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MOTORSPORT NEWS



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DMACK, M-Sport and Motorsport News

DMACK UPS MOTORSPORT



Robert Reid (left) won the 1993 British title with Richard Burns before world honours in 2001

By Jack Benyon

Motorsport News has joined DMACK and M-Sport to offer one of the biggest prizes in rallying – a subsidised R5 seat in the DMACK British Rally Team in the BRC in 2017.

The DMACK M-Sport Motorsport News Rally Driver Award winner will get a drive for next season in one of the tyre manufacturer's Ford Fiesta R5s, which will be piloted by Elfyn Evans (see news page 5) and Max Vatanen in 2016.

On each round of this year's championship a single driver registered for the BRC will be selected by a panel, with the nominees going through to an

end-of-season shootout. A series of wildcards will also be chosen by the panel from other British championships, including the BTRDA.

The shootout – done in an M-Sport Ford Fiesta R2 – will test the drivers' ability in the car. Other elements such as the drivers' physical condition and media skills will also be tested and taken into consideration for the award.

DMACK British Rally Team manager Glenn Patterson is hoping the award will further the careers of the young drivers who are selected.

"This award is set to further inspire career-focused drivers and, along with the prize from the DMACK Junior BRC, will ensure competitors in the British championship have some great opportunities to progress their careers both in the series and onwards to world rallying," explained Patterson.

"We want to reward drivers who have the ambition, passion and drive to reach the highest ranks of the sport."

While the panel to decide the award is yet to be confirmed, it is slated to contain M-Sport director

Malcolm Wilson, Glenn Patterson, DMACK managing director Dick Cormack, 2001 World Rally champion co-driver Robert Reid and *Motorsport News* national rallying editor Jack Benyon.

Reid – who sat alongside Richard Burns – praised DMACK for its continued input into British rallying at a critical juncture for the return of the BRC in 2016.

"It's great to see a company like DMACK so passionate about developing young talent and supporting the British Rally Championship with a two-car entry," said Reid. "Looking forward, a talent-development programme like this one offers all BRC crews a realistic chance of being in a front-line car fighting for the British title in 2017."

"I remember when Richard [Burns] and I won the British title, the BRC Subaru was the car and the team to be in. OK, we had to raise money for that opportunity, but it was so important for us at that time – it's a similar position with this seat."

Another person who will be closely involved with the project – 40 years after his first BRC title



Vatanen is backing award

HEADLINE NEWS

Photos: mcklein-imagedatabase.com, LAT

launch new rally driver award

BRC INVOLVEMENT WITH NEWS M-SPORT AWARD



Award winner will get a 2017 drive in a DMACK Fiesta R5

– is DMACK brand ambassador Ari Vatanen.

The Finn will be supporting son Max as he drives in the DMACK British Rally Team this year – the team that will field the award winner in 2017.

“This is a great initiative and another huge commitment from DMACK to British rallying,” said 1976 and 1980 champion Vatanen. “I have fond memories from many BRC events and it really was a championship which generated so much intense competition. I’m sure this award will do the same and I’m really happy to be involved with helping young drivers progress.”

The award increases DMACK’s presence in the revived-for-2016 BRC. The manufacturer will also offer the winner of the BRC Junior category a subsidised drive in the WRC-supporting Drive DMACK Trophy for 2017. The championship has attracted some of the best young rally drivers from across the globe since its introduction in 2014, with the overall champion winning a WRC2 season in a Fiesta R5.

DMACK also offers a similar award – the Vatanen Touch

Trophy – that elects a candidate from each WRC event and places them in an end-of-year shootout.

Northern Irishman Jon Armstrong was this year’s winner, having been put forward from Rally Spain. The shootout took place at the Kirkbride test area, and the team’s director Malcolm Wilson – who was BRC champion in 1994 – will continue his support of the BRC and British rallying by adding to an award he hopes can bring on young drivers as it has in the past.

“Everybody getting involved with this award shows the real passion, enthusiasm and drive to get the BRC back where it belongs,” said Wilson. “I have been there and seen what this championship can do for drivers down the years. It’s so important and to be part of another step on the ladder is great.”

“Another good thing is that this will, hopefully, bring more foreign competition in. We’ve had some really strong entries from Finland with junior teams and crews from all over the place coming in to make their name in the British Rally Championship. It’d be great to see that overseas

interest coming again.”

Similar competitions exist in circuit racing – MN’s sister publication *Autosport* has run the McLaren Autosport BRDC Award for 27 years – but rallying has failed to establish a long-lasting award (see sidebar).

Motorsport News editor Kevin Turner – who is also a MABA judge – is hopeful that the new BRC award can help to identify young drivers in a similar way. “One of our big frustrations is seeing talented drivers not get the opportunities they deserve,” explained Turner. “Hopefully this will go some way to helping those drivers, and it is to DMACK and M-Sport’s great credit that they are throwing their weight behind the initiative.”

“The signs are that the rebirth of the British Rally Championship will really give this country a genuinely competitive and entertaining step towards the world stage. This prize should reinforce that and we look forward to charting the progress of the finalists in the pages of *MN*.”

The award will be officially launched at Autosport International on Thursday.



Cronin won '10 Pirelli prize

Rallying prizes from the past

There’s nothing new about the concept of organising a season-long prize drive in British rallying – or the idea of an annual award to help a young driver:

And this isn’t the first time *Motorsport News* has been involved in an award to unearth young rally talent. In 1997, Niall McShea won the Ford/*Motoring News* Champion of the Future competition. As well as a test with the Ford World Rally Team, the would-be Production Car World Rally champion contested the Race of Champions as part of his prize.

Ford’s history in rally awards goes back even further, with the Ford Rallyman of the Month running through the 1970s and 1980s. A judging panel would sit and reflect on who’d done the most in British rallying in the past month, before handing out 12 awards each year.

MN was also involved with Peugeot in the search for a rally driver in 2000. The prize was an outing on the clubmans Bulldog Rally and Kris Meeke won. He led the event early on, before finishing fourth overall and first in class.

It was hoped the Roger Clark Award – organised brilliantly by the inimitable Rich Stoodley – would become an annual feature, but it only lasted for 2001. McShea scooped the £50,000 prize.

Latterly, the British Rally Championship-based Pirelli Star Driver scheme has offered young drivers the best opportunity, with a season in a frontrunning car on offer to the winner. In its seven years between 2008 and 2014, Elfyn Evans, Keith Cronin and Dan McKenna won the coveted prize. **David Evans**



Wilson joins panel and triumphed in BRC 1994

- Formula One
- Le Mans 24hr
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HEADLINE NEWS

Photos: mcklein-imagedatabase.com, Jakob Ebrej

EVANS JOINS BRC WITH DMACK SQUAD

M-Sport driver will join Vatanen in two-car DMACK British rally team



DMACK ran R5 for Ketomaa in 2015



Evans was a star in the BRC in 2011

By Jack Benyon

M-Sport driver Elfn Evans will join the DMACK British Rally Team and compete in the British Rally Championship in 2016, Motorsport News can reveal.

The 27-year-old will join Max Vatanen in a two-car assault, while dovetailing his WRC2 duties in the latest specification Ford Fiesta R5.

Evans is hoping the opportunity gives him a chance to gain more seat time in a competitive car after losing his WRC drive. "I think the people involved are very keen to win," explained Evans. "And I seem to have more time on my hands than I would like! I'd much rather be there to compete than sitting at home."

"At the end of the day it's an opportunity for me to drive, to really bring the fun back into the sport personally and I think it fits everybody involved. We know the R5 is a competitive car and we're really looking forward to getting out again."

The team will consist of two sons of British Championship winners, with Elfn backed by 1996 champion Gwyndaf (see sidebar), and Max supported by 1976 and 1980 champion Ari.

Dick Cormack – DMACK managing

director – believes the historical implication of the duo competing together is one of the key elements to the new team.

"Committing to a two-car campaign was the obvious choice for us and we have a really enthusiastic line-up with Elfn and Max," explained Cormack. "Not only are they up for the challenge but there's a huge historical significance with their fathers both being former British Rally champions. Elfn's presence in the BRC will really help young drivers progress as I believe they will have something to aim for."

"We will also have a range of new and upgraded products for competitors in all classes of the BRC this year."

Evans last completed a full BRC slate in 2011, at the wheel of a TEG-prepared Subaru Impreza. The Welshman finished second to David Bogie, who is also expected to compete in the BRC this year.

The Dolgellau driver believes this year's championship is an exciting proposition, not least because of the quality of the

rallies included by the organisers.

"Obviously it's looking like a really exciting championship; proper rallies and proper organisation," added Evans. "I'm looking forward to all of the rounds if I'm honest. I've always liked rallying in Ireland. Obviously the season starts on a very local round to me [the Mid Wales Stages] which is good, the Pirelli is back in there, which is a really fast event. The Nicky Grist I did in an R5 in 2013 and quite a few times in an R2, obviously I've done some of the stages on Rally GB. That will be a really interesting event with the mixed surface."

M-Sport team principal Malcolm Wilson (below) is behind Evans' move to the DMACK team, citing the likelihood of winning as a confidence boost for the young Welshman.

"Running in the BRC this year will give Elfn even more seat time and more competition," said Wilson.

"I hope and I'm sure he will come up with some really strong results and I know from experience that there's no better confidence boost than winning."

"Elfn's spent two years battling to improve and hopefully this will give him

that extra leg-up that he needs."

Wilson also believes the BRC itself will benefit from the quality of Evans, and provide a reality check for some of the competitors.

"Having Elfn there gives everybody somebody to go for," added Wilson. "He's a benchmark. It would be very easy for the other guys in BRC to think they're doing really well without Elfn there, but then they come to the World Rally Championship and get a real reality check – everybody knows how good Elfn is in the WRC. This is a win-win for Elfn, the BRC and the other guys out there."

After making his rallying debut in 2006 in a Nissan Micra, Evans spent three years in Ford Fiesta STs before his 2011 British Rally Championship assault in the TEG Impreza. In 2012 he went back to a Fiesta R2 for world and British championship events, which he says was one of the most enjoyable periods of his life.

"Some of the most enjoyment I've had in my career was driving the R2 to the limit on a lot of the British rallies, so we're definitely looking forward to enjoying ourselves more than anything this year," added Evans.

The BRC opens with the Mid Wales Stages, which is based in Newtown, on March 5/6.



David Evans



Evans won in series' heyday

Max Vatanen hoping to gain experience from Elfn and Ari in his first season of British rallying

MN revealed in August that the Cumbrian-based tyre manufacturer DMACK would run two cars in 2016, with Max Vatanen announced as the other driver in the newly formed team.

Vatanen has competed in the Drive DMACK Trophy – for Fiesta R2Ts – for the past two seasons, finishing fourth and third

respectively in his two attempts at the championship, which supports the WRC for five rounds.

However, the Finn will now get the best chance yet to benchmark his pace against a podium-scoring WRC driver in Elfn Evans.

Vatanen is hoping that the support of father Ari and new team-mate Evans will overcome

his relative inexperience in the UK.

"I've heard so much about the stages in the BRC so I'm really looking forward to the first event," explained Max. "The championship will provide me with some great experience and the support from my father and my new team-mate Elfn will be extremely valuable. I don't have

much knowledge of the UK, but I'm ready for the challenge it brings."

Current communications director Glenn Paterson will take over the role of team manager, having competed with the likes of Kris Meeke in the championship before. More details about the team – including who will run the car – is expected in the coming weeks.



Vatanen: first season in BRC

BTCC NEWS SPECIAL

Photos: Jakob Ebrey, mcklein

SUBARU JOINS BTCC GRID

Plato and Turkington to drive Levorg cars



The new Subaru will be rear-wheel drive

By Matt James

Subaru will join the British Touring Car Championship this season with the estate Levorg model, driven by former champions Jason Plato and Colin Turkington.

Team BMR will build and run the cars, with team owner Warren Scott running in a third machine.

The cars will use the boxer configuration of engine and they will be rear-wheel drive, and the firm's commitment is for three years.

Team BMR ran four VW CCs last season for Plato, Turkington, Aron Smith and Scott. The crew won 10 races and the teams' championship.

Team boss Scott said that he was delighted to have secured a long-term deal in the BTCC with full manufacturer backing.

"I have made no secret that I wanted to take the team to the next level, and that meant getting a factory deal," said Scott. "Subaru has really engaged with this programme already. They are very fired up about it and this is the start of a great new chapter for us."

"The Levorg is Subaru's newest car and that is the one they want to promote, which is why it has been chosen. Although it is an estate car, it has a very strong drag coefficient and also the dynamics of the boxer engine mean that the weight is lower down in the unit, which will help with the weight distribution of the car."

"If you looked at all of the cars available that could have fitted in to the BTCC regulations, the Levorg would be very high up on that list, which is why we are delighted to have secured this deal."

Scott said that work had already started on the build of the Levorg, and he hoped that the car would be present at the championship's media day at Donington Park in mid-March. Scott added: "We will be looking to have a few test days before the start of the season."

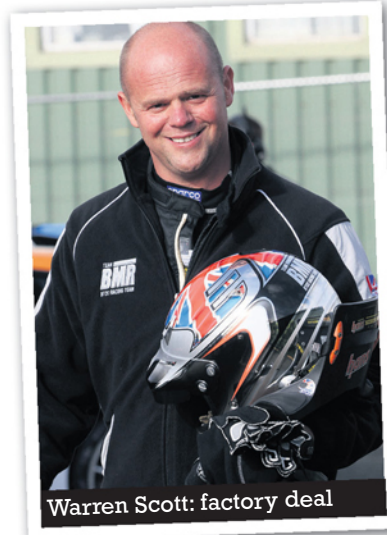
Plato, who was also instrumental in pulling the deal together, said: "Subaru is an iconic name in motorsport, and the Levorg is the perfect platform for the modern day NGTC rules. We have got lots of work to do before the start of the season, but all the initial things I have seen have me buzzing with excitement about this programme."

"It is going to be something different out there on the grid. The boxer engine will make it sound different and I really hope that the public will get behind it. It should be an easy car to support and Subaru has a loyal fan base."

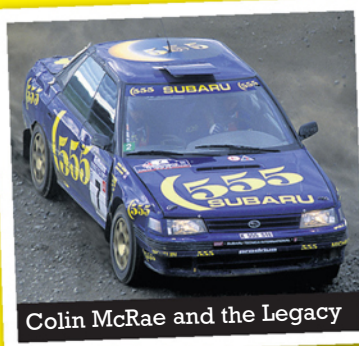
"I have every faith in the designers we have at Team BMR because I have worked with them for a long time, and we really have the potential to do something special here."

Turkington said: "This is the best news I have had in a long time. Tying up with Subaru is a massive deal for us. It is a brand with a huge heritage in motorsport and it is a brand with a winning heritage."

"Going back to rear-wheel drive will be a bonus for me too. It is a format I am comfortable with and something I know well. We wouldn't have decided to do this programme unless we thought we would be more competitive than we were with the VW CCs that we had last season. [Engineer] Kevin Berry designed the BMW that I won the title with in 2014, so I know that the car will be good."



Warren Scott: factory deal



Colin McRae and the Legacy

How Subaru forged a strong motorsport heritage on the rally stages across the globe

Various Subarus appeared in rallying throughout the 1980s, but it wasn't until the manufacturer teamed up with Prodrive that real success came.

The squad entered the 1990 World Rally Championship with a Legacy and it showed potential. Once that was blended with consistency and reliability, the results began to arrive. A best finish at world level was yielded by Colin McRae, who won in New Zealand

in 1993. That resulted in the Subaru top brass signing off on the new Impreza; the Fuji Heavy Industries parent company wasn't keen on seeing the replacement car being used before the initial motor had been victorious.

The 1994 season was a sign of things to come. A mistake on the Lombard RAC rally by Carlos Sainz gifted the drivers' title to Didier Auriol, but at that point it was clear the Impreza was ready to win.

Everyone knows what happened in 1995; McRae won twice – including on the RAC – securing Britain's first WRC title and Subaru's first makes' title.

Another pair of manufacturers' titles followed in 1996 and '97, but Tommi Makkinen dominated the drivers' standings and the arrival of a rejuvenated Toyota shared the manufacturers' titles with Makkinen's Mitsubishi in 1998-'99.

There would be one final major success for Subaru in the WRC, Petter Solberg took the 2003 WRC, but after that it was all about Citroen and Sebastien Loeb. A temperamental hatchback challenger in 2008 lasted just one year and was no match for Citroen's C4 and the team bowed out after 2008.

Subaru has enjoyed success in the USA with the Subaru Rally Team USA.

Jack Benyon

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'Boardley is building
a Ginetta Hot Rod'
New shape for the ovals, p28



INGRAM TARGETS TITLE WITH SPEEDWORKS



Speedworks will field Ingram once more

Tom Ingram has set his sights on Independents' Trophy victory this season after confirming his deal to line up on the British Touring Car Championship grid at the wheel of a Speedworks Motorsport-run Toyota Auris.

Ingram, 22, is entering his third season in the BTCC with the Speedworks team. The 2013 Ginetta GT Supercup title winner took two podium finishes in the BTCC in 2015 on his way to 13th overall in the drivers' standings.

"I feel like we laid down some very strong foundations in 2015," said Ingram. "We have a great platform to take more

steps forward in the year ahead. We had a freshly built car at the start of 2015 and it took a while to get on top of it, but once we did, we were flying. We were gathering momentum as the season ended and it was a shame we had to stop. I hope we can carry that form into 2016.

"There will be some new things to learn on the car with the new RML control parts for this year, but that will be the same for everyone. We have some pre-season testing planned so I hope we will be able to hit the ground running when we get to Brands Hatch in early April."

Christian Dick, the boss of

Speedworks Motorsport, said he was delighted to continue the relationship with Ingram.

"Tom is only going to get better," said Dick. "Tom only ever makes a mistake once and he learns from it. There is no harsher critic of his own performance than Tom himself, and he is constantly working to get the most from himself, which makes him a pleasure to work with."

