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MOTORSPORT NEWS

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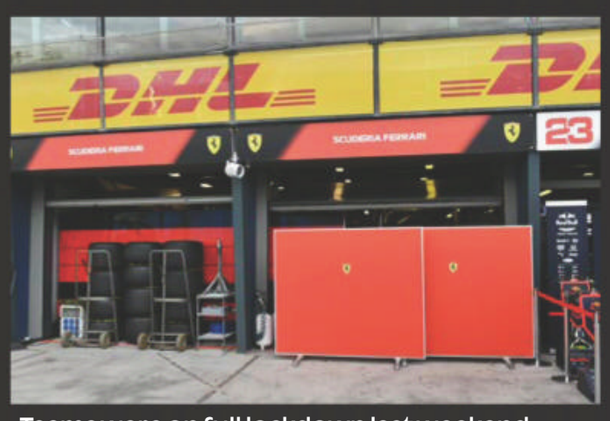

## OGIER WINS RALLY MEXICO

Toyota man claims glory on truncated WRC counter

P12

### National and international calendars devastated by global health crisis

# MELTDOWN!




Teams were on full lockdown last weekend



Fans in Melbourne were prepared for the race




Chase Carey tells the world that F1 is cancelled

**By Matt James**

**Worldwide motorsport has been scrapped in the wake of the coronavirus pandemic and organisers are facing an increasing headache to reschedule events and save the 2020 season.**

The opening three grands prix in Australia, Bahrain and Vietnam have been axed, and the fourth round in China was postponed a month ago. It is still unclear whether the contest will resume at the Dutch Grand Prix in Zandvoort on May 3.

Rally Mexico took place last weekend but was cut short to allow competitors and teams enough time to return to their home countries in the midst of a worldwide travel shutdown. The following event in Argentina has also been axed.

World sportscars, Formula E and IndyCar are also among the headline events which have been scrapped.

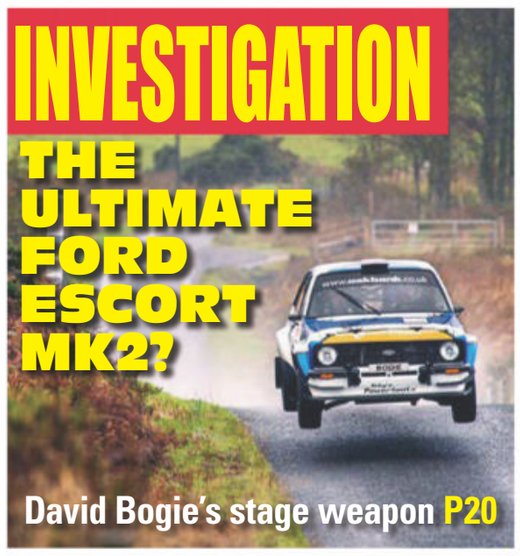
On the national racing and rallying scene, a host of events have been cancelled, but the opening round of the British Touring Car Championship, scheduled to take place at Donington Park on March 28-29, was still set to take place as Motorsport News closed for press. However, this is subject to change should any advice be issued by the UK government.

**Full story, p4-5**

THE VOICE OF BRITISH MOTORSPORT MOTORSPORT NEWS

## INVESTIGATION

THE ULTIMATE FORD ESCORT MK2?



David Bogie's stage weapon P20

## INSIGHT



THE FUTURE IS RIGHT NOW

The latest single-seater crop P24

## COLUMN



ASTON ACE JONATHAN ADAM

GT serial title winner speaks to MN P22

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# COMMENT

Photos: Jakob Ebrey



The British Touring Car Championship is due to take place at Donington Park on March 29

# MAKING THE RIGHT DECISIONS

**It seems slightly churlish to describe a feeling of disappointment that the Australian Grand Prix didn't take place when people are losing their lives. There are so many issues affecting countries around the globe right now that a few cars running around in circles in Albert Park is insignificant.**

Most top-level sport has been wiped out while governments and sports organisations take the necessary precautions to make sure that the coronavirus pandemic does not worsen.

So everything is subject to a hiatus now. The last round of the World Rally Championship in Mexico was binned before the final day had taken place to allow teams and drivers to make their way home. That was a radical, but highly sensible, decision.

It has been something of a moving target over the course of the last seven days to find out exactly what motor racing will do as a result of the health issues and, as Motorsport News closed for press, a number of organising bodies are waiting from clarification from the government over any restrictions that might be placed on large gatherings.

By the time you read this publication on Wednesday, and grave situation might have become even worse and there could well be total lockdown.

There is a desire to keep some events going, though, and it has even been acknowledged that sport has a positive impact on the public's mental health. But can any motorsport even truly justify itself amid the current landscape? For example, no motorsport event can take place without a significant support network of medical staff and, right now, any medical experts will be deployed on more important tasks.

This week's Motorsport News is also slightly different. In a response to reader feedback, and we thank everyone who was motivated to get in touch, a significant section MN will now go to press on Monday. That will allow is to carry the very latest results from each of the major championships – but now, it seems, we will have a few weeks to wait before there will be any results to print.



**Matt James**
matt.james@kelsey.co.uk

MOTORSPORT NEWS

ISSUE MJ3223 MARCH 18 2020

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Global and national events are axed amid virus fears



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David Bogie on his bonkers Ford Escort Mk2



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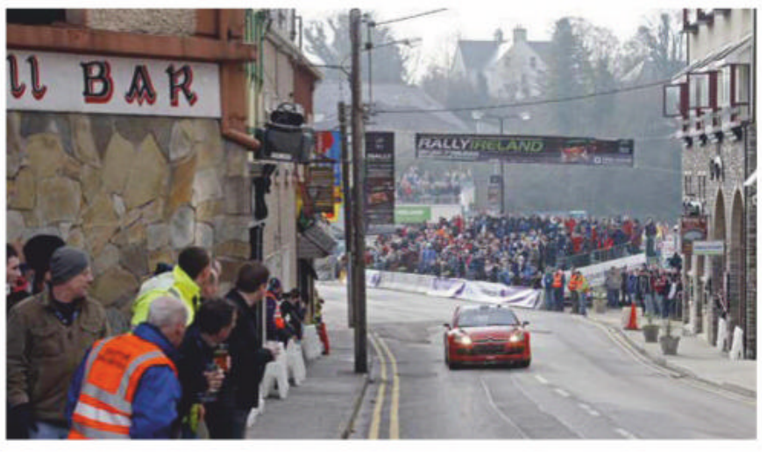
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We assess the British F4 line-up for 2020

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Is Britain's WRC encounter looking west?




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Flux goes back in time

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# HEADLINE NEWS




The Australian GP faced a red light last week

# CALENDAR CRISIS AS VIRUS THREAT

## National and international organisers faced with huge reshuffle as events are axed amid health fears

By Matt James

**Motorsport bosses around the globe are facing an organisational headache as calendars have been decimated by the spread of the coronavirus.**

There was widespread anger among the Formula 1 fraternity, including world champions Lewis Hamilton and Sebastian Vettel, as the plug was pulled on the Australian Grand Prix on the eve of the opening round of the season. The drivers felt that F1 should not have scheduled the race at all amid the increasing crisis.

The opening four grands prix have now been axed, with the contest slated to kick off in Holland at the beginning of May.

World Rally Championship bosses were forced to abandon Rally Mexico after three of its scheduled four days to allowed teams and drivers to return home as flights and travel were becoming increasingly affected. Rally Argentina has been canned, which means the WRC too will not resume until May at the earliest.

Bosses of several other international championships have announced that the series' have been put on ice, including IndyCar, Formula E, NASCAR and International GT and sportscar racing. World Rallycross (*see separate story*) has also been affected.

The second round of the British Rally Championship, the West Cork Rally, which was a joint round with the Irish Tarmac Rally contest, was cancelled ahead of last weekend (*see separate story*), while a limited number of other events were run.

There is some uncertainty over national racing events (*see story, right*). The chairman of Motorsport UK, David Richards, told Autosport: "It's early days and all we can do is follow government advice when it comes to this and look at the best practice.

"Clearly it's a concern to everybody but we just have to see what happens next and react accordingly. I don't think we necessarily need to preempt any decisions and nor do we need to overreact."

As MN closed for press, the UK government had issued a request that only essential travel took place and last weekend's major sporting events were cancelled, Most of those that did run were performed without spectators.

The opening rounds of the British Touring Car Championship, scheduled to take place at Donington Park on March 28-29, were still going ahead as MN closed for press. However further advice from the UK government was expected, which would eliminate mass gatherings and mean the event would be axed.

BTCC boss Alan Gow said: "We are following any advice that has been issued, clearly, but currently we are planning to go ahead as usual.

"If there is a further directive, then we will heed it."

The BTCC was due to host its media day at Silverstone, which was due to be open to the public, yesterday (Tuesday).




As MN closed for press, the BTCC was go...

### 'BUSINESS AS USUAL' FOR UK NATIONAL RACING

With the UK's national racing season starting in earnest this weekend, at the time of writing national clubs say that, despite coronavirus, it is business as usual and events will continue as scheduled.

A statement issued by MotorSport Vision Racing, which runs Brands Hatch, Cadwell Park, Donington Park. Oulton Park and Snetterton, said that "it is unlikely that there will be any form of government requirement to suspend club racing, given the small spectator numbers," plus open-air events, as things stand, "are not a major contributory factor in the spread of viruses".

There will though be additional precautions at meetings such as hand sanitiser at sign-on and that anyone with symptoms should not attend. Clubs also though are monitoring the developing situation. If meetings are cancelled due to authorities many clubs have promised to refund entry fees and tickets, or transfer fees to a rescheduled meeting.

The Scottish Motor Racing Club is in a slightly different position, as the Scottish Government has announced that from Monday this week all gatherings above 500 people with the potential to impact emergency services should be cancelled. An SMRC statement on Monday said "we are we are monitoring our position on upcoming events and particularly, round 1 on April 5".

The club was due to provide a further update, after discussion with Knockhill, just after MN went to press.

### NEW IRISH AND BRITISH DATES BEING LOOKED AT

The West Cork Rally could run on a date either side of June's Donegal International and August's Ulster Rally as a replacement for its lost round, Motorsport News understands.

Informal discussions about rescheduling the Clonakilty-based event have already taken place between West Cork Rally officials, Irish Tarmac Rally Championship and British Championship bosses and Motorsport Ireland representatives.

A source told MN: "It will, of course, all depend on what other events are taking place between June and August, but if there is a window of opportunity there, and if we can make it work, we will."

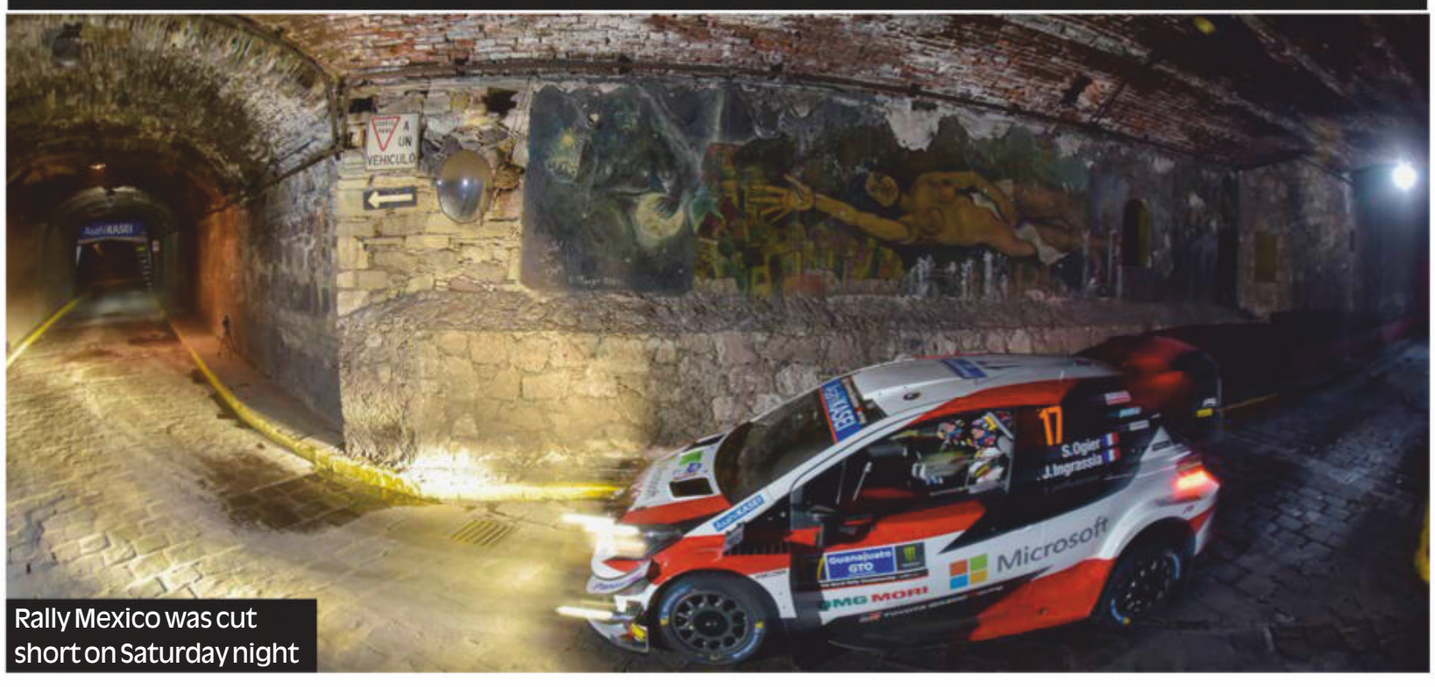
Irish Tarmac Championship manager Paddy Flanagan says he will support whatever efforts are made to run West Cork at a later date but admitted the next few months could pose fresh challenges for the series – and motor clubs. "If we lose the Circuit of Ireland and Killarney then that will be a massive hit for the sport in Ireland," he said. "If Donegal fails to run as planned that only compounds matters."

# MOTORSPORT IN LOCKDOWN

Photos: Jakob Ebrey, LAT, mcklein-imagedatabase.com, fiaworldrallycross.com




Richards: Motorsport UK is pragmatic




Rally Mexico was cut short on Saturday night

# FOR MOTORSPORT RAMPS UP

## BRITISH RALLY CHAMPIONSHIP REACTS TO POSTPONED WEST CORK

British Rally Championship manager Iain Campbell has told Motorsport News that the decision to postpone the West Cork Rally was a "sad one" but the series fully supports the organisers' decision.

The decision was made to cancel the rally just after Thursday lunchtime last week – less than two days before the rally was due to commence. Several competitors were therefore forced into quickly reconsidering their travel plans to avoid being trapped in Ireland as the UK and Ireland continually reviewed their travel policies. Motorsport News understands that several made their way to Wexford, 141 miles north-east of Clonakilty, to board the earliest possible ferry they could while one competitor is believed to have spent over £700 on a flight to Manchester.

Others, including Junior BRC contender Rupert Flynn, stayed in Ireland an extra day and recced the stages anyway for extra practice.

"You can imagine what it means to Clonakilty, it is hugely beneficial to them across the whole weekend [and] what they put on there is a world class event," Campbell told MN.

"We really feel for them but also feel for all of our competitors. Everybody was there with their cars because scrutineering was on Friday. Some had been there testing that week already so it's bad news. It's a huge financial outlay for the car club, it's a huge financial outlay for our competitors. It's a sad one but when you look around [they had no alternative]."




BRC faces a tough season

The BRC is working with Motorsport Ireland to arrange an alternative date for West Cork, but MI "acknowledge" that any date it agrees may not the suitable for the BRC. Wales Rally GB will be added to the calendar as the championship's reserve event should this be the case.

## WRC EVENT HALTED MID-WAY THROUGH; RALLY ARGENTINA AXED

The WRC fraternity was given the chance to make an early exit from an event some thought should not have gone ahead in the first place when Rally Mexico was called off last Saturday.

With Sunday's route, including the points-paying powerstage, still left to run, the factory teams and WRC Promoter made a joint request to the event organisers for an early stop – mindful of the fact that 75 per cent of the distance had been covered for full points to be awarded.

While the decision, which was made with the FIA's full backing, was put down to the "fast-changing travel restrictions connected with the global COVID-19 outbreak", there were suggestions from within the service park in Leon that enough was enough in light of the worsening situation in Europe and the mass cancellation of sport globally.

Winner Sebastien Ogier said it was "strange to race in a critical situation", while one unnamed team principal reportedly lobbied to have the event called off before teams left Europe.




Coronavirus testing in Mexico

Personnel entering and leaving the service park were made to apply hand sanitiser, while some were prevented from accessing public areas. However, plans to close the service park to the public on Saturday were shelved.

Meanwhile, teams had been informed on Thursday that the earliest the WRC would resume post-Mexico would be on May 21, the start of Rally de Portugal. The news followed the 'postponement' of Rally Argentina, which Motorsport News understands there is little chance of running later in the year due to logistical issues.

## GOODWOOD COULD FALL UNDER HEALTH FEAR

Most UK promoters and organisers in historic motor sport were playing a waiting game as MN closed for press on Monday morning. Should the UK government impose a ban on large outdoor gatherings, then many events are likely to be impacted.

The first major historic meeting of the 2020 calendar is the Goodwood Members' Meeting, which is scheduled for March 28-29. However, this now appears to be in serious jeopardy.

Events across Europe have already been cancelled or postponed, including the Peter Auto Paul Ricard race meeting and Tour Auto Optic 2000 (*see historics, page 18*).

The first major rallying cancellation was the 68th Costa Brava Rally in Spain, which was due to run last weekend. With many European crews, including several UK competitors, already at the rally base in Girona, the decision was made to cancel the event on Thursday afternoon.

The rally was due to have been the opening round of the FIA European Historic Sporting Rally Championship and had an entry of over 160 cars.

The second round of the FIA European Historic Sporting Rally Championship, the 35th Historic San Remo Rally in Italy planned for April 3-4 had already been postponed to an undetermined later date.



Uncertainty over Goodwood




Spain's WRX round is binned

## WORLD RALLYCROSS FACES A DELAYED START TO THE SEASON

The World Rallycross Championship's first round in Spain on April 18-19 has been postponed.

Catalan authorities had increased measures to combat the coronavirus outbreak in the Spanish region last week, which led to the announcement by World RX organisers on Friday.

That was the same day that the Spanish government declared a state of alarm in the country from Saturday, following the rapid growth of cases in the country.

A statement released by World RX promotor IMG said: "In light of the Generalitat de Catalunya's decree to currently suspend all live sporting events in response to the evolving COVID-19 situation, this year's World RX of Catalunya-Barcelona has been postponed. This decision was made after careful consideration and consultation with the FIA, the Spanish ASN and the local event organiser, as the health and safety of everyone involved remains the top priority. We are looking into an alternative date for the event in conjunction with the local event organiser."

No information has been released about the second round of World RX, set to take place at Montalegre in Portugal on May 2-3. But, with case numbers rising in Portugal over the weekend, that event too now looks unlikely.

In the UK the BTRDA Clubman Rallycross Championship's opener at Blyton Park next week and the British Rallycross Championship's opening round at Lydden Hill on Easter weekend could be in doubt if the UK government bans large events and gatherings.

The impact on short oval racing in the UK has yet to be determined, with organsiers also waiting on direction from government before making any decisions.

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# RACING NEWS

Photos: Toyota GB, Jakob Ebrey, Gary Hill, BMW




The Corolla is now a Gazoo...

# SPEEDWORKS BECOMES TOYOTA GAZOO RACING FOR BTCC ATTACK

## Closer links with Japanese firm for Tom Ingram's bid for 2020 glory

By Matt James

**The British Touring Car Championship squad Speedworks Motorsport will run under the Toyota Gazoo Racing UK banner in 2020.**

The Gazoo Racing umbrella name is employed across all of the Japanese firm's leading motorsport programmes. Gazoo is the moniker used by the firm's World Rally Championship arm, and also the World Endurance Championship attack, where it has twice won Le Mans. Fernando Alonso also took part in the recent Dakar Rally at the wheel of a Toyota Hilux Gazoo machine.

Speedworks gained factory backing last season as it entered a new Toyota Corolla into the championship. Ingram finished sixth in the points last year with four race victories.

The Cheshire-based team also confirmed recently that it would run one of the new Toyota GR Supra GT4 cars in this season's British GT Championship, which will be driven by James Kell and Sam Smelt.

Speedworks boss Christian Dick said the move to align the BTCC team with Toyota's identity was a huge step.

