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CHINESE GP REPORT

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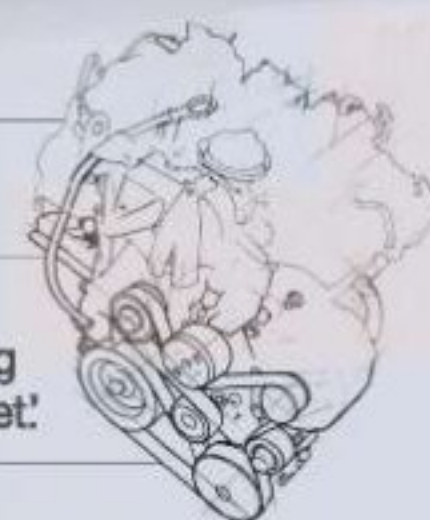
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POLE POSITION

Hamilton's landmark Easter-weekend victory

IT IS IMPOSSIBLE TO COMPARE ERAS DIRECTLY, BUT when someone equals or eclipses one of the great landmarks of Formula 1, it's important to take note and applaud them.

In China last weekend, Lewis Hamilton broke Jim Clark's record of grand prix pole positions by a British driver, and then equalled the flying Scot's win tally the following day. The lights-to-flag manner in which Lewis did so was certainly in the mould of Jimmy, and should Hamilton now go on to equal Clark's number of world titles, it would be no great surprise.

Easter is always a busy weekend for motorsport, and this year we were blessed with marvellous sport right across the nation. From Silverstone's World Endurance Championship opener to Donington Park's BTCC, Oulton's British GTs and the humble Castle Combe 'clubbie', there was some superb fare on offer.

However, we were also reminded about the tragic side of our sport this week too, as Garry Whyte passed away from injuries sustained at Silverstone's recent VSCC meeting. Following so soon after the death of Al Fleming at Hockenheim, our deepest condolences go to all the families and friends involved.



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PRIVATE EAR



FIND US ON



PIT & PADDOCK

8 THIS WEEK IN F1

11 JONATHAN NOBLE: F1 NEWSHOUND

12 THIS WEEK IN MOTORSPORT

15 FRANCOIS RIBEIRO: THE INSIDE LINE

GRAND PRIX REPORT

16 CHINESE GRAND PRIX REPORT

All the action from the Shanghai circuit, where Lewis Hamilton took his first F1 hat-trick. Includes driver-by-driver and team guide, technical analysis, comprehensive results and the key on- and off-track moments from the weekend

DEBRIEF

32 CRUNCH TALKS OVER F1 COST-CUTS

Will the well-funded teams help the sport's minnows?

34 F1 EYES ACTIVE-SUSPENSION RETURN

Remembering the sport's early-1990s technology

36 PROST ON AN ELECTRIC RACING FUTURE

Four-time F1 champ on the new FIA Formula E series

RACE CENTRE

38 BTCC DONINGTON

Plato, Tordoff and Shedden do the business

43 TOCA SUPPORTS DONINGTON

Renault Clio, Ginetta, Fford and Porsche action

46 WEC SILVERSTONE

Toyota takes a one-two in season-opening enduro

50 ELMS SILVERSTONE

French trio takes Thiriet Morgan-Nissan to victory

52 EUROPEAN F3 SILVERSTONE

Blomqvist, Ocon and Fuoco take maiden series wins

54 WTCC PAUL RICARD

It's another Citroen whitewash - this time on home soil

56 BRITISH GT OULTON PARK

Caine/Al Harthy Aston and Sims/Attard BMW on top

58 AUTO GP; ERC; BLANCPAIN GT SPRINT

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CLUB AUTOSPORT

73 INSURANCE CLAIM OVER BRIT GT SHUNT

Trackspeed and Triple Eight cars damaged at Oulton

74 BERG JOINS M-SPORT; BENTLEY STARS

Rembert Berg makes last-minute Continental GT3 bow

78 NATIONAL REPORTS

Thruxton HSCC; Snetterton BRSCC; Castle Combe CCRC; Oulton Park MSVR

84 BRDC FORMULA 4 PREVIEW

Looking ahead to season two of single-seater series

THE BACK STRAIGHT

86 THIS WEEK

Readers' letters; best pictures; product reviews

88 WHAT'S ON

The best track and TV action in the coming week

90 RACE OF MY LIFE

Pierre-Francois Rousselot, Thruxton F3, 1971



THE BIG PICTURE

“I had an extremely good weekend, probably at the level of 2012” – Fernando Alonso was ‘on it’ in China, encapsulated here by his exit from the final corner



This week in F1



McLAREN PLANS RED BULL COURT ACTION

McLaren plans to take Red Bull to court over aerodynamicist Dan Fallows, who the team insists it has a legally-binding contract with.

Red Bull announced recently that Fallows was returning to the team as head of aerodynamics rather than joining McLaren as previously

confirmed. McLaren now plans to launch legal action in the High Court, with group CEO Ron Dennis saying the team felt it had no choice.

Red Bull is adamant that Fallows was free to commit to a new deal with its team, as he had not commenced employment with McLaren.

To be honest that's completely unacceptable to us. It's now likely that McLaren will have no alternative other than to pursue a High Court action against Red Bull, which will ask very serious questions as to that team's integrity and sense of fair play.

McLaren CEO Ron Dennis

This is something we will defend vigorously. I don't know how it can question the integrity of the team. It is the choice of the individual. Slavery was abolished years ago and I don't think anybody can be forced to do a job against their will.

Red Bull boss Christian Horner

Mattiacci: I thought it was a joke



New Ferrari team principal Marco Mattiacci thought an initial approach to take the role by president Luca di Montezemolo was an April Fool's joke.

The Italian revealed at the Chinese Grand Prix that he was first offered the role the previous Friday, but didn't believe it at first. "I live in New York and I received a call at 5:58 on Friday morning [April 11]," said Mattiacci. "The chairman, di Montezemolo, told me, 'this is my idea'. I told him that April Fool's had been about 15 days earlier. But then, after the second or third minute of discussions, I knew it was serious."

"I will help him, I will do like I did in the past: I will stay closer to Formula 1, I'll spend more time on it."

Ferrari president Luca di Montezemolo will back his F1 team's new boss



Exhaust mods to boost noise

Changes to the exhaust systems on Formula 1 cars are being targeted to improve engine noise this year. Preliminary analysis of a different tailpipe design tried out by one manufacturer on a dyno has shown a promising jump in engine volume. An action plan is set to be decided at a crunch meeting on May 6.

Drivers rule out striking over pay

Formula 1 drivers are in talks to find a collective way to resolve pay disputes with teams, but will not strike over the issue. Kimi Raikkonen left Lotus for Ferrari last season, citing unpaid wages as one of the reasons, while Force India's Nico Hulkenberg encountered problems with Sauber (below) last year.

"It's not good for the pinnacle of motor racing but we've never discussed doing a strike," said Hulkenberg.

"We want the issue to be addressed."



For all the breaking news, visit **AUTOSPORT.COM**

When you are involved in F1, you should not make such negative comments. Bernie has never been in favour of [the new rules] but I was more surprised by Luca. I can't understand, because everybody should be going in the same direction



Four-time F1 world champion and Renault ambassador Alain Prost hits back at recent criticisms of Formula 1's new rules by Luca di Montezemolo and Bernie Ecclestone



Red Bull: fuel-flow rule OK

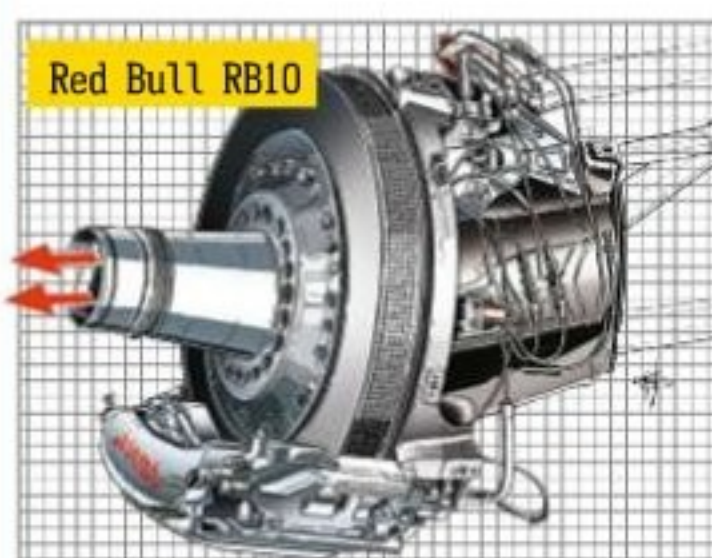
Red Bull boss Christian Horner says his outfit now has no choice but to take the FIA's fuel-sensor readings as gospel. The FIA's International Court of Appeal has instructed Red Bull to pay full costs from its failed appeal over Daniel Ricciardo's Australian GP disqualification. "Even if it is 25 per cent out, it is the point of reference. That is the conclusion we have to take from the hearing," Horner said.

FERRARI BLOWN FRONT AXLE

→ **GARY ANDERSON:** Ferrari introduced a variation on the 'blown' front-axe concept at the Chinese Grand Prix, previously tried by Red Bull and Williams. This design is more advanced when compared to the others. The aim is to achieve the most efficient brake cooling, because the more air used for that, the more you disturb the airflow and rob downforce.

The wheelnut and the centre section of the wheel have a large volume, which doesn't equate to good flow. While the others have been taking hot air from the brakes out through small 'spokes', Ferrari is sending hot air out through the hole in the axle (which, like the Williams design introduced last year, is legal because the hole doesn't move). Ferrari is also twisting that airflow towards the tyre contact patch, or just behind it, as that's where the low pressure is.

The axle has a bigger diameter than theoretically needed, allowing better direction of the air, but the other designs we've seen (below) are more simple.



Maldonado knocks F1 penalties

Pastor Maldonado fears drivers could be unwilling to battle wheel-to-wheel if the FIA continues to hand out penalties for racing incidents, such as the one he received for tipping Esteban Gutierrez into a roll at the

Bahrain Grand Prix earlier this month.

"[The threat of penalties means] you cannot race, you need to only stay on track and wait for problems," he said. "They [the FIA] need to be slightly more flexible."



→ **P24 PITLANE SHUNT FOR MALDONADO**



Montoya: Haas 'mad' to do F1

Juan Pablo Montoya believes new F1 entrant Gene Haas's plan to run his team from America is "mad". The seven-time grand prix winner, who raced in F1 from 2001-2006, said: "If he wants to build [the team] here in the States I think it's completely mad. You can't even call it mad because it makes no sense. You are not going to get people from England to move to Charlotte."



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Jonathan Noble

F1's newshound

There are numerous theories about the origin of Mercedes' current advantage, but the real reason lies in decisions made back in 2010

There's rarely a golden bullet in Formula 1. Recent weeks have been dominated by talk of what might be the single factor that's helped Mercedes deliver such a dominant car this season.

A fair amount of fuss has been made of the fact that the compressor on the Mercedes turbocharger is at the opposite end of the engine to the turbine. Could that be it?

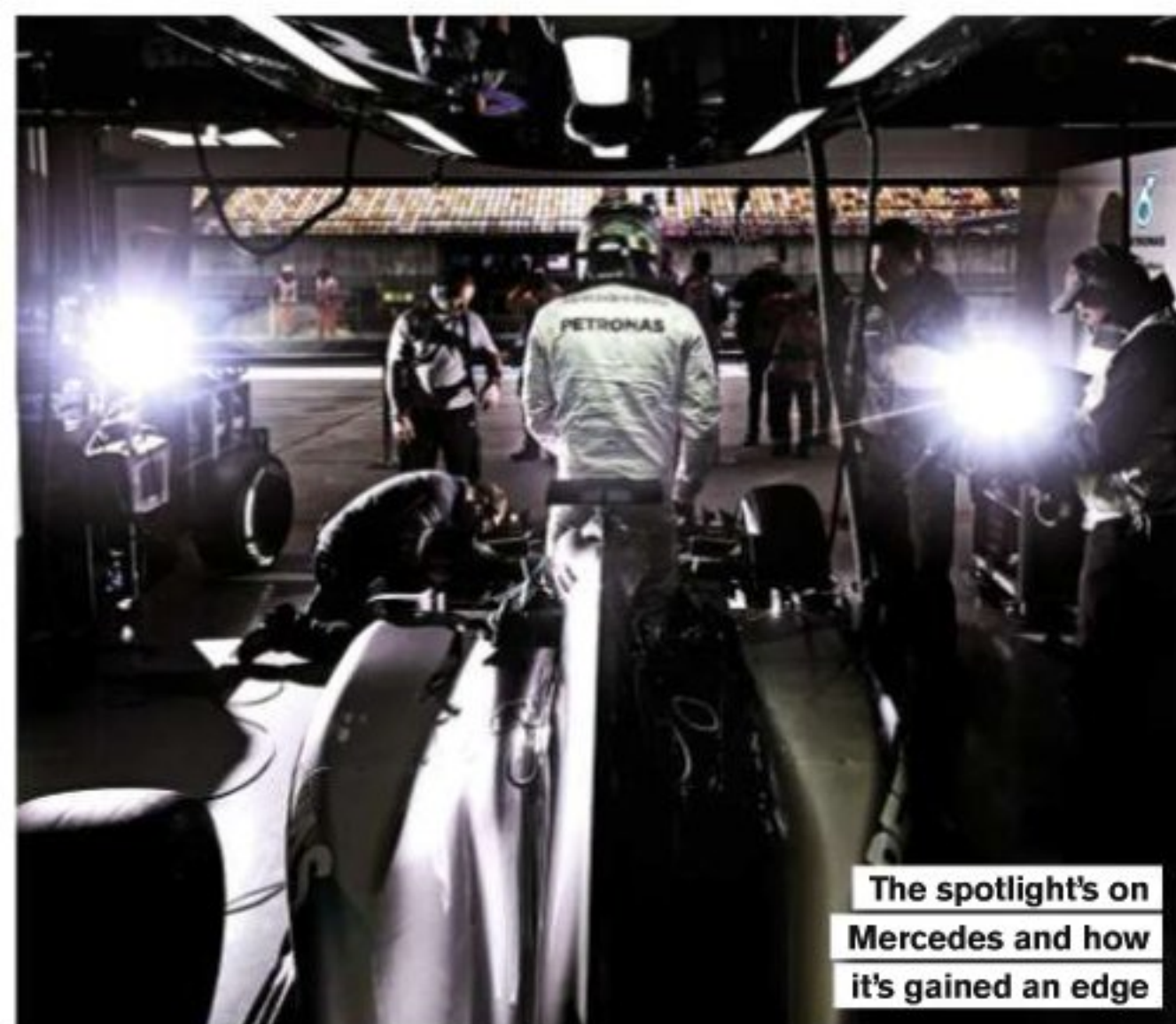
There have also been suggestions that Mercedes hit the ground running because it has invested heavily in a state-of-the-art, full-car rig set-up at its Brackley base. It was this that allowed it to be operating its engine, car installation and gearbox as one in the factory before running on track, to avoid the kind of early troubles that wrecked Red Bull's early testing. Perhaps it's that?

Rival teams have even suggested that Mercedes has simply upped its spending to a huge degree and has bought its way to success. Surely it's not as simple as that?

Others have also mentioned the role that its fuel partner Petronas has done in delivering some impressive new technology – like oil that gets thicker as its gets hotter – that has proved a game changer. Really?

Yet while some innovation, equipment, finances and technology may all be contributing to Lewis Hamilton and Nico Rosberg being in a class of their own at the moment, none of these can be singled out alone.

In fact, if you want to trace the Mercedes success story back to a single factor, then it's something that you'll not find on the car at all. And best of all for Mercedes, it's not



The spotlight's on Mercedes and how it's gained an edge

It was an approach that was in contrast to its current engine rivals – who either let teams develop KERS themselves (Renault) or relied upon external partners like Magneti Marelli (Ferrari).

Mercedes' determination to stick with its in-house project has not only given it a massive head start in terms

“Mercedes didn't wash its hands of the KERS project and let all that knowledge go to waste”

something that can be copied by its rivals. For the roots of Mercedes' advantage lead all the way back to 2008 – when a decision made by the firm's engine division then paved the way for what is happening right now.

Back then, F1 was bracing itself for the arrival of Kinetic Energy Recovery Systems (KERS) in 2009. And Mercedes, which was then locked in a close partnership with McLaren, elected to keep development of its KERS in-house rather than allow the Woking-based team to head off and do its own thing. But, more importantly than that, when it was agreed by teams that no one would run KERS in 2010, Mercedes didn't wash its hands of the project and let all that knowledge go to waste.

As engine chief Andy Cowell told me earlier this year: “When KERS wasn't raced in 2010, we didn't disband. We said: ‘right, we will do a second generation KERS.’”

“We raced that with six cars in 2011 and that has built a really good platform of internal knowledge, capability and capacity. We've built on that really.”

of gathering experience with energy-recovery systems. It's also given it a benefit in ensuring that those systems are completely integrated with the engine. Everything is as one.

With the early 2014 races showing that the key to success is in energy recovery and deployment over a lap, rather than all-out fuel efficiency or power from the turbo engine, having an advantage in this area is massively important.

It's the integration of its energy recovery systems, power unit and car that is the real story behind Mercedes' dominance. It was just better prepared over a longer period than its rivals for the challenge of the new regulations.

Time will tell if its advantage can be eroded; and Ferrari and Renault are well aware of what needs to be done. The gap will close in time – that's the inevitability of F1.

But for now, decisions made long ago in the board room of a factory building in Brixworth are the real reason why Hamilton and Rosberg have the advantage on track today. It shows that in F1, success can never just be measured in thousandths of a second. Sometimes it takes years. 

This week in motorsport

12

AUDI IN SPA CHASSIS RUSH

Audi is facing a race against time to assemble its line-up of R18 e-tron quattros for the next round of the World Endurance Championship at Spa on May 3.

The two R18s entered in last weekend's opening round of the WEC at Silverstone both sustained chassis damage in the accidents that put them out of the race. Audi also has to ready the extra car it will run in Belgium in preparation for its three-car attack on the Le Mans 24 Hours.

Audi Sport boss Wolfgang Ullrich

said: "Both tubs are damaged to the extent that they will have to be sent away to be repaired, and it is unlikely that we will get them back in time. So we will have to find another solution." That is almost certain to involve using the chassis from its test cars, of which Audi is known to have at least two.

Front-suspension pick-up points were damaged on both cars, which were crashed by Lucas di Grassi in the first hour and Benoît Treluyer (above) just after the halfway mark.

Stanaway back in single-seaters

Aston Martin Racing driver Richie Stanaway is to return to single-seaters in GP3 with Status Grand Prix.

The New Zealander, winner of a GP3 race in 2011 but injured in a Formula Renault 3.5 shunt in '12, has driven five of the six test days with Status (below).

"For my single-seater career, I always hoped my injury would be a bump in the road, not the end of the road," said Stanaway. "Branching into GTs last year was important, and I'm very happy to stay at Aston as a parallel programme."



LAT/CP3



WRC CALL FOR IRISH CLASSIC

The Circuit of Ireland has been tipped for inclusion in the World Rally Championship following last weekend's event.

The two-day rally, returning after an absence of one year, ran as a round of the European championship, but Citroën star and local hero Kris Meeke said the Circuit must look to move upwards.

"What we've seen here has been a fantastic show," said Meeke. "It's been

unbelievable. But it's just a taste of what could come with the WRC. This rally has every ingredient needed to be a world championship round." Event winner Esapekka Lappi agreed: "Just add another day on and it's ready for the WRC."

Event director Bobby Willis accepted the praise but cautioned: "We must walk before we run – but nobody wants the WRC more than me."



Rydell returns to the WTCC

Swedish touring car legend Rickard Rydell is to return full-time to the World Touring Car Championship next season.

Rydell, winner of the British tin-top title in 1998, will drive a Honda Civic under the Honda Racing Team Sweden banner. It will be run by Nika Racing, with which he won his domestic touring car title in 2011.

The 46-year-old's last full WTCC programme was with SEAT in 2009.

For all the breaking news, visit **AUTOSPORT.COM**

'Wet' test for Formula E

The all-electric FIA Formula E prototype completed a three-day test at Issoire in France last week, including artificially wet conditions to trial its all-weather Michelin tyres.

Test driver Emmanuel Collard reported: "The tyres were very impressive, very consistent in the dry and in the wet."

"The car feels very strange to drive at first because of the lack of noise. But after two or three laps you forget about that and it feels like a normal car, like a Formula 3 or Formula Renault."

Verstappen Jr plans Dutch Masters attack

European Formula 3 rookie Max Verstappen is hoping to contest the Zandvoort Masters race in July, for cars from British and German F3.

The 16-year-old, who took a best result of second with Van Amersfoort Racing at Silverstone last weekend, would prefer it to be with VAR's German F3 squad, but the Dutch team's regular drivers already plan to contest the event.

"I'd like to do it for sure!" he said.

REMEMBER WHEN

AUGUST 1 1993



Max Verstappen's father Jos won the Masters of F3 at Zandvoort in 1993 in front of his home crowd. Seven months later he made his Formula 1 debut with Benetton.

WITTMANN TOPS DTM TEST

BMW's Marco Wittmann set the pace at the final pre-season DTM test at Hockenheim.

The RMG driver topped the times on the first two of the four days, his best coming on the second afternoon.

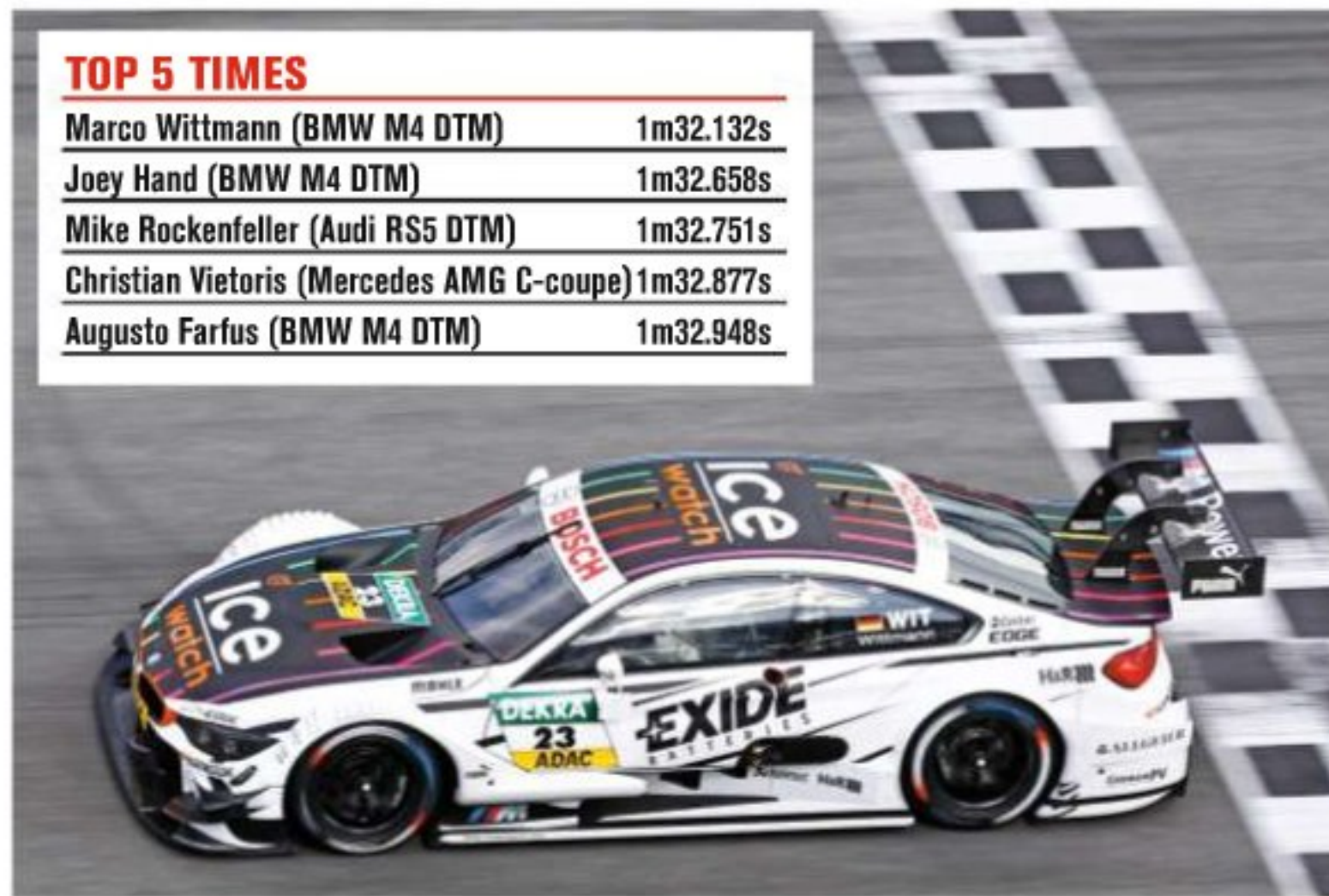
Joey Hand was second quickest in his

RBM BMW, with reigning champion Mike Rockenfeller leading the way for Audi with the third-fastest time of the test.

The best Mercedes driver overall was Christian Vietoris, with HWA team-mate Robert Wickens fastest on the final day.

TOP 5 TIMES

Marco Wittmann (BMW M4 DTM)	1m32.132s
Joey Hand (BMW M4 DTM)	1m32.658s
Mike Rockenfeller (Audi RS5 DTM)	1m32.751s
Christian Vietoris (Mercedes AMG C-coupe)	1m32.877s
Augusto Farfus (BMW M4 DTM)	1m32.948s



GIORGIO PIANTA: 1935-2014

GIORGIO PIANTA, WHO HAD A LONG and varied career as a test driver, motorsport manager and racer, has died at the age of 78.

The Italian is perhaps best remembered as test driver, his role when he joined the Fiat Group's Abarth competitions department in the 1970s. He helped develop the Fiat 131 Abarth with which Walter Rohrl took the 1980 World Rally title.

Pianta's abilities meant he was quickly promoted within the Abarth organisation and took on more management responsibilities on the Lancia Rallye O37 and Delta S4 Group B programmes, which eventually led to him being put in charge of racing activities at Alfa Romeo after it was incorporated into Fiat in 1986.

"Giorgio was the guy who decided the set-up of all the rally cars," says ex-Lancia competitions boss Cesare Fiorio. "You always need a good driver to do that and he was good,



but he also had good technical solutions. That's why I gave him more responsibility with the organisation of the service of the rally cars."

Pianta went on to have a 10-year career at Alfa Corse. He oversaw its DTM triumph with Nicola Larini and the 155 V6 TI in 1993 and its early successes in the Super Touring class. He left Alfa Romeo suddenly ahead of the end of the 1996 International Touring Car season (left), but continued to work for the Italian federation.

Pianta started racing in the late 1950s at the wheel of a Fiat 1100 103. His career included appearances in the Le Mans 24 Hours and the Targa Florio, and a one-off Formula 1 start in the British Aurora series.

● Gary Watkins



In brief

BERNSTORFF ON TOP

Anglo-Dane Emil Bernstorff set the fastest time in the final two-day pre-season GP3 test at Barcelona last week. The Carlin driver headed Pal Varhaug (Jenzer) and Alex Lynn (Carlin). Fourth was Nick Yelloly, who had topped the first day with Status GP.

EKSTROM TO RALLY-X

DTM star Mattias Ekstrom has started a team to compete in the World Rallycross Championship. His EKS squad, which has yet to choose which car to run, will play second fiddle to his DTM commitments with Audi.

MORE TWEAKS TO 500

There have been further tweaks to the Indy 500 qualifying format. A competitor who 'suffers a hardship' in Saturday qualifying will now get the chance to take a back-row spot on Sunday. The same would apply to any new entry making a late qualifying bid on Sunday.

SAAVEDRA PROBATION

Colombian IndyCar racer Sebastian Saavedra has been fined and placed on probation until the Indy 500 for a full-course-yellow offence in last week's round at Long Beach.



Jordan tests rallycross Ford

Reigning British Touring Car champion Andrew Jordan last week tested the Ford Fiesta he will race in next month's World Rallycross round at Lydden.

Jordan, who started his career in the sport, drove the OlsbergsMSE-run car at the Kent track, and is keeping a lid on his expectations.

"If I could get into the final I'd be happy, but it's a big ask," he said. "The racing is close, similar to touring cars, just everything happens a lot faster in rallycross."



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Francois Ribeiro

The Inside Line

The new era of WTCC cars is up and running but, as the chief at series promoter Eurosport Events reveals, this is only the start of the journey

Motorsport is one of the pillars of Eurosport's programming. For the Easter weekend we put on air the World Touring Car Championship, the Circuit of Ireland round of the European Rally Championship, and the World Endurance Championship from Silverstone.

After last weekend's second round of the WTCC at Paul Ricard, we have a better view regarding the series' new TC1 rules introduced this year. As a championship promoter, I think we have learned three lessons.

The first lesson is that it was good to have changed the technical regulations. When I watched TC1 cars passing by, and then TC2 cars, I kept asking myself why we didn't change them earlier. The cars really look like proper racing cars now – they're very aggressive, and that's right. It's a much better show, for viewers on TV and for spectators at the track. The circuit promoter at Paul Ricard told me 29,000 tickets were sold, and that's reality, because we can't mess around with the French tax authorities. The last time they made such a successful paying event like WTCC was 15 years ago, for the last edition of the Bol d'Or bike meeting.

The second lesson? I think there were a lot of question marks that with much more downforce, overtaking would be much more difficult. I was very much reassured with what I saw Paul Ricard on Sunday. I did not count the numbers, but there was a lot of overtaking – and not just because Citroen started at the back. I saw a lot of overtaking between Honda and Chevrolet, Chevrolet and

Citroen will get success ballast from the next round in Hungary onwards. If they get 60kg, they will lose around 0.6s per lap. But beyond this, WTCC is not a championship that subscribes to a concept of balance of performance, for example like WEC is doing. In the end, if Citroen worked better, did more tests and have the best drivers, because of the way the championship is structured, they will dominate qualifying and race one, and in race two they will have to start in the middle of the pack.

I expect Honda, Lada and Chevrolet to keep working on their cars and reduce the gap they have to Citroen. I don't see Honda not reacting to this. Talking to them at the weekend, I saw the effort they're putting into this, and I think they understood the message very clearly. They are eager to reduce the gap to Citroen and fight for podiums.

Eurosport Events as a promoter is supporting privateers, and the three teams who bought two RML Chevrolet Cruze cars each. We supported them a lot this year, because the gap to purchase these new TC1 cars was very high compared to the TC2 cars. In return, we have their three-year presence in the WTCC.

We are also keen to see new TC2 rules, the sooner the better, and this is an ongoing process with the FIA and the manufacturers. If the FIA does a good new set of TC2 rules, we would be the first to take these regulations on board and build up our own championship. If you see the ETCC today, it is a success with 30 cars. However, these cars will be obsolete very soon. If BMW Motorsport does

“TC1 cars look like proper racing cars – they're very aggressive, and that's right. It's a better show”

Lada etc. So from this perspective we didn't lose our DNA, and honestly that was my biggest concern.

The third lesson is, if you change technical regulations, and then one manufacturer invests more by starting testing and development six months ahead of all of the others, it makes a huge difference. I really don't believe the gap that Citroen currently has over Honda, Lada and Chevrolet is about money. I think it's really about time. They started testing the C-Elysee in July 2013, while Honda started in January, and RML (who built the Chevrolet) and Lada in March. I am sure if you were to give Honda the option, 'What do you prefer, more money or more time?' today they would probably tell you more time.

For instance, Citroen prepared for the very particular kerbs they would face in Marrakech by testing on very appropriate circuits. So today it's true that it's a bit like Mercedes in Formula 1 or Volkswagen in rallying – there is a dominant manufacturer. That's obvious.

How will things develop? It's not entirely in our control.

not produce spare parts any more for TC2 and SEAT Sport does not produce spare parts, it won't be possible to have 30 cars next year for TC2. There is a need and we would be the first to have a separate grid. It could be called, perhaps, the FIA TC2 championship – we would have some events in Europe and some events in Asia, to make a proper feeder series for TC1.

I would love to think that if the next TC2 regulations are good then some national motorsport bodies will start to recreate national touring car championships. For France, why not? I think Germany is also expecting something. I spoke to the ADAC and DMSB presidents in Marrakech, and both told me if the FIA does something they would immediately jump on board.

As championship promoter, the feedback we get from the market is that there are many drivers saying they want to do an international championship, one with nice events and good promotion, that costs a maximum of €300,000 per season. We believe the demand is there. ❧

CHINESE GP

THE RACE REPORT

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

Lewis – to the power of three

Hamilton scores his third Chinese Grand Prix victory – his third in a row for Merc this season – at Shanghai, as a premature chequered flag ends Alonso/Ricciardo podium fight. **EDD STRAW** reports



AT A GLANCE



"I was expecting to do another lap, and all of a sudden I looked up for a split second and I saw the flag" **LEWIS HAMILTON**

CHINESE GP
Shanghai

ROUND 4/19

LAPS 54

WINNER
Lewis Hamilton
1h33m28.338s

POLE POSITION
Lewis Hamilton
1m53.860s

FASTEST LAP
Nico Rosberg
1m40.402s

RACE RATING
★★★★★ After the thrills of Bahrain this was a bit of a dull one, albeit with intra-Red Bull intrigue

DRIVERS' STANDINGS

1 Nico Rosberg	79pts
2 Lewis Hamilton	75pts
3 Fernando Alonso	41pts





Hamilton celebrates
breaking Clark's British
grand prix pole record

QUALIFYING 14:00, 19.04.2014

When you have taken pole position by six-tenths of a second, your earlier banker lap would have been good enough to take pole position anyway, and even your team-mate is happy to admit that, had everything had gone right for him, you would still have been faster, you know you've had a great day. Lewis Hamilton underlined all that by pointing out that his pole lap wasn't even the best he could have done.

It was a dominant performance worthy of breaking Jim Clark's record for world championship pole positions by a British driver and, more significantly, become the fourth-most successful qualifier in history. Only Michael Schumacher, Ayrton Senna and Sebastian Vettel have more poles. As Hamilton put it: "unbelievable".

After Q1, where most started on wet tyres, intermediates were the rubber of choice. The Q3 top 10 shoot-out was relatively straightforward at the front. Hamilton banged in a solid

banker lap early in the 12-minute final segment, lapping at 1m54.348s. On his second run, he went faster by almost half a second.

While Daniel Ricciardo, who outqualified his illustrious team-mate Sebastian Vettel for the third time in four races, was Hamilton's closest challenger, the real competition was between the two Mercedes drivers. Nico Rosberg ended up 1.283 seconds down after a scruffy session. Following an unremarkable banker lap, which ultimately earned him fourth on the grid, Rosberg ruined the first flier on his second run by locking up and running wide at the Turn 14 hairpin. On his second attempt, a misleading dashboard readout prevented him salvaging a front-row slot.

"Coming out of the hairpin, my time delta said that I was two-tenths slower than my reference time, which was the one I qualified on," explained Rosberg. "So I said 'two tenths off, just take a risk at the last corner' and I spun.

I wasn't even annoyed, because I thought I was going to be slower, but I couldn't understand how I lost eight tenths in Turn 14.

"I knew I braked a bit carefully, but I had lost eight tenths looking at my dash, which was strange. It's so reliable normally that I believe it, and it was wrong. I was actually six tenths up going into the last corner."

The reason for the discrepancy wasn't that the dash wasn't working, simply that the delta is generated based on a reference lap (Rosberg's banker) using distance travelled and time. He had travelled 30 metres further on that lap thanks to differing lines and the odd moment.

Fernando Alonso reckoned he couldn't have done better than fifth, but Ferrari team-mate Kimi Raikkonen had endured a difficult weekend and didn't make Q2. McLaren's Jenson Button suffered the same fate, struggling for front tyre temperature and ending up 12th.



Button failed to
make Q3 for second
time this season

P30 FULL RESULTS & POINTS

2014 年 F1 中国大奖赛

车手	车队	圈速	积分
红牛	法拉利	1m53.860s	25
红牛 2 队	红牛	1m54.455s	18
卡特汉姆	卡特汉姆	1m54.960s	15
梅赛德斯	梅赛德斯	1m55.143s	12
路特斯	路特斯	1m56.147s	10
玛鲁西亚	玛鲁西亚	1m56.282s	8
玛鲁西亚	玛鲁西亚	1m56.860s	7
玛鲁西亚	玛鲁西亚	1m57.289s	6
玛鲁西亚	玛鲁西亚	1m57.675s	5
玛鲁西亚	玛鲁西亚	1m57.988s	4
玛鲁西亚	玛鲁西亚	1m58.264s	3
玛鲁西亚	玛鲁西亚	1m59.326s	2
玛鲁西亚	玛鲁西亚	2m00.865s	1

THE GRID

1 HAMILTON MERCEDES 1m53.860s Soft	2 RICCIARDO RED BULL 1m54.455s Soft
3 VETTEL RED BULL 1m54.960s Soft	4 ROSBERG MERCEDES 1m55.143s Soft
5 ALONSO FERRARI 1m55.637s Soft	6 MASSA WILLIAMS 1m56.147s Soft
7 BOTTAS WILLIAMS 1m56.282s Soft	8 HULKENBERG FORCE INDIA 1m56.366s Soft
9 VERGNE TORO ROSSO 1m56.773s Soft	10 GROSJEAN LOTUS 1m57.079s Soft
11 RAIKKONEN FERRARI 1m56.860s Soft	12 BUTTON McLAREN 1m56.963s Soft
13 KVYAT TORO ROSSO 1m57.289s Soft	14 SUTIL SAUBER 1m57.393s Soft
15 MAGNUSSEN McLAREN 1m57.675s Medium	16 PEREZ FORCE INDIA 1m58.264s Soft
17 GUTIERREZ SAUBER 1m58.988s Soft	18 KOBAYASHI CATERHAM 1m59.260s Soft
19 BIANCHI MARUSSIA 1m59.326s Soft	20 ERICSSON CATERHAM 2m00.646s Soft
21 CHILTON MARUSSIA 2m00.865s Soft	22 MALDONADO LOTUS no time Soft

KEY
+5 5-place grid penalty



Hamilton streaks away as Rosberg flounders and Massa hits Alonso

RACE 15:00, 20.04.2014



Small differences add up to a lot in Formula 1. During the Chinese Grand Prix weekend, three pairs of high-profile team-mates drove identical machinery, but endured very different races. All scored points, and two of the duos finished next to each other in the results, but that could not shroud just how big the differences between each pair really were.

The most obvious of the pairings in question was at Mercedes. Lewis Hamilton utterly bossed this race weekend, so much so that the relatively modest 18.062-second gap to team-mate Rosberg did little justice to his supremacy. The so-called 'grand slam' – victory, pole, fastest lap and leading from start to finish – is rarely achieved in F1, but Hamilton only missed out on the second of his grand prix career simply because he was so dominant.

Rosberg had to bang in the fastest lap of the race, 0.794s faster than Hamilton's, during his successful pursuit of second-placed Alonso during the final stint, but Hamilton could simply cruise to the chequered flag (which appeared prematurely). His hard work earlier in the weekend had earned him the right to take it easy on Sunday afternoon.

After a Bahrain GP characterised by scraps between team-mates throughout the leading positions, things were very different in China.

DUEL 1 HAMILTON VERSUS ROSBERG

The Mercedes didn't look quite as dominant in China as it had done in Bahrain, but it was still in a class of its own. During practice, it seemed both Hamilton and Rosberg were playing a game of cat and mouse, eager not to show their true hand to their

team-mate. Hamilton was not especially happy with life despite being fastest on Friday, and with Rosberg's best lap in FP2 compromised by yellow flags for the Lotus Pastor Maldonado had rather embarrassingly parked in the barrier in the pit entry, there was no clear read on which driver was in better shape.

Saturday dawned wet, and stayed that way, so it was no great surprise to see Hamilton have the edge in qualifying. The 2008 world champion is regarded as one of the best in the rain (if you are not convinced, check out the quality of his triumph at Silverstone in 2008, which stands as one of the great wet-weather victories) and Rosberg knows he doesn't have the beating of his team-mate in those conditions.

"He has just been doing a good job in the wet, that's clear, again today he was very quick," said Rosberg after qualifying. "But also, one must say that the set-up is completely wrong for the wet today because we are set up for front-left graining tomorrow which is the opposite of what you need in the wet, so the rear was all over the place today."

Rosberg certainly reckoned he had something up his sleeve in terms of set-up, even though he wasn't completely happy with the car's feel under braking. Perhaps he did, but in order for that to have had a significant say in the race he first needed a dry qualifying and second needed to be on Hamilton's tail in a dry race.

Rosberg: '[Lewis] has been doing a good job, that's clear – he was very quick again'

The loss of telemetry before the formation lap effectively ensured that would not happen as it made it impossible to optimise the clutch set-up, playing a big part in Rosberg bogging down and going backwards.

He finished the lap 4.563s behind Hamilton and with Sebastian Vettel, Fernando Alonso, Daniel Ricciardo and Felipe Massa between him and his team-mate. From then on, there was no intra-team battle. It was all about using the inherent pace of the car to ensure that, while beaten, he hung onto his world championship lead with a second-place finish.

The path to second was relatively straightforward and Rosberg showed admirable patience, very capably dealing with the lack of telemetry along the way. He passed Massa on lap four, undercut his way ahead of Ricciardo through the first round of pitstops, then overtook Vettel in the second stint before catching and passing Alonso after his final pitstop.

Once the final stops had been completed, the gap between Rosberg and Hamilton held firm to the flag, so had they finished the first lap line astern, it might have been a ▶



As Hamilton pulls clear, Rosberg battles for sixth



Closest Nico got to Lewis all day was on podium

► fascinating battle. As it was, Rosberg was in a race for second from the moment the red lights went out.

From that perspective, he had more reason to be happy with a distant second in China than his fighting runner-up position in Bahrain.

The latter race, he should definitely have won. In China, while he might have felt he had an advantage in terms of tyre management, that wasn't the hand he was dealt.

"Set-up wise, it was a good team effort this weekend because it's a very unique track here with understeer being the main problem and the front-left tyre," said Rosberg. "You really have to change everything, adapt to the needs of the track and we did well as a team. It wasn't perfect in the race, but it was definitely pretty good."

"We have the best car and that makes it more enjoyable to do catch-up, even though of course we don't want to do any catch-up. But I was back there, so catching up was nice with this fast car. It's a good weapon."

But it's important not to overlook how well Hamilton did to earn his advantage. Inevitably, he dealt much better with the loose rear-end in wet qualifying and once Rosberg was out of the way he controlled the race beautifully.

He didn't have to push too hard, which prevented any major problems with front-left graining on the soft tyres (this was more of a problem on the mediums). So not only could he afford to sacrifice time by taking it easy early on, but he could also throw away more seconds by extending that first stint to make absolutely sure of being able to pull off a comfortable two-stop strategy. Those are the kinds of trade-offs that dominance earns you the right to make.

As well as dealing well with the curveball thrown in by the Saturday

rain, Hamilton also made progress in terms of set-up. On Friday afternoon, he was not happy, not only because of a rear suspension problem that cost him track time but also because of the feel of the car. "It was not the easiest of days," he said, prior to retreating into debriefs to come up with a series of set-up changes that, thanks to the conditions on Saturday, he had to carry blind into the race.

"The car was really good," he said



Vettel didn't acquiesce to team orders straight away

Vettel: 'If you look at the raw result it was quite obvious that he was quicker than me'

on Sunday evening. "We made lots of changes overnight on Friday and obviously it was wet for qualifying, so I didn't know what it was going to be like today. We didn't guess, we really made those steps in anticipation of today and it worked perfectly. I couldn't really have asked for more."

Whether things might have been different with Rosberg on his tail, leading Hamilton to put more stress on his front Pirellis, can't be answered. The fact is, Hamilton reaped the rewards of being at the front.

DUEL 2 RICCIARDO VERSUS VETTEL

The bare facts are that Ricciardo outqualified his four-time world champion team-mate for the third

time in four races, half-a-second faster than the German, and then beat him to third place in the race by 20.642s. Impressive.