"We have a test programme at Portimao planned and, with the continuity that we have with the car and with Tom, I think we are ready to make a breakthrough in 2016."



Ingram has title aim



BTCC cars will have a home

New development series set for club races to create a home for aspiring BTCC entrants

A new second division touring car championship will run this year with the aim of giving teams and drivers a chance to sample top flight tin-tops before stepping up to the main British Touring Car Championship.

The B-TEC Development Series will run at six club meetings and incorporate 12 rounds. The opening round is scheduled to

take place at Brands Hatch on March 27/28. The winner will receive a test in a 2016 BTCC machine.

Prime mover behind the series is Triple Eight Racing boss Ian Harrison. He said: "There are cars out there that are eligible to compete, and we think we can have up to 12 for the initial season. We are deliberately running at

club meetings to make this cost effective. The budgets for the 12 races should be under £100,000.

"It will be a great way for drivers to get experience of a modern BTCC car, and it will also provide a useful stepping stone for teams, engineers and mechanics too. They will have a chance to sample the cars and the level of competition required before

maybe stepping up to the BTCC."

The B-TEC Development Series has been given the nod by BTCC series director Alan Gow, but there will be no link between BTCC organiser TOCA and the new category.

Rob Austin Racing has already confirmed it will run two Audi A4s in the series in 2016.

Insight: aims of the new series, p24

THE VOICE OF NATIONAL RACING

MATT JAMIES

"This will be
a new chapter
for Subaru"



Images of Subaru make people think of McRae

So the cat is out of the bag. Team BMR, the British Touring Car Championship's closest thing to a super group, has landed a factory deal for 2016 with Subaru. That has come from left of centre.

It heralds another remarkable step for Warren Scott's team, which has only truly been in existence for three seasons. In that time, it has won races, lured Jason Plato and Colin Turkington, gathered together some of the best engineering brains in the pitlane, built up new cars and came within a whisker of lifting the drivers' title in 2015. It has already been quite some journey.

But Subaru? Subaru has a rich and successful history in motorsport, based mainly on the rally stages. When anyone thinks of the Japanese marque in competition, it is hard not to conjure up an image of either Colin McRae or Petter Solberg in one of the firm's blue and yellow missiles.

But that is about to change.

Rumours of this plan first surfaced around the time of the teams' meeting at the end of last season. Team BMR asked for an amendment to the technical regulations to allow a car that is four-wheel drive to be permitted in to the category in two-wheel-drive format only. It needed a majority to approve it for the tweak to the rulebook to be made and, remarkably in a series where consensus is hard to come by, the majority agreed. The car will be rear-wheel drive, and fitted with what will be a gorgeous-sounding boxer engine.

A rival team manager said to me after the tweak, which he had agreed to, that his reasons were simple: "If this leads to another manufacturer being on the grid, then that has got to be good for everyone, hasn't it? It makes no sense to stand in the way of someone who is trying to do something good for the championship."

A team manager with a wider view than only his own operation? They do exist...

This is a chance for Subaru to rewrite its competition history and bring the memories right up to date by creating a new chapter.

This is going to be the toughest test that Team BMR has yet faced. Plugging former champions Turkington and Plato into a proven race-winning VW CC was always highly likely to reap strong rewards, but building up a brand new NGTC car from scratch is a big ask. With the engineering brains it has, and with the experienced drivers at the wheel, there are all the ingredients there to make it in to a success, but the British Touring Car Championship is a seriously tough nut to crack. It will be an intriguing plotline to the season ahead.



AGREE/DISAGREE?
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RACING NEWS

IN BRIEF

Simpson signs up

Simpson Race Products will sponsor this year's Ginetta Junior Championship. The race equipment firm will offer to supply drivers with race suits, helmets, frontal head restraint devices, and the winner of the championship will be loaned a Ginetta G55 GT4 car for use in the GT4 Supercup Championship.

Ford dates

The British Racing and Sports Car Club's National Formula Ford 1600 Championship will visit Zandvoort in Holland on May 14/15, not June 11/12 as reported in last week's MN.

Test a GT-R GT3

British constructor JRM is offering test packages for its new Nissan GT-R NISMO GT3 machine at the Circuit de Catalunya in Spain on February 11 and 12. The tests are run by the factory team in the latest spec GT-R. Prices begin from £2500 (excluding taxes and tyres).

Grundy back

Tom Grundy will return to the Renault UK Clio Cup with the JamSport Racing team. The 18-year-old will line up alongside Ant Whorton-Eales at the team.

Formula Renault ALPS is shelved for 2016

The Italian-based Formula Renault ALPS Championship will not run this year after series organisers opted to shelve it.

The Pan-European championship had run in its current guise for the last six years, having morphed out of the Swiss FRenault Championship. It held races across Northern Europe including rounds in Italy, Belgium, Austria and France.

The series had a seven-round calendar in place for this year, but championship promoter, Fast Lane Promotion, has opted to pull the plug on the class.

FR ALPS attracted grids into the mid-20s last season, and Briton Jack Aitken won the title.

European FRenault classes have suffered against the rise of the FIA's Formula 4 concept, and the withdrawal of factory Renault support for all two-litre classes besides its own Eurocup 2.0.

A statement from FLP read: "FLP will focus its know-how and priorities on the Clio Cup Italia, with the support of Renault Sport Technologies and Renault Italia.

"After 15 years of successful history, ALPS takes a break until more favourable conditions to continue in the future."

FRALPS helped to launch the careers of several star drivers, including Robert Kubica, Daniil Kvyat and Pastor Maldonado.

FERRARI BACK TO BRITISH GT

FF Corse and Fox teams merge to field new Italian GT3 racer



FF Corse will merge with Fox Motorsport squad

By Rob Ladbrook

Leading Ferrari squad FF Corse will return to British GT this year with at least one of the Italian firm's new 488 GT3 challengers.

FF Corse has entered into a partnership with the Fox Motorsport team to field the first customer 488 GT3 programme to be announced in the UK.

Fox secured the 3.9-litre twin turbocharged machine, but will continue to focus on its GT4 operation. FF Corse will oversee the GT3 project.

The car is due for delivery next month, with testing due to begin in

Portimao, Portugal in March.

Drivers for the new machine have yet to be announced, but FF Corse head Anthony Cheshire said negotiations were ongoing.

"We're excited to have the new 488 GT3 as part of our line-up and we want to be running it in British GT as it's a terrific championship and a great platform," said Cheshire. "We're looking around for the right driver pairing at the moment.

"We've known Paul [McNeilly, Fox Motorsport head] for a few years and looked after a number of Ferrari Challenge cars for him. This is a

fantastic opportunity because the 488 GT3 is a stunning car and a big step forward from the 458. The car shares the same chassis platform as the GTE car, so it should easily be capable on the UK circuits."

The deal marks part of a major expansion for the Fox Motorsports team, which has also bought a Ginetta Junior machine with a view to contesting selected rounds in 2016 and a full campaign in 2017.

McNeilly, who shared the Fox Ginetta G55 GT4 with Jamie Stanley in British GT last year, added: "Fox already runs cars in the Ginetta GT5 Challenge,

Racing Drivers' Club and karting [through McNeilly's son, Liam] and we want to create a ladder for drivers from karts to GT3.

"With the addition of the Ginetta Junior and the 488 GT3 we can take drivers from karting and up to the top level of British sportscars."

FF Corse was a race winner with Gary Eastwood and Adam Carroll in British GT, but Eastwood quit the series after issues over driving standards.

● FF Corse will also take delivery of a second 488 GT3 chassis, which will contest the GT3 Le Mans Cup with Johnny Mowlem and Ivor Dunbar.

Priaulx turned down BTCC for Ford WEC

Briton Andy Priaulx turned down the chance to continue in the British Touring Car Championship and GT racing in America to join Ford's new FIA World Endurance Championship assault.

Multiple tin-top champion Priaulx was confirmed as one of the four factory drivers to pilot the twin Ford GT challengers in the WEC's GTE Pro category for

this coming season.

Priaulx will join Olivier Pla, Stefan Mücke and Marino Franchitti at the Ford Chip Ganassi Racing team. The driver pairings, and the additional two drivers for the Le Mans 24 Hours, have yet to be announced.

The move to Ford on a two-year deal ends Priaulx's 14-year association with BMW. Priaulx lifted three World Touring Car championships with the Munich marque.

The Guernseyman said he turned down the chance to race in America and also continue in the BTCC this year in favour of a fresh challenge.

Priaulx joined the WSR BTCC team last season to run a BMW 125i M Sport. He won two races and finished eighth in the points, despite missing the Rockingham rounds.

"It would have been more



New Ford GT will race in World Endurance Championship

comfortable remaining with BMW and I would have had other benefits in staying there, but the decision was all about the racing," Priaulx said.

"I would have raced a BMW in the GT Daytona class of the IMSA SportsCar Championship and continued in the BTCC [with WSR], but that doesn't even come close to what I have now with Ford.

"It's about going to Le Mans and winning big races; having

the opportunity to win important stuff meant a lot more to me than anything else. I've been on the podium at Le Mans with BMW [in 2011] and it is something that I really want to do again."

Priaulx will make his debut with the Ford Ganassi Racing team in this month's Daytona 24 Hours in one of two Riley-Ford EcoBoost Daytona Prototypes the team is fielding in the IMSA opener on a one-off basis.



Priaulx: moved to Ford

OBITUARY

Maria Teresa de Filippis 1926-2016

The first woman to compete in a world championship F1 race, Maria Teresa de Filippis, has died at the age of 89.

The Italian started three grands prix in 1958, driving a Maserati 250F, and achieved a best result of 10th at Spa when she was classified last.

She also failed to qualify a Porsche at Monaco in 1959, before retiring aged 33 following Jean Behra's death.

De Filippis accepted an invitation in 1979 to join the Club des Anciens Pilotes de Grand Prix F1 for retired drivers. She later became vice president in 1997 before then being made honorary president.

She was also a founding member of the Maserati Club.

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'Solberg will be live at Autosport show'
Plan your visit now, p20



Latif has tested Porsche 911

European GT ace Latif to Carrera Cup

Teenager Alessandro Latif will race in the Porsche Carrera Cup GB this year with the GT Marques squad.

The 19-year-old finished 13th in the Pro Mazda Championship last year, but has previously starred in GT racing. He won the Pro-Am Trophy of the Blancpain Sprint Series in 2014, alongside Marc Basseng.

He was also due to contest the Le Mans 24 Hours race the same year in an LMP2 Greaves Motorsport Zytek-Nissan, but never got to drive after an early collision for team-mate Michael Munemann.

Now the Briton will switch to the TOCA support category, having tested with GT Marques last year.

"I'm really looking forward to the season ahead," said Latif. "It's exciting to be a part of the Porsche family, and hopefully this will be the start of a long relationship. Pre-season testing will be crucial – particularly with my lack of knowledge of UK circuits.

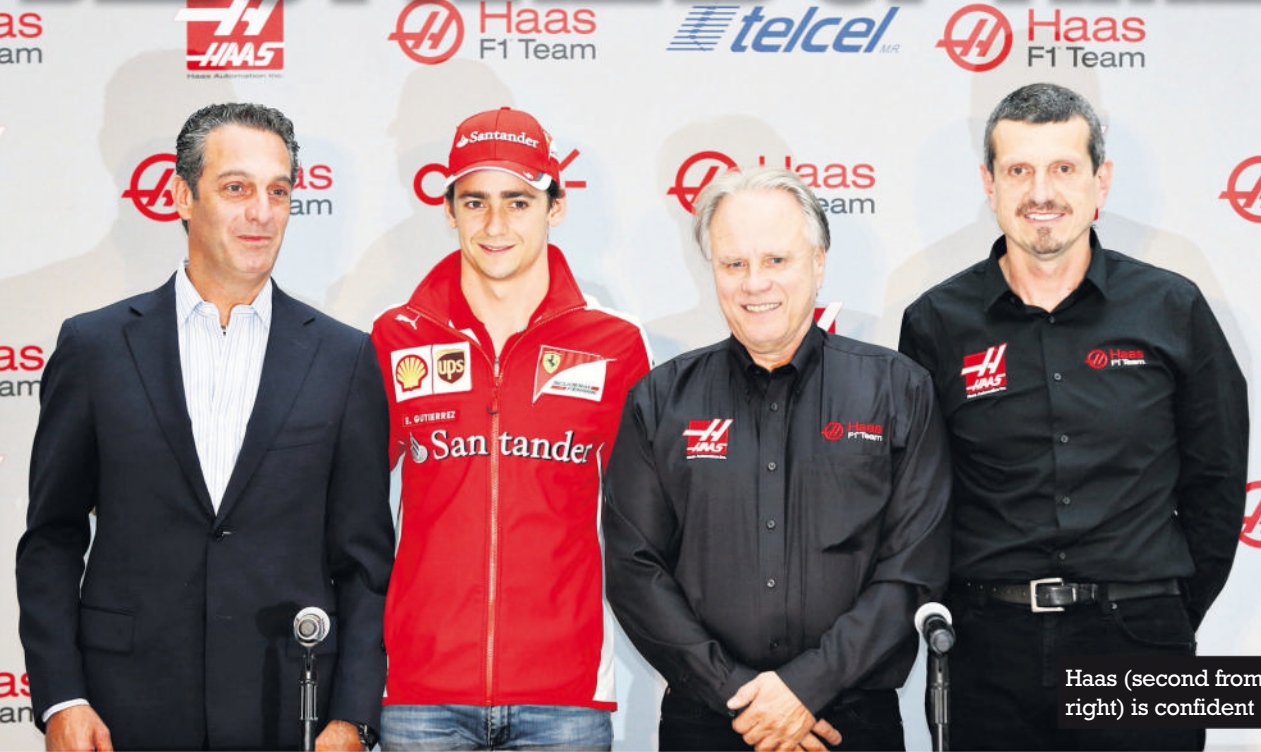
"I began my career in endurance racing before moving into single-seaters last year, perhaps mistakenly. I learned a lot from Pro Mazda, but in truth, my heart remained in sportscars. For me, that means Porsche – and that makes the Carrera Cup GB the next step on my journey."

GT Marques boss Paul Mace added: "When we tested him, he impressed us straight away. At Donington, he had never seen the track before, yet after just 15 laps he had worked his way down to within a couple of tenths of the benchmark.

"I have very high hopes for him in 2016."

Photos: LAT and Jakob Ebrey

HAAS READY FOR F1 DEBUT AHEAD OF TIME



Haas (second from right) is confident

The first car to be raced by new Formula 1 team Haas has passed the mandatory FIA crash tests.

The American outfit will join the grid this year after entering a partnership with Ferrari and is now ready for pre-season testing next month.

The team confirmed the test result on Twitter, posting: "Passed FIA crash tests. Next up testing."

Before the tests were passed, team founder Gene Haas said that his team had "too much time" to get its car ready, after first starting work almost two years ago.

Haas had originally planned to enter the sport last year, but decided to defer its entry until 2016 to improve its chances of

a more successful debut campaign.

"We had too much time, actually," Haas said. "We probably had maybe three months more than what we really needed. But that provided us with the time to look at all the things we needed to order in, things like the technical trailers – it takes almost a year to build them all. That time gave us a benefit you don't normally get.

"For many people, when they go into Formula 1 they buy another team with all the infrastructure already in place. But we had none of that. We had to start everything from scratch and I think that's what killed so many of the other start-up teams. They had six

months to go Formula 1 racing which, even now, when I look at it, that's absurd.

"Looking back, I really don't think we would have been ready if we had tried to enter for last season. We could have taken over Caterham or Manor, something like that, but then we would have been chasing the eight ball."

The team has already announced an experienced driver line-up for its rookie season, with former Lotus driver Romain Grosjean joining Mexican ex-Sauber racer Esteban Gutierrez.

Haas will be the first new squad to join the grid since 2010.



Tincknell going for gold

Tincknell rejoins Jota for ELMS

Harry Tincknell will return to the Jota Sport team for a third shot at the European Le Mans Series title this year.

Tincknell will share the team's Gibson-Nissan LMP2 machine with team head Simon Dolan and ex-Formula 1 racer Giedo van der Garde for the full ELMS campaign. Tincknell has finished in the top three in the table in his previous two years with the team, missing the title by just four points on each occasion.

"My aim is to win the ELMS title, and I firmly believe we can," said Tincknell, 24. "The atmosphere at Jota is fantastic and it will be great working with Simon again. I feel we – together with Giedo – can take another step forward this year."

Tincknell's plans for the Le Mans 24 Hours has yet to be announced, as has Jota's driver line-up for its campaign in the FIA World Endurance Championship with an Oreca-Nissan.

Van der Garde added: "This is a new chapter for me going in to endurance racing and I am sure it will be an enjoyable one."

OBITUARY

Tyler Alexander 1940-2016

McLaren legend Tyler Alexander has died aged 75.

The American was one of the founding members of the team and worked in a variety of roles within the company.

In the late 1960s and during the 1970s, Alexander was part of McLaren's successful Can-Am and USAC programmes in the United States. He also worked on an Indycar project with former McLaren boss Teddy Mayer in the 1980s and briefly worked with the Beatrice F1 team.

He then returned to McLaren in 1989 and continued at the Woking squad until he retired in 2008.

Group CEO Ron Dennis paid tribute: "Tyler Alexander was one of the first pillars of our company, working hard alongside Bruce McLaren.

"Bruce couldn't have asked for a sturdier pair of shoulders upon which to help build the team's reputation.

"Tyler's expert yet practical expertise, coupled with his energetic and optimistic attitude, topped off by his infectious dry and satirical sense of humour, made him both highly successful and hugely popular.

"Quite simply, Tyler lived and breathed McLaren."



Superdry founder will share new SuperRacing Vantage GT4

Fashion company founder makes racing debut in British GT4 Aston

The co-founder of fashion company Superdry will make his racing debut in British GT this year with the SuperRacing team.

