

BAHRAIN GRAND PRIX THRILLER

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LEWIS WINS MERC DUEL

AUTOSPORT ANALYSIS

Epic night race silences F1 critics and louder engines are on the way too

"We haven't raced like that since karting"

'WHOA! WHAT WAS THAT?!'
Gutierrez gets Maldonado-ed

Rosberg admits: "I swore at him in my helmet"





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PORSCHE



**SUE
NEXEN**

CASE NO. 00143
**INFRINGEMENT
OF THE PATENT**



NFERA SU1

The symbol of flexible cornering,
Cheetah sues NEXEN for infringement of the patent
which runs even at the accelerated moment.

Sorry for my good

POLE POSITION

F1 delivers a classic to answer its critics

Got your breath back yet? Sunday's Bahrain Grand Prix was a modern classic, a stunning riposte for F1's hybrid/turbo-driven era after all the criticism of recent weeks. Taxi-cab driving or a Sunday economy drive it most certainly was not.

Thanks to Mercedes' decision not to impose team orders (beyond 'bring them home') we were treated to a huge battle for victory between Lewis Hamilton and Nico Rosberg. Pass and repass, alternative tyre strategies and an unseen battle to manage energy-store replenishment – this was a classic duel even before the late-race safety car added spice.

Only once did Rosberg complain of Hamilton's driving tactics, and when Nico did make it stick at Turn 1, Lewis grabbed the lead back 25s later at Turn 5. But it was Hamilton's stubborn defence at Turn 4 – "You can't come around me on the outside, that's a no-go" – was pure, on-the-limit racing. Fabulous stuff.

But it wasn't just the battle for the lead, there were scraps for position everywhere. Force India's Sergio Perez and Red Bull's Daniel Ricciardo starred; Sebastian Vettel and Ferrari struggled.

This new broom's sweep has been colossal. More please!



Bradley

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Daytona Formula Vee World Finals, 1973



This week in F1



COATES/LAT

FERRARI IN TALKS TO IMPROVE F1 SPECTACLE

Luca di Montezemolo and Bernie Ecclestone met with FIA president Jean Todt during the Bahrain Grand Prix weekend to discuss potential changes that could improve the spectacle of Formula 1.

Ferrari boss di Montezemolo is

unimpressed with the sport's new fuel-efficiency regulations, and met with the sport's chiefs before Sunday's race to discuss possible alterations.

Both di Montezemolo and Ecclestone believe the 2014 regulations need revisions to improve the show.



COATES/LAT

P30 HOW THE BAHRAIN GP TURNED F1 2014 AROUND

Sauber planning lightweight car

Sauber is preparing a new lightweight chassis for May's Spanish Grand Prix.

The Swiss team has failed to hit F1's minimum 692kg weight limit this year, which has hurt the pace of its Ferrari-powered C33. It is working on revisions that should shave around 20kg from the car, with 10kg of weight worth around three tenths of a second per lap.

Adrian Sutil, the heaviest driver on the grid at 75kg, has attacked lighter drivers for blocking moves to lower F1's minimum weight limit.

"I think it's unfair," Sutil said. "I wouldn't like to win against a driver who is 20kg heavier and if I win by a tenth in qualifying, this is not the truth. He won, but I am in front of him, that's the truth."



STAKEVIEW

Sirotkin test run

Sauber development driver Sergey Sirotkin drove at Bahrain on Tuesday to obtain his F1 Superlicence

Two new teams linked to F1 next season

Formula 1 could have two new teams in 2015, the sport's commercial boss Bernie Ecclestone has suggested.

An American outfit led by NASCAR team owner Gene Haas is in an advanced state of negotiations with the FIA, but another team, believed to be led by former HRT team boss Colin Kolles, is also understood to be considering an entry. "They will be accepted," said Ecclestone about the Haas entry. "We have also accepted another team as well. Whether they will make it or not is another story."

The FIA has yet to formally announce any team for the vacant slot.

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F1 cost-cap plans dropped

Formula 1's plans for a cost cap in 2015 have been abandoned. The six team representatives in F1's Strategy Group – Red Bull, Ferrari, Mercedes, Williams, McLaren and Lotus – wrote to the FIA last month to say they did not believe plans for a budget cap were realistic.

FIA president Jean Todt said of the situation: "If the commercial rights holder [which has six votes] and six teams, which means 12 of 18 [in the Strategy Group], are against, I cannot impose it. It's mathematics. So in this case, no more cost cap."



COATES/LAT

BRITISH GP SET FOR 'FAN THURSDAY'

British Grand Prix organisers have been given the green light to open the pitlane for Formula 1 fans on the Thursday before this year's race. Silverstone bosses have got approval to allow fans into the pits for a close up look at the cars and team preparations on July 3.

MILESTONE

Jenson Button started the 250th grand prix of his career in Bahrain last weekend. Button remains fifth on the all-time starters list in F1, behind Jarno Trulli (252), Riccardo Patrese (256), Michael Schumacher (306) and Rubens Barrichello (322).



GILHAM/GETTY

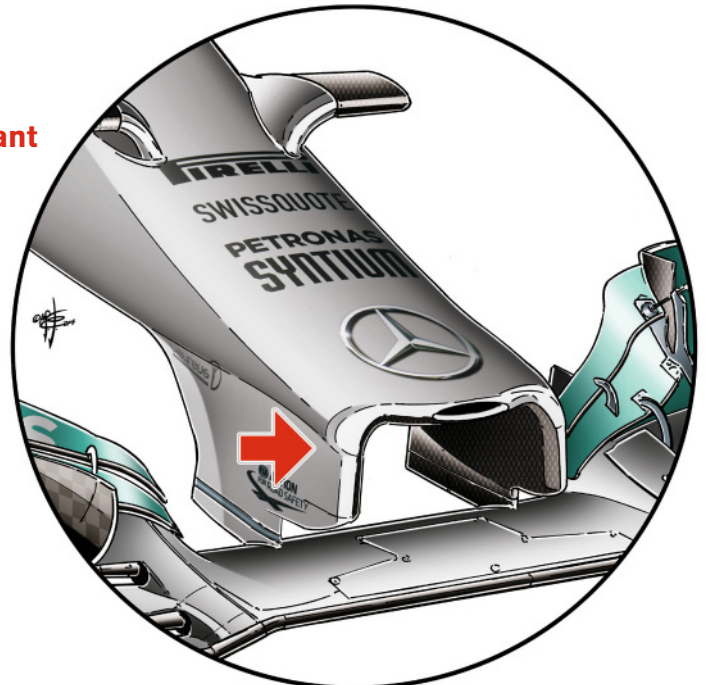
MERCEDES PLANS TO SHORTEN NOSE



Gary Anderson
Technical consultant

Mercedes has been working on a shortened version of the nose of its F1 W05, which will be evaluated on track once it passes its crash test.

Mercedes has been running a very conventional nose, built to the letter of the law, and designed to work with the modified front wing it introduced at the start of the season. The idea behind shortening the nose is that it currently overhangs the central section of the front wing. While that is the neutral section, when you have two surfaces, one above the other, you are constraining the flow and then expanding it again, which compromises the airflow over the whole car. This is the concept behind the anteatr noses, which have the cosmetic snout to satisfy the regulations but keep the start of the nose proper as far back as possible. But as Mercedes has discovered, it is a challenge to build the nose in a manner that passes the crash test.



The new design appears to have the front of the nose at the trailing edge of the central part of the front wing. This is roughly 800mm forward of the front wheel centre line, which when you include the mandatory 50mm 'soft' tip makes the nose as short as rules permit. The key to

passing the crash test will be ensuring that debris does not get contained within the nose itself when it is crashed. If the debris can be made to disperse externally then Mercedes has a chance of getting the design through, but it will still be very difficult.

"I really do trust the team. In the end you are an employee for the team and you work for the team, so for me it's really clear what to do"



Valtteri Bottas is clear that drivers should obey team orders

"We know we need to do the best for the team, but I race for myself as well and I need to do the best for my career"



Felipe Massa feels you have to put yourself first sometimes

WILLIAMS APOLOGISES TO DRIVERS OVER TEAM ORDERS

Williams deputy team principal Claire Williams has apologised to drivers Felipe Massa and Valtteri Bottas, and fans of the squad, for the Malaysian Grand Prix team-orders controversy. She admitted the situation, in which Massa was ordered

to let his team-mate through into seventh place in the closing stages of the race – an instruction Massa disregarded – was not handled correctly. "For our fans, we want to apologise for that because we didn't handle it in the best way," said Williams.

Schumacher shows signs of waking up

Michael Schumacher is showing 'moments of consciousness' his manager revealed last Friday, amid signs of an improvement in his condition. Sabine Kehm said: "Michael is making progress on his way. He shows moments of consciousness."

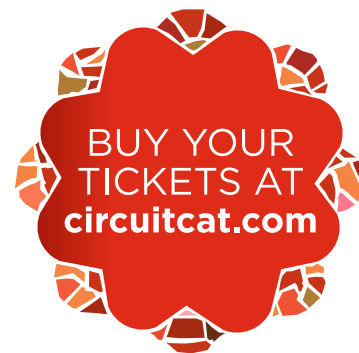
Reserve drivers debut in practice

Ex-Formula Renault 3.5 champion Robin Frijns and GP2 ace Felipe Nasr both made their Formula 1 Friday-practice debuts at the Bahrain Grand Prix. Frijns took over Kamui Kobayashi's Caterham, while Nasr drove Valtteri Bottas's Williams. Caterham refugee Giedo van der Garde made his Sauber debut, substituting for Esteban Gutierrez.



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Jonathan Noble

F1's newshound

Bahrain was grand prix racing at its best, but is there perhaps a formula that can ensure every race is just as exciting?

The negative noise being generated about the Formula 1 spectacle almost got to the point of drowning out the cars last weekend. So if there was ever a time for the racing to answer back and get its voice heard, it was now.

Bahrain 2014 wasn't just one of the best grands prix of recent times, it also served as evidence that the new turbo regulations not only can work, they do work.

Flat-out racing, spectacular wheel-to-wheel action, thrills and spills, plus a victory decided in the final laps rather than at the first corner provided all the proof you needed that F1 has a bright future with its new set of rules.

However, just as it was wrong of people to think that F1 was in crisis after the first two races failed to deliver quite as much drama as we would have hoped, so too we can't think right now that every race is going to be like Bahrain.

The reality is that, just as in any season, we're going to have some great races, as we did last weekend, and equally there may be some processions, as we had in Malaysia. It's the ebb and flow of the sport – and ultimately the better days are always sweeter because of the bad ones.

Yet perhaps the time has come for taking a bit more of a radical approach and pondering ways that can make races exciting all the time.

It was on this very topic one evening last weekend



reverse grids. But that would be as bad a gimmick as double points.

So the solution we came up with was a halfway house: reverse-grid qualifying. Rather than the current three qualifying segments to set the fastest time as we have now, Saturday's one-hour session would be turned into a sudden-death competition race.

From a rolling start in reverse-championship positions, drivers would be unleashed for 22 laps of racing – with the man at the back being black-flagged

“The time has come for a more radical approach that can make races exciting all the time”

that I spent time debating with some colleagues about just what – if anything – could be done to really spice things up if we could write the rules afresh. Any solution had to retain the purity of competition, could not involve pure luck and had to produce one thing in spades – excitement.

After much toing and froing, the conclusion we came to was perfectly simple – because one truth of motorsport is that if you want a boring race, you start the fastest car at the front, with slower cars behind it, and let them tour around until the chequered flag comes out.

Excitement is caused when a faster car's trying to get past a slower one ahead. That's why some of the best grands prix have come about when the fastest cars have been out of position down the grid – not left all alone on pole. Think Japan 2005.

The ultimate way to ensure that the maximum number of faster cars are at the back is to introduce

each lap to decide the grid from back to front. The last man standing would take pole position.

The action would be spectacular. Teams and drivers would have to have cars optimised for overtaking rather than pure lap time, and there would be a much greater prospect of this system delivering some mixed-up grids for the grand prix itself.

On current form, no one is going to stop Mercedes storming away with race victories this year – but having Lewis Hamilton and Nico Rosberg fighting their way through from the back of the grid on Saturdays and completing their task on Sundays would ensure there was never a dull weekend.

F1 has been very brave in adopting some fantastic new technology this year as a way of pushing on towards the future. Could the powers-that-be ever be bold enough to try out something as radical as reverse-grid qualifying?

Over to you, Bernie... ☘

This week in motorsport

MERCEDES BREAKS AUSSIE V8 DUCK

Mercedes became the 10th manufacturer to win a premiership Australian touring car race at Winton last weekend.

Lee Holdsworth claimed victory aboard his Erebus Mercedes-Benz E63 in the second of the three V8 Supercars races at the Victoria venue. The win means that Mercedes joins Holden, Ford,

Nissan, BMW, Chevrolet, Mazda, Volvo, Jaguar and Porsche on the all-time winners' table for the series, which adopted its current name in 1993.

Holdsworth, who took his first series win since 2010, crossed the line 1.45 seconds ahead of Mark Winterbottom's Ford Performance Racing Falcon on Saturday.



Holdsworth took Mercedes to Victory Lane at Winton

AUSSIE V8 SUPERCARS WINNERS' TABLE*

460	Holden
301	Ford
26	Nissan
2	Volvo
1	Mercedes

* manufacturers currently participating



P57 WINTON V8 SUPERCARS REPORT

There have been some notable situations related to our competition procedures that unfortunately have partially overshadowed the positive aspects of our debut



IMSA competition boss Scot Elkins finds the longest way possible to say 'we got it wrong' as the United SportsCar Championship confirms changes to safety car procedures in race control.



Earnhardt's flame-grilled Texan smash

NASCAR star Dale Earnhardt Jr escaped unscathed from a fiery crash at Texas Motor Speedway on Monday, after clipping the grass on the frontstretch and then slamming into the outside wall where his car caught fire. "I just didn't see the grass," he said. "Just a mistake on my part."

CARLIN SKIPS FR3.5 OPENER

Formula Renault 3.5 championship-winning team Carlin will miss this weekend's season-opener at Monza after failing to find suitably-funded drivers in time.

The British outfit, which missed all of pre-season testing for the same reason, hopes to return to the grid as soon as possible. Team boss Trevor Carlin has targeted a return in time for the second round at Aragon later this month.



For all the breaking news, visit AUTOSPORT.COM

HOCHZWEI

TOP-SIX FASTEST DTM TIMES

1	Christian Vietoris (D)	Mercedes	1m37.461s
2	Nico Muller (CH)	Audi	1m37.505s
3	Augusto Farfus (BRA)	BMW	1m37.640s
4	Maxime Martin (B)	BMW	1m37.733s
5	Miguel Molina (E)	Audi	1m37.792s
6	Edoardo Mortara (I)	Audi	1m37.806s



Vietoris quickest in first DTM test

Mercedes driver Christian Vietoris set the pace in the first official DTM test of the 2014 season.

The German recorded an unbeaten best of 1m37.461s at the Hungaroring on the third of the four days. Vietoris backed up his pace on the final day aboard his

HWA Mercedes AMG C-Coupe by topping the times again.

Nico Muller (Audi) was second fastest across the four days, the rookie's best time coming on day two, while Augusto Farfus's day-four time was the best for the new BMW M4.



Nissan ZEOD to test at Ricard

The Nissan ZEOD RC experimental Le Mans 24 Hours racer will run on track with its full hybrid powerplant next week.

The ZEOD is scheduled for four days of testing at Paul Ricard, starting on Sunday, with both its two-litre turbo engine and the electric motor with which it is planned the car will do a lap of Le Mans each stint.

The car underwent its first meaningful test with both elements of its powertrain for the first time at the Bruntingthorpe proving ground last week. That followed hot on the heels of the car with petrol-only power running at Snetterton.

In brief

SATO BACK TO AUTO GP

Sauber Formula 1 reserve driver Kimiya Sato will return to Auto GP, in which he finished runner-up last season, to undertake a limited programme with Euronova alongside his GP2 campaign with Campos.

BRITISH LMP2 TO RUN

The new Strakka Dome LMP2 was scheduled to run for the first time at Paul Ricard this week. The British team had scheduled a three-day test, starting on Wednesday, for the Nissan-engined S103 coupe after pulling out of the official World Endurance Championship test at the French venue late last month.

FELIX IS FASTEST

Felix Rosenqvist topped the times in the first of two official pre-season Formula 3 European Championship tests. The Swedish Mucke Motorsport Dallara-Mercedes driver finished the two-day test at the Hungaroring last week just over a tenth clear of the best of the Carlin Volkswagen-engined Dallaras driven by Antonio Giovinazzi. The second test took place at Spielberg on Tuesday and Wednesday this week.

CAMERON IN FOR RISI

Banned Risi Ferrari driver Matteo Malucelli will be replaced by Dane Cameron for this weekend's Long Beach United SportsCar Championship round. US sportscar regular Cameron is taking the vacant seat alongside Giancarlo Fisichella after Malucelli received a one-race ban for causing a major incident in last month's Sebring 12 Hours.

BREEN OUT IN KERRY

Craig Breen retired from Sunday's Circuit of Kerry, his final preparation for the next ERC counter, next week's Circuit of Ireland. Breen's Peugeot 208 T16 slid off the road on the fifth stage. Breen (below) tested the factory 208 on Thursday and will have another day of testing in preparation for the Circuit of Ireland.



Piquet emulates his father in Brazil

Pedro Piquet, son of three-time Formula 1 World Champion Nelson, made a winning start to his Brazilian Formula 3 campaign in his Cesario Dallara-Berta (right), complete with Brabham BT52 lookalike livery. The 15-year-old took the laurels in both races at last weekend's opening round at Viamao's Taruma circuit.



CARSTENHORST

BRABHAM IN F3 TRY-OUT

British Formula Ford frontrunner Sam Brabham tested a Formula 3 car for the first time this week.

Brabham, who is returning to the series for a second season with a JTR Mygale in 2014, tried a Carlin Dallara-Volkswagen, at the official British F3 media day at Donington Park on Tuesday.

There are, so far, no plans for Brabham to race in F3 this season.

REMEMBER WHEN



...Sam's father David Brabham won the British Formula 3 Championship in 1989? He did it at the wheel of a Ralt-VW run by Bowman, which just happened to be managed by Trevor Carlin.

NASCAR eyes horsepower cut

NASCAR's ongoing quest to improve the quality of its racing could lead to a reduction in horsepower, although series bosses are yet to publicly commit to a timeframe for the change.

Series chairman and CEO Brian France told NASCAR Radio that such a move would create closer racing while ensuring that the category remains relevant to its manufacturer partners.

"The engine will get a significant change," he said. "I'm not going to say [for 2015], but we are certainly sizing that up."



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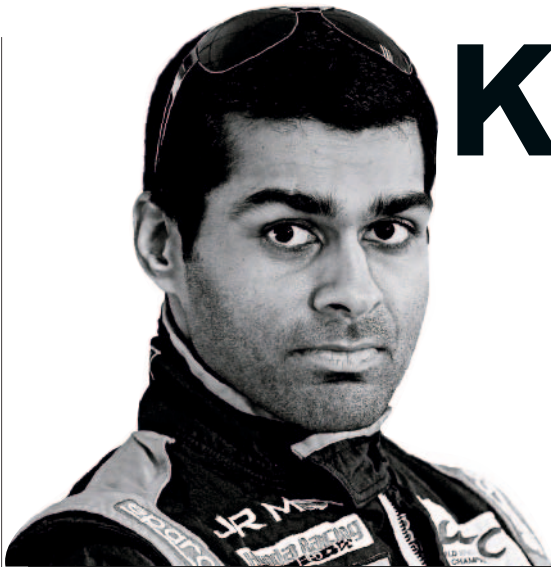
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Karun Chandhok

The racer's eye

Great racing up and down the field made for an exhilarating Bahrain GP. Let that be a lesson for all of Formula 1's feeder formulas

The Bahrain Grand Prix really showed the world, and especially drivers in junior formulas, just how good clean wheel-to-wheel racing can be. I thought the dicing that was happening, often between team-mates, all the way through the race was really high-quality stuff. The drivers were really having to use their heads and pick their moments while often thinking of the consequences two or three corners down the road.

Racing wheel-to-wheel is always hard in a single-seater because of the blind spots. You often can't see the other car alongside you and because you can't see your front wing, it's often hard to judge just how close you can squeeze in before contact is made. You also have to remember that racing drivers all have an ego and, more often than not, you rely on the guy you're racing to treat you with respect and back out of the fight at some point to avoid a collision. In recent years, as cars and tracks have got safer, the drivers often wait too long to concede a place, which ends in a collision, but this week we saw plenty of examples of drivers giving up places strategically to get it back by clever placement a few corners later.

Lewis Hamilton and Nico Rosberg were a fine example of drivers racing hard but fairly. They came very close to touching on the opening lap at Turn 4 until Nico had to accept he had lost the corner, and I thought they again came very close just before the first pitstop, when Lewis gave Nico a chop coming out of Turn 1 into Turn 2. Apart from that, there was a good amount of respect



against Kevin Magnussen but apart from that he was very good at playing to the strengths of the Red Bull in the middle sector of the lap and getting moves done at the end of the back straight.

The relative lack of straight-line speed meant that he was never really going to be able to pass into Turn 1 as easily as most others so you could see him just focus on not losing time in the first sector before getting himself lined up for a move through Turn 11. From the onboard shots, it was interesting to see how Dan would use a slightly wider line on the way into Turn 10 and get the steering wheel straight faster than some others in order

“Bahrain had good, clean fighting and I hope we see this as an example for other categories too”

shown between them both.

What was particularly impressive about Lewis's final 10 laps is that his defensive driving was very well calculated, I thought. If you watch the replay of those final laps, you'll see that he was always very strong in the final two corners of the lap. While watching it, I did think that he was perhaps saving up his tyres and even energy power to ensure that he was particularly strong in the final corners before the start-finish straight, which made sure Nico didn't get that extra car length or two he needed to get ahead. For all the talk of Nico being the more thinking driver, I thought that was great strategy from Lewis to just manage his pace around the lap perfectly.

The quality of racing from guys like Checo Perez, Nico Hulkenberg, Jenson Button and the Williams drivers was also very high. But I thought Daniel Ricciardo was particularly impressive in terms of once again using his head and putting his car in the right place at the right time. OK, he had one wobble into Turn 1 when fighting

to get a better exit. Perhaps the extra downforce in the Red Bull helped him place the car this way, but he was still opportunistic and attacking in a good way.

Of course for all the good racing, there were a couple of moves which were really questionable – Pastor Maldonado's lunge on Esteban Gutierrez was just clumsy with pretty dramatic consequences for the Sauber, and I thought Jules Bianchi's lunge into Turn 1 was also very optimistic, just like his move on lap one in Malaysia, but overall the quality of overtaking was very high.

You also have to keep in mind the whole brake-by-wire system and varying brake balance in all of this. The drivers are constantly adjusting the brake balance and therefore to have the confidence to attack the brakes at exactly the right point and make the move stick is actually harder than it used to be. Bahrain was a great example of clean, good fighting and I do hope that we see this as an example not just for the rest of the season, but for other categories as well. ❧

THE RACE REPORT

QUALIFYING • TRACKSIDE VIEW • RACE HISTORY • TEAM BY TEAM • RESULTS

Hamilton hangs on in epic battle

A tremendous intra-Mercedes duel between Lewis Hamilton and Nico Rosberg was the focal point of a dramatic Bahrain Grand Prix, a feud that was only decided in the closing laps. By **EDD STRAW**



ETHERINGTON/LAT

AT A GLANCE



"It feels like a long time since I've been able to have a real racer's race, and really use the skills I've acquired" **HAMILTON**

BAHRAIN GP
Sakhir

ROUND 3/19

LAPS 57

WINNER
Lewis Hamilton
1h39m42.743s

POLE POSITION
Nico Rosberg
1m33.185s

FASTEST LAP
Nico Rosberg
1m37.020s

RACE RATING
★★★★★ It doesn't get much better than this. Epic battles from the front to the back of the field

DRIVERS' STANDINGS

Nico Rosberg	61 pts
Lewis Hamilton	50 pts
Nico Hulkenberg	28 pts





DUNBAR/LAT

Hamilton's fluffed last lap gave pole to team-mate Rosberg

QUALIFYING 18:00, 05.04.2014

16



Did Lewis Hamilton throw away a pole position that was there for the taking, or did team-mate Nico

Rosberg quite literally pull a fast one? Perhaps it was a bit of both. Hamilton appeared to have an advantage, albeit a small one of around one-tenth of a second, heading into qualifying, yet by the time both had completed their first runs in Q3, it was Rosberg who was fastest by 0.279s.

Hamilton knew he had a fight on his hands, and it was surely no coincidence that his final lap was ruined when he locked up into Turn 1. This was the one sector where Rosberg had been quicker all weekend, and the under-pressure Hamilton admitted to being a little greedy on the brakes. He ran off the track, and there was no recovering.

"I braked a little bit later and just locked up," admitted Hamilton. "There's not much else to say."

With the chasing pack miles behind (third-fastest man Daniel Ricciardo was 0.866s off pole), Rosberg was informed of Hamilton's mistake. It probably came as a relief because he himself had suffered a big lock-up into the slow Turn 10 left-hander and suspected he would have struggled to better his time.

"I still made it through the corner and I was close to my best, even though I was all over the place," laughed Rosberg. "Lock-up on the front, lock-up on the rear – everywhere! It would probably have been slightly slower, but similar."

The other 20 cars were scrapping over third on the grid. Throughout the weekend, Ricciardo had looked more at ease than team-mate Sebastian

Vettel and, other than the Mercedes drivers, he was the only one to get through Q1 using only the slower medium-compound Pirellis.

With Vettel falling in the second stage of qualifying after encountering a downshift problem, the Australian nailed it when he had to – even with a 10-place grid penalty, the legacy of an unsafe release in the Malaysian GP, hanging over him.

This allowed fourth-fastest Valtteri Bottas, who had hustled the Williams FW36 to impressive effect throughout the weekend, to inherit third place ahead of Force India's Sergio Perez.

After a dismal start to 2014, the Mexican was the star Force India driver throughout Friday and Saturday, while the ragged Nico Hulkenberg made a couple of mistakes on his key Q2 lap and ended up down in 12th place.



Bottas was quick all weekend and good for his third on the grid

THOMPSON/GETTY

P28 FULL RESULTS & POINTS

BLOXHAM/LAT

THE GRID

 1 ROSBERG MERCEDES 1m33.185s Soft	 2 HAMILTON MERCEDES 1m33.464s Soft
 3 BOTTAS WILLIAMS 1m34.247s Soft	 4 PEREZ FORCE INDIA 1m34.346s Soft
 5 RAIKKONEN FERRARI 1m34.368s Soft	 6 BUTTON McLAREN 1m34.387s Soft
 7 MASSA WILLIAMS 1m34.511s Soft	 8 MAGNUSSEN McLAREN 1m34.712s Soft
 9 ALONSO FERRARI 1m34.992s Soft	 10 VETTEL RED BULL 1m34.985s Medium
 11 HULKENBERG FORCE INDIA 1m35.116s Soft	 12 KVVAT TORO ROSSO 1m35.145s Soft
 13 RICCIARDO RED BULL 1m34.051s Soft	 14 VERGNE TORO ROSSO 1m35.286s Soft
 15 GUTIERREZ SAUBER 1m35.891s Soft	 16 GROSJEAN LOTUS 1m35.908s Soft
 17 MALDONADO LOTUS 1m36.663s Soft	 18 KOBAYASHI CATERHAM 1m37.085s Soft
 19 BIANCHI MARUSSIA 1m37.310s Soft	 20 ERICSSON CATERHAM 1m37.875s Soft
 21 CHILTON MARUSSIA 1m37.913s Soft	 22 SUTIL SAUBER 1m36.840s Medium

KEY
+10 10-place grid penalty
+5 Sent to back of grid

The drag to Turn 1 on the opening lap was crucial as Hamilton squeezed ahead



RACE 18:00, 06.04.2014



Nico Rosberg could live with finishing second to Lewis Hamilton in Malaysia a week ago. Back

then, he was outperformed by his team-mate on every level. So he did what he always does: regroup, analyse, understand and improve. This was all much to the frustration of Hamilton, who took every opportunity to highlight how much Rosberg had gained from studying his data during the intervening week.

In Bahrain, however, defeat was not so easy to take. The world championship battle is at present a two-horse race. And judging by the rate at which the battling Mercedes duo dropped the chasing pack after the final safety car (24 seconds in just 11 laps), it will remain that way. So pressing home your advantage on a given weekend is essential.

Rosberg had the strongest hand in a dramatic Bahrain Grand Prix, but didn't play it right and lost out in a thrilling head to head.

It was a spectacular grand prix, the antithesis of the 'taxi-cab' racing Ferrari president Luca di Montezemolo had again slated in the build-up to the race.

With Mercedes motorsport boss Toto Wolff promising "zero interference" in the fight between his drivers, Rosberg and Hamilton gave each other no quarter.

Track position was Rosberg's trump card, and he started the race with that firmly in his hand after taking pole position. However, within seconds of the red lights going out he had thrown it away. Rosberg's launch was not a bad one, it was just that Hamilton's was better, and the 2008 world champion reached Turn 1 just

Hamilton: 'The Bahrain GP felt like one of the best-calculated races that I've ever had'

ahead and with the inside line. Rosberg had to give best.

Nico tried to wrest the initiative back at Turn 4 on that opening lap, but Hamilton was having none of it. He defended, forcing Rosberg wide on the exit to consolidate his position. Advantage Hamilton.

Rosberg took up a watching brief, sitting 1-1.5s behind his team-mate for the next 16 laps. He knew the strategic plan. The fastest route to the end of the race was a two-stopper, with two stints on the soft-compound Pirellis and one on the mediums.

Whichever driver was second at the end of the first stint was always likely to switch to the slower tyre for the middle stint to set up a potential attack late in the race. It was a slower strategy, but only fractionally, and it promised the pursuer a speed advantage in the final run to the flag.

"We had split the strategy to give Nico a chance for an overtake on Lewis because that strategy was quite evenly matched," said Mercedes executive director Paddy Lowe. "Naturally, the option/option/prime strategy is optimal, and the option/prime/option is a little bit behind.

But if the car behind is quicker, it can use the option at the end to catch up and have a performance difference to the car ahead."

This was the more difficult path to victory, though. Rosberg knew he'd have the chance to reverse the roles if he could pass Hamilton before the end of the final stint. Had Hamilton been behind, he is likely to have switched onto the alternative strategy, putting Rosberg in the box seat.

On lap 15, Rosberg launched his attack, taking three-tenths out of Hamilton. The next lap and another three-tenths put him within DRS range. The lap after, he gained three and a half tenths. The game was on.

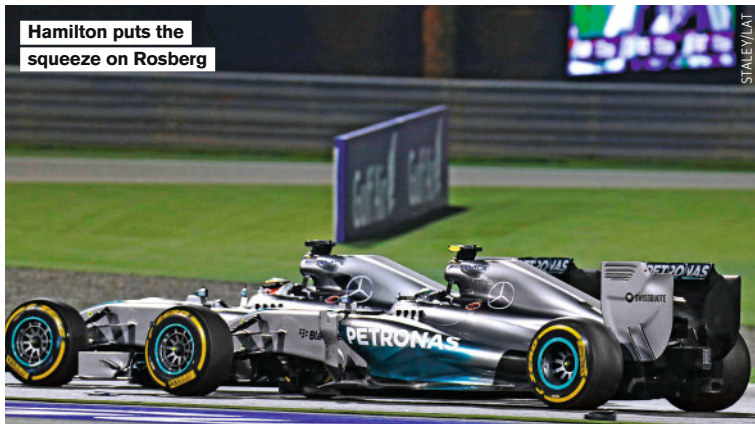
On lap 18, Rosberg made his move, sending his Mercedes up the inside. But he couldn't make it stick. Hamilton cut back, the pair came close enough to touching that everyone on the Mercedes pitwall must have held their breath.

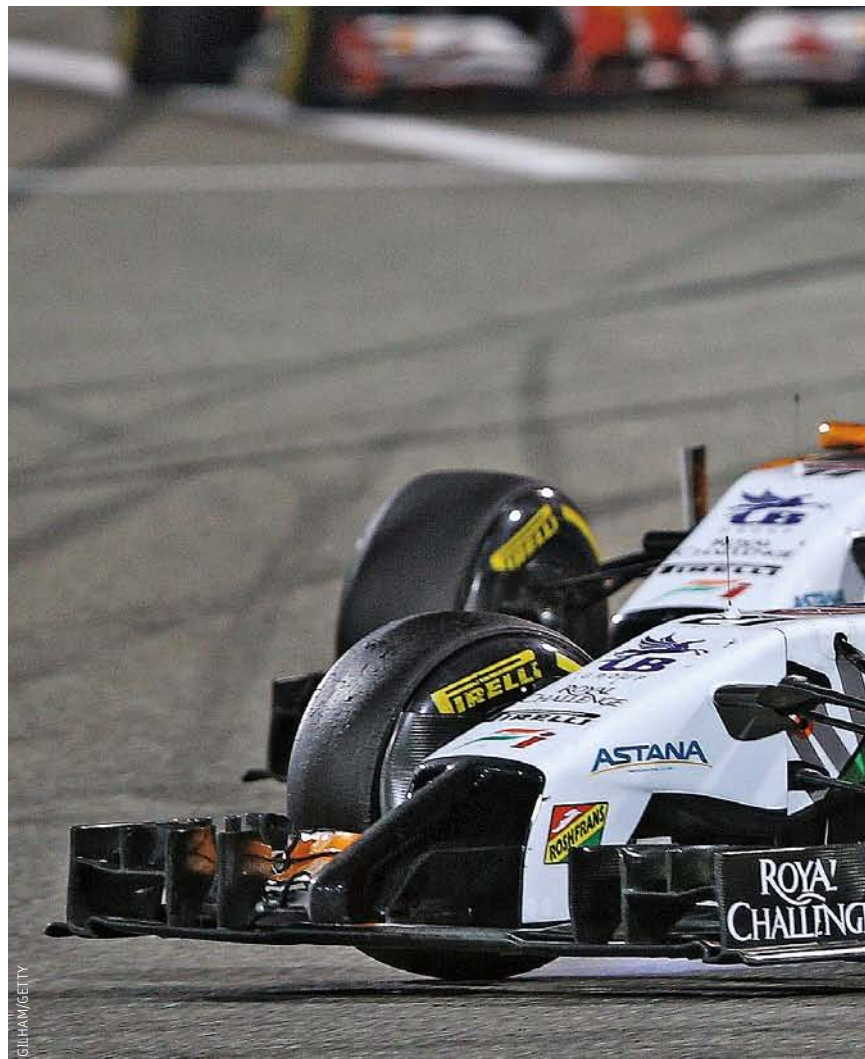
The following lap gave a snapshot that might come to define the whole title battle. Again, Rosberg went to the inside, but this time both drivers locked up. They made the corner, and Hamilton again cut back and carried good exit speed, although Rosberg pressed again on the outside of Turn 4.

Just as he was earlier in the race, Rosberg was crowded out at the exit. Hamilton pitted at the end of that lap and the die was cast. Rosberg was on the alternate strategy.

He stayed out for an extra two laps, which led to him rejoining six

Hamilton puts the squeeze on Rosberg





► seconds behind. But during the middle stint he really showed his pace. Lowe reckoned that the medium tyres were “three- to five-tenths” slower than the softs, yet Rosberg lost only a shade over two-tenths a lap during this part of the race.

The final stops were approaching when Pastor Maldonado, exiting the pits, forced the issue by pitching Esteban Gutierrez’s Sauber into a roll at Turn 1. The safety car was deployed and Hamilton’s 9.5s advantage was wiped out.

“In terms of entertainment, you could not have set it up better,” said Lowe. “The safety car created this situation with two cars that normally would have had a big gap suddenly closed up, and the car behind was on the [quicker] option.

“If there hadn’t been a safety car, [how the race finished] would all depend on the pace difference between the cars. The potential was that Nico would have caught Lewis with two or three laps to go, but that would all have depended on the gap. The gap when the safety car was called was right on that limit between whether Nico would catch Lewis or not.”

Crucially, the gap had stabilised at 9.5-9.7s, so it is likely Hamilton didn’t quite have the pace to haul himself far enough clear to keep Rosberg at arm’s length in the final stint. But the

inverted Sauber rendered that scenario hypothetical.

What really happened was straightforward; Hamilton, on the slower mediums, led Rosberg on the softs with 11 laps to go. Both were politely reminded over the radio that it might be a good idea not to drive into each other, but other than that they were free to race. They did race, hard. They did not drive into each other, just.

Rosberg’s strategy was simple. Save up the maximum available energy to focus his efforts on a big attack. With the regulations allowing a total of 4MJ of electrical energy to be deployed on a given lap, but only permitting half of that to be harvested by the MGU-K on top of whatever you could stash from the MGU-H mounted on the turbo. That, potentially combined with the absolute maximum permitted fuel flow, could give Rosberg an advantage.

Twice, he lunged at Turn 1, but twice Hamilton managed to outwit him. After all, with each side of the Mercedes garage able to see what the other was doing, his all-guns-blazing attack was noticed and responded to.

“One of the new games you can play in F1 is energy management,” said Lowe. “It was the same with KERS, you can save up energy and deploy it in double boosts. With this power unit, that effect is even more extreme, so

Gutierrez’s flip brought out the all-important late-race safety car



there are opportunities to manage your energy flow and save it up.

“What we saw in the last 10 laps was the drivers competing and each side of the garage competing in terms of playing with the energy deployment, so it was the cat-and-mouse game – one staying ahead of the other with the use of the energy around the lap.