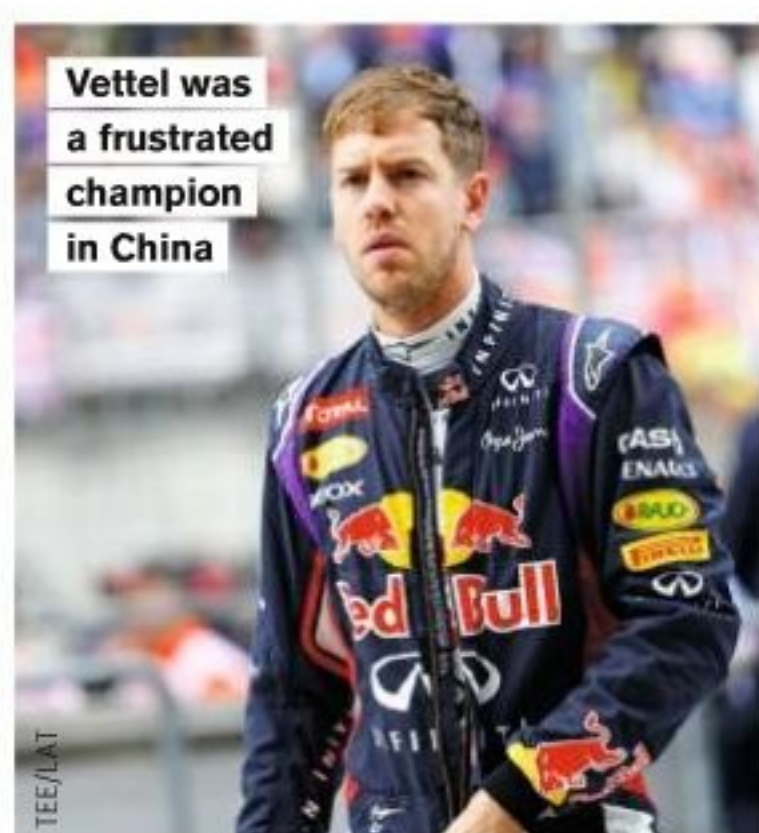
On top of that, Ricciardo had the additional satisfaction of Vettel's "tough luck" message over the radio after he was told to let the Australian by on the basis he was on a different strategy. Of course, Ricciardo wasn't on a different strategy the way the race panned out as Red Bull couldn't make Vettel's three-stopper work. So it was just that he was working his way through the tyres much more slowly and had three-lap younger mediums on his RB10.

Vettel, struggling more on the mediums, did apparently relent and allow Ricciardo past, but he would have been powerless to prevent him getting ahead at Turn 1 on lap 22 anyway. That, combined with his vigorous defence just a couple of corners earlier, renders it a moot point as to just how co-operative he really was.

"He just seems to get more out of the car than I do," said Vettel of



Rosberg made the most of his superior machinery – here he outrags Vettel



Vettel was a frustrated champion in China

Ricciardo. "There are a lot of things that I don't really like at this stage, but in the end we have the same car and the gap is too big than just to be something small in terms of set-up. I know there is not too much difference.

"Initially, I didn't understand and once I was told that we are on a different strategy, there was no point to hold him up any further. And if you look at the raw result at the end, it was quite obvious that he was quicker than me."



Rosberg only passed Alonso in closing stages

Vettel's main problem is stability of the rear, particularly under braking, which makes it impossible for him to commit to the turn-in and rotate the rear in the way he made his trademark in recent years. By contrast, Ricciardo has no such hesitation or discomfort.

"I wasn't aware of that [the 'tough luck' message]," said Ricciardo. "But in battle, you want to hold on to what you've got and you just blurt out what you feel at the time. At least we eventually did get by. I think, at the

time, we weren't really sure whether it was a two or three stop and I figured if he was on a three maybe he was going to shoot into the pits in a lap or so and maybe that's why he was holding on. But I don't want to start any conflicts."

DUEL 3 ALONSO VERSUS RAIKKONEN

Of the three intra-team battles in question, this was the most one-sided. While Alonso qualified fifth and finished an outstanding third,



Troubled weekend for Raikkonen

Kimi Raikkonen failed to make Q3 and finished eighth, over 50 seconds behind his Ferrari team-mate.

Alonso undoubtedly got the best out of the machinery. That, combined with a decent first lap during which he was fortunate to survive hitting Felipe Massa's Williams, laid the foundations for his first podium finish of 2014. Raikkonen, by contrast, wasn't even able to give Force India's Nico Hulkenberg and the Williams of Valtteri Bottas a hard time for their sixth and seventh places.

While Raikkonen hasn't had a great start to his second Ferrari career, things were moving in the right direction in the build-up to China. After a poor run in Australia, things looked better in Malaysia but were masked by damage on the opening lap, while in Bahrain he was right behind Alonso at the finish. But China, a front-limited circuit, was always likely to exacerbate Raikkonen's struggles with his F14 T.

His liking for precise front-end feel has been talked about extensively, but it's also important to note that he's not a big fan of an understeery car, which makes it difficult for him to set the car up on turn-in as he would like. He complained of an all-round lack of grip, although the front grip problem will have been primarily responsible for the balance not being to his liking.

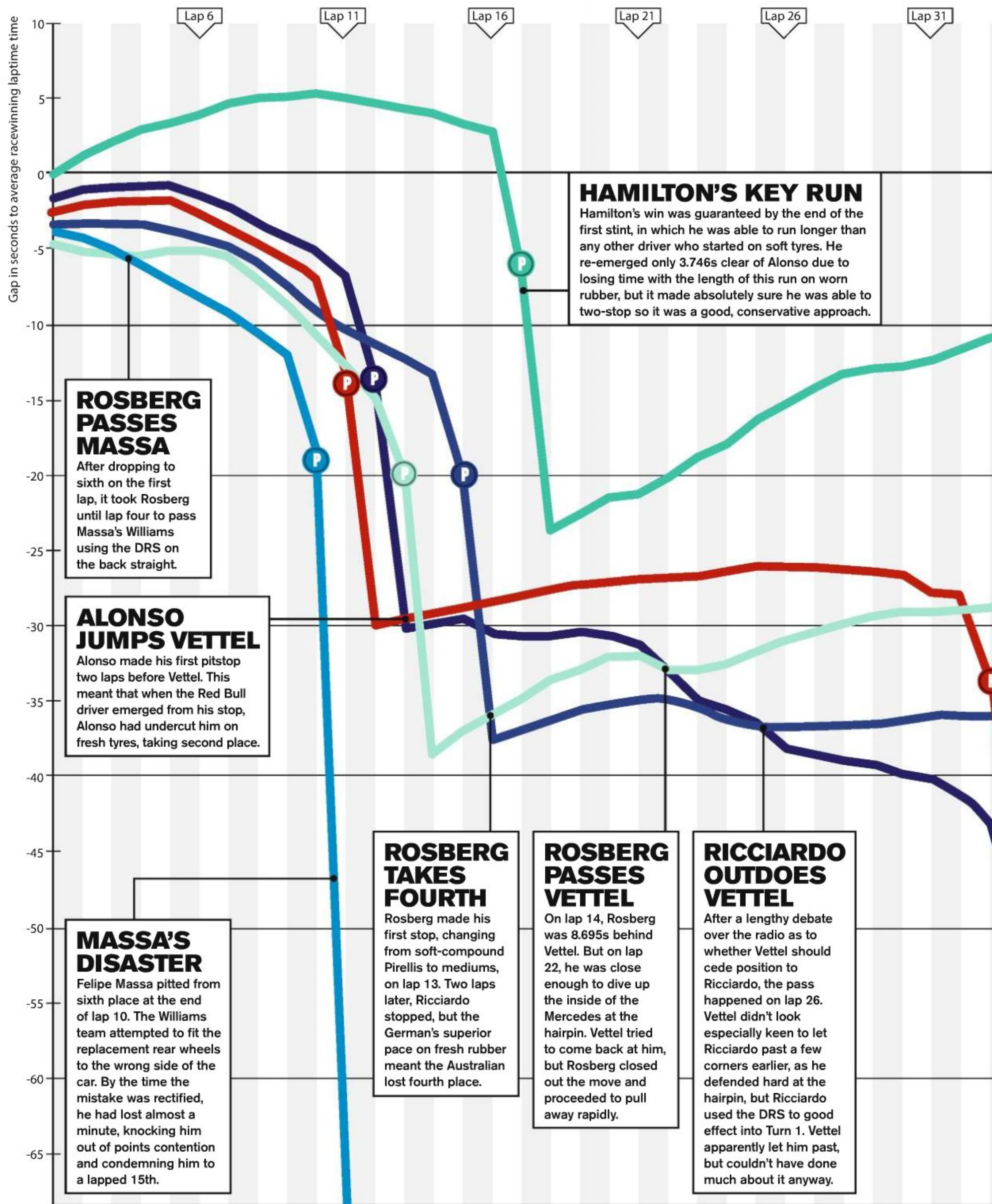
Raikkonen's relative strength on fresh rubber, before the graining set in, supports that, suggesting that China is a dip in form rather than a more worrying trend.

"It's probably more to do with my driving style, plus the cool conditions and not getting the tyres working," said Raikkonen. "If it was some problem with the car, we would not be fast on new tyres, or happy with the tyres. It's a combination of cool conditions, circuit layout and my driving style, probably."

As all three of these intra-team battles prove, it's always a combination of factors that make the difference. China is an unusual circuit given the fact it is front-tyre limited, something compounded by track temperatures as low as Pirelli has been confronted with on a race weekend since it returned to the sport in 2011.

In Spain in three weeks' time, the weather and track layout will offer very different challenges and these battles will start afresh. That's what makes the unique combination of human and machine ceaselessly compelling race after race.

HOW THE RACE WAS WON



Lap 36

Lap 41

Lap 46

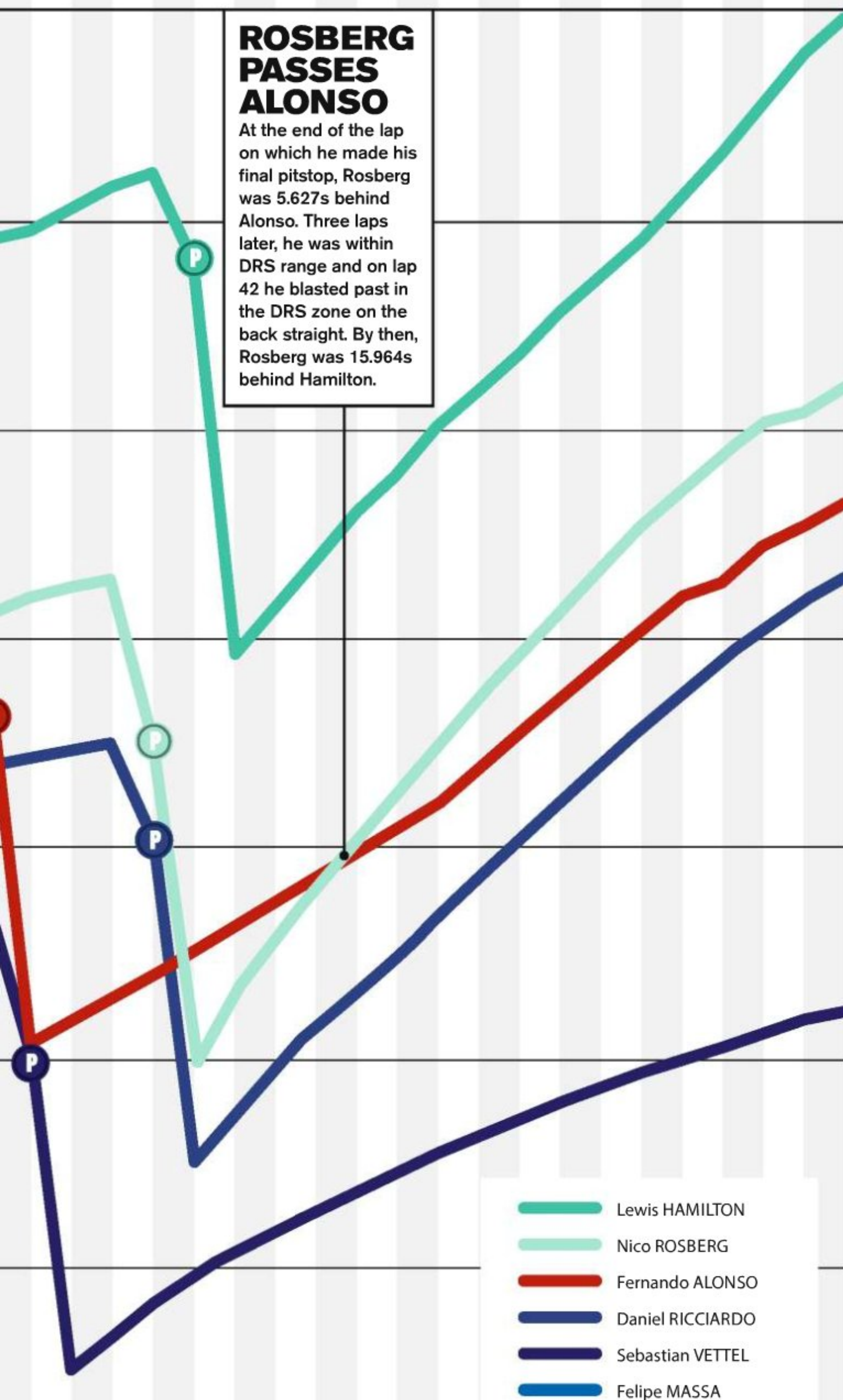
Lap 51

HOW THE GRAPH WORKS

↓ This graph plots the positions of the key players in the race, relative both to each other and the average racewinning pace (0 seconds). The racewinning pace is calculated by taking the winner's race time and dividing it by the number of laps (except first and SC laps).

ROSBERG PASSES ALONSO

At the end of the lap on which he made his final pitstop, Rosberg was 5.627s behind Alonso. Three laps later, he was within DRS range and on lap 42 he blasted past in the DRS zone on the back straight. By then, Rosberg was 15.964s behind Hamilton.

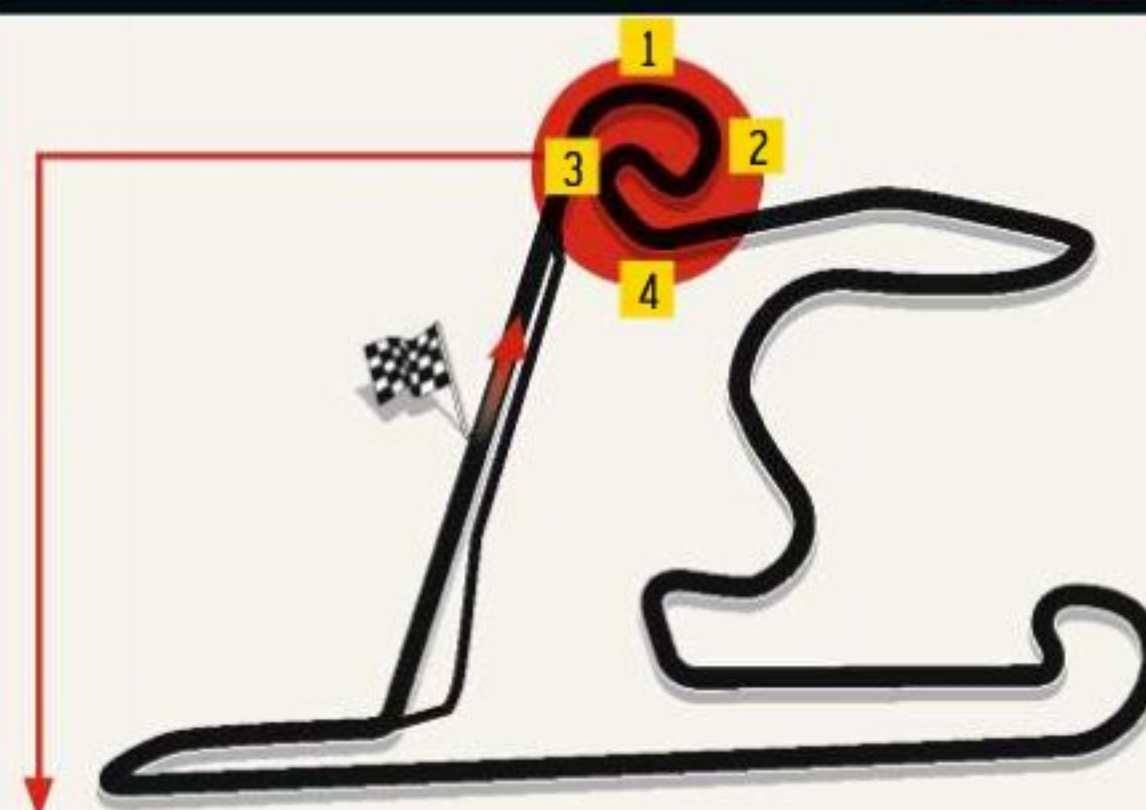


- Lewis HAMILTON
- Nico ROSBERG
- Fernando ALONSO
- Daniel RICCIARDO
- Sebastian VETTEL
- Felipe MASSA

TRACKSIDE VIEW**EDD STRAW F1 EDITOR**

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An hour standing in the chilly gloom, slowly drenched by unrelenting drizzle, does not sound like the perfect way to spend an hour of Saturday morning. But the wet conditions during the third free practice session made it a fascinating demonstration of wet-weather technique.

Turns 1-4 are effectively one sequence, in wet conditions requiring not far off 20 seconds of continuous steering input before reaching the short, flat-out blast to Turn 6. A lot of time can be gained or lost here. At Turn 1, it's a case of carrying in as much speed as possible without picking up understeer or the rear breaking away on turn-in. Then, the drivers bleed off speed for the snaking, slow second and third turns.

In dry conditions, the plunge out of Turn 2 through the downhill Turn 3 is relatively straightforward. Hold a middle line at the exit of Turn 2, then in Turn 3 stay relatively tight, but without hugging the kerb all the way round.

But in the wet, the compromises are different. Here, Daniel Ricciardo stood out. While some stuck to the dry line, others yanked the car as wide as possible for the entry of three but then placed the car too tight mid-turn. The Australian took a relatively conventional line at the entry, but let the car run wider on turn-in – in order to take a wide line. This allowed him to minimise wheelspin, feed the power in relatively early to ensure a good exit and use extra grip on this part of the track.

Team-mate Sebastian Vettel took a similar line, but a more pronounced, wider version that didn't work quite as well because it was difficult to get enough power down to capitalise on the resulting slingshot on to the straight.

It was no surprise to see Ricciardo snatch a front-row slot in similar style a few hours later.

'Vettel took a more pronounced, wider line that didn't work out quite as well'



Vettel wasn't as effective through T1-3 as Ricciardo

STORIES OF THE RACE

Rounding up the action
from the Chinese GPEDD STRAW
F1 EDITOR

Ferrari makes step after Bahrain debacle

FERRARI MADE A SIGNIFICANT IMPROVEMENT IN performance in China, with Fernando Alonso claiming the Scuderia's first podium of the season.

In addition to car upgrades, including new 'blown' front axles (see *This Week In F1*), there were also tweaks to engine software that improved straightline performance. Alonso qualified fifth in wet conditions, jumping to third on the opening lap and then stopping a lap earlier than Sebastian Vettel to take second. While he was powerless to keep the recovering Nico Rosberg behind, losing second in the DRS zone on the back straight on lap 42, he kept Daniel Ricciardo's Red Bull at bay in the closing stages.

"It was a combination," said Alonso of what led to Ferrari's improved form after its cars finished ninth and 10th in Bahrain two weeks earlier. "We brought new parts that feel a little more competitive, the car feels a little bit faster. We also tested them in Bahrain, they felt OK and we confirmed that here."

"In Bahrain, we were one minute behind the leaders, ninth and 10th, and today we are on the podium, seven seconds behind Nico. Hopefully I can keep going like this, I felt more comfortable with the car and we will not give up."

Alonso also believes his driving has reached a higher level than it did in the first three races. He compared his own performance to the 2012 season, where he came close to winning the world championship even though the Ferrari was not the strongest car in the field.

"I personally have had an extremely good weekend, probably at the level of 2012 in terms of driving and feeling

comfortable with the car," was Alonso's summary.

Ferrari has further upgrades planned for next month's Spanish GP, although it is still a long way off Mercedes. While in race conditions the Red Bull looked slightly the stronger car and Ricciardo would probably have finished ahead but for his bad start, Ferrari now has the platform to contend for best-of-the-rest behind the Silver Arrows.

Alonso is now 38 points behind championship leader Rosberg, with Ferrari only fourth in the constructors' championship, already 102 points off Mercedes.

FERRARI RESULTS IN 2014

AUSTRALIAN GP	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12
Alonso												
Raikkonen												
MALAYSIAN GP	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12
Alonso												
Raikkonen												
BAHRAIN GP	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12
Alonso												
Raikkonen												
CHINESE GP	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12
Alonso												
Raikkonen												

FINISHING POSITION



TEE/LAT

24

Maldonado crashed
at the entry to the
pitlane in practice



TEE/LAT

Maldonado suffers pitlane practice shunt

LOTUS DRIVER PASTOR MALDONADO suffered two embarrassing incidents during Friday practice in China, culminating in him crashing in the entry to the pitlane.

Maldonado accepted responsibility for the crash, saying "I made a mistake on the entry of the pit". The crash, which brought his Friday to a close with an hour of the afternoon session remaining, echoed his similar accident during Friday practice in Malaysia in 2011. He admitted that he was deliberately pushing in the pit entry when he went off.

Maldonado also drove off the track and spun at the exit of Turn 8 after failing to wind off the

right-hand lock once he had emerged from the corner during the morning session. He blamed this on having to change some of the settings on the steering wheel.

"It's a lot more busy for the drivers," said Maldonado. "The problem of this circuit is that it's not like in Bahrain, where you have four long straights, here even if you see some small straights you are always trying to do things so it's quite tricky."

After starting last following an engine failure in Saturday-morning practice that prevented him from participating in qualifying, Maldonado put in a solid drive to 14th in the race.

Flag blunder leads to shortened race

THE CHINESE GRAND PRIX RESULT WAS

declared after 54 laps, rather than the 56 that were staged, because of the premature showing of the chequered flag to winner Lewis Hamilton on lap 55.

Although all cars then completed the full distance, F1's sporting regulations Article 43.2 declares that the race "will be deemed to have finished when the leading car last crossed the line before the signal was given" in the case of the flag being shown early.

The mistake only changed one position in the race, with Kamui Kobayashi robbed of 17th place, earned with a pass on Jules Bianchi's Marussia at Turn 14 on the final lap.

"We'd had a really good battle for the last few laps of the race and I got him on what was the last lap until it turned out the chequered flag had been waved a lap too early by mistake," said Caterham racer Kobayashi.

The chequer was
waved too early
at Shanghai



TEE/LAT



McLaren still a long way off the pace

McLAREN ENDURED A TERRIBLE CHINESE GP weekend, with Jenson Button and Kevin Magnussen able to finish only 11th and 13th on merit.

It's the first time McLaren has had two healthy cars finish outside the points since the 2013 Canadian GP and the worst two-car finish since Lewis Hamilton and Heikki Kovalainen were 13th and 14th in the 2009 Turkish GP.

Button qualified 11th and slipped to 14th at the start and lost out to Toro Rosso driver Daniil Kvyat in the battle for the final point after the 19-year-old passed him on lap 21. Magnussen was the only driver to start on medium-compound Pirellis and made little progress, finishing nine seconds and two places behind his team-mate.

Q&A

ERIC BOULLIER

McLAREN RACING DIRECTOR



Why was it so difficult here for McLaren?

The only reason is that we are lacking downforce. It has a direct effect on the tyres, tyre wear and tyre degradation. Obviously the layout here is very front-limited, which doesn't help as well. Everything went wrong for us so it is just a question of time. We know where we have to address the issues on the car and we are working on it, but obviously it is going to come sooner than later I hope. We have already picked up a lot of performance in the windtunnel so back at the factory it is fine. It is just a question of preparing everything and shipping it to the track.

So these upgrades will be coming for the Spanish GP?

Part of it will be in Barcelona, but I think it will take a bit longer than this.

Is there something fundamentally wrong with the car?

[It needs] more downforce and more balanced downforce, then it should be fine.

Why did the car work so well in Australia, where you finished second and third?

To be honest, what is more difficult to explain is that if you look at Bahrain, except for Mercedes, we were chasing the Force Indias. We could have, with a better, more aggressive strategy, even finished on the podium. The range of the performance on our car is not narrow but it is weather-dependent. If it is too hot we are out, if it is too cold we are out. Because we are missing downforce we cannot exploit the tyres.

Hamilton became pole record holder among the Brits



Hamilton breaks Clark's F1 pole record

LEWIS HAMILTON BROKE JIM CLARK'S BRITISH record for world championship pole positions by topping qualifying for the 34th time in China.

Hamilton's third pole position of the season also elevated him to fourth place in the all-time list. He is now behind only Michael Schumacher (68 poles), Ayrton Senna (65) and Sebastian Vettel (45).

"I don't pay too much attention to records, but I feel blessed that I've had the chance to work with great people

and have these good cars to be able to put these laps in – even more so with this team," said Hamilton.

"To be up there amongst the great names of all the Brits, I'm very, very proud of that. To beat Jim Clark's record is unbelievable."

Clark established the record by beating Stirling Moss's mark of 16 pole positions at the 1965 British Grand Prix at Silverstone. While Clark's 33 poles came in 72 attempts, Hamilton has taken 132 to rack up his 34 poles.



HAMILTON'S F1 POLE POSITIONS

2007			2008			2009			2010	2011	2012			2013			2014		
H J PRC P1 P1 P1 CDN USA GB P1 P1 P1			PRC P1 H B J P1 P1 P1 AUS CDN D P1 P1 P1			UAE P1 EU I SGP P1 P1 P1			CDN P1	ROK P1	BR P1 I SGP UAE P1 P1 P1 AUS MAL H P1 P1 P1			H B P1 P1 PRC GB D P1 P1 P1			AUS MAL PRC P1 P1 P1		

STORIES OF THE RACE

Massa unhappy after tyre disaster

FELIPE MASSA FINISHED A LAPPED 15TH IN THE Chinese GP having been on course for a sixth-place finish in the first stint of the race.

After making a superb start from sixth on the grid, he attempted to go between Daniel Ricciardo's Red Bull and Fernando Alonso's Ferrari, only for the Spaniard to move over on him.

"I had a great start and then Fernando didn't see me and he hit me," said Massa. "The stewards didn't think it was a problem, so they didn't do anything."

Massa survived but then lost almost a minute when the Williams team attempted to fit the rear wheels the wrong way round at his first pitstop.

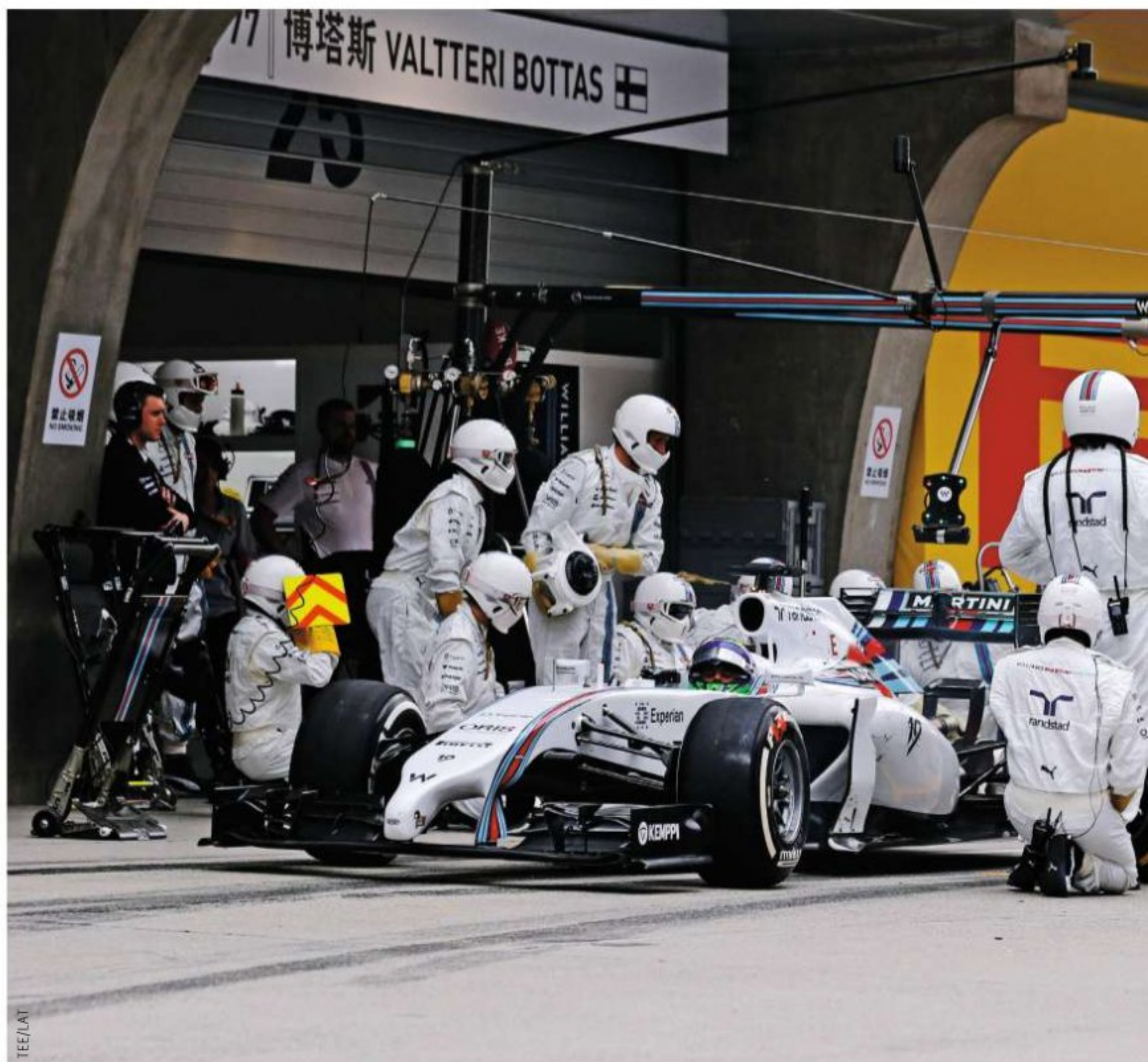
"We tried to fit the left on the right and vice versa," said head of vehicle dynamics Rob Smedley. "What led to it was not having good enough procedures, not having good enough processes to catch things like that to ensure they don't happen."

The second Williams of Valtteri Bottas finished seventh despite losing telemetry during the race.

Unfortunately, it's another race where we lost important points, but what can I do? I'm frustrated for what has happened today



Felipe Massa after losing a likely top-six finish in China



Gearbox trouble denies Grosjean a point

LOTUS WAS DENIED ITS FIRST POINT OF 2014 when Romain Grosjean's race was ended by a gearbox problem.

The Franco-Swiss had capitalised on wet conditions to get the troublesome twin-tusk Lotus E22 into Q3 for the first time in 2014. He ran ninth early on before being jumped by Kimi Raikkonen at the first round of pitstops but held the position at the start of the second stint thanks to Felipe Massa dropping back. He was passed by Sergio Perez on lap 23 and was holding 10th ahead of Daniil Kvyat's Toro Rosso when he had to retire with the transmission glitch.

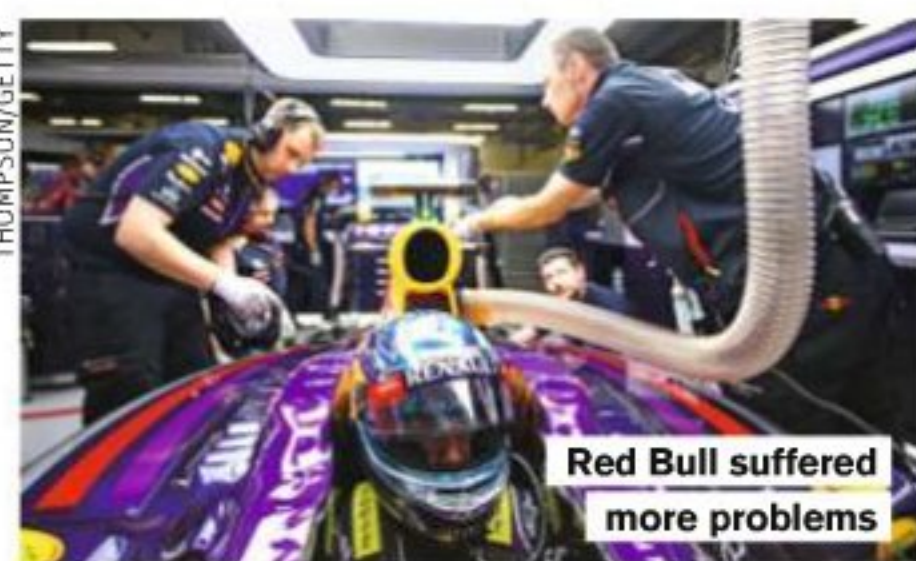
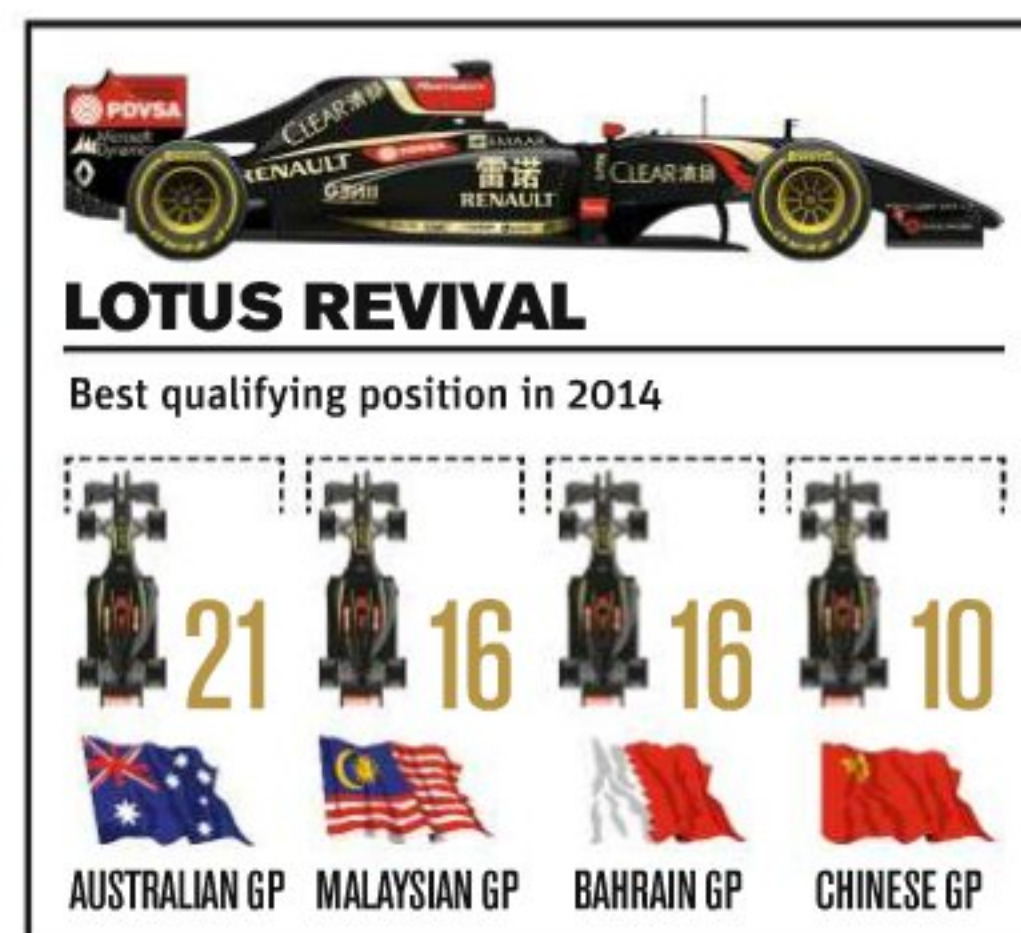
"Romain suffered from a gearbox issue which meant he lost fourth gear and then the other gears," said Lotus trackside operations director Alan Permane. "A points finish was realistic."

Lotus has endured a dismal start to the season, but things continued to improve in China and Grosjean was able to keep both the Toro Rossos and the McLarens behind him.

"It's no miracle, it's work," said Grosjean of the improvement. "Renault has been working, Lotus has been working, and we are now having some lead of where to go with the car and what we need to develop the car."



Lotus was on course for 10th when the problem struck



Red Bull suffered more problems

Fuel-flow sensor woes for Red Bull

RED BULL SUFFERED MORE FUEL-FLOW sensor problems during the Chinese GP weekend.

Although the team reported no difficulties in the race, AUTOSPORT understands Sebastian Vettel's sensor failed during qualifying. This forced the team, with FIA approval as per a technical directive issued at the start of March, to switch to using its fuel-flow model to ensure it did not exceed the maximum permitted fuel-flow rate of 100kg/h. It was suspected this failure was down to an incompatibility with TOTAL fuel, leading to a seal in the sensor being damaged.

The team also suffered a problem with one of its sensors 'drifting' during Friday practice, meaning its readings changed without the parameters of the operation of the engine being any different.



Horner downplays Vettel defiance

RED BULL TEAM PRINCIPAL CHRISTIAN HORNER insists Sebastian Vettel was happy to comply with team orders to let team-mate Daniel Ricciardo past during the Chinese GP.

Vettel initially responded to the instruction to cede position with "tough luck" when he learned Ricciardo was on the same tyres as him. But Horner insists that Vettel was willing to do so once the situation was clarified to him.

"Of course, he is going to question it to understand it," said Horner. "But as soon as he understood the reasoning he immediately moved aside."

Horner also took the unusual step of explaining the strategy call to Vettel over the radio after the race.

"We switched the cars at that point because we were looking at a three-stop being the better route to use for the end of the race," Horner told the world champion. "Then the gaps weren't opening up behind, so the two-stop was the better race for you."

DRAWING BOARD

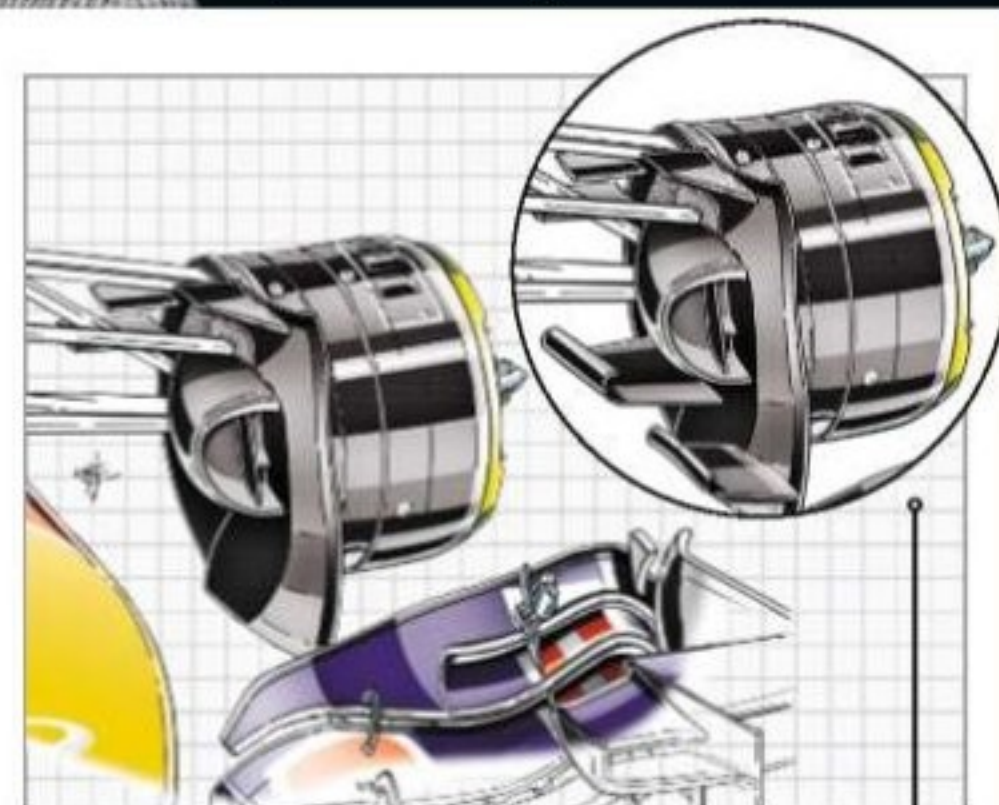


Gary Anderson, technical consultant



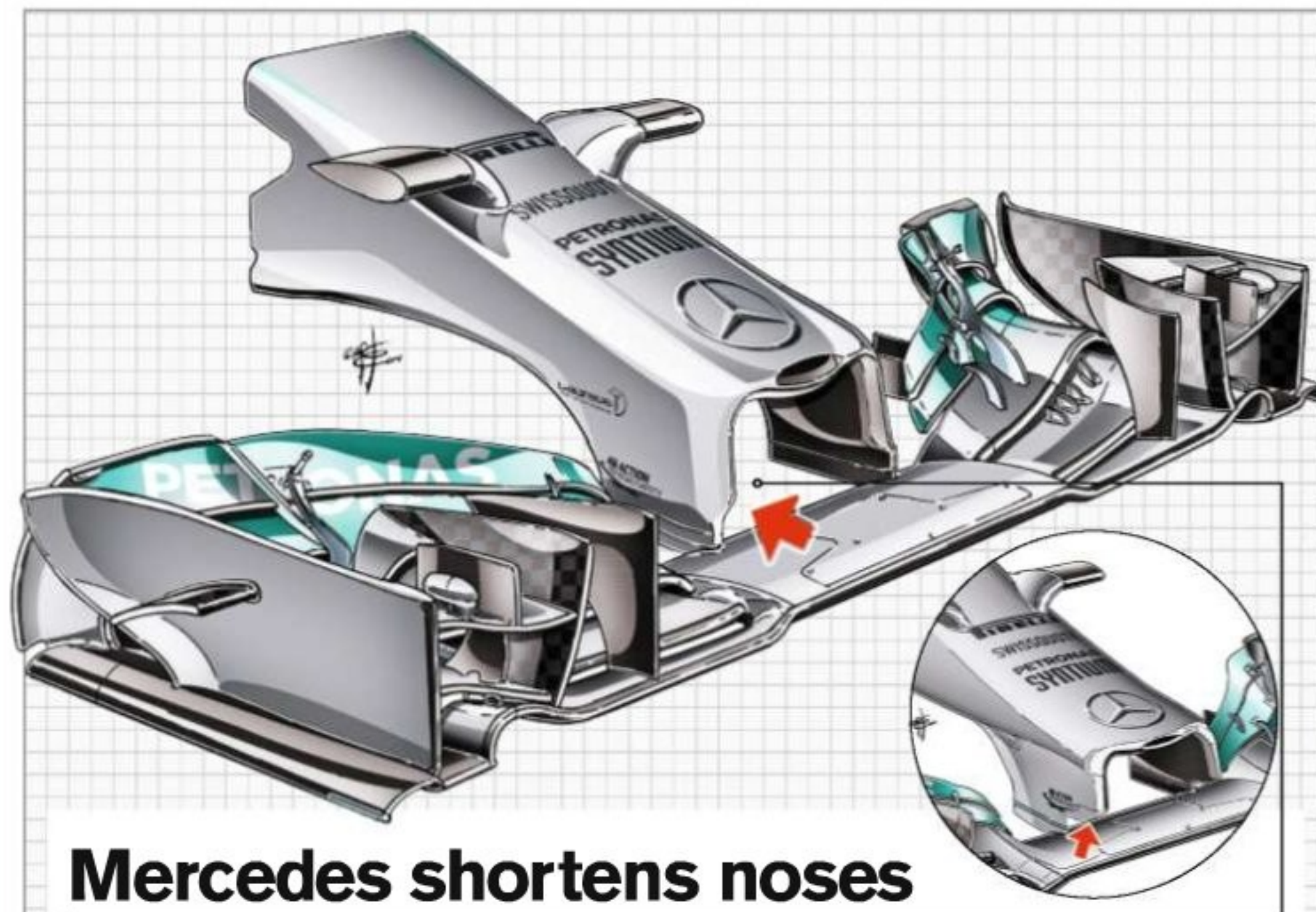
Force India makes rear-wing tweaks

➔ Force India ran a modified rear wing in China, with some interesting detail work designed to make it work more effectively. If you look at the endplates, the louvres at the front lower edge are designed to work better with the airflow off the rear tyres. The airflow comes off the tyres and as it hits the leading edge of the endplate, unless it hits at exactly the right angle, you will get airflow separation on the inside surface. So this slotted endplate allows the airflow to attach better as it lets air through it as well. At the back of the endplate, there is also a series of little turning vanes. Because the endplate is turned outwards in order to make the wing wider than it is, the idea is to widen the wake coming off the wing to create a bigger low-pressure area. This should allow it to produce more downforce.



Red Bull modifies RB10 brake ducts

➔ Red Bull ran modified brake ducts in China, with the inset (pictured) showing the specification it raced in Bahrain. Brake ducts are there to manage the airflow that is being dispersed by the tyre, as well as cooling the brakes. The aim is to stop the airflow going around the inside of the tyre and going underneath the car, as it loses energy working its way around the wheel. So you want to try to turn it into the low-pressure area behind the tyre. As the air hits the tyre, some is swept around the outside by the front-wing endplate, but it's the airflow around the inside that you are trying to control. The turning vanes that were on the brake ducts (inset) were about allowing that to happen, although the new version is more simple. It has to work in conjunction with Red Bull's very complex six-element front wing.



Mercedes shortens noses

➔ The long-awaited new version of Mercedes's nose was raced for the first time in China. This was the design that the car was conceived with, but because it took time to get a version of the new nose that passed the crash test, Mercedes had to run the compromised 'snout' design (inset) in the

first three races. The nose is shorter, and therefore a bit higher to meet the regulations. It ensures that the nose does not interfere with the airflow over the central section of the front wing. This should allow the front wing, and therefore the rest of the car, to work better aerodynamically.