James Holder co-founded the £1.3 billion SuperGroup global fashion company in 2003 and will now enter motorsport under a team banner inspired by the group's most famous brand.

Holder will share an Aston Martin Vantage GT4 with Matthew

George, who is an experienced driver coach and a simulator professional with Base Performance Simulators.

David and James Appleby's Generation AMR team will run the car under the SuperRacing banner.

David Appleby said: "We know the Aston Martin extremely well, having run the car in various championships since 2010. We want to make sure James learns what is

required to be competitive. He is a driven and focused individual so I know he will push himself.

"Matthew has coached him and the Aston is the perfect car for them as it's reliable, safe and fast."

Holder added: "We have a dedicated team with a winning heritage. The first season will be a learning curve and we'll use it to build a solid foundation for future class wins for SuperRacing."

THE FASTEST NEWS ROUND-UP



Briton Sam Bird has joined Ferrari for this year's World Endurance Championship. The 29-year-old won the LMP2 title last year but will now move to GTE, driving a Ferrari 488 alongside Davide Rigon. Fellow Briton James Calado will partner Gianmaria Bruni in the other car, replacing Toni Vilander who will focus on the IMSA SportsCar Championship...

KCMG will not return to the WEC LMP2 class next year. The team has sold its Oreca-Nissan 05 ahead of a regulation change in 2017. The squad won the Le Mans 24 Hours last year

with Richard Bradley, Matt Howson and Nicolas Lapierre and challenged for the LMP2 class title. The Hong Kong team still plans to race at Le Mans, as it receives an automatic entry... **British teenager Callum Ilott has joined Van Amersfoort Racing for his second season in the Formula 3 European Championship. The 17-year-old made his car racing debut with Carlin in the category in 2015, finishing 12th in the points. Ilott achieved one podium last year but has been dropped from the Red Bull Junior programme...** Formula E

will not increase its power output in season three, but will instead phase in a hike during the following two years. Current peak power stands at 200kW, but will rise to 220kW in season four and 250kW for season five. However this is some way off the original 300kW figure planned for the fifth season... **Pipo Derani topped the final day of testing ahead of the Daytona 24 Hours later this month. The ESM driver led the way in an LMP2-spec Ligier-Honda JS P2, after the similar Michael Shank Racing car had previously topped the timesheets...**



Bird will run in GTE Pro

RACING NEWS

Photos: Jakob Ebrej, Steve Jones

IN BRIEF

CSCC Open Series

The Classic Sports Car Club has launched a new series for this year, with cars not eligible for the club's other categories allowed to take part. The Open Series is for any cars, except sports-racers, and drivers must use treaded tyres. There will be a 10-class structure based on engine capacity, with two groups, one for Sevens and one for other cars. The races will be 30 or 40 minutes long and there will be nine across the season.

Perez returns

Seb Perez will return to the Ginetta Junior championship this year, continuing with the JHR Developments squad. The 16-year-old had a difficult rookie season in the category, finishing 20th in the standings, but took his first podium in the Winter Series: "I've gotten used to the Ginetta G40 race car and the circuits we travel to, so I'm hoping that experience will come in handy when it comes to picking up more podium positions," he said.

Green stays at WDE

Renault UK Clio Cup driver Rory Green will remain with the WDE Motorsport team. The 21-year-old finished 12th in the points in his rookie season in 2015, but will miss two rounds of this year's series because of clashing exams.

Gaffney rejoins the Ginetta GT4 Supercup

Reigning GT Cup class champion Rob Gaffney will return to the Ginetta GT4 Supercup this year with his Amigo Motorsport team.

The 25-year-old won GTA of the endurance contest in 2015 in a Ginetta G50 and previously raced in the G50 class of the Supercup between 2011 and 2013.

The team hasn't raced in the category since a fire destroyed its infrastructure in 2013.

"I'm really happy to have a plan in place this early for next season," said Gaffney. "Last year was a great year for us as a team and I'm going to be pushing as hard as I can in the GT4 Supercup."

"It has always been our plan to return in a G55, and although it's taken us more time than we would have liked, we're delighted to be back on the grid in 2016."

ISMAIL SIGNS UP WITH HHC FOR BRDC F4 ATTACK

Young ace joins champion team



Ismail scored a race win in first season



Ngebulana will race with HHC too

By Rob Ladbrook

BRDC Formula 4 race winner Omar Ismail will enter the remodelled category this year with championship-winning squad HHC Motorsport.

Ismail, 16, is the second driver confirmed for HHC, which ran Will Palmer to the championship crown last season. Ismail joins Sisa Ngebulana in the team's planned three-car attack.

Solihull-based Ismail made his car racing debut in BRDC F4 last year after a

successful club and European karting career. He made his debut from round three with Chris Dittmann Racing, having been too young to race in the first two rounds. Ismail took a race win on just his fourth outing and finished ninth in the championship.

He said: "After a strong half-season I feel really confident about this year and I've gelled with HHC really well during testing so far."

"The new car is a lot different to the one I raced last year. It's a lot faster with much more

downforce and is very exciting to drive. I learnt loads last year just about getting to grips with car racing. Things like racecraft and the tracks, but it all came quite naturally.

"Motorsport takes a lot of mental preparation, that's probably the biggest and most valuable thing I'll bring into this season. While there's a new car for this year that everybody will have to learn, last year's experience will definitely be useful to me. For example, I've now raced on all of the tracks

barring two – and we have a trip to Spa-Francorchamps too – so I have all of the basics covered.

"My coach Kieren Clark and I are confident that we will be able to race at the very front throughout, with the main objective for myself and the team being to win as many races as possible."

HHC head Charlie Kemp said: "Omar is a very talented young racer, as was evidenced by his strong performances in his rookie year. Omar has race-winning pedigree and we are confident that we can help him develop further."

Truck racing set to grow under new firm

The British Truck Racing Championship has doubled track time at its showpiece events after completing a change in promoter for this year.

New company Truck Sport Promotions Ltd has been founded by series regulars Steve Thomas, Stuart Oliver and Steven Powell, and will work alongside the British Automobile Racing Club to grow the category.

The proposed switch to Truck Sport Promotions caused unrest among the championship regulars late last year (MN, Nov 25). However, the British Truck

Racing Association board agreed to align itself with the new firm.

Truck Sport's first action has been to double the number of races over a weekend for its key events, including the series opener at Brands Hatch on March 27/28 and the returning Silverstone National event on August 13/14.

"We have 30 trucks lined up for Brands already so we'll run 10 races over the weekend instead of five to cater for everybody," said Truck Sport Promotions Ltd's Steve Thomas. "We can only fit 20 trucks onto one grid, so



Trucks will have double the races at top-ranking rounds

we'll run five Class A races and five for Class B.

"It's great to get our plans settled, and now we can concentrate on working with the

BARC and raising the profile of the championship. We're here to get sponsors interested and put funds back into the championship."

CALENDAR

2016 British Truck Racing Championship

DATE	TRACK
March 27/28	Brands Hatch
April 23/24	Pembrey
June 11/12	Thruxton
July 2/3	Nurburgring
Aug 13/14	Silverstone
Sept 10/11	Snetterton
Oct 15/16	Pembrey
Nov 5/6	Brands Hatch

Thomas added that his firm was pushing for an increased TV deal for the series, which he hopes will include coverage on terrestrial channels and in HD.

OBITUARY

Pat Mannon 1934-2015

Club racer and entrepreneur Pat Mannon passed away on New Year's Eve. He was 81.

Born in Galway, Ireland as the oldest of seven children, Pat moved to England in the 1950s. Pat founded Revolution Wheels in 1967 and he worked tirelessly to establish the brand. It was not uncommon for him to work through the night machining and painting wheels to then deliver

them in person the next day.

Pat became an accomplished racer in his own right. He started sprinting in 1962 and, by the 1980s, was competing in special saloons, winning the Wendy Wools special saloon championship in 1984 in his now renowned Sunbeam Stiletto.

He notched up numerous lap records and podium finishes. He raced with drivers Gerry Marshall,

David Enderby, Ginger Marshall and many more. In 1990 Pat sold Revolution Wheels.

Pat leaves Rita, daughter Jackie, son in law Tony, granddaughters Sophia, Gabriella and Bernadette and great grandson Fletcher. Pat will be remembered as a pioneer in the alloy racing wheel industry and a family man.

Warren McKiernan

MSA Formula star Herta stays with Carlin as he moves to BRDC F4

MSA Formula ace Colton Herta will move to BRDC Formula 4 this season, remaining with the Carlin squad.

The 15-year-old son of Indycar star Bryan finished third in the MSA Formula points in 2015 with a strong finish to the season.

The American has already started testing the new Tatuus-Cosworth MSV F4-016.

"Last year was a great start to my European racing career," said Herta. "With Carlin, I was able to learn a lot and finish the season very strong. I look forward to carrying that momentum into the new season in BRDC F4."

Team boss Trevor Carlin added: "The progress Colton made on every level in 2015 was very impressive and by the end of the

year he was one of the most consistent drivers in the field. He's a great asset to the team and we have no doubt he will be a frontrunner in 2016."

Herta completes Carlin's line-up for its rookie season in the category. He will be joined by his MSA Formula championship-winning team-mate Lando Norris and Ameya Vaidyanathan.

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HISTORICS

'Guy Martin will try rallycross'

Bike man to BRX, p29



Photos: Paul Lawrence and LAT

DOWN THE PUB WITH

ANDY HARRISON

Age: 50
Lives: Shipley, West Yorkshire
Mini guru

It started with a TV programme

"I watched a TV programme called 'In at the deep end' when Chris Searle navigated for Roger Clark and I went and joined Shipley Motor Club as a 13-year-old. It went from there."

It is mainly about Minis

"Minis have been a big part of my life. A good friend, who I grew up with, his father did up Minis in his driveway and that got me into Minis. I ended up helping on the cars."

That led to a business

"I started Acespeed probably 30 years ago out of a garage outside my house and it then progressed. I started the business with Minis and they are still a big part of what we do. But we do other competition cars, including single-seaters and I look after a couple of Lotus Cortinas. It's whatever comes through the door."

He's raced a lot

"I raced in Mighty Minis and Super Mighty Minis, then a season of Mini Miglia. I took that car to Sebring and finished first in class and 20th overall from 70 cars. I've now found my home with historic Minis and I've also bought a Formula Junior Envoy so I'll do a bit in that. Duncan Rabagliati twisted my arm to get a Junior so it is all his fault. I hope to take it to Pau in May. I've also got a Formula Ford Jamun that PA Motorsport is restoring for Historic FF1600."

'Whizzo' Williams is a good friend

"I've shared the Mini with Barrie Williams and he's like a driver mentor to me. It's the most fun I ever have when I'm racing with 'Whizzo'. It's serious and we like a result, but we have a lot of fun as well. He's very quick."

He does the events he likes

"I love historic racing. We might go to the Copenhagen Historic Grand Prix this year because I've done it a couple of times. I don't tend to follow championships; if I like an event I'll do it."

Family is important

"I've got three grandchildren and I'm a very happy grandfather. A lot of my family live on the Isle of Man and I go over there for the TT, the rallies and the hillclimb. I just spent Christmas there and I love it!"



Harrison: Mini expert

BIG PORSCHE AND FERRARIS TO GOODWOOD

Iconic 917s and 512s to Members' event



Long-tailed 512S will be in demo

By Paul Lawrence

High-speed demonstrations featuring six Porsche 917s and five Ferrari 512s will be a major feature of the 74th Members' Meeting at Goodwood in March.

A total of 16 Group 5 machines from 1969 to 1971 will be put through the paces as the March 19/20 event celebrates a special period in world championship

sportscar racing. Cars like the Porsche 917 and Ferrari 512 were immortalised in Steve McQueen's movie 'Le Mans'.

Joining the Porsches and Ferraris will be four Lola T70 Mk3Bs. The big bangers were built when production cars, of which at least 25 had to be built, were allowed five-litre engines rather than the three-litre cap for sports-prototypes of the same era.

The Porsche 917 line-up will include the 1970 Le Mans 24 Hours winner of Richard Attwood and Hans Herrmann. Attwood will be on hand, along with 1969 Le Mans winner Jackie Oliver. Veteran historic racer David Piper will drive the 917 he raced in period.

Five Ferrari 512s will take part in the demonstration runs with examples of the 512S and 512M, as well as a rare low-drag

'Coda Lunga' version designed for Le Mans in 1970.

Attwood, who is a regular racer at Goodwood and a former owner of a 917, said: "The 917s are great old things, but of course compared to modern cars they are quite dangerous. I had my own 917 until the end of 2000. It was the Steve McQueen film car, chassis 22. I used to run it up the hill at the Goodwood Festival of Speed every year."



Hopkirk: honoured

Rally legend Hopkirk gets MBE

Rally legend Paddy Hopkirk was awarded an MBE during the New Year's Honours.

The Northern Irishman remains one of Britain's best-known rally drivers, nearly half a century after the conclusion of his international career.

Now 82, Hopkirk started rallying in the mid-1950s and scored one of his most famous wins on the 1964 Monte Carlo Rally in a works Mini Cooper. He continued to rally at the top level into the early 1970s.

Hopkirk and period co-driver Ron Crellin will be reunited with an ex-works Mini they used 50 years ago during the Mini Fair at Stafford Bingley Hall on January 31 and Hopkirk will join the Circuit of Ireland 'Deja Vu' event at Easter.

Mini DART to make comeback for Chateau Impney Hill Climb this July

The unique Mini DART will compete in the Chateau Impney Hill Climb in July in the hands of owner Stefan Wray.

Aside from a successful debut at Goodwood in 2010, the car has seen little action since being

restored. Wray found it for sale on eBay and bought the early 1960s project in 2008.

The DART, based on a Minivan chassis to get a longer wheelbase, was created by racer and aviator 'Dizzy' Addicott in

1963. Its design inspired the Mini Marcos and Mini Jem.

"I'm not brave enough to race it myself," said Wray. "But Chateau Impney seems like the ultimate hillclimb for period cars."



New contest for historic rally cars for 2016

The Historic Rally Car Register has launched a new rally championship for 2016.

The Stage Masters Challenge will run over seven events, covering both gravel and asphalt rallies, and is a closed-to-club championship.

HRCR Chairman Paul Loveridge said: "Rallying is going through some tough times and we felt something had to be done to offer our 2000 members and organisers a fun series where the challenge is

competing among themselves in their own classes and categories."

Apart from the Isle of Man Classic Rally and Killarney Historic Rally, most of the rounds will run in the Brecon and Llandovery areas.

"We're delighted that we have managed to secure some iconic rallies with roots firmly in historic rallying," added Loveridge.

The opening round is the Mid Wales Stages on March 6.

Masters to run enduro series

After the successful four-hour race at Donington Park last July, Masters Historic Racing has launched the Masters Three Hours series races for pre-1966 GT and touring cars.

European races will be at Brands Hatch GP (May 28/29), Donington Park GP (July 2/3) and Jarama (October 15/16).

In addition, two races will be run in North America at the Daytona Historic (November 10-13) and the new Sebring historic event on December 1-4.

Jo Seymour from Masters said: "Our pilot race at Donington last year proved the popularity of long-distance racing for historic cars. We know that drivers want as much track time as we can offer them."

IN BRIEF

Eddie Ganderton
MN is sad to report the death of Eddie Ganderton (76) after a long illness. The York-based driver and co-driver was one of the longest-serving members of York Motor Club and co-drove for drivers like Ian Oldfield, Dick Rowland and Yuk Hodgson. He contested several RAC Rallies and finished second on the Pirelli Classic Marathon with 'Piggy' Thompson.

Historics unveiled

The MSA British Historic and the Fuchs R.A.C. Historic Asphalt Rally Championships will be unveiled at Autosport International. The Roger Albert Clark Rally Motor Club will be on stand 6814 in Hall 6 to take the wraps off its 2016 programme, which also includes the DMACK Carlisle Stages. Championship registration will be available for both series.

More trials for 2016

The Historic Sporting Trials Association has added a new event to its 2016 schedule. The Sywell Historic Sporting Trial will run on Sunday January 31 at a new site opposite Sywell aerodrome near Northampton.

Dual attack

Rally driver and co-driver Alan Walker will contest two very different events back-to-back this weekend. On Saturday night he will drive on the challenging VSCC Measham Rally in his vintage Bentley before making the short trip from Thirsk to Croft on Sunday morning to co-drive on the Jack Frost Stages in Peter Smith's MG Metro 6R4.

Copenhagen GP

The date for the Copenhagen Historic Grand Prix has been set for the weekend of July 30/31. A series of historic races will be run on the street circuit based on Copenhagen's Bellahøj Park and a number of British racers are expected to return. Patrons of the event include famous Danes Tom Kristensen and Jan Magnussen.

Mass on Tour

Ex-grand prix racer Jochen Mass will drive a Group 4 De Tomaso Pantera on the 25th edition of Tour Auto in April. Europe's premier race and rally tour starts in Paris and finishes in Cannes after races at Dijon, Bresse, Ledenon and Paul Ricard. The final leg will take in night-time special stages in the mountains behind the Cote d'Azur.

Bovington Stages

Regulations for the Bovington Stages, the first round of the new R.A.C. Historic Asphalt Championship, have been published for the March 5/6 rally. On offer are 90 stage miles for £245. Details at bdcc.org.uk.

Sunbeam BHRC duo

Dave Hopkins and Tony Vart will tackle the BHRC this season in their 1600cc Sunbeam Ti (below). Their 2015 season was cut short by engine problems on the Mid Wales Stages and the decision was taken to fit a new, more powerful engine for 2016. The car is now ready for testing prior to the Red Kite Stages on February 21.



