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WITH MARTIN BRUNDLE

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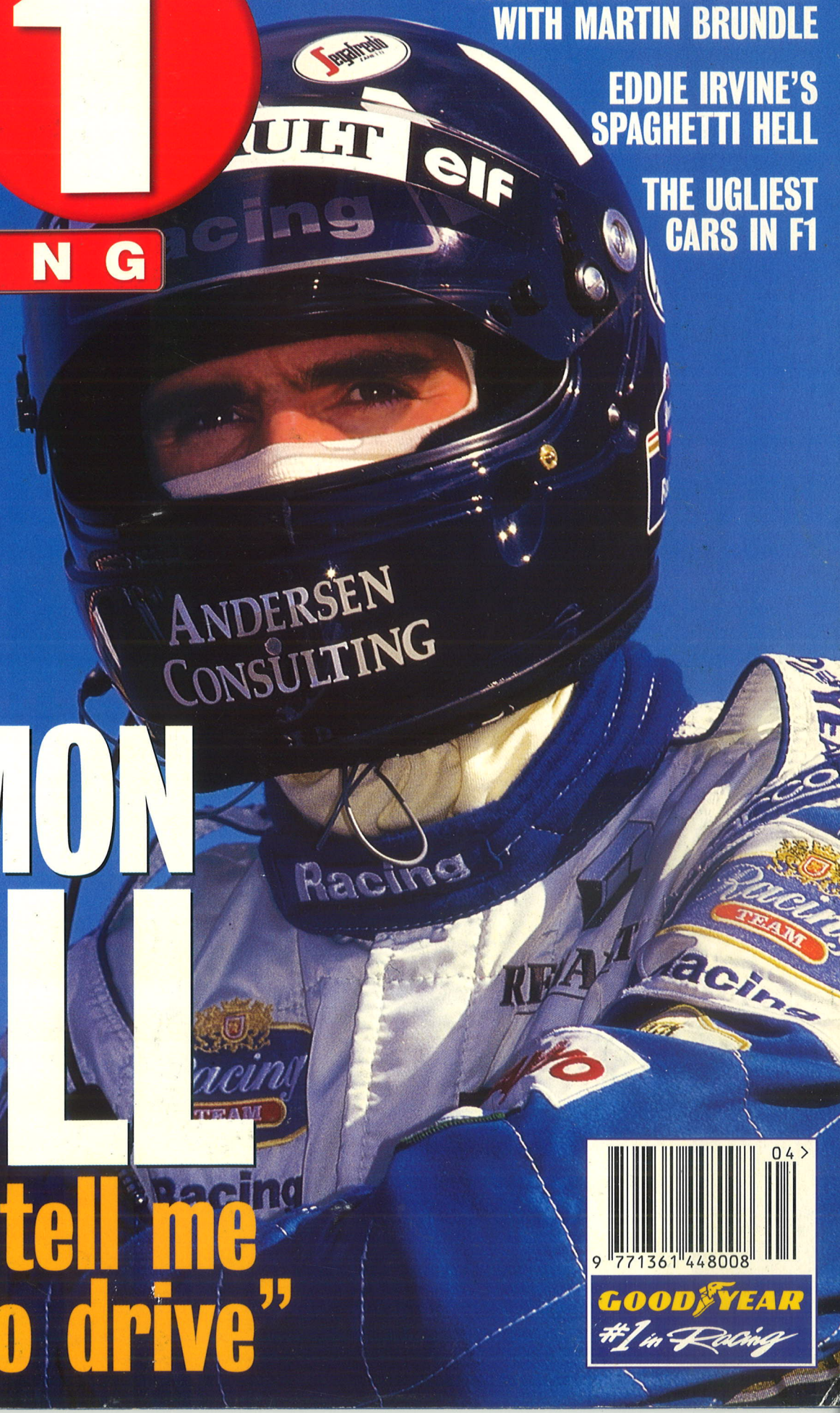
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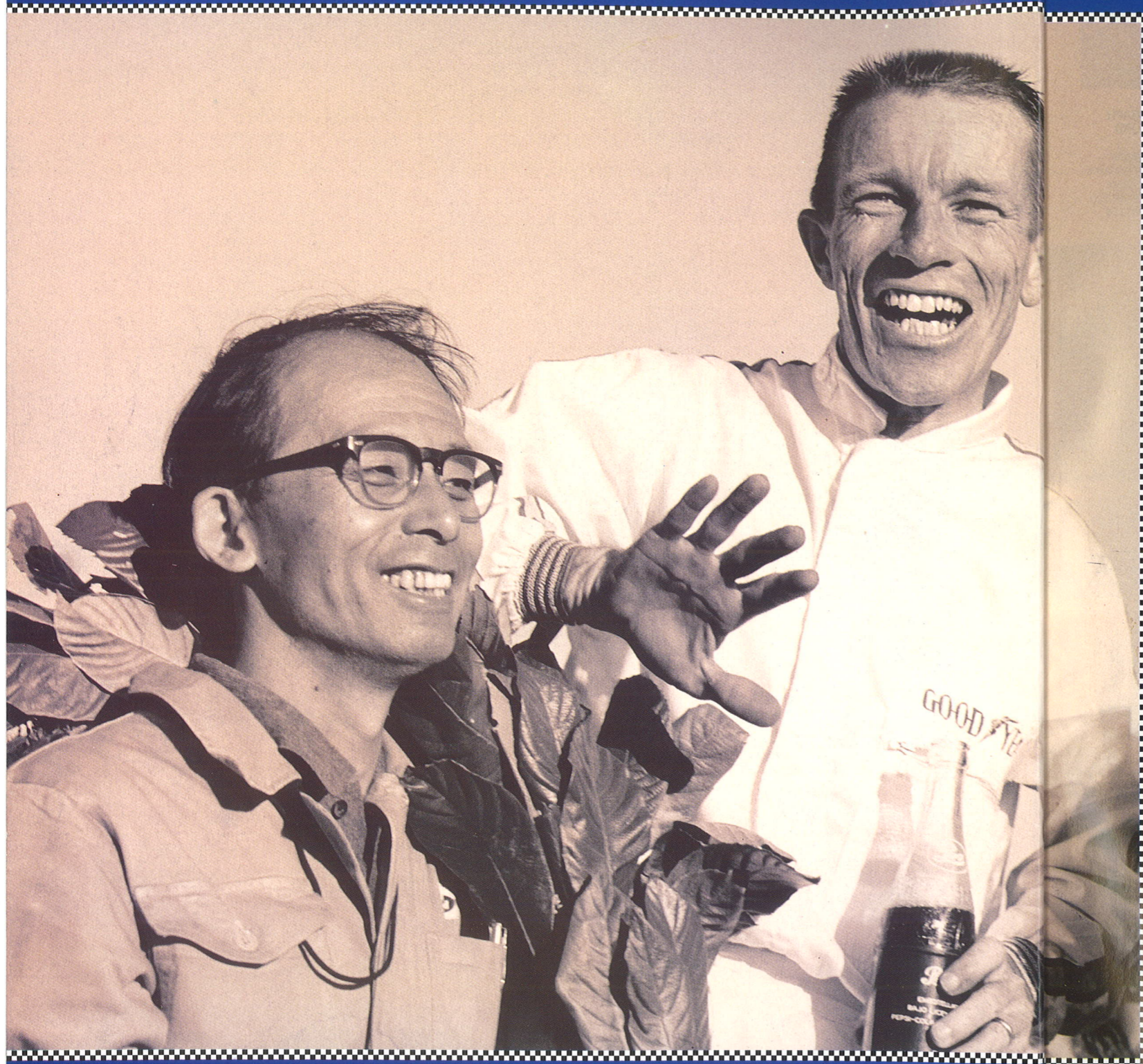
THE F1 MAGAZINE
THAT'S ALREADY
QUICKEST ON
THE STRAIGHT

DAMON HILL

“Don't tell me
how to drive”



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#1 in Racing



Mexico 1965... Ritchie Ginther begins Formula One's longest winning streak.

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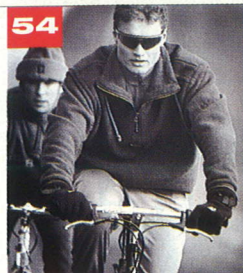
Stick with the winning team...



This month

Fitness fan

McLaren's David Coulthard heads for the hills to keep in top shape for F1



What a mess

F1 cars are uglier than ever. Blame the sponsors says Brabham's former stylist



Pole position

The pressure's on: only 12 laps, and no second chances. Can you grab pole?



Crown Prince

Why Heinz-Harald Frentzen is sick of being compared to Schumacher



Top drawer

What makes John Barnard think his latest Ferrari can be a title winner



Jackie, Oh!

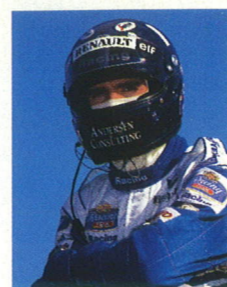
How a chance meeting took Jackie Stewart to his first world title



F1

RACING

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COVER PHOTOGRAPH BY MARTYN ELFORD

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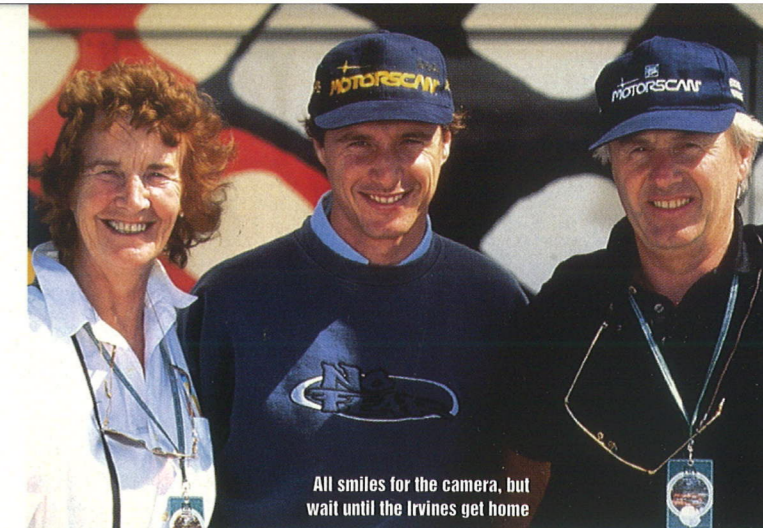
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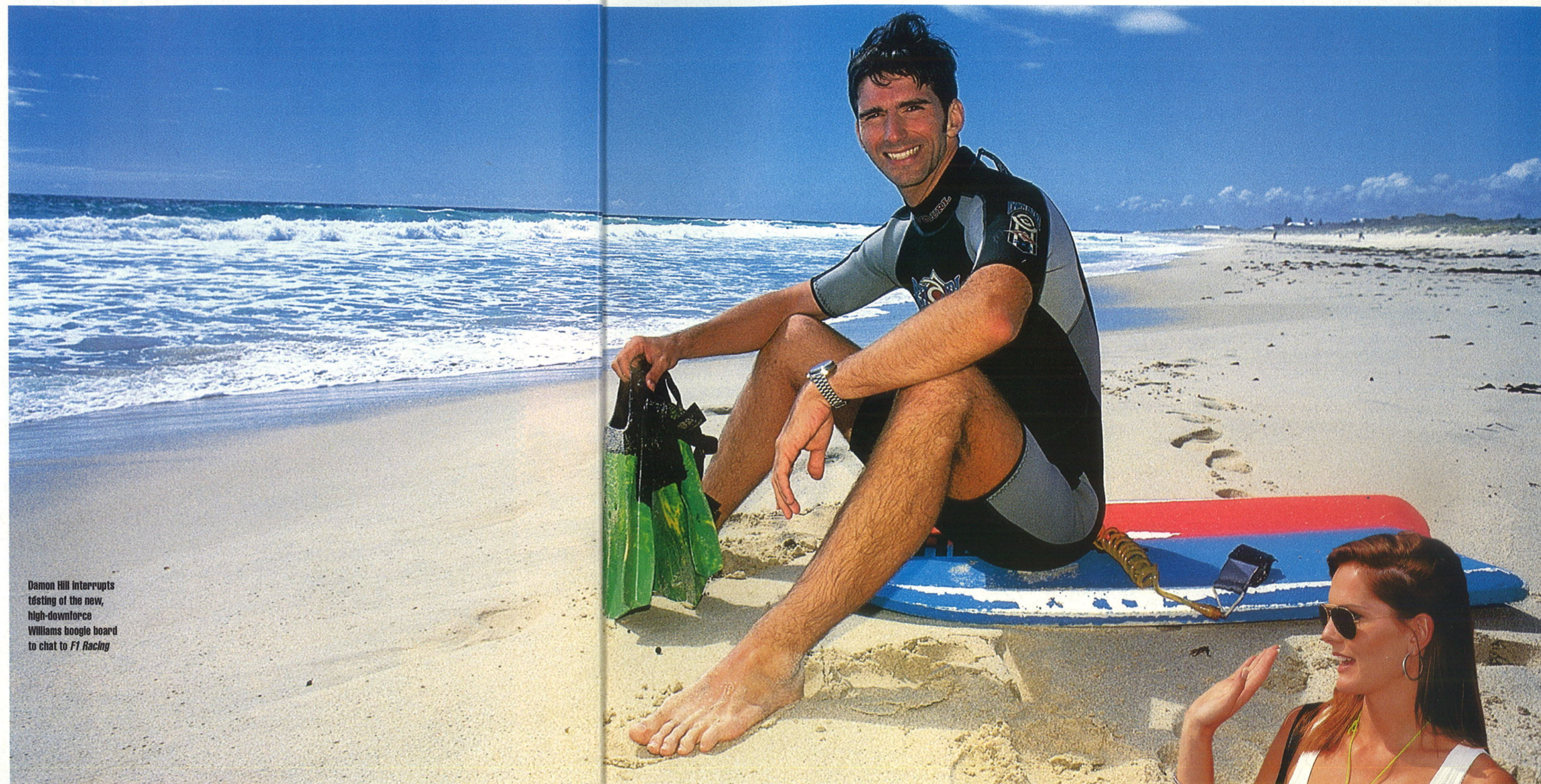
From starting the engine to setting fastest lap
By Martin Brundle

68 In the ring with the Irvine family

Blazing rows, broken legs and cold spaghetti
Referee: Mike Doodson



All smiles for the camera, but wait until the Irvines get home



Damon Hill interrupts testing of the new, high-downforce Williams boogie board to chat to *F1 Racing*

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Damon wages war on black tie revolutionaries

Midnight in Bond Street, London. A passing cyclist looks a little bemused as he glances at the bright red Ferrari parked up outside Asprey's jewellery shop. It's a Formula 1 car, see, complete with real-life F1 duo Michael Schumacher and Eddie Irvine, on duty at the black tie function marking Ferrari's reluctant submission to the power of the sponsor's dollar.

The high-brow appearance of Asprey on the Ferrari F310's sidepods may not be as stark a transformation as the new gold-



Go on Heinz, let me read! Frentzen, page 82

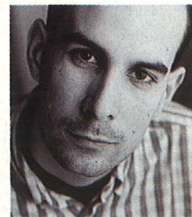
wrapped Jordans, but it's just as revolutionary. And it's bad news according to design ace Peter Stevens, as he offers us his view of the impact of sponsorship on the look of this year's F1 grid.

Irvine doesn't seem too bothered about it though, perched on the Ferrari show car next to the obligatory high-society *femme*. It's quite a change from his family battles as a recalcitrant teenager

growing up in Northern Ireland, recounted by a shell-shocked Mike Doodson on page 68. Was Mrs Irvine really trying to tell Eddie something when she served him that fateful plate of cold spaghetti, returned immediately at head height?

Events at Melbourne gave us a first clue to Irvine's prospects – but before you jump to any conclusions, read Martin Brundle's brilliant F1 driving lesson. It certainly puts things in perspective if you're tempted to give the guys at the back of the grid a hard time. "One thing you can be sure of," says Brundle, "when you accelerate away for the first time, your brakes won't work into the first corner..."

Of course, such minor details won't stop the tabloids from having their say – particularly when it comes to this month's cover star, Damon Hill. An older, wiser Hill is ready for their worst. "I don't want people putting words in my mouth," he says. "You can find yourself paying a high price for that – but I don't want to be a product." In the sponsor-dominated world of F1, it's good to hear.



Mike Herd

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RICHARD WILLIAMS

Long before he turned his attention to motor racing, Richard was a music writer and former editor of *Melody Maker*. He's now a top sportswriter for the *Guardian* and is author of the book *The death of Ayrton Senna*, recently published in paperback.



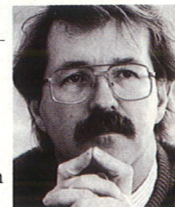
MARTIN BRUNDLE

Martin Brundle entered his 142nd F1 race with Jordan in Melbourne. In 12 years he's driven for Brabham, Benetton, Ligier, McLaren, Tyrrell and Zakspeed. He's also a good talker and commented with Murray Walker on BBC's *Grand Prix* last year.



PETER STEVENS

When he designed the liveries for Brabham, Peter had plenty of experience with successful F1 cars – Nelson Piquet won two world titles in cars that carried his designs. More recently, he's worked for McLaren, designing their F1 road car.



MARTYN ELFORD

This month's cover photographer has been taking pictures ever since he can remember, and he's been *Autosport's* grand prix photographer since 1991. He's also keeping up the family tradition: father Vic was an F1 racer between 1968 and 1971.



Where will you be on 19 May, 1996?



or 2 June?



or 28 July?



or 25 August?

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Be where the action is ... see page 17

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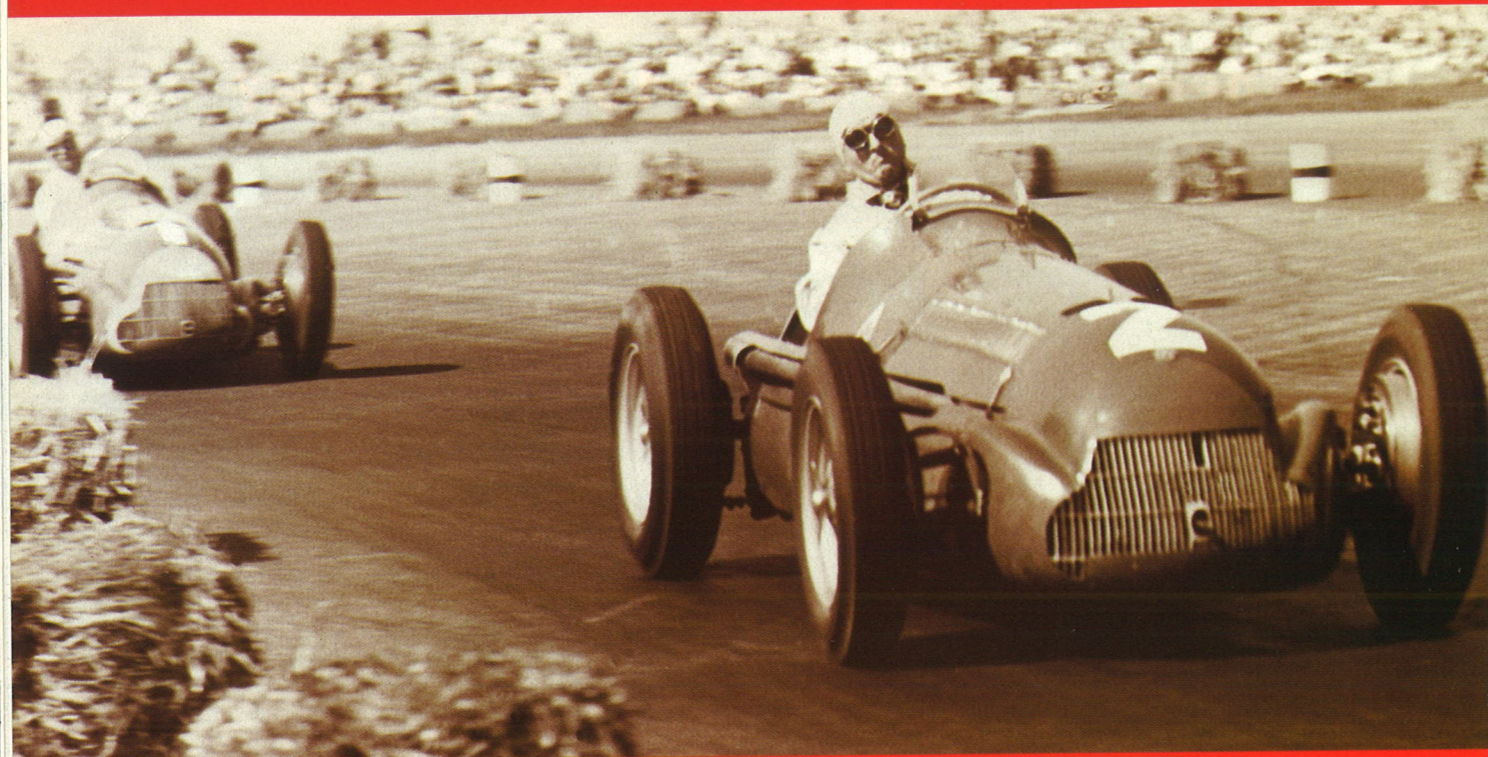
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Gerhard Berger

Fast, but not fast enough

DESPITE A TOP SIX FINISH IN MELBOURNE, THE BENETTON NEEDS MORE POWER

It was good to finish fourth in Melbourne. Those three points could be vital by the end of the season. It was also encouraging that I felt physically in such good shape after the race. I'd gone to Australia early to get some sun and shake off the last vestiges of my winter pneumonia - I even spent a couple of days jet skiing with ex-motorbike champ Barry Sheene. Hopefully, I can now put my illness behind me.

My first impression of Albert Park was that it looked more like a permanent track than a street circuit. I took some flak on Thursday for saying it was a bit dangerous in a few places, but it's only when you drive a Formula 1 car at racing speeds that you recognise the actual danger spots. The organisers added more tyres to the barriers on some corners. I put some of them to good use on Saturday morning, adding one more tyre and the front suspension of my Benetton to the pile!

You'll remember we had some problems with F1 superlicences over the winter. For some reason Max Mosley fuelled the controversy by releasing all the correspondence between the GPDA (Grand Prix Drivers Association) and various drivers to the press. I actually signed my papers two weeks before the grand prix - some drivers were still sorting things out at the last minute - but frankly I'm fed up with all the politics between the drivers and the FIA. Any new problems should be looked at behind closed doors.

On the track, the new Benetton is handling much better than last year's car. We've still got a lot of fine tuning to do but our performance in Australia was pretty much as I had expected.

I had hoped that Jean Alesi and I would qualify ahead of the Ferraris, but we both had problems. My car was loose at the rear, and when I tried to get it handling better, I got too much

understeer. Under braking, the back was even more sensitive. That's why I hit the wall on Saturday morning.

As a result, I had to qualify in the spare car. The problem was that it had a pressure drop in the airbox which was costing me about 30 horsepower. It had something to do with the new cockpit regulations, which make helmet position critical - just a few millimetres either way can make a big difference to the flow of air into the airbox.

A number of teams seemed to be having the same problem. It wasn't hard to see why there was a lot of controversy in the pitlane over the Williams and Jordan teams' interpretation of the new rules, which probably improved their cars' air flow to the airbox (see Pitpass).

Jean wasn't having so much of a problem, so we tried changing my seat position to match his, but we couldn't move it forward.

The end result was that we both started further back on the grid than we had hoped. I started seventh, just behind Jean and the McLaren of Mika Hakkinen who,

incidentally, I congratulate on an impressive recovery from his Adelaide accident last November.

The start was slightly different in Melbourne. Green lights are no longer used and instead you just wait for five red lights to go out. The system worked okay and I was running well until the race was stopped after Martin Brundle's accident. Unfortunately, I didn't get away well at the restart. As we jostled our way into the first turn I was edged back to ninth behind Hakkinen, Rubens Barrichello and Heinz-Harald Frentzen.

After a couple of laps I managed to get past Frentzen, but Hakkinen and Barrichello were quicker than me on the straight and there was no way to overtake. Rather

than take a risk, I decided to wait until my first pitstop to get ahead. The plan worked, and I moved up another place after Jean ran into Eddie Irvine. After everyone had made a pitstop, I was up to fifth place behind the Ferraris.

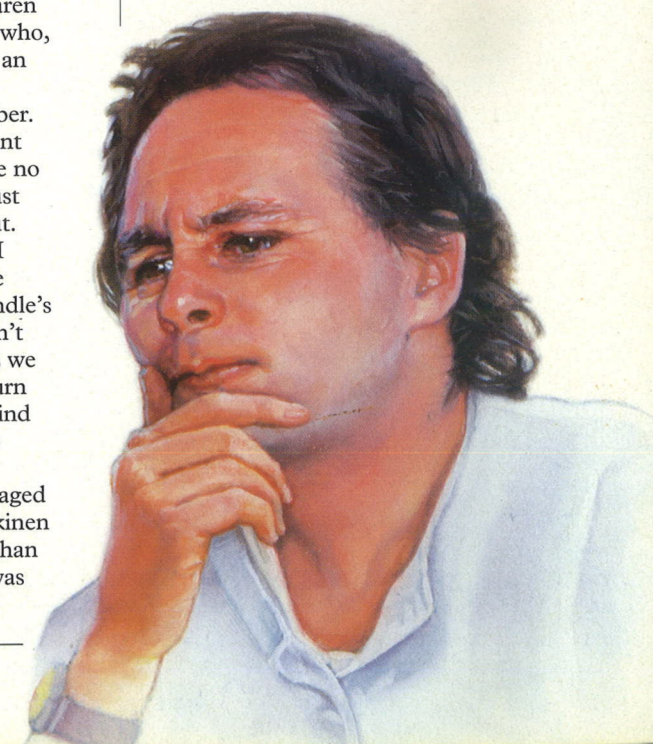
That became fourth when Michael Schumacher dropped out and I started to think about a place on the podium. Unfortunately, I'd already lost a lot of time behind Barrichello and Hakkinen and I knew I wouldn't catch Irvine unless he had a problem. He didn't.

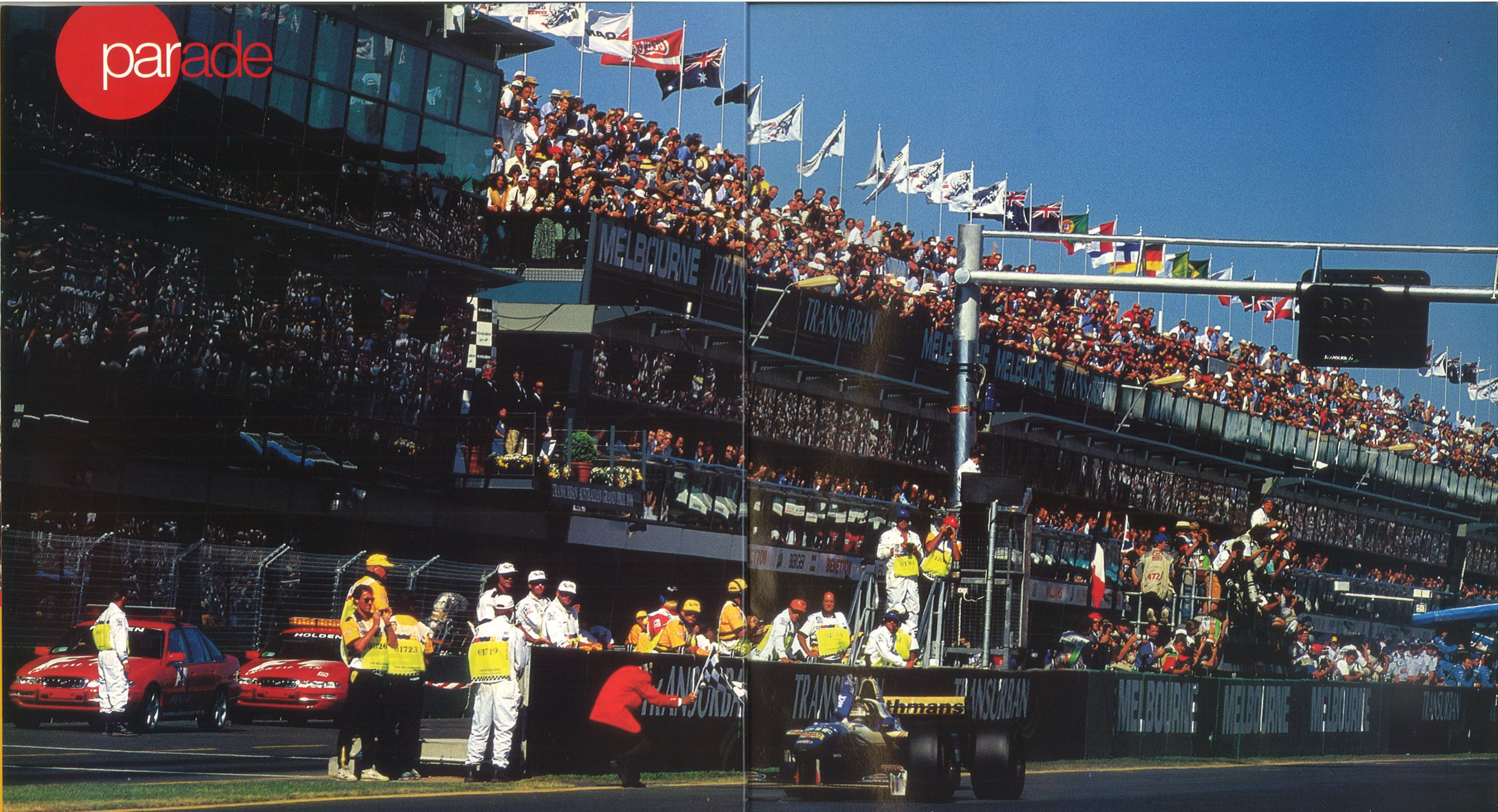
Still, I'm glad to have three points in the bag. I hope we'll do some testing at Silverstone before the cars are shipped to South America for the Brazilian Grand Prix on 31 March. We definitely need to sort out a way to get all the power out of our Renault engines by getting more air into the airbox!

Right now it's fairly clear that Williams are already ahead of the pack. Ferrari are strong, but are they reliable? We're about as quick as the Ferraris. Jordan and McLaren look like being close, but Williams, Ferrari and Benetton are going to be the top three teams this season.

Of course, if it all goes to plan we'll be number one! **1**

I'd lost a lot of time and knew I wouldn't catch Irvine unless he had a problem. He didn't





Damon's dirty weekend

Australian flag maestro Glen Dix welcomes Damon Hill's battle-stained Williams across the Melbourne finish line. For most of the race, the victorious Hill has run in the shadow of Formula 1 debutant Jacques Villeneuve, and for some 30 laps his team-mate's car has been leaking oil. "It got everywhere - even down my neck," said Hill. "I'd used all my tear-offs and when I wiped the visor with my glove, it just smeared. I was a bit worried that something might go bang on his car and we'd both go off."

Photo: Ralph Hardwick/Nikon F4, 300mm lens, Fuji Velvia film, 1/500th at F5.6



Back in the frame

The distinctive outline of Alain Prost on the pitwall, stopwatch in hand, timing McLaren's two young drivers, David Coulthard and Mika Hakkinen. With 12 years experience in F1 and four world titles – three with McLaren – he's in a good position to help the team back to the top. "He's forgotten more than I've learned," says Coulthard. "It just makes sense for him to be there."

Photo: Mike Cooper (Allsport)/Canon EOS1n, 300mm lens, Fuji Velvia film, 1/1000th at F5.6



Rainbow warrior

It's just turned 9am and as Jean Alesi gets to grips with his Benetton the early morning sun catches his visor and casts an oil-slick of colours across its surface. The glare doesn't obscure his vision: Alesi is clear about his goal for the year. "I am with a fantastic team, car and engine," he says. "This season, my ambition is to be world champion."

Photo: Mike Cooper (Allsport)/Canon EOS1n, 600mm lens, Fuji Velvia film, 1/250th at F5.6

New boy a breath of fresh air

JACQUES VILLENEUVE MAY BE FAST, BUT HE'S NOT LIKE YOUR EVERYDAY F1 DRIVER

Melbourne, Thursday, 12.30pm. The first learning session on the new Albert Park track has just ended. Damon Hill is fastest, from Schumacher and Alesi. No surprises there.

In the back of the Williams pit, long tables are laid for lunch, and Paul Edwards and his catering team are dispensing salmon mousse, pasta, carrot cake and cream for sponsors and guests, favoured journalists and, later, for the mechanics. Patrick Head is playing host, and there is a cheerful hubbub of gossip and punditry. The grand prix circus is picking up the social threads after the winter.

In a corner on his own sits a small, bespectacled figure, hunched over a bowl of raspberries and a glass of milk. There is an inescapable glimpse of the new boy on the first day of school term, too shy to join in the rowdy chat of fourth-formers renewing friendships after the holidays.

When you strike up a conversation he smiles politely, but the impression remains of diffidence and

extreme youth. He is wearing the sort of large, shapeless shorts that kids wear, a loose T-shirt and no socks. He hasn't shaved for a couple of days.

We have become used to modern racing drivers now: tight-lipped, carefully groomed, suspicious, weighing up every nuance to look for snags and manoeuvres, all the while eyes searching the horizon for the sniff of a deal. Which is why this quiet young man is such a breath of fresh air. Talk to him of racing and he opens up. He uses words like "fun" and "great". He seems as far from the current image of grand prix racing as it is possible to be.

And yet this same afternoon he will go out in the second familiarisation session - and be fastest of all. This weekend he will take pole position for his first grand prix and earn the respect of the Formula 1 world with a race debut more astonishing than Senna's, or Schumacher's, or Prost's.

It's the eyes that give him away. Above that polite smile they're steady, a cold pale blue, and rarely blink. When he talks about racing, another word he uses a lot is "edge", as in going near or up to or over. "Fight" crops up a lot too. And you realise that your first impressions have been wide of the mark. Jacques Villeneuve is one hard racer.

It's a strange thing, this son-of-father business. Both Damon Hill and Jacques have become understandably irritated by repetitive lines about following in father's footsteps. They rightly want their achievements to stand on their own merits, regardless of parentage. The fact remains: they did choose to be racing drivers. You don't become one of the world's most committed, driven racers because you liked it when your dad took you to the paddock.


Perhaps it's buried deep in the subconscious, but there's surely some powerful force at work there. Alberto Ascari was seven when his father, the great Antonio, was killed at Monza. He went on to become the first double champion in Formula 1. Jacques was 10 when his father's Ferrari cartwheeled into the fences at Zolder; he began racing karts the same year. At 20 he was living on his own in Japan, amassing a wealth of racing experience. At 23 he was Indycar champion.

At first his driving style seems very different from his father's flamboyant approach. Gilles, the master of opposite lock, was never happier than when hanging out a full-blooded slide. Jacques is all about controlled attack.

