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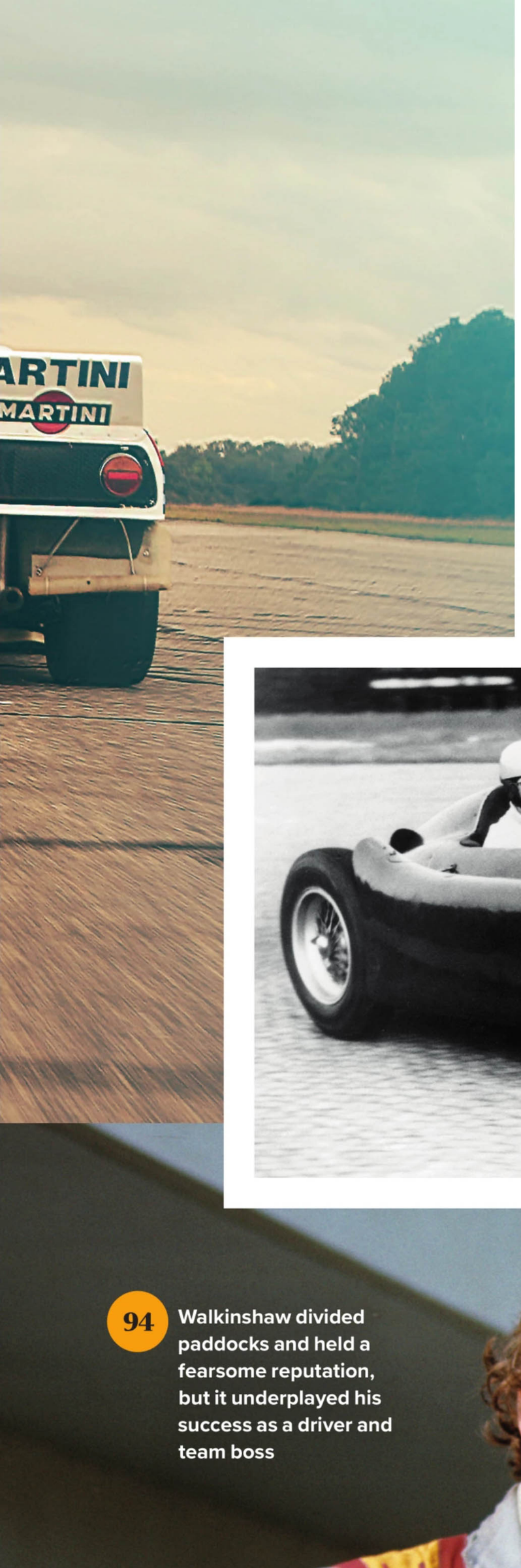
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MOTOR SPORT

THE EDITOR

"This isn't just an ethical question for F1, it's also existential"

WHAT WILL THE IMPACT OF THE COVID-19 health crisis be on Formula 1? As *Motor Sport* has argued before, it is not too glib to suggest that in the medium term, the crisis affords F1 an opportunity for renewal. In the short term, however, one thing is clear: in the new world order, money will be tight.

F1 is already in the final throes of negotiating a cost cap that will reduce expenditure significantly, at least for the top teams, as we report on p82. The cap can be seen as belated recognition that F1 has become too bloated and, although it was underway before the COVID-19 pandemic hit, it has become even more urgent in the current climate.



In April, Liberty, F1's commercial rights owner, restructured its finances to create liquidity to support several F1 teams that rely on race revenue to keep going. In the absence of racing, there was a risk the unnamed teams would go bust, so Liberty stepped in to bridge the gap by freeing up $1.5bn (not all of which will go to the teams).

But it won't only be the teams seeking funding, Liberty will be under pressure to increase revenues, and one key source is race hosting fees. The problem here is that Liberty needs to raise hosting fees just as many traditional circuits are negotiating hard to reduce them. Both Spa and Silverstone have recently won discounts on the amount they pay to stage grands prix, and with upcoming races predicted to take place without spectators, it's easy to see others following suit.

In hard times, the lure of taking racing to controversial countries with big wallets could be hard to resist. While the talk now is of avoiding the collapse of teams and ensuring that races remain viable without spectators, important questions need to be answered. Where will the money come from – and who might prey on a weakened F1?

After Liberty announced the cash injection for F1 teams, it emerged that it had sold a $500m stake in its live events business, Live Nation, to the sovereign wealth fund of Saudi Arabia. The two developments are unrelated, but it is no secret Saudi has been courting F1 for several years. In January, Saudi Arabia announced plans for a new track, the Qiddiya circuit, to be ready from 2023. And reports suggest F1 has been in talks over staging a grand prix there in a deal worth around £50m.

Then last month, F1 signed a major sponsorship agreement thought to be worth in the region of $40m per season with Saudi's state-owned oil and chemicals company Saudi Aramco.

Under the terms of the deal, Saudi Aramco was set to get trackside branding at most races this year plus title rights to the 2020 US, Spanish and Hungarian races, should they take place. Will it also lobby for an even earlier Saudi GP? Perhaps one as early as next year, based on a mooted street circuit in Jeddah, while Qiddiya is completed?

Saudi Arabia already hosts Formula E and is keen to increase its international profile by hosting more events – such as the recent boxing bout between Anthony Joshua and Andy Ruiz Jr. But it is important to ask whether welcoming Saudi Arabia to F1 would be in the sport's long-term interests.

While F1 is looking to dust off its image, is it wise to host a grand prix in a country accused of murdering critical journalists and whose human rights record is described by Amnesty International as "heinous"?

The last time I wrote of the stain of 'sportswashing' on the reputation of F1 – before the Azerbaijan GP in Baku – some readers responded by insisting that *Motor Sport* should stay out of questions of social justice.

But this isn't just an ethical question for F1, it is also existential. If F1 continues to be open to the highest bidder, then the temptation will be to expand into new areas at a time when sport should be doing the opposite. In what looks like becoming a more local, less consumerist post-pandemic era, it should be racing at circuits and countries that have a history and a fan base, not in half-empty stadiums, in countries with no racing tradition. It should capitalise on its unique heritage to create a spectacle that attracts new fans and sustains existing ones.

In a post COVID-19 world, can F1 resist the temptation of making up lost funds with more races in big paying countries such as Russia, China, Bahrain and Saudi Arabia?

AS WE CLOSE FOR PRESS, SILVERSTONE HAS ANNOUNCED IT WILL HOST two grands prix this summer on consecutive weekends, if there's an exemption from the planned 14-day quarantine requirement for international arrivals to Britain. We understand that negotiations are ongoing and, if successful, will confirm the importance of Britain's motor racing industry to the wider economy and national morale.

Which leaves the question of what the second grand prix, on the first August weekend, should be called? After the response to June's Stirling Moss commemorative issue, we would like to join those suggesting it is named The Stirling Moss Trophy. If the greatest driver never to win the World Championship had a round of the 2020 series named in his honour, it would be a fitting coda to a remarkable life.



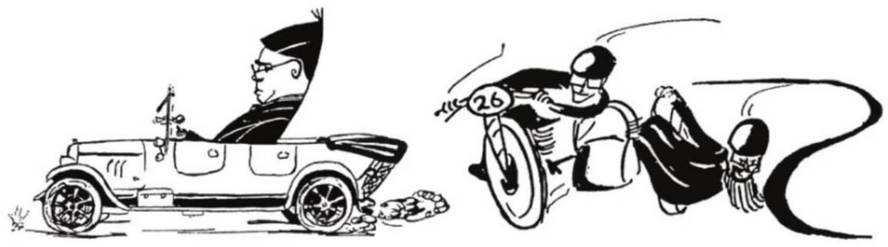
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NEXT ISSUE: OUR AUGUST ISSUE IS ON SALE FROM JUNE 24

MOTOR SPORT

IN THE SPIRIT OF BOD AND JENKS



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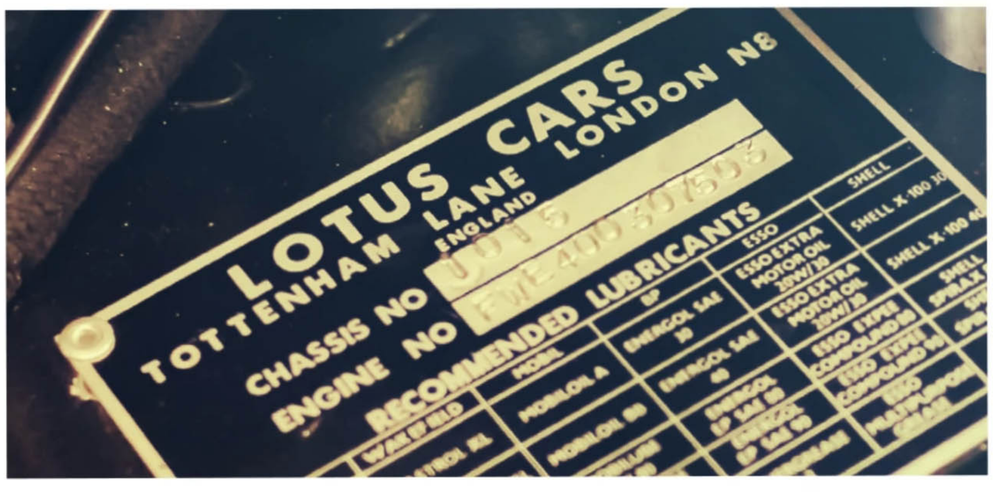
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Details matter.



The Tottenham Lane address given on the chassis plate of the Elite featured this month was the birthplace of Lotus. The growing company would move to new premises in Cheshunt by June 1959. But with the Elite and the Lotus Seven, its old north London home had sparked a new era. The Tottenham Lane address is now a Jewson hardware outlet, with a plaque commemorating its Lotus link.

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Vettel's Ferrari split sets F1's silly season into full swing

The 2020 cars may be sitting around, but the driver market has burst into life as the '21 grid falls into place

ALTHOUGH THE 2020 SEASON HAS YET to turn a wheel in anger, Formula 1's silly season is getting into full swing with Sebastian Vettel's split from Ferrari sparking a chain of driver switches.

Last month, four-time World Champion Vettel and Ferrari announced they would part ways when the German's contract expires at the end of 2020. While Ferrari said negotiations for a fresh deal had stalled, it has transpired that Vettel was never in the team's plans beyond this year and that it had already agreed terms with his successor, Carlos Sainz Jr, during the winter.

Vettel's place at Ferrari had been under question for some time, but things reached a head when he collided with team-mate Charles Leclerc during last year's Brazilian Grand Prix, putting both cars out and ironically opening the door for Sainz to score his maiden F1 podium in his McLaren.

Vettel looks set to struggle for front-end options next season, with the situation at Mercedes looking static and Red Bull's Christian Horner rating a reunion with Vettel as "enormously unlikely."

Ferrari team boss Mattia Binotto told Italian media he still expected Vettel to continue racing. "I think [the split] was right for him and us," Binotto said. "Only Seb knows what he will do in the future. He's a great driver, and he'll make the right choice. We have a good relationship and a mutual understanding of this decision.

"Sebastian is extremely passionate about this sport, so he'll want to get back into it, but he'll have a few things to think about."

Vettel may have a chance at Renault, as Daniel Ricciardo has completed a switch to McLaren to fill the void left by Sainz.

However, the Enstone team is likely to take its time to mull its options. Fernando Alonso is also on the driver market again, and Renault has the option of promoting one of its current or former junior drivers.

2020 season taking shape?

Silverstone looks set to host two races this season as F1 chiefs scramble to recover the fixtures lost to the coronavirus pandemic.

With the opening 10 races of the season either postponed or cancelled, the pressure is on to secure a run of grands prix to form a schedule over the second half of the year.


Silverstone is set to run two races this year. Neither will feature fans

F1 owner Liberty Media had targeted at least 15 races for the 2020 campaign, well above the minimum of eight grands prix needed to declare the World Championship.

The season is expected to begin behind closed doors in Austria on July 3-5 in a fixture that could become a double header.

Silverstone's British Grand Prix originally had a date of July 12-14, but its double header is now set for July 26 and August 2.

Silverstone's managing director Stuart Pringle confirmed the deal to stage two races, both of which would be closed to fans, but added there was still much work to be done with the government to make them happen: "We have reached an agreement in principle to host two races this summer; however, these races will be subject to government approval, as our priority is the safety of all involved."

Despite seven of the 10 F1 teams being based in the UK, the situation is complicated by the government's planned introduction of a two-week quarantine period for any foreign visitors into the UK, which would also include team members travelling back from international races.

Spa has also received the green light to host a race without fans, so the Belgian GP should be able to go ahead on August 30.

GETTY IMAGES, DPPI, JAKOB EBREY

British racing gearing up for August restart

NATIONAL MOTOR SPORT LOOKS SET TO get the green light to resume from August after both of Britain's leading series unveiled reworked calendars planning a summer start.

Both the British Touring Car Championship and the British GT Championship have produced reworked schedules, which should allow both series to complete 90 per cent of their planned seasons, with the campaigns running from August 1 until late into November.

The coronavirus pandemic had led Motorsport UK to suspend all organising permits until at least June 30. However the governing body has stated that it is keen to get the sport back underway as soon as is safely possible. However, both revised calendars remain provisional pending government measures, and it is still unknown if attendance at the events will be either allowed or limited.

As the top-flight domestic series, the BTCC has used its first-pick privileges when rescheduling to secure enough events to form a 27-race season, while British GT has retained nine of its usual 10 races, with the annual European round at Spa being cancelled.

British GT will also adopt a new format in an effort to recoup any lost hours of racing. A second three-hour race will be held, and its second round - at Donington Park - will host both a single one-hour race and a two-hour second outing. Both the BTCC and British GT calendars are published in full on each series' respective website. The British Superbike Championship is expected to publish its revised schedule in June.



British GT has retained nine races, and has a fresh race format too

The new Maserati MC20 pays some degree of homage to Sir Stirling, who made a star turn in the Eldorado

Maserati teases new supercar with Moss tribute

Lockdown may be easing, but in Kilmany, Fife, one of our racing heroes continues to set a good example

PICTURE CREDIT: CHRIS MARTIN



Will Senna leave the rest behind as he did at Donington in '93? Vote for your choice now



DPPI, NEWSPRESS



MASERATI HAS CHOSEN TO mark the death of Sir Stirling Moss by releasing pictures of its new MC20 prototype in a special Moss livery. Aimed at returning the marque to racing, the forthcoming mid-engined supercar is an evolution of the Ferrari Enzo-derived MC12, which raced successfully in the 2000s, but this time powered by a Maserati-designed engine, thought to be a V8 or V6 hybrid.

Moss's had close links to Maserati: before landing his works drive with Mercedes-Benz, the British legend galvanised the Formula 1 arena in a private Maserati 250F, achieving his first F1 win in the 1954 Oulton Park Gold Cup and later competing in works single-seaters and sports cars. But what the new Maserati commemorates is his drive in the 'Eldorado' 420M/58, the one-off V8 single-seater built for the Race of Two Worlds at Monza in 1958.

Intended to unite European and Indy racing, the two events held on the Monza banking were a US whitewash, but the Eldorado car made history by being painted not in national racing colours but the livery of an ice cream firm. It's this white, red and black scheme the Modena company's teaser pictures reflect, with the ace's name prominent in cartoon-style lettering. It's a way of keeping the new model, delayed until September, in the news as the photos show a camouflage scheme on disguised panels. Perhaps a more permanent honour would be to name the new car the Maserati Stirling...



Greatest GP voting now open

F1 70

TIME IS RUNNING OUT TO HAVE YOUR SAY on the greatest grand prix in the 70-year history of the Formula 1 World Championship.

With the help of our social media followers, we have whittled 1018 World Championship races down to a shortlist of five, with a public vote to identify the winner.

Will it be John Surtees' 0.2sec victory over Jack Brabham at the 1967 Italian GP, or the 1971 Monza race, a classic slipstreamer that featured the top five split by just 0.61sec at the flag? Wet weather assisted the drama in three of the races: Senna's masterclass at a soaking Donington in 1993 and Damon Hill's victory in the Jordan at Spa in 1998. Jenson Button's unlikely 2011 win in Canada, where he rose from 21st to first, is the final option. Voting at motorsportmagazine.com closes on June 19.

Each voter will be entered into a prize draw to win a set of lithographs showing three famous races, signed by Sir Stirling Moss, Derek Bell and Nigel Mansell.



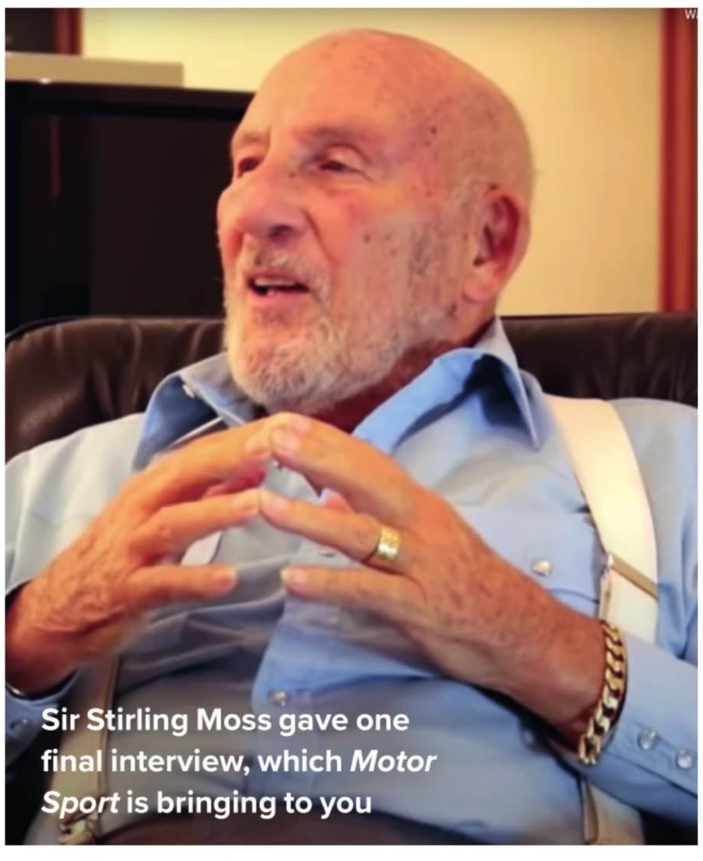
The 992 911 will now come with a manual transmission after all. As we always said it should...

Porsche 911 gets some stick



NOT EXACTLY HOT ON THE HEELS – fully 18 months behind if truth be told – but the long-awaited manual version of the new 992-series Porsche 911 is now available to order. The gearbox is based on the same seven-speed manual used in the previous 911 Carrera and not the six-speed used in either the current Cayman or Boxster or, indeed the last GT3. Porsche says the new transmission comes at no extra cost, which may not seem generous as usually it is the two-pedal option that costs more, but the manual also includes the Sport Chrono pack comprising a sport mode, steering wheel-mounted driving mode button, active engine mounts and automatic rev-matching on downchanges.

The rear differential is now purely mechanical, rather than electronically controlled, and weight saved here and in the gearbox makes the manual 911 35kg lighter than the double-clutch version. Without launch control or instant shifting, the 0-62mph time lengthens from 3.6 to 4.2sec, which you won't feel at all. The only disappointment is that, for now at least, the gearbox is only available on 'S' models costing £94,350, not on the standard, and some say sweeter, £82,795 Carrera.



Sir Stirling Moss gave one final interview, which *Motor Sport* is bringing to you

Secret Moss interview surfaces

STIRLING MOSS DECLARED HIMSELF satisfied with life in a final in-depth interview, recorded shortly before his retirement from the public sphere.

Unseen until now, the conversation with Mia Forbes Pirie, the daughter of his former secretary, and family friend, is a revealing account of the man behind Mr Motor Racing.

In the hour-long recording, presented exclusively by *Motor Sport*, Moss recounts his famous Mille Miglia victory and says that he had more respect for Juan Manuel Fangio than any other driver. He laments his decision to retire from racing following his crash at Goodwood, saying that he should have left it an additional year, as he might have been able to return to his sublime level.

Moss also gives some insight into his ruthless and single-minded character, and how he paired his principles with the highest form of sportsmanship and fair play.

Surveying his life and career, Moss said: "Life is to be lived. Running as close to the limit as possible is exhilarating."

He said that he was proud to have been knighted and to have served his country. "I'm glad I beat Jackie Stewart to it," he added.

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MARK HUGHES

"Ferrari needs a better-balanced, harmonious line-up. It needs Sainz Jr"

THE RHYME OF TIME IS STRONG while this is being written. The recent anniversary of Gilles Villeneuve's death in 1982 was a reminder of a time when Formula 1 was facing a major crisis, just as it is now. There's even a parallel in the themes of those crises. The coronavirus has merely hastened F1 to a destination it was always heading for: a damaging mismatch between the top teams and the others. Ferrari is forming the most vocal resistance to an adjustment, just as it was in '82.

The row raging then was between younger minds and hotter heads than those of today's disagreement and had become poisonous. That poison was a significant contributor to the circumstances in which Villeneuve crashed and died at Zolder.

The small independent teams of 1982 (FOCA), with their customer engines, were justifiably concerned that they could be swept out of existence by the arrival of much bigger automotive teams and their sophisticated and expensive turbocharged engines. The governing body's president, Jean-Marie Balestre, was openly hostile to the Bernie Ecclestone-led independents and was stacking the odds even further in favour of the manufacturers in his framing of the rules. It looked as if he was actively seeking to deny the independents of Brabham, Lotus, McLaren, Williams et al the oxygen of competitiveness, reducing their bargaining power, possibly to the point of extinction.

Believing themselves to be fighting against oblivion, the FOCA teams had found a highly disingenuous loophole - running their out-powered cars up to 65kg underweight, equalising performance against the governing body-assisted manufacturers. The FOCA teams were unilaterally giving themselves equalisation against the Ferrari and Renault turbos via the water-cooled brakes ruse.

So when the FOCA cars of Nelson Piquet and Keke Rosberg were disqualified from the first two places in the Brazilian Grand Prix for being flagrantly underweight, FOCA (representing about 70 per cent of the grid) refused to take part in the San Marino Grand Prix. That meant the only four fast cars (Ferrari and Renault) putting on a show race for most of the distance - which helped Didier Pironi to take advantage of the peculiar circumstances to 'steal' the win from Villeneuve, who'd been the faster Ferrari all weekend. Villeneuve was furious, the team didn't back him up, and so now there was poison internally and externally heading to Zolder.

In the disagreements of 1982 and today, each side had legitimate positions that were mutually exclusive with the other side. But in '82 that triggered anarchy. Now F1 is more mature, how will it be resolved this time? Ferrari's current objections about being forced to limit its budget (*see page 82*) are legitimate - as are those of the smaller teams facing extinction. Just as in '82, they need to co-exist for the benefit of F1, but how?

"The stakes are not so dangerous, but Ferrari should learn from 1982"

Just as in 1982, Ferrari faces internal friction. The Scuderia often loses out when a manufacturer gets serious about F1 - Mercedes in the 1950s and now, Honda in the 1980s and '90s. The Schumacher era was the outlier. All previous eras of Ferrari domination came when the manufacturers were absent. With a new manufacturer era only just beginning but armed with a good car and turbo engine, Ferrari had the perfect window of opportunity in '82 - but it blew it through not controlling its drivers. Not that there could have been any controlling those two when pitched together as rivals for the title. Recruiting Pironi - brave, political, fast, ambitious, all to an extreme degree - when it already had enormously fast, brave, proud and uncompromising Villeneuve was asking for trouble. When the car wasn't competitive, as in '81, it was fine. But the '82 car was the best on the grid. A Ferrari driver was going to become World Champion. Except it was disaster instead. If Imola hadn't triggered it, it would've been something else. This was an unworkable combination, guaranteed to turn nasty and dangerous.

In the present, Ferrari looked at its line-up and decided that Leclerc/Vettel was too difficult - right at the join of the previous generation to the current, with all the pain and pride involved. Vettel had to go.

Just as in F1's political arguments, there are cooler and more mature heads today than back then when, given that Ferrari already had Villeneuve, it needed a more sympathetic character than the ambitious Pironi. Someone quick enough to win when the opportunity arose, but who would integrate seamlessly. It needed, in hindsight, Elio de Angelis alongside Gilles for 1982. The anniversary of Elio's death has just passed, too. He'd likely not have fatally been in the wrong place at the wrong time in 1986 had Ferrari chosen him for '82 - and Villeneuve would likely not have been in a fatal state of rage at Zolder.

The stakes are not so high now. But Ferrari should learn from history. Leclerc is its chosen one. It doesn't need an in-house rivalry. That wasn't a good fit with the intensely competitive Vettel. The events of Monza, Sochi and Interlagos last year pointed to the direction that was heading. Ferrari needs a much better-balanced and harmonious partnership. It needs Carlos Sainz Jr.

Since he began covering grand prix racing in 2000, Mark Hughes has forged a reputation as the finest Formula 1 analyst of his generation

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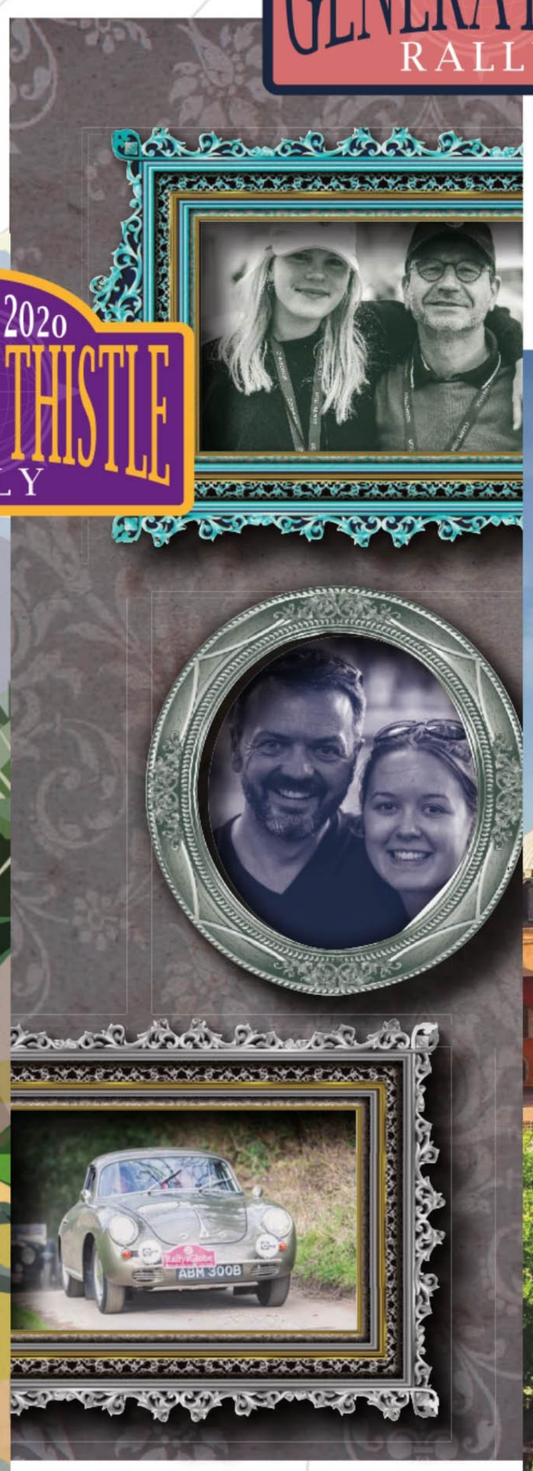
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MAT OXLEY

"Factory engineers always bristle at any effort to curtail their engineering"

RACING IS NOT A DEMOCRATIC exercise. It's about finding an advantage over your rivals by just about any means necessary, so it is pretty much the exact opposite of egalitarianism.

Yet paradoxically the owners of the premier car and motorcycle championships now spend much time working to equalise performance across the grid, to improve the racing to attract more fans to boost profits.

In MotoGP this process has been underway for over a decade, triggered by two specific events. On January 1, 2007 tobacco sponsorship was banned, robbing the paddock of its richest form of income. A year and a half later, on September 15, 2008, American bank Lehman Brothers went bankrupt, signalling the start of a global financial crisis (GFC) that was still present when COVID-19 struck earlier this year.

During the first few years of the GFC, the MotoGP grid shrank dramatically, with just 14 starters at some rounds and 10 finishers at others. Something had to be done, so MotoGP rights-holder Dorna embarked on a cost-cutting crusade that answered that age-old question once and for all...

"We are a sport, but sport can only live if there is a show, so this is showbusiness," said Hervé Poncharal, president of the MotoGP teams association. "We need to understand that grand prix racing's time as an engineering laboratory isn't over, but that role is less important than it was before."

First of many revised technical regulations was the move to a single tyre supplier in 2009. None of the tyre companies – Bridgestone, Michelin or Dunlop – wanted the end of free competition but Dorna was adamant.

There is still debate in the paddock over the merits of spec tyres. Some argue that forcing teams to use the same tyres actually increases costs, because whenever the tyre supplier changes the specification of its products the manufacturers have to expensively redesign their chassis. What isn't in doubt is that fewer tyres are used under the current regulations. Before, a rider might burn his way through 40 tyres during a grand prix weekend. Now the allocation is 22.

Engine rationing was next on the agenda. From 2010 riders were restricted to six engines per season, reducing consumption of pistons, crankshafts and other internals by almost half.

Dorna also cut MotoGP's annual testing allowance from 22 days to 12 days, shrank practice and qualifying from four hours per weekend to 3hr 15min, reduced the choice of wheel rim sizes and gear ratios and increased minimum machine weight from 148kg to 157.

Dorna was really getting into its stride now, scything through the rulebook, and upsetting factory engineers who always bristle at any effort to curtail their engineering.

In 2012, the Madrid-based company introduced its most radical cost-cutting ploy, specifically to keep poorer teams on the grid. These teams were allowed to build MotoGP bikes around road-going superbike engines, at a fraction of the cost of leasing prototype MotoGP machines.

"We need more high-quality machines out there, not less"

The factories hated sharing racetracks with glorified road bikes and they weren't the only ones. In May 2012, reigning World Champion Casey Stoner announced his retirement, citing Dorna's low-cost and "dangerously slow" budget bikes as a factor in his decision.

"This is a prototype championship," said the Australian. "We need more high-quality bikes out there, not less. The championship is going backwards."

But Dorna now had the holy grail in its sights: the introduction of a spec ECU and software. Honda immediately threatened to quit the championship and move to World Superbikes if MotoGP electronics development was strangled.

That threat vanished when Dorna's private-equity owners Bridgepoint bought the Swiss sports marketing company Infront for its football TV interests. By chance, part of the package included the World Superbike Championship, which Bridgepoint handed to Dorna. Honda now had nowhere to run, so in 2016 MotoGP became a spec-ECU series.

Dorna hadn't won every battle but it had won the war. However, some of its efforts to cut costs had the opposite effect. For example, revising the practice schedule in 2010 had the unintended effect of increasing the number of crashes, with a heavy impact on budgets.

One other rule change also caused more crashes, specifically as riders entered corners. Gradually MotoGP's fuel capacity was reduced, not to reduce costs but to force manufacturers to improve their lean-burn technology.

The final reduction, to 20 litres, was a step too far, because electronics engineers started shutting off fuel on the overrun to save a few precious drops at each corner.

"To have the engine-braking you want, you need fuel," said Corrado Cecchinelli, MotoGP's director of technology. "By going very lean you have erratic combustion, which can mean a different engine-braking character at every corner, which catches riders out."

Dorna is now hosting regular online conferences with the manufacturers to ensure MotoGP is still viable once the world emerges from this pandemic. Already most machine development has been frozen until 2022.

The good news is machinery costs won't be reduced any further, so the quality of racing should remain undimmed.

Mat Oxley has covered motorcycle racing for many years – and also has the distinction of being an Isle of Man TT winner

Follow Mat on Twitter @matoxley

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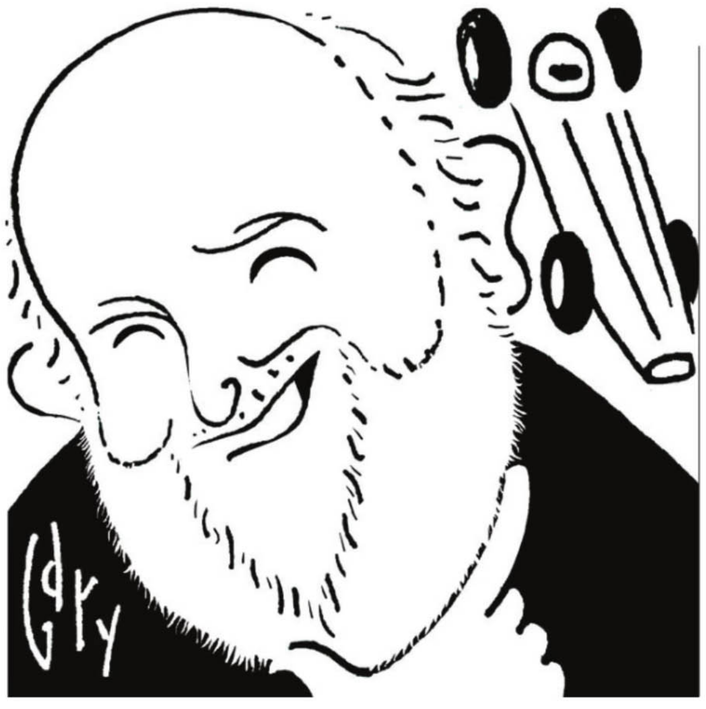
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DOUG NYE

"As the motor sport soap opera rolled on, the actors were ready to roll the dice"

ONE OF THE GREATEST fascinations of motor sport in all its forms is that its story has progressed from its earliest inception in the 1880s as an enduring serial to a high-tech and hyper-competitive soap opera.

Right now that soap is on pandemic pause. Perhaps it's time to reflect upon the good and the bad times in the story so far. Some of us have spent - or, arguably, wasted - so much time exploring the past that we have more of the story to consider. If we had been around in the great heroic age of racing, just how wonderful might that have been, or indeed how crushingly dull?

Imagine waiting for ages beside an Alpine road in 1902 to watch the Gordon Bennett and Paris-Vienna cars clatter by? Rene de Knyff or Selwyn Edge, wow, come and gone in a flash. And that's all you'd see. Circuit racing, with its multiple laps, meant multiple chances to see our heroes and their cars. The European way of road racing progressed essentially upon the French *politique de la gloire* - the quest for political glory. Kudos for assisting the big show lay behind government backing for the early Grands Prix. The fact that neighbouring field-owning farmers pocketed more in spectator entry fees than the race promoters didn't matter compared to 'the glory'.

Of course in America things were different. Commerciality was king. Mainstream track racing developed strictly around 'no pay, no view'. Fairground trotting tracks begat quarter-mile ovals, then board speedways, then the full 2½-mile Indianapolis 'Brickyard'. Each venue could be firmly fenced-off, gates policed, turnstiles manned, money taken.

And so the motor sporting serial, the soap opera, progressed. It's always been a regret that we weren't around in the 1930s to have witnessed the great Silver Arrows and the classic Italian Alfa Romeos and Maseratis. Just how impressed might we have been to see the reality, to smell the boot-polish exhaust haze and the burning tyre rubber, as Bernd Rosemeyer careered by broadside in his Auto Union, or Rudolf Caracciola and Dick Seaman slammed by in their supercharged Mercedes? Anyone who really knows is in their 90s now.

That truly great racing driver Tony Brooks is the last-surviving World Championship-level Grand Prix-winning driver from the 1950s. Indeed, Jackie Stewart and Jacky Ickx are the only surviving winners from the 1960s...

Bernie Ecclestone once reminded me that while Formula 1 racing through the 1950s might seem rosy in retrospect, the reality was something else - grinding three-hour Grands Prix, often with yawning gaps between cars. Many brought up with the big 2½-litre F1 classics then detested kiddy-car 1½-litre F1 racing in 1961-65. My contemporaries grew up amongst those tiny devices, and viewed them instead as exquisitely intricate Swiss-watch machines - the flat-12 Ferrari 1512 and the Lotus-Climax 25/33s - corr! Then the 1966 'Return of Power' and 3-litre racing revived sheer grunt.

But above all, some of us experienced the reality of the Porsche 917 versus Ferrari 512 war through 1970-71. Surely this was close to its 1930s equivalent? I remain so glad I lived it. To have been in the little pub on the apex of Burnenville Curve at the Spa 1000Kms when the Porsche 917s of Jo Siffert and Pedro Rodríguez slammed by, nose to tail, the sash window panes beating, bah-boom, bah-boom, in concert. To have heard 'Seppi' describing the moment they rubbed door handles into Eau Rouge: "Wasn't that brutal racing between team-mates?" - "Oh no, we are great friends; it's just that whenever we are on track together, the little bastard tries to kill me...".

Or Frank Gardner upon being instructed by Porsche chief engineer Dr Helmuth Bott to pay great attention to the gas pressure gauge on the 917's chassis frame when he and David Piper deputised for reluctant Porsche works drivers at the Nürburgring 1000Kms. "If the gauge zeroes, that means the chassis has cracked, so you will then drive the *neun siebzehn* back to the pits" and rugged Frank's answer: "Listen, pal, if that gauge zeroes I'll park the bastard and walk back".

It has to be said that Porsche displayed what today would be regarded as near-criminal disregard for its drivers' safety. The front end of the 917 was at best sparsely constructed, at worst flimsy. That the drivers committed themselves so intensely speaks volumes for their warrior values, lack of imagination, or true dimness. I don't think it's the last. There was a generation of self-evident heroes. No question of "Oh, I'd love to do that, and I think I could. But I'm not brave/daft enough". Maybe that latter reflex is something that has been progressively filtered out over recent decades. Amid acres of unobstructed asphalt, there's not too much horribly hard to hit. One year at Daytona, Peter Revson said to me: "I think the penalty for a small mistake is too great for a modern racing driver. I don't see why he should pay for it by being killed".

"We are great friends; it's just when we are on track, he tries to kill me..."

'It's just not going to happen to me' fuelled so many of those contemporary greats. As the soap opera rolled on, the serial unfolding, actors were ready to roll the dice.

Jackie Oliver said it all when he told me he'd been invited to drive a 917 again around Daytona to celebrate the model's jubilee, but had replied, "Why should I want to do that again? I survived it once...".

Doug Nye is the UK's leading motor racing historian and has been writing authoritatively about the sport since the 1960s



ANDREW FRANKEL

"They raced not knowing if brake failure might occur, nor the consequences..."

NOW THAT THE CAR'S GONE, I can tell you that I've passed through lockdown in the company of a brand new Bentley. I didn't ask for it, but Bentley foresaw imminent factory closure and smartly scattered its press fleet to the winds in the hope it might do some work in the interim. Fat chance.

My idea was that the car would travel the locale, delivering essential supplies and medicines to the vulnerable and, I can't deny, helping its driver stay sane. I threatened one of Bentley's press officers with painting a red cross on its roof. But it never happened. I am a registered NHS responder but the call never came. My beautiful Bentley has just sat there. I've used it to help resupply the isolated in-laws a few times and once to pick up the fish order for our village shop. Then a feeling I thought I'd parked started to resurface...

I first had it when I owned an Aston Martin DB2/4 MkIII about 25 years ago. It was a lovely car but like so many fools who've bought an old Aston in the past, I saw only that I could afford to buy it and had not thought about running it. Feltham Astons aren't cheap, even if they're in the finest fettle, and mine was not. So I stopped using it. It sat in the shed and every time I opened the door, what I felt upon seeing it was not pride or joy, but guilt. Guilt about failing to practice what I preached, guilt about the amount of money it represented, guilt about how much it had already cost and over how few miles that cost had been amortised, and guilt that I was denying someone the chance to cherish and use it.

I was delighted when I finally sold it for a humiliating sum to a charming German businessman who turned up at my cottage in Wales and drove to Germany, via an overnight stay in Dover, and blew it up doing 120mph on the autobahn. I felt guilty about that too.

If I learned my lesson that day, it did not stay learned for long. The next car down the line was a gorgeous 993-series Porsche 911 Carrera RS I bought from Nick Faure. 'Aha,' I thought, 'it will never go wrong, so I won't be afraid to use it, so I'll enjoy having it.' And, true, it never went wrong, but I still ended up not using it, this time because I'd just gone freelance and spent every working hour driving test cars to earn a living. I will never forget finally getting back into it one bright morning in early spring and discovering the clock still set to summer time. I sold that too.

Having the Bentley has been like having a wonderful bottle of wine, uncorked and ready to go and someone saying you can only sniff. I appreciate that no reader will be wiping a tear from their eye at my plight, but it does remind me of the most important consideration when it comes to buying a car. What are you going to do with it? If the answer to that doesn't come freely and honestly, stay away. Take it from someone who knows.

I WAS RIFLING THROUGH SOME photographs the other day and stumbled across some shots I took in May 2012, when with a few others, I took Sir Stirling Moss and Norman Dewis back to Brescia to celebrate the 60th anniversary of their drive for Jaguar in the 1952 Mille Miglia.

"The new owner blew up the Aston at 120mph on the autobahn"

It brought the memories flooding back: Stirling hesitant on camera, hilarious in private, Norman always in his element. Even then, they were the oldest surviving team of any note to have done the original race. It's awful to think we've lost both in the last 12 months.

My fondest recollection of that weekend is seeing the two of them greet each other in the lobby of the Ca' Nöa hotel in Brescia. I don't know how long it had been since they last met but this wasn't just the reunion of two old mates, there was something deeper too, maybe the experience they shared which no other person present could have understood.

They'd taken not just any C-type, but XKC003 – the car that the previous year had taken Jaguar's first Le Mans victory – and, with only a skeleton crew, had driven it to Italy to do the Mille Miglia. They'd done it not as a full-works entry intent on victory, but to put new technology through the toughest test. Back then they were called 'plate brakes' but we know them as discs. They raced not knowing if or when brake failure might occur, nor the possible consequences. They managed 827 miles and were third when the car cried enough. But it was the steering, not the brakes, that quit. Those plates had behaved perfectly.

We couldn't provide XKC003 in 2012 – it had been scrapped in period by the factory – but XKC005 was the best substitute as the first car ever to win a race with disc brakes, at Reims in 1952 with, appropriately, Stirling driving. I tend not to struggle with my emotions when working, but I wasn't the only one with a lump in my throat when Stirling guided the C onto the starting ramp.

They didn't take part in the retrospective, but parked the car around the corner and went back to the hotel where we all drank too much. When it was just Norman and I left in the bar, he started talking, only in general terms, about his other life as a turret gunner in the appallingly vulnerable Bristol Blenheim bomber during the war.

My only regret is that the film of Stirling and Norman's grand reunion never saw the light of day. I'm not sure why, but it's out there somewhere. How good it would be to celebrate their lives with its airing.

A former editor of *Motor Sport*, Andrew splits his time between testing the latest road cars and racing (mostly) historic machinery
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Räikkönen's greatest drive

In a new series, **Mark Hughes** uses the pause in racing to select F1's finest and most influential races, starting with a clash of the titans at Suzuka



IT WAS THE GREATEST GRAND PRIX OF the 21st century to date. Suzuka 2005 could make a serious claim to the best of all time. Decided going into the last of 53 laps as Kimi Räikkönen, from 17th on the grid, squeezed his McLaren-Mercedes past the Renault of long-time leader Giancarlo Fisichella at 200mph, engines on the rev limiters in top gear, wheels almost touching, as the silver car strained against the air to take advantage of Renault's slower entry onto the pit straight. It was magnificent, but merely the sign-off denouement of an incredible tapestry of greatness from Räikkönen, Fernando Alonso and Michael Schumacher, all of whom had been obliged to start from the last few rows and fight their way through the pack - sometimes together, sometimes against each other - the world's three best drivers around F1's greatest circuit, trying to get to the front before time ran out. It was a race that included the highly symbolic moment of Alonso passing Schumacher at 208mph around the outside of the flat-in-top 130R, a move he did not need to make, having clinched the title at the previous round in Brazil, and which would almost certainly have been fatal had it gone wrong. It was a race where the raw gladiatorial essence of grand prix racing was laid bare - and it was breathtaking. How did it come together? It was a multitude of factors all converging at a crucial time.

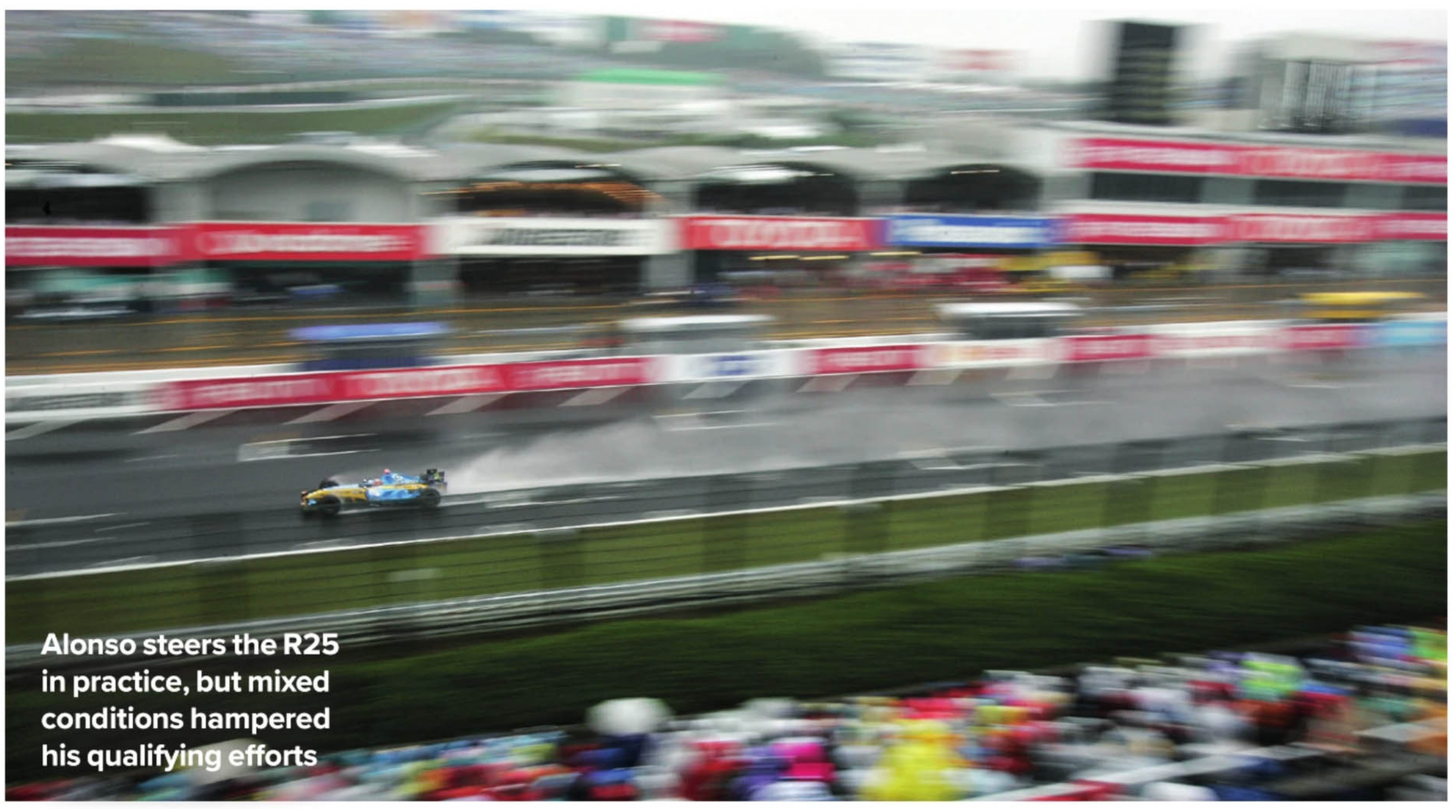
Single-car qualifying and rain

What put Schumacher, Alonso and Räikkönen in their respective 14th, 16th and 17th starting places - the very root of the incredible spectacle that was to follow - was the system of single-car qualifying on a rainy day.

This was the final season of single-car qualifying (in place since 2003) before the introduction of the current knockout system. Each driver would be allocated a slot for a single flying lap, with his chosen fuel load to be carried into the race's first stint. The running order was the reverse order of the previous race result. As the session began on a damp track but with no rain falling, it became progressively quicker as each of the slower cars ran. The surface was at its peak grip just as the 13th car out - Ralf Schumacher's Toyota - made its lap. Then the heavens opened, and the track became ever-slower as the faster cars made their runs. This put Ralf on pole ahead of the previous runner, the BAR-Honda of Jenson Button. Running one car later than Ralf, Giancarlo Fisichella went a heroic third-fastest, the Renault aquaplaning crazily down the back straight after Spoon Corner, but Fisi staying near-flat through 130R. "That was an outstanding effort," said an admiring Pat Symonds, Renault's engineering chief and strategy maestro.

Fisi at least had the benefit of a relatively dry first part of the lap, but all subsequent runners - Michael Schumacher, Alonso, Räikkönen and McLaren's Juan Pablo Montoya - dealt with atrocious conditions and lined up towards the back of the grid. Fisichella was in the only fast car starting near the front, with only a couple of slower cars ahead. The shape of the race thus seemed set: Fisichella was surely the favourite by a huge margin.

So that meant the challenge of Michael Schumacher, Räikkönen, Alonso and Montoya was obvious: clear the slower cars before Fisi could pull an unassailable gap.



Alonso steers the R25 in practice, but mixed conditions hampered his qualifying efforts

Slow warm-up and a green track

Ralf Schumacher led the pack around at a very slow pace on the formation lap to the start. Given that everyone was on brand new dry-weather rubber because qualifying had

TORU YAMANAKA/AFP VIA GETTY IMAGES



Ralf Schumacher leads from pole, with Renault's Fisichella in pursuit. The Italian would famously endure a race-deciding, last-lap duel with Kimi Räikkönen at Suzuka

been run on either wets or intermediates, a slow formation lap would mean that in addition to not being fully scrubbed, everyone's tyres would also be under-temperature and under-pressured on the first lap, especially on a track washed clean by the rain. This played a crucial part in what was about to happen.

Montoya's impact

The take-no-prisoners actions of Montoya on the opening lap, from his 18th place grid slot, were, in combination with the tyres, also critical in the shaping of this race.

As the gantry lights went out, the light-fuelled Toyota of Ralf Schumacher led away from Fisichella and Button, while Takuma Sato (BAR) and Rubens Barrichello (Ferrari) both ran off into the gravel trap and collided once there, before rejoining at the tail of the field.

