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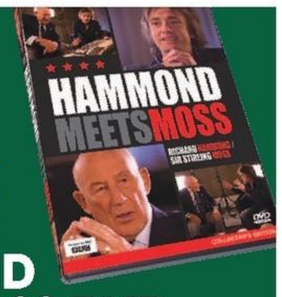
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Cover image: Red Bull/Getty Images

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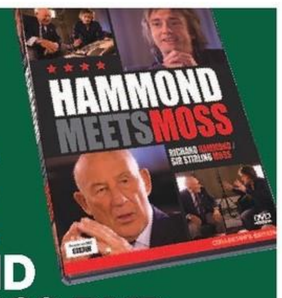
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PORSCHE



He wasn't the favourite...

The night before the big season finale, I was at Beaulieu for a Formula 1-themed charity dinner. I'd been asked to say a few words, so I took the opportunity to ask the guests who'd they be cheering for when they tuned in to the BBC's excellent coverage from Abu Dhabi the next day. Rank outsider Lewis Hamilton got the biggest cheer – no surprise being 'our man' and all that – and predictably they booed the German in the Red Bull, and jeered even louder for the dastardly Spaniard in the Ferrari. Fernando Alonso's role on these shores as F1's arch villain continues to bemuse us here at *Motor Sport*, but it looks like he'll be stuck with that one for years to come.

I was more intrigued to see how they'd feel about Mark Webber. My perception was that many fans were rooting for the Aussie – yes, even in an Ashes year! – and my audience that evening appeared to confirm it. While patriotism has its place in motor sport, intelligent racing fans have often looked beyond driver nationality when it comes to choosing their favourites, and so it is with Webber. Being F1's all-round 'good bloke', most of us can forgive his gold and green origins!

In my trade there is no place for bias, but as a racing enthusiast I had my fingers crossed for him because I couldn't help feeling that he deserved the title after so many years of graft. But as Clint Eastwood once said, "deservin's got nothin' to do with it"! The bald facts are that Sebastian Vettel was the man on form in the final quarter of the season, and earned his historic first title fair and square. We congratulate him and everyone at Red Bull Racing.

So removing all emotion, as one must to make a true judgement, who were the best drivers of the 2010 F1 season? We couldn't resist coming up with our own ranking.

1. ***Sebastian Vettel: yes, despite that finger-wagging victory salute***
2. ***Fernando Alonso: you've always got to love a good villain***
3. ***Mark Webber: not bad for a number two? You bet***
4. ***Lewis Hamilton: modern-day Gilles Villeneuve***
5. ***Robert Kubica: just wait 'til he gets a winning car***
6. ***Jenson Button: modern-day, er, Jody Scheckter (see p50)***
7. ***Nico Rosberg: not just a pretty face. Just ask Schuey***
8. ***Rubens Barrichello: evergreen veteran just won't slow down***
9. ***Kamui Kobayashi: overtakes where others fear to tread***
10. ***Felipe Massa: deserves credit for head-injury comeback***

Such lists are popular at this time of year, but they do focus the mind – especially when there is no mention of one Michael Schumacher. You'll let us know what you think, won't you...

The news that General Motors is returning to Indycar racing in 2012 in the face of its painful government bail-out is a great signal for motor racing's future. Recession or not, there's clearly still a place for 'win on Sunday, sell on Monday', a point well made by Bobby Rahal on p33. Bobby bows out as our star columnist in this issue and we thank him for his entertaining insight over the past year. Make sure you tune in next month to meet our new columnist for 2011.

Damien Smith, Editor

CONTRIBUTORS



Nigel Roebuck

The man-made harbour, the sci-fi hotel that crosses the track, the pretty lights in the darkness... Abu Dhabi's F1 race looks great on TV. As it did for Nigel in the paddock and press room for the much-anticipated season finale. But it takes more than that to impress our editor-in-chief. This is supposed to be a *race* circuit, after all. His Reflections on Abu Dhabi and the season's climax begins on p16.



Bobby Rahal

It's been a year since Bobby came on board as our guest columnist, and in that time the CART champion and Indy winner has given us some fascinating insights into the challenges facing a team owner and race organiser who's also father of a rising Indycar racer. This is his final column, but we've loved talking to him, and wish him well with his vintage festivals and his star appearances at Goodwood.



Rob Widdows

Rob has seen plenty of captive rally cars scrabbling round Lord March's garden at Goodwood. But when he invited himself (during a website podcast recording with Malcolm and Matt Wilson!) to see them in the wild, it was time to get muddy. And Wales can be very muddy... Mlada Boleslav wasn't though. Is that a rally stage in a Welsh slate mine? No, it's quite a lot further East...



Eoin Young

It's one of the things we're proud of that so many of our articles are written by people who were there – even if it was 50 years ago on the other side of the world. Before he came to the UK with Bruce McLaren to be part of his team, Eoin was already a devoted enthusiast at home in New Zealand, so a chance sight of a 1961 picture triggered some colourful memories of a Lady called Wigram.

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Hear this: *Motor Sport goes audio!*

PODCAST. It's a funny word. Sounds like something you'd find in that horror classic *Invasion of the Body Snatchers*. Readers who are internet-savvy won't need an explanation, but for those to whom it's an alien term, think virtual radio or TV show that you can watch or listen to online. It's a concept that *Motor Sport* has embraced with gusto, as our website goes from strength to strength.

Our audio podcasts – which take the format of a 'live' discussion among the *Motor Sport* team, covering a range of motor racing matters – have particularly caught the imagination of our website readers. Especially as they can listen for free! Throughout 2010 we've been recording shows each month and a burgeoning audience is 'tuning in' – or, to be more accurate, downloading or listening online.

But we reckon they deserve a wider audience. So to mark the end of a thrilling season we present with this issue a CD of podcast clips, a 'best of' compilation from the shows featuring an impressive line-up of special guests. If you haven't discovered the podcasts yet, we hope this CD will inspire you to log on and listen each month. You can even join in the shows by submitting questions for the guests and the panel.

So how did these *Motor Sport* podcasts come about? They were inspired by editor-in-chief Nigel Roebuck and features editor Rob Widdows stopping all work during office visits with their entertaining stories and racing gossip. We began to think: wouldn't it be great to record this stuff and give the readers a chance to share in the fun?

Having rented some equipment for the job we set about our first recording, but it soon became obvious we needed the help of a pro. Alan Hyde, best known as the voice of TOCA radio, came on board to record the shows. He smoothed off some of the rough edges, but not too many. They're not recorded in a studio, but in the *Motor Sport* office – and the intention is to keep it informal and not become too slick. Heaven forbid we come across as being too professional!

As the format took hold, we were delighted to find that guests did not require much arm-twisting to join us for the shows. The roll-call of stars featured on this CD is impressive: Mario Andretti and Brian Redman (recorded together the morning after the *Motor Sport* Hall of Fame), Damon Hill, Patrick Head, Christian Horner, Sir Stirling Moss, Tom Kristensen, Jochen Mass, Bobby Rahal, Martin Brundle, Emanuele Pirro and Richard Attwood – they've all got into the right spirit.

Taking a long car journey over the holiday season? This might help the miles pass a little easier. And if you like what you hear, click on www.motorsportmagazine.com to enjoy even more each month. Alternatively, visit iTunes (Apple's music website) where you can also download the shows for free.

Audio CD comes free with UK issues and subscription copies only. If you are an overseas reader, the CD is available at a special price on our website: www.motorsportmagazine.com













Vettel win 'icing on cake' for Red Bull

Red Bull raise the roof at the team's and Vettel's twin title celebrations

Red Bull/Getty Images

SEBASTIAN VETTEL EARNED himself a place in the record books at Abu Dhabi when he became the youngest World Champion in Formula 1 history, although the man himself modestly admitted that Lewis Hamilton – whose previous mark he beat by some six months – could have won his first title a year earlier than he did.

Remarkably the 23-year-old is the first champion since James Hunt in 1976 not to lead the standings until the end of the final day of the season. He is also the fifth World Champion in as many years, the longest streak of different winners since the run of seven from 1976-82.

While Fernando Alonso, Mark Webber and Hamilton were all left rueing misfortunes that befell them during the course of the season, the consensus is that Vettel more than deserved the title. After a mid-year wobble, when it appeared that the stress of the contest was getting to him, he fought back to totally dominate the last four races of the season. Had he not lost out in Korea, when his engine failed a few laps from home, his victory would have been a lot more decisive.

"The constructors' [title] was a massive result for the entire team," team principal Christian Horner told *Motor Sport*. "Even if we'd only won that this year it would have been a huge, huge achievement. We've won nine Grands Prix, had 20 podiums and 15 pole positions, and it's just unbelievable.



"It's great and I think fitting that Sebastian has won the World Championship"
CHRISTIAN HORNER

"I genuinely thought we probably had a 30 per cent chance with Mark [Webber] and 20 per cent chance with Seb of winning in Abu Dhabi. We came here and thought let's give it everything. It all panned out perfectly for Sebastian, he drove a great race.

"The constructors' was the big one for the team, and the drivers' was the icing on the cake. We decided to back both drivers absolutely equally, to not interfere, to give them the same support, the same equipment. There were a lot of people who questioned the philosophy, but I think it's been vindicated. At the end of the day it's down to what they've done on the circuit."

Vettel has been touted as a future World Champion since his impressive early races with BMW Sauber and Scuderia Toro Rosso in 2007, while his remarkable wet-weather victory at Monza in 2008 removed any question marks about his potential. Horner is full of praise for the German.

"Sebastian has kept his focus. He's had some dreadful luck. He had a guaranteed win in Australia, there was the brake disc in Barcelona, and then of course Korea and the engine failure there. But he's never lost his focus. He's always believed in himself, believed in the team, believed in the car.

"He's a very determined, astute young man. He's very talented, and he's got a great sense of humour. He's just got better and better. He's made a few mistakes, but they all have this year. But when he's at the front, he's phenomenal. His ability to read and control a race, and look after the car and tyres and engine, is impressive. He's led a lot of laps this year, and it's great and I think fitting that he's won the World Championship." *Adam Cooper*



LAT

Drivers buoyed by first Pirelli test

THE FORMULA 1 TEAMS GAVE AN INITIAL thumbs-up after sampling 2011 Pirelli rubber for the first time when they ran two days of testing at Abu Dhabi in the week following the final Grand Prix of the season.

This was the only chance for the teams to work with the Pirellis before their new cars are launched in February. It was a measure of the significance that was attached to the test that most teams chose to give the job to their race drivers, with both Fernando Alonso and Felipe Massa turning out for Ferrari, and Sebastian Vettel returning from his PR tour in Europe just days after winning the World Championship.

However, McLaren chose to utilise third driver Gary Paffett and GP2 man Oliver Turvey on the basis that the tyres are likely to change before the start of the season, and thus the team felt that there was no need to recall Lewis Hamilton and Jenson Button to the Middle East.

Pirelli brought its soft and medium compounds to Abu Dhabi, and between them the teams ran for some 11,000km, adding a huge amount of data to that gathered by the Toyota TF109 test car driven by Nick Heidfeld and latterly Pedro de la Rosa in Europe.

Michael Schumacher and the Mercedes team are relying heavily on the tyres working well with their new car after the former World Champion struggled with a lack of front-end grip throughout this season.

Although there was no instant fix in Abu Dhabi, Schumacher remained positive: "In terms of consistency, it looked quite good. But we were using the 2010 car today and it will be all about how these tyres suit our 2011 car."

De la Rosa is due to continue the in-house test programme in Bahrain in the middle of December.

IN BRIEF

■ Hispania's plans to race a Cosworth-powered update of the stillborn Toyota TF110 in 2011 ground to a halt after Toyota Motorsport announced it had severed all contact with the Spanish-owned team. Hispania had already announced that it will use a Williams gearbox as part of next season's package.

■ Leading Spanish businessman Juan Villalonga has been named as a key partner in Hispania. Villalonga is an ex-boss of former Minardi and Renault sponsor Telefonica, and has promised to source funding.



■ Jules Bianchi (left) has been confirmed as a Ferrari test driver for 2011, having previously been a member of the team's young driver programme. The Frenchman – managed by Nicolas Todt – was given two days of running in the Abu Dhabi rookie test.

■ Lotus Racing will hark back to the JPS era by running a black and gold livery in 2011, having used traditional green and yellow this year. It remains to be seen whether Tony Fernandes can still use the name, as his bitter dispute with Group Lotus continues. Sources suggest Fernandes went the JPS route precisely because Group Lotus had intended to use it should it join forces with the Renault team.

■ Russian supercar company Marussia Motors has invested in Virgin Racing, and its name will be part of the team's title next year. Formed in 2007, Marussia has made an impact at major motor shows but has yet to deliver a car to a customer.

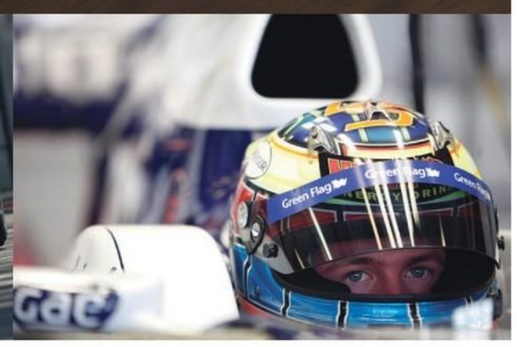
■ The FIA has formalised a new disciplinary system which will take major F1 disputes out of the hands of the World Motor Sport Council. The International Tribunal will comprise 12 judges, while its decisions can still go to the International Court of Appeal, operating as before.

■ Red Bull Racing has agreed to use Renault engines until the end of 2012 – at which point a new turbo formula is due to come in. Renault has increased its branding on the RBR drivers and cars, and heavily advertised its involvement in the 2010 title success.



Britons Bird, Turvey and Stoneman (below l-r) showed well in test, but Ricciardo (bottom) was fastest





Brit pack shines in young driver runs

NO FEWER THAN 21 HOPEFULS TOOK part in the F1 rookie driver test at Abu Dhabi after the last race of the season.

Held for the first time last year, the test provides an opportunity for teams to try out drivers who have not yet started a Grand Prix, and is also a rare chance for established third drivers to actually get some mileage.

While some of those who invested hard cash in a session with one of the lesser teams may never get close to a Formula 1 grid, others are undoubtedly stars of the future.

Perhaps not surprisingly Red Bull third driver Daniel Ricciardo topped both days of the test with the car that had just won the drivers' championship.

Encouragingly for anyone searching for the next Button or Hamilton, five British drivers took part. Sam Bird showed well over two days with Mercedes, while fellow GP2 man Oliver Turvey was second-fastest for McLaren on day two. Regular third drivers Gary Paffett and Paul di Resta appeared for McLaren and Force India respectively, while FIA F2 Champion Dean Stoneman had his prize drive with Williams.

New Sauber signing Sergio Perez had his first run with his new team, and Pastor Maldonado drove for both Williams and Hispania.



LAT

Nigel Roebuck



REFLECTIONS
– A historic – if disappointing – Grand Prix finale
– Wise words from Todt on the spectacle of racing

Only in Italy would you find a politician weighing into a debate about the outcome of a Formula 1 World Championship. Within hours of Sebastian Vettel's winning the title in Abu Dhabi, one Roberto Calderoli, a member of the Northern League party, was so incensed by what he called Ferrari's 'demented strategy' (to pit Fernando Alonso earlier than planned) that he publicly called for the resignation of company president Luca di Montezemolo.

Calderoli, who by all accounts has had a run-in or two with di Montezemolo in the past, couldn't pass up an opportunity to tap into all that grief, to capitalise on Ferrari's failure to deliver.

Di Montezemolo, who was in Abu Dhabi together with Piero Lardi Ferrari, in hopes of being on the spot when Alonso clinched the championship, gave Calderoli short shrift. "The night hasn't lessened the bitter taste after the sad end to an extraordinary season," he said the morning after the race.

"We're sorry to see that there are some politicians on the outside who are ready to push for the guillotine when things go badly. We don't understand anyone who revels in self-defeatism, who sinks into the culture of 'everything's gone wrong, we have to start all over again'. They are vices that are very Italian, and we must learn to shake them off."

Luca concluded by suggesting that only when Calderoli had achieved for Italy one per cent of Ferrari's contribution would his remarks merit a reply. Beyond the one he had already given, that is.

I had every sympathy for di Montezemolo, but if Calderoli's words were more than a touch over the top – a chance to score a cheap point – still I found it oddly pleasing that a politician should be even aware of 'Ferrari strategy', demented or otherwise, and it served to remind me why I have always loved Italy and Italian motor racing. Can you imagine such a thing here? Nor I.



Vettel won three of the last four Grands Prix to become F1's youngest World Champion

The Grand Prix season finished frenetically, with three races – Korea, Brazil, Abu Dhabi – in four weekends. And when Vettel's Renault engine blew apart in the first of them, leaving victory to Alonso, it began to look as though Red Bull, despite fielding emphatically the quickest car, were somehow going to lose the 2010 World Championship. That same day Mark Webber crashed out early, and handed his long-held points lead to Alonso.

In Vettel's demeanour, as he walked back into the pitlane to be comforted by Helmut Marko, there was something different from before, however. Over the last couple of seasons we had come to see a rather different side of the sunny-faced kid who so charmed the paddock in his early days; in many a press interview there was no hint of 'a rueful grin' when things hadn't gone according to plan, and tales abounded of toys being hurled from prams.

In Korea, though, there was nothing of the kind. From pole position Vettel controlled the race on a treacherous day, chased by Alonso, but under no real threat until his engine let go with 10 laps to the flag. In the circumstances we might reasonably have expected a major sulk, but instead there was evidence of a new maturity as Sebastian coped with all the questions put to him. He had, after all, done his part of the job to perfection; no blame lay with him. It was just… life, and whoever said life was fair?

