GP BRITAIN
SUNDAY, JULY 6, 2008. ISSUE 222
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THE RED BULLETIN

AN ALMOST INDEPENDENT F1 NEWSPAPER



SILVER ARROW, RAGING BULL, PRANCING HORSE

Lewis's rough ride
Lewis Hamilton goes through the gravel at Luffield on a hot lap during qualifying yesterday. Despite the backing of British fans, Hamilton will have to draw on all his reserves to turn fourth on the grid into victory at his home grand prix.
Photography: Reuters

BRITAIN
SUNDAY 06·07·08

Lewis Hamilton could only qualify fourth after McLaren team-mate Heikki Kovalainen's stunning last-gasp lap denied Mark Webber a maiden Red Bull pole and Kimi Räikkönen rallied in the struggling Ferrari to claim third. With speculation rife about David Coulthard's likely successor at Red Bull next year, Sebastian Vettel did his prospects no harm as a solid performance put his Toro Rosso on row four.

SMALL TALK

Toyota's race-team co-ordinator – and international peacekeeper – Andy Beavan



Good afternoon, Andy, time for a word with The Red Bulletin?
That depends... do you have beer?

Umm... normally we'd oblige, but as your press minder is giving us the evil eye, maybe we should move on. What does a race-team co-ordinator do?
Preparation is the key. Along with an office full of people back in Cologne, I plan hotels, flights, transfers and all of that stuff. Basically I look after the kids.

So, everyone blames you when they're in some horrible hotel?
Yep, that's how it works. Scapegoat is part of my job description.

Is Silverstone an awkward event?
No, it's pretty normal. Well, the less said about the pits the better, but apart from that, it's OK. Oh, and the airport. There isn't one, which causes us some trouble.

Ah yes, Toyota – the most international of teams. How does that affect your job?
You have to cater for everyone's quirky ways. Everyone is an individual, so we treat them individually. Actually, everyone gets on much better than they would in a team with one dominant nationality – and not because we don't understand each other, because we do.

No doubt they were getting on last night in a relaxed social environment.
If I frequented places where alcohol and cigarettes are to be found, there's apparently a street in Northampton filled with pubs and clubs. It gets pretty wild on a Friday and Saturday night, I can tell you. Or rather I can't, because I've never been. My commitment to the professionalism of F1 is too strong.

So, Château Beavan beckons?
I'll be going home to Hilperton, Wiltshire, this evening, and back to Cologne on Tuesday.

So that's why you don't find Silverstone shockingly rural...
We're all modern now in the West Country. We're even having electricity put in next week...

Webbers at full speed

Mark Webber's great performance in Q3 to claim Red Bull Racing's first front row and his first since Monaco '06, was a cause for celebration for all at the team but Mark's partner, Ann Neal, almost missed the whole thing as before qualifying she'd left the paddock to make a pitstop of her own, by driving back to their Aston Clinton home to let one of the family dogs out. Ann made it back to Silverstone just in time to see Mark complete his flying lap to line up beside Heikki Kovalainen on the front row.

Suit for sale

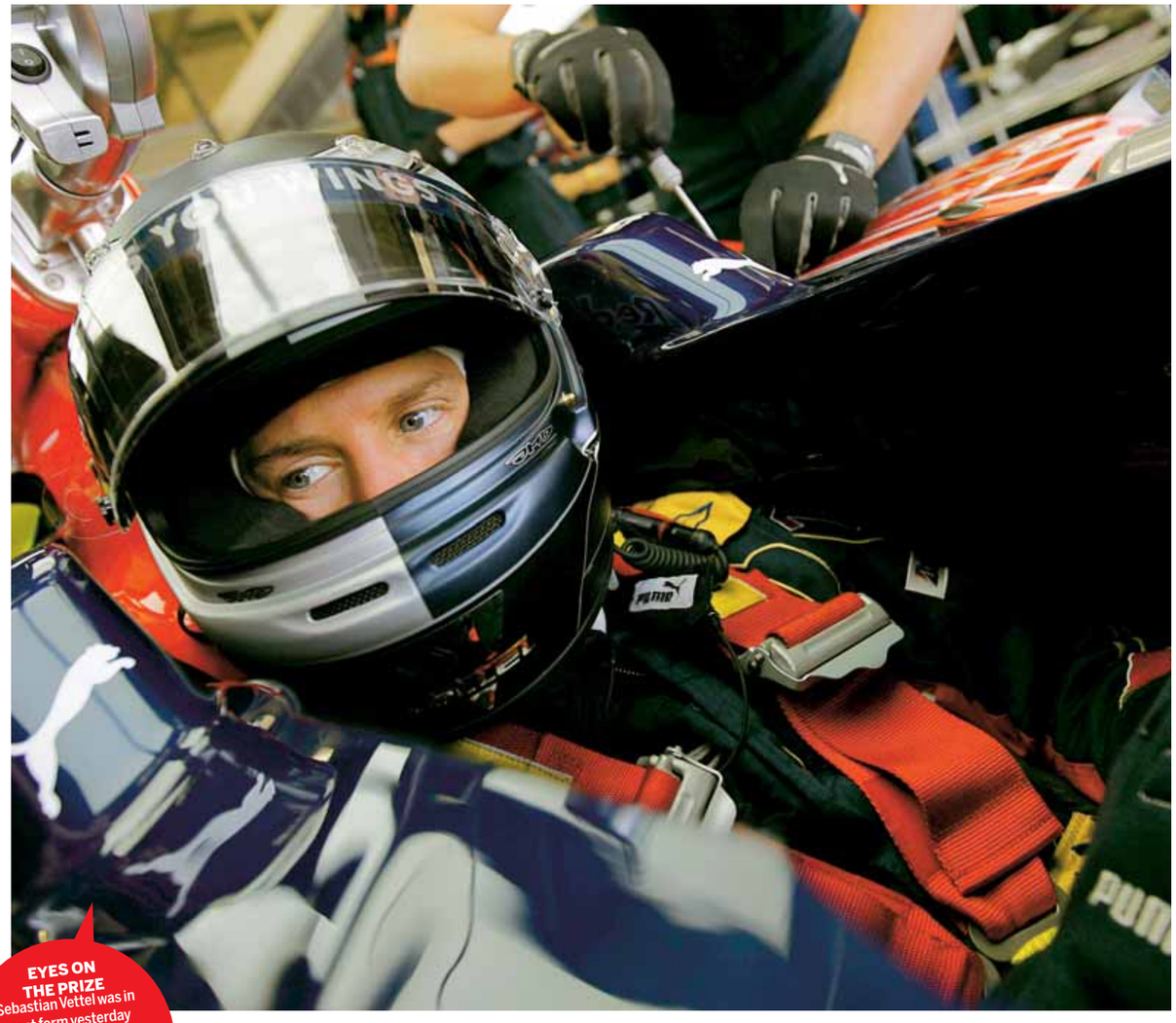
Yesterday we announced that Holly Samos – BBC Radio 5 Live's pit reporter – had let us auction her fireproof overalls for charity. Well, the Alpinestars suit – signed by Lewis Hamilton, Jenson Button and David Coulthard – had shot up from its 1p reserve to an incredible £754 (at the time we went to print). But it's not over yet – you have until 9pm tonight to get on eBay and put in the winning bid. And please be as generous as you can, as all the proceeds go to Red Bull's charity of choice Wings For Life, to help people with spinal injuries. The eBay auction number is 280238570107.

British playboys best

Lewis Hamilton has been voted Formula One's greatest playboy ever, in a poll by British channel Nuts TV Sports News. Viewers voted in five different categories to determine the smoothest operator of all time. In terms of driving ability, that honour went to Michael Schumacher, but the seven-time world champion performed badly in all the other categories. Hamilton was voted number one in terms of style, champagne lifestyle and success with women. Bizarrely, when it comes to the ladies, it seems Nuts' viewers have forgotten James Hunt. And François Cevert. And Gerhard Berger. In fact, the only poll James Hunt won was the 'sense of humour' category. In this category, not a single current driver was listed. In the overall points-scoring, viewers were patriotic, with Hamilton beating Hunt in second, Jackie Stewart in third, Eddie Irvine fourth and Jenson Button fifth.

Misspelt masala

GP2's Karun Chandok was thrilled when the Khushboo Indian restaurant in Brackley offered to name a dish after him. Karun often visits this curry house while he's on Silverstone driving duties, to remind himself of home. So imagine his disappointment when he arrived at the restaurant with a group of friends, just to show them his name on the menu. 'Karun's Special (Hot),' read the listing, 'Test driven by Karun Chandos.' Interestingly, centuries ago, the Chandos family were very big in the Brackley area. It was the Duke of Buckingham and Chandos that owned the nearby Stowe House. And Karun does have an air of the landed gentry about him.



EYES ON THE PRIZE
Sebastian Vettel was in great form yesterday putting his Toro Rosso eighth on the grid ahead of the winners of the last two races, Felipe Massa and Robert Kubica.