He said: "To see the Corolla running under the Toyota Gazoo Racing UK banner this season will be a great incentive for everyone in the team and for all of our fans, as it connects us directly with one of the world's most successful motorsport operations. It is an absolute honour and clear validation of the outstanding effort put in by each and every member of the Speedworks crew, of whom I am immensely proud. We are all very much looking forward to building upon what we achieved in the Corolla's maiden campaign last year and mounting an even stronger championship challenge in 2020."

Ingram, who was the back-to-back Independents Trophy winner in the BTCC in 2017-2018, has visited the Gazoo WEC team to get an insight into one of its test programmes and have a guided tour of the TS050 Hybrid. He has also sampled Toyota Gazoo Racing's simulator.

The 26-year-old said: "The last few years have been an absolute whirlwind, from our Independent Trophy title wins to the arrival of official manufacturer support in 2019 and now the close affiliation with Toyota Gazoo Racing, whose pedigree in motorsport speaks for itself."

## Organisational tweaks at BRSCC for 2020

**The British Racing and Sports Car Club has created a new deputy race operations role to be undertaken by Mandy Andrew, previously coordinator of BRSCC's various Mazda MX-5 categories.**

**Andrew had been coordinator of the club's MX-5 racing since 2016 and in her new role will work alongside race operations and general manager Paul McErlean in overseeing all of BRSCC's racing.**

**"The role is part of the BRSCC's strategy to build their development team," Andrew told Motorsport News. "While it will be a challenge, I look forward to helping shape the future of the club and its portfolio throughout 2020 and beyond."**

**Lyndsay Close, who has been part of the club's coordination team for four seasons, replaces Andrew as coordinator of the MX-5 Championship and SuperCup – the latter newly merged back with the MX-5 Super Series.**

**"Having been involved with the Mazda paddock over 10 years, naturally I'm sad to be leaving my post as coordinator," Andrew continued. "I know it will be in good hands with Lyndsay Close taking over and I have every faith she will ensure both championships continue to succeed."**



Neal (left) explored the limits on his BTCC comeback

## BTCC CHAMP NEAL RETURNS TO THE COCKPIT AND PLOT FULL RACE RETURN

Three-time British Touring Car champion Matt Neal is confident of being able to make a competitive return to the category this year after his first test following multiple injuries he sustained in a mountain bike crash in January.

The Team Dynamics Honda Civic Type R racer suffered a broken clavicle, multiple shoulder fractures, a broken rib and a collapsed lung after the spill and has been battling to return to fitness.

The early testing work on the revamped Civic Type R has been conducted by his team-mate Dan Cammish and Gordon Shedden, who claimed his three BTCC crowns with the squad.

Neal was given the all-clear to return to the driving seat last week and ran for two days at Brands Hatch.

The 53-year-old said that he was pleased to be back in action and that the discomfort he suffered was not insurmountable. "I think I did about 100 laps in total," he said. "I wasn't too keen on doing full race runs though. The HANS device sits on my clavicle, but that wasn't where I was getting the most pain. That came from the seats, which are built to strict FIA standards. There is very little give, and I could certainly feel it for a few days afterwards.

"There are still a few weeks to the start of the season and that will give me time to get fully back to health."

Neal said that despite the limited running and the mixed conditions, he was able to assess some of the upgrades that have been made to the hatchback over the closed season. "There are some things that the team has done and I could already get a positive feeling from those," he said. "That makes me more determined to be ready for the start of the season."

## Fuller deputised for Bushell in Team Hard VW CC

Howard Fuller will return to the British Touring Car Championship grid in 2020 to replace Mike Bushell, who is recovering from a medical condition.

Bushell was due to tackle the 30-race campaign in a Team Hard VW CC, but was diagnosed with myocarditis while on holiday ahead of the season. The Kent-based racer has had to stand down while he recovers and Fuller, who last raced in the BTCC in a Vauxhall Insignia in 2013, will step into the seat.

Fuller, who has contested races in a number of categories including the TCR UK series, since moving away from the BTCC, said: "There's no doubt things will be a bit rusty but I'm physically and mentally prepared for the challenge. The speed will come organically, the team know I can do it, and so do I. Obviously the circumstances aren't ideal with Mike unfortunately not being able to race, he'll be missed. He is a real character of the paddock and one of the fastest."

Team Hard boss Tony Gilham said he was confident the team would be able to help Fuller, 27, get on the pace. Gilham said: "Being totally honest with myself, whilst Howard was ready as a driver, we weren't ready as a team at the top level [when we last ran him]. [This year] will finally see what we can achieve together where we are both more than prepared at the same time."



Fuller to make BTCC return




**The Team BMW BTCC squad has taken the wraps off its new livery which it will use in 2020. The WSR-run cars, which finished 2019 1-2 in the competition and took the drivers and manufacturers-constructors silverware, will be driven by Colin Turkington, Andrew Jordan and Tom Oliphant.**

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# RACING NEWS

## IN BRIEF

**Redline recruits pair**
Ten-time Porsche Carrera Cup GB champion Redline Racing has confirmed 20-year-old Argentinian Dorian Mansilla and experienced racer Jamie Orton as the team's first two drivers of its 2020 Carrera Cup entry. Mansilla embarks on his second season of car racing while Orton starts his fourth consecutive Carrera Cup campaign and competed in three events with Redline in 2017. "Both drivers have shown they are quick behind the wheel of a Porsche 911 GT3 Cup car and are brilliant additions to our line-up this season," said team boss Simon Leonard.

**Hunt in SuperCup**
Two-time Ginetta GT4 SuperCup runner-up Will Burns is aiming for the title this season with Rob Boston Racing. Burns after two years away returned to the championship with the team last season and took second in the standings behind Harry King. "I definitely come into 2020 with unfinished business in the series," Burns said. "To twice take the title battle down to the final race of the season and miss out is agonising."

**Father-and-son again**
Reigning Radical Team Challenge champions Chris and Daniel Headlam will return to defend their title with Lanan Racing this season. The father-and-son pairing in their debut campaign as a duo last year claimed the title after totalling eight class wins. "The Team Challenge is a fantastic combination of endurance, sprint and strategy and last year we never had a dull moment," Chris said. "We are hoping for a repeat performance this year, but with reduced lap times!"

**De Sadeleer's back**
Radical Challenge 2019 championship runner-up Jerome de Sadeleer will return this year to take another shot at the title with 360 Racing. De Sadeleer heads a five-strong line-up at the decorated team, for which the outright Challenge crown is one of the few trophies missing from its cabinet. "I'm not here to mess about, it's maximum effort to win this season," de Sadeleer said.

Photos: Jakob Ebrey, IHI Automotive Photography


Grundtvig's CV has French and Danish F4 experience


Browning already has two British F4 victories

# BROWNING AIMS FOR F4 CHAMPIONSHIP AFTER FORTEC MOTORSPORT SWITCH

## Race winner excited by the chance to chase the single-seater crown

By Graham Keilloh

**Luke Browning is targeting the British Formula 4 championship this year after switching to the Fortec Motorsport squad from Richardson Racing.**

The 18-year-old won two races with Richardson during his debut British F4 campaign last year, on the way to sixth in the drivers' standings. Now after confirming his Fortec move, joining Roberto Faria and Rafael Villagomez at the team, Browning is aiming for the number one spot.

"Really excited to join them, the car's been phenomenal so far," Browning told Motorsport News. "They [Fortec] have got experience of winning full stop. I went there and there's just trophies everywhere, it looks like my sort of dream bedroom!"

His new boss Ollie Dutton told MN he has long been an admirer of Browning. "Since Ginettas we've been watching Luke and always tried to do what we can to help him out," Dutton said. "I know for him it's a budget-related thing.

"We've always believed in him and we do believe he can be very successful. [We've tried to] just push him because he's a good British talent that we believe deserves to be in a car."

Danish racer Mikkel Grundtvig meanwhile will compete in British F4 this year with JHR Developments, joining Abbi Pulling and reigning Ginetta Junior champion James Hedley at the squad. Grundtvig last year competed in French F4, taking a pole, fastest lap and race victory treble at Ledenon, and has also competed in Danish F4.

"I'm very excited for the season, [it's] my first time ever on British tracks," Grundtvig told MN.

"Hope to learn a lot. I haven't driven racing cars for that long compared to my competitors. For sure it [the season] will help me a lot in driving technique. I'm always aiming for the win, so winning the championship is my goal or at least top three."

"There's an awful lot of optimism to be taken from the drivers that we've signed for this year," added JHR team principal Steven Hunter.


Mackintosh has rare kidney condition

## YOUNGSTER SEEKS CROWDFUNDING FOR F4 DRIVE

Sixteen-year-old Daniel Mackintosh is seeking to crowdfund online his drive in this season's British Formula 4 championship, after it was thrown into doubt by a sudden sponsorship withdrawal.

Mackintosh, who suffers from a rare kidney condition that kept him away from racing for a number of years, has in recent months conducted a series of two-day tests in an F4 car at Croft, Donington Park and Brands Hatch with the JHR Developments team. He also last year tested a Ginetta Junior car with Elite Motorsport.

Mackintosh was poised to ink a deal for a full British F4 season in 2020 along with five tests, however his sponsor then pulled out. He now, as well as seeking alternative sponsorship, is aiming to raise £35,000 for his drive via a funding page.

Mackintosh started karting at the age of seven though at the age of 12 had to stop as he was recovering from a relapse of his rare chronic kidney condition, during which time he was hospitalised for long periods.

He returned to racing after a three-year sabbatical in March last year, and won all his races in the British Schools Karting Championship, and all his races apart from one in the Junior Rotax Championship, at his local kart track. Mackintosh is also being helped in his quest for funding by the children's charity Dreamflight.

Fans can donate to his crowdfunder at justgiving.com/crowdfunding/danmackf4.

## STROKE SURVIVOR STEVE DAVIES ENTERS GINETTA RACING

Steve Davies has overcome a stroke to make his racing debut in this year's Ginetta Racing Drivers Club, and with it he aims to raise money for the Stroke Association.

Davies suffered a stroke in January 2019, and the 35-year-old's long-held goal to become a racing driver became a focus for his recovery. He will compete in this GRDC season with SVG Motorsport, and he seeking is to also raise money and awareness for the charity via his racing.

All the sponsorship and donations he receives will go to the charity, while the roof livery of his G40 will have purple hearts dedicated by supporters to loved ones lost to a stroke and to survivors. Davies also is organising a charity day at Donington Park, with passenger rides, raffles and auctions.

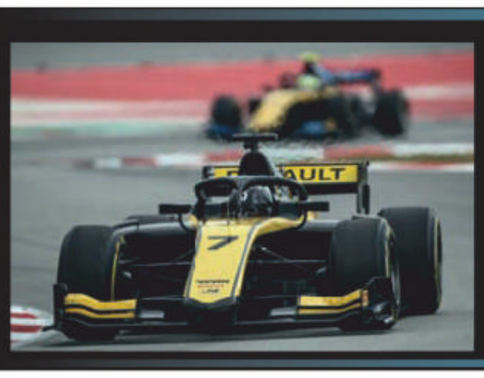
"In the dark days after the stroke, I kept thinking that I had to live for the now," Davies said.

"So I had a search on a race car website online and a G40 came up. It was the same car me and my partner had seen at Oulton Park and loved the livery of, so it seemed like a sign.

"It stayed in the garage and every now and then I'd go over to look at it, and remind myself what I had to achieve. That's when the fundraising idea came to me. Why not race and help others at the same time?

"It seemed like a no brainer, so I set a target of £10,000."


Davies is seeking to raise awareness for stroke charity

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# RACING NEWS

Photos: Jakob Ebrey




Hayes winner is back on track

## CAMPFIELD PLOTS NATIONAL FF1600 COMEBACK

### Multiple winner returns to the cockpit after eight years away after a test with Kevin Mills Racing

By Graham Keilloh

**Walter Hayes Trophy winner Adrian Campfield is seeking a comeback to Formula Ford 1600 racing this season after eight years away from competition, following a recent test with Kevin Mills.**

Campfield won the Silverstone end-of-season event in 2011, which was the first Walter Hayes win for the Kevin Mills Racing team as well as the last serious racing completed by Campfield. The 30-year-old returned to the Spectrum cockpit in a recent Silverstone test with the team.

"It was a bit impromptu," Campfield told Motorsport News, "I was doing some coaching at Whilton Mill kart track literally about three weeks ago, and I saw Kevin there, he was there with his boy, we got chatting and he said 'why don't you come and do Formula Ford for a season again?'

"It's been nearly 10 years since I've drove any race car really, I didn't have my licence for eight years. So I said 'OK I'll come and do a test day and see how we get on'. I had to ring around all the tracks to find one that was doing an ARDS session, I found one at Castle Combe. A week later I did the test day. Literally by the third lap I felt back in the groove. I was only three tenths off the best time from the Walter Hayes, and I was on old tyres and I'm a little bit heavier than I should be!"

Campfield, who works for McLaren Automotive, is now seeking to raise budget to compete in the BRSCC National FF1600 season. "I'd love to do it, I'm in a position now where I can probably do it, we just need to make it happen. It's just finding that one person that's in a position financially," Campfield added.

"At McLaren they [sponsors] can come and do visits and site tours, they can see all the heritage cars. Working there as a manager I can get people in, I'm trying to use that as a way of attracting some sponsors. I'm offering go-karting days, just all sorts of things. I'm trying to be different rather than just saying 'have a sticker on my car and come and watch the race'."

## Sharp in team swap to chase National Formula

Jamie Sharp will race in the upcoming National Formula Ford 1600 season with B-M Racing, after switching to the squad from Team Dolan for last year's end-of-season Formula Ford Festival.

Former Formula 4 driver Sharp raced with Dolan during his maiden National FF1600 campaign last year, and finished seventh in the standings, but the 18-year-old felt that the time was right to move on.

"We definitely considered racing with Team Dolan again [in 2020]," Sharp said. "I just think that B-M was a bit more appealing to us this year. It wasn't an easy decision but we had to decide something and it's a good choice to make. I really get on with the team, they're so easy to work with.

"I can't thank Team Dolan enough for the help that they gave me. It definitely upped my level of confidence in the car and got me on and made me mature as a driver."

Sharp at Oulton Park recently tested a Medina chassis rather than his usual Van Diemen, and hopes to run the Medina through 2020.

"[It's] a car I had never tried before," Sharp continued. "I was very comfortable in it and we were quite quick so I'm pretty happy with how it went. I feel that I can personally [rectify] where I was going wrong. It's a lot more predictable than before. I've got a big decision to make but ideally that'd be my car this year."




Smith was third in the National Formula Ford points in 2019

## Rory Smith returns as part of a three-car line-up with B-M Racing

Rory Smith will remain with B-M Racing for 2020 as he sets his sights on the BRSCC National Formula Ford Championship title.

Smith was third in last year's championship standings and will remain with B-M Racing for the third consecutive year.

Speaking about his season's plans, Smith said: "There was lots of careful consideration over the winter as to what we were wanted to do with the season this year and I think it just made the most sense, just to go for the National campaign again.

"There's no doubt in my mind in terms of which team to go with. I think we'll definitely put a good campaign together in the coming year."

B-M Racing team boss, Andy Brickles added: "We're very excited for Rory to come back on the squad. I think last year he had pace to challenge for the title but we had a very unlucky year."

Smith forms part of a three-car line-up for B-M Racing in the National championship, with the team confirming that Jamie Sharp and Tom Ward will race alongside him this season.

## American Grant Palmer joins Dempsey's squad

American 19-year-old Grant Palmer will drive for Cliff Dempsey Racing in this year's National Formula Ford 1600 Championship.

Palmer joins fellow American teenager Bryce Aron and last year's Formula Ford Festival winner Jonathan Browne racing for the team this season.

After starting out in karting aged 14, Palmer scored podium finishes early this year in the Lucas Oil Winter Series in the US, and has tested both FF1600 and Formula 4 machinery.

"It was recommended to me by a few people," Palmer said of his decision to race FF1600 in the UK. "It will be a great chance to work on my racecraft since there's no wings on the car. There are a lot of tracks [in the UK] that I like, at least on the video games."



Palmer will head for UK tracks

Palmer's goal is to reach IndyCar and said that Dempsey's history of producing top drivers, including two-time IndyCar champion Josef Newgarden, gave him a good feeling about joining the team. "It's been shown that he's had a lot of successful drivers come through, like Josef Newgarden," Palmer added.

## GRONKOWSKI LAUNCHES PRIZE FUND TO SALVAGE HIS SEASON

Scottish Formula Ford 1600 champion Jordan Gronkowski has launched a prize draw to help him raise enough budget to defend his title this season.

After just a few installation laps at a pre-season test, Gronkowski's engine blew, leaving him nearly £5000 short for the forthcoming campaign.

"We could either admit defeat or find a way to try and get over the obstacle, and of course we chose the latter option," Gronkowski told MN. "That's where #LateBreaking comes from. We want to give people the chance to win something special and hopefully we've done that through our range of prizes."



Scottish FF1600 racer is facing a budget gap after engine woe

A single ticket into the draw can be bought from £2.50 with multi-buy deals also available, including 35 tickets for £50. The jackpot winner will receive an all-expenses-paid, behind-the-scenes tour with Gronkowski's team at the Scottish Motor Racing Club's July 25-26 race weekend at Knockhill as well as a £250 Knockhill Ultimate Driving Experience voucher.

To view the full list of prizes and pledge your support, head to jordan-gronkowski.co.uk/latebreaking.

