AMAZING ABU DHABI GP REPORT

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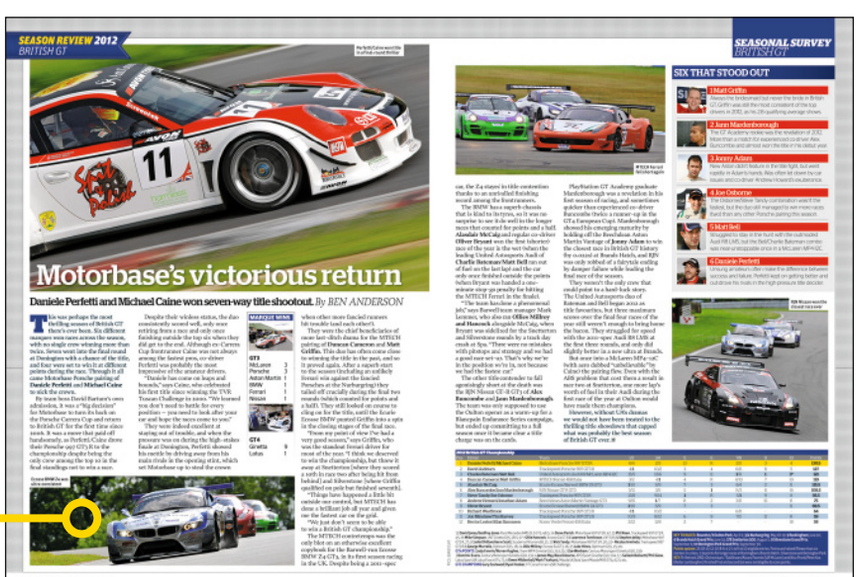

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AUTOSPORT, ISSN number 0269946X, is published weekly by Haymarket Media Group, Teddington Studios, Broom Road, Teddington TW11 9BE, United Kingdom. The US annual subscription price is $235. Airfreight and mailing in the USA by agent named Air Business Ltd, c/o Worldnet Shipping Inc., 156-15, 146th Avenue, 2nd Floor, Jamaica, NY 11434, USA. Periodicals postage paid at Jamaica NY 11431. Subscription records are maintained at Haymarket Media Group, Teddington Studios, Broom Road, Teddington TW11 9BE. Air Business Ltd is acting as our mailing agent.
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Frontline Ltd, Park House, 117 Park Road Peterborough, Cambs, PE2 1ZTS. Tel: +44 (0) 1733 555161. Printed in England by Wyndeham Heron Ltd. Cover and centre sections printed by CSM Impact, Basingstoke. Colour origination: Colour Systems, 90-92 Pentonville Road, London N1 9HS (editorial and advertising). ISSN 0269-946X. AUTOSPORT, incorporating Autoclassic, is published weekly by Haymarket Consumer Media. Teddington Studios, Broom Road, Teddington, TW11 9BE, UK.

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POLE POSITION

Why Raikkonen's winning return is good news for F1

SO, WAS THAT THE 80TH WIN FOR Lotus or the first for a new entity that shares the same name? It may be a headache for statisticians, but for fans of Formula 1, seeing Kimi Raikkonen back on the top step of the podium was a sight for sore eyes.

It was a thrilling race, and one that perfectly sets up a duel for the title over the final two races. Fernando Alonso has done an amazing job to remain in the hunt in a Ferrari that's clearly not the fastest car, but the amazing fightback Sebastian Vettel produced on Sunday shows that both would be very worthy champions.

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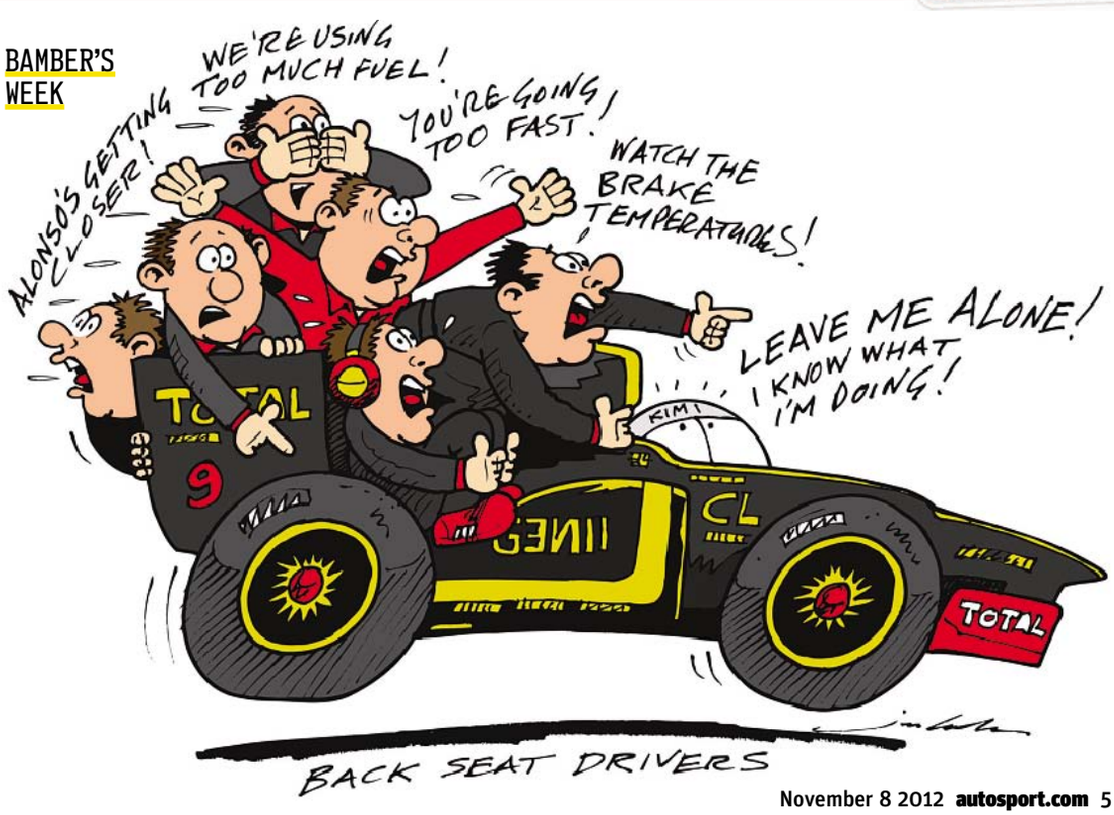
BAMBER'S WEEK



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INTERCONTINENTAL RALLY CHALLENGE

Mikkelsen in the groove on a Cyprus hill

Andreas Mikkelsen was already IRC champion when the Cyprus Rally started. Just as well, because a host of punctures restricted the Skoda UK-run Norwegian to second place. It was a picturesque way for the series, which merges into the European Rally Championship next year, to bow out. Report, p56.

Pic: IRC

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COVER STORY

Raikkonen ready for 2013 title tilt

Consistency on return is backed up by first victory with Lotus. By EDD STRAW

Kimi Raikkonen's first victory since making his return to Formula 1 has proved his and the Lotus team's readiness to mount a championship bid next season.

The 33-year-old's Abu Dhabi Grand Prix victory last weekend was his first since the 2009 Belgian GP with Ferrari, and has been on the cards since he narrowly lost out to Sebastian Vettel in April's Bahrain GP. The Abu Dhabi result puts him 57 points off the championship lead, meaning that only a small step forward relative to the opposition in 2013 would place Raikkonen and Lotus in the fight for the title.

Team principal Eric Boullier told AUTOSPORT: "Kimi is definitely on great form and maybe he can deliver even more, but he's certainly back to the top. With the team pushing very hard behind him, we have a great future together and 2013 should be even better than this year.

"If we have a better start to the year, with all the ingredients in place, we can have a stronger season."

Abu Dhabi was Raikkonen's seventh podium finish of 2012. After struggling to match inexperienced team-mate Romain Grosjean for speed in the first half of the season, he has become stronger as the year has progressed. The Finn's race pace has been consistently good, but disappointing qualifying performances cost him shots at victory in several races, notably the Spanish and Hungarian grands prix.

Lotus trackside operations director Alan Permane points to changes in the characteristics of the E20 as playing a big role in Raikkonen's victory.

For October's Korean Grand Prix, the team introduced a new exhaust set-up harnessing the Coanda effect. This has boosted the amount of downforce available, particularly while on the power.

Permane, whose career with the team stetches back to Benetton days in 1989, said: "It's difficult to say that Kimi has improved through the year because I never worked with him before, but he's certainly more relaxed and there's no doubt that since late mid-season he has got the car much more to his liking.

"Certainly since we put this new Coanda exhaust on in Korea, over the last three races it has got better and better.

"The exhaust gives us more downforce, but it's a little bit different because it also gives you more downforce on power. Kimi had to learn how to drive it a bit, but this is the third race with it and we got pretty much the maximum out of it in qualifying and the race."

The effectiveness of the new exhaust suggests that the technical team at Enstone, led by James Allison, can produce a strong car next season. The win is the final confirmation that Lotus has recaptured the momentum it lost last year (when it was called Renault) thanks to opting for forward-facing exhausts that initially performed well but ultimately proved to be a developmental blind alley.

This year the Lotus E20 has performed well out of the box, aside from an abandoned test during pre-season thanks to a problem with suspension pick-up points in the chassis.

Lotus boss Boullier (left of Raikkonen): *numero un!*

Qualifying helped race chances

Even so, some have questioned Lotus's struggles with the much vaunted 'double-DRS' device — the passive nature of this system has made it difficult to perfect.

But with the regulations largely unchanged for 2013, hurdles such as this should be overcome.

"This year, we were on a learning curve," added Boullier. "Our drivers and the team were working together for the first time. We had to make some difficult decisions with the development of the car, bringing the Coanda exhaust late in the season and showing that we can bring parts that deliver on track."

ABU DHABI GP REPORT P24

Raikkonen heads pack in Abu Dhabi

AUTOSPORT SAYS...

EDD STRAW
F1 EDITOR

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Signing Kimi Raikkonen was a gamble. Talk all you want about his undeniable class and proven qualities as a grand prix driver, there were legitimate question marks over whether he would deliver. But he has done so, in spades.

In many ways, he's a more-rounded driver than he was in his McLaren years, when his staggering speed should have led to at least one drivers' championship had Mercedes been able to provide reliable engines. Now he's an ultra-consistent and utterly dependable performer.

2005-spec Kimi

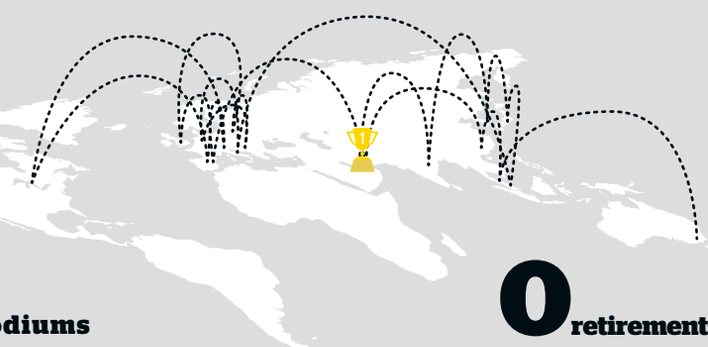
Those qualities will serve him very well in a world championship fight. As Fernando Alonso has discovered, retirements can cut a points lead very quickly, and Raikkonen has played the percentages to perfection. It's difficult to argue compellingly that his outright, single-lap pace is quite as spectacular as it once was, but potentially he's a better driver than he was in 2005 and he's still quick.

The word 'potentially' is particularly appropriate, for Raikkonen still appears to be improving and finding that last few per cent of performance lost when his Formula 1 edge was blunted in rallying. His qualifying has improved dramatically, he has got on top of the tyre characteristics after a troubled start and all the signs are that he is still honing his skill sets for current F1.

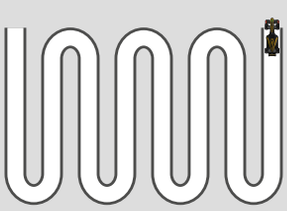
Any driver who sits out two years takes time to get back to their best. With a year of experience under his belt and a good car under him next year, he will take some beating.

KIMI'S COMEBACK IN NUMBERS

18 races

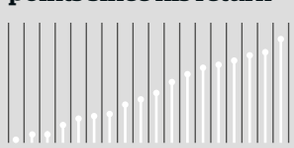


1 Win **7** Podiums **0** retirements



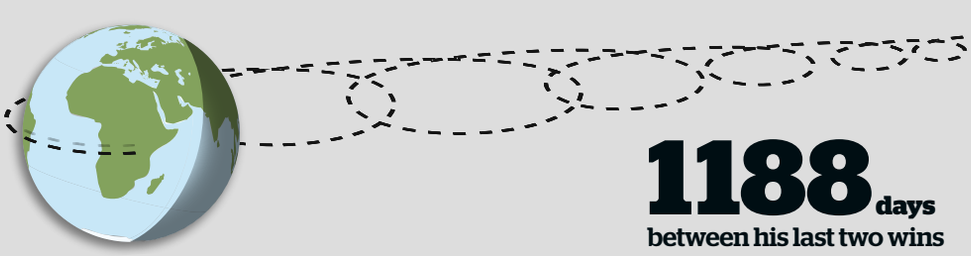
100% of race laps completed

198 points since his return



7th	5th		2nd	3rd	9th
8th	2nd	5th	3rd	2nd	3rd
5th	6th	6th	5th	7th	1st

17 points finishes



1188 days between his last two wins

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> The lack of testing means that the young-driver test has been used by the small teams for revenue and by the big teams for development
>
> **Martin Whitmarsh**

Formula 1 teams are set to re-unify the annual young-driver test programme next season after it fragmented into three separate runnings this year.

Six teams, headed by Red Bull and McLaren, finish their three days of running in Abu Dhabi today (Thursday). This follows Marussia, Williams and HRT running at Silverstone in July and Mercedes, Ferrari and Force India testing at Magny-Cours in September. When F1's in-season test ban was introduced in 2009, the young-driver test was introduced, allowing each team three days of running for rookie drivers. But the spirit of the move, designed to allow inexperienced drivers mileage, has been corrupted this year by some teams using it primarily for in-season development.

McLaren is honest about its motives

McLaren team principal Martin Whitmarsh said: "Yes, but everyone has been doing that," when AUTOSPORT put it to him that running 31-year-old test driver Gary Paffett was not in the spirit of the young-driver test. "If you are honest about it, the lack of testing means that the young-driver test has been used by the small teams for revenue, with money in front of talent, and by the big teams for development.

"In fairness, we have hedged our bets because we have [22-year-old Formula Renault 3.5 racewinner] Kevin Magnussen as well and he is truly in the spirit. So we have one driver in the spirit of it, but I wouldn't claim that the others [Paffett and Oliver Turvey] are in the spirit of it.

"It is a shame, but that's what we are allowed to do. We're trying to win just as everyone else with it."

Red Bull, which has run the likes of Daniel Ricciardo and Jean-Eric Vergne in the young-driver test in the past, is arguably more in the spirit even though it will use the test for development as well as evaluating young drivers Antonio Felix da Costa and Robin Frijns. The team also came under fire for the fact that it and Scuderia Toro Rosso harpooned the plan by the other 10 outfits to run the three-day test at Silverstone mid-season.

Tests have been split this year

Red Bull team principal Christian Horner told AUTOSPORT: "It's a genuine opportunity to look at young talent. The performances of Daniel and Jean-Eric were a fundamental part of them graduating to an F1 seat.

"It's right that there should be a young-driver test, but teams have different agendas. Some use it for income-generation and others purely as a data-gathering exercise. It's impossible within the regulations to determine how a team approaches the test. It was a mistake to allow teams to test in different venues and it's better to have a collective test. Within the team managers' forum we will be discussing it [for 2013]."

Ideally, the young-driver test would be held near the end of the season. This would both minimise its value in developing the teams' current cars and allow drivers to run at the end of their regular seasons in the junior categories. But given the congested end to the year, with three pairs of double-headers each separated by a week, that stretches the teams in terms of resources. This was why the

ABU DHABI YOUNG-DRIVER TEST LINE-UP NOVEMBER 6-8

RED BULL
Antonio Felix da Costa (Tues/Weds)
Robin Frijns (Thurs)

McLAREN
Kevin Magnussen (Tues/Thurs)
Gary Paffett (Tues/Weds)
Oliver Turvey (Weds/Thurs)

LOTUS
Nicolas Prost (Tues)
Edoardo Mortara (Weds)
Davide Valsecchi (Thurs)

SAUBER
Robin Frijns (Tues)
Esteban Gutierrez (Weds/Thurs)

TORO ROSSO
Luiz Razia (Tues/Thurs)
Johnny Cecotto Jr (Weds)

CATERHAM
Giedo van der Garde (Tues/Weds)
Alexander Rossi (Thurs)

McLaren gave some running to Magnussen

Prost Jr drove for Lotus

idea of the Silverstone test — which was stymied by delays in finding an agreement and meant that there were no longer three days available on the full circuit — hit the rocks.

Sauber team principal Monisha Kaltenborn believes it's imperative that the test is run collectively and at the end of the season.

"If you start splitting it up, it's nothing more than a normal test," she said. "We really have to get back to what it is meant to be and do it all together at a point where you don't put your focus on developing the car. We have all agreed that we will do it together towards the end of the season. We've seen what happens if you open up the rules."

PICS: COATES, DUNBAR, FERRARO, GIBSON, XPB/LAT

DA COSTA AND FRIJNS LEAD ENTRY LIST

FRenault 3.5 stars Robin Frijns and Antonio Felix da Costa are the two standout talents testing in Abu Dhabi this week.

Frijns is due to test for Red Bull today (Thursday) as his prize for winning the Renault title. He also tested for Sauber, with which he is set for a long-term deal, on Tuesday. Da Costa drove for Red Bull on the first two days of the test.

Red Bull team principal Christian Horner told AUTOSPORT: "Felix da Costa has been very impressive. Just look at how he has performed since joining the junior programme in GP3 and then, very dominantly, in Renault World Series where he outscored everyone from the point that he joined the series.

"He looks a genuinely exciting prospect so it will be very interesting to see how he performs.

"Robin is also a very talented individual and we're keen to take a look at him, although I'm not sure what his contract situation is regarding other teams."

Da Costa with Red Bull

60 SECONDS WITH

GRAEME LOWDEN
Marussia team president

You ran your young-driver days at Silverstone earlier this year. Why?
Without any question, the most sensible place for the teams to do it was Silverstone. Two teams [Red Bull and Toro Rosso] decided that they wanted to go separately. It's sad that the teams don't go with the majority. The fact that 10 wanted to go to Silverstone and two to Abu Dhabi tells you something. Some of the teams running in Abu Dhabi will be using back-up crews [because of the congested calendar] but others just don't have that resource.

But we have ended up with six running in Abu Dhabi…
Yes. But it turned out that Silverstone wasn't an option [because of late planning] and the grid became fragmented. The teams have lost out, the young drivers have lost out and therefore the sport has lost out.

Will it be better planned next year?
Absolutely, it has to be. It was a poor indictment of the application of common sense. There was a really good solution that would have been best for everybody. People have to have a long hard look at things like this. The only way the sport is going to move forward in the best way is if people look at the greater good rather than self-interest.

So has it been discussed properly for 2013?
They are tightening the regs next year to make sure everyone tests in the same place. We can't go through this again because it's ridiculous. There are teams testing in Abu Dhabi who don't ideally want to be testing there; if they did they wouldn't have wanted to go to Silverstone in the first place.

Is F1 failing young drivers?
I wouldn't go so far as to say that. We try hard to provide a route into F1. Manor Motorsport has brought more top-class drivers into F1 than anybody – one of them [Kimi Raikkonen] won in Abu Dhabi – so I'd argue that [team principal] John Booth knows exactly what he's doing when it comes to developing drivers. The talent always come through. We work hard at it and I know other teams do as well. It would just be nice to organise a young driver test without so many complications.

Graeme Lowden was talking to AUTOSPORT F1 editor **Edd Straw**

Marussia ran at Silverstone test

Toro Rosso racers out-performing their predecessors

The inexperienced line-up of Ricciardo and Vergne has started well enough in F1 to earn a second year with Red Bull's junior team

Scuderia Toro Rosso pairing Daniel Ricciardo and Jean-Eric Vergne are ahead of their Red Bull junior predecessors Sebastien Buemi and Jaime Alguersuari, according to team principal Franz Tost.

Before the Abu Dhabi Grand Prix, it was confirmed that the duo would be staying on for a second season in 2013. AUTOSPORT understands that they are both seen as more credible candidates for a Red Bull drive in the future than Buemi or Alguersuari, who were dropped by STR because their potential was seen as limited. While the current pairing have scored 20 points between them, Alguersuari and Buemi managed only nine in their first season's worth of racing.

"They are ahead [of Buemi and Alguersuari] because this year's car is not as good as the car was before," Tost told AUTOSPORT. "Daniel and Jean-Eric are ahead in their development curve and I'm confident that they have a good future. If they continue like they have this year with their improvement, I'm convinced they are candidates for Red Bull."

Since STR's mandate is to develop drivers, Tost has a vested interest in talking up the pair. But on-track both have made a good impression. Ricciardo, in particular, has stood out since the August break, with his consistently strong qualifying performances bolstered by good race drives. His final stint at Suzuka, during which he held off Michael Schumacher's faster Mercedes for 10th, demonstrated how much progress he has made.

"Your first aim is to get the edge on your team-mate," Ricciardo told AUTOSPORT. "I'm still behind in the championship, which is not the plan. But looking at it as a

TORO ROSSO'S YOUNG GUNS – HIGHS AND LOWS IN 2012

DANIEL RICCIARDO

BEST MOMENT

Pulled one of the best qualifying laps of the season out of the bag to line up sixth in Bahrain. From Turn 5 onwards, his lap was fractionally faster than Sebastian Vettel's pole position effort.

WORST MOMENT

By his own admission, after a bad getaway in Bahrain he had a catastrophic first lap. Was flustered by the slow start and ended the lap down in 16th, two places behind Vergne.

JEAN-ERIC VERGNE

BEST MOMENT

Drove a fine race in Korea to equal his best F1 finish in eighth place, passing Ricciardo, who was battling car problems, in the closing stages. Described it as his best performance.

WORST MOMENT

Turning in on Heikki Kovalainen at Valencia, hitting him hard enough to cause wheel-rim damage and earning himself a 10-place grid penalty for the following race and a fine of €25,000.

PICS: FOX, ROSE/GETTY, COATES, FERRARO/LAT

Ricciardo and Vergne will stay on in 2013

Buemi raced for Toyota at Le Mans

Alguersuari is part of Five Live's team

whole, I have been in contention to score more often."

Ricciardo pulled off a similar feat in Abu Dhabi last weekend, again finishing 10th under pressure from Schumacher to extend his recent run of points-scoring finishes to four in the past five races.

Vergne, by contrast, has been a less reliable performer. In qualifying, he has struggled, although his race pace has compared well will Ricciardo's.

"My only concern was qualifying," said Vergne. "At the beginning of the year, I didn't know how to push the tyres and be quick. My race pace was fine but qualifying was a struggle. Since Spa, it has been much better.

"I was probably a bit on the conservative side at first, then I pushed too much and quite often I made mistakes. There are many examples of when I lost three-to-five tenths in a lap. The pace is there, I have shown it in the races."

Vergne's race performances have also been a little more erratic, with a trio of eighth places in Malaysia, Belgium and Korea the highlights. But while he is reckoned by Red Bull to be firmly second in the queue behind Ricciardo, it won't be until next year that he will be on a relatively level playing field with the Australian. This is because Ricciardo had half-a-season of Friday drives for STR, as well as 11 races for HRT, under his belt at the start of 2012. Vergne, by contrast, had only three Friday outings last year.

"You must not underestimate that Daniel had 11 races and the Friday sessions," said Tost. "That's a big advantage. And the difference between the two drivers is not such a big one. 'JEV' is doing a really good job, especially in the races. He overtakes a lot and is quite aggressive. I'm really satisfied with both."

Next year is likely to be crucial to the development of both drivers. If Vergne is able to join the dots of his performance peaks and Ricciardo is able to continue his upward trend, both have the potential to put severe pressure on Mark Webber's place alongside Sebastian Vettel at Red Bull.

"The second year is always important," says Tost. "You can see that if a driver is highly-skilled, he will improve his performance."

RICCIARDO VERSUS VERGNE

Analysing how the Australian and the Frenchman have compared during their first season together at Scuderia Toro Rosso – from qualifying pace, race performances and errors. And what's clear is there's very little to choose between them

QUALIFYING

Ricciardo has comfortably had the better of his team-mate on Saturdays, beating him 15 times in 18 races. That translates to an average advantage of 0.393s, calculated using the times from the last qualifying segment in which both participated at each event. Vergne has failed to escape Q1 on eight occasions, whereas Ricciardo missed out only in Hungary.

RACE PACE

It's difficult to come up with an accurate metric for race pace, given the variables involved. However, AUTOSPORT technical correspondent Gary Anderson's race-pace analysis, based on fastest race laps in completed races, gives Vergne a 0.255 per cent edge over his team-mate.

RACE RESULTS

Vergne has the edge with 12 points to Ricciardo's 10. But the Australian has twice as many top-10 finishes with six. Given that the Toro Rosso is, on average, the ninth fastest car, both statistics are poor performance indicators because scoring points usually depends on other cars hitting trouble. A more accurate reflection of their performances is relative race finish. In the 14 grands prix that both have completed, Ricciardo has been ahead eight times.

ERRORS

Vergne has made more mistakes than Ricciardo in both qualifying and the race. Most recently, he spun in qualifying in Abu Dhabi on his final Q1 lap. There was also a controversial collision with Heikki Kovalainen at Valencia that earned him a hefty fine.

TREND

Looking at the relative progress of the pair over the season, Ricciardo's performances stand out more. Four of Vergne's race 'victories' over his team-mate came in the first half of the season, while the Australian has scored points in four of the past five GPs compared with one.

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THIS WEEK IN F1

Kubica to drive world title-winning Citroen

Robert Kubica will contest two national-level rallies later this month driving the Citroen C4 WRC that won the World Rally Championship between 2007 and '10. Kubica will compete on Italy's Rally di Como on November 15-17 and France's Rallye du Var a week later in the car, which is equipped with a paddle-shift not used in current WRC spec.

Electric pitlane plans shelved

FIA president Jean Todt has confirmed that plans for F1 cars to only be allowed to run under electrical power in the pitlane in 2014 have been put back at the request of the engine manufacturers. The new-for-2014 regulations allow for a 160bhp electric engine, which originally would have been the only means of propulsion allowed in the pits.

Chilton's FP1 debut

Marussia reserve driver Max Chilton made his debut as a Friday driver at the Abu Dhabi GP. The GP2 race winner (below) completed 22 laps, setting a best time one second off regular driver Timo Glock. The Briton spent much of the session conducting aerodynamic evaluations.

PICS: ROSE/ THOMPSON/ ROBERTSON/ GETTY, COATES/LAT

New chassis for di Resta

Paul di Resta ran with a new chassis in Abu Dhabi after a "fundamental" problem was found with his previous one. The Scot ended a three-race pointless run in the race to take ninth, and was certain that the new chassis had solved his car problems.

Entry fee rise

The FIA has significantly raised the team entry fees for the 2013 season. This season, teams paid a flat €309,000 ($395,000) but next year the constructors' champion team will pay $500,000 with an additional $6000 per point scored in 2012. All other teams will pay the same base fee, plus $5000 per point. If Red Bull goes on to win the title, it has already racked up over $2.5 million worth of fees.

> It's normal that people want to make up stories that I'm not doing well because of the McLaren deal. It's not true and it's not right

Sergio Perez, without a point since signing for McLaren, denies he has been distracted by thoughts of the big time.

HRT hydraulics failure caused Rosberg shunt

Nico Rosberg's major crash on the eighth lap of the Abu Dhabi GP was triggered by Narain Karthikeyan's HRT suffering a sudden hydraulic failure, which locked the Indian's steering, it has emerged.

Renault Sport chief moves on

Renault Sport F1 managing director Jean-Francois Caubet stepped down from his position after the Abu Dhabi Grand Prix. A drinks reception in his honour was held on Friday evening over the grand prix weekend.

Kimi Raikkonen has become the first driver to win Formula 1 World Championship races driving Ferrari, McLaren and Lotus-named chassis.

Castrol EDGE GRAND PRIX PREDICTOR

McMoose F1 topped the 18th round of the Castrol EDGE Grand Prix Predictor with a 95-point haul in the Abu Dhabi Grand Prix. Perfect selections of Jenson Button for fourth and Paul di Resta for ninth combined with an inspired use of bonus points carry the team to the top of a gameweek in which just 51 teams correctly called the podium trio. **Visit predictor.autosport.com to play.**

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MARK HUGHES
GRAND PRIX EDITOR

As the title battle moves towards its climax, suspicion and paranoia over who is gaining an unfair advantage and who is not is rearing its ugly head

Conspiracy theories ran riot in Abu Dhabi – even before Sebastian Vettel was excluded from the qualifying results when Red Bull failed to provide the requisite one-litre fuel sample.

It began with scurrilous rumours that the Red Bull was employing a system of moveable ballast, shifting fuel around to give more bias forward than the legal static weight distribution allowed. The implication was that there was a separate tank ahead of the main one, which is banned by the regulations.

This would take weight away from those overstressed rear Pirellis and give the front end more initial tyre bite – both highly desirable qualities in a season when the front rubber can be reluctant to switch on and the rear is prone to overheat.

Then the whispers moved to McLaren, suspected by at least one rival to be running brake ducts with inlets that changed shape according to the temperature of the discs: big when hot, small for maximum aero benefit when cool. Bi-metallic strips using two metals of different thermal expansion and contraction rates were all that was needed to make this work, apparently.

In both cases, the teams concerned denied they were running such systems, although Red Bull did persist in questioning the FIA about McLaren's alleged brake duct system, asking whether it would be legal if it existed. The reply was that, in the FIA's opinion, it would not.

This was all before the cars had even turned a wheel. Things were to get much more fevered later.

Lewis Hamilton's skills around the tight turns of the final sector of the Yas Marina circuit are always worth a big chunk of time. It comprises 40% of the lap and rewards Hamilton's audacious late braking, early oversteer style. To watch him through here each year, treating his car as a 750bhp kart, is to realise that if this was all F1 ever demanded of a driver, then he would be almost literally unbeatable.

The Red Bull didn't look its usual composed self through the same section. At other parts of the track, with longer turns, it was working brilliantly. The way the rear end rolls into oversteer to combat the initial understeer was very evident, as was Vettel's ease with then counter-intuitively getting hard on the power, using the exhaust blowing to raise the rear grip to halt the slide.

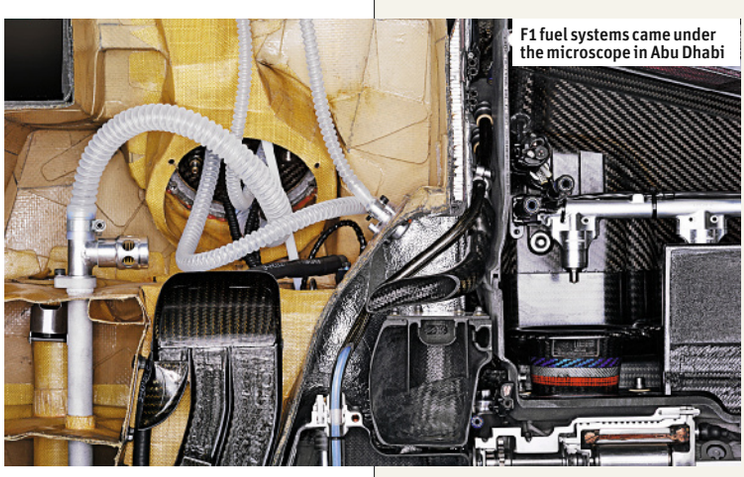
The car is even geared to be in a high part of the rev band at the appropriate corners. In the short-duration final turns, however, it was as if there wasn't quite enough corner for the roll-oversteer to combat the initial understeer.

Here's how the conspiracy theorists would read what happened next. Red Bull, alarmed at Hamilton's speed during the practice sessions, understood that its previous margins did not apply here. It was therefore going to run Vettel absolutely on the limit, with the bare minimum of fuel. Then whatever mechanism the conspiracy theorists supposed was used to drain fuel from the supplementary tank into the main tank failed. It's an appealing hypothesis, if you're into that sort of thing. It might even be what had happened to Hamilton's McLaren in Barcelona...

Here's a less paranoid interpretation: there is no separate tank. Instead, there is a main tank with a geometry, compartments and baffles that together trap as much fuel as possible as far forward as possible under braking. The tank may even be shaped more deeply at the front than the rear, further increasing how much weight can be brought forward. As long as the compartments are interconnected and have the defined minimum spaces connecting them, it's legal.

Pretty much every F1 car will have some variation of it; some will be more cleverly engineered than others. Red Bull simply miscalculated how much fuel Vettel would use, given that he had missed the qualifying simulations of third practice. The team based its consumption figures on Mark Webber's usage – and he is not as extreme in nailing the throttle to enhance the exhaust blowing. The pump struggled to pick up the last dregs – as pumps do – and the fuel was thereby not accessible from the FIA drain tube.

From there, myriad conspiracies were born, some that stretched into championship manipulation and shadowy figures in corridors of power. Take your pick.



F1 fuel systems came under the microscope in Abu Dhabi

"Conspiracy theories ran riot over the Abu Dhabi weekend"

V8 SUPERCARS

NISSAN DRIVES

Nissan's new-for-2013 Altima V8 Supercar was shaken down at Calder Park last week by Kelly Racing team owner/driver Todd Kelly and Nathan Pretty.

DTM

Green set for Audi DTM move

The DTM-frontrunning Brit looks likely to call time on his Mercedes career for 2013. By JAMIE O'LEARY

Jamie Green is set to make a shock switch from Mercedes to rival manufacturer Audi in time for next year's DTM.

AUTOSPORT understands that the 30-year-old Briton has agreed a multi-year deal with the manufacturer that will bring his eight-year stint in the championship with Mercedes to an end.

Green's Mercedes association began as a result of his winning the 2002 McLaren AUTOSPORT BRDC Award, which led to him being powered by engines built by the brand's HWA organisation on his way to the 2004 F3 Euro Series title.

Since stepping up to the DTM in 2005, also with Mercedes, he has taken eight victories, six pole positions and 13 fastest laps, as well as finishing in the top six of the championship in all but one of his campaigns. Third place in the 2012 points marked his most successful season to date.

Green was unavailable for comment when contacted this week, but a Mercedes spokesperson told AUTOSPORT: "We will announce our 2013 driver line-up once all the details are sorted out."

All Green's DTM wins have come with Merc

It is unclear whether Green will be part of Audi's four-car Abt Sportsline operation, or drive for one of the manufacturer's smaller teams: Phoenix Racing or Team Rosberg. The latter team was Audi's most successful this year and delivered two wins courtesy of Italian Edoardo Mortara.

MERCEDES' DRIVER SEARCH

Green's departure leaves Mercedes' front-line HWA squad looking threadbare for 2013. Fellow Briton Gary Paffett, who missed out on this year's title to BMW's Bruno Spengler by just four points at the season finale, is currently the only driver within the Mercedes ranks to have a DTM title or even a race win to his name.

By contrast, BMW can list a pair of title winners in Spengler and Martin Tomczyk, while Audi's 2012 line-up included two-time champions Mattias Ekstrom and Timo Scheider.

SCHEIDER STAYING PUT

Scheider this week put rumours of a switch to Mercedes for 2013 to bed.

The 2008-09 champion pledged his allegiance to Audi despite having now gone two years since he last won a race.

He wrote on his Facebook page while on holiday in the USA: "I, Timo Scheider, will remain 100 per cent loyal to Audi.

"Yes, we've had some difficult times, but these are just the ones during which you have to remain together the most. I had the biggest success of my career with Audi and there should be a couple more coming.

"I/we will continue to fight. That is certain. I still want at least one more title."

Mercedes motorsport vice-president Norbert Haug confirmed to AUTOSPORT (November 1) that, contrary to recent speculation in the German media, no contract offer was ever made to the 33-year-old German.

P52 DTM SEASON REVIEW

WTCC

WTCC switch for GT1 champions

GT1 WORLD CHAMPION TEAM Munnich Motorsport will move over to the World Touring Car Championship next season.

The German squad, which claimed the GT1 drivers' title this year with Marc Basseng and Markus Winkelhock as well as the teams' crown, will run a trio of SEAT Leon WTCCs in the full series next season. Basseng and Winkelhock will drive, together with team owner Rene Munnich.

Team boss Basseng, whose team ran Mercedes-Benz SLS AMGs this year, told AUTOSPORT: "We will switch to the WTCC as long as nothing unexpected happens and we are in final discussion to buy three SEAT Leons."

Basseng explained that there were a number of factors behind the switch and that the desire of team owner Munnich, who is a successful rallycross driver, to move over to circuit racing was central to the plan.

