 2000 Lei [for the pair] – a very big monthly wage!" Which Tibor paid. The receipt, of April 14, 1965, declared a remarkably specific repair estimate of 53,972 Lei. Jozska and Tibor then shared ownership 50:50.

Tibor continued: "My father even sold a house to finance the repairs, but every little repair was a very long story. The cylinder blocks, for instance, were taken to Brasov on foot on his back and he also took eggs and cream and other dairy products to get them repaired. He put in an incredible amount of money… and this was one of the reasons why they gave him these cars. We shared ownership of both cars until his death, when I inherited the remaining one."

In 1971 they sold their undamaged car, chassis No7, for a reputed sum of $80,000 paid to the Rumanian Government, plus two brand-new Mercedes and a VW Beetle. "We sold two cars, bought a house from one of them and lived from the other, while the third became the family car".

Thereafter a succession of would-be buyers, agents and experts pursued the second car, No15. Dick Crosthwaite, Tony Merrick, Chris Renwick and a British 'Mr Fixit' named Jeremy Churcher tried, plus dealer Charles Howard and collector Terry Cohn, some becoming involved with Tutunaru, of ACC.

Tibor Roman recalled exchanging a W154 steering wheel for a VCR, which the donor later seemed to regard as securing the car. But: "It was not the complete steering wheel. My father had several wheels, not all of them original…"

Jozska Roman first wrote to Mercedes in June 1939 applying (unsuccessfully) for a job as a racing mechanic. The »»





Jozska ran the repaired car in his local hillclimb, but crashed it badly (left)

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INSIGHT

THE PEAK OF AN ERA

The high-tide of Mercedes Grand Prix cars had their final race overshadowed by the declaration of war

FIFTY YEARS BEFORE THE fall of dictator Nicolae Ceaucescu's Rumania, the fifth birthday of Peter II, Yugoslavia's boy king, was celebrated on September 3, 1939, by a Grand Prix motor race. Taking place on streets encircling Belgrade's old Kalemegdan fortress, the cobblestoned course was narrow, bumpy, slippery and liberally adorned with tram-lines.

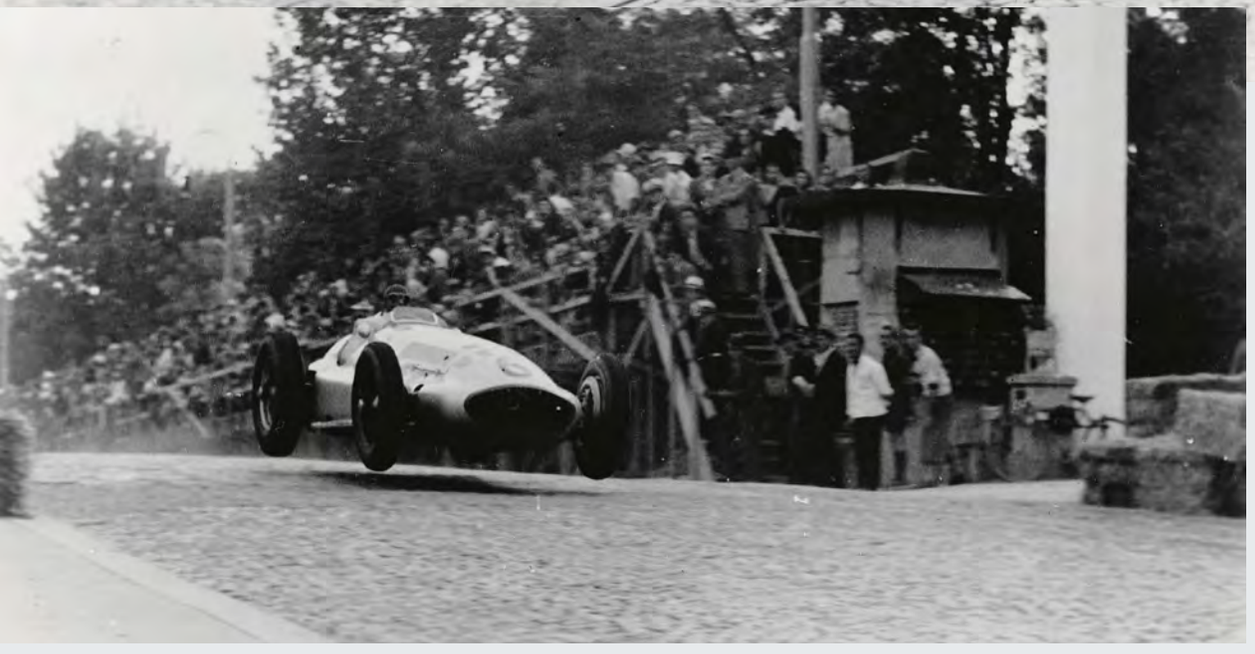
On Friday, September 1, Belgrade's second practice day, German Panzer columns rumbled into Poland. Britain and France had guaranteed Polish independence. At 9am on the morning of race day, in Berlin's Foreign Ministry, British Ambassador Sir Neville Henderson delivered his Government's ultimatum that unless by 11am all offensive action against Poland had ceased, and German forces begun withdrawal, Great Britain and Germany would be at war. The French Government concurred. The Third Reich persisted. So World War II erupted.

In Belgrade, just two works-entered Mercedes-Benz and a pair of factory Auto Unions began that race. Their single rival was Bosko Milenkovic's outclassed Bugatti Type 51. Mercedes' drivers were Hermann Lang and Manfred von Brauchitsch; Auto Union's were Tazio Nuvolari and HP Müller. The Germans had agonised whether to race or return home. The Yugoslav promoters pleaded "stay"; the German Embassy confirmed they should.

At 4.45pm the race began, each professional determined to win. But Lang's start was too brutal. Brauchitsch's sister W154 – chassis No15 – led. But he



Daimler



Europe is at war, but in Belgrade a race begins. Mercedes pair head a thin field; Brauchitsch's No15 (left) will finish second

drove wildly, and on lap seven clipped a gutter, his spinning wheels throwing up stones which shattered Lang's aero-screen and both goggle lenses. Lang stopped for team medic Dr Glaser to remove glass splinters. Two laps lost, Walter Baumer took over Lang's car. Brauchitsch lapped two-tenths faster than his pole position time, but on lap 16, already leading Müller's Auto Union by 13.8sec, he spun and stalled in a fast uphill curve before the French Embassy. He restarted by rolling downhill against race direction – then spun the car to rejoin, just as Müller and Nuvolari shot ahead. Müller led until lap 29, while the feverish Brauchitsch spun again, allowing Baumer by. Brauchitsch promptly shouldered the youngster into straw bales and a tree.

> "Brauchitsch drove wildly, throwing up stones which shattered Lang's goggles"

On lap 30 Müller's left rear tyre stripped and Nuvolari inherited a 5sec lead from Brauchitsch, but on lap 36 Brauchitsch had to change tyres, giving Nuvolari 50sec before the Italian too stopped for tyres on lap 39. His wheel change took 26sec, and after 64 minutes' racing Nuvolari won for Auto Union, with von Brauchitsch's hard-used Mercedes No15 7.6sec behind in second place. The Silver Arrows era, 1934-39, was over. Seven years would pass before Grand Prix racing resumed.

During the war Daimler-Benz stored their racing cars round Untertürkheim, Stuttgart, until 1942-43 when Allied bombing really intensified and the cars were dispersed for safety. The company tended to consign them in pairs, either to trusted Mercedes agencies, mining and industrial or heritage sites. Both W154s in this story, No7 and No15, went to the Esterhazy Palace estate in Eisenstadt, Austria. In 1946 Soviet forces shipped them into Rumania, but left them at Braila, where Jozska Roman rescued the pair. No7 is now with Arturo Keller in California, while No15 resides in the Collier Collection in Florida.

first they heard from him post-war was in 1963 – their first news since 1945 of these two missing W154s. In May 1980 Tibor offered them No15 but they were unable to buy. Jerry Churcher met Tibor several times but according to the weight-lifter closed no deal. Churcher contact Terry Cohn claimed to have given 'someone' a Mercedes saloon as deposit. Tibor: "Well, if he gave it to someone, it wasn't us. He probably gave it to some Bucharest authorities."

The language barrier impeded every foreigner eager to deal. Then, in 1987-88, Dr Andre Bilciurescu appeared. He ran a dental equipment business in Neuchatel, Switzerland. Tibor Roman: "I was a friend of his uncle. He and his uncle visited me and he saw the car in the garage in pieces and he said he wanted it. He seemed a more serious buyer because we could negotiate without an intermediary as he spoke Rumanian." Dr Bilciurescu retained childhood memories of seeing the cars in Cluj, and he and Tibor clicked.

Private ownership in a Communist State guaranteed confusion and potential conflict. Churcher would later claim that Tibor Roman had sold the car to Tutunaru who was then paid in return for promised delivery. In 2003 Tutunaru stated that ACC never had any title to the Mercedes yet did hold Communist State authority to export it, had they ever laid hands on it. However, Tibor Roman had already clinched the matter. With his wife Erszebert, Mercedes No15 "and some china" he'd crossed the border into rapidly democratising Hungary, and re-settled in Budapest. There on September 10, 1988, he sold the Mercedes to Dr Bilciurescu, I believe for DM400,000 – plus a VW Golf...

So – three months before we even arrived in Rumania – the car had been removed into Hungary, and sold into Switzerland. But nobody told us. After several days talking – and travelling – in circles, we achieved *nada*. At one point, in a top-floor room at the Hotel InterContinental, discussion with Tutunaru ground to a halt. He wanted a deposit paid immediately. Evert swore not one penny would be paid until the car crossed onto western soil, was proved genuine and was loaded onto his own transport. Robert had stepped out onto the frosted 12th floor balcony. He re-entered, beaming, having decided to change the subject. So he asked Tutunaru genially: "Tell me, Catanil – do you fly?". My instant reflex was "Bloody hell – he's going to throw him off the balcony!".

Before we flew out, Tutunaru took us to a run-down villa in a suburban street near the airport. The heavies threw back a tarpaulin to reveal an Alfa Romeo 8C-2900B with four-seater body, black, neglected, but substantially intact. It had been Prince Michael of Rumania's car, bought in 1938, and owned for many years by Ion Croitoru, before being placed on the State heritage list and Croitoru pressured to sell. Plainly we were just one party amongst many taken to inspect it, but what we didn't know was that so far as Terry Cohn was concerned he had already agreed to buy not only this Alfa, but also Mercedes W154 No15…





Jozska and Tibor work on a crankcase. Above, 'lost' Alfa Romeo 8C-2900B

GP Library

He had a Letter of Intent dated July 13, 1988, describing how he and a group of officials had inspected "two old-timers (Alfa Romeo Coupé 1937 [sic] and parts of the so-called Mercedes Grand Prix 1938 [again, sic])". It ended with the words "Mr Cohn will immediately open a L/C" – Letter of Credit, inferring purchase. Another document dated November 22, 1988, refers to Terry Cohn, Europa American Furs Inc, supposedly agreeing to buy 50 trucks plus (as a bolt-on) the Alfa Romeo and Mercedes No15…

Terry – who died in 2001 – loudly maintained that he had paid a million-dollar deposit for the cars. When he heard that Dr Bilciurescu had sent 'his' W154 to be restored by Technosim AG in Birsfelden, Switzerland, he resorted to law.