“With Nico, they were running a little bit of a plan to save up a lot of energy for a big attack on one lap, but the other side spotted that and started saving energy as well.”

If that sounds a bit dry, it was nothing of the sort. Rosberg’s big assault came on lap 52, diving up the

inside of Turn 1. Hamilton again cut back inside, but their battle continued all the way to Turn 4.

Again, Hamilton squeezed Rosberg off the track – hard but fair – with the German keeping his foot in but unable to make his move stick. He had another go with a late lunge a lap later, but Hamilton effortlessly cut back again to retake the lead. By then, any energy advantage Rosberg had built was gone.

It was a superb performance by Hamilton. In that final stint, he was on the slower tyre, he had been robbed of the cushion he had built in the middle of the race and, on top of all that, he was fractionally slower on raw pace than



Hulkenberg complained about team-mate Perez's 'robust' driving tactics



Ferrari's ninth and 10th places was a low ebb for the team

Rosberg. What he did have was track position and he defended beautifully.

"I had a good enough lead, around nine seconds, which I think I'd have held without the safety car," said Hamilton. "But when the safety car came out I thought, 'Shoot, he's on options, I'm on primes, that's it, it's going to take a miracle to hold him back.' And he had so much grip behind me.

"So it felt like one of the best-calculated races I've ever had — how I was using my power and how I was positioning my car. He'd catch me down the back straight, still be with me at the last corner and have 10-12km/h on me with the DRS. So

I had to accept he was going to come past. I couldn't come to the inside and then block, I had to get him back. I don't know how I did it all the time."

The interesting question is what might have happened had Rosberg held the lead at the start or made one of his two moves at the end of the first stint stick. Were the roles reversed, would Hamilton have lived up to his reputation as a great overtaker and made the difference, or would track position have prevailed?

Impossible to say, but while Rosberg was happy to attack, there were a couple of times where he might just have been tempted to keep his foot in had he been battling with any

driver other than his team-mate. While he didn't exactly give a quarter, perhaps he did give an eighth.

And had their positions been reversed and there been no safety car, would Hamilton have had the pace to lap just 0.217s per lap slower than Rosberg during the middle stint? Perhaps not — in which case we would be hailing an impressive Rosberg win. On such details championships can turn.

While it only takes two cars to make a race, and Hamilton versus Rosberg was a classic, the supporting cast played its part to perfection. Warring team-mates was a recurring theme. Sergio Perez drove superbly all weekend, and while Force India team-mate Nico Hulkenberg complained that "he pushed me right off" after the Mexican pulled off an opportunistic pass at Turn 4 on lap 28, the Mexican was the stronger of the team's drivers.

The Silverstone squad, which now sits second in the constructors' championship, would probably have finished third and fourth but for the safety car, which allowed the Red Bulls to close up on them.

But it wasn't Sebastian Vettel who led the Red Bull charge, it was Daniel Ricciardo. After showing his willingness to take on the four-times world champion on the opening lap for the second successive race, the

Australian was smoother and, in the final stint, quicker than Vettel.

He passed him at Turn 1 on lap 50, three tours later getting past Hulkenberg to take fourth. Had the race gone on a lap longer, he might even have passed the other Force India and made the podium.

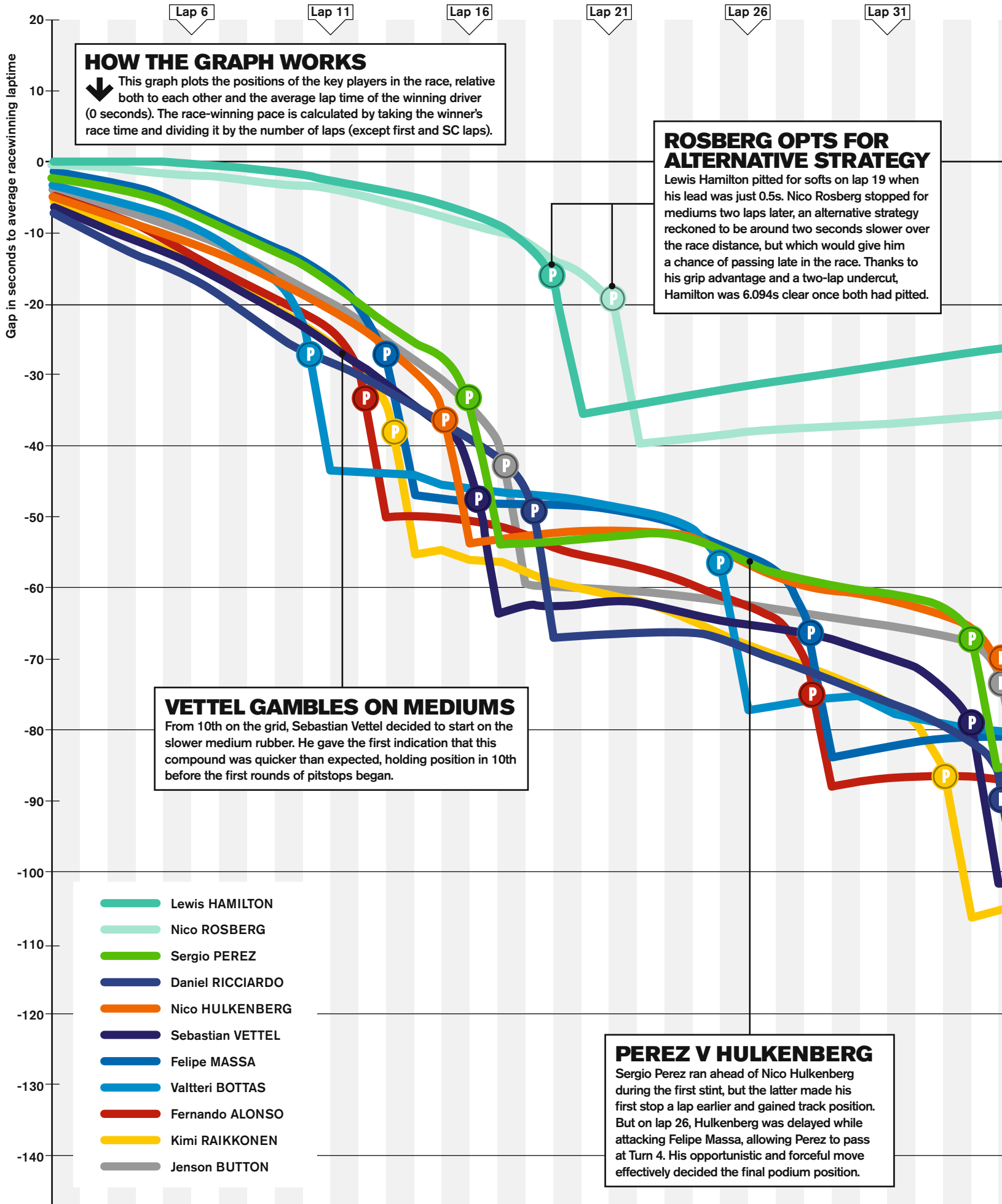
Felipe Massa again prevailed in an intra-Williams scrap, with Valtteri Bottas just behind. Their battle ran on and off through the race, but never spilled over.

Behind them, perhaps, was the scenario di Montezemolo was talking about. If there were any taxi cabs in the Bahrain GP, it was the Ferraris of Fernando Alonso and Kimi Raikkonen, two world champions who came home ninth and 10th on merit.

Certainly, given the F14 T's lack of power, a pedestrian might have fancied their chances of flagging one down from the trackside. The Ferrari was brisk enough to sit in among the cars ahead at some points in the race, but simply did not have the pace to do much more.

Alonso raised his arm from the cockpit, shaking his fist in mock celebration as he crossed the line. Now in his fifth year with Ferrari and with a third world championship as far away as ever, he was perhaps one of the few that could take no enjoyment from a stunning grand prix. 🏆

HOW THE RACE WAS WON



Lap 36 Lap 41 Lap 46 Lap 51 Lap 56

Safety car on track

RICCIARDO'S LATE CHARGE

Without the safety car, neither Red Bull would have been within range of the Force Indias of Nico Hulkenberg and Sergio Perez late on. Daniel Ricciardo took the restart seventh, passing Sebastian Vettel on lap 47, then Hulkenberg on lap 53 to secure fourth. At the flag, he was only 0.422s behind third man Perez.

HAMILTON'S LEAD PEAKS

During the middle stint, Lewis Hamilton's tyre advantage equated to an average of 0.217s per lap over Nico Rosberg. When the safety car was deployed, forcing both into the pits, his lead had extended to 9.526s.

FERRARI UNABLE TO CAPITALISE

Fernando Alonso and Kimi Raikkonen started the final stint ninth and 11th, but other than the Finn passing an ailing Jenson Button, they were unable to make any progress on what was a poor weekend.

BUTTON LOSES FIFTH

Jenson Button's McLaren restarted fifth. But serious clutch problems had manifested themselves under the safety car and he faded before eventually retiring.

SAFETY CAR DEPLOYED

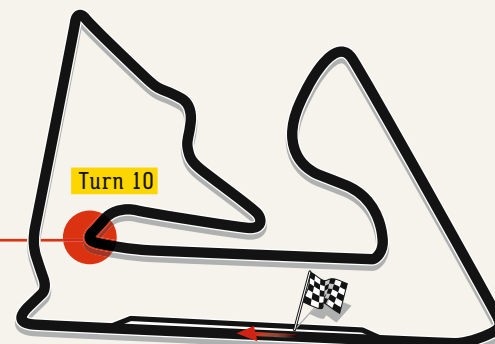
The safety was sent out when Esteban Gutierrez's Sauber rolled after being hit by Pastor Maldonado. Hamilton, Rosberg, Alonso and Raikkonen all pitted. Bottas and Massa, third and fourth before the safety car and the leading three-stoppers, both pitted before the safety car, switching to mediums, ending up seventh and eighth at the restart once Button had retired with a clutch problem. While the safety car did potentially hurt Williams, Massa and Bottas struggled to attack the Red Bulls at the restart, and it's a moot point as to whether the pair would have been able to challenge the Red Bulls without the safety car.

TRACKSIDE VIEW

EDD STRAW F1 EDITOR

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Bahrain is the first track that Formula 1's new generation of 1.6-litre turbocharged V6 machinery has visited for a second time. While Nico Rosberg's pole position lap was only 0.073s faster than Felipe Massa's fastest from eight days of pre-season testing, a visit to Turn 10 during FP3 revealed just how far these cars have come.

Turn 10 is the key corner in the middle sector of the lap. The long back straight that follows it means that poor exit speed is punished in spades, while the need to brake from pushing 160mph to just under 50mph with left lock applied for the second-gear corner makes it very easy to lock the inside-front wheel and compromise your entry. It's a corner where bad cars look really bad and good cars look really good, but what stood out is just how far they have all come in such a short period of time.

During testing, cars constantly locked up on the entry. But while lock-ups were not exactly rare this time around, the poise of all the cars was so much better (well, except the Lotus, always in a state of oversteer or understeer with the wheels rarely pointing in the desired direction of travel). For most, the wheelspin that was common at the exit six weeks ago had been tamed.

'What stood out was just how far the cars have come in such a short period of time'

The Mercedes looked beautifully under control on entry with Lewis Hamilton seemingly able to carry more speed through the corner without paying a price at the exit. But when it mattered in Q3, Rosberg attacked the corner magnificently and turned the tables.

The contrast between Sergio Perez and Nico Hulkenberg at Force India was stark. Perez was ultra-smooth, eternally patient when feeding in the throttle, while Hulkenberg hustled the car. It was more spectacular, but slower.



The Mercs looked the pick of the pack through Turn 10

STORIES OF THE RACE

Rounding up the action from the Bahrain GP

EDD STRAW
F1 EDITOR



Merc takes one-two, with closest rivals nowhere to be seen

22

Mercedes reveals true pace in Bahrain

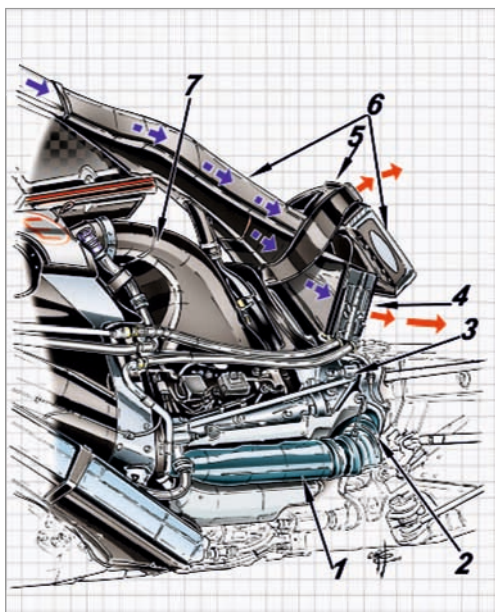
MERCEDES DRIVERS LEWIS HAMILTON AND Nico Rosberg showed the true extent of the team's dominance in the final 11 laps of the Bahrain GP.

After the safety-car period, racewinner Hamilton pulled out 24.067s over third-placed Sergio Perez, an average rate of 2.188s per lap. Even taking into account Perez's poor restart and disregarding the first lap of the 11-lap dash, Hamilton pulled an average of 1.966s per lap over Perez.

Key to the advantage is the strength of the Mercedes engine. During the Bahrain GP weekend, there was much talk about the advantage of its turbo design, which AUTOSPORT first analysed during the Australian Grand Prix weekend.

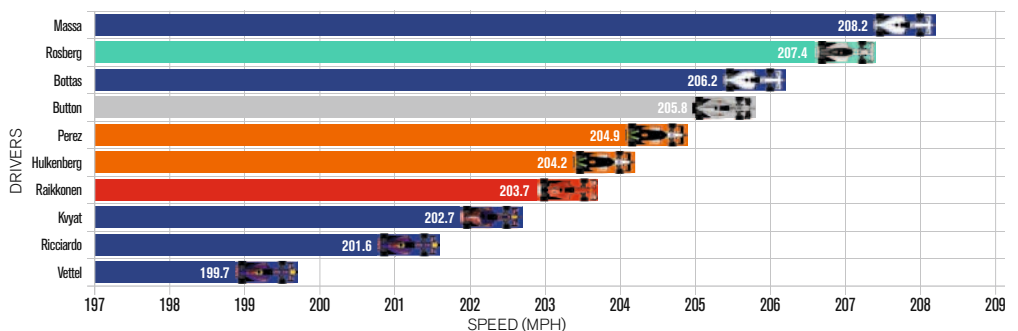
GARY ANDERSON: "Mercedes has packaged its turbo installation differently from the others. It has the hot side of the turbo at the back of the engine and the cold side at the front. These are joined by a shaft running from front to rear with the MGU-H mounted in the middle. This has several potential advantages.

- 1 The heat transfer from the hot side of the turbo to the cold side is dramatically reduced, meaning that the intercooler has less work to do.
- 2 The pipework from the exhaust to the turbo (1 and 2) has more flexibility in its positioning, as does the pipework (7) coming from the intercooler to the airbox. Potentially, a clutch could be fitted to separate the hot side of the turbo from the cold side when the exhaust gasses are being used to generate electrical power and/or when the MGU-H is spooling up the turbo to reduce turbo lag. Either of these would help with the efficiency of the MGU-H. Chassis and engine stiffness are very important – as the engines are quite small nowadays this can be difficult.
- 3 This shows a machined rib going from the engine to chassis mounts and to gearbox mounts.
- 4/5/6 Air ducts and coolers take up the rest of the space, each one of them individual so they can all be tuned to the correct cooling levels. The blue arrows show cold air coming in – through the cooler – while the red arrows indicate the hot air exiting.



RACE SPEED TRAP FIGURES

The six fastest cars through the main speed trap on the approach to Turn 1 during the Bahrain GP were all powered by Mercedes





Alonso appeared frustrated at the end of the race

MASON/GETTY

Ferrari hobbled by major speed deficit

THE WEAKNESS OF FERRARI'S ENGINE WAS exposed by Fernando Alonso and Kimi Raikkonen finishing ninth and 10th.

The pair started ninth and fifth respectively, but lacked the speed on the straights. Alonso appeared to raise his arm in mock triumph as he crossed the line, underlining his displeasure with an engine that is understood to be overweight, too thirsty and down on power.

"We were missing a little bit of performance," said Alonso. "We were especially missing the top speed a little bit. We didn't have too many battles and in the battles we had they weren't real

because in one straight they [rivals] overtook us.

"We are ninth and 10th and we didn't have a crash or have to have an extra pitstop because of a puncture or whatever. This is what we could do today. I have won this grand prix three times, it's not that I am bad at driving here, so we are ninth and 10th because there were eight better than us today. We need to change this as soon as possible."

Alonso has scored only 26 points compared with championship leader Nico Rosberg's 61, while Ferrari lies fifth in the constructors' standings, with 33 points to Mercedes' 111.



Raikkonen and Magnussen came together again

Magnussen clashes with Kimi again

ROOKIE KEVIN MAGNUSSEN CLASHED WITH

Kimi Raikkonen for the second grand prix in succession, with the McLaren driver making contact with the Finn's Ferrari at Turn 6 on the opening lap

Neither driver suffered any significant damage in the clash, but Raikkonen blamed the Dane for the collision, saying, "he went inside the kerb and just drove into me."

Magnussen had made an excellent start, making up positions on the inside of the first corner. But the clash with Raikkonen cost him momentum, leading to him dropping to 11th at the end of the lap.

"In Turn 6, they got bunched up and I didn't expect them to brake that early," said Magnussen. "So I went up the inside and touched him a bit but nothing happened [as a result]."

Mercedes denies team-orders call

MERCEDES MOTORSPORT BOSS TOTO WOLFF torpedoed suggestions that identical messages issued to Lewis Hamilton and Nico Rosberg under the safety car were instructions to hold station.

Wolff, whose claim is supported by the fact Rosberg twice attempted to take the lead after the restart, insisted that the instruction issued by executive director (technical) Paddy Lowe saying, "there are 10 laps left, can we make sure we bring both cars home" was simply a reminder not to take each other out.

"What we said was exactly the same sentence to both of them, reminding them in a moment before the heat would start to say don't forget what we discussed [not to risk colliding]," said Wolff. "This was not a strategic call, it was a gentle reminder."

Wolff also stressed that the split strategy was adopted to give the driver behind a chance to overtake rather than to keep the pair apart.

Imagine if we had imposed team orders from lap two or something - what a terrible thing that would be for F1 and for the philosophy of Mercedes in motorsport

ROBERTSON/GETTY



Paddy Lowe
Mercedes executive director (technical)

Podium boosts Force India's Perez

SERGIO PEREZ CLAIMED HIS FIRST PODIUM finish since the Italian GP in September 2012 after a strong weekend during which he outperformed team-mate Nico Hulkenberg.

The Mexican was the fastest non-Mercedes driver on long-run pace during practice and started sixth, making a forceful move on his team-mate mid-race to secure what would become third place. After his podium-less season with McLaren in 2013, Perez described it as an emotional race.

"It is no secret that I had a really tough time at McLaren," said Perez. "I was a young driver at a top team, very hungry for success and thinking that it was the biggest chance ever of fighting for the title. I never had an opportunity to fight for a podium and then became even more disappointed when McLaren decided they didn't want to keep me, so it was a big impact. It was a very emotional podium for me."

Q&A

VIJAY MALLYA

FORCE INDIA
TEAM PRINCIPAL



This is Force India's first podium since Belgium 2009, but is this validation of how far the team has come since you took it over?

Yes. When I first bought this team, we were running around at the back deciding which driver would be last. Since taking over and making a lot of changes, we haven't significantly increased the investment or resources we have at our disposal, we have just focused them and built a culture within this team, which means that we punch well above our weight. We can't match the facilities the big teams have, but we are beating them on the race track.

Can you follow the big teams in terms of development?

We are not sitting idle, we are developing as well and we hope to remain competitive. This isn't just a one-off early-season phenomenon.

Your drivers were fighting hard on track. Was there any intervention to make sure they didn't collide?

Absolutely not. I will not stand for it. There is nothing known as team orders here. Both are competitive, both want to win, both want to score points. As long as they don't do anything stupid, it's fine by me.

How satisfied are you with Sergio Perez so far this season?

In the first two races, he had bad luck. When he got a solid chance today, he proved what he is made of. He was picked up by McLaren and McLaren would not choose a driver unless they saw something special and I said here's a guy with lots of talent and we should have him.

STORIES OF THE RACE

Gutierrez rolled the Sauber...



CHARVIAUX/XFB

Button's 250th GP ended in frustration



Clutch failure ends Button's 250th race

JENSON BUTTON RETIRED FROM HIS 250TH world championship grand prix start with a clutch problem that started to manifest itself while running fifth behind the safety car.

The 2009 world champion dropped down the order at the restart thanks to the problem, which also put team-mate Kevin Magnussen out, and pulled into the pits with two laps to go, meaning he was classified 17th. Button believes that he could have challenged for a podium had his car not hit trouble and claimed that the McLaren was potentially second only to Mercedes in terms of race pace.

"It was going to be an interesting end to the race because the Force Indias were quick at the start of the stint, but not so quick at the end of the stint," said Button. "We felt our long-run pace was very good, especially the last few laps, so I think we could have raced them very hard."

Williams: seventh and eighth 'optimum'

WILLIAMS FINISHED A DISAPPOINTING seventh and eighth in Bahrain, but new head of vehicle performance Rob Smedley believes this was the best result the team could have achieved.

Bottas and Massa ran third and fourth shortly before the safety car was deployed. Massa stopped three laps before it went out, while Bottas pitted moments before, dropping them to seventh and eighth once the race restarted and Jenson Button had faded. Had the safety car not been sent out, it's possible that the pair could have been in contention to pass Red Bull pairing Daniel Ricciardo and Sebastian Vettel in the closing stages of the race, but in the

circumstances Smedley was satisfied.

"We scored the optimum result for where we are and the events that happened," said Smedley. "We can't mitigate for safety cars, but from the calls that we made, the strategy that we carried out, we are reasonably happy."

Rear-tyre degradation was a weakness for Williams, which could not match the two-stop strategies of the six cars ahead. But Smedley is wary of blaming that only on a lack of downforce.

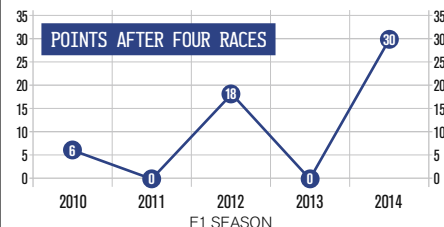
"It's very important we don't start to look solely in one area," he said. "You have to attack every area. It's an aerodynamic formula, but there are hundreds of other areas that we need to attack."

Bottas leads Massa early on



STRONG START TO 2014

Despite disappointing race results, Williams is enjoying its best start to the season since the 25-points-for-a-win formula was introduced.



Maldonado blamed for Gutierrez roll

PASTOR MALDONADO WAS HIT WITH A FIVE-place grid penalty, a stop/go penalty and three superlicence endorsement points for tipping Esteban Gutierrez's Sauber into a roll on lap 40.

The Lotus driver had just made his second pitstop and went up the inside of Gutierrez at Turn 1. He hit the right-rear corner of Gutierrez's Sauber, which rolled. Gutierrez was uninjured in the incident.

"Esteban seemed to be off his line coming into Turn 1," said Maldonado, "and he missed his braking point, and by then I was in the corner with nowhere to go."

Jules Bianchi was hit with a drive-through and two superlicence penalty points, taking his tally for the year to four, for hitting Adrian Sutil on lap 13 while attempting to pass the Sauber.

Sutil also earned two penalty points of his own after being found guilty of impeding Romain Grosjean during Q1, which also led to him being given a five-place grid penalty.



Ricciardo has the measure of Vettel

DANIEL RICCIARDO CONTINUED THE IMPRESSIVE start to his Red Bull career, passing team-mate Sebastian Vettel with eight laps to go on his way to finishing fourth.

The Australian qualified third but started 13th thanks to a 10-place grid penalty for an unsafe release in Malaysia. He finished within half a second of third-placed Sergio Perez and after battling with Vettel on the opening lap, said he and his team-mate were happy to fight each other.

"It was really good fun, we raced hard but fair and always left each other room," said Ricciardo. "That's what we want from each other. We have discussed it, we are racers and that's what we enjoy doing. It was a clean, fair fight."

Vettel admitted he couldn't get as much out of the car.

"Daniel proved that there was a little bit more to get, but I couldn't really get to that bit," he said. "For some reason, we seem to be very slow down the straights."

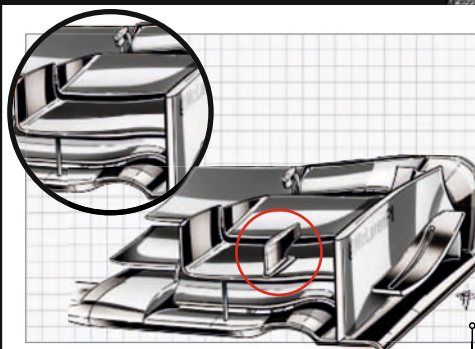
I personally love it and I'm sure all the other drivers agree if they can have a race like that and are in battles the whole time it's the best feeling



Daniel Ricciardo
Red Bull driver

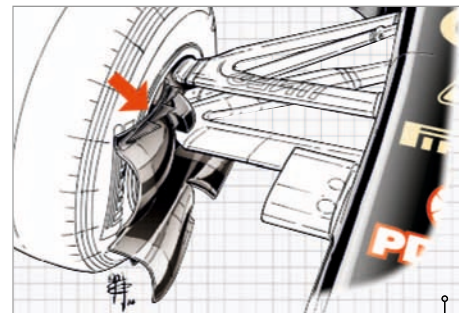
DRAWING BOARD

Gary Anderson, technical consultant



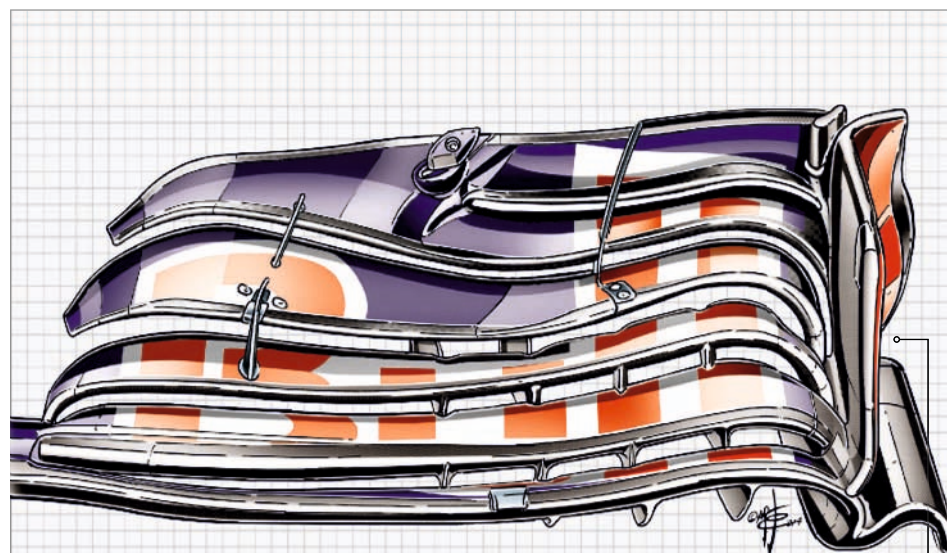
McLaren adds front-wing vane

➔ One of the less-talked-about rule changes this year is the front wing being 150mm narrower than it was in 2014. This means that teams have to turn the airflow more aggressively to ensure it gets around the outside of the front tyres. The majority of McLaren's assembly was the same in Bahrain as it was in Malaysia except for this small vane. It is shaped the way it is because you don't want to interfere with the airflow on the surface of the wing, instead you want to redirect the mass flow outboard and let that influence the flow on the surface to avoid suffering separation. We have seen a trend this year for teams to introduce more vertical details in their front wings as they understand more about the demands of the narrower wings having previously focused on more horizontal designs.



Lotus makes extra use of brake ducts

➔ Modern brake ducts are largely about helping aerodynamics rather than cooling brakes. This is very much against the spirit of the regulations. In the case of the Lotus front-brake ducts, first seen in Malaysia, only one small part of them is anything to do with the brakes themselves. The red indicates three small vortex generators on the top of the duct itself. Each one of these sets up a vortex that increases in size as they all get together. This vortex works a bit like an invisible vacuum cleaner to suck air from the front of the tyre and disperse it into the low-pressure area behind. This helps channel better-quality airflow between the chassis and the inside of the front tyre to the leading edge of the sidepods. Airflow management around the tyres is hugely important given the blockage they create.



Red Bull removes front-wing cascade

➔ As Red Bull's Renault engine is down on power, the team has had to reduce rear downforce for straightline speed. That necessitates trimming the front wing for balance. In Bahrain, the team removed the forward cascade, which would normally sit in front of the main elements of the wing. The

airflow coming off the back of the front wing assembly is what the car is designed to work with, but while some teams would simply reduce the front-wing angle, this will compromise that airflow. So Red Bull simply removed the whole cascade, ensuring the whole car continues to work well.

ILLUSTRATIONS: GIORGIO PICOLA

TEAM BY TEAM

RED BULL



RED BULL-RENAULT RB10

1
7/10

SEBASTIAN VETTEL
Start: 10th Finish: 6th
Strategy: 2 stops
(medium/soft/soft)

3
9/10

DANIEL RICCIARDO
Start: 13th Finish: 4th
Strategy: 2 stops
(soft/medium/soft)

Red Bull knew it couldn't count on a wet qualifying session to get a car onto the front row in Bahrain, but thanks to Ricciardo's superb effort there would have been one in third spot on the grid but for his 10-place penalty for an unsafe release in Malaysia. The RB10 ran trimmed back on downforce to counteract its relatively weak straightline speed, with both Red Bulls at best in the lower mid-pack through the speed traps over the weekend. Ricciardo was the more impressive Red Bull driver throughout the event, although it was a close-run thing in the race as both climbed from poor grid positions – Vettel's thanks to a downshift problem in Q2 – to finish fourth and sixth.

MERCEDES



MERCEDES F1 W05

6
8/10

NICO ROSBERG
Start: 1st Finish: 2nd
Strategy: 2 stops
(soft/medium/soft)

44
9/10

LEWIS HAMILTON
Start: 2nd Finish: 1st
Strategy: 2 stops
(soft/soft/medium)

Simply imperious, but for the first time this season we did see a Mercedes really stretching its legs at the front of the field, thanks to Hamilton and Rosberg's spectacular duel. The battle between the pair during the weekend was an engrossing one, with Rosberg seemingly hitting on a better set-up for the cooler night conditions, even though Hamilton looked to have a clear pace advantage when it was warmer. To Mercedes' credit, the pair were allowed to race as promised, and they did so fiercely, with Hamilton holding at bay the slightly faster Rosberg. It was a fascinating encounter and a second consecutive one-two finish for the team, just seven days after ending a 59-year wait for one in Malaysia.

FERRARI



FERRARI F14 T

7
7/10

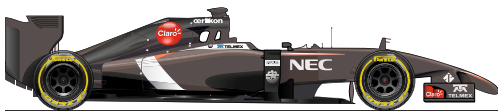
KIMI RAIKKONEN
Start: 5th Finish: 10th
Strategy: 3 stops
(soft/soft/medium/medium)

14
8/10

FERNANDO ALONSO
Start: 9th Finish: 9th
Strategy: 3 stops
(soft/soft/medium/medium)

Finishing ninth and 10th on merit, with two world champions in the driving seats, has to rank among one of the Scuderia's lowest ebbs in competitiveness during more than 60 years in F1. Alonso's wave of the fist in mock triumph as he crossed the line ninth after a smooth but far from quick race sums up exactly where Ferrari is. Alonso claimed not to have enough straightline speed – something that was attested to by the presence of five Ferrari-engined cars in the bottom eight of the speed trap figures in qualifying, with only the trimmed-out Sutil near the front. Aerodynamically, the car is performing solidly, but tyre degradation wasn't great. All in all, a weekend where Ferrari was deep in the midfield.

SAUBER



SAUBER-FERRARI C33

21
6/10

ESTEBAN GUTIERREZ
Start: 15th Finish: DNF
Strategy: retired
(soft/soft/soft)

99
5/10

ADRIAN SUTIL
Start: 22nd Finish: DNF
Strategy: retired
(medium/soft/soft)

Realistically, Sauber is in a holding pattern until its lightweight chassis hits the track at the Spanish GP next month. But, even so, it was a trying weekend. The team is still struggling to optimise the Ferrari drivetrain package, particularly the super-smooth downshifts that the works team can pull off, and at times the lack of traction at corner exits was a big problem. Sutil failed to make Q2 after inadvertently impeding Grosjean, earning him a place at the back of the grid. He retired after being hit by Bianchi. Gutierrez was having an anonymous race when Maldonado hit him at Turn 1 and flipped the Sauber into retirement. Some big steps are needed soon for this car to be a points contender.

TORO ROSSO



TORO ROSSO-RENAULT STR9

25
5/10

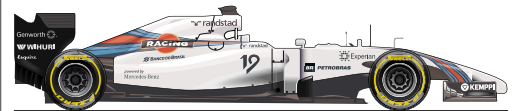
JEAN-ERIC VERGNE
Start: 14th Finish: DNF
Strategy: retired
(soft/medium/soft)

26
8/10

DANIIL KVIAT
Start: 12th Finish: 11th
Strategy: 3 stops
(soft/soft/medium/soft)

During Friday practice, things looked very promising for the ex-Minardi team. The car was slightly stronger on long-run pace than McLaren's, and looked like a Q3 threat. But things didn't quite work out that way in qualifying, with neither Kvyat nor Vergne mustering the pace to challenge. Vergne's race was ruined after a clash with a Lotus early on, leading to his retirement after plodding around at the back for a while. Kvyat, though, was the stronger driver all weekend, and while he sat on the periphery of the points, he was relying on cars ahead retiring to score for the third consecutive race. With a Mercedes engine in it, the STR would be a dead-cert points car.

WILLIAMS



WILLIAMS-MERCEDES FW36

19
7/10

FELIPE MASSA
Start: 7th Finish: 7th
Strategy: 3 stops
(soft/soft/soft/medium)

77
6/10

VALTTERI BOTTAS
Start: 3rd Finish: 8th
Strategy: 3 stops
(soft/soft/soft/medium)

The team's impressive pace during pre-season testing in Bahrain meant that expectations were high, so it was a little disappointing for Massa and Bottas to end up seventh and eighth in the race. The Williams was quick enough for Bottas to put it on the second row, and with Massa jumping to third on the opening lap things looked promising. But rear tyre degradation was a problem, and the team couldn't match the two-stoppers of those ahead of it. Given that Williams spent much of practice in the garage, confident of the data it had gathered in testing, you have to wonder if the degradation problem might have been improved with a bit more information to refine the set-up.

For the reasons behind the driver weekend ratings, visit AUTOSPORT.COM

LOTUS



LOTUS-RENAULT E22

8
7/10



ROMAIN GROSJEAN

Start: 16th **Finish:** 12th
Strategy: 3 stops
(soft/soft/medium/soft)

13
4/10

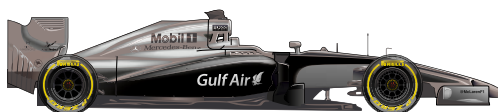


PASTOR MALDONADO

Start: 17th **Finish:** 14th
Strategy: 3 stops
(soft/soft/medium/soft)

The Lotus looked horrible to drive for much of the weekend. Sometimes it understeered, sometimes it oversteered, but it rarely pointed exactly where the drivers wanted it to. In qualifying, both Maldonado and Grosjean were marginal Q2 contenders, with the latter bumping the former at the end of the first segment of qualifying. While Grosjean probably should have outpaced Gutierrez, the eighth row was fair for the E22. The car was at least better in race trim, but Grosjean's position just behind Kvyat at the flag proved the Lotus is still some way off being a points contender on merit, even if Maldonado did demonstrate a knack for drop-kicking opposing drivers off the track.

McLAREN



McLAREN-MERCEDES MP4-29

20
6/10



KEVIN MAGNUSSEN

Start: 8th **Finish:** DNF
Strategy: retired
(soft/soft/soft/medium)

22
8/10



JENSON BUTTON

Start: 6th **Finish:** 17th (DNF)
Strategy: 2 stops
(soft/soft/medium)

A slow-burner of a weekend for McLaren. It looked very midfield on Friday, but did slightly better on Saturday and then emerged as a podium threat in the race thanks to Button's finely judged drive. Unfortunately, both Button and Magnussen fell victim to clutch problems in the race, the former losing what would have been at least a fifth-placed finish. That is a big step forward from Malaysia and supports the team's argument that the high track temperatures there held it back. The big concern is reliability, with the clutch issues coming on top of several costly sensor malfunctions in Malaysia that cost track time. Magnussen had a difficult weekend and was outpaced by Button, but not by too much.

FORCE INDIA



FORCE INDIA-MERCEDES VJM07

11
9/10



SERGIO PEREZ

Start: 4th **Finish:** 3rd
Strategy: 2 stops
(soft/soft/medium)

27
7/10



NICO HULKENBERG

Start: 11th **Finish:** 5th
Strategy: 2 stops
(soft/soft/medium)

Force India looked strong straight out of the box in Bahrain, with Perez the closest challenger to Mercedes on long-run pace on Friday afternoon. This proved to be an accurate indication, although single-lap speed was also better than qualifying suggested, with Nico Hulkenberg, the more ragged of the two during the weekend, falling in Q2, while Perez put in a scruffy lap to end up fifth fastest. In the race, however, both were superb, with the Mexican pulling a forceful pass on his team-mate mid-race to underline his status as Force India's stronger performer in Bahrain. The car was quick and consistent, and the team clearly has a good handle on the set-up demands of the VJM07.