But in Melbourne it could almost have been Gilles forcing past Hill to retake the lead through a gap that didn't seem to be there, or understeering off on to the grass and back on to the tarmac and still

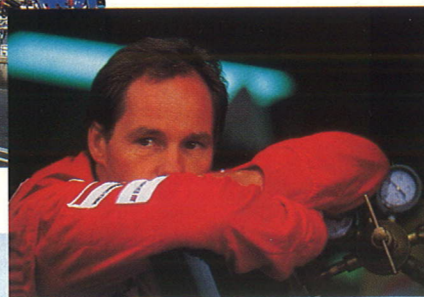
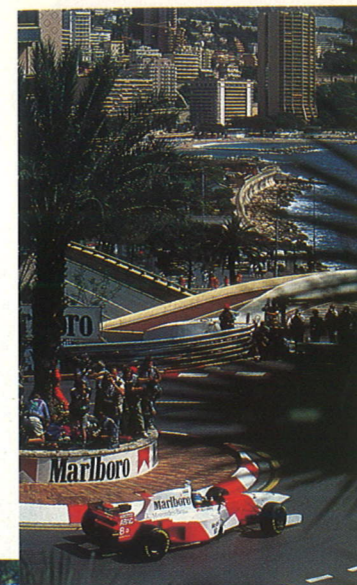
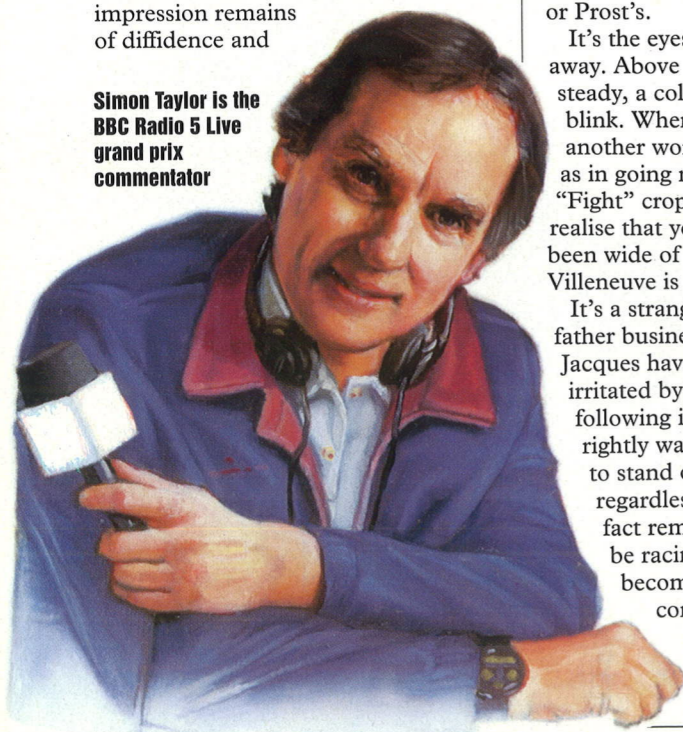
keeping Hill behind, or blotting out the red light on the dash and the team's concerns over the radio until finally an imperious SLOW sign from the pit brought their battle to an end.

It's clear that the Williams team already adore him, even if Patrick Head, a stickler for the old values, grumbles that he doesn't seem to possess a comb. And after his historic pole on Saturday, Bernie Ecclestone himself found time to congratulate him. The ruler of Formula 1 had one of his quiet words in Jacques' ear, but an optimistic TV crew's hovering mike picked up what he said: "Make sure you finish the job tomorrow."

But for that oil leak, he would have. Now the record book will never list Jacques Villeneuve as the man who won his debut grand prix. But before he's done, he'll write a few more lines in that book. Welcome to Formula 1, Jacques. 

You don't become one of the most committed, driven racers because you liked it when your dad took you into the paddock

Simon Taylor is the BBC Radio 5 Live grand prix commentator



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WILLIAMS DYNAMIC DUO HAVE THE AUSTRALIAN GP TO THEMSELVES

Villeneuve's spilt oil calms Damon's troubled waters

If 1996 follows the pattern of the past six years then Damon Hill will win the world championship. The winner of the first race has gone on to take the title every year since 1990.

It was the perfect result for Hill – 10 points in the bag and none for arch-rival Schumacher. It was also his 14th GP win, equalling the tally set by his father Graham. The only fly in the ointment was the speed of his new

team-mate. Jacques Villeneuve out-qualified Hill, led him for nine-tenths of the race, blocked him when he tried to overtake, muscled past him when he did manage to slip ahead after the pit-stops, and sprayed him with oil.

If Hill had any complaints about the way Villeneuve defended his position, he showed no signs of it. "Jacques has shown he's a racer, but for the moment I'm leading the championship. I've got three weeks to the next race and I'm going to savour every day of that."



Damon equalled his father's record of 14 GP wins. How long before Jacques matches his dad's eight wins?

Sauber: "We've got a bit of work to do"

Peter Sauber had to grit his teeth and look cheerful on the Friday before the Australian GP. Tucking into noodles in truffle sauce in the team's hospitality area was Jackie Stewart, the man who next year will whip away Sauber's exclusive use of Ford's new V10 engine. "It doesn't help to get angry," Sauber said.

It wasn't much of a debut for the new car and engine either. Both Heinz-Harald Frentzen and Johnny Herbert suffered aerodynamic problems that

made the Sauber C15 difficult to drive and the V10 was clearly off the pace. "We've got a bit of work to do," said Cosworth's Martin Walters. "The driveability is not what it should be."

The race couldn't have started in a worse fashion for the team. Frentzen's car broke down on the parade lap and Herbert was involved in the third corner shunt. Frentzen made the restart in the spare car but it handled appallingly and he eventually finished eighth, a lap behind.

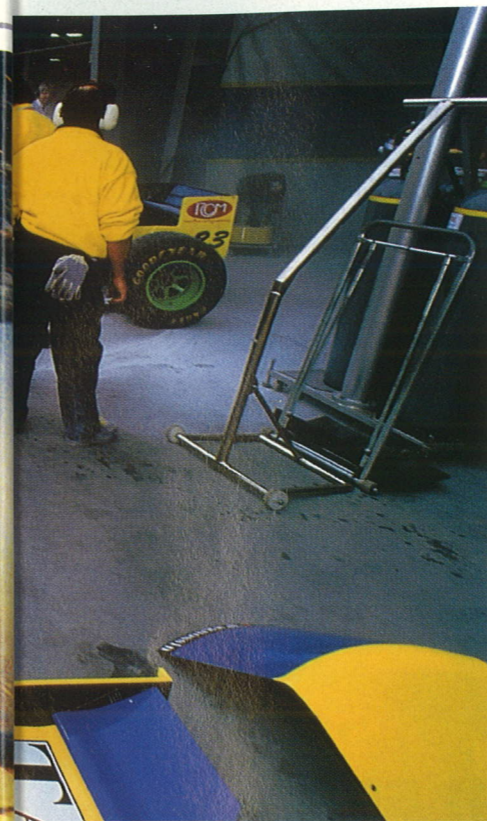


Hakka makes a point (or two)

Mika Hakkinen demonstrated conclusively that he is well on the road to recovery after his terrible accident in Adelaide last year, with a strong run to fifth place in the new McLaren MP4/11.

"I'm working hard to build up my fitness, but it could take half a year to be fully up to strength. When you have a shunt like that it changes your thinking and maybe when you are out on the track you calculate your risks more. Before I took risks every lap. Now it's just every second lap."

Both the McLaren drivers struggled with poor grip and traction during qualifying, which forced them to run a lot of wing but in turn compromised the car's straightline speed.



Andrea Montermini surveys his smoking Forti-Ford, knowing that his chances of qualifying for the grand prix have just gone from very slim indeed to absolutely zip all. He managed only four laps in the one-hour timed session and was 10sec off Villeneuve's pace. Team-mate Luca Badoer missed the 107 per cent qualifying mark by just 0.4sec

New passes are the pits



Turnstiles and a new 'swipe card' FIA pass made entrance to the Melbourne paddock a fraught affair. One of the first victims of the pit police after his pass refused to be swiped was FIA president Max Mosley.

The turnstile exchange ran something like this. Gate Gorilla: "G'day. You with this show mate?" Mosley: "Well, actually, yes. I rather believe I am..."

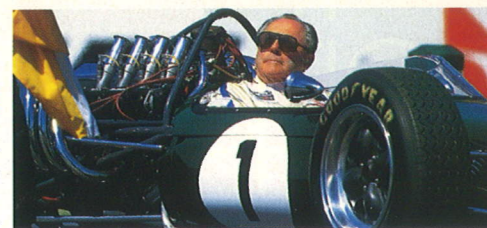
Vehicles didn't escape either. Windscreen passes were zapped by an infra-red gun in an attempt to foil the burgeoning trade in fake paddock passes. Tyrrell's van fell victim to a dirty windscreen, which meant its bar code couldn't be read. An ugly confrontation was only avoided when common sense finally prevailed.

"It seems an extreme way of attacking something which wasn't a big problem," was how McLaren boss Ron Dennis described the new security system. "There are important things in F1 that need to be addressed, but I wouldn't put that on the list."

The lengths some people were prepared to go to get into the paddock...

BRABHAM SHOWS THE YOUNGSTERS ROUND MELBOURNE

Three times world champion Sir Jack Brabham, who raced at Albert Park back in the '50s, made a return to the circuit and the cockpit in Melbourne. The 69-year-old Australian slipped into the Brabham-Repco with which he won the world championship 30 years ago to drive the first official laps of the new circuit



Black flag

A miscarriage of justice

There are occasions when you despair of 'progress'. Race morning in Melbourne was one such time. To control the flow of illegal immigrants into the Formula 1 paddock, a turnstile system with magnetic swipe cards has been introduced. Haphazard queues formed behind these barriers as security staff wrestled with faulty machinery, sweaty cards and photographers getting hot under the collar as they watched lens fodder disappear.

Standing outside the paddock, 61-year-old Glen Dix waited patiently by a golf cart, immaculately dressed in a red blazer, grey trousers, shirt and tie. Glen's flamboyant flagmanship has been a feature of every Adelaide grand prix, and he had been invited to Melbourne to bring down the chequer at Albert Park.

We shook hands and I asked what he thought of Melbourne considering all the organisational hiccups. "It's like getting into Fort Knox," he replied, gesturing towards the paddock.

"Can't you be bothered with it?" I asked. "I can't actually get a pass to go in there," he said.



Glen was to be taken to his position at three o'clock, half an hour before the race finished

I looked incredulous as he spoke the words quietly, a touch wistfully but with nary a trace of exasperation or anger. A gentle, dignified man, they were doubtless emotions alien to him.

"I don't want to abuse the situation," he added. "It would just be nice to get to the position where I'm supposed to be waving the flag, settle into my new office."

But that wasn't going to happen. Glen was to be taken to his position at three o'clock on Sunday afternoon, half an hour before the race finished. "It's like throwing a driver into a racing car half an hour before the race and telling him to go out and drive," he said.

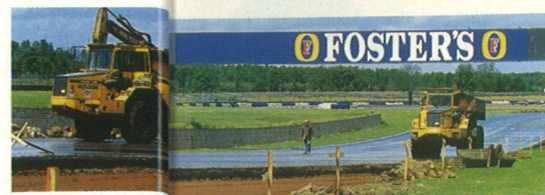
Glen came to Melbourne with his friend Shirley Moyle. As I bade him goodbye and turned away, she grabbed my arm.

"Glen would never say this, but not letting him through to the pit area is an absolute disgrace," she said. "Now he's retired, Glen donates his time to motorsport. A couple of nights ago he was quite distraught that they weren't going to let him into the paddock. The only reason he's waving the flag here is to raise money for children with cancer in South Australia."

"I'd like to see him flag races internationally – be invited to England or Monaco. Glen is the best F1 flagman in the world today. He is the only one who flags from the track."

Given the poor man's treatment in Melbourne, such an invitation might be a nice gesture.

Tony Dodgins



YET ANOTHER SILVERSTONE FACELIFT

After more facelifts in the past few years than Michael Jackson, all aimed at slowing things down, this year's Silverstone revamp is designed to speed things up. Stowe corner is being reprofiled to give it a faster entry speed, and take it closer to the grandstands.



PHOTOGRAPHY: PA NEWS; SUITON; PHOTO: 4. KATZ PICTURES

The Schumachers as you've never seen them before, and perhaps as you'd never want to see them again. The occasion was a fancy dress ball in Cologne, and true to his love of Lloyd-Webber shows the champ turned up in full Phantom of the Opera regalia

Inoue's lost chequebook gives Fisichella a chance

Practice for the first race hadn't even started before the first of the season's nominated drivers lost his seat. Japan's Taki Inoue, believed to have secured his drive at Minardi with a shedful of sponsorship money, apparently turned up at Melbourne with the wrong cheque book. Minardi's test driver, 23-year-old Giancarlo Fisichella took his place.

It was tough on Inoue but good for Formula 1. Fisichella, the 1994 Italian F3 champion, is reckoned to be an outstanding prospect. The Minardi was hardly the easiest car in which to make an impact, but at least Melbourne was new to everyone.

Several other first team players are looking anxiously over their shoulders at the test driving subs bench. Arrows' Jos Verstappen is reckoned to be one of the most vulnerable. Both team and driver are short of funds, and although Arrows boss Jackie Oliver confirmed Verstappen's place for the start of the season, it's by no means sure he will finish it. If he does drop out, and it will

be through lack of money rather than talent, the most likely replacement is Gianni Morbidelli, who drove an Arrows to third place in last year's Australian GP. Morbidelli is keeping his hand in test driving for Jordan.

Mark Blundell, the biggest-name casualty of the winter shuffle, has taken a different route. For 1996 he will be driving in the Indycar series. "I think I got unfairly badged as a solid driver and nothing more," he says. "If you have not got enough money, the right nationality or the right connections it is very difficult to secure an F1 drive."

The same conclusion was reached by Brazil's Gil de Ferran. British F3 champion in 1992 and an F3000 race winner in 1993 and 1994, he failed to get an F1 place last year and moved straight into Indycars. He was rookie of the year and a race winner.

Blundell reckons there are other compensations. "I'll miss the glamour and the glitz, but I'll be glad to see the back of all the politicking. People here actually talk to each other."



Giancarlo Fisichella's exuberant driving style has already cost Minardi the odd wheel

Formula 1 woos world's tackiest city for United States GP

The last time F1 cars appeared in Las Vegas they performed in the Caesars Palace hotel car park. As a spectacle it was only fractionally more exciting than sitting in the sun watching a plank warp.

But plans are afoot to bring grand prix racing back to the Blackpool of America, and rumours have even been circulating of a race tagged on to the back of this year's calendar. That's unlikely to happen, if only for the fact that the proposed temporary street circuit would involve closing the fabled Strip. More likely, though by no means certain, is a Las Vegas GP on the new out-of-town motorsports complex some time in 1997.

Another possible venue for the first

US GP since 1991 is Homestead in Florida. A new 1.5-mile oval circuit hosted the first round of the Indycar championship on 3 March, and the track's promoter, Ralph Sanchez, is keen to run an F1 race. Homestead's

pits and garages have been built to meet FIA specifications.

Florida has hosted a grand prix before. Back in 1959 the first US GP was held at the Sebring circuit, 90 miles from Orlando.

The Las Vegas Strip would provide a pretty unlikely backdrop for a grand prix. But then F1 cars have raced around a hotel car park in the city before



Making tracks over America

No fewer than nine venues have hosted world championship races in the United States. The first was Indianapolis – the Indy 500 counted as a championship round until 1960, but in 1959 the first road race US GP was held at Sebring. In 1960 it switched to Riverside before finding an almost permanent home at Watkins Glen in New York state.

The last Watkins Glen grand prix was run in 1980. By then a street circuit at Long Beach in California was also hosting a grand prix, but it switched its allegiance to Indycars after 1983. The US GP then went on the road with races held in Las Vegas (1981-82), Detroit (1982-88) and a one-off in Dallas (1984). Phoenix in Arizona was the last venue, but after the 1991 race F1 and the US went their separate ways.

ON THE BENCH

Jan Magnussen (Denmark) The 1994 British F3 champion, second in 1995 International Touring Car series driving for Mercedes. Stood in for sick Mika Hakkinen and finished 10th in last year's Pacific GP. Test driver for McLaren.
Gianni Morbidelli (Italy) Made his grand prix debut back in 1990 and has driven for Dallara, Minardi, Ferrari and Arrows.

Twice in the points for Arrows last year. Now test driver for Jordan.
Vincenzo Sospiri (Italy) Last year's F3000 champion. Now test driving for Benetton.
Norberto Fontana (Argentina) German F3 champion in 1995, beating a certain Ralf Schumacher. Now test driving for Sauber.
Kelvin Burt (England) The 1993 British F3 champion. Test driving for Ligier.

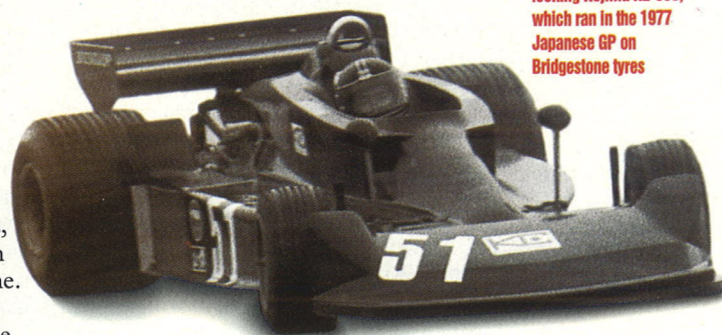
Japan arms for tyre war

After four years of peace, the opening shots of a new Formula 1 tyre war have been fired. Bridgestone, the rubber kings of Japan, are preparing to enter the grand prix arena.

Their plan calls for a two-year feasibility study before a full-scale assault in 1998. Bridgestone first dabbled with F1 20 years ago when they supplied tyres for one-off local entries in the 1976 and 1977 Japanese GPs. Since then they have concentrated on other racing classes, but have kept a weather eye open on F1 with a low-key testing programme. They've been working closely with Honda, who are also rumoured to be preparing for an F1 comeback.

Ironically, because of the increased speeds and costs a tyre war would inevitably create, any new battle may be fought entirely off the track, and be for the right to supply the whole grid.

According to Goodyear's international racing manager, Cal Lint, such a scenario is "quite a high possibility". But the idea did not find favour in the Melbourne paddock.



The distinctly weird looking Kojima KE-009, which ran in the 1977 Japanese GP on Bridgestone tyres

"It is wrong to restrict competition in F1," said Jackie Stewart, while McLaren boss Ron Dennis added: "Inevitably when you have variables you have higher costs, but that's what F1 is. If you can't stand the heat..."



Above and right: '30s GP hero Raymond Sommer

10 GP drivers named after animals

- | | |
|-------------------------|-------------------------------|
| Vittorio Brambilla..... | The Monza Gorilla |
| Froilan Gonzalez..... | The Pampas Bull |
| Denny Hulme..... | The Bear |
| Niki Lauda..... | The Rat |
| Nigel Mansell..... | Il Leone |
| David Purley..... | The Rabbit |
| Alain Prost..... | The Tadpole |
| Jody Scheckter..... | Baby Bear |
| Piero Taruffi..... | The Silver Fox |
| Raymond Sommer..... | The Wild Boar of the Ardennes |



Nice idea, but where do the adverts go?

One or two eensy-weensy little problemettes have occurred to the masterminds of ITV's £60 million acquisition of the terrestrial TV rights to grand prix racing from 1997.

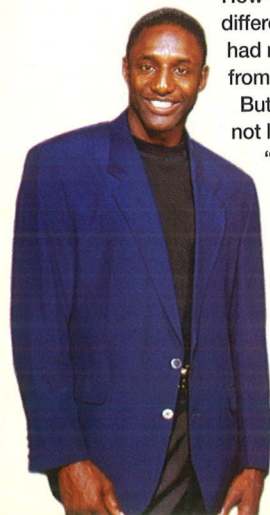
How to fit in the commercial breaks is one. How to accommodate the wildly different local starting times in the broadcasting schedule is another. The BBC had no problem with the first, and their facility to switch transmission at will from BBC1 to BBC2 dealt with the other.

But if ITV have any answer to these seemingly intractable problems, they're not letting on. Our enquiries were answered by executives programmed to say "no comment". A proposal to run the races with a 15-minute delay to accommodate the adverts has already been kicked into touch by FIA vice-president Bernie Ecclestone.

ITV are similarly coy about their presentation team. But we reckon they're lining up John Fashanu and Ulrika Jonsson for the main commentary, Perry McCarthy for the expert's advice and Eye of the Tiger for the theme tune.

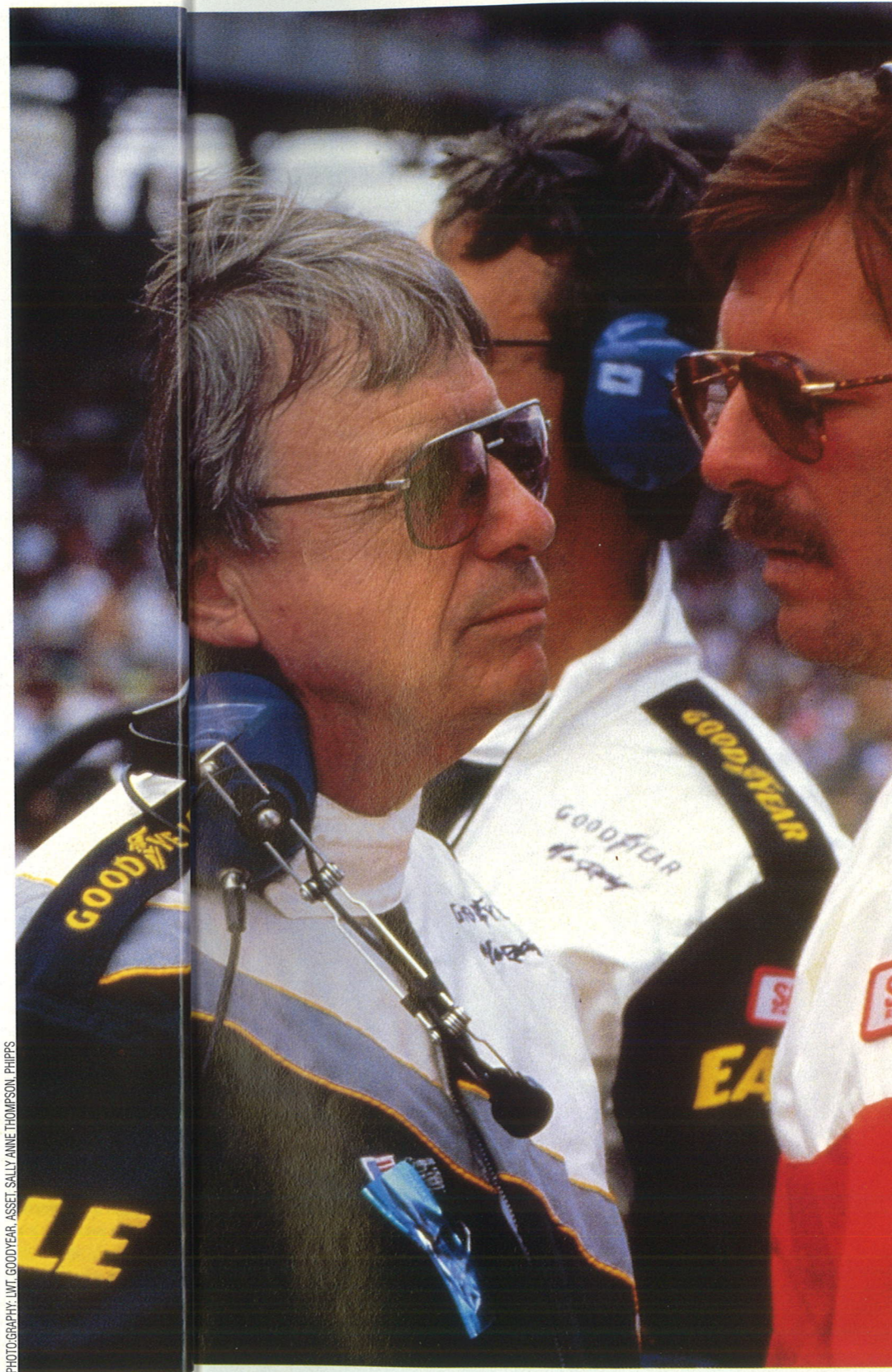
Alternative suggestions on the customary postcard, please.

Fash the Bash and Ulrika-ka-ka-ka. Could they be the new faces of grand prix commentary?



Once-bitten Bernie bites Melbourne pack back

Scarred F1 supremo Bernie Ecclestone was nothing if not blunt in Melbourne about his recent tangle with an alsatian dog. When one local hack made an untimely approach to ask for a portrait shot, he was given a firm "No". Undeterred, the hack asked: "Er, shall I tell the guy 10 minutes?" To which Bernie replied: "I said NO. If your 'ooter was in the same state as mine, would you want a portrait shot?"



Pitlane Hero

LEO MEHL

Age 59.
Nationality American.
Company Goodyear.
Job title Director, worldwide racing.
Why is he in the news?
He turns 60 in April and he's retiring.
Will they miss him?

You bet. According to Goodyear's chairman, Stan Gault: "He has literally built our motor sports programme into the envy of an entire industry. To many people, Leo Mehl is Goodyear racing." A chemical engineer, Mehl joined Goodyear in 1959 after graduation from West Virginia University and three years in the Air Force.

How long has he been in racing?

He moved into race tyre development in 1963, working on an Indy project with AJ Foyt. He also served four years in England as Goodyear's European racing manager before assuming his worldwide responsibilities.

What's he like?

Laid back with a ready sense of humour. He cracked up at a Goodyear celebratory dinner with Nigel Mansell, when McLaren boss Ron Dennis thanked Mehl for "a little assistance in Adelaide with the '86 world championship".

Why's he retiring? Any change in company policy?

He says that he's spent just about every weekend and holiday for the past 20 years at race tracks around the world and now it's time for a change. But Goodyear say they will "aggressively continue Leo's winning racing tradition".

Who's replacing him?

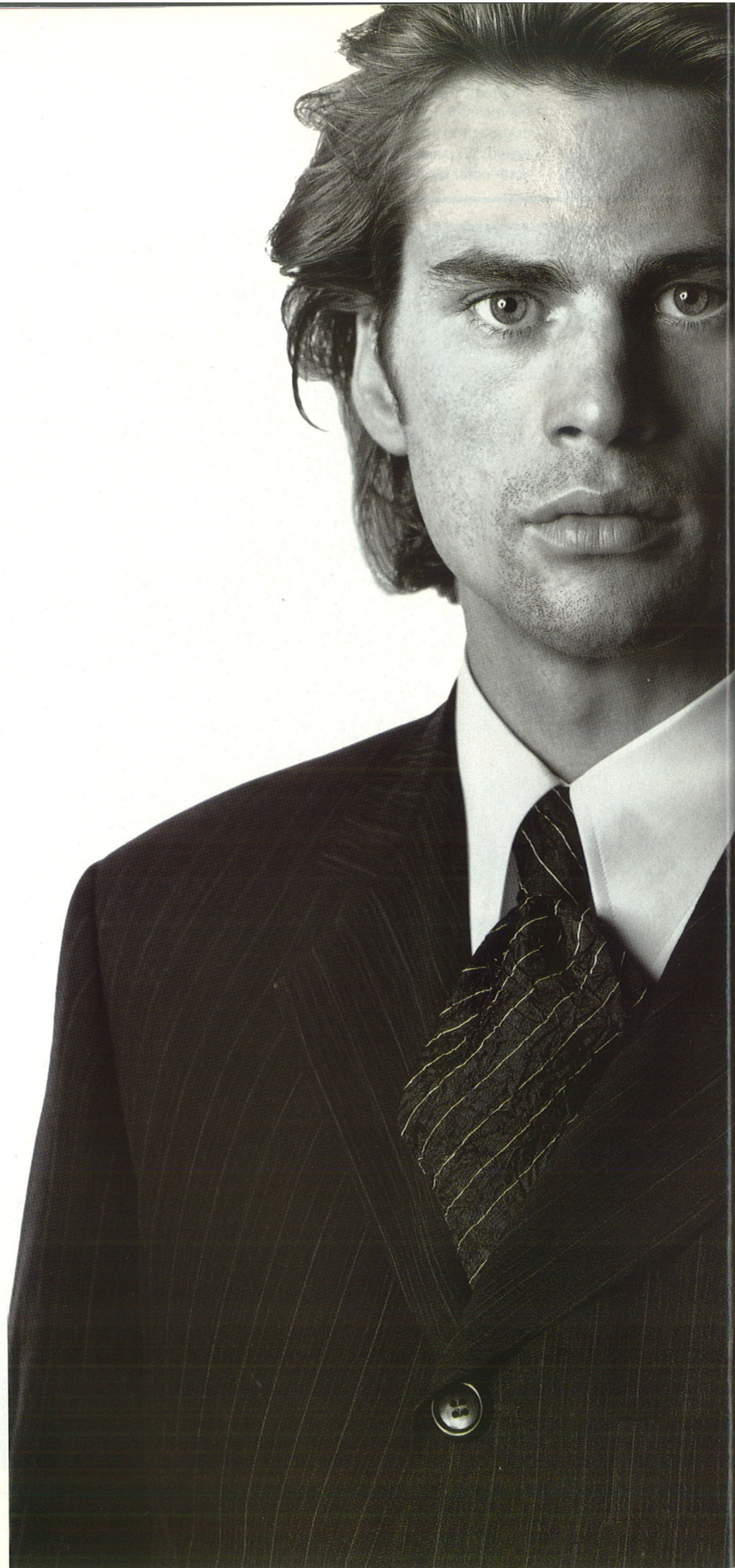
Stu Grant, who was named director in a restructuring of Goodyear's racing division which Mehl started 18 months ago.

If Bridgestone, or even Michelin, enter F1, might Goodyear pull out?

Who knows? They're certainly not afraid of competition, but F1 needs a tyre war like a hole in the head. The experts reckon it would instantly knock 3-4 seconds off lap times, and FIA president Max Mosley already has enough trouble satisfying circuits that expensive safety work won't be rendered obsolete by increased performance levels. The FIA might seek to avoid that by putting the F1 supply deal out for tender to avoid competition on the tracks.

PHOTOGRAPHY: LINT, GOODYEAR, ASSET, SALLY ANNE THOMPSON, PHIPPS

HUGO BOSS AG, D-72655 METZINGEN, GERMANY



BOSS
HUGO BOSS

Photograph by Richard Avedon

Alain Prost

WHAT'S AN EX-WORLD CHAMP DOING AS MCLAREN'S TEST DRIVER?

Why are you working as a test driver instead of racing?

What I'm doing is actually a bigger responsibility. We have to get McLaren back on top. I was world champion four times; at 41 I have nothing to prove, so why go back? Racing a car again would almost be a step down for me. You have to develop in life.

So just how are you helping McLaren?

I'm part of the technical group. I have direct access to technical meetings and I help with test driving the cars. With my experience I can help develop the cars and be a go-between for the engineers and the race drivers, Mika Hakkinen and David Coulthard.

You look very fit just to be a test driver.

I feel well, very competitive and it's a good feeling. I really enjoy cycling – my bicycle is always in the car. If you stop for just two weeks you lose your fitness. And it's hard to get it back.

What's going to happen this season?

For sure, the favourites for the championship are Williams and Damon Hill, but the odds could change during the season so Damon needs to score well early in the year. I can see teams like Ferrari and ourselves being less than 100 per cent at the start of the season but progressing a lot.

Will Schumacher beat your 51-win record?

He started a lot younger than me and has a very good chance. He's already won more money.

Will that tempt you back to racing?

No. I love driving the best cars in the world, but now it's like going out for dinner with a nice woman and not actually doing anything. It's still better than spending time with an ugly woman!

Why do you still think McLaren are the best?

They are the most human team. From the outside there might be a different perception, but it's true. It's fair to say that the guys have had their problems in the past few years, but it was obviously very difficult having to handle four engine changes in four years [Honda 1992, Ford 1993, Peugeot 1994, Mercedes 1995].

Are the engine changes such a big deal?

Sure. You cannot just look at it as a chassis or an engine, you must see the whole package. Often we talk about engine driveability and when you have a problem with that, there is just no way that you can drive the car well. It can affect the set-up of the car, traction, tyre wear, all sorts of things.

What was wrong with last year's MP4/10?

The package wasn't good and the engine wasn't very driveable. But the new MP4/11 seems much better. Its chassis is completely new. When you look at the weight distribution, wheelbase and so on, it's all very different. It's going to take a lot of time to understand it, but it's a good start.

McLaren used to blitz everyone. Can you do it again?

Williams can do it at the moment, like we used to, because their engine is very good and very reliable. And they have a car that just needs detail changes year to year. We have to catch up first.

Will you do it with the MP4/11?

My first impression is good. It responds well to changes – which is normally the sign of a good car – and is much easier to drive on the exit of the corners, has better traction and more downforce. Sometimes you can be fooled by a new car; because you want it to be so good, you convince yourself that it is. But that's not the case with this car. We have a good base.

Does a good car fly straight out of the box?

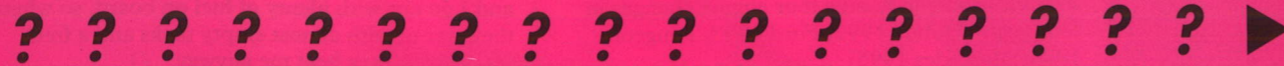
Not always. Schumacher proved it with the Benetton last year. The car didn't work very well at the beginning of the season but four races later it was flying.

Do you put pressure on the regular drivers?

If I drive at 50 per cent we don't learn anything. The best testers drive at 95 per cent and use the other five per cent to think about the car and feedback for the engineers. If I put pressure on David and Mika while I'm doing it, that's just part of the game. It's healthy competition. I'm not there to set the fastest times and I go out with plenty of fuel on board, so when they go out with almost empty tanks and a fresh set of tyres, they beat me anyway. ❶

I have nothing to prove, so why go back? Racing a car again would almost be a step down for me

WHAT'S ALL THE HYPE ABOUT



Better than sex!

Cosmopolitan recently ran an article entitled '69 things better than sex'. One of their suggestions was to slide into clean sheets with a good book and a mug of cocoa. Well, I've found a better alternative - I slid into freshly aired sheets with *F1 Racing* and a large vodka and tonic. Heaven!

MISS P BRAMLEY
CHADDESDEN, DERBY

Mercedes master

With regard to your article on Wolfgang von Trips (March issue), I would suggest that it was his race in the 1956 Mille Miglia - in a Mercedes 300SL - rather than his Nurburgring drive four weeks later that first brought him to Enzo Ferrari's attention. Von Trips, in common with Michael Schumacher, reached the big time as a Mercedes-Benz protégé.

DAVID COLE
OAKHAM, LEICS

Senna's the best

Here's what I say to your 'Ayrton Senna v Michael Schumacher' question. Senna was the dominant driver in an era which included such talents as Alain Prost and Nigel Mansell. Schumacher may well be on a different level to today's crop of F1 drivers, but is this a genuine comparison? Senna had the ability to win in a less than brilliant car. Does anyone imagine any other driver could have wrung five victories from the McLaren MP4/8 in 1993?

On the rare occasions that Schumacher has been put under pressure, he has shown distinct signs of cracking. He berates Damon Hill as second rate but at the same time seems unable to put sufficient distance between them to avoid their coming

together. To suggest that Schumacher's talent rivals that of Senna is at best premature and at worst plain wrong.

DR M P DAVIES
BRIERLEY HILL, W MIDLANDS

No wankles here

Well done on an excellent first edition. It is fresh, interesting, entertaining and informative. Your only potential problem may be maintaining the high standard. But whatever you do, please don't give us lap-by-lap accounts of each grand prix or delve into the technicalities of the 'inner lower left-hand wankle bar'.

ALAN J GOW
TOCA LTD, WARWICK

Stick up for Nige

In your first issue you seem to make fun of Nigel Mansell by saying that 'McLaren looks forward to a Mansell-free year'. Of course, last year's fiasco had nothing to do with McLaren

cocking it up, did it? Let's remember just how good Mansell has been (and still could be) and give him the credit he deserves by placing him among the great racing drivers of all time.

D STOBART
STOCKTON ON TEES

Shallow rave

As I wish to remain a shallow, girly, frivolous, female F1 fan, I must insist that you continue with the black and white, semi-naked, water-droplets-running-over-torso photography à la Jacques Villeneuve.