Basle's Arlesheim District Court heard his case in March 1990, and rejected it. A handwriting expert concluded that six of the eight signatures on his Letter of Intent were forgeries "and had been made by the same hand. Only the signatures of Cohn and Tutunaru were original".

Technosim AG resumed their restoration with Daimler-Benz's assistance – but Cohn then won a US case against Tutunaru – of Scarborough, Maine, USA - ruling that ACC had to deliver the Mercedes to him, and that Tutunaru could only deal with the car on Cohn's behalf.

The matter slowly cooled. The car was restored to running order, and in 1999 ownership passed to a Liechtenstein entity, Singing Horse AG. On September 6, 2000, it was then sold via the Symbolic Motor Car Co of California to Japanese collector and trader Yoshiyuki Hayashi. Symbolic then teed-up a speedy re-sale, an enthusiastic new buyer considering purchase for $10 million, and paying a half-million deposit.

At this happy point, Jerry Churcher resurfaced. According to Superior Court of California papers in 2001, Churcher and others had interfered with the legitimate deal – having "represented to third parties and prospective purchasers of the Mercedes (that) Symbolic and everyone associated with them are all 'Jews, faggots, drug dealers, and Mafia'". British resident Churcher challenged the Californian Court's jurisdiction over him, but lost that notion on appeal. Judge William R. Nevitt Jr eventually ruled on August 6, 2003, that Hayashi was sole legal owner of No15, and that Jeremy Churcher "has no claim of ownership". He was ordered to pay Hayashi US$1 million damages, and $250,000 each to Symbolic and agent Patrick van Schoote – plus costs of $416,478 – and 40 cents.

Through all this upset the car itself shone as the iconic – and still highly original – GP car it really is, not least because of its once-only race, in Manfred von Brauchitsch's hands in that era-closing Belgrade event the day war broke out – but also because with its ultimate-spec 'Gruppe K' two-stage supercharged V12 engine it embodies the absolute high tide of Mercedes-Benz GP car development from 1934-39.

If ever an outstanding car was in need of an outstanding home this was it – and after five years or so, for a more modest price, No15 joined The Collier Collection, in Naples, Florida, where today it is carefully preserved, and truly loved. M



Collier car in Silver Arrows demonstration at Goodwood Revival

LAT

COMFORTABLY FUN

BMW's K1600 GT SE has air conditioning, a hi-fi system, heated seats and sports bike grunt. Martin Brundle calls his "a missile". Is it time to let go the belief that motorcycling has to be painful to be pure?

BY MAT OXLEY

Motorcyclists don't ride motorcycles for the luxury. If you want luxury, you drive a car. We ride motorcycles for adventure, for adrenaline, for bugs in the teeth and for the occasional bloodied knee (if we are very lucky).

But the things that make you happy change with the passage of time. When I was younger I used to look at touring bikes – huge, heavy and overladen – and scoff at them. They seemed to have been created for silver-haired bikers who were no longer cool or crazy enough to endure the ravages of several hundred miles on a sports bike. And I was right.

Its first fully-faired boxer twin – the R100RS – was a revelation to riders in the 1970s. I was never much of a fan of the various four-cylinder models that followed the twin, but the six-cylinder 1600 is something else. At first glance the bike seems like an exercise in excess. Why not just buy a car?

Only motorcyclists know the answer to that one. The BMW is as much of a provider of adventure and adrenaline as any bike. The only thing you'll have to do without is getting bugs in your teeth.

This is a fabulously luxurious motorcycle. Motorways are something you usually avoid on bikes, but the BMW will devour them for breakfast, lunch and dinner if you so desire. That blast to Spa was autoroute most of the way and hugely enjoyable: crank the cruise control up to 100mph, sit back and enjoy the wonders of Europe as a blur.

Going in a straight line on a motorcycle was never so much fun – the 1600's seat may just be the most commodious ever fitted to a bike. All that's lacking in the superbly appointed cockpit is a mounting point for a silver salver, so you can feed yourself grapes along the way.

I used to view 'gimmicks' such as cruise control and adjustable windscreens with scorn. Somehow they seemed impure – sullying the spartan joys of motorcycling. I didn't expect to take much of them aboard the BMW. In fact they helped make the ride.

Cruise control is helpful in a car. It turns

I knew something was up before I'd even got hold of BMW's six-cylinder 1600 GT SE. I found myself anticipating its arrival with more excitement than if it were a brain-curdling 190mph superbike.

A weekend trip to Spa-Francorchamps confirmed my worst fears. I loved every minute. It's official, then: I'm old.

But what the hell, with bikes like the BMW around, old age might be OK. That high-speed ride to Spa was something of an epiphany: you mean that riding bikes long distances doesn't have to be agony? Who knew? I didn't even have to go to my osteopath when I got home.

BMW has been the acknowledged master of the long-distance haul for several decades.

FACTFILE

ENGINE: 1649cc, liquid-cooled straight six
TOP SPEED: 155mph
PRICE: £15,740 OTR
POWER: 160bhp at 7750rpm
FRAME: twin beam aluminium, BMW Duolever front, Paralever rear
www.bmw-motorrad.co.uk



Jason Critchell

out that it's more than that on a motorcycle. Holding the handlebars and working the throttle hour after hour can be hugely uncomfortable, but it's such a part of motorcycling that you only realise it's a pain when you no longer have to do it. Engaging the cruise control allows you to rest your right hand, arm and shoulder; it also allows you to change your position on the bike, so your muscles don't fossilise on long rides.

The adjustable windscreen is another game-changer. Many bike riders don't like looking through a screen because it divorces you from the road, so you lose that immediacy which is one of the great joys of motorcycling.

Adjustability gives you the luxury of choice. At lower speeds you keep the screen down; then you thumb a button on the left handlebar to raise the screen as your speed increases. Fully raised, the screen keeps you out of the wind, so you can comfortably sustain ton-plus speeds all day. The effect on your state of being is huge – wind blast is a major factor in causing fatigue on long rides. Eventually, I found myself using this 'gimmick' all the time.

Most motorcycles aren't very adjustable, unless you want to get out the spanners and fiddle with suspension preload or ride height. The BMW has an embarrassment of adjustability: the screen, engine mapping, suspension, and the heated handlebars and seat, can all be electronically manipulated.

It may just be that adjustable suspension (an ex-works option at £710) is the making of the modern super-tourer. Back in the day, tourers ran soft suspension to make life comfy for the kind of rider who was most likely to buy such a bike. So the machines handled sloppily, dangerously even, for anyone who liked to push on a bit. You would find yourself hurtling into a high-speed autoroute curve, holding your breath and locking your arms against the handlebars, determined to prevent the wobble and weave from turning into anything more disastrous. Some touring bikes still don't handle that well. For example, Honda's flat-six 1800cc Gold Wing is heavier and sloppier than the BMW. The Wing was made for American roads, the BMW for European roads.

The 1600 has three suspension modes – sport, normal and comfort – which adjust both spring rate and damping. On the comfort setting the bike feels like a luxury blancmange, which isn't necessarily a bad thing. On the sport setting the 1600 doesn't quite handle and steer like a sports bike but it comes very close. Even hammering through bumpy motorway curves through the Ardennes the bike held its line.



The huge range of adjustment on the K1600 means that it can be a bike for all riders





Like many BMW road bikes the K1600 features wishbone front suspension, an evolution of the system designed and developed during the 1970s and '80s by Norman Hossack, a former McLaren engineer. Hossack's front end – two wishbones and a single shock – replaces the ubiquitous telescopic front fork and offers plenty of advantages, including improvements in stiffness, stability and geometry. I know this from experience, because I raced Hossack's TT F2 bike in the early 1980s.

I found the adjustable engine mapping a lot less useful than the adjustable suspension, simply because the six-cylinder engine could hardly be more usable in any of its three modes: rain, road and dynamic. Traction control comes as standard, as does ABS.

The 24-valve straight six is one hell of an engine. Peak power is a comparatively conservative 160 horsepower but torque is the number that counts. The six makes 70 per cent of its torque at 1500rpm and top gear roll-on from 100mph is impressive, provoking a huge grin every time you surge towards the horizon. Nought to 60mph takes just 3.2 seconds, about as quick as most 1000cc sports bikes.

An in-line six is not a small engine. It's wide, which is why the configuration isn't popular in motorcycling because engine width can compromise enthusiastic cornering. Sixes enjoyed a brief moment of glory during the 1970s, when lean angles weren't what they are today. Honda marketed the CBX1000 six, its engine designed by Shoichiro Irimajiri who had built the fabled six-cylinder 250/350 GP bike that took Mike Hailwood to glory in the 1960s. Kawasaki responded with its fantastically over-the-top Z1300 and Italian factory Benelli also got in on the act with the Benelli Sei.

Modern day lean angles rule out six-cylinder engines for sports bikes but engine width isn't such an issue for a tourer, which won't be reaching knee-on-the-ground cornering angles. BMW has worked to keep the six as slim as possible and it's also angled the cylinders sharply forward to keep engine weight low.

It seems in some ways that BMW has tried to replicate some of the characteristics of their beloved flat-twins: low centre of gravity and vibration-free running. The six is wondrously smooth, producing its power like a fast-running river, so you can execute instant overtaking moves as if you're on a sports bike. Really, there's more power available than you need, but it's great that it's there.

Formula 1 commentator Martin Brundle bought a K1600 GT last year and he adores the machine. It may not be a coincidence that he is the same age as I am. Brundle got into bikes quite late, in the 1990s. His first proper bike – he had a Garelli 50 when he was 16 – was a Ducati 916, "which I was never in charge of, if I'm honest".

Since then he has travelled the same road as many motorcyclists. "If you're on a superbike your arse is up in the air and you're on your wrists. You're stopping for fuel every hundred miles or so, you're wet through and you hurt like hell. I travel a lot on bikes, but I never do short blasts. I'm always going somewhere, so the BMW is an awesome piece of kit for me.

"I love being on a bike because it reminds me of being in a race car; you're wearing a helmet, you have to read the road at all times and it hurts if you get it wrong. There's a real similarity between riding a bike fast and well and driving a racing car. I just love the freedom, and there's no such thing as a traffic jam."