> "This year's Red Bull is perhaps the best F1 car since the Williams FW14B"

A fortnight earlier Vettel had won at Suzuka, and now, as he put Korea behind him, there remained two races, both at circuits at which his car should excel.

In point of fact, we speak only in degrees here, for it has excelled virtually everywhere. Even allowing for all those Ferraris in the Schumacher era, this year's Red Bull, the RB6, is perhaps the best F1 car – relative to its opposition – since the Williams FW14B, which swept Nigel Mansell and Riccardo Patrese to first and second in the World Championship of 1992. The Williams, like the Red Bull, was powered by Renault; more significantly, it was also designed by Adrian Newey.

I can't remember now who originally coined the phrase, 'If you've got Newey who needs Schuey?', but if there has been a bona fide genius in our sport over the last couple of decades it is surely this quiet ›››

Red Bull/Getty Images

Nigel Roebuck



Red Bull/Getty Images

Furious Webber refused to be second best to Vettel at Silverstone. Below: Newey and Vettel enjoy title success



fellow who still draws everything, who simply understands race car aerodynamics better than anyone else on earth. If it be the case that statistics can be made to say anything, not all truths can be hidden, and if hiring Adrian is not for the financially faint of heart it is as close to a guarantee of success as may be found in F1. This is not to suggest that he is a one-man band – and nor would ever claim to be – but look at the great years of Williams, of McLaren, now of Red Bull, and the common factor is the name on the technical director's door.

What Newey has achieved at Red Bull is perhaps more substantial even than the championship-winning years of the past, for such as Williams and McLaren were already successful entities before him, and he merely made them more so; when he arrived at Red Bull at the start of 2006, though, it had only recently metamorphosed from the nondescript Jaguar team, and the immediate priority was to build a properly structured technical department.

Now, five years on, Red Bull has everything in place, and Newey's influence is ever more apparent. He concedes that, like most others in the pitlane, the team was caught on the hop in 2009 by the double diffuser controversy, when Brawn, Williams and Toyota competed from the outset with something Adrian and other designers had believed outside the rules. For its own reasons, though, the FIA declared the double diffuser kosher, and it took time for the other teams to modify cars not originally designed to run with it.

> "The Vettel-Red Bull combo was the fastest"

During that time, of course, Jenson Button's Brawn won six of the first seven races (the other going to Vettel), and the World Championship was already effectively out of reach. During the second half of the season, however, Newey's RB5 was the class of the field, Vettel and Mark Webber winning five of the last 10 races.

Attempts to land a Mercedes engine deal for 2010 were thwarted, and so Red Bull continued with a Renault motor which has suffered more than most from the 'engine freeze' rule. Through the season the drivers found themselves at a straightline disadvantage, although in Abu Dhabi Vettel said the situation was better now that the team had its F-duct working well.

It was good for its rivals that Red Bull suffered a little in the power stakes – who knows how quick the cars might otherwise have been? As it was, a Red Bull started from pole at 15 of the 19 races, and had it not been for early season unreliability, plus some driving mistakes, Ferrari and McLaren would not have had so much as a sniff of the World Championship.

Although others – Alonso, Hamilton, Button, to say nothing of Webber – all had their days of domination in 2010, indisputably the Vettel-Red Bull combo was the fastest in the business. Ten times Sebastian took pole position, and he should – without mechanical problems and errors of his own – have won many more than five Grands Prix. In reality, the World Championship could have been sealed long before Abu Dhabi.

As it was, Vettel really cut loose towards the end of the season, winning three of the last four races, yet still taking the title by only four points. And there is no escaping the fact that if Ferrari had not goofed so absolutely in Abu Dhabi, Alonso would have won his third championship.

I have written before, and see no reason to change my opinion now, that I believe the team did absolutely the right thing to concentrate on Alonso through the second half of the season. At the time of the 'team orders' fuss at Hockenheim, Ferrari had been through a disappointing sequence of results, and it was obvious that if there were to be a late charge for the World Championship only Fernando could make it. If I had sympathy for Felipe Massa in Germany, he impressed but rarely in 2010.

Alonso won superbly at Monza and Singapore, then fortunately in Korea, and looked to be in the pound seats at the last race, particularly in light of the fact that Red Bull had two championship contenders to worry about, while Ferrari concentrated solely on Fernando.

It looked to be the chink in Red Bull's armour, but as events transpired it proved to be anything but: while Ferrari chose to focus on Webber at Abu Dhabi, Alonso's nearest pursuer, Vettel was racing away in the lead.



Webber had been curiously off the pace in qualifying, setting only the fifth-fastest time. From the start he was behind Alonso, the pair of them running fourth and fifth, and in Ferrari minds that was absolutely fine. If Mark won the race, Fernando needed to be second to take the title, but if Vettel won, fourth would do. Piece of cake, surely.

On lap 11 Red Bull brought Webber in, to get him off the soft Bridgestones and onto the hard as soon as possible. He rejoined in 16th place, behind Jaime Alguersuari, but if he might reasonably have expected the Toro Rosso driver – working for the family firm, after all – to let him by, he was in for a disappointment. For the best part of three laps, Alguersuari held him up, and it was now that Ferrari, thinking primarily of Webber's place in the scheme of things and noting that he was losing time, opted to call Alonso in.

That decision settled the outcome of the World Championship. Yes, Alonso rejoined still ahead of Mark – but, as the front-runners discovered, the soft Bridgestones, once through their 'graining' period, proved far more durable than expected, and Fernando could have gone way longer before needing to change them.

More crucially, he and Webber now found themselves behind Vitaly Petrov, who had taken on the harder tyres at the end of the first lap, when the safety car was out following an accident involving Michael Schumacher and Tonio Liuzzi. Like his pursuers, Petrov was good to go to the end of the race.

In normal circumstances he should have been easy prey for Alonso and Webber, but it was their misfortune that, seeking desperately to hang on to his Renault drive for 2011, Petrov proceeded to drive the race of his life – with great straightline speed, and at a circuit where overtaking is nigh unknown. Fernando and Mark got on his tail on lap 16; on lap 55, when the chequered flag fell, they were still there.

On the slowing-down lap Alonso, boiling with frustration, drew alongside Petrov and signalled his displeasure. But once he had calmed down he accepted that Vitaly had simply been doing his job, fighting to keep his place: the fault lay with Ferrari, and nowhere else.

Fernando knew, too, that even if he had managed to pressure Petrov into a mistake, that wouldn't have been the end of the saga, for ahead of them sat Nico Rosberg's Mercedes, an even tougher proposition. Had Ferrari waited, and brought him in when the Vettels and Hamiltons made their stops, he would have remained in his original fourth place – all he needed for the championship…

Still, Alonso had given his all in a car good overall, as he said, but not as quick as the Red Bull in the corners, nor a match for the McLaren – or, in Abu Dhabi, the Renault – on the straights.

It was no more than inevitable that the Fleet Street tabloids, continuing their endless Alonso witch hunt, should express outrage at his gestures to Petrov, in some cases indeed make it the focus of their post-race stories. Sensitive souls, they are of course more accustomed to the Corinthian behaviour routinely on display at such as Wembley and Twickenham.

Petrov himself was rather less concerned. He was doing his job, he said, fighting to stay ahead, but had he been in Alonso's position he would probably have done the same.

Every sport has to have a villain, of course, and this year Fernando has been increasingly portrayed as The Man In The Black Hat. Foreigner, of course, swarthy sort of cove. Drives for a foreign team. Doesn't care too much for Lewis Hamilton. Pretty damning, all in all, wouldn't you say?

In the build-up to Abu Dhabi, some even cast doubts on the suitability of Emanuele Pirro as an FIA steward at the event. Wasn't it true that he had been known to – whisper it – 'drive vintage Ferraris'? The xenophobic inference was that Pirro, as honest a soul as I have known in racing, might just be… influenced in his decision-making. That took little account of the fact that Emanuele had for several years been a McLaren test driver, and on occasion enjoyed Red Bull sponsorship. "I don't mind people criticising my driving," he said, "but not my integrity." If I were him, I'd have sued.



Angry Alonso tailed inspired Petrov in Abu Dhabi after Ferrari strategy blunder, below

LAT



Ferrari

Nigel Roebuck

In the end, though, Pirro and his colleagues were not called upon to adjudicate on any matter of consequence, for the Abu Dhabi Grand Prix was a remarkably dull race. Endlessly one watched Alonso and Webber trying to pass one Renault, and Hamilton the other, while Vettel sailed serenely round at the front. So often it is the case that a World Championship decider fails to deliver.

On the podium, and afterwards, Vettel looked bewildered, as if unable to take in that, at the last, he had taken the title against most unlikely odds. In victory he was gracious, bringing back to mind the playful kid with whom the paddock originally fell in love, and, for all their differences this year, it was clear he was not unaware of what Webber was going through. If only he would jettison that profoundly maddening habit of stabbing one finger at the cameras…

Undoubtedly Webber was the driver most in the paddock wished to see as World Champion. One has thought occasionally this season that he might – in his own interests – have been better advised to keep to himself some of his observations about the team, and his position within it, but at the same time it is always pleasing, in this era of PR lockdown, to find someone prepared to speak his mind. Webber, it will be remembered, was the only driver – hell, about the only *person* – to say what he thought about the 'Mosley Affair' in 2008. As it happened, he spoke for most of the paddock – but he spoke alone.

If most in Abu Dhabi hoped to see Webber crowned, it was no surprise, for the feeling was that Alonso already had a couple of titles to his name, that Vettel had time enough to win a clutch of them, whereas Mark, at 34, might never get a realistic shot again.

As well as that, there was a wish to see all his years of graft rewarded. Webber, after all, came into motor racing with no money behind him, no benefactors easing his path through the ranks, no career mapped out. When he finally made it to F1, in 2002, it was with the Minardi team, then owned by Paul Stoddart.

The year before, another rookie – Fernando Alonso – had made his F1 debut with Minardi, yet the team's technical director, Gabriele Tredozi – a man who reveres Fernando – recently said that, "Mark was the fastest – and perhaps the best – driver we ever had…"

It was Webber's good luck, just as it had been Alonso's, then to have his career picked up by Flavio Briatore, much maligned by some, but not by either of these two.

I remember a conversation about Briatore with Mark just as he was about to join Williams, from Jaguar, in 2005. I'd known several drivers, I ventured, who'd said, 'Jesus, I've signed my life away to Flav!', but in the end they'd invariably come round and conclude, 'No, I did the right thing…'

"Absolutely," said Webber. "In my case, I had to do it. I owed Paul Stoddart a lot of money – Stoddy had helped me, because I had absolutely nothing coming through. I had a friend paying for my bread, and that sort of stuff, but that was it. I went to Flavio and said, 'Look, I've got some baggage', meaning that Paul had bankrolled me to that point, and he was going to have a slice of my earnings for the future, and I didn't want to see them all going away. So Flavio helped out, and he's always been very, very fair with me. Without him I wouldn't be in F1, it's that simple."

> "Red Bull's tactics were undeniably vindicated"

For 2005 Briatore was keen for Webber to join Alonso at Renault, but Mark felt that Williams was where he wanted to be, and probably – given that Renault took Fernando to the World Championship in both 2005 and '06 – it's a decision he regrets to this day. The relationship with Williams never gelled as both parties had hoped, and thus, after two seasons, he made the move to Red Bull. At the Nürburgring, in 2009, he took his first Grand Prix victory, finally shaking off his 'Amon luck' tag, and there have been five more since.

True, the second half of his 2010 season did not match the first, but his victory at Monaco, for example, was as emphatic as I have ever seen there, and moved Jackie Stewart to remark that it was a win of which he would have been proud.

This thing about how one *feels* within a team is difficult to pin down. Nearly 30 years ago, looking back on the seasons with Carlos Reutemann, Frank Williams acknowledged that he and the team should perhaps have played it differently: "There's no doubt that Carlos needs psychological support – perhaps more than most drivers, and certainly more than Alan [Jones]. He needs to be aware that everyone in the team is wearing a Reutemann lapel badge and an Argentine scarf, that sort of thing. And looking back, I think perhaps we let him down a little there."

Similarly David Coulthard has spoken of his years as Mika Häkkinen's team-mate at McLaren. It wasn't that he ever believed he was getting equipment inferior to Häkkinen's, but that always he felt Mika was the favoured son, and he cited a day when he had fastest time until the dying seconds of qualifying, then witnessed the team's ecstatic reaction when Häkkinen beat it. Inescapably, he said, he always felt like 'the other driver'.

DC's last years in F1 were spent with Red Bull, and when Webber arrived in 2007 he quickly asserted himself as the team's pacesetter. Following Coulthard's retirement, Vettel moved in seamlessly from Toro Rosso.

Just as Lewis Hamilton's apprenticeship, first in karting, then in sundry junior formulae, had been overseen – and paid for – by McLaren, so Vettel was groomed by Red Bull, originally as part of Helmut Marko's 'young driver' programme. When he joined the F1 team in 2009 it was obvious – and logical – that Sebastian should be regarded as 'the future', but for Mark that necessarily meant a certain amount of discomfiture. Having won in the rains of Monza with Toro Rosso, Vettel, at 21, had already broken his Grand Prix duck, where Webber had not.

For all his impression that, certainly for some elements in the team, Sebastian was the blue-eyed boy, Mark – like Coulthard at McLaren – has never suggested that he has been given other than equal equipment. A rumour has floated around the paddock



Briatore offered Webber an F1 lifeline, but couldn't persuade him to choose Renault over Williams, below



LAT

that when the crop of new Renault engines arrive pre-season, and are dyno-tested, the eight best are earmarked for Vettel. But the only apparent favouritism shown Seb this year came at Silverstone, where his car's new front wing broke in Saturday morning practice, and for qualifying the mechanics were instructed to take the one from Mark's car – only two had been made – and transfer it.

This was explained, if not justified, by the fact that Vettel was narrowly ahead in the point standings, but it seemed to me an error of judgement, an unnecessary guarantee of unrest. By all accounts, the new wing was only a minimal improvement, but the effect on Mark's psyche was profound, and the Red Bull management must have known that it was asking for trouble, just as when Marko absurdly blamed Webber for the disastrous coming-together with Vettel at Istanbul.

"I don't know what's going to happen at the start," Mark's father Alan muttered to me a few minutes before the race at Silverstone. "I've never *seen* him like this…" In the event, it was no real surprise that he waltzed it.

When it counted, though, in the crucial races towards the end of the season, Vettel proved irresistible. There were suggestions at Interlagos that maybe, with Alonso leading the championship, and Webber 10 points closer to him, 'team orders' might come into the equation, but at Red Bull they were adamant that such would not be the case, and at the flag it was Vettel-Webber.

In Abu Dhabi they said the same thing, and in light of what happened the tactics of Red Bull were undeniably vindicated. An interesting nuance was the suggestion that if, on the last lap, Vettel were leading from Webber and Alonso, Sebastian might give way, for in that scenario only Mark could beat Fernando to the championship – but it would be Vettel's decision, you understand, and absolutely not 'team orders'.

In the event, of course, Vettel was the only Red Bull driver in a position to seize the title in Abu Dhabi – and had he allowed Webber by at Interlagos, he would not now be World Champion: as it was, he won by only four points, 256 to 252.

So now Red Bull rules the world. Wherever you turn – be it Formula 1, NASCAR, air racing, any 'dangerous sport' you can think of – there is no getting away from the name. The F1 team has had a momentous season, taking on such as Ferrari and McLaren, and beating them fair and square – quite remarkable when you think about it, given that Dietrich Mateschitz bought 'Jaguar Racing' only six years ago, and provided the wherewithal to hire the right people to turn it into a silk purse.

I must confess, though, to finding faintly irritating some of Mateschitz's utterings in the build-up to the championship decider. On and on he went about the importance of 'sport', about his distaste for team orders, about how – in certain circumstances – it would be preferable to finish second, rather than first, etc.

All that came across to me as a touch sanctimonious, I'm afraid, and somewhat patronising towards a company involved in F1 for other than pure marketing reasons. As a Grand Prix team, Red Bull is as dedicated as you will find, as any conversation with Christian Horner, Adrian Newey or whomever, will attest, but the reason why the *company* is involved is to flog more cans to more kids, nothing more or less. ›››

Nigel Roebuck



LAT

Twenty years ago, European tracks such as Spa dominated the calendar, but not any more...

A company like Ferrari, on the other hand, while assuredly wishing to move on as many road cars as it can, has been in this for 60 years because it knows nothing else. To Enzo Ferrari, motor racing was never a game: winning the World Championship was *everything*. Which is of course why, when the title slipped away, a sly Italian politician spotted an opportunity to make hay.

What came to mind, the weekend of the Korean GP, was a remark made some years ago by a BA captain as we taxied along after landing: "Ladies and gentlemen, welcome to Gatwick – the only building site in the world with its own airport..."

It has become the norm, in recent years, for Formula 1 to venture ever more to new venues, and therefore new circuits. Invariably, the countries concerned have no cultural links with the sport, but think it a sound idea to tap into the glamour of F1, to have the prestige of hosting a Grand Prix. And because the government foots the bill, both for the circuit and the race fee, money seems not to matter very much.

Many years ago Bernie Ecclestone said that, in his opinion, it wouldn't be long before Europe was 'Third World'. At the same time, he said, anything calling itself a 'World Championship' should be just that, and it was his plan to expand the reach of F1, to take it to fresh corners of the earth, notably in the Far East.

As we look ahead to the next World Championship, a glance at the schedule reveals just how much the shape of a Grand Prix season has changed. Ecclestone once told me that he "would never, ever, *ever* put on more than 16 races". But that thinking plainly changed some time ago, and in 2011, for the first time, there are 20 on the schedule – modest by comparison with NASCAR's 38, I grant you, but then every Sprint Cup race is held in one country.

