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AN ALMOST INDEPENDENT F1 NEWSPAPER



FAME, PLANES & AUTOMOBILES

The world according to Nelson Piquet

SATURDAY
SPAIN 26·04·08

It's starting to look like Kimi Raikkonen's year. He stamped his authority all over Friday's practice, setting the fastest time in both sessions. The afternoon did throw up a few surprises, however, as both Renaults, complete with new upgrades, weren't far behind – along with Kazuki Nakajima, who was flying in his Williams.

Dark horse
Kazuki Nakajima upstaged team-mate Nico Rosberg yesterday, going fourth fastest in the afternoon practice session, three places ahead of the sister Williams car.
Photography: LAT

Bruce Willis: the voice of F1?

Willi Weber has revealed plans for Schumi: The Movie. Michael Schumacher's manager, Weber, told German magazine Bunte that he's in talks with "a Hollywood producer" and that the seven-times world champion may play himself. But what is most astounding are plans for casting the role of veteran British commentator Murray Walker. Weber's tip for the role is none other than Die Hard star Bruce Willis. "Bruce Willis would certainly do Murray justice," said Weber yesterday. It left Murray a bit "shocked" when he heard the news. "I had to make sure when looking at the calendar that it was April 25 and not April 1." The 84-year-old joked: "I always regarded Bruce Willis as a mirror image of myself, don't you know… a much younger version though."

However, Schumacher's press officer Sabine Kehm says that there's no firm plan yet. "There are several ideas about a potential movie," she revealed to The Red Bulletin, "but it is not the case that there are any current plans. I cannot and will not go into detail."

As for Michael reading from a script, has Hollywood not seen Michael's TV advertisement for L'Oréal? Are they serious about him playing himself? Mind you, his Monaco '06 qualifying press conference was a noble acting effort.

Mr Innovator

As if courting Hollywood weren't enough, Willi Weber is also becoming an inventor. Weber is looking to patent a design for a soft drink can that can be resealed once opened. "I am convinced that in 10 years everybody will be using it," says Weber, adding that he wants to "conquer" the 250 billion can a year market. "With this I can make more money than I did with Schumacher in 15 years of F1."

Willi's expected to make an appearance in the paddock this weekend, and he says he'll bring a prototype can with him.



ROYAL WAVE
Fernando acknowledges his fans from the cockpit after finishing third fastest on Friday afternoon.

PHOTOGRAPHY: KOBAL, SUTTON IMAGES. COVER PHOTOGRAPHY: THOMAS BUTLER. COVER ILLUSTRATION: MATT MAITLAND

Spanish Fever

INSTANT OPINIONS #4: DOUBLE JEOPARDY

Can Spain still justify holding two races?

POSITIVE: Spain has a massive army of enthusiastic fans and a double world champion to cheer on. Spanish circuits, permanent and temporary, have invested in their facilities and will be rewarded with capacity crowds. Spain has become F1's unofficial home – the teams spend more time here than anywhere else and have established manufacturing operations in Spain for that reason.

NEGATIVE: With countries queuing up to fuel F1's multinational diversification, the idea of one corner of Europe hosting two races is just ridiculous. Britain, Italy, Japan and Germany – surely the biggest concentration of F1 power – don't have a second race any more, but Spain somehow manages it – on the rather limited pretext of one of their own having a chance of scoring a point.

High-speed pursuit

The GP2 Asia awards show and 2008 GP2 main-series launched on Thursday night. The event was held at an auditorium in Granollers and attended by graduates Lewis Hamilton, Heikki Kovalainen and Nelson Piquet. But the superstars were left waiting as a few of the organisers showed up a bit late. As it happens, GP2's top brass were feeling pleased with themselves as they left the Circuit de Catalunya with their very own police escort. They sped through the streets while the police car ahead of them switched on its blue light and siren. After about half an hour they started to wonder why they hadn't reached their destination. They were even more confused when they arrived at the scene of a robbery and their policeman jumped out and went inside a shop armed with his pistol. Turns out their cop had received an urgent call for back-up, and was rather impressed that technical director Didier Perrin had managed to keep up.

Swedish India

Colin Kolles wanted Force India's new motorhome to be perfect ahead of Vijay Mallya's arrival, but he was unimpressed by the tables and chairs. Deciding they weren't comfortable or elegant enough, he ditched the lot and headed into town with his company credit card. But where can you buy furniture fit for the man Indians call 'The King of Good Times'? The answer is Ikea. So, while the mechanics wondered where all their screwdrivers had gone, Force India's hospitality team got to grips with flat-pack furniture.

TALK HARDER?
We're not so sure about the idea of Bruce Willis playing Murray Walker...



Driver swap

Rumours about Rubens Barrichello's future have taken Andretti Green Racing by surprise. The story goes that Rubens – who will equal Riccardo Patrese's record of 256 grand prix starts tomorrow – will swap places with Marco Andretti next year and drive for Honda-powered AGR in IndyCar. But team spokesman Al Larsen says the rumour, started by German newspaper Bild, has "blindsided" him. "I've not seen that," he said. "Nobody here has a clue. The only thing official is he's not here. Nobody is confirming it." Not a total denial then. Nick Fry, however, has poured cold water on it: "I know nothing about it whatsoever, and neither does Rubens."

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The Secret Diary of Hermann Schnell, Aged 19½

TUESDAY, APRIL 1ST, LONDON

Very, very annoyed. I'd received an exciting text message this morning. It said, "Hello Hermann, it's Bernie. I think you are absolutely brilliant. Meet me at Farnborough Airport, I'll give you a ride to Bahrain in my big private jet, which is really comfortable, and we can talk about how you got to be so talented at such a young age." After standing on the tarmac with my luggage for five hours, it slowly dawned on me that I may have been the victim of a cruel and not-so-very-funny practical joke.

WEDNESDAY, APRIL 2ND, BAHRAIN

After taking the bus to Heathrow, the only flight going out to Bahrain was via Harare. I flew first-class – I still have my SuperDeluxe Student Freedom Credit Card – which meant I didn't have to sit on a crateful of goats. The goat-herder explained that charitable people buy the goats for one another at Christmas. Deciding they'd prefer iPods, they give the goats to people in poor countries. Maybe I should start my own campaign: "A goat is for life, not just for Christmas." Harare was very odd – everyone was talking about some character who won't do the decent thing and leave gracefully.

THURSDAY, APRIL 3RD, BAHRAIN

I finally arrived in Bahrain this morning. Luckily, Gimlet was at the airport with a sign for "The Annoying Prick". I explained he wasn't on my flight, and so Gimlet took me to the circuit instead. At the driver press conference, the media seemed more excited and restless than usual – honestly, I don't know what's got into them. I was asked a question about morality in F1 – so I explained how all profits from my sponsored sportswear are donated to an orphanage. I would have gone on to announce my goat campaign, but then my marketing manager, Otto, suddenly had a choking fit.

FRIDAY, APRIL 4TH, BAHRAIN

I'm still mad with my crew – I'm sure they're responsible for the text message that left me stranded. Kipper did sidle up to say he thought it was wrong for someone to take liberties with a driver of my genuine ability. I was touched by his honesty – the people who say he is wet, two-faced and spineless obviously don't know him as I do. Of course, he works the front jack, and I have heard that in every team the front jack man is the person least likely to annoy a driver. I wonder why?