Points for style

GP2 is carrying out a poll on its website to determine who in the series has displayed the best driving style this year. Now, of course, driving 'style' can be interpreted in different ways. Here at The Red Bulletin, we consider 'style' to be leaving an entire weekend's rubber at the lights and then crashing through a wall of cardboard boxes en route to pole. Every driver from 2008 - even those who have raced just once – is eligible for nomination. The driver with the most votes will receive a trophy at the GP2 end of season party on the Sunday night of the Italian Grand Prix. You can only vote once, so visit gp2series.com and make that vote count.

Heath's greatest hits

Formula One photographer Darren Heath invited the paddock to view some of his best work on Tuesday night. The exhibition was at Cars International in South Kensington and the turnout was impressive, with ex-racers Martin Brundle and Sir Jackie Stewart lending their support. Strangely there were no other photographers there – jealousy, chaps? We suspect Darren wanted to avoid being heckled and never sent them invitations. But help is at hand, because the exhibition has now moved closer to Silverstone and will be running for the next four weeks. Even F1 photographers are invited. See Darren's work at the 6hq gallery in the beautiful Cotswold village of Chipping Campden, call +44 1386 840278.

Today's schedule

08:20 – 08:50	Formula BMW Europe race two
09:30 – 10:20	GP2 race two
10:45 – 11:20	Porsche Supercup race
11:30	Formula One drivers' parade
12:00 – 12:24	Red Arrows display
13:00	2008 Santander British Grand Prix
15:25 – 15:55	Silverstone Historic Saloon Car Challenge

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F1 LOOKY LIKIES...
The cap fits for Finnish journalist Heikki Kulta and Fahrenheit 9/11's Michael Moore.

SIX OF THE BEST: POSH PILOTS

If the British aren't talking about the weather, then they're obsessing about the class system. The Red Bulletin tugs its forelock and thinks of the six most well-to-do drivers of all time.

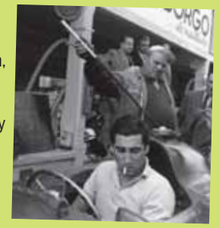
WOLFGANG VON TRIPS *(1928-61)*
Easily the most successful racing aristocrat in this list, von Trips – or Wolfgang Alexander Albert Eduard Maximilian Reichsgraf Berghe von Trips, as it said on his stationery – scored two wins and six podiums in F1. At the 1961 Italian GP, the German count needed only third place to win the world championship, but collided with Jim Clark and crashed into the crowd, killing himself and 15 spectators.





JOHNNY DUMFRIES *(1958-)*
Descended from King Robert II of Scotland, the Seventh Marquess of Bute, John Colum Crichton-Stuart, is best known to F1 fans as Johnny Dumfries, although since hanging up his driving gloves he's become plain old John Bute. He was certainly a respectable driver at the wheel, winning the 24 Heures du Mans in 1988 and taking a creditable fifth for Lotus at the 1986 Hungarian GP.

ALFONSO DE PORTAGO *(1928-57)*
Alfonso Antonio Vicente Eduardo Angel Blas Francisco de Borja Cabeza de Vaca y Leighton, better known as Alfonso de Portago, was the epitome of the playboy driver: articulate, handsome, tall, charismatic, rich and absurdly daring. Co-driver Edmund Nelson predicted he wouldn't live to 30. He was right – the Spaniard crashed out of the 1957 Mille Miglia, killing them both and 11 spectators.





PRINCE BIRA *(1914-85)*
You'd probably recognise Birabongse Bhanutej Bhanubandh's grandfather. He was King Mongkut of Siam, portrayed by Yul Brynner in The King And I. But this shouldn't obscure Prince Bira's achievements. In 1935 and '36, he raced his ERA R2Bs, named Romulus and Remus, and won the 1936 Monaco Grand Prix, and he raced for four seasons in Formula One from 1950.

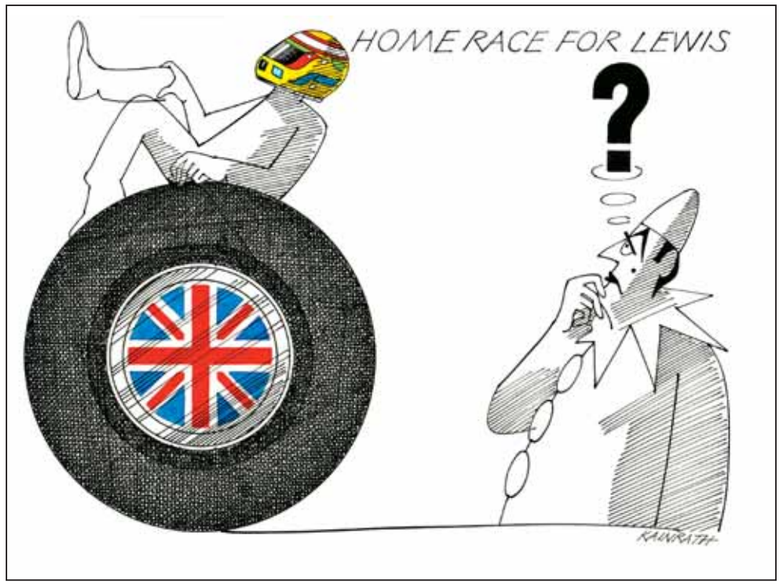
ALBERT II *(1983-)*
Albert Maria Lamoral Miguel Johannes Gabriel Fürst von Thurn und Taxis won the 2006 Lamborghini Cup in the FIA GT3 Championship and he's taken his Gallardo to joint second in the 2008 ADAC GT Masters championship in Germany and Holland. In his spare time, he is also the third youngest billionaire in the world – and Forbes Magazine's 11th hottest royal.





LOUIS ZBOROWSKI *(1895-1924)*
As well as racing Astons and Mercedes, Count Louis Zborowski designed and built cars powered by plane engines. His 'Chitty Bang Bang' prototypes were very quick: Chitty Four was used by John Parry-Thomas to break the world land-speed record in 1926. Zborowski was killed racing at Monza in 1924, but his creations later inspired Ian Fleming's book Chitty Chitty Bang Bang.

PHOTOGRAPHY: LAT, SUTTON IMAGES, GETTY IMAGES, REX FEATURES. COVER PHOTOGRAPHY: GETTY IMAGES



PIT BITCH: THERE IS A TIME AND A PLACE

And neither is at Silverstone

BY HELEN PARADYCE

'Holy handicrafts Batman! It's all gone papier-maché'

Why, if they can put a man on the moon, can they not just put all of them up there? Yes, I'm in a bad mood because I've just split up with the latest boyfriend. I'd gone for a younger model this time, on the basis that men don't grow up anyway, but it didn't work out. I found him tedious and he thought I was an intellectual because I'd read books before they'd been made into movies. So, I'm in that state of limbo where I'm not quite over the old boyfriend but not yet under a new one. It's all about timing. Anyway, maybe it's time to give up this whole dating game, because I seem to have got it wrong from the time I was 14 years old and started going out with my father's best friend. Embarrassingly, my father's best friend was 14 years old.

Toyota's film tie-up with the new Batman movie has been prey to the same kind of bad timing I display in the dating game. All weekend the team have been promoting a tie-in with the film, bringing the extreme boy toy Batmobile to the race and also getting Jarno to clamber aboard a big bike, something most F1 mechanics try to do each race weekend, I hear.

However, the movie people also provided some really nice promotional posters to put up outside their motorhome. All of which would have been fine if we were at any other venue than Silverstone and the posters weren't made of cardboard. Given the title of the film, maybe someone should have pointed out that after a 'Dark Knight' often comes a 'Wet Morning', and that's exactly what happened on Saturday as the early morning deluge reduced the posters to a soggy mess. "Holy handicrafts, Batman!" screamed Robin. "It's all gone papier-mâché." By the time Saturday morning practice had started, the posters were all in the bin.

Silverstone is not exactly party central, but the Force India squad have somehow managed to get themselves into a double-booking dilemma. Technical supremo Mike Gascoyne kindly invited everyone over to his house on Saturday night, but the invite hadn't reached main man Mr Mallya, who also decided to organise a big bash for the team, who are based just opposite the main entrance to Silverstone. The team probably had to shuttle between the two events so as not to hurt anyone's feelings, which meant very little alcohol consumption…



If you see me on the phone in the paddock, please don't ring my number, as the ringing sound will deafen me. Yes, I'm only pretending to be making a call to avoid all my home fans bothering me. Hopefully, far fewer of them will make the trip to the wastelands of northern England and Donington Park in 2010. For the benefit of the non-Brits, Donington is near the city of Nottingham, famous for its gun crime statistics and legendary historical figure Robin Hood, whose motto was "Take from the rich to give to the poor." It had to be that way around, because the poor don't have anything worth stealing. Bernie Ecclestone knows that only too well, which is why we're all off to Donington.

ON THIS DAY... 06/7/08



1907: NO SLEEP TILL BROOKLANDS
The world's first purpose-built racing circuit opens at Brooklands in the UK.
Vintage racers tackle the circuit for its centenary.
YouTube.com search: Brooklands + Byfleet + vintage

1947: AK-47 SHOOTS OFF
Production begins in Russia of the iconic Kalashnikov rifle, the most popular and widespread weapon ever made.
A history of the gun that kills 250,000 people a year…
YouTube.com search: AK + 47 + history

1988: PIPER ALPHA
In the world's worst offshore oil disaster, 167 die as a North Sea oil platform explodes.
Watch a news report from British News broadcaster ITN.
YouTube.com search: Piper Alpha + oil + fires

BIRTHS

1935: THE 14TH DALAI LAMA
Tenzin Gyatso, spiritual leader of Tibet.
YouTube.com search: Tenzin Gyatso + interview + BBC

ON THIS DAY, VISIT...