Eleven of the 20 Grands Prix in the coming season are what the paddock calls 'flyaways' – out of Europe, to put it another way. Of these, India is new for 2011, joining Bahrain, Australia, Malaysia, China, Canada, Singapore, Japan, Korea, Abu Dhabi and Brazil. On the near horizon are a return to the USA and a first venture to Russia, and Bernie says it is inevitable that European races will be shed – this despite the fact that it is in Europe that the bulk of F1 enthusiasts reside. Why do we have curious start times – a virtual guarantee of appalling weather, it seems, at the Far East races – night events and the like, at the 'flyaways'? So as to broadcast the races at times approximately acceptable to the TV audience in Europe – which increasingly has fewer opportunities actually to witness a race in person – that's why. And, not surprisingly, European fans grow ever more restive about this.

It's salutary now to consider how much the pattern of a season's Grands Prix has changed. Go back 10 years, to 2001, and you find that only six of the 17 races were outside Europe; go back 20, and it was four.

Inevitably, therefore, the circuits are changing, too. Only nine of those in the 1991 World Championship – Interlagos, Barcelona, Monaco, Silverstone, Hockenheim, the Hungaroring, Spa, Monza, Suzuka – figure on the '11 schedule.

Increasingly the World Championship is becoming skewed towards the Far East – no surprise, I suppose, because that's where the money is, and CVC, the private equity company to which Ecclestone sold the commercial rights to F1 some years ago, is concerned with a good return to its investors rather more than the good of motor racing. Time was that the FIA held the commercial rights, and when Max Mosley sold them – for 100 years! – to Ecclestone, at what may be termed a favourable rate, he assured us all that he had taken steps to ensure Bernie could never 'move them on' to an entity which might not have F1's interests at heart. There was a clause in the contract, he said – the 'Don King Clause' – giving the FIA the right to veto any such deal. Why it was not invoked in this case remains a mystery.

While no longer the major commercial rights holder, Ecclestone continues to do the deals, and if anything is under greater pressure to seek out cash-rich countries than when simply in business for himself. Thus, we find ourselves now with six races in the Far East, two in the Middle East, and the evidence is that only Japan and Singapore give a damn about F1.

China – everyone's least favourite Grand Prix – has never shown any interest, and at other places, too, the crowds are sluggish, to put it mildly. Half an hour before the start at Abu Dhabi, which holds a maximum of 55,000 spectators, I looked out at the first turn grandstand, and noted a great many empty seats – and this was at the decider of an epic World Championship.

As for Korea, it's difficult to know what to say. A building site, indeed, with a race track running through it. According to the regulations dealing with such matters, the circuit should have been finished, inspected and signed off some months before the scheduled Grand Prix, yet workmen were beavering away throughout the race weekend, and one inevitably thought back to the litany of complaints made by Ecclestone about Silverstone. In light of the indulgence shown to Korea, Bernie, you would think, has now forfeited the right to complain about anywhere else. ›››

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Nigel Roebuck

It was in Korea that Mark Webber made the mistake that would perhaps cost him the World Championship, and mighty unlucky he was, too, for his Red Bull spun across the road into a *wall*! This, at a brand-new Grand Prix circuit… At any other of Hermann Tilke's antiseptic masterpieces, Mark would have spun harmlessly into a Tarmac run-off area the size of a Tesco car park, and been able to continue on his way, presumably into a hatful of points. In Korea, though, a wall at that point was apparently acceptable.

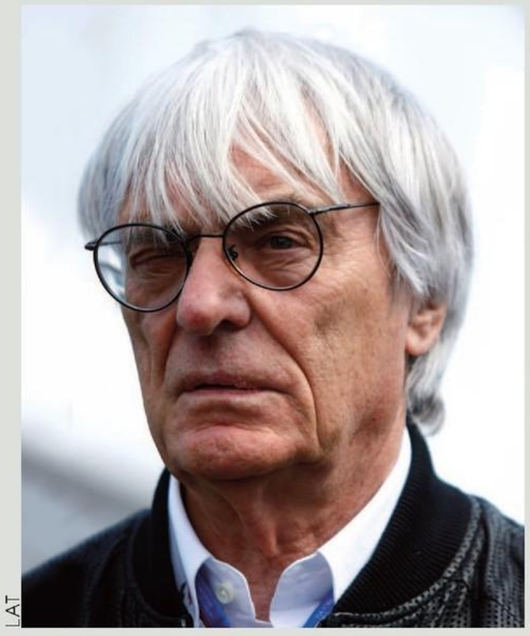
There had, of course, been no preliminary race meeting run at the track, as the rules supposedly require. Remarkably malleable, these rules, it seems. As the saying goes, a dog will not howl if you beat him with a bone.

It has long been fashionable to denigrate Tilke's circuit designs, and I am as guilty as any in that regard. But we should have some sympathy for him, in the sense that he has necessarily worked under severe constraints from the FIA, where safety has long been the *overwhelming* priority to a degree perhaps detrimental to the sport. I shouldn't need to come out with the usual disclaimer, making clear I don't want to see anyone hurt or worse – of *course* I don't – but I do feel that taking safety to the level of obsession has driven out much of the panache once intrinsic to something calling itself 'Grand Prix racing'. If Tilke ever goes to work for FIFA, expect a lot of goal-less draws.

It should perhaps be no surprise that many past drivers regard the F1 of today as something of a namby-pamby activity: "At some of these modern circuits they must need the noise to keep themselves awake," one said to me recently. It is not, though, only retired drivers, looking on from their armchairs, who feel this way: there are also those of the current generation who suggest that the 'edge' has been thrown out with the bath water. There's a reason why these people smile when they get to Spa or Suzuka.

To me, it was a tragedy that the World Championship – with an unprecedented four drivers in the frame – should have been resolved at a circuit with no heritage, no atmosphere, and, perhaps more to the point, no opportunities for overtaking, for *racing*.

High horses were thick on the ground after the race, as folk huffed and puffed about Alonso's gesture to Petrov on the slowing-down lap, and I'll grant you that I, too, didn't care to see it. That said, I can't imagine the frustration Fernando must have felt, following a slower car for 40 laps, and not being able to find a way past it. Fierce racer he may be, but Alonso is also clean, and would never have resorted simply to punting Petrov into the air and out of the way, as Ayrton Senna did to Sandro Nannini's pesky Benetton 20 years ago at the Hungaroring.


LAT

"Bernie says it's inevitable European races will go"

If the FIA won't tackle F1's abiding problem – 'dirty air' – and come up with aerodynamic rules which allow cars to follow each other closely in quick corners, then at least what they must do is ensure that circuit designs do not exacerbate the problem. In Abu Dhabi the facilities are fantastic, the organisation impeccable, but the actual track – like Bahrain, like Valencia, like so many others – might have been designed to prevent passing. And, that being so, for all but Red Bull people, the championship-decider was a stone drag, precisely what F1 didn't need at the conclusion of the greatest season in a very long time. There was so much to savour in this, the first season in years without the tedium of refuelling, but its bookends – Bahrain and Abu Dhabi – were soporific.

A few days after the last race, therefore, I was greatly heartened to hear the comments of FIA president Jean Todt. By general consent, it was not only the racing which greatly improved this year (at proper circuits, anyway), but also the ambience in which the business was conducted. As McLaren's Martin Whitmarsh said, "It's so refreshing that at last the emphasis has been on sport, rather than politics…"

To my mind, much of that has stemmed from the fact that Todt, unlike his predecessor Mosley, has been content to stand in the wings, rarely making proclamations to the world, yet never missing a trick. The removal of an FIA spin doctor from the stewards' decision-making process, and replacing him at each race with a retired driver, was just one of many significant improvements to come along in 2010. I'll confess that, along with a great many others, I had my reservations about the notion of Todt in the top job, but I'm happy to admit that – thus far – I was wrong.

Todt, who was at Abu Dhabi, said this after the race: "We need to favour overtaking. It was impossible at Abu Dhabi…"

Hallelujah! Maybe the cavalry sometimes comes in strange guises.

"Take Hamilton," he went on. "He had fresh tyres, he would have lapped two seconds quicker than Kubica – yet he didn't manage to pass him. From now on, before homologating a circuit, we'll evaluate its spectacle potential, besides its safety. On November 23, at the F1 Commission meeting, we'll discuss the overtaking problem. It's the fault of the cars and the tracks. We'll create a report card about the circuits' competitiveness, and see – if possible – if we can make some modifications as early as 2011."

Highly encouraging, wouldn't you say? It strikes me that a huge amount of money, given some of the circuits currently in World Championship use, will be required for the task, and that burden will presumably fall squarely on the circuit owners, for one rather doubts that such as CVC will feel obliged to contribute. In most cases, though, the tracks most in need of radical change are those of the new era, those paid for by government subsidy, so perhaps something really will get done. Either way, it's quite something that the powers-that-be are even *thinking* about it, so for now I raise my hat to M Todt, a strange character in many ways, but apparently one who understands motor racing.

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IN BRIEF

■ The Racing Steps Foundation, which supports GP2 driver Oliver Turvey and Formula 3 racer James Calado, is monitoring two new rising stars for a fully-funded seat in the 2011 Formula Renault UK Championship. Karter Oliver Rowland and Formula Ford driver Dan Wells are competing in the Formula Renault Winter Series to secure the seat.



LAT

■ Peugeot UK has signed double British Rally Champion Guy Wilks to drive its 207 S2000 in the 2011 Intercontinental Rally Challenge. The ex-Škoda driver (left) will be joined by long-time co-driver Phil Pugh. "It was a difficult decision to leave Škoda UK, but the chance to drive the 207 with the support of a team like Kronos was too hard to resist," said Wilks.

■ The Henry Ford museum in America has announced a new 22,000 sq ft permanent exhibition, called Racing in America. It will cover the history and innovation of US racing, with interactive displays, stories and collections from drivers, plus historic vehicles.

■ British Touring Car Championship boss Alan Gow has become the new president of the FIA Touring Car Commission. The Brit-based Australian replaces Jonathan Ashman. Former co-driver Robert Reid is to be vice-president of the FIA World Rally Championship Commission.

■ A new LMP2 coupé built in the US by Riley Technologies could be on the grid for next year's Le Mans 24 Hours. Riley believes it is close to selling at least one Riley MkXX.

■ The new Lotus Evora GT2 car looks likely to race in the Le Mans Series with the Jetalliance squad. The team, a multiple winner with Aston Martin in FIA GTs in 2006-08, is "very close" to a deal, according to Lotus motor sport director Claudio Berro.

■ Ross Kaiser, 2010 Radical UK Cup champion, will race Doran Racing's Dallara-Ford in January's Daytona 24 Hours. The drive is the 28-year-old Brit's prize for winning the Sunoco Daytona Challenge.

■ The Le Mans Test Day, which is returning to the calendar after a two-year hiatus, is scheduled to take place on April 24 next year.

Peugeot LM car is a mystery

PEUGEOT HAS UNVEILED ITS 2011 Le Mans 24 Hours challenger – but has refused to say whether it is powered by a turbodiesel or petrol engine.

The French manufacturer confirmed the new car, code-named 90X (right), was up and running after it was photographed testing at Monza at the end of October. It has revealed few details of the car or its test schedule, but it is understood that the 90X has undertaken tests at Barcelona and Magny-Cours since its first shakedown at an undisclosed circuit on July 27.

Peugeot Sport boss Olivier Quesnel would only say: "As you can see from the photographs (taken at the shakedown), it is a coupé."

The lack of disclosure over the choice of engine is suitably 'fuelling debate' among rivals. Peugeot's technical director Bruno Famin insisted it was "still exploring options" in this area.

Pictures of the car offer conflicting evidence on its fuel source, but Peugeot's rhetoric in rules meetings suggests it is committed to staying with diesel. One rival team principal said, "all their politicking means I cannot believe they are going petrol".

The 90X retains the family look of the four-year-old 908 design. The most dramatic changes are at the back of the car, which incorporates the F1-style shark fin mandatory on all new prototypes in 2011.

It is unclear at this stage whether the 90X has been testing energy-recovery systems. Peugeot said last January that its 2011 car would be a hybrid, but it has backed away from that in recent months, stating only its intention to race in hybrid specification.



Peugeot



Peugeot wrapped up the new Intercontinental Le Mans Cup by making it three out of three in the series finale at Zhuhai. The French make won the Silverstone 1000Kms and Petit Le Mans at Road Atlanta before taking victory at the Chinese race in November. Stéphane Sarrazin/ Franck Montagny scored a 19th win for the 908 HDi in all competitions.

DPPI

Tin-top target for Ford teams

FORD WILL MAKE A LOW-KEY FACTORY RETURN TO TOURING car racing in 2011. The manufacturer, a tin-top stalwart from the 1970s until the early 2000s, is trying to pool the resources of private teams running Ford machinery to develop the latest Focus ST for touring car racing. It aims to co-ordinate development of a common design that can then be modified to different rulebooks, including global Super 2000 and the Next Generation Touring Car rules that come into force in the British Touring Car Championship next season.

Jost Capito, director of global performance vehicles, said: "Many Ford programmes around the world get a bit of support. Let's put all the resources together and produce a car that is 80 per cent common, then adapt it to different series. We're offering technical support in terms of CFD (Computational Fluid Dynamics) and wind tunnel time."

Ford also has its own S2000-spec engine available, thanks to the introduction of common engine rules encompassing the tin-top category, S2000 and world rally formulae. The 1.6-litre turbocharged unit is being developed for the factory M-Sport team by Pipo Moteur in France.

End of the road for Spyder

PORSCHE HAS CALLED TIME ON THE ULTRA-SUCCESSFUL career of its RS Spyder LMP2 prototype.

The German make will not extend the car's life into 2011, despite at least one team wanting to run it in the American Le Mans Series. Porsche motor sport boss Hartmut Kristen said investing in the necessary parts wasn't possible.

Following a career that started in '05, the Spyder claimed LMP2 titles in the 2006-08 ALMS and 11 outright wins with the factory Penske Racing team, including the '08 Sebring 12 Hours (below). The private CytoSport squad took two overall wins in 2010, and the car won LMP2 at the 2008-09 Le Mans with the Van Merksteijn/Verschuur and Essex teams.



Porsche

Chevrolet and Lotus add power to IndyCar series


L-r: Gil de Ferran, Neil Ressler, Roger Penske, Randy Bernard, Eddie Gossage and Tony Cotman at Chevy announcement

IMS

CHEVROLET WILL RETURN TO INDYCAR racing in 2012 with an engine developed by Ilmor, where it will be joined by Group Lotus which is building its own powerplant. Chevrolet's 2.4-litre twin turbo, direct-injection V6 Indycar engine revives the partnership with Ilmor Engineering that produced the Chevy Indy V8, winner of 104 Indycar races from 1987-93, including six straight Indianapolis 500s between 1988-93 and six CART drivers' championships.

Ilmor was founded in 1984 by Roger Penske, Mario Illien and Paul Morgan. Penske then got General Motors to buy a quarter-interest in the company, resulting in the Chevy Indy V8. Ilmor has also designed and built Formula 1 and Indycar engines for Mercedes-Benz. In recent years its American operation in Michigan has built and maintained Honda's Indycar engines, meaning the company is up to speed with the latest technology.

Chevrolet's Indycar return with Ilmor and the arrival of the Lotus will provide much-needed competition for current engine supplier Honda. It is also hoped that Chevrolet in particular, and possibly Lotus too, will pump marketing and promotion dollars into the IndyCar Series to help expand media coverage and sell tickets.

"We need to get more people in the grandstands and watching on TV," said Roger Penske. "We also need to see that this becomes a worldwide series with competition from around the world. This is the first step."

Penske's power and influence stretches far and wide, and it's long been debated whether it's a good or bad thing. Some people argue that Penske's team will get the best Ilmor/Chevy engines, but IndyCar's technical chief Tony Cotman emphasised that it's his job to write the rules to guarantee all teams get equal engines and are involved to some degree or another in the development programme.

"Any other team who runs a Chevrolet will have exactly the same specification as Penske," declared Cotman. "It's in Chevy's and Lotus's best interests that they have as many teams as possible participating in the development programme. I think that will lead to a far more level playing field in the long run."

Less is known about the Lotus engine. "What we're trying to do with the Lotus brand is leverage our heritage, which is all about motor racing," said Dany Bahar, Group Lotus CEO. "We're taking it seriously. We don't just want to put a sticker on a car that we didn't have an interest in building. We want to fight with the big guys. So we took the decision to build our own engine. By doing that we're going to be the underdogs fighting Chevy and Honda. But that's fine. It's all about competition."

Both Chevrolet and Lotus will also build 'aero kits' for 2012 to provide cars powered by their engines with distinctive and hopefully superior aero packages. Chevrolet will design its kit in partnership with Team Penske. Bahar said Lotus will also sponsor as many as four cars next season, having backed Takuma Sato's KV Technology entry in 2010: "We'll be expanding our activities in IndyCar with our partner KV Technology. There will probably be three or even more cars in our livery next year." *Gordon Kirby*

Read Bobby Rahal's reaction, p33

Cars of the future on show





RAC

THE DAY BEFORE THE VETERAN CARS made their traditional journey from London to Brighton, the cars of the future went the other way, from the coast to the capital.

In one weekend, therefore, we wallowed in nostalgia and wondered what we'll be driving in years to come.

A great deal of attention was paid to motor racing people who'd pulled out of the fast lane and into fuel-saving mode. There was veteran rally star Paddy Hopkirk, in a Mini of course, but with a diesel engine. In an electric version was David Richards (right), whose Prodrive team will bring the Mini back to world rallying in 2011. Then there were Nick Mason and Perry McCarthy in a pair of Tesla Roadsters.