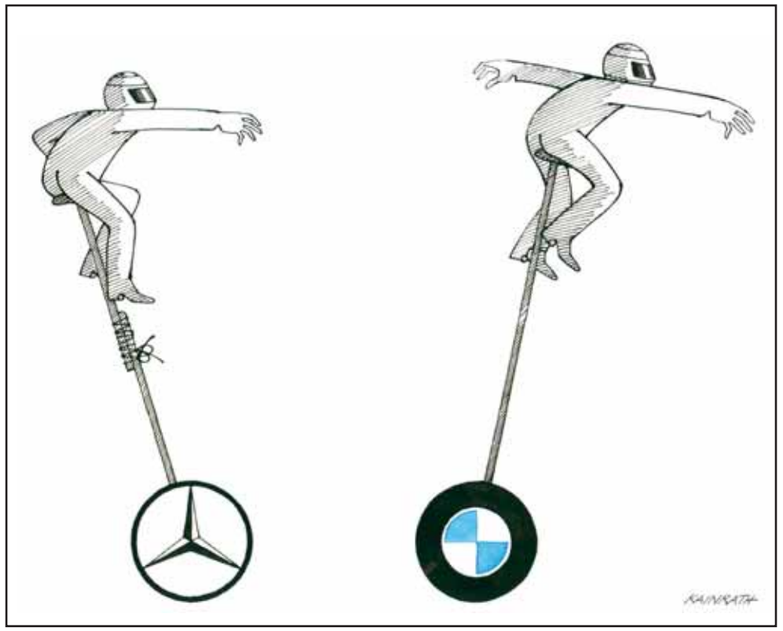
SATURDAY, APRIL 5TH, BAHRAIN

My new girlfriend and soulmate Alessandra is not here this weekend, but she is with me in my heart. At least, that's what she said to The Hollywood Reporter yesterday while promoting her new line of cosmetics. We never talk any more. Actually, we never did. We've been an official item for over three weeks now – I don't have her phone number, but we have been profiled on the E! channel. Is that normal? I'm also annoyed that they referred to me as "celebrity racing driver Hermann Schnell". I'm not a celebrity racing driver – I'm an actual racing driver.



SUNDAY, APRIL 6TH, BAHRAIN

Bit distracted in the race today – which probably accounts for the blizzard of carbon-fibre. It turns out I hadn't read the small print on my credit card. The freedom-enhancing never-to-be-repeated introductory 27 per cent interest rate is per week, and my flight to Bahrain is going to cost me more than my salary. This is a bit worrying – E! called me the sport's youngest millionaire. They must have meant Zimbabwean dollars.



VIEW FROM THE TRUCK: A HIGH PRICE TO PAY

If Super Aguri fail, there is no future for F1

BY JUSTIN HYNES

When Takuma Sato and Anthony Davidson take to the grid tomorrow it will, in the eyes of onlookers, represent a triumph for the underdog. For Aguri Suzuki it will surely constitute a greater success, but for observers it will probably amplify the perennial romance of the small fish in a sea filled with sharks. While that kind of romance can be intoxicating, with the frisson of life on the edge, it is also – like all such affairs – doomed by the very intoxication it is founded upon.

Unfortunately for Super Aguri, their entanglement with Formula One is founded on just that kind of incendiary passion. Beyond a brief flirtation with the high-maintenance environment of the sport's modern incarnation, there can be no future beyond obsessional, unrewarding devotion.

Modern F1 is a supermodel being pursued by a regular guy – there's no chance

To beat this analogy to death, modern F1 is a supermodel being pursued by a regular guy. The ego of beauty welcomes the slavish attention of a devoted admirer, but there is never any possibility that she'll fall for his less than genetically perfect charms. And that, as any of us bespectacled untermenschen will tell you, leads to a caste of perfect specimens admiring only their equals and missing out on the possibility of greater depth, longevity and reward. If Super Aguri fall by the wayside, it will doubtless leave the paddock a shallower place.

Some might say F1 has ever been thus. Small teams come and go, backed by a rich owner or sponsor – vanity projects predicated on glamour by association. If they can't stand the heat, they are routinely evicted from the kitchen. But this ignores the sea change in F1's association with manufacturers. The days of one-week wonders such as Andrea Moda, Life and their ilk may not be missed, but there is now also no longer room for a Minardi, Jordan or Sauber – teams that are serious about racing and the business of racing.

There's nothing new in this of course. Eddie Jordan, Peter Sauber and Giancarlo Minardi complained for years but nobody ever listened, dismissing the privateers with a trite 'survival of the fittest' mantra. All this, too, amid plans to reduce costs in the sport. Some of those initiatives have been nobly conceived, others are utter nonsense, but the reality is that costs have not shrunk, will not shrink and instead continue to increase at alarming rates.

F1 has become an ultra-exclusive club offering membership only to the world's ever-shrinking population of major car manufacturers, companies for whom a $250 million per year expenditure on F1 is a drop in the corporate ocean. If Super Aguri do depart, it won't be because of sponsorship, it will be because no single individual can compete financially in this foolishly gilded world. Like the global environment, it is one that is now chronically over-heated, increasingly unstable and ultimately in serious danger from those who need it most – its inhabitants.

ON THIS DAY... 26/4/08



1962: ROCKET'S DARK SIDE
The first US space rocket to the moon crash-lands on its far side.
See more of America's early efforts in the space race.
YouTube.com search: space + first + decade

1986: CHERNOBYL
The world's first nuclear disaster occurs when a reactor explodes at the Chernobyl power plant in the Ukraine.
Ukrainians remember the disaster 21 years later in 2007.
YouTube.com search: Russia today + Chernobyl

1999: MILKY WAY
Japanese scientists successfully clone two calves from their mother's milk.
Cloning at home is easier than you think...
YouTube.com search: Horizen (sic) + hydroponics + clone

BIRTHS

1963: JET LI
Martial arts movie star
YouTube.com search: Jet Li + black + belts

ON THIS DAY, VISIT...

CASA BATLLÓ
Antonio Gaudí designed this spectacular luxury apartment block for aristocrat Josep Batlló, and the whole building is now open to the public.
Open 9am-8pm daily.
Entry, including audio guide, is 16.50 euros.

ON THIS DAY IN F1...



1998: SAN MARINO
David Coulthard leads from pole to win ahead of Ferrari's Michael Schumacher and Eddie Irvine.
Watch highlights of the season.
YouTube.com search: 1998 + Formula 1

PHOTOGRAPHY: DPPI, GETTY IMAGES. SUTTON IMAGES. ILLUSTRATION: DIETMAR KAINRATH

PHOTOGRAPHY: ??????????



If Sakon made just one more comment about Taku's future career as an Oxford taxi driver, he was going to get a plate of sushi all over his head.



"Bloody hell! Years of sacrifice from my parents to send me to university, a first class degree from Harvard, a PhD in aeronautics and now look at me... bloody parking trees for Mr Ecclestone."



Last year's Honda marketing focused on the Earth, this year it's wildlife. Et voila! The Spanish rabbit. Que pasa Doc?