TEAM BY TEAM

RED BULL



RED BULL-RENAULT RB10



SEBASTIAN VETTEL

Start: 3rd Finish: 5th
Strategy: 2 stops
(soft/medium/medium)



DANIEL RICCIARDO

Start: 2nd Finish: 4th
Strategy: 2 stops
(soft/medium/medium)

The team reckoned it was giving away a good 1.2 seconds on the straights alone, much of that on the long back straight, yet did appear to have the second-strongest car in China. Unfortunately, Ricciardo's poor getaway, exacerbated by some oil on his grid slot, meant that it was the slower RB10 of Vettel that ran in second early on. While Vettel, unhappy with the rear instability under braking, didn't have the pace or the tyre life to hold onto a podium slot, Ricciardo couldn't quite get within range of Alonso to challenge for third place. But with a stronger engine package, it's clear that the RB10 has the performance in the corners to be a serious contender.

MERCEDES



MERCEDES F1 W05



NICO ROSBERG

Start: 4th Finish: 2nd
Strategy: 2 stops
(soft/medium/medium)



LEWIS HAMILTON

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

While Mercedes never demonstrated the crushing advantage that it displayed in the closing stages of the Bahrain GP, it was still comfortably ahead of the rest in China. Hamilton had a supreme weekend, recovering from a rear-suspension problem and set-up struggles on Friday to take a dominant pole position and then win the race at a canter. Rosberg had a tougher time, his qualifying compromised first by a lock-up on what should have been his key qualifying lap, then a misleading delta display (see qualifying report) and ending up fourth. While Hamilton dominated, the telemetry-less Rosberg had a poor start, but recovered to second efficiently to keep his points lead.

FERRARI



FERRARI F14 T



KIMI RAIKKONEN

Start: 11th Finish: 8th
Strategy: 2 stops
(soft/medium/medium)



FERNANDO ALONSO

Start: 5th Finish: 3rd
Strategy: 2 stops
(soft/medium/medium)

After the dismal showing in Bahrain two weeks earlier, Ferrari showed dramatic improvement in China. Partly, it was down to the track configuration not exposing the weaknesses of the engine package so much, particularly in comparison with the Renault, but there was more to it than that. Some car tweaks, along with improved engine software, ensured that the Ferrari's weaknesses weren't so pronounced and Alonso extracted the maximum from the potential of the car to take the final podium position. Raikkonen had a much more difficult weekend, largely as a consequence of the front-limited nature of the circuit and the low temperatures, but at least salvaged a few points after a solid race drive.

SAUBER



SAUBER-FERRARI C33



ESTEBAN GUTIERREZ

Start: 17th Finish: 16th
Strategy: 3 stops
(soft/medium/medium/soft)



ADRIAN SUTIL

Start: 14th Finish: DNF
Strategy: retired
(soft/retired)

With a raft of upgrades, include a significant weight-saving for a car in which even lightweight Gutierrez is too heavy, planned for the Spanish GP next month, this was always going to be a weekend to be endured rather than enjoyed. But it was more of an endurance test than necessary, with Gutierrez hitting trouble during Q1 when his brake-by-wire system went into safe mode, which contributed to him failing to make the next stage of qualifying, along with a big error at the final corner. Sutil did a fine job on Saturday, but a warm-up lap engine problem put paid to his race after a few slow laps. Gutierrez reckoned his result was about all that was possible.

TORO ROSSO



TORO ROSSO-RENAULT STR9



JEAN-ERIC VERGNE

Start: 9th Finish: 12th
Strategy: 2 stops
(soft/soft/medium)



DANIIL KVYAT

Start: 13th Finish: 10th
Strategy: 2 stops
(soft/medium/medium)

The Toro Rosso was solidly on the periphery of the points all weekend long, much as it had been for the first three races of the year. Considering that, Vergne and Kvyat qualified in decent enough positions, although the Frenchman lost a couple of places at the start and couldn't quite get back into top-10 contention. Kvyat drove a fine race, passing Button on track during his second stint to earn a third points finish in just four races. Upgrades are planned for Spain, and with Vergne's car reckoned to be about 8kg overweight, shaving a few kilos off will be important, as well as offer a fairer comparison between the two drivers.

WILLIAMS



WILLIAMS-MERCEDES FW36



FELIPE MASSA

Start: 6th Finish: 15th
Strategy: 2 stops
(soft/medium/medium)



VALTTERI BOTTAS

Start: 7th Finish: 7th
Strategy: 2 stops
(soft/medium/medium)

Williams trialled a raft of updates on Friday, including new front and rear wings and other modified bodywork, with much of the package working satisfactorily. The car's pace was good and improved in wet conditions in qualifying. Both drivers made fast starts, but Massa's was compromised by being hit by Alonso, with Bottas losing a few places at Turn 1 when clipped by Rosberg. Massa lost sixth thanks to a pitstop blunder, with the rear tyres initially finding their way to the wrong corner of the car, while Bottas had a solid run to seventh. Considering the pace of the car, which should have allowed a good two-car points finish, it was not as good a weekend as it should have been.

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

LOTUS



LOTUS-RENAULT E22



ROMAIN GROSJEAN

Start: 10th Finish: DNF
Strategy: retired
(soft/medium/retired)



PASTOR MALDONADO

Start: 22nd Finish: 14th
Strategy: 2 stops
(soft/medium/medium)

The long, laborious slog to achieve respectability appears to have come to an end, with Grosjean's impressive performance during the weekend netting Lotus's first appearance in Q3. It should have resulted in a points finish as well, but for the gearbox glitch that ruined Grosjean's race, while a loss of downforce in Q3 also compromised his qualifying position. From that perspective, it was a very positive weekend. As for Maldonado, crashing in the pits and driving off the track while fiddling with settings on Friday was a poor start, compounded by having to change an engine on Saturday and therefore sit out qualifying. He did salvage a solid result in the race in the circumstances.

McLAREN



McLAREN-MERCEDES MP4-29



KEVIN MAGNUSSEN

Start: 15th Finish: 13th
Strategy: 2 stops
(medium/soft/medium)



JENSON BUTTON

Start: 12th Finish: 11th
Strategy: 2 stops
(soft/medium/medium)

There have been few weekends as desultory as this for McLaren in recent years. The combination of the car's lack of downforce and low temperatures made it very difficult to get the front tyres working, which made the car both slow and suffer from more front-left graining problems than others. It's difficult to say whether the drivers could have got much more out of it, although these sorts of conditions have made life difficult for Button at times in the past. With stronger qualifying performances, the race might have been different and a few points salvaged, but the McLaren was a mediocre midfielder at best in China, which the results reflected.

FORCE INDIA



FORCE INDIA-MERCEDES VJM07



SERGIO PEREZ

Start: 16th Finish: 9th
Strategy: 2 stops
(soft/medium/medium)



NICO HULKENBERG

Start: 8th Finish: 6th
Strategy: 2 stops
(soft/medium/medium)

While the team's podium heroics proved to be behind it in China, which was no great surprise given the very different demands of the circuit, this was still another excellent weekend for the Silverstone-based squad. While Perez endured a difficult Saturday, falling in Q2 for the third time this season after a session blighted by braking problems, Hulkenberg capitalised on good timing to slip into Q3 and start eighth. He had a typically effective race, keeping the more rapid Williams of Bottas behind him with relative ease, while Perez made up three places on the first lap then did a good job to pick up a couple of points for ninth. Remarkably, the team is still third overall in the constructors' table.

MARUSSIA



MARUSSIA-FERRARI MR03



MAX CHILTON

Start: 21st Finish: 19th
Strategy: 3 stops
(soft/medium/medium/soft)



JULES BIANCHI

Start: 19th Finish: 17th
Strategy: 2 stops
(soft/medium/medium)

Significant time during the Bahrain test was dedicated to improving the use of the available electrical power and in dry conditions the Marussia was comfortably quicker than the Caterhams. On Friday, DRS glitches on both cars, plus a fuel-system problem for Bianchi, made life difficult. In qualifying, after struggling badly for grip in FP3, Bianchi had the speed to beat Kobayashi but a costly mistake in the last corner left him behind the Japanese, while Chilton struggled for balance. In the race, Bianchi was fortunate to be handed 17th place back due to the countback scenario caused by the premature chequered flag after being overtaken by Kobayashi on the 'real' final lap of the race.

CATERHAM



CATERHAM-RENAULT CT05



MARCUS ERICSSON

Start: 20th Finish: 20th
Strategy: 3 stops
(soft/medium/soft/soft)



KAMUI KOBAYASHI

Start: 18th Finish: 18th
Strategy: 3 stops
(soft/medium/soft/soft)

With no real changes to the car since the previous race, Caterham was always facing an uphill struggle during the weekend. A second slower than Marussia on Friday, Kobayashi's pace on intermediate rubber in difficult conditions allowed him to outqualify Bianchi, while Ericsson, benefitting from having the latest-specification front wing again – having smashed up his version of it in qualifying in Malaysia – was disappointed not to be closer to his team-mate. In the race, both ended up three-stopping (only four drivers did so), a strategy Kobayashi executed well, passing Bianchi at the hairpin on the last lap. Unfortunately, the result was later changed thanks to the chequered-flag blunder, which cost him a place.



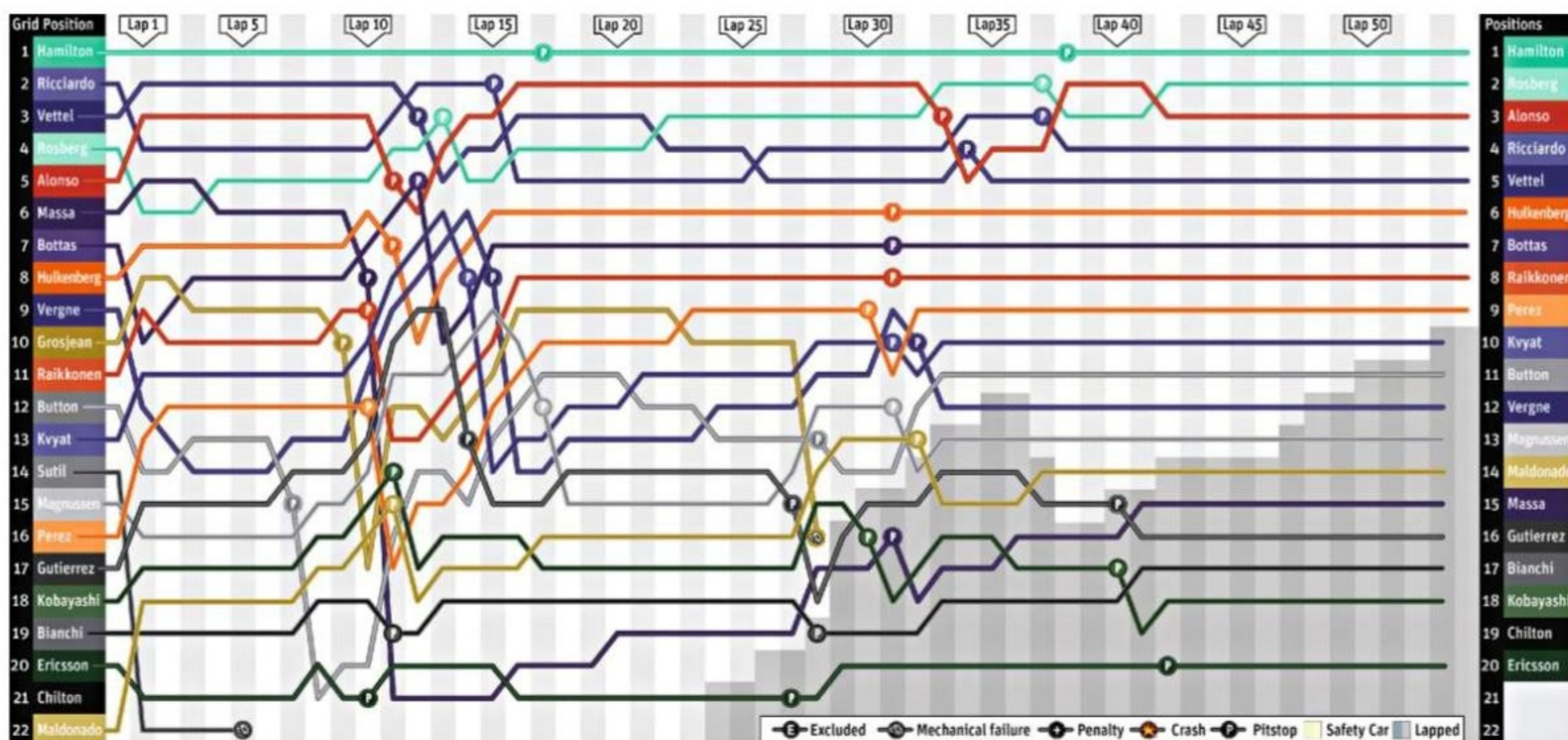
STANDOUT PERFORMANCE

Fernando Alonso

The Spaniard reckoned he was back to his 2012 best with this impressive performance, securing a podium finish in a car arguably not quite quick enough to do it on merit. After qualifying fifth, which he reckoned couldn't be bettered, a good start got Alonso into third place (although he was lucky to survive the clash with Massa) and while he was powerless to keep Rosberg behind, he did a superb job to stay clear of Ricciardo.

"I personally have had an extremely good weekend, probably at the level of 2012 in terms of driving and feeling comfortable with the car"

RESULTS



PRACTICE 1: Friday

POS	DRIVER	TIME
1	ALONSO	1m39.783s
2	ROSBERG	1m40.181s
3	RICCIARDO	1m40.772s
4	BUTTON	1m40.970s
5	HULKENBERG	1m41.175s
6	MAGNUSSEN	1m41.366s
7	VERGNE	1m41.505s
8	HAMILTON	1m41.560s
9	VETTEL	1m41.629s
10	MASSA	1m41.699s
11	KVYAT	1m41.977s
12	GROSJEAN	1m42.090s
13	NASR	1m42.265s
14	VAN DE GARDE	1m42.615s
15	PEREZ	1m42.733s
16	MALDONADO	1m43.731s
17	KOBAYASHI	1m44.038s
18	GUTIERREZ	1m44.162
19	BIANCHI	1m44.270s
20	CHILTON	1m44.782s
21	ERICSSON	1m44.835s
22	RAIKKONEN	no time

Weather: 14C, gloomy, dry

PRACTICE 2: Friday

POS	DRIVER	TIME
1	HAMILTON	1m38.315s
2	ALONSO	1m38.456s
3	ROSBERG	1m38.726s
4	RICCIARDO	1m38.811s
5	VETTEL	1m39.015s
6	MASSA	1m39.118s
7	RAIKKONEN	1m39.283s
8	BUTTON	1m39.491s
9	GROSJEAN	1m39.537s
10	KVYAT	1m39.648s
11	HULKENBERG	1m39.736s
12	MAGNUSSEN	1m39.744s
13	VERGNE	1m39.759s
14	BOTTAS	1m39.830s
15	PEREZ	1m40.124s
16	GUTIERREZ	1m40.359s
17	SUTIL	1m40.395s
18	MALDONADO	1m40.455s
19	BIANCHI	1m42.327s
20	CHILTON	1m43.473s
21	KOBAYASHI	1m43.530s
22	ERICSSON	1m43.679s

Weather: 16C, gloomy, dry

PRACTICE 3: Saturday

POS	DRIVER	TIME
1	RICCIARDO	1m53.958s
2	MASSA	1m54.492s
3	GROSJEAN	1m54.514s
4	HULKENBERG	1m55.032s
5	RAIKKONEN	1m55.062s
6	MALDONADO	1m55.228s
7	KVYAT	1m55.235s
8	BOTTAS	1m55.381s
9	BUTTON	1m55.673s
10	PEREZ	1m56.019s
11	VETTEL	1m56.233s
12	VERGNE	1m56.380s
13	SUTIL	1m56.760s
14	CHILTON	1m56.841s
15	GUTIERREZ	1m57.468s
16	KOBAYASHI	1m57.812s
17	BIANCHI	1m57.976s
18	ERICSSON	1m59.507s
19	ROSBERG	no time
20	MAGNUSSEN	no time
21	ALONSO	no time
22	HAMILTON	no time

Weather: 14C, wet

FRIDAY TESTERS

POS	DRIVER	TIME
1	NASR	1m42.265s
2	VAN DE GARDE	1m42.615s



QUALIFYING TIMES

POS	DRIVER	QUALIFYING 1	QUALIFYING 2	QUALIFYING 3
1	HAMILTON	1m55.516s (1)	1m54.029s (1)	1m53.860s
2	RICCIARDO	1m56.641s (6)	1m55.302s (4)	1m54.455s
3	VETTEL	1m55.926s (3)	1m54.499s (2)	1m54.960s
4	ROSBERG	1m56.058s (4)	1m55.294s (3)	1m55.143s
5	ALONSO	1m56.961s (8)	1m55.765s (5)	1m55.637s
6	MASSA	1m56.850s (7)	1m56.757s (9)	1m56.147s
7	BOTTAS	1m56.501s (5)	1m56.253s (6)	1m56.282s
8	HULKENBERG	1m55.913s (2)	1m56.847s (10)	1m56.366s
9	VERGNE	1m57.477s (11)	1m56.584s (8)	1m56.773s
10	GROSJEAN	1m58.411s (16)	1m56.407s (7)	1m57.079s
11	RAIKKONEN	1m58.279s (14)	1m56.860s	-
12	BUTTON	1m57.783s (12)	1m56.963s	-
13	KVYAT	1m57.261s (9)	1m57.289s	-
14	SUTIL	1m58.138s (13)	1m57.393s	-
15	MAGNUSSEN	1m57.369s (10)	1m57.675s	-
16	PEREZ	1m58.362s (15)	1m58.264s	-
17	GUTIERREZ	1m58.988s	-	-
18	KOBAYASHI	1m59.260s	-	-
19	BIANCHI	1m59.326s	-	-
20	ERICSSON	2m00.646s	-	-
21	CHILTON	2m00.865s	-	-
DNQ	MALDONADO	no time	-	-

Weather: 16C, wet

QUALIFYING STATISTICS

	HEAD TO HEAD
VETTEL	1 3 RICCIARDO
ROSBERG	1 3 HAMILTON
RAIKKONEN	1 3 ALONSO
GROSJEAN	4 0 MALDONADO
MAGNUSSEN	2 2 BUTTON
PEREZ	1 3 HULKENBERG
GUTIERREZ	2 2 SUTIL
VERGNE	3 1 KVYAT
MASSA	3 1 BOTTAS
CHILTON	1 3 BIANCHI
ERICSSON	0 4 KOBAYASHI



POLE POSITION TROPHY

HAMILTON	AUS	MAL	PRC	3
ROSBERG	BRN	1		



SUPERLICENCE PENALTY POINTS

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

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

RACE: 54 LAPS - 189.568 MILES

POS	DRIVER	TEAM	LAPS	TOTAL TIME	FASTEST LAP	PITSTOPS	TIME IN PITS	GRID
1	LEWIS HAMILTON	MERCEDES	54	1h33m28.338s	1m41.196s	2	46.967s	1
2	NICO ROSBERG	MERCEDES	54	+18.062s	1m40.402s	2	46.366s	4
3	FERNANDO ALONSO	FERRARI	54	+23.604s	1m42.081s	2	45.723s	5
4	DANIEL RICCIARDO	RED BULL-RENAULT	54	+27.136s	1m41.473s	2	45.684s	2
5	SEBASTIAN VETTEL	RED BULL-RENAULT	54	+47.778s	1m42.169s	2	44.816s	3
6	NICO HULKENBERG	FORCE INDIA-MERCEDES	54	+54.295s	1m42.624s	2	46.202s	8
7	VALTTERI BOTTAS	WILLIAMS-MERCEDES	54	+55.697s	1m42.660s	2	48.419s	7
8	KIMI RAIKKONEN	FERRARI	54	+1m16.335s	1m42.300s	2	46.285s	11
9	SERGIO PEREZ	FORCE INDIA-MERCEDES	54	+1m22.647s	1m42.228s	2	46.550s	16
10	DANIIL KVIAT	TORO ROSSO-RENAULT	53	+1 lap	1m43.337s	2	47.149s	13
11	JENSON BUTTON	McLAREN-MERCEDES	53	+1 lap	1m43.375s	2	44.956s	12
12	JEAN-ERIC VERGNE	TORO ROSSO-RENAULT	53	+1 lap	1m42.896s	2	48.536s	9
13	KEVIN MAGNUSSEN	McLAREN-MERCEDES	53	+1 lap	1m42.701s	2	46.249s	15
14	PASTOR MALDONADO	LOTUS-RENAULT	53	+1 lap	1m43.067s	2	47.032s	22
15	FELIPE MASSA	WILLIAMS-MERCEDES	53	+1 lap	1m42.379s	2	1m42.107s	6
16	ESTEBAN GUTIERREZ	SAUBER-FERRARI	53	+1 lap	1m42.257s	3	1m08.974s	17
17	JULES BIANCHI	MARUSSIA-FERRARI	53	+1 lap	1m44.825s	2	49.104s	19
18	KAMUI KOBAYASHI	CATERHAM-RENAULT	53	+1 lap	1m43.323s	3	1m15.007s	18
19	MAX CHILTON	MARUSSIA-FERRARI	52	+2 laps	1m42.875s	3	1m11.545s	21
20	MARCUS ERICSSON	CATERHAM-RENAULT	52	+2 laps	1m43.620s	3	1m11.376s	20
R	ROMAIN GROSJEAN	LOTUS-RENAULT	28	gearbox	1m44.366s	1	23.213s	10
R	ADRIAN SUTIL	SAUBER-FERRARI	5	engine	1m58.376s	0	-	14

Weather: 16C, dry, cloudy. Winner's average speed: 117.335mph. Fastest lap: Rosberg 1m40.402s (121.453mph) on Lap 39. Lap leader: 1-54 Hamilton.

TYRE CHOICE

STINT 1	STINT 2	STINT 3	STINT 4
Soft	Medium	Medium	
Soft	Medium	Medium	
Soft	Medium	Medium	
Soft	Medium	Medium	
Soft	Medium	Medium	
Soft	Medium	Medium	
Soft	Medium	Medium	
Soft	Medium	Medium	
Soft	Medium	Medium	
Soft	Medium	Medium	
Soft	Soft	Medium	
Soft	Medium	Medium	
Soft	Medium	Medium	
Soft	Medium	Medium	Soft
Soft	Medium	Soft	Soft
Soft	Medium	Medium	Soft
Soft	Medium	Soft	Soft
Soft	Medium		
Soft			

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

DRIVERS' STANDINGS

POS	DRIVER	PTS	AUS	MAL	BRN	PRC	E	MC	CDN	A	GB	D	H	B	I	SGP	J	RUS	USA	BR	UAE
1	ROSBERG	79	1 st	2 nd	2 nd	2 nd															
2	HAMILTON	75	ret	1 st	1 st	1 st															
3	ALONSO	41	4 th	4 th	9 th	3 rd															
4	HULKENBERG	36	6 th	5 th	5 th	6 th															
5	VETTEL	33	ret	3 rd	6 th	5 th															
6	RICCIARDO	24	ex	ret	4 th	4 th															
7	BOTTAS	24	5 th	8 th	8 th	7 th															
8	BUTTON	23	3 rd	6 th	17 th	11 th															
9	MAGNUSSEN	20	2 nd	9 th	ret	13 th															
10	PEREZ	18	10 th	dns	3 rd	9 th															
11	MASSA	12	ret	7 th	7 th	15 th															
12	RAIKKONEN	11	7 th	12 th	10 th	8 th															
13	VERGNE	4	8 th	ret	ret	12 th															
14	KVIAT	4	9 th	10 th	11 th	10 th															
15	GROSJEAN	0	ret	11 th	12 th	ret															
16	SUTIL	0	11 th	ret	ret	ret															
17	GUTIERREZ	0	12 th	ret	ret	16 th															
18	CHILTON	0	13 th	15 th	13 th	19 th															
19	KOBAYASHI	0	ret	13 th	15 th	18 th															
20	MALDONADO	0	ret	ret	14 th	14 th															
21	ERICSSON	0	ret	14 th	ret	20 th															
22	BIANCHI	0	nc	ret	16 th	17 th															



Ferrari's new boss Marco Mattiacci



China's Kimi fans nail their colours

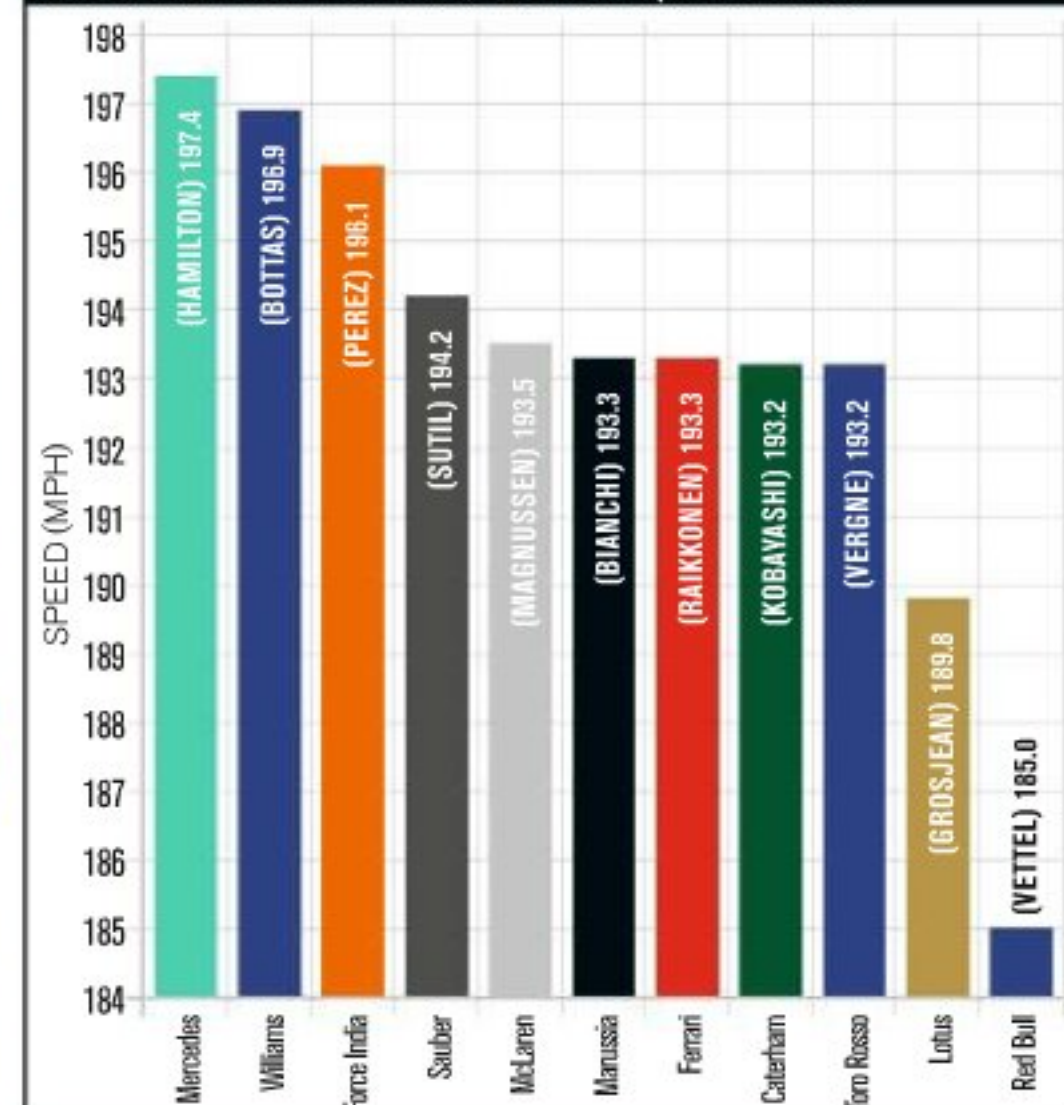


CONSTRUCTORS' STANDINGS

POS	DRIVER	PTS	AUS	MAL	BRN	PRC	E	MC	CDN	A	GB	D	H	B	I	SGP	J	RUS	USA	BR	UAE
1	MERCEDES	154	25	43	43	43															
2	RED BULL	57	0	15	20	22															
3	FORCE INDIA	54	9	10	25	10															
4	FERRARI	52	18	12	3	19															
5	McLAREN	43	33	10	0	0															
6	WILLIAMS	36	10	10	10	6															
7	TORO ROSSO	8	6	1	0	1															
8	LOTUS	0	0	0	0	0															
9	SAUBER	0	0	0	0	0															
10	MARUSSIA	0	0	0	0	0															
11	CATERHAM	0	0	0	0	0															



SPEED TRAP FOR EACH CONSTRUCTOR (QUALIFYING)



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Can crunch talks save F1 as we know it?

Formula 1's biggest outfits could decide the fate of the smaller teams in a crucial meeting on costs next week.

JONATHAN NOBLE assesses the potential impact



32

Formula 1 faces crunch talks next week to decide on an urgent action plan to implement a raft of much-needed cost cuts.

Amid growing fears of an all-out spending war at the front of the grid between F1's biggest outfits – Red Bull, Mercedes, McLaren and Ferrari – smaller teams are fighting for survival and are concerned about a looming financial crisis.

Matters have now reached a head with four teams – Sauber, Force India, Caterham and Marussia – locked in correspondence with the FIA. They are urging it to not ignore an agreement reached earlier this year to implement a cost cap in 2015.

FIA president Jean Todt has responded by demanding all teams get together around the table on May 1 to sort things out.

WHY IT'S NOW CRUNCH TIME

Cost control is nothing new in F1, and the sport's chiefs have been working on limiting expenditure for more than a decade now.

Efforts like reducing testing, limiting track personnel and the introduction of Saturday night parc ferme have all been successful. But the momentum to bring budgets further under control has waned and, despite a global economic slowdown, costs have risen again.

That is due to two factors: the



arrival of all-new regulations for 2014 has ramped up development spending, which means engines are more expensive now than they have been for some time.

Plus, the effective collapse of F1's Resource Restriction Agreement has meant that a spending battle between Red Bull, Mercedes, McLaren and Ferrari has erupted where all four are committed to a level of resources that others have no chance of matching.

F1's biggest teams now boast staff levels of around 800 and budgets that are now pushing past £200 million per season.

Even Red Bull boss Christian Horner admitted that the current ramping up of spending cannot continue at its current rate. When asked by AUTOSPORT if spending

levels were sustainable even for a top outfit like his, he said: "Ultimately, with the exponential growth they've had, no."

All teams are in agreement then that something needs to be done – they are just not lined up on how best to deliver it.

ACHIEVING THE CUTS

Although the introduction of a cost cap for 2015 was agreed unanimously by teams and the FIA earlier this year, the situation has changed since then.

A failure to agree on its implementation and how it can be policed among the top teams meant that the six members of F1's Strategy Group – Red Bull, Ferrari, Mercedes, McLaren, Williams and Lotus – concluded

it was impossible to deliver.

That decision infuriated the smaller outfits, who think any moves to achieve cuts through sporting or technical regulation changes, rather than a cap, will be futile.

While there have been questions about what benefit a £130m budget cap would bring in helping the smaller outfits survive, they argue that having a long-term glide path to bring budgets down is vital for future financial security.

The biggest outfits are convinced that a cost cap is unnecessary, and that if teams want to spend money they should not be limited.

They feel that a host of regulation changes that have been tabled for discussion on May 1 (see panel, right) will be enough to bring down the money needed to become competitive.

IS IT ALREADY TOO LATE?

While next week's meeting is an opportunity to move things forward, several outfits are under no illusions about how important it is for the sport to agree a plan.

Sauber team principal Monisha Kaltenborn warned: "I think a lot of teams here, and maybe more than those who have written this letter, are in a very critical situation."

But one team boss, who did not wish to be identified, suggested that whatever is agreed on May 1 may already come too late to guarantee



STALEV/LAT

Todt has
demanded
action



COATES/LAT

the survival of all the current teams.

With Todt having made it clear that he will not push through stringent rules unless teams support them, the fate of the grid now appears to be in the hands of the big outfits.

Marussia sporting director Graeme Lowdon has urged the top teams to not be afraid to reduce costs, as the battle is about helping everyone and not just F1's minnows.

"We think success in F1 should be a function of skill," said Lowdon. "This is the greatest team sport in the world. These financial regulations help drive towards that – so it is no longer a measure of how much money you've got. There is this fear among some of the big teams that it will erode some of their ability to win – and that is false."

REVENUES UNDER SPOTLIGHT

The divide between the big teams and small teams over cost caps, and the power of the Strategy Group, has shone a spotlight on the way revenue is distributed in the sport.

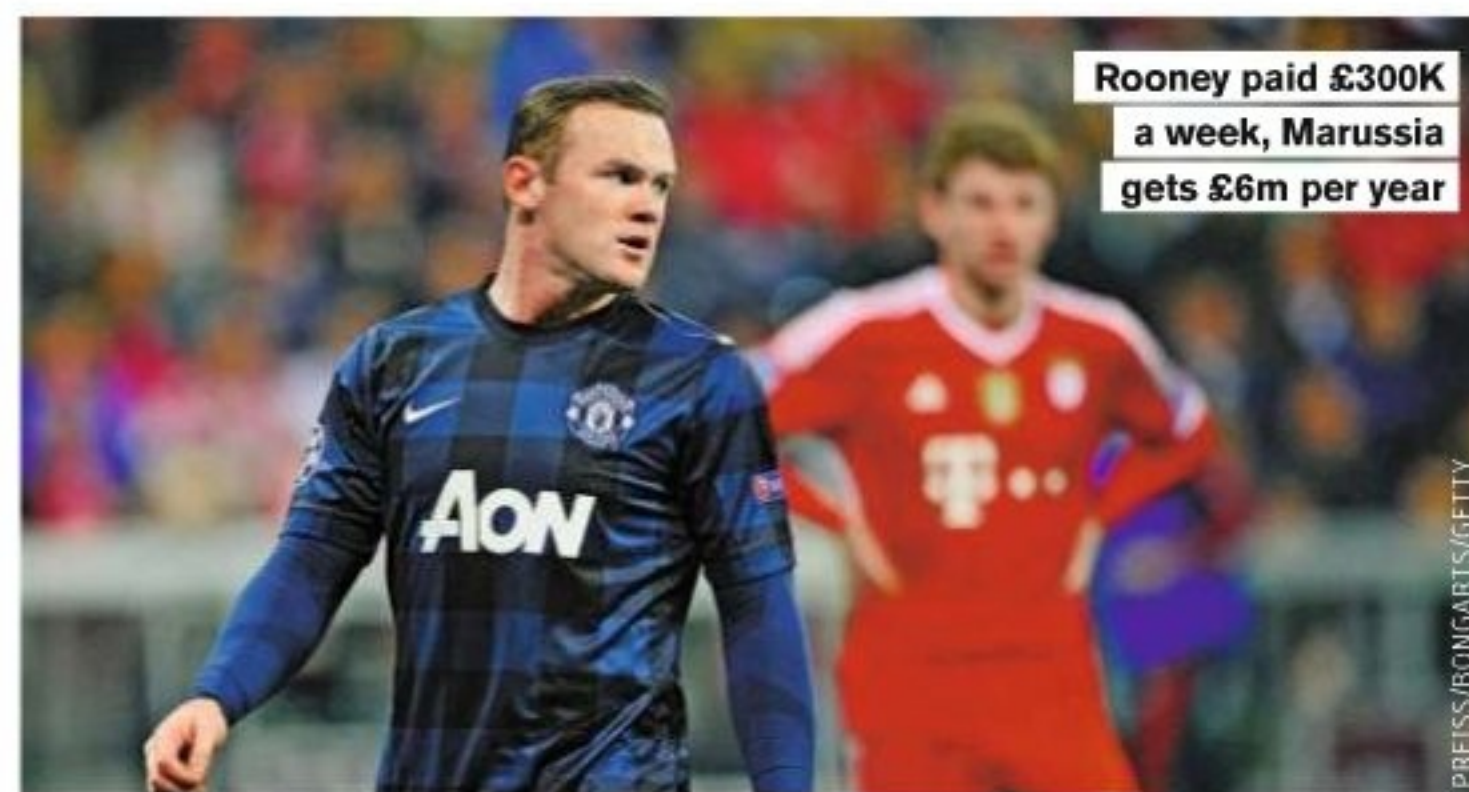
Although the commercial rights income structure in Formula 1 is kept secret, insiders with knowledge of the payments have highlighted the huge divide between the top teams and the smallest outfits.

F1's 10th placed team last year, Marussia, will take home about £6 million – while sources suggest that F1's biggest outfits, Ferrari and Red Bull, pocketed more than £100m each due to a combination of prize money and historic rights payments.

This disparity of payment contrasts with the English Premier League, for example, where the winners take home approximately £60m – while the bottom team gets around £40m.

A more equal share of the revenue for the top and bottom teams ensures a more level playing field that in turn makes the sport more interesting, which helps drive revenues further to assist all teams.

This could be a factor in explaining why F1's overall revenue has fallen behind other sports like the NFL, Premier League, Serie A and the NBA, where monies are shared more equally between its participants.



Rooney paid £300K
a week, Marussia
gets £6m per year

PREISS/BONGARTS/GETTY

THE BIG TEAMS' 3-YEAR PLAN

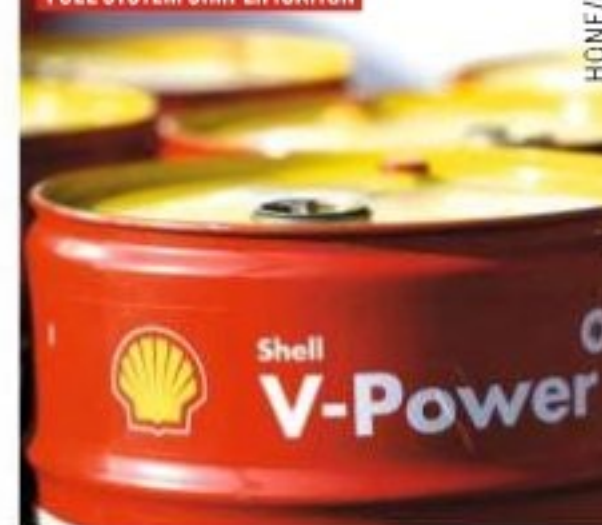
Formula 1's Strategy Group is hoping that a three-year plan to reduce costs through sporting and regulation changes will be enough to limit expenditure. Its proposals, revealed below, will be discussed in May 1's crunch meeting.

Other ideas being talked about are tighter parc ferme restrictions and a further reduction in team personnel at races.

2015

- Tyre blanket ban
- Fuel system simplification
- Brake duct simplification
- Front wing simplification
- Gearbox usage flow brought in line with engine life
- Increase in curfew
- Ban on front and rear interconnected suspension

FUEL SYSTEM SIMPLIFICATION



HONE/LAT

2016

- Standard front impact structure
- Standard rear impact structure
- Standard final drive system
- Standard steering rack



STANDARD FINAL DRIVE SYSTEM

2017

- FIA standard active suspension
- Move to 18-inch wheel rims



18-INCH RIMS

Does F1 need an active fu

F1 has mooted the return of active suspension. **BEN ANDERSON** recalls technology pioneered by the



34

Active suspension has been banned in Formula 1 for 20 years, but could make a comeback in 2017 if plans by the sport's Strategy Group come to fruition.

The possible return of computer-controlled suspension is part of a raft of proposals aimed at reducing costs in F1, without introducing a cost cap.

The belief is that electronic technology could actually be more cost effective for teams in terms of achieving optimum car set-up than the current mechanical systems.

Lotus pioneered active suspension in the early '80s, following Brabham's attempt to circumnavigate the ban on ground-effect floors with a driver-operated rideheight control system. Nigel Mansell gave Colin Chapman's brainchild its race debut at Long Beach in 1983, but 10 years later the technology was banned as part of a push to limit driver aids on Formula 1 cars.

Having been the first driver to try active suspension, Mansell went on to become the first to win the world



Lowe likes the idea of 'active' returning

championship in an actively suspended car. Current Mercedes executive director (technical) Paddy Lowe was a key player in developing the Williams system that helped claim consecutive crowns with Mansell and Alain Prost in 1992-93.

"I started there at the end of '87 when they'd done one race with a prototype system," Lowe recalled. "They wanted to race it in '88 in the

"The whole point of F1 should be to push technology forward"

Paddy Lowe

Judd [engined] car, but in all truth the team was just nowhere in terms of infrastructure to run such a system.

"We were completely unequipped because it involved electronics, computers, hydraulics – all media that were unfamiliar to teams. They'd only just started using ECUs for controlling engines and running data loggers on the cars!

"Steve Wise – who's still at Williams – and I started the electronics control department at the end of '87 and built up the capability to put a computer on the car.

"Frank Dernie hired us and I don't think he appreciated what he didn't have until we arrived and told him 'you're nowhere'. Much of it did not deliver laptime for some years, but Williams led the way on this."

Lowe recalled rival team Lotus (which was the first squad to win a race with an actively suspended car with Ayrton Senna in 1987) used a fully active system, which did away with springs and controlled the car's platform purely with electronics, while Williams used a hybrid 'reactive' system that housed springs within the hydraulic system.

He moved to McLaren in 1993 and found the Woking squad was more interested in using its own 'reactive' system (using springs and dampers not housed within the hydraulics) purely for aerodynamic purposes.

"McLaren viewed its system as a pure aero adjuster," said Lowe. "In those days you could programme the car based on lap distance, so the car was programmed metre by metre – the engineers used to be up all night!

"The real benefit of the active suspension on the Williams was also aerodynamic. Those cars had 'blown' diffusers where the exhaust went straight into the heart of the diffuser. I'm still kicking myself for Red Bull coming up with it again

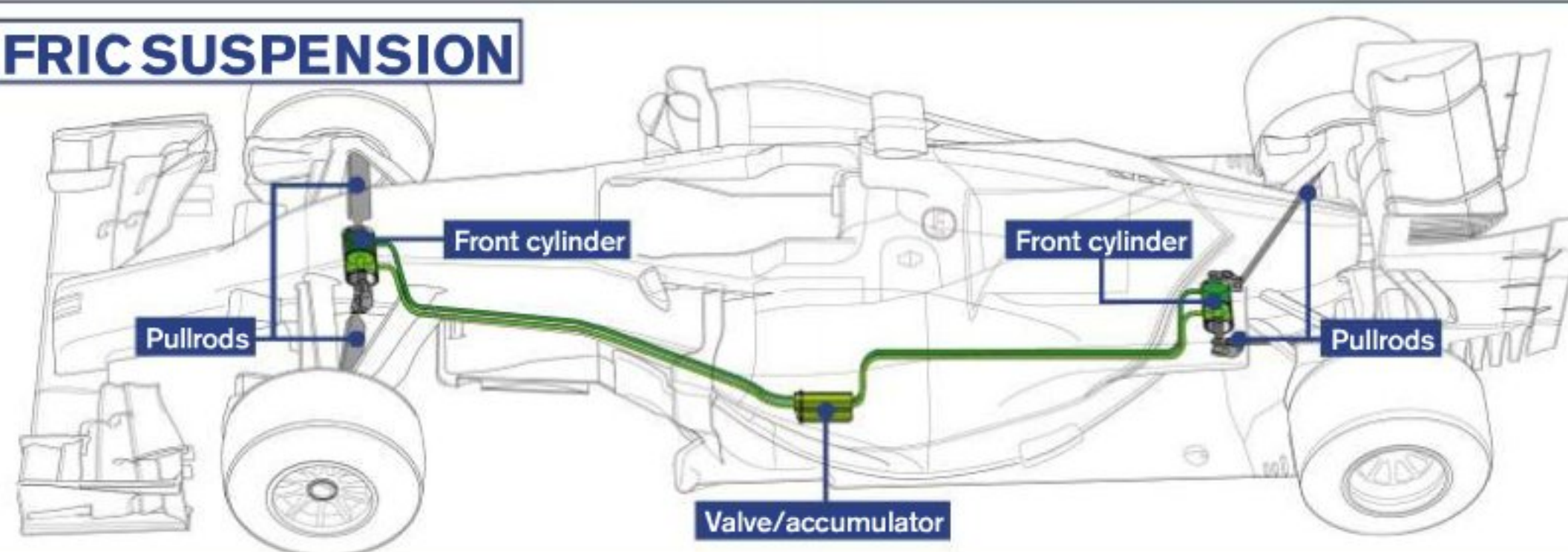
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sport two decades ago

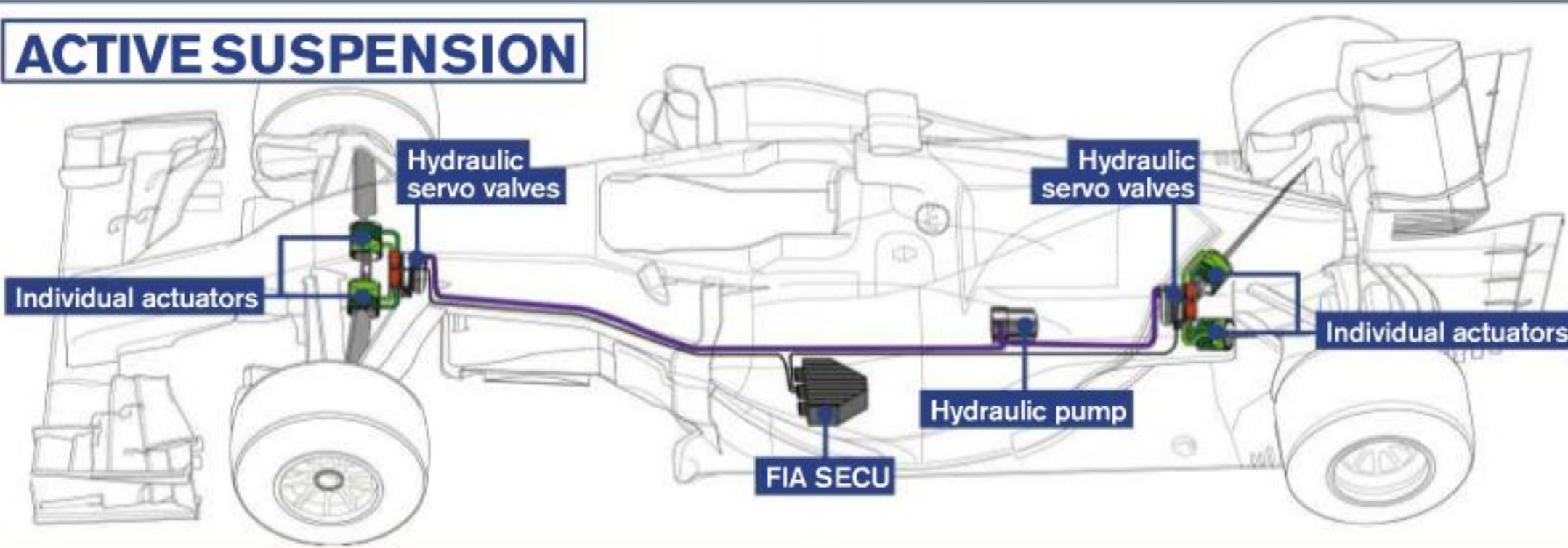


Mansell and active Williams dominated F1 in 1992

FRIC SUSPENSION



ACTIVE SUSPENSION



THE TECHNOLOGY BEHIND THE SUSPENSION SYSTEMS

Active suspension effectively gives complete control of the suspension's response via software.