Typically different and suitably stylish was Gordon Murray's latest version of his T25 city car (far right), making its first public appearance. The driver sits in the middle, as in the McLaren F1, with two passengers behind. Packed with new technology, and weighing virtually nothing, the T25 has a three-cylinder 650cc petrol engine which used under a gallon of fuel from the seaside to the city.

The inaugural RAC Future Car Challenge also featured the first public outing of the all-new electric version of the VW Golf Blue E-Motion, not due on the road until 2013. Ecotricity founder and wind-power pioneer Dale Vince brought his conversion of a Lotus Exige, named the Vince Nemesis, and powered of course by electricity.

Over 60 cars took part in what was surely the quietest motoring event since the first car took to the road. An estimated 250,000 people watched the cars arrive in Pall Mall. The RAC hopes this will become an annual showcase for new automobile technology. *Rob Widdows*



FORMULA 1 WORLD CHAMPIONS Nigel Mansell and John Surtees joined MotorSport Vision boss Jonathan Palmer to wave off this year's Beaujolais Run at Brands Hatch on November 16.

The 2010 edition of the charity event, which raised money for the Henry Surtees Foundation, celebrated 60 years of F1 and began with three laps of the Brands Indy circuit behind a Surtees TS7.

En route to Beaujeu the teams visited Dijon-Prenois and Reims-Gueux, where Surtees drove his first race for Cooper-Maserati in '66.

Jeff Bloxham

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Calling all virgin F1 race engineers

Motor Sport will team up with Formula 1's Virgin Racing at the 2011 Autosport International show to offer fans an unprecedented pitwall experience that will allow them to step into the shoes of race engineers and team managers at 'virtual' Grands Prix.

From January 13-16 at Birmingham's National Exhibition Centre, visitors to the *Motor Sport* stand will be able to sit up on a Virgin F1 'pit perch' as seen on pitwalls throughout the Grand Prix season, and experience the role of a race engineer. The aim will be to help your driver hit a target lap time on a simulation programme by making set-up changes to your car. Participants can adjust front wing dimensions, damper settings and ride heights to modify the aerodynamic and mechanical efficiencies of a virtual VR-01, in a process similar to that used during a real GP weekend.

After securing a position in this year's championship, Virgin Racing shocked F1's established teams by announcing that its new-for-2010 car would not be developed using traditional wind tunnel technology. Instead, Computational Fluid Dynamics (CFD) – a system in which numerical methods and algorithms measure the simulated interaction of molecules with surfaces – would be used to design the car in its entirety. Despite many teams' scepticism, the CFD-designed VR-01 ran on schedule in February's official pre-season test at Jerez, and Virgin has vied with Lotus all season to be the best of the new teams in Formula 1.

At Autosport International up to three visitors at a time will be able to experience Virgin's pitwall simulation. Aided by experienced race engineers and technicians from the team, participants will analyse genuine aerodynamic and mechanical data before choosing their set-ups. Real computer software as used during a race weekend will then reveal how the changes would affect lap times and overall pace. Virgin technical director Nick Wirth will also make an appearance on the stand during the course of the show.

Both Virgin Racing and its technology partner Computer Sciences Corporation (CSC) are keen to showcase the pitwall environment and the practicalities of using CFD as the primary and only tool in race car design. While the experience mixes a family-friendly activity with technical intricacy needing careful thought, CSC believes this interactive experience should be a useful insight into the Formula 1 world and CFD's potentially revolutionary impact on motor sport.

Along with Virgin's interactive experience, the *Motor Sport* team will be on hand all weekend to meet readers – and look out for a special show subscription offer, too. Come and see us on stand number 6251. *James Gent*



For tickets to the event, log on to www.theticketfactory.com/ai/online or phone 0844 581 1420 for more details. Tickets for adults start at £30 per day and from £19.50 per day for children (aged 5-15 years). Group tickets are also available. All tickets allow free access to the Fifth Gear Live Action Arena.

ALSO THERE...

■ **CLASSIC TEAM LOTUS** As war rages over Lotus Racing's designs on the Team Lotus moniker, fans can enjoy their own blast from the past by voting ahead of the event for the cars they want to see. Hot favourites to appear are Jim Clark's 25 from 1963, Mario Andretti's 79 from 1978, and Ayrton Senna's 99T from 1987. Log on to www.facebook.com/ClassicTeamLotus to vote.



■ **HISTORIC McLAREN RACING** The team will showcase an array of iconic machines at the NEC. Alongside team founder Bruce McLaren's striking M7C from 1969 (above) will be a veritable timeline of the Woking outfit's title successes, including Ayrton Senna's MP4/4 from 1988, Mika Häkkinen's MP4-13 from 1998 and Lewis Hamilton's MP4-23 from 2008. For the supercar enthusiast, the new twin-turbocharged MP4-12C will be displayed ahead of its 2011 debut in the showrooms.

■ **BRITAIN'S TOURING CAR STARS IN ACTION** From the World Touring Car Championship, three-time champion Andy Priaulx and eight-time race winner Rob Huff discuss their season-long battle for this year's crown. Newly-crowned British Touring Car Champion Jason Plato will also be in action, capping his appearance on the Autosport Stage with some adrenaline-fuelled competition in the Live Action Arena against *Fifth Gear* co-presenter Tiff Needell.



■ **"AND IT'S GO, GO, GO IN BIRMINGHAM!"** Legendary F1 pundit Murray Walker joins old mate and current F1 commentator Martin Brundle on the Autosport Stage, while the BBC's Jake Humphrey makes his first appearance.

■ **CATERHAM DRIVE EXPERIENCE** Fans wishing to scare themselves silly can enjoy powerslides, donuts and a lap in anger around a purpose-built drift course in a professionally driven Seven at the Caterham Drive Experience.

■ **"I COULD DO THAT..."** Prove your mettle on the BATAK wall, a device designed to hone reaction speeds by recording how many lights illuminated at random a driver can spot and hit in a minute. Jenson Button has managed 114 hits in 60 seconds...

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RACING LIFE



Steve Fecht

A RE-START AND A FINISH...

HUGE NEWS FOR INDYCAR RACING THIS MONTH WITH THE announcement that General Motors is coming back as an engine supplier. This is a tremendous lift for the IZOD IndyCar Series, as well as for motor racing in general in the United States.

The announcement (above, by GM vice-chairman Tom Stephens) of a Chevrolet engine deal for 2012, in partnership with Ilmor Engineering, is the best possible news for Indycar. It means that for the first time in a long time Honda will have the competition they've wanted.

Ilmor will be returning to a relationship with Chevrolet that goes back to the 1980s, when Paul Morgan and Mario Ilien joined forces with Roger Penske to start Ilmor with naming rights to the General Motors engines. For them to come back and compete against Honda is a very big boost for this championship. To have Chevy jump back into the fray is a little bit déjà vu, you know, along with plans to go away from some of the high-banked ovals and move to more one-mile ovals, and more road-racing courses. It's just like old times.

Here's another manufacturer that sees the value of Indycar, and the competition is something that Honda has always wanted. What interests Honda is technical competition, and now they've got it. The presumption is that the Honda Performance Development Group will now look after the Indycar engines rather than Ilmor – for obvious reasons. On top of this, Lotus will also enter the fray (see p28) and there's even talk that Chrysler, or Fiat, will come in for 2012 when we go to the twin-turbo V6 engine. This can only raise the profile of Indycar even further.

Not only that, it tells you something about the economy. This is a big decision – GM is partially owned by the American taxpayer, and this is upwards of a $50 million investment. But in the end General Motors has to sell cars and this can only help them do that. Remember, GM is still in NASCAR, and in the World and British Touring Car Championships with Chevy. The old saying of 'win on Sunday, sell on Monday' – that's a valid concept.

Engine leasing in Indycar has always been on one-year terms, so the teams will be free to choose their engines for the start of 2012. A manufacturer also has to be able to satisfy the demands of the entire grid, to prevent one team from having a dominant engine, like Honda had in Formula 1 for a time. So Chevrolet has to be able to supply every team and that's democratic. Indycar is on its way back, for sure, and we may see the great days again.

Honda will meet the challenge – they always have – and there will be teams who choose to stay with the tried and tested engine. Honda will relish the challenge and you won't see a mass exodus to Chevrolet. Whatever the dyno figures may be like, and however good the simulations, the track is where it matters and there will be teams who remain true to Honda.

On another positive note, things are looking good for my son Graham for Indycar next year. He now has the support of a great sponsor, TBC Retail, one of our biggest tyre distributors with 900 stores right across North America. It's a two-year deal and it means that he now has the calling card he needs to get a ride with a top team.

Ganassi would be the team of choice, of course, but we'll see what happens. This is not just good for Graham, it's good for Indycar as a whole, because it needs a successful American to promote the series which in recent times has been dominated by Europeans and South Americans. So stay tuned – I'm hopeful something can be firmed up before too long.

Sadly, this is my last column for *Motor Sport* magazine. It's been fun, I've enjoyed it, and I would just like to sign off by wishing all my friends in England a happy Christmas holiday and a great new year in 2011.

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DISPATCHES



Ford

A WELSH CHORUS

I ASKED FOR THIS. SO, HERE I AM. ON A WELSH HILLSIDE IN mid-November, in relentless rain, because I dared to suggest that modern World Rally Cars are not exciting to watch.

That would have been alright had I not made this suggestion to Malcolm Wilson, whose M-Sport empire presides over the Ford world rally teams.

Well, I admit I was wrong. OK, it would have been nice to find this out somewhere warmer, but you open your mouth days before Rally GB and this is what you get. Wet feet, shivering extremities, and a ridiculous yearning for a mug of tea and a blanket.

Modern WRC cars are exciting. There, I've said it.

Madame Mégane's torquey turbodiesel has swept us up and over the mountains and now I am looking down into a valley where a Ford Focus is zapping along a muddy track at an impossible rate of knots. Perhaps most impressive is just how neatly these guys drive, how sharply they change direction with apparently no effect on the forward motion of the car. When I last saw rally cars they were constantly sideways, scrabbling for grip and looking like something must have broken. Now they point it, squirt it and they're gone. It all sounds like speedway with a shooting party in the background, the noise bouncing off the sides of the valleys.

The commitment is breathtaking, the leaders visibly faster than those behind. At home you turn on a light to see your way in the dark though you know every step. These guys are flat out into blind corners, over crests. OK, they do recce the stages, but as Wilson explained it is the change in surface that's hard to predict. "They're on gravel set-up but there can be Tarmac, compacted mud, surfaces always changing. That's tricky." I saw what he said. The likes of Loeb, Latvala and Solberg are longer on the power, shorter on the brakes. A tiny mistake can mean disaster.

Returning to Cardiff I was zapped, under braking for a roundabout at Merthyr Tydfil, by a Focus camouflaged as a mud pie. Quick flick left, right, left and it was gone, bang, bang into the darkness. The clock is the enemy. To be late for service is not an option.

I'd been invited to shelter in the 'oasis', a watering hole provided by the Abu Dhabi Tourism Authority. But this was Wales. What we needed was an ark. Next door Mick, the M-Sport chef, fed hungry mechanics before the evening service. What came out of the back of a truck was extraordinary. Roast lamb with mash and veg, pasta if you preferred, and apple crumble made by Di Hopkins, or Mum as she is known. No wonder this is such a happy team.

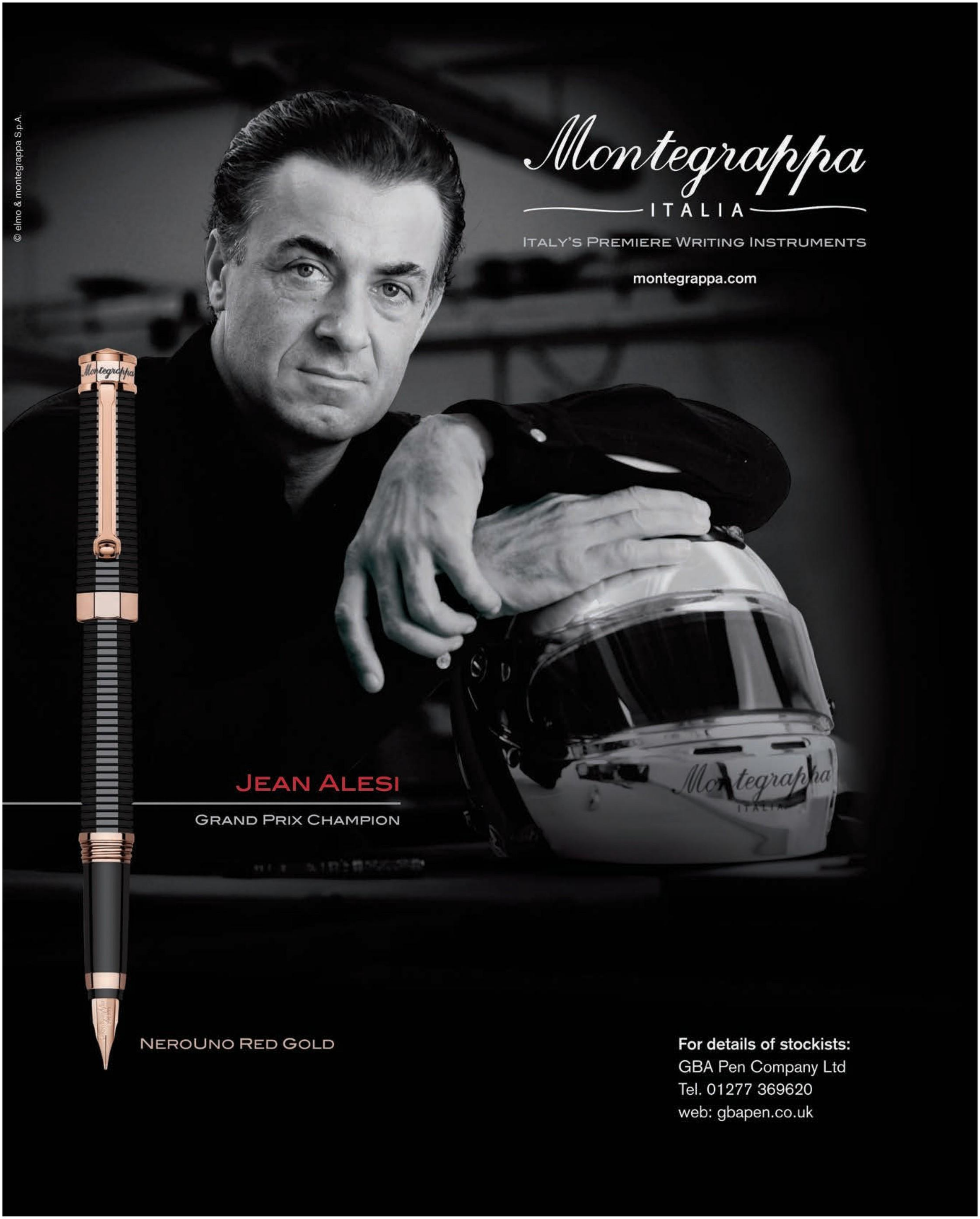
Having feasted, the mechanics waited for the cars to return, along 100 miles of public roads, from Hafren and Sweet Lamb. Latvala would need a new rear left corner, destroyed by a puncture. No problem. Lying in muddy puddles, they changed a clutch in three minutes, a gearbox in 15, and in half an hour a virtually new Focus was ready to return to battle. Their labours were a joy to behold.

The fans in Cardiff, and there were many, were treated to a 'live' Q&A with Kimi Räikkönen. Those unfamiliar with Formula 1 were surprised by the brevity of the answers. Asked about the conditions, he said it was very slippery, and admitted that he was lifting where perhaps he didn't need to. The Finn has been on a mountain of a learning curve.

On Sunday Loeb kept an inspired Petter Solberg's privately-run Citroën at bay despite the Norwegian's adoring fans cheering him every metre of the way. Third was Latvala in the Ford, giving him runner-up slot in the championship. Loeb may have wondered what Solberg could've done in a factory car. Down in Wales, there was never any doubt about the championship. Meanwhile, in the 'oasis', the F1 title went to the wire under the Abu Dhabi lights.

A bedraggled banner proclaimed the joys of a visit to Wales. 'Drop by, do stuff, leave happy', it said. I did. All three, in fact.

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Mat Oxley

ON TWO WHEELS



LAT

ROSSI'S BIG BANG THEORY

THE STOPWATCH NEVER LIES. THAT MAY BE TRUE BUT IT doesn't always tell the whole truth. That, at least, is what Valentino Rossi must have been telling himself after his much-anticipated Ducati debut in early November (above). After two days of testing aboard the factory's Desmosedici MotoGP bike at Valencia he was 15th fastest, 1.7 seconds off the pace. Oh dear.

Rossi isn't allowed to tell the world what he thinks of the Ducati, because although Yamaha granted him early release from his contract they banned him from discussing his new bike in public. But it is unlikely he is really worried.

This was a shakedown test, aimed at using Rossi's remarkable abilities as a development rider to give Ducati engineers a direction in which to work during the 11-week winter testing moratorium. A damaged shoulder also slowed him. Straight after the tests he returned to Italy to undergo surgery on the injury, the legacy of a fall in a charity motocross event last April. Last season the tendon damage sustained in that low-speed fall troubled him more than the broken leg he suffered in a horrible 110mph crash at Mugello.

The big question Ducati wanted answered in Spain was which way they should go with engine configuration. Rossi evaluated two versions of the Desmosedici V4 with different firing configurations – the so-called 'screamer' and 'big bang'. The fact he started out at Yamaha doing exactly the same job gives some indication of the crucial nature of combustion timing in motorcycle racing.

