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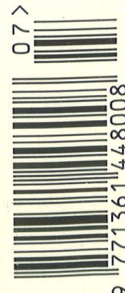
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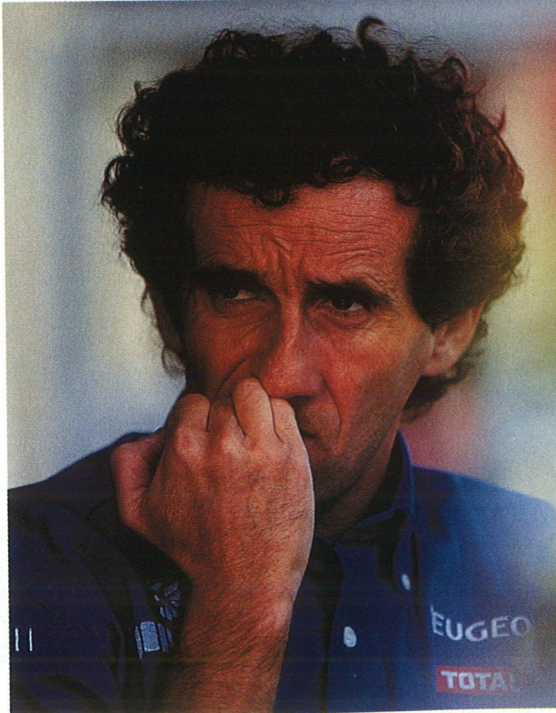


► 54 To the victor ... the spoiled holiday. Schuey hurt his ankle, so Irvine had to fill the testing breach

# F1 RACING

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▲80 Alain Prost won lots of races as a driver – a good habit. Now look at him. Chewing his nails and not winning – bad habits



◀ 119 Tall and tanned and young and lovely, the girl from Interlagos. We talk about the GP too



# Contents

- 10 **Parade** The best pictures in the best F1 magazine
- 20 **Ralf Schumacher** My life with Williams: part three
- 22 **Eddie Jordan** F1's drummer man gets lost in music
- 26 **Pitpass** Who, what, why, where, when & how much
- 36 **F1 to one** Eddie Irvine and Gary Anderson crack on
- 40 **Backfire** Soapbox or hobby horse? It's your choice

119 **Grand prix debrief** We apologise for the five-week loss of F1 sounds and pictures and, without further ado, we are going straight to Interlagos for round two

- 126 **Postcard** Smile, you're on pages 126-7 of *F1 Racing*
- 128 **Murray Walker** There's no smoke without fiery pants
- 132 **Fantasy F1** Made-up game with a real Monaco prize
- 134 **Backstraight** We lift the lid off replica crash helmets
- 138 **Black flag** F1's new track unveiled – Silverstone

**COVER STORY**

44 **Ralf Schumacher**  
Arrogant? No. Immature? No. As good as his brother? Not yet. Potentially? Yeah, maybe. Time is on his side

**CHASING SHADOWS**

54 **F1 testing**  
A weekend in Melbourne, followed by a month off, then a jaunt to Brazil. Sounds blissful. In fact, it was stressful

**MR METICULOUS**

64 **Ron Dennis**  
He's smart and smooth. His silver team is setting F1's gold standard. A life where image and content triumph

**WORLD DOMINATION**

70 **Ayrton Senna**  
His feud with Alain Prost at McLaren pushed the team to the limit. Ron Dennis breaks his silence on this era

**A NATION EXPECTS**

80 **Alain Prost**  
He made F1 look easy – as a driver. Team ownership has been a different story, but will it have the same end?

**I AM WHAT I AM**

86 **Alex Wurz**  
There's an American doctor who can cut a few inches out of your legs. F1's six-footer never wants to meet him

**THE HILL**

96 **A slice of tifosi life**  
Down in Imola's paddock, the glitterati are being wined and dined. Up on Imola's hill, the tifosi are living rough

**WHO WE'RE GONNA CALL**

106 **F1's reserve team**  
If every F1 race driver was abducted by aliens, who would the team owners turn to for advice? Ahem

**NOTHING DIFFERENT, EVERYTHING CHANGED**

114 **McLaren's first mechanic**  
Thirty-three years ago Wally Willmott helped set up McLaren. We reunited him with the team in Australia

◀ 106 F3000 frontrunner Nick Heidfeld is on our F1 shortlist. Now we must wait for the aliens to land!

► 96 Ecowarriors climb trees to protest bypasses; tifosi climb trees to cheer their heroes as they pass by



▲44 He is not just the world's most famous little brother, he's fast, he's smart and he drives a Williams. Ralf Schumacher is his own man



▲70 In our second extract from Christopher Hilton's new Senna book, Ron Dennis talks about the Senna-Prost days



## And then there were two



I WOULDN'T SUGGEST for a minute that any one of Formula 1's chosen 22 weren't trying. Newcomer Stéphane Sarrazin was. You don't spin 10 times without pressing the metal. Rubens Barrichello was – and wasn't it great to see him lead, and lead well? And what about Jean Alesi? There are times when that bloke can touch the moon; there are times when he can only howl at it.

Yep, they all had a dip at Interlagos, a circuit whose unusual left-handed thread attempts to unscrew your head from its shoulders, and whose jarring bumps, in boxing parlance, work to the body.

But F1 reality bit, and bit hard, in Brazil. Oz's fantastical yellow brick road was dug up and replaced by the Schumacher *autobahn*, along which only *he* and Mercedes-engined cars are allowed to proceed. With DC parked on the hard shoulder more often than not, this road only has two lanes, yet

there is no pressing need for it to be widened. You see, there are only two that matter out there at the moment. The rest can only try their hardest.

Trouble is, their hardest left Eddie Irvine almost a minute behind his team-mate when he was forced to make an unplanned pitstop – on lap 56. It also meant (in, I must stress, no particular order) that the tinman, scarecrow and lion of Oz were doing their utmost not to be lapped in Brazil. They failed.

What made it worse was that Schuey stepped from the car after six-dozen qualifying laps looking as fresh as a daisy – as usual – while Mika Hakkinen set the fastest lap of the race just two from the end while resting his head on the cockpit side. Does the McLaren have an armrest?

And so the season's pattern is set: the ever-improving Mika versus the ever-improving Michael.

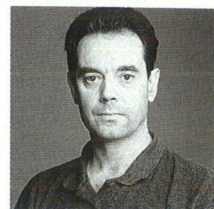
**Paul Fearnley**

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### Jon Nicholson

This ex-yacht racer loves to document everything F1 you will never see on TV. This passion led him up Imola's Rivazza hill. "It's a rebellion against the perfectness of the paddock." He's not kidding. Check out his images on page 96.



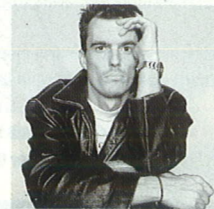
### Nick Wright

Not for him noisy cars blasting past just feet away at 200mph. The man who gives our *Backstraight* section its cool gloss, prefers sedentary subjects. He can make tins of cat food look tasty; we gave him some F1 helmets. Be warned!



### Christophe Gaillard

As the editor of our just-launched French language edition, this man knows what it's like to create a new team under pressure. So he's probably cut Alain Prost more slack (page 80) than the other members of his expectant nation.



### Charles Best

He's done them all – from Rio Ferdinand to Melanie Sykes – and now to Ron Dennis (page 64). He was impressed by Ron's attitude. "Everyone was nervous about upsetting him, but he walked into his office and just got on with it."



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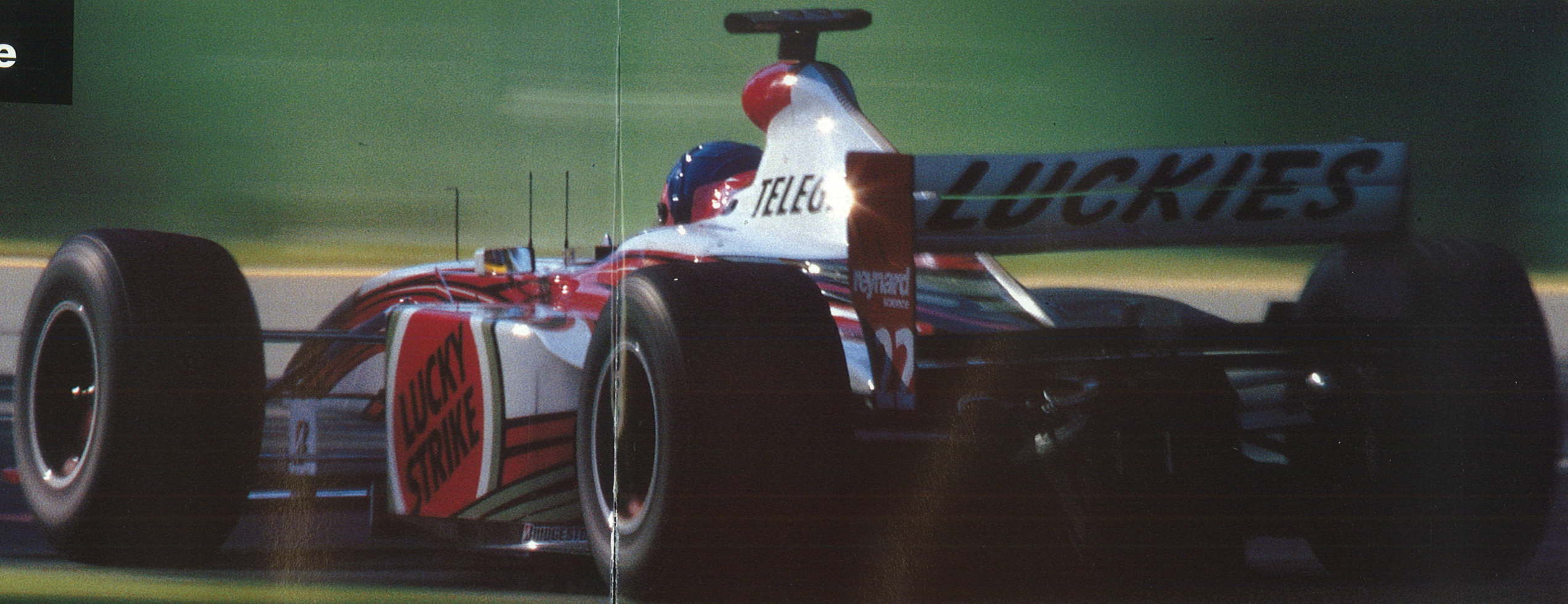
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**Make sure you capture my best side**

The time for hype is long gone. The season is under way and there's still so much to learn. The car needs more speed and better reliability; the team needs time to gel. But BAR can rely on Villeneuve for his total commitment. Rely on him to make their luck. Rely on him to make them stand out from the crowd. Rely on him.

*Photograph by Paul Henri Cahier, Canon EOS 1RS, 600mm lens (1.4 converter), Fuji Velvia film, 1/30 at F18*

**Damon's got an eye for detail**

Okay, it was a difficult start to the season for Damon, being blown off by his teammate Heinz-Harald Frentzen in Australia. So, to Barcelona for testing to get his season back on track before Brazil. Time to refocus, bounce back, get the car right on these God-forsaken four-grooved tyres - and be faster than Frentzen.

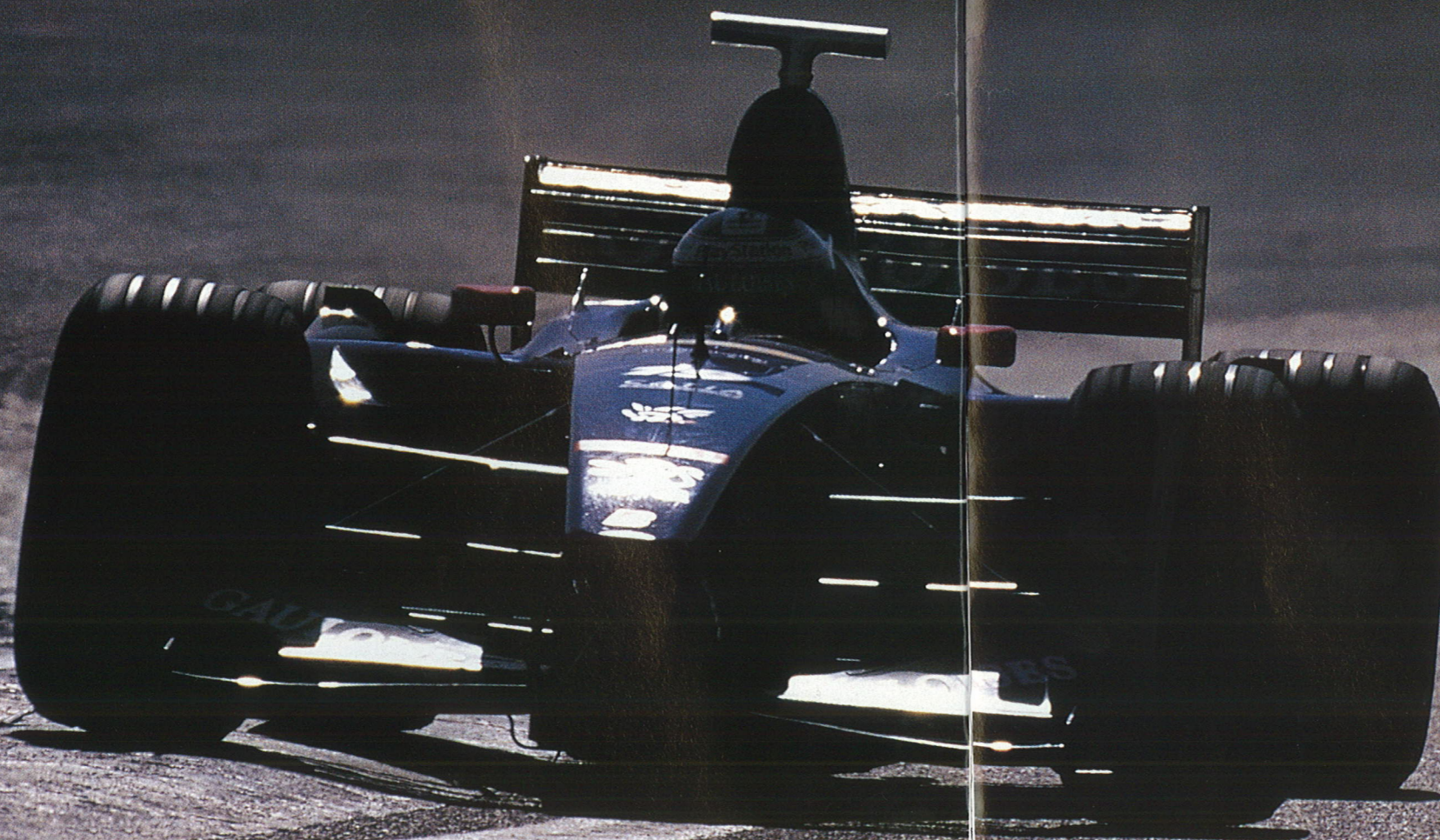
*Photograph by Darren Heath, Canon EOS 1n, 200mm lens with 1.4 converter, Fuji Velvia film, 1/125 at F2.8*



**Trulli spotted kerb crawling**

Pressure. It's a powerful thing and it's on Jarno Trulli right now. He's been marked as one to watch this year but unless he starts finishing races, people will soon forget. F1's fickle like that. So at the Barcelona test session after Melbourne, Jarno is putting the hours in. He has to. France and Italy are expecting. Talk about pressure...

**Photograph by Darren Heath, Canon EOS 1n, 600mm lens, Fuji Velvia film, 1/640 at F11**



**Irv's point of focus**

He's taken the plaudits and sunk the beers. Life sure was good for a while. But Eddie is soon brought back to earth by those big cheeses at Maranello. Schuey's their man, as if Irv needed reminding, so off testing the Ulsterman goes, to find the advantage Michael needs to bring Ferrari back the title.

*Photograph by Darren Heath,  
Canon EOS 1n, 200mm lens with  
1.4x converter, Fuji Velvia film,  
1/640 at F5.6*

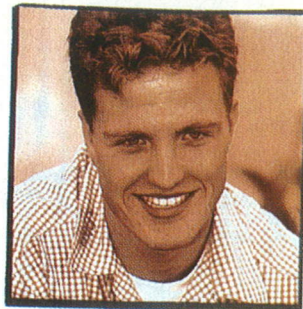




**All the fun of the fair**

It's a busy life. Pose for a camera, complete an interview, sign a book, meet a sponsor, test a car, brief an engineer ... take a fairground ride! Hanging around between grands prix can get a little tedious, but the Benetton boys seem to have found themselves a happy mix.

*Photograph by Mark Thompson, Canon EOS 1n, 20-35mm lens, Fuji Velvia film, 1/250 at F8*



## Ralf Schumacher

A nice rest despite no test, Ralf scored points under pressure in Brazil and became an uncle again to boot

IT WAS STRANGE TO HAVE FIVE WEEKS between Melbourne and Interlagos, particularly as we now have a limit on the testing we can carry out between races. Before this new rule, we probably would have been testing a couple of weeks after the Australian GP and then again in the build-up to Brazil. This rule is quite strange, because there is quite a lot of discussion about how many days we can actually have for testing. In theory it is 50 days – 25 official 'Bridgestone' days and 25 private days – but the two Bridgestone development teams, McLaren and Ferrari, are allowed to carry out tyre development above the 25-day limit; meanwhile, the 25 private days are defined by an allocation of 200 tyres. We have not tested as much as we would like, and are still right on our projected limit, but other teams seem to be testing more than we are. We shall see.

Anyway, we ran at Barcelona before Brazil, working on improvements to the oil system, something that had the Supertec mechanics diving for the oil tank whenever we pulled into the garage in Melbourne, plus other development areas. You will have seen by now that we ran modified barge boards on the car in Brazil; these were one of several improvements the team made at that Barcelona test. Generally speaking, we didn't do as much running as we would have liked due to a few mechanical problems, but in most respects we progressed.


I flew straight back to Europe after the Melbourne race to go to work for the

sponsors and then to play uncle again, helping Michael welcome his new son, Mick, into the world. Mother and baby are doing fine, although it's not clear whether Mick watched football or Formula 1 over the Brazilian GP weekend.

We went to Brazil hoping to build on our Melbourne performance and things clicked together pretty well as the week progressed. I played quite a lot of tennis at the hotel, which meant spending most of the time trying not to laugh at the attempts of my manager, Franz Tost, to volley at the net. But then I really enjoyed the feeling of getting back into the car again.

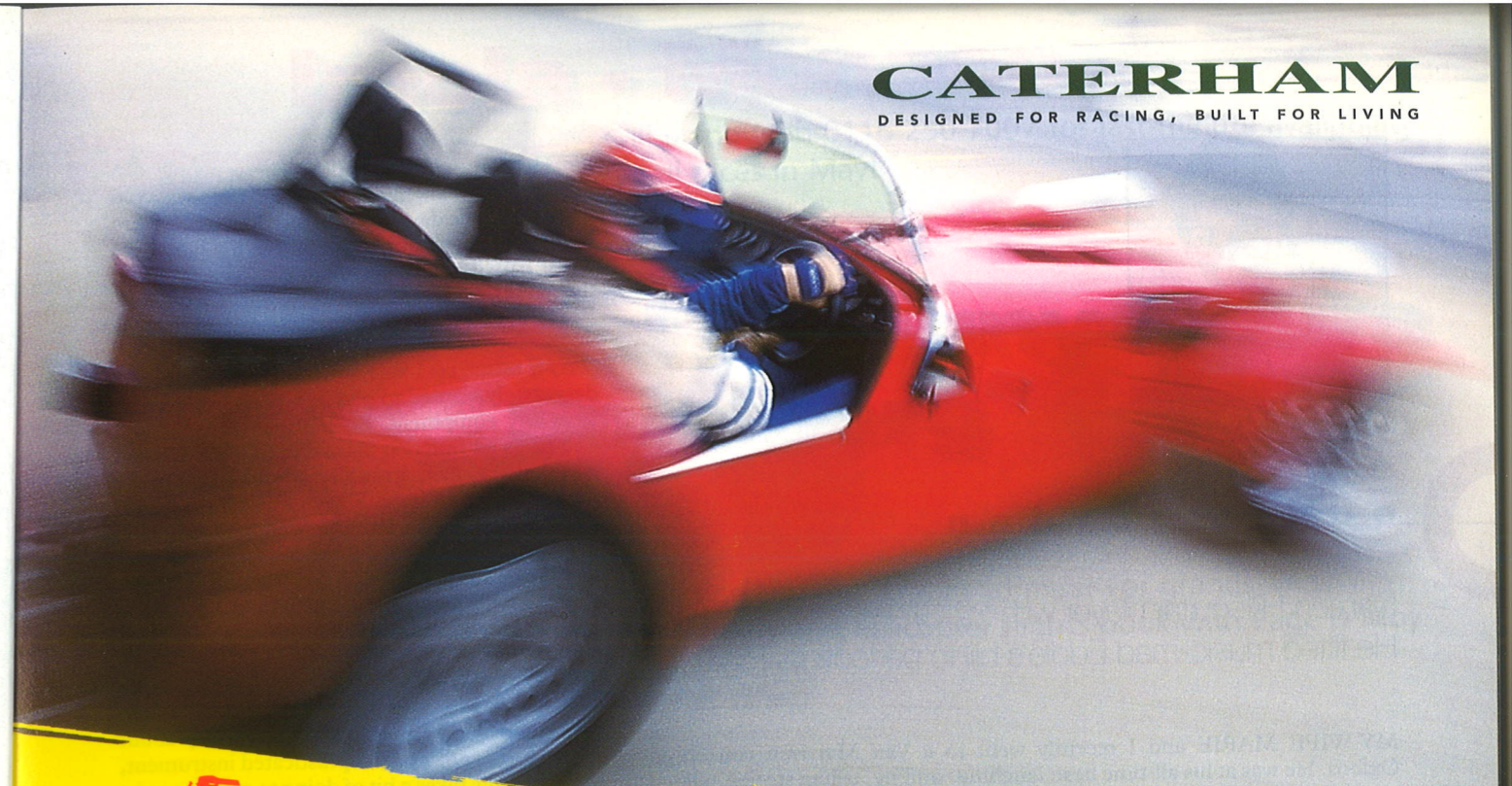
We chose to run the harder Bridgestone compound in the race, which meant that we had to sacrifice some qualifying speed, but we felt it was worth the gamble. The new pitlane exit at Interlagos is much longer than it was last year, and the left-hander that takes it through to the back straight is the sort of corner that would be quite exciting in the wet. The officials decided to carry the 75mph speed limit right through this corner almost to the circuit itself, which we worked out as an additional 14 seconds on top of the normal pitstop time. In other words, a one-stop strategy suddenly looked much more attractive than a two-stopper.

The race was pretty hard – as hard as I've driven, I'd say. I made a pretty good start but got boxed in a bit at the first corner, which meant falling in line and staying out of trouble. We knew that quite a few people would be looking at two stops, so for a while it was just a question of making up as much ground as possible without taking any risks. I was pleased to be right up with Irvine and Frentzen by the time I came in for my stop, and then I really pushed hard to try to catch Heinz-Harald. The tyres went off a bit, which meant that I had to nurse them, and then we found that we were something like -4kg on fuel because of a problem in the pitstop.

I had to try to conserve as much fuel as possible and when Eddie started to catch me in the closing laps I think everyone was getting pretty nervous. I had set the car up with enough wing to be quick through the last few corners, giving me some sort of positioning on the straight, and it worked pretty well. Eddie was filling my mirrors, but by the time we were accelerating up through the gears I always had a margin on him. We decided to take a risk on the fuel so long as I was in front of Eddie ... and in a way it was good that I was a lap behind. I'm not sure that we would have made it through 72 laps! 

**'I played a lot of tennis at the hotel, spending most of the time trying not to laugh at my manager's attempts to volley'**

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## eddie jordan

Damon Hill: guitar player with 22 GP wins to his name. He fitted music-mad Eddie's bill to perfection. Play on

MY WIFE MARIE and I recently went to a Van Morrison concert in Oxford. He was at his all-time best: laughing, smiling, telling stories, talking about all sorts of weird things. You could hear very clearly that he hasn't lost his Belfast accent after all these years on the road.

He's like an old friend. One of the first places I took Marie when we started going out together was to hear Van play in Dublin. He would sing with his band Them every Sunday afternoon in a place called Stella House. The gig was known as The Teenies and ran from 5pm to about 7.30pm, so you didn't have to tell your parents you were at a dance - even though it must have been pretty obvious when you came home with lipstick and whatever else on your clothes.

That aside, I really loved the music. It was part of my life, just as it is for anyone living in Ireland. Music, poetry and folklore are interwoven in our history. It goes back to the days when families had to provide all their own entertainment. For instance, my memory of Christmas Day was not the dinner. It was two things: excitement over the presents and the fact that, after dinner, every single member of the family had to stand up and do their party piece.

My mother would do an unbelievable jig with everyone clapping out the beat. And that's when I learned to play the spoons, because they were a very inexpensive way of making music. Everyone did their thing. It explains why such a small country should produce such a phenomenal amount of talent: people like the Corrs, the Cranberries,


the Hothouse Flowers, U2. These people can get up and do anything. It derives from the cold evenings in the days before television, when there was no money about. I was still in my late teens when I used to walk a mile or so to a friend of the family to watch the European Cup Final. Being allowed in to see television was just as important as the event itself.

As a teenager, I was a bit confused because I desperately wanted to play in a band but I didn't have any equipment. So I played in what was known as an 'interval band'. The way it worked was that the main attraction would take a break for about half an hour. That's where the interval band came in. The promoters wanted someone to keep the show going by coming forward to play the vacated equipment. That was right up my street. That's how I started playing the drums.

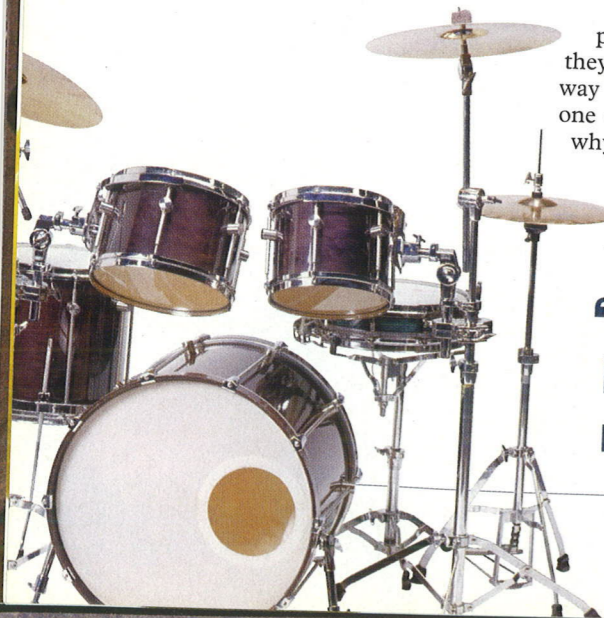
I was very much into Irish music, which was a culture in itself. Pub life revolved around Celtic music and I learned to play the *bodhran* - which is the hand-held drum like the one you may have seen me playing on the TV documentary about the team. It's not a very sophisticated instrument, but it actually takes a bit of doing to get your wrist to work the double-sided stick to hit both the up beat and down beat; sounds complicated but it's not that bad.

An interest in rock music followed its natural course. A friend played for an interval band and that's how I first met Marie: she was going out with the bass player! We started to go out together some time after that. They weren't exactly rock concerts; more like rock dances. If there was a good band playing, you got up and danced. Irish tradition dictates there's not much point in going to hear music if you're forced to sit down. You get up and jump all over the place. You want to come out saying: 'Jayzus, that was wild!'

The only drawback with getting into motor racing was that music had to take a back seat. Even so, there are advantages because I now have contact with top musicians and singers. I may not be able to even get close to their talent but, because of my background, I am able to understand and appreciate what they do. And having Damon along as well adds to the fun. In Melbourne, for example, we had a new band called Fateless as guests of Benson and Hedges Jordan for the weekend.

George Harrison was also there and, in a way, that sums up my appreciation of all kinds of music; classical, rock-'n'-roll, reggae, anything. If pushed, I'd say my favourites are people like Tom Petty, Bob Seger and Bruce Springsteen. It's not that I listen to them all the time, but these are the people I come back to most. It's my era, I suppose. Good and clean, raucous and hard. Music that's pumping. Really rips you up. I love it. 

**'The only drawback with getting into motor racing was that the music had to take a back seat'**



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# Striving for excellence



In the 200mph sport of Formula One, where cutting-edge technology is commonplace, attention to detail can make all the difference.

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Even a relatively standard part like the mandatory wheel locking mechanism, which keeps the tyres and nuts in place when the car is in action, are subject to such comprehensive scrutiny.

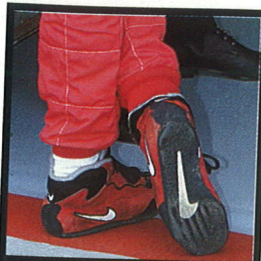
British American Racing machine these parts at their Brackley headquarters. This not only guarantees that the components are produced to the highest calibre, every time, but that they are made when the team needs them.

To pass the team's rigorous quality control, that good job means ensuring the 50 locking mechanisms which are manufactured each year are made to a tolerance of 0.1 millimetres. In exact terms, and BAR are a team that like dealing in exacts, that is the width of just 20 human hairs.

It may sound like taking things to extremes, but it is part of every day Formula One life at British American Racing as they strive for excellence both on and off the track.

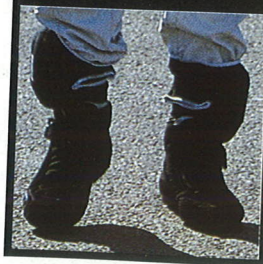


A wealth of stories including stories of wealth



## If the Schu doesn't fit

NIKE HAVE DUMPED Michael Schumacher after the sports clothing company was unable to decide how best to use the German in their advertising campaigns. Their partnership yielded just one rather unremarkable TV ad – very unlike Nike. Schumacher still has a tentative deal with Nike Germany. The eagle-eyed among you may have noticed that he was still wearing Nikes in Brazil (above). Meanwhile, David Coulthard (below) has finalised an Adidas deal, but he is yet to race in their colours. "We are still developing the boot," DC said. "When we are all happy with the boot I will use it."



## NEW TEAM ENROLS AT THE SCHOOL OF HARD KNOCKS



This was not the sort of impact Ricardo Zonta was hoping for. His injuries will force him to miss the next few grands prix

## Zonta injured as BAR suffer

BAR'S BAPTISM OF fire flared up in Brazil. F1's new team suffered a disastrous weekend at Interlagos, the low point of which was Ricardo Zonta's huge shunt on Saturday morning. The 23-year-old left the road at the high-speed Turn Five. He hit the wall at over 110mph, sustaining three broken toes and a sliced tendon in his left foot. He

had immediate microsurgery but will probably be out of action for at least two races. "It appears the car did not react well on a bumpy circuit, which could be one of the causes for the accident," said team boss Craig Pollock, who was unable to confirm or deny whether broken suspension had triggered the crash. "It's too bad that he could not be in the race ...

we could have had two chances of scoring points." Their problems continued when Jacques Villeneuve was thrown to the back of the grid after qualifying because of irregularities with his fuel. But he gave the Brackley team a much-needed fillip in the race by fighting his way up to seventh before retiring with a hydraulics problem on lap 50.

## Who'll replace Zonta?

BAR HAVE SEVERAL options available to them in their search for a temporary Zonta replacement. Mika Salo, out of a drive since leaving Arrows, is probably the favourite to land the seat. BAR team boss Craig Pollock said: "We could give our test

driver Patrick Lémarié lots of testing to get his Superlicence, or we could go for the more experienced option of Salo or Tom Kristensen."

"Go on Craig, it's a job. I can do that. It's a job."



## Williams keep their pecker up

WILLIAMS F1 ARE developing a cartoon character along with sponsor Universal Studios. "Woody Williams" (prominent on the FW21's beak, right) is a woodpecker in Nomex who will appear in 40 episodes and at selected GPs. That's all folks!



## Armoured F1

A NEW RULE for 2000 will see F1 cars fitted with a mandatory 2-2.5-mm Kevlar skin in a bid to improve safety. The material, used in bullet-proof vests, might have lessened Zonta's injuries.



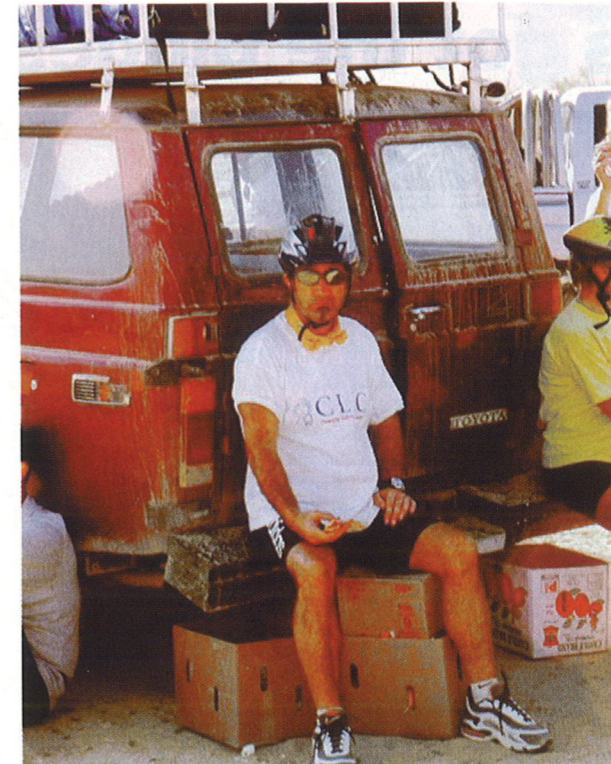
Scarper! An F1 car is coming straight at us!

**NOT WEARING THIN:** Bridgestone have provided clarification on testing restrictions for this season. There will still be 25 official test days – which McLaren and Ferrari have almost used up – but, after this, testing is unlimited. This is due to the unforeseen durability of four-grooved fronts, which means two sets are enough for a day's testing.



## Raised digit

WHILE BERNIE'S handful of digital TV viewers had the pick of all onboard cameras from Brazil, the rest of the world had to make do with the one on Barrichello's Stewart-Ford. "No-one is attempting to squeeze out terrestrial television," claimed Ron Dennis. "Yes, digital TV is the way forward, but we have a clause in the '98 draft of the Concorde Agreement to ensure the continued provision of a world feed at each race." It's worth noting in the light of the upcoming US GP that there is currently no broadcasting facility for digital TV in America.



**FOR CHARITY, MATE** Eddie Jordan took part in a sponsored cycle ride in Israel after the Oz GP. He did it to raise money for leukaemia charity, CLIC. Eddie is a big supporter of theirs and has donated two houses in the centre of Oxford, each worth £135,000. "There is more to life than F1," said Eddie.

## Rocco & Renno

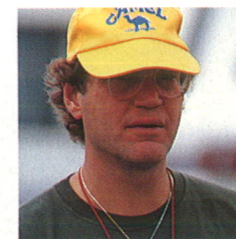
ROCCO BENETTON is focusing on Renault in his headlong pursuit of a works engine deal. "I believe it's a necessity for them to come into F1," said Rocco, "even more so now that they have linked up with Nissan. They need to raise the profile of the two companies. But it may be a while before I get an answer." Benetton won both world titles with Renault in 1995 (right).



LAT: LAT ARCHIVE; PA NEWS; CLIC; ANTONIO OLIMOS

## Letterman to post a lap at Indy

MCLAREN HOPE TO take their two-seater (left) to this year's Indy 500 in a bid to promote the 2000 US Grand Prix. Emerson Fittipaldi, who won his second drivers' world title with McLaren in 1974, will chauffeur chat show host and F1 fan David Letterman around the track. The public will get a chance to win a ride at the GP itself.



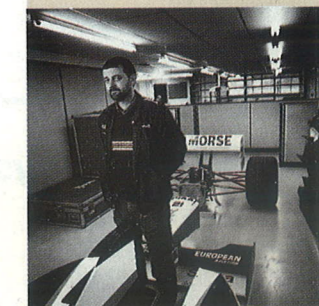
Letterman: let there be F1!

## Pulp fact

The latest paddock gossip

**Flying down to...** Rumours that the Brazilian GP is on the verge of a return to Rio (right) swept through the Interlagos pits. The new race, which is headed up by a consortium of backers including Emerson Fittipaldi and Nelson Piquet, could be staged as early as 2000.

**Jordan to branch into F3000** A Jordan Junior team could be on the horizon following the creation of a new Formula 3000 team by one of their sponsors, European Aviation. The man behind the idea is Paul Stoddart, and he is believed to have finalised the deal with Eddie Jordan. Stoddart was in the news recently when he bought all of Tyrrell that BAR didn't want.



Having bought F1 history in Tyrrell, Stoddart's future lies with Jordan

**Bernie's flotation bobbing along** The flotation of Formula One Holdings could finally happen this summer. This is the result of the developments which kept Bernie Ecclestone away from Interlagos. Mr E is believed to have found support in the City for his proposed £1.6 billion float. Bernie is striking while the iron is hot: Karel van Miert, the EC competitions commissioner who has dogged Ecclestone's every move, has yet to be reinstated to the commission following its en masse resignation in March.



# Who's got the biggest Piggy?



**1** Bernie Ecclestone (and wife - Slavica) **2** Tom Walkinshaw **3** Sir Frank Williams **4** Eddie Jordan **5=** Ron Dennis **5=** Paddy McNally

What makes them so special then?	Boss of Formula 1. Sharp, shrewd and the hardest of noses	Scot who has more fingers in pies than Mr Finger Pie himself	Boss and founder of Williams. Knighted for his services to F1	Eponymous team boss with bags of charm and cash	McLaren's serious boss has a serious amount of moolah	F1's anonymous multi-millionaire
1999 wedge	£900 million (20th)	£85 million (281th)	£80 million (291th)	£65 million (359th)	£60 million (=384th)	£60 million (=384th)
1998 wedge	£1.5 billion (6th)	£85 million (254th=)	£85 million (254th)	£20 million (880th)	£55 million (398th)	£40 million (562th)
What happened this year?	Teething digital TV problems, those pesky Eurobonds and a slowly-sinking flotation cost Bernie £600 million last year. Wonder if he noticed?	Tom was said to be haemorrhaging tons of dough into Arrows before Prince Mal turned up. Tom's rigger team lost in the semis too. Ouch!	Sir Frank has seen his team's performance dip, and Williams are undergoing branding updates too - not cheap - hence his bank balance's drop	The highest climber. Eddie's doing very nicely, thanks mainly to his selling 40 per cent of Jordan to Warburg Pincus, an investment house	Shelling out £2 million per year to secure the services of Adrian Newey has made no impression on Ron's designer wallet. The next Bernie? Maybe	He runs the Paddock Club - F1's bastion of champers and cash. You might remember him stepping out with Fergie a few years ago. You might not
And with it they could buy...	Eight jumbo jets. He's got two already	31 Gloucester Rugby Football Clubs.	40 Adrian Neweys - for a year at least	18,571,429 visits to the Blarney Stone	294,118 six-week sessions at a comedy clinic in Santa Monica	1,597,019 children's party sets (napkins, plates, balloons etc.)

LAT/LAT ARCHIVE: JOHN BRADLEY

## Scheckter says Irv must go

JODY SCHECKTER, who won Ferrari's most recent world drivers' title in 1979, has said that Eddie Irvine (below) must be given the boot if Ferrari want to win the title again.

"Schumacher needs someone right on his tail to raise his game," said Jody. "Eddie is often half a second adrift. Michael would benefit from someone like Giancarlo Fisichella, who is really aggressive, alongside."

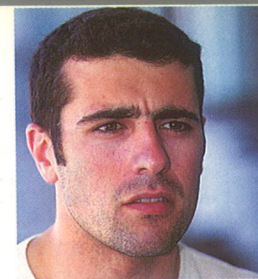
We put this to Eddie in Brazil and his riposte was, as you might expect, short and to the point. Here it is, in full: "What does he know?"

Over to you, Jody. Irvine, meanwhile, has been a media darling since his Australia win, appearing as James Bond in a two-day serialisation in *The Sun*.

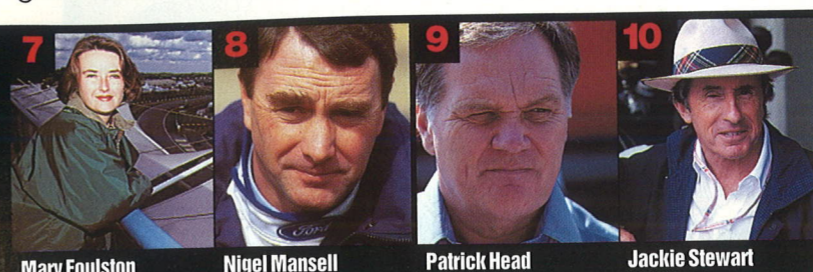


**KID'S PLAY** Benetton's Giancarlo Fisichella and Alexander Wurz met up with a group of underprivileged children when they were in São Paulo for the Brazilian Grand Prix. As well as chatting to them, the drivers took to the field for a few games of footie. Of course, Fisichella, who is a fervent AS Roma fan, captained his team to back-to-back victories. This was all good paternal practice for Giancarlo - it was announced at the weekend that his long-time girlfriend, Luna, is expected to give birth to their first child around Imola time.

