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MOTORSPORT NEWS

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Showpiece event faces battle over funding **P2**

RALLY SWEDEN'S FUTURE IN DOUBT



PLUS: THIS WEEKEND'S WRC ROUND HIT BY WEATHER DRAMA P3

FREE! THE NATIONAL RALLY CALENDAR
FOR THE COMING SEASON



MOTORSPORT NEWS

ISSUE MJ3013

FEBRUARY 10 2016

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Rally Sweden has run every year since 2010

REVISED ITINERARY

Friday February 12

STAGE	TIME
Start Karlstad	0620
SS2 Torsby 1 (10.24 miles)	0851
SS3 Rojden 1 (11.47 miles)	0953
SS4 Svullrya 1 (15.05 miles)	1053
Regroup Kirkenær	1149
SS7 Svullrya 2 (15.05 miles)	1318
SS8 Rojden 2 (11.47 miles)	1413
SS9 Torsby 2 (10.24 miles)	1528
Service Karlstad	1732

Saturday February 13

SS10 Fredriksberg (11.30 miles)	0811
SS12 Vargasen (15.34 miles)	1008
Regroup Hagfors	1115
SS14 Rammen (14.14 miles)	1243
SS16 Vargasen (15.34 miles)	1352
SS17 Karlstad (1.18 miles)	1623
Service Karlstad	1653

Sunday February 14

SS20 Lesjöfors (9.32 miles)	1007
SS21 Varmillsåsen (9.86 miles)	1208
Finish Karlstad	1500

By David Evans

Rally Sweden bosses could be on the verge of quitting the world championship in a row over a hike in fees payable to WRC Promoter.

Glen Olsson, boss of the WRC's only snow round, told *Motorsport News* the terms on offer from the promoter are currently unworkable for the Karlstad-based event, which has been part of the World Rally Championship since its inception back in 1973. And it's both the long and short-term future for the WRC's winter

rally that hangs in the balance this week, with warm weather impacting and still possibly forcing the cancellation of Rally Sweden (see sidebar).

Olsson said: "We're in discussions with the promoter over the issue of money. We are supposed to pay more and we haven't been able to reach agreement. That's where we are at the moment."

"It's all about getting a fair deal or a deal that we can live with. We need a contract which gives us enough rights to make a business out of it. If we can't get that then I don't believe that we can continue [to run Rally Sweden]."

"We had quite a struggle to clear up the financial past for this event. When I first started, the rally was about bankrupt and we had to work out the finance all over again. Since then we have worked hard to raise the revenue and since we are starting to get things in order, we would like to make a little money out of this – not just give it all to WRC Promoter and the FIA. A fair deal is all we are asking for."

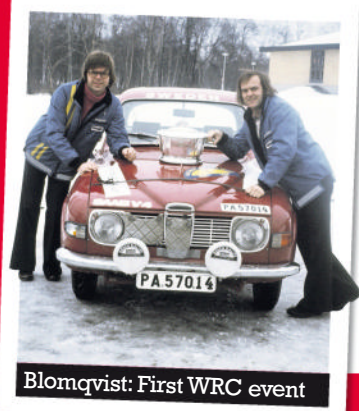
Rally Sweden was one of the

founding events in the WRC and has been ever-present on the calendar since 2010, having been rotated with Norway for a single season in 2009.

It has, however, been in a precarious financial position, running without a major sponsor for several years.

Sweden has managed to offset some of its costs by sharing its WRC round with Norway. As has become tradition in recent seasons, the opening day of competition this week will take place across the border, courtesy of an ongoing working relationship which brings world championship rallying to two countries which couldn't afford to do it on their own.

"We're not like Rally GB," said Olsson. "We don't have £1.5 million coming from a government like Wales. I would like a reasonable level of understanding from the promoter about our position. I believe this event adds value to the championship and it helps to build the championship. I hope we can be in a position to find agreement, but we're in two



Blomqvist: First WRC event

HEADLINE NEWS

Photos: mcklein-imagedatabase.com

Rising WRC Promoter prices could force nation out

SWEDEN COULD LEAVE WRC



Sweden has drawn strong crowds in recent rallies

different worlds. We're on our own here and we can't just keep pouring money in."

There have been rumours of a possible rival winter event coming onto the calendar from Canada and Japan, but WRC Promoter's Oliver Ciesla denied there were any active discussions regarding a replacement for Sweden.

Ciesla also denied there was any immediate timeframe for discussions with Rally Sweden – despite suggestions agreement had to be reached before the end of the event on Sunday.

He told *MN*: "That's absolute nonsense. Agreement for all events to be included for 2017 must be signed in September and not before. Rally Sweden is under no obligation to do anything next week. There's nothing I can talk about regarding Sweden and Norway, except to say that this is a rally which does bring value to the championship; there's good support here and it's a brand which is delivering a lot of what we want. Sweden works for this championship."

"As for discussions with other rallies, there are no candidate

winter events planned this year."

Ciesla, who visited Finland's Arctic Lapland Rally last month, added that he was keen to see more snow rallies on the calendar, with good potential for two winter events on the schedule for the first time since 2007, when Sweden and Rally Norway ran on consecutive weekends.

"The rally in Lapland was fantastic," he said. "What an adventure it was – being able to follow the rally on a snowmobile and seeing some of the pictures coming from that event was amazing. Okay, we're not going to get 700,000 fans attending these rallies, but the visual impacts were second to none."

"We have talked to Canada, Japan and Russia in the past and we are in the ideas stage now for bringing a second winter rally to the calendar. We are in a unique position where we can showcase these snow and ice conditions at a world championship level; nobody else can do this and we have to look to exploit this. If we can't make that happen for 2017 then let's do it in 2018."

Not keen on running back-to-

back events like in 2007, Ciesla said: "Why not come to Sweden, then go to Mexico and then go back to another snow rally. This would be a contrast and something that would really add to the story."

Ciesla ruled the Arctic Lapland Rally out of contention, pointing out that two events in one country – Finland – wouldn't work.

The absence of another WRC-ready snow event will strengthen Sweden's hand in the short term, but that position won't last forever with interest in hosting rounds of the world championship building in countries like Canada, Russia and Japan – all of whom have snow-sure roads.

Currently the championship's most successful driver on winter rallies, Jari-Matti Latvala admitted he would be delighted to see more snow.

"I love to drive on this surface," said the factory Volkswagen pilot. "I can imagine the promoter would be keen to see more. While us drivers enjoy driving on asphalt, the spectacle isn't the same as when you are sliding sideways all of the time like you are on snow."



Ciesla denied talk of Sweden being replaced for '17

Warm Sweden: route shortened

While Rally Sweden's long term World Rally Championship future is a hot topic in the service park this week, it's the rather more prosaic lack of cold weather which is catching most people's attention.

The lack of snowfall has left the WRC's winter rally looking waterlogged and decidedly un-wintery.

The organisers revealed a new itinerary on Monday (*see left*), but this is very much dependent on temperatures diving below freezing point from the middle of the week onwards. If that doesn't happen, the event will almost certainly be cancelled.

The recce has been moved and will now run Wednesday-Thursday rather than Tuesday-Wednesday. Thursday's Shakedown stage has been canned, along with the superspecial in Karlstad later that evening.

The potential damage to the roads from more than 100 crews running studded tyres on wet gravel would force the organisers' hand. The cost of repairing the public roads after the rally would be enormous.

On top of that, there's the safety implication for crews running on tyres which would soon lose their studs and have zero grip when they do find occasional patches of ice.

Rally boss Glen Olsson told *MN*: "The weather all over Europe has not been normal this year. Further south in Europe, it's 17 degrees and people are wearing their shorts. Here we haven't had the kind of minus degrees we would have wanted. We had some more warm days last week and this does make it difficult – it could make the roads quite soft on the second pass."

"It's a lottery. Last year we had good conditions with the snow, but up north in Ostersund the grass was green at the same time. Going north doesn't guarantee the weather, but it will make the costs twice as high."

Despite some tricky conditions in recent years, 1990 is the only year the Swedish Rally has ever been cancelled because of the lack of snow.

The Historic element of the rally has also been cancelled because of the weather.

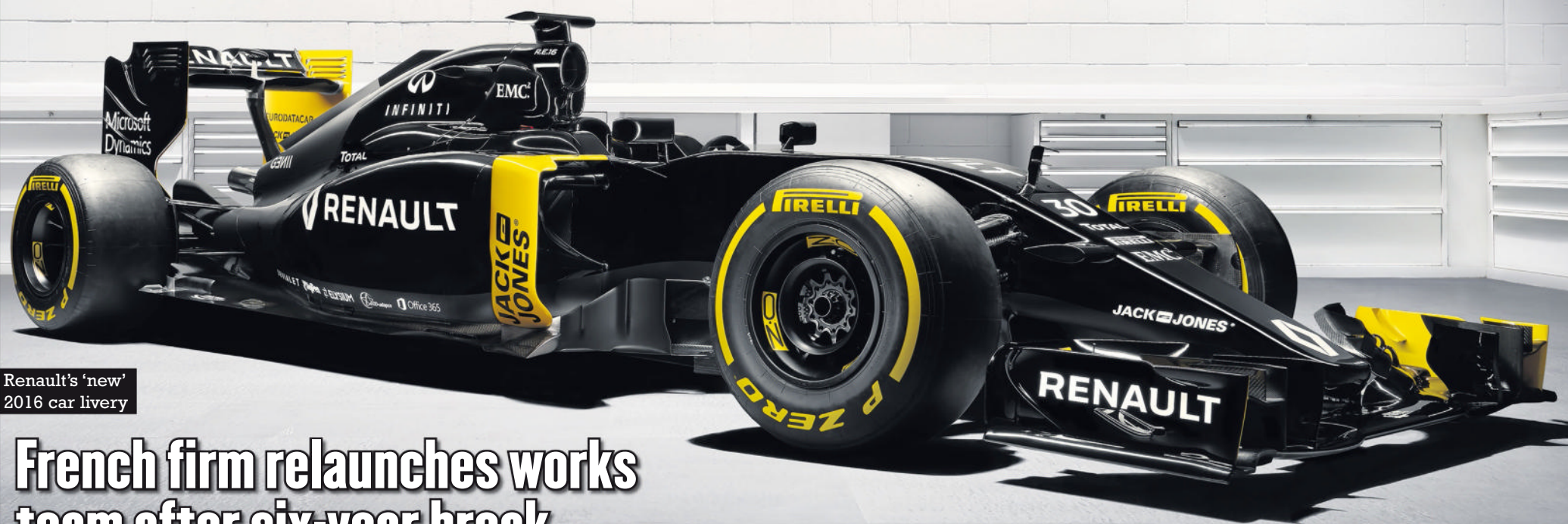


Rally in weather doubt

LATVALA SAYS 'WARM' SWEDEN WILL BE TOUGH

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RACING NEWS

RENAULT'S
NEW ERA BEGINS

Renault's 'new' 2016 car livery

French firm relaunches works team after six-year break



Bell: 2016 will be for rebuilding

By Rob Ladbrook

Renault boss Carlos Ghosn insists that the firm's first season back in Formula 1 will be a rebuilding exercise, but expects the Renault Sport F1 Team to be fighting for the world championship within three years.

Renault formerly announced its F1 plans during a launch event in Paris last week, at which it unveiled a new concept livery and its drivers – Briton Jolyon Palmer and Dane Kevin Magnussen, who was a late replacement for Pastor Maldonado after a sponsorship disagreement for the Venezuelan.

Renault has not been present on the grid as a factory operation since 2010, when it

sold the team and its Enstone technical facility to Lotus and became an engine supplier with Red Bull Racing acting as its pseudo 'works' operation.

That relationship soured following disappointing performances over Renault's Energy F1 V6 power unit. In an effort to restore its reputation in the sport, Renault bought Enstone back from Lotus late last year after months of negotiations and re-formed its works team.

Ghosn said during the team's launch that success wouldn't come overnight: "We know it is going to be tough, we're competing against top teams. It's going to take two or three years to be back in a solid way for the podium.

"We are working a lot on the engine

and we recognise we are starting with a handicap, but we have the talent, willingness and experience to close the gap.

"We are not here to participate, we are here to compete at the highest level and eventually win. We want to get to the point where every time a race starts, Renault is a contender. It won't happen in 2016, that would be a miracle, but I'm counting on the team to make improvements to the engine, car, technology to come forward as soon as possible."

A relearning year

Renault's expectations for its first season back are modest, but pave the way for bigger plans within the next few years.

Ghosn was keen to stress that the re-formation of the team marks the start of a long-term commitment to F1 from Renault, not a last-chance saloon.

Renault's acquisition of the controlling stake of Lotus F1 Team was delayed by the complex nature of the deal – particularly involving Renault's 'historical payments' from Formula One Management in light of its previous years in the sport. Talks began last summer, with Renault signing a letter of intent in September, but the deal was only concluded prior to Christmas.

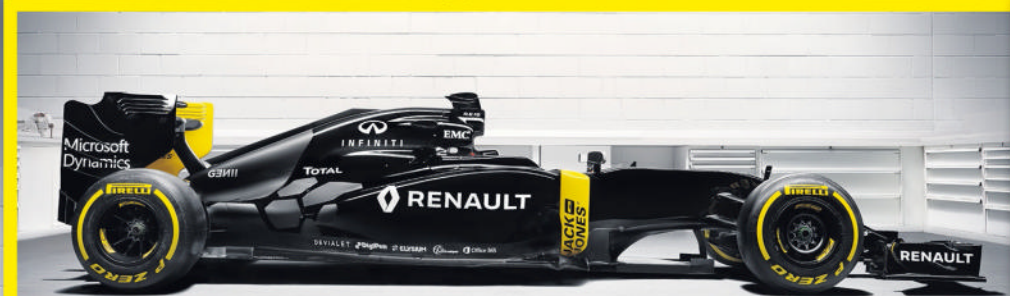
The short handover time resulted in Renault unveiling a 2015-design show car with a new black and yellow interim livery. The new RS16 challenger will be seen for the first time during pre-season

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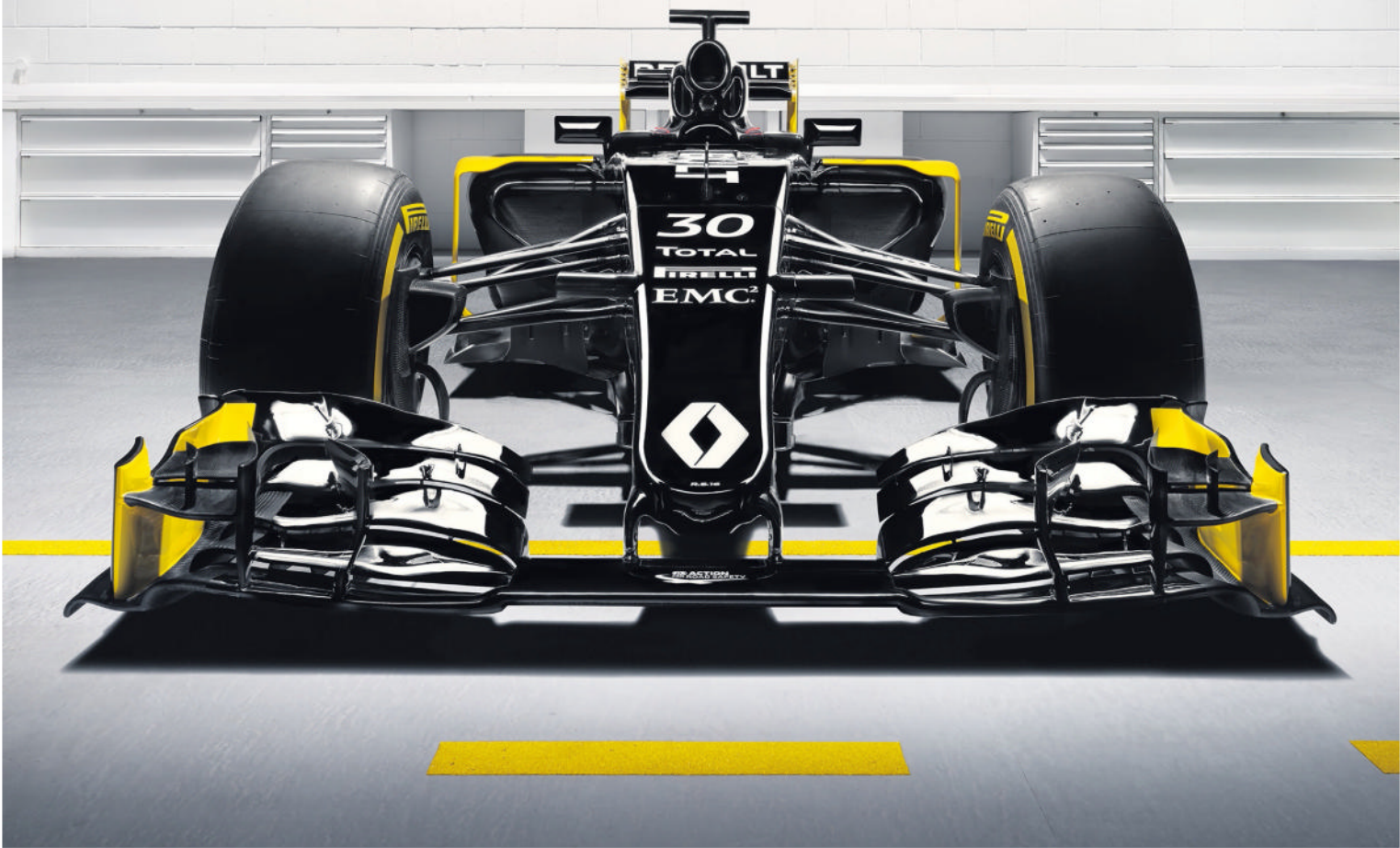
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Renault head Carlos Ghosn says livery may change for first race but will remain “elegant”



Lots of work is going into Energy F1 PU



testing in Barcelona later this month. The team’s chief technical officer Bob Bell said the delays in switching from the financially struggling Lotus team to Renault put the pressure on for the start of this season. “This year is a question of playing catch up,” he said. “Enstone has been starved of resources for at least the last year, and for good reason – the head count dropped, physical resource, capability has dropped. “For Enstone, particularly in the short term, it will be about building that resource back up again. Fundamentally the structure is sound, and there is a very good nucleus of people to build on. The guts of it should be done in a two-year programme. So it will be this year and 2017 before we are pretty much at a

level we think you can realistically compete and be in the top three. We are not going to be rushed in to this. “It is very definitely the case that Renault is in for the long haul. This year will be stabilising the situation, and laying some very basic foundations for the future. “Next year is about showing a step forward in capability and performance. Then 2018 is about having a credible target for the team, and a performance step that will demonstrate Renault is back and is a very serious competitor again.”

Engine updates

While talks about the acquisition of the team were ongoing, Renault’s technical

department at Viry-Chatillon has been pressing forward with a raft of updates to the Energy F1 power unit in an effort to close the horsepower gap to Mercedes and Ferrari. As well as heavy revisions to the internal combustion engine itself, Renault plans to tap-in to the resources of the wider Renault-Nissan Alliance, which includes using Infiniti to aid research and development of the hybrid technology around the engine. Team head Cyril Abiteboul said: “In terms of engine development we are behind, but it’s not because of this [the relaunch of the works team], it’s because of what we have done ourselves. But there is really very good stuff in the pipeline, and for the first

time we know what we have to do. “It’s about implementing that into the engine in a reliable, well-executed manner. It’s not going to be all of it this year, it’s going to take a bit of time, but we will do what we have to do. “If you look back it took Red Bull five years [to win regularly], Mercedes five years, so ours is a very safe ambition. We cannot come in and say we will score podiums this year. We only completed the acquisition of the team on December 18 so with the timeline it’s not possible to score podiums [regularly] this year. Everything we do has to be toward the construction of performance for 2017 and ‘18, and in my opinion 2018 is absolutely possible.”

British ace Rowland gets GP2 shot with MP

Briton Oliver Rowland will move into the GP2 Series this year with the support of Renault after being named as one of the firm’s Renault Sport Academy drivers. Alongside its Formula 1 team, Renault also announced the formation of the Academy scheme, which will back and develop driving talent toward the ultimate goal of bringing new drivers into Formula 1. It provides fitness, education and mentoring programmes. Racing Steps Foundation driver Rowland, 23, will join Dutch squad MP Motorsport for his first full year of GP2. He made two GP2 appearances last season with the team, and also won the Formula Renault 3.5 title. “This is the kind of career move that every driver dreams of,” said Rowland. “I owe a huge debt of gratitude to Renault Sport. Having worked and lived with MP in the Netherlands throughout my second year in the Formula Renault Eurocup we developed a strong relationship and I hope to capitalise on that in GP2.” Racing Steps Foundation founder Graham Sharp added: “Renault Sport have provided the all-important stepping-stones for Oliver to make his way from karting to the brink of F1. It’s extremely exciting to see him take this next leap with Renault also. Now it’s up to him to seize the opportunity with both hands.” MP team head Sander Dorsman added: “We are acutely aware that this is a make or break year in terms of Oliver’s F1 aspirations. We will be doing everything in our power to ensure we engineer a car that will enable him to deliver.”



Rowland raced with MP in 2015



Brit was FR3.5 champion



Magnussen will race Renault

McLaren outcast Kevin Magnussen says that new Renault deal has saved his grand prix racing career

Kevin Magnussen says this year was make or break for the future of his Formula 1 career, following a year on the sidelines with McLaren. The Dane, 23, was officially unveiled as a Renault F1 driver alongside Jolyon Palmer in Paris last week after Pastor Maldonado’s contract with the team was dissolved after a disagreement between his backed PDVSA and Renault. Magnussen – a former Formula Renault 3.5 champion – last raced in F1

in 2015 with McLaren, when deputising for the injured Fernando Alonso. Magnussen made one of the most successful debuts in the sport’s history when he finished second in the 2014 Australian GP. Despite his solid first year, Magnussen lost his seat to Alonso last season, and officially parted company with the Woking outfit late last year. Magnussen said a second season on the sidelines would have been very damaging to his F1 prospects: “Two years out would

have been the end. If you’re a world champion, you might be able to come back. But in my position, being out for two years would have ended my F1 career. This was make or break for me, and luckily I made it. Not many drivers get a second chance.” Magnussen added that he was prepared to play the waiting game with Renault until the team was ready to fight for podiums and wins again. “It’s important to be realistic about where we are,” he

said. “It’s a complicated new set up, but Renault has done this before and I believe they will do it again. “But you have to be patient. Things don’t just happen. So we will be realistic, take it race by race and just race as hard as we can this year.” After parting with McLaren, company boss Ron Dennis insisted he would help the Dane as best he could to return to an F1 race seat. But, Magnussen says his Renault deal came with no such aid.

RACING NEWS

Manor enters LMP2 with ex-F1 crew

Manor Motorsport will enter the FIA World Endurance Championship this year with a new project headed up by ex-Formula 1 men John Booth and Graeme Lowdon.

Manor has registered a single Oreca-Nissan 05 into the LMP2 class for the full WEC schedule, including the Le Mans 24 Hours. The team has signed Tor Graves as its first driver.

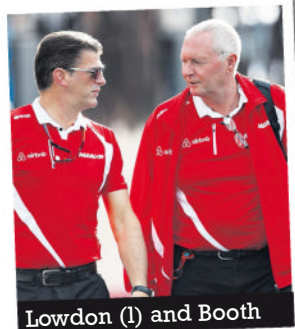
Booth established the Manor team 27 years ago and most recently masterminded its entry into F1 in 2010, initially as Virgin Racing before the Marussia title was adopted from 2012 until 2015.

Booth and Lowdon split from the F1 team at the end of last season following a difference of opinion with new owner Stephen Fitzpatrick.

"We are delighted to be joining the WEC," said Booth. "It is a fantastic series and visits iconic tracks around the world. The level of competition is very high and we are really looking forward to racing again."

"The LMP2 class is specifically designed for teams independent of manufacturers, which places the focus firmly on how the team performs. I can't wait to see the car running now."

Lowdon added: "There is a real buzz within the team at the moment and we have enjoyed great support over the last few months. We all have a great passion for motorsport and we are keen to share that."