SNO!ZONE
1,500 tonnes of snow make up this indoor ski slope. Skiing/snowboard hire (including some equipment) starts at £21 an hour.
Xscape Milton Keynes, 602 Marlborough Gate, MK9 3XS (+44 871 222 5670).

ON THIS DAY IN F1...



2003: FRANCE
Ralf Schumacher wins a second successive race for Williams.
Ride on board with Ralf on a flying lap of Magny-Cours.
YouTube.com search: 2003 + Ralf + France

FOR MORE, VISIT: WWW.REDBULLETINF1.COM

PHOTOGRAPHY: GETTY, SUTTON IMAGES. ILLUSTRATIONS: DIETMAR KAINRATH, MASA



Grant faced a dilemma: when he agreed to judge the Silverstone Extreme Hat contest he never dreamed he'd be faced with deciding between a former boss and a member of the British Royal Family.



"Mmm, this handrail is very useful. No one can tell I'm scratching my bottom."

ACTIONS AND REACTIONS

You can't get away with anything with our photographers around…



Rubens was adamant that Nick 'The Hairdresser' Fry wasn't going to cut his hair again…



Fernando took so long admiring himself in the garage mirror before getting in the car that the lads had taken to providing Nelson with a seat while he waited his turn.



…but it was too late and Jenson was horrified when he saw that Nick had shaved the entire right-hand side of Rubens' head.



Some of the track marshals had been at Silverstone for decades and the news that the grand prix was moving to Donington was too much for them to deal with.

PHOTOGRAPHY: THOMAS MELZER, DPPI, GRAND PRIX PHOTO, SUTTON IMAGES

FOR MORE, VISIT: WWW.REDBULLETINF1.COM

RAIN FALLS, WIND BLOWS, HEIKKI SHINES

Turbulent qualifying as Kovalainen takes a first pole

SESSION 01

Much talk of rain over the last few days, but the variable of most concern at the very start of the session was the wind – with both speed and direction changeable, every braking zone was a lottery, with minor excursions a constant presence throughout qualifying. From the start, it was clear that, as predicted, Williams and Honda were the teams most likely to join Force India in early elimination. By the time the rain arrived, most cars had got in two runs. David Coulthard was an exception, out as the track became progressively more greasy, desperate to improve on 16th. He raced the rain, getting across the line seconds before the heavy stuff fell. With five minutes remaining, and everyone in the garage, both Hondas, the two Force Indias and Nico Rosberg's Williams were in the elimination zone. The shower was brief, and with the track dry enough, many went out again – but not Rosberg. None managed to climb clear, though Sébastien Bourdais showed what was possible, climbing from 15th to sixth in the last seconds.

BOURDAIS
Great final lap on an uncertain surface, taking the Toro Rosso comfortably clear of danger.

HONDA
Down among the dead men for the second race in succession, despite upgrades after Magny-Cours intended to raise their game.

SESSION 02

At the beginning of the session, the threat of further rain had receded. With both Toro Rossos in the top 10 at the end of the first session, and looking hooked-up all weekend, a change to the established order looked possible – the question was which of the regular top 10 would drop out. With five minutes to go, neither BMW had set a time, lending a false aspect to the timing screens. Once Robert Kubica and Nick Heidfeld had managed to slot comfortably into third and fourth respectively, the clearer picture showed the men in trouble to be Sébastien Bourdais, Timo Glock, Coulthard, Jarno Trulli and Kazuki Nakajima.

In 2008 the second qualifying session has come to consist of long periods of calm preceding furious activity in the final seconds. It proved so again yesterday. Aside from the returning BMWs, the track was clear, all the runners waiting for the last moment to go out. As it transpired, the final moments were full of sound and fury, signifying nothing. Despite much activity, those in the elimination zone failed to improve, though Ferrari, doing a final run to safeguard their positions, qualified both cars by little more than one tenth of a second, which will be cause for concern.

PIQUET
A good day for Nelson, who looked much more comfortable in the Renault, and who will start from seventh on the grid today.

TRULLI
On the podium last time out, nowhere close yesterday. The Toyotas seem to be the most variable cars on the grid at the moment.



Bourdais looked good on a damp track. "I don't think anyone knows what the weather will do, but... I wouldn't complain if it rained [this] afternoon."



Ferrari struggled with one-lap pace as both Felipe and Kimi scraped through the session by a relatively narrow margin.



Q3 saw Heikki Kovalainen top the timesheets.

HAMILTON
Mistakes cost Lewis in front of his home crowd. He seems to be going through a bit of a rough patch at the moment.

WEBBER
Starting from the front row after a rousing lap. It's his fourth time up top, but a first for Red Bull Racing.

ONE TO WATCH
JENSON BUTTON


Another miserable qualifying session for Honda left Jenson Button down in 17th. But Jenson is a wet-weather specialist. If it rains this afternoon, he will fancy his chances of scoring points.

SESSION 03

Last season's fuel burn came in for criticism, not providing much of a spectacle for the qualifying denouement. Its replacement, the fuel-saving staying-in-the-garage-for-a-bit is scarely an improvement. The first three and a half minutes of the session passed without any attempt to set a time. Kimi Räikkönen finally appeared, followed by the rest of the shrunken field, with the exception of Sebastian Vettel, who opted to save fuel and a set of tyres. The gale hadn't abated. Räikkönen set the standard with a twitchy 1:22.519. Lewis Hamilton and Robert Kubica both left the circuit on quick laps, while Kovalainen sailed calmly around to take provisional pole by a sizeable margin. Vettel appeared and was fifth fastest.

With the clock running down, Räikkönen's final attempt was half a second quicker than anything before. Hamilton couldn't match it, slotting in behind the Finn. Then, in the surprise of the session, Webber in the Red Bull Racing-Renault went fastest of all, to a collective intake of breath from the paddock and a cheer from the grandstand – but it never looked like standing. Kovalainen, two-thirds the way through his own flyer, was half a second clear – all he needed to do was keep it tidy to take a first pole position. Kubica might have provided a challenge, but after his off-track moment, the Pole was confined the garage for the rest of the session, and will start 10th.

Ferrari have struggled all weekend. While their race package seems unbeatable, the suggestion is that McLaren, while struggling on longer runs, have stellar one-lap pace. Qualifying seemed to confirm this, which makes for a fascinating race – even if it doesn't rain this afternoon.

THE STATS

Venue: Silverstone, 5.141km
Race length: 60 laps (308.355km)
2007 pole position: Lewis Hamilton, McLaren, 1:19.997
Lap record: Michael Schumacher, Ferrari, 1:18.739 (2004)

THE FORM

TODAY'S TOP SIX AND THEIR RECORD IN BRITAIN
Kovalainen: 7 (most recent first)
Webber: 17, 14, 8, 11, R, R
Räikkönen: 5, R, 3, 2, 3, 3, 1
Hamilton: 3
Heidfeld: R, 6, 6, 17, 15, 12, 7, 6
Alonso: 16, X, R, 10, 2, 1, 2

THE STRATEGY

Bridgestone are here with their hard and medium compounds. History suggests Silverstone should be a conventional two-stop race, though Friday running left many teams concerned about the durability of the medium compound over a 20-lap stint. The option to switch to a less-than-optimum two-stopper, or make three, may depend on the weather. Three stops is an unlikely strategy unless Silverstone experiences an unexpected heatwave and track temperatures go through the roof. Another factor making this less likely is the amount of rubber that's gone down over the last two days. Silverstone is slippery, but the rubbering-in process combats this – though a period of heavy rain would obviously wash much of the rubber away. Rain during the race itself is another variable – though anyone setting up with rain in mind is taking a huge gamble.

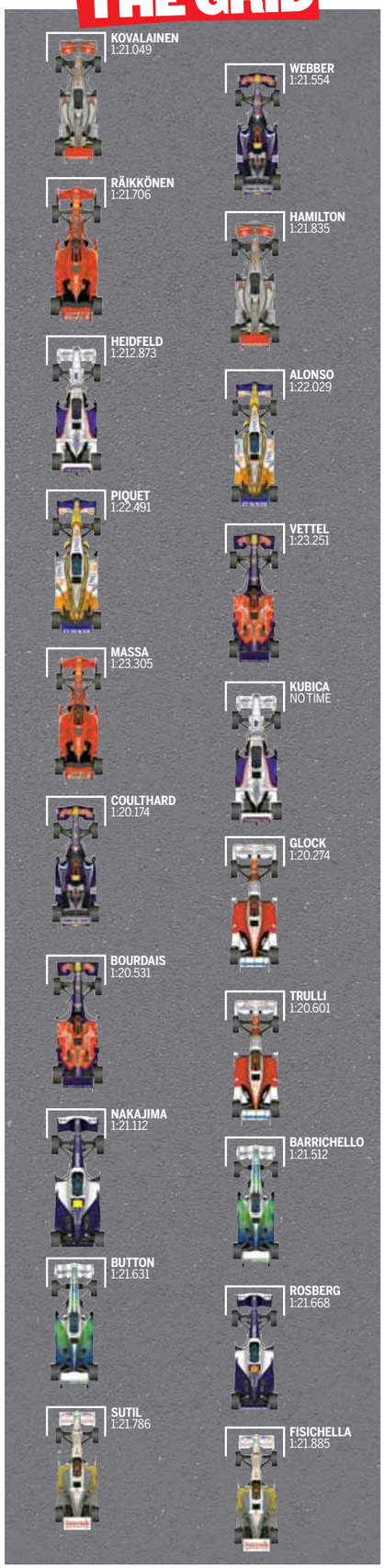
THE BOX OF SPANNERS


TOYOTA: Restricted running on Friday. Clutch problems for Glock and a frightening rear-wing failure for Trulli.