With four quick cars among the minnows towards the back and no time to waste, things got somewhat fruity straight away. Schumacher made a flying start and even before the first corner had passed Albers (Minardi), Pizzonia (Williams), Karthikeyan (Jordan) and Massa (Sauber). Just behind, Alonso had out-dragged Räikkönen, helped by Renault's invariably great traction, and as Räikkönen was obliged to give the Renault room into Turn 1, so Montoya in the sister McLaren aimed for the gap inside of Kimi. They touched wheels as Montoya squeezed through, leaving Räikkönen to deal with a big oversteery moment that dropped him a further couple of places.

Schumacher passed Jacques Villeneuve's Sauber at Spoon to go seventh, and as they streamed through the bumpy 130R, the Sauber bottomed out on its under-pressure tyres and heavy fuel load, allowing Alonso – who'd just passed Karthikeyan into there – the momentum as they exited, heading for the chicane. In trying to line up a pass on the Sauber into there, Alonso stood late on the brakes – but so too did Villeneuve, and they were both forced to miss the corner, having out-braked themselves. On the green track and with pressures still low, the brand-new tyres weren't able to give the retardation Villeneuve and Alonso had asked of them. The Renault and Sauber re-joined from the run-off area with Alonso now ahead. Several others behind them, Räikkönen included, also failed to slow down for the chicane and were forced to take the escape route.

"Villeneuve started to go wider and wider – until he pushed me off the circuit"

Right behind the re-joining Villeneuve, Montoya sensed an opportunity and went for a pass on the left through the right-handed final corner. Villeneuve appeared not to see him and squeezed the McLaren out onto the grass and from there into a heavy collision with the tyre wall, the smoking wreck bouncing back onto the track minus two wheels.

These two Indianapolis 500 winners always had their enthusiasm for each other under control and didn't give each other any slack afterwards. "He started to go wider and wider and wider - until he pushed me off the circuit," Montoya complained. "I was 100 per cent beside him, and he just pushed me and pushed me until I was on the grass. [McLaren] probably could have had a 1-2 today, which would have been fantastic for the team." Montoya was ahead of Räikkönen at the time of the accident, and felt he was the driver who would've headed that 1-2. It wasn't to be.

"I didn't even know what happened," Villeneuve said, "He was on the outside, but not next to me. It's a right-handed corner, so you don't look left. At some point, he ran out of road. I have no idea what he might have been trying to do when he went off."

The safety car was deployed and the field bunched up behind it. This ruined the planned three-stop strategy of the light-fuelled race leader Ralf Schumacher, who had been pulling away from the pack. But it had a significance far beyond that. In bunching the field, it wiped out the big field spread from Fisichella back to Schumacher (in seventh), Alonso (eighth) and Räikkönen (12th). The post-hoc analysis strongly suggests that without that, Fisichella would not have been catchable.

Race control confusion

The cars were let loose again after six laps, and immediately Schumacher pounced on the Red Bull of Christian Klien for sixth, and Räikkönen did the same to Massa and Pizzonia to go 10th. After being passed by Schumacher, Klien was immediately being tracked by Alonso, who tried for a pass on the outside approach to the chicane at the end of the lap. But Klien was super-late on the brakes – and Alonso was forced to take to the escape road again to avoid contact. Alonso emerged ahead, but realising it wasn't a legal pass, he backed off to allow Klien to re-pass. He then slipstreamed him down the pit straight and passed legitimately into Turn 1. Alonso set off to chase Schumacher, surely catchable as the Ferrari F2005 had been no match for the Renault R25 through most of the season.

Alonso took 1sec out of him on that lap and at the end of it was visibly faster through 130R and looked set to make an attacking move on the Ferrari into the chicane. But suddenly Alonso backed off. Renault had received a message from race director Charlie Whiting, which said Alonso must surrender his place to Klien as his pass had not been legitimate.

"We sent a message back protesting that he'd already given it back but had re-passed him at the next corner," explained Symonds. "But we got no response. So rather than losing more time by letting him go on and then having to give it back anyway, we got Fernando to do it as soon as possible." Alonso was 3sec up the road from Klien, so had to back off to let the Red Bull catch and re-pass once more. "Only then did we get the message back from Charlie cancelling the previous instruction and saying it was okay to retain the place."

After spending a lap at Red Bull speeds, Alonso passed Klien yet again. The mix-up had cost an immediate 8.8sec – but that was only the beginning of the time penalty Alonso suffered. That 8.8sec delay meant he'd later have to pass the longer-running Schumacher twice rather than once – and this would ultimately allow Räikkönen to get ahead of him. That phantom penalty almost certainly cost Alonso this race.

But that was all yet to play out. For now, Alonso concentrated on catching Schumacher once more, with Räikkönen, having also passed Klien, now right behind him.

F1's three greatest drivers were now running in tandem, red-blue-silver, making their way towards the front. Alonso had re-caught Schumacher by lap 20, and what followed was one of the most thrilling moments in F1 history. The Renault was faster down the straight that links Spoon to 130R, and as it filled Schumacher's mirrors, Michael feinted this way and that to try to discourage the pass. He finally staked his claim to the



Alonso's rise: Having taken Michael's title at the previous race in Brazil, he also pulled a stunning pass at 130R

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Räikkönen's late pass on Fisi sealed the win. Alonso, in third, was delayed by a mix-up

inside approach of 130R, daring Alonso to try the outside. Back in 2005, this corner was nowhere near as comfortably flat as today. To try for the outside was almost unthinkable. But, adrenaline pumping, that's what Alonso did, running side-by-side with the Ferrari, wheels just a couple of inches apart. Had Schumacher understeered out wide from his shallow entry, they'd have interlocked wheels, and that likely would have been the end of Alonso. But they didn't, and Alonso made the pass with an apex speed of 208mph…

True, they were hardly comparable machines, and Schumacher would go on to fight Alonso for the following year's title with more equal tools, but there was something symbolic about that move, almost as if a baton was passed.

"Alonso's move on Michael was almost symbolic, as if a baton was being passed"

Fisichella's gentle pace

Incredibly, after all the action coming through the pack for 20 laps, Alonso in fifth place was only 10sec adrift of the lead his team-mate Fisi had inherited once Ralf Schumacher's early fuel stop dropped him well down the field. Fisichella had conspicuously failed to make use of the fantastic opportunity he had to build enough of a gap over the fast cars coming through. He'd completely underestimated the pace he'd need to run and was still assuming he had it under control. From the outside, it was becoming conceivable he'd be caught before the end.

In between Fisichella and Alonso at this point were Button, David Coulthard's Red Bull and Mark Webber's Williams. They would all later fall to the advances of Alonso and Räikkönen. Webber – who later reckoned he'd done "53 qualifying laps" – passed Coulthard at the first stops and Button at the second.

Alonso was fuelled only for 22 laps, four fewer than Schumacher and Räikkönen. Which meant he lost places to them both after they'd all made their first stops. Had he not had the phantom penalty, he'd have comfortably cleared them despite the earlier stop. The trio was line astern again, red-silver-blue this time – until Räikkönen made his pass on Schumacher on lap 30, around the outside into Turn 1. He pulled away from the Ferrari at 1sec per lap.

Alonso couldn't hang around behind the Ferrari as Kimi escaped and three laps later dummied Michael into defending the chicane, compromising his entry onto the pit straight, making him a sitting duck into Turn 1. Alonso had now passed Schumacher twice and proceeded to leave him well behind. As he chased Räikkönen, they were lapping at a very similar pace, absolutely on the limit – both around 0.7sec faster than Fisichella in the lead. It was in this middle stint that Fisichella lost the race.

Räikkönen made his final stop two laps after Button/Webber, those two low-fuel laps enough to spring him past them – and with now just Fisichella ahead. Nine laps to go, 9sec to find. Räikkönen began gaining at 1sec per lap – bang on. As if that weren't drama enough, Alonso was passing Button and Webber. As he went to pass the Williams on the inside down the pit straight, Webber moved across to dissuade him, leaving less than a car's width; no matter, Alonso simply put two wheels on the grass. At little short of 200mph in top gear, the Renault telemetry showed he got wheelspin as he made the pass! This was perhaps his best drive ever.

It was probably Räikkönen's, too. Into the closing laps, he hunted the leader down, and Fisichella began to feel the pressure, defending into the chicane even before Räikkönen had arrived on his tail. This only slowed him, and into that last lap, he entered the straight on a compromised line – and Räikkönen's chance for an improbable and magnificent win was presented to him.

The R factor

How a tricky Benetton led to Renault's R25 success

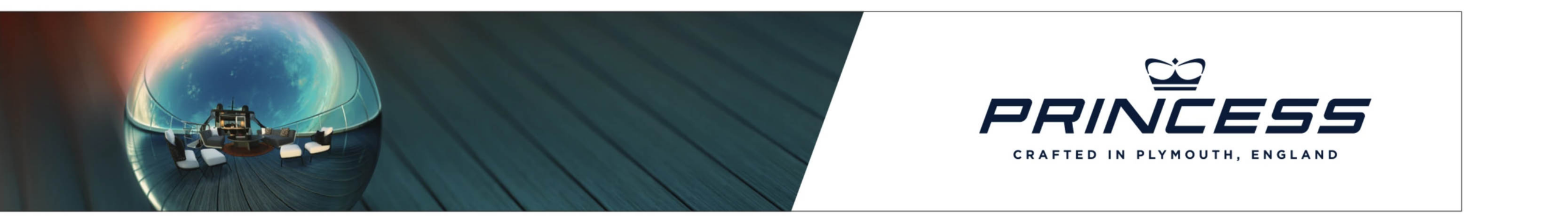


THE 2005 CHAMPIONSHIP-winning Renault R25 wasn't usually as outright quick as its rival – the McLaren MP4-20 – but it was much more reliable. This and a strategically sharp team on the pitwall was all Fernando Alonso needed to take his first title, at the age of 24.

The roots of the car came from the unsuccessful Benetton B201 of 2001 which featured an unusual wide-angle (111-deg) V10, to lower the centre of gravity and reduce the rear bodywork height, improving airflow to the rear wing. Although its poor airbox acoustics meant it was never powerful enough, and poor reliability from the vibration inherent to the v-angle meant adding more weight, it did suggest interesting development areas. As the vibration-afflicted engine developed more torque, its driveability and fuel economy was fantastic. The extra weight upon the rear gave strong traction. The wide-angle engine was abandoned for more conventional and powerful motors, the lessons of its torque curve and rearward weight bias woven into the cars of 2002 onwards, up to the R25 in the last year of V10s.



The car featured a significantly more rearward-bias than the McLaren in both weight and aero distribution. New aero regulations introduced for 2005 targeted a reduction in front downforce by raising the wing. Renault's pre-existing philosophy was very well suited. It was draggier than the McLaren but had a wide aerodynamic set-up window and strong traction.





Crossing the virtual divide

Formula E's esports innovations have caught **Allan McNish's** eye and he can see the potential for real-world racing changes

McNISH ON FORMULA E
IN ASSOCIATION WITH Audi Sport

WITH JUST ABOUT EVERY sport worldwide on hold because of the ongoing coronavirus pandemic, motor sport is fortunate in one sense that it can keep going in a different format – through esports. Of course, in recent years it has been growing anyway; it's not as if it's just started in the last few weeks, but now with real racing unable to take place it has taken centre stage.

As with a lot of different things, because of the pandemic, the push to go sim racing has had to accelerate a bit across the board. And now Formula E has its online racing series, the Race at Home series, where, much like in real life, the fans can tune in on a Saturday afternoon to see how their favourite drivers and teams are getting on.

The bonus in this virtual racing is that it is all done for a great cause as Formula E has partnered with UNICEF.

Motor sport is very much about the fans, and this approach has always been clear in Formula E as well. If you think back to Fanboost, or attack mode, they are designed for fan engagement in one way or another.

With this online series, it's a continuation of that philosophy in some ways. There's a lot of social media activity around it, people following their favourite teams and drivers as if they were actually racing in Hong Kong or wherever.

When I watch it, I get into it with the same sort of feelings of "come on Daniel [Abt]" or "come on Lucas [di Grassi]", messaging with some of our guys in the Audi Sport ABT Schaeffler team and generally engaging in the competitive element of it all. But I still find it slightly odd messaging the drivers, saying "are you ready, boys?", knowing that they are sitting in a simulator in their room, nowhere near anyone, but representing the Audi brand in the virtual world.

There have been some interesting innovations as a result of the Formula E esports series. I think the main thing that is earning fan interaction is having non-racing drivers compete as well. I quite like that.

Another thing I find appealing is the idea that after a certain number of laps, the last car automatically drops out of the race. I think that is an interesting concept. I'm sure that could come up in discussions of Formula E regulations in the future. There have been a few curveballs in the past, and that format is likely being watched closely right now through the online races.

Any skillset is tuned and honed through lots of experience, whether that's in a racing car or virtual racing. The two can crossover; Daniel and Lucas already have to do a hell of a lot of work in the sim, but that's for a slightly different job. It's to develop the car and improve the performance of the car, not to race against each other. That's what they do on the circuit.

From that point of view, they have to be the bridge between the virtual world and the real world, but with a completely different goal in mind.

"How the remainder of season six is going to play out, I don't know yet"

The skillsets are slightly different, but there's no question there is a crossover point. What I've seen so far is that the generation that has grown up with video games from age three or so are more attuned to it; for them it's almost instinctive.

For those learning it later in life it's obviously a bit harder, but there are some examples of older drivers who have really embraced esports and feel some of the same sensations that they do when they are doing the real thing.

Right now, esports is part of our maintenance of Formula E while we are under this 'red flag' situation. Maintaining some sort of communication and interaction with the fans while it's unclear when we're going to restart season six is extremely important.

Clearly, we are racing people and we want to race. But we are all very aware there's a bigger picture at play.

When we return to racing, we've got to tread carefully. The news of the New York and London races being cancelled was disappointing, but we understand the reasoning because both of those venues are essentially being used as hospitals now.

I don't think there's anyone in the paddock that would think motor sport should take priority over the health of the people in New York and London. How the remainder of season six is going to play out, I honestly don't know yet.



Race at Home involves real FE drivers including Daniel Abt

Race at Home has trialled the last-placed driver dropping out at certain points in races





While FE's immediate future is racing online, the planned Gen2 Evo (left) has been delayed

It will come down to exactly how the lockdown regulations are lifted by various governments and the timescales of changes.

Right now, every car manufacturer, indeed every business, is facing a really tough time financially. Therefore, there was a clear need for everybody up and down the Formula E grid to try and get a handle on some costs.

Two areas instantly came up for discussion when we sat down to try and figure this out. One was freezing homologation over a two-year period, and then it was about how to achieve it and put it into practice.

It sounds simple on paper, but when you consider some of the factors, the supply chains, the various contracts that are in place, and the fact we don't know when we can resume testing, there had to be an element of flexibility.

The second one was the delay of the Gen2 Evo bodywork. The manufacturers were very strong in their feeling that they wanted to achieve a homologation freeze, and the FIA was very accommodating for the delay on the Gen2 Evo bodywork.

Between all parties, the boundary lines to move forward were agreed quickly. Some details are still to be finalised, but the big picture stuff is done and dusted.

It was decisive, and it was needed. The worst thing in this situation is long protracted discussions. You need quick decisions, and everybody had a voice in those discussions and committed, which was good to see.

Allan McNish is the Team Principal of Audi Sport ABT Schaeffler Formula E Team as well as being a three-time Le Mans winner.

The picks of the bunch

A confined-to-barracks **Andrew Frankel** has used lockdown to compile a list of his favourite cars that you can currently buy



Want a sports car that does everything well? Step forward the Cayman GTS

Best paddock tow car

Land Rover Defender 110 D240 S

I've seen all kinds of unlikely tow cars over the years, none more so than a magnificent Bugatti Type 46 Sports Tourer at Silverstone with a Type 35B on the trailer behind. I should also namecheck Martin Overington, who has been seen towing a Porsche 962 through France behind his supercharged 4 1/2-litre Bentley.

But among more conventional and modern cars, the Toyota Amazon has long been the weapon of choice, the one the well-informed secretly admire, particularly if it is exceptionally dog-eared and parked amid a sea of Range Rovers with personalised plates. The Amazon is not just an exceptional tow car, and near indestructible, it's also somehow effortlessly cool. But it does have the hindrance of no longer being on sale.

The heir apparent has to be the new Land Rover Defender. More the car the current Discovery should have been all along than a true successor to the original icon, it has both the ability and the authenticity to shape up as the new paddock queen. Just make sure you get it covered in mud first.

- **Price** £49,880
- **Engine** 2-litre, four-cylinder, turbocharged
- **Power** 240bhp at 4400rpm
- **Torque** 368lb ft at 1500rpm
- **Weight** 2323kg
- **0-62mph** 8.7sec
- **Top speed** 117mph
- **Rivals** *Jeep Wrangler Rubicon,* £45,315
Rough and ready relative to the Defender. Expensive, but not without charm
- *Toyota Land Cruiser Icon,* £50,905. Not actually an icon like the old Amazon, but probably about as dependable.

Best all-purpose driver's car

Porsche 718 Cayman GTS

A few weeks ago this category would have had a different name at its head: the Alpine A110. And as a thing simply to get in and drive, I'd say the Alpine is probably still a cigarette paper ahead of this Porsche. And given it has only four cylinders, a turbocharged engine and not even the option of a manual gearbox, that's a mighty achievement for the A110. But it's the presence of the qualifier 'all-purpose' that tips it in favour of the Cayman GTS.

For now that Porsche had seen sense and elected to replace the unlovely 2.5-litre flat-four turbo motor with a normally aspirated 4-litre flat-six (at least in GTS models), all the magic of the Cayman concept has not just been fully restored but elevated to an even higher level of performance. With six manual gears as standard and that howling engine, it actually has the feel of a car from another era, combined with the ability of one designed today by some of the best brains in the business.

- **Price** £64,088
- **Engine** 4-litre, six-cylinder, naturally aspirated
- **Power** 394bhp at 7000rpm
- **Torque** 310lb ft at 5000rpm
- **Weight** 1405kg
- **0-62mph** 4.5sec
- **Top speed** 182mph
- **Rivals** *Alpine A110S,* £56,810
Faster and more expensive than standard A110, but no better to drive
- *Toyota GR Supra 3.0L Pro,* £54,000. Rapid and quite fun, but still something of a pulled punch against rivals.



Adept both off-road, or on its way to Mallory Park. The new Defender is the tow car of choice

Best family hack

Mercedes-Benz E220d SE Estate

The secret here is not to buy anything that tempts you to drive fast, because in the not





desperately humorous world of large family transport, that way leads almost always to frustration. But nor should you abandon all hope of actually enjoying what you drive, for follow that path to its inevitable conclusion and you'll end up behind the wheel of one of those ghastly crossover SUVs upon which so much of the world seems currently and inexplicably fixated.

There's a reason that estate cars were popular before everyone became a fashion victim. No higher nor barely any heavier than a conventional saloon, they ride, handle, stop and steer like normal cars, yet they can also carry all the clobber you wish, whether it be for school, shopping or holidaying. True, most won't get you far off-road but I expect most of us can live with that limitation.

A Mercedes-Benz E-class estate would remain top of my list. Of this kind of car, only a Škoda Superb Estate will carry more, but the Benz also provides a quiet, comfortable and classy interior and a driving experience that, while well short of being actually fun, is never anything less than entirely pleasant.

- **Price** £38,880 - **Engine** 2-litre, four-cylinder, turbocharged
- **Power** 194bhp at 3800rpm
- **Torque** 295lb ft at 1600rpm
- **Weight** 1780kg - **0-62mph** 7.7sec
- **Top speed** 146mph
- **Rivals** ***Škoda Superb 2.0TDI Laurin & Klement,*** £38,085. The most capacious estate around but not as classy as rivals
- ***BMW 520d SE Touring,*** £40,345. Not quite as practical as the Mercedes but probably better to drive.

Best road-legal track day car

Ariel Atom 4

Before the Atom 4, no previous Ariel would have lived in this spot. It would have been close, but their inherent on-limit trickiness would have handed something else, almost certainly a Caterham, the honours.

While the Atom 4 may look superficially similar to those other Atoms, which have now been around for nigh on 20 years, it's actually a new car from the ground up and comes complete with a new turbocharged 2-litre Honda engine, laden with torque and packaged in a car weighing under 600kg. For the money, it's the most astonishingly potent package.

Yet despite being faster than ever, it's a brave person who flicks the three-position power switch over to the maximum 320bhp output, as the Atom 4 is a thoroughly developed and utterly delightful track car. The slight twitchiness on turn-in, which kept you so firmly on your toes in the Atom 3, has now been entirely eradicated, replaced by the most delightful and friendly balance.

Indeed, the biggest problem it poses is simply getting your head around the sheer speed of the thing. Turn up at a track day in one of these, and while you might drool over those Italian supercars in the paddock, out on the track, they're more likely to be obstacles for you to negotiate your way around.

But once you're properly dialled into it, of the cars I've driven there's nothing else on sale that can match not just its raw speed, but the never-ending pleasure available to those willing and able to learn its extraordinary ways.

- **Price** £39,950 - **Engine** 2-litre, four-cylinder, turbocharged
- **Power** 320bhp at 6500rpm
- **Torque** 310lb ft at 3000rpm
- **Weight** 595kg - **0-62mph** 2.8sec
- **Top speed** 162mph
- **Rivals** ***Caterham 620S,*** £50,390. The original and some still say the best, especially when, like this, turned up to 11
- ***BAC Mono,*** £167,940. An exquisitely engineered single-seater that makes the Atom look compromised.

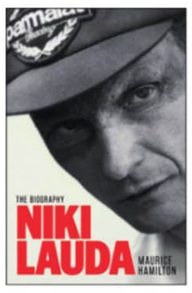


HORTONS BOOKS

Okay computer, you're the best

A barnstorming new biography of Niki Lauda reveals his innate humanity, says **Damien Smith**





Niki Lauda: The Biography
Maurice Hamilton
Published by Simon & Schuster
ISBN: 978-1-4711-9201-2, £20

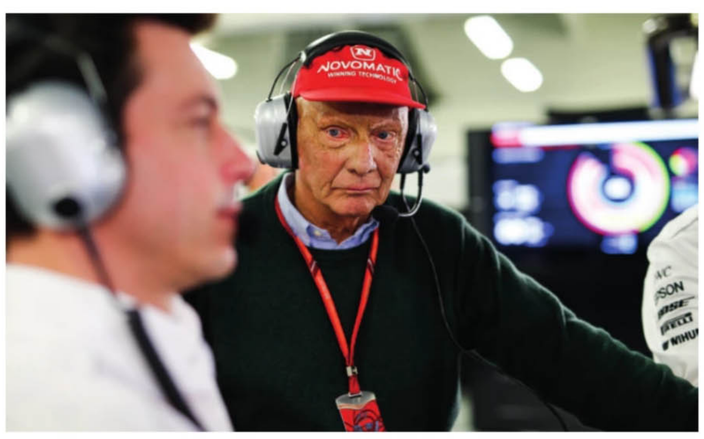
THE AUTHOR HAD NO INTENTION of writing this new biography of Niki Lauda. After all, the three-time World Champion's wonderful story has been told often and well through the decades in magazines, books and on film. But when Lauda died on May 20 last year at the age of 70, Maurice Hamilton found himself compelled to revisit the life of a man he had known for 40 years, such was the outpouring of genuine grief, including from within the modern-day Formula 1 paddock, in which Niki remained both actively relevant and hugely popular.

On the anniversary of his death, this isn't the only Lauda book hitting the shelves this month. His celebrated autobiography *To Hell and Back* is also back in circulation, with the addition of a new introduction and a round-up chapter on his later years by former *Times* motor racing correspondent Kevin Eason. But Hamilton's book, which has the blessing of Lauda's sons, Lukas and Mathias, is the one we'd recommend. As great as *To Hell and Back* remains, the new biography adds greater detail from other perspectives while still drawing on the best direct quotes from the many other interviews Lauda gave over the years. Autobiographies are not necessarily the definitive word on a subject.

Hamilton adds a nice personal touch, given that he had so many dealings with Lauda from their first interview in 1982. He includes a delightful portrait he took as a fan, of a young Niki in his Formula 2 March at Mallory Park in 1971. Lauda was never one for nostalgia, but years later when Hamilton showed him the picture he was genuinely moved, especially when he spotted the family ring on his left hand. The heirloom would soon be discarded, following the traumatic row with his autocratic grandfather, who had tried to sabotage his racing ambitions.

The two-part career through the 1970s and '80s will be familiar for most, but the author's deft touch keeps a brisk pace and his use of less familiar period interviews adds vivid colour, detail and Lauda's own unmistakable, clipped voice. Perhaps it's Hamilton's newspaper background that draws him to Fleet Street sources, such as David Benson's period interviews with Lauda for *The Daily Express* on the Nürburgring 1976 crash and his remarkable return at Monza. Lauda's matter-of-fact description of the mortal battle he fought in the days after the accident still sends a shiver.

But what really makes this new biography compelling are the chapters after 1985.



Lauda played a large part in the development of the now all-conquering Mercedes F1 team

Writing about Niki Lauda is like revisiting The Beatles: you think it's all been told before. The trick is to unearth the nuggets that offer new depth and perspective. That's not easy for Lauda's racing career – although Hamilton gives it a good go – but the approach comes into its own when documenting Niki's dual careers running his airline and other people's F1 teams, perhaps because these years are less documented.

The chapter on the crash in 1991 that claimed the lives of all 223 onboard Lauda Air's Boeing 767 is particularly affecting and thorough – as you'd expect on such a topic. Lauda's pursuit of Boeing for the truth about its cause and his heartfelt promise to the grieving families to find them the answers is at least as powerful as anything in the sections on the 1976 season. The scars from the "worst experience of [his] life" ran deeper than those on his face and head.

Lauda's time as a consultant at Ferrari during the 1990s, when he was charged by his old friend Luca di Montezemolo to revive

DPPI, GRAND PRIX PHOTO



A two-part F1 career, which ended at McLaren in 1985, is just one element of the fascinating Niki Lauda story

"The scars from 'the worst experience of his life' ran deeper than those on his face and head"

the team's fortunes, doesn't dwell on the details of his failure, but instead gives credit for his anointment of Jean Todt as the man to complete the task. That recommendation cost him his job, as Todt eventually pushed him aside – but Lauda never bitched: it wasn't his way. Anyway, his instincts had been on the money. Todt went on to work wonders that were probably beyond Lauda's political capabilities.

The section on Jaguar and Lauda's part in its sorry F1 debacle at the turn of the century are more revealing, particularly the accounts of his dealings with Ford's hopeless corporate executives. Richard Parry-Jones is a revered figure in the wider automotive world, but he never did understand motor racing. Lauda was miscast in his role as the head of the pompously titled 'Premier Performance Division', but again his instincts were proven right. He introduced Dietrich Mateschitz and Red Bull to the board as a potential sponsor, a notion dismissed out of hand. But the energy drinks company would prove rather more competent at running the F1 team than the shiny suits Lauda had to deal with.

The most illuminating part is the section on Lauda's role within the hugely successful Mercedes F1 team. His influence went far beyond just convincing Lewis Hamilton to step away from McLaren in 2012. The author's interviews with team boss Toto Wolff reveal a depth of friendship that is as genuine as it is surprising. These were very different men, and at times Wolff's patience was sorely tested by the blunt force of his non-executive chairman. But Lauda's trademark antipathy for "bullshit" added a vital element of authenticity to the Mercedes mix.

For a man known as 'The Computer' during his driving career, it was Niki Lauda's humanity that was his true driving characteristic, and that's the running thread that pulls his authoritative book together. No wonder we miss him so much.

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Richard Noble's career is full of high-speed stories, such as three different LSR contenders

A fast-paced thriller

When thinking of speed, few names loom larger than Richard Noble. And his story is fascinating, says **Gordon Cruickshank**

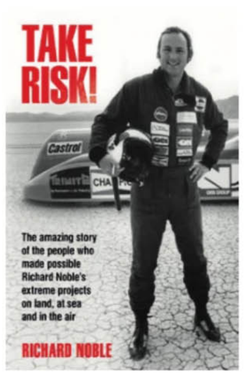
TALKING WITH RICHARD NOBLE can be tiring. He has a lot to say, and it's important, and it's urgent. That's what this book feels like - urgent. And there *is* a lot to say; the man has been involved in so many schemes that three Land Speed Record attempts are just a fraction of it. And he feels strongly that his theme is important, not just to him but to British industry, education and the wider world of technical advance.

Ungrammatical though it looks, that title sums up what he wants to say. Throughout his life he has battled against people's fear of taking risks, whether it's the never-ending pursuit of sponsorship or fighting to persuade government officials to support his aeroplane company. All the way along he has met rebuffs and U-turns which spelled disaster - but somehow there's always been an "and then something amazing happened" turnaround. The message is that if you batter against all the barriers with enough force, one of them will give way. And boy does Richard have that force: hearing what a thread the Thrust II and SSC projects constantly hung on, and how the threads would break just as they'd landed another lifeline, is tense reading even now.

It's the same pattern through his other schemes - his own conviction versus others' fear of burnt fingers. The first two LSR projects were successful; not so his ARV light aeroplane company - a clever, efficient design the market still needs, scuppered by other people's nervousness - or the Farnborough 'taxi' plane, an Uber of the air before Uber was thought of, scuppered by etc, etc.

Noble is fiercely proud of what his various teams achieved, and he credits them, the sponsors who weren't too scared to write cheques, and the firms and universities who threw themselves into his many battles. He's especially proud of the STEM spin-off Bloodhound had with schools, much needed today, and frank that he failed to bring that one off. But he pushes on, looking at the water speed record...

His takeaway message is "Failure to accept risk leads to a sterile climate in which innovation happens elsewhere". And if the book is a bit choppy in texture - so what? He has a message to impart!



Take Risk!
Richard Noble
Published by Evro, £19.99
ISBN: 978-1-910505-51-9

TONY SUGDEN – MY 70 YEARS IN MOTORSPORT

Anyone who appreciates Special Saloons will know Tony Sugden. Racing for over five decades, the cheery Yorkshireman moved from grasstrack bikes in the 1950s to saloons of all varieties, and famously his various 'Škodas', regular winners in the silhouette world. Even after retiring in 2003, aged 71, Tony continued to drive safety cars at Silverstone and Cadwell and is still a race steward today. A long career without great fame, yet a source of huge fun to him and those who saw him fling his so-called DAF 55 or Esprit-Cosworth through a grid of V8 Escorts and VW-Chevrolets. Self-published and a bit rough and ready, Allen's book, much of it in Tony's own words, nevertheless conveys the feel of club racing fuelled more by enthusiasm than cash. **GC**

Mike Allen, Published by Mike Allen, £20, mikeallenbooks@outlook.com

FASTER

Film-makers often condense a complex story to one challenge – think of *The King's Speech*. It's not often the case for a racing history, but *Faster* does just this. Built round the story of Lucy and Laury Schell's Ecurie Bleue team and their Delahayes, it leads up to the 1938 Pau Grand Prix, where René Dreyfus beat Caracciola's Mercedes W154. It's full of detail – with 80 pages of notes! – but with an over-simplistic angle, in this case 'how a Jewish driver and a forgotten woman beat the Nazis!'. The sensational style is more like a novel, with detailed conversations no-one could have heard and lurid emotion. Maybe I'm the wrong market; in our world we do know of Lucy Schell and also that, Pau aside, Germany firmly dominated the era.

It's easy to point to Merc's troubles at Pau – Caracciola's injured leg, a tight circuit that didn't suit the car, oiling plugs – but that's racing. It was a fine win, but though France hailed it with joy, it was hardly the crippling blow to Germany the book seeks to suggest, and a claim that Hitler sought to destroy this Delahaye to erase the disgrace is baseless. **GC**

Neal Bascomb, Houghton Mifflin Harcourt, $28, ISBN 78-1-328-48987-6

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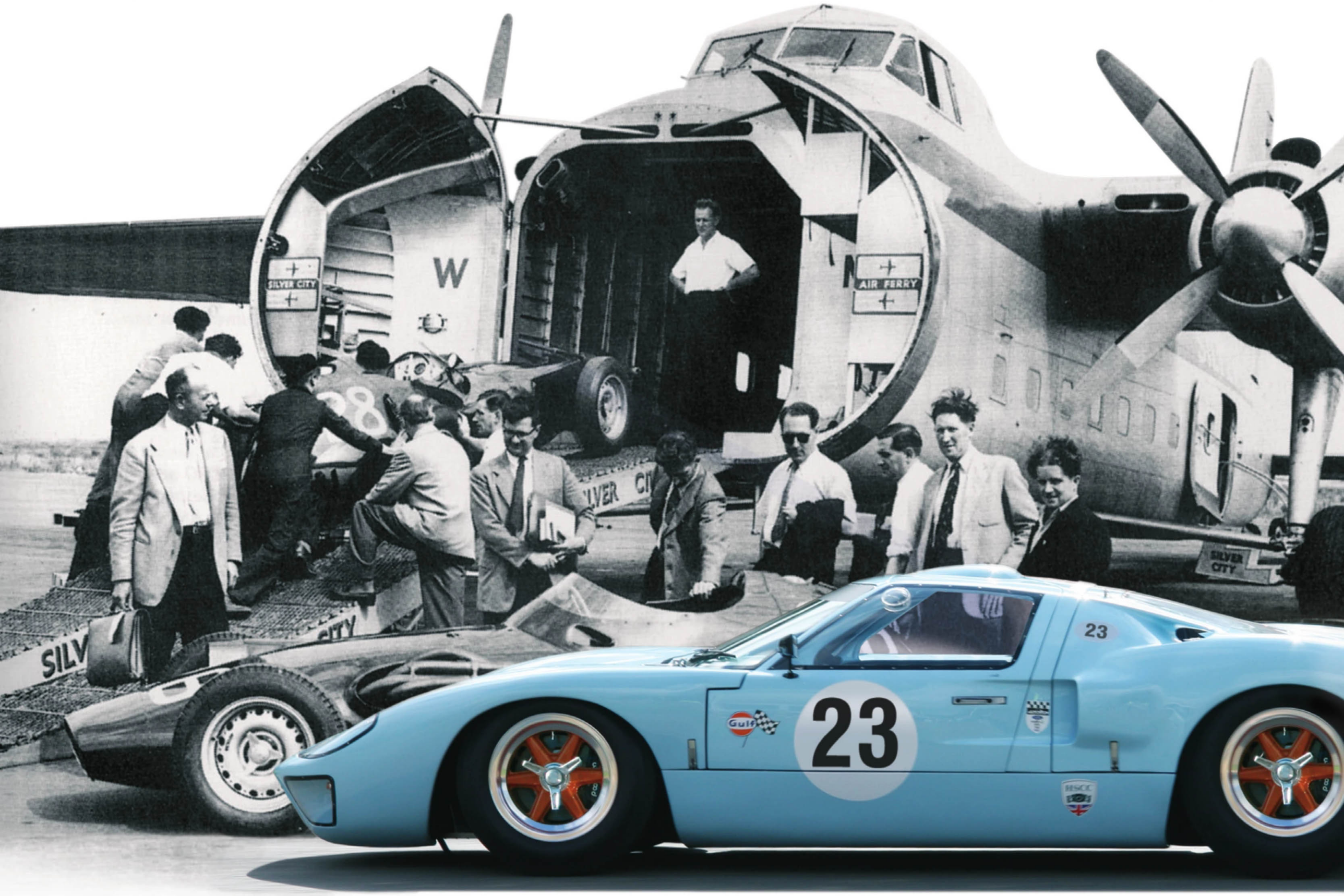
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We're perhaps a bit guilty of shining the light on the 'it's not a toy, it's a scale model' pastime of Lego, and often forget there are a host of other great kits available from other brands. This remote control offering from classic brand Meccano is a prime example. Based on Lamborghini's Huracán or Aventador models, these kits recreate the structure of the Italian hypercars and then let you bolt them together and race them around your living room floor. The kits contain over 270 pieces and use real working scissor doors, coil spring suspension, moving engine pistons and a 2.4GHz radio control powertrain. They're also suitably loud, with the Aventador featured in striking orange and the Huracán sporting an electric lime green colour.

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WALLSAUCE MURALS

You've probably stared at that blank wall in your home and thought wistfully: 'If only I were staring out across Monaco harbour on a grand prix weekend, or watching a life-size Henri Toivonen powersliding his Group B Lancia toward me around the Col de Turini...' Now those visions can be a reality thanks to this range of murals from Wallsauce. With Formula 1 images licensed by leading snapper Darren Heath and rally art from the McKlein collection, you can take your favourite view and put it on your wall. All you have to do is submit your wall measurements, and then each mural is printed to an exact fit and supplied in wallpaper-style 'paste the wall' spec or as self-adhesive panels, so they're easy to fit. And far more interesting than that old magnolia...

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Norris branded Pagenaud a “loser” after this clash sparked a war of words

Norris vs Pagenaud; NASCAR set to return

A moment of controversy between stars as F1 and IndyCar clashed, while NASCAR heads for its real-world comeback

LANDO NORRIS’S ARRIVAL IN THE IndyCar iRacing Challenge ruffled more than a few feathers in April when the Formula 1 driver took victory in his first event at the virtual Austin track. So all eyes were on the British driver in May when he lined up to repeat the feat at the Indianapolis round.

But the race descended into controversy in the closing laps when Penske’s Simon Pagenaud deliberately crashed Norris out of the lead. The move, which played out over social media, caused shock among fans and led to an angry backlash from the McLaren driver who branded the 2019 Indianapolis 500 victor a “loser”.

Later, Santino Ferrucci’s side-swipe of Oliver Askew heading to the line for the win further tarnished what had been an exciting race. Supercars champion Scott McLaughlin inherited victory as chaos unfolded around him, in a disappointing end to an otherwise entertaining series staged by IndyCar.

Conversely, the month of May featured F1 putting on some of its best online races to date, with Charles Leclerc, Alex Albon and George Russell starring in the F1 Virtual Grand Prix series.

A race-long battle between Leclerc and Albon at Interlagos enthralled asthe pair swapped the lead on almost every lap, before the Red Bull driver eventually took the win, aided by a penalty for Leclerc.

The following race was a tense but equally entertaining affair, as Russell stopped Leclerc from taking the win. The Spanish Grand Prix was won by the Williams driver, who had a three-second time penalty for a track limits infraction cancelled out when Leclerc earned himself the same sanction on the penultimate lap.

NASCAR hosted its final esports event ahead of its return to real-life racing, visiting North Wilkesboro for the first time since 1996, albeit virtually. The series ended the way it began, with Joe Gibbs Racing’s Denny Hamlin securing the final win of the season. He held off NASCAR iRacing series star Timmy Hill in the final laps to close out the virtual stock car racing, just before the class returned to reality at Darlington.



F1 AND FE HEADLINE AS W SERIES AND BRDC JOIN IN

This month, Formula 1 and Formula E will continue to stage online racing. F1 will next host the Azerbaijan, Canadian and French Virtual Grands Prix events.

The young stars on the 2020 F1 grid will be back and joined by several celebrities, including football stars, golf pros and special guests. This will all take place ahead of F1 potentially returning for the beginning of the real 2020 season in Austria.

FE’s events also continue, and BMW Andretti driver Maximilian Günther has dominated the online series so far. Aside from Günther, only Mahindra Racing’s Pascal Wehrlein has won races, but with more events on the way, and the unique elimination format FE uses, there could be surprises in store.

Both series’ events can be watched online on the official F1 and Formula E YouTube pages respectively.

Both the W Series and BRDC have announced esports series, with BRDC Award winner Johnathan Hoggard winning the opening BRDC event.

FORMULA 1

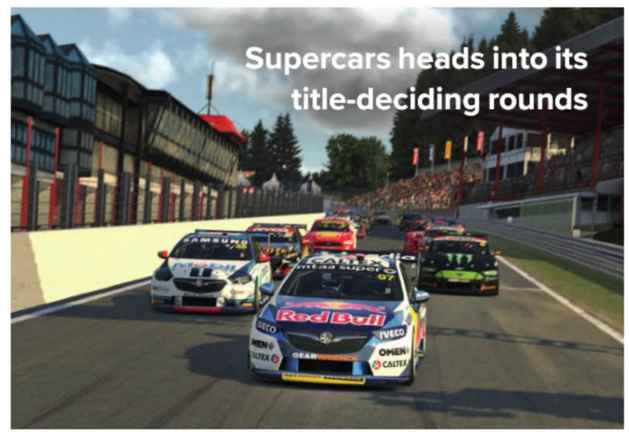
Azerbaijan GP **June 7**
Canadian GP **June 14**
French GP **June 28**

FORMULA E

Round 7 **June 6**
Round 8 **June 13 (Finale)**

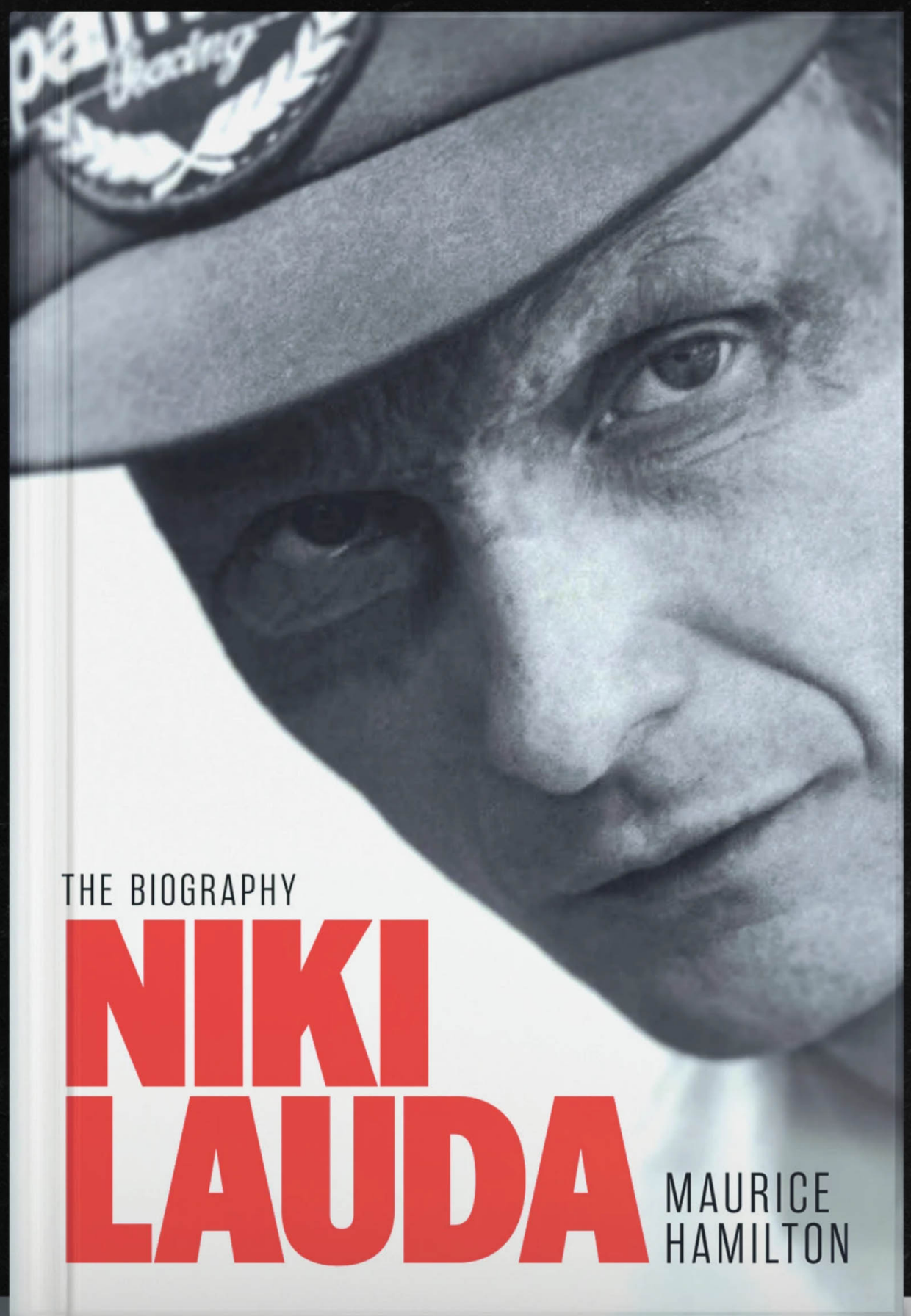
SUPERCARS

Round 9 **June 3**
Round 10 **June 10 (Finale)**



Supercars heads into its title-deciding rounds

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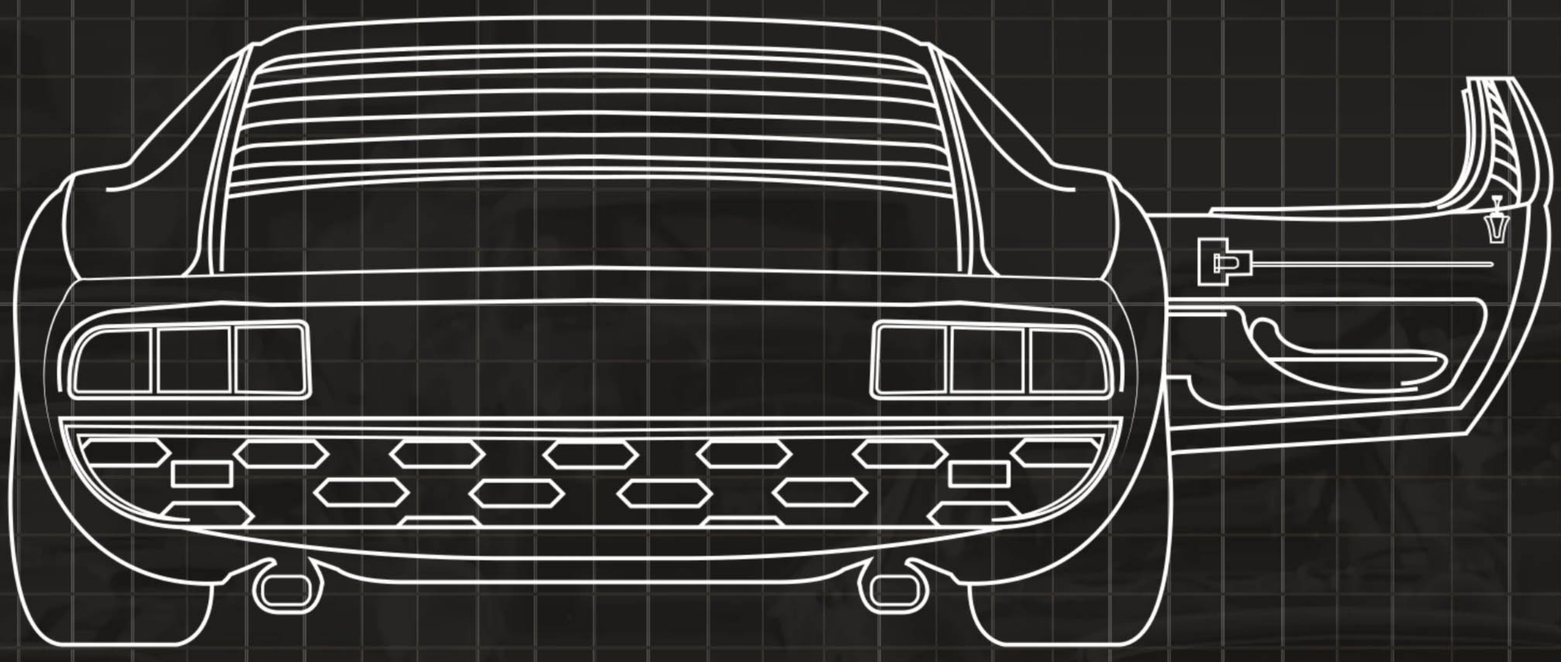
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Rouse finished seventh in a Capri at 1980 Spa 24 Hours alongside Tassin and Martin



Andy and Julian combined for Britcar success in 2003

RACING LIVES

Andy & Julian Rouse

Andy Rouse managed to combine racing and business to great success, taking four BSCC titles in 1975, '83, '84 and '85 and breaking records along the way. Below the headline success, Rouse was a shrewd operator who set up Andy Rouse Engineering, honing all the skills he had learned in his early days working with Broadspeed and Jaguar in particular. His links to motor sport remain through son Julian, Arden Motorsport's general manager, who rose up the ranks of management after an early foray in racing. The pair even drove a then-11-year-old Mercedes DTM car together in a 2003 Britcar campaign... ***Interviews by James Mills***

GETTY IMAGES, PAUL CHERRY

ANDY ROUSE: "There were many times when being an engineer gave me an advantage in racing, although not always how some might imagine. One of my big breaks came when I started driving with Broadspeed in the 1970s. Ralph Broad's team had the deal to build the Jaguar XJ12C for the European Touring Car Championship, and I raced with Derek Bell.

The Jaguar weighed about 1450kg, had a big V12 over the front axle and no power steering. Worse, it had 19-inch wheels - 19 x 12s on the front and 19 x 14s on the rear - at a time when most road cars were on 13-inch wheels. It was a serious effort to drive, so much so I needed to do something about it, so I designed and built myself a training machine.

It was a seat on a frame with a steering wheel attached to springs, and it allowed me to exercise all the muscles I needed all in one go. It would improve everything from grip and thumb strength, to arms and shoulders, all at once, in my garage at home. I've still got it!

That make-and-mend mentality came from being brought up on a farm, where my father worked as a market gardener, growing tomatoes, lettuce and so on. So there was a private road to drive on, sheds to work in and things like tractors and ploughs to tinker with.

As a lad, when I was 14 and 15, I'd cycle for miles to go and watch jalopy racing. We'd head off to see clubs put on events at Gloucester and Forest of Dean, and while at school I built my own jalopy racer, a Singer special, which I bought from a local garage for £10, with a Ford Kent engine. It was a bit like a Morgan, with an aluminium body over a wood frame, and I stripped it all down to install a roll cage.

My best mate from school, Ian Bisco, would help me, but I don't think anyone else of our age was doing anything like that at the time. Ian went on to run Cosworth in America, so it must have been a good grounding.

Because of that, I learned my craft racing on grass fields, which is like driving in the

wet. You have to get the car set up nicely otherwise you can't do anything, as there's a big difference between it being right and wrong. It all came naturally to me, somehow.

It's because of racing that I came to end up working on engines at Broadspeed in 1971. I'd gone to Ralph to buy an engine for my Dulon Formula Ford, ended up with a job, and Ralph sold me an Escort Mexico at cost price so I could race. I couldn't have been at a better place to prepare it, and off we went and won the '72 championship, and one thing led to another with drives in saloons.

Mind you, Ralph did pretty well out of it, because the Mexico Championship went across Europe, and Belgium in particular would send cars to Broadspeed to prepare. There were so many that eventually we had to send some back because we couldn't manage them all.