MARUSSIA



MARUSSIA-FERRARI MR03

4
6/10



MAX CHILTON

Start: 21st **Finish:** 13th
Strategy: 3 stops
(soft/soft/medium/soft)

17
5/10

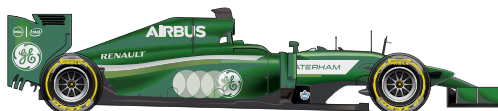


JULES BIANCHI

Start: 19th **Finish:** 16th
Strategy: 4 stops (soft/soft/medium/soft/medium)

Qualifying pace was disappointing, although Bianchi suspected that had the available electrical power been used in a different way in Q1, he would have been able to beat Kobayashi's Caterham. In the race, however, the car was stronger. Bianchi dropped back following a penalty issued for hitting Sutil, which he and the team were unimpressed with, but it appeared to be the consequence of an overly-aggressive lunge on the Sauber. Chilton, meanwhile, did manage to beat both Caterhams after a solid race drive. The fact that Bianchi was in a position to have a collision with a Sauber while racing with Sutil is a sign that the gap to the back of the midfield has now gone for good.

CATERHAM



CATERHAM-RENAULT CT05

9
6/10



MARCUS ERICSSON

Start: 20th **Finish:** DNF
Strategy: retired
(soft/soft/soft)

10
7/10



KAMUI KOBAYASHI

Start: 18th **Finish:** 15th
Strategy: 2 stops
(soft/soft/medium)

Kobayashi described his run to the finish in the Malaysian GP as the starting point for Caterham's season, and to the team's credit things largely ran smoothly. Kobayashi qualified well, only four-tenths off Q2, and quite reasonably suggested that this is about where the car is on pace. In the race, he lost out to Chilton, while Ericsson retired with an oil leak related to the MGU-H. But Bahrain at least validated the step Caterham seemed to have made in Malaysia, and showed that the performance gain required to fight for a Q2 slot is not as huge as it seemed to be during testing. And Kobayashi is determined to push the team to make that stride.



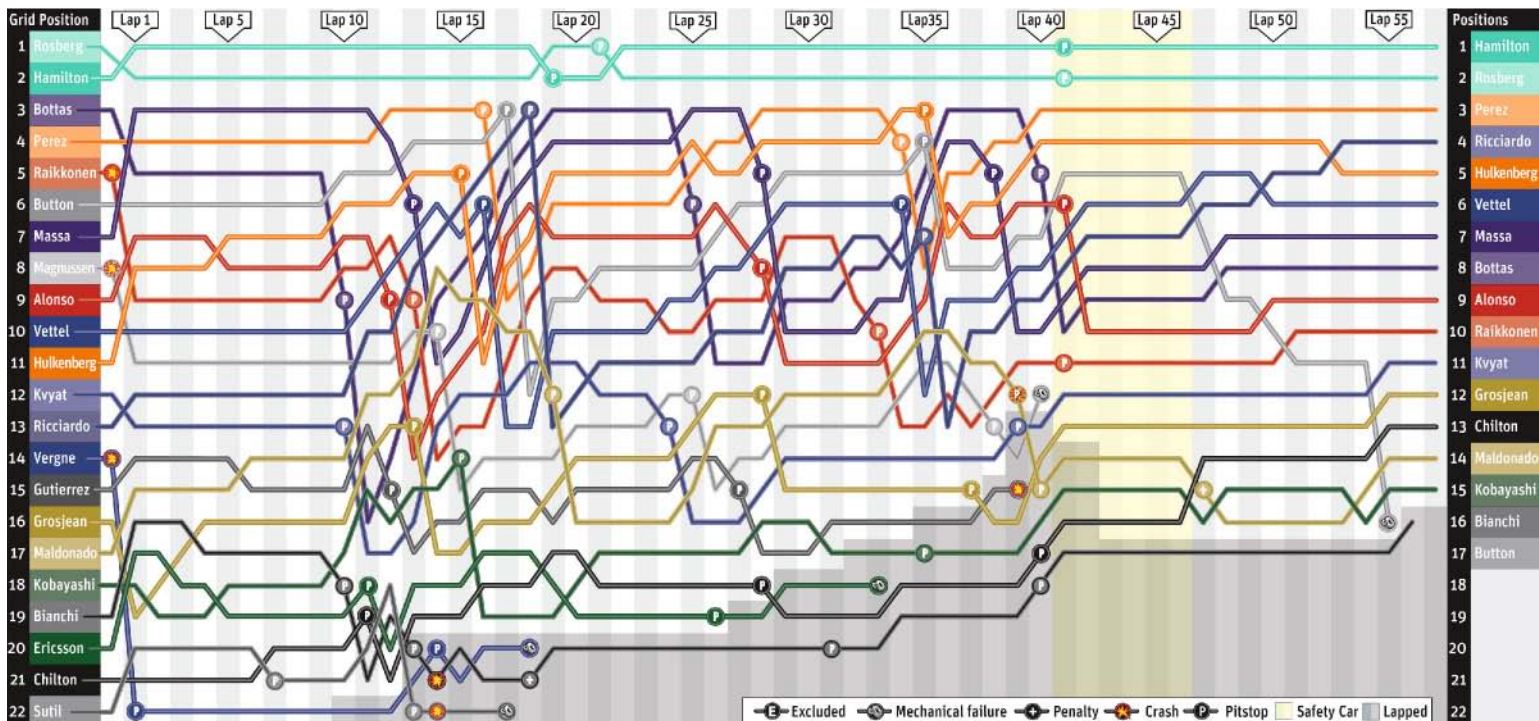
STANDOUT PERFORMANCE

Sergio Perez

After a dire start to the year, Sergio Perez outclassed team-mate Nico Hulkenberg throughout the weekend. While qualifying wasn't perfect, his race pace was superb. He was also combative, without overstepping the mark in the battle, and showed that he isn't afraid to upset the highly rated Hulkenberg. Perez's smooth style and patience when feeding the power in really shone through in Bahrain, earning him a first podium since 2012 and the first step on the path to post-McLaren rehabilitation

"It means a lot. It's a very special podium. This is only my third race for the team and it was a really, really good one"

RESULTS



PRACTICE 1: Friday

POS	DRIVER	TIME
1	HAMILTON	1m37.502s
2	ROSBERG	1m37.733s
3	ALONSO	1m37.953s
4	HULKENBERG	1m38.122s
5	BUTTON	1m38.636s
6	RAIKKONEN	1m38.783s
7	MAGNUSSEN	1m38.949s
8	KVYAT	1m39.056s
9	PEREZ	1m39.102s
10	VETTEL	1m39.389s
11	MASSA	1m39.533s
12	VERGNE	1m39.862s
13	NASR	1m40.078s
14	RICCIARDO	1m40.406s
15	SUTIL	1m40.652s
16	MALDONADO	1m40.793s
17	BIANCHI	1m40.889s
18	VAN DE GARDE	1m40.913s
19	GROSJEAN	1m41.036s
20	CHILTON	1m41.794s
21	FRIJNS	1m42.417s
22	ERICSSON	1m42.711s

PRACTICE 2: Friday

POS	DRIVER	TIME
1	HAMILTON	1m34.325s
2	ROSBERG	1m34.690s
3	ALONSO	1m35.360s
4	RICCIARDO	1m35.433s
5	BUTTON	1m35.442s
6	BUTTON	1m35.528s
7	VETTEL	1m35.606s
8	KVYAT	1m35.640s
9	MAGNUSSEN	1m35.662s
10	PEREZ	1m35.802s
11	BOTTAS	1m35.920s
12	VERGNE	1m35.972s
13	HULKENBERG	1m35.998s
14	RAIKKONEN	1m36.366s
15	SUTIL	1m36.962s
16	GUTIERREZ	1m36.975s
17	MALDONADO	1m37.259s
18	GROSJEAN	1m37.599s
19	BIANCHI	1m37.800s
20	CHILTON	1m38.247s
21	KOBAYASHI	1m38.257s
22	ERICSSON	1m39.136s

PRACTICE 3: Saturday

POS	DRIVER	TIME
1	HAMILTON	1m35.324s
2	ROSBERG	1m35.439s
3	PEREZ	1m35.868s
4	BOTTAS	1m36.116s
5	MASSA	1m36.364s
6	BUTTON	1m36.394s
7	ALONSO	1m36.454s
8	HULKENBERG	1m36.455s
9	KVYAT	1m36.680s
10	RAIKKONEN	1m36.772s
11	MAGNUSSEN	1m36.822s
12	VERGNE	1m37.030s
13	HULKENBERG	1m37.119s
14	GUTIERREZ	1m37.325s
15	SUTIL	1m38.089s
16	KOBAYASHI	1m38.400s
17	BIANCHI	1m38.736s
18	MALDONADO	1m38.880s
19	ERICSSON	1m38.971s
20	GROSJEAN	1m39.208s
21	VETTEL	1m39.225s
22	CHILTON	1m39.597s

FRIDAY TESTERS

	1 NASR	1m40.078s
	1 VAN DER GARDE	1m40.913s
	1 FRIJNS	1m42.417s



Weather: 25C, sunny

Weather: 20C, dark

Weather: 28C, sunny

QUALIFYING TIMES

POS	DRIVER	QUALIFYING 1	QUALIFYING 2	QUALIFYING 3
1	ROSBERG	1m35.439s (10)	1m33.708s (1)	1m33.185s
2	HAMILTON	1m35.323s (8)	1m33.872s (2)	1m33.464s
3	RICCIARDO	1m36.220s (14)	1m34.592s (3)	1m34.051s
4	BOTTAS	1m34.934s (2)	1m34.842s (7)	1m34.247s
5	PEREZ	1m34.998s (3)	1m34.747s (6)	1m34.346s
6	RAIKKONEN	1m35.234s (5)	1m34.925s (10)	1m34.368s
7	BUTTON	1m35.699s (12)	1m35.699s (4)	1m34.387s
8	MASSA	1m35.085s (4)	1m34.842s (8)	1m34.511s
9	MAGNUSSEN	1m35.288s (7)	1m34.904s (9)	1m34.712s
10	ALONSO	1m35.251s (6)	1m34.723s (5)	1m34.992s
11	VETTEL	1m35.549s (11)	1m34.985s	-
12	HULKENBERG	1m34.874s (1)	1m35.116s	-
13	KVYAT	1m35.395s (9)	1m35.145s	-
14	VERGNE	1m35.815s (13)	1m35.286s	-
15	GUTIERREZ	1m36.567s (15)	1m35.891s	-
16	GROSJEAN	1m36.654s (16)	1m35.908s	-
17	MALDONADO	1m36.663s	-	-
18	SUTIL	1m36.840s	-	-
19	KOBAYASHI	1m37.085s	-	-
20	BIANCHI	1m37.310s	-	-
21	ERICSSON	1m37.875s	-	-
22	CHILTON	1m37.913s	-	-

Weather: 20C, dark

QUALIFYING STATISTICS

	HEAD	TO HEAD	
VETTEL	1	2	RICCIARDO
ROSBERG	1	2	HAMILTON
RAIKKONEN	1	2	ALONSO
GROSJEAN	3	0	MALDONADO
MAGNUSSEN	2	1	BUTTON
PEREZ	1	2	HULKENBERG
GUTIERREZ	2	1	SUTIL
VERGNE	2	1	KVYAT
MASSA	2	1	BOTTAS
CHILTON	1	2	BIANCHI
ERICSSON	0	3	KOBAYASHI



POLE POSITION TROPHY

HAMILTON	AUS	MAL	2
ROSBERG	BRV	1	



SUPERLICCENCE PENALTY POINTS

Drivers	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12
BIANCHI	X	X	X	X								
BOTTAS	X	X										
MAGNUSSEN	X	X										
MALDONADO	X	X	X									
SUTIL	X	X										

Anyone who gets to 12 points will be suspended for one race

Ecclestone has been vocal about the lack of engine noise



MASON/GETTY

30

How Formula 1's critics were silenced by Bahrain drama

One of F1's best races in years has defused growing criticism of the new regulations that was threatening to damage the sport's credibility. By **JONATHAN NOBLE & BEN ANDERSON**

A thrilling Bahrain Grand Prix, and concessions by manufacturers to increase engine noise, have silenced the strongest critics of Formula 1's 2014 regulations.

After a week of increasingly negative comment about the sport, with Bernie Ecclestone claiming just hours before the start of the event in Bahrain that the current rules were "unacceptable" to fans, F1 produced one of its greatest races for years.

However, it was not just on the track that there was evidence of the success of the new fuel-efficiency regulations. A series of meetings over the Bahrain GP weekend proved crucial in helping move the sport away from a downward spiral of negativity.

GROWING COMPLAINTS

The build-up to the Bahrain GP was dominated by the disapproval generated by the impact of the new hybrid turbocharged 1.6-litre V6s.

The opening two races had fuelled condemnation of the sound of the new engines – with Ecclestone and world champion Sebastian Vettel

both outspoken in their belief that F1 had taken a wrong turn.

An uninspiring Malaysian GP also prompted questions about the effect on the racing. Ferrari president Luca di Montezemolo claimed that the sport was now more about 'taxi-cab' economy runs than flat-out competition.

Di Montezemolo travelled to London in the week prior to Bahrain to express his feelings to Ecclestone, before demanding a meeting with FIA president Jean Todt at Sakhir.

"My position was clear a few months ago. To have drivers who save fuel and tyres – this is not Formula 1," he said shortly before his meeting with Todt.

Ecclestone also continued to increase the pressure, suggesting that Todt's vision for a more fuel-efficient F1 had taken the sport away from its core values.

The remarks of di Montezemolo and Ecclestone left other factions in the paddock frustrated and concerned that they were starting to damage the sport's credibility.

Mercedes' non-executive chairman Niki Lauda, who knows



BLOXHAM/LAT



Todt was at Sakhir to consult with team bosses

THOMPSON/GETTY



Lauda feared F1 could destroy itself

ETHERINGTON/LAT

Ecclestone well, said he did not understand how such criticism could be good for F1.

“What has been happening in F1 is like if [Rush director] Ron Howard had said that he wanted to make a movie, and then told everyone before it came out that it was the worst movie he had ever made,” Lauda told AUTOSPORT.

“Nobody would go to see it. So what we are doing now, because of different influences, is destroying our sport.”

NOISE WAS CATALYST FOR BACKLASH

Prior to the 2014 engines’ on-track debut there had been plenty of doubts over whether the new turbocharged powertrains would sound sufficiently dramatic.

The fact that they were quieter than last year’s V8s left fans divided, but the voices of the denigrators proved louder than those who argued that the engines had a distinctive quality of their own.

Lauda reckons the noise issue ultimately provided emotional ammunition for those who had wider objections to the new rules, which started giving credence to arguments about fuel-economy runs and boring races.

“It all started in Australia because the organisers complained about the noise level,” he said. “Then it got its own dynamics and di

“To have drivers who save fuel and tyres – this is not F1”

LUCA DI MONTEZEMOLO

Montezemolo came in and said there is not enough fuel.

“Out of this momentum everyone threw their own troubles in. I have never seen such a stupid approach to a problem – how can you do that?”

BREAKTHROUGH MEETING HELD IN BAHRAIN

The groundswell of criticism prompted Todt to call a meeting in Bahrain with several big players, including Lauda, Ecclestone and Red Bull boss Christian Horner, to discuss the situation.

Everyone conceded that the knocking of the sport had to stop, or it could ultimately damage its reputation.

Furthermore, Ecclestone was appeased when agreement was reached for a working group to be



Di Montezemolo is a stern critic of new F1

COATES/LAT

COMPLAINT #1: TAXI-CAB RACING?

Ferrari president Luca di Montezemolo heavily criticised the fuel efficiency focus at the heart of the current Formula 1 regulations, saying the new formula “means drivers are taxi drivers”.

But Lewis Hamilton, who has won two out of three races so far this year, says fuel saving has been part of F1 for as long as he can remember.

“It’s not a lot different really,” he said. “You’re lifting and coasting pretty much the same as in other years. There’s so much stress about it, but the percentage it’s increased is not as big as people talk about.”

“You’re doing exactly the same as I’ve had to do since I first got to F1. In 2007, I had to lift and coast; in 2008, I had to lift and coast – every year I’ve had to lift and coast in certain races.”

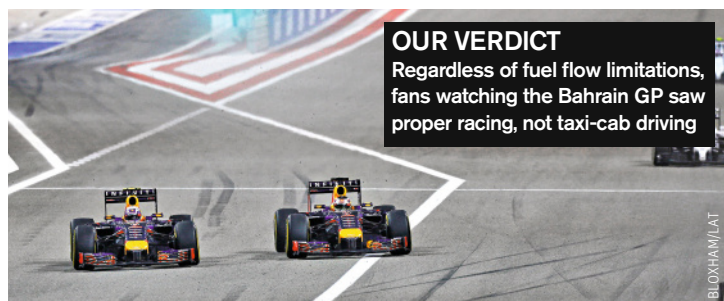
As Williams showed in Malaysia when it used less than the maximum

100kg of fuel permitted, some teams have already gained enough efficiency to race flat out over a grand prix distance. Only three circuits – Melbourne, Sakhir and Montreal – will place real pressure on fuel consumption, and two of those tracks are already out of the way.

“Ask [Lewis] Hamilton and [Nico] Rosberg if they are driving like taxi drivers... if you have an efficient car, you don’t have any problem,” said FIA president Jean Todt.

“I hear that some engines are over the minimum weight limit, which is 145kg. If you have an engine five, 10 or 15kg heavier, then of course it is not as powerful.

“It seems that Mercedes is stronger. I don’t have the power to say, ‘Let’s slow them down.’ If they are quicker than the others, I think that it is a challenge for the other teams to catch them.”



OUR VERDICT
Regardless of fuel flow limitations, fans watching the Bahrain GP saw proper racing, not taxi-cab driving

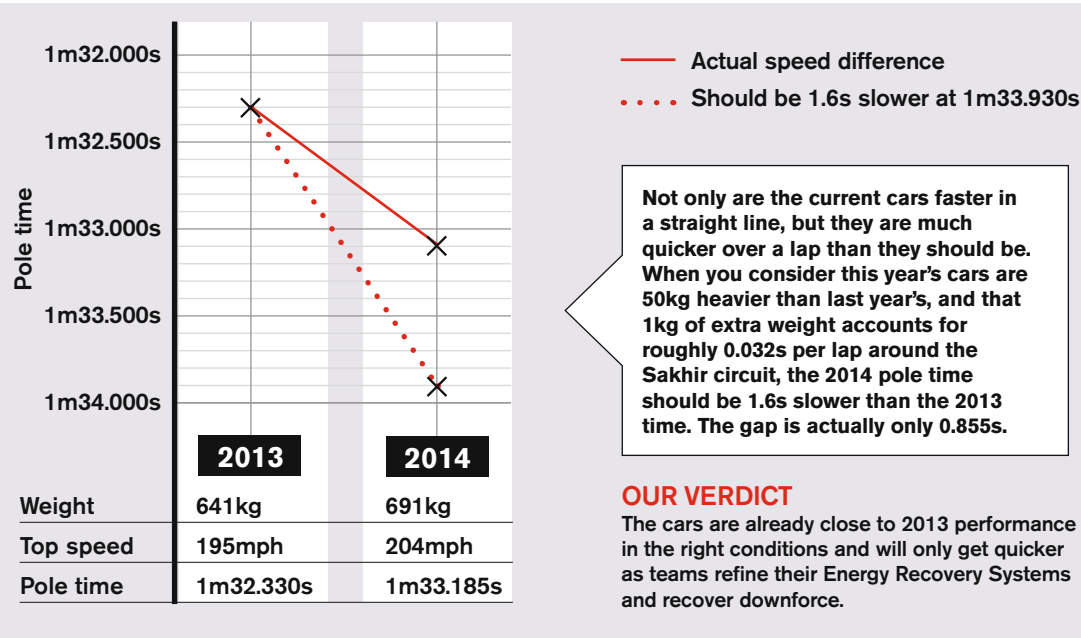
BLOXHAM/LAT

COMPLAINT #2: THE CARS ARE 'TOO SLOW'

Ferrari's Fernando Alonso criticised the latest breed of F1 cars for being too slow in the build-up to the Bahrain Grand Prix, and he wasn't the only one to express that

view. But the reality is that 2014 F1 cars are much faster than they should be in relation to their predecessors, if you consider how much heavier they are.

2014 VERSUS 2013 IN BAHRAIN



Within this year, we will be finding another 1.5 seconds or more. We have shown that we can bring all this new technology, but at the same time the spirit of racing is still there, and I can't remember in the last decade, in terms of wheel-to-wheel racing, a more exciting race.

PADDY LOWE



► set up to look at ways to increase engine noise as soon as possible. Lauda commented: "We said, let's stop this criticism and analyse for Bernie what the biggest problem is – which is the noise. "And I think the noise matters. It gets in our head that you think the more noise you have the quicker you go. It is an emotional thing. "So we agreed to put [the FIA's] Charlie Whiting in charge, and get all the engine manufacturers around the table to discuss what we can do to create more noise. So this will happen. Hopefully we can solve [it] quickly." There's no obvious answer yet about how to address the noise issue, but it's hoped the FIA think-tank in charge of the matter can be ready to evaluate developments by the post-Spanish GP test.

FURTHER RULE CHANGES ARE THROWN OUT

Di Montezemolo and Ecclestone talked in Bahrain about the need to consider more rule changes to further spice up the action. Among the ideas put forward to allow drivers to race harder for longer, it was suggested that increasing the fuel limit by 10kg, removing the 100kg/h fuel flow limit, or shortening GP distances would all help the situation. The suggestions were discussed in Friday's meeting, and all rejected. Mercedes felt there was a competitive agenda at play to limit

It wasn't just Hamilton
and Rosberg going wheel
to wheel last weekend



DUNBAR/LAT

FACTORS THAT MADE THE BAHRAIN GP SO ACTION PACKED

There's no doubt the Bahrain Grand Prix was a fantastic antidote to the previous two races this season, providing the sort of wheel-to-wheel action missing so far in 2014.

There is a feeling that a combination of the circuit layout (placing a premium on engine performance and traction, rather than downforce), the cooler conditions of a night race, the fact that teams had tested here already (thus closing up most of the field) and Pirelli's choice of tyre compounds (soft and medium as opposed to medium and hard in

2013) all contributed to improving the spectacle.

"I'm rather surprised at some of the negative comments," said Williams's new head of vehicle performance, Rob Smedley.

"From my point of view, whether you're racing at 50km/h or 300km/h, it's racing.

"What made it exciting was that you had all the teams with their cars next to each other. You've got all of these evenly matched machines able to fight. We put on a great show for the public. I'm impressed with this new breed of Formula 1."



Pirelli's tyre choice
played its part
in the spectacle...

FRONTIER

its current advantage, so it saw no reason to be open to change it felt was unnecessary. Its stance was backed by Todt, who made it clear he would only support changes that had unanimous agreement from teams.

Furthermore, engineers showed on a practical level that tweaking the fuel restrictions would prove more detrimental to the sport.

Getting rid of the fuel flow limit would lead to more powerful engines that could produce in the region of 1500bhp, but there would be more failures – and teams would burn through their five allocated units very quickly.

Mercedes' Paddy Lowe said he was baffled by some of the suggestions being put forward.

"There have been things talked about here in the past few days that are just completely unrealistic," he said. "The first suggestion was that we need 110kg of fuel. But has anybody realised that you cannot fit 110kg in these cars?"

"It should never have come to this point where we risked destroying our own sport" NIKI LAUDA

EPIC RACE PROVIDES BEST ANSWER TO CRITICS

With Ecclestone placated over the noise issue, and further regulation changes rejected, the debate about the success of the rules ended abruptly when Bahrain produced one of the best races for years.

A combination of the track layout, tyre compounds that



...as did the layout of
the Sakhir circuit

TEE/LAT

opened up strategic variations and greater confidence with the machinery at a circuit where teams had tested extensively resulted in a memorable spectacle.

And, post-event, there was nothing but praise for the flat-out racing and wheel-to-wheel competition that had delighted fans.

Lauda thinks that the time has now come for the sport to focus

on the positives thrown up by the new rules.

"If we stop this bullshit ourselves, then it will go away right away," he said about silencing the criticisms. "The noise issue is here to stay because fans always hear the cars, but the other issues will disappear. It should never have come to this point where we risked destroying our own sport." ❧

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GP2 Sakhir (BRN)

April 5-6

Round 1/11



RESULTS

RACE 1: 32 LAPS, 107.458 MILES

1	STOFFEL VANDOOORNE (B)	59m57.411s
	ART Grand Prix; Grid: 2nd-1m38.895s	
2	JULIAN LEAL (CO)	+1.551s
	Carlin; Grid: 12th-1m39.588s	
3	JOLYON PALMER (GB)	+5.880s
	DAMS; Grid: 1st-1m38.865s	
4	STEFANO COLETTI (MC)	+6.317s
	Racing Engineering; Grid: 6th-1m39.271s	
5	ARTHUR PIC (F)	+15.100s
	Campos Racing; Grid: 9th-1m39.462s	
6	TAKUYA IZAWA (J)	+21.729s
	ART Grand Prix; Grid: 23rd-1m40.401s	
7	SIMON TRUMMER (CH)	+21.979s
	Rapax; Grid: 21st-1m40.059s	
8	FELIPE NASR (BR)	+24.425s
	Carlin; Grid: 12th-1m39.301s*	
9	RENE BINDER (AUT)	+24.861s
	Arden International; Grid: 17th-1m39.788s	
10	ADRIAN QUAIFE-HOBBS (GB)	+26.194s
	Rapax; Grid: 24th-1m40.408s	

Winner's average speed: 107.536mph. Fastest lap: Artem Markelov, Russian Time, 1m43.604s, 116.851mph.

RACE 2: 23 LAPS, 77.193 MILES

1	PALMER	41m02.484s
	Grid: 6th	
2	TRUMMER	+0.809s
	Grid: 2nd	
3	LEAL	+1.430s
	Grid: 7th	
4	NASR	+8.719s
	Grid: 1st	
5	STEPHANE RICHELMI (MC)	+16.416s
	DAMS; Grid: 19th	
6	QUAIFE-HOBBS	+17.680s
	Grid: 10th	
7	MITCH EVANS (NZ)	+18.012s
	Russian Time; Grid: 14th	
8	BINDER	+19.791s
	Grid: 9th	
9	PIC	+19.977s
	Grid: 4th	
10	ARTEM MARKELOV (RUS)	+20.678s
	Russian Time; Grid: 15th	

Winner's average speed: 112.851mph. Fastest lap: Alexander Rossi, Caterham Racing, 1m45.344s, 114.921mph. All drivers in Dallara-Mecachrome GP2/11.

DRIVERS' CHAMPIONSHIP

1	PALMER	38	6	COLETTI	12
2	LEAL	28	7	PIC	10
3	VANDOOORNE	25	8	IZAWA	8
4	TRUMMER	18	9	RICHELMI	6
5	NASR	12	10	QUAIFE-HOBBS	5

TEAMS

1	DAMS	44	4	RAPAX	23
2	CARLIN	40	5	RACING ENGINEERING	12
3	ART GRAND PRIX	33	6	CAMPOS RACING	10

POINTS SYSTEM EXPLAINED

Race 1: 25-18-15-12-10-8-6-4-2-1 to top 10 finishers. Race 2: 15-12-10-8-6-4-2-1 to top eight. Pole for race one: 4. Fastest lap of top 10 finishers in each race: 2.

Markelov (left) was in top 10 on Sunday



Honours even between Vandoorne and Palmer

McLaren's Belgian protege wins on GP2 debut, but his British rival strikes back in race two and takes points lead. By CHARLES BRADLEY



IN A SEASON BILLED AS ROOKIES VERSUS VETERANS, Bahrain was a score draw in terms of race victories. On Saturday, series newcomer Stoffel Vandoorne matched a feat that only Heikki Kovalainen, Alvaro Parente and Charles Pic have managed by winning at the first time of asking. A day later, it was fourth-season driver Jolyon Palmer's turn to taste success, having thrown his feature race chances away with a disastrous start from pole.

"A big mess, finger trouble on my part" was how Palmer honestly described his getaway. His DAMS car's rear wheels were wreathed in smoke as his hard-fought pole position advantage (by 0.03s over Vandoorne) was wasted and the Belgian rocketed past him to lead, as Palmer fell to sixth.

Although he came under pressure from Palmer's team-mate Stephane Richelmi at Turn 1 on lap two, that was as close as anyone got to Vandoorne.

The McLaren starlet pushed hard on his soft tyres until lap nine to establish a gap, and rejoined well clear of his fellow soft/hard strategy runners.

The chase was now led by Palmer, who enjoyed a rapid pitstop on lap seven. Of those who had pitted at the first opportunity on lap six (just as the safety car came in following Axcil Jefferies' big shunt at Turn 4 on lap two), Richelmi lost a place to Rio Haryanto and Stefano Coletti also dropped a spot, claiming he'd been held up in the pitlane.

The race now splintered into two groups, with those who had started on the hard prime tyre going long on the first stint. Despite starting from the pitlane after stalling on the grid, Simon Trummer (Rapax) had the best pace on the hards, and worked his way into the lead on lap 15.

In the soft/hard group, the 'real' leaders were led by Vandoorne. Leal's relatively late stop on lap eight had bought him a couple of places, and he was now running on Palmer's tail, effectively in third – not bad from 12th on the grid. Also in the ascendancy was Arthur Pic, who stayed out until lap 10 and used his fresher tyres to work his way into top-five reckoning.

Bizarrely, Rapax elected to keep on-the-road leader Trummer out until just two laps to go. "I was thinking five laps before the end that we should stop, but the team kept me going," he said. The Swiss rejoined back in ninth, but had only two tours to unleash qualifying-style pace with fresh soft tyres and low fuel.

Trummer simply romped past Adrian Quaife-Hobbs and Nasr to finish seventh. "Maybe if we had stopped earlier, we could have gained even more positions," he rued. And he was right.

Finally in his true position at the head of the field, Vandoorne rattled off the laps with the calm

Vandoorne emulated Kovalainen, Pic and Parente with his win



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Vandoorne leads
Richelmi into Turn 1
on way to rookie win

IN THE COCKPIT

STOFFEL VANDOORNE
FEATURE RACE WINNER



I ALWAYS HAD A GOOD FEELING COMING INTO this weekend. I knew we had a nice baseline car – we'd done some good race simulations and good qualifying sims, too. I felt well prepared, and I think we made excellent progress through winter testing.

We were P2 in free practice and P2 in qualifying, although I'd have really liked to have been in pole position. That was definitely possible, but we had a flat front-right tyre on our second set, so we had to run with the old tyre.

I've always wanted to win this championship in my first year. Everybody thinks it's very difficult for a rookie to win. To win my first race in GP2 was definitely not easy – that's for sure! But we had the right preparation and the right approach to this race. I made a good start, and then controlled the pace on the soft tyres.

I pushed hard when I had to in order to create a gap before the pitstop, and I was in a comfortable position when I came out. [Julian] Leal was quite quick at the end, maybe a bit quicker than us, but I still had a bit left, and I didn't need to push hard.

The support of McLaren has been really important to me. They have really built a package around me to make this possible, and without them I wouldn't have been there. The relationship with McLaren and ART is working really well. Now we need to keep focusing, so the car works everywhere. That's the biggest challenge in GP2. If we can't be the quickest, we have to be as close as possible. My approach won't change now – I always go into a championship aiming to win.

Stoffel Vandoorne was talking to Ben Anderson



Palmer sprays
the sprint race
rose water



Leal scored two
podiums with Carlin

composure that he'd shown since the start. "The car was absolutely amazing," he insisted, but it had been driven to perfection. "I had a really good start and managed my tyres from there. I had no really big degradation on the soft tyre, and we only pitted when we did to make sure of keeping the lead."

Leal passed Palmer for second at Turn 1 with three laps remaining, as the Briton struggled with severe rear-tyre degradation. "I wasn't expecting this," said Leal. "The car was really good on the hard compound, and our strategy of pitting a little bit after the other guys paid off, too."

Palmer just held off Coletti to the finish in third, with Pic in fifth to celebrate team boss Adrian Campos's return to the GP2 paddock.

ART's Takuya Izawa was the first of the hard/soft runners home in sixth – a great return from 23rd on the grid. Behind Trummer, Nasr clung to

eighth and a reversed-grid pole for Sunday, while early frontrunners Richelmi (who had a rollbar issue), Haryanto and Mitch Evans tumbled down the order to the mid-teens as they simply couldn't manage the drop-off from their hard tyres.

Sunday's sprint race was also a study in tyre management, and its best exponent was Palmer. From sixth on the grid, he produced a perfect start this time and jumped up to second by the first corner as a host of cars made tardy launches, not least poleman Nasr. Coletti didn't even move, and Izawa and Pic stuttered away, too.

All that allowed Trummer to lead, but Palmer passed him at the first corner on lap two. "First to sixth yesterday, and sixth to first today," grinned Palmer on the podium after he'd kept Trummer and the close-following Leal at arm's length for the duration. Trummer got the gap down to 0.5s with

five laps to go, but that's as close as he got.

"I was driving a lot more conservatively after my lesson from yesterday," admitted Palmer.

Nasr, who dropped to fifth after his terrible start, battled his way past the fast-starting Quaife-Hobbs after a sequence of pass/repass moves with a handful of laps remaining. Richelmi also got by Quaife-Hobbs to place fifth, but left it until the final lap at Turn 11. Evans, meanwhile, charged to seventh from 14th on the grid, with Rene Binder taking the final point by less than two-tenths of a second from Pic, who'd been shoved out of an earlier sixth by the robust Richelmi.

But what of Saturday's hero Vandoorne? A poor start dropped him to 11th and he tripped over Daniel de Jong at Turn 4, breaking his front wing, which consigned him to 22nd after a pitstop. His true pace was top three, however. 🏆



HONDA'S POWER

The new TC1 version of the Civic is Honda's third car in three seasons, and it's now up against the

The introduction of steroid-enhanced, muscular new TC1 cars to the World Touring Car Championship for 2014 delivered something of a googly to Honda. The company's European motorsport manager William de Braekeleer had guided the brand's return to international touring car competition late in 2012.

But the cordial Belgian could little have anticipated that Honda's first investment, the Civic WTCC S2000, would have a shelf-life of just a season-and-a-half owing to an

impending revamp of the technical regulations.

The man tasked with both taking the fight to the dominant RML Chevrolet Cruzes and implementing Honda's new TC1 project last season was *Ingegnere* Alessandro Mariani, the hugely experienced team principal of Honda's technical partner and car builder JAS Motorsport.

After launching three cars in three years, the Milanese concern could boast about being well-versed in the design and build of new Civic racers. Does Mariani feel there has been any advantage in producing cars for two sets of regulations in close succession?

"For my health it has been a disadvantage for sure," comes the instant, jovial, response. "But from the technical side," Mariani considers, "I do believe it is a big advantage, because we had the opportunity to take experience; starting with the 2012 car, then making an evolution for 2013 and now a complete revolution for 2014. I believe we can exploit all of the experience that we collected in the best way, as the basic principles of the championship are still the same – the FIA didn't change the style of the touring car."

Indisputably Honda trails chief rival Citroen in pre-season testing mileage. The late finalisation of certain details in the technical regulations caused the knock-on effect of squeezing JAS's available build time. At Paul Ricard last month, just one car circulated for works drivers Gabriele Tarquini and Tiago Monteiro, while privateers Mehdi Bennani and Norbert Michelisz were forced to watch

patiently from the sidelines. At Valencia a fortnight ago, Monteiro drove the first race car built for the season, while Tarquini handled the Civic test car.

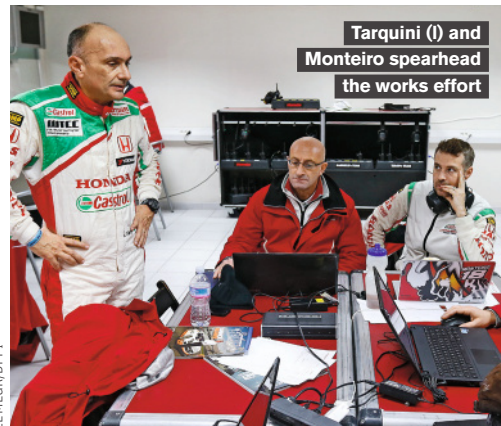
"Of course, the late arrival of the new regulations made things difficult," explains Mariani, who emphasises the critical importance of nailing a successful aero package in the design-phase.

"We started to develop the car very late, and for me it is a pure miracle that we had tested a car by the middle of January.

"The longest impact on the car build was the aero aspect. We needed to design the car, make different solutions or options to test in the windtunnel, find and freeze the solution, go back home and make drawings and moulds and then start to fabricate. From the aerodynamic point of view we started work when the regulations were still in progress and had not been set. This was the initial point, and then we started to design the car in the middle of August when, finally, many details of the technical regulations were clarified."

Mariani estimates that the importance of aerodynamics on the performance of a WTCC car has increased from one per cent on the outgoing 2013 model to 30 per cent on the new TC1 racer: "When I'm asked which parts are carried over from the old car, the answer is zero!"

De Braekeleer expands on the Honda top brass's thinking. "This was the critical choice we did, because we could also have started the project modifying the existing car," he says with measured tones. "But then with Honda, we decided to make



LE MEUR/DPP/PI



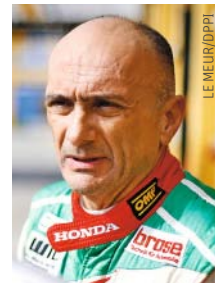
OF THREE

might of Citroen, Sebastien Loeb and Yvan Muller. By **PETER MILLS**

Q&A

GABRIELE TARQUINI

2009 WORLD TOURING CAR CHAMPION



After testing with Citroen at Le Castellet and Valencia, do you have an idea of the relative performance of the cars?