JULIE CLEVETT
USA

Less is more

The boys here at Williams pounced on the copies of *F1 Racing* when they arrived and the unanimous opinion was that it is a great magazine. But I'm not so sure about the picture of Michael Schumacher in the bath. I suppose you could

I WAS THERE...

when Villeneuve first raced in F1

Whatever Jacques Villeneuve does on his grand debut - and I'm looking forward to it as much as anyone - I doubt if it will have the same effect on me as his father's first F1 race did.

I was lucky enough to be at Silverstone on that blasting hot summer weekend in 1977, and I saw things I'll never forget. Most of them were Gilles Villeneuve (far right, with James Hunt) spinning an old McLaren M23 at Club corner, getting it together before he hit anything, and then heading back towards the tarmac at barely diminished speed. He did that a lot during practice.

But you could see a method in that madness. This wasn't someone trying too hard and falling off; it was someone finding out - the quick and dirty way - exactly what the car could take. This was Villeneuve trying out F1, not F1 trying out Villeneuve.

I wish Jacques the best of luck, but I hope Eddie Irvine thrashes them all.

PATRICK KELLY, PECKHAM, LONDON



describe it as oily rag meets sex symbol!

We can't wait to see who will take their clothes off for issue two - hopefully not Tony Dodgins!

ANN BRADSHAW
WILLIAMS GP ENGINEERING

Bamber fan

Your magazine was well worth the hype, but there was something missing: a doodle from Jim Bamber, the funny man behind the cartoons in *Autosport*.

MATHEW FULLER
WHITSTABLE, KENT

Tired of change

Some F1 rule changes are made in the name of safety and others are made to cut costs, but what does the FIA think Frank Williams will do with the money he saves when various technical devices are banned? Will he increase his donation to the Save the Children Fund? No, he will spend the money on R&D and thus keep the status quo between the rich and poor teams.

JAN CLAUSEN NIELSEN
RANDERS, DENMARK

Sub mistake

As a serving British submariner, I was dismayed to see the photograph accompanying your article on Admiral Lane-Nott was not of a British submarine. I am sure if you ask the Admiral nicely he would lend you a photograph of one of our fine British submarines.

NAME AND
ADDRESS SUPPLIED

Team approval

I found *F1 Racing* very amusing and well made. Congratulations - keep up the good work!

RENATO CAPPUCCI
MINARDI TEAM, ITALY



We've made the world's most aerodynamic cars before.
But you weren't able to buy them.

For the car buyer of the 1950's, the Mercedes 300SLR was extremely desirable but sadly unavailable.

It was the car in which Stirling Moss won the Mille Miglia. And, like many of our racing cars before it, was

one of the most streamlined of its kind. For the car buyer of the 1990s, the new Mercedes E-class is

desirable and available. Prices start from £23,500. There has never been a more streamlined production saloon. Lower wind resistance means it costs less fuel. It averages 33 mpg. Road holding is much better in high winds and strong cross winds.

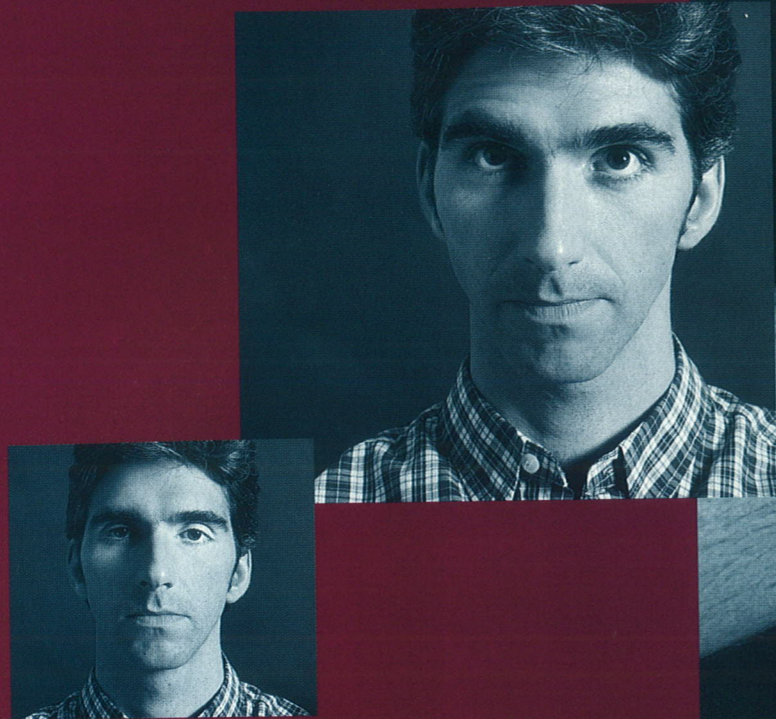
It's quieter at high speeds. Even when the sunroof is open, a wind deflector keeps noise to a minimum. And to keep the side windows free of dirt, we've restyled the wing mirrors and the sides of the windscreen.

Juan Manuel Fangio described his

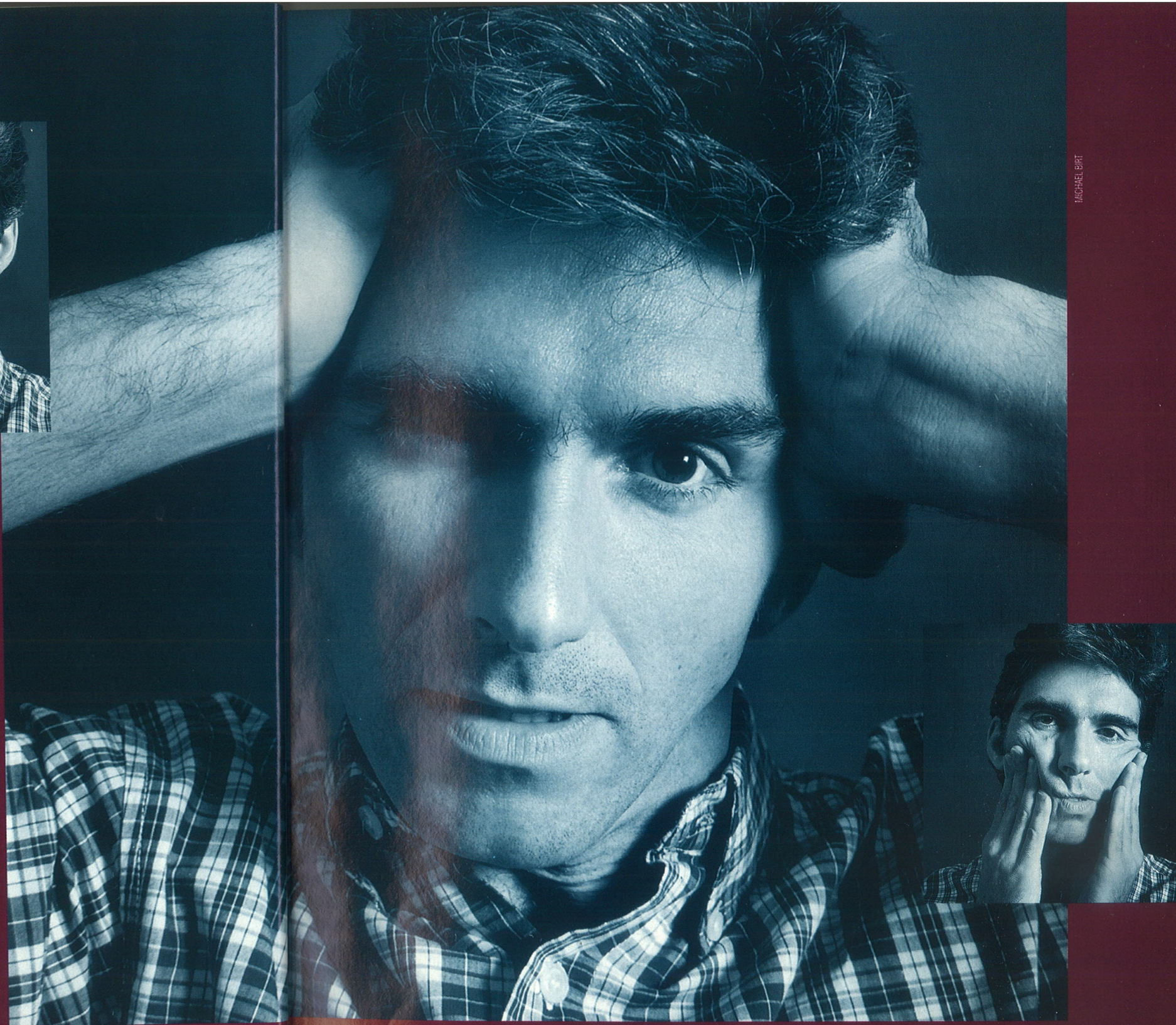
Mercedes racing car as the perfect car. 'The machine every driver dreams of.' Drive the new Mercedes E-class. We think you may feel the same.



Mercedes Benz
Engineered like no other car.



DAMON HILL'S NOT WORRIED
BY MICHAEL SCHUMACHER,
AND HE CAN HANDLE THE
FEROCIOUS TABLOID PRESS.
IT'S THE BEASTS WITHIN
HE NEEDS TO CONQUER.
BY RICHARD WILLIAMS



MICHAEL BIRT

Damon's demons

He's a strange one, our Damon, so mystifyingly uneasy with the laurels, the plaudits, the accolades, the rewards, the affection and admiration of the millions who sit at home cheering him on every time he leaves the starting grid. With his quick, jerky movements, his oddly charmless acceptance of an airport-lounge request for an autograph and the intense, forbidding glare that darkens his face even in moments of innocent concentration on his appointed task, he seems perennially uncomfortable in his own skin.

That's the perception, anyway. And, as with politics, perception is what counts in the world of sport. Reality is something else, as Damon Hill has always known. The problem for this sensitive man is to bring the perception close enough to the reality to make it possible to live with himself.

Unlike most top drivers, Hill has always taken sole charge of the decisions affecting his own career. Nigel Mansell had Sheridan Thynne,

jumble of toys. Georgie Hill, whom Damon met in 1981 and married seven years later, could be seen doing something domestic in the knocked-through kitchen-dining area. Damon's salary had suddenly leapt from a test driver's pittance to £150,000 a year, but celebrity had yet to affect their lives. Now, three house-moves later, they are settled in a new home overlooking Killiney Bay, just south of Dublin in the Irish Republic, and Damon has been trying to make the time to understand the lessons of the past three years.

"There's a great deal more to sport than just playing the game," he said. "It's something that I've become particularly aware of in the past two seasons. It's a product of my rapid exposure to the sharp end of F1. When I moved from Brabham to Williams I leapt straight from the back of the grid to the front, and I had to swim or sink. I think I swam quite well. There's no problem with what I do when I drive, as far as I can see. But there's the whole political and PR aspect to F1 which I've resisted trying

You've got to be up for that. Schumacher gets the same thing in Germany. Prost got it in France. I don't know about Senna. Nigel certainly got it. It doesn't take much in this sport for there to be some controversial material, and I guess there was plenty to go on last year. But I've learnt from first-hand experience, and I think I'm better equipped to handle it now.

"I put a lot of pressure on myself to do well. You do your damndest, but then sometimes you feel you get nothing but criticism for it. That can be a bit upsetting. But in any business at the top level you can't expect too much in the way of praise. Sport is one of the few places where you can expect some praise when you get the opportunity to do well. I'm certainly one of the first people to pick up the paper and read how wonderful I was."

Yet with 13 grand prix victories in three-and-a-bit seasons to Hill's name (compare the records of Riccardo Patrese or Gerhard Berger, neither of whom have been less privileged in terms of opportunities), what makes

"I don't want to be a product. I don't want people putting words into my mouth. You can find yourself paying a price for that"

Michael Schumacher has Willi Weber, David Coulthard has the massed suits and briefcases of Mark McCormack's International Management Group. But Hill, whose break into Formula 1 came not through high-level, top-dollar negotiations, has always looked after his own affairs, with the help of his older sister, Brigitte. "I do everything myself," Hill said recently. He works closely with "some good advisers, both inside and outside racing", although he won't identify them. "But I'm not comfortable with the idea of having someone do things on my behalf. In some ways that's left me a little bit exposed. But I suppose I can't bear to be told what to do, quite simply. I'd rather work things out for myself. That's how I get my satisfaction. And if I make mistakes... well, they're my mistakes. I can't go round telling people that it went wrong because I didn't have the right management team around me."

Three years ago I visited the Hills in their Wandsworth terraced house on the day Williams announced Damon's arrival as number two to Alain Prost for the 1993 season. The two small boys, Oliver and Joshua, were playing on the floor of the living room in a

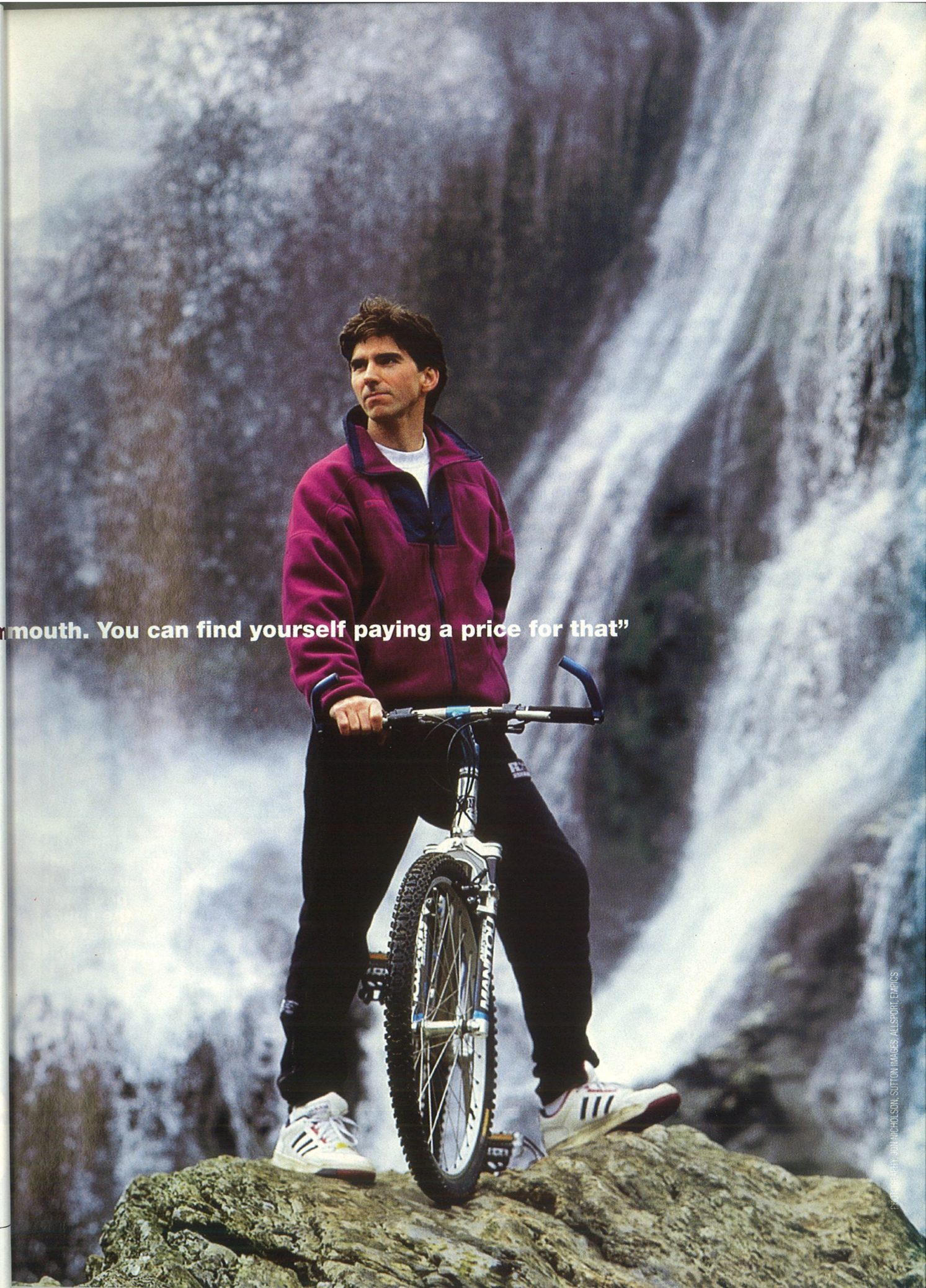
to conform with, to a degree, because I want to be myself. I don't want to be a product. I don't want to be packaged. I don't want people putting words into my mouth. You can find yourself paying a price for that."

In an attempt to reduce the price, the personnel of Team Hill has been joined by an "image consultant": Michael Calvin, chief sportswriter of the *Daily Telegraph*, whose advice has been sought on rehabilitating the public perception of a man who, in the eyes of Fleet Street's tabloids, has committed the cardinal sin of not being Nigel Mansell. They gave him three chances, and he blew them all. Third in the championship in 1993 (behind Prost and Senna, in his first full season), then second in 1994 and again in 1995, both times trailing Michael Schumacher, his nemesis: it wasn't good enough, and the pack turned on him. From BBC Sports Personality of the Year to "the Formula 1 whinger" (the *Evening Standard's* headline) in less than a year represents quite a fall from grace.

"I wasn't so much shocked as amazed at the severity of it," Hill said. "But I suppose it's just part of being in the arena and taking on the challenge.

us so ready to expose him to such scorching public criticism? Partly it has to do with the expectations aroused by the kind of money he gets paid, which appears to give fans and professional observers alike a licence to say whatever they want. It is without doubt also a result of the relentless tabloid circulation war, and its vocabulary of violent confrontation and recrimination. In the *Daily Mirror* the other week, a four-paragraph story based on a couple of harmless quotes from Jacques Villeneuve was headlined "Hill on his Jacques!" and began: "Jacques Villeneuve put the boot into Damon Hill..." This took its place on a spread of stories headlined "Fans stand there and call me a fat b*****", says Paul Gascoigne", "Tel hits out", "My world of hate - Tyson", "Athers faces new torment" and "Fans spit on Mac". To command space in such pages, as the sponsors expect, you have to learn to speak the language.

Perhaps more than this, in Hill's case, it is a question of being his father's son. Damon walked on to the stage of F1 and received a big hand simply for being Graham's boy. Yet that was the last thing he wanted to ▶



be known for, and it set up tensions that are still a long way from being unwound. In the life he has made with his wife, his three small children and his network of family, friends and assistants he seems centred and secure. Yet from the world outside comes this constant scratching away at the business of living up to his father's achievements, and unfortunately the witless preoccupation of outsiders (this one included) happens to correspond to something genuinely unresolved in his own mind.



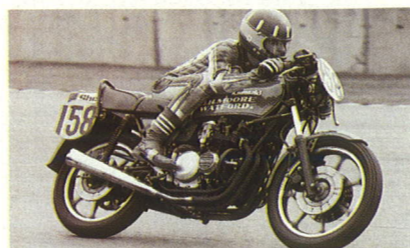
I asked him if he agreed with the bit of basic Penguin Freud analysis which says that, during a childhood spent watching his father from a distance, he was able to observe the difference between the public personality (the Terry-Thomas of the tracks, with a smile and a wiggle of the moustache for any passing paps) and the private man (far more demanding and difficult), and subconsciously determined never to put himself in a position where he might have to erect a similar façade. Hence his discomfort when faced with cameras and notebooks; hence, too, his preference for testing F1 cars, with its long periods of anonymity and honest, unrelieved toil, over the glamour of actually racing them.

"You're half right," he said. "I'm not going to make any direct reaction to what you're saying about my father. It's just too lengthy to go on about. But certainly I was backstage when I was growing up, and I could see the show and all the tricks that were used to convince the people in the audience that what they were seeing was for real. There's a need to put on a show, to give the audience what they want, whereas I think for a long time I just pursued the objective of getting into F1, getting my hands on a car, and then doing as well as I could in the race. I just put blinkers on and let everything else take care of itself. But before I knew it, I was expected to perform other tricks that I hadn't learnt along the way."

Hadn't learnt, or perhaps had chosen not to learn, out of distaste? "I wouldn't say distaste. I just didn't understand it. You don't really appreciate things until you've got a little experience of them yourself. It comes back to what we were saying about management. These days, drivers need to prepare themselves for being thrust into stardom, and I'd never really felt the desire to have that kind of coaching. And so I think to some degree I'm a lot more up-front than a lot of people in the sport."

What you see is what you get. And I hope that never changes, to be honest, because I think the public deserve that. If they're fed a constant diet of perfectly trained performers, then the sport runs the risk of becoming less convincing."

David Coulthard, his team-mate last year, has criticised Hill's "inconsistent" personality. Alan Jones, who holds a special position in the affections of Frank Williams and



Top: growing up under the gaze of Formula 1's good and great. Above: bike racing in 1980. Below: leading an FF1600 pack at Brands in '85. Bottom: on an F3 podium with Johnny Herbert



"I'm a lot more up-front than a lot of people in the sport. What you see is what you get. I hope that never changes"

Patrick Head, recently summed up his view saying that "Damon either procrastinates for half the bloody race or runs into somebody's arse end". With only a few weeks to go before the start of the 1996 season, Head himself infuriated Hill by making pointedly dismissive remarks about drivers with "fragile egos". Hill has not been slow to defend himself, but there is a powerful sense that self-criticism comes first, perhaps more painfully than he cares to let us know, and that devising a convincing response to the harsh words of others has not, until now, been a priority. The well publicised mind-games with Schumacher, in which he has generally come off second best, he describes as "something to provide a little bit of spice to the circus. It's a bit like boxing. People will switch it on if they think they're going to see two guys who hate each other's guts. But, sure, at times there's an attempt to play a bit of a psychological game. And it's like advertising: it's difficult to prove whether it's effective or not. Sometimes it can be fun. Quite amusing. But I'll say one thing, there's

no way you can stage-manage the performance on the track."

As for Williams and Head, had they not borrowed from Enzo Ferrari the strategy of keeping their own drivers in a constant state of creative tension? "That's a kind way of putting it. There are two ways to motivate people: positively or negatively. I don't need other people motivating me. I resist that kind of approach. I do not like to be pushed or prodded or intimidated. I go well when I'm enjoying myself, when I like what I'm doing and the people I'm doing it with, when we're all pulling together in the same direction and trying to achieve the same thing. Surely that's realistic. But F1 is much more complex than that. And I consider myself capable of handling all the various situations that come up. That's as challenging as the driving, to be able to stand your ground and survive in that environment as well as you handle surviving in a pack of 26 cars."

When I asked him if he'd been able to make Williams and Head understand his point of view, he said that he "didn't want to polarise it ▶

King of the strings

Damon Hill is a rarity: a top sportsman with another interest. Despite the dedication it needs to win in F1, Hill is very serious about his music. At home in Dublin he prowls venues, watching out for new talent as well as favourites like Van Morrison. Music is a solace for Hill. As he showed in a jam session after last year's British GP, picking up a guitar to bang out some tunes is an effective way to get over another damaging collision with Michael Schumacher.

Hill once played bass in a punk band called Sex Hitler and the Hormones. It was more about fun at volume than about being in the same key as the rest of the band, but make no mistake, he can play the guitar.

Being musical doesn't always help. After watching a Donald Duck video with his kids, Hill was pounding around Estoril when the 'Quacky quack song' popped into his head. It went away through the twisty bits, but popped back again on the straights. Almost drove him mad. James Allen



While Coulthard plays air castanets and Eddie Jordan boogies on down with a can of the amber nectar, Hill plays a real guitar

Good, but just how good?

Compile a list of great British drivers. At the top you've got Stirling Moss and Jim Clark, with Jackie Stewart close behind. Graham Hill has to be up there, too. But where do you file the modern pair, Nigel Mansell and Damon Hill? It's a thorny question, because neither could honestly be called a "natural".

The argument against Mansell – despite his 31 GP wins and back-to-back F1 and Indycar championships – is that he wasn't a natural in the Senna/Prost mould. Certainly it took him a long time to emerge as a winner. He won only a handful of Formula Ford races and didn't hack it in F3 either. His first four years in F1 were spent with Lotus, when he rarely looked like a winner.

It wasn't until Mansell moved to Williams in 1985 that he became a regular frontrunner. But once he had that vital first win under his belt, he never looked back. It wasn't simply a matter of confidence – even in his difficult F3 days he displayed enormous self-belief – it was more a question of finding a car that suited his style. The more power a car had, the more he seemed to enjoy it, and this was the era of the 800-900bhp turbo cars. Nobody, not Piquet, not Prost, not even Senna, could pick up one of these projectiles by the scruff of its neck and drive it to within an inch of its life the way Mansell would.

His style didn't always find favour. Unlike Prost, and to a lesser extent Senna, he never made driving fast look easy and comfortable. He darted rather than flowed, the car always looked edgy and nervous, and he was hard on tyres.

But his control and commitment were never less than breathtaking, and he often made a nonsense of complaints that it was impossible to overtake.

So what about Hill? In Formula Ford and F3 he was good, but Johnny Herbert, Mark Blundell and Martin Donnelly were better. Damon won four F3 races in two years, but team boss Glenn Waters used to refer to his drivers as "Donnelly and the other one". Hill looked better in F3000, but it wasn't until he got his F1 break in 1993 (ironically at Mansell's expense) that he really began to impress. He didn't quite upstage team-mate Alain Prost, but he did far better than anyone, even those at Williams I suspect, dared hope. Like Mansell he seemed to flourish when he had more power under his right foot.

And like his father Graham, also depicted as making it to the top through application rather than natural talent, Damon was a late starter. Graham Hill didn't even learn to drive until he was 24, the age at which Schumacher became world champion. Damon was 23 when he made his unspectacular start in the junior categories. By comparison, when Senna entered Formula Ford in 1981, he had already been racing for more than 10 years. In these circumstances it's not particularly surprising that Hill's been something of a late developer.

But I will always find it hard to think of Hill like I do Senna and Prost. I suppose that a man who is put into the best car and enjoys unlimited testing is bound to emerge, as Mansell and Hill did. But you can't help feeling that the level of a "natural" would be higher. *Tony Dodgins*

The tightest-knit team in F1 – Damon and Georgie Hill, with Tabatha. Georgie didn't laugh at his jokes, but married him anyway. She's the antithesis of Penelope Pitstop, the reason he doesn't need a manager



Hill and Mansell: they've won 44 grands prix between them and people still say they lack flair

around those two", and went on to describe how he split F1 observers into two camps. "It could almost be simplified by saying that there are two views of the sport: the Senna view and the Prost view. Some who regard it as no holds barred, anything goes, the only thing that matters is winning, and others who see it in terms of doing anything to win within what is permissible and what you feel is fair. Those two attitudes are quite distinct, and you can go back through the history of F1 and find people who'd rather come second than do something they wouldn't feel happy with. To go further, some view the sport as a test of strength while others view it as an art. Last year there was a problem with the regulations, which said one thing while what was being practised was something else. I got involved in that and found myself accused of whinging. I hate raking up last year the whole time, but I wanted to know what I was supposed to be doing, whether I could adopt a different approach within the regulations or not. And that's where I got a little bit mixed up. Frank was

extremely supportive the whole year. He gave me the right motivation at the right times. Patrick's approach is more attacking. But I know Patrick's moods well. And it's been a very successful operation over the past few years."

They are, I said, a pair of unusually brilliant and interesting men, a statement which made him laugh in an enigmatic sort of way. "Yeah. True. Very brilliant and interesting men. And I have a lot of respect for them. But you can't afford to... well, I came into the team and I learnt things the Williams way. I had simply to follow instructions. But there comes a point where you know you're right, and you have to insist on what you want. Otherwise it's too easy to fall into the trap of blaming someone else. I think we got a lot sorted out over the winter. Last year was a tough experience for everyone. In fact we've had two tough years. You couldn't get a tougher year than 1994. After that, we all wanted to win so much last year. Everyone was very disappointed. But there's been a big determination to understand what went wrong with our approach, and what we have to do to put it right."

After entering the team by the back door, as a junior partner first to Prost and then to Senna, had he found it difficult to establish his primacy, his continuing right to the number one seat? "I'd liken it to a parent coming to the realisation that their child has grown up. A lot of parents find it difficult to accept that the child is no longer 10 years old. That would be putting it too strongly with my situation, but it's a similar thing. I know that Frank is a very perceptive person. He knows when a driver has matured and is ready to win championships. He knew when I'd be ready to win races. He's a seasoned observer of drivers. So I don't think there's a problem there. But inevitably there have been growing pains."

Some of the pain has concerned Hill's remuneration, which has reportedly gone from £150,000 to £1.5 million to £6 million in successive seasons. After a certain point, aren't these sums really more of symbolic value than anything else? "Yes. It would be easy to see it as an attempt to extract as much money for your own needs as possible, but it's

not just that. The retainer a team is prepared to pay is an expression of their desire for that driver."

And the tens of millions that Schumacher is getting from Ferrari, what level of desire does that represent? "Well, nobody knows the real figure. But it's stupendous."

Would "the right management team" have made a difference to Hill's own negotiations last summer? He said he doesn't know exactly how close he came to a Ferrari seat. "We had a number of meetings. Certainly I was intrigued by the idea because I'd spent three years at Williams and I could see that Ferrari were making progress. It would have been a new challenge. And who wouldn't want to drive for Ferrari? You shouldn't really allow yourself to get romantic about your job, but when you're talking about Ferrari it's difficult not to take that into account. So it was certainly a possibility, a lot more than just a rumour. And it was very flattering to be in discussions with them."

Not many other top grand prix drivers would have been modest enough to formulate that last

statement, but then arrogance is not part of the Hill temperament, which is why his attempts at psychological warfare are so unconvincing and so revealing. What people really like about sport, I said to him, whether they realise it or not, is the way it peels back the layers that are intended to disguise the essential components of a person's character. "I agree with that. It's what attracts people. They like to see the discipline executed by its finest exponents, but they also want to see how different people react to the same situation. I wasn't happy with my own performance in some situations last year, to be honest. I've realised that however much coverage F1 gets, it's only a snapshot of your personality. There isn't the time to go into depth about any particular situation. So the ability to put things in a nutshell, to sum up what's happened as clearly and simply as possible, is very important. But that's not my natural character. I'd rather go into something in great depth and at great length than just roll off a one-liner and dismiss it. But it relieves a lot of the burden to be able to do that and forget it. Because otherwise you're just dragging all this stuff around behind you."

Three years ago, on a brief first meeting, I was impressed as much by Georgie Hill as by her husband. It's dangerous to jump to conclusions about such things, but she seemed able to share in the pleasure of Damon's success without being unduly impressed by the world in which he was achieving it. "She's an



"I am a defector"

Unlike most F1 drivers Hill spent his early years racing bikes, rather than karts. His ambition to become a four-wheeled champion came only after a career in bike racing which peaked in 1984 with two club championship wins.

After making the shift to cars, Hill kept in touch with the bike world by writing a column in the bike racer's bible *Fast Bikes*, an excerpt of which appears below.

"...I am a defector. I am not worthy to fumble the classifieds of *Motor Cycle News*. I have renounced the holiness and purity of the motorcycle for the sacrilege of cars.

But the truth is, I have reached the point when it could be F1 for me if I'm a

good boy, so bikes are off the list.

My so far single experience of an F1 car was about 30 laps of Paul Ricard in a Benetton 1.5 Turbo in 1987 and I could not do any more laps or my head would have been ripped off my shoulders. The power was insane. I can remember turning into the Mistral going from second through to fifth in about two seconds, and then screaming 'YES! YES! YES! HA HA! NOW THE WORLD IS ALL MINE, MINE!' before shifting into sixth and taking Signes flat out. With 650bhp, a few tonnes of downforce and a huge contact area, you begin to see that nothing you could score in Ladbroke Grove could be as addictive as this..."



incredible woman," he says now. "The first time I met her, she was actually being taken out by a friend of mine. I tried out some of my best jokes on her, but she didn't laugh. I was very impressed by this. She's the sort of woman who will not be messed about with. I admire her greatly for that. It can be hell to live with, of course. But stimulating."

I said that she seemed the antithesis of the Penelope Pitstop characters in evidence elsewhere. "Well, exactly. I think she sees through all that. She has a good sense of priorities."

Is she the reason he doesn't need a manager? "Yeah, we discuss a lot of things. She's very much a part of the business. I had to teach her about motor racing. She didn't know the first thing about it when we met. But she's very well informed now, and she

enjoys it, too, although she's not a bit starry-eyed. She's got a good head on her shoulders. It's a partnership. She knows me very well, knows my moods, knows when to say something to bring me back on line. She's my datum, the point to which I always refer back so that I don't go too far off track. In this situation, it's quite easy for that to happen."

The past three years have taught him to be more efficient. "I have less time for everything. It's a bit like going to university, I imagine. I've been through a period of being taken away from home, if you like, and being confronted by a great many new things. I've enjoyed it, and I feel more professional about myself now. The learning curve has been very steep, and it's been very satisfying to tackle it. Not many lines of work give you

Win the title, lose the drive

Damon Hill may be the title favourite for many experts, but he still can't be sure of keeping his Williams seat in 1997.

With Jacques Villeneuve on a two-year Williams contract and Heinz-Harald Frenzen the subject of Frank Williams' thinly-veiled interest, what does Hill have to do to keep his seat? Indeed, would winning the world championship be enough?

There is precedent here. In 1992 Nigel Mansell romped away to the title but lost his seat to a man who wasn't even driving: Alain Prost. Sacked by Ferrari for speaking out of turn, Prost took 1992 off, although he apparently had a '93 Williams deal in place before the '92 season had even started.

Twelve months on the same thing happened to Prost. Ayrton Senna wanted a seat at Williams and it was goodbye Prost, despite the Frenchman having strolled to the 1993 title. He clinched it on the same weekend he learned that Senna was replacing him. Not much room for sentiment there.

Something you have to remember is that the deals for wheels are set in motion a long way ahead. Who's to say Frenzen does not already have an agreement with Williams for '97? Has Frank already taken the view that Damon's had two bites at the cherry in the best car and not made it? Is 1996 the last bite — a lucrative last hoorah, a kind of pension fund for Damon?

But if you don't have confidence in a bloke, why end up paying him £6 million

for 1996? The conventional wisdom is that Williams, once he realised Schumacher was on his way to Ferrari, thought that Benetton might pinch Hill. At that time — July last year — Hill was the only guy giving Schumacher a hard time, and he looked much more convincing than David Coulthard.