Lowdon (l) and Booth

LE MANS 24 HOURS EXPANDS TO 60-CAR FIELD THIS YEAR

Record-equalling grid for the endurance classic



Ford has four GTE Pro entries for GT



Garage expansion allows more cars

By Rob Ladbrook

Le Mans 24 Hours organisers have confirmed that 60 cars will be able to start this year's 84th running of the French endurance classic.

Race organiser the Automobile Club de l'Ouest has pushed forward the completion date of four new garages at the Circuit de la Sarthe, which are being constructed across the old parc ferme area toward the exit of the pit lane.

It was originally planned for 58 cars to

take part this year, with only two new garages due for completion in 2016 before the rest were opened for 2017. But faced with rising interest in the race, the ACO will cater for a record-equalling number of cars this season. Sixty cars took part in three events in the early 1950s, but that amount has never been bettered.

ACO sporting manager Vincent Beaumesnil said: "Each year the selection committee is finding it increasingly difficult to establish the list of entries. We will have 32 prototypes and

28 GT cars this year and it already looks like a first-class race."

Among the entries is an expanded four-car attack from the Ford factory team, which will field a quartet of its new Chip Ganassi-run GT machines in the GTE Pro class. Two cars had been expected to run, but the ACO has granted two additional entries to Ford, which celebrates 50 years since its first victory at La Sarthe.

Both of Ford's full-time World Endurance Championship cars – entered

for Marino Franchitti and Olivier Pla – will run as will its two IMSA SportsCar Championship cars with Joey Hand and Ryan Briscoe as the first drivers confirmed. The cars are numbered 66-69 to commemorate the marque's four consecutive Le Mans wins with the original GT40.

"Running all four cars will be a big challenge for us but one we are thrilled to undertake," said Ganassi. "We have prepared well and can't wait to get the cars on track to show what they can do."

Jota Sport partners with G-Drive Racing for WEC and ELMS attack

British team Jota Sport will run in association with G-Drive Racing in both the World Endurance Championship and European Le Mans Series this year.

G-Drive backed the Onroak Automotive team of Julien Canal, Roman Rusinov and Sam Bird in last year's WEC and the trio won the LMP2 title.

The Russian fuel brand has now

switched allegiance to Jota Sport, which will field its Gibson-Nissan 015S and new Oreca-Nissan 05 in G-Drive colours for both the ELMS and WEC respectively.

Jota has already confirmed Briton Harry Tincknell, team founder Simon Dolan and ex-F1 driver Giedo van der Garde for its ELMS campaign. Rusinov will share the WEC Oreca with

Nathanael Berthon and an as-yet unknown third driver.

Both cars will race in the Le Mans 24 Hours, with Jake Dennis due to replace Tincknell in the Gibson for that event.

Jota head Sam Hignett said: "G-Drive wanted two cars at Le Mans so it made sense for the relationship to cover both WEC and ELMS."



Jota will field the colours of reigning LMP2 champions



Toyota Gazoo Racing will run a new livery in this year's World Endurance Championship. The new livery was shown off on the 2015 TS040, with the new machine set to be unveiled in March. The team has also signed ex-F1 racer Kamui Kobayashi to replace the retired Alex Wurz in its driver line-up.

LMP3 entry grows to 19 for this year's European Le Mans Series

The LMP3 class has grown to 19 cars for its second season within the European Le Mans Series, with Ligier the dominant manufacturer.

Of the 19 entries on the provisional LMP3 list, 18 are the French firm's new JSP3 chassis, with the sole remaining car being an Ave-Riley machine entered by Murphy Prototypes. LMP3 trailblazer Ginetta has no cars

entered, despite making up the entirety of the LMP3 market for most of last season.

Many teams have switched



No Ginetta P3s entered

away from running the Leeds-built chassis after a dispute between it and powertrain supplier Oreca. Sources have now confirmed this dispute has been resolved, so Ginettas could return to the grid for the start of the new season at Silverstone on April 16.

Alongside its 18 LMP3 entries, Ligier also has eight LMP2 chassis, meaning it will supply 60 per cent of the field.

JONNY ADAM SAMPLES A CORVETTE DAYTONA PROTOTYPE

PAGE 20

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'Goff has arguably taken a step forward'
WSR's new driver, p23

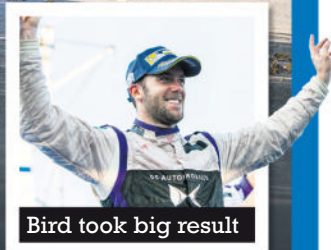


Photos: LAT, FIA WTCC.com

Bird (right) stayed out of trouble



BIRD IN NARROW FORMULA E WIN



Bird took big result

Briton Sam Bird claimed his first victory of the Formula E season after fending off a charging Sebastien Buemi in Buenos Aires.

Bird earned his and the DS Virgin Racing team's first pole position in qualifying and led from start to finish in the glaring heat of Argentina.

Having held off Buemi's Renault e.dams team-mate Nicolas Prost in the early stages, then Antonio Felix da Costa and Lucas di Grassi, Bird's biggest challenge came in the final quarter of the race.

Buemi, who started 18th after a spin in qualifying, tore through the field and was up to fourth (albeit 12 seconds behind Bird) when a safety car – called to recover the luckless da Costa's stricken Team Aguri car – bunched the field together again.

He passed Stephane Sarrazin and then title rival di Grassi with decisive moves, then piled the pressure on Bird in the closing stages. Bird defended brilliantly, and had saved a little more energy than Buemi to edge slightly clear

on the last lap and clinch the victory.

The heavy twin-motor powertrain adopted by DS Virgin, and championship-winning outfit NEXTEV TCR, has lagged behind its more conventional rivals in season two, but Bird's squad has made particularly significant gains in recent rounds.

After a pointless opening race in Beijing, Bird bagged a podium in Putrajaya but retired in Punta del Este. His Buenos Aires victory puts him a comfortable third in the

championship, 28 points behind Buemi.

"It has been tough," he admitted. "Beijing was very, very difficult. Malaysia was a bit fortunate but we took the points anyway. We were unfortunate at Punta because we did show good speed there, and we were up there with the big boys again.

"Here we got the ultimate points haul really, apart from fastest lap. I'm absolutely thrilled for the team. It was a really tough win, my hardest race so far."



Tordoff (l) and Collard

Goff joins Collard, Tordoff in WSR BTCC team

WSR has confirmed a three-car line-up in this season's British Touring Car Championship after signing Sam Tordoff and Rob Collard for another campaign.

The pair will drive GardX-backed rear-wheel-drive BMW 125i M Sports. Jack Goff will also be part of the team in an IHG-backed BMW 125i M Sport.

It will be Collard's ninth season with the squad and Tordoff's second. Both were race winners in 2015. Collard finished 10th in the standings. Tordoff was sixth.

"It is great to have both Sam and Rob continue with the team

this year," said team principal Dick Bennetts. "Considering that Sam has only done three years in the BTCC and only one in the rear-wheel-drive BMW, I reckon he'll really shine this year. Rob really lifted his game last year, to the point that even Andy Priaulx, a three-time world champion commented how quick Rob is on race day..."

"The guys have been working really hard through the winter to move the 125i M Sport on to a new level, as we all know just how competitive the British Touring Car Championship is."

Neate lands BTCC return with Team Dynamics

Andy Neate has signed with Team Dynamics to drive its third Honda Civic Type R in the BTCC.

He will join champion Gordon Shedden and three-time title winner Matt Neal at the Pershore squad.

Neate has formerly driven for the WSR team, Arena International and was a factory MG driver alongside Jason Plato in 2012.

Neate, who last contested a part-season in the BTCC in 2013, said: "Like Matt Neal, I've been involved with multiple teams in British

Touring Cars and so bring with me a wealth of understanding and familiarity of the championship. I'm really excited to be working alongside two of the greats in Matt and Gordon and it will be brilliant to have team-mates that I can learn so much from.

"The car looked epic last year and I am sure this year will be no different. I can't wait to get behind the wheel and begin to support Honda in achieving back-to-back manufacturers' championships and, of course, be challenging for those hard-fought podiums."

Chilton gets Citroen seat for WTCC attack

Tom Chilton will join Sebastien Loeb Racing to campaign a Citroen C-Elysee in this year's World Touring Car Championship.

The 30-year-old finished 11th overall in the points last year in a ROAL Motorsport Chevrolet Cruze. Chilton will now partner Mehdi Bennani and Gregoire Demoustier at SLR.

"It's an incredibly positive step and the team has proven successful," said Chilton.

"For the last couple of years I've tried my hardest for Chevrolet and tried every set-up and couldn't go any faster."

Chilton's car will be one of the chassis campaigned by the works Citroen team last season.



Chilton has C-Elysee seat

The factory outfit will run two cars instead of three with SLR adding a third C-Elysee to the two it ran in 2015.

"They've [Citroen] said it's a satellite team and that they want us to do well because there's potential to sell more cars," added Chilton. "They've said they'll try and give us the same stuff [as the works cars]."

THE FASTEST NEWS ROUND-UP



BMW has reshuffled its DTM driver line-up. Augusto Farfus, Timo Glock and Maxime Martin have all switched teams. Farfus will replace Glock at the MTEK team, Glock will join RMG, while Martin will move to RBM...

Gabriele Tarquini will remain in the



World Touring Car Championship this season after joining the works Lada team. The 2009 champion has swapped places with new Honda driver Rob Huff...

Formula 3 outfit Team West-Tec (below) has offered cut price deals for drivers in the 2016 European F3 Championship after struggling to get any signed. The British squad has until February 15 to sign a driver otherwise it will be forced to quit the series...

Three-time NASCAR Sprint Cup champion Tony Stewart will miss the start of his final season in the category after sustaining a back injury in an accident at the end of last month. Stewart crashed an all-terrain vehicle while on holiday and suffered a burst fracture of the L1 vertebra...

THE VOICE OF NATIONAL RACING

MATT JAMES

"Tandy will be perfect for his new role"



Nick Tandy picks up the John Nicol Trophy

I am very proud to say that I knew John Nicol. Having done some work experience at Brands Hatch as a young teenager, he was one of the men it was impossible not to meet, and someone it was impossible not to be impressed by.

Nicol was a chief executive of the British Racing and Sports Car Club and also operated the Brands Hatch Racing Club, which was devised by circuit supremo John Webb to promote the interests of the circuit through operating its own meetings – a bit like the MotorSport Vision Racing division which does the same thing for the Brands Hatch group of circuits now.

I was equally delighted to see the latest recipient, Le Mans winner Nick Tandy, pick up the John Nicol Trophy at the BRSCC's annual awards bash in Stratford-upon-Avon on Saturday night.

The accolade is another to contribute to Tandy's impressive collection of silverware that he has earned over the last few seasons.

It was also announced by the BRSCC chairman Bernard Cottrell on Saturday night that Tandy had accepted the offer of becoming an honorary vice president of the club.

I can't think of anyone more suitable for the job.

Not only does Nick have a top-flight career for Porsche that has taken him to the very pinnacle of the sport with that victory at Le Mans, he also has a keen eye on the younger generation through his role heading up the JTR MSA Formula team.

There's not a lot that escapes his attention on the nursery slopes. He knows the drivers, understands how the sport works, knows what is required to run a title-winning team and also has the knowledge that he has gained from years behind the wheel – all the way back to racing in Ministox when he was a much younger man.

And the humility that he showed when he stepped on to the stage on Saturday night was also impressive. Tandy was quick to pay tribute to all of the champions who had been highlighted earlier in the evening when they were picking up their own silverware. Tandy seemed genuinely impressed by the other talents in the room.

All of those factors combine to mean he is perfectly placed to have a useful input into shaping the future of the sport through his new role with the British Racing and Sports Car Club. He is desperate to give something back to the sport that has given him almost everything he has in life so far. It is a great match and a mark of the man that he was so eager to step up to the plate when Cottrell asked him.



AGREE/DISAGREE?
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RACING NEWS

IN BRIEF

Crash no issue

The Porsche World Endurance Championship team has played down the impact of a hefty testing accident at Abu Dhabi last week. Marc Lieb was at the wheel of the revised 919 Hybrid LMP1 when he crashed at Turn 19 and damaged a suspension mounting point. The team lost one of its four days to repairs. "We had a one-day break, it was not ideal but we made up for it on the last day," said team head Andreas Siedl.

Lidseys return

Tyler Lidsey will join his brother Brett in the Clio Cup Race Series this season. Both drivers will drive for the new MRM team, which is headed up by former 20Ten Racing mechanic Mike Ritchie. Brett finished fifth in the standings last year, while Tyler was third in the Road Series class.

Fun Cup switch

Toyota MR2 team-mates and rivals Anjum Waheed and Gerry Buggy are planning to contest selected Fun Cup rounds this season, after both sampled one of the VW Beetle clones at Donington Park recently. Waheed and Buggy raced in the MR2 and Nippon Challenge last season with CFM Racing-prepared cars. "We both enjoyed the car and will definitely be doing the Spa 25 Hours now and some other races too," said Waheed.

Scottish youth

Michael Macpherson has become the youngest driver to pass their ARDS test at Knockhill Circuit. Macpherson completed the course aged 14 years and 11 months. The Inverness youngster has been racing in Super One karting and is now planning to test Formula Ford 1600 machinery across the course of this year before joining the Scottish championship in 2017.

Radical returns

Reigning Radical European Masters SR3 champions Marcelo Marateotto and Marco Cencetti are defending their title this season, as they head a three-car line-up in Banbury-based RAW Motorsports. In the UK championship RAW will run 2015 runner-up Steve Burgess, along with John Macleod, Gary Patterson and Brian and Tom Harvey.

RXC gets GT3

The Radical RXC Turbo has been granted National GT3 homologation from this season onwards. The Peterborough-based marque applied for the paperwork in January and the model has been granted GT3 status by European homologation firm OSK. Radical is planning to run the car within the GT3 section of International GT Open. The firm said the news "opens the gates to a wide range of championships and racing opportunities."

MASERATI GRANTURISMO SET FOR BRITISH GT DEBUT



The new GT4 car will run this year



Eaton and Hoggarth will handle colourful Maserati GranTurismo

By Rob Ladbrook

GT Cup squad Ebor GT will field a new Maserati GranTurismo MC GT4 in British championship for Abbie Eaton and Marcus Hoggarth.

The York team has ordered one of the Italian firm's new GT4 machines and expects to take delivery later this month. Ebor specialises in historic race and rally

preparation for Italian cars, and last season also ran Hoggarth to second in the GT Cup's GTC division points alongside BTCC driver Tom Ingram.

Eaton steps up to GT4 having won the Mazda MX-5 Supercup in 2014 and raced a BMW M3 in the GT Cup last year.

Ebor GT head Adrian Snook said: "We've always worked with Italian cars and the GranTurismo MC GT4 is a

beautiful machine so we saw it as the next step. GT4 racing is good value compared to GT3 and British GT is the best place to do it by the looks of it as the grid is larger than ever. We chose the Maserati as it's been racing for a while now as a single-make Trophy car so it's a proven product with plenty of miles of development on it."

Eaton said: "I've been working to get

into British GT for a few years so I'm delighted this has come together. The years in the Mazda and the BMW have helped me get used to racing with rear-wheel drive and the power the BMW had means the GT4 shouldn't be too alien.

"I'm looking forward to racing with Marcus. He's a very switched-on driver and he's very quick and reliable. I'm feeling very positive about this year."

Student team set to tackle Formula Vee Championship campaign

A new student-run racing team from Brooklands College will compete in this year's Formula Vee Championship, running Jake Hockley in a GAC.

Hockley has entrusted the car – which was formerly raced by Autosport staff member Ben Anderson – to the Weybridge-based college to run for Hockley's maiden season of motorsport.

"I'm going racing to scratch a long-held itch," said Hockley.

"I'm really just interested in driving and my mechanical ability is limited, to say the least.

"A partnership with the college is a win-win situation. I can just jump in and drive, and the students get a modern single-seater which they can use to practice their skills."

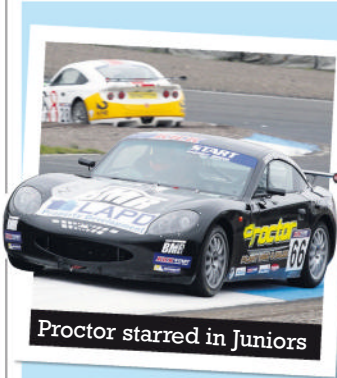
Brooklands College engineering tutor Richard Green added: "The project is different from those of other colleges. In

this case we *are* the team. By maintaining or repairing it at base and then operating it at race meetings, our students will get a fully-rounded idea of what it takes to engineer a racing car."

Hockley will run stickers to raise awareness of the Morgan's Mission cause, which supports his five-year-old neighbour who suffers from a life-threatening kidney disease.



Racing novice Hockley will be backed up by college students



Proctor starred in Juniors

Ginetta Junior runner-up Proctor retains BMR backing in Clios this year with Team Pyro

Ginetta Junior runner-up Senna Proctor will race for Team BMR in association with Pyro in the Renault UK Clio Cup this year.

The 17-year-old had originally agreed to race for JHR Developments, but has now signed a multi-year deal with touring car outfit BMR. Reigning Clio champion Ashley Sutton raced under a similar arrangement with Pyro last year.

"I was very honoured to drive for BMR last year in my second season in Ginetta Juniors, but for them to extend their deal with me for the next couple of years is fantastic news," said Proctor. "It's a huge boost to my career as they guide me towards race for the team. I'm looking forward to working with the title-winning Team Pyro."

Proctor's father, ex-touring car driver Mark, added: "We are over the moon, it's a double celebration. We know we're with the team that is going to do the best job in Clios. Senna's ultimate aim is touring cars and with Warren [Scott, BMR boss] we have an ally who can work with us all the way."

Pyro team boss Mark Hunt said: "We will start with an

intensive test programme and would like to hit the ground running come Brands in April. Senna has a sensible but sharp head on his shoulders."

● Proctor will be joined by Josh Price in Pyro's line-up this year. He completed the final three rounds of last season with the team, achieving a best result of fourth place.

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*"You can feel quite
nauseous at times"*

Jonny Adam at Daytona, p22



Photos: Gary Hawkins, Jakob Ebrey

DONNERS RUN MONSTER CAPRI



The Capri has taken
two years to build

Veteran car builder Ray Donner will return to racing this year with a self-built Ford Capri, and will share the car with his son, Chad.

Donner was a successful car builder in the 1980s and 1990s, working with club drivers Andy Pipe and Craig Davies on their respective Fords and Corvettes. He took a break from competition at the end of the decade, but has spent the last two years building the Group One 1983 Capri to share with his 28-year-old son Chad this year.

The car, which runs a three-litre 280bhp Steve Warrior engine had its shakedown test at Brands Hatch recently.

"It was brilliant to get the car on track as it's been two years of hard work to get it



Ray Donner (left) and his son Chad

ready," said Donner, 57. "I essentially retired from racing but Chad grew up looking at pictures and now wants a go so it seemed the right time to start up again.

"The car has cost at least £53,000 plus labour

so far, but we did everything to it. It was a basic Gp 1 when we bought it and we gutted it and fitted the new engine. We've also fitted four-link rear suspension and fabricated our own body kit with a bespoke front end and arches inspired by the original Zakspeed design."

The Donners plan to race the car in a selection of club events, including the *Motorsport News* Saloon Car Championship, but hope to race it in the Spa Classic one-hour race.

"We want to share the car so in the UK we'll do series with double header races and do a race each," added Donner. "Spa is on my bucket list so we'll try and do that together either this year or next."

Raven will tackle the full
national championship



Former Festival winner Raven signs with Cliff Dempsey FF1600

Formula Ford Festival winner James Raven will team up with Cliff Dempsey Racing for an assault on the British Racing and Sports Car Club Formula Ford 1600 National Championship this year.

The 2014 Festival winner from Portsmouth completed the full season with CDR, but took a year away to concentrate on his schooling in 2015. He did contest

the Festival and the Walter Hayes Trophy last year and was in contention for victory at the WHT before an incident ruled him out of the running.

The 21-year-old has been drawn back by the Mazda Road to Indy prize on offer in the championship this year; whichever driver wins the title will get an entry into a shootout, dependent on their age, where

the winner earns a drive in USF2000 for 2017. "It's make or break for me this year in terms of my racing career," said Raven. "The chance to get on the Road to Indy ladder is huge. I'm surprised more drivers haven't announced their intentions to do it. I know the team well and they're one of the best FF16000 outfits there is with 30 odd years of experience."

Fortec signs Danish star for MSA Formula

Danish karter Nicolai Kjaergaard will drive for Fortec Motorsports in MSA Formula this year.

The 16-year-old has a strong record in the Danish Super Kart series and has also starred in German championships.

He will now step up to cars, racing alongside fellow karting graduates Alex Quinn and Ross Martin at Fortec in the TOCA support category.

"I feel really at home with Fortec and see the team as playing a key part in my development during the season," he said. "I know it will be a really tough championship but I am looking forward to the challenge ahead and cannot wait to get started."

Fortec team manager Dan Mitchell added: "We tested Nicolai throughout November and December in Valencia and he showed promising signs. He learned and adapted quickly. Importantly, he really showed he can be on the pace."

GROUP NATIONAL EDITOR

ROB LADBROOK

**"Was Renault's
launch much
of a launch?"**



Full marks Renault, but then you get a deduction for that livery...

The full marks come for sheer effort. In an age of digital car launches when Twitter, Facebook and the interweb-u-net get you global coverage within seconds, teams have gradually eschewed the traditional Formula 1 launch event.

This year is the worst by far. Nobody is doing one, with every team planning to either post out a rendering of its new car, or simply push it into the Barcelona pit lane. It's not as fun as it used to be. When cars were unveiled in theatres, town squares, or even the Bond villain-esque grandeur of the McLaren Technology Centre. There was pageantry and passion. Yes they cost time and money, but so does the endless cycle of F1.

Now nobody does it. Nobody that is, except Renault Sport F1 Team.

But then was Renault's event much of a launch? Kevin Magnussen's appointment in place of Pastor Maldonado was leaked weeks in advance. We all knew. It was simply a matter of seeing the Dane in the black and yellow overalls to make it official. Briton Jolyon Palmer was signed and sorted.

All we were waiting for was the car, and *that* livery... sadly *that* livery never really arrived. Instead we got a shiny black car with less shiny bits at the rear and a few yellow flashes. Renault boss Carlos Ghosn described it as "elegant", the internet argued back with "plain dull".

What makes it worse is the car that wore it was the 2015 model. *Not* a 2016 car. Then, when questioned why the car was basically just black, Ghosn added: "The livery may change for the season. But it will still be elegant."

So to sum up Renault's launch. New team name [give them that at least], two drivers we already knew about – but we're at least excited about, and an old car with a plain livery that's probably going to change anyway. It says something when our sister title *F1 Racing* stirs up more interest with a mocked up graphic on its cover!

For all the kudos Renault has earned by actually holding a launch, it loses pretty much all of it for it being incomplete. Let's have a *new* car, a livery that took some effort and imagination, and at least one surprise along the way please.

What the French firm is doing well though is looking after the next generation of drivers. The announcement of the Renault Sport Academy is a great thing. Designed to help nurture the best talent from Renault's F1 feeder classes, it's another genuine way of bringing drivers through the barely ajar F1 door.

Schemes like this are hugely important for the future of F1 as a talent-rich sport.



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RACING NEWS

Team Hard signs first GT4 drivers

Team Hard has signed tin-top duo Jordan Stilp and William Phillips to handle its first British GT4 entry.

Stilp, 21 from Northampton, graduates to British GT having raced in the Renault UK Clio Cup and Ginetta GT4 Supercup in recent seasons. He finished third in the 2014 Clio points before taking two podium finishes in a part-season last year.

Phillips, 21 from Milton Keynes, has been a regular in the Mini Challenge. He was fifth in the series' Gen 3 F56 category in 2015.

The pair will handle one of Hard's new Ginetta G55 GT4 machines and team boss Tony Gilham said he was confident they could be in the mix for the title in their first year.

Gilham said: "They're friends off the track so there is a relationship there and they are both very quick."

"Jordan has raced the G55 [in the GT4 Supercup] so he brings experience and he will help Will adapt to the car. We went down the Ginetta route because the G55 is a tried and tested product."