Since the 916 Brundle has had a series of BMW tourers and sports-tourers and the 1600 is his favourite so far. "It's a missile, and it'll do more than 200 miles on a tank when you're pushing hard."

That's a huge range on a motorcycle. Most sports bikes won't go much further than a hundred miles on a tank. Even Honda's VF1200 sports tourer will only go 150 miles when


"It's a missile and it
will do more that 200
miles on a tank when
you're pushing hard"



Long journeys on open roads pass in no time, although stereo extra is unnecessary

brimmed, which is a joke for a machine that's designed to go places. When cruising at legal-ish speeds on the BMW (a difficult trick to pull off), the 24-litre tank will take you nearly 250 miles. When you do fill up you are once again reminded that BMW engineers have really thought about what they're doing. Many bikes feel top heavy with a full tank. The 1600 doesn't because the fuel load is kept reasonably low.

That's not to say that the bike is light and easy to throw about. It's a big, heavy thing – 320 kilos fuelled up and ready to go, but probably nearer half a tonne when you're two-up and fully loaded. Looking on the bright side, at least this is a motorcycle that allows you to take a friend or a lover with you without them wanting to hate you for the rest of their lives.

At speed you barely notice the BMW's weight, but when you're trickling through traffic or parking you do become aware of its bulk and you need to know what you're doing. At very low speeds you must be nice and smooth, keeping mass transfer to the minimum when you apply the brakes.

Incidentally, Honda's Gold Wing features a reverse gear to simplify parking. Well, a 'pretend' reverse gear, powered by the bike's starter motor.

The BMW will happily tackle traffic jams, so long as you mind the gap when you're lane-splitting because the machine is exactly one metre wide with panniers fitted. An Issigonis Mini is only 40cm wider.

Such dimensions make it impossible to chase scooter kids through traffic jams, but this isn't a huge price to pay for what counts as Babylonian luxury on a bike. And you just know that any scooter kids will swoon with jealousy when they slip past the BMW and hear it pumping out the sounds, like it's the world's biggest ghetto blaster.

The only problem with the stereo (another ex-works extra) is that you really need to be a scooter kid to enjoy it, because unless you're 17 you shouldn't feel the need to share your music with the rest of the world. And anyway, even if you do turn it up to 11 you can't really hear above 50mph. The system definitely isn't worth its £690 asking price. I preferred to use my iPod with earphones; this isn't usually much use on a bike because of wind noise, but with the BMW's screen fully raised you can listen all the way to 100mph.

For the record, Brundle's favourite riding music is 1970s heavy rock. "I never thought I'd listen to music on a bike but I find a bit of Deep Purple or Led Zeppelin really enjoyable."

The 1600 has too many knobs, buttons and gizmos to go into here. I never used the heated seat or handlebar grips, but I did use the 'air-con', a very non-digital system that consists of two ducts that swivel out to funnel cooling air towards you when you're lucky enough to be riding on a hot day. Simple and highly effective.

There's only one feature on the 1600 BMW that didn't make me smile: the transmission. It is so hellishly clunky that I can only assume BMW's gearbox engineers had just returned from several days of over-indulgence at the Munich beer festival.

Yet this is a motorcycle I always looked forward to riding. Not only that, it's the kind of bike that will have you dreaming of longer trips, the kind of journeys where travelling means more than arriving.

Brundle is already planning his biggest trip on his 1600 – to the Monza Formula 1 round. "You can fly along on the thing. So far I've been to Spa and the Nürburgring on it, and I've come home from Nürburgring on the Sunday night. That's the beauty of the bike – you can do a 500-mile ride after a long weekend's work. I'm already looking at going to Scotland on it, then Monza is next on my list. That would be a good ride."

And that surely has to be the ultimate compliment for any touring bike: even when you're back at home, it has you poring over maps of Europe, wondering where to ride off to next. The 1600 reminds me of an advertisement for a (much, much less efficient) Yamaha tourer of the late 1970s. The ad read: "Sometimes we took the plane and sometimes we flew."

Road tests

BY ANDREW FRANKEL



RANGE ROVER

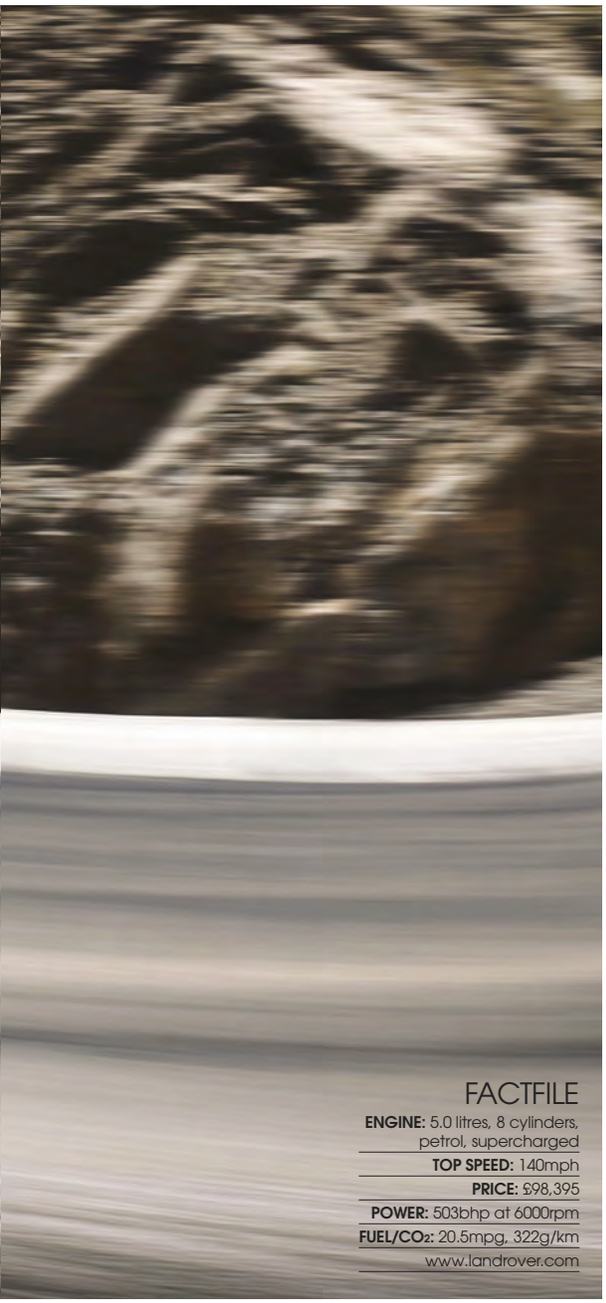
Why is it that no rival car company has ever had a proper crack at stealing a slice of the Range Rover's action? I know my role is usually to provide answers rather than ask questions, but here there is no easy explanation.

It may simply be that the Range Rover was considered inviolable, that it performed the role of luxury SUV so well any attempt to usurp it would end in failure. This happens more often than you'd think: the BMW Mini enjoyed almost a decade with the market to itself while the Rolls Phantom is effectively without rival now Maybach is dead and Bentley's Mulsanne is a very different kind of luxury car.



But finally the world has woken up and within two years the Range Rover will face more genuine rivals than it has seen in the four decades plus it has so far spent in the marketplace. Bentley, Lamborghini and Maserati's contenders are already declared, Aston Martin is believed to be pressing ahead with a Lagonda SUV while a true luxury Mercedes SUV is on the cards. I'd like Jeep to make one; after all its 1960s Wagoneer invented the luxury SUV and not the Range Rover as is popularly supposed, but I expect that's being a little too hopeful.

Besides it's not as if even the more exalted brands are going to find it easy to break into a market that is as synonymous with the Range Rover as Sellotape is to sticky-back plastic. And to make life more difficult still, Land Rover has



FACTFILE

ENGINE: 5.0 litres, 8 cylinders, petrol, supercharged
TOP SPEED: 140mph
PRICE: £98,395
POWER: 503bhp at 6000rpm
FUEL/CO2: 20.5mpg, 322g/km
www.landrover.com

just released an all-new Range Rover, only the fourth such car since 1970.

I'll cut to the part you want to know. It's extraordinary. Even coming at it from a perspective inherently suspicious of vast and profligate SUVs, there were times during my day on board where I could not suppress a stifled snort of amazement at just how wide this car casts its net. I can see how its incoming rivals might choose to tackle certain areas of its endeavour and using that focus, to arrive at specific solutions even more impressive than those already reached by Land Rover. But across the board? I can scarcely conceive what kind of car could prove so much better as a whole as also to negate Land Rover's



XF Sportbrake is still a worthy option against rivals from the likes of BMW

JAGUAR XF 2.2 DIESEL LUXURY SPORTBRAKE

I AM RARELY LESS THAN impressed by Jaguar's ability to develop new product on an amount of money that probably wouldn't pay the postage bill of one of its big rivals. Last year Jaguar sold fewer than 50,000 cars while BMW, Mercedes and Audi are all past the 1.25 million mark. 'Minnow' doesn't begin to cover it.

And yet the cars appear in their build quality, chassis configuration and looks, rarely if ever to give anything away to the opposition. Take this new Jaguar Sportbrake (why can't these manufacturers be honest enough to call their cars estates?) – its design is so well integrated it suggests the XF was always designed to be an estate rather than having estate bodywork grafted on in the second half of its lifetime.

It doesn't turn the smart XF saloon into some kind of gargantuan beast of burden, but if you liked the idea of an XF but have dogs, children with vast amounts of clobber to take back to school or enjoy long driving holidays, this car is for you. Self-levelling rear suspension means there is really remarkably little degradation in ride quality, in fact I thought it slightly smoother when fully laden.

In other areas, the XF is starting to show its age slightly which, when you remember its core structure dates back to last century's S-type is perhaps not too surprising. The off-the-peg Ford/PSA four cylinder engine gives credible performance and economy, but rival motors from Audi and especially BMW offer a better blend of the two as well as significantly enhanced refinement. Jaguar knows this and is just starting the process that will result in its own engine factory, but it is years rather than months away.

The XF Sportbrake is another Jaguar that's better than it has any right to be. It's not class-leading but it is certainly competitive. That combined with those clean looks and its new-found practicality should ensure it enjoys the success its modestly-resourced engineers surely deserve.





FACTFILE

ENGINE: 2.2-litres, four cylinders, turbocharged
TOP SPEED: 140mph
PRICE: £36,440
POWER: 197bhp at 4000rpm
FUEL/CO2: 55.5mpg, 135g/km
www.jaguar.co.uk

inbuilt advantage of heritage and authenticity.

The new car is available with three engines: a 3-litre, six-cylinder diesel almost all customers in Europe will buy, a 4.4-litre V8 diesel that will undoubtedly offer the optimum blend of performance, range and fuel efficiency and an utterly indefensible 503bhp, 5-litre supercharged V8 model retailing for £98,395. No prizes for guessing which I'm in.