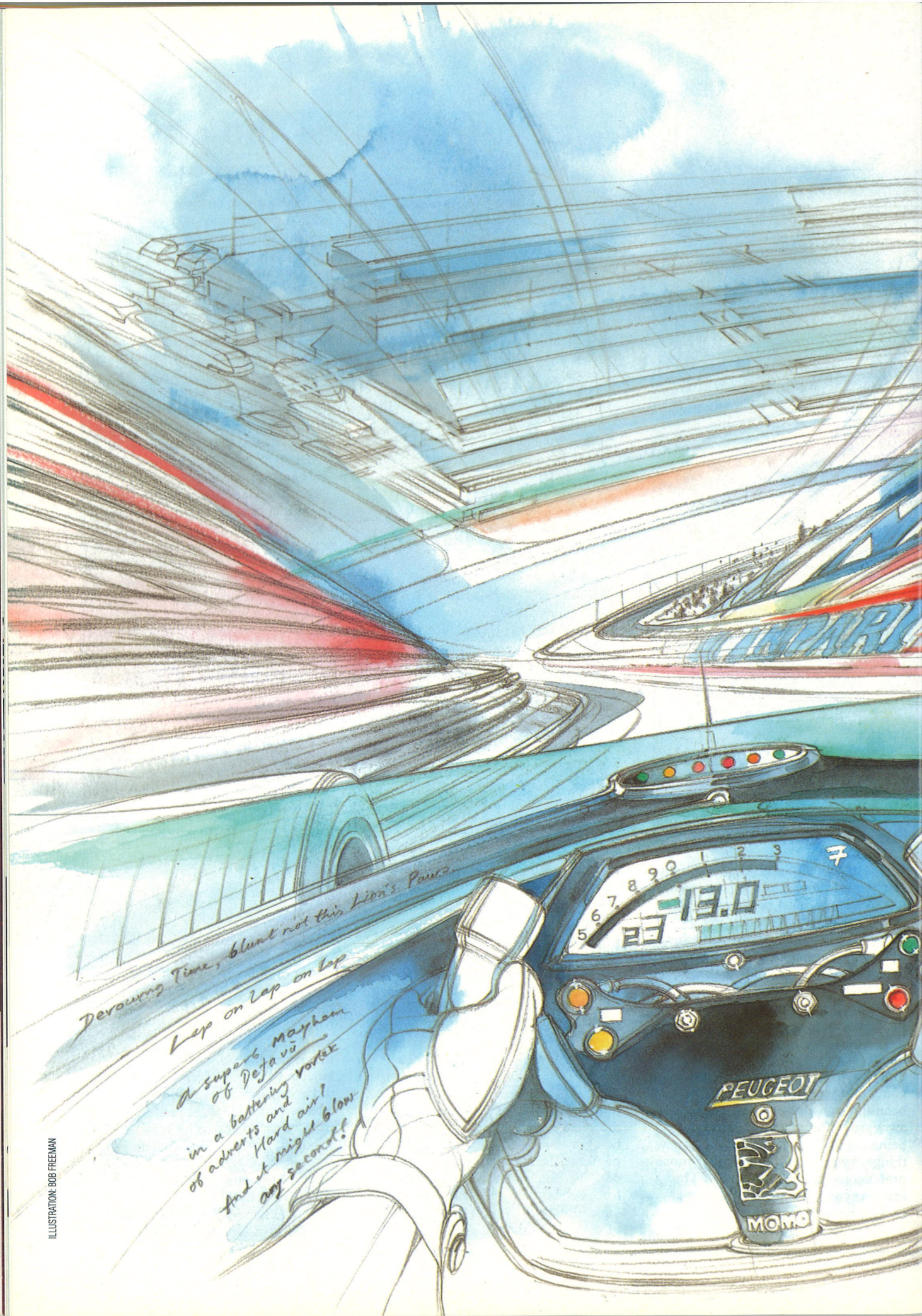
Perhaps that was enough. Maybe Frank did panic. Maybe he had good cause — he has all the data and we don't. Maybe the Williams technical department thinks Hill has developed into a truly first rate driver. Prost, for one, thinks Damon is underrated and, having driven with him, he should know. "I think Williams and Damon must be favourites for the 1996 championship," Prost said recently.

Let's suppose Hill is not retained by Williams in 1997. At 36, where would he go? Ferrari or McLaren looks unlikely, a seat at Benetton is a possibility, but nothing else in F1 would really fit the bill. Unless a certain Scot who was pulled out of a fuel-leaking, twisted BRM by Damon's father at Spa 30 years ago, gives him a call... *Tony Dodgins*

Williams' last two title winners both lost their jobs. So what does Hill have to do to keep his?



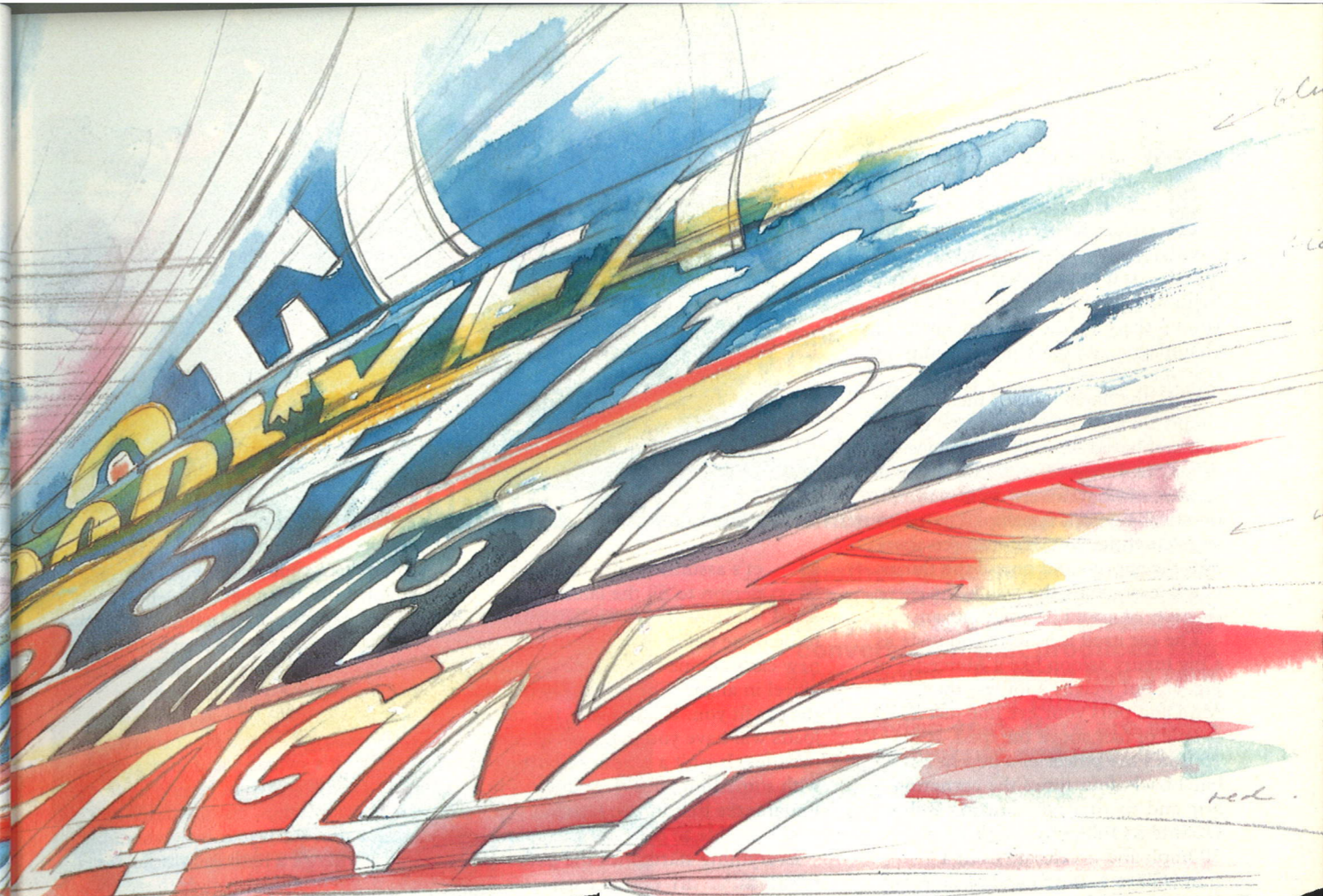
"A lot of the discomfort I feel is with myself as much as with anyone else," he said, in conclusion. "So I have to come back and have another go. I won't be able to race for ever. When that time comes I want very much to be able to look back and say, 'Well, I did everything I possibly could, as well as I could, and I'm happy with that, whatever the result may be.' It would be awful to have to bear any other kind of feeling into old age. And much of my motivation is derived from that feeling as well, that I'm more frightened of not having lived to the fullest than I am of dying." **1**



Derailing Time, blunt not this Lion's Paw
Lap on Lap on Lap

*A superb Mayhem
of Deja vu
in a battering vortex
of adverts and
hard air?
And it might blow
any second!*

ILLUSTRATION: BOB FREEMAN



How to drive an **F1 car**

by
**Martin
Brundle**

Think about the last time you whipped your Cavalier or Golf GTi through a roundabout. Didn't you wonder, just for a second, whether you had the stuff to be the next Senna or Schumacher? Whether it shouldn't be you up there on the podium, soaked in champagne and clutching a trophy the size of a suitcase?

Well, the harsh truth is that there's simply no way of knowing how good you are, based on road experience. F1 driving is, I believe, so far off the scale of what normal drivers do that there's practically no relationship. To discover your potential you've got to put years into the sport – and one of the things you'll learn along the way is the sheer enormity of grand prix performance.

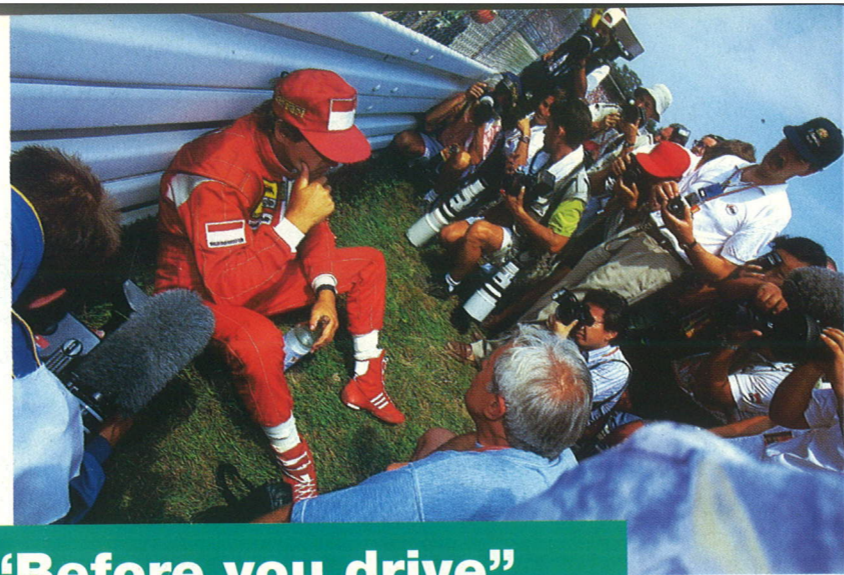
The car itself is as long and wide as a big luxury saloon like a Mercedes or Jaguar, but weighs a lot less than a Mini and puts your eye line just a couple of feet above the road. It has 15 times the power of a decent hot hatchback, four times the cornering grip and six times the braking ability. Used to its full potential, it'll do 200mph and accelerate from a standstill to 120mph and back in less than 10 seconds.

Sounds fast, does it? Well, bear in mind that your team doesn't just want you to get control and drive the thing around, all neat and tidy. They want you to win with it, to extract every ounce and every shred of performance over two mad hours, punctuated only by a couple of pitstops that will send your heart rate even higher.

"Throw away the car keys; even my Ferrari F355 bears no relation to F1"



PHOTOGRAPHY: SUTTON IMAGES, AUTOSPORT, ALLSPORT, WORDS & PICTURES



"Before you drive"

Let's assume you're the right person to fill the latest F1 vacancy. There's a hell of a lot to be done before you'll even hear your new car's engine run, let alone turn a wheel in anger. The priority is making the car fit you. If it doesn't, the racing loads will have you in agony within minutes. It isn't a matter of putting up with something; if the car doesn't fit, I guarantee that in two laps flat you won't be able to drive for the pain.

Everything starts with the pedal positions; all drivers are particular about them. There's absolutely no space to spare in the footwell, so you've got to be precise about the relativity between throttle and brake pedals, the position of your right heel rest and your left foot rest. Accelerator position is important, too, because the cars are prone to wheelspin and throttle control is critical. I also make sure my brake pedal is vertical, so my foot acts directly on it. Your brake foot has to work really hard in a race, especially somewhere like Monza, where you're always slowing from 200 to 60mph.

I take plenty of time to position the steering wheel. Over the years you get to know exactly

where you want it, and your muscles adapt. I like the wheel as high as possible, just short of a point where my hand obscures the forward view when I'm cornering. The mirrors are important, too: I try to put them behind the front tyres, so my view isn't interrupted in tight corners.

Then it's switches and instruments. You'd think an F1 car would have good ergonomics, but the dashboard is so tiny that the layout is nowhere near ideal. There's a limit to how far the team can modify the dash to suit you, because once the car's wiring loom is made, things are pretty well fixed. It's not as if there's a few feet of spare wire flapping about under the dash.

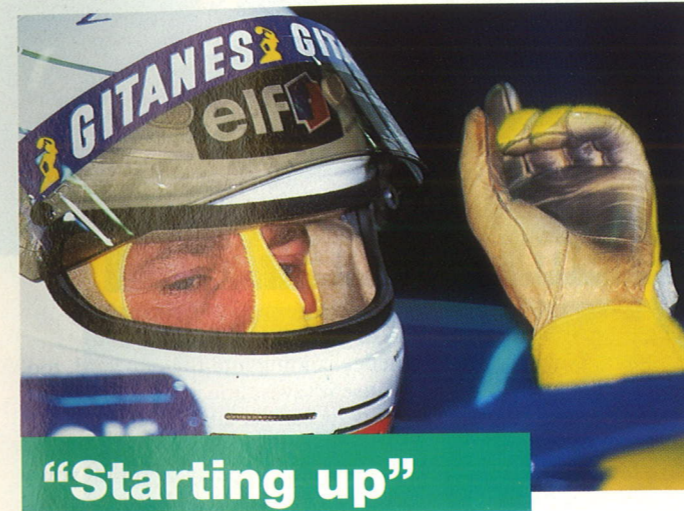
At least you can have the steering wheel exactly how you want it: any diameter, any rim thickness. My wheel has four 'paddle' levers on the underside – clutch and downshift left, clutch and upshift right – and on its face are different-coloured buttons for downshift (seventh to third), neutral selection, radio transmit and pitlane speed limiter. It might sound confusing, but you soon find yourself doing everything automatically.

Now comes the seat fitting. That's a matter of sitting in a bin liner full of warm liquid foam for 20 minutes until it solidifies – often with the mechanics pushing down on your shoulders to make sure it spreads enough. You need three seats: a regular racing seat, one for the spare car and one for the test team. Often your first seat isn't too good; you find you're sitting too high. You've got to get your backside as low as possible, provided you can still see.

Sitting in the car, your body is supported from mid-thigh with your backside in a kind of bucket. Most of the side support is at your hips and shoulders; the car's hardly got any suspension travel, so anything bearing on your ribs would bruise them before

you'd even finished the warm-up lap. But your shoulders have to be wedged so tightly into the car that it hurts. If the cockpit feels comfortable in the garage, it's not tight enough. You'll be flopping all over the place in corners.

The same principle applies to straps. You've got six of them: two crutch, two lap and two shoulder belts. They all anchor into a quick-release block in your lap. The lower belts are cut to length and are very, very tight. The shoulder straps are adjustable, and I get a mechanic to pull them down because he can get plenty of purchase. One extra pull after they get painful is my rule of thumb. Even then I know they'll be loose before the first pitstop.



"Starting up"

You're in the garage, strapped into the car in your fireproof playsuit with your helmet on. This is one of the 1996 cars, and you'll find the new cockpit protection 'cushions' give you an extra feeling of security. Your hands are on the wheel at a quarter to three, with your thumbs hooked over the tops of the spokes and your third fingers gripping the thick, chamois-covered wheel rim just below them. Your eyeline passes just over the cockpit rim, just above a bank of six warning lights (neutral, hydraulic pressure, upshift, rev limiter, oil pressure, coolant temperature) and you can't see anything of the nose, or very much of the front wing. That's why in a grand prix car it's ridiculously easy to nudge the car in front.

Time to start up. The mechanics take the electric blankets off your tyres, which are at 80deg C – about 20deg short of the racing ideal – and the pressure is on because they're losing heat. Your chief mechanic at the front of the car nods to say everything's ▶

Brundle's gift of the gab

Martin Brundle is a self-confessed senior citizen among grand prix drivers. He rose to prominence in a series of titanic F3 battles with Ayrton Senna in the early '80s, then joined Tyrrell in F1 for 1984. He has raced for McLaren, Benetton and Ligier, and joined Jordan this year for the Australian Grand Prix, his 142nd start. At 36, Brundle is highly respected by F1 insiders for his speed, tenacity, honesty and deep mechanical understanding. But he has another, quite separate skill. As BBC Grand Prix viewers discovered last year – and as the three-hour conversation that produced this story shows – Brundle has a rare natural gift for putting others in the driving seat. Here are some of his comments and anecdotes.

On F1 horsepower:

"A car may feel quick when you first drive it, but as soon as you're used to it you'll want more power. It doesn't matter how much power you've got, you'll want more. And when you're careering down the straight with the driver in front pulling away or the driver behind getting into your slipstream, your car feels like the laziest, most underpowered old dog in the race. I started in a Tyrrell with 545 horsepower and graduated to a 1250-horsepower turbo. Now I've got 730 horsepower, having passed through the 600s last year. Never in my career have I had enough power."

On race gestures:

"Some drivers specialise in 'internationally recognised signals'. Mostly it makes me laugh, because when they do it you know they're not quite under control. Sign language can work, though. I was in an FF2000 race once, dicing side by side for the lead, when my rival suddenly raised his hand and pointed straight ahead. I was so surprised I backed off..."



Alesi gives Coulthard an 'internationally recognised signal'

okay, so you raise your left hand and make circular motions with your finger. A crewman behind inserts the air starter into the car's vitals and rotates the engine. An engine man holds what looks like a Scalextric controller as he watches the various pressures rise on a laptop computer plugged into the side of the car. After three seconds he fires the engine, you pick it up on the throttle pedal and the garage fills with noise.

It's best not to rev the engine too much while the crew is getting the car off the jacks; it's too hard on everyone's ears. There's no real need for it: today's F1 engines idle almost as smoothly as an old V12 Jag. Keep it turning at about 4000rpm, though, to maintain hydraulic pressure. You'll need that very soon when you start declutching and changing gears.

Look around. Check the switches. Check temperatures and pressures – the LCD dash display will show whatever you want. If everything's right, give the lower of the two left-hand paddles under the steering wheel an experimental pull. If the orange warning light straight ahead shines steadily, you've got enough hydraulic pressure to select a gear. Still holding the clutch lever in, flick the downshift lever just above it. The car will kick slightly, and you've selected first. Give the engine 6000rpm and you're off.

Care is vital. The clutch is sensitive, without much travel – there's no 'feel' like in an ordinary car. And you've got to turn the wheel to leave the garage, which means your fingers will probably lose contact with the clutch lever. You could find yourself careering towards the pit wall. The only options are an expensive contact or stalling the thing on the brakes. If you do stall, the rigmarole has to start again: jacks, laptop, checks, air starter and the rest.

On race helmets:



clean and dry, looks after visors and tear-offs, makes sure your tobacco sponsor's decals are legal for the country you're in and so on. I don't get paid to wear Bell, but I do expect service. Anything that helps keep my mind clear on race weekend is worthwhile."



"Away from the pits"

Let's say you've got the thing moving, no problem. Now is the time for clear thinking. Are there any stray people standing around? Is the track clean? And how do you intend to leave the pitlane? Are you practising a full-on pitstop departure or bedding in a new set of tyres? If it's the latter, you'll need to blend the temperature into them fairly gently.

I usually practise a proper pitstop departure when I leave the pits, popping the clutch at 12,000 to 14,000rpm, gauging grip, getting into the fast lane and dumping the speed limiter exactly on the white line at the

end of the pitlane. You'll need to practice coming into the pits hard, too, because it saves time in the race and your crew can get a true picture of race tyre temperatures. But you've got to be careful. If you really storm in, you can heat soak the whole brake system and boil the fluid, which means you've got no brakes when you go out again.

One thing you can be sure of as you accelerate away for the first time: the brakes won't work into the first corner. Carbon discs operate best at 700 to 800deg C, and they don't work at all under 400deg. Which means they'll need at least half a lap to get warm. Same goes for the whole car. At low speeds and temperatures it'll feel unbelievably crude and cumbersome. But things improve dramatically when the temperatures rise – the engine gets into its stride beyond 12,000rpm and the downforce comes in properly at the start of the third gear range, somewhere above 70mph.

When that happens, you've got to be careful of your own reactions. If you haven't driven an F1 car for a while and you've just arrived from the airport in some hired turbo diesel, chances are that for the first mile or so the scenery will seem to be coming at you a mite too fast. Throw in cold tyres and brakes and you could be on your way to the scene of an accident.

On pitstops:

"You have to come in hard, of course, but it's also vital to be precise, because in effect you're parking in a tiny garage made of people. If you're a couple of feet out, everyone has to shuffle about and you lose time. You have to hold the steering wheel firmly, otherwise the guys on the front wheels won't have steady stub axles to aim at. And the engine has to keep running fairly hard to maintain hydraulic pressure. You select first gear when all the wheels are on, as you're waiting for the fuel guys to finish. The instant the man with the 'brakes on' sign leaps clear you go – and for God's sake don't stall it."



"Getting up to speed"

If you've got the makings of an F1 driver, you'll be in the groove in three laps or four laps. You'll have the engine working in the power band – that's 14,000 to 16,000rpm in the Jordan, with its seven-speed gearbox – and your tyres and brakes will be up to temperature.

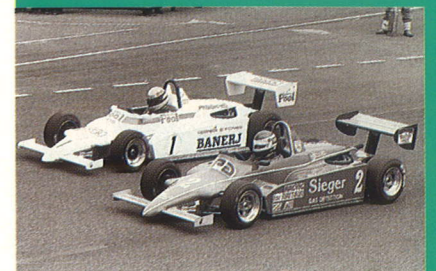
Gearchanging, you'll find, is the one thing that's simpler than in your road car. You dip the clutch only to start, never on the move. Changes are just a matter of flicking the little levers behind the steering – right for up, left for down. A gearchange takes just 20 milliseconds.

Funnily enough, for all its 730bhp, your three-litre, 10-cylinder engine won't seem particularly noisy. You'll only hear induction and mechanical noise, no exhaust. In fact, the only time you'll be bothered by loud exhausts all weekend is when you're in the garage, or standing by the pit wall, watching other cars. Out on the circuit, the noise is muffled by your helmet, balaclava and specially shaped earplugs and it comes through as a very smooth sound, like a louder than usual turbine, with a cammy, angry edge to it. But it sounds very 'solid', as if your engine were super-reliable ▶

How Brundle got to the top



1977: starting out in a BTCC Toyota Celica



1983: pipped at the post by Senna (left) in F3



1984-86: first taste of F1 with Tyrrell



1988: sportscar champion for Jaguar



1994: tough year in the unreliable McLaren

When it all goes wrong



Too much power sends Herbert spinning in Spain



Understeer puts Moreno into the Suzuka gravel



Capelli fights to control oversteer in Adelaide



Badoer misses his apex in the '93 Hungarian GP



...and loses the track altogether at Suzuka '95

and unburstable. Which is what you hope for, of course.

Once you're at racing speed, you'll see just how much aerodynamics govern every aspect of the car. Even after the latest FIA moves to limit it, your half-tonne F1 car still develops a tonne of downforce at top speed. Which is very different from road cars, nearly all of which generate lift as they go faster. Downforce is good. It's the reason why your car feels so stable at 200mph on the straights (you can even risk taking two hands off the steering wheel to tighten your straps), and why F1 cars can brake in such amazingly short distances without locking wheels. It's why they develop as much as 4g of lateral acceleration in corners (the McLaren F1 road car manages around 1.2g).

It's also the reason why, when you back off the throttle at 150mph, there's so much deceleration that you'd swear the brakes had come on by themselves. Downforce causes drag, of course, which is why an F1 car's drag coefficient exceeds 1.0, whereas a sleek modern saloon is usually under 0.3.

Making the most of the downforce, you'll soon discover, is the reason your car has any suspension at all. It's certainly not there to give the driver a nice, comfortable ride. The body of your car has to be kept close to the ground under a wide variety of aerodynamic loads, without touching it, because even a millimetre of variation in ground clearance is a large change and degrades aerodynamic performance. That's why the whole thing is set up to be so firm. The springs and dampers have literally a few millimetres of travel, and tyre 'squash' provides more than half of the

car's total ability to absorb bumps.

To complicate things, tyre pressures also affect ride height – and therefore aerodynamics – and obviously they vary with temperature. In a race, your tyres run at 23-24psi front, 19-20psi rear. The whole problem of controlling tyre temperatures falls into the lap of your race engineer, who has to decide early in the race weekend what cold pressures to use. If he's wrong, it's a disaster.

In corners, your car is always going to slide. If it isn't sliding, you're not trying. True, modern cars look as if



"The importance of balance"

Getting your car's chassis 'in balance' is absolutely critical to lapping quickly. Your suspension has a wide range of settings, which you can alter to suit different circuits and conditions. In essence, you're trying to equalise the grip of the front and rear wheels, so both ends share the job of cornering more or less equally. If there's an imbalance, your car will tend to slide early at one end or the other. Too little grip at the rear means your car will oversteer (left); too little at the front means understeer (below). In a race, either condition will overheat your tyres and make you go slower.



they're 'on rails' when you see them on TV, but there's much more going on in the cockpit than you'd think.

How you adjust the car's balance – how you tame its tendency to slide too much at one end or the other – has a big effect on your lap time. Often, if the car feels comfortable it's too slow! Spectacular drivers like Nigel Mansell, Jean Alesi and Michael Schumacher prefer cars that oversteer (slide at the rear). I'm in the Alain Prost school that likes cars with mild understeer (a tendency to slide at the front). It's less spectacular, but you don't have to fight the car so much. You're on and off the power less, so the car's aerodynamics work better.

Final word? Do not lose concentration. Your life depends on it. The first five laps may leave you gasping for breath, but take it from me that if you're fit you'll be able to drive the remaining 65 laps on adrenalin. Remember, F1 is not a team game: you don't play well for 70 minutes then coast for a while. Lose concentration and you'll literally fly off the road.

That's it. If you're good enough and determined enough, if your car is working well and strikes the right balance, then you'll qualify for the race. I'll see you on the grid – and good luck to you. Just make sure you move over when I come by... 1

On a driving lesson from Niki Lauda:

"It was at Monza in '85, before the days of tyre and fuel stops. I got a great start and really rattled past Lauda into the first corner. I was really pleased with myself. Half a lap later he caught me on the straight and just cruised past, because he had so much more power. We were side by side at 200mph, and he looked across and raised his hand in this helpless gesture which said: 'This is Monza. It's the first lap. You've got 70 more to do. You've got to look after your tyres. And what about your brakes? If you do things like that, they won't last. What on earth are you doing?' Then he just drove serenely away."



On winning:

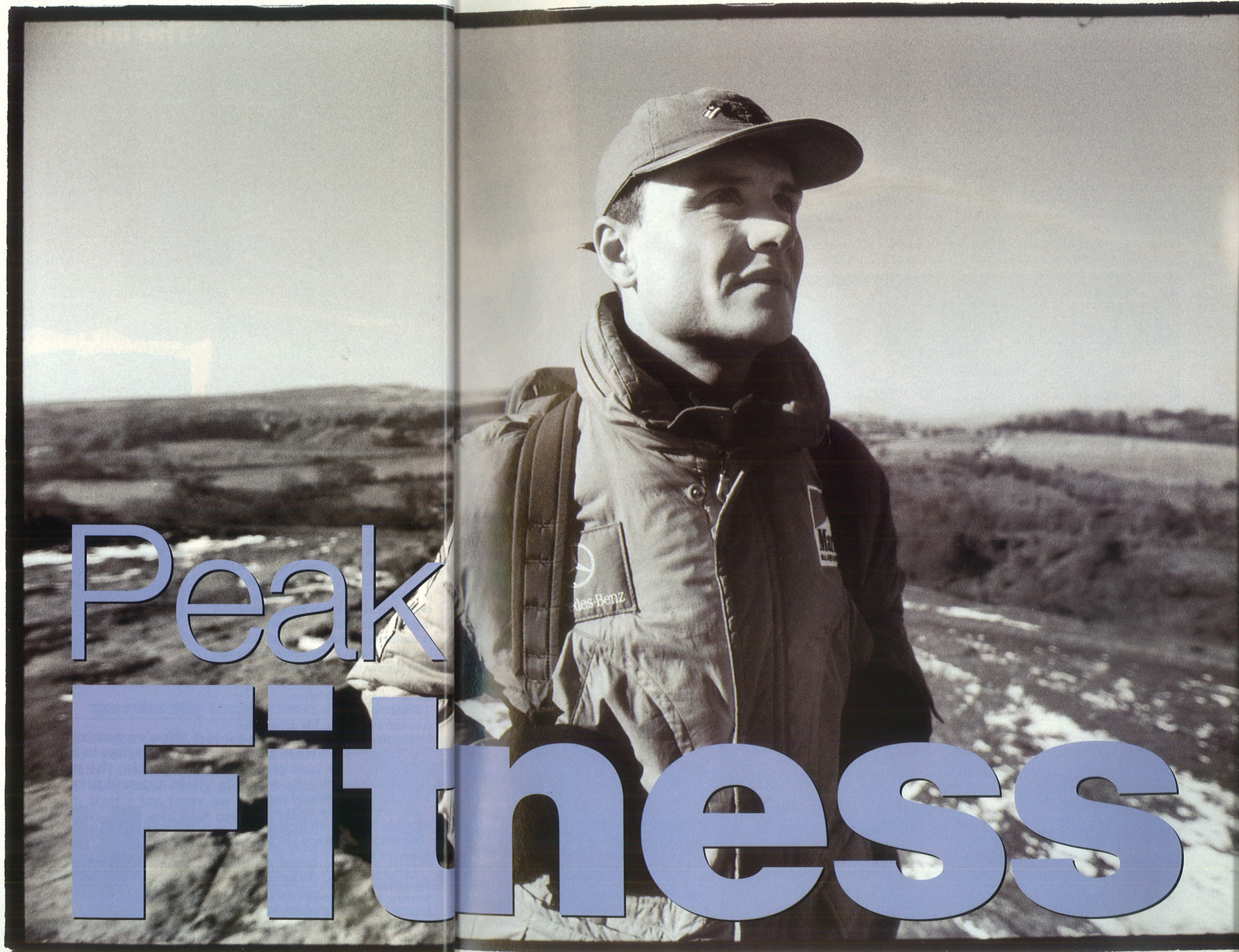
"You've got to be the eternal optimist. If anything, my motivation is higher now than ever. The closer you get to a win, the more motivated you get. I've been second in a grand prix three times – behind Piquet, Senna and Schumacher. Twice I've had a car that could win and been robbed by breakdowns. If I won the British Grand Prix I'd be ecstatic. I'd have the satisfaction of knowing that all the work, all the effort, had led to the ultimate goal. Really, I think it would make my life."



FORGET *SUPERSTARS*:
TODAY'S F1 DRIVERS
CALL IN THE PARAS
WHEN THEY NEED TO
GET FIT. DEBORAH TEE
WORKS OUT WITH
DAVID COULTHARD



PHOTOGRAPHY: PHILIP NEECH



Peak Fitness

It's difficult to assess how much physical fitness affects a grand prix driver's performance. The difference between Nigel Mansell's exhaustion after a momentous battle with the laws of physics and Michael Schumacher's sweat-free rejoicings may be all too obvious, but are today's drivers really in better shape than ever before?

David Coulthard thinks they are. "Michael has helped to take the fitness issue to new levels," he says. "People are always looking for reasons why he's so good, and his obvious dedication to his training [the exact details of which remain a closely guarded secret in the Schumacher camp] has inspired even

the longest-standing Formula 1 drivers to take their training more seriously."

So winter has taken on a new meaning for F1's finest, and drivers now spend much of the off-season in fierce training. Tyrrell's Ukyo Katayama even climbed the forbidding mountains of his native Japan to build himself mentally and physically for the new season. At one point he came close to falling off the side of a mountain as he struggled alone to negotiate his way to base camp.

Coulthard also took to the hills this winter for his annual army training weekend in the Brecon Beacons of Wales. Not the mountains of Japan, admittedly, but still pretty bleak in the

"There's a great sense of satisfaction when you've hiked 30km, abseiled down sheer rock and you all get together on the side of a hill to brew up"



middle of January. Coulthard lined up with a hard-nosed bunch of ex-paras, all veterans of the Falklands war, led by Terry Wood, a former army physical instructor who has been training racing drivers since 1978.

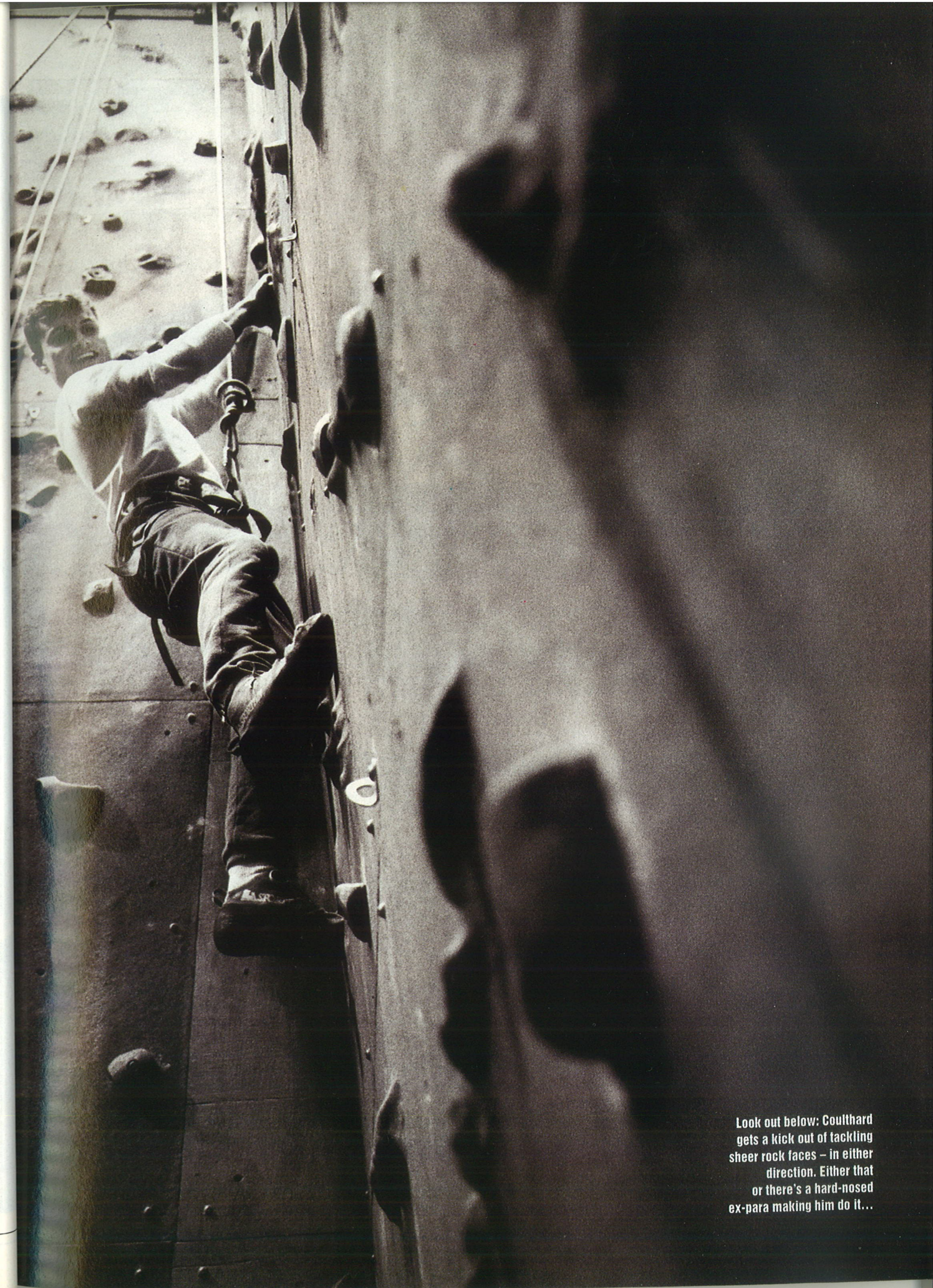
"When you hear some of the stories from Terry's days in the army," says Coulthard, "you realise how hard these guys have had to push to overcome the pain barrier. And when you drive an F1 car for a living, that's an important lesson to learn."