Moore will handle Audi

Moore returns to racing in Audi GT3

Multiple sportscar champion Nigel Moore will return to racing full time this year in both the Michelin GT3 Le Mans Cup and the remodelled Britcar Endurance Championship.

Moore will share an Audi R8 LMS ultra GT3 with 16-year-old karting graduate Phil Hanson. Tockwith Motorsport, Moore's family team, will run the car in both championships.

Moore, 24, won the Ginetta Junior title in 2007 before lifting the G50 Cup title the next year at his first attempt. That earned him a seat with the Ginetta works team at the Le Mans 24 Hours in 2009, at the time making him the youngest driver ever to compete at the French endurance classic. He was also Formula Palmer Audi champion in 2010, but stopped racing after 2011 to work at the family's Tockwith Motorsports complex in Yorkshire.

Hanson steps up to GT3 having won the Super One National Junior X30 title with Tockwith's karting arm last year.

Tockwith team boss Simon Moore said: "We bought the Audi last year and did loads of testing to plan for this season as it's going to be a big one. It's great for Nigel to get back out racing again as he's worked hard over the last few years to get back into it and we now have the budget to put a proper programme together."

Photos: LAT, Peugeot



Pirtek colours will flank Caroline's car



Caroline won Ginetta title

GINETTA CHAMP CAROLINE MOVES UP TO MSA FORMULA

By Stephen Lickorish

Ginetta Junior champion Jamie Caroline will switch to MSA Formula this year with Jamun Racing.

The 17-year-old Pirtek-backed racer decided to move into single-seaters after a couple of successful tests last year, rather than follow his title rival Senna Proctor into the Renault UK Clio Cup.

Explaining the change of disciplines, Caroline said: "A year in single-seaters is the best thing for an aspiring driver. I'm still young and it would not be a wasted year. Most professional drivers

have done a year in single-seaters, Jason Plato has, Andy Priaulx has and so on.

"It allows you to get to grips with slicks and is of benefit later in your career. Clios do not excite me as much and I think this is a good way to try and get my name out there.

"I tested with the team last year and got on really well with them and I loved the car. I also tested with Fortec, but with Jamun it's the only car they run so they can spend more time on it.

"I've got the momentum from winning the Ginetta Junior title. I really enjoyed the Ginettas but they were a bit unpredictable. The F4 car is a car

that does what you want it to do."

Caroline won't complete any further testing until next month but doesn't think his lack of track time will hurt him as he was on the pace straightaway when he first drove the car.

The Jamun name will return to MSA Formula this year after the team raced as MBM in 2015 with Jack Barlow and Toby Sowery completing partial campaigns.

Team manager James Mundy said: "We are delighted to have finally put this deal together. We have been determined to get

Jamie in our car for the 2016 season ever since we first tested him. His raw speed and natural talent is something we haven't seen for some time. It's a great feeling to get that buzz back."



Clio move was turned down for single-seaters



The 208 GT machines have 320bhp from 1.6-litre engines

Peugeot UK backs multi-car entry into Silverstone 24 Hour event

Peugeot UK will field a factory entry in this year's Silverstone 24 Hours race, with Briton Bradley Philpot leading the driving team.

The 30-year-old from Southampton will handle one of Peugeot Sport's two bespoke 208 GT machines in the twice-around-the-clock event at the Northamptonshire track from April 2/3. The French Team Altran squad will run both cars, with full Peugeot UK support.

Philpot's team-mates have yet to be decided, but European Peugeot Sport regulars Stephane Ventaja, Thierry Blaise, Guillaume Roman and Kim Holmgaard are

expected to be involved across the two cars.

Bedford Autodrome instructor Philpot won the French firm's 208 GT1 Racing Experience in 2013 and was rewarded with a seat in the 208 GT for the Nurburgring 24 Hours that year. He hasn't raced competitively since, but did take part in last year's Race of Champions event in London.

"I've stayed in contact with Peugeot as an ambassador since 2013 and any time they need a driver they call me," said Philpot. "I heard that Team Altran was planning to enter the Silverstone

24 Hours so I got straight on the phone. It's massively exciting as the race is for touring cars only this year so we can fight for the outright victory, and that's what's appealing for Peugeot UK."

"The 208 GT is a beast of a car. It shares the chassis, differential and 1.6-litre engine block with the GT1 road car, but aside from that everything is bespoke. The engine produces up to 320bhp, which is a huge amount for a 1.6. It was built alongside and shares a lot of engineering with the R5-spec 208 T16 rally car. It's great fun to drive and I can't wait to get back out with the team."

McLaren takes glory down under with Bathurst 12 Hour victory

Tekno McLaren won the Bathurst 12 Hour in Australia last weekend by a narrow 1.3-second margin.

Shane van Gisbergen, Alvaro Parente and Jonathon Webb scored the win in the Intercontinental GT Challenge opener aboard a 650S GT3.

The car ran at the sharp end of the field all race, with V8 Supercars ace van Gisbergen establishing a comfortable lead during his first stint and lowering the Mount Panorama

circuit record in the process.

However, the New Zealander nearly lost the race by speeding while exiting the pits for his second stint and picking up a drive-through penalty. Parente then had to reset the McLaren's electrical system during the night. That dropped the car to third, 1m 40s off the lead. But a key strategy call to stop for fuel during a safety car period helped the crew back to the front of the field as their rivals stopped later.

Nissan was the closest challenger, with last year's winners Katsumasa Chiyo, Florian Strauss and Rick Kelly aboard its GT-R. Chiyo again put on a stunning late-race stint to finish just 1.3s shy of the Tekno McLaren.

Brits Matt Bell, Steven Kane and Guy Smith helped Bentley to third, having lost a podium at the final corner last year. Both Continental GT3s suffered tyre issues during the endurance event.



McLaren 650S landed the big prize at Bathurst after tight scrap

HISTORICS

'New name for Cholmondeley'
Festival rebranded, below



Photos: Paul Lawrence

DOWN THE PUB WITH

KEITH MESSER

Age: 73 Lives: Newent
Historic F3 racer

He started with the 750MC

"My first day on track was at Castle Combe in about 1965 under a 750 Motor Club practice day, when they did tuition for novices. I did about a lap and a half before the car failed. It became a Messer and it was an 1172 special jointly built with a fellow apprentice. I did my first race at Castle Combe in 1969 with it, then as a Formula 1200."

He moved to a Lola

"I did Formula 1200 and Formula 1300 right through to about 1995, latterly with a Lola T492 Sports 2000 chassis and then we put a Philspeed 1500cc BDA engine in it. That was a phenomenal engine and we fitted the Lola with special bodywork. I won the Castle Combe Special GT title in 1996 with that car and I've still got it."

He was based in Basingstoke

"I worked for 47 years for Lansing Bagnall, the forklift truck company, and ended up as development manager. I lived in the same house in Basingstoke for 65 years and moved out on the last day of my 65th year and moved to Newent."

He hasn't raced every year

"I think I've succeeded in racing for so long because I didn't race every year. You race for two or three years really competitively and then have a couple of years off. You recover mentally, physically and financially. In life there are always times when your spare time and your finances are imbalanced. When I did the Castle Combe GT Championship I was preparing the car at 1700hrs on a Friday to be on the circuit on Saturday morning, which wasn't ideal."

He now races Historic F3

"When I was doing Formula 1200, F3 was the only next step so it had always been in my mind. The first race in the Vesey Formula 3 car was in 2002 and it has served me well. It's a very good car and thoroughly enjoyable. It is a one-off and it only did one F3 race in period, but it did a lot of Monoposto races. We set up the 1000cc F3 Historic Racing Association in 2007. The race at Goodwood last March has lifted the profile of the category enough to make people think about it."



Messer: Combe expert



Spice was a regular Capri winner



Rebuilt car has been finished

CLASSIC SPICE CAPRI TO RETURN

Former British Saloon Car Championship machine back on track

By Paul Lawrence

The famous ex-Gordon Spice Group 1 Ford Capri will return to racing at the Goodwood Members' Meeting in March.

The Autocar-liveried car, chassis CC10, is nearing completion of a full rebuild and will be raced by new owner Mike Whitaker and former

GT and BTCC racer Mike Jordan in the Gerry Marshall Trophy race on March 19/20.

Whitaker, best known for historic racing success in TVRs, bought the car at auction last year and has had it rebuilt by Nigel Reuben. It is the car raced by Spice in the British Saloon Car Championship in 1979 and 1980, scoring six overall wins during 1979. As well as wins in

the UK, the car finished fifth in the Spa 24 Hours and second in the Paul Ricard 24-hours.

"I've been in touch with Gordon Spice and he hopes to come to Goodwood," said Whitaker, who will be racing at Goodwood for the first time. "I've been looking for an opportunity to race at Goodwood and I'm overjoyed to get the chance."

The trophy race will be Whitaker's first race in the car and he will share it with Jordan, who has raced a Capri just once. "I did one Production Saloon race in a Capri at Cadwell in the early 1980s," said Jordan.

In period, the leading Capris were built by Dave Cook and Peter Clark at CC Racing Developments at Kirkbymoorside in Yorkshire.

Kynaston swaps from modern machinery to a Triumph TR7 for his return to the forests

After four years out of rallying, David Kynaston will return this year to campaign a newly prepared Triumph TR7 V8 in the British Historic Rally Championship.

The Devon-based driver is

best known for his asphalt performances in a stunning Audi A3, but will now switch to historics in the Triumph that contested just one local event last summer.

"It's all very unknown, but

we'll do the Red Kite on February 21 and see how we get on," said Kynaston. "I looked at Escorts, but they were out of my price range. Instead, I thought the TR was a good option and there are lots

of Rover V8 parts around."

Kynaston, who has not rallied in the forests for 30 years, will be joined on some events by his brother Paul who plans to do some rallies later in the season in his Opel Ascona.

Harper enters his 53rd race season

John Harper, one of Britain's most experienced historic racing drivers, will race regularly again in 2016, his 53rd season of racing.

Harper has just finished building a Jaguar E-type and will contest this year's Jaguar Heritage Challenge.

"In 2015 I only did one race and the year before I only did three races," said Harper who lived in France for eight years until 2012. "I'll be 77 when the season starts and so I'm not going to bother with single-seaters anymore."

Harper has been racing since 1963 and has raced just about every type of historic car over the last six decades. He is now based in Broadway in Worcestershire.

OBITUARY

**Arthur Senior
1932-2016**



Arthur Senior, who died last week aged 84, was a successful rally driver for more than half a century. As a founder member of Morecambe Car Club, Senior drove for Jaguar and Reliant on events like the Monte Carlo Rally and Liege-Sofia-Liege in the 1950s and 1960s.

Later, after taking part in the

Golden Fifty Rally in 1982, Senior was a regular competitor on historic events right up until 2013. Those who knew him well described a fierce competitor and an all-round nice bloke who was always ready to help fellow competitors.

MN offers its condolences to his family and many friends in the sport.

Shand gets miles in R.A.C. contest

Grant Shand will use the Bovington and Salamandre rounds of the R.A.C. Historic Asphalt Championship as preparation for contesting the Corsica historic rally in October.

The East Anglian driver and rally car preparer will take his Ford Escort Mk2 to the Tour de Corse Historique. "I've been to the rally twice looking after customer cars, but I've never driven it. It is the twistiest asphalt rally I've ever seen."

The event covers 350 stage miles on the island and Shand's Rally Xtreme Ford Escort is freshly prepared. "I just want to make sure it is right, so doing Bovington and Salamandre in Belgium in the spring is the ideal shakedown."

Perfetti's Historique

Former British GT champion Daniele Perfetti took victory on the 19th Rallye Monte Carlo Historique when it finished in Monte Carlo last Wednesday. The Anglo-Swiss driver and co-driver Ronnie Kessell recovered from earlier delays to grab victory on the final section in their Alpine Renault A110.

Hore on circuit

Peter Hore will return to racing in the Historic Touring Car Championship this season after a five-year sabbatical. Hore has spent five seasons helping to manage the successful championship but now wants to race his Lotus Cortina again. He also contests Historic Sporting Trials in a Concord with partner Jennifer Mearns.



Hore tackles Sporting Trials

IN BRIEF

Cholmondeley date

The former Cholmondeley Pageant of Power is being re-branded for the 2016 edition and will now be called Cholmondeley Power and Speed. The promoters of the June 10-12 event in the grounds of the Cheshire castle believe that the new tag better encapsulates three days of action on the track, in the air and on water.

Junior showdown

Greg Thornton (Lotus 20/22) and Richard Smeeton (Wainer) shared the wins when the Formula Junior Diamond Jubilee World Tour started at the Zwartkops circuit in South Africa. Smeeton took his win in a near dead-heat with Thornton while Erik Justesen won the front-engined class in his ex-Arthur Mallock U2 Mk2.

Butler and Sutton

Mark Butler and former leading co-driver and rally team owner David Sutton successfully finished the Monte Carlo Classique Rally. They competed in a 1961 Lotus Elite prepared by Butler at Historic Motorsport Ltd. Their biggest drama came when the ferry from Hull to Zeebrugge was cancelled due to weather conditions and they had to re-route to the Channel tunnel.

Co-driver sought

UK-based Kenyan Aziz Tejpar is looking for an experienced co-driver for this year's MSA British Historic Rally Championship. Tejpar is a leading Category 2 contender in his immaculate Ford Escort Mk1 and is looking for someone to start on the Red Kite Stages on February 21. Enquiries should go to alintoncrook@gmail.com

Tony Dron Trophy

A new award will be presented for drivers in Group 1 Historic Touring Cars this season to honour racer and journalist Tony Dron. The Tony Dron Trophy will be run within the Historic Touring Car Challenge from Motor Racing Legends and will be for cars from 1970 to 1982. Dron is well-known for racing Triumph Dolomite Sprints in the era.

RALLY SWEDEN

Photos: mcklein-imagedatabase.com

LATVALA: WARM SWEDEN PROVIDES CREWS WITH TOUGH TEST



Latvala prefers more snow in Sweden



Latvala will have to bounce back from Monte struggle

WRC PREVIEW

By David Evans

Ask any driver about the feeling for driving in Sweden and you'll get the same reply. No words. Just a grin. A very big grin.

As the World Rally Championship descends on Karlstad, hopes of going a gear higher and leaning on the snowbanks melt away. The absence of winter in the Varmland – translated literally as the warm land – means a complete rethink on the way this event is tackled.

"When the conditions are not so good, it's a different rally," said Jari-Matti Latvala, a driver who knows all about success in this part of the world – only Stig Blomqvist and Marcus Gronholm have won it more times than he has.

"I tested for this event in Are, in the



Finn has plenty of Sweden wins

north of Sweden and we had really good conditions. Perfect conditions for the rally, we have a lot of snow and good ice. But when we are coming south to Karlstad, we have to remember that the roads are very different this week and this will change the way we set the car up."

When winter's in town, the average World Rally Car will run a stiff, razor-sharp set-up offering pinpoint accuracy on turn-in. It's all change when it warms up.

"You have to run the car much softer," Latvala told *MN*. "You will have a lot of slush around and the car will be jumping in and out of the ruts, you can't get the confidence or the traction if the car is too stiff. This was always in the back of the mind when we were testing at the weekend."

It's not just the set-up of the hardware which needs a reboot, either. The approach to the stages is different in the absence of snow.

"The snowbanks do let you go into the corner harder and faster," said Latvala, "and the feeling is really nice when you can lean the car on the bank on the exit – all of the time you know you are taking more speed than you could normally. The mindset when the snowbank is there is really different. But you always have to be careful that the snowbank

doesn't collapse and pull the car in."

Not much chance of that this week...

"Sometimes, a lot of snow can actually make the road slower," Latvala added. "If you are clearing a lot of snow from the surface then that can make it difficult to find grip, but also the snowbanks – when they are big – they can alter the nature of the corner and make the road a little bit more narrow, which also slows you down."

"When you don't have the snow, but you do have ice, then the speed is definitely higher. The second run at some of these stages will be quite tough this week, but when we have patchy ice and gravel, the truth is that we will get some of the best grip ever from the studded tyres. The only trouble is that this grip will only last for 12 miles and then all of the studs will be out of the tyre and you only have rubber. This is OK when you are in the soft gravel, but when you do come to a patch of ice under braking for a corner, it can be so hard to get it stopped and turned in."

Not even snow flurries will help, either, according to Latvala.

"The trouble with a little bit of snow is that it covers things at the side of the road," he said. "So you go to make the cut in the corner and you find a rock has been covered by snow. When the condition is like this, you have to be so careful – you just have to keep the car in the middle of

the road; don't slide wide because you can hit the rock on the outside as well. I remember in 2005, we had conditions like this and we had a lot of punctures and suspension damage on a lot of the top cars."

The Volkswagen-driving Finn will need to put all of the above into practice this week, if he's to avoid handing his series-leading, title-defending team-mate Sebastien Ogier an even bigger advantage.

"I know I need a result in Sweden," said Latvala. "The one thing which not scoring points in Monte Carlo should have done is give me a better position on the road in Sweden this week. I'm not sure that will happen. If the weather stays as it is, then the road could get worse the further down the order you start."

Latvala was enormously frustrated by this event last year, having won it the year before.

"I couldn't get comfortable with the 2015 car in Sweden," he said. "I made some changes and was much happier on the final day, but by then I had already gone off the road. I couldn't get the car how I wanted it in Mexico or Argentina either; it was only when I got to Portugal that it really worked for me. Now, I know I am comfortable in the car and I can take a lot of confidence from that this week."

Fan incident won't affect performance

Jari-Matti Latvala is confident his collision with a spectator on the Monte Carlo Rally won't affect him in Sweden.

The Finn was handed a suspended one event ban for the accident, during which he knocked a fan down, albeit at slow speed and without injury, after going off the road.

Talking to *MN* about the incident, Latvala said: "I have put this behind me, now I am only looking to Sweden and getting back into the championship there."

"I can't influence what has been written about what happened to Miikka [Anttila, co-driver] and me," he said. "I live with that. What I was surprised about was the amount of fans and people who were contacting me straight away after the accident on the telephone and on Facebook to give me support. I am sorry for what happened."

"OK, I have paid the penalty for this, but now we move on."

JENNINGS TAKES OVERDUE GALWAY WIN AS CRONIN HEADS R5

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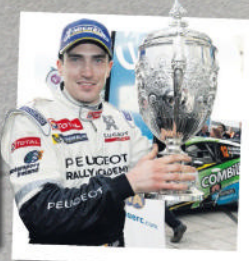
'Bowen comes from 12th to snatch victory'
North West Stages Report, p25

Photos: mcklein-imagedatabase.com, FIA ERC

Breen will join Lefebvre in Sweden



BREEN READY FOR CITROEN BAPTISM



This week's Rally Sweden will provide Craig Breen with the opportunity to step up to a top-spec World Rally Championship seat for the first time.

Breen, who took back-to-back WRC Academy and SWRC titles in 2011 and 2012, has spent the last two years driving for Peugeot in the European Rally Championship. Now though, comes the big step forward for the 26-year-old from Waterford.

"This really is a childhood dream," Breen told *MN*, shortly after stepping from the works Citroen DS3 WRC at his first test with the Abu Dhabi Total World Rally Team on Monday.

"The car's absolutely incredible. Honestly, it's amazing and like nothing I've driven before. OK, I did a couple of events in the Fiesta [RS WRC], but things have moved on a fair bit since then. The way the differentials and the suspension work in the DS3 is just out of this world."

"This really is a red letter day for me. But it's just the start, I know I've got plenty of work ahead of me to make the next step – but thanks to everybody at Abu Dhabi and Citroen for giving me the chance to show what I'm capable of."

While Breen's dream has come

true in driving the DS3, the conditions he'll face in Sweden are something of a nightmare.

"It's true," he said. "The conditions are tough. The test road we're using is changing every half an hour; the gravel's coming through and ripping the studs out of the tyres, so we're not getting as many runs as we might be. But I can deal with all of that when I'm sitting in this car."

Breen expected to clock up around 60 miles of testing close to Torsby, including mileage in the dark, in order to firm up lamp pod settings for his DS3.

He continued: "While the

conditions aren't great here, one positive is that it looks like the roads on the rally will be pretty similar, so the experience we're getting here will be useful for us on the event itself. I really feel like I'm adapting pretty well to everything."

On the subject of what he expected from Rally Sweden, Breen said: "I now have to grab this chance and show that I deserve my place among the elite. My aim is to keep improving throughout the rally, not to push like crazy on the first stage. I have a lot to learn and I'll have other opportunities to show my speed."



Martin will co-drive Breen in Sweden

Third season with experienced Martin will boost Breen

Craig Breen's step up to a factory World Rally Championship seat will be made easier by the presence of top British co-driver Scott Martin alongside him for a third season.

Cumbrian Scott, 34, has started 92 WRC rounds and spent five years in factory teams – four of those with Matthew Wilson at M-Sport and one with Khalid Al-Qassimi at Citroen.

It's that experience of the French team in particular that will help Breen.

"One of the best things

Craig and I did was stay with the team in Monte Carlo after we'd finished the recce," Martin told *MN*. "Craig really got a good insight into what it's like to work with a team at the top of the sport."

"Take the weather as an example. Craig and I would have spent the whole week looking at the weather forecasting websites, trying to figure out what it was going to do. All of that's done for you here. Video cameras for the recce, that's another example – Craig

could leave his at home; they'll all be set up in the recce car and ready to go. The difference is amazing."

"What this does for the driver, and this is what we've been talking about, is give you a lot more time to focus on what's really important: driving. Taking away so much of the peripheral stuff will allow Craig to think solely about driving that rally car. From the minute he landed in Sweden, everything was taken care of. I'd say he's adjusted really well."

Meeke: Sweden could be toughest yet

Kris Meeke believes the WRC crews will struggle to look after their tyres on this weekend's Rally Sweden, if conditions don't cool and no ice appears.

Meeke tested close to Torsby a day before Craig Breen, and confirmed the surface wasn't ideal for the rally.

"The conditions on the test were quite slushy," he said.

"I guess that's similar to what we'll get in some stages, but on others it could be quite wet – it just depends on how much ice we get if and when it freezes."

"For the second run through some of the stages, we'll really be having to look after the tyres and trying to keep the studs in."

The Dungannon driver has finished 10th and seventh in the last two seasons with Citroen –

and he admits the winter event is one of his favourites.

"When the conditions are right, it's amazing," he said. "I've seen the great conditions on the recce, but I've never really done this rally when it's been perfect with the big snowbanks and really hard ice. I don't think it's going to be like that this year..."

If ice doesn't formulate this week, it will undoubtedly favour those running at the front of the field on the hardest ice base – with drivers like Meeke and Jari-Matti Latvala running further down the order dealing with broken ice and gravel coming through.

This week will be Meeke's last WRC outing until Rally Portugal in the middle of May.



Meeke believes that running order could have a major impact

GROUP RALLYING EDITOR

DAVID EVANS

"Craig will get another go. Will Sweden?"



Big coat or no coat? Winter boots or flip-flops? In between typing these words, these are questions I'm faced ahead of this week's big trip north to Sweden and Norway.

The world of twitter and social media made for a pretty miserable place last weekend as more and more pictures of sodden, snow-free stages found their way into cyberspace, seemingly condemning the Swedish organisers for not being able to turn the temperature down...

At the moment, that temperature could still tumble mid-week giving the deep-freeze needed to deliver solid and sustainable ice for the weekend. If that doesn't happen, there's really not much appetite for the revised itinerary on offer right now.

If the conditions don't improve and the event does run, it'll be a mud bath and an embarrassing one at that. That's all bad enough for the organisers and the competitors, but the wider implication comes via WRC Promoter – how can Oliver Ciesla sell a snow rally with no snow?

The age-old tag line of the WRC taking crews from the depths of a frozen Scandinavian winter to the blistering heat of a Sardinian summer won't really cut it this year. Not when it's colder in London than the service park in Karlstad. And, right now, it's pretty warm in London.

Just before we turn our guns on the Swedish organisers, full of sympathy for the promoter and a potentially less than satisfactory offering to Channel 5, let's give some consideration to the economic implications for the rally itself. A significant chunk of money has already been laid out implementing the infrastructure of the event and calling it off will hit an already hard-up bunch very, very hard. Cancelling the rally could send the organisers under, while running it would mean a crippling repair bill for the roads and could give the same eventual outcome.