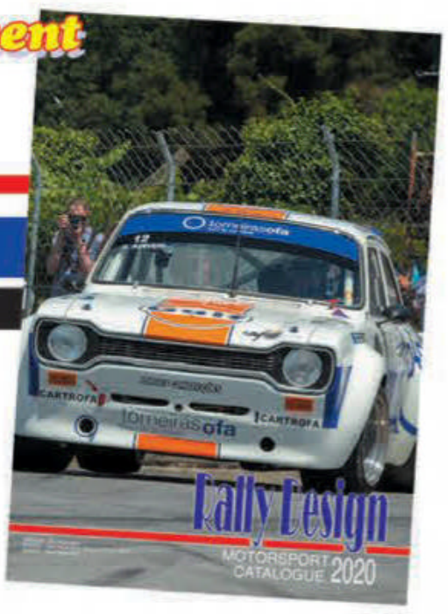
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| Atlas plate style diff, historic spec. with 'Boreham' mods, 18 tooth side gears | £495.80 | £594.96 |
| **SPARES** | | |
| Spare side gears, 18 tooth | each £32.50 | £39.00 |
| Motorsport plate kit | £83.90 | £100.68 |
| Wavy plate | each £16.30 | £19.56 |
| Atlas CWP, 3.4, 3.7, 4.6, 5.1 | £251.80 | £302.16 |



| | | |
|---|---|---|
| Atlas axle casing, thick tube, double pinned & breather | £198.60 | £238.32 |
| Pig's head only | £165.00 | £198.00 |
| Axle end stubs, R/H & L/H thread | pair £49.90 | £59.88 |
| Axle locking rings, R/H & L/H thread | pair £21.90 | £26.28 |
| Locking ring adjustment tool | £25.50 | £30.60 |
| Caliper mount brackets, suit AP | pair £29.50 | £35.40 |




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|---|---|---|
| Fully floating hub assembly without shafts | pair £218.60 | £262.32 |
| Fully floating axle kit, inc.(2) F/F Hub assemblies plus (2) '4340' halfshafts,18 tooth (choice of length) | £328.60 | £394.38 |
| Flange to suit F/F hub kit | £49.50 | £59.40 |
| **SPARES** | | |
| Studs | each5.90 | £7.08 |
| Seal pack | pack z£13.90 | £16.68 |
| Bearing, top quality | each £38.90 | £46.68 |
| 770mm '4340' halfshaft, 18 tooth | each £77.50 | £93.00 |
| 820mm '4340' halfshaft, 18 tooth | each £82.50 | £99.00 |

*All Blackline halfshafts Group 1 and Group 4 are manufactured from 4340 alloy steel and have induction hardened teeth to Rockwell 50 HRC specifications. 4340 is about twice as strong as 1040 (the material which OEM halfshafts are normally manufactured from). It has a high degree of ductility to absorb shock loadings of abrupt acceleration, taking some load off the differential and CWP. However, it has a very high yield strength to sustain high torque loads without failure. 4340 is the ideal halfshaft material.*



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|---|---|---|
| 266 x 21 'Forest' type discs | pair £159.00 | £190.80 |
| FBL 002 disc bells | pair £51.00 | £61.20 |
| Halfshaft flange, not F/F, suit std. axle | each £59.50 | £71.40 |

## ENGLISH AXLE PARTS, BLACKLINE

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| English plate style diff (30/90 ramps) Available 18 tooth (mates with semi-floating conversion kit) | £395.80 | £474.96 |
| Available 22 tooth (mates with std. halfshaft) | £395.80 | £474.96 |
| Spare plate kit | £39.50 | £47.40 |
| Spare side gears, 18 or 22 tooth (please state) | £32.50 | £39.00 |
| English CWP, 3.54, 3.7, 3.9, 4.1, 4.4, 4.7, 4.9, 5.1, 5.3 | £231.50 | £277.80 |
| Spare side bearing, top quality | £19.90 | £23.88 |
| Crush washer | £5.90 | £7.08 |
| Crown wheel bearing | £9.90 | £11.88 |
| Pinion bearing | £14.90 | £17.88 |
| Atlas into English semi-floating hub kit, inc. (2) '4340' halfshafts, 18 tooth | £443.80 | £532.56 |
| English axle weld-on brace ring | £39.90 | £47.88 |
| Special 10mm axle brace, English axle | £99.50 | £119.40 |
| **SPARES** | | |
| Semi-floating hub assembly (less bearing) | each £144.40 | £173.28 |
| Bearing '4340' | £48.90 | £59.76 |
| Halfshaft, suit semi-floating kit | £77.50 | £93.00 |
| Flange, not semi-floating, suit std. axle | £59.50 | £71.40 |
| Flange, Group 1 type | £59.50 | £71.40 |
| Brake disc, 265 x 10 | each £34.50 | £41.40 |

## HELICAL LSDs (ATBs), BLACKLINE



| | | |
|---|---|---|
| English axle, Caterham, 22 spline | £324.00 | £388.80 |
| Atlas axle, 16 spline | £354.00 | £424.80 |
| Ford FWD - Escort, Fiesta, Focus, KA, Orion, Puma (BC/1B5 trans) | £399.00 | £478.80 |
| Sierra 7", Caterham | £399.00 | £478.80 |
| Focus ST170, Mini Cooper 'S' (6-speed Getrag box) | £399.00 | £478.80 |
| Mazda MX5 (94-05) | £399.00 | £478.80 |

## TRANSMISSION PARTS, BLACKLINE

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| 4-speed bearing type gearlever | £38.50 | £46.20 |
| 5-speed bearing type gearlever | £40.50 | £48.60 |
| 5-speed quickshift conversion kit | £13.50 | £16.20 |
| M10 ally 'Pro' gearknob | £14.90 | £17.88 |
| M10 white or black nylon gearknob | £12.50 | £15.00 |
| Propshaft, Type 9 - English or Atlas axle | £89.50 | £107.40 |

## ESCORT BRAKING PARTS

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| Wilwood brakes kit, 265x10, Powerlite caliper | £299.51 | £359.41 |
| Wilwood brakes kit, 247x20, Midilite caliper | £468.49 | £562.19 |
| Wilwood brakes kit, 285x21, Midilite caliper | £571.40 | £685.68 |
| Balance bar pedal box, cable clutch | £189.50 | £227.40 |
| Balance bar pedal box, hydraulic clutch | £215.00 | £258.00 |
| RMD master cylinders | from £21.50 | £25.80 |
| Wilwood master cylinders | from £29.50 | £35.40 |
| Wilwood proportioning valve, knob | £42.50 | £51.00 |
| Wilwood proprtioning valve, lever | £57.50 | £69.00 |
| Blackline 'swaged' stainless brake lines, 3-line | £29.74 | £35.69 |
| Classic Ford wheels 6x13 | £69.00 | £82.80 |
| 7x13 | £76.00 | £91.20 |
| 8x13 | £87.50 | £105.00 |
| 8x15 | £99.00 | £118.80 |




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|---|---|---|---|
| Poly' bump stops, top axle mounting | pair | £8.12 | £9.75 |
| Escort 11/1300 front springs, 145-220lbs | pair | £33.80 | £40.56 |
| Escort RS front springs, 145-220lbs | pair | £33.80 | £40.56 |
| 1.9" & 2.25" coil springs, 20,000 in stock! | | from £15.90 | £19.08 |
| Adjustable spring seat kit | | £24.50 | £29.40 |
| Helper spring adaptor, 2.25"-2.25" | | £10.50 | £12.60 |
| Gaz, adjustable front shocks | each | £67.60 | £81.12 |
| Gaz, adjustable (3-way) front shocks | each | £299.50 | £359.40 |
| Gaz, adjustable rate rear shocks | each | £65.00 | £78.00 |
| Quick steering racks | RH 2:9 ratio | £119.50 | £143.40 |
| | RH 2:4 ratio | £139.50 | £167.40 |
| | LH 2:4 ratio | £149.50 | £179.40 |



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|---|---|---|---|
| H/duty quick steering racks | RH 2:4 ratio | £174.50 | £209.40 |
| | RH 2:2 ratio | £204.50 | £245.40 |
| | LH 2:4 ratio | £184.50 | £225.40 |
| | LH 2:2 ratio | £214.50 | £257.40 |
| OEM style steering rack mounts | pair | £16.80 | £20.16 |
| Roller bearing top mount - spherical bearing, | each | £49.50 | £59.40 |
| Roller bearing top mount - roller bearing, | each | £49.50 | £59.40 |
| Roller bearin plastic dust covers | pair | £9.50 | £11.40 |
| Spherical bearing race type top mounts | pair | £49.60 | £59.52 |




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| TCA's 'Pattern' style | pair | £36.50 | £43.80 |
| TCA's 'OEM' style | pair | £63.50 | £76.20 |
| TCA bush insertion tool | | £14.90 | £17.88 |
| Twin cam anti-roll bar | | £59.50 | £71.40 |
| Anti-dive kit | | £31.00 | £37.20 |
| World cup X-member | | £106.50 | £127.80 |
| World cup mounts | pair | £28.50 | £34.20 |
| RS2000 track rod ends | each | £10.50 | £12.60 |
| Group 4 style all steel U/J coupling | | £19.80 | £23.76 |
| 4-link kit | | £119.50 | £143.40 |
| Heavy duty 4-link kit | | £185.00 | £222.00 |
| Group 4 round turret kit | kit | £65.00 | £78.00 |
| Mk1 spring shackles | car set | £17.00 | £20.40 |
| Mk2 spring shackles | car set | £23.50 | £28.20 |
| OEM Escort RS struts | each | £96.95 | £116.34 |
| Group 4 spec. front RS struts | each | £128.00 | £153.60 |
| Escort RS stub axles | pair | £130.00 | £156.00 |
| RS steering arms | pair | £69.50 | £83.40 |
| Heavy duty steering arms, gusseted | pair | £79.50 | £95.40 |
| Quick fit steering arm kit | pair | £9.60 | £11.52 |
| Ally hubs - standard or Group 4 | each | £49.50 | £59.40 |
| Stub axle hardware kit | | £10.90 | £13.08 |
| Watts linkage kit | | £199.50 | £239.40 |
| Taper leaf springs, 146lb rate | each | £49.50 | £59.40 |
| Ally tube strut brace, round tube | | £44.90 | £53.88 |
| Work style 60mm oval tube strut brace | | £51.50 | £61.80 |
| Rear lamp protectors | pair | £12.90 | £15.48 |
| Chassis mounted sump guard, wet sump | | £137.00 | £164.40 |
| Kaylan mudflaps, 4mm (500x300) | pair | £16.50 | £19.80 |
| Body jacking kit | car set | £119.50 | £143.40 |
| Ford hub nut socket, 3/4"D, 65mm | | £13.90 | £16.68 |




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|---|---|---|
| X-Flow ally radiator | £179.60 | £215.52 |
| RS2000 (Pinto) ally radiator | £179.60 | £215.52 |
| 13/235 oil cooler | 50.10 | £60.12 |
| Lockable fuel filler cap assembly | £49.50 | £59.40 |
| Silicone hose kit, Mexico or RS2000 (available blue, black or red) | £62.34 | £74.81 |






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|---|---|---|---|
| WCP interupter fuel pump | | £29.00 | £34.80 |
| WCP solid state fuel pump | | £19.00 | £22.80 |
| WCP injection fuel pump | from | £32.19 | £38.63 |
| Bonnet pin kits, stainless | | £5.00 | £6.00 |
| Bonnet pin kits, alloy | | £7.00 | £8.40 |
| Aerocatch | from | £31.00 | £37.20 |
| Avanti map light | from | £19.50 | £23.40 |
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| Escort Mk2 front laminated screen (incl. rubber) | £69.50 | £83.40 |
| Escort Mk1 Front heated laminated screen (inc. rubber) | £198.60 | £238.32 |
| Escort Mk2 Front heated laminated screen (inc. rubber) | £198.60 | £238.32 |
| Escort Mk1 front screen rubber | £24.92 | £29.90 |
| Escort Mk1 rear screen rubber | £23.92 | £28.70 |
| Escort Mk2 front screen rubber | £29.08 | £34.90 |
| Escort Mk2 rear screen rubber | £29.08 | £34.90 |
| Laser windscreen chip repair kit | £13.90 | £16.68 |
| 14" or 17" rear view mirror | £14.90 | £17.88 |

## Escort Mk2 Rubber Parts

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|---|---|---|---|
| Bonnet bump stop | pair | £6.20 | £7.44 |
| Bonnet rail bump stop, set of 4 | | £10.90 | £13.08 |
| Bonnet bump stop, centre-rear | | £5.10 | £6.12 |
| Wiring loom bulkhead grommet | | £6.90 | £8.28 |
| Bonnet release cable grommet | | £5.20 | £6.24 |
| Steering column bulkhead grommet | | £7.20 | £8.64 |
| Handbrake backplate dust boots | pair | £7.10 | £8.52 |
| Spedo cable bulkhead grommet | | £5.20 | £6.24 |
| Throttle pedal pad | | £5.20 | £6.24 |
| Brake and clutch pedal pads | pair | £8.00 | £9.60 |
| Shock absorber top caps | pair | £13.90 | £16.68 |
| Rear bumper side plugs, set of 4 | | £9.90 | £11.88 |
| Oil line bulkhead grommet | | £5.10 | £6.12 |
| Brake servo rod bellows | | £5.20 | £6.24 |

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# WRC MEXICO

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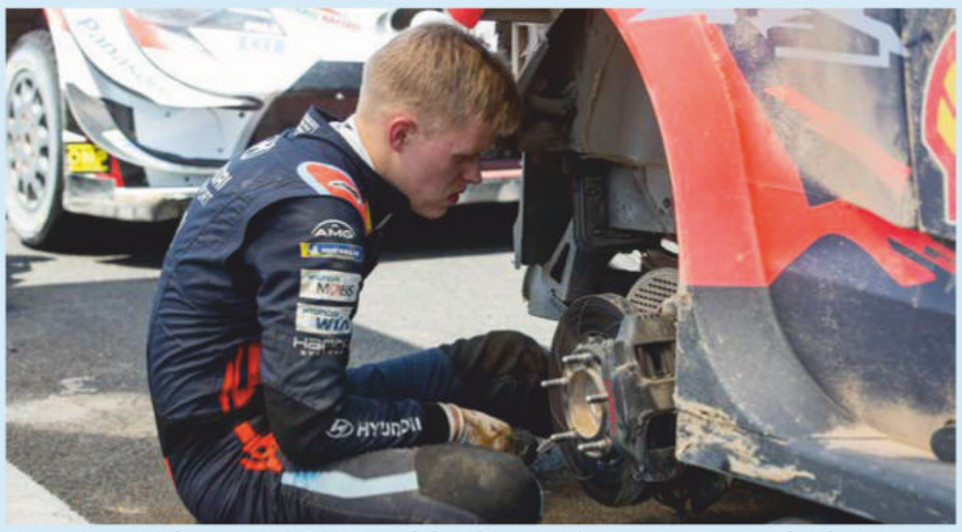


Frenchman opened his account in the Yaris WRC



# MUTED CELEBRATIONS AS OGIER GOES TO THE TOP OF THE TABLE WITH MEXICO WIN

## Graham Lister reports as the Frenchman claims his first victory for new employer Toyota



Running wide meant Ott Tanak had to perform some roadside repairs



Teemu Suninen was back on top form in his M-Sport Fiesta WRC



Welshman Elfyn Evans had a steady run to fourth spot

**Sebastien Ogier's record-equalling Mexico victory made him the third different winner in as many events this season, as the WRC action was truncated for a second rally in succession.**

The Frenchman's win, his first for Toyota, enabled him to replace team-mate Elfyn Evans at the top of the title table but was celebrated under a considerable cloud.

Having called into question the running of the event amid the global COVID-19 pandemic, Ogier admitted it was "hard to celebrate in these circumstances", after he drew level with countryman Sebastien Loeb at the top of the list of all-time Mexico winners, with a tally of six.

"We would have preferred to celebrate our first win with Toyota in a different context because today is definitely a strange victory," Ogier said on Saturday night following the rally's earlier-than-scheduled finish. "I didn't want to race basically. I have been convinced to do it and I have done my job but, for me, protecting human life should go first. I hope we didn't bring any harm here to our friends in Mexico.

"With all the fans here, to not give them autographs, not give them pictures, they didn't really understand… I was trying to do my best to respect what everyone in the world is trying to do at the moment."

### Tanak shines for a time

After Thierry Neuville bossed the two runs of the Guanajuato street stage on Thursday night, his Hyundai team-mate Ott Tanak made the most of running sixth on the road through the loose gravel of the El Chocolate stage on Friday morning.

The world champion was fastest by 10.3 seconds to lead M-Sport Ford driver Teemu Suninen by 10.6s, only to falter on the very next run, dropping 45s to Ogier and slipping to eighth overall.

"I went wide and hit a big stone, which damaged the rear suspension," Tanak explained. "We had some spare parts to fix it but not enough."

Those running repairs helped him to the second fastest time on Las Minas, but he was 38.6s adrift of the leader by the time he reached midday service in Leon.

### Sordo's poor return

It was Dani Sordo, in the third factory Hyundai, who topped the order on Las Minas but the Spaniard, making his first start of 2020, was already out of the victory fight. A loose radiator pipe delayed him by five minutes on El Chocolate and the damage would lead to his retirement in the afternoon.

### More Hyundai woe

Neuville, equal on points with Evans starting the event, was third until an electrical fault stopped him during the second visit to Las Minas. He restarted on Saturday but the early finish left him languishing in 16th. With the powerstage shelved, the Belgian was outside the points.

### Suninen shows promise

Following poor runs on the Monte and in Sweden, Suninen was back on form with third, although he was destined for second behind Ogier until a brake issue struck on Saturday afternoon. Esapekka Lappi, in M-Sport's second Ford-backed Fiesta, completed SS7 4.6s behind Neuville in fourth but with flames bellowing from his car, which quickly became engulfed, albeit after the crew had vacated.

### Fourth fine for Evans

Having lost time opening the road on Friday, Elfyn Evans and Scott Martin salvaged fourth in their works Yaris WRC.

**RESULTS**

**Round 3/13, Rally Guanajuato Mexico 2020, March 12-14**

| POS | DRIVER/CO-DRIVER | CAR | TIME |
|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | Sebastien Ogier (FRA)/Julien Ingrassia (FRA) | Toyota Yaris WRC | 2h47m47.6s |
| 2 | Ott Tanak (EST)/Martin Jarveoja (EST) | Hyundai i20 Coupe WRC | +27.8s |
| 3 | Teemu Suninen (FIN)/Jarmo Lehtinen (FIN) | Ford Fiesta WRC | +37.9s |
| 4 | Elfyn Evans (GBR)/Scott Martin (GBR) | Toyota Yaris WRC | +1m13.4s |
| 5 | Kalle Rovanpera (FIN)/Jonne Halttunen (FIN) | Toyota Yaris WRC | +2m20.5s |
| 6 | Pontus Tidemand (SWE)/Patrik Barth (SWE) | Skoda Fabia R5 Evo | +10m29.3s |
| 7 | Nikolay Gryazin (RUS)/Yaroslav Fedorov (RUS) | Hyundai i20 R5 | +12m27.0s |
| 8 | Marco Bulacia Wilkinson (BOL)/Giovanni Bernacchini (ITA) | Citroen C3 R5 | +13m37.5s |
| 9 | Gus Greensmith (GBR)/Elliott Edmondson (GBR) | Ford Fiesta WRC | +13m56.5s |
| 10 | Ole-Christian Veiby (NOR)/Jonas Andersson (SWE) | Hyundai i20 R5 | +15m32.2s |
| 16 | Thierry Neuville (BEL)/Nicolas Gilsoul (BEL) | Hyundai i20 Coupe WRC | +42m38.1s |
| R | Esapekka Lappi (FIN)/Janne Ferm (FIN) | Ford Fiesta WRC | |
| R | Dani Sordo (ESP)/Carlos del Barrio (ESP) | Hyundai i20 Coupe WRC | |

**Drivers' championship**

| POS | DRIVER | PTS |
|---|---|---|
| 1 | Ogier | 62 |
| 2 | Evans | 54 |
| 3 | Neuville | 42 |
| 4 | Rovanpera | 40 |
| 5 | Tanak | 38 |
| 6 | Suninen | 26 |
| 7 | Lappi | 24 |
| 8 | Tidemand | 8 |
| 9 | Sebastien Loeb | 8 |
| 10 | Takamoto Katsuta | 8 |

**Manufacturers' championship**

| POS | DRIVER | PTS |
|---|---|---|
| 1 | Toyota Gazoo Racing WRT | 110 |
| 2 | Hyundai Shell Mobis WRT | 89 |
| 3 | M-Sport Ford WRT | 65 |

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# RALLY NEWS

## RALLYING ADDED TO MOTORSPORT GAMES

Rallying has been added to an expanded list of events for the second FIA Motorsport Games.

Scheduled for Circuit Paul Ricard in France from October 23-25, the rallying element will cater for Rally2 (formerly R5) and Rally4 (R2) cars.

There will also be an historic rally and historic regularity rally during the inter-country competition.

No route details have been released but Paul Ricard is no stranger to rallying. For the last two years the Rallycircuit Cote d'Azur has taken place within its confines.

Nine-time world champion Sebastien Loeb and Mercedes Formula 1 driver Valtteri Bottas make up the list of winners.

## BOSSES OUTLINE FUTURE PLANS

As predicted in last week's Motorsport News, it will take until the June FIA World Motor Sport Council meeting to have a clear picture of the Rally1 regulations for 2022.

While the rules regarding transmission, suspension and aerodynamics were signed off by the WMSC in Geneva recently, engine regulations, hybrid technology specification and the FIA-designed safety cell, confirmed as mandatory for all car builders, will go for further discussion and analysis over the coming months.

Rally1 is replacement for the World Rally Car category with the FIA pledging a "performance parity" between Rally1 cars and cars from the previous era.



Revamp for top flight

## NEW FIA COST-CAP REGS FOR RALLY3

**FIA technical chiefs have capped the price of the new Rally3 cars at €100,000 (approximately £88,000).**

**Essentially a Rally4 (formerly R2) car with four-wheel drive, Rally3 is being pitched as the replacement for Group N on mainly regional events.**

**The FIA hopes to control costs by specifying "common front and rear parts such as wishbones, dampers and brakes". Standard bodywork can also be used, while the fuel tank shape has been designed with cost saving in mind.**

**Rally3 cars can be homologated from January 1 2021, although Motorsport News understands non-homologated examples could be seen in competition from the summer.**

Photos: mcklein-imagedatabase.com




Champion will drive the Firenza

# STIG BLOMQVIST HEADS TO McRAE TRIBUTE EVENT

## World champion to celebrate with Vauxhall Firenza outing

By Graham Lister

**Stig Blomqvist is the first star name to be confirmed for the McRae Rally Challenge at Knockhill from October 3-4.**

This year's event will commemorate Colin McRae's world title success in 1995. His father Jimmy and brother Alister will also take part, while a number of other legends from the sport are set to join the entry.

Blomqvist, the 1984 world champion, will pilot the same Vauxhall Firenza that he did on the first running of the event in 2015.

"The car is so different," said Blomqvist, who will be 74 when the event takes place. "The 4998cc engine certainly has power and now the car is on 15" wheels with bigger brakes it will be great fun to drive around Knockhill."