Here's progress for you. When I first got into this game 25 years ago I briefly ran a Mitsubishi Shogun. Its diesel engine offered a top speed of less than 90mph, 0-60mph sometime the same day and 20mpg if you drove it sensibly. This new supercharged Range Rover takes 5.1sec to reach 60mph, will reach 140mph and will also do 20mpg if you drive it sensibly.

Using that performance is an extremely guilty pleasure. You're so aware of the car's looming presence and its capacity to intimidate anything else on the road that I tended to deploy its formidable firepower only when I knew nothing was in range. Of course there are cars far quicker than this, but none with five seats available for a five-figure sum that comes close to providing this level of theatre. You sit high on your throne, blown V8 bellowing away floors below you while tonnes of metal, wood, leather, flesh and bone are projected through the scenery.







Rivals from Bentley and Lamborghini will struggle to match the best Range Rover to date

It can do this because, vast and heavy though it is, its new aluminium monocoque still makes it several hundred kilos lighter than the old steel Range Rover. It's also the reason the new car handles so much better than you'd expect. Rightly Land Rover has made no attempt to confer any sense of artificial and entirely spurious sportiness upon the Range Rover for even that monstrous motor merely makes it feel fast rather than sporting, but that in no way disqualifies it from providing true driving pleasure. On the contrary, its accurate steering, carefully controlled body movements and, above all, transformed ride quality, have added real capability to the immense charm of the previous model.

The Range Rover's finest achievement, then, is that it stacks up very well as a luxury car for which no further qualification is required. For 40 years my forebears and I have been excusing the car by saying, for instance, that its ride is impressive given the car has dual purpose on/off road functions to perform. Or that it's commendably refined given it's as tall as a 1960s tower block. We can put all those excuses away now. It may not ride quite as well as a Mercedes S-class or be as eerily quiet as an Audi A8, but it's close enough to stand comparison without proviso.

And of course, should you feel like driving over the Atlas Mountains or deep into the Sahara desert, or tow a double horse box or a vintage Bentley, it can. You no longer even need to tell the car what kind of work you want it to do: its Terrain Response system is now laden with sensors that know if you're in mud, snow or sand, or clambering over rocks, and adapts the transmission, engine and suspension mapping to suit.

If it has a fault, it lies in its interior design. The cabin of the previous Range Rover was a landmark of its type, the perfect blend of form and function where wood was used so cleverly it looked structural, as if limbs of trees provided the framework for the interior. I guess it was a



near-impossible act to follow, and there's little you can point at in the new interior that's wrong – it just lacks that sense of occasion.

It will be interesting to see where Land Rover takes the Range Rover from here. Expensive though this top of the range model is, it's likely still to be significantly cheaper than most of its forthcoming rivals, especially those from Bentley and Lamborghini. Land Rover also knows from how quickly the 'Ultimate' edition of the last Range Rover sold out despite its £120,000 price that there is considerable potential for the new car to move up to and, undoubtedly, beyond this price point.

I'm expecting an elongated version in the spirit of the original LSE Range Rover. All its street-tied rivals are available with a choice of wheelbases and while the Range Rover is now notably more spacious in the back than before, it is now a good enough luxury car to make genuine sense as a chauffeur-driven machine.

And, for the avoidance of doubt, I'd not have the 5-litre supercharged V8. Its tidal wave of performance has novelty value, but the V8 diesel has much more low-down torque and will go well over half as far again on a tank of fuel. It may not be quite so quick, but it will feel even more effortless. A long-wheelbase version powered by such an engine may start to ask questions that even the likes of Bentley might struggle to answer.



In a class of one: The CLS Shooting Brake is more attractive than its coupe cousin

MERCEDES-BENZ CLS250CDI SHOOTING BRAKE

I'D LIKE TO SAY THAT THE CLS Shooting Brake and Jaguar Sportbrake appear on these pages by design to indulge in some kind of battle of the 'Brakes, but it wouldn't be true. It just happened that way.

Mercedes' take on the Brake is bold, and proves the CLS concept to be more flexible than even Mercedes first thought. You will recall that the CLS was one of those rare cars with a genuine claim to starting an entirely new class and may shortly find itself in the unique position of having done so twice. The original was the first modern four-door coupé, while the Shooting Brake can credibly be thought of as the first coupé estate.

One way to look at it is as a profligate waste of space. You can buy an E-class estate sharing the same platform and the same 2.2-litre diesel engine and with essentially identical performance and economy for over £15,000 less. And while the Shooting Brake has a boot barely any bigger than that of the diminutive C-class estate, the E-class's carrying capacity is unrivalled by any other estate on sale. For a car that's almost as long as an S-class, it could be seen as a nonsense.

But that is an entirely one-dimensional view of a car with more visual charm in its rear light clusters than you'll find in an entire E-class estate. It may not be a colossal load carrier but as a means of cutting a dash while still making practical sense it would lead its class by a mile, had it a class in the first place.

Indeed I found the CLS Shooting Brake a completely compelling proposition, the kind of car you could keep for 10 years and never find a job to which it was not inherently suited. The only question I fear it leaves unanswered is why on earth anyone would now buy the coupé upon which it is based. For an extra £1400 the Brake turns the CLS from a charming niche product into an even more attractive and incomparably more useful all-purpose weapon.

FACTFILE

ENGINE: 2.2 litres, four cylinders, turbocharged
TOP SPEED: 146mph
PRICE: £49,360
POWER: 201bhp at 3800rpm
FUEL/CO_2: 53.32mpg, 139g/km
www.mercedes-benz.co.uk





The M135i may not be a 'proper' M car, but it's more fun than many of them

BMW M135i

DON'T BE FOOLED by the name: the BMW M135i is not an M-car in any conventional sense. Instead it is intended to be a halfway house betwixt BMW's standard offerings and their vaunted and expensive motor sports offshoots. It is meant to offer a taste of what M is about, but at an affordable price.

In this case, £29,995. Or, put another way, for £3000 more than a 280bhp, 2-litre four-cylinder, front-drive Vauxhall Astra VXR, you can drive a 315bhp, 3-litre, six-cylinder, rear-drive BMW. If that sounds tempting, wait until you've driven it.

In the past I have been quick to criticise BMW's pollution of its once pure 'M' brand by applying the letter to cosmetically augmented but otherwise standard cars. The difference with this one is that it's actually more engaging to drive than one or two full-fat M-cars.

I've always believed that the true spirit of 'M' lies in compact cars like this. Call me a die-hard old traditionalist who cannot lay to rest the memory of the original E30 M3, but my almost unwavering experience of these cars is that the bigger and more powerful they are, the less satisfying they have turned out to be.

The M135i weighs around a tonne and a half, and with turbos that blow so gently it can keep a 10.2:1 compression ratio, it feels more like a larger capacity, normally-aspirated unit than a forced-induction motor. You can choose either a six-speed manual or an eight-speed auto and while I always gravitate towards three-pedal solutions for cars like this, the automatic was so good I had to confirm with BMW that it wasn't a double-clutch transmission.

BMW is also one of depressingly few makes who quite correctly programme their sequential gearshifters

FACTFILE

ENGINE: 3.0 litres, six cylinders, turbocharged
TOP SPEED: 155mph
PRICE: £29,995
POWER: 315bhp at 5800rpm
FUEL/CO2: 35.3mpg, 188g/km
www.bmw.co.uk





to change down when pressed forward. In race cars you push forward to change down and pull back to change up because that's the direction in which your body is being pushed under forces of braking or acceleration. To have to push forward in order to change up is entirely counter-intuitive or, put another way, nuts.

I digress. By any standards, this M135i is a fine high-performance hatchback. With the automatic gears BMW says it'll beat 5sec to 62mph, but the car I drove felt quicker even than that, fast enough to provide the chassis with proper



work too. I guess because it's relatively light and simple, the M135i felt alive in a way I associate more with performance BMWs of the past than present. It grips quite well even in marginal conditions, but is also an always-willing co-conspirator in any traction-off mischief you may wish to make. All I'd live happily without is the thick and squidgy rim to the steering wheel that clearly robs you of a degree of feel the car would otherwise happily provide.

But it's not much of a complaint, not when the rest of car is so competent and accomplished. It's quiet and sufficiently comfortable to make a very pleasant only car and you can buy it with three or five doors and find enough room in the back for your children in either.

Over the years we've seen many fine fast BMWs, but this one is slightly different: not only is it an outstandingly strong competitor in its class, it is also a bargain. For a BMW, that's rare.



Sidetracked
WITH ED FOSTER



GEARING UP FOR THE FUTURE



Hewland Engineering has undergone a huge amount of reinvestment thanks to the son of its founder in order to pave the way for a brighter future

"When my Dad started the company in 1957," reflects William Hewland, "it consisted of four blokes in a leaky shed by Maidstone station. He started off with a little metal-plating idea and then kind of fell into doing racing car gearboxes."

Humble beginnings for a company that now supplies gearbox components to five Formula 1 teams, GT racing, the WTCC, the DTM, GP2, GP3, Formula 2, Honda's LMP1 and 2 cars and Formula 3. Mike Hewland and his 'boxes shot to fame in the 1960s when the world was coming round to the need for specialised racing gearboxes instead of adapted VW units. The world changed, though, and by the time his son William took over the helm in 1991 the company was "pretty out of date". It needed reinvestment, an attitude change and it needed new markets to sell to.

That's exactly what has happened over the past 21 years and while the loss of the Champ Car contract hurt – Hewland supplied the entire grid with full gearshift systems – and the recession hit the firm hard, it responded by going back into F1. "Right in the middle of the recession we went out and invested speculatively in an enormous new plant aimed at filling the cracks we had in respect to F1 clients."

William put his gearboxes to the test as well, with 10 years as a racer, but come the year 2000 he became a father, a new general manager arrived and he couldn't find the time to do it properly, so preferred to quit rather than dabble in it. "You can stand in the street, pull your trousers down and look like an idiot for nothing," he says when asked why he retired.

Although we received the sad news in August 2012 that his father had passed away, the company is more than doing the great name justice. Xtrac and Ricardo are both strong competitors, but "Hewland is the only company daft enough to try and span the whole of the motor racing range. We go from modern Formula Ford, through the single-seaters, GT and LMP racing, to component supply in F1."

I caught up with William Hewland at the company's base just outside Maidenhead to hear about its current work and why series such as DTM are such a challenge.



ONE-MAKE SERIES

"I've seen three generations of the industry and one of the big changes is one-make racing. There are pluses and minuses and you could have that conversation all day, but I don't think racing would be around if it wasn't for it.

"We do GP2, DTM, GP3, Formula 2, we used to do Superleague, Champ Car of course, and we now effectively do Formula 3 because the gearbox has been homologated by Dallara.