I suspect rally boss Glen Olsson tired years ago of the helpful suggestion of taking the rally north. That's been considered, but Olsson says it's too pricey and still not snow-sure.

I can confirm the pricey bit. Without being too much of a name-dropper, I went for a beer in Are with Carlos Sainz and Carlos Sainz Jr while we were all racing around frozen lakes in Richard Tuthill's Porsches. It was eye-wateringly expensive, but very swish and very cool. Freezing, in fact.

There's plenty of sympathy on offer this week, but while the organisers and promoters way up the pros and potential costs, let's spare a thought for Craig Breen.

The Irishman stands on the verge of realising his lifelong dream of driving a World Rally Championship round for a frontline works team. He's got the keys, but they could still be taken off him.

Like all of his WRC colleagues, Breen and his co-driver Scott Martin are sitting in a hotel room waiting to find out if they'll go to work this week.

The upside for Craig is that he'll get another go. Question is: will Rally Sweden?



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RALLY NEWS

Photos: mcklein-imagedatabase.com

TOYOTA REVEALS LIVERY

Twelve months on from announcing its return to the World Rally Championship, Toyota revealed the livery for its 2016 test Yaris WRC at a Tokyo press conference last week



Mikkelsen: Not out to finish second

Volkswagen's Andreas Mikkelsen believes his good start to the season can spur him on to victory on his 'home' round of the World Rally Championship.

The Norwegian led the event into the final stage last year before a mistake cost him victory and dropped him to third place. This time around Mikkelsen is more determined than ever to take his second win, having broken his WRC duck in Spain last October.

Rally Sweden, as usual, will cross the border into Mikkelsen's native Norway on Friday, where he is determined to make the most of his home advantage.

Mikkelsen said: "I am not travelling to Rally Sweden to finish second. It is my home rally, as part of the route is in my native Norway. Many of my friends and my entire family will be there, and it has always been my dream to win there. I came so damned close last year."

"I had the win in my hands – but ultimately came up just short in the final few metres. We have made a good start to the season, and I will do everything in my power to win in Sweden for the first time."

Last year's winner and his team-mate's nemesis Sebastian Ogier anticipates a big fight with Mikkelsen and Jari-Matti Latvala.

"I am expecting a close Rally Sweden," said the reigning world champion. "I am certainly looking forward to the rally. Last year it was a tough struggle with the Nordic drivers. They are the ones to beat in Sweden."

OSTBERG PREPARES FOR SWEDEN WITH HOME WIN

By David Evans

Victory on Saturday's Finnskog Rally has helped put Mads Ostberg in the best possible position to challenge for his first Rally Sweden success this week, according to the Norwegian.

Ostberg dominated the Norwegian championship round in an Adapta Team Ford Fiesta R5. He now equals Henning Solberg's record of four Finnskog wins.

Most importantly to Ostberg was how his relationship developed with new co-driver Ola Floene. Ostberg struggled with a change of language (from Swedish to Norwegian) and note delivery on the opening round in Monte Carlo, but he said it worked well on Saturday.

"It's always fun to race in Norway," he said. "It's fun to stand as the most winning driver on the biggest event in Norway. But, most importantly, this

time was the preparation for Sweden.

"We prioritised high pace during two long stages, where we pushed to the maximum – the way we have to push all the time in Sweden. I am very satisfied with the collaboration with Ola. We're left with a really good feeling before Rally Sweden, where we certainly will be fighting at the top."

M-Sport's team principal Malcolm Wilson says this week's event offers the best possibility for an Ostberg win this year.

Wilson said: "We go to Sweden with our confidence high; Mads is always a contender on snow and he has achieved some fantastic results with the Fiesta in the past, coming close to winning the event in 2011. The whole team can see his ambition. He has grown as a driver and he is hungry for victory. This week provides him with an opportunity to secure that victory and if everything works in his favour then he certainly has the potential to deliver it."



Ostberg and Floene took win

Al-Attiyah breaks rally record in Qatar

Victory on last week's Qatar International Rally has carried Nasser Al-Attiyah past Mohammed bin Sulayem's record of 60 Middle East Rally wins.

Al-Attiyah's 61st career success in the regional series came following another dominant performance, this time aboard his new-for-2016 Skoda Fabia R5. He and co-driver Matthieu Baumel won 10 from 13 stages on the two-day event which finished on Saturday.

Mohammed Al-Suwaidi was six minutes down in second place in a Ford Fiesta R5.

While reigning WRC2 champion Al-Attiyah has overtaken bin Sulayem's record for individual rally wins, he still trails the UAE driver in terms of championship titles. Bin Sulayem has 14 while Al-Attiyah's chasing his 12th this season.

Between them, Al-Attiyah and bin Sulayem have won 121 of the 172 Middle East championship rallies run.

Brynildsen gets best chance to impress with works M-Sport Ford Fiesta R5 Evo outing

Eyvind Brynildsen will join the M-Sport World Rally Team for the biggest opportunity of his career, driving a Ford Fiesta R5 Evo at this week's Rally Sweden.

The 28-year-old, who finished second in WRC2 in Sweden last year, partners Elfyn Evans in a sister R5. Norwegian Brynildsen

says joining M-Sport has given him the best preparation yet for his home event.

"I have never been in a better position leading up to a rally," he said. "We have everything we need to succeed and I feel really well prepared. If you want to win in Sweden then everything has to

be perfect – the driver, the co-driver and the team. If we can do that, then I think we have a good chance and that's what we'll all be aiming for."

Brynildsen will face major WRC2 competition on the Karlstad-based event. Beyond his team-mate Evans, who won WRC2

round one comfortably in Monte Carlo last month, Brynildsen will face a trio of potential winners in Skoda Fabia R5s: Pontus Tidemand, Esapekka Lappi and Ole Christian Veiby. Last year's Junior ERC champion Emil Bergkvist makes his first WRC2 appearance in a Citroen DS3 R5.



Brynildsen: WRC2 run

JACK GOFF PLANS TO TAKE BTCC BY STORM IN WSR BMW

PAGE 23

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'Jennings ends bad luck run'
Galway report, p24

Photos: Roy Dempster, Writtle Photographic, mcklein-imagedatabase.com



MacCrone has experience of Fiestas

MacCRONE TO RETURN IN SRC



John MacCrone will make his competitive return on the Snowman Rally later this month, four months since an accident on the Mull Rally claimed the life of his co-driver Andrew Mort and left him with serious injuries.

MacCrone is planning a full Scottish championship campaign in a Ford Fiesta R5 starting with the Inverness-based Snowman Rally on February 20.

MSL will prepare MacCrone's Fiesta and the Mull driver will

join fellow Scot Garry Pearson in competing in an R5 car in their national series.

"I felt like I need to go out and enjoy some rallying and the Scottish championship is a great place to do that," said MacCrone. "It's a great place to learn the car. I don't have a lot of experience with it, it's a good place to get back out and get into the swing of things and it works well for the sponsor too with them being based in Scotland."

"I had a bit of support last year from a company called

Watermans based in Edinburgh, they helped me to do Rally Germany. Then the Mull accident happened and it set us back a bit."

MacCrone, who has recovered from the neck and back injuries sustained in the Mull crash, is considering the British championship for 2017, once he has mastered the R5 Fiesta.

"At the moment we're planning on doing the full Scottish championship with the aim of learning the car," said MacCrone. "I'd like to think that

next year it would be nice to have a crack at the full British championship also.

"We'll take it in our stride. The Snowman will be the first rally since the accident so it's not going to be easy, but it gives me a chance to get going again. I'm not putting any pressure on myself, I'm just out to have fun and do my own thing."

Rhianon Gelsomino, wife of Gus Greensmith's co-driver and Ken Block's former navigator Alex, will co-drive MacCrone on the Snowman.

Laffey to BRC in CA1-backed Ford Fiesta R5

Four-time MSA Asphalt Junior champion Alex Laffey will join Fredrik Ahlin at CA1 Sport for the upcoming British Rally Championship season.

Laffey, who hasn't competed on gravel since 2011, will drive a Ford Fiesta R5 partnered by co-driver Andrew Roughead.

Laffey acknowledges a lack of experience on gravel, but believes he'll get progressively quicker through the year.

"We've made a commitment to do a full British Rally

Championship programme this year, including the gravel rallies," said the Scot. "The aim is to progress through the season and see where we end up. I've never driven an R5 car on gravel before, so I'm not really expecting to set the world alight on the opening Mid Wales Stages."

"However, I'd like to think we'll be up there fighting against the very best on the Tarmac."

Laffey enters his sixth year with the Martin Wilkinson-run CA1 Sport outfit from Cumbria.



Laffey has competed in MSA Asphalt series for several years



DMACK Trophy (above right) could be the destination for some ST Trophy drivers (above left)

DMACK Shootout spot prize for BTRDA-supporting Fiesta ST Trophy

The BTRDA-based Fiesta ST Trophy will offer its winner a chance to compete for a Drive DMACK Trophy campaign in the world championship in 2017.

Tyre firm DMACK runs a shootout, won this year by Jon Armstrong, which features selected drivers from the current series, plus winners of the Vatanen Touch Trophy – chosen by DMACK ambassador Ari.

This year's ST Trophy will join the other contestants in the shootout where a driver is chosen

for a subsidised season in the WRC-supporting Drive DMACK Trophy next year.

ST Trophy co-ordinator John Pritchard believes the prize package of the series – which is supporting the BTRDA on all rounds this year – is unrivalled.

"It's great news that DMACK are providing the Fiesta ST Trophy winner with the chance to win a supported drive in the Drive DMACK Fiesta Trophy," said Pritchard.

"It adds a huge amount of value

to the Fiesta ST Trophy, and it creates a cost-effective opportunity for a driver."

The series also offers the top junior driver free tyres for the British Rally Championship in 2017, also supported by the Cambrian tyre firm.

DMACK's Glenn Patterson said: "The trophy is a great way to not only help competitors make the transition into the DMACK Junior BRC, but the prize of an opportunity to win a funded drive is also a real boost."

AMS enters two cars for Cambrian

AMS Arnside Motorsport will enter two Mitsubishi Lancer E10s on this weekend's Cambrian Rally, with Wayne Sisson competing in the whole BTRDA championship.

Sisson will steer a new-build car on the Cambrian before going on to compete in the rest of the championship in the B13-spec machine, while Barry Groundwater will drive the second car, which was used for select events in 2015.

Groundwater will use the Llandudno-based event as a warm-up for the Snowman Rally, the opening round of the Scottish championship, on February 20.

Sisson will be joined by navigator Peter Foy for the Cambrian as regular co-driver Neil Shanks is attending Rally Sweden.

"It's great to have both cars on the event," said Sisson. "The Cambrian has attracted a strong entry and the conditions will be tough."

NATIONAL RALLYING EDITOR

JACK BENYON

"Two things have changed since my last ITRC column"



A couple of weeks ago I was on the phone to a high-ranking member of the Irish Tarmac Rally Championship, and I listened very carefully.

The net result of our conversation was clear. The R5/S2000 move is a good one for the championship.

You may have read my column when the change was announced last summer, where I was undecided. After all, the fans want to see the most modern and fastest machinery driven by their heroes. It's old ground I don't need to cover too closely: Bertie Fisher, Billy Coleman etc. They had the latest and quickest cars.

I stand by my original thoughts. The organisers of the championship were damned if they did, damned if they didn't. How do you inject competition back into a series by ruling cars out? I think that was a fair and balanced opinion at the time.

However, two things have changed since I wrote that column, the first being the absolute explosion of interest in the British Rally Championship. Its calendar now features two Irish Tarmac rounds, with the two championships sharing the similar rules (both have R5/S2000s as the top class). I don't think anyone could have predicted the sudden rise of the BRC, which looks like it will attract around 15 R5 entries for its Mid Wales opener next month.

Here's why it makes a difference, and why my opinion has altered a little: numbers. I wasn't convinced in June that we'd get a double figure number of R5s in the ITRC, but we've had that on the first round. Perhaps the accessibility between Irish, British and European championships has helped that. Drivers can now do those two rounds and potentially compete in one, two or three championships depending on your results in each round. Brilliant.

Back to the numbers: yes, WR Cars are the best to watch and get the spectators out of bed, but would two? If you saw an entry of two WRC cars, as we had at many points last year, would you be up at 0400hrs to travel to the depths of the Irish countryside to follow the rally? I doubt it.

Here's where the R5 thing works. The cars are nearly as fast as a WR Car in the right hands, and we got 14 of them including S2000s in Galway alone. Fantastic.

The second reason is parity. A S12B Subaru Impreza and a 1.6-litre modern Fiesta are two different beasts suited to different conditions. If you're a youngster, proving yourself with a car which is deemed to favour a certain rally removes your bragging rights.

However, the R5s are on a very even keel. Yes, some R5s are better than others, but perhaps by 0.2s per mile driven by the best. No disrespect intended here – but at a relatively grassroots level, that 0.2s probably isn't going to be accessed.

So gear up for a year of proper-close rallying, if Galway is anything to go by.



AGREE/DISAGREE?
mn.letters@haymarket.com

RALLY NEWS

Photos: Roy Dempster, mcklein-imagedatabase, Mccrash Media

IN BRIEF

David Stokes

A group of people raising money for an unwell rally driver are calling for more support as they get closer to their £1000 target. Lucy Owen-Moczadlo and Guy Weaver have raised £450 – which will be donated to a cancer charity of Stokes' choice. They are selling 'Rallying for David Stokes' stickers, which are available on Facebook and at selected rallies. They will be on sale at the Cambrian this weekend.

Juniors testing

Both MH Motorsport and Nick Carr tested their BRC Junior R2 Ford Fiestas last weekend. Carr was trying his new Fiesta R2 for the first time, while MH Motorsport got a chance to shakedown its drivers including Italian Umberto Accornero at the joint test at Walters Arena. Prospective Drive DMACK Trophy driver Osian Pryce was also in attendance at the test, but wasn't driving.

Equipment help

Vital Equipment and Simpson teamed up at last week's Rally Future forum to give advice to competitors and attendees on Front and Neck Head Restraints like the HANS device. The equipment is mandatory for 2016, and the two parties joined up to help correct fitment issues and provide advice on which device is correct for drivers and co-drivers.

Brands Hatch

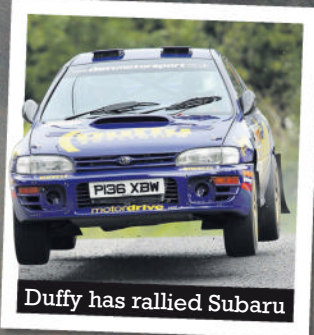
Motorsport News would like to clarify the full and correct name of the Brands Hatch round of the Motorsport News Circuit Rally Championship. The MGJ Engineering Brands Hatch Winter Stages took place on January 31, won by Chris West.

SORT oil for BRC

The British championship has secured SORT Oil as lubricant sponsor for 2016. As part of the deal, SORT will provide a prize structure including £100 for each class winner, as well as a £200 voucher for 'performance of the rally'. SORT is also backing Ollie Mellors in the series.



SORT:backing Mellors in BRC



Duffy has rallied Subaru

New car will be based on Skoda Fabia S2000 shell

DUFFY BUILDING SKODA MONSTER

Den Motorsport is helping create mad 2.5-litre Fabia S2000

By Jack Benyon

Multiple Mull Rally winner Callum Duffy is in the process of building a one-of-a-kind Skoda Fabia S2000 with a Millington engine.

The car, purchased from Desi Henry, is in the process of being built up by Den Motorsport and will run on national sealed-surface events when it is completed between late March and early April.

Duffy purchased a Group A-spec Subaru last year, and did a shakedown on the Ulster Rally ready for Mull. He was leading the Scottish event before it was cancelled following Andrew Mort's fatal accident.

"I had the idea last year before we bought the Subaru, but it just didn't fall into place, we didn't have the budget at that time," explained Duffy. "The Subaru was a car I'd always wanted to drive so we went with

it. We decided life's too short and got the Skoda. We bought it from Desi Henry and we knew it was a good car. Obviously the problem with the S2000 is a lack of power, so we decided to put the Millington [engine] in. We did a bit of research and it's going to happen. We're getting there slowly but surely."

The build hasn't proved completely straightforward, with problems being experienced in converting the car to an engine it wasn't originally designed for.

"We've tried to utilise a lot of the stuff that was in the Skoda already as it's proven," added Duffy. "We found out quickly the Skoda wiring won't speak to the Millington [engine] management, so we had to rip everything out and re-wire the whole car. That's taking a bit of time."

"We're converting it from left-hand drive to right-hand drive as well, so we've had to

have a special steering rack made. It's the guys who make them for Formula 1 that are doing it, so it's a proper job."

Duffy joins a number of competitors converting to a Millington-powered modern cars, with John Stone the latest to join the club in a Fiesta S2000-shelled machine, originally run by Roger Moran.

"I had the option of a Fiesta as well, but my preference, it's the Skoda," added Duffy. "It's a proven chassis that has been developed by works drivers, there's a lot of work gone into them."

"It's expensive but you're getting a rally-winning car on paper."

Duffy hasn't identified a definitive championship to compete in, and will assess his options when the car is complete, but is eyeing the Triton Showers Irish National Championship as a potential destination for the car.

McGarrity ready for title defence

Six-time champion Derek McGarrity will begin the defence of his McGrady Insurance Northern Ireland Rally Championship title at Kirkistown Circuit in County Down this weekend.

McGarrity will drive the same DMACK-liveried Ford Fiesta RS World Rally Car that he took to victory at the same venue almost a month ago when he won the New Year Stages by 13 seconds.

"The plan is to do the whole championship," the competition's most successful driver said. "The rallies suit my budget and they don't require me to take too much time off work."

His Fiesta has only just returned from M-Sport in Cumbria where engineers made a series of tweaks to the car's set-up, including to its ECU after McGarrity noticed it was misfiring when in fourth gear.

"It feels a lot better now, I'm happy with it," he said. "Unfortunately, we didn't do last weekend's Galway International Rally."

"I was hoping to close a sponsorship deal for the rally but it didn't work out in time sadly."

The organising North Armagh Motor Club will run six stages from 0930hrs on Saturday, with a series of small changes from previous years helping to increase the total competitive distance to almost 30 miles.



McGarrity:New Fiesta

JRM launches new production-spec Subaru STi for club rallies

JRM has released a new production-based Subaru STi aimed at clubman rally drivers.

The car is based on JRM's current NR4-spec challenger, which headed its class in the hands of former British champion David Higgins at Rally GB last November.

The new car will cost £60,000, and can be upgraded to full NR4 specification.

"Production rallying has

been the mainstay of rallying for many years but there needs to be a simple and inexpensive



Higgins: NR4 Rally GB

product solution that allows competitors to make the step from regional to international competition using the same car if they want to," said Jason King, managing director of Daventry-based JRM.

"We're giving competitors the chance to invest in a professionally-built, latest-specification, NR4 Subaru that has been built to a specification that suits the requirements of their career."



Photo: Pro-rally.co.uk

An ex-Lucy Block Ford Fiesta R2 made an appearance in the hands of Duncan Taylor at the North West Stages. Block – wife of former WRC driver Ken – competed in select events in the USA, and now Taylor has taken ownership of the car, although he has left it in the original striking livery used by Block. He finished 16th overall and third in Class C.

BTRDA PREVIEW

Photos: Jakob Ebrey, Writtle Photographic, Crayford Media

CAN THE BTRDA BUILD ON A RECORD SEASON?

Jack Benyon looks at what to expect in 2016



McCloskey was close to title in 2013 and now returns in a Mini



Payne (r): Familiar with new car



Francis was impressive in 2015

Last year was always going to be a big year for the BTRDA Rally Championship, ever since the British championship announced its hiatus for 2015.

While the two series insist they need each other as part of the rallying ladder, there was always potential that a boost in entries last year in the BTRDA was as a result of its big brother's absence.

With the 2016 entries open for some time, early signs are good for the clubman-level BTRDA with 150 runners in for the series opener, the Llandudno-based Cambrian, with a similar number of registrations. As championship co-ordinator Howard Wilcock explains, although the series did engage with competitors who will compete in the BRC this year, the two are not in competition.

"I want people to understand that from our perspective," explains

Wilcock. "We aim at different things and different markets, the BRC is more high profile. But it is unlikely to receive 150 odd entries. It will have less competitors than us."

While some of the drivers are shaking down cars ahead of the BRC at the Cambrian – something that was common even with the old Wydean opener – Wilcock believes that drivers graduating into the BRC can only be good for the sport.

"Euan [Thorburn] – the 2013 BTRDA champion – is competing on the Cambrian and I'll be watching him and the other BRC-bound drivers closely. It's good for the BTRDA. Co-driver Phil Hall [now part of the Toyota Gazoo Racing effort] is someone who has competed in our championship before and now he's gone on to finish third on the Arctic Lapland Rally."

With Thorburn graduating, a number of last year's frontrunners have also left the championship. Dave Weston won't compete a full year because of work commitments,

Paul Bird received a two-year motorsport ban for a positive drugs test and Jamie Anderson joins Thorburn in stepping up to the British championship.

Despite the migration, the championship remains as strong and interesting at the front as ever, although it's almost impossible to pick the prospective favourite.

In the Ford Fiesta camp is Stephen Petch, who came on leaps and bounds in 2015 in the R5+ car, and he's joined in the Ford contingent by Charlie Payne – running an S2000-shelled Fiesta with Focus WRC running gear. Payne won the Trackrod in 2015 and with the car bedded in, will be a contender. Steve Perez – 2014 champion – could end up competing in more events in 2016 and he'll be one of the Ford frontrunners should he decide to complete a full slate.

Someone who pushed Petch hard on certain events last year was Luke Francis. The Welshman only competed a part schedule in the new hollowed out B13 Mitsubishi Lancer

E9, but was bang on the pace including an exceptional performance on last year's Cambrian, where he finished ahead of two WRC Fiestas in what is essentially a lightweight Group N car. Also in the Evo camp is the intriguing proposition of Shaun Gardener. A previous double champion, he'll be a podium contender for sure in his Lancer E6 WRC, which he debuted on the Woodpecker last year.

Perhaps the most interesting entry is Connor McCloskey. The Northern Irishman finished a very close runner-up to Thorburn in 2013 and, with a Prodrive Mini WRC, he'll be a popular attraction out on the stages.

"I'm buzzing at the thought of getting back behind the wheel again," he explains. "I'm going to drive my own rally on the Cambrian and wherever that takes me I'll be happy. Everything is going well and I'm chomping at the bit to get going."

The calendar for this year's championship remains largely

similar, with the well discussed absence of the Wydean and consequent shuffling the only changes to the order.

The Cambrian is the season opener while the Trackrod now concludes the year. With average speeds high on the gravel-based Trackrod, it should be a corking end to the campaign.

Perhaps the biggest change to any event is the Nicky Grist Stages, which will also run as part of the BRC. With cars seeded on performance, that means some BTRDA entries will run near the front of the order.

All in all, entries are down on a record year, which is hardly unexpected, but the quality of the crews and events has been maintained. The BTRDA now needs to sustain the number of entries on the Cambrian through the year, and there's no reason why the serious fun motto won't attract drivers and co-drivers back to the series. ■

● For info on the BTRDA and its championships, visit btrdarally.com

New championships should help refresh BTRDA series structure

Two new championships join the BTRDA in 2016, with two-wheel-drive hatchbacks coming to the fore.

First off, the DMACK Fiesta ST Trophy – for the M-Sport-built Group N-spec cars – has been spawned from the Copart Trophy which ran for Rally GB last year. With the car reaching the end of its 10-year homologation period it's no longer eligible for international events. The Copart

Trophy offered a test in a modern R2T Fiesta for the winner.

Now the man behind the GB-based trophy – John Pritchard – has started the ST Trophy for the cars to run in, with prizes by DMACK. The winner of the series will get the chance to compete for a drive in the DMACK Trophy in 2017, which supports the WRC on five rounds and is generally accepted as the best form of Junior rallying in the world

championship. Junior 1000 champion George Lepley and Next Big Step winner Sam Bilham are among the entries to the trophy, with a competitive year ahead.