I wanted to teach Julian the right lessons when he started in karting. He was good; we did the TKM championship, mainly, in Juniors and Seniors, and he raced well. But it was hard work, and it was at a time when I was flat out. All the same I didn't want to pay somebody else to take him racing, I wanted us to spend time together and learn. We were at the same meetings as Lewis Hamilton and his dad, and got to know them well over a couple of seasons. It's pretty professional and cut-throat-competitive now.

When the family came along I had to think about the practical arrangements at the races. If I hadn't taken them with me, the only time I'd have seen the children would have been at breakfast before I went to work and they went to school. My days were long, especially after founding Andy Rouse Engineering, and the weekends were spent at circuits.

So once they were two or three years old, we bought a motorhome and that used to be our base for the weekend. It was a civilised way to go about it, because it gave us a place to go through the day and later, once everybody had gone back to their hotel, we'd light the barbecue and the kids would be on their motorbikes, messing about and having fun.

The highlight had to be racing in the BTCC in the mid-1990s, when it had become a series of international standing. And the Sierra Cosworth RS500 was my favourite car, but it was hot, hard work driving those. The floor would reach 60deg C, and after about 10 laps you couldn't keep your foot on the floor because of the heat-soak. In the right-hand drive cars you'd be sitting on the same side as the turbo, with just a thick piece of sheet metal between you, the exhaust was running underneath and it was so severe I wouldn't wear fireproof underwear, had to have an open-face helmet, and always kept the window open - I was dehydrated at the end of a race.

There were a lot of setbacks along the way, whether it was Jaguar pulling out of racing in 1978 and not having a drive, or losing the Ford contract in 1996 when I was running Andy Rouse Engineering. I kept faith, because I knew what I wanted and where I wanted to be, so it was a case of making the best of it.

One of my lasting memories from racing is getting home, late on a Sunday, picking up the sleeping children and tucking them in."

"The Sierra Cosworth RS500 was my favourite, but it was hot and hard work"

JULIAN ROUSE "I was born into attending circuits right from the start. Looking back, you have this nostalgic feeling of being a travelling family. It was great fun seeing so many different places at a young age.

We didn't see a lot of Dad in the week. Around the time my sister and I were born he set up his own team, so he had responsibilities in the business, as well as the technical aspects, and had to stay fit to drive.

His life was different from other racing dads, who were employed by a manufacturer and weren't necessarily that involved outside race events. My mum, Sheila, was supporting the business, handling the administration and bookkeeping, so it was a family effort.

We spent plenty of time with him at the Andy Rouse Engineering facility in Coventry, around the cars and the workshop. But this way of life meant that if we'd driven over to Snetterton in the motorhome and Dad had a shit race weekend, the joke was you probably wouldn't hear him speak until Wednesday, let alone driving back from Snetterton!

Racing was more family orientated then, and the family would be more involved, certainly compared to what I experience today with the professional drivers I work with at Arden and R-Motorsport. When we were young we built up friendships with Peter Hall and his family. He was the owner of ICS, and a predominant sponsor of dad for over a decade, and I got on well with Stuart, Pete's son, and David Yates and his son Jack, who was my age. I used to walk to Jack's house, which was about a mile from Oulton Park.

When you think of all the great cars he raced, and all Dad achieved, it's funny how he doesn't have any memorabilia or past race cars. He's a simple guy who doesn't feel the need to hold onto those things and moves on.

As soon as one of Dad's old cars comes up for sale, I will get a message from my friend Charlie Hollings, who takes a lot of pleasure in reminding me that's the inheritance that I won't be getting. A lot of the cars go for good money... But that's Dad. He was running a business and the cars had to pay their way.

That sort of pragmatic approach came to bear when I was racing. As a teenager trying to race I had never seen the struggle and the journey that Dad had been on to get to where he was, which was probably counterproductive and compromising because I felt everything was going to fall into place because I was his son and he had a successful business and driving career. Not seeing those challenging years set me up for a fall, because I didn't anticipate the challenge, and thought it would all happen naturally. Of course, it never does.

In karting, I'd always get a bollocking because I wasn't winning. In the Renault Clio Cup it became evident that I liked to shunt! I tried to do things as quickly as possible, put pressure on myself, and made errors. I'd crash and have to rebuild the car on Monday.

In my father's single-minded style, we got about four races in and when we were back at the factory he told me it was a waste of time that it was costing a lot and he was going to sell the car. It was hard to take, especially as a teenager without a lot of direction, but it was justified and kicked me into shape.

I spent a year and a half working at a local clothes shop in Leamington Spa, which made me realise how much I missed motor racing. I managed to get some weekend work, building club-race cars with Andrew Crighton of Advent Motorsport, then I spotted an ad placed by Fortec, for a junior mechanic. Kelvin Burt introduced me to Paul Jackson, who was running the team, and that's how I got started. They were flying high; it was a great experience that set me up for team management.

Motor sport is volatile, you need to dig deep. Dad did that, he had a determination to be successful, I suppose I have it too. I just wish he'd kept some of his cars!"



Julian's path took him to Arden, where he oversaw the likes of Daniil Kvyat's pre-F1 career

GRAND PRIX PHOTO

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LUNCH WITH

John Wickham

The co-founder of the Spirit F1 team who also led Audi's touring car campaigns and Bentley's Le Mans successes reflects with **Gary Watkins**

PORTRAITS: JAKOB EBREY



1973 was Wickham's big break, in F2 for Surtees with Mass as lead driver

He co-owned the Spirit Formula 1 team in the early 1980s, helped mastermind Audi's successes in the British Touring Car Championship in the mid-1990s, was at the helm of the Bentley set-up that won the Le Mans 24 Hours in the 2000s, and went on to put together and then run the A1GP World Cup of Motorsport over the second half of the same decade. John Wickham enjoyed an eclectic career of which those are just the highlights.

Wickham worked across a range of racing arenas all around the globe for nearly 50 years. He managed teams in Formula 2, Formula 3000 and multiple touring car categories, and ran sports car programmes on both sides of the Atlantic. And he was still going strong with few thoughts of retirement as he approached 70 before being diagnosed with motor neurone disease.

We meet at the Lambert Arms, not far from the care home close to High Wycombe where John has lived since shortly after his diagnosis in 2019. He opts for the chicken liver pâté with red onion marmalade followed by the beer-battered haddock.

Brought up in Petts Wood near Bromley, Wickham had an early interest in motor sport. "My father had raced motorcycles between the wars at places like Crystal Palace and the original grass track at Brands Hatch," he explains. "I was reading the magazines from the age of six, and then got the Scalextric set and started modifying the cars. I even organised a sweepstake on the result of Le Mans when I was 13 or 14."

His first involvement in motor sport came with junior membership of both the British Racing & Sports Car Club and the British Automobile Racing Club in his mid-teens, helping at nearby Brands and Crystal Palace.

"I started working in the paddock before I was old enough to go trackside as a marshal," he recalls. "I can recall being at the memorable races: the amazing drive from Pedro Rodríguez



in one of the Gulf Porsche 917Ks at the BOAC 1000 in 1970; and the World Championship Victory Race in 1971 in which Jo Siffert died."

There was a short-lived dabble as a competitor, navigating on road rallies with a Mini-owning friend. But working in motor sport rather than banking – he was employed at a National Westminster branch in Covent Garden after leaving school at 18 – was very much the aim for the young John Wickham.

"I saw a small ad for a position at the BARC," John recalls. "I was mad about motor sport and thought it had to be more fun than banking. I remember hand-writing my application to [general manager] Grahame White." It might sound incongruous today, but the club's offices were in Argyll Street in Soho, right next to the London Palladium. From the centre of London, the BARC's new competitions manager helped organise 20 race meetings through 1972.

The ambition, however, was to progress from running race meetings to running a race team: "Formula 2 or sports cars, I was thinking." White's departure from the BARC over the winter of 1972/73 made Wickham decide it was time to seek new pastures.

Another ad in a mag resulted in a trip down to Edenbridge in Kent to see John Surtees, who

was looking for a team manager for his F2 squad. "Surtees for some reason gave me the job, even though I'd never been near a race team," recalls John. "The team was John, one mechanic for each car, a truckie and me."

He oversaw a programme with a pair of TS15s powered by Hart-tuned Ford BDAs for Jochen Mass aboard the team's lead car and a roster of drivers including Mike Hailwood, Carlos Pace and Derek Bell in the second. It was a busy schedule for the rookie team manager: Team Surtees raced in 16 of the 17 rounds in the 1973 European F2 Championship.

Mass won two of them and scored a further four podiums, though ended up a distant second in the championship to works March driver Jean-Pierre Jarier. There were some scrapes along the way, most notably when the German was disqualified from the two-heat Thruxton race in April.

"Jochen's engine blew in the first heat, so we swapped cars. We put him in Hailwood's car for the second race and said it was Mike who'd blown up. Of course, we were found out. That was John's idea."

Surtees and Wickham had another brush with officialdom at Enna in late August. "We built a new chassis that was meant to be more aerodynamic. The truck had already left by the time it was finished, so we trailered it to Sicily only to be told at scrutineering that the car was a centimetre or something too wide."

The rest of the team travelled on to the Salzburgring in Austria for the next round, while Wickham was tasked with towing the new car the 1500 miles home on his own.

"The first morning, I went down to the beach and had some melon, which turned out to be infected. I was sleeping in the van, and when I woke up I'd have to jump straight out for obvious reasons - I wasn't very well. When I got back, the doctor told me I had dysentery. I was in bed for a week and a half. In those days there was prize money, all in cash. After a week or so, a police sergeant knocked on the door and said, 'Mr Surtees has accused you of stealing the money'."

Wickham decided that Team Surtees wasn't for him and left at the end of the season. It was then back to the BARC, now based at Thruxton and run by Sidney Offord. Offord oversaw a massive expansion of meetings organised by the club: "Sidney realised that the only way to make more money was to hold more meetings. We went from 19 meetings in my first year back in '74 to 29 in 1976."

The next role in the pitlane for Wickham would also be in F2. Thruxton's place on the European calendar meant Wickham was present at an F2 association meeting at the end of '78. March co-founder Max Mosley asked if he might be interested in helping the team out: "I thought, perfect!" Wickham was a team manager again, but his remit this time went further. He also engineered one of the flotillas of works cars that March ran.

"There was a knock: 'Mr Surtees has accused you of stealing'"

Marc Surer won the title in Wickham's first year in the job aboard a BMW-backed factory March 792. It was a close battle with Brian Henton in one of the Toleman team's Ralt-Hart RT2s, the Swiss coming out on top courtesy of the British driver losing victory at Enna after missing a chicane at the start. "Henton was excluded, and Toleman appealed, but got turned down. It probably helped that Sidney was a steward," recalls John. "He was there because he could speak Italian."

The following year March built an 812 F2 powered by the new Honda V6 engine with which Ralt and Geoff Lees won the European title. That resulted in Wickham coming into contact with Nobuhiko Kawamoto - the architect of Honda's return to four-wheel racing and a future CEO of the company - when he visited Japan to oversee Satoru Nakajima race the car. "Kawamoto asked me out to dinner and told me he wanted a team that was focused on F2, not building all sorts of customer racing cars like Ralt," recalls John. "He asked if I would be interested."

Wickham was, and hooked up with former McLaren F1 designer Gordon Coppuck, who'd joined March in 1981, to start what became Spirit Racing: "Kawamoto asked what we would call ourselves. We were driving somewhere in Tokyo, and I saw a Bridgestone advert that read, 'Come on racing spirit'. I thought Spirit might be good."

Coppuck designed a new F2 car for 1982, while Wickham put together the team and looked for the other half or so of the budget that wasn't provided by Honda. The two Spirit-Honda 201s would end up running in Marlboro livery by coincidence. Wickham successfully went after Thierry Boutsen and Stefan Johansson, who were each sponsored by the Philip Morris company in their respective homelands, because "they were the best two drivers available".

The honeycomb-chassis Spirit with a Honda engine and Bridgestone tyres was the class of the field, with eight poles from 13 races. Johansson didn't win a race after encountering the lion's share of Spirit's reliability issues. Boutsen, on the other hand, finished all bar one of the rounds, notching up victories at the Nürburgring, Spa and Enna.



Wickham (third from right) oversaw Gachot's (second from right) '88 F3000 bid at Spirit/TOM'S

JAKOB EBREY

The Belgian looked on course for the title at the Misano decider, only for rain to derail Spirit's championship bid.

"The Bridgestone slick had gone to a radial construction, but the wet was still a cross-ply," explains Wickham. "When we went to wets, we had to change the ride-height by a few millimetres, but obviously we couldn't do that during the race." Boutsen slipped to sixth, and the title went to March driver Corrado Fabi. But by then Spirit was already looking beyond F2: it was working on a car that would take Honda back to the pinnacle of the sport.

"Honda asked me to go to Tokyo and told me they were going to go into F1. They gave us a choice: you can stay in F2, or you can have a deal to run a test team, which might lead to an F1 race programme. We opted for the testing because it was a way to get into F1."

The first Honda F1 twin-turbo V6 ran in the back of a car, a converted Spirit 201, at Silverstone that winter. The date was November 24, John's birthday: "You need to set yourself deadlines, otherwise things slip, so I picked my birthday."

Wickham and Coppuck were lobbying to go racing through a winter test programme that took them as far afield as Riverside and Willow Springs in California. It was helpful that there was a non-points race in April, the Race of Champions at Brands Hatch: "I told Honda they would only be able to tell how good the engine was if they went up against other people." Spirit entered the Brands event with Johansson taking driving duties. The Spirit-Honda 201C suffered engine problems in both qualifying and the race, the car stopping after five laps with a turbo seal failure. "Brands was a one-off, so I pushed to do the second half of the season. They told me they would think about it, but at the same time revealed they were already talking to Williams about 1984."

The go-ahead for Spirit to join F1 with a one-car effort for Johansson from the British Grand Prix came as the entry deadline approached: "I ended up sleeping on the office floor in Slough. I knew the decision was coming by fax overnight." Spirit turned up for its grand prix debut at Silverstone with a new car, the 101, effectively a beefed-up F2 chassis with an F1-sized fuel tank. Spirit's best result of the season came at the Dutch GP in August at Zandvoort with seventh. The same month, Spirit learned it wouldn't have Honda engines next year.



Spirit made its F1 debut with Johansson in '83 British GP

"My understanding is that Frank said no to Honda having two teams," recalls Wickham. "It was a pity because we had sponsorship from Skoal Bandit [a chewing tobacco brand being launched in Europe] and free tyres from Goodyear if we kept the Honda deal. It was all coming together to run one car if not two."

Honda, once again, offered Spirit a choice: "We could go back to F2 with their support or, if we decided to stay in F1, they would pay for four engines from another manufacturer."

Spirit opted to remain in F1 with Hart's straight-four turbo. There was no tobacco money, sponsorship guru Guy Edwards had taken it to the RAM Racing team, and Pirellis, in place of the Goodyear tyres. "It was a way of staying in F1," muses Wickham. "Dropping out and trying to get back in isn't easy. It might have been the wrong decision..."

Spirit ran Mauro Baldi initially, then Huub Rothengatter for eight races, before the Italian returned for the final two grands prix of 1984. Four eighth positions for the Spirit-Hart 101B were the best results of a season when "money was always a problem". The team made it into '85, but with debts mounting it ended up selling its Pirelli deal to Toleman - which had been left without any tyres - and ended its season after three races.

"Our overdraft at Barclays was something like £80,000, and they said they were going to foreclose on us, and there were other debts, too," recalls Wickham. "We also owed money to Baldi's manager, Nicolo di San Germano, and he brokered the Toleman deal. The money we got cleared everything we owed."

Spirit intended to get back on the grid for 1986. Coppuck continued work on a new car and, when an F1 return looked increasingly unlikely, set to on a Champ Cars Indycar.

"Gordon found someone in the States who wanted to invest in an Indycar," John explains. "That was designed, but never got beyond a wooden mock-up. Then we basically ran out of money and closed the company."

Try and try again

Long after Spirit and Footwork, Wickham would twice again struggle to crack F1...



JOHN WICKHAM'S FORMULA 1 CAREER DIDN'T end with his departure from Footwork at the end of 1994. He had two short-lived stints back in grand prix racing at the beginning of the 2010s.

A1GP boss Tony Teixeira was going to invest in the fledgeling HRT squad founded by Adrian Campos, one of three new teams set to join the F1 grid in 2010. He brought in Wickham to help put the team together.

"I went down to live in Spain and started to organise all the things you need to do with a new team, the shipping, the passes," recalls John. "Tony kept calling, saying he was in a meeting in Madrid, or wherever, and that the money was about to be transferred. Then he disappeared, and that was that."

A year later, Wickham was recruited by Lotus Renault GP boss Eric Boullier, who'd masterminded Team France's A1GP successes with DAMS.

"Eric had promised me after A1GP came to an end that if he had anything for me, he'd give me a call. The first thing I did for him was an efficiency study in the machine shop. Then he said he wanted me to do the same thing for the race team.

"I was a spy in the team, though I think some people might have been told why I was there. Steve Nielsen, the sporting director, was going to leave, and Eric asked me if I would take over. Only I wasn't sporting director, I was the team manager.

"I went to the Japanese GP and around then I was being excluded from a lot of meetings. I wasn't involved in what I wanted to be involved in. I told Eric it wasn't working, and I only ended up doing three races."



Wickham's HRT stint was hurt by funding problems

Wickham's career took a new direction in '86. Di San Germano looked after sponsorship for the Nordica ski equipment manufacturer, which ended up on the side of the works Volvo 240 Turbos run by the Belgian RAS Sport squad. The Italian recommended bringing in the Brit to bolster a team that was moving up from the lower classes of what was known simply as the ETC.

Homologation rows over the Group A rules dogged the series at the time: "That year we were in court in Vienna, Paris and London." There were three wins along the way, plus two lost to disqualification, but Volvo again failed to win the Spa 24 Hours: "Spa was a nightmare. We had bottles thrown at the cars at the old Bus Stop chicane, and I never found out why. We had two broken windscreens."

A trip to the Far East at the end of the season sent Wickham in another direction for 1987, just as it had six years previously. RAS fielded the Volvos in the end-of-season Macau Guia and Fuji InterTEC races. It was here that John met the founder of the Japanese TOM'S organisation, Nobuhide Tachi. He was in the process of ramping up a UK operation together with Glenn Waters, who Wickham joined for 1987 to oversee programmes in touring cars, Formula 3 and sports cars. For the first time, Wickham would go to Le Mans, a quarter of a century or so on from organising that sweepstake.

TOM'S ran a pair of Dome-built Toyota 87C Group C chassis powered by Toyota engines in the French enduro. Neither got beyond hour six. Wickham was running the car driven by Alan Jones, Geoff Lees and Eje Elgh, which ran out of fuel at the end of its opening stint. "The team still had the fuel read-out in the car set to the length of Suzuka, I think," says John. "Jones was being shown he could do one more lap on the fuel and ran out."

Wickham opted to leave Norfolk-based TOM'S after two seasons because he "didn't really enjoy jumping around between different programmes". He now linked up with British driver Steve Kempton for an F3000 assault in Europe under the Spirit TOM'S banner.

Wickham parted company with the team in the summer and briefly went back to March to work on "various projects". His Japanese links subsequently resulted in him establishing the Footwork team for an F3000 programme in Europe for '89. Midway through the season team owner Wataru Ohashi decided he wanted to move up to F1: "He gave me a budget, what you would now call a pittance, to go out and buy into an F1 team."

JAKOB EBREY, DPPI, GP PHOTO



Wickham's near-50-year career included famous wins with Audi and Bentley, as well as attempts at F1

"Early 1991 was a disaster. The Porsche engine was a boat anchor"

Wickham met with Ken Tyrrell and Jean-Pierre van Rossem, the maverick sponsor of F1 rookie operation Onyx, who'd taken a majority stake in the team mid-season. "Ken told me that it wasn't enough for the stake we wanted and van Rossem, who was wearing some kind of gown when I met him, told me he didn't need our money. We ended up going to Jackie Oliver at Arrows. I was initially the sponsor's representative, but then Alan Rees decided he didn't want to go to races and I became team manager during 1990."

Footwork's F1 stint is always associated with the disastrous Porsche 3.5-litre V12 unit that came on stream in 1991. Wickham recalls he and Arrows designer Alan Jenkins having very early doubts about the engine. "The third time we went over to Stuttgart, both of us said as we were flying back 'not sure about this'. We didn't dare tell anyone else, because the Japanese wouldn't have liked our concerns.

"There were quite a few non-qualifications in the first year with the Cosworth car: when Michele [Alboreto] and Alex [Caffi] non-qualified in Adelaide [in 1990], Jackie and I went fishing on race day. The first half of 1991 was a disaster. The engine was a boat anchor: it was heavier than a Cosworth DFR, less powerful and thirstier. But when the definitive Porsche-powered FA12 arrived at Imola [round three], Michele had his massive shunt in practice at Tamburello when the front wing failed. We saw a problem when he passed the pits and called him in, but it was too late."

The team, now called Footwork, dropped the Porsche engine after six races and reworked the cars for the Ford DFR.

"Porsche said they were going to come back with something better. That went on for about four months, and then they said it wasn't possible. I think the deal was about £5m a year and we got it back, or at least Ohashi did."

Wickham remained with Footwork until the end of 1994. His final season might have been more successful but for aerodynamic

LUNCH WITH *John Wickham*



Wickham on the pitwall at Le Mans 2003 when Bentley dominated and sealed a 1-2 finish

rule changes that followed the deaths of Roland Ratzenberger and Ayrton Senna at Imola and the accident in Monaco that left Karl Wendlinger in a coma.

"In Brazil, we qualified sixth and 11th and then ninth and 13th at the Pacific GP and finished fourth with Christian Fittipaldi [in the Ford-engined FA15]. We soon started slipping back and stayed back. We seemed to suffer more than most with the reg changes."

Wickham left Footwork at the end of the year and briefly looked after Ohashi's charge, Aguri Suzuki, at Ligier, while also working for Nissan Motorsports Europe, overseeing its Primera Super Tourer project in Germany and Spain. That led into the touring car programme for which Wickham is best known.

Richard Lloyd, a race winner in the British Saloon Car Championship in the 1970s as a driver and world series sports car events in the '80s as a team owner, had business connections with Audi and played a key role in bringing it to the British Touring Car Championship. It wasn't the initial plan, but he ended up putting together the Audi Sport UK team that ran the programme in 1996-98.



Footwork's origins: F3000 with Katayama in '89

"Richard met me in a pub near Brackley and said, 'you know about touring cars, you could help put a team together'," recalls Wickham. "Wolfgang Ullrich [Audi Sport boss] had told Audi UK he couldn't find a team to trust over here, so we persuaded him we could do it."

Star Audi driver Frank Biela was sent over to race one of two Audi A4 Quattros fielded in the BTCC. The German won the 1996 title at a canter aboard the four-wheel-drive machine, winning eight times and notching up a further 12 podiums across the 26 races. "I got told off by Ullrich at Thruxton for winning by too big a margin. He said, 'that's not how you do it'. Frank knew the car really well and learnt the circuits very quickly." Wickham said 1997 was "more difficult" after the weight penalty for using all-wheel drive was increased, and '98 was "impossible" because it was banned.

"I got told off by Ullrich for winning by too big a margin"

Audi exited touring cars at the end of 1998 for a new path in sports cars. Lloyd had a hand in the move and planned to go to Le Mans in 1999 with two different cars, the open-top R8R LMP car machine in Germany and run by Joest and the British-built R8C coupé fielded by Audi Sport UK.

"Richard and others persuaded Audi that it wasn't clear if an open car or a coupé was the way to go. Richard took Audi up to the old TOM'S facility in Hingham. They liked it, so they bought it."

The go-ahead for the R8C at what became Racing Technology Norfolk came late. The car was barely tested ahead of the Le Mans pre-qualifying day in April, but both cars made the cut. But the race wasn't a success, gearbox issues putting both cars out early.

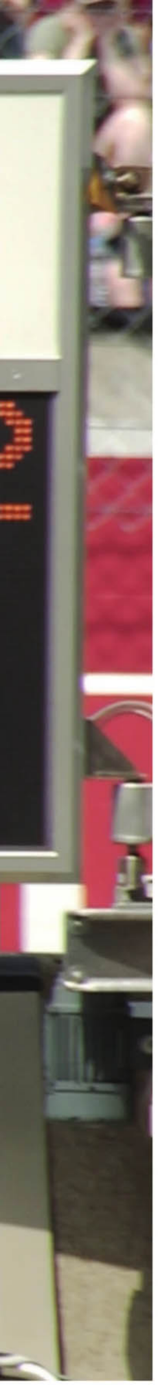
The R8C project came to an end as Audi focused on developing a brand new LMP car in Germany, the all-conquering R8. Wickham had "another one-year programme" running Stefan Johansson's new sports car operation that fielded a pair of Reynards in the American Le Mans Series and at Le Mans in 2000 before rejoining Lloyd.

But RTN was working on a new closed-top prototype. The car was designed for a W12 engine, the pet project of Volkswagen Group boss Ferdinand Piëch, that was quickly halted.

Brian Gush, Bentley's head of powertrain and a motor sport fan, resurrected the project with a supply of Audi engines.

Lloyd and his renamed Apex Motorsport squad were brought in to run what became the Bentley EXP Speed 8 at Le Mans in 2001 with Wickham as team manager. Bentley claimed a podium first time out with the EXP Speed 8 shared by Andy Wallace, Eric van de Poele and Butch Leitzinger, albeit over 10 laps behind the winning Audi. Wickham reckons it was a good result: "We really weren't sure where we were going to end up. Third was good, and we did manage to lead the race early on."

The result owed a lot to the mettle of 1988 Le Mans winner Wallace and the cap from a bottle of Evian or similar. "A small hole was allowing water to get into the gearbox electronics and the cars were getting stuck in





gear. We were lucky to find something that fitted the hole. Guy Smith got stuck in sixth and didn't make it back, but Andy used all his experience to get his car to the pits when the same thing happened to him. He knew everything about that race."

Wallace, van de Poele and Leitzinger were fourth a year later aboard a solo Bentley entry with an updated EXP Speed 8. An all-new machine, the Speed 8, followed for 2003, the year of the big push from Bentley as sister marque Audi's factory presence came to an end. As Audi stepped up its involvement in Bentley's campaign, Wickham's role changed.

"At the end of 2002, Ingolstadt asked if I would become a Bentley employee. They wanted me to move to Norfolk and be absolutely full-time on the programme."

The Bentley set-up changed, too. Joest was brought in to run the car shared by Tom Kristensen, Rinaldo Capello and Smith. The Apex crew still looked after what was dubbed the 'British' car driven by Johnny Herbert, Mark Blundell and David Brabham.

Bentley dominated, finishing 1-2 as Kristensen notched up his fourth Le Mans victory in a row aboard the #7 entry. It could have been different, however. "The #8 was as quick, sometimes quicker. Johnny was the fastest on the averages of all of the drivers. But that car had a headrest come lose early on and then battery problems [it was replaced twice]."

Job done, Bentley's programme came to an end with its Le Mans victory, but Wickham was back at the Circuit de la Sarthe 12 months later after he was brought in by Zytek Engineering to put together a works team to run a short programme of events with one of its 04S LMP1s. During the race, he made the contact that led to the next phase of his career.

He met the founder of the A1GP World Cup of Motorsport, Sheikh Maktoum. The introduction was made by sometime F3000 driver Stephen Watson, who was advising the Sheikh and looking for somewhere for him to sign a contract.

"Our car was already out of the race and Stephen, who I vaguely knew, asked if he could use our motorhome and said I could stay if I liked. It turned out the contract was for a supply of Zytek engines for A1GP and Stephen asked me if I wanted to run the test team with the new Lola A1GP car."

Wickham thus became employee number one of A1GP Operations Ltd, ran the test programme and then continued as general manager, technical and operations right up until the demise of the series in 2009. That meant running the show on the ground as it travelled around the world.

"There were always doubters, but we had two, if not three, really strong years. The races were good and well attended, and we had the funding coming in."

The situation changed when series boss Tony Teixeira did a deal with Ferrari for a supply of engines for a new car, supposedly modelled on its 2004 F1 design, for 2008/09.

"We assumed it was going to cost a lot of money, and it did. It was meant to have a design element of an F1 Ferrari, but the Ferrari badge we put on the nose of the first car was ripped off at Maranello."

The series made it through one season with the so-called 'Powered by Ferrari' machine until mounting debts resulted in A1GP Operations being put into administration in May 2009. A calendar had been announced for 2009/10, and despite Teixeira's claims that the money was in place to continue, the World Cup of Motorsport withered and died.

After A1GP Wickham had two forays back into the world of F1 either side of a stint evaluating a sports car built by Russian manufacturer Marussia, later involved with the Manor F1 team, for GT racing. Then came a phone call from Gush at Bentley.

"They were looking at GT3, and I brought in Graham Humphrys to do an evaluation on the Continental. Brian always says he doesn't like southerners and suggested M-Sport [which is based in Cumbria] as a potential partner. I was thinking more of people with a background in sports car racing, but when we went there and saw their facility it was quite obvious that they could do it." Wickham was team manager with M-Sport's factory team in 2014 and '15 for its Blancpain GT Series Endurance Cup campaigns and subsequently worked with the German HTP and Abt teams on their customer programmes, remaining with the marque until the beginning of 2019.

Wickham picks the Le Mans victory with Bentley in 2003 as the highlight of his career. "Owning an F1 team was short-lived and even shorter-lived as a works team," he says. "Le Mans was a race I'd followed since I was young, so it finally came good."



CV

BORN: 24/11/1949, PETTS WOOD, ENGLAND

- **1973-78** Major break with Surtees either side of BARC spells, works in F2 with March
- **1981-85** Founds Spirit with Coppuck. Makes F1 debut at Silverstone in '83. Struggles after Honda exit, folds in '85
- **1987** After ETC spell, works at Le Mans for the first time
- **1989-94** Establishes Footwork and becomes F1 team manager in '91. Woeful Porsche engine derails season, he leaves in '94
- **1995-98** Wickham steers Audi's successful BTCC project, Biela wins title in '96
- **2001-03** Wickham joins Bentley as team manager, the manufacturer takes overall victory at Le Mans in 2003
- **2004-09** Becomes head of operations at A1GP and is involved until it folds in 2009
- **2010-15** Two short F1 stints with HRT and Lotus Renault, then joins Bentley GT3 project

JAKOB EBREY, DPPI, JAMES LIPMAN



Specially made for a swift escape

Originally inspired by aircraft ejector seats, Bremont's MB-II is the latest model to offer an online customisation service

The watch business has truly joined the online configurator game that has proven so popular in the car industry. One of the most engrossing systems can be found at the Bamford Watch Department, the official customising house of Zenith, TAG Heuer and other LVMH-owned brands, while the likes of IWC have their interactive customising tools. The latest to offer the service is Bremont, which has launched a configurator dedicated to one of its most popular models, the MB-II.

'MB' stands for Martin-Baker, a name that represents the difference between life and death for military pilots of over 90 air forces worldwide, since the Middlesex-based firm is the world's leading producer of the aircraft ejection seats that have saved over 7600 lives since John Oliver 'Jo' Lancaster used his MK.I version to escape an AW52 aircraft in 1949.

Andrew Martin, the grandson of the firm's founder Sir James Martin, went in search of a watch collaboration, partly in a bid to achieve wider recognition for the company. Martin chose the then-fledgeling Bremont in 2007 because its founders, Nick and Giles English, are experienced pilots and were willing to develop an ultra shock-resistant mechanical watch using many of the systems used to create ejection seats at Martin-Baker.

Prototypes were subjected to nine live ejections at speeds of up to 600 knots and at forces of up to 30*g*, with the guinea pig watch undergoing hours on a vibration device to simulate the entire service life of a military helicopter. It was also housed inside a corrosive fog exposure cabinet to simulate six months on the deck of an aircraft carrier, and placed inside a heat chamber for extreme conditions.

To help it survive such situations, the M-B watch movement is protected by a Faraday cage and supported by a specially designed 'suspension' system that can absorb the massive shocks from M-B's front-impact test that simulates the 18.4*g* of a crashing aircraft.

Since launch, the watches have been sold under the MB-II moniker, with a second version, the MB-I (distinguished by a red-anodised case band) available to those who have ejected from an aircraft using an M-B seat.

The MB configurator can mix and match elements, such as the colour of the dial and anodising and the strap material. Hundreds of combinations are available, but there's only one way to earn the red case band...

Bremont MB-II. £3995.
Try the configurator tool at bremont.com



When Switzerland's Zenith watch brand was acquired by Chicago's Zenith Radio in 1971, the new bosses ordered the destruction of swathes of old timepieces, plans and tools, believing that quartz was the future. Zenith's Charles Vermot secretly stashed the material in an attic beside the Le Locle factory, including a curious chronograph made from blackened steel. It has inspired the Revival Shadow, with a '70s-style case recreated in micro-blasted titanium and fitted with a visible El Primero movement.
Zenith El Primero Chronomaster Revival Shadow. £6900 zenith-watches.com



Paris-based sports watch brand Bell & Ross has marked its fourth year as the official timing partner of the Renault Formula 1 team with a trio of new chronographs, our favourite of which is the BRV3-94 R.S.20 pictured here. The 43mm watch echoes the racing team's livery, while a subtle pattern around the minute track recalls the hard-fought prize of the chequered flag. Just 999 examples will be made, and they can be had on a black and yellow 'carbon effect' calfskin strap or a steel bracelet.
Bell & Ross BRV3-94 R.S.20. £3500
bellross.com

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LETTERS

There has, it seems, always been a small gap in Stirling Moss's history. The result for the 1953 GP at Monza showed him finishing 13th. However, behind that modest position is a tale of a concerted attempt to ambush this Formula 2 event.

The car, a Cooper/Alta. The fuel, a nitromethane derivative, and the clue an SU 'petrol' injection system. To quote Mike Hawthorn, "What the... have you got in there?"

Why then the lowly result? Tyres! We made pitstop after pitstop to change tyres that simply could not contain the power that the engine was developing. Try to stop Stirling going so fast? You must be joking. At one stop, the flailing tyre had broken the bungee holding on one of the two side saddle tanks. While Alf Francis and I worked to secure and reroute the fuel supply, someone threw one of the old wheels over the pit counter which exploded on landing. Alf called out to me, "Nick, I don't know how high we are but keep going." We did, to get Stirling home.

NICK MANLEY, BY EMAIL



First-hand account: official Mercedes postcard sent from the 1939 Bern GP

Thank you for an excellent April issue, particularly Richard Williams's article on Dick Seaman. I recently found an old postcard which reminded me all too vividly that the current grand prix season is not the first to be truncated by a global crisis. I am of course referring to the 1939 season which came to an abrupt halt following the Swiss Grand Prix at Bremgarten, Bern on August 20, 1939.

The postcard, an official Mercedes-Benz photo of one of its star drivers, Rudolf Caracciola, is postmarked August 19, 1939 and was posted at Bern railway station. The sender writes of watching practice for the grand prix, which he found "very exciting" as the course was "very fast indeed".

The fifth and final GP of the 1939 season was to have been the Italian but it did not take place as just two weeks after the Swiss GP Britain and France declared war on Germany.

The 1939 championship was never officially awarded, but Auto Union's Hermann Paul Müller headed the unofficial championship standings, by virtue of having finished fourth at Bremgarten. However, the German authorities declared Hermann Lang to be the champion, with his two wins (Spa and Bremgarten) to Müller's single victory at Reims-Gueux. Let us hope that the result of this year's championship is somewhat clearer.

PETER COWLEY, SHIPSTON-ON-STOUR, WARKS

Like other schoolboys of the 1950s, Stirling Moss was my hero, and I can remember the thrill of watching him racing at Brands Hatch in 1959, '60 and '61. I was at Goodwood on that fateful day in '62, although unaware of the seriousness of his crash until later.

I suspect that had the Goodwood accident not happened then 1962 might have been, from an F1 perspective, a difficult year for my hero. For one thing, Jim Clark had shown in the final two F1 races of '61, both in South Africa, that he now appeared to be at least as quick as Moss. Secondly, the Ferrari that Moss was due to drive in '62 was to prove uncompetitive, and even with Moss's brilliance, it is hard to envisage it would have had the desired success. The logical fallback would have been to use a Lotus 24, which might well have been slightly quicker but probably less reliable than the Ferrari.

Either way, the BRM of Graham Hill, perhaps the fastest car of 1962, and the combination of Jim Clark and his Lotus-Climax would have presented very tough challenges for Moss.

GEOFF WHYLER, WEST WITTERING, SUSSEX

One of my outstanding memories of Stirling was at a Brands Hatch meeting on August 1, 1960, during the touring car race won by Roy Salvadori in a Jaguar Mk2. However, an accident took place when Graham Hill's Mk2 came out of Bottom Bend and for some reason spun sharp left into the bank with some force. Graham was badly winded and still in the wreck.

Stirling, still recovering from his Spa accident and spectating from behind the pits, dropped his crutches and rushed across to Graham, who was still inside the car. Such was his sportsmanship and concern for his friend and fellow competitor.

And thank you *Motor Sport* for your superb June edition featuring so much of our late great British Treasure Sir Stirling.

ROGER BUNTING, HARROW, MIDDLESEX

On the topic of the successes of the Ford Escort Twin Cam from your May 2020 [Speedshop Race Car] issue, the year before the Escort was announced, I acquired a racing Ford Anglia. I was cogitating what to do with it when I had a call from a Bert Avard, the chief engineer on Ford's AVO project: he and some colleagues had a Twin Cam engine and were keen to put it into a body shell. The Ford hierarchy had no wish to be involved; it was to be an amateur venture.

I passed the shell over to them, to be worked on in a lock-up garage in Dagenham. The car was entered for the all-Ford Ilford Trophy, with Alan Peer driving, and not only did it win the trophy, but it broke the class lap record at every circuit it raced on.

At the year's end, Peer won a special race at Brands Hatch, but on the lap of honour, he rolled the car. I never learned what happened to the wreck, but I never head of another Twin Cam Anglia. Soon after, Ford announced the Escort and the Twin Cam Escort.

I respectfully submit that Peer and the Anglia were, in fact, the first race winners in a Ford fitted with the Twin Cam motor.

IAN GRANT, SITTINGBOURNE, KENT

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MOTOR SPORT

Rebirth

PHOTOGRAPHY: TOM GIDDEN

THE MARTINI SIX

Martini

A world-renowned group of Martini Lancias brought together by one man as a labour of love is up for sale. The cars will then likely disappear from public view, but not before **James Mills** gets an exclusive final look at the Campion Collection

The road to Amelia Island is a calm, gentle drive, tracing the Florida coastline and rolling past pretty wooden beachside properties. Pelicans perch motionless atop pontoon posts, the water is calm, and 99.9 Gator Country is playing. The calm doesn't last.

Waiting on a disused runway at Fernandina Municipal Airport are six of the wildest race and rally machines ever to roll out of Lancia. Some, such as the Delta S4, are infamous for being fire-spitting animals that pushed even the most talented drivers to, and tragically beyond, their limits. Others, notably the LC2, displayed dazzling speed and promise that would go unfulfilled.

They are cars from a time when Lancia provided motor sport fans with the sights, sounds and smells that remained embedded in their memories long after the Italian car maker as good as disappeared. Seeing them together serves up a snapshot of Lancia's success in rallying and motor racing during the 1970s, '80s and '90s. Yet it also paints a picture of a company that found itself pushed around by parent Fiat, leaving key figures like Cesare Fiorio, the brand's motor sport master, to skilfully steer Lancia around obstacles and uphold its reputation.

This is the last time anyone outside of the Campion Collection will see the six Lancias together. It's a final farewell, after John Campion, the entrepreneur and motor sport fan who owns the world-renowned collection, put them up all for sale to focus on helping rising stars through his new CJJ Motorsports squad. The collection is being sold by Girardo & Co and we have been invited to witness the last hurrah.

Three of the Lancias have already found new custodians. Little surprise. The cars have been maintained regardless of cost, come inspected and authenticated by Lancia Classiche and boast comprehensive history files. Here are their stories, accompanied by insight from Riccardo Patrese and Miki Biasion, the drivers that raced and rallied them to victory.



A two-time overall WSC champion, the Montecarlo defeated Porsche in 1980



Turbocharged engine was fitted in 1979





Montecarlo had road car roots, unlike Stratos



Group 5: 1980 Lancia Beta Montecarlo Turbo

THE BETA MONTECARLO TURBO IS ONE OF Lancia's greatest successes in motor racing, boasting two overall World Sportscar Championships. Yet during the infancy of the project, few saw potential in the mid-engined road car. No matter. The person that counted most, Cesare Fiorio, knew it had the makings of a winner.

Far-sighted Fiorio was Lancia's hugely successful motor sport manager and would go on to lead the resurgence of Ferrari in Formula 1 during 1989-91. After the success of the Stratos, which won three World Rally Championships in 1974-76, Fiat's top brass, doubtless miffed, decreed that Fiat and Abarth should lead the group's rallying activities with the Abarth 131.

Fiorio deftly steered Lancia into motor racing and knew the chosen car should be based on a showroom model, rather than a homologation special like the Stratos, to smooth approval from the powers that be.

Senior engineer Gianni Tonti and chassis designer Giampaolo Dallara worked with Fiorio to manipulate the Beta Montecarlo within the Group 5 regulations. By the end of 1978, the mid-engined, 1.4-litre turbocharged Montecarlo, weighing 300kg less than the road car, was ready for the 2-litre class.

Riccardo Patrese was approached to drive for Lancia's works operation. "At the end of the '70s [1978] I drove the Fiat Ritmo Group 2 on the Giro d'Italia automobilistico, and that's where my relationship with Cesare Fiorio began.

"Fiorio was very clever, always trying to get the best advantage he could from the regulations, pushing for the rules to suit his cars, always thinking ahead and having ideas that the others didn't have. And he created a very happy working atmosphere, which is something he took to Ferrari. He knew that the force of the team was a nice

"Early on in the project, few saw motor sport potential in the Montecarlo"

atmosphere, motivation, working together. We knew we had a good leader who could work around the politics."

Patrese was heavily involved in the development of the Group 5 Beta Montecarlo Turbo. "I did the first laps of the car with the chief engineer, Mr Gianni Tonti, starting with the volumetric supercharged engine from the 037. Then the turbo engine arrived, at the beginning of 1979, as we kept on developing the 1.4."

The first race was the Silverstone 6 Hours, Patrese partnering with Walter Röhrl. The pair retired, but the half-season yielded one win, enough to suggest things were on the right track.

In 1980, Lancia threw its weight behind the World Championship for Makes and beat Porsche to the title, Patrese taking multiple wins.

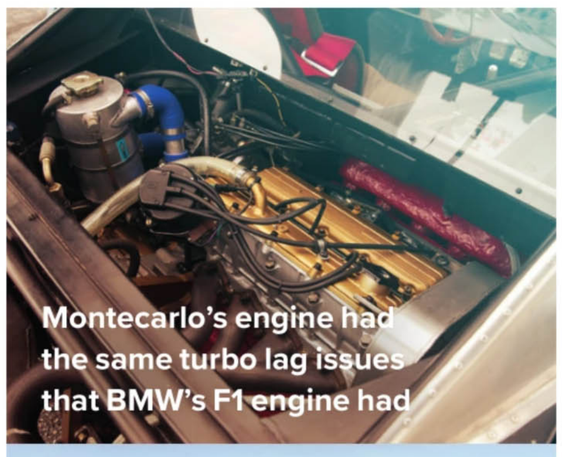
He remembers the Beta Montecarlo for its agility and good handling – "Dallara did a good job on the chassis" – but says it was important to drive around the lag of the early era turbocharger. "You needed to brake and then put the power down much earlier than a naturally aspirated engine. But it was the same problem with the BMW engines in Formula 1."

This car, chassis 1009, gave Campion the bug for endurance racing cars, and it was the first example he bought. Under Campion's custodianship, 1009 has undergone a mechanical restoration, which included an engine and gearbox rebuild by Savannah Race Engineering.

Its wedge-like, Pininfarina-designed bodywork is so of the period that you half-expect the guys at Campion's CJJ Motorsport operation to step out of their race car transporter wearing cowboy boots and flares, shirt open, perm in place and Marlboro red hanging from the lips.

The stylish Campagnolo wheels are unquestionably some of the coolest ever to grace a race car. Inside, it's a shock to find how the design of the front-end gave little thought toward the positioning of the steering column and pedals. They are set far over to the left, so much so that the seat is angled slightly in an attempt to help the driver remain comfortable. A personal claret-red suede wheel, engraved with 'R Patrese', stares back at you, and the cabin feels rather rudimentary. But who cares when you had all the right ingredients beneath you?

Light, fast and reliable, the Beta Montecarlo Turbo showed that Lancia still had what it took to win on the track, as well as on a rally stage.



Montecarlo's engine had the same turbo lag issues that BMW's F1 engine had





Iconic Pininfarina/Martini style, but driving position (below) was awkward

1980 LANCIA BETA MONTECARLO TURBO

Engine: 1.4 turbocharged straight-four
Power: 460bhp estimated
Weight: 780kg
0-60mph: 3.6sec estimated
Top speed: 178mph



The LC1 was Lancia's first bid at ground-effects, but was caught out by the FIA and WSC

Group 6: 1982 Lancia LC1

SAT IN THE DRIVER'S SEAT OF THE LC1, IT'S easy to see why Campion couldn't resist adding his final Lancia to the collection in late 2016. It's a racing machine born of simpler times. You sit low, the view ahead is unimpeded, bar the rear-view mirror on its stilt, and there is precious little to the cockpit or the car's safety hardware.

It's also rare. Just four LC1s were built as the company looked to move up the ladder in the World Endurance Championship. But Lancia found itself wrong-footed by the FIA, which wished to phase out Group 6 and attract manufacturers to the newly formed Group C class. Group 6 racers would no longer be eligible for the manufacturers' championship, but the drivers' title was still up for grabs. The fuel economy restrictions didn't apply to little old Lancia, so it was able to fight it out with more sophisticated and powerful Group C rivals.

There was much to admire about the LC1. It was the first car to take Lancia into the murky, emerging world of ground-effects, with more than 120 hours of wind tunnel work conducted at Centro Ricerche Fiat, in Orbassano, on the outskirts of Turin. The Kevlar and carbon bodywork weighed just 58kg, while the Dallara aluminium monocoque, built around magnesium-alloy ribs, tipped the scales at 55kg, which is why the LC1 was so light at just 640kg.



Driver protection was at a minimum, and the bare cockpit (right) played a part in a Patrese crash at the Nürburgring





Abarth built on the Montecarlo turbo engine for the LC1

"This LC1 took the overall win at the daunting Nürburgring 1000Kms"

Another reason for its featherweight status could be found behind the driver's back. Abarth built on the four-cylinder engine found in the Beta Montecarlo Turbo, and it had a considerable weight advantage over the flat-six of its Porsche 956 adversary. All of which meant it was seriously quick. LC1s took three pole positions and three victories during the 1982 season.

This very car qualified second on three occasions and took the overall win at the daunting Nürburgring 1000Kms, with Michele Alboreto, Teo Fabi and Riccardo Patrese sharing the driving.

Did the exposed cockpit ever play on Patrese's mind? "I drove the LC1 last year, and it made me realise how little protection you had for a very high-speed car! In fact, I had a very bad accident [in 1982], at the Nürburgring, when the car turned over in qualifying, and the roll bar collapsed, so my helmet scraped along the floor, and I was unconscious.

"I remember waking and hearing Michele [Alboreto] pushing the marshals to turn over the car and get me out." Clearly, it didn't affect Patrese too much, as he won the 1000Kms the next day.

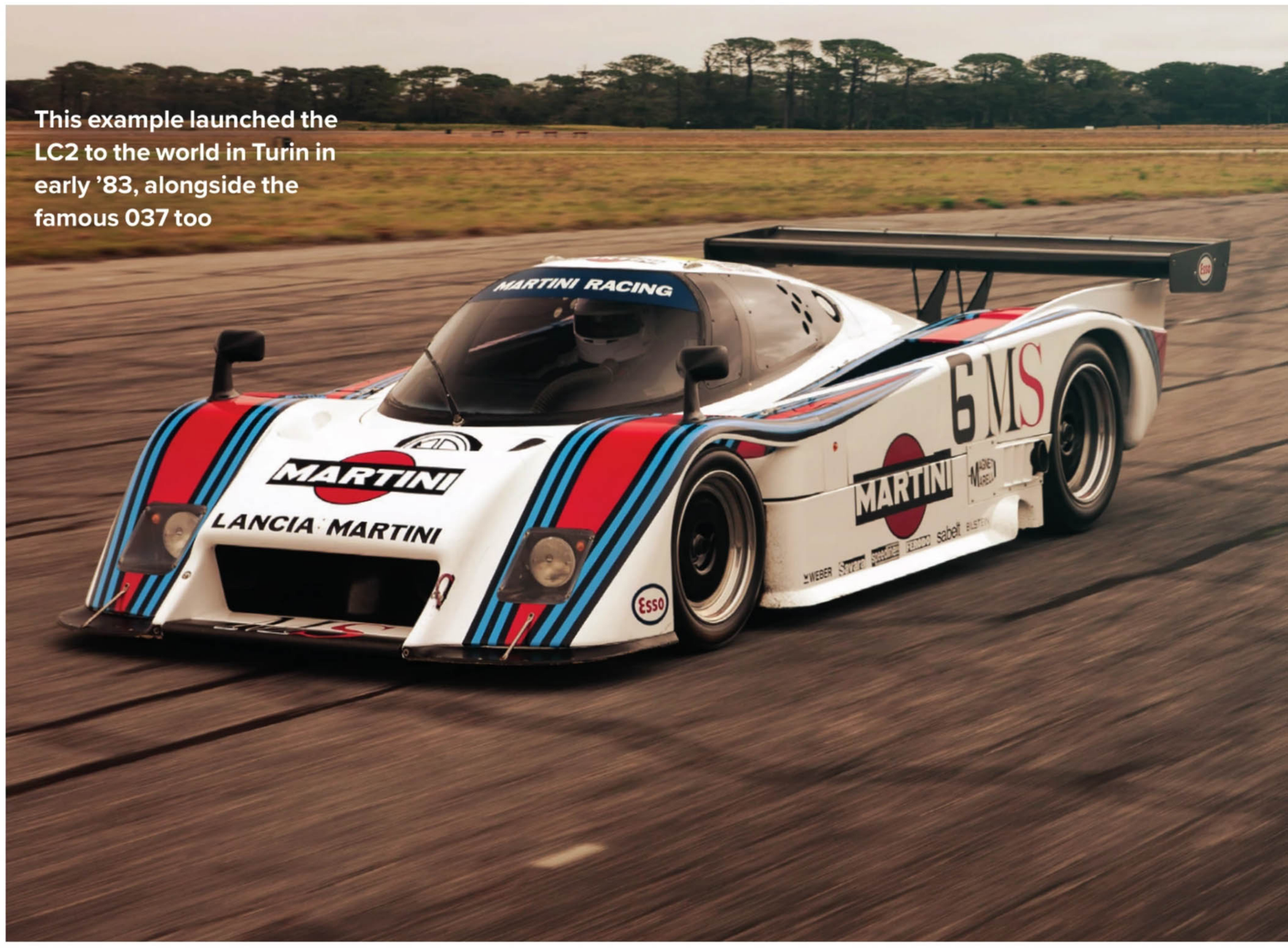
The Group 6 machine was short-lived but successful, delivering Lancia the World Championship for Makes in 1981 and keeping Patrese in contention for the 1982 drivers' title into the final round. At Brands Hatch, Jacky Ickx won by a handful of seconds and finished ahead on aggregate standings, after Patrese's co-driver Fabi lost ground following a race restart, which meant the race finished in the dark and Fabi lost time lapping cars because the LC1 had no headlights.