"One-make racing is actually something that we've done very well. You'd think it wouldn't be, but it's been an interesting challenge. It's a huge ask to provide 25 gearboxes that just go into a whole series without any problems.

"Take GP2 – you have one car that runs some prototype miles, not very many if I'm honest, and you can't make a prototype 'box because it's not economically viable. You make and then give them the first of the 30 gearboxes and if there's something wrong you need to change it on the other 29. That's why you have to make your art good because if you get it wrong you catch a cold – the price is capped before you start. You put the price in, make the first one, test it and if anything's wrong you pay for it. Next thing you know every single one you've built is on the grid in Bahrain."



DTM

"We got the contract to do the entire DTM transmission and gearshift system in 2012 and it's gone very well. The beginning of this year was quite interesting because the teams were all experimenting with not putting enough oil in the gearbox in an attempt to gain an advantage.

"The competitive nature of the DTM is at a level which I have almost never seen – it's bristling. With BMW coming back in you've got three German companies involved in an ego contest. They were trying everything! They wouldn't even tell us how much oil they were running. At Hockenheim, before the first race, I asked BMW how much oil they had in. The guy looked at me calmly and just said 'enough'. It's an incredible series, absolutely amazing, and very interesting because it's about to spread its wings to Asia and America."

FORMULA 1

"No one supplies entire gearboxes to F1 teams any more. It's so different to what it was. Back in the 1960s and '70s the difference between a Formula Ford and a Formula 1 car was mainly its size. The technology and the idea or concept behind them weren't that different then. It's stratospherically apart now.

"Formula 1 teams control their own gearbox programmes because it's such an integral part of the car. The nearest thing to someone buying their own gearbox in the modern era is a team buying one from another team.

"It's all in the packaging – in terms of concept it's not amazing new technology. Even the seamless shifts, to be blunt, are similar to the stuff my dad was doing in the 1960s, but just operated brilliantly. It's a bit like taking a sundial and turning it into the most expensive Breitling watch. The concept is the same, but the detail is amazing.

"In the motor racing 'business pyramid' you have the widest, cheapest bit at the bottom and then Le Mans or DTM at the top. F1 is then on a little strand three times higher. It's very important not to mix up F1 with the rest of motor racing. To make a pinion gear for one of the 'boxes that Honda will use to race at Le Mans in LMP1 will take, off the top of my head, eight operations to make. The same thing in F1 will take 20-25 operations.

"We started to talk to F1 teams again after a 12-year break in 2009, when the recession hit, and one of them – a very organised one high up the grid – came to us with a stack of component drawings. We quickly realised that two-thirds of them we couldn't entertain because we didn't have the processes in house. We invested heavily and now you'll find Hewland parts in five teams' cars on the grid.

"F1 is a good driver of people. It gives our staff a focus, a carrot on the end of a stick. It's also a good shop window, as many of our conversations with other series start with 'what do you do in F1?' It was also one of the few areas of motor sport spending money during the recession!"

Returning to F1 was a bold move, and one that has paid off. But the problem with supplying gearboxes to one-make series is that most of the money arrives in one lump sum when the gearboxes are first delivered, then the only income from the championship over the next three years is the supply of spares. However, according to William this just means that you must constantly be on the lookout for more business.

Then consider that "the gearbox has become a smaller and smaller percentage in terms of overall spend; it used to be about 20 per cent of the car when I started, but it's now more like five to 10…" William clearly has his work cut out. The current signs are good, though, and it's safe to say that the company is entering another healthy era.



FACING THE DANGERS OF RACING

An evening spent in the company of David Piper and Richard Attwood reminded us just how far we have come in

JUST WHEN FORMULA 1 WAS returning from the Abu Dhabi Grand Prix, I hosted an event at Dick Lovett's Ferrari dealership in Swindon. Surrounded by Ferrari race and road cars, I was joined by David Piper and Richard Attwood to talk through Ferrari's luminous history in sports car racing.

As you can imagine, it was an insightful evening, especially when we got onto how the drivers faced the dangers of competing in the 1960s. "The danger was always there," Attwood said. "We didn't do it for the glamour; I certainly didn't. I found I was quite good at it and I thought it would beat working in an office or a garage. Some cars were safer than others, though. I think Ferrari made quite a solid car all the way through. But yes, if you thought too much about it you wouldn't do it, and if you didn't want to drive a particular car there were plenty of other drivers who would.

"It was just par for the course – just one of those things. Yes, the 1960s was a dangerous era, probably the worst era, and we were lucky to survive. Although I can think of a couple of times when I might not have made it. You just hoped that it wouldn't be you. When there was an accident you kept on racing and thanked God that it wasn't you. That's how it was."

The Brazilian Grand Prix produced plenty of dents and scrapes, not least Romain Grosjean's 9.8*g* crash. But not once did we have to worry whether a driver would survive. Different times indeed.



BRAKING DOWN
F1 TECHNOLOGY

Brake manufacturer AP Racing doesn't shout about its success in Formula 1 and beyond. But the technology behind its ground-breaking stopping power has a wider relevance, for the benefit of us all

FERRARI'S STREAK OF FIVE WORLD championships at the turn of the century was either a brilliant display of superiority or a dominance that made you question your love for Formula 1 – and possibly both. But imagine a company helping to win every Formula 1 World Championship for 45 years. That's what AP Racing has done. However, the brake and clutch company doesn't exactly shout about its success. I found that statistic on a company statement. It was the third-last point on it.

AP's history stretches back further than that first world championship in 1968 with Graham Hill driving the Lotus 49. Automotive Products was set up in 1920 as an importer of components from the USA for the American ex-military vehicles left behind after the war. Nine years later it moved into brake component manufacture and within 12 months it had set up a competitions department – an area where two-thirds of its business is still done.

When Ferrari was busy winning its first drivers world championship since 1979 in 2000, AP was struggling to stay alive. That year it was sold to Delphi Automotive Systems, but the competitions arm, AP Racing, lived on as its own company.

The current owner of AP Racing is fellow brake company Brembo, which has its own competition division, Brembo Racing. Thus, like Audi and Porsche, related outfits often compete for the same tender. Despite this, Brembo is happy for AP Racing to work as an autonomous entity. "It shows a lot of guts to keep us like that," says marketing manager Joe Bennett when we sit down in a meeting room at AP Racing's base outside Coventry. "Brembo is a big company – they employ 6000 people – but there's no cross-pollination of technology between us and Brembo Racing. They compete in the same field, but there's no collusion and AP Racing does its own thing."

'Doing its own thing' means supplying brakes to a huge range of series around the world. Formula 1, WRC, NASCAR Sprint and Nationwide Series, DTM, WTCC, BTCC and Australian V8s all use AP Racing parts, and some use entire AP systems from discs to pedal boxes. That's just the motor sport side; there's also manufacturer supply work, projects in armoured vehicles and upgrade packages for road cars which make up the final third of the business. A team of 125 currently oversees 30,000 product part numbers, and the work shows no signs of slowing down.

Unsurprisingly the greatest leaps in braking technology are being made in Formula 1, and this feeds down into other series and even road cars. With great development, however, comes great expense. AP won't talk about what F1 brakes cost, but the general consensus in the paddock is that it could be £1000 a disc, £500 per pad and £4500 per caliper.

That may not sound too bad, but bear in mind that the top teams will be getting through at least three sets of discs and pads a weekend and four sets of calipers a year. This means you're looking at over £1.1 million for calipers, pads and discs each year per team.

Part of AP Racing's success over recent years has been due to the new type of caliper that it's using. In 2007 the company launched the Radi-CAL caliper, which is now used in F1, NASCAR, LMP1, LMP2, F3 and the WTCC. The idea behind it is simple: brake calipers used to consist of two machined steel castings and, even though they would be bolted together, the fact that they were two pieces of metal meant that they had to be extremely heavy in order to deal with huge braking forces. The Radi-CAL is made of aluminium, which has been used on high performance calipers for a while, but it is forged out of a single block of metal. This means that F1 Radi-CALs offer, on average, an 18 per cent decrease in weight and a 10 per cent increase in strength from the 'standard' calipers.

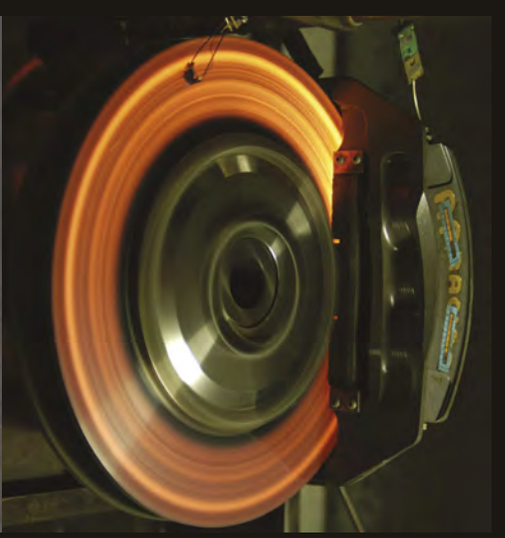
"What we've done with the Radi-CAL is to take the envelope of the wheel and maximise the space available inside it," says Bennett. "The new caliper can then be lighter and run cooler. There are also channels within the caliper that direct the airflow, and they can pipe air to where it's needed.

"Some of our competitors have variations on this theme, and you've still got to make two-part calipers for different formulas and budgets. Although the Radi-CALs don't use rare materials – because F1 is restricted in that area – they're still expensive because of the detail and the billet it's machined out of."

As with most things in Formula 1, the braking is expensive. However, unlike much of the technology on the cars there is a direct link between F1 braking and that now being used on supercars thanks to the Radi-CAL caliper. It's good to hear that the sport still has plenty of relevance in particular areas. Ⓜ



AP supplies F1 teams with their amazing braking power





Historic Scene
WITH GORDON CRUICKSHANK



Paul McMorran (l) and Arnie Black flank founder John Crosslé

FRESH PAINT – AND NEW PLANS

An enthusiastic customer aims to build on Crosslé's 55-year history in the racing business

What's the oldest racing car builder in the UK? Award yourself a holiday in Barbados if you said Crosslé, the Northern Irish concern which goes back to 1957 and a Ford special built by racer John Crosslé. Still operating from the same County Down premises, it now has a new owner, who liked racing the cars so much he bought the company.

It's a dramatic contrast for Paul McMorran, who is switching from over 30 years as a global oil industry executive, most recently in Moscow, to running this tiny outfit. "First time I've worked in the UK since I was a student," says the Belfast-born man. His fluent Russian may not help in the Holywell plant, but he recently achieved a Master's degree in 'consulting for change'. Does that mean a radical shake-up? Paul says he has considered many options, including electric cars, but he'll be taking small steps.

"First I want to improve working conditions, starting with a simple workshop repaint! Patina's all very well, but this is a working factory, not a museum."