"Driving is a very uncomfortable job. A circuit like the Hungaroring is incredibly demanding, and you can't relax or you'll spin off. I know – I made my share of mistakes last year."

Indeed, the state of Coulthard's fitness was a recurring theme throughout the first half of last season, when he was plagued by a particularly virulent strain of tonsillitis.

"I didn't start the season on a high. I'd cracked a rib at the Bercy end-of-season karting event in Paris and was unable to train for three weeks. Then things went from bad to worse with the tonsillitis. I just found I could do nothing after a race, and would take to my bed for a couple of days to recover. I saw some pictures the other day, taken of me at Magny-Cours, my first race back after the tonsil operation. I was shocked at how ghastly I looked."

Coulthard – despite having a low resting pulse of 40 – admits the move ▶



Look out below: Coulthard gets a kick out of tackling sheer rock faces – in either direction. Either that or there's a hard-nosed ex-para making him do it...



Where does this bit go? Coulthard is nonchalant about a schedule punishing enough to deter most sportsmen

“David is Goliath”

Former army instructor Terry Wood has been training racing drivers for 18 years. He's not only David Coulthard's personal trainer but also looks after the fitness of McLaren test driver Jan Magnussen, Indycar driver Gil de Ferran and F1 hopefuls Dario Franchitti, Oliver Gavin and Gareth Rees.

Wood has been training Coulthard since the young Scot moved into Formula 3 in 1991 and is proud of the fitness of his star pupil.

“David is an athlete now – that's the best way to describe him. He's very lean and has a very good lung capacity, which means he could probably be a good middle-distance runner. Above the 5000m mark he'd come into his own. There's no question that David is fitter than most Premiership football players. And I think he's fitter than Michael Schumacher – but not by much.”

When Coulthard first started training with Wood, his physique was not up to the strains and stresses of F1.

But an extensive exercise programme has added one and a half inches to his neck, boosted his chest size by two inches and increased his waist measurement from 30 to 31 in.

During training, Wood focuses on building the muscles that are crucial to motor racing – the neck, arms, back and shoulders. “David's weight training programme is obviously geared to these parts of the body,” says Wood. “He doesn't need to do leg weights: building up his thighs and calves like a footballer would just create excess baggage; it's preferable to keep the weight down.”

Wood says some of the biggest gains on the track are made through Coulthard's recovery rate. After serious exercise his heart rate can reach a maximum of 196, but just five minutes later it's back down to 48, close to his resting pulse of 40.

“One of the reasons for this fast recovery is the fact that David utilises 70 per cent of the oxygen in his lungs,” says Wood, “whereas most people only use around 50 per cent. If a driver has a moment at one corner you can guarantee their heart rate won't recover quickly enough and he will have another moment at the next corner. That's where David has an advantage.”

“He's the best athlete in F1.”



up from Formula 3000 to F1 was a shock. “Your upper body endurance must be strong enough to survive the stress of 5g, and when you brake at the end of a straight it feels like a sledge hammer down your back. You need to be ready for those kind of forces.”

Which is where the paras come in. The weekend in the Brecons is an exhaustive mix of climbing, trekking, abseiling and mountain biking, and Coulthard says it is an essential part of his pre-season training routine.

“When I'm at home, I fit in as much time as possible in the gym, but you never get away from the phones or the

constant travel.” (Too true: Wood has had to develop a complex routine of cardio-vascular work and upper body strengthening that Coulthard can perform in a multitude of hotel rooms, using chairs and bathroom doors.)

“Out here, I'm away from everything. We work together as a team to survive the weather, and you push yourself that little bit harder. There's a great sense of satisfaction when you've completed a 30km hike, abseiled down sheer rock and you all get together on the side of a hill to brew up.”

The sheer pleasure Coulthard gains from describing this punishing

schedule is frightening. Surely this is a routine that few other sportsmen could tackle with such apparent nonchalance. But then, says Coulthard, few sports match grand prix racing in their physical demands.

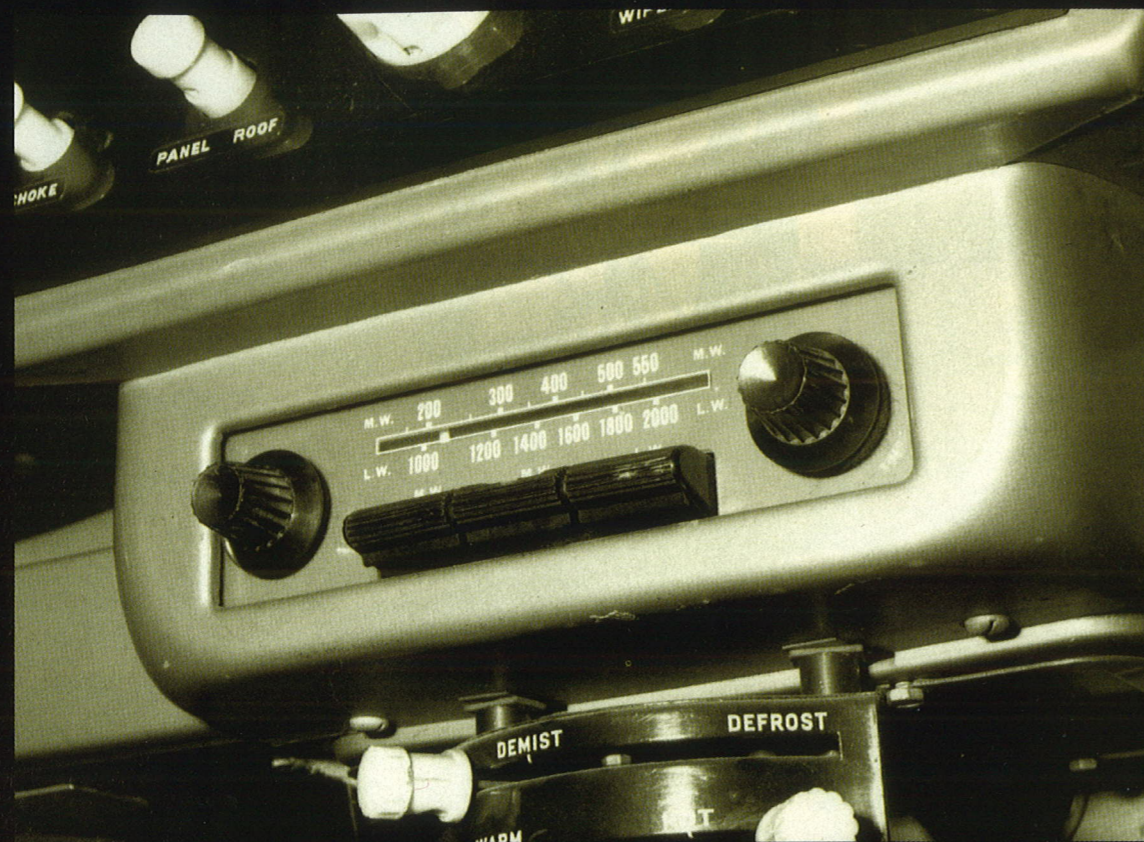
“In fact, I can't think of any other sport to compare with F1. If you're in the middle of a tough tennis match, you can still take a break between games and relax your mind and body. There's no rest in a grand prix car. For at least 90 minutes you're at the wheel of a potentially lethal weapon and you cannot allow your concentration to waver for a second.”

If he won't compare himself with other sportsmen, at least Coulthard is in a position to rate his fellow F1 drivers. Who's the fittest?

“It really is impossible to say, because we don't work out together. We all have different strengths. There again, it would be great if we had a *Superstars*-type competition for a bit of fun at the end of the year. That would sort us out!”

Of course, if any of his rivals need a helping hand, they could always buy the fitness video that Coulthard is planning to produce (no joke). Eat your heart out, Michael. ①

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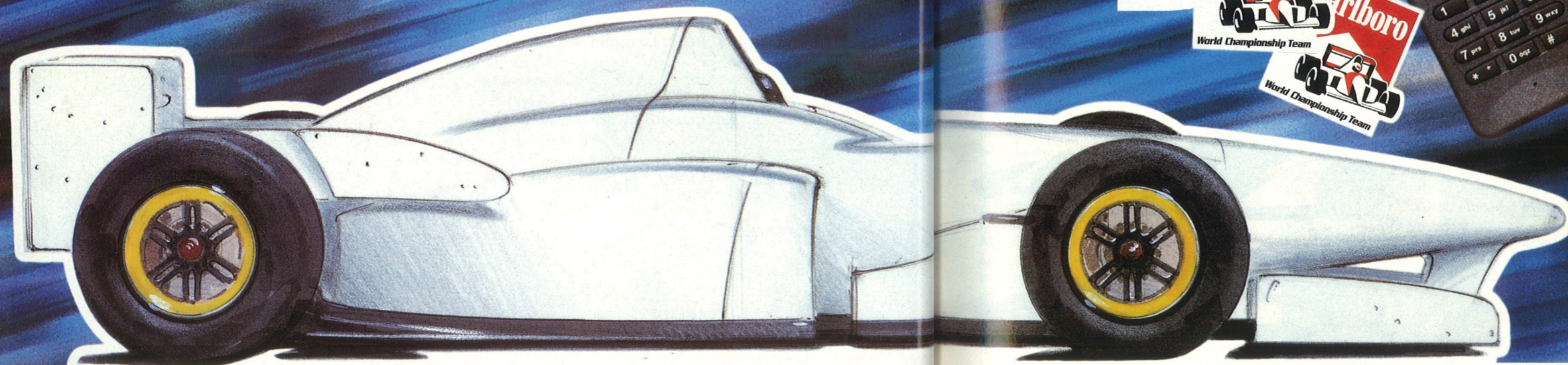


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The colour of money



THEY DON'T PAINT GRAND PRIX CARS LIKE THEY USED TO, SAYS DESIGNER PETER STEVENS. HE SHOULD KNOW – HE'S STYLED QUITE A FEW OF HIS OWN

Engines and wings may have got smaller, but grand prix cars just keep getting faster. Computer suspensions may have gone, but lap times still relentlessly fall. Rapid progress can, it seems, be taken for granted in every area of grand prix design – except one: the visual impact and style of the cars. In the past five years, grand prix colour schemes have taken a big step

backwards. The root of the problem is that sponsors' logos have overwhelmed the visual integrity of the cars. For 1996, blue and white designs and plain greens abound, and too many schemes feature droopy lines that take no account of the car's essential shape. The cars are now littered with bitty sponsors' stickers so that, in the worst cases, car designs look little better than fly-postered shop windows. Careful integration

of sponsors' decals seems a thing of the past.

These days sponsors are given a side view of the car marked out in rectangles where advertising can be placed. Each one has a price that relates to area and prominence. A car's nose, sidepods and engine cover are the prime spots, whereas the monocoque sides (inboard of the front wheels) and front wing end plates come a lot cheaper. Sadly, sponsors

choosing on price now affect the car's overall visual theme for the worse.

It's all a far cry from the classic colour schemes of the past like John Player Special on Lotus, Camel on Lotus, Parmalat on Brabham and Gitanes on Ligier. They were all cohesive, distinctive designs which worked because the car had an overall graphic identity into which primary sponsors' colours and logos were incorporated. Secondary ▶

ILLUSTRATIONS: PETER STEVENS

How I restyled Bernie's Brabham

I designed the graphic identity and colour schemes of almost all Brabham grand prix cars from the first appearance of Parmalat as a sponsor on the BT45 in 1978.

My involvement came about quite by chance. I'd heard on the grapevine that Brabham had found a new sponsor to replace Martini, so I phoned Brabham team boss Bernie Ecclestone, who told me to get straight down to their Chessington office in Surrey.

An hour later I was looking at the proposed Parmalat livery: a confusion of white, red with gold, orange, dark blue, light blue, green and yellow stripes. Their top driver, Niki Lauda, was stalking around the car saying it "looked like shit" and that there was no way he was going to drive it. Ecclestone instantly set about placating his unhappy driver. He pointed to me and told Lauda that here was a designer who'd produce some new proposals – by tomorrow!

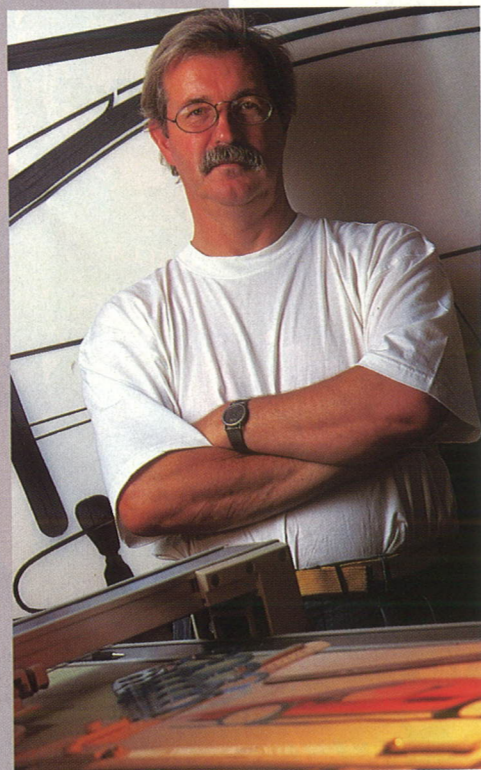
Next morning, after a hectic all-night session, I went back to Brabham with a selection of proposals, one of which was a red-based scheme and another which was a blue and white design. Ecclestone decided on the red, reckoning that it was flattering to Alfa Romeo, the team's engine supplier. After Brabham and Alfa parted company at the end of the 1979 season, we started to use the blue and white scheme.

It worked well for years. Blue and white became Brabham's colours in 1980 and sponsors either joined in or went away: that was Bernie's philosophy.

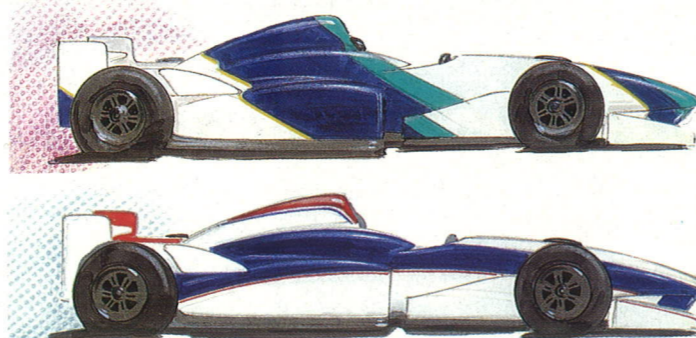
In 1983 we made an important change to the design. The Detroit grand prix that year coincided with me buying my first colour television. And as I watched the race, I realised that the scheme looked weak against the rest of the field. I phoned Ecclestone on his return to England and told him the scheme was a cock-up, and suggested we reverse the colours. He agreed at once.

The Canadian Grand Prix was the following weekend, so the car could not be changed immediately, but the new scheme was introduced at the British Grand Prix at Silverstone four weeks later. It looked a lot better, even if I do say so myself!

Peter Stevens



PHOTOGRAPHY: AUTOSPORT, SUTTON IMAGES, WORDS & PICTURES, AUTOCAR



Stevens reckons cars need a basic theme (examples above) into which the sponsors' logos blend

sponsors were then encouraged to blend into the main theme and become part of the whole picture.

Only McLaren and Ferrari follow this philosophy today. Ferrari do it rather by default, but McLaren's policy is very deliberate. Team boss Ron Dennis insists the car must look like a McLaren first and foremost. Sponsors join as partners and work with the team's graphic designers to integrate their logos into the visual theme of the car. In the past, McLaren are said to have redirected – or even turned down – sponsors whose design requirements haven't suited the car. Dennis believes his team sells

corporate and engineering excellence, demonstrating their high standards both in the look and performance of the car and the quality of peripheral details such as the pit garage layout.

Ferrari almost always manage to create a beautiful design. Like McLaren, they have a definite identity to which their sponsors have to conform. Traditionally the cars are red – or scarlet, as Murray Walker would say – although there have been variations on the one colour theme: the cars that were so successful for Niki Lauda in the '70s carried a horizontal white stripe along the engine cover. Indeed, it was thought that returning to this scheme in 1993 would bring the team similar success. It didn't work, of course...

Front and rear wing surfaces on the Ferraris have also changed, from polished aluminium through white to black as the materials have changed. The stickers on the cars are always white or yellow, which is one reason why Ferraris always look like Ferraris. The sponsors come a definite second.

Red was the national racing colour of Italy in the days when sponsors (though in existence) did not get their

message on to the cars and national colours could dominate. Ferrari cleverly hijacked red back in the '50s to the extent that it now means 'Ferrari' and not 'Italy'. Red is a great colour and would look good on any race car – but you try telling that to the other manufacturers.

The Arrows style must be sponsor-dependent, Creak says. Knowing that the cars won't be at the front of the grid, he believes it is vital that Arrows' grand prix guests can instantly spot their car down the field – and that they feel it looks better than its peers.

Arrows use design consultants to

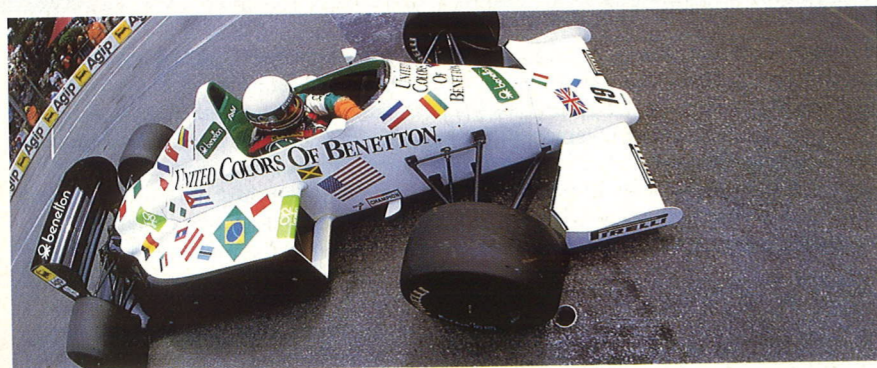


Above: Lauda only agreed to drive the '78 Parmalat Brabham-Alfa after it had been restyled by Stevens. Left: Accommodating all the sponsors' decals is no small task for a team like Jordan

Cohesive design is harder for the middle-order teams, who are less likely to have a dominant sponsor. But John Creak, head of marketing at Arrows, rightly says that their car looks better than most because the team's philosophy is to make its graphical treatment lively and easy to recognise.

marry the demands of the team, sponsors and aesthetics. The results are usually striking, although even Arrows suffer if insistent sponsors want their logo pushed beyond the edges of the allotted space because they don't realise that white space is needed to let the logo 'breathe'. ▶





Despite the constraints, some schemes on midfield runners do stand out; the red and white Footwork design, the Beta Tools March, the blue-green Leyton House March and the black, yellow and white Minardis were all particularly good.

Naturally, F1 has also had its share of wild, weird and wacky schemes. Rupert Keegan's *Penthouse*-sponsored Hesketh with its *Penthouse* pet logo, and Ram Racing's Skoal Bandit Car are prominent in this category. The *Penthouse* sponsorship was based on a clever idea whereby a certain amount of advertising space in *Penthouse* magazine was given to co-sponsors who then gave what they would have

paid the magazine to the team as sponsorship money.

One of those sponsors was Rizla, misspelt – by me – on the John Macdonald-run black, white and gold *Penthouse*-'Rizlia' March! Fortunately, no one noticed the mistake and I was able to correct the graphics before the car made the cover of *Autosport*.

At that time (the late '70s and early '80s), logos were either hand-painted by signwriters or applied as hand-cut, carefully spaced sticky-backed letters – on Fablon if you wanted to peel them off after a race, or Fasson for permanent use. Cheapskates still used graphics screen-printed on to a clear or white plastic sheet. Machine-cut

A fleeting view of a distinctive car can be reinforced by clear pictures seen later. The essence of the art is to make the car memorable



Clockwise from left: when Benetton's colours were united; the striking JPS Lotuses; Hill's brash Brabham

lettering was fast superseding these methods at the time, but it took two, three or even four weeks for the steel-bladed cutting tools to be set up for chopping out individual letters that were held in their correct relationship on a slightly sticky backing sheet.

These days, laser cutters produce immaculate lettering as information is fed to the cutter from a computer. In this age of thinner and lighter materials, lettering is often renewed each time a car appears, sometimes even between qualifying and the race.

So where is the future taking us? Towards more complicated designs, I fear. Economic pressures have reduced the budgets of 'lead' sponsors whose ability to cover an entire car is very much reduced. Teams are having to seek more and more supporting sponsors whose requirements will tend to make cars look more and more scrappy. The trouble is that small-scale messages are lost at racing speeds on television, particularly on lesser cars that are not the focus of attention.

F1 cars' need for simple, strong graphics that say 'Tyrrell' or 'Minardi' without the spectator even thinking about it have never been in greater demand. The idea should be to trigger a memory of previously

seen photographs of the car in the onlooker's mind, from which sponsors' names are recalled in conjunction with the team's name. What's more, a fleeting view of a distinctive car can be reinforced by clear pictures seen later. The essence of the art, I believe, is to make the car memorable.

The current, 'rolling billboard' style of F1 car livery cannot hope to achieve this objective. Today's teams need the confidence, artistic flair and persuasive power of former team bosses Colin Chapman and Bernie Ecclestone – or the corporate style and self-belief of Ron Dennis – if F1 is to retain a high-class professional image through the beauty of its cars. ①

'96 class fails art exam

On the face of it, grand prix teams design the liveries of their cars to reflect the sophisticated, fast-moving image on which they pride themselves. But this year's designs are anything but dynamic.

The **Benetton** is a mess. At the front, the light and dark blue areas flow across the body surface in a sloppy way. Halfway along the monocoque sides, a blue block appears from nowhere. Then there is a casual green block on the sidepod with a weak suggestion of the United Colors theme trailing rearward on the top surface.

The variety of colours on the Benetton's engine cover don't follow the form and a blue bit runs casually forward, emphasising the clumsy treatment of the raised cockpit sides. Mild Seven appears 17 times, sometimes with one logo at right angles to another!

Tyrrell's two tones of blue and white are dull and uninspired. An amorphous blue area, with little regard for the body shape, surrounds the cockpit, making it look like a cheap plastic garden pond. The front wing is a fairly swoopy design in blue and white, but the little dark blue area with spiky ends on the engine cover really does not relate to anything else on the car.

The **Ligier**, dark blue and white with a touch of yellow, looks okay in some views, but those big white areas are suspiciously empty at present. Late-arriving sponsorship could make it look less attractive. The line where the white engine cover becomes dark blue behind the cockpit looks weak and does not relate to anything else on the car. And what's that yellow bit ahead of the cockpit?

The Benson & Hedges sponsorship means the new **Jordan** is a non-metallic gold-yellow. Although there is no contour shading it now has an overall theme – it even has gold wheels. Apart from the black lettering, the only other colouring is the red Total flashes on the nose, wings, roll hoop and mirrors.

Williams, dark blue and white, is fairly straightforward and businesslike – the same characteristics as the team themselves – though the change of thickness of the red and gold lines often looks arbitrary. The whole thing hardly makes your pulse race. **Sauber** have opted for two shades of blue and the **Minardi** car is a dreary dark blue-green and white. Only **McLaren** have opted for a clear, precise and uncompromising message, while **Ferrari's** cars are the traditional red and as good as ever. Peter Stevens



BENETTON



TYRRELL



LIGIER



WILLIAMS



SAUBER



FERRARI



Left to right: Irvine cuts his 30th birthday cake. You can bet he's got a bigger boat now Ferrari pays his wages. Irvine (fourth from right) always loathed racing but loved swimming

PHOTOGRAPHY: SUTTON IMAGES

We all know that Eddie Irvine is a lippy Irishman with an eye for the ladies and a huge portion of self-confidence. He's even been known to argue with Formula 1 supremo Bernie Ecclestone in public – and get away with it. But then Eddie's been trained by experts when it comes to arguing and holding his own: the Irvine family.

Meeting the Irvines isn't like chatting to your average proud family. When I get the four of them together to talk about Eddie and how he's made it as an F1 driver, voices are very quickly raised. I soon find myself in something close to a civil war.

What, I ask innocently, is the correct way to pronounce Irvine? Even the most combative families usually agree on how to say their name. Not the Irvines. Eddie and his father, Ed senior, insist that it's Ir-VINN. Eddie's mother Kathleen and sister Sonia know better. They insist on Ir-VYNE. Don't argue. It's something to do with a big Belfast furniture store of the same name.

In this family, everyone talks at once. No doubt it saves time but

“Do you wanna be in my gang?”

FORGET HIS F1 BUST-UPS, EDDIE IRVINE HAS ENOUGH TROUBLE DEALING WITH HIS FAMILY!
MIKE DOODSON REFEREES ROUND ONE

it's confusing for outsiders. Worse, the Irvines don't use names. They refer to each other as “him” or “her”, with a nod in the general direction of whoever is being talked about.

I casually ask if young Eddie ever showed signs of wanting to be a racing driver when he was growing up near Newtownards, 10 miles east of Belfast, in County Down. Big Ed, a handsome mid-50-ish, promptly shoots that one down. “Not really,” he says. “After I stopped racing myself we used to go to watch races. The British Grand Prix was an annual pilgrimage for us. He [nodding towards Eddie] was probably about six the first time. We used to take a lot of friends with us, have a party. So he got an interest in the sport then – but never to go racing as such.

Eddie butts in. “I thought racing was shit,” he says. “But I enjoyed going to the grands prix. John Watson was the nearest I ever had to a hero because he came from Northern Ireland, like me.

“I always managed to sneak in. The police once caught me digging a tunnel underneath the fence. They told me to stop... then walked away while I carried on digging. They probably reckoned they'd done their bit of the job. I used to get in

everywhere without a pass. I was always in the pits.”

Fortunately, Bernie Ecclestone has since forgiven him. In fact, Bernie is now Irvine's number one fan and even bought him a sweatshirt in America last year. It's decorated with tributes to the ‘Fighting Irish’.

So Eddie really didn't rate motor racing. Didn't read the mags, didn't watch the telly. He and Sonia, who's two years older, were into swimming.

“He was unbelievably lazy,” says Sonia, nodding towards Eddie. “We hated having to get up in the morning so much that we used to sleep in the car. Dad would just jump in next morning and drive us straight over to the pool.”

Big Ed: “I used to do breakfast for them, eggs and bacon and stuff before they went to school.” So the two kids must have been pretty close then?

“We used to fight,” says Sonia. “But if anyone said anything against him [nodding at Eddie], I'd knock their lights out. I was a real tomboy. We did a lot together because we were always out in the country. But there were constant arguments because he was so slow at doing anything. I had to go round and find the swimming costumes and get things under way.” ▶

“The police once caught me digging underneath the fence at the British GP. They told me to stop... then walked away while I carried on digging”



Above: Yep, Eddie's mad about Ferrari. Right: A rare moment of peace as big sister Sonia gives him a quick rub-down

On the quiet, however much they might have battled, Eddie was pretty sweet on his big sister. Sonia, 32, a physiotherapist, is a bit handy at the Irish country dancing. Eddie was so proud that he went out and bought a cabinet to show off all her medals.

Of his achievements at school, Eddie grins. "Could do better," he admits. In fact, he spent a lot of time dashing around on motorbikes. After he managed to wheedle a small scrambler out of Big Ed, he took up motocross. Trouble was, the most convenient place to ride was the nearest golf links.

Says Eddie with a smile: "One day I was up the golf course with my mate when we saw this car coming flying across the links at us. It was my Dad trying to get hold of us."

Big Ed: "I wanted to give him a good kicking."

Eddie (nodding towards Big Ed): "Well, he's a member of the golf course, see. I used to try not to spin wheels on the grass, so I wouldn't do any damage."

Big Ed: "Yeah – and I suppose I'm the Fairy Queen!"

But Eddie didn't survive his youthful antics completely unscathed. "When he was 14," says Big Ed,



"he broke his leg roller-skating and needed to go over to the hospital to get extra plaster on it. On the way home he complained about his mother Kathleen's driving so much that she stopped and told him to get out of the car – about three miles from home.

"When Kathleen got home I told her that she shouldn't have done that – had she forgotten he had a broken leg?" Kathleen, recalling this slight oversight, claps her hands to her eyes and continues the tale. "I jumped in my car and went back all the way to Newtonards. There was no sign of him! We started panicking. But an hour later we

were just sitting there and he arrived home all muddy."

"I came across the fields," chips in Eddie. "Broken leg in plaster and all. It was about four miles."

Like banter, racing is in the Irvines' blood too. The Irish like to change their cars frequently, so Big Ed, who is a purveyor of quality pre-used automobiles, used to take some of his nicer stock to England and do a few deals that allowed him to come home with a competitive racing car. He raced all the way up to Formula Atlantic, albeit with only modest success. Then it was the kid's turn. When Eddie was 17, Big Ed took him down the road to Kirkistown,



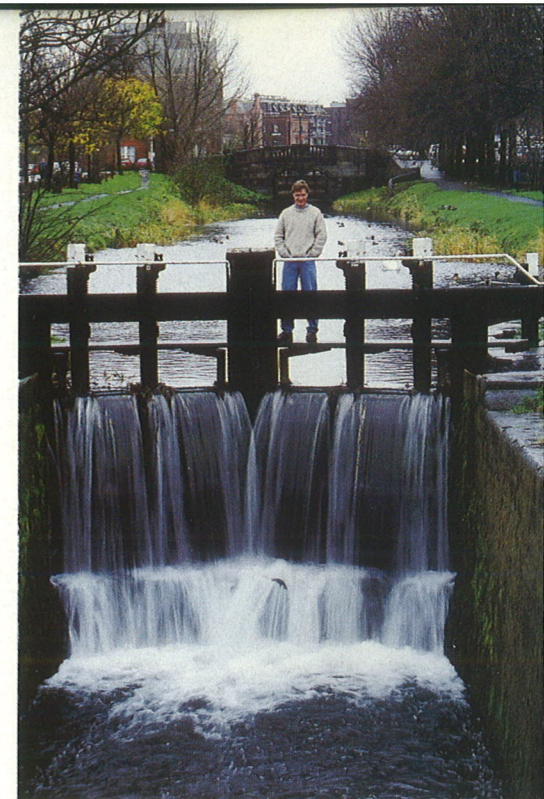
"I came across the fields – broken leg in plaster and all. It was about four miles"

Northern Ireland's only permanent race circuit, with a Formula Ford, cleared away the worst of the cow pats and gave Eddie his first run.

No sooner has this pleasant memory surfaced than the two Eddies are arguing about who was quicker! But whatever the lap times, they were enough to convince Big Ed that it was worth investing in his son's racing career. At the same time, for some obscure reason he was unwilling to give the lad the job he wanted fixing up cars in the yard at Irvine Quality Autos.

Eddie is forced to admit that he has never had a proper job. "I remember him [nodding towards Big Ed] saying: 'No son of mine is going to sign on the dole'. So for a few weeks I walked around Bangor, the local town, asking people to give me work. But no one would give me any work, so eventually he took me on."

Big Ed starts to confess that the kid was a good worker. Eddie chimes in: "That was because I was into it. I enjoyed pulling out engines... and I enjoyed making money. Well, I made money for him [nodding at his Dad] but it was good to see it coming in." Surely you got a wage? "Fifteen quid



Clockwise from left: Winning the '87 FF1600 championship. Training by the sea in Dublin. Early racing in Kirkistown. Leaving the pits in the '95 Jordan. You won't catch anything with your rod in the field, Eddie. Can Irvine keep his head above water at Ferrari?

for working seven days a week." An indignant Big Ed butts in: "Yeah, but I was paying for all his racing."

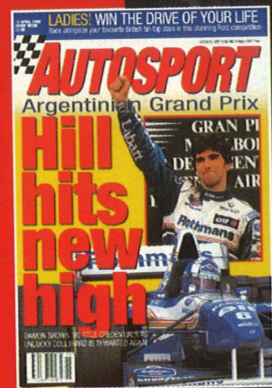
Eddie decides this is the moment to complain about a money-saving decision to employ one of his cousins as a mechanic when he started racing Formula Fords in England. The cousin was no good. Eddie did all the work.

While this is going on, Eddie and his mum begin discussing a dinner she served him one winter's evening in 1976. The spaghetti was cold and it was instantly returned – at high velocity and head height. Kathleen says she thought her son would have forgotten it long ago. No chance.

It seems like a good time to leave. As I say my farewells, number one son is getting into his stride about Kathleen's culinary crime. "How could I bloody forget?" whinges elephant's memory Eddie as I tiptoe out. "You'd do the same if someone served you cold spaghetti!"

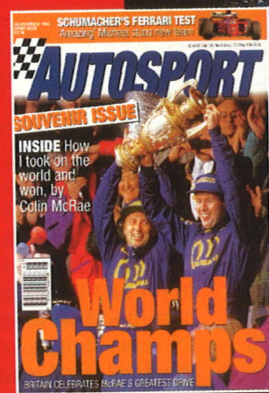
At least cold spaghetti is something Eddie is unlikely to encounter at Ferrari. But if it ever comes down to a head-to-head between Eddie and his new team-mate, Michael Schumacher, I know which one gets my money. Especially if the Irvine family is called over from Northern Ireland to help. ❶

Will Damon break his duck...



Can Michael turn Ferrari around...

Is Colin set for the double...



FORMULA 1 ■ TOURING CARS ■ RALLY ■ INDYCARS ■ NATIONAL RACING

For all the answers **every week** there is only one motorsport magazine...

EVERY WEEK!
AUTOSPORT

When Saturday comes

IT'S SUDDEN DEATH.
ONE SESSION,
12 LAPS, AND NO
SECOND CHANCES.
SO WHAT'S THE
SECRET OF
QUALIFYING ON
POLE? ADAM
COOPER FINDS OUT

Take a look at any grand prix book and one statistic jumps out. Ayrton Senna: 65 pole positions. This remarkable record is unlikely ever to be approached, let alone beaten. The second-placed drivers, Jim Clark and Alain Prost, are a long way behind on 33 poles each – a total matched at the end of 1995 by the combined efforts of Damon Hill (11), Gerhard Berger (11), Michael Schumacher (10) and Jean Alesi (1). Senna was the master of qualifying. His total of 41 race wins seems paltry by comparison, but it was affected by accidents, mechanical failures and the fact that even Senna couldn't win races in a car that plainly wasn't up to the job – even if he could sometimes get it on pole.

In qualifying, outside influences frustrate the best driver less than the rest. It's man and machine against the clock, a weekend of preparation distilled into 80 or 90 seconds of intensive action. It was Senna's bad

luck that many of his greatest performances were seen only by fans who turned up on the days before the race. It's a different story now, though. More and more TV stations show F1 qualifying live and it has become a spectacle in its own right.

That's why the rules have changed this year. In the past, when qualifying was held on both Friday and Saturday afternoons, there was always a risk that rain would make the second session superfluous. It happened last July at Silverstone: the second day was wet and few drivers could find a reason to splash around. For long periods the track was empty. Casual viewers were put off in droves.

Now, only Saturday afternoon ▶



PHOTOGRAPHY: SUTTON IMAGES, ALLSPORT, ENRIPCS, AUTOSPORT, ASSET, WORDS & PICTURES

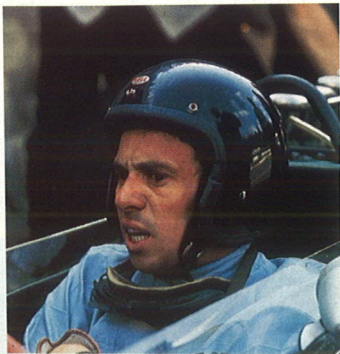
Battle of the Time Lords. F1 drivers past and present develop square-eyes as they study the constantly updated time screens



counts for the grid. The two sessions on Friday, and the one on Saturday morning, will be used to prepare the car for both the race itself and that final, hectic hour of qualifying. Senna would surely have approved of the new format, but which of the current F1 drivers will thrive under the new rules?