PADDOCK PRANKS

The F1 boys have been getting up to mischief... yet again.



Things were looking very bad as trainees for the Ferrari Magicians Club had yet again messed up the famous "Sawing a Mechanic in Half" trick.

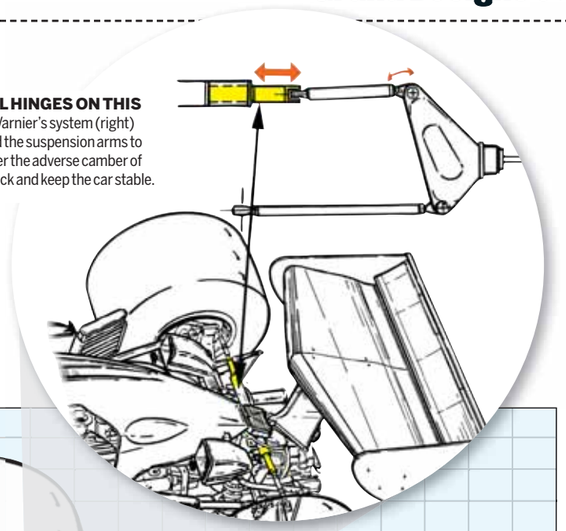
The Drawing Board

The Other Fan Car

You'll almost certainly never have heard of the Tyrrell 008 fan car unless you worked on it. It was, in fact, the first of its type – conceived before Brabham's – and has remained a secret for more than 30 years. Now, the men involved reveal the concepts behind it.



WHAT LIES BENEATH
The Tyrrell mechanics jealously guarded the unmodified 008 from prying eyes in case its secrets were discovered.



IT ALL HINGES ON THIS
Gene Varnier's system (right) angled the suspension arms to counter the adverse camber of the track and keep the car stable.

HIDDEN AGENDA

Giorgio Piola

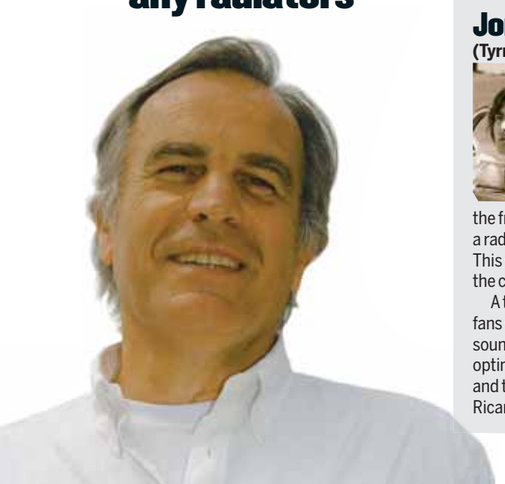
You wait years to get a scoop, and then two come along at once. They're both over 30 years old and about designs featured on the same car – and you knew about one of them all along!

The subject of Tyrrell's fan car first came up very close to April 1 on a blog written by former Tyrrell mechanic Jon 'Wingnut' Greaves on his website www.jonathangreaves.com. This was then relayed to another site where former Tyrrell design engineer Gene Varnier confirmed its existence and provided more detail, adding that Maurice Philippe not only came up with the idea before Brabham's Gordon Murray, but he also tested a camber change system on the same car, the Tyrrell 008.

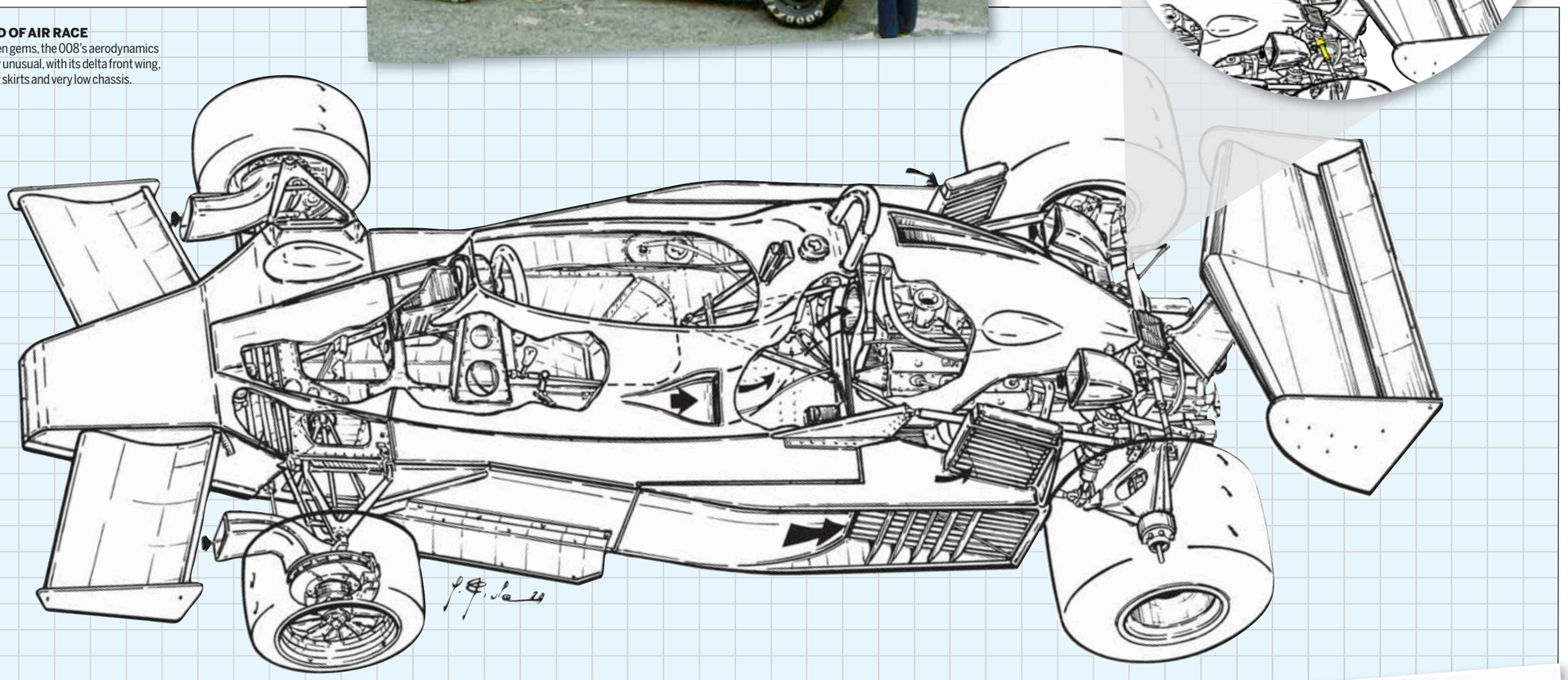
I knew about the latter, and as a result you can see the drawings here. I noticed it because a mechanic stopped a TV cameraman taking views of the back of the car, which apparently looked conventional. I took a closer look and realised what was there. You could see where the system would have been fitted, but it was discarded fairly early in its existence, as Varnier explains (below right).