In fact Paul is himself preserving marque history with his own collection, including a lurid V8 sports car, gathered since he began historic racing. "And now my passion is becoming my profession."

From Ford specials founder John Crosslé expanded to Formula Junior and other single-seaters, but it was Formula Ford that made the firm's name – during the 1970s if you wanted to win in FF1600, you wanted a Crosslé. A string of championships boosted production to over 100 cars a year, with many going to racing schools, and names who steered Crosslés to success include John Watson, Nigel Mansell and Eddie Irvine. And of course in the Sixties the firm produced the 9S, one of the prettiest sports racers to grace a grid – and they still build them. Today it's mainly historic racing which sustains Crosslé: "We make a small number of new cars," says McMorran, an engineer by training, "but we also help look after many of the 1000 cars the firm has built so far."

REALISING VISIONS IN ALLOY

There's room for imagination to flourish even when history didn't quite get there…



SOME CAR PROJECTS TAKE A BIT LONGER than intended, but a 73-year delay? That's the gap between Jean Bugatti's plans for a luxurious streamlined coupé and the project turning into metal. A mild development of the Type 57, the Type 64 boasted a 4.4-litre straight-eight engine but Jean Bugatti's death in a testing crash in 1939 halted work with only three chassis built. One is part of Peter Mullin's museum of prime inter-war machinery, and until recently was *sans* bodywork. But Mullin has long dreamed of realising Jean Bugatti's vision, and at the recent Quail Motorsports gathering the museum revealed a partly complete car of extravagant lines. The riveted alloy body is in the spirit of a number of Jean Bugatti's sketches, enlarging on the Atlantic theme with doors hinged in the roof and a dramatic tapering tail between fully faired rear pontoons. I can hear carping from hardliners about 'fantasy engineering'. Yet – wealthy man buys bare chassis and fits own body... Isn't that how things used to work?

Along with spares and restoration, McMorran has a careful line to tread with the new 'late run' 9S cars, reintroduced by previous owner Arnie Black, another successful Crosslé racer who took over the company in 1997.

"The HTP version [Historic Technical Passport, which allows identical replicas to race against originals] is indistinguishable from the original," says McMorran, "but the chassis plates make it clear it's a continuation car. There's growing acceptance of new-build HTP cars in historic classes, but it's always down to the organising club, and we respect that decision. We don't want to devalue original cars."

Meanwhile, for those who just like the looks of the 9S, there's also a simplified version with Ford Zetec power which runs in its own series.





Gerry Birrell takes the 1969 Euro FF title. Below, John Watson in his 7S

Paul points out that the 9S may be the only such car still built in the same factory, on the same jigs and by some of the same people, "and with the founder at our shoulder." Though he retired in 1997, Dr John Crosslé lives right alongside and pops in most mornings for coffee.

McMorran also inherits Crosslé's unlikely success story – its trials car. This spindly four-wheeled insect has slithered to copious sporting trials victories through the last 20 years, but "it's a niche market," McMorran admits. "I'm not sure about expansion, but maybe we can enhance performance and simplify production."

Can he see the firm building new Formula Fords? "The motivation isn't strong to go up against the big manufacturers," he reckons. "We do get asked to build new 'historic' chassis, but I'm reluctant to do it. If we did we'd make it very clear what they were."

Meantime, if you race a Crosslé, look out for the boss alongside you on the grid. McMorran aims to keep racing amongst his customers.

"I don't underestimate the weight on my shoulders," the new MD concludes. "There's a lot of pride in Northern Ireland about this name after 55 years."

AC HOARD IS WORTH THE WAIT

Sometimes patience and diplomacy are the keys to clinching the deal

YOU SEARCH FOR AN AC TO buy – and then three come along at once. That's what faced AC enthusiast Kevin Kivlochan, who has landed an impressive catch of the English marque after a long wait. It's a trio of cars which have sat unmolested since 1972, waiting for someone to extract them from their dusty garage and give them some TLC.

Enjoyed by AC lover Vic Yates until poor health stopped him using them, the trio includes a 1962 Bristol-engined Greyhound, an Aceca with only 61,000 miles on the clock, and an Ace-Bristol which turns out to be a 1957 works car with a prolific race history. Vic Yates died a year ago but the family found it difficult to let the cars go.

"People in the AC club knew about the cars," says Kivlochan, "and I'd made a few approaches over the 12 years since I first heard of them. But having had the cars for so many years they just couldn't bring themselves to say yes to a deal."

In the process Kevin became friendly with the family, who followed the restoration of Kivlochan's Cobra (our October cover car) with approval. After Vic died the family finally came to an agreement – as long as Kevin bought all three cars.

"We spent a long day discussing it over cups of tea," says Kivlochan. "I've been looking for an Ace for years so couldn't let this pass, but the other two will sadly have to go before I start the Ace restoration."

Both are in good shape; the Aceca with its practical rear hatch has had only two owners from new, while the four-seat Greyhound has a very original interior and its 1950s buff log book. And there is a pile of spares including two AC engines. For an AC exponent like Kivlochan (he has raced six different Cobras) the find is a bonanza and he can't wait to get the Ace in shape.

"We're going to do it as it should be done," he says. "The interior is saveable – the dash only needs a good clean – and I hope to have it out racing for 2014. And of course I'll take Vic's widow out in it."

The hoard struck a chord with me, as around 1980 I was taken to see a forgotten Cobra stranded in a shed in the middle of a garden. Where? I can't remember. Somewhere in the Telford area…

Peering through mucky windows we could see the curvaceous flanks covered in dust, but the owner was absent so I couldn't get the back story. Dreaming of a snip purchase I later tried to find the house again – no luck. I assume the car has since been rescued, but maybe, just maybe, there's a lost Cobra out there…



DREAM GARAGE

WHAT WE'D BLOW THE BUDGET ON THIS MONTH



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NICK WHALE

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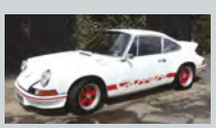


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French dressing: ex-Varzi Bugatti T54 is up for sale

Around the houses

NEWS FROM THE MAIN AUCTION HOUSES AROUND THE WORLD

– BONHAMS –

The beginning of the year is always a busy time for auctions, with Scottsdale sales running from January 15-20.

Bonhams is holding its annual January sale on Thursday 17 and has announced 'La Petite Royale', a 1930 Bugatti Type 46 Faux Cabriolet (£560-750,000), a 1972 Lamborghini Miura SV (£560-680,000) and a 1955 Mercedes-Benz 300SL Gullwing (£530-600,000).

Fast-forward to February 6/7 and the auction house has already consigned several lots for its Grand Palais sale. Headlining the event is the ex-Varzi, Monza-winning 1931 Bugatti T54, which carries an estimate of £2-2.8 million. The 82-year-old machine is the car that Achille Varzi used in the 1931 Gran Premio di Monza when he won his heat ahead of fellow Bugatti driver Louis Chiron. Two burst tyres in the final meant he crossed the line third.

As well as Varzi's winner there is also a 1938 Type 57C Special Coupé that has an estimate of £650-810,000.

Bonhams has also announced that at the same sale it will auction the 1929 De Havilland DH 60GMW Gipsy Moth bi-plane that featured in the 1985 film *Out of Africa*. The 105mph two-seater is expected to reach over £120,000 by the time the hammer drops.

For Steve McQueen fans it's worth keeping an eye on Bonhams' Las Vegas motorcycle sale on January 10. Alongside two 1954 BMW Rennsport 254s, one with a sidecar and one without, there is the film star's 1970 Husqvarna 400 Cross (£50-60,000). This isn't the one that he rode in *On Any Sunday*, the 1971 bike enthusiast documentary, but it's bound to sell for more than a standard 400 Cross.



– RM AUCTIONS –

For its auction on January 18 in Arizona RM has announced a 1960 Ferrari 250GT SWB Berlinetta 'Competizione' (above, POA), which is expected to nudge record numbers. With only four owners from new, chassis 1905 GT is expected to fetch a significant seven-figure sum.

There is also a 1965 Ford GT40 that was raced extensively from 1973 onwards. It's been "sympathetically restored" and the Canadian auction house believes it will break the £1.5m mark. Other Americana includes a 1967 Shelby 427 'semi-competition' Cobra , which has a pre-sale estimate of £870,000-1m, and a 1963 ex-Lance Reventlow 'factory competition spec' version that should draw interest.

– GOODING & COMPANY –

A "one-of-a-kind" 1957 Maserati 150 GT Spider is the headline lot on January 18/19 when Gooding hosts its Scottsdale sale. The factory-built car was originally made as an A6GCS sports racer and campaigned by the works team during the 1954 season. It was then used as a prototype for the 300S – a state in which it remains to this day. A lofty estimate of £1.9-2.5m won't surprise enthusiasts.

Alongside this one-off will be a 1938 Bugatti 57C Atalante (£875,000-1.1m) and a 1965 Shelby 289 Cobra (£530-635,000).

– ARTCURIAL –

The French auction company amassed £16.8m from four sales in 2012. At its last auction of the year – on November 11 – the 1976 Gp4 Lancia Stratos (featured in our December issue) added £292,280 to that total. The 1957 Arnolt Bristol 404 finally sold for £128,200.

– MOTOR SPORT –

At the fourth *Motor Sport* Magazine Hall of Fame on February 25 Bonhams chairman Robert Brooks will host a charity auction in aid of the Grand Prix Mechanics Charitable Trust. Lots include a Red Bull steering wheel signed by Sebastian Vettel, a Jenson Button McLaren race seat and the Williams differential gear that carried Pastor Maldonado to a brilliant victory in the 2012 Spanish GP. All estimates are available on request.

JAN 10 BONHAMS *The Las Vegas Motorcycle Sale,* Bally's Las Vegas Hotel & Casino, Las Vegas, USA Tel: 001 415 391 4000

JAN 12 COYS *Autosport International,* NEC, Birmingham Tel: 0208 614 7888

JAN 15-20 BARRETT-JACKSON *Scottsdale Sale,* North Pima Road, Scottsdale, Arizona, USA Tel: 001 480 663 6255

JAN 16-20 RUSSO AND STEELE *Scottsdale Sale,* South 39th Street, Phoenix, Arizona, USA Tel: 001 602 252 2697

JAN 17 BONHAMS *The Scottsdale Auction,* The Westin Kierland Resort & Spa, Scottsdale, Arizona, USA Tel: 020 7468 5801

JAN 18 RM AUCTIONS *Arizona Sale,* Biltmore Resort & Spa, Phoenix, Arizona, USA Tel: 001 800 211 4371

JAN 18/19 GOODING AND COMPANY *The Scottsdale Sale,* Scottsdale Fashion Square Scottsdale, Arizona, USA Tel: 001 310 899 1960

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Reviews







50 YEARS OF FORMULA 1 PHOTOGRAPHY & SPORTSCAR RACING 1962-1973

By Rainer Schlegelmilch

You wait this long for a Rainer Schlegelmilch book to come along, and then…

The German photographer specialises in mighty tomes – most the approximate weight of a Cosworth BDA – and all stand apart in terms of content and value.