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KNOWLEDGE EXCHANGE

We work with all levels of industry from YASA Motors and BMW to Speedway and Dallara. Our staff and students are involved in designs for the next generation vehicles including electric cars, playing a significant part in the development of YASA's electric motor for automotive and motosport. With Speedway our students are working on improving the bike frame design and the feasibility and design requirements for an electric bike. We have a strong heritage that enables us to add value to any organisation. We are active contributors to the sustainability agenda, working with low carbon technologies, and have a keen interest in modelling futures. Consultancy and collaboration ensures our graduates are up to date with the latest developments.

We look forward to meeting you: Hall 8, stand 8150

Visit our website: tde.bz/asi2016

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NATIONAL MOTORSPORT ACADEMY LEADS THE WAY IN ONLINE LEARNING



The National Motorsport Academy is proud to launch the World's first online motorsport engineering degrees. The FdSc & BSc (Hons) Motorsport Engineering Degrees incorporate all of the practical and knowledge-based skills required to work in the motorsport industry with the flexibility of studying online from anywhere in the world. Students are able to choose their own start date and work at their own pace which will allow them to fit their studies around work and family commitments.

The National Motorsport Academy is pleased to launch this pioneering new course in partnership with Staffordshire University.

In this global industry, motorsport engineers must have the broad range of skills demanded by the world's top teams. Working closely with the industry, the courses have been designed to meet these rigorous requirements. Not only will NMA graduates be qualified motorsport engineers with practical experience, they will also be innovative, resourceful and commercially-focused. These are highly-desired skills within this competitive sporting industry. The exciting new degree courses will be on show at the Autosport International exhibition where Academy Director Kevin Riley will be on the stand alongside the Director of Motorsport Kieran Reeves.

We'll be on stand 6015 so why not pop by and say hello!

motorsport.nda.ac.uk
enquiries@motorsport.nda.ac.uk
01159 123456

The MG Car Club looks towards the future



Racing has always been a strong tradition of the MG Car Club, and now the Club is looking to continue the success they have had over the last 80-plus years.

Since the 1930s, MG racing has been about several key aspects; cars that are inexpensive to buy and run, simple to prepare, with plenty of spares available, and most of all enjoyment factor.

With a commitment to low-cost entry fees, the MG Car Club gives potential drivers the opportunity of racing across the UK at iconic circuits that include Silverstone Historic GP and Oulton Park in MG Metros, MG ZRs, MG Midgets, and MGBs.

For as little as £6,000, a 16-21 year old can compete in a full season with the Club, and follow in the footsteps of stars like Jack Goff - a former MG Trophy driver now racing an MG6 in the BTCC. This includes the price of a car, race preparation, and half price entry fees.

Present on the stand will be MG Trophy Championship 2015 winner John Gil's MG ZR 160, along with several co-ordinators and drivers from the Club's seven championships. So come and say hello and learn more about what the MG Car Club can offer.

With an amazing history, mentoring from Championship co-ordinators, alongside brilliant paddock atmosphere and camaraderie, MG Car Club racing offers a unique package for drivers looking to kick-start their career in motorsport.

Hall 7, stand 7433. Contact John Hutchison - Competitions Secretary
johnh@mgcc.co.uk 01235 849 738

VBOX Video



Racelogic have been at the forefront of video data logging for some years, with thousands of systems in use the world over by racing drivers of every ability. Now they are just about to launch the latest in the VBOX Motorsport line of products: VBOX Video.

Developed in-house over the last couple of years with extensive customer feedback, and designed to be used by anyone - without needing to be a race engineer - the new system uses dual cameras to capture 1080p video at up to 60 frames per second, synchronised with 10Hz GPS data logging and real time graphical overlay. The result is a fantastic blend of high definition video and graphics that not only looks stunning, it will also guide those in search of better lap times.

VBOX Video also contains a battery backup and ten second video pre-buffer; Bluetooth for remote start/stop logging, connection to the vehicle's CAN Bus, and heart-rate monitoring; and camera preview over Wifi to Android/iOS devices.

As with all their data loggers, the new system is compatible with Circuit Tools which allows for easy analysis of track performance. Available for both PC and Mac, the software has helped many thousands of drivers, at all levels of motorsport, to achieve faster and more consistent track performances. A significant number of racing instructors around the world use it as an integral part of their coaching.

More information available from vboxmotorsport.co.uk - and you can see the new product and talk to the Racelogic team at Autosport International on stand 7535, Hall 7 - where they will also be running a competition on their driving simulator, with a first prize of a VBOX LapTimer.



Reis Motorsport Insurance attends Autosport International 2016

Reis Motorsport Insurance, a leading specialist broker for the motor sports industry, is thrilled to once again be exhibiting at Autosport International 2016. The Reis team are looking forward to seeing many of you this weekend at the NEC and introducing its new branding, including a new logo.

Reis Motorsport Insurance has built its reputation providing a bespoke, personal service that focuses on the needs of the individual and business. By providing tailored products, delivered by a friendly and highly knowledgeable team, you can enjoy your sport, sound in the knowledge that you and your assets are protected.

They understand the needs of competitors, teams and enthusiasts at all levels, from racing as a hobby right through to racing full time in a professional capacity and have been arranging

commercial schemes for businesses, teams and event organisers, as well as individual policies for competition, classic and sports cars since 2008.

With clients from all sectors, they also cement their passion and enthusiasm for the sport by sponsoring a range of events, series and activities. This commitment will continue in 2016, with the Reis team announcing some exciting news on Thursday morning at the show.

There's also the opportunity for a lucky visitor to enter a competition on their stand to win a pair of VIP tickets to the opening round of the MSA British Touring Car Championship on Sunday 3rd April at Brands Hatch.

So why not pop over to the Reis Motorsport Insurance stand 6575 to get involved and see how the broker can help you.

www.reis.co.uk
contact@reis.co.uk
[@reismotorsport](https://twitter.com/reismotorsport)
 0115 965 1020 (personal insurance)
 0115 965 1050 (commercial insurance)



Make sure you have the right fuel - and meet some of US racing's top brass with Anglo American Oils Ltd

Anglo American Oil Company Ltd continues to represent Sunoco Race Fuels, Driven Racing Oil, PJI, ISC racers tape, KLEERS motorsport range and its own bespoke 'R' products in Europe and the Middle East. This year is looking to be an exciting year for Anglo American Oil Company, with new championship fuel supply contracts and a new addition to the oil portfolio - Petronas - aimed at current road car requirements - a market that Anglo American Oil Company has not previously targeted.

A growing concern for Anglo's customers are fuel-related issues caused by ethanol in pump fuels, such as absorbing water leading to corrosion, oxidation and phase separation of the fuel. We are continuing to introduce Sunoco Optima at AIS - an ethanol-free unleaded petrol, specially designed as a storage fuel.

In early part of 2015, the

business is set to move to new purpose-built premises in Dorset, encompassing 1,950 sq m specialist warehouse, workshop, bespoke blending facility and offices. We also continue to run the Sunoco Whelen Challenge and the Sunoco 200 Challenge which have, for the sixth year running, proved a great success in bringing European talents over the pond. Challenge winners Phil Keen and Oskar Krüger are, this, testing at the Roar Before the Rolex 24 (January 9-11) for their Daytona International Speedway race debut on January 21.

Anglo American Oil Company invites you to attend a press call and forum at 1430hrs on Thursday January 8 to celebrate the 2015 Sunoco Challenge winners, Phil Keen and Oskar Krüger. The event will cover several topics, including the Sunoco

Challenge program, the 53rd Rolex 24 At Daytona and Daytona International Speedway's latest innovation, Daytona Rising. There will be interviews with the panellists, followed by a short Q&A opportunity with IMSA's VP of Marketing David Pettit and Director of International Development Alana France.

If you have any questions, please contact Hannah Ford at hannah@aaoil.co.uk.

Contact details:
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 3 Holly Close, Sandford,
 Wareham, BH20 7QE.
 01929 551557



Turatello Trailers : stylish enclosed vehicle transporters



Italian designed Turatello Trailers will have one of the most imposing exhibits at Autosport International as the company showcases its F35 Motorsport Living trailer alongside the F26 - UK best seller in 2015.

Proudly built at the company's headquarters in Padua, Italy, the F35 Motorsport Living trailer is one of the largest motorsport towing trailers on the market and is one of the only trailers currently available that can accommodate a GT-sized racecar and sleeping quarters for three people. The entire trailer can be raised or lowered to the ground thanks to the two hydraulic cylinders fitted between the front and rear axle beams. Bearings, integrated into the axles' mounting brackets, allow the beam to rotate when the hydraulic cylinders are deployed. This has the advantage over hydraulic tilt trailers in that all four corners can be lowered by up to 210cm making it the best solution for loading race cars and sportscars with extremely low ground clearance. Furthermore, the trailer can be lowered for long-distance transit to reduce drag and ultimately fuel consumption of the tow vehicle.

The outer body is made of insulated sandwich panels and clad on an anodized aluminium frame, while for the sleeping quarters, Turatello has used filmed plywood panels and treated non-slip floors. All features can be customised further according to a customer's precise requirements.

The living quarters, includes lockers, a fold-out single bed with a further foldaway double bed above it, storage shelves, chemical toilet, shower tray, fridge, 220/12V transformer, water tanks and a boiler for hot water.

Autosport International will be the first time that the F35 will be shown to the public and is ideal for customers who need light and practical transportation to and from race circuits. It can be towed on a B+E driving licence, too.

Visit Turatello Trailers at stand #7411 or www.turatello.co.uk.



RALLY NEWS

Photos: Jakob Ebrey, mcklein-imagedatabase.com

MONTE COULD BE LAST WRC ROUND FOR KUBICA

Former F1 star considering return to circuit racing later in the year



Kubica finished 2015 with M-Sport help

By David Evans

This month's Monte Carlo Rally could be Robert Kubica's last start in this year's World Rally Championship.

The Polish star confirmed to *Motorsport News* that he will start the season opener, but he then won't see any further WRC action until Portugal in May, if at all. Kubica is still talking to sponsors for this season, but decided to wheel out his own Ford Fiesta RS WRC with the support of Pirelli for the French Alps.

"Finally, I took the decision to do the event," said Kubica. "I put in the entry and then had to think about things, but yes, we are going. For now though, we have no programme for the rest of the year. At the moment, it stops after Monte."

Italian team BRC will run Kubica's car and he will discuss the potential for more 2016 outings once the Monte Carlo Rally is finished.

"BRC is giving me support and help on the logistics and technical side," he said. "I discovered last year that to try and do everything yourself is not so easy. I am the driver and I need to focus on the driving, that's what I'll

do in Monte Carlo."

Kubica tested his Fiesta on Friday and Saturday in France last week and is ready to start an event where he has starred for the last two years. He led the Monte in 2014 and set a string of fastest times 12 months ago.

"Monte Carlo is a very unpredictable rally," added Kubica. "For sure, the weather will play a very big role in the event. With our Pirelli tyres, we have the chance to make an advantage in some of the conditions. We will see but, like I say, anything can happen. The aim for me is to do a rally without any mistakes."

Kubica admitted he hoped to return to the world championship in Portugal, but said it remained possible that he would move away and do something completely different.

He said: "If we continue in rallying, it has to be different to last year – that was crazy. It's such a big commitment to do the whole year, I would prefer to not do all the rallies, but really prepare well for the ones we are doing."

"At the same time, it's possible for us to do something else and there are some options for the second half of the season. This could mean getting

back in a race car; if I do that then I will dedicate all of my time to this – it would be a longer-term project. For now though, that's not on my mind. What is on my mind is the Monte Carlo Rally and making sure that I am completely prepared for it."

Asked if he wanted to stay in rallying, Kubica replied: "I started rallying after a difficult period and difficult situation. I wanted to be distracted from this by trying something new and I did that. And it's still a pleasure to drive these events. That's important for me. I need to take pleasure and I need to have the chance to take a good result."

"One of the biggest results I have achieved in rallying is that people see me as normal competitor, not as a handicapped driver. I have shown that, if I concentrate on just the driving and get the approach right, then it can work pretty well."

"There have been some complications in 2014 for some reasons and for some other reasons last year, but I was happy with my performance in the second half of last season. I didn't bring home as many results as I would like, but there were reasons for that."

Kubica: WRC2 didn't prepare Pole for WRC promotion

Winning the 2013 WRC2 title did not do Robert Kubica any favours, according to the man himself.

In his first season as a rally driver, Kubica tackled WRC2 and selected European Rally Championship rounds, but it was the world championship-based competition that took priority and he won it with a round to spare driving a Citroen DS 3 RRC. Now, however, Kubica wonders if that success pushed him on too quickly in his new career.

His second season in the sport was littered with crashes as he sought to come to terms with World Rally Car competition at rallying's highest level.

He told *MN*: "Looking back, maybe we have to say that it wasn't so good to win WRC2 and in the end, maybe I wasn't ready for the WRC. Everybody seemed to think that, because I had been in Formula 1, this [rallying] would be easy and the guy [Kubica] should jump in a rally car and drive at the same pace."

"At the end of March in that year, I did my first ever gravel rally after just two days of testing. This was not normal. I expected too much. You



WRC2 offered little prep for Kubica

know, there is no time to experience the sensations of driving on this surface and then to move to the World Rally Car [a factory DS 3 WRC on Rally GB] there was even less margin in the faster car. In the end, I was not ready."

Kubica revealed he had the offer of a drive with Citroen for 2014, but he turned it down to go his own way.

"There was an offer from Citroen, but I could not take it," he said. "It was a bit complicated from my side [believed to be because of the clash of oil companies] and I didn't feel ready. That's the reality and now I'm relaxed and looking forward."

AUTOSPORT INTERNATIONAL PREVIEW

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The Strength of Experience

speedline



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'BTCC development series announced'
New touring car plans, p24



Photos: mckleinimagedatabase.com

M-SPORT LIVERY REVEALED



M-Sport revealed the livery of its 2016 challenger on Monday. The Ford Fiesta WRC will be driven primarily by Ott Tänak and Eric Camilli, with both taking part on the Monte Carlo Rally next week

NANDAN DEFENDS SORDO LEAD CALL



Sordo is pseudo no.1

Hyundai team principal Michel Nandan has defended his decision to put forward Dani Sordo as the team's nominated driver for 2016.

FIA regulations stipulate that each registered manufacturer must give the name of one driver who will tackle at least 10 of the 14 rounds. Hyundai went with the Spaniard, over Thierry Neuville – the driver who finished as the Korean firm's leading points-scorer in 2015.

Nandan said: "Whichever driver we would have nominated, there would have

been talk and rumour about the why and because, and some people would not like the choice whatever it was.

"I want to underline once again there is no number one driver in our team and we plan to give equal treatment to get the best out of our drivers on each event."

There were those in the team who felt Hayden Paddon should have been put forward, having outscored his more experienced team-mates from Italy onwards last season. But it was Sordo's experience that Hyundai is

looking at – he has started more WRC rounds (128) than the other two put together (Neuville 58 and Paddon 47).

"We decided to nominate Dani for this year," Nandan continued. "Dani is the most experienced driver of our line-up, he is consistent and fast, so looking at the manufacturers' title for us it was the good choice to make. That doesn't mean Thierry and Hayden will not run 14 events or they are less valued in the team. A lot of people are speculating too much about this topic, for us

it was really a matter of complying with FIA regulations."

Nandan added that the combination of Sordo, Neuville and Paddon gives Hyundai good chances on all rallies with its new car.

He said: "We have three top drivers in Dani, Hayden and Thierry with a rich pool of talent and we plan to utilise their expertise on the surfaces on which they excel. I'm convinced we have the most versatile driver line-up in the WRC and we want to use that to our advantage."

M-Sport remains a manufacturer in WRC

Despite FIA confirmation of M-Sport's manufacturer entry, the Cumbrian squad remains far from certain to contest all 14 rallies this year.

The FIA issued its list of manufacturer and WRC teams last week. Manufacturers – according to WRC regulations – must contest every round of the calendar. M-Sport's Malcolm Wilson says his team is not ready to confirm where drivers Mads Ostberg and Eric Camilli will be seen yet.

"Don't get me wrong," said Wilson, "we are working flat out to make that happen, but at the moment, nothing has really changed. We don't have the budget confirmed for all 14, so I can't tell you definitively that we will be at every event."

Beyond the financial commitment from what is essentially a private team, one of the primary concerns for Wilson is the need to test next year's all-new World Rally Car.

"We've had a meeting and been through our test plan with the guys," said Wilson. "But that's for the first six months. After that we need to see where they are [in the championship] and what we need to do for the new car. The new car has to be the priority."

Wilson would not be drawn on when he expected a conclusion, but it is believed likely to be ahead of the start of next week's Monte Carlo Rally.

While M-Sport hasn't confirmed its 2016 plans, it has confirmed its livery, launched on Monday (see above).

Al-Attiyah won't rule out Dakar victory

Last year's Dakar winner Nasser Al-Attiyah has refused to give up hope on back-to-back wins, despite Peugeot's dominance of the first week in South America.

The 2008 DKR has won every competitive section and Sebastien Loeb headed a 1-2-3 for the French manufacturer at the time of writing.

Despite being 17 minutes off the lead, Al-Attiyah says he will keep pushing and keep pressuring the three cars ahead of his Mini.

"We are sticking to our plan," said Al-Attiyah. "At the moment we are 17 minutes behind the leader and on the Dakar this is really nothing. Absolutely anything can happen. I believe we still have the opportunity to win."

Loeb admitted his position as rest day leader came as a surprise.

"It's true that I've been helped by many of the stages being quite similar in character to what I have been used to on the WRC," he said. "I'm here to learn and I'm fortunate to be surrounded by some very experienced people."



Loeb has battled at the front

The second week of the event moves into more desert terrain, which will suit the rear-wheel drive Peugeot more, but Loeb less. Loeb's team-mate Carlos Sainz is the driver to have suffered most mechanical issues with his 2008 after engine problems halted him for 14 minutes on day one. Heading into week two, he was five minutes behind Loeb.

"There is no point in drawing any conclusions until you are at the end of the rally," said Sainz. "It's clear the speed is there but one of the most important aspects of the Dakar is reliability, and we have still had some issues on the cars. There is more work to do in this area."