We have a better idea. We are happy with the development we've already done, but I'd say we have only completed 70 per cent of the work. We still need more time.

So given Citroen's headstart over everyone in terms of testing, would it be fair to say they start as favourites?

Yeah. They started testing very early last year, sure. Also, watching the performance and watching their job during testing, it seems they are much more forward than us. I never test a long distance, we have a lot of doubts over our standing-start situation because we have not focused on the details. We were focused on the important things before the homologation at Le Castellet. At Valencia we tried to set up the car, changing for the first time the springs and rollbars and suspension angles and so on. It is sure that we need time.

The fastest time of the Citroen, especially in Valencia, was very fast. But it is like Formula 1 pre-season testing: it means something but sometimes it does not show the real situation.

Speaking in general regarding the TC1 rules, are you satisfied with the direction the series is going in?

As a driver I am happier than last year – the car is faster everywhere. Everybody is a little bit worried about the budget. It is sure the TC1 is more expensive than last year's car, needs a lot of windtunnel testing, a lot of development as you have aerodynamic influence. But I think we need to wait at least half a season before finally judging these new rules.

“When I’m asked which parts are carried over from the old car, the answer is zero!” ALESSANDRO MARIANI



Honda's Mariani (l) and de Braekeleer

elected to sit the year out. De Braekeleer and Mariani, men with first-hand knowledge of the excesses of alternative touring-car philosophies, namely Super Touring and the spectacular but short-lived ITC in the 1990s, believe the fight between TC1 converts Honda, Citroen and Lada will not lead to costs spiralling out of control.

“In 2000, Honda's BTCC budget was really a lot for one market,” agrees de Braekeleer. “Figures of £10 million were attributed to other manufacturers, I am not sure we said [publicly] what ours was. In WTCC, through the regulations, we are making a spectacular racing car that's affordable to private teams.”

Mariani adds: “Fortunately the WTCC regulations are quite stiff, so the development is quite controlled. It is not totally free, otherwise the costs explode, which is what happened in the past. Probably 10 per cent is too low, but probably we arrive at 20 per cent [higher than in 2013]. I am an old man with a lot of experience in motorsport.

“With the new regulations, with the entry of Citroen and the arrival of Sebastien Loeb, I can feel there's more interest in the championship. Citroen has more experience but they started completely

an aggressive approach, because the life of the car is many years. We wanted to start with a white paper and design our best at that moment, also thinking about our customers [Zengo Motorsport and Proteam].”

Mention of privateer entrants brings us to the subject of cost. Inevitably, the season is expected to be something of a transition for the category, with the field split between TC1 and TC2 divisions. Indeed, long standing WTCC supporters such as Bamboo Engineering and Wiechers-Sport have

from zero. We just are just entering a new motorway, but I don't know where the motorway will arrive, also for the costs. The spirit of the championship is also to defend the interests of the small teams because in the times of difficulty, the small teams or private teams allowed the WTCC to survive. So we have to be very careful between the balance between show, the luxury approach and reality.”

Honda's return to Formula 1 with McLaren in 2015 is another sign of the Japanese company's increased commitment to motorsport. De Braekeleer insists the next planned conquest of F1 has no bearing on the viability of his programme.

“No, it doesn't have any impact. First, [Honda] didn't discuss it [the impact of the return to F1] with us. But no, it is two different programmes. F1 is really the big umbrella in motorsport. We see it like that. We just launched the WTCC programme, we didn't commit for a certain number of years but obviously we didn't commit for two years only. At the moment yet we really don't have the end of the programme in sight.”

“That's right,” concurs Mariani. “Otherwise I'm off to manage McLaren.” ❧

EYE ON THE PRIZE

Lada stalwart James Thompson knows there's still lots of development for him and fellow Brit Rob Huff to do but, he tells PETER MILLS, he expects all their hard work to pay off in 2015



38

The Russian saying 'If you enjoy riding, you'd better enjoy pulling the sleigh' – think 'No pain, no gain' – may contain some resonance for Lada's new British pairing of James Thompson and Rob Huff in the early rounds of this year's World Touring Car Championship. Lada stalwart Thompson is full of plaudits for the hard work that has gone into developing a completely revised Granta for the TC1 regulations introduced this year. However, the York driver is conscious that the new model's difficult birth has put the team on the back foot against well-prepared opposition represented by Citroen and Honda.

"We have done a few tests, but only very limited mileage," explains Thompson. "We have probably done a total of 20 laps in the car. I was at Magny-Cours for four days, and we only did a couple of laps a day. We have a few fundamental teething troubles, shall we say?"

Driving duties for the Granta WTCC TC1's maiden test were shared between the Englishmen, but with the difficulties becoming apparent, Huff took the opportunity to take a 10-day break in Mexico to recharge his batteries before the start of the coming season.

"For the first couple of races, it will be just a matter of getting through them," states Thompson



Thompson has a strong bond with engineer Calovolo

pragmatically. "I was using Rob's car last week to test with because my car wasn't be ready until Friday, and it had to go to Marrakech on Saturday. That is the reality of it; that is how close to the mark it all is. We have not even evolved the car a great deal from that point. Being realistic, you can't expect too much. It is a pat on the back to everyone that we're actually going out to the first race – where we stand is almost irrelevant.

"From Rob's point of view, he is perfectly happy to leave me to it to work through the issues. We will get down to brass tacks later. At the moment, it is fighting fires."

Despite the rocky start, Lada team boss Viktor Shapovalov's signing of former world champion Huff alongside resident top-liner Thompson is a statement of intent. This still very Russian project,

based in the Lada car plant in Samara Oblast, can count on further international pedigree thanks to contracting French motorsport specialist ORECA to build its engines.

Entering his 20th season of touring car racing, Thompson views these developments positively. Alongside that enthusiasm, however, is a propensity for straight talking and an unwillingness to raise expectations without warrant. Adding to his concerns is an apprehension that Lada has not tested against the opposition.

"Yes," he says, "it's 20 years since my first touring car, the blue Peugeot [BTCC 405]. Blimey! The WTCC regs change this year makes everything pretty exciting. It's nice to have something that's a bit faster, and I would say is a little more enjoyable to drive than last year. My first impression of the new Lada was that it's really nice to drive, but it's a lot better driving the car if you know that it's competitive. In isolation, it has been enjoyable, but if we're way off the pace, then it's not fun any more. I'm sure everyone is miles behind Citroen. It is going to be Citroen, then Honda and then probably us and the Chevs, who have done similar mileage."

For new boy Huff, the decision to move to Lada, his third team in three years, was born out of a desire to return to a manufacturer team, and one he believes can challenge for the 2015 world title. To that end, though, Thompson raises legitimate questions regarding the development programme assigned to the Granta, given that it will be used for just one season.



The Lada showed some of its potential in Porto last season



Huff (right) joins Thompson in the team this year



ORECA's engine expertise could prove vital

“This year is going to be a stepping stone to 2015 – a year of playing catch-up really” JAMES THOMPSON

“This year is going to be another stepping stone to 2015,” he says. “It is going to be a year of playing catch-up really. You can’t expect to hit the ground running and be competitive against someone who has done six months testing and development. We have done a few laps. I hope by the middle of the season we will be on top it; through a lot of waivers and hopefully with a development push for the car. But we do also have to build a new car for 2015. From what I have seen of the new Ladas, they look fantastic. They really are a departure from what we have seen so far. This car is limited because it is such an old design – basically and inherently. That’s the thing. How long do you concentrate on this car before you start thinking about the one for the following season?”

Crucial in making progress with the Granta will be the effectiveness of the long-standing relationship between Thompson and engineer Marco Calovolo. Their understanding takes on additional importance given the geographically distant relationship with the car’s Russian designers.

“Marco and I asked for certain criteria for the car, but it’s totally and utterly designed in Russia – in Tolyatti. We have only ever seen the designer once. We just deal with the car when we see it physically and try to make the best of it on the weekends. We know there is a lot of performance to come from the car, and Marco and I are trying to extract as much as we can in a very short timescale. The Russian design team has done a good job to get

the car drawn up and built in the time available, but it’s a totally fresh project, not an evolution of anything that was done last year, so you have to go through it with a fine toothcomb.”

Once the season starts, Thompson believes the value of Huff’s input should become apparent. “If you want to be seriously competing for manufacturers’ points, you need three cars,” he explains. “Then, from a development side, and from my side, you need two top-line drivers. I am not taking anything away from Mikhail Kozlovskiy – I am sure he will be a star in the future – but we probably didn’t get into top-10 qualifying a few times last year simply because I had nobody to work with. From that point of view, it should make a huge difference.”

Thompson has been loyal to the, at times, stop-start Lada WTCC effort since making his first outing in a Priora back in 2009. The result of that energy and sizeable slice of his career invested in the project is a desire to see the fruits of the team’s sweat and labours – no matter which driver should be the first to achieve success.

“It will sound corny, but I don’t really mind who gets the podium,” he says. “Like everyone involved, I’ve put a lot of time and effort into it. The reasons why I was very keen to have another [established] driver was simply because it’s not all about me. A podium or win would show the whole evolution of the project, and that is the key. It doesn’t just have to be all about me getting the result.”

Q&A

ROB HUFF

THE 2012 WTCC CHAMPION ON JOINING LADA SPORT



What are your first impressions of the Lada?

For the overall characteristics of the car it’s too early to say, but my first impression is the engine is definitely stronger. The tyre is better because we have a bigger wheel, or better construction. It almost feels like the Super Tourer. You can push a lot harder, rather than having to treat it like a baby.

How prepared do you feel for Marrakech?

We have had a few technical difficulties, but the guys seem to have overcome them. They’ve done an amazing job. The cars are leaving for Marrakech on Saturday. We rolled James’s car out last Friday, but I don’t think Mikhail’s will roll out until Marrakech. We are behind, but with the regulation change, it was very hard to get things ready. In four days, I probably did about eight laps, but things have changed a lot since then.

Have you finalised which engineer you will be working with?

I have brought across Johan Seville, my engineer at Munnich Motorsport last year. We got on really well. He was my first new engineer in eight years, and we dragged every last bit of steam out of the SEAT. I wanted that to continue.



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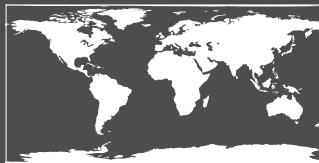
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TEN TO WATCH



WTCC SEASON 2014

DATE	LOCATION
April 13	Marrakech (MA)
April 20	Paul Ricard (F)
May 4	Hungaroring (H)
May 11	Slovakia Ring (SK)
May 25	Salzburgring (A)
June 8	Moscow Raceway (RUS)
June 22	Spa-Francorchamps (B)
August 3	Rio Hondo (RA)
September 14	Sonoma (USA)
October 12	Shanghai (PRC)
October 26	Suzuka (J)
November 16	Macau (PRC)



TECH REGULATIONS

ENGINES

1.6 turbo, max 4 cylinders
 ENGINE SPEED: 8500rpm
 TURBO PRESSURE: maximum 2.5 bars absolute
 LUBRICATION: wet sump (TC2 wet or dry sump)
 TRACTION: two-wheel drive
 GEARBOX: six-speed sequential

SUSPENSION

TC1 MacPherson strut with coil springs
 TC2 original design of the production car with reinforced components

BRAKES

TC1 FRONT: max four pistons per wheel, brake discs max diameter 380mm. REAR: max two pistons per wheel, brake discs max diameter 300mm. ABS not allowed
 TC2 FRONT: max four pistons per wheel, brake discs max diameter 322mm. REAR: max two pistons per wheel, original brake discs. ABS not allowed

WHEELS

TC1 max dimensions of the rim: 10" x 18"
 TC2 max dimensions of the rim: 9" x 17"

AERODYNAMICS

TC1 front splitter, flat bottom, rear wing homologated in S2000 kit
 TC2 elements homologated in S2000 kit

GROUND CLEARANCE

TC1 minimum 60mm
 TC2 minimum 80mm

MINIMUM WEIGHT


TC1 1100kg, including driver
 TC2 1150kg, including driver

Yvan Muller (F)
 Citroen Total WTCC – Citroen C-Elysee
WTCC STARTS 182
WINS 37 POLES 22
2013 WTCC CHAMPION
 Has acted as a sort of consultant for new rules, and has had intensive testing. Citroen may be new to the series, but he's still firm favourite.




There are so many unknowns heading into the WTCC's new era. Never one to shirk a challenge, **PETER MILLS** picks the likely lads

Sebastien Loeb (F)
 Citroen Total WTCC – Citroen C-Elysee
WTCC STARTS 0 2013 4TH IN FIA GT; 2ND IN MACAU PORSCHE
 Much hoopla surrounds nine-time WRC champion's entry to WTCC. Few question his ability to handle a racing car, but with Muller on the other side of the garage the drivers' title may be an optimistic ambition.



Tiago Monteiro (P)
 Castrol Honda (JAS) – Honda Civic WTCC
WTCC STARTS 161 WINS 5
POLES 2 2013 8TH IN WTCC
 Trailed team-mate Tarquini last year more often than he'd have liked although scored strong win at Shanghai. Will the more aero-dependent TC1 car be more to the former Formula 1 driver's tastes?



Tom Coronel (NL)
 ROAL Motorsport – Chevrolet RML Cruze TC1
WTCC STARTS 200 WINS 4
POLES 0 2013 10TH IN WTCC
 Irrepressible Dutchman continues with ROAL for a fourth season. Has extracted the most from the team's BMWs over several years, so will be intriguing to see how he performs in TC1 Cruze.



Jose Maria Lopez (RA)
 Citroen Total WTCC – Citroen C-Elysee
WTCC STARTS 2 WINS 1
POLES 0 2013 15TH IN WTCC; 5TH IN SUPER TC2000
 Former TC2000 champion has impressed rivals in testing. Scored reversed-grid win on his maiden meeting last year, and with a C-Elysee at his disposal is well placed.




Norbert Michelisz (H)
 Zengo Motorsport – Honda Civic WTCC
WTCC STARTS 95 WINS 3
POLES 2 2013 6TH IN WTCC
 Preparations not ideal as team's first test of TC1 Civic was only last Friday at Cervestina. Is making transition from one the WTCC's comingmen to established frontrunner, and has continuity at Zengo.




Gianni Morbidelli (I)
 Munnich Motorsport – Chevrolet RML Cruze TC1
WTCC STARTS 19 WINS 0
POLES 0 2013 1ST IN SUPERSTARS
 There are many unknowns in the Munnich/Cruze package, but Morbidelli's quality should see him mix with leading Chevy runners. Last WTCC campaign was in 2006 with an N-Technology Alfa.



Gabriele Tarquini (I)
 Castrol Honda (JAS) – Honda Civic WTCC
WTCC STARTS 199 WINS 19
POLES 17 2013 2ND IN WTCC
 The 2009 WTCC champ believes he is starting 2014 with only 70 per cent of development work completed on his TC1 Civic, but who would dismiss completely the chances of a second WTCC title?



Tom Chilton (GB)
 ROAL Motorsport – Chevrolet RML Cruze TC1
WTCC STARTS 48 WINS 2
POLES 1 2013 5TH IN WTCC
 Shook all six Cruzes down before testing at Valencia and Adria. After early bugs, said Adria test went well. Has experience of Cruze; brought a couple of personnel from former team RML with him to ROAL.



Mehdi Bannani (MA)
 Proteam Racing – Honda Civic WTCC
WTCC STARTS 104 WINS 0
POLES 0 2013 12TH IN WTCC
 Proteam only shook its new Civic down at Cervestina last Friday. Any strong showings from Bannani may have to wait until he has acclimatised to car and front-wheel drive after four years in BMWs.



TC1 ENTRIES		TC2 ENTRIES	
CITROEN TOTAL WTCC		CAMPOS RACING	
1 Yvan Muller	Citroen C-Elysee	7 Hugo Valente	Chevrolet RML Cruze TC1
9 Sebastien Loeb	Citroen C-Elysee	98 Dusan Borkovic	Chevrolet RML Cruze TC1
33 Ma Qing Hua	Citroen C-Elysee	MUNNICH MOTORSPORT	
37 Jose Maria Lopez	Citroen C-Elysee	10 Gianni Morbidelli	Chevrolet RML Cruze TC1
CASTROL HONDA WORLD TOURING CAR TEAM (JAS)		77 Rene Munnich	Chevrolet RML Cruze TC1
2 Gabriele Tarquini	Honda Civic WTCC	LADA SPORT	
18 Tiago Monteiro	Honda Civic WTCC	11 James Thompson	Lada Granta Sport
ROAL MOTORSPORT		12 Rob Huff	Lada Granta Sport
3 Tom Chilton	Chevrolet RML Cruze TC1	14 Mikhail Kozlovskiy	Lada Granta Sport
4 Tom Coronel	Chevrolet RML Cruze TC1	PROTEAM RACING	
ZENGO MOTORSPORT		25 Mehdi Bannani	Honda Civic WTCC
5 Norbert Michelisz	Honda Civic WTCC	TEAM ENGSTLER	
		6 Franz Engstler	BMW 320 TC
		8 Pasquale Di Sabatino	BMW 320 TC
		CAMPOS RACING	
		27 John Filippi	SEAT Leon WTCC
		NIKA RACING	
		99 Yukinori Taniguchi	Honda Civic WTCC



ALL PICS: NICOLAS ZWICKEL, XPB, LE MEUR/DPPI

Sprinting to GT success?

The FIA GT Series is gone and now we have two Blancpain contests. **GARY WATKINS** looks at how the change is working ahead of the two series openers this month



42

There are now two international championships carrying the Blancpain name. Yet rather than adding to the confusion of the sportscar landscape, it simplifies it. Stephane Ratel's decision to create the Blancpain Sprint Series out of the old FIA GT Series and bring it fully in-line with the Blancpain Endurance Series – and then further reinforce the link between the two with an umbrella championship – is designed to bring both to a new level.

Some have suggested that the Blancpain GT Series, based on points scored across the two championships, could become the most important GT title in the world. That might, perhaps, one day become true, given that it is fought out only by GT cars. But for the moment, it is not the case.

Only five teams will bid for the Blancpain GT Series drivers' and teams' crowns and the €100,000 (£82,600) winner-takes-all prize fund (for the teams' title) that comes with it. And two of those,



“We need to grow things progressively so more teams will decide to do both series” STEPHANE RATEL

the WRT Audi squad and the HTP Merc team, did BES and FIA GTs last year anyway. That's a disappointment to Ratel, but he suggests it was always going to take time.

“The one thing I have learned in this business is that you need patience,” he says. “We need to grow things progressively so that more teams will decide to do both in the future.”

That includes manufacturer entries, which Ratel is happy to welcome to both his series. He is

disappointed that Nissan's RJN-run team, with which the Japanese manufacturer bloods its Academy gamers-turned-racers on the international scene, has opted to focus on the BES and give up its sprint campaign. Its reasoning is that the Nissan GT-R NISMO GT3 is more competitive on the faster circuits that make up the BES schedule. Ratel is hoping for Bentley, which is undertaking a development year in the enduros in the first full season of competition for the Continental GT3, as well.

“If we succeed in growing the TV, and we are on an upward curve, I would hope that Nissan, Bentley and others will do both series in future,” he says.

A total of 22 cars have signed up for the BSS, which puts it on a par with last year's FIA GT Series. Ratel admits that he was hoping for – and thought at one point that he'd secured – a grid of between 26 and 28 cars. But he's still happy with his entry in what was inevitably always going to be a season of transition.

The good news is that he has a core of all-professional line-ups competing in the Pro Cup and the new Silver Cup. Ratel's latest idea is



BSS CALENDAR

DATE	LOCATION
April 20-21	Nogaro (F)
May 17-18	Brands Hatch (GB)
July 5-6	Zandvoort (NL)
August 23-24	Slovakia Ring (SK)
September 6-7	Algarve (P)
October 18-19	Zolder (B)
November 1-2	Baku (AZ)

BES CALENDAR

DATE	LOCATION
April 13	Monza (I)
May 25	Silverstone (GB)
June 28	Paul Ricard (F)
July 26-27	Spa 24 Hours (B)
September 21	Nurburgring (D)



Can the Sprint series live alongside its sister Endurance events?

designed to encourage young drivers under the age of 25 who are be ready to jump off the single-seater ladder to compete in their own class at the same time as racing for overall points.

Competitors in the Silver Cup will also have the potential to leave each race with €50,000 in their pockets. There's a €100,000 total prize fund for each of the seven sprint rounds. The overall winner of the so-called championship race, the second of the two one-hour sprints each weekend, gets €30,000, but the Silver Cup winner comes away with €20,000. And Ratel believes that the best of the 12-strong entry in the new sub-class will be challenging for overall honours.

This new prize fund is not a one-off gimmick, insists Ratel. "The money doesn't come from outside investment; it is generated by the series," he explains. "TV is bringing in more income and we have more circuits wanting races than we have dates. The idea is to be able to grow the prize money, not reduce it."

The sprint entry will go up, Ratel is sure of that, while he believes that the endurance series has found its natural level. The 44-car 2014 entry is down on the 62-strong initial full-season field for last year, but that's not a bad thing, according to the series boss.

"We know from our teams that 60 cars was too many," he explains. "We had quite a lot of unhappy teams last year who didn't like working with 60 cars in the paddock and overcrowded garages."

The challenge for Ratel is to get some more of those 44 BES entries to double up and do both series. He's aware of it, and reckons that the twin attractions of television and prize money will eventually do the job. ❧

TWO-HORSE RACE

Just two teams are effectively in the running for the €100,000 prize fund for the Blancpain GT Series, covering the sprint and enduro encounters. The Belgian WRT Audi team and HTP Motorsport Mercedes squad each field two fully professional line-ups in both series.

WRT, last year's FIA GT champion, has entered the #1 Audi R8 LMS ultra for Laurens Vanthoor and Cesar Ramos, who will be joined by Marc Basseng in the enduros. Its #2 car will be driven by Rene Rast and Enzo Ide in the BSS and by Christopher Mies, Frank Stippler and James Nash in the BES.

Stef Dusseldorp and Sergei Afanasiev drive the #85 HTP Mercedes-Benz SLS AMG in the BSS and will be joined by a so-far-undisclosed team-mate in BES. Reigning BES champion Maximilian Buhk's driving partner for the sprints



WRT Audi squad chases GT Series...

in the #84 car has yet to be announced, but he will race together with Nico Verdonck and Harold Primat in the enduros.

The overall Blancpain GT Series titles will be decided on the basis of points scored across the two series, but the teams' title – which comes with the money – is actually a car championship. It will go to the entry that scores the most points.

There are three other teams doing both series. ROAL Motorsport is running two BMW Z4s across the two series, but is only represented in the pro ranks in the BSS with race returnee Alex Zanardi. The Italian Villorba Corse squad moves over from the International GT Open series to run a Ferrari 458 Italia for Andrea Montermini and Filip Salaquarda in the Pro Cup in BSS, but is only represented in the Pro-Am division in BES. JMB fields a Nissan in the Silver Cup in BSS with FIA GT race winner Alon Day and Mathieu Jaminet and runs in the Pro-Am class in the enduros.



... alongside HTP Mercedes squad

A TOUGH ACT TO FOLLOW

Formula Renault Eurocup frontrunners have starred as Formula Renault 3.5 rookies in the past couple of years. **GLENN FREEMAN** speaks to the next two aces from that production line

OLIVER ROWLAND (GB) Age 21

2014 Formula Renault 3.5 with Fortec Motorsports

2013 Formula Renault Eurocup runner-up (3 wins), 4 wins in 8 starts in FR NEC

2012 3rd in Formula Renault Eurocup (1 win)

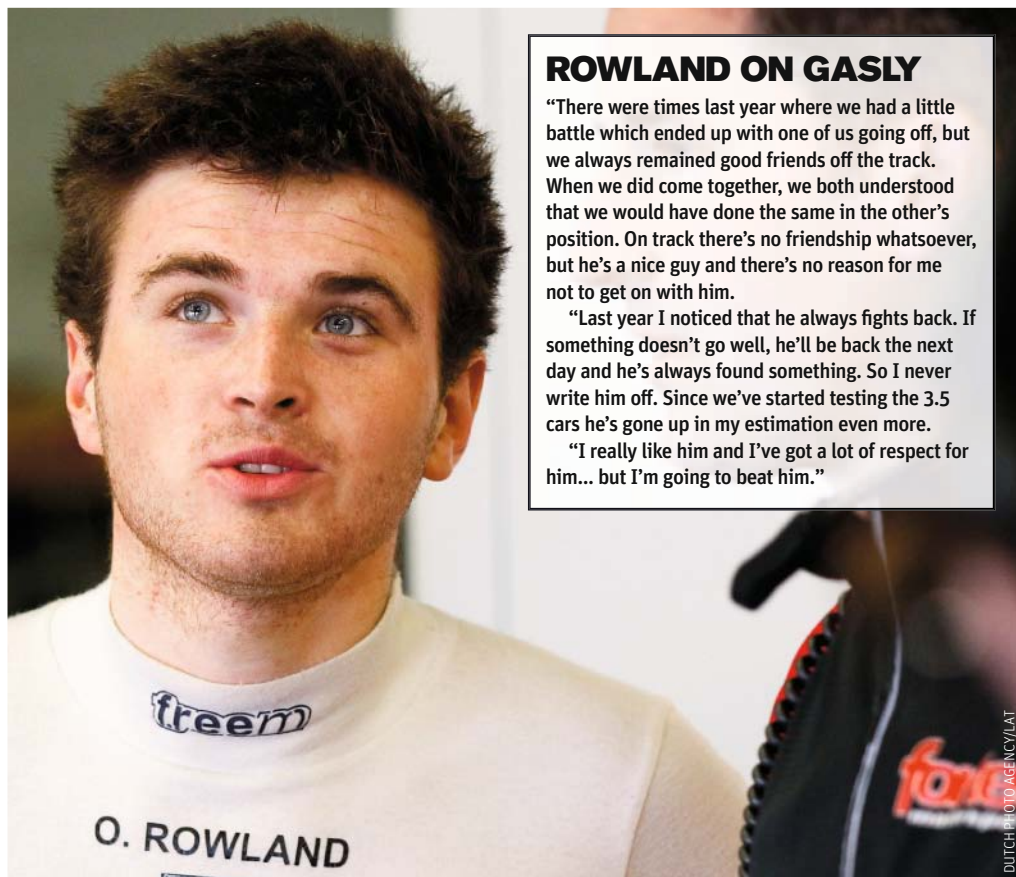
2011 2nd in Formula Renault UK (4 wins)

Oliver Rowland's career stumbled through the winter of 2012-13, as the Racing Steps Foundation that supports his career considered his future after he'd finished a distant best-of-the-rest in the Formula Renault Eurocup to that year's top two. One year on, and having fought for the same crown until the last race of last season, the former McLaren AUTOSPORT BRDC Award winner enters 2014 reinvigorated, and he can take heart from what hindsight has taught us about the two charges who left everyone in their wake in that 2012 season: current Toro Rosso Formula 1 racer Daniil Kvyat, and that year's Eurocup champion, McLaren junior Stoffel Vandoorne.

"When you look at 2012 now, finishing third to those two looks pretty good," Rowland says with a hint of a laugh. "But at the time it wasn't considered good. Going into this year it's nice to have everybody around me pleased; I'm not sure they were that pleased this time last year, and that makes a difference in the back of your mind."

Rowland eventually lost out in his pursuit of the 2013 FR Eurocup title after a collision while trying to pass season-long rival Pierre Gasly. As you'll read elsewhere on these pages the two haven't let their frenetic, sometimes incident-packed campaign affect their relationship, and now both are stepping up to the main event of the World Series by Renault programme, Formula Renault 3.5.

Thanks to the heroics of Robin Frijns (2012 FR3.5 champion) and Vandoorne (2013 runner-up) in their rookie seasons, expectations are high for the latest Eurocup graduates to make the step up. But while Gasly follows Frijns and Vandoorne in making the jump as champion in the smaller category, there will still be plenty of attention on Rowland as he takes over the Fortec Motorsports seat of the rookie superstars of the past two years.



ROWLAND ON GASLY

"There were times last year where we had a little battle which ended up with one of us going off, but we always remained good friends off the track. When we did come together, we both understood that we would have done the same in the other's position. On track there's no friendship whatsoever, but he's a nice guy and there's no reason for me not to get on with him.

"Last year I noticed that he always fights back. If something doesn't go well, he'll be back the next day and he's always found something. So I never write him off. Since we've started testing the 3.5 cars he's gone up in my estimation even more.

"I really like him and I've got a lot of respect for him... but I'm going to beat him."

And just like his predecessors, the 21-year-old has starred in winter testing. Back when Frijns was dominating pre-season in 2012, most were happy to write it off as a rookie working on one-lap pace while everyone else focused on race work. With what we've witnessed for the past two years, nobody is that naive anymore.

"I couldn't have hoped for much more, to be honest, says Rowland of his winter running. "Things have started off very good and if it continues going the way it's been going in the tests then there's no reason why we can't win the title."

As is often true of drivers at this stage of their careers, Rowland has done a lot of growing-up in the past 12 months. An example of that maturity is his acceptance of previous shortcomings.

"I know that last year there were a few question marks about me," he says. "I'm in a better place now and I'm more confident. Everything is clicking into place. I don't feel as much pressure this year, although obviously Robin and Stoffel have proved that it's possible to fight for the championship as a rookie. So if I finish lower than second, that's probably not good enough!"



Vandoorne made a successful leap from Eurocup to FR3.5

DUTCH PHOTO AGENCY/LAT

PIERRE GASLY

(F) Age 18

- 2014 Formula Renault 3.5 with Arden Motorsport
- 2013 Formula Renault Eurocup champion (3 wins), six starts in FR ALPS
- 2012 10th in Formula Renault Eurocup, seven starts in FR NEC
- 2011 3rd in French F4 (4 wins)

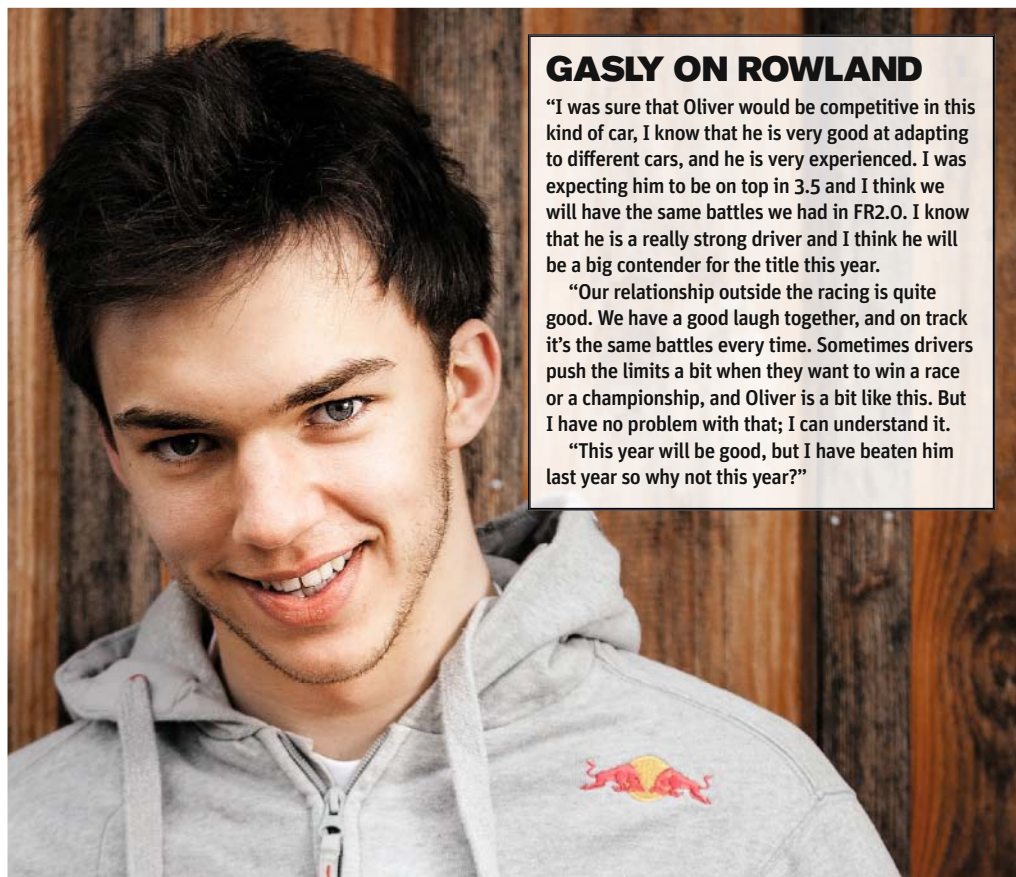
Thanks to Robin Frijns and Stoffel Vandoorne, the days of a driver stepping up from the Formula Renault 2.0 ranks and being given time to adapt to more powerful machinery are long gone. Perhaps we were first alerted to what a talented graduate could do stepping out of that category when Kimi Raikkonen made the extraordinary jump straight to Formula 1 with Sauber for the 2001 season.

More recently, 2011 FR Eurocup champion Frijns caused a shock by winning the FR3.5 title as a rookie, beating a talented field that included race-winning GP2 converts Jules Bianchi and Sam Bird. A year later, his successor at FR2.0 level, Vandoorne, came close to doing the same, in the end only losing out to the McLaren F1-bound Kevin Magnussen.

So 2013 Eurocup champion Pierre Gasly has a fair bit to live up to. And in case there wasn't enough pressure already, he's also now a fully-fledged member of the Red Bull junior team, and will be racing in the colours of F1's quadruple world championship-winning outfit. That's a lot to take in for a driver who has only just turned 18, but Gasly seems to be taking it all in his stride, and pre-season testing suggests he will be just as much of a factor in the title fight as his predecessors.

"What those guys [Frijns and Vandoorne] did gives me confidence because that shows what is possible," he says. "Now I have to work to do the same thing as them. Everything in pre-season was excellent, the car is really competitive, and it's important for me to feel that I have one of the best cars. I just have to focus on my driving and learn as fast as possible."

Gasly stops short of declaring a title push like



GASLY ON ROWLAND

"I was sure that Oliver would be competitive in this kind of car, I know that he is very good at adapting to different cars, and he is very experienced. I was expecting him to be on top in 3.5 and I think we will have the same battles we had in FR2.0. I know that he is a really strong driver and I think he will be a big contender for the title this year.

"Our relationship outside the racing is quite good. We have a good laugh together, and on track it's the same battles every time. Sometimes drivers push the limits a bit when they want to win a race or a championship, and Oliver is a bit like this. But I have no problem with that; I can understand it.

"This year will be good, but I have beaten him last year so why not this year?"

his 2013 foe Rowland, but even he appears to accept that trying to reduce expectations too much is futile.

"The main thing is to win races as soon as possible," he says. "The top three is a good first goal, and after we will see what will happen during the year."

Red Bull's driver-development chief Helmut Marko, the overlord of its junior scheme, isn't one for setting conservative goals though, and given those high expectations (third in FR3.5 last year wasn't enough to earn Antonio Felix

da Costa a shot at F1), and the inevitable comparisons to Frijns, Vandoorne, and even Rowland, Gasly is bound to be under pressure from the moment the cars hit the track at the season opener at Monza this weekend. And he accepts that earning a place as a Red Bull junior is only part of the battle.

"Joining Red Bull is the best feeling for a driver," he says. "I have proved I am good enough to be in the programme, and now I have to show them that I can stay in the programme. That will be the hardest part of my job." ▶



Sainz keeps Red Bull backing for his move to crack DAMS team

ACES TO WATCH

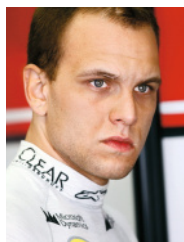
Carlos Sainz Jr (E)

DAMS
2013 10th in GP3, nine races in FR3.5
 Red Bull has retained its faith in the son of the rally legend of the same name, after a 2013 campaign in which he was unable to match the stellar form of GP3 championship-winning team-mate Daniil Kvyat. But his FR3.5 appearances for Zeta Corse – including a stunning top six on his debut in Monaco – suggested there is plenty of potential there. He takes over Kevin Magnussen's championship-winning DAMS car for 2014, so we should end this year in no doubt about what he's capable of.



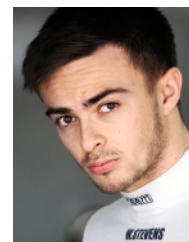
Marco Sorensen (DK)

Tech 1 Racing
2013 7th in FR3.5 (2 wins)
 A mystery engine issue that left him down on power took the wind out of Sorensen's sails early last year, which was a shame given that he had been a star rookie in 2012 and even finished ahead of countryman Kevin Magnussen in that campaign. A dominant weekend in Austria – two wins from two poles – showed what he is capable of when things come together, and a switch from the Gravity Charouz-run Lotus team to Tech 1 could give him the same impetus Magnussen took from a switch of teams ahead of 2013.



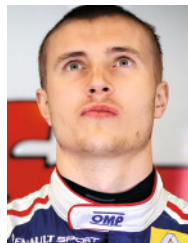
Will Stevens (GB)

Strakka Racing
2013 4th in FR3.5
 Stevens is back for a third season in FR3.5, as he and backer Caterham agreed that a title push with Strakka made more sense than a learning year in GP2 with the F1 team's offshoot operation. That means expectations are high, and the fact that he is the highest-placed driver from 2013 to be sticking around solidifies his position as an early-season favourite. He is yet to win a race at this level, but if he can replicate his best form from 2013 then it should only be a matter of time before he puts that right.