The latest releases, one from a tightly defined period in endurance racing history, the other broader in scope, adhere to a familiar, glittering template. The older images naturally have the unfair advantage of context, because it was almost impossible to take a duff shot during the Targa Florio and drivers (all right Kimi, not you) paid less attention to what they said and did, or when they did it. Back then, the PR constabulary was light years from invention.

It matters not, though, that the formulaic nature of modern paddocks creates fewer opportunities for the imaginatively inclined. Many of the more recent F1 shots underline that the art of candid portraiture is alive and well in Schlegelmilch's mind. He has been doing this kind of stuff since 1962: long may he continue.

Both books are exquisite and the most expensive costs about half as much as it would to brim a Ford Focus with unleaded.

Remarkable, in a word. **SA**

Published by Könemann, (F1) ISBN 978 3 86407 056 3, €49.95; (Sportscar) ISBN 978 3 86407 057 0, €29.95



JACKY ICKX

by Pierre van Vliet

A flame-scarred Bell Star – hangover from his 1970 Spanish Grand Prix clash with Jackie Oliver – is a stark, strange choice for the cover of an illustrative essay spanning the racing life and times of Jacky Ickx. It has its place within the book certainly, but a defining career image? Hardly.

The bits in the middle pursue a more logical course, respected writer van Vliet weaving a narrative between some fine photographs that track Ickx's rise from motorcycle trials rider to Ferrari lynchpin and Le Mans maestro, before continuing to post-pinnacle diversions such as Paris-Dakar.

Unlike some of the cars he raced – the Porsche 956/962 series, for instance – Ickx has hardly been exhausted as a literary subject, and much of the content is unfamiliar. There is also an interesting opinion piece, reproduced from *Automobile Year 1958*, in which Ickx's father, Jacques Snr, outlines his distaste for motor racing… and its absolute right to exist as a sport.

A curio, then, but good with it. **SA**

Published by Cannibal Publishers, ISBN 978 9 49137 614 6, €45



ONE GLORIOUS HOUR

THE MIKE HAWTHORN STORY

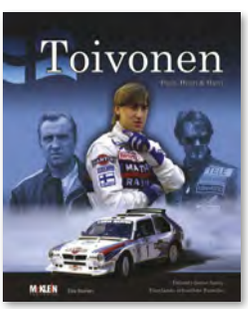
by Don Shaw

Novels woven around historical events aren't uncommon, but are rarely about motor racing. The action in this one, though, is entirely fact, the fiction element being the mental processes and private conversations of the *dramatis personae*, viz Peter Collins, Mike Hawthorn and their circle during that tragic year of 1958, when Britain won its first F1 titles.

Read as a putative interpretation of factual events it's bound to be conjectural. But as a novel, while waving a colourful veil of guilt, revenge and obsession around the deaths of Musso and Collins, it's on thinner ice.

We experience Hawthorn's mental agonies about whether his 'mon ami mate' killed himself trying to protect Mike's title chances, but with a known storyline and no ingenious McGuffin theory to pitch facts on their head, it remains one man's guess about the contents of another's head. **GC**

Published by The Derby Books Publishing Company Ltd., ISBN 978 1 78091 043 7, £12.99



TOIVONEN

PAULI, HENRI & HARRI, FINLAND'S FASTEST FAMILY

by Esa Illoinen

It's Henri that you think of when someone says 'Toivonen'. But there's much more to the family story than his great rallying success and his tragic death in the 1986 Tour de Corse.

Father Pauli was European Rally Champion in 1968 and brother Harri had some racing success, finishing ninth at Le Mans in 1991. Some of you might remember that astonishing save when his Porsche 962's suspension collapsed.

Henri, of course, is the big story and rightly he is the focus of this personal German/English account by Esa Illoinen, which charts the Finn's rise from karting to Group B through Formula Vee and the lower ranks of rallying.

Thanks to help from Henri's family, this is more than just a career overview: it's a must-read for any rally fan, if you forgive the occasional translation error. **EF**

Published by McKlein Publishing, ISBN 978 3 927458 61 €49.90

YOU WERE THERE

Secrets and surprises in this month's pick: a high-security blanket at Brands, plus a star in a reasonably fast kart…



1 2



ROGER TAYLOR

By chance Roger caught Niki Lauda testing the secret Brabham fan car at Brands in 1978. {1} **"Suddenly it coasted to a stop; mechanics raced from the pits and wrapped a tarpaulin round the rear before it was towed"** {2} **"For 10min Lauda circulated at race pace"** {3} **In '79 Roger gate-crashed a Silverstone test: "I heard muttering but kept out of the way…" Here Lauda and Murray ponder BT48** {4} **Ground-effect McLaren M28 on jacks** {5} **Firing up Reutemann's Lotus 79**



3



4 5







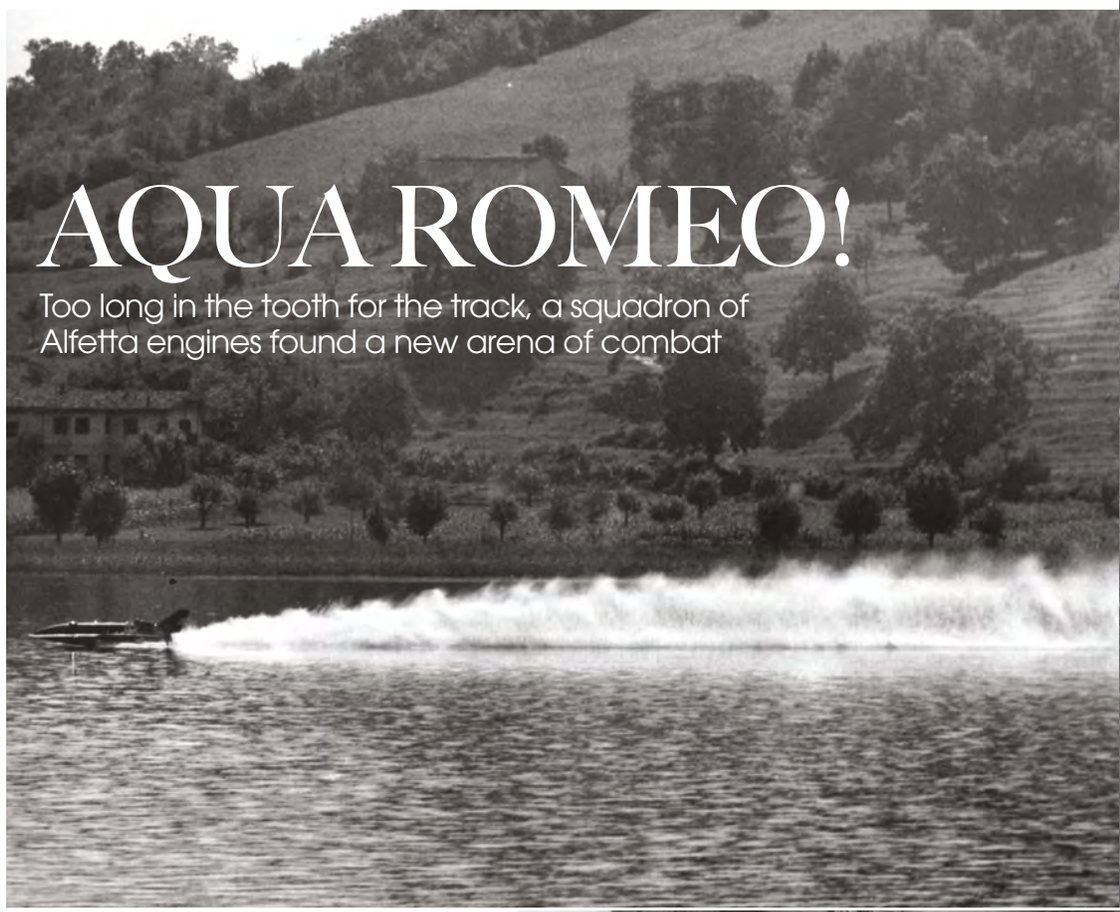
1 2

GREG RICKES

Greg Rickes sent his pictures from Latham, New York, but they feature a background closer to home for us – Brands Hatch {1} **In August 1979 Greg attended the kart race school at the Kent circuit and was surprised to find someone else enrolled for lessons – multiple motorbike racing champion Barry Sheene** {2} **Standing by his white Rolls-Royce, Sheene talks with instructor Mike Wilds**

AQUA ROMEO!

Too long in the tooth for the track, a squadron of Alfetta engines found a new arena of combat



When Denis Jenkinson died in 1996 I fell heir to his archive (he always did have a wicked sense of humour). As yet I still haven't tunnelled my way through more than a fraction of it, but just recently a letter surfaced which throws fascinating light upon the ex-Formula 1 Alfa Romeo 158/159 engines which found post-retirement use in racing and record-breaking boats. Jenks's informant was Dott Ing Carlo Leto di Priolo. This aristocratic Milanese was one of the three racing brothers, Dore, Carlo and Massimo, who had been prominent in the Scuderia Ambrosiana cooperative team based in Milan from 1946 on. Jenks had evidently written to him to ask about the retired Alfa Corse team's 1½-litre supercharged straight-eight engines. And Leto Di Prioli responded:

"You would be interested to know why Achille Castoldi was so lucky (as) to have this wonderful engine installed first among the others. During the Second World War, two Alfette were hidden under a coal mountain in Castoldi's works in Abbiategrasso, 25kms from Milan. The coal mountain was so big that on occasion of a 'blurt-out' [sic – but self-explanatory] the German SS came and looked for the Alfette but they get tired before succeeding to remove by hand all the coal pieces protecting the two cars.

"The installation of 158 engine on a boat follows four different trends:

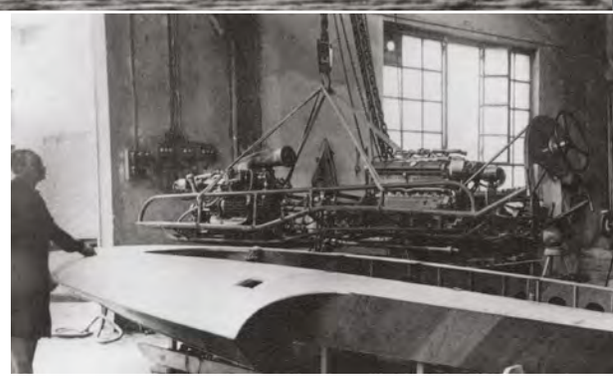
"The first was with horizontal engine with a reduction drive [to the propeller shaft itself]. The second one was that on *Arno II* with engine horizontal at the back of the driver connected with the inboard-outboard unit made by Cattaneo and driving two opposed contra-rotating propellers.