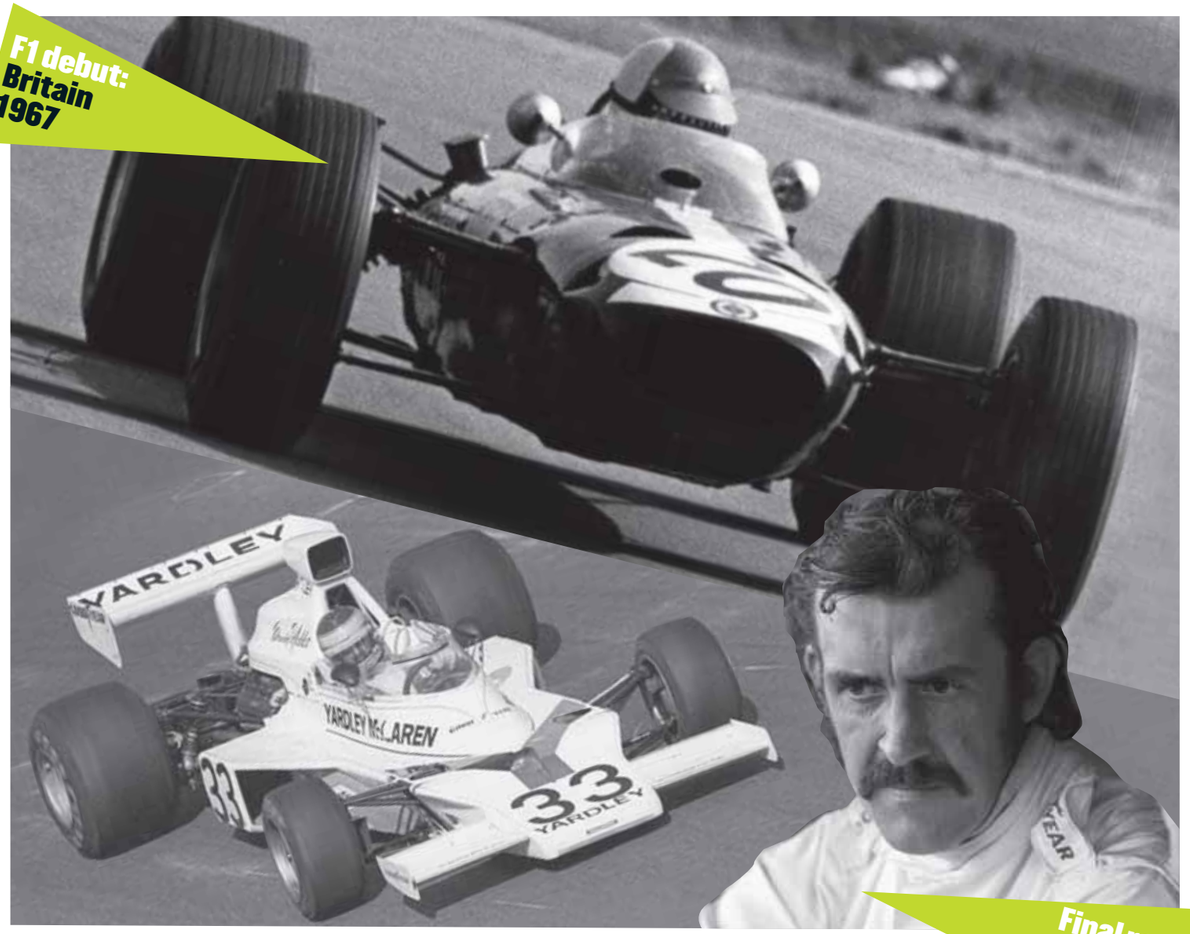

FERRARI: Get-out-of-jail-free engine change for Räikkönen, destroyed rear end for Massa, sliding on spilt oil.


NAKAJIMA: Hit the wall at Bridge on Friday afternoon and missed the last 20 minutes of qualifying.

THE GRID



PHOTOGRAPHY: GEPA, SUTTON IMAGES. THOMAS BUTLER. ILLUSTRATIONS: EMERIC DE BARÉ



F1 debut: Britain 1967

Final race: Italy 1974

First Day/Last Day

DAVID HOBBS

If it has wheels, Speed commentator David Hobbs has probably raced it. His championship Formula One career spanned seven years but only six races.

Tim Parnell had already asked me to drive in the [non-championship] 1966 Syracuse Grand Prix, and I'd finished third behind the Ferraris of John Surtees and Lorenzo Bandini. I thought that was pretty good. A lot of people agreed, but obviously not enough, as the next chance I had to drive in F1 was a year later at the 1967 British GP, in which I drove a BRM privately entered by Bernard White.

I think it was between Bob Bondurant and me as to who got the drive, but it was the British Grand Prix, so I did. It was hardly what you would call a well-funded team and we didn't have masses of equipment. If I'd wanted a slightly higher gear ratio for Copse, there wouldn't have been one; if I'd wanted a slightly lower one for Becketts, there would not have been one of those, either. We had the BRM with a Tasman Series two-litre engine, a trailer and a few tyres, plus just one mechanic called Roly Moat, but we fumbled our way through and I think I did a reasonable job.



My memories of it are pretty vague. We had to stick an extra oil-cooler on the car – for some reason it was overheating. I remember being at a race with people like Jo Siffert and Pedro Rodriguez. I'm not even sure where I finished – I know it wasn't in the points. [It was eighth.]

My last grand prix was the 1974 Italian GP with Yardley McLaren. Regular driver Mike Hailwood and I had become close friends by then. I had first got to know Mike while I was driving Bernard White's Ford GT40 at Kyalami. Bernard had originally called me, as he thought I was an up-and-coming lad who probably would not be too expensive.

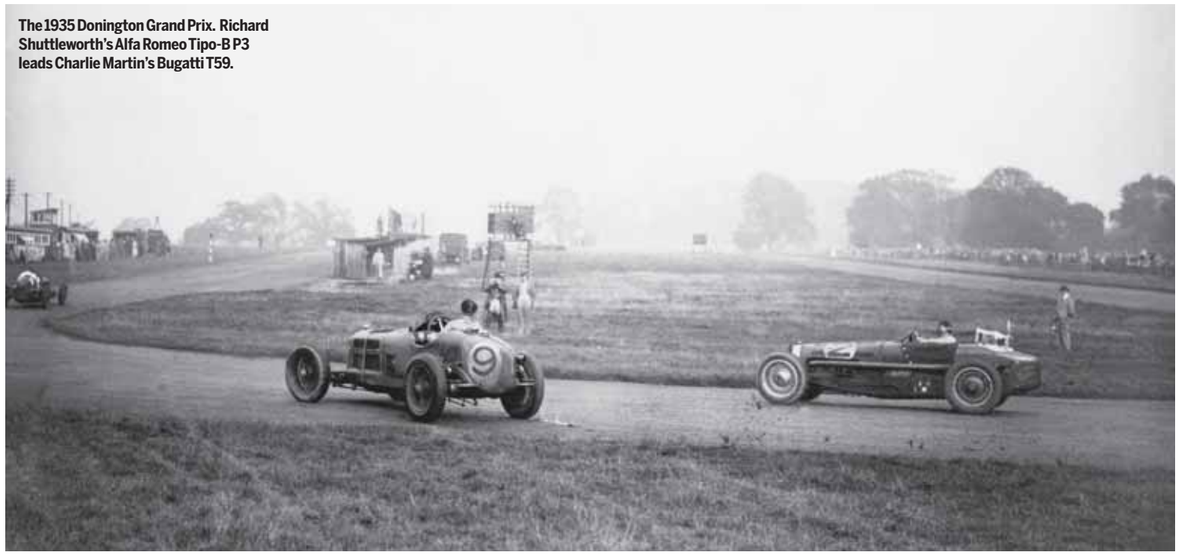
Mike had crashed his McLaren at the Nürburgring and broken his leg badly. I was visiting him in hospital and he thought it would be a good idea if I drove his car in Austria. I thought it would be a great idea, too, particularly as I had driven for McLaren that year at the Indy 500 and come fifth. They knew exactly who I was and I was doing quite well in F5000. I did a lot of negotiating on the phone with Teddy Mayer and Phil Kerr, who ran the Yardley car, and ended up driving at the Österreichring and then at Monza.