"Rene wants to do some circuit racing," he said. "He did the Suzuka WTCC with Special Tuning Racing and found that these cars suit him."

Munnich raced SEAT at Suzuka

A desire to compete in a world championship was also a significant factor in the decision to switch and not contest the new GT Sprint Series and the Blancpain Endurance Championship, which will combine to form the GT World Series in 2013.

"We don't think the world series is a true world championship and the marketing and PR behind the WTCC makes it easier to make the investment," he said.

The team expects to take delivery of its first SEAT before Christmas. Two 2012-spec cars, run under the Lukoil banner this year, should arrive in January.

P40 SHANGHAI REPORT

AUTOSPORT SAYS...

JAMIE O'LEARY
REPORTS EDITOR
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Jamie Green's switch to Audi is yet more proof, if any were needed, that the gentlemen's agreement that existed between Mercedes and Audi for much of the last decade is dead and buried.

The deal, by which neither manufacturer would poach a driver from another, and kept a lid on driver salaries, was blown out of the water when BMW arrived and signed Bruno Spengler and Martin Tomczyk from Mercedes and Audi; the German just a month after winning the title. Both men are now earning considerably more from their race activities.

Green is the third man to switch camps since BMW's return to the series and is the first big mover of a winter that could feature a few more.

Paffett needs a top team-mate

Significantly, his move leaves Mercedes with arguably the weakest driver line-up in the DTM, and that's a big problem for Norbert Haug, Gerhard Ungar and co. Ralf Schumacher has delivered only two podiums in five years and Christian Vietoris – a GP2 racewinner, don't forget – has not justified his promotion to HWA this year.

OK, so the signs shown by Robert Wickens in particular suggest that the three-pointed star may just have a new Spengler within its ranks, but it would be neither sensible, nor fair, to promote him to HWA and expect an instant delivery. Gary Paffett, its only frontline driver, needs a top team-mate to bounce ideas off. It will be to the whole HWA team's detriment if he doesn't get one.

GP2

Rossi closing on GP2 deal with Caterham

CATERHAM FORMULA 1 JUNIOR DRIVER ALEXANDER ROSSI IS set to switch from the team's Formula Renault 3.5 outfit to its GP2 squad for next year.

The American, who had a difficult FR3.5 season with Arden Caterham, shone in last week's GP2 test with its sister team, topping the final day of running. He told AUTOSPORT last weekend that a deal has not been finalised for 2013, but he is confident of landing a seat on the GP2 grid.

"The goal is GP2," he said. "My contract with Caterham is long-term so the plan is GP2 next year. Nothing's been announced yet but that's where everyone's focus is directed at the moment."

Rossi was buoyed by his performance in last week's Barcelona test, and he feels Caterham has made progress since he last drove its GP2 car a year ago.

"It's a massive difference compared to when I drove it in 2011," he said. "There is a little bit of a step that we need to catch the top teams but I think there's the possibility to do that in testing."

Rossi tested last week

GT WORLD SERIES

GTs 'deserve world status'

THE NEW-FOR-2013 GT SPRINT SERIES and the existing Blancpain Endurance Series deserve a world title because they represent the pinnacle of GT racing, according to leading team boss Vincent Vosse.

GT supremo Stephane Ratel announced last week that manufacturers' and teams' titles are set to be awarded under the FIA GT World Series banner on the basis of points scored in the two championships.

Vosse, whose WRT Audi squad won the teams' and, provisionally, the drivers' titles in the BES, said: "Blancpain is the biggest and best GT series in the world right now. If the GT Sprint Series is as good then it makes sense to have a world title."

Vosse believes that Ratel's decision to mirror the Blancpain class structure in the Sprint Series, by having Pro, Pro-Am and Am categories, will be the key to its success.

Vosse stated that he intends to run Audi R8 LMS ultras in both the Sprint and Endurance series next year.

Ratel revealed last week that he has reached a draft agreement with FIA President Jean Todt to use the FIA GT World Series banner for the two series.

REMEMBER WHEN...

Jamie Green made his Merc DTM debut?
As the reigning F3 Euro Series champion, Green made the first of his Mercedes starts at Hockenheim in 2005. He qualified a sensational third and finished sixth.

PICS: STALEY/GP2, IRLMEIER, XPB/LAT

Fitch in Corvette SS during 1957 Sebring 12 Hours...

John Fitch *1917–2012*

AMERICAN SPORTSCAR RACER JOHN Cooper Fitch, who died last week aged 95, was a man who could turn his hand to any challenge.

Born in Indianapolis, Fitch flew Mustangs for the US Air Force in the Second World War before embarking on a racing career. He quickly proved successful in SCCA events driving MG and Jaguar machinery, and soon joined Briggs Cunningham's eponymous sportscar team.

Fitch competed rarely but successfully in a variety of events. He won a Coupe des Alpes for a clean run in the 1953 Alpine Rally, driving a Sunbeam Alpine, and took the first of two world sportscar championship victories at the Sebring 12 Hours the same year, sharing a Cunningham C4R with Phil Walters.

... a race he won four years earlier with Phil Walters (r)

One of the first American racers to come to Europe in the 1950s, Fitch was third overall at the 1953 Le Mans 24 Hours, sharing an updated C5R Cunningham with Walters.

Fitch made the leap to a top European racing team when he joined the Mercedes-Benz sportscar squad. He took fourth on his first outing – the 1952 Carrera Panamericana – only to be disqualified for receiving outside assistance, and as part of the 1955 team he experienced highs and lows.

At Le Mans, it was Fitch who was due to take over from Pierre Levegh before the Frenchman's horrific accident that claimed over 80 lives, while just three months later the American partnered Stirling Moss to win the Tourist Trophy on the tough Dundrod circuit.

Fitch also took a GT class win in the 1955 Mille Miglia, after coming up with the pacenote idea that helped team-mates Moss/Denis Jenkinson to overall victory.

In between his Mercedes stints came a Hollywood turn. Fitch and 1949 British Grand Prix winner Emmanuel de Graffenried were technical advisors and stunt drivers for the racing film *The Racers*, starring Kirk Douglas.

Although mainly a sportscar driver, Fitch did make two Formula 1 World Championship appearances, the second of which resulted in ninth at the 1955 Italian Grand Prix in Moss's Maserati 250F.

He then became one of the key members of the fledgling Chevrolet sportscar operation, taking class victories at Sebring in 1956 and Le Mans in 1960.

After retiring – along with Cunningham – at the 1966 Sebring 12 Hours, Fitch remained involved in the sport. He played a role in various safety projects, perhaps most importantly inventing the Fitch Inertial Barrier that is now commonplace on American roads.

The fact that he was also a design consultant for many racetracks, including Lime Rock, merely underlines the breadth of his abilities and his often-underestimated impact on the motorsport world.

● *Kevin Turner*

P89 FITCH ARCHIVE

INDYCAR

Andretti leads calls for IndyCar calm

US RACING LEGEND MARIO ANDRETTI believes that concerns expressed by fans and some quarters of the media about the future of the IndyCar Series following the departure of its CEO Randy Bernard are unfounded.

Bernard left his post following an emergency board meeting of series owner Hulman & Co two weeks ago, with H&C CEO Jeff Belskus stepping up as his interim replacement. The news was greeted with dismay by many series fans, who feared that the move had been made impulsively and without proper consideration over Bernard's replacement.

However, Andretti told AUTOSPORT that he believed the quality of the racing during the 2012 season proved that the category was on a safe footing, with or without Bernard at the helm.

"What's the big deal that everyone's making about one man leaving?" he said. "The series is going to be fine. When you have the product there, the rest will take care of itself. And the product is there."

Andretti 's sentiments were echoed by influential team owner Chip Ganassi.

Andretti says the racing will speak for itself

"For five people in the press to be wound up [about Bernard] is not really having the finger on the pulse of what's going on," he said. "Everything is fine. It's the off-season and there's nothing else to talk about. So, everybody, just take a deep breath."

Meanwhile, Bernard took to social-media site *Twitter* to break his silence for the first time since stepping down as CEO. He sent three messages thanking fans for their support last Friday.

"Let's not forget what this sport is all about: speed, world-class drivers, and the best competition in all of racing," he wrote.

INDYCAR

IndyCar aero-kit decision for 2013 still to be made

INDYCAR INTERIM CEO JEFF BELSKUS has warned that a decision over the implementation of alternative aero kits in 2013 is still some way off.

The possibility of allowing non-Dallara bodykits to be used had been planned for the 2012 season, but was delayed due to concerns from some team owners over costs.

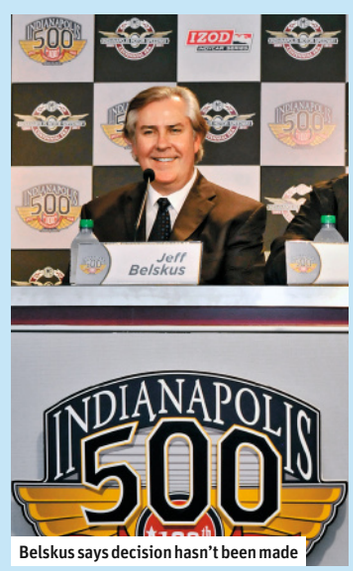
Former series CEO Randy Bernard was keen to push ahead with their introduction during 2013, although this had still not been finalised when he left his position two weeks ago.

Belskus told AUTOSPORT that he does not see a resolution anytime soon.

"That's an ongoing conversation," he said. "I don't know that I can set a timeline for when it will be resolved."

At the time of Bernard's departure, it appeared likely that permission to develop alternative bodywork would be restricted to manufacturers.

Chevrolet and Honda have already confirmed their intentions to build kits if allowed, although both have expressed concerns about a late decision encroaching on the lead times needed to get parts designed, tested and manufactured.



Belskus says decision hasn't been made

Wiggins says deal is 'looking pretty solid'

WEC

HVM set for sportscar move

INDYCAR SQUAD HVM IS CLOSING IN on a switch to sportscars in the World Endurance Championship next year.

Team boss Keith Wiggins has revealed that a deal to run a solo LMP2 car in the eight-race WEC is "looking pretty solid". The WEC assault is likely to replace its IndyCar involvement.

"We have done a lot work in the background to make this happen," he said. "Nothing is slam-dunk, but we are working closely with a couple of drivers to make it happen."

Wiggins would not reveal the names of the drivers nor which chassis-engine combination he would choose if the deal comes off. HVM's plans to run an LMP2 in the American Le Mans Series this year were abandoned due to its IndyCar commitments.

IN BRIEF

Filippi was fastest

FILIPPI TOPS GP2 TEST
Luca Filippi led Daniel de Jong in a one-two for the outgoing Coloni squad at last week's GP2 test at Barcelona. Nigel Melker was third overall for DAMS as all the best times came on the dry opening day.

KVYAT TESTS GP3 CAR
Formula Renault NEC champion Daniil Kvyat dove for MW Arden at this week's official GP3 test at Estoril. Alex Brundle drove for Lotus while British F3 champion Jack Harvey and Lewis Williamson drove for Carlin and Atech CRS.

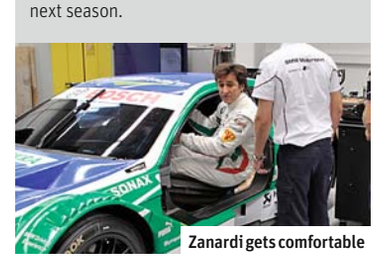
DITTMANN'S F2 TEST
Chris Dittmann has been awarded a prize Formula 2 test later this year as his reward for winning the MSV F3 Cup. No date or venue has yet been confirmed for when the 23-year-old Briton will drive.

MORGAN'S 2013 TEAM SWITCH
British Touring Car racer Adam Morgan will switch from Speedworks Motorsport to his family-run Cicely Racing squad for 2013. Morgan has bought an NGTC Toyota Avensis from the rival Dynojet squad.

EGR TO USE HENDRICK MOTORS
Earnhardt Ganassi Racing will use engines built by Hendrick Motorsports in next year's NASCAR Sprint Cup. The team has used Earnhardt Childress Racing engines since its formation, via a merger of the Ganassi and DEI squads in 2009.

TIM WARDROP: 1950-2012
Engineer Tim Wardrop has died aged 62 after a long illness. The Briton served in F1 with McLaren, Williams and Wolf, and was Arie Luyendyk's engineer in 1996 when the Dutchman set his Indianapolis 500 qualifying speed record at 236.986mph.

ZANARDI DRIVES DTM BMW
Alex Zanardi was due to make his DTM test debut today (Thursday) in a modified version of the BMW M3 that took Bruno Spengler to this year's title. The Italian is considering a return to motorsport next season.


Zanardi gets comfortable

PICS: LAT ARCHIVE, PRICE, KUHN/LAT, STALEY/GP2

Al-Attiyah won final IRC event in Fiesta

WRC

M-Sport set for Qatari funding

Middle-Eastern cash is key to firm's front-line continuation in World Rally Championship. By DAVID EVANS

Nasser Al-Attiyah is ready to commit Qatar government money to an M-Sport World Rally Team led by Petter Solberg next season.

Qatari Al-Attiyah met M-Sport team chief Malcolm Wilson on Rally Cyprus last weekend, an event he won in a Ford Fiesta Regional Rally Car built by the organisation and supported by Qatar.

The Dakar Rally winner, who clinched his eighth Middle East Rally Championship title with the victory, admitted that he is ready to commit the required investment to safeguard the Cumbrian team's continued WRC participation.

Ford will withdraw its financial support from the team at the end of this season, although it will maintain its technical and engineering input into the ongoing development of the Fiesta RS WRC.

Wilson and Al-Attiyah celebrate Cyprus win

Al-Attiyah is aiming to drive a Fiesta WRC on seven rounds of the series next year, while tackling the same number of MERC rounds in an RRC version.

"For me, everything is good with Malcolm," said Al-Attiyah. "Nothing is decided yet, but he will come back to me next week. I am happy. It is very important for me to be with M-Sport, both for the world championship and in the Middle East. I decide where I put the budget I am given for next season and I will divide it between WRC, Middle East and Dakar. There is enough [money]."

Solberg and Mads Ostberg are likely to form the full-time line-up. Al-Attiyah believes the duo are good enough to challenge for titles.

"Petter and Mads would be good for next year," added Al-Attiyah. "With Sebastien Loeb going part-time, the championships can be a little bit different to how it has been in the past – I think this team can be competitive."

Wilson will not reveal the precise nature of the discussions, saying: "It was a good weekend in Cyprus. Seeing an M-Sport Regional Rally Car win the final round of the IRC and take the Middle East Rally Championship title was great news for the company. There were other discussions going on, but I'm not ready to talk about those yet."

Solberg added: "If M-Sport and Malcolm want me then I am ready to be part of the team next season.

"I'm quite sure this car can be world champion next season. The Fiesta is good the way it is right now, but there is more coming and it's going to improve further. I think I can be world champion in the Fiesta as well next year."

P56 IRC CYPRUS REPORT

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LE MANS

Alpine name could make Le Mans return

THE JOINT VENTURE BETWEEN Caterham and Alpine announced this week could result in the famous French name returning to the Le Mans 24 Hours.

A new sportscar will be developed at Alpine's Dieppe factory, from where Renault's 1978 Le Mans 24 Hours victory was masterminded, in a deal involving Caterham buying a 50 per cent share in the company from the French manufacturer. Caterham owner Tony Fernandes hinted this car could have a future at Le Mans in the GTE class.

"Le Mans could be a way to run this car together," he said. "It would bring the heritage together and create a good story.

"There are plans for other motorsport projects and things we can do together out of Dieppe. We will work on plans that are good business and showcase our companies."

Fernandes did not dismiss the idea of the Caterham Formula 1 team, which uses the Renault V8 powerplant, incorporating the Alpine name.

"The F1 team could change," he said. "It would make sense, but it is not decided."

A442B won 1978 Le Mans

Details of the new sportscar to built in France by the new joint venture have yet to be revealed. It is understood that the car, which Renault boss Carlos Ghosn said would have "Alpine DNA", will be a lightweight car in the spirit of the A110 of 1961-78.

Alpine has a long history of involvement in motorsport. As well as developing the line of cars that led to the A442B that won Le Mans with Didier Pironi and Jean-Pierre Jassaud, it built the test mule for Renault's F1 engine in 1976 and, most recently, assembled the latest-generation Formula Renault single-seaters.

P42 WEC REVIEW

IN BRIEF

Meeke's warm-up

MEEKE TO ENTER BAJA EVENT
Kris Meeke will contest next week's Baja 1000 on a motorbike. The former IRC champion finished the 24-hour Dawn to Dusk race in Wales last summer to prepare for the 1121-mile event, which starts from Ensenada, Mexico, on November 15.

ERC CALENDAR UNVEILED
Eurosport Events has revealed a 13-round European Rally Championship calendar for 2013. The 11 confirmed events are: Janner Rally, Latvia Rally, Circuit of Ireland, Rally Azores, Tour de Corse, Croatia Rally, Rally Ypres, Rally Zlin, Rally Poland, Sanremo Rally and Rallye du Valais. Two extra gravel rounds will be held in Bulgaria, Romania, San Marino or Turkey.

FISHER GETS PROTON SEAT
Alastair Fisher, who won the opening round of this year's WRC Academy, has joined Proton Motorsport for Rally Catalunya. The 24-year-old Briton, who drove an S2000 Ford Fiesta on Rally GB, will be team-mate to Per-Gunnar Andersson, who trails Craig Breen by two points in the race for the SWRC title.

WRC

Paris meetings spark fury among WRC stakeholders

THERE IS INCREASING HOSTILITY IN the World Rally Championship as manufacturers and rally organisers seek assurances over the future of the series.

Two meetings in Paris last week sparked ferocious WRC debate, with stakeholders questioning the pace at which the series is moving forward.

The manufacturers have been angered at an FIA request for them to sign a new commercial agreement, involving the transfer of certain rights away from the teams and into the hands of the FIA.

One source told AUTOSPORT: "We were given this legally binding document on Wednesday and told it had to be signed and returned to the FIA two days later. That's completely unrealistic. We appreciate the new promoter's input, but we need more direction on where we're going in the future."

An FIA source defended the meetings, saying: "All this talk of dissent is surprising. We asked in the meeting if anybody had any questions and nobody said anything. And then they go to the media to make their questions. This is not a good way forward."

Anger is directed at the FIA

IN BRIEF

India's RoC play-off line-up

ASIAN PLAY-OFF FOR ROC
India, China, Thailand and one other Asian nation will take part in a mini play-off to decide the final spot in the Race of Champions Nations' Cup this December. Karun Chandhok and Narain Karthikeyan will form the Indian team. Ho-Pin Tung and Han Han compete for China.

LORENZO SIGNS UP FOR ROC
MotoGP world champion Jorge Lorenzo will compete for Spain in the RoC Nations' Cup in Bangkok this December as well as taking part in the individual event at the Ramangala Stadium.

COZZOLINO TO MAKE WTCC BOW
Kei Cozzolino has replaced Alberto Cerqui at the ROAL BMW team for the World Touring Car Championship finale at Macau. Cozzolino, who has twice raced at Macau in Formula 3, has not competed since Formula Nippon in 2010.

MORTARA TO COMPETE IN CHINA
DTM star Edoardo Mortara will warm up for his Macau GT drive by taking part in this weekend's final round of the Chinese Audi R8 LMS Cup at Shanghai.

PORSCHE JUNIOR FINALISTS
Porsche held its shootout for factory junior status 2013 at Vallelunga last weekend. Finalists Connor de Philippi, Alex Riberas, Pietor Schothorst, Dennis van de Laar, Jeffrey Schmidt and Levin Amweg were all assessed by the German manufacturer.

ELMS ALLOWS GT3 CARS IN
GT3 machinery will be eligible for the European Le Mans Series next season, it has been confirmed. One-make GT machinery, such as the Ferrari 430 Challenge and Porsche 911 GT3 Cup, will not be eligible.

FALKEN STAYS IN ALMS
The Walker Racing-run Team Falken Tire Porsche squad will continue for a third year in the American Le Mans Series. Factory driver Wolf Henzler and Bryan Sellers will again race the 911 GT3-RSR.

Falken Porsche stays in ALMS

PICS: LAT ARCHIVE, LEPAGE, FERRARO, COATES/LAT

ABU DHABI GP
Yas Marina,
November 4

ROUND 18/20

LAPS 55

WINNER
Kimi Raikkonen
1h45m58.667s

POLE POSITION
Lewis Hamilton
1m40.630s

FASTEST LAP
Sebastian Vettel
1m43.964s

RACE RATING
★★★★☆
Some good racing, some drama, and some great radio messages!

DRIVERS STANDINGS

Vettel	255pts
Alonso	245pts
Raikkonen	198pts

MILESTONES
- Hamilton takes the 75th pole for a McLaren-Mercedes
- De la Rosa is the first HRT driver ever to finish on lead lap!

PIC: TEE/LAT

BLACK-AND-GOLD IS BACK IN FRONT

Kimi Raikkonen puts the charismatic Lotus colour scheme on top after more heartbreak for Hamilton and a stunning fightback from Vettel. MARK HUGHES reports

QUALIFYING

Hamilton utterly supreme as Vettel loses fuel in the Middle East

"Yeah, it was fantastic," grinned Lewis Hamilton upon setting his 25th pole. "It was how I imagine Sebastian's car to be all the time!"

It was just a light-hearted little dig at the man heading the championship, but who was here a somewhat ragged third quickest after a troubled preparation and then excluded from the qualifying results for having insufficient fuel left to give a sample.

But even had Vettel not lost almost all of Saturday morning practice to brake dramas, it's by no means certain he'd have had the legs here of Hamilton, who was in devastating form in a McLaren that allowed him to fully express himself, especially through the heavy-braking/slow-corner sequence of the final sector.

"We've brought next to zero to the car," he said. "I think the aero package we have just suits the track. It felt fantastic right from the get-go. You can get really early on the power and I was able to really put it on the edge."

The pole lap came on his first Q3 run. At the time that had put him almost half a second clear of the pack, and so there was nothing really to lose on his second attempt. He reacted to this by trying to go for it in an even bigger way. "The next lap I was up a little bit," he explained. "I think I was up a tenth or so, and then I lost it. I had no idea I'd done a good lap, so it was just about going completely over the line and seeing if you can get something – but it didn't work." A slight overcommitment into one of the tight final-sector turns – where his spectacular late braking and oversteer had paid back dramatically all weekend – took him just a little over the top. But no matter. His final margin over Mark Webber was 0.348s.

Webber improved on his final run to bump Red Bull team-mate Vettel from second and he thereby became the first man other than Hamilton or Vettel ever to have started from the front row here. Mark had lost much of Friday afternoon with a KERS cooling-fluid leak, but used Vettel's data as his baseline into qualifying. Coming off the slow turns the low-geared Red Bulls were singing, maximising the exhaust blowing and compensating for their small-capacity KERS. It meant they were the slowest of all through the trap at the end of the long straight, but the very fastest for a lot of the straight prior to that. But it was as if the turns of that final sector – comprising 40 per cent of the lap – were just a little too short to allow the car's usual slow-corner roll-oversteer to overcome the initial understeer.

Penalty for this would drop Vettel 21 places

Vettel lost almost all of Saturday morning practice to a long brake pedal, which entailed changing all four calipers after the source of the problem on the original calipers could not be traced. "There were a couple of questions I'd have liked answered about the car that we couldn't find out before qualifying," said a resigned Seb. His initial Q3 lap was a little scruffy and, although he improved on his final attempt, it was still a scant one hundredth shy of Webber. On his slow-down lap he was told by the Renault Sport engineers to shut down the engine. They could see a shortage of fuel in the collector pot and did not want to risk damaging the motor. For reasons initially unknown to the team there was insufficient fuel left in the tank to give the required one-litre sample afterwards and, just as with Hamilton at Barcelona, Vettel was excluded from the qualifying results.

Hamilton was on flamboyant form

As usual when the walls are close, Pastor Maldonado was in mighty form for Williams. He went fourth quickest in the further-improved FW34, even though he'd only just scraped into Q3 at 10th quickest, the balance proving a little knife-edgy to access.

Kimi Raikkonen was surprised at how quick the Lotus was, given that with its further revised Coanda exhaust and associated tweaks its balance didn't feel that great. He eventually raced with the first version of the Coanda. He was marginally slower than Maldonado, fifth quickest, and slightly quicker than Jenson Button, who was dismayed to be a full 0.6s slower than his polesitting McLaren team-mate. "All weekend the car felt great," he said. "Then into quallie there was just nothing there – understeer on turn-in, poor traction, locking fronts and rears."

Fernando Alonso was 0.3s adrift even of the troubled Button around a track that could have been designed to expose the Ferrari's traction weakness. A full half-second of the deficit to pole came in the tight twists of the final sector. He was running the new front and rear wings the team had worked hard to have ready. Alonso did pretty much the same lap time on three separate occasions through Q2 and Q3, underlining how that seemed to be the limit of the car.

Nico Rosberg got his Mercedes through to Q3 and produced a terrific lap there to go eighth in a car with a serious degree of understeer, set up this way to protect the rear tyres. Felipe Massa in the older-spec Ferrari was a couple of tenths down on Alonso in ninth after just a single fresh-option-tyre run, having used up his others in getting through. Romain Grosjean's lap in the Lotus was on a par with Raikkonen's after the first two sectors but he made a sequence of small errors in the final series of bends, leaving him 0.5s adrift and back in 10th.

Nico Hulkenberg squeezed everything from the Force India but that was good only for 11th, a couple of tenths and two places ahead of team-mate Paul di Resta, who had a new chassis at his disposal after a fundamental problem was found with the previous one. Sergio Perez split them in his Sauber, but team-mate Kamui Kobayashi had been on course to have bumped Maldonado out of Q3 before locking up in the final sector. This left him 16th.

Michael Schumacher languished in 14th after confusion over how many laps he had left in Q2 and making the wrong KERS-harvesting setting in the Mercedes as a result. Bruno Senna was 0.4s adrift of his Williams team-mate in Q2, leaving him back in 15th. Daniel Ricciardo was again the only Toro Rosso driver to make it out of Q1, while Charles Pic did a great job in the Marussia to split the Caterhams and beat team-mate Timo Glock by 0.4s.

P34 RESULTS
All those vital stats

Di Resta escapes as Hulkenberg hits Senna

30C

RACE CONDITIONS
Dry, hot conditions, with air temperature dropping from the low 30s to the high 20s.

It was about an hour before the race when Red Bull team principal Christian Horner took a deep breath and knocked on Sebastian Vettel's door to wish him good luck. "He was sitting in there playing a drum kit," marvelled Horner later, "his trainer sitting there with him, and he just said, 'I'll see you on the podium.'"

A little while later, Vettel got in the car and headed down to the bottom of the pitlane, from where he'd be starting the race. The Red Bull team boss smiled and admired his charge's spirit — but in his mind he was thinking a couple of points would be as much as could be hoped for from there.

With 10 laps to go, Seb sat fourth in the safety-car queue, his 24-second deficit to the leaders wiped out — and on faster option tyres that had eight to nine laps' fewer use than the primes on the guys ahead. The Red Bull had good top speed thanks to the wing and ratio changes the team had been able to make through having opted to take the car out of parc ferme. For the first time, Horner allowed himself to dream. The safety-car periods had been the team's friends on this day, giving back much of what had been taken away by the lack of fuel the day before.

At the head of that queue, black and gold glinting beneath the floodlights, weaved the tyre-warming Kimi Raikkonen, in a very comfortable place, one that he hasn't been in for a while, but which felt immediately very familiar — as soon as that McLaren ahead of him had pulled off 20-odd laps earlier. He wasn't going to lose this race from here, not now.

Fernando Alonso, second in that queue, could hardly have wished for more. The Ferrari wasn't great around here, not even in the race. It was OK and he'd raced it hard and aggressively — opportunistically past Jenson Button on the opening lap and building from there. But here was a bigger opportunity: one of stealing it, no question. It would mean getting the jump on Kimi. He knows from years that stretch right back to their respective childhoods in karting that this would be no simple matter, but the Ferrari was a lot faster than the Lotus at the end of that back straight up to Turn 8. It just might be possible.

Button? A pretty standard Abu Dhabi weekend for him so far. Poor qualifying, strong race, a sequence of fastest race laps just before this safety car as he closed back down on Alonso, a dayglo vision in the desert night. And behind him, Vettel.

The next 10 laps were about to provide yet more narrative. But there'd been so much of it leading to this point it was easy to lose track; a wham-bang race of incident unlike any seen at this venue before.

Off the line Lewis Hamilton's clutch was fine; there was no Indian Grand Prix-style underdelivery of torque and the McLaren was cleanly away, the biggest question mark of his race now answered in a positive way, clear dusk between him and his pursuers. Mark Webber, on the other hand, had bogged down terribly and was jumped immediately by Pastor Maldonado's Williams to his outside and Raikkonen down the inside.

Bernie keeps a lid on Vettel's hopes

Raikkonen exited that opening-radius first turn heading the pursuit of Hamilton, up through the blind-apex uphill left of Turn 2, sixth gear and still accelerating through the thrilling downhill S of Turns 3 and 4. Webber got his elbows aggressively out at Turn 1 to keep from being mugged by Button, the lost momentum this cost Jenson allowing Alonso to pounce, not hesitating for even one millisecond — and he wasn't finished yet.

Webber got a clumsy exit over the kerbs of Turn 9 and Alonso was onto him like a heat-seeking missile. When these two go wheel to wheel there's inevitably an added fizz, and this was no exception as Webber feigned to intimidate Alonso toward the wall on the right down the long curving run up to the next tight chicane of Turns 11-12-13. Fernando kept coming, wheels close to touching in seventh gear, and eased his way past. By the time he'd completed the move it was very late to begin braking. Smoke poured briefly from the inner front as he sought to avoid hitting the back of Maldonado. It was a stunning move.

The midfield had failed to squeeze cleanly into the first turn and, in the multi-car melee, Nico Hulkenberg's Force India failed to survive. The sister car of Paul di Resta was heading pitwards for repairs and Bruno Senna's Williams was ▶

PICS: RYS, THOMPSON/GETTY, FERRARO, HONE/LAT

◄ carrying damage. Later in the lap, Nico Rosberg's front wing would puncture Romain Grosjean's front tyre, and they'd both be in too. Vettel benefited from these delays, and was lining up Senna by the end of the lap – though he would slightly damage his front wing in his optimistic move. From 24th to 17th already, even so he was already 15s off the lead, a gap that would build up to 24s over the next few laps as he made his way through the lower half of the field.

As the pack wound its way through the tight twists of the final sector, Hamilton was visibly quicker than the following Raikkonen. But the McLaren's brakes and tyres were still a little cool on the second lap as Hamilton braked for Turn 8, the tight

> "Over-anxious not to let Webber rejoin ahead of him, Massa looped around in a cloud of tyre smoke"

left at the end of the back straight. A front wheel locked, he ran wide onto the painted Tarmac run-off, then quickly pulled himself back on track ahead of the clunky right-handed part of that chicane – just in time to prevent Raikkonen from pouncing. But it gave Kimi a better exit out of there and Lewis had to get super-defensive to keep him behind, dust thrown up from the diffuser as he hugged the inside kink to prevent Raikkonen seeing a gap.

That was to be the only wheel Hamilton had put even mildly wrong throughout the weekend and he quickly pulled away all over again. Even the enabling of DRS – two zones up to Turns 8 and 11 – on lap three didn't allow Raikkonen to get close.

That gap would build to almost 4s by the end of the eighth lap, a margin that was about to be wiped by the safety car.

Maldonado kept Alonso and Webber at bay early on

Whitmarsh comforts Hamilton – almost for the last time

Narain Karthikeyan was approaching the flat-out right-hander of Turn 15 alongside the marina, when with a sinking feeling of dread he felt his steering go suddenly very stiff – hydraulics failure. He lifted off as he headed inevitably towards the run-off, but bearing down fast was the unsighted Mercedes of Rosberg, recovering from his earlier stop. He hit the HRT at full force and flew scarily over the top of its cockpit before hitting the Tecpro barriers hard. It was with great relief we saw them both climb unharmed from their cars. But with debris scattered across the track, the safety car was sent out.

This was potentially great news for Vettel, who'd climbed to 12th and with a likely-compliant Toro Rosso ahead of him. That 25s deficit had been wiped. But in the brake/accelerate sequence in the queue Daniel Ricciardo was braking just as Vettel was accelerating, and Seb had to veer sharp right off the track in avoidance – collecting a DRS marker board.

DRIVER BY DRIVER by Edd Straw

1 9/10 Event rating

SEBASTIAN VETTEL
Red Bull-Renault RB8-04
Start: 23rd. Finish: 3rd
The cards fell his way in the race, but he did everything to capitalise. There were some outstanding moves along the way, not least passing Button with an inch-perfect around-the-outside move. A moment of inattention led to him hitting a DRS sign, but otherwise a great salvage job.

2 5/10 Event rating

MARK WEBBER
Red Bull-Renault RB8-03
Start: 2nd. DNF
It was all looking so promising after qualifying, but he went backwards at the start with another clumsy getaway. Incidents with Maldonado and Massa were unnecessary as things went from bad to worse. But not responsible for his ultimate exit when he collected Grosjean.

3 8/10 Event rating

JENSON BUTTON
McLaren-Mercedes MP4-27-01
Start: 5th. Finish: 4th
A tidy weekend, although he was thoroughly put in the shade by his team-mate, who appeared to be on a different level. His defending against Vettel in the closing stages was superb, forcing the Red Bull driver to pull off the move of the race to get ahead. Decent but unspectacular.

4 9/10 Event rating

LEWIS HAMILTON
McLaren-Mercedes MP4-27-02
Start: 1st. DNF
Simply untouchable, dominating qualifying and the race until an electrical problem knocked out the fuel pump and put him out. The only negative was the moment early on when he locked up on cool tyres and ran off track at Turn 8, nearly handing Raikkonen the lead.

5 8/10 Event rating

FERNANDO ALONSO
Ferrari F2012-295
Start: 6th. Finish: 2nd
Did almost everything right in Abu Dhabi. After a decent qualifying effort, he made up ground early on and with a few more laps he might have been able to make a concerted effort to pass Raikkonen. But a poor restart after the first safety car made his task harder.

6 6/10 Event rating

FELIPE MASSA
Ferrari F2012-294
Start: 8th. Finish: 7th
Again running without the full benefit of Ferrari's updates, he did a good job in qualifying. He spent a lot of the race in traffic, and getting caught up in the incident with Webber was just what the team didn't need him to do, given that it allowed Vettel to get ahead of him 'free of charge'.

PICS: FOX, RYS/GETTY, HONE, TEE/LAT

Recovering Webber tries to force a move on Massa...

...which ends with the Ferrari spinning off

Button defended well but lacked overall pace

Ricciardo: points in five of the past seven races

Now he'd really damaged his wing.

Forced to pit for a new nose, Vettel was also switched to a set of the soft-compound options, having been one of just three to begin on the medium-compound primes. He rejoined right back at the tail of the field. But because it was bunched, that wasn't too costly. He'd soon be scything back through the lower half of the pack, his longer gearing and lower wing helping the RB8 to an unfamiliar fourth fastest through the speed trap. Now out of sequence on his tyre strategy, he was on softs that averaged about 0.6s faster than the hards, but which would be unlikely to complete the remaining 42 laps. With the rest of the field one-stopping — the circuit proving like India's Buddh track in how easy a time it gave the tyres and therefore making a one-stop much the favoured strategy — it wasn't ideal.

When racing got underway again, Alonso, in trying to get a better run onto the pit straight than Maldonado ahead of him, almost dropped the Ferrari through the final corner and had to indulge in a bit of weaving to keep Webber from taking advantage. Upon the restart Maldonado found his KERS had died during the safety-car lappery and a bit of a queue would soon form behind the Williams as Hamilton and Raikkonen pulled quickly away.

Lewis took only four laps to build the gap over Kimi back to what it had been before the safety car. But then he failed to come round again. Electrical failure took out the fuel pump and the engine died a few seconds later. No warning. Just as in Singapore, he'd lost a race he was dominating. McLaren has now suffered six significant failures across five of the past six races. Hamilton walked forlornly back under the glare of the night-time lights.

And so it was that Kimi Raikkonen was leading a grand prix, just like the old days. "Just leave me alone," he insisted over the radio as the team tried to inform him of the gap. So it was also that Vettel's deficit to the lead was reduced from 25s to 21s, Seb now up to 12th. His knife-through-butter progress was allowing that gap to remain relatively stable — which made his position very interesting, given that those ahead of him would all soon have to make their pitstops, taking up around 20s of elapsed time. It was a brilliant performance.