According to Williams technical director Patrick Head, the successful drivers will be the ones who use their tyres best. "There's one fast lap, maybe two, in a new set of tyres," says Head, who has worked with most of the stars of the past 20 years. "Some drivers use their tyres astutely, but others are inclined to complain that their tyres weren't quite 'on' at the beginning of a lap and were going 'off' at the end. Well, tough. They probably did something wrong.

"Senna in particular was a master at judging the condition of his tyres and



"What Senna did in the FW16 was amazing. He didn't feel comfortable pushing it hard, but he still dug deep and put it on pole"

Jim Clark's 33 pole positions put him equal with Prost - but well behind Senna

knowing how to get the best from them. He showed it throughout his career." Head describes the three pole positions Senna achieved in the difficult Williams FW16 in 1994 as "quite outstanding".

Former grand prix driver and Eurosport commentator John Watson agrees. "What Senna did in that car was amazing. He didn't feel comfortable pushing it hard, but because of who he was, because of his own pride and determination, he dug deep and put it on pole. Senna always went for speed. He could take a car that was easy to drive slowly and make it inherently unstable but fast."

One driver who seems to have worked out how to qualify well is David Coulthard. Last year he took five poles for Williams in his first full season. Team-mate Damon Hill had seven, but Coulthard's average qualifying time over the season was actually quicker than Hill's.

"I don't know what the secret is, if there is a secret," says Coulthard. "Based on my career in the junior formulae, you wouldn't say I was a

good qualifier. But I seem to have improved as I've got older."

Coulthard certainly sees the importance of careful use of his tyres. "When I was in F3, I didn't really understand how to get the best out of them," he says. "It was a lack of experience. I didn't grow up with qualifying because in karts we always had heats. In effect, I developed as a racer before I learned how to qualify.

"It's all about confidence. It's putting the car where you want it, rather than being driven by it. If you have confidence, you can gain half or three-quarters of a second from that alone. If you keep getting beaten, especially by your team-mate, your instinct is to try harder. But if that's all you do, you often go slower.

"Speed comes from understanding in detail what makes a quick lap. You may think the job is just to go as quickly as you can, but it's not as simple as that. You've got to be on the limit as you're coming off the brakes, on the limit as you're going on the power. On the limit everywhere. Sounds simplistic, but it's very, very difficult. It's not overdriving, it's a controlled aggression."

As a young lion, Coulthard is expected to fly in qualifying. More often than not, drivers lose a little of their raw speed as the years go by. Young Niki Lauda outpaced Clay Regazzoni at Ferrari in the mid '70s, but a youthful Alain Prost was faster than Lauda at McLaren a decade later. Then Senna came along and blitzed Prost. And so it goes on.

"Prost had the most awful problems with Senna in the team, blowing him ▶

The master: Senna knew exactly how to get the most from his tyres. Below: David Coulthard is proving he has the knack too, with five poles in '95



TV addicts Ecclestone (left) and Mosley

Bernie and Max star in TV thriller

'Single session' qualifying is aimed almost entirely at the armchair fan watching the action on television, F1's supremos admit.

"The impetus came from television and Bernie Ecclestone," confirms FIA president Max Mosley. "For example, ITV will be showing it in Britain in 1997, while Austrian TV started showing qualifying last year, and immediately got a massive audience.

"A race tends to be anti-climatic, in that it's very exciting at the beginning and quite often gets less exciting towards the end. Qualifying is exactly the opposite. It can be absolutely thrilling right to the end."

There is no room for a repeat of last year's washed out final session at Silverstone, says Ecclestone, who controls F1 television rights. "There were one or two races last year where we saw the motorhome roofs for an hour, which is not the sort of thing we're trying to portray. It's going to be great, and it'll be good in the rain as well, because you might get a few different people on pole."

Persuading the teams to accept the new format was not easy. "There's always opposition to change," says Ecclestone. "Teams like to run more often, to play with their cars for as long as possible."

Eurosport's John Watson welcomes the new format, although his channel will still show Friday's sessions. But he points out that as drivers are restricted to 12 laps in that crucial final hour, there will still be times when few cars are out on the track.

"The public want to see the cars running throughout the one-hour session, not all waiting until the last moment. The FIA should do away with the 12-lap restriction and let them run as many laps as they want."



Breakfast TV: the new format makes for a low fuel, high speed diet on Saturday mornings

away," says Watson. "But at that time Prost probably had a better racing head than Senna. He knew winning races wasn't necessarily about being on pole. But pole was still a matter of pride, and here was his team-mate illustrating how much quicker he could go. It's the old thing about being the fastest gun in the West, until a faster one rides into town.

"When you're young, you've got natural speed. When you get older, experience of racing starts to make you prudent, apprehensive. That's what made Nigel Mansell outstanding. When the man was no spring chicken, he was still able to drive a racing car bloody quickly."

Most drivers believe one-session qualifying won't be much different from the way it has always been. The same people will rise to the top, though now there is more chance that a single stroke of bad luck will consign a quick driver to the back of the grid.

What has changed is the way teams approach a race weekend. The Melbourne race wasn't necessarily typical: it was a new track for everyone and there was an extra day's running on Thursday. But now various tactical permutations are possible. Teams can use all of Friday for race testing and not try the car in qualifying trim (light fuel load, new tyres) until Saturday.

"You could do that," agrees Coulthard. "If you have experience of the car and know it's good, you might work on the race set-up on the Friday. But at the beginning of the season you don't know enough about the car. We'll be concentrating on qualifying first and then using the information to decide on a set-up for the race."

The intriguing thing is that only the teams themselves will know when they've been running with minimum fuel on board, when they're going for a fast time. Some may prefer to play it cool on Friday and sandbag all the way to the final session.

Benetton race engineer Pat Symonds says the new format does make a difference. "The risk is doubled. Before, if something went wrong on Friday you could bale yourself out on Saturday. Now you've got to be that much more on the ball.

"We'll see different philosophies from different teams. We'll see top teams doing their homework on Friday, rather than trying to impress the punters. But they'll be lucky if the work's all done by Saturday morning."

"It's certainly going to be tough," says Patrick Head. "If you know your

Spare cars back in the frame

This year teams will be allowed to use their spare (or 'T') car for qualifying if necessary. But it can only be used on Saturday afternoon and not in the earlier practice sessions.

There was considerable debate among the team owners before the rules were fixed. According to one fly on the wall source, the good-natured banter may have gone something like this:

Ron Dennis: "If you allow more than one spare car, I'm going to turn up with special qualifying cars, and it's all going to cost a fortune."

Ken Tyrrell: "Don't be silly, Ron. If you're not allowed to run the spare car except in that session, you'll never get it set up properly."

Dennis: "Ken, you just don't understand modern Formula 1 cars. They're set up to a hundredth of a millimetre before you ever get to the circuit. It's not like the old days."

Bernie Ecclestone: "Ron, your car hasn't been set up all season..."

The spare car situation is particularly difficult for Williams since Damon Hill has three pedals and left-foot braker Jacques Villeneuve only two. Ferrari are in a



Three's company: a spare car can now be used to qualify if necessary – but not before

similar situation with Schumacher and Irvine, while the differing physiques of Berger and Alesi have created a drama for Benetton. Swapping to the spare will take at least 10 minutes. But there could still be time for something special. "In 1991 Riccardo Patrese stepped into the spare Williams at Estoril with about three minutes to go," Head recalls. "He put the car on pole. It even had an earlier engine specification!"

concentrate on low tanks and speed for grid position."

Even if the engineers want to take it easy on Friday, Head concedes there may still be pressure from sponsors for teams to grab the headlines. "I'm sure being at the top of the grid on Friday gives better coverage in the Saturday papers, and there will be a desire to be in good shape. If we're fourth or fifth quickest I don't think I'll be too worried, but I'm sure there'll be some pressure, even from within the team."

The man responsible for the new format, FIA promotions boss Bernie Ecclestone, reckons it's going to make for a great season. But who does he think will star in qualifying?

"Above all, it's someone who can withstand a bit of pressure – because there *will* be pressure. You've got to get the job done. It's no good coming back tomorrow. But I think all the guys who did the job last year will show well again. And then there are some who can't qualify to save their lives..."

car is very competitive and very quick, you can hide your light under a bushell and not show your performance level on Friday. But it usually isn't like that, and you're struggling to get the best out of your car. I'm sure a lot of race work will be done on Friday, whereas before we used to do race work on Saturday morning. Obviously there'll be big pressure on Saturday to



"Speed comes from knowing what makes a quick lap. You've got to be on the limit everywhere"

One chance is all they need

So what's all this fuss about one-day qualifying? A look at the two-day qualifying sessions for the 49 grands prix held during the past three years shows that if a driver is destined to be in pole position, he doesn't usually need more than one chance.

On no fewer than 36 occasions the bloke who was quickest on the Friday afternoon also started from pole on the Sunday – either by setting an unbeatable time on the first day (14 cases) or

by improving on his own provisional pole time on the second day of qualifying (22 cases).

Only 13 times did the identity of the pole man change from Friday to Saturday.

	1993	1994	1995	TOTAL
Overall pole set on Friday	2	6	6	14
Friday poleman sets new Saturday best	9	5	8	22
Overall pole set on Saturday	5	5	3	13

dreamteam

Your ultimate F1 fantasy

Win the drive of your life!

ONE GP DOWN, 15 TO GO – THERE'S STILL TIME TO WIN OUR F1 DREAM TEAM TOP PRIZE

So, you didn't get your F1 Dream Team registered before the first race of the season? Don't worry because you're still in with a chance of winning the top prize in the *F1 Racing* Dream Team game, run in conjunction with *The Independent* newspaper. All you have to do is register a Dream Team now. The prize at the end of the year is a fantastic trip to the AGS F1 training school in the South of France, where you will learn to drive a grand prix car!

To play, you need three drivers, a chassis and an engine. Make your selections from the grand prix shopping list; the only restrictions are that your third driver must come from the £1m driver category and your total purchase does not exceed the budget of £40m.

The beauty of F1 Dream Team is that you don't have to enter by a certain date, because each grand prix is a game in itself, with superb

individual prizes. Each team then also scores points throughout the rest of the season, towards the prize F1 drive. Teams only start scoring from the moment you register them.

The player with the most points after each grand

prix wins that race's individual prize. We'll always let you know in advance what you're playing for – this month

the prizes are a trip to the San Marino Grand Prix and a blast at the Nigel Mansell Racing School. Note that if there is more than one winning team for these individual race prizes, the team that was registered first will win.



HOW YOU SCORE

Points are awarded per race to the top six finishers – based on the F1 world championship points scoring system (10, 6, 4, 3, 2, 1) but with an extra 10 points for each of the top six finishers. All drivers are eligible to score for a top six finish but they also notch up extra points as follows...

- The fastest driver in race day warm-up will collect six points, with five for the second and so on down to a point for the sixth quickest.
- Drivers score a point for each place they make up over their grid position. Points are not deducted for losing places.
- Five points are lost if your driver posts first retirement, four for second, down to one point lost for the fifth retirement.
- If your driver makes the quickest pitstop (from the entry of the pitlane to the exit) you gain five points.

THIS MONTH'S PRIZES

● Whoever's lucky enough to have the most points after the Brazilian race wins a fantastic trip to the San Marino GP with exclusive *F1 Racing/The Independent* Dream Team GP tour company, Page & Moy. A GP in Italy is an experience not to be missed by F1 fans and the lucky winner and a friend get to see qualifying as well.

● The F1 Dream Team manager with the highest score after the Argentinian GP wins an initial trial at the Nigel Mansell Racing School. This super prize includes instruction laps in a BMW 318i before going out on your

own in a Formula First single-seater. The winner can choose between Brands Hatch in Kent, Oulton Park in Cheshire or Snetterton in Norfolk.

DREAM TEAM TOP PRIZE

The manager with the most points after the last race of the season wins the top prize – a drive in a 650bhp F1 car. You will be flown to the AGS team's training school in Le Luc en Provence, in the South of France, where you will enjoy one of the most



exhilarating experiences of your life. The school specialises in F1 courses and provides all the racewear and instruction you will need for a day driving grand prix cars and other single-seaters.

* For eligibility conditions see Rules section Page & Moy: 01162 507008 Nigel Mansell Racing School: 01474 872367



THE **INDEPENDENT**



It could be you... Enter an F1 Dream Team to win the ride of your life in a 200mph F1 car

- If your driver sets the fastest lap in the race you gain five points.
- If your driver receives a stop/go penalty you lose five points.
- If your driver starts on pole position you gain five points.
- *F1 Racing* will name a Driver of the Day after each race, for a particularly impressive performance. If he's in your team, that's worth five points.
- Non-qualification for a GP loses you two points. If a driver is on the FIA's published starting grid but fails to take the start, no points are lost.
- Drivers removed from the results for any reason lose all points gained that weekend. Any driver not competing in a grand prix weekend scores no points.
- Chassis score and lose points in the same way as the drivers for a top six finish or an early retirement. However, only the first chassis home can score for the team. Likewise, only one can lose points if they are both among the first five to retire.
- Engine rules are the same as chassis rules, without the retirement penalties.

HOW TO ENTER

Simply choose the best five elements for your winning F1 Dream Team, think up a suitably witty name for the team (keep it clean, please) and then register the team details by ringing **0891 891 810**. The hotline will immediately ask you the entry question: How many races are there in this year's Formula 1 World Championship?

There are two methods of entering your F1 Dream Team. If you are using a tone phone, you can enter your team details by keying in the code numbers of your drivers, chassis and engine choices. The computer will check that your team is within budget and eligible.

If you do not have a tone phone, you can still give your team details, but a budget check will not be possible.

You will then have to predict how many points you think this year's world champion will notch up over the year. In case of a tie-break at the end of the season, the nearest to the actual points total will win the F1

drive. (In case of a further tie, the team that was registered first will be successful.)

Once you've registered your team details – by whichever method – you will be asked to give your name, address and telephone number. Your team and personal details will then be played back, giving you the chance to confirm that they are correct. If they are, you will be given a PIN number which you should keep safe. This is confirmation of your entry and will enable you to access the score checking line. There is no limit on the number of teams one person can manage – you can enter as many times as you wish – but only one entry can be processed per call.

If you have any queries, please write to Jacqui Weston at *F1 Racing*.



CHECKING YOUR SCORE

You can check your team's position at any time by ringing **0891 891 811** and quoting your PIN number. You need a tone phone to use this service. If you want to know the individual driver, chassis and engine scores from the most recent race, call **0891 891 812**. This check line also lists the top 50 F1 Dream Teams.

SHOPPING LIST

DRIVERS

£25m	37 A Prost
1 M Schumacher	38 G Tarquini
£23m	39 K Wendlinger

CHASSIS

2 J Alesi	£20m	40 Benetton
3 D Hill	£18m	41 Williams
4 G Berger	£18m	42 Ferrari
5 D Coulthard	£15m	43 McLaren
6 E Irvine	£14m	44 Sauber
7 J Villeneuve	£10m	45 Jordan
8 M Hakkinen	£10m	46 Ligier
9 H-H Frenzen	£6m	47 Tyrrell
10 M Brundelle	£5m	48 Arrows
11 R Barrichello	£3m	49 Minardi
12 J Herbert	£1m	50 Forti
13 M Salo		
14 P Lamy		
15 P Diniz		
16 U Katayama		
17 J Verstappen		
18 O Panis		

ENGINE

19 L Badoer	£26m	51 Renault
20 R Rosset	£18m	52 Ferrari
21 A Montermini	£15m	53 Mercedes
22 G Fisichella	£12m	54 Peugeot
23 V Sospiri	£10m	55 Mugen
24 T Marques	£8m	56 Ford V10
25 F Lagorce	£6m	57 Yamaha
26 H Noda	£4m	58 Hart
27 T Inoue	£3m	59 Ford Zetec V8
28 M Blundell	£2m	60 Ford ED V8
29 J-C Boullion		
30 K Brack		
31 K Burt		
32 E Collard		
33 N Fontana		
34 D Franchitti		
35 N Larini		
36 J Magnussen		

THE RULES

All telephone calls are charged at 39p per minute cheap rate, 49p per minute at all other times, with a typical call to secure your entry lasting between five and seven minutes. The deadline to be included in a particular race is midnight the Thursday prior to that race.

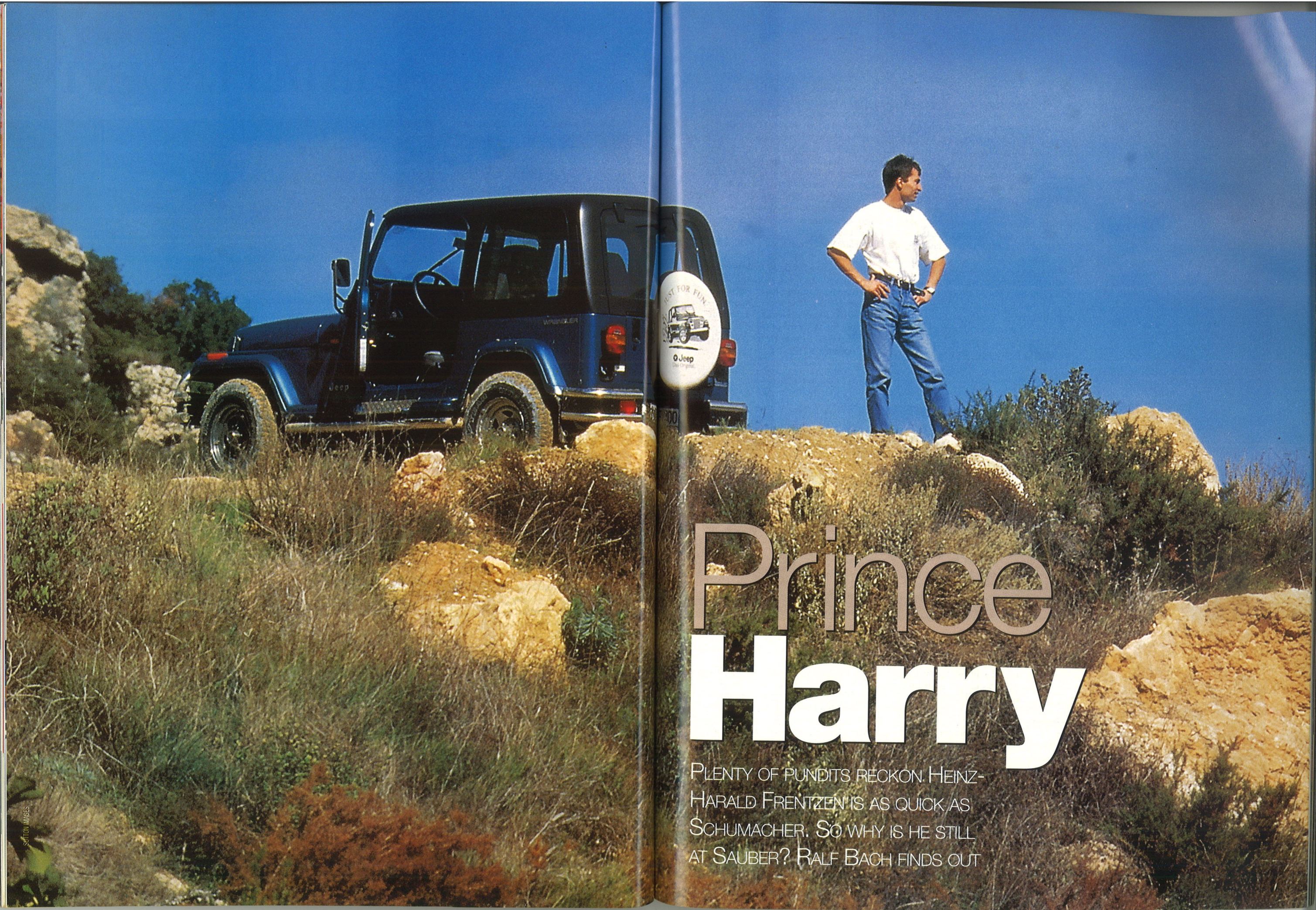
F1 Racing's decision is final, no correspondence will be entered into and the prize cannot be exchanged for cash. Employees of Haymarket Publishing Ltd and all associated companies and their families are ineligible. Entrants must be 18 or over and residents of the UK.

To be eligible for the main prize, you must hold a current driving licence, be no more than 1.95m tall and weigh no more than 220lb. All scores will be worked out according to the official FIA time sheets produced at the meeting. The values stated for drivers, engines and chassis bear no relation to real life.



DREAM TEAM REGISTRATION – 0891 891 810

TEAM POSITION CHECK LINE – 0891 891 811 • RESULTS & TOP 50 TEAMS – 0891 891 812



Prince Harry

PLENTY OF PUNDITS RECKON HEINZ-HARALD FRENTZEN IS AS QUICK AS SCHUMACHER. SO WHY IS HE STILL AT SAUBER? RALF BACH FINDS OUT

Michael Schumacher only signed his \$25 million deal with Ferrari when he was sure of one vital piece of information: that Heinz-Harald Frentzen was not going to drive for Williams in 1996. That would have been too much of a threat.

Schumacher hasn't forgotten the days when the two shared a Mercedes sportscar. "Michael had to work hard to post lap times that Frentzen did with ease," says one Schumacher confidant. "Frentzen is the only driver Schumacher really respects."

Peter Sauber, who ran the Mercedes sportscar team and is Frentzen's current boss in Formula 1, has no doubts. "Heinz-Harald was quicker right from the start," says Sauber. "And now, in F1, I reckon he's already number two in the world."

doubt about that." But last season other grand prix teams saw something they liked and Frentzen's ratings took off. By August, several teams were talking to Frentzen about driving for them in 1996. Even though it would have cost about \$2 million to break him out of his contract with Sauber, he was still pursued by McLaren, Benetton, Williams and Ferrari.

His first decision was to turn down the offer from McLaren. "I wasn't keen to sign a one-year contract," he says. "In the end they only wanted Schumacher. I think [McLaren boss] Ron Dennis felt hurt after that, because he never asked me again."

But Benetton still wanted Frentzen and team boss Flavio Briatore invited him to dinner during the Hungarian GP weekend in mid-August. Briatore told him he was the only driver who could beat Schumacher and offered Frentzen a four-year contract. But

of coffee," says Frentzen. "Imagine how that made me feel! I'd seen him racing a kart in Belgium when I was a teenager and had always admired him. We talked about this and that but mainly about our new cars."

Frentzen made such an impression on the Brazilian that he urged Frank Williams to have a closer look at him too. After Senna's tragic death at Imola that year, Williams phoned Frentzen at home in Monte Carlo and asked him to step in for Senna. Frentzen refused.

"Karl Wendlinger had just had his big accident in Monaco [which left him in a coma for more than two weeks] and our team was completely shattered. I couldn't let Peter Sauber down. He'd given me my chance to enter F1. Every driver dreams about driving for Williams at some stage in his career. But for me that wasn't the right time."

Despite losing probably the best seat in F1, Frentzen is not bitter. "Jacques is a nice guy," he says. "I do not begrudge him the drive."

After the letdown at Williams, Ferrari was Frentzen's last hope of a seat with a top team. "Frentzen is one of the best," says Ferrari sporting director Jean Todt, "but two Germans at Ferrari? No chance."

All that was left were late offers from Ligier and Jordan. Jean-Pierre Jabouille, shortly before his sudden departure as Peugeot Sport boss, tried to persuade him to join the Jordan-Peugeot fold, but it was all in vain. Sauber's engine supplier, Ford – now well aware of Frentzen's potential and the loss they'd suffer if he walked – stepped in with a fat contract that kept Frentzen at Sauber for a third year.

But next year Jackie Stewart's new F1 team will pick up the Ford works

Fuel in his veins

Heinz-Harald Frentzen's father, Harald, never had the slightest doubt that his son would eventually graduate into Formula 1. "The boss' believes in fate: "The boy has fuel running through his veins," he says. "When his mother was pregnant I gave her driving lessons and she learned the proper driving rhythm. This passed to the little boy in her womb."

The boss also built his son's first kart – a 'kettcar' powered by a lawnmower engine. When neighbours complained about the noise, the Frentzens went to a nearby karting course. It was there, at the age of 12, that the young Frentzen first met Michael Schumacher.

From then on, all his racing activities went according to plan. Frentzen was victorious in karts, Formula Ford, Opel Lotus and Formula 3.

As runner-up in the 1989 German Formula 3 championship (ahead of Schumacher), Frentzen joined the newly formed Sauber-Mercedes Group C junior sportscar team with Karl Wendlinger and Schumacher. The idea was that these three drivers should all make their way up to F1. According to team boss Peter Sauber, Frentzen was the quickest of the three from the word go. His future seemed certain. He was Mercedes' first choice to go on to F1.

But at the end of the year he left the team in favour of a new Vortex F3000 team. He found it hard to leave Mercedes, and it turned out that he backed the wrong horse.

Driving a Lola chassis, Frentzen didn't have a hope of beating the superior Reynards during the 1991 F3000 season. To add insult to injury, Michael Schumacher made a sensational F1 debut with Jordan at Spa the same year – an entry supported and arranged by Mercedes.

In 1992 Frentzen didn't race until the Le Mans 24-hour race in June, when he drove a Lola-Judd for Euro Racing. But the following year, when compatriot Volker Weidler gave up racing for health reasons, Frentzen took over his Nova-entered Japanese F3000 car. At the same time, Frentzen became Mugen-Honda's and Bridgestone's test driver. Then came Peter Sauber's invitation to test his F1 car at the Mugello circuit in Italy, which led to Frentzen starting his F1 career with Sauber in 1994.

PHOTOGRAPHY: SUTTON IMAGES, ASSET, AUTOSPORT, AUTO MEDIA



Left to right: Getting a lesson in boule; Senna soon spotted Frentzen's car control; on the hobsleigh with old team-mate Karl Wendlinger; already a big star in Germany; relaxing with Eddie Irvine during practice for Japanese F3000

And that's without even scoring second place in a grand prix, let alone a win. In fact, Frentzen only made the podium for the first time last year when he was third in the Italian GP.

Despite his limited F1 success, the accolades for the 28-year-old German keep on coming. Four-time world champion Alain Prost reckons Frentzen is better than Schumacher. And former F1 driver Michele Alboreto agrees. "In the long run, Frentzen is the only driver who can beat Schumacher," he says.

Frentzen himself just says: "Michael is the best driver at the moment – no

there was a catch: during the first two years Jean Alesi would be the team's number one driver. "That was totally unacceptable," recalls Frentzen. "Why should Benetton be able to prepare two equally competitive cars in 1996? Their cars have never been at the same level before."

With Benetton and McLaren ruled out, Frentzen's best chance was alongside Damon Hill at Williams. He had first met the team during testing before the San Marino GP in April 1994. Their driver, Ayrton Senna, was impressed by Frentzen's speed and car control. "Senna invited me for a cup

However, Sauber offered to release Frentzen to Williams this year for free – without the \$2 million buy-out clause that applied to all other teams. They were grateful for his loyalty after Wendlinger's crash and were willing to give him a chance with arguably the best team in F1.

Williams technical director Patrick Head wanted Frentzen, but F1 power broker Bernie Ecclestone was already initiating a deal to bring Canadian Indycar champion and Indianapolis 500 winner Jacques Villeneuve into F1. He managed to place him at Williams – and Frentzen was out.

engine deal, leaving Peter Sauber to explore other avenues. So far, he's caught the attention of Peugeot and Mugen-Honda. One of the reasons they're interested is because the Sauber team are in good shape financially, thanks in particular to their Red Bull sponsorship.

As for Frentzen, his options are open. "After Ford leaves Sauber I am free again," he says. And, as he walks away, he mentions rather casually that he still has contacts with a team who have just moved to Wantage, Oxfordshire. Begins with 'W', apparently... ①

THERE'S MORE TO F1 THAN A FLASH EXTERIOR

UNRIVALLED COVERAGE OF THE COMPLETE GRAND-PRIX WEEKEND AND THE BIG SUNDAY EVENT "LIVE", ALL WITH AWARD WINNING COMMENTARY FROM JOHN WATSON AND BEN EDWARDS. OUR IN-DEPTH WEEKLY F1 MAGAZINE TAKES YOU RIGHT BEHIND THE SCENES OF GRAND-PRIX RACING... PITS N'ALL.



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Drawn to perfection

MAVERICK DESIGNER JOHN BARNARD WANTED THREE YEARS TO PERFECT FERRARI'S FORMULA 1 CHALLENGER. HIS TIME IS UP, WRITES ALAN HENRY



Hard slog: Barnard and veteran driver Gerhard Berger didn't have much to smile about last year

I'm looking out of the window, it's all going past in a blur and I can't do anything about it. I can't get off at that station because I don't want to *be* at that station. I want to be at the end of the line."

This season, Ferrari designer John Barnard has reached the end of the line. Barnard's new creation, the Ferrari F310, is the climax of his latest three-year programme to develop a Formula 1 race winner. Driven by double world champion Michael Schumacher, the pressure on it to be a world beater is enormous.

But Barnard's used to that. It is a testimony to the unyielding force of his character that a healthy slice of contemporary Ferrari F1 history has sprung not from the team's Italian headquarters at Maranello, but from a business park on the fringes of rural Surrey.

Twice now Barnard has established a UK-based design satellite for Ferrari. First time around, in 1990, the fruits of his labours carried Alain Prost to within hailing distance of a world championship. That is, until Ayrton Senna intervened on the first corner at Suzuka in Japan, using his McLaren as a 120mph battering ram to settle the outcome of the contest. In his favour. In the gravel trap.

Much of Barnard's reputation is rightly founded on the three years of world championship success between 1984 and 1986 with the superb TAG turbo-engined McLarens. Yet legend

and myth have, perhaps inevitably, become intertwined.

Barnard celebrates his 50th birthday this season. It's 26 years since he started out on his motor racing career as a junior on the design team at Lola, in company with another newcomer by the name of Patrick Head. Ever since, comparisons have inevitably been drawn.

Putting accurate labels on both men is difficult, but tempting. If Williams technical boss Head could be described as pragmatic, the epithet for Barnard would be 'perfectionist'. One should add that the two qualities need not be mutually exclusive.

But whereas Head has been able to stamp his identity on a generation of F1 cars from a position of continuity as a partner in Williams Grand Prix Engineering, Barnard has been more of a free spirit since he split with Ron Dennis at McLaren in 1986. Two spells at Ferrari have been broken by three years with Benetton.

Barnard has a reputation as an uncompromising dictator. His eyeball-to-eyeball confrontations with Dennis have gone down as some of the most stormy rows in contemporary F1 folklore. Legend has it that one McLaren mechanic used to slip off home at the height of these disruptions, asking the receptionist to phone him when the coast was clear.

In fairness to Barnard, this sort of thing is not unique. When Williams first set up their premises in Didcot, the owners of adjacent factory units



Best yet: The Ferrari 640 of 1989 boasted design details

Barnard's rows with McLaren boss Ron Dennis have gone down as some of the stormiest in contemporary F1 folklore



Red hot: This year's Ferrari F310 must win races

which, says its creator, have never been improved on

apparently begged Frank to close the windows to reduce the distraction of Patrick Head's booming tones!

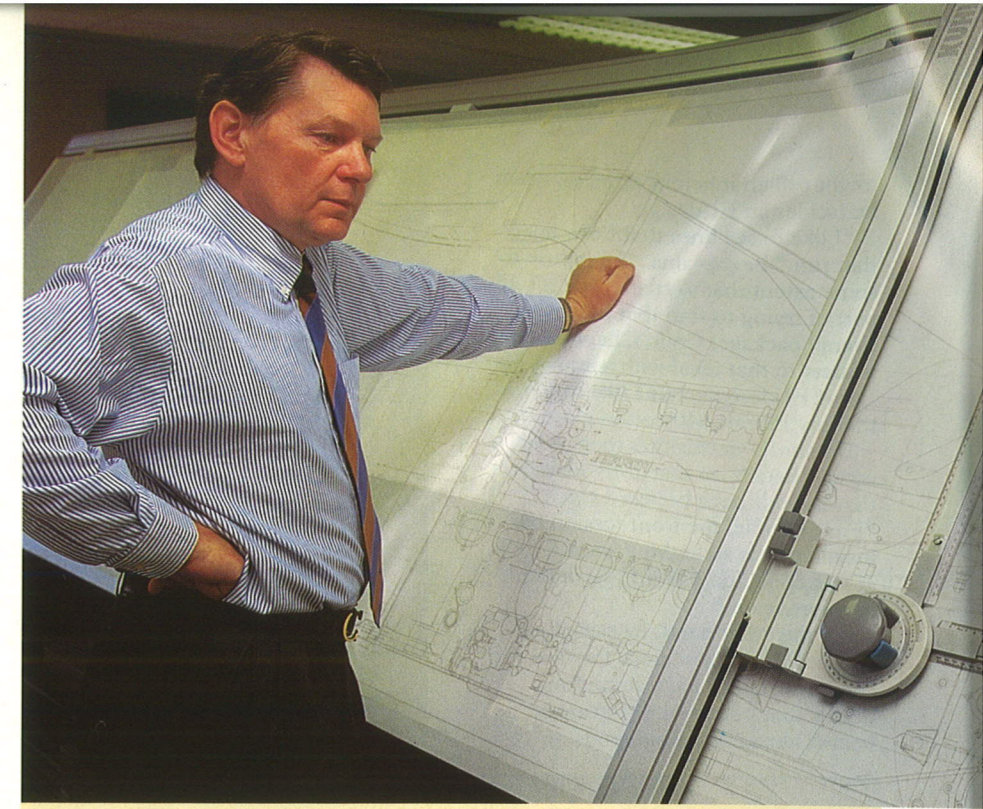
On a personal level, Barnard is extremely convivial. He's good company and always likes to keep up with the F1 gossip. He is also a fine raconteur; his recollections about how he re-engined his first car, a 1955 Aston Martin DB2/4, first with a Chevy V8 and later with a Ford Zodiac six, are alone worth the drive to Ferrari Design & Development.

But when it comes to his racing cars he is deadly serious. Aside from the actual production processes – the hours spent pondering problems at a computer screen, the days in the wind tunnel and the potential frustration of prototype component builds – Barnard struggles to express the particular buzz he gets from his job.

"A neat, clever, efficient job well done gives me pleasure," he concludes at last. "It could be a wheel bearing, a damper, a gearbox – or a whole car. If I'm lucky enough to produce a good, homogenous effort, I would be satisfied. But that is technically not achievable.

"I reckon I would get closer to that goal if, after completing a car design, I could sit down right away and try to design it again from scratch. That would be the ideal."

Barnard has always insisted that he regards any completed F1 car as simply a snapshot of the existing technology at a given moment in time. He loves design symmetry, what you ▶



Made in England: Barnard refuses to work in Italy, so design work is carried out in Shalford, Surrey

Back at Ferrari, where he belongs

After working with Ferrari in the late '80s, John Barnard's iron resolve to stay in England resulted in a breach with the team in 1989. Yet the momentum of his efforts was picked up by Alain Prost and translated into five race wins the following year. Then the whole team's F1 edifice fell apart as a succession of nervous nominees from Fiat (Ferrari's parent company) attempted to restore order.

A little more than two years after they had fallen out with Barnard, Ferrari kicked out Prost. Another priceless asset had apparently been sacrificed on the altar of operational dogma.

Towards the end of 1991, Barnard was approached by newly appointed Ferrari president Luca di Montezemolo with the offer of moving to the team's Maranello headquarters as F1 technical director. He turned it down, just as he'd turned down a similar deal in 1986. As before, he wanted to remain based in the UK.

"Having a young family, I did not want to be away for a month at a time, or whatever it had to be to work in Italy," he said firmly.