The screamer and the big bang use differently timed crankshafts: the screamer fires evenly, the big bang fires unevenly with pairs of pistons firing within a few degrees of each other, hence the nickname. The aural result is a sonorous groaner of an engine, compared to the higher-pitched screamer which sends shivers down your spine every time it rockets past.

On track the big bang's result is more rider-friendly performance, with improved feel and traction during acceleration. Remarkably, no one is quite sure why. One theory suggests that grouping the power pulses together allows the rear tyre to regain grip between each salvo. Another proposes that the big bang exorcises 'inertia torque', the effect of the crankshaft decelerating and accelerating during each stroke, which spoils the rider's feel for what's going on at the rear tyre.

Even Ducati's genius chief engineer Filippo Preziosi admits he doesn't have all the answers: "We have numbers that show the big bang has some advantages and numbers that show the other configuration is better in other areas. But these numbers don't show the whole truth. From the work we do on the test bench we have less than 50 per cent of the truth, the rest comes from the rider."

Following Rossi's input at Valencia Preziosi seems likely to take the big bang road, which is the same road Rossi chose when he started with Yamaha in 2004 and the same road Casey Stoner chose during his time with Ducati.

The unevenly timed crankshaft does cost a little in terms of pure horsepower, but that's irrelevant because the screamer's power is so difficult to put to the ground. "The last time I tried the screamer it wanted to rip my arms off and spin up and buck and weave," says Stoner. "I wanted nothing more to do with it."

No one knows whether Rossi will win on the big bang Ducati, not even the man himself, which is perhaps why he wore a question mark on his helmet at Valencia. However, Rossi's faithful crew chief Jeremy Burgess – who followed him from Honda to Yamaha and now to Ducati – is convinced that this will be another successful venture: "That is without question. We've done it before: we did it when we went from two-stroke to four-stroke (in 2002), when we went from Honda to Yamaha, and when we went from 990cc MotoGP bikes to 800s, and now we're a bit older and wiser."

The stopwatch will next pass judgement on Rossi and his 2011 rivals at Sepang in early February.

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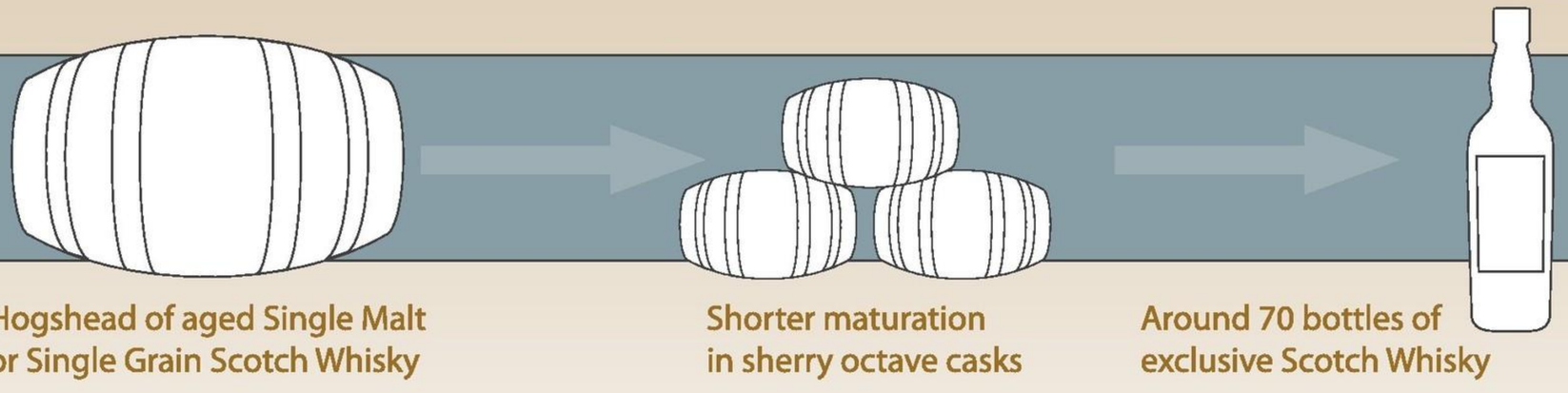
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THE US SCENE



LAT

RETURN TO THE ODYSSEY

BACK IN OCTOBER I SPENT A FEW DAYS AT OUR EDITOR-in-chief Nigel Roebuck's place in Surrey. As any regular *Motor Sport* reader knows, Nigel's interests in motor racing are both catholic and eclectic. I've had the pleasure of working with Nigel for more than 30 years and I know few others with such a broad knowledge and passion for the entire sport. So it's always a delight to share yarns and reminisce with Nigel.

During my short stay at his house we enjoyed some of his wide selection of DVDs, including the story of Curtis Turner, reckoned by many contemporaries to be the most talented NASCAR driver ever. We also watched Doug Nye's superb Standard-Triumph film of the 1955 Tourist Trophy at Dundrod as well as the official video of the Indianapolis 500 through the '70s, plus a couple of DVDs about the original, unlimited Can-Am.

All of Nigel's DVDs were captivating and sparked many good-humoured stories, but the Can-Am film, presented by Sam Posey and Jim Hall and titled *Can-Am, the Odyssey of Speed*, really caught my attention. The Can-Am and preceding run of Group 7-type races through the early '60s were an essential part of my motor racing education. I enjoyed some of these races from trackside, featuring an increasingly impressive selection of Anglo-American specials driven by top drivers from Formula 1, USAC and American sports car racing.

The cars were as eclectic as the wide selection of drivers, starting with Lotus 19s and 23s, Cooper Monacos and Brabham BT8s, and morphing through Roger Penske's Zerex Special into a spectacular series of American V8-powered beasts including King Cobras, Bruce McLaren's original McLaren-Oldsmobile, Lotus 30s, McLaren M1As, M1Bs and M6s, Lola T70s, Dan Gurney's McLeagle and Jim Hall's Chaparrals. Ultimately, of course, along came the turbo Porsche 917/10 and 917/30 by which time I was on the job covering the races with gusto.

It was an incredible time for American racing as the cars went faster and faster, driven by huge horsepower and by a steep increase in technology and innovation. Helped by a technical liaison with General Motors, Hall's superb Chaparrals were true leading-edge designs bringing new chassis materials, wings and ultimately ground effects to the sport. With Posey's charming narrative assistance Hall explains his development of the Chaparrals in *The Odyssey of Speed* and an excellent selection of film brings Can-Am to vibrant life.

As I remarked to Nigel, it's no wonder that we fell in love with racing because the cars were spectacular to watch, slithering through the corners as they understeered in and oversteered out of the turns. You could see the drivers hard at work and feel the pulsating power as they put it to the ground.

Another thing the film reveals is the close racing that was so often a part of this championship. Most of us remember Can-Am as a spectacular series featuring runaway victories by the likes of Bruce McLaren and Denny Hulme (above, leading at Watkins Glen in 1972 aboard a McLaren M20). But *The Odyssey of Speed* shows otherwise, as the stars of the show battle side-by-side through the corners in a kind of racing we no longer enjoy.

Then, of course, there were huge crowds spilling over the fences at every race, from Canada to Long Island to the west coast. We tend to forget how incredibly popular Can-Am was, with massive traffic jams in and out of the race tracks and pages and pages of coverage in the local newspapers.

Sadly, those days are long gone. But if you want to remember and enjoy how healthy road racing was in the US and Canada for a fleeting period through the 1960s and into the '70s, then I urge you to sit down for an hour or so with *Can-Am, the Odyssey of Speed* and warmly relive those great days.

Letters

Vettel shows mettle

Sir,

How enjoyable for me to have got home from work and find the newly-crowned Formula 1 World Champion to be Sebastian Vettel.

The way practice had panned out I fully expected Fernando Alonso to have taken the title and for it to have then be tainted by the antics of the Ferrari team at Hockenheim.

Vettel has proved to be the fastest in what has sometimes been a fragile package, and has shown courage and nerve for one so young.

His over-enthusiasm has led to some crashes this season, but as Steve Parrish very often points out regarding MotoGP riders, "You can teach someone not to crash but you can't teach them to go fast."

Philip Cracknell, Waingroves, Derbyshire

Not so Jolly Jack

Sir,

Gordon Cruickshank's feature on the Ferguson P99 Grand Prix car in your November issue brought back some memories. As mentioned, it appeared at Aintree for a run in the British Grand Prix, where the car was down for 'Fearless' Jack Fairman to campaign. It was soaking wet on race day, but, dedicated as I was, I was out round the track with my camera collecting reference. A frequent companion those days was photographer Mike Cooper, and, soaked to the skin, we were commiserating over our lot on a bit of Tarmac which led off the Railway Straight when Jolly Jack approached at reduced speed towards us and pulled over to stop. He muttered something by way of disgust, and, having climbed out and had a think, got back in and asked us to give him a push-start to get the car back to the pits.



As the incident was mentioned in the article, I thought you might like to see the snaps I took in between chatting and pushing (above). This push-start was, as stated, the reason the car was later black-flagged after Moss took over, but the incident helped to enliven an otherwise very soggy day for two hardy souls.

Michael Turner, Chartridge, Bucks

Four-wheel drift

Sir,

It was a great pleasure to be reacquainted with the Ferguson P99 and Sir Stirling Moss's mastery of it. In 1961 Mark Rigg and I were testing the rebuilt Alta-Bugatti (often called the Chorlton Special after the original builder) on a very wet day at Silverstone. As I was going down the straight in a cloud of spray, Jack Fairman came effortlessly past and continued around Woodcote without effort. I, on the other hand, had to give it some welly trying to keep up and promptly spun round as the double blowers abruptly came in. The car certainly made me a fan of four-wheel drive.

I also enjoyed the article on 'our own' John Fitch, who we see all the time at the VSCCA's home track of Lime Rock. I was lucky enough to be seated next to him at dinner one night. He's very entertaining and always maintains Eva Peron fancied him... Great driver and a great man, doing a great deal for driver safety.

Mike Virr, Fairfield, Connecticut, USA

Ferguson's Tasman calling

Sir,

I loved the story of Sir Stirling and the Ferguson at the Oulton Park Gold Cup meeting – wonderful to see the pleasure he continues to give to so many enthusiasts. I used to save my pocket money to send Stirling a Christmas card each year in the late 1950s, and I always got a reply then, as you still do now!

As you say in the article, the Ferguson was equipped with a 2.5-litre Climax motor and sent to New Zealand for the 1963 Tasman Series, which included Brabham, McLaren, Surtees, Maggs and all the top locals. You mentioned the Ferguson being raced in the New Zealand Grand Prix at Pukekohe, where Graham Hill sadly broke down while in second place. However, although Graham then returned home, the car stayed on and Innes Ireland took the wheel for the next three NZ international races.

After a third place at Levin's tight circuit, where he was supposedly the first person to spin the car, Innes retired at Wigram at about half distance "in a cloud of steam", after starting from the back of the grid. But he took another third at the far southern Teretonga track, behind McLaren and Maggs.

Don't we all wish we'd had better cameras in those days, and that our parents were less concerned about us using up all that film?

Mark Holman, Wellington, New Zealand

Thou shall not covet...

Sir,

As a youngster I eagerly awaited the weekly visits by the Harrison brothers to their mother ('GTO history', November letters), who lived in a bungalow directly across the road from our house. The GTO you featured, 3505, was a regular sight there, the other brother sometimes appearing in another 250GTO, or one of those Testa Rossa sports cars that Nick Mason says he would like to have in his collection.

I must confess that my observance of the tenth commandment was somewhat lacking on these occasions.

Roger Stead, Sheffield

A lap with Vaccarella

Sir,

Upon our return from Sicily, we found the December issue of *Motor Sport* at home. And coincidentally, there was a major item on the Targa Florio. I was happy to read that Damien Smith liked the island, the track – including the numerous bumps and ditches – and the company of some Sicilians. I read the article with pleasure and thought about our visit some days before, when my friend Nino Vaccarella drove us around the long circuit. It was a pleasure being driven by the 'maestro' himself, doing all the corners in style.

While driving through Cerda, Vaccarella told us that we would not stop at this museum, but go straight to Collesano where Giacinto Gargano, conservator of the local museum, was waiting for us. And I fully agree – a fine exhibition they have there. Allow me a few remarks on the article: the large photo of the 512S shows Ignazio Giunti at the wheel. Also, Nino crashed his P4 in 1967 rather than '66. On the big colour photo, the Ferrari is running in the opposite direction through the pitlane. But in all, it was great reading, as always with *Motor Sport*.

Ed Heuvink, De Bilt, Holland

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

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Letters

Language, Brian!

Sir,

Damien Smith's excellent feature on the Targa Florio reminded me of the 1971 race, when I was making a film for Firestone. Brian Redman kindly drove me around the course in one of the factory Porsche 914/6s that the works drivers were given to practice in. I was filming with a sizeable hand-held camera and Brian was miked up for sound giving his impressions as he drove at speed. Very insightful, although I had to cut out some of Brian's salty language as practice took place without the roads being closed to everyday traffic. You'd come round a blind bend at speed and confront a herd of sheep or a truck on the wrong side of the road. Scary, although Brian always seemed to pre-empt every situation and calmly drove through with a few choice words. Mind you, driving the 914/6 must have been a doddle compared with the 908/3.

As for charging £15,000 extra for the camel-dung yellow paint job on the 458 – please! Ferrari should be paying the customer £15,000 for agreeing to go with such a colour.

Tony Maylam, Kensington, London

The best club in town

Sir,

What a marvellous article Nigel Roebuck gave us on his interview with Juan Manuel Fangio (November issue), and where better to meet than that charismatic institution, The Steering Wheel Club in London's Mayfair. Unfortunately in its last year or so in the 1980s the club rather went downhill after being taken over by new management, and it is a huge shame that the priceless contents disappeared. However, I have many happy memories of that establishment. Frank the barman was the spitting image of Alan Whicker, and he and his brother Ernest who ran the restaurant were huge characters.

As a young man living in London in the late '60s/early '70s, the club was a sanctuary after a busy day in *Autosport's* advertising department. A glass of good house wine, before and during dinner (the house pâté and prawn curry were the best anywhere), with a brandy or two afterwards, relaxing in comfortable leather armchairs, was the perfect way to spend an evening with my girlfriend or friends. On a summer's evening the windows that looked out onto Curzon Street would be open, and the goings on in the flat opposite were often a source of great amusement. Curzon Street was and is very smart, but the area was famous for the odd red glowing window!

The club was frequented by many top drivers, team managers and owners of the era, and you never knew who would be in. It was irreplaceable.

Richard Nayler, Tenbury Wells, Worcs

Tigering to the finish

Sir,

Thank you for the excellent article on Emanuele Pirro (October issue), which mentions the ACO's unhappiness at him standing up in the cockpit to celebrate his 2002 Audi Le Mans win. Even though I was there, I didn't notice until watching a DVD of the race that just before the final corner, Pirro reached up and attached two 'horns' to the front of his helmet above the visor.

I asked him about this and he said that before leaving for Le Mans, his son Goffredo (then six) wanted to give him something to bring good luck. He gave him a pair of suction-cup tiger ears and said, "stick them on your helmet during the race; they will give you the fighting spirit to win". So Pirro stuck them on his helmet just before the chequer. He said his son was over the moon when he saw the images, and of course his whole school and friends knew about it.

And now so do *Motor Sport's* readers. Please don't tell the ACO. I agree with Rob Widdows that motor racing needs people like Pirro.

By the way, the article correctly reported that Pirro was one of the first drivers to win Le Mans in a diesel car (the Audi R10 TDI in '06), along with Frank Biela, but the third driver was Marco Werner, not Tom Kristensen.

Don J Trantow, Buford, Georgia, USA

Looking for Clark's cross

Sir,

I read with great interest Andrew Marriott's story in July of his pilgrimage to the site where Jim Clark lost his life. I was a true fan of his and remember that day well. My wife and I were in Europe in October and planned to go to as many tracks as possible, including Hockenheim. I wanted to experience what you did, so we set out to find the spot.

We drove to the access road like you said. Before I could drive to the No7 tree the locals stopped me and told us we couldn't drive up there. I told them we wanted to see the Clark tribute and they directed us to the new one. So with your map and instructions I was off, and my wife being a good sport went with me. We found the No7 tree and followed the path; when I saw the two pine trees I thought of Jimmy coming down the straight and felt a lot of emotion, but when I got there my heart sank. There was nothing. Someone had dug up and taken the cross. What a disappointment. But I saw the spot and said a prayer. I just wanted to say thank you for writing that article because I got to see the place where one of my heroes passed.

Mike Reed, Santa Fe Springs, California, USA

Andrew Marriott tells us that the wooden cross was damaged and that the Clark fan who put it there is replacing it with a stone version – Ed.

Coming through, Eric...

Sir,

I can offer coda to your coverage of Eric Carlsson's first RAC rally win in 1960 (December issue). That year, the RAC had built in a series of special stages at various race tracks around the country, with the climax being a group of races at Brands Hatch. As a result BMC entered an extra 'semi-works' Mini alongside with racing driver John Whitmore at the wheel – and somehow I ended up in the navigator's seat.

No one could keep up with Carlsson, though John did well in the circuit tests. But when it came to Brands John was determined to do his bit for the team and show off the Mini to its best advantage as it lined up on the grid with Carlsson just in front. (Alas, we navigators were turfed out in the paddock so could only watch.)

At the end of the first lap John, with enormous élan, slid the Mini sideways through Paddock, nudging Carlsson out of the way. I'm sure that Carlsson, with overall victory in the bag, was in no mood for fighting and let John sail away.

At the banquet afterwards the Saab came up onto the stage to a fanfare. It had been beautifully polished – but the tell-tale scar on one side from John's 'nudge' brought us a little secret pleasure.