Alonso finally found a way around the KERS-less Maldonado on lap 21, zapping him in the DRS zone up to Turn 8 to go second, with Webber next in line to have a look at the Williams's defences. Mark's Red Bull, unlike Vettel's, still had its qualifying ratios and wings and was 10km/h slower through the trap. It made it a very difficult car to race in the pack, but even so his attempt at passing Maldonado at the end of the second DRS zone was clumsy. From the outside he simply turned in to Turn 11 ahead, leaving Maldonado no option but to punt the Red Bull, which duly spun. Button, Felipe Massa ▶

7 6/10 Event rating

MICHAEL SCHUMACHER
Mercedes F1 W03-09
Start: 13th. Finish: 11th

His recent bad qualifying run continued, this time because of confusion over KERS-harvest settings. He would have come out of the race with a clutch of points as he was running seventh when a puncture forced him to make an extra pitstop. Couldn't quite get back into the points.

8 7/10 Event rating

NICO ROSBERG
Mercedes F1 W03-07
Start: 7th. DNF

As in India, he was able to drag a pretty good qualifying lap out of unpromising machinery. But his race was a disaster. Hitting Grosjean early on put him on the back foot, then Karthikeyan's HRT lost hydraulic pressure in front of him and launched the Mercedes into the barriers.

9 10/10 Event rating

KIMI RAIKKONEN
Lotus-Renault E20-05
Start: 4th. Finish: 1st

What really stood out was how in control he was on his way to the win, particularly late on when he let Alonso close up but then unleashed a little extra pace to prevent him getting within DRS range. To be able to drive like that after two years in rallying is testament to his ability.

10 6/10 Event rating

ROMAIN GROSJEAN
Lotus-Renault E20-03
Start: 9th. DNF

Did his best to have another solid, cautious run to a points finish, but other drivers seemed not to want him to do so. After being hit by Rosberg on the opening lap, showed good awareness in battle, particularly with Vettel, only to be caught out when Perez fired a Sauber across his bows.

11 7/10 Event rating

PAUL DI RESTA
Force India-Merc VJM05-04
Start: 12th. Finish: 9th

There was a change of chassis, designed to cure a "fundamental" problem, but the story in qualifying was a familiar one as he lost out to Hulkenberg by 0.2s. Was unfortunate at the first corner, but safety cars helped him to top six. Cautious tyre strategy dropped him back to ninth.

12 6/10 Event rating

NICO HULKENBERG
Force India-Merc VJM05-03
Start: 10th. DNF

Appeared odds-on to keep his run of points finishes going after again outqualifying di Resta. But he ran out of room on the run to the first corner, bringing his race to an end. The stewards deemed it a racing incident, although a more circumspect approach could have served him well.

◄ and Sergio Perez all flashed by before Mark could rejoin.

Next lap, Button made a great move down the inside of Maldonado for third into Turn 8, though he was already 5s behind Alonso. A few moments later, Webber tried to take advantage of Massa's loss of momentum after the Brazilian had been passed into Turns 8-9 by Perez. The Red Bull tracked the Ferrari down in the second DRS zone and then tried for the outside of Massa into Turn 11, Felipe nudging wheels to hold it out wide, forcing Mark to take to the run-off. Over-anxious not to let Webber rejoin ahead of him, Massa accelerated too hard, too early out of T12 and the Ferrari looped around in a cloud of tyre smoke. He would pit soon afterwards, his tyres finished.

The leading stops were kicked off by Alonso on lap 28, from almost 8s behind Raikkonen — not enough to allow him to rejoin ahead of Vettel. The Ferrari was stopped for just 2.7s as a set of prime tyres was fitted. Button and Maldonado were in the next lap and they — like Alonso — were leapfrogged by the flying Vettel. Seb was now up with Webber, and Mark was being instructed not to fight if his team-mate went for a pass. His rear tyres were now well past their best anyway and he was brought in on lap 30.

Although he was able to leapfrog Maldonado. Webber was still behind Perez and all three were now stuck at the pace of the old-tyred, out-of-sequence bunch in fourth to seventh, comprising Senna's Williams, the Toro Rosso of Jean-Eric Vergne, Grosjean's Lotus and di Resta, the Force India making a great recovery from its first-lap stop. With Perez, Webber and Maldonado trapped, so it played even further into Vettel's hands, now up to second thanks to that much earlier stop and his pace.

Raikkonen finally pitted on the 31st lap. "We could have gone longer than that with Kimi," explained the team's Alan Permane, "but the concern was Vettel. He was lapping quickly on those options and, although we didn't think he'd be able to get to the end on them, we didn't want to risk getting behind him just in case he could. So we pitted Kimi while we had enough of a margin to get out still ahead." The Lotus exited still in the lead, albeit only by around 1.5s. Kimi then began to pull away on his fresh tyres. Alonso lay 6s behind the Red Bull, with Button's McLaren — happier on the prime tyres — beginning to cut into the Ferrari's advantage.

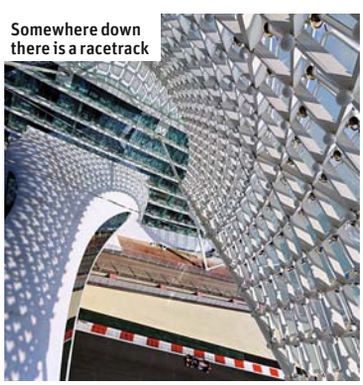
At this point Red Bull was contemplating trying to get Vettel through to the end on his existing tyres. "We asked him and he was challenging us about it," said Horner. "He thought we needed to stop again." They monitored his times and, once Alonso and Button began gaining by around 0.5s per lap, it became clear Seb was right. They left him out long enough to ensure he came out ahead of that old-tyred pack, bringing him in for fresh options on lap 37, with 18 still to go. He rejoined a distant fourth.

Frustration was building behind that pack. On the 38th lap di Resta went for a DRS pass on Grosjean at Turn 11, and in the subsequent squabble the closely-following Perez looked to take advantage, trying to pass them both. As they all squeezed each other out through the complex of slow corners, with di Resta ahead, Perez spun into Turn 14 and was collected by Grosjean, who in turn was hit hard by Webber. The Lotus and Red Bull were out on the spot, the Sauber was in for repairs and would subsequently be in again for Perez to take a stop-go penalty. Out came the safety car; up went Red Bull's hopes for Vettel. The 24s gap to Raikkonen was now wiped away.

"He's got to be the luckiest person in F1," said a watching Hamilton and, while it's true that those safety cars had fallen well for Vettel, he'd made brilliant use of that luck. The old-tyred cars took the opportunity to stop. So behind the leading quartet of Raikkonen, Alonso, Button and Vettel it was Maldonado fifth, from Kamui Kobayashi's Sauber, Michael Schumacher's Mercedes, Massa and Senna. Schuey picked up a puncture over the debris, forcing a stop that dropped him out of the points.

"Yes, yes, yes," said Raikkonen dismissively as the team reminded him to keep the tyres and brakes

Joy for Raikkonen and Vettel; Alonso knows work lies ahead


Somewhere down there is a racetrack

DRIVER BY DRIVER by Edd Straw

14 7/10 Event rating

KAMUI KOBAYASHI
Sauber-Ferrari C31-04
Start: 15th. Finish: 6th
Qualifying performance was nothing special, but he can be relied upon to steer a safe course through an action-packed race. Without others hitting trouble, he would have been much further down, but deserves credit for keeping his head while those around him were hitting each other.

15 4/10 Event rating

SERGIO PEREZ
Sauber-Ferrari C31-03
Start: 11th. Finish: 15th
Perhaps it's a coincidence that things haven't been going well for him since he signed for McLaren, but once again a few wild and ill-thought-out moments proved his undoing. Quick enough – certainly faster than has team-mate – but speed is meaningless without self-control.

16 8/10 Event rating

DANIEL RICCIARDO
Toro Rosso-Ferrari STR7-04
Start: 16th. Finish: 10th
The Australian has developed a knack for holding off Schumacher for the final point. Car wasn't competitive, but the cards fell well for him and he deserves credit for turning that opportunity into another points finish. Had the better of Vergne on race pace as well.

17 6/10 Event rating

JEAN-ERIC VERGNE
Toro Rosso-Ferrari STR7-01
Start: 17th. Finish: 12th
Seemed slightly more puzzled at spinning in Q1 than the rest of the world was, accustomed as they are to seeing him make mistakes in qualifying. Things didn't go that well in the race, in large part down to a compromised strategy. That said, race pace wasn't quite as good as Ricciardo's.

18 9/10 Event rating

PASTOR MALDONADO
Williams-Renault FW34-04
Start: 3rd. Finish: 5th
The Williams had a very good turn of pace and he pulled off yet another special qualifying performance. It would have been so much better in the race had he not suffered a KERS failure, but in the circumstances salvaging fifth place was testament to how well he drove all weekend.

19 7/10 Event rating

BRUNO SENNA
Williams-Renault FW34-03
Start: 14th. Finish: 8th
Yes, he sat out FP1. Yes, he did have a few car problems. But his qualifying effort was still poor relative to his team-mate. Despite some misfortune in the race, including getting battered at the first-corner and picking up car damage, he drove very well to bag points.

PICS: THOMPSON/GETTY, HONE, TEE/LAT

Kobayashi was solid in sixth, Perez wild and out

De la Rosa did a full race distance for HRT

warm. "I know what I'm doing." He proved it as the safety car came in and he sprinted clear with the race's fastest lap so far.

Alonso was left gasping, but Button's challenge to the Ferrari had now faded. The worn primes were reluctant to come back up to full temperature, having lost much of their bulk, and Jenson was now fully occupied with trying to keep Vettel behind. He tried around the outside of Turn 8 even before DRS had been re-enabled. Button was being very tactical in his use of KERS, continually thwarting the much faster car behind. Vettel continued to try into Turn 8, sometimes inside, sometimes outside, and still Button would place his car perfectly.

> "'He's got to be the luckiest person in F1,' said Hamilton. But Vettel had made brilliant use of it"

Alonso, meanwhile, began setting fastest laps to cut into what Raikkonen had built into a 3s gap. But Kimi had it under control, never allowing the Ferrari to get within DRS reach. Button's defences were finally breached by an audacious Vettel move — around the outside of Turn 11 with three laps to go. "I thought that was a pretty risky move for someone in his position," said Button in reference to Seb's title quest. But on this day Vettel had thrown caution to the wind and his third place leaves him 10 points clear, down from 13. Not a bad result from a pitlane start... "I'd loved to have got past Jenson sooner and then past Fernando as well," he said. "We got hit hard yesterday and we had to fight. I'm looking forward to the next two races."

Meanwhile, what were Kimi's emotions on winning for the first time since 2009? "Not much really."

20 7/10 Event rating

HEIKKI KOVALAINEN
Caterham-Renault CT01-3
Start: 18th. Finish: 13th
His hopes of continuing his F1 career appear to lie in getting Caterham ahead of Marussia in the constructors' table. Agonisingly, he came within one position of doing that. Drove an excellent, attacking race but powerless to do any better than he did. Outclassed Petrov into the bargain.

21 5/10 Event rating

VITALY PETROV
Caterham-Renault CT01-2
Start: 20th. Finish: 16th
Claimed after qualifying that traffic cost him, which contradicted what he'd said over the radio, so being 0.2s off Kovalainen is probably a fair reflection of his pace. Unremarkable race, complaining of understeer, and continued not to match his team-mate's speed.

22 6/10 Event rating

PEDRO DE LA ROSA
HRT-Cosworth F112-02
Start: 24th. Finish: 17th
Admitted after qualifying that there was maybe a tenth or two left, but it's unlikely that he would have been able to beat Glock. Did his usual capable job in the race despite starting from the pitlane, finishing on the lead lap with a little help from the safety car.

23 6/10 Event rating

NARAIN KARTHIKEYAN
HRT-Cosworth F112-01
Start: 22nd. DNF
Missing FP1 in favour of Ma Qing Hua and a lack of track knowledge made life difficult. Admitted after qualifying that still not totally comfortable with the circuit. Was doing fine in race when hydraulic pressure plummeted, locking his steering and causing Rosberg to torpedo him.

24 7/10 Event rating

TIMO GLOCK
Marussia-Cosworth MR01-01
Start: 21st. Finish: 14th
Outqualified fair and square by Pic, whose advantage was much the same on both of the pair's runs. Kept Kovalainen in sight during the race, but given the lack of KERS he was on a hiding to nothing in terms of challenging him. Overall, a good evening's work in the race.

25 6/10 Event rating

CHARLES PIC
Marussia-Cosworth MR01-03
Start: 19th. DNF
After missing FP1, did an outstanding job to end up just 0.133s off Kovalainen, the sixth time Pic has outqualified Glock. Although he slipped behind his team-mate at the start, his race pace was good and he was still in touch with Petrov when engine troubles set in.

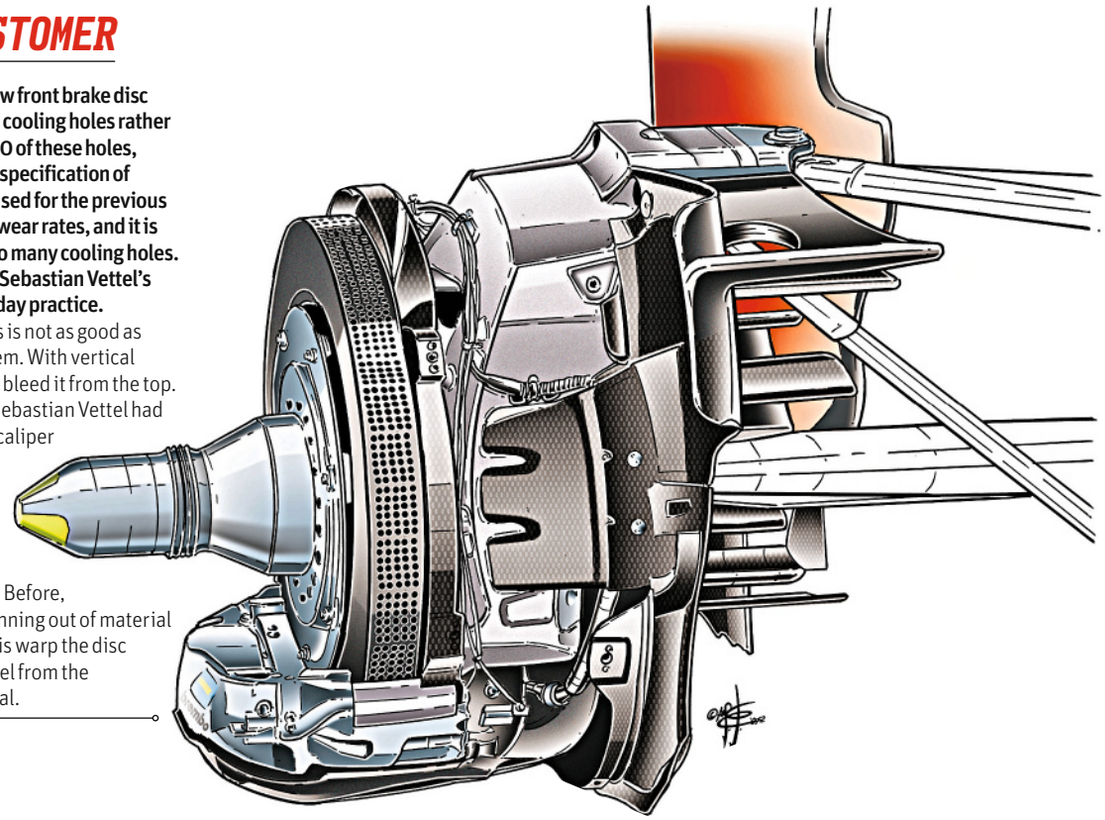
Drawing board

Gary Anderson, Mark Hughes and Giorgio Piola give their thoughts on the technical updates that Red Bull, Williams, McLaren and Ferrari had available to them at the Yas Marina circuit

RED BULL IS COOL CUSTOMER

Since Singapore, Brembo has produced a new front brake disc for Red Bull and Ferrari, with columns of five cooling holes rather than the previous four. Each Red Bull disc has 1200 of these holes, while the Ferrari has 1000 per disc. After Spa the specification of carbon in the discs changed to CER from the CCR used for the previous decade. This has allowed dramatically improved wear rates, and it is this that has made possible the incorporation of so many cooling holes. An air lock within the horizontal brake calipers of Sebastian Vettel's car in Abu Dhabi caused him to lose most of Saturday practice.

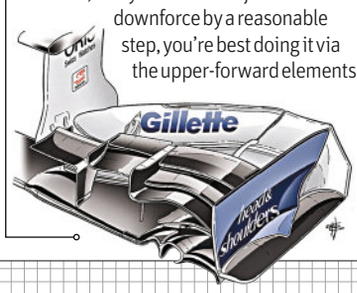
GARY ANDERSON: Having horizontal brake calipers is not as good as having vertical ones in terms of bleeding the system. With vertical calipers, the air gets to the top very easily and you bleed it from the top. You can't do that with horizontal calipers. When Sebastian Vettel had a long pedal, it proved quite tricky to trace which caliper was giving the problem, so all four had to be changed. When the discs had a higher wear rate, you needed to use a harder material that gave you less feel. Now the material has improved, and has a very low wear rate. This also means you can drill more holes in the disc to give greater cooling. Before, the high wear rate meant there was a danger of running out of material if you had too many holes. What the holes also do is warp the disc a little when the driver brakes, giving him some feel from the displacement. It's like an artificially softer material.



WILLIAMS: IT'S ELEMENTARY

Williams had yet another variation of its intricate front wing, with a three-element upper-forward section.

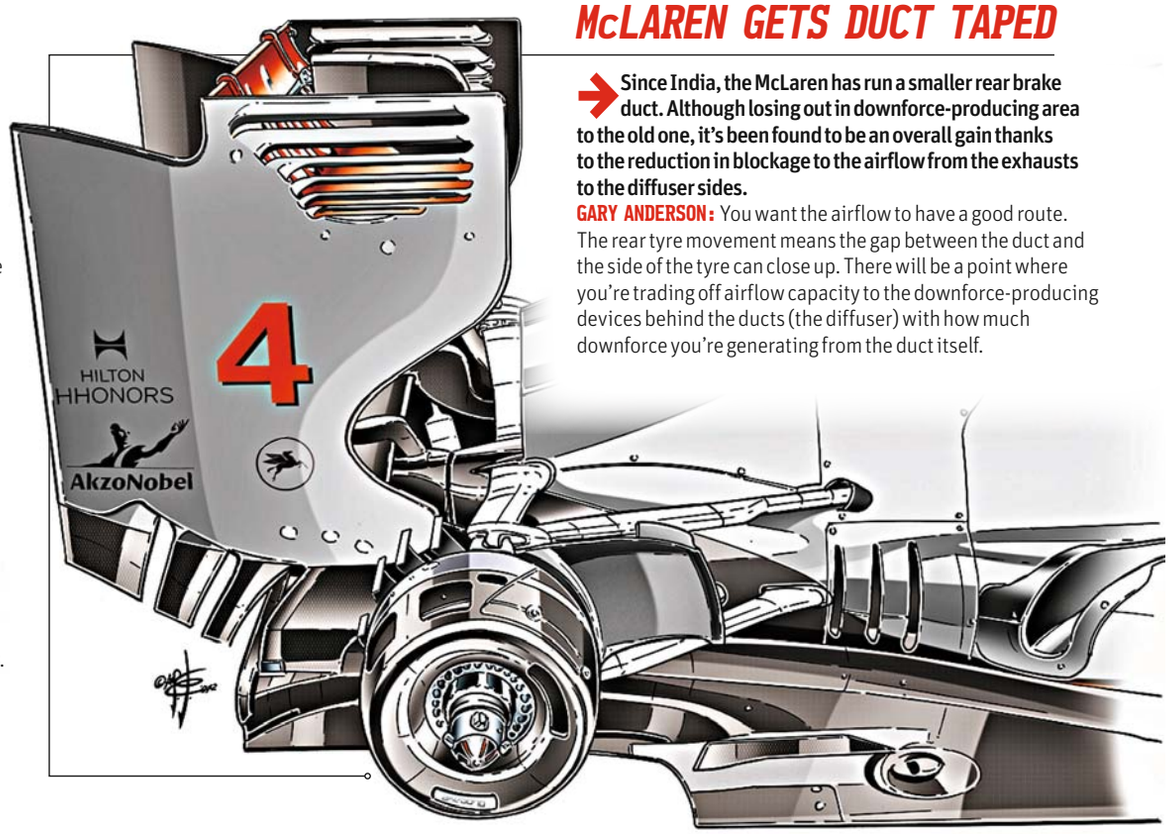
GARY ANDERSON: Williams has a multitude of front wings: this one, with the three-element upper-forward section, a two-element one and one with half two/half three. The different layouts each define different levels of downforce. The rear flap on the main wing section is how the rest of the car is optimised. To alter downforce using that 'Gillette' flap means potentially changing how the whole car works, so you want to stay away from it as much as possible. Plus or minus a couple of degrees would be OK, but much more, and you'd see adverse aero effects further back. By contrast, the wake from the outer-forward section is pretty much invisible to the rest of the car, so if you want to adjust the front downforce by a reasonable step, you're best doing it via the upper-forward elements.



McLAREN GETS DUCT TAPED

Since India, the McLaren has run a smaller rear brake duct. Although losing out in downforce-producing area to the old one, it's been found to be an overall gain thanks to the reduction in blockage to the airflow from the exhausts to the diffuser sides.

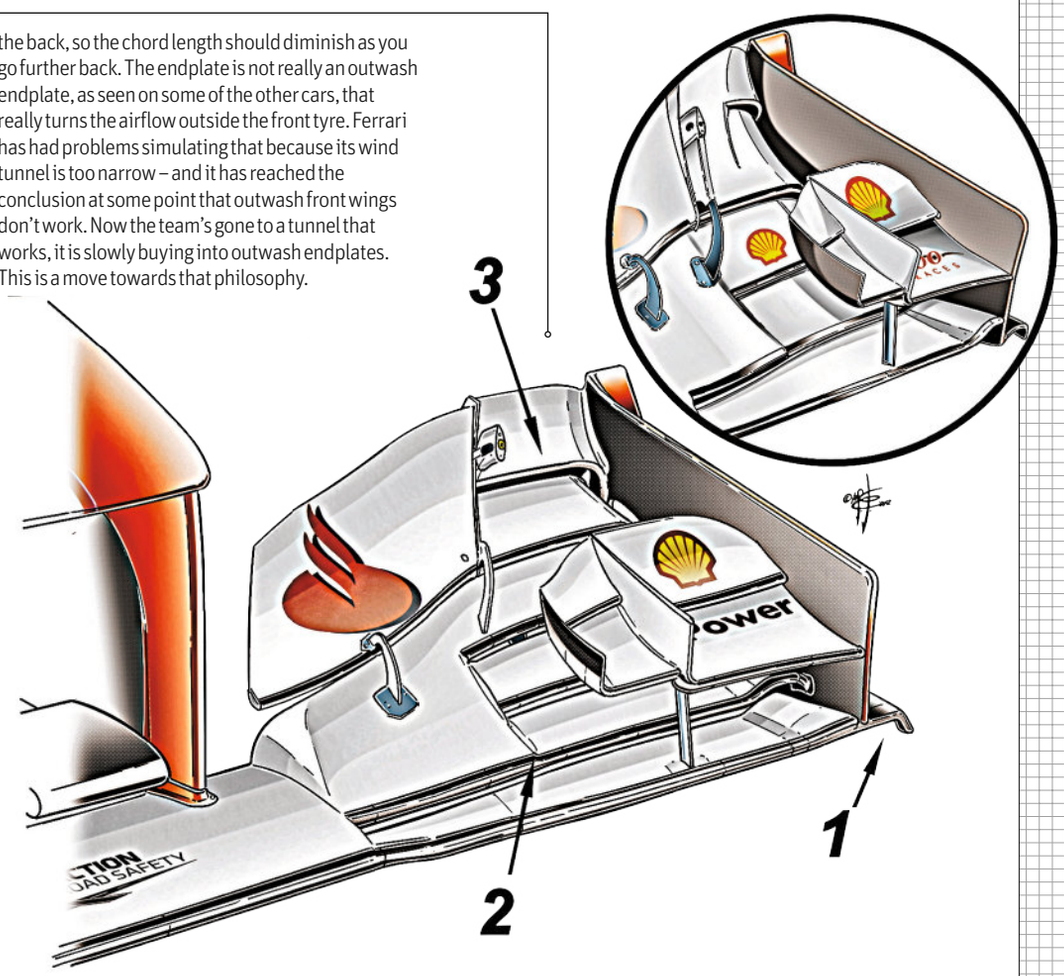
GARY ANDERSON: You want the airflow to have a good route. The rear tyre movement means the gap between the duct and the side of the tyre can close up. There will be a point where you're trading off airflow capacity to the downforce-producing devices behind the ducts (the diffuser) with how much downforce you're generating from the duct itself.



FERRARI STRIKES A UNIFORM CHORD

Ferrari introduced a front wing with a total of six elements on the outer end, an increase from the previous five (inset, right). The vortex generator (1) has been reshaped, the leading edge of the main-plane (2) reprofiled and there is an extra element on the outer upper flap (3). The new endplate (inset, left) features a fifth hole in the side cut-out feeding the outer part of the wing when the wheels are steered. Fernando Alonso used this new wing/endplate in the race. Felipe Massa retained the older one.

GARY ANDERSON: Ferrari has gone to six elements on the outer part of its wing, which looks great. However, they all have very uniform chord lengths, and that's not ideal because of the way you want to control the stall at this part of the wing. The more slots, the more downforce you lose – in a straight line. The slot gaps are there to manage the airflow when steering lock is applied, so the wing doesn't stall as the front tyre stops blocking the air behind the wing. That's when you want to control the stall. Stall starts happening at the back, so the chord length should diminish as you go further back. The endplate is not really an outwash endplate, as seen on some of the other cars, that really turns the airflow outside the front tyre. Ferrari has had problems simulating that because its wind tunnel is too narrow – and it has reached the conclusion at some point that outwash front wings don't work. Now the team's gone to a tunnel that works, it is slowly buying into outwash endplates. This is a move towards that philosophy.



FERRARI IN A FLAP...

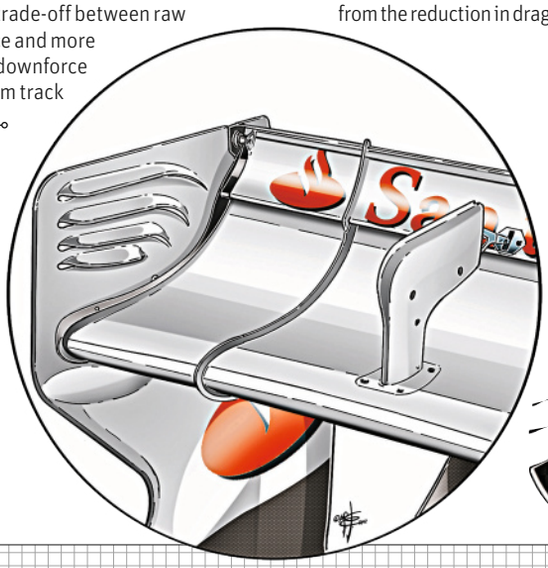
Ferrari's new rear wing featured a smaller flap in search of better DRS performance.

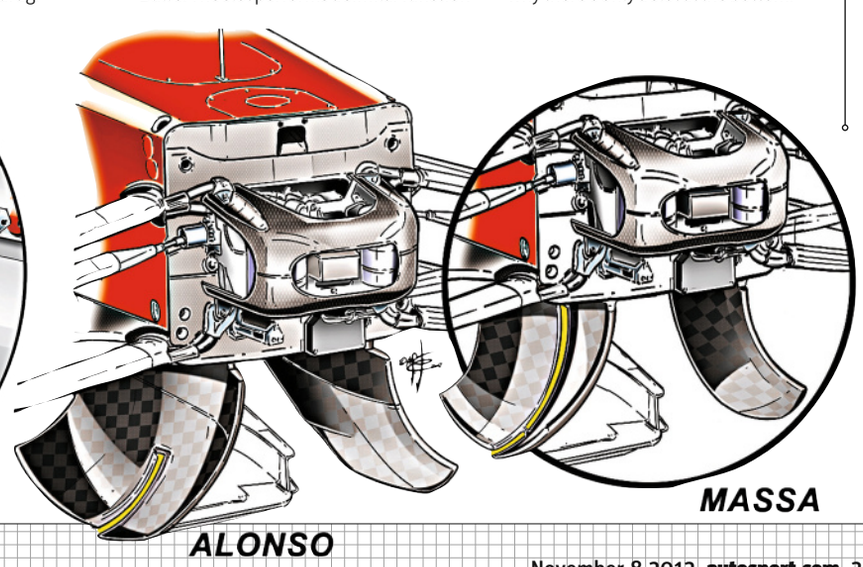
GARY ANDERSON: You need maximum-efficiency downforce around this track. The best trade-off between raw downforce and more efficient downforce varies from track to track. The detail of the louvres at the endplate is about increasing efficiency. It also entails losing some of the downforce, but you'd lose less from that around Yas Marina than you'd gain from the reduction in drag.

...BUT FINS ONLY GET BETTER

Matching the new Ferrari front wing was a revised and reprofiled pair of fins beneath the nose. Fernando Alonso raced with the car in this form.

GARY ANDERSON: The new fin looks like Red Bull's. The slot performs a similar function to a slot gap in a wing. It keeps the airflow attached there. At the bottom of the chassis, where you're trying to turn the airflow, it doesn't have an attachment problem, but lower down it does. That's why there's only a slot at the bottom.





ABU DHABI GP *RESULTS*

PRACTICE 1: Friday

POS	DRIVER	TIME
1	HAMILTON	1m43.285s
2	BUTTON	1m43.618s
3	VETTEL	1m44.050s
4	ALONSO	1m44.366s
5	WEBBER	1m44.542s
6	SCHUMACHER	1m44.694s
7	MALDONADO	1m45.115s
8	ROSBERG	1m45.194s
9	BOTTAS	1m45.347s
10	RAIKKONEN	1m45.422s
11	MASSA	1m45.567s
12	HULKENBERG	1m45.587s
13	KOBAYASHI	1m45.722s
14	GROSJEAN	1m45.743s
15	BIANCHI	1m45.769s
16	PEREZ	1m45.811s
17	RICCIARDO	1m46.649s
18	VERGNE	1m46.708s
19	KOVALAINEN	1m47.418s
20	GLOCK	1m47.891s
21	DE LA ROSA	1m48.354s
22	CHILTON	1m48.887s
23	MA	1m50.487s
24	VAN DER GARDE	no time

Weather: dry

PRACTICE 2: Friday

POS	DRIVER	TIME
1	VETTEL	1m41.751s
2	HAMILTON	1m41.919s
3	BUTTON	1m42.412s
4	WEBBER	1m42.466s
5	GROSJEAN	1m42.500s
6	RAIKKONEN	1m42.532s
7	ALONSO	1m42.587s
8	MASSA	1m42.823s
9	MALDONADO	1m42.998s
10	PEREZ	1m43.106s
11	SENNA	1m43.191s
12	ROSBERG	1m43.200s
13	HULKENBERG	1m43.255s
14	SCHUMACHER	1m43.267s
15	DI RESTA	1m43.578s
16	KOBAYASHI	1m43.689s
17	RICCIARDO	1m44.260s
18	VERGNE	1m45.005s
19	PETROV	1m45.245s
20	KOVALAINEN	1m45.782s
21	GLOCK	1m46.589s
22	PIC	1m46.671s
23	DE LA ROSA	1m46.707s
24	KARTHIKEYAN	1m47.406s

Weather: dry

PRACTICE 3: Saturday

POS	DRIVER	TIME
1	HAMILTON	1m42.130s
2	BUTTON	1m42.420s
3	VETTEL	1m42.614s
4	WEBBER	1m42.743s
5	HULKENBERG	1m42.750s
6	GROSJEAN	1m43.015s
7	MALDONADO	1m43.064s
8	ALONSO	1m43.133s
9	RAIKKONEN	1m43.184s
10	DI RESTA	1m43.338s
11	MASSA	1m43.480s
12	PEREZ	1m43.571s
13	ROSBERG	1m43.593s
14	SCHUMACHER	1m43.635s
15	KOBAYASHI	1m44.010s
16	VERGNE	1m44.025s
17	SENNA	1m44.071s
18	RICCIARDO	1m44.149s
19	KOVALAINEN	1m45.301s
20	GLOCK	1m45.879s
21	PIC	1m46.036s
22	PETROV	1m46.261s
23	DE LA ROSA	1m46.554s
24	KARTHIKEYAN	1m47.032s

Weather: dry

FRIDAY TESTERS

1 VALTTERI BOTTAS
WILLIAMS 1m45.347s

2 JULES BIANCHI
FORCE INDIA 1m45.769s

3 MAX CHILTON
MARUSSIA 1m48.887s

4 MA QING HUA
HRT 1m50.487s

5 GIEDO VAN DER GARDE
CATERHAM no time

QUALIFYING TIMES

POS	DRIVER	QUALIFYING 1	QUALIFYING 2	QUALIFYING 3
1	HAMILTON	1m41.497s (1)	1m40.901s (1)	**1m40.630s**
2	WEBBER	1m41.933s (3)	1m41.277s (2)	**1m40.978s**
3	VETTEL	1m42.160s (8)	1m41.511s (3)	**1m41.073s**
4	MALDONADO	1m41.981s (6)	1m41.907s (10)	**1m41.226s**
5	RAIKKONEN	1m42.222s (9)	1m41.532s (5)	**1m41.260s**
6	BUTTON	1m42.342s (10)	1m41.873s (9)	**1m41.290s**
7	ALONSO	1m41.939s (4)	1m41.514s (4)	**1m41.582s**
8	ROSBERG	1m41.926s (2)	1m41.698s (7)	**1m41.603s**
9	MASSA	1m41.974s (5)	1m41.846s (8)	**1m41.723s**
10	GROSJEAN	1m42.046s (7)	1m41.620s (6)	**1m41.778s**
11	HULKENBERG	1m42.579s (12)	**1m42.019s**	-
12	PEREZ	1m42.624s (13)	**1m42.084s**	-
13	DI RESTA	1m42.572s (11)	**1m42.218s**	-
14	SCHUMACHER	1m42.735s (14)	**1m42.289s**	-
15	SENNA	1m43.298s (16)	**1m42.330s**	-
16	KOBAYASHI	1m43.582s (17)	**1m42.606s**	-
17	RICCIARDO	1m43.280s (15)	**1m42.765s**	-
18	VERGNE	**1m44.058s**	-	-
19	KOVALAINEN	**1m44.956s**	-	-
20	PIC	**1m45.089s**	-	-
21	PETROV	**1m45.151s**	-	-
22	GLOCK	**1m45.426s**	-	-
23	DE LA ROSA	**1m45.766s**	-	-
24	KARTHIKEYAN	**1m46.382s**	-	-

Weather: dry

QUALIFYING STATISTICS

	HEAD TO HEAD		
VETTEL	10	8	WEBBER
BUTTON	4	14	HAMILTON
ALONSO	17	1	MASSA
SCHUMACHER	9	9	ROSBERG
RAIKKONEN	9	9	GROSJEAN/D'AMB
DI RESTA	8	10	HULKENBERG
KOBAYASHI	10	8	PEREZ
RICCIARDO	15	3	VERGNE
MALDONADO	16	2	SENNA
KOVALAINEN	14	4	PETROV
DE LA ROSA	17	1	KARTHIKEYAN
GLOCK	11	6	PIC

THE GRID

1 HAMILTON McLAREN 1m40.630s Soft
2 WEBBER RED BULL 1m40.978s Soft
3 MALDONADO WILLIAMS 1m41.226s Soft
4 RAIKKONEN LOTUS 1m41.260s Soft
5 BUTTON McLAREN 1m41.290s Soft
6 ALONSO FERRARI 1m41.582s Soft
7 ROSBERG MERCEDES 1m41.603s Soft
8 MASSA FERRARI 1m41.723s Soft
9 GROSJEAN LOTUS 1m41.778s Soft
10 HULKENBERG FORCE INDIA 1m42.019s Soft
11 PEREZ SAUBER 1m42.084s Soft
12 DI RESTA FORCE INDIA 1m42.218s Soft
13 SCHUMACHER MERCEDES 1m42.289s Medium
14 SENNA WILLIAMS 1m42.330s Medium
15 KOBAYASHI SAUBER 1m42.606s Soft
16 RICCIARDO TORO ROSSO 1m42.765s Soft
17 VERGNE TORO ROSSO 1m44.058s Soft
18 KOVALAINEN CATERHAM 1m44.956s Soft
19 PIC MARUSSIA 1m45.089s Soft
20 PETROV CATERHAM 1m45.151s Soft
21 GLOCK MARUSSIA 1m45.426s Soft
22 DE LA ROSA HRT 1m45.766s** Soft
23 KARTHIKEYAN HRT 1m46.382s Soft
24 VETTEL RED BULL 1m41.073s* Medium