"The third trend was the standard one today with engine in front of driver, inclined and direct coupled with the transmission propeller shaft. The Alfa Romeo engine was always assembled with the original clutch and a special bell-housing…

"The fourth trend was used only once by Mario Verga when he made his fatal attempt, with two 159 engines in longitudinal position but opposed, one in front of the other; this was to eliminate the dynamic effect [ie the torque] of the crankshafts. The two engines were connected with a transfer case to a single inclined propeller shaft."

Luigi Castoldi, a cousin of Macchi aircraft designer Mario Castoldi, had used Alfetta power in his boat *Arno I* to set a 400kg class power boat record of 81mph as early as 1940. In 1946 he became President of the FIM – Federazione Italiana Motonautica – and raced his latest power boat *San Ambrogio* fitted with an Alfa Romeo V12 aero engine in the Detroit Gold Cup. By 1953, when Mario Verga assumed Alfa Romeo 'motonautica' backing, Castoldi turned to Enzo Ferrari instead, his latest boat *Arno XI* promptly inheriting an ex-Formula 1 4.5-litre Ferrari 375 V12 engine as an 800kg class contender. In October 1953, Castoldi then raised the flying kilometre water speed record to 241.71kmh, 150.224mph, on Lago d'Iseo, near Bergamo in northern Italy.

Two days after Christmas, 1953, Mario Verga, a 43-year-old silk manufacturer from Milan, used Alfetta straight-eight horsepower



to win the Miami Grand Prix over Florida's Haulover Beach course, then raised the 151cu in-class hydroplane world record to 131.680mph despite his Alfa straight-eight engine displacing just 91.5cu in.

Verga had campaigned a series of Alfetta-engined boats. His first, *Laura I*, had made him 450kg class World Champion. *Laura II* had followed in the 800kg division, in which he raised the class record to 140.73mph. By 1953 he was 800kg World Champion, and progressed to *Laura III*, a three-point hydroplane built for him in marine plywood by Carlo Timossi



'Motonaut' Mario Verga in *Laura III* with its twin Alfetta engines (bottom). Left, Verga high-tails it across Lake Iseo

Kevin Desmond

on Lake Como and powered by a pair of Alfa Romeo 159 supercharged engines prepared by the Alfa works and developing a combined 800 horsepower. The shapely, tail-finned *Laura III* was lightly built, with its twin engines slung in a tubular spaceframe which bolted into the wooden hull. But late in 1954, again on Lago d'Iseo, double World Champion Verga was attacking the world water speed record of 178.497mph set by Stanley Sayres's *Slo-mo-shun IV* when he ran out of luck.

These very powerful, very lightweight boats were critically sensitive to pitch and yaw. Verga's Italian rival Ezio Selva's Alfetta-powered boat *Moschettiere IV* had proved so nervous that Selva abandoned his record ambitions. Verga found *Laura III* extremely tricky to drive. He gave Selva a test run, who returned staring-eyed, to confirm Verga's impression. Just like Donald Campbell years later Verga was running out of time and money, and also public sympathy. Like Campbell, possibly whistling in the dark, he assured friends: "I'm not afraid… It's a trial of strength, but we are going to do it".

On October 9, 1954, with Lago d'Iseo's surface ruffled by the local *Il Tivano* wind, Verga set off in *Laura III* in a win-or-bust world record attempt. His speed was estimated as almost 190mph when the racing-red boat suddenly bounced nose up, exposing its underside to the airstream, and it somersaulted to destruction in a smother of spray and tumbling debris. Divers found Verga's body trapped in the sunken wreckage, killed instantly upon impact.

In December 1957 Ezio Selva's Alfetta-engined hydroplane then raised his own Miami beach course record from 141mph to 146.1, but three days later, in the Orange Bowl Regatta's Grand Prix event, the last appearance of 159 Alfa Romeo engine in boat racing, he 'did a Verga' – *Moschettiere* bounced nose-up over a wave at 100mph-plus and back-flipped. It landed upside-down and ploughed in stern-first, water pressure hurling Selva forward in the cockpit, crushing his chest against the cockpit coaming and windscreen. The 56-year-old wire manufacturer had been fatally injured in what he had declared would be his last race. And some still said it was motor racing that was dangerous…



LAT

The Old Man and the Kiwi

IN 1987 I FOUND MYSELF SEATED ON ONE SIDE OF AN imposing desk in a spacious, but modestly furnished, office at Maranello. Seated at one end of the desk was the genial and ever-helpful Dr Franco Gozzi. And on the other side of it, looking at me rather dismissively – like a great Test batsman regarding a novice schoolboy bowler – sat the living legend himself, Enzo Ferrari.

I was interviewing him on camera for a BBC TV programme which never reached transmission. It had been approved by Michael Grade, then head of BBC2, but while we were haring around Europe filming motor racing's great and good, he announced his resignation from the Beeb to become head of Channel 4. Alan Yentob was appointed in his place – and suddenly everything approved by Grade was tossed into the 'file and forget' bin, and arty-fartyness suppressed anything as non-U as a celebration of technological prowess, sporting endeavour and sheer, true, grit…

The interview went quite well, considering. I have always been too thick to speak Italian (I think too slowly to converse against habitual machine-gun delivery) but I have usually been able to understand and read it adequately. Franco Gozzi was translating my questions and The Old Man's responses. You couldn't call them answers because he always said precisely what he wanted to say, and little more, virtually regardless of the question.

At one stage Mr Ferrari leaned forward, eyes bright behind his tinted glasses, and he roared

with laughter at some memory, two gold teeth in his lower set flashing. I was just entranced. This seemed to be going well. Here we were in the presence of *the* living legend. Here was the man who had kept kings and emperors awaiting his convenience. Here was the man who had known and worked with both Ascaris, and also with Andretti; with Campari and also with Collins and Castellotti; with Varzi and with Gilles Villeneuve. He had known and entertained Earl Howe, and employed Mike Hawthorn, and Phil Hill. I was in awe, but all was going really well. And then I screwed it up.

Perhaps suddenly over-confident, I asked "Mr Ferrari, one thing that has always puzzled many of us: could you tell us how you managed to be so prominent within the Fascist regime pre-war, and then maintain such prominence in the postwar period, when this part of Italy in particular had become so strongly communist and socialist?".

Dr Gozzi's eyes glazed over, and then he turned to Mr Ferrari, who was waiting attentively for the next cue to hold forth with another much-repeated standard response. Gozzi's mouth opened, but no words came. Mr Ferrari prompted him. And Gozzi said "Mr Nye seems to think that your company was once nationalised, how did that happen?". Which of course, wasn't what I'd asked at all – but the effect was much the same.

"Basta! Enough. This interview is over. Give 'em a book. One only, mind…". And the frail Old Man was helped to his feet, and walked out. Clutching my book, when I had really wanted him to autograph the much-thumbed old autobiography I had brought with me, we sheepishly followed...

In fact, of course, Mr Ferrari had walked an exceptionally perilous tightrope in navigating his way through World War II and emerging after 1945 not only alive but with his business ambitions intact. Now one of the most extraordinary books I have ever seen on The Old Man has emerged from New Zealand author David Manton. Entitled *Enzo Ferrari's Secret War* (Bridgehampton Publishing, ISBN 978-0-9834133-0-1) it's a sprawling soft-backed work which pivots around an investigation of Kiwi racing driver Pat Hoare's mysteriously close relationship with Mr Ferrari.

During a period when the factory habitually sawed up and scrapped its redundant Formula 1 cars, the enigmatic, taciturn Pat Hoare was able to charm first a four-cylinder special Ferrari monoposto out of the factory and then Phil Hill's 1960 Italian GP-winning front-engined Dino 246, into which a 3-litre V12 engine was shoehorned for him. This is the ex-Hoare, ex-Neil and Nigel Corner car which Tony Smith still campaigns today in historic events.



LAT

Neither Mr Ferrari himself nor Pat Hoare ever explained publicly their undeniably close links. The best I ever established was that Hoare had been with the New Zealand Army advancing up the leg of Italy in 1943, and was amongst the first units to liberate Modena from the retreating German Army. David Manton has plainly failed in pinning down chapter and verse to unlock the true story, but he does reveal startling possibilities.

When Mr Ferrari wanted a trusted engineer to realise his ambitions of building a new V12-engined marque postwar, he sought out Ing Gioachino Colombo, his former employee at Alfa Romeo. In 1944-45, however, Colombo was tainted by having been such an enthusiastic Fascist under Mussolini's now toppled regime. With communist partisans taking control, Colombo was fired from Alfa and placed under investigation. His very life hung by a thread. He could have been imprisoned, or summarily shot. Manton believes that Hoare – who had met Ferrari as a confirmed motor racing enthusiast from the pre-war years – may have been instrumental in freeing Colombo by influencing the relevant authorities. Certainly Colombo was enabled to resume work for Ferrari when some of his former Party colleagues remained proscribed, or had already – like Alfa-Romeo boss Ugo Gobbato and carburettor maker Eduardo Weber – been assassinated.

But David Manton presents the possibility that such mediation might have been only part of a more intimate link. Pat Hoare's personal photo album from the period includes several shots of an extremely attractive Italian girl identified only as Rita. He was an unmarried 27-year old Army officer. She was a ravishing 18, believed to have been born near Modena around 1926 and raised not by her birth parents, but by relatives. Some of Pat Hoare's old friends in Christchurch, New Zealand – while fiercely protective of his memory – share a belief that the lovely Rita was not just an early love of his life, but that she was also the illegitimate daughter of Enzo Ferrari…which would explain so much.

Nothing is proven. David Manton's book frustratingly teases but so – over so many decades – has the intrinsic discretion and privacy of the powerful Italian alpha male. As American-in-Modena Pete Coltrin told me many years ago, Mr Ferrari was simply "a complex man in a complex country". He had a hard-won reputation as a womaniser, which itself earned the respect – and the grudging admiration – of many of his Italian peers, and employees. But if Mr Manton's theories hold any water they certainly go an awfully long way towards explaining the Pat Hoare/Enzo Ferrari relationship, which both considered far too private ever to divulge to the enthusiast public… Ⓜ



Pat Hoare mysteriously managed to buy Phil Hill's Dino, pictured at Monza and now raced by Tony Smith (above)

Michael Cockson


elf
5
elf
elf
5



Parting Shot

Austrian Grand Prix, Österreichring, August 19, 1973

Jackie Stewart steers his Cosworth-powered Tyrrell 006 to second place nine seconds behind Ronnie Peterson's JPS Lotus 72E. The final spot on the podium went to Carlos Pace, who set the fastest lap of the race in his Surtees TS14A

To buy this photo or other classic motor racing shots, visit www.latphoto.co.uk