**FRANCHITTI SPEAKING:** Leading Champcar driver Dario Franchitti is said to be talking to Jackie Stewart about the possibility of an F1 drive in 2000. Jackie said: "If a seat became available he would have to be seriously considered. He's very quick. In '94, he was outpsyched by Jan Magnussen in F3 and you didn't see his potential. I've known him a long time and rate him highly..."



There are no wolves at these guys' electronically-controlled gates. How Formula 1 fares in UK's Top 1000 Richest People



**7** Mary Foulston (and family - Nicola) **8** Nigel Mansell **9** Patrick Head **10** Jackie Stewart

Racing's very own 'Bernice' Ecclestone. Owns four UK tracks	Britain's golf course-owning F1 bulldog	The technological half of Williams. Cars have won 103 GPs	Team owner, thrice champion F1 driver, and a crack shot too
£50 million (471th)	£35 million (675th)	£32 million (720th)	£30 million (731th)
£50 million (428th)	£35 million (=617th)	£35 million (617th)	£30 million (668th)
Shrewd deals, tough talking and feminine charm has ensured that Brands Hatch Leisure is thriving. Now they're gunning for the British GP	'Our Nige' has been relatively quiet of late, despite the odd foray into the BTCC. But the golf course and personal appearance money see him right	When this engineer's engineer finally looks up from his drawing board - in 2035 - he's going to get a nice shock when he goes to the hole in the wall	This talkative Scot is beginning to repay Ford's faith in him. He's worked tirelessly so that success - and oodles of dosh - can come his way again
One Silverstone	507,246 Isospur Inset putters by Ping	16 more Neweys - can't have too many	857,143 yards of quality tartan

## inside Me, Michael and the muzak

Michael Schumacher doesn't do one-on-one interviews at races, "otherwise he would never get any time to himself", according to his press delegate Heiner Buchinger. But there is a way to circumnavigate the problem: stay at the Hotel Transamerica in São Paulo.

The 'Transam' is a five-star, 392-room rabbit warren where the F1 fraternity stay for their annual Brazilian stopover. Its next-door proximity to the track and the omnipresent guards on the doors are its main attractions in what is otherwise a fairly insalubrious and crime-riddled part of town.

This year Michael had a room on the sixth floor (I was on the seventh), and on three separate occasions in the opening 24 hours of our stay, we bumped into each other in the lift. This gave me more than two minutes of exclusivity with him - certainly more than any other British journalists over the weekend.

One of the few joys of the Brazilian GP is that it's the only race on the calendar where nearly all the drivers stay under the same roof. Let's face it, no-one goes to São Paulo to exercise their olfactory senses or enjoy the local markets. The threat of being mugged forces everyone together and generates a strong sense of camaraderie. It's evocative of the bygone era when drivers were genuine mates.

"I don't understand why this kind of thing can't happen more often," Jackie Stewart said. "I was really good friends with some of the other drivers when I was competing. But now, because everyone has their own plane, I suppose, no-one is as close any more. Then again, if everyone always stayed in the same hotel, can you imagine the bickering that would go on about who would get the best room?"

Hill, Alesi, Herbert, Irvine and Gené were relaxing by the pool on Wednesday. But, like most things in F1, it was short-lived. They'll go to great pains to avoid each other in Imola. Shame.



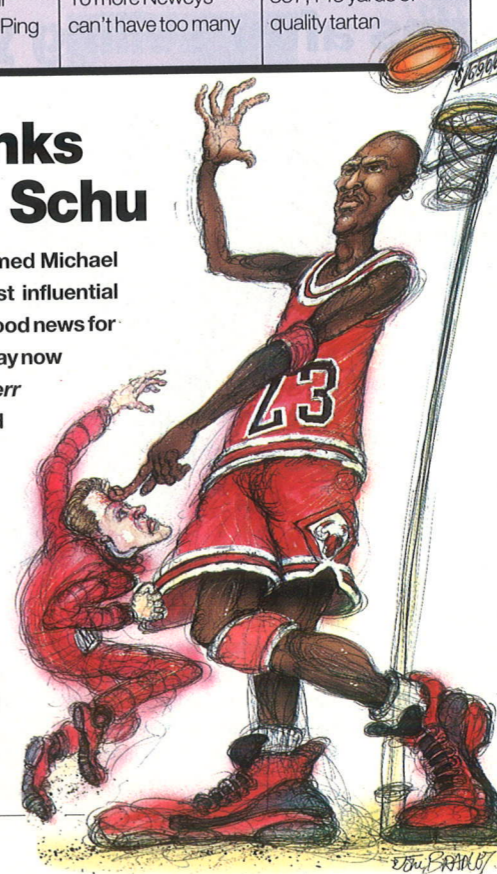
by TOM CLARKSON

## Jordan banks more than Schu

**FORBES MAGAZINE HAS named Michael Schumacher as the 40th most influential celebrity in the world. This is good news for the US GP in 2000; the Yanks may now be wondering what makes Herr Schuey so special, which could boost the fortunes of the GP.**

**Forbes list Schuey as the second-richest sportsman on the planet with earnings estimated at \$38 million a year. But former basketball star Michael Jordan towers above Formula 1's 'giant' with estimated earnings of \$69 million a year.**

Slam dunk!



# Tyre debate rolls on and on

GP DRIVERS PAST and present are still refusing to drop into the F1 groove.

Alex Wurz, in his role as spokesman for the Grand Prix Drivers' Association, has made his colleagues' disapproval of grooved tyres known to the FIA.

Wurz said: "The FIA know that each year the cars are working within a narrower area of limit and are much sharper to drive.

"They accept the drivers' comments that the cars are very difficult to drive. Too difficult, so not safe."

Meanwhile, ex-world

champions Jody Scheckter and Alan Jones have called for a reduction in downforce and a return to slick tyres.

But FIA President Max Mosley continues to counter-attack with his rubber bullets.

"Reducing aerodynamic performance does not work in real life," he said. "F1 engineers predicted that the narrow track (1998) rule would reduce lap speeds by 1.5 seconds. But, in reality, had it not been for the grooves, the 1998 cars would have been

faster than 1997. It's become even more clear than it was back in '97 that slicks should have been stopped at the start of the 1970s. There's no point in repeating the same mistakes over again.

"A racing car is not unsafe because it's difficult to drive. It's only unsafe if it is too fast for the combined safety measures of car and circuit. It does not matter if a driver loses control, as long as he does not hurt himself."

That's us told. But are the drivers listening?

**'It does not matter if a driver loses control, as long as he does not hurt himself'** Max Mosley



## Cockpit slot for F1 Virgin

PRINCE MALIK, the new boss of Arrows, seems to be a big music fan.

From the Brazilian GP on, the Arrows cars will bare the legend of Virgin Records and carry their web address just ahead of the cockpit (above).

"Music and F1 are a natural combination and we're excited about this relationship," said Malik. It remains to be seen if its tempo is fast or slow.

## WHAT DO YOU WANT TO DO RON? TO DO RON?

### Life begins after selling your 40%...

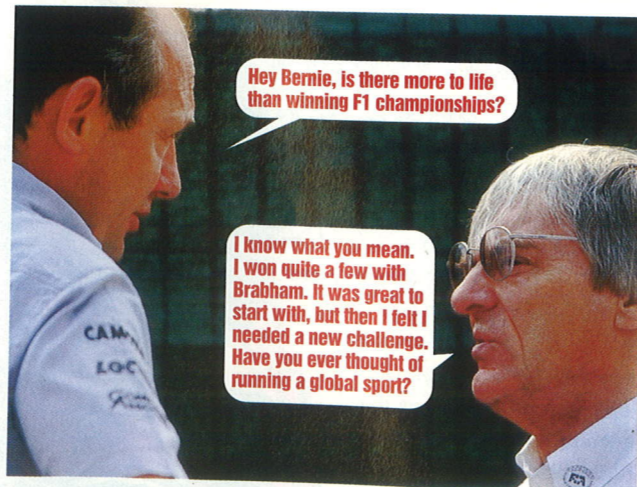
YOU SHOULD ADD Ron Dennis to that growing list of Bernie successors.

The route to the McLaren boss's candidature for F1's top job is a convoluted one – but it makes some sense.

The story goes like this: Mansour Ojeh sells his controlling interest in the TAG/McLaren Group and uses the money to purchase Ecclestone's Formula One Holdings (FOH).

But Ojeh doesn't fancy the day-to-day hassle of F1, so he takes Dennis along with him to run the sport on his behalf.

This would force Dennis to sell his 40 per cent stake in TAG/McLaren to avoid conflicts of interests and raise enough cash to become a shareholder in FOH.



And who would Ojeh and Dennis sell McLaren to? Mercedes, of course.

Jürgen Hubbert, a big Merc cheese, admitted in a Stuttgart newspaper that TAG/McLaren's hi-tech

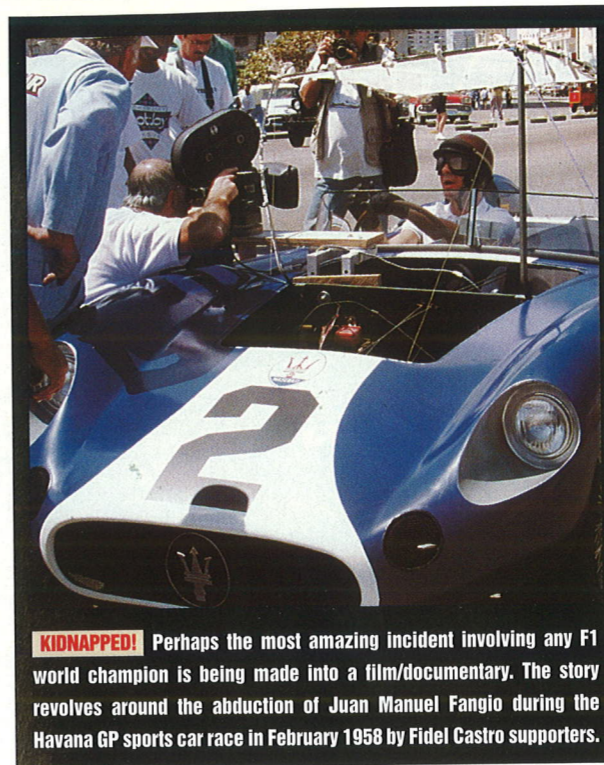
know-how make them an enticing proposition.

Any such purchase would also give Merc a very handy short cut to supercardom.

As usual in F1, two plus two equals £2.5 billion.



STERLING MOSCOW: F1 supremo Bernie Ecclestone has boasted that a number of countries new to F1 want to host a grand prix early in the next millennium. One of these, it would seem, is Russia, which is planning to build a suitable track in Tula, just south of Moscow. The plan has the support of Russian prime minister Yevgeny Primakov, and its organisers claim to have raised a budget of more than £90 million for the project.



**KIDNAPPED!** Perhaps the most amazing incident involving any F1 world champion is being made into a film/documentary. The story revolves around the abduction of Juan Manuel Fangio during the Havana GP sports car race in February 1958 by Fidel Castro supporters.

## Cut-price Formula 1 action

YOU DON'T HAVE to spend your life savings in order to watch an up-to-date car in action.

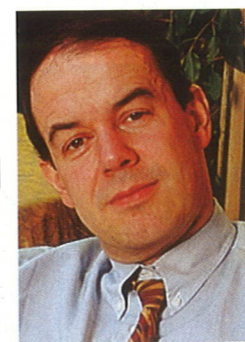
Turn up at Donington Park on 23 May for the Richard Seaman Trophy meeting, bung the Vintage Sports Car Club eight quid and you can watch German hotshoe Nick Heidfeld show off a McLaren MP4-13.

Also on hand will be a 1938 Mercedes W154 GP racer in the hands of 1964 world champ John Surtees.

There are ways of meeting your heroes on the cheap too: Stewart GP's Johnny Herbert and Rubens Barrichello will attend Goodwood's Festival of Speed, held over 18-20 June. Ferrari great Jacky Ickx will be there too. For ticket info call 01243 755055.



GP Mercs on display at Donington Park: a 1998 McLaren and a 1938 W154



He read a critical story about himself in a magazine, written by this man, so now they are relaunching this mag ... together!

## ...and doing business with Bernie E

BERNIE ECCLESTONE IS moving into publishing – with the man who once questioned the F1 supremo's business practices in print.

Tom Rubython, the founder of *Business Age* who came to Bernie's attention after running this front cover (above left), has now been asked by Ecclestone to edit the revamped *EuroBusiness* magazine.

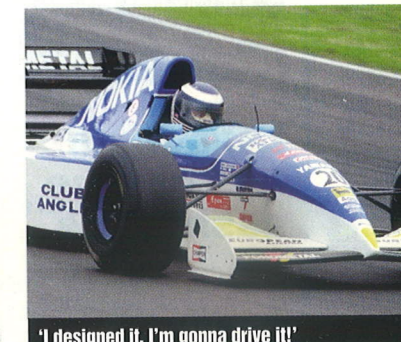
A strange move on Bernie's part perhaps? Not according to Tom: "There are always two sides to every story, and though he was on the phone to the lawyers at the time, Bernie doesn't hold grudges.

"He's a great visionary and has always wanted a magazine. It makes sense – Formula 1 and its audience are the ideal readership

for a business magazine like ours." Rubython reckons that Bernie has no plans to establish a publishing empire, despite this foray.

Ecclestone said: "I thought it was obvious there should be a magazine of this type and I didn't understand why there wasn't one."

Well, there is now, and it will hit the shelves in May.



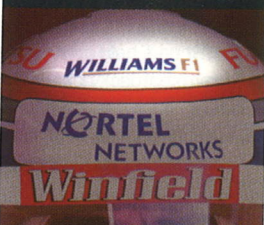
'I designed it, I'm gonna drive it!'

## A designer with drive

JORDAN'S DESIGNER MIKE Gascoyne proved himself a bit handy behind the wheel recently when he took to the track for a BOSS series race at Brands Hatch. He finished third in a Tyrrell 022, a car he designed back in 1994.

He is planning to tackle another five races this year. Perhaps he's getting ready for when Damon calls it a day.

**Williams on their marks, get set, logo**



Spot the new logo - we've highlighted it to help you

WILLIAMS HAVE enlisted the services of branding experts Corporate Edge to kick the team's staid, safe image into touch.

So far a logo has been developed (above), and this is to be followed by branded in-line skates and bikes - and a move into insurance banking. Cool.

For your info, Williams' themes are "dedication, integrity, flair and fun."

**DC's Heidi has got the cash blues**

DAVID COULTHARD'S LOVE Heidi Wichlinski knows a thing or two about credit-worthiness.

And now the IMG-managed model is on the leaflet that tells of the benefits of the blue card from Amex (left). She's pictured munching her way through a bowl of pasta.

Why she is tackling a pile of tagliatelle with chopsticks is beyond us. But we are totally confident that DC never leaves home without her.

Well, somebody's got to get the drinks in!



**BRANDS OR 'STONE? WHATEVER, IT'S A RIGHT PICKLE**



And Irvine leads into Copse. Make that Surtees. Brit GP back to Brands? Could be

**British GP hanging in the balance**

THE BRITISH GP is under threat because of a squabble between Silverstone and Brands Hatch for the right to host the race.

Silverstone's owners, the British Racing Drivers' Club, have a contract with Bernie Ecclestone until 2001. But Brands Hatch boss Nicola Foulston has agreed a deal with Bernie whereby any management change at the up-for-grabs Silverstone will guarantee her the GP until 2009.

But even this doesn't make our GP a cast-iron certainty. Ecclestone, who has less control over the British event than most of the others on the calendar, fired a warning shot across the bows of the warring factions: "There are plenty of places we can go. We



Foulston: the 45th most powerful woman in Britain - and rising fast

**'We have the financial and commercial expertise to support the British GP'**

don't have to have a race in England. Why don't they get together and do a joint thing? I think it's better than to have fights."

Foulston has taken this threat seriously: not only has she tendered a proposal for Brands to host the race from 2002 on, she's also bidding to buy the BRDC and, therefore, Silverstone.

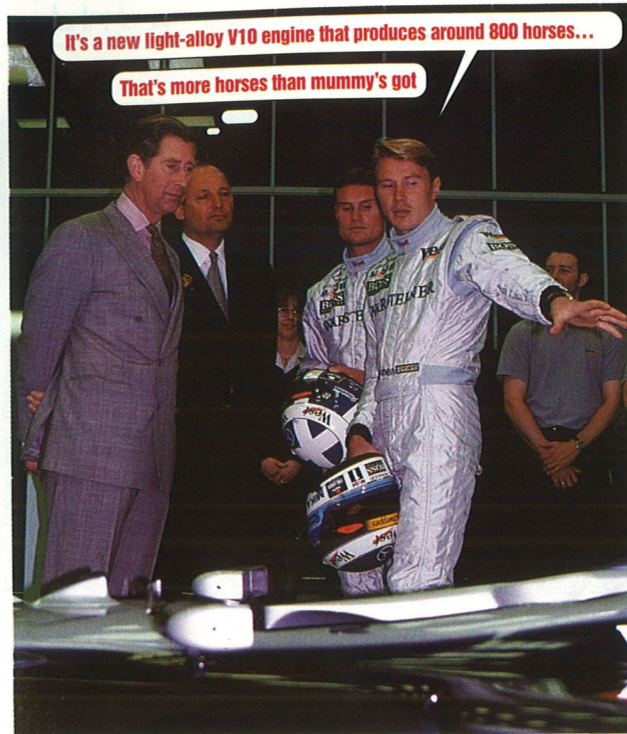
"The non-commercial approach to date has put the British GP in jeopardy," Foulston said. "We have the financial and commercial expertise to support the British GP and undertake the necessary investment into the host circuit."

The BRDC must wait for their members to vote on the restructuring plans before they can move forward. So that's Foulston on pole then.

ALLSPORT; CHARLES CORTES/LAT; GAVIN LAWRENCE/LAT; LAURENCE BAKER; LAT ARCHIVE



RALF SCHUMACHER MAY appear sweet and angelic, but beneath that choirboy exterior lies a man with a predator's instinct. How do we know? Here's how. We have obtained the first images of Junior Schu's new roaring black panther logo (left), due to be officially unveiled at the British GP. Down boy! Get back, I say!



It's a new light-alloy V10 engine that produces around 800 horses...

That's more horses than mummy's got

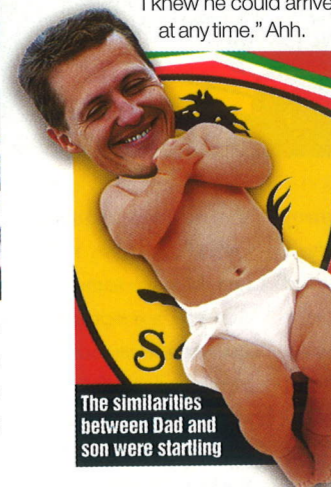
**THE KING AND I** McLaren gave HRH The Prince of Wales a right royal welcome when he paid a visit to their Woking base recently. Charles, that well-known conservationist, talker-to-plants and tree-hugger with a passion for fast cars (he owns an Aston Martin), was shown around by Hakkinen and Coulthard. He was later presented with the helmets the drivers wore in Monaco last year.

**Schu's baby: F1's 2025 champ born**

MICHAEL SCHUMACHER and wife Corinna have produced a baby brother for Gina-Maria.

The latest addition to the Schumacher clan is called Mick and he arrived on March 22, just a few days after Michael had finished testing at Jerez.

"I was a little bit edgy at Jerez," said Schuey, "because I knew he could arrive at any time." Ahh.



The similarities between Dad and son were startling

**hot seat**



JARNO TRULLI

PROST

**Do you believe in God?**

Yes.

**Who was your childhood hero?**

I think it has to be Niki Lauda because he was, and still is, a very good driver.

**Are women good road drivers?**

Yes I think so. Why shouldn't women be good drivers?

**What do you look at first in a girl?**

I don't know. There's nothing really special that I look for - it's a combination of things.

**Your favourite place to holiday?**

The beach.

**What's your favourite road car?**

That's easy - it's my little 1964 Fiat 500.

**What will you be doing at 50?**

I don't know at the moment, tomorrow is another day.

**What is your worst habit?**

I'm always far too early for any meetings or appointments that I have scheduled.

**What is your best attribute?**

I never give up on my job.

**Are you good in the mornings?**

Yes. I am usually happy.

**What's your best non-F1 memory?**

It would have to be the World Cup go-kart race back in 1985 at Suzuka, Japan.



Herbert regrets the airborne photo call as Hakkinen and Irv pose on terra firma...

**The sky really is the limit in F1**

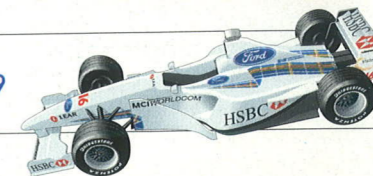
GETTING AIRBORNE SEEMS to be the priority among Formula 1 drivers at present. Johnny Herbert (above) took a ride in Melbourne, Mika Hakkinen was treated to the Eurofighter in Germany (above left) and Eddie Irvine hitched a lift with the Red Arrows (top left). Going on the picture evidence alone, it looks like Eddie and Mika knew the ride would be a touch rough.

# STREETS AHEAD

Stewart-Ford driver Rubens Barrichello finds that the challenge of Monte Carlo is like no other in the world



FORD INSIGHT 1999



The Monaco Grand Prix brings back many happy memories for me and the whole Stewart-Ford team, after we finished second there in the rain-hit 1997 race. It is an event that I particularly look forward to but, despite the good feelings, the race is definitely the toughest on the calendar.

To be quick means that you have to drive just inches away from the barriers. There is absolutely no room for error and that is why

the event requires as much mental concentration as skill behind the wheel. In fact, Monaco is the only track on the calendar that you are not looking to brake later than everyone else, but are trying to get on the accelerator earlier.

The first corner, Ste. Devote, is very difficult to judge. The barriers on both sides of the track narrow on the entry and you have to guess about where you brake, because it is a

blind entry. When you brush the kerb on the inside of the corner, you know that you have got it right.

After Ste. Devote, the track climbs up the hill and around the left-hander Massenet before the most fantastic corner on the track, Casino Square. This 120mph right-hand corner, which plunges downhill, is absolutely blind and gives you a great feeling when you get it right. Throughout the weekend, as more and more

rubber is laid down, the grip increases and it becomes a real challenge to work out how fast you can go around there.

The track now plunges downhill quite sharply, and you have to be careful as you go over the famous bump because it can drag you into the barriers on the left. At the bottom of the hill is the right-hand Mirabeau corner, which is just underneath my apartment. It is quite slow and, because of the camber, it is impossible to stop the inside front wheel lifting off the ground.

**"I heard a bang every time I went through the corner. It was my rear wheel brushing the barriers"**

With commitment through Mirabeau, you should be well placed for the Loews Hairpin, which is the slowest part of the track. I remember in the wet 1997 race I was going around here at just 20mph. In a 200mph Formula One car, that is very frustrating.

Once you are out of Loews, there is a double right handed bend at Portier, which does not cause too many problems, before you reach the famous tunnel. It is very important to make sure you are on the accelerator early here, because it can gain you a lot of time.

Although the tunnel is well lit, it is much darker than outside and that can create a few visibility problems if you are wearing a dark visor. But whatever kind of visor you are wearing, it always takes a few moments for your eyes to adjust to the dark of the tunnel and then readjust to the natural light at the other side.

The right-hander inside the tunnel is a lot sharper than it looks on television and it is getting harder every year with the regulations that give us less grip. You have to be fully committed all the way through here until you get into the braking zone for the chicane.

This section is bumpy, downhill and very slippery, which makes finding the right place to brake down to first gear very difficult to judge. The chicane itself is very slow and quite special because it is the first glimpse you get of the boats in the famous harbour.

After the chicane comes the left-hand Tabac,

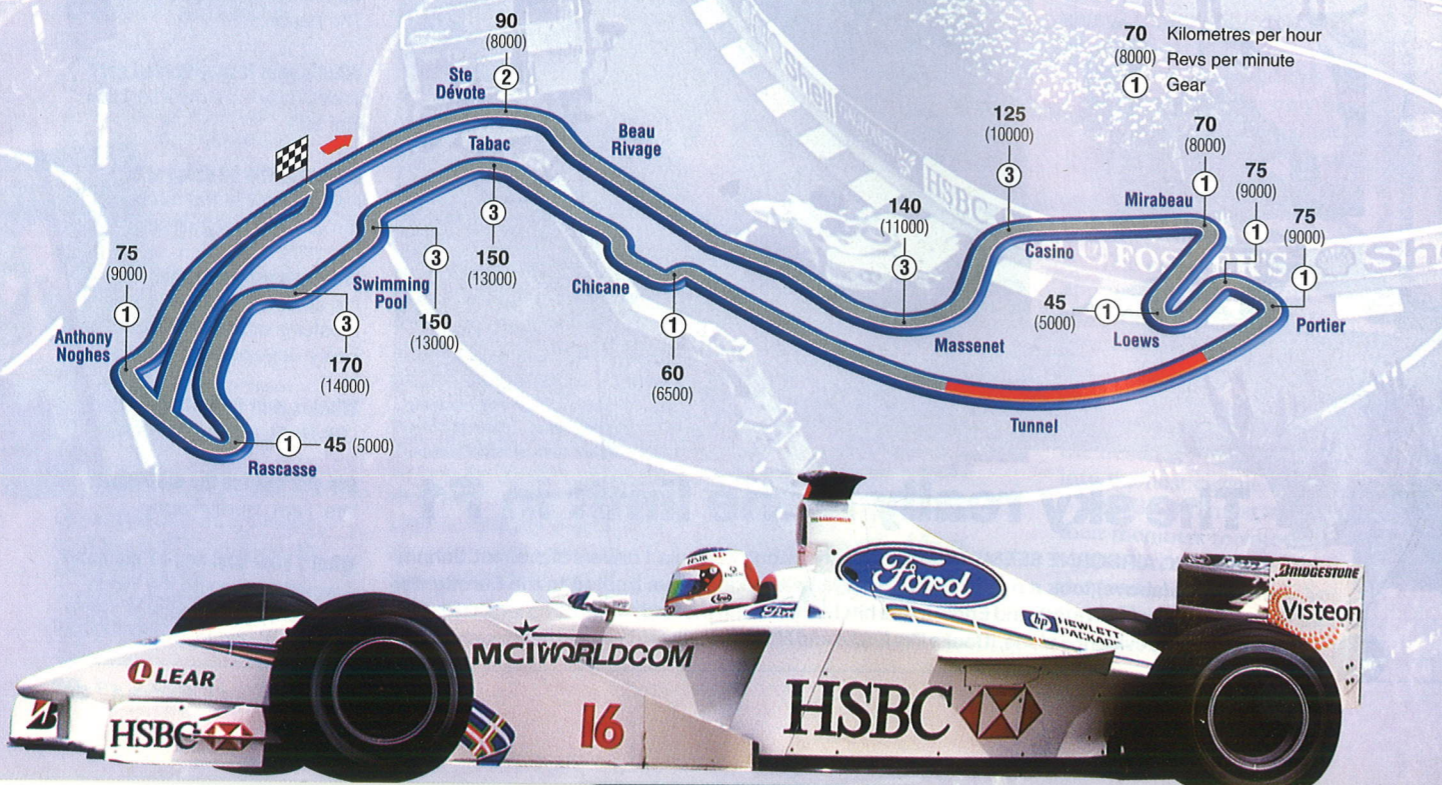
which is another corner where, if you are brave and get really close to the barriers, you can gain a lot of time. Then comes the very fast left-right, right-left Swimming Pool complex which is the last difficult section on the track.

It's about 140mph on the entry and you have to be very precise through here. I remember on my first visit to Monaco in 1993 that every time I went through here I kept hearing a bang. I could

not understand what it was, until I paid attention a few laps later and realised it was my rear wheel brushing the barriers. That is how close to the edge you have to be if you are going to be quick.

The final section of the track is quite easy, but very slow. Through Rascasse you have to give everything, and it is quite frustrating because one mistake now means all your work will have been wasted. Once you are out of the final right hander, it's back on the accelerator and you cross the finish line, ready for another lap.

ABOVE LEFT TO RIGHT: RUBENS BARRICHELLO LOVES MONACO. JACKIE AND PAUL STEWART CONGRATULATE BARRICHELLO AFTER HIS SECOND PLACE IN 1997. THE MOST FAMOUS STREETS IN THE WORLD. BARRICHELLO HAS HIGH HOPES FOR THE FORD-COSWORTH V10 CR-1

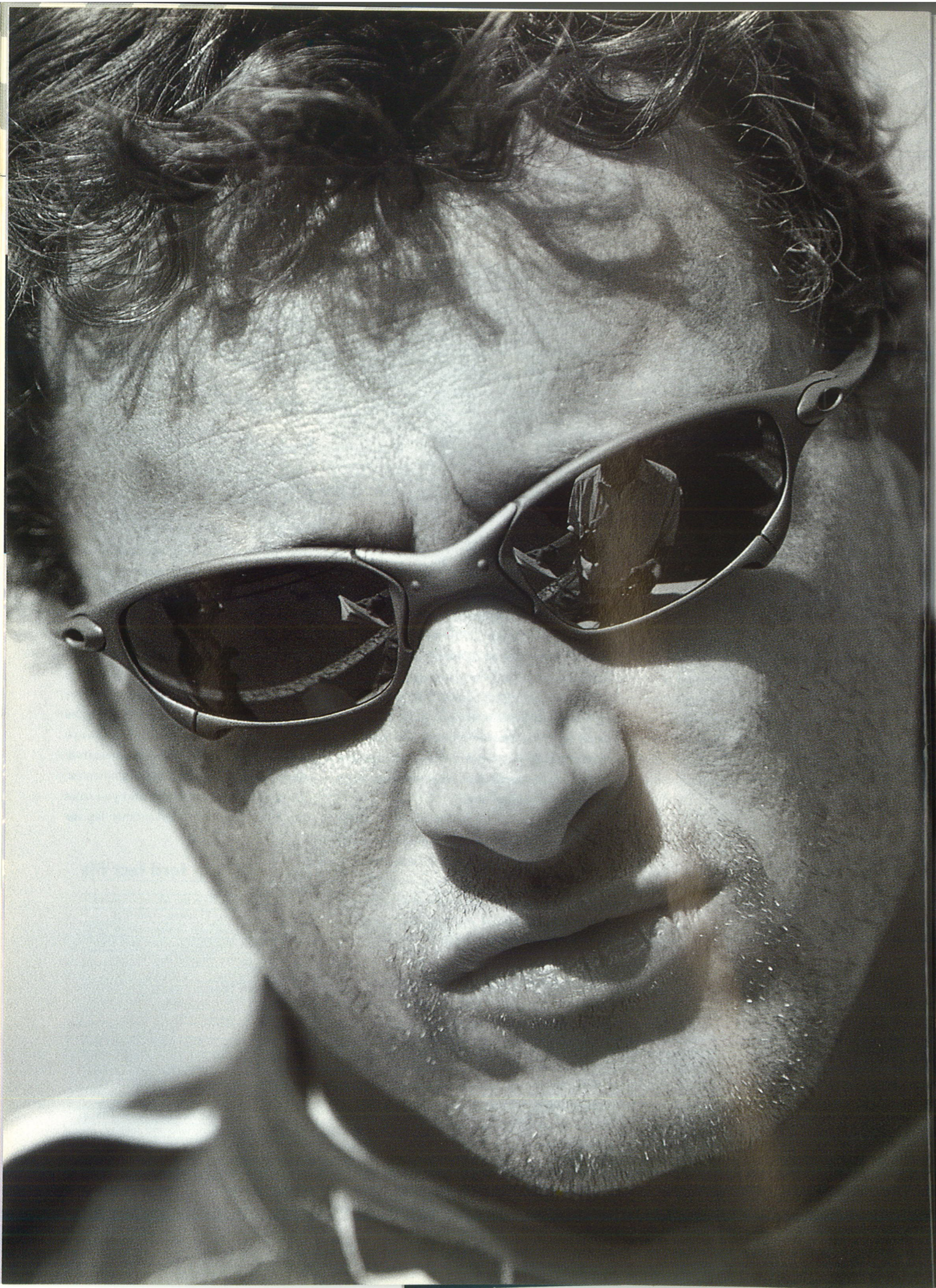


## ford fact file

- Ford have won the Monaco Grand Prix a record 13 times. Their first victory came with Graham Hill in 1968, while Michael Schumacher took their most recent triumph in 1994.
- Jackie Stewart took his first Monaco Grand Prix victory with a Ford engine in 1971. He also won in 1973.
- The Stewart-Ford team secured the first points in their history when Rubens Barrichello finished in second place in 1997.
- Stewart-Ford's current driver line-up of Rubens Barrichello and Johnny Herbert both have apartments in Monte Carlo.

[www.fordracing.net](http://www.fordracing.net)

Send your questions to the Stewart-Ford team via: [question@ford.com](mailto:question@ford.com)



DARREN HEATH

**How much is the win a weight off your shoulders?**

It's a weight and it was a fantastic feeling, but it's like all these things – it's now over and done with. I have to say that it was great for a couple of days – I was left thinking that's cool, that's cool.

**Did your achievement sink in immediately?**

The immediate feeling was great and I think I'd forgotten what it felt like. I'm sure that the more you do it the less special it becomes. Sure, the win was a long time in coming and to win your first grand prix in a Ferrari and in Australia – you know there were so many mega things. But if there was one car you'd choose to win your first race in, it's a Ferrari.

**Has it altered your ambitions within F1?**

I want to win some more races this year but, let's face it, judging by the pace of the McLarens it's not going to be easy to win a race on pace this year. It's going to be a matter of positioning myself right behind them and hoping that they will break down.

**Has the win changed your circumstances at Ferrari?**

Not at all. It won't affect anything – that was made fairly obvious to me after the race. They are focused on Michael getting the results, not me. If he wins everyone goes crazy, if I win the race it's not such a big deal. There was a lot of pressure in Melbourne, with the McLaren being so fast and Michael not scoring points in a race when the McLarens retired, so it was a big disappointment. The team's only aim is to get him winning.

**Has the win upped your stock as a driver?**

I don't know. What is it? Yeah, one swallow doesn't make a summer.

**Can Ferrari challenge this year?**

I didn't think we'd be as quick as the McLarens, but they are further ahead than I thought. You have to say – I mean – that's one quick car they've got, but if it doesn't finish it ain't no good.

**Who else will feature this year?**

The Stewart's looking very good, isn't it? And Jordan are looking pretty good as well, but not for race wins. For that there's McLaren and there's us.

**Why do you choose to have a base in Italy?**

I have an apartment in Milan, but I don't live there. It makes sense to have a base there because, if I'm doing a test on Wednesday, Thursday or Friday and I have to test again on Monday in Maranello, what's the point in going back to Dublin? I'm quite happy to be in Dublin, I'm quite happy to be in Milan, I'm quite happy to be in Oxford – I have three very well set-up places where I can be happy. And then there's the boat which is currently moored in Genoa.

**What do you think of Sepang?**

They've done a fantastic job – the circuit's going to be difficult, there's no doubt about that. It's got everything, although there might be one or two slow corners. I drove the track in a Ferrari F50 and I liked it.

**What will Eddie Irvine be doing in 20 years time?**

I'll be on my boat, playing helicopters, motor bikes, cars. I might stay involved in F1 a little; I'm currently involved in nurturing young talent. There's a young Ulsterman I'm helping at the moment, but it's very, very difficult because of the amount of money required to get anyone from down there to where I am. I'm very lucky in that I had Marlboro who did it for me.

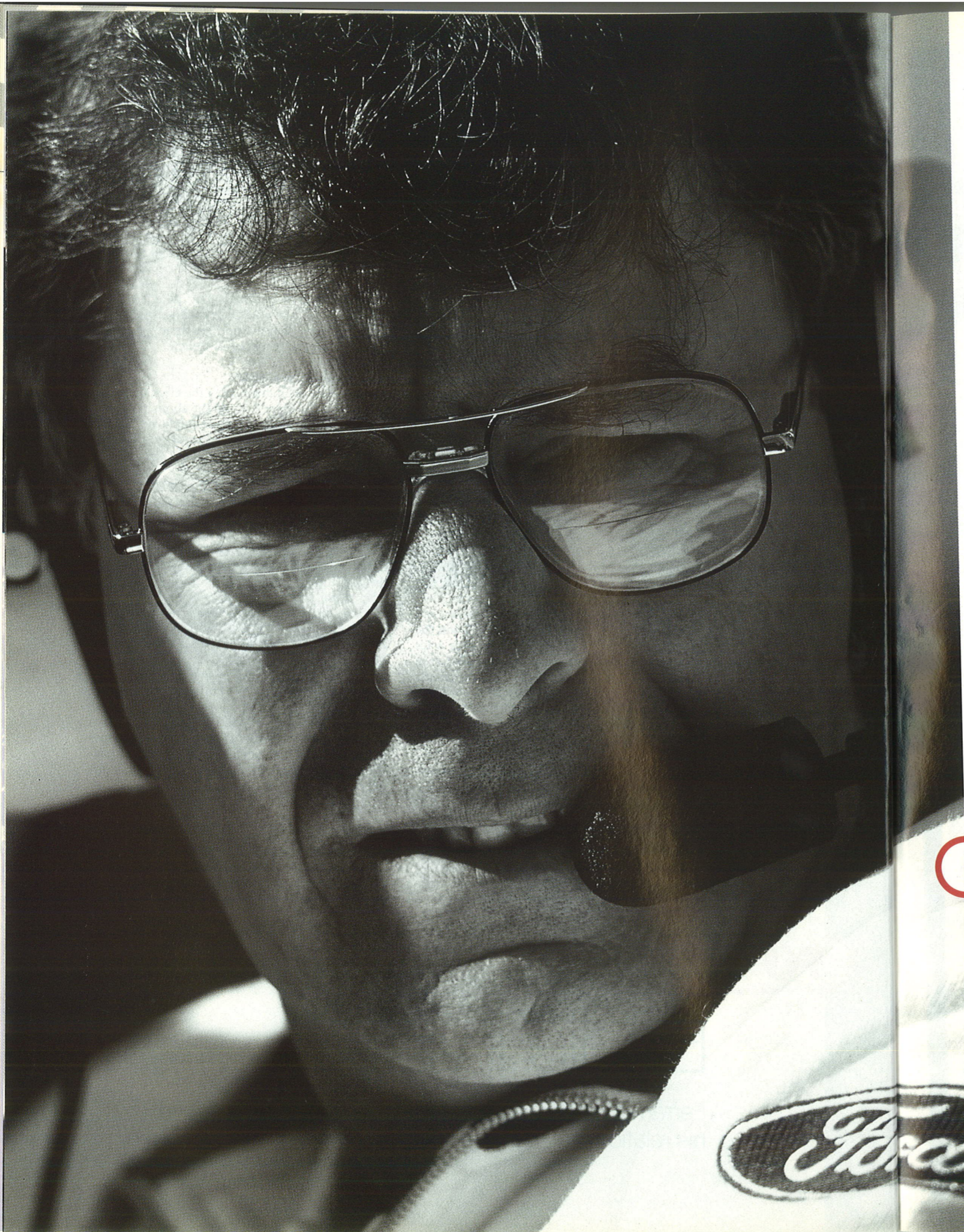
**Any business interests outside F1 – like a clothing chain?**

Bollocks to that! I play the stock market because I enjoy playing it. Michael puts his money with some guy who does it for him and he probably makes a lot of money doing it that way, but there's not much satisfaction in doing it like that. I prefer to do it myself and, so far, I've done pretty well. It's very easy at the moment because everyone involved makes money – it's difficult not to do well. ①

**F1** t o o n e

# Eddie Irvine

Ferrari's 33rd grand prix winner talks about that win in Oz, his relationship with the team, his lifestyle and the future



**F1** to one

# Gary Anderson

Stewart's new technical director on Eddie Jordan, his current drivers, his new employers and flexible rear wings

**How do Stewart compare to Jordan?**

Stewart have a lot more facilities; they are able to manufacture 90 per cent of their car in-house, whereas Jordan can only do 10 per cent of their car. Eddie wanted to keep Jordan as a racing team, he didn't want it to become a manufacturing company. But Stewart can cover the whole range of requirements needed to go racing.