Opening the front and rear clamshells reveals acres of space for spanners and elbows. The bodywork looks to be perched on nothing more substantial than beanpoles, yet this is a car that tore along the Mulsanne and Döttinger Hoe straights at over 200mph.

The Lancia has a wonderful patina, with every battle scar visible. I wonder what it's worth, relative to the LC2 and a contemporary works Porsche. I'm told it's probably in the region of £1.3m for the LC1, versus £2.5m for the less successful LC2. By contrast, a Le Mans-winning Rothmans 956 sold at auction for around £8.3m in 2015. By all accounts, the Le Mans Classic-eligible LC1 is a bit of a steal.



Opening the car up reveals the LC1 was easy to work on, yet looked somewhat fragile



This example launched the LC2 to the world in Turin in early '83, alongside the famous 037 too



1982 LANCIA LC1
Engine: 1.4 turbocharged straight-four
Power: 480bhp
Weight: 640kg
0-60mph: 3sec estimated
Top speed: 205mph

Group C:
1983 Lancia LC2

IF EVER THERE WAS A RACING CAR THAT screamed untapped potential as loudly as its engine roared down the Mulsanne Straight at more than 200mph, it was Lancia's LC2.

Conceived to allow Lancia to take on Porsche, the masters of sports car racing, the LC2 was breathtakingly fast but frustratingly temperamental. Ultimately, and much to the disappointment of Group C racing fans, its life would be brief and its potential never fulfilled.

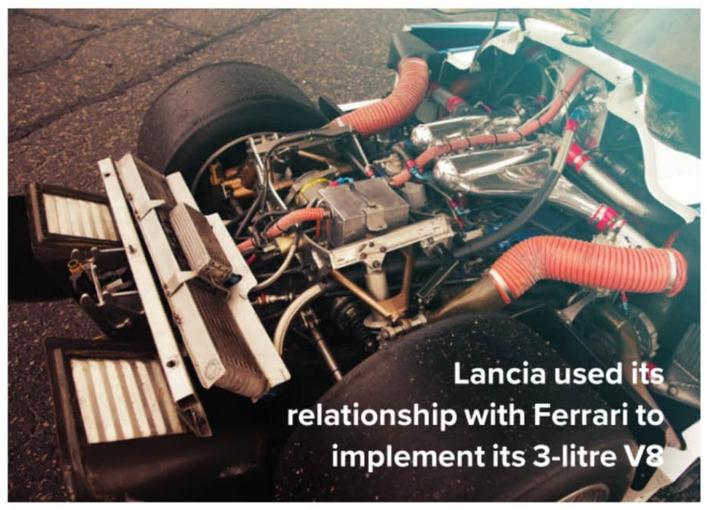
Yet how it pulled at our heartstrings. Here was a Lancia that was powered by a Ferrari engine, rekindling memories of the Stratos and its Dino V6, or even the earlier 1950s Lancia D50 V8 grand prix car that would morph into a Ferrari, once the Lancia family sold its shareholding of the company.

Initially, Ferrari created a 3-litre V8 and injected some Formula 1 magic, with ingredients such as two KKK turbochargers, BEHR intercoolers and Weber-Marelli electronics that could be found on the Scuderia's 126C. Around this, Abarth and Dallara created an aluminium monocoque with honeycomb reinforcement, a titanium roll bar and carbon-Kevlar-composite bodywork.

Only seven were made, with two reproductions following after. This car, chassis 0001, made its debut at the Lancia Martini Racing press conference in Turin in early 1983, alongside the Rally 037 and the F1 Powerboat, with Alboreto and Walter Röhrl posing for pictures and fielding questions. Alboreto had plenty of Lancia experience to his name; the squad also called upon the services of Alessandro Nannini, Mauro Baldi, Riccardo Patrese, Bob Wollek, Teo Fabi, Hans Heyer and even Henri Pescarolo.

"It was a pleasure to drive that car," recalls Patrese, "especially for a Formula 1 driver. I came from F1 when, aerodynamically, it was getting better. When I swapped to the Group C car, it was easier because the aerodynamics were working very well. It was really like driving a Formula 1 car, and in fact, the lap times were very close.

"I was much busier with Formula 1, which had become more time consuming, during the Group C car's years and was ▸



Lancia used its relationship with Ferrari to implement its 3-litre V8

> "Some suggest the LC2 needed an evolution to achieve its true potential"

not involved in the development of the car, whereas I was really with the project a lot with the Group 5 and Group 6 cars. I think the car had great potential but because they wanted to be more involved in rallying, they stopped the programme. It was a shame."

The car's five-speed gearbox was unreliable, and the team's brightest brains and greatest resource were tied up in rallying. There were also tyre issues after Pirelli withdrew from sports car racing, forcing Lancia to switch to Dunlops of an entirely different construction. Bad luck also appeared to plague the programme.

Pole positions were easy to come by. The LC2s reputedly hit well over 200mph along the Mulsanne at Le Mans. This car was entered for the 1983 race, but a fuelling miscalculation halted it, writing off its flying lap and dropping it to 13th, before retiring.

Campion and co then treated the LC2 to a complete mechanical rebuild but wisely opted to preserve the car's originality. It has been used for track days, to get a feel for the car and to keep all the parts moving and was driven to 170mph during an exhibition ahead of the Daytona 24 Hours.

Those with experience of the Group C racer suggest it needed an evolution, an LC3 perhaps, to achieve its potential. But the reality was that Lancia was forced to focus its resources on rallying, and preparing for Group A for 1987, after the FIA banned Group B. It would take TWR and Jaguar, and Sauber and Mercedes, to pick up from where Lancia left off and end the dominance of Porsche.



Miki's beloved number one

Miki Biasion won two WRC titles in the Integrale. He's now celebrating his past with a limited run of the car, as he tells **Damien Smith**





Think of Miki Biasion and images of Martini-liveried Lancia Delta Integrales throwing up the dust or scrabbling for grip on asphalt appear. The Italian won back-to-back World Rally Championship titles in Deltas in 1988 and '89, during a period in which Lancia dominated in a manner that had echoes of McLaren-Honda from the same era in Formula 1.

Today, 62-year-old Biasion is a cherished veteran of rallying's golden age, and he was due to star with old team-mate and rival Juha Kankkunen at the mouth-watering Goodwood Members' Meeting Rallysprint at the end of March until you-know-what scuppered everything. Before the big weekend, *Motor Sport* had planned to catch up with him at the launch of a new special edition Delta Integrale, which Biasion has collaborated in building with Chichester-based Rally Replay. Just 15 bespoke, made-for-order cars will be produced, each to commemorate the 15 WRC victories he scored in Group A Delta Integrales when he was hot stuff between the 1987 Monte Carlo Rally and 1990's Rally Argentina. Biasion claimed his first WRC win in Argentina in 1986, the final year of the fearsome Group B days. He added a 17th and final victory in 1993 on the Acropolis during his much less successful and unhappy spell with Ford.

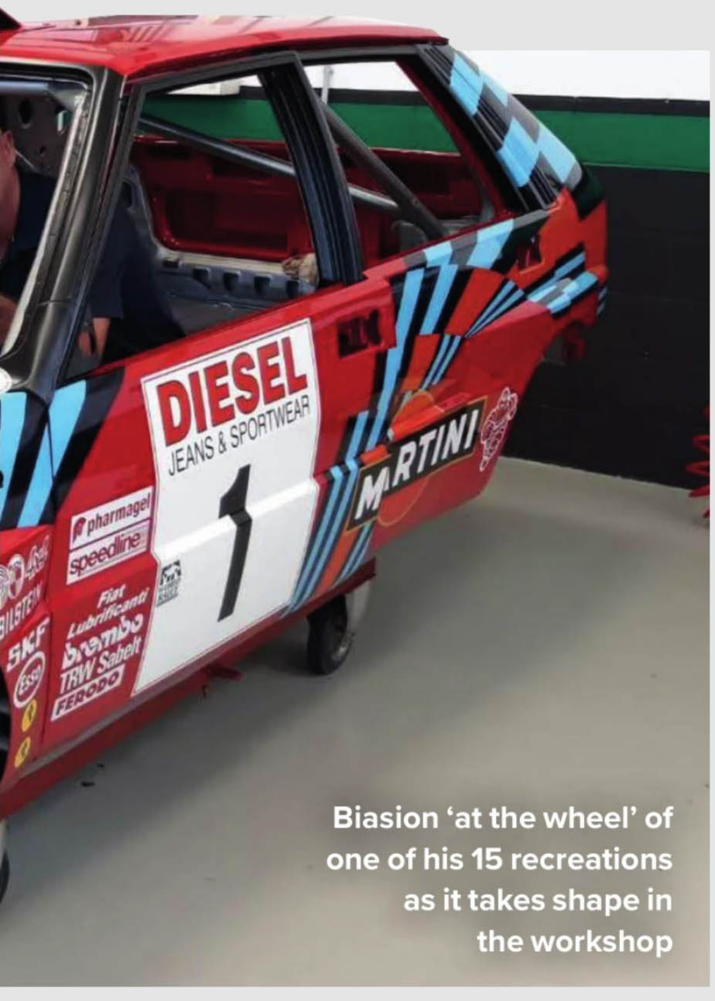
Interviews with Miki – at least in English – are rare, so we were excited to be meeting him. Instead, and fittingly in tune with our troubled times, we salvage a remote interview with the double champion to get insight into his new project and scratch the surface of how he recalls the days when Lancia ruled the rallying world.

MS: You are launching a special edition of the Lancia Delta Integrale. What is special about it and how did this project come about?

MB: I have been dreaming of making my own Integrale for many years, and more recently I have been restoring road and ex-works Deltas in Italy, so when



1983
LANCIA LC2
Engine: 3-litre Ferrari V8
Power: 800bhp estimated
Weight: 850kg
0-60mph: 3sec estimated
Top speed: 223mph



Biasion 'at the wheel' of one of his 15 recreations as it takes shape in the workshop

MCKLIEN, DPPI

the opportunity came up to make 15 special editions, I leapt at the chance. Each of the 15 cars will commemorate one of my 15 WRC victories in the Integrale, and each will be unique. These cars, *Rosso e Bianco*, are available in white in the livery of my 1988 Sanremo-winning car and in red, the livery of my 1989 Sanremo-winning car. The stickers are optional, the stripes are all painted by hand. The cars will have modern performance and various option packs. The client can essentially choose from a simple enhanced road car to a full historic rally or track car.

Your career is closely associated with the Delta Integrale. Why do you think you enjoyed so much success with the car?

I think it's because I was involved as the factory test driver from the beginning. I was responsible for the development of the Delta Integrale, so the car was like a part of me, from the beginning, ultimately contributing to the six consecutive manufacturers' titles [between 1987 and '92] that we are very proud of.

What was the Group B era like? Were the cars too fast and wild?

The Group B cars of the time were the maximum expression of speed on the road. Unfortunately, they were built purely for performance, not safety.

What are your memories of the Lancia team at that time, particularly after the death of Henri Toivonen [who was killed on the 1986 Corsican rally]? Was it hard to continue rallying?

I have lost many friends and colleagues: Attilio Bettega [works Lancia driver, killed in an 037 on Corsica 1985], Henri Toivonen and Sergio Cresto [Toivonen's co-driver who died with him]. A team always looks ahead, and a driver never thinks about a fatal accident.

In the following Group A era, you were hugely successful. What was the transition to Group A from Group B like for the team and was it easy for you as a driver to adapt?

It was initially depressing to go from almost 600bhp to 230bhp at the beginning of Group A, but if we look at 1986-87, the top drivers were the same. A top driver adapts to the car and the regulations.

Why do you think you were able to win so many rallies between 1987 and '90, particularly given how competitive that era was?

Each driver has a period of high competitiveness. My period was from 1983 to 1993, and the peak of this was from 1987 to 1990.

Of all the great rally drivers you drove against, who did you respect the most? And who was the fastest?

Walter Röhrl, Markku Alén and Juha Kankkunen were fantastic – and the fastest was probably Toivonen.

What do you think of the WRC today? And how does it compare with the 1980s?

Today's WRC cars are exceptional cars and rallying is enjoying a lot of new popularity thanks to online streaming like WRC+. A lot of good work has happened promoting rallying again after many years with little coverage. The rallying is very different to the Group B era of the 1980s, we raced with extreme levels of power on long rallies, but the result is the same, Rallying is still exciting and a spectacular event to watch live or online.



Toivonen's Monte '86 win, Biasion rated him highly

Group B: 1983 Lancia 037 Rally Evo 2

THE 037'S PLACE IN MOTOR SPORT HISTORY is well and truly cemented as the last two-wheel-drive car to win the World Rally Championship for manufacturers in 1983, beating the four-wheel-drive Audi Quattro. But it took blood, sweat and tears to get there.

The previous year, the 037 had been plagued by poor reliability. A former Fiat works driver recruited by Lancia, Attilio Bettega, broke both his legs after his 037 hit a wall during the Tour de Corse, and he was sidelined for the rest of the season.

When the Lancia hit its stride, the competition couldn't believe what they were seeing, particularly Audi. According to Sergio Limone, the project manager for the 037, Walter Röhrl's co-driver Christian Geistdörfer wickedly fed rumours back to Audi that there was a secret four-wheel-drive system. The Germans dispatched a man in a helicopter to track the Lancia, so it could land when the car stopped, and Audi could steal a look underneath to see if the rumours were true. Depressingly, they weren't.

Its performance would justify Limone's proposal to keep things simple, given how little preparation time the team had. Even at the start of the project, it was unknown which manufacturer - either Abarth, Fiat or Lancia - would spearhead the rally programme.

Limone argued the Montecarlo's chassis should be modified. But the proven twin-cam, four-cylinder engine that had powered the Fiat 131 Abarth to three World Rally Championships, and resided in the 124 before that, was paired with a Roots supercharger. This was done upon the insistence of Fiat's engine man Aurelio Lampredi.

To adhere to the new Group B regulations, 200 cars had to be built. To this day, Limone shudders at the state of the customer Stradale versions, which all had to be worked on before they could be handed over to their owners.

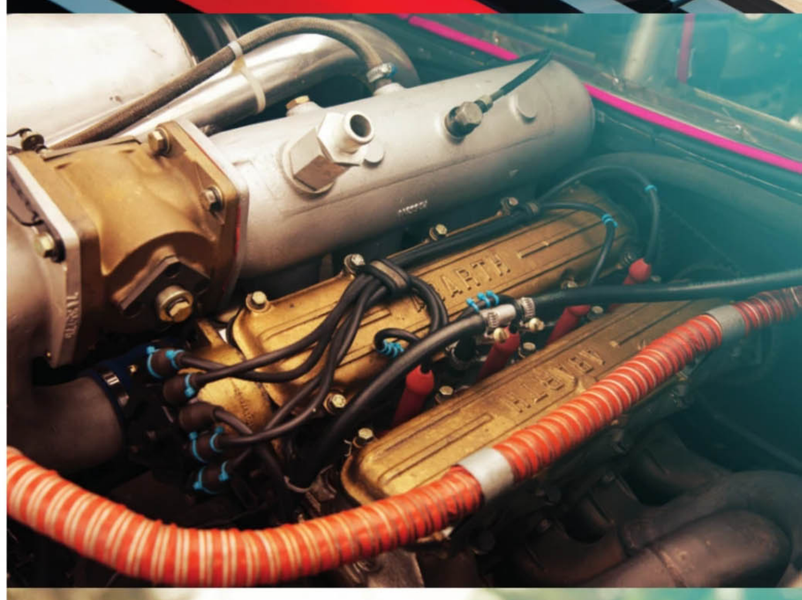
Miki Biasion switched from Opel's Ascona 400 to the 037 and discovered why his main rival on the Italian rally scene, Antonio Tognana, was so fast. Speaking with *Motor Sport*, he takes up the story. "I immediately got a very deep feeling with the car. It was like a racing car, but not easy to drive.

"You had to respect it. The secret to being fast was to be smooth with the throttle pedal. If you are very aggressive, you put all the weight on the rear wheels, and the front would understeer. So, it was better to arrive late with the engine braking and brakes and to do the first half of the corner as deceleration, then when the front reaches the right line to exit you could push on the throttle. It was a big challenge for me to put two-wheel drive on the podium against the four-wheel-drive cars."

Biasion attributes its characteristics to the car's specification, originally conceived for motor racing. While it seemed odd to develop



Distinctive Lancia styling built around the Fiat engine (below-middle) from the 131 Abarth







1983
LANCIA 037 RALLY EVO 2
Engine: 2.1 supercharged Fiat twin-cam
Power: 325bhp estimated
Weight: 960kg
0-60mph: 3.7sec estimated
Top speed: 140mph



The collection is carefully unloaded at the disused airfield for the last time



a two-wheel-drive car for 1983, he says Lancia had its reasons. "The experience with the Lancia Stratos suggested that with a proper, well-balanced, two-wheel drive, central-engine car, they could be competitive. And in '83, with Markku Alén and Walter Röhrl, Lancia won the World Championship against Audi."

There were two evolutions of the 037, and only 20 Evo 2 versions were built. This 2.1-litre car is the 11th of the Evo 2 run, chassis 411, and was originally used by the works Lancia team and Alén. It was then driven by Dario Cerrato during his 1985 European Rally Championship-winning season.

It was the first car that Campion added to his Lancia collection, after purchasing a Stratos that gave John the Lancia bug. It's the only car in the collection not to be rebuilt, but that simply adds to the car's provenance.

The Pininfarina bodywork still leaves you weak at the knees, even now. It's surprising to discover the impossibly low 037 is easy to get in and out of, much like the Montecarlo, even with the later addition of the dual side-impact bars for the roll cage.

The dashboard is simple and features digital displays for oil and air pressure, as well as water and oil temperature. A two-spoke suede wheel bearing the Abarth name, Sparco seat, and alloy pedals are perfectly placed for the driver. Meanwhile, the co-driver takes charge of a bank of fuses, timing gear and radio equipment. The doors and roof feel paper-thin, and on the passenger door sits the registration plate, W67780 TO. At the edge of the dashboard is an SOS number for the co-driver to call in the event of a crash or retirement. I resist the temptation to dial it.

"Limone shudders at the state of customer Stradales"

It has a beast of a clutch pedal, heavy with a long-travel, and also a long-travel throttle. When its engine fires after several goes, it sounds like a two-stroke bike engine as it revs. The Lancia serves up 325bhp at 8000rpm on a good day. The cabin is very noisy and there's a sense of being impossibly low to the road.

That noise grows more intense as the car corners flat, and you can feel the balance that comes from driving the rear wheels as it changes direction. The gearbox, however, is something of a stubborn so-and-so.

I'll leave it to Alén, who named the 037 as his favourite rally car, to paint a true picture of the speed of Lancia's creation. "The balance of the 037 was so good, especially on the jumps in Finland. There was no limit when jumping, and I was always confident to take very big risks. I remember once in the night, in Finland, thinking I was the best driver and decided to take many of the jumps flat out. The feeling with this car was so good that, afterwards, I had to change all my notes for braking to be 20 metres later."



This example was first used by Alén and went on to win the 1985 ERC title

Group B: 1985 Lancia Delta S4 Corsa

EVEN AS IT BEGAN WORK ON THE 037 IN MID-1980, Lancia knew that its car's days were numbered. Four-wheel drive was the way forward for consistent performance on all surfaces and Lancia required a new approach.

The brainchild of Pier Paolo Messori, the '036' concept had originally been sidelined in favour of the 037. Based on a Lancia Delta with a Ferrari engine, rear transaxle and a tubular chassis, it would ultimately be refined into the famous Delta S4.

On the S4's competitive debut in the 1985 RAC Rally, Henri Toivonen took the victory, while Markku Alén took second. Toivonen was two minutes ahead of third-placed Tony Pond in his Metro 6R4, and 26 minutes ahead of Per Eklund's Audi Quattro A2 in fourth. Not bad for what was meant to be a test ahead of 1986.

However, Miki Biasion, who was involved in the car's development from the start, reveals that the car was initially something of a dog, and it took a massive effort to get to that level of driveability. "The 037 was faster than the S4 almost everywhere except the most slippery places. The first few months was frustrating. It was the first four-wheel-drive Lancia and drivers and engineers didn't have the experience, especially with the differentials. It was a challenge to develop the car.

"We started with around 20 or 25 per cent front traction, and the car was very difficult to maintain its lines. You couldn't feel any feedback through the steering wheel either. And it would react strangely because the front diff wouldn't behave as you'd expect. We had to work and work, drive and drive, to get it to a point where it was relatively easy to drive.

"At least the engine's torque and power were good. But the brakes weren't good, and the suspension needed more work. I would say the engine was nine out of 10, whereas the suspension was six out of 10."

Lancia got the car ready. But after a debut win on the 1985 RAC Rally and victory on the 1986 Monte Carlo Rally, development eased – just as Audi and Peugeot hit back...

This 1985 S4, chassis 208, was used extensively by the Lancia Martini Racing works team for testing. Once its testing duties were complete, the car was then switched to the semi-works Jolly Club outfit. Dario Cerrato drove the S4 to victory in the Rally 1000 Miglia, before using it for testing as part of Italian, European and World Rally Championship programmes.

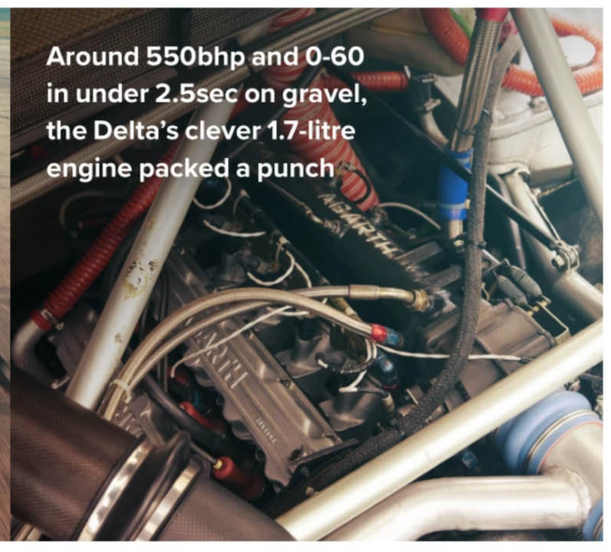
The S4's first-of-a-kind 1.7-litre, four-cylinder, supercharged and turbocharged engine is said to make around 550bhp at 8400rpm, and the red line is marked at 9000rpm. Modern data claims the 950kg S4 is capable of accelerating from standstill to

"The Delta S4 concept won the 1985 RAC Rally on its debut"




Early Delta tests would prove frustrating, Biasion found it unpredictable and lacking feel




Around 550bhp and 0-60 in under 2.5sec on gravel, the Delta's clever 1.7-litre engine packed a punch

Lancia's game-changer

From battling Fiat Group politics to befriending Enzo and redefining WRC standards, Cesare Fiorio was a titan



Fiorio defeated Porsche and Audi in his Lancia days

If it were possible to bottle whatever Cesare Fiorio is made of, you'd be able to name your price. He is one of the great figureheads of motor sport.

Fiorio single-handedly steered Lancia from underdog to top dog during its most successful period in racing. Fiorio, against resistance from senior Fiat Group members, took Lancia to a total of 10 World Rally Championship manufacturer crowns, as well as three World Sportscar titles.

The opposition wasn't only inside Fiorio's organisation. Lancia conquered the greats: Alpine, Audi, BMW, Ford and Porsche, and it all started with the car he is most proud of: the Stratos.

"The Stratos has great appeal," Fiorio says, "it won three World Championships, one after the other. It's special."

His career began with the founding of the HF Squadra Corse in 1963, and in 1965 Lancia had brought the team in-house. Then Fiat arrived on the scene, fired Fiorio and changed its mind within a week after he pointed out that every potential replacement could not match him. So, Fiat charged him with running Lancia, Fiat and Abarth in motor sport.

"Fiat fired Fiorio and swiftly changed its mind"

Arguably the most significant turning point was the creation of the Stratos, the car that broke the mould. Fiorio commissioned it to replace the Fulvia.

"Our competitors at that time were Alpine-Renault and the Porsche 911, and we needed something that would be competitive everywhere, on the Tarmac, snow, mud. So we looked at the regulations and made a car that was at the limit.

"It was a very big effort to make the Stratos. Many people, directors of the Fiat Group, didn't want me to make the Stratos. So I had to fight! I went to get the engine from Enzo Ferrari, and he appreciated what we were doing. He said, 'Okay, if you want my engine, I'll give you my engine,' it was the first time he gave his engine to somebody else."

Sticklers will point out it's not strictly true, as The Old Man had struck a deal with Fiat to build the Dino Coupé to homologate the Ferrari V6 for Formula 2. Lancia would go on to use a Ferrari V8 for its short-lived Group C programme.

The Stratos project showcased Fiorio's political and managerial skills at their very best. After convincing Ferrari, he recruited designer Marcello Gandini, Giampaolo Dallara, of Lamborghini, and driver Mike Parkes, who Fiorio speaks highly of.

"My idea was to select the best talent I could have; in drivers, engineers, and mechanics," says Fiorio. It was an approach that took Lancia to World Sportscar success and record-breaking WRC results.

Despite Fiorio arguing that the Stratos could have taken two further world titles, he says Fiat gave the order to switch to the 131 to boost its image. A further three titles would follow, but for Lancia, it was time for Group 5.

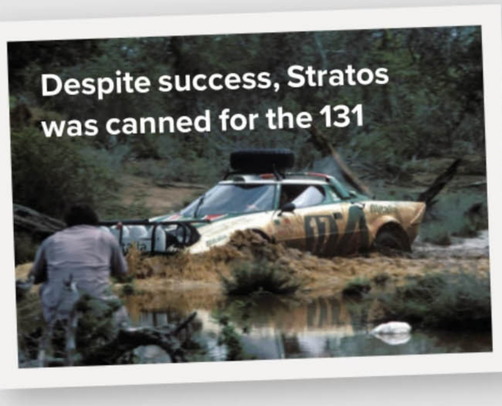
"I used Giampaolo Dallara to do this car and the LC1 that followed it. We were doing the engine in the factory, and he made the rest. We won the makes' and drivers' championships and were competing against maybe 40 Porsches! They had a works team and successful private teams.

"So I used all the Formula 1 drivers that I could – like Patrese, Alboreto, Nannini, Fabi – and when they arrived in the championship, they were superior."

When I tell Fiorio of how highly Patrese spoke of him, and Lancia, he reminds me that "Patrese was doing a great job, too". He also defends Teo Fabi, who Patrese said lost most of a 50-second lead during the final stint of the 1982 World Endurance Championship finale at Brands Hatch. Fabi was forced to race the LC1 into the night, following a restarted race, but it had no headlights. He lost time, lapping traffic that couldn't see him, and lost the race on aggregate by a handful of seconds, costing Lancia the championship.

The LC2 followed, but by this point, Fiorio believed the best people were working on rallying, and Lancia couldn't carry both.

By the time his attention turned back to rallying, Audi was on the scene with the Quattro, and Lancia lacked the technology to immediately develop a four-wheel-drive machine. The answer was the 037, which learned from the Beta Montecarlo Turbo.


Despite success, Stratos was canned for the 131

It beat Audi and you can still hear Fiorio's pride. "That was one of the best results in the history of Lancia." He confirms the rumours that Audi's head of motor sport "threw himself under the 037" to see if it was four-wheel drive.

The Delta S4's debut season was emotional. Henri Toivonen, "absolutely the best interpreter of the Group B cars", was killed, and at the end of the season at Sanremo, where Lancia won, its result was controversially wiped.

"But we managed to become competitive all the same with Group A," Fiorio adds. That's some understatement. In the WRC, the Delta took six manufacturers' and four drivers' titles. He didn't have a great deal of budget, but he knew how to spend it. Miki Biasion recalls how Fiorio would spend every penny to be leading mid-season, then ask the board for more money to secure the title. Call it bravado, but it never failed. It would then be topped up by sponsorship from Alitalia and Martini, another Fiorio initiative.

His skill at conducting Lancia was rewarded with the task of reviving the fortunes of Ferrari's F1 team – another chapter in the remarkable story of Fiorio.

ERIC VARGIOLU / DPPI

THE MARTINI SIX

60mph in less than 2.5secs on a gravel surface. It's amusing to note that the turbo boost gauge is set upside-down so that the driver can easily check whether he's getting full pressure.

Of all the cars gathered here, the S4 looks the most outlandish. The rear clamshell bodywork appears to struggle to contain the engine and gearbox, while wide Pirelli P7 Corsa semi-slick tyres (315/40 R16) sit proud of the flared rear wheel arches. It's as thug-like in appearance as the 037 is delicate. Hardly surprising as a mix of experimental parts, brought together in a display of brute force.

After the 037, the cockpit feels spacious, palatial even, with practical touches such as hooks to hang helmets between stages. But those who have seen the interior bare can appreciate that the driver and co-driver were effectively sat in an elaborate incendiary device. Beneath each seat is a fuel bladder. On the driver's side is the alternator, and behind the co-driver's seat is the spark box. The design would come to haunt Lancia and hasten the demise of Group B.

Yet the S4 feels remarkably friendly to drive. At least, it does at sane speeds. The clutch is light, the throttle wonderfully responsive, the slightly low-geared steering is feelsome, and the five-speed manual gearbox is more cooperative than even the later Delta Integrale's. The four-wheel-drive system gave up to 75 per cent of drive to the rear and featured an active centre differential.

Yet those that know the car well, and have driven it harder, say there is a fine line between the S4 being on your side or against. Given the world's greatest struggled to manage this monster, there is no reason to doubt them.

1985
LANCIA DELTA S4 CORSA

Engine: 1.7 turbocharged and supercharged four-cylinder
Power: 550bhp estimated
Weight: 950kg
0-60mph: 2.5sec estimated
Top speed: 150mph



1988
LANCIA DELTA HF INTEGRALE 8-VALVE

Engine: 2.0 turbocharged four-cylinder
Power: 275bhp
Weight: 1120kg
0-60mph: 6.2sec estimated
Top speed: 134mph







Integrale starred in Group A, constantly evolving from Lancia's rally lineage, from the Delta and 037 Evo (below)



Sunday drive: road car-like interior was a result of Group A's attempt to make rallying safer and cheaper





Our thanks to Max Girardo & Co. and to John Campion for their help and for letting us loose in these incredible cars

Group A: 1988 Lancia Delta HF Integrale 8-valve

THE COVER OF 1988'S APRIL EDITION OF *Motor Sport* featured an Integrale leaping through the air during Rally Portugal, above the headline 'Biasion's challenge takes off'. Miki Biasion and fellow works drivers – Markku Alén and Mikael Ericsson – gave the original Integrale its debut in Portugal, using a five-speed gearbox rather than the planned six-speed unit that was running late. Biasion's was the only gearbox to stay intact, and he put it to good use, earning the Integrale a debut win.

An evolution of the Delta HF 4WD, the Integrale brought important updates that allowed Lancia to flex its muscles in Group A. There was a more powerful tune for the transverse 2-litre, 8-valve, four-cylinder engine, thanks to the much larger Garrett T3 turbocharger, superior cooling, suspension enhancements and flared wheel arches, which permitted larger wheels, tyres and brakes.

Biasion's win was no fluke. Lancia's preceding HF Delta 4WD took Juha Kankkunen and Lancia to the drivers' and manufacturers' titles the year before. As it evolved, the Integrale clinched a further five manufacturers' crowns and three drivers' titles.

Having worked on every iteration of the car from 1985 to 1992, Biasion has a paternal affection toward the Delta. But that first switch from Group B to Group A machinery was challenging. "The step from 600 horsepower to 220 or 250 was really frustrating. After I drove the first car, my thoughts were to not rally anymore," he recalls of his first test, on the island of Elba in 1986. "It was really terrible because the time you needed from one corner to another corner was like a season! We had to modify the notes because there was a lot more time in the cockpit." Another problem was that the tyres kept peeling off the wheel rims. It's why Biasion ended up rolling chassis 002 down a mountainside. He later bought the car and has now restored it.

What was the Delta's secret, a car that won six manufacturers' titles and four drivers' championships, a pair apiece for Kankkunen and Biasion? Not what you might imagine. Although every evolution brought better roadholding and weight distribution, it was the engineers that made the difference.

"During the evolution of the Delta, the engineers [from the rally team] told the production car engineers to standardise as many nuts as possible throughout the car, so that when they worked on the car during service, it would be easy and fast to change parts like the gearbox, suspension, engine parts. Lancia made everything easy to work on, so you didn't lose time during the rally."

Campion's car was driven to victory by Biasion on the 1988 Acropolis Rally, and Jorge Ricalde drove it when he beat Biasion at the Argentinian round that season. It was later shipped to Australia, where it was driven by Greg Carr in national and international events, and remained in its original, 8-valve spec.

The Group A regulations greatly suited the compact four-wheel-drive Delta and meant that this is the only car in the Campion collection that feels familiar and friendly.

I discover that the original dogleg, six-speed, straight-cut manual is stubborn and crunchy. The throttle is precise, but the turbo is asleep until 4000rpm, at which point the Integrale becomes urgent as it surges through the short-ratio gears to 7000rpm and builds speed rapidly. The distinctive crisp growl of the Lancia's motor takes me back to my days testing the road car.

The steering is quick-acting and full of feedback, while the whole package feels taut, together and confidence-inspiring. In other words, it's exactly what you'd expect from one of the most successful rally cars of all time.

"THE TRACK IS MY CANVAS, THE CAR IS MY BRUSH" GRAHAM HILL



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The champagne years



Miki Biasion (right) and Tiziano Siviero celebrate 1987 Monte Carlo win after Lancia made its controversial team order

When Lancia exited the WRC, it left behind a dominant record no marque has since beaten. **David Evans** explains its rise

MCKLEIN

LANCIA'S GOLDEN ERA



Alén took his 037 to second in Portugal, and won just once in 1984

THERE WAS A MOMENT, A PAUSE, and then the realisation – yes, that had just happened. Lancia team principal Cesare Fiorio explained the result of the 1987 Monte Carlo Rally to the media. Invited to agree with his account, Lancia's second-placed driver Juha Kankkunen thought about it and then declined.

Silence settled over Lancia's post-event press conference in the Beach Plaza. The Italians had dominated the first chapter of world rallying's brave new post-Group B era and then shot itself unerringly in the foot. Kankkunen remembers the event and the moment Lancia's incumbent Italian star Miki Biasion was favoured for the win.

"They hired me," says the Finn, "as a World Champion, but I was not allowed to win. Lancia was the best team. But the politics... Sometimes the politics was too much."

He concluded that first outing with Lancia by going for pizza with Keke Rosberg. Politics was never far from the top of the Lancia and Fiat Group agenda. The toing and froing from favour wasn't restricted to drivers. Such policy extended to the manufacturers. Ultimately, Lancia's exit from a world it ruled was steered by politics. Alfa's arrival in and domination of touring cars wasn't done on a shoestring...

Only Lancia has weathered the all-French force that was Sébastien Loeb and Citroën. The Stratos, 037 and Delta combined to seat Lancia at the head of the table – a position it retains with 10 world titles, compared to Citroën's eight. In four of those years, the Turin team did the double and clinched the drivers' crown as well.

But the 1987 Monte was an inglorious start to its dominant and record-breaking era, the origins of which can be traced back through Group B and into Group 4.

Fiorio laid the foundations for greatness a decade ahead of any consideration of sending power to all four wheels of a rally car. He laid those foundations with what remains one of rallying's most purposeful, beautiful and successful cars ever: the Stratos.

For the first time, a manufacturer built a car with one single aim: to win the World Rally Championship. It did just that, for three years straight. But then came Fiat Group's decision to shift the emphasis to Fiat's 131. Fiorio argued for lengthening the Lancia's life, but it was to no avail.

> "For the first time, a brand built a car solely to win the WRC"

"It was," he says, "a political point from Fiat. I was sad to see Stratos go, but I was in charge of Fiat and Lancia, and I said: 'Okay, we are soldiers and we make war with the arms that you give us.'"

The natural successor to Lancia's Stratos was its first Group B car, the 037. By the time it arrived, the Quattro revolution had truly begun. Lancia knew that its new car was two driven wheels short of the full package, but there was nothing it could do. Work had begun on its successor, but when Group 4 became Group B in 1983, that Delta moment was still a couple of years away.

Nini Russo was Lancia's team manager and, like his colleagues, feared the outcome of what on paper looked to be a one-sided fight in 1983. "We had two-wheel drive," says Russo, "and they [Audi] had four-wheel drive. We had to find a solution to try to compensate." That necessity to find another way to defeat Hannu Mikkola, Stig Blomqvist and Michèle Mouton helped define Lancia as the WRC's most complete manufacturer and shape its future glories.

"We were the first to make some changes in the rally," says Russo. "We created this strategy of changing tyres in the middle of the special stages. This was to try to compensate

GETTY, DPPI, MCKLEIN





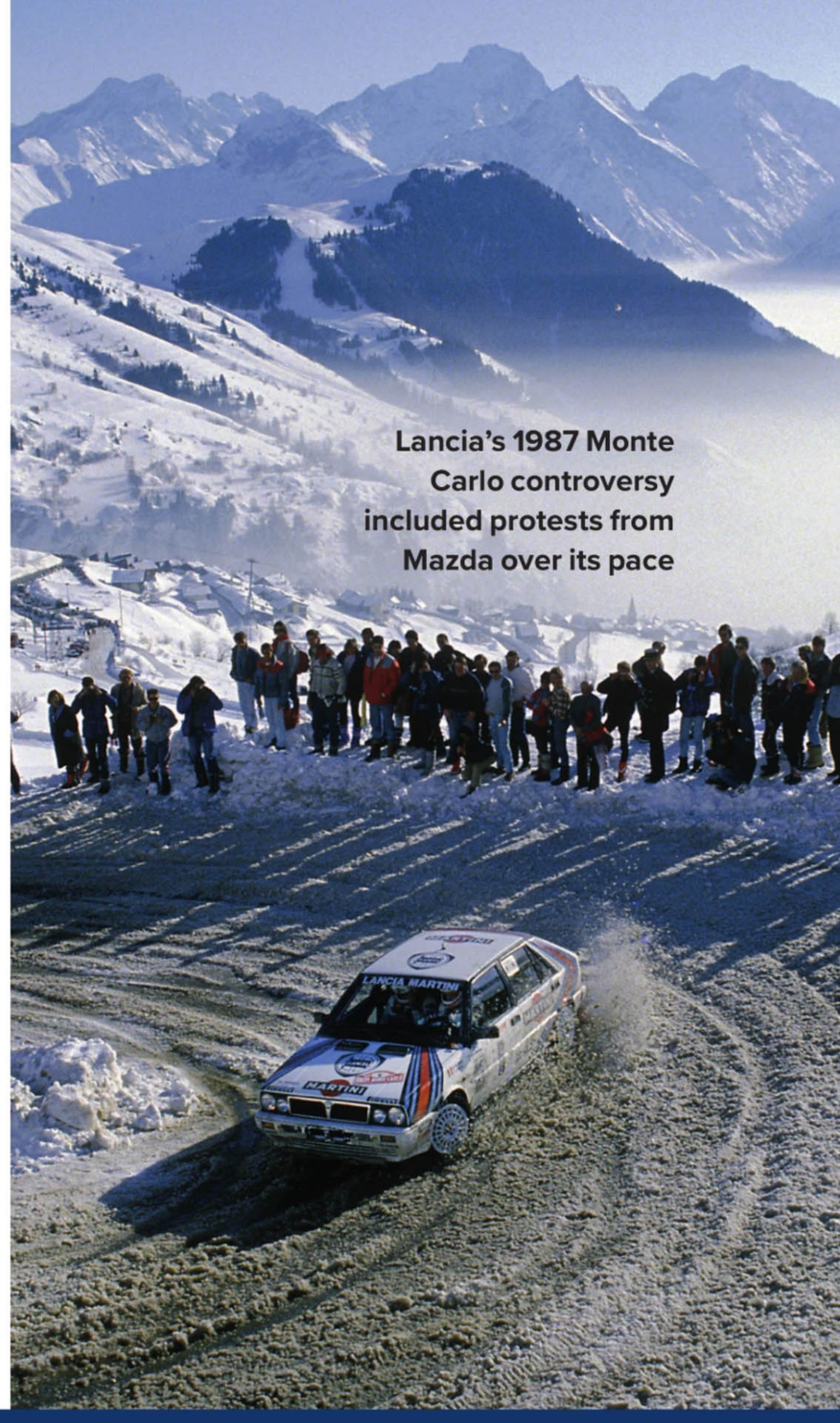
Auriol followed on 1990 Monte; Kankkunen (right) celebrates '87 RAC win







Lancia's tyre change strategy was innovative. Left: Toivonen was the master of Group B



Lancia's 1987 Monte Carlo controversy included protests from Mazda over its pace





Acropolis 1988 (bottom, left to right) Fiorio, Kankkunen, Biasion and Alén with their co-drivers behind. Above: Biasion won his first WRC rally in '86, helping to fill the Toivonen void

for this gap. That was quite famous but, as well as that, look at the history: we were the first to use the aeroplane for communications, we had a doctor, the physio, the catering, the helicopters – we were always one step ahead of the others and then the others would copy us. These things, these commodities, they didn't make the car faster, but they gave us the chance to compensate."

And it wasn't just on the rallies where helicopters made the difference. Markku Alén recalls trying to get his notes right on a particularly tricky Monte stage.

"I was in recce, driving this road all the time," he says. "The team had a 037 recce car for me to drive in the stage. I get to the end, get out the car and into a helicopter, flying me back to the start and into another 037 to drive the stage again. Get to the finish, do the same again. That was the Lancia way."

Based on the Beta Montecarlo road car, the 037 was a fabulously balanced and powerful car – fast enough to land Lancia an unlikely manufacturers' championship in 1983. With Walter Röhrl and Alén leading the team, there was always a chance for the 037. A dominant one-two on a snow-free Monte opened the account, with Röhrl delivering an outstanding debut drive aboard the new car. A similar result with Alén first came in Corsica months later. With Lancia two points ahead, Audi expected to steamroller the following Acropolis Rally.

But the Quattros failed, and Röhrl delivered. Röhrl picked his way around the rocks, made use of the 037's leggy suspension travel, and set up shop, watching and waiting from Mikkola's shoulder. When a pin holding the boot on the Finnish-flagged Quattro broke, the tailgate opened and yanked vital oil pipes with it. The engine was finished, and it was another one-two for Lancia.

Lancia was playing to its strengths, evolving the 037 along the way and doing precisely what Russo said. Giorgio Pianta was Lancia's chief engineer on the 037. According to him, it was the supercharged 2-litre engine that was giving them the edge.

"People at Audi," he says, "thought it was the horsepower that was making the car fast. It wasn't. We had just over 300[bhp]. It was the torque; we could be going from nothing to 165kph in just 350 metres."

Röhrl purrs at the memory of that engine, and car. "If you wanted, you could just leave the car in fifth gear. It would pull. All the time, there was power. The engine was the reason the 037 was winning in this season. But also, the chassis was perfect. And the steering. And the brakes. And the suspension."

Lancia sealed success in the first season of Group B with an Alén victory at Sanremo. Having re-signed for what would be an 11th successive year with the Fiat Group on the eve of that event, he was confident of the future.

LANCIA'S GOLDEN ERA

"Talk was," recalls Markku, in trademark staccato Finnish, "that a four-wheel-drive car was coming. But for me, at the time, the 037 was the car. I liked the Stratos, you know, but this car [037] is a racing car. When I drive in Finland, I have the feeling to really fly. I am having to change pace notes all the time, braking 20 metres later."

Lancia's four-wheel-drive solution, the Delta S4, was delayed, much to the frustration of Alén and countryman Henri Toivonen. But when it landed in Nottingham for the 1985 RAC Rally, it raised the bar. By then Audi's force had faded, and Peugeot was the pace-setter with its 205 T16. Jean-Claude Vaucard, the man behind the all-conquering 205, remembers the arrival of the S4.

"Even when they had the 037, we had to be careful with them," says Vaucard. "But when the S4 came... it was a big fight."

In terms of performance, everything was pushed to the absolute limit. Turbocharging and supercharging the 1759cc engine instantly delivered 450bhp. Even though he only had a handful of miles in the car ahead of the RAC, Toivonen knew his car had come. Speaking before the event, he said: "This four-wheel-drive car will suit me well. All my life I've driven with left-foot braking to balance the car and to keep it slightly sideways. Almost always, I'm ready to get the tail out."

Few could take the S4 to its absolute limit, and fewer still could let it loose on that limit. Toivonen could, and did. Back-to-back world rally wins bridged the end of the 1985 season and the beginning of the '86 campaign.

"Henri was surely the driver uniquely capable of using 100 per cent of the potential of the S4," recalled then development engineer Sergio Limone. Then came Corsica, tragedy, and the end of the road for Group B. By the end of the season, these spaceframe rocketships would be banished in favour of mass-production cars. From 1987 onwards, a presence at the forefront of world rallying required a manufacturer to have produced at least 5000 road-going examples of its car.

Ford was caught between two stools. The RS Cosworth produced plenty of power, but all of it went to the rear. The XR4x4 had a driveshaft at each corner, but the naturally aspirated V6 lump offered 100 fewer horses than the Cosworth's blown 300bhp unit.

Mazda's 323 had a turbo and total traction, but its 1600cc motor left it short on grunt. Audi's 200 Quattro was overweight and ungainly. Prodrive delivered a lightweight BMW M3 racer tuned to the stages. Like the big-winged Ford, the M3 went well on asphalt and fast gravel, but throw some dirty corners at it and it was no match for its rivals.

Nothing was a match for the Delta HF 4WD. To the conspiracy theorists – not exactly thin on the ground through the 1980s when global motor sport governance and Italian manufacturers were involved – it all seemed rather convenient. FISA president Jean-Marie Balestre's decision to ban Group B from the end of 1986 played into the hands of Lancia.

Turbocharging Delta road cars was not new; the HF road car had been around since 1983, but only in front-wheel drive. But Lancia was exonerated by the fact that the four-wheel-drive version was revealed at the Turin Motor Show, before the 1986 Tour de Corse.

Fate, kismet, destiny, call it what you will. Lancia had an opportunity and couldn't get its Chivasso factory churning 4x4 Deltas out quickly enough. By the summer of 1986, the rally version was putting down serious testing miles. A steamroller was being prepared, and it wouldn't be to everybody's liking.

Alén: "I had come from the Olympus Rally [the final round in 1986], from a big and good car: 600 horsepower or something like that. I went to the first test for the Group A car. I drove the car and said: 'Hey, boys, what is this you have given me? Where's the engine?' I had 200 horsepower or something like that."

> "Few could take the S4 to its absolute limit: Toivonen could and did"

By the time the Delta reached the start of the new era, the power was up to around 250bhp. Not the highest output in 1987, but sitting in a well-tested car of near-perfect proportions. The steamrollering could begin. The bad blood in the Beach Plaza is now long forgotten. Limone, the man responsible for turning that Turin Motor Show car into a rally winner in half a year, was happy.

"The basic car," he says, "was a good starting point. We were clever to use the potential of the car and the rules at 100 per cent immediately.

"That 1987 win in Monte Carlo produced great enthusiasm in the management. That gave us the opportunity to ask [for] improvements on the production car, so we then had the Integrale, the Integrale



No success on Corsica '82 (above), but Lancia won on Sanremo '90, Auriol leading a one-two



GETTY, DPPI, MCKLEIN



Röhrl (far-right) won Monte '83, while this Delta fleet took Sanremo '87 through Biasion







Alén celebrates his '88 RAC Rally win, but it was Biasion who was crowned champion





Alén on his way to fourth on 1984 Safari. Above: Delta won 10 of 11 WRC rallies in '88.

16-valve and HF Integrale - the car we called Deltona - a few years later."

Each evolution was a world-beater. Sure, Toyota came along, and the Celicas got in the way, but the only thing to halt the Delta was Lancia's decision to withdraw from full works-backed rallying at the end of 1991.

Russo continues: "People used to talk all the time about the budget. They thought we had the biggest budget, but we used money well. With the helicopters, we saw the cars all the time and kept them running on the road - we had a smaller team [of mechanics] in the helicopters. We didn't need lots of people on the ground. And winning in Monte always gave a big help to the budget. The marketing people used to say victory there would pay [for] almost the whole season. Winning was everything for us, and this is what made Lancia; people would put their hand in the fire for this team. I love that first Delta; this is the car of my heart. This started the greatest period for Lancia."

Great as any cars are, they're only as good as the drivers directing them. In Biasion, Didier Auriol, Alén and Kankkunen, they had a good portion of early Group A's leading talents. Kankkunen did, of course, go on to win the 1987 title, despite a tricky start. But further evidence of the commitment that underpinned Lancia's desire to be the best of the best as the 1980s turned to the '90s came after the 1989 1000 Lakes Rally.

Then driving for Toyota, Kankkunen was furious at losing his home round of the championship after his Celica caught fire. Sensing an opportunity, director-general of Abarth (Lancia's sporting arm) Claudio Lombardi reached out to a former driver.

In typical Lancia style, Lombardi didn't call Laukaa from his Turin office. No. He knocked on Kankkunen's front door. The Finn smiles at the memory. "It was a surprise to see them," he says. "But it showed what Lancia was thinking. I signed for three years."

A year later, in 1991, Kankkunen would celebrate a second title with Lancia. Twelve months on and the Delta had won its sixth and final manufacturers' title. Fiat decided the time had come to go racing.

"In those days, it was only news when we didn't win," says Russo. "We made the last Delta (HF Integrale, the Deltona) in 1991, and it was run by Jolly Club in 1992. But it wasn't really. We were there, but we were in the shadows. It was a complete shock when the news came that Lancia was finished in rallying. We were taken into a room - but my wife called me. She knew before me; it was all over the news. Lancia was finished."