An active suspension set-up simply has a hydraulic actuator attached to each pushrod or pullrod. Each of these is controlled by the hydraulic pressure being metered by a servo valve. Hydraulic fluid is delivered to the servo valves by the pump driven off the engine and the valves opened by electronic control from the FIA SECU. Each of the

actuators used in coordination with these can replicate every aspect of the car's suspension through software algorithms.

The current development process for suspension is: design, simulate, build, rig test and track test. With active suspension, it would be to code the software and send the results straight into the simulator for assessment.

This was pioneered in F1 with active suspension and is now commonplace for controlling many of the cars' systems, from throttles to gearshifts.

Adding this extra level of control is well known and potentially cheaper than the current front and rear interconnected suspension (FRIC) pioneered last year (top graphic).

With the simple electro/hydraulic control, the key aspect of active suspension's return will be the rule book restricting what is considered normal suspension control, to merely mimic current mechanical suspension and not allow extreme control used to exploit aerodynamics.



Benetton's system was different from Williams' version

when we'd already been doing it!

"We did it a lot with the active to balance the extra rear downforce through rideheights. But it also required a lot of confidence from the driver. The combination of Nigel's balls and that '92 car was unbeatable because he trusted the downforce would be there when he hit the throttle."

After winning those consecutive titles in 1992 and '93 the system he spent so much time perfecting for Williams was outlawed for 1994.

"Who knows all the real reasons why they banned it – there was a lot of politics around performance and complexity and cost saving," said Lowe. "Some of the same stuff we see today funnily enough!"

Lowe reckons the rate at which Formula 1 has developed since then would make it much simpler to reintroduce such systems.

"I think a spec system would be a very bad idea," he added. "The whole point should be to develop the technology and push it forward."

"I think in some ways it can be simpler than what we have currently. If you look at the complexity of damping systems, the complex kinematics – it certainly wouldn't be more expensive."

"It's healthy to see F1 is thinking in terms of not only cost saving, but also product. We should be taking the technological lead. The more I think about it, the more I think it would be good if it came back."

DRIVING WITH ACTIVE SUSPENSION



STALEV/LAT

I think it had dumped Nigel a few times and the words were 'put a monkey in it' and I was that monkey! It would occasionally just switch itself off and sit the car on the ground. That was unsettling. The advantage was you could have it as supple as you liked over the kerbs and then present the aero to the track at the perfect angle. It actually cost me my Benetton drive, because they were going active for '93 and took Patrese for his Williams knowledge, but it turned out to be irrelevant because it was a different system.

Martin Brundle, tested for Williams in 1988

My biggest memory is actually of the system failing on the grid at Barcelona. As I stopped the back left corner was trembling! When I took off the car didn't feel right, though I couldn't feel it shaking anymore. They called me in after three laps and it turned out the back left had died, so the car was like a dog that had broken its hind leg. But the other three corners had adjusted to compensate. I passed three people with three wheels on my wagon!

Johnny Herbert, who drove the active Lotus in 1993



LEICESTER/LAT

"It's a new world of motor racing"

Four-time F1 world champion Alain Prost gives **CHARLES BRADLEY** his verdict on Formula E's new all-electric race series



36

With five months remaining until its opening round at Beijing in China, Formula E made an important step last week when development of its prototype single-seater for the first year of competition came to an end.

The signed-off design will now go into production for the 10 teams that will contest year one of the world's first all-electric racing series, and Alain Prost — four-time Formula 1 world champion and co-founder of the e.dams team — gave his thoughts on the project.

As sportscar star Emmanuel Collard put the final development miles on the car for Michelin's tyre compound selection at the Issoire test track in France last Wednesday, Prost got to hear one of the key factors of the Formula E machine for the first time: it's noise, or rather lack of it. Sounding somewhere between an overgrown Scalextric car and a taxi-ing jet fighter, Formula E is certainly going to bring a unique soundtrack to its 10 street race venues.

"I think we should stick to the natural noise we have," said Prost, rejecting suggestions that an artificial sound could be implemented. "Creating a single-seater championship like this should not be artificial. I can understand the problems with F1 [its lack of noise due to new hybrid turbo technology], but that's because we had the situation of V6, V8, V10 and V12 engines together in the past. In the garage in those days, we knew what car was going past just by listening to it. But that was different times."

The different times ahead include Formula E's brave new all-electric world, so what does Prost think the racing will be like?

"I don't know," he shrugged. "In the first year we have identical cars, and we know that this system works well in some disciplines, but if you had all identical cars in F1, then it wouldn't be F1 anymore. We need to have competition in technology, we need something new."

"After year one, Formula E is going to open the technology.

Collard logging miles on new racer at Issoire test track in France



The guys will then make a better job of developing the technology to get their cars to the front. That is part of motor racing. We will need a good show, of course, but you will need to think to drive these cars, you need to manage the energy efficiently.

"It's a new world of motor racing. The races are going to be short to start with, but I'm sure it will be longer and longer in the coming

years. That is part of the challenge."

Prost's other role these days is as a Renault brand ambassador and executive advisor, so with that hat on he can also speak of how attractive the series is to a major motor manufacturer. As Renault is a market leader in electric vehicle sales in Europe, and has badged the powertrain of the cars in year one, he says the next iteration of Formula E can take the series to another level.



Rear-crash protection 'bumper' is a recent addition to prototype



TURNING ONE NEW CAR INTO 40

Producing the field of Formula E racers starts now, although the serious groundwork has already been done. Constructor SPARK, run by Frederic Vasseur of ART Grand Prix fame, has now ended testing of its prototype and will start assembling the one-make racers for the new series.

"When we started we had no car, no engines, no teams, no drivers, no tracks and no regulations – it was a huge commitment," said Vasseur. "To build up something like this is quite different to a normal racing operation. It's probably the most interesting project you could ever have in terms of engineering."

Testing started in February, and Vasseur said: "We have made big improvements week after week, and it's easy to say 'tomorrow is always better' – you have to draw the line somewhere. We have now stopped the development on the

car, maybe make a few tweaks on the cooling side and we'll continue some ECU work and coding.

"We made a huge step a month ago, because we had version two of the battery and engine," he added. "When [Jarno] Trulli did his test, this was a big improvement which we were very satisfied with. We also passed the crash tests, and have been producing the monocoques and big parts already."

More than 3000km has been logged on the prototype machine, which Vasseur claimed is "more than one season" worth of running. In that time there have been no serious issues with the powertrain, and SPARK will now build up the cars and deliver them to the teams at the series' new Donington Park HQ.

The first batch are due for delivery next month, with group testing beginning in July.

"I'm really optimistic about the battery technology of the future; I think that's going to be key," he acknowledged. "It will show people outside of racing that these batteries can last with good performance. We are going to bring something new to the industry, and risk will be part of the game. And we will help the normal [road car] industry in this way in years two and three."

"It's not just car constructors, it can be battery makers or chemical industries, they could play a big part. This is the platform, and I'm sure it will be successful."

Prost: "The big challenge is to make the public understand why we have created this. We need to do something different"

And how far away is the specification of year two of Formula E from being finalised – and will Renault continue to be involved?

"The constructors are waiting for the final regulations to be done in

the [FIA] World Motorsport Council in June, and for sure, if everything is correct for it to be a good platform for constructors, I'm convinced there would be a possibility [of further Renault factory involvement]."

With the SPARK-Renault SRT_01E now going into production (see panel above), with four cars being produced for each team, the emphasis will switch to assembly of the 40 cars which will begin to be delivered to teams at the centralised Donington Park headquarters from next month. Five pre-season tests at Donington will allow Formula E

to perfect its 'show', as well as shake-out any bugs with the all-new machines.

"Formula E is about the show as well as the technology," concluded Prost. "The biggest challenge is to make the public and the fans understand why we have created this. We need to do something different, not to race on normal racetracks like Formula 1, and attract different kinds of people, and perhaps younger people too. It makes sense because electric cars usually live in cities, so we are bringing them to all these people."

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BTCC Donington (GB)

April 20



Round 2/10



RESULTS

RACE 1: 16 LAPS, 31.664 MILES

1	JASON PLATO (GB) MG (Triple Eight) MG6	21m13.030s
2	SAM TORDOFF (GB) MG (Triple Eight) MG6	+0.442s
3	ANDREW JORDAN (GB) Eurotech Honda Civic	+6.398s
4	ROB COLLARD (GB) WSR BMW 125i M Sport	+7.943s
5	COLIN TURKINGTON (GB) WSR BMW 125i M Sport	+16.094s
6	GORDON SHEDDEN (GB) Honda (Dynamics) Civic Tourer	+16.277s
7	FABRIZIO GIOVANARDI (I) Motorbase Ford Focus ST	+21.342s
8	MATT NEAL (GB) Honda (Dynamics) Honda Civic Tourer	+23.015s
9	ARON SMITH (IRL) BMR Volkswagen Passat CC	+23.820s
10	TOM INGRAM (GB) Speedworks Toyota Avensis	+25.284s
11	MARC HYNES (GB) MG (Triple Eight) MG6	+25.516s
12	DAVE NEWSHAM (GB) AmD Ford Focus ST	+25.672s
13	ALAIN MENU (CH) BMR Volkswagen Passat CC	+26.246s
14	MAT JACKSON (GB) Motorbase Ford Focus ST	+29.402s
15	LEA WOOD (GB) Houseman Toyota Avensis	+29.915s

Winner's average speed: 89.54mph. Fastest lap: Rob Austin (Rob Austin Racing Audi A4), 1m17.601s, 91.81mph. Pole: Plato, 1m09.460s, 102.57mph.

RACE 2: 19 LAPS, 37.601 MILES

1	TORDOFF MG	30m09.940s
2	PLATO MG	+1.028s
3	SHEDDEN Honda	+2.493s
4	JORDAN Honda	+3.544s
5	NEAL Honda	+4.814s
6	TURKINGTON BMW	+7.145s
7	M JACKSON Ford	+10.668s
8	SMITH VW	+12.024s
9	NEWSHAM Ford	+12.726s
10	INGRAM Toyota	+13.365s
11	JACK GOFF (GB) BMR Vauxhall Insignia	+14.209s
12	GIOVANARDI Ford	+16.340s
13	GLYNN GEDDIE (GB) United Autosports Toyota Avensis	+17.974s
14	ADAM MORGAN (GB) Ciceley Mercedes A-class	+21.997s
15	NICK FOSTER (GB) WSR BMW 125i M Sport	+23.180s

Winner's average speed: 74.79mph. Fastest lap: Jordan, 1m20.274s, 88.75mph. Pole: Plato.

RACE 3: 18 LAPS, 35.622 MILES

1	SHEDDEN Honda (S)	23m22.396s
2	TURKINGTON BMW (S)	+0.502s
3	NEAL Honda (S)	+3.937s
4	M JACKSON Ford (S)	+6.365s
5	JORDAN Honda (S)	+9.777s
6	PLATO MG (S)	+13.587s
7	COLLARD BMW (S)	+16.680s
8	FOSTER BMW (S)	+18.090s
9	MENU VW (S)	+19.196s
10	MORGAN Mercedes (S)	+19.582s
11	SMITH VW (S)	+19.912s
12	GOFF Vauxhall (S)	+20.023s
13	WOOD Toyota (S)	+25.451s
14	TORDOFF MG (S)	+28.711s
15	JACK CLARKE (GB) Motorbase Ford Focus ST (S)	+29.509s

Winner's average speed: 91.44mph. FL: Turkington, 1m10.818s, 100.60mph. Pole: Turkington. (S) = used soft tyres in this race. Ingram excluded from 13th in the road for contact.

CHAMPIONSHIP

1	JORDAN	87	6	COLLARD	57
2	PLATO	87	7	TORDOFF	56
3	SHEDDEN	86	8	M JACKSON	38
4	TURKINGTON	84	9	SMITH	32
5	NEAL	79	10	INGRAM	27

Old Hairpin barrier
provided a challenge



POINTS SYSTEM EXPLAINED

In each race:
20-17-15-13-11-10-9-8-7-6-5-4-3-2-1
to top 15 finishers.
Additional point for
being fastest in
qualifying, and for
leading a lap.

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FORIX

MG men stake their claim to 2014

Jason Plato and Sam Tordoff dominated in the damp at Donington with Triple Eight's MG6, as others found drama. By KEVIN TURNER



AFTER NARROWLY MISSING OUT ON THE TOP STEP at the Brands Hatch British Touring Car opener, Jason Plato and the Triple Eight MG squad were on superb form at Donington Park last weekend.

Plato took a fine pole – his 10th for MG – and then led team-mate Sam Tordoff home in a dominant display in a wet race one. Tordoff turned the tables in the second encounter, but the MG6s were still unopposed at the front.

Things went a little awry on the soft tyre in the dry finale, Plato falling from a high of second to sixth, with Tordoff 16th on the road before others received penalties, but the overall performance was pretty emphatic. After being bang on the pace in the dry at Brands the MG was the benchmark in the wet in Leicestershire and Plato left tied for the points lead with reigning champion Andrew Jordan.

"I was cruising in race one," said Plato. "And even the [tyre] degradation in race three wasn't the same as last year. I know why it is – the rain made the circuit green, which put us outside the window a little bit."

"We didn't get the set-up quite right, but it's a great weekend for us. There's good confidence in the team. We're in good shape."

Indeed Plato's only real problem for much of raceday was Tordoff. With no team orders – Triple Eight boss Ian Harrison said the only instruction was "don't crash into each other; you've got to leave it to them" – Tordoff was a thorn in his more experienced team-mate's side.

"If I'm cruising Sam thinks he can have a go at



me – he wants to win," added Plato. "In race one I knew we had the pace of the opposition behind and I wanted to slow down. It was a case of circulating as quickly as I could without leaving myself open to a lunge."

"At the start of race two I accidentally caught the speed limiter button [allowing Tordoff through], so I've only got myself to blame. To go by him after that would have been a robust move and there's no point in doing that so early in the season."

For his part, Tordoff pointed to a switch back to right-foot braking as the reason for his improvement after a disappointing Brands opener.

"Over the winter I tried to move to left-foot

Plato (left) and Tordoff
were unstoppable in
the wet for MG



Jordan was spectacular
on his way to three
top-five finishes

braking," he explained. "I couldn't get the consistency with it at Brands and it was affecting the tyres and other things on the car. I've changed back and now we're right back at the sharp end so I'll stick to what I know."

Like Plato, Tordoff wasn't willing to try too big a move on his team-mate. "Jason managed the gap well in race one," reckoned Tordoff. "I was never quite close enough to have a go."

"I was surprised by the pace we had. I looked in my mirrors at the end of the first lap and there was nobody there!"

"The start was where race two was decided. We were very evenly matched. The track was

continually changing so I had to guess the braking points and Jason made me work for it."

Race three, in which Plato's salvage job was 10 spots (on the road) better than Tordoff's, arguably shows the difference experience can make when it comes to accumulating points for a title fight.

"I don't see Sam as a championship challenger in the same way as Jordan, Matt Neal or Gordon Shedden," said Plato. "I don't mean that in a harsh way: for sure Sam is quick but he's a lot further back in experience and that makes a difference. We had the same car in race three..."

"Championships are not won when the car is perfect. They are won when the car isn't."

Shedden gave
Civic Tourer its
first BTCC win



That perhaps helps to explain why Tordoff's 2014 expectations are not as high, even if he can challenge Plato on a given weekend. "Everything's an open book – I can see Jason's data, which is a massive plus to me," added Tordoff, who turned 25 last Saturday. "I want to better myself from last year. If I can get into the top five in the championship, especially with the drivers in the field this season, that'll be a good year."

Of those other drivers, Jordan was again one of the most impressive, despite the fact he only scored one podium. Seventh in qualifying might have seemed average, but the Eurotech Honda's time was better than the 2013 pole and was set with the full 45kg of success ballast, a serious disadvantage with the field as close as it is this year. Team boss Mike Jordan was adamant that weight equates to 0.4s to 0.6s per lap around Donington, which means Jordan was roughly on pole pace (Plato was only carrying 9kg).

"Last year there were a few good cars and a lot of average ones," reckoned Mike. "This year there are a lot of good cars – people are getting a handle on NGTC."

"In the dry, race one would have been damage limitation, so the weather massively helped us with the ballast. We couldn't have challenged the MGs – they've done a good job getting their car in the sweet spot."

Andrew was mighty in the rain, picking his way through to third in race one and only falling to fourth in the second event with a moment at the Old Hairpin in a Civic with a less-than-ideal set-up. A mistake at Redgate at the start of the finale threatened to hurt his points haul but Jordan charged brilliantly on the soft rubber to recover to fifth. Like Plato, the chinks in his armour seem small at this stage of the season.

"At Brands our soft tyre performance was abysmal so to see the team work hard to turn that around is satisfying," added Jordan Sr.

Plato and Jordan might have underlined their current status as the BTCC pacesetters, but there were warning signs of challenges from elsewhere. Once again, the new works Honda Civic Tourers showed promise.

Shedden qualified on the front row for the fourth consecutive year at Donington and, even though he fell to sixth in race one, became more of a threat as the day progressed. He was best of the rest behind the MGs in race two and then drove a storming race three to controversially defeat Colin Turkington at the last corner in the final contest (see story, page 41). "The car is good, but I'd never driven the Tourer in the wet," said Shedden, who left Donington just one point off the top of the table. "From just managing to miss Andrew Jordan in turn one I was miles away from the lead, but the Tourer just came alive on the soft tyres."

Not so strong but still scoring points on one of those 'car isn't perfect' weekends was Turkington. He wasn't happy with his WSR BMW's ▶



Shedden and Turkington take to the gravel as they rush to the finish in finale

► balance, but still managed to pull out an impressive effort to qualify fourth.

"I had to hang onto it," said the 2009 champion. "It was one of those laps where I thought 'how did I get away with that?' and I couldn't do it again."

Despite a strong start that briefly took him to second, Turkington struggled in race one with a different set-up to team-mate Rob Collard, who charged to fourth from 13th, and could only manage fifth. Sixth was the race two result, but he was able to hang on to the leaders much more convincingly. He was running away with the dry finale until the soft tyres went off.

"In the wet we lacked pace, we struggled to get temperature in the tyre," admitted Turkington. "But on the whole we've come away with a good haul of points."

The BMW's best circuits — Oulton Park, Croft and Knockhill — are yet to come, so for Turkington to be within three points of Plato and Jordan underlines how much of a threat WSR could be this season. At this point last season he was 33 behind.

Early in the weekend, however, the BMR VW Passats of Aron Smith and Alain Menu looked like being stronger contenders than the BMWs, but they are still waiting to deliver on their promise. Smith was quickest in first free practice and second fastest in the later session. It said a lot that they were slightly disappointed to qualify on row three.

"The car is brilliant," enthused Smith. "In FP1

straight away the team said 'what do you want to change' and I said 'I don't know, just give it a clean!'

"The track suits us — the long, flowing corners. It's perfect. You can completely switch off and not think about driving, let the car do the work. It allows me to drive the lines around here I've always wanted to. It's in a different league to anything I've ever driven before."

Things didn't go so well in the wet, perhaps not surprising given both drivers' lack of experience of those conditions with the VWs. Smith managed two top 10s, while Menu was lucky to avoid being hit when he was spat out of the pack on lap one of race two and spun back across the road. He nevertheless underlined the basic pace of the car with another charge on the soft Dunlop rubber in the dry finale, this time rising from 29th to ninth.

Team boss Warren Scott said: "We've not had enough wet testing to set the cars up. It's a shame it was wet because I think our race pace in the dry was awesome."

Menu was less enthused, which is perhaps even more worrying for rivals. "I'm still not 100 per cent," he said after qualifying. "I still won't know what set up changes do to the car. I like to get it perfect, but so far I've not been able to."

The same can't be said for Plato. After two years of being quick in a difficult MG, the former double champion looks well set to be in the hunt whatever the weather in 2014. ❧



Collard was on form with his WSR BMW

DRIVER BY DRIVER



1 ANDREW JORDAN

Qualifying: 7 Race: 3/4/5

Quali lap better than it looked, with 45kg of success ballast. Quick in the wet, great recovery in R3 on softs.



30 MARTIN DEPPER

Qualifying: 18 Race: 20/22/16

Minor off in R2 and a slow getaway in the finale. Still building mileage in Civic and managed three finishes.



5 COLIN TURKINGTON

Qualifying: 4 Races: 5/6/2

Struggled for grip, especially in wet. Not happy with last-gasp clash with Shedden in R3, but good points.



10 ROB COLLARD

Qualifying: 13 Races: 4/R/7

Best performance yet in 125i M Sport. Great charges in R1 and R3, marred only by R2 spin while third.



9 ALAIN MENU

Qualifying: 6 Race: 13/R/9

Struggled in R1 and had early exit next time out. Redeemed weekend with charge through field in finale.



40 ARON SMITH

Qualifying: 5 Race: 9/8/11

Happy with car and his team-mate. Surely things will come together soon and the results will arrive.



80 TOM INGRAM

Qualifying: 12 Race: 10/10/DQ

Another impressive weekend for the rookie. Apologised for the R3 move on Austin that got him excluded.



11 SIMON BELCHER

Qualifying: 29 Race: 23/20/18

Turbo issue hampered him on Saturday, but continued his learning process with Handy Motorsport.



Smith and the VW Passat proved rapid in the dry

IN THE PADDOCK

KEVIN TURNER
FEATURES EDITOR

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THE BOTTOM OF THE CRANER

Curves, looking across to the inside of the Old Hairpin, is a good place to watch racing drivers and their machines. Not only is it fast, it gives you a good idea of who's hooked up. And in first free practice last Saturday, it also revealed which drivers respect track limits.

Perhaps unsurprisingly, Colin Turkington and Alain Menu were consistently tidy and quick. Gordon Shedden seemed generally neater than Honda team-mate Matt Neal, which is more unusual, while Jason Plato appeared to be taking the new rules more seriously than MG stablemate Sam Tordoff.

Aron Smith and Andrew Jordan were predictably spectacular, though generally stayed off the grass, while Dave Newsham and Adam Morgan preferred to have more of their cars off the road than on it.

I left wondering how the marshals – sited on the 'wrong' side of the track – would be able to police the corner. But substantial corner markers were put on the apex before FP2, so the issue was resolved.

The result in qualifying? Plato gained all his time over his team-mates through the Craners and Old Hairpin, Shedden was second and Turkington pulled out something special for fourth. Nice to see class rewarded.



Cole's Toyota was wrecked in heavy race-two shunt

Cole and Holland out after crash

JAMES COLE AND ROBB HOLLAND

missed race three at Donington Park after a serious accident in the second encounter and Cole could be a doubt for the next round at Thruxton.

Cole had just overtaken Holland when an incident ahead forced Rob Austin's Audi into a spin at Redgate. As Cole took avoiding action, his United Autosports Toyota Avensis clipped the front of Holland's Rotek Audi S3, sending both heavily into the barriers at Hollywood and bringing out the race's second safety car.

"I'd just overtaken Robb and I went to avoid Rob Austin," said Cole. "Robb didn't see that and turned me round. It's done the shell."

"We'll need a new car for Thruxton. It'll be hard, but we're going to try."

Holland said: "Originally I thought James had just turned into me on a straight, but what happened is that I couldn't see Austin spin and James had to swerve. Both of the cars are in pretty bad shape."

Holland is still confident the S3 will be ready for the next round at Thruxton next month, and is hoping to start work on a second car soon.

"We'd love to get a second car built, but we went to get the first one right and we only have so much manpower," he added. "We are planning on building a second and it's something we want to get done soon."

"We don't have a driver yet but we want them to be championship calibre."

Ciceley Racing is also hoping to build a second Mercedes A-class during the year.

Final corner clash in finale

TITLE RIVALS COLIN TURKINGTON

and Gordon Shedden clashed at the final corner of a dramatic race three at Donington.

Poleman Turkington's WSR BMW had led the race from the start and at one stage was more than five seconds clear of the field. Shedden's Honda Civic Tourer had to fight past several cars, including Jason Plato's MG, but started gaining rapidly on Turkington as the BMW's soft tyres went off.

Shedden caught Turkington going onto the final lap. He was forced onto the dirt when he tried to pass at McLeans, but attacked again on the outside at the final chicane. The cars touched in the braking area, forcing both over the gravel, and Shedden emerged ahead to give the Honda estate its first victory.

"I had the homing missiles on," said Shedden. "It was probably one of my favourite touring car races."

But Turkington was not so happy. "Gordon didn't pass me on the track," he argued. "Whenever you're leading the race for that long and don't lead across the line on the last lap it's hard."

Officials looked into the incident, but the result stood.

The race not only gives the new-for-2014 Honda Civic Tourer its first win, but also means five different drivers have scored victories in the first six encounters.



4 MATT NEAL

Qualifying: 9 Race: 8/5/3

Relatively quiet, but scored decent points. Nice R3 battles, including fine move on Plato at Old Hairpin.



18 NICK FOSTER

Qualifying: 15 Race: 18/15/8

Happy with progress despite clash with Newsham in R1. Good drive from row eight in dry final race.



31 JACK GOFF

Qualifying: 8 Race: 19/11/12

Weekend not without its drama, but the potential is there with the Insignia as well as the team's VW Passats.



67 ROBB HOLLAND

Qualifying: 27 Race: 28/R/NS

Slight contact caused R1 spin, which was followed by a more sizeable accident in R2 that ended his meeting.



52 GORDON SHEDDEN

Qualifying: 2 Race: 6/3/1

Not on right set-up in R1, but a threat thereafter. Clash with Turkington tough to call, but charge before was strong.



6 MAT JACKSON

Qualifying: 14 Race: 14/7/4

Surprised by lack of race pace in R1, but much improved after that. Dodged the chaos and raced well, as usual.



39 WARREN SCOTT

Qualifying: 20 Race: R/21/R

Contact spoiled his weekend, but Scott is upbeat about how well the team has climbed up the grid.



28 CHRIS STOCKTON

Qualifying: 30 Race: 24/R/19

A few on-track dramas, but avoided potentially huge crash when Menu speared across his bows in R2.



99 JASON PLATO

Qualifying: 1 Race: 1/2/6

Textbook until strange error at start of R2, but then salvaged more from R3 after soft tyre problems than most.



7 FABRIZIO GIOVANARDI

Qualifying: 11 Race: 7/12/22

Started OK and got worse. Nadir was 30s R3 penalty for track limits and contact under safety car conditions.



101 ROB AUSTIN

Qualifying: 16 Race: 29/18/R

Change to slicks in R1 brought fastest lap. Contact ruined his day, which ended when rammed by Ingram in R3.



16 AIDAN MOFFAT

Qualifying: 24 Race: 22/16/20

Involved in early incident in R3, but 17-year-old appears to be making progress with under-developed Cruze.



88 SAM TORDOFF

Qualifying: 3 Race: 2/1/14

A return to form and took second BTCC win of his career in R2. Baffled by early drop off of soft tyres in R3.



44 JACK CLARKE

Qualifying: 26 Race: 25/24/15

Five-place grid penalty for R1 put him to the back. Struggled to move forward, but got first point in R3.



54 HUNTER ABBOTT

Qualifying: 22 Race: R/R/24

Hit in R1, then spun off after good first lap in R2. Propshaft failure forced him to start R3 late.



48 OLLIE JACKSON

Qualifying: 28 Race: 26/R/23

Happy with the handling but down on power with new Proton engine. "The car has got lots of potential," he said.



888 MARCH HYNES

Qualifying: 10 Race: 11/23/R

Much improved pace, but poor R1 start and contact prevented better results. Car was beaten up by end of day.



17 DAVE NEWSHAM

Qualifying: 19 Race: 12/9/17

Good race pace, on wet and soft tyres, but still struggling in qualify. Too many moments prevented better finishes.



20 JAMES COLE

Qualifying: 25 Race: 27/R/NS

Left-wheel problem meant he barely took part in qualify. Weekend ended with huge shunt in R2.



12 DAN WELCH

Qualifying: 31 Race: 21/19/21

The weekend was really a shakedown for the new car, so three finishes was a pretty good effort.



33 ADAM MORGAN

Qualifying: 17 Race: 16/14/10

Pace for top six in qualify, but fell foul of rideheight test. Tough from there, not helped by avoiding Newsham in R3.



43 LEA WOOD

Qualifying: 23 Race: 15/17/13

Still improving with his new Toyota Avensis and scored his first NGTC point in wet R1.



21 GLYNN GEDDIE

Qualifying: 21 Race: 17/13/R

United Autosports still trying to get on top of Toyota in the dry, but Geddie was more competitive in the wet.

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Robertson and Massot scored a win apiece

GINETTA GT4 SUPERCUP DONINGTON PARK (GB), APRIL 19-20

Robertson and Massot the class acts

CHARLIE ROBERTSON BECAME THE GINETTA GT4 Supercup's first repeat race winner of 2014 as three different drivers took victory across a hectic Easter Weekend at Donington Park

Robertson led from Pepe Massot throughout the opening race, the Spaniard having jumped ahead of second-place starter Jamie Orton. The pair engaged in a race-long dice that only ended when Massot's tyres faded in the closing stages. Before that they regularly traded fastest laps, but Robertson was faultless throughout "one of the toughest races of my career" and held firm to take his second win of the season. Harry Woodhead completed the trio of talented youngsters on the podium, having edged a tight scrap with Ginetta veteran Carl Breeze and Andrew Watson.

After a faultless first race, Robertson threw his pole advantage away at the start of the second with excessive wheelspin in horrid conditions after a huge downpour half an hour before. His error handed the initiative to Massot who, after negotiating an early safety car period, proceeded to lead until the flag. Robertson launched his

recovery drive in fine fashion, picking off Breeze, Watson and Woodhead in quick succession to assume second. He harried the leader but Massot insisted he "was quicker everywhere it mattered" and held on with relative ease.

Those two were in a class of their own in the difficult conditions. Watson gamely gave chase some five seconds in arrears in third, while Breeze was a lonely fourth (30-odd seconds back) as David Pittard – who had executed a superb move to take two cars under braking for the chicane – lost fifth on the line to Tom Oliphant.

Oliphant, combining his Supercup duties with his British GT debut at Oulton Park, took the weekend's final victory. Just five cars – Watson (fourth); Robertson (fifth); Massot (sixth); Woodhead (eighth) and Reece Somerfield (12th) – took to the grid for the finale, with the remaining nine starting from the pitlane having been wheeled off by their respective teams to make a late change from wet tyres to slicks. The slick-shod cars took less than half the race to overturn the 20-odd second deficit into an

advantage. Oliphant led the charge as Watson and Robertson squabbled ferociously at the front, and by mid-distance was in front.

Breeze and Luke Davenport completed the top three, but the former was handed a five-second penalty for exceeding track limits and dropped to fifth behind David Pittard and Orton. Watson beat Robertson to ninth, but only after punting his rival into Redgate, and their positions were reversed – handing Robertson a two-point championship lead after the opening six races.

● Scott Mitchell

RESULTS

Race 1 (12 laps) 1 Charlie Robertson; 2 Pepe Massot +1.632s; 3 Harry Woodhead; 4 Carl Breeze; 5 Andrew Watson; 6 Luke Davenport. **Fastest lap** 1m09.599s (102.36mph).

Race 2 (18 laps) 1 Massot; 2 Robertson +1.700s; 3 Watson; 4 Breeze; 5 Tom Oliphant; 6 David Pittard. **FL** Robertson 1m18.514s (90.74mph). **Race 3 (16 laps) 1 Oliphant;** 2 Davenport +2.975s; 3 Pittard; 4 Jamie Orton; 5 Breeze; 6 Sean Huyton. **FL** Pittard 1m11.386s (99.80mph). **Points 1 Robertson, 152;** 2 Watson, 150; 3 Oliphant, 139; 4 Davenport, 126; 5 Pittard, 125; 6 Massot, 108.

PORSCHE CARRERA CUP DONINGTON PARK (GB), APRIL 19-20

Webster wins big as the rain arrives

MICHAEL MEADOWS SWEEPED TO A COMMANDING WIN in the first Porsche Carrera Cup GB race, but ruined his own race within moments of the start of the second.

The double champion cantered clear in the opening encounter, beating a spirited Karl Leonard by a comfortable margin as his closest challenger on pace Josh Webster found himself embroiled in a scrap for the final podium place.

As the Porsche GB scholar fought off the attentions of Victor Jimenez and then tried (and failed) to wrest second from Leonard, Meadows eased to a 5.8-second winning margin.

But it wasn't such plain sailing in the second. Leonard matched the poleman at the rolling start and the pair ran side-by-side as they headed towards Redgate, before Meadows was pitched

into a spin before the corner after moving slightly left and making brief contact with Leonard's front-right corner.

As he dropped to the back and mounted a stirring recovery drive to net sixth, Webster assumed the lead. He looked well in control even as rain started to fall, but when it failed to ease and others – including Leonard and guest driver Max Coates – had off-track excursions, he pitted for wet tyres. "I thought I'd messed it up," he confessed after his late decision to pit almost caught out his team. But armed with the right rubber in the wet conditions as his rivals slithered around scrabbling for traction, he soon vaulted back up the order, winning by a massive 50s.

Jimenez took second ahead of Paul Rees, who nicked the final podium slot when Leonard spun



off at the chicane within sight of the flag and dropped to fourth.

● Scott Mitchell

RESULTS

Race 1 (both 23 laps) 1 Michael Meadows; 2 Karl Leonard +5.764s; 3 Josh Webster; 4 Victor Jimenez; 5 Paul Rees; 6 Max Coates. **FL** Webster 1m07.641s (105.33mph).

Race 2 1 Webster; 2 Jimenez +50.259s; 3 Rees; 4 Leonard; 5 Coates; 6 Meadows. **FL** Meadows 1m07.866s (104.98mph).

Points 1 Meadows, 79; 2 Webster, 71; 3 Jimenez, 60; 4 Rees, 50; 5 Leonard, 44; 6 Sherwood, 36.



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BRITISH FORMULA FORD DONINGTON PARK (GB), APRIL 19-20

Kruger wins as his rivals hit trouble

JAYDE KRUGER PICKED UP WHERE HE LEFT OFF AT Brands Hatch with a controlled drive to victory in the British Formula Ford opener, fending off the attentions of JTR team-mate Sam Brabham for his third win of the year.

The pair headed a four-car break at the start, joined by Harrison Scott and the third JTR car of Max Marshall, and then eked out a small advantage. Brabham led at one stage, inadvertently passing his team-mate when the South African slowed for a Ricky Collard-induced safety car, but allowed him back ahead soon after.

The positions remained the same to the flag, with Scott completing the podium just adrift of the lead two. James Abbott and Juan Rosso, the latter recovering from an awful start, demoted Marshall to sixth by the flag.

The second race, which started in damp conditions, seemed to be Rosso's for the taking as he swept around the outside of the unwell, polesitting Marshall and established an early advantage that peaked at over five seconds. But Scott made short work of Kruger and Marshall to move to the head of the chasing pack. At the start of the sixth lap he was 5.5s behind, by the start of the ninth he was ahead and by the 10th he was 2.5s clear. Meridian rookie Connor Mills, excelling like Scott in the greasy conditions, rocketed up the order and claimed a stellar second behind the dominant victor, with Rosso third ahead of Abbott.

Brabham, who led a trio of JTR cars home in fifth in race two, seemed to determined to make up for the win he missed out on in race one by



Kruger took two more wins for JTR

shooting into a strong lead on the opening lap of the finale. But on the second tour he threw it off at the Old Hairpin and as he stood by the sidelines, inconsolable, Scott raced on in front. He had just set a new fastest lap when disaster struck in the form of a faulty oil sump, ending his race early.

That allowed Kruger to take his second double in as many meetings, and also elevated a delighted Marshall – often the recipient of bad luck but hounding Kruger in the final race – to his first podium in the bewinged Formula Ford era.

● Scott Mitchell

RESULTS

Race 1 (17 laps) 1 Jayde Kruger (Mygale M12-SJ); 2 Sam Brabham (M12-SJ) +0.421s; 3 Harrison Scott (Mygale M13-SJ); 4 James Abbott (M13-SJ); 5 Juan Rosso (M13-SJ); 6 Max Marshall (M12-SJ). **Fastest lap** 1m06.478s (107.17mph).

Race 2 (15 laps) 1 Scott; 2 Connor Mills (M12-SJ) +4.508s; 3 Rosso; 4 Abbott; 5 Brabham; 6 Kruger. **FL** Scott 1m18.249s (91.05mph). **Race 3 (18 laps)** 1 Kruger; 2 Marshall +2.044s; 3 Rosso; 4 Mills; 5 Bobby Thompson (M12-SJ); 6 Chris Mealin (M12-SJ). **FL** Scott 1m07.173s (106.06mph).

Points 1 Kruger, 158; 2 Scott, 133; 3 Abbott, 126; 4 Rosso, 125; 5 Marshall, 120; 6 Chris Mealin, 86.



Cook was the best of on-form SV Clio squad

RENAULT CLIO CUP UK DONINGTON PARK (GB), APRIL 20

Cook leads KX Academy domination

MUCH LIKE THREE WEEKS AGO AT BRANDS HATCH, a KX-backed SV Racing driver was on imperious Clio Cup form. Josh Cook did not enjoy the easiest of opening weekends in Kent but more than made up for that with a dominant performance that yielded a fine pole and two lights-to-flag successes.

Pyro's Mike Bushell claimed best-of-the-rest honours in the first encounter as he pipped Ant Whorton-Eales to second ahead of James Colburn and Jordan Stilp. Points leader Alex Morgan struggled to sixth with an unidentified engine issue.

Cook duly romped to a second win in the sequel but a multi-car fight for second raged throughout. Brands dominator Morgan was the cork in the bottle, holding second early on and batting off the attentions of Whorton-Eales, Paul Rivett, Stilp and Ash Hand after Bushell had been eliminated at the first corner after a somewhat

self-inflicted bit of contact with poleman Stilp.

Hand edged to the front of that train to take a career-best second, while Whorton-Eales and Morgan went at it for third. The former prevailed, just, with the two skating over the gravel at the chicane on one occasion but delivering an SVR 1-2-3-4. Rivett was shuffled back to fifth after a hectic 16 laps, with Stilp having to settle for sixth.

● Scott Mitchell

RESULTS

Race 1 (14 laps) 1 Josh Cook; 2 Mike Bushell +3.490s; 3 Ant Whorton-Eales; 4 James Colburn; 5 Jordan Stilp; 6 Alex Morgan. **FL** Bushell 1m25.132s (83.68mph). **Race 2 (16 laps)** 1 Cook; 2 Ash Hand +2.352s; 3 Morgan; 4 Whorton-Eales; 5 Paul Rivett; 6 Stilp. **FL** Stilp 1m18.229s (91.07mph). **Points** 1 Morgan, 107; 2 Cook, 103; 3 Whorton-Eales, 80; 4 Bushell, 79; 5 Rivett, 74; 6 Colburn, 74.

GINETTA JUNIOR DONINGTON PARK (GB), APRIL 19-20

Mitchell again but Norris challenges

THIS YEAR'S GINETTA JUNIOR SCRIPT IS ALREADY beginning to read like a word-for-word remake of 2013. Just as Harry Woodhead dominated 12 months ago, Jack Mitchell followed up his pair of victories at the season opener with another brace at Donington.

Unlike his almost untroubled time in Kent, however, he was pushed much harder last weekend. Karting sensation Lando Norris has racked up the testing mileage already and the 14-year-old defied his rookie status to finish second twice, with HHC Motorsport boss Charlie Kemp praising the youngster's mental approach as much as his swift improvement in pace.

Behind the two pacesetters Ryan Hadfield and Jamie Caroline shared the final podium places, while second year racer James Kellett was fourth in the opener but was black-flagged from the second after ignoring a drivethrough penalty notice while running second.

● Scott Mitchell

RESULTS

Race 1 (11 laps) 1 Jack Mitchell; 2 Lando Norris +1.581s; 3 Ryan Hadfield; 4 James Kellett; 5 Jonathan Hadfield; 6 Jamie Caroline. **FL** 1m24.664s (84.15mph). **Race 2 (9 laps)** 1 Mitchell; 2 Norris +1.076s; 3 Caroline; 4 R Hadfield; 5 Ben Pearson; 6 William Taylforth. **FL** Caroline 1m25.383s (83.44mph). **Points** 1 Mitchell, 147; 2 R Hadfield, 100; 3 Norris, 89; 4 J Hadfield, 74; 5 Pearson, 73; 6 Taylforth, 60.

WEC

Silverstone (GB)

April 20

Round 1/8



RESULTS

167 LAPS, 611.281 MILES

1	S BUEMI (CH)/A DAVIDSON (GB)/N LAPIERRE (F)	5h22m42.296s
	LMP1 Toyota Racing Toyota TS040 HYBRID (Q5)	
2	A WURZ (A)/S SARRAZIN (F)/K NAKAJIMA (J)	
	LMP1 Toyota Racing Toyota TS040 HYBRID (Q1)	-1 lap
3	T BERNHARD (D)/M WEBBER (AUS)/B HARTLEY (NZ)	
	LMP1 Porsche Team Porsche 919 Hybrid (Q6)	-2 laps
4	N HEIDFELD (D)/N PROST (F)/M BECHE (CH)	
	LMP1 Rebellion Racing Lola-Toyota B12/60 (Q8)	-8 laps
5	O PLA (F)/R RUSINOV (RUS)/J CANAL (F)	
	LMP2 G-Drive Racing (OAK) Morgan-Nissan LMP2 (Q3)	-13 laps
6	T MATSUDA (J)/M HOWSON (GB)/R BRADLEY (GB)	
	LMP2 KCMG ORECA-Nissan 03 (Q10)	-15 laps
7	F MAKOWIECKI (F)/M HOLZER (D)/R LIETZ (A)	
	GTE Pro Porsche Team Manthey Porsche 911 RSR (Q15)	-20 laps
8	N TANDY (GB)/P PILET (F)/J BERGMEISTER (D)	
	GTE Pro Porsche Team Manthey Porsche 911 RSR (Q14)	-20 laps
9	D TURNER (GB)/S MUCKE (D)	
	GTE Pro Aston Martin Racing Aston Martin Vantage V8 (Q18)	-20 laps
10	G BRUNI (I)/T VILANDER (FIN)	
	GTE Pro AF Corse Ferrari 458 Italia (Q13)	-20 laps
11	D RIGON (I)/J CALADO (GB)	
	GTE Pro AF Corse Ferrari 458 Italia (Q16)	-21 laps
12	M GRIFFIN (IRL)/A PARENTE (P)	
	GTE Pro Ram Racing Ferrari 458 Italia (Q19)	-21 laps
13	N MINASSIAN (F)/M MEDIANI (I)/S ZLOBIN (RUS)	
	LMP2 SMP Racing (AF Corse) ORECA-Nissan 03 (Q12)	-22 laps
14	F REES (BR)/D O'YOUNG (PRC)/A MACDOWALL (GB)	
	GTE Pro Aston Martin Racing Aston Martin Vantage V8 (Q23)	-23 laps
15	D HEINEMEIER HANSSON (DK)/K POULSEN (DK)/N THIM (DK)	
	GTE Am Aston Martin Racing Aston Martin Vantage V8 (Q22)	-23 laps
16	P LAMY (P)/P DALLA LANA (CDN)/C NYGAARD (DK)	
	GTE Am Aston Martin Racing Aston Martin Vantage V8 (Q20)	-23 laps
17	S BIRD (GB)/M RUGOLO (I)/S WYATT (AUS)	
	GTE Am AF Corse Ferrari 458 Italia (Q17)	-24 laps
18	K BACHLER (A)/C RIED (D)/K AL QUBAIS (UAE)	
	GTE Am Proton Competition Porsche 911 RSR (Q25)	-25 laps
19	B COLLINS (GB)/J MOWLEM (GB)/M PATTERSON (USA)	
	GTE Am Ram Racing Ferrari 458 Italia (Q26)	-26 laps
20	M CIOCI (I)/L PEREZ COMPANC (RA)/M VENTURI (I)	
	GTE Am AF Corse Ferrari 458 Italia (Q21)	-26 laps

In each car, first-named driver started race.