**Did you swap teams to revitalise your career?**

It had been playing on my mind for a while and I'd originally planned to move on from Jordan and change teams in 1997. That was in the second half of the season but I felt I couldn't move because it would leave them in the lurch.

**Were you living in Eddie's shadow?**

Not really. Eddie and I will hopefully get on for a long time; we were quite content with each other. One of the biggest problems we had was that I understood where he had come from, in not having two pennies to rub together. It was difficult for me to go to Eddie and get the money needed to do the job correctly, we were too understanding of each other.

**Is there a very corporate attitude at Stewart?**

The team have got huge potential because of the Ford back-up, and Jackie has got a lot of racing understanding because he's won a lot of races and done a lot of motorsport. He respects my job because of his involvement in racing, because he drove a car - he drove bad cars, he drove good cars and he respects that it isn't just something that comes by being there.

**How good is the latest Ford V10?**

It's very good given that it only went on the dyno on 19 December, so it's been a roller-coaster ride to date. It will be up there with the Mercedes engine once we've overcome the problems.

**Has it been difficult to take on Alan Jenkins' car?**

I've never looked at it as being difficult because the moment you get involved with it you make yourself familiar with it. The problems it has are my problems; if it doesn't perform it is my fault. I've made a lot of changes to it, but not because the initial car was wrong, but because development can't stand still.

**Does the Stewart have a flexible rear wing?**

We are not partaking in that at the moment because I don't understand the logic. There can be some benefits from a drag reduction at the far end of the straight, but you need the rear stability when you hit the brake pedal.

**Do you rate Johnny and Rubens?**

One of Rubens' biggest problems at Jordan was that he wasn't his own man, he had too many Brazilians hanging around him. Now he doesn't have that same group pestering him and he's a much more mature person, an easier person to get on with. He's very good, he just needs a couple of good results and then you'll see him jump forward in leaps and bounds. I've never worked with Johnny before, but he's good. It's the same thing with him: get the results and he'll be away.

**Do you work closely with Ford, aside from engines?**

I've been to Dearborn, to their Advanced Vehicle Technology Centre which will be good. As far as quick response stuff is concerned they are not much help, but they can do projects for us that will pay off in perhaps two or three years time. They have a lot of technology, a lot of brain power and huge budgets in research and development, so they could research a flexible rear wing for us for instance!

**Is this the most exciting time in your career?**

I think so. What could come out of this is incredible - we just have to get on and do it because all the ingredients are here. **1**

## backfire



Scarfioffi won once for Ferrari, in '66. Will Irvine's tally be the same?

### One-win wonders

I can't help feeling that the laconic Irishman, Eddie Irvine, has signed up to an exclusive club of Ferrari one-win wonders. 'The Swerve' was in the right place at the right time – how many more races are we likely to see the McLarens and Michael Schumacher cock up? Irvine, I suspect, has joined such luminaries as Piero Taruffi (Swiss GP '52), Luigi Musso (Argentine GP '56), Giancarlo Baghetti (French GP '61), Lorenzo Bandini (Austrian GP '64), Ludovico Scarfiotti (Italian GP '66) and Jean Alesi (Canadian GP '95) as singleton Ferrari winners. I hope, however, that I'm proved totally wrong.

HENRY GORDON-SMYTHE  
BANBURY, OXON

### The greatest

With reference to Murray Walker's top 10 greatest drivers (*F1 Racing*, April), I know that he makes a lot

of the wins per starts ratio, but this is no way to compare drivers. The only way to assess them is to analyse podium finishes over as long a period as possible, hence eliminating retirements, car design and engine design. As a result, my top 10 would read (from first): Senna, Mansell, Clark, Schumacher, Lauda, Prost, Stewart, Fangio, Ascari and Moss. What do you think?

CHRIS MORETON  
LONDON

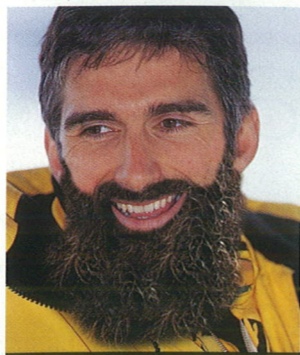
### The fuzz

I am writing to express my shock and disgust – how dare there be so much facial hair in the magazine (*F1 Racing*, April). What on earth has Damon done to himself? The offending creature lurking on his chin would not look so bad if the colour matched the rest of his hair, but it clearly does not. And what about 'Mad' Max Biaggi? Not only is he a biker, but he has the audacity to harbour this well-groomed animal on his chin. Should we get ready for a small rat to be found nestling in Jacques Villeneuve's hair?

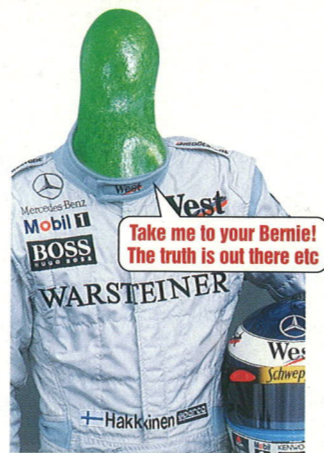
JANICE WOOTTON  
WICKEN, MILTON KEYNES

### Sweet conspiracy

So Mika is now endorsing Germany's favourite sweet (*F1 Racing*, April). Is this some sort of propaganda



Our projection of how Damon Hill will look by the end of this season



instigated by McLaren? Or perhaps some sly plot by the Germans to encourage the populous to make Mika voodoo dolls? This story could end up becoming more intriguing than *The X-Files*.

S HOLMES  
LEEK, STAFFORDSHIRE

### Stop right there!

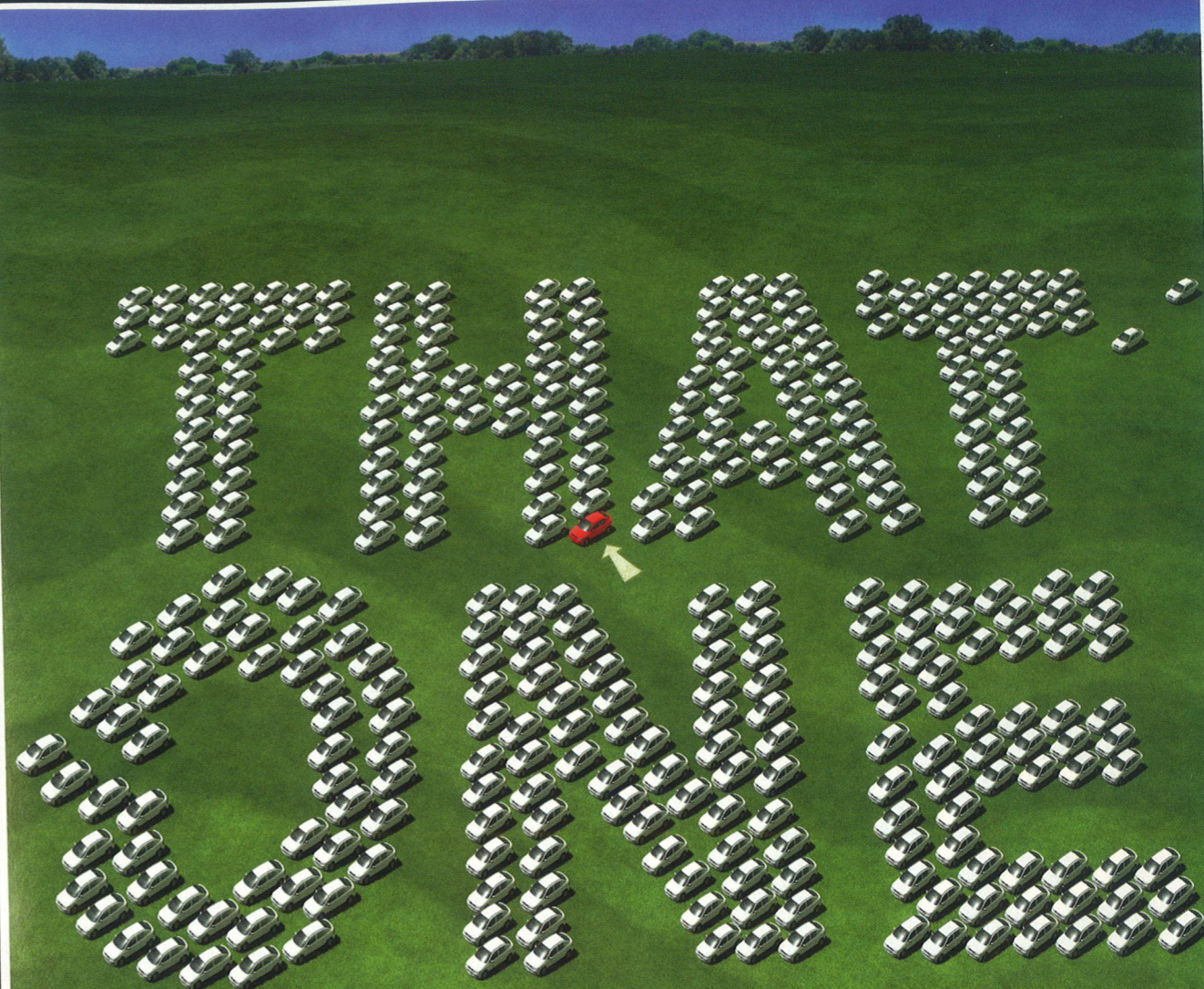
Peter Windsor's article about Rubens Barrichello was the straw that broke the camel's back (*F1 Racing*, April). Many times we have heard that Barrichello and Stewart are made of the right stuff, that they can both deliver the goods. Barrichello has had six years in F1 to prove himself. What exactly has he done, apart from that super-lucky second place in Monaco in 1997? Stewart are now embarking on their third year, and what promise they did show in Melbourne went up in smoke. I think it's far too early to start talking up Barrichello as some sort of future champion, let alone Stewart as potential winners. We've seen it all before: Mika Salo was talked of as a world champion, but look what's happened to him.

JAMES MCKENZIE  
PRESTON, LANCs

### Sleeping satellites

I know it's boring, but ITV's coverage of F1 has raised its head again. All I want is to see the press conference in its entirety. Surely it can't be expensive satellite time – they only last five minutes. What's the problem, ITV?

KENNY MCLEOD  
DUNDEE, SCOTLAND



## What if your Car Rental company let you pick out the car you wanted?

On March 1st National Car Rental launched a new concept. It's called Choice, because that's exactly what it offers.

Starting at our Heathrow location, customers can pick out the make, model and even colour of car they want from the category they have booked\*, then simply drive it away.

We've already successfully pioneered Choice in the USA. It offers a more flexible approach. And it's exclusive to National Car Rental.

So call central reservations on **0870 600 6666**. And go!



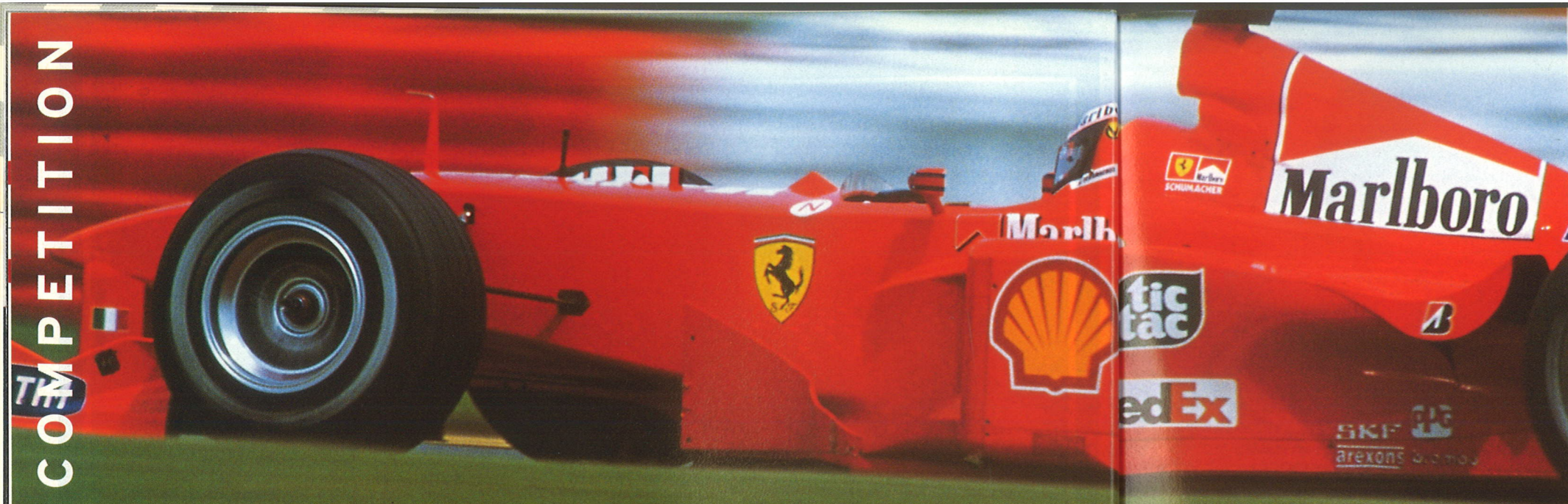
\* Subject to availability at a time and point of rental.

[www.nationalcar-europe.com](http://www.nationalcar-europe.com)

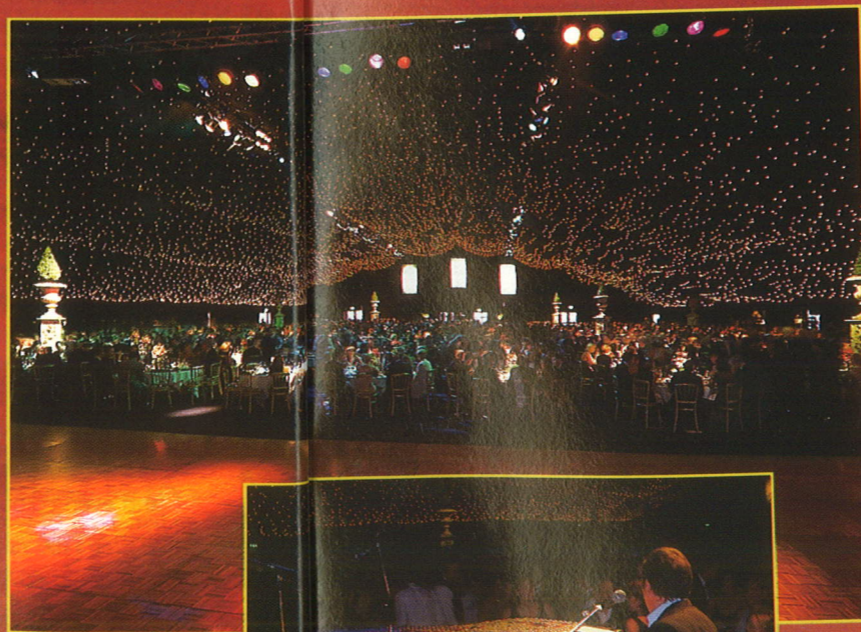
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Green means go

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# Are you cool OR WHAT?



## Are you cool or what?

You've left the ear-piercing noise and dust of the race track behind you. A stretch limo has picked you up from your hotel for a slow drive through the countryside. It's a sultry Summer evening, your driver sweeps you into the magnificent driveway of Stowe School. You spend the next few hours sipping champagne and rubbing shoulders with the rich and famous. You're definitely at the place to be seen - the 1999 British Grand Prix Ball.

IF YOU THINK YOU'RE COOL then you won't be able to resist entering our unique competition.

Answer the following questions, complete our tie-breaker, and it could be you sampling the glamorous lifestyle that is Formula 1 racing.

The prize, for one winner and a guest, includes:

- Tickets to the Friday practice session at the British Grand Prix plus hospitality
- Overnight accommodation
- Guests of the Scuderia Ferrari Marlboro Team at the British Grand Prix Ball on Friday evening

The ball is a Black Tie affair, so be sure to pack your dinner jacket or ballgown.

**Q.1** Where in Italy is the Scuderia Ferrari Marlboro team based?

**Q.2** How many forward gears does the Scuderia Ferrari Marlboro F399 Formula 1 car have?

**Q.3** Which Scuderia Ferrari Marlboro driver won the 1998 British Grand Prix?

**Tie-breaker:** As a cool jet-setter myself, I would expect to be rubbing shoulders with..... at the ball because..... (not more than 20 words).

**Closing date for entries is Thursday 20th May 1999.**

Answers on a postcard with your name and address to:  
F1 Racing 'Are you cool OR WHAT?' Competition, 38-42 Hampton Road, Teddington, Middlesex, TW11 OJE

**Competition Rules**  
1. To enter you must be aged 18 or over. Please mark your date of birth on your entry. Winner's guest must be over 18 years of age. 2. No entries will be accepted from employees or their families of this publication or any other companies associated with the competition. 3. The winner will be the first correct entry drawn, who has completed the tie-breaker to the judges' satisfaction. 4. The Editor's decision is final, and no correspondence will be entered into. No alternative prize will be given, and the closing date for entries will be Thursday 20th May 1999. 5. We will not retain or make use of your name, address or date of birth for any purposes. 6. The winner will be notified as soon as possible after the closing date. 7. No responsibility will be accepted for entries lost, damaged or delayed in transit, illegible or altered entries will be disqualified. 8. By entering the competition, competitors will be deemed to have accepted and agreed to be bound by these competition rules and all entry instructions given are deemed to form part of the rules of the competition. 9. No telephone entries or enquiries will be accepted. 10. Prize details correct at time of going to press. 11. Winner and guest are responsible for their own transportation costs.

**Promoter:** Haymarket Publishing Services Limited  
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Ambitious, confident, thoughtful  
and only 23. Ralf Schumacher has  
moved to WilliamsF1 and his future  
looks increasingly bright

# Time on his side

THE F1 BORDERS are now so vast, the F1 world so embracing, that real life fuses with fantasy. Which is to say that, although WilliamsF1 currently don't make their own hi-fi systems, like McLaren, they can now mould you the perfect office: run your Fujitsu Powerbook and your Brother fax/printer through Nortel Networks ... and you'll have plenty of time to stop for a Winfield and a bottle of Veltins.

So it was that Ralf Schumacher flew recently to CeBIT, Europe's biggest electronics trade fair, to work the sponsors ... and to do what he would have done anyway. Computers, the latest software, two-band mobile phones ... these are the trademarks of the new-age F1 driver. And Ralf Schumacher is that in full. He dives into a back office, opens his briefcase and pulls out his laptop. There is a new route-finding program he would like to install. Fujitsu's technicians gather round.

He wears a light grey suit, suede shoes and dark shirt. That briefcase is post-modern Louis Vuitton. He is lean and fit - fitter than he has ever been and thus fitter, by the estimation of his management team, ▶

Words by Peter Windsor;  
photographs by Oliver Reck



even than his older brother, Michael. Ralf has flown in to Hanover in a turbo-prop Piaggio, a twin-engine Italian plane that is fast, light and economical to use. Behind him? Three days in Austria, where he has been *langlauf* skiing, working out in the gym and running in the mountain air.

He sips on a mineral water. Also present are his personal manager and former F3 and F3000 team manager, Franz Tost, and Williams' Australian-bred, German-speaking sponsorship exec, Chris Styring. Chris pulls a white Fujitsu shirt from a bag and asks Ralf to find a phone booth.

"No way I'm wearing that," says Ralf. "No way. When I'm away from the race track I wear my own clothes."

Chris shuffles uneasily and glances at the Fujitsu executives.

"But Ralf..."

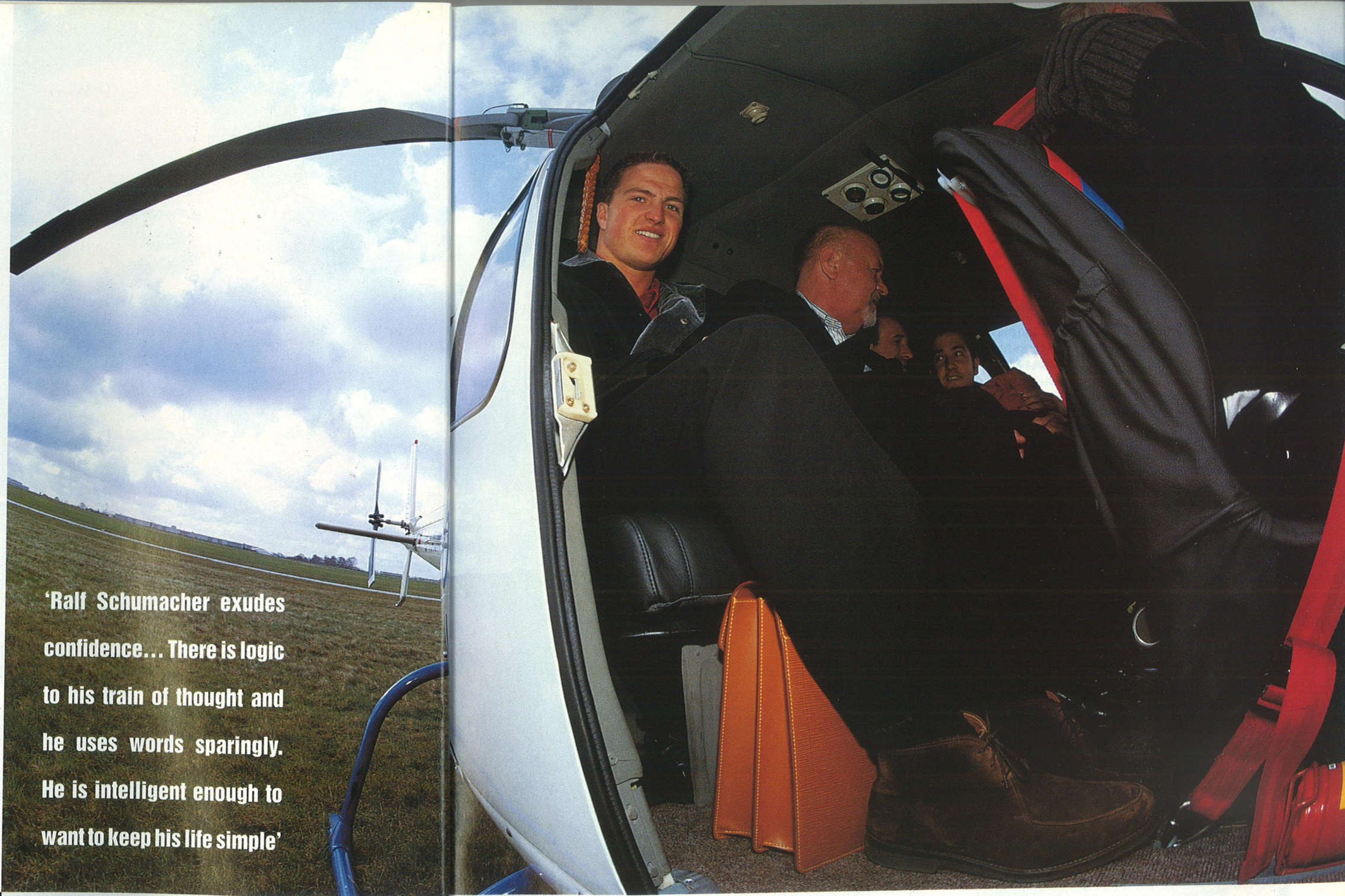
"Just kidding," says Ralf, laughing. "Just kidding..."

A few minutes later we are walking downstairs towards a makeshift studio, security guards paving the way. Heads turn and waters part as Ralf slices through the crowds. We chat about Melbourne and the upcoming test programme. Ralf is concise and matter-of-fact, reminiscent of Niki Lauda.

"Melbourne was okay. It was very good to get some points, but we need to find a lot more in the car. I could maybe have stayed in front of Heinz but it would have been difficult. I got the jump on him at the restart but then approaching the next corner I was in the middle of the road rather than right over on the inside. He braked later than me and just came up inside me. I could have fought him for the place but I thought it was better to let him go. It was a mistake on my part, but not a huge one, considering that this was the first race of the season and it was very important to score some points."

Ralf Schumacher exudes confidence with every syllable. There is logic to his train of thought and he uses words sparingly. He is intelligent enough to want to keep his life simple. When he graduated to Formula 3 as the younger brother of the Benetton star, he was besieged with requests for TV and radio interviews, most of which came from journalists who weren't finding it easy to get to Michael.

"No interviews," said Ralf. "No interviews until I have proved myself in Formula 3. After that?"



**'Ralf Schumacher exudes confidence... There is logic to his train of thought and he uses words sparingly. He is intelligent enough to want to keep his life simple'**



Certainly. Until then? Give me time to do the job."

Logical.

Ralf is ushered onto the stage, amidst bright lights and applause. A crowd pushes forwards and a German chat-show regular starts his preamble.

"Now, Ralf, the idea is that I'm going to ask you a few important questions..."

"...and let me guess: I'm going to give you some answers..." interjects Ralf to much hilarity.

The interview proceeds. Did Ralf always imagine he would be an F1 driver? Did Michael's success ever make the task seem impossible?

"I started racing karts at two-and-a-half," replies Ralf. "I couldn't brake, so my father had to hold the kart on a rope. At that age I didn't have any targets

**Pleasing the sponsors does have benefits, like a helicopter to Europe's biggest electronics fair courtesy of Brother**

or objectives; I just loved driving.

"You change as you grow. If anything, Michael's success pushed me on. I could learn from him. And now here I am. I should thank God 100 times a day that I do what I do. I love my life."

More questions; more answers. Then autographs. Ralf and Chris have developed a routine. Ralf signs – a right-handed scrawl, not unlike his brother's – and Chris distributes. The line is long but the receivers are orderly and polite.

"How much more do I have to do?" asks Ralf.

"Just another day and a half," says Chris. "Six more question-and-answer sessions; seven interviews and 10 autograph signings."

Ralf raises an eyebrow and carries on. ▶

Later, back in the office, he's serious for a second. "You know, it's okay now, but I've seen how difficult it is for Michael – I've seen the pressure he's under from everyone. At some point you have to say no."

"Okay," I say, "but the thing about Michael is that he is always professional, always easy, when you do get your slot with him. That is the secret. Limit your time – but never limit your input."

Ralf narrows his eyes and looks into the middle distance. Thinking of the day he will be lucky enough to have Michael's problems? Thinking of Michael?

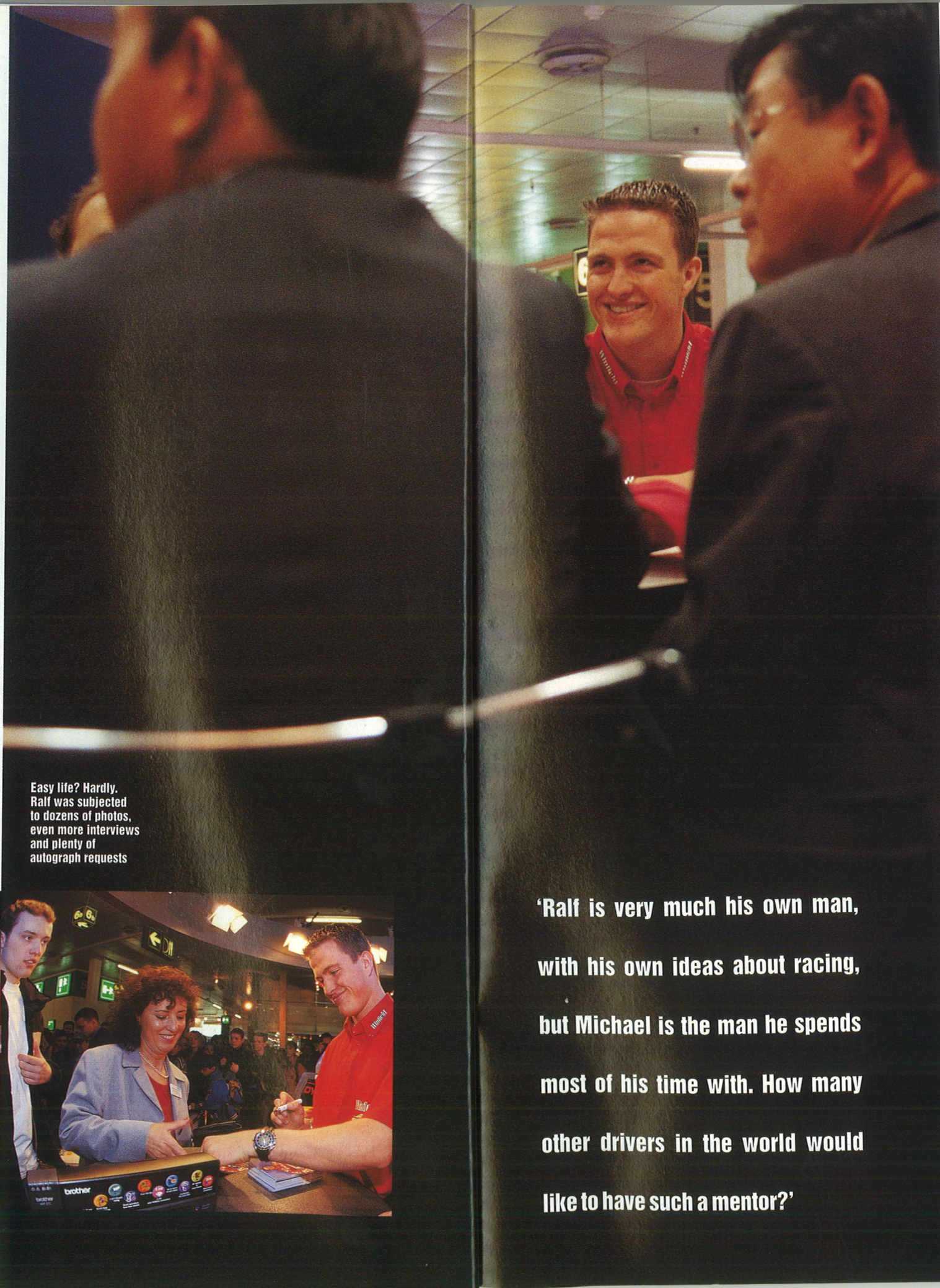
These are subjects about which you never ask Ralf Schumacher; the relationship between the two brothers is too personal. What you can say is that Ralf is unique amongst young F1 stars in that the person closest to him, the person who most influences his life and his thought processes, also happens to be the greatest racing driver of his time.

Consider that most athletes in other sports have full-time coaches – as distinct from media or commercial managers – and remember that driving an F1 car is the world's most solitary profession – in that you can do the motor racing equivalent of hitting the ball into the net yet no-one will see it – and you begin to see the advantage that Ralf is growing up with. Ralf is very much his own man, with his own ideas about racing, but Michael is the man he spends most of his time with. How many other racing drivers in the world would like to have such a mentor?

It could be, though, that the biggest thing Ralf has learnt from Michael is that you don't have to be a god to win two world championships. Ralf and his parents are probably the only three people on this planet who still see Michael as just an ordinary guy who began driving karts because his father rented facilities at the local track. One thing led to another and suddenly there was Michael, on TV, winning races. It was the same Michael, though – the same guy who came home on Sunday night and sat down to eat with the rest of the family.

Winning world championships? It is a combination of having the right car, the right approach and giving it 100 per cent. That was what Michael did – and Ralf, too, can do it: that is the lesson from Michael.

Easy life? Hardly. Ralf was subjected to dozens of photos, even more interviews and plenty of autograph requests



**'Ralf is very much his own man, with his own ideas about racing, but Michael is the man he spends most of his time with. How many other drivers in the world would like to have such a mentor?'**

Besides, Michael always used to say that Ralf was quicker – and there are few Schumacher experts around today who will actually say that Ralf is slower; at worst, Ralf is as quick as Michael. What they will add is that they are two very different people, different drivers. Michael is the consummate athlete – 100 per cent balance, reflexes, timing and rhythm, agile with a soccer ball, adaptable almost to any sport he chooses. Ralf, slightly cumbersome in the way he walks, and thicker-set, wouldn't compete with Michael on the football field but makes up for it in other ways. If he is 90 per cent athlete, the remaining 10 per cent is cerebral. Ralf thinks before he talks and talks before he acts.

Spa last year was a good example. While all around him searched for a gap in the first corner mayhem, Ralf virtually parked his Jordan and waited for the debris to settle. Then there was that radio discussion as the Belgian GP reached its climax.

"Ralf, hold station behind Damon."

"Ralf? Can you hear me? Hold station behind Damon."

"Ralf? Ralf?"

"Okay. I will hold station."

Thinks. Then acts.

Ralf leaves the show at around 6pm to drive to Hamburg, where Marcel Tiemann, a driver-friend from the F3 days, is celebrating his birthday. On the limit-free autobahn the BMW cruises smoothly at 150mph. Ralf, calm and relaxed, drives with his fingertips. He taps the rim of the wheel to *Tin Tin Out* and Franz recalls the evening in Japan last year when both Ralf and Michael were flat out on the karaoke.

"Ralf can carry a tune," says Franz, who knows about such things. "He's not bad at all."

Next morning, bleary-eyed, Ralf and co take a helicopter back to the show: the place is immense and over 80,000 people are expected to click through the gates. Ralf is in a red team shirt and heads for the Brother stand for more interviews and autographs. The talk is of traffic congestion and crowds and of using the helicopter later to take the group back to the airport. There's a head count and a baggage count but then suddenly Ralf interjects and reminds everyone that the helicopter is Fujitsu's and that wouldn't it be more polite if we asked their permission first?

The thought is not untypical of Ralf – a driver raised to know the importance of manners, morals and ethics. His parents (now separated) have never imposed themselves on the success of either brother. They are close, but Ralf's father isn't particularly interested in F1 and attends one or two races a year, max. Amazingly, there is no recorded history of athletic talent in either branch of the family: and then along came Michael and Ralf, racing karts because the kart business was just something that their father happened to be running at the time.

Upstairs on the Brother stand, Oli Reck, the photographer, is preparing a backdrop for the front cover shoot. He has sketches of what he hopes for and shows them to Ralf, getting him in the mood. Overalls on – Ralf is conservative amongst racing drivers in that he doesn't spend much time walking around shirtless, Villeneuve-style – photographer and driver begin the session. Oli hops around in the squatting position, calling for a slight move to the left here or a subtle smile there. Ralf, totally calm, and oblivious to the taunts of Willi Weber, who has arrived ▶



through a side door, stares deep into the lens.

Willi is a good guy. He ran Michael in F3 when Michael needed someone who believed in him and he has always looked after Ralf. He occasionally reminds the Schumachers that he and Franz Tost used to be quick F3 drivers – a claim that Tost totally refutes: “We were useless,” he says – but for the most part he steers a clear path between letting the drivers do their thing and keeping them under control. Willi is also a lateral thinker: he is at CeBIT because he’s launching a new fingerprint key pad for use in the home, office, car – virtually anywhere. He has his own stand at the show, alongside Brother, Toshiba and Microsoft. Well, sort of.

Half an hour later, Ralf has had enough. “No, Oli, no. You said ‘two more’ 30 shots ago. Enough. No. Finish.”

And, with that, we are adjourning to lunch in a rooftop chalet. Ralf talks politely with the Brother directors – they make the day’s first joke about ‘Brother’ being a perfect sponsor for Schumacher – and munches on cheese and ham while he handles the small talk:

“So how do you think you will go this year? How do you feel about Williams?”

“Obviously I don’t think we’ll be up there with McLaren and Ferrari, but the team are very good and I think we can get some strong race results. Qualifying will be difficult, but Williams race well and in racing anything is possible.”

“Where do you live?”

“Monaco. I have everything there I need. The sea. Kart track. Nice airport. It’s very convenient for F1.”

And so on. And on.

Over 1000 autographs, 20 interviews, 100 brief conversations and dozens of impromptu photo shoots later, Chris finally calls a halt. It is 5pm and Ralf heads for the airport. The Williams sponsors are delighted, Ralf is exhausted and Franz sits in the airport lounge eating a large chunk of strawberry cake.

“I don’t think many people yet realise how good Ralf is,” he says between bites. “I’ll never forget the day when Willi rang me to tell me that I had to join him and look after Michael’s younger brother. I said

**‘When Ralf spoke to Frank after his first drive in the FW20-Supertec he surprised his new boss by noting that the test had started late. This is a hardness that Williams have lacked’**



no 100 times but Willi was Willi and eventually you have to give in. I didn’t know what to expect – but, from the day I started with him, I have always been impressed. Sure, he was very young when he began. He wanted to have things his own way – wanted a team-mate in F3 who was much slower than him, that sort of thing. We said no. You must have someone who can push you. He learnt. He listened. He watched. And he used his brain. He is very, very smart and I have no doubt at all that he has the ability to be world champion.”

Is he in the environment to do that? Right now, only McLaren-Mercedes would be better; and with that not a current option, he is doing the next best thing: he is joining Williams while they are in a low, which is always a good time to join a team. Ahead

**It may be the same questions, but Ralf has learnt to work with the press – a lesson taken from his mentor, Michael**

looms the BMW project – something that might lift Williams to a higher plane. In short, there is nowhere better – not even at Ferrari, where (if he raced as Michael’s team-mate) the politics would be ridiculous.

When Ralf spoke to Frank Williams after his first drive in the FW20-Supertec he surprised his new boss by noting that the test had started late. This is a hardness that Williams have lacked in recent times, and which should endear Ralf to Frank and Patrick. He’s quick, too, and he’s as focused as Michael. He’ll still make mistakes, particularly when he’s fighting understeer, but his trackcraft is excellent and he knows how to finish.

He knows the business of the racing life, too. He’s learnt from the master ... and now he is out there, blazing his own trail. **1**

Snapshot from *WILLIAMS F1*

"what kinda  
rubber  
would you  
put on?"



© Winfield WilliamsF1 1999

# CHASING



# SHADOWS

It's the GP you didn't see. Ferrari's race to close the gap to McLaren; Minardi's never-ending fight for survival; Jordan's opportunity to build on early success

Words by Tom Clarkson;  
photographs by Darren Heath





'THIS IS THE FIRST TIME EDDIE HAS DRIVEN THE CAR SINCE HIS OH-SO-SWEET VICTORY – THERE'S A SWAGGER TO HIS STRIDE, A NEW SENSE OF PURPOSE'

**D**amon Hill can't remember seeing Michael Schumacher more depressed than he appeared to be on the flight home from Australia: "I think he knows that, yet again, he's got to pull it out of the bag because he hasn't got the right machinery to beat McLaren."

His theory has credence. Okay, so Eddie Irvine won in Australia, but Ferrari didn't prevail on merit – anybody can see that. Irvine would have been lapped in Melbourne by Mika Hakkinen had the McLaren driver kept going in the race, kept up his searing early pace.

Even the mercurial Schumacher, the benchmark by which all things Ferrari are measured, was 1.3 seconds off Hakkinen in qualifying. You'd be depressed too.

The F399 had proved more of a gelding than a stallion Down Under – so to speak – and in 1999, remember, there is no tyre war through which to claw back some of the current disadvantage.

But an annual budget of £125 million isn't stumped up by Fiat and Marlboro to finish second – so, only six days after

returning from Australia, Ferrari go to Barcelona to embark on the first of 10 scheduled test days prior to the Brazilian Grand Prix.

It's a development programme that will cost something close to £1 million.

It's a sign of their determination.

It's the GP you never see.

It's absolutely crucial.

AND IMMEDIATELY THERE'S a spanner in the works: Michael has sprained his ankle playing football, so the responsibility of taking the team forward, at this test at least, falls at Irvine's feet. The Ulsterman has two cars at his disposal, his race car and a spare. The objective of this test is to improve the predictability of the car on the new-for-'99 hard-compound Bridgestone tyres. There are also numerous suspension and aerodynamic modifications to assess, the burden of which is to be split between the two cars.

Eddie is a wonder to behold; this is the first time he has driven the car since his oh-so-sweet victory Down Under – there's a swagger to his stride, a new sense of purpose. The past is of no relevance in

motor racing; even his own team have gone some way to suggesting that Melbourne was, in fact, a failure (because Schumacher, their Chosen One, didn't score). But Eddie can prolong the ecstasy of the moment; for the next five weeks he is the leader of the world championship. Every question asked receives a sincere answer, backed by a sense of relief which no amount of *live* could have provided.

As the king of all he surveys, Eddie ventures to the far end of the pitlane, to Minardi, where they have set up shop for what will be their only test of the prolonged break between races. Their rookie, Marc Gené, is clocking up some reliability mileage because, like Schuey, he too has a problem with the speed of the McLarens: Hakkinen's pole position in Melbourne bumped him off the grid via the 107 per cent qualifying rule. It was only because of some persuasive lateral thinking and nifty rule interpretations by team manager, Cesare Fiorio, that he was allowed to start.

"You can't blame Marc for what happened in Melbourne," says Minardi's technical chief Gustav Brunner, who is overseeing operations at the test. "He's ▶



Marc Gené prepares to give 107 per cent. Left: A day in the sun is little comfort for Ferrari as they search for that elusive time

new to F1 and, as yet, we don't have the machinery to let him get the job done. We didn't even start wind tunnel work on the new car until last November because Benetton had it booked out. We are achieving reliability here and then I will introduce some modifications on the car to make it quicker. By Imola I hope you will see a car with which I'm happy with from a speed point of view."

