MOTORSPORT

BRITAIN'S NEW WORLD CHAMPION; 2008 SEASON REVIEW; LUNCH WITH JOHN WATSON

JANUARY 2009 VOL.85 NO.1

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MOTORSPORT

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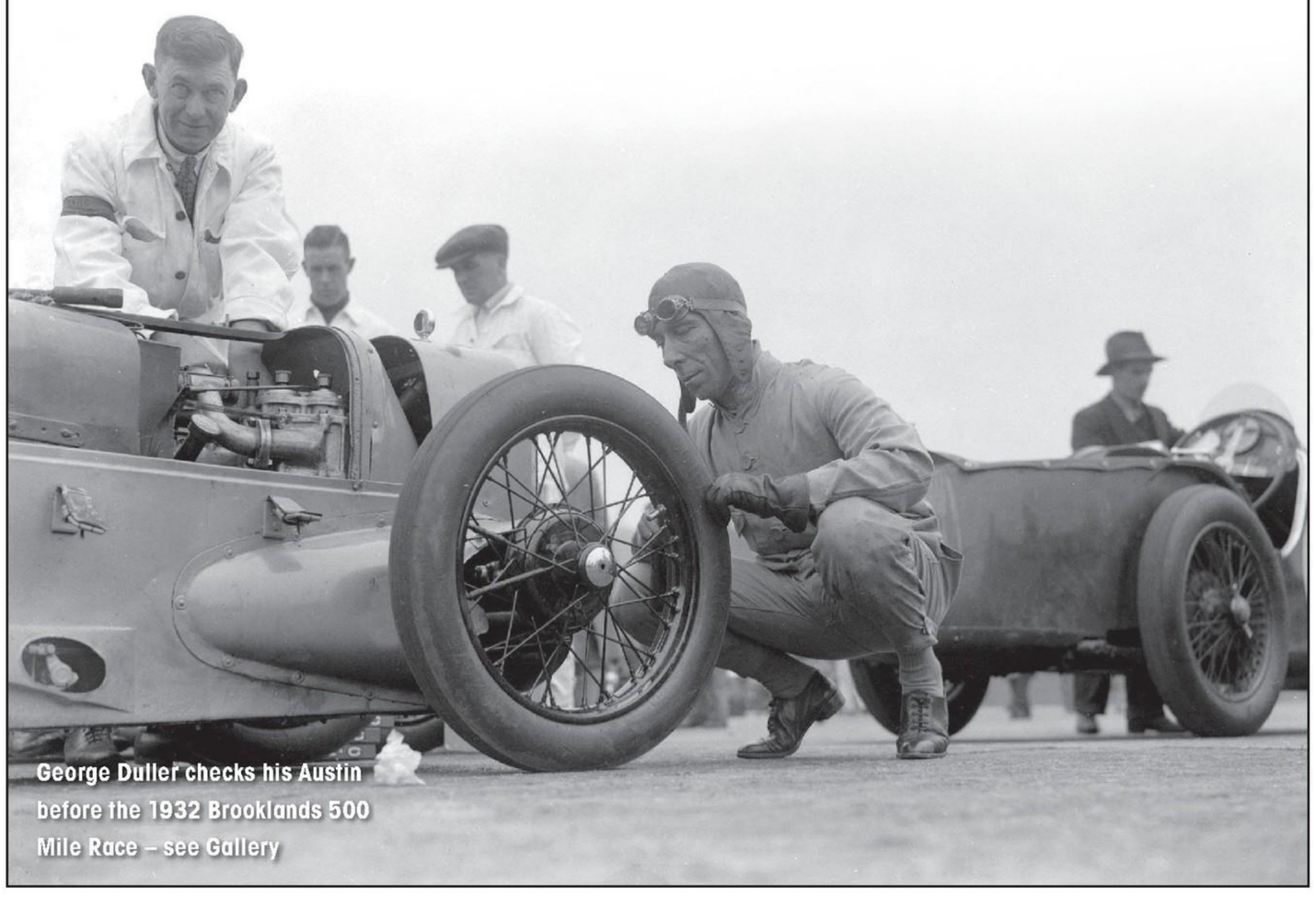
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Cover: Patrick Gosling

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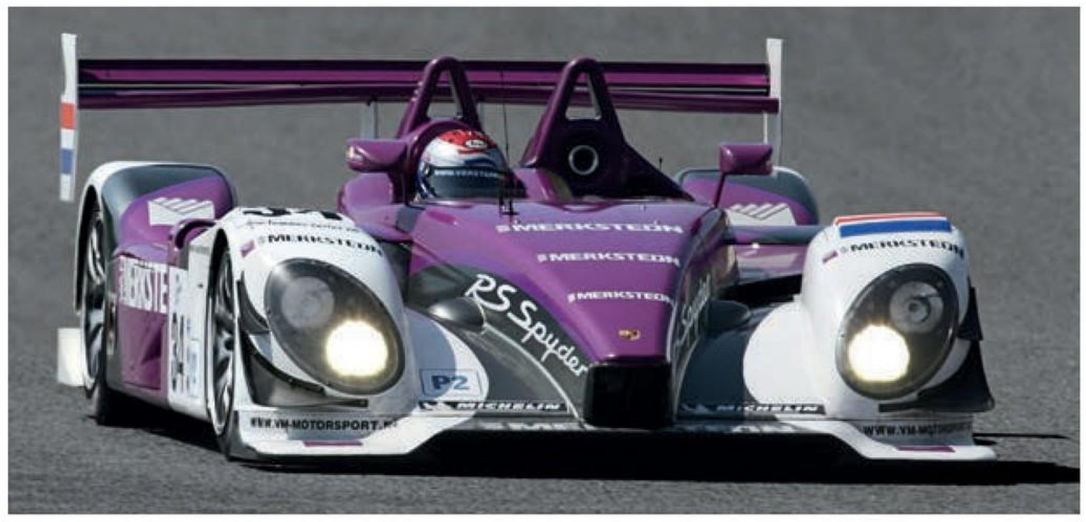
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Where to next for our sport?

We reflect upon the end of another season of Grand Prix racing, and the crowning of a new British World Champion, in this, our 1001st issue. But as usual we're not content with looking back. Motor sport is facing up to an uncomfortable reality, and in the context of a disturbing global recession, change on an unprecedented scale looks sure to be the result.

Racing, of course, always develops and Formula 1 has a wealth of talented young superstars to keep the flame burning. Happily, we can safely predict Lewis Hamilton isn't about to dominate Grand Prix racing in a Schumacher style. There's too much competition for that. And the racing might – just might – be better than we've seen for years. As I write, the new generation of F1 cars are hitting the track for the first time in anger (below), featuring 'cleaner' aerodynamics and the return of slick tyres. They ain't pretty (then again, they haven't been for at least 15 years), but if the right balance of mechanical grip over aero downforce has been achieved, overtaking might no longer be restricted to the brave do-or-die moves Hamilton has specialised in during his first, incredible 35 GPs. Here's hoping.



Off-track, the GP teams have publicly questioned the management of F1 – at last. They want a bigger share of revenues after discovering just how much interest is being paid by CVC Capital to service the billions of debt it heaped on the sport when it bought F1 two years ago… **Read that back** to yourself. Something's wrong there, surely.

Meanwhile, the FIA is hustling the teams to agree on ways to slash costs. It's usually tiresome when the governing body 'nannys' car manufacturers over how much they spend, but given the perilous state we're all in, one cannot deny action is needed. F1's excesses have echoes of the last days of Rome, and it is far from impervious to the fast-approaching recession. But standard engines? We'll end up with IRL Grand Prix racing at this rate. Perhaps the FIA wants to drive out the big manufacturers once and for all…

Television remains central to F1, and not just as a means of making money. For the British public, the BBC is back, so it's goodbye to those pesky ad breaks. But will the Beeb be allowed to make the most of its deal? The potential to deliver more across the mediums of television, web and radio are massive. As ITV discovered, a certain Mr Ecclestone stands in the way. The basic circuit feed is light years behind NASCAR, but that was all ITV had to work with. And the same will be the case for the BBC unless Ecclestone opens the way for innovation. But will he do so or will he continue to be obstructive to TV companies? At times his control seems to throttle the sport he has built. And he rules F1 without even owning it any more!

These are vital times for motor racing. Hold tight for a rocky ride.

As Richard Noble says in this issue, motor racing is governed by formulas to control speed. Such restrictions have no place in the quest for the Land Speed Record. Technical brilliance is the only control required for brute force over the measured mile. That the aim of the BloodhoundSSC project is to encourage the next generation of engineers as much as blitzing an almost unthinkable 1000mph ensures the primal chase for speed still has a place in this ever more restrictive world. We'll be tracking the Bloodhound on your behalf, all the way to the record.

Damien Smith, Editor

CONTRIBUTORS



Martin Brundle

Multiple hot-rod winner Brundle has been one of the anchors of F1 TV coverage since 1997. His grid walkabout is a highlight, because as a Grand Prix driver and Le Mans winner himself he can talk to an F1 driver on equal terms. His insight and crisp honesty make a welcome change from corporate-speak, so this month he joins Nigel Roebuck for a metaphorical 2008 'grid walk'.



Martin Gurdon

Being himself the owner of a Bristol 401, Martin is familiar with the individualistic English company's products. But a meeting with the man who steered Bristol for so many years gave him the opportunity to hear first-hand about Tony Crook's racing background. Martin has written about cars both for newspapers and classic magazines – and has also authored a book on domestic fowl.



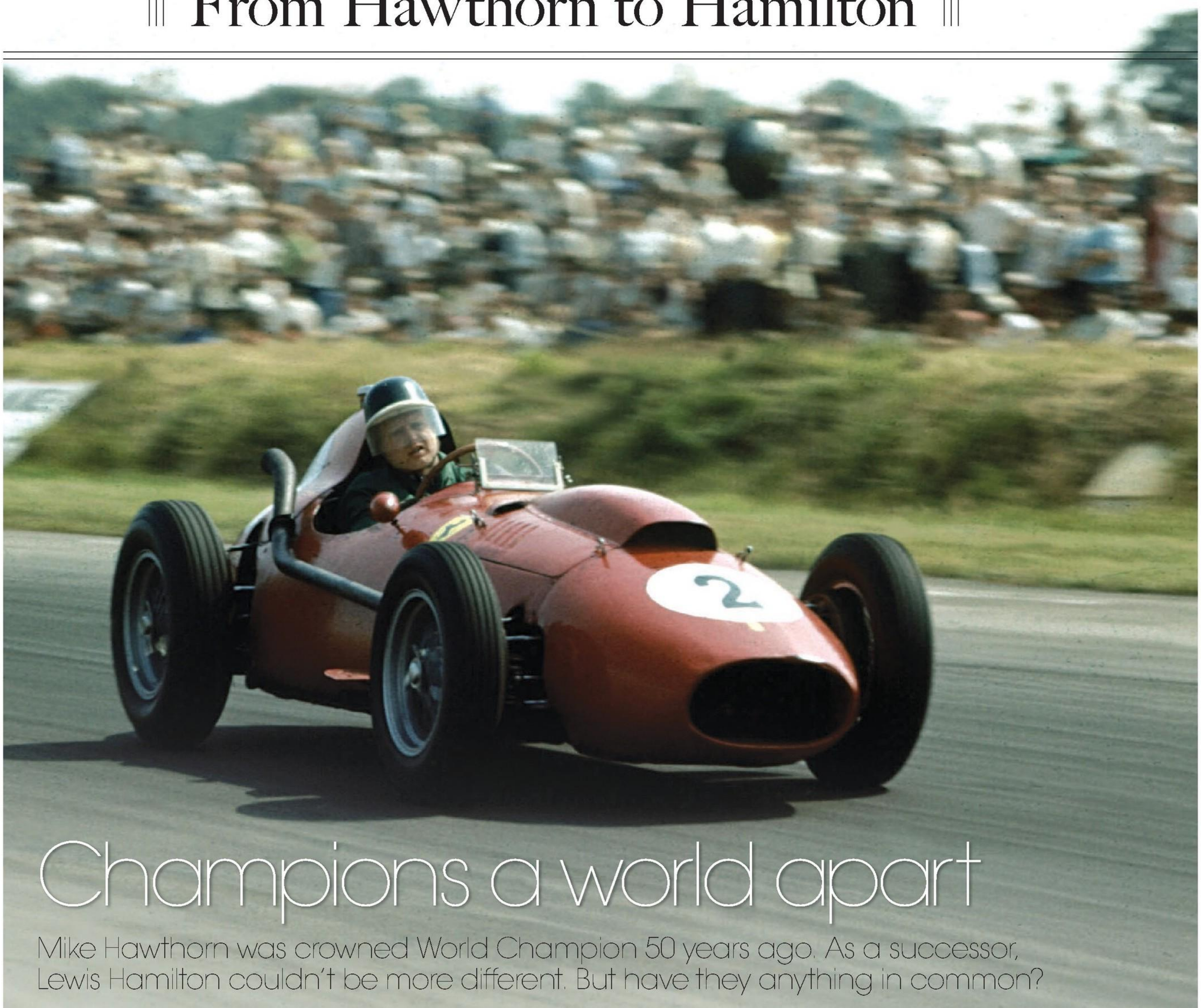
Ed Foster

Ed's teeth are still chattering after his icy ride to Mallory Park and back for our racing Capri shoot. He reports that his new Suzuki GSX-R 750 is a terrific bike, but the heater isn't much cop. However, it was a chance to meet saloon hero Andy Rouse as he tried out a reconstruction of one of the wild racing Fords he worked on and tested as a Broadspeed employee in the 1970s.



Gordon Kirby

Writing about Al Unser Jr this month was home ground for Gordon, who has a string of books on Indycar drivers under his belt, drawing on his 35 years of race reporting in the United States and overseas. Having known Unser for many years was a good basis to draw the Indy 500 winner out on the personal difficulties which disrupted his life and racing career, but which are now behind him.



Champions a world apart

Mike Hawthorn was crowned World Champion 50 years ago. As a successor, Lewis Hamilton couldn't be more different. But have they anything in common?

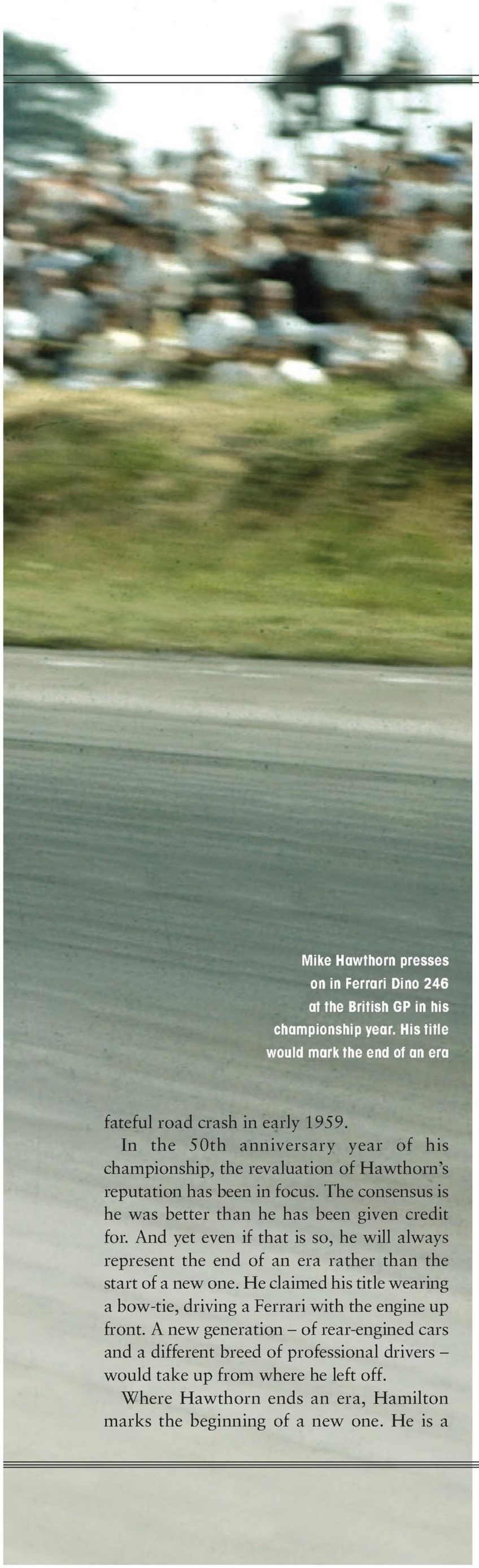
Exactly 50 years after Mike Hawthorn became Britain's first Formula 1 World Champion 23-year-old Lewis Hamilton followed in his wheel tracks. The McLaren ace is the ninth British champion, gaining membership to a select club that also includes Graham Hill, Jim Clark, John Surtees, Jackie Stewart, James Hunt, Nigel Mansell and Damon Hill. His next target is to join Graham Hill, Clark and Stewart as a British driver to win more than one title. It's a challenge he is likely to succeed in meeting.

As the new champion takes his bow, it is natural to contemplate what happens next for Lewis, and given the neatness of '50 years from Hawthorn to Hamilton', also to reflect upon the vast gulf between racing in the 1950s and what we see today. On the face of it, Hawthorn and Hamilton might as well be from different worlds.

And yet despite their differences they do share something beyond their status as British World Champions: they are both truly representative of their times, archetypes of their generations.

Hawthorn's rise took place against a paradoxical backdrop of post-war 'you've never had it so good' optimism and Cold War fear of obliteration. In motor sport his was an era where 'the right crowd and no crowding' still applied, and cheery Mike fitted the image of the British have-a-go racer. But it wasn't all beer and skittles, even for him. He earned his place at the top through hard graft, starting out on bikes before moving on to a Riley 9 bought by his motor trader dad. He had his hurdles, too: the death of his father almost brought an early end to his racing career, he faced public criticism for avoiding the draft and nephritis would likely have prematurely ended his life even if he had avoided that

LAT



Mike Hawthorn presses on in Ferrari Dino 246 at the British GP in his championship year. His title would mark the end of an era

fateful road crash in early 1959.

In the 50th anniversary year of his championship, the revaluation of Hawthorn's reputation has been in focus. The consensus is he was better than he has been given credit for. And yet even if that is so, he will always represent the end of an era rather than the start of a new one. He claimed his title wearing a bow-tie, driving a Ferrari with the engine up front. A new generation – of rear-engined cars and a different breed of professional drivers – would take up from where he left off.

Where Hawthorn ends an era, Hamilton marks the beginning of a new one. He is a World Champion after just 35 races and two years in the top flight. Like Hawthorn, an influential father is behind Hamilton's rise. Unlike Hawthorn, Hamilton's journey to his title began at the tender age of eight. By the time he was in double figures Lewis was reaching levels of dedication and professionalism beyond what Hawthorn ever achieved – or, more significantly, wanted.

This is where the generation gap really shows. This is why we have witnessed the two youngest World Champions, Alonso and Hamilton, in the past four years, and the youngest Grand Prix winner, Sebastian Vettel, this season. Different worlds.



McLaren

We've noted at *Motor Sport* that enthusiasm for Hamilton is well under control for many of our readers. There is a degree of barely disguised arrogance and self-belief about him that has more in common with Senna and Schumacher than the very British modesty of the much-loved Clark, Hunt and Damon Hill. But even for his doubters Hamilton has surely lit a spark in our sport that has been desperately needed.

> "Hamilton has the time and ability to be the 'greatest' British champion of all"

The red-wash years of Schumacher decimated interest in Grand Prix racing, but that is fast becoming ancient history. Off-track, the sport is in a mess thanks largely to greed and mismanagement. But on-track there is new hope that a batch of young stars in cars that can actually race each other – we'll find out next season when the new aero rules come into play – will capitalise on the excitement generated by that last-gasp showdown in Brazil.

But in contrast to Hawthorn, Hamilton is a champion in the worst of times. The threat of the Cold War has gone, but it's been replaced by the fear of religious fundamentalism that runs beyond the control of any government. Economically, we are facing a crippling recession the like of which we've never seen, and in stark contrast to the boom of the post-war years motor sport will feel the pinch, just as we all will. But as Formula 1 finally begins to understand it must curb its costs, there is still hope.

This new era is going to be exciting. Hamilton could race for another 15 years and has the potential to match Schumacher's stultifying career statistics. But can he really achieve that? Are we heading into the 'Hamilton era'? It's unlikely. There's just too much competition from Vettel, Robert Kubica and Nico Rosberg, Felipe Massa, the great Alonso (in a Ferrari some day soon?) and perhaps once again Kimi Räikkönen.

The trend towards standardisation that is threatening to strangle Formula 1 as we know it, as Nigel Roebuck writes this month, is alarming for purists. But at least it should guard against one-team domination and allow more to play leading roles in the global 'show' our sport must be in the 21st century. Even this year there were seven different race winners, driving for four different teams. Yes, it's not all doom and gloom right now.

As for Hamilton's place among the British champions, he has the time and ability to be the 'greatest' of all – in terms of hard stats, anyway. Comparisons of driver talent from different eras is pointless: Hamilton is racing in a sport almost unrecognisable from the one Hawthorn knew. All we can say is that Lewis is unlikely to be revered in the way Mike's '58 title rival was, whatever he achieves. That's because Stirling Moss raced in everything and (almost) anything – and usually won, too. For sheer greatness in its purest form, The Boy can never be beaten.

No matter. That's of no concern to Hamilton. He's living for the weekends, never looking back, hungry for the next Grand Prix. Racing is still just racing, despite all the distractions around it. At least that's something that's never changed.

Damien Smith

Britain's new champion



INSIGHT

HAMILTON'S VOTE OF CONFIDENCE

Lewis pushed aside the question of 'race' as he returned to a rapturous welcome at McLaren's Woking base, but it's one that just won't go away

JUST HOURS AFTER BARACK Obama crossed his own finish line to be confirmed as the first black president of the United States, Formula 1's first black World Champion returned to his team and a deserved hero's welcome.

Hamilton is always uncomfortable when the 'race' question is raised because he simply thinks of himself as a racing driver – nothing more, nothing less. But the significance of his position as a black role model will be foisted upon him whether he likes it or not, and journalists were quick to tackle him on the subject on his homecoming to McLaren's Woking base.

The champ swerved round the questions with skill and his usual charm, but was much more forthright when questioned about his future at McLaren. "I'm with the team I've always dreamt of driving for, and I've got the car I always wanted – so why change?" he said. "I don't know how long I'll be in Formula 1 – but I want to see my career out with this team, and that's my plan."

Hamilton is tied to McLaren as Jim Clark was to Lotus. The whole staff at the space-age McLaren Technology Centre hold him in very obvious and genuine affection. Lewis arrived home at the wheel of an MP4-23, driving round the MTC lake and parking up outside the main entrance. The staff, who had been given special permission to down tools to celebrate the moment, gave him a huge cheer as he stepped from the cockpit, stood on a sidepod and waved his thanks. Hamilton's subsequent speech returned their affection as he paid tribute to the team's efforts to make him the youngest F1 World Champion in history.

A letter of congratulations from the Queen capped a very special morning for Hamilton, who had every right to enjoy his moment. As the staff returned to work, the champion and his pop star girlfriend headed for the airport and a Mercedes function in Germany, where he would drive a McLaren through the streets alongside another great champion, Mika Häkkinen.

The whirlwind life of a World Champion had begun. *DS*



This is only the beginning, predicts jubilant McLaren

SENIOR McLAREN PERSONNEL SAY THAT THE SKY IS THE LIMIT for Lewis Hamilton now that the Briton has got his first World Championship under his belt.

Having missed out by just a point in 2007, Hamilton turned the tables on Felipe Massa and Ferrari in Brazil to become the youngest World Champion in history, while also matching the feat of Jacques Villeneuve in winning in his second year at the top level of the sport.

"He deserved to win it last year and to win it this year is something special," Ron Dennis told *Motor Sport*. "It was a nail-biting and very satisfying World Championship. It means a lot. We've come a long way in a short distance. To be part of his career from being a young boy to seeing him the youngest-ever World Champion is a wonderful experience. I'm so pleased for Lewis, but also very pleased for the team."

In two seasons Hamilton has scored nine Grand Prix wins and taken 13 pole positions. He has been on the podium 22 times in his 35 starts, and has scored 207 points. Remarkably, the 23-year-old has yet to suffer a retirement due to any kind of technical problem or team error. His only non-finishes have been as a result of his crashes in the pit entry in China in 2007, and at the pit exit in Canada this season.

"He's very, very special," said McLaren CEO Martin Whitmarsh. "Under enormous pressure he delivered for the team, and for himself. There were millions of Brazilians who understandably had the dream of Massa winning the World Championship, and they shared those emotions with us during the course of that weekend! That put enormous pressure on someone who's still very young.

"On top of the pressure that clearly mounts from having just missed out on the year before, to then find yourself in that position, where potentially the slightest error and you're going to be condemned to second place for another year, was tough. We all had that in our minds going into Brazil,



McLaren's staff were given the morning off work to welcome back Hamilton, who arrived in style in an MP4-23

All pics McLaren

and over the course of the weekend Lewis didn't panic. He could easily have panicked and made a mistake at various stages of the race.

"And it was difficult for the team and our psyche to race for fifth place. I have to say it wasn't a very enjoyable experience! It could easily have gone terribly wrong for us. I'm delighted for everyone who worked so hard and for Lewis obviously that we got it right in the end."

Whitmarsh believes Hamilton's true potential has yet to be seen: "He may well turn out to be one of the most gifted racing drivers ever. He's developing as a human being, developing as a complete article. Brazil was a demonstration of that, and he'll only come away stronger and better.

"This is the start of a fabulous career. To be rookie of the year and just miss out in your first year, and then win it – he has just a phenomenal career ahead of him. He will now come into next year's World Championship with the self-assurance of a World Champion.



"Lewis will draw a lot out of winning the title and having the right number on his car next year"

MARTIN WHITMARSH

"In my opinion he's got all the natural, raw talent that we've known about for years, and he's just going to get better and better. I think he's going to draw a lot out of winning the championship and having the right number on his car next year. He will be of greater stature and more comfortable next year."

Whitmarsh admitted that McLaren had endured some tough times over the past decade, having failed to win a title since Mika Häkkinen's second success back in 1999. Aside from '07's disappointment, the team twice missed out at a late stage with Kimi Räikkönen.

"After the near-misses there's been enormous pressure on the team. Everyone at Woking and Brixworth has worked so hard. Now it's just released a lot of that pressure. We've had some tough breaks in the last few years, and to win this one feels very good indeed. It's been a roller coaster ride."

McLaren Racing MD Jonathan Neale agreed that it wasn't easy for the team to recover from the frustrations of 2007, and particularly the spy scandal.

"Last year was last year," said Neale. "It made us stronger. We all learned a bit, we moved on. We've been really consistent pushing through the course of this year, stayed disciplined, stayed focused. There have been distractions over the past couple of years, but I'm really pleased that we had the discipline and the confidence to push on and finish it.

"It's fantastic. We love motor sport, and Brazil was what F1 is all about. It had everything. What a great way to finish the season – that was the most exciting fifth place we've ever had! At the end it was a real nail-biter, but Lewis hung in there. He's got more points than any other driver over the last two years. He's been a consistent performer all the way through. He has real talent, and he is what it says on the tin – racing driver. This is just the beginning, there's much more to come."

Hamilton's success in Brazil was particularly poignant for McLaren's veteran head of race operations Steve Hallam, who was enjoying his last race with the team before heading for a new career in NASCAR.

"It was a wonderful way to end. The race was just something that you couldn't imagine in your wildest dreams, unfolding like that. The last couple of laps were anxious, shall we say. We were contenders down to the last race in 2003, and we were contenders in '05 and '07. In 2008 we pulled it off. It's just great. Lewis is right at the beginning of his career. He'll just go from strength to strength now."

Adam Cooper

Dennis to give motor sport safety lecture at NEC show

RON DENNIS HAS BEEN LINED UP to deliver the 2009 Motorsport Safety Fund Watkins Lecture at the Autosport International show on January 9.

The lecture at the NEC in Birmingham has become one of the highlights of the British racing car show and is named after former F1 medic Professor Sid Watkins, who has made the speech twice before. It is usually attended by some 500 delegates who are directly involved in the sport. Previous speakers include Sir Jackie Stewart, Max Mosley, Niki Lauda, Ross Brawn, Bernie Ecclestone, David Richards and Martin Brundle.

Newly retired F1 ace David Coulthard, Le Mans winner Allan McNish, sports car driver David Brabham and rising star Oliver Jarvis are among the names already signed up for the '09 event from January 8-11.

Coulthard will be celebrating his career at the show, with a selection of cars and karts he raced during his career being brought from the David Coulthard Museum in his home village of Twynholm. "Autosport International has been a regular event for me over the years," said Coulthard. "It's quite fitting that we should collaborate on displaying the cars that I have been lucky to drive throughout the years; I have been at the show at the beginning of most of the seasons that will be represented."

McNish will be celebrating his famous 2008 Le Mans 24 Hours victory when he defeated the quicker Peugeots at the wheel of the Audi R10. Radical has also been confirmed for the event, where it will be displaying its latest machinery in new livery. Crowd favourite Terry Grant, the stunt driver who holds 16 world records, will star once again in the 4700-seat Live Action Arena.

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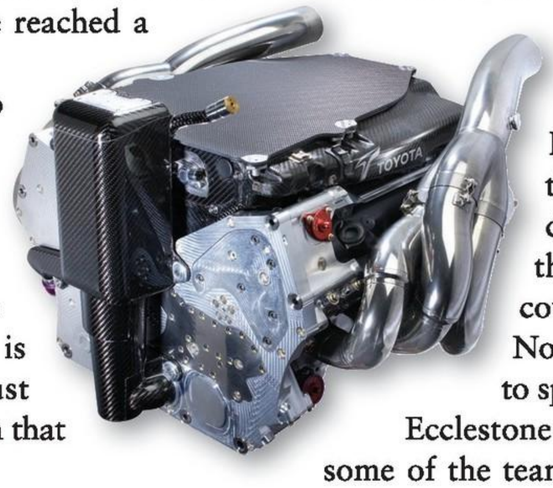
RENAULT

F1 struggles with cost cuts

THE ONGOING DISCUSSIONS ABOUT COST reduction in Formula 1 do not appear to have led to many firm decisions for 2009 and beyond, despite the insistence of most team bosses that within the Formula One Teams Association they have reached a consensus on the way forward.

Thus far the only rule change to be set in stone by the World Motor Sport Council is an increase in engine life from two to three races for 2009, something that will automatically mean teams require fewer units. In addition, testing is expected to be trimmed to just 15,000kms for the season, although that change has yet to be confirmed.

Team bosses met in London immediately after the Brazilian Grand Prix, but little appears to have come out of the meeting.



FIA president Max Mosley is insisting that engine supply deals should be capped at 5 million euros from 2010, and says that if the teams don't come up with a workable plan a standard engine will be introduced.

"We're trying to get the teams to save on the necessity to spend money to be competitive," said Bernie Ecclestone. "I'm sure some of the board members are going to sit down and say 'what are we spending this on?' They're still getting more coverage than they would elsewhere. Notwithstanding that, why do they need to spend? The answer is they don't."

Ecclestone is sceptical about the motives of some of the team principals involved in the FOTA discussions. "As always they are trying to manoeuvre it to what's good for them," he said. "You're always going to get leading lights."

Renault bags Alonso

THE QUESTION OF FERNANDO Alonso's future was finally resolved when Renault confirmed that the Spaniard will be staying with the team for the next two years.



After opportunities with Ferrari and BMW disappeared Alonso's only real alternative was an open invitation to move to Honda, where Ross Brawn was keen to get him on board. Alonso had long insisted that he knew what he was going to be doing in 2009, but the news did not come until three days after the final race of '08 in Brazil.

Alonso had an astonishing end to the season, winning in Singapore and Japan and jumping up to fifth place in the World Championship. He scored more points than any other driver in the last third of the season.

Renault also confirmed that Nelson Piquet will be retained for another season, despite lobbying within the camp on behalf of test drivers Lucas di Grassi and Romain Grosjean. Piquet was given a late boost by points finishes in Japan and China.

Rubens Barrichello is keen to retain his Honda seat alongside Jenson Button, but his chances appear slim. At the Barcelona test in mid-November Honda gave GP2 star Bruno Senna his first F1 outing, and also tried di Grassi. Honda will have substantial Brazilian sponsorship from Petrobras in 2009, but that is said not to be a factor in driver choice.

Barrichello's one remaining option is Toro Rosso, where Sébastien Bourdais, Takuma Sato and test driver Sébastien Buemi are all still in the frame for a seat.

Force India shake-up

FORCE INDIA IS IN A RACE against time to ready a car for 2009 after agreeing a deal to use Mercedes engines and gearboxes and a KERS system from McLaren.

The team had an ongoing engine supply deal with Ferrari, but team owner Vijay Mallya ended it a year early because he wanted to have a complete drivetrain package, and Ferrari could not supply it. In effect the team has had to start afresh with the design of the VJM02.

The news coincided with a major management shake-up. Mallya will take over the team principal role and adopt a more hands-on approach, while erstwhile team boss Colin Kolles and chief technical officer Mike Gascoyne have both left.

Ex-McLaren man Steven Robert will handle day-to-day business as COO, with the technical side headed by James Key and Mark Smith.

Mika turns manager

MIKA HAKKINEN HAS DECIDED to begin a new career as a driver manager. The two-time Formula 1 World Champion has joined the ACES Management Group in order to find and help young driving talent.

Having teamed up with his old manager Didier Coton, Häkkinen says that he's excited about the new venture and believes he can take drivers to the top. "From my own experience I understand what it takes to arrive at the top and how vital it is to a sportsman's career to have a close group of trusted professionals around him," he said.

"I can't wait to share what I learned winning two titles with ambitious young drivers."

Canadian GP rescue bid fails

THE CANADIAN GRAND PRIX has failed to reappear on the latest version of the 2009 Formula 1 calendar, despite attempts to revive the race.

Bernie Ecclestone confirmed in Brazil that there was still a good chance the race could be saved after negotiations with the Montréal authorities. However, the task could not be completed in time to add it to the calendar confirmed by the World Motor Sport Council a few days later.

Ecclestone did confirm that there was no way back for the French GP in 2009. The race will be missing from the World Championship for the first time since 1955, when it was cancelled in the wake of the Le Mans disaster.

Ecclestone has also shuffled the calendar by switching the Chinese GP to April and bringing the last three races forward. The inaugural Abu Dhabi GP will now close the season on November 1 rather than the 15th as originally intended.

2009 FIA FORMULA 1 CALENDAR

MAR 29	**AUSTRALIA** *(Melbourne)*
APR 5	**MALAYSIA** *(Kuala Lumpur)*
APR 19	**CHINA** *(Shanghai)*
APR 26	**BAHRAIN** *(Manama)*
MAY 10	**SPAIN** *(Barcelona)*
MAY 24	**MONACO** *(Monte Carlo)*
JUN 7	**TURKEY** *(Istanbul)*
JUN 21	**BRITAIN** *(Silverstone)*
JUL 12	**GERMANY** *(Nürburgring)*
JUL 26	**HUNGARY** *(Budapest)*
AUG 23	**EUROPE** *(Valencia)*
AUG 30	**BELGIUM** *(Spa-Francorchamps)*
SEP 13	**ITALY** *(Monza)*
SEP 27	**SINGAPORE** *(Singapore)*
OCT 4	**JAPAN** *(Suzuka)*
OCT 18	**BRAZIL** *(São Paulo)*
NOV 1	**ABU DHABI** *(Abu Dhabi)*

Nigel Roebuck



REFLECTIONS
– Title decider had shades of Hawthorn vs Moss
– Why standard engines have no place in F1

If the rain at Interlagos had kept from suddenly worsening for another half-minute or less, Sebastian Vettel and, more importantly, Lewis Hamilton would never have caught Timo Glock on the last lap, and Felipe Massa would be the World Champion of 2008. For a brief moment indeed, as he took the flag after a perfect drive, Massa – and all in the Ferrari pit, including his parents and brother – thought he had done it. Twenty-one seconds later Hamilton overtook a stricken Glock for the fifth place he needed, and Luca di Montezemolo, watching at home, smashed his TV set to pieces.

In the following days endless words were published about this convulsive conclusion to the Formula 1 season, and if every cliché – not least the one about no racing movie script daring to come up with a climax like this – was served up, it was hardly surprising. I remember thinking the same about the 1970 Monaco Grand Prix, when Jack Brabham understeered into the barrier at my feet, and Jochen Rindt, shaking his head in disbelief, nipped by to win.

That, however, was merely the last corner of the last lap of a race. What we saw at Interlagos was a matter of the last corner of the last lap of a *season*, and in a trice it all came back to Hamilton, while Massa, who had touched the hem of the World Championship, was plunged into his own private tragedy. Hero and zero, shuffle them as you will.

As Hamilton's eternal chaperone, his father Anthony, steered his boy through the photographers and TV crews in pitlane, there was an overpowering poignancy about the day. While McLaren and Mercedes folk hugged each other, their joy amplified by relief, by the sheer *unexpectedness* of it all, the crowd, its mortification the more overwhelming for coming on the heels of brief rapture, began sullenly to boo.

Hamilton *père* expressed disappointment at what he perceived as a lack of sportsmanship, and you could understand him, but in reality he could have »»

If Hamilton was not as consistent a force in 2008 as in '07, still he was a deserving champion

McLaren

Nigel Roebuck

expected little else. Had this been Silverstone, after all, and the fortunes of Lewis and his rival reversed, the response would have been no different. Let us not forget the enchanting banner unfurled in the Woodcote grandstand before the start of the 1992 British Grand Prix, when most of the populace apparently dared anyone to challenge Nigel Mansell. 'F*** Senna', it said. Without the asterisks.

What made the post-race scene at Interlagos surreal was that the title fight had been settled, and in the most dramatic fashion imaginable, yet the new World Champion was nowhere to be seen, for in the podium ceremony he had no role to play. And adding to the paradox of the moment was that in the lights, harsh against a gloomy sky, Massa was struggling to keep from tears, Alonso and Räikkönen apparently at a wake.

In this age of sport, in which the clenched fist and contorted face are so much the norm, Massa's behaviour was from another time, and it would have been a stony heart left unmoved by the conflict in his face, the mix of anguish and pride. I thought he handled a cruel scenario with consummate grace.

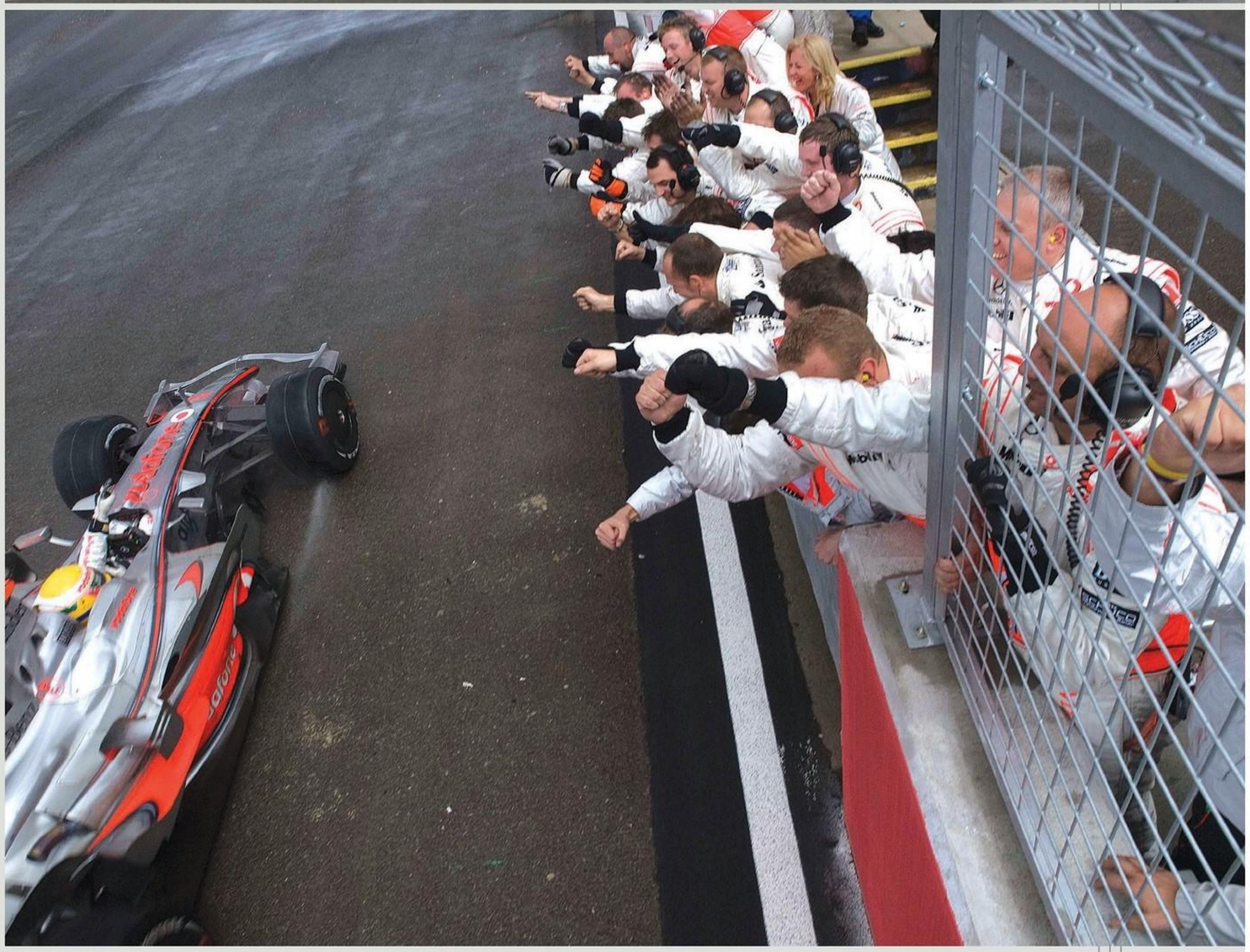
Felipe has, after all, lately made Interlagos his own, and not only by virtue of his nationality. Two years ago – on the occasion of Michael Schumacher's final race – he won with ease, and in 2007 was similarly untouchable before moving over to allow Räikkönen through for the 10 points he needed for the championship. This time around Massa, to have any realistic shot at the title, had to win in Brazil again, and he could have done nothing more, starting from pole position and putting a lock on the race from the outset.

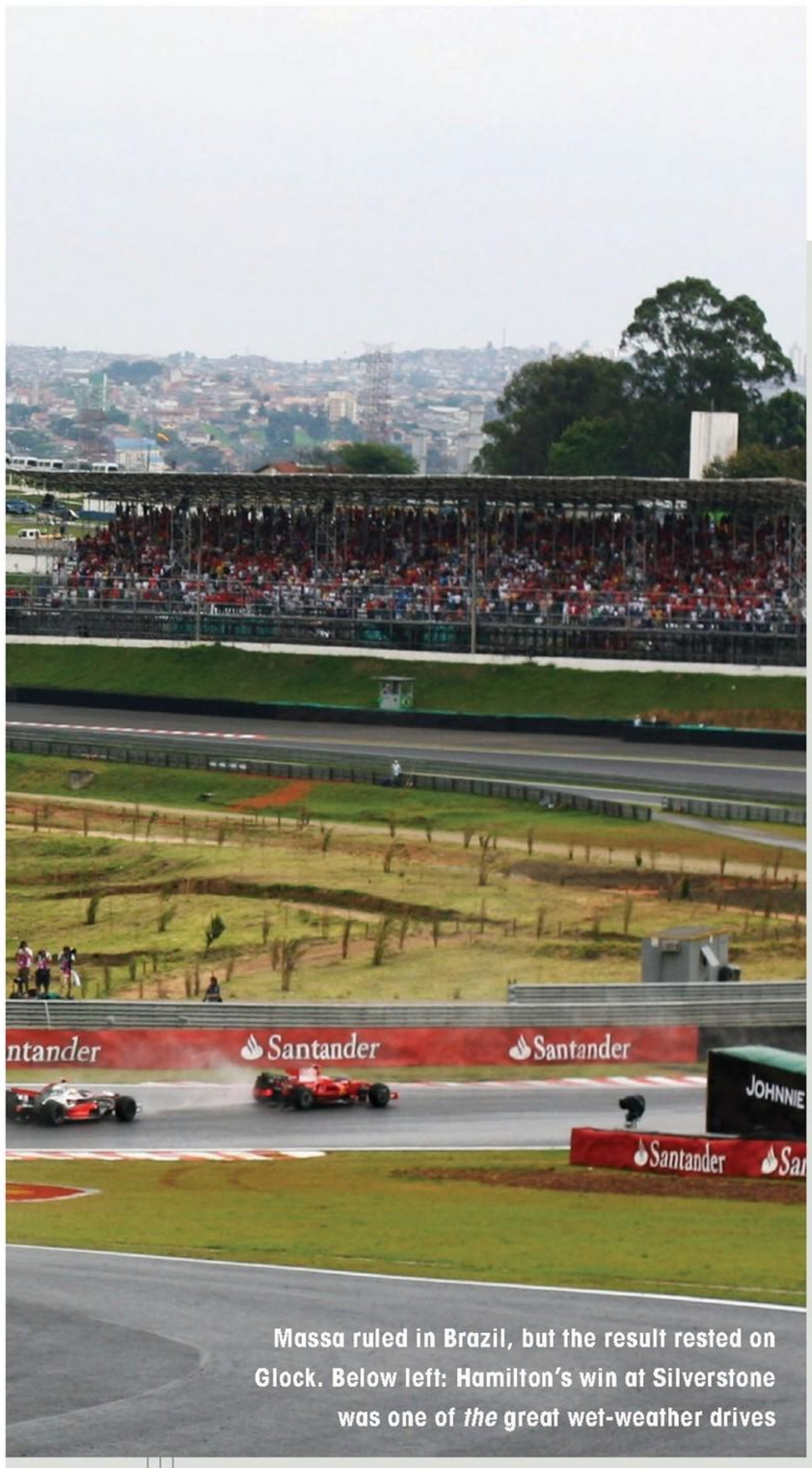
In a way, the occasion was reminiscent of the championship decider 50 years ago, when Stirling Moss had to win in Casablanca, and did so emphatically, but Mike Hawthorn needed only second place to become Britain's first World Champion, a position duly handed to him in the late laps by Ferrari team-mate Phil Hill.

Like Moss, Massa won more races than anyone else in the season, but there the



Toyota


McLaren



Massa ruled in Brazil, but the result rested on Glock. Below left: Hamilton's win at Silverstone was one of *the* great wet-weather drives

comparisons end, for there was no question, as some fatuously suggested, of Glock's making a present of fifth place to Hamilton. If Timo could have finished ahead of Lewis, he would have done, but, as we have so many times seen, on a streaming track a modern F1 car on dry tyres is about as agile as a reveller in a swamp, and on its final lap the Toyota was 18 seconds slower than Lewis's intermediate-shod McLaren. For the record, it's worth pointing out that Jarno Trulli's Toyota, also on slicks, was fractionally slower still.

In the end, then, it all came right for Hamilton, but as he freely acknowledged, a sizeable chunk of luck was involved, for in the late laps he had been powerless to do anything about Vettel, who had passed him for that crucial fifth place, and the World Championship looked lost, just as at Interlagos in 2007. Neither Lewis nor anyone in the McLaren pit, after all, could positively have *known* when the rain was going to intensify, when Glock was going to slide back into their clutches. This was the closest of calls in the history of the championship, shading even Adelaide in 1986, when the title swung between Mansell, Piquet and – finally – Prost.

It has been a curious season, 2008, in the sense that occasionally one began to wonder if anyone really *wanted* the title. Räikkönen, the reigning World Champion, was rarely a factor, and if it worried him he didn't show it, while Alonso, pound for pound the best all-round racing driver on earth, had talked himself out of McLaren, and gone back to a Renault team understandably off the boil after a year with Fisichella as number one. Robert Kubica did more with what he had than anyone, but after a victory (the aim of the season) had been achieved in Montréal, BMW turned down the flame on development of the '08 car, preferring to concentrate on the delights of KERS and everything that next season will entail.

All of which distilled the championship to a fight between the two motivated drivers at McLaren and Ferrari, Hamilton and Massa, both of whom were often sublime, occasionally awful.

In the build-up to the Brazilian Grand Prix some frankly absurd things were written and said about the protagonists in the forthcoming battle, some observers suggesting that Felipe's challenge to Lewis amounted to effrontery – how dare this journeyman presume to take on a god?

Utter nonsense, it seemed to me. Massa may not have the once-and-for-all talent of a Senna, a Schumacher – or a Hamilton, but he has annihilated the more naturally gifted Räikkönen this season, and done it with a minimum of fuss, on more than one occasion simply disappearing into a race of his own, just as he did several times in 2007, and at Istanbul the year before, when Schumacher couldn't live with him in either qualifying or race.

They say of Felipe that he is at his best only when he starts at the front and leads all the way, that he is less certain when he needs to fight, to come through the pack. For what it's worth, there were those who said the same of such as Alberto Ascari and Jim Clark. It is undeniable that the great majority of Felipe's victories have been flag-to-flag affairs – as Alain Prost used to say, "That's surely the aim, no?" – but his pass, for example, of Hamilton around the outside at the first corner in Budapest was a masterpiece of audacity and self-belief. Thereafter no one got near him, and he lost the race only because the Ferrari's engine let go three laps from the finish.



Ferrari

"Massa reminds me of Pedro Rodriguez – he just gets better and better"

In a way, Massa reminds me of Pedro Rodriguez, not because he wears a deerstalker, or because he is a genius in the wet (Silverstone, let's face it, was an embarrassment), but because he simply gets better and better and better, just as Pedro did.

To belittle Massa, to suggest he doesn't really belong in the top echelon, is in any case to compromise the significance of Hamilton's achievement. This has been by far Felipe's most impressive season, while Lewis, I would suggest, has not been consistently as strong as in 2007.

That said, like Jacques Villeneuve, he became World Champion in only his second season as a Grand Prix driver, and if, like JV, he was instantly into a front-running car, after a phenomenal amount of preparation, still he had to deliver.

After that remarkable debut season, when Hamilton lost the championship only at the very last, many suggested that logically, with a year's experience to work with, he ought to waltz the title in 2008. Before the season's opening race, though, Jackie Stewart offered a cautionary word or two.

"I think many people's expectations of Lewis are far too high," he said. "For all his talent, he is still a young man – and still short of experience. He had a truly *astonishing* first season, but – while I hope it doesn't happen – I think he could easily fall into the 'second season' syndrome, which is so common: after a great beginning, the second season falls short of expectations. I know all about it, because it happened to me.

Nigel Roebuck

"Things have changed in Lewis's life, haven't they? No longer is he living near the factory, no longer is he in every morning, with his mechanics and engineers, and so on. He's in Geneva – and he's becoming a non-resident, so therefore he's only going to be allowed a small amount of time in the UK.

"There's another thing, too. However difficult the relationship may have been between himself and Alonso, he may find that, in some respects, he misses his influence this season. Fernando is *very* good on set-up, for example, and there will have been times when Lewis benefited from that. As well as that, in 2007 he was the rookie, with very little to lose – if Alonso beat him, well, that was to be expected of a double World Champion, but if he beat Fernando… *wow*! In 2008, though, he is the team leader at McLaren, and in only his second season. I know he's a very confident young man, but that sort of thing brings pressures of its own…"

So it did, and there were occasions this year, most notably at Bahrain, where Hamilton had nothing like the sureness of touch we had come to take for granted in 2007. There were times when he over-drove, and times when he made apparently unfathomable decisions, as in qualifying at Monza, where he opted to go out on intermediates in a monsoon, and found himself 15th on the grid.

All that said, Lewis's blinding speed and other-worldly car control were invariably in evidence. He won brilliantly at Monaco, and at Silverstone produced not only the victory of the season, but also a wet-weather drive which stands comparison with any in the sport's history.

Before Hamilton arrived in F1, Keke Rosberg, who had known him from the karting days, told me of another of his attributes. "Lewis is *incredibly* brave," Rosberg said. "I mean, *Gilles* brave…"

So, too, he is, and sometimes, according to rivals, a little too much so. Thirty years ago they were saying the same of Villeneuve, and although Hamilton has told me how much he bases his approach to the job on Ayrton Senna, the great hero of his youth, if anything I find more parallels – certainly at this stage of his career – between himself and Gilles. Mauro Forghieri used to talk about Villeneuve's 'rage to win', and it is also apparent in Hamilton, sometimes with disastrous consequences, as at Fuji in October, when, with the title beckoning, he tried to outbrake half the world into the first corner. In Shanghai a week later, though, there was a victory in the metronomic manner of Prost.

A worthy World Champion, then? Yes, unquestionably – but so, too, would Massa have been, for through 18 Grands Prix the title see-sawed between the two of them, with occasional interventions from Robert Kubica. At the last, though, it all came down to Timo Glock's tyres.

"Er, Commendatore, have you got a moment?"

"I have all the time in the world, since I am-a retiring from racing…"

As I suggested last month, Peter Ustinov's sublime spoof on motor racing, *The Grand Prix of Gibraltar*, may have been recorded half a century ago, but still resonates today. Commendatore Fanfani's threat to withdraw from racing, for example, merely echoed a pattern of behaviour long ago established by E Ferrari. Lest we forget, not one car bearing the yellow shield was on the grid at Silverstone in May 1950, when the first World Championship Grand Prix was run, Enzo having withdrawn his team after a dispute over 'starting money'. Nothing like beginning as he meant to go on, and if Messrs Ascari and Villoresi were disappointed, well, so be it.

Over time Ferrari, only too aware that his team had a pulling power like no other, ruthlessly badgered race organisers everywhere with his financial demands, and if they were not met the transporters stayed in Maranello, simple as that.

He was in a unique position, and knew it. All through the years of my youth, when there were several non-championship F1 events in this country, as well as the Grand Prix, a race became 'a proper race' only if Ferraris were on the grid, and this had little to do with the team's competitiveness at a given moment. If the only red cars on show were privately-entered Cooper-Maseratis or whatever, entered by such as Scuderia Centro-Sud, the entire occasion was automatically downgraded in my mind, and countless others felt the same.

Having joyfully watched Jean Behra and Tony Brooks finish one-two in the 1959 Aintree 200, for example, I was mortified when Ferrari declined to send any cars to Liverpool for the British Grand Prix later in the year. 'Metal workers' strike.' Yeah, right.

A couple of years later the Old Man didn't even trouble to come up with an excuse for not entering any cars in the US Grand Prix at Watkins Glen, even though his number one driver Phil Hill – an American – had clinched the World Championship a month earlier. Hill and his public were therefore denied the opportunity of celebration at home, and I once put it to Phil that he must have found it difficult to forgive Ferrari.

"Oh," he laughed, "I didn't have enough sense to know that he was supposed to enter for the Glen, you know. I'd won the championship at Monza, but the same day we lost von Trips, and I thought it was clever – and typical – of Ferrari that he could go into mourning, and get out of going to the last race! Yes, it was terrible we didn't go to the Glen, and certainly I was pissed off, but the whole Trips thing was a big trauma. I was with Ferrari for days afterwards, and there was all this, 'Oh, what are we going to do?' hand-wringing stuff, and I just sort of fell into it, and felt that I would be selfish, in this time of great trauma, to say, 'I want to go race some more'…

"You can't imagine what it was like at Maranello at that time. I mean, the Vatican didn't send anyone, but everyone else in the damn country was milling around down there, and there was Ferrari, with three days' beard growth, and bathrobes and everything, to appear grief-stricken… and I sort of fell for it! He'd probably been through the same thing dozens of times…"

Nor, over the years, did Ferrari hesitate to make a theatrical gesture in order to make a point. In 1964, for example, he got into a major row with the Italian Automobile Federation over the disputed homologation of the 250LM sports car, eventually declaring that he was giving up his entrants' licence, and would never again race cars in his own name in Italy.

On the near horizon were the last two Grands Prix of the season, in America



Surtees in the blue and white Ferrari at Watkins Glen in 1964 – one of Enzo's many protests

LAT

and Mexico, and Enzo's final flourish was to place a call to New York, to his old buddy Luigi Chinetti, the Ferrari importer in the USA and proprietor of the North American Racing Team. At Watkins Glen and Mexico City, the Ferraris of John Surtees, Lorenzo Bandini and Pedro Rodriguez were in white and blue – and it was thus in these colours that Surtees won the World Championship. Due notice was taken: the 250LM's homologation problems melted away, and at the start of the 1965 season Ferraris were red again.

Even more overt – and emphatically more costly – was the Old Man's response, in the mid-80s, to an FIA proposal to restrict Formula 1 engines (in the forthcoming post-turbo, 'normally aspirated' era) to eight cylinders. This being four fewer than he considered desirable, Ferrari said that unless the proposed change were rescinded, he would abandon Grand Prix racing altogether, and instead commit his company to the CART series.

Given the state of Indycar racing today, no one would take such a threat seriously, but back then, before greed and self-interest began to strangle it, CART was an immensely popular and very well supported series, growing at a rate which was increasingly a concern to the powers-that-be in F1.

Still, there were many who believed that Ferrari's threat was nothing more than hot air, but Bobby Rahal was one who took it seriously, for the Truesports team, for whom he drove, was contacted by Maranello, and asked if it would be interested in running a car built by Ferrari. Team owner Jim Trueman had a meeting with Piero Lardi Ferrari, and arrangements were made. Rahal duly tested his March-Cosworth at Fiorano, and the car was closely studied by Ferrari engineers.

What's more, the company's CART car was actually built, and a beautiful thing it was. But although it was tested by Michele Alboreto, Rahal never actually got to drive it, for by then the FIA had concluded that, now they thought about it, there wasn't really a whole lot wrong with 12-cylinder engines in F1 after all.

That being so, Ferrari – predictably – lost interest in the CART project, but although the car itself never raced, its turbocharged V8 engine did later surface in the American series, now rebadged as an Alfa Romeo. And, given the way it performed, perhaps it's as well that Enzo stuck with what he knew. From 1989 to 1995, Ferrari drivers had V12 engines at their backs.

Why this look back to some of Enzo's little idiosyncrasies? Well, because recently his successors in Maranello advised the FIA that, unless the governing body's

Nigel Roebuck

proposed changes to the engine regulations were re-thought, Ferrari would have to 're-evaluate, with its partners, the viability of continuing its presence in the sport'. Here we go again...

To some considerable extent, Enzo Ferrari's bullying tactics with race organisers were curtailed in the early '70s, when Bernie Ecclestone became a team owner (of Brabham), and lost little time in unionising – sorry to use an obscene word, Bernie, but it's the right one – the teams. Once FOCA – the Formula One Constructors Association – had been formed, and Ecclestone entrusted with the task of negotiating with race organisers on behalf of all the teams, even those owners with initial reservations looked at their new bank statements, and concluded that Bernie was just the ticket.

That included Ferrari, of course. Ecclestone's contracts with the Grand Prix organisers (and, later, the TV companies) guaranteed the presence of all the major teams at every event, so suddenly Ferrari's occasional absenteeism became a thing of the past. Enzo, for his part, was delighted by Bernie's negotiating skills, which swiftly proved superior even to his own.

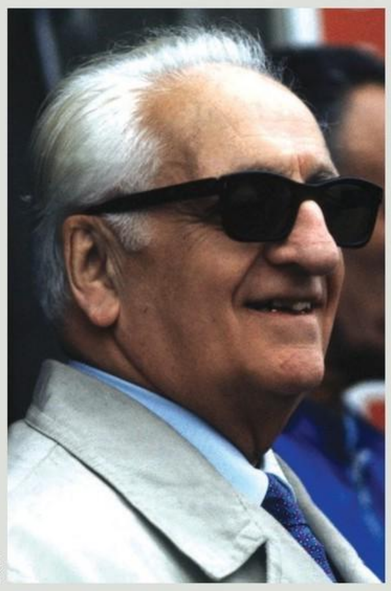
For some little time, therefore, Ferrari – in terms of putting cars on the grid at every race – have been as good as gold. But, following a board meeting in Maranello the week before the Brazilian Grand Prix, the company issued a statement suggesting that its long-term commitment to F1 should not be taken for granted, and this time – for once – I found myself wholly in sympathy with its sentiments.

The press release read thus: "While reiterating its wholehearted commitment to a substantial and needed reduction in costs in F1, starting with propulsion, the Ferrari Board of Directors expressed strong concerns regarding plans to standardise engines as it felt that such a move would detract from the entire *raison d'etre* of a sport with which Ferrari has been involved continuously since 1950, a *raison d'etre* based principally on competition and technological development. The Board of Directors expressed the opinion that should these key elements be diminished, it would have to re-evaluate, with its partners, the viability of continuing its presence in the sport".

For the umpteenth time, no one needs to be told that costs need to be reduced in Grand Prix racing, and drastically so. In 1995, not long before he died, Denis Jenkinson told me of his mounting fear that one day F1 was going to 'implode'. "We've lost our sense of proportion," he said. "There's so much money around at the moment that they don't know what to do with it, but I can't get away from the feeling that it can't be sustained, that it's all a house of cards..."

Ahead of his time, Jenks. Not least of Mr G 'Prudence' Brown.

While Jenks had the conviction that F1 profligacy was out of control, however, he would have been appalled by the FIA's proposal of a 'standard engine', for, like Enzo Ferrari, he loved engines above everything else. "Don't understand tyres," he would airily say; nor did he have a deep interest in aerodynamics. Engines, though, were a different matter, and the notion of 'standardising' them – obliging everyone to run the same motor – might well, I suspect, have killed his interest in the contemporary sport of racing.



LAT

"Enzo Ferrari did not hesitate to make a theatrical gesture in order to make a point"

For a couple of years now, we have had 'standard tyres' in F1, in the sense that the governing body decided all teams should run on the same rubber, and put the contract out to tender. To no one's great surprise, Michelin, whose motivation came from competition, had no interest in competing against itself and declined to bid, leaving the goal open for Bridgestone, a scenario precisely duplicated recently in MotoGP.

Now, however, the FIA wants to develop the 'standardisation' theme in F1, and in a late October letter to FOTA – the recently-formed, long overdue, Formula One Teams Association – Max Mosley offered three options on engines, the most draconian of which was 'A homologated engine produced by a single supplier after an invitation to tender, with the current suppliers free to build an identical engine themselves (but not the gearbox), subject to rigorous controls'.

Option 2 read thus: 'A consortium of teams obtain an engine to current rules, but at a much lower cost, from a single supplier. Engines from other sources to be subject to rigorous controls *to eliminate differences in performance*'. The italics, incidentally, are mine.

And so we come to Option 3, clearly the most desirable – or least undesirable – of those on offer: 'A proposal from FOTA, backed by solid guarantees, for the supply of complete power trains to independent teams for less than five millions euros per team per season, to include 30,000 kms of testing and all on-track assistance'. A move, in other words, to keep the small teams from going under.

It has been a feature of the FIA's working practices, in the Mosley era, to lead F1 teams by the nose towards what the governing body wants, and to achieve that by putting on the table only completely unacceptable, often patently absurd alternatives. Max wants to slash the costs in F1, and also to guarantee an affordable source of engines to the independent teams. But, while both are clearly laudable aims, to threaten the imposition of a 'standard engine', or even to inflict 'rigorous controls to eliminate differences in performance', is surely to destroy the entire ethos of Grand Prix racing.