Winners' average speed: 113.655mph. Fastest lap: Lotterer (Audi R18 e-tron quattro), 1m44.217s, 126.441mph; LMP2: Pla, 1m51.339s, 118.353mph; GTE Pro: Makowiecki, 2m00.963s, 108.937mph; GTE Am: Bird, 2m02.147s, 107.881mph. There were 27 starters.

CHAMPIONSHIPS: LMP DRIVERS

1	D'SON/LAP'RE/BUEMI	25	4	BECHER/H'FELD/PROST	12
2	WURZ/N'JIMA/SAR'ZIN	19	5	CANAL/PLA/RUSINOV	10
3	H'LEV/W'BER/B'HARD	15	6	HOWSON/B'LEV/MATSUDA	8

GTE DRIVERS

1	M'WIECKI/H'ZER/LIETZ	25	4	BRUNI/VILANDER	13
2	TANDY/PILET/B'MEISTER	18	5	RIGON/CALADO	10
3	TURNER/MUCKE	15	6	PARENTE/GRIFFIN	8

LMP1 MANUFACTURERS

1	TOYOTA	44	3	AUDI	0
2	PORSCHE	15			

GTE MANUFACTURERS

1	PORSCHE	43	3	ASTON MARTIN	21
2	FERRARI	23			

LMP2 DRIVERS

1	CANAL/PLA/RUSINOV	26	3	MIN'IAN/MEDIANI/ZLOBIN	15
2	HOWSON/B'LEV/MATSUDA	18			

GTE AM DRIVERS

1	HANSSON/P'SEN/THIM	25	3	BIRD/RUGOLO/WYATT	16
2	LAMY/NYGAARD/D LANA	18	4	BACHLER/RIED/QUBAIS	12

POINTS SYSTEM EXPLAINED

Drivers' championships: 25-18-15-12-10-8-6-4-2-1 to top 10 finishers, 0.5 for all other finishers, 1 for pole. In GTE manufacturers, top two cars from each make score points.

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FORIX

Toyota trio wins game of chance

Davidson, Lapierre and Buemi cruise it in wake of an Audi disaster.

By GARY WATKINS

TOYOTA PRETTY MUCH DOMINATED THE 2014 WORLD Endurance Championship opener at Silverstone on the way to a one-two. At least it did after Audi got it spectacularly wrong early on. Yet the outcome of Sunday's race – and the destination of the historic Tourist Trophy – was ultimately decided in favour of Nicolas Lapierre, Anthony Davidson and Sebastien Buemi on the flip of a coin.

Rain in the opening hour sent both Toyota TS040 HYBRIDs to the pits for more suitable tyre-wear. Toyota Motorsport GmbH decided to split its strategies and sent Alexander Wurz, who was running second behind Andre Lotterer's Audi R18 e-tron quattro before the stops, on his way on full wet-weather tyres. Fourth-placed Buemi, meanwhile, had been given a set of Michelin's ungrooved intermediates when he'd stopped the previous lap.

The latter proved to be the correct tyre for the conditions, and largely explains why Buemi and his team-mates went on to get their names on the Tourist Trophy alongside the likes of Tazio Nuvolari and Stirling Moss. And why Wurz, Kazuki Nakajima and Stephane Sarrazin had to settle for what turned out to be a distant second at the end of a race that was red-flagged with 26 minutes to go courtesy of rain so heavy that the majority of the field was unable to catch the safety car.

TMG technical director Pascal Vasselon explained there was a clear rationale to hedge its strategic bet, but no particular reasoning on who got what in the pits.

"We had a clear forecast saying it was going to rain for 20 minutes, but what was unknown was the intensity," he said. "When you are uncertain, you have to cover both situations."

"It was just fifty-fifty, so it was always going to be good luck for one car and bad luck for the other."

Buemi reckoned it was clear that intermediates were the way to go. "I think it was clear to both crews that the inters were the right tyres for the conditions," he said.

But there was no criticism of Toyota's strategy from Wurz and his team-mates afterwards. "The team made a strategic call that worked out for car #8 and didn't favour us," said the Austrian. "The result shows that it was the right choice – they put their eggs in two baskets on Easter weekend."

Wurz, who had put the #7 on pole together with Nakajima in the four-lap aggregate qualifying session, led at the start from Buemi and, five laps in, from a hard-charging Lotterer. The Toyota then lost the top spot when Wurz tripped up over a GTE Am Aston on the exit of Club, but was still with the Audi when the pitstops began.

Buemi was ahead of Wurz by the time the Austrian left the pits, and within four laps had overtaken the slick-shod Lotterer for the lead, with Wurz the best part of 20s down. Another 10 laps into the race, and Buemi was over a minute to the good.

Nakajima did make inroads into Lapierre's advantage, but any chance that the #7 car had of catching the sister Toyota disappeared early in the





The #8 Toyota was on the right tyres...



...while di Grassi shunted his Audi

fourth hour courtesy of the earlier tyre strategy. Wurz had stopped early after a spin on his wearing wets, which meant that Nakajima handed over to Sarrazin under green-flag conditions. Lapierre, meanwhile, came in nine laps later to give the car to Davidson under the first of two safety cars to interrupt this race. Suddenly there was a lap between the two TSO40s.

The rain was decisive at Silverstone: it decided which of the Toyotas won the race, resulted in two non-finishes for Audi as a result of accidents, and went some of the way to explaining why the new Porsche 919 Hybrid was unable to take the fight to its rivals (see right).

Audi called the conditions wrong. It left both Lotterer and Lucas di Grassi out on slicks while its LMP1 rivals – and the rest of the field – took on either inters or wets. Di Grassi was the first to strike problems, hitting the barriers after losing the car under acceleration at Woodcote.

The Brazilian eventually managed to return to the pits, only for the team to discover damage to a front-suspension pick-up point.

Lotterer pitted out of third place on his fuel schedule and stayed on slicks. Six laps later, Audi's chances disappeared when he beached his R18 at Stowe with the loss of four laps.

Benoit Treluyer, who swapped from slicks to inters when the drizzle returned, subsequently crashed heavily at Copse when he put a wheel on the kerb on the entry. Heavily damaged suspension and steering meant there was no way to return to the pits.

Asked whether Audi had made the wrong call on tyres, Audi Sport boss Wolfgang Ullrich said: "It looks like that, but we were acting on the weather predictions that we had."

A "bad day for Audi", according to Ullrich, set up a fantastic one for Toyota. Or at least for Buemi, Lapierre and Davidson.

Webber: two places higher than Vettel last Sunday!



Webber Porsche scores a podium

PORSCHE ACHIEVED ITS MAIN TARGETS FOR 2014 – at least the ones that it's admitting – first time out at Silverstone on its return to front-line sportscar racing: it proved that its new 919 Hybrid was there or thereabouts on pace and that it can finish races, and notched up a perhaps fortuitous podium with Timo Bernhard, Brendon Hartley and Mark Webber.

Porsche LMP1 vice-president Fritz Enzinger described the result as a "dream start after two and a half years of such hard work". Webber was even more enthused: "It's a great day for sportscar racing today to have Porsche back on the podium."

Bernhard and his team-mates finished a lap down on the winning Toyota and was on the same lap as the second-placed TSO40 until the safety car came out for a second time with 40 minutes of the six hours to go. The car was competitive over one lap – or four, as Neel Jani and Romain Dumas proved in qualifying by grabbing third position with an average only three tenths slower than the pole winner.

Its performance was up and down in a wet-dry race, an inevitable consequence of the aerodynamic configuration in which Porsche was running the two 919s. The cars were running in something akin to Le Mans trim at Silverstone, witness a top speed advantage over the Toyotas of 14mph, and 18mph over the Audis. Porsche has opted not to produce a high-downforce package yet – and hasn't been totally clear about its intentions for the second half of the season post-Le Mans – and stated that Silverstone was all about preparing for the big one in June.

"The aero is for Le Mans, so it was always going to be difficult at Silverstone," explained Enzinger. "It will be a little bit better for Spa, but this is our idea. We need to be ready for Le Mans."

Porsche also started out with a conservative approach on tyres, opting to single-stint initially. That explains why Hartley dropped off the lead lap before the first safety car.

The only downside for the German marque was the retirement of the sister car driven by Jani, Dumas and Marc Lieb. Jani lost the left-front wheel after his first pitstop, which resulted in a stop for suspension repairs. Almost immediately he was back on track, the car was hit by an undisclosed driveline problem. ▶

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IF SOMEONE HAD TOLD ME THAT PORSCHE was going to top the times in free practice one at Silverstone while I was out getting a fix of track action at Becketts, I would have laughed all the way back to the paddock. From where I was standing (close up to the fence just after the first left), the Audi R18 e-tron quattro looked like a sure bet for a position at the top of the times.

The timing sheets revealed that the Porsche 919 Hybrid, which quite honestly looked bloody awful through the fast sweepers, was quickest. I couldn't quite believe it until I checked out the speed-trap times. Those figures explained why the German manufacturer was on top.

Porsche and Toyota proved at Silverstone that traditional motorsport thinking is in the process of being thrown out of the window with the latest LMP1 rulebook. Porsche might have been preparing for Le Mans, but Toyota – which ran its TS040 HYBRIDS at a level of downforce somewhere in between its two rivals – pointed out that the game has changed courtesy of the new emphasis on efficiency.

Just as the manufacturers have chosen different technologies to exploit the new regulations, so they have opted for different ways of running their cars. Despite these variations, it all looks very close: the six factory cars were separated by just under half a second in qualifying.

A season that was always going to be interesting has, after Silverstone, become even more intriguing.



Porsche: not the most stable on track

BIG NUMBER

18

Number of races since Audi Sport Team Joest had failed to get a car to the finish of a race. The last was Petit Le Mans 2011, when one R18 TDI crashed out battling for the lead and the other, delayed car retired late on with a steering vibration.

Winning Porsche (#92) was behind when it mattered



EBREV/LAT

GTE

Porsches decide it among themselves

THE LUCK OF THE BOUNCE ON TYRE STOPS ALSO decided the battle in GTE Pro between the two factory Manthey Porsche 911 RSRs. Frederic Makowiecki, Marco Holzer and Richard Lietz triumphed, but only because they were running behind their team-mates when the rain intensified in the final hour.

Both works Porsches were out on Michelin's wets, but it was decided to bring both in for the softer-compound grooved tyre, so bad were the conditions. Patrick Pilet, who shared the leading car with Nick Tandy and Jorg Bergmeister, was edging away from Makowiecki when he dived into the pits. The second Porsche was due to follow him in, but Makowiecki found the pits closed when he arrived courtesy of the deployment of the safety car.

The safety car was never withdrawn, the race was stopped early and thus 'Mako' and co ended up as the class winners. It was as simple as that.

Makowiecki was happy to admit that good fortune was on their side. "For sure we were lucky today," said the Frenchman.

The car in which Tandy joined WEC regulars Bergmeister and Pilet for Silverstone as his warm-up race for the Le Mans 24 Hours was the quicker of the two 911 RSRs at the weekend. So much so that it was able to come back from a stop-go penalty for overtaking under yellows to retake the lead early in the fourth hour.

Bergmeister, who had been eight seconds up on Holzer, came back from 14s down in 20 laps to take back the top spot.

"It's a one-two for Porsche; that's the only good thing about today. If the yellows had come five seconds later we would have won," said Bergmeister, who added that he had a lot of fun during his stint.

The latest version of the 911 RSR, which came on stream at last year's WEC finale in Bahrain to beat the GTE specification freeze for this season, has clearly been honed into a potent weapon over the winter. The German car had an advantage at Silverstone that grew inexorably as the conditions worsened thanks to the rear-engined car's inherent traction advantage.

The lead AF Corse Ferrari 458 driven by Gianmaria Bruni and Toni Vilander, which had qualified on pole, briefly headed the two Porsches, but looked set for a distant third until the closing stages, despite a stop-go and a brief refuelling fire in the pits.

"I'm a bit surprised at how fast the Porsche is," said Bruni. "On slicks it is a little bit faster, but in the damp and the wet it's way quicker than us."

Bruni and Vilander lost third in the final hour when the car stopped for the soft wet, allowing Aston Martin drivers Darren Turner and Stefan Mücke to grab a surprise podium. The Vantage GTE wasn't a force at Silverstone thanks to a Balance of Performance change that has raised the car's rideheight by five millimetres.

"Clearly our speed is missing," said Mücke. "The 5mm affects us more than we thought, so we have a lot of work to do."

Turner/Mücke Aston took a late third



EBREV/LAT

Rebellion in rush for new-car debut at Spa

REBELLION RACING IS STILL

facing a race against time to ready its pair of new R-One LMP1 coupes in time for the Spa World Endurance Championship round on May 3.

The Anglo-Swiss squad was forced to run its old Lola-Toyotas B12/60s at Silverstone after only managing to test its new ORECA-designed and built challenger at Paul Ricard the day before scrutineering in the UK. The first R-One completed just 10 laps at around 8pm at Ricard in the

hands of Mathias Beche, which is why the team is reserving judgement about getting one or more of them ready for the Belgian event.

"There's a big challenge ahead of us to get on the grid at Spa," said Rebellion team manager Bart Hayden over the weekend. "The entire team is going to France for the whole of next week and things are going to go down to the wire, but I would say the chances are good."

Rebellion has a two-day test scheduled

for today (Thursday) and Friday, after which it will make the decision on which car it will take to Spa.

"The plan is to run the two cars," Hayden continued. "The focus when we get out there is to fix any niggles with the first one, while we get the second one ready."

Hayden explained that the shakedown had been successful, despite its brevity.

"Ten laps is only 52km (32.3 miles), but it wasn't just in-and-out laps," he said. "The car went past the pits at speed – and we have footage from a mobile phone to prove it."

Rebellion's decision to run its Lolas last weekend was an organic one. The old warhorses first appeared on the entry list back in March, but the team was still insisting at the end of the week before Silverstone that there was no final decision on which car it would race in the series opener.

That decision was made for the team when the rollout for the R-One was pushed back again to the middle of last week.

Rebellion took a distant fourth place at Silverstone – following the retirement of three factory P1s – with Nick Heidfeld, Mathias Beche and Nicolas Prost. The car, in which Heidfeld drove for the first three and a half hours, was eight laps down on the winning Toyota, despite the best of the Rebellion cars qualifying only 1.5s from the pole.



Was this last race for Rebellion Lolas due to new car (inset)?

EBREY/LAT



EBREY/LAT

DANISH ASTON SIZZLES

Aston Martin Racing claimed a one-two in GTE Am at Silverstone. The all-Danish crew of Nicki Thiim, Kristian Poulsen and David Heinemeier Hansson overhauled the sister Vantage GTE of Pedro Lamy, Paul Dalla Lana and Christoffer Nygaard in the penultimate hour to seal the win.

SENNA IN TOP AMR CAR

Bruno Senna will join Darren Turner and Stefan Mücke in the lead GTE Pro AMR Vantage for the Le Mans 24 Hours and, by way of a warm-up, the next WEC round at Spa on May 3. Senna, who has stepped down from a full-season programme with the team to race in the Brazilian Stock Car Championship, had been listed in the additional, third AMR Pro entry. Drivers for this car will be announced imminently.

MILLENNIUM DELAYED

The Millennium Racing LMP2 squad, run by the Delta-ADR team, scratched its pair of ORECA-Nissan 03s from Silverstone after failing to receive funds from parent company OMD, a Dubai-based development fund investing in automotive technology and motorsport. A team statement said a court order had been obtained to lift a block on the release of the funds by "international institutions" and that the team will be at Spa.

DOMES SORTING SNAGS

Japanese constructor Dome insists that there are no major issues with the new S103 P2 coupe it is jointly developing with the British Strakka team. "There is not one big thing that is stopping us racing, just lots of little things that we need to sort," said Dome managing director Hiroshi Fushida.

DAVIDSON'S TROPHY

Race winner Anthony Davidson became the first recipient of the Richard Lloyd Trophy. The prize, in memory of the late sportscar entrant and driver, will be awarded annually to the highest placed member of the British Racing Drivers' Club in the Silverstone WEC round.

WEC UNVEILS APP

The WEC has unveiled a free app that will allow fans to watch races live on iPhone and Android devices. The app will have two levels of access, one free with news and videos and a second offering live coverage of the races. All six-hour WEC races can be viewed for €19.99 (£16.40), while Le Mans is available for €9.99 (£8.20).

LMP2

G-Drive bounces back from double nosejob

THE OAK-RUN G-DRIVE RACING

squad came back from two lengthy pitstops to claimed LMP2 honours at Silverstone with its solo Morgan-Nissan driven by Olivier Pla, Roman Rusinov and Julien Canal.

The team lost a minute each time changing the nose section of the car, which had a broken headlight. It made a mistake at the first stop by putting

on a nose without dive-planes and therefore had to repeat the process.

The Morgan LMP2 got back on terms with its only real rival for honours in the depleted class, the KCMG ORECA-Nissan driven by Tsugio Matsuda, Richard Bradley and Matt Howson, during the first safety car period. Canal hassled Howson after the yellow-flag period, then took the lead early in hour five when the Chinese team's entry

received a 10s stop-go penalty for pitlane speeding. KCMG was subsequently docked a lap in the final results for an unsafe release in the pitlane.

The AF Corse-run SMP Racing squad was never a factor at Silverstone. The team never got its new Michelin tyres – as opposed to the frontrunners' Dunlops – working and suffered in the damp and wet conditions.



OAK-run Morgan was on top at Silverstone

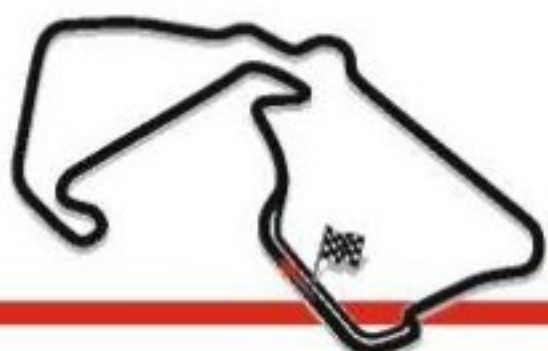
EBREY/LAT

ELMS

Silverstone (GB)

April 19

Round 1/5



RESULTS

118 LAPS, 431.924 MILES

1	P THIRIET (F)/L BADEY (F)/T GOMMENDY (F)	4h00m29.711s
2	M FREY (CH)/F MAILLEUX (F)	+3.828s
3	C KLIEN (A)/G HIRSCH (CH)/R BRANDELA (F)	+4.731s
4	M MCMURRY (USA)/C DYSON (USA)/T KIMBER-SMITH (GB)	+14.388s
5	N PANCIATICI (F)/O WEBB (GB)/P-L CHATIN (F)	+55.068s
6	J LITTLEJOHN (GB)/A WELLS (GB)/J WALKER (GB)	+1m00.569s
7	J CHAROUZ (CZ)/V CAPILLAIRE (F)	-2 laps
8	R GONZALEZ (YV)/A KAPADIA (GB)/K CHANDHOK (IND)	-6 laps
9	D CAMERON (GB)/M GRIFFIN (IRL)/M RUGOLO (I)	-6 laps
10	S ZLOBIN (RUS)/A BERTOLINI (I)/A V SHAITAR (RUS)	-6 laps
11	R NARAC (F)/N ARMINDO (F)/D HALLYDAY (F)	-7 laps
12	K IHARA (J)/G YACAMAN (CO)	-7 laps
13	A TALKSANITA (BLR)/A TALKSANITA JR (BLR)/P KAFFER (D)	-7 laps
14	D MCKENZIE (GB)/G RICHARDSON (GB)/D ZAMPIERI (I)	-7 laps
15	M LYONS (GB)/P PERAZZINI (I)/M CIOCI (I)	-8 laps
16	A PONS (I)/F BARTHEZ (F)/S AYARI (F)	-8 laps
17	A KRUGLYK (UKR)/S CHUKANOV (UKR)/A PIERGUIDI (I)	-9 laps
18	O BERETTA (MC)/D MARKOZOV (RUS)/A LADYGIN (RUS)	-9 laps
19	J LAURSEN (DK)/J MAGNUSSEN (DK)/M MAC (DK)	-9 laps
20	E COLLARD (F)/F PERRODO (F)/S CRUBILE (F)	-9 laps

In each car, first-named driver started race.

Winners' average speed: 107.728mph. Fastest lap: Chandhok, 1m50.757s, 118.97mph. There were 37 starters.

LMP2 DRIVERS

1	BADEY/GOMMENDY/THIRIET 25	5	CHATIN/PANCIATICI/WEBB 10
2	FREY/MAILLEUX 18	6	LITTLEJOHN/WALKER/WELLS 8
3	BRANDELA/HIRSCH/KLIEN 15	7	CAPILLAIRE/CHAROUZ 6
4	DYSON/MCMURRY/K-SMITH 12	8	CHANDHOK/GONZALEZ/KAPADIA 4

LMP2 TEAMS

1	THIRIET BY TDS RACING 25	4	GREAVES MOTORSPORT 12
2	RACE PERFORMANCE 18	5	SIGNATECH ALPINE 10
3	NEWBLOOD BY MORAND 15	6	GREAVES MOTORSPORT 8

GTE DRIVERS

1	CAMERON/GRIFFIN/RUGOLO 25	4	KAFFER/TALKSANITSA 12
2	BERTOLINI/SHAITAR/ZLOBIN 19	5	MCKENZIE/RICHSON/ZAMPIERI 10
3	ARMINDO/HALLYDAY/NARAC 15	6	CIOCI/LYONS/PERAZZINI 8

GTC DRIVERS

1	CHUKANOV/PIERGUIDI/KRUGLYK 25	4	COCKER/MACHITSKI/SARDAROV 12
2	BERETTA/LADYGIN/MARKOZOV 18	5	AJLANI/BRUNDLE/GONZALEZ 10
3	LAURSEN/MAC/MAGNUSSEN 15	6	HASSID/PARISY/LOMBARD 8



POINTS SYSTEM EXPLAINED

In each race: 25-18-15-12-10-8-6-4-2-1 to top 10 finishers, plus a point for pole. Race was awarded full points despite being halted 45 minutes short of planned duration.

FOR IN-DEPTH RESULTS

FORIX



Gommendy
celebrates his win
in parc ferme

Morgan trio beats ORECA duo in a late-race thriller

THE OPENING ROUND OF THE EUROPEAN LE MANS Series developed into a thrilling three-way dash to the flag courtesy of a late safety car. The French TDS Racing team ended up coming out on top in the 20-minute sprint, but Tristan Gommendy had to work hard for the victory at the wheel of the Morgan-Nissan LMP2 he shared with Pierre Thiriet and Ludovic Badey.

Only a 42-year-old property developer in the shape of Michel Frey stood between former Champ Car driver Gommendy and victory, but the Swiss amateur drove the race of his life in his Race Performance ORECA-Judd/BMW 03 as he fought a rear-guard action. Frey, admittedly on new tyres unlike the eventual winner, even set the best sector-three time of anyone in the race in his efforts to keep the Frenchman behind.

Gary Hirsch, champion last year in the LMPC one-make class in the ELMS, was able to join the party and briefly put pressure on Franck Mailleux in his Morand Racing Morgan-Judd/BMW, before the Race Performance driver used the traffic to surprise Frey on the run into Becketts.

"I saw there was some traffic, so I braked a little bit before the corner to be flat on the exit," explained Gommendy. "I was much faster on the exit of Copse and I was able to overtake two, three or maybe more cars. It was a good overtaking."

The safety car was precipitated by a chilling accident involving the car that was on course to win the four-hour event. A year ago, Simon Dolan was merely a bit player in the Jota Sport team's victory he shared with Oliver Turvey for the simple reason that he only drove behind the safety car in the rain-shortened race. This year, he looked to have done enough after taking over from Filipe Albuquerque even before Harry Tincknell, who had taken pole, was due to get in for the final stint.

Albuquerque had led from pole through to the first round of pitstops and Dolan was back in the lead after his final stop ahead of Mailleux. The Frenchman closed the gap from 16s to just under three before Dolan, who was on new tyres unlike his pursuer, was able to re-extend his advantage.

It all went wrong from Dolan on his penultimate lap. He attempted to go around the outside of Michele Rugolo's AF Corse Ferrari on the exit of Chapel, only for the unaware Italian to edge him out onto the grass. The Zyteck snapped sideways as Dolan tried to edge back towards the asphalt and speared into the barriers, clipping the back of Gustavo Yacaman's Larbre Morgan on the way.

Dolan, who was shaken but uninjured by the impact, was not impressed by Rugolo's use – or rather lack of use – of his mirrors.

"There's no way he did it on purpose," he said, "but I flashed him all the way through the complex with marshals waving blue flags at him."

Dolan's wasn't the only tale of woe at Silverstone. The Murphy Prototypes ORECA-Nissan had the pace to potentially challenge Jota thanks to the presence of two quick silver-rated drivers in Rodolfo Gonzalez and Alex Kapadia alongside Karun Chandhok. A puncture for Gonzalez, on which the Venezuelan had to complete a full lap, resulted in bodywork damage that necessitated a trip into the garage for repairs, but the car returned to set a sequence of fastest laps first in Kapadia's hands and then Chandhok's.

● Gary Watkins



IN THE PADDOCK



Teenaged American finished fourth

Teen McMurry impresses team

SIXTEEN-YEAR-OLD MATT

McMurry came through his latest test in his bid to become the youngest driver in history to take part in the Le Mans 24 Hours.

McMurry, who will be 16 years and 202 days when the race starts at Le Mans, impressed at the wheel of the Greaves Motorsport Zytec-Nissan Z11SN he shared with mentor Chris Dyson and Tom Kimber-Smith at Silverstone. His reward was fourth place and, most likely, a seat at the next ELMS round at Imola on the road to Le Mans.

"Fourth is great for my first endurance race, the longest race I've ever done by some way," he said. "I can't say that I am definitely doing Le Mans or Imola, because we are taking it one step at a time, but I certainly feel much better prepared now."

McMurry, son of US sportscar racer Chris, also impressed his team.

Team manager Jacob Greaves said: "For a first time in the car he did a brilliant job. He took the start and got on with it."

GTE-class win to AF Corse

THE AF CORSE FERRARI DRIVEN

by Matt Griffin, Michele Rugolo and Duncan Cameron snatched GTE class honours from the similar SMP Racing example right at the death.

The Franco-Russian SMP squad's solo GTE-class Ferrari 458 Italia looked set for victory in the hands of Andrea Bertolini, Viktor Shaitar and Sergey Zlobin until Bertolini was sideswiped by another of AF Corse's fleet of Ferraris with minutes remaining. There was, however, no hint of gamesmanship, because at the wheel of the errant AF car was Bertolini's good friend, Marco Cioci.

"I was stuck behind him for three laps; he said he thought he had a GT3 car [from the GTC class] behind him," explained Bertolini. "In the hairpin [The Loop], he went to the right and I thought, 'thank you very much!'"



Griffin/Rugolo/Cameron Ferrari took GTE honours

I went in and he closed the door.

"Marco is very upset about it. He has called me four times already to apologise."

Bertolini had moved ahead at the last round of pitstops when Griffin was forced to drive beyond his pit and have the team pull him back due to congestion in the pitlane. Rugolo resumed on Bertolini's tail, but the factory driver was able to pull away into a

clear lap before the incident.

Griffin, last year's ELMS GTE title winner when he was still a silver-rated driver, had taken the lead before the final round of pitstops after closing down Shaitar.

Third place went to the Imsa Performance Porsche 911 GT3-RSR shared by Nicolas Armindo, team boss Raymond Narac and David Hallyday.

Tyre woes hobble champion team

THE SIGNATECH ALPINE TEAM endured a disappointing start to the defence of its ELMS title.

The team's Alpine-branded ORECA-Nissan ended up fifth in the hands of Nelson Panciatici, Olivier Webb and Paul-Loup Chatin, but the truth was that the car was barely competitive. Its Michelin tyres weren't anything approaching a match for the Dunlops run by the frontrunners at Silverstone.

Dunlop had the edge last year as well, but a new Michelin only arrived in time for the two days of testing at the official ELMS test at



Signatech squad struggled with tyres

Paul Ricard at the end of March.

"We've only had one test with the tyres and I don't think the low temperatures [at Silverstone] helped either," admitted Panciatici.

TIGA CLOSE TO LAUNCH

The relaunched Tiga marque is in the process of homologating new bodywork for its forthcoming LM214 P2 contender, a reworked version of the Embassy Racing/Team WFR WF01 of 2008 vintage. New owner Mike Newton, a two-time P2 winner at the Le Mans 24 Hours, aims to have the Judd/BMW-powered contender up and running in the summer and hasn't ruled out the car racing this year.

GRAVES' IMOLA DOUBT

World Endurance Championship P2 race winner Tor Graves is looking increasingly likely to miss the next round of the ELMS at Imola in May as he recovers from a bout of shingles.

SMP PULLS THE PLUG

Boris Rotenberg, co-owner of the Russian SMP bank, pulled his GTE-class Ferrari out of the Silverstone ELMS event. SMP Racing has warned that economic sanctions against Russia from the crisis in Ukraine could have a negative impact on its programmes.

YACAMAN FOR LARBRE

Gustavo Yacaman (below), who is driving for OAK Racing in the United SportsCar Championship in the US, was brought in to drive Larbre Competition's Morgan-Judd/BMW with Keiko Ihara. The Colombian replaced Jacques Nicolet, the owner of OAK and its chassis-building sister firm Onroak Automotive.



Ukrainians defeat Russians in Ferrari GTC battle

ITALIAN ALESSANDRO PIERGUIDI put the MU Motorsport-run Team Ukraine GTC-class Ferrari 458 Italia back where it had been for much of the race on the run to the flag after the safety car period.

Pierguidi was able to come from behind to seal the win for himself and Andriy Kruglyk and Sergii Chukanov after

passing the Formula Racing Ferrari with Mikkel Mac at the wheel. The Italian made light work of closing down the advantage to the Dane and swept through with 10 laps to spare on his way to a seven-second victory.

The Danish-run Formula Racing entry moved into the lead when factory

Corvette Racing driver Jan Magnussen took over from Mac. A quicker final pitstop gave Mac some extra breathing space, but he was powerless to resist Pierguidi's charge and fell to third at the finish behind the SMP Ferrari shared by Olivier Beretta, David Markozov and Anton Ladygin.

Euro F3 Silverstone (GB)

April 19-20

Round 1/11



RESULTS

RACE 1: 18 LAPS, 65.887 MILES

1	TOM BLOMQVIST (GB)	36m31.379s
	Carlin Dallara-Volkswagen F312; Qualifying: 1st-1m51.327s	
2	ESTEBAN OCON (F)	+2.107s
	Prema Powerteam Dallara-Mercedes F312; Qualifying: 2nd-1m51.329s	
3	JORDAN KING (GB)	+3.052s
	Carlin Dallara-Volkswagen F312; Qualifying: 6th-1m51.808s	
4	ANTONIO FUOCO (I)	+4.624s
	Prema Powerteam Dallara-Mercedes F312; Qualifying: 3rd-1m51.378s	
5	LUCAS AUER (A)	+8.504s
	Mucke Motorsport Dallara-Mercedes F312; Qualifying: 10th-1m51.987s	
6	NICHOLAS LATIFI (CDN)	+11.287s
	Prema Powerteam Dallara-Mercedes F314; Qualifying: 8th-1m51.909s	
7	FELIX SERRALLES (USA)	+12.447s
	Team West-Tec Dallara-Mercedes F314; Qualifying: 5th-1m51.795s	
8	ED JONES (UAE)	+13.578s
	Carlin Dallara-Volkswagen F312; Qualifying: 7th-1m51.848s	
9	FELIX ROSENQVIST (S)	+14.131s
	Mucke Motorsport Dallara-Mercedes F312; Qualifying: 14th-1m52.263s	
10	FELIPE GUIMARAES (BR)	+17.708s
	Double R Racing Dallara-Mercedes F313; Qualifying: 13th-1m52.166s	

Winner's average speed: 108.239mph. Fastest lap: Blomqvist, 1m52.282s, 117.359mph.

RACE 2: 18 LAPS, 65.887 MILES

1	OCON	33m53.215s
	Qualifying: 1st-1m51.322s	
2	LATIFI	+3.678s
	Qualifying: 2nd-1m51.460s	
3	FUOCO	+5.148s
	Qualifying: 4th-1m51.536s	
4	BLOMQVIST	+9.264s
	Qualifying: 3rd-1m51.517s	
5	MAX VERSTAPPEN (NL)	+11.237s
	Van Amersfoort Racing Dallara-Volkswagen F314; Qualifying: 6th-1m51.808s	
6	KING	+11.914s
	Qualifying: 7th-1m51.857s	
7	JONES	+19.293s
	Qualifying: 9th-1m51.907s	
8	ANTONIO GIOVINAZZI (I)	+20.649s
	Carlin Dallara-Volkswagen F312; Qualifying: 5th-1m51.755s	
9	DENNIS VAN DE LAAR (NL)	+21.877s
	Prema Powerteam Dallara-Mercedes F312; Qualifying: 8th-1m51.864s	
10	JOHN BRYANT-MEISNER (S)	+23.533s
	Fortec Motorsport Dallara-Mercedes F312; Qualifying: 11th-1m51.998s	

Winner's average speed: 116.658mph. Fastest lap: Ocon, 1m52.103s, 117.547mph.

RACE 3: 18 LAPS, 65.887 MILES

1	FUOCO	34m13.614s
	Qualifying: 2nd-1m51.557s	
2	VERSTAPPEN	+4.731s
	Qualifying: 5th-1m51.810s	
3	OCON	+9.325s
	Qualifying: 1st-1m51.327s	
4	LATIFI	+17.322s
	Qualifying: 4th-1m51.777s	
5	GIOVINAZZI	+21.667s
	Qualifying: 6th-1m51.894s	
6	BLOMQVIST	+25.945s
	Qualifying: 3rd-1m51.577s	
7	ROSENQVIST	+26.266s
	Qualifying: 14th-1m52.277s	
8	AUER	+32.033s
	Qualifying: 10th-1m52.147s	
9	KING	+33.437s
	Qualifying: 11th-1m52.147s	
10	SERRALLES	+33.814s
	Qualifying: 16th-1m52.491s	

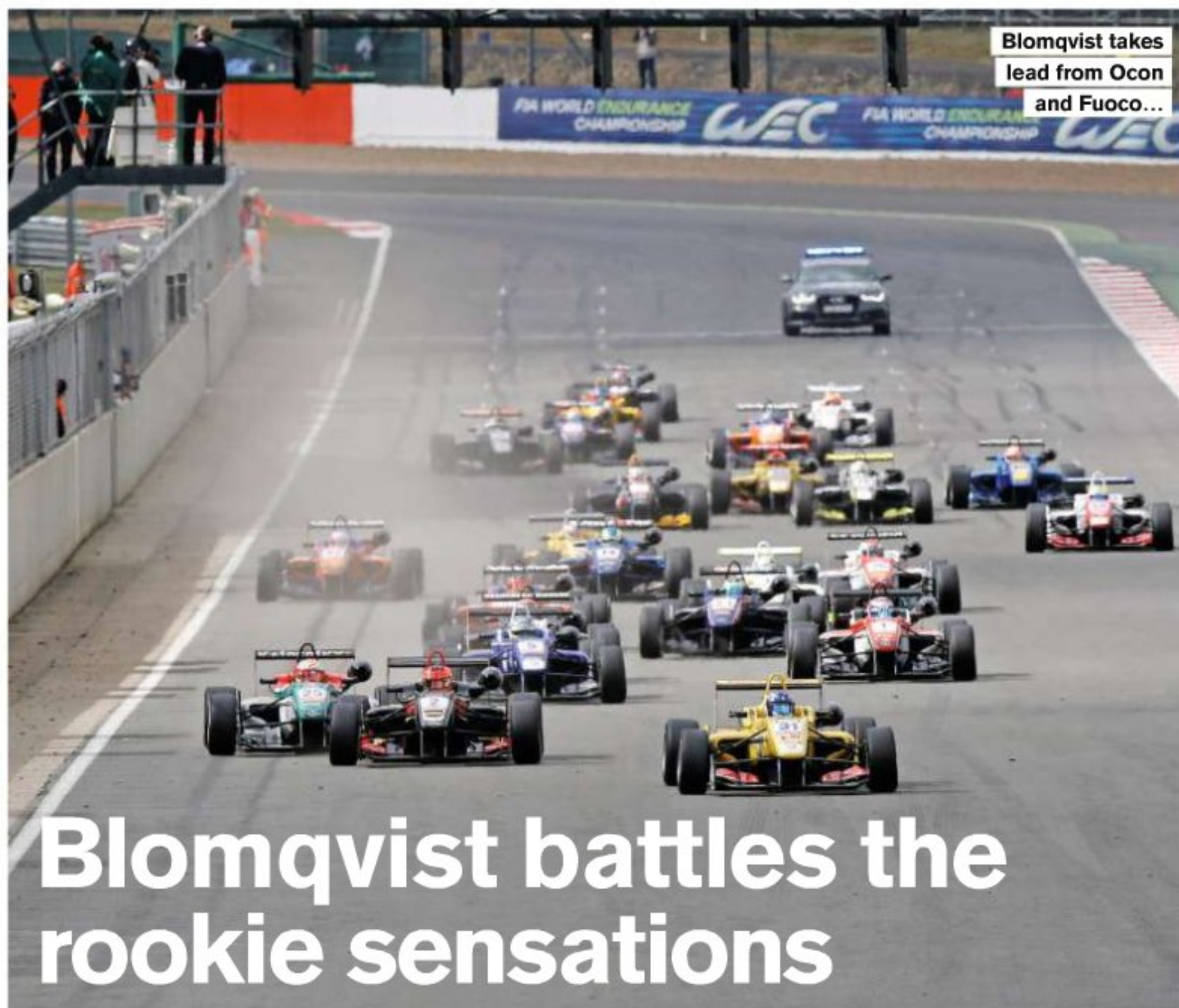
Winner's average speed: 115.500mph. Fastest lap: Fuoco, 1m53.005s, 116.608mph.

DRIVERS' CHAMPIONSHIP

1	OCON	58	6	KING	25
2	FUOCO	52	7	AUER	14
3	BLOMQVIST	45	=	GIOVINAZZI	14
4	LATIFI	38	9	JONES	10
5	VERSTAPPEN	28	10	ROSENQVIST	8

POINTS SYSTEM EXPLAINED In each race: 25-18-15-12-10-8-6-4-2-1 to top 10 finishers.

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Blomqvist battles the rookie sensations

WHEN THE FORMULA 3 EUROPEAN CHAMPIONSHIP introduced a new title for rookie drivers for 2014, not only did it seem contrived, but in hindsight it has proved to be totally unnecessary. By race three at Silverstone's opener last weekend, it was apparent that it's the experienced drivers who need something to fight for, not the new boys.

Tom Blomqvist took the fight to the young whippersnappers at Silverstone, the Anglo-Swede winning the first race of the season on Saturday morning. But from then on he was powerless amid the onslaught of Antonio Fuoco, Esteban Ocon and Max Verstappen – Fuoco and Ocon took the other two wins, Ocon the points lead (and, in case you're wondering, the top spot in the rookie standings too), while the trio monopolised Sunday morning's podium.

Blomqvist grabbed his opportunity to take a win while he could. Ocon appeared to have the most speed in both qualifying sessions, but the Frenchman failed to put his sectors together in the first, and the Briton grabbed pole.

Driving the very Carlin Dallara-Volkswagen chassis taken to victory at this fixture last year by Harry Tincknell, Blomqvist led all the way, pulling out 1.5 seconds on the first lap. He had to do it again after an early safety car, but Ocon was busy fending off an attack from a feisty Jordan King – King passed into Club, but was a gear higher than Ocon on exit and got outaccelerated, allowing Blomqvist to scamper clear again.

After years struggling with lack of finance, his victory was perfect vindication of his salvation by the Indonesian Jagonya Ayam scheme. "Finally, mate!" grinned the New Zealand-raised Brit. "Not a bad way to start the year; it's a bit of a relief."

Like Blomqvist earlier on, Ocon converted pole into a 1.5s lead on the first lap of race two. This time it was Nicholas Latifi upholding the honour of the 'old guard' and, on a circuit for which he has a great affinity, he produced his best performance yet to keep Fuoco at bay in a 1-2-3 for Prema Powerteam's squad of Dallara-Mercedes.

Blomqvist felt slight changes in wind and track



conditions had moved the goalposts on set-up, and he was left to defend from Verstappen and King – who took to the grass late on – for fourth.

Fuoco hadn't taken new tyres in race two, so he always felt confident for the finale, but first he had to jump poleman Ocon.

This he did. Ocon's efforts to force an opening in the early stages took the edge off his rubber and, after a very close first few laps, he faded away.

Verstappen's debut with Van Amersfoort Racing had started disastrously, with clutch problems and an incident at the start of race one, but this time he was on fire. Like Blomqvist he had old rubber all-round, but sliced past the Brit on lap two at the Loop, and did the same to Ocon at the same place with eight laps to go.

Blomqvist's tyres grained so badly he was down a gear in many corners by the end, and he dropped behind Latifi and Antonio Giovinazzi, whose strong qualifying was let down by poor race starts.

Prema's wins with Ocon and Fuoco proved that the team's 'under-the-radar' form in testing was a red herring. "What is important is qualifying and races," said team manager Rene Rosin. "As we did since 2009, when we had a technical restructure, we just focus on trying different things in testing. Looking at what they were doing, and at their experience, I was happy my drivers were on top."

Needless to say, he still is.

IN THE PADDOCK

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IT'S HARD TO REMEMBER WHEN I got so excited about a crop of new drivers.

It's not just me either. One grizzled, usually-cynical British engineer said to me: "Max Verstappen is the most impressive new driver I have seen. Ever."

The Belgo-Dutch World Karting king is clearly a star, but didn't quite nail it in qualifying, but then he did miss December's tests as the decision to jump into the category from karts came so late.

Instead it was Esteban Ocon – from Normandy but of Spanish descent – and Calabrese Antonio Fuoco who went home from Silverstone with race wins.

Fuoco is not only a Ferrari protege (he's even driving the chassis that fellow Maranello man Raffaele Marciello took to the 2013 title), but also has management to bring in much-needed sponsorship.

Lotus F1 junior Ocon, without question, would not be racing had Gravity Sport's Gwenael Lagrue not been tipped off six years ago about an 11-year-old kid who was worth watching in karts. Lagrue went to three or four meetings, liked what he saw, and Ocon's career has been taken care of.

And that's why I'm excited. Money talks, but so does talent.

Fuoco: following in Marciello's steps



BIG NUMBER

50

Combined age of the podium for race three, with Antonio Fuoco (17 years old) beating Max Verstappen (16) and Esteban Ocon (17). Fuoco is the oldest – he'll be 18 next month.



Renault engine project hits the skids – for now

LAST WEEKEND WAS NOT THE first time that Silverstone has been the scene of troublesome beginnings for a Renault engine project, but the ORECA-built Formula 3 powerplant has easily trumped the groundbreaking 'yellow teapot' turbo F1 car of 1977.

The Signature-run cars sat forlornly in their awning after the decision was taken on Thursday night not to run at Silverstone.

Team boss Philippe Sinault, whose European Le Mans Series squad was in action at Silverstone, said it was down to the "lack of performance of the engine. We want to compete on a good level, so we have a lot of work to do."

Oscar Tunjo left the team before the Red Bull Ring test, reportedly angering the Lotus F1 Junior scheme of which he has been part. Tatiana Calderon was ready to race, but when the plug was pulled a late deal was completed for her to take over the Jo Zeller Racing car of Sandro Zeller.



Signature: all dressed up but nowhere to go

This was run by Mucke Motorsport, and it appears likely that the Colombian will remain with the team for the rest of 2014.