*STARTED FROM PITLANE, TIMES EXCLUDED. **STARTED FROM PITLANE AFTER PROBLEM ON GRID

PICS: THOMPSON/GETTY, DUNBAR, ETHERINGTON, FERRARO, HONE, TEE/LAT

THE RACE: 55 laps, 189.748 miles

POS	DRIVER	TEAM	LAPS	TOTAL TIME	FASTEST LAP	PIT STOP	TIME IN PITS	GRID
1	KIMI RAIKKONEN	LOTUS-RENAULT	55	1h45m58.667s	1m44.458s	1	20.278s	4
2	FERNANDO ALONSO	FERRARI	55	+0.852s	1m44.090s	1	19.368s	6
3	SEBASTIAN VETTEL	RED BULL-RENAULT	55	+4.163s	1m43.964s	2	44.880s	24
4	JENSON BUTTON	McLAREN-MERCEDES	55	+7.787s	1m44.533s	1	19.455s	5
5	PASTOR MALDONADO	WILLIAMS-RENAULT	55	+13.007s	1m44.833s	1	20.723s	3
6	KAMUI KOBAYASHI	SAUBER-FERRARI	55	+20.076s	1m45.423s	1	19.529s	15
7	FELIPE MASSA	FERRARI	55	+22.896s	1m45.700s	1	19.585s	8
8	BRUNO SENNA	WILLIAMS-RENAULT	55	+23.542s	1m45.693s	1	22.587s	14
9	PAUL DI RESTA	FORCE INDIA-MERCEDES	55	+24.160s	1m45.617s	3	66.764s	12
10	DANIEL RICCIARDO	TORO ROSSO-FERRARI	55	+27.463s	1m45.903s	2	41.353s	16
11	MICHAEL SCHUMACHER	MERCEDES	55	+28.075s	1m45.225s	2	40.971s	13
12	JEAN-ERIC VERGNE	TORO ROSSO-FERRARI	55	+34.906s	1m46.113s	2	40.204s	17
13	HEIKKI KOVALAINEN	CATERHAM-RENAULT	55	+47.764s	1m47.115s	1	23.032s	18
14	TIMO GLOCK	MARUSSIA-COSWORTH	55	+56.473s	1m47.661s	1	19.884s	21
15	SERGIO PEREZ	SAUBER-FERRARI	55	+56.768s	1m45.410s	2	79.775s	11
16	VITALY PETROV	CATERHAM-RENAULT	55	+1m04.595s	1m48.308s	1	20.769s	20
17	PEDRO DE LA ROSA	HRT-COSWORTH	55	+1m11.778s	1m48.619s	1	22.272s	22
R	CHARLES PIC	MARUSSIA-COSWORTH	41	engine	1m49.079s	1	21.941s	19
R	ROMAIN GROSJEAN	LOTUS-RENAULT	37	accident	1m47.521s	2	47.074s	9
R	MARK WEBBER	RED BULL-RENAULT	37	accident	1m46.959s	1	19.066s	2
R	LEWIS HAMILTON	McLAREN-MERCEDES	19	fuel pressure	1m47.266s	0	-	1
R	NARAIN KARTHIKEYAN	HRT-COSWORTH	7	accident	1m52.238s	0	-	23
R	NICO ROSBERG	MERCEDES	7	accident	1m49.340s	1	29.277s	7
R	NICO HULKENBERG	FORCE INDIA-MERCEDES	0	accident	-	0	-	10

Weather: dry. Winner's average speed: 107.426mph. Fastest lap: Sebastian VETTEL 1m43.964s (119.508mph) on lap 54.
Lap leaders: 1-19 Hamilton; 20-55 Raikkonen

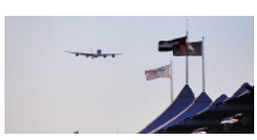
TYRE CHOICE

STINT 1	STINT 2	STINT 3	STINT 4
Soft	Medium		
Soft	Medium		
Medium	**Soft**	**Soft**	
Soft	Medium		
Soft	Medium		
Soft	Medium		
Soft	Medium		
Medium	**Soft**		
Soft	Medium	Medium	**Soft**
Soft	Medium	**Soft**	
Medium	**Soft**	**Soft**	
Soft	Medium	Soft	
Soft	Medium		
Soft	Medium		
Soft	Medium	Medium	
Soft	Medium		
Soft	Medium		
Soft	Medium		
Soft	Medium	**Soft**	
Soft	Medium		
Soft	dnf		
Soft	dnf		
Soft	Medium		
Soft	dnf		

Option tyre in bold; new set in red; used set in black

DRIVERS' STANDINGS

POS	DRIVER	PTS	AUS	MAL	PRC	BRN	E	MC	CDN	EU	GB	D	H	B	I	SGP	J	ROK	IND	UAE	USA	BR
1	VETTEL	255	2nd	11th	5th	1st	6th	4th	4th	ret	3rd	5th	4th	2nd	ret	1st	1st	1st	1st	3rd		
2	ALONSO	245	5th	1st	9th	7th	2nd	3rd	5th	1st	2nd	1st	5th	ret	3rd	3rd	ret	3rd	2nd	2nd		
3	RAIKKONEN	198	7th	5th	14th	2nd	3rd	9th	8th	2nd	5th	3rd	2nd	3rd	5th	6th	6th	5th	7th	1st		
4	WEBBER	167	4th	4th	4th	4th	11th	1st	7th	4th	1st	8th	8th	6th	ret	11th	9th	2nd	3rd	ret		
5	HAMILTON	165	3rd	3rd	3rd	8th	8th	5th	1st	19th	8th	ret	1st	ret	1st	ret	5th	10th	4th	ret		
6	BUTTON	153	1st	14th	2nd	18th	9th	16th	16th	8th	10th	2nd	6th	1st	ret	2nd	4th	ret	5th	4th		
7	MASSA	95	ret	15th	13th	9th	15th	6th	10th	16th	4th	12th	9th	5th	4th	8th	2nd	4th	6th	7th		
8	ROSBERG	93	12th	13th	1st	5th	7th	2nd	6th	6th	15th	10th	10th	11th	7th	5th	ret	ret	11th	ret		
9	GROSJEAN	90	ret	ret	6th	3rd	4th	ret	2nd	ret	6th	18th	3rd	ret	-	7th	19th	7th	9th	ret		
10	PEREZ	66	8th	2nd	11th	11th	ret	11th	3rd	9th	ret	6th	14th	ret	2nd	10th	ret	11th	ret	15th		
11	KOBAYASHI	58	6th	ret	10th	13th	5th	ret	9th	ret	11th	4th	18th	13th	9th	13th	3rd	ret	14th	6th		
12	HULKENBERG	49	ret	9th	15th	12th	10th	8th	12th	5th	12th	9th	11th	4th	ret	14th	7th	6th	8th	ret		
13	DI RESTA	46	10th	7th	12th	6th	14th	7th	11th	7th	ret	11th	12th	10th	8th	4th	12th	12th	12th	9th		
15	SCHUMACHER	43	ret	10th	ret	10th	ret	ret	ret	3rd	7th	7th	ret	7th	6th	ret	11th	13th	22nd	11th		
14	MALDONADO	43	13th	19th	8th	ret	1st	ret	13th	12th	16th	15th	13th	ret	11th	ret	8th	14th	16th	5th		
16	SENNA	30	16th	6th	7th	22nd	ret	10th	17th	10th	9th	17th	7th	12th	10th	ret	14th	15th	10th	8th		
17	VERGNE	12	11th	8th	16th	14th	12th	12th	15th	ret	14th	14th	16th	8th	ret	ret	13th	8th	15th	12th		
18	RICCIARDO	10	9th	12th	17th	15th	13th	ret	14th	11th	13th	13th	15th	9th	12th	9th	10th	9th	13th	10th		
19	GLOCK	0	14th	17th	19th	19th	18th	14th	ret	dns	18th	22nd	21st	15th	17th	12th	16th	18th	20th	14th		
20	KOVALAINEN	0	ret	18th	23rd	17th	16th	13th	18th	14th	17th	19th	17th	17th	14th	15th	15th	17th	18th	13th		
21	PETROV	0	ret	16th	18th	16th	17th	ret	19th	13th	dns	16th	19th	14th	15th	19th	17th	16th	17th	16th		
22	D'AMBROSIO	0	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	13th	-	-	-	-	-		
23	PIC	0	15th	20th	20th	ret	ret	ret	20th	15th	19th	20th	20th	16th	16th	16th	ret	19th	19th	ret		
24	KARTHIKEYAN	0	dnq	22nd	22nd	21st	ret	15th	20th	18th	21st	23rd	ret	ret	19th	ret	ret	20th	21st	ret		
25	DE LA ROSA	0	dnq	21st	21st	20th	19th	ret	ret	17th	20th	21st	22nd	18th	18th	17th	ret	ret	ret	17th		



CONSTRUCTORS' STANDINGS

POS	TEAM	PTS	AUS	MAL	PRC	BRN	E	MC	CDN	EU	GB	D	H	B	I	SGP	J	ROK	IND	UAE	US	BR
1	RED BULL	422	30	12	22	37	8	37	18	12	40	14	16	26	0	25	27	43	40	15		
2	FERRARI	340	10	25	2	8	18	23	11	25	30	25	12	10	27	19	18	27	26	24		
3	McLAREN	318	40	15	33	4	6	10	25	4	5	18	33	25	25	18	22	1	22	12		
4	LOTUS	288	6	10	8	33	27	2	22	18	18	15	33	15	10	14	8	16	8	25		
5	MERCEDES	136	0	1	25	11	6	18	8	23	6	7	1	6	14	10	0	0	0	0		
6	SAUBER	124	12	18	1	0	10	0	17	2	0	20	0	0	20	1	15	0	0	8		
7	FORCE INDIA	95	1	8	0	8	1	10	0	16	0	2	0	13	4	12	6	8	4	2		
8	WILLIAMS	73	0	8	10	0	25	1	0	1	2	0	6	0	1	0	4	0	1	14		
9	TORO ROSSO	22	2	4	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	6	0	2	1	6	0	1		
10	MARUSSIA	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0		
11	CATERHAM	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0		
12	HRT	0	-	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0		

SECTOR 1 TIMES

POS	DRIVER	TIME
1	VETTEL	18.264s
2	RAIKKONEN	18.270s
3	ALONSO	18.299s
4	MALDONADO	18.333s
5	BUTTON	18.338s
6	KOBAYASHI	18.439s
7	MASSA	18.441s
8	DI RESTA	18.442s
9	RICCIARDO	18.482s
10	PEREZ	18.485s

SECTOR 2 TIMES

POS	DRIVER	TIME
1	VETTEL	43.664s
2	DI RESTA	43.828s
3	SENNA	43.902s
4	ALONSO	44.094s
5	RAIKKONEN	44.213s
6	SCHUMACHER	44.235s
7	BUTTON	44.290s
8	MASSA	44.378s
9	VERGNE	44.387s
10	RICCIARDO	44.392s

SECTOR 3 TIMES

POS	DRIVER	TIME
1	VETTEL	41.614s
2	ALONSO	41.655s
3	BUTTON	41.727s
4	RAIKKONEN	41.875s
5	MALDONADO	41.915s
6	SCHUMACHER	42.041s
7	PEREZ	42.142s
8	KOBAYASHI	42.378s
9	DI RESTA	42.491s
10	SENNA	42.570s

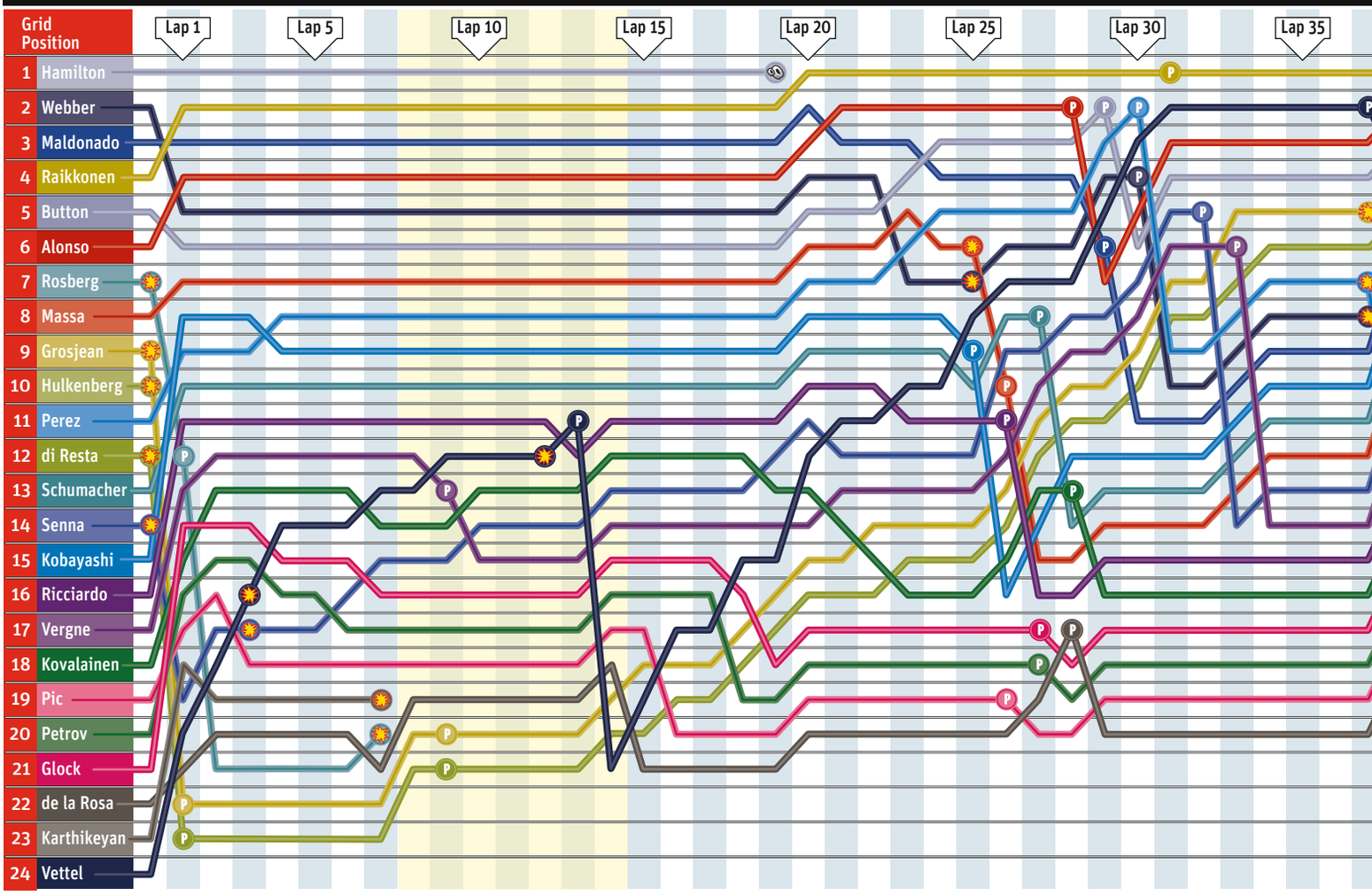
MAX SPEEDS (MPH)

POS	DRIVER	SPEED
1	MALDONADO	201.8
2	SENNA	201.5
3	PEREZ	200.4
4	VETTEL	199.5
5	MASSA	198.8
6	ALONSO	198.6
7	RICCIARDO	198.4
8	VERGNE	197.4
9	SCHUMACHER	197.0
10	KOBAYASHI	197.0

FOR IN-DEPTH F1 RESULTS FORIX

ABU DHABI GP THE FINAL WORDS

THE RACE: LAP BY LAP



GRAND PRIX DIGEST

The weekend in a nutshell - on-track incidents, team radio and tweets that you might have missed…

THURSDAY

1348 Sauber's Sergio Perez insists that his recent pointless run has not been caused by the distraction of signing for McLaren for 2013.

1403 Paul di Resta suggests team-mate Nico Hulkenberg is wrong to move to Sauber. "I don't see it as a step up," he says.

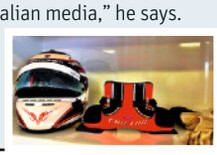
1440 Kimi Raikkonen admits that he extended his Lotus contract by one year because "if you want to go and do something else, then it's less hassle".

1552 Sebastian Vettel talks down his title chances, insisting that he is still "vulnerable", despite his 13-point championship lead and recent winning streak.

1617 **@SChecoPerez: "50 years ago today one of the best drivers in our history left us! Ricardo Rodriguez! He will be remembered always"**

1624 Fernando Alonso torpedoes suggestions that he had a falling out with Pat Fry in India. "That was a very nice invention from the Italian media," he says.

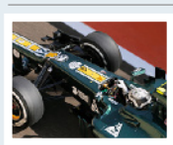
1647 **@MaxChilton_: "Just passed the jump out test & have all my kit ready for tomorrow's afternoon FP1 #SuperExcited #F1"**



FRIDAY

1300 Marussia reserve Max Chilton (right) heads out of the garage in FP1 for his first run in an F1 practice session.

1334 **Nico Hulkenberg: "My seat is getting very hot, just down here where the legs are."**



1430 An electrical problem restricts Caterham Friday driver Giedo van der Garde (left) to just three laps in FP1.

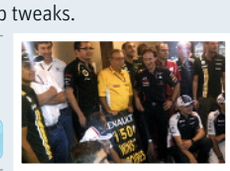
1809 HRT's Narain Karthikeyan spins at Turn 17 in FP2.

1812 Fernando Alonso suffers a big lock-up under braking for Turn 8 and runs off the track, before recovering. He ends the session down in seventh.

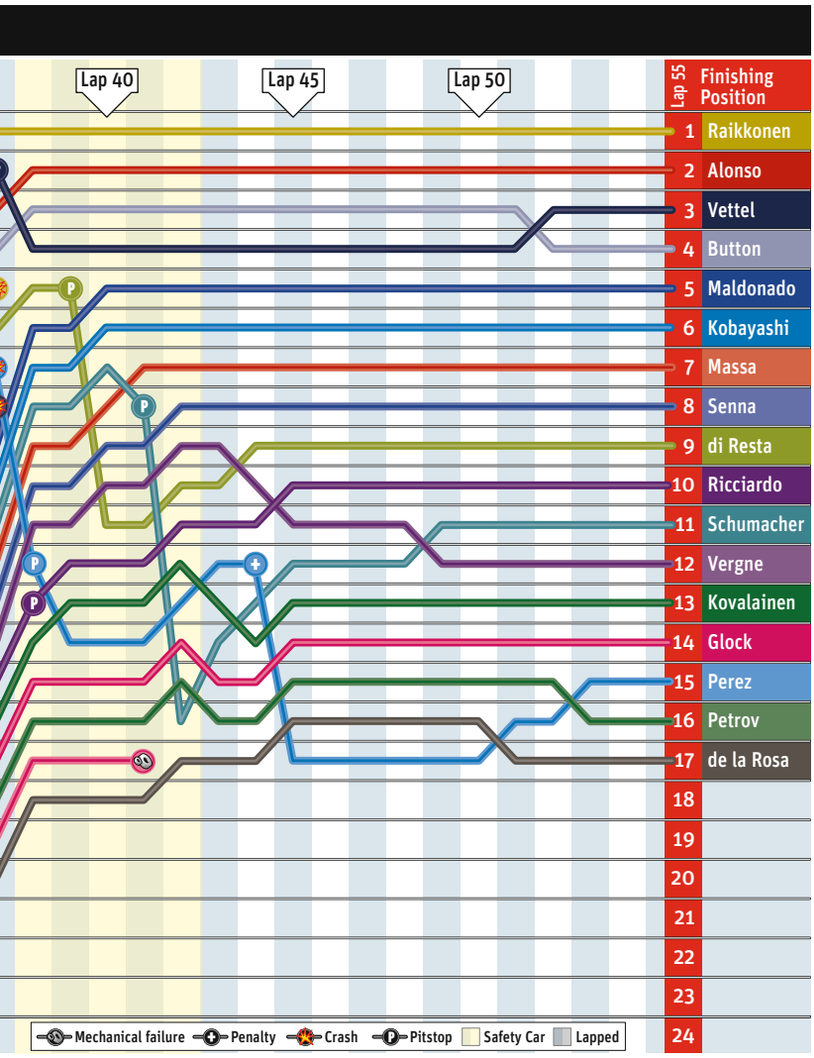
1941 Paul di Resta declares himself satisfied with his car after a chassis change designed to solve a fundamental problem.

1947 Kimi Raikkonen is upbeat about Lotus's chances, reckoning that there is another four-tenths of a second to be found with set-up tweaks.

2032 **@MyCaterhamF1 (photo right): "Celebrating @RenaultSportF1's MD Jean-Francois Caubet's F1 career at a gathering on track tonight in Abu Dhabi"**

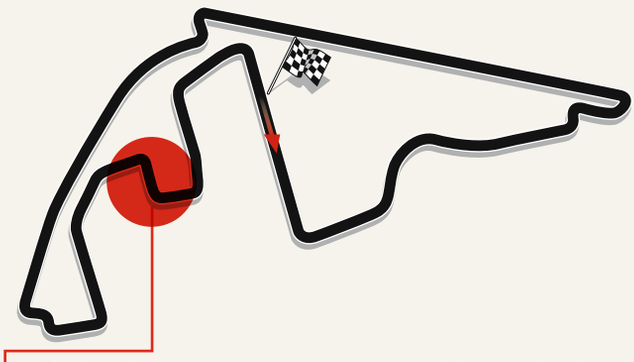


2128 AUTOSPORT reveals that, following complaints from Red Bull, the FIA has clarified rules preventing the use of bimetallic strip to alter brake cooling characteristics according to temperature.



TRACKSIDE VIEW

MARK HUGHES
GRAND PRIX EDITOR



The desert heat is extreme at two in the afternoon, with the cars in their last half hour of first practice. Standing beneath that pitiless sun at this latitude makes the shaded decks aboard the neighbouring yachts in the man-made marina look especially inviting. Never have the drivers needed their fluid intakes more as they perform their acrobatics through the tight interlinked right/left of turns 17-18. The Williams of Valtteri Bottas looks nicely sharp through this section, with plenty of direction change early in the corner for not much steering lock, then hard and early on the gas. Sergio Perez's Sauber seems understeery and lazy by comparison, although its balance improves as he stays out and the fuel load falls – as long as the tyres hold up. The comparison between the Ferraris as they turn into 18 is interesting. Felipe Massa is much busier on throttle and steering than Fernando Alonso in that no-man's-land between turn-in and apex, where the car's not quite decided exactly what it's about to do, and all is loose and anomalous. Massa has the rear end unbalanced through weight transfer as he lifts off, and then uses big throttle application to glue it back down again. Alonso appears to be working within finer margins. As they disappear under the hotel, then brake for 19 their backfires are amplified spectacularly by the enclosed surroundings. Lewis Hamilton is his usual breathtaking self around this final sector. The car isn't glued – it has some entry understeer in fact – but he simply points it well inside of the apex, which results in him hitting it perfectly at just the moment he's picking up the gas hard. It's a dazzling display of judgement and co-ordination.

SATURDAY

1301 @LewisHamilton (right): "This week I spent time with @UNICEF_uk in rural India to see their work on child hunger and malnutrition"

1709 Hamilton locks up and runs off at Turn 12 on first Q1 lap, and asks: "How are my brakes looking?" He is reassured: "Brakes are good."

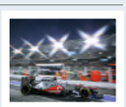
1719 Jean-Eric Vergne spins at Turn 20 while trying to set a time good enough for Q2: "I came in no quicker than usual and the car just spun."

1743 Michael Schumacher goes out in Q2, but admits blame: "Ah, it was my mistake, I got a little confused about changing harvest [mode]."

1804 Sebastian Vettel is told: "Stop the car, stop the car!" by race engineer Guillaume Rocquelin on his slowing down lap after Q3. Vettel confirms: "I've stopped between 18 and 19."

1933 @H_Kovalainen: "Got out of the doping control, not too bad compared to few other guys who still there!"

1949 Jenson Button is baffled to only qualify sixth. "[The pace] wasn't there," he says. "I don't know why – understeer on turn-in, traction very poor. Locking up fronts and rears."



2023 Sergio Perez is reprimanded for impeding Bruno Senna in Q1.

2230 FIA confirms that Vettel is excluded from qualifying for having "an insufficient quantity of fuel for sampling purposes".

SUNDAY

1323 FIA confirms that Sebastian Vettel must start from the pitlane (left) after gear ratio, gearbox and suspension changes.

1706 Vettel hits Senna, says: "Damaged front wing."

1718 Lewis Hamilton rues his luck under the safety car for Rosberg/Karthikeyan clash: "That was a shame, I'd built a nice gap."

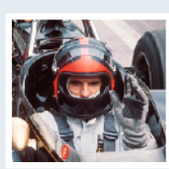
1732 Kimi's engineer: "I'll keep you updated on the gap to Alonso and the pace." Kimi responds: "Just leave me alone, I know what to do."

1735 Vettel ordered to give a position back to Grosjean after passing off the track.

1823 Kimi told to keep heat in tyres during safety car: "Yes, yes, yes, yes, I'm doing that all the time, you don't have to keep reminding me."

1832 Sergio Perez given a 10-second stop/go penalty for forcing Paul di Resta off the track and hitting Romain Grosjean's Lotus.

1850 @MarioAndretti: "Well done Kimi #iceman & @Lotus_F1Team great to see "black&gold" in winner circle again#AbuDhabi"



1902 @ValeYellow46 (Valentino Rossi) "I'd love to go out with Kimi. Good to see him win tonight."

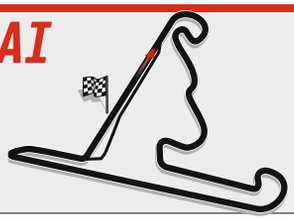
2227 @emmofittipaldi: "Historic Lotus win, 60 years since Colin Chapman created it in 1952, and 40 years of my 1st #F1 title with them in 1972!" (left)

PICS: COATES/ TEE /LAT, RYS/GETTY

SHANGHAI

CHINA

November 3-4
WTCC
Round 11/12



AT A GLANCE

- Race 1 **Alain Menu**
- Race 2 **Rob Huff**
- Pole **Menu**
- Fastest laps **Menu/Huff**

Winner Menu and Muller: terse even before their second-race clash

Huff the magic China dragon

A win and a second at Shanghai have set the Briton up perfectly for the Macau finale

Huff celebrates taking points lead with victory

THE CONTRAST TO THE procession of the preceding round at Suzuka was jolting. The World Touring Car Championship received a thrilling and controversial shake-up, which provided Rob Huff with a huge stride towards the title, during its maiden visit to Shanghai's International Circuit.

The long-standing conservative approach adopted by the Chevrolet men when racing each other was largely discarded in China. The responsibility of scoring points in the manufacturers' title race had been removed after wrapping that up in Japan. Entering the penultimate round of 2012 it was every man for himself — and the result was a storm of high emotions in the pit of the RML-run works team.

Of the three Chevy drivers, only Huff continued to adopt a relatively restrained gameplan. The Briton's softly, softly technique was rewarded, but to explain Huff's climb into the lead of the points table purely as a result of his ability to score through circumspection would be a gross disservice. A better interpretation would be to recognise the consistency of his drives as he extended a remarkable error-free run into Shanghai.

Huff would admit any ascent in the championship was unlikely after qualifying. The #2 Cruze was unable to make the most of its fresh rubber, and Huff was left to contemplate fourth on the grid, behind Norbert Michelisz's Zengo BMW.

The advantage in the finely-poised title race shifted to reigning champion Yvan Muller. The Frenchman moved from level-pegging with Huff to two points clear at the top of standings courtesy of qualifying on the outside of the front row, beside polewinning title outsider Alain Menu. It would be the high point of a torrid weekend for this year's eight-time race winner.

Entering Turn 1, Muller attempted to take the lead around the outside of the recently-inspired Swiss veteran. The pair indulged in light panel bashing, sufficient to jilt Muller off-line and allow Huff into second place.

"I was not really sure what happened at Turn 1," said Huff. "From what I gathered, Yvan just turned into Alain's side door and bounced out wide."

If Huff was unsure of events into the quick right-hander, Muller equally had little idea why he was suddenly pointing sideways at Turn 3. The opening corner at Shanghai tightens clockwise through 180 degrees, before turning into a sharp left. Here, Muller arrived on an outside line, tried to turn across Michelisz and made contact with the orange BMW.

"I was hit from the back, and this time I didn't have time to look behind as I was just concentrating forwards," said a frustrated Muller.

Intuitively, the front-wheel-drive technique of saving a sliding car by booting the throttle was applied, but Muller received terminal right-rear suspension damage through further swipes from a Bamboo-Engineering Cruze, and 2012 WTCC debutant Colin Turkington in WSR's sister example.

The two surviving works Chevrolets would lap Muller on the Frenchman's slow journey back to the pits. Neither Menu nor Huff needed reminding of what good fortune Muller's exit would mean for their own championship ambitions, and thereafter both men played it safe to the flag.

"Once I saw Yvan was out, it was obviously just a case of staying off the kerbs, looking after the tyres and making sure I secured second," said a content Huff, who finished with a 10s margin over third-placed Stefano D'Aste.

Muller may have felt justly aggrieved over events in race one, but impending troubles

Muller biffs Menu in race two

RACE RATING
★★★★☆
Thrills return to series as championship receives a major shake-up

MILESTONE
First WTCC start for Colin Turkington since Shanghai Tianma appearance last November

PETER MILLS reports

would be self-inflicted.

The ROAL BMW of Tom Coronel lined up on the reversed-grid pole, but Hermann Tilke's ultra-wide track and generous straights provided little cover for the Dutchman to defend the oncoming Chevrolet attack. On lap four, the man with 'EAT MY DUST' emblazoned on his helmet was swamped by two Cruzes, Menu choosing the outside line at the hairpin and taking the lead from Muller.

Recovering from excessive wheelspin off the line, Huff joined the blue Cruze formation at the head of the pack by passing Coronel around the outside of Turn 1 on the following lap.

But for the second time in three meetings, Muller bizarrely punted out the race leader. Approaching the first turn on lap eight, he aborted a half-hearted overtaking attempt on Menu, missed his braking point and clattered into the back of the #8 Cruze. The accident had echoes of his similar misjudgement in knocking Franz Engstler out of the lead at Sonoma.

"I braked a fraction too late; I feel bad about it," said a contrite Muller. "After the bad result of the first race, the last thing that I wanted was to have an accident with one of my team-mates."

As Huff cruised into the lead, Muller backed off to allow Menu to recover second position. Sadly for the Swiss, he was unable to hold the place. "The tyres overheated badly in that half spin and then got some rubber pick-up on them," said Menu dejectedly.

Officials awarded Muller a penalty that dropped him from second to 13th. "There are some mixed feelings because of what happened between Yvan and Alain," said RML WTCC project manager Ron Hartvelt straight after the race. "It's unfortunate. We'll talk it over with the drivers and I'm sure that things will calm down — in the next few hours..."

Shanghai may have provided an overload of drama, but the inescapable fact is that Huff holds a 35-point lead over Menu with only 55 to play for, so much heat has been taken from the Macau showdown.

Collisions also hit the 'second division'

The high-profile clash in race one between erstwhile championship leader Yvan Muller and Norbert Michelisz was dire news for the Yokohama Trophy points leader. Having driven outstandingly well to qualify third, the Zengo Motorsport BMW racer lost all hope of a strong points haul when he was slapped with an arguably harsh drive-through penalty.

Pepe Oriola, Michelisz's title rival entering the weekend, ran sixth on the opening lap, despite a spectacular clash of wheels with Colin Turkington at Turn 4. The Spaniard's SUNRED-run SEAT was launched onto two wheels, scattering pieces of front bumper. The unruliness prompted several cars into taking avoiding action by cutting the chicane. The big winners – Tom Boardman and Tiago Monteiro's factory Honda Civic – were among five drivers adjudged to have made up ground unfairly, and were awarded post-race time penalties.

The late amendments to the classification allowed Michelisz to claim two points, but double 2012 race winner Stefano D'Aste took a huge chunk out of the Hungarian's points lead after executing an untroubled run to the Independents' victory and overall podium.

Oriola's adventures caught up with him when his Leon WTCC suddenly slowed on lap seven. The teenager would also retire from race two, where Michelisz was involved in yet another first-lap collision. This time the language student was clattered into at Turn 1 by Alex MacDowall's Bamboo Cruze, forcing him out of points contention.

MacDowall (right) hit Michelisz (centre)

RESULTS

FIA World Touring Car Championship, round 11 of 12, Shanghai (PRC), November 4

GRID RACE 1

2 MULLER 1:54.409	1 MENU 1:54.383
4 HUFF 1:54.582	3 MICHELISZ 1:54.523
6 D'ASTE 1:55.142	5 TURKINGTON 1:54.777
8 MACDOWALL 1:55.378	7 ORIOLA 1:55.325
10 CORONEL 1:55.720	9 TARQUINI 1:55.451
12 BARTH 1:56.296	11 DUDUKALO 1:55.840
14 O'YOUNG 1:55.637	13 BENNANI 1:55.616
16 MONJE 1:55.734	15 NASH 1:55.658
18 C NG 1:55.851	17 MONTEIRO 1:55.742
20 BOARDMAN 1:56.012	19 CERQUI 1:55.973
22 CHILTON 1:56.904	21 ENGSTLER 1:56.577
24 KWONG 1:59.352	23 VALENTE 1:57.947
26 K NG 2:00.969	25 LEONG 2:00.864
28 LIU 2:04.374	27 DE SOUZA 2:01.059

RACE 1 – 13 LAPS, 37.182 MILES

POS	DRIVER (NATIONALITY)	TEAM	CAR	TIME	GRID
1	Alain Menu (CH)	Chevrolet (RML)	Chevrolet Cruze 1.6T	25m12.369s	1
2	Rob Huff (GB)	Chevrolet (RML)	Chevrolet Cruze 1.6T	+1.500s	4
3	Stefano D'Aste (I)	Wiechers-Sport	BMW 320 TC	+11.192s	6
4	Tom Coronel (NL)	ROAL Motorsport	BMW 320 TC	+13.327s	10
5	Gabriele Tarquini (I)	Lukoil Racing Team	SEAT Leon WTCC	+15.653s	9
6	Colin Turkington (GB)	WSR	Chevrolet Cruze 1.6T	+30.125s	5
7	Alberto Cerqui (I)	ROAL Motorsport	BMW 320 TC	+31.463s	19
8	Mehdi Bennani (MA)	Proteam Racing	BMW 320 TC	+40.183s	13
9	Franz Engstler (D)	Team Engstler	BMW 320 TC	+40.320s	21
10	Charles Ng (PRC)	Team Engstler	BMW 320 TC	+44.499s	18
11	Tom Chilton (GB)	Arena Motorsport	Ford Focus S2000TC	+46.076s	22
12	Tom Boardman (GB)	Special Tuning Racing	SEAT Leon WTCC	+56.382s*	20
13	Tiago Monteiro (P)	Honda (JAS)	Honda Civic S2000TC	+1m00.032s*	17
14	Fredy Barth (CH)	SUNRED Engineering	SEAT Leon WTCC	+1m06.426s*	12
15	Norbert Michelisz (H)	Zengo Motorsport	BMW 320 TC	+1m07.550s	3
16	Hugo Valente (F)	SUNRED Engineering	SEAT Leon 1.6T	+1m17.406s*	23
17	Kelvin Leong (PRC)	Song Veng Racing Team	Honda Accord Euro-R	+1m21.551s	25
18	Eric Kwong (PRC)	Look Fong Racing Team	Chevrolet Cruze LT	+1m25.129s	24
19	Filipe de Souza (PRC)	China Dragon Racing	Chevrolet Lacetti	+1m27.186s	27
20	Kin Veng Ng (PRC)	China Dragon Racing	Chevrolet Cruze LT	+1m37.603s	26
21	Alex Liu (PRC)	Team Engstler	BMW 320si	-1 lap	28
22	Pepe Oriola (E)	SUNRED Engineering	SEAT Leon WTCC	-4 laps	7
R	Fernando Monje (E)	SUNRED Engineering	SEAT Leon WTCC	8 laps-damage	16
R	James Nash (GB)	Arena Motorsport	Ford Focus S2000TC	7 laps-electrics	15
R	Darryl O'Young (PRC)	Bamboo-Engineering	Chevrolet Cruze 1.6T	6 laps-damage	14
NC	Aleksei Dudukalo (RUS)	Lukoil Racing Team	SEAT Leon WTCC	-7 laps	11
NC	Alex MacDowall (GB)	Bamboo-Engineering	Chevrolet Cruze 1.6T	-9 laps	8
R	Yvan Muller (F)	Chevrolet (RML)	Chevrolet Cruze 1.6T	1 lap-damage	2

RACE 2 – 13 LAPS, 37.182 MILES

POS	DRIVER	TIME	GRID
1	Huff	25m17.714s	7
2	Menu	+2.698s	10
3	Coronel	+4.378s	1
4	D'Aste	+4.866s	5
5	Bennani	+5.574s	13
6	Tarquini	+20.406s	2
7	Turkington	+25.189s	6
8	Boardman	+26.741s	20
9	Cerqui	+27.167s	19
10	Monteiro	+27.342s	17
11	Dudukalo	+28.113s	11
12	O'Young	+30.937s	14
13	Muller	+31.195s*	9
14	Barth	+32.626s	12
15	Engstler	+35.170s	21
16	Monje	+35.249s	16
17	MacDowall	+35.368s	3
18	Valente	+41.675s	23
19	Chilton	+42.220s	22
20	Kwong	+1m15.910s	24
21	de Souza	+1m21.126s	27
22	K Ng	+1m34.329s	26
23	C Ng	-1 lap	18
24	Michelisz	-1 lap	8
25	Liu	11 laps-mechanical	28
R	Leong	7 laps-mechanical	25
R	Oriola	6 laps-mechanical	4
R	Nash	0 laps-steer/engine	15

CHAMPIONSHIP TABLE

POS	DRIVER	PTS
1	Huff	390
2	Menu	355
3	Muller	349
4	Tarquini	238
5	Coronel	199
6	Michelisz	155
7	D'Aste	144
8	Oriola	131
9	Bennani	68
10	Monteiro	67

YOKOHAMA TROPHY

POS	DRIVER	PTS
1	Michelisz	138
2	Oriola	126
3	D'Aste	123

MANUFACTURERS

POS	MANUFACTURER	PTS
1	Chevrolet	930
2	BMW Customer	602
3	SEAT Customer	569

Race 1 Winner's average: 88.22mph. Fastest lap: Menu, 1m54.947s, 89.58mph. **Race 2** Winner's average: 87.91mph. Fastest lap: Huff, 1m55.546s, 89.11mph. *30-second penalty added.