Down at Ferrari, all Irvine wants right now is performance. Nothing else will do. But after his first installation lap he says that any times posted today will be meaningless because the track is very slippery. Touring cars have been testing here recently and F1 cars are particularly sensitive to the oil and muck tin-tops drop and drag onto the track. It will take at least a day of running for Ferrari and the five other teams present to 'clean up' the circuit ready for quick lap times.

Crouched in the corner of the Ferrari pit is Irv's Irish mate 'Mad Mick'. He is over from London on holiday, and the conditions are perfect for him: clear blue skies and high ambient temperatures. He

is looking burned already. The clement weather holds different connotations for Eddie: high track temperatures mean increased tyre wear and this on a circuit which is renowned as the hardest on tyres of all the tracks visited by the F1 circus.

"The conditions change a lot here," says Eddie. "On the one hand there is the abrasive track surface, and on the other there is the wind. These four-grooved front tyres make the cars very sensitive to wind changes so it's easy to be caught out, especially if you are on worn rubber."

The Circuit de Catalunya sits inconspicuously on the edge of a hillside in an industrial wasteland of Barcelona. It is susceptible to winds from the Med in the east and the mainland in the west. Conditions can alter very quickly – within the space of a lunch break. So day one proves a misnomer: the conditions are limiting and, worryingly, Ferrari are unable to test the bulk of their modifications because of gearbox woes. Eddie's unexpected spell of filling in for the *wunderkind* is spent largely in the paddock, behind the pits. Sunbathing after all.

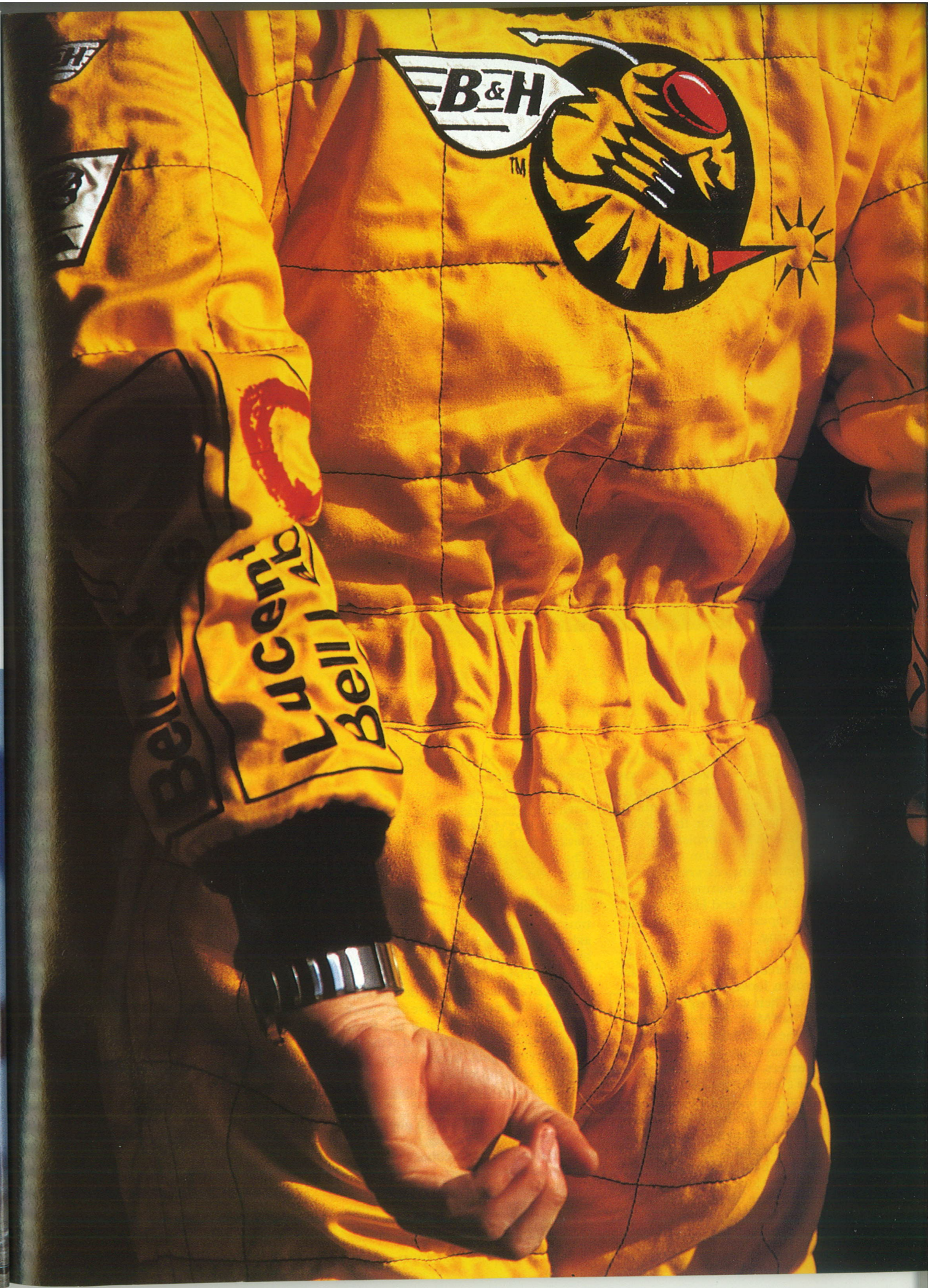
Irvine totals 55 laps today while the Jordans in the next pit, limited to only two engines per car, complete 45. There should be no such constraints at Ferrari. This has been a day of frustration. It's not Eddie's fault, and he looks a little agitated by the lack of running. His state of mind during the long lulls isn't helped by the fact that Luca Baldisseri, his regular race engineer, is on holiday. Ferrari's capable test team chief, Luca Mazzola, is standing in. But in relationships as close as these, stand-ins, however good, will always be way second best.

But Eddie remains committed. His discussions with the team about the troubled car continue long after dark; as a proven race-winner it's his job to lead them. He wants his stock to continue to rise in case that elusive number one seat should beckon from another team at the end of the year.

Given all that, should we be surprised that Irv spends a good chunk of his 'free' test time in conversation with the Jordan team? An Irish team. A team that might need another driver next year, should ▶

'EDDIE'S UNEXPECTED SPELL OF FILLING IN FOR THE *WUNDERKIND* IS SPENT LARGELY IN THE PADDOK, BEHIND THE PITS. SUNBATHING AFTER ALL'

With just one test between Australia and Brazil, Minardi concentrate on their reliability. Right: The Jordan team provided an oasis of pits calm



Searching, longing for a car that can close the gap to McLaren, Irv's test at Barcelona is hit by spins, 'box and tyre trouble and...

'WE ARE FORCED TO SWITCH FROM THE SURREAL TO THE VERY REAL BY REPORTS THAT MCLAREN ARE SETTING DEVASTATING TIMES AT SILVERSTONE'

Damon call it a day at the end of this year. A team that speak English. There are moments when Eddie appears an outsider at Ferrari as his mechanics joke among themselves, the reason for their jollity hidden by Italian slang complexities.

Day two, 8.45am. Jordan mechanics dwell in the pitlane; their cars ready to run, wheels attached, tyre warmers on. They only require Damon and Heinz-Harald Frenzen to appear on the scene before they can get going.

Next door in the Ferrari pit there is an altogether different scene. All hell appears to have broken loose, with no obvious reason why. Their cars aren't ready, so Eddie and 'Mad Mick' decide to continue breakfast in the adjoining pit.

Mechanics run around shouting, some holding spanners, others air guns. One is sitting in the cockpit of the car Eddie will drive first, ready to blip the V10 when she is to be warmed up. Within moments he is governing the deafening tones of the second-most powerful engine in F1 and, at the same time, he is jerking the steering wheel from lock to lock. There is a look of fierce concentration on his face. Monte

Carlo perhaps? No, Imola. Whatever, sure as hell he's quick.

It's a bizarre scene. But we are forced to snap from the surreal to the very real by reports that McLaren are setting some devastating times in testing at Silverstone. The contrast between F1's arch-rivals, at this particular moment, is stark.

And this is only the beginning of an altogether bad day for Ferrari. And this time it is Eddie's fault. Twice he ends up axle-deep in a gravel trap, causing the session to be halted while his stranded mount is retrieved.

Irony of ironies, however, despite what appears to be an unproductive day's work, Ferrari wind up quickest of all. Eddie strings together a flier at the end of the day and everyone goes home happy. The mechanics are still joking.

Trouble is, Eddie still probably doesn't get it.

Down at Minardi, after a good day's work, according to Brunner, they wind up slowest of all. Why? Neither the engine nor the car do their efforts justice.

Ferrari have to pack up early because they have to get the cars back to Fiorano,

their own test track, for the day after tomorrow, when *Michael* will be testing – if the physio on his leg has been fruitful. The way the team talk about *Michael*, the way they set up *his* mobile Technogym for him in the Barcelona paddock just in case *he* turns up makes it clear where their allegiances lie. He, me, you, already knew that, but even the patently obvious can be reinforced in the right circumstances.

You know too that the double world champion, if *he* were here, wouldn't allow for any slackness within the ranks.

You know too that *he* will be demanding answers as to why Rubens Barrichello's Stewart-Ford puts in a time the following day that is three seconds faster than Eddie had managed.

There are eight more days of testing before Brazil, and there is still 1.3 seconds to find. This hasn't been an impressive display; your money still sides very firmly with the Silver Arrows.

"Oh, I wouldn't do that," says Eddie. "I think Ferrari can still win some more races this year – so long as the McLarens retire!"

There you have it – from the Prancing Horse's mouth. ☹



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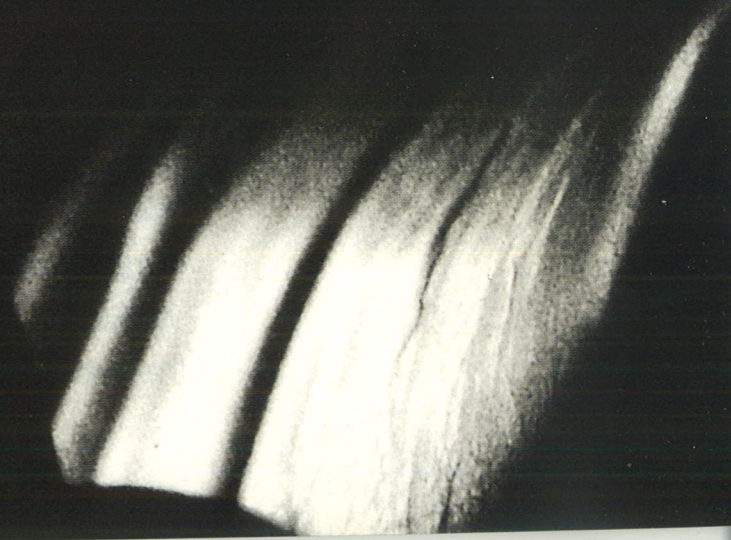


**West McLaren Mercedes**  
FORMULA ONE WORLD CHAMPIONS 1998



**Mr Meticulous** McLaren's boss has seen every side of F1. He mucked in as a mechanic; now he runs a team with a spotless reputation. So what makes him tick?

Words by Peter Windsor; photographs by Charles Best



**D**on't park your car in the crowded McLaren lot, suitably early for your interview, and expect Mr Dennis to say anything dramatic: the grey-black front of McLaren International instead speaks for him – a testament to the explosion that took place within the F1 industry between 1980 and today. Now controlling a workforce of around 850 and a turnover approaching £100 million, Dennis is at once an innovator, a great F1 team

manager and an ultra-successful businessman – the sort of figure that sits comfortably within the pages of *Vogue*, *Fortune*, *F1 Racing* and *Scientific American*. To ask him about specifics, then, would have seemed about as banal as asking Monica Lewinsky about the Serbian crisis. In a brief slot in his day, in a segment bordered by immovable meetings, you instead try to find the essence of the man, his mood of the moment, his spark.

His office is unique amongst those of racing people – Bernard Ecclestone aside – in that it contains no pictures, photographs or momentos from Formula 1. Instead, it is full of art – modern, with scribbled titles like 'Function 3' and 'Visual Form Nine'; exquisite glass vases and plates; a collection of model aircraft; and a parade of classic brass microscopes. His desk is clean save for three family photographs, a computer and two models – one of the McLaren road car and the other of the Eurofighter. The furnishings are dark and classic; there is much less glass and steel than I had imagined.

He arrives in a blur, apologising for being late and immediately picks up the morning's mail for dissection. He reads each screed carefully, calls in his PA, issues instructions and then settles back, ready for thought. He is wearing a neat blue suit of the high-lapel variety, a checked shirt and co-ordinated tie.

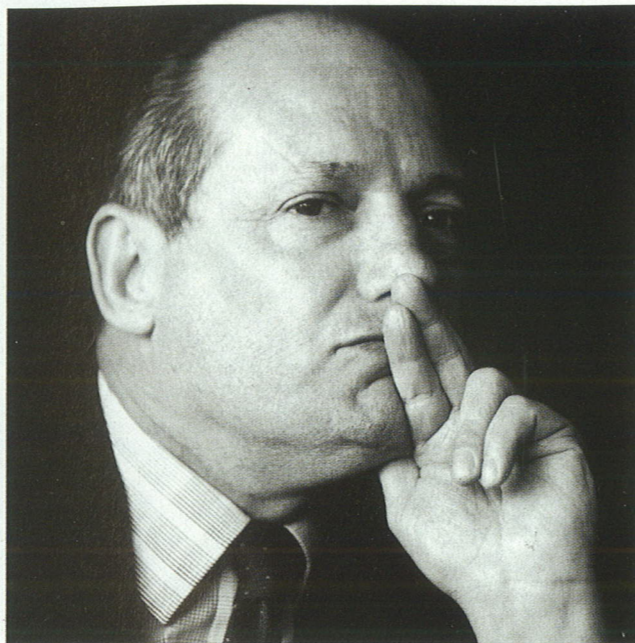
"How did you feel, flying back from Melbourne," I ask, hoping to touch upon his ability to recover from a dual race retirement.

"Tired," he grinned, "but also frustrated and disappointed."

A lot of people I know would have stopped there, or perhaps added that their minds had quickly turned towards the next race, to the next meeting, for that is the racing way. Not for Ron Dennis, though. Surprisingly, he delved further:

"It was more complex than that. I think there is still a belief amongst mechanics that they haven't qualified for that title unless they have worked an all-nighter at some stage. My view is that, if that occurs, unless there are some pretty extenuating circumstances, then it is a management failure. During the month leading up to the race, and over the race weekend itself, a lot of people worked extraordinary hours and I was quite uncomfortable with the part I played in that."

So he was criticising his own performance, as distinct from blaming 'finger trouble' or a design failure or a duff part. Was that



realistic? Could he really imagine an F1 team in which those sorts of working hours were not imposed?

"I think 'imposed' is the wrong word," he replied. "It is more a question of inevitability. There are times when everybody has to work that bit harder; that is the nature of the beast. F1 isn't staffed by nine-to-fivers, but Melbourne was a bit extreme, and everybody felt it."

And then on to the more positive stuff, the analysis of racing problems and strategies:

"Having said that, the balancing thought was that the efforts of these people, which of course started with the conceptual work of the whole design group, led by Adrian [Newey], had provided the team with an extremely competitive racing car. I therefore had the view that I would rather be sitting in our position, albeit with neither car finishing, than in the position of having to find performance. Finding reliability in a grand prix car is a systematic, design-led process which requires you clearly to understand the problem and then to find a solution. Finding performance is much harder."

So there was no regret that he had raced the new cars in Melbourne rather than the MP4-13s, which might have been more reliable?

"Retirements are a bit like an accident. It is very rare that an accident is caused by one thing; it is always a combination ▶

◆  
'Leading up to Australia, a lot of people worked extraordinary hours and I was uncomfortable with the part I played in that'



◆  
'I'd rather be sitting in our position, albeit with neither car finishing in Australia, than having to find performance'

of elements coming together and then there is an unforeseen reaction. It stems from an ambitious objective – and I think we were just slightly more ambitious in Melbourne than we should have been. The decision to race the 14 was correct because we needed to establish its competitiveness in order to understand where to focus our efforts between Australia and Brazil. And, unlike 1998, we really didn't know where it was. Before Australia in 1998 we had a much better handle on our competitiveness but we certainly didn't have that mental luxury this time."

Looking back to 1998, then, did he feel that he should have better disguised the speed of his cars? Should he have won Melbourne by 30 seconds rather than by a lap? Would this, in turn, have enabled them to run the brake-steer for longer?

"Not really, because you go into a grand prix season with a very firm conviction that what you have produced is a package which complies with all the regulations. Why should we fear starting the season with things we had developed over the winter? Although the margin of victory in Australia '98 was significant, it was still a margin that was achieved having paced the cars. It wasn't as if we pushed the cars to the limit. It was also a margin, remember, that was emphasised by our principle competitors being on a different tyre – and, in that race, as in some others, we had a tyre advantage."

Speaking of which, he pulled off the coup of the year by switching, early in 1998, from Goodyear to Bridgestone. It never entered Sir Frank Williams' head to do so; Ferrari thought about it, then balked: Luca Montezemolo thought the risk to be too great; Michael Schumacher wanted to stay loyal to Goodyear. Ron Dennis?

"It didn't really need Einstein to tell you that, if a company has a declared intent to stop significantly sooner than is stipulated in the contract to which it is bound, its focus and commitment has to be doubted. But it wasn't just that. It was also a careful evaluation of the performance of some of the cars that had been running on Bridgestones in 1997. We looked at a lot of races – not

just Hungary – and we eventually concluded that our chassis-engine-driver combination and Bridgestone tyres would be a very competitive package. We also felt that being the first large team to switch would give us a calculated advantage. That proved to be the case."

He then showed his ability to think in different directions – vertically, upside down and laterally.

"If you think about it the other way round, it was clear that Goodyear were going to stop and we were saying to Bridgestone that a world championship in which you have a monopoly isn't really a world championship. It was therefore important for them to win in 1998. Was it difficult morally? Not really. Clearly there had

to be an acceptable conclusion to what was going to be a fundamental breach of contract. My loyalty to Goodyear ceased when their loyalty to me ceased. The outcome was as satisfactory as it could have been under the circumstances. If they had to have raised their efforts and carry all the top teams, including us, in 1998, then I think they would have struggled with the capacity it would have required."

What was it like, I wondered, in the mid-1990s, when he wasn't winning races, when he had to get out of bed knowing that only a freak result would see his drivers on the podium? How did he cope with this?

"It was painful. Sure. All the people who wanted you to fail felt confident enough to say so: 'He is failing.' 'The company is failing.' Then the people who don't want you to fail started to think, 'has he really lost it?' And, inevitably, after a period of time, you start to doubt your own abilities."

"But it is at times like this that you just dig deep into yourself and lean not only on self-belief but also on belief in the people that work around you. Part of management is to provide that emotional support and leadership in difficult periods. You have to keep fine-tuning the situation, because nothing is ever perfect. At the end of the day you can only do your best. If someone struggles to meet standards, that's our failure, not theirs. In those situations you play to people's strengths and support their weaknesses."

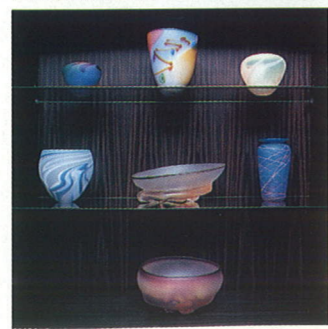
McLaren is indeed full of very good people – not only in the sense of their professional abilities but also in the sense of their natures. Egos seem better-controlled at McLaren than at any team I can think of. Is this something he is aware of?

"On behalf of the company I appreciate the compliment. I don't think we necessarily have the best way, but we have a good way. I think most of our people feel comfortable when they look in the mirror in the morning. You are what you are and you're contributing to the performance of the whole. Everyone in the company is working towards incentives – towards profit-sharing or towards results-bonuses. Of course everyone has an ego and most of us are very competitive. I am. And, sometimes, because of that, I am not a very nice person. I hate losing. Hopefully I've got better as I've matured, but I'm still very competitive."

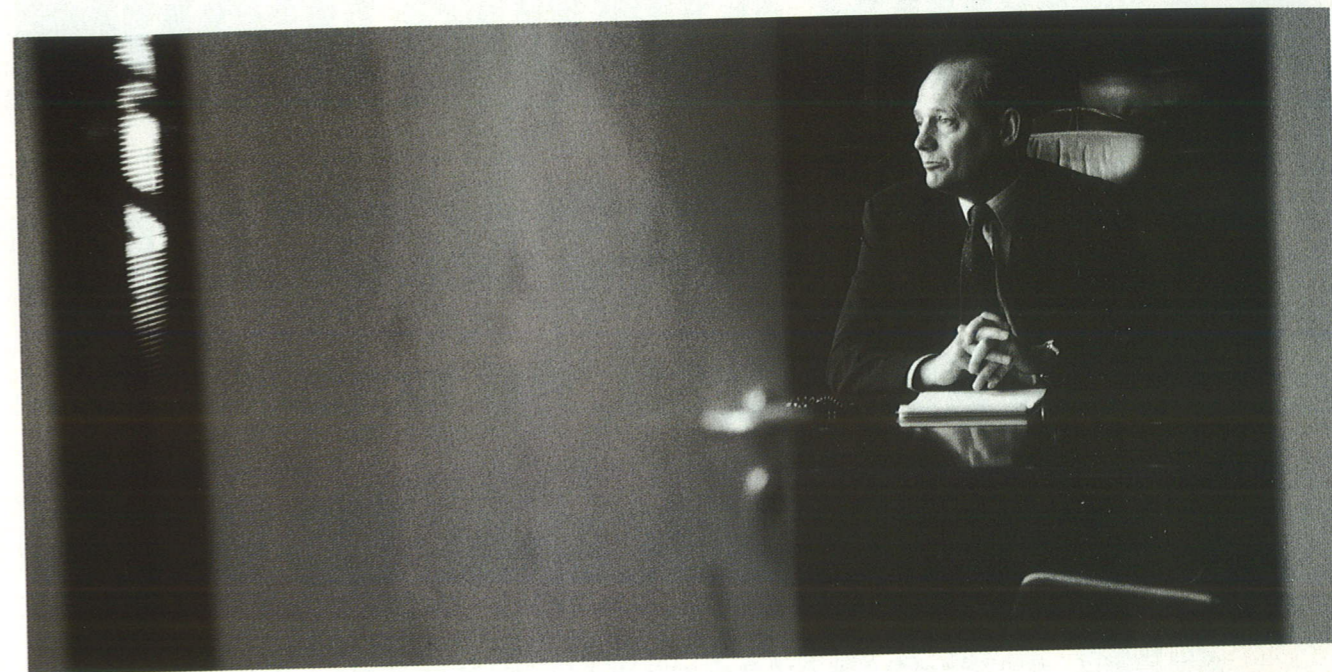
"Overall, though, we work as a team. When Adrian joined us I wouldn't have rated his ability to perform as a team player as higher than a five [out of 10]. My experience of highly-talented, technical people is that they consider their primary asset to be their knowledge and therefore they are very uncomfortable in passing it around the design team."

"Adrian is actually close to a 10. He simplifies his approach by saying, 'If I have a lot of great people around me, contributing, my job is easier.'

No F1 memorabilia clutters this office. Dennis prefers to showcase his vases



—◆—  
'Everyone has an ego and most of us are competitive. I am. I hate losing. Hopefully I've got better as I've matured'  
—◆—



That has a healthy, logical ring about it. But that's only possible when the ego doesn't get in the way. Adrian genuinely believes in sharing the credit for the performance of the car with the team."

I asked him if he was doing exactly what he wanted to do in life ... if he felt he was acting out his destiny.

"As you mature as a human – and I think that that process starts when you're about 14 – you start to have different levels of ambition. Ambition can be characterised in your thought processes as a very precise thing and I would say that I've never got to where I wanted to get because, just before arriving, I've changed the destination. Few human beings could say that there aren't moments when you look down back at the path and not feel particularly comfortable with a decision you've taken. But, by and large, I'm very comfortable. If there is some Supreme Force – and I question this more than I would like to admit – then I hope I'm not disappointing it."

So does he believe in this Supreme Force, the God of our times?

"I can't answer the question with a yes or no. I can only answer it by saying that, if someone or something is going to evaluate your performance up to the point of death, I'm pretty comfortable with myself. Whether it does or doesn't exist in some ways leads you into a necessity to believe in – and this is probably a bit harsh – some kind of psychological crutch: if you are an honest person, a kind person, if you do all the things society expects you to do, then

that will qualify you for passing on to a better world. That's not me. I don't want that crutch. I think you've got to be able to just honestly look at yourself. It's a thought process. Did you do the right thing at the right time?"

The microscopes, the planes, the vases?  
"The microscopes are symbols that remind me that, no matter how much we surround ourselves with technology, there is always a human being at the end of the line. These brass microscopes, which have high levels of accuracy and manufacturing perfection, were made by people with relatively rudimentary equipment ... and they still found accuracy. The planes were made by a perfectionist who, in his very early teens, decided to make a model of every aircraft ever made in England. And he did – from basic materials; none were made from kits."

"The glassware has all been crafted by young English artists, which is a reminder that times change. They used to say that you could not find a decent restaurant in England and that there was no creativity. Now, the opposite is true."

Our time was over – but I could have continued for hours. In an instant he was back to business, signing blank cheque upon blank cheque, speaking as he wrote.

"Don't worry, these all require another signature," he said, smiling. "I have total, 100 per cent confidence in the other guy who's going to sign them..." ①

—◆—  
'I have never got to where I wanted to get because, just before arriving, I've changed the destination'  
—◆—

**‘I know Ayrton would have come back. And when he retired, he would have done it in a McLaren. Of that I am absolutely sure.’ Ron Dennis**

In our final extract from *Ayrton Senna: As Time Goes By*, Christopher Hilton uncovers new thoughts from those who worked with the Brazilian

**A**ll the evidence leads to this singular point, and it is one Alain Prost himself shares: Ayrton Senna intended to destroy him – not outmanoeuvre him, not win more races, not establish some sort of dominion over him but destroy him. The domination of F1 would follow from that.

Jo Ramirez, who has spent a lifetime in motor racing and was working at McLaren, hammered out these words (in *F1 Racing* magazine): “From the very first time Ayrton drove the car, he had an obsession about Alain. He wanted to know what rear wing he had, which front springs, which tyres. Every time he came into the pits, the first thing he would ask is what time Alain had done. All the time. He didn’t care about anybody else. Alain was the number one and beating him was Ayrton’s obsession.”

In 1988, Senna drove 16 races for McLaren, taking 13 poles (a record), winning Imola, Canada, the USA East, Britain, Germany, Hungary, Belgium and Japan, finishing second in Mexico, France and Australia, fourth in Spain and sixth in Portugal. This gave him 94 points (90 counting) and the world championship.

In Rio he took pole but was disqualified and Prost won; at San Marino, he took pole with 1 minute 27.148 seconds,

Prost next on 1 minute 27.919 seconds. Ramirez insists that up until then Prost had been very relaxed about any threat Senna might pose, but the Imola second qualifying – when the fast times were set – altered that. In the truck, they were changing and Prost scanned the split-times to see where Senna had gained on him. To Prost’s bafflement he still couldn’t find where. He had his back to Senna and murmured something earthy about Senna’s speed. Senna heard and winked at Jo Ramirez; and Ramirez thought Senna was on the way.

Monaco followed and here Senna reached the next crossroads. Starkly put, he led but lost concentration on lap 67 and butted the barrier just before the tunnel. He retreated straight to his apartment and was so distraught that when Ramirez rang him that evening he was still crying.

Nigel Stepney, long in racing and wise in the ways of it, says: “Drivers are fractions. That is the difference between winning and not winning. Ayrton was leading at Monaco by a big margin and he shunted it. He lost concentration because he was lifting off. Drivers drive at 100 per cent. Not many can lift off in a race and get away with it. Different drivers have different methods of trying to achieve this and I think that, after the



Monaco Grand Prix, Ayrton found his method.”

Gordon Murray, one of the great racing car designers, was at McLaren working with Senna. “I was his chief designer and chief engineer for two years – 1988 and 1989. My first car was the 1988 [MP4/4] and I worked with him on race strategy that year. I loved the race strategy in particular and so did he. He just left Prost standing, basically. Race strategy was completely different to what it is now and 1988 was a disaster [for everyone] because we had the fuel limitation – it was so complicated.

“Senna was excellent at that. It’s where he had everybody beaten and we used to have a little thing where I’d stand on the pitwall and talk to him on the radio for qualifying to try and find a clear lap, and he was brilliant at that as well. We’d always have a good laugh about it. I’d watch who came in, who’d gone out, who was going quick and he always managed to pick a lap. In my book, as a racing driver there hasn’t been anybody since Jim Clark that comes near.”

Including Schumacher?

“Oh, yes. Oh, Christ yes. Senna was in a different league. Oh, bloody hell yes. I mean, Schumacher just makes so many mistakes. Senna had a ruthless, absolutely ruthless attitude towards lapping people and we’d talk about

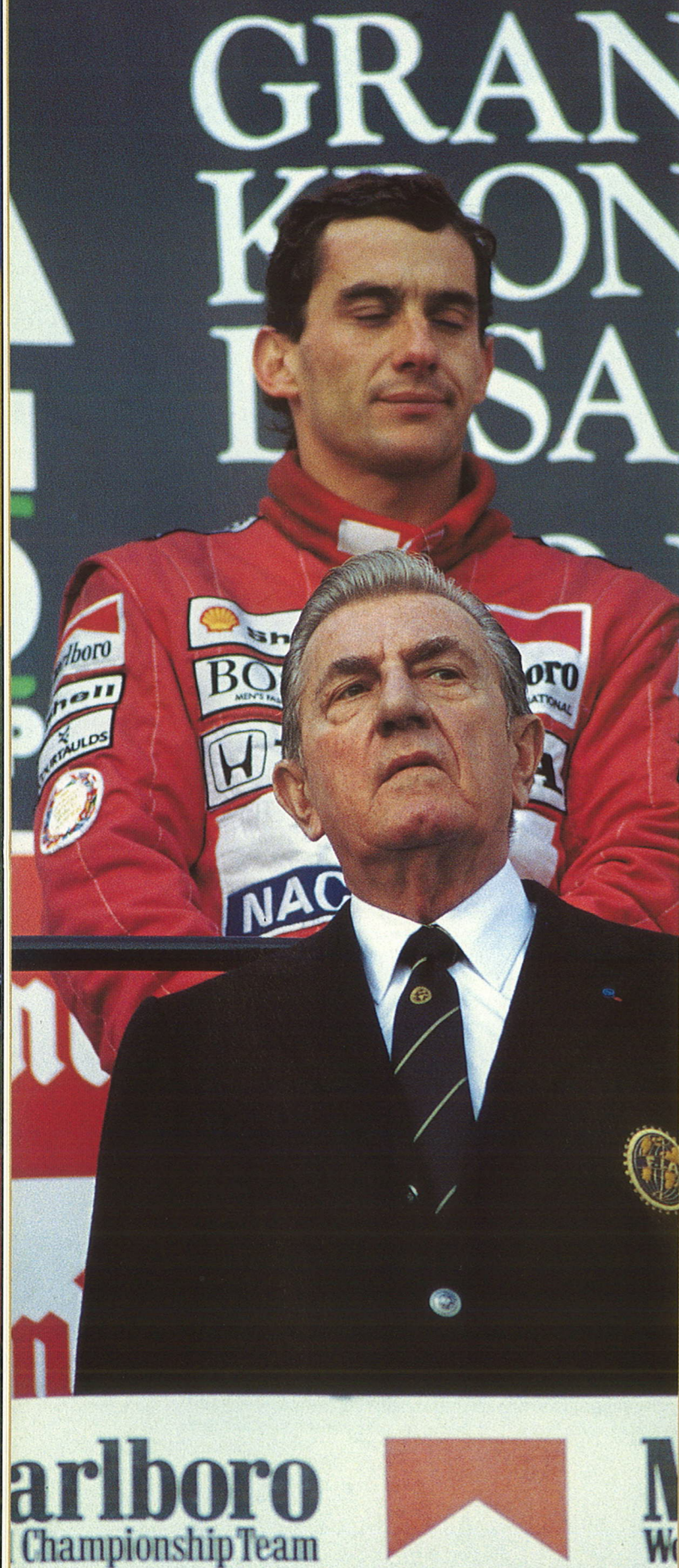
it. It was odds-on that one day he was going to get caught out, like Monza, for instance. That was the one race McLaren lost in 1988.”

The destruction of Prost began at Imola ’89 where Senna proposed a gentleman’s agreement. Because the McLarens were so superior, whichever one took the lead at the green lights would maintain that lead through the first corner – Tosa – and only thereafter would the dicing and racing between them begin. [Tamburello wasn’t regarded as a corner and therefore not included in the agreement.]

Senna took the lead and Prost followed him through, but Gerhard Berger’s Ferrari had gone off at Tamburello and burst into a fireball. When the race was restarted Prost led but, into Tosa, Senna scampered through – seemingly a clear breaking of the agreement, and this by a man who insisted his word was his bond and publicly deplored anyone who ever behaved to lower standards.

Prost told *Autosport*’s GP editor, Nigel Roebuck: “Afterwards, he [Senna] argued that it wasn’t the start – it was the restart, so the agreement didn’t apply. He had his own rules, and sometimes they were, well, let’s say strange.”

By Japan, with the championship still at stake, it had reached such a pitch of intensity that Prost (who led by ▶



16 points) vowed he would not be governed by his usual rational behaviour, meaning that if Senna came barging along Prost would not move out of his way to prevent a crash. "As far as I was concerned, Senna thought about himself, and that was it."

Senna tracked Prost and, after 46 of the 53 laps, tried a lunge down the inside at the chicane. "For me," Prost says, "the way he did it was impossible because he was going so much quicker into the braking area. I couldn't believe he tried it on that lap because, as we came up to the chicane, he was so far back. When you look in your mirrors and a guy is 20 metres behind you it's impossible to judge and I didn't even realise he was trying to overtake me." Simultaneously, Prost reasoned that he wouldn't grant Senna even a "one-metre gap. I came off the throttle, braked – and turned in."

At the time, Prost was quoted as saying: "Ayrton had a small problem. He thinks he can't kill himself because he believes in God and I think that's very dangerous for the other drivers." And that was the crash of '89.

At Japan in 1990 with the championship at stake again, he took pole from Prost (now Ferrari) but wanted the physical position of this pole moved to the left, where he judged the track surface more favourable. Jean-Marie Balestre, the FIA President, refused to move it and, secretly, Senna vowed that he would give the McLaren full power and if Prost got in the way, too bad.

There are many dimensions to this. Senna was prepared to risk his life, and that of Prost, for something an official would not do; he also brought the whole activity of grand

**'I couldn't believe he tried it on that lap because, into the chicane, he was so far back. Ayrton had a small problem. He thinks he can't kill himself because he believes in God and that's very dangerous for the other drivers'** Alain Prost

Left: the former FIA boss, Jean-Marie Balestre, who refused to swap the pole at Suzuka in 1990. Right: Imola 1989, the Senna/Prost fued-inducing incident about to happen

prix racing into disrepute – made it a subject of mockery rather than majesty. But, even more astonishing, two weeks later in Adelaide, Senna held a press conference and resolutely blamed Prost for the crash. There was no mention of moving pole position, the tantrum with Balestre, or hammering into turn one of the race regardless of where Prost's Ferrari was. Senna presented it as a simple motor racing accident caused because Prost left a gap and he – Senna – was fully entitled to go into it.

These many years later, Prost reveals that after he had retired he and Senna spoke about the crash of 1990 and Senna "admitted to me that he'd done it on purpose. He explained why" – the tantrum with Balestre.

Prost also says these ominous and hugely significant words: "He was extremely religious, and he used to go on about that, about speaking the truth. At the time, I used to think that some of the things he did on the track didn't fit with all that, but now it seems to me he really didn't know he was sometimes in the wrong. He had these rules, he played by them, and he wasn't interested in anything else. Looking back, I really think he believed he was always in the right, always telling the truth – and on the track he was exactly the same way."

Senna was shown an aerial photograph of the crash and it showed the gap he'd tried to put the McLaren into wasn't really a gap at all. He scanned the photograph and said "that's a lie!"

By the end of 1993, his face was carrying lines and he might have retired. He was in love, had the creature

comforts which genuine wealth brings and was actively building a business empire, importing quality products into Brazil. He also had ideas about trying to alleviate the plight of stricken children – they're everywhere in Brazil. To retire would have been no defeat and no surrender, but something mitigated against it. On the racing track he still had great truths to prove. He went to Williams.

Ron Dennis is the perfect man – arguably the only man – to conduct a proper review of Senna's years at McLaren. Did he think it was a risk partnering Senna with Prost?

"Not at all. They both had a commitment to win, both knew that our philosophy was to provide each driver with equal equipment and always run two front-runners. The competition within the team was fantastic for the team. Of course their personalities were very different and inevitably that led to the occasional bit of friction. If someone asks me what particular thing I am pleased with in my own career, and I've chosen the word pleased rather than proud, I'll say that I feel I did a pretty good job of managing two very strong personalities for over three years."

Was that difficult for you personally?

"It was not from a business point of view, but it was from an emotional point of view. I am not a particularly emotional person but these guys gave everything. They'd always give 100 per cent in and out of the car. Therefore it draws you into their personalities and when you see two people arguing – two people that I was fond of and that I cared a lot about – then inevitably it gets to your emotions. You can see both sides and you can see that they were ▶



## Hart's wise words predict talent in '84



AFTER THREE YEARS dominating the junior formulae, Ayrton Senna entered Formula 1 with the small Essex-based Toleman team in 1984.

Brian Hart made the engines and after January testing in Rio, when Senna was just beginning to feel his way, Hart wrote these astonishing words:

"So far Senna has been quite good and very analytical, but he lacks experience and is certainly not fit. On Tuesday after an initial few warm-ups, he would be knackered after four or five laps.

"Senna is obviously very bright and to keep him we will certainly have to produce more power and a better car in the 184 [the new Toleman, not yet ready]. By the European races at least, Senna's ability will be apparent and I'd imagine teams would have little problem finding the money to break the contract – this is an opinion Peter Gethin [Toleman's team manager] and I have formed independently."

The engine failed at the Brazilian Grand Prix – Senna's debut – but he slogged out a sixth place finish in South Africa the following race.

Hart says: "At Kyalami a combination of the altitude and the high temperature left him completely exhausted. Peter and I had gone up to the car and poured some water over him.

"Peter had a bit more clout, I was just an engineer, and he got him to the medical centre. You suddenly realised what a young and slender man Senna was."

By the end of the season, he had built himself up and was among the leaders. This selection of photographs, courtesy of Brian Hart and never published before, catch these heady Toleman days perfectly. Days that were matey, unbuttoned and enacted on a human scale. Afterwards the world would never be the same again.



Top: Brian Hart knew early on that Senna was too quick for Toleman. Above: Senna's stunning show in the rain at Monaco 1984 nearly brought him victory in his debut season. Left: Senna's slight build meant that he suffered from fatigue at the start of his F1 career. Below left: By mid-'84 he was a regular front-runner finishing third at Brands Hatch. Bottom: Even as a Toleman driver his reputation earned him fans across the world



PHOTOGRAPHS COURTESY OF BRIAN HART

genuinely upset with each other over certain things. That wasn't comfortable but you got a satisfying feeling that, as and when these things manifested themselves, you were able to be part of the healing process: sort them out and then they'd go away and get on with their racing again."

At Toleman Senna had proved an outstanding prospect, at Lotus he'd proved a race winner, at McLaren he proved to be a world champion.

"And continued to demonstrate it," explains Ron. "Our relationship moved to a different level – to a level that was well, it's wrong to say unique because maybe that's what Chapman and Clark had, but that level."

He stayed six years, which is a very long time. You're talking three championships, you're talking all those pole positions. Lots of people claim to have been close to him. How close did you get?

"To be honest, I don't want to comment on other people and it's not a question of putting my hand up and saying I was closer than anyone else. The people he was closest to were his family – hugely important to him, especially his sister and his mother. He was a gentle man as well as a gentleman, but very determined. People sometimes misread his beliefs and his values. He knew through his parents what was right and wrong. He knew from his family how to conduct himself in life, and that came from all of his family.

"I suppose my relationship could be expressed as more towards a complex mix of brothers and father and son. I wasn't so much older than him that the relationship was father and son, I wasn't close enough in age for it to be brother and brother – but it definitely was a relationship where we talked about grand prix racing and everything in life. There were very difficult periods during his grand prix career that he really struggled with, nothing to do with competitiveness or lack of it but more to do with the politics of grand prix racing. The Balestre thing at Suzuka [refusing to move pole position] for instance."