They didn't set the car up in the way that would probably have suited me best. The result was a fairly mediocre race, considering the potential. I had competed at Monza before and knew the track well, but the car had too little wing through places like the Lesmos. I am sure we could have got the straight-line speed we wanted without making it quite that touchy through the corners.

I hoped that McLaren might let me do the Canadian and the US GPs, and perhaps the year after, but they decided to use Jochen Mass, and he stayed with them for some time.

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PHOTOGRAPHY: LAT, SUTTON IMAGES



The 1935 Donington Grand Prix. Richard Shuttleworth's Alfa Romeo Tipo-B P3 leads Charlie Martin's Bugatti T59.



Manfred von Brauchitsch in the Mercedes W125, on his way to second in 1937.

PARK LIFE

Like the Loch Ness Monster and the Kazakhstan Grand Prix, everyone had heard the rumours of the British Grand Prix moving to Donington Park, but nobody thought it was real. Some people still don't, but at least the legend is based on solid foundations.



In 1938 Hermann Muller's Auto Union D Type leads Dick Seaman's Mercedes W154...



Mercedes locked out the front of the grid in 1937, though Bernd Rosemeyer's Auto Union Type C took victory.



...neither of them would win. Tazio Nuvolari would take victory for Auto Union.



The modern (ish) era saw Donington host the 1993 European Grand Prix. Alain Prost heads the field in the Williams with team-mate Damon Hill in second. Ayrton Senna in the McLaren storms past Karl Wendlinger in the Sauber. Senna would lead the race by the end of the first lap on his way to a legendary win in horrible weather conditions.

PHOTOGRAPHY: GETTY IMAGES, LAT, SUTTON IMAGES









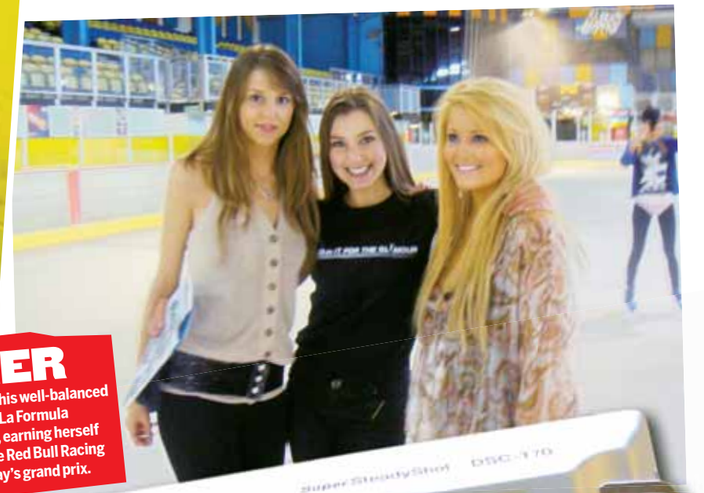
ICE MAIDENS

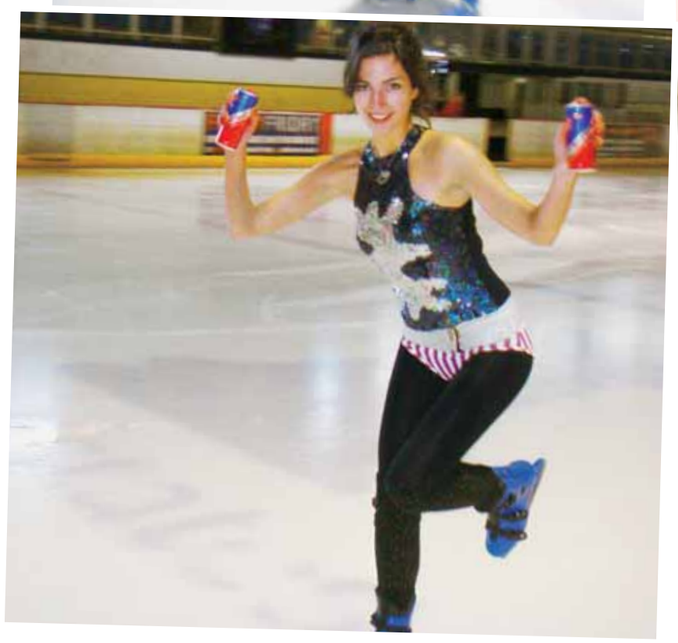
The La Formula Una girls got their skates on and practised their routines at the XScape ice rink on Friday.















WINNER

Persia Parsons took this well-balanced shot of thirsty fellow La Formula Una Nicola O'Connor, earning herself a vantage point in the Red Bull Racing garage to watch today's grand prix.



ACES HIGH

A shadowy group of men are huddled in the VIP area of Red Bull's Energy Station, jackets on, sunglasses fixed. At any other time this might be considered odd, but this is no ordinary situation – this is F1 poker. Adam Hay-Nicholls gatecrashes this secretive club. Photography by Thomas Butler





Smooth operator
The Red Bulletin's very own high-roller, Adam Hay-Nicholls, escapes unscathed from an ice-cool Giancarlo, who shows the others how it's done.







Nick Heidfeld doesn't want to reveal anything, but he keeps thumbing the cards he's been dealt, reminding himself of his hand. That probably means he's got something, a flush maybe. So I fold. Giancarlo Fisichella does the same, and the pot belongs to Nick.

This is F1's secret poker club. Most weekends, the drivers will get together – sometimes back at the hotel, this time in the Red Bull Energy Station's VIP room – to play 'Texas Hold 'Em'.

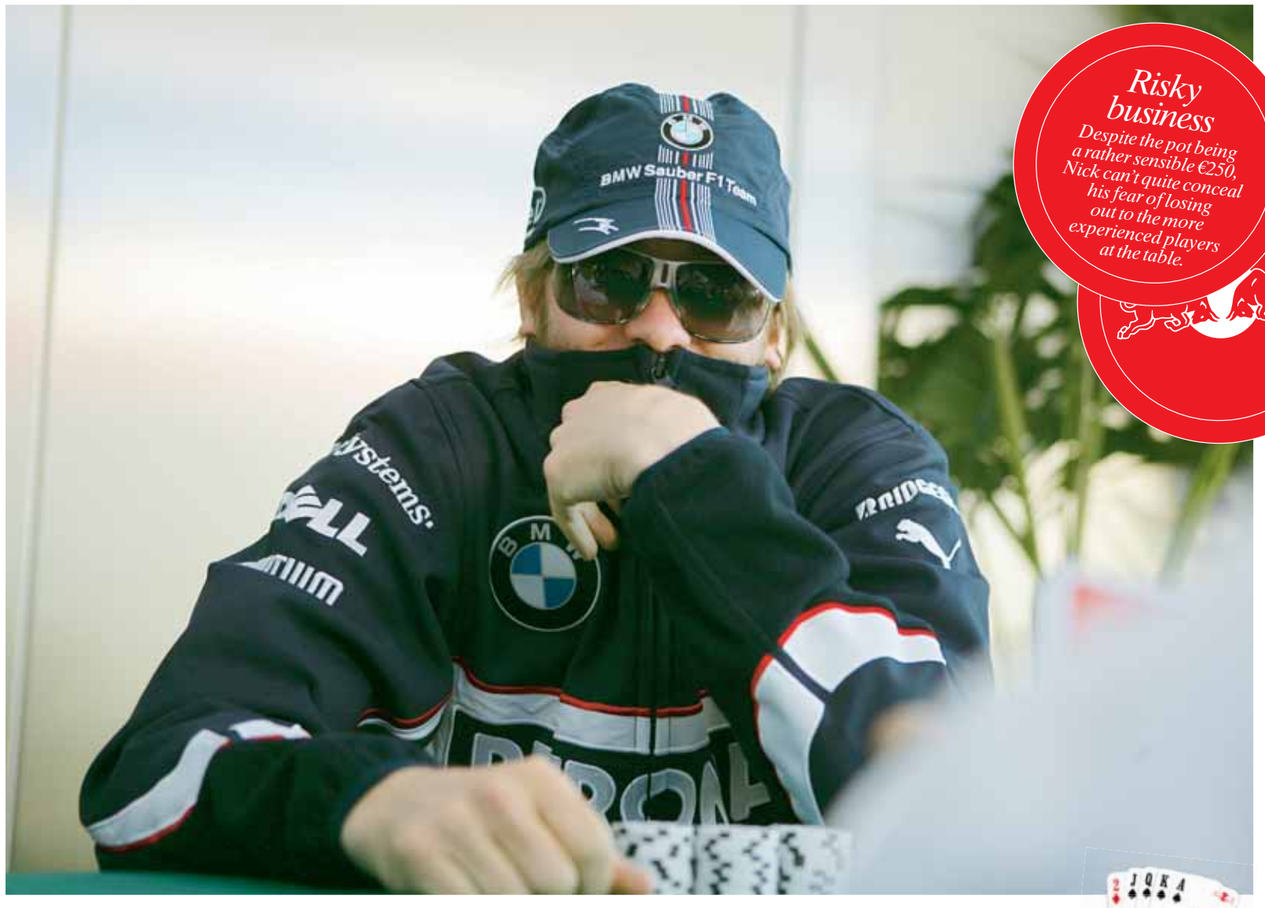
Rubens Barrichello was the trendsetter. He began playing online poker in his room after engineering debriefs, just to relax and escape. Then Fisichella started joining him in the same digital casino, and then Robert Kubica, playing against each other through the motorhome walls.