Champions' final win came in Bahrain

SUN SETS ON AUDI'S GLORY

The rising sun, in the form of Toyota, suggests that 2013 may be very different. By *GARY WATKINS*

It started with the prospect of an Audi whitewash and ended with newcomer Toyota in the ascendancy. The new FIA World Endurance Championship came alive with the Japanese manufacturer's arrival at the Le Mans 24 Hours. It came too late to have an effect on the outcome of the championship, but it was responsible for creating an intense and intriguing battle befitting a series that was the true successor to the World Sportscar Championship of old.

Audi was always going to win once arch-rival Peugeot made its fateful decision to pull out of sportscar racing in January, but Toyota emerged as much more than a worthy opponent. It eventually slotted right into the role Peugeot took in the Intercontinental Le Mans Cup: it didn't win Le Mans, but by the end of the season its TS030 HYBRID had the upper hand over Audi's R18 e-tron quattro.

Toyota wasn't thinking about championship success when it saved the WEC by signing up to contest a minimum of six races rather than the three or so it was going to do in what was always billed as a development year. Any chance it did have of the manufacturers' title disappeared when it not surprisingly failed to get either of its cars to the end of its debut race at Le Mans.

Le Mans, quite rightly, offers double points in the WEC and that meant that Audi was crowned champion after the halfway race at Silverstone. The 50 points that came with victory in the 24 Hours also proved pivotal in Audi drivers **Andre Lotterer**, **Benoit Treluyer** and **Marcel Fassler** becoming the first world champions of endurance sportscar racing since 1992.

HOW IT WAS WON

Lotterer and co effectively won the drivers' crown at Le Mans. Had their rivals in the Audi camp, **Allan McNish** and **Tom Kristensen** (who shared with **Rinaldo Capello** for the first three races), overcome the leading Audi, the destination of the title would have been different.

Yet Le Mans also gave Lotterer, Treluyer and Fassler a momentum that McNish and Kristensen could do nothing about over the remainder of the season. The Audi old guard had won at Sebring and finished a place ahead of their team-mates at Spa, but after Le Mans the younger line-up had a clear edge.

Much has been made of McNish's shunt in the Porsche Curves at Le Mans in his chase of the winning Audi. What shouldn't be forgotten is that Fassler spun there too, and miraculously got away with it.

There was a consistency to the performance of the title-winning trio's Audi over the second half of the season that was missing from McNish and Kristensen. They were up and down over the final five races and *in* the final five races. But then, there was no consistency to their programme.

Lotterer, Treluyer and Fassler ran the e-tron quattro from its debut at Spa, whereas McNish and Kristensen swapped from the hybrid to the conventional turbodiesel ultra and then back again. That chopping and changing of cars was mirrored in their engineering line-up.

STANDOUT PERFORMERS

Look no further than the Toyota Motorsport

Davidson's Le Mans flip was huge worry

GmbH squad and its TS030. What they achieved in their R&D season took even the principals at this ex-Formula 1 race team by surprise.

Podiums and a solo pole position were Toyota's targets ahead of the season. Yet **Alex Wurz** and **Nicolas Lapierre** (who shared their Fuji win with **Kazuki Nakajima**) ended up with three victories from their six starts.

The Toyota was a lithe racing machine that looked after its tyres better than its rival and clearly had an advantage from its hybrid systems. The '120 Rule', which prevented the Audi from deploying retrieved energy through its front wheels below 120km/h (75mph), had something to do with it, but by the end of the season even Audi was admitting that its rival had the more powerful system.

SOMETHING TO REMEMBER

Lapierre taking the lead on the debut of the Toyota TS030 HYBRID — on the grass! The Frenchman's manoeuvre out of Mulsanne Corner signalled the start of what could become one of the great sportscar rivalries.

SOMETHING (NOT) TO FORGET

Another aerial accident served as a reminder that there can be no complacency in the drive to stop flat-bottomed LMP cars flying. Anthony Davidson's flip in the second Toyota came, lest we forget, after a series of rule changes devised to prevent such occurrences.

WHERE NEXT?

Audi has to pull its finger out, that's what. The R18 e-tron quattro was no match for the TS030 HYBRID come the end of the season, but exactly how it will react remains unclear. There will be no all-new car nor change in hybrid concept for 2013.

That must make Toyota favourite for next year's WEC — and perhaps even the Le Mans 24 Hours.

CHAMP IN HIS OWN WORDS

ANDRE LOTTERER

Double points at the Le Mans 24 Hours got us back in the fight for the championship. After our problems at the Sebring 12 Hours, we needed that because with only three works cars there wasn't the opportunity to gain back a lot of points.

We were pretty much focused on ourselves and doing the best with what we had without concentrating on beating our team-mates. We tried to optimise and maximise our potential, and that worked for us.

Most of the time it turned out that we had a little edge over Allan and Tom, although we weren't going to every race believing that we were faster than them. I think we had the momentum this year.

To have world champion on your CV means something, though for the moment I still think that winning Le Mans is more important. That's going to change as the WEC grows, but it's definitely good to win both in one season.

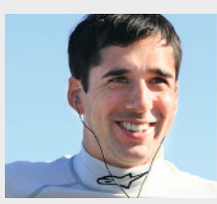
OUR TOP 10 DRIVER RATINGS

1 ANDRE LOTTERER
Another impressive season reinforced Lotterer's position as Audi's main man.

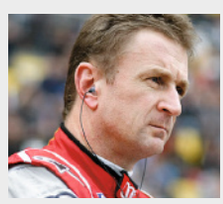
2 ALEX WURZ
Toyota's team leader proved that he's still got the hunger and the speed.

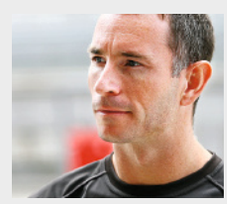
3 NICOLAS LAPIERRE
Only an uncharacteristic mistake at Bahrain prevents a higher rating.

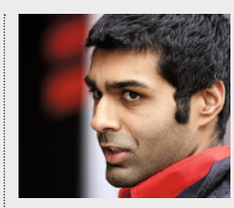
4 BENOIT TRELUYER
The Frenchman again proved just shy of Lotterer in every department.

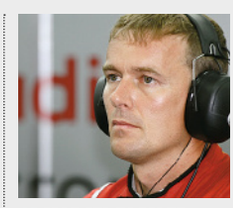

5 NEEL JANI
Another faultless season with Rebellion; when will the factories come knocking?

6 TOM KRISTENSEN
There appear to be reasons for his and McNish's lack of consistency.


7 ALLAN MCNISH
His season was defined by, and will be remembered for, his Le Mans shunt.


8 DANNY WATTS
Super-quick and capable of superhuman effort, Watts was the standout HPD driver.


9 KARUN CHANDHOK
Ex-F1 driver took to sportscar racing well after an initial culture shock.


10 MARCEL FASSLER
The quick-and-consistent Marcel Fassler of old didn't always turn up in 2012.

2012 FIA WORLD ENDURANCE CHAMPIONSHIP

POS	DRIVERS (NATIONALITY)	TEAM	CAR	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	POINTS
1	ANDRE LOTTERER (D)/BENOIT TRELUYER (F)/MARCEL FASSLER (CH)	AUDI SPORT TEAM JOEST	AUDI R18 E-TRON QUATTRO/TDI	11*	2	1*	1*	2	1	2	3	172.5
2	ALLAN McNISH (GB)/TOM KRISTENSEN (DK)	AUDI SPORT TEAM JOEST	AUDI R18 E-TRON QUATTRO/ULTRA/TDI	1	3*	2	3	3	2*	3	2	159
3	ALEXANDER WURZ (A)/NICOLAS LAPIERRE (F)	TOYOTA MOTORSPORT	TOYOTA TS030 HYBRID	–	–	R	2	1*	R	1*	1	96
4	NEEL JANI (CH)/NICOLAS PROST (F)	REBELLION RACING	LOLA-TOYOTA B12/60	17	4	3	6	4	4	4	R	86.5
5	RINALDO CAPELLO (I)	AUDI SPORT TEAM JOEST	AUDI R18 E-TRON QUATTRO/TDI	1	3*	2	–	–	–	–	–	77
6	LOIC DUVAL (F)/ROMAIN DUMAS (F)	AUDI SPORT TEAM JOEST	AUDI R18 ULTRA/TDI	2	1	4	–	–	–	–	–	67
7	DANNY WATTS (GB)/JONNY KANE (GB)/NICK LEVENTIS (GB)	STRAKKA RACING	HPD ARX-03a	8	6	22	5	5	3	6	6	64
8	ANDREA BELICCHI (I)/HAROLD PRIMAT (CH)	REBELLION RACING	LOLA-TOYOTA B12/60	19	5	9	4	6	5	7	4	62.5
9	ENZO POTOLICCHIO (YV)	STARWORKS MOTORSPORTS	HPD-HONDA ARX-03b	3	29	6	9*	7*	8*	9*	8	53.5
10	DAVID BRABHAM (AUS)/PETER DUMBRECK (GB)/KARUN CHANDHOK (IND)	JRM	HPD ARX-03a	12	9	5	7	9	R	5	5	50.5

LMP1 MANUFACTURERS 1 **Audi**, 209; 2 **Toyota**, 96.
RACES: 1 **Sebring 12 Hours**, March 17; 2 **Spa-Francorchamps 6 Hours**, May 5; 3 **Le Mans 24 Hours**, June 16-17; 4 **Silverstone 6 Hours**, August 26; 5 **Sao Paulo 6 Hours (Interlagos)**, September 15; 6 **Bahrain 6 Hours (Sakhir)**, September 29; 7 **Fuji 6 Hours**, October 14; 8 **Shanghai 6 Hours**, October 28.

POINTS SYSTEM: 25-18-15-12-10-8-6-4-2-1 to top 10 finishers overall, with 0.5 to all other finishers. All drivers in pole position car in each class score 1 point, denoted by *. Double points for Le Mans. NB At first four rounds, other unregistered cars competed but race results in these table are based on position in classification of those registered for points.

PICS: EBREY; BIRD; KALISZ/LAT; EUROSPORT

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Rebellion Lola was a match for HPD attack

REBELS ON TOP IN PRIVATEER BATTLE

With a line-up led by the excellent Neel Jani, Rebellion Racing was tough to stop. By *GARY WATKINS*

LMP1 PRIVATEERS

Rebellion Racing was the class act among the small group of privateers that chose to compete at the highest level of sportscar racing. It claimed the privateers' title with its pair of Toyota-engined Lolas and its lead line-up of **Neel Jani** and **Nicolas Prost** came within seven minutes of finishing third overall in the championship.

Jani and Prost, who were joined by **Nick Heidfeld** for the first three races, were the first privateers home four times and were denied the top spot in the 'unofficial' class by poor luck on a further three occasions. The last of those, in Shanghai when gearbox failure intervened at the death, cost the duo that overall top-three.

Rebellion's lead Lola-Toyota B12/60 had the edge on the HPD ARX-03a P1s run by the Strakka and JRM teams, its only full-season rivals. There wasn't much to choose between the 2012-spec Lola-Toyota and the new HPD in qualifying, but the Lola was the better race car thanks in part to the almost *de rigueur* wide front tyre it used in contrast to the HPD.

Rebellion — or rather the British Sebah squad that ran the cars — made a step forward in 2012. There was a change in the engineering set-up, with John Gentry coming in to run the second car, shared by **Andrea Belicchi** and **Harold Primat**, but team boss Bart Hayden put the improvement down to the team's familiarity with its package: this was the first time since the team joined the P1 ranks in 2009 that it had retained the same engine for a second season.

Strakka ended up second in the privateers' classification, or the FIA Endurance Trophy for Private LMP1 Teams as it is correctly known, and also had the honour of being the only non-factory LMP1 team to make it onto the overall podium. **Danny Watts**, **Jonny Kane** and **Nick Leventis** ended up third in Bahrain when Nico Lapierre crashed the Toyota, coincidently trying a rash lapping manouevre on the HPD.

The JRM car, shared by **David Brabham**, **Karun Chandhok** and **Peter Dumbreck**, wasn't a match for the Strakka entry on pace until right at the end of the season. The team that had won the FIA GT1 World Championship with Nissan only finished its HPD in the paddock at the Sebring opener and took time to get on top of the car, though its most impressive result of the season, sixth place overall at Le Mans, owed more to consistency than outright speed.

LMP1 PRIVATE TEAMS

POS	DRIVER	PTS
1	Rebellion Racing	205
2	Strakka Racing	148
3	JRM Racing	123
4	OAK Racing	30

LMP2

The LMP2 class was arguably the most competitive in the first new-look WEC and definitely the best supported. Yet the victories were largely shared out by two teams.

The US Starworks Motorsports squad and British ADR-Delta team took WEC P2 honours in seven of the eight races, their respective HPD ARX-03b and ORECA-Nissan 03 challengers being the only cars that were perpetual frontrunners. Starworks ultimately prevailed thanks to double points at Le Mans and consistent finishing that resulted in the team failing only once to make it home in the top three WEC points-paying positions.

It was an impressive performance from a team new to European-style sportscars. The team pulled off a coup by signing out-of-work Peugeot driver **Stephane Sarrazin** to join **Ryan Dalziel** and amateur racer **Enzo Potolicchio**, and it probably made the difference over the course of the season.

ADR-Delta, a joint venture between Alan Docking Racing and the Delta Motorsport engineering consultancy, proved at least a match for Starworks on speed with a line-up based around **John Martin** and **Tor Graves**. It ultimately lost any chance of the title with a detached wheel at Interlagos and a wishbone failure in Bahrain. But it took more P2 wins than any other team — four, though one came behind the non-registered Jota Zytek at Spa.

The AF Corse-run Pecom team claimed third with its ORECA-Nissan 03, while OAK Racing's Morgan-Nissan 2012 LMP2 was more often than not the fastest car in class when **Olivier Pla** was behind the wheel. ▶

LMP2 TEAMS

POS	DRIVER	PTS
1	Starworks	177
2	ADR-Delta	154
3	Pecom (AF Corse)	141
4	OAK Racing	100

Starworks (below) beat ADR (above) to LMP2 title

PICS: EBREY; WEBB/LAT

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FERRARI DEFEATS ASTON AND PORSCHE

It was quality over quantity in GTE. Ferrari topped the Pro battle, while Chevrolet took Am honours

GTE PRO

Small but perfectly formed: that just about sums up the GTE Pro class in the 2012 FIA World Endurance Championship. Just five cars started the season and only four completed the year, but they were the right cars. And, after some tinkering with the regulations, they were more or less evenly matched.

Ferrari, Porsche and Aston Martin each fielded a factory or factory-backed team. Each had a car capable of winning and did just that.

The AF Corse Ferrari squad had the edge over the season, taking maximum WEC points in half the races on the way to securing the teams' title and winning the Italian manufacturer the GTE Manufacturers' World Cup. The lead AF Ferrari 458 Italia was the superior package, at least in the hands of the regular line-up of Gianmaria Bruni and Giancarlo Fisichella, not least because of a fuel-consumption advantage.

Its direct-injection V8 allowed the Ferrari to complete a six-hour race on four stops, which made the lead AF car virtually impossible to beat. That advantage was removed with a five-litre reduction in fuel capacity for the final three races, which gave Porsche and Aston their chance.

The Felbermayr-Proton team's Pro-class 911 GT3-RSR, shared by Marc Lieb and Richard Lietz, had won at Spa in May courtesy of an inspired tyre choice on a drying track, but the final version of the 997-shape GTE Porsche was no match for the Italian car in a straight fight. A series of performance breaks ahead of the Silverstone round eventually turned the Porsche into a competitive proposition, at least when the conditions were cool, culminating in a class victory at Fuji.

Aston Martin made the winner's circle at the final time of asking at Shanghai after knocking on the door for most of the season. The 2012-spec Vantage GTE driven by Darren Turner, Stefan Mucke and, initially, Adrian Fernandez was in the mix straight away courtesy of a raft of developments and the retention of the performance breaks its predecessor had received in 2010.

The Aston was on pole for three of the final four races and, after a near miss in Bahrain, dominated at Shanghai. That was enough to secure Aston second place in the FIA Endurance Trophy for GTE Teams behind AF.

Larbre Corvette squad deserved Am crown

GTE AM

The French Larbre Competition team has made a habit of winning major GT titles over the years and it continued that form in the WEC with victory in the GTE Am teams' championship.

And rightly so. It was the only squad in the class to run two cars — a pair of Chevrolet Corvette C6.Rs — and had the best driver line-up whether or not it was Pedro Lamy or Fernando Rees sharing with Julien Canel and Patrick Bornhauser (they did four races each).

Yet Larbre only sealed the title with a third victory of the season at the Shanghai finale from the Felbermayr-Proton Porsche squad. That followed back-to-back disqualifications from second place at Silverstone and victory at Interlagos (which remains under appeal).

GTE PRO TEAMS

POS	DRIVER	PTS
1	AF Corse	201
2	Aston Martin Racing	142
3	Felbermayr-Proton	133
4	Luxury Racing	53

GTE AM TEAMS

POS	DRIVER	PTS
1	Larbre Competition	179
2	Felbermayr-Proton	153
3	Krohn Racing	119
4	AF Corse-Waltrip	108

GTE MANUFACTURERS

POS	DRIVER	PTS
1	Ferrari	338
2	Porsche	233
3	Chevrolet	143

Ferrari stayed ahead of Aston for most of season

PICS: EBREY/LAT.

Lawrence wins Sunoco GRAND-AM 200 Challenge

Lawrence Davey

The UK Legends championship held their last round at Brands Hatch this weekend and Lawrence Davey needed to score 307 points to win the Sunoco GRAND-AM 200 Challenge. With two seconds and a race win already under Davey's belt from Saturday's races, plus the championship win, he just needed to finish fourth or above in the first race on Sunday to seal the deal. As the rain fell on the Kent based circuit Davey crossed the finish line in second to secure the drive at Daytona in the Continental Tires GRAND-AM 200 race that supports the Rolex 24.

www.sunoco200challenge.com

1st Lawrence Davey, 85.94
2nd Gary Duckman, 81.90
3rd Dean Brace, 78.02

Gary Duckman

Dean Brace

Photos by Nicola Todd

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Bellarosa starts test programme

Sunoco Rolex 24 At Daytona Challenge winner and SPEED EuroSeries champion, Ivan Bellarosa, will make his Daytona Prototype debut on the 6th and 7th of November at an open GRAND-AM Rolex Sports Car Series test at Virginia International Raceway and at Daytona International Speedway on the 13th and 14th of November. Bellarosa will follow in the footsteps of last years winner, Felipe Nasr, and test the #58 Action Express Racing DP.

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BMW BACK IN BLACK

Bruno Spengler took a gripping last-gasp title. By *JAMIE O'LEARY*

Spengler just edged Paffett for crown

As far as dramatic thrillers set in Teutonic Europe with a strong element of 'noir' are concerned, the DTM this year was a case not of *The Third Man*, but instead The Third Manufacturer. When the sinister black BMW of **Bruno Spengler** crossed the line to win the Hockenheim season finale and clinch an improbable title success, it completed a thrilling turnaround that even Orson Welles would have been hard pressed to match.

BMW's return to the DTM, joining Mercedes and Audi after a two-decade absence, was pure box office as Spengler pulled back a 40-point deficit to **Gary Paffett** to become champion, the Canadian finding form as his rival regularly saw points go south through no fault of his own.

HOW IT WAS WON

The writing was on the wall when **Dirk Werner** qualified third at Hockenheim in April. BMW had arrived (well, returned after 20 years away) and was bang on the pace.

Forget the fact that Werner and his Schnitzer team-mate Spengler were taken out of the race in one hit – two actually – by Ralf Schumacher. The pace was there, with only a bad start (Werner) and a Q2 suspension failure (Spengler) making the pair vulnerable in the midfield.

Paffett's Norisring hopes turned around

Six days later Spengler was on pole at Lausitz, with Augusto Farfus's RBM BMW directly behind him. Yes, Paffett virtually pushed him over the line on raceday, but the deed was done; in only its second race back BMW had won – and recorded its 50th DTM win in the process.

The closeness in competition between Spengler and Paffett that day set the tone for the season as a similar scenario unfolded at Oschersleben and the Hockenheim finale. With Spengler's car set up for performance during the early laps of a stint, allowing its driver to open up a few seconds' advantage early on, the Canadian was more or less protected when it came to pitstop time during those three races. Paffett's final stints often brought him onto the tail of the M3, by which time he usually encountered a firm, yet fair, defence.

Paffett could easily have been champion. Two wins and two other podiums from the first four races giving the Mercedes man a huge lead in the points. But then things started to go wrong. Non-performances by the C-coupes at the Nurburgring and Valencia cost him big points, as did the fact that in the Spanish event Spengler's probable ninth place became sixth after unreliability (and a bit of argy-bargy) moved three Audis out of his way.

Add in a probable Norisring win and Zandvoort podium turning into fourth and seventh places, and a swing of 30-plus points towards Spengler emerges.

STANDOUT PERFORMERS

Edoardo Mortara stopped making the rookie errors of 2011 and was easily Audi's top performer (albeit not its top points scorer thanks to a couple of mechanical problems), as Team Rosberg made the most of having equal machinery to the marque's powerhouse squad Abt Sportsline to perform strongly.

Green's last-lap Norisring win

Augusto Farfus and **Robert Wickens** were the outstanding rookies, the Brazilian capitalising on the constantly-improving BMW to end the year with back-to-back poles and a win at Valencia. Wickens, trapped in that hole of no return that can be life in one of Mercedes' second-string teams, delivered three points finishes mid-season and would have added another had he not suffered a total loss of drive with a handful of laps left at Lausitz in May.

SOMETHING TO REMEMBER

Mortara was magnificent at Zandvoort, which vied with the Norisring as the standout race. Taking seconds a lap out of leader **Mike Rockenfeller** when brief mid-race rain came, he stole a victory that was simply remarkable.

Paffett's sterling fightback at the Norisring, after a first-corner chain reaction sent him spinning to the back, was outstanding, and his team-mate **Jamie Green** was pretty good himself late on, passing Spengler and **Martin Tomcyzk** in the last lap and a half to win.

The Englishman was even better in race trim at Zandvoort and made a couple of ballsy passes

Mortara (right) beat Rockenfeller at Zandvoort

early on. But he was denied a chance to win by a pair of botched HWA tyre changes.

SOMETHING TO FORGET

Mercedes' poor performance at Valencia hurt its drivers', teams' and manufacturers' title hopes, and was devoid of an explanation too. Worse was **Ralf Schumacher**'s horrible practice pitlane incident at Zandvoort, in which four of Paffett's crew members received injuries of varying levels. At Audi, **Timo Scheider** had an awful season, his first four qualifying sessions beset by problems that left him going nowhere and his one highpoint – pole at Zandvoort – turning sour when a leaky valve caused his handbrake to stay on as the lights went out.

ANY OTHER BUSINESS

The switch to 'new-generation' machinery, revolving around more than 50 spec components (including the carbonfibre tub) produced better racing than that seen over the past couple of seasons (the borefests at Nurburgring and Oschersleben excepted). Long may it continue.

WHERE NEXT?

Moscow Raceway, as the series expands outside its regular horizons in favour of new marketing opportunities. Two more BMWs, run by Ernest Knoors' new MTEK squad, will join the grid, while **David Coulthard** and **Susie Wolff** have left the DTM. Not before time, the non-points stadium event in Munich has been canned.

THE CHAMP IN HIS OWN WORDS

BRUNO SPENGLER

We started from nothing. Or should I say they started from nothing, because by the time I was able to drive the car for the first time last November, they'd already gone from zero to something that was quite good. Andy Priaulx and Augusto Farfus had already driven the car quite a bit, and so had Dirk Werner.

Getting the first win at Lausitz was an amazing feeling; probably as good as anything I felt all year, even winning the championship.

I have to say such a big 'thank you' to BMW and Schnitzer, but particularly my crew. I can't believe just how good the pitstops went this year, especially when we were in the really high-pressure races like Oschersleben and Hockenheim and fighting with Gary for the wins. It was probably the difference.

The 2013 season starts now and it'll be even harder to win again, but that's the challenge now.

OUR TOP 10 DRIVER RATINGS

1 GARY PAFFETT
Was the best of the Merc drivers and would have been champion but for Norisring and Zandvoort spins that weren't his fault.
UP 8

2 BRUNO SPENGLER
Freed from the HWA structure, Spengler grew into his lead-driver status with BMW and is now, perhaps, on a Paffett/Ekstrom level.
NO CHANGE

3 EDOARDO MORTARA
Sensational year from the Italian, who was Audi's only winner and a consistent frontrunner.
UP 3

NEW ENTRY

4 AUGUSTO FARFUS
Brazilian made the odd error, but capped off ace rookie year with Valencia win.

DOWN 1

5 JAMIE GREEN
Corrected his tendency to start badly, but lost that special something in qualifying.

DOWN 3

6 MATTIAS EKSTROM
Not enough drives like the one taking him from last to eighth at Oschersleben. A class act.

DOWN 6

7 MARTIN TOMCZYK
Last year's champ came good mid-season, but that move on Paffett at Zandvoort was silly.

NEW ENTRY

8 ROBERT WICKENS
Life in a Merc B-team isn't easy, but Wickens showed his mettle all season long.

DOWN 4

9 MIKE ROCKENFELLER
Was Audi's top points-scorer, not that you'd have noticed. Missed chance at Zandvoort.

NEW ENTRY

10 DIRK WERNER
Forget third on the grid for his debut; his progress in race trim impressed most.

2012 DEUTSCHE TOURENWAGEN MASTERS

POS	DRIVER (NATIONALITY)	TEAM	CAR	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	POINTS
1	BRUNO SPENGLER (CDN)	SCHNITZER MOTORSPORT	BMW M3	R	1	2	R	3	1	6	1	6	1	149
2	GARY PAFFETT (GB)	HWA	MERCEDES C-COUPE	1	2	1	3	4	6	7	2	R	2	145
3	JAMIE GREEN (GB)	HWA	MERCEDES C-COUPE	2	4	8	5	1	4	4	3	10	4	121
4	MIKE ROCKENFELLER (D)	PHOENIX RACING	AUDI A5	5	13	3	7	6	5	2	6	5	R	85
5	EDOARDO MORTARA (I)	TEAM ROSBERG	AUDI A5	11	8	9	1	R	2	1	R	16	6	82
6	MATTIAS EKSTROM (S)	ABT SPORTSLINE	AUDI A5	3	5	5	4	R	11	3	8	3	R	81
7	AUGUSTO FARFUS (BR)	RBM	BMW M3	15	3	11	10	R	10	9	5	1	3	69
8	MARTIN TOMCZYK (D)	RMG	BMW M3	R	7	4	2	2	3	R	R	R	14	69
9	DIRK WERNER (D)	SCHNITZER MOTORSPORT	BMW M3	17	19	16	R	10	12	8	4	9	5	29
10	ADRIEN TAMBAY (F)	ABT SPORTSLINE	AUDI A5	R	18	12	R	15	R	5	16	2	R	28

11 **Filipe Albuquerque (P)**, Team Rosberg Audi A5, 26; 12 **Christian Vietoris (D)**, HWA Mercedes C-coupe, 25; 13 **Andy Priaulx (GB)**, RBM BMW M3, 24; 14 **Timo Scheider (D)**, Abt Sportsline Audi A5, 19; 15 **David Coulthard (GB)**, Mucke Motorsport Mercedes C-coupe, 14; 16 **Robert Wickens (CDN)**, Mucke Motorsport Mercedes C-coupe, 14. 17 **Ralf Schumacher (D)**, HWA Mercedes C-coupe, 10; 18 **Miguel Molina (E)**, Phoenix Racing Audi A5, 8; 19 **Rahel Frey (CH)**, Abt Sportsline Audi A5, 6; 20 **Joey Hand** (USA), RMG BMW M3, 6. **MANUFACTURERS:** 1 **BMW,** 346; 2 **Audi,** 335; 3 **Mercedes,** 329. **TEAMS:** 1 **Schnitzer (Spengler/Werner),** 178; 2 **HWA (Paffett/Vietoris),** 170; 3 **HWA (Green/Schumacher),** 131; 4 **Rosberg (Mortara/Albuquerque)**, 108; 5 **Abt (Ekstrom/Scheider)**, 100; 6 **RBM (Priaulx/Farfus),** 93. **RACES:** 1 **Hockenheim**, April 29; 2 **Lausitz**, May 6; 3 **Brands Hatch**, May 20; 4 **Spielberg**, June 3; 5 **Norisring**, July 1; 6 **Nurburgring**, August 19; 7 **Zandvoort**, August 26; 8 **Oschersleben**, September 16; 9 **Valencia**, September 30; 10 **Hockenheim**, October 21.
POINTS SYSTEM: Each race: 25-18-15-12-10-8-6-4-2-1 for the top 10 finishers.

PICS: BIRD, XPB/LAT

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MY SEASON FELIX SERRALLES

Ace from the Caribbean who came pretty close to busting Carlin's F3 domination

"When I started in motocross as a kid, at that age your bones are flexible and don't break. But my dad saw I was crazy and bought a kart"

Oulton Park: Serralles leads Harvey to first win

Felix Serralles has done a pretty good job of shattering preconceptions in British Formula 3 in 2012. For starters, he was tipped only as a bit-part player, due to a mediocre campaign in Formula Renault Eurocup in '11. Second, he has proved that Puerto Ricans can make it in a sport other than baseball.

But most importantly, Serralles showed that you don't have to be with Carlin to challenge for the BF3 crown. His achievement as an F3 rookie with Fortec Motorsport, in taking the title battle to the final race, represents the closest any of the team's drivers has come to the championship in its 21 years in the series.

Such has been the success of Serralles — who won five races this term — that it prompted a front-cover shot of the family on Puerto Rico's version of *Hello* magazine, complete with cover line: 'Those Serralles: prominent Puerto Rican family seduced by speed'.

Although his ancestors are famed throughout the Caribbean for rum — and he bears the signwriting of the DonQ brand on his Dallara-Mercedes — Serralles says his father is the first to be better known for his sporting exploits.

"He did motocross and won two national titles, but in that sport you get too old very quickly. So he started doing powerboats — it was quite big in Puerto Rico in the 1980s — and moved up the ranks. He ended up as a professional and won world championships with an Arab team. But there were a lot of deaths, so in 2001 he switched to cars and did Trans-Am in a Jaguar XKR.

"Also at that time I started in motocross. At that age you're flexible and your bones don't break, but my dad saw I was a bit crazy so he bought me a kart..."

Serralles has been with Fortec since landing in UK

Felix Juan Serralles IV, to give him his full name ("my great-grandfather was the first; my little brother is the fifth!") went to the US aged 14 after being pulled out of karts "because I was failing school". There, he started working hard on his studies while attending the Skip Barber and Jim Russell race schools.

He won the scholarship to compete in the Skip Barber National Series in 2010, then went to England as a Team USA scholar to race in the Walter Hayes Trophy. While in the UK, he did his first race with Fortec in the Formula Renault Winter Cup, thanks to an introduction made by his then manager, sportscar veteran Nic Jonsson. The rest is history.

This year, Serralles has been a revelation. He puts much of his success down to competing in the Toyota Racing Series in New Zealand, at the behest of Fortec team manager Mick Kouros, who went down under to guide a man in whom he saw a lot of latent talent. Kouros then left Serralles in the charge of his long-time friend and cohort Paul Anderson to engineer him in F3.

Their faith has been rewarded. "I knew I could be a fast driver throughout the year," says Serralles, "but I never thought I'd be a championship contender! The plan for next year is F3 with Fortec again — hopefully in Europe — but whatever I do I'll just drive it as fast as I can!"

SERRALLES CV

Born June 24, 1992
From Ponce, Puerto Rico
2012 3rd in British Formula 3 (5 wins); 8th in Toyota Racing Series NZ (1 win)
2011 12th in Formula Renault Eurocup
2010 3rd in Skip Barber National Series (2 wins); 4th in Walter Hayes Trophy FF1600
2007-09 occasional Skip Barber races
2002 & 03 Caribbean karting champion

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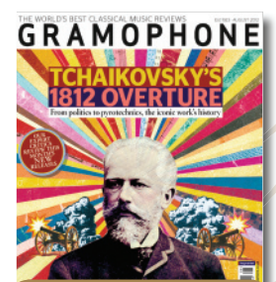

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Johnson (48) and Keselowski ran close

NASCAR SPRINT CUP TEXAS MOTOR SPEEDWAY (USA), NOVEMBER 4, RD 34/36

Sparkling Johnson goes seven up

JIMMIE JOHNSON AND BRAD Keselowski traded paint and the lead during the final laps of the NASCAR Sprint Cup race at Texas Motor Speedway, and it was Johnson who came out on top to open up a crucial seven-point championship lead.

The five-time champion started his Hendrick Chevrolet from pole and dominated the first third of the event. Three mid-race cautions quickly followed one another, and the set-up tweaks made during these brought Kyle Busch and Keselowski into contention.

Along with Johnson, these were the class of the field, and spent the vast majority of the race disputing the lead. Busch had established himself as the man to beat following a long green-flag period but, with the race set to become a fuel-economy run, the Joe Gibbs Racing driver desperately tried to coax better mileage from his Toyota.

All this turned out to be in vain when Marcos Ambrose slammed his Petty Ford into the retaining wall to bring out the seventh caution of the night. At the restart Busch and the Penske Dodge of Keselowski fought it out for the lead in dramatic style, but this was nothing compared to what was about to happen at the next restart – this one caused by Hendrick team-mates Kasey Kahne and Jeff Gordon coming together, sending Kahne into the wall.

Martin's crash caused green-white-chequer

Keselowski had the inside line, Johnson the outside. They both nailed the restart within milliseconds of each other and ran just inches apart. They ran into each other at least twice as they drifted through the high-banked turns.

But this still wasn't the end. Veteran Mark Martin spun, creating a green-and-white chequer, and the title protagonists lined up side by side again. This time Johnson was slightly quicker away and Keselowski opted not to take the do-or-die option.

"I had to choose between wrecking him to win or finishing second," he said. "And wrecking him didn't seem right."

Johnson added: "It was awesome, a bare-knuckle fight with the gloves off. We knew we had the speed if we could just get by him."

Dale Earnhardt Jr and Kevin Harvick are the only Chasers mathematically out of the title fight but, with Clint Bowyer 36 points back, Johnson and Keselowski look the likely contenders.

● Connell Sanders Jr

RESULTS
1 Jimmie Johnson (Chevrolet Impala), 335 laps in 3h41m30s; 2 Brad Keselowski (Dodge Charger), +0.808s; 3 Kyle Busch (Toyota Camry); 4 Matt Kenseth (Ford Fusion); 5 Tony Stewart (Chevy); 6 Clint Bowyer (Toyota); 7 Dale Earnhardt Jr (Chevy); 8 Kurt Busch (Chevy); 9 Kevin Harvick (Chevy); 10 Greg Biffle (Ford). **Points** 1 Johnson, 2339; 2 Keselowski, 2332; 3 Bowyer, 2303; 4 Kasey Kahne, 2281; 5 Kenseth, 2267; 6 Jeff Gordon, 2267; 7 Denny Hamlin, 2266; 8 Stewart, 2259; 9 Martin Truex Jr, 2259; 10 Biffle, 2256; 11 Harvick, 2238; 12 Earnhardt, 2188.