The car itself was quite unusual anyway: delta front wing, very low chassis, NACA ducts beside the driver instead of the standard airbox, central oil tank, small side skirts behind the front tyres and oddly positioned radiators. But no one – not even Tyrrell biographer Maurice Hamilton – had heard about the fan car before. It was tested at Paul Ricard in late 1977, but no one picked up on the fact that it didn't appear to have any oil or water radiators. That was because they were under the fuel tank...

'No one picked up on the fact that it didn't appear to have any radiators'



ANOTHER KIND OF AIR RACE
Aside from its hidden gems, the 008's aerodynamics were very obviously unusual, with its delta front wing, air ducts, small rear skirts and very low chassis.



STARTING THE FAN CLUB

Jon 'Wingnut' Greaves

(Tyrrell test car engineer, 1977-78)



In 1977/8, Maurice Philippe took over from Derek Gardner and designed the 008. Outwardly, it looked fairly conventional, but this car had a secret. It had originally been designed as a fan car. The car was to have a large fan mounted on the front of the crankshaft to suck air through a radiator mounted horizontally under the fuel tank. This would not only cool the engine but also suck the car down to the ground.

A test rig was set up in the race shop and various fans were run by a large electric motor. Some sounded like warning sirens, but eventually an optimum fan arrangement was fitted to the car and taken in great secrecy to a winter test at Paul Ricard. The weather was cold, but it didn't stop the car turning into a steam engine, so the next day a more conventional set-up was adopted. The idea did eventually work, as Brabham proved with their BT46B finishing first and second at the Swedish GP before withdrawing the car.

The 008 was a pretty car and did a good job. Patrick Depailler won at Monaco and it finished fourth in the constructors' championship.

Gene Varnier

(Tyrrell design engineer, 1976-1980)



I was one of four designers involved in the project, another being the very competent chief designer – and all-round nice guy – Maurice Philippe. Brian Lisles was responsible for developing the fan and its drive. The idea was to house the water radiator and oil coolers underneath and at the back end of the chassis. The fan was mounted via a Silentbloc bushing to the end of the crank, and air was drawn through the radiator and coolers in the bottom rear edge of the chassis and exhausted, via ducting, through the fan. It then flowed up and over the inlet trumpets, rearwards. If you look at the top of the engine cover of a 008, you will see a channel where the air was exhausted.

The final version was at the Ricard test when, as I have heard the story, a Brabham employee spotted what was going on underneath the 008 when the car was up on the chassis stands. The rest, as they say, is history.

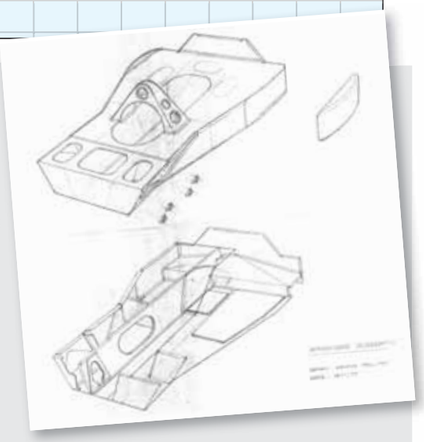
When Maurice first discussed his idea with us in the design office, his argument, in order to have the concept accepted by the governing body of the time, was to say the layout was identical to a road car's, ie fan mounted on the front of the engine, drawing air though the radiator, and exhausting the air past the engine. This indicated that the primary function of the fan was engine cooling, not aerodynamics. Maurice had considered driving the fan via the gearbox, but we all agreed that its primary function would be seen as aerodynamic gain. It would be a movable aerodynamic device and therefore illegal.

As the start of the 1978 F1 season was rapidly approaching, it was decided to temporarily shelve the fan development and quickly move the radiator and oil coolers to the rearward sides on the chassis and bodywork. This is how the car was raced.

By the time we found some spare time to revisit the project, Brabham had introduced their fan car in Sweden and then withdrawn it, and that was that.

The other secret feature designed into the 008 was active camber control. Again, this was Maurice's idea and a concept he developed on his Mk3 Ford Cortina. The response time was acceptable for a road car but too slow for racing. As one of my areas of responsibility was suspension, I had to do the installation design of the system for the 008. As the '78 season progressed, the active camber project was also put on hold, but resurrected for the 009 car. Because of the suspension layout, the control was done via links to the outboard of the bottom wishbones, meaning it was more heavily loaded. The system worked fine, but as the Goodyear cross-ply tyres of that era were heavily cambered in profile, the lap times with and without the system were identical. So, it was decided to remove the system.

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Maurice Philippe's original schematic shows how the top part of the chassis fits onto the lower part. On the bottom right of the chassis is the rectangular instep up into the chassis, where two oil radiators were mounted at either end, sandwiching a larger water radiator in the middle.

ILLUSTRATIONS: GIORGIO PIOLA. PHOTOGRAPHY: SUTTON IMAGES, CRISPIN THRUSTON

THE FULL NELSON

Renault rookie Nelson Piquet gives us the inside track on his racing goals, his family background and his hobbies… and why he's wearing a ring. By Adam Hay-Nicholls. Photography Thomas Butler

Resting serenely in Barcelona's marina, the 64-metre Pilar Rossi is a 20-year-old sailing trimaran that has been highly modified by Nelson's dad, Nelson Piquet Sr. On the expansive rear deck are the kind of luxuries that only a vessel of this size can accommodate – two large speedboats straddle the galley, there are six jet skis on permanent standby, a gymnasium full of driver-oriented equipment, and a heated swimming pool and Jacuzzi, too. This is Nelson's home for the Spanish Grand Prix, and tonight he's invited The Red Bulletin round for dinner.

At Indianapolis last year, I remember you had a go in a midget stock car at a small oval on the outskirts of town. It wasn't an easy thing to drive, but within just a couple of laps you were already on the pace of the professionals. Do you find it easy to jump into an unfamiliar car and immediately push?
I think every racing driver should be like that. I enjoy driving anything. I grew up on a farm, driving quads and tractors and riding motocross.

Is there any other type of vehicle you haven't driven that you would like to?
I would love to try one of those six-speed go-karts that do 250kph. I'd like to try rallying, and I'd also be up for IndyCar. NASCAR, I don't know – the cars look cool on TV, but I've seen them up close and they look terrible.

Do you think you'll have an IndyCar career after Formula One?
Racing in America changes every year – it's never stable. But after F1 I would like to continue racing. I've only just started but I hope I'll be in F1 for a long time to come, and afterwards I may choose something more easy-going. What I would most like to do is win the Le Mans 24 Hours. That's part of my dream. I did one already, with Aston Martin in 2006. We finished fourth. I had chronic hay fever that weekend. I've never felt so bad.

Sounds tough. How tough did you find your first F1 grand prix in Melbourne?
That was tough, too. I got a good start but made contact with another car, and after that my car felt really unbalanced. My lap times were down and everyone started overtaking me. I got worried, wondering if it was me – the driver – that was off the pace. But when we looked at the data afterwards it was clear that the damage the car had sustained had caused it to lose a massive amount of downforce. It sounds silly, but sometimes with these aero parts a big piece can fall off and it makes little difference, or a small bit falls off and it makes a huge difference, depending on where it is on the car. Unfortunately, the small bit that came off my rear wing was key, and that's why I was very slow.