While Kubica is considered the biggest hustler in the paddock, tough competition comes from Fisichella and Fernando Alonso, all of whom like to sit around the green felt as often as they can. Nico Rosberg has caught the online bug now, too, and stays up late in front of his computer. I'm told his handle is 'F1pimp'.

Around the table this evening are Messieurs Fisichella, Heidfeld, Tonio Liuzzi, Timo Glock and myself. There's no need to go mad, so we've each put just €50 on the table, and the first few hands have gone my way. The small blind is €1 and the big blind is €2, and I'm routinely raising five chips whenever I think I have a chance. The drivers are cautious, sizing up each other and me to determine what our individual 'tells' are, ie, what we're doing to betray our otherwise cool, calm demeanours.

Nick notes that Timo "needs sunglasses for his teeth", because every time he thinks he has a good hand he breaks into a wide grin. When his pearly whites are kept from view, all you need to do is raise and he'll fold. He's been playing for nine months or so and is gaining confidence, but if he's not turned ➜





Risky business
Despite the pot being a rather sensible €250, Nick can't quite conceal his fear of losing out to the more experienced players at the table.

➜ on by his hand he'll often fold before he sees the flop. He's the opposite of Liuzzi.

Tonio is what you might call a 'high-risk' player. He likes to keep things interesting, and it's hurting him right now. He's throwing his chips in on nearly every hand, or at least matching any raise I offer. "I get bored easily, so I tend to just go all in. It makes for an exciting and quick game," he says. So quick that, 20 minutes into the tournament, Tonio has been forced into retirement.

Nick is well guarded. The only giveaway I can spot is that his left leg will shake on occasion when the dealer is dealing community cards. It's difficult to know if this is an actual 'tell'. What seems more reliable is his routine. He is not playing aggressively, so his play seems more honest. Given the option, he'd probably 'check'. When he wins, as far as I can tell, it's with a strong hand rather than a bluff.

Giancarlo is the opposite of Nick. He's an experienced player and a skilled bluffer. Up until now, all he's been doing is simply sizing up the opposition and getting into a rhythm. In poker it's all about momentum. Start winning, keep winning, and raise the stakes all the time: pile on the pressure.

And this is where I've made a mistake. We're half an hour into the game and I'm still raising five chips on the flop, and only raising on the turn and the river if I'm challenged. It's too conservative and also predictable. A change of strategy then: check on the flop, and then raise on the following two cards if a high card comes up, to make it look like I have some matching face cards under my palm; apply pressure with bigger raises. But Fisi has seen this coming, and the momentum has swung to him. He's betting 15 chips on the 'flop', and he's prepared to repeat it on the 'turn'. Timo folds on the flop, I give up on the turn and poor old Nick gets totally cleaned out.

Giancarlo has taken a big bite out of my stack and Timo is hanging on for dear life with just a handful of chips. A cheeky tactic on the next 'river': I pull out a list of poker hand values from my pocket. "Just reminding myself what equals what," I remark, as Nick tears the list from my hand and calls me the world's most blatant bluffer. Actually it was a double bluff – I do, in fact, have a straight. Fisi looks confused, calls and loses, but since I'd only raised him 10, his stack of chips remains a Petronas Tower next to my low-rise apartment block. Then he gets ultra-aggressive, betting stacks on every hand as Timo and I continue to cave in. Now all I want to do is leave with the shirt still on my back.

Thankfully, we close the game while I'm still solvent. And I've even made a glorious €6 profit! Timo's lost most of his stake money and Giancarlo has added €130 to his children's inheritance. He also takes Timo's chips in payment "for Brazil" and warns me never to lend the Toyota driver money.

Fisi's winning form is impressive, but what happens next is even more ice-cold. Settling up after the game, I ask Giancarlo for my winnings: "Here you go, here's five. Come see me tomorrow for the extra one," he tells me. "Cheers Fisi," I reply. It isn't until we've gone our separate ways that I realise he still has my €50 stake money. He's performed a simple yet effective mind trick on me. The man is a pro.

Later that night, Giancarlo plays again. He wins a further €800, and kindly sees fit to return my cash: "Adam, I'm so sorry. It was a genuine mistake." What a bluffer.







RULES OF THE GAME
Everything you need to know etc....

Each player is given two cards by the dealer, which are kept hidden from the other players. Before seeing his own cards, the player immediately to the left of the dealer puts down a prearranged number of poker chips, known as the 'small blind', which is the minimum bet. The next player to the left then puts down the 'big blind', which is double the small blind. Now the blind bets have been placed, the players see their cards, and do one of the following...

FOLD
Your cards look rubbish. Quit before you throw away all your money.

'SEE' THE BET
You match the big blind by handing over the required number of chips.

RAISE
You feel lucky, and pressure the others by raising the bet to stay in the game. Shortly, the dealer will reveal up to five cards on the table. Naturally, you want to have the strongest hand. These are the hand values in descending order.

ROYAL FLUSH
Ace, king, queen, jack, 10, all of the same suit – eg diamonds.

STRAIGHT FLUSH
Any five-card sequence in the same suit – eg four, five, six, seven, eight of hearts.

FOUR OF A KIND
Four cards of the same index – eg four queens.

FULL HOUSE
Three of a kind, combined with a pair – eg three fours and two kings.

FLUSH
Five cards from the same suit, but not in a sequence – eg two, three, six, eight and 10 of spades.

STRAIGHT
Five cards in consecutive sequence, but not in the same suit – eg two of clubs, three and four of hearts, five of clubs and six of spades.

THREE OF A KIND
Three cards of the same index – eg three jacks.

TWO PAIR
Two pairs – eg a pair of queens and a pair of twos.

PAIR
Two cards of the same index – eg a pair of queens.

HIGH CARD
If none of the players has so much as a pair, but you have the highest-value single card, then you win.

Of course, not having a good hand doesn't mean you can't still win. You can try 'bluffing'. That means raising the bets in order to make your opponents fold because they think you're holding a terrific hand.
Once everyone has seen their first two cards and the initial round of bets has been placed, the dealer reveals three more cards on the table. This is known as the 'flop'.
At this point the players can 'check', which means they stick to what they've already bet, or raise. If a player doesn't fancy his chances and is unwilling to raise he can fold.
Next, the dealer 'burns' one card off the top of the deck and tosses it to one side. The next card is then revealed. This is known as the 'turn' or 'fourth street'. Again, players can check, raise, or fold.
The dealer burns another card, then reveals the fifth and final card, known as the 'river'. This is your last chance to check, raise or fold. If all the players check, you can 'call' and reveal your cards.
Should all the other players fold, or you reveal the best hand, you win the 'pot', which is all the lovely money that's lying in the middle of the table.

BEST OF BRITISH

British GP, July 16, 1960

Although Australian world champion Jack Brabham took the pole on his way to another victory and eventually a second drivers' championship, three homegrown drivers on the grid also made an impression and lifted British hopes for the future...

Three British names who starred in the 1960 British Grand Prix would all later become world champions: Graham Hill, Jim Clark and John Surtees. "Any prophet could surely have taken down the facts and predicted the grand prix picture in two years' time," Bruce McLaren wrote about the race.

Of these three men, Hill was the most experienced, with 21 races to his name. He drove for BRM and qualified second, but then made things difficult for himself. "I stupidly stalled on the line," wrote Hill, "and poor Tony Brooks – who was right behind me – shunted me up the rear. I got a push start and set off at the back of the field. Naturally I was annoyed at making such a stupid mistake, for I'd got myself on the front row and here I was at the very back, 30 seconds behind everyone else."

Hill reckoned he drove one of his best ever races from that moment on. He'd reached sixth place by lap 20 and fourth by lap 30. Eight laps later, he took second from Innes Ireland and was now just five seconds behind world champion Jack Brabham, the leader from pole.

For 17 laps he looked for a way past the Cooper, and managed to take the lead on lap 55, with 22 laps still to go. But then he had brake trouble. "I had an idea of what was happening, because it had occurred before," said Hill. "The rear brake was, in fact, a single disc working off the gearbox, and of course this had to cope with the two rear wheels. As it was out of the airstream, it tended to get too hot and, as a result, the seal melted and fluid could escape past it. I realised that when there was no more fluid left, my foot would go down a lot further and I'd have no rear brakes at all."

Hill managed to resist Brabham for 17 more laps, but was faced with a dilemma as he approached Copse Corner. "There were two cars in front. One of them was Phil Hill in a Ferrari. I had to make a decision. Jack, behind me, was only a second away. Either I could go by the two cars and get into the corner before they did, or I could sit behind them and lose time – perhaps enough for Jack to pass me before the corner. I decided to overtake them under braking, thinking that if they were between Jack and myself it might hold him off a bit. But I arrived just a bit too quickly and the brakes weren't up to it. I spun, went off into the ditch and that was that."