Sergey Sirotkin (RUS)

Fortec Motorsports
2013 9th in FR3.5
 At one point last year Sirotkin was being lined up for a Sauber F1 drive in 2014. But the fact he is back for a second year in FR3.5 should be viewed as a positive, as it gives the Russian teenager more of a chance to harness what appears to be a promising amount of talent. In moving from ISR to Fortec he heads to a team that has been a regular race winner in recent years, and if he has developed as much as he claims under the guidance of Sauber he should be a threat this season.



Will Buller (GB)

Arden Motorsport
2013 3rd in British F3 (1 win), 16th in F3 European c'ship, 11th in FR3.5 (10 starts)
 Like Sainz, Buller enjoyed a part-season with Zeta Corse last year, and with a car that tended to stay in one piece more than the Spaniard's he was a regular thorn in the side of those fighting for points. A deal with Arden for this year should mean he has a more consistent car each weekend, so Buller could be capable of bigger and better things than we saw from his 10 outings last year. His signing (alongside Pierre Gasly) also gives Arden a strong line-up, something it was missing in 2013.



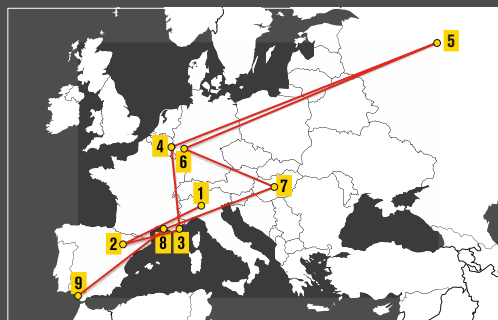
Norman Nato (F)

DAMS
2013 13th in FR3.5
 Much was expected of the Frenchman in his rookie campaign, but his flourishes of speed were fewer and further between than first hoped. He didn't quite manage to ride on team-mate Magnussen's coattails last year, but that said more about the form the now-McLaren F1 driver hit than how Nato was performing. With a second year at DAMS and a team-mate of similar experience, he'll have to find the form that almost helped him beat Daniil Kvyat to the 2012 FR ALPS title.



FR3.5 ENTRIES 2014

DAMS	Carlos Sainz Jr (E)	Norman Nato (F)
Fortec Motorsports	Sergey Sirotkin (RUS)	Oliver Rowland (GB)
International Draco Racing	Pietro Fantin (BR)	Luca Ghiotto (I)
Arden Motorsport	Pierre Gasly (F)	Will Buller (GB)
Tech 1 Racing	Marco Sorensen (DK)	TBA
Strakka Racing	Will Stevens (GB)	Matias Laine (FIN)
Lotus (Gravity-Charouz)	Marlon Stockinger (RP)	Matthieu Vaxiviere (F)
ISR	Jazeman Jaafar (MAL)	TBA
AVF	Zoel Amberg (CH)	Beitske Visser (NL)
Zeta Corse	Roman Mavlanov (RUS)	TBA
Pons Racing	Meindert van Buuren (NL)	TBA
Comtec Racing	Nikolay Martsenko (RUS)	TBA



2014 CALENDAR

RD	DATE	LOCATION
1	April 12-13	Monza (I)
2	April 26-27	Aragon (E)
3	May 25	Monaco (MC)
4	May 31-June 1	Spa (B)
5	June 28-29	Moscow (RUS)
6	July 12-13	Nurburgring (D)
7	September 13-14	Hungaroring (H)
8	September 27-28	Paul Ricard (F)
9	October 18-19	Jerez (E)

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FORMULA RENAULT 2.0

FORMULA RENAULT 2.0 ALPS 2014 // ROUND 1+2



The new Formula Renault 2.0 ALPS season kicked off in Italy, at the prestigious and historic Imola circuit. For the start of what looks set to be an exciting season, 12 teams fielded 41 drivers from 21 different countries. The first victory of 2014 was claimed by Koiranen GP's Nyck de Vries, the Dutch youngster having already collected this year's first pole position. Good driving from the Brazilian Bruno Bonifacio (Prema) – at Imola as a wild-card entry and thus not collecting points – netted second place, just ahead of Frenchman Simon Gachet (Arta Engineering), who was on the series podium for the first time. Brit Jack Aitken marked the start of Fortec Motorsports' first year in the series with fourth place.

Race 2 finished with a repeat of the finishing order from the first encounter: de Vries, Bonifacio, Gachet and Aitken. Shift your attention, though, to those who could steal the limelight when the series moves on to Pau. Sebastien Morris, Charles Leclerc, Martin Kodric and Thiago Vivacqua, the other Fortec Motorsports drivers, will be keen to build on the English team's successful debut at Imola. Watch out also for the Prema duo of Pole Alex Bosak and Singaporean Andrew Tang. Others that impressed were Dennis Anoshin and Marek Bockmann who, alongside the more experienced Denis Korneev, race for Jenzer Motorsport. Finally, keep an eye on Italy's Dario Capitanio (BVM Racing), who was among the fastest throughout the Imola weekend.



Next Race // Pau, France // 10-11 May 2014 // www.renaultsportitalia.com
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ALPS 2014

// IMOLA, ITALY



FORMULA RENAULT 2.0

ALPS

'No Country for Old Men' could well be the title of a movie of the Formula Renault 2.0 ALPS series in 2014: the youngest on track at Imola was British driver George Russell, who was born in 1998. Behind the wheel of the Koiranen GP car, he was always in the thick of the top-10 action in both races.

Also in the class of '98 are Monaco driver Charles Leclerc (Fortec Motorsports) and the Swiss Hugo De Sadeleer (Tech 1 Racing).

Among the young guns who have turned 17 in the Fast Lane Promotion Series is Australian James Allen (Arta Engineering), making his series debut at the Santerno track. Also 17 are Russian Semen Evstigneev (BVM Racing), Croatian Martin Kodric and Brazilian Thiago Vivacqua (Fortec Motorsports), German Marek Bockmann (Jenzer Motorsport), Chinese Kang Ling and Russian Vitaly Larionov (both racing for Koiranen GP), Malaysian Akash Nandy (Tech 1 Racing).

And at the next round in Pau (May 10-11), a new youngster will join the action: another Russian, Matevos Isaakyan, will race in a JD Motorsport car and at just 16 will be the youngest driver in the series.

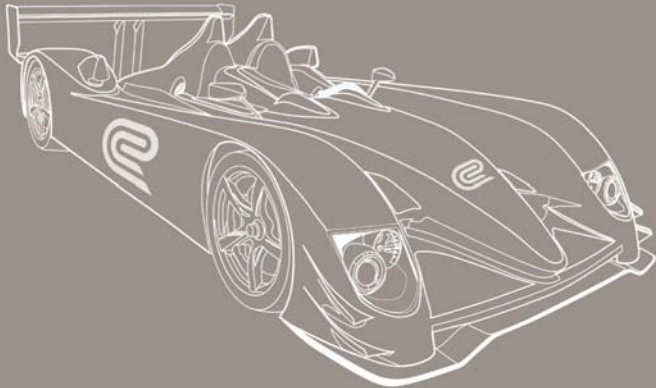
DRIVER	TEAM	PTS
Nyck de Vries	Koiranen GP	50
Simon Gachet	Arta Engineering	36
George Russell	Koiranen GP	25
Andrew Tang	Prema Powerteam	24
Sebastien Morris	Fortec Motorsports	23
Denis Korneev	Jenzer Motorsport	18
Alex Bosak	Prema Powerteam	10
Marek Böckmann	Jenzer Motorsport	6
Dario Capitanio	BVM Racing	4
Akash Nandy	Tech 1 Racing	3

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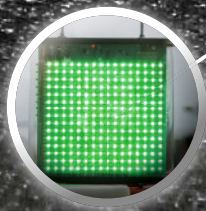
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Logano took four tyres in final stop so had to pass Gordon

NASCAR SPRINT CUP TEXAS (USA), APRIL 6 RD 7/36

Logano made to wait for Texas success

JOEY LOGANO HAD TO WORK

unexpectedly hard to win the rain-delayed Texas Motor Speedway NASCAR Sprint Cup race when a late yellow robbed him of what had been a dominant lead.

Before a flat tyre sent Kurt Busch into the wall with two laps to go, Logano had been sitting on a two-second cushion over Penske team-mate Brad Keselowski, with the rest of the field trailing far behind.

All the leaders dived to the pits ready for the green-white-chequered finish, and Jeff Gordon and Brian Vickers vaulted to the front by taking

just two fresh tyres. Keselowski's challenge for victory ended there due to a pitlane speeding penalty, but there was still no stopping Logano, who swiftly brushed aside both Vickers and Gordon to secure his first win of 2014 and a provisional Chase place.

Gordon held on to second, while Vickers fell behind Kyle Busch to fourth place. Rookie Kyle Larson again impressed, edging into the lead battle for a spell and finishing fifth.

Poleman Tony Stewart controlled the early stages of a race that was delayed until Monday by rain too

heavy even for NASCAR's much-lauded Air Titan system to handle. But the Stewart-Haas driver faded as the sun came out and had to settle for 10th place.

Denny Hamlin also led briefly before a pitlane speeding penalty cost him. He finished 13th.

The race's most dramatic incident happened on its first lap of green-flag running, when Dale Earnhardt Jr got onto the infield grass and then slammed into the wall. He was unhurt, despite his Hendrick Chevrolet ending up ablaze, while team-mate Jimmie Johnson's day

was ruined by debris from the incident flying into his car.

● Connell Sanders Jr

RESULTS

1 Joey Logano (Ford Fusion), 334 laps in 3h48m02s; 2 Jeff Gordon (Chevrolet SS) +0.476s; 3 Kyle Busch (Toyota Camry); 4 Brian Vickers (Toyota); 5 Kyle Larson (Chevy); 6 Greg Biffle (Ford); 7 Matt Kenseth (Toyota); 8 Clint Bowyer (Toyota); 9 Paul Menard (Chevy); 10 Tony Stewart (Chevy). **POINTS 1 Gordon, 259;** 2 Kenseth, 255; 3 Carl Edwards, 247; 4 Logano, 235; 5 Kyle Busch, 231; 6 Dale Earnhardt Jr, 228; 7 Jimmie Johnson, 228; 8 Brad Keselowski, 218; 9 Vickers, 205; 10 Menard, 203.



De Vries leads Bonifacio into Tamburello

FORMULA RENAULT ALPS IMOLA (I), APRIL 5-6 RD 1/7

Two from two for McLaren protege de Vries at Imola

MCLAREN PROTEGE NYCK DE VRIES

opened his 2014 account with a pair of dominant victories from pole position in the opening Formula Renault 2.0 ALPS round at Imola.

Despite a safety car in race one, de Vries cruised to a 10s victory over wildcard entry Bruno Bonifacio, admitting it was "relatively easy".

British duo Jack Aitken and Seb Morris missed out on a podium finish, as Morris lost time in an incident at Turn 1 and dropped to 12th, and Frenchman Simon Gachet passed Aitken, who branded the early laps "absolute chaos". George Russell finished sixth, with Matt Parry ninth.

On Sunday de Vries did it again, pulling clear as Bonifacio ran wide at Rivazza and let Gachet past. Bonifacio repassed Gachet for second, and Aitken finished just 0.4s behind him. Morris was sixth, with Russell ninth.

● Garth Rivers

RESULTS

Race 1 1 Nyck de Vries, 14 laps in 28m02.627s; 2 Bruno Bonifacio, +10.372s; 3 Simon Gachet; 4 Jack Aitken; 5 Dennis Olsen; 6 George Russell. **Race 2 1 De Vries,** 14 laps in 28m02.627s; 2 Bonifacio, +10.372s; 3 Gachet; 4 Aitken; 5 Dennis Olsen; 6 Seb Morris **Points 1** Munoz, 317; 2 Karam, 309; 3 Chaves, 281; 4 Hawksworth, 274; 5 Dempsey, 266; 6 Zach Veach, 227.

NURBURGRING 24H QUALIFYING RACE NORDSCHLEIFE (D), APRIL 5

Marc VDS heads BMW lockout in 24-hour warm-up

BMW TEAMS LOCKED OUT THE FIRST four places in the non-VLN series six-hour race around the Nordschleife, a qualifying event for June's 24 Hours.

The Marc VDS Z4 of Uwe Alzen and DTM drivers Marco Wittmann and Maxime Martin took the spoils. The team won by a one-lap margin over the Schubert BMW of Claudia Hürtgen, Jens Klingmann and Dominik Baumann.

The second Schubert Z4 of Dirk Werner, Dirk Muller and new BMW signings Lucas Luhr and Alexander Sims came third, followed by the second Marc VDS car featuring Bas Leinders, Markus Palttala, Nick

Catsburg and Dirk Adorf. Rob Huff, Kevin Gleason and Richard Meins scored a class win in a Rotek Audi.

● Rene de Boer

RESULTS

1 Maxime Martin/Marco Wittmann/Uwe Alzen (BMW Z4 GT3), 41 laps in 6h08m21.556s; 2 Claudia Hürtgen/Jens Klingmann/Dominik Baumann (BMW), -1 lap; 3 Dirk Werner/Dirk Muller/Lucas Luhr/Alexander Sims (BMW); 4 Bas Leinders/Markus Palttala/Nick Catsburg/Dirk Adorf (BMW); 5 Abdulaziz Al Faisal/Stephan Rosler/Christian Menzel/Jeroen Bleekemolen (Mercedes-Benz SLS AMG GT3); 5 Roman Rusinov/Stephane Ortelli/Edward Sandstrom/Nico Muller (Audi R8 LMS ultra).



BMW's held sway in Nurburgring 24H qualifying event

Rally of Portugal



World Rally Championship
Algarve (P), April 3-6

Round 4/13

RESULTS

16 STAGES, 210.940 MILES

1	SEBASTIEN OGIER (F)/JULIEN INGRASSIA (F)	
	VW Motorsport Volkswagen Polo R WRC #1	3h33m20.4s
2	MIKKO HIRVONEN (FIN)/JARMO LEHTINEN (FIN)	+43.2s
	M-Sport Ford Fiesta RS WRC #5	
3	MADS OSTBERG (N)/JONAS ANDERSSON (S)	+1m12.4s
	Citroen Total Abu Dhabi Citroen DS3 WRC #4	
4	ANDREAS MIKKELSEN (N)/MIKKO MARKKULA (FIN)	+4m50.5s
	VW Motorsport Volkswagen Polo R WRC #9	
5	HENNING SOLBERG (N)/ILKA MINOR (A)	+5m10.2s
	Ford Fiesta RS WRC #16	
6	MARTIN PROKOP (CZ)/JAN TOMANEK (CZ)	+8m27.2s
	Jipocar Czech National Team M-Sport Ford Fiesta RS WRC #21	
7	THIERRY NEUVILLE (B)/NICOLAS GILSOUL (B)	+8m32.3s
	Hyundai Motorsport Hyundai i20 WRC #7	
8	JUHO HANNINEN (FIN)/TOMI TUOMINEN (FIN)	+8m51.6s
	Hyundai Motorsport Hyundai i20 WRC #8	
9	NASSER AL-ATTIYAH (QAT)/GIOVANNI BERNACCHINI (I)	+10m14.7s
	Ford Fiesta RRC #40	
10	JARI KETOMAA (FIN)/KAJ LINDSTROM (FIN)	+10m36.3s
	Drive DMACK Ford Fiesta R5 #35	

OTHERS

14	JARI-MATTI LATVALA (FIN)/MIKKA ANTILLA (FIN)	+15m53.6s
	VW Motorsport Volkswagen Polo R WRC #2	
22	ELFYN EVANS (GB)/DANIEL BARRITT (GB)	+22m31.2s
	M-Sport Ford Fiesta RS WRC #6	
R	DANI SORDO (E)/MARC MARTI (E)	Before SS14-d/shaft
	Hyundai Motorsport Hyundai i20 WRC #20	
R	ROBERT KUBICA (PL)/MACIEK SZCZEPANIAK (PL)	SS9-accident
	RK M-Sport Ford Fiesta RS WRC #10	
R	KRIS MEEKE (GB)/PAUL NAGLE (IRL)	SS7-accident
	Citroen Total Abu Dhabi Citroen DS3 WRC #3	

DRIVERS' CHAMPIONSHIP

1	OGIER	91	6	NEUVILLE	21
2	LATVALA	62	7	EVANS	20
3	OSTBERG	48	8	BOUFFIER	18
4	MIKKELSEN	36	9	PROKOP	18
5	HIRVONEN	36	10	MEEKE	17

MANUFACTURERS' CHAMPIONSHIP

1	VW MOTORSPORT	144	4	HYUNDAI MOTORSPORT	45
2	CITROEN TOTAL	75	5	VW MOTORSPORT 2	40
3	M-SPORT	60	6	JIPOCAR CZECH NATIONAL	20

STAGE TIMES

SS1 LISBOA 1 (2.03 miles) Fastest: Ogier 2m52.7s Leader: Ogier	SS10 MALHAO 1 (13.76 miles) Fastest: Latvala 13m58.1s Leader: Ogier
SS2 SILVES 1 (13.36 miles) Fastest: Sordo 12m25.5s Leader: Ogier	SS11 SANTA CLARA 1 (11.86 miles) Fastest: Ogier 12m04.7s Leader: Ogier
SS3 OURIQUE 1 (15.55 miles) Fastest: Sordo 12m20.8s Leader: Sordo	SS12 SANTANA DA SERRA 1 (19.82 miles) Fastest: Ogier 23m00.6s Leader: Ogier
SS4 ALMODOVAR 1 (16.45 miles) Fastest: Latvala 16m31.8s Leader: Ogier	SS13 MALHAO 1 (13.76 miles) Fastest: Ogier 13m49.2s Leader: Ogier
SS5 SILVES 2 (13.36 miles) Fastest: Ogier 11m53.8s Leader: Ogier	SS14 LOULE 1 (8.59 miles) Fastest: Latvala 8m57.8s Leader: Ogier
SS6 OURIQUE 2 (15.55 miles) Fastest: Neuville 12m10.4s Leader: Ogier	SS15 S BRAS DE ALPORTEL (10.07 miles) Fastest: Ostberg 11m38.7s Leader: Ogier
SS7 ALMODOVAR 2 (16.45 miles) Fastest: Hirvonen 16m27.6s Leader: Hirvonen	SS16 LOULE 2 (8.59 miles) Fastest: Ogier 8m41.7s Leader: Ogier
SS8 SANTA CLARA 1 (11.86 miles) Fastest: Ogier 12m23.0s Leader: Hirvonen	
SS9 SANTANA DA SERRA 1 (19.82 miles) Fastest: Ogier 23m10.2s Leader: Ogier	

Rally route

A new ceremonial start in Estoril was followed by the now traditional dash around Lisbon's city streets on Thursday night. The gravel stages, which were all familiar from last year, were based out of the Algarve Stadium.

FOR IN-DEPTH RESULTS
forix.autosport.com



Ogier leaves the rest trailing in his wake

The world champion's third win from four events has given him a huge points lead as he bids for title number two. **By DAVID EVANS**

TWELVE MONTHS AGO SEBASTIEN OGIER CAME TO Portugal as a weak, but aspiring world champion. Last week he controlled the event and won as he wanted. The flu that had riddled the Frenchman last time was long forgotten. He came as a champion, drove like a hero and towered above the best of the rest. Strength in spades. That's not to underestimate Mikko Hirvonen's efforts to needle him, the M-Sport driver's second place was by far his best result since returning to the Fiesta. Portugal last week had it all: crazy weather, unpredictable conditions, brilliant driving, big crashes and political intrigue that left the drivers not giving interviews on Saturday morning.

LEG ONE (92.77 miles)
Overcast- ambient temperature range on stages 12-23C

Blinking in the late afternoon sunshine on Thursday, Ogier smiled. Helmet off, he could still hear the thousands cheering his fastest time through Lisbon's city streets.

But what about the weather? Running first on the road, wouldn't clouds and their contents have better for the Frenchman? He shrugged. After the near unbelievable rain on the recce, everybody was pleased to see the sun. And nobody was ready to second-guess what Friday morning might bring.

There wasn't any rain, but the water had done its work. Conditions changed from corner to corner – sometimes three or four times in the same corner. VW's strategy was not the hero-maker.

"It's so tough," said Ogier, sounding pretty stressed at the end of the SS3. "Incredibly tough."

The rain had washed away much of the loose



Hirvonen was back on form with strong second

No-one had an answer
to Ogier's dominance
once he'd hit his stride



gravel from the surface but it had replaced it with a thick seam of mud – and Ogier was the first to find where it was deepest.

Twelfth on the road, Dani Sordo made the most of a slightly cleaner surface by giving Hyundai's i20 WRC its first fastest time in Silves. The Spaniard went one better in Ourique when his second scratch time landed the Koreans the rally lead for the first time.

Unfortunately for Sordo, drying conditions exposed both a lack of range in terms of adapting the suspension in the field and a shortage of power on the harder road in Almodovar. He had slipped to fifth by the time lunch was served.

And Ogier was back to the front. Normal service resumed? Not a bit of it. Ogier was sure of nothing. "It's difficult to know for the tyre this afternoon," he said. "And the competition is so close..."

He wasn't wrong. The top half-dozen were split by nine seconds. The good news for his employer was that Jari-Matti Latvala was second, although the Finn was mystified by the inconsistency in grip.

Ending his second morning as a 29-year-old just four-tenths off the front, a slightly baffled Latvala said: "In Wales, you can read the road and you know what you will get, here it's not possible. We have the water lying in some very strange places."

M-Sport's Mikko Hirvonen was chipper in third. Having shown flashes of the kind of pace we know he's capable of earlier this year, he pulled it together for his best loop yet in a Fiesta. Great as Mikko's morning was, there was a danger of Ott Tanak overshadowing his efforts. The Estonian had been second after SS3 and would have stayed there had his co-driver not got out of sync in the notes on

some of the quick bits in stage four.

"He was telling me about the corners when I was already in them," smiled Tanak. "That's not so good."

Tanak and Raigo Molder didn't bother with second helpings at lunchtime and dived straight onto the laptop to watch the onboard footage from the recce.

Two high-profile M-Sporters late for lunch were Robert Kubica and Elfyn Evans, both of whom were caught out in stage four. Kubica ripped a wheel off his Fiesta and blocked the stage, while Evans rolled off the road on a medium-speed right.

Decision time. What to do? Hot or cold? Hard or soft?

VW and the Citroens went hard, Hirvonen and Sordo went soft. The first stage was inconclusive – Ogier was fastest, but Tanak was just nine tenths behind.

Watching the cars going off the line in SS6, Hirvonen feared the worst.

"I saw the dust coming," he said, "and I really thought we had got it wrong."

They hadn't. They'd got it absolutely right.

The clouds came and, while they didn't deliver any more rain, they kept the ambient down and left the Michelin H2s cold. Ogier lost three seconds in SS6 and eight in the final stage of the day. First became third. It could be worse – he only had to look at Latvala for confirmation; the Finn roofed his Polo first stage out of service. It would take two fork-lift trucks to drag it straight later that night.

It had been a long time since Dyfi, Friday November 11, 2011, but Hirvonen was leading in a Fiesta again. Arriving back in service, he and

Citroen's best was
again Ostberg in third



Malcolm Wilson shared a smile. A big smile.

"It's worked today," said the leader. "It's nice that people are saying: 'Mikko's back' but I'm not sure I've ever been away. There have been good times on the rallies earlier this year, but today it's all come together. I feel very comfortable in the car."

But could he keep Ogier behind him?

"We'll see," was the response. "He's not going to give up."

And neither was Tanak. His lunchtime cramming had worked a treat on the second run through Almodovar.

"The notes were perfect," he said at the end of the stage. And so was he.

An end-of-day third was a bit of a novelty for Ogier. Asked about his choice of covers for the afternoon, the champ made his PR purr with: "Our strategy wasn't optimal."

The potential upside was that Ogier had an extra set of softs in the bank, should the weekend weather go south.

"I don't think it will," he said. "I think we've been on softs for the last time on this rally. Our strategy has been safe all day today, so it's a positive to be just six seconds off the lead."

Ostberg was a further 19s behind in fourth, having mirrored Ogier's tyre selection. The Norwegian was pleased his times had been in the same ballpark as Ogier, but admitted he was mystified at the afternoon weather.

"The team and I have good experience of this event," he said, "and – even with the cloud cover – we expected the stages to dry out a lot more than they did."

Sordo might not have been leading any longer, but his brilliant day continued. He ended Friday just a tenth of a second behind Ostberg – and that included doing the final stage without the protection of a sumpguard, which had come adrift midway through SS6.

"I was worried," Sordo said, "so I drove in the middle of the road in the last one."

Hyundai's Friday got even better when Thierry Neuville cemented sixth with fastest time on the second run at Ourique. The Belgian had struggled with the set-up through the morning, but dialled the i20 in at service and pushed in the afternoon.

"I had a good feeling in the stage," said Neuville, "so I thought: 'Why not?' It was a good time."

Henning Solberg overcame an early puncture to land an overnight seventh ahead of a confidence-rebuilding run from Andreas Mikkelsen.

Kris Meeke's hopes of a similar job went awry when he tripped up on the same corner as Evans first time through, shunting his Citroen.

POSITIONS AFTER DAY ONE

1 Hirvonen/Lehtinen	1h25m05.6s
2 Tanak/Molder	+3.7s
3 Ogier/Ingrassia	+6.5s
4 Ostberg/Andersson	+25.6s
5 Sordo/Marti	+25.7s
6 Neuville/Gilsoul	+42.0s

MCKLEIN

Hyundai soldiered on to P7 and P8, led by Neuville



LEG TWO (90.89 miles)

Overcast - ambient temperature range on stages 14-21C

Hirvonen could have been forgiven for a moment's hesitation in drawing back his curtains on Saturday morning. Clouds. Lots of them. Not good. He wanted sun. Lots of it. The weather wasn't playing ball. With only one new set of softs left, he bolted them on and prayed for a break in the weather.

Immediately, Ogier was quicker than the leader - but not quicker than Tanak. The 26-year-old took two tenths of a second out of everybody across the first two miles of Santa Clara. By the end of the test, Hirvonen remained out front and was content that he had contained the time loss to the charging Polo to just two tenths. On hearing that Ogier reckoned he had something in reserve, Hirvonen said: "If he does, we have to do the same."

Heading west for the event's longest stage - the 20-mile Santana de Serra test - anticipation was massive. This was the moment. Ogier took it. He hit the front, taking 8.7s out of Hirvonen.

"We had the chance to make a break," he said. "We pushed, but it was not crazy. Mikko is driving fast at the moment."

Hirvonen admitted he'd lost a little confidence in the super-quick middle section of the stage - which he reckoned accounted for a couple of seconds of the deficit. He would, he promised, redouble his efforts in the morning's final test. After dropping time to the new leader in split one, Hirvonen pulled eight tenths out in the next couple of miles before disaster struck. Well, not quite disaster for him, but certainly disaster for Tanak. His fellow Fiesta driver rolled and blocked the road. Hirvonen stopped and got out of the car to check his team-mates (who were fine) and would later have his time adjusted to equal that of Ogier.

Morning done, Hirvonen was 9.8s down and, with no new boots for a cloudy afternoon, powerless to stop Ogier.



Fifth was a good effort from Henning Solberg

MCKLEIN/LAT

Predictably and progressively, the leader eased his way clear on the second Saturday loop. Seven seconds in the first, 11s in the second and 17s quicker than Hirvonen in the third ensured he would go into a 27-mile final day with 38s in hand.

"It should be OK now," smiled Ogier.

Hirvonen had done all he could. Ostberg had stepped up on to the provisional podium after Tanak rolled out on the final stage of the morning. The lead Citroen driver had saved himself a set of softs for the final day and a possible three-point powerstage.

Sordo remained a solid fourth ahead of the final day. His i20 was the only one running not to hit trouble through Saturday as Neuville slipped down the order with broken suspension and Hanninen suffered two more punctures. Solberg and Mikkelsen ensured that half of the top six were Norwegian by close of play on day two.

POSITIONS AFTER DAY TWO

1 Ogier/Ingrassia	3h03.39.8s
2 Hirvonen/Lehtinen	+38.1s
3 Ostberg/Andersson	+1m26.7s
4 Sordo/Marti	+1m46.7s
5 Solberg/Minor	+4m29.9s
6 Mikkelsen/Markkula	+4m44.8s

LEG THREE (27.26 miles)

Sunny - ambient temperature range on stages 15-24C

Finally, the sun did its thing. But with the stages all running before midday, the drivers all cobbled together as many soft tyres as they could and headed out for one final loop. The first two stages were anybody's. All eyes were on the second run through Loule, the Powerstage.

All eyes except for the Spanish eyes. There was huge disappointment from Portugal's next-door contingent when Sordo retired with driveshaft failure on the run out to Sunday's stages. The only positional change on pace came from Mikkelsen, who powered past Solberg to clinch fourth in a fabulous bounceback from the misery of a brace of Mexican rolls last month. Ostberg's decision to save his tyres netted him an extra point for third place in SS16, but this one was all about the Polos.

Out of the picture since his roll on Friday, Latvala put his all into the last eight miles of the event. Hanging the VW out, he rocketed to the top of the timesheets and stayed there until the flag dropped on Ogier. Typically Ogier had talked of only pushing if he felt comfortable. As always, he felt comfortable. And he massacred everybody. Quickest in every split, he galloped across the finish an incredible 3.3s quicker than Latvala.

That final stage was the very antithesis of this event for Ogier. Early doors, he drove tactically. But, in Loule 2, he unleashed the full force of his ability.

The best of the rest should be afraid. Very afraid. 🚗

IN THE SERVICE PARK

DAVID EVANS
RALLIES EDITOR
@daviddevansrally



THE ONLY SILVER LINING FOR ROBERT KUBICA was that he didn't have to explain himself or his second accident in as many days... for the third rally in a row.

The extraordinary situation that led to the drivers being told not to talk to television reporters is detailed elsewhere on these pages, but the absence of a microphone moments after he dropped the Fiesta in the second Saturday stage was very welcome.

Kubica is feeling the pain right now. Fortunately for him he has perspective on this. Painful as it might be that he has crashed 10 times in five rallies, it's nothing compared with what he has been through. And there's nothing surer than the fact that he will get it right. Kubica comes from the world champion mould and it's times like this that build the character and make the good times great.

It's exactly that message that Kris Meeke has to remember as well. Meeke's position is similar; the Citroen man needs a finish. Not necessarily a result, but certainly a trouble-free run through three days from beginning to end.

In sport, confidence is everything, but it's never more important than when a driver's just heard the words, "six right tightens..." if a driver can't make that one stick then it's time to knock it on the head. Kubica and Meeke are as quick and as committed as any other driver in the service park and their time will come.



Kubica won't keep doing this forever

MCKLEIN

BIG NUMBER

0000

That's the percentage of wins from starts that Volkswagen has achieved since the firm rejoined the WRC at the start of last season. It equates to 14 victories in 17 rallies



Teams and promoter to meet over sport's future

THE WRC PROMOTER AND THE teams have committed to a sport-shaping meeting following an unprecedented row in Faro during last week's Rally of Portugal.

The teams were denied access to video footage from Friday's stages after what was described as a misunderstanding. But when they were reportedly unable to contact the promoter to discuss the matter late that night, the teams instructed their drivers not to give interviews to the WRC television crews.

Saturday morning was greeted with bizarre scenes as the leading drivers kept their doors shut at the end of the stages and refused to talk. A meeting was rapidly arranged for the afternoon and 20 minutes later the teams were given the footage and the promoter had its interviews.

Privately, the teams were furious at the situation and demanded a meeting prior to

the next round in Argentina to clear the air once and for all.

Citroen team principal Yves Matton told AUTOSPORT: "We found a short-term compromise on Saturday, we solved some of the problems and now we look forward to the meeting before Argentina. It seems this was a... misunderstanding, it's what they [the WRC promoters] say. If the misunderstanding brings us to the solution then maybe sometimes it's good to have a misunderstanding."

Matton added that the next meeting was crucial for the future of the series.

"For the manufacturer to be involved in the long-term we need to see some plans on what is the future from the promoter. We don't just want the plan, we want the timetable and financial case of the promotion of the championship."

Asked for his take on the loss of drivers

for interview, WRC promoter Oliver Ciesla said: "I cannot answer why they [the manufacturers] did this. I simply do not understand it. In regard to the footage, they are entitled to get by the underlying agreements and in line with what they ask us for before the event. Let's not forget, this footage does not fall out of the sky, we need time to carve it out – whoever ordered it, gets it."

Following the Saturday meeting, Ciesla added: "Relations are intact. We quickly found consensus and we expect further constructive and positive talks."

Volkswagen's Jost Capito added: "We will have a big meeting and we believe everything will be sorted. We will have agreement before Argentina. In Portugal we agreed we could forget what has happened in the past and start with a clean sheet of paper – that's very positive."



SORDO WANTS MORE

Dani Sordo is hoping his rally-leading effort will be enough to prompt Hyundai to change its Rally Argentina entry in favour of him over Juho Hanninen. The Spaniard (above) became the first driver to head a WRC round in an i20 on the opening day, but ultimately retired with a broken driveshaft on the final morning.

SOLBERG FOR EUROPE

Henning Solberg is hoping to contest all the remaining European rounds of this year's WRC with help from countryman and rival Mads Ostberg's father Morten. Ostberg Sr is hunting for sponsors for Solberg and is confident of making it in time for June's Rally d'Italia.

NASSER'S DEBUT WIN

Former Dakar winner Nasser Al-Attiyah took a debut WRC2 win in his Fiesta RRC. The event was particularly special for his co-driver Giovanni Bernacchini, whose father Arnaldo navigated Raffaele Pinto to victory in Portugal 40 years ago. Jari Ketomaa was second to Al-Attiyah in his Drive DMACK Fiesta R5.

PARN TAKES TROPHY

Estonian Sander Parn won the opening round of the Drive DMACK Fiesta Trophy after five lead changes in the ultra-competitive series. Welshman Tom Cave was second despite rolling on Saturday and led until the penultimate stage.

FISHER'S JWRC WOES

Alastair Fisher missed out on victory in the Junior WRC opener. He was leading until he crashed on the final stage on Saturday and was unable to continue after engine damage on his DS3 R3.

CHINA/BRAZIL FOR '15?

China and Brazil are confirmed by the WRC promoter as the only countries in the running for world championship status next season. The promoter added that the calendar would not increase beyond the current 13 rallies.

CITROEN R5 APPEARS

Citroen's DS3 R5 made an inauspicious debut on last weekend's Sanremo Rally, finishing sixth in the hands of Italian privateer Rudy Michelini – behind an Peugeot R2 car. Sebastien Chardonnet will give the car its first WRC outing in Sardinia in June.

Meeke: I'm down but not out

KRIS MEEKE HAS ADMITTED his latest crash, on the opening day in Portugal, has left him feeling lower than ever in his career.

The Citroen driver crashed on the final Friday stage. It was the third event in succession in which he has spent time off the road.

"I'm at the bottom right now," said

Meeke. "This is the lowest point of my career. I don't feel like I've found the right balance yet. I know the speed is there, I've been in the zone where it clicks and it becomes so simple, but right now it just ain't happening. I'll go home and reboot and find a way out of this."

Meeke was unable to return to the rally due to damage to his DS3 WRC's rollcage.



Irishman Meeke will "reboot" after crash



Kubica will get help to rediscover form

Wilson to help 'repair' Kubica

M-SPORT'S MALCOLM WILSON

says he will be putting more time in with Robert Kubica in an effort to help the Pole rediscover the form that carried him to the WRC2 title last season, after the ex-F1 star crashed twice in Portugal.

"We've got some ideas and some things we're going to work on with him," said Wilson. "We need to get him back on track. There's no doubting his ability."

Kubica, who has now crashed 10 times in five rallies, added: "I am going through a difficult period of my life, even though I've had worse times. I need to reset and try to approach rallies in the way that I did 12 months ago."



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SUPER GT OKAYAMA (J), APRIL 6 RD 1/8

Ito and Caldarelli strike first

DAISUKE ITO AND ANDREA CALDARELLI drove their Bridgestone-shod, TOM'S-run Lexus RC F to victory in the opening round of the new-look Super GT Championship at Okayama International Circuit last Sunday.

Japan's top sportscar series entered its new era with a global link to Germany's DTM, and now features two-litre racing engines for the three big marques: Toyota, Nissan and Honda. The latter, however, was the only one to take advantage of a mid-mounted engine with added hybrid motivation.

Kazuya Oshima and Yuji Kunimoto clinched pole position on Saturday for the Cerumo Team Le Mans-run Lexus RC F, Oshima breaking the lap record at the venue by three seconds to line up ahead of the Joao Paulo de Oliveira/Hironobu Yasuda Team Impul Nissan GT-R.

Oshima led from the start and pulled away on the opening lap. Britain's James Rossiter, driving another TOM'S Lexus, started from fourth on the grid, but was pushed off by the Tsugio Matsuda/Ronnie Quintarelli Nissan GT-R, forcing him into the gravel, where he lost two laps.

Caldarelli moved up to second by lap 20 from fifth on the grid, the Italian sticking with slick tyres in mixed weather conditions as some cars changed over to wets. He closed



Ito/Caldarelli Lexus grabbed Okayama win

in on the lead before handing over to Ito, who also pushed hard before encountering a stroke of luck on lap 55. Leader Kunimoto hit downshift trouble and became stuck in fourth gear. As a result, he could do nothing to stop Ito overtaking him.

Ito went on to claim his first victory since 2012, and it was the first in Japan for Caldarelli in two years of trying. De Oliveira and Yasuda came home third, despite the Brazilian being spun by a Nissan on lap two.