New Zealander Richie Stanaway was to have replaced Tunjo for Silverstone, but found out when he landed at Luton airport on Thursday night on his way back from a

GP3 test that he was off the hook.

Most F3 insiders believe it will be a surprise if Signature races the Renault engine at all this season.

Asked when the team might race, Sinault said: "It's too soon to say – we have to analyse what has happened to the engine."

Rules changed for new motors

EUROPEAN FORMULA 3'S NEW era of bespoke racing engines kicked into life at Silverstone, with lap times 1.5s faster than the best recorded with the old.

The introduction came with some last-minute rule changes. Sporting regulations now require an engine to last a whole season, sealed from the first official test, with a grid penalty if breached.

But this was suspended when Mercedes and Volkswagen – who between them provided 24

of the 26 engines at Silverstone – had reliability problems in testing. With the agreement of Merc, NBE and Renault, VW was allowed to make a modification regarding installation in the build-up to Silverstone.

The grid penalties will also not apply if damage to the engine is the result of an accident.

They sound sweeter than the rasping production blocks, around 500rpm higher and with a lowered noise limit of 110dB.

Rosenqvist pushes
a bit too hard



Mucke has nightmare weekend

FELIX ROSENQVIST AND LUCAS

Auer, who were both expected to be major title contenders, had a disastrous start to the year with Mucke Motorsport.

Rosenqvist began the weekend with engine problems in free practice, and the Mucke team struggled with a lack of grip.

Auer took the team's best result of the event – a distant fifth in race one – while Rosenqvist's charge from 14th to

seventh in race three was his best.

"I'm confident that sooner or later we'll be there – they are doing a good job," said Auer, fourth in the 2013 rankings.

Rosenqvist reckoned the car was better in race three, but the track was slower and colder so some rivals were lacking grip too. "This has been a poor weekend for us; there's no hiding from that," said last year's series runner-up.



DENNIS: TOUGH DEBUT

Briton Jake Dennis had a nightmare F3 debut, with incidents in two races. "For some reason I'm struggling to get round here fast," said the Carlin man. "People assume it's my home track, but I've only raced InterSteps here – I know Hockenheim [scene of round two] much better." Another Briton, Team West-Tec's Hector Hurst, took a best finish of 13th.

ROOKIES IN RENAULTS

Star newcomers Esteban Ocon, Antonio Fuoco and Max Verstappen all got experience of Silverstone in a Formula Renault test last month. Ocon had a run with MGR Motorsport, Fuoco with JTR and Verstappen with Fortec Motorsport.

LYNN CAR 'RETIRED'

Alex Lynn's Macau GP-winning car has been retired from service, after his family bought the car from Prema Powerteam and its Mercedes engine. It will remain in its Theodore Racing livery. "We're a bit romantic about it!" said Lynn.

WEST-TEC WELL UP

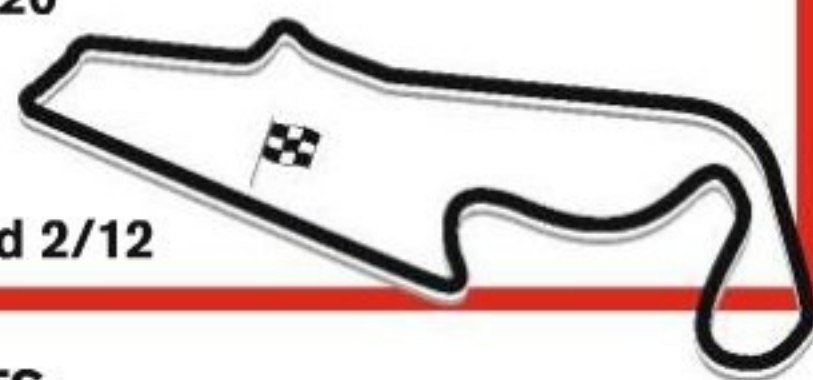
Felix Serralles gave Team West-Tec a promising European F3 debut when he qualified fifth for race one, but a moment avoiding a car emerging from the pitlane put dirt on his tyres in second qualifying. He gambled on new tyres all round for the opening race, but a poor start consigned him to a fight to seventh.

WTCC

Paul Ricard (F)

April 20

Round 2/12



RESULTS

RACE 1: 16 LAPS, 38.192 MILES

1	YVAN MULLER (F)	27m58.347s
	Citroen Total Citroen C-Elysee WTCC; Grid: 1st-1m29.857s	
2	SEBASTIEN LOEB (F)	+12.727s
	Citroen Total Citroen C-Elysee WTCC; Grid: 17th-time cancelled	
3	GABRIELE TARQUINI (I)	+15.026s
	Castrol Honda (JAS) Honda Civic WTCC; Grid: 2nd-1m30.808s	
4	JOSE MARIA LOPEZ (RA)	+18.663s
	Citroen Total Citroen C-Elysee WTCC; Grid: 18th-time cancelled	
5	ROB HUFF (GB)	+31.393s
	Lada Sport Lukoil Lada Granta 1.6T; Grid: 10th-1m32.142s	
6	HUGO VALENTE (F)	+34.415s*
	Campos Racing Chevrolet RML Cruze TC1; Grid: 3rd-1m31.139s	
7	NORBERT MICHELISZ (H)	+34.896s
	Zengo Motorsport Honda Civic WTCC; Grid: 4th-1m30.751s	
8	TIAGO MONTEIRO (P)	+37.918s
	Castrol Honda (JAS) Honda Civic WTCC; Grid: 8th-1m30.751s	
9	TOM CHILTON (GB)	+41.014s
	ROAL Motorsport Chevrolet RML Cruze TC1; Grid: 5th-1m30.987s	
10	JAMES THOMPSON (GB)	+45.739s
	Lada Sport Lukoil Lada Granta 1.6T; Grid: 11th-1m33.162s	

Winner's average speed: 81.909mph. Fastest lap: Muller, 1m43.675s, 82.875mph.
*includes 10-second penalty

RACE 2: 18 LAPS, 42.966 MILES

1	LOPEZ	30m24.551s
	Citroen; Grid: 18th	
2	MULLER	+1.886s
	Citroen; Grid: 10th	
3	MONTEIRO	+7.994s
	Honda; Grid: 3rd	
4	TARQUINI	+8.459s
	Honda; Grid: 9th	
5	MEHDI BENNANI (MA)	+17.407s
	Protem Honda Civic WTCC; Grid: 1st-1m32.458s	
6	LOEB	+17.924s
	Citroen; Grid: 17th	
7	DUSAN BORKOVIC (SRB)	+18.592s
	Campos Racing Chevrolet RML Cruze TC1 Grid: 5th-1m31.099s	
8	MICHELISZ	+18.927s
	Honda; Grid: 7th	
9	GIANNI MORBIDELLI (I)	+20.531s
	Munnich Motorsport Chevrolet RML Cruze TC1; Grid: 4th-1m31.207s	
10	VALENTE	+21.787s
	Chevrolet; Grid: 8th	

Winner's average speed: 84.765mph. Fastest lap: Lopez, 1m31.468s, 93.935mph.

DRIVERS' CHAMPIONSHIP

1	LOPEZ	85	6	MONTEIRO	30
2	LOEB	73	7	CHILTON	30
3	MULLER	65	8	BENNANI	16
4	TARQUINI	31	9	BORKOVIC	15
5	VALENTE	31	10	MICHELISZ	14

YOKOHAMA TROPHY

1	ENGSTLER	45
2	DI SABATINO	30
3	FILIPPI	21

POINTS SYSTEM EXPLAINED

In each race: 25-18-15-12-10-8-6-4-2-1 to top 10 finishers. 5-4-3-2-1 to top 5 qualifiers.

Lopez leads Muller
in race two – and the
championship table



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FORIX



Muller was untroubled
on his way to victory

Muller and Lopez give the home fans a treat

INTRICACIES CONCERNING SAFETY VALVES AND automatic shut-off systems threatened to be the dominant topic at Paul Ricard, and remove the lustre from Citroen's WTCC homecoming. But after two of the imposing Citroen C-Elysees, which a huge crowd had turned out to see, were ordered to the back of the grid for technical infringements, Jose Maria Lopez and Sebastien Loeb rescued the situation for their employers – and audience – by producing stunning recovery drives.

That Muller, in the lone Citroen to survive being sent to detention at the back of the grid, won race one was no surprise. The Alsace star had been promoted to pole, with the gift of a luxurious 15-car buffer to the only two men armed with equipment to offer a challenge. But there was no question that the brilliant progress of his teammates to second and fourth was the key source of entertainment. Even allowing for the C-Elysee's inherent performance advantage, Loeb and Lopez demonstrated superb skills. Indeed, Lopez's performance approached driving nirvana in race two, displaying a perfectly judged mixture of aggression and timing to take an astounding victory from last on the grid.

The former TC2000 ace had a fraught start to a damp race one, being squeezed off track into the first corner on the opening lap. A feisty Tiago Monteiro was next in store for the Argentinian. The pair put lie to the suggestion that contact would be punished with race-ending damage in

the new generation of TC1 cars by clattering doors over eighth. Once through on the Honda man, Lopez was frustratingly forced to watch Loeb pull away up the road when he was further delayed behind a stubborn Lada Granta driven by an inspired Rob Huff.

The former WTCC champion was eventually dealt with, before Lopez's charge would come to a halt behind the Honda of Monteiro's team-mate Gabriele Tarquini. Making his 200th WTCC start, the Italian had grabbed the lead from a slow-starting Muller away from the front row. It was a stirring effort by Tarquini, who was driving a car that had been reshelled in three days following his heavy Marrakech practice accident. The Moroccan shunt also meant that Le Castellet was Tarquini's first appearance on a Sunday in 2014.

Unable to see the lights clearly, Muller had dropped to third behind Zengo Motorsport Honda driver Norbert Michelisz into Turn 1. Wary of the possibility that he would have to nurse tyres if there was a recurrence of rain during the race, Muller patiently picked his way back into the lead over two laps.

Muller would enjoy a 12.7-second margin of victory over Loeb. The nine-time WRC champion survived an early brush with Gianni Morbidelli's Chevrolet to make steady progress – until reaching Tarquini. The former grand prix driver struggled owing to a half-wet/half-dry set-up and gearshift problems, but held the #9 Citroen at bay until being passed at the Chicane Nord on the Mistral Straight two laps from home.

Huff emerged from an epic battle with Campos Racing Chevrolet driver Hugo Valente and a tyre-hampered Michelisz to steal fifth for Lada (see story, right).

In race two, Lopez used a rocket start to climb to seventh by lap one, already having passed 10th-starter and team-mate Muller. The pair carved through the field in tandem until reaching podium-paying positions on lap seven. Monteiro held a 4.8s lead at this point, which was wiped out by a safety car to attend to track debris. Having closed the door and made contact on team-mate Loeb earlier in race, Muller exercised caution with Lopez on the restart. Monteiro survived for two laps before being passed on the inside into the quick Signes right-hander.



Lopez came from the
back to win race two

ALL PICS: DPPI

IN THE PADDOCK

PETER MILLS
CONTRIBUTOR

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FOLLOWING THE CITROENS' convincing lock-out of the top-three qualifying positions, Yvan Muller offered a word of caution to the assembled media.

"I think after the first corner, there might not be any overtaking between us," said Muller circumspectly. From the reigning WTCC champion's characteristic deflated tone, it was difficult to determine if he was feeling sullen at probably finishing third, being pragmatic over how he viewed the race unfolding or was delivering a cryptic message. "We are very close and there are not many passing opportunities on this circuit," he added.

The statement followed comments from team-mates Loeb and Lopez that "the start would be very important". But any fears of an imminent second Citroen formation run in a week would prove unfounded. Extraordinary events on Saturday evening would pave the way for the Paul Ricard round to be a corker.

The exclusion of provisional poleman Sebastien Loeb and Jose Maria Lopez from qualifying (see separate story, right) may not have been in Citroen's gameplan, but the ensuing topsy-turvy grid and a downpour before race one enlivened proceedings like a dull dinner party that had been gatecrashed by the Marx Brothers and a dance troop from the Moulin Rouge.

That Citroen still finished a comfortable one-two in both races is perhaps unnerving for the opposition, but after the opening two rounds it's playing to form. Until Citroen's rivals get a serious handle on their relatively untapped TC1 cars, they will be relying on further freak events similar to those that shook up Paul Ricard to be in contention for podium positions. And let's face it, that's an unlikely proposition.

Valente heaps praise on team for strong start

CAMPOS DRIVER HUGO VALENTE believes the team's aptitude in honing a competitive set-up out of the box on its Chevrolet has played a key role in his strong start to the season.

"We didn't do much testing but the car was well-born," he said. "It is faster out of the pits, which is good news, and we did a good job as well on the set-up to make it even faster. You know it is only a few tenths to the Citroen just because of the lack of testing."

Valente said that an extra effort in training over the close season had paid off for round one at Marrakech, where he scored his maiden podium. "I worked a lot this winter physically, I lost a bit of weight. I did a lot of cardio. Last year I realised it was really hot in these cars, and in Marrakech it was 65 or 70 degrees. That preparation has helped."



Valente has made a strong start to 2014

Citroen boss: we'll sort faulty part

CITROEN RACING TEAM PRINCIPAL Yves Matton was open to making changes to his suppliers after the French make lost its top-three lock-out of the grid for race one when two of its C-Elysee cars failed post-qualifying technical checks.

Polesitter Sebastien Loeb and Jose Maria Lopez were sent to the back of the grid when the automatic fuel cut-off safety system was found to be inoperative owing to a faulty valve.

"This main disappointment is the fact that it is coming from a part that brings nothing

in performance, and from an outside company," said Matton. "It was tested in Marrakech and tested before the start of the weekend here, and it was working."

"It is a new technology that we didn't use in rallying. The first thing is to replace them and for the future try to understand why it has happened. There is more than one producer for this type of part, so we have to see if we keep the same brand or if we make some changes. If we think we are not 100 per cent safe with this type we have to see if we can find another one."



Huff: Lada on the right track

LADA NEW RECRUIT ROB HUFF believes the Russian manufacturer achieved a breakthrough at Paul Ricard, after the Briton achieved the team's highest finish since the start of its WTCC participation.

"Mikhail [Kozlovskiy] was sixth last week, now we have fifth on genuine merit," said Huff. "I think we have found something with the car, because even race two was better than expected."

"In the slipstream, the car holds its own down the straights, although we still have some aero work to do. It was great fun battling with Hugo [Valente] and Norbi

[Michalisz]. The Granta seemed to look after its tyres quite well, certainly much better than Michalisz's Honda."

The performance marked a turnaround from a difficult qualifying session at Paul Ricard, in which both James Thompson and Kozlovskiy suffered steering-arm failures. "After qualifying, we compiled a long list of things we wanted to improve," Huff added, "and now we need to work through them."

Lada is set to test at Magny-Cours next week in search of further improvements before the next round of the series in Hungary on May 4.

In brief

CHILTON GETS PENALTY

Tom Chilton served a drive-through penalty for his part in a collision with Gianni Morbidelli at the start of race two. Morbidelli recovered to take ninth.

HONDA TARGETS TEST

JAS Honda team principal Alessandro Mariani is continuing to target a post-Hungaroring test to make significant performance gains. "We have plenty of ideas, fortunately, but it is trying to find the time on this compressed calendar to put those ideas into practice," he said.

CORONEL MISSES OUT

ROAL Motorsport driver Tom Coronel was a non-starter at Paul Ricard owing to the heavy damage sustained to his Chevrolet Cruze in round one in Morocco. The car was sent from France to car builder RML in Wellingborough last Friday to be rebuilt.

WEB LOVE FOR HONDA

Honda Motorsport Europe boss William de Braekeleer stated that 150,000 people on various social media sites had followed the team's efforts to reshell Gabriele Tarquini's Civic in three days (below) following the Italian's Marrakech practice accident.



BIG NUMBER

200

Race one at Paul Ricard marked 2009 WTCC champion Gabriele Tarquini's 200th start in the series.

New BMW duo stars, but Aston crews lead the way

Motorbase and Beechdean took the points for the Aston hordes at Oulton.

By JAMES WARNETTE



56

WHAT A DIFFERENCE A YEAR MAKES. TWELVE months ago Beechdean's Andrew Howard and Jonny Adam left the Oulton Park round of the British GT Championship with zero points and a hefty repair bill. But two podium-grabbing performances by the Aston Martin pair mean reigning champion Howard and factory driver Adam sit one point off the championship lead.

That is held by new Vantage squad Motorbase's pairing of Ahmad Al Harthy and Michael Caine. Both 60-minute sprint races were dominated by safety car periods that ate into the race time, and in the opener it was Al Harthy and Caine that took a dominant win, despite narrowly missing the opening of the pit window.

Al Harthy led Howard in the opening laps and, with the pitstops complete, Caine had an uphill task of battling 75kg of balancing weight and

building on a slender one-second lead over the Triple Eight BMW Z4.

Behind the duelling Astons, a fighting performance from fifth on the grid by Luke Hines' team-mate Derek Johnston allowed the lone Triple Eight car rise up the order to third. Johnston only made one overtaking move in his rise to second before the pitstops, making a decisive pass on AF Corse's rookie Pasin Lathouras. Ahead of him the Ecurie Ecosse Z4 of Marco Attard retired on lap 10 following a "catastrophic" gearbox issue, before the safety car emerged to deal with Rick Parfitt Jr's stricken Ginetta G55.

Hines' post-pitstop hunt for the lead was ended when he was hit with a stop-go penalty for a shorter-than-required pitstop, and ultimately finished seventh.

His infringement meant AF Corse inherited

second and, with Richard Lyons now at the wheel, the Ferrari 458 Italia was a comfortable runner-up, 3.6s off the back of Caine and 4.2s ahead of a hard-charging Adam.

Taking a hard-fought fourth was the United Autosports Audi of Mark Patterson and Matt Bell. Arguably one of the most competitive pairings last season in British GT, the pair continued where they left off and in the latter stages of the first race forced Adam to defend hard to retain third place.

The PGF-Kinfaun AMR Aston of Phil Dryburgh and John Gaw finished fifth, despite Dryburgh outbraking himself early on at Knickerbrook and colliding with Mark Poole's similar MP Motorsport car (which Richard Abra nursed to sixth). Gaw was almost taken out in the closing stages by the out-of-control FF Corse Ferrari of Rob Barff before Warwick Bridge. Barff had been sent spinning after swiping across the front of the GT4 BMW of Declan Jones. Barff was docked six points for the incident, which started when Gaw and Barff simultaneously attempted to overtake the 2013 GT4 runner-up.

Six-time Olympic cycling champion Sir Chris Hoy's British debut resulted in a top-10 points finish. A strong opening stint coupled with a late charge by Alex Buncombe meant the returning RJN squad collect a handful of points for ninth.

After its disaster in race one, Ecurie Ecosse's fortunes turned in the second, with series debutant Alexander Sims rocketing into an early lead from pole. Adam, along with M-Sport's Steven Kane in the new Bentley GT3, gave chase but were kept at arm's length by Sims, who was faultless bar a small mistake at Knickerbrook on the eighth lap that almost gave Adam half a chance.

The BMW was, however, jumped in the pits by



Ecosse team
celebrates as
Attard takes flag

BRITISH GT4 OULTON PARK INTERNATIONAL (GB), APRIL 21

Ginetta stranglehold on GT4 is broken

BRITISH GT4 IS AN IMPROVED AND EXPANDED

category for 2014, and the sub-class provided Bank Holiday battling as fraught as that of its big brother at the front.

Single-seater refugee Dan Cammish was among the debutants at Oulton Park, and while the British Formula Ford champion's deal to race the first full-time GT4-specification Porsche in British GT history was a late one, he was among the frontrunners in practice and qualifying, netting second on the grid.

With Cammish's strong form, and that of Andrew Jarman and Devon Modell (TF Sport Aston Martin Vantage) and Beechdean Aston juniors Ross Wylie and Jake Giddings, the rookies duly stole the show on race day.

As ever, the Ginettas were strong – particularly defending champion Rick Parfitt Jr and Tom Oliphant in the new GT4-spec G55s – but Wylie and Giddings were a class apart in the opener, romping clear from pole to win comfortably.

Parfitt and Oliphant had a Monday to forget with a double retirement (the fuel pump failed in race one and Oliphant crashed out of the second race), but behind, another newcomer in ISSY Racing's Lotus Evora started, with Oz Yusuf and Gavan Kershaw converting fourth in class on the grid to a strong second.

The Lotus then started on pole for the second instalment but was denied victory by another Aston, this time that of Jarman and Modell, though completed the podium behind Morten Dons and Aleksander Schjerpen.

Wylie's and Giddings' bid to make it a brace of victories was ruined on the formation lap when



Jarman/Modell
lead GT4 after
two podiums

their car's ECU needed resetting and delayed them significantly. They were able to take the start though, and recovered from dead last to finish just 0.3s shy of the podium in fourth. Cammish went the other way, challenging for the lead early on but, as in race one, the Team Parker-run 911 gradually slipped down the order as team-mate Barrie Baxter struggled to run to the frontrunners' pace.

● Scott Mitchell

RESULTS

Race 1 (32 laps) 1 Jake Giddings/Ross Wylie (Aston Martin Vantage); 2 Oz Yusuf/Gavan Kershaw (Lotus Evora) -1 lap; 3 Andrew Jarman/Devon Modell (Aston Martin Vantage); 4 Tania Mann/Matt Draper (Ginetta G55); 5 Peter Belshaw/Declan Jones (BMW M3); 6 Morten Dons/Aleksander Schjerpen (Ginetta G55). **FL** Kershaw 1m45.731s (91.65mph). **Race 2 (31 laps)** 1 Jarman/Modell; 2 Dons/Schjerpen +4.147s; 3 Yusuf/Kershaw; 4 Giddings/Wylie; 5 Belshaw/Jones; 6 Mann/Draper. **FL** Kershaw 1m45.606s (91.76mph). **Points** 1 Jarman/Modell, 40; 2 Giddings/Wylie, 37; 3 Yusuf/Kershaw, 33; 4 Dons/Schjerpen, 26, 5= Mann/Draper & Belshaw/Jones, 20.



Al Harthy/Caine
Vantage won the
first encounter



Sims (left) took a
pole and a win at his
first British GT event



AF Corse Ferrari scored
a second, but FF Corse
had a dramatic weekend

the United Autosports Audi of Patterson and the Ferrari of Barff's co-driver Gary Eastwood, which had shot up the order as the pitstop window opened just as the lead half a dozen cars flew past the pit entry and started another lap.

Attard took over from Sims in third with Patterson now race leader and Eastwood closing in second. But a costly challenge by the Ferrari driver at the Hislops chicane resulted in contact and both cars retiring with accident damage – and a six-point deduction for the FF Corse man.

This resulted in another safety car period, which threatened to cause the race to end under yellows but was ended with four laps to go. Attard, back in front after his rivals' misfortune, saw off a late charge from Trackspeed's Jon Minshaw to win.

"I think Marco had it in hand," said Sims. "We told him to hurry up and he responded immediately.

It certainly made amends for the first race."

Second for Minshaw and team-mate Phil Keen finally gave the Trackspeed team something to smile about after a tough weekend that involved the sister car of Jody Firth and Warren Hughes being written off in a bizarre practice crash (see news, p77). Howard and Adam claimed the final step on the podium to complete the transformation from the Beechdean squad's disastrous opener a year ago, while Gaw and Dryburgh sealed their biggest points haul in British GT with a fourth place finish, their best in the series to date.

Behind the Aston pair was the Triple Eight BMW. After a slow start from Hines, Johnston took over in 17th place and made the most of the pitstop window, safety car period and other action to fight back to finish fifth. That charge was aided after the M-Sport Bentley, now in the hands of

Rembert Berg, slipped off in the final laps from a certain third – throwing away Bentley's maiden GT3 podium.

RESULTS

Race 1 (35 laps) 1 Ahmad Al Harthy/Michael Caine (Aston Martin Vantage); 2 Pasin Lathouras/Richard Lyons (Ferrari 458 Italia) +3.561s; 3 Andrew Howard/Jonny Adam (AM Vantage); 4 Mark Patterson/Matt Bell (Audi R8 LMS ultra); 5 Phil Dryburgh/John Gaw (AM Vantage); 6 Mark Poole/Richard Abra (AM Vantage). **Fastest lap** Rory Butcher (AM Vantage) 1m36.817s (100.09mph). **Race 2 (32 laps)** 1 Marco Attard/Alexander Sims (BMW Z4); 2 Jon Minshaw/Phil Keen (Porsche 997 GT3 R) +0.456s; 3 Howard/Adam; 4 Dryburgh/Gaw; 5 Derek Johnston/Luke Hines (BMW Z4); 6 Lathouras/Lyons. **FL** Sims 1m36.745s (100.17mph). **Points** 1 Al Harthy/Caine, 31; 2 Howard/Adam, 30; 3 Lathouras/Lyons, 26; 4 Attard/Sims, 25; 5 Dryburgh/Gaw, 22; 6 Minshaw/Keen, 19.

French Kiss:
Hungarian takes
flag at Ricard



AUTO GP PAUL RICARD (F), APRIL 19-20 RD 2/8

Kiss chase in France for Giovesi & Sato

THE GUYS AT MICHAEL ZELE'S

eponymous team were beginning to acquire the dubious honour of being the nearly-men of the Auto GP paddock. Following a winter of renewed efforts, a win had appeared possible in round one at Marrakech, only for the team's Hungarian ace Tamas Pal Kiss to be denied a likely victory by an overambitious passing attempt from Kevin Giovesi.

In the short break to Paul Ricard, Zele's second driver Sergio Campana had walked away from the team. The situation had echoes of 2013, when both of Zele's early signings, Narain Karthikeyan and Luciano Bacheta, departed before the end of the year.

But at Le Castellet everything came good. Former GP3 race winner Kiss produced a superb drive to claim the team's first victory in a year.

In a tight qualifying session, in which the top four were covered by just 0.3s, Giovesi took his second successive pole, ahead of series leader Kimiya Sato and highly impressive rookie Markus Pommer.

A problem with the butterfly on the throttle had disrupted Kiss's qualifying session, and restricted him to fourth. Away from the formation lap it was Marrakech winner Sato's turn to be stuck by gremlins. A gear-selector issue delayed the GP2 driver from pulling away until the remainder of the slender 11-car field had passed.

Erroneously, Sato charged back to recover his front-row grid slot, causing the first start to be aborted. At the second attempt, Giovesi led Pommer and Kiss into Turn 1, while Sato produced "a rocket" to catapult from last to fourth.

The top four held station, separated by 1.5s, until the advent of the mandatory pitstops. Sato was the first of the group to duck into the pits, for new rears. Super Nova countered by calling in second-placed Pommer on the next lap, where he countered the conventional thought process by taking on fronts. Enjoying the responsiveness of his car, Kiss elected to stay out and



**Sato lost part of
wing but still
claimed podium**

bridge a slight gap to Giovesi, before stopping a couple of laps later.

A slow change to Giovesi's right-rear tyre by his Eurotech crew dropped the former GP2 man three positions on the road. Kiss, who had jumped Pommer in the pitstop sequence to move to the front, used a clear road to open a 6.2s margin of victory. Former F2 race winner Pommer struggled with worn rear tyres in the closing stages, but fought off Sato to secure second by half a second. A trio of Italians completed the top six, Giovesi fending off Andrea Roda and Loris Spinelli.

Underlining that it really was Zele's day, there was a recurrence of Kiss's throttle problem in parc ferme, where it jammed on.

After enjoying a 100 per cent pole record in Auto GP this year, Giovesi finally produced the goods in a wet race two by securing his maiden victory over Kiss. The ex-GP2 racer's success is also the first win for series

newcomer Eurotech Engineering, set up by former Durango GP2 boss Ivone Pinton.

In a wet but drying race, Giovesi held off charging race one winner Kiss by just 0.9s at the chequered flag. Sato survived an early skirmish, clipping the rear of Kiss's Zele machine, to take a distant third.

The Japanese driver's result extends his advantage at the top of the drivers' standings to 13 points over Pommer, who finished fourth.

● Peter Mills

RESULTS

Race 1 1 Tamas Pal Kiss (Zele Racing), 25 laps in 33m30.924s; 2 Markus Pommer (Super Nova International), +6.214s; 3 Kimiya Sato (Euronova Racing); 4 Kevin Giovesi (Eurotech Engineering); 5 Andrea Roda (Virtuosi UK); 6 Loris Spinelli (Eurotech). **Race 2 1 Giovesi**, 22 laps in 35m55.369s; 2 Kiss, +0.963s; 3 Sato; 4 Pommer; 5 Michela Cerruti (Super Nova); 6 Sam Dejonghe (Virtuosi). **Points** 1 Sato, 68; 2 Pommer, 55; 3 Kiss, 52; 4 Giovesi, 36; 5 Cerruti, 34; 6 Roda, 30.



**Giovesi won for new
Eurotech squad**

Lappi was so far ahead he could admire the view



EUROPEAN RALLY CHAMPIONSHIP CIRCUIT OF IRELAND (GB), APRIL 17-19 RD 4/11

Lappi conquers the Circuit

FINNS WINNING THE CIRCUIT OF

Ireland are like buses. Not one for more than 30 years, then back-to-back success in Skoda Fabias. For Juho Hanninen in 2012 read Esapekka Lappi last week.

Lappi's drive was well worthy of a Circuit win, and was as sublime as it was unexpected. Even he was taken aback. At a packed Donegall Place start in the centre of Belfast, he'd looked edgy, nervous, a man out of his comfort zone.

He channelled his nervous energy into making a Good Friday great, reeling off seven straight fastest times to establish an 18-second lead over Craig Breen's Peugeot by midway through the first afternoon.

The lead wasn't huge, but that unbeaten run was an achievement in itself and Lappi knew it. "That's shit for the Irishman," he said. "Mentally, this is not so good for him."

Breen knew it too. His day had

been good, but not great. A smashed rear screen on Hamiltons Folly reduced the downforce and stability at the rear of the 208, but it was a monster moment in stage six that really caught his attention.

"I had the biggest moment of my life in there," said Breen. "She was absolutely flat in fifth when we came over a jump and it snapped sideways. I can't remember everything, but I had enough time to think if it went wrong it was going to hurt."

By stage eight, Breen's confidence was back and he took his first fastest time of the event, winning Lough Heaney 2 by a tenth of a second. He then won the next two stages as well, cutting the gap to Lappi to 12.6s at the end of the day.

Unfortunately for the Acropolis Rally winner, that was as close as he could come. A fuel-pump problem on Saturday's opener silenced the Peugeot and Breen's dream of a

Circuit win was shattered.

Lappi passed his stricken rival near the start of the Bulls Brook stage and immediately altered his approach; his nearest rival was now more than a minute and a half behind.

Breen's departure ensured a pointless trip for Peugeot's factory squad after Kevin Abbring retired the other T16 with a radiator problem. He was ahead of Breen at the time.

In comparison to Peugeot's woe, Sepp Wiegand completed the perfect one-two for Skoda. The German edged Robert Barrable in a thrilling final-day fight for second, the Irishman only losing out when he overshot his Fiesta on the penultimate stage. Robert Consani was fourth ahead of top Brit Neil Simpson, who wheeled his Skoda to a superb fifth.

Lappi's win in the glorious Easter sunshine — his second of the ERC season — moves him to the top of the standings, which is probably another reason why the Finn fell in love with Irish rallying last week.

● David Evans

RESULTS

1 Esapekka Lappi/Janne Ferm (Skoda Fabia S2000), 2h06m15.5s; **2 Sepp Wiegand/Frank Christian (Skoda)**, +1m50.0s; **3 Robert Barrable/Stuart Loudon (Ford Fiesta R5)**; **4 Robert Consani/Vincent Landais (Peugeot 207 S2000)**; **5 Neil Simpson/Claire Mole (Skoda)**; **6 Daniel McKenna/Arthur Kierans (Citroen DS3 R3T)**.

Points 1 Lappi, 98; 2 Breen, 69; 3 Wiegand, 48; 4 Vasily Gryazin, 48; 5 Kajetan Kajetanowicz, 44; 6 Robert Kubica, 39.



EURO TOURING CARS

Campos Racing team-mates Nikolay Karamyshev and Igor Skuz conducted a lengthy battle for the lead in the opening European Touring Car Cup race at Paul Ricard in their Chevrolet Cruzes. The race was settled at the last corner when Ukrainian Skuz went wide, giving his Russian rival victory and costing him second place to reigning champion Petr Fulin's BMW. Skuz made amends by winning the second race from Karamyshev.

AUSTRALIAN F3

Chris Anthony won both races on the series' annual trip to the awe-inspiring Mount Panorama in his Dallara-Mercedes. The second race was ultra-close, Anthony holding off Ben Gersekowski and Simon Hodge. The circuit's outright record was smashed, Hodge taking it at 2m02.6701s. In the first race, Gersekowski passed Hodge at mid-distance for second.

ASIAN CARRERA CUP

New Zealander Earl Bamber took the win in the first of two Chinese GP support races at Shanghai, leading home Martin Ragginger and Alexandre Imperatori in the wet. Sunday's dry race went to Asia-based Swiss Imperatori, from Ragginger and Bamber.



Breen dropped out of second



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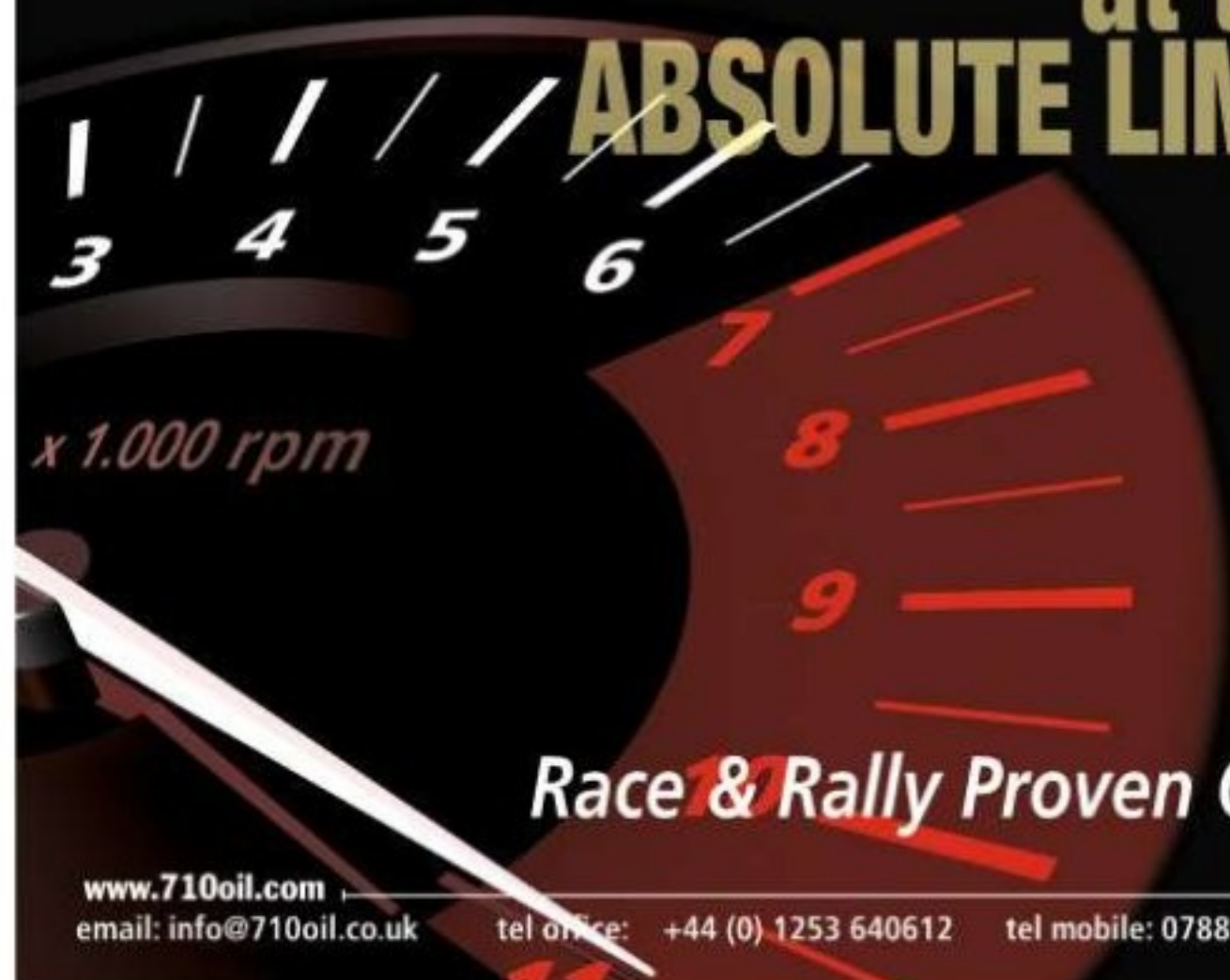
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Gotz/Buhk drew first blood in HTP Merc



BRECHT DECANO

BLANCPAIN SPRINT SERIES NOGARO (F), APRIL 20-21 RD 1/7

Maxi and Maxi take Merc maximum

REIGNING BLANCPAIN ENDURANCE champion Maxi Buhk kicked off his pursuit of this year's Sprint Series crown by winning the main event in the Nogaro opener with Maxi Gotz in their HTP Motorsport Mercedes.

The German duo had finished a quiet sixth on the road in the wet qualifying race, which was dominated by 2013 FIA GT co-champion Laurens Vanthoor and his new WRT Audi partner, Cesar Ramos.

Vanthoor had described that victory as the "start of a great new romantic relationship", but his and Ramos's date was ruined next day when second-place starter Niki Mayr-Melnhof's Phoenix Audi made contact with their R8 as they prepared to line up for the rolling start.

In the confused getaway that followed, Sergio Jimenez burst to the

front in the Team Brasil BMW, with Buhk leading the pursuers.

Jimenez and team-mate Caca Bueno would spend most of the hour looking in their mirrors with faster cars swarming all over them. Buhk was first to escape the train as he drove right around the outside of the Z4 on lap four, and then immediately pulled away.

Vanthoor's 2013 partner Stephane Ortelli and his temporary team-mate in WRT's new satellite G-Drive squad Gregory Guilvert — standing in for Roman Rusinov while he was on World Endurance Championship duty — emerged as the main threat to Buhk and Gotz.

Guilvert worked his way to the front of the queue behind Jimenez and then passed the BMW, before closing the gap to the leader by

virtue of staying out on a clear track until the end of the pit window, whereas Buhk had dived straight in to hand over to Gotz at the earliest opportunity.

Ortelli rejoined four seconds behind Gotz, then whittled away at the leader's advantage until the finish, taking the flag 1.7s adrift.

Bueno held on to third until the final two minutes of the race, when he was shuffled down to fifth by WRT's Silver Cup-class Audi and the second HTP Mercedes driven by Stef Dusseldorp. WRT's young duo Mateusz Lisowski and Vincent Abril were staggered to end up on the podium so soon in their programme.

While Vanthoor and Rast had commanded the qualifying race, second place in the curtain raiser was hotly contested between their team-mates Rene Rast and Enzo Ide and the Grasser Lamborghini of Jeroen Bleekemolen and Hari Proczyk.

The Gallardo had taken pole in Bleekemolen's hands and was in a comfortable runner-up spot until a slow pit exit meant Proczyk had Ide on his tail. The battle that followed ended with Ide pitching Proczyk into the gravel. Although the subsequent stewards' investigation concluded that no penalty was necessary, their technical colleagues then excluded Ide and Rast from second for a rules infraction anyway, promoting Mayr-Melnhof and Markus Winkelhock to the runner-up spot.

The #2 WRT car and Grasser

Lamborghini tussled again in the main race as they fought through from the back, with Bleekemolen holding off Rast for sixth.

Alex Zanardi's motorsport return had some promising moments, including a long spell in ninth in the second race, but ended with a 13th-place finish in his ROAL BMW.

Nelson Piquet Jr's first European racing appearance since his Formula 1 days was disrupted by punctures on his Team Brasil BMW in both races, while 2008 GP2 champion Giorgio Pantano managed eighth in the points race in the best of the McLarens, which he shared with Fabio Onidi.

● Matthieu Biere

RESULTS

1 Maximilian Gotz/Maximilian Buhk (Mercedes SLS AMG GT3), 41 laps in 1h01m21.465s; 2 Stephane Ortelli/Gregory Guilvert (Audi R8 LMS ultra); 3 Vincent Abril/Mateusz Lisowski (Audi); 4 Stef Dusseldorp/Sergei Afanasiev (Mercedes); 5 Caca Bueno/Sergio Jimenez (BMW Z4 GT3); 6 Jeroen Bleekemolen/Hari Proczyk (Lamborghini Gallardo); 7 Rene Rast/Enzo Ide (Audi); 8 Giorgio Pantano/Fabio Onidi (McLaren MP4-12C GT3); 9 Marc Basseng/Alessandro Latif (Audi); 10 Andrea Montermini/Filip Salaquarda (Ferrari 458 Italia GT3). **Qualification Race 1 Cesar Ramos/Laurens Vanthoor (Audi)**, 36 laps; 2 Niki Mayr-Melnhof/Markus Winkelhock (Audi); 3 Jimenez/Bueno; 4 Guilvert/Ortelli; 5 Buhk/Gotz; 6 Afanasiev/Dusseldorp. **Points 1 Gotz/Buhk**, 27; 2 Ortelli/Guilvert, 21; 3 Abril/Lisowski, 15; 4 Bueno/Jimenez, 14; 5 Dusseldorp/Afanasiev, 13; 6 Bleekemolen/Proczyk, 9.

Ramos (left) and Vanthoor begin their 'romantic relationship'



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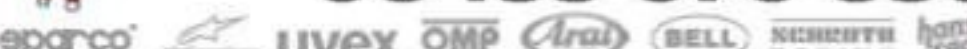
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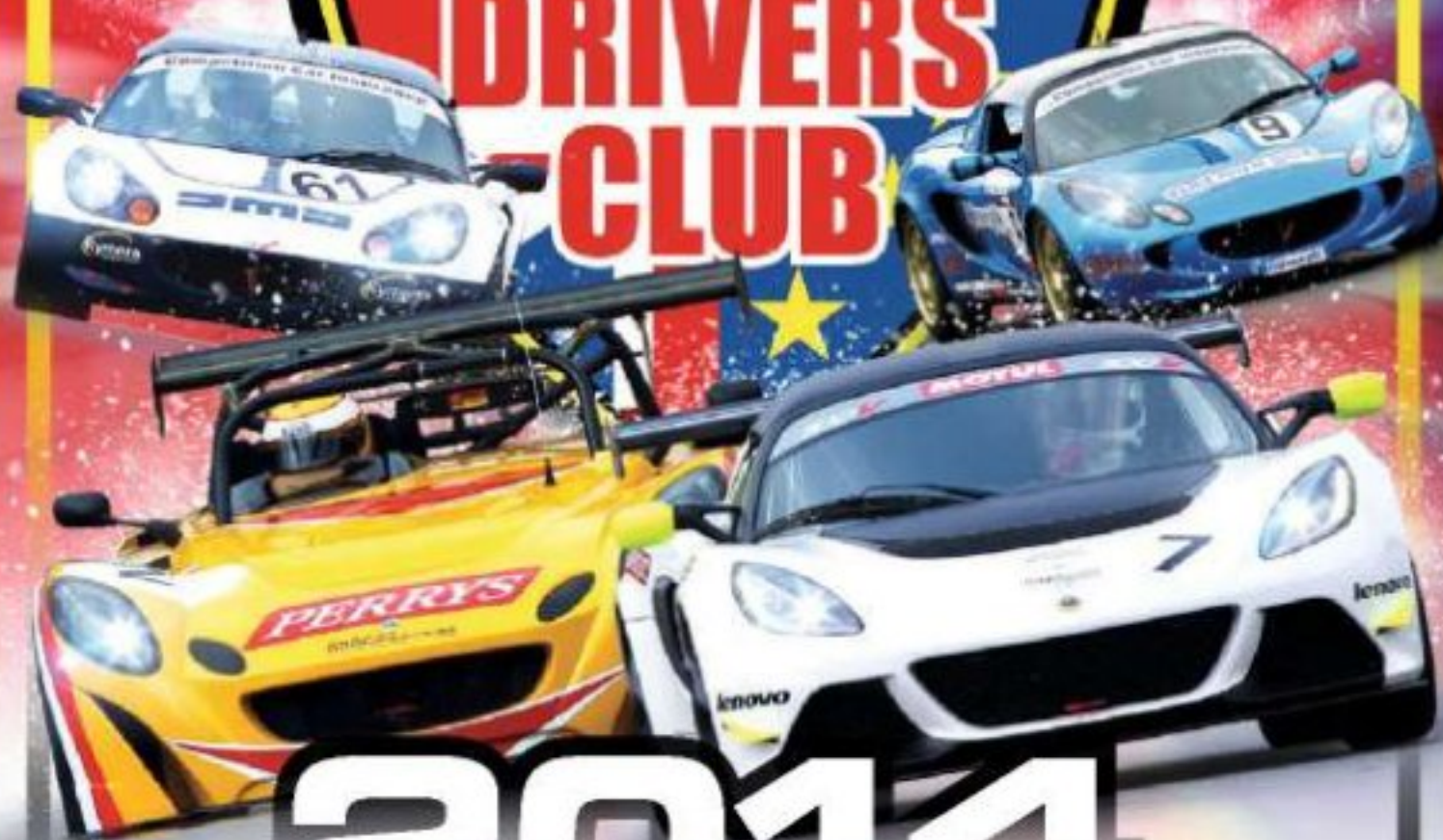
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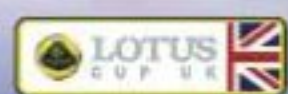
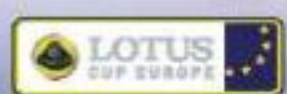
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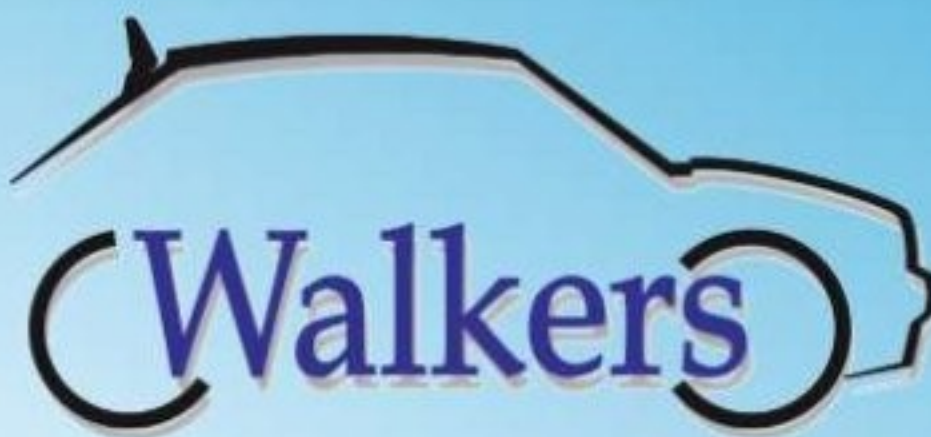


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MOTORSPORT JOBS



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Trackspeed Porsche had to be replaced

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THERE WAS A LOT TO BE

positive about after the British GT opener, but it was hard not to leave Oulton Park disappointed that the usual complaints still did the rounds.