How old were you when you first started racing, and who mentored you?
I started when I was eight and it was my father who taught me initially. After a few months he got me a mechanic he trusted called Agnaldo Furlani, and after a year it was just me and Agnaldo. He's like my second father and I was with him all the time from eight to 19 years old. He moved with me to England where we shared a house. He was just a go-kart mechanic originally, but he learned all about car mechanics and gearboxes so he could make the step up to Formula 3 with me. He stayed two years in the UK, before he had to go back to Brazil to be with his wife and kids, so he didn't come to GP2 with me, unfortunately.

Would you say that you spend more time with your mum or your dad?
I try to split my time between them. But it's difficult because they can never be in the same country or else it's World War Three. My father travels all over and he's often on the boat, while my mother lives between Holland, where she's from, and Monaco, where she has a home. ➜



What would you be doing if you weren't a professional racing driver?
That's difficult to say, but I'm very interested in engineering. Not necessarily race engineering, but maybe I would study architecture. When I was small I would build whole cities out of Lego, complete with airports, train stations and racetracks. These cities would fill the entire floor of my bedroom. I don't know why, but I'm fascinated by miniatures.

Do you collect model cars?
Yes, I love model cars. I have between 600 and 700. I have a few complete grids from F1, WRC and DTM. They're from 1:6 scale to 1:43. I also have a collection of helmets. Often I'll trade with my friends. I'm moving house at the moment so most of my stuff is in storage.

How much of your time does your GP2 team, Piquet Sports, take up?
Not that much. That was my life before and now it's Formula One. But when I have any spare moments during a grand prix weekend I'll spend them with the team and I speak to the engineers on the phone nearly every day.

You don't fancy doing an Emerson Fittipaldi and racing for your own F1 team?
Well, you know how it is. It was difficult enough back then, so imagine trying that today. If I had

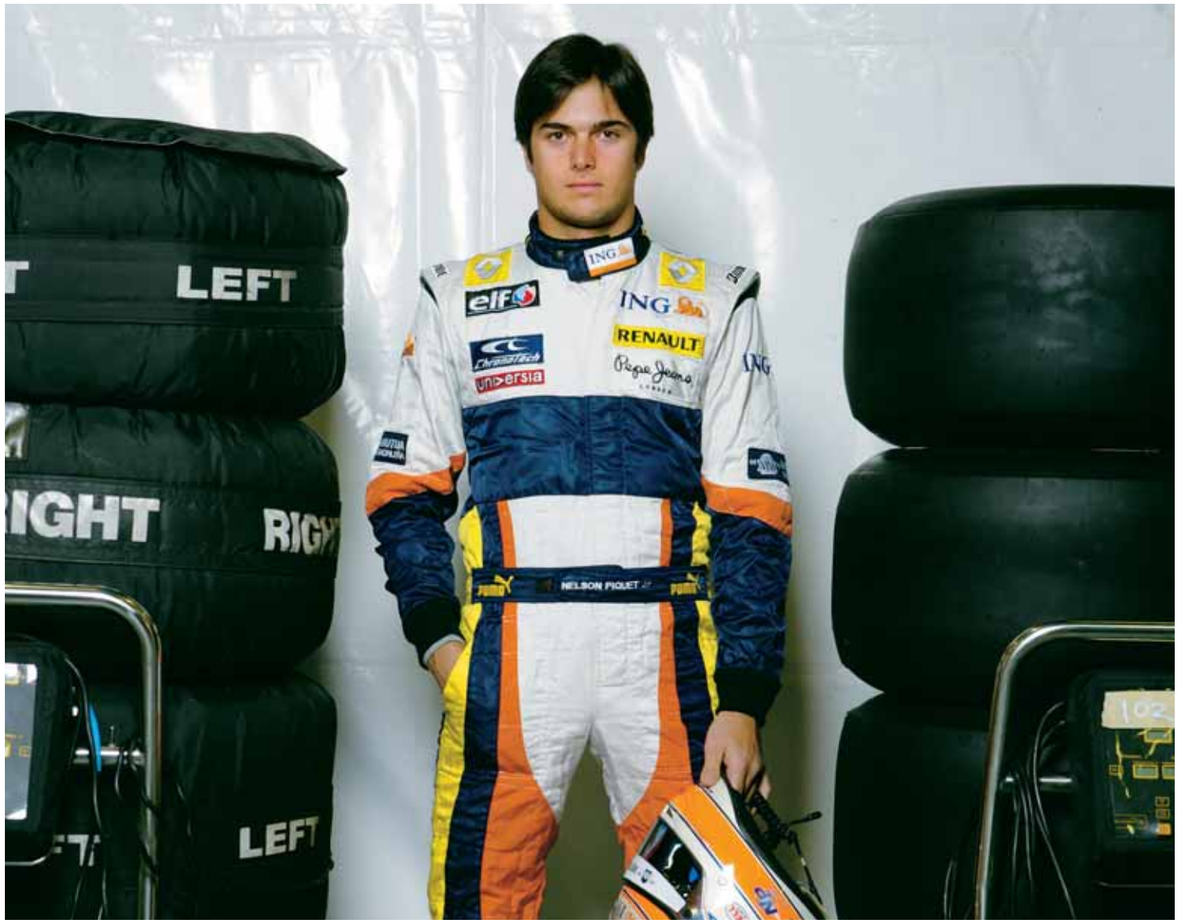
'My goal is to be 100 per cent comfortable in the car. Fernando, with seven years' experience in F1, is trying to make the car 100 per cent comfortable for him'

a manufacturer backing me, then maybe it would be a different story. But there's no point in me doing that, the only thing I'd gain would be stress.

If you had driven alongside Lewis Hamilton at ART in GP2 do you think you would have beaten him to the title?
That's a big 'if' and difficult to say. I did suffer some bad luck in 2006. I ran out of fuel at one race; I had brake failure at Imola when I was second and had to back right off; at Hockenheim my engine wouldn't start; I was really suffering from hay fever at two races; at Silverstone they took my two fastest laps away in qualifying and I still started in fourth. But I don't think things would have been better at ART. My team did a fantastic job and worked their arses off to make the car quick and reliable. At Renault we have 500 people working on the car, yet in three races I've only finished once. Sh*t happens.

Who's finding it more difficult at the moment, you or Fernando Alonso?
Fernando came from a very good car to a team that is not performing that well, so obviously he's complaining a lot to the engineers and identifying areas where we need to improve. For me it's different, because everything is new and I haven't come here from a fantastic car. I'm still getting used to F1, so my goal is to be 100 per cent comfortable with the car. Fernando, because he has seven years' experience in Formula One, is trying to make the car 100 per cent comfortable for him. ➜

ARE YOU SITTING COMFORTABLY?
Nelson poses aboard his father's luxurious yacht moored in Barcelona.



Do Renault drivers get free drinks at Flavio's Billionaire Club?
I got a discount when I went last year. And that was while I was still a test driver, so maybe I won't see a bill at all now!

If you could date any celebrity, who would it be?
Jessica Simpson is hot.

Have you ever been out with a girl who wasn't Brazilian?
Yeah, I've been with an English girl, an Italian girl and an Australian. Australians are more similar to Brazilians than Europeans.