Britain's Oliver Jarvis drove his SARD Lexus to fourth place on

his category debut, partnering Hiroaki Ishiura.

● Jiro Takahashi

RESULTS

1 Daisuke Ito/Andrea Caldarelli (Lexus RC F), 81 laps in 1h57m15.816s; 2 Kazuya Oshima/Yuji Kunimoto (Lexus RC F), +5.026s; 3 Joao Paulo de Oliveira/Hironobu Yasuda (Nissan GT-R); 4 Hiroaki Ishiura/Oliver Jarvis (Lexus); 5 Naoki Yamamoto/Jean-Karl Vernay (Honda NSX Concept); 6 Kodai Tsukakoshi/Toshihiro Kaneishi (Honda). **POINTS**
1 Ito/Caldarelli, 20; 2 Oshima/Kunimoto, 15; 3 De Oliveira/Yasuda, 11; 4 Ishiura/Jarvis, 8; 5 Yamamoto/Vernay, 6; 6 Tsukakoshi/Kaneishi, 5.

V8 SUPERCARS WINTON (AUS), APRIL 5-6 RD 3/14

Holdsworth scores maiden win for Merc

THREE WINNERS IN THREE MAKES OF car ensured Winton's round of the V8 Supercars was one to remember.

Fabian Coulthard and Mark Winterbottom each scored a victory for Holden and Ford respectively, but it was the man who won the middle race who stole the headlines.

Lee Holdsworth's win was the third of his career, but the first for the Erebus Mercedes-Benz AMG team, whose owner Betty Klimenko admits to spending as much as £20 million of her own money in two seasons taking her largely unsponsored team to the podium. The win also came four days

after a naked Holdsworth defended his family from an attempted home invasion with a baseball bat!

A damaged track surface caused problems in practice, and the solution to that increased the grip level to the point where up to two seconds was taken from the qualifying record. Consequently many teams struggled with set-up. Winterbottom qualified a lowly 23rd for one of the races and defending champion Jamie Whincup never got to grips with the track, scoring results of 9-19-10.

Coulthard and Scott McLaughlin showed the best pace, and both

looked to be in contention in the final race when, separately, they received drive-through penalties for speeding in the pitlane (along with three other equally unhappy drivers).

McLaughlin's Volvo was very swift, taking its first pole of the season, but it remains fragile, suffering head gasket and alternator problems.

Holden's James Courtney took his third podium of the year, and has vaulted up to fourth in the points.

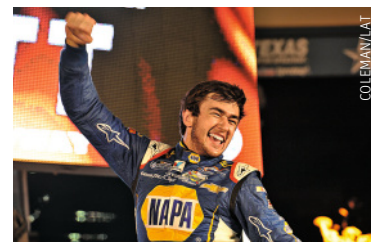
● Phil Branagan

RESULTS

Race 1 1 Fabian Coulthard (Holden Commodore VF), 34 laps in 53m05.96s; 2 Shane Van Gisbergen (Holden), +5.01s; 3 Dale Wood (Holden); 4 Jason Bright (Holden); 5 Lee Holdsworth (Mercedes-Benz E63 AMG); 6 Will Davison (Mercedes-Benz). **Race 2 1 Holdsworth**, 34 laps in 48m27.58s; 2 Mark Winterbottom (Ford Falcon FG), +1.45s; 3 Coulthard; 4 David Reynolds (Ford); 5 David Wall (Holden); 6 James Moffat (Nissan Altima). **Race 3 1 Winterbottom**, 67 laps in 1h36m23.44s; 2 James Courtney (Holden), +9.49s; 3 Tim Slade (Holden); 4 Bright; 5 David Reynolds (Ford); 6 Chaz Mostert (Ford). **Points** 1 Lowndes, 701; 2 Winterbottom, 673; 3 Coulthard, 658; 4 Courtney, 609; 5 Whincup, 606; 6 Van Gisbergen, 549.



Holdsworth (4) battled past Coulthard to win



NASCAR NATIONWIDE

Eighteen-year-old Chase Elliott (above), son of former Cup champion Bill, scored his first victory in NASCAR's second-tier series after pulling off a sensational round-the-outside pass on long-time leader Kevin Harvick at Texas. Driving for Dale Earnhardt Jr, it was only Elliott's sixth start in the series, and he now leads the points. Cup stars Kyle Busch, Kyle Larson and Harvick followed him home.

BRAZILIAN F3

Pedro Piquet started his F3 career in dominant style at Taruma. The 15-year-old son of three-times world champion Nelson won both races and now owns the circuit's overall lap record. He stalled at the start of the first race and had to battle back past his opponents – with the help of two safety car interventions and the retirement of leader Lukas Moraes with gearbox problems.

BRAZILIAN TOURING CARS

Second place in race one at Taruma and fourth in the second has put Denis Navarro (Toyota Corolla) on top of the points, six ahead of defending champion Ricardo Mauricio, who took his Honda Civic to victory in the opening race. Ex-Indycar driver Victor Meira won the second round in his Ford Focus, after finishing down in eighth in the first.

V8 DEVELOPMENT

Ash Walsh took the honours in the V8 Supercar Development Series at Winton. Cameron Waters led Steve Owen and Walsh to a Ford 1-2-3 in the first race on Saturday, while Walsh won the second encounter ahead of Paul Dumbrell and Garry Jacobsen (Holdens). Dumbrell continues to lead the championship.

EUROV8

Eddie Cheever III (below) dominated on his tin-top debut in the revamped series formerly known as Superstars at Monza. The former F3 racer led race one from start to finish over Nicola Baldan in a Mercedes C63 AMG 1-2, as ex-F1 racer Domenico Schiattarella trailed them home in his Chevrolet Camaro. Francesco Sini finished fifth from the pitlane in his Camaro in race one, and was second to Cheever in the reversed-grid race two, with Schiattarella third.



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CELEBRATING A SPECIAL E.R.A.

This year marks the 80th anniversary of one of Britain's most significant early racers.

KEVIN TURNER watched ex-BTCC star Anthony Reid get to grips with an ERA



Vanwall, BRM, Cooper and Lotus. These are the names that usually get the credit when it comes to the early days of British motorsport success. They certainly all played their part in Formula 1 in the 1950s, but two decades earlier a different firm had hinted at what was possible for a UK operation.

When English Racing Automobiles started building voiturettes – effectively a pre-war Formula 2 – in 1934, it had been a decade since Britain's last significant single-seater success in Europe. After Henry Segrave's victory in the 1924 San Sebastian GP for Sunbeam, UK efforts were directed at sportscars or Britain's first permanent race circuit, Brooklands.

ERA changed that. Raymond Mays had experienced success with a modified Riley 12/6 – the 'White Riley' – in 1933 and, with backing from wealthy amateur racer Humphrey Cook, founded ERA. Along with design and engineering input from Peter Berthon, Reid Railton and Murray Jamieson, Mays developed the first ERAs for the 1934 season.

Armed with 1100cc or 1500cc supercharged six-cylinder engines, the ERAs took on the Bugattis and Maseratis in the single-seater category immediately below GP racing. Once over initial teething troubles, they impressed, dominating the 1935 season in the hands of drivers like Richard Seaman, who would go on to race for the Mercedes-Benz GP team. The cars also scored success in hillclimbs and, while overtaken by newer cars from Maserati and Alfa Romeo in the late 1930s, still proved useful tools for privateers after World War Two.

With the 1.5-litre supercharged/4.5-litre unsupercharged category becoming the new F1 after hostilities ended, ERAs became eligible for top-level GP racing. The venerable workhorse was never likely to take outright wins, but Bob Gerard finished third and second in the 1948 and 1949 British GPs at Silverstone, and was in the top six for the first two events of the newly formed world championship in 1950.

Not only did the relatively simple and rugged ERAs prove British engineering could compete on a world stage, they also encouraged Mays to press on with BRM, which would – eventually – be part of the UK's successful invasion of GP racing.

Almost as soon as the ERAs stopped racing in contemporary events, they were put into service in historic competition. Only 17 were built and thus the survivors are among the most continuously used competition cars in the world.

It only seemed right, therefore, that AUTOSPORT should mark the 80th birthday of one of the UK's most significant early racers with a track test. Thanks to current owner Nick Topliss, it's ERA R4A that is at Silverstone waiting for us. And a little while later former British Touring Car racer Anthony Reid, a man familiar with a wide range of historic machinery, walks into the garage ready to prepare for his first taste of an ERA.

GETTING READY TO GO

"The first thing that strikes me is what a remarkable piece of engineering it is," says Reid. "The way it's put together is really purposeful, designed for the job in hand. It looks really solid so I have quite a lot of confidence just looking at the car. You can see it's well put together."

As is perhaps to be expected of a car that has competed across eight decades, R4A has picked up a few tweaks along the way. No ERAs were the same, and suspension, engine and chassis ▶



A BRIEF HISTORY OF ERA R4A

Most ERAs have fantastic histories and R4A is no exception. Originally run as a 1100cc car, R4A was the first customer ERA and was raced successfully by Pat Fairfield. As well as winning the Mannin Beg 200-miler on the Isle of Man and the Dieppe GP for voiturettes, Fairfield also took the car, which he drove in both 1100cc and 1500cc forms, to success in South Africa.

After Fairfield's death at Le Mans in 1937, the car passed into the hands of Norman Wilson and Reg Parnell before British racer Bob Gerard, who at one time owned three ERAs, purchased R4A in 1945.

Company founder Raymond Mays had used a two-litre version in hillclimbs before WW2 and several ERAs later got the engine upgrade. Gerard installed a two-litre in R4A for hillclimb events in 1947, as well as lowering the scuttle and sloping the radiator grille.

R4A was later owned by leading historic competitor John Venables-Llewelyn, who added to its victory tally. It now regularly competes in VSCC races and hillclimbs in the hands of Nick Topliss and James Baxter. Baxter won the 2013 VSCC hillclimb title, while Topliss took his maiden race win at Mallory Park.

R4A PRE-WW2 HIGHLIGHTS

1935

Mannin Beg (Isle of Man)	Pat Fairfield	1st
Nuffield Trophy (Donington)	Pat Fairfield	1st
Dieppe Voiturettes	Pat Fairfield	1st

1936

British Empire Trophy (Donington)	Pat Fairfield	2nd
-----------------------------------	---------------	-----

1937

South African GP (East London)	Pat Fairfield	1st
Rand GP (Johannesburg)	Pat Fairfield	1st

Bob Gerard also took many hillclimb successes in R4A between 1945 and 1948.



Baxter gives Reid some tips before run



► upgrades were introduced either side of WW2. Perhaps the most obvious on R4A are the sloping radiator grille and two-litre engine, both of which it acquired in the 1940s (see page 61). Aside from the extra 500cc, however, preparer James Baxter believes R4A is close to late-1940s GP spec.

Although not technically groundbreaking, the ERAs did have some interesting features. As well as a pre-selector gearbox (more of that later), R4A also has a primitive limited-slip differential and a fuel tank that is pressurised by the supercharger.

"I found the car in Austria and persuaded the guy to sell it," says Topliss, who started racing in 2012 with a GN special before buying the ERA. "It hasn't really had a time not racing, it's always been used and it's been all over the place.

"I didn't ever imagine I'd be able to afford one, but I was very lucky and did well in business. I consciously didn't buy a modern car because I thought I'd be a bit mad. I thought if I buy something old then I can be sensible because there is no expectation.

"As soon as you enter the Vintage Sports-Car Club and start competing, the car you really want is an ERA. It's the car I would sketch on the back of my geography book when I was 10 years old. That's what a racecar looked and sounded like."

It takes something like 11 steps to start an ERA, but Topliss reassures Reid that things are a bit simpler once up and running.

"People say it must be terrifying, but it's really not because it's so communicative," he adds. "It tells you exactly what it's doing. The grip level is such that you sort of just dance the thing. An ERA snaps at the back all the time, but you are dancing it around the corner.

"It's predictable and it's intrinsic to the car. There's not a lot you can do to set them up. There's no anti-roll bar; you can change the



Topliss (right)
prefers a smooth
approach to ERA driving

"I wish I'd had a pre-selector gearbox like that when I was racing Formula Ford in the 1970s!" ANTHONY REID

dampers and you can change the tyre pressures, but the set-up does very little.

"You'll see them driven in really amazing styles. I tend to be as smooth as I can, whereas others really pitch it in and take a whole armful of opposite lock."

With around 260bhp on skinny tyres and a damp track, however, Topliss doesn't keep it completely straight when he goes out to warm up the car, which has a fresh engine, back axle and gearbox for the 2014 season. He grabs Baxter's

attention with a big slide though Woodcote before coming in to hand R4A over.

REID CLIMBS ABOARD

Reid has never raced a pre-WW2 car and has several things to get used to, not least the high seating position and the pre-selector gearbox, which involves choosing the gear ahead of time, then dipping the actuator ('clutch' pedal to you and me, even though the car has no clutch).

Reid is understandably tentative with the methanol-fuelled machine at first, but soon starts to press on. He runs for much of the session before returning the precious car to its owner.

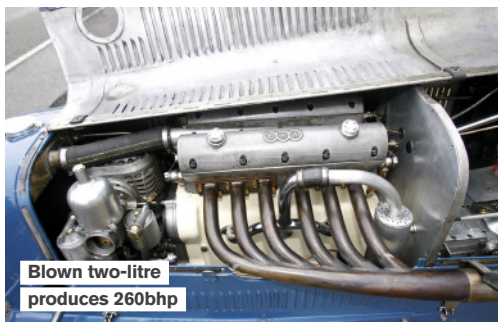
"Wow, what an experience that was!" are Reid's first words before he has even taken his helmet off. "It's quite a challenge to drive, but it's a remarkable bit of engineering for the 1930s. And I love the gearbox."

Almost immediately, he switches back into full racing driver mode, suggesting the ERA be softened, which the team immediately starts working on for Topliss's runs planned for the afternoon. "It picks up all the dips and cambers on the track and loses mechanical grip," explains Reid, who also reports understeer on corner entry and suggests freeing up the diff.

THE ENGINE IMPRESSES

After changing and taking a little time to reflect, Reid remains enthusiastic and pleasantly surprised about the new experience. The engine in particular, which can rev to around 6000rpm, comes in for praise.

"Stepping into the car and going out on track you're immediately aware you have no seat belts, you're sitting on top of the car, and are really exposed, but the engine is really advanced," he says. "It has a flat torque curve. It's amazing.



Blown two-litre produces 260bhp



Garry Whyte warms the car before run



Car's big drum brakes don't fade

"The power delivery is really quite sophisticated in terms of there weren't any pops, bangs, misfires. It gives a very smooth power delivery and has a remarkably wide powerband."

Reid is a regular at historic events like the Goodwood Revival and Silverstone Classic, and he feels the ERA is stronger in some areas than later cars he has raced.

"With cars from the 1950s and 1960s you have to keep the engine on the boil," he continues. "With this it didn't seem to matter which gear you were in. It just gave good, strong power, like

an electric motor. You could drive a lap in both third and fourth gear without any issues."

He is also a fan of the pre-selector gearbox: "I wish I'd had a gearbox like that when I was driving Formula Ford in the 1970s! It worked well and I got to grips with it straight away.

"From a racing driver's perspective, you don't want to worry fumbling about for a gear lever in the most important phase of cornering, which is braking. On the straight beforehand you put it in the gear you need and then you dip the clutch in the normal way during the braking process and it takes the gear. It's incredible.

"Winning races is all about simplifying the task for the driver, so stuff like a pre-selector gearbox has really got to help. Racing doesn't have to be complicated, and you do need both hands on the wheel..."

HANDLING CHALLENGE

The handling and big drum brakes are the areas Reid most notices the ERA's age. "The brakes are a little disconcerting," he says. "When you apply the brakes you are getting varied braking forces from four wheels as you take up the slack in the linkages. There's a lot of dancing about in the braking zone.

"But they get the car stopped and are remarkably good in the sense they are consistent and don't fade. Drums can be a nightmare – on a Jaguar C-type after two laps they just completely go away. Cooling and venting is a huge issue, so I was a bit wary, but they are fantastic.

"The chassis dynamics are also quite crude. The wheels don't follow the contours of the road and you have understeer on turn-in. You have to wait for that to diminish. Once you can open the throttle, then you can have a nice, flowing power-oversteer balance from mid-corner to exit, although that does take a bit of courage, skills and practice! But I can see how you can have a lot of fun in the car."

Fun and competitive pretty much sums up the ERA. In VSCC events the ERAs are about the fastest cars around and continue to rack up win after win, a fitting tribute to one of the important early stories of British efforts in international motorsport. 🇬🇧

AUTOSPORT would like to thank Nick Topliss, James Baxter, Garry Whyte, Anthony Reid and the Vintage Sports-Car Club.



Marvellous ERAs still compete successfully

A DOZEN CARS STILL RACING WELL AT 80

Several ERAs can still be seen racing, but this weekend provides a rare chance to witness most of them together. To celebrate the 80th anniversary of the car, the VSCC is putting on a special race at Silverstone on Sunday.

Twelve cars have entered the ERA race, pretty impressive given that only 17 were originally built. Julian Bronson in R4D is likely to be tough to beat, but David Morris (R4A) and Mark Gillies (R3A) should also be strong. Nick Topliss feels progress has been made with R4A, while Duncan Ricketts brings a different shape in the form of the E-type (GP1) ERA. Several ERA-related cars will also be on display.

The packed two-day programme also caters for pre-WW2 racing and sportscars, plus pre-1961 and pre-1966 GP cars. The second running of the George Abecassis Trophy for cars related to the British driver's career will take place on Saturday and a grid of around 30 cars is expected.



Early understeer eventually gives way to power oversteer

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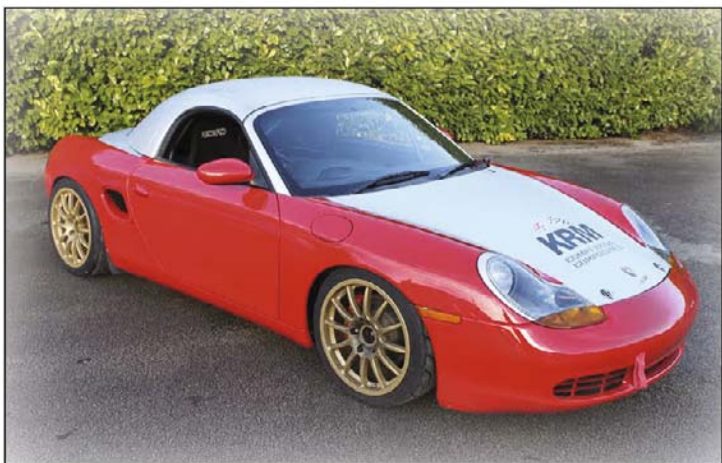
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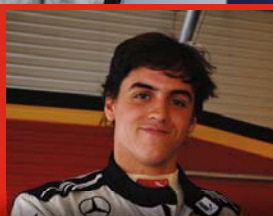
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4	Stuart Wiltshire	F3Cup	50.00
5	Henry Chart	F3Cup	40.00
6	Louis Hamilton-Smith	F3Cup	37.50
7	John Ferguson	F3Cup	35.00
8	Oliver Rae	F3Cup	35.00
9	Lee Morgan	F3Cup	25.00
10	Nick Robinson	F3Cup	22.50



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Olympian Hoy joins British GT

Cycling legend gets Nissan GT3 deal as factory Bentley joins the grid

BRITAIN'S MOST DECORATED Olympian Sir Chris Hoy will race a factory-backed Nissan in British GT this season as part of a three-year plan to race in the Le Mans 24 Hours.

The seven-time Olympic cycling medal winner has joined the Japanese manufacturer's Academy outfit Team RJN and will be partnered in its NISMO GT-R GT3 predominantly by Alex Buncombe. Other members of the Academy will fill in for any of the races Buncombe misses.

Hoy, 38, only made his car-racing debut last season in the Radical SR1 Cup after retiring from a glittering cycling career that also took in 11 world championship titles, and has driven a variety of Nissan GT cars in preparation for the step up.

"It's a very exciting project but quite scary too," he said. "It is a big

challenge but I'm really looking forward to it. I can't wait to get stuck in, it's quite intimidating [but] I want to do my best and do these guys justice.

"It might sound ridiculous right now but my ambition in motorsport is to compete at Le Mans. Who knows if it's even remotely possible but that's my dream. I'm in the right place to do it."

FACTORY BENTLEY JOINS IN

The factory Bentley M-Sport team will field a Continental GT3 on a customer basis in the championship this season.

M-Sport will run the Continental full-time for former American Le Mans Series race winner Humaid Al Masood and long-time driving partner Steven Kane, who is racing a factory Bentley in this year's Blancpain Endurance Series.

It joins the car run under the

Generation Bentley Racing banner for Steve Tandy and James Appleby.

M-Sport team manager Matthew Wilson, whose squad took part in four BGT races last year with an Audi R8 LMS ultra, said: "Once Steven signed for us for the BES, Humaid got excited about Bentley. It's an iconic brand and the car has good performance.

"The BES is only a short programme and up to now we have only taken part in five events as a race team. This is a good way to increase our experience and to keep us sharp through the season."

SINGLE-SEATER ACES TO GT4

British Formula Ford champion Dan Cammish will switch to British GT this season after agreeing to partner Barrie Baxter in a Porsche 911 GT4.

Cammish had eyed a move into British Touring Cars or British Formula 3, but will instead switch to GTs in the Team Parker-run 997.

Ex-Formula 2 champion and Auto GP race winner Luciano Bacheta also plans to join the GT4 ranks in a Reflex-run Ginetta G50.

Meanwhile, Tom Ferrier's new TF Sport will run Aston Martin GT4 Challenge champion Andrew Jarman in a V8 Vantage alongside Renault Clio Cup UK racer Devon Modell.

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"IT'S DEFINITELY A BIG PLUS," said SRO chief Benjamin Franassovici regarding the news that Sir Chris Hoy will be joining the British GT grid this season. Obvious, yes, but make no mistake about it: the move is massive news for the championship.

The series, as we've recorded over the past 18 months, is going from strength to strength. Its grid is one of the finest in Europe to look at and the entry list is awash with established GT talent and rising stars. But while it has quality in abundance, one area it lacks is publicity – when you compare crowd attendance and television coverage to something like British Touring Cars, BGT falls short.

That's why this is important for the series. Hoy's racing ambition and thirst for adrenaline is admirable, and all credit to him for taking the plunge against a top-quality grid, but there's a bigger picture here. Last year's announcement that he would be pedalling a Radical SR1 instead of a state-of-the-art bicycle garnered plenty of mainstream coverage and series boss Franassovici is, quite rightly, hopeful the Nissan deal will expand the BGT audience.

Of course, that is reliant on media coverage outside of motorsport being aware of how big a deal BGT is, especially in comparison to – with no disrespect intended – the SR1 Cup. Inside the sport it is obvious that the former's standing, and GT racing's in general, among aficionados and professionals is very high indeed.

But in the past couple of seasons mainstream media has almost been reluctant to accept that endurance racing has a place near the top of the tree. If Hoy can help change that, the sport as a whole stands to benefit.





Neal will drive ex-Brown Cortina

Historics

BTCC ace Neal to race historic tin-tops

TRIPLE BRITISH TOURING CAR champion Matt Neal is eyeing historic tin-top outings after purchasing a Ford Lotus Cortina.

The Honda BTCC driver has bought the car Neil Brown used to finish second overall in the Historic Sports Car Club's Historic Touring Car Championship last year.

Neal could contest this year's

Silverstone Classic in the race for under two-litre tin-tops, which last year attracted 50 entries.

"It's something we wanted to have a crack at and have some fun with," said Neal. "We're looking at the Silverstone Classic, but it depends on what I've got on. I think that it's possible. The grid is tough, it looks like a great series

and a lot of fun, and it's got some great events.

"I trust Neil. There are lots of cars around, but it's a good one. The category is growing, historics is growing. It's great to be part of it."

Neal is not the first of the current touring car grid to look at historics. Current BTCC champion Andrew Jordan drove an Austin A40, built

by him and his father Mike, at Silverstone last weekend in the Historic Racing Drivers Club's Touring Car Greats race.

They finished third, with Brown victorious, driving alongside Fortec Motorsport boss Richard Dutton in an A35. Aston Martin ace Darren Turner finished fourth in the race in Desmond Small's A40.

Britcar

Century boss Freke commits to Harrier GT1 Britcar campaign

EX-BRITISH FORMULA FORD AND Ginetta G50 Cup champion Nathan Freke will contest four rounds of the 2014 Britcar Endurance Championship alongside Ian Stinton in the latter's Harrier GT1.

Freke previously co-drove with Stinton in a Ginetta G55 GT3 in the Silverstone British GT event last season. The Harrier is an ex-works car first raced in British GT in 1997.

The 30-year-old, who is team principal of British GT and Ginetta squad Century Motorsport, last raced full-time in the Ginetta GT Supercup in 2011, but won both races on a one-off return to the series to fill a vacancy in one of his cars at Oulton Park last year.



Freke will race 650bhp Harrier

"We were unlucky at Silverstone, but Ian and I have remained in touch since then, and I'm so happy that we've been able to put a deal together," said Freke.

"The Harrier is a car with so much history. With 650bhp and no driver aids, it's going to be super-fun and something that I'm so excited to be driving."

FR BARC

Nissan aces to FR BARC as Le Mans racer Reip debuts

NISSAN WILL GIVE SOME OF ITS GT Academy winners their first taste of single-seaters in Formula Renault BARC this season.

Nissan has placed a first-generation FRenault racer, originally purchased for training purposes, with the Fortec team and made a full-season entry for the car.

Belgian Wolfgang Reip, who will race Nissan's ZEOD RC experimental car at the Le Mans 24 Hours, was first in the FRenault at Rockingham last weekend.



Nissan will run FR car this year

A spokeswoman for Nissan said: "We had the car, so we thought we might as well use it. The idea is to give them more experience.

"There is not going to be a full assault on the championship by any one driver; we are going to switch it around a bit."

Reip, who was racing a single-seater for the first time, notched up a best result of sixth over the course of the three races at Rockingham.

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Historic F1

Brit pack stars as Catalan Classic kicks off FIA Masters calendar

BRITON STEVE HARTLEY'S FIA Masters Historic Formula 1 championship campaign opened with a double victory in his Arrows A4 in a 31-car field at the Circuit de Catalunya last weekend.

Hartley held off Joaquin Folch (Brabham BT49C) in Saturday's leg, after early leaders Michael Lyons (Hesketh 308E) and poleman Simon Fish (Ensign N180) were struck by gremlins.

Belgian touring car ace Jean-Michel Martin (Fittipaldi F8) was third, ahead of



Hartley was dominant

compatriot Christophe d'Ansembourg (Williams FW07), Richard Eyre (FW08) and defending champion Greg Thornton, giving his Lotus 91/5 its debut. Japan's Katsu Kubota (Lotus 72) inherited the Pre-'78 class lead when Lyons pitted.

Hartley and Martin made Sunday's running, with Folch third and Lyons a storming fourth from the back.

Leo Voyazides and Simon Hadfield together earned victories in the FIA Masters Historic Sports Car championship (Lola T70 Mk3B), Gentlemen Drivers Pre-'66 GT (AC Cobra) and Masters Pre-'66 Touring Cars (Ford Falcon) openers.

Kubota/Folch (Nissan R90CK) pipped Gareth Evans/Bob Berridge (Mercedes C11) in the 13-car Group C opener. Berridge took the solo race from Herve Regout in a Porsche 962C.

BRDC F4

Wagner confirms BRDC F4 deal as international karters join in

FORMULA RENAULT BARC RACE

winner David Wagner will make his BRDC Formula 4 debut this season after signing with Mark Godwin Racing.

The 21-year-old Scot, who took part in one British Formula Ford round last year, previously tested the car at Donington.

"I'm really happy that I'll be back racing again this year in F4," he said. "I've driven for MGR before and I developed from

a single-seater rookie into a race winner."

Seventeen-year-old Jordan Albert, who contested a bit-part FF1600 campaign last year alongside BRSCC Mazda MX5 and Fun Cup appearances, will also move into BRDC F4 in 2014.

The Brazilian Petrolball squad will field American kart racer Dan Roeper, while Mexican Rotax Max ace Alfredo Zabalza has joined Hillspeed.



Wagner joins MGR team

VW Cup

Di Resta lands top VW Cup drive in JWB-run Scirocco

SOMETIME SCOTTISH MINI

Cooper racer Stefan di Resta will contest the Volkswagen Racing Cup this season with JWB Motorsport.

The brother of ex-Formula 1 ace and DTM driver Paul will be part of a capacity 34-car grid at the opening round at Oulton Park, having tested the Scirocco at Silverstone earlier this year.

Di Resta, 24, recently drove his ex-Scottish Championship Mini at the BARC North-West Sports Saloons Championship opener at Oulton.

"I was very impressed – it all went a lot better than I had expected," he said. "This



Di Resta has tested Scirocco

deal has all come together a bit late, but hopefully I will have a chance to test the car again in the dry before the first race.

"I'm pretty much a novice really, but I hope to give motorsport a good go now and see what comes of it."

HUMBLE PYE

The voice of club racing



Pye was enthralled by the battle between Whitaker and Brooks

The HSCC Guards Trophy was a great GT display

More than 200 registered competitors made the HSCC's Guards Trophy competition for Pre-1966 Grand Touring and Sports Racing Cars – plus invitation classes for Sports Racing, Prototype and Competition GTs built and raced before December 31, 1968 – Britain's biggest club championship last year. It makes compelling viewing if that era fascinates you. Particularly, like me, if it rekindles your youth.

Evocatively named after the sportscar features of the focal decade, the Guards Trophy has grown rapidly since its introduction in 2007. Although the Chevrons, Ginettas and Lenhams that run at the front of mixed grids don't score championship points, the action within the GT pack (run separately when circuit capacities and timetables allow) catches the enthusiast's eye equally.

Only once has the overall title been won by a Pre-'66 Sports Racer – in 2010, when Clive Wilson triumphed in a 1600cc Elva Mk7. The crown has also been worn by hard chargers in an MGB (Martin Richardson, Tom Smith), Porsche 911 (Robert Barrie twice), Lotus Elan (Nick Fleming) and most recently Jaguar E-type (Chris Scragg). That's a healthy spread, a representative cross-section of the entry.

At Donington on Sunday one of the most eye-catching battles of the 2014 opener was fought between TVR Griffith racers Mike Whitaker and Bob Brooks. Whitaker has tamed the steroidal 4.7-litre Ford V8-powered beasts for several seasons, but former Radical and Lola T212 racer Brooks is gaining confidence in his example, built from the ex-Dr Euan Paul car of the period and sprinted by Maurice Gates.

In contrast to the big bangers, the 26R-lookalike Elans, MGBs, Triumph TR4s and Marcos GTs, which come out in greater numbers when the grids are split, carry exceptional speed through the corners, but fare better in longer-distance rounds where the best often provide great class battles and finish well up overall. Watching them go at Silverstone's International Trophy event on May 17-18 should be worth

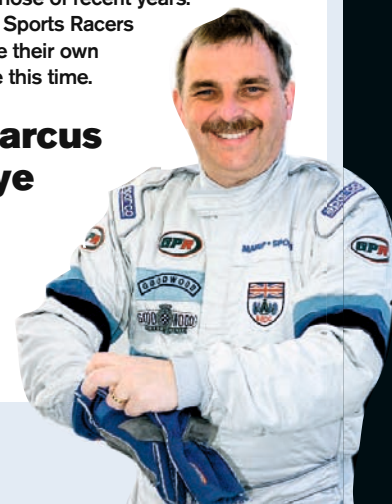
"The battle between Whitaker and Brooks was one of the most eye-catching there"

the admission cost alone.

But the GT event I'm really looking forward to is the HSCC AUTOSPORT 3 Hours race at Snetterton on Saturday, June 7. Fifty years after the last contemporary edition – won by Jack Sears in the thunderous Willment Cobra Coupe – dovetailing Guards contenders with compatible cars from the GT & Sports Car Cup series has already attracted around 30 entries, almost 50 per cent up on those of recent years.

The Sports Racers have their own race this time.

Marcus Pye



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Ramsay will step up to the Eurocup with Lotus

FR Eurocup

Ramsay lands Lotus F1 junior role

GREGOR RAMSAY WILL CONTEST the Formula Renault Eurocup this season after joining the Lotus Formula 1 team's young-driver programme.

The 17-year-old Scot will step up to the category having contested the FR ALPS series last year, during which he scored a best finish of fifth.

Before that Ramsay, who will compete with the Belgian-based KTR team, had

been a race winner in Formula Abarth.

"I am absolutely delighted, especially as such famous Scots have flown the Saltire with Lotus in the past," he said. "This is a new chapter in my career and I am looking forward to representing Lotus, and of course I will do my very best."

A number of Britons contested the FR ALPS opener at Imola last weekend, though Ramsay was not present.

McLaren AUTOSPORT BRDC Award winner Matt Parry prepared for his Eurocup campaign with ninth in the opener and was 26th in race two. Fortec team-mate Jack Aitken was best of the youngsters with a pair of fourth-place finishes, while single-seater rookie George Russell claimed sixth and ninth. New Caterham F1 young driver Seb Morris was 12th and sixth.



DUNLOP

In brief

Lydden revamp begins

Lydden Hill's new startline tower is under construction as the Kent circuit ramps up its preparation for the inaugural AUTOSPORT World RX of Great Britain. Officials are confident the new building will be ready for the event, which is the second round of the World Rallycross Championship, on May 24-25.

Wenhams to Fun Cup

British GT4 race winner Zoe Wenhams will partner her dominant Saxmax champion brother Guy in the Funcup Championship this year. The siblings will drive for Eugene O'Brien's Team O'BR outfit and have conducted a limited pre-season testing programme in the 1800cc, 130 bhp VW Beetles.

Hunt's Tasman race plan

Freddie Hunt, the son of 1976 Formula 1 world champion James, has announced he will contest the Formula Tasman race at Sydney Motorsport Park on June 14. The ex-Formula Ford and Formula Master racer will drive a Cosworth-powered March.

FIA F4 series kicks off

The first race run to the FIA's new Formula 4 regulations took place in Argentina last weekend, with eight drivers taking part. South American F4 utilises Signatech-built chassis and 1.6-litre Fiat engine, the same as used in Formula Renault ALPS 1.6 Junior. Argentinian Frederick Balbi and Brazilian racer Felipe Ortiz won a race apiece.

Chevron goes Stateside

British manufacturer Chevron will give its new GT3 model (pictured) its North American debut this weekend. Harry Blazer, whose company is the NA distributor for Chevron GT cars, will race the GT3-spec machine at Road Atlanta in the NARRA US GT Championship. It will also be entered in the accompanying Time Trial series.



WALKER



Mitchell has restored the 1963 De Tomaso

Formula Junior

Restored De Tomaso runs again

FORMER HISTORIC FF1600 champion Westie Mitchell joined the Formula Junior ranks at Donington Park last Sunday driving a stunningly restored 1963 De Tomaso.

It ran inside the top 10 before suspected coil failure stymied its Ford engine on its first outing since '68.

"It felt fabulous," said Mitchell, who qualified ninth in the 31-car field. "It's

taken 15 months of effort to get this far, and I'm delighted to know that the car has potential."

One of five built, this example of Alejandro de Tomaso's super-slim monocoque chassis won the '64 Italian hillclimb championship in the hands of Mario Casoni and was Formula 1 race winner Clay Regazzoni's first F3 mount in '65.

F3 Cup

Sowery stuns on F3 debut

SINGLE-SEATER ROOKIE TOBY Sowery claimed a dominant double on his F3 Cup debut last weekend.

The 17-year-old, in his first year of car racing, qualified on pole position and stormed to a commanding pair of victories at Snetterton ahead of a host of series regulars.

"It's been miles better than I ever thought it would," said Sowery. "I couldn't have asked for a better weekend."



Sowery took crushing double

HAWKINS



Gillies will be a challenger

BLOXHAM/MAT

ERA

ERA anniversary race gets 12 cars

THE VINTAGE SPORTS-CAR CLUB'S ERA celebration race has attracted 12 cars for Silverstone this weekend.

This year marks the 80th birthday of English Racing Automobiles, which ran in voiturette racing before World War 2 and Grand Prix races after it.

Experienced historic racer Julian Bronson is favourite for the one-off race in ERA R4D, with fellow two-litre runners Mark Gillies (R3A), David Morris (R11B) and Duncan Ricketts (E-type GP1) likely contenders. Paddins Dowling is set to lead the 1500cc contingent in R10B.

Star battles light up HSCC opener



DAVE METHLEY AND GRAEME AND James Dodd had the legs of their Formula Junior and Guards Trophy rivals, but scintillating battles in their wake and 233 race-hungry competitors got the HSCC's season off to a flying start on Sunday.

Brabham BT6 ace Methley headed the Junior school in damp and greasy qualifying, but Sam Wilson (Lotus 20/22) was only 0.088s adrift, with 2012 HSCC Formula Ford 1600 champion Callum Grant next in John Sykes' Merlyn Mk5/7, because his Lotus wasn't ready.

Methley scorched away from the lights, while Andrew Hibberd (Lotus 22) and father Michael (Lotus 27) rocketed past the unusually sluggish Wilson and Grant to reach Redgate second and third. Nobody could live with the leader, but as dad prevailed over lad and quickly opened a gap to

Wilson, the Lightning Envoyette of Pete Morton moved up the order.

Morton thrust between Wilson and Grant to annex third, but a lap later Callum hurtled round the outside of Morton at Redgate in what was to become his trademark manoeuvre. Grant's third didn't last long, for Wilson grabbed it and towed his rivals back towards the Hibberds, who had lost momentum in traffic.