How different things used to be, did they not? And not so long ago, either. When Mosley decreed that 2.4-litre V8 engines would replace the 3-litre V10s for 2006, there was already a pressing need to cut costs, and the manufacturers howled in pain at the thought: to design and manufacture a wholly new engine – and long before

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Nigel Roebuck

the previously agreed expiry date of the V10 era – would, they said, be prodigiously expensive, so how did that square with 'reducing costs'?

Mosley insisted that the change was being made on safety grounds, suggesting that horsepower (while still nowhere near the levels of the turbo era) had become unacceptably high. Very well, the teams argued, why not peg it back by simply imposing a rev limit on the existing V10s? BMW and Honda, in particular, stuck to their guns, and their refusal to fall into line for a long time stood in the way of the unanimous agreement required for the change to go through. Ultimately, the two companies were advised, in words of one syllable, that failure to conform might lead to… repercussions, whereupon they meekly signed on the dotted line. Their anger, though, is evident to this day.

Once the 2.4-litre V8s got the reluctant green light, a couple of hundred horsepower were instantly lost, and immediately the quest began to get some of them back.

Bernie Ecclestone was never a fan of the move to reduce power, to go to a smaller engine. Even before it was introduced, he could see what it was going to mean: "What we'll have to do, probably, is limit the revs on the 2.4, because otherwise they're going to be revving like crazy, and everyone'll be spending a fortune to get another seven horsepower. This change hasn't really achieved anything – except put the cost of engines up..."

As ever, Ecclestone was on the money, and it wasn't long before we had the 'engine freeze', which required all manufacturers to submit for FIA inspection and approval an engine whose specification could then not be changed through the following season. At the same time a rev limit of 19,000 was imposed.

This being F1, it was no more than inevitable that some would take advantage of the period coming up to the 'inspection' date, frantically maximising their engines' performance, while others worked on the understanding that 'engine specs' were already frozen, and consequently lost out in a big way through the season just past.

During the season, indeed, the differences between one engine and another were further exaggerated when some manufacturers, employing modifications permitted in the interests of 'reliability', found ways of making those mods work in the interests of 'horsepower'. *What* a surprise. As the year went on, it became more obvious that some were doing this while others were not, and increasingly Fernando Alonso complained that, as a Renault driver, he wasn't participating in a fair fight. If you doubt him, look no further than the increasing competitiveness of the Ferrari-powered Toro Rosso, relative to that of the Renault-powered Red Bull.

Given that engine specifications are supposedly 'frozen', and for several years, it is therefore hardly surprising that such teams as Renault and Honda (both of which were left gasping in the power stakes this season past) have requested of the FIA that in future the engines should also be 'equalised'.



LAT

Otherwise, as Ross Brawn has pointed out, those at the top – and the bottom – will remain there ad infinitum. The FIA has accepted this argument, and agreed that – so long as cost-cutting measures are accepted for 2009 – 'equalisation' should go ahead. Quite how this is to be achieved, however, remains unclear.

> "This change has only put the cost of engines up"
>
> BERNIE ECCLESTONE

So where, one may ask, is all this going? When the engine 'freeze' was imposed, more than one team principal told me of the difficulties implicit in informing his board that, yes, the company was involved in building engines for F1, but, no, it was henceforth not allowed to seek more power than it already had – and, perhaps more importantly, more than its rivals had. If the engine 'freeze' is indeed to be the long-term status quo, I suppose it makes sense, at least in terms of competition, that the engines should be somehow 'equalised', but that, as I say, seems to cut across the whole point of Grand Prix racing, which has always preened itself as the technological pinnacle of motor sport.

As for a 'standard engine', produced by a single supplier with other manufacturers, in the FIA's words, 'free to build an identical engine themselves', the mind boggles. This is supposed to be *Formula 1*! Can anyone explain why, in those circumstances, a Renault or BMW or Toyota or Honda or… Ferrari, might wish to remain involved? No, nor I. Hence my support for Ferrari's warning shot to the governing body.

Engines, surely, are what racing at the top level has always been fundamentally about. If we are to have 'spec racing' in F1, then why the foolishness of 'freezing' what was already a prodigiously expensive engine? Why not simply put all the top drivers into GP2 cars and have done with it? It would probably turn out a reasonable show in itself, and cost a tiny fraction of Grand Prix racing as she is wrote.

That we need to cut costs there is no doubt, which is why this is an unfortunate moment, for all its clearly 'green' credentials, to be introducing KERS energy recovery technology into F1. But we'll let that go. If the powers-that-be wish to slash expenditure, then instead of stultifying engine development, let them look at other measures, such as paying drivers sensibly, drastically reducing testing, and putting restrictions on the absurdly expensive wind tunnels, which run 24/7 and produce nothing that improves F1 in the eye of the fan. Who, in the end, pays for the whole damn thing, anyway.

And if none of that works, we can always look for outside assistance. Anyone got a number for Lehman Brothers? Oh, that's right, they don't have one any more.

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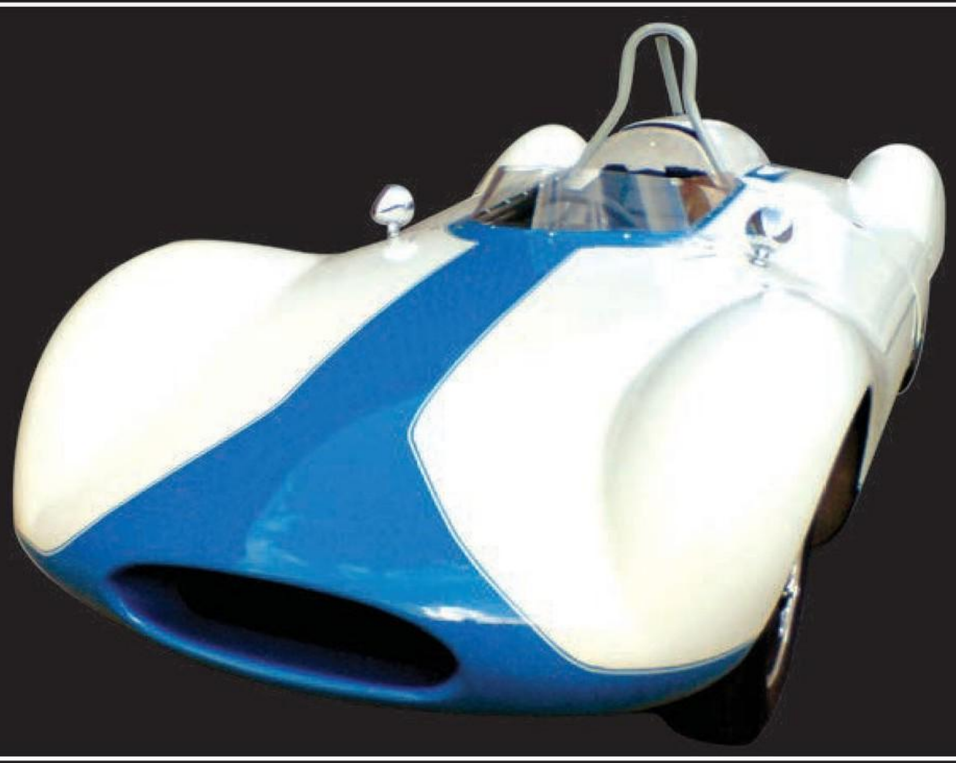
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ITC WINS: 10
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FIA GT WINS: 11

MERCEDES TOURING CAR LEGEND Bernd Schneider has called time on a professional racing career that includes a record five German DTM tin-top titles.

The 44-year-old German confirmed his rumoured retirement ahead of this year's DTM finale at Hockenheim in October, claiming that "today's DTM is for another generation". The five-time DTM champion will now become a brand ambassador for Mercedes AMG. Schneider, who signed up to drive for the works AMG squad for 1992, put his success down to "joining a team that had what it took to win races". He rates his final DTM championship success in 2006 as his best because "winning another title when everyone said I hadn't got it any more was just great".



F1 career never took off in uncompetitive Zakspeed

Schneider first raced in the DTM with Ford's junior team as early as 1986, dovetailing tin-tops with his single-seater career. He graduated to Formula 1 on the back of winning the German Formula 3 title in 1987, but his career at the pinnacle of the sport never recovered from two disastrous seasons with the uncompetitive Zakspeed team.

He rebuilt his career in sports cars with the privateer Kremer and Joest Porsche teams, before a handful of DTM races in a Zakspeed Mercedes at the end of 1991 resulted in a factory contract.

Schneider has not ruled out racing again, "but only for fun", in events such as the Nürburgring 24 Hours.

A1GP snaps up Surfers Paradise date

THE SURFERS PARADISE STREET RACE will become a round of the A1GP World Cup of Motorsport next season.

A1GP has taken over the event on Australia's Gold Coast from the IRL Indycar Series, which was unable to agree terms with the Queensland state government. The disagreement centred on the IRL's insistence on moving the event back to its original March slot.



A1GP boss Tony Texeira said: "We wanted to go back to Australia and this is the ideal venue. We've been given a perfect opportunity to showcase our series to Australian fans."

The Surfers event started out as a CART fixture in 1991 and remained a lynchpin of the Champ Car schedule until the death of the series. Former winners include Emerson Fittipaldi, Nigel Mansell, Michael Andretti and Alex Zanardi.

Surfers was incorporated into the 2008 IRL schedule on its takeover of Champ Car, but the race did not count for points.



FORMULA LE MANS
The new Formula Le Mans one-make racer ran for the first time in November. The Courage-ORECA FLM09, 20 of which will take to the Circuit de la Sarthe on the morning of the Le Mans 24 Hours, was given its shakedown by Stéphane Ortelli at Paul Ricard

Toyota hybrid points to Le Mans return

TOYOTA APPEARS TO BE GEARING UP FOR A RETURN TO THE LE MANS 24 HOURS. Rumours that Toyota's petrol-electric hybrid technology is already being run in an LMP1 test hack have not been denied by the Japanese manufacturer. It would only say that it is "continuing the hybrid race car project".

It is understood that Toyota has renewed its relationship with Japanese constructor Dome, with which it raced at Le Mans in the mid-1980s. It is believed that a Toyota hybrid system has been fitted to an earlier-generation Dome LMP1 rather than the S102 coupé that raced in last June's 24 Hours.

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RM AUCTIONS

Obituary

Pat Moss

It was often said in rally circles that Pat Moss was "one of the boys". The truth was that she was actually better than most of the boys. An extremely talented horsewoman and member of the British Show Jumping team, she got involved in motor sport not through her brother Stirling or her parents, both of whom competed, but by an invitation to go on a treasure hunt with Stirling's manager, Ken Gregory. Her taste whetted, she started rallying her own Morris Minor before buying a TR2 in 1954, with which she had a degree of success. An offer from BMC to drive for the team was rapidly accepted and she drove an MG TF on the 1955 RAC Rally.



Pat stayed with BMC for nine years during which she achieved many of her major successes, of which the most outstanding was her victory on the 1960 Liège-Rome-Liège in an Austin Healey 3000 – the first time a woman had won an international rally. This four-day non-stop marathon was truly an event that all the boys wanted to finish, let alone win, and for a woman to win it in an overtly masculine car was a major achievement. There were other outright victories in those years with Mini Coopers (the 1962 Tulip Rally) and Healeys, but for 1964 Pat was lured to Ford to drive the new Cortina GT. This did not work out and, now married to Erik Carlsson (with Pat, below), she went to join him at Saab.

Again she was successful with the little two-stroke machine, finishing in the top four on tough events like the Acropolis, Liège and RAC, but her outstanding Saab result was on the extremely snowy Monte Carlo rally of 1965 where she finished third behind Timo Mäkinen's Cooper S and Eugen Böhringer's Porsche 904. When Erik retired at the end of 1967, Pat signed up with Lancia and rallied a Fulvia coupé. With the arrival of daughter Suzy, she did fewer events in the 1970s and thus effectively retired.

Pat Moss-Carlsson, a five-time European Ladies' Championship winner, was a delight to be around on a rally. Outside the car she was friendly, generous, vivacious – and constantly mislaying her handbag. Once behind the wheel, however, she had no difficulty in showing that female drivers were every bit as quick – and frequently quicker – than the men. To her husband Erik and daughter Suzy we offer our condolences. *John Davenport*

COMMENT

WRC changes – at what cost?

THE COURSE OF THE WORLD Rally Championship appears to be comprised of a succession of lurches interspersed with uncertainty. The introduction of a rotation principle for 2009 where 24 events are used, but each one run only every other year, has already resulted in the Monte Carlo Rally defecting to the Intercontinental Rally Challenge for '09.

The loss of the world's best-known rally has caused a few tremors within the FIA – imagine Formula 1 without the Monaco GP – and rumours of a re-think on rotation abound. There have been suggestions that the WRC could become a winter series, starting in September and finishing in May, thus hoovering up the free television time left by the close season in Formula 1.



Cost, too, is an issue as in F1. For the past 18 months the FIA's WRC Commission has been working on a way to reduce the cost of World Rally Cars from 2010 onwards – work involving the current teams and their technical gurus. At the World Motor Sport Council meeting in November, its plans were put forward for approval – and summarily rejected. The FIA could not understand why its cost-reduction brief to come up with a bolt-on, removable kit had somehow morphed into a specification practically identical to the four-wheel-drive, turbocharged, electronically complex car used at the moment. Worried that this solution did not reduce costs, the WMSC sent the WRC bosses away with a flea in their ear for a substantial re-think.

Thus 2009 looks as if it will start with a bunch of lesser events – the first truly traditional event is the Acropolis Rally in June – and there are fears that many of the new rallies may be scuppered by a lack of funds. There are concerns, too, that the number of manufacturers may decrease from the four which currently compete. It's a far cry from the heady days of the early '80s when a dozen or more manufacturers were in the WRC. *John Davenport*

Newsfeed

DTM Timo Scheider (Audi) wrapped up the championship with a win in the final race at Hockenheim, leaving him four points clear of second-placed Paul di Resta (Mercedes).

WTCC Yvan Muller wrapped up the title at Macau with third and second in the two races, finishing 26 points clear of Gabriele Tarquini. Japanese Keisuke Kunimoto won the prestigious Macau F3 race.

A1GP Team Pakistan missed the season's first three races after Adam Khan had problems getting comfortable in the car. The team had to redesign the powered-by-Ferrari racer. ■ Filipe Albuquerque won for Team Portugal at Chengdu. It is the 17th nation to win an A1 race.

GP2 The Algarve International Circuit will host the 2009 finale. The circuit will also be used for F1 testing this winter. ■ Pastor Maldonado, confirmed at the ART Grand Prix team, topped the first day of testing at Jerez, while Kamui Kobayashi of DAMS finished day two on top.

ROC Lewis Hamilton will demo his McLaren F1 car at the Wembley event on December 14, before racing a Mercedes-Benz road car against triple Olympic gold medallist Chris Hoy on his bike. David Coulthard has also been confirmed for the event. ■ The KTM X-Bow and RX Racing RX150 buggy have been added to the car line-up.

WRC François Duval's co-driver Patrick Pivato has undergone surgery following their crash in Japan where he fractured his pelvis and tibia. Denis Giraudet will stand in for the Frenchman at Wales Rally GB.

SUPERLEAGUE David Rigon and Beijing Guoan won their third race of the season at Vallelunga. Tristan Gommendy took Porto's first victory in race two, denying Roma a home win by passing Franck Perera on the last lap.

NASCAR Jimmie Johnson was 15th at Homestead to secure his third straight Sprint Cup title, an achievement only Cale Yarborough has matched.

MOTOGP Czech GP organisers have signed a deal for the Brno track to host the race until 2013.

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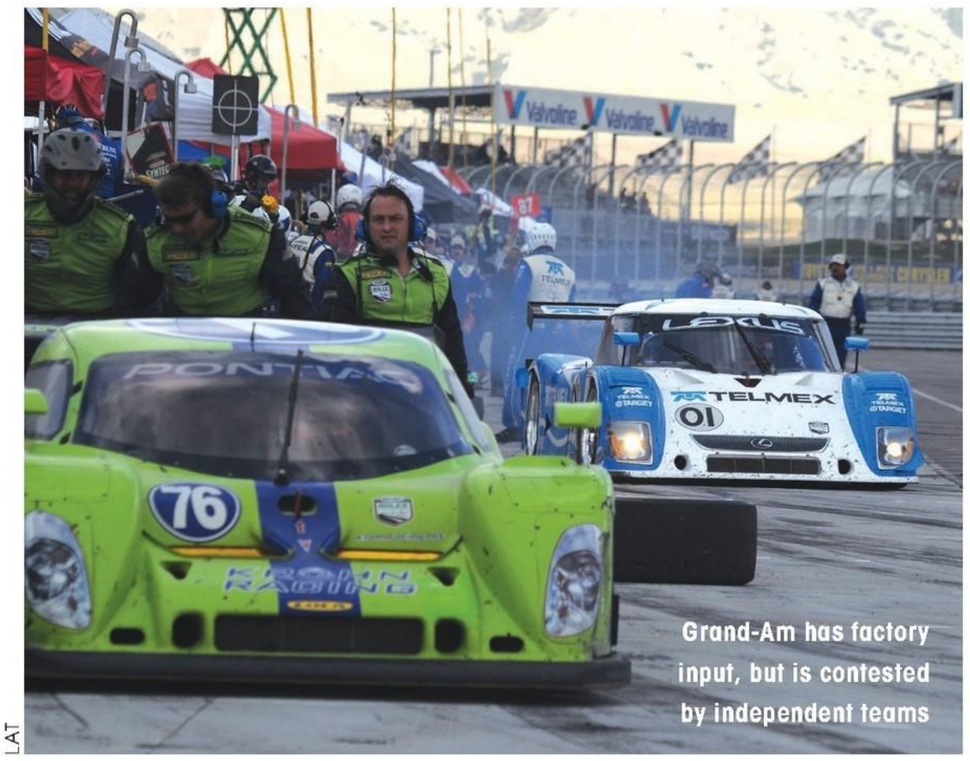
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LAT
Grand-Am has factory input, but is contested by independent teams

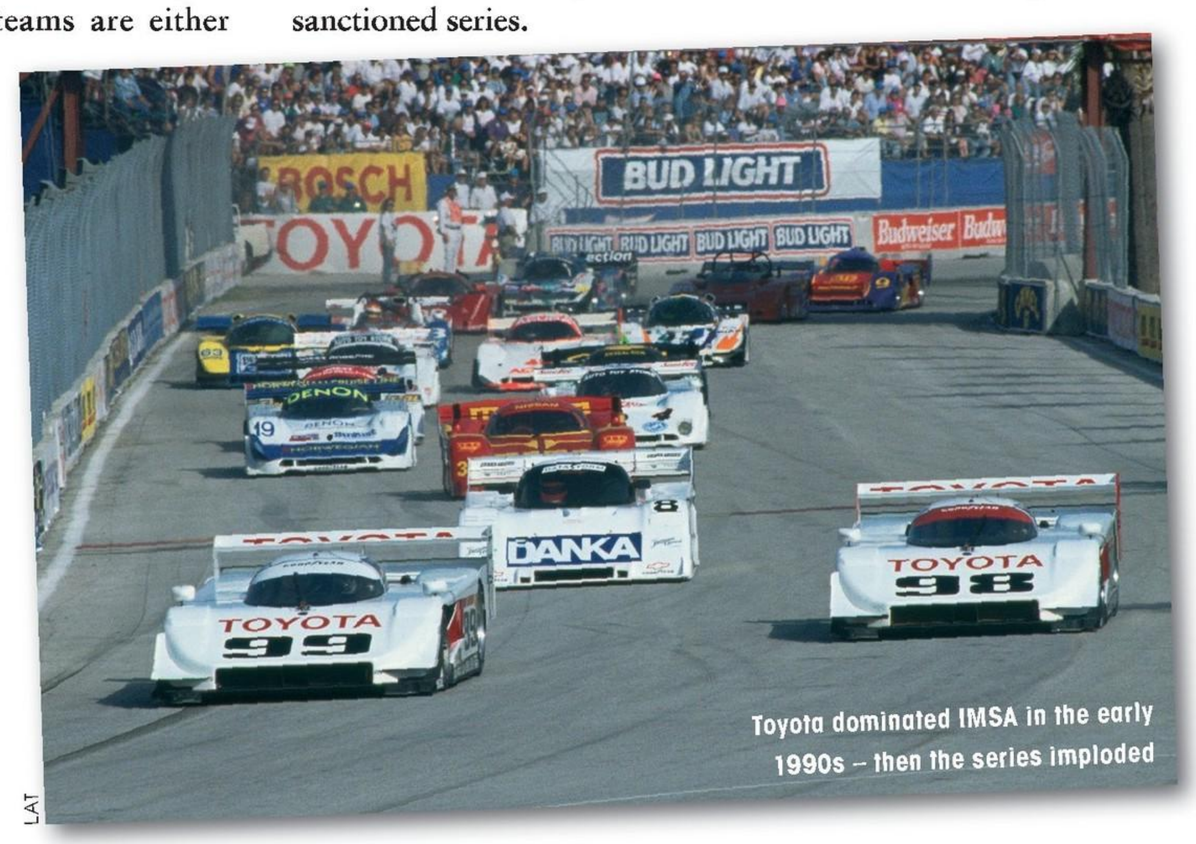
THE US SCENE

TWO SIDES OF SPORTS CARS

Sports car racing's big challenge has always been to achieve a level playing field for both factory and independent teams, a rare balance no sanctioning body has ever been able to strike for anything more than a few years. In America, IMSA ruled sports car racing for almost 20 years until it imploded amid domination by Toyota. Run by former SCCA man John Bishop, IMSA operated quite effectively during the heyday of the Porsche 962, which provided plenty of teams with a high-quality, competitive car. Ultimately, however, US-based factory efforts from Jaguar, Nissan and Toyota upset the applecart.

IMSA (International Motor Sports Association) went out of business at the end of 1993 and following various attempts to rebuild itself, a pair of competing series emerged in 1999 known as the American Le Mans Series and Grand-Am. Essentially, the ALMS has a more open rulebook and is predicated on an equivalency formula which the ALMS has so far been able to manage reasonably well. In the end, the ALMS caters primarily to factory or factory-backed teams. On the other hand, Grand-Am is much more restrictive and its Daytona Prototype formula is modelled on the NASCAR concept. It's not a spec car formula, but appears that way to the uneducated eye. There's competition between chassis and engine manufacturers, but all the teams are either independents or privateers.

The ALMS is owned by Don Panoz and based at his road and race car building facility near Road Atlanta in Georgia. Scott Atherton runs the ALMS for Panoz and the overall operation includes IMSA, which functions as the sanctioning body. IMSA is run by Teddy Mayer's son, Tim. Grand-Am is owned by the France family and led by NASCAR's vice-chairman Jim France, who is also the CEO of the International Speedway Corporation (ISC), the publicly-traded company that owns Daytona, Talladega, Watkins Glen and 10 other tracks across the USA. Roger Edmondson is the president of Grand-Am, which is based at Daytona Beach in company with NASCAR and ISC. Starting in 2009, Grand-Am officially becomes a NASCAR-sanctioned series.



LAT
Toyota dominated IMSA in the early 1990s – then the series imploded

Audi dominated the ALMS for many years, first with its twin-turbo R8 LMP1 Le Mans sports cars and more recently with its ground-breaking turbo-diesel R10. Audi won the P1 championship again in 2008 with Lucas Luhr/Marco Werner who won six races, while Allan McNish, Emanuele Pirro and Dindo Capello added a superb seventh win in the Petit Le Mans event at Road Atlanta in October.

But some serious Audi challengers have arrived over the past three years, starting in 2006 with a team of Penske/Porsche RS Spyder LMP2 cars. Porsche signed a three-year agreement with Penske and the combination has come on strong over the past two years using their lighter weight and better fuel mileage to beat the Audis in some races. The Penske/Porsche team started the '08 season on a high note, winning the Sebring 12 Hours outright with Romain Dumas/Timo Bernhard/Emmanuel Collard, and Dumas/Bernhard took the P2 drivers' championship for the second year in a row. But Penske moves to the Grand-Am series in '09, where he's expected to run a pair of Porsche-powered Rileys. Rob Dyson also ran a pair of Porsche Spyders and will stay in the ALMS, but switch to a Lola-Mazda for the new season.

Honda entered the ALMS in 2007 with its Acura brand, running three P2 cars with three teams – Andretti-Green, Fernández Racing and Highcroft Racing. A fourth Acura team, run by owner/driver Gil de Ferran, joined the party this year. Acura's teams were very competitive in 2008, with Duncan Dayton's Highcroft team scoring two outright and four class wins thanks to some superb driving by David Brabham. But Brabham's co-driver Scott Sharp threw away their P2 title hopes by crashing in practice for Petit Le Mans in October and hitting the barrier again in the early laps of the race. Andretti-Green's Acura P2 car was also healthily competitive in many races and won the Detroit/Belle Isle race outright driven by Franck Montagny and James Rossiter,

the pair leading a one-two-three overall sweep for the Acura marque.

Acura moves up to P1 in 2009 with a twin-turbo V8 engine built by Honda Performance Development in California and a chassis designed by Wirth Engineering in Oxfordshire. Testing starts in December. It will be raced in 2009 by de Ferran's team and Highcroft.

The 2008 Grand-Am championship was won by Scott Pruett and Memo Rojas aboard Chip Ganassi's Riley-Lexus. Pruett is a wily veteran who took his second Grand-Am championship, while Ganassi's team enjoyed its third title in the past five years. Ganassi's team has also won Grand-Am's season-opening Rolex 24 at Daytona the last three years. Second in the '08 Grand-Am championship were Alex Gurney and Jon Fogarty, co-driving Bob Stallings's Riley-Pontiac. Gurney and Fogarty were the defending champions, winning seven races in '07. They were equally competitive in '08 but not quite as effective.

Thanks to a tight rules package Grand-Am produces close racing and more depth of field than the ALMS. Dallara and Lola have built cars to challenge the dominant Riley, while Lexus, Pontiac, Ford and Porsche supply engines. Wayne Taylor's Dallara-Pontiac driven by former champion Max Angelelli and Michael Valiante had a disappointing year, and will very likely switch to Ford engines in '09 as Pontiac cuts back. Gurney and Fogarty in Bob Stallings's car will be the only factory-backed Pontiac effort in the forthcoming season.

Grand-Am's new season kicks off at the end of January with the Rolex 24 at Daytona and the race is sure to be a cracker. Ganassi's powerhouse team will be hard to beat, with two cars and star drivers including Juan Pablo Montoya, Dario Franchitti and Scott Dixon. But with plenty of other good teams and drivers competing it's likely to be a close battle all the way, as it has been in recent years. Sebring seven weeks later should be equally interesting and exciting, with the prospect of another Audi versus Peugeot Le Mans tune-up and the debut of the new Acura P1 car.

But I can't help thinking what a tremendous launch pad American sports car racing would enjoy each year if these two long-distance classics were part of a combined series featuring the same drivers, cars and teams. Unfortunately of course, given the opposing power bases and respective strengths of the two series, that dream is unlikely to happen. We'll just have to continue enjoying both series for what they are. Ⓜ



NHRA

SCHUEY IN CHARGE – SOUND FAMILIAR?

The man of the year in NHRA drag racing was Tony Schumacher, who took a record fifth consecutive Top Fuel championship. Schumacher, who turns 39 on Christmas Day, drives for his father Don's team where he's paired with Cory McClenathan.

Schumacher won 14 times this year, an NHRA record. He took his first Top Fuel title in 1999, then started a run as the sport's dominant star in 2004. His Top Fuel car has been sponsored for the past eight years by the US Army and Schumacher has become known to his fans as 'The Sarge'.

Typically for drag racing, this is a family story. Don Schumacher was a top Funny Car driver who retired from the sport in 1974. After building one of the world's leading battery-charging companies, the elder Schumacher started his own NHRA team in '96 with Tony in the cockpit. The combination went on to become the scourge of Top Fuel racing, and in recent years the team has expanded to become the NHRA's biggest operation.

For a few years Schumacher ran two cars in each of the Top Fuel, Funny Car and Pro Stock categories, and a pair of motorcycles too. But these days he's content with a pair of Top Fuel cars for Tony and McClenathan, and three Funny Cars driven by Jack Beckman, Ron Capps and Gary Scelzi.



NHRA

HILLARY BECOMES THE FIRST LADY

The most successful female racer in the US this past year was Hillary Will, who finished fourth in the NHRA's Top Fuel championship. Will, 28, started drag racing in 2005 and moved into KB Racing's Top Fuel car in '06. A former gymnast and collegiate springboard diver, Will earned a degree in economics before launching her racing career. Will is just 5ft 4ins tall and weighs a mere 50 kilos, but has no problem handling an 8000bhp Top Fuel dragster. She made the final round three times in 2008 and won at Topeka in June on her way to fourth in the points, beating former motorcycle racer Antron Brown but narrowly losing out to ex-champions Larry Dixon and Cory McClenathan.

Will likes to say that it's nothing special to be a woman in drag racing, pointing to Melanie Troxel and Ashley Force, who race Funny Cars, and Angelle Sampey, a three-time NHRA motorcycle champion. And of course, Shirley Muldowney won three Top Fuel titles back in 1977, '80 and '82, establishing herself as the most successful woman racer the sport has seen.

Andrew Frankel



ROAD CARS

SO WHAT WAS GREAT IN 2008?

Please forgive the indulgence, but in a magazine sold during 2008 but dated 2009, it seems legitimate to take a look back over the cars that went on sale in the past 12 months. This is not a Top 10 or any other list-based digest, just the chance to mention a few from the hundred or more I have driven in the past year that, for reasons good or bad, stood out from an often rather indistinct crowd.

After the delight of 2007's Fiat 500, '08 was looking like a wholly unremarkable year for small cars until autumn came and suddenly both the Ford Ka and Renault Twingo 133 turned up outside my house one after the other. Both were terrific. Ford showed how much fun it is still possible to have with just 68bhp under your right foot, so long as the people tuning the suspension know what they're doing: quite extraordinary point-to-point pace becomes possible through the simple expedient of not slowing down for anything.

With the Twingo, Renault is showing an interest in returning to its hot hatch roots that I find very exciting: this is a car whose performance is characterised not by excess power but minimal weight, just like the 5 GT Turbo over 20 years ago. It also happens to work spectacularly well on tight British B-roads where that lack of weight and width combines with perhaps the most throttle-sensitive chassis I've encountered all year to create a devastatingly effective and amusing little weapon. There are many purpose-built sports cars, including a large number of purpose-built hundred-grand-plus supercars, that won't keep you so well entertained on such roads.



Twingo and Ka (above): small cars with pace

For an entirely different set of reasons, I was very much taken with the new VW Scirocco as well. I didn't much care for its looks but thought it would prove pleasant and effective, like the Golf GTI on which it is so closely based. In fact it's much better than that. While there is no single outstanding talent to point to, VW has contrived to create a coupé with an answer to near enough every question you're likely to ask of it: it's quick but comfortable, quiet but entertaining, spacious yet intimate... in short it's one of those cars that, because it appears so much greater than the sum of its parts, makes you wonder whether even VW realised how good it would be.



Bentley Flying Spur 'Speed' – not as good as the standard version

By uncomfortable contrast it's been a rather less good year for Porsches in general and the 911 in particular. This is the year Porsche completely re-engineered the 997, introducing new direct injection engines, the long-awaited PDK gearbox and a host of other more minor mechanical and cosmetic changes. And while the result is faster and more frugal as you'd expect, the price paid in the loss of character has been unacceptably high. A friend of mine who falls into the almost mythically rare category of those who have loved the 911 more and for longer than me, rang after driving one. "It's just another bloody car," he said, clearly thunderstruck. I'd not go so far myself, but understand all too easily what he was saying. We also saw this year the cessation of the latest generation of 911 GT3, one of the three greatest road-going Porsches I have ever driven (2.7 RS and 993RS, as you're asking) and the introduction of the wild GT2, proof if ever it were needed that speed isn't everything.

Italian supercars had a broadly good year: as you can read on page 68, Ferrari introduced the California, successfully negotiating a conceptual minefield to produce a convincing GT, convertible and supercar all under one retractable metal roof, while Lamborghini's new Gallardo LP560 is a huge leap forward. Were it not for the awful (but optional) carbon-ceramic brakes on the one I drove, I might even feel inclined to suggest it rivalled Ferrari's 599GTB as my favourite member of the genre.

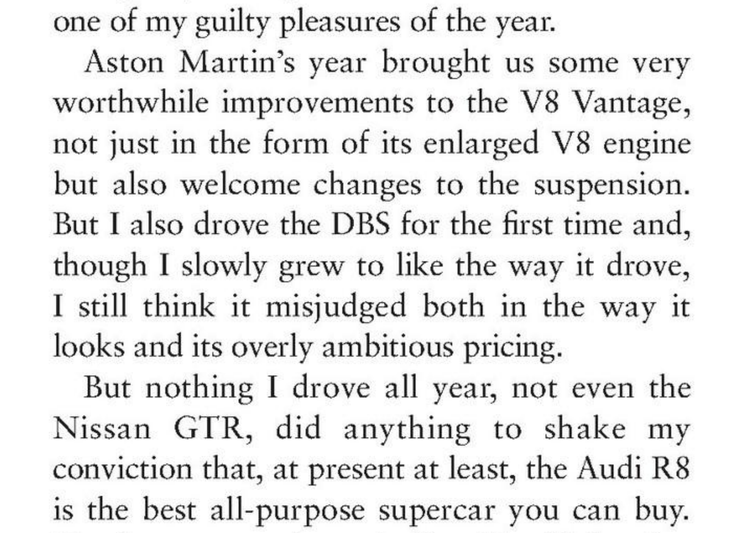
Their British rivals had a more mixed year. Bentley presented a 600bhp 'Speed' version of the Flying Spur which I didn't like as much as the standard car, but then stole my heart completely with the Brooklands coupé. Like the equally lovely though rather more sedate Rolls Phantom Coupé, these must be among the most indefensible forms of transport in such straitened times, but if you ever held doubts that British

handcraftsmanship was unrivalled, one sitting in either of these will put them to rest for good. Of the two, I preferred the way the Rolls looked and the Bentley drove. Drifting this 2.6 tonne, £230,000, 530bhp cathedral for the camera was one of my guilty pleasures of the year.

Aston Martin's year brought us some very worthwhile improvements to the V8 Vantage, not just in the form of its enlarged V8 engine but also welcome changes to the suspension. But I also drove the DBS for the first time and, though I slowly grew to like the way it drove, I still think it misjudged both in the way it looks and its overly ambitious pricing.

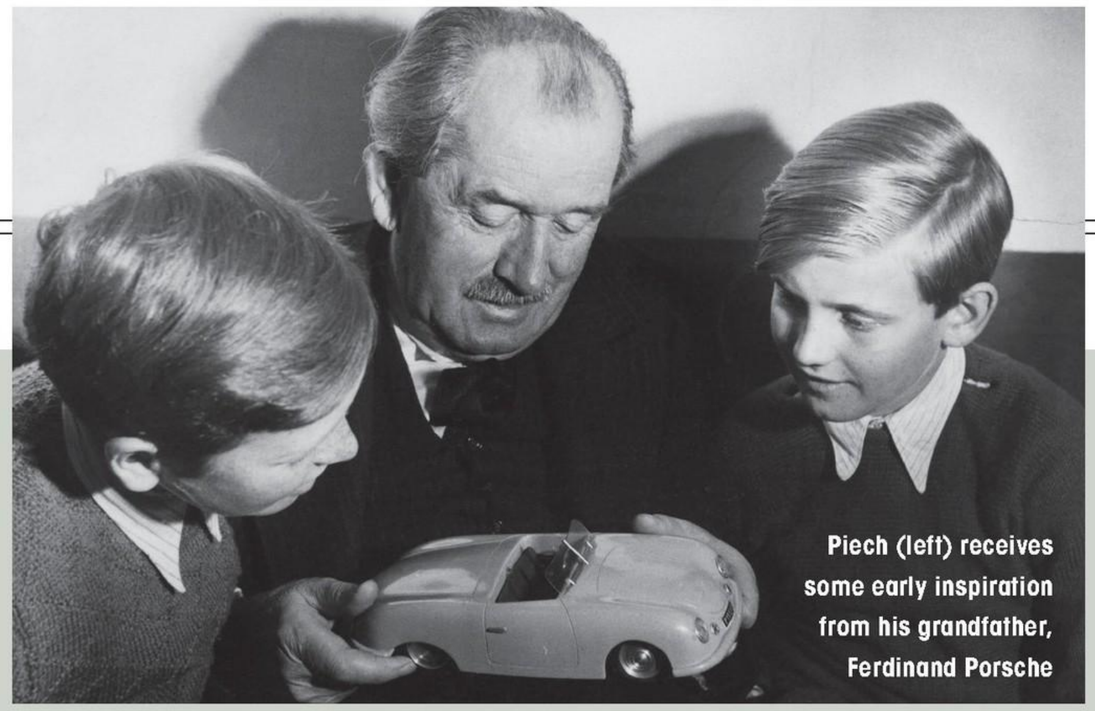
But nothing I drove all year, not even the Nissan GTR, did anything to shake my conviction that, at present at least, the Audi R8 is the best all-purpose supercar you can buy. Nearly two years down the line, it's still showing me things I didn't think it could do.

Outside the realm of the supercar, and into a perhaps more real world, the BMW 330d was undoubtedly the best car of the year: 0-60mph in 6sec, 155mph and 50mpg are numbers that need no further explanation from me, though the memory of the Mercedes-Benz C63 AMG will live longer in my mind. For the first time since the launch of the 190E 2.3-16 almost a quarter of a century ago, Mercedes has finally and entirely got the measure of the BMW M3.



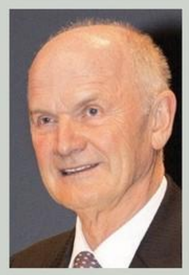
Mini Cooper John Cooper Works – it's a silly name for starters

Sadly there's no contest to determine the most disappointing car of the year: the Lexus IS-F wasn't great and I didn't much care for the Audi RS6, but both were as shining beacons of brilliance compared to the Mini Cooper John Cooper Works. A basic Cooper is a fine car, but the overblown, overpowered, overpriced JCW is a neurotic, hyperactive mess. Still, as this means 2008 sounded only one resoundingly bum note, I think we can put it down as a good year; not a great one but at least a reasonably hard act for 2009 to try to follow.


Piech (left) receives some early inspiration from his grandfather, Ferdinand Porsche

PORSCHE GETS A GRIP ON VW

What lies behind Porsche's acquisition of a controlling interest in Volkswagen? Well, we know what lies around it, namely the wreckage of many hedge funds who'd short-sold VW stock only to see values rocket when Porsche announced that it now controlled 74 per cent of the company. But the reasons for Porsche's takeover reach far beyond the world of finance, beyond the car industry, and into generations of familial infighting and rivalry. In short, it's personal.



There are, of course, many sound business reasons why a low-volume manufacturer would want to climb into bed with a high-volume producer. There are economies of scale, efficiencies of distribution, pooled technological resources and hitherto undreamt of clout with suppliers. But Porsche's rampantly acquisitive attitude towards VW has a different side to it, and at its heart lies one man: Ferdinand Piech. Now 70, Piech (left) sits on the supervisory boards of both Porsche and VW, and it was his desire to unite the two wings of the Porsche family under one corporate roof which originally fuelled this fire. It was his grandfather, Ferdinand Porsche, who designed the Beetle for Hitler and then founded Porsche.

Who should be worried about this, apart from VW workers upon whom more stringent Porsche working practices may be imposed? From the outside, it seems Audi will most likely be in the firing line. Will Porsche want the R8 lodged as a thorn in the side of the 911? Will it let the R10 deny Porsche a Le Mans return? I think not.



ASTON'S MILLION-POUND PLAYER

More details are emerging about Aston's million-pound One-77. It's been known for a while that just 77 of the hand-built, carbon-fibre supercars will be made, but now we're told it will be powered by a 700bhp, 7-litre derivation of its Ford-designed 6-litre V12 and will weigh just 1500kg, giving it a similar power-to-weight ratio to a Bugatti Veyron.

No top speed has been quoted but it gets pretty meaningless at this level: if it were a sufficiently important factor to chase, 230mph is clearly within the scope of such a car, but Aston will probably want more downforce than such a body would likely provide. Even so, it seems clear the first true 200mph Aston will soon be with us.

Letters

A moving tribute to Jenks

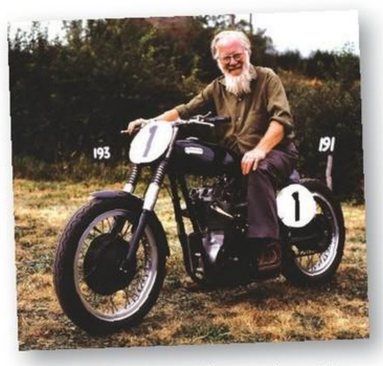
Sir,

I thought you all deserved the highest possible praise for a wonderful 1000th edition of *Motor Sport*. It's absolutely superb – well done indeed!

I was greatly moved by the article on our old friend 'Jenks'. The words were so right, and reminded me very much of the great man. Being more of a bike hillclimb friend, I have attached a picture taken at Shelsley Walsh on a warm summer's day in 1994 (below). As I'm sure you are aware, he was very fond of Shelsley and enjoyed riding there, right up to late in his life.

As I'm organiser of the bike National Hill Climb Association as well as a rider, he always asked me if he could carry the No 1 plate on his bike. He would say, "If I go up first, everyone will have forgotten that I was so slow by the time the quick boys come up."

We looked on it somewhat differently. He was our father figure, so should go up first anyway!



Much as Nigel Roebuck found, when Jenks stayed at my home in the West Country he would polish off the brandy while you kept very quiet and just listened to the wonderful **stories – truly enthralling.** It was a great privilege. As Nigel said, no one like him.

Please keep up the good work. *Motor Sport* is one of the last bastions of the world as we would wish it to be.

Peter Isaac, National Hill Climb Association chairman, Wiscombe Park Hill Climb director

Anything but standard fare

Sir,

I am not in the habit of writing such letters, but on this occasion I think some congratulations are in order.

I would just like to record my profound pleasure and send some heartfelt congratulations on your simply excellent 1000th issue, and the 999 before it as well. I started reading *Motor Sport* as a young child and have been a regular reader ever since. It has brought the joy of motor racing to my armchair on many occasions. I have read with some laughter of the exploits of Mr Tee and WB in past issues, but the most recent account of Mr Tee and the Standard House days really did cause a chuckle.

I'm sure the staff must have a resounding sense of a "job well done" in seeing this issue. A huge shame that DSJ isn't here to share it.

After the 'Red Banner' days, you can be sure you are heading in the right direction. Eighty-five years and still going strong – long may you continue. A huge thank you to you all. Don't try to fix it now, as it ain't broke any more.

Steve Plant, Witney, Oxon

Fond memories of Phil Hill

Sir,

I want to thank you for Nigel Roebuck's wonderfully moving and insightful tribute to Phil Hill in the November issue of *Motor Sport*. Like you, I have been a long-time fan of racing, and in particular of Ferrari (just look at my last name for all the justification you need).

In 1961, at the time of my introduction to what was then in the US called 'European road racing', Phil was driving the striking shark-nose Ferrari GP and sports-racing cars. I was raised near Sebring, where prior to taking the 1961 world title in the 156 F1, he won the 12-hour race with Olivier Gendebien in the shark-nose Ferrari 250 TRI. In the 1962 race, Hill and Gendebien drove the original GTO to first in GT and second overall. To see Phil drifting that lovely piece of rolling sculpture under the MG bridge and through Big Bend was to appreciate the deft touch of a consummate driver. And then to hear him articulate the experience in such vivid and considered terms was to recognise that here was a rare man of intelligence and sensitivity who seemed to be in racing, but not of racing.

Along with Stirling Moss, Phil Hill was the face of racing to me in that era.

Denny Gioia, University Park, PA, USA

Lewis still has much to prove

Sir,

Now that Lewis Hamilton is champion, is it possible to examine how good he really is? He won the title in his second season in the best car on the grid, something that Jacques Villeneuve and Emerson Fittipaldi did – both good, but not usually included in a list of the all-time greats.

Part of Hamilton's reputation is his so-called mastery in the wet, but closer examination reveals this is down to a combination of luck and mistakes by rival teams:

Japan 2007 – the Ferraris forgot the rule about starting on full wets behind the safety car, were forced to pit and rejoined at the back of the field, giving Hamilton a clear run from pole position.

Monaco 2008 – an early mistake by Hamilton forced him to pit after he hit the barrier, which then worked to his advantage as he was fuelled long enough to reach a dry tyre window.

Silverstone 2008 – by lap 18 Räikkönen was catching Hamilton hand over fist when they both pitted. McLaren gambled on more rain and fitted intermediates, while Ferrari gambled on it staying dry and did not change tyres. When more rain came, Räikkönen was in trouble.

Brazil 2008 – with the title at stake Hamilton was passed by Vettel, McLaren allegedly allowing him to do so because its computer had predicted that he would overtake Glock by the finish.

Maybe Lewis will continue to win races and titles if he has his wish and stays with McLaren. Unfortunately this means we will never find out how good he really is and whether he has the ability to win in cars which are not the most competitive, as Senna and Schumacher did.

John Fyfe, Edinburgh

Putting the brakes on a myth

Sir,

In his excellent article on Casablanca 1958 (November issue), Nigel Roebuck seems to have perpetuated the myth that the source of the disc brakes on Mike Hawthorn's F1 Ferrari Dino was Peter Collins' Ferrari 250GT road car.

It is true that Mike suggested transferring the discs to his F1 car and, as far as he knew, this was what happened as he repeated it to the press and included it in his autobiography *Champion Year*. Chris Nixon dispelled the myth, however, in his excellent book *Mon Ami Mate*. He relates how Hawthorn insisted to Enzo Ferrari that the F1 Dino should be fitted with disc brakes and that Dunlop was only too keen to gain a foothold within Maranello. Dunlop despatched technician Harold Hodkinson and development fitter Maurice Rowe to Italy, where they installed a specially made set of discs and adaptor plates on the car with standard calipers and racing pads. Nothing was used from Collins' car.

Dunlop apparently never objected to the 'myth' as it provided them with good publicity.

Mark Whitelock, Flimwell, East Sussex

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

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Letters

New F2 rules are the pits

Sir,

I didn't know whether to laugh or cry when I read of the compulsory 10-second pitstop to be foisted on to Formula 2 in its latest incarnation. A grid full of cars that are evenly matched and "able to follow each other closely" are presumably intended to provide some close racing. So picture the scene, then, when two or three cars are locked into some heroic Rossi-esque struggle for the lead and one of them has to pull out of the fight for his compulsory 10-second stop. And to do what precisely? Have a cup of tea? A rub down with the *Sports Mail*? A spot of cutting-edge knitting, maybe?

Isn't it time that Mr Mosley was locked away in a darkened room with some MotoGP videos to understand precisely what makes the bike races so utterly compelling: a standing start, no pitstops, no safety car on alternate laps, no messing – just a good old-fashioned scrap from flag to flag (as it were). In contrast, the nascent F2 looks like being something out of a 1960s *It's A Knockout* – maybe we should complete the set by getting Stuart Hall into the commentary box for his legendary non-stop laughter.

Come on fellers – isn't it time we ditched the gimmicks and got back to some good old-fashioned bare-knuckle motor racing?

Dick Miller, Tenterden, Kent

Skill before nationality

Sir,

As a born and bred Scot, I feel I must respond to the letter by Gordon Mann from Perth about his non-support of English racing drivers (November issue).

In all my years as a motor sport fan, nationality has never been my reason for supporting a driver. My heroes were Ayrton Senna, Keke Rosberg, Gilles Villeneuve, Ronnie Peterson etc, and since the death of Senna there has not been a real replacement. I support all drivers whom I like as people and if they are British, such as Hill, Herbert, Button and Coulthard, all the better. I am a McLaren fan, which seems to be rare in Britain, but Lewis Hamilton is a special talent and a likable person who deserves British support whether you come from England, Scotland, Wales or Northern Ireland.

Anyway, with a Scottish name such as Hamilton, is that not reason enough for Mr Mann to support him?

Kenne MacKenzie, Wester Muckernich, Ross-shire

My races with Gunnar

Sir,

I appreciated Chris Witty's tribute to Gunnar Nilsson in the November issue of *Motor Sport*. By 1978 I was out of racing when I heard of his sad passing. Chris brought back a few memories of my 1975 Formula 3 season with the Ratcliffe Springs March 743 Toyota.

In practice for the Monza Lottery race, Gunnar rolled his car after hitting the kerb at the chicane after the pit straight and did not start. In the final I made the same mistake as Gunnar in rather less dramatic fashion, getting launched off the same kerb, knocking off the wing, smashing the sump and retiring on the spot. Afterwards we had a big night out and the next day a new sump was collected from the Novamotor works on the way home to England.

At the Silverstone British Grand Prix meeting, Gunnar won from Patrick Neve. I retrieved third place after qualifying well, messing up my start, and coming around in tenth on lap one.

In the next round at Oulton I was on pole but handed a win to Sullivan who made the better start, while my 743 started to understeer – my fault for trying to eke practice and the race out of one set of G53s. Gunnar did not start after his fire extinguisher went off before the race!

Gunnar showed the F3 and Formula Atlantic classes of 1975 how it should be done, and went on to a deserved Lotus F1 ride. I will remember him in the paddock in his grey overalls with his tousled hair, always a good talker with a ready smile, and a committed competitor on track.

Chris, thank you for shedding light on Gunnar's magnificent legacy.

Richard Hawkins, Hong Kong

Racing's humble heroes

Sir,

I discovered Grand Prix racing as a schoolboy in 1956 and it has absorbed me ever since, even though today's F1 bears little resemblance to the heroic sport with which, as Rob Widdows put it in his Goodwood Revival report, "we all fell so hopelessly in love with".

Two constants do remain, though. The first is that from time to time we see a virtuoso performance from a driver which simply takes your breath away. Fangio at the 'Ring in 1957, Senna at Donington in '93 and Hamilton at Silverstone last July are examples that spring to mind, but there are of course others.

Secondly, the sport is sometimes graced with the presence of a driver who has a sense of proportion – someone who realises that motor racing is not the 'be all and end all' and who has what some would call a 'hinterland'. October's *Motor Sport* featured the two best examples of this – Phil Hill and Tony Brooks.

From the beginning I have been a Vanwall fan, so Tony Brooks has always been high on my list of heroes. Imagine my excitement when he came to a members' meeting at Goodwood in September 1960 and offered to take any BARC junior members present for a lap of the circuit. There were only about a dozen of us, and he took us round in a Ford saloon two or three at a time. It was a wonderful experience which I have never forgotten and, although at that age I did not have the words to express it, I realised then that he was not just a great driver but a great man, free of any affectation or ego.

Roger Keyworth, Huntingdon

A car chase with McRae

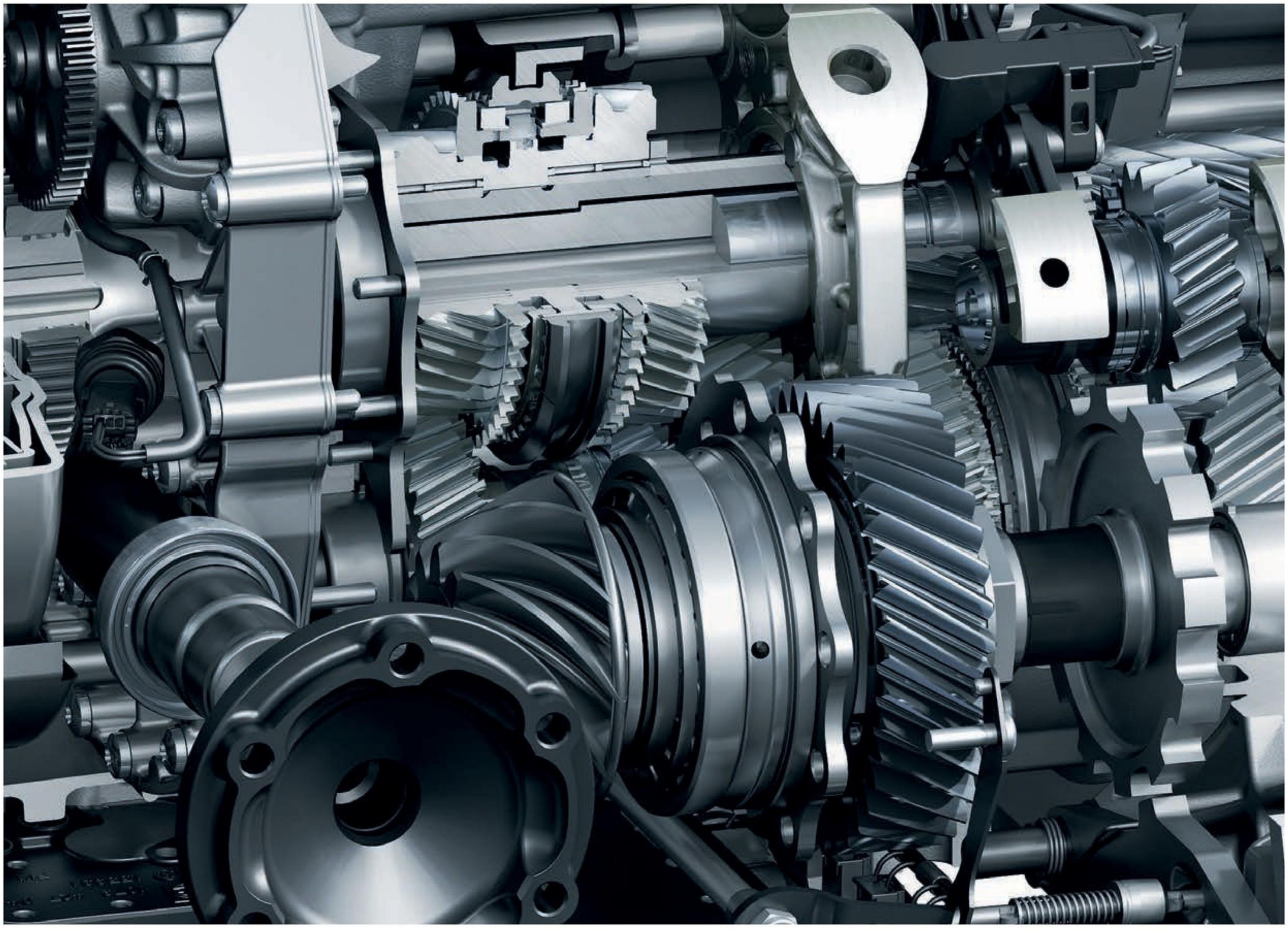
Sir,

Your article on Jimmy McRae (November issue) reminds me of Cyprus 1984 when I was covering the rally for *Motoring News*. In the days leading up to it Brian Patterson and I took our hire car to have a look at one of the notoriously rocky stages. We crawl through the test and emerge to find a welcome tar road, a village and a taverna. Observing the ancient Irish custom of never passing a pub, we stop for a beer. Before long we hear the bangs and clatters of an approaching rally car, and around the corner comes the 240RS of McRae and Grindrod. Of course the custom extends to our friends, so they stop and are soon joined by the crew of the chase car.

A few bottles of Keo later and Patterson, who is facing the road, leaps up and shouts "Jimmy, the car!", and there it is running down the hill on its own, its brake fluid having boiled, thus rendering the handbrake ineffective. We all give chase and manage to apprehend the errant Nissan before it comes to grief. When it is safely parked with gear engaged and a large rock placed under a wheel we decide that considering the shock we've just had, a drink is called for.

A year later and back in Cyprus I drove to the airport to collect Keith Oswin of *Autosport* who had been attending the Manx Rally. This was before the days of e-mail etc, and the result had not reached us, so Keith bore the news of how Brookes had won the championship. While nobody begrudged Russell his win we were all desperately sad that 'our man' had lost.

Richard O'Rourke, Cobh, Co Cork



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PORSCHE

Back to the drawing Broad

No, you're not seeing things: the classic Broadspeed Ford Capri written off in a huge crash at Silverstone in 1973 has been brought back to life

BY ED FOSTER

The words 'replica' and 'recreation' will either evoke little reaction in you or send shivers down your spine. For as long as there have been interesting cars in the world, people – with varying degrees of attention to detail – have made replicas (Porsche GT based on a Porsche Boxster, anyone?). Nowhere is this more rife than in the historic car market, where the topic has been so hotly debated that even Max Mosley had his say in *Motor Sport's* Lunch With… feature back in 2006. "Cars that are real pieces of motor sport history should not be raced," Mosley told Simon Taylor over mouthfuls of lobster mousse and green salad in Monaco. "Real racing should be kept for facsimiles."

What we have here, however, is something different: a recreation of a car that no longer exists. Even the most ardent 'replica cynic' would have to agree that it's better to see something like this back on the track than, well, nowhere. On a very cold and sunny day at Mallory Park Andy Rouse, test driver and race development engineer of the original car, not to mention a four-time British Saloon Car Champion, and Roger King, a very young works manager at Broadspeed in the 1970s, reunited to stretch this long-lost Capri's legs.

The exhaustively named Broadspeed Lindrick Finance Ford Capri RS2600 turned heads when Dave Matthews raced it in the 1973 British Saloon Car Championship. It was the car's end, however, that cemented its name in the history books – a horrific crash at the British Grand Prix support race which left it ready for the scrapheap and Matthews with career-ending injuries.

Broadspeed had made its name racing BDA Escort 1300s and 2-litre Escorts before turning to the Capri. Ralph Broad started the company in 1962 and specialised in engine tuning, which took him into Mini racing and then the BSCC. As with many an engineering wizard he

Mitch Pashavair



Mitch Pashavair

had his quirks, but what he did do was apply his imagination in such a way that his cars were the ones to beat. Week in, week out.

"Ralph was a very, *very* clever man... a complete nutter though," recalls King, now director of QM Engineering. "We were watching a race at Thruxton standing on top of the old truck, and Ralph was jumping up and down, shouting 'f***ing useless' and things like that. Then it all went quiet. We thought, 'oh well, at least he's calmed down'. About half an hour later there was an announcement over the tannoy: 'could a member of the Broadspeed team please go to the medical centre?' It turns out that Ralph had broken his leg falling off the back of the truck."

It was during 1971 that a 24-year-old Formula Ford racer by the name of Andy Rouse approached Broadspeed to ask for an engine. "I've got a works Dulon, how about a works engine from Broadspeed?" Rouse recalls asking. He emerged with an engine and a job.

"Because I had an apprenticeship on tractors and diggers I got a job at Broadspeed, and that set me on the trail of touring car racing. I did a couple of seasons of Formula Ford and the National Championship the year I started at Broadspeed, but that didn't go too well because I was up against people with money and I didn't have any. Even though I had a decent engine and quite a good car, the season hadn't gone well.

"I packed in Formula Ford and the only way I could get anywhere was to go saloon car racing. Fortunately the Escort Mexico Championship was just kicking off, and that was an obvious thing for Broadspeed to do, so I did a deal with Ralph. I bought a car off him at cost and prepared it in Broadspeed's workshops in my spare time, and one of the engine shop lads built me an engine. So off I went Mexico racing and that was my first season with a roof over my head.

"I ended up by winning the Mexico Championship, which Broadspeed did very well out of. It was a growing thing at the time, spreading across Europe, so Broadspeed ended up building cars to run in other countries. The place was full of Mexicos! Because I was involved with Group 2 and the Escorts in the saloon car championship, I used to test the Escorts and later the Capris. It was a great opportunity because I could work in the workshops, do the test driving and race."

It was the Escort that put Broadspeed on the map. Broad recalls: "We won everything at the time with that Escort. We used a Watts linkage on the back end and twin trailing radius arms, basically like the old Aston Martin suspension."

But Ford wanted a car that could win BSCC races outright and fight with the Camaros at the longer circuits. At the time the series still ran a class system, so a car of any size could win the overall title. Broadspeed turned to the Capri, which was about as suitable for racing as a Volkswagen Campervan. But it had little choice if it wanted those wins – the other cars at its disposal were the Cortina, Zephyr, Zodiac and the Granada. Not the most sporting of line-ups.

If anyone could get the Capri to handle, it was





The 'new' Capri has more power and better safety features, but is otherwise a faithful recreation



Broadspeed. The company built two cars for 1973 and Dave Matthews was looking forward to being on level terms with Camaro ace Frank Gardner: "I was dead keen to beat Gardner, who I'd nearly beaten a couple of times the previous year with my Escort in the wet. The chance to nail him was there with that big car."

The Lindrick Finance Capri was built for Matthews to race in the BSCC, while the sister car was built for Vince Woodman in the Belgian Saloon Car Championship. Power came from a 2600cc fuel-injected Weslake-tuned Cologne V6. The only confusing part of the cars' DNA was that, rather illogically, the Woodman Capri (otherwise known as the Claude Bourgoignie car) was right-hand drive, while the Lindrick Finance Capri was left-hand drive. The cars were built from shells, so it took no more time to make a right-hand drive than a left-hand drive, so why do this? It seems no one has any idea.

While the Escorts were nimble, the Capris were sluggish, and Broad had his work cut out to make them handle well. "Ralph came up with an idea to get round the regulations," King explains. "Because the car was running such wide tyres, the [coil] springs were fairly inboard to clear them." This gave the car its famous 'Capri roll', with more time spent on two wheels than four – a feature not helped by the fact that an Escort-style brace bar wouldn't work thanks to the intake trumpets. "Consequently," continues King, "Ralph came up with an idea to get the ratio of the spring to the wheel right by putting the spring behind the rear wheel [operated by a horizontal U-shaped rocker]. It was brilliant."

Rouse remembers this revolutionary fix, which he experienced in that September's Silverstone TT race, driving the Woodman car. Sadly, after qualifying sixth, the crank broke (a known weakness of the Weslake unit) and he retired. "Ralph was brilliant. Never short of ideas," says Rouse. "Sometimes they were just hard to put it into practice, and they were usually drawn on the back of a fag packet..."

With the suspension sorted, Matthews began his campaign at Brands Hatch on March 18, where he qualified fourth and finished sixth behind two Camaros, two Escorts (so far Ford's plan of 'upgrading' from the Escort was going brilliantly) and a BMW CSL. At the next two races at Silverstone on April 8 and Thruxton on April 23 he posted retirements, due to fuel supply and engine problems respectively. But in a return trip to Thruxton on May 28, Matthews drove a brilliant race to finish third. The tyres had gone off and the heavy car had become even more of a nightmare to handle, leaving him exhausted.

"I trained like a demon that year," he says. "It was difficult to drive that car quickly throughout a race. I was doing sets of 80 press-ups every day, just because it was such a difficult car.

"It was very quick in some corners, but not all the time. At Brands, for instance, it showed up quite well. I had faith in Ralph Broad and Roger, though. They produced wonderful touring cars – you used to just get in, pump the tyres up and put the petrol in. I mean they were very, *very* quick."