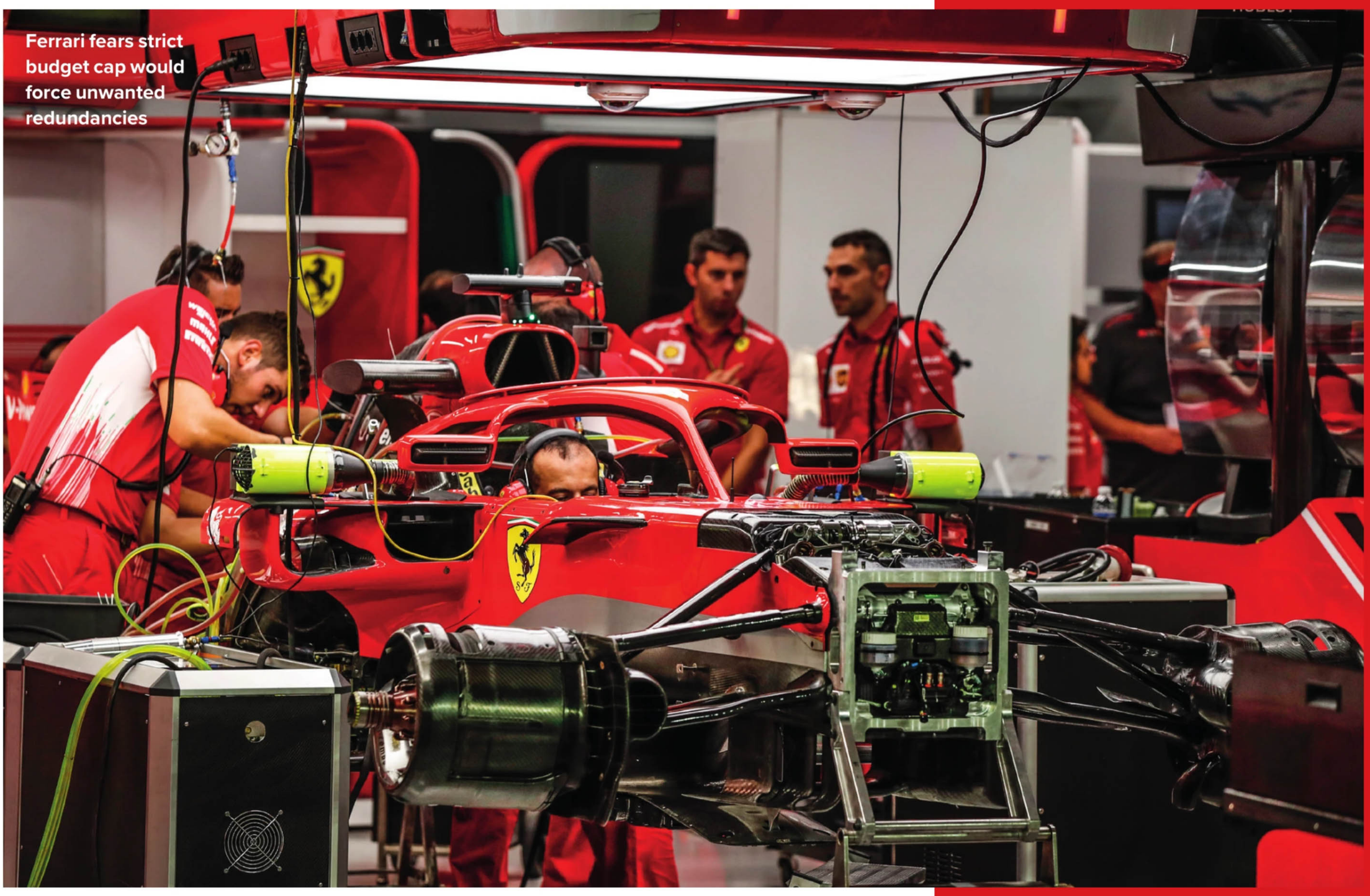
The steamroller had ran out of gas.

RUNNING

F1 is racing to fix its relationship with Ferrari before the Italian team moves to join rival competitions, including Le Mans, reports **Mark Hughes**

Scrambling for the next phase: Ferrari reacts to a Vettel pitstop in Russia last year, but its long-term future is a far more complex challenge

REPAIRS



Ferrari fears strict budget cap would force unwanted redundancies

CAUGHT BETWEEN ERAS, Formula 1's struggle to downsize has only been intensified by coronavirus. No team better encapsulates this struggle than Ferrari.

As F1's poster boy, Ferrari symbolises the excess and exclusivity that is F1's elixir. Ferrari embodies the aspiration and impossible glamour of some fantasy world that glitters with promise like sun rays dappled in a Mediterranean cove - and that's where F1 has always lived. Selling a tantalising glimpse of that world is F1's bread and butter.

To produce that show costs money and requires global scale financing and broadcasting. That money is sucked in from the hard, vulgar commercial world outside the fantasy bubble. So long as oxygen was supplied, the competitive entities inside expanded like goldfish growing to fill their pool. The pool was made smaller by the banking crash of 2008, and it's been made smaller again by the virus. The fish inside it are still as big as when the pool was full size, and the biggest fish of all is Ferrari. The pond may not be big enough for all the bloated fish to survive, but Ferrari is seen as the key to keeping the pond viable. Ferrari is in a strong negotiating position, but getting what it wants could further endanger its whole marine biosphere.

This is the delicate dance Liberty, the FIA and the teams are having to make around a team that does very nicely indeed out of F1, and which F1 does very nicely out of having. So, what exactly are the numbers being argued about in this dance and what are the implications?

Budget caps

F1's first-ever budget caps are set to come into force from next season. Originally, this cap was set at $175m, excluding engine manufacture, driver salaries, marketing and the salaries of the highest-paid three employees other than drivers. It's since been broadly agreed to reduce this figure down to $145m for the first year - ie 2021. But this number seems to be Ferrari's line in the sand, even though Liberty and the FIA wish to glide down to a yet smaller number in 2022. Some smaller teams, and McLaren, are pushing for a severe cut to $100m. Red Bull's Helmut Marko suggests $130m is ideal while the FIA's Jean Todt views even such budgets as 'absurd'.

As can be seen, even the currently-proposed tighter cap of $145m is more than the outlay of the bottom-spending half of the teams. So the cap will impose no spending

The numbers game

The cost-cutting challenge highlights the disparity between the haves and the have-nots, and has worried Ferrari

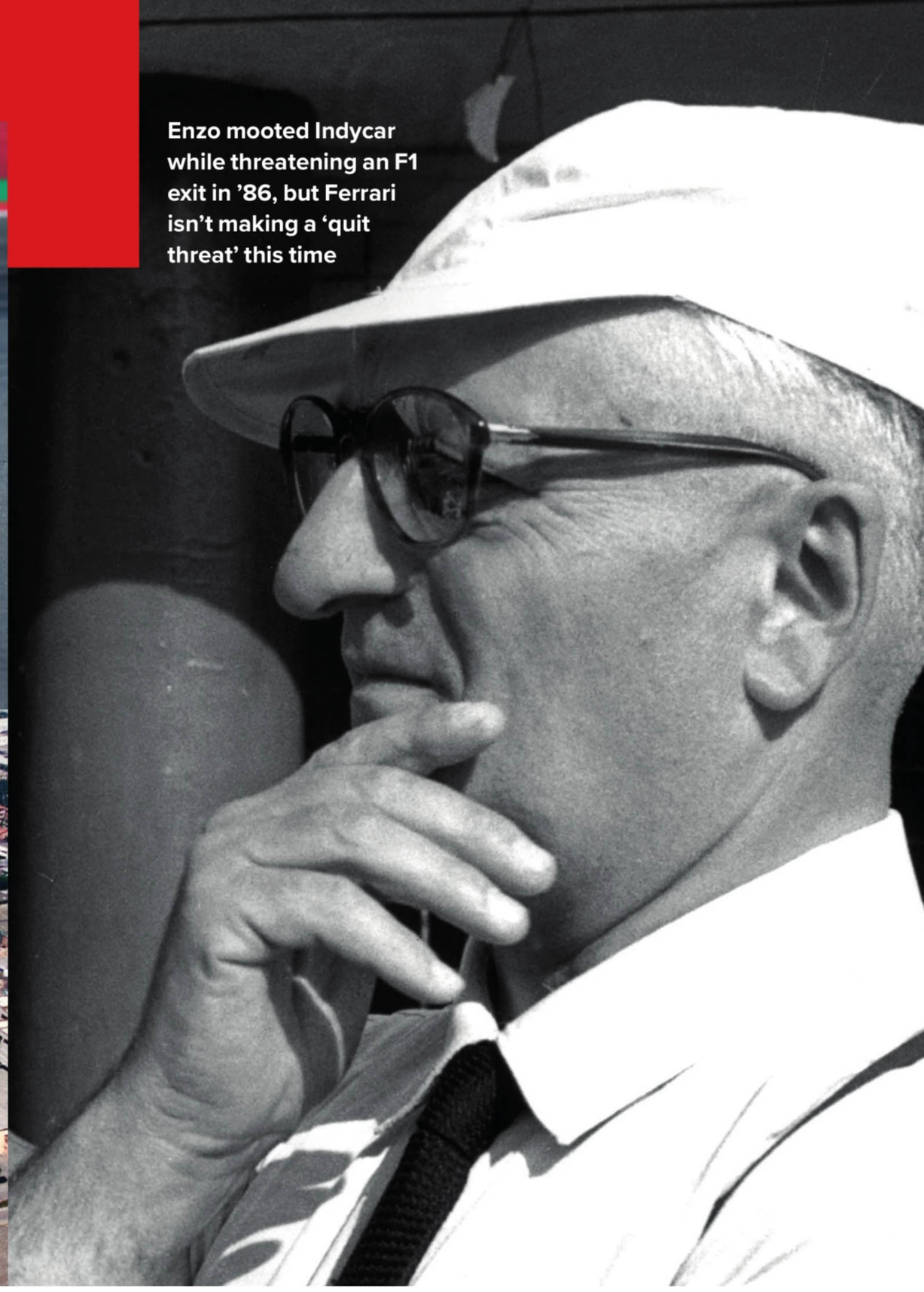
Budgets	2019 estimate	After exclusions*
Mercedes	$480m	$230m
Ferrari	$460m	$205m
Red Bull	$350m	$195m
Renault	$275m	$150m
McLaren	$250m	$150m
Proposed '21 budget cap $145m		
Racing Point	$185m	$110m
Haas	$175m	$110m
Alfa	$140m	$100m
Toro Rosso	$140m	$100m
Williams	$150m	$120m

*Permitted exclusions from the budget cap are engine manufacture, driver salaries, marketing costs and the salary of the highest-paid three employees other than drivers.



How might the role of Fiorano (below) change with further F1 restrictions?





Enzo mooted Indycar while threatening an F1 exit in '86, but Ferrari isn't making a 'quit threat' this time

limitation upon them, though that doesn't mean they can raise enough income to match spending. But it represents a painful reduction for the top three teams.

Ferrari's preoccupation is to avoid making extensive redundancies. "The $145m level is already a new and demanding request compared to what was set out last June," said the team's boss Mattia Binotto last month. "It cannot be attained without further significant sacrifices, especially in terms of our human resources. If it was to get even lower, we would not want to be put in a position of having to look at other further options for deploying our racing DNA."

This was interpreted by some as a 'Ferrari quit' threat, but that wasn't the intention of the message at all – as Binotto himself confirmed. "To clarify," he said. "If the budget cap became too severe, we would look at other competitions in addition to F1."

Not only is Ferrari hesitant to make the number of redundancies it feels would be necessary to reach a cap any lower than $145m, but it also doesn't wish to lose the core skills those redundancies would represent. Furthermore, it could cause Ferrari to fall foul of Italian employment law.

Getting down to just the $145m target is likely going to involve *some* redundancies among Ferrari's 1000-strong workforce. There are likely to be economies made in the composites and aero departments, reducing the team's ability to develop its car as quickly. There will be expected savings made in the replacement of expensive lightweight materials with cheaper and heavier options. Such economies would arguably only be bringing the team towards the available resource of the smaller teams. But Ferrari fears going further would then put it at a competitive disadvantage to some customer teams who buy engines and other components at less than cost, while the engine-producing works teams (Ferrari, Mercedes and Renault) bear the full research and development costs. This, argues Ferrari, would allow the better-funded customer teams to devote more of their capped budget to performance. Ferrari is referencing Red Bull – and to a lesser extent, McLaren – in this fear.

"Ferrari fears a competitive disadvantage to customer teams"

As such, Ferrari is advocating a two-tier cost cap, with additions allowed for engine producers and subtractions from the cap for customer teams. That idea reportedly hasn't found much favour from either the FIA or Liberty and, at the time of writing, efforts were being made to find common grounds on further controlling the cost side of the equation. Already certain power unit development limitations and spec freezes are set to be put in place. The postponing of the radical new technical regulations from 2021 to 2022 – with no aerodynamic research allowed on the '22 cars this year – has also been done with a view to cost reduction. But Ferrari is unhappy with this, arguing that although the new-spec cars incur a greater initial investment, they will be cheaper to operate than the current cars, with longer life components and simpler aerodynamics featuring less development potential.

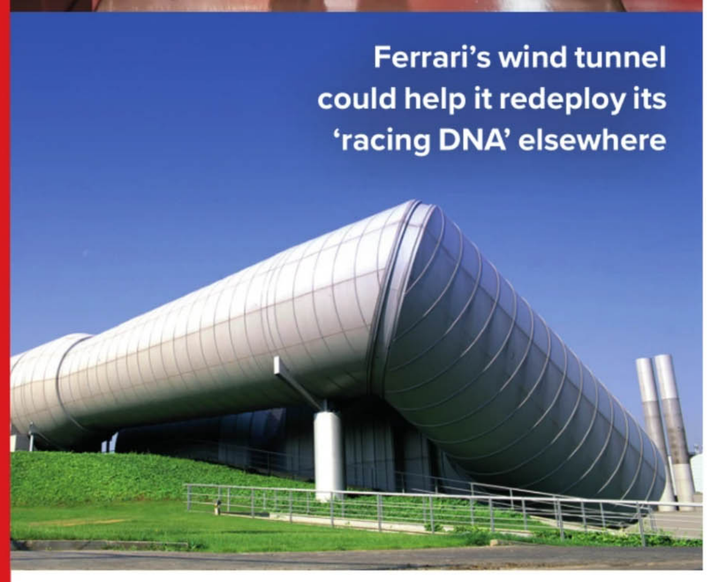
There would seem, in short, something of an impasse between Ferrari and Liberty/FIA regarding the cost cap beyond 2021. This in turn has played its part in Liberty's recent

GETTY, DPPI, FERRARI



Ferrari's political expertise dwindled, and will test Binotto (below)





Ferrari's wind tunnel could help it redeploy its 'racing DNA' elsewhere

confirmation that a new Concorde Agreement, which sets out the financial terms and commits the teams to F1 for the agreement's duration - set to come into force next year - has been put on the backburner.

Negotiation skills

As the highest-profile name, Ferrari has always received highly favourable commercial terms from F1, and an informal agreement had been reached between Liberty and the Scuderia before the current crisis. Ferrari's hardline position on the proposed cost cap changes - and the financial implications of the COVID-19 lockdown - is complicating the consensus.

Part of the equation Liberty is trying to solve among all the teams - but to which Ferrari is absolutely key - is that of balancing spend with income. Even before the coronavirus, the revenue stream for F1 was expected to decline as boom-time-era hosting fees and TV deals came to be renewed. With F1 income expected to shrink, but the teams still sized around the previous conditions, the cost cap is a way of trying to save the teams from themselves.

On the income side of the equation, Ferrari receives more from F1's pot than any other, as befitting its perceived status and as a result of Bernie Ecclestone having prioritised its early signature on previous Concorde Agreements in order to weaken the negotiating position of the others.

Ferrari was paid $28m more than the next highest-grossing team (Mercedes) in 2019. The difference between Ferrari's income from F1 and its total F1 spend, otherwise known as the difference that must be found from sponsors or ownership, was around $255m in 2019. Mercedes' was closer to $300m. Even after sponsorship income, every team is making a loss, if engine costs are taken into account. But Ferrari is losing less than some. Renault's stands as the most expensive programme, with the difference between income and expenditure an estimated $150m. Ferrari's more favourable share of F1's revenue, combined with better results, means its shortfall is little more than one-third of that. Ferrari's operational losses are hardly any greater than those of the much smaller teams.

Crucially, the above 2019 income numbers are derived from a full season's worth of racing. They will look nothing like that this year, given the ongoing catastrophic effect of the coronavirus on the F1 calendar, but the position of Ferrari relative to the other teams remains largely unchanged.

Hence there is real opposition from the others to Ferrari's insistence that its spend should not be brought more in line with those of the smaller teams. It's a tricky position from which the relatively inexperienced Louis Camilleri and Binotto must negotiate. Any accommodation by the others is made yet more difficult by the Ferrari/FIA engine controversy, and the secret resolution that Ferrari refuses to go public with.

So if, as looks likely, the cost cap is set at a level for 2022 that Ferrari finds unacceptable,



GRAND PRIX PHOTO, GETTY, FERRARI

what are its options if it's determined to avoid making significant redundancies inside the race team?

Additional series

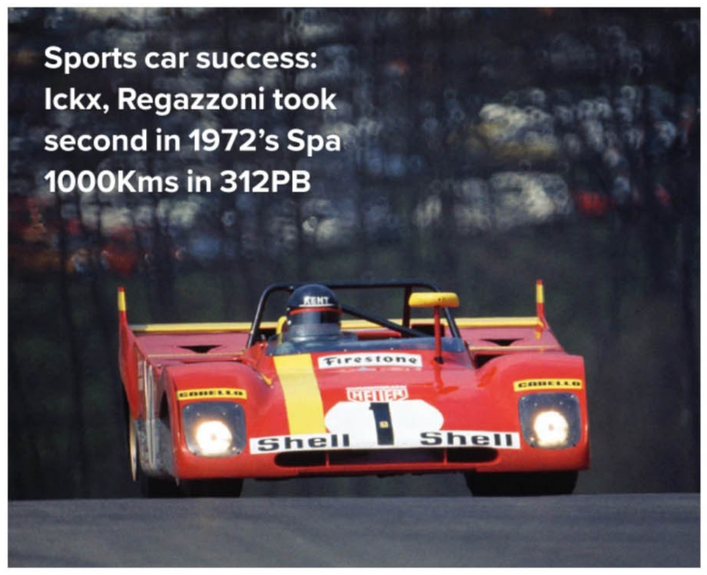
Ferrari's stated position of possibly looking at 'other high-profile series' in addition to F1 is in absolute terms less of a threat than its previous quit threats. But it's much more believable. Any quit threat would be an empty one, and Ferrari knows this. F1 and Ferrari feed the image of the other. It's a symbiotic relationship. The sheen of Ferrari's brand would probably carry for a few years after any withdrawal from the sport's top category, but would ultimately be damaged.

But contesting, say, the Le Mans 24 Hours or the World Endurance Championship in addition to F1 would only add to Ferrari's brand value – while detracting from F1's. If F1 could no longer lay claim to being the only high-profile series in which Scuderia Ferrari competed, it would lose something. The asset value of the F1 brand would be lessened.

If Ferrari wished to maintain its previous spend to keep personnel and core skills within the company but was forced to adhere to a cost cap well below the proposed 2021 level of $145m, it would theoretically leave enough spare to contest Le Mans. If forced to lop $100m off its 2019 F1 budget of $205m (after exclusions), that $100m would be a more than generous WEC budget, which would include Le Mans. It would be a huge deal for both Ferrari and Le Mans – the two had been synonymous for so long before Ferrari decided to concentrate solely on F1 from the mid-70s. It would entail designing cars for widely different technical formulas, but there'd be crossover technologies that could fertilise both programmes.

The excitement created by a state-of-the-art WEC Ferrari, driven by Charles Leclerc and whichever driver replaces Sebastian Vettel can easily be imagined, with potentially a second car utilised for Kimi Räikkönen and Antonio Giovinazzi.

The threat to F1 of such a programme becomes more focused if it's imagined that Ferrari's presence might lend the series, and Le Mans in particular, such status that other automotive giants may perceive it to be of greater promotional value than F1 for a lesser cost. What if Mercedes and Honda switched? What would be the financial implications for F1 at such a delicate time?



Sports car success: Ickx, Regazzoni took second in 1972's Spa 1000Kms in 312PB

These are of course only imaginary scenarios, but they implicitly back up Ferrari's position in this disagreement.

Aside from Le Mans and the WEC, it is *Motor Sport's* understanding that Ferrari is specifically not interested in contesting Formula E, but it could be interested in an IndyCar programme. This could no longer entail Ferrari building its own car – as it did for a planned 1986 Indycar programme – because of IndyCar's single-spec Dallara chassis format. But Ferrari could develop its own engine and enter its own team, enjoying huge exposure in the American market. Again, this could feasibly be done within the budget created by the regulation-restricted F1 spend.

The virus has hastened a crucial moment for F1. It faces an existential crisis. Can it contract quickly enough to be viable in what's sure to be an obliterated global economy? Can it do this without losing the exclusive presence of the biggest jewel in its crown?

"Ferrari could develop an engine and enter its own IndyCar team"



MOULDING

Colin Chapman's first GT design shattered conventional

Simon Aldridge tries

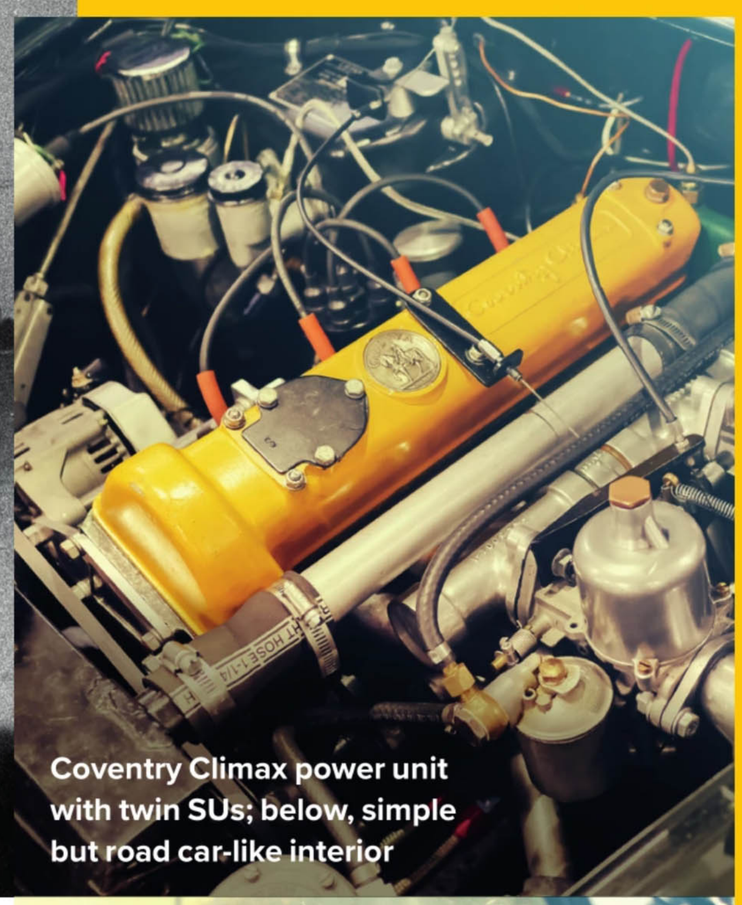
THE FUTURE

thinking, and he took the wheel himself to prove it on track. Chapman's seat for size

CHAPMAN'S FIRST LOTUS

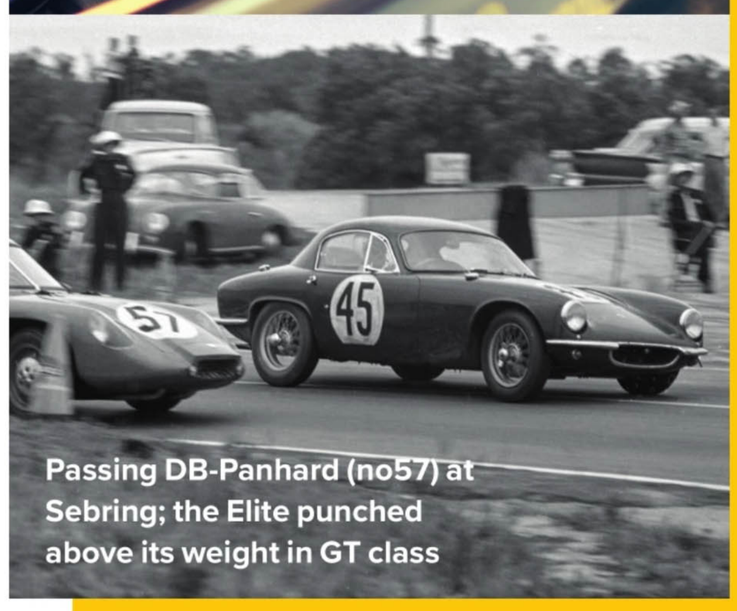


Heavy rain hit the Sebring 12 Hours in the Elite's international racing debut



Coventry Climax power unit with twin SUs; below, simple but road car-like interior





Passing DB-Panhard (no57) at Sebring; the Elite punched above its weight in GT class

REVS INSTITUTE

THE RAIN CAME IN BIBLICAL proportions. On March 21, 1959, Sebring was soaked, and it featured the US race debut for Colin Chapman's first production car, the Type 14 Elite. Sebring rarely drains well, and Chapman's featherweight cars skimmed uselessly over the standing water.

Sebring was the opening round of the 1959 World Sportscar Championship. American road racing had taken off during the 1950s, and the 40,000-strong crowd was anticipating a battle between the Aston Martin and Ferrari works teams for overall victory. Lotus sports racers had performed well there, with three Lotus Elevens finishing in the top 10 at the 1957 race, and that year they also had the Elite competing for production GT class honours against the Alfa Giuliettas and Austin-Healey Sprites in GT1.3, as well as the Porsche 356 Carrera GTs and AC Aces in the classes above.

Lotus brought over two pre-production prototypes of the Elite from England for the race. The car we feature, chassis number 1015-P, was for Chapman himself, and 1013-P was for Lotus's American importer Jay Chamberlain, who was teamed with Sam Weiss. The Elite was Chapman's first attempt to capitalise on the success of his race cars with a production road car, so a good result would help sales.

The pace of Chapman's achievements in the lead-up to this moment is inspiring. He had built his first competition trials car as an engineering student at London University in 1947, and his first circuit racer in 1951. In 1955 he entered the Le Mans 24 Hours for the first time as entrant, constructor and driver. The next year, he drove for Vanwall at the French Grand Prix – he had helped to design that year's Vanwall Formula 1 car – and was very nearly as fast as Hawthorn in practice, but he crashed and was unable to start. He was 28.

That autumn he conceived his Type 14 as a production car, which he could sell in quantity to fund the competition side of Lotus, just as Enzo Ferrari was doing. He took on local north Londoner Graham Hill as a mechanic and put him in charge of the prototype. A year younger than Chapman, Hill had discovered a passion for motor racing, which led him to Lotus in the hope of a drive. He was motivated and eventually completed the maiden prototype in October 1957, just in time for the Earl's Court Motor Show, and the first running car in March 1958 for the Geneva show. The Elite was a star of both, and Hill was elevated to full-time driving in 1958 for his and Lotus's debut in F1 – in the Type 12, fitted with the 1960cc Climax engine.

During 1958, the first several prototype Elites were completed, at the modest premises of 7 Tottenham Lane, North London. Besides development work on production and design refinements, most of these prototypes were destined to race. The competition debut came at Silverstone in May 1958, where Ian Walker took a win in the 1600cc class. Later Jim Clark and Colin Chapman battled on track in Elites at the Brands Hatch Boxing Day Meeting.

But the first international championship race for the Elites was Sebring in 1959. Chamberlain and Weiss in the pale blue no46 were the hot-shoes, but fighting through the standing water on lap 65, they suffered a blown engine and Lotus was forced to retire the car. Meanwhile, Chapman and Pete Lovely survived the rain in the dark green no45, only to have to turn their car over to Chamberlain and Weiss.

The rain had stopped in time for a resplendent sunset and gave Weiss a chance to try to catch the Alfa Romeo Giulietta Spider Veloce of Jake Kaplan and Charlie Rainville, but the heavier Alfa had fared too well during the early part of the race; the flyweight Lotus finished second in class, two

"From a technical standpoint, the new Lotus was revolutionary"



Elite featured world-first techniques and know-how from the boating and jetliner industries

laps down on the Alfa. This was good enough for fifth place overall in the GT categories, though, won by Richie Ginther in a Ferrari 250 GT California, ahead of Hushke von Hanstein in a factory Porsche 356A Carrera GT.

Sebring was a test of power, speed and toughness - a temporary 5.2-mile road course utilising a mix of smooth runway and poorly maintained access roads, with three long straights - and the new Elite fared exceptionally well considering that it was neither powerful nor heavily built. Chapman's GT had beaten most of the GT class cars, including the AC Aces, Arnolt Bolide, Morgan Plus 4, MGA Twin Cam, Austin-Healey Sebring Sprite and the Fiat-Abarth 750 Record Monzas. Despite this, the American enthusiast press hailed the Elite as lovely to look at but not fast enough.

The jostling crowds in the Sebring pits didn't agree. They were trying to get a closer look at the new Lotus because it was, from a technical standpoint, revolutionary. Chapman had conceived the car using his latest design as the basis - the Type 12 F1 car, which first appeared as a Formula 2 design in 1957. The Elite shared the Type 12's wheelbase and suspension components, so unlike the majority of the GT competitors, the Elite had independent front and rear suspension and all-round disc brakes. The chassis was a full composite monocoque moulded from glassfibre-reinforced plastic, a world first.

Polyester resin composite technology was patented by Du Pont in the 1930s, and by the late 1940s small 'plastic' boats and surfboards became common. Then in 1954, Halmatic manufactured what it claimed to be the world's first large GRP boat in the 48ft Perpetua, following early collaboration with famous racing boat designer Uffa Fox.

After Jaguar introduced its alloy-monocoque D-type sports car and the steel-monocoque production MkI saloon in 1955, Chapman saw the opportunity to use GRP to create a lightweight monocoque for his new production car, allowing him to build in low volumes without the tooling costs of steel body pressings or the expensive hand-formed alloy bodywork of his low-volume competitors. He was breaking completely new ground and researched the technology by listening to GRP suppliers and visiting boat and aeroplane manufacturers using the new material. Engineers at de Havilland told Chapman that modern epoxy resins and resin-bonded structures had enormous strength and were used in the wing of their Comet jetliner.

Chapman also learned that GRP had excellent strength, with the unexpected advantage that on impact the resulting damage was localised, the distortion not telegraphed through to adjacent panels. He appreciated this safety aspect of a material that dissipated the energy before it reached the driver and passenger. From conducting small-scale experiments, he concluded that GRP could handle the stress of suspension and drivetrain loads as long as the attachment points were widely spaced and isolated by rubber bushings.

The final body/chassis design was made up of eight enclosed torsion boxes resin-bonded together to form a rigid whole. Each front wing was a boxed section, as were the transmission tunnel, rear differential housing, roof and sills. All of the torsion



Battle-worn no45 Elite was fifth at Sebring through Chapman, Lovely, Chamberlain and Weiss

boxes were made in two halves that were bonded together so that only the smooth side of the moulded resin showed. The opening panels – doors, boot lid and bonnet – were constructed in the same manner. Nowhere was the messy glassfibre side of the material visible. Hand-laid according to the expected load, panels ranged in thickness from 6mm for the undertray to 3mm for the engine bay sides. Steel reinforcement was moulded into the structure in only two locations – a tubular hoop around the windscreen, beneath the dashboard and welded to posts for the door hinges, and a steel subframe partially embedded in the chassis incorporating mounts for engine, radiator and front suspension.

Chapman and his team of a half dozen workers, working in a small North London garage, had designed a load-bearing resin structure of a type never attempted before. Chapman's GT design shattered precedent.

This chassis, 1015-P, was one of the prototypes built before Lotus moved to Cheshunt, in Hertfordshire, and began full-scale production. Its chassis plate proudly headlines: '7, Tottenham Lane, London'. After the 1959 Sebring race, the car remained in the States and was likely sold soon after. Its history file is incomplete during the 1960s and '70s, but at some point it was repainted red. In 1990 it was listed in Dennis Ortenburger's book *Lotus Elite* as owned by Kevin Kilpatrick. Later in the 1990s Kilpatrick sold it as a restoration project to Noel Chiappa, who

"Chapman and his small team shattered precedent with the Elite"

stored the car and eventually sold it on to its present custodian, Nick Grewal. It has several features that didn't carry over to the production cars, which Nick took care to preserve during restoration – starting with the polished fuel cap mounted on the front wing. Chapman used the front wing torsion boxes as fuel tanks by lining them with sealant, therefore saving weight, and keeping the varying weight of the fuel within the wheelbase of the car for more consistent handling.

The front and rear bumpers are handmade prototype parts in chromed brass, rather than stamped steel, and the rear shock towers have a triangular shape, which was changed for production. Nick sympathetically restored the car to race-ready condition.

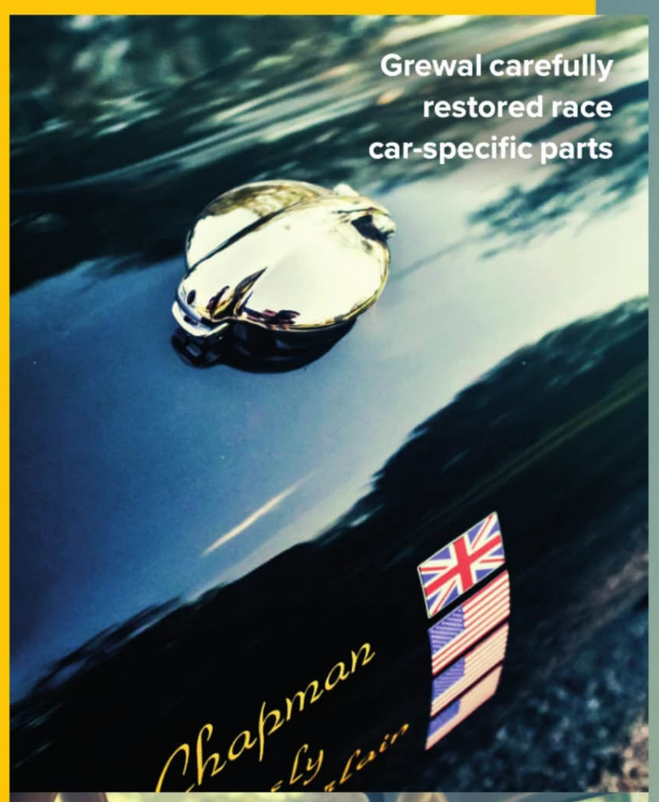
The door is unlatched by a minimalist push button and finger pull, swinging open with the lightness you would expect of a Lotus. Access is easy, despite the large sill structures, and you sit well down in the car, more D-type than XK150 – a benefit of the monocoque design. It's race car-bare inside, the exposed GRP structures and modern roll cage finished in a light grey gloss, the only upholstery being the vinyl door cards and seats.

Chapman's ambition to become a serious sports car manufacturer is signalled by the gorgeous 16in wood-rimmed steering wheel, which is a Lotus design with three slim alloy arms at 10, 2 and 6 o'clock. Settling into the seats, there's lots of room in here, even for me at nearly six feet, and the major controls feel perfectly positioned. The five Smiths instruments are set into an alloy panel ahead surrounded by an elegant dashboard finished in black. It's a comfortable and modern ergonomic proposition, except perhaps for the delicately painted steel pedals, which feel too close together. In the pictures, they look widely spaced, but that's because they are tiny.

The engine erupts into life before quickly settling into a gruff, fast idle. When Nick restored the car he took great pains to bring it back to the Sebring specification. The 1216cc Coventry Climax FWE engine runs on twin SUs, rather than the Webers which became the preferred set-up later on. It's a free-revving alloy four. I check with Nick, and we agree to keep it under 6500rpm today.

Nick checks the car and then sends me off to enjoy the drive over local country roads until the sunset. I was born less than a mile

REVS INSTITUTE



Grewal carefully restored race car-specific parts





Tottenham Lane identification proves the Elite's provenance

from where this car was built in London, so to be sitting in the same seat as Chapman himself is very special. In all likelihood Graham Hill spannered some bits on it also.

The gearbox is a BMC B-series unit with an alloy casing, and accelerating through the gears the Smiths rev counter isn't reading past 4500rpm, so I'm changing up based on the engine note, although cacophony might be a better description – the stressed plastic shell acts like a drum, amplifying the noise and heat from the drivetrain. If you've driven a Lotus Seven Series 1, the Elite feels similar in steering feel. Everything else is a step-change in sophistication. The body/chassis is stiff and the independent rear suspension a revelation for its time. The disc brakes feel modern.

I'm pressing on. The broad winding road offers some long straights and well-sighted bends, and very little in the way of traffic. The gearbox is notchy with a tight gate and syncro that can't be hurried, so acceleration is a combination of frantic revving from the engine punctuated by one-two pauses for each gear change. The gearing feels short, so I find myself in third and fourth and using the lightness of the car to keep up momentum. I'm guiding the car through bends with my fingertips, the stiff chassis and all-independent suspension gliding over the rough frost-scarred roads. Turn-in is positive, without signs of understeer; it just corners flat and grips.

Compared to contemporary competition, the Elite is a revelation. It feels like a sports-racer, not a road car. Chapman's genius in giving this car F1 suspension and a composite chassis led to an all-up weight of 505kg. Both Alfa's Giulietta Spider Sprint Veloce and Porsche's 356 Carrera GT 1600 racers weigh closer to 800kg. I've driven the Alfa in race trim; it's a light and superbly engineered car, but the Elite feels like a purpose-built racer in comparison. Chapman must have been looking forward to racing at Sebring. The fast, flat course would highlight Frank Costin's aerodynamic fettling. The rougher parts of the track would give the Elite's chassis and independent suspension an advantage over the rigid-axle cars. Acceleration and braking would benefit from the low overall weight, and then there were the disc brakes, which none of the Ferraris, Porsches and Alfas had.

A class victory was not to be, but this car represents the zenith of Chapman's ambitions for Lotus Cars. Shortly after Sebring, Lotus Engineering became Lotus Cars Ltd. But the ground-breaking Elite proved too expensive to manufacture, with rumours that Lotus lost £100 on every single one made. By 1963 Chapman realised the Elite was too advanced to be profitable and production ceased after 1076 were produced. It wasn't until TWR/JaguarSport and the XJR-15 in 1990 that a full resin-composite structure was attempted again for a road-legal car. Arguably, it wasn't until the McLaren F1 of 1992 that it was seen again on a production road car. That's how ahead of his time Chapman was with the Elite in 1957, which would win its class at Le Mans for six consecutive years, starting in 1959.

As special as the Elite is, it's the history, and what the car represented to the young Chapman, that makes Elite no1015-P an important part of Lotus history. Designed, created and raced by Colin Chapman – a young *garagista* who took on motor sport greats. ●

1959 LOTUS TYPE 14 ELITE

Chassis no1015-P (prototype, 1959 Sebring 12 Hours - Colin Chapman, Jay Chamberlain, Pete Lovely, Jay Weiss)

Engine: 1216cc Coventry Climax FWE four-cylinder with alloy block and single overhead camshaft, two SU carburettors
Power: 95bhp at 6500rpm estimated **Torque:** 90lb ft estimated
Transmission: Four-speed BMC B-series manual with alloy casing, rear-wheel drive **Steering:** Rack and pinion **Suspension:** Front: double wishbones, coil-over shock absorbers. Rear: Chapman strut, trailing arms **Brakes:** Girling 9½in discs all round, in-board at rear
Tyres: 4.50 x 15 Dunlop Racing L-series bias-ply tires on wire 15 x 4.5 wheels with knock-off central spinners **Weight:** 1110 lbs
Performance: 0-60mph in 10sec estimated **Top speed:** 112mph



Aldrige has driven the Elite's contemporary rivals but says the Lotus is a revelation



DRIVING *AMBITION*

Rovers to Jaguars, touring cars to F1 via Le Mans: Tom Walkinshaw split paddocks wherever his cars raced. But the tough team boss was also a formidable driver in his own right, as **Damien Smith** recounts

Tom Walkinshaw was always one to leave a strong first impression. Love him or loathe him – and there were plenty on both sides of the divide – this was a man who had presence. What he lacked in height was more than made up by width (he must have been terrifying to face on a rugby pitch), but it was his manner that made you pay attention: quiet, composed, softly spoken, intimidating... He was a figure of significant power. And he knew how to use it too, without moving a muscle. A look could be enough, and was that humour in the glint in his eye, or something darker? Whatever, he enjoyed his power and the effect it could have, which is perhaps why he was such an effective racing driver as well as a team owner. If the latter was where he left his most significant mark on motor sport, it was the driving that came first – and it's arguably where his soaring ambition was most forcefully expressed.

Win Percy remembers exactly where he was when he first met Tom Walkinshaw.

DPPI, PAUL-HENRI CAHIER/GETTY IMAGES

TOM WALKINSHAW

TOM WALKINSHAW



As a driver, Walkinshaw made it to F5000 on the single-seater ladder, here at Snetterton in '74



Leading a pack in the 1974 BSCC opener at Mallory Park. Tom would win the Class C title in the Capri



Walkinshaw launched his TWR outfit during 1976

He left an impression on that day, too. "It was at my first touring car race, in a Toyota Celica 1600 at Mallory Park in March 1975," says Percy in that warm Dorset burr. "He was in London Sportscar Centre's 2-litre Escort. I didn't know anybody in touring cars then, I was a rallycross and autocross driver. Everyone was new to me. I'd diced the whole race with this Escort running in the bigger class, and he crossed the line about half a car in front. Afterwards, I was being congratulated on winning the class, and this guy shoulders his way through the crowd. He said: 'Win's a funny name.' 'Well, it's Winston,' I replied. He grunted as he did. 'I understand this is your first touring car race.' Oh dear, what have I done? Then he said: 'One day I'll have my own racing team and you'll be my driver.' We shook hands, and he walked away.

"Who the heck was that? That was the first I'd ever heard of Tom Walkinshaw."

The intention at first had presumably been Formula 1, such was the man's ingrained ambition. Born in Midlothian in 1946, Walkinshaw was a Scottish Formula Ford champion by the end of the 1960s and wasted little time climbing the single-seater ladder, driving a works Formula 3 March in the first season of the new decade. The speed was there, but broken ankles after a crash at Brands Hatch set him back. He returned to action in 1971 and set his sights on Formula 2, but with little success.

It must have occurred to him he was probably the wrong shape for an F1 hero but still he pressed on in F2, Atlantic and Formula 5000 through the first half of the 1970s. Perhaps the penny took a while to drop. But by 1972 he was also twirling an Escort around Silverstone in the RAC Tourist Trophy, to a third-place finish and class win. This was his future. An early association with Ford and a foothold in the British Saloon Car Championship would be the foundation upon which everything would be built. From the start he kept a tight grip on his destiny by preparing and entering his cars, supported fittingly by the Hermetite sealant brand.

"I did the odd race with him but didn't know him well," says John Fitzpatrick, tin-top wizard and a man who always knew the value of racing with a roof over his head. "Then he called me because he was involved in running a couple of cars for Ford at Spa in the 24 Hours, and out of the blue he asked me if I'd drive with him."

Fitz and Walkinshaw were partners in a race that put the latter on the map - even if it was the former who did most of the work (at least on the circuit). "In 1976, Tom was involved in putting a deal together to run a BMW CSL in the new World Championship of Makes," says 'Fitz'. "I drove with him at Daytona in January - [BMW motor sport boss Jochen] Neerpasch put us together for that. They ran three cars, and those three cars were then sent to Europe. Schnitzer had one, Alpina had one and Tom had one."



Walkinshaw's March 703 F3 car at Cadwell in 1970

Tom Walkinshaw Racing was up and running.

The opening round was the Silverstone 6 Hours in May. But there was a problem: Walkinshaw had a clashing commitment. "Tom was also driving a Capri in the BSCC, and there was a race at Thruxton that weekend," recalls Fitz. "So, I started the race, he arrived by helicopter, did an hour in the middle and then I finished it." John not only finished it; he won a proper thriller - just. A late charge by the delayed Kremer Porsche 935 of Bob Wollek and Hans Heyer resulted in a winning margin of just over one second. "Another lap and we wouldn't have won," says Fitz. "The Kremer car would have had us. It was quite exciting, and then I was up on the podium on my own. We had no mobile phones in those days for me to let Tom know..."

Walkinshaw would likely have been too busy to take the call anyway. Having flown back to Thruxton, his Capri headed Andy Rouse's Triumph Dolomite to take a convincing BSCC win. The chopper flights had paid for themselves.



A works BMW drive in the 1976 Daytona 24 Hours helped launch TWR

"From the start Walkinshaw kept a tight grip on his destiny"

"I got on very well with him," says Fitz, who raced with and against the best of the era. "We respected each other. There wasn't really very much between us. He was very good technically, very good at setting up the car, probably a bit better than I was. In those days, I used to just drive what I was given. I was a little bit quicker than he was, but I'm talking tenths. In the race, that didn't really matter. He was a good guy to drive with. A typically dour sort of Scot! But he was very good at putting deals together, and it wasn't long before he got into the serious stuff."

His BMW connections tightened on the back of that Silverstone win. Through the late 1970s, his touring car and endurance racing career began to build a head of steam – but at this stage, he didn't always drive for himself.

Belgian long-distance specialist Pierre Dieudonné, another who had fallen off the single-seater ladder, first met Walkinshaw when they drove CSLs together for Liege-based Luigi Racing in 1977 – and inadvertently ended up at Le Mans. "We were on our way back from Brno where we had won," says Dieudonné. "Both cars were in one piece, so Luigi took an entry at Le Mans. Times have changed. We arrived late for scrutineering, but they were quite flexible. The car was the slowest on the straight because we were only doing 280kph, but we managed to qualify towards the back of the grid. But it was very strong, my car – Tom was in the other one. It just needed fuel and tyres, and we finished eighth overall, first in the IMSA class." Walkinshaw's entry holed a piston. In four Le Mans starts as a driver, he would never see the chequered flag.

At this stage of his life, it was the Spa 24 Hours rather than Le Mans that would play a bigger role in the Walkinshaw story. His first win at the Belgian enduro was an unlikely one, in a Mazda RX-7 shared with Dieudonné in 1981. "Of course, he was the team leader and driving as his co-driver was a big advantage!" says Dieudonné, who remains active today in motor sport as sporting director with the crack WRT squad. "Tom's car had the best chance to win, apart from the fact he was a brilliant driver. He was the boss and a winner in every sense."

Back in the UK, he'd already delivered on his first-meeting promise to Percy, who would win a BSCC title for TWR in the RX-7 in 1980. "I first drove for him in the BMW County Series, and then it got serious with the Mazda," says Percy. Why did Walkinshaw himself not drive in the BSCC? "I asked him 'what are you going to do?' He said: 'That's for me to know and you to find out', which is a well-known phrase from Tom. He said he'd give me £6000, 'but if you don't win the championship, I won't pay you'. I don't think he had the money then.

"We ran two cars, and different drivers came and went. Some couldn't put up with

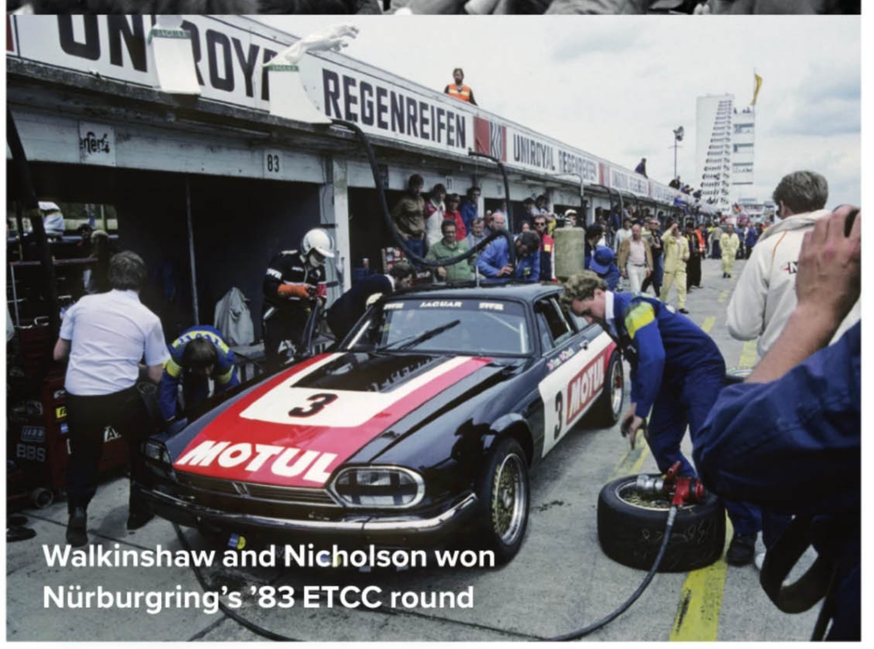
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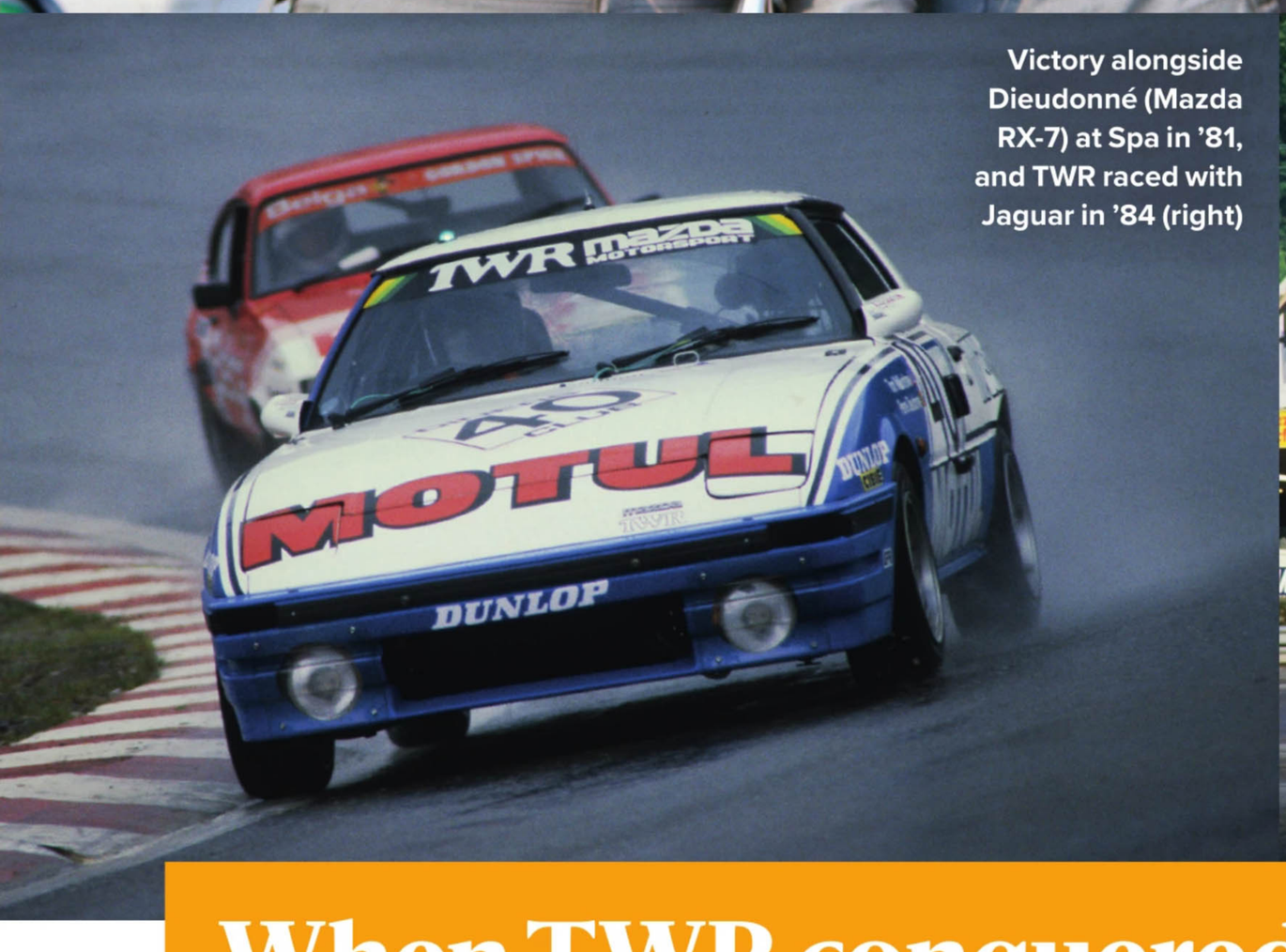
Walkinshaw and Fitzpatrick took second in the ’76 Osterreichring 1000Kms



Dieter Quester (middle) was Walkinshaw’s rival in ’70s ETCC era



Walkinshaw and Nicholson won Nürburgring’s ’83 ETCC round



Victory alongside Dieudonné (Mazda RX-7) at Spa in ’81, and TWR raced with Jaguar in ’84 (right)







When TWR conquered Bathurst

The Mountain interloper had the final laugh with his Jaguar success

Australia’s Great Race, the Bathurst 1000, was a grail for Tom Walkinshaw during the Jaguar XJ-S years. He never did quite conquer The Mountain as a driver, but his team managed the feat, much to the chagrin of the locals who had considered him an interloping nemesis.