By lap eight Andrew had been reeled in, and the struggle intensified. But, having boldly rounded Wilson into Redgate on lap 10, Grant astounded the Hibberds by circumnavigating them both there. Michael retaliated swiftly, but lost out for good on the plunge to the Craner Curves two laps from home.

"There was a yellow flag, because marshals were moving a car, so I wasn't impressed when Callum

drove past me," said the former British champion. "He didn't believe me, so I told him to look on his camera, but it was a good race."

Methley was 17 seconds clear of Grant at the chequer, with Andrew Hibberd third, having overtaken his father a lap earlier. "We had a bit of new tyre syndrome, then bad luck with backmarkers, which is how Callum caught us," said the younger Hibberd. "It was good to get back to third, though."

Hibberd senior, Wilson and McLeans spinner Morton completed the top six. Andrew Wilkinson (Lynx) beat John Chisholm (Gemini) in Class D2, while early C2 leader Crispian Besley (Cooper T56) finished 0.23s behind Robert Barrie (Lotus 18) in another great fight.

Two weeks after a knee operation, Graeme Dodd did the minimum 10-minute stint in the family Ginetta G16, but led before relaying son James to victory in the Guards Trophy mini-enduro. James sprinted out of the pits a lap down on new leaders Michael Schryver and Charlie Allison – who locked his brakes to avoid contact at Redgate – but unlapped himself and tore back ahead of the Chevrons as the pit stagger unwound.

Soloist Allison displaced Will Schryver, who mysteriously lost his brakes twice but, having trumped Will's superb outside pass at Redgate, overcooked it there later. By staying

cool, Schryver was able to snatch silver back on the final lap. "That was as good a race as I can remember," smiled Allison.

Fourth on the road, Philip Nelson (B8) was excluded for exceeding track limits, thus the four quick Chevrons were split by the Lenhams of Jon Waggitt and Brian Casey at the close, while the TVR Griffiths of Mike Whitaker (with a rear-end vibration) and Bob Brooks (with a broken gear lever) ran together atop the GT pack, pursued by Paul Tooms' Lotus Elan.

Benn Simms demonstrated his ultra-smooth Classic F3 and Historic FFord championship-winning prowess by dominating the FF1600 and FF2000 races, the latter on his class debut in Stuart Boyer's Reynard.

Although the Pinto race was red-flagged when two cars collided on an oil slick from the engine in Tom White's Crossle, second qualifier Simms scooted clear of Andrew Park, Ben Tusting and Andrew Storer at the restart. Tim Robinson (Jamun) passed Ken Bowman (Van Diemen) at the last gasp for early class victory.

Jomo-mounted Simms and the fast-starting Maxim Bartell – who from P4 shot past SpeedSport team-mates Michael O'Brien and Josh West at the FF1600 start – were well spaced in first and second until O'Brien, who had slipped to sixth, rediscovered his equilibrium.

Buoyed by a couple of great moves into Redgate, the novice zapped

Simms won both the Historic FF1600 and FF2000 races





Callum Grant edged a frenetic Junior fight for second



Brown crashed out of scrap for Historic Touring Car honours



The Dodds' Ginetta left a superb Guards Trophy fight behind



Ford (1) chased Tomlin hard

Bartell at McLeans on the last lap, only for Max to slipstream him from Coppice and dive by into the chicane. James Buckton (Elden) was fourth behind the Merlyns, with spinner West on his tail. Stuart Baird and Chris Sharples were next in, the latter lapping under 1m20s in his Palliser.

A fine Touring Car battle between Neil Brown and Tim Davies was defused when, on a perilously oily track – after Howard Wise's Lotus Cortina's engine blew – Brown's Mustang slithered into the McLeans gravel trap. Reigning champion Davies's pendulous Cortina thus won from the now cammier BMW of Jonathan Gomm and David Tomlin's Cortina, which was tagged as Wise gyrated wildly on his own lubricant.

With nobody to play with, double CRC champion Ian Jones wanted a sub-1m16s lap in his Lotus 59. The Kiwi narrowly failed in his quest, but finished 42s clear of Andy Jarvis's Palliser, which started at the back following a fuel pump failure. Jarvis was delighted with second, having pounced when Antony Ross

outbraked himself at the chicane.

The power of invitee David Tomlin's Ferrari 308 and the agility and braking of '70s Road Sports champion Oliver Ford's Lotus Europa made for a thrilling contest, in which the former triumphed by a whisker.

Peter Shaw overstretched his TVR Tuscan at the start and faded in third after poleman Julian Barter – guesting in Iain Daniels' Lotus Elan – slid into retirement at the Old Hairpin on lap one. Father Charles, who did not enjoy Julian's TVR 3000M in qualifying, salvaged a lowly [by his standards] seventh in the dry and couldn't wait to get his Datsun 240Z back!

Richard Plant had just worked his Morgan +8 ahead of Peter Shaw's Elan S1 in Historic Road Sports when the latter's engine stopped abruptly and he coasted pitward, leaving Roger Waite and Frazer Gibney (Elans) to trail the rumberling V8. Lotus 7 stalwart Andy Shepherd's fight back through the field after a first-lap off was rewarded with fourth.

● Marcus Pye



Classic Racing Car glory went to Jones

ALL PICTURES: STEVE JONES

RESULTS

FJHRA HISTORIC FORMULA JUNIOR (16 LAPS) 1 Dave Methley (Brabham BT6) 21m19.935s; 2 Callum Grant (Merlyn Mk5/7) +17.125s; 3 Andrew Hibberd (Lotus 22); 4 Mike Hibberd (Lotus 27); 5 Sam Wilson (Lotus 20/22); 6 Pete Morton (Lightning Envoyette).

Class winners Andrew Wilkinson (Lynx T3); Robert Barrie (Lotus 18); Mark Woodhouse (Elva 100).

Fastest lap Methley 1m18.072s (91.25mph).

GUARDS TROPHY (30 LAPS) 1 Graeme & James Dodd (Ginetta-BMW G16) 40m34.633s; 2 Michael & Will Schryver (Chevron-BMW B6) +17.040s; 3 Charles Allison (Chevron-BMW B8); 4 Jon Waggitt (Lenham-t/c P69); 5 Brian Casey; 6 Nick Thompson/Shawn McClurg (B6); 7 Mike Whitaker (TVR Griffith); 8 Bob Brooks (Griffith); 9 Paul Tooms (Lotus Elan); 10 Michael & Andrew Hibberd (Lotus t/c 23B). **CW** Waggitt; Whitaker; Tooms; Hibberd/Hibberd; Bruce Montgomery (Austin-Healey 3000 Mk2). **FL** Allison 1m16.854s (92.70mph).

HISTORIC FF2000 (10 LAPS) 1 Benn Simms (Reynard SF77) 12m36.945s; 2 Andrew Park (Reynard SF81) +7.368s; 3 Ben Tusting (Reynard SF79); 4 Andrew Storer (Royale RP27); 5 Tom Smith (Royale RP27); 6 Colin Wright (SF79). **CW** Tim Robinson (Jamun T6); John Bowles (Elden PRH14). **FL** Simms 1m14.445s (95.70mph).

HISTORIC FF1600 (16 LAPS) 1 Benn Simms (Jomo JMR7) 21m13.956s; 2 Maxim Bartell (Merlyn Mk20A) +3.064s; 3 Michael O'Brien (Merlyn Mk20); 4 James Buckton (Elden PRH8); 5 Josh West (Mk20A); 6 Stuart Baird (Merlyn Mk11A). **CW** O'Brien. **FL** O'Brien 1m18.487s (90.77mph).

HRSR HISTORIC TOURING CARS & GUARDS TROPHY GTB (15 LAPS) 1 Tim Davies (Ford Lotus Cortina) 20m08.565s; 2 Jonathan Gomm (BMW 1800 TISA) +25.215s; 3 David Tomlin (Ford Lotus Cortina); 4 Allan Ross-Jones (Triumph TR4); 5 John Avill (Ford Lotus Cortina); 6 Andrew Bentley (MGB). **CW** Tomlin; Roger Godfrey (Austin Cooper S); Steve Jones (Morris Cooper S); Simon Benoy (Hillman Imp); Ross-Jones. **FL** Neil Brown (Ford Mustang) 1m24.982s (83.83mph).

CLASSIC RACING CARS (16 LAPS) 1 Ian Jones (Lotus-t/c 59) 20m52.461s; 2 Andy Jarvis (Palliser-t/c WDB2) +42.526s; 3 Antony Ross (Lotus-t/c 59); 4 Ian Gray (Brabham-FVA BT30); 5 Michael O'Brien (Merlyn-Ford Mk20); 6 Steve Seaman (Brabham-MAE BT21). **CW** O'Brien; Seaman. **FL** Jones 1m16.300s (93.37mph).

'70S ROAD SPORTS & GUARDS TROPHY GTB (15 LAPS) 1 David Tomlin (Ferrari 308) 21m19.804s; 2 Oliver Ford (Lotus Europa) +0.452s; 3 Peter Shaw (TVR Tuscan); 4 Peter Rutt (Porsche 911S/T); 5 Allan Ross-Jones (Triumph TR4); 6 Andrew Bentley (MGB). **CW** Ford; Shaw; Justin Wilson (Alfa Romeo 2000GTV); Ross-Jones. **Invitation winner** Tomlin. **FL** Ford 1m23.075s (85.75mph).

HISTORIC ROAD SPORTS (14 LAPS) 1 Richard Plant (Morgan +8) 20m00.599s; 2 Roger Waite (Lotus Elan S1) +13.583s; 3 Frazer Gibney (Lotus Elan S1); 4 Andy Shepherd (Lotus 7 S2); 5 Tim Pearce (Morgan +8); 6 Patrick Ward-Booth (Ginetta G4). **CW** Waite; Colin Sharp (Triumph TR5); John Shaw (Porsche 911). **INV** Chris Keen (Marcos 1800GT). **FL** Plant 1m23.333s (85.49mph).

Ferrer was one of three FR BARC winners



ROCKINGHAM, APRIL 5-6 BARC

Ferrer on top as Renaults star

THE FORMULA RENAULT BARC opening weekend produced three different winners, but MGR's Matteo Ferrer took the points lead.

After a dominant qualifying performance, the Italian tumbled to fifth at the start of race one as excess wheelspin allowed Pietro Fittipaldi to make the break. Alex Gill was running a strong second until lap 15, when damage sent him straight on at Deene. Piers Hickin capitalised, but only narrowly beat Ferrer, who having vanquished Ben Barnicoat at Deene, closed rapidly towards the end.

Ferrer forced Fittipaldi to cede the lead into Deene on lap one of race two, and the Brazilian lost out to Hickin and Gill in same place over the early laps. The charging Gill made amends for race one disappointment by pipping Hickin for second.

It got better still for Gill in the finale. He went wheel to wheel with Ferrer on the sixth lap before outbraking him into Deene on his way to his first victory. Hickin passed Fittipaldi in the early stages to claim a third podium.

A truncated Renault Clio Cup Series opener went to David Dickenson. He was challenged at Tarzan on the opening lap by Paul Streather, who sealed the lead into Brook. After a safety car period, caused when Ollie Pidgely collected Luke Herbert at Yentwood, Streather resumed in the lead, but he lost it when he went in too deep at Deene.

Jacques Mizzi followed through to second, but dumped it in the gravel at Yentwood four laps later, prompting red flags. Tommy Ostgaard and Streather completed the podium spots, only for Ostgaard to be excluded from the results for running the wrong rear tyres.

After missing race one with driveshaft failure, Mike Robinson controlled the later contest. Second place boiled down to a scrap between Herbert and Dickenson – Herbert boldly taking the place at Tarzan, with Dickenson penalised for subsequent retaliation at Brook.

Poleman Matthew Fielding had to drive around the outside of fast-starting Roger Lavender at



Deene to retrieve the lead of the first Kumho BMW contest. On a drying track, Robert Salisbury and Dave Griffin showed more pace as the race went on to take second and third, the latter relegating Stephen Pearson from the podium on the final lap.

Fielding was the on-the-road leader throughout race two, but had to overcome a 10-second jump-start penalty. Lavender had just taken second at Tarzan when he was spun into the Turn 4 wall, leaving Pearson to take the position from Salisbury on the penultimate lap. After a first corner brush with Tom Wrigley,

Garrie Whittaker took his customary double in Class A.

James Janicki just edged Adam Lockwood in the two Nippon Challenge races, while Simon James (Citroen Saxo) showed the most Gallic flair to clinch Tricolore Trophy glory.

Ian Conibear won the BARC SE Sports Car opener, but was beaten by Stephen Garner in the sequel. James Dorlin comfortably beat Benn Tilley for a Junior Saloons double triumph, while Paul Corbridge and Aaron Pullan split the MR2 wins, with Jon Winter the dominant Hyundai man. ● Ian Sowman

RESULTS

FORMULA RENAULT BARC (16 LAPS) 1 Pietro Fittipaldi 21m19.874s (87.30mph); 2 Piers Hickin +5.276s; 3 Matteo Ferrer; 4 Colin Noble; 5 Ben Barnicoat; 6 Tarun Reddy. **Fastest lap** Ferrer 1m19.161s (88.22mph). **RACE 2 (16 LAPS)** 1 Ferrer 21m29.415s (86.66mph); 2 Alex Gill +7.633s; 3 Hickin; 4 Fittipaldi; 5 Barnicoat; 6 Wolfgang Reip. **FL** Gill 1m19.759s (87.56mph). **RACE 3 (18 LAPS)** 1 Gill 25m31.883s (82.06mph); 2 Ferrer +0.305s; 3 Hickin; 4 Fittipaldi; 5 Barnicoat; 6 Reddy. **FL** Ferrer 1m19.666s. **RENAULT CLIO CUP SERIES (9 LAPS)** 1 David Dickenson 14m47.365s (70.83mph); 2 Paul Streather +5.156s; 3 Sam Randon; 4 Brett Lidsey; 5 Tom Butler; 6 Andy Wilkins. **Class winners** Wilkins; Jake Honour; Luke Pinder. **FL** Dickenson 1m31.650s (76.20mph). **RACE 2 (12 LAPS)** 1 Mike Robinson 18m56.341s (73.75mph); 2 Herbert +4.235s; 3 Dickenson; 4 Ollie Pidgely; 5 Andy Jordan; 6 Streather. **CW** Pidgely; Honour. **FL** Pidgely 1m32.257s (75.70mph). **KUMHO BMW CLASSES B, C, D & I (BOTH 13 LAPS)** 1 Matthew Fielding (M3) 21m19.448s (70.96mph);

2 Robert Salisbury (M3) +4.240s; 3 Dave Griffin (M3); 4 Stephen Pearson (M3); 5 Roger Lavender (M3); 6 Karl Catliff (M3). **CW** Fielding; Pearson; David Heasman (328i); James Ford (318Ti). **FL** Griffin 1m35.387s (73.21mph). **RACE 2 1 Fielding 20m39.569s (73.24mph)**; 2 Pearson +1.004s; 3 Salisbury; 4 Griffin; 5 Dominic Surdi (M3); 6 Adrian Gilbert (M3). **CW** Fielding; Pearson; Heasman; Greg Marking (318is). **FL** Fielding 1m33.264s (74.88mph). **CLASS A (BOTH 14 LAPS)** 1 Garrie Whittaker (M3) 21m07.852s (77.11mph); 2 Colin Wells (M3) +11.057s; 3 Darren Fielding (M3); 4 Tom Wrigley (M3); 5 Richard Bacon (M3); 6 Thomas Hibbert (M3). **FL** Whittaker 1m29.567s (77.97mph). **RACE 2 1 Whittaker 21m19.604s (76.41mph)**; 2 Wells +8.612s; 3 Fielding; 4 Wrigley; 5 Bacon; 6 Hibbert. **FL** Whittaker 1m29.280s (78.22mph). **NIPPON CHALLENGE (BOTH 10 LAPS)** 1 James Janicki (Nissan Skyline) 16m02.183s (72.58mph); 2 Adam Lockwood (Nissan 200sx) +1.679s; 3 Stephen Cassar (Honda Civic); 4 Andy McLennan (Suzuki Swift); 5 Karen Phillips (Subaru Impreza); 6 Dave Hemingway (Toyota MR2). **CW** Cassar;

Phillips; Hemingway; Simon Miles (Hyundai Coupe); Jason Jesse (MR2). **FL** Janicki 1m34.891s (73.60mph). **RACE 2 1 Janicki 16m03.167s (72.51mph)**; 2 Lockwood +1.771s; 3 McLennan; 4 Cassar; 5 Nick Holden (Toyota GT86); 6 Hemingway. **CW** Cassar; Hemingway; Tony Collier (Toyota Celica); Jesse. **FL** Janicki 1m33.909s (74.36mph). **TRICOLE TROPHY (BOTH 10 LAPS)** 1 Simon James (Citroen Saxo) 16m11.826s (71.86mph); 2 Russell Thomson (Renault Clio) +0.340s; 3 Tony Hunter (Clio); 4 Curtis Mitchell (Peugeot 205); 5 David Bell (Clio); 6 Sonny Hardy (Clio). **CW** Thomson; Mitchell; Gerard Meriman (Saxo VTR). **FL** Thomson 1m35.749s (73.14mph). **RACE 2 1 James 16m13.626s (71.43mph)**; 2 Hunter +3.993s; 3 Curtis Mitchell; 4 Thomson; 5 James Affleck (205GTI); 6 Bell. **CW** Hunter; Curtis Mitchell; Affleck; Jeff McCall (206GTI); Meriman. **FL** Thomson 1m35.238s (73.33mph). **SE SPORTS CAR SERIES (BOTH 10 LAPS)** 1 Ian Conibear (Caterham S3) 15m14.055s (76.40mph); 2 Stephen Garner (Westfield Megabus) +1.111s; 3 Stewart Fenton (Tiger RS6); 4 Bruce Wilson (Caterham CSR); 5 Peter Hargroves (Caterham

SLR); 6 Ian Fletcher (Fletcher Hornet Mk4). **CW** Fenton; Wilson; Fletcher. **FL** Conibear 1m28.675s (78.75mph). **RACE 2 1 Garner 15m25.103s (75.49mph)**; 2 Conibear +0.111s; 3 Fenton; 4 Wilson; 5 Hargroves; 6 John Chasey (Caterham Roadsport). **CW** Fenton; Wilson; Chasey. **FL** Conibear 1m30.247s (77.38mph). **JUNIOR SALOON CAR CHAMPIONSHIP (9 LAPS)** 1 James Dorlin 17m02.190s (61.49mph); 2 Benn Tilley +9.960s; 3 Charlie Kennedy; 4 Edward Moore; 5 Ben Mills; 6 Tom Morkill. **FL** Kennedy 1m50.135s (63.41mph). **RACE 2 (10 LAPS)** 1 Dorlin 17m51.901s (65.15mph); 2 Tom Stockton +12.047s; 3 Ben Colburn; 4 Kennedy; 5 Tilley; 6 Charlie Morgan. **FL** Dorlin 1m45.506s (66.19mph). **MR2 RACE SERIES & HYUNDAI COUPE CUP (BOTH 9 LAPS)** 1 Paul Corbridge 15m31.790s (67.45mph); 2 Aaron Pullan +0.443s; 3 Jon Winter (Hyundai); 4 Eddie O'Kane; 5 Michael Taylor; 6 Nathan Harrison. **CW** Winter. **FL** Corbridge 1m41.516s (68.79mph). **RACE 2 1 Pullan 15m41.502s (66.76mph)**; 2 Winter +2.169s; 3 Corbridge; 4 Nathan Wright; 5 Nathan Harrison; 6 Neale Hurrin. **CW** Winter. **FL** Pullan 1m41.806s (68.60mph).

F3 CUP SNETTERTON, APRIL 5-6 MSVR

Rookie Sowery blows rivals away

SERIES NEW BOY TOBY SOWERY WAS left feeling over the moon after a mature performance in the opening round of this year's F3 Cup.

Sowery set the pace in qualifying, in last year's title-winning car, while Tristian Cliffe tried to respond to his rival's pace before a high-speed rotation at Riches ended his effort.

Cliffe attempted to unsettle the newcomer at the opening corner, but Sowery was not fazed, clinging to the inside line and a lead that he extended to the chequered flag.

Olly Rae then took Cliffe by surprise as he sliced past through Riches on the first lap. In their wake,

Lee Morgan flew over the top of the out-of-shape Henry Chart. Cliffe fought back, racing side by side with Rae from Brundle corner to Coram before reclaiming second place.

An early safety car couldn't distract Sowery in race two, and he handled his first restart like a veteran to keep the rampant Cliffe at bay.

Cliffe had earlier made up for a poor start by jumping from fifth to third at Agostini on the opening lap before dealing with Stuart Wiltshire next time around. Wiltshire then lost a pile of places within seconds when Louis Hamilton-Smith dived up the inside at Riches on lap seven to take

the final podium position. Rae, Chart and Tony Bishop also slipped by.

● Lewis Beales

RESULTS (12 LAPS) 1 Toby Sowery (Dallara F305/VW) 21m 42.754s (98.45mph);

2 Tristian Cliffe (F307/Honda) +16.309s; 3 Stuart Wiltshire (F307/Honda); 4 Tony Bishop (F307/Mercedes); 5 John Ferguson (F305/Toyota); 6 Nick Robinson (F302/Honda). **Class winner** Roberto Tirone (Dallara F301/Renault).

Fastest lap Sowery 1m 46.907s (99.97mph).

RACE 2 (9 LAPS) 1 Sowery 20m 27.571s (78.36mph); 2 Cliffe +5.778s; 3 Louis Hamilton-Smith (F307/VW); 4 Olly Rae (F301/Renault); 5 Henry Chart (F305/Toyota); 6 Bishop. **CW** Rae. **FL** Sowery 1m 47.310s (99.60mph).



In brief

Lotus Elise Trophy

Nothing could stop Adam Gore in the opening Lotus Elise Trophy race – not even BTCC racer Jack Goff, who had his hands full defending his position from Fulvio Mussi until the latter faded in the closing stages. At the start, Mussi (pictured leading) had rapidly passed poleman Martin Wills, as did Goff, who slipped into the lead on the second lap. However, Mussi fought back and regained his former position at Riches.

Monoposto 1600/1800

Kevin Waring blasted past early multi-class Monoposto leader Jason Timms on Bentley Straight and claimed a simple win when Timms dropped a wheel in the dirt at the exit of Williams. Jeremy Timms led away race two from the fast-starting Waring, but it was Jason who demoted both on the opening lap. He then overcooked Murray's, bending his suspension, leaving Waring to win.

Monoposto 2000

Having fought off Malcolm Scott's early challenge, Ben Cater put in a determined chase of Mono 2000 leader Robbie Watts, but spun on dropped oil at Riches just as he had grabbed the lead. Watts' demon start secured a dominate victory in race two, while Scott got past third-placed Terry Clark to chase down Peter Venn and displace him from second on the final lap.

Trackday Trophy

A gear selection problem negated a superb start from Mark Penny in the Trackday Trophy and elevated the Porsche of Adrian Walker into a short-lived lead before overheating halted his progress. Dennis Hays took control, but dropped behind Jason Jones in the pitstops. Jones stroked his MR2 (pictured) home to win with brother Tony. Matthew Weymouth was the Team Trophy victor after Ben and Adam Uren retired when a driveshaft broke.



LOTUS CUP UK SNETTERTON PARK, APRIL 5-6 MSVR

Balon soaks up pressure for victory

ADAM BALON PRODUCED A DEFENSIVE driving masterclass as he held off the persistent challenge of Adrian Hall for the last third of the 90-minute race to take a narrow victory.

British Touring Car Championship racer Jack Goff was the last to pit and handed over the lead car to his co-driver Phil Capstick, but he was quickly demoted by the battling duo.

Hall, quicker in the infield, was all over Balon, but the V6-powered Exige could open up a sufficient gap to keep his rival behind. On one occasion, Hall stole past on the entry of Murray's only to see Balon power back ahead along Senna Straight.

Ken Savage had earlier taken the lead away from poleman Marcus Jewell, who blamed a vibration and

a lack of power for his steady fall through the field, while Savage's race ended with a suspected blown engine.

Fabio Randaccio was in the early hunt for a podium place, but his race was run after his car wouldn't restart after his pitstop. Hetherington brothers Freddie and Benji suffered transmission failure.

The Production class victory went to factory racer Gavan Kershaw after fuel pressure problems hit Jason Baker on the final lap.

● Lewis Beales

RESULTS (42 LAPS) 1 Adam Balon (Exige V6 CupR) 1h 31m 41.604s (81.59mph); 2 Adrian Hall (Exige S1 Honda) +0.723s; 3 Simon Deacon (2 Eleven); 4 Adam Knight (Exige V6 CupR); 5 Mike Vase (Exige V6 CupR); 6 Steve Train/Tom Chatterway (2 Eleven). **CW** Balon; Hall; Deacon; Gavan Kershaw (Elise Cup R). **FL** Ken Savage (2 Eleven) 2m 05.004s (85.50mph).





Clements scarpred clear early in both his race wins

MAZDA MX-5 SILVERSTONE, APRIL 5-6 BRSCC

Clements darts to MX-5 glory

JOHNATHAN CLEMENTS MANAGED TO make a crucial break in both of his Mazda MX-5 races and claim a well-earned double victory.

After chasing Charlie Charman for the first couple of laps in race one, Clements rocketed ahead on the Hanger Straight and soon began to build a decisive lead.

Once Simon Baldwin and James Blake-Baldwin had taken each other off in their quest for third, Martin Tolley stormed after Charman and

secured second place out of Club, leaving Charman to resist Andrew Coombs for third.

Simon Goddard absolutely dominated race two, winning by 45 seconds, with Jake Simpson claiming second with a lap to go, ahead of Lewis Field.

Clements got away again early in race three, leaving Charman and Will Blackwell-Chambers to duel at the head of a huge pack for second. Alan Henderson came through to

claim the place with a lap to go, with Tolley completing the podium.

The final race was a lights-to-flag win for Blake-Baldwin, with Baldwin in second after an early skirmish with Chris Hart.

● Peter Scherer

RESULTS (13 LAPS) 1 Johnathan Clements 21m23.317s (87.49mph); 2 Martin Tolley +2.340s; 3 Charlie Charman; 4 Andrew Coombs; 5 Clive Powles; 6 James Harris. **Fastest lap** Tolley 1m33.877s (70.97mph).

RACE 2 (13 LAPS) 1 Simon Goddard 20m33.309s (70.23mph); 2 Jake Simpson +45.170s; 3 Lewis Field; 4 Matthew Tasker; 5 Richard Collins; 6 Andrew Caird. **FL** Goddard 1m33.556s (71.22mph). **RACE 3 (15 LAPS) 1 Clements 21m19.748s (78.10mph);** 2 Alan Henderson +6.435s; 3 Tolley; 4 Will Blackwell-Chambers; 5 Charman; 6 Gary Hufford. **FL** Henderson 1m23.855s (79.46mph). **RACE 4 (15 LAPS) 1 Blake-Baldwin 21m16.549s (78.29mph);** 2 Simon Baldwin +6.843s; 3 Chris Hart; 4 Paul Tucker; 5 Adam Craig; 6 Kevin Brent. **FL** Blake-Baldwin 1m22.985s (80.29mph).

INTERMARQUE SILVERSTONE, APRIL 5 AMOC

Marrs fend off late attack to take victory

WAYNE MARRS JUST HELD ON TO a reducing lead to take his Ferrari F355 Challenge to victory, as Kevin Norville closed in.

Paul Brooks' Ferrari 456 GT lost the early lead to Graeme Dodd's Aston Martin DB4 as they exited Luffield for the third time, with Robert Rawe's DB4 threatening from third, too.

Brooks was back ahead, though, five laps later, until he got sideways and spun at Becketts, dropping out of the top 10. Dodd, Rawe and Marrs retained the top three places until the pitstop window opened, but once the stops were completed it was Marrs to the fore.

Rawe started to lose out during

the second half of the race, with Norville into second from lap 25 and Brooks' recovery putting him back into third seven laps later.

All three held station to the end, but with Marrs struggling for grip, Norville was only 0.348s from snatching a late win.

● Peter Scherer

RESULTS (39 LAPS) 1 Wayne Marrs (Ferrari 355 Challenge) 45m18.021s (84.73mph); 2 Kevin Norville (Aston Martin GT4) +0.348s; 3 Paul Brooks (Ferrari 456 GT); 4 Tim Mogridge (Ferrari 355 Challenge); 5 Robert Rawe (Aston Martin DB4); 6 Stephen Atkinson (Porsche 968). **Class winners** Norville; Brooks; Raw; Atkinson; Tristan Bradfield (Sunbeam Tiger). **FL** Norville 1m05.518s (90.13mph).



Dunn recovered to win second Jedi race

FORMULA JEDI SILVERSTONE, APRIL 5-6 BRSCC

Dunn strikes back in Jedis

DAN CLOWES AND ANDREW DUNN shared the Formula Jedi spoils in mixed conditions.

Dunn was in a comfortable second and pursuing Clowes in race one before being forced to pit with engine woes. Scott Stevens was chasing new second man James Maclachlan when he spun at Abbey, which left five cars fighting for third in the final laps.

Jack Lang ultimately claimed the place. Barry Armstrong, the recovering Stevens and Robert Sayell rounded off the top six.

Dunn got his reward at the second time of asking, taking a lights-to-flag victory in a damp and drizzly race two having started

from pole. Clowes kept second for four laps, but Matthew Ryder was soon past and harrying Dunn.

Richard Gittings had been fourth, but lost out to both Lang and Maclachlan on the Hanger Straight. He managed to hold on to sixth, well clear of Sayell.

● Peter Scherer

FORMULA JEDI (19 LAPS) 1 Dan Clowes 20m53.144s (101.02mph); 2 James Maclachlan +2.58s; 3 Jack Lang; 4 Barry Armstrong; 5 Scott Stevens; 6 Robert Sayell. **FL** Lang 1m04.537s (103.08mph). **RACE 2 (18 LAPS) 1 Andrew Dunn 20m23.957s (97.99mph);** 2 Matthew Ryder +0.933s; 3 Clowes; 4 Lang; 5 Maclachlan; 6 Richard Gittings. **FL** Ryder 1m04.861s (102.73mph).



Marrs held on for Intermarque win



Kirkaldy (1) was pushed hard by Dailly



READ

In brief

Mighty Minis

Paul Rhodes (above) just held off Ian Stark to win the first race at Silverstone, with Charlie Budd a close third. Although the second race had the same podium finishers, Rhodes had an early scrap with Budd, before Stark emerged a little battered to snatch second on the last lap as he headed home a five-car scrap.

HRDC Touring Greats

Mike Jordan's Austin A40 led the first half of the Silverstone race, with Neil Brown's Austin A35 ousting Peter Burton's Jaguar Mk1. Richard Dutton took over Brown's A35 to chase Burton, with BTCC champion Andrew Jordan, who had taken over from dad Mike, third. Dutton led from lap 25, with Burton well clear of Jordan in second, while Darren Turner and Desmond Small's A40 completed the top four.

Scottish Minis

Reigning champion Ken Thirlwall dominated with a hat-trick of wins. Joe Tanner was his nearest rival with a tenth between them at the end of race two after a race-long duel. Instinctive calls helped Thirlwall in the reverse-grid final, and reaching second on the road by the end of lap one set him up for another win.

Scottish Fiestas

Last year's XR2 champion Wayne MacAuley made the permanent step up to a Fiesta ST and won both races, while Aiden Moffat ran him close to finish second. The top two were both given penalties for exceeding track limits in the second race, but it didn't affect the finishing order. Hamish Smart took both XR2 class wins.

Scottish Legends

David Newall had a difficult start to his Legends title defence. He collided with John Paterson (below) in heat one and was caught up in a midfield pile-up at the start of the second. His misery was completed when he spun out of the final after battling at the front. In his wake came Paterson to clinch the win in the final ahead of Duncan Vincent and David Hunter.



NOIR

SCOTTISH COMPACT CUP KNOCKHILL, APRIL 6 SMRC

Compact king's reign under threat

LAST YEAR, ALAN KIRKALDY WON ALL but one of the BMW Compact races, but after the first meeting of 2014 it looks like the headlines will be made by the success of the series and not just its star driver.

Despite the category's infancy, the BMWs now have their own standalone races on the Scottish Motor Racing Club timetable and 25 cars contested the opening encounter.

Billy Campbell led away from pole position, but Steven Dailly quickly asserted himself with a brave move on the wetter line at Clark on lap two. While Dailly was never truly challenged for the win, Kirkaldy mounted a fightback. He qualified

seventh, but by lap eight had passed Mark Souter for second, although he still ended up more than five seconds behind the race winner.

Kirkaldy looked more confident at the start of the second race and took the lead on lap one. Dailly was in hot pursuit and grabbed the initiative at Duffus on lap 11, with Souter, following behind, then trying a move at the hairpin.

As this drama unfolded, the race was stopped because of Stephen Emslie's stranded car at the tricky approach to the chicane. The drama continued with Dailly given a five-second penalty for exceeding track limits, which dropped him to

seventh and promoted Souter and Stephen Russell.

The indications are that Kirkaldy's title defence will be a challenge this year. His own efforts helped bring more cars into the series, and he will now require all his talent to triumph amid its increased strength.

● Jonathan Crawford

RESULTS (BOTH 12 LAPS) 1 Steven Dailly 13m11.299s (69.405mph); 2 Alan Kirkaldy +5.498s; 3 Mark Souter; 4 Cliff Harper; 5 Stephen Russell; 6 Billy Campbell. **FL** Dailly 1m04.194s (71.295mph). **RACE 2 1 Kirkaldy 13m00.459s (46.913mph);** 2 Souter +0.332s; 3 Russell; 4 Carol Brown; 5 Campbell; 6 Gary Clark. **FL** Harper 1m08.322s (66.987mph).

FF1600 KNOCKHILL, APRIL 6 SMRC

Gronkowski doubles up

DESPITE FORMER CHAMPION GRAHAM Carroll's return to the series, Jordan Gronkowski grabbed two wins in tricky conditions that will force many to reassess his title chances.

Gronkowski had the measure of Carroll and teenager Ciaran Haggerty in both races.

Race one provided the most action at the front as Gronkowski held an early lead from Carroll. The former champion sneaked past at Duffus on lap three, but Gronkowski retook the place a corner later.

At half distance, Carroll again got a run up the main straight, but this time Gronkowski wasn't in the mood to let him by and squeezed him. This allowed Haggerty to catch up and he



Gronkowski was a cut above in FFord

NOIR

overtaken Carroll at Duffus on lap 10. But Haggerty was subsequently given a five-second track limits penalty.

The top three were inseparable at the start of race two. Gronkowski led away, but Carroll had to brave it out around the outside of the kink after Clark corner to secure second, amid difficult visibility. Although the gaps widened at the front, attention turned to the fierce battle between rookies Adam Mackay and Luke Williams.

Williams won the battle of the older-spec Rays in race one, but the

pair swapped places in race two.

● Jonathan Crawford

RESULTS (BOTH 12 LAPS) 1 Jordan Gronkowski (Van Diemen RF90) 12m24s.672s (73.751mph); 2 Graham Carroll (Van Diemen RF91) +3.366s; 3 Ciaran Haggerty (Ray GR14); 4 Luke Williams (Ray GR13); 5 Adam Mackay (Ray GRO9); 6 Matthew Chisholm (Van Diemen RF92). **CW** Ivor Mairs (Mondiale). **FL** Haggerty 1m00.461s (75.696mph). **RACE 2 1 Gronkowski 12m22.319s (73.985mph);** 2 Carroll +2.134s; 3 Haggerty; 4 Mackay; 5 Williams; 6 Chisholm. **CW** Mairs. **FL** Haggerty 1m00.600s (75.523mph).



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NATIONAL RESULTS ROUND-UP

SNETTERTON
APRIL 5-6, MSVR



LOTUS ELISE TROPHY (BOTH 9 LAPS) 1 Adam Gore 20m00.684s (80.11mph); 2 Jack Goff +6.946s; 3 Fulvio Mussi; 4 Craig Denman; 5 Jason Baker; 6 Matthias Radestock. **FL** Mussi 2m12.278s (80.80mph). **RACE 2** 1 Mussi 20m 02.801s (79.97mph); 2 Goff +0.814s; 3 Gore; 4 Baker; 5 Adam Knight; 6 Denham. **FL** Gore 2m11.771s (81.11mph).

MONOPOSTO MOTO DURATEC 1600 & 1800 (BOTH 8 LAPS) 1 Kevin Waring (Jedi Mk6) 15m27.627s (92.17mph); 2 Jason Timms (Speads RM07) +12.749s; 3 Geoff Fern (JKS TFR 11); 4 Jeremy Timms (Speads RM03); 5 Graham Read (Dallara F301); 6 Chris Levy (Van Diemen RF83). **CW** Levy; Douglas McLay (Mygale SJ10); David Parkinson (Reynard FF). **FL** Waring 1m53.717s (93.98mph). **RACE 2** 1 Waring 16m 02.644s (88.82mph); 2 Jeremy Timms +0.694s; 3 Fern; 4 Levy; 5 Read; 6 McLay. **CW** Levy; McLay; Parkinson. **FL** Jeremy Timms 1m57.812s (90.72mph).