John Makin, Oxshott, Surrey

KEEP IN TOUCH

The *Motor Sport* website is fast becoming one of *the* places to discuss motor racing past, present and future. Don't miss the opportunity to comment on blogs, video and audio podcasts, and read Nigel Roebuck's newsletter and the editor's monthly letter. To get involved in the discussion simply log on to www.motorsportmagazine.com and tell our writers exactly what you think! Also, don't forget that if you have any images which would be suitable for our You Were There feature in the magazine, please send them to the office (address on p40).



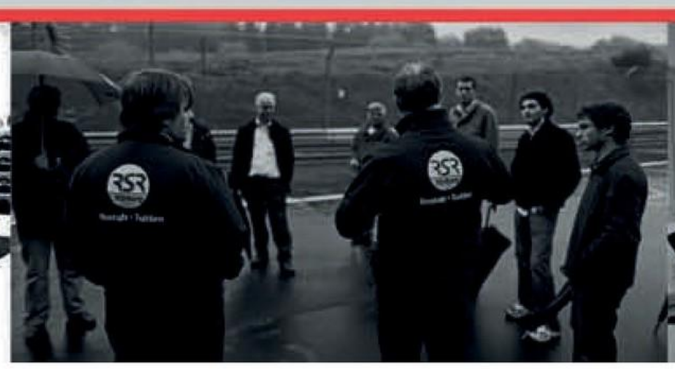
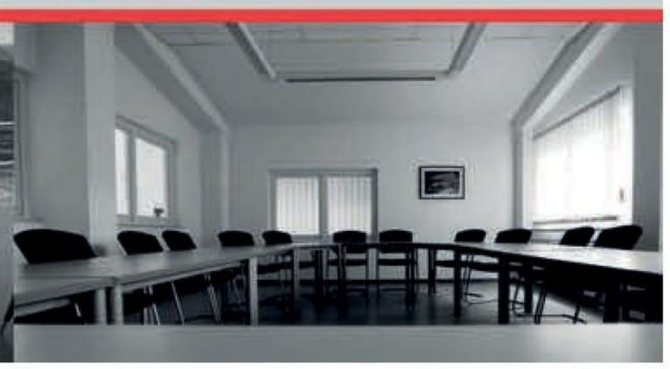
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GP SEASON REVIEW 2010

Billed as one of the best seasons of Formula 1 ever, 2010 certainly delivered, with five drivers (including three World Champions) fighting for the ultimate prize. But, of course, only one could take the spoils – once he'd dealt with an on-form team-mate...



GP SEASON
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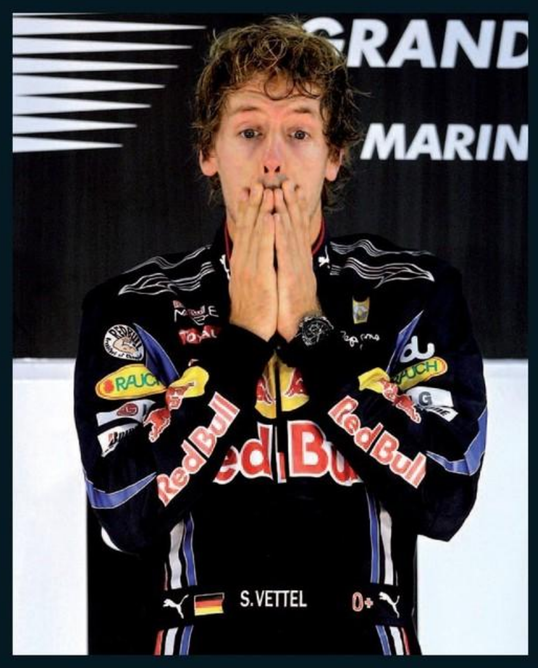
It's your round-up



A great season of F1 such as we've just enjoyed provokes some heated discussion. Time then for the *Motor Sport* team to descend on our local, the Chelsea Ram, for a pint and a pub debate

All images LAT, Mercedes GP, Red Bull/Getty & McLaren





INSIGHT

DESTINED FOR GREATNESS

He had a few wobbles this year, but Vettel was always a champion-in-waiting

SEBASTIAN VETTEL – YOUNGEST FORMULA 1 point scorer, polesitter, winner and now… You know the rest. Twenty-three years and 135 days isn't long to wait for motor sport's greatest crown. Not long, either, to prove what we already knew: that Vettel was a born veteran. Ready on his debut to score an F1 point; ready in only his third full season to smash-and-grab the drivers' title.

And that's what he did. While others bickered, politicked, mind-gamed and washed themselves down the plughole of points permutation, Seb V just went for it. Isn't that what racing drivers are meant to do, the very reason why we thrill to their skill? He wasn't always the fastest this year, nor was he unbeatable, indomitable. Mid-season, with team-mate Webber at his own formidable peak, Vettel looked rattled and tried to force things (Istanbul, Spa…).

The mark of this young man, though, was his recovery from the realisation that, no, for all his mercurial gifts and status as a Red Bull chosen son, this wasn't his title by right. Speed alone would not be enough. He'd have to fight to the *very* end to attain his birthright and rediscover the joy he'd always found in being a race driver. And my, how he did. Over the final four races, he won three times and took three poles, a full house denied only by the lap 45 Korean detonation of a Renault RS27 V8. He forced himself into contention with a combination of immense skill, error-free driving and the coolest of heads. In Abu Dhabi, pressure at its greatest for all four remaining title battlers, he asked race engineer Guillaume Rocquelin not to tell him what was going on behind: "I'll do my job in the race, I don't want to be distracted by anything else." He only knew he'd won the title when 'Rocky' name-checked the finishers, then screamed "*Du bist Weltmeister!*" into Seb's cans. The tears flowed and there, still, was the sunny and heart-on-his-sleeve youngster who wooed us all when he first arrived in the Istanbul paddock in '06.

Four years on, he isn't much changed, despite some added armour. And while steely speed was always bound to cause sparks against a flint like Webber, Vettel has never fanned the flames. The only game he's played is one called the Formula 1 World Championship. He does it well. There are signs in Germany that this young man's style is proving popular. Broadcaster RTL has noted its F1 audience figures not only going up, but improving in quality: Vettel fans are younger, richer, smarter and, er, more sophisticated than Schumacher's barmy army ever was. (Hockenheim main grandstand, any 'Schumi summer' from 2000-06: a vision of mulleted F1 hell.)

These new acolytes are turning out in their tens of thousands to fete this younger hero. In Seb's home town of Heppenheim earlier this year, a Vettel F1 street demo drew so many punters that local motorway exits were closed to prevent traffic meltdown. Within Planet Red Bull, Vettel's loved, too. His success has vindicated every energy drink Euro spent on the company's costly and otherwise patchily successful young driver programme, while also allowing Dr Helmut Marko, Red Bull's talent spotter and motor sport special adviser, eternal bragging rights. It's also likely to ensure the future of the F1 programme. Race teams can never be considered 'core business' for drinks companies, but when said team has won both world titles with a driver who's emerged from its own talent academy, it keeps the naysayers at bay. Next year, in an RB7 that inevitably will be tailored to his desires, he'll potentially be unstoppable and it's here where there may be trouble. Already the team's centre of gravity has shifted his way, and henceforth, with a champion on one side of the garage, any gravitational pull will increase. Mark Webber has done a remarkable job these past two seasons to force his team to afford him equal respect, and next year that challenge will be greater. As he so publicly stated (and proved) at Silverstone this year, he's no one's number two, so Christian Horner is going to have quite a job keeping internal tribal loyalties from disuniting a thus far remarkably cohesive team.

Will any of this be worrying Seb? Not now, and likely not next season either. He's a ferocious competitor, a devil behind the wheel, and he's remembered again how to grin when he's winning. Having lost, then found, this precious thing during a tempestuous season, he won't be letting it go any time soon. *Anthony Rowlinson*



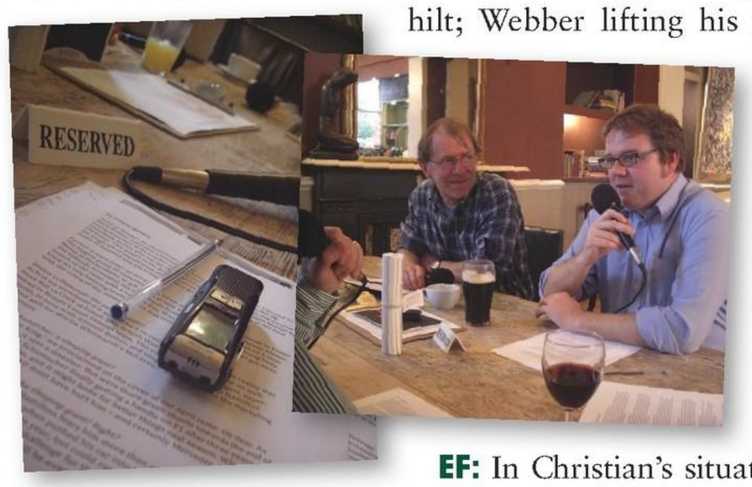
Vettel vs Webber: an inconvenient truth?

Mark Webber even said it himself. The team with the quickest car expected its young superstar to be number one this year – didn't it? When it mattered the Red Bull protégé hit the top of the points standings, but he couldn't have left it later. It was the 30-something Aussie who led the championship through the summer, not 23-year-old Vettel. And team boss Christian Horner had the tough job of improvising as the story got stickier, particularly at the twin peaks of Istanbul and Silverstone.

NIGEL ROEBUCK: Occasionally you get a situation where it is perceived that a team has *a* driver and the other guy is always the *other* driver. We were all aware of it, for instance, in the McLaren era when Mika Häkkinen was teamed with David Coulthard, and we were certainly aware of it in the Schumacher/Ferrari era. I don't think in the case of Red Bull that it's as overt as it was at Ferrari. But, like it or not, there are reasons why Vettel could be considered the favoured one. He was brought on by Helmut Marko from way back as a kid. He's young, he's German-speaking, Red Bull is an Austrian company and he's going to be around for a long time. Webber, on the other hand, is getting into his mid-thirties and he's had a very different… I hate to use the word 'journey', God help me… to where he is now. The perception is that to some degree Vettel has had it easy. Of course you've got to be able to do the job and he has this fantastic fundamental talent, but he was brought on and everything was paid for. It was all quite seamless and straightforward, whereas Mark has fought and grafted every step of the way.

ED FOSTER: Before Vettel came into Red Bull Racing at the start of 2009 everyone perceived that he would blow Webber away.

DAMIEN SMITH: The thing about Webber is that he always tries to dominate his team-mates. In every team he's been in, he psychologically gets on top of them early on and puts them in their place. Earlier in the season when he would outpace Vettel he'd use that by saying 'hey mate, you're supposed to be the wonderkid and here's me beating you. What's going on?' Just putting a doubt in Sebastian's head.



NR: Yeah, and he wouldn't even have had to say it. At Monte Carlo – the one everyone wants to win – each time they restarted after a safety car Mark disappeared again. I certainly at that stage had the impression Vettel was nonplussed, because if someone is quicker than him in the same car fundamentally he feels there is something wrong. My feeling is that when Mark is really on it he's almost unbeatable. Spain and Monaco and Silverstone – it was hard to imagine Mark getting beaten in any of those races.

DS: The same is true for Sebastian in Suzuka, Brazil, in Abu Dhabi, too. They say Vettel is the 'new Schumacher' which is a little glib, but there are some parallels to Michael's early Benetton days: you could see the quality and the talent there, but he would make big mistakes in racecraft; he'd upset other drivers; he didn't like losing. All these things we see in Sebastian.

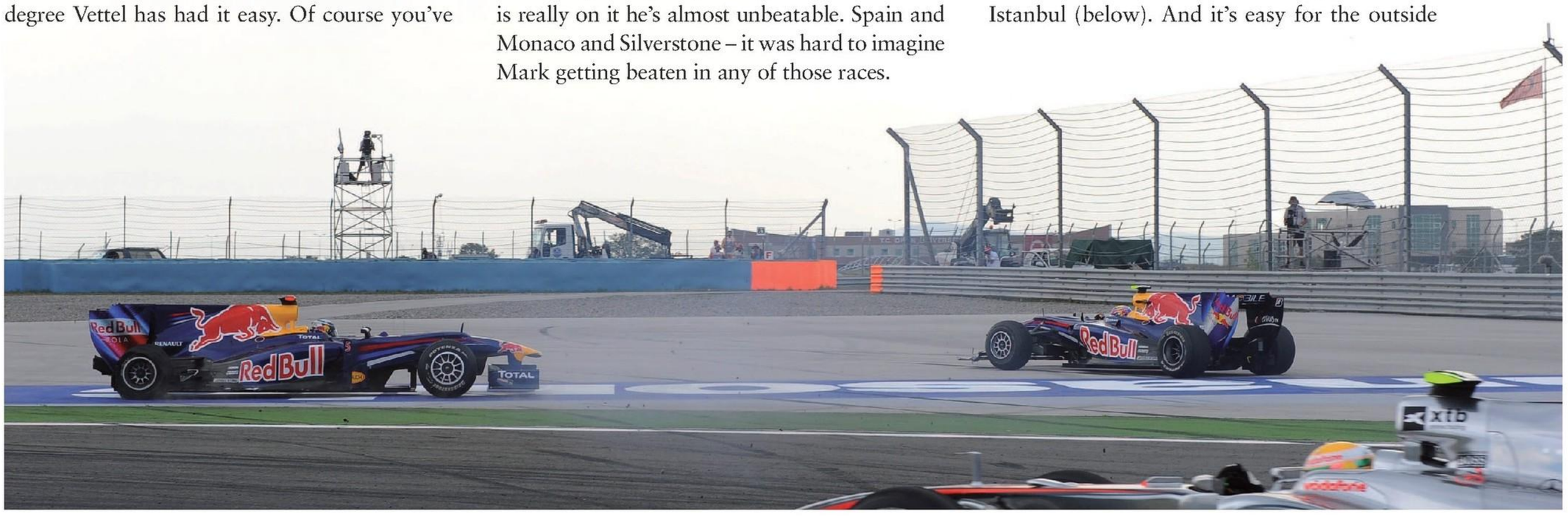
EF: A lot of the moves he pulled off on starting grids this year, chopping across a rival, they should have been picked up on.

NR: Yeah, particularly Hockenheim. Behaving like that – not just Vettel, any of them – that has come from Michael Schumacher. No question.

DS: So how do we think Christian Horner handled the management of the two drivers? He had Helmut Marko in one corner, who has Dietrich Mateschitz's ear, backing Vettel to the hilt; Webber lifting his performance beyond a level he was expected to. Over the course of the season it is very hard to choose which one drove better, really. They both made errors at key points, but both put in great performances, too.

EF: In Christian's situation you're damned if you do and damned if you don't. He's done very well. Both are spiky characters, with Webber coming on the radio at the end of Silverstone saying 'not bad for a number two driver', etc.

NR: What strikes me is you think of Red Bull this season and of course you think of the races both drivers have conclusively won. But you also think of one that was tossed away, which was Istanbul (below). And it's easy for the outside



world to understand why Webber has this perception that the team is fundamentally supporting the other guy because anyone with eyes in their head could see that that accident was caused by Vettel. He was alongside Mark, then slightly ahead of him and turned right before he had cleared him. That was the end of it. There was no argument. Despite that, Helmut Marko blamed Webber. It was an idiotic thing to say, but more to the point it's formed this perception that they are on Vettel's side.

ROB WIDDOWS: Then there was the new front wing at Silverstone [taken off Webber's car and given to Vettel] which was probably Christian Horner's only big mistake of the year. I think if he could have his time again he wouldn't have done that.

DS: OK, last word on Red Bull. Cards on the table. Which one drove better this year?

EF: I'd say Vettel, mainly because his lost wins were mostly due to mechanical failure.

RW: I'd say Webber, only because he is not as fast as Vettel in my view. Vettel is eye-wateringly quick, very exciting to watch, a bit like Lewis Hamilton. But I think Mark has done a better job for the team this year – despite his comments to the press – against the odds and so-called wise opinion.

NR: Let's face it, without mechanical problems Vettel would have won this year's World Championship quite easily. But some of his mistakes have been absurd: Jenson at Spa, Istanbul as we've said, and there is always the likelihood that he will do these things. Mark made loads of mistakes at Melbourne, in front of his home crowd. And Korea, well, what do you say? It was a little mistake he made that led to it, but the cost was very high. I would say of the two Vettel is probably quicker. But I honestly don't think there's a great deal in it.

DS: No, there's nothing in it. I think Vettel edges it because of his reliability problems. But either – both – would have been worthy World Champions. And Vettel drove a champion's race in Abu Dhabi.

NR: Yup. The last thing I would say is that I do sympathise with Mark, although I know he has perhaps laboured it too much. But if you talk to Coulthard about his McLaren days with Häkkinen he will tell you what a difference it makes to feel you are not quite what the team wants, that they would prefer it to be the other guy. It's a very hard thing to get past.



Ferrari: a team order of merit?

The biggest point of controversy in 2010: the not-very-coded message to Felipe Massa at Hockenheim to gift a win to new Ferrari team-mate Fernando Alonso. The tabloids screamed, the fan forums frothed… and the FIA punished a clear breach of the rules with a modest fine. Was that because the governing body knew its rule banning team orders was unworkable? Or did Ferrari get away with the crime of the season?

DS: I still think there was a huge overreaction. Now, I understand why there was an overreaction. None of us want to see team orders. But what were they to do? Massa was never going to win the World Championship this year. OK, at Hockenheim he drove very well, but he was in the lead because of the circumstances at the start between Vettel and Alonso. The reality was that Alonso was the guy who could take the fight to McLaren and Red Bull. This whole rule has never worked properly.