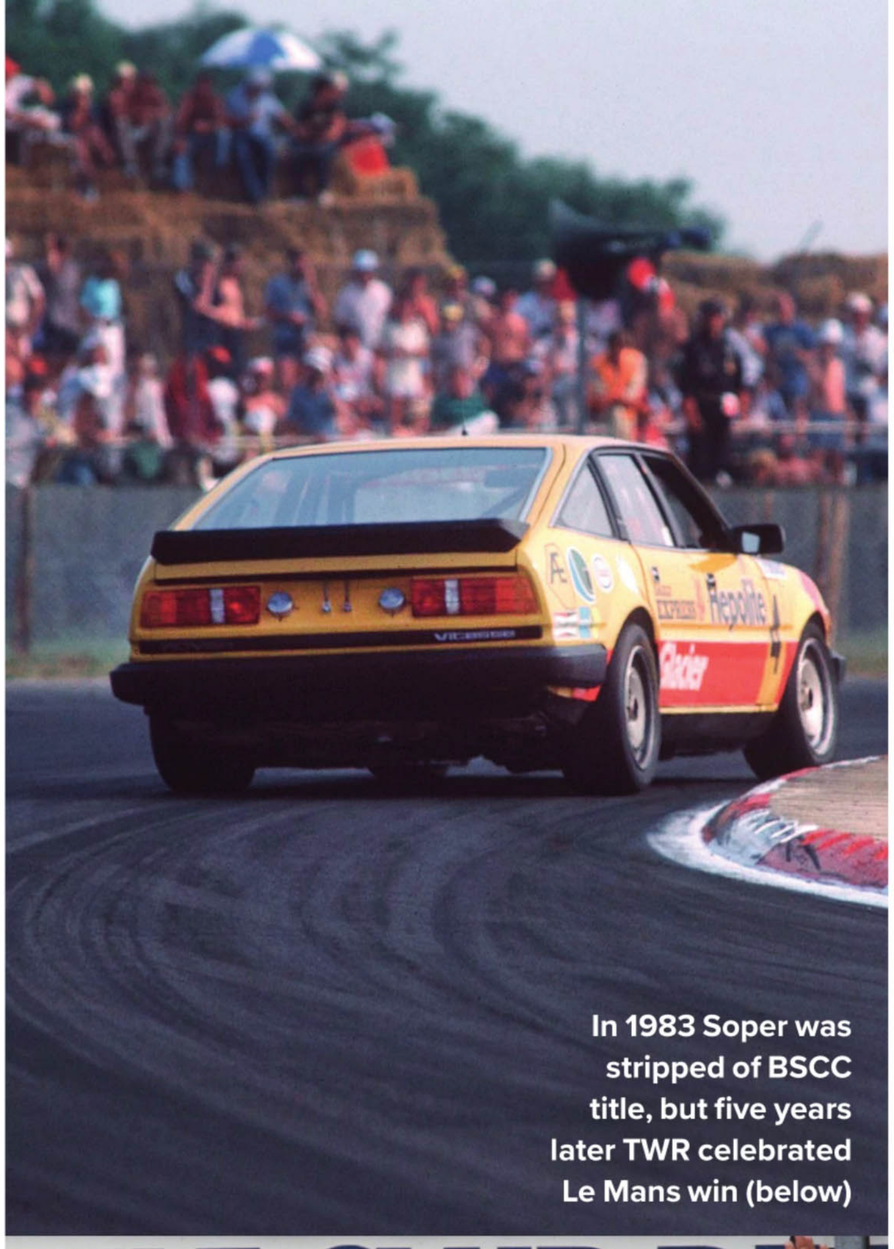
“Bathurst meant a lot to him,” says Win Percy. “He took me over in 1984 when I didn’t have a drive. He was driving John Goss’s Jaguar, and the clutch went on the start line [causing a pile-up and a race stoppage in the process]. On the way home he said: ‘We’re going back next year to win, mate’. Are we? ‘Yep.’” By 1985, Jaguar had dropped the



touring car programme to focus on Le Mans, but Walkinshaw brought the XJ-S out of retirement to enter a three-car team Down Under.

“Around the mountain it was lovely to drive; you could get into a proper flow,” says Percy. “We were leading by a lap, and the blasted oil cooler split just before the end. We repaired it, but it dropped us back and we finished third. The oil cooler was bolted securely to a cross-member, but through the Dipper the body of the car was twisting so much the cooler fractured.

“Luckily Armin [Hahne] and John Goss won it in another Jaguar. In Sydney, the day after, we went up to the Jaguar dealer to say thanks for looking after us, and people were queuing up to buy these cars that won Bathurst. It was incredible: win on Sunday, sell on Monday.”





In 1983 Soper was stripped of BSCC title, but five years later TWR celebrated Le Mans win (below)

GETTY IMAGES, DPPI, MCKLEIN, AUTOPICS

his brashness, and some he couldn't put up with. He did actually give me a choice of partner in the other car for 1980, but whoever I came up with, he said: 'That's no good. Everybody will know everything about what we know.' So he would turn people down if he thought they couldn't keep things to themselves. That was quite important; you had to accept that."

The next chapter of Walkinshaw's life would kick off the most successful period of his career. Forget Benetton, Ligier and Arrows in 1990s F1; it's Jaguars and Rovers in the 1980s for which Tom Walkinshaw should always be best remembered. But the memories are chequered in more ways than one, depending on who you speak to.

In 1983, Steve Soper was fresh out of one-make racing and ready to burst into the touring car stratosphere. That year, in a TWR Rover, 'Soperman' blitzed the BSCC and won the Tourist Trophy at Silverstone to cap his arrival, only to lose the title months later over a technicality that wasn't even performance-enhancing. "Okay, I lost the championship," he says. "I didn't care at the time. As far as I was concerned, I won it morally and fairly. We got chucked out on a nut and bolt that gave no extra horsepower, it just made the car easier to maintain."

Soper was flying high in the mid-1980s at TWR, but it's not a time he remembers fondly. "I had a one-year contract in 1983, and for 1984 I was offered a drive with BMW Germany. I didn't take it. I got talked into staying where I was by John Davenport of Austin Rover. BMW sounded a bit daunting to me. JD said to stay with your friends, with extra money and a two-year contract. In hindsight, which is a lovely word, I think it was a mistake."

Soper ended up offending Walkinshaw by offering what he thought was constructive criticism. The problem was the boss got to hear about it second-hand, and his hair-trigger reaction was to bench Soper for six months. It's no surprise the relationship never really recovered. Soper retains respect forhis old boss as a driver, even if affection is a stretch. "Tom was a very capable, competent driver - fast and quick," he says. "He was clever at knowing how the car needed to be modified and developed. When the car was not right, he knew how to get it right.

"He was very strong, very stocky and had a huge amount of stamina, although he was probably not the fittest guy. The cars were set up for him, so if you couldn't drive it the way he drove it, tough luck. The brake pedal you needed two feet to push, and none of the cars had power steering. Also, for those who drove with him, he wouldn't move the seat. It stayed in his position.

"Was he a Jim Clark or Jackie Stewart? No. But he was certainly as good or even better than a lot of people out there. On equal terms, it was very difficult to beat him. But what he did was make it not quite equal terms. He would always have an advantage. And hey, if it was my team, I'd want the latest bits or best tyres. Whether he took that to the next level is for someone else to say."

In truth, by the 1980s it was hard to unpick Tom Walkinshaw the race car driver from the team boss - because they were the same. Even his friends admit he could be a difficult man to drive for and with, as stories from TWR's largely successful Jaguar XJ-S days attest.

In 1982, Walkinshaw led Jaguar back into the international racing arena in the European Touring Car Championship, now running to the new Group A regs. Burnt by the unhappy Broadspeed XJ6 experience of 1976-77, the grand old British carmaker - still under British Leyland ownership - had become an irrelevance in terms of modern motor sport. Walkinshaw and TWR changed all that in just three years, in a programme that led directly to an even greater one that took Jaguar back to Le Mans.

Percy, in particular, has happy memories, mostly. "I remember the first time I drove a Jaguar for him, doing three laps at Silverstone to see if I was any good for him," he says. "I'd done a handshake with a mechanic because I wasn't allowed to know what time I'd recorded and he was standing behind Tom: thumb up meant the time was good. Thumb down, nah, no good buddy. I'd done my three laps, and as I was getting out Tom said: 'What do you think of my car?' I said: 'It's very good, Tom, but is there any chance I could adjust the seat because I'm finding it very difficult?' I'm long-legged and quite tall, Tom was short and stout, so I was floating about in the seat and up against the steering wheel, like a NASCAR. I was half-way out, and he said: 'If you want to drive my car, you'll drive it where the seat is.' By the time he'd finished that sentence, I was back in the seat pretending it was perfect! And I got the drive. The thumb was up."

"Walkinshaw heard the criticism and benched Soper for months"

The Jaguar ETCC programme gathered pace over the three years, Walkinshaw in particular notching up race wins and making enemies of his old colleagues at BMW. The car was competitive from that first season in 1982. Walkinshaw and Chuck Nicholson won four times, including the Silverstone TT, with Dieudonné among others providing able support in the second car.

The Belgian has mixed memories of his time with TWR. "At Luigi we'd had a friendly relationship, then when it came to racing for him you had to deliver," he says. "In the early days of Jaguar, he really struggled to

set up that deal and the car. In 1982, he had promised me the full ETCC, but he only had the money to run one car. Then he got involved with Chuck Nicholson, who was helping him out, and there was politics. Sometimes he needed to have a British driver because it was Jaguar. So, I was left a little bit in the cold. We did 1983, but I could feel the political pressure. It didn't make me feel so happy.

"Tom would try everything to twist the wording of the rules," he continues. "Every tuner is doing that, but he was like a fighter in a physical way. He could impose and impress more than other people, and at the same time, he was very clever in business and human relationships. He could use his strengths - but in a subtle way. It was a matter of being on the very edge of the rules and probably a little bit over... That's part of the game for a tuner."

Eggenberger BMW duo Umberto Grano and Helmut Kelleners had beaten Walkinshaw to the drivers' title in 1982, but the following year TWR upped the ante. Among the drivers to bolster the team that year was a young ace who was also busy battling a Brazilian called Ayrton Senna in British F3. "Fast, very aggressive," is how Martin Brundle remembers his old mentor as a driver. "Unsurprisingly, Tom was a supremely aggressive race car driver, and he'd got a turn of speed. That Jaguar XJ-S was a winning car, but it was an absolute monster to drive. It was quite an unruly car. But Tom was the boss of it. We used to smile a bit because Tom always had the best tyres, but wouldn't you if it was your team? I certainly would have done. Tom made sure he had the best kit."

One of the highlights of that second campaign was a victory at the Donington 500Kms - but this time Walkinshaw wasn't in the winning car. He'd led before a long pitstop cost him, then Nicholson ran out of fuel... But then Brundle stepped up, as he would so often for Walkinshaw in the years to come. He, John Fitzpatrick and Enzo Calderari beat a trio of BMWs as Walkinshaw and Nicholson trailed in fifth.

Brundle's account highlights how Walkinshaw would stack the cards in his favour - until he was out of the reckoning. "Tom had a special set of wets for himself," says the 1990 Le Mans 24 Hours winner. "For one reason or another, I ended up in the lead in treacherous conditions, and Tom gave me those tyres, and we went on to win a mad, mad race. He wasn't selfish from that respect; he saw the bigger picture for TWR."

But by now, politics was undermining what was otherwise a great era of ETCC racing.



TWR switched from Jaguar to Rover in 1985; Walkinshaw and Win Percy drove in ETCC





Fans celebrate Le Mans success. Above: Brundle & Co won Daytona in '88





Working with Brawn (above) at Benetton in the 90s, the pair also got together at Jaguar in Group C

Walkinshaw and Brundle won the Zeltweg ETCC round in 1983







Asking for a favour...

Martin Brundle on Walkinshaw's influence

"Tom Walkinshaw was like a second father to me. Win Percy and I were close to him, I think, because we got the job done and because we also stood up to him a bit.

"A lot of people have got a lot of things to say about Tom, but he never let me down. Never on anything. I wrote to him when I was 19 and asked him if I could have a go in the County Championship car at Snetterton, out of the blue – and he put me in the car. That put me on the map. We had that affinity from those early years.



"The last time I raced for him would have been 1997 in the Le Mans Nissan – so from 1979 to 1997, I was driving his cars, more on than off. The weirdest thing he ever asked me to do was the Nürburgring Nordschleife in the Jaguar XJ-S. He rang me up, and he said: 'I need you over here'. 'I don't know the Nürburgring, Tom,' I said. 'The plane is already on its way'. He said he'd show me around – and I was standing in the pitlane shivering in fear. I knew the first corner, and that was it – there were no PlayStations back then. Sure enough, Tom comes in, and the XJ-S is ticking over. He said: 'Follow the pussy cat's tail'. And then Enzo Calderari crashed my car on the in-lap. Relief! I know I would have crashed that car, guaranteed... The thought of driving that XJ-S around there is out of the question. But he was going to teach me."



Brundle's last TWR outing ended in retirement at Le Mans in 1997

MCKLEIN, DPPI, GETTY

Schnitzer and TWR would protest and counter-protest each other throughout a difficult season – and Fitzpatrick's memories of just how far his old team-mate from Silverstone 1976 would push to win are telling.

"The first race I did with him was at Donington, and Martin Brundle and I won, which was great," says Fitz. "The team was terrific. A couple of weeks later we went to Mugello, and before I got in the car for practice, a mechanic said: 'I'll just run you through everything, John.' Part of this briefing was how to switch on and use the secret fuel tanks. We finished third in the race. I went to see Tom afterwards to tell him I wouldn't be able to do any more races; and explained exactly why calmly. I didn't feel happy because I was driving against my mates like Dieter Quester and I knew we were cheating, and I'd never cheated knowingly. He was fine – no problem, no aggro, he understood 100 per cent. I had a contract with him for the year. He paid it in full, probably to keep me quiet. We parted on good terms. I had no axe to grind."

Walkinshaw grudgingly lost out to Quester in the final reckoning; but told the now four-time ETCC champion: "We won't give up. We'll be back next year." And now in full British Racing Green, so the TWR Jags would be: 1984 would be their year.

At the Zolder season finale, Walkinshaw claimed the third place he needed to be crowned champion after a campaign in which the V12-powered XJ-S properly vanquished the BMW hordes. And the highlight was the Spa 24 Hours in July.

bullet-proof car. For example, bedding in brakes and pads. Wherever we were in the world, he'd say, 'Winston, you're up early.' He wouldn't do it. The boys didn't want him to do it! He was too eager to get on with it, too heavy-footed.

"The only time I drove with Tom was with him and Hans [Heyer] at Spa when we won. We had two punctures, but we were about three laps ahead at the end, which was amazing. Nobody thought the V12 was going to win a 24-hour race. Hans Stuck and the BMW boys would say 'Yeah, sure, you'll be fast, but we'll be there at the end'. What we agreed was that we would run at a pace we decided, rather than chasing the BMWs. You had F1 drivers and top touring car drivers, so they were going to race each other. Tom and the boys came up with a pace, and we stuck to it.

"In the night, when I was in the car, the fog came down. Alan Hodge from Jaguar went up the hill to the top straight, and as the Jaguar was coming up he would shine the torch across the track, which indicated the 200-metre mark. The fog wasn't constant, it would swirl. You couldn't tell from one moment to another whether it would be thick fog. Two of the leading BMWs crashed into each other, and we inherited the lead. They got going again but were now a few laps down. And we were able to sustain that pace until the very end – apart from those two punctures, one after the other."

The victory at the biggest race of the year came in the same week Jaguar was freed from

"Tom paid my contract up in full, probably to keep me quiet..."

Percy picks up the story. "The XJ-S was different to any touring car I'd ever driven," he says. "The grunt and power were there, and it was wonderful. They started off with 500bhp and by the end were up in the high fives. But you weren't allowed power steering or servo-power brakes: everything was the way Tom wanted it, which was as basic as it could be, and I agreed with that. But you had to manhandle the car. Lots of people couldn't get on with the XJ-S. You had to get hold of it by the scruff of its neck and make it do what you wanted, instead of relaxing as you would expect in long races. It certainly kept you fit. It was a lovely era of touring cars.

"As a driver, Tom was certainly hard on the machinery. That's why he wanted a the shackles of British Leyland and floated into private ownership. "People say that race saved Jaguar," says Percy with pride. "Lots of the staff have said that: 'You guys saved our jobs, our mortgages, the lot...' All of a sudden, people were buying Jaguars again."

Walkinshaw's best achievements for the brand were yet to come – and not at Spa in touring cars, but back where the Big Cat belonged: at Le Mans. By 1985, the XJ-S spell was over, as Jaguar chairman John Egan charged TWR with Group C and the race win that mattered. The best was yet to come.

Walkinshaw probably peaked as a driver in 1984. He remained player-manager for a while, but in TWR's Rovers rather than Group C Jaguars.

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THE LAST JAGUAR TO WIN AT LE MANS

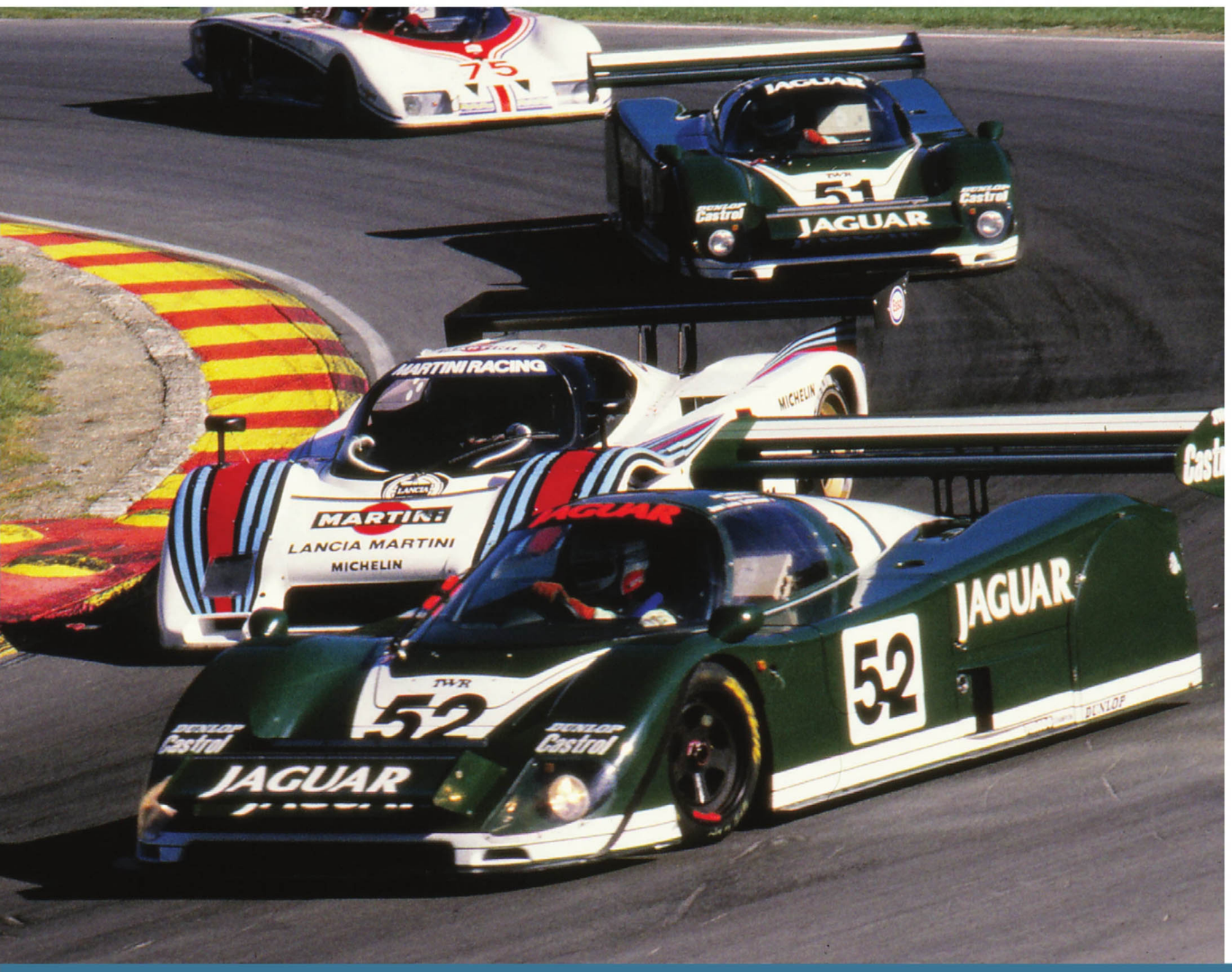
1993 TWR Jaguar XJ220C

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TWR JAGUAR'S GROUP C PROGENITOR

1985 TWR Jaguar XJR-6

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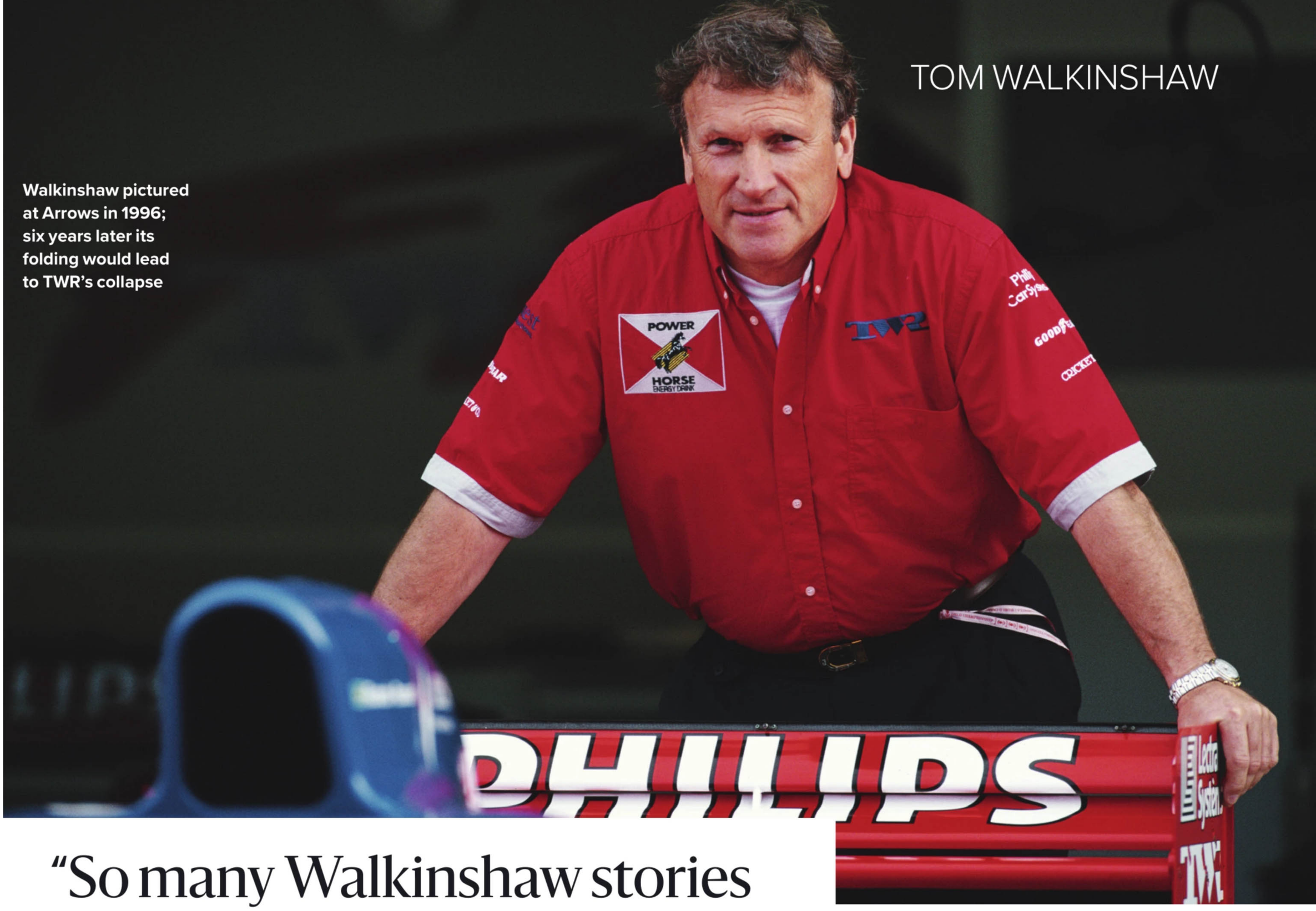
Martin Brundle's podium winner on TWR Jaguar's WSC debut and ex-Lammers, Schlesser, Thackwell, Heyer and Soper.

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Walkinshaw pictured at Arrows in 1996; six years later its folding would lead to TWR's collapse

"So many Walkinshaw stories turn out bittersweet"

Given his abilities and physical strength, why didn't he put himself in the XJR sports cars, too? The drivers don't have a straight answer to that one. "Once we got to Group C he was team boss only, and that was a big programme," says Brundle. "He was developing a lot of other business stuff too. Jackie Stewart tested one and crashed it. They were different animals with the downforce - they weren't grip-limited in a lot of places. The finesse and technique to coax a touring car round, which is a skill in itself, is unique. But I don't ever remember Tom getting in a Group C car." Neither does Soper. "I think he possibly knew his limitations," he says.

But Percy recalls Tom in a Group C test, in the first one, "the green one": the XJR-6. "We were at Donington one day, and I was testing the Rover," he recalls. "It was about 4pm. Hans Heyer was there in the Group C Jaguar but had to go and catch his plane, so Tom was getting ready to get in the car. I said: 'Can I have a go?' 'No.' 'Ah come on, Tom'. 'No'. In the end, he said, 'Tell you what, if there's time before they close the track you can have a go'. He got in the car, put it into gear, down the pitlane - bah, bah, bah, bah, on the rev limiter - and off he went around the circuit. His second lap was quicker than Hans had been all day! That was Tom - wrung its neck. You know, he came in at two minutes to five - and the track closed at five. 'You can get in now,' he said. I was gutted. I got in my car and drove back to Weymouth."

So many Walkinshaw stories turn out bittersweet and, even for his friends there were times when he was hard to like. But respect, whether it was as a driver or team patron, was always there. "I never really gelled with him," says Soper. "I would almost say I didn't get on with him. I had a problem with him in the 1980s. However, whether I liked him or not - and I don't want to say I didn't like him - I admired him for what he was able to do and achieve."

Percy offers one more telling insight into the ambition that would push Walkinshaw to the limit and beyond during his long career at the top. "As a chum, as a friend, he could be quite hurtful because Tom was out to build an empire," he says. "I did say to him one day in the early 1980s 'what are your dreams, what do you want to do?' He said: 'I'll be in F1 one day'. That was his dream, and I'm afraid it destroyed him. He should have stuck with sports cars, as should Jaguar."

Walkinshaw's TWR empire crumbled with his folly at F1 team Arrows in 2002. Then eight years later he was gone, ripped from his friends and family by cancer. But those final chapters are not how they will remember Tom Walkinshaw, and neither should we. Images of the burly Scotsman manhandling an XJ-S around Spa or his beloved Bathurst are so much more fitting. The last word goes to Brundle, who will always see the best in his old mentor.

"He was mighty in the Rovers and the RX-7s," he says with a smile. "Tom's type of car was one you picked up by the scruff of the neck, like the XJ-S. And, of course, he had the stamina to spare, which is why in something as tough as the Spa 24 Hours he was so great - a bona fide professional-level racing driver.

"There's a theme, isn't there? All those cars that needed manhandling..."



Walkinshaw's long Jaguar association began in 1982

DARREN HEATH/GETTY IMAGES, JOHN COLLEY

LANCIA D50



Alberto Ascari rounds Monaco's Station Hairpin in the brilliant but ruinously costly Lancia D50

KLEMANTASKI COLLECTION/GETTY IMAGES

THE *GRAND PRIX GREAT* THAT DOOMED A TEAM

The Lancia D50 struck fear into the leading lights of Mercedes, but it helped ruin its makers and gifted a later world title to Ferrari, says **Doug Nye**

LANCIA D50

RUDI UHLENHAUT, THE ENGINEER behind the stupendous W196 Mercedes, described the Lancia D50 Formula 1 machine as "the only car we really feared". Although the W196 and Maserati 250F were the highlights of the 1954-55 F1 campaigns, it was the stubby, compact, pannier-tanked D50s that would go on to have a lasting legacy.

This startling new 2½-litre F1 design was also, by the standard of the time, tiny. The D50 was the latest, and potentially the greatest, post-war product of the veteran engineer Vittorio Jano's enduring genius. But while he was responsible for its overall concepts, he was not only assisted in its detailing by an outstandingly capable design team, he could also draw upon the frontier-technological capability of Lancia itself.

Ever since the vintage period of the 1920s, Lancia & C. Fabbrica Automobili had been famed for its technically advanced and highly sophisticated motor cars. By contemporary standards it offered the very best production car performance, handling and roadholding available anywhere on the global market. Post-war, the svelte Aurelia line emerged, and in 1950 when Battista 'Pinin' Farina styled the B20 Coupé with its sloping fastback tail treatment - making what Cisitalia and others had been doing look respectable - he set a trend for 2-plus-2 Gran Turismo cars, which was subsequently adopted by all other high-performance GT manufacturers.

However, when company principal Gianni Lancia decreed that the works team would no longer use the Aurelia Coupés after 1952, he set his heart upon building a true and specialised sports racing car series to project the sophisticated Lancia message to an international audience. His engineering team was headed by Jano, then 62 years old and rightly revered for his glory days with Alfa Romeo between the wars. For Lancia his engineers developed a superb series of ultimately 3.8-litre V6-engined sports racing and Competizione Berlinetta cars under the D-series programme, entitled Tipi D20, D23, D24 and D25.

Lancia won the dangerous and car-breaking Mexican Carrera Panamericana, the punishing Targa Florio and the majestic Mille Miglia through 1953-54. The next logical step for Gianni Lancia's ambitions was to enter the new 2½-litre F1, which the FIA had announced for 1954-57. Big, roly-poly Gianni was the son of Vincenzo Lancia, the company's founder and Fiat's greatest racing driver of the pre-World War I period. Gianni ran the family company in conjunction with his widowed mother Adele. They authorised their experimental department to commence an F1 programme in August 1953, just five months before the new formula was to start. Gianni set the target of a debut at the French Grand Prix on July 4, 1954, the event at which Mercedes-Benz would make its re-entry into grand prix racing. Lancia signed double World Champion Alberto Ascari and his inseparable friend and mentor Luigi Villoresi, both from Ferrari, while Direttore Jano's engineers in the Via Caraglia design offices knuckled down. When the F1 Lancia D50 finally made its debut in Spain, it was only the second totally new car, after Mercedes-Benz, to be built to the 2½-litre formula, because Ferrari, Maserati, Gordini and Connaught were all using enlarged 2-litre F2 equipment at that time.



Ascari and team with fresh-painted prototype D50 in early testing

"The F1 programme started just five months before the new formula"

Jano and his specialist engine designer, Ettore Zaccone Mina, decided that no matter the approach with a 2½-litre unsupercharged engine, its ultimate power would never be spectacular. So to achieve optimum performance it was sensible to make it as small, compact, and as light as possible and install it in the minimum possible chassis structure. Having minimised size and weight, the finished car would have the best possible handling and traction to fully exploit the advantages of its good power-to-weight ratio. To save both space and weight, Jano employed his preferred V8 engine as a structural chassis member, its compact crankcase and heads accepting chassis loads where otherwise extra engine-bay triangulation tubes would be required.

Jano had selected a 90-degree vee configuration for his new engine, for both compact packaging and optimum structural integrity since it had to perform double duty as an integral structural member. The unit was angled within the chassis to pass its propshaft to the left of the driver's seat into an offset transaxle input, enabling the seat to be dropped as low as possible within the high-sided cockpit.

On test, the new unsupercharged V8 engine developed 250bhp at 8000rpm. Initially its bore and stroke dimensions were 74 x 72mm, which meant a displacement of 2480cc, but alternatives were tried, including a short-stroke 76 x 68.5mm for 2486cc, and an almost 'square' alternative of 73.6 x 73.1mm, 2499cc.

Naturally, the firm's considerable preceding experience with V6 sports racing engines re-emerged in this new design. A chain-drive system for the twin overhead camshafts was one similarity, while the cylinder head structure itself also derived from the sports car units. The cylinder block casting was one-piece, in unit with the crankcase, in 'siluminum' light alloy with inserted wet cylinder liners. The cylinder heads were also designed as siluminum castings.

In prototype form, Lancia used special Weber carburettors tailormade to the V8, but when they gave trouble, Solex Type 40P11 twin-choke downdraught carburettors were adopted instead. They were fed with cool intake air through a nose-top duct. Ignition was by twin Magneti Marelli magnetos, driven off the inlet camshaft tails on each cylinder bank. The prototype D50 featured two neat magneto-cooling air scoops on its scuttle. Later a single central scoop was adopted, feeding cooling trunks to both magnetos and fitted with a flap, which the driver could open or shut as he pleased to help cool his nether regions...

With development, the V8's power output would increase from around 250bhp at 7000rpm to a peak of some 275bhp at 8000rpm. This front-mounted power unit drove a propeller shaft connecting it to the rear-mounted transverse-shaft five-speed gearbox, final-drive and clutch assembly.

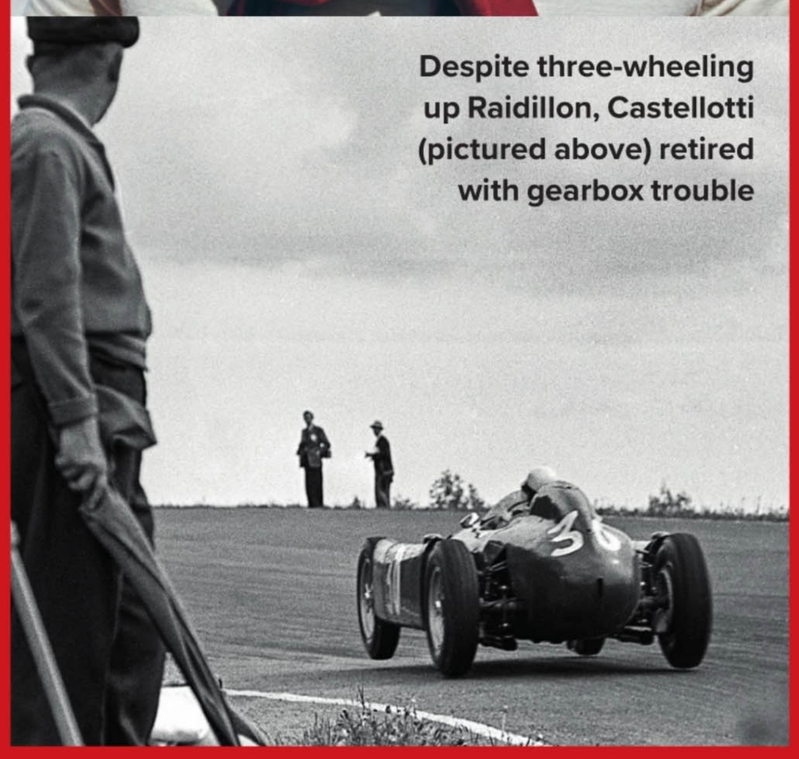
The car's front suspension fed loads directly to the engine, demanding peerless precision in manufacture. Each complete D50 chassis was precision surface-finished

BERNARD CAHIER/GETTY IMAGES



1955 Belgian GP: last hurrah as Castellotti qualified the lone D50 on pole to beat Mercedes





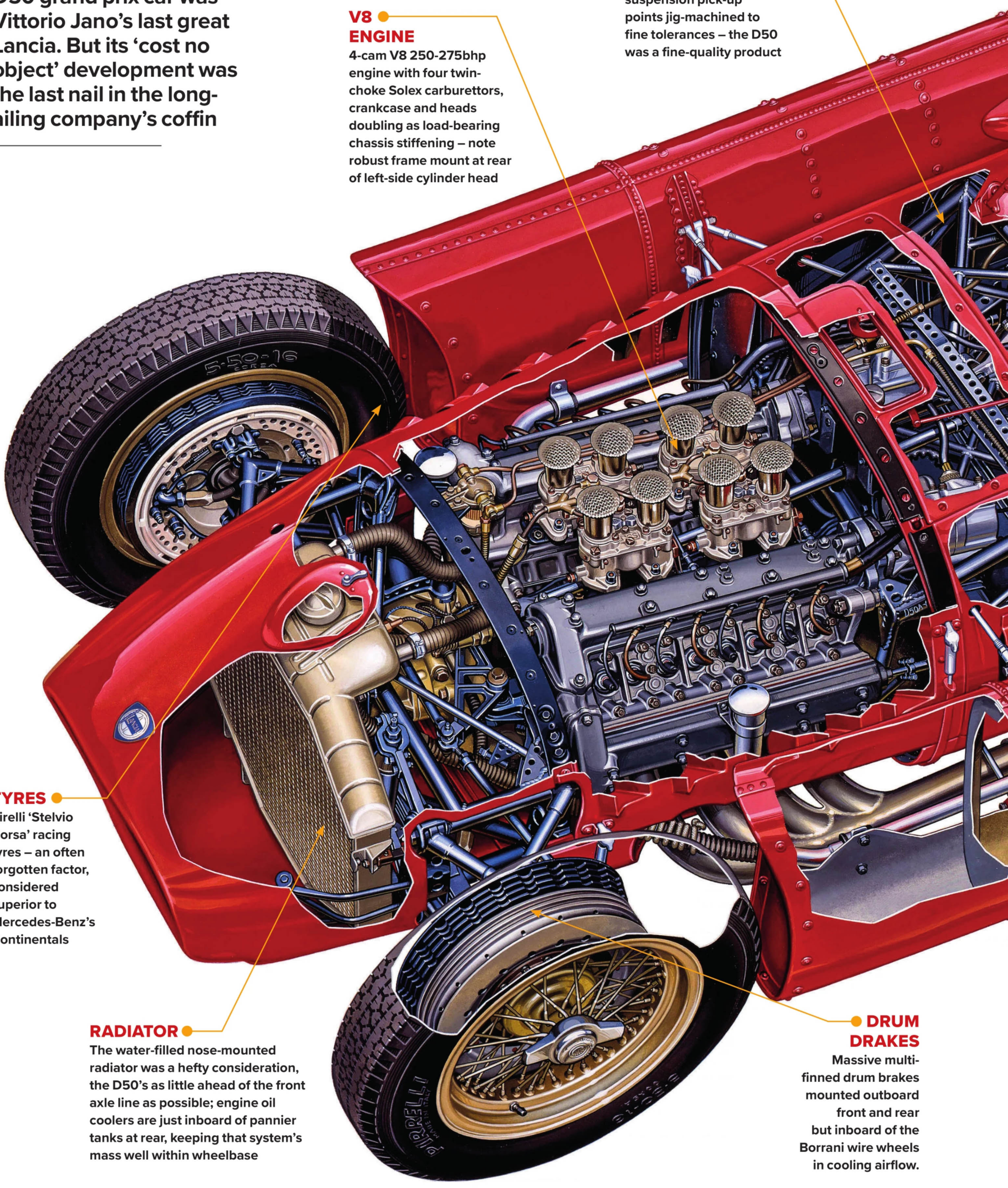
Despite three-wheeling up Raidillon, Castellotti (pictured above) retired with gearbox trouble



Ascari tries D50 prototype in testing at Caselle airport as mechanic changes angled V8's spark plugs

Pride before the fall: four of the five D50s in the Monaco pits, 1955. A magnificent sight

Compact, lightweight, with major mass concentrated around its centre, the D50 grand prix car was Vittorio Jano's last great Lancia. But its 'cost no object' development was the last nail in the long-ailing company's coffin



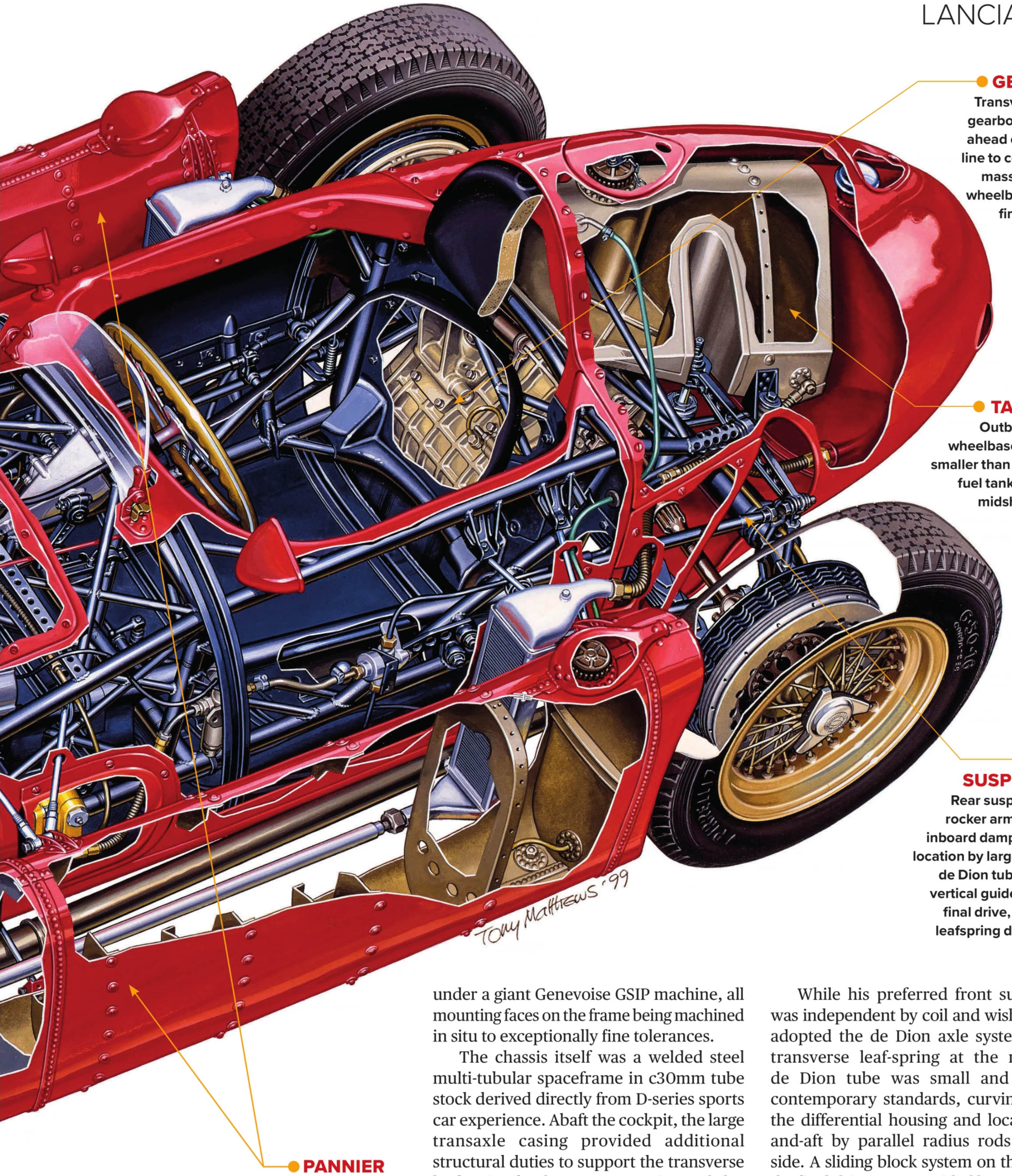
V8 ENGINE
4-cam V8 250-275bhp engine with four twin-choke Solex carburettors, crankcase and heads doubling as load-bearing chassis stiffening – note robust frame mount at rear of left-side cylinder head

CHASSIS
Multi-tubular spaceframe chassis had all engine, transmission and suspension pick-up points jig-machined to fine tolerances – the D50 was a fine-quality product

TYRES
Pirelli 'Stelvio Corsa' racing tyres – an often forgotten factor, considered superior to Mercedes-Benz's Continentals

RADIATOR
The water-filled nose-mounted radiator was a hefty consideration, the D50's as little ahead of the front axle line as possible; engine oil coolers are just inboard of pannier tanks at rear, keeping that system's mass well within wheelbase

DRUM DRAKES
Massive multi-finned drum brakes mounted outboard front and rear but inboard of the Borrani wire wheels in cooling airflow.



TONY MATTHEWS

under a giant Genevoise GSIP machine, all mounting faces on the frame being machined in situ to exceptionally fine tolerances.

The chassis itself was a welded steel multi-tubular spaceframe in c30mm tube stock derived directly from D-series sports car experience. Abaft the cockpit, the large transaxle casing provided additional structural duties to support the transverse leaf-spring for the rear suspension and also to locate the de Dion tube's central sliding-block guide.

Jano had tirelessly investigated the science of suspension behaviour, cornering and handling. He had studied the complex variables involved in combinations of weight distribution, dynamic weight transfer and suspension geometries, castor, camber change, the effect of roll-centres, etc.

While his preferred front suspension was independent by coil and wishbone, he adopted the de Dion axle system with a transverse leaf-spring at the rear. The de Dion tube was small and light by contemporary standards, curving behind the differential housing and located fore-and-aft by parallel radius rods on each side. A sliding block system on the back of the final-drive case provided lateral control.

Inboard space was at a premium in this compact little package, and so the drum brakes were mounted outboard. Jano had minimised the new car's wheelbase by abandoning the successful inboard-mounted brakes of the sports car in favour of this all-outboard system. Then, to concentrate fuel load well within the wheelbase, he conceived the D50's most distinctive feature, two



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Ascari's D50 in the Gasworks Hairpin, 1955 Monaco GP, before his dive into the harbour

long pannier fuel tanks outrigged along each side of the car between its front and rear wheels. They ensured minimal handling change between full and empty tanks, and Jano also believed they would help clean up aerodynamic turbulence – and therefore drag – between the wheels. The Lancia D50 emerged notably short, squat and light. Its centralised weight concentration imparted a low polar moment of inertia, making it the nimblest of contemporary F1 cars. It consequently required a sensitive and capable racing driver to exploit its attributes to the maximum, without the layout's inherent 'nervousness' then denting his confidence in the car.

Everything about the new cars and the works team, from its gigantic Lancia Corse transporter to the well-pressed blue overalls the mechanics wore, and all their carefully thought-out tailor-made equipment, exuded impeccable toolroom class and quality, with that indefinable addition of Italian style and flair.

After a protracted and delayed development period, which led to several early race entries being cancelled through the new formula's maiden season of 1954, two new D50 cars finally ran in their public debut in the late-season Spanish GP at Barcelona. Despite both Ascari and Villoresi retiring there, they had created a great impression. After extensive testing at Monza and, extraordinarily, on the Sanremo street circuit, fuel tankage was increased from 160 to 200 litres to enable D50s to tackle a 500km GP non-stop. A full team of five D50s was flown to Argentina for the opening round of the 1955 World Championship.

> "Had Ascari not crashed into the Monaco harbour, he could have won"

Out there the cars could not handle adequately on the Buenos Aires Autodrome's geometrical curves. Both Ascari and Villoresi spun off, the former after leading laps 5 to 22, the latter in young Castellotti's car after his Lancia's fuel pump had failed. It seemed that the D50s' intentionally neutral-steer characteristics certainly gave a high level of adhesion in high-speed curves, but the drivers received little warning of an incipient breakaway, and when either the front or rear tyres lost adhesion they did so almost instantaneously, and with little chance of recovery.

Lancia's home race, the Turin GP in Valentino Park, followed on May 27. An extra 15bhp had been squeezed out of the engines – 106bhp per litre – and starting from pole position Ascari won impressively after pressuring Luigi Musso into running his leading works Maserati 250F off the road. Castellotti and Villoresi finished third and fourth. On Easter Monday, 1955, the team contested the Pau GP in southern France; Ascari had looked certain to win until a rear brake pipe split. He continued after a stop, with only front brakes operative, and still finished fifth. His team-mates' D50s placed second and fourth.