Have you ever been in love?
Yeah, I'm in love now (points to ring on finger).

You're engaged?
Sort of, this is a commitment ring. Her name is Gabriella and I met her at a go-kart track in Brazil. My cousin had invited her brother to a 12-hour race, and she came along, too. That was at the beginning of December. She's finishing school now, but the plan is she'll come and study at university in the UK. She wants to study business at either the London School of Economics or Oxford.

Were you naughty at school?
I skipped class a lot, plagiarised a fair bit of my homework and cheated on tests. But nothing major, I never hit a teacher or anything like that. Actually, a teacher smacked me over the head with a tin of pencils once. I can't remember why. But I never had to redo any of my school years, I guess because I had good friends who let me copy their work. I quite liked maths, science and geography, but I hated English, Portuguese and history.

'When I need to relax I indulge in retail therapy, it helps to calm me down. I spend all my cash on clothes.'

Why don't grand prix drivers read?
I read a bit. If I'm on a plane and my iPod has run out of battery, I'll pick up a book. The last one I read was about Emerson Fittipaldi. I mostly read biographies and I particularly enjoyed one about escapologist Harry Houdini. I always want to know how magicians do their tricks. I love watching that stuff on TV.

What posters did you have on your bedroom wall when you were a kid?
Well, a lot of racing ones obviously, but also movie posters. A friend of ours had a cinema and he would give me posters. I had Superman, Robocop and Jurassic Park, stuff like that. The racing posters I have on my walls today are antiques, from the 1950s and '60s.

Are you a shopaholic?
Yeah, I like to spend. When I need to relax I indulge in retail therapy, it helps to calm me down. I started out spending money on bottles of vodka for friends and girls, and now I spend all my cash on clothes.

You've got your own jet, too, a Cessna Citation Mustang. Have you customised it at all? Put a leopard-print rotating bed in the back?
You can't do anything like that because it's really small, it's only a VLJ (Very Light Jet). It takes four passengers and even then it's a squeeze. But it's so much more economical than a larger jet. For example, David Coulthard and Jenson Button rented a 14-seat jet to fly from Istanbul to Monaco and they sent an email to all the other drivers to see if we wanted to share it. The cost was 26,000 euros per seat. Mine is a 10th of the price.

Does your dad still complain about Eliseo Salazar, and has he ever kicked you?
My father's never kicked me! He was pissed off with Salazar at the time because that collision cost him a victory, but he doesn't still moan about it.

Has his driving improved since he retook his driving test?
To be honest, I haven't driven with him since. And he's 55 years old so he's not going to change his habits now. But part of the reason he had to go back to driving school was because of parking tickets. They weren't even all his, but all the family cars were in his name so he was the guy who got booked. I probably contributed a few fines!

If you were on death row, what would you order for your last supper?
Well it wouldn't be English food! I'd opt for sushi – 100 pieces of salmon sashimi.

You're allowed to be a character in a film or TV show. Which character would you choose?
Jack Bauer in 24. He's my hero.





Great Scots: Proud dad Duncan helped David get started in his career (left). These days his presence may not be as crucial, but he still manages to come to at least three races a year (below).

Drivers' Dads: Duncan Coulthard

'WE HAVE THE SAME VALUES ABOUT EVERYTHING'

Once a promising young racing driver himself, we turn the spotlight on DC's successful – and overly modest – Scottish businessman father. By Sarah Edworthy

When was David introduced to motorsport?
Some might say he was genetically programmed to race. The Coulthard family's haulage company, based in south-west Scotland, was set up by DC's great-grandfather in 1916. His son, DC's grandfather, competed on the Tulip and Monte Carlo rallies and initiated a long-lasting family love of motorsport. As a child, DC's father, Duncan, watched Stirling Moss and Alberto Ascari race at Scotland's Turnberry circuit, and he also raced karts himself. Young DC enjoyed hearing Duncan's tales of Jim Clark and Jackie Stewart. A Clark autograph on a cigarette packet became a family treasure.

Father and son watching grand prix highlights together on BBC2 was a Sunday ritual, but DC didn't become obsessive about racing until he got behind the wheel of a kart himself. Duncan, who ran karts alongside his day job in charge of the family haulage firm, gave his son a simple 100cc kart for his 11th birthday, and that was that.

How would David describe his father's role in his career?
Let's help the modest, unassuming father here by quoting from the dedication in David's autobiography, It Is What It Is: "I have absolutely no doubt that my love of motorsport grew through being exposed to karting at an early age. That led to the start of my karting career – the journey through the various formulae was managed by the passion and the vision of my father."

Duncan, do you have any racing credentials of your own?
"I raced karts, but so many years ago now that I can't remember. No, I wasn't very good." We know from David's autobiography that this is modesty: "[My father] used to race from an early age and was very, very good, becoming the Scottish karting champion. He was a great kart driver and was even offered a test for a Lotus team. Sadly, that fledgling racing career came to a halt when my grandfather died, aged just 44."

As a successful businessman, what useful F1 survival skills have you been able to pass on?
"I just told David to be himself and be honest. Work hard and you'll move forward. It is the same for any sport, or for any business."

How many races do you attend each year?
"Usually just three, but it will be four this season. Australia, Barcelona (because I have business there), Silverstone and Hockenheim."

Has this pattern changed from David's early days?
"Yes. We used to go regularly but, as my very dear friend Jackie Stewart says, 'You don't take your family to work.' We cut back, we don't want to hassle him."

Do you share any character traits?
"Very much so. We have the same values about everything in life, especially understanding the importance of dedication and presentation. I would say he is 100 per cent like me in character."

Do you and David look like one another?
"No, I don't think so."

What would you nominate as your 15 minutes of fame in the paddock?
"Nothing whatsoever. Who am I? No one has shown any interest in me. I don't think anyone who sees me knows I am David's father."

At a grand prix, where are you most likely to be?
"Watching the TV in the Red Bull hospitality area."

And least likely?
"Standing over David in the car. Definitely not."

Does your son the F1 driver differ from your son as a family member?
"It is very difficult to say, because we come from a small country village in Scotland. David's been away so long now and Formula One culture is so different. In F1... well, there's a lot of talking crap really, isn't there? But David's always just David. We are extremely proud of him. Our wee boy who has found his own fortune. There are only 22 F1 drivers in the world. He's still exactly the same now as when he started. He loves driving, loves racing, loves the job."

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PHOTOGRAPHY: SUTTON IMAGES



SUNSHINE DAYS

La Formula Unas took to the sea in perfect weather, to soak up some sun.









WINNER

La Formula Una Carolina Samper Perez snapped this great shot, perfectly capturing their day out. To get a prime view of the race, she'll be watching from Red Bull Racing's garage.



‘They all said my race was perfect, but it was luck!’

GP PORTUGAL, ESTORIL, APRIL 21, 1985

People often mention lap one of the 1993 European GP, at Donington Park, when discussing Ayrton Senna’s wet-weather skill. Great though that was, his first F1 victory – in Portugal in 1985 – was an even better illustration of his art.

There was absolutely nothing wrong with that amazing first lap at Donington Park, of course. Ayrton Senna was fifth when he first manoeuvred his McLaren into Redgate Corner, the circuit’s opening right-hander, yet he was leading by several car lengths when he returned there approximately 80 seconds later.