Blomqvist entered two WRC events in 1995 – Sweden in a Ford Escort Cosworth and what



Blomqvist: Knockhill

was then the RAC Rally in a Skoda Felicia Kit Car. He says he is "pleased" to be at Knockhill to celebrate McRae's world crown.

"He was really good, quick and a bit different," Blomqvist said of McRae. "He wanted to win. At times he was the underdog but he was a fighter. [I have] good memories of rallying against the Scottish hero."




McRae's 1995 year will be celebrated




Block and the spectacular Escort

## BLOCK SET TO WOW FANS ON BARBADOS OUTING IN MAY

Ken Block is including Rally Barbados on his Cossie World Tour, bringing his Hoonigan Racing Division Ford Escort Cosworth to the event for the first time.

The American will take part in The Rally Show and Flow King of Hill events May 23-24 before tackling Rally Barbados proper from May 29-31 in the MDV Specialist Engineering-built car.

Meanwhile, Rally Barbados's slot in the FIA NACAM Championship was ratified during the FIA World Motor Sport Council meeting in Geneva earlier this month. It's the first time that the event has formed part of the regional schedule following its elevation in status.

# RALLY NEWS

## Breen passenger ride boost for McErlean

**A chance to ride shotgun with Hyundai Motorsport driver Craig Breen has been auctioned off for £1,300.**

**The prize was put forward by Breen during a recent fundraising evening to support Josh McErlean.**

**Breen offered the winner a choice between joining him for a test in his Hyundai i20 R5 or in the family-owned MG Metro 6R4.**

**"The choice is yours," said Breen in front of a packed room where M-Sport boss Malcolm Wilson and double British Rally champion Matt Edwards were among the guests.**

**"Actually, the decision is an easy one," smiled Breen. "It has to be the Metro 6R4 – all day long."**

**The person who was prepared to make the highest bid to auctioneer Andrew Nesbitt on the night was Steven Benton. MN understands Benton is yet to make his decision on which car.**

# BRC STAR EDWARDS EYEING IRISH TARMAC ASSAULT IN THE FUTURE

## Fiesta man says he could be tempted to cross the water for fresh challenge

By Jason Craig

**British Rally champion Matt Edwards has said the allure of becoming the first Welshman to win the Irish Tarmac Rally Championship is an appealing prospect to him.**

Edwards has impressed on the occasions he has driven on closed-road events in Ireland and Belgium. His focus this year is firmly on becoming the first driver to win three back-to-back British titles, but he believes he could end his country's long wait for a Tarmac champion in the future.

The Ford Fiesta R5 driver told MN: "I would love to do the Tarmac Championship in the next two or three years. You have some of the most fabulous stages here, the rallies are long – two or three-day events – and the level of competition is always strong. That's why you go rallying, isn't it?

"To become the first Welshman [to be Tarmac champion] – what a feeling that would be. If I can make it happen then I certainly wouldn't be coming over to Ireland to make up the numbers, that's for sure."

Edwards reckons his pace against seasoned opponents, including Craig Breen, Alastair Fisher and Sam and Josh Moffett, is proof of how far he has come in such a short period.

"I have been near the other guys in the past, especially when you look at how I have done on paper," he said. "A year of good solid results in the Tarmac Championship and it [the title] is definitely possible.

"The result I am most proud of was my second-place finish on Ulster last season. To be a part of those sort of battles is a privilege and something I would like to experience more. The only problem is finding the mechanism to make it happen. I would need to find the sponsors. That's something that can be looked at once we get this season over with."

Photos: Jakob Ebrey, West Coast Photography, SMJ Photography




Edwards wants to expand horizons




Binnie snatched a maiden win on the final stage in Scotland

# BINNIE SAYS HE CAN PUSH ON AFTER SNOWMAN SUCCESS

Scottish Rally Championship points leader Michael Binnie reckons his breakthrough victory on the Snowman Rally has "reinstated a lot of confidence in his driving."

Binnie won the SRC season-opener by 20 seconds in his Mitsubishi E9 from Jock Armstrong after a "blinding" last stage time that was 37s quicker than his rival. It follows his first ever SRC podium at the end of last season.

Binnie said: "Coming out the back of the Galloway Hills and after a long winter break it's hard to think you can get back to the level that you were at.

"We sat in a comfortable second place all day and luckily we had a blinding last stage and managed to take the win so it certainly reinstates a lot of confidence in your driving after that."

Binnie sealed third place in last season's championship but is unsure if he can fight for this year's title despite his win: "I'm sure I'll be dreaming about it but realistically whether we can or not I'm not sure," he added. "But hey, you never know. It [the win] has certainly put us in good stead anyway."

Double SRC champion Armstrong – who Motorsport News understands considered changing cars from his Subaru Impreza in the off-season – believes Binnie's Snowman result is a major positive for the series and non-homologated cars.

"Well done to Michael Binnie," he said. "I think that gives the old cars a bit of a fresh look at the championship as well. You don't need to pitch up in an R5 anymore so I'm quite pleased overall."

Armstrong was the last non R5 or WRC driver to win the SRC back in 2016. But on the Snowman, Fred Milne was the top R5 finisher in third ahead of Donnie Macdonald (Fiesta) and John Wink (Hyundai).

## LOOKOUT STAGES VENUE BENEFITS FROM INVESTMENT

Competitors on this year's Lookout Stages Rally will benefit from an extra £22,000 investment into the Melbourne Airfield venue that hosts the rally.

Event organiser Trackrod Motor Club - whoich also organises the Trackrod – is aiming to build on the success of last year's rally which attracted a full entry and was won by Subaru Impreza driver Arron Newby.

The airfield benefited from a £30,000 investment last year and has had more recent renovations which means £52,000 has been spent in total ahead of the 29th edition of the Lookout Stages Rally. A total of eight special stages and 55 competitive miles are on offer to competitors. Entries close on March 31.

## SIMPSON AIMS TO GO CARBON NEUTRAL RALLYING IN 2020

Ex-British Rally Championship frontrunner Neil Simpson will make his rally team carbon neutral from 2020.

Simpson – a regular British and European Rally Championship competitor in the past – spent last year mostly on the sidelines as he looked to help manage Chris Ingram and his title-winning ERC campaign as well as assisting Nikolay Gryazin who has gone on to drive for Hyundai in WRC2.

Simpson has embarked on a plan alongside award-winning company ClimateCare to make his two Simpson Skoda car dealerships in Lancashire carbon neutral.

As part of that plan, Simpson's varied rallying outings - in a Skoda Fabia R5 - will also benefit as he heads to compete predominantly in European events, but also in the UK. He was slated to start this weekend's cancelled North West Stages.

When asked if it was important teams became carbon neutral and embrace new technologies, Simpson told MN: "I went to watch the Le Mans 24 Hours race 10 years ago and it was won by a diesel hybrid.

"The WRC and rallying in general must move with the times, hybrids, carbon offset and ultimately electric vehicles are where rallying needs to focus if it's going to engage with the changing audience.

"In 1999 we ran the VW Golf TDi in the British Rally Championship on behalf of Volkswagen. Way back then we were a carbon neutral rally team so it's always something I've been passionate about. We all have a responsibility and by each doing a little we can make a difference."

Simpson's main campaign will surround the German Championship and the prestigious Belgian event, Condroz, among others.




Simpson has a plan to stamp out team's emissions




MN runners to benefit again

## MICHELIN PROLONGS TYRE DEAL WITH MOTORSPORT NEWS CIRCUIT CHAMPIONSHIP INTO A SIXTH SUCCESSIVE CAMPAIGN

Michelin has extended its agreement with the Motorsport News Circuit Rally Championship into a sixth successive season.

The extension of the partnership ensures that Michelin will bring its WRC-standard tyres to the national championship, with competitors able to take advantage of the Michelin Pilot Sport R, a new 15" tyre design with the championship in mind.

It also confirms the return of the Michelin Cup – a specifically-designed championship which runs within the overall championship for competitors running on Michelin rubber.

Darren Spann, championship co-ordinator, said: "We are delighted to continue our partnership with Michelin. To retain the support of such a world-renowned manufacturer will undoubtedly help the championship grow into its sixth year."

In each of the series' five seasons, the champion has used Michelin's rubber. Tim Hoare, Michelin motorsport manager for the UK and Ireland, added: "The championship has gone from strength to strength and really allies with our purpose of engaging with club rally competitors."

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# RALLY NEWS

## MOFFETT'S SECOND PLACE RESTORED

**Sam Moffett's second place on the Galway International Rally has been officially restored close to six weeks after the conclusion of the event following a Motorsport Ireland tribunal.**

**Moffett finished 21.1 seconds behind rally winner Alastair Fisher on the Irish Tarmac Championship season opener, but the Hyundai i20 R5 driver had been excluded due to not appearing at post-event scrutineering.**

**Motorsport News understands Moffett had already loaded the Hyundai into the trailer home before being asked to bring the car into post-event scrutiny.**

**Moffett appealed his exclusion, and a tribunal held on Thursday, March 5, accepted this appeal due to "serious errors and inconsistencies in the organisation of the post-rally scrutiny which, in the opinion of the tribunal, contributed to Mr Moffett's failure to be present at post-rally scrutiny as nominated."**

**Moffett is expected to contest the remainder of the Irish Tarmac Championship season whenever that should resume due to the coronavirus outbreak postponing a plethora of events.**

# THORBURN ISN'T FEELING THE PRESSURE TO WIN

## Ford Focus man is relishing the switch to a sealed-surface competition

By Luke Barry

Photos:Kevin Glendenning, Chicane Media, RallyGallery.com

**Euan Thorburn believes "there's no pressure to win" ahead of his Asphalt Championship assault this season despite claiming both the BTRDA Gold Star and the Scottish Rally Championship last year.**

Thorburn won nine of the 10 forest rallies he started in 2019 in his Ford Focus WRC05 but has switched to Tarmac in 2020 in order to seek new opportunities.

Thorburn told MN: "We don't want to go back and keep doing the same thing, the same rallies, so it's nice to try something different and the Asphalt Championship has obviously got a lot of closed-road rallies this year,

"There's more of an attraction for us for that. We've never done it before so it's a different challenge isn't it? It's a lot different [as] there's no pressure to win, and we aren't expecting ourselves to either."

Thorburn contested the Mayo Stages in Ireland earlier this month to get himself back into the "mindset" for Tarmac driving, but described the event as a "disaster." First he suffered an overshoot on stage five and then on stage six, he locked up on a wet, downhill section which shoved him up a bank and into a concrete pillar.

"I hadn't done a Tarmac rally in a few years and that was the first time in that car so it was just [about] getting your head into it," he said. "That's what we were there for, not to set the world alight but just to get some miles but it didn't end up that way.

"We're [therefore] back to square one [but] the car felt amazing at the rally there so it was just driver error that let it down, I hold my hands up for that. But yeah the car is awesome, I'm sure it's capable of winning rallies as long as the driver's up to it."



Thorburn has had a rocky start to 2020

## Perez Junior leads from start to finish in Mallorca to claim his maiden overseas victory in a Porsche 911 Carrera RS

Aston Martin European GT4 racer Seb Perez won his first rally abroad last weekend, taking victory on Rally Clasico Isla de Mallorca-Puerto Portals by 53.6 seconds.

The 20-year-old is the son of former BTRDA and British Rally Championship competitor Steve Perez and contests historic rallies in the racing off-season behind the wheel of a Porsche 911 Carrera RS.

Perez finished second on the Mallorca-based event last year but led the event from start to finish this time around to seal his first rally victory since the Clubman Roger Albert Clark Rally in 2017.

"[We're] over the moon," Perez said. "Massive thanks to absolutely everyone involved and the organisers for their call on cancelling the last day."

The rally was meant to run through Thursday, Friday and Saturday last week but was curtailed on Friday in light of the global coronavirus pandemic.



Stone says that the Asphalt Championship will be a battle

## STONE: ASPHALT CHAMPIONSHIP SEASON LOOKING AS GOOD AS IRELAND

Asphalt Championship frontrunner John Stone believes this year's calendar and entry is strong enough to rival even the Irish Tarmac Championship with five of the seven events featuring closed-roads for the first time.

The North West Stages had attracted a gargantuan entry with over 200 competitors applying for the 125 allocated entries. Of that 125, there were 25 R5 or WRC cars but the event has been postponed because of the looming threat of coronavirus.

"Genuinely there's probably about 20 people that could [have] won it," Stone told Motorsport News.

"I've been doing that championship [Asphalt Championship] for a long time as well [and] I've done quite a lot in Ireland and I think our championship is looking as good as the Irish one at the moment. I think the quality of the events that are in it are fantastic; Jim Clark, Manx, Three Shires, I think it looks really good."

Stone will contest a full season in his Ford Fiesta WRC but admits he could struggle to come out on top against such a competitive field.

"I do enjoy the championship because it keeps you focused and it would be easy to drift out of the sport if you haven't got something to focus on," he added. "It's a challenging thing, especially when you're getting older like I am.

"The plan is to do the championship in the car and let's see where we come because I think Euan Thorburn is having a go at it this year, obviously there's Jason Pritchard so there's some good drivers there and it's a challenge to try and get that result at the end of the day."

## KIRKALDY READY FOR A TITLE CHALLENGE

Alan Kirkaldy is hopeful he can challenge for the Asphalt Championship title in 2020 as he looks to better his joint third in the championship last year.

Kirkaldy won the previous round of the 2019 series – the Cheviot Stages – after upgrading his Ford Fiesta R5 from the homologated 32mm restrictor to a 34mm part. This was done in a bid to boost performance after the Scot secured the class championship on the previous round.

Kirkaldy told Motorsport News: "The way things went last year in finishing joint third, I'd hope to be better this year but then we've got other people joining the championship that are quick as well so I'm just going to have to do as best I can.

"I had to win the R5 class before I changed to the bigger restrictor, so I kind of had to wait until too late in the season to then try and compete against the bigger cars," he added. "But when we did change it, we proved we are capable of beating them so I would imagine that all the events now that we have done, we'll be in a good position now to be fighting for a win."

Kirkaldy won the Knockhill Stages at the end of February but isn't putting pressure on himself to win immediately when the Asphalt Championship begins.

"We'd like to try and just have a good, clean rally and start off the championship well and obviously build on it from then because the first event again it's back on notes for the first time and the car has been rebuilt so it would be good to just settle back in," he said.



Kirkaldy is hoping for a step forwards

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# HISTORICS

'Camera man goes rallying'
**Bramhill's new venture, below**



## DOWN THE PUB

### LORRAINE GATHERCOLE

**Roger Albert Clark**
**Rally debutant**
**Age:** 55 **Lives:** Whittlesey



Gathercole: A rally rookie

**The forests were new**
"My first time rallying in the forest was in the dark on the Friday night of the Trackrod. The lights weren't great but, in all fairness, I wasn't really daunted about the darkness as I'd done Le Mans and the Spa 6-Hours in the dark. But the surface was so different."

**There was a late change of co-driver**
"Chris Skill, who is usually a driver, had volunteered to come and help service for us on the Roger Albert and got roped into co-drive for me at the last minute. He had to borrow a helmet and overalls. He'd never co-driven before and we had some dramas getting to the first stage. We got through the Welsh leg on Friday and that was the length of a normal one-day rally."

**Kielder was tough**
"Day two was in 'Killer Kielder'. It was an incredibly long day and we were on the go all day. I was nervous and didn't eat breakfast, so I had nothing to eat pretty much all day. I had some wine gums in the door pocket because someone had said they were a good idea. Until Saturday night, I'd only had wine gums and energy drinks."

**So was Scotland**
"Off we went again on day three into Scotland and the weather was pretty harsh. The road surface conditions seemed to change so much, which required so much concentration and you're tired already by now. But we got through Sunday with no incidents and just kept it tidy and the car was fine."

**They got to the finish**
"By Monday morning the end was in sight and we were beginning to believe that we could do it. I felt that I was improving and was closer to the pace of the others, so that was very pleasing."

**It was a real challenge**
"You have to learn to adapt; everything is changing all the time, much more than in racing. The surface, the light, the weather is changing all the time. It was a huge challenge and I feel a huge sense of achievement because it was a much bigger challenge than I thought it would be. It was much harder, much more exhausting. The roller coaster of adrenaline over that time is really hard to cope with."

Photos: Paul Lawrence



Alford will return to Snetterton in April

# ALFORD RETURNS TO HIS ROOTS WITH JIM RUSSELL TRIBUTE OUTING

## Experienced racer for Snetterton Formula Junior clash to complete 'circle'

By Paul Lawrence

**Chris Alford plans to race at the Jim Russell tribute meeting at Snetterton, 55 years after taking part in the inaugural Jim Russell Racing Drivers School race at the Norfolk track.**

Alford has recently bought a front-engined Formula Junior Gemini Mk2 in America and hopes that it will arrive in the UK in time to be checked over and readied for the April 4 race.

"I want it to be here in time to race at Snetterton," said Alford, who has not raced for two seasons. "I went to the Jim Russell Racing Drivers' School in 1965 and was in the very first school race in a Lotus 20 Formula Junior. That was on December 27, 1965, and I qualified on pole and finished second after a spin. It was my first race."

The young Alford had paid £1 per lap for training and drove to Snetterton from North London in his MG TC road car. "The circuit was covered in ice and we had to drive round in our road cars to clear the ice," he remembered.

To complete the loop, the Gemini is a car that Alford sold to America in 1995. "Geoff Rumble had rebuilt it and I sold it on his behalf," said Alford. "I remember taking it to Heathrow to go on a flight to the US."

Across half a century of racing, Alford has raced in Formula Ford, Production Sports, Sports 2000 and, more recently, in Formula Junior in an Elva 300. He continues to work as a racing instructor.



The stripped down machine features a few original parts

## FAMOUS 1930s ALFA ROMEO UNDERGOES RESTORATION

A stripped-down Alfa Romeo 6C racing special once owned by Italian dictator Benito Mussolini is being restored by Thornley Kelham in Gloucestershire.

The original Alfa Romeo 6C 1750 Super Sport was delivered to Mussolini in 1930.

In 1937, the car was sold to Renato Tigillo and shipped to Eritrea, an Italian territory once famous for motorsport.

At the time, many young Italians took their cars to Eritrea to live and race on street circuits.

The fitting of a stripped-down racing body took place while the car was in Eritrea, where it was developed for racing.

Now it has very little in the way of original panels, but the chassis, rear axle and gearbox are original.

## Historic organiser first to reshuffle 2020 calendar

Peter Auto has become the first major European promoter of historic racing to amend its calendar due to the spread of the coronavirus.

The French organisation has postponed both major events it had planned for April but plans to run them later in the season.

The Dix Milles Tours du Castellet race meeting at Paul Ricard originally due on April 4-5 has been put back to July 25-26, while Tour Auto Optic is now scheduled for August 31 to September 5. The route of the classic race and rally remains unchanged but it will clash with the Zandvoort Historic Grand Prix.

The Paul Ricard race meeting was due to be the opening event of the Peter Auto season, including the first races of the season for Group C and Classic Endurance Racing. UK racers from Formula Junior and Historic F3 were due to attend.

## DONN RELISHES SWAP TO COLWELL FOR THUNDERSPORTS

**Single-seater racer and rally co-driver Martyn Donn will switch to Historic Sports Car Club Thundersports this season with the rare Coldwell C14 sports-racing car from 1970.**

**Donn's car is chassis number one, built for the Group 6 category by Coldwell Engineering in Sheffield.**

**"David Gathercole owned it and I bought it from him about five years ago," said Donn, who co-drives for Gathercole on historic rallies. David's uncle Jim owns one of the other two cars built.**

**"I've got a Formula 2 Chevron which is about three-quarters built and I hope to be out in that as well later this year," said Donn. The Thundersports season starts at Silverstone in mid-May.**



Donn will have a busy year

## IN BRIEF

**MacHale at the head**
Austin MacHale, six-time winner of the Galway International Rally, will head the field for the sixth Deja vu Motorsport retro event in September. The 130-mile route on September 26 will take in many classic Galway International and Circuit of Ireland stages through Mayo and Connemara and 40 entries are already confirmed, including Rosemary Smith in a Sunbeam Tiger V8.

**Bramhill's attack**
Rally film cameraman Phill Bramhill from the Special Stage team took to driving on the recent Tour of Cheshire in a Saab 96 V4 recently restored by his father David. It was the first event for the immaculate car, with David as co-driver, and they achieved their ambition of finishing the second round of the HRCR Clubmans Rally Championship.