The second FWD series to join the BTRDA is the 205 Cup, for the Peugeot cars which have launched the careers of many drivers in the past. The cup is for historic-spec 205s, but hasn't obtained the uptake bosses would have liked, with only three 205s appearing.

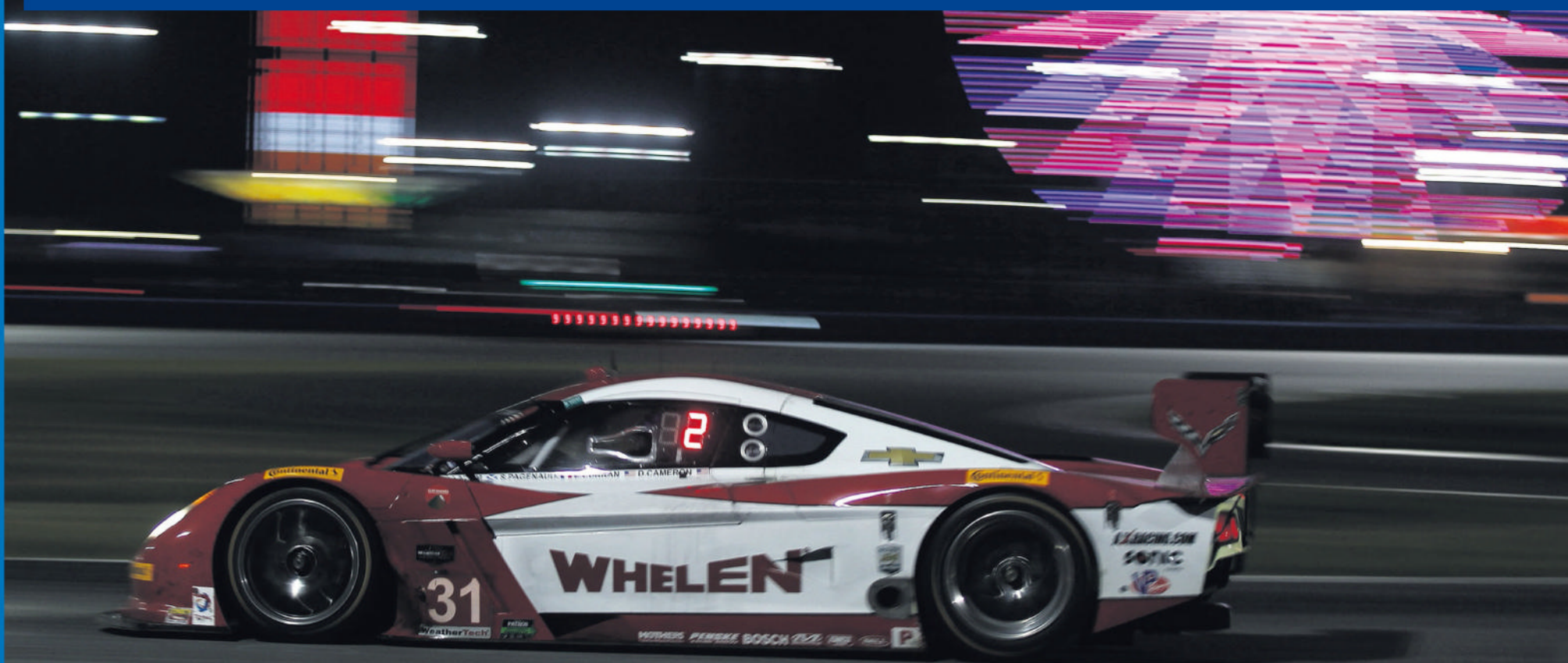


Fiesta ST Trophy proved popular on Wales Rally GB in 2015

BRITONS AT DAYTONA

British GT champion Jonny Adam won a seat in American showpiece. By **Rob Ladbrook**

ADAM'S AMERICAN



Adam shone in the Action Express Coyote-Corvette

Jonathan Adam was thinking he had a shot at making history. He was just a few hours away from a dream result of standing on the podium at the Daytona 24 Hours.

Only one winner of the Sunoco Daytona Challenge has ever achieved that. Then British Formula 3 champion Felipe Nasr – now of Sauber F1 fame – finished third in the 2012 edition of the American endurance classic. Adam was well within a shout of becoming the second, and possibly the best finisher, in last month's race.

Then, just before 0900hrs local time, with Adam in the number 31 Action Express-run Coyote-Corvette Daytona

Prototype running fourth overall and closing on the tight lead pack, suddenly, *bang...* nothing.

As Adam rounded the final corner, the driveshaft sheared. Revs hit the roof, but wheels didn't turn in sync. Adam crawled back to the pits, and the Action Express team worked a miracle to get the machine patched up and back into the action. But by that point the crew had lost 13 laps. The dream had gone... or had it? Not for Adam.

The 31-year-old Scotsman was rewarded with the fully funded Daytona drive through winning the Daytona Challenge contest, which is run by the Anglo American Oil Company's Sunoco brand and Whelen Engineering. The contest awards drivers points based on their results across their respective British national championships. Adam's consistency alongside Andrew Howard in the Beechdean Aston Martin Vantage GT3 in British GT landed him the national title, and also the Sunoco Challenge chance.

But this wasn't Adam's first ride at the Floridian track. He was fortunate enough to land a seat with the TRG Aston Martin team to race a Vantage GTD in the 2014 event. The outing didn't go to plan, but at least served as a foundation of sorts.

"The Aston deal was a bit of a compromise as it didn't offer the best seat time," says Adam. "I was sharing the car with four other drivers and we had a gearbox issue in the middle of the night so lost loads of time to repairs and finished well down the class order.

But it did at least give me a knowledge of the track, where it went and what to look out for."

Through his role as an Aston Martin Racing factory driver, Adam is used to joining new teams regularly to provide help with their competition Vantages. He's used to working with different nationalities and different styles of racing, but there's always been a common theme at the centre of it – the Vantage. A car he knows inside out.

Adam says the Daytona chance was an entirely different situation. With no knowledge of the car, the team or his team-mates Simon Pagenaud, Dane Cameron and Eric Curran.

"It was a totally different experience," says Adam. "It's been a long time since I've been in the situation of going in to something all-new and having to adapt. You learn how to blend in with a team being a factory driver, but the difference is in that situation the team usually looks to me because I know the Vantage. This time I was the unknown quantity, not the known one.

"I spent a lot of time listening to Eric, Dane and Simon, as they have the experience. They gave me tips and tricks and a lot of information. But more importantly they gave me seat time to learn. The prize allowed me to join the team for the Roar before the 24 official test, and it was massively useful. They gave me runs in different situations – such as on warm tyres and high fuel in case we had to do a splash and dash stop, or on totally cold tyres to feel the difference in the car.

"It also gave me time to work with the

engineers and form a bond and most of all learn how the racing works in America. It's very different. Things like not turning the engine off during a pit stop and then being allowed to light the rear tyres up when you leave your box. You'd get a penalty for doing either in most European series, but actually it's very important at Daytona to get the tyres up to temperature as fast as you can."

Adam also had some adapting to do to the Corvette DP, although he says it wasn't as alien as he first imagined.

"The Corvette to me felt like a big GT car in a way," he explains. "I'm glad I went into it from a GT racing background and not something like an LMP2 World Endurance Championship one where you're used to being aggressive with a pointy prototype. You have to be very patient with the car, especially through the slower infield section. The Continental tyres were very consistent, but you couldn't over-drive the front end of the car or they'd get trashed.

"Patience was the key with it, just like a GT car. You'd follow the same trail-braking style and wait for the front end to settle before easing onto the power. I remember the first time I came out of the pits at the test, I put my foot down and the thing just took off. There's so much raw power. But the pit lane exit feeds out to a shallow chicane, so it's so easy to be too eager, spin the wheels up, even though you have traction control, and have an accident and lose the race there and then.

"The high-speed stuff is very

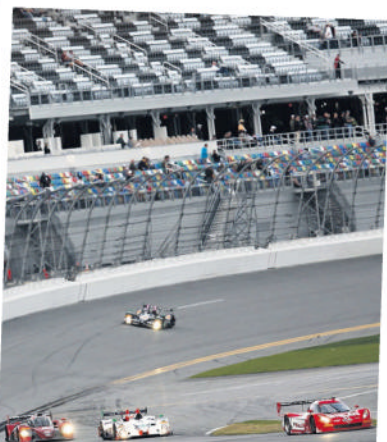
different, especially on the banking. You have much more aero in the DP and the banking is so steep it's scary at first. When you're going slower and bringing the tyres in you can feel pretty nauseous due to the angles and forces. You end up looking almost through the sun strip to see ahead. There are a few ripples in the surface, but mainly the banking is super-smooth and it's easy-flat as the car hunkers down and has so much grip.

"The car is very solid. You can feel that. During the race we had a few scrapes on the side and there was zero damage. They are very well built for endurance racing."

It's a good thing that Adam racked up the test mileage, because the build up to the race weekend itself was a troubled one. Free practice was blighted by heavy rain, as was qualifying, meaning Adam and the entire Action Express team had minimal running before race day.

Adam enjoyed just three flying laps before his first race stint. He was second in line to jump into the car, following qualifier Cameron, who had started the car in sixth place. By the end of his opening stint, the Corvette ran second, and the pressure was on Adam.

"I was watching the timing screens and clocking Dane's lap times and saw we were in second and I was up next, that was real pressure," he says. "I definitely wouldn't have preferred to be lower down the order for my first stint. The pressure spurred me on when I got in because there was an expectation of me. Nobody really knew what I was

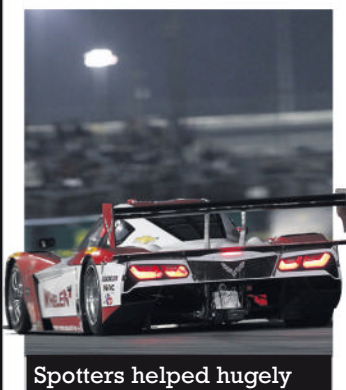


Banking was flat out, but different

W DREAM



This was Adam's second Daytona 24 Hours appearance



Spotters helped hugely



Night racing was enjoyable



Oliver Gavin secured the victory for Corvette GTLM team, just...

British heroes hit the headlines in Florida

British drivers were out in force at this year's Daytona 24 Hours, and were present amongst the majority of the classes on show.

Of the homegrown talent, Ryan Dalziel fared the best, helping his Visit Florida Racing-run Corvette DP to third overall alongside Ryan Hunter-Reay and Marc Goossens.

Close behind came triple World Touring Car champion Andy Priaulx, who finished fifth alongside Brendon Hartley, Alex Wurz and Lance Stroll in a Ford EcoBoost Riley DP. The team had to battle back from a temperature problem, which cost them four laps on Sunday morning.

The Nissan DeltaWing played a starring role in the race, leading briefly with Katherine Legge at the wheel but it retired after Andy Meyrick hit a stationary car when unsighted in the fourth hour.

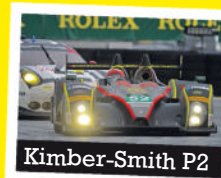
Oliver Gavin scored the GTLM class win by just 0.034s from the sister factory Corvette. Gavin and team-mates Tommy Milner and Marcel Fassler were locked in battle with Antonio Garcia, Jan

Magnussen and Mike Rockenfeller. Garcia briefly headed Gavin in the final minutes but ran wide allowing Gavin to pounce.

Le Mans 24 Hours winner Nick Tandy should have been in that fight too. Tandy showed his class by going fastest during the soaked qualifying session, adding to his shock result of winning Petit Le Mans last year outright in a GT car in the wet. Tandy was in the mix all race alongside Patrick Pilet and Kevin Estre in the works 911 RSR but the trio were dumped down the order by a driveshaft failure on Sunday. Richard Westbrook was ninth in GTLM after electrical issues on his Ford GT. James Calado's Ferrari retired with engine problems.

Tom Kimber-Smith took second in the Prototype class in the PR1 Oreca-Chevrolet FLM09. He and team-mates Robert Alon, Jose Gutierrez and Nicholas Boulle led

much of the race but lost time with a minor mechanical failure. Johnny Mowlem helped the BARI Motorsports team to third in the PC class.



Kimber-Smith P2

capable of. I could have spun, crashed, or been slow in race conditions. There were some nerves in the garage I'm sure.

"I was supposed to only drive for one hour 45 minutes, but I actually ended up doing three hours 15 minutes as my pace was good and I was having a great fight with Brendon Hartley [in the Chip Ganassi Ford Riley DP] to hold on to second. The team changed strategy to keep me in longer but it was tough as my drinks system failed during the first few minutes so I had no fluid in the car for three hours. I was starting to cramp up a bit near the end but adrenaline got me through."

The extension of that first stint kept Adam in the race heading into the night hours. He set the fastest lap of the race at the time during his stint. The Scot says racing at night at Daytona was a strange experience. "It's not like Le Mans because you have floodlights over the entire track, but it's a strange experience."

"Managing traffic at night is tough because drivers get tired and mistakes can happen easily. We're told to stay high on the banking and close to the wall to pass but it's nerve-wracking when you're coming up to lap a GT car at 160mph and you're just thinking 'God, I hope he's seen me and doesn't come across' as you're scraping the wall next to him."

"A big difference was having spotters in the grandstand. Doing this event without them would be near impossible as the vision out of a DP isn't the best. I never checked my mirrors once

because they are so good. The guys usually do NASCAR spotting and they become a constant voice in your ear and your best friend during a stint. When you pass a slower car they'll tell you when you're clear and can re-take the lines or when there's stuff around you on track."

Adam and crew snuck into the lead during Pagenaud's stint in the early hours, but lost time due to a flash fire during a routine pit stop. Some fuel splashed into the cockpit of the car as the team were refuelling and refreshing the drinks system at the same time. It was extinguished within seconds, but caused a delay in Pagenaud handing over to Cameron. It also meant a full tank of fuel wasn't delivered, forcing an extra stop and dropping the team down to sixth and off the lead lap.

Adam took over again around 0600hrs, and settled in for his second stint. It was all going smoothly as he pulled the lost lap back and battled into fourth place. Then came the failure.

"I'd just passed a Ganassi car for fourth through Turn 1 when I could smell burning and the team radioed me to say there was a fluid loss and to keep them posted," says Adam. "Then the next lap it lost all drive coming around the final corner. It was lucky it went then as I could coast into the pits, but the failure was unknown and it took a while to diagnose a driveshaft had sheered and get the replacement parts ready and fitted."

"I knew it was a transmission failure, but the team had never had this type of issue before. I was gutted and felt awful

that it went when I was in the car but there was nothing anybody could have done."

To compound the issue, Action Express's sister car crewed by Felipe Albuquerque/Joao Barbosa/Scott Pruett/Christian Fittipaldi lost the race lead with three hours remaining to the same issue. Adam's car lost 13 laps and dropped back to 14th after the time spent to diagnose the problem. The sister car lost only six.

Adam and crew fought back to finish sixth overall, 12 off the winning Extreme Speed Ligier-Honda LMP2 car of Scott Sharp/Ed Brown/Johannes van Overbeek/Pipo Derani.

"I feel we got robbed a little as the team deserved more," says Adam. "But regardless of the results it was an amazing experience, and it is an experience not just a prize that Sunoco and Whelen are offering."

"It's the full package. From attending the Grand Marshal celebration dinner before the race and mingling with greats of the sport like Tom Kristensen, Allan McNish, Bobby Rahal and Chip Ganassi, to doing the testing, the PR and media events and then the racing itself."

"I've got a great picture that Anders Hildebrand from Sunoco took for me that shows 'Adam P2' on the big leaderboard at the track and underneath mine are names like [Rubens] Barrichello and [Tony] Kanaan. That's special."

"I'd love another go. I feel I showed my pace and what I'm capable of and if the phone rang next year I'd love to have another shot." ■

Homegrown support boosts Adam overseas

Jonathan Adam was joined by a strong Scottish contingent at the Daytona 24 Hours, made up of past and present stars.

Adam, from Kirkcaldy in Fife, got support from IndyCar legend Dario Franchitti, triple Le Mans 24 Hours winner and World Endurance champion Allan McNish as well as Daytona rival Ryan Dalziel before, during and after the race.

"Having Dario, Allan and Ryan around was hugely helpful," says Adam. "I wouldn't say Ryan gave me many tips as he was our competition and right behind us on the grid [in another Chevrolet Corvette DP], but just having

him, Dario and Allan around was great. These are drivers I've admired for ages. The achievements they've all got within the world of motorsport, whether it's IndyCar, Le Mans or Daytona with Ryan – it's amazing to be amongst names like that."

"Even in the photo I don't look like I can believe it's happening! It drills home to me how far I've come. I got nice feedback from them about how I did. Scottish drivers are a close community as it's a small country. We all follow what everybody else is doing and how they are getting on and nobody is ever scared of offering a bit of advice."



Scottish supporters (from l-r): Dalziel, Adam, Franchitti and McNish

RALLY SAFETY

Photos: Bob Sketchley, Mark Writtle

MSA's work on safety has given rallying a new lease of life. By Jack Benyon



Wyedean picture alerted people to safety issues



Marshals are vital to rallying in the United Kingdom



STAGE RALLYING SAVED?

Ari Vatanen, Stig Blomqvist, Colin McRae. What do these drivers have in common?

They're all British Rally champions. Now, close your eyes, and picture the scene.

Stage rallying in the UK is banned. No Rothmans-liveried Legacy sideways on the Manx; no black beauty Shell Oils Escort and no Audi Sport quattro with a crazy Swede at the wheel. No smell of fuel and gravel in the forests. Nothing.

With a chain of events starting with the Snowman Rally in 2013, in the last three years, stage rallying has not just been under threat, it's been a whisker from annihilation.

The spectator fatalities on the Snowman, and the Jim Clark Rally in 2014, led to the governing body in the UK, the Motor Sports Association, having to respond to its stakeholders.

After the Jim Clark incident, the Scottish Government called for a review, which became known as the Motorsport Event Safety Review (MESR), and simultaneously the Scottish police embarked on the investigation which continues into a 19th month with no sign of a concluding date. It's the biggest police investigation ever undertaken after a rally in Scotland. Bar none.

The review issued a report in January, and as it moved to implement the recommendations, the MSA came in for some very harsh criticism from the rallying fraternity. However, far more was at stake.

MSA chief executive Rob Jones says: "Almost immediately I was happy to commit the MSA to the implementation of the 29

recommendations arising from the report. There were many people who thought we were overreacting, that the sport was safe enough, that the governing body was meddling in things that should be left to the organisers of events. In short, that we didn't need to be as responsive as I felt we should. What they didn't know however, is that our stakeholders, in particular the Forestry Commission and our insurers, were very, very concerned indeed."

It was made clear over a series of meetings that unless the MSA committed to implementing the recommendations, the use of the forests would be withdrawn.

Jones continues: "We met with key executives at the Forestry Commission with around 20 delegates in attendance. I was left in no doubt whatsoever that unless we were able to show a commitment to the report, that quite frankly we would not be going back in the forests. This was particularly worrying because they would have found that very easy as the master agreement was in its last year, so they wouldn't have to break any binding agreements. They were able to say 'thank you and goodbye'. This wasn't an empty threat, they were represented at both senior executive and senior health and safety executive levels."

Let's get one thing straight here. The Forestry Commission isn't a group of big bad wolves trying to end stage rallying. They've worked very closely with the MSA in developing the new 2016 safety regulations and should be credited for their openness and forward thinking. But who could argue with their reaction to the prospect of people dying in the forests? We're not talking about trouble-

causers climbing trees here. We're discussing the loss of human life.

Another key element the MSA had to consider was insurance, as Jones explains.

"We have a very good safety record [as a governing body] and because of that we do have a very good relationship with our insurers and because of that our public liability insurance premium – I think – is not unreasonable. Accidents can jeopardise that. In a meeting with the insurers – which will remain private – it was again made clear to me that there were significant expectations on their behalf and they had to be met."

"It wasn't as simple as just listening to what the sport wanted anymore, we had to listen to the stakeholders otherwise we wouldn't be able to afford competitions [because of a high insurance premium] and we wouldn't have anywhere to have them either [with the loss of the forests]. It was perfect storm in many ways for rallying."

The MESR issued 29 recommendations following its investigation in January, and up to now the MSA has already implemented 21. They focus on the encouragement of spectator safety, marshal and media accreditation

and the introduction of a safety delegate with the power to end stages for safety reasons to name a few.

The full implementation is scheduled to be completed by January 1 2017 and the MSA has also developed its own methods to improve safety, such as changes to the running order on rallies.

"When I saw *Motorsport News* [after the Wyedean Rally in February 2015], I saw a picture in the Readers' Photographs section – I saw a picture and thought, 'what is that man standing there for?', " explained Jones. "It was only when I looked in more detail that there was someone lying lengthways on the floor prone at the edge of a corner. It's not fair on anybody for people to be irresponsible to the point where our sport could be lost forever. Once it's gone, you don't get it back. We've seen this in countries where there have been horrific accidents. Once the familiarity, ethos of something is lost it's very difficult to get it back. Try having five years off and then trying to persuade the Forestry Commission and the insurers to let us back in the forests, I can tell you what their answer would be: forget it."

"One of the consequences of what I saw on the Wyedean was that we asked ourselves why did this happen? The answer we were given is the spectators arrived later in the event as they weren't as interested in seeing the slower cars at the beginning of the event. I think that's very disrespectful to those crews as they should be supported equally, but recognising that from a safety point of view it meant the general regulation that fastest first needed to be reiterated and refreshed."

"There has been a reaction to that – category 1 Historics [previously

allowed to run at the front to protect their cars from ruts and damage] has effectively failed as a form of stage rallying as a result [of the reiterated fastest first regulation] and I can understand that but we have to look at the big picture. I'm very pleased to see in 2016 there will be a Tarmac championship for those cars, which is great."

There's no doubt that in places rallying has suffered from the new regulations. Events are under greater scrutiny and under greater financial burdens to make sure they run properly. But the MSA continues to give back to the sport in a way many sporting bodies wouldn't dream.

"In 2014 we gave back a percentage of permit and insurance fees totalling £580,000," said Jones. "In 2015 we gave a percentage of the insurance fees back again totalling £575,000. Over two years, that's over a million pounds which the MSA has given back to clubs organising events to help with the added expectations of the new regulations."

The MSA also offers help through the Club Development Fund, which can assist with costs. Details can be found on its website.

The governing body has made a huge commitment to stage rallying. Now everybody involved in the sport needs to play their part. The criticism of the MSA for its stringent approach is unjust, safety is a moving goalpost and until everyone shares the attitude necessary to continue stage rallying, our sport will always be at risk. ■

● You can view the MESR recommendations and the MSA's new regulations on the MSA's website; MSAUK.org/rallyfuture.

"We nearly lost the use of the forests"

ROB JONES



INTERVIEW: JACK GOFF

Young racer on his plans to conquer the BTCC with a BMW. By **Matt James**

STEPPING UP TO THE MAJOR LEAGUE



Goff will drive the IHG-backed car

This is undoubtedly a big year for Jack Goff. Although he might have stepped aside from the factory-backed MG squad that took him to his maiden win in the British Touring Car Championship in 2015, he has arguably taken a stride forward on the grid.

For 2016, he will line up at WSR, driving the BMW 125i M Sport used by Andy Priaulx last season.

While the rear-wheel-drive car doesn't carry full works support, it was a highly competitive proposition in 2015. Between Priaulx, Rob Collard and Sam Tordoff, they won seven of the 30 races in the well-engineered cars.

The deal for Goff to switch teams wasn't one that was on his radar – and it came out of the blue, when backers the InterContinental Hotel Group decided that it wanted to remain in the BTCC despite Priaulx's defection to sportscars.

"It was a bit of a shock," he says. "In the back of my mind we were staying with Triple Eight and MG. We were still some way off raising the budget that was needed, but this was the direction we had been aiming for as, in my mind, WSR had their line up."

"I spoke to [team principal] Dick Bennetts and the guys at WSR at the end of 2014 and agreed we would like to work together in the future, however this wasn't achievable in 2015," explains Goff. "Then the phone call came when I was

actually at work, I got in a bit of trouble for answering it in fact, but it was well worth the punishment of tea boy for a few hours. The deal itself didn't take that long to put together, I met with everyone at IHG, BMW and WSR and we all quickly decided this is what we wanted to do."