A Balance of Performance row is nothing new. Drivers will always be frustrated if they feel another car has an advantage or they are being pegged back unfairly, and I heard concerns from various drivers over at least three different cars. British GT is in a very good place right now, and what it doesn't need is off-track rows detracting from the on-track spectacle.

Yes, the Aston Martin Vantage was arguably the car to have in Cheshire, with all of the V12 machines featuring at the front in qualifying and Motorbase scoring victory first time out in the hands of Michael Caine and Ahmad Al Harthy. But Alexander Sims and Marco Attard scored a superb win in race two in their BMW Z4, M-Sport's Bentley Continental GT3 showed great promise and the Ferrari 458s and United Autosports Audi R8 LMS ultra were strong podium candidates throughout each encounter.

That goes to show that while the BoP formula might not be perfect, it gets the job done. Series boss Benjamin Franassovici reckons that while it's not often popular, "it works very well" – and while some may disagree over the finer points the fact that so many different makes challenged at the front suggests it's not a million miles away. Hopefully any negativity is kept to a minimum – the big grid, (mostly) well-behaved racing and variety at the front at Oulton were creditable positives to take from the opening weekend and be built on, not something to be overshadowed as the season progresses.



Astons excelled but variety was still good

Insurance claim after shunt

Trackspeed and Triple Eight cars damaged in bizarre practice crash

THE TRACKSPEED AND TRIPLE Eight British GT teams are seeking financial compensation after two cars were heavily damaged in a bizarre accident at Oulton Park.

AUTOSPORT understands a request has been made for the series' insurance information after one of Trackspeed's Porsche 911s and a Triple Eight BMW Z4 were involved in the free-practice-two crash.

Trackspeed's Jody Firth spun at Britten's chicane, with his Porsche hitting the tyres backwards and ending up perched on top of the barrier. Waved yellow flags were used initially and the car was not moved from its position at the side of the circuit and partially on the tyrewall.

Several drivers reported later that the flags were withdrawn, and a few laps after the original incident Lee

Mowle spun approaching the same corner. His BMW hit the stranded Trackspeed car at speed and was seriously damaged in the incident, which meant Mowle and team-mate Joe Osborne – whose best time prior to handing over to Mowle in FP2 was the quickest of the session – were forced to miss both of Monday's races.

Both teams are covered by insurance company MIS Motorsport and while it is not known how much the insurance claim is for, it is understood that both GTs will need to be replaced at a high cost. Both MIS and clerk of the course Bernard Cottrell declined to comment when approached by AUTOSPORT, with the matter now referred to the Motor Sports Association.

Firth, who managed to take part in the pair of one-hour contests in Trackspeed's third car alongside

team-mate Warren Hughes, was furious with the decision not to halt the session and recover the car.

"They should have red flagged the session," he said. "Eight foot off the track is not safe, not at Oulton – or at any track for that matter. It's just not OK."

Mowle was not seriously hurt in the crash but believes officials should learn from the accident.

"It's only when you look at it again 24 hours later you realise just how lucky you are," he said. "There have been too many incidents not dealt with in the past and safety cars issued for much less. There's just too much inconsistency in the decisions."

In addition to the incident on Saturday, some drivers criticised the handling of safety car periods in each of the two races. The first was after it picked up Alex Buncombe in eighth. The lead Aston Martin of Ahmad Al Harthy pitted just as the safety car was brought out and Buncombe and the rest were not cleared to pass it, putting them almost a lap down.

The other issue surrounded the time it took to clear the stricken United Autosports Audi R8 LMS ultra in race two, when the safety car was required for several laps as the car was towed from Knickerbrook to the pits.



Chassis damage ruled out #8 BMW



Berg joined Kane for British GT opener

British GT

Berg joins Kane for Bentley UK bow

REMBERT BERG WAS A LATE substitute for the M-Sport squad's Bentley Continental GT3 at Oulton Park last weekend, helping the car score points on its British GT debut.

Factory Bentley driver Steven Kane was due to be joined at the opener by Humaid Al Masood but the Emirati was unable to attend due to personal reasons.

Berg, who was due to fly to the United States ahead of the

weekend, was approached on Wednesday evening.

"It's not the easiest of tracks to jump in without testing but I know the car and I know the team very well," said the Dutchman, who drove for the team last season and was part of the Continental GT3's development programme.

"I have nothing planned this year so it is a surprise race. It was a very nice privilege that they called me up."

First-lap contact in the opening race meant Berg dropped to the tail of the field but he and Kane battled back up the order, with the latter taking eighth on the last lap.

Having scored points on the car's British GT debut the pair was in a comfortable podium position in race two before a spin from Berg in the closing laps dropped them to the 17th at the finish.

Ex-British Touring Car racer Tom

Onslow-Cole also made his British GT debut after his Strata 21 squad secured a late entry for Oulton. The team inherited Von Ryan Racing's slot after the McLaren MP4-12C outfit was unable to take part.

Onslow-Cole and team-mate Paul White were twice classified 16th in their Nissan GT-R, though had finished ninth on the road in race two before being hit by a 30s penalty for not serving a drivethrough.

British GT

Olympic hero Hoy impresses on British GT debut for Nissan

OLYMPIC CYCLING LEGEND SIR

Chris Hoy overachieved on his British GT debut according to Nissan team-mate Alex Buncombe.

The six-time Olympic gold medalist qualified 14th in the 'Amateur' session before bagging points in his first race in the championship with ninth in race one.

Factory Nissan driver Buncombe believes the Radical SR1 Cup graduate excelled in the circumstances.

"I was really pleased with the job Chris did today," he said. "He did even better than I expected so I'm really chuffed with his performance."

Hoy started the first race and rose to 10th in his Nissan GT-R NISMO before handing over to Buncombe and, despite a tougher second encounter in which



Buncombe (right) was impressed with Hoy

they finished 13th, said it reaffirmed his desire to push on in GT racing.

"I've had an absolutely brilliant weekend," he said. "It's a privilege to be here. Those two races have just confirmed how much I enjoy this. I've definitely got the bug."

British GT

Cammish calls for Porsche help after first GT4 outing

BRITISH GT NEWCOMER DAN

Cammish believes series bosses need to alter the Balance of Performance among the GT4 cars.

Cammish has joined historic racer Barrie Baxter in a Team Parker-run Porsche 911 for his GT bow and finished last of the finishers in both races despite a strong personal qualifying performance.

The British Formula Ford champion topped the media day test and challenged for the lead early in race two, but his car was bottom of both results



Cammish liked Porsche

sheets as Baxter's inexperience meant he tumbled down the order.

"The BoP needs a look at, we've been hit with a load of rideheight and weight, and the car just hates it," he said. "I think it will be a while before we're at the front. But it's good, I enjoyed it."

Despite Cammish's concerns, series boss Benjamin Franassovici believes the rookie's qualifying performance (second) and race pace showed the Porsche had not been unfairly pegged back.

"He's joining from one world to another," he said. "The concept has proven to work – it might not be popular all the time, but it works very well."

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Radical

Radical ace Smith to make European series debut in SR8

BRITISH RADICAL DOMINATOR

Bradley Smith will graduate to the manufacturer's flagship European Masters' championship this season driving an SR8.

The runaway SR3 Challenge champion had been facing a year without a full racing programme but has secured a late deal to step up to Radical's premier series with his Mectech Motorsport outfit.

Smith, who contested the Daytona 24 Hours after winning Radical's Sunoco



Smith was SR3 ace

Challenge last year, is chasing a trio of back-to-back Radical titles after graduating to the SR3 Challenge last year as Clubman's Cup champion.

He has a very limited experience of the SR8 and has no prior knowledge of most of the circuits he will race on, but is hopeful of fighting at the front once he and the team are up to speed.

"It ran a bit late," he admitted, "but we got the car a few days ago and have been preparing it. I've only done one session in an SR8 before and I've never been to any of the European tracks before so it's going to be a big challenge."

"We'll take a sensible approach and hopefully use the first round [at the Nurburgring on May 2-4] as a platform to push on. The guys in the Masters series aren't silly, but we're only going in it to win it. Three in a row would be mega."

Formula Ford

Barlow misses Donington round

BRITISH FORMULA FORD RACER

Jack Barlow was forced to miss the second round of the season at Donington Park last weekend, a legacy of his high-speed testing crash at Thruxton.

The BRDC Formula 4 race winner rolled multiple times after a 125mph off during the official TOCA test the week before the Donington meeting (see AUTOSPORT, April 17).

He escaped serious injury and had hoped to take part after Jamun Racing

repaired the damage to his Mygale, but medics did not pass him as fit to race.

It meant that long-time FFord frontrunner Jamun was absent from the meeting, though Barlow is expected to return for Thruxton on May 3-4.

● Two drivers made their British FFord debuts at Donington. Ford Fiesta driver Bobby Thompson was a guest driver with Meridian Motorsport, while Nigerian racer Ovie Iroko was present as a lone Richardson Racing entry.



Thompson scored a best of fifth at Donington

FIA F4

New Italian Formula 4 racer hits the track for the first time

THE TATUUS-BUILT FIA FORMULA 4 car that will be used in the Italian series has undergone its first track test.

The Abarth-powered F4 T014 completed 120 laps of the Circuito di Vairano in the hands of ACI CSAI Federal School director Raffaele Giammaria.

Italian F4 had been scheduled to start on June 8 this year but it is unclear when the replacement for Formula Abarth will actually kick off after the May 2 Vallelunga collective test was postponed to July 22.

Giammaria, an International Formula 3000 podium finisher, praised the car.

"I believe this is a formula that will suit



New F4 car has hit the track

very well youngsters coming from karting but also drivers with more experience," he said. "Tatuus did a great job with the chassis and we already know the Abarth."

HUMBLE PYE

The voice of club racing



Charteris was the star of an impressive show at Thruxton

Clubmans defeat of F5000 and F2 a Thruxton highlight

Thruxton's Easter Revival event – co-promoted by the HSCC and the (recently rebranded) BARC – grew in stature in its second year and the Hampshire airfield circuit generated racing of the highest calibre across 262 competitors in 13 race sets. Whether saloon, sports, GT or single-seaters are your bag, the spectacle was tremendous in both dry and very wet conditions.

As an unashamed fan of Thruxton's Easter Monday European Formula 2 internationals in the 1970s – I missed the early years when Jochen Rindt, Graham Hill, Ronnie Peterson and Henri Pescarolo won alas, but not a subsequent one – it puzzles me that continental-based Historic F2 racers won't support it (or Hockenheim's Jim Clark Revival in any number for that matter).

Guesting in former Historic F1 racer and Classic F3 champion Peter Williams' 'for sale' March-Hart 782, Neil Fowler gave spectators a tantalising glimpse of two-litre F2 pace with a brilliant demonstration in the first Derek Bell Trophy stanza of the best period chassis after lapping in the 1m10s bracket (just shy of 120mph average) in qualifying.

Having competed in historic events with the ex-Keke Rosberg Chevron B40 (in which Nico's dad won the Enna-Pergusa Euro F2 round on aggregate the Sunday after I joined AUTOSPORT in '77) and several F5000s, I get excited when they are driven well in the DBT series. I loved the five-litre stock block cars in the '70s, thus was disappointed when period race winner Ian Ashley withdrew his Lola T300 following Friday testing.

The performance of the weekend for me was that of Classic Clubmans ace Mark Charteris who – having

hurled his Mallock Mk20/21 round in 1m14.275s to qualify second – battled DBT champion Neil Glover's Lola T330/332 in the dry on Saturday, getting ahead of the 500bhp leviathan several times before power told. On Sunday, Charteris could barely conceal his glee when the rain came hosing down, and he duly trounced even Fowler to win outright.

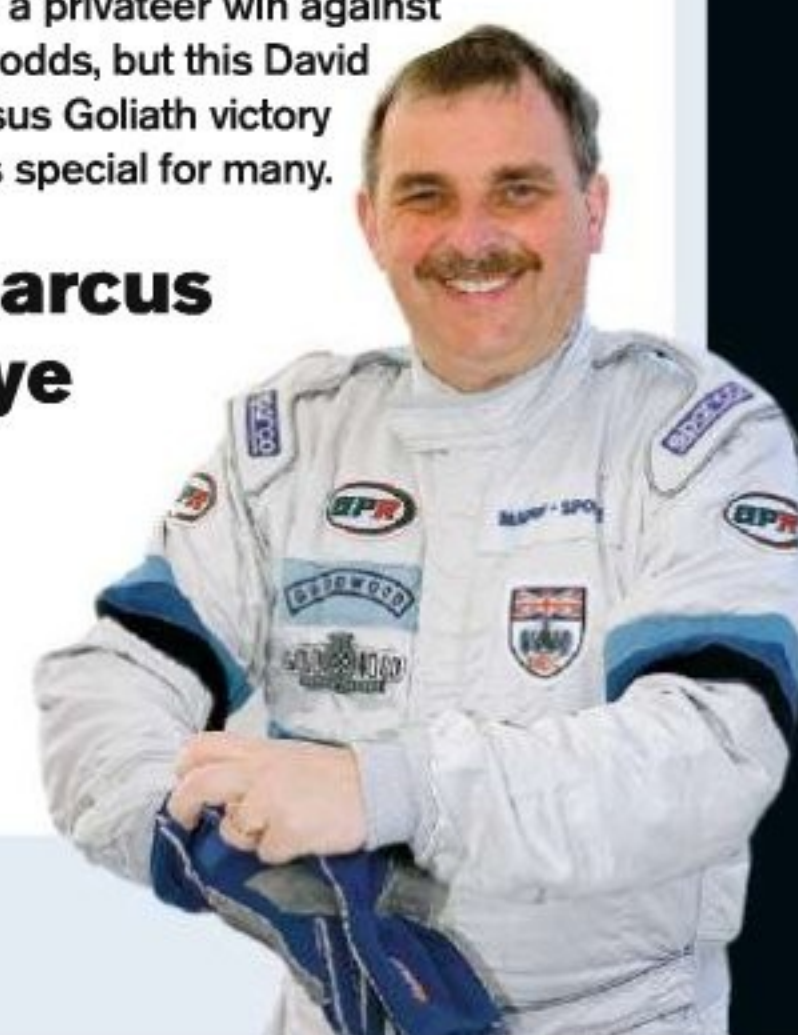
Charteris, who started racing in

"It's always great to see a privateer win against the odds and this was special"

2004 with the Mallock in B-sport trim, toiled all winter with his teenaged son to rebuild the chassis, wrecked as an innocent party in a multi-car shunt at last August's Oulton Park Gold Cup meeting.

Everything forward of the dash bar the engine had to be replaced, but with help from rival John Harrison and his lad, and Mallock Racing, it has bounced back better and quicker than ever. It's always great to see a privateer win against the odds, but this David versus Goliath victory was special for many.

Marcus Pye



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Gallagher's Golf ended up well off the track

VW Cup

VW Cup racers escape big crashes

SOMETIME BRITISH TOURING CAR drivers-turned-Volkswagen Racing Cup competitors Howard Fuller and Kieran Gallagher escaped serious injury after heavy accidents last weekend.

Fuller was at the centre of a massive startline accident in the first Bank Holiday Monday race at Oulton Park. His VW Golf GTI was the worst hit in the multi-car pile-up, having spun across the track and been collected multiple

times by cars within the pack.

The ex-Formula Renault BARC racer was extricated from his car and taken to the circuit medical centre for an initial inspection before being airlifted to hospital for precautionary scans. He was released later the same evening.

His Team HARD stablemate Gallagher avoided the melee but had his own red flag-inducing crash in the second event.

His Golf suffered a brake failure on

the run to Shell corner in the early stages and ploughed through the barriers at high speed. He was not taken to hospital and, though he reported pain in the evening, is expected to make a full recovery.

One Team HARD driver to avoid the chaos was BTCC race winner Paul O'Neill. The ITV pundit was a late substitute for Harry Vaulkhard in another of the squad's Golfs. He qualified 10th and finished 12th on his series debut.



EBREVILAT

In brief

Drivers double up

British GT and TOCA support category racers Devon Modell and Tom Oliphant flew between Oulton Park and Donington Park via helicopter as they contested both meetings last weekend. Modell finished ninth and eighth in the two Renault Clio Cup races and his Aston Martin GT4 debut yielded a third and a win. Oliphant took his first Ginetta GT4 Supercup victory on Sunday at Donington (above) but crashed out of race two on Monday at Oulton.

Wakefield suspended

Ginetta GT4 Supercup racer Josh Wakefield was absent from the races at Donington Park after having his licence suspended, and will miss the next three rounds of the season as well. The former Renault Clio Cup driver picked up the three-month ban after reaching the maximum allowed penalty points for an incident at the opening round at Brands Hatch. Carl Boardley also missed the Donington round and will not contest the remainder of the season due to medical reasons.

Claessens to F4

Lotus Six Hours winner Michael Claessens will compete in BRDC Formula 4 this season after completing Mark Godwin Racing's three-car line-up. The 21-year-old Dutchman won the Brands Hatch event in November last year alongside Sam Hancock, and his car racing experience only extends further to a Lotus Elise Trophy outing two weeks before that.

Fleming's funeral

Al Fleming's family is grateful for the overwhelming support received since his fatal accident at Hockenheim and has invited all racing friends to attend his funeral, which will take place at Kirkcaldy Crematorium in Fife at 11.45 on Wednesday, April 30.

King back with March

American James King, who first raced at Thruxton in 1977 with the works March F3 team, was reunited with the March 76B he raced in the USA and Canada the previous season at the Easter Revival meeting (below).



BLOXHAM

Obituary

Garry Whyte succumbs to his injuries

VINTAGE SPORTS-CAR CLUB

racer Garry Whyte, 26, died on Good Friday, having sustained serious head injuries when he rolled the 1921 GN Gnome at Silverstone six days earlier.

The Scot, who was airlifted to Coventry hospital following the accident, was still heavily sedated when he suffered heart attacks on Thursday and Friday morning.

The VSCC's James Taylor said: "Garry came bounding onto the scene and, having competed in pretty much every race meeting and speed event [as well as trials and rallies], was very popular within the younger



WALKER

Young Whyte was a real enthusiast

VSCC set. He epitomised the VSCC spirit and was 'front and centre' of last October's French [road] trip."

Whyte raced his own Riley 12/4 Special last season, finishing third at Snetterton in September, and contested the VSCC's Goodwood Sprint in the supercharged Gnome owned by Nick Topliss, whose ERA R4A Whyte helped prepare with James Baxter.

Carrera Cup

BMW ace tries Carrera Cup

DOUBLE PRODUCTION BMW

champion Rob Smith made his Porsche Carrera Cup GB debut last weekend.

Smith raced the Redline Racing-run 991 used by Emmerdale actor Kelvin Fletcher at Brands Hatch in preparation for a Porsche-based endurance programme in 2015.

Fletcher will return to the car for the next round at Thruxton while Smith, who contested the Bathurst 12 Hours earlier in the year, will contest the Le Mans 24 Hours support race.

"I want to get to know the Porsche before going endurance racing next season and do the big 24-hour races like Daytona and Spa," said Smith.

"To do Bathurst and Le Mans in a Porsche in the same season is amazing."

Super Touring

Dodds suffer triple tin-top failure

HISTORIC SPORTS CAR CLUB

Super Touring racers Graeme and James Dodd were forced to sit out last Sunday's second race at Thruxton, despite taking three cars to the Hampshire circuit.

Having shaken down their ex-Peter Kox Honda Accord on Friday, it was cannibalised after a driveshaft failed on James' regular ex-James Thompson

example while he was leading Saturday's round. Insufficient wheel clearance in the suspension parts, which were also changed, precluded James from starting.

Father Graeme's ex-Anthony Reid Nissan Primera was sidelined by a broken hub. "It was very disappointing to have a spare car for the first time, but end up with nothing working," said Dodd Sr.



Dodd led before Honda broke

JONES

Cleland scored his first win in a Super Tourer since 1998



ALL PICS: STEVE JONES

THRUXTON, APRIL 19-20 HSCC

78

Making history once again at Thruxton

DOUBLE BTCC CHAMPION JOHN CLELAND and contemporary rival Patrick Watts' (Historic) Super Touring wins, Formula 1 racer-turned-TV pro Tiff Needell repeating his first race victory 42 years on – in the same AUTOSPORT Lotus 69F – and magnificent HRSR Touring Car and Guards Trophy GT lead scraps, the second Thruxton Easter Revival was a fantastic spectacle. Even before Clubmans ace Mark Charteris blew off F2s and F5000s to dominate Sunday's Derek Bell Trophy in his mighty Mallock!

Although the biting wind was omni-present, the event on BARC's

home ground – run by its '60s competitions boss Grahame White, the HSCC's long-time CEO – was one of two halves. Sunday's sullen skies, then rain, painted a 'British Racing Grey' backdrop over Saturday's perfect spring day, on which the racing was exceptional.

Neil Fowler qualified Peter Williams' March 782 on pole for Saturday's DBT opener with a stirring 1m10.884s (119.65mph) charge, then hurtled away, reminding fans of Rad Dougall's '79 European F2 win with a Toleman entry. The scrap in his wake was a gem though, for Charteris repeatedly urged his 185bhp Classic

Clubmans bolide past champion Neil Glover's F5000 Lola T330/332, only to be trumped by American brawn.

Charteris seized Sunday's wet opportunity eagerly. After a lap behind Fowler, he darted past and thrashed allcomers. "I can't believe it, the little car's amazing," he beamed. Fowler's delight was the BARC's Jochen Rindt Trophy, as F2 winner.

Glover, first of many to rotate, left Jon Finch (Chevron B34) third, but John Harrison (Mallock) overhauled the period Toyota Atlantic racer, hounded to the chequer by Greg Thornton whose F5000 Chevron B24's battery died on day one.

James Dodd was tearing away with Saturday's Super Touring race when driveshaft failure halted his Honda Accord. Moments later a broken hub forced father Graeme's Nissan's retirement from third, while shadowing period factory drivers Cleland (Vauxhall Vectra) and Watts (Peugeot 406). Stewart Whyte smashed his own lap record before a massive spin through Church sidelined his Honda. "The first five laps were quite hectic, but no way would I have caught James – he's a little star," said Cleland, having shaken off Watts for his first win of the century!

Neither Dodd car made Sunday's soggy race but Watts passed Cleland when the Scot lost his power steering, then pulled away from

Simon Garrad's Renault Laguna. "Finishing seven seconds behind a Vauxhall [yesterday] would have been a result in our day, but the wet's always a great equaliser," said Watts.

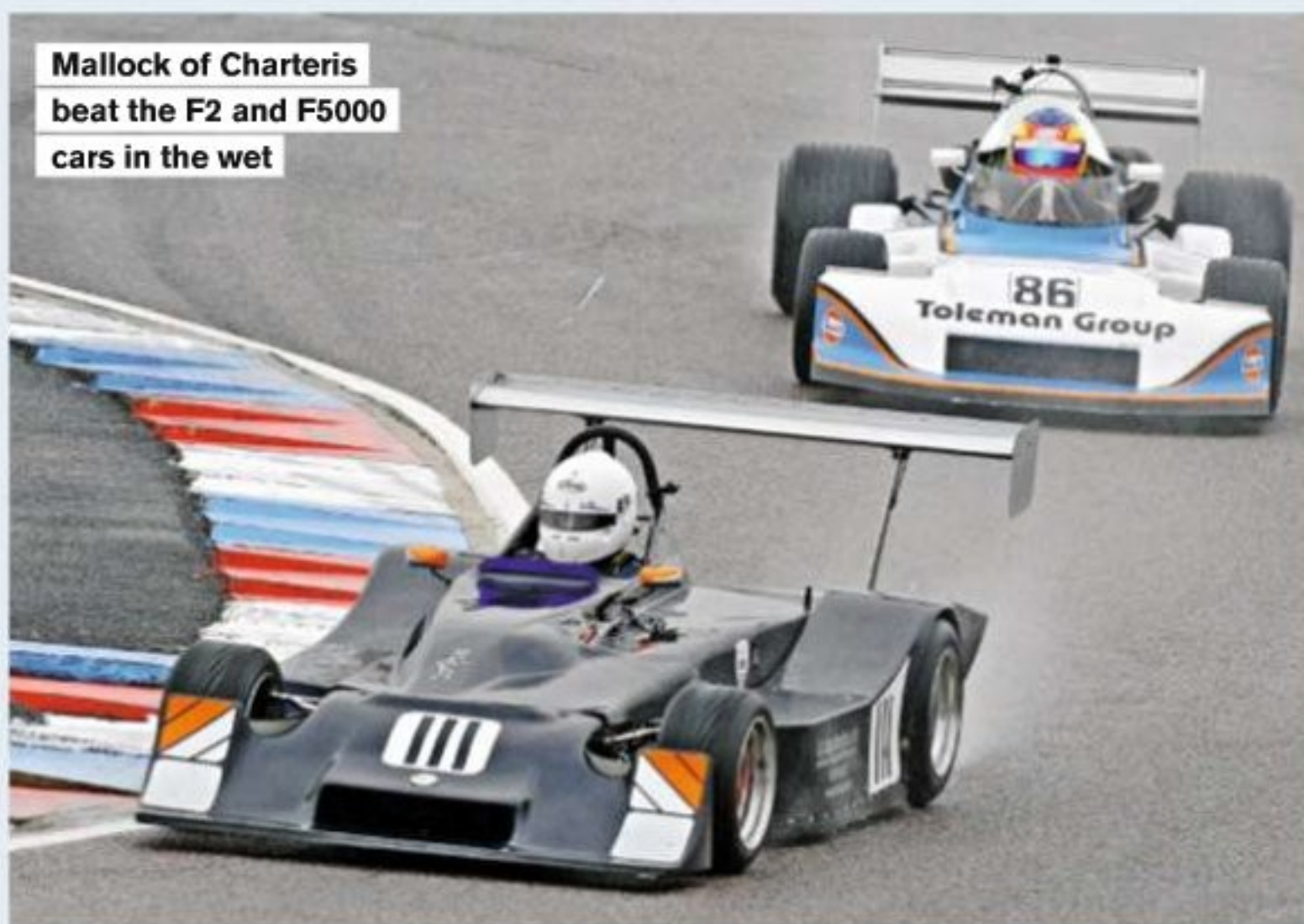
After Historic FF1600 pacemakers Michael O'Brien and Max Bartell had spun (O'Brien when he fluffed a gearchange, Bartell with a helping hand), Needell might thank Daniel Stanzl for Saturday's momentous triumph. In shunting his ex-Danny Sullivan Elden after Noble, the red flag rewarded Tiff, who had just been ousted by Benn Simms (Jomo).

"I won my first race in this very car here, in 1972, and you may have just seen me win my last," grinned Needell, who had to cede to former champion Simms on Sunday, when traffic played a greater part. "Ben was luckier today, so one win each is a fair result," offered Tiff. O'Brien, whose late braking on day one was breathtaking, was an accomplished third again.

Saturday's Pre-'66 Touring Car advantage see-sawed between Neil Brown (Ford Mustang) and Tim Davies (Lotus Cortina). Their display of trust was resolved only at the chicane on the final lap when Brown astounded the Welshman by outbraking him.

With engine legend Brown on Honda BTCC duty at Donington on Sunday, Sean McNerney wielded his weightier BMW 1800Ti skilfully to best Davies, who lost second to Roger

Mallock of Charteris beat the F2 and F5000 cars in the wet



Godfrey (Mini Cooper S). Godfrey had previously demoted fellow former champ Simon Benoy (Hillman Imp) to a strong fourth.

Dorset Elan pedaller Paul Tooms brilliantly beat Mike Whitaker (TVR Griffith) in a stonking Guards Trophy GT encounter. Tooms clung to the V8 monster for 17 laps – either side of the mandatory stop – until Mike “overcooked it” out the back, rewarding him with a first Guards victory. “I was sideways in fourth gear for about a third of each lap, but Paul is a demon driver. He deserved to win today,” said Whitaker.

After their Super Touring woes, the Dodds found consolation with another Guards SR gold in their trusty Ginetta G16. Chris Goodwin, grappling with his ex-Chris Amon 1966 Can-Am McLaren-Chevrolet M1B, chased them all the way. “I haven’t driven here in over 20 years, and it’s quite terrifying in this – but great fun,” he smiled.

The Chevron B8s of buddies Charles Allison and Philip Nelson (Charlie’s finished by Peter Thompson) scrapped for third throughout, Nelson prevailing. Grateful for a set-up tip from Lotus rivals Mike and Andrew Hibberd, Andy Shepherd drove his 23C beautifully to beat them in the Pre-’66 1600cc class.

When runaway leader Andrew Hibberd spun on oil from the split gearbox of Westie Mitchell’s charismatic de Tomaso at Segrave, Callum Grant, 18, nailed his first Formula Junior win at his third attempt. Driving John Sykes’ Merlyn, Grant made Sunday’s double-up look easy, skating away from Chris Drake and Steve Jones as Hibberd scythed from the back to fourth. Andrew’s dad Mike, second on Saturday, hated the conditions thus parked his ex-Peter Arundell Lotus 27.

The Oliver Ford v David Tomlin ’70s Road Sports battle reprised Donington’s opener, but Tomlin took eight laps to reel-in the champion’s Lotus Europa. Shooting ahead up Woodham Hill the Ferrari 308’s right rear tyre blew, spinning Tomlin wildly



Historic Road Sports
field got the worst
of the weather



Needell took
an FF1600 victory
in his old Lotus



Brown makes
surprise move to
win in Mustang

into retirement. Jim Dean’s Europa thus grabbed second, to the chagrin of previous owner Peter Shaw whose TVR Tuscan V6 could not catch it!

A massive storm, which hid the circuit’s edges under standing water and prevented marshals seeing adjoining posts, stopped Sunday’s HRS round. An hour later, Robin Pearce boldly slithered his Morgan +8 clear again in unassailable style. Undeterred by a spin, invitee Ben Adams (Turner) rallied to a fine second, pipping Prof Shepherd’s Lotus 7 and setting fastest lap. Larry Kennedy’s first-lap gyration at Goodwood did not deter the

Witchampton Garage boss’ Elan from regaining fourth.

Reversing their DBT finishing order, Richard Trott (ex-Siegfried Stohr Chevron B43) repelled the determined David Shaw (ex-Nelson Piquet Ralt RT1) to win the Classic F3 race, only Marcus Mussa staying on the same lap. Michael O’Brien topped the amalgamated CRC field.

Back in Stuart Boyer’s FF2000 Reynard, Benn Simms repeated his Donington success, rocketing past Colin Wright in the spray at Goodwood on lap one before leaving allcomers floundering again. Andy Park nabbed second from Wright,

while Tom White (Crossle 33F) claimed Pre-’79 honours despite Antonio Armelin ousting him from fourth overall in a tough tussle.

Ending a stellar weekend, Mark Charteris added the Classic Clubmans trophy to his haul. “I had to work hard for that as I couldn’t see much behind Ray [Mallock],” he said, having taken seven laps to plan a pass that stuck on the former Thruxton Euro F2 and British F1 racer, now touring car engineering guru. ‘Rastus’ Wood maxed Ford Kent momentum in the B-Sport split to deny Barry Webb.

● Marcus Pye

RESULTS

DEREK BELL TROPHY (16 LAPS) 1 Neil Fowler (March-Hart 782) 19m58.058s; 2 Neil Glover (Lola-Chevrolet T330/332) +26.293s; 3 Mark Charteris (Mallock-Ford Mk20/21); 4 Jon Finch (Chevron-BDA B34); 5 John Harrison (Mallock-Ford Mk21); 6 James King (March-BDA 712). **Class winners** Glover; Charteris; Finch; King; David Shaw (Ralt-Toyota RT1). **Fastest lap** Fowler 1m12.861s (116.40mph). **RACE 2 (15 LAPS)** 1 Charteris 20m49.969s; 2 Fowler +39.543s; 3 Harrison; 4 Finch; 5 Greg Thornton (Chevron-Chevrolet B24); 6 Shaw. **CW** Fowler; Finch; Thornton; Shaw; Clive Wood (Van Diemen RF82); Martin Bullock (Chevron B17C). **FL** Charteris 1m21.129s (104.54mph).

SUPER TOURING (15 LAPS) 1 John Cleland (Vauxhall Vectra) 20m12.434s; 2 Patrick Watts (Peugeot 406) +7.244s; 3 Paul Smith (BMW 320); 4 Simon Garrad (Renault Laguna); 5 Dave Jarman (Nissan Primera); 6 Keith Butcher (Nissan Primera ST). **FL** Stewart Whyte (Honda Accord) 1m18.729s (107.73mph).

RACE 2 (14 LAPS) 1 Watts 20m29.242s; 2 Garrad +2.007s; 3 Cleland; 4 Neil Smith (Alfa Romeo 156); 5 Whyte; 6 P Smith. **FL** Watts 1m26.094s (98.51mph).

HISTORIC FF1600 (9 LAPS) 1 Tiff Needell (Lotus 69F) 12m55.758s; 2 Benn Simms (Jomo JMR7) +0.062s;

3 Michael O’Brien (Merlyn Mk20); 4 Maxim Bartell (Merlyn Mk20A); 5 Stuart Baird (Merlyn Mk11A); 6 Brian Morris (Lola T202). **CW** O’Brien. **FL** Bartell 1m24.305s (100.60mph).

RACE 2 (13 LAPS) 1 Simms 21m03.136s; 2 Needell +2.778s; 3 O’Brien; 4 James Buckton (Elden PRH8); 5 Pertti Kiiveri (Kvantti Mk1); 6 Baird. **FL** Simms 1m35.615s (88.70mph).

HRSR HISTORIC TOURING CARS (BOTH 12 LAPS)

1 Neil Brown (Ford Mustang) 19m08.006s; 2 Tim Davies (Ford Lotus Cortina) +0.320s; 3 Sean McNerney (BMW 1800Ti); 4 David Tomlin (Ford Lotus Cortina); 5 Greg Thornton (Ford Mustang); 6 Mike Gardiner (Ford Lotus Cortina). **CW** Davies; Tomlin; Thornton; Gardiner; Roger Godfrey (Austin Cooper S); Simon Benoy (Hillman Imp); John Goldsmith (Ford Mustang). **FL** Tomlin 1m33.275s (90.93mph). **RACE 2** 1 McNerney 21m30.984s; 2 Godfrey +34.819s; 3 Davies; 4 Benoy; 5 Thornton; 6 Tomlin. **CW** Godfrey; Benoy; Thornton; Tomlin; Goldsmith; Gardiner. **FL** McNerney 1m45.793s (80.17mph).

GUARDS TROPHY GT (23 LAPS) 1 Paul Tooms (Lotus Elan) 36m09.228s; 2 Mike Whitaker (TVR Griffith) +9.568s; 3 Craig Davies (Chevrolet Corvette Stingray); 4 Peter Thompson/Charles Allison (Marcos 1800GT); 5 John Spiers (TVR Griffith); 6 Jamie Boot (TVR Griffith). **CW** Whitaker; Colin McKay/Iain Rowley (Jaguar E-type); Andy Bentley/Martin Richardson. **FL** Tooms 1m29.327s (94.95mph).

GUARDS TROPHY SPORTS RACING (28 LAPS) 1 Graeme & James Dodd (Ginetta-BMW G16) 40m14.296s; 2 Chris Goodwin (McLaren-Chevrolet M1B) +2.734s; 3 Philip Nelson (Chevron-BMW B8); 4 Charles Allison/Peter Thompson (Chevron-BMW B8); 5 Nick Thompson/Shawn McClurg (Chevron-BMW B6); 6 Andy Shepherd (Lotus-t/c 23C). **CW** Shepherd; Brian Casey (Lenham-t/c P69). **FL** J Dodd 1m21.390s (104.20mph).

FJHRA HISTORIC FORMULA JUNIOR (14 LAPS) 1 Callum Grant (Merlyn Mk5/7) 20m14.262s; 2 Mike Hibberd (Lotus 27) +34.780s; 3 Steve Jones (Cooper T67); 4 Chris Drake (Elva 300); 5 Richard Smeaton (Wainer); 6 Andrew Wilkinson (Lynx T3). **CW** Drake; Andrew Taylor (Cooper T56); Justin Fleming (Lola Mk2). **FL** Grant 1m24.924s (99.87mph).

RACE 2 (12 LAPS) 1 Grant 21m33.825s; 2 Drake +32.875s; 3 Jones; 4 Andrew Hibberd (Lotus 22); 5 James Hicks (Caravelle Mk3); 6 Wilkinson. **CW** Drake; Taylor; Alex Morton (Bond). **FL** Grant 1m45.708s (80.23mph).

70s ROAD SPORTS (13 LAPS) 1 Oliver Ford (Lotus Europa) 19m55.413s; 2 Jim Dean (Lotus Europa) +16.687s; 3 Peter Shaw (TVR Tuscan); 4 Barrie Woolston (Morgan +8); 5 William Jenkins (BMW 3.0CSL); 6 Paul Anderson (Porsche 928). **CW** Shaw; Woolston; Brian Jarvis (Porsche 924); Jenkins. **FL** Ford 1m26.8s (94.27mph).

HISTORIC ROAD SPORTS (8 LAPS) 1 Robin Pearce

(Morgan +8) 16m21.058s; 2 Ben Adams (Turner Mk2) +18.908s; 3 Andy Shepherd (Lotus 7 S2); 4 Larry Kennedy (Lotus Elan S4); 5 John Shaw (Porsche 911); 6 Jonathan Stringer (Lotus 7 S2). **CW** Shepherd; Shaw; Colin Sharp (Triumph TR5); Richard Owen (Triumph TR2); Adams. **FL** Adams 1m58.713s (71.44mph).

CLASSIC F3 & CLASSIC RACING CARS (8 LAPS) 1 Richard Trott (Chevron-Toyota B43) 12m55.140s; 2 David Shaw (Ralt-Toyota RT1) +0.893s; 3 Marcus Mussa (March-Toyota 763); 4 Hugh Price (March-Toyota 803B); 5 Iain Rowley (Oliroy-Toyota); 6 Michael O’Brien (Merlyn-Ford Mk20). **CW** O’Brien; Mark Linstone (Brabham-MAE BT21). **FL** Trott 1m33.699s (90.52mph).

HISTORIC FF2000 (8 LAPS) 1 Benn Simms (Reynard SF77) 12m31.752s; 2 Andrew Park (Reynard SF81) +21.979s; 3 Colin Wright (Reynard SF79/81); 4 Antonio Armelin (Reynard SF79); 5 Tom White (Crossle 33F); 6 Ben Atkinson-Willes (Reynard SF78). **CW** White. **FL** Simms 1m31.618s (92.57mph).

CLASSIC CLUBMANS (10 LAPS) 1 Mark Charteris (Mallock Mk20/21) 14m06.110s; 2 Ray Mallock (Mallock Mk18B) +11.882s; 3 John Harrison (Mallock Mk21); 4 Spencer McCarthy (Mallock Mk20); 5 Mike Lane (Mallock Mk18); 6 Clive Wood (Mallock Mk20B). **CW** Wood. **FL** Charteris 1m22.149s (103.24mph).



Wheeler leads the Mini pack away at start of tight race

CASTLE COMBE, APRIL 21 CCRC

Wheeler wins Mini Miglia celebration

DRIVING PETER BALDWIN'S 2013 title-winning car, historic Mini racer Dan Wheeler won a corking Mini Miglia opener on a day when Sir Alec Issigonis's immortal brainchild marked its 250th race at Castle Combe.

Rupert Deeth climbed from 15th to second, on Wheeler's bootlid, with David Drew and Tony Le-May in his slipstream, after poleman Aaron Smith non-started with engine problems and Kane Astin slipped to fifth after a brush with Deeth.

Astin was clear of a multi-car fracas at Quarry that stopped the second encounter after a lap. He made a great start to lead the rerun throughout, but Le-May, Drew, Wheeler, James Coulson, Richard Casey, Colin Peacock and series debutant Dan Summerhayes finished in a train a distance behind him.

On Howard's Day – remembering Combe saviour Howard Strawford –

Robert Howard set fastest lap as he tagged onto the main group. Mini legends Ian Curley and Bill Sollis headed the new Classic Cooper S-class runners.

The Spectrums of Ashley Crossey and Nathan Ward headed the 18-car Castle Combe FF1600 qualifiers, but Ward went off on lap one when his throttle stuck open and Crossey lost out to Roger Orgee on lap six. Reigning champion Adam Higgins deposed Orgee to lead, but in a frantic final lap – which featured three place changes – Orgee fought back to win by a length. A grassy moment dropped Crossey to fourth.

Mitsubishi returnee Barry Squibb could not shake off the feisty Keith Dunn's Caterham in the Combe GT race, which boasted an eclectic mix, from Nick Holden's five-litre Lexus V8-powered Toyota GT86 and Doug Watson's BMW 6 Series coupe to Mark Higginson's bizarre Rage buggy.



Orgee (3) pipped Higgins in FF1600

Audi TT stalwart Tony Hutchings topped the 35-car Combe Saloon field but poleman Russell Akers (now with a two-litre engine in his previously 1400cc Vauxhall Astra) kept him honest until a grassy tankslapper at Old Paddock let Charles Hyde-Andrews-Bird's Renault Megane and Mark Wyatt's Astra past. Adrian Slade (Peugeot 106 GTi) underlined his title credentials with a strong Class C win.

Andrew Deviny and Darren Thomas won two gripping Mini Se7en encounters, the first of which strangely went 11 laps although the result was backdated to the mandated 10. Thomas pipped Deviny second time out after leader Ashley Davies got sideways in front of him at Camp on the last lap. An unavoidable tap sent him spinning.

Fastest into his stride, top qualifier Ben Palmer doubled his unbeaten

run in the 2014 MGOC championship to four with two neat performances. Andrew Rogerson led the pursuit first time out, but went off in the opening-lap scramble later on and battled back to sixth. Vince Pain made the biggest gain in race one, climbing from eighth to third ahead of Lee Sullivan and Gary Smith, who finished in the opposite order as Palmer's closest rivals in race two.

The six competitors who started the inaugural Combe Sports Car series became five when Alan Hamilton's Mallock broke on lap one, but the lead battle between Radical men Andy Crockett and Norman Lackford was riveting. Lackford got ahead before Crockett slid off on oil at Tower, and the remaining trio all sampled third and finished together. More cars are needed, but keep the faith...

● Marcus Pye



Hutchings topped saloon thrash in Audi

RESULTS

MINI MIGLIA (BOTH 10 LAPS) 1 Dan Wheeler 13m31.331s (82.08mph); 2 Rupert Deeth +0.287s; 3 David Drew; 4 Tony Le-May; 5 Kane Astin; 6 Richard Casey. **Class winner** Ian Curley. **Fastest lap** Deeth 1m19.196s (84.09mph). **RACE 2 1 Astin 13m28.798s;** 2 Le-May +1.760s; 3 Drew; 4 Wheeler; 5 James Coulson; 6 Casey. **CW** Bill Sollis. **FL** Robert Howard 1m19.137s (84.15mph).