**Brown at VSCC**
The Vintage Sports-Car Club has appointed Tania Brown as the new club secretary. Brown brings extensive experience of the VSCC as a competitor, organiser and marshal and becomes the first female Secretary in the VSCC's 86-year history.

**Historics miss out**
Five historic crews were in the capacity field for the postponed North West Stages, which was also due to be a round of the Northern Historic Rally Championship. Heading the historic entry was the Ford Escort Mk2 of local crew of Stephen Ellison/Catrin Jones while the class also included two Hillman Avengers for Scottish drivers Drew Struthers and Brian Fraser.

**Andreason award**
A new Pre '79 award for Classic Formula 3 will be named in memory of Roger Andreason. The award will be supported by Tim Colman at Chevron Heritage Ltd in honour of his late business partner and will be presented for the best performance in a pre '79 Classic F3 car in 2020.

**Island trials**
The Historic Sporting Trials Association has confirmed plans for a two-day event on the Isle of Wight over the weekend of April 18-19. The event will be held at Calbourne near Newport.

**HRCR trains up**
The Historic Rally Car Register will hold a beginners training day in conjunction with Loughborough Car Club's Easylarity event over the weekend of May 23-24. Based at Melton Mowbray, the Saturday training day is aimed at those new to historic rallying and will be perfect for intending competitors in the Motorsport News-supported Clubmans Rally Championship.

**Brookes remembered**
A tribute to the late Russell Brookes will be held over the Easter weekend (April 11-12) based on Wexford in Ireland. A number of his former cars will join a run through some of the famous Circuit of Ireland stages and scenic routes along the Copper Coast.

SPORTING SCENE

# RUSSIAN RALLYCROSS ROUND AXED AMID CONTRACT ISSUES

## New venue bosses fail to reach agreement with series chiefs for 2020

By Hal Ridge

**The new Russian round of the World Rallycross Championship planned to be held in July at the Igora Drive motorsport complex near Saint Petersburg has been cancelled.**

The FIA's World Motor Sport Council has confirmed that World RX in 2020 will now run over 10 rounds. The Russian Automobile Federation (RAF) stated "lengthy negotiations with the promoter of the series and the failure to reach an agreement" as the reason for the cancellation.

The event, due to take place as the sixth round of the season on July 18-19, was added to the World RX calendar late last year, subject to contract between the local and championship promotors, and FIA homologation of the new circuit.

The purpose-built rallycross layout at Igora Drive, which sits alongside the Hermann Tilke-designed circuit that will host DTM for the first time this season, is understood to be ready to hold a World RX event and that the RAF is hopeful of hosting a round of the series in the future.

While World RX will drop to 10 rounds, the Euro RX Super1600 category will continue to join World RX at six events, with its Russian round moving to the new German event at Nurburgring.

Projekt E will also maintain its planned five-round campaign, Holjes in Sweden replacing the Russian event.

# WORLD RX ENTRY LIST STRONG AND MORE SIGNINGS COULD FOLLOW

By Hal Ridge

**In a flurry of announcements between the permanent entries for the 2020 World Rallycross Championship closing on March 6 and the FIA releasing the list of permanent teams and drivers five days later, the full-time runners and riders were revealed for the 10-round 2020 campaign.**

While the permanent list has dropped from 16 last year to 13. Motorsport News understands that a number of the teams and drivers that raced full-time last season but are absent from the 2020 roster, are working on deals that could mean they appear at several events through the season.

The biggest headlines are that world champion Team Hansen returns, while double drivers' champion Johan Kristoffersson will make a comeback and 2019 runner-up Andreas Bakkerud has switched outfits.

Photos: fiaworldrallycross.com



Team Hansen will defend its titles


GRX Taneco will be return with same driver line-up



Champion Kristoffersson will be back in a Volkswagen

## THE RUNNERS AND RIDERS

### MAJOR ENTRIES

#### Team Hansen

Drivers:
**#1 Timmy Hansen**
**#9 Kevin Hansen**
Car: **Peugeot 208 WRX**
Facts: Team Hansen looks much the same as 2019, when it scooped both titles, but the squad has moved all operations to its workshops in Gotene, Sweden, rather than running partially out of French workshops as it did last year. The move also brings a change in personnel, which continues to be led by Kenneth and Susann Hansen, and British engineer Graham Rodemark.

#### GRX Taneco

Drivers:
**#68 Niclas Gronholm**
**#7 Timur Timerzyanov**
Car: **Hyundai i20**
Facts: Marcus Gronholm's outfit retains its 2019 driver and car line-up, but the i20 has undergone a number of changes, the most notably to the suspension, including a new partnership with French firm BOS. The team conducted multi-day tests in Latvia and France before World RX's testing curfew deadline.

#### Monster Energy GCK RX Cartel

Drivers:
**#13 Andreas Bakkerud**
**#33 Liam Doran**
Car: Renault Megane RS RX
Facts: Having raced EKS-run Audi S1s in 2019, the RX Cartel driver pairing of Bakkerud and Doran has switched to run under the GCK umbrella for 2020, in a pair of Renualt Meganes originally developed by Prodrive. Doran raced for GCK for four events at the end of 2018, while Bakkerud tested a Megane after the South Africa season-finale the same year.

#### GCK Unkorrupted

Drivers:
**#36 Guerlain Chicherit**
**#14 Rokas Baciuska**
Car: **Renault Clio RS RX**
Facts: GCK team owner Chicherit and one of his 2019 team-mates Baciuska, who set a brace of fastest times late on in the campaign with the squad's Megane, have switched to the team's Renault Clios for 2020, cars similar to those raced by Cyril Raymond and Guillaume De Ridder for the squad last season, but with revisions to suspension, chassis and engine.

#### Munnich Motorsport

Drivers:
**#44 Timo Scheider**
**#77 Rene Munnich**
Car: **Seat Ibiza RX**
Facts: After two years racing in the European Rallycross Championship, Munnich returns to full-time World RX action in a second Ibiza Supercar alongside double DTM champion Scheider. The squad's 2020 announcement also indicated that it will enter electric cars into World RX next year, so 2020 will be a mix of targeting solid results, and learning for the future.

### INDIVIDUAL ENTRIES

#### Kristoffersson Motorsport

Driver:
**#3 Johan Kristoffersson**
Car: **Volkswagen Polo GTI**
Facts: Two-time World RX champion Kristoffersson has told MN of his desire to race in rallycross again all winter, following Volkswagen's withdrawal from the WTCR at the end of last year to focus on electric-only motorsport, but for the Swede to return with a works-built Polo run by the KMS outfit will put a cat amongst the pigeons this year. Only time will tell how much ground the opposition has made up on Volkswagen's Polo in its year away.

#### GCK Bilstein

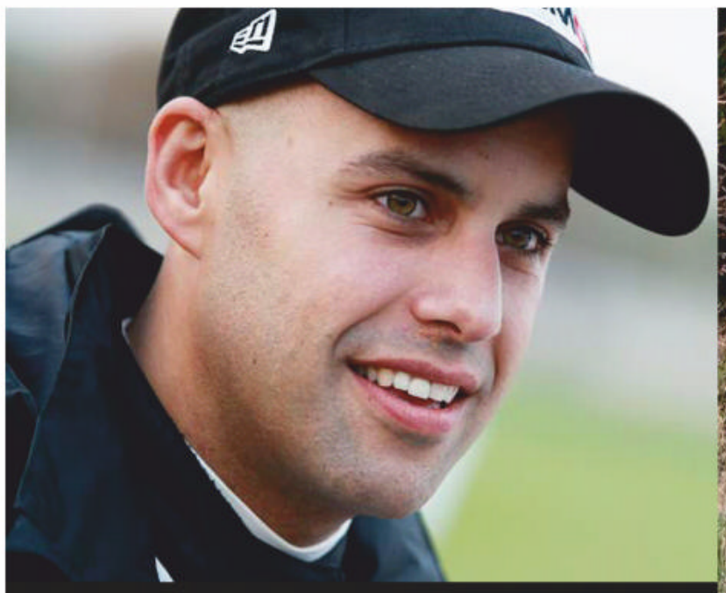
Driver:
**#92 Anton Marklund**
Car: **Renault Megane RS RX**
Facts: Double European champ Marklund remains with GCK for another term, having claimed the team's first victory at the Norwegian round last year, only to be stripped of the victory by a non-performance enhancing technical infringement. Continuing his relationship with Bilstein, Marklund's Megane will feature updated dampers from the German firm.

#### JC Raceteknik

Driver:
**#4 Robin Larsson**
Car: **Audi S1 RX**
Facts: Having stepped back to the European championship last year after a torrid World RX campaign in 2018 with Olsbergs MSE, Larsson dominated the five-round series to take the title in 2019 with the JC Raceteknik team and an ex-EKS Audi S1. He will now return to World RX with the same squad, driving a latest-specification S1.

Advertising enquiries: 01233 228753

FEATURE



Bogie is excited by his patriotic rallying monster




Escort is perhaps the ultimate Mk2

# THE ULTIMATE ESCORT

# BOGIE'S LATEST CHALLENGE

**David Bogie recalls how his epic Escort Mk2 was created and reveals his ambitions. By Luke Barry**

**Modified Escorts are 10-a-penny in Ireland but David Bogie's is different, and purposefully so. Well over 50% of the components in his car – designed and developed between Bogie and Escort guru Hamish Kinloch – are totally bespoke. And the results it has already achieved are remarkable with outright podiums on the Mull and Jim Clark rallies in 2019.**

Bogie says: "It's something I'm very proud of, and I take as much satisfaction from seeing other people get satisfaction from seeing the car at scrutineering or the service area or seeing the car on the stages. It has very much been a team effort [between me, Hamish and Robbie the engineer] and I think it's a fantastic car [we've] built between us all."

Bogie's Escort journey began 13 years ago when spectating in Donegal the year Sebastien Loeb brought his Citroen C4 WRC out to play. But Bogie was more interested in the modified battle, and that's when he first realised just how much excitement these cars create. With the bug firmly caught, the Scot wheeled out his father John's Metro 6R4 but was repeatedly let down with mechanical woes year after year.

"Murray Grierson came in one day and I said after Donegal 'I'm sick of this Metro 6R4 and the problems and the headaches it's giving me'," Bogie recalls. "He said 'you know what you could do, that Escort [bodyshell] of your dad's, send it up to Hamish, get him to prep it.' So I thought 'that's a good idea Murray.' And that's how it started."

Bogie was keen to use his Escort on Scottish gravel events too, so what hatched was a gravel-spec Escort that was good enough to power him to a Donegal National victory in 2016 but realistically wasn't going to consistently challenge the lightweight Tarmac cars in Ireland long-term. But Hamish spotted an Escort shell in Germany and a new project was born.

"That was it, that was the beginning of it all," Bogie remembers. "In all honesty, on the first test I was thinking 'Christ, this is quick but it's not giving me the feedback I want from the car.' We had problem after problem with throttle motors and different issues. I was impressed with the car and I knew we had the base package to develop from but at the same time I was actually thinking to myself 'have we done the right thing here?"

The car's first test in late 2018 was a precursor to the Killarney Historic Rally that December but, looking back, Bogie admits heading to that rally was a mistake. But once the development process accelerated so did the car's reliability and crucially, Bogie's stage times.

"I think certainly on wet Tarmac we've got the car working well," Bogie says. "Dry Tarmac, again, I'd say we're very, very close to having it where it needs to be but the car's going to continue to evolve. I've got plans for it and how we can improve in different areas and even this year going to Michelin tyres. What works on other cars doesn't necessarily work on our car and that's what we've found."



Bogie won the BRC back in 2011

Developing his Escort and getting it dialled in precisely how he likes it is a process Bogie has thoroughly enjoyed even if history suggested something different. After winning the Mitsubishi Evo Challenge in 2008, Bogie was tasked with developing the new E10 which he describes as a "headache".

"I came away from that year thinking 'I don't want to develop a car in the future'," he admits. "The engineers were arguing against my feedback, I was doubting myself. I appreciate JRM at the time were putting a lot of money in to make that project work but I just wasn't comfortable. I didn't have the experience at that stage. I'm more confident in my own ability [now]. I'm older, wiser [and] probably stronger and will stand my ground if I'm not happy. I've got Hamish and Robbie putting everything into this project. This isn't a business for them, they're doing this because they want to make this work. And I'm driven by their passion and their drive. Between that triangle of us three it's a good place to be."

Being able to freely change as much as he likes on the car too – free from the constrictions of homologation rules – is a whole new dynamic that Bogie is enjoying exploring: "[With] a four-wheel-drive car, of course you can change damper settings, revalve dampers, springs, rollbars, diff preloads, but on the whole you are restricted. Whereas [with] this you've more or less got a blank piece of paper and I think from my feedback, I'm not an engineer by any means, but I like the fact I can say to the engineer 'the car is doing this, the car is doing that' not necessarily 'change this and change that.' To build a car in Scotland and to then go along and race these Irish guys, as a proud Scotsman it's fantastic."

Talking about a five-time Scottish and previous British Championship winner as an underdog feels somewhat bizarre but it's a position Bogie finds himself in when equipped with his Escort. Despite all the technology harnessed within the car, it's still some feat for it to go toe-to-toe with a WRC or R5 car. Regardless, Bogie's aim is to do just that if the conditions lend themselves to it.

"The Jim Clark Rally for example wasn't ideal, the conditions didn't lend themselves well because of the muck and the mud," he explains. "So I was absolutely amazed to be on the pace that I was on. [In] Mayo we had two second fastest times overall [and] one of the

Photos: Chicane Media, Jakob Ebrey




Bogie has rallied the Escort in Scotland




Bogie has proved his credentials in BRC

stages we were 1.6 seconds down on Donagh Kelly who was quickest, so yeah I think punching above your weight is great.

"If there's a battle, I want to be a part of it," he continues. "That's the long and short of it. I don't want to go and win a rally by a minute and win every stage. It's not what I take satisfaction from. I want to be in the thick of a battle and punching above my weight with R5 cars and World Rally Cars. That's where I take the enjoyment from."

This year is going to be a case of picking and choosing events for Bogie who gets married to his fiancee Joanna on the same weekend as the Jim Clark Rally. Subsequent stag dos and a honeymoon, plus his ongoing business commitments, have forced a more relaxed approach to selecting events for the year which are likely to include at least Killarney; Donegal where he has "unfinished business" following last year's retirement; the new Coast2Coast Rally and Mull in his Escort.

The Speyside Stages and Scottish Rally have been touted in a hired four-wheel-drive car but fundamentally, Bogie is enjoying not being tied into a championship.

"A lot of these guys are doing it full time, that's their job, that's their life," he says. "Generally in a run up to a British Championship rally, I'm trying to sort out things at work, even during the rally I'm getting phone calls, keeping up to speed with what's going on. After the rally you're straight back to work. I did it as a balance, trying to give as much time as possible to testing and to rallies but it's not something I can just neglect. Having one project to be involved with and not having the British Championship which takes all your time [is nice], just to have something where I can say 'I'm going to go do that rally, or I'm not'."

Bogie concedes his Escort project will never truly be finished as he has recently bought a new shell over in Ireland, but his career could twist back towards the BRC or the Irish Tarmac Championship in the coming years too.

"I suppose one day I want to have children and I want my children to follow me rallying, running about the service area so yeah there's every chance we'll be back. British Championship, Irish Tarmac or something, but just at this stage of my life I'm enjoying the modified."

For now, Bogie's focus is on his Escort, starting with this weekend's North West Stages where another giant-killing performance is anticipated. ■

## BOGIE'S CAREER REFLECTIONS

David Bogie's rallying career could've been very different had things panned out another way. As 2011 British Rally champion, Bogie defeated Elfyn Evans but didn't progress with him into WRC Academy the following year.

"At that stage the BRC was going two-wheel drive and I didn't see that as a step forward in my career," he said. "Elfyn Evans chose to go World Championship and he's been there ever since but I wasn't at a stage where I could go World Championship and chase that dream.

"I'm not the driver Elfyn is by any stretch, he is the finished article, the real deal, but like a boxer they've got their career and if you go on Wikipedia, you can go back and see he's lost a fight early in his career. And once you've lost as a boxer that loss stays on your record for the rest of your days, so it makes me smile a lot to think I beat Elfyn in the British Championship. It's a nice one to brag about in the pub. But by any means I'm not going to compare myself to him."

As for a standout moment, Bogie holds his battle with team-mate Fredrik Ahlin on the 2017 Scottish Rally as one of his finest.

"Going into that last stage [there was] 0.1 seconds between us. That was just crazy. I went into that last stage and was like 'I'm either going to win the rally or I'm going to destroy this car into a ball.' That was basically how it was. Fredrik went in there with the same mindset. Of course, he picked up a stone and burst the radiator. And at the end of the rally, it wasn't what I wanted to see, but Fredrik had a massive smile on his face and was like 'that is rallying, that's what it's all about.' We went for a dinner after that, had a night out in Dumfries and I was just thinking 'this is what rallying should be.' Two good friends having a massive, massive fight on the last stage. Crazy."

**Luke Barry**




Kevin Rea (left) and David Bogie celebrate a tight victory




David Bogie said that he didn't enjoy the development work in the JRM Mistubishi Lancer in 2009

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COLUMN



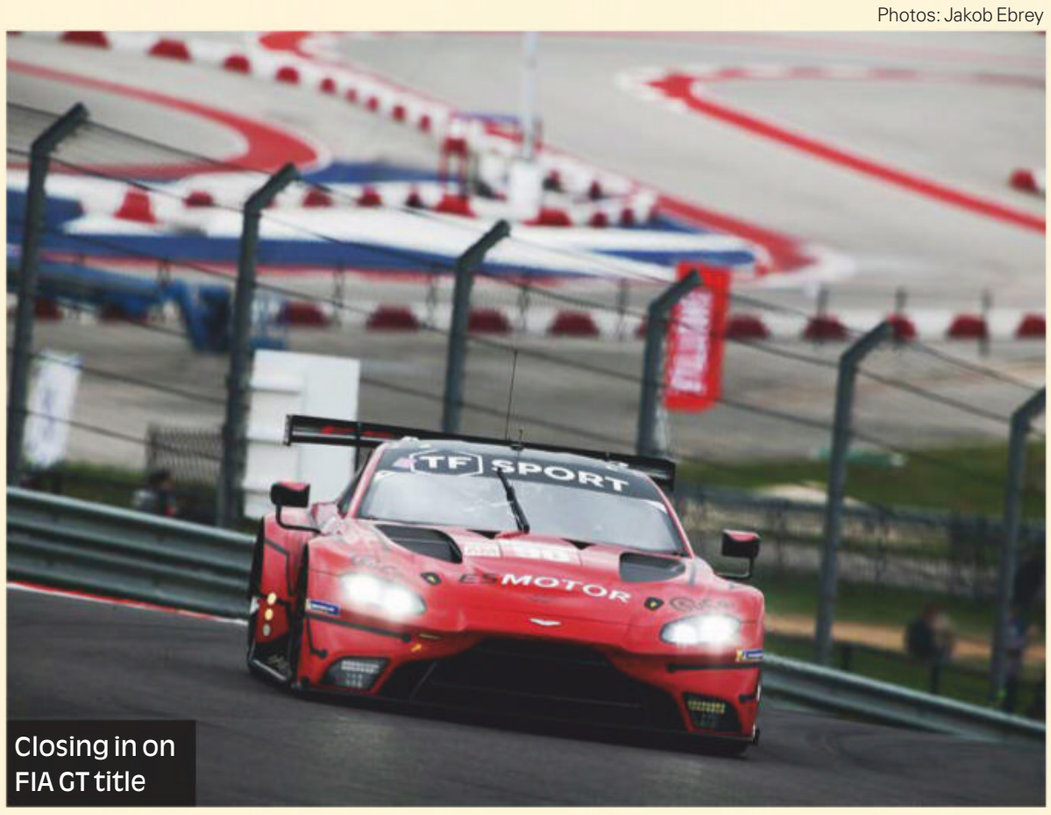
# JONNY ADAM

## *Multiple British GT champion who is aiming high again*

Photos: Jakob Ebrey



Adam has new team-mate in UK



Closing in on FIA GT title

**Best laid plans, and all that: I should have been enjoying a trip to the USA this week to tackle Sebring. It would have been a great kick start to the year and my 2020 schedule is packed. However, the virus took care of all of that, so it was a weekend off.**

I will be continuing my campaign in the 2019-2020 FIA World Endurance Championship. I am chasing the GT Am Championship in a TF Sport Aston Martin Vantage alongside my team-mates Charlie Eastwood and Salih Yoluc. It has been a good season for us so far and we are second in the points behind the AF Corse Ferrari of Emmanuel Collard, Nicklas Nielsen and Francois Perrodo. We are only two points behind, and we have rounds at Spa and Le Mans to come too. It is an exciting programme and we have taken wins. The pressure is on, but we have a really good crew of drivers.