Did you realise the depths to which that enraged Senna?

"For a time he had decided to retire. I never said don't retire. We talked it through, we did that on the basis of what the alternatives were and in the end his passion for grand prix racing overruled his dislike of that aspect of the sport. It was an aspect he always despised: the politics, the double values and the double standards."

Did you find Suzuka hard to take because there was abuse heaped on you as well as him?

"Yes. I think during that period other drivers were involved in other incidents and his view was: if other drivers can do things like that and there is no penalty, and that is the standard, then so be it – but he didn't like the standard. I felt that afterwards he regretted, very much regretted, lowering himself to drive in that way."

What do you consider his best race for you?

"The Brazilian GP in 1991. Honda had appointed a new technical leader to the programme, he was obviously inexperienced and that showed in the performance of the engine. So we started that race with significantly less horsepower than we'd finished the season before. We had made a better car and fortunately we were still competitive. Ayrton was excelling in difficult conditions which became even more difficult before the end of the race. Suddenly the whole gear mechanism locked and he was left with one gear. He actually drove quite a few laps with only that one gear but he managed to continue and won. It started to rain



and Riccardo Patrese [in the Williams, catching Senna] backed off. He didn't realise the problem we had."

What about his move to Williams?

"Not at all difficult to understand. He was in some ways partially responsible for the lack of performance that we were getting from our car and engine – or the potential lack of performance in the 1994 car. You have to remember that he won five races in 1993 and that year we made the best car we have ever made, with a very sophisticated active ride system. And even with the second-level Ford engine we won those five races. He realised that he had to move and there were two reasons.

"First, it was apparent that we were not going to have a very strong engine at that stage. In fact, we subsequently signed a contract with Peugeot and I think if we had done that early enough he might have stayed. But more importantly, and this has never really been recognised because I've never said it before, he always had tremendous financial demands. In satisfying those demands we effectively underspent in various areas in the car so he inadvertently drained money out of the company as we met his very high retainer aspirations. In 1993, in fact, we were paying as we went and the final payment of his 1993 contract was paid in 1994.

"It was a very difficult period of time for us. That's when we made a policy change and decided to develop younger drivers and arrive at a situation which Williams had then, where they were making such superior cars that a variety

Above: Designer Gordon Murray (middle) believed that Senna was the best since Jim Clark, and certainly better than Prost

**'I worked with Ayrton on race strategy in 1988. I loved that in particular and so did he. He left Prost standing, basically. It was all completely different back then because of the fuel limitations but Senna was excellent at it – he had everyone beaten'** Gordon Murray



**'At the end of 1993, we made a policy change and decided to develop younger drivers. So our attitude was let's invest in the company, push to improve the resources within the organisation, then pick from several drivers and still win races'** Ron Dennis

of drivers could win in them. Those cars flattered some drivers. Several people, and I was certainly one of them, recognised all this, and so our attitude was let's invest in the company, push harder to improve the resources within the organisation, then pick from several drivers and still win races. And that's what we've done. We knew we would go into a trough on the way and that it would take some time to work out of, but we did it the way we wanted to do it."

I know he was very emotional at leaving...

"He was on loan. That's the way I felt, that's the way he felt. There was no formal agreement but he would have come back. Therefore it wasn't difficult.

"It was better that we rebuilt the team and got some of the things sorted out, better that he went away, continued to win and come back a different person. He wouldn't have retired. I think he would have stayed in grand prix racing a very long time and when he did finally retire he would have done it in a McLaren. Of that I am absolutely sure."

This Ron Dennis interview took place partly in the immaculate factory at Woking, partly in his car. Dennis is not, as he says, an emotional man but just this once his voice changed towards that.

It meant more than a river of tears from another man. ❶

*Taken from Ayrton Senna: As Time Goes By by Christopher Hilton, published in April by Haynes Publishing, Sparkford, near Yeovil, Somerset, BA22 7JF, England, and available through all good bookshops, price £19.99.*

**Ron Dennis grins with pride as Senna celebrates yet another Monaco win. After his crash in 1988 he never lost that race again**

## Peter Ratcliffe

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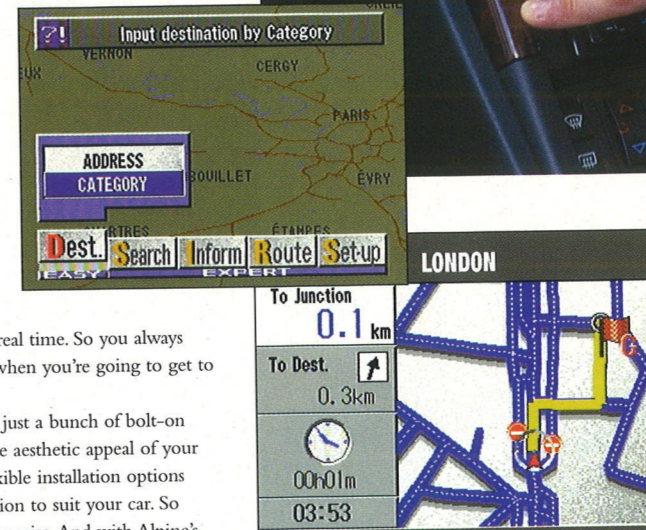
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# a nation expects...

Entering his third year as a Formula 1 team boss, France's beloved champion Alain Prost looks to have cracked the knack of pen pushing. This year will be better, but nothing compared with 2000 he assures us

Story by Christophe Gaillard and Simon Strang

**a**lain Prost is an intelligent man. His entire racing philosophy has been perceived as that of a person who thinks things through to their conclusion. The same can be said of his approach to team management. He understands the frustration that sides with the growing pains of a new team, that they are all part of a process which he knows will eventually bring success. He foresees further painful experiences and expects to overcome many more problems before he reaches a level of competitiveness. More than anything, he knows that for him and the team, there is still much to learn.

Yes, Australia was a fillip (Jarno Trulli briefly ran third after the McLarens retired), a nice change from the mediocrity which had become the norm. But if you ask Prost whether this means the blue cars are returning to form he is not merely cautious, but thoughtful. Would you expect anything less?

"It was not bad and not good," he says. "A good thing would have been to get some points. We were third in the race but a lot of cars had stopped on the track. The way we retired – Jarno's accident with Gené and Olivier's front wheel problem in the pits – was disappointing."

This is a refreshing approach. Rather than seizing the opportunity to hype the moment, Prost prefers to analyse why

it was disappointing: "Our reliability had been good up until this point. The temperature problems we were expecting were not there in the race, so I think it could have been better."

Trulli, for his part, is enthused by the AP02. The Italian, like his team, was forced to spend last year bonding experience to his ability, and so he finds his new car liberating: "I enjoy driving this car, which is good. It's as good as any of the others out there, apart from the McLaren. You can change the car to suit you, rather than change your driving style to suit it. But still we have lost a year because 1998 was so bad, so we have some way to go before we come on really strong."

Prost agrees: "We learnt so little from the AP01 last season that we started from scratch with the AP02. This means that the AP02 is our first *real* car, a basis of work and development for the future. We've made a great leap forward and we'll make another, just as important, between 1999 and 2000. We're going to make a big step especially on the engine and gearbox side. The current Peugeot V10 is old. It's quite long and heavy, but we know they are making a big, big effort for next year."

Some would argue that Peugeot's 'big effort' could be weakened or even taken away by their decision to begin a full-blown factory assault on the World Rally Championship. There have been ►



rumours that whichever of the French manufacturer's programmes is the least successful could be disbanded. But Prost is unwilling to comment on a decision that is not his to make. "I don't know what is going to happen in the future," he says. "For sure we will know this year because we have to know what to do about 2001 and beyond. It's obviously easier to win in rallying than in Formula 1 but, having said that, it's Peugeot's decision."

Rather than concentrate on things beyond his control, Prost is already looking to 2000. This is the year in which he feels his team should be ready to challenge the big teams. His appointment of the experienced designer

John Barnard, a man whom Prost admires and respects having worked with him during his championship-winning years at McLaren, came too late for the Englishman to oversee the design of the AP02. That car is based on Loic Bigois's concept, but the talented French aerodynamicist will continue to work closely with Barnard on the AP03.

There is still much to do both on and off the track. After 1998, firm results are required. The team's stability, something which Prost sees as essential to their success, has to be established. Points have to be scored. "It's a little bit frustrating," he admits. "Because the season last year was so bad you want to be back at the top

Main: Trulli terrific. The young Italian (with Prost, above right) went well in Australia, and has the ear of his boss

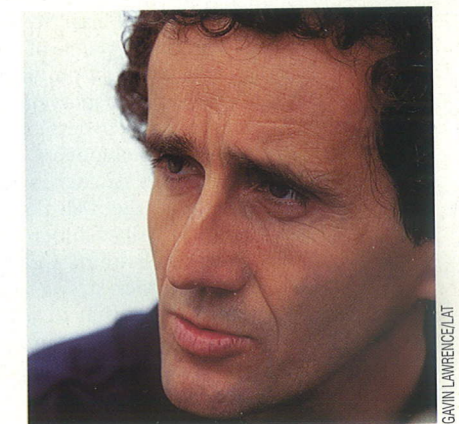
'As a driver I was four times champion, but that doesn't mean that my team will be champions immediately'



immediately. But we have to give ourselves the time to prepare things well for next year. In F1 you need to have a long-term strategy and I agree that we need to achieve some results this year to prove that we are making progress, and then next year the objective will be much higher anyway."

It seems strange to hear Prost talking of next year when this season has barely got under way but he, like his rival team owner Jackie Stewart, understands that to build a strong team takes years rather than months. He also understands that his reputation as a winner has no bearing on the amount of time it takes to achieve success as a team boss. "It is easy to misunderstand," says Prost. "As a driver I have been four times world champion but that doesn't mean that my team will be world champions immediately. I know that myself, but I think everybody should understand it. I put pressure on myself and I want to be successful as quickly as possible. But sometimes when you want to go too fast you don't do a good job and you miss things."

Stewart, a triple world champion himself, sympathises entirely with Prost's situation. "I think there is a public perception that it should be easier for us to go in and press the right starter button, which is totally wrong. We've got to go in and start a business that is highly



complicated and highly dependent on large sums of money. To take on people who are already totally established and have been for many years and hit the ground is not possible.

"We have got to learn the same lessons as the other teams have. We may know a little bit more about the business than some other newcomers, but not the business of running a team. So we have just got to learn it the same way. Whether your name is Alain Prost or Jackie Stewart, that is no passport to success. We have just got to graft hard, focus and depend on a whole load of other people."

Prost's situation is further complicated by his recent decision to build a base in ▶

'Going to England never crossed my mind. This is the challenge, to build a team and succeed in France'



Guyancourt, south west Paris. Stewart Grand Prix are slap in the centre of F1's Silicone Valley and can rely on all the expertise that Britain's motorsport culture can provide. But Prost have to develop the skills of young French engineers who have not been exposed to such a rich environment of knowledge. All the F1 teams bar Ferrari, Prost, Sauber and Minardi are based in Britain, and the temptation must have been strong to set up in Oxfordshire. "No, that idea has never crossed my mind," he counters. "This is precisely the challenge, to build a team and succeed in France."

But Prost GP lack experience in depth. The average age is 32, closer to 29 if you take into account the research and development engineers. "There aren't that many ways that you can make an F1 team work in France," accepts Prost. "You can't go and employ 200 people from England, so you have to bet on young and talented French technicians. Time is the problem. Even if there are lots of people who support us, I often have to fight against the impatience of those who expect a lot from a French team. We've started from a very small base. We've had to build everything from scratch, and to find race mechanics in France today is the devil's own job. We couldn't just go and tempt loads of people away from England like British American Racing have.

"What you can be sure of with all these youngsters is that we're betting on the future. It'll take time and we'll make some mistakes along the way because we're still lacking in an F1 culture, but it'll come little by little."

In his driving strength, Prost has bet well. Jarno Trulli has long been considered a future star, and Prost is not about to argue: "I think he is, yes. He has made a big improvement since last year, really changing the way he works and the way he drives. We still need to wait and see a little bit because he needs more experience, but he is pretty good for sure."

Trulli's performances are backed up by a fierce self-confidence, which even led him to heavily criticise his team for fudging his pitstops in Australia.

"I don't have much faith in the team," says Trulli. "Every time I pit during a race I'm terrified – but I still have a good relationship with Alain." Outspoken Trulli may be, but his stature in the team has grown since he arrived mid-way through '97, and in Melbourne he overwhelmed his French team-mate Olivier Panis who, according to one Prost engineer, is struggling with *his* self-confidence. As you might expect, Prost is thinking about this.

"Yes Jarno has been very good so far this year, but I want to wait a little bit to see how the situation develops. As usual, like in other teams, one driver gets all the



Above: the pitstops could be better, according to Trulli, but Prost GP have hit the ground running in '99. Above left: Prost with Panis – Alain gives a few tips to his struggling number two driver

little problems. Olivier has had a lot of problems, even last week in Barcelona [two weeks after the Australian GP] he got almost all of the problems on his car. I don't know if he has a lack of confidence because of that, but I want to wait a little. It's true also to say that Jarno is quite quick. It is a normal competition between two drivers, but the performance of Olivier, especially in qualifying in Melbourne, was not what we expected and he felt the same way too. But we are here to see how we can help in the future."

In general though, the feeling from both drivers and team boss is good. There is a fresh impetus. A spring in his step. The confidence to look ahead. "The

atmosphere is much better because we see the projection of the future," Prost says. "We can see the new engine coming. The atmosphere has never been bad, but it is difficult to ask people to do overtime when the results aren't coming in.

"There is still a lot of work to do on the organisational side. You can't just bring the people together and make them gel together into a fantastic organisation just like that. You need to take steps to stabilise and build a platform. We really need another year to be good, you know."

A standard F1 excuse? Probably, but it was Alain Prost, four-time world champion, who said it and you find yourself wanting to believe him. ❶

Alex Wurz adores biscuits, but doesn't eat them. Loves training, but can't stand gyms. Enjoys maths, but hates doing sums. And refuses to have his legs cut off. Confused? You shouldn't be Story by Matt Bishop

# 'I am what I am

**R**ewind to early November '98, and the long flight back from Suzuka. Seven miles above the plains of Kazakhstan, Alex Wurz eases his seat to full recline and shuts his eyes. Time to sleep, yes, but also time to reflect on his first full season in Formula 1.

Three fourth places in the first five races – races where Giancarlo got one sixth, one seventh and three DNFs. Quite proud of that. Where did we go next? Ah yes, Monaco. Banging a wheel with Michael, then shedding the same wheel minutes later. In the tunnel, of all places. Scary. Well, yes, scary – but, more important, a podium lost. Same thing in Montreal. Upside-down on lap one. Lucky there was a restart. Another fourth place – enjoyed that – but Giancarlo was second.

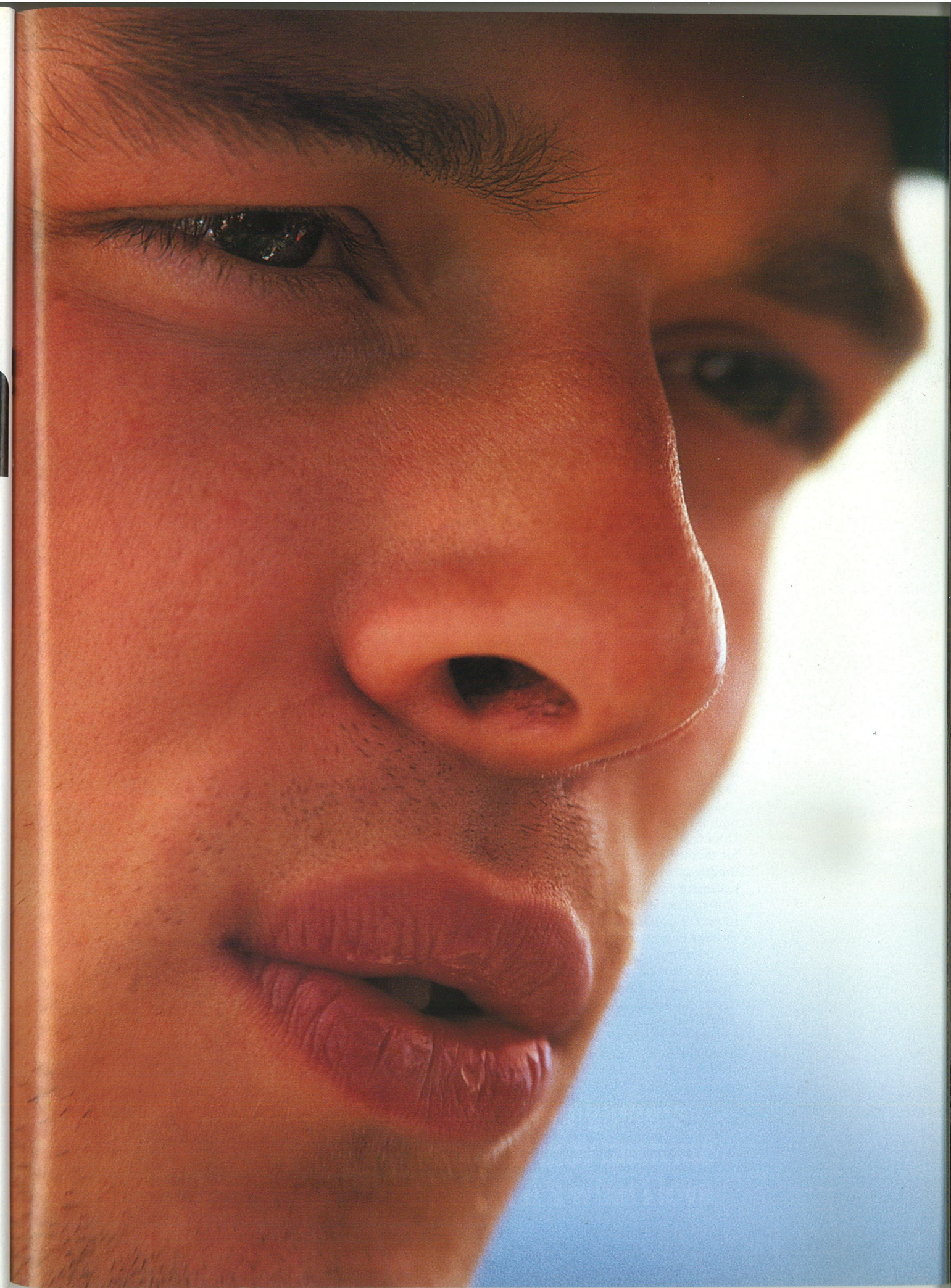
Podiums. Didn't get one in '98. Giancarlo got two. Hmm. Still, stuffed him in the championship: 17 points to 16, six points-finishes to five. Not too bad. But qualifying went 10-six in Giancarlo's favour. Not a good feeling, that. Oh, try to stop thinking. Try to sleep.

**FAST-FORWARD TO** early March, to another business-class seat – this one bound for Melbourne. Alex is fit, tanned, never better. The winter was great. A brilliant holiday in the Maldives – plenty of scuba-diving – then back home to Monte Carlo for a rigorous training

regime. Then the Alexander Wurz Motor Show in Vienna, then Barcelona testing. Went well there – three-tenths quicker than Giancarlo. Ahead, now, are two days of PR work: opening a Benetton megastore in downtown Melbourne tomorrow, then an appearance at something called Luna Park the next morning – think it's a funfair – then a Mild Seven press event with some Aborigines. Might be interesting. Then the weigh-in on Thursday. Then Friday, the day the bullshit stops and the action starts. Can't wait.

**I'M TO MEET** Alex under the Benetton team's awning in a sun-drenched Melbourne paddock on Saturday afternoon, by which time a lot more has happened. He has walled his intended race car in free practice and qualified the T-car 10th. Giancarlo is seventh. If it was anyone but Alex, you'd reckon on a tricky interview. All scowling and monosyllables. But Alex is different. Alex, as usual, wants to talk.

Tell me about the shunt.  
"Oh, you wouldn't believe how good that car felt. It was just really, really good. I was enjoying the set-up so much – really loving just driving the car – and I couldn't stop myself from really going for it. I wanted to be in the top five – could have done it, easy – and I just lost it. I just got too excited and just lost it. But, you know, I learned something today: do not get ▶



excited in free practice, however good the car feels. Bring it safely to qualifying, because if you have a good set-up you want to keep it. Not stuff it in the wall."

And there you have Alex Wurz in microcosm: impulsive yet analytical, youthful yet wise, wild yet philosophical. People who don't know him call him geeky, robotic, tech-obsessed, an anorak. But they've missed the man's soul.

"People think I'm serious and all that, and it's true. But I enjoy my life. I make jokes like anyone else. I mess around with the mechanics, but people don't see that. Because what they see – or what they remember – is when I click a mental switch on a Friday and start really working. And then I push the engineers and I push the team and they push me and it's perfect. And that's what I love."

But people tend towards stereotypes, and the geek label is likely to stick. A shame, because the Wurz mind is far more introspective than that. Spiritual even. His training, for instance, is like no-one else's, and follows a regimen of his own design. You won't often find him in a gym, for example. "I'm not a fan of gyms, although Cybex equipment is very good [nifty sponsor name-check there, Alex; well done]. No, I love nature. I train a lot outside. Things you can do with your own body weight. Uphill running, hiking, mountain-biking, rock-climbing – my fingers are getting very strong these days, from the rock-climbing. I love to take outdoor activities to extremes. When I'm doing it, I don't feel I'm taking things to extremes, but afterwards I see that I have. And if I take friends with me – even other athletes – they sometimes think I'm nuts. But that's what I love."

As a result, of current drivers perhaps only Michael Schumacher and David Coulthard are as fit. But things are simpler for them. You see, Alex has a handicap unique in modern Formula 1 – an impediment for which every aspect of his training has been tailored to compensate. In an era of elf-like car-jockeys, Alex is six-foot-two.

And as a result he will always top the annual drivers' weigh-in. The 1999-model-year Alex Wurz, in full racing togs, tipped the Melbourne scales at 82.5kg. Thirteen stone.

Could he shed a few more pounds? He could not. Some sobering stats: the body of an averagely fit adult male is 25 per cent fat; most Olympic athletes have whittled that figure down to between 10 and 15 per cent. Alex? A cool seven-point-nought.

"It's very important that my training doesn't add bulk to my muscles – because bulk is weight. My muscles have to be strong yet lean. I've tried to reduce my ▶

Wurz in Melbourne practice. The front torque transfer system was later removed in order to save weight

PAUL HENRI CAHIER



**'I enjoy my life. I push the engineers and I push the team and they push me and it's perfect. And that's what I love'**

body fat to below seven per cent, but I can't. I don't think it's possible. Even so, I have to be very careful what I eat. I'm used to it, though. I've been on a strict diet and exercise regime ever since I was 11, when I started taking BMX competition really seriously [Wurz won the BMX World Championship as a teenager]. It's okay, but I dream about biscuits sometimes."

Nasty. So, Alex, don't you ever cast wistful glances at the other drivers – at Giancarlo, for example – and catch yourself wishing you were shorter, lighter? "Sometimes I think like that, yes. I can't help it. And then I start doing stupid calculations. Like today: Giancarlo is seventh and I am 10th. His lap was twentieth faster than mine. And so I say to myself: 'He is 12kg lighter than me and each kilogram is worth about a twentieth of a second. So that's six-tenths – which would make me fifth.' The thing is, you have to do these calculations for the purpose of sorting out your race strategy and so on, but *not* for the purpose of making yourself look good. Because I'm 10th and that's it, and no-one cares about my calculations. And they're right not to.

"But you can't help it. Everyone does it. For example, the gap between me and Giancarlo, here, is the second-smallest between any two team-mates. The gap between Takagi and de la Rosa is the only one smaller. I did that sum for fun. And, you know, I had yellow flags on my last run and Giancarlo didn't, so he was lucky – but, again, that doesn't count for anything. No-one wants to know about yellow flags on my last run. No-one wants to know how close we are. No-one wants to know about my height or weight. He's seventh and I'm 10th. That's it. That's life."

Height and weight. Each brings its own problems, each problem its own solution, each solution further problems. Wurz is always struggling not to go too far over the car-plus-driver weight minimum – hence his decision not to use Benetton's revolutionary (but heavy) front torque transfer system in Melbourne. These days, the trend is to aim way under that minimum and then ballast the car – strap bespoke weights low down – to lower its centre of gravity. Rumour has it that some car-driver combos have 80kg of grip-enhancing ballast to play with. So even if the minimum is not exceeded, Alex's car

can never be ballasted as advantageously as can Giancarlo's. Which means, to be blunt, that he's at a disadvantage before his Supertec V10 is even fired up.

So much for height, but what about height? Does height usher in problems independent of the weight it occasions? It does. A very good example is the dash bulkhead – the cockpit-reinforcing structure above the driver's knees onto which the steering wheel is mounted. One of the FIA's safety regulations states that a driver has to be able to sit in his seat and lift his knees cleanly past the underside of the dash bulkhead. And so the Benetton engineers have had to carve very, very large cut-outs in that dash bulkhead to allow room for Alex's knees to do that.

So far so good. But there's another rule, new this year, which stipulates that the dash bulkhead must not deform under a load of seven tonnes applied to the forward roll-hoop (the small nodule about 18 inches in front of the driver's nose). Problem: the larger the cut-outs for the driver's knees, the weaker the dash bulkhead becomes. Solution: the structure must be bolstered and reinforced – which means extra weight (problem). And so it goes.

"I'll tell you something. Some people have told me that there is an operation you can have, in America, that cuts three or four centimetres off your height. And they think I should have that operation. But I'm not going to. I've been put on this earth to live – let's hope – for 70 or 80 years, and there is a reason why I am so tall. Call it God if you want. And I want to plan for those 70 or 80 years, not just the next three or four. I want to have a well-balanced philosophy for the whole of my life. I am what I am. So no operation."

And how – or, more pertinent, where – is this "three or four centimetres" to be lost? Like so: the patient's legs are broken at the femur, a section removed, then the stumps conjoined to produce a shorter thigh. It has even been suggested by some pragmatic souls – and you're not going to like this – that it would not be an altogether bad thing if Alex were to break his legs in a racing accident so that the operation could be done at the same time.

"Horrible. Okay, at the moment I am with a team who accept me as I am. They understand that I am tall. There are some details they have to change on the car ▶

In Melbourne, Wurz found himself struggling in the race until the rear suspension let go



CHARLES COATES/LAT

**'No-one wants to know about my height or weight. Giancarlo qualified seventh and I'm only 10th. That's it. That's life'**



PAUL HENRI CAHIER

The view Wurz wants rivals (and his team-mate) to see this year

## 'I want you to know that I really love my racing – the absolute thrill of getting the best out of the car on the track'

because of my height and weight, but it's not impossible. And if, one day, I can't get a Formula 1 seat because of my height, then so be it: I will not have that operation."

Such dispassionate discussion of Wurzas-engineering-conundrum has probably contributed to Alex's ability to think creatively about all aspects of his preparation. It's a subject he's happy to expand on. "You know, mankind has gone a long way to perfecting the art of body training, but we're still far away from knowing how to develop the brain. We should try to learn how to do this, because the brain is only another part of the body. If only we knew how to do it, I'm convinced it would respond to careful training. Because at the moment a sports star with perfect physical preparation and excellent musculature can fail to perform to the best of his ability. And that's a brain thing. And I think that's especially true in motor racing – because racing is probably 60 per cent brain and just 40 per cent body.

"At the moment, the only thing we can aim for is a healthy mind in a healthy body. In other words: train the body and the brain will follow. Physical exercise frees your mind and helps you psychologically. In that sense, all training helps the brain. But there's a lot more we can do, because

that's rather vague. How come, say, a cross-country skier can win a race in 31 minutes one week – then one week later, with exactly the same physiological profile, he's 90 seconds slower? It's the brain, of course. So we can recognise the problem, but we can't solve it."

Engage Alex in conversation about the things that interest him, and the intensity of his eye-contact is astonishing. Intelligence and passion, in the raw. But now, suddenly, he's distracted. He's looking over my shoulder at the looming forms of two beckoning engineers. "Alex, we need you now," one says.

"Okay, Matt, I have to go. But I want you to know that, apart from all this stuff that interests me a lot, I really love my racing. The absolute thrill of getting the best out of the car on the track." He makes a face. Kind of: I'd like to stay, but duty calls. The larger of the two engineers is now leaning over us, and is stubbing his cigarette out into the ashtray in the middle of our table, holding the butt down hard until the last wisp of smoke, the very last breath of life, has been extinguished from it, like someone drowning a kitten in a stream. The body language is clear. Alex is up and off. He has clicked that mental switch, and he's really working. **1**

# Exclusive New Formula One Fine Art Prints



## 'First Corner'

The incident of the 1998 season. Who can forget the carnage at Spa and the amazing race which ensued? Michael Schumacher on 3 wheels. A victory for Damon and just to round things off a punch-up in the pits. Fantastic!

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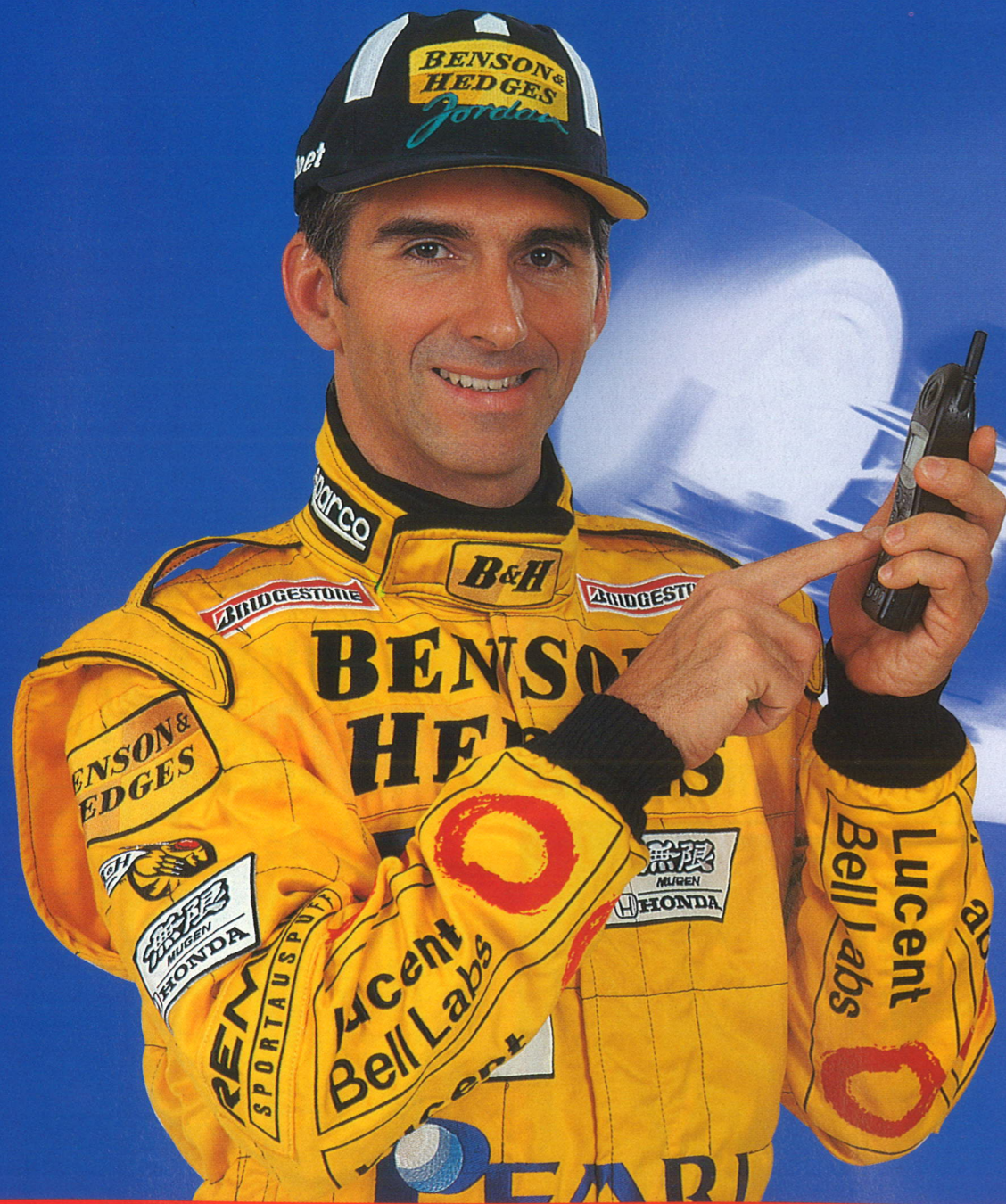
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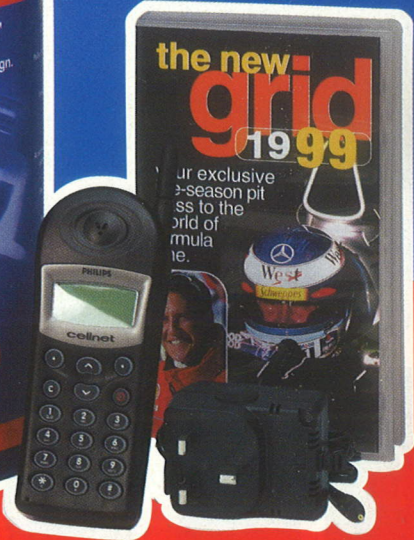
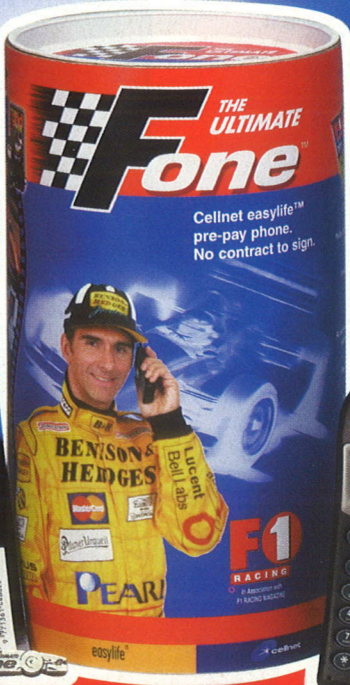
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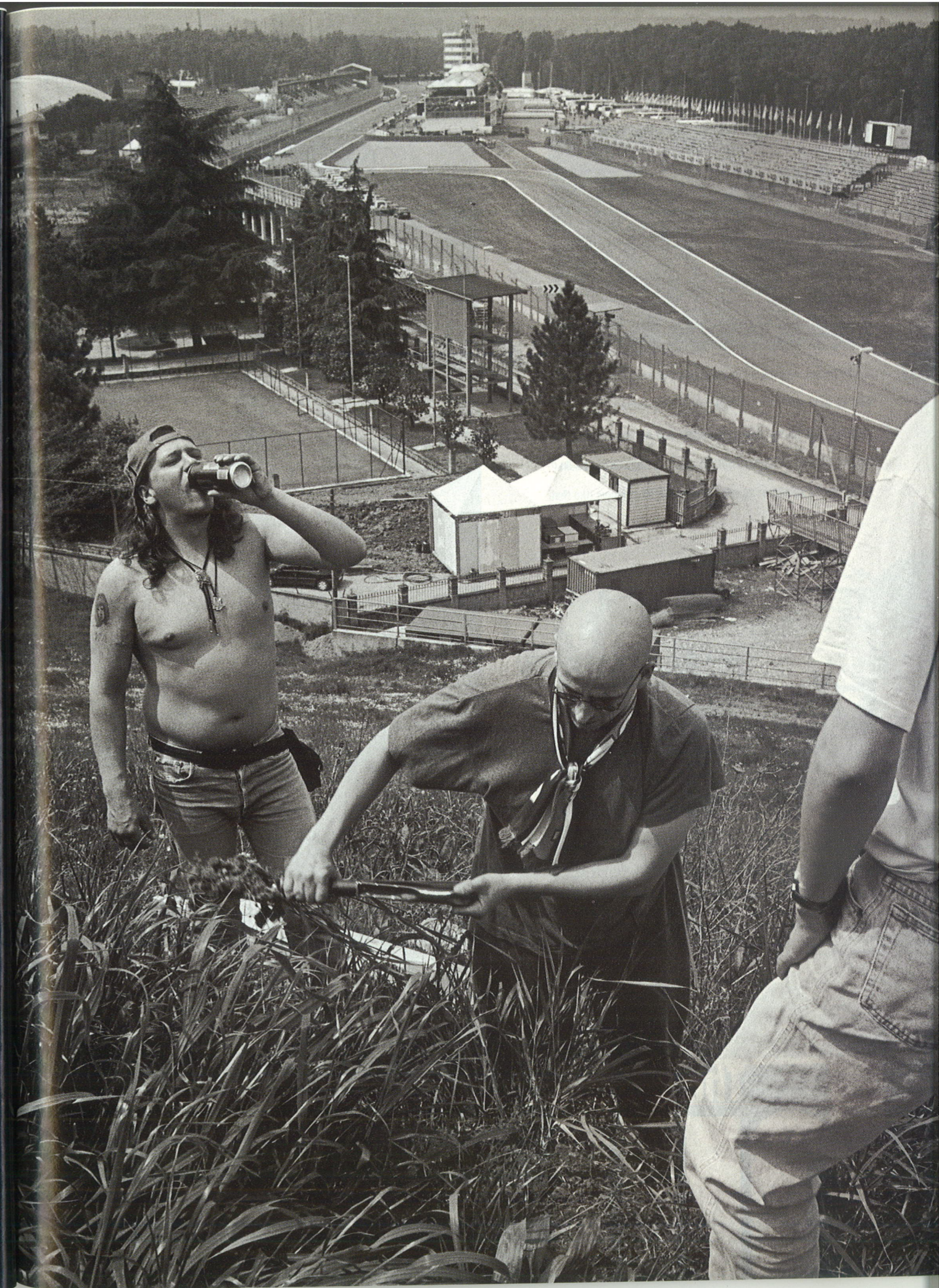
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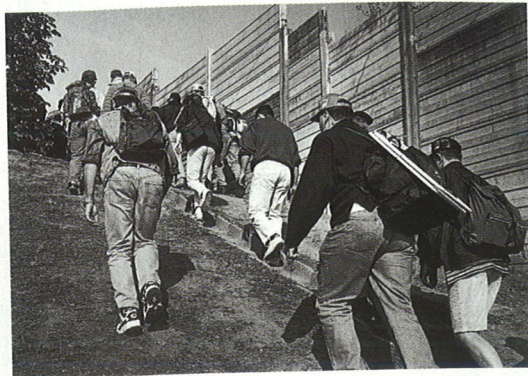


The *tifosi* start young (above). These kids have arrived at the hill, with their parents, and are voicing their support of Maranello's finest. But it's the German fans (right) who make the first 'claim' on the hill. It's thirsty work clearing the grass, but, as they're to spend the next four days and three nights here, careful preparation is absolutely vital

This is the most famous grassy knoll in Formula 1. Overlooking the Rivazza curve at Imola, San Marino, it's the ideal vantage point for the Italian fans, the *tifosi*, the hardcore of Formula 1. Jon Nicholson's camera charts life on the hill in four crazy days in May. It's hard, unremitting – a world away from the cosseted lifestyle of the paddock poseurs