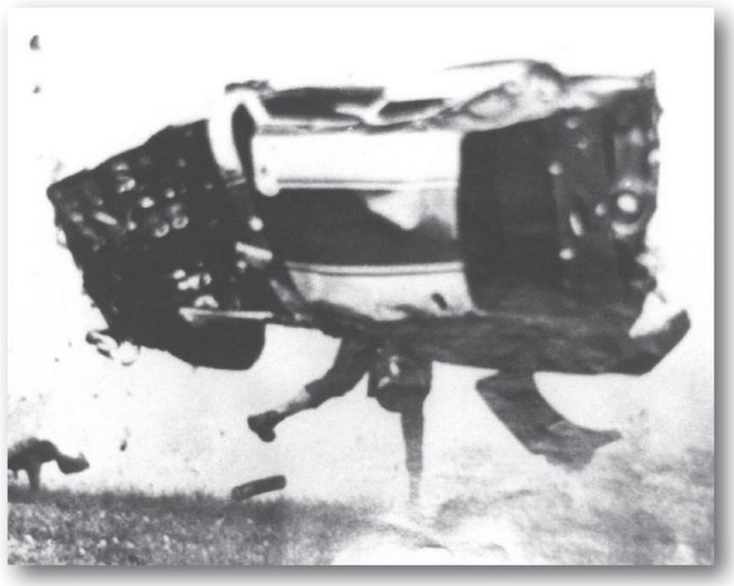


Four-time touring car champion Rouse began his career at Broadspeed

A CAPRI REBORN

It was at the next race it all went wrong. The British GP support started well enough with Matthews third on the grid. But seven laps into the race Matthews' Capri, Dave Brodie's Norman Reeves Escort 1600 and Gavin Booth's BMC Mini were involved in one of the worst accidents in BSCC history.

"I'm a little bit tapped around by it but I remember what happened," says Matthews, who can laugh about events now. "People who get banged on the head don't usually remember a damn thing, but I remember everything. I remember the car, the colour of it, the sun on it…



"When you're in a quick car lapping slower cars, you get to know whether they've seen you or not. I knew Gavin hadn't seen me. I wanted to get after Frank [Gardner] and at Abbey I just popped down the inside of Gavin, giving him more space than I would have usually because my corner was spoiled anyway. The next thing I remember I was looking at the road.

"Witnesses thought Gavin had seen me coming up the inside and tried to pop in to get a pull. But with the speed differential in those cars, he was never going to get a pull anyway. It was just an unfortunate thing.

"I was going quicker than he was, sort of timing it so that as he drifted out, I drifted past on the inside. I remember the next thing he touched my offside wheel and pulled the tyre off the rim. I think the photographs showed it. And then the wind got under my car, and I don't know how quick I was going but it was still quickish. Anyway, the car got up in the air and that was that."

> "The next thing I remember I was looking at the road"
>
> DAVE MATTHEWS

Matthews suffered head and eye injuries, and to this day has no sight in one eye. He subsequently missed out on an offer from Peter Ashcroft at Ford to race for the team in 1974, and has competed on few occasions since thanks to problems passing the medical for a race licence. But Matthews realises he was lucky to escape at all: "I owe my skin to the Broadspeed qualities in that car. I'm not sure many people have got away with a bigger one than that. I thank that car for getting me out of it."

Broadspeed continued to flourish, as did Rouse, who won his four touring car titles in a Broadspeed-prepared Triumph Dolomite Sprint in 1975, a Rover Vitesse in '83, an Alfa Romeo GTV6 in '84 and the Ford Sierra Turbo in '85.

After the Capris, Broadspeed ran the Jaguar V12, which King doesn't have such fond memories of: "It was totally the wrong car to race, but Ralph was pushed into a corner. It should have been what Tom Walkinshaw had, an XJS – that would have been sensational. But Jaguar wanted to promote the V12. The car was so unsuccessful they deemed it was doing Jaguar's image no good, so they pulled the plug."

It was also the end for Ralph Broad and Broadspeed – following trouble with the unions, he left the UK 30 years ago to set up home in the Algarve: "I started when I was 14 and in the end I employed 200 people, but the unions were telling me what to do. I didn't do it so they blackballed me. I said 'that's it,' and I sold out. It lasted three years and then it closed."

"Ralph sold the business to another '60s Mini racer John Handley, who had a very successful engineering supply group called Roller Chain Holdings," recalls Andy Rouse. "John ran Broadspeed for a few more years but without Ralph it wasn't the same, so he closed it down. At the same time Vic Drake and I were ready to start up in the racing business, so having secured premises in Daventry we bought most of Broadspeed's equipment and Andy Rouse Engineering was born."

The company soon became a household name, enjoying the same reputation as Broadspeed for producing extremely quick cars. Rouse himself finally hung up his helmet in 1994 with 60 top-flight wins and now occasionally competes only in historic cars. He's happy with his legacy.

This new Capri may be a recreation, but the team that worked on the original car is certainly pleased to see it on track. "It's great – it's a racing car again as opposed to a wreck being stuffed in a yard somewhere," says Matthews. "It's good that some of these things that have got history are given another chance. I know they'll have done a great job; Roger King was always such a great engineer. It's a very strong team."

Many thanks to Speedmaster, QM Engineering, Andy Rouse and Mallory Park for their help with this feature.



LAT

Matthews gives the Capri its debut at Brands in '73

INSIGHT

RECALLED TO LIFE

Rebuilding the Lindrick Finance Capri was no simple matter

A year ago Speedmaster commissioned QM Engineering, whose director and owner Roger King worked on the Lindrick Finance Capri in 1973, to build a recreation of the car. No easy task when you consider that many of the Capri drawings were lost in a flood at Ford Cologne.

King (below) was ideally placed to bring this car back to life, however, as he still has many of the original Broadspeed technical plans. The car you see on the opening pages is almost exactly as it was in 1973, bar the obvious safety improvements such as side impact bars and HANS device points.

The biggest thing that's changed is that QM has built the car to RS 3100 specification. Strange, you may think, when the 1973 Lindrick Finance car housed the less blood-curdling 2600 engine. Well, during the evolution of these cars the Claude Bourgoignie Capri was updated to 3100 spec. The Lindrick Finance car would have undergone the same surgery had it survived beyond that fateful day at Silverstone, so 35 years later it has finally, and quite appropriately, received its update.



The car is, unsurprisingly, proving as quick as the original after posting a fastest lap of 52.3 seconds in its first race at Mallory Park. James Hanson of Speedmaster had some overheating problems on the grid of the Touring '70s race after a three-minute wait for the green flag, but recovered well to be classified fourth.

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A British attempt to hit four-figure speeds on land has higher aims – to inspire a new generation of UK engineers and scientists

BY GORDON CRUICKSHANK



1000

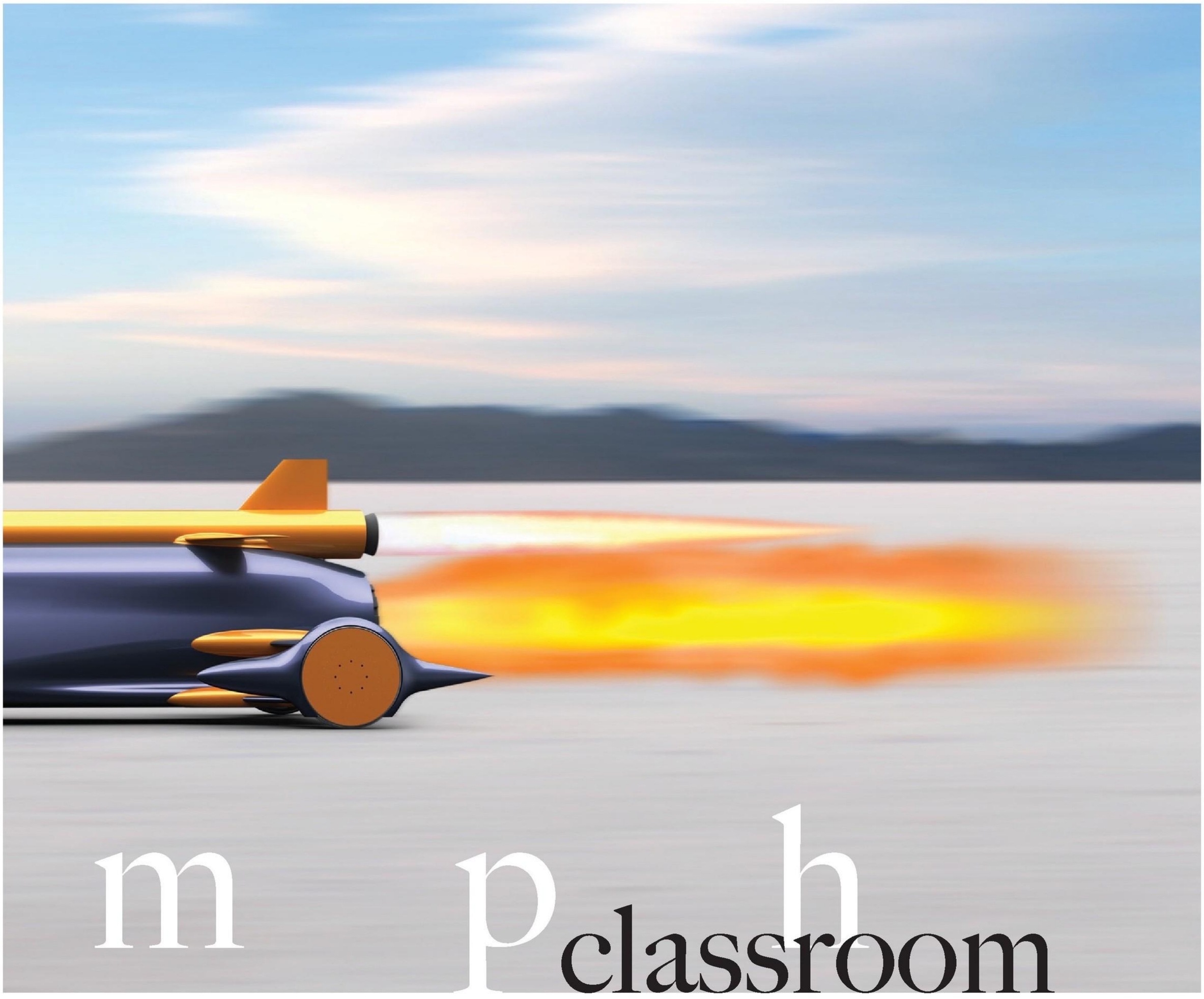
A crazy target, 1000mph – but so was Mach 1 and they hit that. Because some of the supersonic ThrustSSC team are also steering BloodhoundSSC: Richard Noble directing, Andy Green driving, and Land Speed Record specialist Ron Ayers overseeing aerodynamics. They've been at it secretly for 18 months, and the car should be ready to run at a gentle 800mph late next year, hit the 900s in 2010 and go for the big one a year after. And if he makes 1000mph, Green will break the low-altitude aircraft record. Yet 1000mph is not top of the agenda: Noble emphasises his £10m project is about boosting UK engineering skills.

Knowing Steve Fosset, among others, was planning an LSR challenge before his death, ideas for defending ThrustSSC's 763.035mph record were already buzzing around Noble's head. But it was then-defence minister Lord Drayson, also known as ALMS racer Paul Drayson, who lit the fuse. Seeing a severe shortage of engineering skills in UK industry in general, he met Noble and Green to suggest that an iconic project could excite young people and tempt them towards technical subjects. It's this educational angle which makes BloodhoundSSC different.

Noble talks knowledgeably about how major projects have excited the public in the past, back to the Schneider Trophy and even the building of Brooklands. He points out that racing had to introduce formulas to control speeds, which restricts development and fosters secrecy.

"We're doing the opposite. We're going to put everything up on the web as it happens, including problems, and we'll read all the feedback. And if a student hits on a good idea, we'll follow it up." He hopes that schools and technical colleges will factor the project in to coursework. It is already part of the engineering course at the University of Western England in Bristol, whose engineers are working on the project. There is a supporters' organisation, the 1k Club, whose members get to watch the build, or even a test run, while the vehicle itself will be built in a 'visitor centre' at Filton, near Bristol, with continuous public access. Openness is Bloodhound's middle name.

Boosting interest in engineering is the primary aim, says Noble. "If we hit 1000mph but don't achieve the other aims, we'll have failed." Andy Green is equally eager: "We know we can build the car, but getting the project into schools is something no one has done before. If we can



m p h classroom

point to the simulator readouts and say to the kids 'this tank is at 1.7bar' and then explain that, they're studying maths without realising it."

When I bring up the green question, Noble chuckles. "There's a great answer to that. Bloodhound's CO_2 output is equal to 4.1 lactating cows! Yes, we'll be producing a little CO_2, but we're also producing the generation of engineers who will face the challenge of climate change."

Choosing Wing Commander Green, the RAF pilot who steered ThrustSSC through the sound barrier, as the driver was not automatic. "The team approached me to devise a driver selection process," he says. "Which I did, but I realised that my process pointed directly to me. There are other speed record drivers, but none who have gone supersonic. There are other fast jet pilots, but none who have driven a record car. I'm the only one. So I said 'how about it?' and the team were delighted."

He's already familiar with one part of Bloodhound – the Eurojet EJ200 turbofan engine from the Typhoon fighter. But the car also packs a specially designed rocket motor riding piggy-back. Why both? Engineering director John Piper, ex-Williams F1, who also worked on Dieselmax, explains that while the EJ200 can push a Typhoon to Mach 1.4 at 40,000ft, drag on the ground is much higher. A pure jet car would probably plateau at some 800mph, so the rocket is vital to boost speed. But a rocket is not easy to throttle; it's all or nothing, making it hard to hit and hold the incremental speed targets the team needs for development. Variable-throttle rockets exist but are more complex and riskier, as they use liquid fuel. The jet brings controllability and reduces the amount of volatile rocket fuel to be carried to foreign parts; and as Piper points out, it comes fully developed. Of course, it helps to know people: Green tells me the MoD, his employer, is loaning test engines which conveniently have no flight time left.

Perched above this, the hybrid rocket engine is the biggest ever built in Britain. When Green hits 350mph he will press the red button and 25,000lb of thrust will erupt behind him, doubling Bloodhound's power for 17 brutal seconds to push it to 1050mph – Mach 1.4. Hybrids are inherently safer as they use solid fuel triggered by an oxidiser, and until ignition the two are kept separate: the solid fuel inside the motor only burns while the oxidiser – hydrogen peroxide, or HTP – flows. The rocket will »»

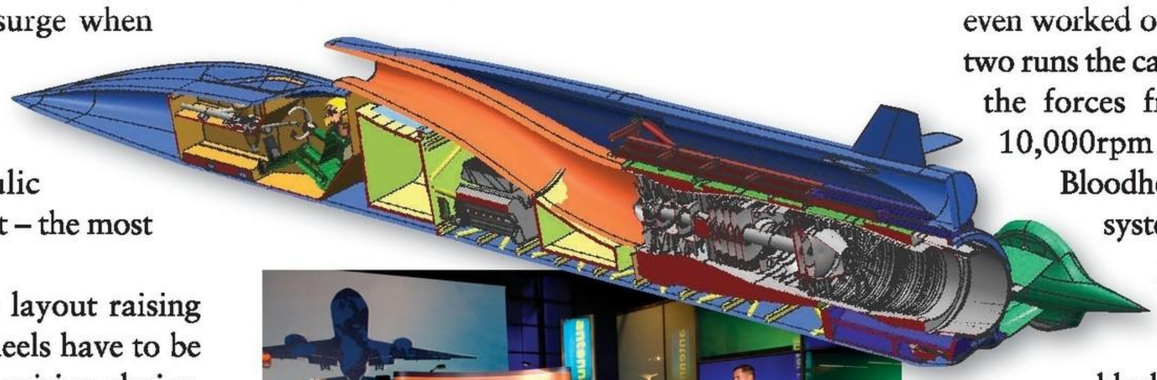
be constructed by Falcon Project, which builds military rockets in the UK and US.

But Bloodhound packs a third engine too. In those few seconds the rocket consumes one tonne of liquid HTP, which has to be pumped from a tank behind the pilot. This is done by an 800bhp petrol V12 built by MCT (similar to Superleague series engines) via a pump developed for Blue Streak, Britain's advanced ballistic missile of the 1950s. Very appropriate, as that was a period of technological surge when Britain seemed about to grab a world lead. The V12, buried inside the machine and cooled by ice, also provides hydraulic systems power and fires up the jet – the most powerful starter motor ever.

With this double-deck power layout raising the centre of gravity the rear wheels have to be out-rigged for stability – a drag-raising choice, but cleaner than doing it with the fronts. To minimise shock wave formation they run in close-fitting needle-nosed shrouds, mounted to faired double-wishbone suspension arms with pull-rods to internal coil springs. And before you say "aren't salt lakes flat?", the team reckons that wherever they run they need a good 100mm of suspension travel. Running out of wheel movement could have a catastrophic effect on the car's stability. Currently the 36in wheels are likely to be forged titanium, though Piper says they are investigating a composite centre with aluminium 'tyres'.

The crucial aero design is handled at Swansea University's School of Engineering, where Ben Evans runs the Computational Fluid Dynamics programme. There will be no wind tunnel models, says Evans; this will be the first LSR car shaped entirely inside a computer. Even with a hugely powerful supercomputer it takes a day to run a full test at a single speed, he says. Nevertheless this slashes development times and removes the need for tunnel testing over the critical step from Mach 0.99 to 1.0, when trans-sonic shock waves cause enormous drag.

Even more crucial is the car's balance. It's vital to maintain constant loading on the wheels at all times, despite the huge pressure shocks of piercing the sound barrier and the fact that the car's weight alters radically during the run. "We burn one tonne of HTP and half a tonne of jet fuel," says Piper, "so our 6.5-tonne car drops to five tonnes in 80 seconds." Wheel loads and the critical pitch angles are controlled by moveable winglets above the wheels. It's not a fully active system, Piper explains; instead the adjustments are pre-mapped against speed, and will be optimised after each test run. As for that dainty vertical fin, it may look small, but Piper says the car is highly stable directionally and this is enough to give control. Green amplifies this, pointing to the window from 3-500mph where the wheels lose influence and the aero hasn't built up. "That's fine," he says coolly. "It doesn't have to be stable as long as it's controllable..."



Orange section is air intake to jet; tanks in green sandwich V12 engine and HTP pump





Noble (l) and Green launching the 1000mph pursuit



> "If we hit 1000mph but don't achieve our other aims, we'll have failed"
>
> RICHARD NOBLE

Feeding the jet engine is another problem: it can't swallow supersonic air, so Evans' team has spent hours shaping the intake trunk above Green's head. Supersonic air is first slowed by hitting the cockpit canopy, then again inside the trunk as the cross-section expands. Once it's subsonic, it sweeps downwards over the fuel tanks and the V12 to the engine's compressor stages. The huge intake trunk makes a big hole just where the 43ft vehicle needs strength, so it will be a structural element made of composites, sharing loads with the tubular steel framework which forms the car's rear section, clad in composite panels.

Up front, Green sits in a composite monocoque between the HTP tank and the front wheels on their double wishbones. This safety cell protects both him and the highly explosive liquid. Unlike ThrustSSC Bloodhound steers from the front, though maximum deflection is five degrees so opposite lock is off the menu. And no one has even worked out the turning circle... Between its two runs the car will be turned by trolley. Because the forces from a 300lb wheel turning at 10,000rpm are enormous, explains Piper, Bloodhound uses a 30:1 worm and wheel system which obviates kickback but gives little feel. So a servo motor will give Green artificial feedback as he strains to follow a thin black line at a mile every four seconds, peering between the front wheel arches – his position has been lowered to clear the air intake.

LSR rules have not altered much since Donald Campbell's day, so despite the radical speed jump (the biggest in LSR history) Bloodhound still only has 11 miles to play with – five to run up, the measured mile, and five to stop in. And like an F1 pitstop, Green must halt on the mark to get the car readied for its return run. "We only have one hour for the turn-round," says Piper. "There is no time to move the car." Stopping from 1050mph happens in stages: simple aero drag after shutting off the engines will haul the car back to 800 at a fearsome 3g. Then Green releases an air-brake; at 650 he pulls 'chute one, and 'chute two pops at 400. From 200mph down it's over to a set of carbon discs.

Where will all this happen? Not on Black Rock Desert, scene of ThrustSSC's record. The surface has deteriorated too much.

Instead, through a global satellite search, the team has identified some 14 possible sites, in the US, South Africa, Turkey and Australia. Visits to narrow the options follow soon.

Meanwhile Noble's job ramps up: with £1m already under his belt he needs to find the next tranche of that £10m from commercial sponsors to begin the build. The government may be behind him, but it's not offering cash. This time, though, he has something fresh to offer: not just media exposure and national flag-waving, but a chance to influence this country's technological future.

To view BloodhoundSSC's progress and join the 1k Club visit: www.bloodhoundssc.com Also long-time LSR sponsor STP: www.stp.eu





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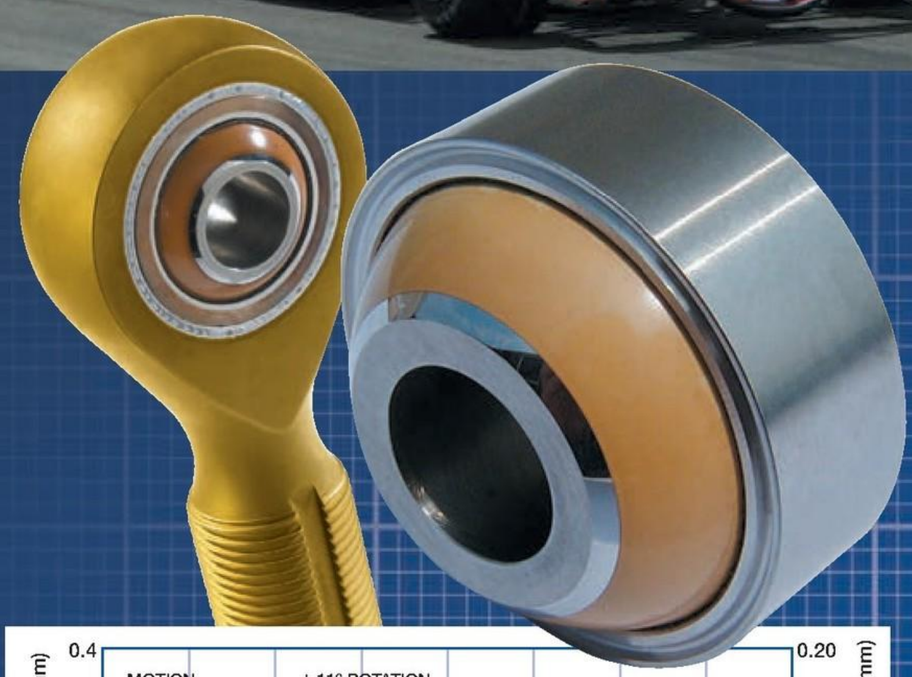
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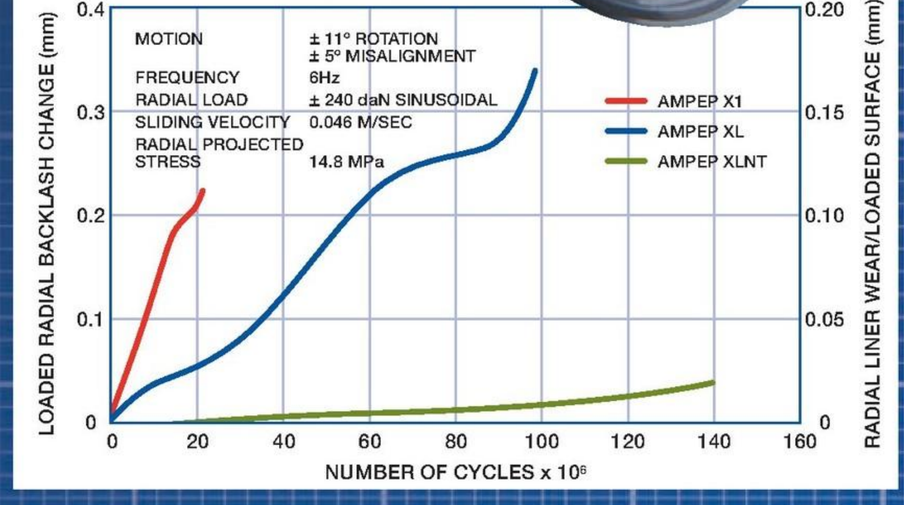
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2008 REVIEW

THE STORY OF A SEASON

WITH NIGEL ROEBUCK & MARTIN BRUNDLE



Marc Wright

Lunch with Martin Brundle in an Italian restaurant in Knightsbridge, the plan to spend a relaxed couple of hours talking over the World Championship just past. As expected, it was thoroughly enjoyable, with a good deal of scurrilous chat, some of which, alas , cannot make it to the printed page. Raise a glass, one and all, to Judge Eady. Or not, as the case may be. We began, perhaps not surprisingly, at the end. In the dying seconds of the Brazilian Grand Prix, the see-saw between Hamilton and Massa finally came down on Lewis's side, and thus we had the first British World Champion for a dozen years.



Hamilton dives down the inside of Massa at Hockenheim – a race where he humbled his title rival

NIGEL ROEBUCK: I was delighted that Lewis won the title, but actually I didn't feel that, overall, he drove as well as in 2007, his first season in Formula 1.

MARTIN BRUNDLE: You're probably right, but there are a few indisputable facts, one being that Hamilton was penalised more than Massa. I'm not making a case for any kind of discrimination, but… there *were* some seriously marginal calls on Lewis, weren't there? I looked at it in some detail, and he suffered more than Felipe, to the tune of 11 points. Mind you, that figure doesn't match the number Massa lost through unreliability and pitstop dramas and so on.

NR: Felipe dominated in Hungary until the engine blew, and he would have *walked* Singapore. On the other hand, without the intervention of the stewards, he wouldn't have won at Spa – and Lewis *would* have…

MB: When we got to Bahrain, for race three, Massa had zero points on the board, and he was partly to blame for each of the retirements. But after that Felipe did what he's always done: when he dominated, he *really* dominated, and this year he did that even more than before.

NR: When Massa's on pole, and disappears in the race, more than anyone he reminds me of Prost. Complete lack of drama, not the tiniest mistake. In those circumstances you can positively bank on him.

MB: Yes, you can – whereas at one time you could bank on him falling off! He dominated in Bahrain, Istanbul, Valencia and Interlagos, and he also won at Magny-Cours, where Räikkönen had a problem, and Spa, where Hamilton got the penalty – which I still believe was an outrageous decision, by the way.

Massa won more races than anyone else, but still there are people who don't really rate him, and I don't understand it. I mean, to beat Michael Schumacher in equal cars, and to beat Räikkönen regularly, by some margin… that *means* something! Felipe raised his game this year, although on his off days you don't really expect to see him flying up through the field. He had an awful time in the rain at Silverstone, but in fairness his car did look *terrible*.

NR: At Spa, although he finished up winning, he was pretty lacklustre, too, nowhere near Hamilton and Räikkönen, and he didn't really figure at Shanghai, either.



MB: No, that's true. It was a typical Massa season, if you like – except that he ramped up the good days to a new level.

NR: What really did impress me was the way he went round the outside of Hamilton at the first corner in Hungary. It was a bit of a do-or-die thing, but he judged it perfectly, and once in the lead he was gone…

MB: Yes, and that was right after he'd been humbled by Hamilton at Hockenheim – I mean, Lewis really did put manners on him there, didn't he? But Felipe gets strength, advice, whatever, from somewhere – whether it's from Schuey or from Rob Smedley, his race engineer – and comes back at the next race sort of renewed.

I must say I thought Lewis at Silverstone was just out of this world – a different quality of drive altogether from what he produced at Interlagos, which just showed how much pressure he was under there. Mind you, in Brazil he was being 'managed' almost lap by lap…

NR: And what about Monza? After that performance at Silverstone, you might have expected him to dominate wet qualifying, but he blew it, and that looked like over-confidence to me.

MB: It was, for sure. Completely crazy. He wasn't trying to set a grid time, he was simply trying to get through to Q3. It was pouring down – and he went out on intermediates! What I couldn't understand was that, even after he'd changed to wets, he was still *seconds* off the pace. This was the same guy who'd left them behind at Silverstone, and I found that very confusing.

NR: The race was confusing, too. He started back in 15th on the grid, and in the early laps was going nowhere – but then there was a point where he just *took off*!

MB: Yes, and I've never heard any rational explanation of that. OK, these cars are complex bits of kit, and the matter of tyre pressures and temperatures and all that is a science in itself – or maybe voodoo would be a better word. I remember saying, on the TV commentary, 'What is Lewis Hamilton doing?' Then he just came alive!

Having said that, I thought he was daft in that race. Yes, he was incredibly quick, but he was *so* aggressive – he put Glock on the grass, chopped Webber, chopped Alonso, and it really wasn't necessary. *cont. on page 56* »»

Clockwise on this page: Vettel's Monza win was the most heart-warming of '08; Ferrari's pitstops didn't always run smoothly...; Trulli's third place in France pointed to Toyota progress; Piquet was lucky to keep Renault seat

GEPA/Mathias Kniepeiss

LAT

Ferrari

Toyota



BMW



McLaren



LAT



Force India/Sutton



Honda

Clockwise from top left: Kubica kept BMW in the title fight; Kovalainen won in Hungary, but then faded; Fisichella and Nakajima get it very wrong in Turkey; Barrichello was best Honda driver; the resurgent Alonso won twice for Renault

I would have penalised him for the incident with Webber, but it never even came up for investigation.

NR: Well, this *was* just after Spa…

MB: Fair point! It seemed that the whole penalties thing was being jockeyed along through the season, but as soon as there was any negative press about it, they backed off. But, going back to the original point, there are times when Lewis succumbs to pressure, and then his mind just goes.

NR: Some of the things he does rather remind me of Gilles Villeneuve, like the first corner incident at Fuji, where he tried to outbrake the whole field. That was *exactly* the sort of thing Gilles would have done, but when you think what was at risk for Lewis, who was trying to win the championship…

MB: I can't argue – but on the other hand you can't really cherry-pick the bits you like about a driver, can you? On a personal level, I find the kid lovely to deal with, but I think he does sometimes come out with some slightly unfortunate things – his message is clear, but his choice of words isn't always right.

There's such a fine line between confidence and arrogance, isn't there? And how much of that… confidence do you want to knock out of the lad? He's an instinctive racer – and these are instinctive moments we're talking about, rather than calculated ones. The night before the race at Fuji, he told me he was going to play the percentage game – and he was very convincing. But as soon as the race started, his instincts took over…

NR: Yes, and he could have taken Kovalainen out, let alone anyone else. Actually that moment made me think of Senna, and some of the moves he put on Prost when they were McLaren team-mates…

MB: As I said, you can't cherry-pick the good bits. As with Senna, there are some rough edges about Lewis that he might want to round off a bit, but we all do things we regret, don't we?

It's a fact that he's not the most popular boy in the paddock, but I think some of that is driven by jealousy and frustration – after all, here's this kid, who's had the magic carpet ride since he was 12, who's got the best, most reliable, car… I think there's an element of, 'Alonso started off with a Minardi, and Räikkönen with a Sauber – you've had it too easy, son, and now you come out with this arrogant stuff…'

Lewis may have had the best car from the start of his F1 career, but he was a serious contender in his first Grand Prix, wasn't he? And this year, unlike last, he had a team-mate who wasn't going to be a lot of trouble – Kovalainen was never going to bother Hamilton, was he?

NR: Well, I thought he was going to bother him more than he did, I must say. And there were odd times when Heikki did have the upper hand on Lewis – in dry qualifying at Silverstone, for example, and the same in the wet at Monza.

MB: Yes, that's true – but remember the look on his face after the race at Monza, when he knew he should have beaten Vettel. After his win in Hungary, he was very disappointing for the rest of the season, I thought.

NR: It's been said that, as the season went on, the car was developed in a way that would suit Lewis, rather than Heikki, but it's always been like that, hasn't it? Inevitably that a team will focus on the driver most likely to win for them.

MB: Yes, I know all about that – I experienced it with Schumacher at Benetton and Häkkinen at McLaren!

I actually think Kovalainen is a lot better than we've seen so far, but I don't think his first year in F1, with Renault, did him a lot of good – I think Flavio [Briatore] convinced him he wasn't up to it. The pace he shows in practice demonstrates that he's got what it takes – what he can't do, so far, is deliver under pressure.



NR: The biggest disappointment, though, was surely Räikkönen. There was all this stuff about 'Kimi can't make the Bridgestone fronts work in qualifying', but is that acceptable from a World Champion, and the highest-paid driver in history?

MB: No, it isn't. Massa makes them work, doesn't he? At the very top level, with that amount of resource and expertise and data and support – and at that money! – there are no excuses. It was a pretty underwhelming season, wasn't it? Come to that, I also think Kimi was quite lucky to win the championship in '07.

> "I'd love to see Kubica in a McLaren and Alonso in a Ferrari"

NR: Yes, he was, but in the second half of that season he really came on strong, and I thought he'd turned the corner at Ferrari. For most of this year, though, he's been lacklustre, just as in the first half of '07. He won in Sepang and Barcelona, two of the first four races, and then never looked like doing it again, except at Magny-Cours, where he had a problem, and Spa, where he went off.

MB: Kimi hasn't *looked* strong, has he? Last winter I interviewed him at a test, and I never saw a man more happy, more confident, but by the beginning of the season that had all gone.

In a way, F1 needs Kimi, but you look at the Ferrari, and you think, 'What would Alonso have done with it?' But the bottom line is that, whatever we think, whatever the *world* thinks, Kimi doesn't give a toss! As ever, there's no single explanation for his poor season. I think he lost motivation, I don't think he was fit enough…

NR: Yes, but where does pride come into it? The other Ferrari driver is starting from pole, and winning a lot of races – and you're the World Champion!

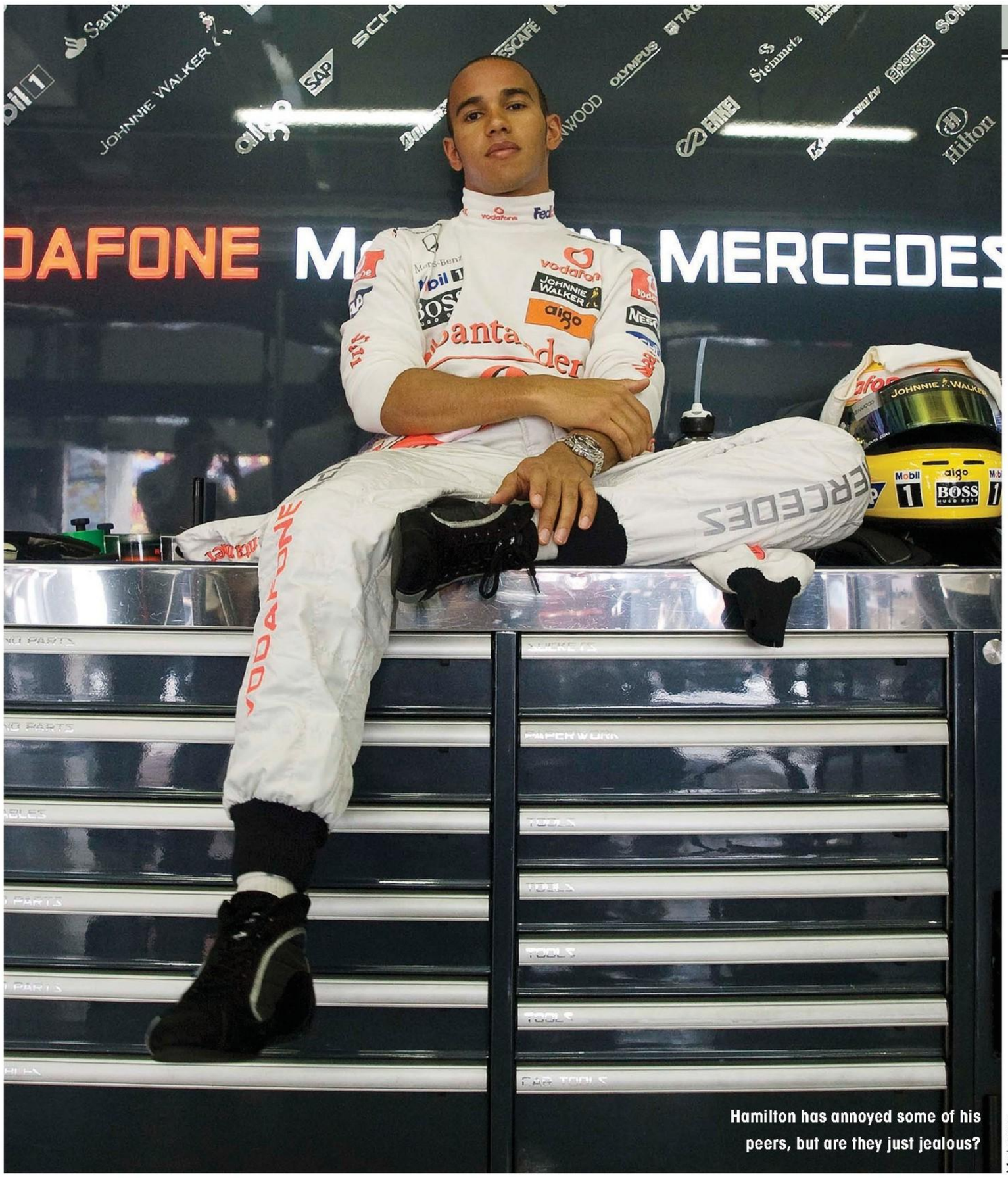
MB: Nige, you're thinking like a logical elder statesman! I know exactly what you mean – but you're not thinking as a twenty-something-year-old who's never had a job, who's got tens of millions in the bank, a World Championship under his belt, and opportunities beyond belief – on every level imaginable. Wherever you go, you're treated like a god. David [Coulthard] describes it as 'Bring me the M&Ms – without the green ones'!

NR: Yeah, you're right, but this year it still seemed to me that Ferrari and McLaren were each wasting a car…

MB: Well, you're braver than I am to say something like that – that's the difference between TV and the printed media! But it's true that I would love to have seen Kubica in a McLaren and Alonso in a Ferrari – or Vettel in either. Talk about 'must watch' sport…

NR: Actually, it's easy to forget that Kubica was a championship contender until late in the season, and if, after his win in Montréal, BMW hadn't abandoned development of the car to concentrate on '09, who knows where he might have finished up? Robert's a bit of a maverick, isn't he? A real racer, yet he makes remarkably few mistakes.

MB: I agree with you – although I find him



Hamilton has annoyed some of his peers, but are they just jealous?

McLaren

very hard to work out. I look at his driving style, and it seems to me *extremely* unusual. There's a lot of movement going on – the car moves, and so does he – but the whole thing somehow comes together as one, and keeps moving forward.

Nick Heidfeld had a strange season, I thought, very impressive in some races, all at sea in others. Because he's such a quiet bloke, he's more difficult to read than most of the drivers.

NR: For me, in terms of what he did with what he had, Kubica was probably the driver of the year – and I don't think Alonso was far behind…

MB: I'm not as black and white on that as you are. Actually I thought Alonso was pretty ordinary in the first half of the year – in my view he really came alive in the second half, when the Renault got interesting, and he got interested. How they suddenly made the car that much better I don't know, because they claimed they hadn't changed it that much. Certainly they were down on power until late in the season.

NR: I know Alonso's *results* were ordinary until the last few races, but I always think you learn more about a driver when he's in an average car, and he impressed me. When you've won two World Championships, come close to a third, and then suddenly find yourself in a midfield car, it must be pretty difficult to motivate yourself…

MB: Very! To me Alonso is the most complete driver out there – I've no doubts about that. So why is he finding it so hard to find an absolutely top drive? Fernando should be in the Ferrari – unquestionably. But he, and the people around him, have got it wrong with their package of demands. That's indisputable, and it's a great shame, because he's a fantastic racing driver. Look at Fuji, where he won. He was actually managing the race strategy from the cockpit! Because of the tyre degradation problems, he was telling the team to fuel him shorter than Kubica, his main rival – 'Just keep me in front of him, and I'll handle the rest…' His ability to have so much *thinking* capacity available while driving a Grand Prix car is amazing – it reminds me of Prost. If you were starting an F1 team tomorrow, which two drivers would you want? You'd want Fernando Alonso – and Lewis Hamilton!

NR: Well, yes – unless you were Ron… Alonso's team-mate this year gave him rather less trouble – in fact, Fernando out-qualified him at every single race. I thought Piquet might raise more of a blip than he did…

MB: Me, too. Quite honestly, I can't believe he's got the job again next year. He's a pleasant kid, but his driving doesn't do a lot for me. A situation was handed to him by the safety car at Hockenheim, and he did a good job there, but he made an awful lot of mistakes. Is he worthy of an F1 seat? Yes. Did I think Renault would keep him? No. Was he told to crash in Singapore? Don't know! Only joking…

NR: Of course you are, Martin. Let's swiftly move on to Toyota, who finally made some progress. For all his foibles, I remain a Trulli fan, and I think the decision to hire Timo Glock looks like a pretty good one.

MB: Yes, I'm a fan of Jarno, too, as a bloke and as a qualifier, although as a racer I think he's… a bit variable. Is he still worthy of an F1 drive? Unquestionably. Does he know how to drive a team forward? Yes, I think he does. Good bloke, knows which way is up, communicates well.

As for Glock, at first I wasn't convinced by him, but cunningly – being the ice-skater I can be – I said we should wait and see. And, honestly, he really impressed me. He may not be an Alonso or a Hamilton, but I do see him as a long-term serious F1 driver.

NR: In his GP2 days, what struck me was that he was a no-nonsense racer who got stuck in…

MB: Well, I remember in Turkey that he was passed by Piquet, and it looked over – but he got him straight back again. Young drivers need to realise that reputations are won and lost on things like that. Think of Montoya in the F3000 race at Monaco years ago, passing somebody in Casino Square – where *nobody* passes anybody! That was a significant moment, and people remember those things.

NR: Monza was a pretty significant moment, too, you'd have to say: pole position and victory for Vettel and Toro Rosso. I thought that was the most pleasing *result* all year long. And who knows, in the end Sebastian may turn out to be better than any of them…

MB: Yes, that could well be the case. Monza was a *proper* race, too, with real speed, and an adult strategy. As you say, everything was right about it. Vettel didn't put a foot wrong – when others did. He's got *phenomenal* promise, that boy.

NR: One thing about Vettel which must be disturbing to some of the drivers is that he looks as though he's having fun! He always has a grin on his face, and then he gets in the car, and goes like hell… »»»

MB: That's right. A guy like him doesn't worry about tyre graining or how the car reacts off the kerbs – he just drives through it. I did an interview with Vettel in practice at Monza, and, you know what, he thanked me! Then he shook hands with all the guys on the crew, and asked if there was anything else we needed. You, of all people, don't need telling that this is not how most Grand Prix drivers behave! Gerhard [Berger] is going to miss him next year.

NR: He certainly is, but if I were him without a doubt I'd keep Bourdais. He looked a bit shaky in the early part of the year, but at Spa he was superb, and at Monza, after starting a lap late, set the second fastest lap, and ran the whole race at virtually the same pace as Vettel…

MB: Yes, I thought Bourdais was genuinely unlucky this year – not least at Fuji, where he got that ridiculous penalty for the incident with Massa. There were some races where he unquestionably outperformed Vettel – and you'd be mad to drop someone capable of doing that.

NR: It was a touch embarrassing that Toro Rosso, the supposed 'B' team, had the better of Red Bull, but then they had the Ferrari engine, rather than the Renault…

MB: Mmm, Red Bull got the worst of that, didn't they? A couple of blogs said I was always negative about Webber on TV, which I don't think I am. I rate Mark, and I think his raw speed is unquestionable, but to me he's a bit like Trulli – I find him difficult to work out. He's still seven podiums behind me – and he shouldn't be. I like the guy, and I think he's got a good take on life.

NR: He was also the only driver with the balls to say what he thought about the Mosley affair…

MB: Yes, he was, and that said a lot about him. I think his potential is high, but so far he hasn't lived up to it. The arrival of Vettel will make or break him. Either he'll raise his game, and look good against Sebastian, or it's over.

NR: Your boy DC had a disappointing final season, apart from that third place in Montréal. It was sad to see him punted out of his last race at the very first corner.

MB: Well, what do you say? It was the poorest season I've seen from him – he always seemed to be wearing either his own front wheel or someone else's car, which was not at all like him. Basically DC was a quarter of a second slower than Webber, and when you've mentally decided to retire, that's not a bad effort.

NR: What of Williams? The season began so promisingly, but I hated seeing them mainly towards the back again…

MB: Me, too, and yet, as you say, it looked quite good at the beginning, didn't it? Nico [Rosberg] was third at Melbourne – and he was fast with it.

You do have to worry for Williams, though. Where's the succession? Where's the influx of new talent and money? [CEO] Adam Parr doesn't strike me as the guy to pick it up and run with it.



Felipe handled his heartbreak in Brazil with great dignity

Bernard Asset

"When Felipe dominated, he *really* dominated, and this year he did that more"

As for the drivers, from what I've seen, Nakajima frankly doesn't do anything for me. Nico I admire for his loyalty to the team, and I also like his intellect and the way he presents himself. The car was off the pace so often, but whenever an opportunity came up he didn't blow it. I think Nico's a class act, and far better than he's been able to show so far.

NR: If Williams had another poor season, Honda had another *terrible* one – 14 points from 18 races. On balance, though, I think this year Barrichello did a better job than Button.

MB: Without a doubt. I know Jenson has said, 'Let Lewis try a crap car, and see how he gets on', but, honestly, particularly through the second half of the season, Rubens did a better job than he did. Jenson's made some bad decisions, and he's had to live with the consequences, hasn't he? If he's going to make it, he should be in a McLaren or a Ferrari by now. I still believe in him, but… I think it's all been a bit too cosy for too long. Very long-term deals, like that between him and Honda, aren't necessarily a good thing – for either party.

I thought Ross [Brawn] would have made a bigger difference than he has, but probably you can't judge him and Honda until the end of next year – boy, they've got some work to do.

NR: Last, Force India – which, with the new McLaren-Mercedes deal, should be a very different proposition in 2009. Should the team keep Fisichella?

MB: No – nor Sutil, really, although probably he deserves another chance. I thought he looked better when he first started than he does now.

NR: Well, he did drive a superb race in the wet at Monaco, until Räikkönen turfed him off the road. How the hell did Kimi get away without a penalty that day?

MB: Well, didn't mean to do it, Guv, did he? It was just an absolutely crass piece of driving.

NR: Let's finish with the highlights of the year, starting with the best drive of the year. I'd go for Lewis at Silverstone…

MB: Yes, I'd agree. Tell you what, I think we should construct the championship schedule so that the races coincide with the rainy season, whenever that is! Either that, or install sprinklers at every circuit, because a wet Grand Prix is always sensational.

NR: Best result of the season? For me, it was Vettel at Monza…

MB: I think most people would say the same. It was refreshing, wasn't it? A *warm* result. One of the smallest teams on the grid, with a car supplied, a new driver winning – and no luck involved whatever.

NR: And the best driver? Did the right man win the World Championship?

MB: Overall, yes, I think Hamilton was the outstanding driver of the year, with Massa not far behind. Alonso and Kubica are the others in the 'dream four', but over the season I don't think they were on it consistently enough. For me, the ideal in '09 would be to have Robert at McLaren and Fernando at Ferrari – pity it isn't going to happen, isn't it? But then go a year or two beyond that, and think of Vettel in a Ferrari…

NR: Another grappa, Martin?

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"You're never going to make all the people happy. I can live with that"

After a difficult season Kimi Räikkönen gives a rare insight into what went wrong at Ferrari – and reveals why there was never any doubt about his staying

BY ADAM COOPER

Kimi Räikkönen remains something of an enigmatic character to the outside world. He doesn't help himself with his apparent lack of enthusiasm in press conferences – perhaps not surprising given his low boredom threshold – but get him on his own for an interview and he's always far more open and interesting.

Spend time with him socially and yet another Kimi Räikkönen emerges. To say that he is the life and soul of any gathering would be an understatement. Away from the pressure cooker of the Formula 1 paddock, he becomes so relaxed and chatty that it's hard for anyone else to get a word in. He also conveys a far deeper understanding of the sport, and many other subjects, than you might expect.

In stark contrast to the superficially more outgoing Fernando Alonso – who keeps himself to himself – Kimi is arguably the most social of any of the current crop of racing drivers, always ready to spend a Sunday night after a race relaxing with his peers. And you won't find any of them with a bad word to say about him. He's never made an enemy in the paddock, either with his actions on the track or his carefully chosen words off it.

He's also fiercely loyal. He spends much of his down-time with old friends from Finland and still counts Sauber team manager Beat Zehender as one of his best pals seven years after they worked together. He has resolutely refused all suggestions that he should distance himself from father-and-son management team David and

Peter Fox

Steve Robertson now that he's a major-league earner. He acknowledges that he wouldn't have made it without them and regards the younger Robertson as a sort of big brother.

The contrasting public and private faces of Räikkönen reflect a curious roller-coaster pattern to his F1 career. In 2001 the precocious Finn had a sensational impact on the top level of the sport with Sauber after making the unprecedented jump straight from Formula Renault. With McLaren in 2003 he challenged Michael Schumacher for the World Championship, only for engine dramas to ultimately cost him dear. In 2005 he very nearly beat Fernando Alonso to the title, but again Mercedes unreliability proved expensive. And then in 2007 he finally won it first time out with Ferrari after a season of astonishing consistency during which he barely put a foot wrong.

Spot a theme? For some reason Räikkönen's career peaks coincide with odd-numbered years, so perhaps it was destined that 2008 would prove to be so difficult.

In the end he scraped home a respectable third in the World Championship, beating Robert Kubica on the tie-break of having two wins to the BMW man's one. Nevertheless he was some 22 points shy of team-mate and championship runner-up Felipe Massa and, while it's easy to point to circumstances that would have made that gap smaller, few would argue against the proposition that the Brazilian did the better job over the season.

"It was definitely not what we wanted," says Räikkönen. "We had a pretty good year in one way, but then we made mistakes when we took some wrong choices. And *I* made mistakes. After that we weren't able to recover from it; we had some bad races."

So what went wrong? It's not an easy question to answer. Closer examination reveals that things weren't as bad as they might appear, and perhaps the most baffling statistic is that in 2008 Kimi set no fewer than 10 fastest laps – to the one of Lewis Hamilton. Given the right circumstances, the pace was clearly still there.

He scored two solid wins early in the year at Malaysia and Spain, and for a while he led the championship. If anything, Massa was the guy under pressure in the first third of the season.

But then Räikkönen endured a series of dramas that were beyond his control. A problem fitting the wheels on the grid in Monaco led to a penalty which dropped him down the order, and then the team made a bad call on strategy. Trying to catch up, he made a mistake that took out the unfortunate Adrian Sutil, something he's apologised for many times.

In Canada he led out of the first pitstops only to be thumped by Hamilton. In France he was comprehensively beating Massa when an exhaust broke and he had to cede the lead. And on a drying track at Silverstone he was catching leader Hamilton when again the team made a bad tyre call as rain returned.

All of those lost chances came in the face of ongoing struggles to get the F2008 to his liking. Massa generally felt more comfortable in the car, and the situation became more acute after mid-season developments left Kimi floundering to find a set-up that worked for him.


LAT

"We had a pretty good year, but we made mistakes – I made mistakes"

"We tried [various changes] in a test and thought it was good, but then we couldn't get the car where we wanted. Then really there was no other test to try, and finally we decided to go back [to what we had before] and it seemed to be better. But we wasted a few races on that.

"It's not the first time it's been like that. Last year was similar at some point. Sometimes it seems to be difficult to get it exactly right. It's on the edge all the time, and if you get it right it's good, but if you're a little bit off, it seems to make everything difficult. I don't know whether it's the tyres or getting everything together to make the tyres work."

Qualifying was especially problematic for Räikkönen, who often struggled to get the tyres to reach optimum temperature on an out-lap. "Everything seemed to be much more difficult than it should be, and you lost time in one place, like three-tenths," he says. "We were getting a little closer all the time and especially in the races the car was usually good. But over one lap, sometimes it was good in one qualifying session, but in another it was difficult. It was hard to get it consistently good.

"Felipe and I have different [driving] styles for sure, and our cars were quite a bit different. It's just a different way of driving, it's been there even last year. We just haven't found a way to get everything as we want."

Further changes brought the car more to Räikkönen's liking at Spa, a track where he had won the previous three races. In the dying laps he had the lead when it started to rain and Hamilton controversially squeezed by. As he tried to fight back Kimi lost control and stuck it in the wall.

"It was a bit disappointing. I knew if it started raining it was going to be more difficult. With the hard tyres it was very difficult anyhow. I wanted to win – it was the only way to really recover my championship. OK, afterwards it's easy to say that Lewis [deserved] a penalty, but I'd rather race on the circuit and get the results on the circuit than somewhere else. It could have been different, but I wanted to win, and that's what I tried. And I crashed."

Kimi's struggles in the many wet races this year made him look like a beginner, but in reality his (and Massa's) problems just put a focus on weaknesses in the car: "When things are not working it doesn't matter how good you are. If something isn't working on the car, or you can't get the car or the tyres or the whole package together, there's nothing you can do. You can only do your best and still people are passing you, or you can't pass people. You just need to try and fix it. We saw last year we had wet races and we were strong – always. It's not like suddenly we lost how to drive in the wet.

"It's a similar issue in the dry, but when it's bad weather, maybe it's multiplied. I don't think it's purely that the car is not good in the wet, it's just sometimes we get things working, sometimes not. They've been quite complicated races anyhow, with all the things going on."

A couple of races after Spa, Räikkönen crashed heavily at Singapore. For a man who drove flawlessly in 2007, it was especially galling to make so many errors. "Probably more than for many, many years!" he says with a sheepish grin. "But that's the price you pay. Sometimes you push hard and you don't get anything. You feel worse when you make the mistakes yourself and crash out, like Singapore. I lost points for fifth place, the team lost points, but for myself it didn't make any difference in the championship, so it's not a big deal.

"I wanted to get past the Toyota and there were only a few places where I had a chance, but I needed to be very close. Unfortunately I hit the kerb too hard, locked the wheel and couldn't turn the car enough. I could have easily driven around and come fifth, but I wanted to be fourth. And I got nothing. It wasn't the car – the car was pretty good in the race there. I just pushed too hard in the wrong place."

Two major offs in three races did not do much for Räikkönen's reputation, especially as Massa was up there fighting for the title. Did he feel under pressure as his season went off the rails?

"I wouldn't say [there was] pressure, but of course you want to have good results, and the team wants good results. It's easier if you have a good race – it gets everybody to stop talking bullshit. But it's always the same in F1. You can have a bad race, or if you have a good race »»



LAT



LAT



Ferrari

Clockwise from top left: an off-track moment in the Australian GP – a sign of things to come?; missing his front wing after hitting Sutil's Force India at Monaco; there's a stark difference between Kimi the F1 driver and Kimi the man (below); not all the Finn's retirements were his fault – witness his pitlane crash with Hamilton in Canada; Räikkönen fared better with the F2008 in the races than in qualifying, with 10 fastest laps to his name; the first of just two wins in 2008, in Malaysia



Ferrari



LAT



ATP



LAT



"I'm happy to be with Ferrari. We're going to have some good years still – and some wins"

a week later the same people say completely the opposite things.

"You know when you shouldn't read the newspapers and when it's OK to read them! I mean, it's not the first time. It's not nice, but it's not going to change anything in my life. They sell their papers, and there are always critics. Even when you do well there are some people who like you and some who don't – you're never going to make all the people happy. I can live with that."

If there's one thing that does rile him, it's when criticism extends from his performance to the way he lives his life away from the track. Over the years he's proved an easy target for the tabloids, especially in his native country. His view is that whatever he does when he's letting his hair down has no effect on his racing – quite the opposite in fact, because if he's enjoyed himself on his days off, he returns to work in a positive frame of mind. And Ferrari seems to have adopted a more *laissez-faire* approach to the subject than did Ron Dennis.

In the summer Kimi's life was made harder by suggestions that he had retirement in mind – despite the fact that he only turned 29 in October, and his contract stretched into 2009. Those who were convinced that Alonso was on his way to Maranello were silenced when Ferrari announced that Räikkönen's contract had been extended to include 2010. Coming just after the Spa debacle, it was a timely vote of confidence.

"I always had next year, but people were saying that I was going to retire after this year. I never said that. If you don't say anything, then people start making up stories, and in F1 it all gets quite silly very soon. It's normal...

"I know what's going on, nobody else does. I read so much weird stuff that it's funny. Like I said, it's normal in Formula 1. A lot of stuff is going on – rumours – and when you don't say anything then people get even more excited that they're right. I don't mind. There are always going to be rumours.

"I've never been really worried about my future," he adds. "OK, when you have bad times people think that you're going to sign whatever you get. We talked with the team for a while and in the end we found a good position for both sides where we were both happy, and then we decided to sign.

"I was not in a hurry, I still had next year. It wasn't going to change anything. But I'm happy to sign a new contract and be with the team. We're going to have some good years still – and some wins."

So will he ever again drive anything other than a Ferrari?

"I've said that this is probably going to be my last team. But in Formula 1 you never know. I'm happy here, and as long as we do good things and everybody is happy then I don't have a reason to go anywhere else. But you've seen what happens in F1 – it can change a lot."

As noted Kimi is still only 29, but 2009 will be his ninth season in F1 and the eighth to be conducted in the intense glare that comes from driving for one of the two top teams. Retirement doesn't figure in his plans just yet, however.

"I'm not going to do this until the end of my life! There are a lot of other things to do, but I still enjoy F1. It hasn't been the season that we expected, but it doesn't change the approach or the feeling about F1. Hopefully next year we can be stronger again and fight for the championship."

Of course the disappointments of 2008 were made easier to handle in the knowledge that he's already got one World Championship win to his name. "If I hadn't won last year, and if we had ended up in the same position I'm in now, it would have been harder," he says. "I always wanted to win at least one [championship], and if I win more it's a nice thing and that's what we're aiming for."

And in the end, Räikkönen believes this past year has only made him a better driver. "You always learn," he says. "It's not the first year that I've had some hard times. Sure, you'd rather have a good year after you win [the title]. It's so easy to lose points and to have bad races, and it all changes very quickly. It's hard when you make mistakes, but you need to take the best out of them and find the good things."

Peter Fox



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FERRARI'S GOLDEN STATE



Other car makes fear the financial storm warnings, but thanks to its new California the sun still appears to be shining on Ferrari

BY ANDREW FRANKEL

Don't let thoughts of a title won and lost in almost as many seconds make you feel too sorry for Ferrari this winter. For what it's worth, I think justice was done for all: the team with the best car won the constructors' title, the team with the best driver won the drivers' title.

But perhaps more cogently, Ferrari seems to be a business in very good shape at the moment. I've been doing this long enough to remember the days when Ferrari said it would never build more than 3000 cars each year. Then it was 4000, then 5000... And in the first year of full production of this new California, the number of cars wearing the little yellow badge nosing their way out of the Maranello gates will approach 8000. Given that, at £143,320, the California is the cheapest car Ferrari makes, that can neatly be described as good business if you can get it. In volume terms it puts Ferrari on the same sort of plane as Bentley and Aston Martin, though if you expressed it in terms of revenue, I suspect it's playing an altogether different game.

Also, the California is sold out until 2011, which is not something you'll hear anyone at Bentley or Aston Martin saying about any of their mainstream products right now. Yes, the California is new, and of course some of those orders will evaporate before being fulfilled but, at the same time, I suspect fresh orders will also be received from those who have waited to see if anything as conceptually compromised as a 1735kg convertible with a retractable hard top can cut it as a Ferrari on the open road.

Perhaps surprisingly, it can. When you drive the California, what strikes you most is how Ferrari has used it to embrace a whole raft of new technologies, from that roof past its direct injection engine to the seven-speed, paddle-shift,

double-clutch gearbox while, at the same time, never losing sight of the fact that, above all, it must be a Ferrari.

It's a car I had grave reservations about – I didn't like the way it looked when I saw the photographs and I didn't like the way it read when I saw its specification. It seemed likely to be one of those strange and unsatisfying cars Ferrari feels the need to produce once in a while when its focus loses sharpness: the 348tb was one, the 360 Modena another, while the current 612 Scaglietti is a third.

The bad news is seeing the car in the flesh did nothing to allay these fears. I don't understand why Pininfarina has struggled for so long with the styling of Ferraris: the last one I really liked was the F355 which itself was based on the 348 which would have been styled at the back end of the 1980s. That's 20 years without a truly great original design for Ferrari, yet its work for Maserati of late has produced some of the greatest shapes ever to wear a trident. By contrast the California is fussily detailed and a little too big in the posterior. There's an awkward homage to something going on at the front too – I thought an original California, though rumour has it that the name was not settled on until very late in the day – and the overall effect is not bad, just mildly disappointing.

Still, it's not as if there aren't good things to dwell upon here. There is more history under the bonnet where the California notches up another claim to fame: the first Ferrari ever to sport an indigenous V8 in its nose. Although its capacity might suggest it's the same motor used by the F430, it's actually only distantly related and comes not only with direct injection but even a different bore and stroke, leading to a capacity 3cc below 4.3 litres, rather than 8cc above. Somewhat confusingly Ferrari says its closest relative is actually the 4.7-litre V8 it casts in its foundry for use by Maserati and Alfa Romeo.

As with every Ferrari V8, with the sole exception of the 3-litre motor it adapted for use by Lancia in the unlovely Thema 8.32 of the late '80s, the California uses a 180-degree crankshaft rather than the more usual 90-degree layout, retaining the sharp Ferrari bark and howl rather than a more Stateside rumble and thunder. Its 453bhp makes it convincingly the least powerful motor in Ferrari's arsenal and, installed in a car whose kerbweight is exceeded only by that of the portly Scaglietti, hopes for explosive performance are not high.

But through the use of ultra-close gear ratios, a Getrag gearbox for which Ferrari is able to quote no measurable shift time and, in extremis, a highly effective launch control system, the California contrives to stretch this comparatively meagre resource a remarkably long way. Bar-room bores will love to quote its sub-four second 0-60mph capability and 8000rpm red line, while I revelled simply in acceleration that seemed quite relentless up to the 140mph or so I managed to achieve while the Sicilian police kindly looked the other way. The gearchanges are, indeed, apparently immediate while the noise of the motor is vintage Ferrari V8. A three pedal option will be available next year, but Ferrari anticipates a minimal uptake.





California's sheer usability means you'll spend more time in here

The car also handles beautifully. A mid-engined Ferrari – even one as unfeasibly good as a Scuderia – is not a car in which to turn off all the electronics and start taking liberties: sooner or later it will find a way to repay your impertinence. But the California is not like this: its natural desire is to understeer just a little, which is exactly how it should be, but when called upon to be a little more demonstrative than this, it doesn't skid, flick or lurch into a slide – it simply eases gently through a generous period of neutrality and flows into oversteer. I can't remember when I last felt so confident driving a Ferrari with such abandon, but I suspect it was either in an original 550 Maranello or never.