EF: You can't enforce it, can you? You can write it down, but you can't always tell what the teams are ordering their drivers to do.

RW: But it was so early in the season. That's why everybody made such a fuss.

NR: Well, in part it was, but some people appear to be unaware of the fact that it was only the Schumacher/Barrichello scandal in Austria [in 2002] – and to my mind that *was* a scandal – that made team orders so controversial. This was entirely different. If you look back to the races before Hockenheim, Ferrari had had a terrible run, in terms of poor reliability, bad luck, mistakes and so on. They were effectively out of the title hunt and to me it was no more than common sense to conclude that with the best will in the world Massa 'just ain't gonna do it. If we are going to have a World Champion this year it can only be Alonso'. Ferrari has always said the team comes first. It was strange that it caused this great hue and cry. Of course it's not something you want to see happen, but neither Ferrari nor McLaren nor Red Bull – nor anyone – is doing this to provide entertainment for the public. They are doing it to win. They were entirely justified doing what they did – team orders have always been a part of F1. Had they not used them, Mike Hawthorn and John Surtees would not have been World Champion.

RW: Except they broke the rule and were taken to court for doing so. And then they weren't really punished, were they? What does it say to everybody else if you break the rule, you go to court and to all intents and purposes you are let off?

EF: I think the FIA realised the rule is unworkable. They know they can't enforce it. The mistake Ferrari made was not to rein in Rob Smedley and tell him what to say.

DS: Ferrari being too honest!

NR: And Max Mosley being against them, which is also rare…

DS: One thing we can rule out is this was not a case of Ferrari favouritism by the FIA because Jean Todt is no great lover of Ferrari these days. That love affair is long over.

EF: The saddest thing to come out of it was the effect on Massa. He put in some good drives early in the season given that he was coming back from a head injury. But after Hockenheim his season tumbled.

NR: Brazil was a case in point. He's never started there in a Ferrari in anything other than pole position, until this year. There had been all this suggestion that Massa would step up to the plate and help Alonso, as he did Kimi Räikkönen three years ago. Now explain that to me: he let Räikkönen by to win the World Championship in 2007 and as I recall not a word of criticism came anybody's way.

DS: Because it was the last race, I suppose. People think there is a different rule – but it's not written that way, is it? The rule has to go. »»

Button vs Hamilton: the perfect team?

At first we wondered if it would be a re-run of Prost vs Senna. The reality was more Hill vs Clark at Lotus: two British World Champions who got on well, paired in Britain's most famous team. The combination of intelligent, super-smooth, at-ease-with-himself Button and tough, super-fast, edgy Hamilton worked well for Martin Whitmarsh's McLaren – and not just for the marketing department.





DS: Everyone rubbed their hands at what could be coming up: the reigning World Champion arriving at a new team and everyone asking 'is he mad? It's Lewis's team'. We all know what a tough character Lewis is and we thought this was going to be fireworks. What we didn't take into account is that Jenson is just incredibly at ease with himself, very confident. He knew going in that Lewis was going to be quicker on occasion, probably more occasions than not. Lewis is a great qualifier, Jenson is not. But I think coming off the back of the championship with Brawn last year he was ready for something new. Clearly something went wrong with Brawn which has never been fully explained in public, and he fitted into McLaren so well.

NR: Yeah, I must confess I was one of those who thought, 'God Jenson, is this a good idea?' Of course it turns out it was an extremely good idea. But I think when we were looking ahead and seeing a Prost/Senna situation we were looking at it in terms of driving and results rather than personality. In point of fact, as far as driving is concerned and what they've achieved this year it's been remarkably like Prost and Senna, the difference being that Lewis and Jenson actually get along. Jenson's victories in the early part of the year were classic Prost. I've always looked at Jenson as a sort of lesser Prost. Not to denigrate him at all because I think Prost was one of the very greatest of all time. But in many ways they are very similar. And I think Lewis has benefitted hugely from Jenson's presence, and admits it himself. Not least in terms of what to say, how to behave and so on. There's been a sea change for him this year – Lewis has been without his father for the first time.

RW: Jenson's almost been an elder brother…

NR: Well, there's no question Lewis has been a looser, more relaxed individual this year than I ever remember seeing him.

DS: Another comparison to the past you have made, Nigel, is Lewis Hamilton and Gilles Villeneuve. He's absolutely flat out all the time and there is no compromise – which I think is what is great about Lewis Hamilton.

NR: I absolutely agree with you. We've talked about Prost/Senna and Hill/Clark comparisons. You could also make a case for Villeneuve and Jody Scheckter.



Michael Schumacher: a sleeping giant?

'Return of the King', we proclaimed on the cover of our April issue. Oh dear. As comebacks go, it was a disaster. But were there green shoots towards the end of the season? Was Schumacher finally getting a handle on F1 after three years out of the sport? Maybe, and it might bode for better things next season. Whatever, his poor form in 2010 must have hurt him – and certainly Mercedes-Benz.

NR: Michael is a fantastically skilled Grand Prix driver, but the incident with Barrichello in Hungary illustrated perfectly why I've never been a fan. As far as this year is concerned, what I've personally become a bit weary of is hearing this endless thing that Michael can't get on with the tyres. My first thought about that was I remember interviewing Ross [Brawn] eight or nine years ago and saying to him 'what is the difference between Michael and the rest?' Ross immediately said 'it's what Michael can do in adversity. It's what Michael can do with a bad car'. At one time that may well have been the case. But I think that it's a bit poor, a bit flimsy, to say poor old Michael can't get on with these front tyres. I was interested to hear Alain Prost say recently that it is obviously just an excuse.

DS: The thing about Michael Schumacher is that in 2010 he was coming back into an F1 that is far more competitive than in any other era. Comparatively the competitive level has gone up hugely and you've got more good drivers at the top of their game, plus Felipe Massa, plus Nico Rosberg – who deserves a lot of credit for what he's done – not to mention Robert Kubica…



NR: That can't be said enough. Nico has somehow been barely noticed. Here we are not talking about Mercedes, but Michael Schumacher. And Nico has simply annihilated him. Nico hasn't had the best of luck this season, but I think he has had a tremendously good season and he is underrated and overlooked.

RW: Rosberg seems to me to go about his business with a singular lack of drama and controversy, and therefore he's not really of that much interest to most sections of the media. What I don't get is that so many top racing drivers have told me over the years that you do not forget how to do it.

EF: Michael hasn't forgotten how to drive an F1 car, it's just that edge that makes all the difference has faded a little.

NR: I'll confess, when I interviewed Alonso and started to talk about Michael, pretty much everyone had said the same thing: he's 41, life changes, the cars and tyres are different. And Fernando is adamant that if the Mercedes is decent next year and the tyres suit him he will be right back. There aren't many people who will say that.

DS: F1 comes down to having the right car, doesn't it? We saw that last year with Brawn coming out of the traps with the double diffuser, which gave Jenson the chance to do the business. If Mercedes comes up with something for next year – and there's no reason to suggest they won't – if he's got a car advantage, Michael will be right there.

NR: If he's got a car advantage. Which is what he did have for the great bulk of his F1 career.

RW: I should say at this point that in my New Year predictions I said Schumacher would win a race this season. Oh dear.

EF: That, and Kimi Räikkönen would come back to F1…

NR: Having won the World Rally Championship!

RW: With permission from the editor, may we move on? ›››



Robert Kubica: no, he's the sleeping giant! Right?

It's often said that Lewis Hamilton fears him more than any other driver. But not in a Renault. Robert Kubica often pushed his car into the Red Bull/Ferrari/McLaren mix this year, but could rarely maintain his challenge. It is universally agreed that he can challenge for the title in a truly competitive car. But we're starting to wonder – will he ever get one?

NR: Well, first of all I'm sure he will get one. Kubica is about as good as there is. Personally I believe Alonso's the best, but I suspect Alonso probably fears Kubica like Lewis does. I really like Kubica – he's a nice guy, a nice dry sense of humour and in terms of his personality he is very laid back. But I don't think he's laid back in terms of driving his team and I think he's driven Renault hard this year and it's shown in the results. They've got a fairly tiny budget compared to the McLarens and Ferraris…

DS: It's not a fair comparison these days.

NR: A driver can have an *immense* effect on the progress of the team. I think Robert is bound, in the end, to finish up in a Ferrari or a McLaren and when that happens the rest need to watch out.

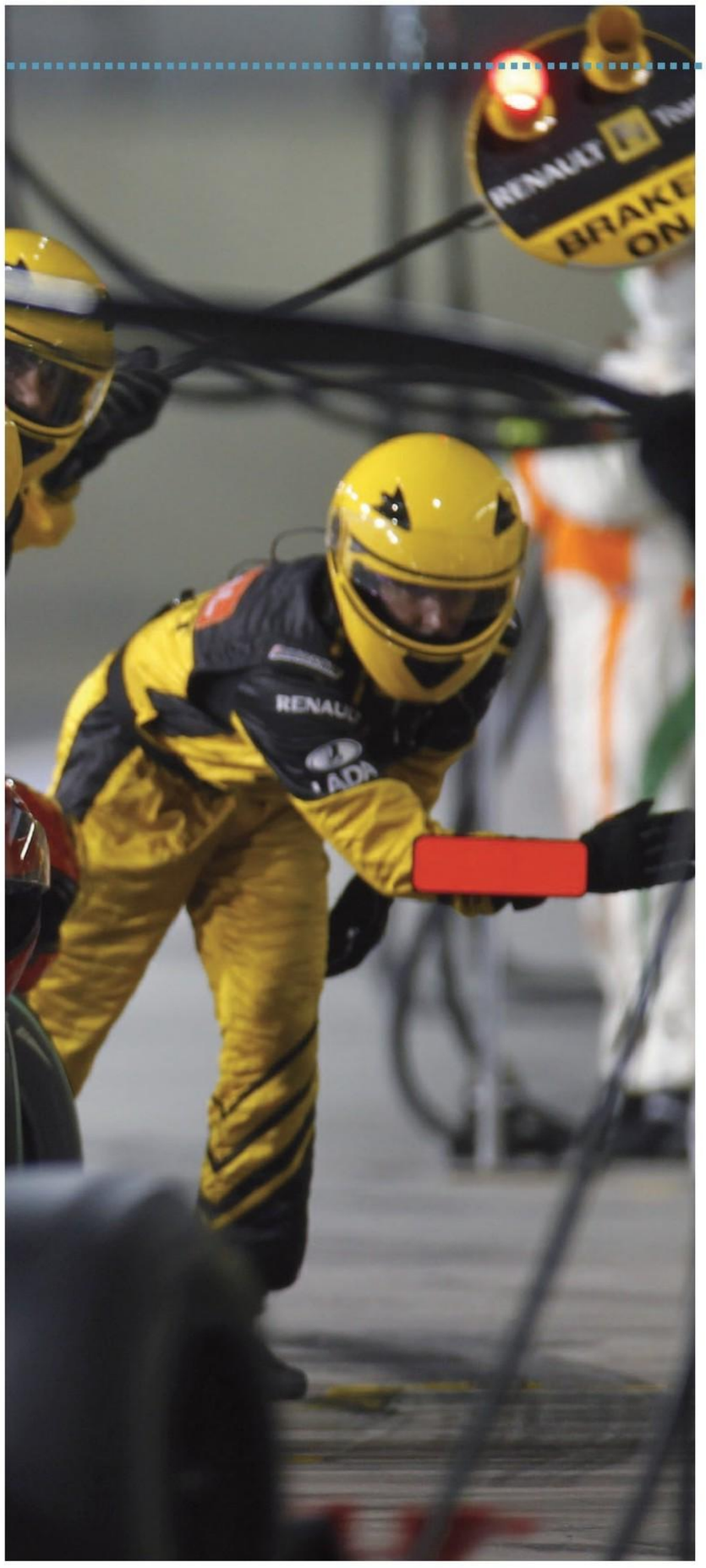
DS: I just hope he doesn't have to wait as long as Jenson did to get in a competitive car – Jenson had to wait 10 years for his chance. It seems such a shame to see him not where he should be. Having said that, I do think Renault deserve credit this year because financially it's not easy for them. Genii Capital has taken it over and it's been well documented that the team is strapped for cash, and I think Eric Boullier has done a great job of keeping that team together. Robert's clearly galvanised them on the track and he's certainly, in my mind, knocking on the door of the top five drivers of the year.

NR: Yep, yep… I would say Kubica and Nico Rosberg I think. One point I would add about Kubica, it almost seems a negative thing, but it truly isn't. Jenson makes remarkably few mistakes, but Robert makes fewer mistakes than any of them. He's almost like Prost in that respect. He hardly ever screws up.

EF: Until Abu Dhabi, there were three drivers who have made it into Q3 for every race, and that's Kubica and the two Red Bull drivers…

DS: At Williams, Rubens Barrichello has driven extremely well this year, as you'd expect him to. But what do we think of Nico Hulkenberg, who is out of a drive for 2011? I guess people expected a little more from him this year. That Brazilian pole apart it hasn't been quite the season we expected from him.

NR: No, I mean there have been flashes of 'wow' when you suddenly see him in P5 in qualifying and that sort of thing. He's crashed a lot and I wasn't impressed at all with the way he drove against Webber at Monza, for instance. I mean some of the things he did to keep him back were very reminiscent of Michael, but he probably is close to the complete package with a few more years behind him. He just needs to be able to progress with



decent teams. I'd hate to see him pitched into a poor drive for reasons of sponsorship and nothing else.

EF: Nowadays, with so little testing, it's so difficult to expect rookies to come in and perform straight away. We've seen it with Vitaly Petrov, we've seen it with Hulkenberg, they get hardly any time in the car compared to five years ago and you've got to expect them to make mistakes. And once you go off the F1 radar it's very rare to get back on it. Someone like Romain Grosjean – he's never likely to get back into F1 again.

NR: I agree with that and I actually felt quite sorry for Petrov. Eric Boullier has done a very good job this year, but he's probably spoken a little too much about 'ah, we might keep Petrov, we might not, we'll see how he goes, he has to qualify better, he needs to score some points'. That has multiplied the pressure on Petrov and I felt quite sorry for him. I think he is a pretty handy driver, as he showed in Abu Dhabi.



New teams: wasting their time?

Lotus, Virgin and Hispania (HRT) achieved what USF1 could not by making it to the grid in Bahrain and surviving their first seasons – although in Hispania's case, making it to Abu Dhabi was far from a foregone conclusion. Now all three teams have to justify their places in F1 by climbing off the bottom rungs of the ladder in 2011. But can they really do it?

DS: First of all, they all deserve credit for getting F1 teams up and running from a standing start because everyone knows how hard it is these days. Lotus and Virgin have clearly done a better job than HRT. The HRT thing really hasn't been worthy of F1 2010, it reminded me a bit of the early '90s when you had these start-up teams coming from nowhere, not doing much, embarrassing themselves and then disappearing. Now, HRT are still there, but they haven't featured in any way for me. The Lotus and Virgin stories are more interesting. They've been nip and tuck for a lot of the year in terms of being the best of the new teams. But what a long way to go for both of them.



NR: The interesting thing is they haven't significantly closed the gap. We started off with a four- or five-second difference to the front of the grid, which is… Jesus, that's a *lifetime* in F1 terms. There were some races where particularly the HRTs were qualifying slower than the GP2 cars. I'm probably quite harsh when it comes to backmarker teams and I always have been. But there were races this year when the serious end of the grid was trying to find its way round the HRTs and I honestly think they are a thundering nuisance.

RW: I take Nigel's view about backmarker teams but what's been more disappointing than HRT or Virgin is Lotus, and I only say that because they're constantly talking up the car and the team and yet nothing happens.

NR: Well, Mike Gascoyne said that Lotus gave up the development of this car long ago and all their thoughts are on 2011. They'll have a Renault engine etc for next year, so Lotus do show signs of aspiring to become a bigger team. I remember interviewing Bernie [Ecclestone] about 15 years ago and at that time there were one or two little teams, and to say Bernie had no interest in them didn't make a start on it. He thought essentially they were a nuisance and he wished they'd go away and compete in a Formula where they could be competitive. We have these three new teams fundamentally because of the situation that arose with Max Mosley and his capping costs and budgets. The budget was going to be $30 million, then $40m, then it got increased a bit more and this is when the whole thing looked like it was going to splinter apart with the official F1 World Championship not having many cars. I think they came into it thinking the costs would be much lower than they've turned out to be. Whether they would do the same now, knowing what they do, I wonder. I can't tell you honestly I was aware that there were half a dozen more cars in F1 this year than last. I've been surprised how much it's been a second division. ›››

GP SEASON REVIEW 2010

The racing: best season ever?

Eight changes of championship leader during the season; five title protagonists for much of the way; few 'dud' races; and competition perhaps more intense than ever from the front to the back of the field. F1 2010 will be remembered as one of the best in history. But is the quality of the racing as good as it should be?

NR: The first race in Bahrain was probably one of the dozen most boring races I have ever been to in my life, and I remember at the airport there was such a hue and cry about 'oh God, what have we done?' And there was panic – 'we've got to change it, what do we do? Do we bring back refuelling?' Bernie fortunately was very sanguine about it and just said 'let it settle', and eventually the hysterics calmed down. Everybody in Bahrain was ultra-conservative as no one had any clue about how long the tyres were going to last on a full tank. Once it settled down I think we had a fantastic season. I always thought refuelling was a waste of time anyway because all it did was more or less keep the cars in qualifying spec the whole time, so it was sprint for 20 laps, stop, more fuel, a bit more fuel... The car was always light, the car was always on relatively fresh rubber and nothing ever happened, and weren't we all surprised?