MONOPOSTO CLASSIC & 2000 (BOTH 8 LAPS) 1 Robbie Watts (Lola F106/03) 15m35.285s; 2 Malcolm Scott (Dallara F398) +5.515s; 3 Peter Venn (Dallara F301); 4 Ben Cater (Dallara F301); 5 Tony Bishop (Dallara F304); 6 Russ Giles (Dallara F398). **CW** Daniel Hands (Van Diemen 01). **FL** Cater 1m 51.958s (95.46mph). **RACE 2** 1 Watts 15m20.222s (92.91mph); 2 Scott +22.514s; 3 Peter Venn (Dallara F301); 4 Dave Gillett (Dallara F398); 5 Bishop; 6 Bryn Tootell (Dallara). **CW** Mike Hatton (Vauxhall Lotus). **FL** Watts 1m52.767s (94.78mph).

TRACKDAY TROPHY (18 LAPS) 1 Jason Jones/Tony Jones (Toyota MR2) 45m09.942s (70.99mph); 2 James Bird/Andrew Stacey (Mini Cooper S) +28.175s; 3 Rick Bromley/Andy Montgomery (Mini R53 Cooper); 4 Luke Allen (Renault Clio Cup); 5 Jeremy Hayman/Mark Penny (Vauxhall VX220); 6 Aaron Harding/David Slater (Renault Clio). **CW** Jones/Jones; Bird/Stacey; Bromley/Montgomery; Ricky Coomber/Gary Inge (Honda Civic); Adrian Timpon (Toyota MR2). **FL** Hayman 2m18.950s (76.92mph).

TEAM TROPHY (23 LAPS) 1 Matthew Weymouth (BMW M3) 54m35.586s (75.04mph); 2 Nigel Richards (BMW M3) +3.932s; 3 Ricky Coomber/Tom Gannon (Honda Integra); 4 Richard Preece/James Read (Ginetta G20); 5 David Scarborough/Antony Sharpe (Lotus Elise); 6 Jamie Mchugh (Porsche 944). **CW** Weymouth; Coomber/Gannon; Scarborough/Sharpe; Edward Christie (BMW M3). **FL** Ben Uren (Seat Cupra Mk1) 2m12.876s (80.43mph).

SILVERSTONE INTERNATIONAL
APRIL 5-6, BRSCC



MIGHTY MINIS (13 LAPS) 1 Paul Rhodes 20m18.567s (71.08mph); 2 Ian Slark +0.397s; 3 Charlie Budd; 4 Paul Inch; 5 Adrian Tuckley; 6 Samuel Hathaway. **FL** Slark 1m32.443s (72.07mph). **RACE 2 (13 LAPS)** 1 Rhodes 20m55.748s (68.98mph); 2 Slark +7.298s; 3 Budd; 4 Hathaway; 5 Inch; 6 Tuckley. **FL** Rhodes 1m32.967s (71.67mph).

TOYO PORSCHE (16 LAPS) 1 Jonathan Greensmith 21m05.998s (84.21mph); 2 Ed Hayes +7.703s; 3 Garry Lawrence; 4 Richard Avery; 5 Nick Hull; 6 Graham Heard. **CW** Jayson Flegg; Simon Hawksley (924). **FL** Greensmith 1m17.820s (85.62mph). **RACE 2 (15 LAPS)** 1 Greensmith 20m09.497s (82.63mph); 2 Hayes +1.870s; 3 Heard; 4 Avery; 5 Lawrence; 6 Garry Goodwin. **CW** Flegg; Hawksley.



Lotus Elise Trophy was out at Snett

FL Greensmith 1m18.423s (84.96mph). **SUPER MIGHTY MINIS (14 LAPS)** 1 Jamie White 20m34.840s (75.54mph); 2 Elliot Stafford +0.253s; 3 Neven Kirkpatrick; 4 Scott Kendall; 5 Steve Maxted; 6 Daniel Budd. **FL** Stafford 1m28.503s (77.02mph). **RACE 2 (14 LAPS)** 1 Stafford 21m09.915s (73.45mph); 2 Kirkpatrick +1.502s; 3 Kendall; 4 Maxted; 5 Mark Burnett; 6 Alex Comis. **FL** Kendall 1m27.495s (76.15mph).

FORD FIESTA CLASS C (10 LAPS) 1 David Ellesley 14m41.031s (75.62mph); 2 David Grady +1.736s; 3 Joe Ferguson; 4 Daniel Holland; 5 Andrew Taylor; 6 Nathan Lawley. **FL** Grady 1m27.541s (76.11mph). **RACE 2 (15 LAPS)** 1 Grady 20m18.113s (82.05mph); 2 Holland +1.872s; 3 Ellesley; 4 Simon Horrobin; 5 Lawley; 6 Taylor. **FL** Ellesley 1m19.952s (83.34mph).

FORD FIESTA CLASSES A, B & D (14 LAPS) 1 Edward Cockill 20m59.289s (74.07mph); 2 David Abbott +11.085s; 3 James Appleby; 4 Jack Williams; 5 Peter Dendy-Sadler; 6 Al Daly. **Class winners** Williams; John Bateman. **FL** Williams 1m28.446s (75.33mph). **RACE 2 (15 LAPS)** 1 Cockill 20m53.695s (79.72mph); 2 Abbott +17.112s; 3 Appleby; 4 Williams; 5 Daley; 6 Dendy-Sadler. **CW** Williams; Michael Hopper. **FL** Cockill 1m23.117s (80.16mph).

MAZDA MX-5 SUPER CUP (BOTH 15 LAPS) 1 Mike Comber 21m03.483s (79.10mph); 2 David Chapman +18.218s; 3 Matt Davies; 4 Clint Bardwell; 5 John Davies; 6 Abbie Eaton. **FL** Comber 1m22.914s (80.36mph). **RACE 2** 1 Comber 20m26.631s (81.48mph); 2 Chapman +2.944s; 3 Eaton; 4 Tom Roche; 5 M.Davies; 6 Bardwell. **FL** Comber 1m20.300s (82.97mph).

SILVERSTONE NATIONAL
APRIL 6, AMOC



HRDC TOURING GREATS (33 LAPS) 1 Neil Brown/Richard Dutton (Austin A35) 46m13.645s (70.26mph); 2 Peter Burton (Jaguar Mk1) 2.388s; 3 Mike Jordan/Andrew Jordan (Austin A40); 4 Desmond Smail/Darren Turner (Austin A40); 5 Richard Butterfield/Tom Butterfield (Jaguar Mk1); 6 David Griffiths (Standard Vanguard). **CW** Burton; Griffiths; Max Cawthorn (Wolseley 1500); David Lillywhite (Austin A35); Paul Alcock (Morris Minor). **FL** Turner 1m14.241s (79.54mph).

INNES IRELAND CUP (38 LAPS) 1 Peter Snowden (Jaguar E-Type Lightweight) 45m05.604s (82.94mph); 2 John Clark (Tojeiro Ford GT) 28.972s; 3 David Tomlin (Lotus Cortina); 4 Paul Kennelly (Jaguar E-Type Lightweight); 5 Pete Foster/Tim Mogridge (Triumph TR4); 6 Jeremy Cooke/Mike Dowd (Ford Shelby GT350). **CW** Clark; Tomlin; Foster/Mogridge. **Fastest lap** Clark 1m06.816s (88.38mph).

EQUIPE GTS (25 LAPS) 1 Pete Foster (Triumph TR4) 30m34.168s (80.49mph); 2 John Andon (Triumph TR4) +1.917s; 3 David Reed (Aston Martin DB2); 4 John Yea (MGB); 5 Mike Thorne (Austin Healey 100N); 6 Dominic Spicer (Triumph TR4). **CW** Reed; Yea; Andrew Mitchell (Alfa Romeo Giulia Sprint GT); Richard Frankel (Alfa Romeo Sprint). **FL** Brian White (Triumph TR4) 1m11.866s (82.17mph).



Snowdon won first Alfa Romeo thrash

HRDC ALLSTARS (21 LAPS) 1 Mike Whitaker (TVR Griffith) 30m35.139s (67.58mph); 2 John Spiers (TVR Griffith) +2.469s; 3 Bill Shepherd (Ford Galaxie); 4 David Tomlin (Lotus Cortina); 5 Nicholas King (Ford Mustang); 6 Gordon Elwell (Austin Healey Sebring Sprite). **CW** Shepherd; Tomlin; Elwell; Alistair Dyson (Ford Cortina GT); Desmond Smail (Austin A40); Julian Crossley (Austin Mini); David Griffiths (Standard Vanguard); Paul Crew (MGB Roadster); Tim Patchett (MG TA); Paul Clayton (Vauxhall VX4/90); David Lillywhite (Austin A35). **FL** Spiers 1m06.924s (88.24mph). **505 SPORTS CARS/JAGUAR XK CHALLENGE (25 LAPS)** 1 Darren McWhirter (Tojeiro Jaguar) 30m55.947s (79.55mph); 2 Mike Thorne (Austin Healey 100M) +1m13.565s; 3 John Burton (Jaguar XK120); 4 Rob Newall (Jaguar XK120); 5 Jeremy Cooke (Cooper Bobtail); 6 Martyn Corfield (Austin Healey 100/4). **CW** Thorne; Burton; Cooke; Paul Chase-Gardener (Jaguar XK140); Anne Reed (Aston Martin DB2); Peter Dubsky (Aston Martin 15/98). **FL** McWhirter 1m09.431s (85.05mph).

SILVERSTONE NATIONAL
APRIL 6, BRSCC



ARROWPAK SALOONS & SPORTS, FORD RACING & 4-TWO CUP (BOTH 20 LAPS) 1 Mark Biggers (Nissan Skyline) 20m34.480s (95.67mph); 2 Peter Challis (Porsche 997 GT3) +39.173s; 3 Chris Hoy (Nissan 370Z); 4 Kevin Wendt (BMW M3 E46); 5 Simon Deaton (Porsche 997 GT3); 6 Steve Putt (Mazda RX7). **CW** Challis; Hoy; Wendt; Ian Craig (BMW M3); David Matthias (Ford Escort Cosworth); Ross Craig (Ford Fiesta ST); Jake Jackson (Smart Car). **FL** Biggers 59.946s (98.51mph). **RACE 2** 1 Biggers 20m30.857s (95.96mph); 2 Deaton +8.683s; 3 Challis; 4 Hoy; 5 Wendt; 6 Doug Ellwood (Marcos Mantis). **CW** Deaton; Hoy; Wendt; Matthias; Craig; Jackson. **FL** Biggers 1m00.257s (98.00mph).

ALFA ROMEO (BOTH 18 LAPS) 1 Chris Snowden (33) 20m12.128s (87.69mph); 2 Guy Hale (147 GTA) +3.027s; 3 Ray Foley (GTV); 4 Nick Anderson (33); 5 Graham Seager (GTV); 6 Clive Hodgkin (75). **CW** Hale; Foley; Hodgkin; James Bishop (156). **FL** Snowden 1m05.674s (89.92mph). **RACE 2** 1 Hale 20m28.122s (88.55mph); 2 Darelle Wilson (GT Diesel) +29.667s; 3 Roger Evans (156 GTA); 4 Foley; 5 Anderson; 6 Ian Brookfield (164). **CW** Wilson; Evans; Anderson; James Ford (156).

FL Hale 1m06.489s (88.82mph). **FIESTA JUNIOR (BOTH 17 LAPS)** 1 Robert Cox 20m57.512s (79.83mph); 2 Michael Higgs +3.839s; 3 Geri Nicotia; 4 Thomas Grundy; 5 Samuel Waters; 6 Jessica King. **FL** Nicotia 1m12.592s (81.45mph). **RACE 2** 1 Cox 20m29.832s (81.63mph); 2 Higgs +2.793s; 3 Nicotia; 4 Grundy; 5 Watkins; 6 Nathan Edwards. **FL** Cox 1m11.864s (82.40mph).

KNOCKHILL
MARCH 6, SMRC



SCOTTISH MINIS (ALL 9 LAPS) 1 Kenneth Thirlwall 9m59.221s (68.739mph); 2 Joe Tanner +0.825s; 3 Oliver Mortimer; 4 Malcolm McNab; 5 Jack Borthwick; 6 Aiden Moffat. **FL** Thirlwall 1m05.657s (69.706mph). **RACE 2** 1 Thirlwall 13m35.727s (50.495mph); 2 Tanner +0.101s; 3 Mortimer; 4 McNab; 5 Borthwick; 6 Chris Reid. **FL** Tanner 1m03.917s (71.603mph). **RACE 3** 1 Thirlwall 11m47.308s (58.235mph); 2 Ian Munro +6.277s; 3 Tanner; 4 David Sleight; 5 Alan Waugh; 6 Max Bear. **FL** Mortimer 1m06.269s (69.062mph).

SCOTTISH LEGENDS (8 LAPS) 1 Daniel McKay 9m12.540s (66.264mph); 2 Paul O'Brien +0.470s; 3 David Hunter; 4 Euan McKay; 5 John Paterson; 6 Kyle Reid. **Fastest lap** Duncan Vincent 1m07.309s (67.928mph). **Heat 2 (8 LAPS)** 1 Hunter 10m49.937s (56.334mph); 2 Vincent +0.660s; 3 Robbie Burgoyne; 4 Daniel McKay; 5 Euan McKay; 6 Paterson. **FL** Hunter 1m03.680s (71.87mph). **Final (10 LAPS)** 1 Paterson 10m40.127s (71.496mph); 2 Vincent +2.789s; 3 Hunter; 4 David Newall; 5 Burgoyne; 6 O'Brien. **FL** Hunter 1m01.260s (74.709mph).

SCOTTISH CLASSIC SPORTS AND SALOONS (BOTH 12 LAPS) 1 Tommy Gilmartin (Morgan +8) 12m12.460s (74.980mph); 2 John Marshall (Ford Escort Mk1) +11.709s; 3 Harry Simpson (Ginetta G4); 4 Raymond Boyd (Porsche 911); 5 Mike Cannon (Lotus 7); 6 Matthew Gordon (TVR 300M). **CW** Marshall; Simpson; Boyd; Tim Reid (Marcos GT); Steve Uphill (Ford Fiesta). **FL** Gilmartin 59.365s (77.094mph). **RACE 2** 1 Marshall 13m04.943s (69.967mph); 2 Boyd +1.958s; 3 Gilmartin; 4 Simpson; 5 Bruce Weir (Lotus Sunbeam); 6 Jimmy Crow (Ford Escort). **CW** Boyd; Gilmartin; Simpson; Reid; Uphill. **FL** Gilmartin 1m04.255s (71.227mph).

SCOTTISH SALOONS AND SPORTS CARS (BOTH 12 LAPS) 1 Graham Davidson (Noble M400) 11m39.366s (78.528mph); 2 Paul Brydon (BMW M3) +27.150s; 3 Alister Robertson (Ginetta G5); 4 Andrew Morrison (SEAT Cupra); 5 Clark Sutherland (BMW M3); 6 Paul Rankin (Subaru RB320). **CW** Sutherland; Paul Rankin (Subaru Impreza); Bob Stuart (Peugeot 206); David Smail (Mazda MX5). **FL** Davidson 56.481s (81.03mph). **RACE 2** 1 George Orr (Mitsubishi Evo) 12m17.161s (75.026mph); 2 Finlay Crocker (Renault Clio) +38.810s; 3 Morrison; 4 Sutherland; 5 Chris White (VW Corrado); 6 Stuart Wait (SEAT Ibiza). **W** CW Orr; Crocker; Stuart; Smail. **FL** Orr 59.263s (77.227mph).

Scottish Fiesta Championship (BOTH 12 LAPS) 1 Wayne MacAuley (Fiesta ST) 12m50.071s (71.318mph); 2 Aiden Moffat (Fiesta ST) +1.540s; 3 Peter Cruickshank (Fiesta ST); 4 George Runcie (Fiesta ST); 5 Stephen Ward (Fiesta ST); 6 Andrew Christie (Fiesta ST). **CW** Hamish Smart (Fiesta XR2). **Fastest lap** MacAuley 1m03.365s (72.227mph). **RACE 2** 1 MacAuley 13m14.634s (69.114mph); 2 Moffat; 3 Cruickshank; 4 Runcie; 5 Christie; 6 Smart. **CW** Smart. **FL** Moffat 1m04.931s (70.485mph).



HRDC tin-tops head towards Copse

RISE OF THE CSCC



The Classic Sports Car Club flies under some people's radar, but it's fast-becoming one of the country's top racing clubs. SCOTT MITCHELL unearths one of national racing's hidden gems

88

Name a motorsport organising club in Britain. It's easy, right? You'll probably think of the British Automobile Racing Club, or the British Racing and Sports Car Club. Maybe MotorSport Vision Racing, the 750 Motor Club or the Historic Sports Car Club.

But what about the Classic Sports Car Club? It's not as mainstream as the five aforementioned, but the CSCC has grown substantially in recent seasons and that trend has continued into 2014.

Formed 12 years ago, and having celebrated 10 years of putting together race meetings in August last year, the CSCC organises seven in-house series

and caters for other races as well.

With two-full time members of staff in director Hugo Holder and assistant club secretary David Smitheram, two part-time officials and the remainder a host of volunteers, there's nothing sizable about its ranks. In fact, its early existence was managed from its founder's bedroom.

In 2000 Richard Culverhouse, the former competition secretary of the Aston Martin Owners Club, was driven to create a club for grassroots competitors – but the first few years were tough. In addition to the financial hurdles such a task naturally faces, Culverhouse was also dealing with personal challenges.

"Initially the new club operated out

of one of my bedrooms," he said, having gone through a divorce just as the CSCC was beginning in 2002. "I had to take outside part-time jobs to make sure the club survived, but I was determined it would work."

From those early days the club has blossomed. The CSCC's own series include the Magnificent Sevens (with split grids for 2014, such is its popularity); Swinging Sixties; Tin Tops Series; Modern Classics; Future Classics; Special Saloons Series and, returning for this year, the Classic K Series. Last weekend's Historic Sports Car Club curtain-raiser drew 233 cars to Donington Park, yet more than 300 have been present for the last three CSCC kick-offs.

Admittedly that figure is usually

boosted by external guests (such as the Aero Racing Morgan Challenge), but that's to the club's credit, not its detriment. This weekend, new series for Production Porsches and Ford Pumas will spark into life, and it is the CSCC that has taken on the responsibility of including the new series in its race meetings.

Such a move is not new for Holder and his team, though – "gambling", as he calls it, on running something other clubs might shy away from is quite a common occurrence. A case in point is the CSCC's meeting at Mallory Park on July 20 – the only race meeting that will be held at the recovering 'Friendly Circuit' all year.

Another major feather in the CSCC cap is that taking on new challenges

CSCC SUPER SEVEN

Swinging Sixties



Eligible: Sports, saloon and GT cars built in the 1960s.

Modern Classics



Eligible: Saloons (over two litres) or two-seaters from the 1990s.

Future Classics



Eligible: Sports, saloons and GT cars from the 1970s, '80s and '90s.



RICHES

The club has come a long way in just over a decade

STYLES

“Initially it operated out of my bedroom. I had to take part-time jobs”

RICHARD

CULVERHOUSE

club he founded has achieved.

“I would never have thought that within 10 years of working out of my bedroom that the club would have its own purpose-built premises, and great office staff who can be relied on to give members the service they deserve,” he confesses.

“But this is due to the hard work produced by the team: all the series co-ordinators [also known as drivers’ representatives], senior officials and everybody who helps at the race meetings and give freely of their time – and of course the office staff.”

Exceeding expectations is great, particularly in the current climate. But that’s not enough. Holder, for one, is looking to the future.

“You can always improve,” he insists. “You can’t just rest on your laurels, you have to work at it. We don’t tend to shout about it. Maybe we should, but the people who need to know about us do know.”

“What we’re not going to do is expand and change huge amounts to be the biggest and best, take over market share and things like that.

“We’re doing what we’re doing, it’s been very successful for us and we need to consolidate that.”



...but early years were tougher

STYLES

£295 and £365, which gets you a 20-minute qualifying session and a 40-minute race, but Holder reckons it’s about more than money.

“The simplicity of the regulations is important,” he suggests. “We’ve only got four rules effectively. Obviously we have different things



Packed grids are the norm now...

HAWKINS

has not compromised the health of its own categories. In fact, the opposite is true – numbers are improving all the time. The Magnificent Sevens’ grid growth is the prime example. In 2009, it garnered 11 entries – a tally that has increased five-fold in six seasons. The Tin Tops grid has

attracted a record 39 entries for the opener. There were 45 entries for the club’s inaugural class, the Swinging Sixties, last year, while the year-old Modern Classics is up from 20 cars to 31 in 12 months.

So what is the key to that success? Prices for the meeting are between

Magnificent 7s



STYLES

Eligible: Kit cars like Caterhams, Locosts, Lotus Sevens or Strykers.

Tin Tops



STYLES

Eligible: Normally-aspirated saloon or hot hatch machines under two litres.

Classic K



STYLES

Eligible: GT and touring cars running to Appendix K regulations.

Special Saloons and Modsports



STYLES

Eligible: Modified cars from the 1970s to the early 1990s.

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THIS WEEK

LETTERS • BEST PICS • LATEST GEAR • ON TRACK & SCREEN • ONLINE

What you think of the motorsport news of the past week



Epic Hamilton/Rosberg ding-dong ranks among F1's greatest battles

This is Formula 1 at its finest

What a race, what a battle (or should I say battles). You get the feeling Lewis has been doing that to Nico since they were kids.

The pundits were comparing the Hamilton/Rosberg fight to Mansell/Piquet, Senna/Prost, Schumacher/Hill. It didn't remind me of any of those

battles. It was the reaction in the pitlane and cool-down room afterwards that got me: no animosity, just celebration.

What did it remind me of? Villeneuve/Arnoux at Dijon. No quarter asked or given and the result was secondary, it was the battle that was important.
Bob Barker, Leominster, Herefordshire

Superb race. After 45 years of watching F1, this is possibly the best grand prix in a decade!

Congratulations to Mercedes for another one-two finish. And it's so good to see Force India in the frame at last. Also a great improvement by Williams.

It's good to see from the fans' point of view more than one team excelling. We all should look forward to the next race to see who else will surprise us!
Patrick Wickham Buckingham

Bernie Ecclestone is biting the hand that feeds him. The most tiresome part of F1 at the moment is his constant sniping about the new regulations.

As usual, Ferrari and Red Bull have his ear and therefore he wants change. What Red Bull and Ferrari should be doing is working to be more competitive, rather than moaning all the time.

Us fans will get used to the new F1; more like it than Ecclestone will admit.

It's crazy to be so negative at this point in the season.

Richard Hargrave Hitchin, Herts

At last! Absolutely fabulous: respectful team-mates racing wheel-to-wheel. A happy, smiling Aussie levelling some scores, Williams back where they should be, in the points. Perez on the podium, a real confidence boost following his year at McLaren.

Taxi drivers? Get real, Bernie. Perhaps it's time to join Brucie in retirement.

David Denham-Smith Woodhall Spa, Lincs

The performance advantage currently enjoyed by Mercedes is very reminiscent of McLaren in 1988. That was arguably the most one-sided season in the history of F1, yet was the catalyst for the sport's most recent 'golden era'.

I already sense some needle between Hamilton and Rosberg, and if it develops

to the magnitude of Senna and Prost, it will be the best thing to happen in F1 in a quarter of a century. Bring it on!

Paul Roberts Caerphilly

Ricciardo is let go with a loose wheel which didn't come off. Incurs a 10-second stop/go penalty and a 10-place penalty in the next GP.

Maldonado crashes into and inverts Gutierrez and gets three points on his licence but only a five-place penalty!

Well, I'm sure that all makes sense, but only in the world of F1, and even then it stretches credibility.

Simon Astley Rickmansworth, Herts

I'm so glad Bernie doesn't get involved in the WEC. Imagine when the Audi drove past, you could probably hear his moaning over the top of it!

Ben Greig By email

In pictures

Images around the globe, from Bahrain to Portugal via the Lone Star state



ONE OF US IS ENJOYING THIS...
Lewis Hamilton and Nico Rosberg put on a great show in Bahrain, but from the body language it's plain to see which Mercedes driver was most entertained by their battle royal

STALEY/LAT



PORTUGAL POSITIVE FOR HYUNDAI
Hyundai scored its first WRC stage wins in Portugal with Dani Sordo and Thierry Neuville. The latter (pictured) finished the event in seventh

MCKLEIN

LATVALA FORCED TO PACK IT UP
VW Polo R driver Jari-Matti Latvala suffered a huge off when pushing his team-mate Sebastien Ogier for the lead during Portugal's round of the WRC



MCKLEIN

EARNHARDT JR FLAMES OUT
Dale Earnhardt Jr walked away unhurt after his Chevrolet caught fire when it hit the wall on lap 13 of Texas's NASCAR Sprint Cup race on Monday



TRACKER/JAT

In the shops

Desirable new releases

HONDA BTCC OFFICIAL GEAR

From £14.99 – autosport.com/shop

There's a lot of love for the Team Dynamics-run Honda Civic 'estates' in the 2014 BTCC, so the new official clobber should be popular. Choose from a range of stuff, including the adjustable team cap at £14.99, the team T-shirt at £22.49 and jacket with concealed hood at £119.99.



LOEB PEUGEOT 208 T16 1:43

£52.99 – autosport.com/shop

Spark has released a 1:43-scale resin replica of the stonking Peugeot 208 T16 used by Sebastien Loeb to demolish the outright record at the Pikes Peak International Hill Climb last year. The model comes in detailed packaging, which is inspired by the livery of the car.



OFFICIAL PORSCHE 50th BOOK

£65 – autosport.com/shop

Published by Porsche's Stuttgart museum, this is a huge and lavish photographic celebration of 50 years of the iconic 911 sports car. It's packed with factory archive images, ad pages, design sketches, cut-aways and racing pics – with captions in five languages (including English!) – and *must* be bought by all true 911 fans.



WHAT'S ON

ON TRACK IN THE UK

SILVERSTONE

BRSCC

April 12

www.silverstone.co.uk

Britcar's ensemble fires into life on Saturday on the International circuit with its flagship Endurance Championship supported by the Endurance Sports and Touring Car categories among others.

SILVERSTONE

VSCC

April 12-13

www.silverstone.co.uk

The Spring Start gets the VSCC season underway on the National circuit. This weekend's meeting includes a special race to celebrate the 80th birthday of English Racing Automobiles.

SNETTERTON

CSCC

April 12-13

www.snetterton.co.uk

As chronicled in this week's National Focus (see page 88), the Classic Sports Car Club gets its season underway at Snetterton. More than 300 competitors are expected across a spread that includes the new Production Porsche series and Ford Puma category.



Britcar's season kicks off at Silverstone

HAWKINS

BRANDS HATCH

BARC

April 12-13

www.brandshatch.co.uk

Trucks, Pickups, Legends, Intermarques and more – the first club meeting of the season at Brands Hatch is action-packed to say the least. South East Saloons will also star.

OULTON PARK

BRSCC

April 12

www.oultontpark.co.uk

Formula Ford 1600 rules the roost in Cheshire on Saturday, with a trio of single-seater series on show. Support comes from the Ford XR Challenge and Fun Cup.

MONDELLO PARK

(IMRC)

April 12-13

www.mondello.ie

A slightly slimmed-down roster makes up this weekend's Mondello Park meeting, with Formula Vee, Touring Cars and Patch Fiestas among the series set to do battle in Ireland.

VALKENSWAARD

British Rallycross

April 12

www.eurocircuit.nl

The second round of the British Rallycross Championship takes place in Holland. Three-time champion Julian Godfrey leads the Brit pack charge at Valkenswaard.

ON TRACK AROUND THE WORLD

INDYCAR SERIES

Rd 2/15

Long Beach, California, USA

April 13

indycar.com

UNITED SPORTSCARS

Rd 3/13

Long Beach, California, USA

April 12

imsa.com

INDY LIGHTS

Rd 2/10

Long Beach, California, USA

April 13

indycar.com

FORMULA RENAULT 3.5

Rd 1/9

Monza, Italy

April 12-13

worldseriesbyrenault.com

BLANCPAIN ENDURANCE SERIES

Rd 1/5

Monza, Italy

April 13

blancpain-gt-series.com

WORLD TOURING CAR CHAMPIONSHIP

Rd 1/12

Marrakech, Morocco

April 13

fiawtcc.com



Long Beach hosts the second IndyCar round

NASCAR SPRINT CUP

Rd 8/36

Darlington, South Carolina, USA

April 12

nascar.com

V8 STOCK CARS

Rd 2/12

Santa Cruz, Brazil

April 13

stockcar.com.br

SUPER TC2000

Rd 2/12

Viedma, Argentina

April 13

super-tc2000.com.ar

AUTO GP

Rd 1/8

Marrakech, Morocco

April 12-13

autogp.net

SUPER FORMULA

Rd 1/7

Suzuka, Japan

April 13

superformula.net

Your guide to the best events taking place in the UK and around the world – plus TV and online

ON TELEVISION

THURSDAY APRIL 10

1005-1310 Motors TV
 V8 Supercars Highlights
1445-1650 Motors TV
 NASCAR Nationwide Series Highlights
1900-1930: 2200-2230 Sky Sports F1
 Bahrain GP: Midweek Report
2100-2200 Sky Sports F1
 F1 Classics: Belgium 1982



FRIDAY APRIL 11

1500-1745 BT Sport 2 LIVE
 MotoGP: Austin FP1
1900-2200 BT Sport 2 LIVE
 MotoGP: Austin FP2
2000-2100 Sky Sports F1 LIVE
 The F1 Show
2100-2315 Sky Sports F1
 F1 Classics: Abu Dhabi GP 2011

SUNDAY APRIL 13

0640-0705 Channel 4
 Goodwood Members' Meeting, part 1
1315-1715 Motors TV LIVE
 Blancpain Endurance Series: Monza
1400-1500 British Eurosport 2 LIVE
 Auto GP: Morocco Race 2
1500-1600 British Eurosport 2
 Formula Renault 3.5: Monza Race 2
1600-1800 British Eurosport LIVE
 WTCC: Morocco Races 1 & 2
1945-2130 BT Sport 2 LIVE
 MotoGP: Austin
2100-2145 Sky Sports F1
 F1 Classics: Austria 1984
2130-0000 ESPN LIVE
 IndyCar Series: Long Beach

SATURDAY APRIL 12

1200-1300 British Eurosport LIVE
 Auto GP: Morocco Race 1
1400-1500 British Eurosport LIVE
 WTCC: Morocco Qualifying
1500-1615 British Eurosport LIVE
 Formula Renault 3.5: Monza Race 1
1500-1800 BT Sport 2 LIVE
 MotoGP: Austin FP3
1800-2215 BT Sport 2 LIVE
 MotoGP: Austin Qualifying
2100-2145 Sky Sports F1
 F1 Classics: Monaco 1993
2100-2300 Motors TV
 NASCAR Nationwide: Darlington
2300-0105 Motors TV LIVE
 United Sportscars: Long Beach
2330-0400 Premier Sports LIVE
 Nascar Sprint Cup: Darlington

MONDAY APRIL 14

2100-2230 Sky Sports F1
 F1 Classics: Britain 2003

TUESDAY APRIL 15

2100-2145 Sky Sports F1
 F1 Classics: Hungary 1990

WEDNESDAY APRIL 16

2100-2330 Sky Sports F1
 F1 Classics: China 2007

ONLINE

HOT ON THE WEB THIS WEEK

YouTube **GERRY MARSHALL TROPHY HIGHLIGHTS FROM GOODWOOD**



SEARCH FOR: Goodwood 72nd Members' Meeting RACE NINE - Gerry Marshall Trophy pt2 (3:59)
 If you missed the 72nd Members' Meeting at Goodwood recently and its showpiece event, the Gerry Marshall Trophy for Group 1 saloons of the late-1970s and early-'80s, then this highlights video will ensure you don't make the same mistake next year.

AUTOSPORT+

Exclusive content coming up in our premium website this week

Follow Sebastien Loeb's and Citroen's WTCC debut as the Marrakech street race action unfolds this weekend with Race Centre Live. We'll also have minute-by-minute coverage of the next Marc Marquez vs Jorge Lorenzo vs Valentino Rossi shoot-out when MotoGP 2014 resumes at Austin.

GET AUTOSPORT ON THE MOVE

- IN THE IPAD ISSUE THIS WEEK
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Revved up over what's on the box

The Mercedes radio fizzes into life, and it's a more ominous voice than the usual firm-but-friendly sound of the race engineer. It's not the unnerving baritone of the big-big boss with the cartoon villain's name at least, but it's still not someone to be ignored: "Lewis, it's Paddy. There will be about 10 laps of racing left, can we make sure we bring the cars home."

Moments later, the same message for Nico Rosberg. And that was it: the greatest grand prix in years ruined with another outrageous imposition of team orders as Mercedes bluntly clamped down on what would have been an extraordinary late lead battle and robbed both fans and its drivers of the contest they all deserved. "Team orders!" Sky Sports F1's pit

reporter Ted Kravitz instantly cried. "Clear and simple! That puts the truth to everything the team management has been saying in the build-up to this race



doesn't it?" But it wasn't over, as the heroic Rosberg and Lewis Hamilton simply disregarded their team's cruel attempts to stifle their competitive spirit and went at it flat-out, wheel-to-wheel anyway, to the horror of the Mercedes pitwall... Except the horror bit, that didn't happen.

It didn't happen because there weren't any team orders. Or any controversy. The spectacular intra-team denouement actually took place with the full blessing of Mercedes management.

Still Kravitz wasn't entirely convinced, ending a circuitous post-race interview with a happy but slightly bamboozled Niki Lauda that included the phrase "we let them race, that's the most important thing" with "so Paddy was

saying 'don't race' but they ignored him?"

He didn't. They didn't. It was fine. There was no scandal. Just an epic race, Ted.

Mistakes and misunderstandings happen in live broadcasting, especially when trying to pick out the nuances of fuzzy radio transmissions amid a quieter-than-2013-but-still-noisy pitlane.

But charging on headlong with a contentious statement that intimates an F1 squad has been fibbing to the world about its team orders approach, and sticking with that opinion even when your commentating colleagues are questioning whether you might be clinging doggedly to the wrong end of that particular stick, is probably a habit best avoided.

Revved Up

Manfred Schurti

“I was comfortably leading – those \$20,000 were looming on the horizon”

■ Formula Super Vee World Finals, Daytona ■ February 11, 1973 ■ Royale RP5 ■ Victory in loan car



Schurti won on his FVee 'comeback' in Florida in a borrowed Royale RP5

RACING ONE / ISC IMAGES & ARCHIVES / GETTY

I HAD A PRETTY SUCCESSFUL season in 1972, becoming European Formula Super Vee Champion. So, right after the season was over, I sold all my equipment to a fellow Swiss amateur – my Royale RP4 plus engines and trailer.

But just as I had finalised that deal I got invited to travel overseas for the World Cup Finals at Daytona. Americans tend to exaggerate, as we all know: as soon as there is some European participation, they implement the term 'World Cup'.

Anyway, I was eager to compete. But I needed a car and an engine plus a spare engine. First step: giving Bob King from Royale a call. Sure he'd lend me a car, but if I was going to win he wanted 50 per cent of the winnings which was a solid \$20,000.

No problem, I thought. Next, I rang fellow countryman Max Heidegger. A race engine and a spare? No problem, but he demanded 50 per cent of the winnings, too. So I thought it better to forget about the whole adventure.

I rang Bob King again to let him know I was going to cancel the thing, when he said he'd talk to Royale's US importer Bill Scott. Now, for the amiable Scott it was a no-brainer to lend me a car for free, so off I went to Florida in January, with a car and two powerful Heidegger engines.

In practice everything went according to plan: pole position was mine. Come raceday things even got

better. I was comfortably leading and those \$20,000 were looming on the horizon, when with a couple of laps to go I suffered a broken exhaust tail-pipe. I had a lead of five seconds before and now had to fight Swede Bertil Roos, armed with a Tui. Roos made me battle like hell. Still, I held him off at the flag by one second with top Kaimann driver Helmuth Koinigg coming home third.

This was a mega result for me and very important for my career. After the race there was an absolute rush on my Heidegger engine, as well as on the spare. Selling the engines right away would have made life a lot easier for me instead of taking them back to Europe. So I rang Heidegger back in his native Lichtenstein. 'Dear Max, some Americans would love to buy your engines,' I carefully opened the conversation. 'Go ahead, do it,' he said. 'Ten thousand dollars apiece. But only if you sell them both.'

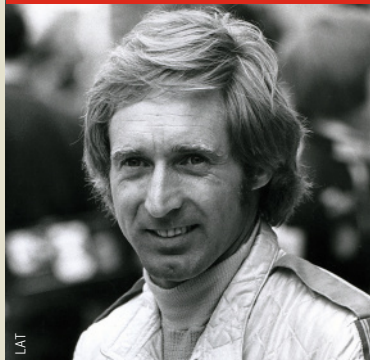
So after I had worked on getting the sale finalised, I rang him back.

'The deal is done – but the 50 per cent of the prize money thing is obsolete now, right?' I asked. To me that seemed only logical to get my share – kind of a provision.

'No discussions!' he barked. 'Load up the engines and get 'em over here!'

And so I had no choice but to hand over 50 per cent to that grumpy engine wizard. ☞ *Manfred Schurti was talking to Gregor Messer*

PROFILE



AUSTRIAN-BORN BUT OF

Lichtenstein nationality, Manfred Schurti won the European Formula Super Vee title in 1972. After a few troubled attempts in F2 he switched to GTs and touring cars. He took three Le Mans class wins between 1974 and '82 and was a top runner in the DRM series in a Porsche 935. In 1980, at Avus, he became the only non-F1 driver to win a round of the BMW M1 Procar series.

NEXT WEEK RON DENNIS ON SENNA
Plus: Jenson Button on his F1 future & McLaren



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- Individual protective single box packaging



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Standard EU test figures for comparative purposes and may not reflect real driving results. Acceleration 0–62mph in 5.7–5.9 seconds.