But perhaps what I liked best about the California is that if you're lucky enough to be on the right roads, you can behave like this all day until it's time to go home, whereupon you can raise the roof in 14 seconds, soften the dampers and cruise back to base with a level of comfort and refinement that befits fully Ferrari's claim that this is a proper GT. Writing about how enjoyable a Ferrari is to drive slowly might not be fashionable on the pages of magazine such as this, but it will be important to those in a position to buy a California: the more usable a car is, the more it is likely to be used.

Despite the looks, the weight and its apparent brief to be a Jack of all trades, the California turns out to be a fine Ferrari. Not a true great, perhaps, but one fully deserving its place in the stable. So if you show me someone who claims its only real home is the Santa Monica Boulevard in its adopted California, I, in turn, will show you someone who's not driven one. Ⓜ

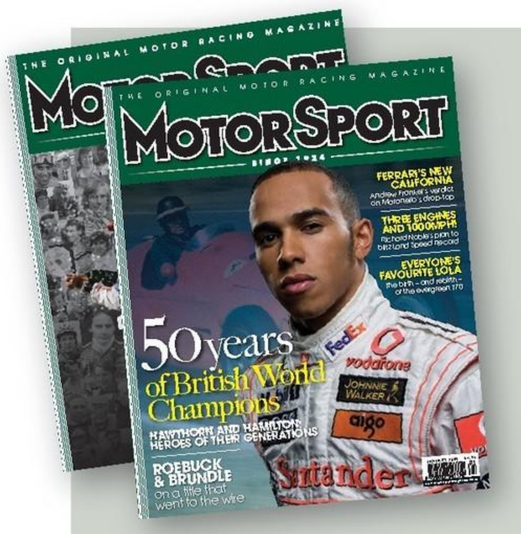
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POWER/TORQUE: 453bhp at 7750rpm, 358lb ft at 5000rpm
GEARBOX: F1, dual clutch, 7-speed plus reverse or manual 6-speed
TYRES: f: 245/40; r: 285/40
FUEL/CO_2: 21.6mpg, 305.6g/km
ACCELERATION: 0-62mph: under 4.0sec, 0-1000m: 22.1sec
SUSPENSION: f: double wishbone; r: multilink
BRAKES: carbon-ceramic discs f: 390x34mm; r: 360x32mm
PRICE: £143,320 (includes extras)
TOP SPEED: 193mph

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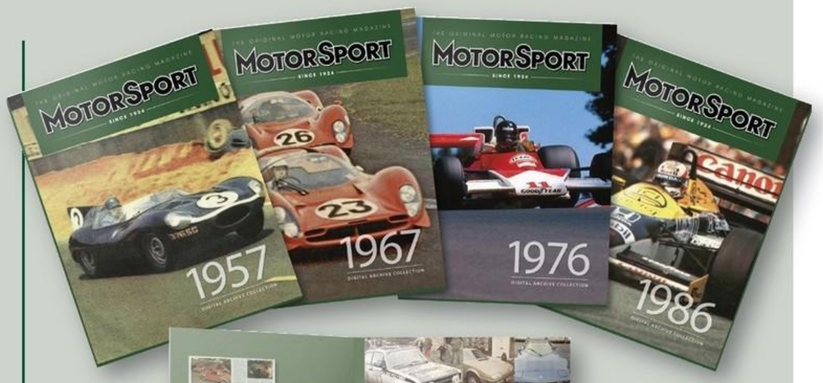
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A polished performance

RONDEL RACING WAS A TEAM TO BE RECKONED WITH FROM THE BEGINNING, AS NEIL TRUNDLE TELLS ROB WIDDOWS

Neil Trundle, the 'del' of Rondel Racing (the Ron half was a certain Mr Dennis), is into his fifth decade in motor racing. One of the great mechanics, a man who can make or mend anything, Trundle wielded the spanners while Dennis poured on the polish. And it worked.

We're going back to 1971 and the first season for Rondel Racing. With support from fuel company Motul, and a lot of hard work, Neil and Ron Dennis – they'd become friends at Brabham – had built a couple of Formula 2 Brabham BT36s. Then they signed up no less than Graham Hill as lead driver, with Tim Schenken as team-mate. From these little acorns very big trees would grow. Their first race was at Hockenheim.

"To get it together was a mammoth task," smiles Neil. "We were living with Ron's parents, no rent, free food, and we just worked 24 hours a day. Ron did a deal with Ron Tauranac and we built the cars, just the two of us, then we bought an old truck on the HP and Alain Fenn spent all night signwriting it.

"We got two engines from Bernie Ecclestone, who'd been running Jochen Rindt in F2, without putting any money down. Four weeks later the phone was red-hot and if we'd known what we know now, we'd have paid up sooner. Anyway, Ron and Tim had met a Greek shipbroker called Tony Vlassopulos and persuaded him to come in as a backer. Then it was just relentless work, all day and all night, to get ready for Hockenheim in April. It was incredible how hard we worked, but the cars looked a million dollars, with a new paint job by our mate Alain. The team just looked the business."

The journey, then, had just begun. But it was not without its problems.

"The truck broke down on the way to Dover," laughs Neil, "but once we fixed it we got to Hockenheim, the cars looked wonderful and we had the image, that was what Ron wanted. OK, we were working under an awning at the side of the truck, but it all looked great."

Neil looked after Schenken while Dennis prepared Hill's car, and practice went well.

"I remember after first practice Graham told Ron the car was good but not quite right," says Neil, "and so they spent two hours doing the tracking, the cambers and the corner weights – Graham was a good mechanic and they worked together. I was just putting the wheels on Tim's car when Ron called me over to help tighten up an oil pipe on Graham's car. I got it tight with a few minutes to go before the first heat, and we just had time for a quick breather as we waited with the cars on the grid. We'd had no sleep for days, remember. Then I looked down at Tim's car and I saw that two wheel nuts were loose – I'd put them on in a big rush to go and help Ron with the oil pipe, and hadn't tightened them all up. Makes me go cold just thinking about it now. So I ran to the pits, grabbed my brace, and ran back to the grid. Ron was standing there looking very smug, with that smirk, you know – 'what's up with you?' he says – and I realised he'd already done up the nuts for me…"

The races went very well indeed, Hill winning his heat and coming second to François Cevert overall, while Schenken scored more points for the team with fifth.

"Our very first race, and our first win," smiles Neil. "It set the benchmark. Our standard, our image, was always way above the rest of the teams. It was all about presentation – we had to have reliability of course – but Ron was always working on the image, re-painting the cars, always polishing them. When he worked for Jack Brabham he polished the front rockers until he was nearly through the zinc, and that's what he brought to Rondel – immaculate presentation."



But it wasn't all about image. Just a week later, at Thruxton, Hill won outright, beating Ronnie Peterson by less than a second with Schenken again in fifth place.

The rest is history. Neil Trundle is still at McLaren, still loving his motor racing. If ever the team is short of a mechanic, they know where to find him.

Neil started his career in 1968 with Alan Mann and the Ford F3L. After Rondel he ran the Token F1 car and built the six-wheel Tyrrell before rejoining Ron Dennis at Project 4 in '77. After the merger with McLaren he built MP4/1, the first carbon-fibre F1 car. In 1981 he started his own F3 team, returning to McLaren in '85 and eventually becoming chief mechanic to Senna and Prost.



Lunch with... JOHN WATSON

'Wattie' was always quick on track, but he was no politician off it, which could be why he didn't enjoy more success in F1 – and why he remains Britain's most underrated GP driver

BY SIMON TAYLOR



James Mitchell



Here's a man who was Britain's top Formula 1 driver for six consecutive seasons. A man who scored two of the greatest from-back-to-front victories in F1 history, and in his best year came oh-so-close to winning the World Championship. And yet when anoraks gather, or when pub discussions turn to a roster of all-time British F1 greats, his name is rarely mentioned. It's almost as if posterity has forgotten about John Watson.

John himself is relaxed about this, a contented man who is passionate about his fishing, relishes his TV commentary work, and remains on friendly terms with most of F1's movers and shakers. But this is also the man who was, says Jackie Stewart, "Too nice to win races" – which sounds like damning criticism.

"I'm not offended by what Jackie says. It's an insight into the naïve side of my personality. When I came into F1 I thought motor racing was just about who is best on the track, a level playing field if you like. I had the self-belief to think I could beat anybody, but it took me too long to wake up to the reality that races are won and lost long before you even get to the track."

John lives just outside Oxford now, and we're lunching at the Cherwell Boat House, overlooking the placid river and its line-up of parked punts awaiting hire. As befits a fisherman, he orders lobster and red mullet, and a glass of white wine.

Two days set him on the rocky road to F1. One was in 1955, when he was nine years old. His father took him to the Tourist Trophy at Dundrod, up in the hills above Belfast where he was born. Marshall Watson ran a successful motor business and raced for fun, at Kirkistown and Bishop's Court and the Curragh. He won Ireland's first touring car race in a Citroën Light 15. "It was a family thing. My mother, my sister and I were the support crew. Then at Dundrod I saw Fangio, Moss, Hawthorn, the Mercedes 300SLRs, the D-types and Ferraris. All my dreams crystallised that day.

"I finished school with no distinction whatever – I didn't see why I needed to pass a Latin exam to become a racing driver – and as soon as I was old enough I started racing an Austin-Healey Sprite. I became the racing driver in the family. I graduated to a Crosslé sports-racer, and then we got an old Brabham BT14 twin-cam. I won Phoenix Park two years running, and some local championships. It was just Irish racing, with the odd foray to minor meetings in England, at Rufforth and Mallory and Oulton. I was working for my father, but I hadn't forgotten my dream.

"Then Gerry Kinnane, who bought and sold cars from a garage on the Falls Road, bought two second-hand Lotus 48 Formula 2 cars and a job lot of spares. He painted Team Ireland on the side of an old bus, and entered the Lotuses for the first round of the European Championship at Thruxton. John Pollock, an experienced Irish single-seater man, drove one, and he offered me the other. So Easter Monday 1969 was my second special day."

At Thruxton Jochen Rindt won from Jackie Stewart, setting a new outright lap record. F2 was a serious business in those days. But the story of the race was how an unknown 22-year-old bearded Irishman, driving an outdated car in his first major race, stormed through a strong field from 20th to fifth – before crashing.

"I'd never driven the car until I went out in practice. I'd never driven a car with wings, and F2 had the big high rear wings then. I was shy and self-effacing – I still am, although I later developed mechanisms to overcome that – and it was scary to find myself on track with Rindt, Stewart, Courage, Siffert, all the people I read about every week. Initially I was paranoid about getting in their way. But suddenly the dream became reality and I found I could compete with them, in some cases pass them and pull away, in a car that wasn't considered very competitive."

Slowed by a misfire in his heat, John started the final 20th on the grid. His progress up the field was astonishing. He passed the works Tecnos of François Cevert and Nanni Galli, Derek Bell's Ferrari, then Johnny Servoz-Gavin's Matra, Tino Brambilla's Ferrari and Billy Ivy's Brabham. By lap 28 he was fifth, and catching Henri Pescarolo's Matra, when the dream ended at Cobb Corner. He ran wide under braking and wrecked the Lotus, tearing off two wheels. But he had certainly made his mark.

"That day at Thruxton changed my life. No way did I want to stay working in the family business now. My parents were happy with me racing in Ireland, but the big stuff was different. People got killed in those days – even Jim Clark, in a Lotus 48 exactly like the one I drove at Thruxton just a year later. But I'd had a sniff of my dream becoming reality, and they knew I had to go for it. So with my father's help I got a Brabham BT30 to do F2 in 1970."

This privateer effort had its ups and downs until John had a massive accident at Rouen. "I loved Rouen, those fast sweepers down the hill from the start, then the hairpin and climbing up the other side of the valley. It was all the things I'd learned from Irish road racing on tracks like Dunboyne and Phoenix Park. But in practice, through the final flat-out right-hander, a rear tyre deflated and I was off into the barriers, almost tore the car in two. Broke my arm, broke my leg, fractured my ankle. I ended up in an appalling French hospital, but Bernie Ecclestone, whom I'd never met, got me flown back to Belfast in Jochen Rindt's plane. It was a bad weekend: Jean-Luc Salomon and Denis Dayan were both killed in the F3 race.

"We got the Brabham mended for the 1971 season, but money was very short now, and I had to take it race by race. Derek Bell offered me the use of his workshop in Bognor Regis, so I went to live in Bognor and I employed Derek's mechanic, George Brown. We went around Europe in an old Ford Transit, towing the Brabham on a trailer, each of us driving two hours on, two hours off. As a privateer you're always trying to finish, so you can get to the next race for the start money. I couldn't afford the Brian Hart FVAs that the top teams were using. I'd drive up to Cosworths in Northampton in my Renault 4L and buy the bits, and George would strip the engine, do whatever it needed – valves, pistons, shells. My engine never saw a dyno, but it never failed. There are a lot of unsung heroes in motor racing, and George is one of them. But that Christmas I had to tell him I couldn't afford to employ him any more. The new 2-litre F2 was coming in, and we couldn't run to a new car."

It seemed like the end of the road. Other drivers who'd shown speed in uncompetitive cars would have been knocking on doors and hustling for drives, but that wasn't in John's nature. But gradually drives came to him. "Sadly Bert Hawthorne was killed in Alan McCall's Tui at Hockenheim. Alan was short of money, but he rebuilt the car and asked me to drive it. I provided my old Transit and trailer, and we shared any prize money. It got me racing again. And Chevron gave me an F2 ride in the Rothmans 50,000, a combined F1/F5000/F2 race at Brands Hatch. I finished sixth, ahead of all the F5000s. A week later I had my first Formula 1 drive.

"This was in the Eifelland March, the Coloni-bodied car that Rolf Stommelen had driven that season. Bernie Ecclestone picked it up, and sold it on to a wild Dublin wheeler-dealer called Monkey Brown. Monkey asked me to drive it at Phoenix Park, just as it stood, with the weird bodywork and that central mirror on a big prong in front of the cockpit." The car only lasted 14 laps, but John set a new lap record, averaging 101mph around the park.

"I thought that was the last of it, but then Monkey dealt the car on to Paul Michaels, who ran Hexagon of Highgate. Paul's friend John Goldie put some money in, and they entered it, with normal mirrors now, for the October Brands Hatch F1 race. I finished sixth behind the BRMs of Vern Schuppan and Peter Gethin, and ahead of Ronnie Peterson's March and Mike Hailwood's Surtees.

"In March 1973 Gordon Murray had just finished his first F1 car, the Brabham BT42 – very different, very narrow, very small – and as a shakedown Bernie put me in it for the Race of Champions. The throttle was sticking a bit, and immaturely I decided to try to drive through the problem. Coming into Stirlings it didn't close fully, and I ran wide and hit the sleepers. The front of the car was bent through 90 degrees and I was trapped, with my right leg broken. I was in there for about an hour. The marshals tried to saw through the steering rack, and were just blunting their blades. If it had caught fire I couldn't have got out, but I just had to wait. The race carried on, Peter Gethin won and did his lap of honour, and in the end the Brabham mechanics came over and dismantled the rack, so they could get me out and into the ambulance."

John's comeback race was Le Mans, driving a JW Gulf Mirage, and he also did the Watkins Glen Six Hours with Mike Hailwood, finishing fifth. And he did his first two Grands Prix, at Silverstone in a Hexagon-run Brabham, and at Watkins Glen where Bernie ran a third works car. Both ended in retirement. There were some F2 drives, too, but he seemed to be slipping out of the loop. "I was driving anything I could get my bum into, but the Brands Hatch accident had set me back."

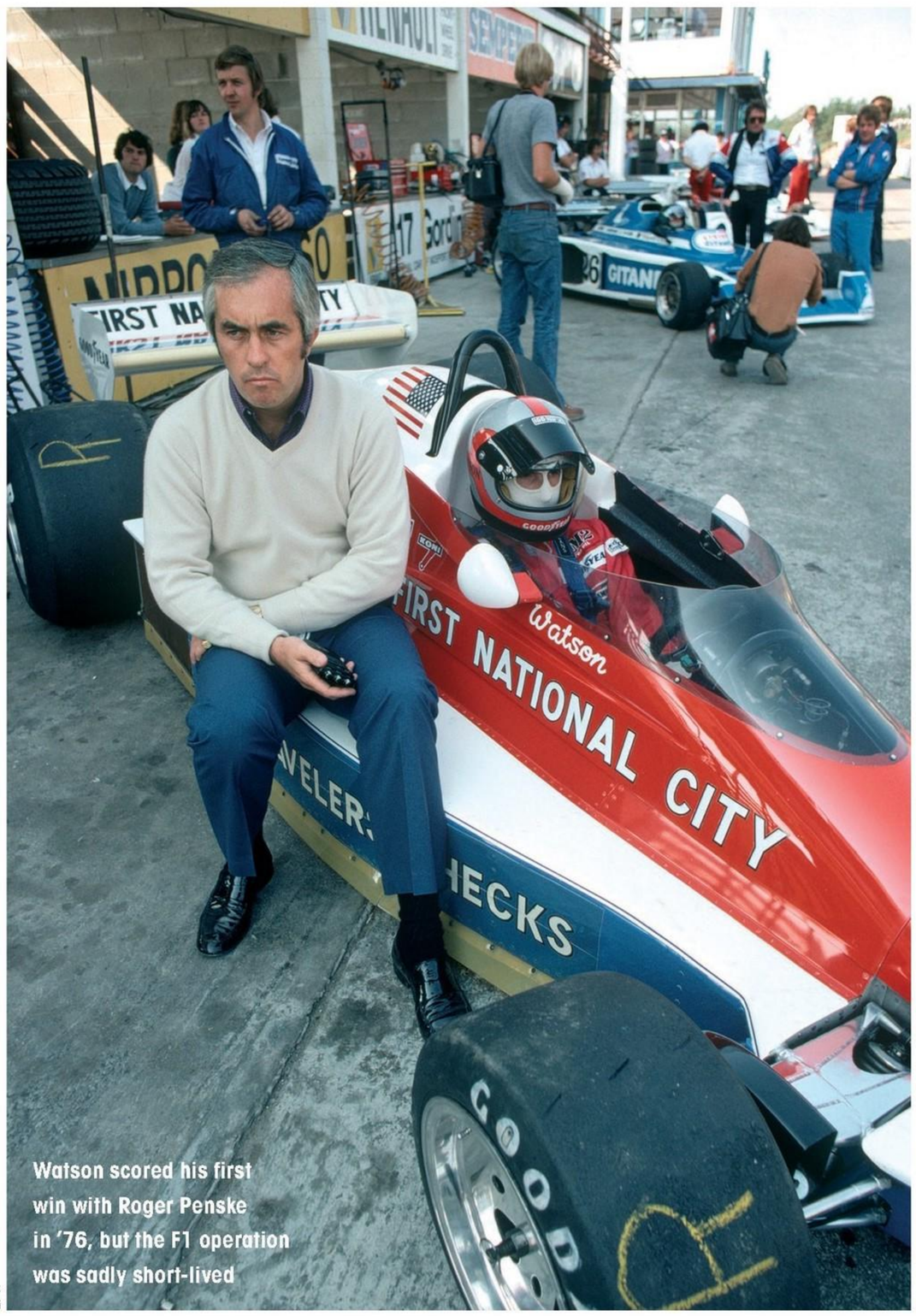
The Hexagon F1 effort in 1974 changed all that. With a Brabham BT42, and later a BT44, John did a full Formula 1 season, with far better results than a privateer operation should expect. At Monaco he drove brilliantly, taking sixth place and his first championship point. In Austria he finished fourth after a tyre stop. At Monza he was fastest in final practice. He was on a quicker lap, which could have beaten Niki Lauda's pole, when a rear wheel broke at Lesmo and pitched the BT44 into the barriers. He started in the works spare BT42, from fourth on the grid, and finished seventh after a pitstop. At Watkins Glen, despite broken suspension, John managed fifth place, bringing his and Hexagon's points tally for the season to six. But there was no more budget, and the little team folded.

John had also done F2 for Surtees that year, and for 1975 he signed for its one-car F1 effort. "John Surtees was one of the most misunderstood people in racing. Not everybody's cup of tea as a team boss, maybe because he could jump in any of his cars and perform as well or better than some of the drivers he employed. He was passionate about his racing, probably not very good at delegating, and some of his likes and dislikes were very strong. He was a racing driver/engineer in an era when you already needed to be a commercial businessman to run a team. He got support from Matchbox, but the sums of money were tiny compared to what Philip Morris and Texaco were starting to spend."

John's second place in the Race of Champions ahead of Ronnie Peterson's Lotus was encouraging, and in the chaotic Spanish GP at Montjuich he qualified sixth. After that it all went downhill. The team missed the German GP, and John drove a JPS Lotus 72 instead, replacing Jacky Ickx. "I got that drive because Colin Chapman couldn't understand why Watson, in a Surtees, had beaten Peterson, in a Lotus, at Brands Hatch. He was quite upset about that." Just before Monza, Surtees withdrew from F1 altogether. Rather than take a weekend off, John drove a T33 Alfa in a

Nürburgring Interserie race instead. Then he was approached by Penske.

"Mark Donohue's death in Austria was a tragedy for that team. But they needed to run a car at Watkins Glen, because their sponsor First National City was bringing a lot of important guests, so Heinz Hofer called me. Heinz was a top-class Swiss skier who'd been Roger Penske's ski instructor in Colorado one winter. Roger liked him, offered him a job, and he ended up as team manager of the F1 operation. At the Glen I qualified 12th in the PC3, which was their March copy, but it expired on the warm-up lap. With all those guests, it didn't look good. They had their original Geoff Ferris-designed PC1 on show on the grass in the hospitality area, not race prepared or anything, but when the PC3 stopped Roger shouted, 'Put Watson in that car!' I'd never sat in the damn thing before, but I drove it onto the grid and started from the back. During the race I broke two ribs because the seat didn't fit me, but I went the distance and finished ninth. So they signed me for 1976. By mid-season we had Geoff's new PC4 working well, and I was third in France, and third at Brands after James' disqualification. And in Austria I won." In wet conditions, John got the better of a three-car battle with Ronnie Peterson and Jody Scheckter to take a classic outsider victory.



Watson scored his first win with Roger Penske in '76, but the F1 operation was sadly short-lived

LAT

"Roger Penske put huge emphasis on presentation. His cars, his transporter, his crew, were always immaculate. He liked a clean-cut image. But I'd had my beard a long time, and I didn't want people saying I'd shaved it off just because Roger demanded it. So I said to him, 'When we win a Grand Prix I'll shave off my beard.' After I won in Austria we stayed Sunday night in a hotel at Heathrow, because Roger wanted a breakfast meeting next day before he flew back to the States. I got to my room, got the razor out and I had a ceremonial shaving. It wasn't a pretty sight. It had been a hot summer, so when I took the beard off I looked like a black and white minstrel. I went down to breakfast next morning, and Roger was saying, 'Where the hell's Watson?' 'Over here, Roger…' He hadn't recognised me, didn't think I'd actually do it.

"At Penske, Heinz Hofer was one of those people who play a pivotal role in your life. He understood me better than any team manager I've ever worked with, gave me the ability to go beyond where I might have gone on my own. And for 1977 the plan was to make Penske a full two-car team, and try for Ronnie as the other driver. Then at the end of November Roger called me in the middle of the night, I'd never heard him speak in such a broken voice. 'John, I've got to rationalise. I'm pulling the plug on the F1 team.' He had USAC, he had NASCAR, he was in a major expansion of his various businesses. The F1 team was more Heinz's operation, so it was the expendable option. Next morning I went to Poole to see Heinz and the first thing he said was, 'We've got to find you a seat for next season.' He picked up the phone, called Bernie, and said, 'You've got a seat at Brabham. Can John have it?' Bernie said, 'Send Watson to see me at 7pm tonight.' I duly turned up at that pad he had on the Embankment, with my manager Nick Brittan, and I signed to drive alongside Carlos Pace for 1977 in the flat-12 BT45-Alfa Romeos. In less than 24 hours I'd gone from despair to a really good seat. Of course, it was on Bernie's terms…

"But I was lucky with the timing. Martini, the Brabham sponsor, had been pressing Bernie to hire Clay Regazzoni, because they wanted an Italian-speaking driver, and he was flying in the next day to sign. Herbie Blash had to go to the airport, meet Clay off the plane and tell him to go home to Switzerland.

"Heinz went off to the US to run Penske's USAC team, but he came back for the winter because he was going to marry his English girlfriend, Linda. Just after Christmas he came over to my house at Bognor for dinner. Heinz had picked up Roger's new Ferrari Boxer, and was putting some miles on it before it was shipped to the States. He left, I went to bed, and at 2am I had a call from the police. It seems Heinz went the wrong way round the roundabout on the A27 and was going west on the east-bound carriageway. He hit another car head-on. He was killed instantly, and one of the two people in the other car was killed also. That night I had to go to the mortuary to identify him. It was appalling, stupid, tragic. Heinz was the best person I ever worked with in F1.

"My team-mate at Brabham was Carlos Pace. I'd just got pole position for the Race of Champions when news got to Brands that he'd been killed in a light aircraft crash in Brazil. Carlos wasn't your Lauda-style disciplined driver, just a Latin guy who embraced everything that life offered – wine, women and song. He liked to gamble, Bernie likes to gamble, and the word was that whatever fee Carlos got for 1976 he took as a credit, and by the time the year was over it was all gone. His wife Elida liked to spend, too. In the paddock they called her Miss American Express.

"Bernie was close to Carlos. Bernie's no

"Carlos liked to gamble; his wife liked to spend, too. In the paddock they called her Miss American Express"

softy, but he is much more human than people think. He and Carlos were mates. Bernie's different today, of course, because the scale of F1, the scale of everything, has changed so much. But he's still got that sense of humour. Bernie off duty is very funny. His stories of the motor trade and motor racing in the 1950s, you couldn't make them up. You couldn't print them, either.

"It's not generally known that in the early 1970s, after Jackie Stewart retired, he persuaded his manager Mark McCormack of F1's potential on the world stage. McCormack, through his company IMG, had done a lot in other sports, tennis and golf in particular. At the time Bernie was only just starting to turn his mind to the wider implications of F1. McCormack put a proposal to the F1 constructors that he should take over the TV and marketing rights. Bernie persuaded the team principals that it wouldn't be a good idea. His response was, let's do it ourselves. It's interesting to speculate what might have happened if IMG had taken over, and what Stewart's role might have been. He's been a triple World Champion, a team owner, an ambassador. But he never got his hands on the crown jewels..."



"Alain in his first year was like Lewis, but with a less competitive car"

John spent two seasons at Brabham, leading his first race for the team in Argentina until the rear suspension started to fall off. At Monaco he took pole, and chased Jody Scheckter's Wolf for the lead until his gearbox failed. He led the Belgian GP from the start, but was punted off by Mario Andretti, and was nudged off in Sweden by Scheckter while second. Then came the French GP at Dijon, where John planted the bulky Brabham-Alfa at the head of the field on lap five and stayed there. "It was going to be a great victory. I'd fought off a hard challenge from Mario in the Lotus 78, and on the last lap, coming out of that hairpin round the back, the engine stuttered. Fuel starvation. Mario was gone, I finished second. Two weeks later I was leading at Silverstone, and it happened again. Two races we should have won.

"At the end of 1977 Bernie said to me, 'Niki [Lauda] wants to join Brabham, what d'you think?' I said, 'I've got no problem with that. All I ask is that we get equal treatment.' What I didn't realise was that Niki, apart from his abilities as a driver, his conciseness of thought, his good communication, knew how to be political. He'd learned that at BRM, and then of course at Ferrari. He brought Parmalat to Brabham, a significant lever for him, and he came as a two-time champion. He was a very clever operator. He was able to pull the team round him and subtly say, John's a lovely guy, very quick, but I'm the one who will win for you. Soon there were tiny signs that I wasn't getting as much out of the team as I should. It wasn't their fault, it was my fault. I'm a slow learner, I wasn't as savvy as Niki. He was probably the first tough team-mate I'd had, and he was doing what was right for him. Even so, we got on very well, we had lots of laughs."

For 1978 Gordon Murray came up with his radical surface cooling concept. "Bernie gave Gordon a free rein, and Gordon never followed convention. The BT45 was a big bruiser to accommodate the Alfa engine, which needed more fuel than the Cosworth. The BT46 was much more compact. I drove it at Balocco, the Alfa test track, and losing the drag imposed by a normal radiator was like having another 100bhp. But the surface cooling area was a fraction of what was required, so actually it was a disaster. They had to hang a big radiator on the front as an afterthought.

"Gordon's answer to that, of course, was the fan car, the BT46B. After its one race in Sweden and the outcry from the other teams, Bernie agreed not to run it again. Colin Chapman in particular was apoplectic with rage. Two weeks later at Paul Ricard we were back with the BT46, and I gave Chapman and Andretti the bird by putting it on pole. But on race morning Bernie said to me, 'I want to ask you a question. Niki's got more points than you in the championship, so if you're leading on the last lap and he's second, will you pull over and give him the win?' This was only halfway through the season, remember. I felt he'd sucked the oxygen out of me. Perhaps I should have lied, but I was naïve enough to be honest, and I said, 'No, Bernie, I can't do that.' Thereafter it became clear, not in any tangible way but clear to me, that my days at Brabham were numbered."

So for 1979 John went to McLaren, where he was to stay for five years. Initially this was the pre-Ron Dennis McLaren, with Teddy 'The Wiener' Mayer at the helm. "That first season was a disaster. McLaren didn't understand ground-effects, and the M28 had the structural rigidity of this table napkin. By the time they'd got the honeycomb monocoque reasonably strong it weighed a ton. So, under pressure from Marlboro, in the space of six weeks they produced the M29, their version of a Lotus 79, and that was much better. My team-mate was Patrick Tambay, but The Wiener decided to test some young hot-shoes. He came up with Kevin Cogan, and Marlboro fielded a French F3 hero called Alain Prost. We went to Ricard, I did a few laps, then Cogan went out.

"You can usually tell in seconds if someone knows what they're doing in an F1 car, and Cogan didn't. But Alain, it was like he was born in that car. No question about his speed, he gave concise and accurate feedback, he embraced the team at once, and they embraced him. Alain became the weapon for Teddy to hit back at Marlboro, who were trying to move McLaren into Ron Dennis' Project Four operation. They weren't prepared to force the issue at that stage, and Teddy had the balls to face up to them. Alain in his first F1 year was like Lewis Hamilton in 2007, but with a less competitive car.

"So once again I found myself being sidelined, which wasn't nice. Gordon Coppuck copped a lot of flak for the M29's shortcomings, which wasn't necessarily fair. They brought in Robin Herd as a consultant, he did some serious wind tunnel work, and through 1980 it got better. But McLaren were also working on a secret project, which appeared at Zandvoort. This was the M30, the culmination of all Alain's input. But fundamentally it never worked. I stuck with the M29, Alain went with the M30 and I started to get the upper hand in the team again. Alain was now being courted by Renault, he knew we were going into the turbo era and McLaren hadn't got a turbo. We got to the last race of the year at Watkins Glen, and in practice the M30's suspension broke and Alain had a big old shunt. I went to the medical centre to see him, and he said, 'John, you will be number one at McLaren next year. I will never drive a McLaren again.'

"In fact McLaren had him on a long-term contract, but Marlboro eased his exit and continued their sponsorship of him at Renault. As part of the deal, McLaren had to take Andrea de Cesaris, whose family was friendly with Aleardo Buzzi of Philip Morris. Then the Ron Dennis/John Barnard takeover happened. There was an interim period when Teddy and Tyler Alexander still had 50 per cent of the company, and Ron and John had the other 50 per cent, but it was always going to be an exit for Teddy and Tyler – although Tyler still works there, even now. Mansour Ojjeh came in soon after."

John Barnard's 1981 car, the McLaren MP4, used a full carbonfibre monocoque developed with the Hercules Corporation in the USA. »»

Clockwise from above: in Gordon Murray's Brabham BT46 in '78, pre-fan car outrage; singleton Team Lotus drive at the 'Ring in '75 ended in suspension breakage; F1 break came at privateer Hexagon team, where Wattie impressed; father Marshall Watson raced for fun, inspiring the young John; Watson felt sidelined as Prost's team-mate at McLaren in 1980, but was title runner-up in '82; racing to fifth with Mike Hailwood in 1973 Watkins Glen Six Hours aboard Gulf-Mirage M6-Ford

All images LAT

"Carbon fibre was very new then. We didn't really know what would happen to the driver in an accident. Fortunately for me, de Cesaris did a lot of the crash testing! John Barnard had a reputation for being difficult because he could never accept any sort of compromise. He wanted to control every detail of the car. Up to then a lot of how F1 cars were built was guided by the mechanics. You'd have the basic design, and the mechanics would put it together, so for convenience they might change where, say, a catch tank was sited. If anybody did that to one of Barnard's cars he'd be out the door. 'It's my car, I designed it, I'll decide what it does and doesn't have.' John raised the levels of precision engineering in F1, took it into a new era. Up to then no one had been as fastidious. If there was a more complicated way of making a component, John would specify it. Every little piece was like a Fabergé egg." It took time to get the MP4 up to speed, but in three consecutive races John finished third (Spain), second (France) and then scored a heart-warming victory in the British GP at Silverstone. In the wet in Canada he finished second, and set fastest race lap. And for 1982 he got Lauda back as his team-mate.

"Having spent two years on his airline, a substantial Marlboro pay packet helped him decide that he wanted to go racing again. It was a one-year deal, with a break point after three races if he didn't deliver. He set about it the way he always did things, he got Willi Dungl to sort out his fitness, he got the key people in the team around him, told them, 'I'm the guy who will deliver for you.' But in fairness to Ron – and he's done this throughout his career – we always had totally identical equipment."

In 1982, although Niki confirmed his place in the team by winning his third race, John soon got the upper hand. He beat Niki to win at Zolder, and four weeks later came his most famous win, on the tight street circuit in Detroit. "We were on the Michelin 06s, and in qualifying I couldn't get enough core tyre temperature, couldn't get the speed into the car. So I was 17th on the grid. Six laps into the race Riccardo Patrese hit the barriers and there was a red flag. While they cleared the track Pierre du Pasquier of Michelin persuaded me to change onto the 05s. After the restart, with a full fuel load getting more energy into the tyres, I found I had more grip, and I was catching people. The key with overtaking is you mustn't lose your momentum. You've got to arrive, complete the job and move on. I passed a lot of people, and by the time I caught up to Niki I was fifth. Niki was stuck behind Eddie Cheever and Didier Pironi. I went by him, then I did Cheever. Cheever tried to squeeze me, but I kept on coming, drove under him and he swerved away. Then I did Pironi. And Niki reprogrammed his mind, saw it was possible, and followed me through. Keke Rosberg was leading in the Williams, and I caught and passed him without problem. Keke was a pragmatist, he knew I was faster that day. Behind me, Niki came up to Keke, went for him up the inside at Turn 1, but he wasn't decisive enough. Keke shut the door, and Niki was in the wall.

"Now I was leading the World Championship. But then I had six races out of the points, various silly things. So we got to the last race at Las Vegas. If I won, and Keke didn't score, I would be champion. But all Keke had to do was finish sixth. As it was, I finished second – we never did work out why Michele Alboreto's Tyrrell was quite so quick that day – and Keke finished fifth. I'd done the best I could, and that was that."

In 1983, at Long Beach, John turned in another of his trademark up-the-field races to victory. "I qualified 22nd, Niki 23rd. In the McLaren motorhome Ron, John Barnard and John Hogan of Marlboro had faces like Lurgan spades. They thought we were just a pair of old farts. It was all about grip again. Once we were into the race and got some heat in the rubber we went forward in tandem, Niki ahead and me stuck to his gearbox. Eventually I went for him at the end of the straight, shot down the inside. He didn't like that at all, but he didn't resist and I was gone. So I won, Niki was second, and in the McLaren motorhome they were just shell-shocked...



"They thought Niki and I were a pair of old farts. I won, he was second"

"In South Africa, at the last race of the year, I agreed with Ron that we'd talk about my 1984 contract as soon as we got back to England. I assumed I'd be carrying on. We flew home, and next morning I had a call from Niki. He'd heard Alain Prost was at McLaren, and they wanted to sign him. Prost was contracted to Renault, but he'd been summoned to Renault HQ and summarily fired, allegedly because he'd been indiscreet with the wife of a senior team member. At once he'd called John Hogan, because of course he was a Marlboro driver, to see if he could get into Ferrari. John said, 'They're locked up, they've got Alboreto and Arnoux. But at McLaren Niki's in contract, John's out of contract. There's a seat there.'

"Niki didn't want Prost at McLaren, because he saw him as a bigger threat than me. He wanted to win another championship, but he didn't want to have to drive his fingernails off to beat a man like Prost, who was just coming into the sweet spot of his career.

"I went down to see Ron, and he said, 'That's the way it is.' I wasn't bitter. I was 37 years old, I'd had 10 years of F1. I'd have liked to carry on at McLaren, but I didn't want to have to start a new relationship with another team. Peter Warr contacted me about driving for Lotus. Players were insisting on an English driver alongside Senna, and the incumbent, Nigel Mansell, wasn't Warr's favourite. But he didn't really want me, he just wanted an English driver who wasn't Mansell. It didn't feel right.

"To wean myself off the drug, I took up sports car racing. In 1984 I drove some races with Porsche, finishing up in Japan, which we won – well, Stefan Bellof won, I was his co-driver. Stefan could take a Porsche 956 into places where no one else, not Jacky [Ickx], Derek [Bell] or Jochen [Mass], could go. The team loved him: they loved seeing their cars being driven on the limit. When Stefan was killed at Spa in 1985 he was doing just that, taking it to the limit by the scruff of the neck.

"I did BMW in North America, driving a March-constructed car with David Hobbs. I drove for Jaguar at Le Mans three times, then for Toyota. It was a way of tapering off my career. Then I started broadcasting, first for BBC Radio, then F1 on Eurosport and now A1GP on Sky. I love doing A1: it's entertaining racing, and Ben Edwards does a fantastic job as the main commentator. And I don't just walk the track for the programme, I drive it in an A1 car."

John's daily drive is the inevitable Mercedes, but cherished in his garage are two classic Porsches, fruit of a love affair that goes back to when he saw his first Porsche at Dundrod in 1955. His 356 he has had 20 years, and his 911RS Touring for 34 years, ever since he took it off Paul Michaels' showroom floor in part payment for his season with the Hexagon Brabham.

"I did 150-plus Grands Prix, I finished second in the World Championship, I won some races. I feel I should have achieved more. I know I had the ability in terms of my speed in the car, and there were races that should have come to me and didn't. But I can't change any of that. It's in the book..."



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As an IRL driver coach, Al Unser Jr has found a way to leave his problems behind and give something back to the sport in which he's achieved so much

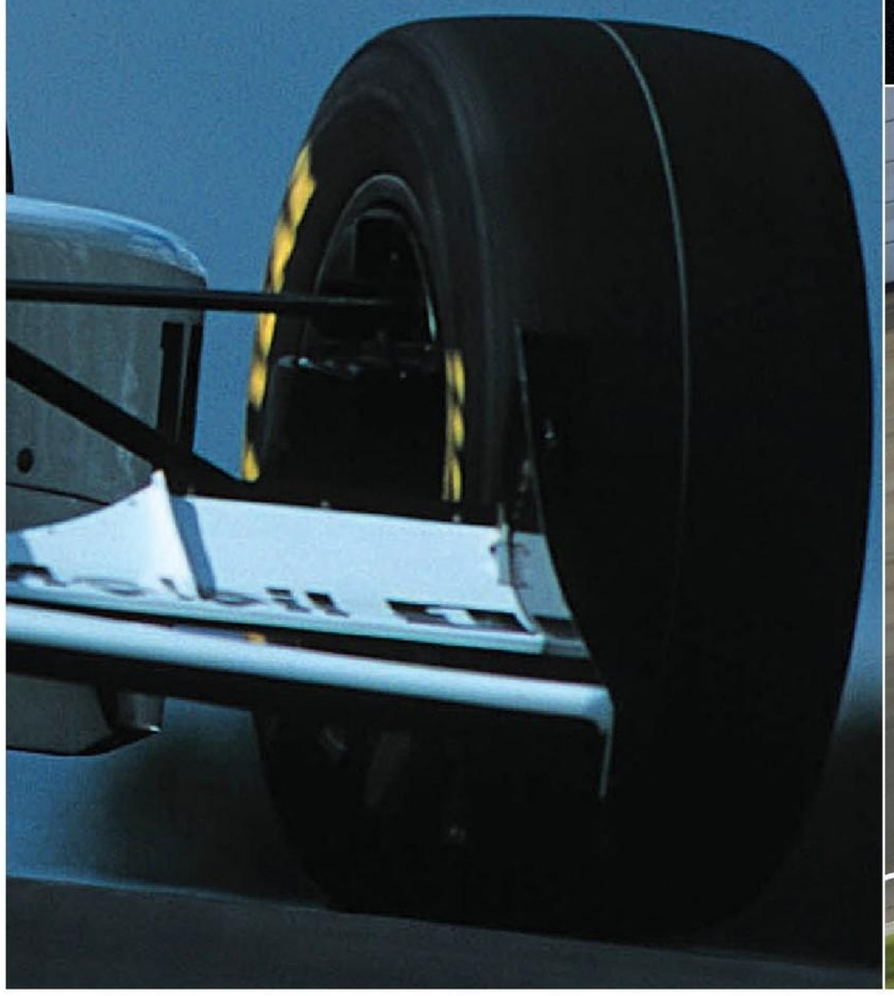
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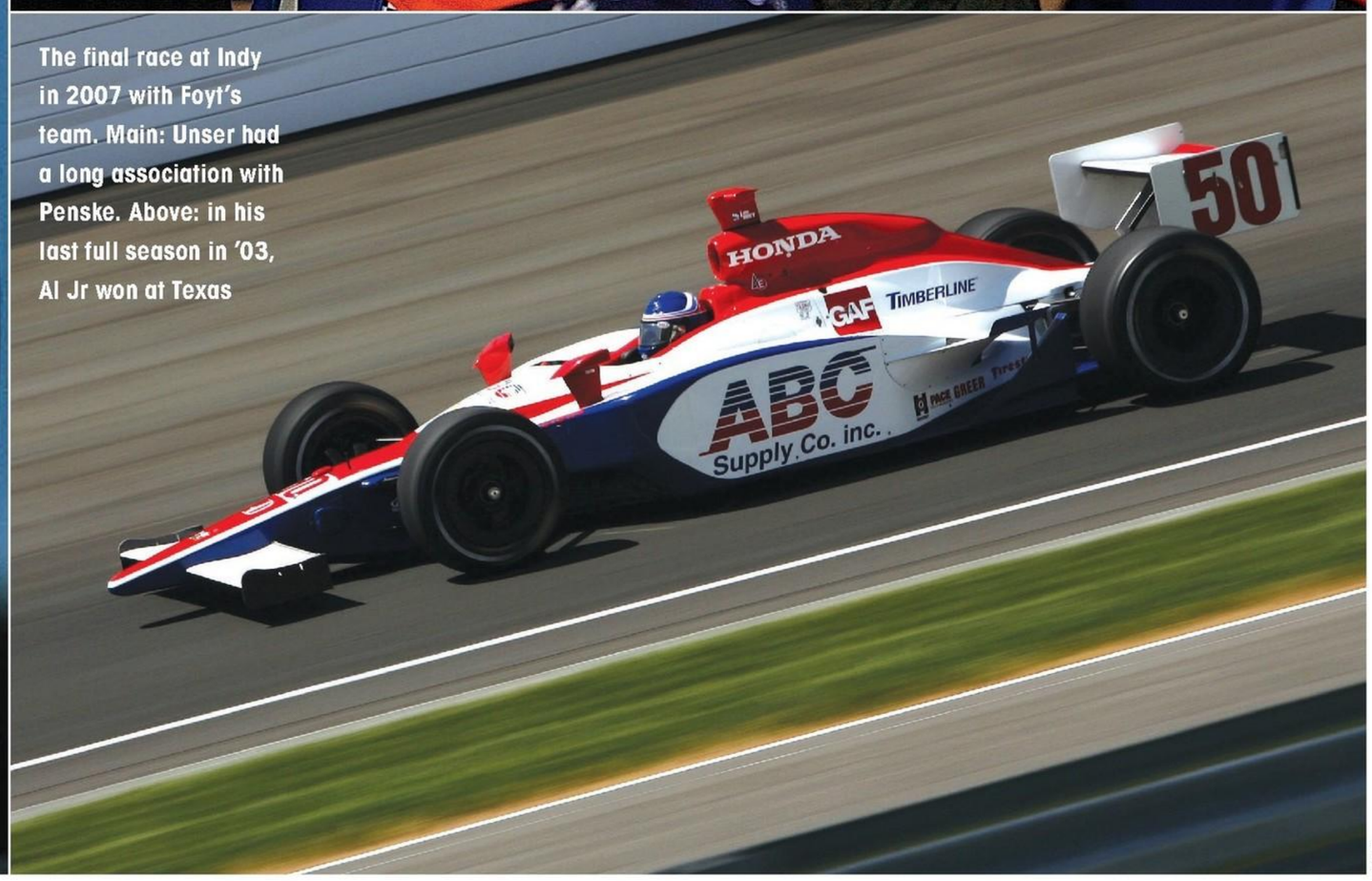
Through the height of CART's Indycar World Series, Al Unser Jr was one of *the* men to beat. He won the championship twice with Galles-Kraco Racing in 1990 and Penske in '94, was title runner-up three times and won 31 races, including two Indianapolis 500s.

Unser started his career aged 15 in sprint cars and, like his father and uncle before him, won the Pikes Peak Hillclimb in 1983. Through the 1980s and '90s, Al claimed races and titles not only in Indycars but also in the IROC series. He was IROC champion in 1986 and '88 when that series was at its apogee, and caused Dale Earnhardt no end of heartache by repeatedly beating him in races at Daytona and elsewhere. He won four straight Long Beach Grands Prix from 1988-91, and added two more victories in the Californian street race in 1994 and '95. Unser also co-drove Al Holbert's Porsche 962 to win five IMSA races, including the 1986 and '87 Daytona 24 Hours. For some time it could fairly be argued that he was one of the world's most complete drivers.

But in the late '90s, as he approached his 40th birthday, Unser's career began to veer off-course as he battled alcoholism, went through a bitter divorce and saw his teenage daughter Cody stricken with Transverse Myelitis, leaving her paralysed below the waist. Following a couple of arrests for drink driving, Unser »»







The final race at Indy in 2007 with Foyt's team. Main: Unser had a long association with Penske. Above: in his last full season in '03, Al Jr won at Texas

LAT

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went into an alcohol rehabilitation programme, and following a long struggle he hasn't had a drink since February 2007. Since then Al has moved into a new phase of his life as an IRL official, working in race control with Indycar's chief steward Brian Barnhart and former Champ Car race director Tony Cotman.

"I'm officially a driver coach but I'm also another set of eyes in race control to help Brian make the calls," says Unser. "If anybody does anything on track that's unsportsmanlike, he'll ask me about it, and the same thing with pit infractions or mistakes.

"I bring to the table the same thing that my father does. We're drivers, and we know what's happening on the track and in the pits from a driver's perspective. I alternate races with my dad. Whichever races he doesn't want to do, I'll do."


Gary Gold

Essentially, Al is an understudy to his father, Al Sr, who became the IRL's driver coach in 1996 when the breakaway series was formed. But in recent years, and this year in particular with the influx of former Champ Car drivers into the IRL, the need for coaching has declined, although Unser does some work in the Indy Lights series. "Rick Mears is the official driver coach and is in race control for the Lights series," he explains, "I work across the whole spectrum."

Unser's transition from driving – his final race was last year's Indy 500 with AJ Foyt's team – to official and coach began two years ago. He ran his last full season in 2003 and won an IRL race at Texas. Al believes his new life of sobriety has been ordained from above.

"I've been sober since 2007 and I've really got a new outlook on life," he says. "God gave me the talent to become one of the best race car drivers in the world and I learned from that and did it for a lot of years. Then my personal life got a little sidetracked – I should say a lot sidetracked – and with God's help I've been able to put it back straight again, and this is what He wants me to do. I feel this has been His plan from the beginning.

"I'm in a position to help so many people on so many fronts. I'm not a team owner who is only thinking about how to advance my own situation. I spent the first 20 or 25 years of life doing that.

"When you're a racing driver it truly is all about the winning. It's like when Emerson [Fittipaldi] and I got together at Indy in '89, there's a time in the race when nobody's lives matter any more.

"Now, my life is not about me. It's about helping other people and it's in all areas of racing, not just the drivers. It definitely helps my sobriety to give back in a bi-partisan way to something that gave me so much.

"I've worked with more than three-quarters of the mechanics in the IRL today. When I walk through the garage area and pitlane, I'm talking with those guys. What I learn I keep to myself. In time everybody will see that and know my goal is that Al can be trusted. You can come to me and I'll tell you the straight truth.

"I would compare that to my driving," Unser adds. "Back then anybody could run next to me and know they were in good hands, and I hope that to be the case as I become a full-time official."

Today, Unser can talk frankly about his struggle with alcoholism. "The toughest thing was to recognise and acknowledge it," he says. "I had the hardest time believing that one beer or one glass of wine had that much power over me. I was an Indy 500 champion, I've won many races and all of a sudden it was a very depressed time in my life when I crossed the line in '99."

> "When I was drinking I should have killed myself several times"

After 19 years of marriage, Al and his first wife Shelley were divorced. Then out of the blue their daughter Cody fell ill one day while playing basketball. "Going through the divorce was very bitter. And then three months later, after Shelley and I separated, my little girl was put into a wheelchair. That was when I really lost my faith in God and when the big spiral began.

"It was February 1999 when Cody got ill and I couldn't understand why God would pick on a little girl. I didn't understand it when my sister died when I was a teenager, and when Cody got ill it was the same thing. Somewhere during that time I crossed a line."

Unser says the line is invisible. "Nobody can see it. Other people do, but not the alcoholic. The alcoholic always thinks they're hiding it. For me, it was so hard for what we alcoholics call 'to surrender'. It was very difficult to admit that my life had become unmanageable. It was a seven-year run."

One night in 2002, while in a drunken rage, Unser stopped at the side of Interstate 465 in Indianapolis and told his girlfriend to get out of the car. He left her stranded at the side of the freeway and drove off. "When I left my girlfriend Geena, who is now my wife, alcohol was involved. I went into rehab after that. My sponsor paid for it and I thank them very much, because I always said I didn't have a problem. When Geena told me I had a problem, I told her 'No way!'"

A drink-driving conviction resulted in Unser having to enter an alcohol rehabilitation programme. "The place I went to, I wouldn't call it a rehab centre," he says pointedly. "I went to an insane asylum, and that's what true rehab is. It's a hospital for insane people and that's what alcoholics are. They're people who are mentally insane under the influence of alcohol. When they're not, they're good people. But when they get to drinking they turn insane and make insane decisions, and I was doing that.

"That was the first time I was ever in group therapy. It was school for me. Rehab was where I learned that I was, in fact, an alcoholic."

It took a few more years before Unser could get to grips with his problems. "When I came out I tried to follow the programme they recommended, which is not to drink and to talk to other alcoholics. I did that for a bit, but I had excuses not to do it, simply because I always believed it was the last drink that got me into trouble. I always thought if I hadn't had that last drink I would have been alright. But it's not the last drink, it's the first. And that took a long time to figure out.

"I wouldn't wish my path on anybody, but I would like to see a lot more people where I'm at today in my way of thinking. In this world of computers and machines that man has built and controls, I've learned that we don't have any control. We can guide ourselves, but God is the one who has the ultimate control.

"When I was drinking I should have killed myself several times," he adds. "I was way out there and should never have pulled through. For me today, it's a daily challenge. The first 30 days, you're still kinda in the fog, and 90 days was a real big accomplishment. Six months was another one. Then, I would say somewhere between the sixth and the tenth month, it started getting a little easier. Now I don't think about it nearly as much.



LAT

At the height of his powers in 1990, Unser won the CART title with Galles-Kraco Racing

"Don't forget that alcohol is everywhere. It's legal, and for good reason. When alcohol is used in a proper way, it's good stuff. It's good for people to unwind."

Among the highlights of Unser's career were testing and developing the under-financed, underdog Galmer with which he won the 1992 Indy 500, and enjoying a more thorough and well-funded development programme with Penske and Mercedes-Benz to win the 500 again in '94.

"I was blessed with a strong talent for driving and developing cars. I took great pride in that. My rookie year at Indy I had the only Eagle in the field, and then developing the Galmer was a real treat. Joining Roger and being able to develop a car and engine at the same time – the 209 Mercedes – that was just great.

"It's sad that those days are gone in American open-wheel racing. It's so much more 'spec' now. You don't develop wings, tunnels, engines, or anything."

Unser hopes such development and a more open rulebook will return to Indycar racing. "Hopefully someday there'll be another engine manufacturer to rival Honda, and then the development process will begin again. But as far as the cars go, that's pretty much gone, until they come up with some new materials that are going to keep the driver safe at 250mph. When that technology comes along the officiating body will allow speeds to start rising again, to where teams can develop the car to its fullest.

"The technology in safety is the key thing. The tyre technology is there. Everything's there, except the safety aspect, and that's getting there. The absorbing walls help but they're not everything. I hope the technology arrives soon because I'd like to see the 250mph barrier broken.

"I thought we'd do it in my career and we came pretty close. Gil de Ferran set the closed course record at almost 241mph, but the speed was out-running the safety technology.

"What was fun about those days was developing the car. There wasn't the computer. The engineer wasn't telling you that you're not flat there and you're using too much brake here and what's your foot's resting on the clutch for? Back then, you'd come in and tell the engineer what the car was doing! Today, they don't even go to the driver. The car pulls into the pits and they download data from the computer.



Gary Gold

"I was blessed with a strong talent for driving and developing cars"

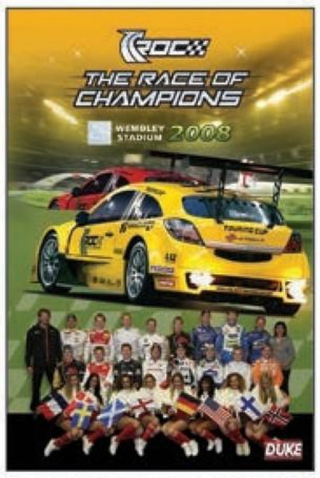
"You still have to feel the car," Al continues. "What I've found is that the data accelerates the driver's learning curve, but you still need the talent to catch it when it jumps out. You still have to get out of the throttle when it pushes before it goes up into the fence."

Bobby Rahal has said for many years that Unser was the most talented driver he raced against, but he believes that Al Jr would have achieved even more without his troubles.

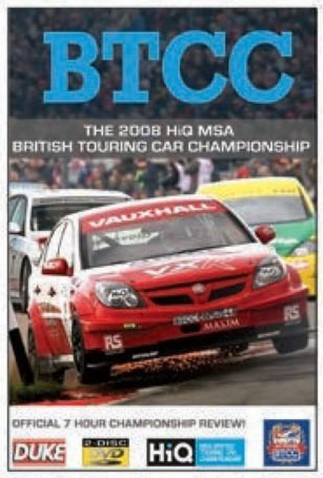
"A lot of people have said that and it can go both ways," says Unser. "The results could have been a little better, but only maybe five races better at most. What would have made the biggest difference was that I personally would have enjoyed the racing more. I would remember more detail and I'd have been living life to its fullest instead of recovering from the night before."

Many people saw Al Unser Jr as a simple country boy living the family trade. But for those who got to know him and appreciate the man inside he was a complex character whose intellect outran his early education. Today, at 46, after an epic racing career and a long journey of many personal and family tribulations, Al has started to discover the real man inside.

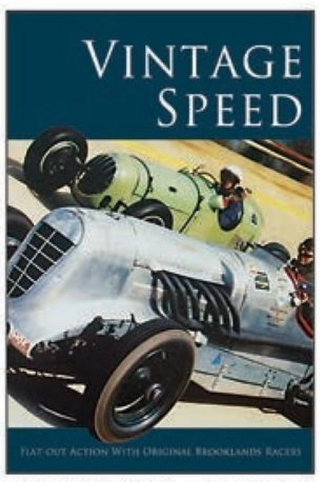
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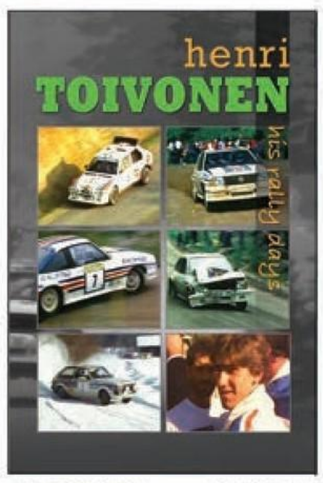
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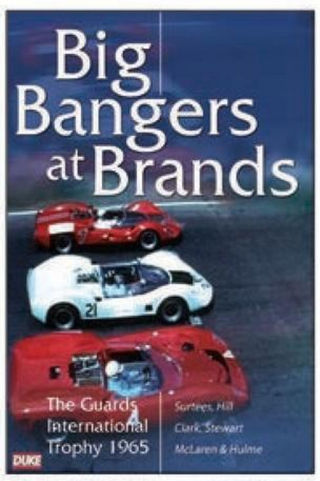
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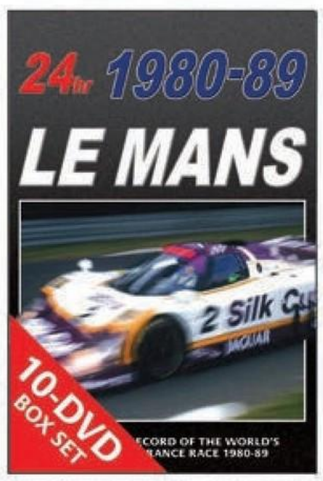
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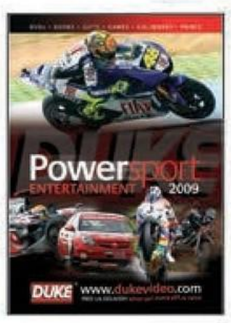


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1970 Chevron B16

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Steve Small

Crook was one of the early post-war drivers, competing with Moss and Salvadori. Right: winning the second Easter Handicap for Sports Cars race at Goodwood in 1954, aboard a Cooper-Bristol

On motor sport's front line

As the Second World War ended, so motor racing could start up again, with RAF pilot Tony Crook among its early pioneers

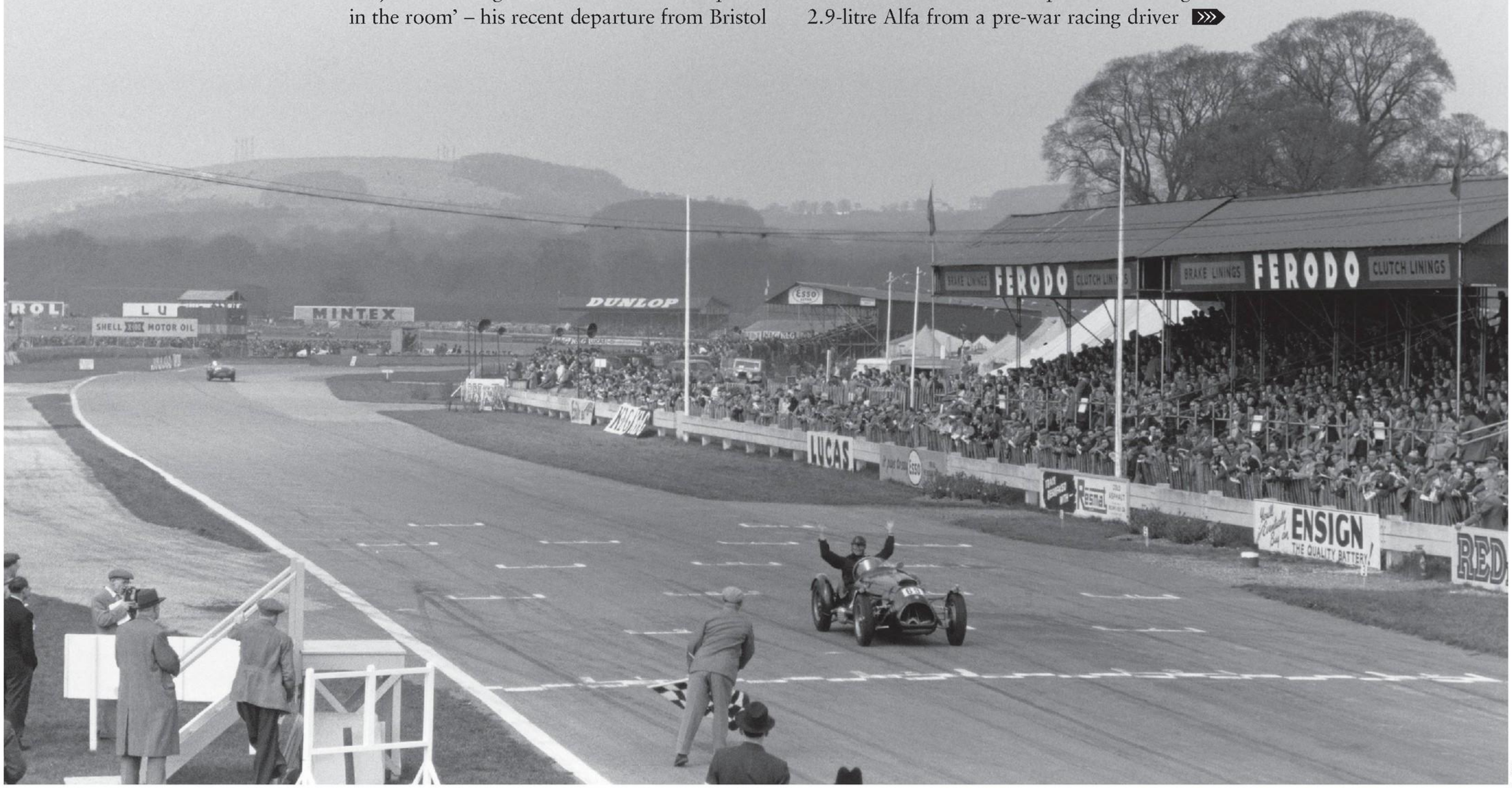
BY MARTIN GURDON

Childhood wishes drew Tony Crook to motor racing, and eventually made him decide to leave it. Until recently best known as the man behind Bristol Cars, Crook had a distinguished record in early post-war motor sport. From 1946 to '55 he competed on equal terms with the likes of Stirling Moss, Roy Salvadori and Tony Rolt in some 400 sprints, hillclimbs and circuit races (including many F2 and F1 drives), winning or being placed in over 370 starts.

Now 88, Crook's recollections are considered, thoughtful and often very funny. But there is a subject which might be described as 'the elephant in the room' – his recent departure from Bristol Cars. It's been acrimonious, but for legal reasons nobody will say why. So let's stick with Crook's racing story, which began in tragic circumstances when he was six.