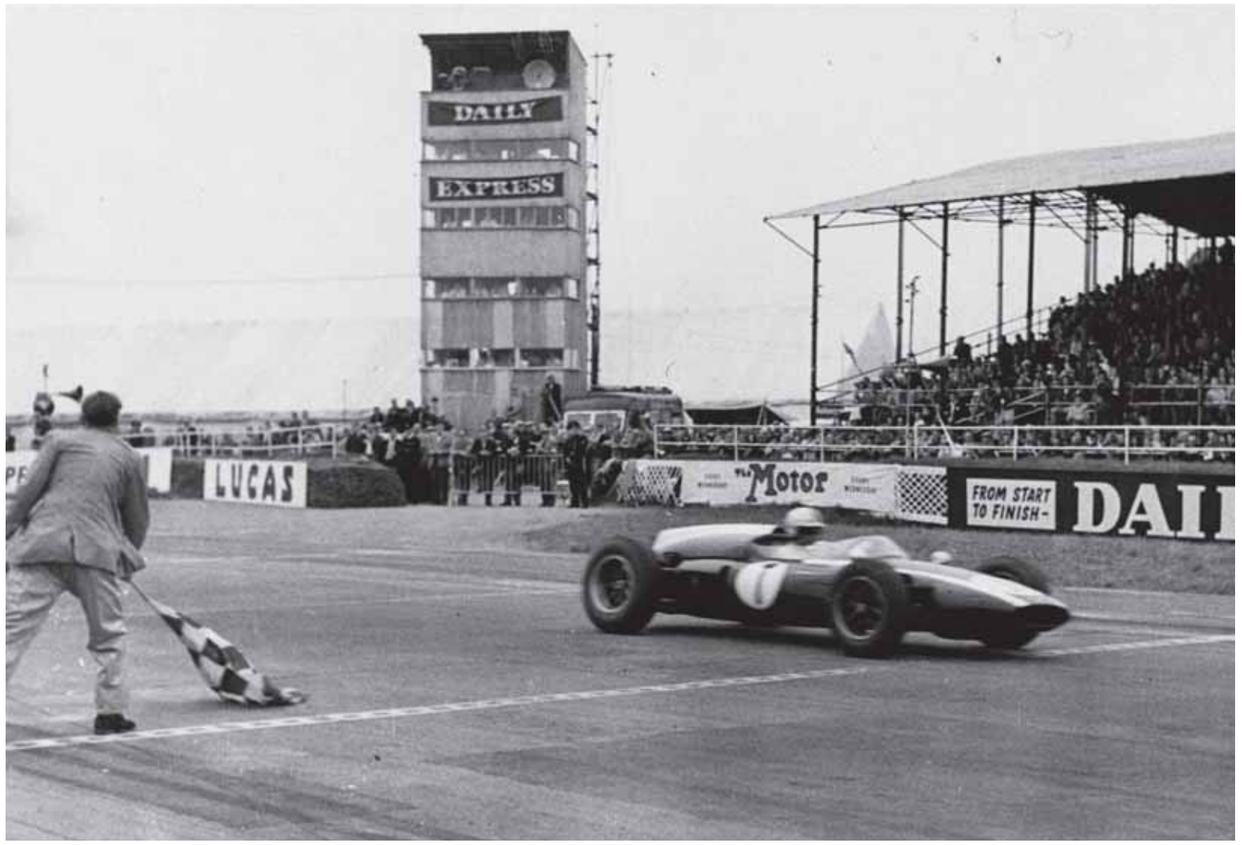
So Brabham won the grand prix, and at the very next race clinched the world title for the second year running. Hill would have to wait another two years for his first win, but Bruce McLaren predicted that his day would come.

'Any prophet could surely have taken down the facts and predicted the grand prix picture in two years' time'
Bruce McLaren

Two more new names had also made an impression on McLaren that day. Battling for third place initially, then moving ahead of Ireland, were Surtees and Clark. The pair started on row three. Surtees, who had just moved across from motorcycles, had only done a handful of car races. At 26 years old, this was his second grand prix. Clark, two years younger, was in his fourth grand prix. "I'd been able to race alongside both of them that day (I finished fourth)," wrote McLaren, "and it was the Scotsman Clark who impressed me. They were both fast, but Clark was the smoother of the two, driving in an extremely relaxed fashion."

Clark would suffer a long stop for front suspension repairs, but Surtees finished a remarkable second. Ireland was third, while McLaren was unhappy with his fourth place. Brooks recovered from his delayed start to finish fifth, ahead of the two Ferraris. But that day marked a significant day in British grand prix racing: the British drivers had arrived.

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Clockwise from above: After an eventful race and a strong challenge from Graham Hill, world champion Jack Brabham finally crosses the line to take the win; Bruce McLaren contemplates his fourth place and the future; John Surtees on his way to second place in the Lotus-Climax; A delighted Brabham celebrates at the finish; Jack Fairman, on three wheels in his Cooper-Climax , keeps Jim Clark in the Lotus behind.







PHOTOGRAPHY: AP, LAT, SUTTON IMAGES

What If...

JACKIE

hadn't sold Stewart Grand Prix

Stewart Grand Prix were the little team that could win, but by the time Johnny and Rubens were drenching Jackie and Paul in champagne at the Nürburgring, the deal that led to the Jaguar Racing train-wreck had already been done. But what if it hadn't?

As early as 1998, it was clear some at Ford were not entirely comfortable with the idea of Stewart Grand Prix. Jackie's deal had gained SGP a free engine, start-up money and an agreement from Ford to partially fund drivers' wages. To people in Dearborn, more accustomed to the balance sheets of NASCAR, it seemed like a lot of money was being spent in exchange for some relatively minor decals. The Blue Oval wasn't getting the exposure, either figuratively or literally.

It wasn't that Ford necessarily wanted out: they wanted control. Before Stewart, they'd attempted to buy a majority stake in Benetton. Eventually they proposed a similar deal to Jackie. He offered either 49 per cent or everything, not being interested in a minority shareholding.

Negotiations began during the early part of the 1999 season. Ford argued for a discount, given that the team had been built with their money. Jackie merely smiled, asking to see the contract where such a thing was mentioned. His price was too high – Ford said no. But it didn't end their interest.

'Sixty per cent of Arrows gave Ford everything they wanted, at a substantially lower price than that offered by Stewart'

Ford was primarily a financial institution. Around the world it sold the deal, not the car, and an aggressive marketing strategy kept the customers coming. Motorsport was important: in North America, Ford had NASCAR; in Europe the WRC. But the Premier Automotive Group, made up of Jaguar, Volvo, Aston Martin and Land Rover, had premium price tags and a global executive customer base. F1 provided the perfect exposure. Stewart-Ford was too much Stewart and not enough Ford. They wanted more. That's when they received an offer from Tom Walkinshaw they couldn't refuse.

Shares in the Arrows team had been changing hands regularly, with 60 per cent owned by a consortium led by a Nigerian prince. But less than a year after the deal had been done, Walkinshaw wanted another partner with deeper pockets. Sixty per cent of Arrows gave Ford everything they wanted, at a substantially lower price than that offered by Stewart. TWR Jaguar was reborn. Eddie Irvine generously accepted a king's ransom to leave Ferrari and paint a big cat on his helmet.

Jackie was not happy. He had a five-year deal with Ford, but the money was going to dry up. He needed big sponsorship. Fortunately, the new Jaguar team would be painted green, much to the annoyance of Arrows' title sponsor Orange. Would the telecoms company be interested in jumping to a winning team – happy to paint the car any colour the sponsor wanted? It turned out they would. HSBC, having seen their original risk grow decidedly less risky with poles, podium finishes and a victory, were also keen to renew. Jackie went one better, selling the bank the minority stake that Ford had rejected: in 1999, everyone wanted a piece of an F1 team. Needing a replacement for Ferrari-bound Rubens Barrichello, Jackie's new money hired Mercedes' surplus young charger Nick Heidfeld to partner the experienced Johnny Herbert.

When the Orange Stewart SF4 was unveiled in January 2000, everyone hoped the team could build on its Constructors' Championship fourth place. The early signs were not good: Gary Anderson's new car was struggling for balance at the tests. But Heidfeld was a revelation, and, combined with a settled team, his rapport with the engineers got the car into reasonable enough shape for a finish at the top of the midfield. It set a pattern for the rest of the decade.

Meanwhile, Jaguar was not a happy place. Managers in Dearborn decided they knew how to run a grand prix team, making the kind of wholesale changes to technical and management line-ups that Jackie Stewart had resisted. The year 2000 was not successful, and in 2001, with Ford in the throes of a record US$5.5bn loss and Jaguar road cars selling badly, the future suddenly looked decidedly uncertain. F1 project budgets were cut, the car's performance declined dramatically, and pay-drivers were suggested. No one was surprised when Ford put the team up for sale – or that nobody wanted it.