It will be another stepping stone for Goff. After the first win at Snetterton, he took three other podiums to finish ninth in the points. He knows that it is time to prove he deserves his place among the front rank of driver.

"I need to thank [Triple Eight Racing principal] Ian Harrison and everyone at MG for giving me my best year to date in the BTCC, I gained so much knowledge from these people plus having Andy Jordan as my team-mate was a huge bonus, as I had a previous champion to compare myself to."

"The first win was very special, and to get a podium at the first weekend of the year was great. To round the year off on the podium, too, was good as it showed we had some pretty good consistency throughout the year. We want to build on that."

"I learned from Andy Jordan"

Jack Goff



Goff, now 24, is in the best place to learn. With WSR boss Dick Bennetts' legendary attention to detail and the expert crew he has established around him, Goff will have a lot of brainpower to tap in to. The work has already begun.

"WSR has a huge heritage the same as Triple Eight Racing do, but the thing I have noticed with Dick so far is that he has a huge passion to succeed in motorsport and he will do anything within the rules to win and be constantly at the sharp end," says Goff, who has signed a one-year deal. "The lads back in the workshop are doing a lot behind the scenes to make sure me and the team will be fighting at the sharp end from the word go."

There are a couple of factors that are going to take some achieving for Goff. Although he has raced a rear-wheel-drive Lotus, the configuration is new to him in BTCC terms. Also, he will have to tame two other racers in the team who have experience with the BMW: colleagues Rob Collard and Sam Tordoff.

Of the switch to rear-wheel drive, Goff is confident that he will be able to overcome this before the start of the season: "I honestly think it won't be an issue. I have a good amount of testing planned which will help – it's the most I have ever had, which is a big luxury."

"I understand what makes rear-wheel drive work and not work. I think that will help and I also have my same engineer from last year [Simon Cumberpatch] who has rear-wheel-drive experience, plus Dick is going to

sit down with us both to talk us through the engineering side."

In terms of the intra-team battle, Tordoff has been a thorn in Goff's side before. "I have raced against Sam, we have grown up racing against each other, from karts all the way to the BTCC. There will be lots of competition in the team which will be great for us all."

"I am used to that though. I had Alain Menu as my team-mate in 2014, then Andy Jordan last year and I feel I held my own against them both. The disadvantage for me is obviously Rob Collard has had lots of rear-wheel-drive experience in the BMW and Sam has a year under his belt with the car and his experience from racing the Porsches in the past."

Whatever the competition, Goff is adamant that he will be in the British Touring Car Championship for several seasons to come.

"[Series director] Alan Gow has done a fantastic job with the BTCC. It's by far the best championship to be in – the TV and press coverage is unquestionably the best, for me and my sponsors it's the only place to be. The crowd figures continue to grow year on year and the spectators are the best in the world I would say."

"People say the British Touring Car Championship is the best in the UK, I would argue the fact that the BTCC is the best saloon car championship in the world along with DTM, although I see that more as an F1 with a roof."

"I don't see this changing any time soon as the championship continues to grow year on year and I'm so glad that I am a part of it." ■

CV

Jack Goff

Born: March 6, 1991
Lives: High Wycombe

BTCC career

Races: 87
Wins: 1
Podiums: 5
Poles: 0
Fastest laps: 1

2016: British Touring Car Championship in IHG-backed BMW 125i M Sport
2015: British Touring Car Championship with Triple Eight Racing MG6, one win, ninth
2014: British Touring Car Championship in Team BMR Vauxhall Insignia and Volkswagen CC, 14th
2013: British Touring Car Championship in Team BMR Vauxhall Insignia, 17th, one podium
2012: Renault Clio Cup championship winner, two victories with Team Pyro
2011: Renault Clio Cup championship, fifth, three wins with Team Pyro
2010: Renault Clio Cup championship, ninth
2009: MG Trophy, third in the points



Goff: Clio champ in 2012

RALLY REPORTS

Photos: Roy Dempster



Fermanagh man
was unchallenged



Jennings had to rebuild car after Ulster

JENNINGS ENDS GALWAY DROUGHT

Subaru driver puts bad luck behind him as Keith Cronin opens the new R5 era. By **Brian Patterson**

The last time Gary Jennings sat in a WRC-spec Subaru Impreza competitively, it was on fire – literally – as his hopes of winning a record third Ulster Rally slipped away.

However, there was no stopping the Fermanagh man as he and co-driver Rory Kennedy remained on fire in form terms only to take a rally win in Galway which had eluded Jennings for many years – a rare event he hasn't won previously. As his rivals slipped away, the final margin of victory was more than three minutes.

The opening day consisted of a trio of stages repeated three times, over mostly narrow, muddy and wet country roads. It was fever pitch in the service area as the Irish Tarmac Rally Championship prepared to usher in a new era of R5 and S2000-spec cars being the quickest eligible machines to score points towards the championship. WRC cars now score in the WRC Cup and can net overall wins, but don't score towards the overall championship anymore.

Jennings opened his score with a fastest time, seven seconds up on Ford Fiesta WRC driver Declan Boyle. The first test proved even more treacherous than expected with multiple cars off the road at various points, one of those being Tim McNulty, 2011 champion, who hasn't competed since his title-winning year. McNulty's surprise return came in a Derek McGeehan-shaped Mini WRC, but the silhouette was altered

when he ran wide and fell victim to the slippery roads. The radiator was the final nail in the coffin on what sadly became a very short comeback.

McNulty did block the stage for a short while, meaning a handful of cars were given a notional time. This affected most of the top R5 contenders. Jonny Greer (Citroen DS3 R5) and Desi Henry (Skoda Fabia R5) were the first two cars to then drive the stage competitively and certainly it gave Henry an edge, although not Greer. In stage two Jennings was again fastest, while three-time British champion Keith Cronin was the quickest of the R5 drivers in his DS3.

In stage three – the final run of the first loop – the story was much the same at the front, with Jennings edging Boyle – his only serious challenger. The latter was unhappy with his Fiesta's handling and trailed Jennings by 21s at service in Portumna. Boyle raised his Fiesta's suspension, to induce more body lean and possibly increase the grip. Desi Henry made the most of his early advantage and backed it up with decent times through stages two and three to lie third in his Skoda. However, Cronin was the fastest R5 man and he was up to fourth, with Alastair Fisher (Ford Fiesta R5) just 1.7s back in fifth. Sam Moffett was only 4.3s behind Fisher, so it was game-on between the R5 men and a brilliant battle in the championship's new era.

At the front of the rally there was a major drama in stage six, Fairfield, when former champion Boyle crashed his Fiesta WRC on a fast left over a narrow bump bridge. He'd

been caught out under braking on the muddy, wet and bumpy surface and his rally was over with the Fiesta needing some serious repair. He had escaped earlier when he slid wide at a 90-degree-left turn and ironically removed a 'stop' sign.

On the final loop of Saturday stages Jennings extended his lead to over two minutes from Keith Cronin. Fisher was third in his second major outing in a Fiesta R5. Jennings made no mistakes and pulled clear with haste on Sunday morning, although there were slight worries over his Subaru's wipers and also the centre differential needed a re-map.

Cronin made a slightly shaky start to defending his second position when his Citroen hit the scenery on the opening Sunday stage. However, he quickly settled into the groove and finished with a 16s lead over Fisher in his Fiesta R5. Sam Moffett piled on the pressure early in the day and got his Fiesta R5 ahead of Henry, but then the latter crashed his Skoda in stage 12. Moffett was lucky to avoid a wall during his push, but held on for fourth ahead of a sensible drive from Roy White in a WRC-spec Fiesta.

Eugene Meegan was battling at the head of the National category and held the lead impressively, but he retired his BMW 1M following a puncture and then an excursion in stage 12. This allowed Wesley Patterson (Escort) to claim the National honours.

In the Historic section Ray Cunningham, dominated in his Mini Cooper from David Goose (Escort) with Luke McCarthy third in his Porsche 911.

RESULTS

Armstrong Galloway Hills Rally

POS	DRIVERS	CAR	TIME
1	Gary Jennings/Rory Kennedy	Subaru Impreza WRC	1h42m57.7s
2	Keith Cronin/Mikey Galvin	Citroen DS3 R5	+3m25.4s
3	Alastair Fisher/Gordon Noble	Ford Fiesta R5	+3m41.9s
4	Sam Moffett/Karl Atkinson	Ford Fiesta R5	+4m30s
5	Roy White/James O'Brien	Ford Fiesta RS WRC	+4m42.4s
6	Josh Moffett/Jason McKenna	Ford Fiesta R5	+5m20.1s
7	Joseph McGonigle/Ciaran Geaney	Skoda Fabia S2000	+5m39.2s
8	Jonny Greer/Kirsty Riddick	Citroen DS3 R5	+5m41.2s
9	Stephen Wright/James Fulton	Ford Fiesta R5	+5m55.1s
10	David Guest/Paddy Robinson	Mitsubishi Lancer E9	+9m19.9s

11 Brendan Cumiskey/Ronan O'Kane (Fiesta R5); 12 Aaron Machale/Enda Sherry (Skoda Fabia S2000); 13 William Mavitt/Andrew Browne (Lancer E9); 14 Callum Devine/Keith Moriarty (Opel Adam R2); 15 Gus Kearney/Tommy Hayes (Lancer E9); 16 Richard Whelan/James Whelan (Citroen DS 3 R3); 17 Marty Gallagher/Dean O'Sullivan (Fiesta R2); 18 Joe Connolly/Richard Connolly (Fiesta R5); 19 William Creighton/Lian Regan (Peugeot 208 R2); 20 Andrew Slattery/Shawn Forde (Peugeot 208 R2).

Class winners: Callum Devine/Keith Moriarty (Opel Adam R2); Richard Whelan/James Whelan (Citroen DS 3 R3); Guest/Robinson; Cronin/Galvin; Jennings/Kennedy; Declan Forde/Chris King (Ford Escort Mk2); John O'Sullivan/Eoghan McCarthy (Honda Civic); Frank Rafferty/Warren Tighe (Chrysler Sunbeam); Tommy Flanagan/Keith Flanagan (Escort Mk2); Patrick McHugh/Pauric O'Donnell (Escort Mk2); Wesley Patterson/Johnny Baird (Escort Mk2); Tommy Cahill/Enda O'Leary (Lancer E9); Des Lyons/Shay Lahean (Civic); Jason McSweeney/Stephen Quin (Lancer E9); Brendan McAree/J.P. McAree (Porsche 911 SC RS); Ray Cunningham/Adrian Cusack (Morris Cooper S); Luke McCarthy/David Hogan (Porsche 911); David Goose/Richard Wardle (Escort RS1800); Mark O'Leary/Ciaran Graal (Toyota Starlet); Kieran O'Donoghue/Peter Falvey (Civic).



Cunningham beat many more powerful historics for victory

IRISH TARMAC CHAMPIONSHIP: OVERALL BATTLE



Cronin didn't have it all his own way

The pre-event hype in Galway centred around the beautifully turned-out R5 cars, including the much-awaited debut of the Skoda Fabia R5, handled by Desi Henry.

With this class now the fastest eligible to score points towards the overall championship, a new era lies ahead for the championship as the organisers look to breathe new life into a category which had been labelled as stale in recent years in some quarters.

And stale it certainly wasn't. The pre-event billing put multiple British champion Keith Cronin as the favourite, but with 14 R5 and S2000-spec cars on the agenda it was difficult to choose.

Alastair Fisher, nephew of Irish rallying legend Bertie, was another favourite in his

Fiesta R5, along with the Moffett brothers Josh and Sam in similar fast Fords.

Because McNulty blocked the opening stage when he crashed his Mini (see main report) the higher-seeded R5 cars had to take a notional time. Therefore, of the frontrunners, only Jonny Greer in his DS 3 R5 and Henry managed to set times.

Fisher then got his Fiesta R5's nose in front, closely followed by Cronin. Cronin soon edged ahead and the battle ensued. Henry stayed in contention until midway through the second day, when he crashed his Skoda, but essentially the scrap for victory was between Cronin and Fisher. They slugged it out from stage four to the finish, with Cronin getting the upper hand towards the end to lead the championship

from Fisher. Fisher showed excellent pace in what is essentially a new car, having only done one event in a Fiesta R5 (last year's Circuit of Ireland). With both Cronin and Fisher seemingly focusing on the ITRC this year, it looks like we're in for similar battles throughout 2016.

Sam Moffett showed great flair on some of the Sunday stages, although he backed off after he arrived first on the scene of Henry's accident, and he felt it was a reality check. Sam then spun his Fiesta on the penultimate stage, but such was his advantage over the next contender – his younger brother Josh – that Sam comfortably held on to third place points. For his part Josh seemed to have a slightly ragged rally, and was just a fraction off the pace. Donegal man Joe McGonigle in

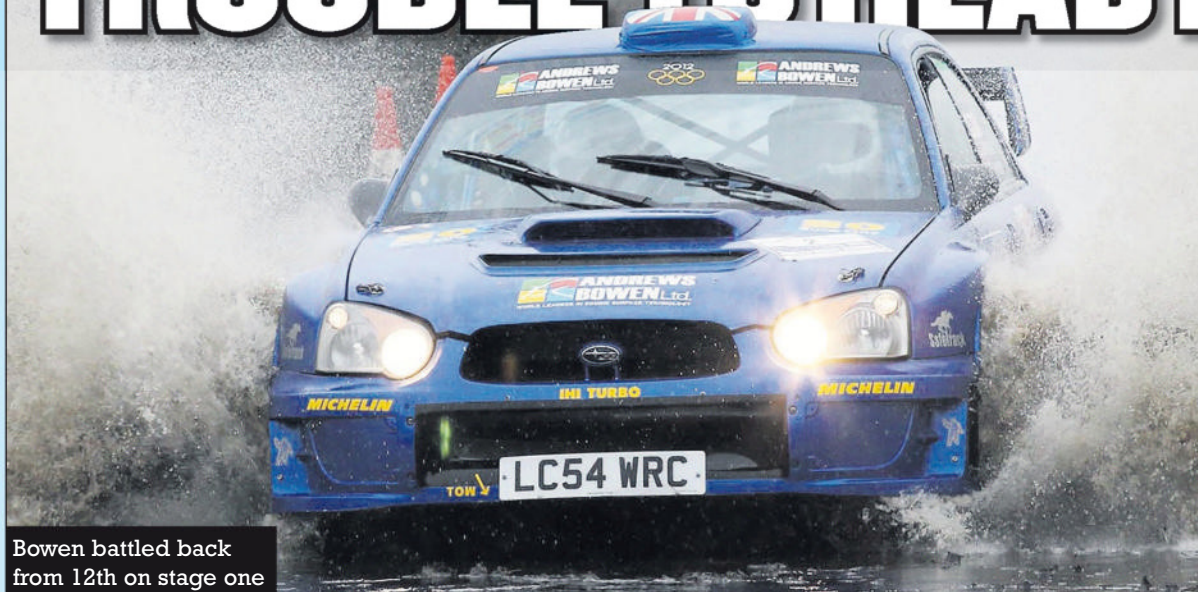
his Skoda S2000 opened a few eyes with his brave drive on the Sunday, picking slick tyres when most drivers were on wets, and he improved from 10th to seventh at the end, sixth in the points.

Stephen Wright and Jonny Greer – in a Fiesta R5 and DS 3 R5 respectively – were disappointed to be off the pace. Both drivers were unhappy with the grip and the feel of their respective chariots. Brendan Cumiskey was out in a new Fiesta R5, and he fitted different brake pads in an effort to combat brake fade. He did have a great battle with Aaron MacHale, who struggled initially to come to terms with his recently acquired Skoda S2000. Both drivers finished just outside the top 10 overall, with Cumiskey just in front.



Photos: pro-rally.co.uk, JMSPhotographic.com

BOWEN RECOVERS FROM EARLY TROUBLE TO HEAD NW STAGES



Bowen battled back from 12th on stage one



Newby gave his Impreza an impressive debut in Blackpool

Legend Fires North West Stages

By Phil James

Organiser: Motorsport (North West) Ltd.
When: February 5/6 **Where:** Blackpool **Championship:** ANCC; NETRC; ANWCC; SD34 **Starters:** 90 **Stages:** 24

Simon Bowen and Richard Robinson recovered from an inauspicious start to finally win in their ex-Petter Solberg Subaru Impreza WRC S11.

The victory looked unlikely with the pair mired in 12th place after Friday's opening leg, but trouble for others helped them claw the deficit back.

With top seeds Tony Bardy and Neil Colman arriving late for scrutineering and having to run their Ford Focus WRC01 last on the road, it was Bowen who was first through the opening Lytham stage. That left him sweeping a path through the leaf-strewn woods in torrential rain leaving him to bemoan his tyre choice: "I put intermediates on and I should have had wets," Bowen said.

At least he was still in the rally: John Stone and Carl Williamson's run finished at the end of that 1.7-mile opener when the alternator on their Ford Fiesta S2500 failed.

Heading the standings following the opening pair of Lytham tests were Mark and Andrew Constantine in their Vauxhall Corsa, three seconds up on Tristan Pye and Andrew Falconer's Impreza. Bardy was a further three seconds in arrears and tied for third with Ian and Kathryn Forgan in their two-litre Ford Ka.

Friday night's short schedule was completed with a pair of three-mile tests on Blackpool Promenade, by the end of which Bowen was established as overnight leader. He had a six-second lead over Arron Newby and Rob Fagg, who had set fastest times at both venues on their debut with their new B13-spec Impreza. Pye was next, his time being matched by Charles and Lindsay Shaw, who had a set of remoulds on their

Impreza. The Constantine brothers were running in fifth place.

More rain came on Saturday when Fleetwood Waterfront, Docks, Weeton and Blackpool Promenade made the bulk of the mileage. A break in the weather came with a further visit to Lytham, but timing issues forced the cancellation of one of the two stages.

Bowen started the day as he meant to go on with fastest time on each of the opening six stages and left SS10, Weeton 2, with a 21s advantage ahead of Bardy. Newby, Pye, Shaw and Constantine filled the next four places ahead of Damian Cole and Paul Morris, who headed Class D in their Escort Mk2. Chris Ford/Michael Gilbey were eighth but were soon to retire their Impreza WRC with transmission issues. Andrew Varley/Paul Wild (Escort Cosworth) and Andrew Fenwick/Andrew Roughead (Proton S2000) completed the top 10.

Bardy then started to slowly chip away at Bowen's lead until a moment of

madness at the Docks led him to break two wheels, collect three punctures and pick up a stage maximum for good measure. Newby, enjoying a trouble-free run, slotted into second place leaving Bardy to fend off Pye, who survived a few minor offs, for third.

With Shaw already out with clutch problems, Cole claimed fifth on the final stage after Lee Hastings and Julie McGuire slipped to eighth as they struggled to restart their Impreza after the fuel pump cut out. Fenwick enjoyed a trouble-free run to finish sixth on his North West Stages debut. The Constantines ran out of fuel in sight of the final control and had to push their car the final few yards to claim seventh.

Mark and Ed Bentley had nothing more than a puncture on Weeton to contend with as they finished ninth ahead of fellow Impreza incumbents Steve Harvey and Andy Falconer, who survived moments at Fleetwood and Lytham. Breaking a ball joint on the

final stage robbed Varley of a certain top 10 finish.

Class A winners Stephen Bethwaite and Ann Forster brought their Vauxhall Nova home 17th overall with concerns about imminent suspension failure. Finishing just behind them were Alistair Hutchinson and St John Dykes, who claimed Class C awards in their Renault Clio LPG. Suzuki Swift pairing Graham and Toby Marshall took the Class F prizes whilst Class L honours went to Clive Allford and Tom Thompson in their Land Rover Wolf XD.

Results

1 Simon Bowen/Richard Robinson (Subaru Impreza WRC S11) 1hr30m54s; 2 Arron Newby/Rob Fagg (Impreza) +0m32s; 3 Tony Bardy/Neil Colman (Ford Focus WRC01) +1m27s; 4 Tristan Pye/Andrew Falconer (Impreza); 5 Damian Cole/Paul Morris (Ford Escort Mk2); 6 Andrew Fenwick/Andrew Roughead (Proton S2000); 7 Mark Constantine/Andrew Constantine (Vauxhall Corsa); 8 Lee Hastings/Julie McGuire (Impreza); 9 Mark Bentley/Ed Bentley (Subaru Impreza); 10 Steve Harvey/Andy Falconer (Impreza). **Class winners:** Stephen Bethwaite/Ann Forster (Vauxhall Nova); Constantine/Constantine; Alistair Hutchinson/St John Dykes (Renault Clio LPG); Cole/Morris; Pye/Falconer; Graham Marshall/Toby Marshall (Suzuki Swift); Clive Allford/Tom Thompson (Land Rover Wolf XD).

Fowden opens 2016 with victory in swamped Pembrey

Rali Cwm Gwendraeth

By Ian Harden

Organiser: Gwendraeth Valley Motor Club
When: February 7 **Where:** Pembrey, South Wales **Championship:** WAMC Tarmacadam, FMP Rally Challenge **Starters:** 55 **Stages:** 5

Bob Fowden and co-driver Paul Wakely overcame treacherous conditions to take a dominant win at a sodden Pembrey.

The Subaru Impreza duo overhauled early leaders Phil Turner/Simon Anthony's Mitsubishi Lancer E9 on stage two and set fastest time on every remaining stage to take victory by 1m29s from Oliver Hopkins/Ashley Trimble (E9), with Neil Williams/Peter James (Ford Escort Mk1) third.

Pre-event rain made the stage surface extremely slippery, with patches of standing water along the Beach Road section causing numerous spins. Turner, recovered from his recent illness, set the early pace ahead of Fowden, Hopkins and Williams. Mechanical woes as well as the treacherous conditions caused early problems; top seeds Robert Tout/Emma Jones (Mitsubishi Lancer E10) retired with a blown turbo, while second seeds Geoff Kitney/Ken Gibbard (Mitsubishi



Fowden and Wakely overcame Pembrey conditions for perfect start

E6) lost time when they spun and could not select reverse gear.

Once Fowden got a feel for the grip levels he snatched the lead and broke free of his pursuers, helped when Turner's good run ended due to a blown turbo. This moved Hopkins into second and having reported that his new E9 was running well, he switched to full wet tyres to fend off Williams's increasingly strong challenge. The stalemate broke on stage four, when Hopkins stopped the clocks 16s faster than his rival to secure runner-up spot. After a slow start, Wynne Watkins /

Sherryn Roberts (Impreza) mounted a late charge to challenge Williams, but missed out on third by three seconds.

Results

1 Bob Fowden/Paul Wakely (Subaru Impreza) 46m59s; 2 Oliver Hopkins/Ashley Trimble (Mitsubishi Lancer E9) +1m29s; 3 Neil Williams/Peter James (Ford Escort RS1800); 4 Wynne Watkins/Sherryn Roberts (Impreza); 5 Christopher Stanfield/Jordan Wilkinson (Peugeot 106 Maxi); 6 Carl O'Grady/Ian Davies (Nissan Sunny F2); 7 Geoff Kitney/Ken Gibbard (Mitsubishi Lancer E8); 8 Tom Barber/Jamie Barber (BMW Compact); 9 Adrian Evans/Mark Lewis (Escort); 10 Chris Jones/Darren Jones (Vauxhall Chevette HS). **Class winners:** 1: Matthew Curzon/Kath Curzon (Vauxhall Nova) 2: Stanfield/Wilkinson 3: O'Grady/Davies 4: Terry Clarke/Ron Roughhead (Ford Escort) 5: Barber/Barber 6: Hopkins/Trimble 8: Huw Jones/Darren Williams (Peugeot 206 XS) 14: Rod Haven/Kevin Haven (Escort RS2000) 15: Williams/James.

ROAD RALLY ROUND-UP

Three-time West Euro Cup champion Guy Woodcock made a triumphant return to road rallying when he and navigator Steve Herbert took a resounding win on the **Rali Bryniau Clwyd**. They finished the event the best part of a minute clear of the opposition, having led throughout the night.