His father, a Lancastrian colliery proprietor, died during the General Strike in 1926. "They didn't want to tell me Dad had died, so a housemaid took me to Southport Sands where there was motor racing. I knew then I would be a racing driver." As a schoolboy at Clifton Collage he acquired an MG PA, which he supercharged and then drove wearing a false moustache – something that didn't prevent detection and a beating.

He saw war service with the RAF, but maintained his automotive passion: "I bought a 2.9-litre Alfa from a pre-war racing driver »»



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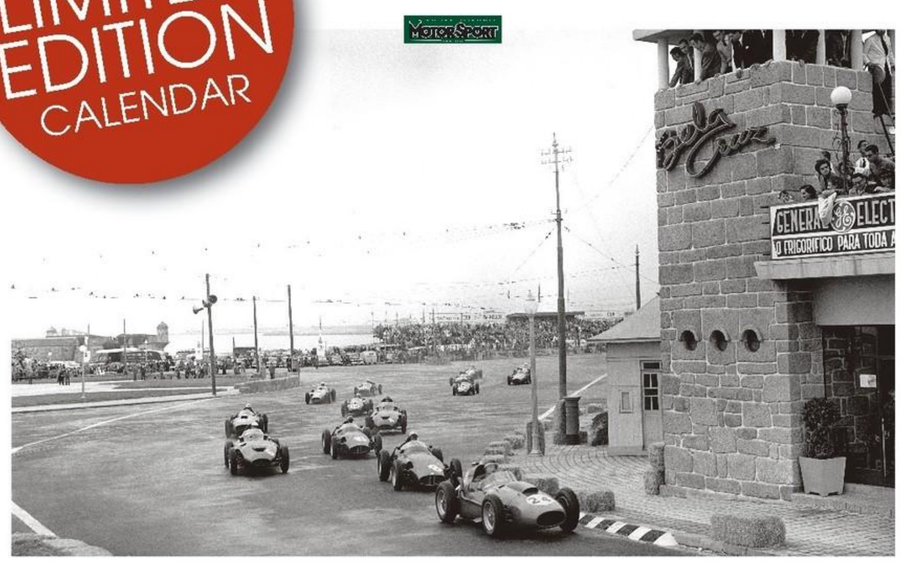
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"Alfred Moss came along with Stirling and said, 'I hear you have a couple of tyres'"

Hillclimbs were among the few racing venues after the war. This is Crook in a Cooper-Bristol at Shelsley Walsh

LAT

called Robert Arbuthnot, who had a place called High Speed Motors in Lancaster Gate. He said, 'I get paid for racing out of the motor business'. I nearly went into business with him."

Together with the short-wheelbase supercharged Alfa, Crook also acquired a 1938 Frazer Nash BMW 328. By then he was stationed in Lincolnshire, within striking distance of Raymond Mays. "I wrote and asked, 'how do I become a racing driver?' Then I visited him in the 328 and he said, 'you've got enormous potential', so that was that." Hence in 1944, while still serving in the RAF, Crook became a partner in Mays' nascent racing operation.

His first official drive for Mays in the 328 was in an event held at a London building site in 1945, billed as the 'Cockfosters Rally' or 'Cockfosters GP'. "*Motor Sport* said, 'Flight Lieutenant Crook did the best run yet, including a marvellous demonstration of how to change from first to second at speed.' That was left lying around in the squadron officer's mess. The one person who saw it laughed out loud – that was our intelligence officer, Michael Bentine."

The field included Lord Brabazon of Tara in his Fiat 1100 Special, Gordon Sutherland in the prototype Aston-Martin Atom, John Bolster in 'Bloody Mary', Reg Parnell, John Wyer and HJ Aldington in a Frazer Nash.

Crook and his 328 then won Britain's first post-war circuit race in June 1946 at Gransden Lodge, a redundant bomber base in Bedfordshire, where a near-triangular circuit had been set out. Each race was limited to three laps, but Crook had mapped out the circuit and practiced at the airfield where he was stationed. "There's only one other person left who drove there – my mate Roy Salvadori. He had a single-seat MG R-Type. That's where we met."

Motor racing opportunities were scarce in the '40s. "There wasn't much until 1948 when Silverstone and Goodwood opened," recalls Crook. There were some sprints, however. "At Prescott, Mays entered me in the 328. He raced the ERA [R4D] and there were lots of pre-war drivers whom I was a bit frightened of. I was nearly fastest in practice, but at the start I overdid it and bashed in the front corner. It rained and I only came second.

"For Shelsley and Prescott we'd stay in Broadway, Worcestershire in an old hotel with a big yard. We raised the ERA on jacks to warm the transmission and there were complaints about the noise. A local bobby came up and said, 'why don't you run it up Fish Hill?' So we did. It's a big, twisting hill. I had no licence, no plates, nothing. I was probably the only bloke to drive the ERA on the open road."

Like many drivers of his generation, Crook took every chance to compete. But by 1946 he had left Mays – "he was far too famous and busy to prepare my cars" – and started his own motor dealing business in Caterham, Surrey close to Kenley aerodrome where the exotic machines which passed through his hands could be tested.

"I entered the first race at Goodwood. At the time I had two lovely pre-war Dunlop racing tyres in their packets. Alfred Moss came along with his 17-year-old son, Stirling. He had a 328 too, and had started racing the year after me. Moss Major said, 'I hear you have a couple of tyres. Stirling is short of a tyre on his 328.'"

Initially reluctant to sell, Crook asked for £5 but settled for £3. "I put retreads on my 328 thinking 'that will do for Goodwood'. I was leading until I got a slow puncture and finished second, otherwise I'd have won £5. That was when I learned how to lose money in motor racing – and in the end Stirling didn't even drive the BMW, he appeared in a Cooper."

In early '50s Crook drove for Frazer Nash. "The parties were crazy. At Monaco in 1952 I finished third. On the trackside was a huge model of a Nardi steering wheel. People said, 'that would look nice in the reception »»

area at Caterham.'" Two of his mechanics appropriated it, and Crook went from party to party with his illicit prize. "One nightclub 'hat check' gave me a ticket for it. By then the police had started looking for the wheel. They chased me all over Monaco."

When he was arrested the following morning at the Hotel de Paris, the wheel was already on a Frazer Nash transporter heading for the UK. Crook had rowed with Colonel Aldington over prize money, so: "I told them Aldington had it, and he was arrested at Dover. He got off as usual, and the wheel appeared at Caterham."

In 1951 Crook and Salvadori both piloted Frazer Nash Le Mans Replicas. They entered a production sports car race at Silverstone that May, where Salvadori crashed at Stowe corner. "I was behind him when he had this appalling accident, turning over and over. I was so worried I slowed down, then pulled myself together and won."



Racing a Bristol in the 1952 *Daily Express* International Trophy LAT

Salvadori was taken to hospital with head injuries and given the last rites. "They thought he would die, but in a week he was sitting up in bed saying, 'have you rebuilt the Frazer Nash?'"

By 1952 the man he cheerfully calls 'Salvadozi' was driving for Maserati and Crook was piloting single-seater Cooper-Bristols, but the pair's rivalry continued: "The racing between me and Salvadori was a highlight of the time."

> "I hit an ice-cream wagon, then I was in this field of cabbages which slowed me down"

A sense of mischief pervades many of Crook's recollections. When a dignitary such as the Duke of York dropped the chequered flag at Silverstone, Crook noticed that the timekeeper AVEbblewhite would tap the Royal shoulder fractionally beforehand. "I'd go when I saw 'the shoulder', but I came unstuck. People stood outside the pits and I ran over the foot of a *Daily Express* reporter. I got nothing from the *Express* for a long time after that."

Crook also "played a small part" in helping to establish Mike Hawthorn, having persuaded a sponsor, Esso, to back him. "In 1951 he was driving a very fast Riley at Goodwood. We were equal on points, but he had a handicap of 12 seconds on a five-lap race. He won by a single point. Naughtily, he'd run the car on dope. His dad had been a motorcycle racer and got a brew of methanol. Afterwards I said, 'Well done, Mike. What a funny smell.' He just looked at me."

As one of the generation who saw active service, Crook concedes there was a devil-may-care attitude among many of the early post-war drivers, and he witnessed some grisly accidents. "At Blandford Camp (an army camp set up as a road circuit), I drove the 328 and a Veritas for Ecurie Belge. Two people were killed there, one in a 328, and I remember passing the guard house with a Cooper on its roof."

Crook survived being struck in the face by a shard of tyre in the course of setting a 200-mile, 120mph, 2-litre endurance record with a Frazer Nash Le Mans Replica at Montlhéry in 1951. "I was knocked out by a cabbage in an F1 race at Snetterton," he says with some pride. "Along with Moss and Peter Whitehead, I was piloting a 180bhp Alta with Cooper chassis. The other two had trouble with the things blowing up. The brake pedal was attached to the bell housing, and the whole thing blew on my car, so I had no brakes. I hit an ice-cream wagon, then I was in this field of cabbages. George Abecassis said I was doing about 140, and the cabbages were slowing me down, but then one of them hit me."

It was a late-night smash at Goodwood in 1955, though, that led to Crook retiring from racing. Driving a Cooper he was, "roaring down Woodcote. Ken Wharton's Ferrari had dropped oil on the track. I came out of the chicane, hit the oil, turned round and was hit by Stirling. Up in the air I went, and I was bloody lucky. I could have been crushed."

Suffering severe concussion, he was taken to Chichester Hospital where he came to 24 hours later. "It was a nasty business because a friend, Mike Keen, was killed in the same race." Crook recalls this being discussed and hearing someone say, "there's another bugger down there, he'll be off in a minute". It was at this point he realised he was the topic of conversation.

Surrounded by flowers from Moss, Crook was visited by his 10-year-old daughter: "She arrived with a small model coffin and said, 'this will do for you'. I pressed it and a body came out. I got the message – that was the end of my racing."

He smiles at the recollection. Fifty-three years on, Crook has no regrets about the childhood ambition which brought him to motor racing, nor the one which persuaded him to leave it. Ⓜ



Crook (right) with Abarth at Hersham

INSIGHT

BRISTOL PASSION

Tony Crook will be forever associated with Bristol Cars

As salesmen go, Tony Crook never was a swaggering self-promoter. As the public face of Bristol Cars, he generally kept the media at arm's length and would be the first to phone and chastise you if you'd had the temerity to criticise his wares in print. But to most sectors of motoring hackery, Crook remains much-loved and admired, not least for his unswerving loyalty to the marque with which he is inextricably linked.

A singularly British breed, Bristol nonetheless has German genes. In 1946 the Bristol Aeroplane Company sought to diversify into car production and in conjunction with AFN – makers of Frazer Nash cars – it obtained the rights to BMW's proven 328 engine as war reparations. In a remarkably short period of time the firm produced the 400 saloon which married aerodynamic efficiency with high standards of refinement for the day. It even went as far as to instigate a competition programme, the highlight being class honours at Le Mans in 1954-55. All subsequent models would use the Bavarian-sourced straight-six unit until 1961, when Chrysler V8s took precedence. A year earlier, Crook and Sir George White had assumed control and began operating under the Bristol Cars Ltd banner, the latter selling his stake to his partner in 1973.

Already the concessionaire for Abarth and Zagato, Crook ploughed his own singular furrow, all Bristols being impervious to fashion for the simple reason that they've never been in fashion. With no dealer network to speak of, customers dealt directly with the factory – and by default Crook – with precise production figures being a mystery. In 2001 Crook sold out to Toby Silverton but stayed on board as frontman as the extraordinary new Fighter model was readied. A recent – and very acrimonious – split saw him leave the firm to which he'd given so much. *RH*

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WAR AND PEACE

Their clash in the 1992 BTCC finale is infamous; but now enough time has passed for John Cleland and Steve Soper to calmly relive the experience...

BY PAUL FEARNLEY

Two copper-bottomed tin-toppers, one piece of silverware. An ex-club rally/hillclimb charger and a one-make scrapper made good. A never-say-die racer with an ever-ready quip and a DTM superstar ringer. A 'goodie' and a 'baddie'. John Cleland and Steve Soper. Their collision in the final round of the 1992 British Touring Car Championship is perhaps the most famous/infamous of any UK series. For some, aka the purists, it was indicative of everything bad about foot-in, head-down, elbows-out saloonatics. For others, aka a surprisingly sizeable chunk of the population, it was a thrilling bare-knuckle climax to a barnstormer of a race and title chase.

You see, it had been a season of three phases: Vauxhall, Toyota and BMW. John had topped the points all season, yet not since the first two races had his Cavalier been the fastest. First the powerful Toyota Carinas of Andy Rouse and reigning champion Will Hoy usurped him, and then it was the turn of the BMWs. Vic Lee Motorsport – and Prodrive – had been charged with giving Munich's new E36 iteration its global motor sport debut. It struggled with it initially, but a simpler, stiffer rear suspension, coupled with a 25kg reduction of the rear-wheel-drive car's original mandatory 100kg penalty, saw it leap to the front. Tim Harvey, with Steve riding shotgun, ticked off six wins – including five in a row – from eight starts to move into title contention during the second half of the season. But come round 15, on Silverstone's Grand Prix layout, it was still the dogged, opportunistic Cleland who was out front: 145 plays 142 (Harvey), plays 141 (Hoy).



In-car with Harvey on lap 14 of 15. He levels with Hoy's Toyota, before pulling off a "ham-fisted" pass at Copse

JOHN CLELAND: "The BTCC in that period, right up to when I won it in 1995, was about Vauxhall and another manufacturer, be it BMW, Renault or Volvo. I was always the thorn in their side. We were the car that would give them the biggest run for their money. I loved that role. It was great. Ironically, Vic Lee had offered me the seat alongside Steve. But at that time Steve was the DTM man, BMW's blue-eyed boy, and I thought, 'That's never going to work. I'm never going to get fair and equal treatment.' So I turned it down, and Harvey got the drive instead."

The finale was promoted as a straightforward 'first past the post is champ' affair, but a rain-hit qualifying left John in seventh, Will ninth and Tim 12th. A nice, clean win was now unlikely. It was going to be action-packed back in the pack. Steve was on the second row. Jumped at the start, he immediately set about regaining places.










Harvey's move allows Cleland and Soper to get past. But both BMWs are quickly on to the Vauxhall's tail...



Into Club, Soper pulls off a brilliant pass on Cleland. Cue a bout of angry swearing inside the Cavalier






On board with Harvey, we see Soper's mangled BMW delay Cleland at Bridge, allowing Tim past both






Cleland, determined to stay with title rival Harvey, comes back at Soper as they head into Brooklands...









STEVE SOPER: "I was quite aggressive to David Leslie [in an Ecurie Ecosse/Ray Mallock-run privateer Cavalier] and went down the inside of him at Club. I passed him but, when I tried to shut the door to stop him coming back at me, he was having none of it and spun me round. I felt there was something wrong with that at the time, but I would have done a similar thing had I been in David and Vauxhall's position."

Already the hackles were rising, the paranoia was seeping in – unnecessarily so, according to John.

JC: "Yes, it was Leslie who spun Steve round, but it was no team game. There was absolutely no collusion. In fact, we didn't get on at all well with the Mallock team. We saw them as our biggest competitors. I had been warning 'Cookie' [Dave Cook, builder of the works Vauxhalls] for ages: 'We have to move forward from here or you're going to get your arse kicked. Mallock is going to take this contract from you if you're not careful.' So the last thing we were going to do was share information with the Mallock boys."

Leslie, however, would later wave through Jeff Allam, John's team-mate, into second place, a move that would give Vauxhall the manufacturers' title by two points.

SS: "Unfortunately, I didn't know the situation between the Vauxhall teams."

Steve's mood wasn't improved any when Robb Gravett's Peugeot 405 Mi16 collected his spun Bimmer and created the first 3-series Compact. In a horribly crumpled car that now hated right-handers, Steve began another of his amazing charges. He had squeezed 11 BTCC races between his DTM commitments, and in seven of them, for one reason or another, had been forced to stage a jaw-dropping comeback drive.

JC: "He came from the back [21st] with bits hanging off everywhere. He'd have been black-flagged for that today. But for some obscure reason he wasn't, and never looked likely to be. He just pulled his way through the field bit by bit. Did that BMW have a 2.5-litre engine? [The BTCC was a two-litre formula.] We knew he was good, but was he that bloody good?"

SS: "At one point mid-season we had been waiting for a phone call from BMW to hear if we could continue [the team had been rocked by the imprisonment of Vic Lee following a drugs bust]. And having got BMW to agree to us finishing the season I can assure you there was nothing hookie-cookie in those cars. Bear in mind the car had one thing which none of the others did: ABS."

JC: "Aye, a safety feature!"

SS: "If you have ABS, and you understand how it works, it's a huge advantage. Plus, obviously, the adrenalin was flying by then. 'F***ing ➤➤➤

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Cleland passes on two wheels but Soper hits back at Luffield – literally

hell, the masterplan hasn't worked! You're stone-cold last, with the car all piled up.' But don't forget, from there until I caught back up with John. I never touched another car, not one."

Cleland, a ferocious fighter, was always going to be a tougher proposition. The title race came to a head on lap 14 of 15. Rouse, Allam and Leslie were battling for the lead; Hoy, despite a below-par engine, was hauling them in; and he was being caught by Harvey, Cleland and Soper…

JC: "When Harvey nudged Will off in a fairly ham-fisted effort [at Copse] I remember thinking, 'Ah, this is what it's going to be like.' But I wasn't expecting how brutal it would become. If it had happened part-way through the year you could have said, 'Okay, we understand the rules now, we know the guidelines.' But it was the last race. BMW had held everything up their sleeve."

John and Steve grabbed the chance to draft past Harvey and the grasstracking Hoy. Advantage Cleland. But it didn't last long. Steve dived past at Club. It was a clean move, but tempers were hot: Cleland flicked him the finger.

SS: "I was pretty revved by then. And I guess John was, too. He's a very verbal guy, even when he's driving, and unfortunately for him he was wired-up – and I had all the in-car footage. [I'd got to the studios first on the Monday morning after the race!] It's "F***ing, f***ing Soper!"

Nor was John's mood improved any when Steve "buggered him about" at Bridge to allow Harvey back past them both. It was a masterful piece of racecraft, which went totally unappreciated by John. He had other things on his mind. Taking a wider, faster line through the left-hander at Priory, the Cavalier Scot lunged down the inside of Steve at Brooklands. John didn't have to pass Harvey to win the title but he did have to finish glued to his bumper.

JC: "Everything on that last lap was about the championship. I wouldn't say my move was snow white, but I needed to be past Steve. I knew there was enough room to get through, but when I got there the gap had perhaps narrowed. I leaned on the [inside] kerb and that flicked the car up on two wheels. By trying to avoid contact I'd made it look more dramatic than it actually was. There was no real damage to the right-hand side of my car, or the left side of his."

SS: "There was a bit. You leant on me hard."

JC: "I think you were surprised. You thought when you'd passed me that that was that. But with a championship at stake, I was never, ever going to lie down."

SS: "I was surprised because I didn't think I'd left enough room. And I hadn't! But, to be fair, John could have gone straight into my rear quarter and spun me off."

JC: "Had I known how brutal the whole thing was going to become in the next hundred yards, I would have nerfed you off onto the infield and that would have been the end of it."

He didn't, though. And it wasn't. Having been shouldered to the edge of the concrete apron, Steve attempted to immediately repass at Luffield – at that time two 90 rights linked by a short straight. Despite hooking a wheel over the kerb, he whacked the Vauxhall in its driver's door. Both cars spun out. The title was Harvey's. It was ugly. It looked blatant.

SS: "The TV coverage made it look horrific from a sporting aspect. True, I didn't want to take any prisoners, but my objective was not to wipe John out at the next corner. My objective was to get my position back. If I'd wanted to eliminate John I could have just held back and tapped him going into Copse, or any number of places. That way I wouldn't have taken myself out either."

JC: "The main hit was a really hard one. I could hear he never came off the throttle. That BMW was going flat chat. I knew he was there but I couldn't see him. And then round we went."

SS: "I've looked at it over and over again, and I think John thought I'd gone. I don't know where he'd thought I'd gone but, because he'd lost his door mirror during his acrobatics, he didn't see me. I didn't expect him to give me a bloody car's room, but I suppose I half thought he would give me some room. Unfortunately, he didn't."

JC: "Steve didn't say much after the accident, mainly because I had his Adam's apple in my left hand. The thing is, had he just tapped me on the chest I would have fallen over…"

SS: "You'd bust your ribs? In the shunt?"

JC: "No, I'd crashed testing at Donington and broken my sternum. That was something else which made it look even more dramatic. I had foam padding tucked inside my overalls to »»



It's game over, as the BMW and Vauxhall hit the gravel trap at Luffield

Cleland is out of the car. He pauses before rushing to confront Soper. Steve stays put, and marshals step in

ease the pain when I tightened the belts. I looked like an American footballer when I got out of the car. It looked like I intended to kill him."

Marshals intervened and cameramen descended gleefully. John won the subsequent soundbite squabble, labelling his rival "an animal" and accusing him of DTM-type tactics. The good burghers of the RAC and BRDC bristled at the very thought.

JC: "That crash was the point when you realised that touring cars was hugely important to win, at any cost. Whether it was BMW or the team – I doubt very much it was BMW – that team went to the end of the earth to win that title. That's what surprised me most, that someone would go to those lengths. I'm no angel when it comes to pushing and shoving, but from then on it went from 'After you' to 'No, that's my piece of track and I'm going for it at any cost.'"

SS: "Yes, BMW wanted to win the title, and my job was to help Tim achieve that. My role was to take points off everybody else. But there was never a situation whereby BMW GB, Munich, or anybody in the team said, 'We are here to win at all costs.' There were no last-minute orders. DTM wasn't any more brutal than the BTCC, but it was very open about team orders – not eliminating rivals, but messing them about. I was used to that sort of thing. If I'd had an argument with John about what had happened at Bridge I would have felt quite happy and relaxed about it. I wasn't happy about eliminating him. I was the spoiler, not a hitman."

The post-race spat, however, was the tip of the iceberg. Months of legalese and an RAC tribunal were to follow.

JC: "They wanted to nail Steve to the wall."

SS: "No sanctions were taken at the track because they wanted to do something bigger and 'better' to me at a later date. It got very critical over the next six months, to the extent that I was hearing they wanted to take my licence from me. I spent a fortune on legal advice. As did John."

JC: "We got no support. Vauxhall [and BMW] were like, 'Guys…"

SS: "… You're the drivers. We pay you to drive."

JC: "But this is your problem. Go deal with it.' And we did."

SS: "Our relationship was frosty… I didn't get a Christmas card from John…"

JC: "Yeah, you did. It had a BMW on top of a bonfire on it!"

SS: "… But my clever friend was even smarter than I thought. Full credit to him. He rang me the day before the tribunal and said, 'I think you were in the wrong, I think you're probably going to get done, but I'm not sure. However, I've been told that if they can't do you, they'll do one of us. We should have a chat before it all starts.'"

JC: "I'd lost something I had worked for all year. Nothing was going to give me that back. I didn't see any point in the RAC taking Steve's licence off him for 100 years or whatever. All that would have done was have given him pain, and that wasn't the point. I wasn't after him."

SS: "We met two hours before the tribunal and reached a gentleman's agreement whereby we wouldn't criticise each other's actions. We both said it was a racing accident. You should have seen their faces."

JC: "They were really confused. Even if they knew we were in cahoots, what could they do? I wanted to draw a line under it all. I didn't want there to be appeals. Instead I wanted to see if we could get something good out of it. Which was where the Touring Car Drivers' Association came from. It wasn't perfect, but it was better."

SS: "I guess John and I will never agree, in the way that Senna and Prost, Hill and Schumacher never did. John can say I'm to blame, I can say he's to blame. But I know the truth: I have huge respect for John as a driver, a person and a friend… I didn't want that outcome."

JC: "Looking back, both moves were probably marginal. There were some high-level people at the RAC who were pissed off they didn't get a result out of that tribunal, but it wouldn't have done touring cars any good. Instead the whole affair lit the blue touchpaper for touring cars. It raised awareness. It was on all the front pages: a couple of used-car dealers beating the living daylights out of each other! We'd proved that, yes, the BTCC was bruising, but it's also exciting racing full of drivers who clearly want to win. Suddenly the BTCC was big news."

It had all kicked off for the protagonists in its aftermath, but there's no doubting that the BTCC – its profile, viewing figures, ad revenue and manufacturer involvement – kicked on from their point of impact.



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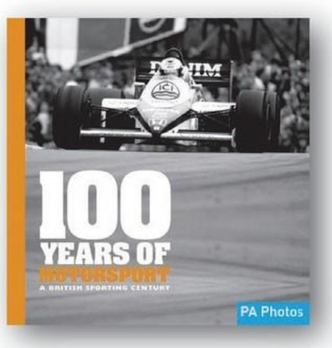


AN OVAL OFFICE
BROOKLANDS TRACK - MAY 8, 1938

Noel Pope jumps the fearsome banking at the world's first race track on his motorcycle

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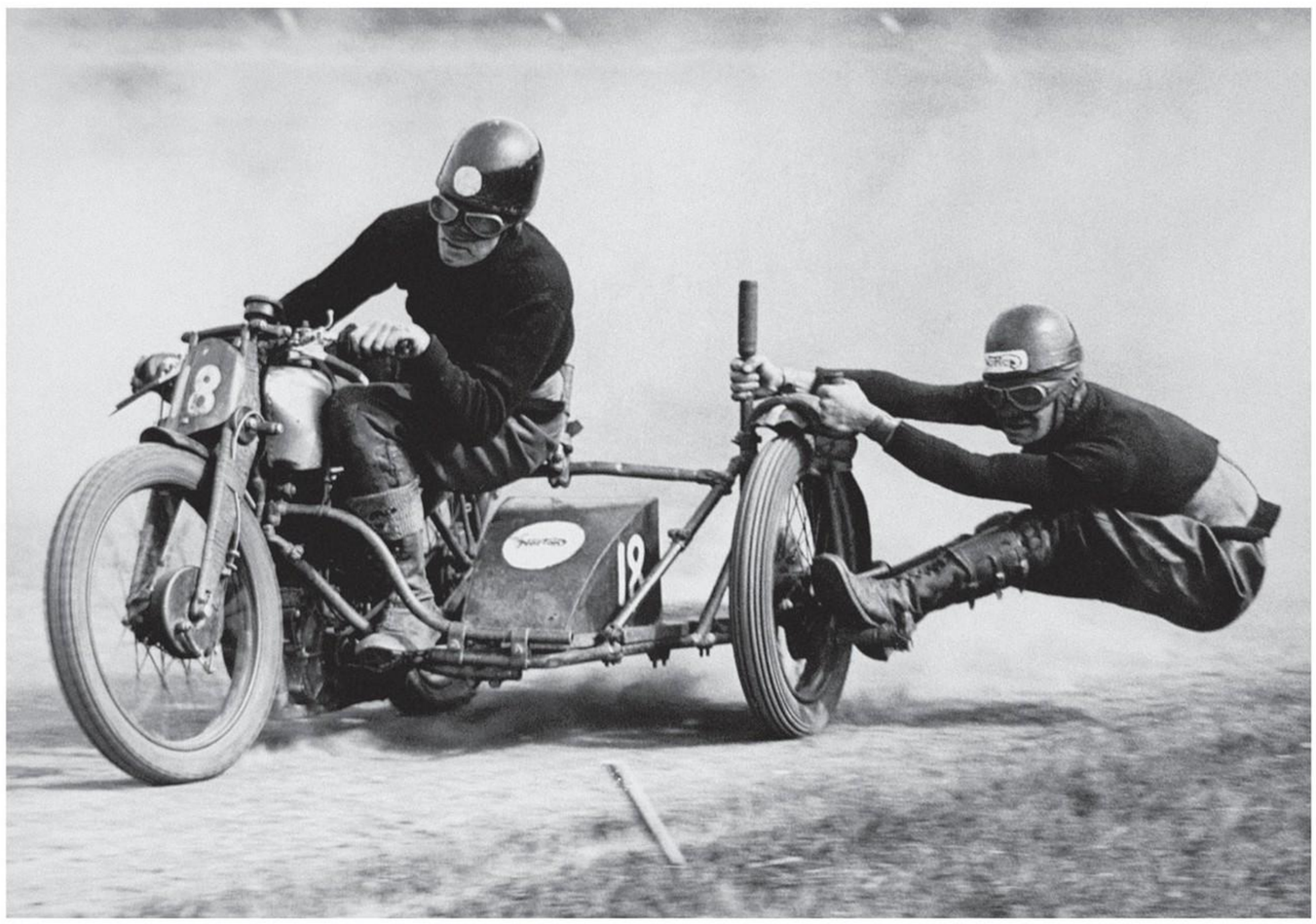


THE GALLERY



FEMALE OF THE SPECIES
DAILY EXPRESS INTERNATIONAL TROPHY, SILVERSTONE – MAY 2, 1959

Maria Teresa de Filippis enjoys a quick smoke in her Maserati 250F, as a young fan waits patiently for her autograph



HANG ON A MINUTE
GRASS TRACK MEETING, BRANDS HATCH – JUNE 22, 1936

Brian Ducker and his passenger navigate the corner in spectacular style to win the sidecar scratch race

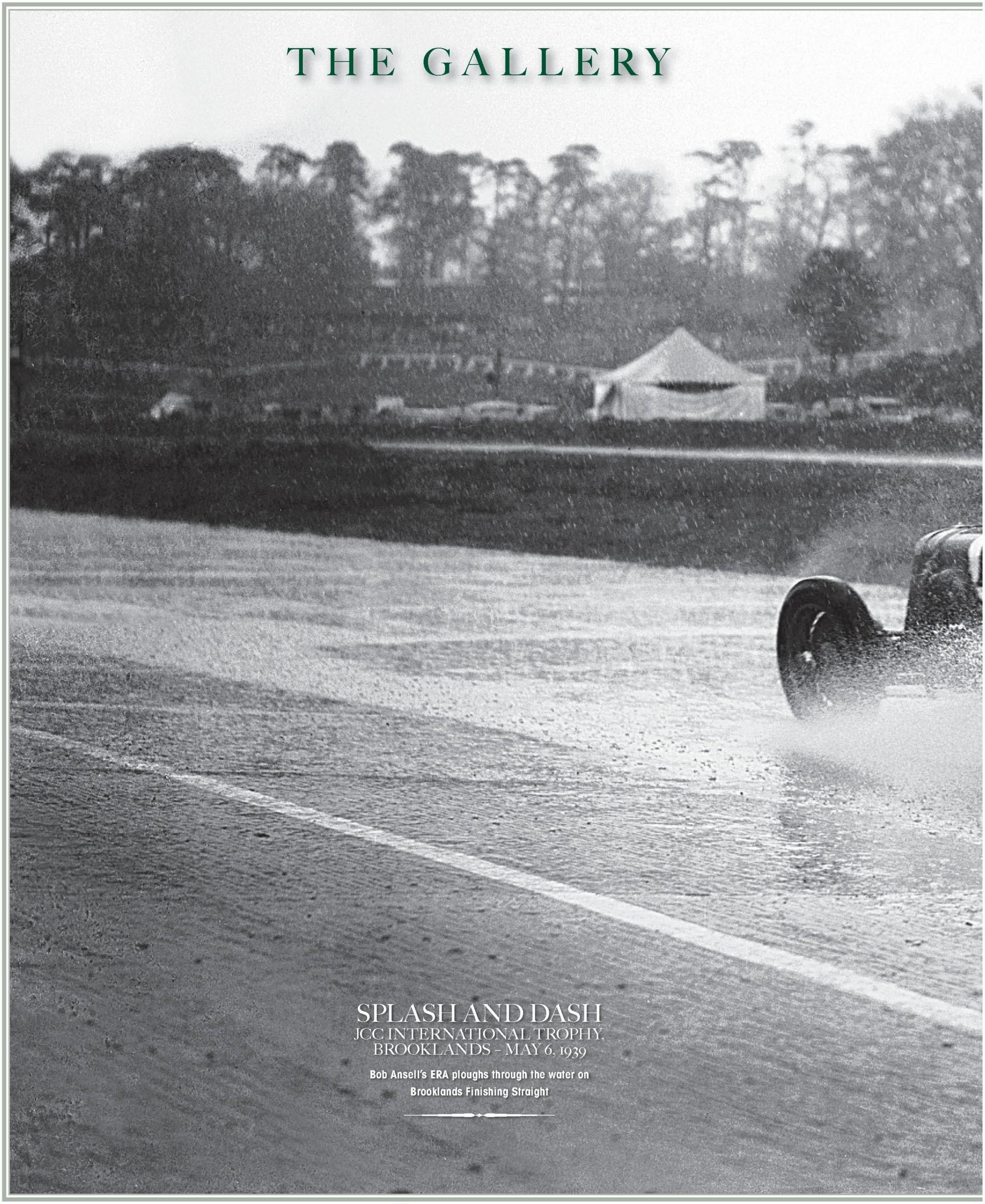


ALL THAT JAZZ

RACE OF CHAMPIONS, BRANDS HATCH - MARCH 14, 1969

Jackie Stewart tries his hand at playing the trombone while sitting in his Matra MS80-Ford, watched by band leader Chris Barber and members of his jazz band

THE GALLERY



SPLASH AND DASH
JCC INTERNATIONAL TROPHY, BROOKLANDS - MAY 6, 1939

Bob Ansell's ERA ploughs through the water on Brooklands Finishing Straight



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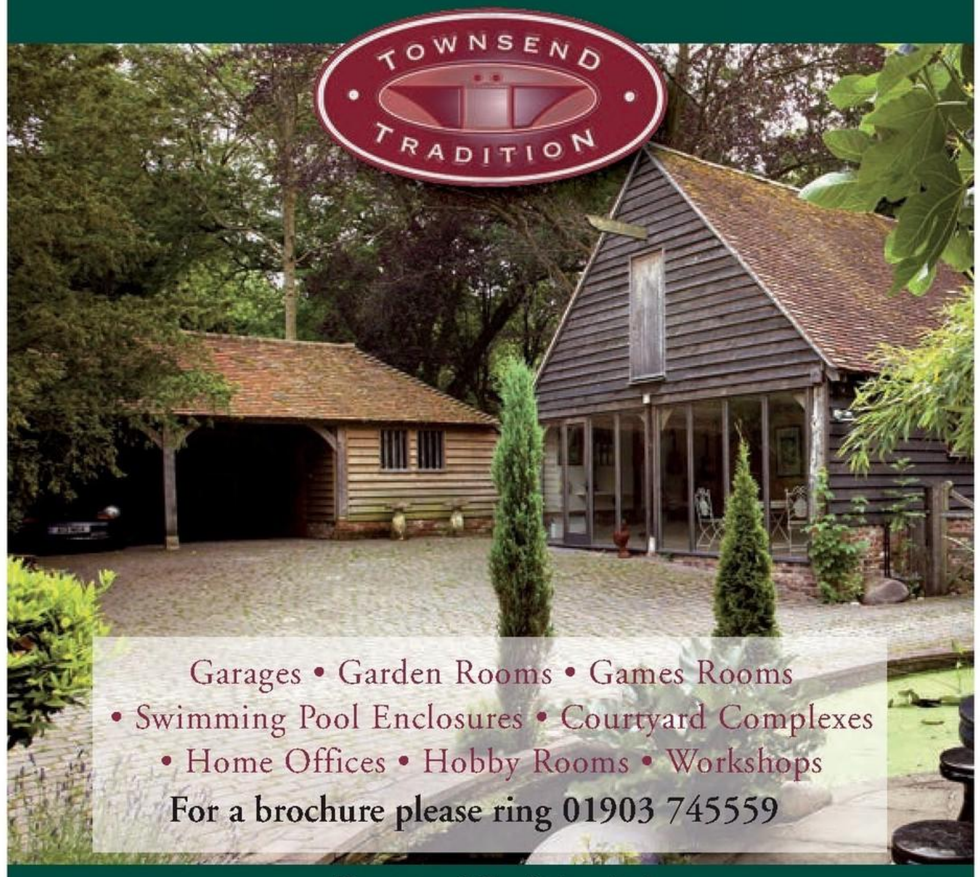
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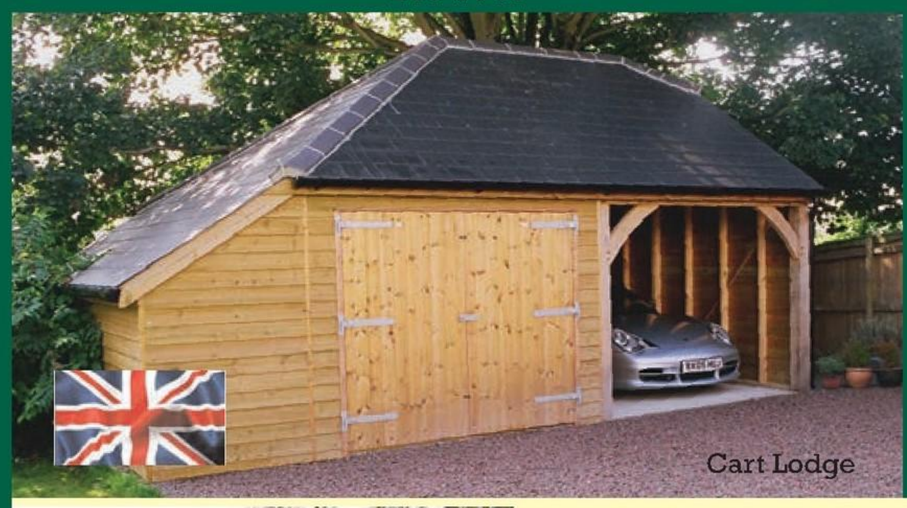
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Historic clubs cut races

Charlie Wooding

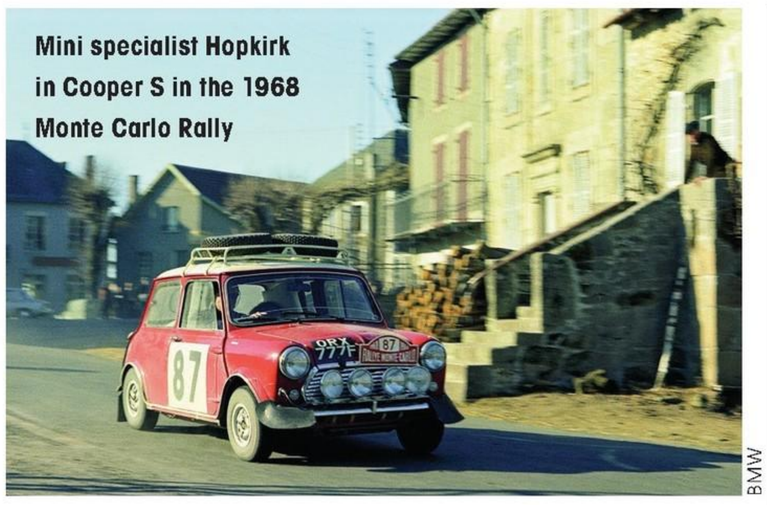
THE MAJOR ORGANISERS OF historic racing are planning for a 10 per cent reduction in activity in 2009 in the face of the global economic downturn. A cut-back in the number of race meetings and championship rounds is likely across the sport, and clubs are urging circuits to peg back increases in track hire costs.

"It's a year for consolidation and caution, and providing what our members want to do," said Christopher Tate of the Masters Series. "All the evidence is that people who have historic racing cars will do all they can to race them, and recent auctions show that, for instance, the market for pre-1978 3-litre F1 cars remains very strong."

Oli McCrudden of the Historic Formula One Championship said: "We may do one event fewer in 2009. Circuit prices need to reflect the current situation, as that's where the major cost is. That cost has to be reflected in entry fees."

The Historic Sports Car Club has already trimmed three days of racing in comparison to its 2008 calendar. "We have to be realistic and expect entries to be reduced, which means that some meetings will be marginal," said Grahame White, the club's CEO. "However, if circuits don't increase hire charges, we will try not to increase entry fees."

In other recession-led changes the Masters season will start later and closer to home than before, with the first major festival at Donington in early May rather than the late March date at Mugello in Italy held in '08.



Mini specialist Hopkirk in Cooper S in the 1968 Monte Carlo Rally

BMW

Mini celebration planned

TO MARK THE MINI'S 50TH ANNIVERSARY, A SPECIAL MINI CUP will be run in historic rallying in 2009 with support from Paddy Hopkirk in a bid to get more of the cars back in action.

Created by the Historic Rally Car Register, the Mini 50 Cup will run over eight special stage rallies and will be open to all classic-specification Minis built up to 1981.

"We want to try and get as many Minis back onto the stages as possible," said Paul Loveridge of the HRCR. The calendar will cover four gravel rallies and four asphalt events, starting with the Red Kite Stages on January 18.

Entries build for 'Le-Jog'

AROUND 50 CREWS, INCLUDING SOME FROM ACROSS mainland Europe, will tackle the annual Land's End to John O'Groats Reliability Trial. 'Le-Jog' will start from Land's End on Saturday December 6, finishing at the northern tip of Scotland on Tuesday morning after 1400 miles on some of the most demanding roads in England, Wales and Scotland.

Organiser Peter Nedin of HERO is promising a challenging route and new venues for special tests, with overnight halts at Runcorn and Carlisle. As usual, the tricky Welsh night leg will test crews, in a route that avoids clashes with Wales Rally GB.

Peterson's Tecno to race again

THE 1-LITRE FORMULA 3 TECNO owned and raced in period by Ronnie Peterson is due to return to the track in 2009 in the hands of veteran pilot Peter St Barbe.

The chassis is thought to be the one used by Peterson to win the 1968 Swedish F3 title. It was then used in Britain the following season, while his 1969 chassis was run in international races.

Later raced by David Andrews of Lucas, the Tecno was owned by Hall and Hall for a decade and raced by Rob Hall up to 1993.

It has not been driven in anger for 15 years, but St Barbe now intends to contest Classic 1-litre F3 events.

IN BRIEF

■ Stephen Hepworth is trying to trace the early history of the V8-engined Cooper T43 that his late father David used to great effect in the early 1960s. The family recently bought the car back at auction. Hepworth can be contacted on 07976 652495.

■ The annual Historic Rally Car Register Open Day will be held at the Heritage Motor Centre, Gaydon on Saturday January 10. The full HRCR programme for 2009 will be presented, along with events from other organisers.

■ The Masters Festival will run again at Brands Hatch next year over the Bank Holiday weekend of May 23-25. Most of the series' categories will be in action, topped by Grand Prix Masters, with racing on the full GP circuit.

■ Teenager Michael Lyons and Ian Gray are among the Historic Sports Car Club's 2008 champions. Lyons bagged the Historic Formula Ford crown, while Gray took his ex-John Watson Brabham BT16 to the Classic Racing Cars title.

■ The HSCC has announced four key dates for 2009, including Silverstone's International Trophy (May 9/10), the Autosport 3 Hours at Snetterton (provisionally May 30/31), the HSCC Historic Superprix at Brands Hatch (July 4/5) and the Oulton Park Gold Cup (August 30/31).

■ David Piper's annual winter tour in South Africa has been confirmed for early 2009, with races at Zwartkops (January 30/31) and Killarney (February 7/8). They will feature '60s sports/GT/prototypes and saloons, pre-66 cars and Formula Juniors.

■ Hagerty International launched an initiative to get young people involved in the classic and collector car scene at the Classic Motor Show. It included entries in a Kids Art Competition, with the winner receiving a donation towards school equipment.

■ Neil Calvert and Arlene Cookson have won both the Water End Properties Asphalt and Gravel Cups in their Lotus Cortina in the British Historic Rally Championship. For the first time, one crew won the awards for the best performances on the three asphalt and five gravel events.

Historic Racing News



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Record Brighton Run

THOUSANDS OF SPECTATORS LINED THE route to cheer on participants in this year's Brighton Veteran Car Run on the first Sunday in November. A healthy 420 of the 483 pre-1905 cars which started made the finish.

Following a concours in Regent Street the day before, the first competitors left London's Hyde Park at sunrise, and just over three hours later the first car reached the finish line at Madeira Drive on Brighton's seafront. That was the 1900 Napier Double Phaeton of Christopher Thomas (above), which was taking part for the 54th time. "It went very well – the roads were very clear," said Thomas of his 22nd London-Brighton run. "The police were excellent and I was lucky as all the traffic lights were green!"

The Napier finished 10 minutes ahead of the second car, Tim Scott's 1903 60hp Mercedes, and 25 minutes ahead of the 1902 Opel track racer of Rene Kreis. Formula 1 designer Adrian Newey took part on a 1901 Mors. It was 4pm before the last finishers reached the coast.

"It has been a fantastic day and probably the best run ever," said event director Roger Etcell. "Good weather and good road conditions have been very helpful in getting the cars to Brighton in record time." Next year's London to Brighton will be held on Sunday November 1.



Oliver McCrudden

Pane is Historic F1 king

ITALIAN RACER MAURO PANE HAS BEEN confirmed as FIA Historic Formula 1 Champion in his six-wheel Tyrrell P34. With a continuous run of seven class wins through the bulk of the season, Pane (left) finished the season comfortably clear of his nearest rival, the Matra MS120 of Brazilian racer Abba Kogan.

Pane, who prepares a range of F1 cars for customers under the F1 Storiche banner, raced the ex-Patrick Depailler chassis owned by Italian Piero Ratti and topped his season with a memorable overall win at Monza.

Initially, Bobby Verdon-Roe's McLaren M26 looked like being Pane's big class B rival, but he was sidelined for much of the season after a major accident at Monaco.

Castle Combe to host classics

BUILDING ON ITS FIRST CLASSIC race weekend in 2008, Castle Combe has unveiled plans for a week of events in 2009.

The new 'Classic Week' at the Wiltshire track will open on Saturday June 6 with the annual classic action day, featuring the 40th anniversary of the Ford Capri starring Vince Woodman in his 'Cologne Capri'.

Mid-week events will include visits from tours and a classic track day, before a race weekend (June 13/14) featuring Masters Top Hat and HSCC action. The event will be repeated in 2010, the circuit's 60th anniversary year.

Focus shifts for Derek Bell series

THE HSCC PLANS TO RE-WORK the Derek Bell Trophy in 2009, switching the focus to historic Formula 5000 and F2 cars.

As F5000 marks its 40th anniversary in Britain, five or six mainly double-header race meetings will be run, with the club applying to the MSA for championship status for the series. For the first time Formula 1 cars will no longer be admitted, although few have raced in the series in recent seasons.

"There are a lot of people running Formula 2 cars in Britain, and interest in Formula 5000 is building all the time," said the HSCC's Grahame White.



Jeff Bloxham

Rare TVR in UK race debut

A RARE 1964 TVR 5000 HAS made what is thought to be the model's UK race debut in the hands of former TVR boss Peter Wheeler.

Discovered in a barn last year and since restored, the Ford V8-engined car was an export model for North America and was never marketed in Europe. Wheeler gave the car its Heritage GT race debut at Brands Hatch in late October, partnered by former TVR press guru Ben Samuelson.

The car has been prepared by Lawfield Engineering and JGR Motorsport Preparation, companies based at the old TVR works in Blackpool.

Wallace relives Formula Ford fun

LE MANS WINNER ANDY WALLACE RETURNED TO HIS ROOTS DURING THE Walter Hayes Trophy at Silverstone by racing a classic Formula Ford 1600. Back in 1980, Wallace won the Pre-74 FF1600 title in a Hawke DL11, and a chance meeting with the Classic Formula Ford Register during July's Silverstone Classic led to the offer of a race outing.

Wallace duly tackled the November event in a Crossle 25F and loved the experience despite not reaching the final. He said: "It was a great car, but it certainly didn't have the type of downforce that I've got used to over the years since I last raced a Formula Ford!"



Jakob Ebrey

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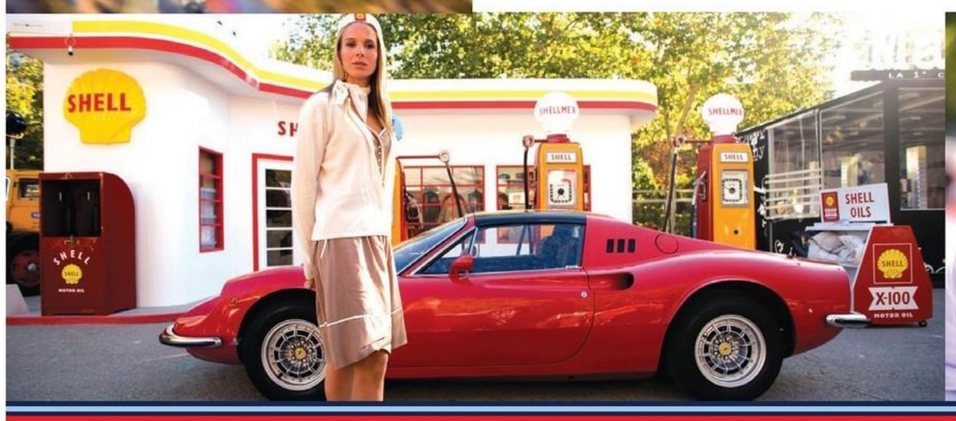




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Mix classic cars with the return of Ferrari to Jarama, and you have the

Jarama will always be Gilles Villeneuve's circuit. A total of nine World Championship Grands Prix were held at the tortuous track on the outskirts of Madrid between 1968 and '81, not including the 1980 race. That was the one stripped of its points status following the outbreak of the FISA/FOCA war, much to the chagrin of winner Alan Jones. Graham Hill, Jackie Stewart, Emerson Fittipaldi, Niki Lauda, James Hunt, Mario Andretti and Patrick Depailler were others to win here. So was Jim Clark, in a 1967 non-championship race.

But still, think 'Jarama' and invariably 'Villeneuve' springs to mind – along with that powerful yet canine Ferrari 126CK. How he fended off a string of cars for 66 sweltering laps is the stuff of legend.

Jarama hasn't held a Grand Prix since, and endearingly it appears frozen in time. It's slightly tatty around the edges, and falls way short of Formula 1's sanitised modern safety standards. It's as if the 1990s had never happened. Which makes the sight and sound of a modern Ferrari Grand Prix car wound up around its confines all the more satisfying.

Marc Gené's laps in the championship-winning F2007 were the highlight of a wonderful Martini Legends weekend in late October. The Italian drinks brand, which enjoys great popularity in Spain, has this year celebrated its 40th anniversary as a sponsor of great racing and rally cars, and is adding to its rich heritage as an official partner of Ferrari in F1.

Huge crowds turned out to witness Ferrari's Jarama return, as test driver and Spanish racing star Gené had fun reacclimatising to a circuit he last raced on in the Nissan World Series in 2003. But in a modern F1 car, this demo was more of a challenge than it might have appeared.

"There are three fast corners in total, and on the first lap I braked too early into the first corner because it is easy to go off," Gené said with a grin after his run. "The rest of the circuit is very nice – perhaps a bit dangerous going up the hill behind the paddock. It should be flat, but I didn't try... If something goes wrong you look so bad on a day like today! You want to do a good lap time but always with a margin."

Gené did three flying laps, split by a Grand Prix-style pitstop, then ended his show with crowd-pleasing burnouts and 'doughnuts'. "My fastest lap was a 1min 17.1sec. You could do 1min 15sec easily, but you'd have to work on the set-up to find more. I wasn't expecting to go as fast as I did. I was expecting a 1min 19sec."

For the record, Jacques Laffite's Ligier JS17 set pole position in 1981 at 1min 13.754sec – but two corners have been re-profiled and the



The Martini weekend in Madrid included track action at Jarama and a special display in the Parque del Retiro

right ingredients for the second Martini Legends event

BY DAMIEN SMITH

the circuit length increased by half a kilometre since that time.

Martini held its first Legends event at Barcelona's Montjuich Park last year, and it was a raging success. Madrid's majestic Parque del Retiro may not enjoy a motor racing heritage, but it certainly provided a beautiful and popular backdrop for Martini's celebrations away from Jarama.

Families enjoying the warm autumn sun milled about the Martini Legends paddock, which featured a classic line-up of cars. The Martini-liveried machines alone would have been a draw: Gordon Murray's era-defining Brabham BT44, the Safari Rally-spec Porsche 911, Markku Alén's stunning Lancia 037, Mario Andretti's Lotus 80 wing car, Jacky Ickx's 1977 Le Mans-winning Porsche 936 – all strong reasons to vote Martini's blue-and-red stripes the most evocative livery in motor sporting history.

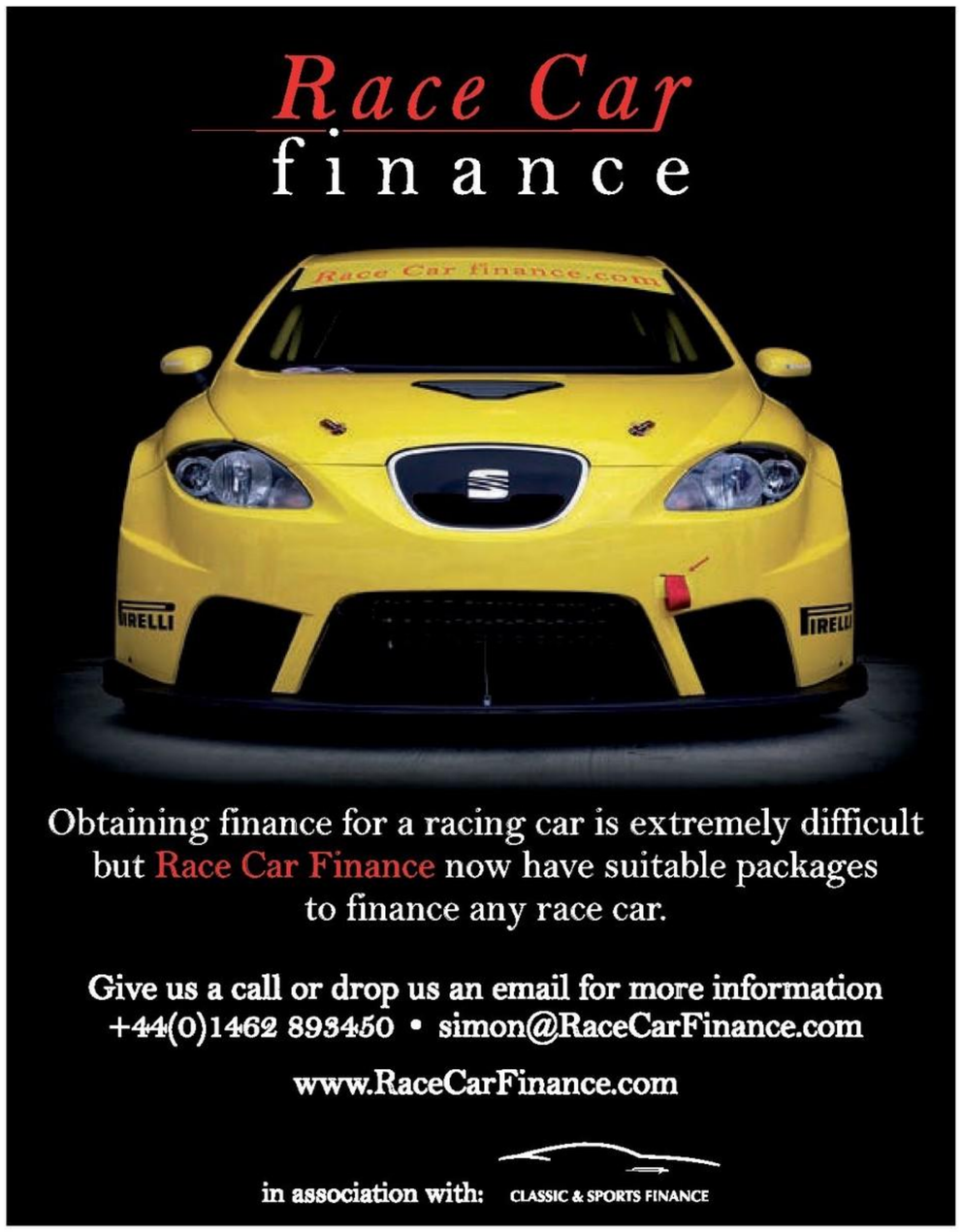
Within the VIP area, Ferrari unveiled its new California road car (road tested by Andrew Frankel on page 68), while Shell added a nice retro touch with its 1950s-style filling station. This was the work of MagicofMotoring.com, the British company that manufacturers Shell heritage merchandise and built the popular AFN garage at the Goodwood Revival last September. "The AFN garage took eight weeks to build, this took two days!" said company boss Mick Pacey. The big project for 2009 is the completion of a fully-working Shell garage at Woad Corner in Newport Pagnell.

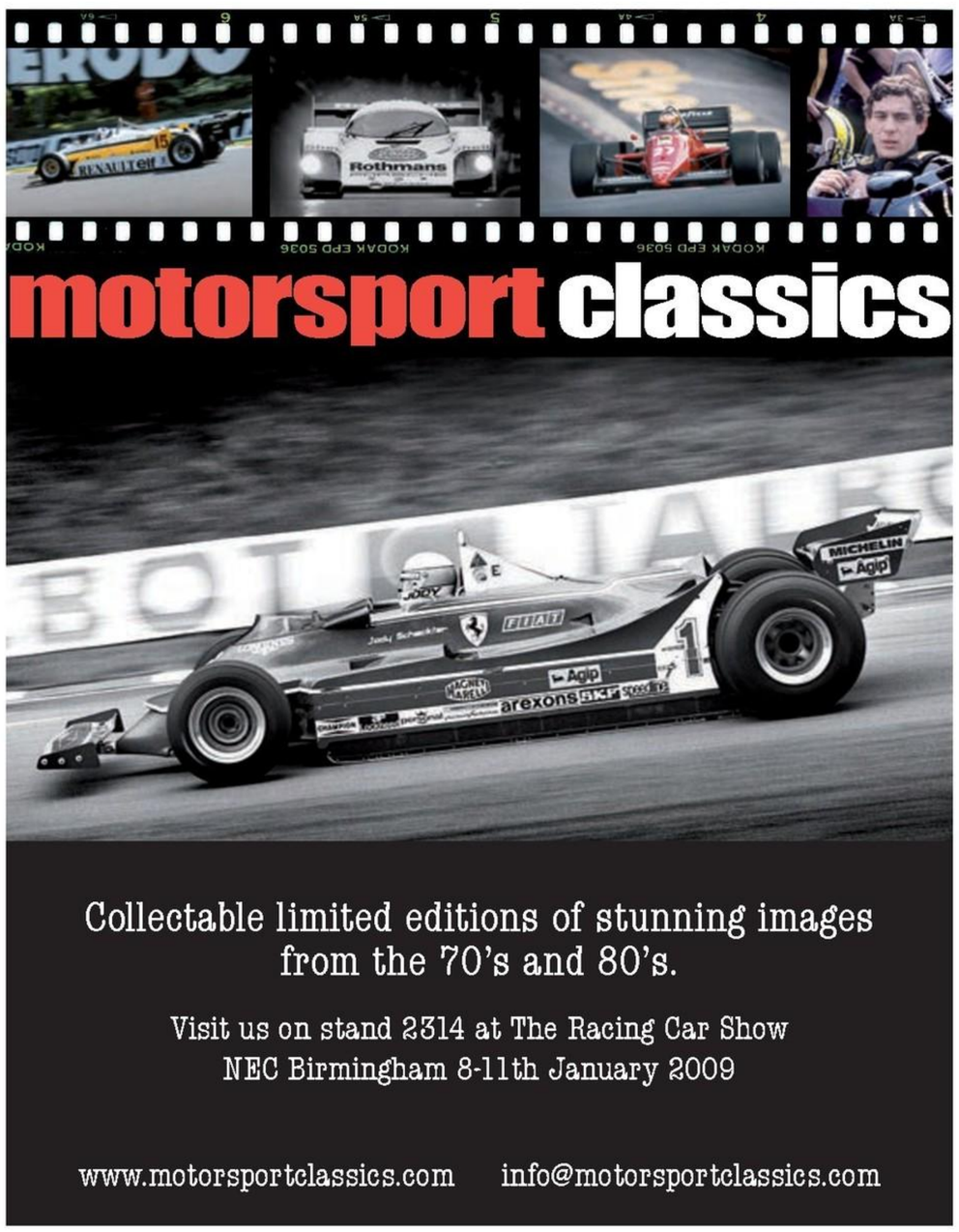
Back at Jarama, a support bill of historic races kept the enthusiastic Spanish fans cheering. Where Gené spanned the decades with the incongruity of the new and the old, the final round of the FIA Historic F1 Championship was a pure time warp. Roland Kinch's victory over Joaquin Folch even had echoes of Villeneuve. Lap after lap Folch's Williams FW08 crawled all over the back of the Arrows A4 around the twisty bits, but Kinch's DFV gave him the edge down the start-finish straight every time.

The Orwell SuperSports Cup and the European F2 Trophy entertained with a pair of races each, but sadly neither enjoyed bumper entries. The racing bill was propped up by a pair of EuroBOSS races in which Klaas Zwart fired at an open goal in his first drive in Cars International's 2005 V10 Jaguar F1, taking on four ageing Renault World Series cars, a G-Force IRL racer and a 1988 Coloni.

The mix of the past and the present kept the locals happy, and for us northern Europeans there's a lot to be said for a bit of Spanish autumn sun to finish off the historic racing season. Martini Legends has been a draw for two years now – let's hope they go for the hat-trick in 2009.


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Martin McCormack took the fight to Wilson in Mk2 before crashing out



Steve Perez rounded out the top 10 in Lancia Stratos



Category one winner Bob Bean finished the rally stuck in second gear



Jim Valentine drove Saab 96 Sport



Steve Graham was in Lancia Fulvia

Wilson: win is sweetest feeling

After narrowly missing out in 2004, Ford WRC boss Malcolm Wilson dominated this year's Roger Albert Clark Rally to honour his childhood hero

BY PAUL LAWRENCE

For one weekend, Ford's world rally team boss Malcolm Wilson turned his attention away from state-of-the-art WRC cars to climb back behind the wheel of a Ford Escort. The result was a resounding victory on the Roger Albert Clark Rally.

In 2004, on the first running of the event that honours the memory of one of Britain's greatest ever rally drivers, Wilson was battling for victory with Stig Blomqvist when he was caught out by slippery conditions in Kielder forest early on the final day.

Fast-forward four years and Wilson headed into the same forest complex with victory in his grasp and a lead of nearly five minutes. "I'm glad I'm not in a battle for the lead," said Wilson as the cars arrived at Kielder Water for service, with rain in the air and mist swirling over the vast reservoir.

But this time there were no slips and Wilson and co-driver John Millington emerged from the final 18-mile stage in Broomylinn with an even bigger lead to score an emotional victory.



Wilson's winning margin in the Mk2 Escort was over six minutes

"It's so sweet to win my hero's rally," said Wilson, who was an ambitious teenager when Clark was at the top of the game.

Once again, the Roger Albert Clark had been a massive hit with competitors and fans alike. This is an event that turns the clock back to the RAC Rallies of the late 1960s and '70s, with a tough three days of competition in the forests of Yorkshire, Northumberland and southern Scotland. It brings fans out in their thousands, many reliving their own memories of a golden era of rallying.