It was a spectacular demonstration of hard-edged racecraft, but the purity of the moment was compromised because his endeavours were assisted by electronic traction control – an option that wasn’t available to everyone.

By that stage of his career, Senna had three world titles to his credit and the unexpected was more or less expected. But that was far from the case when he arrived at Estoril for the second round of the 1985 world championship – the 17th grand prix of his F1 career.

Quickest on a drying track on Friday, he coaxed his Renault V6 turbo-powered Lotus 97T around faster still on Saturday to secure the first of the pole positions that would soon become his trademark. Raceday dawned bright and clear, but by late morning it was distinctly cool – and it was absolutely pouring with rain.

Nowadays a race would start behind the safety car in such weather, but back then drivers just got on with it. Senna made the most of pole position to seize the early initiative – and proceeded to drive with mesmerising consistency in changeable conditions that were never any better than horrible.

After 15 laps, Jacques Laffite entered the pits and drove straight into his garage. There was nothing mechanically wrong with his Ligier, but its Pirelli tyres weren’t suited to the conditions and he could think of better ways to spend a Sunday afternoon. The team subsequently withdrew their second car, too, possibly because it was driven by Andrea de Cesaris, who was prone to damaging cars even when conditions were clear.

At the start of the 31st lap, championship leader Alain Prost also retired. Running in dense spray behind Elio de Angelis’s Lotus, the Frenchman hit a deep puddle on the main straight and spun off.

Contemporary F1 paddocks are home to many of the class of ’85, so we decided to find out what they could remember of that race.

Niki Lauda took the 1984 world title at Estoril, but retired from the following year’s race when his McLaren suffered a melted piston. “I don’t remember anything about it,” he says. “I can tell you about ’84. Can we talk about that instead?”

No, we can’t.

Gerhard Berger was an F1 rookie, in only his sixth grand prix, and his memory seems to be just as bad as Lauda’s. “I can barely remember last week,” he says. “If it was ’85, I guess I was driving an Arrows. How did I do?”

We point out that he spun off after 12 laps. He considers this for a while before deciding his mind is still blank. “Actually,” he says, “I had a good fight with Stefan Johansson’s Ferrari at Estoril in 1986, when I was driving for Benetton. Do you want to know about that?”

Thanks, but no.

Martin Brundle does better. “The lack of visibility was hideous,” he says. “I’d retired with gearbox problems, so I was watching at the end when Ayrton splashed into parc fermé – those celebrations became iconic. I was recently privileged to drive his old Lotus 98T, the 1986 chassis, and you forget how much turbo lag those cars had. It puts into perspective how well he drove in such conditions that day.

“The thing I recall most vividly, though, was Keke Rosberg’s Williams. He crashed at the final turn and the car sat in the middle of the track for several laps. Every time you approached the corner, you’d think, ‘They must have moved it by now,’ but there it would be, inviting you to pass either side. It was incredibly dangerous, but we didn’t have safety cars then.”

‘On one occasion I had all four wheels on the grass, but the car came back onto the circuit’

Unfazed by the surrounding chaos, Senna was in a league of his own. Only Michele Alboreto’s Ferrari – more than a minute behind – was on the same lap at the end. Ever the perfectionist, however, Senna was able to pick fault with his afternoon’s work. Speaking to top journalist Alan Henry during that evening’s flight to London, he said, “Everyone claimed I made no mistakes, but that’s not true. On one occasion I had all four wheels on the grass, but the car came back onto the circuit. Everyone thought that was fantastic car control. No way! It was just luck.”

Later in his career, though, he acknowledged that his first win had been one of his best, a performance in which the only form of traction control had been exercised by his right foot.

ILLUSTRATION: HERI IRAWAN

24hr

Paddock People!



HOBBIES
CHRISTIAN DANNER: HORSES

It was at the Portuguese Grand Prix at Estoril one year that I first became interested in horses. I was introduced to some lovely people who turned out to be breeders of a very special Portuguese horse called the Lusitano.

I fell in love with this horse, and my interest in it extends beyond simple horse-rearing and dressage. The Lusitano, a horse from the Iberian Peninsula, played a very significant role in European history and influenced the world dramatically. It was on these horses that the entire continent of South America was discovered. Every leader rode a Lusitano or its sibling, the Andalusian from Spain.

I have 10 Lusitano stallions now, though technically they belong to my ex-wife. But I visit her stables south of Munich often to ride them, so I guess she didn't take everything away from me!

These are horses for dressage, and that's what I like to do – not for competition, just for fun. 'Dressage' is the French term for 'training' and is a kind of equestrian ballet where the rider demonstrates the horse's gymnastic abilities as well as discipline.

Sometimes I'll take my horses cross-country, which they love. But show jumping is too dangerous and not for me. When I've done it before, I've been scared. Horses have a lot of willpower and a mind of their own. It's much easier to drive a Formula One car than ride a horse. And they are also so sensitive. With top dressage horses, if you do something wrong they'll just stop – which can be really embarrassing! That said, I've had a few F1 cars just stop – usually with a lot of smoke coming from the rear.

I find it fascinating how sensitive you have to be to co-operate with the horse and make him understand what you want. In my case, because I'm only an average rider, it's the horse telling me what to do.

Genetically, the Andalusian and the Lusitano are the same horse. It's just slightly different breeding methods that have changed over the centuries. And any bronze statue you see of a king or general in the saddle, I'll bet you it's also a Peninsula horse.

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RHYS EDWARDS ACCOUNT MANAGER RENAULT



LOVE / HATE

1. THE 1980S
What's not to love? Sweatbands, headbands, the evolution of hip hop with icons such as Grandmaster Flash and Kurtis Blow, and great films like St Elmo's Fire and The Lost Boys.

2. SUNGLASSES
I have around 28 pairs, some expensive and some retro ones from Portobello Road. Everybody should have 'race-day glasses' – no excuses.

3. RICHARD PRYOR
A comedy genius and one of my heroes. He was able to laugh at himself no matter what the situation – something I greatly admire. He was one of the few people in the world who can actually make me cry laughing.

4. JJ CALE
I am a massive fan of Johnny Cash and JJ Cale. I've grown up with their music, but JJ Cale is often overlooked. He has a great outlook on life and makes great music. No matter where I am in the world, it will always put a smile on my face.

5. SEAFOOD
The more messy you can get while eating, the better. Use your hands, dig in, and forget the cutlery! Finish with a chilled Pouilly-Fumé.

1. CAMPARI
More than anything in the world, I want to love this drink. Campari and soda – it's kitsch, it looks cool, but it tastes like acid. Surely nobody actually enjoys this drink.

2. SMALL DOGS
Want a small dog? Get a cat.

3. OAKED CHARDONNAY
Why? The only thing worse than oaked Chardonnay is warm oaked Chardonnay. I'd rather drink a Campari and soda – at least I'd look cool.

4. CHINOS
One of the worst inventions ever. Why put pleats in trousers? What the hell kind of a look is that? If you don't know what chinos are, see our travel kit. They are uncomfortable and hang ridiculously. Burn them all.