GROUP RALLYING EDITOR

DAVID EVANS

"Loeb robot-like in Dakar performance"



I've changed my mind. Dakar's not rubbish any more. After a week of watching Peugeot and Sebastien Loeb turn the formbook on its head, I'll admit I was wrong to dismiss it on these pages last week.

At the time of writing, we're halfway through with some very big days still to come. For example, the penultimate leg of the whole event is a 578-mile dash from San Juan back to Villa Carlos Paz. And that day's stage is 298 miles long.

This year's Rally Mexico is shaping up to be the World Rally Championship's most arduous of tests and includes a total mileage of 668, 249 of which are competitive. But that goes on for three days.

Dakar might have moved out of Africa, but its numbers still have the ability to stop you in your tracks. It really is a marathon and the weather has transformed it into one of the toughest events in years – a match for anything the road through Senegal could conjure.

But it's not really the numbers that kept me captivated this week, it's Loeb.

How does he do it?

Regardless of what happens this week, the nine-time world champion has exceeded all expectations. Admittedly, the roads favoured him in Argentina, but even over the border in Bolivia, where there was more sand and more open terrain, he has still shone.

Watching the splits on Friday's loop around Uyuni, it looked like the Dakar had caught up with him. Eight minutes down, it hadn't bitten him, but maybe it'd had a nibble. Not a bit of it. He'd had two punctures and been forced to drive for 50 miles on the key, with the throttle sticking wide open.

The next day? Back in the lead.

Some of the onboarders are showing Loeb with the sun visor down on his crash helmet, giving him a slightly robotic look. That works. That makes what he's doing that bit easier to explain.

Peugeot deserves similar praise. Last time the lion was in these parts, it was limping like a wounded animal.

What a transformation.

I'll admit, I was skeptical about what was being done behind closed doors in Velizy. There was talk of total disarray, crew members wanting to walk away and the possibility of the project even being canned. Instead of responding to such speculation, Bruno Famin and his team firstly kept their heads, then they got them down and put the hard yards in. They took the 2008 DKR back to basics and reworked just about every aspect of the car.

It worked, the midnight oil was put to good use (if only they'd saved a drop for Craig Breen's 208 T16...) and a car of real class and performance was reborn.

But finally, the last word has to be saved for Carlos Sainz. So much has been said about Loeb, but it's worth remembering that, without the 14 minutes he lost on the first day, King Carlos would be comfortably out front right now.

Bring on week two. Can't get enough of this Dakar thing.



AGREE/DISAGREE?
mn.letters@haymarket.com

RALLY NEWS

Photos: RallyGallery, Chris Huish-RallySport Media

BRC VAUXHALL FINALISTS ANNOUNCED

Two-car team to reveal winners at Autosport International

FINALISTS

Adam Bustard Irish Junior 1000 champion 2013
Arron Windus Victorian Rally Championship event winner 2015
Guy Tyler South Australian Rally champion 2015
Mattias Adielsson Swedish R2 Rally champion 2014
Miko Niinema Estonian Junior champion 2015
Pontus Ahman ADAC Adam Cup contender 2015
Robert Duggan Billy Coleman Award winner 2015
Ruary MacLeod Pirelli Star Driver Award finalist 2013



Vauxhall Adam R2 broke cover at Rallyday

By Jack Benyon

The Vauxhall Motorsport Junior Rally Team has announced the final eight drivers in with a chance of winning a drive in the 2016 British Rally Championship.

The squad – run by Simon Mauger’s Major Motorsport – will choose two of the finalists to drive the Vauxhall R2s in the BRC Junior category this season.

The shortlist features a heavy international flavour, with

interest from abroad growing as the championship continues to announce details ahead of its season opener in March.

Major Motorsport’s Melanie Holmes said: “It’s brilliant to have so much international interest and we were really surprised with how far word has reached of the Vauxhall Motorsport Junior Rally Team without us really trying, it just took off.”

Among the finalists is Rob Duggan, who has spoken of potential Junior World Rally Championship and Drive DMACK

Trophy campaigns in 2016 after winning last year’s Billy Coleman award with a prize of 50,000 euros.

Holmes believes that the BRC Junior prize of a subsidised entry into the Drive DMACK Trophy for 2017 is a key draw for young drivers like Duggan.

“Rob is a really good up and coming driver, so if he is looking at moving into the World Championship then the prize the BRC is offering for the Junior category is a huge chunk off his budget. The Adam could be the car to help him to the prize.”

The team has taken into account previous rally results, onboard footage and driving technique at a Tarmac test day, before a final interview day where the final decision will be made. The two winners will be announced on the BRC stand at the Autosport International Show on January 14. Ex-Opel driver Ari Vatanen will be on hand to announce the winners.

Mauger confirmed to *MN* that the drive is subsidised. Holmes added: “As in all professional rally teams, drivers will be expected to bring a contribution.”



Road to Wales winner Duggan (l) is a finalist



Harris competed on last year’s Wales Rally GB with MHM

MH Motorsport squad to field four cars in the 2016 British Rally Championship Juniors

MH Motorsport will field a four-car assault on the British Rally Championship Junior category next year.

The outfit – run by competitor and team owner Mike Harris – will run three normally aspirated Ford Fiesta R2s and one R2T, all of which have been secured for the coming BRC season. The squad will announce the drivers at the Autosport Show this week.

The squad has gone from strength to strength in the past year, believes Harris: “Last year we started running Fiesta R2s and over the year it’s got bigger and bigger.”

“We ran Josh Cornwell all year in an R2, and myself and Josh both did Wales Rally GB in the cars.”

Harris believes that the draw of the Junior prize – a subsidised year in the Drive DMACK Trophy – is better

than most other national championships can offer.

“The prize is one of the biggest I’ve seen for youngsters in a long time,” he added. “For them to be constantly putting money into rallying is great because there aren’t many people out there doing that.”

“The drivers are coming from all over the world. We had enquiries from people as far afield as Australia. I don’t

think any other championship in the world can offer what the BRC is offering in terms of the prize and the rallies. It’s a no-brainer for most junior drivers to enter the BRC at the moment.”

The four MH Motorsport cars take the prospective entries into double figures, with more runners expected to be announced in the coming weeks.

ICEBREAKER RALLY REPORT

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'McKinstry wins in County Antrim'

Icebreaker Rally report, p19

Photos: Writtle Photographic, ni:media, MCR Motorsport Media



IN BRIEF

Riponian change

The main service and Finish will change to Ripon Market Square for this year's Riponian Rally. The event is on February 28, and will feature some stage miles never before included on the event. Ollie Mellors and Charlie Payne are among the entries.

MSA award winners

South Hams Motor Club has been awarded the JLT MSA Club of the Year award for 2015, winning £1500 and a trophy. The club organises the Boconnoc Motorsport Carnival, the Devon Classic Rally and various road rallies and autosolos. The 63 Car Club – which organises the Speyside Stages – was second.

Permit granted

The Restruct Ltd Welsh Mixed Surface Championship has received a permit from the MSA. The eight-round championship opens with the Red Kite Stages and concludes with the non-BTRDA Wydean Stages in November. MN understands that the release of the regulations was imminent as we closed for press on Monday.

JRM to MERC

Two JRM-prepared Subaru WRX STIs will compete in the Middle Eastern Rally Championship this season. The Group N-spec car will run under the Qatari Rally Team banner, with the cars being driven by Khalifa Al-Attayah and Rashid Al-Naimi. Al-Attayah is the younger brother of double WRC2 champion and Dakar winner Nasser.

Limited edition lid
To celebrate 10 years as the official Stilo supplier, Nicky Grist Motorsport will sell 150 limited edition helmets on the company's stand at the Autosport Show.

Pearson chooses Scotland over Britain

Garry Pearson will forego the British Rally Championship to compete in the MSA Scottish series next year in a Ford Fiesta R5.

The 2012 British Junior Rally champion competed in France in a Peugeot 208 R2 last year, and will be joined by Robbie Mitchell for an assault on the championship.

The Scottish title begins with the Inverness-based Snowman Rally on February 20, where Pearson will get his first taste of R5 machinery.

"The mileage is key to us learning and adjusting to each other in the car, a lot will be very new and it's a big learning curve for us both," said Pearson.

Pearson and father Monty had discussed a return in the BRC Junior category, but the duo decided a Scottish assault suited best.

Pearson Sr said: "After some deliberation on the financial aspects, even if Garry were to win the 2016 BRC Junior Championship again with its contribution towards a run in the 2017 DMACK Fiesta Trophy, there was still a considerable shortfall, which would be difficult to make up – so we decided on a class upgrade instead."



Perez returned from a year out in October 2015

PEREZ COULD RETURN TO BTRDA

BTRDA champion Steve Perez will compete on the season-opening Cambrian Rally before evaluating a potential full campaign in the series.

Perez, the 2014 BTRDA champion, only contested one rally in 2015 – electing not to defend his title. He crashed out of last year's Cambrian, which concluded the 2015 championship but has now swapped to open the 2016 series. It is running two BTRDA events in the space of four months.

Perez said: "We'll see how we get on in the Cambrian. My problem is my son [Seb Perez] is doing Ginetta Junior, so I intend to try and spend the time with him and there are a

few clashes with the BTRDA. If we get a good result on the Cambrian, we'll have to see."

Perez could just use the Cambrian as a one-off, but last year's appearance whetted his appetite for getting back into a WRC car:

"I really enjoyed the Cambrian in October, it's a fantastic rally and the stages are brilliant," added Perez. "I loved being back in the Focus again after a year's break. I realised how much I'd missed it. The [Lancia] Stratos is great, but you can't beat the modern car as a driver."

Perez competed on the Christmas Stages at Croft in a 2004 ex-Markko Martin Ford Focus WRC, but the real

attraction from the weekend came in the lunch break. Perez wheeled out his Group B Audi quattro, which Malcolm Wilson handled for a demonstration around the track in the lunch break.

"I've been inundated with people wanting me to bring the Audi to every event going after we got it out at Croft," he said. "It's currently got 91,000 views on YouTube. We haven't got any plans [to bring it out again]. Obviously we aren't allowed to use in it competition with it being a Group B-spec car. If it's another interesting event then I'll look to get another star driver in it. It can't really go on the forests."



Edwards won Gareth Hall after lengthy injury period

Edwards to campaign in BRC for first time

Experienced national driver Matt Edwards will take on the British Rally Championship for the first time in his career in 2016.

The Brit has a strong reputation in national rally circles, but has never completed a full BRC season. He'll enter the BRC2 category in a Group N-spec Mitsubishi Lancer E9.

"The Evo is a known quantity to us," explained Edwards. "It may not be an overall winning car but we'll hopefully upset some middle order R5s. I think that's a fair target."

Edwards set out to attempt the British Historic Championship last year, but a crash while co-driving on the

Malcolm Wilson Rally ruled him out for most of the year.

He won his first rally back from injury in August – the Gareth Hall Memorial Stages – in an Evo, which he has now sold to fund the BRC project.

Edwards said: "We've never done the British Championship even though I've been rallying for 10 years. The opportunity to do it came up and we took it."

"Will Rodgers will be co-driving, he's been with me in the past. It's good to have a good number of people working towards the programme instead of just me. It was always a budget struggle in the early days, doing everything in my shed. It's nice to have more support behind me."

Weston to follow in brother's footsteps

BTRDA 1400 Series challenger Ryan Weston will step up to the British Rally Championship Junior category next year.

The 19-year-old – brother of 2015 BTRDA Gold Star champion Dave Jr – will drive a Ford Fiesta R2T prepared by Melvyn Evans Motorsport. The team also steered Dave Jr to his 2015 title.

"The BTRDA series has been a great stepping stone but now it's time to move on with my career and the Junior BRC is the perfect place to do just that," explained Weston.

"I'll be just looking to go out and enjoy myself and gain experience of the different events for the future. There will be a lot to learn and I'm sure the pace at the front of the Juniors will be pretty impressive too."

One driver Weston will be aiming at is Meirion Evans, who will also run an R2T with Melvyn Evans Motorsport. Weston finished fourth in the Kick Start 1400 championship last year.



Weston joins Melvyn Evans

NATIONAL RALLYING EDITOR

JACK BENYON

"Evans deal has greater implications"



W

hat is the ultimate method of judging a rally driver? Unlike circuit racing, rallying

doesn't benefit from door-to-door competition. Overtaking skill is a factor many people take into account when analysing a circuit racer.

In rallying, the best form of test for a driver is surely a benchmark. A quality rival proven at a higher – or the very top – level. That is why the news of Elfyn Evans' addition to the British Rally Championship has much larger implications than a good driver joining a 'new' series.

Regardless of the debate about why Elfyn isn't driving an M-Sport Fiesta WRC full time this year, the fact is he performed well in the World Rally Championship. He had a relatively unproven benchmark himself in terms of his team-mate Ott Tanak. But Elfyn's WRC performance is a story for another column.

Much of the emphasis on the BRC this year has been placed on young drivers, and giving them an opportunity to flourish. While some have complained because the BRC Junior category will feature strict control tyre rules, the result is a subsidised season in the WRC's Drive DMACK Trophy.

But in terms of the R5 category, little has been announced in terms of a prize or scheme for drivers at the top of the field. After all, only one driver can win the championship. Perhaps the only option for a young R5/S2000/RRC driver to score any sort of 'prize' is through the new DMACK M-Sport Motorsport News Rally Driver Award (announced on pages 2-3).

Take Rhys Yates – after just one year in the BTRDA in a Ford Fiesta R2, he has now stepped up to an R5. Experience isn't absolutely essential in rallying. It can be a game changer at a higher level, but it doesn't govern raw speed.

Now Yates can test himself against a driver who really didn't do a bad job in the WRC, just like Colin McRae had Dai Llewellyn and Malcolm Wilson. OK, we're not at that stage yet – but the BRC drivers in R5s have a very real opportunity to prove themselves against a WRC2 contender. Last year that could have only really happened on Wales Rally GB.

Hopefully the addition of Elfyn to the series will inspire the other R5 entries to step up their game, and improve as drivers overall.

Now that the DMACK M-Sport Motorsport News Rally Driver Award has been announced, challenging Elfyn could well provide you a nomination into the end-of-year shootout and a chance for a subsidised drive in the BRC in 2017.

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23rd/24th January	BREAN STAGES	Club Rallysport West
20th March	AGBO STAGES	Owen MC
23rd April	HORIBA D'ISIS	Quinton MC
28th May	RED DRAGON IT STAGES,	EMCOS
5th June	ABINGDON CAR-NIVAL	Sutton & Cheam
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Heart of England Champions: Julian Jones & Jamie Vaughan
Road Rally Champions: Matt Barker & John Connor

The Awards Evening is to be held on Friday 29th January 2016
at Harper Adams University, Newport, Shropshire.

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March	MOONBEAM	Telford AC
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May	BORDER 100	Welsh Border CC
May	061 ALTRATECH	Stockport 061 MC
May	EAGLE	Newtown & DAC
June	P. K. MEMORIAL	Bala & DMC
July	PACEMAKER	Knighton MC
August	BARCUD	Barcud CC
September	RALI MERION	Harlech MC
September	MERCIAN	Mercia Motorsports
November	POWYS LANES	Epynt MC
November	PEAK REVS	Ludlow Castle MC

Further details: Gareth Thomas on 07763 052 325
e-mail: roadrally.awmmc@gmail.com

Visit www.awmmc.org.uk for more information

AUTOTEST: Contact Bob Budd on 02476 361 558 or e-mail: r.budd89@btinternet.com | **CAR TRIALS:** Contact Steve Courts on 01926 612 962 or e-mail: steveco1@outlook.com



RALLY REPORTS



Photos: Roy Dempster, John Fife

McKINSTRY WINS AS MORROW EXITS EARLY



McKinstry was on form in an Impreza



O'Brien showed 4WD promise

Icebreaker Forestry Rally

By William Neill

Organiser: Mid Antrim Motor Club
When: January 9/10 Where: Cargan, County Antrim
Stages: 6 Starters: 30

The return of the Slieveanorra Forest stage brought Kenny McKinstry to County Antrim, and he duly won the Icebreaker Forestry Rally by 41 seconds after early leader Phillip Morrow went off the road on SS2.

Morrow won the first 1.5-mile Beaghs stage despite not rallying for over a year; a production category win on the 2014 version of Wales Rally GB his most recent accolade. The former Mitsubishi UK driver was preparing for a potential British championship return later this year and a narrow 0.8s lead on SS1 was promising.

McKinstry and Kenny Hull were fourth fastest on the

opener, 3.2s from Morrow's pace. However, the S14-spec Subaru Impreza crew went on to have an 11.7s advantage heading to the first Cargan service.

Event locals Oran Donnelly and Paul Hughes followed McKinstry in a Ford Escort Mk2. The pair remained second and led the two-wheel-drive runners until an off on Donnelly's all-time favourite stage after first service. The Martinstown driver reported he was not doing anything "too crazy" because of wet conditions before exiting on an SS4 bend. "I touched the brakes and got off line," he explained. McKinstry's lead thus grew as his closest challenger retired.

Patrick O'Brien made extra progress on the second loop. The Irish junior champion was sixth fastest on SS1, but after a repeat of Beaghs was third in a Group A Mitsubishi Lancer E6 with

Stephen O'Brien, behind Shaun Sinclair's Impreza.

Just 0.4s kept Scotland visitor Sinclair and Stephen O'Hanlon behind at half-time. But the Subaru Impreza S9 was second after a repeat of the seven-mile Slieveanorra – a former Glens of Antrim stage, unused in over six years prior to Saturday.

Motorsport Ireland Billy Coleman Award finalist O'Brien fought back on the third loop, going fastest on both tests to secure second by just 1.1s. He also took 2.3s from McKinstry on SS5 and another 1.8s on SS6. Impressive considering the youngster was competing in a four-wheel-drive car for the first time, having campaigned a Citroen C2 last year.