Although he went into the final day of the event with a handy lead, life had not been so simple for Wilson on day two as the crews tacked classic stages in the forest of Ae, Twiglees, Castle O'er, Newcastleton and Craik. A stunning charge from young Irishman Martin McCormack in his Ford Escort Mk2 had eaten into Wilson's lead. Starting the leg with a deficit of 1min 42sec after two offs on day one, McCormack pulled back 50sec before a deceptive right-hander in Craik ended his rally when he slid into a ditch and bent the back axle.

Instead it was David Stokes, a rival to Wilson 30 years ago, who moved into a superb second place with co-driver Guy Weaver in their Ford Escort Mk1. Having just had his car re-shelled after a major accident in Belgium, Stokes drove with both commitment and restraint to lead the chase of Wilson.

Into the top 10 overall and a resounding category one victory came 70-year-old Bob Bean after a stunning drive in his Lotus Cortina, with Malcolm Smithson alongside. Even having to run most of the final stage stuck in second gear failed to remove the grin from Bean's face. It's that sort of rally.

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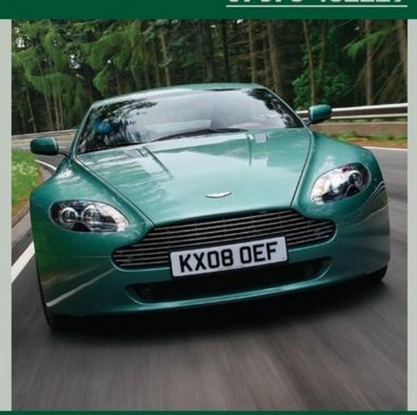
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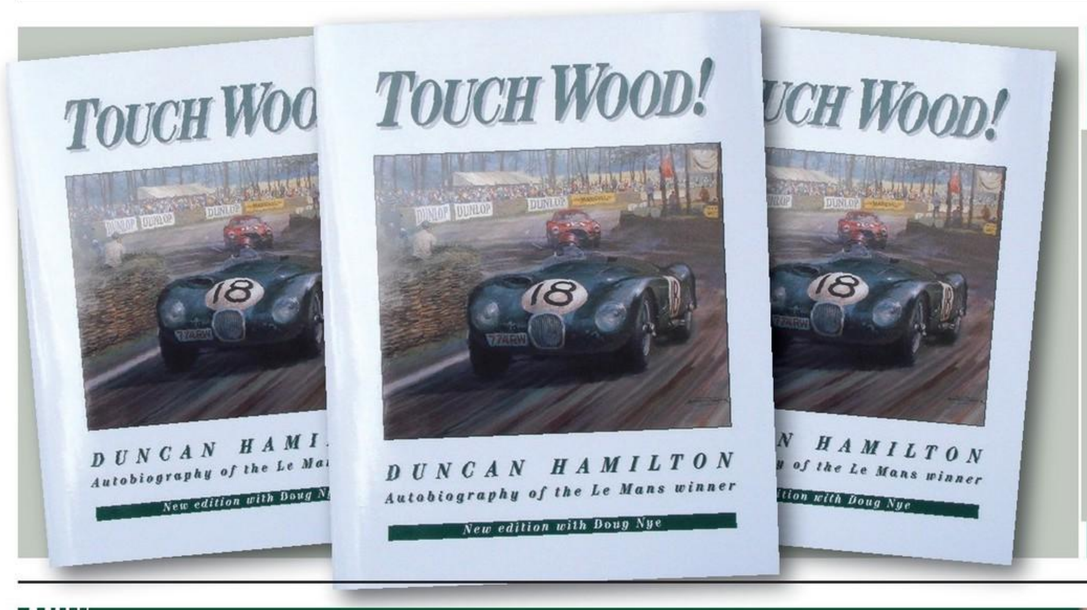
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TOUCH WOOD by Le Mans winner Duncan Hamilton was one of the first, but arguably still the most hilarious, of all the motor racing autobiographies. This book charts the remarkably successful racing career of the larger-than-life Hamilton, who competed in no fewer than nine Le Mans endurance races, was a works driver for Ferrari, Jaguar and Healey, and a force to be reckoned with in his own D-type Jaguar. Punctuated with side-splitting stories of trespassing at Brooklands and his wartime service in the Fleet Air Arm, this is a non-stop read for any enthusiast. The most recent edition, edited and extended by Doug Nye, is available for £29.95, plus £7.05 p&p (UK), £9.50 p&p (Europe) and £14.50 p&p (worldwide).

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The big sell

Times are hard and yet some auction houses are still achieving good sales. So what's their secret?

The annual RM Auctions sale at Battersea has become something of a stalwart in the motor sport calendar. In only two years of hosting the event, the American auction house has made a name for itself by selling some of the most interesting cars, achieving record prices, hosting lavish parties the night before and for offering the British auction scene that little something extra. Whether that something extra is what everyone wants will depend on whom you ask, of course.

FOR FULL AUCTION LISTINGS AND RESULTS VISIT www.motorsportmagazine.co.uk

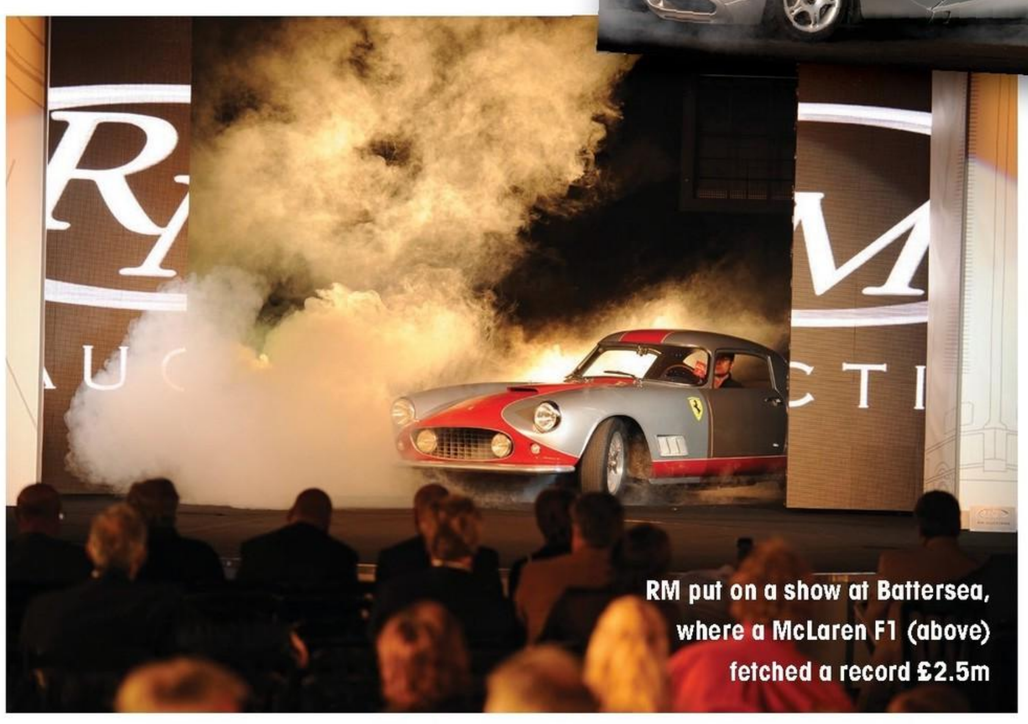
The fact that we no longer live in a world where a Ferrari 250 GT Tour de France Berlinetta can be sold in a cold and damp warehouse is indisputable. But what RM does is to create an event rather than just an auction. So much so that many have expressed concern that it is catering for an audience that simply doesn't exist in Britain. Terry Lobzun, director of PR for RM, is keen to stress that it is the relationships the house has built up with its clients that have helped its growth outside the US. "What gives us a competitive advantage is our comfort level with clients," he tells *Motor Sport* after the sale in Battersea.

"Our business started in the restoration shop so we have a collective knowledge, and customers know that we know the cars from the ground up. Also we respect the different territories and the way things are done. I know there have been some comparisons with American-style auctions, for example when we first went to Italy for the Ferrari sale. There were suggestions that it looked more like the auctions you see on television, which wasn't true really. But we're far removed from the old days of popping up a tent; the PT Barnum way of doing things."

Everything evolves, and that's certainly true of auctions, which historically were first held around 500BC when sales of women for marriage were staged in Babylon! Today, the common concern is that auctions should cater for the country that they are based in.



"I think you'll see a difference between what we do in London and, say, Monterey," says Lobzun. "It's really two different markets, two different audiences. We always do things with finesse and with style and respect. Also we've always had international clientele. It wasn't as if we came over blind – we had a base of clientele and it allows us to service them more efficiently. We came over with the confidence that we were going to provide great cars, that we'd put a little bit of glamour and showbiz into it. People reward us with buying these great cars."



RM put on a show at Battersea, where a McLaren F1 (above) fetched a record £2.5m

AUCTION DIARY

Our pick of the upcoming sales and the items you can't afford to miss



STAR LOT
EX-INNES IRELAND 1970 ASTON MARTIN DB6 MK II VANTAGE, ESTIMATE: $75-90,000

DECEMBER 1 BONHAMS, Important Collectors' Motor Cars, Pioneer and Vintage Motorcycles and Fine Automobilia, Olympia, London. Tel: 08700 273618

DECEMBER 4 COYS, Classic Collectors' Cars and Related Automobilia, Royal Horticultural Halls, Westminster. Tel: 020 8614 7888

DECEMBER 8/9 BARONS, Classic Collectors and Historic Cars, Esher Hall, Surrey. Tel: 02380 668413

DECEMBER 11 THE CLASSIC AUCTION COMPANY, Classic and Prestige Cars, Classic Motorcycles, Automobilia and Transport Collectables Auction, Severn Hall, The Three Counties Showground, Malvern, Worcestershire. Tel: 01684 562213



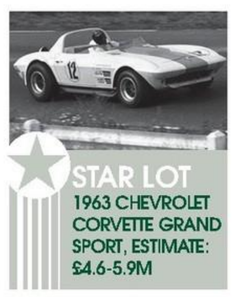
STAR LOT
EX-MILLE MIGLIA 1955 FERRARI 121 LM SPIDER SCAGLIETTI, ESTIMATE: £2.3-3.3M

DECEMBER 20 BONHAMS, Collectors' Cars and Related Automobilia, Gstaad, Switzerland, Tel: 0033 142 611 011

JANUARY 10 COYS, Classic Sporting and Collectors' Cars and Related Automobilia, NEC, Birmingham. Tel: 020 8614 7888

JANUARY 11-18 BARRETT & JACKSON, Collectors' Cars and Related Automobilia, Scottsdale, Arizona, USA. Tel: 001 480 421 6694

JANUARY 14-18 RUSSO AND STEELE, 9th Annual "Sport & Muscle in Scottsdale", 18601 North Scottsdale Rd, Scottsdale, AZ, USA, Tel: 001 602 252 2697



STAR LOT
1963 CHEVROLET CORVETTE GRAND SPORT, ESTIMATE: £4.6-5.9M

JANUARY 16 RM AUCTIONS, Automobiles of Arizona, Arizona Biltmore Resort & Spa, 24th Street & Missouri, Phoenix, Arizona, USA. Tel: 001 519 352 4575

JANUARY 17 GOODING AND COMPANY, Historic Motor Cars, Corner of East Camelback and North 68th Street, Scottsdale, USA, Tel: 001 310 899 1960

FEBRUARY 6-8 RM AUCTIONS, Collector Cars of Fort Lauderdale, Greater Fort Lauderdale/Broward County Convention Center, Fort Lauderdale, Florida, USA, Tel: 001 519 352 4575

It's an attitude that has worked, if the results of the Battersea sale are anything to go by. Click through auction results from anywhere in the world right now and what stands out is the number of cars which have a 'no sale' tag attached to them. It's obvious that the small matter of the largest economic crisis in living memory is affecting sales. But RM still managed to achieve a record £2,530,000 for a McLaren F1 at Battersea and sell 70 of the nigh-on 100 cars that were put under the hammer. A quite remarkable achievement when you think that the market some of these cars are aimed at includes people who have lost millions of pounds in the past few months.

Lobzun adds: "The enthusiasm is still there and the attendance is there. The positive attitude about the industry is still there and certainly the opportunities are too. But we were actually more than surprised [about Battersea], given the economic conditions.

"There are people who think that life is too short and I think that's why the industry is so active. People always seem to be looking for alternative investments and creative investments, something they can enjoy and have fun with. So I think we're going to see a lot more incredible prices next year."

The fact that RM has crossed the Atlantic to host sales in Europe can only be a good thing, especially when it achieves what it did at Battersea. It's just a shame that RM is compared to British auction houses on such a regular basis, as there is no way of saying who is better. The bottom line is that RM just has a different way of doing business, and variety is no bad thing when it comes to choosing where to sell your car.

Auction results

What happened to the latest classic cars to go under the hammer

OCTOBER 22
BRIGHTWELLS
- 1955 Aston Martin DB 2/4 Mkl 3-litre: £38,750
- 1960 Austin Healey 3000 Mkl: £27,500
- 1953 Jaguar XK120 DHC: £41,000
- 1933 Lagonda 16/80 Tourer: £68,000

OCTOBER 25 COYS
- Ex-Sir Malcolm Campbell 1926 Bugatti T35A: unsold
- Bugatti Type 37A Grand Prix restoration project: £68,850

OCTOBER 29
RM AUCTIONS
- 1949 Alfa Romeo 6C 2500 SS Villa d'Este: £247,500
- 1938 Bugatti Type 57C Atalante: £660,000
- 1959 Ferrari 250 GT Tour de France Berlinetta £2,255,000
- 1998 Ferrari F355 Challenge: £34,100
- 1996 Ferrari F50: £319,000
- 1938 Horch 853 Special Roadster: £1,127,500
- 1957 Elva II 'Bobtail' Sports Racing Car: £66,000
- 1965 Ferrari 250LM Berlinetta: £2,255,000
- 1997 McLaren F1: £2,530,000
- 1959 Aston Martin DB4 Prototype: £129,250

OCTOBER 31
BONHAMS
- 1896 Léon Bollée tandem two-seater: £69,700
- 1903 Malicet et Blin 8hp four-seater: £84,000
- 1903 Gamage Aster 6½hp: £65,300
- 1901 Hurtu 4½hp Rear-Entrance Tonneau: £54,300

NOVEMBER 1
WORLD WIDE GROUP
- 1959 Jaguar XK150S 3.4: £94,400
- 1942 Alfa-Romeo 6C 2500 Sport Cabriolet: £217,115
- 1963 Maserati 3500 GT Spyder £133,000
- 1954 Aston Martin BD 2/4: £103,800

NOVEMBER 16
BONHAMS & GOODMAN
- 1957 Lotus Climax Eleven Le Mans Series I: £58,747
- Ex-Alan Stacey, Bob King 1959 Lotus 16: £151,780
- Ex-Maston Gregory, Jo Bonnier, Lucien Bianchi 1961 Lotus 18: unsold
- Ex-Jim Clark, Richard Attwood 1963 World Championship-winning 1962 Lotus 25: £660,980
- Ex-Jim Clark 1966 Lotus 39 Tasman Series: £156,660
- Ex-Mario Andretti, Jochen Rindt, John Miles 1969 Lotus 63: £97,913
- Ex-Mario Andretti, Carlos Reutemann 1978/79 Lotus 79: £249,670
- 1967 Aston Martin DB6 Vantage Volante: £210,395

AROUND THE DEALERS

Competition cars currently for sale here and abroad



1959 FERRARI DINO 196/246S

Luigi Chinetti bought chassis 0776 for his star Mexican drivers Pedro and Ricardo Rodriguez in 1959, who campaigned the car at Nassau, Sebring, the Nürburgring and in the Targa Florio. After a period in the US with Buck Fulp and Tom O'Brien, it was sold to F1 privateer Rob Walker. This unique Fantuzzi-bodied Dino is lighter and potentially faster than a Testa Rossa, and comes with disc brakes and both 2.4 and 2.2-litre V6 engines.
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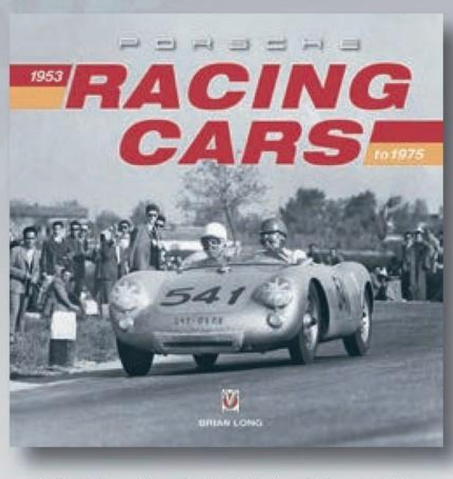
1973 CHEVRON B24 F5000

This B24 is believed to be the ex-Peter Gethin Race of Champions winner. In 1973 Doug Shierson ordered a B24 for Gethin, in which he also won the first round of the European season at Brands Hatch. The car then raced in the US F5000 Championship. It is race-ready and has recently been rebuilt.
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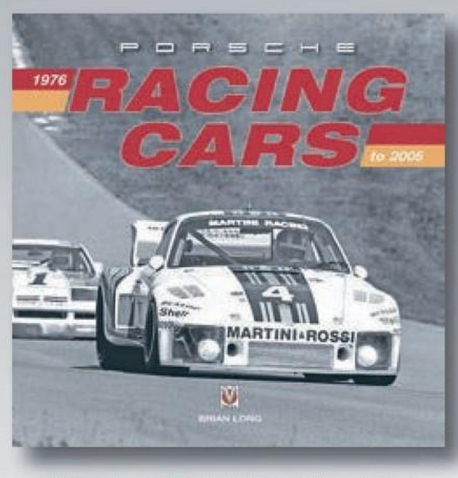
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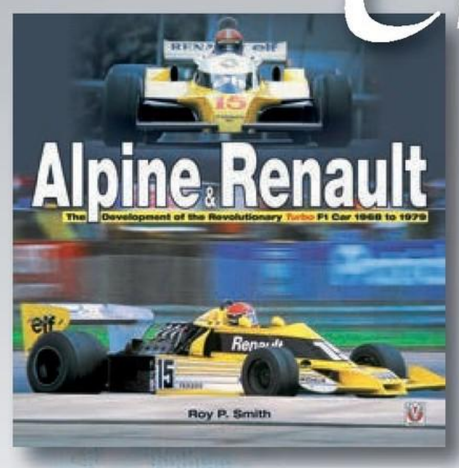
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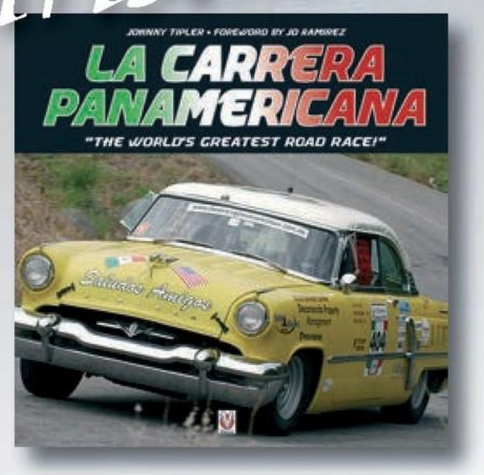
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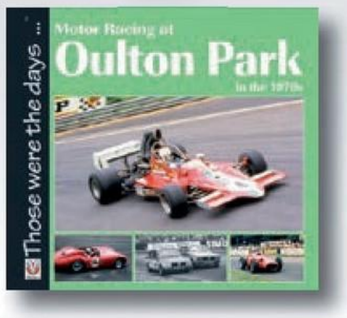
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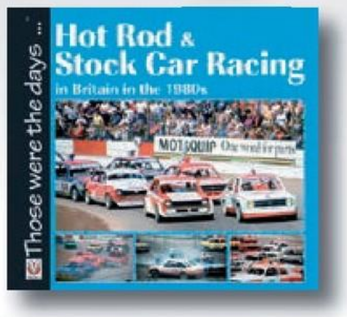
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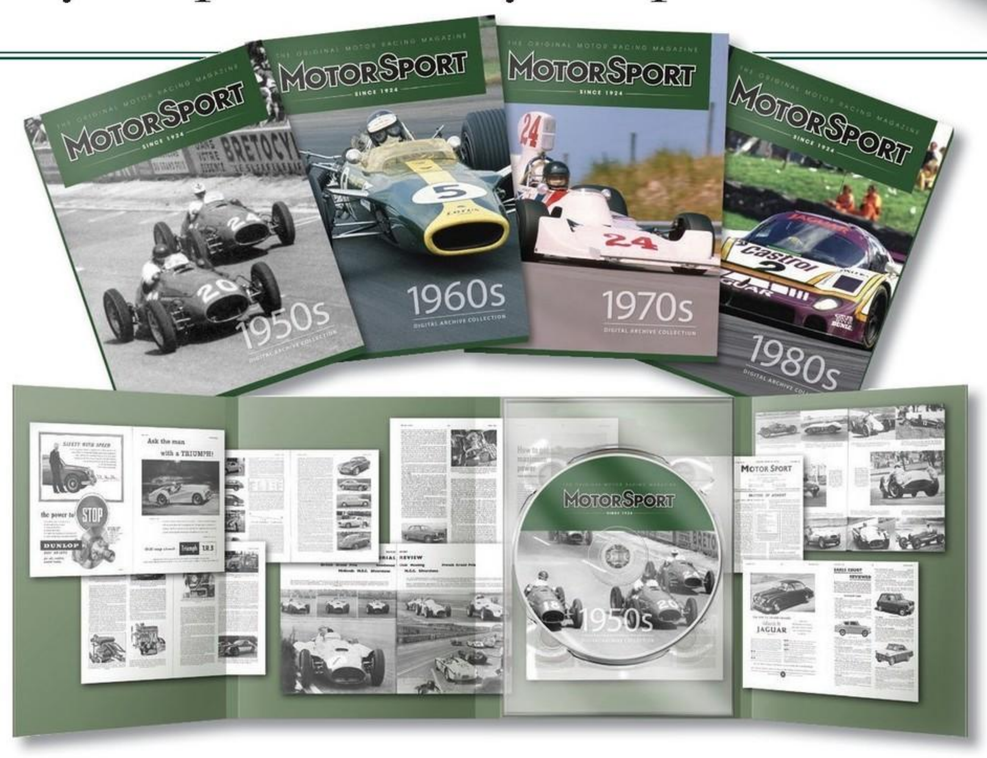
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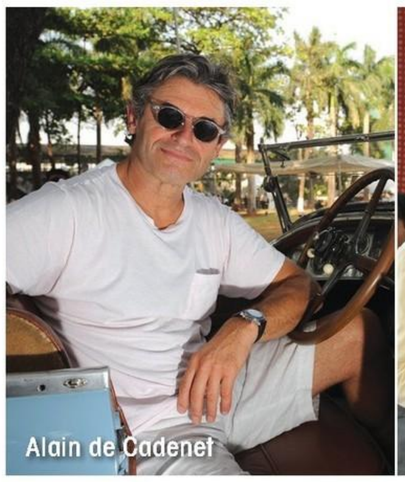
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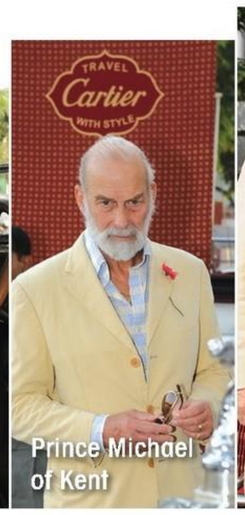

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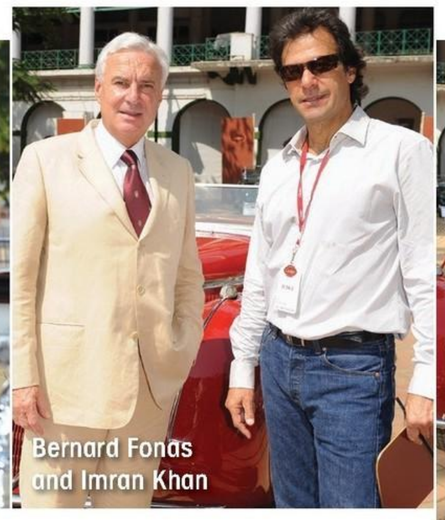
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The 1939 Delahaye 135MS show winner

CARTIER DISCOVERS SOME GEMS IN INDIA

The latest setting for Cartier's Concours d'Elegance was the Royal Western India Turf Club in Mumbai, where Cartier unveiled its inaugural Travel with Style, commemorating India's automobile heritage.

At this exclusive and unique event, the owners of heritage automobiles – Maharajas and other royalty, as well as private collectors – displayed their cars in public.

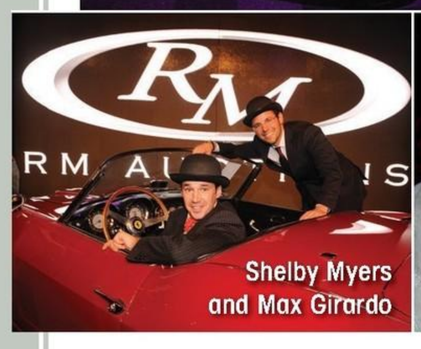
Master of ceremonies Alain de Cadenet announced the final winners which were judged by, among others, Prince Michael of Kent, Imran Khan, Nick Mason, Yasmin Le Bon, car designer Peter Stevens, Gordon Murray and classic car dealer Simon Kidston.

The collection included a 1936 Daimler V12 and a 1949 Bentley Mark VI tourer specially built for the Maharaja of Mysore. The best of show winner was a 1939 Delahaye 135MS owned by Maharaj Duleep Singhji of Jodhpur.

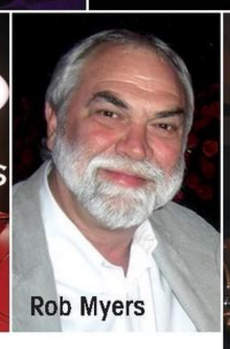




RM Auctions knows how to put on a show



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RM PEELS BACK THE YEARS AT BATTERSEA

RM Auctions' second 'Automobiles of London' classic car sale landed on Battersea Park again and kicked off with a soirée on the eve of the sale, held in association with Sotheby's.

The theme of the party was *The Avengers*, and guests were given bowler hats and red carnations on arrival. They tucked into canapés and drank champagne and cocktails while admiring the classic cars on display, and were entertained by dancers in 1960s-style chequered flag dresses.

DJ Chris Evans told me during the evening that he was planning to change the colour of his ex-James Coburn 1961 Ferrari 250 GT SWB California Spyder. Let's hope he doesn't live to regret it!



Neil Godwin-Stubbert



Competitors' cars lined up in Regent Street



Adrian Newey

Neil Godwin-Stubbert

GALLIC FLAIR AT LONDON-BRIGHTON

This year's London to Brighton Veteran Car Run paid homage to the many early French cars that always star in this event.

Participants lined up in London's Regent Street prior to the 60-mile run from Hyde Park to Brighton, with some spectators even in period costumes. Bonhams' Bond Street Veteran Car Run sale was followed by a cocktail reception, before the run started on Sunday morning.

Competitors included Red Bull's Adrian Newey and Jochen Mass. First to arrive at Madeira Drive in Brighton was the 1900 Napier driven by Christopher Thomas.



Crossing the start line in Hyde Park





Jochen Mass



N·G·S



Aston Martin DBS fresh from *Quantum of Solace* outing



Dr Ulrich Bez, and Barbara Broccoli



Dr Ulrich Bez

ASTON TOASTS JAMES BOND LANDMARK

Aston Martin celebrated its 10th appearance in a James Bond film at Sketch restaurant in London. It all began when the now-iconic DB5 appeared in *Goldfinger* in 1964. The party was held in the same week as the premiere for the latest Bond film, *Quantum of Solace*.

Parked at Sketch's entrance was an Aston Martin DBS which featured in the latest film, complete with missing driver's door, dents and scratch marks after a bruising car chase. The party was brimming with Bond and Aston Martin fans, and guests included Aston's CEO Dr Bez Ulrich and Bond film producer Barbara Broccoli.



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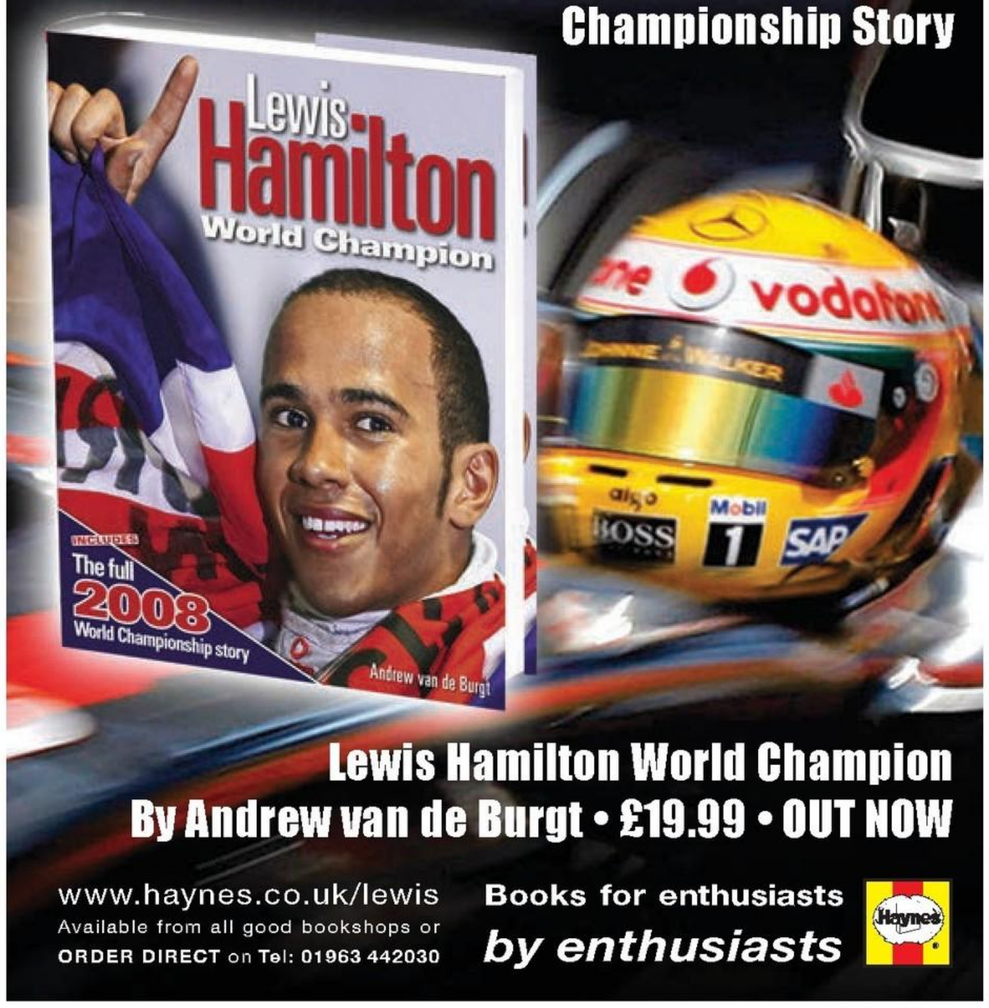
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Lola T70

Even if you struggle to master it on track, Eric Broadley's classic '60s sports-racer will win you over with its looks. Prepare to fall in love...

BY RICHARD HESELTINE



Aston-powered T70 of Surtees and Hobbs lined up second for '67 Nürburgring 1000km but retired from the race. Right: 'a new GT from Lola'!

Point of view is the crux. It's quite simple really; the Lola T70 is the most beautiful sports-racing car ever made. Period. Anyone who thinks otherwise is, of course, quite wrong. Save perhaps the Chevron B16, nothing comes close to invoking such an intense case of puppy love on initial contact. This is how racing cars *should* look; muscular, curvaceous and captivating. None of that slab-of-side, geometric nonsense thank you. Here was a car conceived with little more than a vivid imagination, a slide rule and a HB pencil. One that remains the most fêted Lola product amid a back catalogue that stretches back half a century; so much so that the Huntingdon firm will even knit you a new one, at a price.



Surtees won 1965 Guards International Trophy at Brands in T70 Mk2-Chevrolet

"T70s are such a joy to drive when set up correctly"

NIGEL HULME

Thing is, for all its gorgeousness, presence and whatnot, the T70 never was a particularly successful racing car. Not really, not for its intended purpose as an international player, anyway. After constructing his striking – and influential – Ford small-block V8-powered MkVI coupé, Lola's Eric Broadley effectively took a year's sabbatical to conceive and build the Blue Oval's Le Mans challenger for 1964: the GT40. With lessons learned with the MKVI's spaceframe chassis, he sketched out the Detroit-funded sports-prototype with an ally-skinned monocoque. Except Ford, with its extensive insight into endurance racing, overruled him and insisted on steel. So it was heavy. And rusted. No matter, Broadley got a new factory out of the deal and had already laid out plans for the car he *really* wanted to build.

The result was the Group 7 T70 Spider. "It was a good design," recalls the prolific Tony Southgate, whose résumé includes Grand Prix, Le Mans and Indy 500 winners. Having started out as Broadley's first employee, the 750MC racing driver turned draughtsman had walked shortly after "the men in shiny suits" arrived from Dearborn, and returned to the firm as soon as the Ford execs left. "I was effectively Eric's right-hand man," he recalls. "He would produce the concept and suspension geometry and I would fill in the rest with some sound engineering, although Mike Smith did the doors. I hated doing doors."

Though never assigned any credit, the sensational T70 outline was largely the work of Specialised Moulding's Jim Clark. The former architect and Lotus man (he penned the Elan FHC and the 30 sports-racer in part), had left his native New Zealand to design cars in Europe because "I didn't want to spend all my time doing pig pens... We did all sorts of stuff at SM including the Chevron B16 and McLaren M6GT." The resemblance between all three cars is obvious.

With 1964 Formula 1 World Champion John Surtees acting as marque talisman aboard his Team Surtees entry, the T70 proved an instant winner, 'Il Grande John' scorching his way to 1966 US Road Racing Championship honours. But more was to come, the classic coupé edition taking a bow in Chevy bent-eight-powered form at the January 1967 Racing Car Show at Olympia. Creating more of a hubbub, though, was news that two chassis were destined for Le Mans with Aston Martin's latest V8 amidships. Latest, if not altogether sorted...

The first customer car was subsequently delivered to Jackie Epstein who gave the model its debut in that year's Spa 1000km. Sharing with Paul Hawkins, he finished a respectable fourth overall, despite having to run in the top-flight Group 6 class rather than Group 4 as the car had yet to be homologated.

Then came the Nürburgring 1000km, the works Aston-engined T70 of Surtees and David Hobbs qualifying second overall behind the Phil Hill/Mike Spence Chaparral, only to retire early on with suspension issues. Come Le Mans



All images LAT



and the two factory cars embarrassingly fell out early on: Surtees and Hobbs retired after just three laps with piston failure, the Chris Irwin/Pier de Klerk sister car following suit just 22 tours later with crankshaft maladies. The Tadek Marek-conceived V8 wouldn't again appear at La Sarthe until 1977…

For the rest of the '67 season, works and privateer entries – with Chevy power – proved competitive if only in sprint races. Denny Hulme triumphed at Croft in Sid Taylor's entry, Hawkins in the Gallaher GT Trophy at Warwick Farm and the Cape Three Hours at Killarney, a round of the Springbok series. It was clear, however, that the T70 hadn't fully delivered upon its promise.

Into 1968 and engine displacement was capped at five litres by the CSI: the 327cu in Chevy cranked out 5354cc so engine specialist Jim Travers of Traco Engineering developed a short-stroke 304.6in version. Even so, few Group 4-homologated T70s ever raced seriously in the World Championship of Makes. Sixth in the BOAC 500 for Jo Bonnier and Sten Axelsson was the best placing for the model that season. At national level, however, it proved invincible, winning every Group 4 race of the year: Brian Redman at Oulton Park, Denny Hulme at Silverstone's May and Martini 300 meetings, Frank Gardner in the same Sid Taylor car at Mallory Park and Brands Hatch, and Mike de Udy at Oulton Park.

For the following year, Lola introduced the MkIIIB with a new all-ally monocoque that owed its architecture – if only in part – to the T160 Can-Am weapon. Outwardly identifiable by its single pair of headlights, and forward-hinged (in place of gullwing) doors, the ➤➤➤



"I RACED ONE"

BRIAN REDMAN

This ever-genial Lancastrian made the leap to sports car stardom after switching from a Jaguar 'Lightweight' E-type to a T70 Spider.

"At the end of the 1965 season with the Red Rose Motors E-type, Charles Bridges (the team principal) asked me what I'd like to drive in '66. I should have said 'Formula 3', as that was the only recognised way to the top. However, I'd just been to a race at Croft which featured Can-Am-type cars. My answer was, 'If I really have a choice, it would be a Lola T70.'

"Sure enough, in April 1966 I received a call from Charles asking me if I could be at Oulton Park at 8am the following Thursday. Of course I could, and there in the spring sunshine sat this beautiful T70. Charles said, 'Bugger you Redman, I'm driving it first!' Well, it came to a rest three feet from a large oak tree which used to stand on the inside of Old Hall.

"The 1966 season was very good with a mix of club and international races. This experience of 'big cars' led to a drive at the Spa 1000km race with Peter Sutcliffe in his GT40, where we finished fourth overall. That then led to me joining the John Wyer/Gulf team. At the end of the year I was one of three recipients of a Grovewood Award, so in retrospect I think it was not only a huge amount of fun but also the right choice."

latest strain was, and remains, a work of singular beauty.

And Lola picked up from where it had left off in Blighty, winning seven out of eight British GT races in 1969, but it still fell some way short of expectation on the world stage with the notable exception of Team Penske's victory in the Daytona 24 Hours. The Pennsylvania squad's hurriedly-finished, Mark Donohue and Chuck Parsons-driven entry won largely by stealth, triumphing only after faster rivals broke; to finish first, you must first finish and all that. James Garner's American International Racing T70 driven by Ed Leslie and Lothar Motschenbacher took the runner-up spot, albeit 30 laps down. Jo Bonnier's second place in the final championship round at the Osterreichring, and four wins out of five races in the Springbok series, rounded out the Lola's season.

By the dawn of the '70s, the game was up. There wasn't a single major placing in the International Championship of Makes, although the T70 was still a player in sprint events. Richard Attwood took wins at Montlhéry and Dijon, with Jean-Pierre Beltoise rounding off its victory roll at Magny-Cours in July of that year aboard David Piper's example.

Except the T70 never really went away. Into the early '70s, the model made a brief comeback as a road car under the aegis of former Scuderia Fillipinetti chief (and often only) mechanic, Franco Sbarro. The Italian-born, Swiss-domiciled engineer converted racers into road cars, initially with Lola's blessing, making as many as a dozen 'Sloughys' (really!). Of these, some have since been rebuilt as race cars, just to add to the confusion.

Some T70s dropped further down the food chain, finding a place in Interserie events, others being raced with intermittent success in South American long-distance events. Then came historics, the T70 officially being classed as a 'historic' racing car while barely a decade old. And one of the great stalwarts of the big-banger movement is Nigel Hulme who has spent the past 30 years racing seven different T70s, most recently the ex-Wilson Fittipaldi MkIIIB.

"I always loved these cars as a boy. The noise used to make the hairs on the back of my neck stand on end," he recalls. "Having dabbled in refurbishing old heaps and then selling them on, I was able to purchase an ex-Le Mans Porsche 911. I entered in the Wild Rose Caravan Park GT Championship in the mid-to-late '70s and found that it was not really suitable as I was getting blown away by Chevron B8s. Ray Potter then approached me about buying the Porsche and we finished up doing a deal for my first T70, an ex-Can-Am Spider. It had a Ford 427 'side-oiler' in the back and all I managed to do was swap ends. Anyway, David Piper got to hear about the car and he and Mike Knight were starting a series for this type of car which was going to go international; he asked if I would join the fun. Into the '80s, we did the Atlantic Computers Leasing GT Championship and had a few class wins." More than a few, Hulme also winning the 1985 Failsafe GT Championship.

"They're such a joy to drive when set up correctly," he adds. "They're really forgiving and neutral. You can set them up as you like as they're very adjustable. T70s are easy to drive to about eight-tenths but you'll have to have your wits about you above that. You'll need a good amount of time before you can safely go to the limit. But you can run one on a modest budget, although you will definitely need help from someone who really knows their stuff. Over the period I've owned T70s, pretty much everything that was ever likely to break has, and I've been lucky in having [ex-Piper mechanic] Clive Robinson to sort my cars so they've become very reliable and competitive."

Eligible for many blue-chip stand-alone events (witness Simon Hadfield's brilliant Whitsun Trophy win at last September's Goodwood Revival in the ex-Mecom Spider), the Classic Endurance Racing meetings plus the HSCC's Guards Trophy series (although it's ineligible for overall points), it's rarer to find an event where T70s *aren't* competing. And with dozens of cars having been made originally, and that's before you count the number of, cough, non-Lola-made 'genuine authentic fakes' that are doing the rounds, there are plenty to go around. Add in off-the-shelf parts availability (it's mostly proprietary stuff – even the steering rack is a modified BMC 1100 item) and running costs shouldn't be too awful. Well relative to any Maranello or Weissach product, anyway.

But then we were sold just on the looks. That the T70 remains hugely popular with fans on both sides of the pitwall, and Lola is tapping a rich nostalgia vein and building new ones, says it all. Eric Broadley's would-be world beater is simply a copper-bottomed classic, proof that a tidy design is the symptom of a tidy mind. Ⓜ

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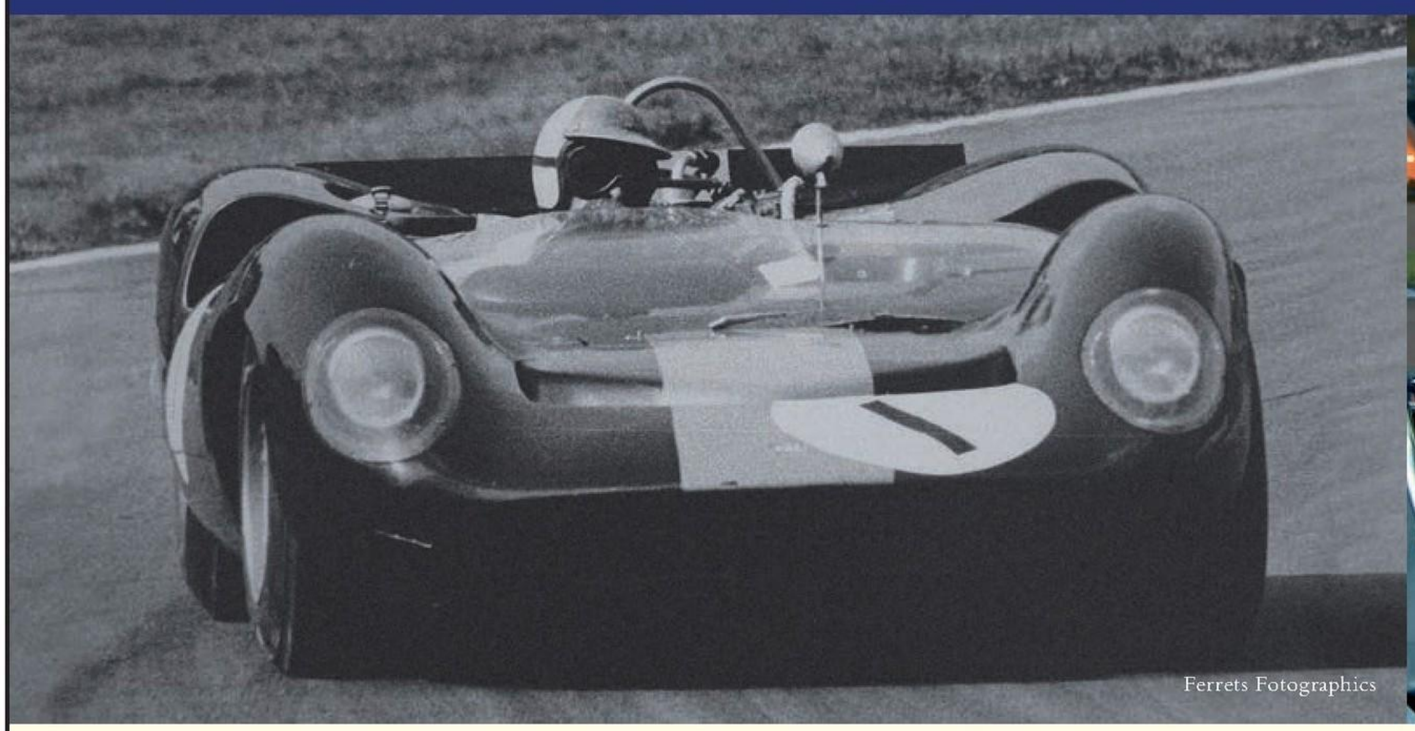
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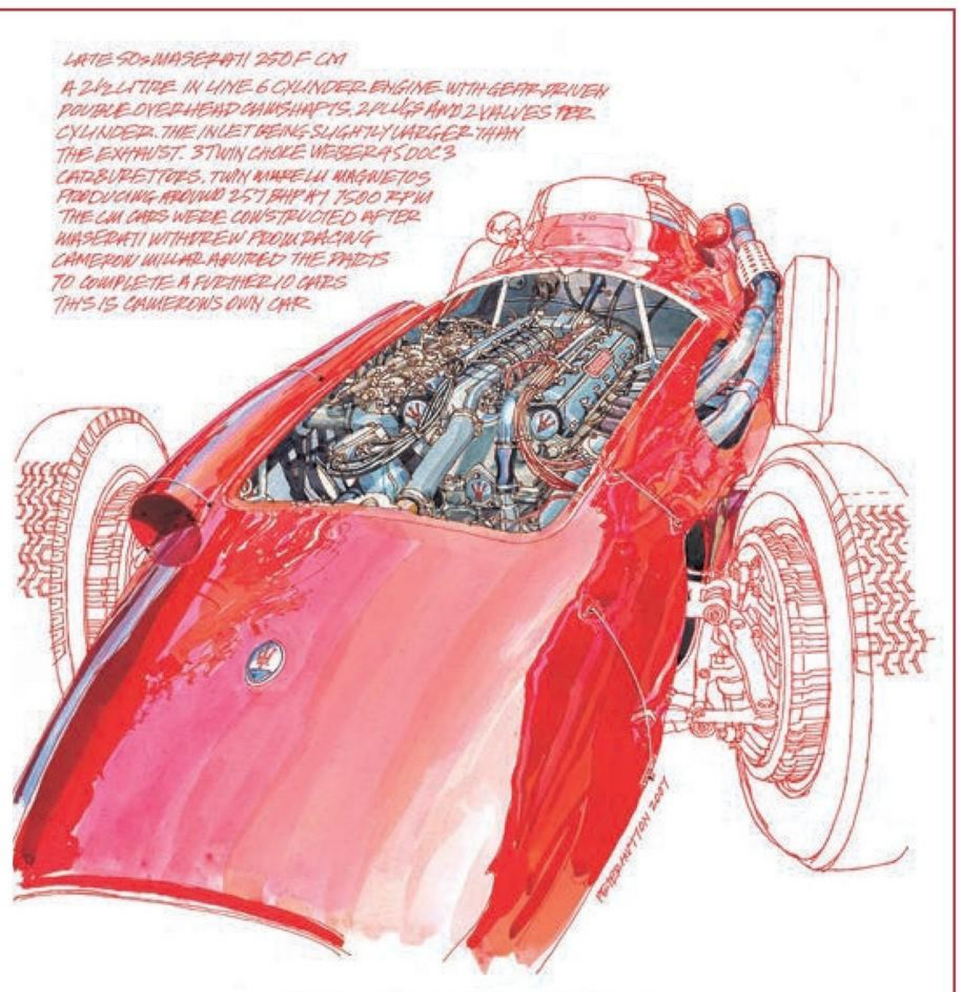
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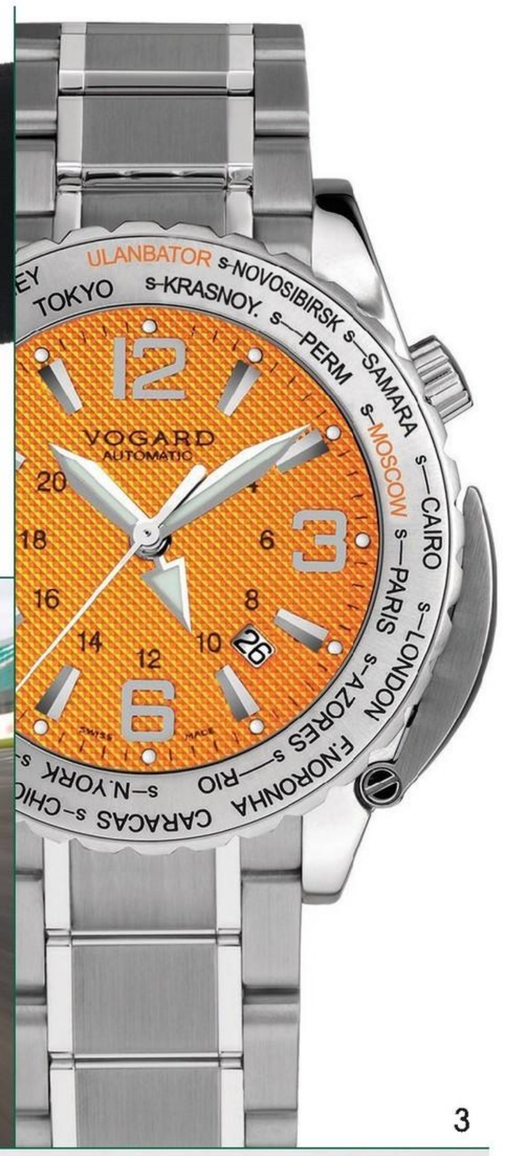
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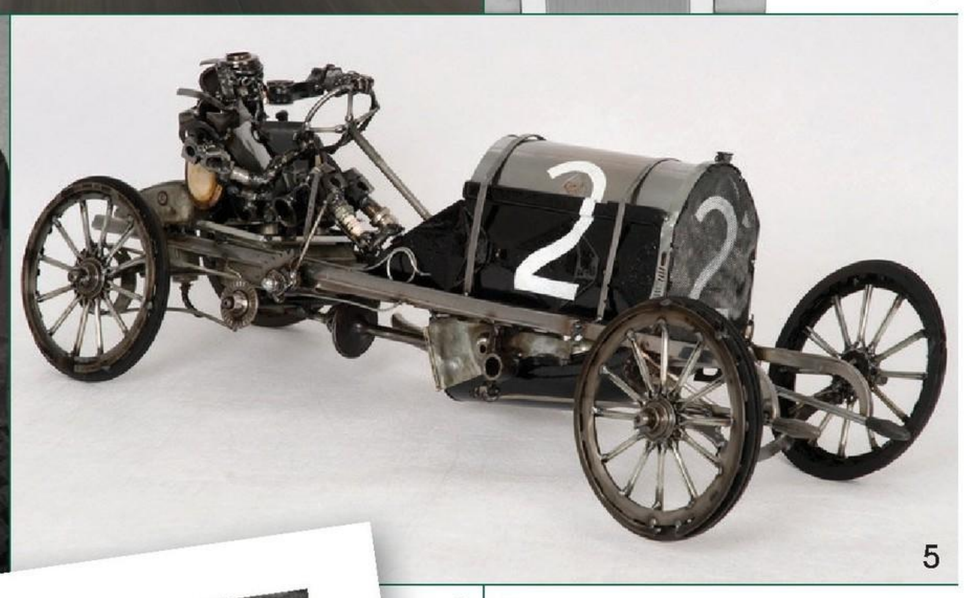
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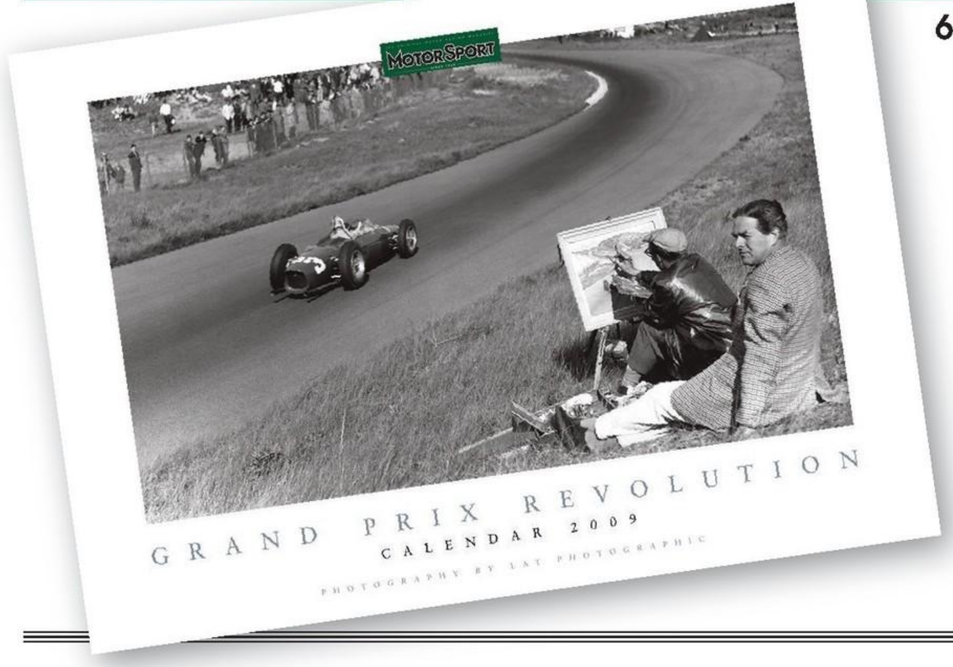
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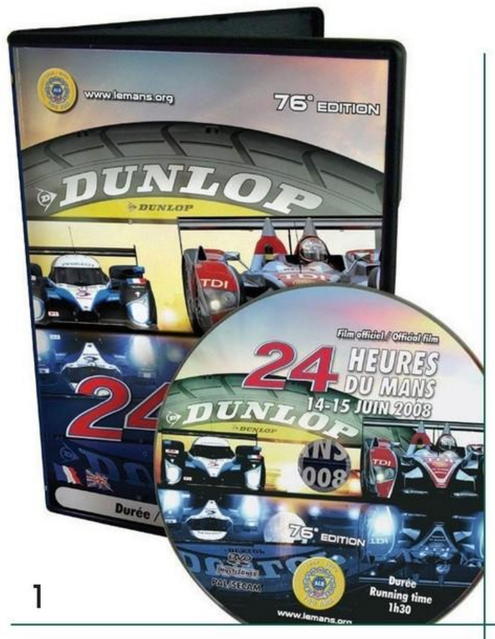
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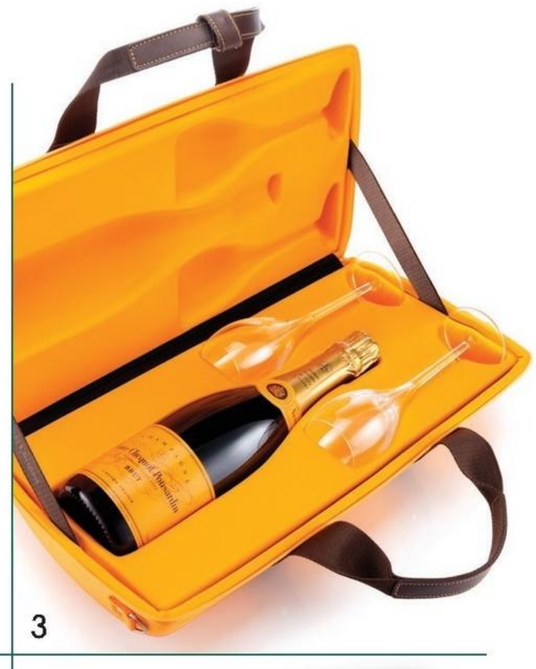
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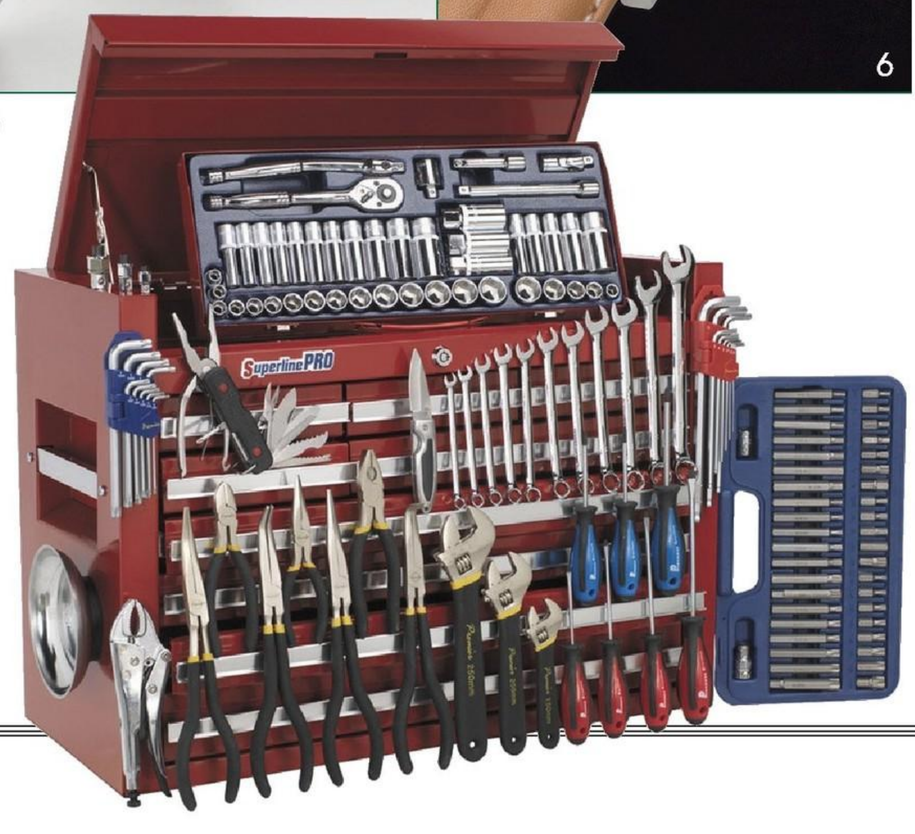

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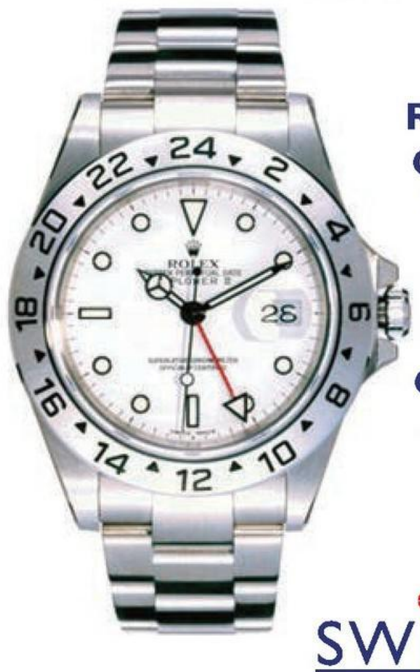
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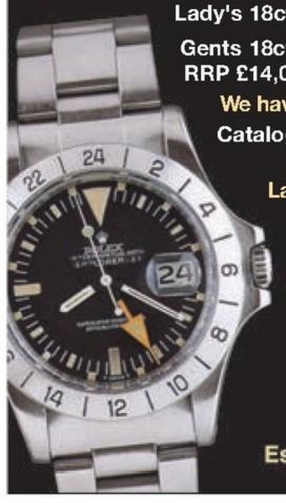
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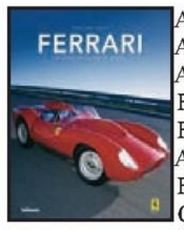
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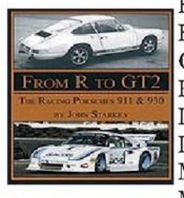
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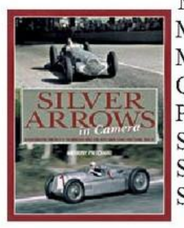
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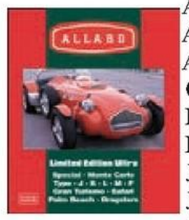


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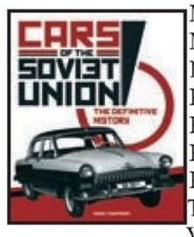


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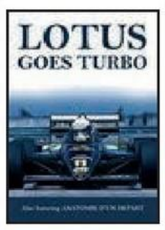
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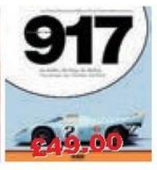












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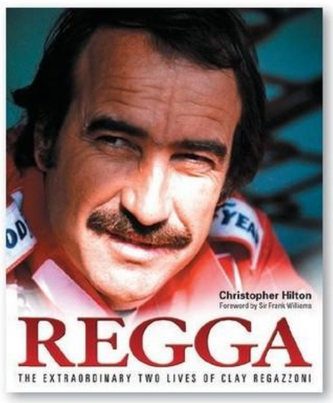
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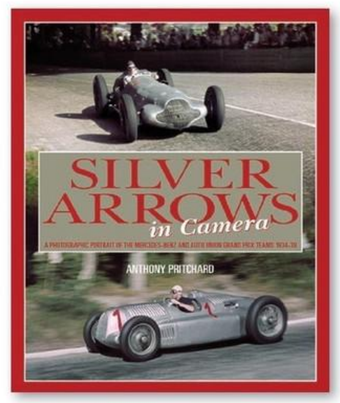


REGGA
THE EXTRAORDINARY TWO LIVES OF CLAY REGAZZONI

CHRISTOPHER HILTON

This is the first English-language biography of Clay Regazzoni, which is surprising given how popular he was in the UK during the '70s. But this engaging work makes up for the shortfall. You can't go far wrong with 'Regga' – he was so colourful. Hilton works through the highs and lows of a quirky racing career (from Ferrari to Ensign in one winter) and documents the 1980 accident at Long Beach which left Gianclaudio paralysed. It would've been easy to skip through his 'second life' when he was confined to a wheelchair, but just as much space and effort is dedicated to this. Hilton's strength is his depth of research. So many 'voices' add to the story – friends, rivals, team-mates and bosses. It's a book that does justice to the man. **DS**

Published by Haynes, ISBN 978 1 84425 479 8, £35

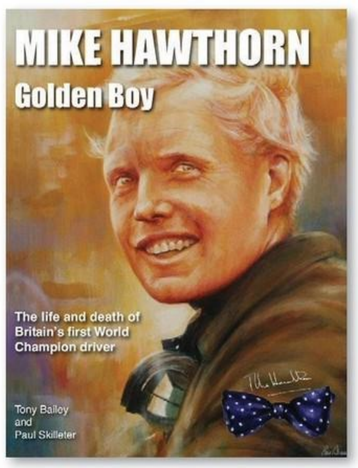


SILVER ARROWS IN CAMERA
A PHOTOGRAPHIC PORTRAIT

ANTHONY PRITCHARD

Packing an armoury of photos, some previously unpublished, this massive volume covers every race entered by the pre-war Mercedes-Benz and Auto Union teams. It does not claim to supplant Chris Nixon's masterwork on the subject, but is an impressive assemblage of images. Divided into sections covering the three formulas the cars raced under, it is interspersed with race summaries, a pre-1934 scene-setter and chapters on record-breaking, hillclimbs and what happened afterwards. It's a treat to see Klemantaski's period colour shots of these cars – I did not know that they ran with coloured grilles. There's not a great deal to read, but detailed specs, driver biogs and a list of surviving cars are all useful. **GC**

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MIKE HAWTHORN
GOLDEN BOY

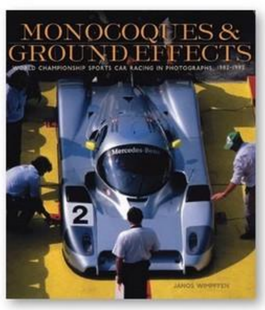
TONY BAILEY AND PAUL SKILLETER

Of all the people we feature in the magazine, Mike Hawthorn raises the most controversy, always bringing letters attacking or defending, so a huge biography of the man 50 years on from his tragic death ought to put things straight.