"Then they did a deal with [Tyrrell designer] Harvey Postlethwaite, who went back to Maranello again at the end of 1991. Then, come July the following

year, Niki Lauda got in contact and asked whether I was interested in setting up another base in England.

"At the time I'd been working for the TOM's team up in Norfolk, together with a lot of members of my group from before, and we started to set it up with



Keep it clean: Barnard says he likes neat, efficient lines

the idea of going F1. The idea was to start work on a Toyota-engined F1 car and hopefully suck them into the project. Unfortunately, it ran out of steam before any serious money could be attracted.

"So then Ferrari started talking to me again. I'd had a bad experience with Benetton and was quite bitter and twisted about it. I thought working with Benetton would be similar to doing my own team again, as it was in the early days with Ron Dennis at McLaren, but when that all went belly up I decided to go back to Ferrari."

might call an inherent tidiness, when he tackles an F1 design.

"I like to see lines that flow, lines that run," he explains. "I suppose to some extent that's artistic, but it's all part of trying to find that integrated overall package. Colin Chapman got nearest to that ideal with some of his Lotus F1 designs, but I like to think that my Ferrari 640 comes close."

Barnard's view is that there were certain details on that 1989 chassis that haven't been bettered since. "For example, the front torsion bar installation is something we still look at and conclude it would be difficult to improve on."

On the other hand, he says that some of the biggest steps forward in car performance have come from details that offend him. Fitting barge boards ahead of the sidepods on

"After completing a car design, I always want to sit down right away and try to design it again from scratch"



From light bulbs to grand prix winners

Born 4 May 1946, London.

Began his working life with GEC in North Wembley, designing machines for making light bulbs.

1968 Junior designer on Lola's design team, working on junior single-seaters.

1972 Joined McLaren, working with Gordon Coppuck on their M23 Formula 1 design and later the M16 series of Indycars.

1975-77 On the design unit of the California-based Parnelli Indycar team, developing the first Ford-Cosworth turbo Indycar engine and transverse gearbox.

1978-79 Designed Jim Hall's Chaparral 2K Indycar, which won the 1980 Indianapolis 500 driven by Al Unser.

1980-86 Chief designer for the McLaren International F1 team, overseeing the Porsche-built TAG turbo V6 F1 engine which propelled his MP4/2 series of carbon-fibre composite chassis to a hat-trick of world championships.

1986-89 Technical director of Ferrari F1 team, but based in the UK.

1989-91 Technical director of Benetton.

1992 to date Research and development director of the Ferrari F1 team, again based in the UK.

the 1994 car yielded a massive aerodynamic gain. Yet they offended his aesthetic sense. "Scabby little panels," he calls them. And rightly so.

Barnard admits that he could conceivably become interested in other areas of engineering, but that the speed of F1 is also gratifying. "If I worked in another area – even road cars – there would not be the same urgency," he says.

One area in which Barnard remains absolutely uncompromising is his three-year design and development programmes. He joined Benetton and Ferrari on the basis that this was the time frame in which he was operating to produce a winning package.

"You don't just walk into an office, snap your fingers and say: 'Get me a drawing board, get me a computer, get me a secretary – right, now we'll sit down and design a car'. It just doesn't work like that."

One of the most important elements he had to develop on his return to Ferrari was an efficient wind tunnel. "I know from my own experience that I need a good tunnel and people who will analyse the numbers and work on the car's aerodynamic development the way I want to go.

"This is important because there are a lot of ways you can work in that area; ways of interpreting those numbers, what areas you consider to be important versus what somebody else feels to be important.

"Ultimately, I have certain beliefs about the various aspects of an F1 car. Basically, I'm right or I'm wrong, but I'm also in charge. I don't want somebody else developing off in a direction which I don't agree with."

So do the teams sometimes get frustrated with this three-year approach? Are they always pushing prematurely for results?

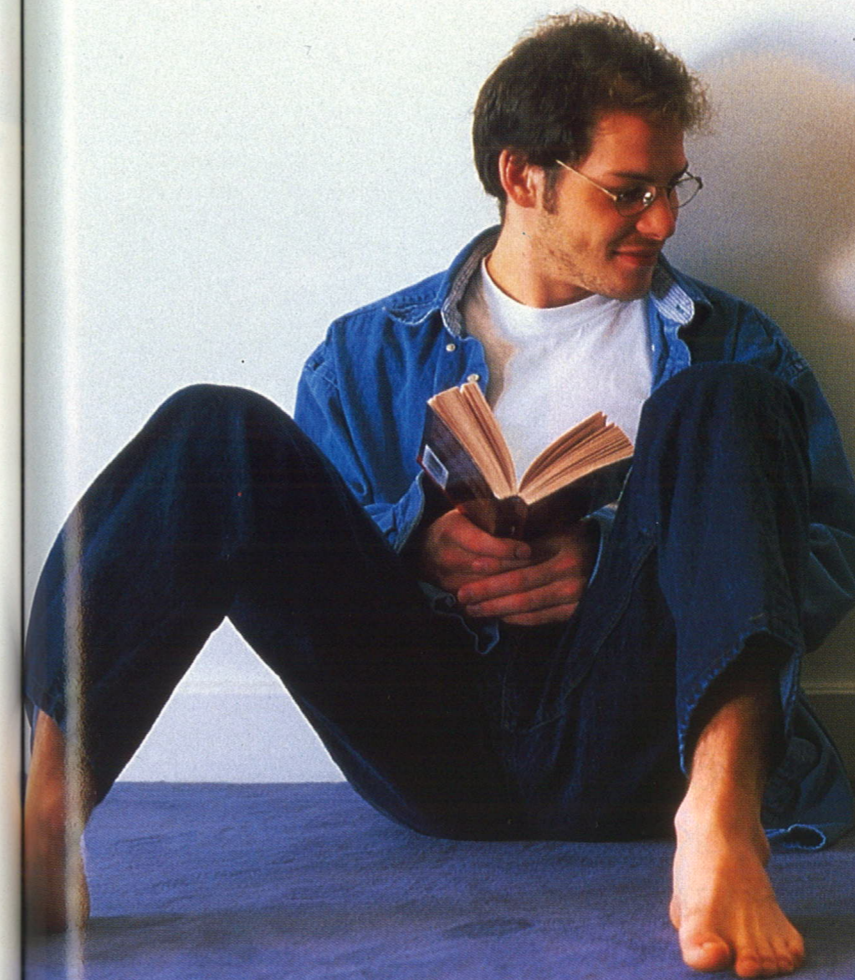
Barnard grins. "I think many of them have difficulty in conceiving long-term plans in F1. They agree and nod their heads, but in the back of their mind they would like to win three or four races the following year.

"In those circumstances you just have to close your eyes and bulldoze ahead. The 1993 season with Ferrari, for example, was one of the most difficult I've ever had, wrestling with the active suspension. But in the back of my mind I was thinking that we're just passing through on the way to the terminus."

The journey has been a painful one. We will soon see if Barnard, Ferrari and Schumacher have really arrived. ①

So Trixie, what do you think of my chances of winning the championship?

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F1
RACING

Holy Matra-mony

JABBY CROMBAC, WHO HELPED MATRA
JOIN FORCES WITH TYRRELL IN 1965,
TELLS HOW THEIR TIE-UP TOOK JACKIE
STEWART TO HIS FIRST WORLD TITLE

RAINER SCHLEGELMILCH



Tyrrell mechanics
strap Stewart into his
new Matra chassis



Left: "Hands off, they're all mine!"
Below: Ken Tyrrell gives Stewart some tips on fashion, sorry, racing

When he first heard the news, Jackie Stewart was horrified. "Ken," he told his boss, "those Frogs made you drink too much." But the deal Formula 2 team owner Ken Tyrrell had put together that night in late 1965 would make both driver and team Formula 1 world champions within four years. And it would bring France back to the forefront of grand prix racing for the first time since 1925.

Stewart and Tyrrell first came together in 1964, when the Scot drove Tyrrell-entered Formula 3 Coopers to 18 wins from 22 starts. In 1965 Stewart leapt straight into F1, as number two to Graham Hill in the BRM team, at that time second only to Jim Clark and Lotus in the grand prix pecking order. But, like most F1 drivers of the time, Stewart also raced in F2, re-signing with Tyrrell in 1965 and using Coopers with BRM engines. Stewart had a sensational debut F1 season, winning the Italian GP and finishing third in

the championship behind Clark and Hill, but the F2 project was a flop: neither the chassis nor the engine was competitive. For Ken Tyrrell it was a disaster.

That year a new French race car manufacturer had emerged, providing a Cosworth-engined chassis for Jean-Pierre Beltoise to win an important F3 race in Reims. Matra (from Mecanique-Aviation-Traction) was a missile manufacturer that had taken over a minor and ailing sports and racing car concern, Bonnet, and set up a small subsidiary, Matra Sports, to keep the project alive (and divert attention from its main activity).

It was a small and inexperienced operation, but ambitious and well funded. After that win at Reims the division's boss, Jean-Luc Lagardere, was keen to go further. At that time I was the organiser of all F2 and F3 races in France, and at the annual motorsport prize-givings in Paris I introduced Lagardere to Tyrrell. We talked afterwards in the restaurant at Orly airport, waiting for Tyrrell's plane back to London, and it was agreed that a Matra F3 chassis



His greatest drive:
Stewart powers through the spray in his Matra MS10 to a four minute victory in the '68 German GP



PHOTOGRAPHY: SCHLEIBERLICH, AUTOSPORT, CROMBAC, DPP

The man who took Stewart to the top

Ken Tyrrell was one of many young men who benefited from World War II: it provided an education that his gamekeeper father could never afford. Still a teenager, he flew several missions in Halifax and Lancaster bombers as an RAF flight engineer. After the war he and his brother started a timber business – hence the nickname 'Chopper'.

One day in 1952 his football club organised a junket to Silverstone to watch an F1 race. Tyrrell was fascinated. A neighbour, Alan Brown, was racing that day and Tyrrell went to visit his garage. 'Silver Tongue' Brown sold him a 500cc F3 car, in which he achieved moderate success. Brown offered him a deal to go into F2 and with another neighbour they ran two F2 Coopers. Tyrrell prepared both cars and drove one while the other was rented out. But Tyrrell soon realised he wasn't a good enough driver for F2 and at the end of the year hung up his helmet.

Chopper might not have been a champion driver, but he soon proved to be a top team manager. For years he was the official representative of Cooper,

would be mated to one of Tyrrell's F2 BRM engines, for Stewart to test at Goodwood. If he liked it, Matra would build a proper F2 car for Tyrrell to race in 1966.

Stewart liked it all right. He reckoned it was the best chassis he'd ever experienced. The Matra was built to aerospace standards, drawing on all the resources of a leading-edge missile maker. The quality of the monocoque's side pontoons was such that bag fuel tanks were not needed. This meant that each pontoon could be braced by lateral bulkheads which made for a much more rigid chassis, improving roadholding and handling.

Tyrrell hot-footed it from the Goodwood test back to Paris to wrap up the deal with Lagardere for 1966. A bonus was sponsorship from Elf, the fledgling French fuel company that had decided to use motorsport to promote their new and still unknown brand name.

The first F2 season didn't go well. Neither the BRM nor Cosworth engines could hold a candle to the Honda unit exclusively supplied to Brabham. For Stewart, there wasn't much to cheer about in F1 either. Driving for BRM, he won the opening round of the championship at Monaco but crashed heavily at Spa.

However, Matra and Tyrrell's ▶

the 1959 and 1960 F1 world champion, in the lesser formula, and invariably his was the team to beat.

At one race in Chimay, a small Belgian town near the French border, the rules said teams could use local fuel or the best available in *one's own country*. Tyrrell realised that the Belgian fuel had a lower octane than British fuel and on the Saturday evening he caught the last ferry to England. In Dover he filled some jerrycans and returned aboard the same ferry. By the Sunday morning he was back in Chimay. No one was any the wiser and his drivers, John Love and Tony Maggs, won easily.

Tyrrell gave opportunities to many aspiring young drivers – notably Jacky Ickx and Jackie Stewart. He 'discovered' Stewart at Goodwood during an F3 test. John Cooper had just completed his new F3 car and Bruce McLaren, the works team's number one F1 driver, was there to test it. Tyrrell invited Stewart to the session. McLaren established a base time, but Stewart went quicker. And quicker again. When he came into the pits, John Cooper shouted at Tyrrell from the end of the pitlane: "Sign him up!"

Stewart was so impressed with Tyrrell that he left BRM to help in Tyrrell's climb to grand prix racing. After the Scot retired, Tyrrell's team won seven more grands prix, but the last one was in 1983, and they have not won another championship. Tyrrell really was 'Stewart's team'.

relationship had been extremely good, and in 1967 it was a complete success. Driving the new MS7, young Belgian Jacky Ickx clinched the F2 European Trophy, established that year for drivers who had not yet scored points in F1, while Stewart had another rotten year with BRM.

Earlier that year Tyrrell had been at Zandvoort to see the triumphant debut of the Ford Cosworth DFV engine in the back of Jim Clark's Lotus 49 in the Dutch GP. Tyrrell decided there and then that he simply *had* to get this engine to break into F1. He knew he could count on Stewart, who was thoroughly disenchanted with BRM, so he approached Ford's Walter Hayes, the man who had 'fathered' the DFV project. Hayes was interested: he knew Tyrrell's reputation and liked the idea of Stewart driving a Ford-powered car. It had already been decided that Lotus would have exclusive use of the DFV in 1967, but after that the engine would be made available to other teams. Hayes agreed that Tyrrell would be one of them.

Tyre suppliers Dunlop were also keen on Stewart. Their domination of F1 had just been broken by Goodyear and Firestone and they were keen to get back into the game. The company offered to fund most of Tyrrell's F1 project largely on the back of Stewart's uncanny ability to test and evaluate tyres.

Tyrrell had the money, the engine, the driver and the tyres. All he needed to complete the package was the chassis. He knew that the French government had lent Matra £5 million to build a three-litre V12 F1 engine, and that Matra were building their own chassis. So Tyrrell asked Lagardere to build another one, to take the light, compact Ford DFV V8 engine. He agreed, and Matra started work on two cars – the MS10 for Tyrrell's V8 and the MS11 for the factory's V12.

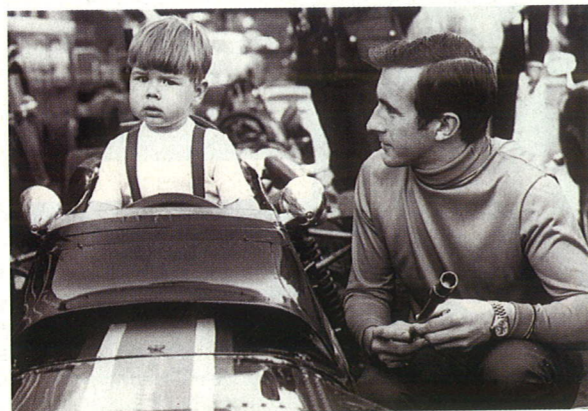
In fact, the first Matra F1 car was only a cobbled together prototype, consisting of an MS7 F2 chassis and a DFV engine, and was rushed to the opening round of the

1968 championship in South Africa on New Year's Day. But Stewart qualified third and was holding that place when he retired with engine failure halfway through the race.

The MS10 made its debut in Spain, for the second round of the championship, but Stewart wasn't there to drive it, having broken his



Below: Stewart gets the Matra MS80 airborne at the 'Ring on his way to the 1969 world title. Bottom: Stewart and son Paul hatch the masterplan to conquer F1. Bottom right: What, no pit garage?



wrist in an F2 crash. He also missed the Monaco GP, and by the time he was truly fit Graham Hill had established a huge lead in the championship. Stewart won three races that year, although two of them, in pouring rain, were more down to the driver and some demon Dunlop wet-weather rubber than the car. On the difficult 14.2-mile Nurburgring, Stewart drove probably his greatest race, splashing through the rain and fog to win the German GP by an incredible margin of four minutes.

It all came right for Tyrrell and Stewart in 1969. Matra suspended work on the V12 and concentrated all their resources on the Tyrrell entry. The MS80, with its distinctive aerodynamic 'fences' and bulbous midriff, was the class of the field and

Tyrrell had the money, the engine, the driver and the tyres. All he needed was the chassis

Matra: from Amon to MPV

Chris Amon took Matra's MS120 F1 car to their only victory in the non-championship Argentine GP in 1971, but at the end of the following year, the team pulled out of F1 and concentrated on sportscars. In 1972, Matra won the Le Mans 24-hour race using the F1 engine's three-litre V12, and they went on to dominate sports car racing (and Le Mans) for the next two years. After that Matra stopped building racing cars.

Their V12 engine was tried briefly by the Shadow F1 team in 1975 before switching to Ligier in 1976. In 1977 the Matra V12 engine finally won a grand prix with Jacques Laffite in Sweden. Ligier dropped the V12 in 1979 and 1980 but gave it one last fling in 1981, when Laffite won twice. But at the end of 1982 the V12 was finally scrapped.

Today Matra is best known as builder of the Espace MPV for Renault.



Tyrrell moves the new Matra by dead of night

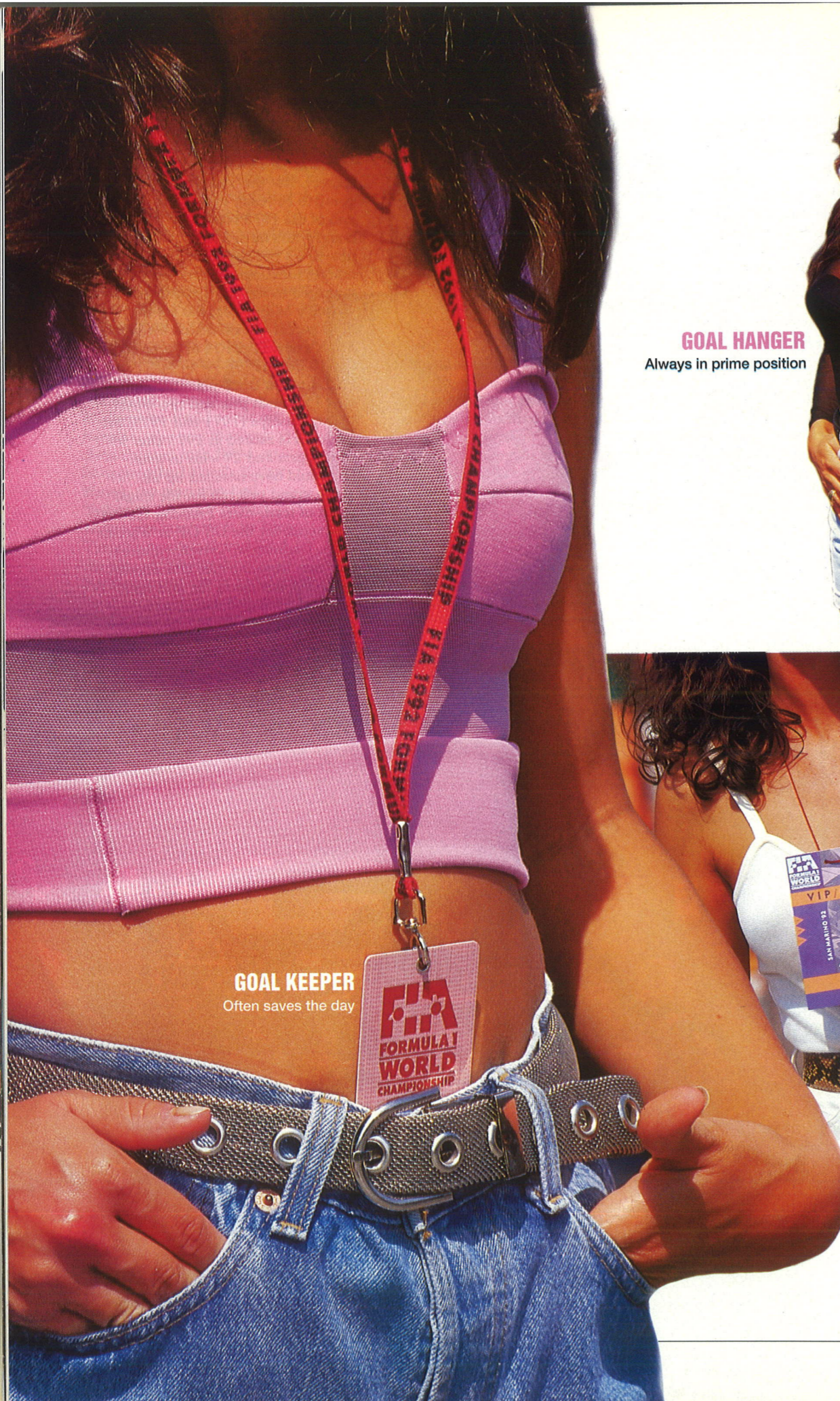
Stewart reeled off five wins in the first six races, wrapping up the world championship with three races still to run. Matra also comfortably won the constructors' championship.

Incredibly, this successful partnership dissolved at the end of the year. Matra signed a deal for Simca to supply engines for their new Bagheera sports car and a relationship with Ford was now politically out of the question. Lagardere asked Tyrrell to try the V12, but Stewart wasn't impressed, finding that it lacked mid-range punch.

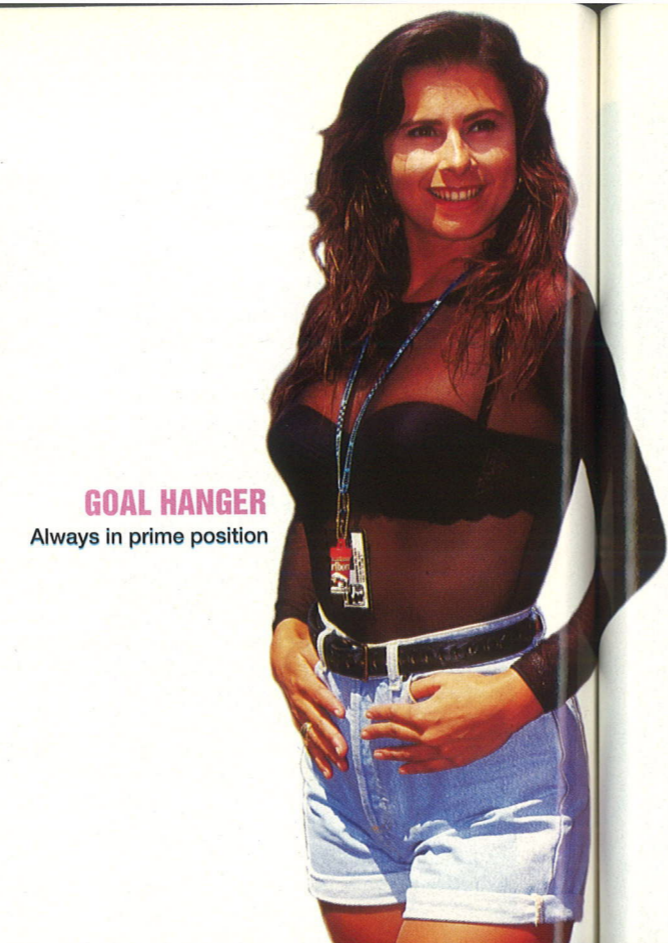
Tyrrell decided to become a constructor and hired Derek Gardner to design and build a new car in secrecy. But the Tyrrell 001 wasn't going to be ready until towards the end of the 1970 season, so Tyrrell bought cars from March, who were new to F1 but had seen a gap in the market for customer cars. Stewart managed to win the Spanish GP in Tyrrell's March 701, but for the most part it was no match for Jochen Rindt's new Lotus 72 or Jacky Ickx's flat-12 Ferrari.

In the next three years Stewart won 15 grands prix and two world championships (1971 and 1973) for Tyrrell. He retired in 1973 after 99 grands prix and 27 wins in total. He would have notched up his 100th grand prix but for the tragic death of team-mate Francois Cevert in practice for the US GP at Watkins Glen. Distraught, Tyrrell withdrew the team from the race and Stewart walked slowly down the grid just before the start, shaking hands with each driver. ①





GOAL KEEPER
Often saves the day



GOAL HANGER
Always in prime position



MIDFIELD
Orthodox but dependable



ON THE WING
Waiting on the flanks to move in



LEFT BACK
Occasional flashes of brilliance



CENTRE FORWARD
Every boy's dream position



SUBSTITUTE
No pass means no admission. Shame

Nice pass

THE SEASON'S STARTED, YOU'RE GOING TO A GRAND PRIX — SO HOW DO YOU WEAR YOUR PASS? HERE ARE A FEW IDEAS

BACK THREE
"No one gets past us"



PHOTOGRAPHY: SUTTON IMAGES; AUTOSPORT

Richard Fox

GRAND PRIX TROPHY MAKER

Richard Fox's work is so treasured that many racing drivers strive for their entire career to get their hands on it, yet only the very best are likely to succeed. As specialist trophy maker to the FIA, his creations are seen by millions, held by the world's top Formula 1 drivers and cost tens of thousands of pounds to make.



"It all started in 1984 when Bernie Ecclestone, president of Foca [the Formula One Constructors' Association], asked me to go and see him," says Fox. "I walked out that day with the commission for two trophies: the Bernie Ecclestone Trophy, presented to the racing organisation whose drivers score the most points for their country, and the FIA Television Trophy, for the best TV coverage."

Since then, Fox has made more than 200 motorsport trophies, including all the F1 winner's medals between 1991 and 1993. Last year Ecclestone asked him to design two new trophies – one for the championship-winning driver and one for the championship-winning constructor. In January they were presented to their new holders, Michael Schumacher and Benetton boss Flavio Briatore.

"It was a very special moment," says Fox. "The driver's trophy will last until the year 2050, and to know that it will be handed on to future world champions gives me a lot of satisfaction."

"Bernie was very specific about what he wanted on the trophy. He gave me the brief and then I came up with the idea. He knows exactly what he wants."



"The design of the trophy is crucial. It's got to have contemporary as well as classical elements because it must be timeless. The trophy also has to be structurally sound, because it's over half a metre tall, weighs 5kg and has to last well into the next century."

The finished article is made of highly polished silver and is engraved with the signatures of all title-winning drivers from 1950 to the present day in a gold laurel that spirals around the cup.

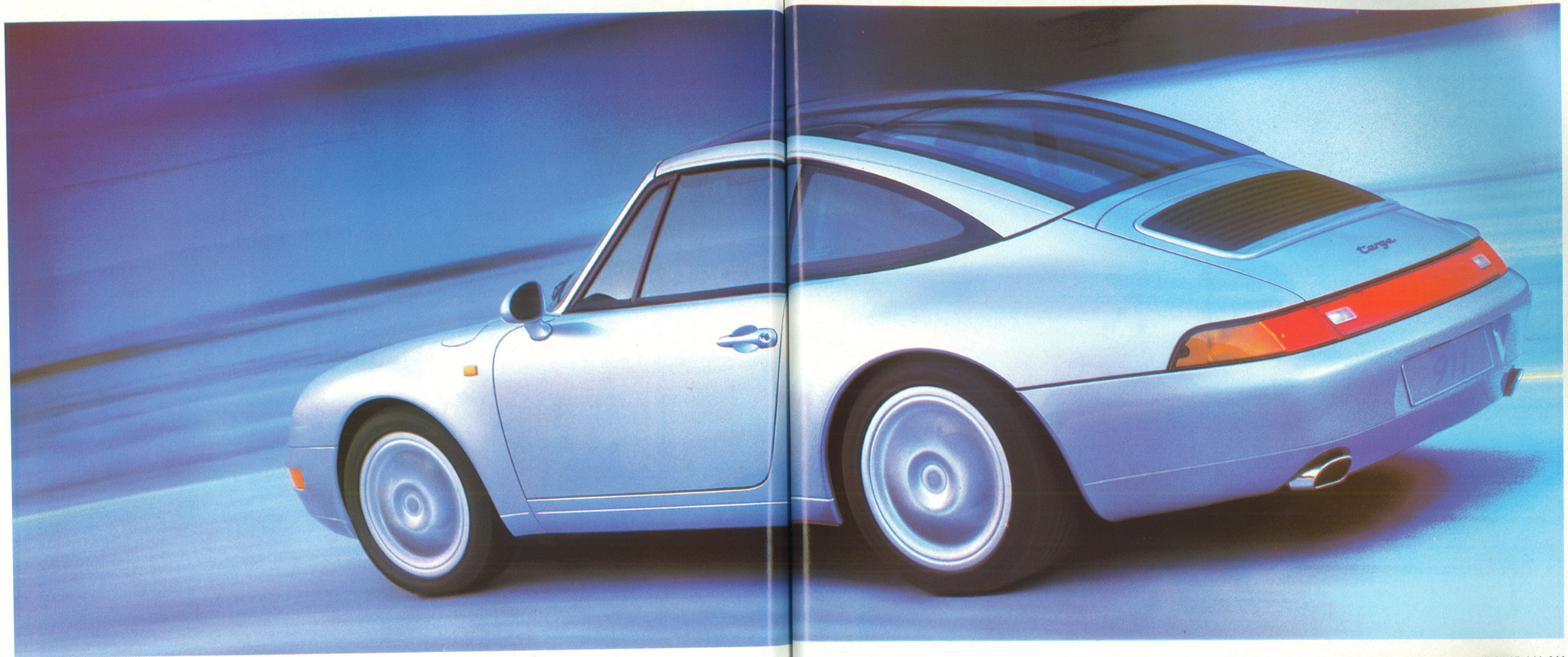
"It took us about nine weeks to make, and that included some very long nights; it took three days just to engrave all the signatures," says Fox. "It takes a long time because we use techniques that date back to the Egyptian age."

Like everything else in grand prix racing, the title winner's trophy doesn't come cheap, although Fox will not reveal its exact cost. "It's upwards of five figures," he says. "Put it this way: the trophy is worth more than my salary, and I own the company." ①

"The trophy must be structurally sound, because it's half a metre tall, weighs 5kg and has to last well into the next century"

PHOTOGRAPHY: JED LEICESTER





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Being able to see the sky, clouds

and the moon.

There's nothing quite like driving

with the roof up.

PORSCHE

GRAND PRIX FOCUS

ROUND 1: AUSTRALIAN GP, 10 MARCH

THE RACE WENT TO DAMON HILL, BUT IT WAS WILLIAMS TEAM-MATE JACQUES VILLENEUVE WHO MILKED THE APPLAUSE AT MELBOURNE. HE TOOK POLE POSITION IN HIS FIRST GRAND PRIX, AND LED THE RACE UNTIL AN OIL LEAK SLOWED HIM IN THE CLOSING STAGES. ON THIS EVIDENCE, HILL IS IN FOR A TOUGH YEAR, AND WE ARE IN FOR A GREAT ONE

PHOTOGRAPHY BY SUTTON IMAGES AND DARREN HEATH



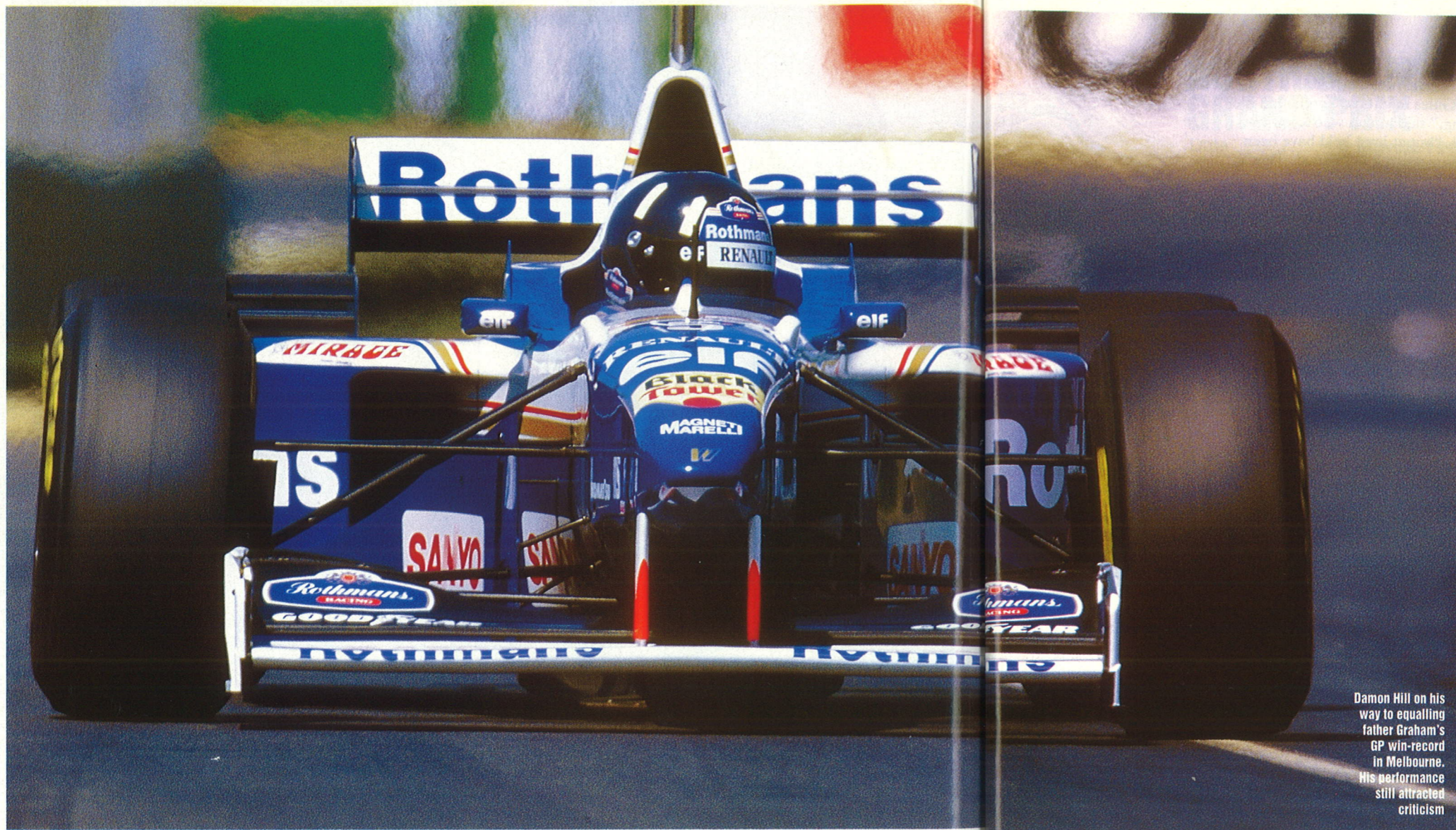
Walking on water: Williams debutant Jacques Villeneuve speeds past the yachts in Albert Park lake to an historic pole position. He almost won the race the following day



Back in the saddle:
McLaren's Mika Hakkinen
contemplates his return
to racing just four months
after the accident – at the
last Australian GP – which
nearly killed him.
Fifth place in the race
was fitting reward for
the Finn's commitment



Light at the end of the tunnel? Minardi mechanics battle to keep Pedro Lamy's Melbourne challenge on track. The Italian crew had a busy weekend as Lamy and new team-mate Giancarlo Fisichella went off repeatedly in practice. Sadly, their mechanics' efforts were in vain: both drivers retired from the race. Lamy after his seatbelts came undone



Damon Hill on his way to equalling father Graham's GP win-record in Melbourne. His performance still attracted criticism

AUSTRALIAN GP

Jacques starts as he means to go on

THE WAY JACQUES VILLENEUVE LEFT THE MELBOURNE GRID SAID IT ALL

Cruel luck. That's the only way to describe the manner in which Jacques Villeneuve was robbed of victory in Melbourne. He had done everything right. If pole position on his grand prix debut wasn't impressive enough, his race performance certainly was.