5. TIMES NEW ROMAN
Why does nobody take time to choose the typeface they use to write letters and emails? Choice of typeface (OK, so I'm a little type-anal) says so much. Times New Roman can only be topped by writing in blue, point size 14. Why would you do that to yourself?

ILLUSTRATION: JAMES TAYLOR. PHOTOGRAPHY: SUTTON, SHUTTERSTOCK

LUCKY NUMBERS

DR RICCARDO CECCARELLI

Always on hand with 120 different medicines, Toyota's team doc can treat just about any ailment. Then again, he might just try to sell you a Bible…

5

5 POINT BREAK... to Robert Kubica's right arm. A very severe injury he sustained in a road car accident, yet one of the most amazing recoveries I've ever seen. He had trapped a nerve inside the fracture and couldn't move his hand or fingers. No one in Poland wanted to do the surgery, so his manager brought him to my clinic in Italy. The fracture was so big that the surgeon had to use a leg plate and 17 screws. He should really have had to wait three months before he was fit to drive, but in fact just seven weeks later he won his debut F3 race.

30,000

30,000 FEET... up in a plane when an elderly Japanese man suffered a brain haemorrhage. I had my medical bag with me and administered an infusion high in cortisone. By the time we landed, he was better. Though I have letters confirming my status as a doctor, it's much harder to fly with my case now, and I have to take out all the liquids, syringes, scissors and infusions. Before 9/11, I used to walk through immigration with bags of urine and blood, and no one batted an eyelid.

48

48 FORMULA ONE DRIVERS... that my clinic, Formula Medicine, has treated over the past 20 seasons. Fortunately, none has suffered critical injuries. One of the biggest accidents was Mika Salo's in 2001, when he crashed his Toyota at Paul Ricard. He was experiencing severe back pain, so we airlifted him to Marseille. He had fractured two vertebrae. There's not a lot you can do, except let nature take its course and heal the bones. He was back in the car 10 weeks later, which was quite a quick recovery.



5

5 BIBLES... and 25 books on Pope John XXIII sold each week. Yes, I was a door-to-door Bible salesman! That was how I financed my racing in 1978. As a kid I desperately wanted to try karting, but my father wouldn't support me; motor racing scared him. I enrolled in a racing school, and bought a really old Formula Ford. Catholicism paid for it.

5

5 F1 TEAMS... that Formula Medicine supports in the form of doctors, physios and trainers. Toyota, Renault, Ferrari, Super Aguri and Toro Rosso. We are also involved in the FIA GT Championship, and have a safety investigation team at tests. My first grand prix was Imola '89. I was looking after Ivan Capelli, who I met when I was an amateur racer. I went on to become official team doctor for Leyton House, Ferrari, Minardi, and now Toyota.

120

120 MEDICINES... in my case. I try to have everything, and whenever I find something I don't have, I get it – I collect medicines like other people collect records! I can't keep a full pharmacy, but I have medicine for just about every ailment.

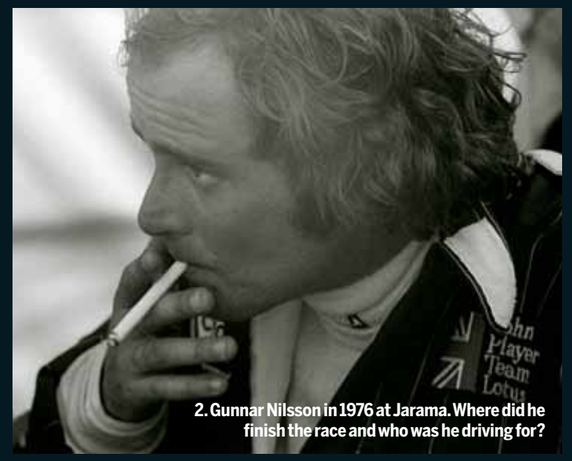
PHOTOGRAPHY: CRISPIN THRUSTON, SUTTON

Spain Events

From Jarama to Jerez, Montjuïc to Montmelo how well do you know this GP?



1. Nigel Mansell embraces the local culture in 1986. Where did he finish the race?



2. Gunnar Nilsson in 1976 at Jarama. Where did he finish the race and who was he driving for?



3. Here's Gianfranco Brancatelli making his debut at the 1979 Spanish GP. It was also the team's debut. What was the team called?



5. The Yardley BRM team at Montjuïc Park in 1971. Who were their drivers at that race?



4. In Spain in 1992, who did this racer drive for?

ANSWERS: 1. SECOND, BEHIND AYRTON SENNA. 2. THIRD FOR LOTUS. 3. KAUHSEN WK – THEY FAILED TO QUALIFY. 4. IT'S ERIC VAN DE POELE AND HE DROVE FOR BRABHAM, THOUGH HE DIDN'T QUALIFY. 5. JO SIFFERT, PEDRO RODRIGUEZ AND HOWDEN GANLEY

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Either/Or

SEBASTIAN'S BACK!

Vettel's opted for motorhome splendour at the track, but how does he react to life's other little choices?

WET RACE OR DRY RACE?
Wet race! I like to play with my car. It also opens up interesting possibilities in the race.

SUPERMODEL OR GIRL NEXT DOOR?
The girl next door is more of a challenge – and most of the time less bitchy.

MONEY OR GLORY?
Glory, for sure! It's all about success. I can't imagine admiring someone for his fat purse.

SALAD OR STEAK?
Definitely steak, I love meat... and I don't like vegetarians – they're stealing food from my steak.

BEACH OR MOUNTAIN?
When you hike up a mountain and you get to the peak the feeling is fantastic. You don't get this on the beach – unless you're lying next to a hot girl.

TRAINING IN THE GYM OR OUT ON THE ROAD?
Outside is a bit more fun, but I like training so I don't mind too much.

SHOPPING MALL OR INTERNET SHOPPING?
I'm not really into shopping – I'm male.

IPOD OR VINYL?
An iPod is excellent for travelling, but you can't beat the sound of vinyl. I like that raspy quality you get with old records.

RACE OR QUALIFYING?
Hmmm... I love both. In qualifying you have to cut right to the chase, whereas in a race you have more time and I love the way it tests you.

NIGHT ON THE TOWN OR QUIET NIGHT AT HOME?
Usually quiet night at home. How can I be profound and insightful without a good night's sleep?



MINIVAN OR MOTORCYCLE?
Minivan would be the safer answer but where's the fun? Maybe minivan with a few friends...

MONACO APARTMENT OR SWISS CHALET?
Swiss chalet... I don't like neighbours.

GOLF OR FOOTBALL?
Football... I'm too young to play golf – and I like to move.

BEARD OR SHAVE?
Do you really think I have the option?

MOZART OR MOTORHEAD?
Rock and roll?

WINE OR WATER?
I'd say water. I don't really like alcohol that much, and I prefer beer to wine anyway.

YACHT OR PLANE?
I can't afford either.

NEWSPAPER OR COMIC BOOK?
Newspaper. I don't like comics.

SUIT OR CASUAL?
Casual only... I don't have much of a choice when it comes to suits as I only have one.

BOOK OR TV?
If the book is worth it then I really like to read, but I'm quite picky. TV is the easier option.

PHOTOGRAPHY: THOMAS BUTLER