Castrol EDGE Rankings
CURRENT STANDINGS

1	Sebastian Vettel	◇	22,232
2	Fernando Alonso	◇	19,105
3	Sebastien Loeb	▲	18,631
4	Mark Webber	▼	18,447
5	Lewis Hamilton	◇	18,242

Ranking the world's best drivers

WHAT HAPPENED THIS WEEK
Brad Keselowski jumps to an all-time high of 14th in the Rankings, despite being defeated by Jimmie Johnson in Texas. Johnson (8) moves up a spot, equalling his best place for 25 months. Kyle Busch – third last Sunday – gains three spots to move up to 25th.

To see the full list, visit castroldriverrankings.com

PICS: LABOUNTY/LAT, FERREY/GETTY

QUICK RESULTS
- Race 1 **Jamie Whincup**
- Race 2 **Whincup**
- Race 3 **Whincup**
- Poles **Will Davison x 3**

RACE RATING ★★☆☆☆ Largely a procession, albeit with some good overtaking

V8 SUPERCARS YAS MARINA (UAE), NOVEMBER 3-4, RD 13/15

Whincup closes on crown with treble

Jamie Whincup was always a step ahead

THERE WAS A GULF BETWEEN Triple 8 Australia's Jamie Whincup and the opposition in the three V8 Supercar races in the Middle East last weekend.

The reigning champion was in dominant form in the trio of 12-lap races, winning almost as he pleased. There have now been seven races held at the UAE circuit, on three different track configurations. Whincup has won six of them, and now has a 2012 record of 11 victories in 26 races, five of them coming from the last six outings.

Whincup ran away with the opening race, which was conducted on the harder, 'control' tyre. And he carried a smaller, but still convincing, margin in the final two, on the 'sprint' Dunlop rubber, in spite of his team making significant changes to cope with the build-up of Formula 1 marbles after qualifying.

But it was not that way in V8 qualifying. In a unique format, the drivers lined up for the first race in the order of their fastest laps in the single, 20-minute session, while the grids for the second and third races race were determined by drivers' second and third-fastest laps respectively.

The system delivered Ford Performance Racing's Will Davison three pole positions, all ahead of Whincup. Davison chased hard to take three second places, with Shane van Gisbergen third in both of Saturday's outings in his Stone Brothers Falcon.

Tim Slade was a brilliant third in race three, an encounter that featured a ruck of cars fight out the placings on the first two laps, until a multi-car melee prompted a safety car.

Karl Reindler jogged away from a burning Commodore after ramming a spinning Jason Bright. Three laps were spent at slow speeds while the fire was dealt with in a fairly pedestrian manner by the marshals.

The uniformity of the results gives Whincup a lead of 296 points in the championship. If he leaves the next round at Winton with a lead just four points more, he will seal his fourth title with a full round — scheduled for Homebush in December — to spare.

● Phil Branagan

RESULTS

Race 1 **1 Jamie Whincup (Holden Commodore VE II)**, 12 laps in 27m05.295s; 2 Will Davison (Ford Falcon FG), +4.100s; 3 Shane van Gisbergen (Ford); 4 Tim Slade (Ford); 5 Lee Holdsworth (Ford); 6 Mark Winterbottom (Ford). **Race 2** **1 Whincup**, 12 laps in 26m48.853s; 2 Davison, +2.801s; 3 van Gisbergen; 4 Winterbottom; 5 Garth Tander (Holden); 6 Slade. **Race 3** **1 Whincup**, 12 laps in 30m36.684s; 2 Davison, +1.132s; 3 Slade; 4 van Gisbergen; 5 Winterbottom; 6 James Moffat (Ford). **Points** 1 Whincup, 3360; 2 Winterbottom, 3064; 3 Craig Lowndes, 2971; 4 Davison, 2779; 5 van Gisbergen, 2434; 6 Slade, 2319.

INTERNATIONAL GT OPEN BARCELONA (E), NOVEMBER 3-4, RD 8/8

Tandy is the bridesmaid again

NICK TANDY AND MARCO Holzer were denied the International GT Open title in dramatic circumstances at Barcelona as Ferrari pair Gianmaria Bruni/Federico Leo passed several slowing Italian machines on the final lap of the year's final race to take the crown.

British driver Tandy and Holzer had suffered a wretched start to the weekend as their Manthey Porsche retired early in the opening race with a gearbox problem. With AF Corse duo Bruni/Leo finishing fifth and the Villois Aston Martin of Alvaro Barba/Matteo Malucelli winning, all three crews went into the season finale 24 hours later with a chance of the title.

A shower just before the start led some to switch to rain tyres; Barba/Malucelli and Bruni/Leo failed to get out of the pitlane before it closed and would have to start the race from there.

Race two win was not enough for Tandy/Holzer

Patrick Pilet led the race in his Imsa Porsche, but his co-driver Raymond Narac could not hold off the charging Tandy after taking over, the Brit slicing into the lead at Turn 1.

With Bruni and Barba running on the fringes of the top 10 at the time, this looked like being enough to secure the title. But inside the final few laps the pace of several Ferraris dropped off significantly, Philipp Peter significantly staying well out of Bruni's way as the Italian passed to take a fourth place that was enough to make himself and Leo champions by just three points.

Daniel Zampieri/Michael dalle Stelle took the IGTS (GT3) title, with Brit Archie Hamilton third in the points. Maxime Martin/Bertrand Baguette were the stars of the class all weekend in their Aston.

● Ben Evans

RESULTS

Race 1 **1 Alvaro Barba/Matteo Malucelli (Aston Martin Vantage)**, 36 laps in 1h10m02.764s; 2 Andrea Montermini/Juan Manuel Lopez (Ferrari 458 Italia), +5.236s; 3 Miguel Ramos/Raffaele Giammaria (Chevrolet Corvette C6.R); 4 Patrick Pilet/Raymond Narac (Porsche 911 GT3-RSR); 5 Gianmaria Bruni/Federico Leo (Ferrari); 6 Maxime Martin/Bertrand Baguette (Aston Vantage GT3). **Race 2** **1 Nick Tandy/Marco Holzer (Porsche)**, 25 laps in 50m40.850s; 2 Pilet/Narac, +0.722s; 3 Ramos/Giammaria; 4 Bruni/Leo; 5 Philipp Peter (Ferrari); 6 Stefano Bizzarri/Andrea Rizzoli (Ferrari 458 GT3). **Points** 1 Bruni/Leo, 195; 2 Tandy/Holzer, 192; 3 Barba/Malucelli, 179; 4 Ramos/Giammaria, 157; 5 Montermini/Lopez, 154; 6 Pilet/Narac, 152.

INTERNATIONAL RACES & RESULTS
INTERCONTINENTAL RALLY CHALLENGE
Cyprus Rally (CY), Rd 33/36

QUICK RESULTS
- Winner **Nasser Al-Attiyah**
- Production Cup **Toshi Arai**
- 2WD Cup **Harry Hunt**
- Champion **Andreas Mikkelsen**

RACE RATING ★★★☆☆ Spate of punctures means muted title celebrations for Mikkelsen

IN BRIEF

Harvick lets off some steam

NASCAR NATIONWIDE
Kevin Harvick dominated at Texas Motor Speedway, leading 127 laps in his Richard Childress Chevy and beating Ryan Blaney's Penske Dodge to take victory. Ricky Stenhouse Jr's fourth spot means he's now tied with Elliott Sadler for the series lead with only two races remaining.

NASCAR TRUCKS
Johnny Sauter took his second win of 2012 in Texas, the ThorSport Toyota man beating Parker Kligerman (Red Horse Toyota) and polesitter Nelson Piquet Jr (Turner Chevy). Ty Dillon was fifth, reducing James Buescher's series lead to 15 points with two rounds to go.

SUPER TC2000
Leonel Pernia took Renault's first win of the year at Salta, fending off the Ford of points leader Jose Maria Lopez throughout the race. Lopez increased his advantage to 9.5 points over Mattias Rossi, who was third for Toyota.

SPANISH GT
Finn Mikko Eskelinen won the title at Barcelona with a third place in the finale, sharing his Novadriver Audi R8 LMS with Cesar Campanico. Imsa Porsche duo Patrick Pilet/Raymond Narac won both races.

EUROPEAN F3 OPEN
Niccolo Schiro won the title on the last lap of the Barcelona season finale, crossing the line on three wheels after colliding with the stricken car of title rival and RP Motorsport team-mate Gianmarco Raimondo. Campos Racing's Auto GP regular Facu Regalia won both races.

Schiro took title

INTERCONTINENTAL RALLY CHALLENGE CYPRUS RALLY (CY), NOVEMBER 2-4, RD 13/13

Al-Attiyah wins on IRC's swansong

NASSER AL-ATTIYAH MADE up for his retirement in Cyprus 12 months ago by winning the swansong IRC event as a spate of punctures robbed double champion Andreas Mikkelsen of a third win of 2012.

Mikkelsen, in a Skoda UK Fabia Super 2000, was leading following the Paphos street stage on Friday night when he stopped to change a puncture on Saturday's first stage. He then suffered further delay with another puncture on the day's final run.

A trio of stage wins on Sunday morning gave hope, but a double deflation for Mikkelsen on stage 11 ensured victory for Al-Attiyah and his turbo Autotek Ford Fiesta RRC, as Mikkelsen adopted a cautious approach over the closing three tests having depleted his tyre supply.

With all chance of victory gone heading to the last stage, Mikkelsen invited navigator Ola Floene to drive the final stage, partly to celebrate their IRC title but also to mark the end of their six-and-a-half-year partnership. Floene was 45.6s off the pace.

Al-Attiyah's success puts him back on top of the Middle East Rally Championship standings after key rivals Yazeed Al-Rajhi and Abdulaziz Alkuwari crashed out.

Meanwhile, Toshi Arai clinched his first IRC podium in third in a Group N Subaru Impreza. His Tommi Makinen Racing team-mate Jarkko Nikara came home fourth after both drivers endured long delays.

Volkswagen protege Sepp Wiegand restarted on Sunday after stopping with broken steering on day one to finish fifth, while Briton Harry Hunt claimed his second IRC 2WD Cup title in three years.

● Graham Lister

Al-Attiyah won after Mikkelsen troubles

RESULTS
1 Nasser Al-Attiyah/Giovanni Bernacchini (Ford Fiesta RRC), 3h16m25.2s; 2 Andreas Mikkelsen/Ola Floene (Skoda Fabia Super 2000), +3m35.3s; 3 Toshi Arai/Dale Moscatt (Subaru Impreza R4 STI); 4 Jarkko Nikara/Jarkko Kalliolepo (Subaru); 5 Sepp Wiegand/Timo Gottschalk (Skoda); 6 Savvas Savva/Andreas Papandreou (Mitsubishi Lancer Evolution IX). **Points** 1 Mikkelsen, 168; 2 Jan Kopecky, 101; 3 Juho Hanninen, 93; 4 Wiegand, 73; 5 Giandomenico Basso, 65; 6 Al-Attiyah, 50.

FORMULA NIPPON SUZUKA (J), NOVEMBER 4, RD 9/9

Another title for the Nakajima family

KAZUKI NAKAJIMA CAME out on top of a five-way final-round title fight to become Formula Nippon champion with victory in his TOM'S Swift-Toyota at Suzuka last Sunday.

After finishing 13th in race one, the ex-Williams Formula 1 driver found himself third in the standings, two points behind Honda-powered Dandelion team-mates Kodai Tsukakoshi and Takuya Izawa.

But Nakajima hatched a plan. From ninth he made up three places at the start, then made his mandatory pitstop at the end of the opening lap, intent on exploiting the clear track that he emerged onto.

Helped by the retirements of early-race frontrunners Tsugio Matsuda and Joao Paulo de Oliveira due to, respectively, driveshaft and rear-wing failures on their Team Impul cars near mid-distance, Nakajima found himself in the lead once everyone had been in.

Nakajima's second win of the year made him champion and allowed him to emulate the achievement of his father Satoru, who won the last of his five Japanese Formula 2 crowns in 1986.

The opening race had brought a victory for Izawa, who outsprinted Matsuda off the line to grab the lead, and never relinquished his advantage during the 20-lap sprint race.

Tsukakoshi was third in the opener to give himself the best possible chance of taking the title. But, with Nakajima winning the following day, a repeat result left him three points shy of glory. Frenchman Loic Duval finished second in the finale in his Team Le Mans-run car.

● Jiro Takahashi

Nakajima took title at final race

RESULTS
Race 1 1 Takuya Izawa (Swift-Honda FN09), 20 laps in 34m27.682s; 2 Tsugio Matsuda (S-Toyota), +3.249s; 3 Kodai Tsukakoshi (SH); 4 Joao Paulo de Oliveira (ST); 5 Andre Lotterer (ST); 6 Takashi Kogure (SH); 7 Loic Duval (ST); 8 Kazuya Oshima (ST); 9 Kohei Hirate (ST); 10 Daisuke Nakajima (SH). **Race 2 1 Kazuki Nakajima (ST)**, 28 laps in 49m10.946s; 2 Duval, +1.289s; 3 Tsukakoshi; 4 Kogure; 5 Hirate; 6 Izawa; 7 Oshima; 8 Lotterer; 9 Hironobu Yasuda (ST); 10 Takuma Sato (SH). **Points** 1 K Nakajima, 46; 2 Tsukakoshi, 43; 3 Izawa, 41.5; 4 Lotterer, 35.5; 5 de Oliveira, 34.5; 6 Duval, 25.

PICS: ISHIHARA, LEVITT/LAT

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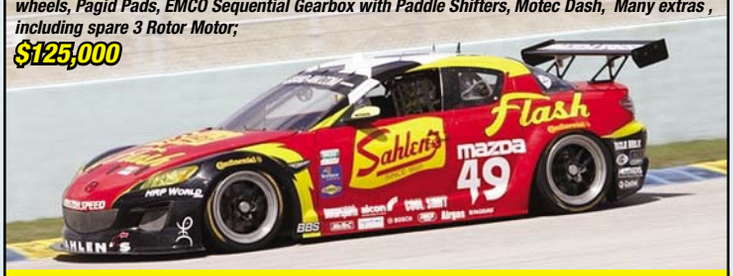

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In our last update we announced the new MAXI PROTOTYPE category for lightweight protoypes and diesel fuel capacity (90L) as well as listing over 30 teams, representing 9 countries and 17 different brands, which have already confirmed their intention to take part.

Three of these team principals talk about their plans – and motivation:

"The concept of a 48 Hour race greatly excites us. Normally in endurance the distance is anything from 3 to 24 hours with factors such as driver fitness, fuel use, tyre wear and changing weather meaning that strategy has to be dynamic. Here that challenge is doubled with more factors such as driver and crew fatigue playing a greater role.

If taking part in a 24 Hour race is the motorsport equivalent of climbing Everest, then the Maxi Endurance 48 Hours is like a trip to the moon."

- John Cowan, team principal Spirit Motorsport (BMW M3 E46 - MAXI CUP)

"Motorsport Services is a New Zealand based team specialising in endurance racing. We lease race cars and bring like-minded drivers together at top events - from Bathurst to Dubai to Silverstone.

The challenge of the Maxi Endurance 48 Hour event at Navarra was something we HAD to be a part of."

- Dave Taylor, team principal Motorsport Services (SEAT Leon Super Copa - MAXI SPORT)

"We will be on track with the Wolf GB08, the car which triumphed this year in the Speed Euroseries and in the prestigious 4 hours of Castellet. Lead driver will be Ivan Bellarosa, recent winner of the Sunoco Daytona Challenge and 2013 Speed Euroseries Champion.

Our passion for endurance racing is the reason we are going to Maxi Endurance 48 Spain - in a country that displays the same appetite for motorsport."

- Giovanni Bellarosa, team owner Avelon Formula (Wolf GB08 – MAXI PROTOTYPE)

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White handed F3 chance

Formula Ford racer earns test after stellar Hayes showing

White has had an impressive late-season run in FF1600

FORMULA FORD 1600 RACER Oliver White will test a Formula 3 car alongside Team USA Scholarship drivers at Pembrey this week, after impressing with his performances at the recent blue-riband Formula Ford Festival and Walter Hayes Trophy events.

Ex-Saxmax champion White finished fourth in the FF1600 Festival at Brands Hatch at the end of October, before running at the front of the WHT at Silverstone last weekend.

He finished second in his WHT heat and semi-final, behind Festival winner Ivor McCullough, before being spun out of the final by an accidental hit from McCullough.

Team USA, which entered its scholarship drivers Tristan Nunez (who came through to win the WHT) and Jack Mitchell Jr at Silverstone, had been in discussions with Double R Racing boss Anthony Hieatt about running an F3 test for a selection of its drivers.

Following further talks with Hieatt and WHT organiser James Beckett, it was decided to extend the test to offer a free drive to the 'most deserving' driver across the Festival and Walter Hayes.

White, who will test a National Class British F3 car at Pembrey on Thursday, was the consensus pick among Beckett, Team USA's Jeremy Shaw and a selection of motorsport journalists.

Beckett said: "He's developed well during the year, with some very solid performances in the Champion of Brands and other events. He had a good Festival and ran well in the Hayes.

"Oliver has shown a bit of potential and has a good head on his shoulders. It's a rare opportunity for him to drive an F3 car and it's really good for Formula Ford."

NOT WEATHER-BEATEN

Organisers of the 12th edition of Beckett's WHT battled with heavy rain that left the Silverstone National Circuit flooded, but eventually completed the running of the event on Sunday.

Pumping equipment had to be used on parts of the circuit, while tractors swept water clear of other parts of the track.

The first race eventually started at 1310, almost three hours late, giving officials just over three hours to run nine races. Two allcomers races were combined, while all the others, including the WHT final, were reduced in distance.

Clerk of the course Julian Floyd said: "It was one of the year's greatest challenges, but we got through the event.

"Many thanks to all of the marshals and officials, and in particular to the circuit team for manning the pumps and clearing vast quantities of water."

Torrential rain delayed the 2012 Walter Hayes for hours

PICS: EBREY, JONES

AUTOSPORT SAYS...

BEN ANDERSON
NATIONAL EDITOR
ben.anderson@haymarket.com

THE WALTER HAYES TROPHY truly is a rare gem among the stones in UK motorsport's jewellery box.

Once again James Beckett's brainchild attracted a staggering entry to Silverstone. We had 116 cars doing battle in a true knockout style of Formula Ford racing, and we were treated to an epic final – only able to go ahead thanks to dogged work by officials and marshals, who saw the meeting through despite torrential rain threatening to curtail the event.

The Walter Hayes is Beckett's *piece de resistance* and the one event in the Formula Ford calendar that brings together drivers from all the strong regional series.

It's a shame this chemistry isn't replicated at other meetings. The WHT's end-of-season timing and central location (on a track that doesn't host a regional series) are certainly to its advantage. But I wonder if there is mileage in uniting the FF1600 showpieces (the WHT, Brands Festival, David Leslie Trophy, Martin Donnelly Trophy and Combe Carnival) under one umbrella...

Perhaps if a sponsor could be found to fund decent prizes to the best drivers across all five (united under Beckett's stuttering Super Series moniker?), we might get to see the best of what Formula Ford has to offer more often.

Extra contact details
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British GT

Firth makes McLaren switch

Ex-GT4 champion to share United Autosports MP4-12C in British GT next year

McLaren has been a force in British GT

FORMER BRITISH GT4 champion Jody Firth will race a United Autosports McLaren MP4-12C in next year's British GT3 championship.

Double SPEED Series prototype champion Firth raced in LMP2 and shared a Team WFR Ginetta G55 with Riki Christodoulou in British GT this season, but was left without a drive when the team withdrew the car before the finale at Donington.

For 2013, Firth will share a UA McLaren with historic racer Richard Meins. The pair will contest a full British GT season, as well as the Spa 24 Hours and Abu Dhabi and Bathurst 12-hour enduros.

"It's a great opportunity," said Firth. "I will be racing a car that I think is brilliant and is the pinnacle of engineering. United had a great season in 2012, and winning three out of the last four races shows there is more to come.

"The British GT Championship is going from strength to strength, and no one car ran away with it this season. The package gives me confidence that I can challenge for the title and that's exciting."

Team boss Richard Dean added: "We know Jody very well having run him in Formula Renault in 2005 [as Team JLR].

"He is the perfect fit for us and not only because he is from Yorkshire! Jody is a real team player, he knows the circuits and his LMP2 experience has made him a stronger driver since we last worked together."

McLaren factory driver Alvaro Parente and UA team owner Zak Brown, who won the 2012 Donington British GT finale, will also contest a full season in a second MP4-12C, while Matt Bell will share UA's Audi R8 LMS ultra with Mark Patterson.

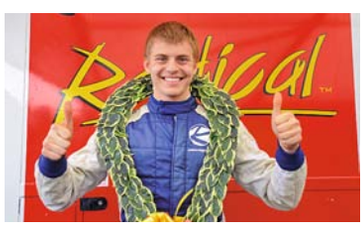
Radical European Masters

Calko's title as Kronegard wins

LATVIAN RACER KONSTANTIN Calko clinched the Radical European Masters title with two SR3 class wins at Circuit de Catalunya last weekend, as Christian Kronegard won twice overall.

Kronegard led the first race after poleman Lionel Comole was unable to take the start, while Spanish SR8 racer Igor Urien worked his way up to second.

Kronegard extended his lead, which ballooned to more than 15 seconds when the mandatory pitstops were completed. He eventually won by more than 25s from Urien, with Greg Hart just holding off James Littlejohn for third.



Latvian Calko is the new Radical Masters champ

Littlejohn set the fastest lap of the weekend in taking pole for race two, but Kronegard came through to win despite starting from the back of the grid after missing qualifying due to a technical issue with his SR8.

Kronegard gained 19 places on the first lap alone and eventually grabbed the lead from Littlejohn's co-driver Tony Wells with two laps to run.

Grand-Am 200 Challenge

Davey gets Daytona Camaro prize

NEW LEGENDS CHAMPION Lawrence Davey has won the 2012 Sunoco Grand-Am 200 Challenge.

A string of podium places at Brands Hatch last weekend, as he clinched the Legends title, meant Davey defeated Production Touring Car Trophy racer Gary Duckman.

Davey, 27, from Hartfield, Surrey, will travel to Florida in January to race a Chevrolet Camaro in the Continental Tires GT support race to the Daytona 24 Hours.

The prize is awarded to the driver who scores the most points based on a combination of race results, pole positions and fastest laps across the season in Sunoco-supported categories. Davey defeated competitors from F3 Cup, GT Cup, Britcar and Dutch Supercars.

Davey said: "Driving a Camaro on that famous banking will be mega!"

Davey's Legends title brings added bonus

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F3 Cup

Carlin open to more F3 Cup as series impresses team boss

TOP BRITISH SINGLE-SEATER squad Carlin has left the door open to racing in the F3 Cup again after making a successful debut in the series at Snetterton last month.

Trevor Carlin's team, which competes in Formula Renault 3.5, GP2, GP3 and Formula 3, ran Red Bull protege Antonio Felix da Costa in the 2012 F3 Cup finale, in order for the Portuguese to gain an entry into this month's Macau F3 GP.

Da Costa qualified nine seconds clear of the field in the wet and dominated the event as an invitation entry in a Dallara-VW F308. F3 Cup regulars are restricted to cars no later than 2007.

Team boss Carlin praised the category and said he would consider a return if he could find the right car.

"I think the championship is fantastic," said Carlin, who also presented 2012 teams champion Omicron Motorsport with its award at Snett. "It's a good way for people to go motor racing in an affordable way – I almost fancy having a go myself!

"It's a great way for aspiring drivers to get mileage. If we could find a way of getting a car into it that meets the regulations, and a cheap engine, we would consider it, [but] obviously we wouldn't want to disrupt what the series is about."

Da Costa and Carlin enjoyed F3 Cup run

Toyota Racing Series

Cassidy and Auer in TRS return

REIGNING TOYOTA RACING SERIES champions Nick Cassidy and Lucas Auer will return to the category for the 2013 season.

Formula Renault Eurocup racer Cassidy won the overall crown in the 2012 TRS with Giles Motorsport, while German F3 runner-up Auer (nephew of ex-F1 racer Gerhard Berger) finished sixth and claimed the rookie title with the same squad.

Series boss Barrie Thomlinson said: "TRS 2013 is going to be another cracking series. Nick is returning after a difficult European season and we expect he will be stronger for that experience.

"Lucas joins several international drivers returning for a second time and they will all provide a great benchmark for our rookies."

British F3 racers Pipo Derani and Felix Serralles will both return to TRS this winter, while Formula Ford rookie Ryan Cullen will make his debut with M2 Competition.

Auer will return to TRS after a strong season

Ginetta GT5

Vittoria offers Ferrari test incentive

BRITISH GT SQUAD SCUDERIA Vittoria will offer a free test in its Ferrari 458 Italia to any of its drivers that finish in the top three of the Clio Cup or Ginetta GT5 Challenge next season.

Vittoria, which ran John Dhillon/Aaron Scott in the Ferrari in British GT this year, hopes the prize will help its Clio and Ginetta drivers find a path into GT3.

Team director Piers Masarati said: "GT4 doesn't have many cars and is a lot more money [than Ginettas or Clios], but 24 cars in GT5 is healthy. It's a nice stepping stone to GT3."

Formula Ford racer Alex Drabble will be eligible for the prize after becoming the first driver to join SV for next year's GT5 Challenge. "The move from Formula Ford to GT was always on the cards as my goal is Le Mans," he said.

Vittoria wants to use GT5 as a GT3 springboard

MARCUS PYE

HUMBLE PYE

The voice of club motor racing

Hayes Trophy provided some peerless racing

In recent weeks news of two new 'junior' single-seater formulae – BRDC Formula 4 and the slick-tyred and bewinged Formula Ford EcoBoost 200 – have made headlines. Each may have merits, but I am not convinced either addresses the fundamental needs of an 'affordable' transition class for karters to cars. And I fear they will dilute each other.

Where Jonathan Palmer's two-litre, 175bhp Ford Duratec-powered F4 initiative scores will be MotorSport Vision's powerful marketing of a bespoke product, plus three races per weekend over eight fixtures. The coup for Ford's rehash of its ill-starred 1.6-litre, 165bhp turbocharged category (like 1800cc FF Zetec and 1600cc FF Duratec before it a slow-burner) is a BTCC support slot.

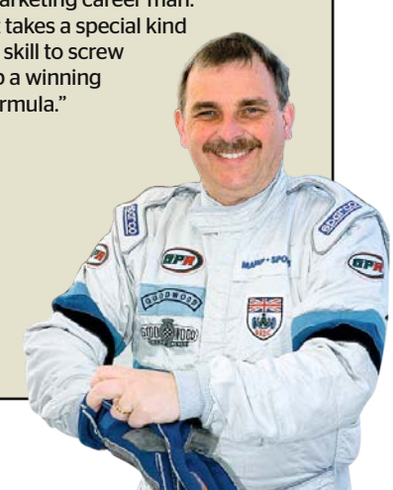
In the 1990s, Ford, Vauxhall and Renault promoted single-seater classes – Ford's always to open-chassis rules – but, as Formula Renault finally priced itself out of the UK and was discontinued for 2012, the TOCA package has been mostly open-wheeler-free. FFord EcoBoost 200 will therefore stand out, offering 30 races over 10 meetings. Still nowhere near the 70 Mark Blundell did in FF1600 in '84...

I can't help believing, though, that Ford would get more mileage from – and serve the sport better globally with – a wingless car motivated by a normally-aspirated one-litre three-cylinder EcoBoost engine. A machine closer to the original ethos of Formula Ford, which created more F1 champions than any other class, yet equally allowed privateers to compete.

Today's racers are so far beyond the £1000 Cortina GT-engined machines of 1967, evolved from old FJunior/F3 stock, that their initial cost is necessarily high. Nonetheless, Palmer and [Van Diemen founder] Ralph Firman of RFR have striven to offer value for money with the new F4 cars, which, if everybody who has paid a deposit converts, appear to be selling like hot cakes.

That was always the case with FF1600, which, 45 years on, provided peerless racing at last weekend's Walter Hayes Trophy event at Silverstone. Richard Hayes – son of the late journalist-turned-Ford racing visionary who brought the Cosworth DFV F1 engine and Formula Ford to fruition in a golden era for the Blue Oval – watched the drama unfold in the BRDC Clubhouse. "This class is still fantastic," said the motorsport marketing career man. "It takes a special kind of skill to screw up a winning formula."

> "It takes a special kind of skill to screw up a winning formula, which FF1600 still is"



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Ginetta Junior

Chadwick wins Scholarship

Sister of Ollie becomes first female to win Yorkshire marque's annual prize

JAMIE CHADWICK, YOUNGER sister of Ginetta Junior frontrunner Ollie, will race her brother in the series next season after winning the third annual Ginetta Junior Scholarship.

Chadwick, 14, defeated a field of 60 hopefuls to claim a fully-funded season in the category, after a series of driving, fitness and media assessments at Bedford Autodrome last week.

Chadwick, who is the first female winner of the prize, said: "I am absolutely over the moon. The Ginetta Junior Scholarship is a fantastic opportunity.

"The standard has been so high and to see drivers travel from Sweden and Spain to compete shows just how popular the series is."

The scholarship, previously won by 2012 title contender Sennan Fielding and Oliver Basey-Fisher, was judged by chief instructor Jack Stanford, former Ginetta Junior champion Tom Ingram and BTCC racer Adam Morgan.

Ginetta boss Lawrence Tomlinson said: "The calibre of entrants this year was phenomenal and they astounded our driving instructors.

"Ultimately, Ginetta was looking for a scholar who brought 'the whole package' of speed, skill and personality to the grid. Jamie excelled in all areas and we look forward to seeing what she can do."

Chadwick will make her race debut in this Saturday's Winter Series races at Rockingham, which have attracted a 13-car entry.

HSCC

Road Sports targets coupes for '13

70s Road Sports wants more cars

THE HISTORIC SPORTS CAR CLUB will expand its 70s Road Sports category to allow two-door coupes next season.

Roadsports is open to production cars built and road-registered between January 1 1970 and December 31 1979.

The move aims to attract cars such as Ford Capris, Vauxhall Firenzas and BMW 6-series to join the GTs and sportscars, such as the Porsche 911 and Datsun 240Z, already competing in the series.

Leading competitor and championship chairman Charles Barter confirmed the move was due to competitor interest.

"We've had some enquiries from people with cars like Capris and Firenzas and we decided it was sensible to accept this type of car," he said. "We feel that two-door coupes are in keeping with many of the existing cars in the series.

"We added a kit-car class in 2012 for specific cars and this class continues to develop. We are always looking to build the grid in these difficult times."

The rest of the series' regulations, for which there is a mandated weight for each model of eligible car, will remain unchanged.

Scottish Formula Ford

Ford exclusion is overturned

SCOTTISH FORMULA FORD RACER Ross McEwan has been confirmed as the 2012 champion after having an exclusion overturned.

McEwan was excluded from third in the September 23 round at Knockhill for an exhaust infringement, but has been reinstated after an investigation by the National Court of the Motor Sports Council. This means the indiGO Van Diemen driver is now champion by two points from Ray racer Alistair Dow.

"It has been an intensely competitive season and I have to thank the team at IndiGO Motorsport, Bold Engines and Bendi Forktrucks for giving me the car, engine and budget to get the job done," McEwan said. "We can now look forward to competing nationally and are assessing programmes in Duratec Formula Ford, F3 Cup and sportscars."

McEwan (leading) is Scottish Ford champion

IN BRIEF

Wells scored two thirds and a second

BRITISH RACER DAN WELLS WILL head to the Formula Pilota China finale with an outside shot at the title after scoring three podium finishes at the Sepang circuit in Malaysia last weekend. The KCMG racer now lies 40 points adrift of leader Antonio Giovanazzi with 55 on offer at December's Sepang finale.

FORMULA RENAULT SQUAD MARK Burdett Motorsport plans to run two cars in the new 1.6 Junior NEC series in 2013. The team is in discussions with karter Luke Whitworth, who tested a 1.6 car at a Zandvoort invitation day last week.

SHAHAN SARKISSIAN WILL SWELL the grid for this Saturday's Formula Renault BARC Winter Series finale to 20 cars. Sarkissian will race with MTECH Lite at Rockingham. Patric Armand replaces Laura Tillett at Fortec, while Tom Oliphant takes Gustav Malja's seat at MGR.

ARGENTINIAN FORMULA RENAULT racers Matias Galetto and Emmanuel Caceres plan to move into BRDC F4 in 2013. The pair plans to test in MTECH Lite's FR BARC cars at Silverstone and Donington later this month.

FORMER EUROPEAN AND 10-TIME British truck champion Stuart Oliver made his Legends debut at Brands Hatch last weekend. He started the first heat from the back row of the grid in Peter Morton's car and finished 17th out of 27.

KARTER NICK BARNES WILL MAKE his debut in the Northern FF1600 pre-90 division next season after acquiring Alan Slater's Swift FB89. The 20-year-old will follow in the footsteps of his father Chris, who raced a Crossle at Oulton Park in the early 1980s after cutting his teeth in the MG Midget Challenge.

DRIVING THE IRH2 IN WHICH HIS father competed as a passenger in the late 1960s, Ian Veale (partnered by son Josh) beat an 18-car field in the Cotswold Historic Trial, the second event of the new Historic Sporting Trials Association.

First Cotswold Historic Trial had 18 cars

PICS: MOIR, VILLAR, WOODING

WHT FINAL QUICK RESULTS
- Winner **Tristan Nunez**
- Fastest lap **Nunez**
- Pole **Ivor McCullough**

Nunez celebrates his late victory

WALTER HAYES TROPHY FINAL SILVERSTONE, NOVEMBER 4

Nunez conquers the Hayes

Martin (left) and McCullough flank Nunez

Dempsey leads at the packed start

TRISTAN NUNEZ LAST weekend became the third Team USA Scholarship driver to lift the Walter Hayes Trophy. And the 17-year-old from Florida, already a champion in IMSA Prototype Lites, ranked the victory as his best. "Nothing comes close to this," he said, still dazed by his triumph.

Although he had shown excellent pace at the Formula Ford Festival a week earlier, at the Hayes Nunez had flown below the radar, with fourth places in his heat and semi-final putting him out of mind when evaluating contenders for victory in the final.

Nunez started seventh, and was sixth after one lap in his CDR Ray GR08, having passed Michael Moyers at Luffield. Up front, Peter Dempsey (CDR Ray GR11) was ahead of Joey Foster (Don Hardman Ray GR10), who had dived inside Oliver White at Brooklands on lap two.

Unfortunately, 2009 Saxmax champion White's race didn't last much longer, his Van Diemen RF01 being hit from behind by Ivor McCullough's RF00 on lap three and sent spinning. The Northern Irishman accepted responsibility for the unintentional clash.

By now, Nunez had already jumped ahead of Rob Hall (Mygale SJ00), and emerged third after McCullough was delayed by his incident.

Ahead, Foster reeled in Dempsey, and with the pair having split six WHT titles between them, and each gunning for a fourth, the final took on the air of Fantasy Formula Ford. Nunez went with the top two, while McCullough and John Martin (Mark Bailey Racing Spectrum 012) scrapped over fourth.

Foster breached Dempsey's defences with a confident move at Brooklands on lap eight, while Martin grabbed fourth there almost simultaneously. Dempsey, however, went around the outside of Foster at Luffield to get his nose ahead as they pulled out of Woodcote. Foster then got ahead through Copse before Dempsey struck back at Maggotts.

A lap later, the fantasy was over when the leaders clashed exiting Becketts. "I got good traction, but Peter was compromised on the slippery stuff," said Foster. "We hit wheel to wheel."

"I think I gave him plenty of room, but I am not sure if his car got loose and came across into mine," countered Dempsey.

Although Nunez was released into the lead,

Martin chases Nunez (22) and McCullough

"I couldn't believe it when I saw the flag. I didn't think I could win"

Nunez believed there were more laps to go at the finish

Hadfield (69) and Gardner put on great fight until it all went wrong

Foster (left) and Dempsey clash disputing the lead

McCullough (who had swiftly repassed Martin) took him at Brooklands on the penultimate lap, immediately grabbing the preferred line for Luffield. The American wasn't done, though, retaking the lead at Maggotts, despite pressure from Martin.

McCullough lost one more place, with Martin going around the outside of him at Brooklands two corners from home.

Nunez, who finished 0.278s clear, was overjoyed by his win, the sixth for Cliff Dempsey Rays in 12 WHTs. "I couldn't believe it when I saw the flag because I thought that there were a couple more laps to go," said Nunez. "I honestly would have been happy with third because I didn't think I could win."

Having stepped back to FF1600, Martin pledged to return. "I'll be back in future because I've had a ball this weekend," said the Australian.

Despite a rapid clutch change after the semi-final, McCullough had to battle with problems. "Every time I needed to go down a gear, it locked the back wheels up," he explained.

Hall was the top English driver in fourth, while an unsung hero was Falco Wauer with fifth. The F4 champion struggled in his debut FF1600 heat, so he lined up 25th for his semi before scrabbling through to seventh. His Enigma Van Diemen RF99 made up nine places in the final.