Ascari then qualified on pole yet again for the Naples GP at Posillipo on May 8, winning easily while Villoresi ran only third. There was no team car available for Castellotti that weekend, but these were immensely encouraging results. Two weeks later, Lancia Corse entered the season's first European round of the World Championship, the Monaco GP, in force, with four D50s for the usual works trio plus 56-year-old Louis Chiron, the local ace who had won the 1954 Monte Carlo Rally in a Lancia Aurelia.

A fifth D50 was also on hand as a practice *muletto*, and Lancia's paddock line-up looked truly magnificent. Ascari qualified on the front row alongside two Mercedes-Benz W196s. In the race, he couldn't hold back the German cars until all three struck trouble. Then, just as Ascari was approaching the end of the lap – which would have seen him pass Moss's leading Mercedes, by this time stationary in its pit – he slid on spilt oil at the harbourside chicane and crashed clean through the quayside straw-bale barrier to plunge into the harbour. His car vanished

BERNARD CAHIER/GETTY IMAGES

in a smother of spray, steam and straw, shocked spectators bursting into cheers of relief as Ascari's bright blue helmet broke the water's surface. Boatmen recovered him barely injured, save for a broken nose, shock and a soaking. His battered, salt-water streaming car was winched out that evening.

Castellotti had been delayed, but he salvaged second place for Lancia, while Villoresi and Chiron finished fifth and sixth. Had Ascari not crashed, he could have won. Lancia Corse salvaged its car, but not the company's independent future.

Having forsaken sports car racing for F1, Gianni Lancia allowed his contracted drivers to take other sports car rides. Four days after that Monaco ducking, Ascari accepted Castellotti's offer to try his brand new works Ferrari 750 Monza sports at Monza; the car left the road in the high-speed left-hand curve at Vialone, and he was killed.

Italian racing was devastated. Poor Villoresi - Ascari's lifelong mentor and friend - would not contemplate racing again for some time. The Lancia Corse racing programme had been built largely around Ascari and his skills. Now it simply collapsed. Gianni and Adele Lancia decided it would not compete again until a later date, although Jano was permitted to take one car to the Belgian GP for Castellotti as a private entry.

There the youngster covered himself in glory during practice, beating all the Mercedes W196s for pole position. But in the race, he could not string together such rapid laps, and after running third his car's gearbox seized. Behind the scenes, Lancia was in dreadful difficulty. For five wild years, Gianni Lancia had permitted his engineers' creativity to run riot, almost regardless of cost. The company's finances collapsed, with the Italian press avidly stoking the fire of its insolvency. Beset by anxious creditors and labour unions, the Lancias, mother and son, decided to sell it to cement and finance millionaire Carlo Pesenti. The family lost



"At Monza four D50s emerged, standard except for prancing horse badges"

control of the great Vincenzo's creation. But the Lancia Corse hardware was too valuable and had too much potential to go to waste. After protracted further negotiations involving Lancia, Fiat and Ferrari - and probably some prompting from the Italian government - Gianni Lancia's friend Agnelli of Fiat donated some £30,000 annual sponsorship to Ferrari if it would continue to race the D50s against Mercedes for its country. This was a great coup for Mr Ferrari, whose own outdated cars had become obsolescent and uncompetitive. Now he had fallen heir to the world's finest F1 machines outside Stuttgart.

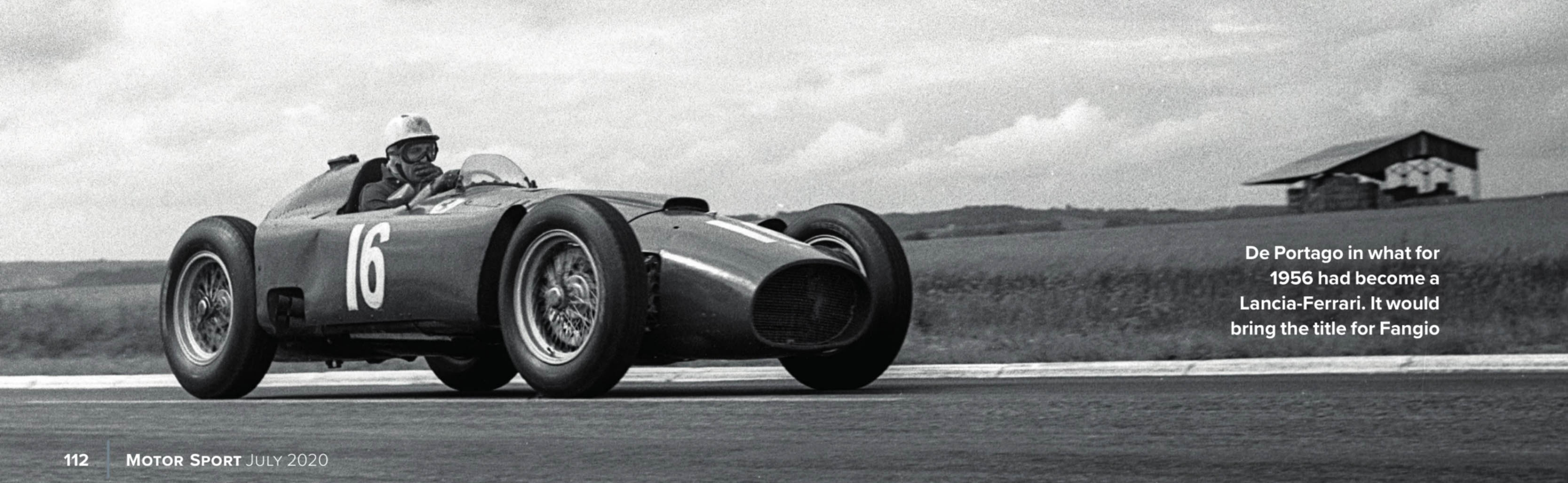
On July 26, 1955, a formal ceremony at the Turin factory witnessed six of the eight D50s handed over and transported to Maranello, accompanied by spares, drawings, tools, transport and an almost complete streamliner body, intended for the Italian GP at Monza. Engineer Jano was obliged to leave Via Caraglia in a new-broom operation by Pesenti, so he followed his D50s to Maranello. Initially, it was rumoured that the powerful, compact and lightweight Lancia V8 engine would appear in a Ferrari chassis, but in practice for the Italian GP at Monza, four D50s emerged in completely standard form as before, save for fresh Ferrari prancing horse badges. But all of them encountered terrible Englebert tyre problems on the new banked speedbowl section and, rather than risk an accident, all four were wisely withdrawn before the GP. It was a bitter blow for Italy, as they were the only Italian cars with any hope of challenging Mercedes.

This incident truly highlighted the obsolescence of Ferrari's Belgian Englebert tyres compared to the Pirellis around which the Lancias had been designed. Then two D50s were taken to England to run in the minor Oulton Park Gold Cup race, driven by Hawthorn and Castellotti, but neither handled well on the parkland circuit, and Hawthorn merely inherited his second place.

For 1955, Ferrari would work hard to develop the D50 into a more handleable, user-friendly proposition for his drivers, and Juan Manuel Fangio would make the most of it, winning the 1956 World Championship in Lancia-Ferrari cars, while team-mate Peter Collins also shone brightly, winning his first grands prix.

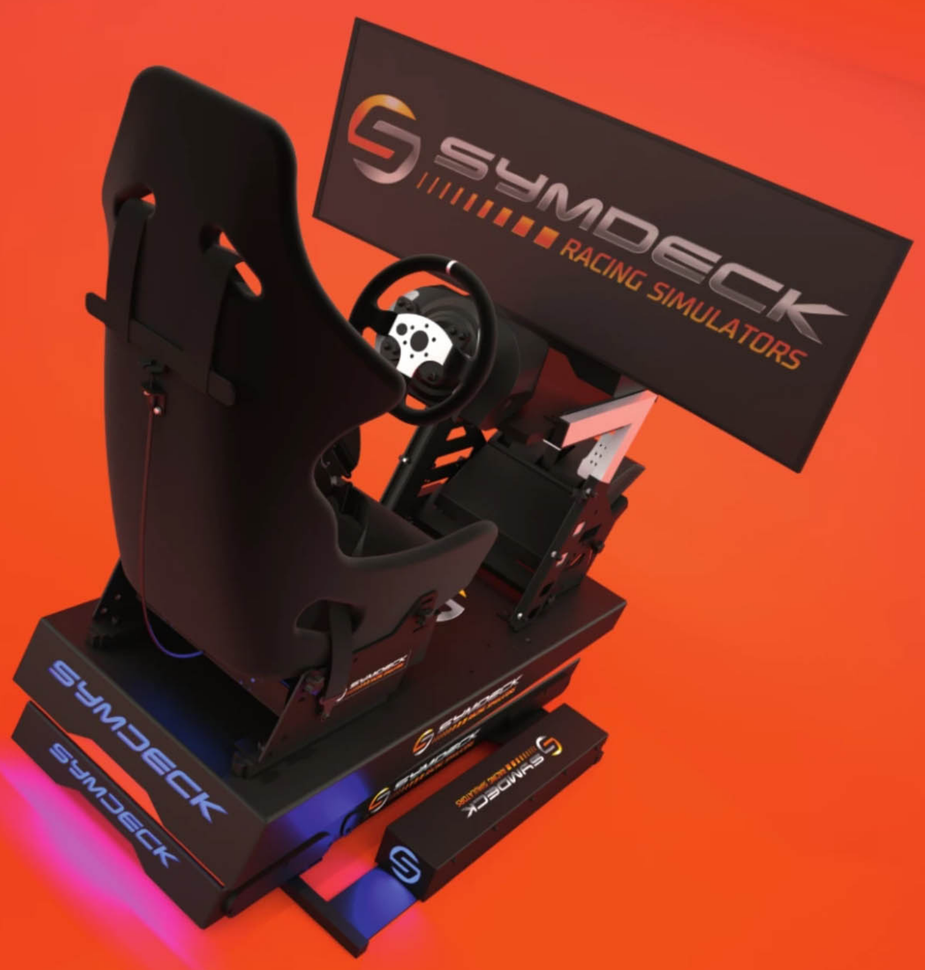
In retrospect, the compact, low polar moment, centrally weight-concentrated Lancia D50 was a matching predecessor to Jackie Stewart's Derek Gardner-designed Tyrrell 005-006 cars of 1972-73. Once developed, both designs brought World Championship honours to truly great racing drivers. But for Alberto Ascari, and the Lancia family, the introduction of the glorious D50 had led to disaster... ●

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De Portago in what for 1956 had become a Lancia-Ferrari. It would bring the title for Fangio

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NOTHING LIKE A GHOST TOWN

Coventry suffered badly as manufacturing declined, but high-level skills persisted. **Gordon Cruickshank** visits a firm which can recreate the past and create the future

PHOTOGRAPHY: MATT RICHARDSON

From fractional digital accuracy to hand-forming skills, Envisage boasts an impressive range of facilities



Nose to nose: David Brown Speedback and Jaguar D-type bodies

ONCE IT WAS BRITAIN'S MOTOR City. Coventry, in the bustling industrial Midlands, was the hub where from 1896 onward such firms as Daimler, Triumph, Alvis and Hillman, Jaguar and a hundred others flourished when this country was a manufacturing force, and in the 1960s the world's biggest car exporter. Supporting that industry were countless smaller firms providing coachbuilding, engineering, trimming, electrical know-how, prototyping and a dozen other services, their skills growing out of the bicycle, sewing machine and watch-making industries that burgeoned across the Midlands.

Not so today. Jaguar Land Rover at Whitley is the only manufacturer of scale left. But that doesn't mean the pool of skills has vanished. Even in the dark times of unemployment in the 1980s - remember this is the city about which The Specials wrote *Ghost Town* - craftsmanship persisted in a plethora of small outfits unknown outside the business. There's always been a firm who could build you parts, a body, or a complete prototype. Those Daimler 420 limousines which ferried so many brides to church were manufactured by Motor Panels and Park Sheet Metal; Jaguar's XJ220s were made by Abbey Panels, all based around the town. Now one organisation has pooled those disparate but little recognised talents into a nexus of car creation capabilities. The name is Envisage Group and, despite an international reach, its home is Coventry.

Of the five company sites in the city, I went to visit Classic & Bespoke, the section dealing with restoration and bodyshell manufacture. I expected to find a conventional bodyshop, and I did. I also discovered that this is just one arm of a complex organisation with very wide-reaching abilities: whether you are a major car company or a wealthy car lover with a dream, it can progress it from a sketch idea through to a running prototype and beyond to production engineering.

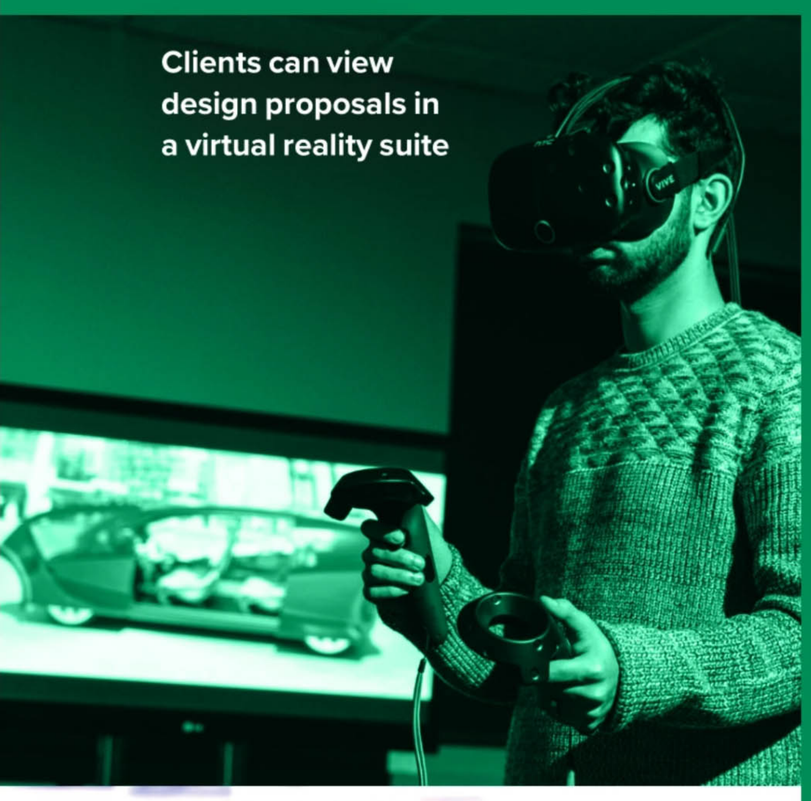
Envisage CEO Tim Strafford ran me through the story, which grew from a technical recruitment business. Noting how much of its custom involved the automotive sector, the firm set out to offer not just the people, but all the facilities its customers were after, starting by acquiring concept design and engineering firm Visioneering Ltd.

Soon after, it added CGI, now Envisage Classic & Bespoke Technologies, responsible for many of the glossy dream cars you've seen at motor shows. Now the five sites work on a hugely diverse spread of projects. Most of them are completely under the radar. To be more precise, you've seen the results; you just didn't know it was Envisage who made it happen. Aston Martin's One-77? Envisage built the bodies. Jaguar's continuation D-types? Shells made here. Ditto those new XKSSs. David Brown Speedback GT? Engineered by Envisage and bodies built here. London's TX5 electric black cab? Prototypes developed here too. And that's just the ones I'm allowed to mention. Much of the work that Envisage handles is prototyping, or viability studies, productionising, or even sorting out a problem on an existing model. Naturally, that is all confidential.

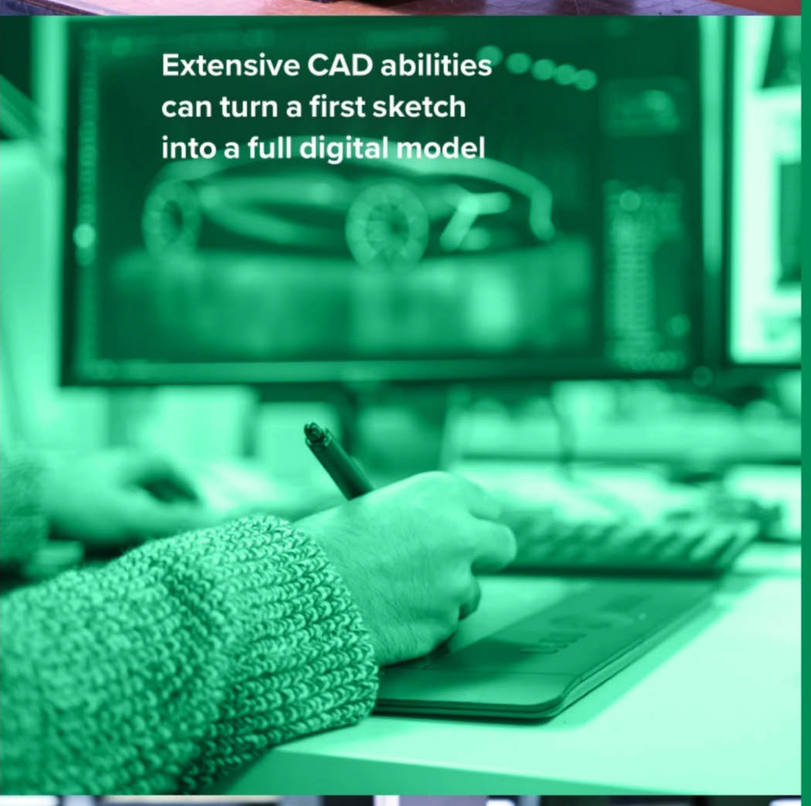


Shaping an Aston Martin DB4 Zagato bonnet

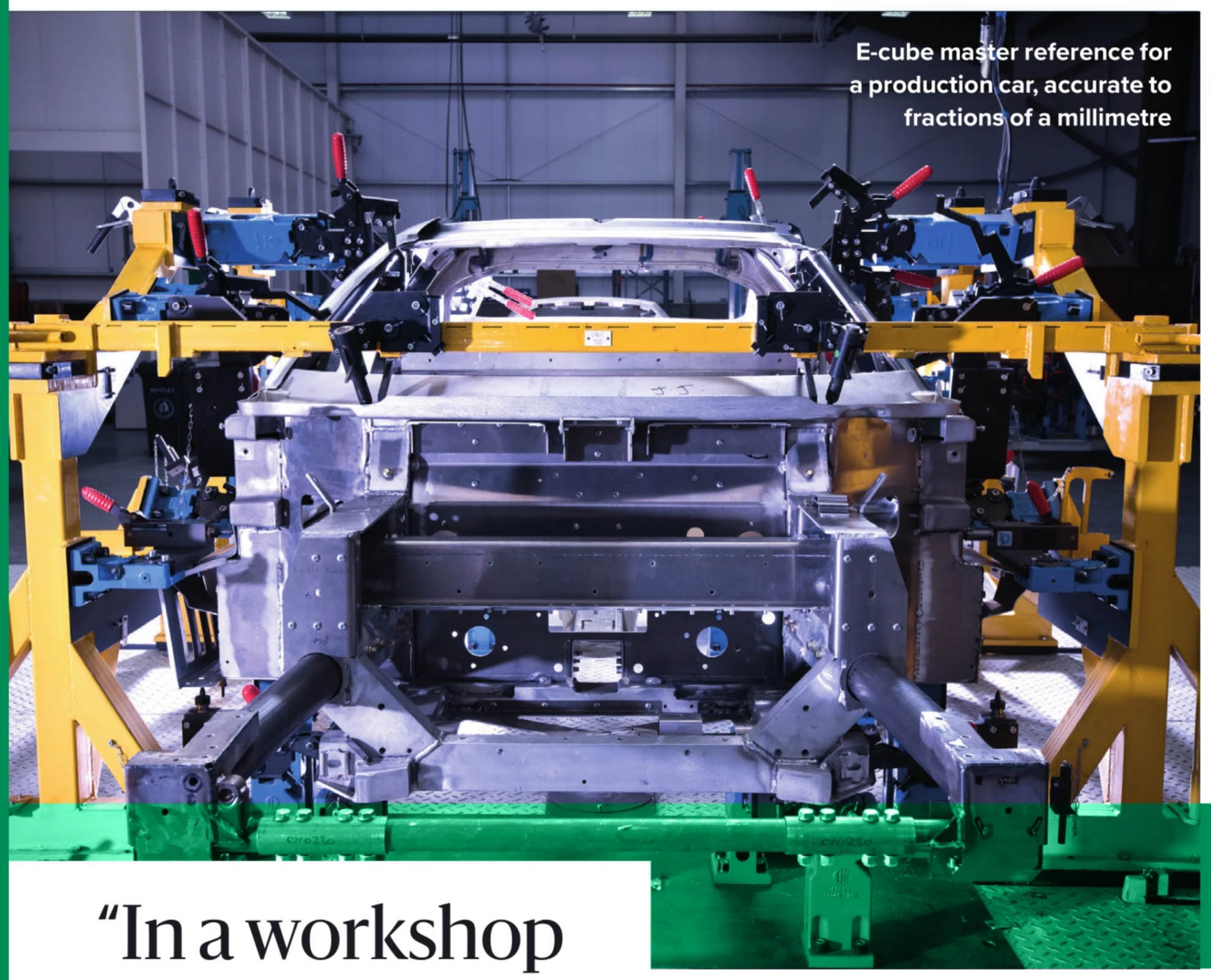
It's a frustrating position for an ambitious company, and it's why it has invited *Motor Sport* here, as long as I promise not to mention certain things - and there was quite a list. Not surprising, as the facilities are so diverse. As an example, it can offer no fewer than 25 separate design studios around Coventry, where a mainstream firm can base a small team for a special project. That might be a concept car for a motor show, which is an extraordinarily complex thing to produce, requiring a custom subframe and unique switchgear, glass and brightwork. And nowadays, says Strafford, concept cars are expected to be functional, with opening panels, working lights and impressive dash screen displays. That process might begin with a digital model, turned into a fifth-scale 3D model by the firm's CNC machines.


Clients can view design proposals in a virtual reality suite


Traditional scale and full-size clay modelling is available too


Extensive CAD abilities can turn a first sketch into a full digital model


Distinctive nose of Ferrari 250SWB bodyshell


E-cube master reference for a production car, accurate to fractions of a millimetre

"In a workshop next door, Birkin's works Blower is being disassembled"

From there, clay-sculpting facilities finalise the design and every option for producing a complete vehicle. Show cars for most of the major brands have emerged from the company's workshops. For a new Chinese marque, Strafford tells me, it even took a radical route to get a show concept ready in a hurry – it CNC-milled an entire set of 2mm-thick body panels out of solid aluminium blocks. It was simply faster to go straight from the digital information.

There's a hint in there of the firm's international reach. It has a Chinese presence and facilities in California and India, with clients from around the world too. But let's get back to Coventry and Classic & Bespoke, where director Andy Hunter is guiding me around. Here are the conventional bodyshop sights: men with hammers delicately shaping panels, English wheels, presses, jigs, formers and part-complete cars. I see D-type noses, a Healey 3000 tail, a shell for a DB4 Zagato, and Envisage has worked on a run of Ferrari 250SWBs. But there are things you wouldn't see in a classic workshop: a current sports car – I can't say which – being bulked out to wide-body spec for well-known vehicle modifiers, as well as design revisions on a Speedback GT nose, and a levelling plate with crab-like digital measuring arms used for accurately squaring up and measuring entire cars.

As we pass a dusty wooden lattice buck for an Aston 2/4, Andy says, "That's the old way. This is today," pointing to a full-scale shape I recognise as the La Sarthe Bentley special. "It's CNC-milled from a dense material called tooling board foam, which is hard enough to hammer over."

All along the walls are racks of these green formers for classic car noses and wings, scanned from originals and ready to produce new panels. "We even do Lancia Integrale wings because no-one else does," says Andy.

Hunter tells me that in a closed shop next door is Tim Birkin's famed works Blower Bentley, being disassembled and scanned to create the marque's 12 forthcoming continuation cars, a process Envisage is closely involved in. But we're not allowed to see that... One more visible Bentley cooperation was the nine Zagato Continental GTZs, designed in Italy, but realised in Coventry. It's clear that the traditional skills all around are the 'hands-on' end of the operation. To show a wider extent, Tim takes us to the boardroom and a screen presentation.

Further up the line, for instance, are CMF – Colour, Materials and Finish – studios where clients can investigate new interior and

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Under the radar



Aston Martin One-77
All 77 bodyshells were hand-built at Classic & Bespoke in Coventry



Team Bentley Blower
Birkin's Le Mans racer is being dismantled to create 12 replicas



Jaguar D-type continuation
Building D and XKSS shells follows a previous path for the marque



JCB Dieselmax
World's fastest diesel car, designed and engineered by Visioneering



TX5 electric black cab
It's not all sports cars: London's green taxi prototype began here

exterior materials and finishes for their concept or a production car, plus the craftspeople to trim and paint a show vehicle. There are virtual reality and demonstration suites for models and concepts, which can be remotely driven if required to illustrate the vehicle's aesthetics in motion. Vehicle electronics are central, and the firm can develop anything from simple demo instrument screens for a show car, to full production systems control.

Then there's engineering; but that simple term is hardly adequate to explain the differing elements: FEA structural analysis, productionising, dimensional verification. And if you don't know what an e-cube is, here goes: it's a milled alloy and steel skeleton, accurate to within 0.1mm, representing the full master set of body engineering dimensions in physical form with all fixing points for exterior panels and trim inside and out. It's used to validate suppliers' components and check that fit and finish are correct. Any errors found can be reported and corrected. You could compare it to that reference kilogramme in Paris that your weekly shop depends on, except finding out that 10,000 parts do not fit your new bodyshells would be more of a disaster than being short-changed on jam.

From that engineering sign-off point, there's still a maze of productionising: tooling, jigs and fixtures to design; assembly protocols, testing programmes, quality control. Envisage has a whole section devoted not just to measurable quality such as panel fit, but also perceived quality. Customer clinics report on the click of the switchgear, the clunk of a door closing, or the feel appeal of upholstery.

I'm aware I'm in danger of sounding as though I'm writing its PR, but it was an education. I never imagined developing a new car was simple, but I'm now realising just how many elements run in parallel. Of course, all of this happens in every major car company, but an independent hub of expertise like this is valuable to a start-up, or for those secret special projects that suddenly burst upon us with a fanfare of PR, apparently from a major marque's HQ. It's one of its strengths, says Strafford, that between its 250 full-timers and hundreds of contract experts it can form specialist teams to tackle any such programme.

Origination, too, is on tap, with several design and build studios available. When French battery firm Nawa Technologies planned a new electric motorbike, Envisage helped turn the company's sketches into reality with a concept e-motorbike that clients could 'ride'. "It was much more engaging for visitors to the stand," Tim explains, "and it brought huge press exposure." Other non-automotive tasks include furniture for the Science Museum, bronze panels for Harrods' escalators and unique furnishings for a yacht. There's nothing you can't get done with deep enough pockets; I'm asked not to broadcast details of the extravagant Ferrari reworking for one enthusiast, or the limited run of another Maranello re-imagining. But I have permission to mention the five James Bond DB5s on the way – and yes, they will have working gadgets. I wonder if you linked the ejector seats to radar crash detection, could the occupants be fired skywards and parachute to safety? Must suggest that.

The Bespoke element is as important as the Classic in this place, though it can equally handle short production runs. Parts for David Brown Speedback number 12 are on hand, while 29 Proteus C-types were born here, while the numbers for Jaguar's own continuations run to nine XKSS bodies (replacing those lost in the 1957 Brown's Lane fire) and 25 Ds. There's a circular suitability about this, as C and D bodyshells were originally built by Abbey Panels, another Coventry firm now part of Envisage.

There's racing involvement too: Hunter recalls going to Le Mans with the Spyker team and their C&B-built bodies, only to see three of his carefully crafted noses destroyed even before the race, while Envisage's carbon fibre facilities are especially busy for the heavily disrupted F1 season producing elements for upcoming machines. And it was Visioneering, yet another wing of the group, which designed and built the JCB Dieselmax that broke the land speed record for diesel cars.

> "The Bespoke element is as important as the Classic in this place"

So, there we are – from furniture to F1 via your dream car. I came away from Coventry knowing rather more about car production, and more than that, pleased to know that the town continues a long heritage of automotive expertise. Should I decide to give up writing and start a car company, I'll be heading up the M40.

PARAGON



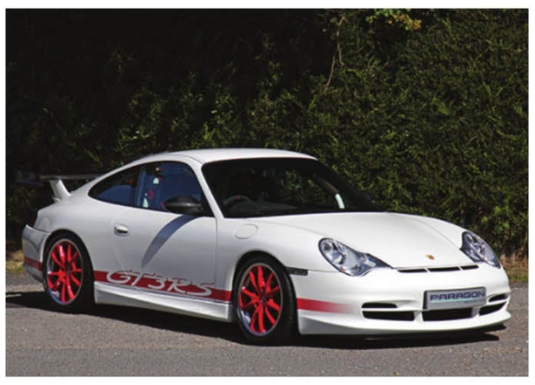
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911 RS Touring

Jet Black • Black Seats • Manual Gearbox • 15" Fuchs Wheels • Fully Restored • Matching Numbers
1973 (L)

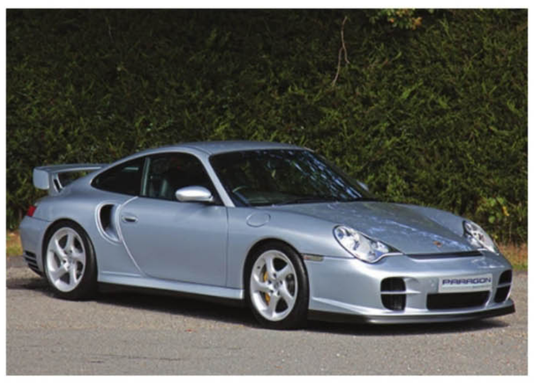
£549,995



911 GT3RS (996)

Carrara White • Black Nomex Bucket Seats • Manual Gearbox • Full Roll Cage • Air Conditioning • 20,694 miles
2004 (53)

£139,995



911 GT2

Polar Silver • Black Leather Sport Seats • Manual Gearbox • Porsche Ceramic Composite Brakes • Sports Exhaust • 21,725 miles • 2003 (03)

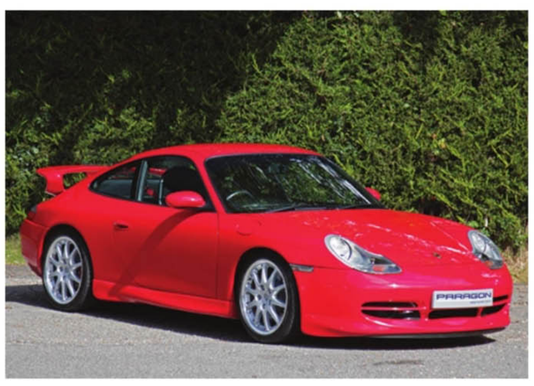
£124,995



911 Carrera Sport Targa

Grand Prix White • Dark Blue Leather Seats • Manual G-50 Gearbox • 16" Fuchs Wheels • Fully Electric Seats
22,373 miles • 1988 (F)

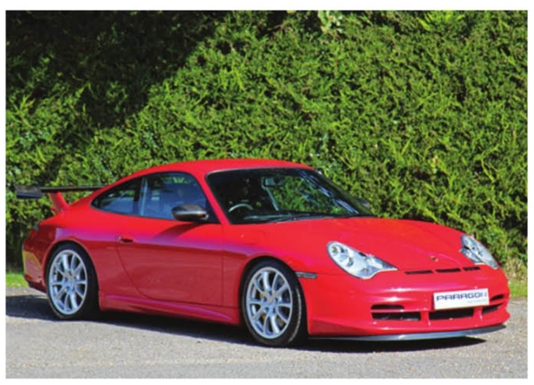
£84,995



911 GT3 (996)

Guards Red • Black Leather Bucket Seats • Manual Gearbox • 18" Sport Design Wheels • Air Conditioning
29,552 miles • 1999 (V)

£79,995



911 GT3 Clubsport (996)

Guards Red • Black Nomex Bucket Seats • Manual Gearbox • Porsche Carbon Ceramic Brakes • Rear Roll Cage • 43,336 miles • 2004 (53)

£74,995



911 Carrera 4 (993)

Arctic Silver • Classic Grey Leather Sport Seats • Manual Gearbox
17" Cup Wheels • Air Conditioning
61,259 miles • 1997 (P)

£59,995



911 Carrera 4 S (996)

Seal Grey • Black Leather Seats Manual Gearbox • 18" Turbo II Wheels • Satellite Navigation
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With just 175 miles on the clock, this F50 is the closest thing to a showroom example

The 'newest' F50 alive

A renowned supercar dealer is selling a remarkable example of one of the great modern Ferraris, finds **Simon de Burton**

LOCKDOWN MIGHT HAVE HAD A seriously detrimental effect on businesses everywhere - but not, it seems, if you happen to be one of the world's most experienced exotic car dealers with a knack for sourcing the rarest of the rare and the best of the best.

Tom Hartley is just such a dealer and, with 45 years in the game, a promise to be available by appointment 365 days a year and an extensive private estate at which to display his wares, he has been operating more or less as normal in what has come to be described as 'these extraordinary times'. Almost uniquely for a dealer, Hartley has even written a book, called, unambiguously, *The Dealmaker* which documents his time in the rarefied world of buying and selling supercars.

So it was little surprise to learn that the Ferrari F50 we had hoped to write about here only remained available for 36 hours before a buyer came through on the Hartley hotline and snapped it up for a cool price of £2million.

What was perhaps surprising, however, is the fact that Hartley managed to find another F50 to sell within a couple of days. And this time, it's one that he believes



F50's 'analogue' nature, with few driving aids, makes it a great driver's car

could be the finest example available anywhere in the world: never previously registered and with only 175 delivery miles on the clock it is, essentially, as close as anyone is likely to get to a 'new' F50 and it accordingly carries an eye-watering price tag of £2.5m.

Hartley certainly has a bit of history with the almost mythical model, having bought the first one imported into the UK shortly after it was delivered new to its original owner, tennis player and entrepreneur David Lloyd. Since then, Hartley estimates he's bought and sold around 10 per cent of the 349 F50s officially produced.

"The example we recently sold was undoubtedly one of the best I have ever seen, but this particular car, is quite remarkable and is probably unrepeatable," Hartley says. "I very much doubt if there is another F50 in the world like it."

The 512-horsepower supercar, capable of 202mph and built from 1995-97 in celebration of Ferrari's 50th anniversary, came from a private Swiss collection where, despite never being used, it has been serviced annually and kept in perfect working order.

Inaccurately described at launch by the marque's then-chairman Luca di Montezemolo as "the first and last F1 car with two seats", the F50 is arguably the most collectable of the few modern-day, limited-edition Ferraris built, both due to its rarity and its highly analogue nature. A manual gearbox, no power-assistance on steering or brakes and a lack of ABS make it a sublime driver's car, while better road manners than its more brutal predecessor, the F40, make it more usable. Oh, and the roof comes off.

Being an F50, however, even carrying out that procedure isn't a task for the average owner. According to Hartley, it should be done by a specialist technician, and it will take around two hours and cost in the region of £200.

And for UK buyers, that must mean another £200 to put the roof back on again 10 minutes later...

1996 FERRARI F50

On sale at Tom Hartley, Swadlincote, Derbyshire DE12 6JD. Tel: +44 (0) 1283 762762, tomhartley.com Asking: £2.5m

The supercar golden era

Extreme sports car production boomed during the 1990s, and they're still popular



FERRARI TESTAROSSA. £99,950
Ferrari's first mid-engine 12-cylinder road car packed a punch, hitting 62mph in just 5.3sec. This example has under 50,000 miles on the clock and just two previous owners.
tomhartley.com



HONDA NSX-R. £155,000
Imported from Tokyo in 2017, this rare NSX-R is one of what is believed to be four examples in the UK and has the authentic Type-R enhancements. Oh, and air con.
pistonheads.com



JAGUAR XJ220. £399,995
The XJ220's pedigree is well known, having leant on TWR's expertise. Once the world's fastest road car, this car was previously owned by the Sultan of Brunei.
amarisupercars.com



ASTON MARTIN DB7 VOLANTE. £34,990
A now affordable way to get a '90s supercar, the DB7 was Aston's entry point and helped revive the brand. This example also has low mileage.
classicdriver.com

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This Austin has lived in the Netherlands in recent years, but has Goodwood pedigree

AUCTION HERO

Austin Academy salute

The HRDC series was a boon for historic racing, and the A35. **Simon de Burton** looks over one of the more famous examples

HRDC RACE DIRECTOR JULIUS Thurgood really started a trend when he had the idea of establishing his accessible Academy series back in 2013 to offer an inexpensive route into motor sport.

The original formula, developed with the input of former Formula 1 driver Rupert Keegan, was based around modifying Austin A35s within strict parameters, which meant using a specific kit of parts, running only Dunlop CR65 L-section tyres, and fitting sealed motors built to identical specifications by Classic and Modern Engine Services.

The result made it possible to get on track for as little as £15,000 and be a part of what soon became one of the most popular historic racing series on the calendar among drivers and spectators alike.

The Academy series also considerably heightened demand for the once little-coveted A35, resulting in many neglected examples returning to life, sending up values and



BONHAMS

reminding people of the success it had originally achieved in saloon car racing 'in period' more than 50 years earlier.

It's probably fair to say that the Academy series was inspired by the exploits of Rae Davis Racing which, in 2001, took to the track in the team's first modified A35 named 'The Powerful Peanut', which boasted enhancements based on those designed for the model during the late 1950s by Speedwell Performance Conversions – where Graham Hill was first a foreman, then chairman, and finally owner.

In 2008 Davis acquired this 1957 A35 from the Southampton-based family that had owned it from new, stripped it to its bare bones and then rebuilt it to similar 'Speedwell' competition specification, endowing it with a useful 125bhp at 6800rpm and giving it handling to match.

Dubbing it 'Baby Boomer', Davis raced the car for several years in HRDC events, also allowing a raft of celebrity drivers to take the wheel at various Goodwood Revival meetings with the likes of Martin Brundle and TV presenter Tony Jardine driving. As a result, it achieved considerable notoriety in historic racing circles.

Recently upgraded with new safety equipment, it's being sold with various spares, including half-a-dozen wheels fitted with Dunlop tyres. The car is also eligible for a range of historic race series, including some of those run by the HRDC and HSCC, plus the pre-1960 St Mary's Trophy at Goodwood.

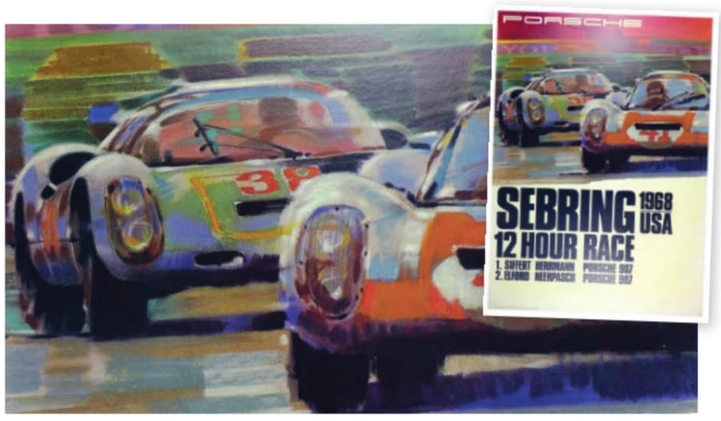
Although consigned from its current base in the Netherlands, the UK registration is still valid, meaning it could even still be used for the type of local shopping trips which the A35 was originally designed for.

1957 Austin A35 'Speedwell' competition car. Estimate £15,000-£20,000. On sale May 30 at Bonhams MPH, Bicester Heritage, Oxfordshire (live online, no bidding or viewing on site). bonhams.com



2019 PORSCHE 911 SPEEDSTER. SOLD FOR $1,050,000. RM SOTHEBY'S

The last 991-model 911 to roll off the Zuffenhausen production line, it was donated by Porsche to raise money for the US COVID-19 relief charity United Way Worldwide. The $550,000 high bid was topped-up with a $500,000 donation from Porsche Cars North America. The buyer also got a unique Porsche Design chronograph watch with a strap made from off-cuts of the car's interior leather, a winding rotor based on its alloy wheels, and its chassis number engraved on the case.



1968 SEBRING 12 HOURS PORSCHE POSTER. SOLD FOR $11,213. RM SOTHEBY'S

This 1968 poster, measuring 4x3ft, was issued after Porsche had romped to first and second in that year's Sebring 12 Hours. Jo Siffert and Hans Herrmann won in their 907 in an event reported as being rather dull. Unlike the poster.



1981 AUSTIN MAXI 1750L. SOLD FOR £3769. H&H

Rare cars like the Porsche 911 2.7RS and Ferrari 250 GTO are common as muck compared with Austin Maxi 2s of the 1750L variant with an automatic transmission – it's thought that only two survive in the UK. Maxi fact: the seats were designed to fold into a double bed.



1996 FERRARI 456 GT. SOLD FOR £34,875. H&H

This 456 GT is unusual in being a well-used Ferrari (almost 100,000 miles). It originally belonged to tycoon Peter de Savary but had been in the vendor's ownership for a decade. With history and Schedoni luggage, it was fitted with the manual gearbox and a recent clutch.

Boredom bidding

Lockdown is sparking an unexpected market upturn, says **Simon de Burton**

A FEW MONTHS AGO IN THESE pages we expressed a thought that the old car market, while generally on a downward trajectory, was becoming increasingly difficult to judge.

Once eagerly contested cars were becoming less expensive; some ultra-high-end rarities were failing to find buyers, yet others were being snapped-up; middle-of-the-road classics were being treated with ambivalence; 'new timers' were hot; veterans were chugging along - and so on.

But rather than the picture becoming clearer with time, the googly of coronavirus appears to have made things even more illogical. As noted by Tom Hartley in our Star Sale Car focus, seven-figure offerings are flying off the shelves, sight unseen, and auctioneers are successfully forging ahead even though bidders can't visit salerooms or preview their lots.

A similar story appears to be playing out on the less reliable yardstick of eBay: a fellow car and motorcycle enthusiast in my village recently listed a ratty but running Westfield Seven in the hope that there would be enough people bored by confinement to part with £3000 and free-up some space in his garage. Five days later, £7000 landed in his bank account, wired by the winning bidder from locked-down France.

Strange times indeed...





1969 OMEGA SPEEDMASTER MKII. SOLD FOR £2640. BONHAMS

Omega's Speedmaster MkII may have featured an arguably less attractive ovoid case, but it was designed for drivers, with this example featuring the sought-after 'racing dial' identifiable by its orange detailing.



1964 MORRIS MINOR. SOLD FOR £9720. CCA

A Minor for the 21st century, this immaculate 'restomod' had been rejuvenated at a cost of £15,000. It features a new chassis, rebuilt engine, re-trimmed interior, stealthy grey paint job and a rorty-sounding, stainless-steel exhaust system with three-branch manifold.

LISA LINKE ©2020 COURTESY OF RM SOTHEBY'S



THE INSIDE LINE

"It's early data, but the prices we're seeing still match pre-virus... just"

WITH THE WHOLE WORLD UPSIDE-DOWN and few of us knowing what the next few days will bring – never mind the following weeks and months – only a fool would attempt to write about the current state of the market.

So, here goes...

Coronavirus and lockdown saw many predicting the collapse of the classic car market; social distancing, along with the discretionary nature of classic cars, would, it was argued, mean an at-best temporary stop to buying and selling.

And for a while, it looked like they might have been right: a lot of dealers reported a decline in enquires, much less sales, traditional car auctions struggled to trade safely, and classifieds proved defunct in a world that prevented non-essential travel.

And yet, we at The Market have experienced no such decline – and we're not alone. Every day we talk to dealers, some of whom also report that exceptional cars are still bucking the market and even setting records, while the not-so-good need to be realistically priced to move. All trends that are no different to the last few years of softening values.

We've seen a tripling of traffic to our online auction platform as bored enthusiasts browse the classifieds from home. Possibly motivated, at least in part, by paltry interest rates and a desire to benefit from a crisis.

A more charitable view is that buyers are frustrated by being unable to drive and showcase their cars, so are seeking alternative ways of indulging their hobby, possibly with a new project to distract them and keep them busy. There is life out there in our industry, and plenty of buyers and sellers are still very active.

What does this mean for the private seller? Well, we attribute our success – almost a million pounds moved in April, and nine out of ten cars sold – to three main things, all of which you can use to help sell your classic.

The first is a comprehensive album of 100-plus professionally shot photos. Most of our buyers bid and take delivery of their 'new' classic cars without ever seeing it in the flesh, so good photographs of a freshly valeted car are absolutely vital.

Support that with an accurate and transparent description that appeals on emotional as well as rational grounds, and we know we've got it right when some owners call to say that it made them reconsider selling!

Finally, it's been a buyers' market for a couple of years. When we are sensible with estimates, we usually achieve the highest hammer prices – and if you're brave enough, you'll receive the most by placing it with no reserve...

So within this global marketplace turmoil, where are values? That's not always easy to say; some are trying to liquidate their classics to keep their head above water, some are in hiding, and others are keeping their funds liquid, just in case they come to rely on them. Restorations are being abandoned, and some dealers, auction houses, and suppliers are going bust.

But we all have our own attitude to risk, so many others are still looking to purchase – for enjoyment or investment – and market forces mean the two can achieve equilibrium.

You want figures? Well, it's still immature data at the moment but the best prices we are seeing are still matching those seen pre-virus. Just.

The classic car industry is changing and is likely to continue to be disrupted for some time.

No-one knows what the future holds, and only a fool would attempt to make any guesses.

We'll see you again next month with our predictions...

Tristan Judge is director and co-founder of The Market, the online auction platform for classic and collectable cars

Buying guide

Tatuus Formula Renault FR2000

A single-make change that single-handedly produced stars



Manor's Hamilton took 10 victories driving the 2000 Formula Renault Tatuus in '03

IT'S HARD TO THINK OF A MORE successful or influential junior single-seater than Tatuus' first one-make Formula Renault racer. Controversial at first, the Italian-built, French-powered car almost single-handedly transformed the junior series scene worldwide.

But Formula Renault in the UK was tricky at first. The British racing core was content with strong Formula Ford 1600 grids, its successful bigger brother, FFord 2000, and even Formula Vauxhall Lotus. Any new single-seater category had to bring something special and, at first, FRenault showed little promise on these shores.

When it arrived, after successful European pedigree, it allowed cars to be built by multiple brands around a set of spec parts designed to control costs. Constructors would get a 1721cc engine, electrics, brakes, gearbox and wheels to create a spaceframe chassis around.

Uptake was slow at first, with just five cars starting the inaugural UK race at Thruxton in 1989. The numbers grew as the prospect of a junior category offering good power and 'slicks and wings' on a reasonable budget took hold, as did a chunky prize fund from Renault and the lure of an F3000 test for the champion. Engines were increased to 2-litre spec from '95, but the series' biggest advance came at the turn of the century when it went single-make.

This was anathema to FRenault's biggest rival, FFord. FRenault's gamble of getting rid of big-name makes such as Van Diemen, Swift and Mygale looked a big one, but in truth, it was market-led. Formula Vauxhall was gathering momentum in its similar plan of using Reynard-built chassis, but it lacked the financial clout, and Formula 1 connection, of Renault. With its single-make switch, FRenault ensured not only its survival but also long-term success.

F1 cars had big, downforce-inducing wings and were unrecognisable from the wingless FFords at the bottom of the ladder. Kids with big budgets coming out of karting wanted cars that looked, and acted, right. Renault went in search of a supplier able to hit that target.

Between 1996-99 every FRUK champion used a Tatuus chassis, so when the tender came up for a single-make supply from 2000, Artico Sandonà's firm was a natural choice. Seeking to create a true baby grand prix car, Tatuus designed a carbon-fibre tub and mated it with the proven 2-litre in-line four Renault F4R engine also used in the Renault Clio Cup, and

TATUUS FORMULA RENAULT FR2000

- **Price new** €45,000
- **Price now** £10,000-£20,000
- **Engine** 2-litre Renault Sport F4R FS in-line four cylinder, naturally aspirated
- **Rivals** Formula Ford 1600, Formula BMW
- **Verdict** Game changer with a huge impact on modern single-seater racing



Two wins at Donington concluded Hamilton's title victory in '03 ahead of F3 Euro Series graduation for '04



Räikkönen's 2000 championship-winning Formula Renault UK car recently sold for £13,500 at auction

a Sadev sequential gearbox. The result could get from standstill to 100mph in just under five seconds, and had downforce to boot, offering a stepping-stone for any driver.

The appeal of the new car brought some of the best European and domestic karting talent through. Kimi Räikkönen won the inaugural single-make title in 2000 and was signed directly to Sauber's F1 team for the following year. It was reinforcement that FRenault had made the right call.

Other notable stars to hone their skills in a Tatuus FR2000 in the UK include Lewis Hamilton (2003 champion), Mike Conway (2004), Oliver Jarvis (2005) and other drivers such as Paul di Resta, Alexander Sims and Sam Bird. Throw the net wider to include other regions, and there aren't many modern F1 drivers without some FRenault experience on their CV.

"Räikkönen's F1 move was proof that FRenault had made the right call"

Tatuus' first single-make design was used for a decade - unheard of at the time - and proliferated worldwide. Just under 1000 were built and sold to cover 14 different series - from Estonia to Argentina and Brazil, via China.

It proved a runaway success, with the top-tier Eurocup then bringing the best from multiple regions together.

There were a handful of bodywork revisions, mostly around the bargeboards and sidepods, and a hike in engine power from 185bhp to around 200bhp from 2006, but the base stayed stable for its 10-season life.

Tatuus' FR2000 design was eventually replaced in 2010, but it raced in club-level series such as Formula Renault BARC until 2014, and cars can still be found active elsewhere.

That helps make this design one of the most influential and enduring single-seaters ever.

DPPI

Market view

A stable market exists outside of the UK

After the Formula Renault 2.0 UK series folded in 2012, which was followed by the end of the Protyre Formula Renault series in 2014, demand for the Formula Renault 2000 vehicles fell in the UK market.

The market is now more concentrated around continental Europe and Malaysia, following in the wake of the Formula Renault Eurocup 2.0 and Formula Renault AsiaCup competitions.

With a Clio-derived engine, spares are readily available and not prohibitively expensive, so they do remain popular purchases even now.

Cars typically retail in the £10,000 to £20,000 range with the most publicised Formula Renault 2000 sale being that of Kimi Räikkönen's Manor Motorsport championship-winning car he drove during the 2000 season.