Golden Boy contains new information which one would think would end the debates over the Le Mans tragedy, his illness and his fatal accident. I suspect, though, that the arguments will continue. On the crash, Bailey and Skilleter include a mass of testimony, even tracking down the policemen who attended, plus some alarming photos of the wrecked Jaguar, but less gruesomely there is a feast of detail on the young Hawthorn.

The racing forms a surprisingly small part of a book packed with fascinating personal information and memories, but if it has a fault it is obsessive 'completism'. Page after page of models, trophies, programmes, belongings, steering wheels, sculptures, memorabilia, paintings (32 pages!), photos of pubs Mike drank at, of his grave, his memorial tree… There are 13 pages on two replicas of Hawthorn's road car alone. It's the first solo biography and it does a fine job, but a filleted version would be a crisper read. **GC**

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JÁNOS WIMPFFEN

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Sadly for a photograph-led book, the design and some images are a let-down. With many photos appearing dark and dreary, and some even out of focus, this nigh-on £100 book falls short of doing the legendary Group C era justice. The text does offer comprehensive coverage of the series, but the result is less impressive than Wimpffen's three previous volumes. **EF**

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YOU WERE THERE

This month some extra-curricular racing from Donington, followed by classic cars in the 1973 Targa Florio





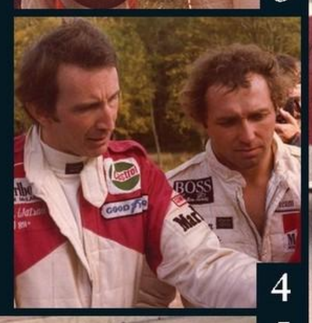
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JOHN PORTER

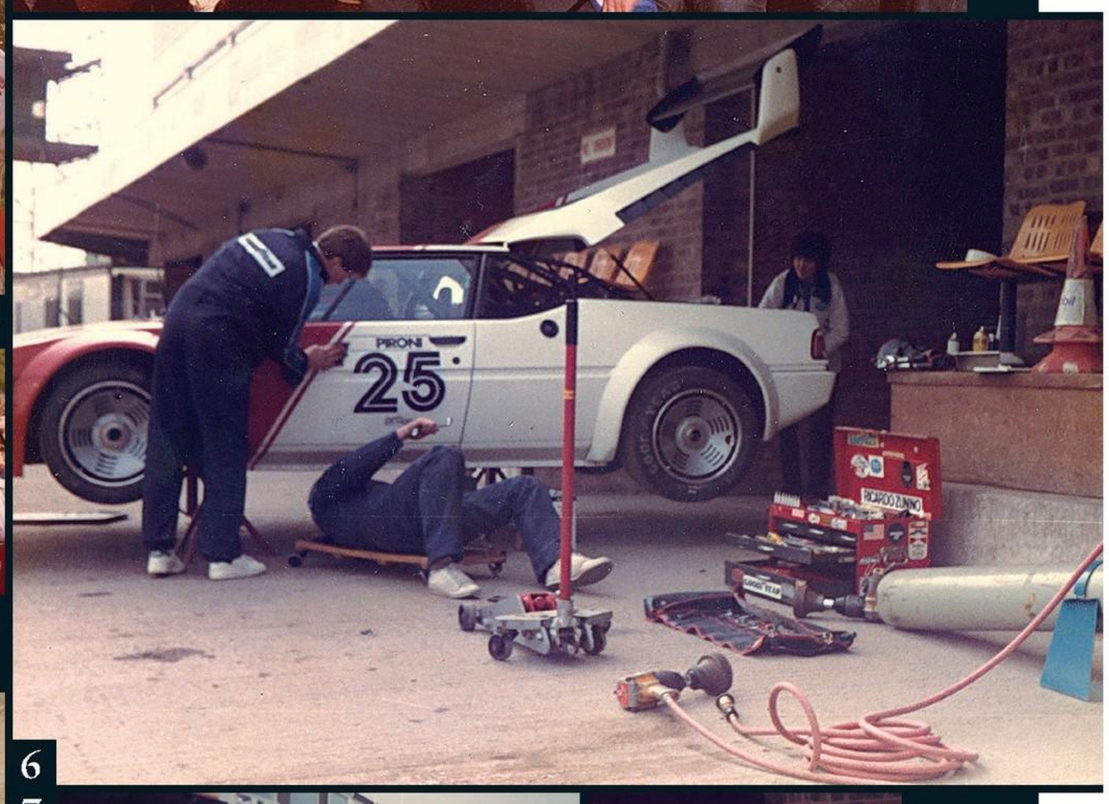
After Donington Park re-opened in 1977, John signed up as a marshal and took these shots off-duty. They are from the 1979 Eaton Yale Rally Sprint, organised by Nick Brittan, and the 1980 BMW M1 Procar Series race. {1} John Watson on the rally stage startline in Lotus Sunbeam Ti. {2} Competitors with their co-drivers. Back row includes (l-r): Tony Pond, John Watson, John Taylor, Per Eklund, Ari Vatanen, Alan Jones and Patrick Tambay. {3} Watson and Tambay wait for their runs. {4} Watson with Jochen Mass. {5} Wolfgang Schutz and {6} Didier Pironi's Procars are prepped. {7} Nelson Piquet and {8} Carlos Reutemann were among the F1 stars taking part.



3

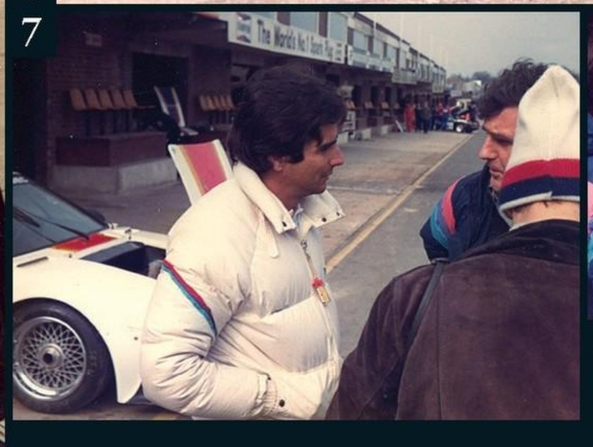


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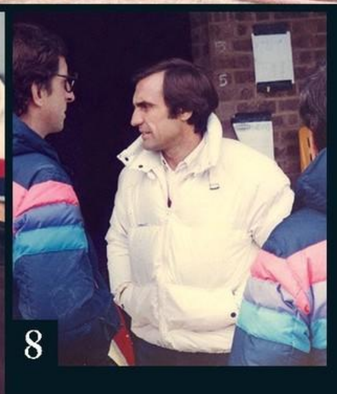


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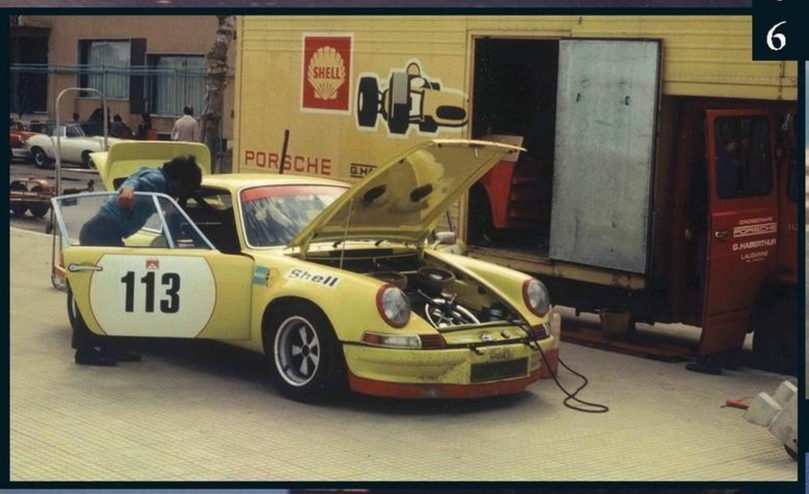
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MIKE RUSHTON

Mike's photos were taken during the 1973 Targa Florio around Campofelice di Roccella. {1} The Merzario/Vacarella Ferrari 312PB would retire with gearbox failure. {2} Lone Alfa 33TT of Stommelen/de Adamich was "taken out by a local Lancia Fulvia". {3} "Ferrari don't do lock-ups," recalls Mike. "They took over the hotel on the main drag in Cefalù." {4} Early competition outing for Lancia Stratos with Munari/Andruet. {5} Every garage or lock-up was commandeered by race crews. {6} The Porsche Romand Club set up shop on the sea front. {7} Polin/Rogliatti Lola T290 had 10km to go before pitting at Cerda, but didn't make it. {8} Ickx Ferrari on the run to Buonfornello. He hit a rock on lap two; team-mate Brian Redman never got to drive. {9} Van Lennep/Müller Porsche outlasted Ferrari/Alfa rivals.



8



9

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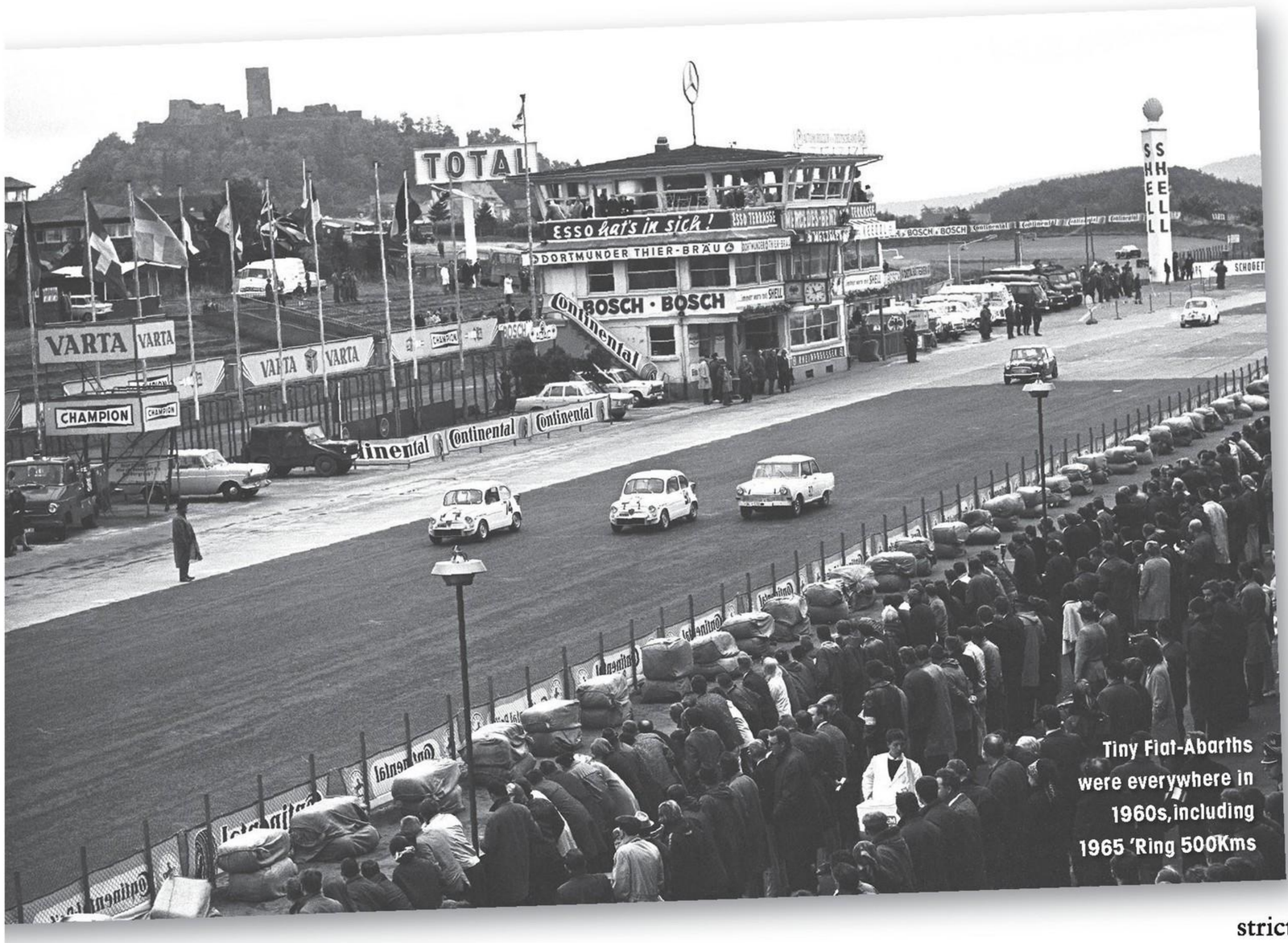
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Tiny Fiat-Abarths were everywhere in 1960s, including 1965 'Ring 500Kms

LAT

THE AUSTERE MR ABARTH

His cars were exotic rivals to the likes of Ferrari and Porsche, but Carlo Abarth himself was a man not to be trifled with

Abarth cars have always been something of a Cinderella marque in my mind. They had and still have an enthusiastic following, not only in Continental Europe but also most notably in the USA and Japan. I think my indifference to Carlo Abarth's finest efforts was imbued by simple lack of personal exposure to them. The only ones I really recall running regularly on British soil were Bobby Buchanan-Michaelson's admittedly very lovely GT Berlinetta and the Anstead brothers' boxy Fiat-Abarth baby saloons, with their engine cowls significantly propped open to help cool the frenzied clockwork within. I actually drove one of John and Jean Aley's in an extended record run at Snetterton, covering myself with ignominy by being called into the pits for a perverse bollocking – delivered by the redoubtable Jean – for going too fast.

By the time I began to follow endurance racing around Europe, the Abarths I saw were – for my taste – far more impressive than those hordes of small-capacity GTs and production-based Topolini which somebody no doubt loved but which to me provided nothing but a wall of so-what background noise. The works sports-prototype cars always seemed especially exotic, perhaps because they were perennially unfancied against the cutting edge of Porsche, Ferrari, Alfa Romeo, Matra and Gulf-Mirage's finest. The Sport 2000 first grabbed me in the paddock at the Nürburgring in 1967, rear clamshell open to reveal the engine dangling outboard behind the curvaceous Spider's back axle. Like the Porsche 911 such an arrangement looked to me like demanding a triumph of development over intelligent design. A couple of years later a more functional-looking sports-prototype emerged as the V8-engined Abarth 3000 in which little Art Merzario followed his works team predecessor – Peter Schetty – by earning a place with Ferrari. But one of Abarth's most prominent exponents slightly earlier in the 1960s had been the Dutch driver Ed Swart, later to achieve such great success with his Canon-sponsored 2-litre Chevrons – particularly the B19 – and in recent years still pedalling a Formula 1 Shadow in American 'Vintage' events.

Ed – whose motor-trading father was a Dutch Fiat distributor – was reminiscing about racing the little Fiat-Abarth saloons in the mid-60s. I told him I had never formed any real picture of Carlo Abarth's personality and asked what was the Austrian-born, Italian industrialist really like? Ed replied: "Very old-time Austrian. You could picture him as the product of the Austro-Hungarian empire. Very severe, very strict, very serious. He had a routine in his factory – at the end of every afternoon he'd summon his senior engineers and managers to his office. They would all have to line up, all standing, and all in their white coats. And he'd go along the line questioning them on what they'd done today. Woe betide any one of them who hadn't done everything expected. And then he'd tell each of them what he expected them to do the next day – and then it was 'dismissed', and they'd all file out. You didn't make jokes with Mr Abarth."

Ed recalled the 1965 Nürburgring 500Kms – something of an Everest for small-capacity endurance racing at that time, with the entry headed by up to 1300cc sports-prototypes, while Ed's Fiat-Abarth saloon contested the 850cc Touring Car class. Abarth cars won five of the classes, but were beaten overall by the Bianchi brothers – Lucien and Mauro – in a works Alpine-Renault. Ed won his class after driving the entire 20 laps solo in his 850. He recalled how "Mr Abarth came up onto the podium with us, and then we walked back into the paddock together. I was feeling pretty pleased with myself, but he didn't say anything. Then as we were walking along he rummaged about in his coat pocket, and just said 'Oh – you did a good drive – ummm, have this' – and he gave me an apple!

"That was Carlo Abarth…"

Hawthorn beats Hamilton in race for first GP win

Much fuss has been made – quite justifiably – in memory of Mike Hawthorn's first British win in the Formula 1 Drivers' World Championship, 50 years before Lewis Hamilton, whereas we all know this rather splendid kid has really won his 2008 title 50 years after Mike. Once Ron Dennis and McLaren had introduced Hamilton to the World Championship, in 2007, he scored his first win in what was only his sixth F1 race. Big deal? Perhaps not quite.

When Hawthorn was invited to join Ferrari's works team, in 1953, he was also just 23 years old. OK, he'd enjoyed brief senior-category experience with Bob Chase's Cooper-Bristol during '52, but since world title-level entrants are today extinct it seems reasonable only to compare his works team top-level record against that of his illustrious successor.

Back in 1952-53, World Championship status had been applied to 2-litre unsupercharged Formula 2 cars that season, and Mike's first race for his new Italian employer was in the Argentine Grand Prix at Buenos Aires on January 18, 1953. His debut went pretty well. He finished fourth.

In the next meaningful World Championship round, the Dutch GP on June 7, he then placed fifth on the road, though the Maseratis of Bonetto and Gonzalez ahead of him were judged to have dead-heated for third, so he could be described as finishing fourth.

But in between times, in non-championship Formula 2 races for Ferrari, he'd retired at Syracuse on March 22, finished second at Pau on April 6… but then won both his preliminary heat and the final of the BRDC's International Trophy race at Silverstone on May 9. Therefore he had won what was only his fourth – or fifth if you discount the minor heat – senior-formula race for his new Grand Prix team… at least one ahead of Lewis.



GP Library

Hawthorn's wins in his first year at the top level included 1953 Ulster Trophy

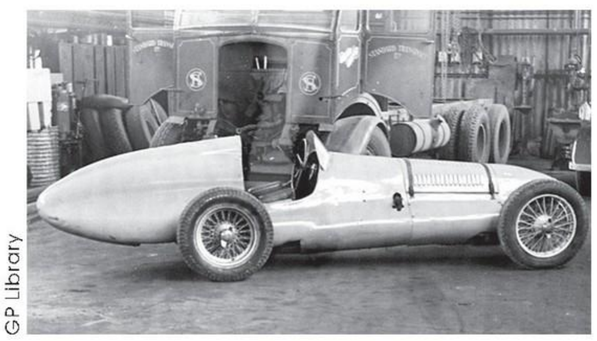
The weekend following Silverstone, on May 16, Hawthorn drove his works Ferrari 500 to win twice more, this time in both preliminary heat and final of the Ulster Trophy, on the frankly frightening Dundrod public road circuit just outside Belfast. He knew it well, he revelled in that kind of road racing, and he shone. So at that point he had won handsomely in two of his first five – or counting the heats six – Grand Prix-category races.

On June 21 he then finished sixth in the championship-level Belgian GP, and on June 28 was second behind senior team-mate 'Nino' Farina in the non-World Championship race at Rouen-les-Essarts. On July 5 at Reims he finally scored his long-awaited first World Championship-qualifying race win, beating Fangio's Maserati in a sensational French GP.

So, within his maiden season with a World Championship-level works team he had scored his first top-category race win fourth time out, won again fifth time out, and had then won what was only his fourth World Championship-qualifying GP. Still with me? In essence, some of the bow-tied blond youngster's records have survived the emergence of his modern-era (equally) young successor.

How to spoil a car's balance? Stick the fuel tank out back...

I recall once standing with Gordon Murray gazing in wonder at an Alfa Romeo 158 Alfetta. We had ooh-ed and aah-ed at the highly supercharged straight-eight engine, and gloried in its classically front-engined torpedo shape. But then Gordon murmured, "It's amazing, isn't it, how designers from this period could get so much right, but then compromise everything by overhanging all the fuel out the back in a clunking great tank like that"… indicating the car's long, tapering tail with a swing of his foot. "It's as if they just ignored the fundamental rules of physics. Stick that changeable mass out there and you're giving yourself all kinds of handling problems – unbelievable…"



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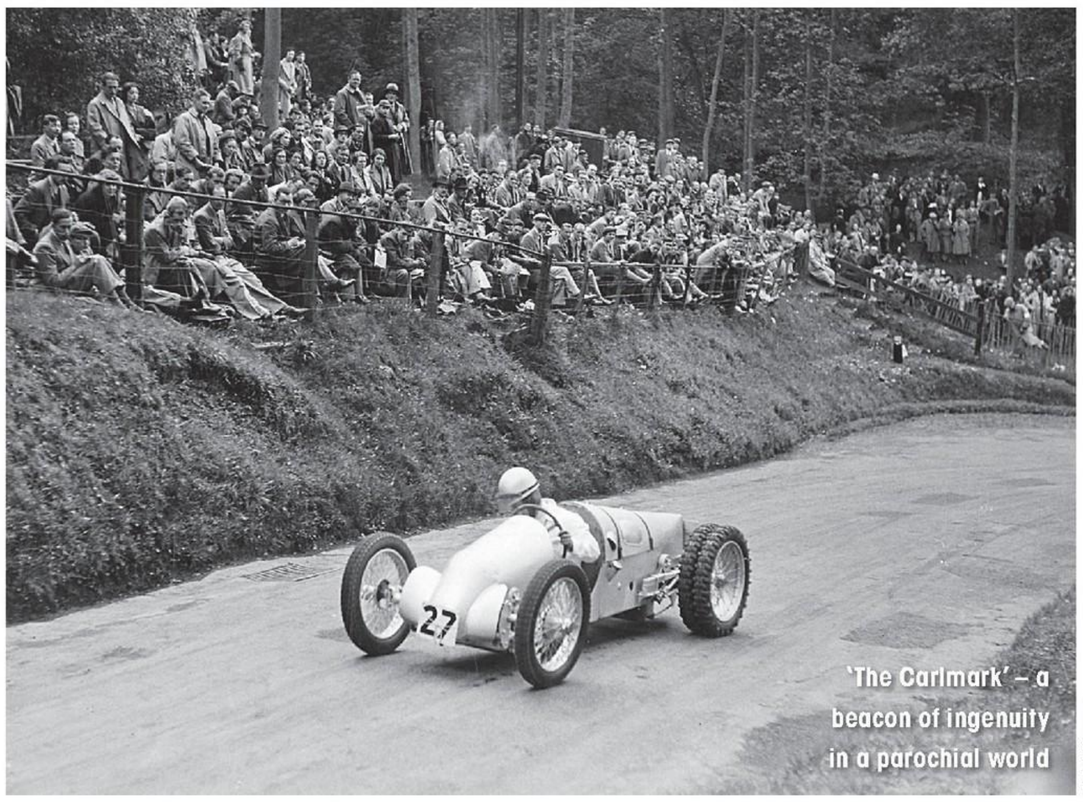
Overload: Parnell Challenge GP car of 1945 boasted worst-ever case of fuel tank overhang

We strolled on: here sat a V16-cylinder Auto Union – fuel tank slap-bang amidships like any self-respecting modern performance car. "There you go," I pointed out. "At least the Porsche Büro who designed this one knew what they were about." Gordon ran his critical eye over the piece: "What kind of power did these things really have?" – "Oh, probably 550 horsepower but more to the point around 600lbft torque."

"Hmmm," he pondered, "they had more faith in their drivers then than I'd ever dare. All that power and torque, five-inch wide tyre treads, and swing axles!" I could only counter with a weak, "Well what about Mercedes' W25s – similar power, bags of torque, swing axles and an enormous tail tank as well."

Shelsley Walsh's special brew

Shelsley Walsh is a splendidly enduring British institution, having first been used as a motor sporting venue as early as 1905, and still going strong today. The organising Midland Automobile Club always seems remarkably welcoming and what I'm about to say is absolutely no criticism of the club, nor indeed of its (astonishingly steep) hillclimb venue. But when you leaf back through the British motoring and national sporting press, the event's perceived significance from 1905-1955(ish) seems frankly baffling.



'The Carlmark' – a beacon of ingenuity in a parochial world

GP Library

While our Continental neighbours, and rivals, were road racing around Spa, the Nürburgring, Le Mans, Strasbourg, the Bremgarten and so many more – or storming uphill for miles on end at the Grössglockner, Mont Ventoux, the Klausenpass or Susa-Moncenisio – our forebears were merely scratching away over a paltry thousand yards of Worcestershire farm driveway.

Indeed the manner in which Shelsley heroes like Raymond Mays and AFP Fane, and later Dennis Poore and Ken Wharton, grabbed so many headlines is really evidence of what a poorly served, parochial little pool of motor sporting enthusiasm Great Britain really was. But Shelsley Walsh of course bred its wonderfully wacky catalogue of home-built specials. And it's here, to my mind, that its legend simply soars...

The Fry family's Blackburn vee-twin powered Freikaiserwagen perhaps tops the list – indeed a wonderful monograph book on the car has just been published – while John Bolster's 'Bloody Mary', Jack Moor's 'Wasp', Basil Davenport's long-lived GN 'Gnat', Dick Caesar's 'Alfi-Capa' and so many more create a tremendous honour roll of ingenious British motor sporting eccentricity.

One of the many which has always appealed to me is the special built, continuously developed and intrepidly driven by HD Carlmark. Its one consistent feature seems to have been its 996cc air-cooled JAP vee-twin engine, which John Bolster himself recorded as having developed some 78bhp at 5500rpm, which was pretty good news in 1937-38. 'The Carlmark' was completely transformed during its career, from early beginnings as a front-engined special to become an Auto Union lookalike with the clamouring JAP twin mounted behind its owner's driving seat. In his book *Specials* Bolster related "...the machine (then) burst upon an astonished world with merely a rudimentary form of front springing, and no rear suspension whatsoever. It was watched by one and all to see if it would hold the road; it didn't. Having gone from the sublime to the gorblimey, the versatile Carlmark... bought for himself a Fiat 500 front-end and chassis. Still evidently prejudiced against this new-fangled independent suspension, he fitted it with friction-type dampers to stop it working too well. In order to prove that he had the courage of his convictions, the intrepid Carlmark again seated himself next to the accident..."

Intrepidity largely unrewarded, the Carlmark, at least in its 1938 form with twin rear wheels and tyres, has always struck me as a splendidly Britannic counterfoil to what those ever-suspect Continentals were up to with their Auto Unions. In conjunction with Shelsley Walsh – its reason to be – the Carlmark-JAP and its sisters seem to embody all that was finest, together with that which was most feeble, about British motor sport of the period.

Ferrari's day in the desert

New enthusiasts often react with surprise as they begin to grasp the enormous breadth of motor racing which went on through the classic period of the 1950s. The World Championship Formula 1 and sports car scenes are well understood – well served by so many books, magazine features and websites – but there's an even richer background tapestry of long-forgotten and obscure races run at all kinds of unlikely sounding venues.

Occasionally one is reminded of these lesser Internationals by uncovering new or long-forgotten photographs. Here's one which I recently unearthed, showing the grid formed up for the two-hour Grand Prix du Senegal at Dakar, in March 1956. Mr Ferrari was perfectly amenable to his contracted drivers running his works sports cars in any potentially money-earning race – and particularly among a potential market – almost anywhere in the world. His man Maurice Trintignant qualified on pole in the big 3.2-litre Ferrari 857 Sport, with its two distinctive bonnet-top blisters clearing the tall four-cylinder engine's cam-boxes. He faced the Maseratis of Jean Behra, Cesare Perdisa and Benoît Musy and won handsomely, while Harry Schell and Jean Lucas finished second and fourth behind him – bracketing Behra – in Ferrari 750 Monzas.



GP Library

Study the photo carefully, and back there on the outside of row three is the curvaceous shape of a D-type Jaguar – Duncan Hamilton's car 'OKV 1' driven that time-misted weekend by Graham Whitehead. Above all it's the Dakar grandstand which tickles me – economising on scaffolding the Senegalese first threw up an enormous man-made sand dune on which to build it. Eat your heart out, Hermann Tilke.

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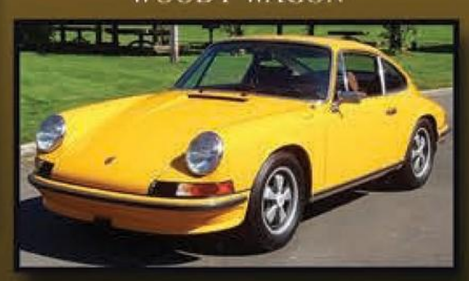

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Hutchison in his Tipo B Alfa Romeo at Craigantlet hillclimb in 1948

KEN HUTCHISON: MUD & MOTORS

The wealthy race fan side-stepped the family business to make a name for himself in trials and on the track

I do not know quite how Ken Hutchison acquired the finance to take up motoring sport but have heard that after completing his education he was supposed to join the family company. He did not enjoy this and was told he could leave with all the dividends and annuity due to him. He purchased a chain-drive TT Replica Frazer Nash with which he was very successful in trials. For instance, he was a prominent supporter of the MCC classics with the Frazer Nash in 1931 and '32, and with Fords thereafter in the Exeter, Land's End and Edinburgh events, at first the four-cylinder ones then with V8s, with the exception of an SS in the 1933 Exeter, an Alvis in the MCC Torquay Rally and a Jensen in the 1935 London Gloucester trial. He won the coveted MCC Triple Award in 1933 in a Ford.

Meantime Ken had married Kitty who knew most of his fellow competitors and was great fun, not minding navigating in hoodless cars in pouring rain, which she described in two amusing articles in *Motor Sport*.

When Donington opened in 1933 Hutchison obtained a red Type 37 Bugatti with which he won the second heat and the Final from Freddie Dixon's Riley and Casswell's Frazer Nash, setting a lap-record of 60.3mph. At the second meeting he won a 10-lap race from HJ Aldington's Frazer Nash and Eason Gibson's Riley. After which he returned to trials driving.

He had been competing in club "mud" events with his Ford, as had Sydney Allard with one of the TT racing Fords, gaining team awards with Chappel and Hutchison. Realising that the 1934 TT car had outdone its usefulness Allard set about having his company construct trials specials with Ford V8 engines. One of these, CLK5, was for Hutchison. Its first event was the West London MC's Coventry Cup Trial but some improvements were required, so only **a souvenir award was won. Undeterred, an** entry was obtained for the 50-mile Southport sand-race Handicap race, which CLK5 won impressively. It then took the NW London MC's Gloucester trial's prize for best class performance again.

"I was regarded as very brave or foolhardy going in KH's Allard"

These successes resulted in orders for ordinary Allard cars and Sydney formed a team with Guy Warburton's Vauxhall 30/98 and KH's Ford. There had been public complaints that country lanes were being spoiled by cars with competition tyres so these were banned by the RAC. Hutchison's new car was a light one with most of the weight over its back-axle. At first a Ford V8 engine was installed but for the Experts' Trial KH had a Zephyr V12 engine. The Vauxhall was replaced by CLK5 and KH got Allard to build him a trials Allard with a 4.3-litre V12 Lincoln Zephyr engine. The 1937 Experts' Trial in Devon was chosen as the first event for KH's new car. One of the 'sections', Colley, on the edge of Exmoor was a steep hill bounded by high banks with a central gulley. Sydney in his Allard took it at high speed, the car mounted a bank and overturned, pinning Sydney and his wife Eleanor beneath it, with petrol dripping on the hot exhaust. A horrid experience, until some onlookers got them out.

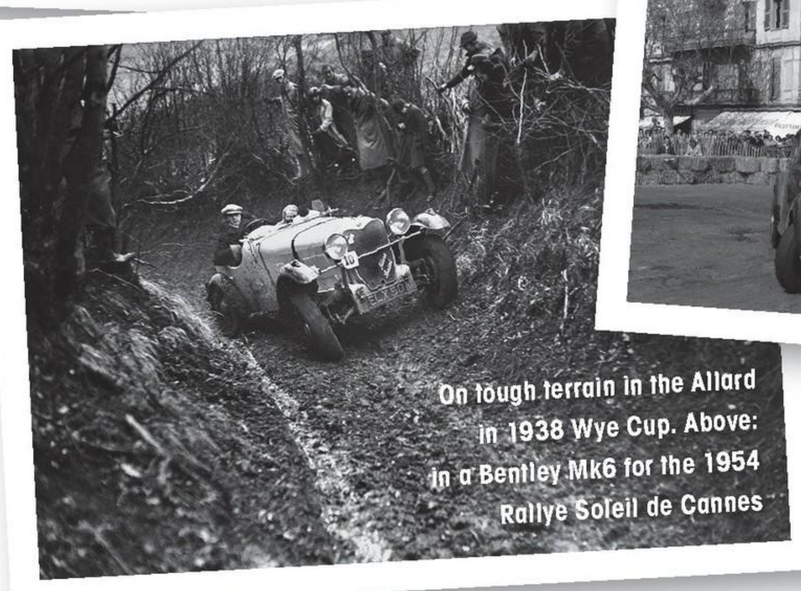
In 1938 the team of 'Tailwaggers' was made up of Allard's latest car, Warburton, the former

Vauxhall owner's Allard and KH's white V12 Allard. The drivers all took home a Premier Award, a first class award and the Team Prize.

The Experts' Trial was held again in 1938, and the 'section' of the Allards' accident used again but renamed Ditch Lane, presumably to avoid timid memories. I was to go in KH's powerful V12 Allard. I can recall it all. Kitty, who enjoyed jollity, went down early on the day before but KH decided we would leave for Exmoor after lunch at his Wimbledon flat. I went in leather coat and with a flying helmet, in readiness for a bleak ride that afternoon and next day. But I had no scarf and not wanting to be late for lunch a local Woolworth's was the only available place in which to buy one. When KH saw it he said, "You're not wearing that awful thing, are you?" But I still remember the wonderful chocolate pudding his maid served us.



KH's Allard Special (9) chases B Bira's HRG in LCC sports car race


On tough terrain in the Allard in 1938 Wye Cup. Above: in a Bentley Mk6 for the 1954 Rallye Soleil de Cannes



On the way in the Allard the lamps failed as it became dusk and KH stopped at a very small country garage. "We are closed," we were told but a spot of financial persuasion produced a mechanic who dealt with the lamps. Those who recalled the previous year's accident seemed to regard me as very brave or foolhardy going in KH's faster Lincoln-powered Allard, but we got up safely after a fast ascent and I must admit I was glad when we got to the top. There had been a less good performance on a former 'section' but KH got a second-class award and was third in the Highland Two-Day event before the war closed it all down.

There was a sequel to the Experts' weekend. After the trial I wanted to avoid another night away and Tom Lush agreed to collect me by driving from London in my worn-out Austin 7 Mulliner fabric coupé. The noise in the hotel bar was at its height when Kitty said she could hear the Austin's horn outside. So we were off on the long run home. We ran out of petrol but Tom removed the screen wiper tubing(!) and blowing through it induced enough for us to reach a garage.

Hutchison was then living in an imposing house, once the residence of Sir Malcolm Campbell. Invited to dine there with Ken and Kitty, my wife and I were present when Kitty's Siamese cats started to climb up the curtains before the windows, causing Ken to ring for a maid who was told to get them down immediately, otherwise they would be exterminated. On another occasion I called on this wealthy man and found him sitting in front of his gate with a pile of worn tyres and a shabby leather coat and a big "For Sale" notice. He showed no embarrassment but complained that he had been there for a long time without any customers coming, hardly surprising as the mansion was up a remote Surrey lane... There's no accounting for human oddities!

In the post-war period KH resumed his competition driving, winning the Bristol MC and LCC Spring Trial, making FTD at the Southampton MC's Fordingbridge hillclimb, and taking a souvenir award in CLK5 and a second-class award in the MCC Buxton Trial, until in 1946 he decided to take up racing. He had already made his debut at Brooklands in 1938, when he and Allard had finished ninth in the LCC Three-hour race for fully-equipped sports cars over the Campbell circuit, with Kitty in the pit, in the V12 Allard, after losing time when the fan belt broke and caused overheating.

For 1946 KH bought the Scuderia Ferrari 2.9-litre P3 Alfa Romeo which AF Ashby had raced pre-war, becoming distinguished as having raced at Brooklands from 1929 to 1934, with Rileys, until he got the Alfa, with which he won a Dunlop Road Handicap there in 1938. He had had a new cast-iron cylinder block made and other engine changes, and installed the Dubonnet suspension and Lockheed hydraulic brakes. It broke the Class-C lap record (66.89mph).

KH had bought this Alfa in 1946 in a sorry state. After he had dealt with this he decided on the sensible plan of developing the car in stages, and engaging the famous engineer Robin Jackson as supervisor.

In his first season, 1947, KH took part in many speed trials and hillclimbs, which included two second-FTDs at Shelsley Walsh, Bo'ness and Southsea, FTD at Poole and a tie for FTD at Bouley Bay. He said that the car's top speed was 152mph on a 3.79 axle-ratio and 700x60 tyres "but it would require a mighty long road" and would mean 6500rpm in top gear, and he did not exceed 6200rpm.

Other events in 1947 included Craigantlet hillclimb and the Brighton speed-trials, the only setback being a broken piston during the Gransden race. KH hired an aeroplane to take the Alfa to Jersey. He continued to take part in various events but space precludes a list.

After his racing years were over Kitty and Hutch toured Europe in a Mercedes-Benz which had given no trouble in a phenomenal mileage and Hutch wanted to see how long it would go without needing attention. After he died I wrote to Kitty with condolences and asked if she would be returning to England, but she said that, although most of their friends had gone, she thought she would just drive about in the Mercedes, staying in the hotels they used when her husband was alive – which I thought was rather sad.

Bill Boddy



Luis Fontes beat a more experienced field in his Alfa to win the 1935 JCC International Trophy

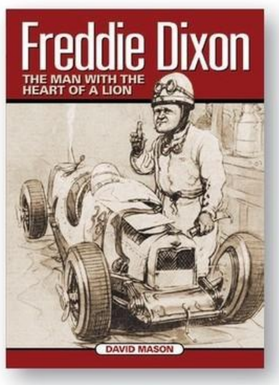
How Fontes was the Vettel of his day

The unexpected victory of young Vettel in the Italian Grand Prix was a splendid change from Lewis Hamilton being the Formula 1 driver so often publicised. One must accept that Hamilton was fortunate in having a long period of race experience from karting upwards, but I note that *Motor Sport* claims 23 GP starts for Vettel prior to his 2008 victory.

It is always nice to see a young and less experienced driver beating the top opposition, and history certainly repeats itself. I recall how 21-year-old Luis Fontes decided in 1935 that he wanted to do some proper racing. He had entered an MG for the long-distance JCC International Trophy race at Brooklands, but somehow got this changed for the Alfa Romeo previously raced by John Cobb and the Hon Brian Lewis which he hired from Thomson & Taylor.

As his first entry had been allocated he was allowed to take number 13!

The seemingly inexperienced driver drove a steady race to win at 86.96mph from Freddie Dixon's Riley and Hall's MG, and nine others including the Wisdoms, Shuttleworth, Malcolm Campbell and Raymond Mays. I can find no evidence that he ever raced the MG. When he had trouble with the law he said that if he wasn't wanted on the road he'd take up air racing, which his sister was doing. So he bought the Miles Hawk Speed Six G-AGPG and competed in races such as the 1935 and 1938 King's Cup contests.



Freddie Dixon

The Man with the Heart of a Lion, by David Mason

It's astonishing, in view of the place Freddie Dixon holds in the history of successful motor cycle and car racing, and his many engineering projects, that we've had to wait so long for a book about him. David Mason, a barrister, has now ably provided this. He covers it all – races, commercial ventures, patents as well as Dixon's drinking episodes. He details the court cases in which he was involved, ending in prison sentences, and his life in detail.

The racing cars and motor cycles are all thoroughly described, and Dixon's many achievements tabulated. Something no enthusiast should miss, particularly as the photographs are an excellent adjunct to the text.

There are a few blunders – an Austin Six never took third at Brooklands in 1934 and Mason's accounts of Freddie's brushes with the stewards differ from mine – but both are probably apocryphal. Mason says that when Dixon came before the stewards for baulking a faster car he asked how he could be expected to look behind him at 125mph. My version is that he said he knew little about motor racing but his car was in the paddock with fuel and his mechanic to get it going, so which of the gents would show him how to do it?

Nevertheless this is a serious, informative book; don't be misled because of the splendid cartoon cover.

Published by Haynes, ISBN 978 1 84425 540 5, £25.

Harvey's close call in an Alvis

A photo in a recent issue of the Alvis 12/50 Register's magazine reminded me of the unfortunate accident to C M Harvey's car in the 1926 JCC 200-mile race at Brooklands.

Alvis had won this race in 1923 after the dramatic retirement of the two Fiats and for 1926 it had now built two very advanced straight-eight cars with which it seemed possible it could impose a challenge to the "unbeatable" Talbots of Segrave, Divo and Moriceau. Moreover, these new Alvises had front-wheel-drive, as Alvis was about to make a few cars of this kind as catalogue models and racing could show their superiority. Its drivers were the professional Alvis racer Harvey (below) and the Earl of Cottenham – I never understood why he was able to drive the works Alvises; he was keen and had written a motor racing novel, but he was hardly an experienced choice.

Alas, in the race Harvey came fast out of the artificial bend to find Longden's slow



little Fiat 501 in his path – to be fair, the Fiat was "race-tuned". Harvey braked and slid backwards across the Track. A telegraph pole and railings which bent over but did not collapse saved the spectators, who had fled anyway. Harvey was hurt only in spirit and I thought the fuel tank was damaged, until I remembered that the fuel and oil tanks were at the front. So why was the Alvis not restarted? In the Register picture the off-side front wheel looked to be not quite upright, and a push start would have led to disqualification. Cottenham also retired and Segrave won.

In our review of *Freik – the Private Life of the Freikaiserwagen* we omitted the purchase details of this interesting book, price £15 inc P&P. To buy a copy contact the Midland Automobile Club, Shelsley Walsh, Worcs WR6 6RP. Tel: 01886 812211.

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GT3 cars come from Porsche, Ferrari and Jaguar (below). Classic counterparts include famous racing E-type (above) and Ferrari 330LMB (left)

Supercars on show

We have some of the best classic and modern race supercars on display at Autosport International

Motor Sport is arranging a display of racing supercars at Autosport International at the NEC, Birmingham in January. First held at the NEC in 1991, The Racing Car Show is the world's biggest motor sport show. The *Motor Sport* display, which will be in the historic racing section, will feature three historic sports cars and their 2009 counterparts in the form of contemporary GT3 cars, all from some of the greatest marques in sports car racing – Ferrari, Jaguar and Porsche.

The historic cars include a rare Ferrari 330LMB. This 1963 Le Mans car, one of only four built, was driven at La Sarthe by Lorenzo Bandini and Mike Parkes, who also raced it at Sebring. More recently the car won the 2008 RAC TT Celebration race at last September's Goodwood Revival driven by Bobby Verdon-Roe and Peter Hardman, and run by Tim Samways Sporting and Historic Cars.

Joining the Ferrari, and also from 1963, is the ex-Roy Salvadori Lightweight E-type '86PJ'. This car is number four of the 12 special aluminium lightweights built by the Jaguar factory. It was bought by CT Atkins for Salvadori, who raced it though '63, and it is still painted in Salvadori's trademark metallic green.



Among its achievements that year are the GT lap record at Silverstone and third place in the TT race at Goodwood. The car was sympathetically restored by Eagle Racing, is owned by Swiss collector Stefan Ziegler and is maintained by CKL Developments Ltd. It is considered to be the most original of the remaining Lightweights.

The final historic car, from 1972, is a Porsche 911 RSR. Fresh from restoration with marque expert Andy Prill, this RSR has spent most of its life in the US and has a great history, including taking part in three Sebring 12 Hours. It is kindly loaned by Gregor Fisken.

The modern cars represent the best of the international GT3 field. The Ferrari 430 GT3 is based on the 430 Challenge, and this CR Scuderia Racing car won the final round of the 2008 British GT championship driven by Luke Hines and Jeremy Metcalfe. The 911 GT3 is the latest production race car from Porsche, competing in international racing as well as Porsche Supercup series around the world. This is the British Carrera Cup car of Jota Sport, which is raced by Sam Hancock. The Jaguar XKR GT3 built and run by Apex Motorsport is supported by the Jaguar factory, and is one of three cars now racing in the UK. Ⓜ

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Q: In what year was Autosport International first held at the NEC?

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MELBOURNE – MARCH 16

1	Lewis Hamilton	McLaren
2	Nick Heidfeld	BMW
3	Nico Rosberg	Williams
4	Fernando Alonso	Renault
5	Heikki Kovalainen	McLaren
6	Kazuki Nakajima	Williams
7	Sébastien Bourdais	Toro Rosso
8	Kimi Räikkönen	Ferrari

Fastest lap: Heikki Kovalainen
Pole: Lewis Hamilton

MALAYSIA
KUALA LUMPUR – MARCH 23

1	Kimi Räikkönen	Ferrari
2	Robert Kubica	BMW
3	Heikki Kovalainen	McLaren
4	Jarno Trulli	Toyota
5	Lewis Hamilton	McLaren
6	Nick Heidfeld	BMW
7	Mark Webber	Red Bull
8	Fernando Alonso	Renault

Fastest lap: Nick Heidfeld
Pole: Felipe Massa

BAHRAIN
BAHRAIN – APRIL 6

1	Felipe Massa	Ferrari
2	Kimi Räikkönen	Ferrari
3	Robert Kubica	BMW
4	Nick Heidfeld	BMW
5	Heikki Kovalainen	McLaren
6	Jarno Trulli	Toyota
7	Mark Webber	Red Bull
8	Nico Rosberg	Williams

Fastest lap: Heikki Kovalainen
Pole: Robert Kubica

SPAIN
BARCELONA – APRIL 27

1	Kimi Räikkönen	Ferrari
2	Felipe Massa	Ferrari
3	Lewis Hamilton	McLaren
4	Robert Kubica	BMW
5	Mark Webber	Red Bull
6	Jenson Button	Honda
7	Kazuki Nakajima	Williams
8	Jarno Trulli	Toyota

Fastest lap: Kimi Räikkönen
Pole: Kimi Räikkönen

TURKEY
ISTANBUL – MAY 11

1	Felipe Massa	Ferrari
2	Lewis Hamilton	McLaren
3	Kimi Räikkönen	Ferrari
4	Robert Kubica	BMW
5	Nick Heidfeld	BMW
6	Fernando Alonso	Renault
7	Mark Webber	Red Bull
8	Nico Rosberg	Williams

Fastest lap: Kimi Räikkönen
Pole: Felipe Massa

MONACO
MONTE CARLO – MAY 25

1	Lewis Hamilton	McLaren
2	Robert Kubica	BMW
3	Felipe Massa	Ferrari
4	Mark Webber	Red Bull
5	Sebastian Vettel	Toro Rosso
6	Rubens Barrichello	Honda
7	Kazuki Nakajima	Williams
8	Heikki Kovalainen	McLaren

Fastest lap: Kimi Räikkönen
Pole: Felipe Massa

CANADA
MONTRÉAL – JUNE 8

1	Robert Kubica	BMW
2	Nick Heidfeld	BMW
3	David Coulthard	Red Bull
4	Timo Glock	Toyota
5	Felipe Massa	Ferrari
6	Jarno Trulli	Toyota
7	Rubens Barrichello	Honda
8	Sebastian Vettel	Toro Rosso

Fastest lap: Kimi Räikkönen
Pole: Lewis Hamilton

FRANCE
MAGNY-COURS – JUNE 22

1	Felipe Massa	Ferrari
2	Kimi Räikkönen	Ferrari
3	Jarno Trulli	Toyota
4	Heikki Kovalainen	McLaren
5	Robert Kubica	BMW
6	Mark Webber	Red Bull
7	Nelson Piquet	Renault
8	Fernando Alonso	Renault

Fastest lap: Kimi Räikkönen
Pole: Kimi Räikkönen

GREAT BRITAIN
SILVERSTONE – JULY 6

1	Lewis Hamilton	McLaren
2	Nick Heidfeld	BMW
3	Rubens Barrichello	Honda
4	Kimi Räikkönen	Ferrari
5	Heikki Kovalainen	McLaren
6	Fernando Alonso	Renault
7	Jarno Trulli	Toyota
8	Kazuki Nakajima	Williams

Fastest lap: Kimi Räikkönen
Pole: Heikki Kovalainen

GERMANY
HOCKENHEIM – JULY 20

1	Lewis Hamilton	McLaren
2	Nelson Piquet	Renault
3	Felipe Massa	Ferrari
4	Nick Heidfeld	BMW
5	Heikki Kovalainen	McLaren
6	Kimi Räikkönen	Ferrari
7	Robert Kubica	BMW
8	Sebastian Vettel	Toro Rosso

Fastest lap: Nick Heidfeld
Pole: Lewis Hamilton

HUNGARY
BUDAPEST – AUGUST 3

1	Heikki Kovalainen	McLaren
2	Timo Glock	Toyota
3	Kimi Räikkönen	Ferrari
4	Fernando Alonso	Renault
5	Lewis Hamilton	McLaren
6	Nelson Piquet	Renault
7	Jarno Trulli	Toyota
8	Robert Kubica	BMW

Fastest lap: Kimi Räikkönen
Pole: Lewis Hamilton

EUROPE
VALENCIA – AUGUST 24

1	Felipe Massa	Ferrari
2	Lewis Hamilton	McLaren
3	Robert Kubica	BMW
4	Heikki Kovalainen	McLaren
5	Jarno Trulli	Toyota
6	Sebastian Vettel	Toro Rosso
7	Timo Glock	Toyota
8	Nico Rosberg	Williams

Fastest lap: Felipe Massa
Pole: Felipe Massa

BELGIUM
SPA – SEPTEMBER 7

1	Felipe Massa	Ferrari
2	Nick Heidfeld	BMW
3	Lewis Hamilton	McLaren
4	Fernando Alonso	Renault
5	Sebastian Vettel	Toro Rosso
6	Robert Kubica	BMW
7	Sébastien Bourdais	Toro Rosso
8	Mark Webber	Red Bull

Fastest lap: Kimi Räikkönen
Pole: Lewis Hamilton

ITALY
MONZA – SEPTEMBER 14

1	Sebastian Vettel	Toro Rosso
2	Heikki Kovalainen	McLaren
3	Robert Kubica	BMW
4	Fernando Alonso	Renault
5	Nick Heidfeld	BMW
6	Felipe Massa	Ferrari
7	Lewis Hamilton	McLaren
8	Mark Webber	Red Bull

Fastest lap: Kimi Räikkönen
Pole: Sebastian Vettel

SINGAPORE
SINGAPORE – SEPTEMBER 28

1	Fernando Alonso	Renault
2	Nico Rosberg	Williams
3	Lewis Hamilton	McLaren
4	Timo Glock	Toyota
5	Sebastian Vettel	Toro Rosso
6	Nick Heidfeld	BMW
7	David Coulthard	Red Bull
8	Kazuki Nakajima	Williams

Fastest lap: Felipe Massa
Pole: Kimi Räikkönen

JAPAN
FUJI – OCTOBER 12

1	Fernando Alonso	Renault
2	Robert Kubica	BMW
3	Kimi Räikkönen	Ferrari
4	Nelson Piquet	Renault
5	Jarno Trulli	Toyota
6	Sebastian Vettel	Toro Rosso
7	Felipe Massa	Ferrari
8	Mark Webber	Red Bull

Fastest lap: Felipe Massa
Pole: Lewis Hamilton

CHINA
SHANGHAI – OCTOBER 19

1	Lewis Hamilton	McLaren
2	Felipe Massa	Ferrari
3	Kimi Räikkönen	Ferrari
4	Fernando Alonso	Renault
5	Nick Heidfeld	BMW
6	Robert Kubica	BMW
7	Timo Glock	Toyota
8	Nelson Piquet	Renault

Fastest lap: Lewis Hamilton
Pole: Lewis Hamilton

BRAZIL
SÃO PAULO – NOVEMBER 2

1	Felipe Massa	Ferrari
2	Fernando Alonso	Renault
3	Kimi Räikkönen	Ferrari
4	Sebastian Vettel	Toro Rosso
5	Lewis Hamilton	McLaren
6	Timo Glock	Toyota
7	Heikki Kovalainen	McLaren
8	Jarno Trulli	Toyota

Fastest lap: Felipe Massa
Pole: Felipe Massa

DRIVER STANDINGS

1	Lewis Hamilton	98
2	Felipe Massa	97
3	Kimi Räikkönen	75
4	Robert Kubica	75
5	Fernando Alonso	61
6	Nick Heidfeld	60
7	Heikki Kovalainen	53
8	Sebastian Vettel	35
9	Jarno Trulli	31
10	Timo Glock	25

MANUFACTURER STANDINGS

1	Ferrari	172
2	McLaren-Mercedes	151
3	BMW-Sauber	135
4	Renault	80
5	Toyota	56
6	Toro Rosso	39

FIA WORLD RALLY CHAMPIONSHIP

MONTE CARLO
JANUARY 24-27

1	Sébastien Loeb	Citroën
2	Mikko Hirvonen	Ford
3	Chris Atkinson	Subaru
4	François Duval	Ford
5	Petter Solberg	Subaru
6	Gigi Galli	Ford

SWEDEN
FEBRUARY 8-10

1	Jari-Matti Latvala	Ford
2	Mikko Hirvonen	Ford
3	Gigi Galli	Ford
4	Petter Solberg	Subaru
5	Andreas Mikkelsen	Ford
6	Dani Sordo	Citroën

MEXICO
FEBRUARY 28 – MARCH 2

1	Sébastien Loeb	Citroën
2	Chris Atkinson	Subaru
3	Jari-Matti Latvala	Ford
4	Mikko Hirvonen	Ford
5	Henning Solberg	Ford
6	Matthew Wilson	Ford

ARGENTINA
MARCH 27-30

1	Sébastien Loeb	Citroën
2	Chris Atkinson	Subaru
3	Dani Sordo	Citroën
4	Conrad Rautenbach	Citroën
5	Mikko Hirvonen	Ford
6	Federico Villagra	Ford

JORDAN
APRIL 24-27

1	Mikko Hirvonen	Ford
2	Dani Sordo	Citroën
3	Chris Atkinson	Subaru
4	Henning Solberg	Ford
5	Matthew Wilson	Ford
6	Federico Villagra	Ford

ITALY
MAY 16-18

1	Sébastien Loeb	Citroën
2	Mikko Hirvonen	Ford
3	Jari-Matti Latvala	Ford
4	Gigi Galli	Ford
5	Dani Sordo	Citroën
6	Chris Atkinson	Subaru

GREECE
MAY 29-JUNE 1

1	Sébastien Loeb	Citroën
2	Petter Solberg	Subaru
3	Mikko Hirvonen	Ford
4	Urmo Aava	Citroën
5	Dani Sordo	Citroën
6	Matthew Wilson	Ford

TURKEY
JUNE 13-15

1	Mikko Hirvonen	Ford
2	Jari-Matti Latvala	Ford
3	Sébastien Loeb	Citroën
4	Dani Sordo	Citroën
5	Henning Solberg	Ford
6	Petter Solberg	Subaru

FINLAND
JULY 31-AUGUST 3

1	Sébastien Loeb	Citroën
2	Mikko Hirvonen	Ford
3	Chris Atkinson	Subaru
4	Dani Sordo	Citroën
5	Henning Solberg	Ford
6	Petter Solberg	Subaru

GERMANY
AUGUST 15-17

1	Sébastien Loeb	Citroën
2	Dani Sordo	Citroën
3	François Duval	Ford
4	Mikko Hirvonen	Ford
5	Petter Solberg	Subaru
6	Chris Atkinson	Subaru

NEW ZEALAND
AUGUST 28-31

1	Sébastien Loeb	Citroën
2	Dani Sordo	Citroën
3	Mikko Hirvonen	Ford
4	Petter Solberg	Subaru
5	Urmo Aava	Citroën
6	Per-Gunnar Andersson	Suzuki

SPAIN
OCTOBER 2-5

1	Sébastien Loeb	Citroën
2	Dani Sordo	Citroën
3	Mikko Hirvonen	Ford
4	François Duval	Ford
5	Petter Solberg	Subaru
6	Jari-Matti Latvala	Ford

FRANCE
OCTOBER 10-12

1	Sébastien Loeb	Citroën
2	Mikko Hirvonen	Ford
3	François Duval	Ford
4	Jari-Matti Latvala	Ford
5	Petter Solberg	Subaru
6	Chris Atkinson	Subaru

JAPAN
OCTOBER 24-26

1	Mikko Hirvonen	Ford
2	Jari-Matti Latvala	Ford
3	Sébastien Loeb	Citroën
4	Chris Atkinson	Subaru
5	Per-Gunnar Andersson	Suzuki
6	Toni Gardemeister	Suzuki

GREAT BRITAIN
DECEMBER 5-7

1		
2		
3		
4		
5		
6		

DRIVER STANDINGS

1	Sébastien Loeb	112
2	Mikko Hirvonen	102
3	Dani Sordo	59
4	Jari-Matti Latvala	50
5	Chris Atkinson	50
6	Petter Solberg	41
7	François Duval	22
8	Henning Solberg	22
9	Gigi Galli	17
10	Matthew Wilson	15

MANUFACTURER STANDINGS

1	Citroën Total WRT	175
2	BP-Ford WRT	164
3	Subaru WRT	93
4	Stobart Ford Rally	64
5	Suzuki WRT	28
6	Munchi's Ford	22

Race Results

FIM MOTOGP CHAMPIONSHIP

QATAR
LOSAIL – MARCH 9

1	Casey Stoner	*Ducati*
2	Jorge Lorenzo	*Yamaha*
3	Dani Pedrosa	*Honda*
4	Andrea Dovizioso	*Honda*
5	Valentino Rossi	*Yamaha*
6	James Toseland	*Yamaha*

Fastest lap: *Casey Stoner*
Pole: *Jorge Lorenzo*

SPAIN
JEREZ – MARCH 30

1	Dani Pedrosa	*Honda*
2	Valentino Rossi	*Yamaha*
3	Jorge Lorenzo	*Yamaha*
4	Nicky Hayden	*Honda*
5	Loris Capirossi	*Suzuki*
6	James Toseland	*Yamaha*

Fastest lap: *Dani Pedrosa*
Pole: *Jorge Lorenzo*

PORTUGAL
ESTORIL – APRIL 13

1	Jorge Lorenzo	*Yamaha*
2	Dani Pedrosa	*Honda*
3	Valentino Rossi	*Yamaha*
4	Colin Edwards	*Yamaha*
5	John Hopkins	*Kawasaki*
6	Casey Stoner	*Ducati*

Fastest lap: *Jorge Lorenzo*
Pole: *Jorge Lorenzo*

CHINA
SHANGHAI – MAY 4

1	Valentino Rossi	*Yamaha*
2	Dani Pedrosa	*Honda*
3	Casey Stoner	*Ducati*
4	Jorge Lorenzo	*Yamaha*
5	Marco Melandri	*Ducati*
6	Nicky Hayden	*Honda*

Fastest lap: *Valentino Rossi*
Pole: *Colin Edwards*

FRANCE
LE MANS – MAY 18

1	Valentino Rossi	*Yamaha*
2	Jorge Lorenzo	*Yamaha*
3	Colin Edwards	*Yamaha*
4	Dani Pedrosa	*Honda*
5	Chris Vermeulen	*Suzuki*
6	Andrea Dovizioso	*Honda*

Fastest lap: *Valentino Rossi*
Pole: *Dani Pedrosa*

ITALY
MUGELLO – JUNE 1

1	Valentino Rossi	*Yamaha*
2	Casey Stoner	*Ducati*
3	Dani Pedrosa	*Honda*
4	Alex de Angelis	*Honda*
5	Colin Edwards	*Yamaha*
6	James Toseland	*Yamaha*

Fastest lap: *Casey Stoner*
Pole: *Valentino Rossi*

CATALUNYA
CATALUNYA – JUNE 8

1	Dani Pedrosa	*Honda*
2	Valentino Rossi	*Yamaha*
3	Casey Stoner	*Ducati*
4	Andrea Dovizioso	*Honda*
5	Colin Edwards	*Yamaha*
6	James Toseland	*Yamaha*

Fastest lap: *Dani Pedrosa*
Pole: *Casey Stoner*

GREAT BRITAIN
DONINGTON – JUNE 22

1	Casey Stoner	*Ducati*
2	Valentino Rossi	*Yamaha*
3	Dani Pedrosa	*Honda*
4	Colin Edwards	*Yamaha*
5	Andrea Dovizioso	*Honda*
6	Jorge Lorenzo	*Yamaha*

Fastest lap: *Dani Pedrosa*
Pole: *Casey Stoner*

NETHERLANDS
ASSEN – JUNE 28

1	Casey Stoner	*Ducati*
2	Dani Pedrosa	*Honda*
3	Colin Edwards	*Yamaha*
4	Nicky Hayden	*Honda*
5	Andrea Dovizioso	*Honda*
6	Jorge Lorenzo	*Yamaha*

Fastest lap: *Casey Stoner*
Pole: *Casey Stoner*

GERMANY
SACHSENRING – JULY 13

1	Casey Stoner	*Ducati*
2	Valentino Rossi	*Yamaha*
3	Chris Vermeulen	*Suzuki*
4	Alex de Angelis	*Honda*
5	Andrea Dovizioso	*Honda*
6	Sylvain Guintoli	*Ducati*

Fastest lap: *Casey Stoner*
Pole: *Casey Stoner*

UNITED STATES
LAGUNA SECA – JULY 20

1	Valentino Rossi	*Yamaha*
2	Casey Stoner	*Ducati*
3	Chris Vermeulen	*Suzuki*
4	Andrea Dovizioso	*Honda*
5	Nicky Hayden	*Honda*
6	Randy de Puniet	*Honda*

Fastest lap: *Casey Stoner*
Pole: *Casey Stoner*

CZ REPUBLIC
BRNO – AUGUST 17

1	Valentino Rossi	*Yamaha*
2	Tony Elias	*Ducati*
3	Loris Capirossi	*Suzuki*
4	Shinya Nakano	*Honda*
5	Anthony West	*Kawasaki*
6	Chris Vermeulen	*Suzuki*