Salih has improved every time he gets in the car and Charlie has proven quality: you don't win the Porsche Carrera Cup GB unless you are pretty handy. We have a really good blend and to win the title would be a feather in our cap.

I am a factory driver, but I am part of the TF Sport crew in the FIA series and in British GT, where I will partner with Ahmad Al Harthy in a GT3 Aston Martin too.

It is part of my role with Aston Martin Racing to help out the customers, and it is something I enjoy. Most drivers, when they start out, do some work as instructors and there is also the coaching side of the job, which I have done since I very first started out and it is something I get a real satisfaction from. Taking a bronze-graded driver and working with them is something that gives me so much pleasure. At the end of the day, it is about me being selfish too: the better they can perform, the better my chances are when I partner with them in a team.

Onlookers don't have a clue about the amount of effort that goes into a season because a lot of it is behind the scenes. For example, I often use Base Performance simulators, which is firm set up by Aston factory driver Darren Turner, to help. Last year with Graham Davidson, I think we spent almost 24 hours in total at the simulator.

It is a really brilliant tool. GT cars, particularly GT3 ones, are not cheap to run. You are looking at tens of thousands that you can spend on a test session. If you can chip away and find the small margins on the simulator, you are saving a great deal of money for the driver, who is the customer.



Adam and Davidson won in British GT in 2019




Adam has driven the works car at Le Mans

There have been many customers who I have driven with and helped over the years. I have had five team-mates in British GT, for example, and they are all different – and that is in terms of personality and driving styles too. You have to tailor how you treat each one of them. You need to suss them out: do they need a hard time? Do they need an arm round the shoulder? How do they respond best? It can be a minefield, but one I enjoy picking my way through. Like I say, it is all to my benefit to make each co-driver as fast as they can be.

I will be returning for my ninth season in British GT. People often ask me if I get bored with it and I certainly don't. I have won four of the last five titles, and any time you are winning, you know you are in a good situation. Undertaking the journey with new teams and team-mates always keeps it fresh, and the GT3 cars are a real pleasure to drive.

Al Harthy has been racing in Blancpain in recent seasons but the level that British GT is at now has tempted him to come back and race in the UK. Look at the line-up this year: we have 19 GT3 cars slated to take part, and the quality of the drivers across the grid is superb. We are getting back to the heady days we had in 2013 and 2014 in terms of numbers. Who wouldn't want to be part of that?

It is funny that I often bump into British Touring Car star Colin Turkington at some end-of-season awards dos, and we have been lucky enough to compare title-winning years during our more recent meetings. He's gunning for number five and so am I: I think there might be a few cheeky text messages swapping between us this year…

*"You need to suss out your team-mates pretty quickly"*

FEATURE

Photos: BRDC SuperStars




Top row (l-r) Phil Hanson, Jake Hill, Ashley Sutton, Enaam Ahmed, Seb Morris, Callum Ilott, Charlie Eastwood, Kiern Jewiss Bottom row (l-r) Dan Harper, Johnathan Hoggard, Tom Gamble, Sandy Mitchell. Not pictured: Dan Ticktum, who was conducting simulator work for Williams at the time.

# HOW THE BRITISH RACING DRIVERS' CLUB NURTURES THE NEXT GENERATION

## Matt James takes a look at the SuperStars scheme and its new 2020 intake

**There are many pitfalls for a young driver as they try to forge a professional career in motorsport. Alongside those traps for the unwary, there are schemes that are designed to give aspiring racers a leg-up. There are numerous young driver initiatives run by various manufacturers and teams, and they all have one aim: to unearth the next big thing.**

Since 2008, the owner of Silverstone, the British Racing Drivers' Club, has been on the hunt too. For more than two decades it has run the Rising Stars scheme, where a panel selects talents and invites them to join the mentoring roster. While there is no financial input, it is a way of marking out hot prospects and gives them the kudos of being aligned to one of the most prestigious motor racing bodies in the UK.

But the BRDC went further in 2008 with the introduction of the SuperStars moniker. Every season since then, the club has selected up to 15 drivers who are on the cusp of achieving great things and it gives them an intense level of support and mentoring.

The 1992 British Touring Car Championship winner Tim Harvey headed up the scheme initially, until he handed over the reins to sportscar talent Andy Meyrick, a former BRDC Superstar himself, at the beginning of 2019.

While the pockets aren't deep at the BRDC – after all, it has the burden of the Formula 1 grand prix contract to maintain – what it does offer is a huge resource in terms of back-up and experience contained within its membership. The doors can open for the SuperStars and the decades of knowledge accrued by its members is unmatched in motorsport.

It is a two-way street as well. Not only do the aspiring professionals get a stamp of approval, the club itself is put firmly on the young drivers' radar and it engages them with the BRDC from the beginning of their career. It is a win-win.

The new roster for this season, the 13th year of BRDC SuperStars was announced recently and encompasses single-seater talents, tin-top specialists and GT and sportscar drivers too.

Meyrick, now 34, is full of enthusiasm about the new portfolio, and is keen to apply the lessons he learned on his way up through the single-seater and sportscar ranks. He explains: "I have been there and done it, and I certainly know what the pitfalls are, and I think that I can bring relevance to the scheme for these drivers, because I have been in their position.

"When you look at the crop we have selected, they all have different requirements and needs from the SuperStars scheme. They are all quick racing drivers – they would not have been selected otherwise – and so that part of their armoury is already there. What we can do is work on the other areas with them, identify where they might need some support and development and then tailor any specific programme to them. We can offer off-track support and tap into the resources we have within the club. If I don't know the answer to any question or if I don't know the best advice to give, there will be someone within the club's membership who does.

"For example, we have Enaam Ahmed on the programme last year and he is doing F3 in Japan. For him, he was able to talk to our other members who have raced there and they were able to give him a steer on some of the practicalities that it involves racing in a totally different culture."

Meyrick is keen to point out that the back-up offered by the BRDC SuperStars is perhaps more inclusive than the rewards on offer from a manufacturer's young driver scheme.

"There are lots of young driver development programmes out there and they are great, but the focus is different," says Meyrick. "They want success and future champions, and drivers can be turfed out if they don't perform.

"The BRDC is independent, and that mean we can offer advice from a different angle. The guys that we have on the SuperStars scheme are there to forge a career. We aren't going to make them faster or demand certain targets in terms of on-track results, but what we are able to do is give them the tools to forge a long-term career in motorsport. We want them to be around for years to come at the top of their games, and so we need to underpin what we teach them with aspects that can help them get there."

The resources that the club has don't only extend to the membership and the knowledge is has within. There is also the clubhouse, and that has come into play when young drivers are aiming to seal a deal with sponsors. Meyrick says: "Maybe an invite to the clubhouse can help get a sponsor over the line: we have seen this work before. It is the little things like this can help."

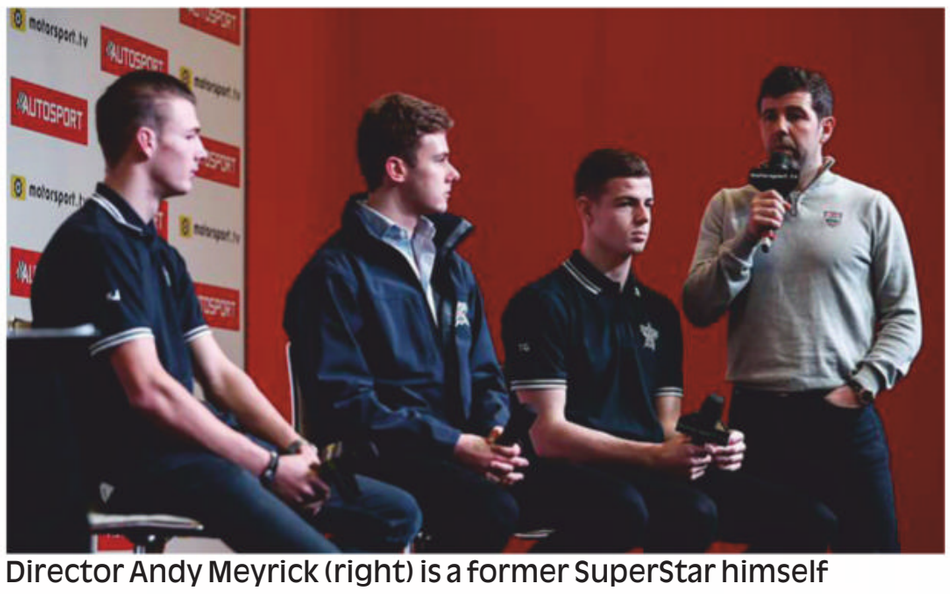
The group gets together on a couple of occasions a year, and then individual programmes are devised to help each with their needs. But the group sessions are equally vital, according to Meyrick.

"When they get together, there is a great camaraderie," he explains. "Each driver is on their own journey, of course, but they can learn from each other about the challenges they've each faced. There might be something a single-seater driver does that a tin-top racer doesn't know about and can learn from, and vice versa. It is also important that they are able to see where they stand in terms of their career compared to the other drivers who are around the same level."

The group will support each other and friendships are formed, and the club can facilitate that. Five of the drivers who have been part of the BRDC SuperStars scheme over the last 13 seasons – Will Stevens, Jolyon Palmer, Alex Albon, Lando Norris and George Russell – have made it to Formula 1 and have performed in front of the BRDC Clubhouse at the British Grand Prix. They've probably drawn UK fans through the turnstiles too, and helped promote the health of British motorsport. That, of course, is to the benefit of everyone. ■



Racers will carry BRDC branding




Director Andy Meyrick (right) is a former SuperStar himself



Group meet-up sessions help the drivers learn from each other

### THE 2020 SUPERSTARS LINE-UP

**Enaam Ahmed**
**2020 programme:** FIA F3 with Carlin

**Charlie Eastwood**
2020 programme: **FIA World** Endurance Championship with Aston Martin

**Tom Gamble**
**2020 programme:** European GT4 with R-Motorsport; European LMS with United Autosports

**Phil Hanson**
**2020 programme:** LMP2 with United Autosports

**Dan Harper**
**2020 programme:** BMW Motorsport Junior driver

**Jake Hill**
**2020 programme:** British Touring Car Championship with Mark Blundell Motorsport

**Johnathan Hoggard**
**2020 programme:** Porsche Carrera Cup Asia

**Callum Ilott**
**2020 programme:** FIA F2 with Virtuosi

**Kiern Jewiss**
**2020 programme:** British F3 with Douglas Motorsport

**Sandy Mitchell**
**2020 programme:** Lamborghini Junior driver, TBC

**Seb Morris**
**2020 programme:** Factory Bentley driver for international GT races

**Ash Sutton**
**2020 programme:** British Touring Car Championship with Laser Tools Racing

**Dan Ticktum**
**2020 programme:** FIA F2 with DAMS, Williams F1 development driver

Advertising enquiries: 01233 228753

FEATURE

Photos: Jakob Ebrey



The F4 pack is ready to do battle in 2020



Ginetta Junior champion James Hedley will proffer a challenge



Luke Browning will be part of the Fortec British F4 line-up

# WHY BRITISH F4 IS ANYONE'S GAME IN 2020

## Graham Keilloh looks at the country's springboard for future single-seater stars

**"Normally at this time of year I feel that there's a view that you think 'ah, those look like the contenders'," says British Formula 4 championship chief Sam Roach. "This year I'm struggling. There are so many people that you could make a case certainly for winning races, and a good number that could be champion."**

There is close to unanimity on this point about the forthcoming 2020 British F4 campaign among its competitors too. "You can tell already how close it is," concurs Fortec's team manager Ollie Dutton. "You can go hero to zero in a tenth or two. Every team has a driver that looks like they could take the championship."

JHR Developments boss Steven Hunter goes further. "There's a group of potentially 12 or 13 drivers who could be podium drivers," he predicts.

Sixteen drivers are in place for this year's ultra-competitive British F4 fight. The number is already an increase on last year and, with vacancies still open, hopes are that it will grow to 20. The drivers are a diverse bunch too, in nationality, career paths and experience. It underlines that British F4 is maintaining its status as an attractive, and exacting, test for those with single-seater career ambitions. The 2015 champion, a certain Lando Norris, attests.

"It was something Lando Norris's dad said to me at the end of the year when they'd done German and Italian rounds as well," Roach adds. "He said this is the hardest one to win in and I thought that's about the best accolade we could get."



British F4 series boss Sam Roach

A good place to start when looking for likely winners is the team that's triumphed in every season it has participated in British F4. Carlin's four drivers for 2020 are all new faces. There is reigning Ginetta Junior rookie champion Zak O'Sullivan, Peruvian karting protegee Matias Zagazeta, winner of Jacques Villeneuve's FEED Racing France programme Marijn Kremers, and the charismatic ex-karter Christian Mansell. And Carlin took a rookie all the way to the drivers' title last year.

Last season's teams' champion Double R meanwhile has become Argenti Motorsport, with Porsche Carrera Cup champion Michael Meadows now in charge. "We're a bit of Double R and a bit of new team," Meadows says. "I've got some good ideas that I learned through my driving career so hopefully I can impart some wisdom on these young guys!"

Casper Stevenson, winner of the inaugural F4 scholarship and another Ginetta Junior graduate, is on Argenti's driver roster. "He's got speed so we're expecting him to be right in the mix," Meadows predicts. Stevenson's alongside Reema Juffali, back for another year, and former karter Nico Pino.

Yet it is Fortec where you'll find the driver who is possibly favourite for this year's title. Luke Browning won two British F4 races last year with Richardson Racing on the way to sixth in the standings. He's now switched to Fortec for a championship crack. "I went down to their workshop and it was just absolutely immaculate," Browning recalls, "I'd eat my dinner off the floor in that place! It really is a well-oiled machine. For sure the championship is the aim, I've got the right people around me, I definitely think I can do it."

"We've always believed in him," Browning's new boss Dutton adds. "It's just the classic kind of fast racing drivers that struggle to get the money. He's a natural talent." And though Browning's not been able to fork out for the testing mileage that many of his rivals had, he led the lap times right from his debut in the car with his new squad.

Dutton reckons 1-2 finishes may be in the offing for Fortec indeed as the team also boasts Roberto Faria, another entering their follow-up British F4 campaign. "This year he's in a position to really fight for the championship and that's where we believe we are with him." Dutton says. Fortec also has debutant Rafael Villagomez, who is dovetailing his effort with French F4.

Another tipped for the top this season is JHR's James Hedley, who last year bagged the Ginetta Junior title by a distance. "It's a whole new ball game – glad to have some grip out there compared to the Ginetta!," Hedley notes. "I'm aiming for the championship – top three minimum. If I put myself together we'll be really strong. JHR, they've come second twice so hopefully third time lucky."

Alongside him is another Ginetta graduate, Abbi Pulling, as well as Mikkel Grundtvig, who does not want for F4 experience having already sampled the French and Danish versions. "We've got an element of experience, a young up-and-coming driver and then we've got one that seems to be just pulling out the surprises constantly," boss Hunter explains of his driving trio.

Arden looks strong too, with Alex Connor another entering his second year in the category – he bagged a pole and podium finish late last year.

His two rookie team-mates – Roman Bilinski, with a part-season in Ginetta Juniors behind him, and Frederick Lubin, graduate of the Arden-affiliated Young Racing Driver Academy – have both impressed the team.

The season opener is scheduled to be at Donington Park on March 28-29, and there we will start to resolve this riddle. "Anyone can win that first race," Dutton concludes.

"There are at least a handful of drivers that it would not surprise me. So it all comes down to qualifying and we'll see from then on… It's going to be exciting, for sure."

### Technical tweaks that will make a difference

British Formula 4 right now has a definite sense of a championship at ease with itself. It is attractive for young drivers internationally who have single-seater ambitions, and boasts a strong grid in numbers and quality.

The lesson is that details matter. The engine support provider may not strike as vital, but it has been key. Neil Brown Engineering was appointed to the engine role from the 2018 season, and has ensured since that in this championship aimed at identifying driver talent, it is not engine quality that splits the competitors.

"It is absolutely almost our most important job, to have that absolute equality," British F4 championship boss Sam Roach explains, "because the cars are so close out on the track and we are looking at hundredths and thousandths of second differences, we have got to be within 0.75 of a horsepower of all the engines plus or minus.

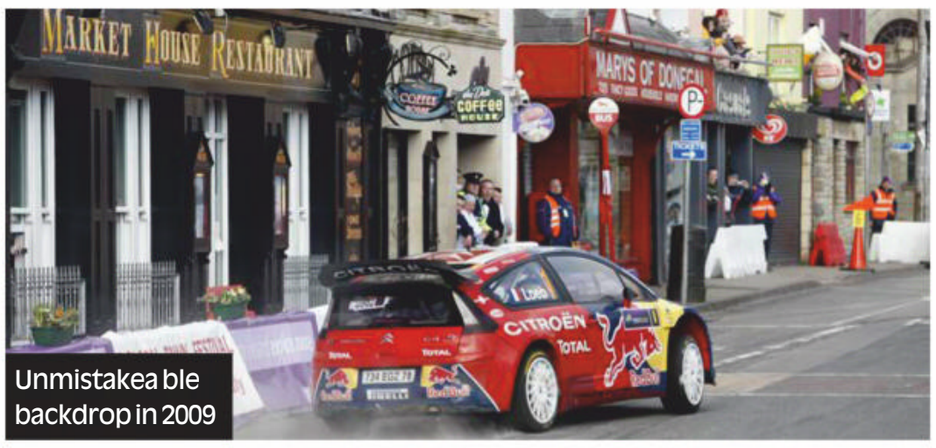
"It's a very hard job to do and NBE have absolutely risen to that and delivered us wonderful and equal engines. [It's made a] huge difference."

Arden boss Gary Ward for one recalls the situation previously. "With Sodemo that was originally doing the engine, there wasn't a lot of control with the engine coming through," he notes. "Whereas Neil Brown have really got it locked down. They control all the time, they're plugging in [the engines] 24/7, they're going back and look at the data. We get to June time, the engines will come out, they'll go back on the dynos again, be recalibrated again."

And Ward reckons it's had a direct benefit on grid numbers. "Now that proves it this year with 16 cars going straight into the first round," he adds. "That was the whole idea of setting out to do it, that it was down to that pedal in the middle [the driver]."

# FEATURE

Photos: ERC, mcklein-imagedatabase.com



Unmistakea ble backdrop in 2009



Breen won the Circuit in 2015

# IS THE REALITY OF THE WRC IN NORTHERN IRELAND MOVING CLOSER?

## There is some momentum building behind a World Rally Championship return to the Emerald Isle. By Jason Craig

**Northern Ireland PLC's quest to stage the British round of the FIA World Rally Championship was going great guns in the first seven months of last year. The stars appeared to be aligning for those working behind the scenes to bring Sebastien Ogier and company from Llandudno in Wales to Belfast in time for 2020.**

The idea was debated in the House of Commons, tourism chiefs from Northern Ireland had met with their Welsh counterparts to share best working practices, and a number of iconic stages had been mooted for the itinerary blueprint.

At one point, the groundswell of opinion for rotating the rally was so strong that it led to the official announcement of where Rally GB would be based from this season to be deferred.

Before the announcement was made that delay, coupled with the FIA's decision to postpone rubber-stamping the 2020 calendar, gave rally fans in Northern and southern Ireland real hope for optimism.

WRC Promoter Oliver Ciesla fanned the flames when he said – on the record – that moving Rally GB to Northern Ireland would help safeguard the UK's long-term involvement in the World Championship.

The small country has form when it comes to hosting truly world-class sporting competitions. Either side of the World Police and Fire Games – the third largest multi-sport event on the planet – and the Open Championship – golf's main flagbearer – it ran the opening leg of the Giro d'Italia bicycle race.

So relocating the rally from one nation in the UK to another for one year seemed doable. As the crow flies Llandudno and Belfast are separated by 215 miles of land and sea. Not an overly large distance, you might think, but reality started to set in during late summer 2019. The chasm was proving difficult to cross.

The reason? No devolved Northern Ireland government meaning no money. The handbrake had been tugged on and, until the Stormont Executive in Belfast was back up and running again, Westminster would not be releasing it.