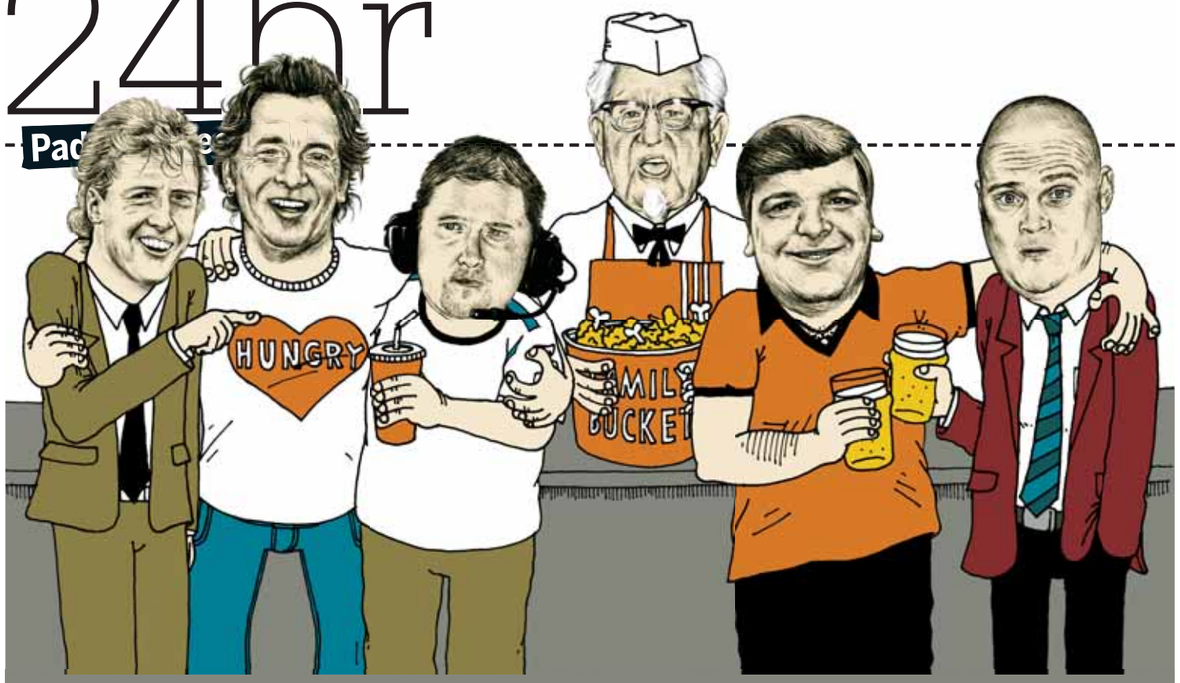
Meanwhile, Stewart – now Sir Jackie – continued to run a tight ship. The policy of getting out of tobacco sponsorship early paid off. With a list of high-tech sponsors, SGP was able to survive the bloodletting in the economic downturn when other small teams went to the wall. While never able to match manufacturer teams for budget, Stewart Grand Prix was the model privateer. Together with Sauber and the newly formed Red Bull Racing Jordans, by 2005 they formed the backbone of the paddock.



ILLUSTRATION: MARKUS ROOST

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Reservation For...
David Croft

BBC Radio 5 Live's commentator likes a little sport and music – and lots of chicken…

FRANK MCAVENNIE
I've met quite a few West Ham greats, but I've yet to come face to face with the cheeky blond genius that is Frankie Mac. His 26 goals in the '85/'86 season, and the 20 from his striking partner Tony Cottee, ensured the highest ever league place for the Hammers (third). I thought he was brilliant from the moment I first saw him score twice against QPR. Away from the pitch, Frank just couldn't stay out of trouble, but as a dinner guest he'd have lots of stories, and if he brought a ball we could have a kick-around in the garden.

BRUCE SPRINGSTEEN
For some it's the Stones, others Pink Floyd, but for me it's the Boss: the greatest songwriter of the last 35 years, period. Thunder Road still gets me all misty-eyed, and I have been known to sing Rosalita very loudly around the house, sometimes while ironing. He would have to bring his guitar, of course. I've seen him three times in concert in the past eight months, so for one night only he can bring the gig to me.

COLONEL SANDERS
Let's face it, the KFC Colonel has been looking after me for the last 30 years with his finger-lickin'-good chicken, so the very least I could do is repay the favour. He would have to bring a few of his bargain buckets though, and be prepared to reveal the secret blend of 11 spices. I was once delivered a KFC bucket live on air as a reward for losing lots of weight after British Conservative MP Ann Widdecombe challenged me on the radio to a diet.

JOCKY WILSON
One of my favourite lines from the film Animal House – John Belushi at his best – is when the dean turns to Kent Dorfman and offers the following advice: "Fat, drunk and stupid is no way to go through life, son." I'd like to think that Jocky Wilson proved that theory wrong. Twice world darts champion and a complete legend, he lives as a recluse in Kirkcaldy (in Scotland) these days. Maybe an invite to a dinner like this one could tempt him out of the house, and if he brought his darts, that would be a bonus.

AL MURRAY
Let's face it, the Pub Landlord is one of the greatest English comedy characters ever, politically incorrect and brilliantly funny as a result. I actually met Al at Radio 5-Live once – we had an argument on air as to whether a pint of shandy was a fruit-based drink for the ladies or not. He says the lemonade ensures it is. Personally, I'm not so sure. Either way, if he brings a barrel of beer he's allowed through the door. Of course, he's also a big F1 fan – and he's an Oxford history graduate, so funny and clever.

Make my Life Complete: Helen Marshall

Williams' hospitality co-ordinator loves New York, was a drummer in a previous life, and is a danger to sweet jars…



PLACES: Singapore is my favourite place on Earth. My parents lived there until last month and I'm so looking forward to going back there for the race. While we lived there, we went to Angkor Wat in Cambodia, which was magical and totally deserted. And I recently went to New York for the first time and fell head-over-heels in love with the place – the energy is like nowhere else.

FOOD: I love all Asian cuisine – Vietnamese, Thai, Chinese – but the real stuff, not takeaway interpretations. I also have a massively sweet tooth. You can often find me in the garage with my hand in the sweet jar!

DRINK: I'm partial to a gin and tonic at the end of a day. I'm not really a wine or beer fan – I have a bit of a child's palate, really.

MUSIC: I play the guitar and the piano – and I'm a pretty competent drummer, having once been in a band. I'm currently learning some Ludovico Einaudi scores– I find playing the piano a fantastic way to relax.

CAR: Betty, my Ford Ka, is my trusty steed, but to be honest I've never been in a super-fast car – any invitations are welcome!

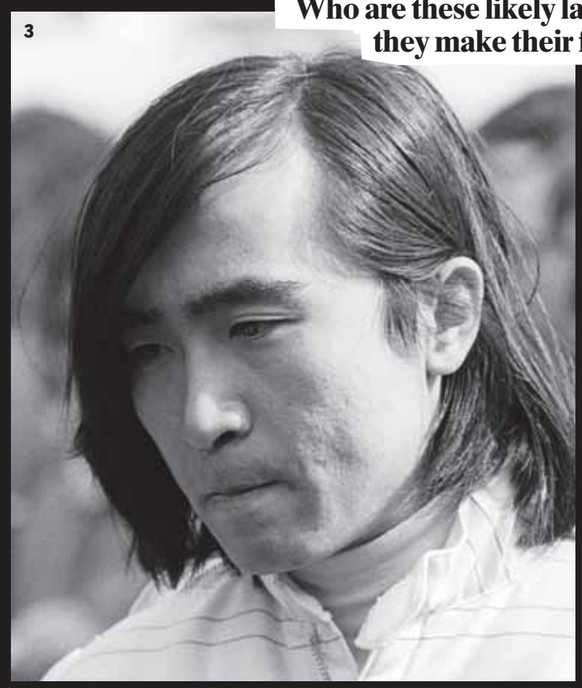
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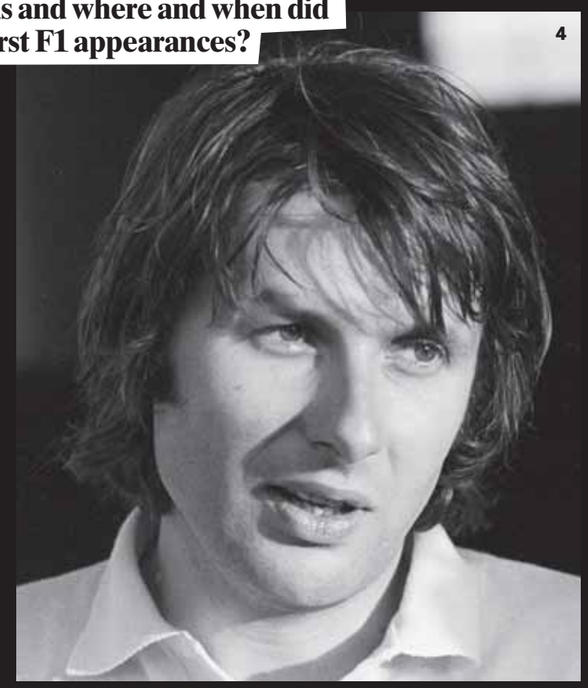




Debutants

Who are these likely lads and where and when did they make their first F1 appearances?





1. VERN SCHUPPAN, BELGIUM, 1974. 2. RICARDO ZUNINO, CANADA, 1979. 3. NORITAKE TAKAHARA, JAPAN, 1976. 4. JEAN-PIERRE JARIER, ITALY, 1971.

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