Michael Moyers was sixth in his Kevin Mills Racing Spectrum, ahead of Robert Barrable, Garrett Grist, Roger Orgee and Jack Mitchell Jr. The rest of the classification was littered with drivers who were heartbroken to miss out on a coveted top-10 spot.

There were no pre-1982 cars in the main final, meaning that the winner of the Classic and Historic race received the Bernard Baxter Trophy.

Simon Hadfield (Lotus 69) led for much of the way, but Mike Gardner (Van Diemen RF80) grabbed the initiative at Copse on lap seven. Hadfield tried to come back at Brooklands, but spun as the duo went into Luffield with the gap between them ever narrowing. Stuart Kestenbaum's RF79 had nowhere to go and hit the Lotus, depriving the crowd of a grandstand finish.

Behind Gardner, David Wild (Lola T200) was second and Andrew Smith (Van Diemen FA73) third, having started the race in reverse — for the first time since Mallory Park in 1990, as he told commentator Ian Titchmarsh.

● Ian Sowman

WALTER HAYES TROPHY FINAL (12 LAPS) **1 Tristan Nunez (Ray GR08)**; 2 John Martin (Spectrum 012) +0.278s; 3 Ivor McCullough (Van Diemen RF00); 4 Rob Hall (Mygale SJ00); 5 Falco Wauer (Van Diemen RF99); 6 Michael Moyers (Spectrum 011C); 7 Rob Barrable (Ray GR09); 8 Garrett Grist (Ray GR08); 9 Roger Orgee (Van Diemen RF00); 10 Jack Mitchell Jr (Ray GR08). **Fastest lap** Nunez 1m09.877s (84.44mph).

BERNARD BAXTER TROPHY FOR PRE-1982 FF1600 (8 LAPS) **1 Mike Gardner (Van Diemen RF80)**; 2 David Wild (Lola T200) +3.655s; 3 Andrew Smith (Van Diemen FA73); 4 Simon Toyne (Lola T200); 5 Dan Fox (PRS RH001); 6 Liam McShane (Crossle 45F). **FL** Wild 1m15.510s (78.14mph).

PICS: JONES, EBREY, MITCHELL/EBREY

WALTER HAYES TROPHY SEMI-FINALS SILVERSTONE, NOVEMBER 4

Dempsey and McCullough lead the way

McCullough starred on his way to the final

PETER DEMPSEY and Ivor McCullough triumphed in the semi-finals, in the process installing themselves as favourites to win the Walter Hayes Trophy.

Indy Lights ace Dempsey started on the outside of the second row and made up places on each of the first three laps to take the lead of semi-final one.

John Martin (Spectrum) yielded to the Ray driver on the exit of Luffield on lap one, before heat one winner Rob Hall (Mygale) lost out early on lap two.

Dempsey made a move on Ben Norton — who defeated him in the first round — at Copse on the next lap. The Spectrum man caught the kerb on the exit of the corner and spun back down the order.

Dempsey was left clear, but Hall set fastest lap on the wet track as he aimed to regain contact with the leader. Had the race been run over a full 12 laps, rather than eight due to earlier rain delays, Hall may well have done so.

Joey Foster (Ray) grabbed third from Martin at Copse on lap four, the Cornish driver finishing well behind the leaders, but five seconds clear of the Australian.

When Callum MacLeod was tipped into a spin by Kevin O'Hara at Becketts on the sixth lap, Robert Barrable and Garrett Grist moved into the top six in their Rays, while 2007 British FF champ MacLeod retired on the final circuit.

McCullough's victory was a resounding one, coming as it did despite "an awful start" to semi-final two. Although fellow front-row starter Neville Smyth (Ray) led briefly, he suffered from wheelspin and fell back. McCullough, meanwhile, escaped to a five-second win. "I didn't push too hard, I just took my time," he said.

After an early skirmish, Oliver White (Van Diemen) established himself in second, taking advantage when Josh Fisher ran wide at Becketts. The Reynard driver relinquished third place on the fourth tour, when Michael Moyers (Spectrum) drove right around the outside of him at Brooklands.

Luke Cooper (Swift) and Graham Carroll (Van Diemen) had been enjoying an incredibly close battle for fifth, with Floridian Tristan Nunez (Ray) joining in late on. On the final lap, Fisher and Carroll made contact at Becketts, Cooper went off in avoidance and Nunez scampered through into fourth, clear of the Van Diemens of Stuart Gough and Roger Orgee. Carroll, with frontal damage, was the leading retirement.

Earlier, David McArthur and Ryan Hayes won the Progression and Last Chance races respectively, with race debutant Joe Porter second in the former. However, Nathan Ward starred in the Sunday preliminaries, gaining more than 50 places in the repechage races before climbing from 29th to 15th in semi two.

SEMI-FINAL 1 (8 LAPS) 1 Peter Dempsey (Ray GR11); 2 Rob Hall (Mygale SJ00) +0.849s; 3 Joey Foster (GR10); 4 John Martin (Spectrum 012); 5 Robert Barrable (GR09); 6 Garrett Grist (GR08). **CW** Simon Hadfield (Lotus 69). **FL** Hall 1m11.139s (82.94mph).

SEMI-FINAL 2 (8 LAPS) 1 Ivor McCullough (Van Diemen RF00); 2 Oliver White (RF01) +5.132s; 3 Michael Moyers (Spectrum 011); 4 Tristan Nunez (GR08); 5 Stuart Gough (RF92); 6 Roger Orgee (RF00). **FL** McCullough 1m11.392s (82.64mph).

PROGRESSION RACE (3 LAPS) 1 David McArthur (Van Diemen LA10); 2 Joe Porter (RF90) +4.036s; 3 Nathan Ward (011C); 4 Jonny McMullan (Mondiale M89S); 5 Luke Rosewell (Ray 96F); 6 Vince Mann (RF89). **CW** Steve Bradley (Crossle 25F). **FL** McArthur 1m15.733s (77.91mph).

LAST CHANCE RACE (8 LAPS) 1 Ryan Hayes (RF92); 2 McArthur +6.505s; 3 Mike Gardner (RF80); 4 Ward; 5 McMullan; 6 Ben Mitchell (RF99). **CW** Gardner. **FL** McArthur 1m14.260s (79.45mph).

WHT HEATS QUICK RESULTS
- Heat 1 **Rob Hall**
- Heat 2 **Ivor McCullough**
- Heat 3 **Neville Smyth**
- Heat 4 **Ben Norton**
- Heat 5 **Josh Fisher**
- Heat 6 **Noel Dunne**

Dunne was another to star on Saturday

WALTER HAYES TROPHY HEATS SILVERSTONE, NOVEMBER 3

Combe v Ireland in the heats

Norton pipped Dempsey and Martin in heat four

WALTER HAYES Trophy heat honours were split evenly between drivers from the island of Ireland and those who regularly compete at Castle Combe, but it was the Wiltshire circuit's current champion and lap record holder who produced the outstanding first-round performances.

Double title winner Ben Norton only qualified in sixth position for heat four, but came through to defeat three-time WHT winner Peter Dempsey and WEC LMP2 racer John Martin.

"I'm a club driver racing against what I consider to be professional drivers, and it doesn't get much better than this," said the jubilant Bratton man.

Norton had climbed to third by Becketts on the opening lap, before passing Martin at Copse on lap four and Dempsey there a lap later.

Dempsey piled on the pressure for the remaining four laps, but claimed progression was more important than the heat win. Dan Headlam finished less than a tenth clear of Scott Moakes, who had survived a brush with Sam McLeod at Brooklands, for fourth.

Josh Fisher was a last-minute entrant in Tom Margetson's Reynard 89FF, but qualified on row six due to race rustiness and a misfire. He was up to sixth on the first lap of heat five, and fourth in two more, before passing poleman Roger Orgee on the outside at Brooklands.

Stuart Gough's fumbled attempts on the lead of Noel Robinson at Becketts let Fisher by into second, before he made a brilliant move at Brooklands to grab first. As Robinson tried to fight back at Becketts on the next lap he lost his right rear wheel after a touch with Fisher, so Michael Moyers, up from 14th, ended second ahead of Gough and Orgee.

At the beginning of the day, Rob Hall had grabbed a hard-fought win from Callum MacLeod. The 2011 Combe champion had surged away at the start, but MacLeod reeled him in and regained the lead with a bold move at Brooklands, only to lose it there a lap later. Rally star Rob Barrable stole ahead of Alice Powell at Becketts to claim third, with Felix Fisher following him through.

Formula Ford Festival victor Ivor McCullough controlled heat two, winning by 5s. Oliver White held second virtually throughout, with only Luke Cooper penetrating his defences briefly mid-race. Cooper had lost third to Nathan Ward going into the final lap, but went around the outside at Brooklands. That gave Cooper the inside line for Luffield, but as Ward fought to hold third place there was contact that put him into the gravel. Tristan Nunez was fourth.

Ben Mitchell's strength on the brakes at Brooklands gave him the lead of heat three from Neville Smyth on lap five. Having briefly lost second to Graham Carroll, Smyth countered there on the inside line two laps later, but made contact with Ben Mitchell, who limped home 12th with bent suspension. Smyth led Carroll and Jack Mitchell Jr over the line.

Noel Dunne pulled away at the front of the final heat, but an intense battle for second hit the hopes of WHT legend Joey Foster when Neil Winn outbraked himself at Brooklands on the penultimate lap and launched Foster airborne. Kevin O'Hara and Garrett Grist capitalised, Jonny McMullan having already retired with crank failure.

● Ian Sowman

Hall took his Mygale to a heat victory

HEAT 1 (ALL 8 LAPS) **1 Rob Hall (Mygale SJ00)**; 2 Callum MacLeod (Spectrum 011) +0.301s; 3 Rob Barrable (Ray GR09); 4 Felix Fisher (Van Diemen RF05); 5 Alice Powell (GRS07); 6 Ed Moore (GR11). **Class winner** David Wild (Lola T200). **Fastest lap** Fisher 1m03.200s (93.36mph).

HEAT 2 1 Ivor McCullough (RF00); 2 Oliver White (RF01) +5.034s; 3 Luke Cooper (Swift SC10); 4 Tristan Nunez (GR08); 5 David Quinn (RF99); 6 Josh Barnett (Van Diemen BR001). **Class winner** Andrew Smith (Van Diemen FA73). **Fastest lap** McCullough 1m02.628s (94.21mph).

HEAT 3 1 Neville Smyth (GRS09); 2 Graham Carroll (RF91) +0.109s; 3 Jack Mitchell Jr (GR08); 4 David McCullough (RF00); 5 Austin Kimberley (Van Diemen FCM12); 6 Bob Higgins (Van Diemen JL12). **Class winner** Simon Jackson (Javelin JL5). **Fastest lap** Carroll 1m03.014s (93.63mph).

HEAT 4 1 Ben Norton (Spectrum 011B); 2 Peter Dempsey (GR11) +0.185s; 3 John Martin (Spectrum 012); 4 Dan Headlam (Van Diemen JL012K); 5 Scott Moakes (RF99); 6 Sam McLeod (Van Diemen JL012K). **Class winner** Stuart Kestenbaum (RF79). **Fastest lap** Dempsey 1m02.458s (94.47mph).

HEAT 5 1 Josh Fisher (Reynard 89FF); 2 Michael Moyers (Spectrum 011C) +0.160s; 3 Stuart Gough (RF92); 4 Roger Orgee (RF00); 5 Chris Acton (GRS08); 6 Jonathan Hoad (RF90). **Class winner** Mike Gardner (RF80). **Fastest lap** Moyers 1m02.698s (94.10mph).

HEAT 6 1 Noel Dunne (RF00); 2 Kevin O'Hara (RF01) +4.578s; 3 Garrett Grist (GR08); 4 Doug Crosbie (RF00); 5 Joey Foster (GR10); 6 Neil Winn (Van Diemen LA10). **Class winner** Simon Hadfield (Lotus 69). **Fastest lap** Dunne 1m02.882s (93.83mph).

PICS: JONES, EBREY

QUICK RESULTS
→ Allcomers Closed **Andrew Shanley**
→ Allcomers Open **Neil Harrison**

"I was covered in oil, and it was horrendous"
Cummings didn't enjoy the conditions

WHT SUPPORTS SILVERSTONE, NOVEMBER 3-4

Shanley splashes to support success

ANDREW SHANLEY WAS a class apart in a well-supported Allcomers Closed Wheel race, as his Radical Prosport managed to lap the whole field inside 10 tours. "I dropped the revs, got away OK and found grip around the outside, then just threaded my way through," he said.

Shanley, Dave Coyne's Ferrari 328 and Andy Cummings' Radical SR3 eased away from the rest on the opening lap, but Coyne had deposited most of his oil at Brooklands and was soon out of the race.

Cummings was covered in oil, too, and David Porter's Porsche GT3 spun out of fourth at Brooklands, which promoted Spencer McCarthy's Mallock.

Dan Stringfellow's BMW M3 E48 soon carved through the field to fourth on lap two and claimed McCarthy's scalp a tour later. As Shanley continued to charge clear, Cummings had a couple of spins, the second of which allowed Stringfellow to take second at Maggotts on lap nine of 15. "I was covered in oil, and it was horrendous on the wet track," said Cummings.

"I had already started to pull Andy in before he spun, and I just tried to keep my pace up," Stringfellow added.

As the lead trio held station to the end, McCarthy came under a late challenge from Steven Chaplin's Phantom for fourth. He held him off for a while, but Chaplin snatched it on the last lap.

It was a lights-to-flag win for Neil Harrison's Dallara F302 in the Allcomers Open Wheel race. Simon Hadfield's F5000 Lola T330 was into second by Brooklands on lap two and gradually started to close on the leader. On the last lap, however, they rounded Luffield nose to tail, with Harrison just holding on. "It was cold and slippery, but another lap and Simon would have had me for sure," said Harrison.

Hadfield was given a 10s jumped-start penalty, but was still a clear second. "My car was just too wide in the corners for those conditions, but at least I could use some power on the straights," he said.

Paul Wighton's Van Diemen RF82 consolidated third and was top Formula Ford 2000 runner, with Mark Pearson's RF83 the last unlapped runner, having taken fourth from Javier Pernas' Delta on the fifth lap. Pernas retained fifth after his duel with Philippe Layac's Formula Renault ended when the latter slid off.

Andy Huxtable's Chevron B34 took charge for the HSCC Allcomers Open Wheel race after poleman Thomas Smith had mechanical problems with his March 79B. For a while, Jamie Brashaw's March 793 threatened Huxtable's lead, but once the tow was broken the gap grew to more than 16 seconds at the flag.

After Smith's retirement, Ian Gray's Brabham BT30 became established in third, with Wighton's Van Diemen's demoting Pernas' similar car on lap four, before both were caught by Matthew Sturmer's Ralt RT3. On lap six, Sturmer made it by to secure fourth, while Wighton and Pernas retained fifth and sixth.

A startline shunt behind him helped poleman Roderick Smith take a dominant win in the HSCC Allcomers Closed Wheel race. Smith's Chevron B16 was more than three seconds clear after the opening tour, and continued to build on that lead to take victory by more than 42 seconds.

Mike Gardiner's Ford Falcon completed the opening lap in second, but couldn't hold off the Merlyn Mk6A of George Daws. Both drivers followed the leader's example and consolidated their positions, being the only others to remain unlapped.

Roger Waite's Lotus Elan was fourth for most of the race, while after an early shuffle with Mike Smith's Porsche 911 RSR and Richard Dutton's Ford Mustang, Steven Wood's Chevrolet Camaro started to settle in fifth. In the closing laps, however, Wood was caught by Bob Yarwood's Crossle 9S and Harry Wyndham's Jaguar E-type. Yarwood clinched fifth two laps from home and Wyndham settled for sixth on the penultimate lap, having recovered from his involvement in the startline shunt.

● Peter Scherer

Wet conditions didn't faze Shanley

Hadfield's F5000 Lola couldn't quite usurp Harrison's F3 Dallara

Smith's Chevron took a clear win

ALLCOMERS CLOSED WHEEL (15 LAPS) **1 Andrew Shanley (Radical Prosport)**; 2 Dan Stringfellow (BMW M3 E48) -1 lap; 3 Andy Cummings (Radical SR8); 4 Steven Chaplin (Phantom P79); 5 Spencer McCarthy (Mallock Mk20B); 6 Alex Osborne (Austin Mini). **CW** Andrew Todd (Crossle 9S); Stringfellow; Chaplin. **FL** Shanley 1m09.757s (84.58mph).

ALLCOMERS OPEN WHEEL (13 LAPS) **1 Neil Harrison (Dallara F302)**; 2 Simon Hadfield (Lola T330) +10.517s; 3 Paul Wighton (Van Diemen RF82); 4 Mark Pearson (Van Diemen RF83); 5 Javier Pernas (Delta T80); 6 Matt Hayes (Jamun M97Z). **CW** Pernas; Wighton; Hadfield. **FL** Harrison & Hadfield 1m08.520s (86.11mph).

HSCC OPEN WHEEL (20 LAPS) **1 Andy Huxtable (Chevron B34)**; 2 Jamie Brashaw (March 793) +16.534s; 3 Ian Gray (Brabham BT30); 4 Matthew Sturmer (Ralt RT3); 5 Wighton; 6 Pernas. **CW** Brashaw; Wighton; John Hutchison (Crossle 14F); Andrew Hayden (Lotus 22) Alan Fairbrother (Merlyn Mk20). **FL** Huxtable 59.291s (99.51mph).

HSCC CLOSED WHEEL (20 LAPS) **1 Roderick Smith (Chevron B16)**; 2 George Daws (Merlyn Mk6A) +42.281s; 3 Mike Gardiner (Ford Falcon); 4 Roger Waite (Lotus Elan S1); 5 Bob Yarwood (Crossle 9S); 6 Harry Wyndham (Jaguar E-type). **CW** Daws; Gardiner; Waite; Wyndham; Steven Wood (Chevrolet Camaro). **FL** R Smith 1m03.498s (92.92mph).

BEC QUICK RESULTS
→ Winners **Witt Gamski/Keith Robinson/John Gaw**
→ FL **Richard Abra**

"We drove the wheels off it but got beaten"
Wilkins and Scott gave all they had

Ferrari 430 won out in the end

BRITISH ENDURANCE CHAMPIONSHIP DONINGTON PARK, NOVEMBER 3

Ferrari wins the finale as Viper loses its bite

Aston made the early running

AFTER FOUR HOURS OF racing in the final round of this year's series, it came down to a straight fight between the Ferrari 430 of 2010 champions Witt Gamski, Keith Robinson and John Gaw, and the Dodge Viper of 2011 winners Craig Wilkins and Aaron Scott. And it was the Ferrari that got the verdict.

The new Aston Martin Vantage of Mark Poole/Richard Abra was way ahead after half an hour, with only Javier Morcillo/Manuel Cintrano/Paul White's Mosler also on the lead lap.

Paul Bailey/Andy Schulz's Ferrari 430 soon vacated third with power steering problems, promoting Lee Mowle/Jake Rattenbury's Ginetta G55. Fellow Ginetta crew Flick Haigh/Ryan Ratcliffe had passed Mowle in the first hour, but after 53 laps Rattenbury lost drive and retired.

A short wintry shower took its toll when Cintrano spun at Redgate, and Poole was forced into the gravel in avoidance. Robinson had the lead but soon pitted, as Wilkins moved into second from the Chevron GR8 of Chris Hart/Tommy Field.

By half distance Robinson held a 52s lead over the Viper, with Chris Jones/Ian Loggie's Porsche 997 a lap down in third. Martin Byford was also on the move in the Bullrun Lotus Evora, as Wilkins and Robinson pitted again.

Byford's challenge ended with a throttle problem, leaving Gaw to take over the lead Ferrari and hold off the Viper crew. But when Gaw pitted on lap 121, he was held up behind a recovery truck in the pits, which handed Scott a comfortable advantage.

With an hour of racing remaining, Scott had 44s in hand, but his brakes were almost gone. Gaw chased down the leader to claim the win, with Hart/Field securing third from the recovering Poole/Abra.

● Peter Scherer

RESULTS (177 LAPS) 1 Witt Gamski/Keith Robinson/John Gaw (Ferrari 430 GTC); 2 Craig Wilkins/Aaron Scott (Dodge Viper) +58.357s; 3 Chris Hart/Tommy Field (Chevron GR8); 4 Mark Poole/Richard Abra (Aston Martin Vantage GT3); 5 Flick Haigh/Ryan Ratcliffe (Ginetta G55); 6 Chris Jones/Ian Loggie (Porsche 997). **Class winners** Javier Morcillo/Manuel Cintrano/Paul White (Mosler MT900R); Warren Gilbert/Henry Fletcher/Owen O'Neill (Marcos Mantis); Hart/Field; Jones/Loggie; Matt Smith/Peter Smith/Dan Eagling (Ginetta G55); Haigh/Ratcliffe. **Fastest lap** Abra 1m05.569s (108.65mph) **record**.

SEAT came through to win in Production

BRITCAR PRODUCTION DONINGTON PARK, NOVEMBER 3

Safety car helps set up a SEAT success story

CRAIG DAVIES AND Adam Jones took victory, after a safety car wiped out Andrew Jordan's lead.

Davies' SEAT led from lap one, but having overshot the chicane on lap four, he dropped to fourth, as the BMWs of Michael Symons, Mark Radcliffe and Wayne Gibson came to the fore.

Two laps later, Symons went wide at Redgate, allowing Radcliffe to lead onto the Craner Curves, with Gibson following through at the chicane.

Davies mounted his recovery by reclaiming third at McLeans and then traded second spot with Gibson before the latter began to consolidate the place.

Carl Breeze also came into the frame in his Ginetta G40, rising to fourth as Symons decided to be the first driver to pit for slicks.

Gibson had top spot when Radcliffe pitted to hand over to Adam Hayes, and it was just over the hour before the leader made his own stop.

After that, Jordan took charge in Nigel Ainge's Honda Integra, and his lead grew when Kevin Clarke, in the Gibson BMW, had a diff failure and vacated second.

Hayes therefore took up second from Adam Jones, Symons and Tom Howard (in the Breeze Ginetta), but the safety car bunched them all up after 39 laps.

From the green flag, Hayes spun straight into the Redgate gravel, which left Jones to pursue Jordan for the lead. He made it through at the chicane with 11 laps remaining.

● Peter Scherer

RESULTS (62 LAPS) 1 Craig Davies/Adam Jones (SEAT Leon Supercopa); 2 Nigel Ainge/Andrew Jordan (Honda Integra) +31.236s; 3 Michael Symons (BMW M3); 4 Carl Breeze/Tom Howard (Ginetta G40); 5 Guy Povey/Graham Coomes) BMW M3 CSL); 6 Paul Black/Clive Bailye (SEAT Leon Supercopa). **Class winners** Ainge/Jordan; Simon Mason/Ryan Ratcliffe (Ginetta G40); Alyn James (Honda Jazz). **Fatest lap** Jones 1m14.817s (95.22mph).

SMART 4TWO CUP DONINGTON PARK, NOVEMBER 3

Horrobin outsmarts rest

SIMON HORROBIN took pole for the two races, and won both.

In race one, Horrobin ousted the fast-starting James Palmer at the end of the first lap and then built a decisive lead as Martin Clatworthy challenged for second.

Palmer fought him off, but Clatworthy was less successful when Paul Bates reeled him in.

"Then he outbraked himself at the chicane on the last lap," said Bates as he snatched third.

Despite having to serve a drivethrough penalty for a jumped start, Horrobin was never seriously challenged in race two.

● Peter Scherer

RESULTS (11 LAPS) 1 Simon Horrobin; 2 James Palmer +6.902s; 3 Paul Bates; 4 Martin Clatworthy; 5 David Nash; 6 Howard Kayman. **FL** Horrobin 1m49.153s (65.27mph). **RACE 2 (13 LAPS) 1 Horrobin**; 2 Kayman +16.408s; 3 Bates; 4 Palmer; 5 Alistair Lindsay; no other finishers. **FL** Horrobin 1m34.282s (75.56mph).

Horribin was the Smart master

PICS: WALKER, HAWKINS

LEGENDS QUICK RESULTS
- Final 1 **Dean Brace**
- Final 2 **Lawrence Davey**
- Champion **Davey**

Packed out Intermarque field gets under way

BARC BRANDS HATCH, NOVEMBER 3-4

Davey grabs Legends glory

Davey secured his second Legends crown

TALES OF TITANIC tussles between Legends are, well, legendary, and last weekend's events added more to the tome.

Lawrence Davey came to Brands with a substantial points lead, and stormed through from row six to finish right on the tail of winner John Mickel in Saturday's opening heat.

By the end of Saturday's second heat, the title chase was over. Dean Brace did his best and romped home to win, but a strong second was sufficient for Davey to take his second crown.

With a reversed grid for Saturday's final, four laps passed before Dean Brace hit the front. Early leader Stephen Whitelegg soon dropped back — Mickel swept around him at Paddock to secure second and then Davey slipped past at Surtees for third.

Davey took a sure win in Sunday's wet final, despite lightly tagging Brace, who ended up in the barriers with a weekend tally of four wins and four fastest laps.

Mickel and Fastres came through to finish second and third respectively.

Rod Birley led all of the first combined BARC SE Saloons/Tin Tops race, while his rivals faltered: points leader Ashley Hargreaves and Guy Blumer tangled at Paddock, and Paul Eve spun out.

Consequently, Lee Allen finished a lonely second ahead of Gavin Thomson.

Birley's Ford Escort was comfortably in front of Thomson's Peugeot 205 when the second, very wet race was red-flagged after Allen had crashed his Mini out of third. An amended result gave Allen third on countback, ahead of Jordan Batts, and this effectively handed Thomson the title.

Chris Brockhurst's Vauxhall Tigra led all of the first Intermarque event. Keith White (BMW Z4) made impressive progress past the Tigras of Jeff Simpson and his son Matt, but Brockhurst saw him coming and pulled away.

In the second race, four-wheel-drive on the wet track helped Malcolm Wise's Ford Escort take a narrow win over Malcolm Harding, who stormed his Mercedes SLK through from 16th on the grid.

Pickups leader Steve Dance needed to finish fewer than three places behind Nic Grindrod in each race to seal the title.

First time out, Grindrod made the break and raced on to his 11th win of the season, but Dance forged through from the fifth row and then chased the winner to the flag.

Their second race was sensational. Grindrod led by inches from Carl Boardley, Dance and David O'Regan. With two laps to go, it seemed all over when O'Regan overslid and Boardley was on the grass down Graham Hill. But Boardley fought back. In a fantastic finish, with all three cars overlapping at the flag, Grindrod held on to win by a whisker, Dance took second — and the title — and Boardley, broadside on the grass, was third.

● Kerry Dunlop

Pickups put on a sensational race

LEGENDS SATURDAY
HEAT 1 (11 LAPS) **1 John Mickel**; 2 Lawrence Davey +0.166s; 3 James Holman; 4 Guy Fastres; 5 Matthew Pape; 6 Ben Power. **FL** Dean Brace 55.893s (77.80mph).
HEAT 2 (11 LAPS) **1 D Brace**; 2 Davey +3.978s; 3 Mickel; 4 Holman; 5 Fastres; 6 Nick Brace. **FL** D Brace 55.932s (77.74 mph).
FINAL (12 LAPS) **1 D Brace**; 2 Mickel +0.615s; 3 Davey; 4 Stephen Whitelegg; 5 Holman; 6 Fastres. **FL** D Brace 55.546s (78.28mph).
SUNDAY HEAT 1 (9 LAPS) **1 D Brace**; 2 Davey +1.709s; 3 Power; 4 Fastres; 5 Pape; 6 Whitelegg. **FL** Fastres 1m08.155s (63.80mph).
HEAT 2 (9 LAPS) **1 D Brace**; 2 Davey +2.429s; 3 Pape; 4 Jack Parker; 5 Fastres; 6 Power. **FL** Pape 1m09.118s (62.91mph).
FINAL (11 LAPS) **1 Davey**; 2 Mickel +2.115s; 3 Fastres; 4 Jean-Michel Poncelet; 5 Power; 6 N Brace. **FL** D Brace 1m07.477s (64.44mph).
BARC SE SALOONS/TIN TOPS (17 LAPS) **1 Rod Birley (Ford Escort Cosworth)**; 2 Lee Allen (MINI JCW) +10.527s; 3 Gavin Thomson (Peugeot 205); 4 Ian Butler (Ford Focus RS); 5 Nick Proudlock (Ford Escort Mk1); 6 Guy Blumer (Ford Sierra Cosworth). **Class winners** Allen; Butler; Proudlock; Blumer; Andrew Mitchell (Peugeot 205 GTi); Curtis Mitchell (Peugeot 205 GTi); Scott Brooker (MINI Cooper JCW); Richard Johnson (Honda Civic); Peter Osborne (Renault Clio); Vic Hope (Honda Civic Type R). **FL** Birley 53.134s (81.84mph).
RACE 2 (7 LAPS) **1 Birley**; 2 Thomson +2.539s; 3 Allen; 4 Jordan Batts (SEAT Leon); 5 Ashley Hargreaves (Peugeot 306); 6 Steve Rothery (Renault Clio). **CW** Thomson; Batts; A Mitchell; C Mitchell; Andy Woods-Dean (Renault Megane); Butler; Osborne; Johnson. **FL** Allen 1m00.056s (72.40mph).
BARC INTERMARQUE (18 LAPS) **1 Chris Brockhurst (Vauxhall Tigra)**; 2 Keith White (BMW Z4) +1.487s; 3 Matt Simpson (Vauxhall Tigra); 4 Richard Smith (Vauxhall Tigra); 5 Colin Gomm (Mercedes SLK); 6 Mike Thurley (Vauxhall Tigra). **CW** White; Malcolm Wise (Ford Escort Cosworth); John Chasey (Caterham Roadsport). **FL** White 50.022s (86.93mph).
RACE 2 (14 LAPS) **1 Wise**; 2 Malcolm Harding (Mercedes SLK) +0.484s; 3 M Simpson; 4 Brockhurst; 5 White; 6 Jeff Simpson (Vauxhall Tigra). **CW** M Simpson; Brockhurst; Philip Blackford (Toyota Starlet). **FL** Harding 58.207s (74.94mph).
PICKUP TRUCKS (17 LAPS) **1 Nic Grindrod**; 2 Steve Dance +3.617s; 3 Michael Smith; 4 David O'Regan; 5 Carl Boardley; 6 Dave Longhurst. **FL** Dance 1m03.109s (68.90mph).
RACE 2 (18 LAPS) **1 Grindrod**; 2 Dance +0.073s; 3 Boardley; 4 O'Regan; 5 Paul Tompkins; 6 Paul Poulter. **FL** O'Regan 1m02.656s (69.40mph).

Perfetti/Caine won title in a final-round thriller

Motorbase's victorious return

Daniele Perfetti and Michael Caine won seven-way title shootout. *By BEN ANDERSON*

This was perhaps the most thrilling season of British GT there's ever been. Six different marques won races across the season, with no single crew winning more than twice. Seven went into the final round at Donington with a chance of the title, and four were set to win it at different points during the race. Through it all came Motorbase Porsche pairing of **Daniele Perfetti** and **Michael Caine** to nick the crown.

By team boss David Bartum's own admission, it was a "big decision" for Motorbase to turn its back on the Porsche Carrera Cup and return to British GT for the first time since 2006. It was a move that paid off handsomely, as Perfetti/Caine drove their Porsche 997 GT3 R to the championship despite being the only crew among the top 10 in the final standings not to win a race.

Despite their winless status, the duo consistently scored well, only once retiring from a race and only once finishing outside the top six when they did get to the end. Although ex-Carrera Cup frontrunner Caine was not always among the fastest pros, co-driver Perfetti was probably the most impressive of the amateur drivers.

"Daniele has come on leaps and bounds," says Caine, who celebrated his first title since winning the TVR Tuscan Challenge in 2000. "We learned you don't need to battle for every position – you need to look after your car and hope the races come to you."

They were indeed excellent at staying out of trouble, and when the pressure was on during the high-stakes finale at Donington, Perfetti showed his mettle by driving away from his main rivals in the opening stint, which set Motorbase up to steal the crown when other more fancied runners hit trouble (and each other!).

MARQUE WINS

GT3	
McLaren	3
Porsche	3
Aston Martin	1
BMW	1
Ferrari	1
Nissan	1

GT4	
Ginetta	9
Lotus	1

They were the chief beneficiaries of more last-ditch drama for the MTECH pairing of **Duncan Cameron** and **Matt Griffin**. This duo has often come close to winning the title in the past, and so it proved again. After a superb start to the season (including an unlikely Ferrari win against the fancied Porsches at the Nurburgring) they tailed off crucially during the final two rounds (which counted for points and a half). They still looked on course to cling on for the title, until the Ecurie Ecosse BMW punted Griffin into a spin in the closing stages of the final race.

"From my point of view I've had a very good season," says Griffin, who was the standout Ferrari driver for most of the year. "I think we deserved to win the championship, but threw it away at Snetterton [where they scored a 10th in race two after being hit from behind] and Silverstone [where Griffin qualified on pole but finished seventh].

"Things have happened a little bit outside our control, but MTECH has done a brilliant job all year and given me the fastest car on the grid.

"We just don't seem to be able to win a British GT championship."

The MTECH contretemps was the only blot on an otherwise excellent copybook for the Barwell-run Ecosse BMW Z4 GT3, in its first season racing in the UK. Despite being a 2011-spec

Ecosse BMW Z4 was ultra-consistent

MTECH Ferrari fell short again

car, the Z4 stayed in title contention thanks to an unrivalled finishing record among the frontrunners.

The BMW has a superb chassis that is kind to its tyres, so it was no surprise to see it do well in the longer races that counted for points and a half. **Alasdair McCaig** and regular co-driver **Oliver Bryant** won the first (shorter) race of the year in the wet (when the leading United Autosports Audi of **Charlie Bateman/Matt Bell** ran out of fuel on the last lap) and the car only once finished outside the points (when Bryant was handed a one-minute stop-go penalty for hitting the MTECH Ferrari in the finale).

"The team has done a phenomenal job," says Barwell team manager Mark Lemmer, who also ran **Ollies Millroy and Hancock** alongside McCaig, when Bryant was sidelined for the Snetterton and Silverstone rounds by a track day crash at Spa. "There were no mistakes with pitstops and strategy and we had a good race set-up. That's why we're in the position we're in, not because we had the fastest car."

The other title contender to fall agonisingly short at the death was the RJN Nissan GT-R GT3 of **Alex Buncombe** and **Jann Mardenborough**. The team was only supposed to use the Oulton opener as a warm-up for a Blancpain Endurance Series campaign, but ended up committing to a full season once it became clear a title charge was on the cards.

PlayStation GT Academy graduate Mardenborough was a revelation in his first season of racing, and sometimes quicker than experienced co-driver Buncombe (twice a runner-up in the GT4 European Cup). Mardenborough showed his emerging maturity by holding off the Beechdean Aston Martin Vantage of **Jonny Adam** to win the closest race in British GT history (by 0.022s) at Brands Hatch, and RJN was only robbed of a fairytale ending by damper failure while leading the final race of the season.

They weren't the only crew that could point to a hard-luck story. The United Autosports duo of Bateman and Bell began 2012 as title favourites, but three maximum scores over the final four races of the year still weren't enough to bring home the bacon. They struggled for speed with the 2011-spec Audi R8 LMS at the first three rounds, and only did slightly better in a new ultra at Brands.

But once into a McLaren MP4-12C (with aero dubbed "unbelievable" by Caine) the pairing flew. Even with the ABS problem that cost them a result in race two at Snetterton, one more lap's worth of fuel in their Audi during the first race of the year at Oulton would have made them champions.

However, without UA's dramas we would not have been treated to the thrilling title showdown that capped what was probably the best season of British GT ever.

SIX THAT STOOD OUT

1 Matt Griffin

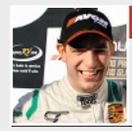
Always the bridesmaid but never the bride in British GT, Griffin was still the most consistent of the top drivers in 2012, as his 2.8 qualifying average shows.

2 Jann Mardenborough

The GT Academy rookie was the revelation of 2012. More than a match for experienced co-driver Alex Buncombe and almost won the title in his debut year.

3 Jonny Adam

New Aston didn't feature in the title fight, but went rapidly in Adam's hands. Was often let down by car issues and co-driver Andrew Howard's exuberance.



4 Joe Osborne

The Osborne/Steve Tandy combination wasn't the fastest, but the duo still managed to win more races (two) than any other Porsche pairing this season.

5 Matt Bell

Struggled to stay in the hunt with the outmoded Audi R8 LMS, but the Bell/Charlie Bateman combo was near-unstoppable once in a McLaren MP4-12C.

6 Daniele Perfetti

Unsung amateurs often make the difference between success and failure. Perfetti kept on getting better and out-drove his rivals in the high-pressure title decider.