Fastest lap: *Casey Stoner*
Pole: *Casey Stoner*

SAN MARINO
MISANO – AUGUST 31

1	Valentino Rossi	*Yamaha*
2	Jorge Lorenzo	*Yamaha*
3	Tony Elias	*Ducati*
4	Dani Pedrosa	*Honda*
5	Chris Vermeulen	*Suzuki*
6	James Toseland	*Yamaha*

Fastest lap: *Valentino Rossi*
Pole: *Casey Stoner*

UNITED STATES
INDIANAPOLIS – SEP 14

1	Valentino Rossi	*Yamaha*
2	Nicky Hayden	*Honda*
3	Jorge Lorenzo	*Yamaha*
4	Casey Stoner	*Ducati*
5	Andrea Dovizioso	*Honda*
6	Ben Spies	*Suzuki*

Fastest lap: *Valentino Rossi*
Pole: *Valentino Rossi*

JAPAN
MOTEGI – SEPTEMBER 28

1	Valentino Rossi	*Yamaha*
2	Casey Stoner	*Ducati*
3	Dani Pedrosa	*Honda*
4	Jorge Lorenzo	*Yamaha*
5	Nicky Hayden	*Honda*
6	Loris Capirossi	*Suzuki*

Fastest lap: *Casey Stoner*
Pole: *Jorge Lorenzo*

AUSTRALIA
PHILLIP ISLAND – OCT 5

1	Casey Stoner	*Ducati*
2	Valentino Rossi	*Yamaha*
3	Nicky Hayden	*Honda*
4	Jorge Lorenzo	*Yamaha*
5	Shinya Nakano	*Honda*
6	James Toseland	*Yamaha*

Fastest lap: *Nicky Hayden*
Pole: *Casey Stoner*

MALAYSIA
SEPANG – OCTOBER 19

1	Valentino Rossi	*Yamaha*
2	Dani Pedrosa	*Honda*
3	Andrea Dovizioso	*Honda*
4	Nicky Hayden	*Honda*
5	Shinya Nakano	*Honda*
6	Casey Stoner	*Ducati*

Fastest lap: *Valentino Rossi*
Pole: *Dani Pedrosa*

SPAIN
VALENCIA – OCTOBER 26

1	Casey Stoner	*Ducati*
2	Dani Pedrosa	*Honda*
3	Valentino Rossi	*Yamaha*
4	Andrea Dovizioso	*Honda*
5	Nicky Hayden	*Honda*
6	Colin Edwards	*Yamaha*

Fastest lap: *Casey Stoner*
Pole: *Casey Stoner*

RIDER STANDINGS

1	Valentino Rossi	*373*
2	Casey Stoner	*280*
3	Dani Pedrosa	*249*
4	Jorge Lorenzo	*190*
5	Andrea Dovizioso	*174*
6	Nicky Hayden	*155*
7	Colin Edwards	*144*
8	Chris Vermeulen	*128*
9	Shinya Nakano	*126*
10	Loris Capirossi	*118*

TEAM STANDINGS

1	Fiat Yamaha	*563*
2	Repsol Honda	*404*
3	Ducati Marlboro	*331*
4	Tech 3 Yamaha	*249*
5	Rizla Suzuki	*248*
6	San Carlo Honda	*189*

FIA WORLD TOURING CAR CHAMPIONSHIP

BRAZIL
CURITIBA – MARCH 2

Race 1

1	Yvan Muller	*SEAT*
2	Rickard Rydell	*SEAT*
3	Jörg Müller	*BMW*
4	Andy Priaulx	*BMW*
5	Gabriele Tarquini	*SEAT*
6	Félix Porteiro	*BMW*

Race 2

1	Gabriele Tarquini	*SEAT*
2	Andy Priaulx	*BMW*
3	Félix Porteiro	*BMW*
4	Jörg Müller	*BMW*
5	Yvan Muller	*SEAT*
6	Augusto Farfus	*BMW*

MEXICO
PUEBLA – APRIL 6

Race 1

1	Jordi Gené	*SEAT*
2	Rickard Rydell	*SEAT*
3	Nicola Larini	*Chevrolet*
4	Tom Coronel	*SEAT*
5	Gabriele Tarquini	*SEAT*
6	Yvan Muller	*SEAT*

Race 2

1	Tiago Monteiro	*SEAT*
2	Rickard Rydell	*SEAT*
3	Gabriele Tarquini	*SEAT*
4	Yvan Muller	*SEAT*
5	Jordi Gené	*SEAT*
6	Tom Coronel	*SEAT*

SPAIN
VALENCIA – MAY 18

Race 1

1	Robert Huff	*Chevrolet*
2	Gabriele Tarquini	*SEAT*
3	Jordi Gené	*SEAT*
4	Yvan Muller	*SEAT*
5	Jörg Müller	*BMW*
6	Nicola Larini	*Chevrolet*

Race 2

1	Alain Menu	*Chevrolet*
2	Robert Huff	*Chevrolet*
3	Andy Priaulx	*BMW*
4	Jörg Müller	*BMW*
5	Gabriele Tarquini	*SEAT*
6	Jordi Gené	*SEAT*

FRANCE
PAU – JUNE 1

Race 1

1	Augusto Farfus	*BMW*
2	Yvan Muller	*SEAT*
3	Jordi Gené	*SEAT*
4	Robert Huff	*Chevrolet*
5	Gabriele Tarquini	*SEAT*
6	Rickard Rydell	*SEAT*

Race 2

1	Andy Priaulx	*BMW*
2	Nicola Larini	*Chevrolet*
3	Rickard Rydell	*SEAT*
4	Gabriele Tarquini	*SEAT*
5	Robert Huff	*Chevrolet*
6	Augusto Farfus	*BMW*

CZ REPUBLIC
BRNO – JUNE 15

Race 1

1	Alex Zanardi	*BMW*
2	Félix Porteiro	*BMW*
3	Alain Menu	*Chevrolet*
4	Augusto Farfus	*BMW*
5	Jörg Müller	*BMW*
6	Gabriele Tarquini	*SEAT*

Race 2

1	Gabriele Tarquini	*SEAT*
2	Alex Zanardi	*BMW*
3	Augusto Farfus	*BMW*
4	Félix Porteiro	*BMW*
5	Yvan Muller	*SEAT*
6	Alain Menu	*Chevrolet*

PORTUGAL
ESTORIL – JULY 13

Race 1

1	Rickard Rydell	*SEAT*
2	Nicola Larini	*Chevrolet*
3	Yvan Muller	*SEAT*
4	Robert Huff	*Chevrolet*
5	Jordi Gené	*SEAT*
6	Andy Priaulx	*BMW*

Race 2

1	Tiago Monteiro	*SEAT*
2	Yvan Muller	*SEAT*
3	Andy Priaulx	*BMW*
4	Félix Porteiro	*BMW*
5	Robert Huff	*Chevrolet*
6	Nicola Larini	*Chevrolet*

GREAT BRITAIN
BRANDS HATCH – JULY 27

Race 1

1	Jörg Müller	*BMW*
2	Yvan Muller	*SEAT*
3	Andy Priaulx	*BMW*
4	Alex Zanardi	*BMW*
5	Tom Coronel	*SEAT*
6	Félix Porteiro	*BMW*

Race 2

1	Alain Menu	*Chevrolet*
2	Félix Porteiro	*BMW*
3	Alex Zanardi	*BMW*
4	Jörg Müller	*BMW*
5	Gabriele Tarquini	*SEAT*
6	Augusto Farfus	*BMW*

GERMANY
OSCHERSLEBEN – AUG 31

Race 1

1	Augusto Farfus	*BMW*
2	Robert Huff	*Chevrolet*
3	Alain Menu	*Chevrolet*
4	Tiago Monteiro	*SEAT*
5	Jordi Gené	*SEAT*
6	Rickard Rydell	*SEAT*

Race 2

1	Félix Porteiro	*BMW*
2	Tom Coronel	*SEAT*
3	Robert Huff	*Chevrolet*
4	Jordi Gené	*SEAT*
5	Andy Priaulx	*BMW*
6	Augusto Farfus	*BMW*

ITALY
IMOLA – SEP 21

Race 1

1	Yvan Muller	*SEAT*
2	Rickard Rydell	*SEAT*
3	James Thompson	*Honda*
4	Robert Huff	*Chevrolet*
5	Gabriele Tarquini	*SEAT*
6	Nicola Larini	*Chevrolet*

Race 2

1	James Thompson	*Honda*
2	Jörg Müller	*BMW*
3	Robert Huff	*Chevrolet*
4	Nicola Larini	*Chevrolet*
5	Yvan Muller	*SEAT*
6	Rickard Rydell	*SEAT*

ITALY
MONZA – OCTOBER 5

Race 1

1	Yvan Muller	*SEAT*
2	Gabriele Tarquini	*SEAT*
3	Andy Priaulx	*BMW*
4	Tiago Monteiro	*SEAT*
5	Nicola Larini	*Chevrolet*
6	Robert Huff	*Chevrolet*

Race 2

1	Gabriele Tarquini	*SEAT*
2	Jordi Gené	*SEAT*
3	Nicola Larini	*Chevrolet*
4	Yvan Muller	*SEAT*
5	Alain Menu	*Chevrolet*
6	Tiago Monteiro	*SEAT*

JAPAN
OKAYAMA – OCTOBER 26

Race 1

1	Rickard Rydell	*SEAT*
2	Jörg Müller	*BMW*
3	Andy Priaulx	*BMW*
4	Robert Huff	*Chevrolet*
5	Tiago Monteiro	*SEAT*
6	Augusto Farfus	*BMW*

Race 2

1	Tom Coronel	*SEAT*
2	Augusto Farfus	*BMW*
3	Sergio Hernández	*BMW*
4	James Thompson	*Honda*
5	Robert Huff	*Chevrolet*
6	Yvan Muller	*SEAT*

MACAU
MACAU – NOV 16

Race 1

1	Alain Menu	*Chevrolet*
2	Andy Priaulx	*BMW*
3	Yvan Muller	*SEAT*
4	Augusto Farfus	*BMW*
5	Robert Huff	*Chevrolet*
6	Jordi Gené	*SEAT*

Race 2

1	Robert Huff	*Chevrolet*
2	Yvan Muller	*SEAT*
3	Andy Priaulx	*BMW*
4	Rickard Rydell	*SEAT*
5	Alex Zanardi	*BMW*
6	Franz Engstler	*BMW*

DRIVER STANDINGS

1	Yvan Muller	*114*
2	Gabriele Tarquini	*88*
3	Robert Huff	*87*
4	Andy Priaulx	*81*
5	Rickard Rydell	*77*
6	Augusto Farfus	*63*
7	Jörg Müller	*60*
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Parting Shot

Brazilian Grand Prix, Interlagos, January 25, 1976

James Hunt starts his first race for McLaren from pole position, ahead of Niki Lauda's Ferrari 312T. Hunt's M23 spun into the catch-fencing on lap 32, while Lauda comfortably won from Patrick Depailler's Tyrrell and Tom Pryce's Shadow.

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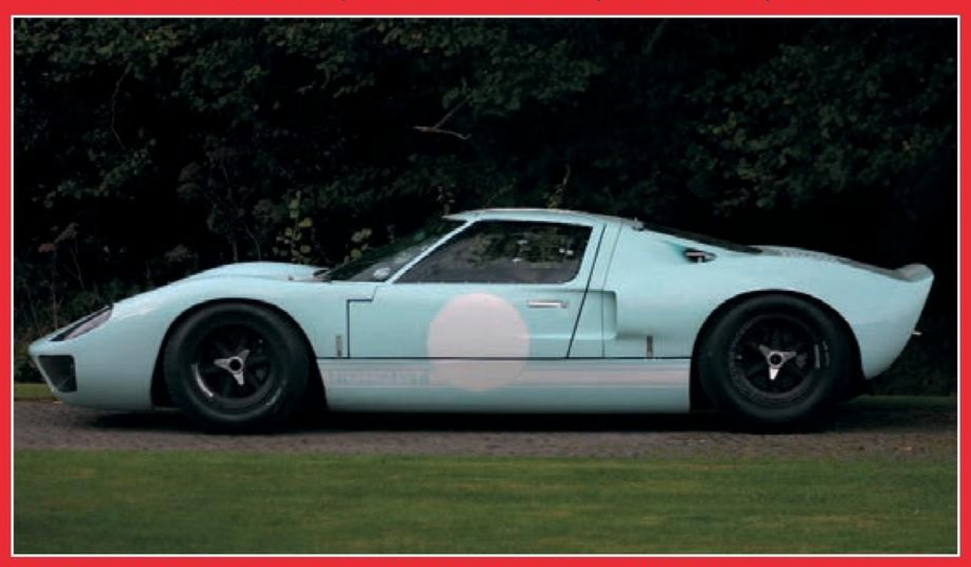
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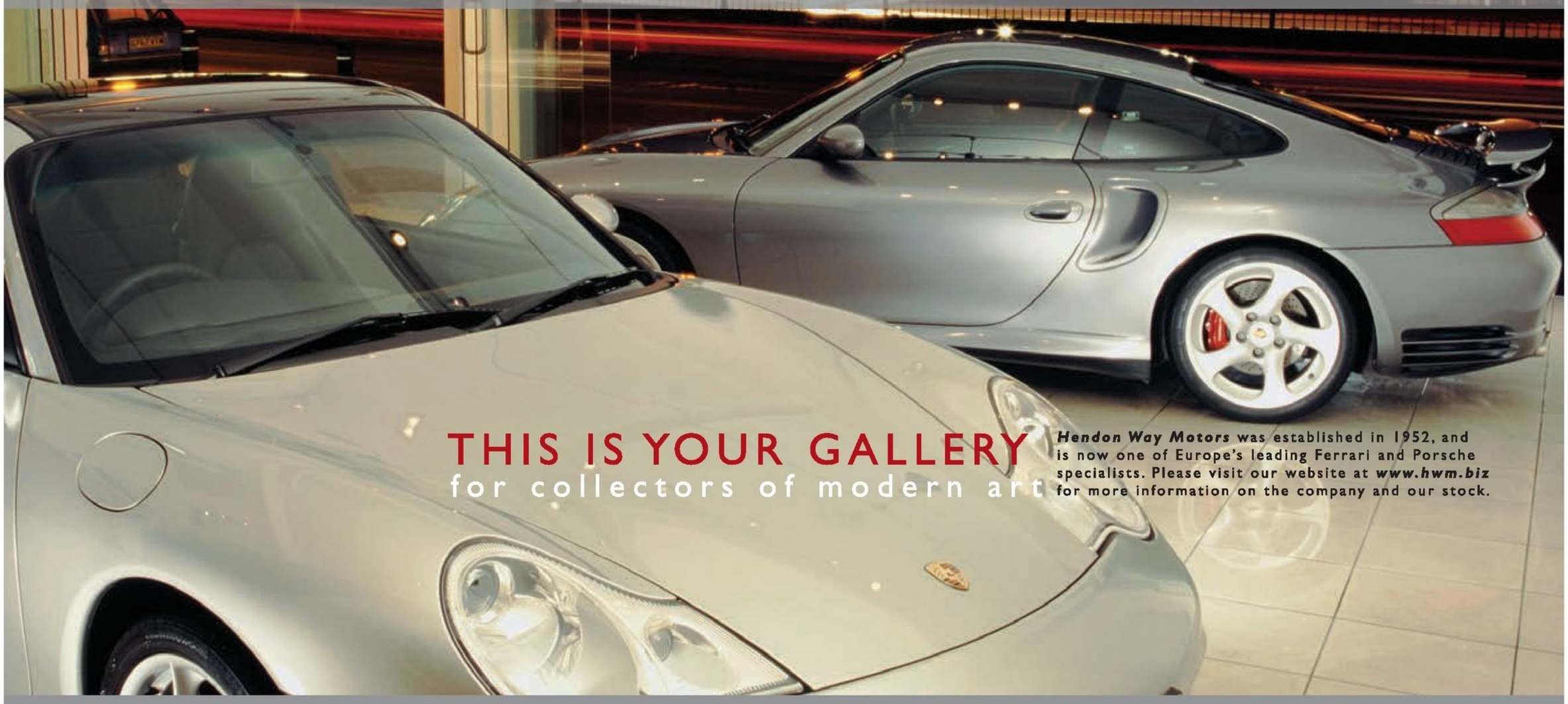
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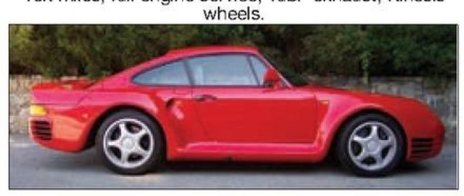
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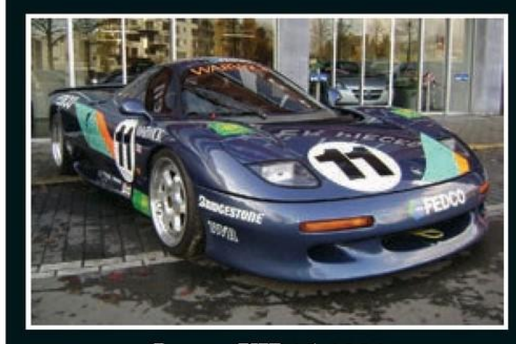
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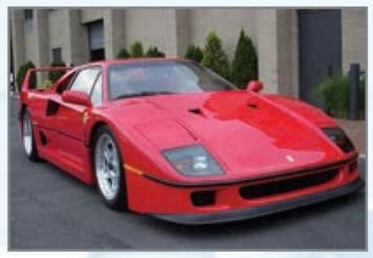
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Lancia Fulvia 1.6 HF Works Rally car. 2nd Overall San Remo 1972.

Abarth 1000 SP, 1968.
Alfa Romeo 2000 GTAm, 1970.
Alfa Romeo Coloni S1, 2000.
Ferrari 308 GTB Group-4, 1976
Lancia Stratos Competition, 1974.
Lancia Stratos HF, 1973.
Lotus Elan Ian Walker Racing, 1965
Porsche 914/6 Group-4.
Porsche 935 Interscope, 1978
Riley Autovia V8 Supercharged Special.
Shelby GT350 FIA, 1965.
Sunbeam Tiger FIA, 1964.

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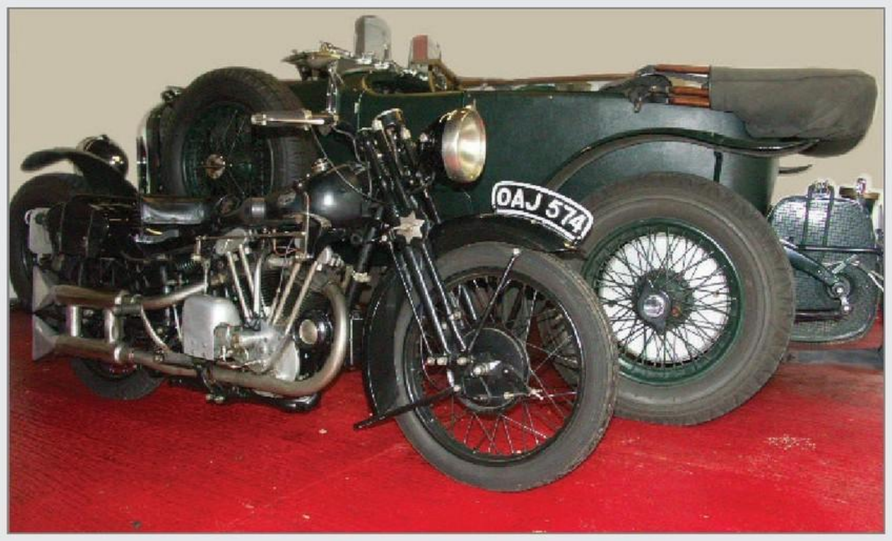
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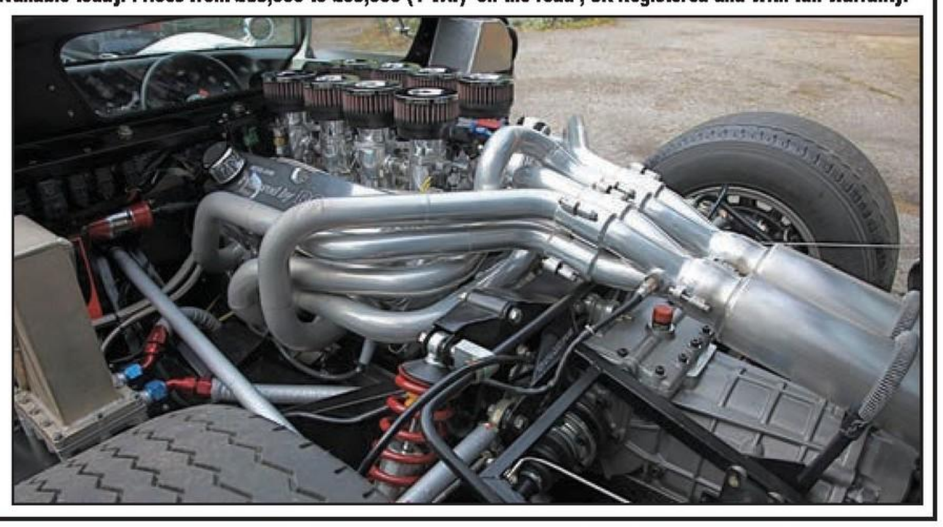
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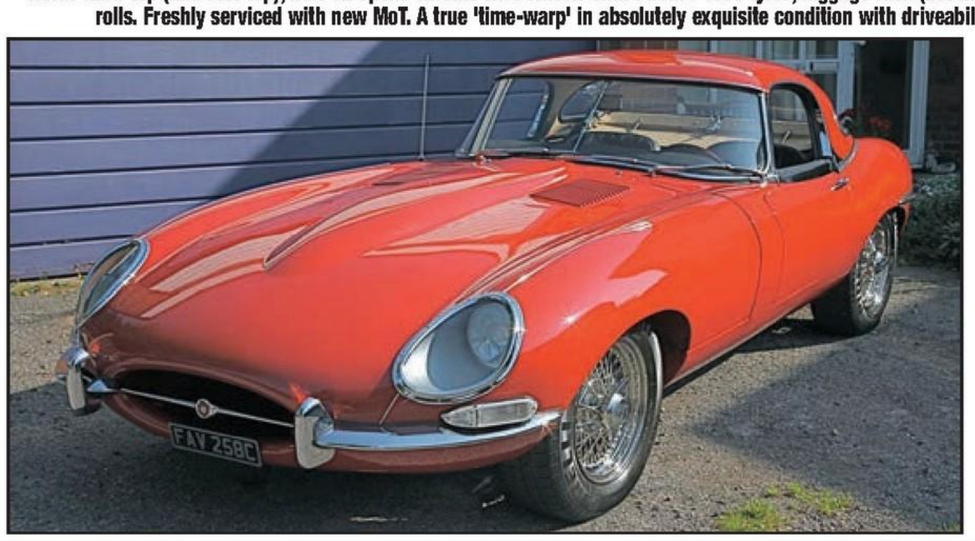
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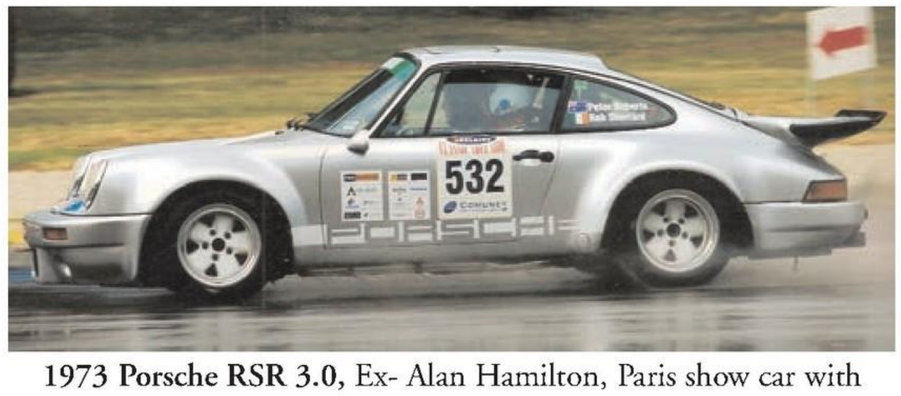
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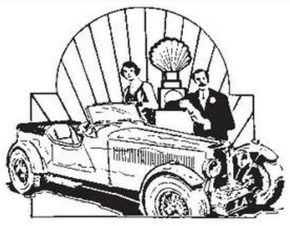
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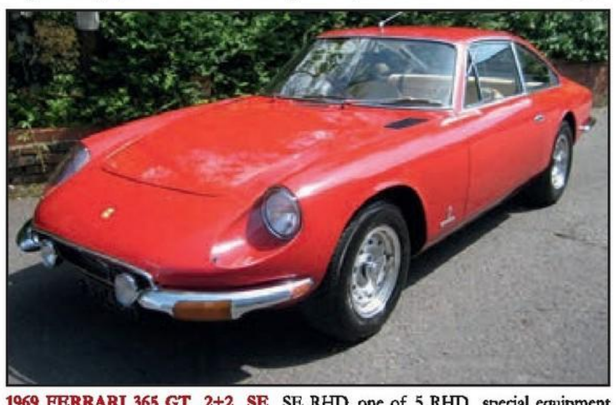
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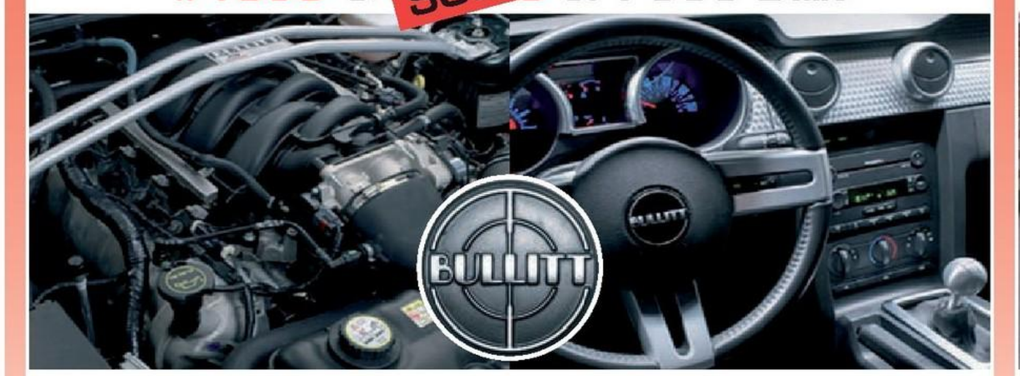
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Another Monday morning, like any other Monday morning early in the month. The weekend glut of emails, a workshop to direct and prioritise after a weekend, two days away from the work environment sometimes I think it might as well have been a week! Then finally into my office, where the most important job seems to be clearing the desk and sorting through several period photographs of the French Grand Prix at Montlhery in 1925. Period photographs where cars moving at speed appear distorted, the wheels turn to eggs, the usual lines of a Type 35 pulled at different angles like a rubber toy and then the team photo, young men in racing cars wearing collar and tie, eager and ready, looking forward to practice. Out of place one driver smoothing his hair and checking his reflection in the rear view mirror, just as the photographer chose to operate the shutter.

Once these tasks are completed it's the opportunity to begin the job which I have now managed to avoid for best part of an hour, invoicing. It should be the best job of the month, an opportunity to communicate the miracles we've performed on our customers behalf in the preceding month and hopefully cheer the bank manager up by putting some money into the bank as given the effects of the credit crunch they seem to need it! Maybe it's the ill judged deal they're about to do, to shore up the banks finances with very expensive sovereign investment funds. I was just about to get started when the phone rang. The message I got was typical. "There is a woman on the phone wanting to speak to you, I didn't quite catch the name, she has a heavy accent, but she says she knows you." Resigned I asked for the call to be put through, resigned because mostly these turn out to be call centres attempting to sell me anything from a better deal on my electric to guaranteed shares in the American stock market. However on this occasion it was different. The accent was thick and I guessed Eastern European. The voice at the other end of the line said "Hello Tim, my name is _____ we have met once. I need to speak to you about a car, but I can't do it on the phone. All I can tell you is it involves Janine Jenneky. After a brief conversation we agreed to meet at the Connaught Hotel in London on Thursday. I couldn't do Tuesday because I was going to take photographs of a Type 44 that a customer wanted to place with me for sale. It is a good car, mechanically in excellent condition, complete and correct, with an open body, a copy of a period body, which was fitted to the car in the early 80s, the car being in the same hands for more than 30 years. The Type 44 is a wonderful touring car and this would be a good place to start a Bugatti ownership. Anyway the phone call gave me the opportunity to avoid invoicing for a little longer as I looked into Janine Jenneky, she raced Bugattis a contemporary of Elizabeth Junek and Helle Nice, she won at Dijon in 1928.

Tuesday went well, Wednesday dragged and eventually Thursday came. A trip to London involves the train, our local station being Haddenham only some 4 miles from the workshop where you can get a train to Marylebone which, if its the fast service, takes about 45 minutes. Early in the morning the station heaves with commuters, but at 10.45 it is a deserted platform. A chance to sit and contemplate my appointment and her cloak and dagger approach. Four minutes until the train is due on the hour, two people join me on the platform, the first a young woman, smartly dressed in comfortable shoes, holding tightly to a document case. In her early 20s, I guess she is on her way to an interview. The other passenger in his 50s, pin stripe suit, shoes that really needed polishing, he looked like somebody who'd had far too many city lunches. On the hour the train arrives and I settle into the carriage for the fast run to Marylebone, stopping at Princes Risborough forever thought of as "Princess Risbry" after meeting a couple of girls coming out of London one night. Dressed for a 70s party, big wigs, platform shoes and drinking Vodka from the bottle, they had come from deepest, darkest Camden and were on their way they explained to me "to Princess Risbry". They were going to be late, so they thought they ought to catch up with everybody else, hence the drinking. The last stop on the fast train is at High Wycombe, before the final run down into Marylebone, passing close to the new Wembley Stadium. Having been brought up in Greenford it's very strange passing the site of the stadium and not seeing the familiar white building. Finally into Marylebone and a short cab ride to the Connaught. I hadn't been there for a couple of years, possibly even more, certainly not since Angela had gone to America. It's a wonderful old hotel with the kind of relaxed opulence that you see in so many 1950s films. Walking into the restaurant I explained I was meeting _____ for lunch. "Oh yes sir, she's here already, would you care for an aperitif." Ordering a vodka I quickly made my way to the table. She stood to greet me. I realised yes, I had met her before, mid 30's, straight black hair, slim, pretty, bright red lips, too much make up for my taste, however the reason I remembered her; those eyes. She had the most amazing violet eyes, she had been a "niece" to a man in his late 50s who I met at the Monaco Historic in the summer. I sat down, took a long pull on the vodka and felt it warm me, she sipped at champagne and started to tell me about her father, a Type 35b, and a lady racing driver.

To be continued . . .

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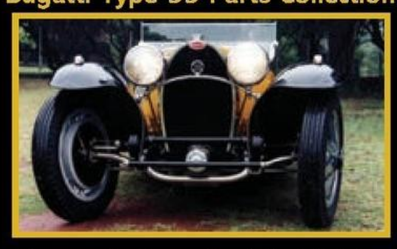
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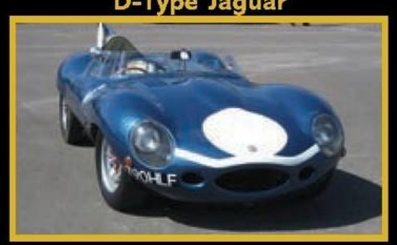
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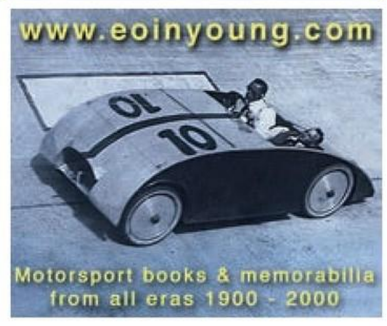
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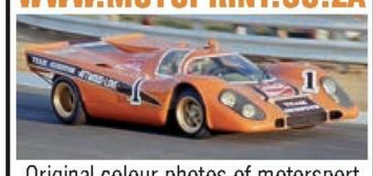


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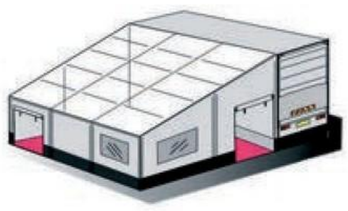
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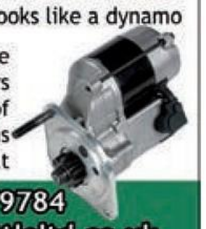


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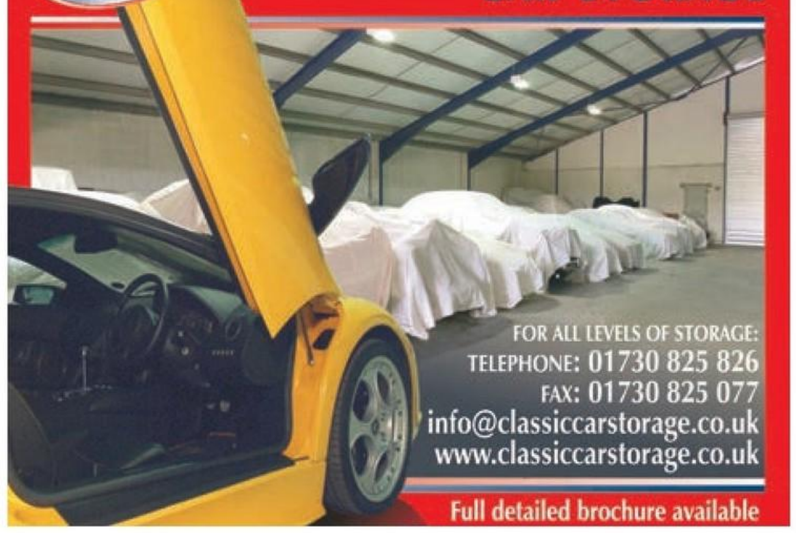
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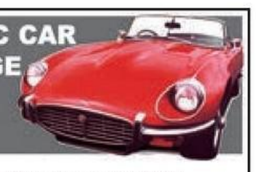
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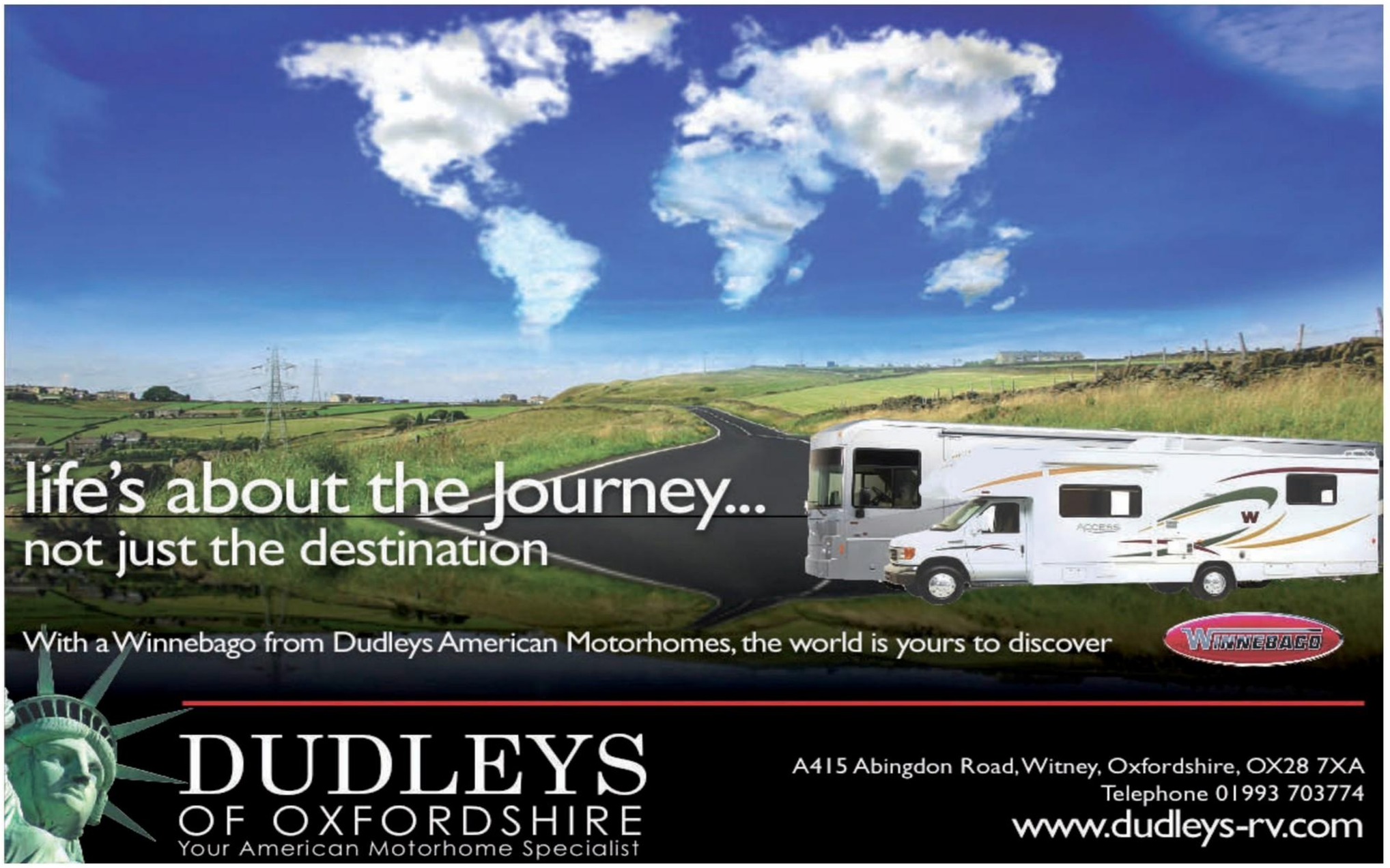
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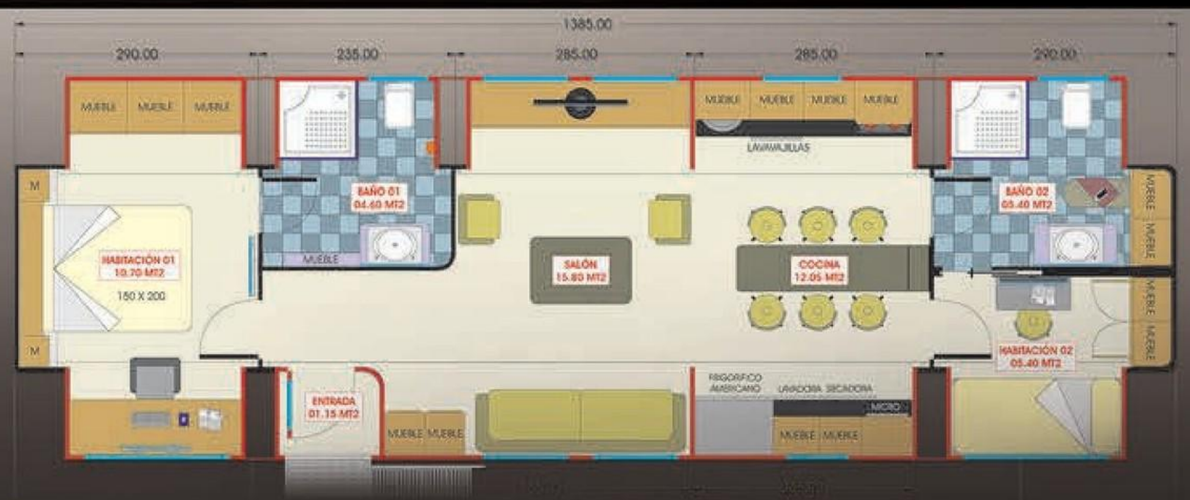
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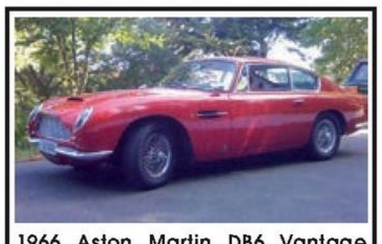
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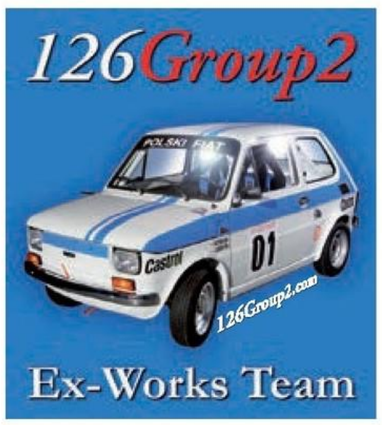
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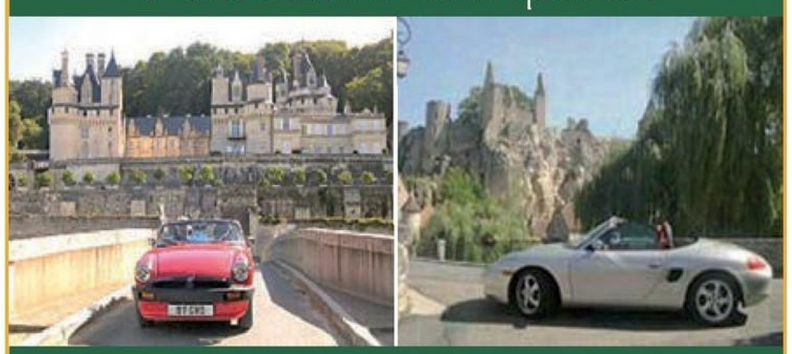


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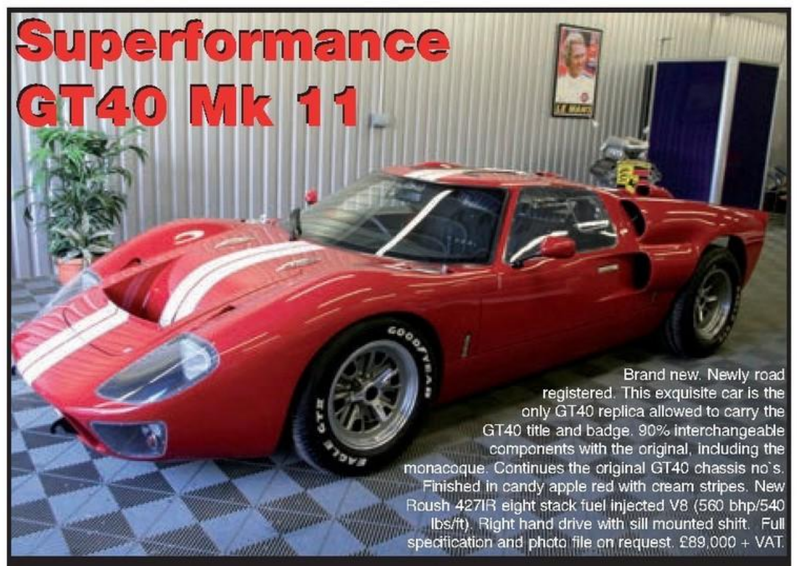
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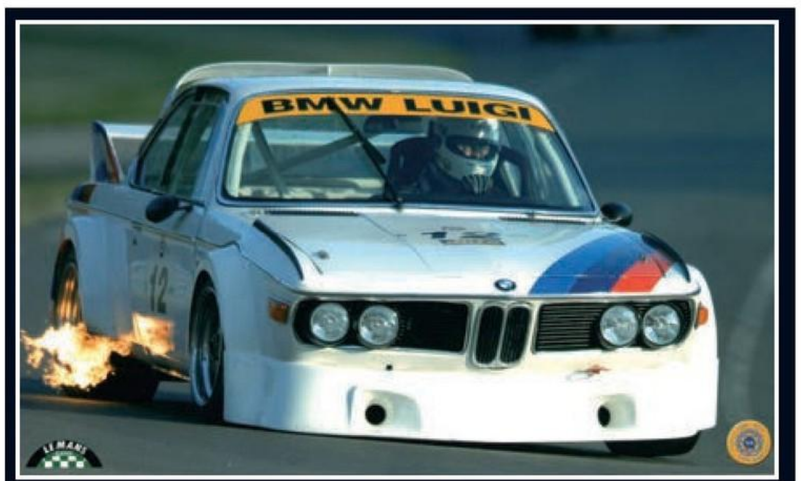
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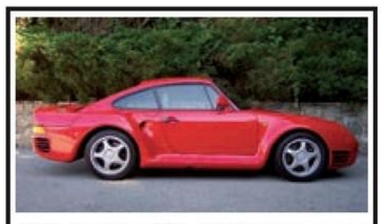
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Osella F.1 Alfa Romeo V12. Chassis FA1E 02 and 03, year 1983, ex Ghinzani / Fabi, Fia papers. **Email: alcaracing@gmail.com**

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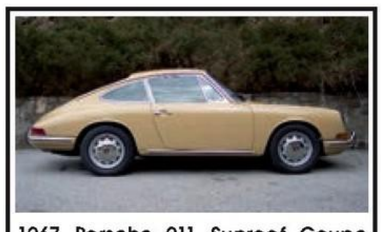
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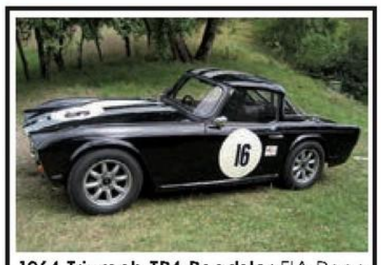
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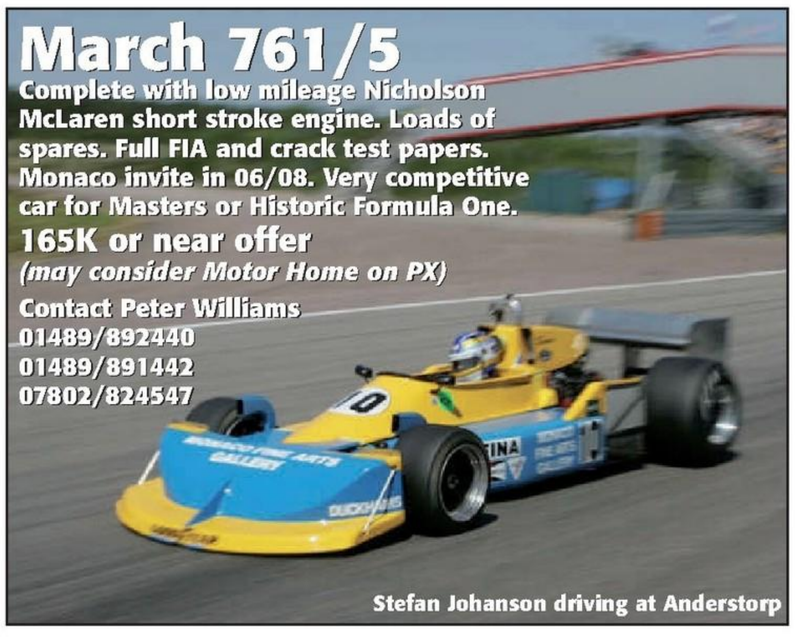
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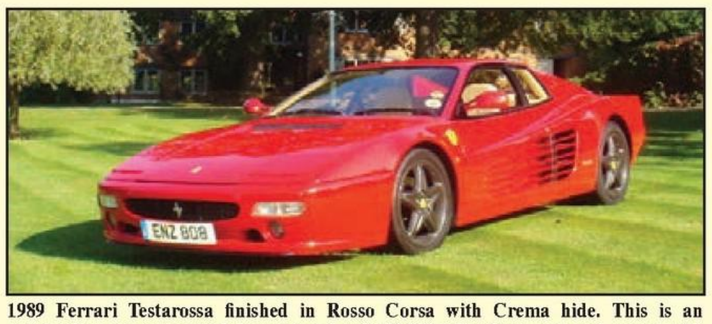
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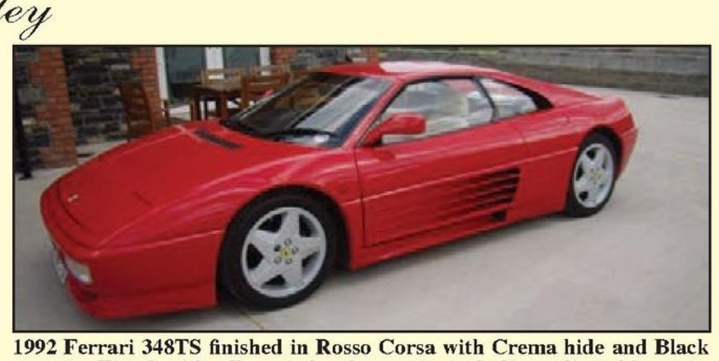
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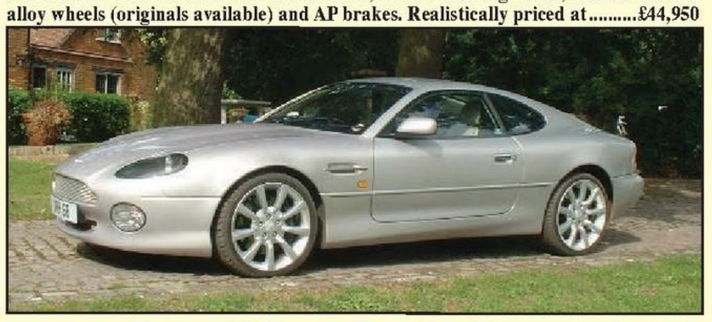
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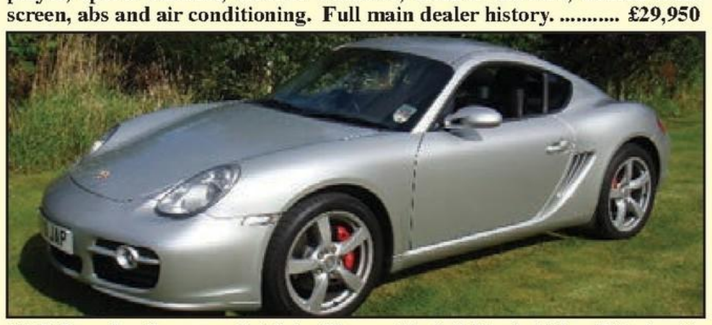
2001 Aston Martin DB7 Vantage Finished in Stornoway Silver with Magnolia and Charcoal hide interior. Fitted with Touchtronic gearbox, alloy pedals, mesh grille, 18" alloy wheels, stereo system including CD player, sports exhaust, electric windows, electric mirrors, heated front screen, abs and air conditioning. Full main dealer history. £29,950



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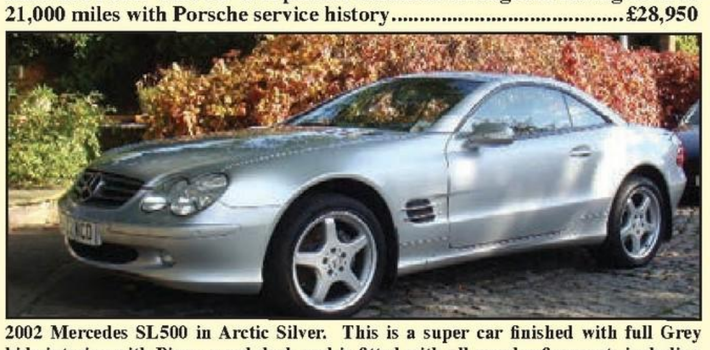
2005 Porsche Cayman 3.4 S in Silver with full Black hide. Fitted with 6 speed Manual gearbox, air conditioning, cruise control, Porsche CDR 24 sound system, 18" 5 spoke alloy wheels, red calipers, partial electric seats and PSM. This car is in perfect condition throughout having covered 21,000 miles with Porsche service history.....£28,950



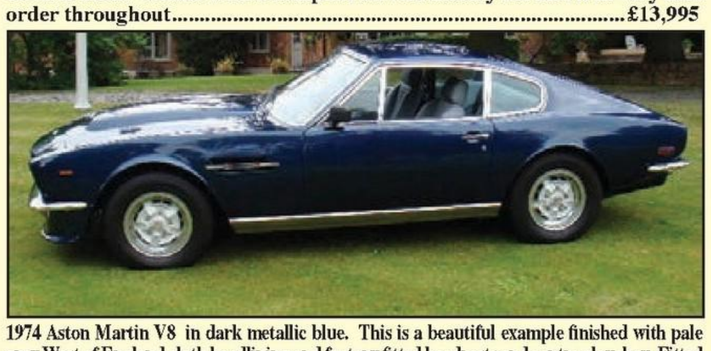
1990 Porsche Carrera 2 Cabriolet finished in Guards Red with full Black leather interior piped Red and Black hood. Fitted with all usual refinements including Graphite alloy wheels, 5 speed Manual transmission, electric seats. Comes with a complete service history file and is in very nice order throughout.....£13,995



1966 Porsche 911 in Arctic White with period Black interior. This car has been the subject of a considerable restoration and refurbishment and has been rebuilt to 911 specification. The car drives beautifully and is very quick and comes with a comprehensive history file. This would make an ideal historic race car and with FIA Papers, would be acceptable for numerous classic series..... £19,995



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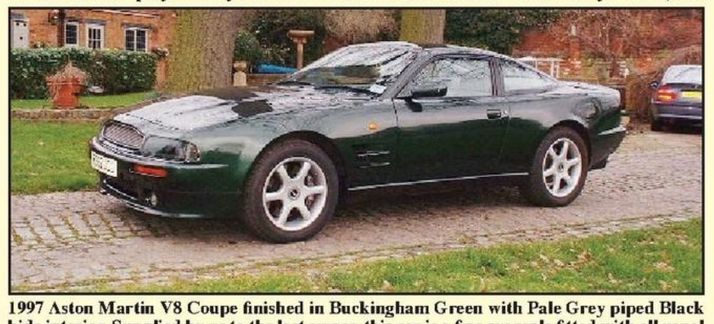
2004 Mercedes SL500 in Silver with pale Grey hide interior. This is a beautiful example with Rosewood veneer fitted with automatic transmission, Satellite Navigation, multi functional steering wheel, cruise control, electric steering column, electric heated seats, wind deflector, fully retractable hard top, overmats, 18" 5 spoke sports alloy wheels and CD player. Only one owner with full Mercedes service history.....£25,950



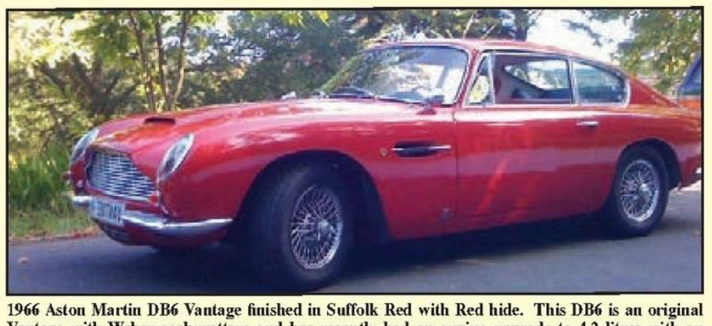
1991 Aston Martin Virage 5.3 FHC in Squadron Blue with Magnolia hide piped Blue and new Blue carpets with Aston Martin logos and alcantara headlining. This car has only covered 42,000 miles from new and has a complete Aston Martin service history. Really beautiful. £24,950



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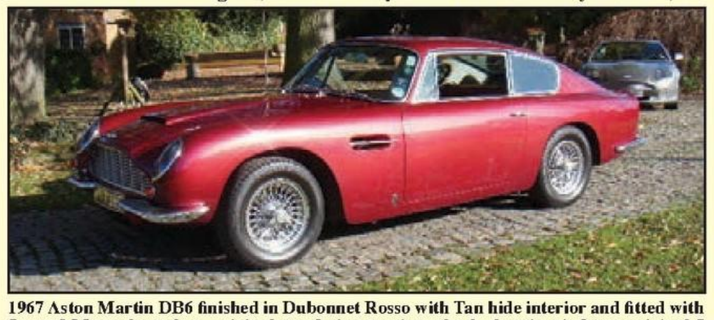
1997 Aston Martin V8 Coupe finished in Buckingham Green with Pale Grey piped Black hide interior. Supplied by us to the last owner, this car is a fine example fitted with all usual refinements including front wing vents, 6 speed Manual transmission, air conditioning, 6 spoke 18" alloy wheels, Red calipers, mesh grille, 6 stack CD player, electric windows and electric heated seats. 48,500 miles, 4 owners with complete service history together with detailed invoice file showing £30,000 worth of expenditure in the last 2 ½ years ... £34,950



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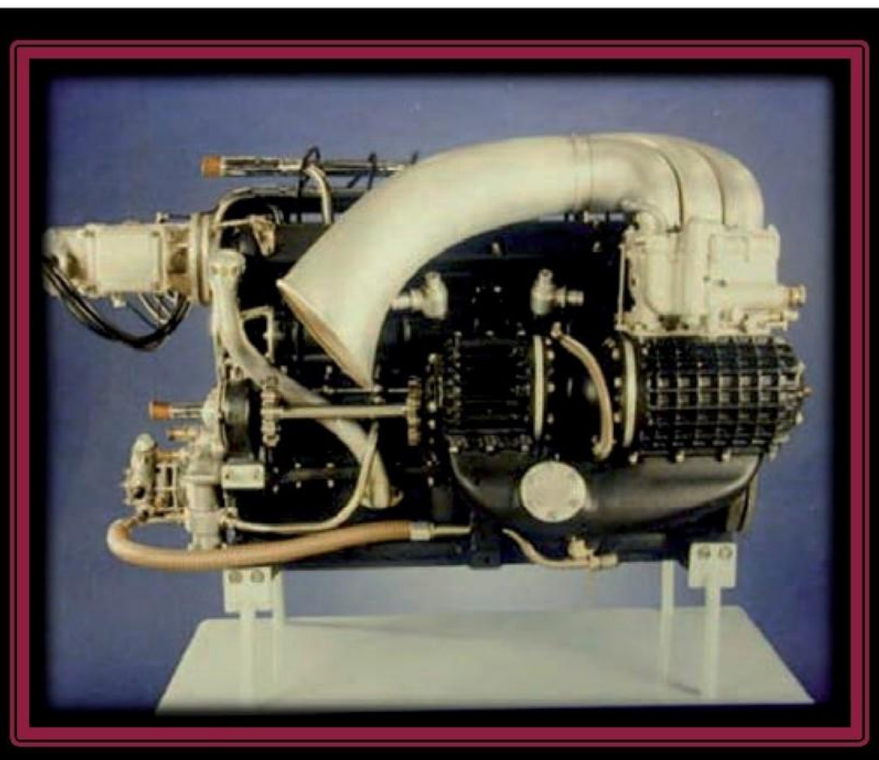


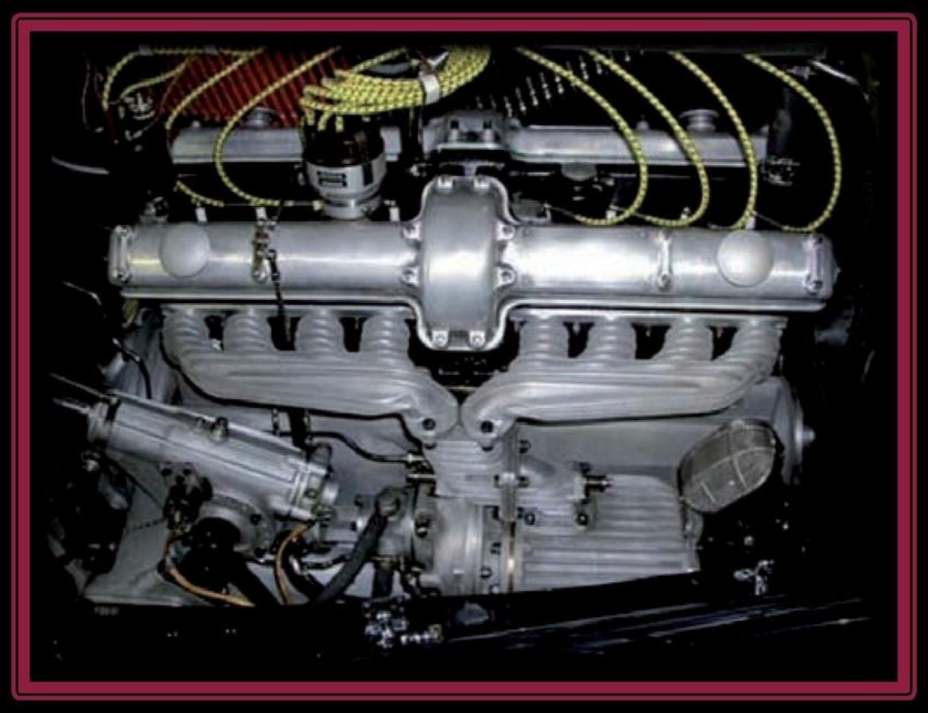
1967 Aston Martin DB6 finished in Dubonnet Rosso with Tan hide interior and fitted with 5 speed Manual gearbox, original wood rim steering wheel, electric windows, original 5 push button Motorola radio, chrome wire wheels and seatbelts to front and rear. The car comes with a thick history file detailing considerable previous works carried out including factory refurbishment. These cars are a fast appreciating asset and therefore this is sensibly priced at £99,950

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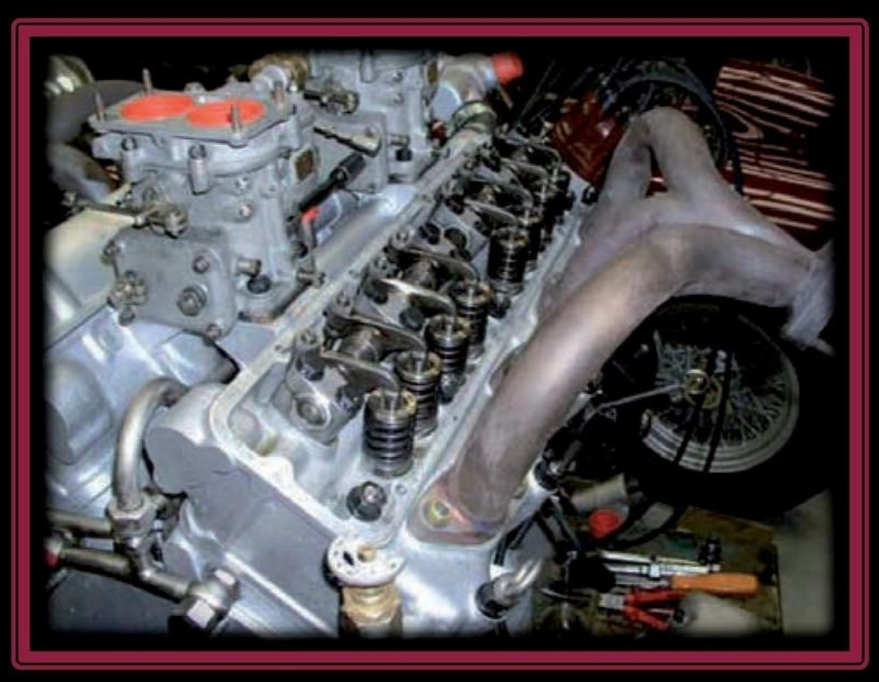






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