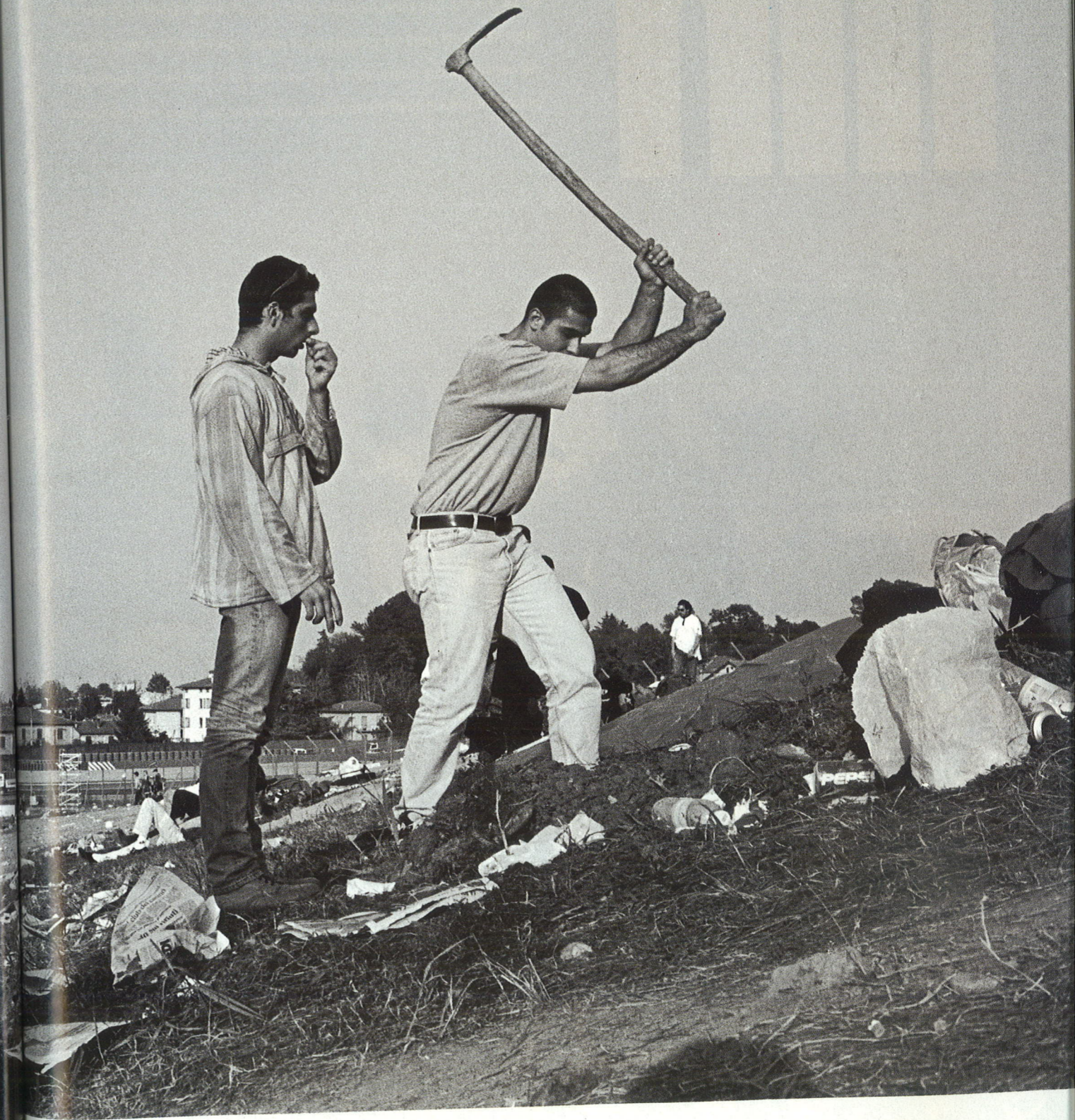
# The m



A pilgrimage. There's a constant influx of people making their way up to the hill, but the bulk of the fans arrive on the Friday morning. God knows how many people end up there but, by the time of the race, it's impossible to move. It's absolutely packed solid. Maybe 20,000 or 30,000 – something horrendous like that



Saturday, and the fans are in building mode. They dig out a step from the hillside and shore up the excavated mud with empty beer bottles! A novel idea that adds to the ever-growing pile of rubbish which covers the site. The atmosphere builds as these terraces begin to take shape. The race is close – time to dig in



the  
m

Sow and ye shall reap. The devotion borders on the biblical. A worshipper carves his space. That he got into the circuit with an axe is amazing. Can you imagine any other sport where fans can stroll into the ground with such an implement? Certainly not at Wimbledon or Lord's. But then seats are provided at Wimbledon and Lord's. And the atmosphere is not as forbidding at Wimbledon or Lord's as it is up on the hill

# The Hill

The hill's full to bursting, but the pilgrims still keep on arriving. It's 2pm on Sunday, the race has already started. This is a first-come-first-served environment, but the stragglers have come prepared – hence the stepladders. For them, the hill isn't quite high enough. So perched, they peer over the throng, over a singular Damon Hill flag-waver (brave man), and down at their heroes below. Down at a McLaren victory



Sunrise, race morning, the dedicated sleep (above). The hill is filling up fast, but this fan, with a water bottle for a pillow, is oblivious to all around him. Facilities are sparse, just a restaurant at the summit, so you have to be prepared to rough it, and share your 'bedroom' with many thousands of strangers



Temperature's rising. Terraces built. They can only sit and wait now. Clearly many of them have dug in here before; they know what to expect, what to take, what to wear. Beer is the staple diet during the race weekend but, unlike on football's terraces, there's little violence as a result of alcoholic excess



*These photographs were selected from 5 days of a Grand Prix by Jon Nicholson and Adam Parsons. Published by Macmillan, this book is out now and is available through all good bookshops, priced £20.*

The race is over, but for this man and woman, the day's work has only just begun. It looks for all the world as though they're fleeing from an oppressive regime, from a megalomaniac dictator, wading through the ruins of their home. Instead, they're out 'shopping'. The fans leave anything they can't be bothered to carry home, and the people from the local villages and estates come and pick through whatever's left



Unless you knew it was the hill above Rivazza, you could mistake this for the aftermath of a riot. The tifosi pour off the hill to reveal their flotsam and jetsam, which will all have to be burned. The hill is then raked back into its original shape and the grass grows back to heal the scars. They will be reopened in a year's time



Scavengers. This mother and child are collecting bits and pieces from the hill after the race. And there's plenty to collect: wine, bread, you name it. The camera clicks, and clicks again, and the kid gets agitated and the mother turns away. Then the father arrives, shouting aggressively in Italian. Time to leave

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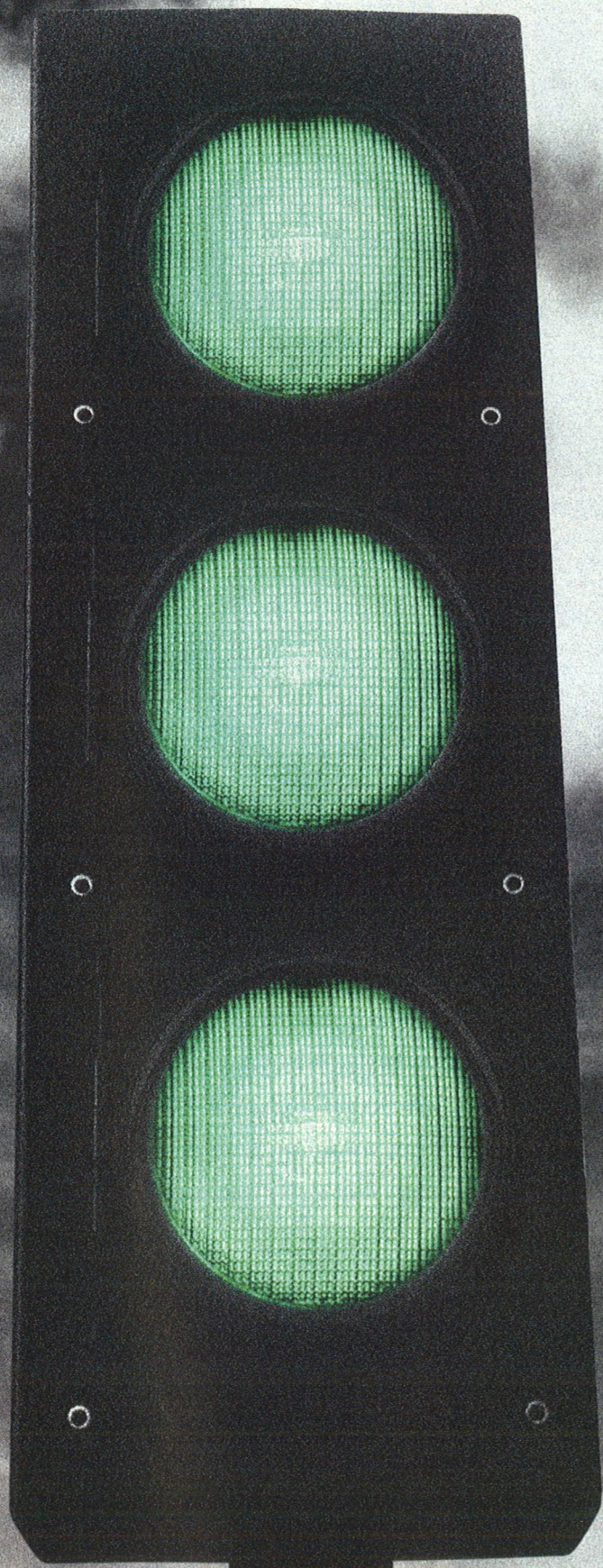
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# Who were gonna call...

Here's the scenario. Every driver who has ever raced a Formula 1 car is beamed up by aliens and whisked away to a distant galaxy. But Bernie demands that the show must go on, and he postpones the season for two months while the replacements are trained up. Here's the guys who we'd get on the blower to

**Max Angelelli** *Italian*  
15 December 1966

**Background:** Long-time Formula 3 driver who was Italian champion in 1992 with a Dallara-Opel. Also experienced the European touring car scene and GT racing in Japan.  
**Why:** Very talented. He travelled to the 1997 Macau F3 race purely to spectate, but ended up qualifying second, winning the restarted first heat and setting a lap record in the second heat. And he hadn't sat in a single-seater for months. But he is prone to occasional bursts of hot-headedness too. He was later excluded from the same race when found guilty by the stewards of deliberately stopping the first heat after he was hit by Soheil Ayari. A fiery Italian? Who would've thought of such a thing?



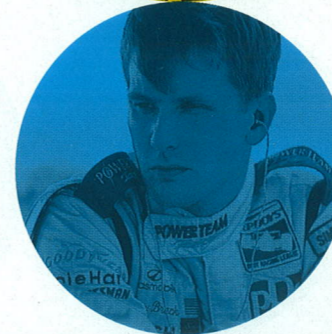
**Jenson Button** *British*  
18 January 1980

**Background:** Multiple karting champion before winning the British Formula Ford Championship and McLaren/Autosport Young Driver Award in 1998. Official Renault F3 team Promatecme offered him a drive in this year's British F3 series and he got pole position in his first race.  
**Why:** Amiable and confident, Button has been racing karts since he was five and, though young, he is extremely talented and has good car control. Obviously the jump from FFord to F1 is huge, but there are similarities – lots of sliding and a small window for error. With sponsorship from Marlboro, his task is made slightly easier. He also has the benefit of the unknown – he's yet to trip up.



**Peter Dumbreck** *British*  
13 October 1973

**Background:** Formula Vauxhall Junior champion in 1994. Won the Formula Vauxhall title two years later. Finished third overall in first season of British F3. Forced to switch to Japanese F3 in 1998 – and won it with the TOM'S team, scoring 11 wins from 14. Also won that year's Macau GP. Will race at Le Mans for Mercedes in '99  
**Why:** Smooth, quick and consistent. He had a bad year in FVauxhall in '95, when beaten by Johnny Kane, and gained a reputation for being easily demoralised. But he canned that in F3. Did well in his first year (1997) only to fall off the dominant Paul Stewart Racing bandwagon because of a lack of cash. Yet he stayed strong and raised his stock by winning in Japan.



**Kenny Bräck** *Swedish*  
21 March 1966

**Background:** Ex-European Renault Clio champion (1993) who switched to single-seaters, and won two American titles – Barber-Saab in '93 and last year's Indy Racing League. Was also the 1996 F3000 runner-up. Tested for Williams in 1993, and Arrows in 1996.  
**Why:** Never had much sponsorship, but he's tenacious. Went to the unfancied IRL and adapted superbly to this oval-based series. His F3000 experience means he knows most of the GP circuits, and Patrick Head was impressed when he tested for Williams in the wet at Paul Ricard. He's loyal too: he turned down a drive with leading Champcar team Ganassi in 1999 because of his contract with AJ Foyt's IRL team still had time to run.



**Ross Cheever** *American*  
12 April 1964

**Background:** Won in nearly every junior category. Joined Valour Racing – a shoestring F3 team – in the mid-'80s but still managed to win five races. Japanese F3 champion in '87 and a Japanese F3000 frontrunner for years. Beat Schumacher in Michael's only F3000 race, at Sugo, 1991.  
**Why:** He hasn't driven for three years, but he stills works out and is incredibly quick and dynamic. Was always good in the wet. Brilliant at Spa and Brands Hatch, both tricky tracks. He's beaten some big names too, including Schuey, Herbert and Frentzen – who rates him highly. Crashed quite a lot because he was totally fearless. He's said to be a bit arrogant too – just what F1 needs. In the right team, he'd be amazing.



**Dario Franchitti** *British*  
19 May 1973

**Background:** Formula Vauxhall Junior champion '91. FVauxhall champ '93. Struggled in 1994 British F3 series, winning one race to team-mate Jan Magnussen's 14. Joined Mercedes for the '95 DTM and was a frontrunner for next the two years. Switched to Champcar in 1997 with Hogan Racing; jumped to Team Kool Green in '98 and finished third overall with three wins; title favourite in '99.  
**Why:** Experienced and quick on street circuits and ovals. He scored a superb win at Road America last year, and he's been unstoppable since. Smart money is on him entering F1 in 2000. He's managed by Craig Pollock, and we all know about the last driver he bought across the Pond... Jacques Villeneuve. ▶

**Oliver Gavin** *British*

29 September 1972

**Background:** McLaren/Autosport Young Driver Award-winner in 1991. Second in 1993 British F3 with Edenbridge; took a year out before becoming F3 champ in 1995, again with Edenbridge. Deal to drive for Pacific at '95 Aussie GP fell through at the last minute. ITC '96 with Opel proved a disappointment. Occasional F3000 drives and Benetton tests since. Pilots the F1 Safety Car.

**Why:** Initially promised much, but time is running out. He has done a lot of miles and knows the F1 circuits. Though he has been out of a racing car for some time, he's now competing in the Porsche Supercup. He is quick, smooth, intelligent and personable – reminiscent of David Coulthard.



**Jeff Gordon** *American*

4 August 1971

**Background:** American superstar. Multiple USAC sprint car champion and youngest ever NASCAR Winston Cup champion (1995). Also NASCAR's top dog in 1997 and '98. Twice won Daytona 500 and also won the inaugural Brickyard 400 at Indy in '94.

**Why:** Known worldwide for racing a 200mph saloon, but he won virtually everything in single-seaters during his early career, so clearly he's versatile. Has a natural talent: on short ovals with a loose surface he showed his phenomenal car control and brilliant racecraft. NASCAR to F1 would be a massive jump, but he's super-talented, fit, and a natural crowd-puller, which would please Uncle Bernie no end. There's even been talk of an F1 test...

**Nick Heidfeld** *German*

10 May 1977

**Background:** Two years in German F3 (1996-'97), winning the title in the latter year. 1998 F3000 runner-up for West Competition (a scion of the McLaren empire) in their debut year. He's staying with the team for another crack at the title.

**Why:** Being carefully groomed by Mercedes to become Germany's next star. This cossetting means that he has yet to develop as a person, but has made for a very complete driver package at the tender age of 22. Shy off the track, he's very aggressive on it – in qualifying and the races. David Brown, his engineer, a man who looked after Senna, Prost, Mansell and Hill at Williams, rates him highly. F1 with McLaren in 2000? Don't bet against it.

**Tom Kristensen** *Danish*

7 July 1967

**Background:** German F3 champion in 1991; Japanese F3 champion in 1993. Frontrunner in Japanese F3000. Full season of European F3000 in 1997, winning at Silverstone. Won Le Mans the same year – at his first attempt – in a Joest Porsche. German touring cars with Honda in 1998.

**Why:** Top bloke. Might even be too nice for motor racing. Bags of talent – witness those pole positions at his first visit to the Pau street circuit and Spa-Francorchamps, tracks at opposite ends of the spectrum in terms of technique. Heaps of experience make him very level-headed. Tested for Minardi at the end of last season and perhaps let himself down on the day. He deserves another chance.

**Colin McRae** *British*

5 August 1968

**Background:** Two-time British rally champion (1991-'92) with Subaru before concentrating on the world scene. World rally champion in 1995, also with Subaru. Switched to Ford for 1999 and has already won.

**Why:** Britain's most successful rally driver has a God-given talent that surely could be translated into F1. He did a 1992 BTCC race at Knockhill and was fantastic to watch in the wet. True, he was ragged in the dry, but that was only due to a lack of track experience. He got some more of that when he tested a Jordan at Silverstone in 1997. First time past the pits he was hard on it, flicking up the box like a veteran... Stewart has promised him an F1 test. Can't wait. ▶

**Mario Haberfeld** *Brazilian*

25 January 1976

**Background:** Runner-up in 1995 British Formula Ford series. Fifth in 1996 European Formula Renault Championship. Sixth in British F3 in 1997; champion in 1998.

**Why:** Doesn't give up. After a couple of years of underachievement in the racing wilderness, he turned things around by becoming the British F3 champion with Paul Stewart Racing. This was a chance he could not afford to miss. He didn't. He reeled in early leader, Promatecme's Enrique Bernoldi, who cracked under the pressure. Tested for Stewart GP in 1998 and has landed the pukka West Competition F3000 drive for 1999. Has the demeanour of a future F1 driver, and a sizeable fortune to back it up.

**Bryan Herta** *American*

23 May 1970

**Background:** Third in the 1985 Karting World Championship. Barber-Saab Pro Series champion in 1991. 1993 Indy Lights champion. Has been impressive in Champcar ever since but has not gained the results his talent deserves. Finally won in '98, at Laguna Seca; potential frontrunner in '99.

**Why:** Champcar career lost its momentum because of a devastating accident at Toronto in 1994 – broken legs and pelvis. The next setback was losing at Laguna Seca on the last lap in 1997 because of an incredible pass by Alex Zanardi. But it's back on track now. He's phenomenally quick, especially on drivers' circuits, but needs to learn how to win. Easygoing and bright, F1 would suit him.

**Allan McNish** *British*

29 December 1969

**Background:** Hakkinen's 1988 Formula Vauxhall team-mate, winning the British series. Stripped of '89 F3 title because of technical irregularities. Won F3000 races at Brands and Silverstone in 1990, a season punctuated by a big shunt at Donington, in which a marshal was killed. Struggled in 1991 with an uncompetitive car, since when he has clung to his F1 hopes and reinvented himself in GT racing. Won Le Mans in '98 for Porsche.

**Why:** Very experienced. At least as good as Johnny Herbert. Superb in the wet. Neat, precise and quick. Ten years ago he was touted as the next Jackie Stewart. Then it turned sour. Has F1 experience thanks to testing deals with McLaren and Benetton.

A classic car?

A flotation tank?

A hi-fi speaker?

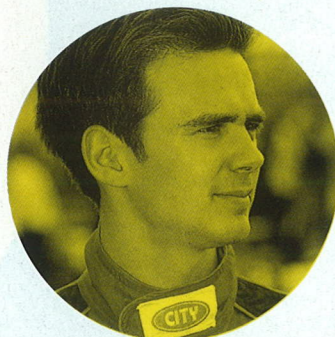


**Darren Manning** *British*

30 May 1975

**Background:** Second in Formula Vauxhall Junior in 1993. Fifth in Formula Vauxhall in 1994; fourth in 1995. British Formula 3 with the Speedsport team in 1996 (seventh) and 1997 (11th). Has won British GP F3 support race for the past two seasons – and he only contested four races in 1998!

**Why:** Record not that impressive, but a lack of cash means that he's never really been in a frontline team. But he's very determined and very good. And possesses the happy knack of upping his game when all the F1 team managers are in the vicinity. He's currently contesting the Japanese F3 series with TOM'S, and he needs to do a 'Dumbreck' if his career is to blossom. He's convinced us though.



**Greg Moore** *Canadian*

22 April 1975

**Background:** Blitzed the 1995 Indy Lights Championship – twice as many points as his nearest rival in a record-breaking year. Immediately stepped up to Champcar. Was a frontrunner in 1997 and '98, and is likely to battle it out with Franchitti for this year's title.

**Why:** Knows how to win, although the excessive variables in Champcar (tyres, poorly-managed fuel usage) have occasionally cost him victories in the past two years. He wouldn't have those problems in F1. He's approachable and hungry for success in F1 and will no doubt succeed with strong management and discipline. Put him in a Williams or McLaren and he'd be blinding. Young, polished, calm. The real deal.



**Gonzalo Rodriguez**

*Uruguayan*

22 January 1973

**Background:** Runner-up in 1994 UK Formula Renault series. Had a lean spell (1995-'97), but things changed for the better after he joined Astromega for the 1998 European F3000 series. Won at Spa and the Nürburgring. He is staying with them for 1999.

**Why:** Fast, but you get the impression that he doesn't know quite why. But he's still learning. A dominant win at Spa did him a world of good, and he's starting to look after his cars better. A thoroughly good bloke with the heart of a bull – and of gold – he has recently impressed top Champcar teams, Newman-Haas and Penske. His efforts have been rewarded by the latter – he's deputising for the injured Al Unser Jr.



**Tony Stewart** *American*

20 May 1971

**Background:** Followed traditional US career path, which included dominating America's fiercely-competitive sprint car scene. Unable to find a full-time Champcar ride, he concentrated on the oval-based Indy Racing League, which he won outright in 1997. Has now turned his attentions to the dollar-laden NASCAR Winston Cup.

**Why:** A child prodigy in the Jeff Gordon mould. A very strong character, he has turned away advances from Champcar teams because they had ignored him when he was trying to break into circuit racing. His adaptability and talent was proved at this year's Daytona 500, the Winston Cup's season-opener, when he qualified on the front row. A natural.



**Juan Pablo Montoya**

*Colombian*

20 September 1975

**Background:** Formula Vauxhall runner-up in 1995. A year in British F3 was followed by two seasons of Formula 3000. Won the championship at the second time of asking, with SuperNova. Has replaced Alex Zanardi at Chip Ganassi's team for the 1999 Champcar series.

**Why:** Fast. Very fast. Very, very, fast. And perhaps a little bit crazy. Won the F3000 race at Pau in 1998 by a lap! Quicker than Heidfeld, though perhaps not as complete a driver. Took part in a large 1998 Williams test at Barcelona, overshadowing the highly-rated Soheil Ayari. Almost signed for Williams for 1999. His F1 time will come.



**Jörg Müller** *German*

3 September 1969

**Background:** German F3 champion and Macau GP winner in '93. In fact, he's the only driver to complete the street circuit 'Triple Crown' – Monaco, Pau, Macau. Won the 1996 F3000 championship with an underfinanced team. Acted as Sauber's 1998 test driver. Now entrusted with the development of BMW's new F1 engine prior to its F1 debut in 2000.

**Why:** Super-competitive, as his clash with Bräck in the 1996 F3000 title-decider showed. A hard, but fair racer. He's also penniless and very down-to-earth; hours after winning an F3000 race at Enna, Sicily, he was seen dismantling his team's awning in a deserted paddock...



**Rickard Rydell** *Swedish*

22 September 1967

**Background:** F3 hotshoe who went tin-top. Scored F3 wins in Sweden, Britain, Japan and Macau before switching to the BTCC with Volvo in 1994. Been with them ever since. One of the fastest men in the series, he finally won it outright in 1998.

**Why:** A man renowned as a superb qualifier (in F3 and touring cars) has been toughened up into a fearless dicer by the crash-'n'-bash of the world's most competitive touring car championship. His style is a smooth and unhurried one, and he is generally unflappable – grabbing the occasional rival by the throat notwithstanding! He would take a measured approach to F1 that would pay dividends.



**Mark Webber** *Australian*

27 August 1976

**Background:** Best Aussie hope for some years. Won the 1996 Formula Ford Festival at Brands Hatch, and one race in F3 in 1997 – a season which was hampered by a lack of cash. Mercedes liked what they saw, however, and signed him up to do the 1998 GT Championship. He finished second. He is staying with them to contest this year's Le Mans.

**Why:** Reckoned by many to be at least as good as his 1998 GT team-mate, Ricardo Zonta – and look what happened to him! He's quick in the wet – always a good sign – and has the right attitude: competent and calm. We're totally convinced he can succeed in F1 – given the chance. ①

Porsche?

Maserati?

Ferrari?



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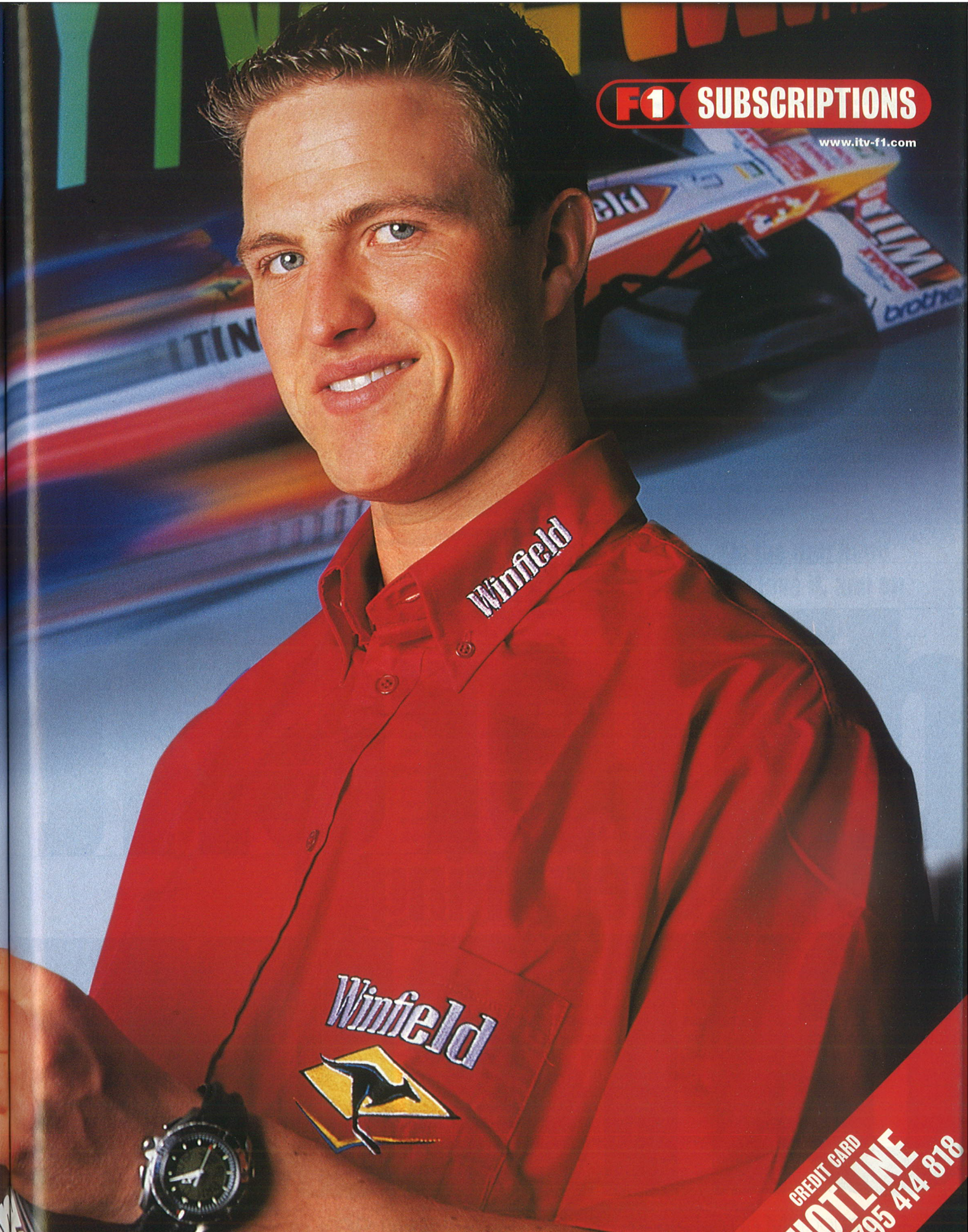
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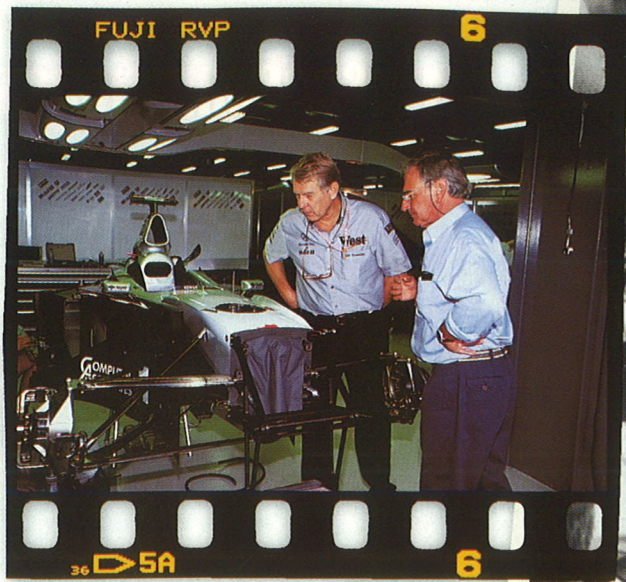


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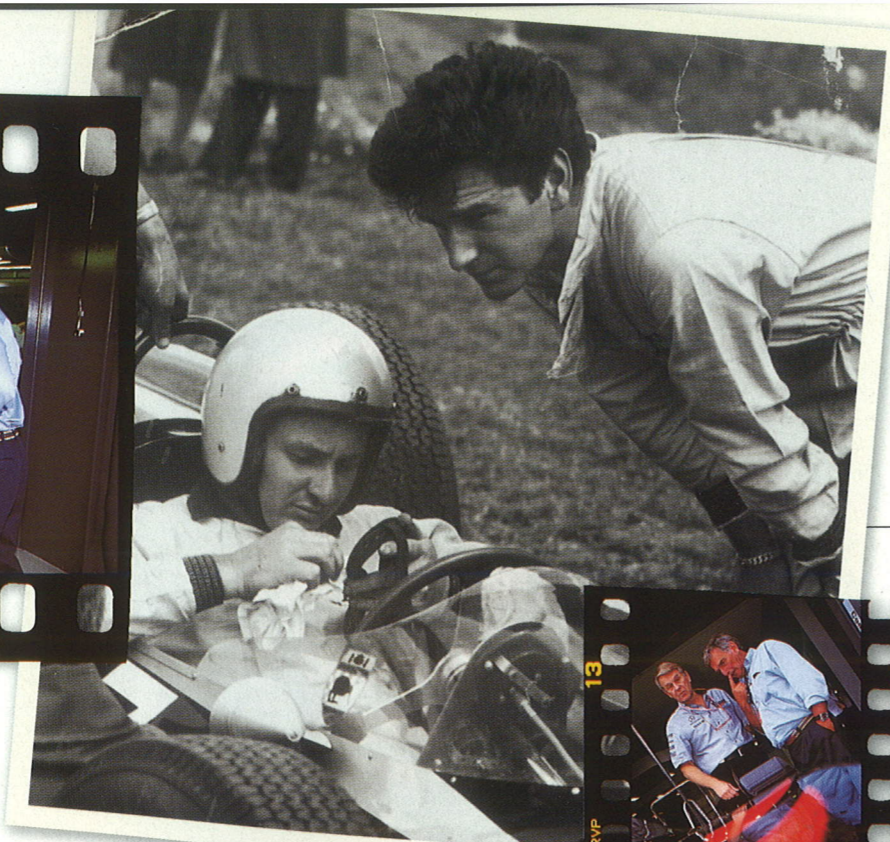
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Wally (above right) discusses suspensions with his former colleague Tyler Alexander. The principles may be the same, but it's a far cry from 1963 with Bruce (right) and his Cooper



**n**

othing has changed but everything is different. Wally Willmott was with Bruce McLaren when he founded his eponymous company in 1963. He left in '68 and hasn't been to a GP since. Until Melbourne '99.

Willmott and fellow founder member Tyler Alexander worked with New Zealand's first GP winner to build Bruce McLaren Motoring Racing Ltd from nothing. Yet when they meet again after 30 years apart, it's as though they spoke on the phone only yesterday. Instantly they drop into the same knockabout humour, the same camaraderie which kept them going through the 'all-nighters' that were an integral part of racing when the Formula 1

industry standard was just two mechanics per car.

Jackie Stewart is another old friend, a racing driver when Wally knew him, yet to be a champion, and now a team owner. Wally reckons he hasn't changed. Only older. But then they had been in their 20s. Now they're in their 50s.

In his 20s, F1 motor racing was Wally's life. Then, in 1968, he suddenly quit. Just like that.

"I got married and I had a wife who wasn't interested in me going away for long periods of time. Plus I started to wear out mentally. It got to the point where I wasn't enjoying the all-nighters we used to take in our stride. So I walked out.

"Why did it take me 30 years to come to another grand prix? Probably because I felt guilty. Bruce wasn't happy when I left and I regret that I never had the chance to clear the air with him before he died. I just shut it out. I was still a closet fan, but there was no Formula 1 on television in Australia for a long time. I haven't been back to Europe since."

I see Willmott watching Tyler and Jackie and wonder whether he would be working beside them if he hadn't walked out and disappeared to Australia.

"It was all down to the love-hate relationship that a lot of people have in motor racing. On the one hand you love it, and on the other hand you'd love to get out because of all those things ... the hassle, the hours, the travelling."

In Willmott's time, a team consisted of just a handful of mechanics, now it's more like 100.

"I guess that's part of the corporatisation," he says, sounding more like Ron Dennis than Ron. "As Tyler said, there are only four people on the car at the coal face, but behind those four there is a huge pyramid of people doing things I wouldn't have a clue about, therefore the responsibility is shared more. In our day if something went wrong, the finger could be very clearly pointed at whose fault it was.

"In Melbourne, people told me that in this specialised era the mechanics have become fitters. If there are gear ratios to be changed, the mechanics don't actually pull the gearbox apart and drop gears in the sand like we used to. They change the whole gearbox which has been built at the factory and bolted together in a dust-free environment. Nothing to drop in the sand, not that I saw much sand in the McLaren pit.

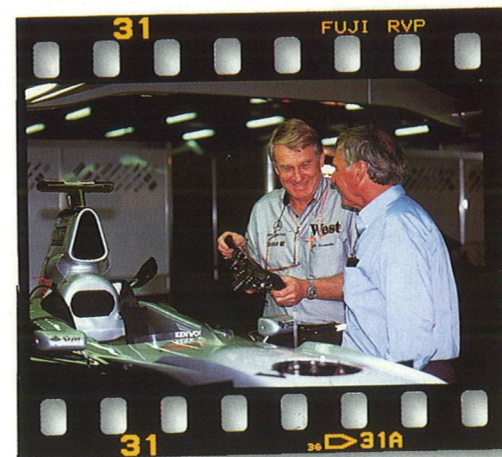
"A crash during practice still means an all-nighter though, and according to Tyler, this job still means being on the road all the time. They stayed up all night to rebuild Mika's car after his crash in Friday practice. It was the same car he put on pole. Tyler said the tub wasn't damaged at all and yet it hit the wall pretty bloody hard. I think I'm probably glad I got out when I did - Tyler never has much time to call his own.

"You have to have a fixation with racing. You don't just go motor racing, you've got to live it. You have to be totally engrossed in the world that is motor racing and there's nothing outside that world. World War III could have happened during the Australian GP and nobody would have known ... or cared."

Tyler takes his old mucker Willmott into the McLaren garage after qualifying and explains in some detail the technicalities of the left-front wheel, the brakes and the suspension system. Mechanics working on the car regard Willmott with suspicion, until Tyler allays their worries.

"If the cars in Formula 1 today aren't a work of art, then ▶

**'On the one hand you love it, and on the other you'd love to get out because of all those things... the hassle, the hours, all the travelling'**



# nothing different everything changed

It's been 30 years since McLaren mechanic

Wally Willmott went to a GP. Until now. Eoin Young meets him in Melbourne

they're a work of craft," says Willmott. "The craftsmanship is superb. The front upright on the McLaren is made of titanium and to make them you have to put the stuff into a vacuum, fill it with argon and then weld the upright inside the cabinet. Titanium was available to us from the aircraft industry in the '60s and we knew about it, but we just couldn't afford it. With all the financial sponsorship in F1 today, a top team can use anything they feel like. Money isn't the barrier that it was. We considered that we were at the cutting edge then, but you look back now and you think it was all fairly agricultural by comparison.

"When I went to my first grand prix as a Cooper mechanic in 1962, we had a 4-cylinder 1500cc with a magneto and one piece of wire running off a kill switch; when I left F1 in 1968, McLaren had a V12 BRM engine with electronic ignition and an alternator to keep the battery charged. And that was the extent of anything electrical. Now Tyler shows me the front hub of the McLaren and there are more wires going into that than we had on the 12-cylinder.

"Then he showed me the steering wheel. I didn't want to press my luck and ask what all the buttons and levers were for, but it sure as hell did a good deal more than just change the car's direction. I'd love to be able to go back into the garage and get right into it without being regarded as some sort of spy. Tyler was great. He was showing me bits of the aerodynamics that he knew I'd never talk about, and I won't. That's what it's all about. But those mechanics were nervous of me being there, and if I'd been them I'd be nervous too, having someone they'd never seen before poking about. Mechanics have always been suspicious, and they always will be.

"The biggest change I noticed was the sheer number of people involved in the team. It was apparent that one person couldn't hope to understand all that goes on in every part of a modern F1 car - there has to be specialisation. In my day, two of us built the car from front to back and we both knew every part of it."

Willmott asks Alexander what his role is: Tyler shrugs and says he works on Mika's car, fiddling with the electronics. Alexander asks Willmott what he's doing these days and he tells him he's running a fleet of charter boats on Lake McQuarie near Newcastle, north of Sydney. He lives on his yacht. Both look briefly as though they'd like to trade places; then they return to their real worlds.

Willmott lived a gypsy career in Australia after quitting F1, working briefly in a high-performance car dealership. He had a spell as the most overqualified racing mechanic in Aussie touring car racing, was a motorcycle dealer, worked in the Snowy Mountains' ski fields, and built yachts. He also had a stint in the movie industry before slipping back into boats again when he sailed across the Tasman Sea to his hometown of Timaru in New Zealand. It was here that he had originally started work as an

apprentice auto electrician and caught the racing bug.

He was 17 years old and hillclimbing a Cooper when New Zealand champion Angus Hyslop asked him to work on his 2.5-litre Cooper in the 1962 Tasman Series. He jumped at the chance.

I met Willmott in his Cooper 500 days when we were all lads in Timaru, dreaming of going overseas and getting involved in a world of motor racing we had only read about. It never seemed unusual that he could cope mechanically with what had only just recently been a grand prix car.

"I'm convinced that the best motor mechanics are butchers and bakers. If they get into motor racing it's because they are really interested - because they've found they have a flair for it," Wally explains.

Bruce McLaren offered him a job after the final round of the Tasman Series, just as he had done with me, and Wally phoned his mother to say he was 'extending his holiday'. He became McLaren's personal mechanic in the Cooper team, just as Ron Dennis had been a Cooper mechanic with Jochen Rindt before following him to the Brabham team.

Willmott keeps returning to his days as a mechanic and wondering at the changes. "With so much technology, the balance of power is shifting from the cockpit to the pits. The drivers are no longer principals of the team as it was with Bruce and Jack [Brabham].

"With McLaren and Brabham, the driver was the principal and everything that happened in the team came from the cockpit of the car. Now, the driver has some input but most of it comes from the computer screen, if not at the track, then back in England. It staggered me to learn that the


information goes all the way down the line to the factory base in the UK at Woking, as well as to the screens in the back of the pit garage in Australia during the race.

"I spent most of the race weekend either with Tyler at McLaren or in the Stewart-Ford pit. Both teams had appalling races despite looking so competitive at the start. We always used to try and look

on the bright side too and there were a lot of times when that wasn't easy, but both teams after Albert Park were hugely optimistic despite their problems in the race. I suppose from that point of view, nothing has changed in the 30 years I've been away from the game. It's always the next race. By Sunday evening, the last one is history and they're looking ahead to the next one, just like we did."

Willmott seems amazed at the strength in depth of the modern day McLaren organisation, pleased and modestly proud that Ron Dennis has kept the McLaren name.