CASTLE COMBE FF1600 (15 LAPS) 1 Roger Orgee (Van Diemen RFOO) 18m27.477s (90.20mph); 2 Adam Higgins (Van Diemen JL12);

+0.129s; 3 Richard Higgins (Van Diemen JL12); 4 Ashley Crossey (Spectrum 011B); 5 Ed Moore (Van Diemen JL013K); 6 David Cobbold (Van Diemen RF89). **CW** Cobbold; Paul Barnes (Swift SC92F). **FL** A Higgins 1m12.492s (91.87mph).

CASTLE COMBE SPORTS & GT (15 LAPS) 1 Barry Squibb (Mitsubishi Lancer Evo 9) 18m11.903s (91.49mph); 2 Keith Dunn (Caterham C400) +0.319s; 3 Tim Woodman (Caterham 7); 4 Doug Watson (BMW M6); 5 Phil Gale (Darrian-Vauxhall T9); 6 Mark Higginson (Rage RT200T). **CW** Dunn; Gale; Dan Williams (Ford

Fiesta ST). **FL** Dunn 1m10.886s (93.95mph).

CASTLE COMBE SALOONS (15 LAPS)

1 Tony Hutchings (Audi TT) 19m36.128s (84.94mph); 2 Charles Hyde-Andrews-Bird (Renault Megane) +1.209s; 3 Mark Wyatt (Vauxhall Astra); 4 Russell Akers (Vauxhall Astra); 5 Julian Ellison (Vauxhall Astra VXR); 6 Dave Scaramanga (VW Bora). **CW** Wyatt; Adrian Slade (Peugeot 106GTi); David Rose (VW Lupo). **FL** Hyde-Andrews-Bird 1m16.200s (87.40mph).

MINI SE7EN (BOTH 10 LAPS) 1 Andrew Deviny 14m43.963s (75.34mph); 2 Ashley

Davies +0.119s; 3 Graeme Davis; 4 Ross Billiton; 5 Ian Deviny; 6 Kieren McDonald. **CW** I Deviny. **FL** Darren Thomas 1m26.226s (77.23mph).

RACE 2 1 Thomas 17m43.974s (62.59mph); 2 A Deviny +0.362s; 3 Spencer Wanstall; 4 Davis; 5 McDonald; 6 Leon Wightman. **CW** Shaun Tarlton. **FL** Davis 1m28.539s (76.95mph).

MGOC (BOTH 11 LAPS) 1 Ben Palmer (ZR160) 15m06.766s (80.79mph); 2 Andrew Rogerson (ZR160) +2.735s; 3 Vince Pain (ZR160); 4 Lee Sullivan (ZR160); 5 Gary Smith (ZR160); 6 Fergus Campbell (ZR160). **CW** Mark Baker

(F); Chris Pollard (B). **FL** Rogerson 1m20.775s (82.45mph) record. **RACE 2 1 Palmer 15m07.681s (80.71mph);** 2 Smith +7.328s; 3 Sullivan; 4 Pain; 5 Campbell; 6 Rogerson. **CW** Baker; Pollard. **FL** Palmer 1m21.346s (81.87mph).

CASTLE COMBE SPORTS RACING (17 LAPS)

1 Norman Lackford (Radical PR6) 20m34.790s (91.69mph); 2 Robert Gillman (Radical ClubSport) -1 lap; 3 Richard Gray (Radical SR4); 4 Neil Harris (Nemesis); no other finishers. **CW** Gillman. **FL** Andy Crockett (Radical ProSport) 1m06.495s (100.15mph).

GINETTA GT5 CHALLENGE OULTON PARK INTERNATIONAL, APRIL 19 & 21

Wins for Simms, Chadwick and Gamble

GARY SIMMS, OLLIE CHADWICK AND George Gamble shared the top step of the podium in three action-packed Ginetta GT5 races.

The safety car was straight into action in race one, after Ben Hyland spun at Cascades and was T-boned by Stuart Pearson's G20. From the green flag it was Simms heading Gamble and Mark Davies. But Chadwick was third at Island and second into Cascades a lap later.

Chadwick then pushed hard for the lead, but Simms kept the door firmly shut to win by 0.4s.

Gamble lost third to Davies, but kept the pressure on. He was joined by Stewart Linn and Dennis Strandberg before Gamble retook

third into Knickerbrook on the last lap, while Linn followed to claim a late fourth over Davies.

Gamble's lightning start gave him the edge over Chadwick and Simms at the start of the second race, with Simms gradually falling back in third.

For four laps Gamble held on, but as they exited Cascades Chadwick dived ahead. Gamble stayed close until the final lap, and was well clear of Simms, while a three-car battle for fourth went Linn's way. Strandberg held off Davies for fifth, before being penalised back to sixth.

The final race was a lights-to-flag win for Gamble, with Chadwick chasing hard throughout. Simms retired early on, which left Linn to go

clear in third, while Davies claimed a late fourth from Strandberg.

Brian Murphy, Pearson and Alex Preston shared the G20 victory spoils.
● Peter Scherer

RESULTS (7 LAPS) 1 Garry Simms 15m33.632s (72.66mph); 2 Ollie Chadwick +0.411s;

3 George Gamble; 4 Stewart Linn; 5 Mark Davies; 6 Dennis Strandberg. **G20 winner** Brian Murphy. **FL** Gamble 1m53.619s (85.29mph).

RACE 2 (8 LAPS) 1 Chadwick 15m10.437s (85.15mph); 2 Gamble +2.260s; 3 Simms; 4 Linn; 5 Davies; 6 Strandberg. **G20** Stuart Pearson. **FL** Chadwick 1m52.081s (86.46mph).

RACE 3 (11 LAPS) 1 Gamble 20m48.140s (85.41mph); 2 Chadwick +1.298s; 3 Linn; 4 Davies; 5 Strandberg; 6 Rob Gaffney. **G20** Alex Preston. **FL** Gamble 1m52.443s (86.18mph).



VW RACING CUP OULTON PARK INTERNATIONAL, APRIL 19 & 21

Mason leads the way but shunts mar VW openers

TWO RED FLAGS AND ONLY FOUR racing laps from two starts gave the VW Racing Cup an incident-filled start to the season. But defending champion Aaron Mason still managed to come to the fore, leading both races when they were stopped.

The first race was red-flagged after one lap as Howard Fuller spun and was collected by the pack at the start. Mason led, from Jack Walker-Tully, James Greenway and Stewart Lines,

but the race was declared void as Fuller was extricated from his car.

Saloon car debutant James Greenway rocketed away to an early lead in race two, with Mason and Joe Fulbrook slotting in behind. But on the second lap ex-Formula 4 racer Greenway was back to third as they exited Cascades, and Mason started to build a decisive lead.

Mason was well clear but, having fallen away, Greenway had started to



come back at Fulbrook for second place when the race was stopped. This time it was for Kieran Gallagher, who suffered a suspected brake failure into Shell.

David Sutton had been under pressure from Lines, Walker-Tully and Sam Morgan, and had slowed as they went into Knickerbrook. He began to lose places but the race stoppage allowed him to retain fourth place on countback.

● Peter Scherer

RESULTS (4 LAPS) 1 Aaron Mason (Scirocco) 7m42.623s (83.79mph); 2 Joe Fulbrook (Golf) +2.664s; 3 James Greenway (Scirocco); 4 David Sutton (Scirocco); 5 Stewart Lines (Scirocco); 6 Jack Walker-Tully (Scirocco). **FL** Mason 1m53.280s (85.55mph).



In brief

Northern Sports & Saloons

Mike Cutt's BMW M3 led from the start of race one at Oulton Park, but lost out to the Lotus Europa of Andrew Wareing on lap four. Paul Brydon's BMW E46 M3 (above) followed into second and took Wareing around the outside at Druids a lap later to secure victory, with Peter Cook (Mitsubishi) completing the podium as Cutt fell to fifth. Brydon was never headed in race two, with Wareing demoting Cutt again for second on lap two.

Trackday Trophy

The Toyota MR2 Turbo of Leon Bidgway and Andy Chapman was never headed at Oulton, taking pole comfortably and setting fastest lap. The Stephen Johansen/Guy Pettit SEAT Leon was close for a while, after they demoted Mark Penny's Vauxhall VX220 early on. But Penny was promoted back to second after Johansen and Pettit were one of three crews to get a post-race penalty for too short a pitstop. The Rick Bromley/Andy Montgomery Mini was fourth.

Aston GT4 Challenge

Brothers Liam and Kieran Griffin were dominant lights-to-flag winners, crossing the line 1m46s clear after 51 laps of the Oulton International circuit. Paul Whight looked secure in second after Tim Eakin coasted into the pits out of fuel but, after Bob Berridge took over from Whight, he was tripped up by a backmarker. Despite contact and briefly losing a place, Berridge was soon well clear of Paul Cripps, who completed the podium in the car started by Mike Brown.

HV8R Bernie's V8s

MGB V8 driver Simon Cripps was left with a clear lead in race one after early pacesetter John Wilson pitted in his MGB GT V8 (below, leading). Bernie Chodosh (Chevy Corvette) and Cheng Lim (Cobra) completed the podium. In race two Lim took both Chodosh and Cripps into Old Hall on lap three, but was second best to experienced GT racer Oliver Bryant's Morgan +8 for the rest of the race.



Ellesley took a brace of narrow Fiesta victories



FORD FIESTA CLASS C SNETTERTON 300, APRIL 19-20 BRSCC

Ellesley wins latest duel of the Davids

HAVING TAKEN A WIN APIECE IN THE first round of the Class C Fiesta championship at Silverstone two weeks before, David Ellesley and David Grady also grabbed the limelight on the Snetterton 300 circuit. But this time an impressive Ellesley had the edge, claiming narrow wins in both races.

Ellesley saw his early lead in race one cancelled out by red flags, but he asserted himself again on the

restart and repelled Grady's attentions to secure victory.

It was similarly close behind, as Charlie Ladell overtook Dan Holland for third on lap three and just held him off to the finish. Further back, Joe Ferguson shaded Nathan Lawley for fifth.

Round two in the battle of the Davids rumbled throughout a tense sequel. Although Ellesley once more led away from pole, he couldn't

relax for a moment as Grady snapped at his heels. The gap between them rarely extended beyond a second, but Ellesley was able to find an answer to his rival's every challenge. "We both know where our strengths and weaknesses are," explained the victorious Ellesley afterwards.

With an unfortunate Holland retiring with engine problems on the opening lap, third-placed Ladell

pulled away from Lawley to claim another podium place.

● Oliver Timson

RESULTS (6 LAPS) 1 David Ellesley 13m51.623s (77.11mph); 2 David Grady +0.323s; 3 Charlie Ladell; 4 Daniel Holland; 5 Joe Ferguson; 6 Nathan Lawley. **Fastest lap** Grady 2m17.031s (77.99mph). **RACE 2 (9 LAPS)** 1 Ellesley 20m42.412s (77.42mph); 2 Grady +0.855s; 3 Ladell; 4 Lawley; 5 Andrew Taylor; 6 Rory Green. **FL** Ellesley 2m16.803s (78.12mph).

GOLF GTI SNETTERTON 300, APRIL 19-20 BRSCC

Gusterson takes the fight to reigning champion Hill

REIGNING CHAMPION SIMON HILL got his 2014 season off to a flying start in the first race of the Production GTI championship by guiding his Golf into the lead at the opening corner and staying ahead.

While polesitter John Mawdsley fell back to third, an on-form Simon Gusterson set fastest lap as he sped from sixth on the grid to claim runner-up spot, chasing Hill across the line. Meanwhile, Christopher Skipp made up even more ground, vaulting from row 11 to finish fifth.

Although race two featured little movement in the top eight places throughout, the key change came in the final few yards. Having loomed

large in the mirrors of long-time leader Hill from the start, Gusterson snatched a dramatic victory on the drag to the flag. Mawdsley, the 2012 champion, once more completed the podium places.

● Oliver Timson

RESULTS (BOTH 7 LAPS)

1 Simon Hill 16m57.961s (73.49mph); 2 Simon Gusterson +0.718s; 3 John Mawdsley; 4 Tim Hartland; 5 Christopher Skipp; 6 Chris Webb. **Class winner** Dean Clayton. **FL** Gusterson 2m23.212s (74.63mph). **RACE 2** 1 Gusterson 16m53.588s (73.81mph); 2 Hill +0.334s; 3 Mawdsley; 4 Skipp; 5 Martyn Walsh; 6 Webb. **CW** Craig Roberts. **FL** Gusterson 2m23.115s (74.68mph).

Winstanley was top Superlight runner



CATERHAM R300 SUPERLIGHT SNETTERTON 300, APRIL 19-20 BRSCC

Winstanley wins twice as Head stars in Superlight

EX-TV RACER DANNY WINSTANLEY proved peerless in the first Caterham Superlight R300 double-header of the year. He easily converted pole to the lead in race one, before driving away from the rest for an imperious victory.

Meanwhile, a three-way scrap raged for second, with Jon Barnes finally emerging ahead. David Robinson chased Barnes across the line in third, only to be demoted a place for exceeding track limits.

Winstanley starred again in the sequel, leading from start to finish, but this time he had to share the limelight with Aaron Head. He had

to start from the back, having retired early from race one with driveshaft failure, but Head flew through the pack to be second within just three laps. Although he pushed hard to the finish, Head couldn't bridge the gap to the leader.

● Oliver Timson

RESULTS (BOTH 15 LAPS) 1 Danny Winstanley 31m20.108s (85.27mph); 2 Jon Barnes +9.501s; 3 Mike Robinson; 4 David Robinson; 5 Terry Langley; 6 Jason Redding. **FL** Winstanley 2m03.828s (86.31mph). **RACE 2** 1 Winstanley 31m23.853s (85.10mph); 2 Aaron Head +4.660s; 3 Barnes; 4 D Robinson; 5 M Robinson; 6 Langley. **FL** Winstanley 2m04.611s (85.77mph).

Gusterson hounds Hill before making his late move



NATIONAL RESULTS ROUND-UP

OULTON PARK APRIL 19 & 21, BRSCC



NORTHERN SALOONS & SPORTS (9 LAPS)

1 Paul Brydon (BMW M3) 16m58.543s (85.63mph); 2 Andrew Wareing (Lotus Europa) +0.290s; 3 Peter Cook (Mitsubishi E9); 4 Andrew Morrison (SEAT Leon Cupra); 5 Mike Cutt (BMW M3); 6 David Botterill (Porsche 944 Turbo). **Class winners** Cook; Morrison; Neil Claxton (Suzuki SC100); Paul Moss (Citroen Saxo); Neil Finnighan (Caterham R400); Simon Mayne (Fisher Fury); Clinton Ewen (Austin Mini); Steve Kirtan (Vauxhall Corsa).

Fastest lap Wareing 1m49.144s (88.79mph).

RACE 2 (7 LAPS) 1 Brydon 13m01.440s (86.81mph); 2 Wareing +7.050s; 3 Cutt; 4 Morrison; 5 Botterill; 6 Cook. **CW** Cutt; Cook; Claxton; Moss; Ewen; Mayne; Steven Craggs (Ford Fiesta); Finnighan. **FL** Brydon 1m49.742s (88.30mph).

MSV TRACKDAY TROPHY (13 LAPS) 1 Leon Bidgway/Andy Chapman (Toyota MR2 Turbo) 28m36.205s (73.41mph); 2 Mark Penny (Vauxhall VX220) +22.998s; 3 Stephen Johansen/Guy Pettit (SEAT Leon Supercopa); 4 Rick Bromley/Andy Montgomery (Mini); 5 James Bird/Andrew Stacey (Mini Cooper S); 6 Aaron Harding/David Slater (Renault Clio). **CW** Penny; Bird/Stacey; Nick De-Jesus (BMW 318i Compact); Adrian Timpson (Toyota MR2). **FL** Bidgway/Chapman 2m00.736s (80.26mph).

AMR GT4 CHALLENGE (51 LAPS) 1 Liam Griffin/Kieran Griffin 1h40m57.924s (81.58mph); 2 Paul Whight/Bob Berridge +1m45.764s; 3 Mike Brown/Paul Cripps; 4 Tom Black/Chris Kemp; 5 David Tinn/John Dickson; 6 Tim Eakin/Richard Taffinder. **FL** L. Griffin 1m46.411s (91.07mph).

HV8RA (11 LAPS) 1 Simon Cripps (MGB V8) 20m48.504s (85.38mph); 2 Bernie Chodosh (Chevrolet Corvette) +15.726s; 3 Cheng Lim (Cobra); 4 Pete Hallford (Chevrolet Corvette); 5 Bernard Foley (MGB GTV8); 6 Grahame Bryant (Morgan +8). **CW** Chodosh; Foley. **FL** John Wilson (MGB GTV8) 1m51.591s (86.84mph). **RACE 2 (7 LAPS) 1 Oliver Bryant (Morgan +8) 13m18.673s (84.93mph);** 2 Lim +1.674s; 3 Cripps; 4 Phil Keen (Chevrolet Malibu); 5 Foley; 6 Zoe North (Sunbeam Tiger). **CW** Cripps; Foley. **FL** Lim 1m52.218s (86.36mph).



SNETTERTON APRIL 19-20, BRSCC

CATERHAM TRACKSPORT (13 LAPS) 1 Stephen Nuttall 30m48.569s (75.16mph); 2 Andres Sinclair +0.128s; 3 Paul Croll; 4 Mike Evans; 5 Pete Fortune; 6 Michael Coulten. **FL** Fortune 2m13.879s (79.83mph).

RACE 2 (12 LAPS) 1 Nuttall 32m11.394s (66.40mph); 2 Sinclair +0.948s; 3 Fortune; 4 Croll; 5 Coulten; 6 Evans. **FL** Sinclair 2m15.956s (78.61mph).

CATERHAM ROADSPORT (BOTH 9 LAPS) 1 Henry Heaton

20m42.514s (77.41mph); 2 William Smith +0.034s; 3 Timothy Dickens; 4 Dan Gore; 5 Richard Osgerby; 6 Max McDonagh. **FL** Chris Hutchinson 2m15.763s (78.72mph).

RACE 2 1 Heaton 21m58.554s (72.95mph); 2 Hutchinson +0.185s; 3 Cedric Bloch; 4 Jack Brown; 5 Gore; 6 Rob Clay. **FL** Hutchinson 2m17.498s (77.73mph).

OSS (11 LAPS) 1 Tony Sinclair (Jade 3 V6) 21m39.988s (90.43mph); 2 Darren Luke (Juno Duratec) +8.434s; 3 Craig Fleming (Juno TR250); 4 Craig Mitchell (Ligier JS49); 5 Josh Smith (Radical PR6); 6 Graham Cole (Jade Trakstar).

CW Luke; Smith; Peter Drennan (Global GT Light). **FL** Sinclair 1m47.088s (99.80mph). **RACE 2 (8 LAPS) 1 Fleming 15m50.061s (89.99mph);** 2 Sinclair +3.942s; 3 Cole; 4 Mitchell; 5 Smith; 6 Jonathan Hair (Nemesis). **CW** Sinclair; Smith; Paul Fitzpatrick (Global GT Light). **FL** Sinclair 1m49.457s (97.64mph). **RACE 3 (11 LAPS) 1 Sinclair 19m58.982s (98.05mph);** 2 Fleming +0.696s; 3 Mitchell; 4 Smith; 5 Hair; 6 Simon Tilling (Ligier JS49T). **CW** Fleming; Smith; Drennan. **FL** Sinclair 1m47.362s (99.55mph).

CATERHAM SUPERSPORT (10 LAPS) 1 Paul Thacker 22m10.382s (80.33mph); 2 Mike Hart +0.213s; 3 Jonathan Mortimer; 4 Adam White; 5 Steve Day; 6 Matt Dyer. **FL** Danny Killen 2m10.895s (81.65mph).

RACE 2 (9 LAPS) 1 White 20m01.971s (80.02mph); 2 Hart +0.276s; 3 Mortimer; 4 Day; 5 Graham Johnson; 6 Killen. **FL** White 2m11.735s (81.13mph).

FORD FIESTA A, B & D (8 LAPS) 1 Edward Cockill (Zetec S) 20m49.600s (68.42mph); 2 Jack Williams (Si) +24.714s;

Sinclair's Jade took two wins at Snett



3 James Appleby (Zetec S); 4 Al Daly (Zetec S); 5 Ian Scruton (Si); 6 Simon Roud (Zetec S). **CW** Williams; Mike Hooper (Zetec). **FL** Cockill 2m26.092s (73.15mph). **RACE 2 (9 LAPS) 1 Cockill 21m39.818s (74.00mph);** 2 Williams +13.595s; 3 David Abbott (Zetec S); 4 Appleby; 5 Daly; 6 Roud. **CW** Williams; Hooper. **FL** Cockill 2m22.612s (74.94mph).

FORD FIESTA JUNIOR (BOTH 9 LAPS) 1 Robert Cox 21m33.380s (74.37mph); 2 Geri Nicosia +13.712s; 3 Michael Higgs; 4 Thomas Grundy; 5 Samuel Watkins; 6 Jessica King. **FL** Cox 2m21.863s (75.34mph).

RACE 2 1 Higgs 21m41.522s (73.90mph); 2 Nicosia +0.727s; 3 Grundy; 4 Nathan Edwards; 5 Watkins; no other finishers. **FL** Cox 2m21.919s (75.31mph).

Wareing's modified Europa took two seconds in Northern Saloons & Sports



Caterham Roadsport racers Smith and Osgerby got a bit took close at Snetterton



Griffin brothers were dominant in the Aston GT4 Challenge at Oulton

Sophomore success?

BRDC Formula 4 exploded onto the UK single-seater scene in 2013 with big grids and close racing in its debut year. SCOTT MITCHELL looks at how its second season is shaping up

Twelve months on from the eve of BRDC Formula 4's inaugural season and the championship is readying itself for a year of proving it has slotted in as Britain's top junior single-seater series.

It seems incredible with hindsight that a year ago FIA single-seater commission president Gerhard Berger questioned whether Jonathan Palmer's series was "right for young drivers". In the months that followed his suggestion it became clear that to doubt BRDC F4's immediate success would be to ignore grids of 20-plus cars and a cast of drivers from which half of the McLaren AUTOSPORT BRDC Award shortlist was formed.

That left little doubt that Palmer and the British Racing Drivers' Club had, at the very least in the short term, struck a winner with the new formula. The question at the end of



World karting champ Eastwood is one of many rookies

the season, quite obviously, then became 'will it be that good next year?' – and the signs are positive.

As you'd expect from a championship that averaged 20 cars and produced three Award finalists, interest has been high over the winter. That's led to the confirmation of 22 drivers ahead of this weekend's

Silverstone opener, with Palmer confident of pushing that number higher, and the majority of those are new to single-seater racing. The average age of the grid is under 18 (the youngest of the three mainstream single-seater series in the UK), with only two drivers out of their teens (David Wagner and

"Second years are often harder than the first. What is encouraging is this will be even better"

Jonathan Palmer

Michael Claessens, both 21).

Understandably, given the car has only been racing for a year, there is no dramatic change to the Ralph Firman-designed F4-013. A few tweaks over the winter, centred on upgraded dampers, were introduced at a cost of around £3-4k and have contributed to a

BOOSTING BRITAIN'S APPEAL

In recent seasons the UK's various single-seater struggles has led to Britain gradually lose its place as the place to go and race formula cars.

While attracting international drivers on a regular basis has not really been the case for a while, the rise of Formula Renault Eurocup and NEC in recent seasons has also led to many young Britons looking to move to Europe as early in their careers as possible.

The spread in this year's BRDC Formula 4 field suggests that the championship has gone some way to reversing both of those scenarios. Twelve nationalities will be represented on this year's grid, but half the field is British and the majority of those drivers are in their

first year of car racing.

Excluding Britain and Ireland, the series has attracted drivers from Brazil, Denmark, Holland, India, Malaysia, Mexico, Norway, South Africa, the USA and Venezuela.

That South American appeal has been boosted by coverage of the series on Fox TV, with the Escuderia Telmex programme – the same one Sauber Formula 1 driver Esteban Gutierrez is part of – placing two drivers, Diego Menchaca and Rodrigo Fonseca, with the Douglas Motorsport squad.

In addition to the Mexican young driver scheme, the new Petroball Racing set-up has backing from Brazil and has bought a new base and team house in Milton Keynes.



Mexican Telmex scheme has placed drivers in BRDC F4



Lanan looks strong again, with rookie Russell impressing

BRDC F4 CALENDAR

DATE	CIRCUIT
April 26-27	Silverstone
May 17-18	Brands Hatch
June 21-22	Snetterton
July 18-19	Oulton Park
August 16-17	Silverstone
August 30-31	Brands Hatch
September 20-21	Donington Park
October 25-26	Snetterton

small step up in performance, but stability is the key for this year. It's not broke, so why fix it? That's a sensible approach to the car, but in terms of the grid it's all changed at the sharp end.

Typically, being a proving ground, the top six drivers from 2013 have all moved on, with seventh-placed Raoul Hyman the top second-year sticking around for another season with HHC Motorsport. Only five other drivers return from BRDC F4's inaugural year, and two of them – Sennan Fielding and Falco Wauer – were not present full-time in 2013.

There should be no concerns over the pedigree of the grid, though. The entry list includes karting aces with World and European titles in Charlie Eastwood and George Russell, last year's Formula Renault BARC champion Chris Middlehurst and

category race winner David Wagner, plus former Ginetta Junior frontrunners Sennan Fielding, Will Palmer and Tom Jackson.

Of the overseas contingent, a legion of international karters join the field, in addition to an ADAC Formula Masters race winner in Danish racer Nicolas Beer and ex-Formula 1 driver Rubens Barrichello's protege Gaetano di Mauro in the new Brazilian-backed Petroball Racing team.

That means the task of judging who is best placed to succeed Jake Hughes as champion is made all the more difficult. Struan Moore is the only BRDC F4 race-winning driver in the field, and joins the Lanan Racing outfit that ran Hughes to the title last year. Moore topped the official media day test last week, but it's another Lanan driver – car racing rookie Russell – who several have earmarked

as the early favourite, including team boss Graham Johnson. Rival chiefs and series head Palmer have picked him out as one to watch too.

Another expected frontrunner, the more experienced Middlehurst, believes it would be foolish to single out any driver as the man to beat because of how closely matched last year was. While Moore topped testing, a few rookies surprised in the top 10 and some of the expected pacesetters languished in the times. Middlehurst believes that is proof that testing has been inconclusive and the pecking order will only be revealed come the first round.

"We're going to be on it at Silverstone for sure," he said. "The media day test was about setting the car up and trying new things. I intend to be out attacking from the start. You've got no other option

really because it's so close."

While Russell, whose racing campaign has already kicked off with an impressive brace of top 10s at the 40-car Formula Renault ALPS opener at Imola, has been tipped to thrive, there's not a shortage of potential race winners. That, according to Palmer, is what could make the category's sophomore campaign trump 2013.

"Second years are often harder than the first year," he admits. "You have a honeymoon effect. It was very successful, but what's particularly encouraging is the second year is going to be better."

"It's not just the number it's the quality of the drivers – the best in the UK and a strong international element. I'm very pleased but I'm not surprised. It's unique in the world and is really thriving."



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THIS WEEK

LETTERS • BEST PICS • LATEST GEAR • ON TRACK & SCREEN • ONLINE

What you think of the motorsport news of the past week



It's likely we'll see
Lewis doing a lot
more of this in 2014

Waving the flag for Hamilton

At the risk of sounding overly nationalistic, I'm keeping everything crossed in the hope of a British world champion this year. I reckon it's about time!

As a long-standing motorsport fan (first grand prix attended in 1982), I've watched Lewis Hamilton grow up in the spotlight, and it's a pleasure to see how the precocious talent that fired my enthusiasm a decade ago in F3 could well deliver a second F1 title.

So often we laud the stars of the past, but fail to fully appreciate what's going on in front of our noses right now. Can you imagine, back in Michael Schumacher's Ferrari heyday, the tifosi dozing off en masse as he steamrolled his way to yet another grand prix win?

Obviously, I'm hoping this season brings us a lot more Bahraïns and a lot fewer Shanghaïses...

Frances Stewart, London SE13

Yes! What a weekend for
motorsport: BTCC, WTCC and
Mark Webber's first podium with
Porsche in the WEC at Silverstone.

And, oh yes, another (yawn) win
for Mercedes with Hamilton in
Formula 1. I hope we don't have the
same problem with the same team
winning each time, like we had with
Red Bull for years.

The only interesting bit of the race
was the spoilt-child attitude of Vettel
when he was told to pull over and let
his much faster team-mate through.
Danny passed him anyway!

Roll on the next touring car/
WEC weekend!

Patrick Wickham
Buckingham

When can we start booing
Lewis Hamilton for winning so often?
Dr Paul Sheldon
By email

The forthcoming cost-capping
meeting really has got F1 caught
between a rock and a hard place.

On the one hand, the need to achieve
sustainability and thus encourage a
longer term future for the sport has
to be laudable. However, any such
measures that restrict spending
are less so and surely go against
the sport's fundamental principles.

The essence of competition is all
about being the best and/or finding
ways to beat the opposition. There
is no reason for this to change,

and perhaps other methods should
be sought to prevent the potential
loss of any teams.

Money, or the lack thereof, does
not always prevent shock results
from occurring.
Michael Brierley
Stalybridge, Cheshire

In questioning Red Bull's
"integrity and sense of fair play",
I wonder if Ron Dennis's memory
stretches back to 2001, when he
convinced Adrian Newey to stay
with McLaren despite him signing
a contract to move over to that
very team (as Jaguar).
Michael Walsh
By email

In pictures

Images around the globe, from Belfast to Silverstone, via Paul Ricard



NEW EURO F3 ERA SPARKS INTO LIFE

With all-new engines in the back at Silverstone, the F3s came out to play on the FIA WEC bill. Here Riccardo Agostini hangs on to a big slide, ahead of Hector Hurst, Jake Dennis and Spike Goddard

FIA F3/SUER

LOEB CALLS ON RALLYING SKILL

Sebastien Loeb gets all crossed up in his Citroen C-Elysee as he tries to pass Gianni Morbidelli's Chevy while on a WTCC charge at Paul Ricard



FLAMAND/DPPI

SILVERSTONE SUPER-SELFIE

Toyota's drivers pose for a one-two group selfie on the podium – although Porsche's Mark Webber, who shared the third-placed car, is keen to photobomb!



IRISH DANCERS DELIGHT CREWS

High-kicking dancing girls kept the waiting crews entertained during last weekend's Circuit of Ireland European Rally Championship qualifying round



LENORMAND/DPPI

In the shops

Desirable new releases

ALFA ROMEO GIULIA BOOK

£50 – autosport.com/shop

The third edition of Johnny Tipler's Alfa Romeo Giulia Coupe GT and GTA tome tells the full story – complemented by a wealth of period and contemporary pics – of the popular Italian machines, which in racing guise giant-killed in the 1960s and are now well-loved in historic racing.



PORSCHE 911 RSR 1:43 MODEL

£49.99 – autosport.com/shop

Porsche 911 fans will snap up Spark's new, 1:43-scale resin model of the RSR that Marc Lieb, Richard Lietz and Romain Dumas drove to a debut victory in the LMGTE Pro class of the 2013 Le Mans 24 Hours. Success for the all-new, 991-shape racer was particularly special as it came in the 911's 50th birthday year.



ASTON MARTIN OFFICIAL GEAR

From £11.99 – autosport.com/shop

The official Gulf Aston Martin Racing apparel for 2014 celebrates the 10th anniversary of the Prodrive-run squad – hence the 10 on the range of items. Choose from a branded mug (£11.99), laser-etched cufflinks (£39.99), Team T-shirt (£27.99) and Team sweatshirt (£79.99) – all with the correct branding.



WHAT'S ON

ON TRACK IN THE UK

SILVERSTONE

April 26-27

MSVR

www.silverstone.co.uk

The second crop of BRDC Formula 4 racers begin their season on the Silverstone Grand Prix circuit this weekend. Last year's top six drivers have moved on, which means there's plenty up for grabs as the young guns attempt to seize the early initiative. Among the swell of supporting categories are the F3 Cup and Formula Ford 1600 Super Series brigade.

KIRKISTOWN

April 26

500MRCI

www.kirkistown.com

Kirkistown's Formula Ford 1600 and Saloon and GT runners are back in action on Saturday, with Formula Libre Ireland and Ginetta Juniors also on the bill.

DONINGTON PARK

April 26-27

MSVR

www.donington-park.co.uk

It's a festival of MSVR-run racing at Donington this weekend as a host of bumper series kick off their 2014 seasons. Top of the bill is the rammed GT Cup, while the Mini Challenges offer a tin-top alternative and the Radical



BRDC F4's second season kicks off at Silverstone

SR3 Challenge and Clubmans Cup provide club sports-prototype action.

CROFT

April 26-27

BARC

www.croftcircuit.co.uk

With a cast that includes Classic Formula Ford 1600 and 2000, Citroen 2CVs and a variety of thunderous classic and modern saloon cars, Croft's club racing season kicks off this weekend with an eclectic mix of classes for your entertainment.

BRANDS HATCH

April 26-27

750MC

www.brandshatch.co.uk

The throng of 750 Motor Club competitors descends on Brands Hatch for a weekend that marks the curtain raiser for its 750 Formula, Classic (and regular) Stock Hatch and Formula Vee categories. Grids for a variety of its other classes, including the new Civic Cup and ever-popular Compact Cup, mean a packed two days of fast-paced, low-cost action.

ANGLESEY

April 26-27

BARC

www.angleseycircuit.com

North Wales's picturesque circuit opens its doors to the national racers for the first time this year with a typically varied bill. Aficionados of slipstreaming kit cars will be keen to spy the Caterham Graduates races, while the BARC's Max5 Racing bunch, NW Sports and Saloons and Junior Saloons are also present.

presented by
AUTOSPORT NEWS

Come to the next KXQT at Thruxton's BTCC round on Saturday May 3 and question the panel, which will include former champs Jason Plato and Fabrizio Giovanardi, TV presenter Louise Goodman, and rookie Jack Clarke.

FREE ENTRY

ON TRACK AROUND THE WORLD

IndyCars move off city streets and into the Alabama countryside



INDYCAR SERIES

Rd 3/15

Barber Motorsports Park, Alabama, USA

April 27

indycar.com

INDY LIGHTS

Rd 3/10

Barber Motorsports Park, Alabama, USA

April 26-27

indycar.com

FORMULA RENAULT 3.5

Rd 2/9

Motorland Aragon, Spain

April 26-27

worldseriesbyrenault.com

FR3.5 heads on to Aragon



NASCAR SPRINT CUP

Rd 9/36

Richmond, Virginia, USA

April 26

nascar.com

V8 SUPERCARS

Rd 4/14

Pukekohe, New Zealand

April 25-27

v8supercar.com.au

FORMULA ACCELERATION 1

Rd 1/8

Algarve, Portugal

April 26-27

acceleration14.com

V8 STOCK CARS

Rd 3/12

Goiania, Brazil

April 27

stockcar.com.br

ADAC GT MASTERS

Rd 1/8

Oschersleben, Germany

April 26-27

adac-gt-masters.de

Your guide to the best events taking place in the UK and around the world – plus TV and online

ON TELEVISION

THURSDAY APRIL 24

1240-1445 Motors TV

European F3: Silverstone highlights

1930-2000 Sky Sports F1

F1 midweek report

2000-2300 Sky Sports F1

F1 Classics: British Grand Prix 1989

FRIDAY APRIL 25

0200-0300 BT Sport 2 LIVE

V8 Supercars Race 1: Pukekohe

1035-1345 Motors TV

WEC: Silverstone highlights

1345-1545 BT Sports 2 LIVE

MotoGP: Argentina FP1

1700-2000 BT Sports 2 LIVE

MotoGP: Argentina FP2

2100-0000 Sky Sports F1

F1 Classic Races: Singapore 2011

2330-0235 Motors TV LIVE

NASCAR Nationwide: Richmond

SATURDAY APRIL 26

0500-0600 BT Sports 2 LIVE

V8 Supercars Race 2: Pukekohe

0700-0800 BT Sports 2 LIVE

V8 Supercars Race 3: Pukekohe

0925-1100 ITV4

BTCC: Donington highlights

1300-1600 BT Sports 2 LIVE

MotoGP: Argentina FP3

1330-1430 Eurosport LIVE

FRenault 3.5: Aragon Race 1

1600-2015 BT Sports 2 LIVE

MotoGP: Argentina Qualifying

2100-2205 Motors TV

Eurocup Clio: Aragon Race 1 highlights

2330-0400 Premier Sports LIVE

NASCAR Sprint Cup: Richmond

SUNDAY APRIL 27

0615-0800 BT Sports 2 LIVE

V8 Supercars Race 4: Pukekohe

0900-1330 Eurosport 2 LIVE

World Superbikes: Assen

1245-1345 BT Sport 2 LIVE

FRenault 3.5: Aragon Race 2

1330-1430 Eurosport 2

FRenault 3.5: Aragon highlights

1430-1530 Motors TV LIVE

Eurocup Clio: Aragon Race 2

1745-1915 BT Sports 2 LIVE

MotoGP: Argentina

2000-2230 BT Sports 2 LIVE

IndyCar: Alabama

2000-2100 Sky Sports F1

Ayrton Senna journalist special

2100-2200 Sky Sports F1

F1 Classic Races: Portugal 1985

MONDAY APRIL 28

2100-2145 Sky Sports F1

F1 Classic Races: Detroit 1987

TUESDAY APRIL 29

2100-2145 Sky Sports F1

F1 Classic Races: Japan 1989

WEDNESDAY APRIL 30

2000-2030 Sky Sports F1

Roland Ratzenberger special

2100-2145 Sky Sports F1

F1 Classic Races: Monaco 1992

ONLINE

HOT ON THE WEB THIS WEEK

YouTube 250cc KARTING MADNESS ON THE ISLE OF MAN



SEARCH FOR: Isle of Man - E250 Karting GP - On the Streets of Peel City (2:27)

Here's some onboard footage – that we found disturbing, quite frankly – from the 1990 250cc Peel Kart Grand Prix around the streets of the Isle of Man town. The fact that it's just started raining seems not to be bothering these intrepid racers.

AUTOSPORT+

Exclusive content coming up in our premium website this week

AUTOSPORT's F1 team analyses the events from China after Lewis Hamilton's third consecutive win for Mercedes and explains the latest active suspension technology, which could return to F1 in the near future. Plus, David Evans looks back at last weekend's Circuit of Ireland rally.

GET AUTOSPORT ON THE MOVE

IN THE IPAD ISSUE THIS WEEK

- HIGHLIGHTS FROM WEC, WTCC AND THE CIRCUIT OF IRELAND RALLY
- ON SALE ALL OVER THE WORLD FOR ONLY £2.99

DOWNLOAD IT NOW
AUTOSPORT.COM



Revved up over what's on the box

Sideshow Bob is one of the best-crafted characters on *The Simpsons*. As his name suggests, he's hardly a central character, but his brilliantly scripted emergence as Bart's murderously inclined nemesis (voiced by *Frasier*'s Kelsey Grammer) made the episodes he appeared in a real treat.

The Sideshow Bob to the BTCC's Bart Simpson is the TOCA support package, a more regular staple of the fine ITV4 live coverage but just as good. While the BTCC provides the high-profile fodder, it's the support act that often supplies true gems of motorsport theatre.

Easter Sunday's Donington Park coverage was a classic of its type, as the great British Bank Holiday weather threw plenty of spanners (well, raindrops) into the works. A succession of close races

were punctuated by showers that made even the poorly supported Porsches a real thriller as leader Josh Webster made a bold (and ultimately wise) mid-race pitstop for wets, while Karl Leonard's stay-on-slicks gamble failed like Audi's WEC nightmare at Silverstone.

Pulsating Ginetta and Clio action was topped by Sam Brabham crashing out of

the lead of the final Formula Ford race, leading to a Basil Fawlty-esque attack on the tyrewall and an earth bank, showing how much it means to these youngsters.

But there's one aspect of ITV4's otherwise flawless production that continues to grate: Paul O'Neill answering questions on Twitter. This is nothing against the affable, £6-haircut scouser

(although he does struggle to read and talk simultaneously, not helped on Sunday by an earphone-inspired meltdown). I wouldn't mind if they ran tweets from viewers across the bottom of the screen now and then if they must, or from drivers in little quote boxes like on *Match of the Day*, but do we really need MetalMonkey78 (are there another 77 members of the MetalMonkey family on Twitter?) asking if Matt Neal wears lucky pants?

O'Neill's Ginetta commentaries, on the other hand, were top notch alongside Richard John Neil. Like the jokes on *The Simpsons* have been pretty much the same for over 20 years now, the best bit of the BTCC and its support act is the racing and the fine people who make it happen. Focus on that, please!

Revved Up



Pierre-Francois Rousselot

“We arrived side-by-side for the chicane at the end of the very last lap”

■ F3 European Cup ■ Thruxton ■ September 19, 1971 ■ Brabham BT35 ■ First French winner in UK



Depailler leads P-FR (hidden) during their intense F3 scrap

MY STORY ACTUALLY STARTS at Silverstone in July that year, when I was leading by 10 metres going onto the final lap ahead of Dave Walker and Roger Williamson, but I lost the win to Walker at the very last corner – it was very close.

This was such a big day for me because it was the first time I understood that I could win a major Formula 3 race – I realised I was driving at their top level.

At this time F3 was a very big deal and the meetings, like Silverstone and Monaco, were huge events. There were something like 50 entries, with free practice, two heats and a final, and there were many constructors: Lotus, Brabham, March, Tecno, Ensign, Martini – quite different to today. There were also three future world champions on the grid: James Hunt, Jody Scheckter and Alan Jones. The races were almost an hour long, so there was plenty of time to work your way to the front.

At Thruxton for the European Cup

there were two very strong cars: Jean-Pierre Jabouille and Patrick Depailler in the works Alpines, designed by Andre de Cortanze, with Renault engines by Bernard Dudot – two famous French engineers who I'd say were working at the level of F2 in the F3 paddock. They were pretty sure that they'd win this race.

Depailler was on pole and he took the lead, going away from everyone

at the front. I hadn't been so quick in practice, and was 10th or something, so I decided to break my budget and buy two new tyres for the left-side of the car. I certainly didn't have enough money for all four!

Step-by-step, just like I had done at Silverstone, I worked my way to catch the frontrunners. For the final five laps, Patrick and myself were two cars at the front alone, so we

started a big fight. We swapped the lead several times, and we both knew that at Thruxton you must not start the final lap in the lead, you must be behind to get the slipstream...

Patrick was obviously clearer about this idea than me, because I was leading going onto the last lap! I knew it was the wrong place to be, so an idea came to me: I slowed down on purpose, quite a lot, just after the pits. And Patrick stayed behind me! So I thought, 'OK, this is my only chance' and I quickly restarted at full speed, taking him by surprise, so he wasn't close enough to get the really big tow on me.

So we arrived side-by-side for the chicane at the end of the last lap, really close wheel-to-wheel, and the whole race came down to this final braking zone, where I managed to stay in front. I got the win – and the honour of being the first Frenchman to win in F3 in England, and shared a new lap record with Patrick. *Jean-Pierre Rousselot was talking to Charles Bradley*

PROFILE



APART FROM HIS RACING CV, which includes six Le Mans starts, Pierre-Francois Rousselot is well known for co-writing *Competition Driving* with Alain Prost and testing cars, including Ligier, Renault and Brabham F1 racers, for *L'Automobile* magazine. He also managed the famed Winfield racing school with Mike Knight, and will race his Spice-Cosworth in the historic Group C event at Le Mans this year.

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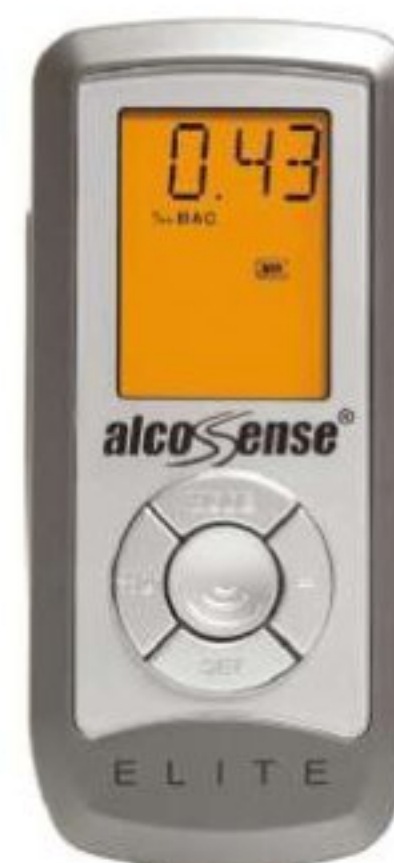
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** 17.1% of drink drive accidents are between hours of 5am and 1pm (Source: Dept. for Transport, Road Accidents and Safety Annual Report 2010)

* 4 Pints of Abbot Reserve contain 14.8 units of alcohol (Source: Greene King) and each unit takes 1 hour to leave the body (Source: NHS). Therefore 14.8 hours after 9pm the alcohol will have passed from the body.

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