This was the last car he campaigned before moving into Formula 1, and it originally sold at auction in 2015 for £10,620 before it was sold again in 2016 for £13,500.

We don't anticipate prices changing far from their current range as most vehicles are likely to be in the hands of enthusiasts.

Robert Johnson,
Classic and Sports Finance

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Tatuus Formula Renault FR2000 - £10,000 - £20,000

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2003 PORSCHE 996 CARRERA 4S. Basalt Black with full black leather, 59,000 miles only with impeccable Porsche history. Sunroof, alloys, red callipers, rear wipe, air conditioning, sports exhaust, top music. Tiptronic sports gear box. Unmarked, and original. **£26,950**



1983 JAGUAR XJ6 SERIES 3 AUTO Masons black with beige leather. 24,000 miles only from new. National Champion of Champions. All as new Books, Tools, and perfect documentation . . . unique.....**£24,950**



1965 BUICK RIVIERA 445 WILDCAT Clamshell Coupe. Matching numbers, 51800 miles. Original, unrestored and stunning..... **£39,950.**



1992 DAIMLER DOUBLE SIX SERIES 111. White with full black leather and VDP wood veneers, sunroof, Aircond, starfish alloys. One of the last three sold in the UK. 49,000 miles only, FJSH, all books, tools and documentation. A mint original and stunning example.....**£19,950**



2004/5 BENTLEY CONTINENTAL GT. Silver with Tan leather and dark wood veneers. 10 spoke alloys, recent tyres and big service. Usual high specification, 31,700 miles only with FBSH. All books, tools, keys etc. Not to be confused with the normal high mileage average examples available, this car looks 3 years old and is probably the finest available at.....**£29,950**



2008 PORSCHE 997 CARRERA 2 COUPE. Basalt Black with Full Black leather trim, 6 Speed manual, 10 Spoke alloys, Aircond. Electric sports seats, rear wiper, CD/Stereo. 50000 miles only with FPSH, unmarked example ....**£30,950.**



1986 MERCEDES 300SL W 107. Silver with full Blue leather and factory rear seats. Nautic blue hard top and blue mohair soft top. Flat face alloys, previous owner 30 years. Stunning mint and show standards example with 95000 genuine miles with FSH **£32,950**



2000 PORSCHE 996 GT3 MK1. Speed yellow with black leather, aircond, Club sport spec, RS Clutch and flywheel, roll cage, full harness set, short shifter gearbox, 31000 miles only with FPSH. Stunning original example.... **£69,950**



1989 F MERCEDES 300SL W107. Nautic Blue with Grey leather, rear seats. Hard and soft tops, OTG, flat face Alloys. Stunning and original mint car, 108K with full documented history, every MOT, all books and tools, superb late model SL, realistically priced **£29,950**



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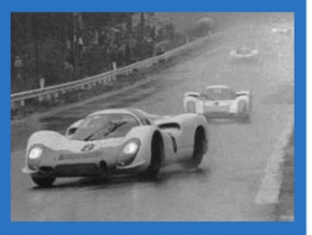
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Buying guide

Austin-Healey MkI 'Frogeye' Sprite

A working-class hero that was perhaps the first true people's sports car



'Frogeye' name arose from a cost-saving design decision

THE TERM 'COBBLED TOGETHER' is an understatement in regards to the Austin-Healey 'Frogeye' Sprite. The 1950s sports car was the product of a new union of car makers, brought about by a surprise joint venture with a rallying star, and put together using a hotchpotch of borrowed parts. The result is perhaps the first truly affordable British sports car.

Back in 1952, the British car industry was struggling in the wake of World War II, and brands such as Austin, MG, Riley and Wolseley merged into a more financially secure package: the British Motor Corporation (BMC). The idea behind this union was to trim costs by standardising production and creating 'badge engineered' versions of similar designs.

But Austin head Leonard Lord was keen to revive Austin's heritage and come up with a design that could do for the casual motorist – and perhaps even amateur racer – what the Austin Seven had done pre-WWII. Austin needed a new, low-cost and accessible offering.

And the spark for such a project came from a chance encounter at the Earls Court Motor Show in 1952 when Lord caught sight of a new open-top sports car constructed by Cornish businessman and avid rally driver, Donald Healey. That was the Healey 100, a custom-built small-run design based on off-the-shelf Austin parts and a powerful 2.5-litre Riley engine and gearbox. It looked great but had a price tag to match due to Healey's ethos of making cars for the upper-end of the market.

Lord and Healey struck a deal for a toned-down version called the Austin-Healey 100, created from the framework of the Austin A90. 14,634 were made between 1953-56, but the production and retail costs were too high to achieve true mass-market potential. That's when Healey's design team set about scripting a lower-cost model, made from the existing parts out of BMC's spares bin.

An A Series 948cc 43bhp engine from the Austin A35 was mated to a standard four-speed BMC gearbox. The A35 also gave up its suspension, and the rack-and-pinion steering from the Morris Minor completed the package. Sounds simple, but the Sprite had a clever twist. Instead of the more expensive

AUSTIN-HEALEY SPRITE MKI 'FROGEYE'

- **Price new** £669
- **Price now** £14,000-£25,000
- **Engine** 948cc A Series in-line four
- **Power** 43bhp ● **0-62mph** 19sec
- **Top speed** 83mph ● **Rivals** Austin-Healey 3000, MGA Roadster
- **Verdict** 'Love it or loathe it' looks mask a truly important 1950s sports car design

GETTY, ALAMY



Distinctive styling came from a practical unibody construction


Sprite's low price and performance made it a hit

practice of mounting the car's body onto a chassis - as used by the 100 - chassis designer Barry Bilbie came up with a single-piece steel unibody design. All the ancillaries could then be mounted to speed up construction time.

It was a good plan, but it led to compromises. For instance, the bodywork was designed without an opening bootlid, for extra rigidity. Instead, it was accessed by swinging the rear seats forward. The bonnet and wings were made from a single piece of steel in that classic clamshell hinge form.

But there was an even more famous compromise. Healey designer Gerry Coker intended the Sprite to have pop-up headlights. But the cost-conscious BMC board baulked at the idea of paying out for the mechanisms and demanded the lights be fixed permanently in the up position. It gave the Sprite its most defining feature and became known as Frogeye (or Bug-Eye in the States).

The £669 Sprite was launched in 1958 and was an immediate success. Despite its low power, the lightweight and agile chassis made it feel and sound fast. Almost 50,000 rolled off the line between 1958-61, and it rejuvenated the Austin name in motor sport, with many club racers using it as an affordable entry-level car.

"The Sprite would rejuvenate the Austin name in motor sport"

Healey even modified a handful of later hard-top Sprite models in 1959 to take on the Sebring 12 Hours event. The 'Sebring Sprites' dominated their class, and earned BMC, and Healey, worldwide PR as the once cobbled-together design became one of the great British motoring innovations.

Market view

The Sprite is an ideal classic car entry point

THE FROGEYE IS AN ARCHETYPAL classic car and has always been a strong contender for consideration as a starter classic for new owners. BMC A-series spares availability and ongoing engine development have remained strong since its release, and with a range of specialists there is plenty of support for ongoing maintenance if required, although most tasks could be completed by a competent DIY mechanic.

Price-wise, the Frogeyes did experience some uplift in values through to the end of 2017, but they weren't the subject of speculation, which has kept them in a sensible price band over the past six or seven years.

Prices start at around £4000 for a restoration project, £10,000-£15,000 will get you a solid useable example, if not concours, £15,000-£20,000 an older restoration and £20,000-£25,000 will get you a recently restored/show-level car.

The outlier for the market value was the sale of a works rally car in 2018, which sold for a price just under £110,000.

We don't anticipate the majority of Frogeyes climbing in value to any marked degree, but it remains a great car to buy and enjoy for those wanting to own a classic car.

Robert Johnson,
Classic and Sports Finance

TARGET DEAL

Austin-Healey Mk1 'Frogeye' Sprite - £14000 - £25,000

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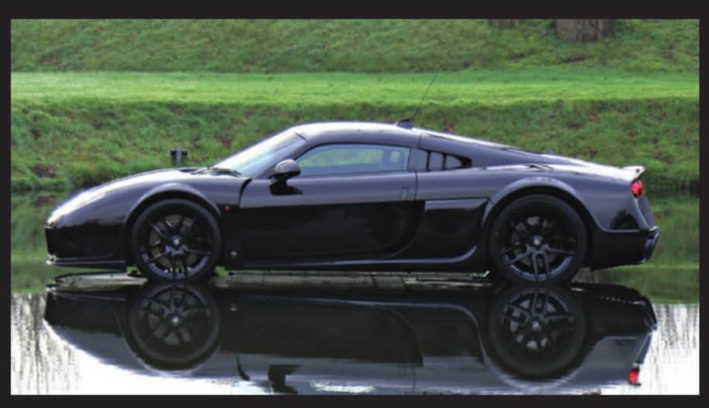
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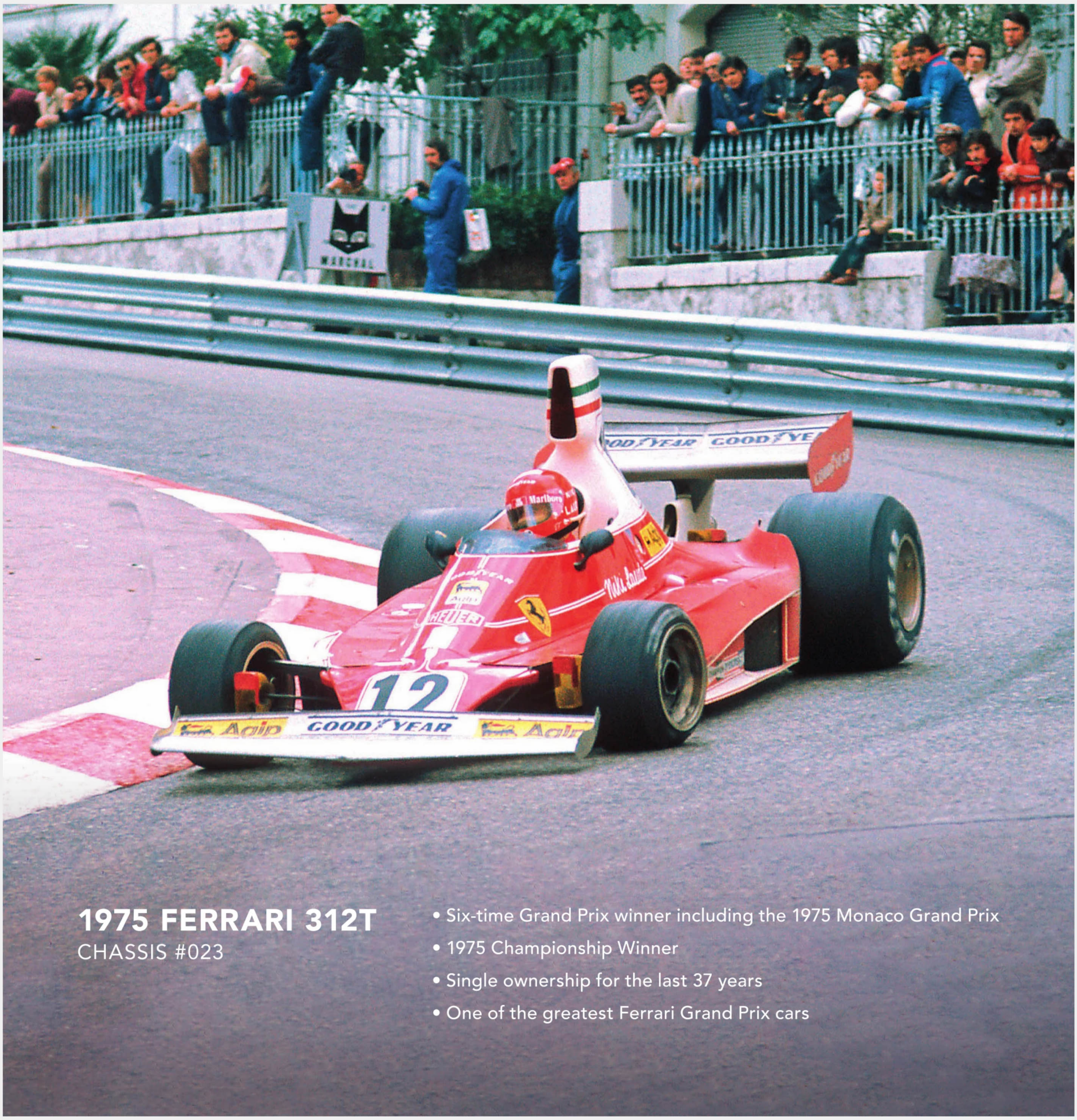
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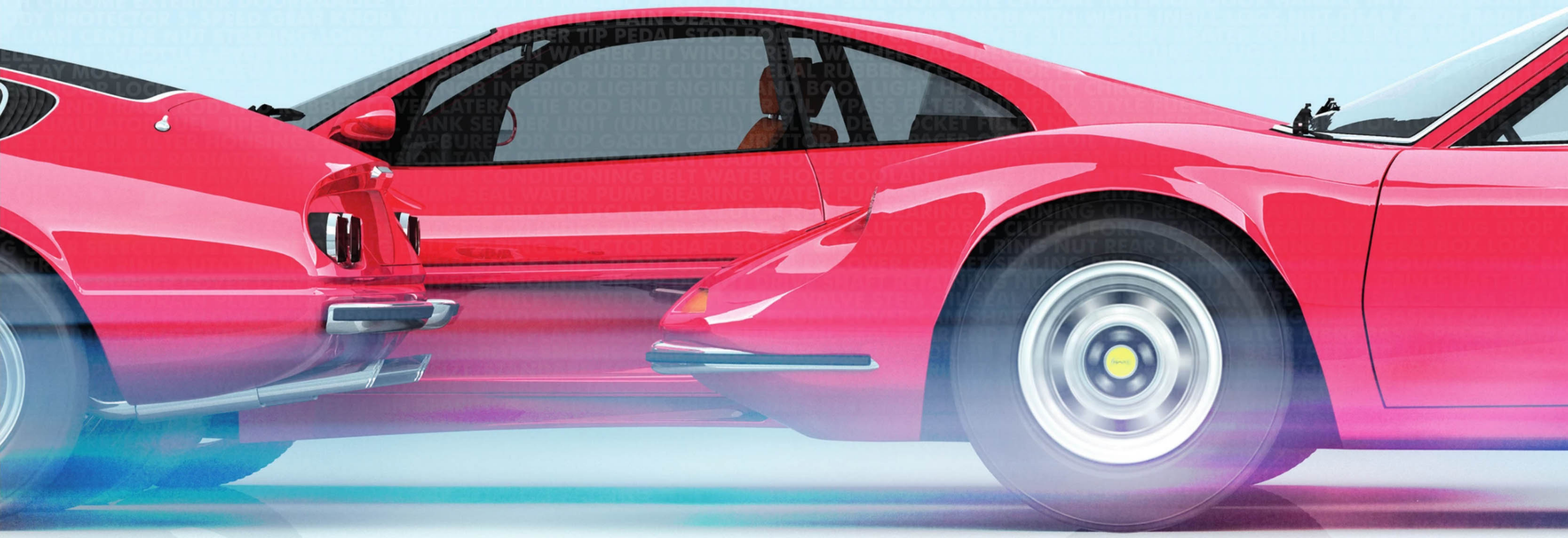
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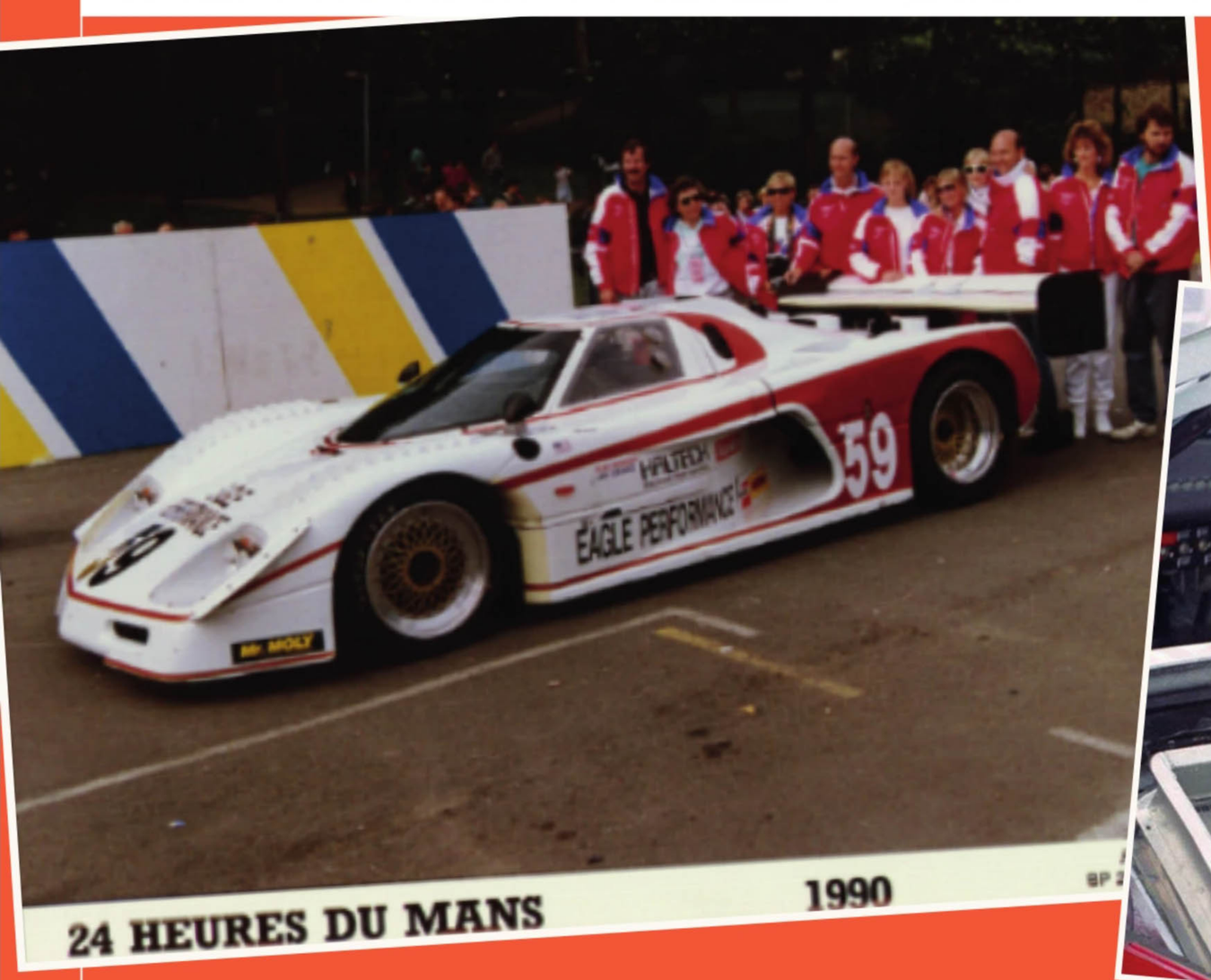
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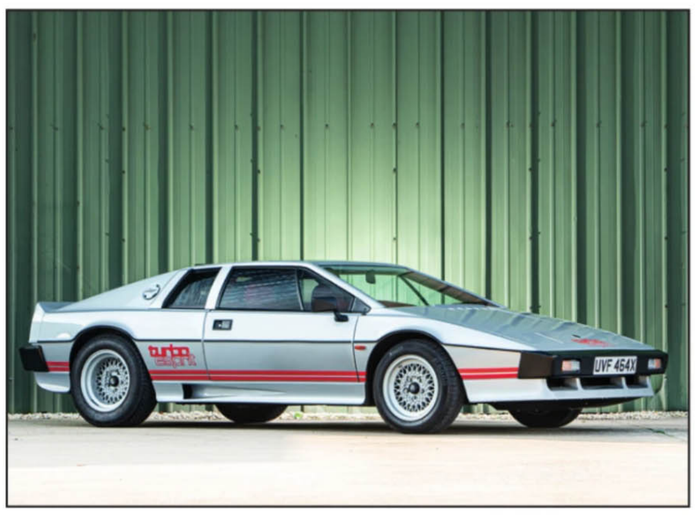
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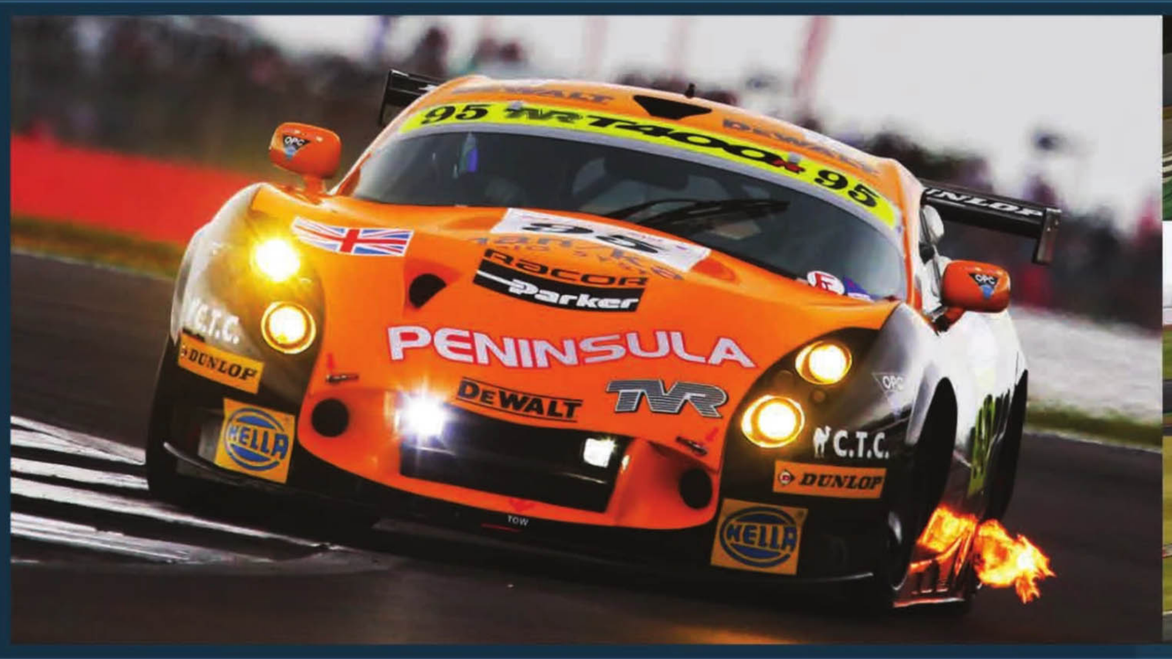
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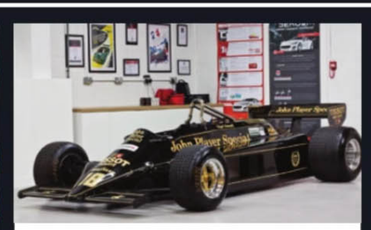
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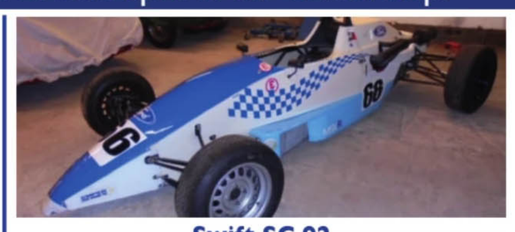
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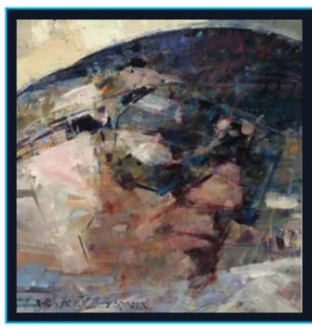
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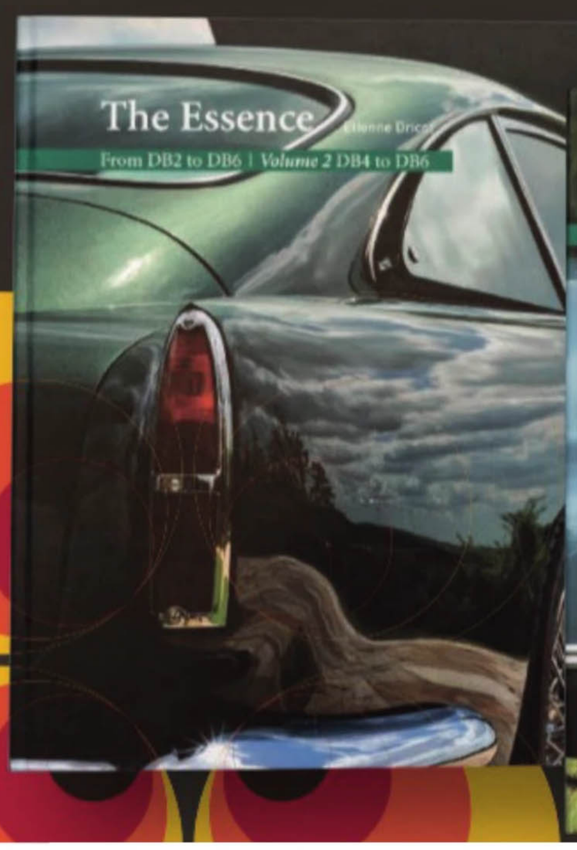
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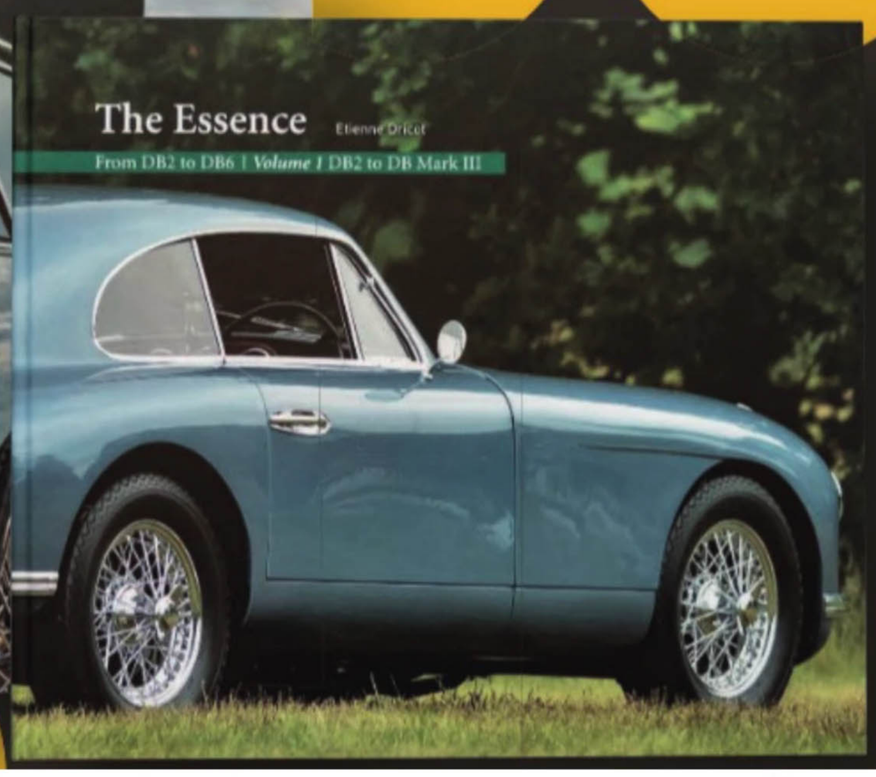
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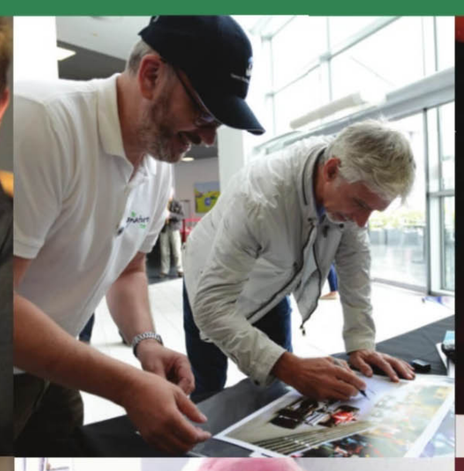
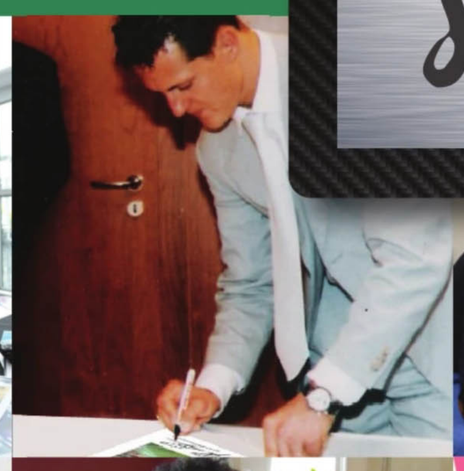
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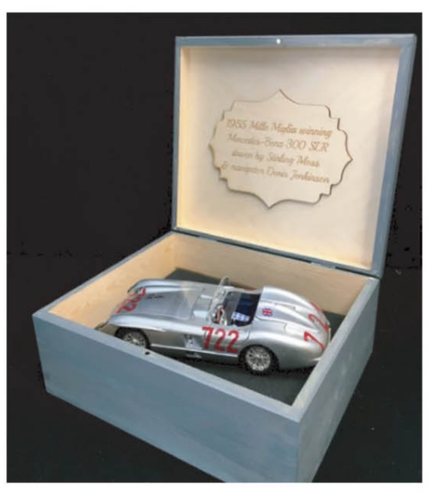








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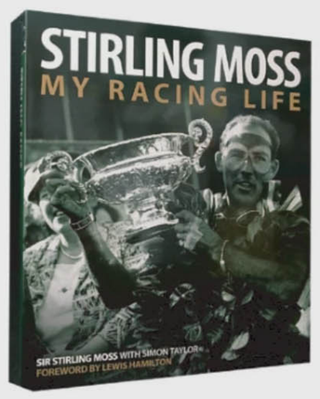


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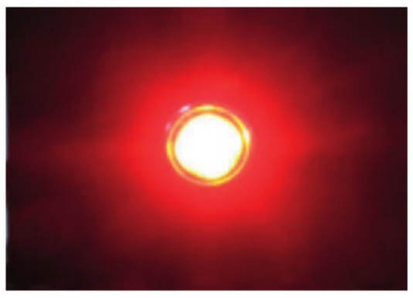
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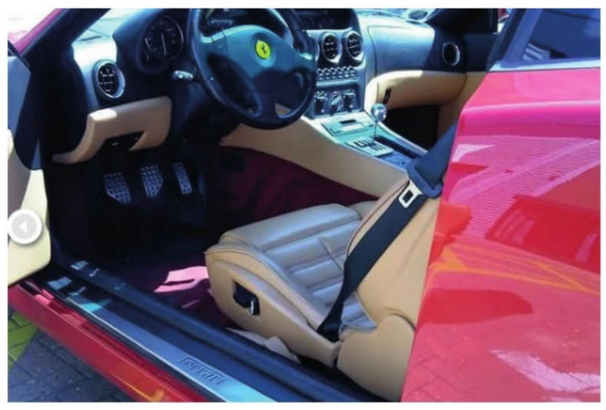
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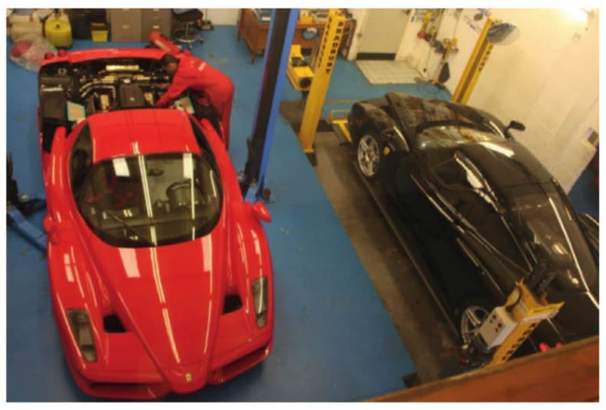


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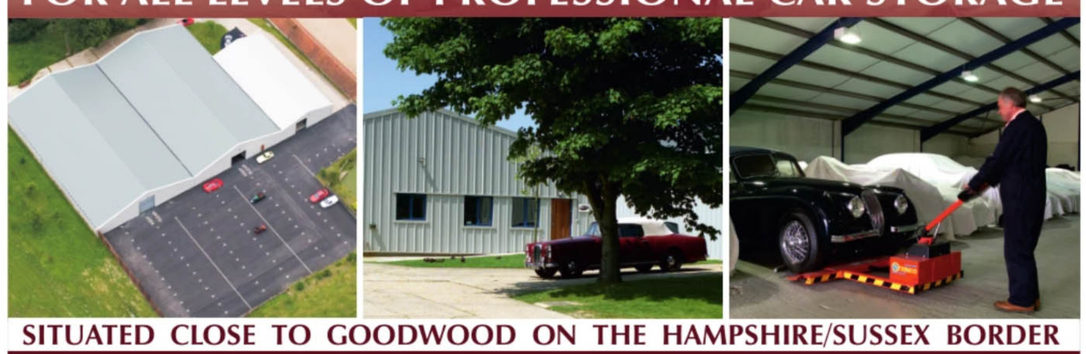
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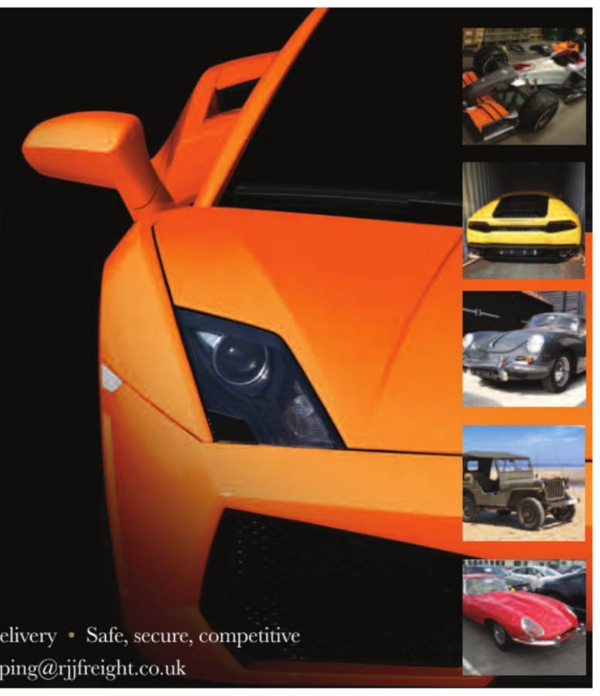
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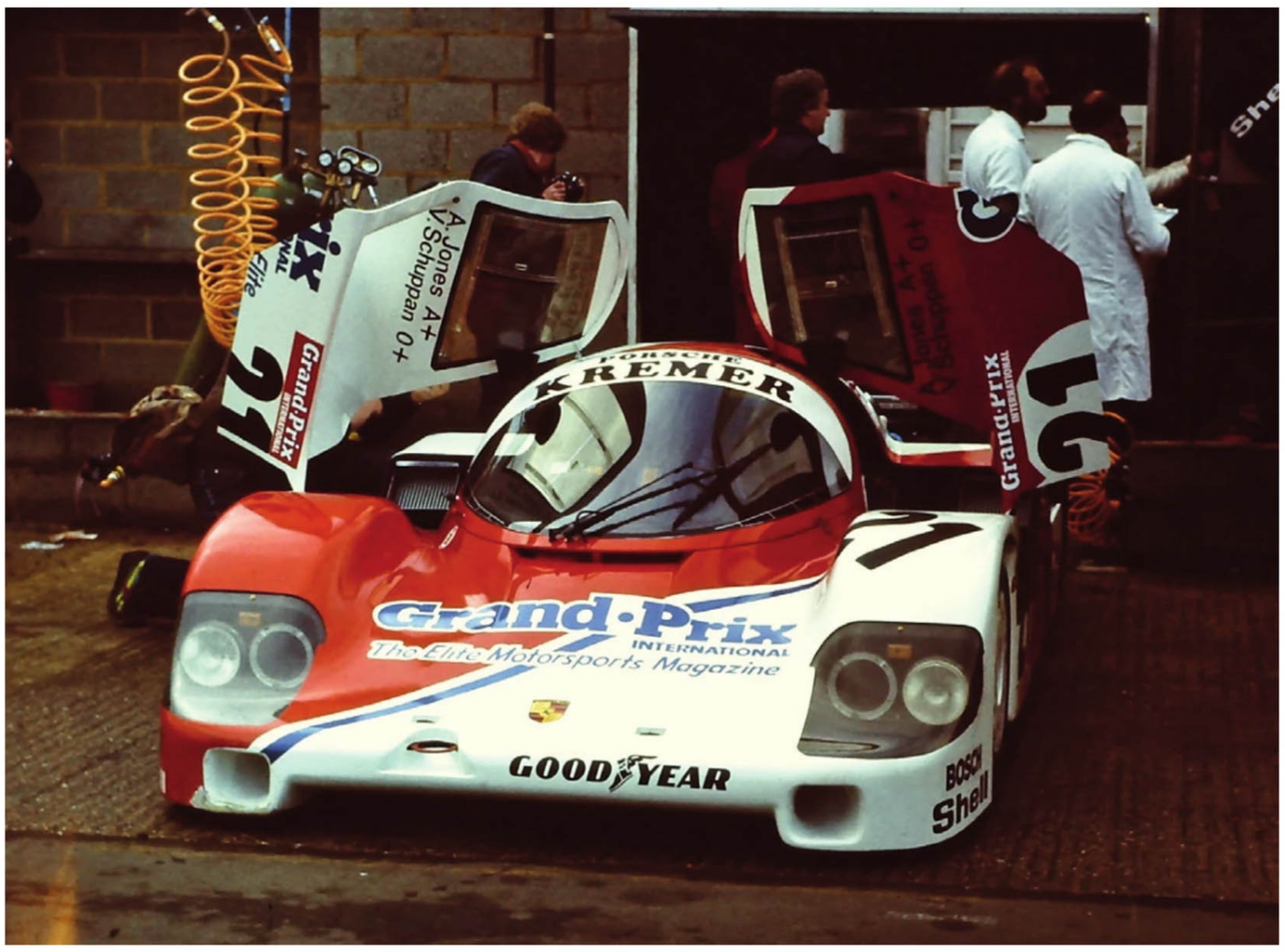






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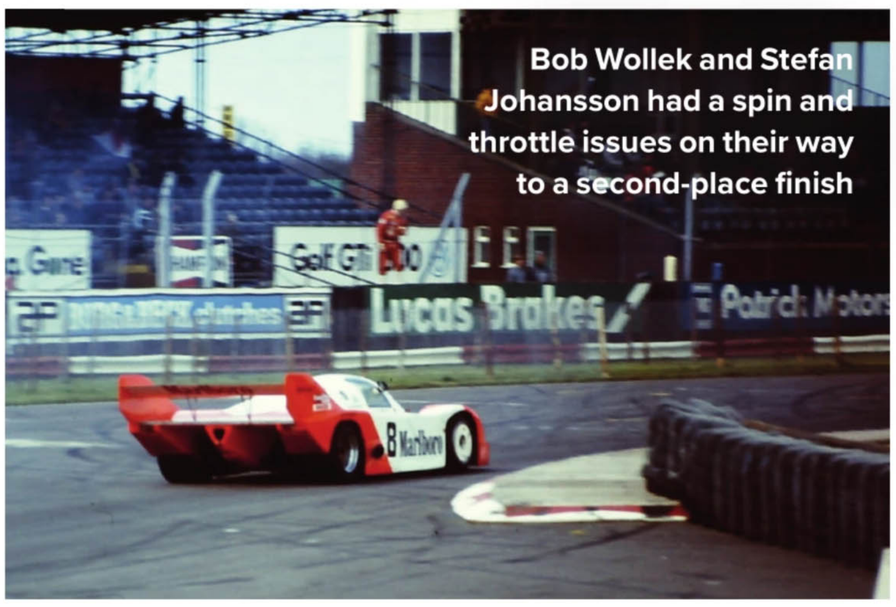
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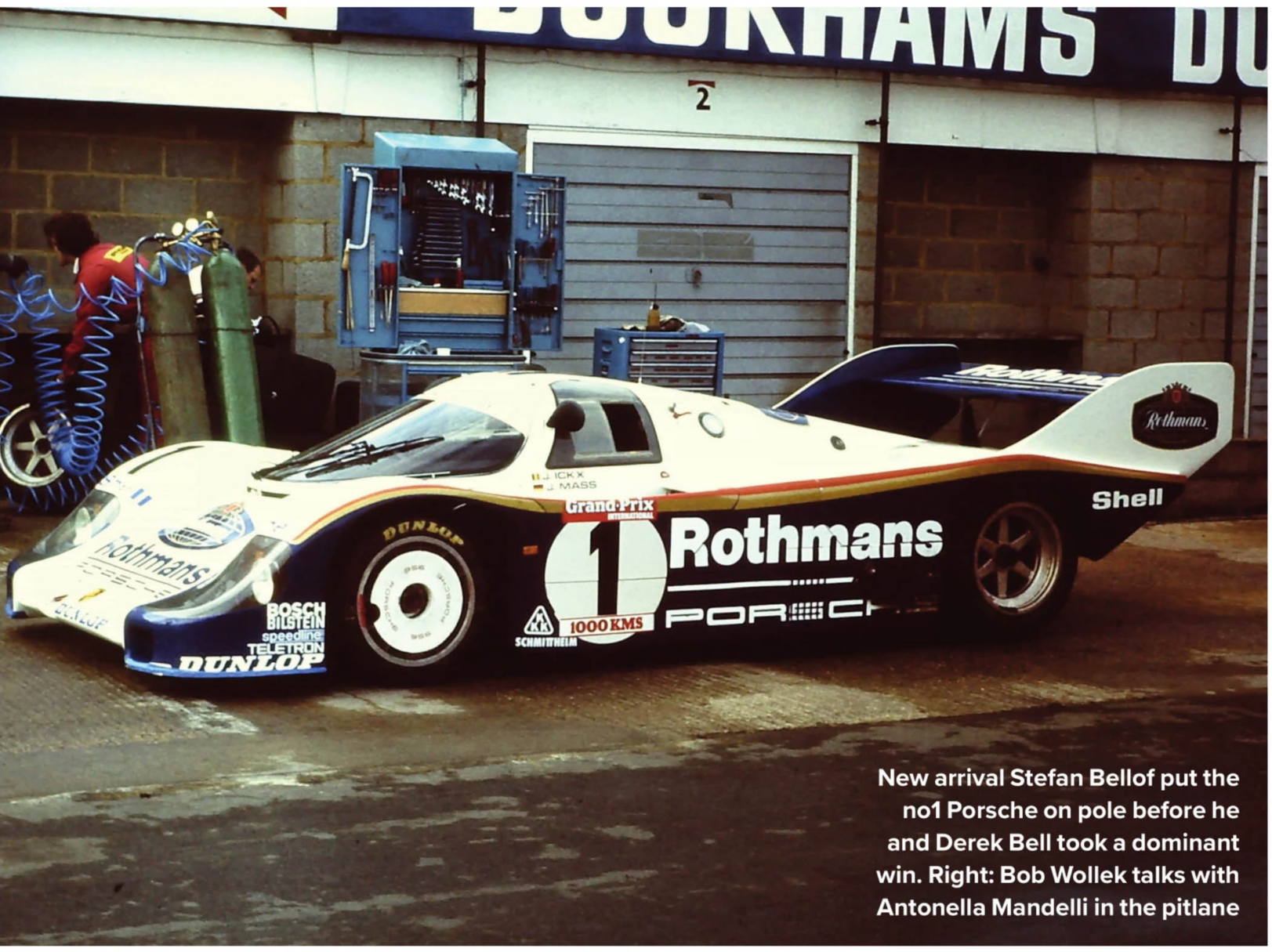


Left: Alan Jones made his WSC Group C debut with Kremer Porsche, alongside Vern Schuppan. Below: No18 Obermaier Porsche finished eighth after rivals had trouble









New arrival Stefan Bellof put the no1 Porsche on pole before he and Derek Bell took a dominant win. Right: Bob Wollek talks with Antonella Mandelli in the pitlane

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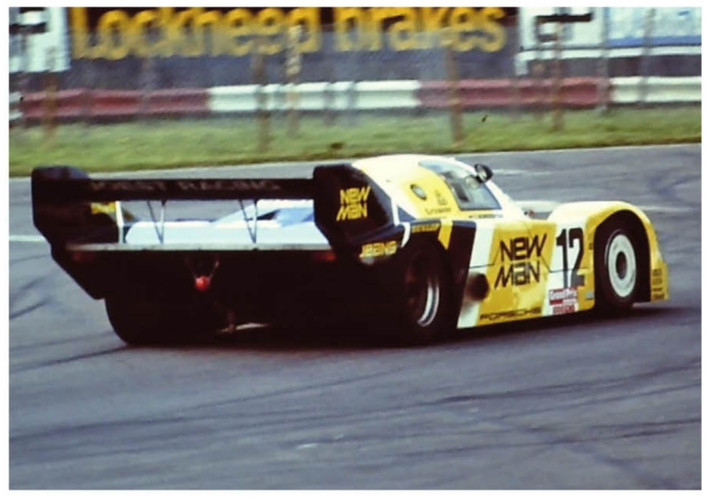
If you have any photographs that might be suitable for *You Were There*, please send them to: *Motor Sport*, 18-20 Rosemont Road, London, NW3 6NE or email them to: editorial@motorsportmagazine.co.uk



Thierry Boutsen and Jan Lammers took their Porsche 956 to third after gear problems, sweeping the podium for the Stuttgart brand

When Porsche ruled Group C

Porsche set the standard in the Group C era, but it faced rare stern opposition at Silverstone in 1983. **Brian Blair** was there to see the Stuttgart marque prevail and lock out the podium



Joest-run Porsche of Hans Heyer, Volkert Merl and Clemens Schickentanz retired, but it didn't feature in the leading Porsche vs Lancia battle



Lancia hoped recent tests had ended tyre woes. After leading the opening stint, overheating forced the two LC2s into retirement

PARTING SHOT



GRAND PRIX PHOTO



4 AUGUST, 1969
GERMAN GRAND PRIX

Jacky Ickx stole the show at the Nürburgring in 1969, sealing pole in his Brabham-Ford. Then, after dropping to eighth following an average start, he battled back to lead the final eight of 14 laps eventually taking the victory and the fastest lap following a duel with Jackie Stewart.

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1969 Jaguar E type 4.2 Series II Roadster finished in Signal Red with beige hide interior. This fine motor car was the subject of an in-depth restoration back in 2010-2011 by renowned Jaguar restorers M&C Wilkinson. Fitted with new chrome wire wheels and a 5 speed Getrag gearbox, it comes with a very detailed history file and is now very sensibly priced at **£82,500**



1964 Jaguar E Type 3.8 Series I Roadster as road tested by Classic and Sportscar magazine this month. This is a fully restored Motor Car that is in perfect condition throughout and drives as you would expect. It still carries its original Coventry registration number and comes with a Jaguar Heritage certificate confirming that it retains its original engine. 3600 miles only since the restoration and sensibly priced at **£139,950**



1973 Aston Martin V8 Fuel injection finished in Midnight Blue with pale grey hide interior. This car has been the subject of a restoration costing in excess of £135,000 between 2007 and 2015 and has had very little use since. The car was stripped to a bare shell and repaired and repainted, the engine and all other moving parts have been rebuilt to the highest standard and this car is now fabulous. It comes with a huge history file and is very sensibly priced at **£89,950**



1997 Aston Martin V8 Coupe finished in Mendip Blue with Parchment hide interior piped in blue with best quality Wilton carpet throughout. It comes with full Aston service history and was the property of the first owner for 18 years. It is a limited edition of just 101 cars, making it rarer than DB4's 5's & 6's. Fitted with automatic transmission, climate control and power assisted steering, it is a very relaxing car to drive. Recently reduced for a quick sale to only **£69,950**



2002 Aston Martin DB7 Vantage with Visual Driving Dynamics Upgrade, finished in Aston Racing Green with Forest green and parchment hide interior. In the same ownership for the past 10 years, the specification includes Touchtronic transmission, Climate control, electric heated seats, Aston Satellite Navigation, heated front and rear screens, a leather steering wheel and 18" alloy wheels. The car is very rewarding to drive and we believe that it is likely to hold its value if kept in this condition. Sensibly priced at **£27,950**



2000 Aston Martin DB7 Vantage Manual, finished in Porsche Cobalt blue with Pacific blue and Parchment hide interior. This exceptional example has covered just under 38,000 and has a fully stamped up service history. It has had just 3 owners from new and has been kept in exemplary condition. Specification includes 6 speed manual transmission, electric heated seats, fully adjustable steering column, heated front and rear screens and 18" alloy wheels. Manual versions of the DB7 Vantage were produced in very low numbers and to find one in this condition is becoming rare. Not expensive at **£36,950**



2013 Aston Martin 4.7 Vantage Coupe finished in Onyx Black with matching Obsidian black hide interior with large silver stitching and a Tailors Grey headlining. This is a 2 owner car that comes with a complete Aston Martin service history and has covered 54,000 miles from new. Just serviced and recent new clutch and driving correctly. Very competitively priced at **£38,950**



2011 Jaguar XKR Supercharged Coupe finished in Midnight Black with contrasting warm Charcoal hide interior with Piano black cappings. This 3 owner example is in stunning condition and comes with a complete Jaguar service history with every service invoice from 2013. The car is in unmarked condition and wonderful value at only **£21,450**

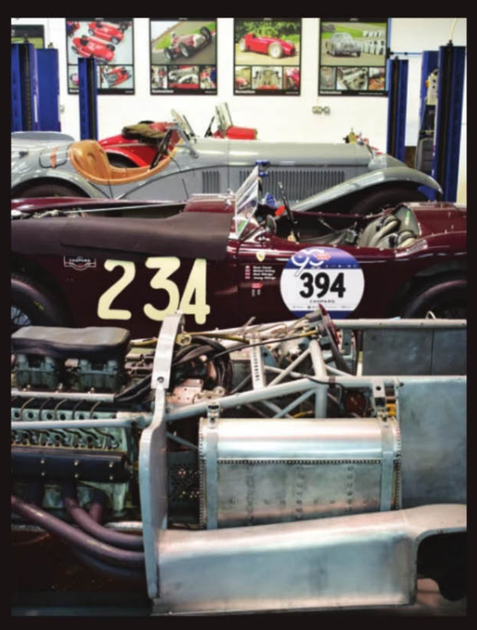
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