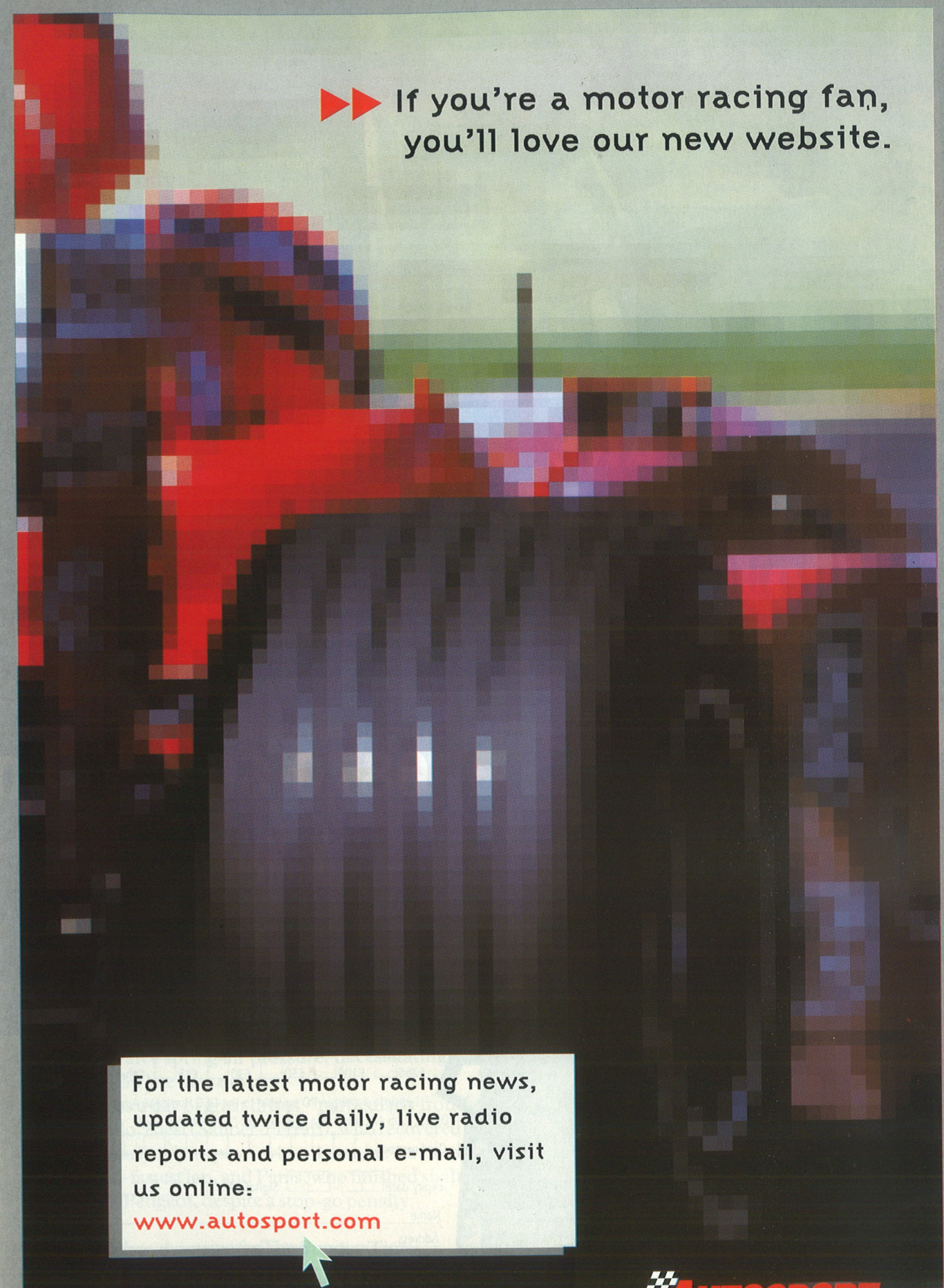
"I signed a McLaren book in the paddock in Melbourne and I asked how far back it went from a history point of view. The guy said, 'Oh, from when Ron took over,' as if that was the beginning of time. But it's good that Bruce's name lives on. From a personal point of view, the McLaren name shows the spirit of the beginning and makes me wonder whether the team would exist today without us having started it with Bruce."

Everything different, nothing changed. 



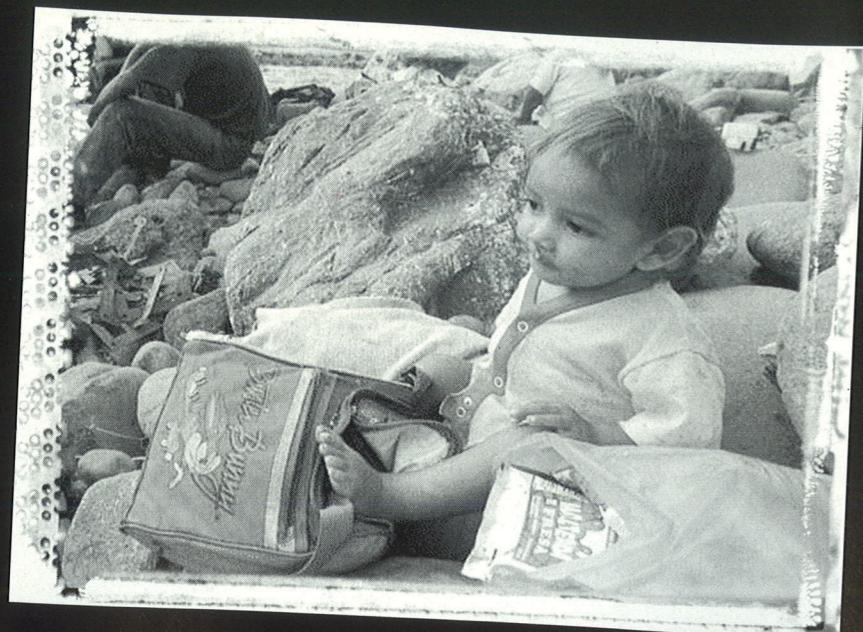
**'The mechanics were nervous of me, and if I'd been them I'd be nervous too, having someone they'd never seen before poking about. Mechanics have always been suspicious, and they always will be'**

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# HURRICANE MITCH ROARED THROUGH IN 52 HOURS MONTHS LATER, IT'S STILL DESTROYING LIVES

Please don't think that the crisis in Central America is over. In November Hurricane 'Mitch' killed 11,000 people and left thousands more missing. It was the largest natural disaster in the region this century - and the effects will still be felt for a long time.

### The real disaster is only just beginning.

The essentials of life: food, clean water and basic shelter are no longer present in much of Central America.

Food:- the fields are decimated and the staple banana crop is wiped out.

Water:- ironically, although much of the area has been flooded, there's little clean, uncontaminated water to drink. Outbreaks of cholera and typhoid

are escalating.

Shelter:- millions of people are homeless, their whole world ripped apart.

As a result, we are looking at a disaster of truly apocalyptic proportions. But we don't want you simply to watch it on tv and in the press - we're counting on you to act.

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# GRAND PRIX DEBRIEF

The statistics so far...

Australia 7 March, Winner: Eddie Irvine

REVIEW Brazil 11 April Winner: Mika Hakkinen p120

PREVIEW San Marino 2 May Imola p128

PREVIEW Monaco 16 May Monte Carlo p130

Spain 30 May, Barcelona

Canada 13 June, Montreal

France 27 June, Magny-Cours

Britain 11 July, Silverstone

Austria 25 July, A1-Ring

Germany 1 August, Hockenheim

Hungary 15 August, Hungaroring

Belgium 29 August, Spa-Francorchamps

Italy 12 September, Monza

Europe 26 September, Nürburgring

Malaysia 17 October, Sepang

Japan 31 October, Suzuka

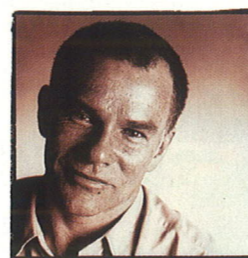
### DRIVERS CHAMPIONSHIP

1	Eddie Irvine	12
2	Mika Hakkinen	10
=	Heinz-Harald Frentzen	10
4	Ralf Schumacher	7
5	Michael Schumacher	6
6	Giancarlo Fisichella	3
7	Rubens Barrichello	2
8	Pedro de la Rosa	1
=	Olivier Panis	1

### CONSTRUCTORS CHAMPIONSHIP

1	Ferrari	18
2	McLaren-Mercedes	10
=	Jordan-Mugen Honda	10
4	Williams-Supertec	7
5	Benetton-Playlife	3
6	Stewart-Ford	2
7	Arrows	1
=	Prost-Peugeot	1

## Back to the old one-two again



HIS McLAREN STAMMERED for a moment on the fourth lap, with the driver unable to select fifth, but Mika Hakkinen double-shifted after that, found reliability, and emphatically won the Brazilian Grand Prix.

This was a race - a real start to the championship - because Michael

Schumacher was a strong second for Ferrari, dominating a car that was about one second off the McLaren pace and defining the margin around which Mika could drive.

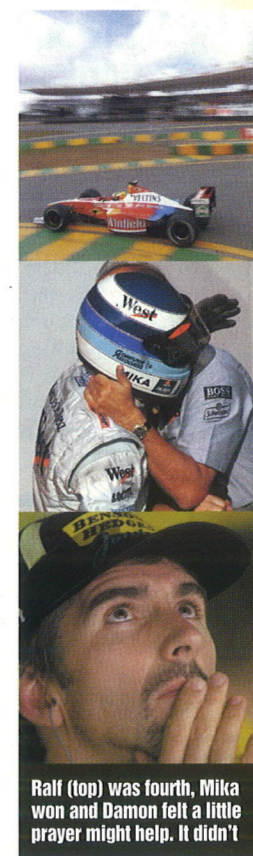
The star, however, was Rubens Barrichello: he qualified his Stewart-Ford third, took second place at the start - and then led when Hakkinen momentarily slowed. His engine eventually expired, but for 23 laps he held the home crowd spellbound.

With Coulthard's race evaporating on the grid (stalled engine), Damon Hill's Jordan-Honda colliding with Wurz's Benetton-Supertec, Fisichella's Benetton-Supertec losing its clutch in the pitstop, Alex Zanardi having diff and clutch problems and BAR suffering the weekend from hell, Ferrari were the only team to bring two cars to the finish.

Another strong performance from Jordan-Honda resulted in third place for Heinz-Harald Frentzen, despite the car stopping with no fuel pressure on he last lap; Ralf Schumacher was fourth for Williams-Supertec, nursing a fuel shortage; and Eddie Irvine was fifth. His Ferrari handled poorly and lost valve spring air pressure, necessitating a second stop late in the race.

This was a day of great drives - particularly from Barrichello, Alesi (Sauber-Ferrari), who recovered from an early spin to pass no less than nine cars and set fourth-fastest lap, and Panis, who finished sixth for Prost-Peugeot, despite a stop-go penalty.

Peter Windsor also writes for The Sunday Times



Ralf (top) was fourth, Mika won and Damon felt a little prayer might help. It didn't



# Mika and Michael down to business

This was a day for the skilful – for Mika Hakkinen, nursing an early-lap gearshift glitch, to win out at the slowest possible speed; for Rubens Barrichello, third on the grid for Stewart-Ford, calmly to lead his home grand prix; for Michael Schumacher to extract every last ounce of performance from his Ferrari; and for Jean Alesi to slice his way through the field after an early spin.

The McLaren-Mercedes are on top – of that there is no doubt. They are currently about 1.3 seconds quicker than the Ferraris ... or about a second quicker than the Stewarts. The what? The Stewarts. The Anderson/Jenkins/Hamidy/Cosworth design is the toast of F1 – a beautifully-packaged dream of a race car with a pretty good engine to match. Give it a tad more power, give the team a bit more depth, and you are looking at the nearest thing to a McLaren clone. And Barrichello, with plenty of years in bad cars now behind him, is more than ready to translate that sweetness into strong podium finishes: that was the sound of Brazil.

Rubens was all suntan, smiles and serenity in his homeland, producing

exactly what was expected of him whenever he fastened his newly-chromed helmet. He lay third for a long time in qualifying, lost it to Schumacher ... and rushed straight back out there, sure and positive. Michael, relegated to fourth, could speak only of Ferrari not having enough qualifying experience on Bridgestones. Translation: the car is slower than the McLarens and the Stewart.

There was a Bridgestone tyre choice. McLaren chose the harder compound because this was the conservative way to go, and so did the Ferraris, Frentzen and the Williams. On softs: Rubens, the Benettons and Damon Hill.

Race day was hot – 25 degrees – and suddenly the pitlane was longer. Its speed limit was now stretched over its new, longer length and pitstop times were now extended to 35 seconds or so. Round one to the (hard-compound) one-stoppers.

Coulthard, only a shade slower than Mika in qualifying, and confident of a win, stalled on the line. Or rather the engine stalled on the line. He'd had a gear selection hiccup on a reconnaissance lap

**'Hakkinen took off and Rubens darted in behind, oblivious to Ferrari, Jordan, and Benetton. He followed Mika, cool and calm'**



Schuey was mighty, but Milka (right) held sway

but everything was perfect as he edged it onto the grid. Handbrake on (this is Suzuka's downhill start in reverse), revs up ... and then nothing. He rejoined two laps down, ahead of Mika and Michael, and for a while it was fun out there, regaining ground and showing his speed. Then they blue-flagged him and he sort of felt obligated to let them both by, the better to be apolitical. His race ended when he lost his gears completely.

No-one had hit Coulthard's stationary McLaren – amazingly. Hakkinen took off and Rubens darted in behind him, oblivious to the Ferraris, Jordans and Benettons. He followed Mika, cool and calm, and then at the start of lap four, as



DEBRIEF ROUND-UP by Tom Clarkson

**PITLANE EXTRA! READ ALL ABOUT IT**

The late decision to increase the distance of the pit speed limit to the exit of Turn Three was met with disgust, as the teams had already made their tyre choices. Jackie Stewart said: "This makes a mockery of our choice because stops will be far longer." They were, by an average of 14 seconds.



**Sarrazin takes Minardi for a quick spin**

**PROST GP TEST DRIVER Stéphane Sarrazin, who was called up by Minardi just one week before Brazil to sub for the injured Luca Badoer, made a very big impact.**

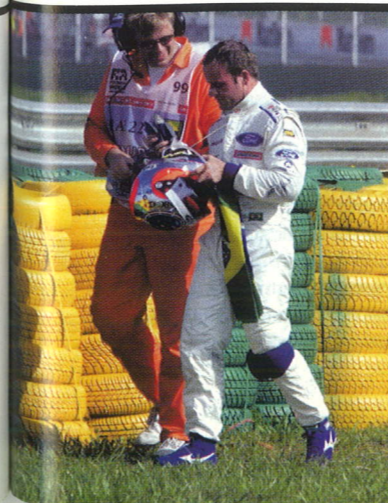
**He comfortably upstaged regular**

**Minardi pilot Marc Gené to the tune of half a second in qualifying and stated that the Ford engine was as good as Peugeot's V10.**

**He was running 11th in the race when he suffered the mother of all shunts entering the start/finish straight.**

**"I don't know what happened," he said, "but it's a shame because I was driving a good race." He was. One to watch.**

**Most spins in one accident on debut? Ten (at least), Sarrazin, Brazil, 1999**



**Chrome domes all the rage**

**TWO MORE NEW HELMET DESIGNS** to report: Pedro Diniz had some chrome edges added to the arrows on his hat and Rubens Barrichello also had a new chrome design.

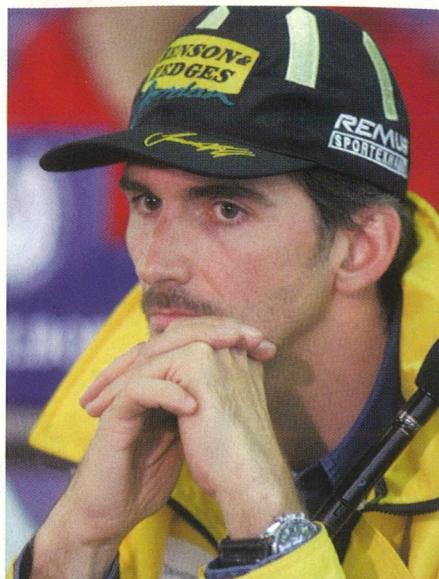
"It's just for the race because I want to show off," said Rubens. It didn't help him. The vent at the top of the helmet worked loose, causing him extra buffeting on the straights.

On the livery front, BAR are stuck with theirs. Craig Pollock doesn't like it, but he can't change it because this could bring it back to the attention of the FIA. Catch 22.

**Only me. New crash helmet. Oh, you don't want to do that**

**HOBBLING WOUNDED**

Everyone was in the wars in Brazil. Michael Schumacher was suffering with an ankle injury he'd picked up playing football, Pedro Diniz fell off his pushbike during training and had to have 18 stitches in a knee, Stewart Collins, one of Jordan's fabricators, broke his ankle falling into a ditch on Thursday



Reasons to be ... er, perhaps not, eh Damon?



BAR had a fraught time: Zonta was hurt in a huge shunt in practice and Villeneuve retired from the race

### 'True, Mika was trapped behind Michael's Ferrari. True, he would have to make two pitstops to their one. This, though, was a genuinely new force in GP racing'

Mika ran through the gears onto the back straight, the McLaren suddenly slowed. Mika couldn't get fifth gear. He radioed back to the pits, dropped it back to fourth and then double-shifted through to sixth.

He lost two places – to Rubens and Michael – but then he stayed cool, thinking of how to recover. He would double it through fifth every time; with McLaren's seven-speed gearbox, the difference in performance would be small – much smaller than if it had been a six. Beyond that, he would hold his breath.

Rubens had zapped out of the McLaren's turbulence onto a free road – into the lead of the Brazilian Grand Prix – and immediately it felt very natural, very familiar. It was just like leading a Formula 3 race, of which he used to win a lot, and everything felt in place. On the softer tyres he had grip and balance – slight understeer where he needed it, and great traction out of the slow stuff.

Lap four. Lap five. Lap six – and beyond. Rubens Barrichello's Stewart

was starting to flavour the Brazilian Grand Prix. True, Mika was trapped behind Michael's strung-out Ferrari. True, he would have to make two pitstops to the one of McLaren and Ferrari. This, though, was a genuinely new force in GP racing. It was brilliant to watch.

He stopped on schedule, at one-third distance, but almost immediately he felt that things weren't the same. On this set of tyres he had more grip at the front, more oversteer, and suddenly the track was full of incident – of yellow flags, debris, dust. He put his head down and caught and outbraked Eddie Irvine, and he was sure that he had the pace at least to finish third, but then suddenly the engine died and that was it. The day was over.

He was sad, gutted ... but then was he? Really? This, truly was the start of the new Stewart era. Deep down, he was exultant.

By now, plenty of drivers had sidelined themselves. Damon Hill made a clean pass down the inside of Alex Wurz, then had Alex move over on him, banging Jordan right-front with Benetton left-rear. Alex continued, eventually to finish seventh, but the Jordan felt funny to Damon and he cruised back to the pits. They tried to nudge him into returning to the race on a fresh set, just to see if it was a damaged wheel rim, but Damon was adamant: the car was spooky.

Jean Alesi had come and gone in a burst of turquoise, rubber smoke and speed, recovering from a poor qualifying ▶

#### ■ RUBENS' BUBBLE CRACKLES THEN POPS

Rubens Barrichello stopped outside his pit at the end of the race morning warm-up to simulate his start procedure after the team's problems in Melbourne. During the trial run the Stewart's engine cover started to bubble – evidence that all is still not well on that particular Ford front.



Zonta's impact was beyond the scope of the wheel tethers, and two rims went AWOL

#### Wheel meet again ... maybe not

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF the new-for-'99 wheel tethers were called into question after Ricardo Zonta's nearside wheels were swiped off during his enormous crash on Saturday.

New boy Stéphane Sarrazin also lost a wheel when he smacked the wall at 110 mph during the race.

The tethers are designed to withstand loads of 50 kilo-newtons. Zonta's smash was considerably more than that.

Ron Dennis said: "The tethers are good in that they stop wheels flying into the crowd and into the cockpit, but after that they inflict damage on the car as the wheels are thrown into the bodywork."



Hakkinen looked set to run and hide right from the start, only for a gearbox glitch to force him to sing for his win

#### Rule-benders feel weight of inflexible law

THE FLEXIBLE REAR wing saga, which plagued the season-opening Australian Grand Prix, was solved in Brazil by the introduction of a static test by the FIA.

A weight of 100 kilos was attached to the rear jacking point on the car and, to remain legal, the rear wing was not allowed to move more than one degree.

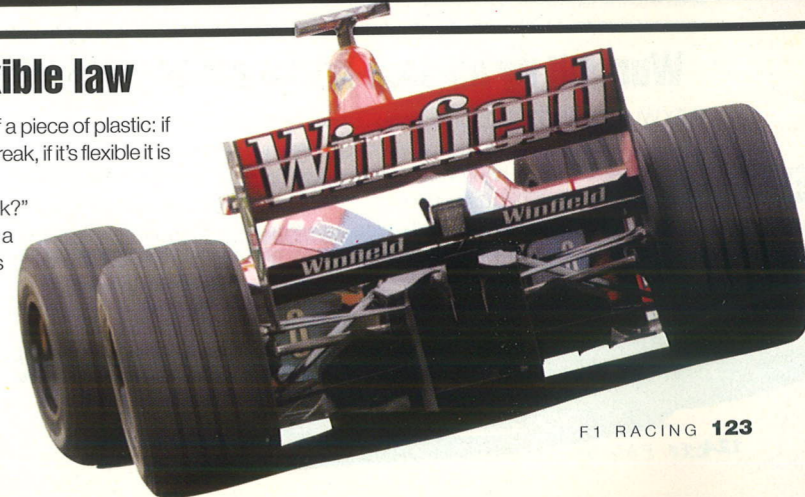
Michael Schumacher commented: "I don't see how flexible rear wings are

dangerous. Think of a piece of plastic: if it's rigid it's easy to break, if it's flexible it is impossible to break.

"What do you think?"

He might have a point, but F1 rules are F1 rules.

Teams had to keep a stiff upper lip and wing in Interlagos





# GRAND PRIX DEBRIEF BRAZIL



The eyes have it: Hakkinen (above) drove a superbly savvy race to keep a determined Schumacher at bay. Panis (below) scored a point for Prost

**'The Jordan ran out of fuel pressure on the last lap but was sufficiently ahead of the rest to be classified third: the Gascoyne/Anderson car is looking good'**

session – the Sauber boys thought it was going to rain and thus sent him out early – and Giancarlo Fisichella, who could have been third, lost his clutch in his pitstop. Johnny Herbert's points finish disappeared with no hydraulics and Alex Zanardi's frustration continued: his car quickly ran into a diff problem and eventually lost its clutch. Eddie Irvine didn't like his Ferrari's handling, and he had to pit late to replenish engine valve spring

air pressure, and Olivier Panis drove well to finish sixth, despite a stop-go (jumped start). Ralf Schumacher's strong fourth place is detailed in his column (page 20).

What was left was Mika from Michael from a very good Heinz-Harald. The Jordan-Honda ran out of fuel pressure on the last lap but was sufficiently ahead of the rest to be classified third: in the wake of the Stewart, the Gascoyne/Anderson car is looking increasingly good. 1



## Wurz hit by all-stop-no-go penalty after Benetton diet



124 F1 RACING

ALEX WURZ MANAGED to run Benetton's innovative torque control braking system in Brazil, having had to forego it in Oz in a bid to save weight. This specification upgrade was the result of the

team having saved more than nine kilos according to technical director Nick Wirth.

The B199 featured 85 new components in Brazil, but Wurz was forced to qualify on only nine cylinders, which cost him almost four mph on the straights to team-mate Giancarlo Fisichella – putting him right back to square one.

There's no point being able to stop if you can't go.

Worth the weight? Not on this occasion. Wurz had one of his least auspicious GPs – with or without gizmos

## MALIK STEPS INTO TOM'S SIZEABLE SHOES

Prince Malik Ado Ibrahim was the sole Arrows boss in Brazil, after Tom Walkinshaw was kept away by other business commitments. However, the Nigerian's new-found position of influence was overlooked by many. When asked to comment on HRH, Michael Schumacher said: "Who?"

# RACE FACTS BRAZIL

Weather Sunny; Track temperature 30 degrees; Lap distance 2.660 miles; Laps 72; Race distance 191.520 miles; Attendance 119,000

## QUALIFYING TIMES

McLaren's fastest again as Barrichello stars. BAR disaster: Zonta injured in practice, Villeneuve's time disallowed for fuel irregularities.

Table with 3 columns: Position, Driver, Time. Lists drivers from 1 to 22 with their respective qualifying times.

## THE FINAL STANDINGS

Table with 4 columns: Final position, Driver & car, Total race time, Pos after 1 lap. Lists drivers from 1 to 22 with their final positions and race times.

## RETIREMENTS

Table with 4 columns: Driver, Reason, Laps. Lists drivers who retired during the race and the reason why.

## FASTEST RACE LAPS

Hakkinen's best set two laps from finish. Alesi records flying fourth fastest. Sarrazin only a tenth slower than 1996 World Champion Damon Hill

Table with 4 columns: Position, Driver, Time (lap). Lists drivers and their fastest lap times.

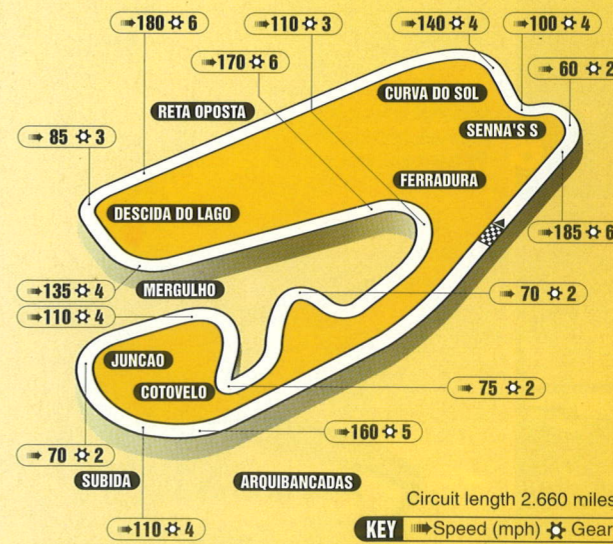
## DID YOU KNOW?

The first three Brazilian Grands Prix were won by Brazilians; Emerson Fittipaldi in 1973 and '74, then Carlos Pace in 1975. This Brazilian Grand Prix was Rubens Barrichello's 99th. It should have been his 100th but Argentina was cancelled. Alain Prost won the race an incredible six times. Damon Hill has completed the least amount of racing laps this season with just 10.

## FASTEST 'IN-PIE-OUT' LAPS

Despite the fact that Brazil has a long pit entry and exit, the fastest 'in-pit-out' lap was 20 seconds quicker than the best from Melbourne

Table with 3 columns: Position, Driver, Time. Lists drivers and their fastest in-pit-out lap times.



## THE DOWN-THE-PUB FACT BIT

Table comparing fastest pitstop, slowest pitstop, fastest over start/finish line, and slowest over start/finish line.

## LAP-BY-LAP

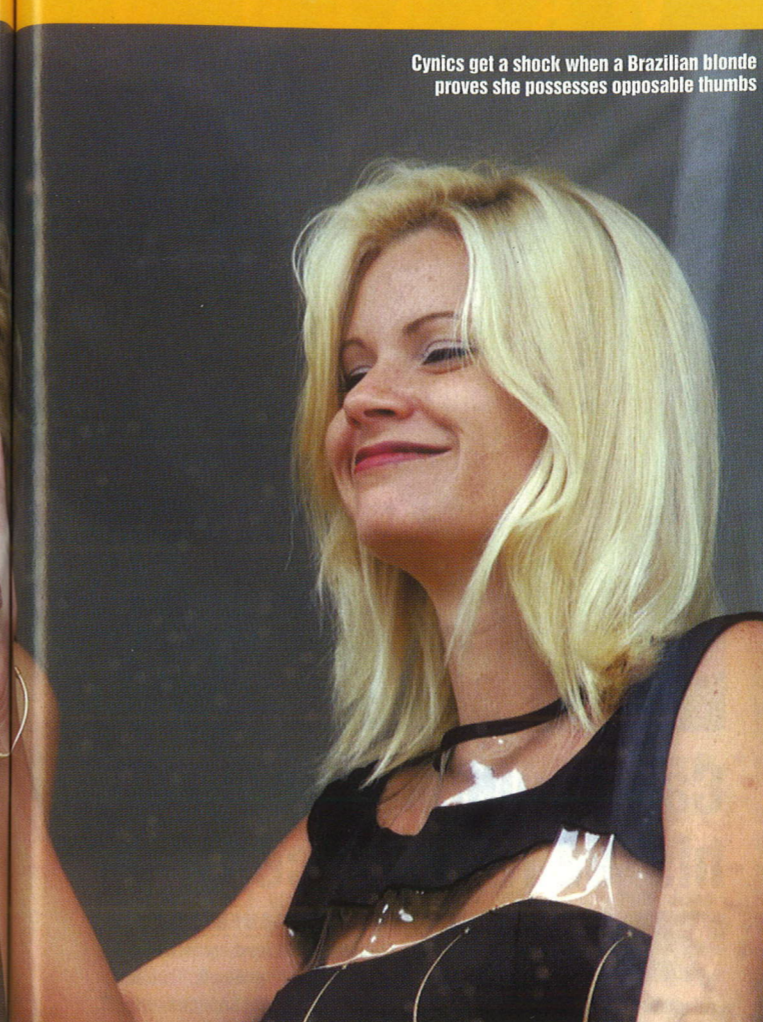
LAP 1 Coulthard stalls on grid and is pushed into pitlane; Hakkinen leads local hero Barrichello and Michael Schumacher. LAP 2 Alesi spins and drops back to 19th. LAP 4 Coulthard leaves the pits; Hakkinen slows out of Turn Three with gear selection problems and drops back to third; Barrichello gives Stewart their first race lead. LAP 10 Hill and Wurz collide into first corner; Damon retires. LAP 12 Panis pits for 10-second penalty for jumping start. LAP 15 Herbert retires with hydraulic problems. LAP 21 Alesi climbs to fifth place having passed Frentzen and Wurz in three laps. LAP 22 Coulthard retires with a broken gearbox. LAP 27 Barrichello pits and hands lead to Michael Schumacher; Alesi retires. LAP 32 Sarrazin crashes heavily at the last corner. LAP 36 Barrichello passes Irvine into the first corner for third place. LAP 38 Fisichella retires with hydraulic failure; Michael Schumacher makes his only pit stop. LAP 42 Hakkinen pits and comes out ahead of Schumacher, effectively winning the race; Barrichello retires with a blown engine. LAP 55 Irvine pits to replenish air pressure systems. LAP 70 Hakkinen sets fastest lap of the race. LAP 72 Hakkinen takes the chequered flag.



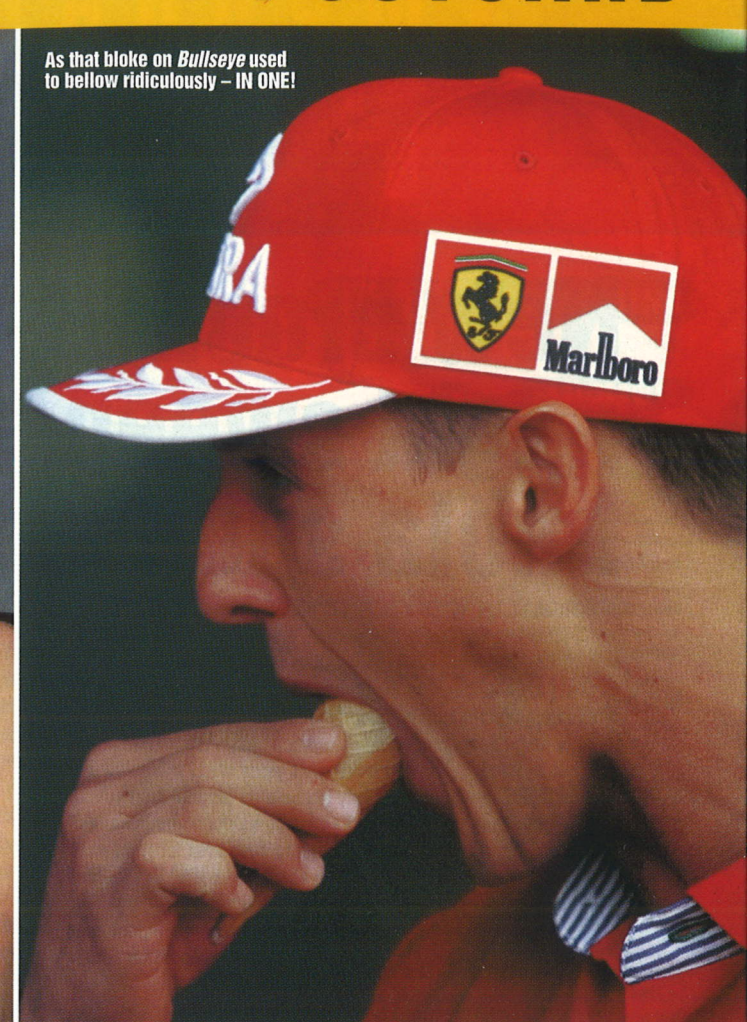
Hakkinen: 'e progresso-ed to his second Brazilian Grand Prix win



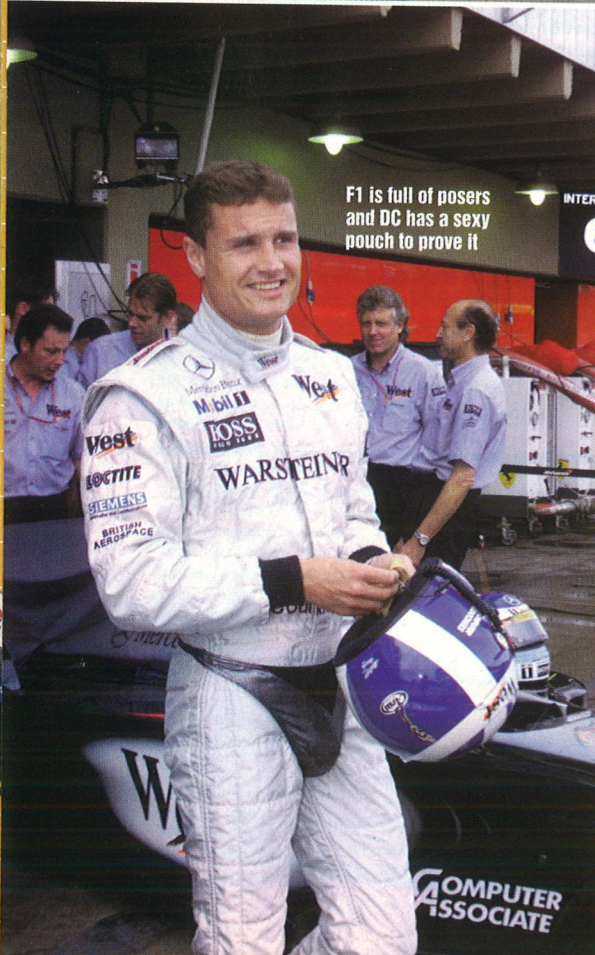
Schuey checks out McLaren's super-strength elastic band



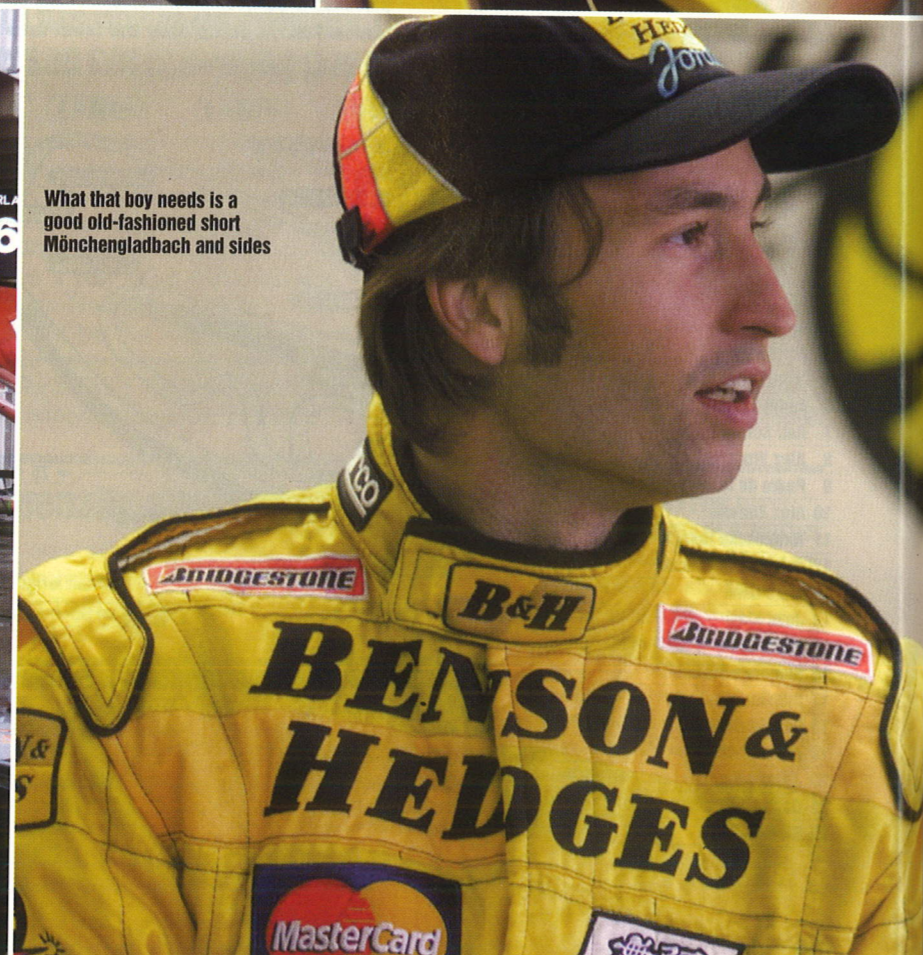
Cynics get a shock when a Brazilian blonde proves she possesses opposable thumbs



As that bloke on Bullseye used to hellow ridiculouslly - IN ONE!



F1 is full of posers and DC has a sexy pouch to prove it

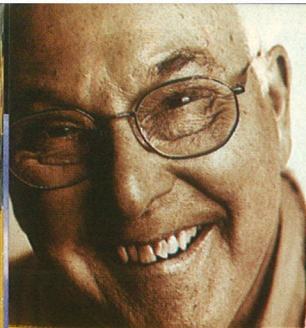


What that boy needs is a good old-fashioned short Mönchengladbach and sides



Driverdance: Eddie Irvine gets into the swing (sway and wobble) of samba

WARREN HEATH, GAVIN LAWRENCE/JAT, CHARLES COATES/JAT, STEVEN TELFER



# MURRAY WALKER'S PREVIEW

## New broom might sweep Imola spoils

AUSTRALIA WAS GREAT. So was Brazil. But boy am I looking forward to Imola! With Eddie Irvine still top in the drivers' championship for Maranello, and Ferrari an impressive eight points clear of Jordan and McLaren in the constructors' contest, they're going to need a shoehorn to get the fanatical tifosi into Imola.

F1 is refreshingly different this year with a new winner in Australia, Stewart mighty strong in Brazil and Jordan up to a highest ever second (equal) in the constructors' race. McLaren may have a mighty fast and impressive new car, but one finish in four starts is nothing to write home about, and with Ferrari not only looking as reliable

**'David Coulthard will be looking for a repeat of his 1998 Imola win after a torrid start to the season'**

as they were last year but also beaver away on go-faster changes, it's not looking like a repeat of last year's dominance for the Woking Wonders. If only Damon can keep out of trouble and Stewart can finish, the San Marino race could be a four-way fight for supremacy. That is different!

Five weeks between races after Australia was hard to take and the three weeks before Imola won't be much better, but at least it's more time for the teams to test and develop the machinery.

No offence to Melbourne and São Paulo, but it'll be good to be back in Europe, especially at such a fine circuit. David Coulthard will be looking for a repeat of his 1998 win after as torrid a start to the season as he had last year. His was a copybook victory from pole 12 months ago. But you don't need to be a genius to see that things should be a lot closer this time.

Which is as it should be. So contain yourself - it's not long now!

**Murray Walker**



Despite having Schumacher for close company throughout the race (above)...

## Can Coulthard repeat his '98 race success?

THE SAN MARINO GP signifies the start of the Formula 1 season proper. Australia and Brazil were the *hors d'oeuvres* - the once-a-fortnight grind of the European 'season' is where the foundations of a title challenge are constructed. Or destroyed. And so this trip to Imola is crucial.

The 2.65-mile track was heavily revised after 1994, the year in which Ayrton Senna and Roland Ratzenberger met their deaths. Because of these enforced changes, it lost some of its charm as one of the 'old school' race tracks, but it's still a fast circuit, with average lap speeds over 130mph. Thanks to the ever-present tifosi, its atmosphere is electric - even though it has been 16 years since a Ferrari won there.

Some of the best places to watch are either on the outside of Tosa (where you see the cars storm out of Tamburello, through Villeneuve and head up the hill), or at the Variante Alta chicane. There you can stand just metres from the cars as they thump over the rumble strips. The blast down to Rivazza, just beyond the chicane, is also extremely spectacular.

### CLASSIC MOMENTS

**David Coulthard** scored his only victory of 1998 at Imola. The Scot put the dominant McLaren-Merc to good use to win from pole. His team-mate **Mika Hakkinen** succumbed to gearbox problems on lap 17, so DC was forced to back off for the rest of the race to ensure he didn't succumb to a similar fate. But he still put in a solid drive to hold off a charging **Michael Schumacher**.