A podium finish on his first gravel rally in a Dom Buckley prepared car, however, was a pleasing result for a modest Sinclair. "We only gained

where others made mistakes," he said at the finish. "The pace was good later and Stephen on the notes made me commit."

Adrian Hetherington and Cathal Mulgrew were as high as third on two occasions before securing fourth, 5.2s from the podium. In a Ford Escort Mk2 the pair moved into the two-wheel-drive lead on SS4, where they remained after six stages following Donnelly's exit.

Group N winners Niall Henry and John Rowan finished fifth after completing SS1 13th. The E10-version Mitsubishi Lancer driver later said it was "an eventful morning with tricky conditions, a few close calls and silly mistakes". A push through Slieveanorra on the second loop changed the Portglenone and Cushendall duo's result for the better.

Seamus O'Connell and Sean Magee took a class win on the

way to sixth after they took a position from Paul Britton and Peter Ward on the final stage. The Subaru Impreza N12b was ahead by 1.8s with one stage remaining. O'Connell got the place by 4s at the end.

Event sponsor William Carey and Ian Archer were eighth, another 48.7s down but ahead of Robert McKelvey and Aaron Johnston. Damien McGauran and Darran Flanagan took 10th.

Results

1 Kenny McKinstry/Kenny Hull (Subaru Impreza S14 WRC) 26m06s; 2 Patrick O'Brien/Stephen O'Brien (Mitsubishi Lancer E6) +41s; 3 Shaun Sinclair/Stephen O'Hanlon (Impreza S9 WRC); 4 Adrian Hetherington/Cathal Mulgrew (Ford Escort Mk2); 5 Niall Henry/John Rowan (Lancer E10); 6 Seamus O'Connell/Sean Magee (Escort Mk2); 7 Paul Britton/Peter Ward (Impreza N12b); 8 William Carey/Ian Archer (Escort Mk2); 9 Robert McKelvey/Aaron Johnston (Lancer E8); 10 Damien McGauran/Darran Flanagan (Toyota Corolla). **Class winners** 2: Henry/Rowan; 5: Niall Donnelly/Dave Birt (Escort Mk2); 6: Stanley Orr/Guy Weaver (Escort RS2000); 7: O'Connell/Magee; 8: McKinstry/Hull.

Seeding no issue for Llewelyn Jones crew

JJ Brown Memorial Rally

By Ian Mills

Organiser: Caernarvonshire and Anglesey Motor Club
When: January 9/10 Where: Snowdonia
Route: 120 miles Starters: 57

From a start number of 16, Rhys Llywelyn Jones/Daniel Llewelyn Jones came through to be surprise winners of the JJ Brown Memorial Rally.

The event had been postponed from its original date in December after heavy rains led to flooding in the Caernarfon/Bangor area. Despite torrential rain – and at times snow – that fell throughout Saturday night, the rearranged rally ran without any of the route having to be cut.

At Petrol, Kevin Kerr/Max Freeman had dropped just 2m27s and held a lead of three minutes over Llion Williams/Cadog Davies. Osian Vaughan Williams/Sion Tegid Tomos were in third, just three seconds off second place.

However, none of these crews were to make the Finish. Williams/Davies withdrew at the halt due to a broken exhaust, while the leaders broke a shaft on the sections after the restart.

The winners, fourth at Petrol, dropped time on the cleanable penultimate section but held on to finish 32 seconds ahead of Endaf Jones/Merfyn Williams.

The rally proved to be a tough challenge, with only 26 of the 57 starters being classified as finishers. Attrition was highest in the Expert class, where just seven of the 19 crews in that category got to the end.

Results

1 Rhys Llywelyn Jones/Daniel Llewelyn Jones (Citroen Saxo VTS) 12m25s; 2 Endaf Jones/Merfyn Williams (Honda Civic) +32s; 3 Wil Evans/Carwyn Evans (BMW 318ti); 4 Dylan Parry/Dylan Griffith (Vauxhall Corsa); 5 Colin Davies/Roger Evans (Ford Escort); 6 Ieuan Owen Thomas/Declan Mason (Saxo); 7 Malcolm Atherton/Robert Bryn Jones (Peugeot 205 GTI); 8 Dylan Thomas/Iwan Griffith (Ford Focus); 9 Jamie Atherton/Mark Atherton (Saxo VTR); 10 Dion Evans/Elliott Davies (Peugeot 106 GTI). **Class winners** Semi-Experts: Parry/Griffith; Novices: Atherton/Atherton.

Tyre selection key for Adams as Scottish weather wreaks havoc with rally crews

Knockhill Stages

By John Fife

Organiser: Border Ecosse Car Club
When: January 10 Where: Knockhill, Fife
Stages: 8 Starters: 63

Gary and Gordon Adam won the opening event in the 2016 Scottish rallying season with victory on last weekend's Grant Construction Knockhill Stages Rally, the first round of this year's Blackwood Plant Scottish Tarmac Rally Championship.

In wintry conditions that should have favoured the four-wheel-drive brigade, the Adam family Ford Escort Mk2

used soft wets to find grip where others slithered.

This ploy was spotted by Alan Kirkaldy, who staged a remarkable fightback from 10th quickest on the opening stage to claim the runner-up position when he switched his Escort to soft wets at the half-way point.

Until then, Stuart Walker had been holding second place in his Skoda Fabia S2000 but lost out by just five seconds. However, the star driver on the day was Ross Hunter, who had been wringing the neck of his two-litre Peugeot 205 in treacherous conditions until a puncture robbed him of

third place. A similar fate befell the Ford Fiesta of James Gibb, who lost out on a top six placing when he also punctured a tyre.

The fight for fourth was closer still as the Subarus of Ian Paterson and Iain Wilson finished the day one second apart, with Charlie Shaw rounding off the top half dozen in his Subaru.

Donnie MacDonald posted an early retirement when his recently rebuilt Mitsubishi developed a turbo fault and he chose to pull out rather than risk the engine.

Angus Lawrie took the Class 1 award with Ross

Carbry sliding off on the first stage, and Sean Robson exhibited a spirited display of driving winning Class 2, while Nick Rintoul's Skoda Fabia R2 was sidelined with coil failure.

Results

1 Gary Adam/Gordon Adam (Ford Escort Mk2) 49m32s; 2 Alan Kirkaldy/Garry Muir (Escort Mk2) +41s; 3 Stuart Walker/Julie McGuire (Skoda Fabia); 4 Ian Paterson/Alan Paterson (Subaru Impreza); 5 Iain Wilson/David Kirkpatrick (Impreza); 6 Charles Shaw/Lindsay Shaw (Impreza); 7 Gareth White/Harry Marchbank (Citroen DS 3 R3T); 8 Alistair Inglis/Colin Inglis (Lotus Exige); 9 Sean Robson/Ben Diamond (Citroen C2R2 Max); 10 Stephen Thompson/David Crosbie (Escort Mk2). **Class winners** 1: Angus Lawrie/Heather Grisedale (Vauxhall Corsa); 2: Robson/Diamond; 3: Thompson/Crosbie; 4: Adam/Adam; 5: Walker/McGuire.



Escort crew came good in Scottish rain

AUTOSPORT SHOW PREVIEW

Ready for the new season? Take a wander around Autosport International

WELCOME TO

2016

It's time to shake off the winter blues and kick-start your season! Autosport International rolls into the Birmingham NEC this week and is the perfect way to gear up for the 2016 motorsport year.

Whether you're a Formula 1 fan keen to hear from the stars and try to grab an autograph, or a club racing or rally enthusiast, you are well catered for: The glory of the show is in its variety.

Every branch of the sport is represented under one roof – OK, maybe several inter-linked roofs. From grassroots disciplines like karting and Ministox, through to high-ranking national championships, world class engineering as well as careers and education – everything is covered.

The only issue is making sure you catch everything. Here we've created a handy guide to pick out some of the must-see elements of this year's show.

Grab your tickets at www.autosportinternational.com and get ready to wear out your trainers...

MAIN STAGE

If you fancy hearing the latest updates from the stars themselves, then the Autosport Stage is the number one destination.

You literally can't miss it, with large video screens and more microphones than you can shake a stick at. The stage will host to a plethora of talking heads from all areas of the sport across the four days, including all of last year's McLaren Autosport BRDC Award finalists, as well as winner Will Palmer.

Host Henry Hope-Frost will (lightly) grill each guest, flanked by great some great cars: the FIA World Endurance Championship-winning Porsche 919 Hybrid LMP1, Ford's new GT Le Mans machine and Gordon Shedden's British Touring Car Championship-winning Honda Civic.

Check the timetables each day to make sure you don't miss your favourites, or if you do take a look at www.autosport.com to catch up on any of the gossip you might have missed.

GUEST LIST

Confirmed guests for the main stage this year include:

Johnny Herbert
Damon Hill
Andrew Jordan
Guy Martin
Felipe Massa
Allan McNish
Matt Neal
Gordon Shedden
Petter Solberg
Colin Turkington
Claire Williams
Susie Wolff
Wayne Gardner
Phil Read

ENGINEERING AND CAREERS

Interested in the inner workings of racing cars, or keen to find that mechanical advantage on your own challenger? Autosport Engineering should be your destination.

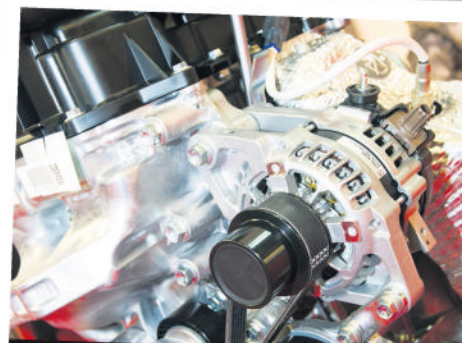
Open during the trade days only on Thursday and Friday, the exhibition

houses hundreds of top companies from around the UK and the globe, showcasing new high-performance products and innovations. Traditionally around £1 billion worth of business is generated during the two days of the show alone.

Foreign firms account for around 15 per cent of the total exhibitor base, with the rest all home-grown, proving Britain is still a world leader in this area.

If you are interested in getting into engineering, the show's careers in

motorsport area is well worth a visit. It runs all four days and includes the best universities, colleges and courses available to kick-start a career in motorsport engineering and design. There will also be a new fitness and preparation area at this year's show.



Engineering show can be big business

THE STORY OF WILLIAMS

Williams has become an absolute staple of the British motorsport industry, and goes far beyond just being a Formula 1 race team.

The main feature exhibit of this year's show is dedicated to the great Grove concern, and its contribution to motorsport past, present and future. Take a meander through a selection of great cars from the company's history, including its 2015 challenger.

Deputy team principal Claire Williams will be joined by Rob Smedley and Pat Symonds, while current driver Felipe Massa will be on the main

stage and also handling a pretty special machine in the Live Action Arena (*see right*).

Damon Hill will also be present, and chatting on the stage about his world title triumph with the team as he celebrates its 20th anniversary this season.

As well as all that, there's a showcase of Williams' booming Advanced Engineering splinter company. Williams Advanced Engineering has grown exponentially in recent years and now designs, develops and supplies components and technology to a multitude of

disciplines – be it Formula E batteries or FIA World Endurance Championship energy storage systems, Williams has a hand in it somewhere.

Also be sure to catch former F1 test driver Susie Wolff, who is launching a new initiative alongside the Motor Sports Association to try and boost the number of female drivers in motorsport. Wolff will reveal details of the new scheme tomorrow (Thursday), and will be a guest on the main stage on Saturday to discuss it further.

For more GP machinery, also take a look at *F1 Racing's* stand.



Williams Martini Racing will have a big presence



Solberg is a star live act

LIVE ACTION

Eyeing stationary racing cars on stands is one thing, but it only ever acts to whet the appetite to see some at full bore. For that the Live Action Arena is an essential diversion from the main halls.

Running multiple one-hour shows hosted by Sky Sports F1's David Croft each day, the arena has 5000 seat capacity and the closed-in nature of it is great for giving your senses a huge dose of

noise and tyre smoke.

A very special addition this year will be the Williams FW08C from 1983, which just happened to be the first F1 car the legendary Ayrton Senna ever drove. The great Brazilian made his test debut in the chassis at Donington Park during his F3 days. Keke Rosberg and Jacques Laffite raced it in period. Current Williams driver Felipe Massa gets the honour of displaying

the machine on Sunday afternoon.

Double FIA World Rallycross champion Petter Solberg will perform stunt shows, while motorcycle ace Guy Martin will also take part for the first time.

In addition, you can catch demonstrations by national rallying giant the BTRDA, short oval action from BriSCA and hot rods, drifting and a host of world record attempts.

Hot Rods will be showcased



OVAL RACING

Let it never be said that Autosport International doesn't cater for fans of all kinds of motorsport, with the Oval Racing experience a particular treat on the weekend days at the NEC.

Located in Hall 10, this year's event features the Grid of Champions, with

cars from BriSCA F1 and F2 champions Rob Speak and Kelvyn Marshall, National Hot Rod driver Shane Murphy and National Bangers' Jack Overly, among others.

The exhibit covers autograss, rallycross, oval racing, drag racing and

off-road racing, plus celebrity interviews, awards, and new car and product launches.

In total, over 40 cars will be on display, including a special line-up showing the 'Evolution of Hot Rods', featuring cars from the past and present.

AUTOSPORT SHOW PREVIEW

NATIONAL RACING

While the star names and flashy attractions at the head of the show are all well and good, if you fancy having a go yourself the club racing section of Autosport International is your best chance all year to weigh up every option.

ASI traditionally attracts packed stands from most of the UK's top racing clubs, with the British Racing and Sports Car Club, 750 Motor Club, British Automobile Racing Club, the MG Car Club and more out in force.

Whether you fancy a tin-top campaign, modified special or a humble single-seater, each stand is rammed with club and individual championship representatives keen to share information and educate you on the strengths of their various series.

ASI is also a great place for new car launches. British favourite Ginetta will take the wraps off its new G57 sports car, while Radical will share its new RXC Spyder. Young British marque Zenos will show off its hot E10R track car and there's a new project called the Avatar to seek out. It boasts a 250bhp engine and weighs just 700kg.



HSCC AT 50



Honda (top) and Chevron will join HSCC celebration

One of the leading organisers of historic racing, the Historic Sports Car Club, will mark the start of its 50th anniversary season with a display of period racing cars at Autosport International.

Star billing on the Club's stand (number 6730 in Hall 6) will go to the Jaguar D-type raced by Neil Corner to win the inaugural Griffiths Formula race at Castle Combe in May 1966. The Griffiths Formula race was a race for sports cars from 1945 to 1955 and led to the formation of the HSCC.

On the stand at 1400hrs on Friday (January 15) will be several drivers who competed in that first race, as well as some of the club's past champions and senior officials.

The D-type will be joined on the stand by the Lotus Mk10 that finished second in the race in the hands of Chris Warwick-Drake and an Aston Martin DB3S of the type that finished third. In 1966, John Le Sage took the final podium place in chassis DB3S/4.

Eight more cars will be on display to trace the story of the HSCC across half a century. The Formula Junior Lola Mk2 of Tony Steele marks the Club's long association with the Junior category. Back in 1976 Steele won the Formula Junior class of the Club's Single-Seater Championship.

Club chairman Frank Lyons will have two cars on show. His mighty Gurney Eagle FA74 marks 30 years

since the HSCC first included Formula 5000s in the forerunner of the Derek Bell Trophy. Also from Lyons' stable is a McLaren M26, highlighting the Club's role in the development of Historic Formula 1 racing through the late 1980s and 1990s.

The Chevron B19 of Jonathan Loader will bring back memories of the RJB Mining Group 6 Championship, which enjoyed great support through the 1990s. The Chevron is also now a contender in the Club's new-for-2015 Pre '80 Endurance Series.

Representing 20 years of Historic Formula Ford, one of the Club's most popular categories, is the Jamun T2 of Will Nuthall, while the newest category in the Club's portfolio, the Super Touring Trophy, will be illustrated by the ex-works Honda Accord of Graeme Dodd.

Completing the display will be a huge Can-Am McLaren M8E sports-racing car, as the 50th anniversary of the class is also celebrated, and a 1950s Cooper Bristol MkII single-seater to recall the early days of historic racing in the 1970s.

"We've got a tremendous line-up of cars at the NEC to launch our 50th anniversary season," says the Club's chief executive Grahame White. "I'm particularly pleased that we've been able to track down the cars that finished first and second in the Griffiths Formula race at Castle Combe in 1966."



Double World Rallycross champion Petter Solberg will be the star rallycross attraction at the NEC this weekend.

The popular Norwegian will once again grace the Autosport Stage to entertain the crowds with his tales that can, and probably will, go off on a variety of tangents at any moment.

Solberg will be performing in the Live Action Arena in his 'breathed on' Citroen Xsara WRC car, where you'll be able to see more donuts than you could believe possible.

While Solberg leads the dual-

Photos: LAT, Jakob Ebrey, Paul Lawrence, mcklein-imagedatabase.com and MCR Motorsport Media



Dunlop BTCC stand is always a hive of activity



Club stands are packed with racing options for '16

RALLYCROSS



Solberg's stage sessions (inset) are worth a watch

surface fraternity at the NEC, lorry mechanic and popular motorcycle racer turned TV star Guy Martin will be present on Saturday and Sunday, following the announcement in this issue of *MN* that he will race a Ford Focus Supercar in an MSA British Rallycross Championship event this year. Martin will be present on stand 6860 – shared between the British Rallycross Championship and Team RX Racing – at various times throughout the weekend to sign autographs alongside the

Supercar he will race later in the year. On display on the same stand will be a British Championship RX150 buggy and Julian Godfrey Engineering's new World RX specification 'Custom Engine'. Martin will also be in action in the Live Action Arena, where he will show off his skills on a Honda CRF450 Short Track motorbike. As part of the Oval Racing Experience on Saturday and Sunday, the BTRDA Clubmans Rallycross Championship will display three cars.