Dale Furniss/Nick Bloxham were the only crew to keep in touch with the leaders. They dropped time at four controls, the same as Woodcock did, but only beat the winners on one of them. Ian 'Dude' Roberts/Gwawr Hughes were four minutes off the lead in third.

Mark 'GT' Roberts/Steve Price were in fourth at Petrol but withdrew at the halt due to a misfiring engine. Previous event winners John Paul Williams/Roger Evans went out at an early stage when a wheel bearing collapsed on their Subaru Impreza.

The **Bruce Robinson Memorial Rally** provided Martin Betts/Richard Hage with their first rally victory for several years – since 2010 in the case of Hage and 2009 for Betts. They were the only crew to clean the first of four time cards. All controls on that card were timed to the minute and Betts/Hage emerged with a 60s lead.

They won, but by the end three other crews were within a minute of them.

Ian Mills

Rali Bryniau Clwyd

Organiser: Broughton-Bretton Motor Club **Date:** February 6/7 **Where:** North-East Wales **Championships:** ANWCC **Route:** 130 miles **Starters:** 45.

Results

1 Guy Woodcock/Steve Herbert (Ford Escort) 3m24s; 2 Dale Furniss/Nick Bloxham (VW Golf GTI) +47s; 3 Ian 'Dude' Roberts/Gwawr Hughes (VW Golf GTI); 4 Howard Price/Carl Williamson (Ford Escort); 5 Stu Kelso/Ashley Owen (VW Golf GTI); 6 Steve King/Dilwyn John (BMW 318Ti); 7 Mal Acott/Cyril Jones (Ford Escort); 8 Carl Acott/Dan Jones (Ford Escort); 9 Andy Darlington/Pete Dale (Peugeot 206 GTI); 10 Ryan Pickering/Andy Pullan (Ford Escort). **Class winners:** Semi-Experts: Carl Acott/Dan Jones; Novices: John Jones/Simon Jones (Vauxhall Nova).

Bruce Robinson Memorial Rally

Organiser: Lincoln Motor Cycle & Car Club **Date:** February 6/7 **Where:** Lincolnshire **Championships:** EMAMC, ANEMMC, ANCC & HRCR **Premier Route:** 140 miles **Starters:** 28.

Results

1 Martin Betts/Richard Hage (Satria) 6m09s; 2 Adrian Green/Ian Gibbins (Satria) +23s; 3 Stan Featherstone/Sam Spencer (Peugeot 205); 4 Guy Robinson/Charlie Wheelodon (Impreza); 5 Carl Hawkins/Iain Tullie (Mitsubishi Colt); 6 Richard Hunter/Paul Taylor (Escort); 7 Mark Turner/Richard Pashley (Civic); 8 Richard Hemingway/Sam Collis (Satria); 9 James Vincent/Kevin Phipps (MG ZR); 10 Mark Banham/David Smalley (Rover 25). **Class winners:** Semi-Experts: Vincent/Phipps; Novices: Adam Brown/Andrew Egger (BMW Compact).

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17X7.5 TO 17X9.0 / 18X7.5 TO 18X9.0



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4 SPOKE RACE

13X5.5 TO 13X10.0



4 SPOKE RALLY

13X7.0 TO 13X10



5 SPOKE RALLY

15X5.5 TO 15X9.0



RFX RALLY

13X5.5 TO 13X6.0 / 14X5.5 TO 14X6.0



8 SPOKE RALLY

13X6.0 TO 13X9.0 / 15X5.0 TO 15X10.0

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KARTING

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for services to karting'*
MSA award winner, below

Photos: kartpix.net



MSA WARNS OF CYBER BULLYING PROBLEM

By Stephen Lickorish

The general secretary of the MSA has written to all kart club chairmen and series co-ordinators warning of the problem of cyber bullying.

Simon Blunt's comments follow a recent incident where a karter was vilified on social media for apparently causing a collision with another racer.

He said that kart clubs need to play an important role in avoiding such abuse and that the MSA is prepared to intervene in extreme cases.

In the letter, Blunt said: "I am deeply concerned about the potential consequences of inappropriate and unacceptable use of social media within our sport. We all know the fantastic power of social media as a tool to promote our sport, our clubs, our volunteers and, of course, our competitors.

"I am determined that the MSA must lead by setting a benchmark of acceptable behaviour online for everyone directly and indirectly involved in our sport across the UK.

"Abuse, aggression, intimidation, or bullying must not be tolerated at

motorsport events. Equally there should be no room in our sport for abuse, aggression, intimidation or bullying online. This includes inciting, whether intentionally or unintentionally, 'trial by social media' following an incident.

"I am asking kart racing clubs and championships to be a first line of defence on tackling abuse. All clubs and championships have our full support. Where necessary, the MSA will act as a second line of defence to tackle such abuse through existing disciplinary processes.

"The MSA already has best practice guidelines for social media use, and I will commit to revise and update these. The MSA will also issue simple best practice guidance for everyone to consider when using social media to promote or discuss our sport."

These latest guidelines will support the MSA's Race'n' Respect campaign – launched last year – which is designed to create a positive atmosphere on and off the track. It's based on values of respect, fair play, self-control, good manners and sincerity.

General secretary says clubs need to play a role in avoiding abuse after race incidents



MSA has respect campaign in place

IN BRIEF

X30 Super debut

IAME's new X30 Super engine will make its international debut at the X30 Challenge Europa at Castelletto in Italy over the Easter weekend. The 175cc non-gearbox engine will form the basis of a new class in Portugal, France, Germany and Italy. It will also feature as part of the class structure of the X30 Euro Series and the IAME International Final at Le Mans.

Electric karts

The first ever electric kart racing series in North America will be launched later this year. The Zero Championship Racing Series will feature six events throughout Metro Vancouver and Vancouver Island.

Armstrong to KKC

Former RL Race Department team manager Steve Armstrong will join KKC this year. He achieved a number of title successes in recent years and will now head up KKC's Vital Motorsport team, which will enter drivers into several United Kingdom series this year.

PFI's Paul Fletcher given MSA award

The MSA have awarded Paul Fletcher the Sir Malcolm Campbell Memorial Trophy in recognition of his services to karting at its Night of Champions event last month.

Fletcher is the man behind the PF International circuit in Lincolnshire which has become established as the UK's leading karting track.

He opened the venue in 1994, but 2010 was the circuit's breakthrough year as it hosted the first CIK-FIA event in Britain for 45 years.

Since then there has been an £1.3 million extension to the circuit and it received an award for the best organised CIK-FIA event of the year in 2015, having hosted a number of world and European events.

Fletcher is still owner of the track and is heavily involved in its operation, along with the Trent Valley Kart Club.



Fletcher set-up track

British ace Edgar switches to MiniMax

British karter Jonny Edgar will bid for the Super One Rotax MiniMax title this season after joining Coles Racing.

Edgar won the Cadet class of the SuperNationals in Las Vegas last year and has starred in IAME Cadet for the last couple of seasons, winning the Little Green Man Series in 2015.

He made his debut in MiniMax at PF International on the last weekend in January and managed to win his first race.

Edgar will drive for Coles



"I am really pleased to finally announce I'm joining Coles Racing in the Mini Max category for the 2016 racing season," said Edgar. "This will include competing for the British title in the Super One Series.

"It is great to be involved with such a hard working, dedicated team and to have such friendly team-mates. Let's hope the whole team can achieve the results they deserve this year."

Entries open for HSF Team Challenge

Entries are now open for the fifth Henry Surtees Foundation Brooklands Team Challenge.

The event organised by John Surtees in partnership with Brooklands and Mercedes will again take place at Mercedes-Benz World in Surrey. Last year it raised £58,000.

Up to 35 teams can take part in the two-hour endurance race driving two-stroke DMAX Karts.

Surtees said: "The foundation is now taking entries for teams to participate. Why not put a team of four together, join fellow enthusiasts and motorsport personalities to experience the thrill and excitement of this prestigious karting race?"

The event will also feature a parade with star names driving some iconic cars.

The foundation recently funded the purchase of rehabilitation equipment for Darent Valley Hospital.



Jewiss won the National Rotax MiniMax title last season

Jewiss stars at WSK Champions Cup

British driver Kiern Jewiss won the OK-Junior class in the WSK Champions Cup at Adria last weekend, grabbing the lead on the final lap.

The 13-year-old was making his debut in the category in Northern Italy and it was also his first race since joining Formula 1 driver Daniel Ricciardo's karting team.

The Super One National Rotax MiniMax champion climbed up the order in the Final to take the win on the last

lap after passing Frenchman Timothy Peisselon.

Ricciardo wrote on Twitter: "Not a bad first weekend in the kart. Well done guys."

Fin Kenneally made it two Britons on the podium in third. It was the first time the new OK engines had been used in a major race. American Logan Sargeant won in the OK division, the 2015 World Junior champion beating Karol Basz. Paolo De Conto won in KZ2 and Michael Paparo took 60 Mini.

SPORTING SCENE

ROUND-UP

Brian Conlon became the seventh different driver to score a **Sporting Trial** win this season, beating Fergil Gregory by four marks to take his first victory for more than three years in Ashford, County Wicklow.

John Bolton used his decades of experience to score his best result for some time in third position in the highest-placed rear-engined car.

In foul weather conditions, there was a very high retirement rate, with 12 drivers falling by the wayside.

Despite a broken handbrake on the final test, which cost him three seconds, Steven Ferguson scored his fifth win of the season to stretch his **Hewison Irish Autotest Championship** lead and remain on course for a record-equalling six titles in succession at Rosenallis, County Laois.

Main challenger Robin Lyons was 2.5s behind at the finish, with veteran Eamonn Byrne third. Early leader Guy Foster slipped to fifth behind David Thompson's Nova when a CV joint broke.

Steven Ferguson could equal Eddie Peterson's record of winning six Hewison Irish Autotest titles in a row in Monaghan on Sunday, as victory there would put him out of reach of main challenger Robin Lyons in the remaining two rounds.

Sporting trial

Organiser: Motor Enthusiasts' Club
When: February 6 **Where:** Newtown Boswell, Ashford, Co Wicklow.
1 Brian Conlon (Erskine-Honda) 6 marks; 2 Fergil Gregory (Erskine-Yamaha) +4m; 3 John Bolton (Grasshopper VW); 4 Tommy Gregory Jr (Sheane VW); 5 Philip Hughes (Hughes-Honda); 6 Ian Sweeney (Sweeney-Suzuki); 7 Dara Fay (Wilson-Suzuki); 8 Brendan Kilkenny (Erskine-Yamaha); 9 James Ralph (Kilkenny-Honda); 10 Percy Pennefather (Erskine-Suzuki); 11 Robin Taylor (VW); 12 Gordon Graves (Erskine-Suzuki). **Grade winners:** Gregory; Gregory Jr; Hughes; Dermott Quigley (Kilkenny VW).

Autotest

Organiser: Laois Rallysport Club
When: February 7 **Where:** Rosenallis, Co Laois.
1 Steven Ferguson (Mini Special) 729.9s; 2 Robin Lyons (Mini) +2.5s; 3 Eamonn Byrne (Mini); 4 David Thompson (Nova); 5 Guy Foster (Mini Special); 6 Timmy Lynch (Westfield); 7 Chris Grimes (Mini); 8 Darren Quille (Westfield); 9 Paddy Power (Mini Moke); 10 Ian White (Mini Special); 11 Liam Croston (Nova); 12 Tom Devaney (Westfield). **Class winners:** Lyons; Foster; Lynch; Thompson. Best semi-expert: James Mansfield (Mini). Novice award: James Hogarty (Starlet).

Mikey Godfrey has reworked his National Hot Rod ahead of the second half of the current season. The Oxfordshire racer, who is sixth in the points at the mid-season break, said: "We have tweaked the suspension and tidied up the car a bit, plus we have given it a fresh look. We have made it better." The National Hot Rod season resumes on March 5 at Birmingham Wheels.



Photos: Hal Ridge and mkpics.net

GRINT TO BID FOR THE BRITISH TITLE

Former rally man signs a deal to race for Albatec concern



Grint will be back in a Peugeot

By Hal Ridge

James Grint will contest the British Rallycross Championship Supercar category this season in an Albatec Racing Peugeot 208.

Ex-rally driver Grint made his Supercar debut for the squad in the British series last season, before stepping up to the European Rallycross Championship, qualifying for the semi-finals three times.

"I'm really excited to be staying with Albatec in 2016,"

said Grint. "I've known the team for a while now and I've got two amazing mechanics, who I get on very well with. My engineer, Graham Moore, is also incredibly clever, he's engineered cars for some of the biggest names in motorsport."

The 25-year-old Grint accepts that he is lacking in experience compared to some of his rivals in British RX, but thinks he can fight for the title in 2016.

"Although I'm still a relative newcomer to rallycross compared to some of the

Supercar drivers in Britain, with the Albatec car being as fast as it is, I should be a championship contender for sure," said Grint.

"It looks like the British championship will be very fair and professional this season, and bringing it into line with the format of World RX is certainly a good thing."

Albatec team principal Andy Scott, who has yet to announce his own driving plans for the upcoming season, has welcomed Grint's decision to

continue with his squad.

"There is no doubt that consistency is important for both team and driver, and I'm certain there's a lot more to come from James," said Scott.

"He proved last season that he could mix it with the category front-runners. His previous rally experience meant he was very quickly up to speed on the gravel aspect of rallycross tracks, and he's done some driving this year which he feels will help him on the Tarmac sections too."

World Rallycross lands new TV deal

Every round of the World Rallycross Championship will be shown live on free-to-air channel Quest in the UK and Ireland this season.

Quest broadcast the World RX finale from Argentina last season as it happened, the first time that rallycross had been live on free-to-air TV in the UK in three decades.

"It is incredibly exciting to bring live coverage of the entire World Rallycross Championship season to Quest in 2016," said the channel's Simon Downing. "The championship has proven increasingly popular with our viewers. Adding comprehensive coverage of all the action this year ignites our sports offering yet further."

Event highlights will also be broadcast on ITV4 on the Tuesday evening following events, and on Eurosport.

The British Rallycross Championship has also announced a new television deal for 2016.

BT Sport will broadcast one-hour highlights programmes produced by Globecast, which is also working with British RX organisers to provide online coverage after events have taken place.

"The focus in 2016 is to deliver successful events and prepare the championship for the future," said British RX manager Tim Whittington. "Having a quality TV product and a broadcaster who's engaged with the championship is a key part of that."

Morgan on show at Speed Festival

The local Morgan Car Company will take centre stage at the inaugural Bromyard Speed Festival in Herefordshire on April 3.

With 2500 spectators expected to visit the town, the event will be split into classes to showcase various car manufacturers.

The town's main streets will be closed to public traffic to create the course and there will be a number of trade stands and displays set up.

In a statement outlining the not-for-profit event, organisers have confirmed that it will be a free festival for the public.

More details on the festival are available by visiting bromyardspeedfestival.co.uk.



Jones will tackle the Junior Swift series this season and has European championship ambitions

Jones eyes a step into Europe after 2016 campaign in Junior Swift

Sam Jones is aiming for the Junior Swift title this season in his first full campaign in rallycross as a move to the Super1600 class beckons for next year.

His father Mike had built a works-based Super1600 version of the Suzuki Swift to compete with full-time this season, but will take a step back from racing to allow Sam to tackle the full Junior championship instead.

Jones Sr could run his son in the Super1600-specification car in the European championship in 2017.

"I learned a lot in 2015 and have gone from being a complete novice to winning heats," said Jones Jr. "I'm hoping to continue to improve this year."

"The Junior class is looking good [for 2016] with lots of new drivers. Hopefully I can finish on top of the table."

Of his possible progression to European Super1600 competition next season, Jones added: "The chance to race any car is superb but this car in Europe would be a dream come true."

The younger Jones will get support from Iain Swann, who previously helped Will Gollop and Andrew Jordan.

Croft in North Yorkshire hosts the opening Junior Swift event on March 6.

Photos: Hal Ridge

KEEPING IT IN THE RALLYCROSSING FAMILY

How the Bellerby clan is enjoying their sporting discipline. By Hal Ridge

Drew is part of a huge rallycrossing dynasty



Drew (l), David and Paige Bellerby

It isn't unusual for a father to be followed into motorsport by his offspring, even at the highest level. Look no further than Damon Hill, Nico Rosberg or Max Verstappen. In rallycross, father and son racing is commonplace, but it is rather more unusual for a driver's daughter to enter the discipline.

To have a father and two daughters competing in rallycross, and at the same time, is almost unheard of.

Dave Bellerby is regarded as one of the most accomplished drivers in the British rallycross paddock, having won championships in both front- and rear-wheel drive. He has made sporadic appearances behind the wheel in recent

seasons, while also helping his daughters, Paige, 20, and Drew, 17, to run a pair of cars. In 2015, all three won a British Championship event in their respective categories; Dave in RX150, Paige in SuperNational and Drew in the Junior division.

The older of the sisters, Paige, was brought up on rallycross and moved to the sport after a year in autograss when she was 12. Immediately competitive in the Junior RX class, she won the title in 2010 – the youngest female ever to win a British rallycross category crown.

Since mid-way through 2014, she has raced a Lotus Exige in SuperNational, not too dissimilar to that in which her father dominated the class in 2006 and 2007. Having got to grips with the supercharged rear-drive machine, Paige won the final round at Croft last season.

Drew will graduate to the senior Swift category for this season having spent the last two years battling for Junior honours. In both years she's won events, and only missed out on the title in final-round deciders. The youngest of the trio says she feels no pressure to perform, despite the success of her father and sister. "All Dad and Paige do is encourage me, and to win is just a bonus for us," says Drew. "We go out there to have fun and to win is even better. It was disappointing to just miss out on the title again last year."

Rallycross weekends for the Bellerbys are a busy affair, but experienced racer Dave says he wouldn't have it any other way, and to see his daughters succeed is very nearly as good as racing himself.

"Paige was coming racing when she was only a baby, sleeping in the back of

a Transit van," he explains. "Then when Drew came along, soon they were both there all the time. I don't push them to do it, they want to. Just watching them race is brilliant – they don't need to win for me, but when you see them do particularly well, it's overwhelming. I'm not one to show emotion, but it does choke you up a bit. I suppose it's every dad's dream. The key to it all is that they wouldn't have a car to race if they didn't fix it themselves, so we all work in the garage together most nights when we need to."

Building on strong performances last term, both sisters are aiming for silverware this season. Podiums in the Swift Sport class are a realistic prospect for Drew in her first year in the class, while Paige is targeting the SuperNational title. "I'm getting there

slowly with the Lotus," says Paige.

"I'm understanding how to drive it a lot better. I want number one this year."

Both girls are keen to see their father race at the sport's highest level too. "Neither of us are happy for Dad to just watch, we want him to be racing too," continues Paige.

Bellerby Sr has made the odd Supercar appearance previously, and says that is likely to be his next move this season. "I'm reasonably happy to watch the girls race, but I think my next move will be into a Supercar. It's unlikely to be early in the season, but hopefully towards the end of the year, that's where I intend to be."

There's no doubt that in the Bellerby family, rallycross runs in the blood, and Paige and Drew are proving that success can too. ■

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MN does not always agree with opinions expressed in letters

MN SAYS...

Rally Sweden dilemma is a concern

As the promoter faces financial turmoil, it is a worrying sign for the sport

The news that Rally Sweden's long-term future is in jeopardy is a worrying sign for the sport as a whole. It is an iconic event that has been on the World Rally Championship calendar since the competition was created in 1973.

There has been much hand-wringing over certain events, such as Corsica, and it all comes down to how much the promoters are asking for to host events. It is a common complaint and one that is not only restricted to the World Rally Championship either. Just look at the trouble the British Racing Drivers' Club has had to endure to protect the future of the British Grand Prix.

Of course money talks in all forms of motor racing, but when the scales get so impossible that some of the sport's truly legendary events are facing difficult futures, it could rip the heart out of the sport that we all love so much.

Matt James, Deputy Editor (Twitter: @MattJMNews)



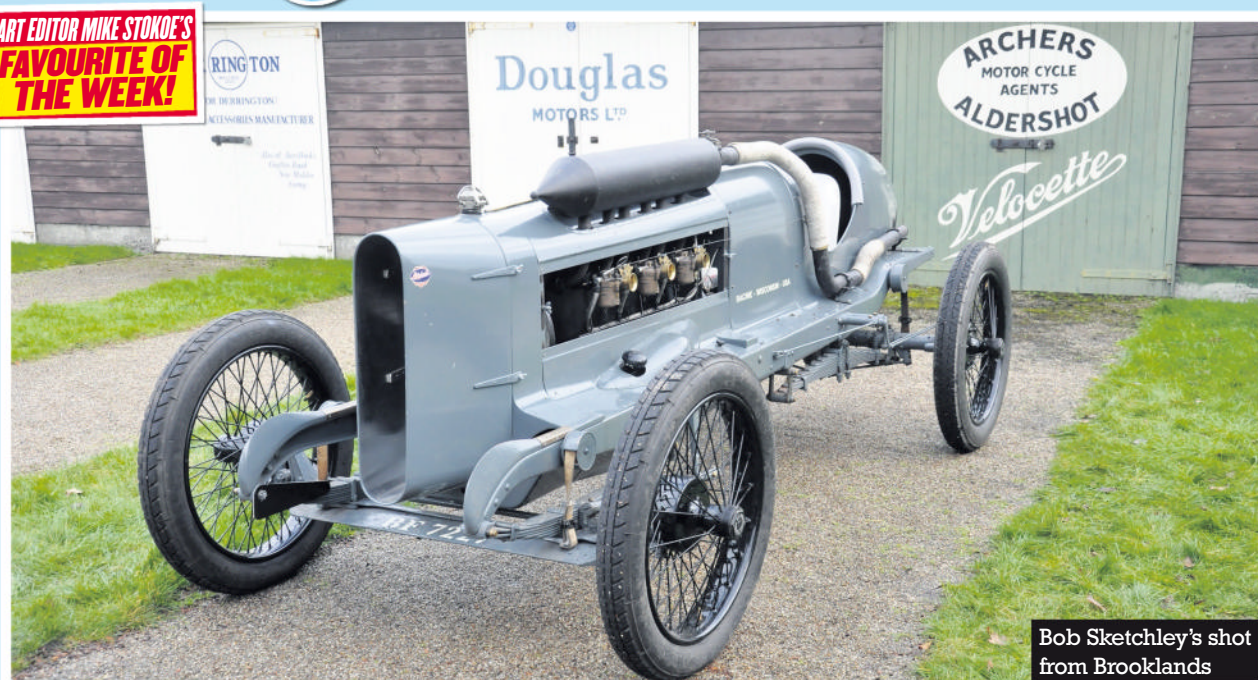
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ART EDITOR MIKE STOKOE'S FAVOURITE OF THE WEEK!



Bob Sketchley's shot from Brooklands



Peter Figg's shot from the recent rally at Brands Hatch



James Lomax sent in this photograph of a Metro 6R4



The BRSCC's champions crowned



Matt and new wife Catherine Shinnor sent in this photo from their recent trip to the Arctic Lapland Rally



Peter Figg's shot from the recent Winter Stages event



Samantha Nudd took this shot from testing at Snetterton



A classic rallying Ford, photographed by Graham Lomax

GET MN ON THE GO

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TV GUIDE



Norris leads TRS points

This week's TV guide theme is Brits abroad, so let's kick off with **Rally Sweden**, where Craig Breen will drive a works-backed WRC car for the first time. Catch the WRC magazine show (Thursday, 0930-1000hrs, BT Sport 1) for all the latest leading up to the event, and our WRC TV box (right) for when to catch live and as-live action.

Sticking with Brits in rallying, Phil Hall helped fellow Toyota junior driver Hiroki Arai to a podium in the **Arctic Lapland Rally** held in Finland (Saturday, 0835-0900hrs, Motors TV). Drivers like 2014 DMACK Trophy champion Sander Parn were also in action for what was an intriguing event.

Back on the asphalt, and multiple Brits did a fantastic job in flying the flag in the **Daytona 24 Hours**. Katherine Legge even led for a while in the DeltaWing... catch highlights here (Wednesday, 1035-1240hrs, Motors TV).