Coincidentally, the 1997 race provided the only victory for **Heinz-Harald Frentzen** in the season his Williams-Renault team-mate, Jacques Villeneuve, took the title. Despite the sporadic season that followed, Frentzen drove a strategically perfect race and finished a second ahead of Schumacher the elder.

**Damon Hill** won in 1996, but it was Schuey who starred in his first race for Ferrari on Italian turf. Despite the F310 being difficult to drive, the German took a heroic pole position just as the chequered flag fell. On his slowing-down lap the front suspension collapsed!

This was Damon's second Imola win having finished on the top step the year before. On this



... DC (above) ensured that Imola marked his first win of the 1998 season

occasion Schumacher had been leading in the Benetton-Renault but a mistake on a damp circuit saw him hit the wall at Piratella extremely hard.

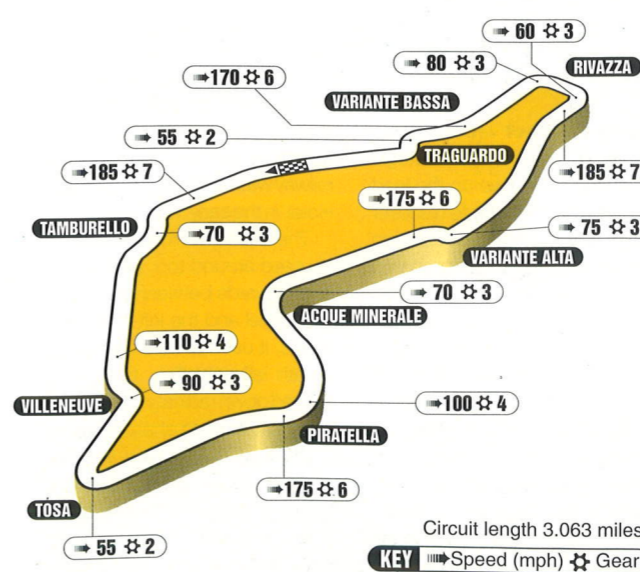
Schumacher scored his only win at Imola to date in 1994, but this was overshadowed by the deaths of **Ayrton Senna** and **Roland Ratzenberger** during the weekend.

Williams dominated the event in 1992 and '93, with their back-to-back world champions, **Nigel Mansell** and **Alain Prost**, taking the honours.

Senna demonstrated his skill in a wet/dry race in 1991 by

winning after reeling in **Riccardo Patrese's** Williams-Renault. This race saw Ferrari reach the nadir of an uncompetitive season: Prost spun on the warm-up lap and retired, while his team-mate, **Jean Alesi**, fell off a few laps into the race. Their flamboyant manager Césaire Fiorio was later dismissed.

Patrese won, uneventfully, for Williams in 1990. But the previous year provided a motor racing milestone: Senna, who went on to win, broke a first-corner pact with Prost, and so they embarked on one of the most famous feuds in the history of the sport. It was only resolved at Imola five years later.



Circuit length 3.063 miles

KEY Speed (mph) Gear



### ANORAK HEAVEN

Unlike Brazil's São Paulo, Imola is a tourist's heaven. Not far from Bologna, it is a typical Italian town. The architecture is beautiful, the population laid-back, the food tempting and the clement climate ideal for lazy days. It's not hard to see why this is one of F1's favourite stops on the calendar.

The build-up and atmosphere is helped by the steady stream of red-clad fans turning up at the circuit and the town. From Thursday onwards they build campsites, makeshift towers and grandstands that proliferate the steep hill that sits on the double left-hander at Rivazza.

Imola isn't in San Marino but it's a good excuse for Italy to host two grands prix all the same (the Italian GP is held at Monza). The first modern-era F1 race to be held at Imola was in 1979, a non-championship encounter held a week after Monza's GP. Niki Lauda won in a Brabham.

A year later, after much political wrangling, Imola replaced Monza as the venue for the Italian GP, but this was smoothed over when the San Marino Grand Prix was reintroduced in 1981.

Following 1994, the flat-out left-hander at Tamburello became a fiddly chicane, while Acque Minerale, which used to be a fiddly chicane, was opened out into a third gear right-hander. Despite these changes, Imola is regarded as one of the better circuits.

### HOW TO GET THERE

Airtrack (01895 810810) offer two deals, one for three nights and one for four. You can stay in Rimini or Bologna, and take advantage of hospitality lunches in a restaurant just 15 minutes from the track.

Motor Racing International (01304 612424) offer a three-night package in Riccione plus tickets for £469, or Just Tickets (01304 228866) can help if you only want to go to the circuit. It's £102 for a three-day pass at Tosa. General admission on Sunday is £50.

## PREVIEW SAN MARINO

Round 3 Imola 2 May 1999

### PAST RESULTS

#### 1998 TOP SIX

- 1 **David Coulthard**  
McLaren-Mercedes MP4-13, 120.618mph
- 2 **Michael Schumacher**  
Ferrari F300, 120.521mph
- 3 **Eddie Irvine**  
Ferrari F300, 119.525mph
- 4 **Jacques Villeneuve**  
Williams-Mecachrome FW20, 119.467mph
- 5 **Heinz-Harald Frentzen**  
Williams-Mecachrome FW20, 118.990mph
- 6 **Jean Alesi**  
Sauber-Petronas C17, 118.543mph

### POLE POSITION

**David Coulthard**  
McLaren-Mercedes MP4-13  
1m25.973secs, 128.175mph

### PREVIOUS WINNERS

- 1997 **Heinz-Harald Frentzen**  
Williams-Renault
- 1996 **Damon Hill**  
Williams-Renault
- 1995 **Damon Hill**  
Williams-Renault
- 1994 **Michael Schumacher**  
Benetton-Ford
- 1993 **Alain Prost**  
Williams-Renault
- 1992 **Nigel Mansell**  
Williams-Renault
- 1991 **Ayrton Senna**  
McLaren-Honda
- 1990 **Riccardo Patrese**  
Williams-Renault
- 1989 **Ayrton Senna**  
McLaren-Honda

### WHEN TO WATCH ITV

- Qualifying  
11.40 Saturday 1 May
  - The Race  
12.15 Sunday 2 May
  - Highlights  
23.45 Sunday 2 May
- Times subject to change

## Mika's mad for some Monaco magic in May

The most glamorous weekend of the F1 year is almost upon us. We give you the low-down on the best places to watch, how to get to Monte Carlo and much, much, much more

THERE IS NOWHERE to overtake and the paddock facilities are woefully inadequate – some would say that the Monaco Grand Prix doesn't deserve a place on the Formula 1 calendar. But F1 just wouldn't be F1 without this annual madcap dash around the streets of Prince Rainier's tiny Principality.

Anyone who visits Monaco will tell you what the drivers already know: despite its inherent dangers and drawbacks, this really is the ultimate test. The cars are never more than inches from the barriers, the corners are ridiculously tight and, when they thunder through the swimming pool complex, or blast out of the tunnel, they look mighty, mighty impressive.

If it rains, Monaco can be won by anybody, but if it's dry, the driver leading after the final pitstop has a distinct advantage, such is the difficulty in overtaking.

Historically, Monaco is where the best drivers shine. Ayrton Senna and Graham Hill won it six times – a record, Alain Prost four, and Michael Schumacher three – and he's not even retired yet.

### CLASSIC MOMENTS

**Mika Hakkinen** scored what he considers to be one of his best victories to date in last year's race. Building on the momentum of his winning start to the season, the McLaren driver dominated from pole and, once his team-mate **David Coulthard** had dropped out, the Finn was all but home.

This was also the race where **Alexander Wurz** proved he is happy to mix it with the big boys, rubbing wheels with Schumacher's Ferrari. But both of them were to regret it: Wurz crashed big time in the tunnel; Schuey finished 11th.

**Michael Schumacher** blew away everybody in the rain of 1997. It was Ferrari's first win in Monaco since **Gilles Villeneuve** in 1981, and it was one of Schuey's greatest ever performances – he reduced the entire field to also-rans. The best of the rest was **Rubens Barrichello** whose second place brought Stewart their first podium position in only their fifth grand prix.

**Olivier Panis** won perhaps the most curious of Monaco



LAT. ARCHIVE: ALAN ELDREDGE



Grands Prix, in 1996. On his way from 14th on the grid, he passed Schumacher's crashed Ferrari, the broken cars of both Damon Hill and Jean Alesi, then outsmarted David Coulthard and Heinz-Harald Frentzen during the pitstops. Only three cars were running at the end of the race.

**Schumacher** won in 1995 thanks to a clear-cut strategic advantage. Hill gave up the lead at his first pitstop, only to discover that Schuey's Benetton had been prepped to stop once compared to Damon's two.

Schumacher also dominated in 1994, but it was a sombre affair as everyone mourned the losses of Ayrton Senna and Roland Ratzenberger at Imola, then they had to deal with the coma-inducing shunt of **Karl Wendlinger**.

When **Senna** won in 1993 it was his record sixth victory at the circuit, and it was the only Monaco

in which he relied on luck. It was made possible after Prost received a 10-second stop-go penalty and Schumacher's engine blew.

### ANORAK HEAVEN

Monaco first hosted a GP in 1929, yet the track's outline is basically unchanged – in fact, it went untouched from 1955 to 1972. There have since been a number of revisions, though.

A chicane – the race cars go round the wrong side of a roundabout – was introduced at the first corner, Ste Devote, in 1976, and it has been the scene of many first-lap accidents ever since.

The Loews hairpin used to be called the Station Hairpin, but the railway was replaced by the Loews Hotel, in the early '70s.

The seafront chicane has been shunted around too, backwards and forwards between the exit of the tunnel and the left-hander at Tabac. It used to be a hold-your-breath left-right flick, but it was slowed down radically in 1986, the cars now turning sharp left onto a piece of road jutting into the harbour and mounted on pylons.

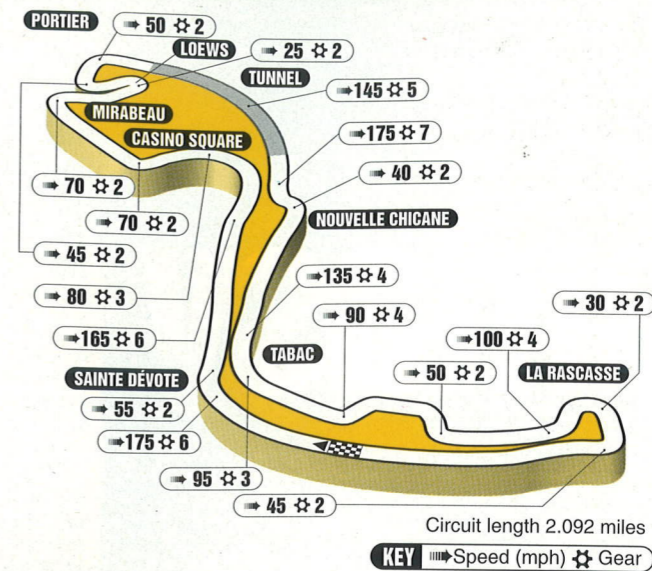
This chicane – in its early form – was the scene of the track's most famous accident in 1955, when

Alberto Ascari's Lancia plunged into the harbour. He survived, only to be killed testing at Monza four days later.

The biggest change, however, came in 1973 with the addition of the Swimming Pool Complex and La Rascasse hairpin. Before this, the track followed the line of the start-finish straight, to which it was linked by the very unglam-sounding Gasworks Hairpin. It was here that Jack Brabham lost the 1970 Grand Prix on the last corner of the last lap. He was hounded into the mistake by an inspired Jochen Rindt, who set a new lap record on the very same lap!

### HOW TO GET THERE

As Monaco is the most famous Formula 1 track of them all, passes and tours get thin on the ground pretty quickly. However, there are still a few opportunities left. Airtrack (01895 810810) offer a number of packages depending on whether you fly, drive, or train it. If you want to travel in style and mix with the



stars, Motor Racing International (01304 612424) will put you up in the famous Loews Hotel, take you to the casinos and fly you there Club Class – all for £2299. If you want to go your own way but need

some passes, Just Tickets (01304 228866) will be able to help out. Standing passes for Saturday and Sunday start at £69 while a grandstand pass at the Swimming Pool Complex costs £269.



There ain't no doubt about it, Monaco is spectacular in every sense: glamour, speed and tons of money. Top left: Hakkinen celebrates his first victory in the Principality in 1998, while the glamour (left middle) looks on. Bottom left: Hakkinen and Coulthard lead the field in 1998. Left: Loews, surely the most famous hairpin in Formula 1. Below: Wurz's Benetton rubbed wheels with Schumacher's Ferrari in 1998, then crashed exiting the tunnel because of the damage it had sustained



### PAST RESULTS

#### 1998 TOP SIX

- 1 **Mika Hakkinen**  
McLaren-Mercedes MP4-13, 87.902mph
- 2 **Giancarlo Fisichella**  
Benetton-Playlife B198, 87.751mph
- 3 **Eddie Irvine**  
Ferrari F300, 87.361mph
- 4 **Mika Salo**  
Arrows A19, 87.115mph
- 5 **Jacques Villeneuve**  
Williams-Mecachrome FW20, 86.320mph
- 6 **Pedro Diniz**  
Arrows A19, 86.219mph

### POLE POSITION

**Mika Hakkinen** McLaren-Mercedes MP4-13, 1m19.798s, 94.385mph

### PREVIOUS WINNERS

- 1997 **Michael Schumacher**  
Ferrari
- 1996 **Olivier Panis**  
Ligier-Mugen Honda
- 1995 **Michael Schumacher**  
Benetton-Renault
- 1994 **Michael Schumacher**  
Benetton-Ford
- 1993 **Ayrton Senna**  
McLaren-Ford
- 1992 **Ayrton Senna**  
McLaren-Honda
- 1991 **Ayrton Senna**  
McLaren-Honda
- 1990 **Ayrton Senna**  
McLaren-Honda
- 1989 **Ayrton Senna**  
McLaren-Honda

### TV TIMES

- Qualifying  
11.30 Saturday 15 May
- The Race  
12.15 Sunday 16 May
- Highlights  
23.45 Sunday 16 May

Times subject to change

# Win in our F1 Fantasy

So how have you done so far? Any closer to that trip to Monaco next year? There's still time to enter a team before San Marino, so good luck!

### HOW TO ENTER

- You have a budget of £40 million to spend on assembling your Fantasy F1 team. Out of this you need to select your engine, chassis and three drivers, at least one of whom must come from the £1 million category
- Create a name for your team
- Call 0891 891810 to register your team. At this stage you'll also be asked to predict how many points this year's champion will amass. Your forecast will come into play in the event of a tie-break. You might like to note that Hakkinen became the 1998 world champion with 100 points
- You can enter as many teams as you wish, and at any time during the season, but only one team can be registered per telephone call to the 0891 number

### HOW TO SCORE

- Just like real Formula 1, the top six finishers score points on the same basis used in the established 10-6-4-3-2-1 system. However, for Fantasy F1 players, all drivers finishing in the

top six are awarded an extra 10 points. So, for example, the driver finishing second gets six points plus an extra 10 points for being in the top six, thereby earning 16 points. Players will also earn/lose points in the following circumstances:

- Six points will go to the fastest driver in race day warm-up. The second-quickest gets five points, down to the sixth-fastest who receives a single point
- The driver making the fastest pitstop (pitlane entry to exit) during the race earns five points
- At the finish, each place made up over the starting grid position will score that driver an extra point. Points are not lost for losing places
- The first driver to retire from the race will lose five points. Four are lost by the second retirement down to the forfeit of one point by the fifth driver to pull out
- The driver accredited with the fastest race lap will gain five points
- Pole position is worth five points

- A stop-go penalty (for whatever reason) loses the driver five points
- Five points will be awarded to the driver declared by F1 Racing as Driver of the Day
- Failure to qualify will mean two points being lost. If a driver fails to take the start on race day, but is on the FIA's published starting grid, then no points will be lost
- Drivers lose all points gained over the weekend if they are removed from the results, for whatever reason
- Scoring for a chassis is the same as that for a top six driver or an early retirement, but only the first chassis home can score for a team. Similarly, only one chassis loses points if it's among the first five retirements
- The rules for engines are the same as those for chassis, but without retirement penalties
- All queries should be addressed to Jacqui Weston at F1 Racing 38-42 Hampton Road, Teddington, Middlesex TW11 0JE
- Technical helpline: 0181-288 1321

### THE RULES

Team entrants must be 18 or over and residents of the UK. Telephone calls are charged at 50p per minute with a typical call to register entries lasting between five and seven minutes. Once registered, teams will be eligible to score/lose points at all remaining 1998 F1 GPs. The deadline for entering a team is midday on the Friday preceding the race and teams start scoring only after they are

registered. Team scores are worked out using the official FIA timesheets from GPs. No correspondence will be entered into and there is no cash alternative to prizes. Employees of Haymarket Publishing and their agents are ineligible. The nominal values of drivers, chassis and engines bear no relation to real life. F1 Racing's decision is final.

Fantasy F1 registration hotline:

**0891 891 810**

Fantasy F1 team positions:

**0891 891 811**

Top 50 Fantasy teams results:

**0891 891 812**

**Top Prize** PAGE & MOY

If you've got the most fantasy points at the end of the season, then you'll be on your way to Monaco in 2000. This superb Page & Moy VIP trip includes flights, three nights in a luxury hotel and grandstand tickets. Cool!

**Brazil** DIGITAL EDGE

Psynosis and Digital Edge have a limited-edition bundle pack for the winner after Brazil. This consists of a fantastic PC driving game, the new F1 SIM COMPACT steering wheel and a pedal set from Digital Edge to play it on.

### LAST MONTH'S FANTASY F1 WINNER

C Racher of Sidcup won in Australia with her team MC Racers 1 Irvine, Diniz, de la Rosa, Arrows, works Ford V10 = 85pts

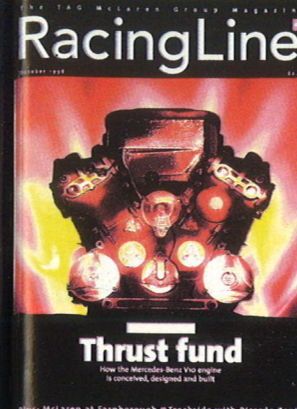
### Shopping list

You have £40 million to spend on your team. You can check scores here or use the 0891 numbers below to check on your progress

Name	Fantasy Price	Australia	Total
<b>DRIVERS</b>			
1 M Schumacher	£25m	9	9
2 M Hakkinen	£23m	10	10
3 J Villeneuve	£21m	-3	-3
4 D Coulthard	£21m	4	4
5 D Hill	£19m	-4	-4
6 E Irvine	£19m	30	30
7 H-H Frenzen	£19m	19	19
8 A Zanardi	£16m	0	0
9 R Schumacher	£16m	19	19
10 G Fisichella	£11m	16	16
11 A Wurz	£11m	0	0
12 M Salo	£11m	0	0
13 J Alesi	£11m	-5	-5
14 R Barrichello	£7m	7	7
15 J Trulli	£7m	2	2
16 O Panis	£7m	2	2
17 P Diniz	£5m	3	3
18 J Herbert	£5m	0	0
19 T Takagi	£5m	10	10
20 R Zonta	£3m	0	0
21 J Verstappen	£2m	0	0
22 S Nakano	£2m	0	0
23 M Gené	£1m	0	0
24 J Magnussen	£1m	0	0
25 J-P Montoya	£1m	0	0
26 D Franchitti	£1m	0	0
27 G Moore	£1m	0	0
28 P de la Rosa	£1m	28	28
29 N Heidfeld	£1m	0	0
30 R Rosset	£1m	0	0
31 J-C Boullion	£1m	0	0
32 S Sarrazin	£1m	0	0
33 L Redon	£1m	0	0
34 N Larini	£1m	0	0
35 L Badoer	£1m	0	0
36 J Müller	£1m	0	0

Name	Fantasy Price	Australia	Total
<b>CHASSIS</b>			
37 McLaren	£21m	-2	-2
38 Ferrari	£19m	20	20
39 Williams	£19m	13	13
40 Benetton	£16m	13	13
41 Jordan	£16m	12	12
42 BAR	£13m	-3	-3
43 Sauber	£13m	-5	-5
44 Prost	£11m	0	0
45 Stewart	£11m	12	12
46 Arrows	£7m	11	11
47 Minardi	£4m	0	0

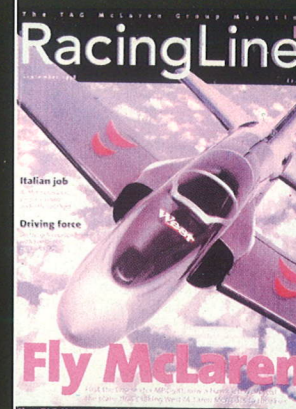
Name	Fantasy Price	Australia	Total
<b>ENGINES</b>			
48 Mercedes	£22m	0	0
49 Ferrari	£19m	20	20
50 Mugen Honda	£16m	16	16
51 Supertec	£16m	14	14
52 Sauber Petronas	£12m	0	0
53 Peugeot	£10m	0	0
54 Ford V10 (works)	£7m	13	13
55 Ford V10 (cust.)	£3m	0	0



Plus: McLaren at Farnborough @ Trackside with Ricardo Zonta



Plus: Mercedes celebrates in style @ Tony Bullimore: affoot again!



Plus: TAG McLaren Audio's new launch @ McLaren at Monza 1998



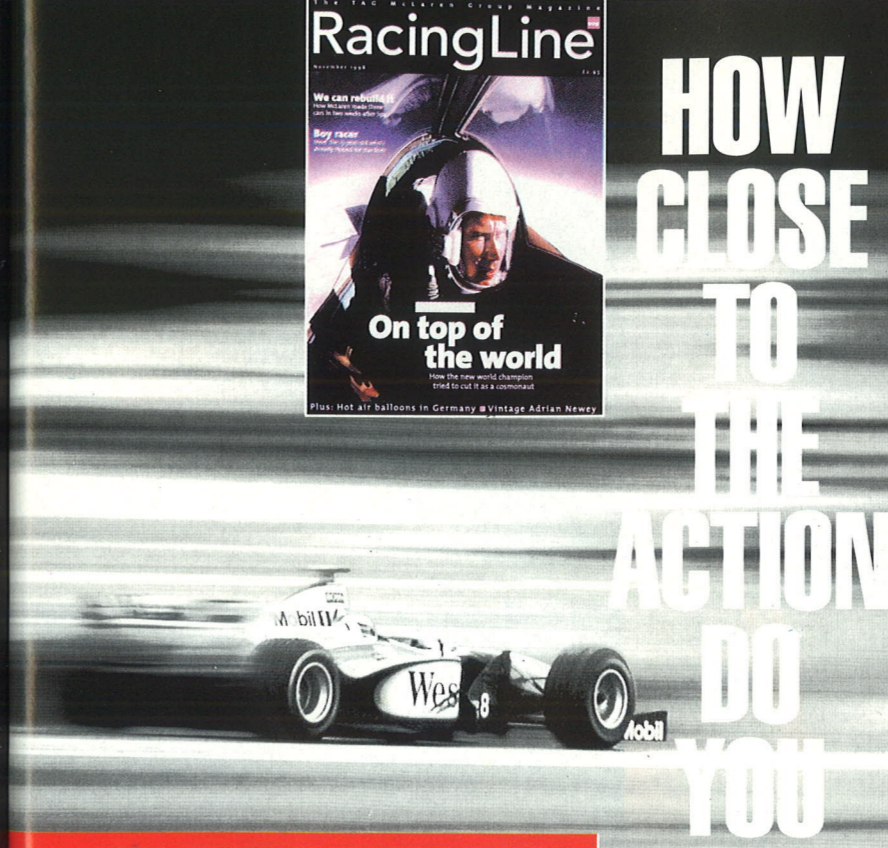
Plus: Hot air balloons in Germany @ Vintage Adrian Newey



Plus: Fast cars, fast clothes @ Watson remembers Silverstone



Plus: Digital TV at Silverstone @ McLaren's first Grand Prix win



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- ▶ The opportunity to meet a driver.
- ▶ Access to exclusive events, competitions and special offers.
- ▶ Exclusive member's pack.

### Individual membership:

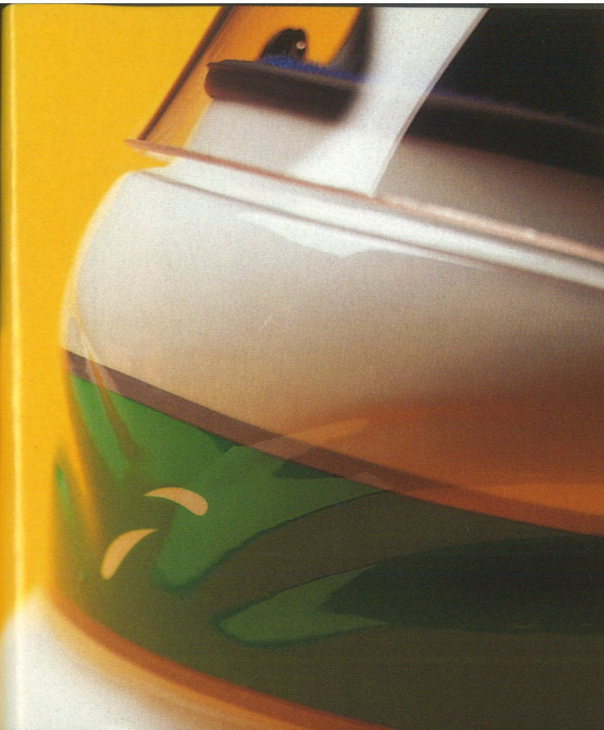
UK £49, Europe £57, Worldwide £68.

### Family membership:

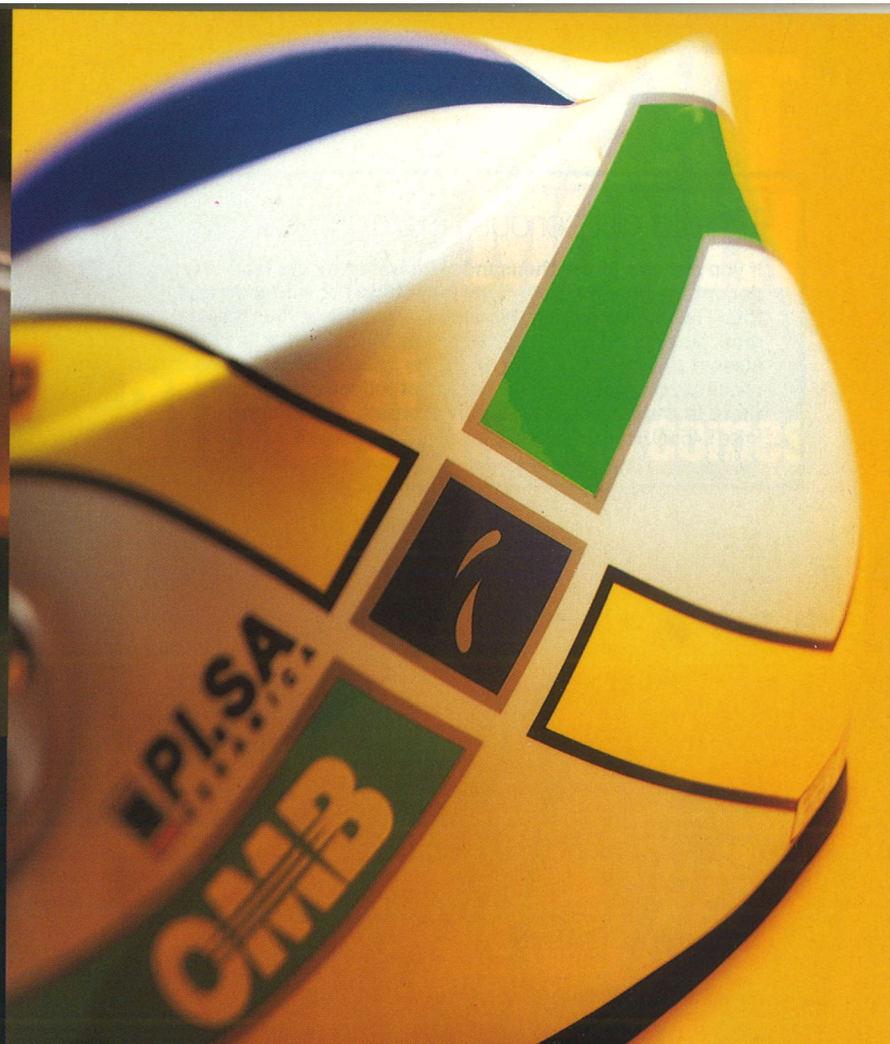
UK £69, Europe £84, Worldwide £97



If you crave a replica crash helmet but want to be original too, then this is your lid (left, below): Alex Wurz's Bieffe lightweight aero-special. Price £680. For further information call Dread on 01908 221666



Like the Wurz replica, you can out-flash your mates with Fisichella's Bieffe lid (above, right) on the track because it's approved to FIA safety standards. Price £680. For more information call 01908 221666



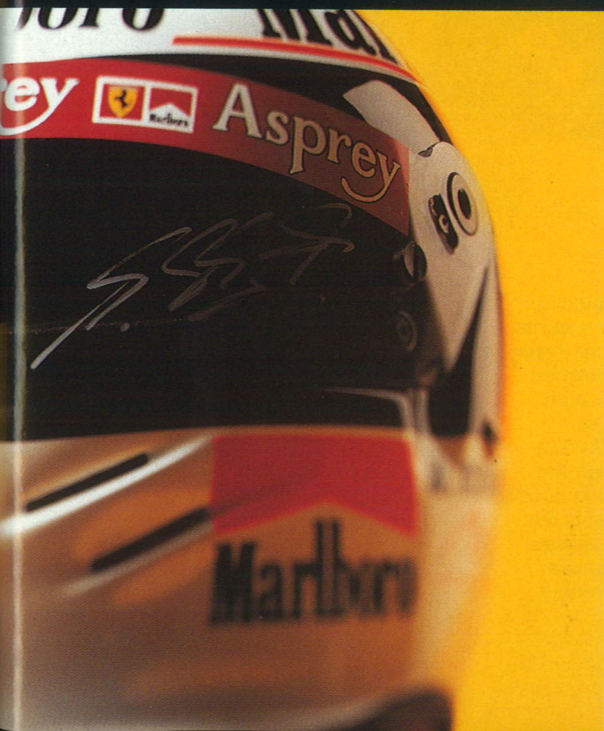
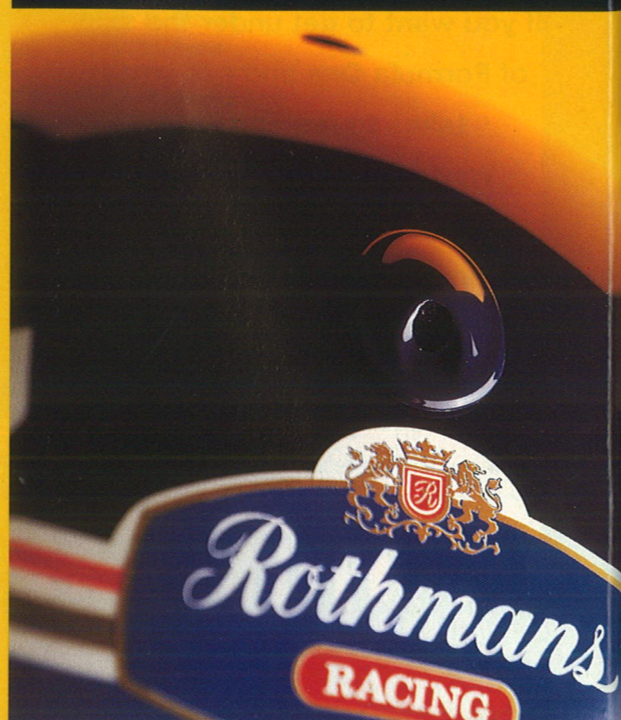
### backstraight |

Unless you are an F1 star, these will look better on display

Edited by Simon Strang and Barry Ainslie; photographs by Nick Wright



For an official Schuey Ferrari helmet, or Hill's hat (left, below) in a case, if it's to take pride of place on the mantelpiece, visit Peter Ratcliffe's Windsor emporium. For more information call 01344 874874



If Michael memorabilia is the way forward then this helmet (above, right) sets the standard. It's a limited edition direct from Germany. Price £2500. Call Grand Prix Legends on 0171 6161900



**NEXT  
MONTH**

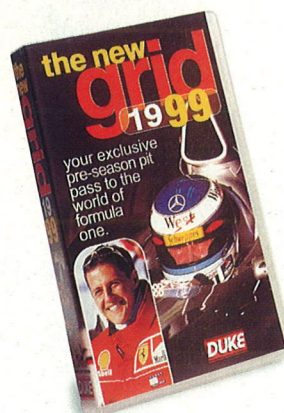
**Watch out Damon!** Here he comes

Time to get serious by playing games

If you are one of the thousands frustrated by the lack of a decent F1 game for your Sony PlayStation or Nintendo N64, then Racing Simulation: Monaco Grand Prix is your holy grail. Developed by top software house Ubi Soft, this is the closest thing yet to racing an F1 car on your own TV. The other cars are clever, your car is not indestructible and there is a top career mode. A real breath of fresh air. Price £45.99. From all decent computer game retailers



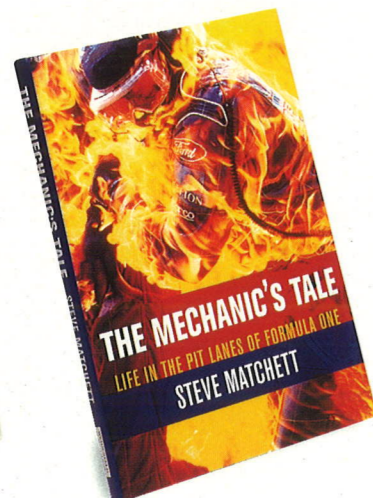
**backstraight**



Looking back into the future

Recorded before the season began, this is a behind-the-scenes look at who went where, what went fast and what went wrong in pre-season F1 testing. Look out for the neat, backstage footage from the team launches as well as the all-star Bercy kart race in Paris, which is always held during the winter lay-off.

Price £10.99. For further details call Duke Videos on 01624 640000



Out of the frying pan

Steve Matchett worked at Benetton when they won the world championship in 1994; he helped them do it again a year later; he was even there during the famous pitlane Hockenheim fire. Now he's left Benetton and is writing full-time about his F1 life. His second book is out now and is a must for the real inside story. Price £18.99. Published by Weidenfeld & Nicolson



Imola revisited in C-minor

This masterpiece of jazz has won awards, and its creator Peter King is a renowned saxophonist. With *Tamburello*, he remembers Ayrton Senna through the music he's composed. Understandably this piece is not always jolly, but it makes excellent listening. Price £12.00. Tamburello, by Peter King. For further details call Miles Music on 01953 850275



On the scent of Formula 1

Furry dice are out, but now you can hang your very own smelly driver from your rear-view mirror. They come in a variety of scents, this one is McLaren pine. Price 99p. Top Star Grand Prix air freshener. For more information call 01245 443636

**5 DAYS OF A  
GRAND PRIX**



JON NICHOLSON & ADAM PARSONS

A superb documentary by snapper Jon Nicholson and writer Adam Parsons about what happens over a grand prix weekend. Check our extract from the book on page 96. Price £20.00. Published by Macmillan and available from all good bookstores

**NEXT ISSUE ON SALE  
21 May**

Dear Bernie,

My goodness me, what a right royal row this British Grand Prix business is brewing up into. One minute everybody expects Silverstone's future to look tickety-boo well into the next century...

... the next we have Brands Hatch boss Nicola Foulston swooping out of the sun doing her Red Baroness bit with a well-aimed burst of verbal machine gunfire in an effort to unseat the event's long-standing sitting tenant. If that's not a contradiction in terms.

Let me recap on the situation as I understand things. The way it's all panning out, it seems to me we have four distinct options. Option one: the British GP stays at a Silverstone track which is still owned by the British Racing Drivers' Club. Option two: the race remains where it is, but with the venue owned by Brands Hatch Leisure. Option three: the race goes back to Brands Hatch. Option four: the British Grand Prix is lost to the calendar altogether.

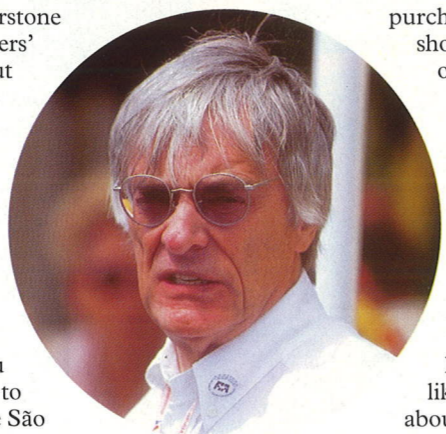
I must say I've noted your recent remarks about no race anywhere in the world having a God-given right to its place on the calendar. Also your concerns about the shortcomings of the track facilities at Silverstone. I think you'd have to accept that public opinion is pretty divided on this one and many of my mates think it's a bit rich you laying into Silverstone when you allow the F1 circus to traipse all the way to Interlagos. By comparison, the São Paulo track makes the home of British motor racing look like Palm Beach to even the most sceptical of observers.

Viewing things in a critical light, you'd have to say that all three British Grand Prix venues used since the war have had more than their fair share of shortcomings. Silverstone's wide open spaces always seem unusually arctic in anything less than a heatwave, while F1 fixtures at Brands Hatch tended to attract their fair share of the singlet-and-shorts brigade to the accompaniment of beefburgers and fried onions. Finally, I'm told by those who are able to remember Aintree, home of the British GP on five occasions between 1955 and '62, that the Liverpool track also gave off a unique pong, a heady blend of the nearby gasworks and the circuit's urinals. A bit like Interlagos, some say.

Ironically, when Donington Park hosted that one-off Grand Prix of Europe back on Easter Sunday, 1993, you could have been forgiven for thinking that it was the most suitable place of all for F1 cars to be seen in action. A nicely undulating circuit layout combined with the potential for a decent-sized paddock. What more could you want?

What we really want to know is where you stand in all this?

At the end of the day I don't really believe that you're seriously going to risk sluicing the British Grand Prix down the pan. It's all



**'On the subject of the race returning to Brands, I must say my friends collapse with laughter at the idea'**

very well to claim that Lebanon, Indonesia and Pago Pago are all ready to slit each other's throats for the privilege of staging a grand prix, but F1's hitherto amazingly resilient popularity stands to suffer a major loss of credibility if there is no race in the UK.

On the subject of the race returning to Brands Hatch, I must say my friends at the bar collapse amidst chortles of laughter at the very idea. I suppose it would be possible to create some sort of grotty Jerez facsimile on the site of the old track, but I have my doubts as to whether there's any way it would recognisably be Brands Hatch at the end of the day. That's without hysterical objections from the planning authorities and the environmentalist brigade. I know Ms Foulston thinks otherwise, but only the passing of time will tell us whether or not she's backed the wrong horse.

Anyway, whatever happens I am pretty certain you'll come out on the right side of the balance sheet.

On another subject completely, I was very interested to see that the government had pulled the rug from underneath that Aussie media wallah Rupert Murdoch's bid to purchase Man United. Why anyone should show any interest in that array of spoiled brats is neither here nor there, but I was fascinated to see the trade secretary - a rather insipid johnny called Byers - describe it as anti-competitive when he was giving the official thumbs-down on the box.

I'm sure you've heard that expression used by that bossy Dutch cove at the European Union - Van Gogh or somesuch handle - who keeps popping up like a bad penny and complaining about the terms of your F1 television contracts. But since they have had that wholesale spring clean at Brussels after that rather tiresome Cresson woman was found employing her dentist as a political consultant, perhaps Van der Valk will be thrown into the skip with the rest of them and not give you any more trouble.

That would then leave you free to sell your Formula 1 bond issue to the thwarted, cash rich Antipodean media mogul and not mess around putting

Silverstone through the hoop just because its lavs don't match up to those at the Savoy Grill.

A brilliant way out for all concerned, don't you think?

Yours with due deference,

*the SCRUTINEER*

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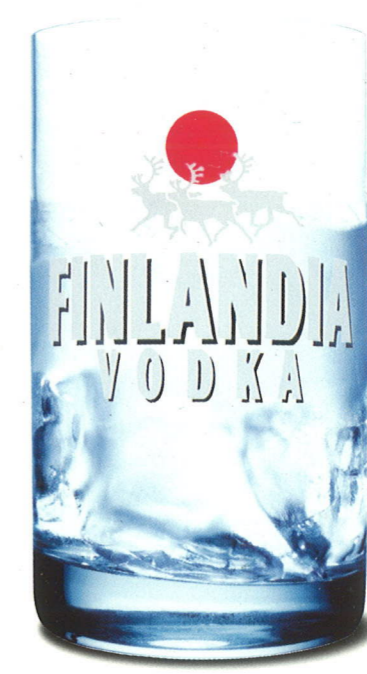
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