Higgins' McRae-liveried Subaru will be on display

NATIONAL RALLY

It's never a bad Thursday when you're going to meet 1981 World Rally champion and all-round motorsport hero Ari Vatanen – especially when he's going to be talking about the all-new DMACK M-Sport *Motorsport News* Rally Driver Award.

Vatanen will be on both the centre stage and the British Rally Championship stand talking about his own association with DMACK, his son Max's potential in one of the Drive DMACK team's 2016 BRC Ford Fiesta R5s, and the opportunity afforded by British rallying's biggest and best award.

Full details of the DMACK Motorsport News Young Rally Driver Award can be found on page 2 of this week's *MN*, but DMACK managing director Dick Cormack and former co-driver turned team communications expert Glenn

Patterson will be around on Thursday to answer any further questions.

DMACK's rallying appeal stretches way beyond these shores of course and evidence of that can be found on the M-Sport stand, where one of the Drive DMACK Fiesta Trophy cars will be on show. The Cumbrian-built Fiesta R2 is the car of choice for M-Sport's World Rally Championship-based one-make series – and will also feature in this year's BRC.

With the British Rally Championship returning after a year's hiatus, excitement around the series is building. The MSA-supported contest boasts a substantial stand at ASI, which will also be visited by Ari Vatanen. As well as a host of Q and As with famous BRC characters from past and present, a selection of the cars to be used in the series will be on show. R5 cars will lead the

running, with Rhys Yates' striking black and day glow green Ford Fiesta R5. The car finished on the podium in the hands of 2015 European Rally champion Kajetan Kajetanowicz before the Chesterfield driver obtained it.

The BRC2 category Subaru Impreza is also there, which David Higgins rallied on Wales Rally GB in a McRae-themed livery to commemorate the 20th year since the Scot's WRC success, while two cars to be used in the BRC Junior category also complement the bill – a Vauxhall Adam R2 and a Ford Fiesta R2T.

Championship manager Iain Campbell said: "The show is an excellent place to meet everyone, to answer any queries or clarify any points. Having such a legend as Ari Vatanen on the stand to help with news for the championship just makes it a great start to the year."



Yates' R5 machine will help represent the 2016 BRC



Legend Ari Vatanen will be a special guest speaker

BTCC DEVELOPMENT SERIES

How a new series is set to shake up the tin-top world. By **Matt James**

CATERING FOR THE TOURING CAR MASSES



VW CC cars could appear on the new grid



BTCC cars will have a home in the B-TEC Development Series

There is no question that the British Touring Car Championship is riding the crest of a wave. The huge influx in interest and entries since the switch to the NGTC rules, which mandate a number of cost-controlled universal parts, has underpinned the popularity and the longevity of the category.

Allied to that, series bosses introduced a new idea in 2014 as teams were given TOCA BTCC Licences (TBLs) to guarantee their spots on the grid for the longer term. While that has given each squad a tangible value to its entry, it also means that it is extremely hard for aspiring teams to progress into the BTCC top flight.

The existing TBLs are earmarked for teams that already operate in the

championship or those that are already in the series and might want to expand to extra cars.

That means it is virtually a closed shop, despite a number of teams clamouring to take part.

That is where the new B-TEC Development Series comes in.

The idea has been fronted up by Triple Eight Racing's Ian Harrison, and its basic premise is to operate a feeder category that will allow drivers and teams to sample contemporary BTCC machines in a club-level series. That will give them the experience in the tin-top motors before they then graduate on to the main class in the future when the chance arrives.

The idea is loosely based on the V8 Supercar Development Series in Australia. One of the offshoots of the original Triple Eight Race Engineering firm in the UK was the Australian arm,

which has gone on to huge success in Oz and has claimed numerous titles. Harrison has a keen eye on the UK and on things Down Under and often visits the country to watch progress in the V8 category.

"I guess the Australian series was always in the back of my mind," admits Harrison, who runs the factory MG operation in the BTCC. "But it really ramped up with the recent success of the British Touring Car Championship

and the licence system for teams. I talked to a few people around and there was a genuine interest to do this."

The idea for the series is simple: contemporary BTCC cars, such as those run in the main championship, can take part over 12 races run at club meetings. The timetables are due to be compact and should only require teams to turn up on a Saturday morning and leave on Sunday night at most events, cutting the outlay, and technical support from the likes of Dunlop has already been put in place.

The series will be a totally separate entity from the TOCA operated and run British Touring Car Championship, although TOCA boss Alan Gow has given the category his approval. "We are committed to working with TOCA as it will benefit everyone concerned in the long term," said Harrison.

B-TEC is the name that has been given to the new teams' organisation,

which was formed over the latter half of the 2015 season to look into ways of expanding and exploiting the commercial streams that are available to teams that take part in the top flight championship. The B-TEC Development Series is a spinoff from that and it aims to open up new opportunities for drivers and teams. "We have intentionally kept things low key over the winter until we had something to talk about. Now we have and I will be speaking with the BTCC entrants over the coming weeks about other opportunities that we are pursuing," says Harrison.

"The budget should be no more than £100,000 for a year," explains Harrison. "That means that it will give drivers a chance to race a pukka tin-top in a competitive championship. It will give them a chance to learn their craft before stepping up, but it could also provide a home for those who want

"This is a stepping stone"

Ian Harrison



TEAM

AT A GLANCE

B-TEC Development Series

Regulations

- Category is open to any non-BTCC entrants
- Cars can only be fitted with GPRM components
- Standard Swindon race engine on all cars (310bhp)
- On-event engine support will be provided at every round
- Single set of gear ratios for all rounds

Tyre supplier

- Dunlop Tyres will provide one compound for the entire series
- Specialised Dunlop tyre fitting service at each round
- Dunlop tyre restrictions (eight new tyres at each event, 12 at the first round, four carry over tyres from the previous round)

Event information

- 1 x 40-minute practice session on Saturday afternoon
- 1 x 30-minute qualifying session on Saturday afternoon
- 2 x 30-minute races on Sunday

Series administration

- BARC organises the series
- Dedicated B-TEC Development Series management team, including series co-ordinator and series scrutineer
- Team garage at most events
- B-TEC Development Series race centre at all events
- TV coverage at a minimum of two rounds

Prizes

2016 B-TEC Development Series champion and runner-up will receive a test drive with a current BTCC team

CALENDAR

DATE	TRACK
March 27/28	Brands Hatch Indy
April 23/24	Croft
May 28/29	Rockingham
TBA	TBA
September 3/4	Anglesey
October 15/16	TBA



Series will start at Brands

to race these types of cars but can not commit to a full season in the BTCC."

And, importantly, it is not just about the drivers. Harrison says that it will be a proving ground for teams and engineers as well: "It will be a place for teams, engineers and mechanics to learn too, before they might get a chance to step up to the full BTCC. The top level is hugely competitive and it takes a big effort to run at the highest level. By running in the B-TEC Development Series first, it gives them a chance to gain the experience they will need."

What has also helped is a tweak to the top level BTCC specifications for the 2016 season. The supply contract of a number of the control parts has moved from the GPRM firm to RML. A lot of BTCC teams will be upgrading cars ahead of the new campaign, meaning that there are a lot of parts and handful of chassis available to



Huge BTCC grids have led to new plan

form the bedrock of the nascent B-TEC Development Series. That, in turn, provides a very useful income stream for the teams in the top flight.

"If the NGTC rules that we use in the BTCC were being adopted by other countries then we probably wouldn't need the development series," says Harrison. "But this is certainly the right time to do it and we have had nothing but positive reaction so far. There will always be dissenters who will poo-poo any idea that wasn't thought about by them, but in general the reaction has been positive."

"We know it is hard to start any new category from scratch, but the beauty of this is that the kit is already out there."

Harrison has been the driving force behind the initiative, along with Team BMR head Warren Scott and Rob Austin Racing's team manager Richard Austin. Harrison believes a number

of teams – although not all – have got behind the plan and he expects grids of up to 12 cars for the initial season.

"In the longer term, this Development Series will be a benefit to the main BTCC," he says. "The teams and drivers it creates will already be at a standard before they make the step in to series."

Allied to this impetus to get the B-TEC Development Series off the ground is a new recruit to the teams' organisation, Blake Friend, a former sponsorship manager for the V8 series in Australia. He will work full-time on the UK development series, among other projects that he is trying to introduce to the UK.

The building blocks have been put in place for a new era. The foundations of the B-TEC Development Series are strong. If it can tap in to the aspirations of teams and drivers to get on the ladder towards the tin-top big time, then it will be a success. ■

Austin eager to field two Audis in series

Rob Austin has pledged to run two Audi A4s in the new B-TEC Development Series in 2016, and the team owner says he can see plenty of room for the category to grow.

Austin has run the A4s in the BTCC since 2011 and says the time is right for the introduction of a second division for touring cars.

"I was very keen to support this idea," he explains. "There is a lot of equipment out there that is still competitive, and there are lots of drivers out there who want to race touring cars but have nowhere to do it."

"The regulations mean that the BTCC is highly competitive and close – it is some of the best racing on the planet – and this new series means people will get the chance to experience that without the commitment and outlay of the top flight."

Austin says that the B-TEC Development Series has the potential to flourish in future seasons too. "This is the right time to do it, because there is such a demand to race touring cars," he says.

"You just have to look at the model in V8 Supercars in Australia – the development series really hit the spot over there."

"The British Touring Car Championship has full grids and people sometimes can't get in. This provides the ideal launchpad for them."



Two Audi A4s will be on track

Learning the tin-top lessons from Australia

First run in 2000 as a home for older, outdated V8 Supercars, what was the V8 Lites series has blossomed as the V8 Supercar Development Series.

While still retaining its role as a home for previous chassis, it acts as a feeder series for drivers who can gain V8 experience out of the glare of the main game. It's also a good way to get co-drivers up to speed before they are installed in a car for the main endurance races, such as Bathurst.

With teams unable to pair their regular drivers anymore, a quick co-driver is

Series is strong in Australia

essential and the top Australian teams keep them match fit by running them in the Development Series. It moves away from its feeder role, but it has raised the bar of competition by several notches.

Crucially, the series is embraced by V8 Supercars as a company. Although it doesn't run at all events, it doesn't play away and so all of its rounds are alongside the main championship and it is part of the package rather than being farmed off elsewhere. And for the fans, they get two more touring car races. Ripper idea, mate!

David Addison



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The world-famous *Autosport International* show is heading to Birmingham's NEC from 14-17 January, and motorsport fans have more reason than ever to be excited. See triple FIA World Champion Petter Solberg drift his FIA WRC machine in the Live Action Arena, get up close to some of Williams Martini Racing's most famous Formula One cars and listen in awe to the heroic stories of motorsport legends like Damon Hill OBE.

The centrepiece of *Autosport International 2016* is a tie-up with Williams that brings all of the glamour of a Formula One race weekend to the Autosport Stage. For the first time ever, the eight-metre-tall Williams Martini Racing motorhome will be constructed away from a race circuit to form part of the exciting new Autosport Stage, which will be packed full of insightful interviews and features with famous faces from motorsport.

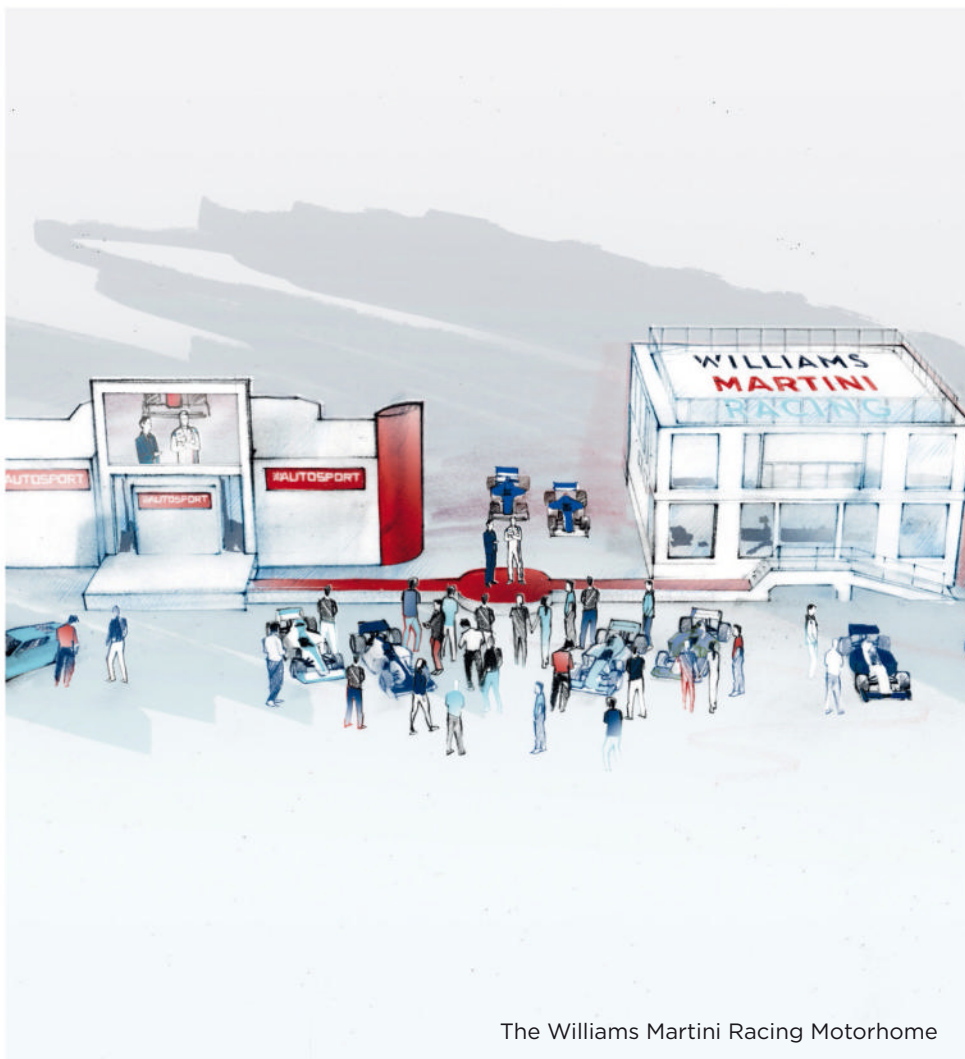
What's more, Williams will be bringing an incredible selection of its most famous Formula One cars to the NEC, from the very first Williams-Ford FW06 to this season's Williams-Mercedes FW37. Among them will be the team's greatest ever car, the Williams-Renault FW18, which won 12 of 16 races in the 1996 season. As well as interactive features focusing on Williams' F1 activities, visitors will also get an insight into the

world of Williams Advanced Engineering, the division that transfers technology from Formula One to market sectors as diverse as defence and renewable energy.

Elsewhere at Autosport International, the 5,000-seat Live Action Arena gives showgoers the chance to experience all of the raw sights and sounds of pure racing machines. Reigning FIA World Rallycross Champion, Petter Solberg, is just one of the highlights, drifting his Citroën Xsara WRC within centimetres of the track barriers. Fans will also be able to see incredible driving stunts and insightful interviews with legendary racing drivers across the weekend.

Autosport International features every form of motor racing from karting to Formula One, allowing visitors unrivalled access to racing machines from across the world. The MSA Dunlop BTCC and F1 Racing displays immerse fans in a gridwalk of current racing cars from each championship, while a new historic racing display entitled 'When We Were Kings' brings together some of the most iconic models from the golden eras of racing.

Tickets to *Autosport International* are on sale now, and can be purchased from www.autosportinternational.com or on **0844 581 1420**.



The Williams Martini Racing Motorhome



Damon Hill: 1996 Formula One World Champion

SPORTING SCENE

McGarry takes on new VX220 project

Peter McGarry is set to compete in the Irish Rallycross Championship and selected British events at the wheel of a new Vauxhall VX220.

McGarry raced a Stock Hatch Peugeot 205 in Ireland last year alongside a campaign in a SuperModified version of the car in the BTRDA Clubmans Rallycross Championship in the UK. The Clubmans championship event winner has bought a part-built VX220 from former Irish Rallycross champion Michael Coyne, who emigrated to Australia before the car was finished.

"Michael was the reason I first started in rallycross. He mentioned he might sell the car and it was an opportunity I couldn't pass up," said McGarry. "There have been many ways to get the best out of the Lotus Exige-VX220 concept, but we are being different and will fit the supercharged Peugeot engine from my SuperModified car."

Coyne, who was champion in 2009, had initially intended to replace his highly successful Vauxhall Nova with the VX220 before emigrating.

"The car will be finished towards the end of this year, hopefully sooner," said McGarry. "We want to have a full attack on the Irish Championship in 2017."



VX220 is currently in build

Group B celebration planned for Lydden

Organisers of the Retro Rallycross category in the MSA British Rallycross Championship are planning a 'Group B Extravaganza' at the British round of the FIA World Rallycross Championship in May.

The Retro category has been present at both of the previous World RX events held at Lydden Hill with a range of cars, but the 2016 event is hoped to feature the largest number of the iconic Group B machines yet, both in on-track demonstrations and on static display.

"The Group B era remains a favourite with rallycross fans and to include these mighty beasts in Retro Rallycross is sure to be a crowd pleaser," said series promoter Shirley Gibson.

"Interest is being shown by various Group B owners and of course Lydden Hill is the perfect place to host such a spectacle."

Former European RX competitor and Retro RX regular Rob Gibson is expected to take part, while multiple British RX champion Pat Doran could drive the Ford RS200 fondly known by the Doran family as 'Rosie'. Will Gollop drove one of his former MG Metro 6R4s last year.

The event is held on May 28/29.



Photos: Hal Ridge, cstartworks

NEW GINETTA G40R HOT ROD REVEALED

Multiple champion Boardley takes British marque to short ovals

By Matt James

Multiple Hot Rod World champion Carl Boardley will race a specially developed Ginetta G40R in the series later this year, Motorsport News can reveal.