Finally – and this may be a first – the New Zealand **Toyota Racing Series** makes it into the TV guide (Saturday, 1925-2030hrs, Motors TV) but for a very good reason. Last year's inaugural MSA Formula champion Lando Norris is competing, and Motors offers a chance to watch the latest event, round three from Hampton Downs. Norris leads the points with two rounds left.

WRC TV RALLY SWEDEN

Channel 5

■ **Review:** Monday, 1900hrs, Channel 5

ITV4

■ **Review:** Tuesday, TBA

Motors TV End of day reviews

■ **Friday:** 2235-

2340hrs, Motors TV

■ **Saturday:** 2235-

2305hrs, Motors TV

■ **Sunday:** 2235-

2305hrs, Motors TV

BT Sport

Friday

■ **SS1:** 0600-0700hrs,

BT Sport 1

■ **End of day review:**

2230-2300hrs, BT Sport 1

Saturday

■ **SS12:** 0900-1000hrs,

BT Sport 1

■ **End of day review:**

2230-2300hrs,

BT Sport 1

Sunday

■ **SS21 (PowerStage):**

1100-1200hrs,

BT Sport 1

BOOK REVIEW

Brabham BT52 Owners' workshop manual

Haynes publishing

RRP £25.00

Andrew van de Burgt

There's something very satisfying about a good Haynes manual, and none more so than when its subject is retro 1980s Formula 1 cars.

The subject at hand is the Brabham BT52, a car that went on to win the 1983 Formula 1 World Championship with a radical design and extremely powerful BMW powerplant.

Not only do we get a real insight into the design brilliance of Gordon Murray in this offering, a real history is also on show from author Andrew van de Burgt, ex-editor of *Motorsport News*' sister publication *Autosport*.

From the early years of the team and its founder Jack Brabham, through to the Bernie Ecclestone period encompassing the BT52 and on to the sad demise of the Chessington marque, the history is charted excellently, and in excruciating detail as you would expect of any Haynes title.

The imagery is vivid, and the detail of the drivers involved in the entire BT52 project – including Stirling Moss and Ayrton Senna – give a real opportunity to relive some of the glory days of Formula 1.

Jack Benyon



LISTINGS

RALLYING SATURDAY

■ **Llandudno, North Wales**

Cambrian Rally

Starts 0801hrs **Admission**

free **Web** cambrianrally.co.uk/

■ **Goodwood, Chichester**

South Downs Stages

Starts 0900hrs

Admission free

Web southdownsstages.co.uk

■ **Kirkistown Circuit, Newtownards, Republic of Ireland**

Pacenotes Rally Magazine

Stages Rally

Starts 0930 **Admission** TBA

Web anicc.org.uk/

SUNDAY

■ **Piltown, Kilkenny,**

Republic of Ireland

Willie Loughman Forest Rally

Starts 0900hrs **Admission** TBA

Web carrickonsuirmotorclub.com

SPORTING SCENE

■ **Jiggers Jug Sporting Trial**

Sporting Trial Where: Colston's

Farm near Melmerby, Penrith

Cumbria **Starts:** 0930hrs

Admission: free

Web nptcc.org.uk

All details correct at time of going to press but please check before travelling to events.

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OUT WEDNESDAY FEBRUARY 17



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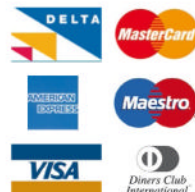
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	8x15	£94.00

Minilite style wheels from £64.00 £76.80

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Full listing of all Mk1 and Mk2 body panels on our website

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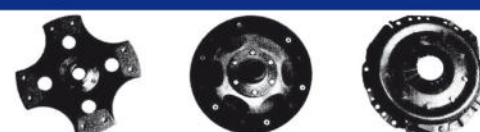

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ESCORT 1.6 TURBO 84-86	£152.38	£102.17	£146.58	TOYOTA GT4 TURBO 88-96	£264.03	£151.39	£203.06	HONDA CIVIC B16A	£300.72	£397.46
ESCORT 1.6 TURBO 86-90	£204.62	£102.17	£146.58	TOYOTA SUPRA 3.0 LTR	£414.10	£184.17	£211.63	HONDA INTEGRA TYPE R K20A	£356.37	£431.41
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FIAT COUPE 2.0 16V TURBO	£481.96	£162.85	£213.47	VAUXHALL ASTRA 1.8,2.0 8V	£191.71	£89.87	£169.25	MITSUBISHI EVO 4,5,6	£449.66	£528.94
FIESTA ST150	£204.01	£99.06	£169.25	VAUXHALL ASTRA 1.8,2.0 16V 82-92	£188.84	£149.97	£182.57	MITSUBISHI EVO 7,8,9	£460.20	£527.90
PUMA 1.7 LTR 16V	£198.08	£89.87	£169.25	VAUXHALL ASTRA 2.0 16V 92-98	£202.45	£149.97	£182.57	MITSUBISHI 215mm TWIN PLATE	£1,218.40	£1,423.06
HONDA ACCORD TYPE R	£234.75	£150.00	£177.96	VAUXHALL 2.0 CALIBRA TURBO 92-96	£202.45	£149.97	£195.36	NISSAN SUNNY GTIR TURBO	£427.27	£482.58
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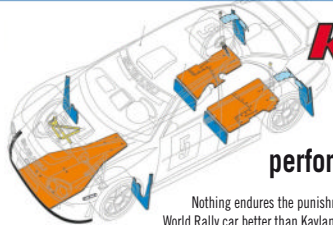
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CHAMPIONSHIP INDEX

NO	CHAMPIONSHIP
1	MSA English Rally Championship
2	ARR Craib MSA Scottish Rally Championship
3	Pirelli MSA Welsh National Rally Championship
4	MSA Northern Ireland Rally Championship
5	MSA Asphalt Rally Championship
6	MSA British Rally Championship
7	REIS BTRDA Rally Series
8	Mintex MSA British Historic Rally Championship
9	FUCHS Lubricants RAC Historic Asphalt Championship
10	Thomas BTRDA 1400 Championship
11	BTRDA Vial Equipment Rally First
12	MG ZR Rally Challenge
13	BTRDA Historic Cup
14	Association of Northern Car Clubs Forest Challenge
15	ANCC Tarmacadam Challenge
16	ANCC Multi-Use Challenge
17	Jelf Motorsport Welsh Clubman's Forest Rally Championship
18	J D Tyres Welsh Tarmacadam Championship
19	Hirefit King of Epynt
20	SG Petch Association of North East and Cumbria Car Clubs Stage Rally Championship
21	Association of West Midlands Motor Clubs Heart of England Rally Championship

NO	CHAMPIONSHIP
22	AS Performance North of England Tarmacadam Rally Championship
23	BP Motor Body Builders and Engineers Ltd Cotswold Motorsport Group Rally Championship
24	Hamilton Classic Ltd Association of Central Southern Motor Clubs Tarmacadam Rally Championship
25	Jelf Motorsport.com Association of Eastern Motor Clubs Stage Rally Championship
26	Eurocars Motorsport Manx Rally Championship
27	Alexander Calder Financial EMAMC Stage Rally Championship
28	ANEMMC Stage Rally Championship
29	Association of North Western Car Clubs Stage Rally Championship
30	ANWCC Forest Rally Championship
31	ANWCC Historic Rally Championship
32	ANWCC Forest Stage Championship
33	Association of South Western Motor Clubs Sealed Stage Rally Championship
34	ASWMC Loose Stage Rally Championship
35	FMP Rally Challenge
36	Britpart MSA British Cross Country Championship
37	Ecosse Challenge
38	Blackwood Scottish Tarmac Rally Championship
39	Brian Dennis Motorsport Welsh Historic Championship
40	HRCR Mintex Old Stager Rally Series

NO	CHAMPIONSHIP
41	HRCR Motorscope Northern Historic Asphalt Rally Championship
42	HRCR Motorscope Northern Historic Gravel Rally Championship
43	GwynneSpeed Rally Challenge
44	Super 1000 Rally Series
45	Formula 1000 Stage Rally Championship
46	Kick Energy Junior 1000 Rally Championship
47	Clonakilty Blackpudding Irish Tarmac Rally Championship
48	Irish Historic Tarmac Stage Rally Championship
49	Triton Showers Irish National Stage Rally Championship
50	Valvoline Motorsport Ireland forest Rally Challenge
51	Top Part West Coast Rally Championship
52	Southern 4 Rally Championship
53	Midlands East Rally Championship
54	Sligo Pallets Border Rally Championship
55	BTRDA Rally Challenge
56	Motorsport News Circuit Rally Championship in association with MSVR
57	Restruct Ltd Welsh Mixed Surface Championship incorporating the S P Challenge
58	SVP 205 Cup
59	Fiesta ST Trophy



INTERNATIONAL CHAMPIONSHIPS

FIA World Rally Championship

DATE	EVENT
Jan 21-24	Rallye Monte Carlo
Feb 11-14	Rally Sweden
March 3-6	Rally México
April 21-24	Rally Argentina
May 19-22	Rally Portugal
June 9-12	Rally Italy
July 1-3	Rally Poland
July 28-31	Rally Finland
Aug 18-21	Rally Germany
Sept 8-11	Rally China
Sept 29-Oct 2	Rally France
Oct 13-16	Rallye Spain
Oct 27-30	Wales Rally GB
Nov 17-20	Rally Australia
June 2-4	Rally Açores (POR)
June 23-25	Ypres Rally (BEL)
July 15-17	Rally Estonia (EST)
Aug 4-7	Rajd Rzeszowski, (POL)
Aug 26-28	Barum Czech Rally Zlin (CZE)
Oct 7-9	Cyprus Rally (CYP)

FIA European Rally Championship

DATE	EVENT
Feb 5-7	Rally Liepaja (LAT)
March 10-12	Rally Islas Canarias, Canary Islands
April 7-9	Circuit of Ireland
May 6-8	Acropolis Rally (GRE)

EVENT CALENDAR

FEBRUARY

DATE	EVENT	CHAMPIONSHIP
5/6	Legend Fires North West Stages	15, 22, 29
6/7	Corrib Oil Galway International Rally (IRL)	47, 48
7	Rali Cwm Gwendraeth	18, 35, 39
13	Cambrian Rally	3, 7, 10, 11, 12, 13, 30, 31, 32, 35, 58, 59
13	Sherrards Resourcing Southdown Stages (Goodwood)	24, 25
13	Eurocables Stages Rally (Kirkistown, NI)	4
14	Willie Loughman Forestry Rally (IRL)	50
20	Arnold Clark Jurys Inn Snowman Rally	2
20	Jack Neal Memorial Rally (Blyton)	27, 28, 29
21	Red Kite Stages (Llandovery)	8, 17, 34, 43, 57
21	Birr Stages Rally (IRL)	51, 53
26-28	Race Retro (Stoneleigh)	
27	Fivemiletown Spring Rally (NI)	
28	Able UK Riponian Rally	14, 20, 27, 30, 31, 32

APRIL

DATE	EVENT	CHAMPIONSHIP
2	Rally North Wales	3, 8, 30, 31, 32, 34
2	Get It Sideways Stages Rally (Down Ampney)	23, 43, 57
2	DCC Stages (Inglinton)	22, 38
3	Circuit of Kerry (IRL)	49, 51
3	Lookout Stages (Melbourne)	27, 28, 29
7/9	Circuit of Ireland (NI) ERC	4, 6, 47, 48
9/10	BCCC Myherin	36
10	TJS Self Drive Alan Healy Memorial Stages (Cadwell Park)	15, 56
16	Moonraker Forestry Rally (IRL)	50
16	Ballycastle Forest Stages (NI)	
16	Somerset Stages Rally	1, 7, 10, 11, 12, 13, 34, 55, 58, 59
17	JCMotor Services SMC Stages (Anglesey)	16, 29
23	McDonald & Munro Speyside Stages	2, 37
23	Lark in the Park (IRL)	
23	Horiba D'Isis Stages (MIRA)	21, 25, 27, 29
23/24	Salamandre Rally (Belgium)	9
24	Monaghan Stages Rally (IRL)	54
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30/1	Pirelli Carlisle Rally	6, 8, 20, 42

JUNE

DATE	EVENT
4	Severn Valley Stages (Builth Wells)
4/5	BCCC Forest Stages
5	Jim Clark Reivers F Stages
5	Abingdon Cariva Stages
5	Welsh Marches M Epynt Stages
11	DMACK Carlisle Stages
11	Mourne Rally (NI)
12	Mid-Summer Cae
12	Keith Frecker Memorial Weeton
12	Laois Heartlands M
17-19	Donegal Internati
18	Crail Summer Stag
18	Rally of the Midlan
19	Three Counties St
23/24	BCCC Ceri/Hafre
25	RSAC Scottish Ra
26	Flying Fortress Sta
26	Grafton Underwo
26	Raven's Rock Rally

MARCH

DATE	EVENT	CHAMPIONSHIP
5/6	Mid Wales Stages	3, 6, 17, 30, 31, 32, 35
5/6	Bovington Stages	9, 24, 33
6	Donington Park Stages	27, 28
6	Hotel Ballina - Kennedy Motors Mayo Stages Rally (IRL)	49, 54
12	Malcolm Wilson Stages	1, 7, 10, 11, 12, 13, 20, 30, 31, 32, 42, 58, 59
12	Rally Time Trial (Mull)	
12/13	Quality Hotel Clonakilty West Cork Rally (IRL)	47, 48, 52
13	Melvyn Evans Motorsport Tour of Epynt	5, 18, 19, 29, 57
13	Roskirk Stages (Three Sisters)	29, 44, 45, 46
19	Brick and Steel Border Counties Rally	1, 20, 37, 42
19	Memorial Garden Stages	
20	Lee Holland Memorial Trophy Rally (Anglesey)	15, 29, 45, 46, 56
20	AGBO Stages (Weston Park)	21, 40
20	Midland Moto Stages (IRL)	53
27	Tour of Caerwent	18, 23
29	Alan Healy Memorial Stages (Cadwell Park)	56

MAY

DATE	EVENT	CHAMPIONSHIP
1	Dixies Historic Challenge	19, 39, 40, 57
1	Middlewick Stages	25
1	TBC (Sheffield and Hallamshire Motor Club)	29
1	Harlech Stages (Llanbedr, Wales)	18, 29
2	St Angelo Stages Rally (TBC) (NI)	
6/7	Manx National Rally	5, 26, 29, 55
7	Tour of Sperrins (NI)	50
7/8	Kames Rally (Muirkirk)	
7/8	BCCC Bovington North	36
8	Cetus Solutions Stages (Three Sisters)	29
8	Carlow Stages Rally (IRL)	49
14	Plains Rally	3, 7, 10, 11, 12, 13, 17, 30, 31, 32, 58, 59
15	John Overend Memorial Stages (Melbourne)	16, 27, 28, 29, 44, 46
21	Loughgall Stages (TBC) (NI)	
21/22	Subaru WRC Spares TSH Stages (Portreath)	24, 33, 43
22	Lawrence Landfill Dale Stages (TBC)	18, 39
28	Red Dragon I.T Stages (Down Ampney)	22, 23, 40
29	Cavan Stages Rally (IRL)	49, 54

JULY

DATE	EVENT
2/3	Mach 1 Stages
2	Lurgan Park Rally
3	ALMC Stages
3	Enville Stages (A
9/10	Nicky Grist Stages
10	Greystoke Stage
10	Connacht Sligo Stages Rally (IR
17	Brawdy Stages
17	Twyford Stages
17	Imokilly Mini Stage Rally (IRL)
24	Sam Helen Rally Time Trial (Brech
30	Tyrone Stages (N
31	Harry Flatters Ra



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AUGUST		
DATE	EVENT	CHAMPIONSHIP
6	Dogleap Stages (NI)	
6	Carfax Stages (Throckmorton)	23, 24, 33, 38, 40
6	Solway Coast Rally	32, 44, 45, 46
7	Tyneside Stages	1, 5, 22, 38, 41, 55
7	Phoenix Stages	16, 27, 28
7	Tipperary Stonethrowers Stages (IRL)	49
13	Coltel Communications Grampian Rally	2, 37
13	Purbeck Forest Stages Rally	34
14	Jim Walsh Cork Forestry (IRL)	50
19/20	Ulster Rally	4, 6, 47, 48
20	Red Dragon Stages (Walters Arena)	8, 17, 30, 31, 32, 34, 35, 57
21	Centenary Stages (venue TBC)	27, 29, 56
21	Westmeath Rallysprint (IRL)	53
26	Sunset Rally	(TBC)
27	Gareth Hall Memorial Stages (Trawsfynydd)	29, 43
28	Mewla Rally (Epynt)	5, 18, 19, 21, 29, 39, 55
28	Galway Summer Rally	54
29	The Online Kitchen Wethersfield Stages	(TBC)

OCTOBER		
DATE	EVENT	CHAMPIONSHIP
1	Trackrod Forest Stages	1, 7, 10, 11, 12, 13, 14, 20, 30, 32, 55, 58, 59
1/2	Cork '20' (IRL)	47, 48, 52
1	EMC Clubman Stages (NI)	
2	Harold Palin Memorial Stages (Fulbeck)	28
8	Donegal Harvest Stages (IRL)	49, 54
9	Adgespeed Stages (Three Sisters)	16, 29
9	Cheviot Keith Knox Stages (Otterburn)	5, 9, 15, 22, 41
14-16	Mull Rally	29
14/15	Jersey Rally	24, 38
15	Down Rally (NI)	4
16	Mayo Forest Stages Rally (IRL)	50
22	Challenger Stages (TBC) (Bovington)	33
23	Peter Lloyd Rallying Stages (Pembrey)	18, 43, 44, 45, 46
23	Dukeries Rally (Donington Park)	21, 27, 28
23	GSMC Mini Stages Rally (IRL)	53
27-30	Wales Rally GB	
30	Fastnet Stages Rally (IRL)	52

NOVEMBER		
DATE	EVENT	CHAMPIONSHIP
5	Glens of Antrim Rally (NI)	50
5/6	BCCC Walters Arena	36
5	Neil Howard Stages (Oulton Park)	56
5	Kingdom Stages (Crail)	38
6	Malton Forest Rally	1, 14, 20, 27, 42
6	Lynn Charity Stages (Sculthorpe)	25
11/12	Pokerstars Stages (IoM)	26, 29
12	Wyedean Stages	3, 17, 30, 34, 39, 43, 57
12	Bishopscourt Stages (NI)	
20	Cadwell Stages	27, 28, 29, 44, 45, 46, 56(TBC)
26	Grizedale Stages	14, 20
26	Regency Stages (Shepton Mallet)	23, 24, 33
26/27	Glyn Memorial Stages (Anglesey)	18, 29, 36, 44, 45, 46, 56 (TBC)
26	Hall Trophy (Blyton)	16, 27, 28, 29

DECEMBER		
DATE	EVENT	CHAMPIONSHIP
3	Killarney Historic Rally (IRL)	
3/4	Rockingham Stages	
28	Jaffa Stages (Pembrey)	(TBC) 56(TBC)
30	Turkey Run	(TBC)

SEPTEMBER		
DATE	EVENT	CHAMPIONSHIP
2/3	Promenade Stages (New Brighton)	15,29
3	Woodpecker Stages	1, 3, 7, 10, 11, 12, 13, 17, 30, 31, 32, 34, 35, 58, 59
3	Lakeland Stages (NI)	50
4	Smeatharpe Stages	33
10/11	BCCC Bovington South	36
10/11	Wexford Stages Rally (IRL)	
10	Galloway Hills Rally	2, 37, 42
10	Granite City Rally (TBC)	
11	Pendragon Stages (Warcop Ranges)	15, 22, 29, 38, 41
11	Vale of York Stages (Melbourne)	27, 28, 29
15-17	Rally Isle of Man	6, 8, 9, 26, 40, 48
18	Clare Stages Rally (IRL)	49
24/25	Kames Rally	37
24	Omagh Bushwhacker Rally (NI)	4
24	Pendle Heroes Stages (Weeton)	29
25	Patriot Stages (Caerwent)	5, 21, 23, 24, 33, 35, 39, 44, 45, 46, 57
30/1	Trackrod Historic Stages	8, 31, 42

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CHAMPIONSHIPS AT A GLANCE

MSA British Rally Championship	
DATE	CHAMPIONSHIP
Mar 5/6	Mid-Wales Stages
Apr 7-9	Circuit of Ireland
Apr 30/May 1	Pirelli Carlisle Rally
June 25	RSAC Scottish Rally
July 9/10	Nicky Grist Stages
Aug 19/20	Ulster Rally
Sep 15-17	Rally Isle of Man

BTRDA Rally Series	
DATE	CHAMPIONSHIP
Feb 13	Cambrian Rally
Mar 12	Malcolm Wilson Rally
Apr 16	Somerset Stages
May 14	Plains Rally
Jun 11	Carlisle Stages Rally
Jul 9	Nicky Grist Stages Rally
Sep 3	Woodpecker Stages
Oct 1	Trackrod Forest Stages

MSA Scottish Rally Championship	
DATE	CHAMPIONSHIP
Feb 20	Snowman Rally
Mar 19	Border Counties Rally
Apr 23	Speyside Stages
Jun 5	Jim Clark Reivers Rally
Jun 25	RSAC Scottish Rally
Aug 13	Grampian Stages
Sep 10	Galloway Hills Rally

Irish Tarmac Rally Championship	
DATE	CHAMPIONSHIP
Feb 6/7	Galway International Rally
Mar 12/13	West Cork Rally
Apr 7-9	Circuit of Ireland Rally
Apr 30/May 1	International Rally of the Lakes
Jun 17-19	Donegal International Rally
Aug 19/20	Ulster Rally
Oct 1/2	Cork '20'

MSA Asphalt Rally Championship	
DATE	CHAMPIONSHIP
Mar 13	Tour of Epynt
May 6/7	Manx National Rally
Jul 3	ALMC StagesMeath
Aug 7	Tyneside Stages
Aug 28	Mewla Rally
Sep 25	Patriot Stages
Oct 9	Cheviot Keith Knox Stages

BTRDA Rally Challenge	
DATE	CHAMPIONSHIP
Apr 16	Somerset Stages
May 6/7	Manx National Rally
Jun 11	Carlisle Stages
Jul 9	Nicky Grist Stages Rally
Aug 7	Tyneside Stages
Aug 28	Mewla Rally
Oct 1	Trackrod Forest Stages

British Historic Rally Championship	
DATE	CHAMPIONSHIP
Feb 21	Red Kite Stages
Apr 2	North Wales Stages
Apr 30	Pirelli Carlisle Rally
Jun 4	Severn Valley Stages
Jul 31	Harry Flatters
Aug 20	Red Dragon Rally
Sep 15-17	Rally Isle of Man
Sep 30/Oct 1	Trackrod Historic Cup

R.A.C Historic Asphalt Rally Championship	
DATE	CHAMPIONSHIP
Mar 5/6	Bovington Stages
Apr 23/24	Salamandre Rally, Belgium
Jul 31	Harry Flatters
Sep 15-17	Rally Isle of Man
Oct 9	Cheviot Keith Knox Stages

MSA Welsh Stage Rally Championship	
DATE	CHAMPIONSHIP
Feb 13	Cambrian Rally
Mar 6	Mid-Wales Stages
Apr 2	Rally North Wales
May 14	Plains Rally
Jun 4	Severn Valley Stages
Jul 9/10	Nicky Grist Stages Rally
Sep 3	Woodpecker Stages
Nov 12	Wydean Stages

MSA Northern Ireland Rally Championship	
DATE	CHAMPIONSHIP
Feb 13	Kirkistown Stages
Apr 8/9	Circuit of Ireland
May 7	Tour of the Sperrins
Jun 11	Mourne Rally
Jul 30	Tyrone Stages Rally
Aug 19/20	Ulster Rally
Sep 24	Bushwhacker Rally
Oct 15	Down Rally

GwynneSpeed Rally Challenge	
DATE	CHAMPIONSHIP
Feb 21	Red Kite Stages
Apr 2	Get It Sideways Stages
May 21/22	TSH Stages
Jul 10	Brawdy Stages
Aug 7	FODMC Time Trial (TBC)
Aug 27	Gareth Hall Memorial Stages
Oct 23	Peter Lloyd Stages
Nov 12	Wyedean Rally
Dec 3/4	Rockingham Stages

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