### Return of devolved power

Then, on January 11 this year, following make-or-break talks brought about by the UK and Irish governments – the co-guarantors of the Good Friday Agreement – the DUP and Sinn Fein restarted their mandatory coalition. World Rally Championship talk resurfaced in motoring circles but was this another false dawn?

In truth, those who really want to see the WRC return to the province for the first time since 2009 – and there are many, if truth be told – could not stomach another 'so near and yet so far' scenario. Happily, the current feeling at Stormont Buildings – the backdrop for the opening Super Special stage from Rally Ireland in 2007 which Kris Meeke won – is 'how quickly can we make this happen?'

If the new Economy Minister, Diane Dodds MLA, gets her way it could be 2021. "A proposal is being considered for Northern Ireland to host the UK round of the 2021 World Rally Championship," she says. "Officials right across government are currently engaged with Motorsport UK to consider the feasibility of hosting the UK round.

"Tourism Northern Ireland is considering funding applications for events in 2020-2021, as well as a number of global events that could be hosted in Northern Ireland in future years. Funding of these events would, of course, be subject to affordability."

If it is a return on investment Northern Ireland wants, the WRC delivers in shovelfuls. The latest set of figures issued by the WRC reveals it had a cumulative television audience of 825 million in more than 150 countries.

History shows Tourism Northern Ireland likes to err on the side of caution, choosing instead to hide its light under a bushel. It has confirmed, however, that a WRC bid paper is currently sitting on its desk. Having its ties firmly rooted in the UK mainland, there is a desire from some to rotate the event.

One of those is Iain Campbell, Wales Rally GB's clerk of the course. He says: "It is no secret that there have been various conversations over a period of time about the World Rally Championship visiting Northern Ireland."

Malcolm Wilson – the boss of M-Sport – has fond memories of the Irish lanes and the challenges they presented, especially during his title-winning British Rally Championship campaign from 1994. However, in business – which the World Rally Championship is effectively – he says there is no room for sentiment nor nostalgia.

Wilson says: "I would be happy to see the World Rally Championship back in Ireland. The world doesn't know how unique Ireland is or how demanding it is, but I do. At the moment there is a lot of competition for a place.

"The manufacturers have, just recently, been in discussions and we feel 13 rallies is the limit. It's not going to be easy, especially after Paraguay announced that they plan to run a candidate event this year in the hope that they will be handed a place in 2021."

### WRC comeback

Speak to top drivers and they relish the unfamiliarity of new events, be they in Chile, the Safari or Japan. Hyundai Motorsport driver Craig Breen acknowledges that he is biased in wanting the WRC to pay a visit to the Emerald Isle for the first time since 2009.

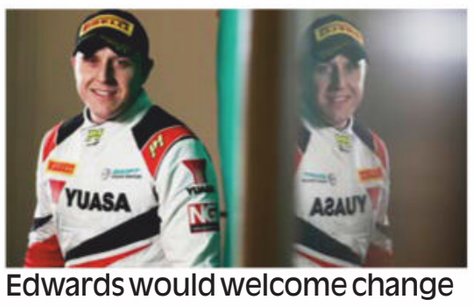
"I'd love if the WRC came back," he says. "The fanbase exists here, the infrastructure is in place and, most importantly of all, the roads you need are here. It would be great if we could get it back here. I have been lucky to travel around the world and I can say with confidence that what we have here is far, far superior to other parts of the world."

Naturally, if you are Welsh and you have a good thing like the WRC you don't want to surrender it too easily.

Matt Edwards – a two-time British champion who is aiming for a record-breaking third title in 2020 – has had the benefit of driving the stages on Wales Rally GB, with some running not far from his home.

He has also experienced Irish roads on previous visits to the Ulster Rally and says he would be in full support of Motorsport UK rotating Britain's round of the World Rally Championship, even on a one-off basis. Whereas closed-road legislation is still a relatively new concept on the UK mainland, Wales especially, it has been well exercised in Northern Ireland – another reason, says Edwards, why rotation works.

"As it stands, we don't know what Tarmac rallying [in England or Wales] has to offer," says Edwards. "You have the Jim Clark Rally in Scotland and the stages there are good, but you really need more Jim Clark rallies. We don't know what other roads are available on the mainland. You don't have that problem in Ireland as so many of them have been used down through the years. The only fear I have is that indecisiveness could create problems longer term. If we take our eye off Wales Rally GB because we are looking at rotation, we could end up where we are not in the WRC." ■



Edwards would welcome change


Gronholm: Ireland had drama...

# JASON CRAIG



MN'S MAN IN THE SERVICE PARKS

## *"The WRC would bring happiness to thousands"*

**First Northern Ireland had the Intercontinental Rally Challenge in 2012. What followed was the European Rally Championship from 2014. Logic tells us that the World Rally Championship should follow next.**

That is the idea in theory, but taking an idea and turning it into a reality is proving harder than some could have imagined. Especially for respected route planner Bobby Willis who chose not to comment on the current state of play to MN. He doesn't want to raise people's expectations unnecessarily. He would rather talk about the World Rally Championship when the paperwork has been signed, sealed and delivered and he knows the series is coming to Northern Ireland.

There is some uncertainty surrounding the future of the deal to keep Rally GB in Wales. There has to be a drive from Motorsport UK to host the event, and it might have already sealed a deal to remain on the mainland, which would scupper any chances of rotation. But those are decisions being made in the corridors of power right now.

The trouble I have is the paralysis that appears to stymie decision-making at government level. Yes, there are more pressing matters right now but mental well-being is a cornerstone of any government's mandate and in the case of the WRC it has the potential to bring happiness and a release to tens of thousands of individuals.

Is it all pie in the sky? Am I looking at the whole thing through rose-tinted glasses? Am I allowing myself to become emotively involved in the idea of Sebastien Ogier, Ott Tanak, Elfyn Evans et al racing along the north Antrim coast? Probably. OK, I am. Most definitely.

But here is the thing. Last year I spoke to the MP for the area, Ian Paisley, and he made a bold statement that has stuck in my mind ever since. "We have invested about £3m into golf tourism and that's brought the Open, which is going to be a phenomenal event, but the WRC could dwarf that."

Enough said, really.

Advertising enquiries: 01233 228753

# RALLY REPORTS

Photos: West Coast Photography, Martin Walsh, William Neill

# BINNIE NEARLY BINS IT BUT HOLDS FIRM TO WIN

## After a long wait, Mitsubishi man finally tastes Scottish championship success



Binnie took an emotional victory

**Coogie Urquhart Snowman Rally**

By John Fife

**Organiser:** Highland Car Club **When:** March 7 **Where:** Inverness **Championships:** KNC Groundworks Scottish Rally Championship; Highland Car Club Championship **Stages:** 5 **Starters:** 93

**It was something of a shock to see the names Michael Binnie and Claire Mole at the top of the results sheets at the end of this year's Snowman Rally, but it was richly deserved. Binnie achieved this career-best result on his 32nd rally start.**

Going into the final stage, Jock Armstrong and Cameron Fair had a nine-second lead over second-placed Binnie. Few would have bet against the former Scottish champion in his Subaru Impreza consolidating that lead at worst, or improving it at best, over an 11-mile stage.

Already used as the opening test earlier that day, the final run still had patches of snow, ice and slush to catch out the unwary. Perhaps the top seeds were just too cautious given the unpredictability of conditions. Whatever, Binnie hit the afterburner and went for it, the red Mitsubishi Lancer blazing a stunning trail through that final test.

His time was a full 37s quicker than Armstrong's. Victory was his. "I just felt I was on it all day," said Binnie afterwards. "We did hit a huge bump, though, in the final stage which sent the car flying and I just thought to myself 'don't chuck it all away now'…"

Armstrong was quite philosophical in second place. He said: "I thought I drove at a sensible pace in that last one, but if that's the times, then that's the times."

Going 1s faster than Binnie to claim fastest final-stage time was the Ford Fiesta R5 of Freddie Milne and Patrick Walsh, their scintillating final blast sufficiently quick to displace Donnie MacDonald and Andrew Falconer for third place in their Fiesta R5.

Fresh from their sixth-place finish on the recent Fivemiletown Spring Rally in Northern Ireland, John Wink and Neil Shanks were hoping for better than fifth in their Hyundai i20 R5, but the pace proved much fiercer than expected. Bruce McCombie was sixth after recovering from a spin his Ford Focus WRC on the third test.

Mark McCulloch finished as top two-wheel-drive runner in a superb ninth place overall after a day-long struggle with Keir Beaton who finished 11th, both in Ford Escort Mk2s, while Bobby Mitchell's class-winning run in his Ford Fiesta ST earned a remarkable 14th place overall.

Prior to the Snowman, Binnie had only four seasons rallying under his belt. He started with a Mitsubishi Lancer E5 and has used his current E9 for the past two and half seasons. Although the Lancer is faster in a straight line than most R5s, there were few straights in the Scottish Highlands at the weekend. This event also marked Mole's fourth outright victory, having previously won in the USA, Yorkshire and the Scottish borders. And you can bet your boots, the frontrunners won't be caught napping again.

**Results**

1 Michael Binnie/Claire Mole (Mitsubishi Lancer E9) 45m33s; 2 Jock Armstrong/Cameron Fair (Subaru Impreza) +20s; 3 Freddie Milne/Patrick Walsh (Ford Fiesta R5); 4 Donnie MacDonald/Andrew Falconer (Ford Fiesta R5); 5 John Wink/Neil Shanks (Hyundai i20 R5); 6 Bruce McCombie/Michael Coutts (Ford Focus WRC); 7 Alan Dickson/Martin Forrest (Mitsubishi Lancer E9); 8 Ian Forgan/Chris Lees (Subaru Impreza); 9 Mark McCulloch/Michael Hendry (Ford Escort Mk2); 10 John Morrison/Peter Carstairs (Mitsubishi Lancer E9).

**Class winners:** Donald John MacLeay/Ross MacRae (Ford Escort Mk1 Mexico); Keith Riddick/Mairi Riddick (MG ZR); Tom Coughtrie/Ian Fraser (Mitsubishi Galant VR4); Bobby Mitchell/Ewan Lees (Ford Fiesta ST); McCulloch/Hendry; Keir Beaton/Iain Thorburn (Ford Escort Mk2); Binnie/Mole; Armstrong/Fair; Milne/Walsh.

# KELLY HOLDS HIS NERVE TO OVERHAUL AILING MOFFETT IN MAYO

**Mayo Rally**

By Martin Walsh

**Organiser:** Mayo & District Motorsport Club **When:** March 8 **Where:** Castlebar, County Mayo **Championships:** Triton Showers National Rally Championship, Sligo Pallets Border Rally Championship **Stages:** 9. **Starters:** 80.

**Former champion Donagh Kelly took his Volkswagen Polo GTi R5 to victory in the Mayo Rally, the opening counter in this season's National Rally Championship. He finished 30.8 seconds ahead of the Ford Fiesta WRC of another ex-champion, Roy White, with Gary Kiernan (Ford Escort) a further 38.3s adrift in third.**

**While heavy rain was a feature of the event, most of the drama unfolded close to the end as long-time leader Josh Moffett retired after his Hyundai i20 R5 developed an issue with its ECU on the penultimate stage where Peadar Hurson's Ford Fiesta WRC also rolled out of third place.**

**Reigning national champion Moffett made the perfect start and even though the second stage was cancelled due to livestock troubles, Moffett was 7.9s ahead of Kelly after stage three. Niall Maguire was an opening-stage casualty, falling victim to the slippery terrain when slid off his Subaru WRC off the road. Damian Toner (Ford Escort) retired with an electrical issue and while he returned under Rally2, he withdrew prior to the final loop. Meanwhile, Hurson was 6.3s further behind in third while White had to resist using the handbrake as it locked all four wheels when deployed.**



Champion Kelly managed to finish more than half a minute clear

**On the repeat loop, Moffett extended his lead but Kelly lost second place when he caught up with White's punctured Fiesta. Hurson moved into second only for Kelly to regain the spot within two stages as heavy rain made for difficult conditions.**

**Moffett enjoyed a 21.6s lead at the final service and seemed on course to begin the defence of his crown in the best possible fashion. But it all went wrong on the penultimate stage where his lead was slashed to 8.5s and he was forced to retire with the ECU issue.**

**Kelly went on to claim the spoils as White took the powerstage and second place following the demise of Moffett and Hurson. Eugene Donnelly (Proton Iriz R5) was another final-loop retirement.**

**Kiernan was third but almost came a cropper on the final stage where David Bogie came within 3.3s. Jason Black (Toyota Starlet) was next followed by Declan McCrory (Fiesta R5) and Raymond Conlon (Toyota Corolla), who had no answer to his fellow rear-wheel drive exponents. Niall Devine had an untroubled victory in Group N.**

**Results**

1 Donagh Kelly/Conor Foley (VW Polo R5) 55m43.1s; 2 Roy White/James O'Brien (Ford Fiesta WRC) 30.8s; 3 Gary Kiernan/Ryan Moore (Ford Escort); 4 David Bogie/John Rowan (Ford Escort); 5 Jason Black/Karl Egan (Toyota Starlet); 6 Declan McCrory/Stephen O'Hanlon (Ford Fiesta R5); 7 Raymond Conlon/Damien Fleming (Toyota Corolla); 8 Niall Devine/Liam McIntyre (Mitsubishi Lancer E9); 9 David Carney/Ray Fitzpatrick (Ford Fiesta R5); 10 John Warren/Ruthann O'Connor (Toyota Corolla).

**Class winners**: Colin Mullins/Des Sherlock (Honda Civic); Eamonn Kelly/Conor Mohan (Ford Fiesta R2T); Roger Kennedy/Wendy Blackledge (Peugeot 306); Devine/McIntyre; McCrory/O'Hanlon; Colin O'Rourke/Shane Gilhooly (Ford Fiesta WRC); Brendan Friel/Aoife Stewart (Nissan Micra); Alvin Alcorn/Barry Melly (Toyota Corolla); Liam McMullan/Christy McLaughlin (Honda Civic); Shaun Doherty/Chris Harley (Ford Escort); Brian Armstrong/Aodhan Gallagher (Ford Escort); Black/Egan; Bogie/Rowan; Ian Roche/JJ Cremin (Subaru WRC); Simon Chapman/Peter Foy (Proton Millington); Shane Norris/Anthony McDonald (Honda Civic).



McGarrity was quick all day



Amy Graffin was spectacular

# DEREK McGARRITY RESTORES HIS ORDER WITH BISHOPSCOURT GLORY

**Bishopscourt Stages**

By William Neill

**Organiser:** Organiser: Ballynahinch and District Motor Club Ltd **When**: March 7 **Where:** Bishopscourt Race Circuit, County Down **Championship:** Motorsport UK Northern Ireland Rally Championship **Starters:** 64 **Stages:** 6.

Multiple champion Derek McGarrity says he is back where he "should be" after a start-to-finish 10.8-second win in a Ford Fiesta WRC generated a single-point series advantage.

McGarrity and Damian Garvey were fastest on the opening three stages despite catching cars over the two-lap format. With the Newtownabbey man 2.7s quicker than eventual runners-up Derek and Mark McGeehan on the opening stage, he pushed the lead up to 14.8s by the increased mileage of the third stage.

It was here a tyre choice for the Mini John Cooper Works WRC proved costly.

During an effort to maintain second, the McGeehan duo went fastest on both the 6.6-mile fourth and 7.4-mile fifth stages to bring the margin to just under 10s before McGarrity bagged a final-stage win.

Gareth Sayers was third going into stage six but explained he did an extra lap when a car blocked a split.

So, on her first rally, 16-year-old Amy Graffin navigated father Kieron to the podium after hitting a tyre marking the course resulted in a two-wheeled moment. The Ford Fiesta R5 was over a minute from the leaders.

Despite a misted windscreen, stall and overheating issues on the pre-West Cork outing Kevin Kelleher and Martin Brady were 7s back in fourth using a McKinstry Motorsport Subaru Impreza S14 WRC. And that name, McKinstry, followed 19.6s later with Emma, daughter of preparation expert Kenny McKinstry, and Kenny Hull fifth.

Jason Mitchell and Kenny Bustard held a penultimate-stage slide to finish sixth, a position down on their Kirkistown result in another Fiesta R5, 24.3s from improving.

With an all-out effort to regain time after from a third-stage mistake where a tyre was stuck under their Ford Escort Mk2, James and Heather Kennedy came back to win the two-wheel-drive category by 10.3s from Drew Stewart.

**Results**

1 Derek McGarrity/Damian Garvey (Ford Fiesta WRC) 43m12s; 2 Derek McGeehan/Mark McGeehan (Mini John Cooper Works WRC) +10.8s; 3 Kieron Graffin/Amy Graffin (Ford Fiesta R5); 4 Kevin Kelleher/Martin Brady (Subaru Impreza S14 WRC); 5 Emma McKinstry/Kenny Hull (Fiesta R5); 6 Jason Mitchell/Kenny Bustard (Fiesta R5); 7 James Kennedy/Heather Kennedy (Ford Escort Mk2); 8 Drew Stewart/David White (Escort Mk2); 9 Alastair Cochrane/John Adams (Escort Mk2); 10 Jonny Morrow/Adam Semple (Toyota Corolla).

**Class winners:** Andrew Bushe/Ivor Lamont (Vauxhall Chevette HSR); Daryl Sproule/Stephen Caldwell (Vauxhall Astra); Philip White/Kyle Diffin (Nissan Micra); Robert Erwin/Sara Erwin (Corolla); Sam Adams/Michael Johnston (Escort Mk2); Kennedy/Kennedy; Niall Carey/Ciaran Carey (BMW Compact); Gary McEvoy/Keith McEvoy (Mitsubishi Lancer E9); George Robinson/Tommy Speers (Fiesta 4x4); McGarrity/Garvey; McKinstry/Hull.

# TOUR OF CHESHIRE REPORT

Photos: Paul Lawrence




Bloxham avoided numerous pitfalls

# BLOXHAM SNAPS UP THE GLORY ON THE TOUR OF CHESHIRE

## Ford Escort Mexico crew lead from the front in HRCR showdown. By Ken Binstead

**The second round of the MN-backed Historic Rally Car Register Clubmans Championship was the Tour of Cheshire where Nick Bloxham and Niall Frost (Ford Escort Mk1 Mexico) claimed glory and conquered tough sections.**

There was an early start for crews from the Bickerton Poacher Inn in Malpas. They were straight into two regularities on the quiet roads, which gave the competitors time to settle in to the event. Putting out a statement of intent even though they started from the back of the field, Bloxham and Frost achieved just seven seconds of penalties across both regularities. They were closely followed by Ian Crammond and Matthew Vokes in a Mercedes 280SL and Paul Crosby with Ali Procter in a 911. Both those crews had accrued eight seconds of penalties.

The field then moved on to Oulton Park for the first of two tests around the rally circuit. Bloxham and Frost were fastest through, completing the task three seconds ahead of the chasing pack in the first and three seconds ahead of Peter and Douglas Humphrey in an Austin Mini Cooper in the second challenge.

After a coffee break, the competitors were back out for Regulation C which consisted of a pre-plotted route using a variety of coloured roads and county boundary markings. Returning champion driver Richard Isherwood, with Ian Canavan in a Volkswagen Golf GTi, nearly pulled off a clean sweep with just a single second penalty across the three timing points.

Two tests in the confines of the car parks at Radbroke Hall in the village of Peover Superior then beckoned. Bloxham and Frost were at it again, winning the first by one second and then coming out joint winners with mother-and-son Colin and Anji Martin in a Ford Escort 1600 Sport in the second counter.

Regularity D used a circular herring bone layout to identify the route. This was generally well handled by the majority of the crews and then, prior to the lunch stop, there were two more car park tests, this time at Booths Hall in Knutsford. Crosby and Procter were obviously hungry at this point as they won both tests by a margin of one second.

Lunch then gave everyone a chance to regroup. Bloxham/ Frost were leading the way by 18s at this point ahead of Crosby/Procter. Novices Elliott Dale and Charlotte Ryall, using a Derby Bentley, had an excellent morning with consistent regularity times and test speeds that were incredibly competitive running in 10th at lunch. The leading experts were Mark Goodwin and Anthony Davies in a Triumph Dolomite Sprint in 14th spot.

After that, the cars were out onto Reg E that was a descriptive route with no maps, just 49 instructions to get from one point to another within the prescribed time. However, the event was centred on the Cheshire showground with its myriad gates and tracks to confuse the unwary. Mix in three passage checks to throw out the timing, and the was impressive and demanding in equal measure.