Casual observers would never have guessed that the Australian GP was Villeneuve's first standing start since his Formula Atlantic days in 1993. After snatching pole on Saturday he had voiced reservations: "If I can get around

turn one, I think we should be in good shape. But with the new cockpit sides, peripheral vision is cut down. Someone will put a wheel inside and you won't know the guy is there until you touch him."

If that's what he thought, he didn't let it bother him. He started like a veteran and gave the impression of knowing exactly where everyone was. Away superbly, he stayed wide, briefly locked a wheel and plunged through turn one on the ideal line, not even bothering to defend the inside. It was a display of complete self-assurance, a trait Villeneuve has exhibited since he first arrived at Williams. Hill took a brief look, got sideways, let the Ferraris by and Villeneuve was gone. Until Martin Brundle's shunt brought out the red flag.

Villeneuve's second start was just as impressive. For a good few laps Schumacher's Ferrari looked ominous behind the Williams pair – amazing given that the world champion's first distance run with the F310 was the Australian GP. But it was a little misleading: Williams were running one-stop race strategies and Ferrari two, so Schumacher had a lighter fuel load at that stage. He admitted later that they were half to three-quarters of a second shy of the Williams pace. There was, he said, still much work to be done and he remained pessimistic about his chances of winning his third

successive title. "There will be races where we are competitive this year, but thinking about the championship means dreaming, and I am a realist."

If Schumacher is genuinely out of it – and there are many who don't buy that – the battle between the two Williams drivers is likely to become the championship focus. And it seemed that Villeneuve had Hill sewn up in Melbourne. He's a racer, but a thinker too.

Who can remember Zandvoort '79 and his father Gilles wrestling a Ferrari 312T4 around the Dutch dunes with the left rear wheel hanging off? Jacques was seven when his father got up to those memorable antics. Some marvelled while others tutted, of course, but can anyone imagine Gilles moving over in similar circumstances to those his son encountered in ▶

You had to feel a bit sorry for Hill too. All anyone could talk about was how his position at Williams had been undermined by Villeneuve

GOODYEAR

RESULTS AT A GLANCE

FINISHING ORDER

1. DAMON HILL, WILLIAMS-RENAULT FW18; 1-32:50.491 (58 LAPS, AVE SPEED 124.210MPH)
2. JACQUES VILLENEUVE, WILLIAMS-RENAULT FW18; 1-33:28.511 (123.368MPH)
3. EDDIE IRVINE, FERRARI F310; 1-33:53.062 (122.830MPH)
4. GERHARD BERGER, BENETTON-RENAULT B196; 1-34:07.528 (122.516MPH)
5. MIKA HAKKINEN, MCLAREN-MERCEDES MP4/11; 1-34:25.562 (122.126MPH)
6. MIKA SALO, TYRRELL-YAMAHA 024; 57 LAPS
7. OLIVIER PANIS, LIGIER-MUGEN-HONDA JS43; 57 LAPS
8. HEINZ-HARALD FRENITZEN, SAUBER-FORD C15; 57 LAPS
9. RICARDO ROSSET, FOOTWORK-HART FA17; 56 LAPS
10. PEDRO DINIZ, LIGIER-MUGEN-HONDA JS43; 56 LAPS
11. UKYO KATAYAMA, TYRRELL-YAMAHA 024; 55 LAPS

RETIREMENTS

- PEDRO LAMY, MINARDI-FORD M195B; 42 LAPS, SEAT BELTS
 MICHAEL SCHUMACHER, FERRARI F310; 32 LAPS, BRAKES
 GIANCARLO FISICHELLA, MINARDI-FORD M195B; 32 LAPS, CLUTCH
 RUBENS BARRICHELLO, JORDAN-PEUGEOT 196; 29 LAPS, ENGINE
 DAVID COULTHARD, MCLAREN-MERCEDES MP4/11; 24 LAPS, STUCK THROTTLE
 JOS VERSTAPPEN, FOOTWORK-HART FA17; 15 LAPS, ENGINE
 JEAN ALESI, BENETTON-RENAULT B196; 9 LAPS, ACCIDENT DAMAGE
 MARTIN BRUNDLE, JORDAN-PEUGEOT 196; 1 LAP, SPIN

NON-STARTERS

- JOHNNY HERBERT, SAUBER-FORD C15; ACCIDENT DAMAGE IN FIRST START
 ANDREA MONTERMINI, FORTI-FORD FG03/86; Did NOT QUALIFY (107% RULE)
 LUCA BADOER, FORTI-FORD FG03/86; Did NOT QUALIFY (107% RULE)

FASTEST LAP (RACE)

JACQUES VILLENEUVE	WILLIAMS-RENAULT
LAP 27	TIME: 1M33.421SEC
	SPEED: 127.696 MPH

FASTEST PITSTOP

GERHARD BERGER	BENETTON-RENAULT
TIME: 24.534SEC	(FROM ENTRANCE OF PITLANE TO EXIT)

FASTEST SPEED AT START/FINISH LINE (RACE)

DAMON HILL	WILLIAMS-RENAULT	178.5 MPH
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SLOWEST SPEED AT START/FINISH LINE (RACE)

PEDRO LAMY	MINARDI-FORD	166.6 MPH
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POLE POSITION LAP

JACQUES VILLENEUVE	WILLIAMS-RENAULT
TIME: 1M32.371SEC	SPEED: 129.148 MPH

FASTEST SPEED AT START/FINISH LINE (QUALIFYING)

DAMON HILL	WILLIAMS-RENAULT	177.5 MPH
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SLOWEST SPEED AT START/FINISH LINE (QUALIFYING)

ANDREA MONTERMINI	FORTI-FORD	163.8 MPH
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GRID AT A GLANCE

	1m 31.5s
	1m 32.0s
	1m 32.5s
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	1m 33.5s
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	1m 34.5s
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	1m 41.0s
	1m 41.5s
	1m 42.0s
	1m 42.5s
	1m 43.0s

Poleday whoops of delight

The Saturday shoot-out. The time, 1m32.371sec. Spontaneous applause. Jacques Villeneuve is on pole. Only twice before has a world championship rookie done that. Everyone was a rookie at Silverstone in 1950, so Giuseppe Farina doesn't count. Mario Andretti did it on home soil with a Lotus 49 at Watkins Glen in 1968, and Carlos Reutemann did it in his native Buenos Aires with a 'lobster claw' Brabham in 1972.

Thirteen minutes later, even bigger whoops of delight. Fists and pens in the air around the press room. Eddie Irvine is third with the new Ferrari. More importantly, he's faster than Michael Schumacher – only the third time in the double world champion's career that he has suffered the ignominy of starting behind a team-mate.

the final few laps of this race, to let his team mate into the lead?

"Gilles might have grenaded the thing," said a man who knew him well, "but at least he'd have been leading when it happened. That's what he was all about."

So whose decision was it to move Jacques over after he'd led every lap of his F1 debut and was just five laps short of becoming the only man other than Giancarlo Baghetti to win his debut grand prix? Did he have a choice, or was it a command?

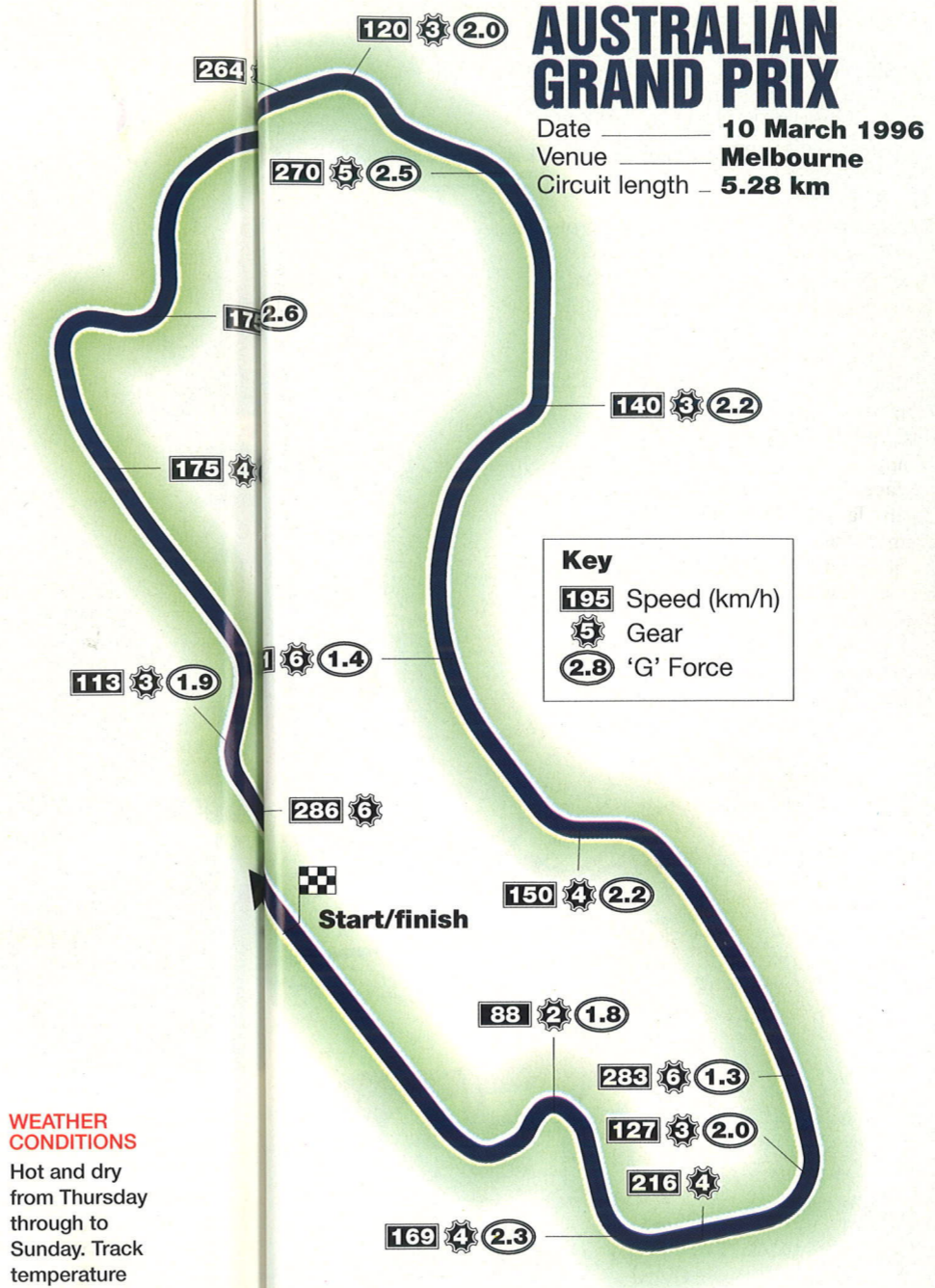
"It was a team decision and it was a command," admitted Williams designer Adrian Newey. "It was very disappointing for him, of course, but we faced the nightmare scenario of having Jacques' engine let go and Damon skating off on his oil. But Jacques is a sensible chap and he realised it was the only way he was going to finish the race. Six points are better than none."

But could he have made it to the finish? Bernard Dudot, Renault's engine guru, shrugged and thumbed his chin. "It was an oil pressure problem and about 15 laps from the end we could see it on the telemetry. As he lost more and more oil it became critical in the corners, where there was lateral g-force. It's unlikely he would have made it."

Before the problem struck, Villeneuve had shown the racer's instinct. His metronomic smoothness was interrupted by a late braking incident that put the Williams on to the grass at the first corner. He hustled back on to the road and unceremoniously blocked Hill – the sort of thing that, from Schumacher, would have prompted a national outcry. In the press room, though, he got nothing but plaudits. Villeneuve also managed to drive around his team-mate with no messing when Hill got his nose very briefly in front after the pitstops. His reputation as a man not to be trifled with seems entirely justified.

You had to feel a bit sorry for Hill too. He'd been just about as quick as Villeneuve all weekend, equalled his father's tally of 14 wins, become the first man to win consecutive grands prix in the same country and conducted himself with dignity all weekend, yet all anyone could talk about was how much his position at Williams had been undermined. On the evidence of Melbourne, Hill is in for a tough year and we are in for a great one.

Tony Dodgins



WEATHER CONDITIONS
Hot and dry from Thursday through to Sunday. Track temperature for the race was 35.8degC, ambient temperature was 24.8degC

TYRE FACTS
Goodyear took 1600 Eagle Racing tyres to Melbourne. One dry tyre was available – the 'B' compound – plus Aquatro rain tyres

Melbourne lap-by-lap

Formation lap: Frentzen stops (electronics). **Lap one:** Brundle launched over Herbert into gravel. Red flag. Brundle and Coulthard (and Frentzen) restart in spares, Herbert out. **Restart.** **Lap two:** Villeneuve leads Hill, Schumacher takes Irvine for third. Brundle spins. **Lap nine:** Alesi dives inside Irvine, damages left sidepod and retires. Irvine survives. **22:** Williams pair lap Coulthard. **26:** Coulthard retires with stuck throttle. **30:** Villeneuve takes only pitstop (34.5sec), rejoins second. **32:** Hill pits (35.31sec), rejoins just in lead. Villeneuve drives round him in turn four. Schumacher takes second pitstop: nose cone off, brake problem. Rejoins but retires immediately. **34:** Villeneuve on grass at turn one, but recovers to block Hill. **53:** Villeneuve, oil leak worsening, signalled to let Hill past. Irvine other podium finisher; points for Berger, Hakkinen, Salo.

RACE FASTEST LAPS

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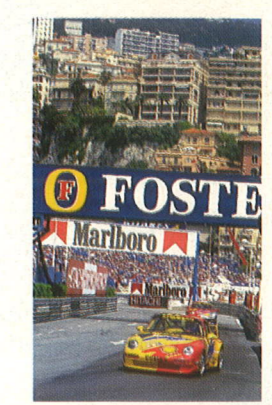
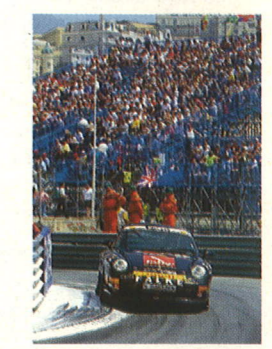
THE OTHER WORLD CHAMPIONSHIP

Not content with the official FIA results, *F1 Racing* is also holding its own unofficial world championship, with race points awarded by our own panel of experts and hangers-on.

ROUND ONE: 1, JACQUES VILLENEUVE, 10PTS; 2, MIKA HAKKINEN, 6PTS; 3, EDDIE IRVINE, 4PTS; 4, DAMON HILL, 3PTS; 5, MIKA SALO, 2PTS; 6, MICHAEL SCHUMACHER, 1PT



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Supercup
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Competence
leading
to success



WARSTEINER

A crime of passion

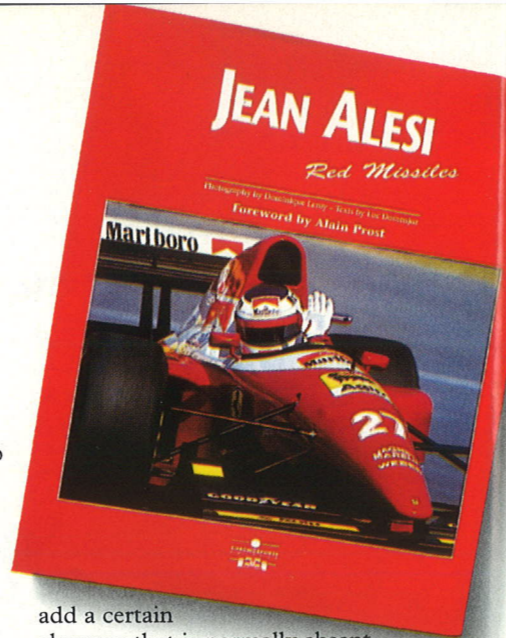
JEAN ALESI, RED MISSILES BY LUC DOMENJOUZ, £18.50

Alesi fans can rest easy, safe in the knowledge that a book on the racing career of the former Ferrari driver is now available.

It's a stunning book that is lavishly printed on cartridge paper. It features interviews with Eddie Jordan and Ken Tyrrell, as well as a foreword by Alain Prost. Alesi's career is chronicled from the time when he first aspired to be a racing driver, through to his first victory in the Canadian GP last year.

But the downside is that the book lacks any in-depth analysis and no attempt is made to penetrate deep into Alesi's character. What's more, there's little mention of his legendary driving skill and no explanation of his ability to attack a wet track on slick tyres.

However, what ground the book loses in words it makes up for with pictures and style. The photographs from Dominique Leroy capture the aggressive driving technique that has made Alesi famous, and the high-quality paper and typography do



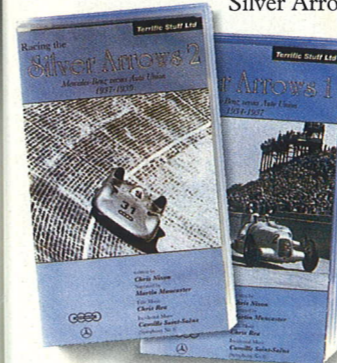
add a certain elegance that is normally absent from motor racing books. And despite the lack of analysis, it's an excellent book.
Chater's: 0181 568 9750

The silver age of motorsport

RACING THE SILVER ARROWS, £17.99 EACH

Ten years after publishing his book on the great races between Auto Union and Mercedes-Benz, Chris Nixon brings to life the heroes who raced the Silver Arrows in the '30s in a two-part video set. It features the likes of Caracciola and von Brauchitsche, Rosemeyer and Varzi, Stuck and Fagioli, as well as many more. The races range from the one with the slowest average speed (51mph in Monaco, 1936) to the fastest (162.6mph at Avus, 1937).

There's plenty of superb action, but not all the races are covered: the original films were made as propaganda, so if Auto Union didn't do well it wasn't shown.
Terrific Stuff: 0181 891 1872



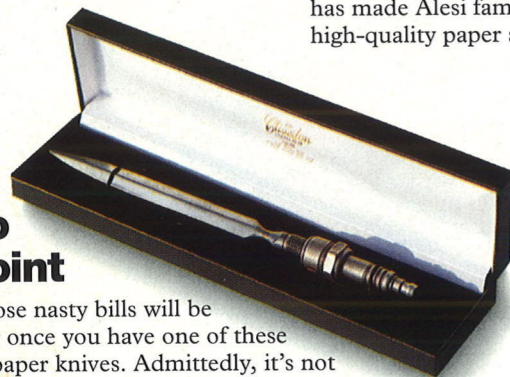
Sweaty palms at the wheel? Keep losing your grip? Perhaps you should try these £55 OMP racing gloves. They were designed to suit the requirements of Ayrton Senna and are available in red or blue.
Demon Tweaks: 01978 664466



Sharp and to the point

Opening those nasty bills will be much easier once you have one of these spark plug paper knives. Admittedly, it's not an original Formula 1 plug, but it's a good reproduction, is finished in antique silver and can sit on your desk for just £20.

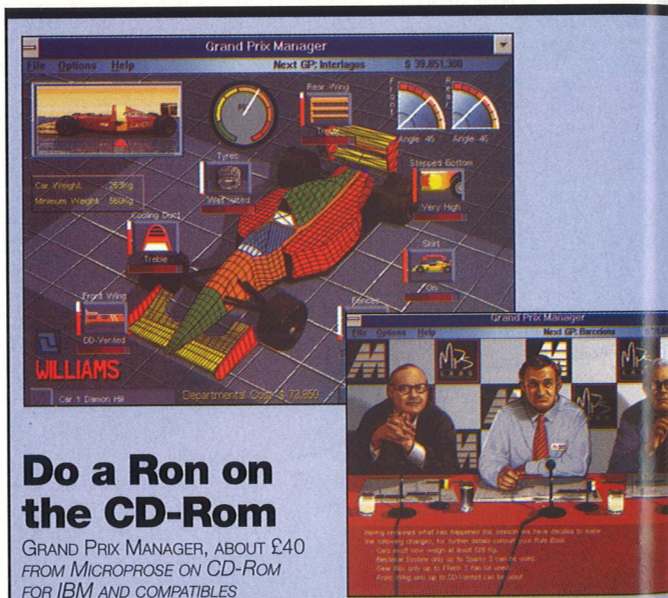
The Clivedon Collection: 01749 850 728



Quality wrist action

It's not often that Mika Hakkinen is late for work on Sunday afternoons. Perhaps that's because he wears one of Tag Heuer's top-of-the-range watches, the S/1 1/100th second Chronograph. You too can have his excellent timekeeping for only £1570.

Tag Heuer: 01204 861168



Do a Ron on the CD-Rom

GRAND PRIX MANAGER, ABOUT £40 FROM MICROPROSE ON CD-ROM FOR IBM AND COMPATIBLES

The only game of its type currently available, *Grand Prix Manager* gives you the chance to emulate McLaren's Ron Dennis and run a Formula 1 team. It also happens to be an accurate and playable motor racing simulation.

You are thrown into the job of managing an F1 team. You can choose any of the teams that began the 1995 grand prix season or start your own squad. The aim is to contest a full grand prix season while keeping your team from going bankrupt.

It features everything from negotiating contracts with your entire staff to testing, race strategies, pitstops, refuelling, and winning the title.

It's incredibly difficult, but you'll find that even if your interest in grands prix is limited, you'll be hooked for hours.

Microprose: 01843 893 893



Real wheels

Grand Prix II, from £40 From Microprose on CD-ROM for IBM & compatibles



The original *Grand Prix* has been described as the definitive racing simulation by experts and drivers alike – Oliver Gavin actually used the game to learn how to drive around Spa in Belgium. This sequel is a vast improvement and quite simply the best racing game ever made.

All 16 grand prix circuits are accurately recreated and the car actually feels real. It's not an arcade game: you have to follow the racing line and brake in a straight line, and if you give it too much power the car will spin off the track.

The scenery is equally realistic. You'll know when you are heading into St Devote at Monaco or Eau Rouge at Spa, and the high level of detail means that every curve, each small undulation and all the buildings are in the right place. The new version also includes rumble strips that pull you off line, sound effects



that blip on the limiter as you change down and sponsors' decals on the sides of the cars.

You can race for any team. There are practice and qualifying sessions or you can simply jump into a race.

Grand Prix II is the best simulation currently available. It's hard to imagine getting any closer to racing in F1.

Microprose: 01843 893 893

F1 for everyone

THE RENAULT FORMULA 1 BOOK, £9.99

The complex business of Formula 1 is simply explained in this superb new book. It sets out to explain F1 to the newcomer without alienating the die-hard addicts. Every detail is included and explained in a clear and user-friendly way.

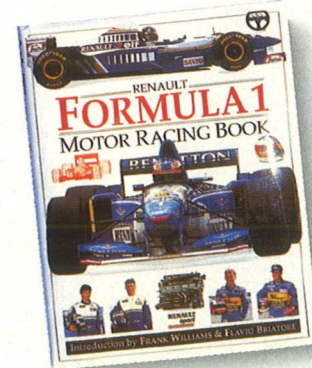
It uses pictures, 3-D models

and graphics in tackling every aspect of building, maintaining and racing an F1 car.

Every stage of design and production is shown, from the drawing board to the finished car. All the crucial members of the team are featured, and it even tells you how the F1 circus travels around the world. Other features include an analysis of all the grand prix circuits, a driver's look at racing lines and an overview of all the world champions from 1950 to the present day.

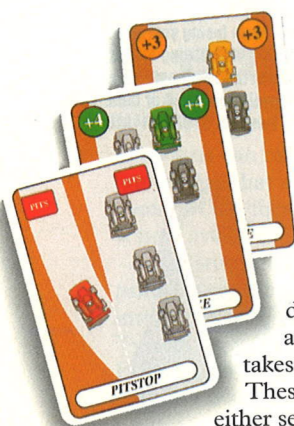
In the preface, Frank Williams says that "everyone will learn from this book", and he is probably right.

Chater's: 0181 568 9750



backstraight

F1 at your fingertips



A good deal

Formula 1 races don't always go round in circles; they also go in a straight line. At least, they do in *Formula Motor Racing*.

Up to six people can play, each running a two-car team. After a roll of the dice, all the cars are placed in a straight line. Everyone then takes turns to pick race cards.

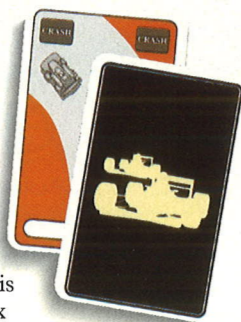
These affect one of the cars and either send it flying to the front or leave it floundering at the back.

But the beauty of the game is that the cards don't always have to affect your cars. If you're feeling particularly ruthless you can send your rivals in for a pitstop or bump them off the track with a crash card. "That's why people like it," says Gibsons Games' Roger Hayworth, "because you can run your opponents off the road." But don't forget, they can do the same to you...

The play continues until the last card is drawn – points are scored by the first six finishers. A minimum of four races complete a season, at which time you can crown your title winner.

It's good fun, easy to learn and, at just £10.95, is a cheap way to get your fix of F1 between races.

The Games Shop: 01252 311 443



Bulging wallets

It's unlikely that Michael Schumacher could fit his spare cash in them, but maybe Eddie Irvine uses one of these leather Ferrari wallets. They're yours for £58.50 each.

Ferrari UK: 01784 436 222



Charge of the light brigade

Formula 1 technology now extends far beyond the race track. This Simpson briefcase is crafted out of the same lightweight carbon fibre as an F1 chassis and, with its combination lock, will keep all your valuables secure. It comes in two sizes – the 3in slim model and the standard 5in profile – and costs £398.

Demon Tweaks: 01978 664466

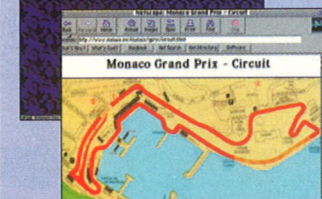
On-line access

The most exciting new F1 site currently on the Internet is the World Wide Sportsweb at

<http://www.icnsportsweb.com>.

It includes up-to-the-minute information from all the races as well as team and driver news. An arcade section means that users can order F1 merchandise directly off the Net. It also has competitions, photographs and a comprehensive archive section, with special drivers' columns completing the line-up.

A good place to start hunting for other F1 sites is at <http://www.dortmund.netsurf/~mstruck/f1.html>. This is a links page that will point you in the direction of almost every site on the Net.



The number of F1 drivers with sites continues to grow. Even Taki Inoue has a site – although it is called an 'unappreciation page' – at <http://www.megasoft.tic.ab.ca/~zonker/f1/taki/>.

David Coulthard has one of the most comprehensive sites currently available. It's got pages of information about his career and pictures from the F1 paddock as well as the track. You can find it on

<http://www.abdn.ac.uk/~u08eam/>.

Heinz-Harald Frentzen's site is equally good, and is at <http://www.uea.ac.uk/~u9501959/Frentzen.html>.

The Ferrari web site continues to shine and has daily updates of their F1 progress. It also has lots of racing pictures – they might take a while to download but they're well worth the wait. You can reach Ferrari on <http://www.tol.tol.telecomitalia.ferrari/>.

Other sites to check out include: Johnny Herbert: <http://www.cyberitd.co.uk/silvers/herbert/htm> Jos Verstappen: <http://www.pu.net/~rhm/home.html> Jean Alesi: <http://www.bath.ac.uk/~pg3dlg/motorsport/drivers/Alesi.htm>



NEXT MONTH

TIME TO GET SERIOUS, JEAN

**Fiery, yes.
Fearless, yes.
Exciting, yes.
Champion?**

F1
RACING

NEXT ISSUE ON SALE 19 APRIL

Dear Luca,

I have to let you know of my concern and anxiety. I have been waking recently in the wee small hours, my fists clenched, heart pumping, brow bathed in perspiration.

I have been haunted by recurring dreams of such a desperate nature that I feel the time has finally come to unburden myself in the hope that I may be freed from these mental shackles. I have therefore chosen to confide in you at the start of a season that promises to be a turning point for the credibility of the Prancing Horse.

Grand prix racing without Ferrari is inconceivable, a nightmare beyond belief. Yet from the moment the new Ferrari F310 first appeared I became apprehensive. Such a gem of a car from such a gifted design team, such a superb driver line-up. But the words that issued forth from your mouth made me tremble.

When we spoke at the Brazilian GP last year, you were upbeat and optimistic. You felt that Ferrari might challenge for the championship in 1996. Jean Todt attempted to soften your optimism by offering the view that it would take until 1997. That seemed reasonable enough.

But in the sunlight at Maranello I detected a tremor of doubt in your voice. You said you hoped the team might be able to come close to a championship in 1997. But you didn't sound convinced.

Things have changed since you were last in the Maranello hot seat, haven't they? Remember those balmy days of the mid '70s when you were Enzo Ferrari's right-hand man at the races? You were charged with turning around the team's decline. And you delivered. Niki Lauda won the 1975 world championship, the first since John Surtees in 1964.

I well recall Niki telling me, when he first saw the resources at Maranello, that he just couldn't understand why Ferrari didn't win all the races. Well, Luca, some people now feel much the same about the present situation. Ferrari fans the world over can barely bring themselves to whisper the fact that it is now 17 years since Jody Scheckter won your last drivers' championship.

When Mr Agnelli flew in to join you at Maranello, I sensed an inexorable build-up of pressure. Okay, he brushed aside the notion of Ferrari eventually having to withdraw from F1 if they don't finally deliver. That's

as maybe, but just how long can this waiting be allowed to continue?

One of your problems, I have decided, is the Italian press. Like the late Mr Ferrari, I fear you take far too much notice of what is said and written about you. The Italian papers drove Alain Prost

so far round the bend during his final season for Ferrari that he finally gave up taking them seriously. So you should make it your resolution not to open a newspaper until after the Japanese GP on 13 October.

Of course, in the old days Mr Ferrari had a much easier time of it. When the cars were going badly, he could fall back on the old excuse of a metalworkers' strike and miss a couple of races when it looked as though his cars would be taken to the cleaners by the opposition. The British GP in 1960 and 1966 are the races that spring to mind.

I should think there have been times when you would have liked to pull just such a stunt. But F1 now marches to Bernie's beat and those little luxuries are denied to today's F1 team operators.

Yet I will keep the faith, Luca. Despite everything, I will be rooting for your scarlet machines with their new V10s. And I will turn a deaf ear to those cynics, some of whom used to work for Ferrari, who say that you don't really comprehend what is needed to win a championship in the '90s.

Surely this is a harsh, unbending judgement. Or is it? A decade ago nobody in their right mind could have envisaged F1 without Brabham or Lotus. Now those two famous names have vanished without trace from the starting grids across the world.

Ferrari deserve a better fate than simply being consigned to the faded pages of motor racing history. Yet what will happen if you don't win a championship this year or next?

Michael Schumacher will assuredly desert you, Luca. And I doubt you will ever again secure another driver of his dynamic calibre. Time is running out, Luca. Please win. Please! I need the sleep.

Yours watchfully,



Schumacher will desert you and I doubt you will get another driver of his calibre again

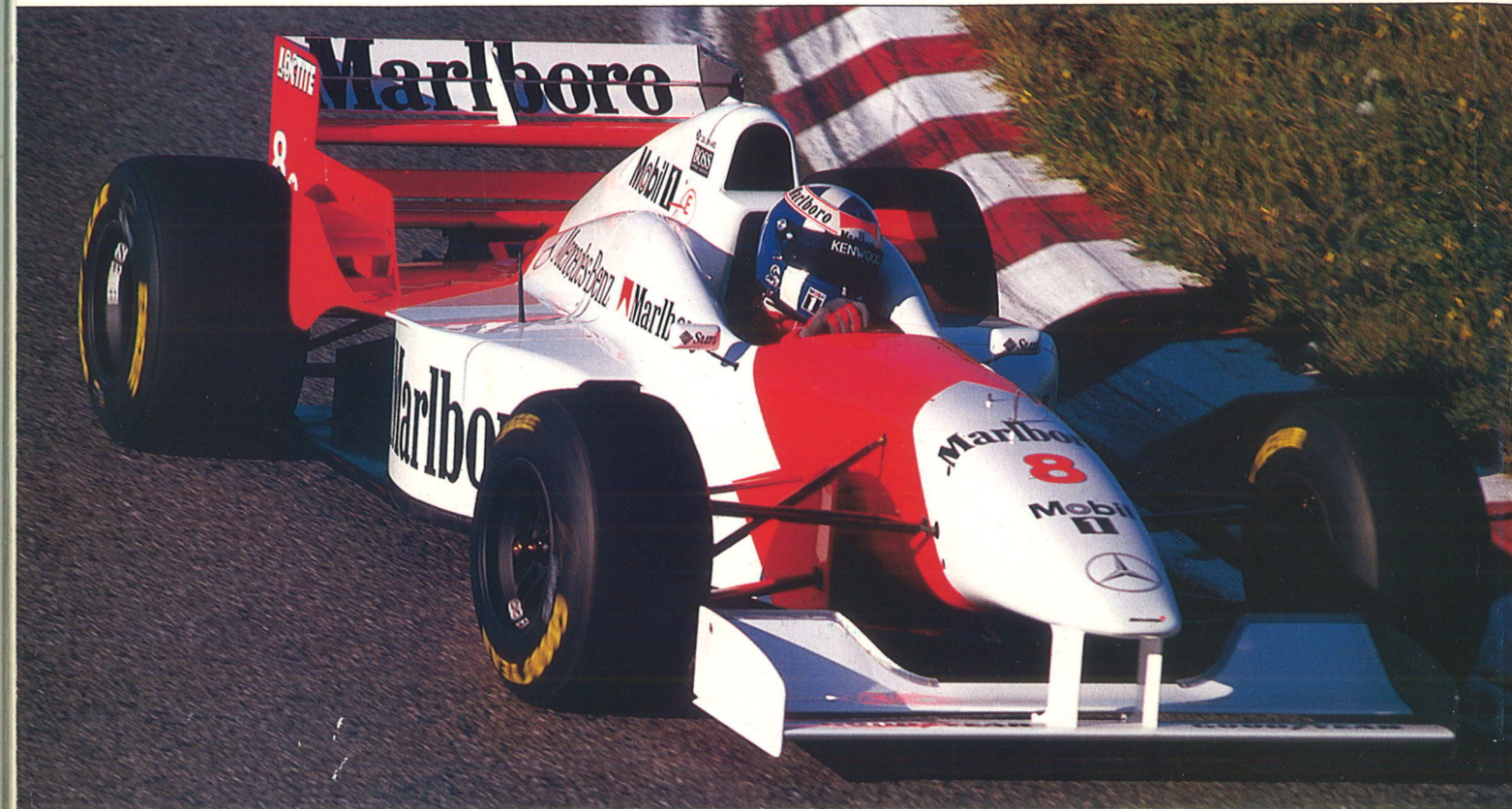
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Mercedes built the engine Mobil built the oil



McLaren, one of the world's most successful Formula 1 teams and Mercedes-Benz, the maker of the world's most dependable road cars, rely on Mobil 1 engine oil.

Mercedes, renowned for their achievements in technical excellence, have developed a brand new V10 engine for the new McLaren MP4/11 Grand Prix car.

This 3 litre multi-valve engine produces more than 650 bhp at over 15,000 rpm powering the MP4/11 to a top speed over 330 kmh.

McLaren and Mercedes demand 100% reliability from every one of the 700 moving parts of the engine - including the engine oil.

They use Mobil 1 to protect the engine and keep it in peak condition through more than a million revolutions every Grand Prix.

Mobil 1 is an oil that will withstand internal engine stresses 8,500 times the force of gravity yet remains fluid and stable at temperatures which exceed 300°C. Mobil 1 is precision engineered to keep a film of lubricant between every moving part and virtually eliminate engine wear.

The Marlboro McLaren Mercedes Team trust Mobil 1, an oil that is also available for your car.

Whatever car you drive it's time you changed to Mobil 1.

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The world's most advanced engine oil