The Boardley Motorsport boss will offer the car to customers when it is completed in the spring and already has three orders for the Leeds-built sports car. The design has been approved by

the National Hot Rod sanctioning body the NHRPA.

"The original idea came to us in 2013," said short- and long-circuit racer Boardley. "We were taking a look at the Ginetta pace car that is used for the firm's one-make racing series and one of my crew said it would make a great Hot Rod. Before I knew it, tape measures were coming out and the idea has been in the back of my mind since then."

Boardley said he spoke to drivers at last season's World

Final to gauge interest and then decided to give the project the green light. Ginetta is fully behind the plan.

"We have had to go about the design in a slightly different way," explained Boardley. "We knew where we wanted the wheelbase, had to ensure it fitted the NHRPA template and then have had to reconstruct the body to not only suit, but also still very much resemble the Ginetta G40R."

"Boss Mouldings have the body now and are currently

working on the moulds to produce the body panels, while the chassis frame and suspension will be produced by SHP Engineering to my own design."

Alongside the Ginetta, Terry Hunn is fielding a Mazda RX-8 in the category in the future to add to the variety on the grid.

Boardley will be present at this weekend's Autosport International Show to field questions about the new design and talk to any interested customers.

SPORTING TRIAL

Veale takes a tasty victory in Herefordshire

Sporting Trial, Kington, Herefordshire

By Duncan Stephens

Organiser: BTRDA When: January 9

Ian Veale won the BTRDA Gold Star sporting trials championship on Saturday at Kington, Herefordshire with a majestic drive.

Veale has chased the title for over 30 years after being gifted a new trials car as a wedding present from wife Lindsay, and took the crown with middle son Sandy passengering, after oldest son Josh won a year ago.

With the exceptionally wet conditions nationwide, many expected flat-out blasting all day

in top gear. But extremely challenging wide hills laid out by Ian Wright required much more skill than that, with subtle trickling and blasting, which Veale showed all how to do from the offset, dropping just a point during the first round of 10 hills to lead John Fack by a point.

Despite clipping a nine post on the second round, he retained the lead at lunch by three points from Simon Gracey, who had been invited from Northern Ireland as their reigning champion.

A sharp shower during the afternoon meant conditions deteriorated rapidly, more all-out blasting and scores rising but Veale continued his march to

become a well-deserved champion, beating Fack by a clear margin of 12 points.

Reigning British champion Roland Uglow had been favourite following a stunning season. He completed the podium ahead of Gracey, who had a poor final round and dropped to fourth. Pete Fensom won best Midlander in fifth, while Mark Milne was top Northerner in sixth in a very close gaggle of drivers that completed the top 10.

Julian Fack was seventh from Andrew McKinney, Josh Veale and Simon Kingsley, with McKinney being top live axle car.

The Silver Star was hotly contested, with Jerome Fack



Veale was on fine form

taking the lead from Autotest champion Alastair Moffatt by a point, which was extended to seven at the end of 30 hills. Despite Fack struggling with a worsening engine, he still finished 13th overall in an entry of 35. Moffatt was runner-up, with Harry Barr third.

Results

1 Ian Veale/Sandy Veale (Sherpa) 29 points; 2 John Fack/Jordan Fack (MSR) 41; 3 Roland Uglow/Laura Wilks (Crossle); 4 Simon Gracey/Clive Gracey (Crossle); 5 Peter Fensom/Liz Fensom (Hamilton); 6 Mark Milne/Richard Milne (Crossle); 7 Julian Fack/Meg Marrion (Crossle); 8 Andrew McKinney/Chris Millar (Concord); 9 Josh Veale/James Washer (Sherpa); 10 Simon Kingsley/Jo Edwards (Crossle).



Graham's Escort Mk2 will run

Graham commits to full BTRDA Clubmans Rallycross campaign in attempt to win for Ireland

Former rallycross Supercar racer and Irish RX champion Tommy Graham is setting his sights on being the third Irish driver in a row to win the BTRDA Clubmans Rallycross Championship, by committing to racing in the series this season.

Graham will race his Ford Escort Mk2 in the Clubmans championship, having made sporadic appearances in Britain and Ireland since debuting the Zakspeed car in the Retro Rallycross category at Lydden Hill in 2013, where he rolled.

"I want to race in the BTRDA Championship and take the trophy over the Irish Sea again. It's a great championship with some really great competitors, but of course I want to beat them all and win the title," said Graham, who won a round of the Clubmans

championship at Pembrey in 2014. "I like the championship structure and the two double-header events make it more feasible for me to do the championship."

Graham began in rallycross in the early 1980s in a Fiat 128 Coupe.

Trials survey aims to boost entries

The MSA Trials Committee has commissioned a survey to help shape the future of sporting trials.

Entry numbers have reduced over the last five years and the last decade has been dominated by highly powered and independently sprung state-of-the-art cars.

MSA Trials chairman Nick Pollitt said: "We are seeking views on the best way we can encourage not only newcomers on a limited budget, but also seasoned campaigners with traditional cars, who would like a more level playing field."

The older live axle cars have diminished in numbers with the top of the sport evolving rapidly, while at the same time sections have become more challenging.

The novice class of drivers has been given a tyre pressure advantage over the last two BTRDA events, a change that has been well received. There will now be a live axle class next year to encourage the development of those cars.

The last time a live axle car won the MSA British title was the late Calvin Kneebone in 2002, though in the BTRDA Josh Veale took the Gold Star in 2014.

The short survey can be found at snapsurveys.com/wh/s.asp?k=143498307026.

Clubmans RX adds all-wheel-drive class

The BTRDA Clubmans Rallycross Championship will introduce a production four-wheel-drive category to run alongside the Clubman Supercar class this season.

Organisers have confirmed that two cars are already in build for the category. Ian Shelley and Leanne Richardson will both compete in a pair of Subaru Imprezas. Along with the Mitsubishi Lancer Evo, the popular Japanese saloons are expected to be the cars of choice for competitors in the category.

Richardson is the wife of Mark Richardson, who will race a Ford Sierra Cosworth in the SuperModified and Historic categories this year.

"The production four-wheel-drive class is a great new addition, expanding on current production vehicles it allows drivers with limited budgets who want to race a four-wheel-drive car to have a go," said BTRDA rallycross committee member John Rook. "We're hoping for around 10 cars this year."

GUY MARTIN TO TRY RALLYCROSS

Motorcycle road racing star turned TV presenter Guy Martin will race a rallycross Supercar in an MSA British Rallycross Championship event this season.

The Isle of Man TT expert will compete in a round of the British RX series in 2007 British Champion Ollie O'Donovan's Ford Focus. The exact event that Martin will race at will be decided once his commitments filming for his latest television series with Channel 4 are concluded in the summer, meaning that Martin may race at Lydden Hill in late August, Pembrey in September or the Croft season finale in October. "It's something different and that always excites me," said Martin. "I'm looking forward to the challenge some time later in the year, subject to other commitments."

O'Donovan is looking forward to having Martin aboard his Ford Focus. "Guy is a man that can

certainly drive, and he isn't scared of anything clearly," said O'Donovan. "I have every confidence that Guy will get in the car, grab it by the neck and give it a good go. He's got some wacky ideas about the things he does, which I love. He's a properly competitive competitor so I'm sure he's going to be quick."

Martin will be given a pre-event test in the four-wheel-drive 560bhp Supercar prior to his rallycross debut, to give him an idea for what to expect.

"It's a pity he's coming mid-way through the season. At the moment it's a one-off drive but I'm sure when he gets a taste for it he may like to do some more," said O'Donovan.

The car that Martin will drive will be on display at the Autosport International Show this weekend at the NEC in Birmingham, where Martin will also be present on Saturday and Sunday (see *ASI* preview in *MN* this week, p20-23).



Martin will race the Focus of Ollie O'Donovan this year

ROUND-UP

Robin Lyons scored his third Autotest victory of the season in Longford, closing the gap on **Hewison Autotest Championship** leader Steven Ferguson to four points as the series passed its halfway point. Ferguson, the title holder for the last five years, had a 5s penalty on the second of 12 tests, and the difference at the finish was 5.1s, showing just how closely matched this pair was all day.

Ten times Hewison champion Eamonn Byrne was third, followed by Guy Foster and saloon class winner David Thompson.

The Tyran family dominated the opening **Navigation Trial** of the New Year, with the uncle-nephew combination of Mickey and Ciaran taking a narrow victory over Mickey's son Martin, navigated by Fintan Clerkin. Damien Hagan and Damien Connolly were close behind in third place, ahead of semi-expert winners Derek Mackarel/Arthur Kierans, who missed out on a possible overall win by skipping a via towards the end of the night.

Tony Farrell scored his first win of the season in the **MEC Sporting Trial**, a single mark ahead of a returning Jonathan Fildes, who was on only his second outing since a long layoff. Third-placed Joe McCann took Grade B, another two marks down.

Results

Midland Autotest

Organiser: Midland MC

When: January 10 Where: Longford

1 Robin Lyons (Mini) 638.2s; 2 Steven Ferguson (Mini Special) +5.1s; 3 Eamonn Byrne (Mini); 4 Guy Foster (Mini Special); 5 David Thompson (Vauxhall Nova); 6 Timmy Lynch (Westfield); 7 Darren Quille (Westfield); 8 Paddy Power (Mini Moke); 9 Chris Grimes (Mini); 10 Paul Phelan (Mini Special); 11 Tom Devaney (Westfield); 12 Norman Ferguson (Mini Special).

Class winners Byrne; Ferguson; Lynch; Thompson. Best semi-expert: James Mansfield (Mini).

Monaghan Navigation Trial

Organiser: Co Monaghan MC

When: January 9/10

Where: Ballinade, Co Monaghan

1 Mickey Tyran/Ciaran Tyran (Subaru Impreza) 23 marks; 2 Martin Tyran/Fintan Clerkin (Subaru Impreza) +2m; 3 Damien Hagan/Damien Connolly (Subaru Impreza); 4 Derek Mackarel/Arthur Kierans (Subaru Impreza); 5 Keith McCann/Michael McCluskey (Subaru Impreza); 6 Pádraig Duffy/Evin Hughes (Subaru Impreza); 7 Shane Maguire/Barry Garvey (Subaru Impreza); 8 Emmet McCooey/Conor Boylan (Subaru Impreza); 9 Mac Kierans/Thomas Wedlock (Subaru Impreza); 10 Fintan Larmer/Sean McCaffrey (Subaru Impreza); 11 Kevin McCormack/David McCrudden (Subaru Impreza); 12 Aaron Duffy/Laurence Keenan (Subaru Impreza).

Sporting Trial

Organisers: Motor Enthusiasts' Club

When: January 9

Where: Corballis, Rathdrum, Co Wicklow

1 Tony Farrell (Erskine-S&S) 8 marks; 2 Jonathan Fildes (Erskine-Yamaha) +1m; 3 Joe McCann (JM/VW); 4 James Ralph (Kilkenny-Honda); 5 Enda Byrne (VW); 6 Siobhan McCann (JM/VW); 7 Fergil Gregory (Erskine-Yamaha); 8 Robert Fox (VW); 9 Percy Pennefather (Erskine-Suzuki); 10 Tommy Gregory Jr (Sheane VW); 11 Morgan Evans (Mog-Honda); 12 Kevin Sheane (Sheane VW). Grade winners Fildes; McCann; Aidan Kehoe (Sheane VW); Sheane.

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MN SAYS...

New award for a great BRC

Young drivers will get their chance in the relaunched series

It's not every week you get to launch an important new prize and we're proud to have helped create the DMACK M-Sport Motorsport News Rally Driver Award, which we hope will assist talents up the rallying ladder.

I'm fortunate enough to be involved in the rigorous McLaren Autosport BRDC Award – which has built up an impressive list of winners since it began in 1989 – and have seen the benefits it can bring to aspiring racing drivers. If the new award can be anything like as successful, it will have been a fine addition to the motorsport scene.

It's also the latest piece of good news for the British Rally Championship. Like many, we were sceptical when the decision was taken to give the historic contest a year out in 2015. But the signs are that the rebirth has been worth it, with strong events, interesting cars, good prizes and, so far, an encouraging entry.

The news that Elfyn Evans has committed to a full campaign also provides the BRC with a strong benchmark. Evans might have lost his WRC drive, but he is a podium finisher at rallying's highest level. He'll also be determined to show M-Sport boss Malcolm Wilson he was wrong to drop him from the WRC, so anyone who can take the fight to the 27-year-old will do themselves no harm at all. For Evans, he really has to lead the way to make a case for a WRC comeback.

Kevin Turner, Editor (Twitter: @KRT917)



LETTERS

Bird's nest

I was highly amused to read Paul Bird's statement on page 14 of *Motorsport News*, January 6, 2016. As an employment lawyer with over 20 years' experience of advising employers, I have dealt with dozens of cases of employees failing their employers' drug tests. Of course, it is never their fault. They have always accidentally and unknowingly ingested drugs, including diuretics used to remove evidence of drug taking. The same goes, it seems, for rally drivers...

Harry Sherrard
Storrington, West Sussex



MN, January 6

Wimbledon hope

In last week's *Motorsport News*, you wrote about the closure of stock car racing in London and at other venues in the UK. There is hope!

In early 2005 the old Matchams speedway circuit near Ringwood in Hampshire was under threat, but after many appeals (including *Motorsport News*), it was saved. Nine months later the site reopened as Ringwood Raceway, with new facilities for food, drink and fun for younger visitors.

Garry Robin Simpson
New Milton, Hampshire

LISTINGS

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Photographs must be of a good quality and please send no more than three images

ART EDITOR MIKE STOKOE'S FAVOURITE OF THE WEEK!



Fafnir at Stony Stratford
by Bob Sketchley



Audi fever at Croft
by Peter Tompkins



Our man Jack Benyon won a hair award at the BTRDA awards night. No, really...



James Dewar shot this Escort at Knockhill



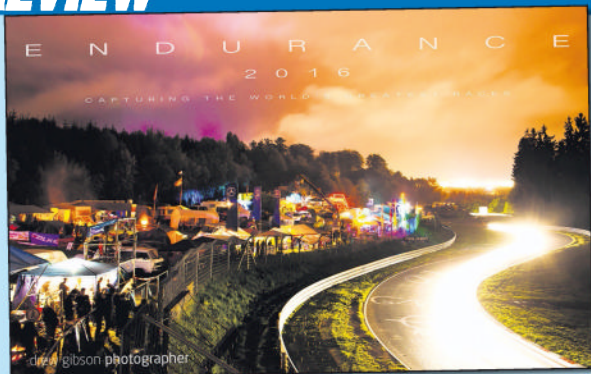
Unusual Mercedes at Croft
by Chris Payne

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WHAT'S ON

REVIEW



Endurance 2016 calendar

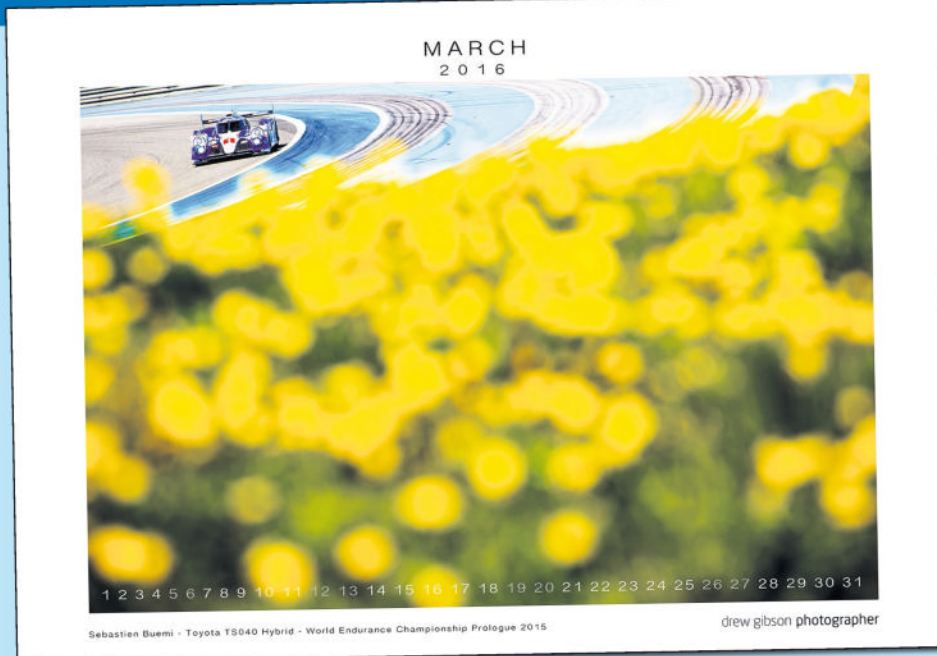
www.drew-gibson.co.uk: £24.99

If you're a sportscar fan, then few calendars will be able to trump top snapper Drew Gibson's offering.

Gibson is well-known within both the FIA World Endurance Championship and the Blancpain GT Series paddocks, and you can sample 12 of his best images

from the 2015 season.

The subject matter covers everything from the WEC and the showpiece Le Mans 24 Hours, to the Nurburgring 24 Hours. The images are all perfectly crisp and high res, and feature a nice blend of traditional action shots and artistic light trails, which lend the calendar a very atmospheric and modern feel. **RL**



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OUT WEDNESDAY JANUARY 20

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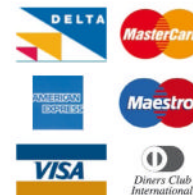
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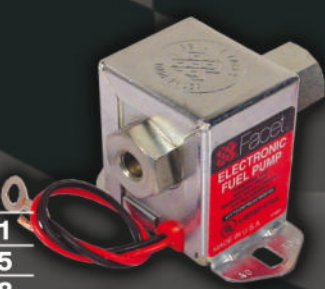
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