Crammond and Vokes came out on top this time with just three seconds of penalties. This challenge was followed by a quick test up the exit driveway before the crews departed the showground. Darren Everitt and Susan Dixon produced the best time of 26s, one second ahead of Crosby/Procter.

Reg F was pre-plotted using a series of spot heights to find the way. All the top crews had little difficulty with this but it was there to lull people into a false sense of security.

Reg G became the one that defined quite a few crews rally. The top 10 managed to find all the controls but 13 crews didn't and with a hefty 300-point penalty for each control missed, it would put some out of contention.

At the end Bloxham /Frost tied with Jonathan Hancox and Richard Lambley in a TR4 with five seconds of penalties.

The crews then returned to Oulton Park Rally circuit for the final two tests. There was no change at the top, though, with no-one able to challenge Bloxham/Frost who were turning everything they touched to gold. They claimed the opening challenge by two seconds, and took the second one by a single second.




Dale and Ryall's Bentley started strongly

The final regularity came in two parts. The first was following a route across grid squares and the second was a Jogularity-style using Tulip diagrams, trip distances and timings.

A formidable amount of concentration was required as the route was over 20 miles long, took nearly 50 minutes and contained six controls, with one hidden in a farmyard. Gareth Hockridge and Rob Henchoz in a Volvo Amazon 121S proved they had what it takes and managed to complete the task with just seven seconds of penalties.

Finally, the crews could relax and make their way back to the Poacher in Malpas to be awarded the traditional Cheshire Cheese for each finishing competitor.

It was another excellent rally organised by the team at Knutsford Motor Club with challenging navigation, a good variety of special tests and they even managed to arrange it on a dry day.

### Results

**HRCR Tour of Cheshire**

**Organiser:** Knutsford Motor Club **When:** March 7 **Where:** All over Cheshire **Starters:** 76.

1 Nick Bloxham/Niall Frost 11m10s (Escort); 2 Howard Warren/Iain Tullie (Porsche 911) +14s; 3 Paul Crosby/Ali Procter (Porsche 911); 4 Ian Crammond/Matthew Vokes (Mercedes 280SL); 5 Richard Isherwood/Ian Canavan (Volkswagen Golf GTi); 6 Jonathan Hancox/Richard Lambley (Triumph TR4); 7 Paul Bloxidge/James Bloxidge (Volkswagen Golf GTi); 8 Mike Vokes/Philip Vokes (Ginetta G15); 9 Clive Baty/Gary Evans (Renault 5); 10 Jon Dunning/David Taylor (Alfa Romeo 2000). **Classes:** Experts: Mark Goodwin/Anthony Davies (Dolomite Sprint). Novice: Stuart Anderson/Emily Anderson (Bentley Derby)




Ian Crammond and Matthew Vokes slipped to an eventual fourth




Warren and Tullie took second position

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COLUMN

# IAN FLUX



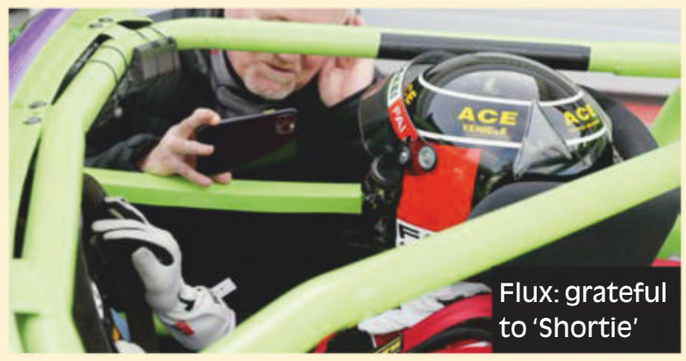
## National racing legend takes a trip down memory lane at Silverstone

Photos: Jako Ebrey



Champ back in TVR harness



Flux: grateful to 'Shortie'

**It's a good job I am a silver surfer. I was online last Tuesday night and happened across a post from my old TVR Tuscan Challenge rival Martin Short. He was a formidable rival and hard as nails, but as with anyone in that series, we had huge respect for each other and eventually became friends: just not too close when the V8s sparked into life!**

Shortie's post said that he was going to Silverstone to take part in a BRDC track day on the following morning, and that as well as his LMP1 cars, which he raced so successfully at Le Mans, he was dusting down his recently rebuilt TVR Tuscan Challenge car for a blast. I told him I had nothing special to do particularly that day, and so we arranged that I could pop along and maybe get a run in the Tuscan.

I have a framed chart on my kitchen wall at home which lists all the TVR Tuscan Challenge race winners. The only reason I have got it as because I am top of the pops! I won the championship in 1996 and was a narrow runner-up in 1997 behind my mate Bobby Verdon-Roe. In my time in TVRs, which lasted up until 2000, I was lucky enough to win 26 rounds. I was pretty pleased with that return, while Shortie is also on the list with 13.

Anyhow, with the 30th anniversary of the category last year, a number of drivers have either bought back their old cars or reworked their originals. When I got to Silverstone last week and had a walk up and down, Richard Hay was there with his example and Mike Jordan had brought his too, alongside Shortie's. It's just a shame that everyone was working to different schedules and we didn't get a chance to bring them all together for a photo. That would have been almost 1500bhp of raw Blackpool power.

When I got to the circuit and saw Martin's car, I was blown away. It has been lovingly put together, and it is perfect in every detail. The car was exactly as I remember it – but then I only usually saw it when it was in my rear-view mirror...

I got a brief run in the morning, but a longer stretch of about five laps in the afternoon and wow, what an experience. By the time I got to Becketts on the very first lap, it was like putting an old pair of shoes on. It was just like I remembered it. All brute force and grunt. Shortie had asked me to be careful and run the engine at no more than 6500rpm because it was new. But he wasn't watching around the back of the circuit, was he?

One thing that I'd forgotten about was just how good the front-end grip is on these cars. I was blown away, and Martin agreed. I drive a lot of modern-day sportscars in my day job at the Silverstone racing school, but the TVR far outstrips a latest Aston Martin or Ferrari. I wonder if that is why we were all sideways in the Tuscans all the time, as the front was stuck like glue. The brakes were brilliant too, and all the memories came flooding back for me. The cars were upgraded when the AJP V8s came on stream and so they were all on-song in 1995: these things are 25 years old, and still able to shine brighter than modern machines.

I am so grateful to Shortie for letting me have an outing, and it made me realise that, even though I have driven some truly fantastic machines in my career, the TVR Tuscan Challenge car was right up there as the best.

It was a great time to reflect, and I will be doing a bit of reminiscing myself later on this month. On March 28, it will be the 50th anniversary of my first ever motor race. I managed to race for 49 seasons consecutively up until last year, so there will be plenty to ruminate on. That is quite an achievement, and another thing I am very proud of.



The V8 car was ready to rumble

*"Getting into the TVR again was like putting on a pair of old gloves"*











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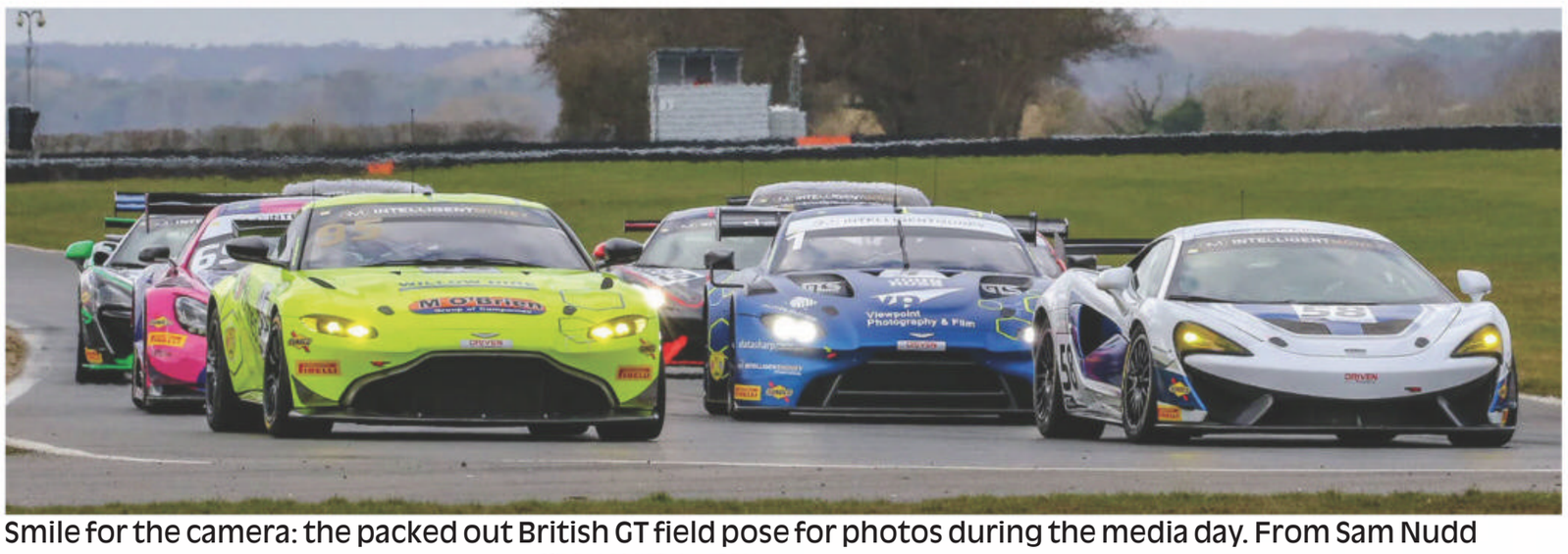
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The essence of trialling. This shot is from Mike Griffin



Smile for the camera: the packed out British GT field pose for photos during the media day. From Sam Nudd

ART EDITOR MIKE STOKOE'S FAVOURITE OF THE WEEK!



The Tour of Cheshire presented many challenges. This shot was sent in to Motorsport News by Chris Collier



Another from Sam Nudd: this time an F3 car in flight



Peter Atkins's shot of a 555 Subaru Impreza on a demo



Mike Griffin's photo from the John Harris Sporting Trial



Chris Collier went to the BRDC F3 test day at Snetterton



In the air: Lee Holland Memorial action, sent in to MN by Richard Salisbury



More Snetterton pre-season action from Chris Collier, this time an Aston Martin

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# WHAT'S ON

## LISTINGS

**RACING**
**SATURDAY/ SUNDAY**
■ **Silverstone National, Northants**
**BARC meeting:** Hyundai Coupe, Classic 2CV, Caterham Graduates, Mini Seven/Miglia, Kumho BMW, Junior Saloons, Mighty Minis, MGOC
**Starts:** Saturday racing from 1325hrs (qualifying from 0900hrs); Sunday racing from 0925hrs (qualifying from 0900hrs)
**Admission:** £15
**Web** silverstone.co.uk

**SATURDAY/ SUNDAY**
■ **Silverstone International, Northants**
**BRSCC meeting:** Caterham Enduro, Mazda MX-5, Ford Fiesta, Fiesta Junior, BMW Compact, Clubsport Trophy
**Starts:** Saturday racing from 1055hrs (qualifying from 0900hrs); Sunday racing from 0900hrs
**Admission:** £15
**Web** silverstone.co.uk

**RALLYING**
**SATURDAY**
■ **Garstang, Lancashire**
Legend Fires North West Stages
**Starts:** 0845hrs
**Admission:** Starts from £20
**Web:** northweststages.co.uk

*Listings correct at time of press – but please check first*

## TV GUIDE

With the coronavirus continuing to take its toll on global events, there's arguably no better time for a midweek F1 digest. **F1 Midweek Debrief** is broadcast on Wednesday evening on Sky Sports F1 (2315hrs-2345hrs) just before **The Inside Line** (2345hrs-0015hrs) giving you a full hour of content updating you on the world of Formula 1 in the wake of the postponed Australian Grand Prix.

But if electric racing is your thing, make sure you're tuned into FreeSports on Saturday afternoon (1200hrs-1230hrs) for **Formula E Street Racers**; the magazine show giving viewers behind-the-scenes access into the world of electric single-seater racing.

Straight afterwards, you can view all the highlights from the previous weekend's planned **Supercars** race at Melbourne (1230hrs-1430hrs) in what is always an entertaining watch.



Formula E Street Racers will get behind the scenes of FE

## PLEASE BE AWARE!

**All timings and event listings are subject to change. Please check with organisers and broadcasters for the very latest updates**

## LIVE TV

**F1**
**Bahrain Grand Prix**
■ **Practice 1:** Friday, 1100hrs, Sky Sports F1
■ **Practice 2:** Friday, 1445hrs, Sky Sports F1
■ **Practice 3:** Saturday, 1145hrs, Sky Sports F1
■ **Qualifying:** Saturday, 1455hrs, Sky Sports F1
■ **Race:** Sunday, 1505hrs, Sky Sports F1

**F2**
■ **Practice:** Friday, 0730hrs, Sky Sports F1
■ **Qualifying:** Friday, 1350hrs, Sky Sports F1
■ **Race 1:** Saturday, 1315hrs, Sky Sports F1
■ **Race 2:** Sunday, 1140hrs, Sky Sports F1

**F3**
■ **Qualifying:** Friday, 1250hrs, Sky Sports F1
■ **Race 1:** Saturday, 0910hrs, Sky Sports F1
■ **Race 2:** Sunday, 0940hrs, Sky Sports F1

## NEXT WEEK — OUT WEDNESDAY, MARCH 25

*Content correct at time of press*

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**EDITORIAL**
**Editor:** Matt James
**Tel:** 07884 117139
**Email:** matt.james@kelsey.co.uk

**Deputy Editor:** Graham Keilloh
**Email:** Graham Keilloh@kelsey.co.uk

**Reporter:** Luke Barry
**Email:** Luke.Barry@kelsey.co.uk

**Art Editor:** Mike Stokoe
**Tel:** 07957 282340
**Email:** mikestokoe@gmail.com

**Contributors**
**Rallying Editor:** Colin Clark
**Historics Editor:** Paul Lawrence
**Rallycross Editor:** Hal Ridge
**Columnist at large:** David Addison
**Columnist and track tester:** Andrew Jordan

**ADVERTISING**
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**Account Director:** Richard Rowe
**Email:** richard@tandemmedia.co.uk
**Tel:** 01233 228757

**Account Manager:** Peri Smith
**Email:** perianne@tandemmedia.co.uk
**Tel:** 01233 228753

**PRODUCTION**
Tandem Media Ltd.
**Ad Production Manager:** Andy Welch
**Email:** mn@tandemmedia.co.uk
**Tel:** 01233 220245

**MANAGEMENT**
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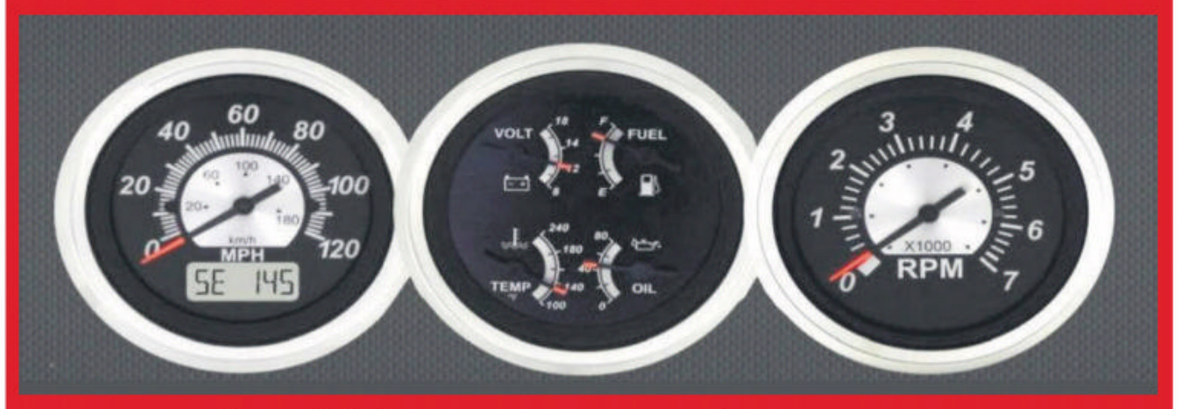
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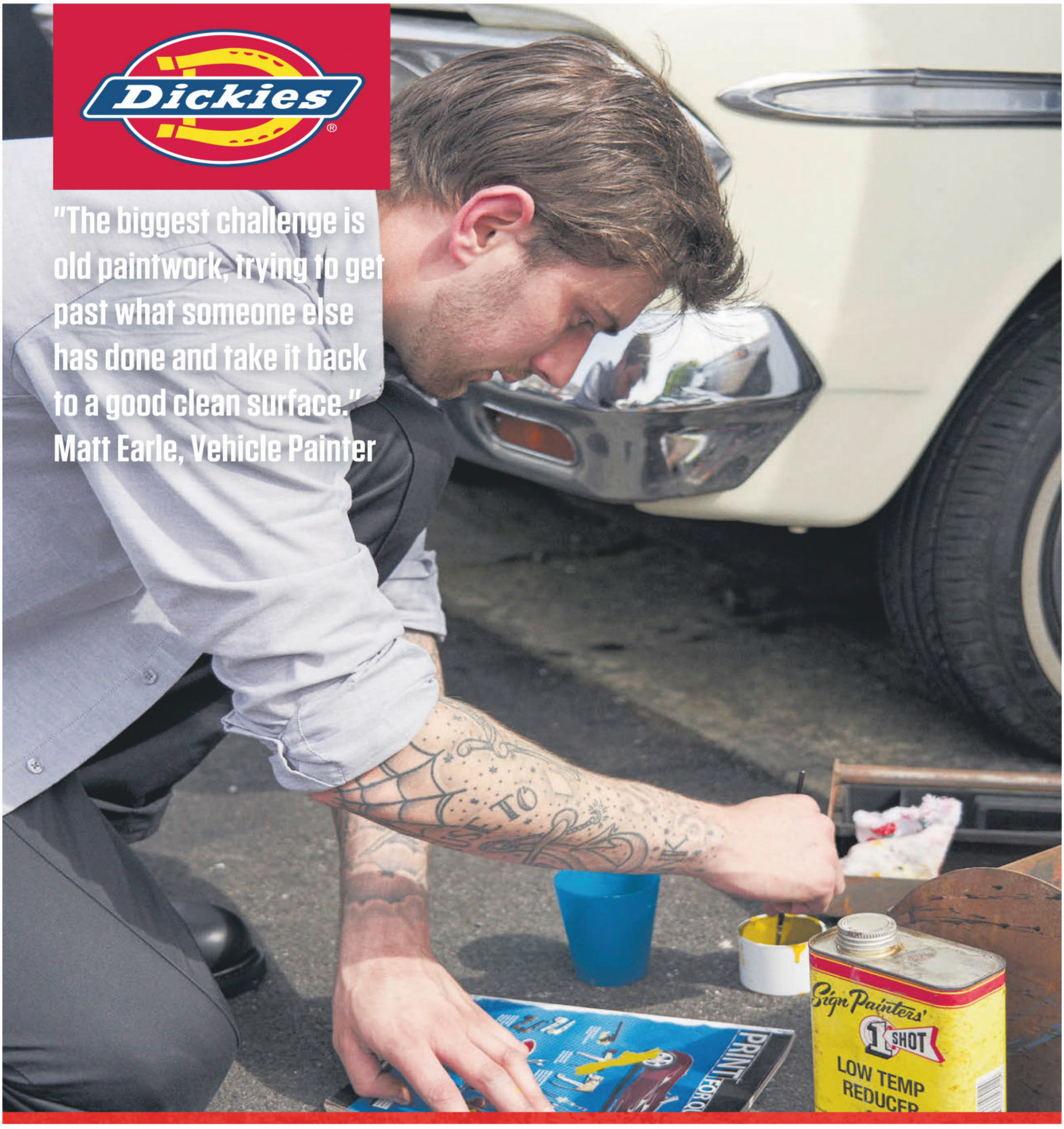

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## THIS CLASSIFIED SECTION WAS BROUGHT TO YOU BY:

**Richard Rowe**
Account Director
T: +44 (0) 1233 228 757
E: richard@tandemmedia.co.uk

**Peri Smith**
Account Manager
T: +44 (0) 1233 228 753
E: perianne@tandemmedia.co.uk

**Andy Welch**
Advert Production Manager
T: +44 (0) 1233 220 245
E: MN@tandemmedia.co.uk

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