RJN Nissan won the closest race ever

2012 British GT Championship

Pos	Driver	Team	1/2	3/4	5	6	7/8	9	10	Points
1	**Daniele Perfetti/Michael Caine**	Motorbase Porsche 997 GT3 R	6/4	2/3	13	R	2/5	3	4	**130.5**
2	**David Ashburn**	Trackspeed Porsche 997 GT3 R	4/**1**	10/2	3	4	6/R	R	5	**127**
3	**Charles Bateman/Matt Bell**	United Autosports Audi R8/McLaren MP4-12C	15/5	13/6	9	11	**1**/R	**1**	**3***	**121**
4	**Duncan Cameron/Matt Griffin**	MTECH Ferrari 458 Italia	3/2	4/**1**	4	R	4/10	7	10	**119**
5	**Alasdair McCaig**	Ecurie Ecosse/Barwell BMW Z4 GT3	**1**/10	5/9	7	3	8/4	2	11	**115.5**
6	**Alex Buncombe/Jann Mardenborough**	RJN Nissan GT-R GT3	5/11	3/5	5	**1**	R/3	8	16	**108.5**
7	**Steve Tandy/Joe Osborne**	Trackspeed Porsche 997 GT3 R	13/8	9/14	**1**	R	5/**1**	9	8	**93.5**
8	**Andrew Howard/Jonathan Adam**	Beechdean Aston Martin Vantage GT3	9/15	**1**/7	R	2	3/R	15	R	**75**
9	**Oliver Bryant**	Ecurie Ecosse/Barwell BMW Z4 GT3	**1**/10	5/9	7	3	-	-	11	**69.5**
10	**Richard Westbrook**	Trackspeed Porsche 997 GT3 R	4/**1**	10/2	-	-	6/R	-	-	**64**
11	**Jon Minshaw/Tim Harvey**	Trackspeed Porsche 997 GT3 R	10/3	8/12	6	9	7/2	11	R	**59**
12	**Hector Lester/Allan Simonsen**	Rosso Verde Ferrari 458 Italia	2/12	11/8	2	7	-	-	18	**58**

13 **David Jones/Godfrey Jones**, Pyro Mercedes AMG SLS GT3, 48.5; 14 **Steve Parish**, Motorbase 997 GT3R, 47; 15 **Phil Keen**, Trackspeed 997 GT3 R, 45; 16 **Mike Simpson**, LNT Ginetta G55, 28.5; 17= **Ollie Hancock**, Ecosse Z4 GT3 & **Lawrence Tomlinson**, LNT G55 & **Stephen Jelley**, Motorbase 997 GT3 R, 27; 20 **John Dhillon/Aaron Scott**, Scuderia Vittoria 458, 21; 21 **Nick Tandy**, Motorbase 997 GT3 R, 20; 22= **Nicolas Armindo**, Trackspeed 997 GT3 R & **George Murrells**, Optimum G55, 18; 24 **Ollie Millroy**, Ecosse Z4 GT3, 16; 25 **Luke Hines**, Optimum G55, 15; etc.

GT4 POINTS 1 **Jody Fannin/Warren Hughes**, Team WFR Ginetta G50, 243.25; 2 **Zoe Wenham**, Century Motorsport Ginetta G50, 159; 3 **Dominic Evans**, Century Motorsport Ginetta G50, 132; 4 **James May/Alex Osborne**, APO Sport Ginetta G50, 104.5; 5 **Sailesh Bolisetti/Phil Glew**, Lotus Sport UK Lotus Evora GT4, 71; 6 **Owen Mildenhall/Mark Ticehurst**, Mazda UK/Jota Sport Mazda MX5 GT4, 62.5; etc.

GTC CHAMPIONS **Gary Eastwood/Ryan Hooker**, FF Corse Ferrari 458 Challenge.

KEY TO RACES: **Rounds 1/2 Oulton Park**, April 9; **3/4 Nurburgring**, May 18-19; **5 Rockingham**, June 10; **6 Brands Hatch Grand Prix**, June 24; **7/8 Snetterton 300**, August 5; **9 Silverstone Grand Prix**, September 9; **10 Donington Park Grand Prix**, September 30.

Points system: 25-18-15-12-10-8-6-4-2-1 to first 10 eligible entries. Points are halved if fewer than six starters in a class. 1.5xpoints for longer races at Rockingham, Brands Hatch, Silverstone and Donington Park.

KEY: R=Retired; DNS=Did not start; *Zak Brown/Alvaro Parente (UA McLaren) and Nico Pronk/Peter Kox (Reiter Lamborghini) finished first and second but were not eligible to score points.

PICS: EBREY/LAT

TAKING THE NEXT STEP

After racing in Caterham Academy in 2011, AUTOSPORT tries Roadsport. By GLENN FREEMAN

Just like old times. A year has passed between Caterham races, but everything feels familiar on return. The Roadsport series – one step up from the Academy championship, which AUTOSPORT backed in 2011 – is full of familiar faces, all of whom have another season of racing under their belts since the last time we shared the track.

But even after a year away, familiar habits come flooding back. It's a testament to the way the Academy series eases novices into racing that it all seems so straightforward, and it's been the same for those who have raced in the Roadsport championship full time.

Back in a Caterham, 12 months on

"I think I would have been lost if I had jumped straight into this sort of series without the preparation of the Academy season," says 2012 Roadsport champion Brad Smith. "It gets you ready for a year like this, where the level goes up and there's a lot more racing."

Roadsport is an all-out racing series, whereas the Academy season starts off with sprint events before the rookies are let loose together on circuits later in the season. There are more rounds, two races in a weekend, and even an eye-catching foreign event, which in 2012 was at the Nurburgring. And all with an upgraded car that feels a lot more like a racer than its predecessor.

The main changes made to the cars to get them into Roadsport spec are the addition of a rear anti-roll bar and a switch from the bulging Avon CR322 tyres to the CR500, which has a much better resemblance to a racing tyre. The changes are subtle, but they transform the car. It feels sharper, more responsive and more willing to comply when really leaned on in the corners. Drivers in this year's championship had promised me that it would be a more enjoyable drive on the eve of the Rockingham season finale, and they were right. Some words of wisdom from Caterham chief motorsport and technical officer Simon Lambert then came in very handy.

"It let's you push a lot harder in the corners without breaking away," he said halfway through the test day. "Don't be afraid to really attack it – it will respond to you."

As is the case with more serious racing cars, the limit is a lot harder to explore than it is in an Academy-spec Caterham. The entry-level car is a handful, but it gives you a very early warning of when it's starting to break away, and over time that inspires confidence. As a result of that, an accomplished set of Academy graduates are then ready to tackle a more challenging car.

2012 Roadsport racer Adrian Barwick adds: "I found it easier this year. The car felt much more manageable. I just didn't

"It's more serious this year, but you've still got your friends you made in Academy. We miss each other in the winter!"

Academy graduate and 2012 Roadsport champ Brad Smith

Nurburgring trip was a highlight

get on with the Academy tyres and I wasn't very well prepared for last year, so this felt like a fresh start. The car felt like a true racing Caterham."

And there was plenty of true racing in the recent Rockingham finale. My black #7 entry – unfortunately 'our' red-and-white car from the 2011 season was sold on – was in the thick of midfield scrapping on a charge from 10th to fourth in the first race, and then chased the lead trio home in race two. But thanks to a couple of time penalties that result became a second place! In a clear example of the off-track camaraderie that the Caterham system creates, even those who were dropped down the results were quick to offer their congratulations on my comeback results.

"We had a really tight group in the Academy and that carried over into this year," says Barwick. "Even some of those who didn't continue racing still come and see us at each race; socially it's a great bunch."

Smith adds: "It was more serious this year, but even in a different atmosphere you've still got your friends that you've made in the Academy. We miss each other over the winter, to be honest!"

The group was as close-knit as ever when it was time for the Nurburgring trip in the summer. Many travelled down in convoy, some armed with CB radios. Naturally, there were a few laps of the Nordschleife taken in, though not in their Caterhams.

"The Nurburgring is a great track, but that weekend was as much about us all going away together as it was the racing," says Smith, who won both races in Germany.

That spirit between on-track rivals is almost certainly helped by the fact that – as in the Academy – team support is not allowed at Roadsport level. Everyone has to fend for themselves as they continue to learn about motorsport, so people look out for each other.

With a second year of racing ticked off, the Roadsport racers have now turned their attention to 2013, where they will step up again on the Caterham ladder.

PICS: RACHEL HORGAN; RICK WILSON

ACADEMY MAN WITH HONOURS

Robinson claimed Tracksport title

Not everyone who carried on racing after the 2011 Caterham Academy made the conventional step up to Roadsport. Some, like David Robinson, jumped another level to race in the Tracksport series, and the ex-karter increased the stamp of 2011's newcomers by winning that championship.

"It was really good making the bigger jump up," he says. "The racing in Tracksport was ridiculously close, and the standard was so high. I think the championship's biggest winning margin of the year was two seconds, and the next biggest was six tenths!"

Tracksport is the first level on the Caterham ladder where support from professional teams is permitted but, aside from a bit of help on the side from DPR Motorsport, Robinson was one of the grid's 'privateers'.

"DPR have been really helpful with certain things, but it was awesome to go up against the teams and beat them," he adds. "You probably have to work a little bit harder outside the team environment, and things don't always go right, but it makes it twice as rewarding when it all comes together."

AUTOSPORT-journo-wastes-booze shock!

YOUR SAY

What you think of the motorsport news of the past week

Kimi gets the job done in dramatic Abu Dhabi GP

Great to see Lotus win again

It's been a long time since we saw a Lotus take the chequered flag. For all Lotus supporters around the world, it's great to see the Enstone team carry the great name to grand prix victory.

You won't meet a nicer bunch in the pitlane, and I'm so pleased, especially for Kimi Raikkonen, James Allison and Eric Boullier, that the E20, the most beautiful grand prix car this year, has finally crossed the line in first place.

It was a fantastic race with drama throughout and a victory that a certain Mr Chapman watching from the heavens would be proud of!

D Price, by email

EDITORIAL CONTACT mail@autosport.com

It's 2.30am on Monday and I'm in my hotel room in Tokyo. On Saturday I drove a Lotus 78 F1 car in the Japan Lotus Day at Fuji. We had a great event with 600 Lotus cars at the circuit.

Last night, with Clive Chapman and the rest of the Classic Team Lotus crew, I watched the Abu Dhabi GP in a local sports bar. Weekends don't get much better!

They might not be 'Team Lotus', but Lotus F1 had the whole bar on the edge of their seats, then jumping up and down as Kimi crossed the line.

Well done Lotus F1. Whatever your roots, I hope you keep the Lotus name at the forefront of F1 for a long time.

Dan Collins
By email

Right now in F1 the money is bringing the quality. Mark Hughes laments Perez knowing Carlos Slim, but what is Vettel but a pay Red Bull driver?

It's so competitive in F1, a sponsor, in order to get on a winning team, has to bring the team, driver, and all the money.

It's really cool watching the Austrian drinks manufacturer blow the doors off Ferrari and McLaren, almost as cool as when Benetton did it.

And getting these cool tracks built by governments is pretty neat, too.

Johnnie Crean
Hawaii

Since the first Abu Dhabi GP in 2009, the consensus has been that the track layout doesn't provide good racing.

This year, however, the race over-delivered! Kimi's win was the tip of the iceberg. Sebastian coming from the back was something special, and the drama in the midfield provided us with the race of the season!

Rob Manifield
Devon

Last weekend's Walter Hayes Trophy was deemed a huge success, with some of the best racing ever seen at the event.

Racing on Sunday was only possible due to the hard work of the marshals, the HSCC race organisers and Silverstone's maintenance crew. Their herculean efforts ensured the event remained on-track despite the torrential rain!

To all the competitors, and the spectators who cheered from the sidelines, I thank you. Roll on 2013.

James Beckett
Walter Hayes Trophy organiser

AUTOSPORT.com

TOP FIVE ON OUR WEBSITE

1. TEAMS TOLD TRICK BRAKE SYSTEMS ILLEGAL
2. RED BULL BAFFLED BY FUEL PROBLEMS
3. VETTEL DISQUALIFIED FROM QUALIFYING
4. TEAMS HIT WITH DRAMATIC ENTRY FEE HIKE
5. HORNER SAYS CAR HAD ENOUGH FUEL

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F1 BLOG: TECH SECRETS REVEALED

To read this exclusive feature and many others like it, log on to autosport.com/plus and choose which package you'd like. A month will cost £5.50, a year £46. Includes access to Forix – the ultimate stats website.

WIN!

ROAD ANGEL VANTAGE

This week's star letter will receive a Road Angel Vantage – a dedicated safety camera and blackspot locator that displays the legal speed limit of every road you drive, automatically and wirelessly updating its database every few minutes as you drive. For more details on Road Angel visit www.roadangelgroup.com Please ensure that your full address is included on all correspondence.

FROM THE FORUM - forums.autosport.com

WHAT OUR READERS ARE TALKING ABOUT RIGHT NOW

- Ridiculous parc ferme rules
- Does RBR have a rubber nosecone?

CORRECTIONS AND CLARIFICATIONS

It is the policy of AUTOSPORT to correct significant errors as soon as possible. Please note the issue date and page number when contacting us on autosport.editorial@haynet.com

PIC: THOMPSON/GETTY

THE LATEST GEAR

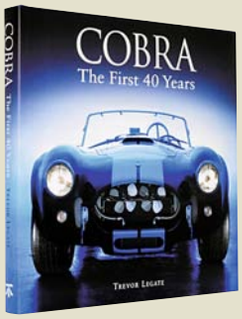
Desirable new releases for motor racing fans: books, DVDs, models, art and gifts

TYRRELL 006 1:18 MODEL
£111.99 (£189.99 signed)
autosport.com/shop

This TrueScale Miniatures replica of Jackie Stewart's 1973 world-championship-winning Tyrrell 006 is a staggering recreation of the Scot's final F1 machine. It's pretty much identical, albeit in 1:18th scale, to the spec used by JYS to take his 27th and final victory – in the German GP at the Nurburgring. Stewart will be signing a limited number of models so get in there sharpish.

GULF iPAD COVER
€35
brm-manufacture-gulf.com

Those fabulous powder-blue-and-orange colours of the Gulf oil company look good on anything – and this iPad case is no exception. It's part of an officially endorsed range of merchandise from BRM Manufacture that includes luggage, accessories and computer peripherals for that super-cool retro look.



AC COBRA HISTORY
£60
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Trevor Legate's third work on the legendary muscle car is an expensive-yet-meaty appraisal of the whole Cobra story, from the original Surrey-based sportscar firm's tie up with Ford and Texan ace Carroll Shelby, through to the replicas and continuation cars of today. Real Cobra fans will cherish this one.

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£50.90
grandprixmodels.com

Japanese plastic-model firm Fujimi has produced a 1:20-scale kit of last year's Sauber C30 F1 car. And it comes with excellent detailing, particularly in the suspension. The decals are very well printed and allow you to choose either of the team's two drivers, Kamui Kobayashi (#16) or Sergio Perez (#17).

HOT ON THE WEB THIS WEEK

YOUTUBE: BOB WOLLEK'S MASSIVE SEARS POINT IMSA SMASH

SEARCH FOR: IMSA 1987 | Sears Point | Porsche 962 | Bob Wollek (7:16)
Sportscars fans of a certain vintage: cast your minds back 25 years to the 1987 IMSA series as you go onboard with the late 'Brilliant Bob' Wollek in a Porsche 962 at Sears Point. The Frenchman's leading – and it all goes horribly wrong.

WHAT'S ON...

Your guide to the best events taking place in the UK and around the world this week – plus TV and online

Matthew Brabham (23) will hope not to do this at Rockingham

BRANDS HATCH MSVR

November 10-11
Admission £13 each day on the gate, £10 advance booking for each day
Tel: 01474 872331

MotorSport Vision Racing's final pair of meetings for 2012 are good ones for Lotus and Formula Vee fans. Saturday features a six-hour enduro race for Lotus Cup and Elise Trophy cars. On Sunday, Brands plays host to the fifth Formula Vee Festival, with Sam Oliveira looking to maintain his unbeaten record in the season-closing event. Support comes from the Victor Meldrew Trophy for saloon cars plus the closing rounds of MSVR's season-long Trackday Trophy and Team Trophy series.

ROCKINGHAM BARC

November 10
Admission £15
Tel: 01536 500500

Formula Renault BARC has been the standout single-seater series for aspiring professional drivers in the UK this season and its two-round Winter Series concludes this Saturday. InterSteps runner-up Matt Mason leads the way after sharing wins with former Ginetta Junior champion Seb Morris at the Brands opener last month, while Jack Aitken and Chris Middlehurst are also well in contention. Ginetta Junior will have its own one-round winter series decided over three races, while support comes from BARC Sports & Saloon Challenge and BMW RDC double-headers.

SNETTERTON BRSCC

November 10
Admission £13
Tel: 01953 887303

The home of Norfolk motorsport wraps up its 2012 season with a 12-hour race for Fun Cup cars and Mazda MX5 variants.

Everyone will be gunning for Loeb on Rally of Spain

RALLY OF SPAIN

World Rally Championship
Rd 13/13
Salou, Spain
November 8-11
wrc.com

Ignore the pontificating going on in the background over the future of the WRC and enjoy the final round of this year's championship from Catalunya.

This is, after all, Sebastien Loeb's swansong event – as a full-time Citroen pedaller at least. The nine-time champ has won the past seven events in these parts and is odds-on to make it a farewell eighth. But Ford men Jari-Matti Latvala and Petter Solberg will want the Blue Oval to bow out in style as a full-fat works team.

NASCAR SPRINT CUP

Rd 35/36
Phoenix, Arizona, USA
November 11
nascar.com

NASCAR NATIONWIDE

Rd 32/33
Phoenix, Arizona, USA
November 10
nascar.com

NASCAR TRUCK SERIES

Rd 21/22
Phoenix, Arizona, USA
November 9
nascar.com

V8 STOCK CARS

Rd 11/12
Brasilia, Brazil
November 11
stockcar.globo.com

PICS: WWW.MCKEIN.DE, THOMPSON/GETTY, EBREY, LEICESTER/LAT

Television

THURSDAY NOVEMBER 8
0010-0115 Motors TV
Formula Ford Festival
0800-0900, 1500-1600 Sky Sports 3
FIA WEC: Shanghai 6 Hours Highlights
1340-1545 Motors TV
NASCAR Nationwide: Texas Highlights
1400-1500, 2100-2205 ESPN Classic
Formula 1 Retro: 1973
1515-1610 Premier Sports
NASCAR Sprint Cup: Season Highlights
1900-1930 Eurosport
Inside WTCC
2235-2305 Motors TV
WRC: Rally Spain Preview

FRIDAY NOVEMBER 9
0730-0800 Eurosport
Inside WTCC
0900-0935, 1105-1135, 1340-1415 Motors TV
WRC: Rally Spain Preview
1400-1500, 2100-2205 ESPN Classic
Formula 1 Retro: 1974
1500-1600 Sky Sports 4
Racemax
2235-2305 Motors TV
WRC: Rally Spain Day 1

SATURDAY NOVEMBER 10
0355-0425 Channel 5
Motorsport Mundial
0835-0935 ITV4
Motorsport UK
0900-0935, 1220-1250 Motors TV
WRC: Rally Spain Day 1
0935-1135 Motors TV
V8 Supercars: Abu Dhabi
1300-1400 Sky Sports 3
Max Power
2030-2335 Motors TV LIVE
NASCAR Nationwide: Phoenix
2335-0010 Motors TV
WRC: Rally Spain Day 2

SUNDAY NOVEMBER 11
0530-0600, 0900-0935, 1100-1130 Motors TV
WRC: Rally Spain Day 2
1100-1200 Sky Sports 2
Racemax
1230-1400 BBC2 LIVE
MotoGP: Valencia
1800-1900 Premier Sports
NASCAR Sprint Cup: Season Highlights
1800-2000 ITV4
BTCC: Season Highlights
1900-0000 Premier Sports LIVE
NASCAR Sprint Cup: Phoenix
2235-2305 Motors TV
WRC: Rally Spain Day 3

MONDAY NOVEMBER 12
0245-0335 ITV
Motorsport UK
1105-1135, 1720-1750, 2235-2305 Motors TV
WRC: Rally Spain Day 3
1515-1720 Motors TV
NASCAR Nationwide: Phoenix Highlights
1800-1900, 1130-0030 Sky Sports 4
NASCAR Sprint Cup: Phoenix Highlights
2305-0115 Motors TV
V8 Supercars: Abu Dhabi

Online

AUTOSPORT+

Coming up in our premium web content this week

The Silverstone experience: mud

SILVERSTONE: IMPROVING ON 2012

This year's British Grand Prix didn't enjoy the smoothest of build-ups, with some fans even being advised not to attend. So what lessons have been learned for the future? Simon Strang finds out

THE NEXT MALAYSIAN IN F1?

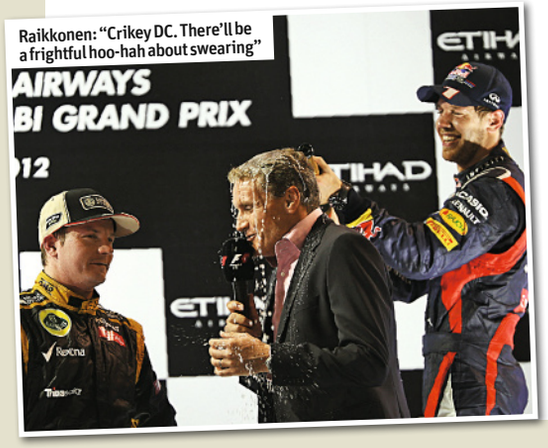
Jazeman Jaafar came close to this year's British F3 title. Marcus Simmons looks at just how high he could climb

WHAT HOPE FOR THE WRC?

David Evans wades through political strife in an attempt to find a way forward

REVVED UP OVER WHAT'S ON THE BOX

We cast a critical eye over the best and worst of this week's TV coverage



Raikkonen: "Crikey DC. There'll be a frightful hoo-hah about swearing"

THERE I WAS, SITTING ON my sofa minding my own business, reflecting on an entertaining grand prix, digesting a well-cooked Sunday lunch. And then it happened. Exactly when impressionable youngsters could be watching. And on the BBC, which I demand should only show popular, educational programmes, that are about a niche subject only I'm especially interested in that tells me something I didn't already know, doesn't cost a penny to make and isn't presented by Jonathan Ross or retrospective perverts.

And to make it worse there was no pre-warning, and no post-event apology. No time to prepare myself for the full horror of David Coulthard, dressed as an extra from *The Love Boat*.

The mind boggles at how he squeezes into those icy white jeans. Actually, scratch that, I'd really rather not know.

Since the introduction of the new F1 post-race podium interviews, I've found myself gradually recoiling into the foetal position at the sheer awfulness of it all, but in Abu Dhabi – DC's sartorial assault aside – it was the most entertaining yet. For the wrong reasons, of course.

Kimi Raikkonen started the ball rolling, replying "not much really" when asked about his emotions on winning his first race since 2009. He kicked it up in the air when he added that "I was given shit last time because I didn't really smile enough". But it was volleyed into the back of the net by Sebastian Vettel when he observed that starting from the pitlane was "a chance to fuck it up" before tipping a bottle of, er, rose water over DC's head and that lovely maritime jacket as he turned to Kimi for one final grunt.

Ever the pro, DC sought equanimity by reminding the viewers that the drivers were speaking in a foreign language. But the damage to the souls of those who heard it had already been done.

Hopefully some Mary Whitehouse wannabe was watching and has complained to all and sundry, and kicked up such a stink that Bernie will have no choice but to put the whole charade out of our misery. As I've been saying all along, it's a load of Seb-ing Kimi.
Revved Up

> "Ever the pro, DC sought equanimity by reminding the viewers that the drivers were speaking in a foreign language"

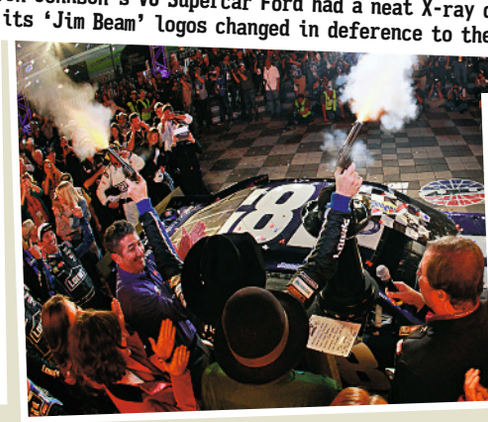
THE WEEK IN PICTURES

Our lensmen pounding the beat, from Abu Dhabi to 14,000 feet above Florida, via Texas

COMING BACK FROM AN EVENING WALK
Lewis Hamilton returns to the pitlane after his McLaren's failure cost him victory in Sunday's Abu Dhabi Grand Prix.

NO – IT'S NOT IMPROMPTU COOLING IN ABU DHABI…
Steven Johnson's V8 Supercar Ford had a neat X-ray design, and had its 'Jim Beam' logos changed in deference to the Arab hosts

DON'T GET SIDESWIPED BY A PORSCHE!
DeltaWing racers Lucas Ordonez (left) and Gunnar Jeannette (right) did a 14,000-foot skydive above Florida. Nice aerodynamics!



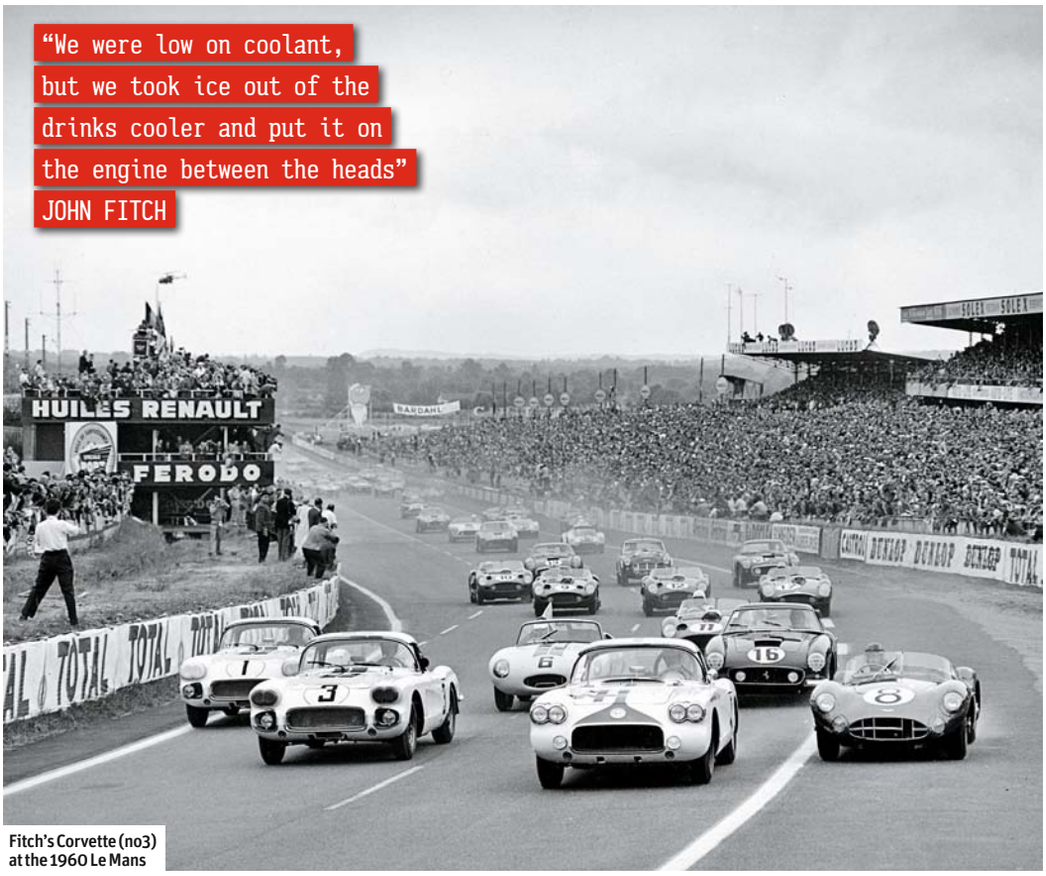
PRESUMABLY THEY VOTED FOR MITT ROMNEY
Texas, NASCAR, guns… Just a traditional celebration for Jimmie Johnson's win. Next: banjo playing around the campfire.

PICS: PENNINGTON, ROBERTSON, THOMPSON/GETTY

NEXT WEEK **F1 IN AMERICA** CRACKING THE STATES; MARIO ANDRETTI ON AUSTIN; YOUNG TALENT **DON'T MISS IT!**

FROM THE ARCHIVE

The Corvette needs cooling off on its Le Mans debut, 1960



"We were low on coolant, but we took ice out of the drinks cooler and put it on the engine between the heads"
JOHN FITCH

Fitch's Corvette (no3) at the 1960 Le Mans

JOHN FITCH'S GREATEST SPORTSCAR SUCCESSES MIGHT have been at the wheel of Cunningham and Mercedes thoroughbreds, but he was also one of the early pioneers of the Chevrolet Corvette GT programme.

The iconic American car, which has been one of the great GT racers of recent years, actually made its first appearance in the Le Mans 24 Hours as far back as 1960 – and Fitch was on the driving strength.

Four relatively standard 4.6-litre Corvette C1s were entered at La Sarthe, three run by the Briggs Cunningham team with which Fitch was so familiar, and one by the Camoradi outfit.

In those days, the grid for the 24 Hours was still set by capacity order – with the biggest first – so the Corvettes lined up in first to fourth places. They were never going to match the sports-racers, particularly the Ferraris, on speed, but Fitch and co-driver Bob Grossman would prove competitive in the GT category.

Good pace in the rain helped the duo into the overall top 10 at one-quarter distance, chasing the GT-leading Ferraris. Meanwhile, the other Chevrolets hit trouble. William Kimberley crashed the car he was sharing with team boss/driver Cunningham, while the Richard Thompson/Fred Windridge car blew its engine – right in front of the pits – after having had two offs.

The Camoradi car of Leon Lilley/Fred Gamble also had its troubles, so the team was desperate to get the Fitch/Grossman machine home when overheating struck in the closing stages.

"It started overheating about an hour and a half before the end of the race," remembered Fitch at the 50th anniversary celebrations of his race in 2010.

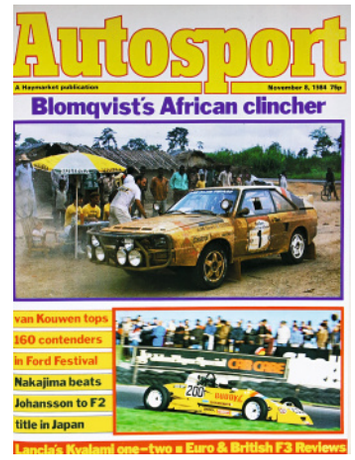
"We were low on coolant, but Will Frick, a very talented automotive technician, thought of taking ice out of the drinks cooler and putting it on the engine between the heads on the manifold. That's what cooled the engine enough for us to do slow laps at the end and win, and we could do slow laps because we had built up such a lead in the class."

Frick's ingenuity and the care of the drivers allowed the number three Corvette to make it home in eighth place overall and fifth in the GT category. The car also took the 4001cc-5000cc class win.

Although only the Corvettes ran in their class at Le Mans, the result was enough for the car to claim a promising start to a GT career that would really reach its height almost half a century later in GT1.

PIC: LAT ARCHIVE

THIS WEEK IN...

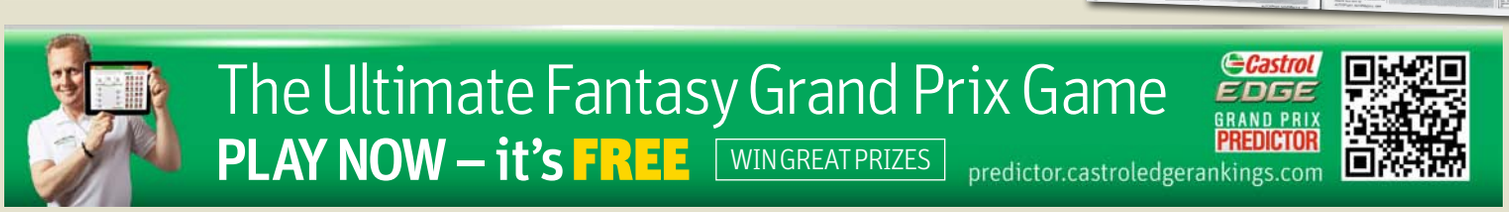


NOVEMBER 8, 1984

STIG BLOMQVIST SECURED HIS FIRST World Rally Championship crown on a shortened Ivory Coast Rally this week in 1984. It was his fifth victory of the season – a record at the time – and the seventh for Audi, which was an equally unmatched feat.

Ivory Coast was also the first win for Audi's short-wheelbase Quattro Sport. Blomqvist had been switched into the car after pre-event delays had resulted in only one long-wheelbase Quattro A2 being prepared in time.

Another Swede was in championship contention across in Suzuka, as Stefan Johansson and Satoru Nakajima went into the All Japan Formula 2 Championship finale knowing victory would secure either man the title. It was Nakajima who triumphed, however, withstanding a massive late charge by Johansson to clinch the win – and the series – by just 1.3 seconds.



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ERIK COMAS

■ Monza Formula 3000 ■ June 24 1990 ■ Lola-Mugen T90/50 ■ Fending off Irvine's attack

Comas leads Eddie Irvine, Gary Brabham and Gianni Morbidelli

THERE ARE MEMORIES FROM two or three races that I take away as really nice souvenirs from my career. The first was in French Formula 3 at Pau in 1988. I was on pole, but was hit before the first corner and sent spinning. When I restarted I was last. Overtaking at Pau was not easy, but I ended up in third position with the lap record.

Another was in the rain at Mine in Japan in 1998. I was sharing with Satoshi Motoyama in the GT series. When I took over our Nissan it had no third gear, but I had a tremendous fight with Ukyo Katayama, who had brake trouble in the top TOM'S Toyota. Because of our problems we were swapping the lead all the time, and at the finish I was just able to win.

My best racing season though was definitely with DAMS in 1990, when I won four races and the Formula 3000 title. So I think I will pick Monza. It was a really competitive year, with people like Eddie Irvine, Heinz-Harald Frentzen, Damon Hill and others.

I had gone into that year as the favourite, but with a lot of pressure. The year before I was equal on points with the champion Jean Alesi. Scuderia Italia had offered me a Formula 1 drive, but when I sat down with Marlboro they persuaded me that if I stayed in F3000 and won the title, then they would help me find a really great F1 seat.

> "There was a lot of pressure. The year before I was equal on points with Jean Alesi. Scuderia Italia offered me an F1 drive, but Marlboro persuaded me that if I won the F3000 title, they would help find me a great F1 seat"

I accepted the challenge, but it was risky. When you've been first equal, the only option is to be first. At Monza I was on the second row, but was soon in a fight for the lead with Irvine's Eddie Jordan Racing Reynard. My Lola was quick, but it was missing a bit of straightline speed. So Irvine was behind me the whole race, trying to push me into a small mistake.

The reason why I remember that race was the day after, on the Monday, we stayed at the circuit to test. The rear wing had a main support plus two extra cables on the side. We tried disconnecting the cables on Monday, and I was 0.6s quicker on every lap! It had an effect like DRS in F1 now! I was not missing downforce in corners, but I was faster. If we had done it earlier I would have had a much more comfortable race, as it was very tricky having Eddie behind the whole way. I've owned a few of my racing cars, but have only kept one. I think that Marlboro Lola T90/50 is such a beautiful machine. At the end of the season I bought the car from DAMS and I still own it.

My only regret is not going into Formula 1 with Jordan, who had been trying to sign me, the year after. Everything had started when I won the Volant Elf. It changed my life. I spent 10,000 Francs and won a million. When I won the F3000 championship Elf's early plan was to help me move to Williams, but there was some change when Mansell came in. Elf told me to go to Ligier. I said, 'I don't want to go to Ligier, they haven't scored a point this season!' I had three options: find two million dollars, which I didn't have, to drive for Eddie; or choose between Ligier and sportcars with Peugeot. But it is hard to decline F1 – even a Ligier. From then on, things were not so easy!

Erik Comas was talking to Peter Mills

IN PROFILE

AFTER LIFTING THE FRENCH karting title, Erik Comas quit his university course to go racing. Victory in the Volant Elf at Paul Ricard in 1984 provided his springboard, and he won French crowns in Formula Renault in '86, Supertourisme in '87 and F3 in '88. After dominating in F3000, he drove for Ligier and Larrousse in F1. He then enjoyed success in GT racing in Japan, winning two titles with Nissan. Today, he rallies a Lancia Stratos and runs Green Cars Challenge, which uses a fleet of Teslas for corporate days.

PICS: LAT ARCHIVE

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Melissa Wright, Kelly

'I don't use anything but Auto Finish for a perfect finish.'
Barry Wood, London

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