DS: You can't fault the ban on refuelling. Some of the drivers have professed frustration that once a race starts there's not much they can do on strategy because they've got what they've got. Before you could pit early for more fuel, or pit later, but in essence we've got Grand Prix racing back again as it was historically meant to be. There was always an endurance element to Grand Prix racing; it isn't meant to be sprint racing. It's interesting that in the age where TV matters more than anything else we should go back to a more traditional form of Grand Prix racing and I think it's worked brilliantly. There have been very few dud races this year – apart from the first and last one – but almost all of them have been interesting in one form or another.

NR: Absolutely. The ban on refuelling has for the first time in a long time made tyre wear and how you treat your tyres important, which really wasn't a factor at all for 15 or 20 years. Then throw in the fact we've had three companies that have been able to make comparably competitive cars. Red Bull did have a discernible advantage, but Ferrari and McLaren were thereabouts, and on top of that we've got the best crop of drivers since the mid to late 1980s.

EF: But they need to sort out not being able to follow a car closely. They're unlikely to sort it totally, but they've got to do something to help. You can see people closing on the car in front by half a second a lap, then they get within that one-second gap and it's like hitting a brick wall.

DS: It's very hard to turn back time on this, though, you can't deny the fact that the past 20 years have happened and we have to live with aero. Even if they vastly reduce the size of the wings like they did in 2009, the teams find a way round it. There's been quite a bit of overtaking this year – OK, some tracks make it harder than others, but overall I think the balance has been pretty good.

RW: And to be fair to Sauber, they have found a way to do this: he's called Kamui Kobayashi. Yeah, we'd all like to see more overtaking, but I'm sure Nigel would agree with me that there never was a time when we saw huge amounts of overtaking in Grand Prix racing, was there?

NR: No, you're probably right, but certainly more than in this era and it's purely because of aerodynamics. Just look at Hockenheim, and Massa and Alonso. Alonso was quicker than Massa, they were in identical cars, but Alonso



being a quicker driver didn't mean he was able to overtake a slower team-mate.

RW: So what can be done about it? Do any of us know?

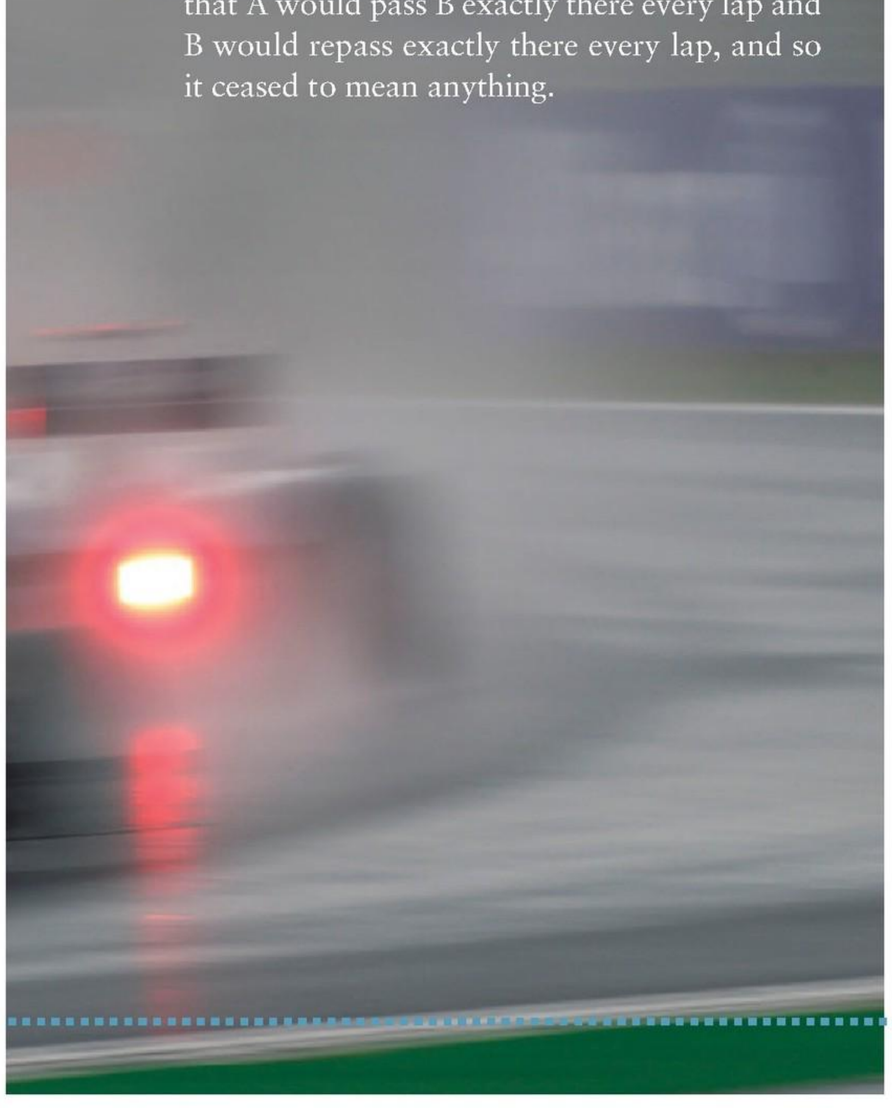
NR: Well, it seems to me we need to get rid of some of the downforce. Go back to ground effects to a degree so the downforce is created by tunnels under the car rather than this endless reliance on wings.

RW: Damien, you say we can't turn back the clock, but on the other hand this is a pretty important element, isn't it? There is no racing without overtaking, so surely somebody somewhere has to come up with a solution?

DS: Yes they do, and I guess the frustrating thing was that the Overtaking Working Group was created [by the FIA] where a lot of good work was done, but then you get a team come in with a double diffuser and all that work is undone. There will always be somebody coming up with something that will create dirty air or make it difficult for cars to follow each other.

RW: I think from an entertainment point of view it's a big problem because if you don't have people fighting for the lead, passing and repassing, then it's not a race, it's not thrilling.

NR: That's true, Rob, but I don't think it should ever be easy. I remember that era on the superspeedways in CART when they had the Handford wing, which was palpably absurd because you'd get two cars having a hell of a race at a place like Michigan, but you knew that A would pass B exactly there every lap and B would repass exactly there every lap, and so it ceased to mean anything.



The F-duct: too clever for its own good?

McLaren's aero innovation, which allowed drivers to control airflow to the rear wing down the straights, was in the best traditions of clever thinking in F1. Other teams copied it, but the fact that few made it work highlighted how brilliant it was. Typically, it is banned for 2011. But is it right for the FIA to constantly peg back inspired engineering?



EF: F1 is such a good forum for technical innovation and I find that really exciting. But the problem with the F-duct we saw with Alonso, who had both hands off the steering wheel going into a corner, which isn't a great situation. This one I think should be banned, but I'd like to see a bit more freedom in the rules for technical innovation.

DS: The problem is that variables make for good racing, and the more variables you add in the more chance you have of cars being unequal. Who actually wants equal cars? That just leads to processions and that's why F1 should never be a one-make formula. F1 is just too restrictive. Obviously you've got to keep control of the costs, we all understand that, and it's always been the case that you come up with something and the FIA ban it. That's the nature of the sport – trying to contain it – but to me it's a shame to point-blank ban something as soon as it comes in.

EF: If you took all the paintwork and sponsors off these cars I'd say there is a very, very small percentage of people who could tell one from the other, and most of those will be the ones who designed them. That's really sad. The days of different-looking Grand Prix cars are long gone.

NR: Yep, that's true. But it's all very well to think back to the days of Gordon Murray and *huge* innovation, but potentially it is *very* expensive. And what are we short of at the moment? ›››



GP SEASON REVIEW 2010

Jean Todt: Napoleon Dynamite?

We feared more of the same when Todt succeeded Max Mosley as FIA president last autumn. He was Max's man, wasn't he? Well, yes. But only until he assumed power, and then he dropped Mosley like a stone. With hindsight, we should have known: Todt's ruthless single-minded approach was the backbone of Ferrari's dominance in the past decade. He was never going to be a puppet president. Instead, we've had regime change and a new, subtle approach. No big public statements, no games played out through the media – and the least politically volatile season in years. So Todt's reign so far has been a success, right?

DS: What has been really refreshing is that it was the least political season for years. Todt has had an incredibly low profile this year. We all feared that it would be more of the same after Max Mosley and it hasn't been at all. Todt's his own man who does things his own way.

EF: One of the very telling moments was immediately after Hockenheim. There were quotes from everyone, but I did not see one from Todt, whereas Mosley would have been – and was – right in there.

NR: Yes, that's true. Todt was in a kind of embarrassing position there because you could say that it was only because of his actions at Ferrari with Schumacher and Barrichello that we had a ban on team orders in the first place! But I must say I agree with Damien: I feared that because Mosley was so strongly behind him and almost daring anybody to vote for someone else that we'd be in for more of the same. But from everything I hear, Mosley and his cohorts – many of whom I have to say are no longer at the FIA – have been somewhat disappointed with Todt's behaviour this year, which many would say can only be a good thing.

RW: I think the whole situation's extremely worrying. I take entirely the opposite view about Todt's virtual silence and low profile. What has he been doing all year?

NR: He's been doing a great deal, Rob. What he hasn't done is scream and shout about it every other day, which is what we'd become used to. Something that had driven me nuts over the years was the behaviour of the stewards, because I thought they were inconsistent in their responses, and they were often just plain wrong. For the last few years, until the end of 2009, the stewards were advised by an FIA man who was very much Max's right-hand man. He's not there now, instead of which we have an ex-GP driver advising the stewards, which common sense tells you should have happened years ago. It might not seem like a huge thing but as far as I am concerned it's not insignificant.

RW: Well, I guess one thing we can say is that the atmosphere has improved enormously, hasn't it?

DS: Without a doubt. It's refreshing. And speaking of refreshing, who's for another pint?



DIARY OF A SEASON

January



05 Renault F1 appoints Eric Boullier as its new team principal

12 John Booth takes over from Alex Tai as Virgin's team principal.

19 Sauber announces that Pedro de la Rosa – who hasn't competed in F1 since the Brazilian Grand Prix in 2006 – will race alongside Kamui Kobayashi.



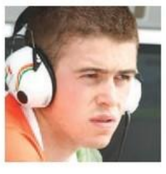
22 It's finally confirmed that 2009 rookie Jaime Alguersuari will stay with Toro Rosso for the 2010 season.



31 Vitaly Petrov, the 2009 GP2 runner-up who is the first Russian ever to compete in Formula 1, is confirmed as a Renault driver.

February

01 Teams test at Valencia where the Ferrari drivers fill the top two spots on the timesheets. Red Bull and Force India don't go to Spain in order to have more time to develop their 2010 cars.



02 Force India signs Mercedes DTM driver (and Dario Franchitti's cousin) Paul di Resta as its third driver.

10 Lotus and Virgin arrive to join the established teams at the Jerez test. The struggling Campos Meta and USF1 are both absent, however.

11 Silverstone announces that it will use the new Arena layout of the circuit for the British Grand Prix on July 11.

11 Mark Webber says that Red Bull should be "somewhere in the hunt" for the 2010 World Championship after driving the car at Jerez.

12 The Lotus Racing team launches its 2010 challenger in London.

17 The second Jerez pre-season test takes place. Jenson Button is fastest.

19 José Ramón Carabante takes majority control of new team Campos Meta, while Colin Kolles is appointed as the team principal.

19 Ken Anderson of USF1 asks the FIA whether it can miss the first four races of the season and start at the Spanish Grand Prix on May 9. That bodes well…

25 Final pre-season test takes place at Barcelona. Lewis Hamilton is fastest ahead of Mark Webber.

March



02 It is revealed that Lewis Hamilton will no longer be managed by his father Anthony (left). Applications for the position come flooding in.

02 The USF1 operation is closed down, though boss Ken Anderson insists he still hasn't given up on racing…



03 Campos Meta F1 is rebranded as 'HRT F1' (Hispania Racing F1 Team).

03 The FIA announces there are 12 teams on its 2010 entry list, meaning USF1 and Stefan GP will not compete.



All images LAT

04 Karun Chandhok signs for HRT.

11 The McLarens pass scrutineering despite Red Bull having expressed doubts about the legality of its rear wing.



14 **BAHRAIN GRAND PRIX**

Fernando Alonso comes through from third on the grid to take his first win for Ferrari. He trails Vettel by up to five seconds, but the German slows with an engine issue. Team-mate Felipe Massa finishes second and Lewis Hamilton is third. Bruno Senna's HRT runs for the first time ever in Friday practice and Karun Chandhok's in qualifying – both cars start the race from the pitlane. Alain Prost is the first driver steward and teams start the rush to design their own version of McLaren's F-duct.

18 McLaren buys back the majority of Mercedes-Benz's stake in its F1 team.

19 It is announced that Monza will retain the Italian GP until 2016 despite rumours of a street race in Rome.

26 Virgin Racing is given permission to increase the size of its fuel tank after discovering that it was too small to finish some races. Oops…

28 **AUSTRALIAN GRAND PRIX**

New McLaren signing Jenson Button wins after making a bold early switch to dry tyres and inheriting the lead from Sebastian Vettel, whose Red Bull loses the torque drive between the front left hub and wheel. Robert Kubica takes a brilliant second for Renault.

April

3 Lotus makes it into Q2 for the first time as Heikki Kovalainen manages 15th on the Malaysia grid. McLaren duo Lewis Hamilton and Jenson Button are both eliminated in Q1 after waiting in the pits rather than recording a time when the team's weather radar predicts dry running at the end of the session.



4 **MALAYSIAN GRAND PRIX**

Vettel leads home a dominant Red Bull 1-2, while Mercedes takes its first podium of the year with Nico Rosberg finishing third. Jaime Alguersuari scores his first points in F1 after finishing ninth, and Virgin driver Lucas di Grassi finishes a Formula 1 race for the first time.

4 The FIA faxes the teams to confirm that ride height devices are illegal following the claims that Red Bull was using such a system.

GP SEASON REVIEW 2010

09 Red Bull boss Christian Horner says that the ride height clarification has no impact on the RB6.

17 Sakon Yamamoto is named as HRT test and reserve driver.



18 CHINESE GRAND PRIX

Jenson Button wins a chaotic race. The McLaren driver makes another good tyre choice when he opts to stay on slicks during an early safety car and manages a later safety car period to finish ahead of Hamilton and Rosberg. Button hails the race as his best win yet. Hamilton and Vettel are reprimanded after battling side-by-side in the pitlane during the race.

26 Santander announces a new one-year deal with Fernando Alonso, whose thumbs are now insured for a cool €10 million!

29 Silverstone opens its new Arena layout ready for the British GP. Mark Webber says that it will suit the RB6.

May

06 Michael Schumacher says that new upgrades on the Mercedes F1 car – which include a longer wheelbase – will suit him better.

07 Christian Klien returns to F1 as a test and reserve driver for HRT.



09 SPANISH GRAND PRIX

Mark Webber storms to victory ahead of Alonso and team-mate Vettel. Webber is so dominant that his lead extends to 16 seconds by lap 49. Hamilton sets fastest lap of the race while chasing the Australian, but crashes on the penultimate lap when his car suffers a broken rim.

09 During a FOTA meeting the teams agree to ban the F-duct in 2011.



15 Fernando Alonso will have to start the Monaco Grand Prix from the pitlane after Ferrari struggles to repair damage from his accident in the third practice session.



16 MONACO GRAND PRIX

Mark Webber takes the lead in the Drivers' World Championship after cruising to an impressive victory around the streets of Monte Carlo. Team-mate Vettel finishes second, while Robert Kubica – who qualified on the front row – is third for Renault. Jenson Button, who led the championship before the race, drops out after only two laps when a cooling cover is left on his car's left sidepod on the grid. Michael Schumacher is given a 20-second penalty for overtaking Fernando Alonso on the last corner of the race, immediately after the safety car leaves the circuit.

23 Lewis Hamilton is given a fine for performing a burnout on a public road at the Australian Grand Prix.

23 Red Bull changes Vettel's chassis and discovers a fault in the one which was outpaced by Mark Webber in Spain and Monaco.



25 It is announced that the United States Grand Prix will return to the calendar in 2012 at a purpose-built facility in Austin, Texas.

26 Hispania Racing parts company with chassis builder Dallara.



30 TURKISH GRAND PRIX

Lewis Hamilton wins a chaotic race in Turkey. The Red Bulls and McLarens are the class of the field, but despite trying on track and in the pitstops, McLaren can't get past its rival. That is until Vettel tries to overtake Webber on lap 40 and collides with his team-mate, leaving Sebastian with a DNF and Mark in third place. Both blame each other for the crash, but Red Bull's motor sport advisor Helmut Marko aggravates things when he sides with the young German...

June



03 Red Bull releases an image of Webber and Vettel smiling and pretending all is well after their damaging clash in Turkey.

07 Webber extends his contract for another year with Red Bull.

09 Felipe Massa extends his Ferrari contract until the end of 2012.



13 CANADIAN GRAND PRIX

Lewis Hamilton heads a McLaren 1-2 with Alonso third and the two Red Bulls, Vettel and Webber, in fourth and fifth respectively. The race is a busy one due to the high rate of tyre wear, especially with the softer of the two Bridgestone compounds, and there are so many pitstops that even Toro Rosso's Sebastien Buemi leads for a lap.

16 Fernando Alonso pens a blog on Ferrari's website condemning the fact that some people are writing off the team so early in the season.

21 Alonso manages to sidestep the testing ban when he drives a heavily-updated F10 at Maranello during a special 'filming' day.





23 The World Motor Sport Council decides that teams will be able to use adjustable rear wings to aid overtaking in 2011, as opposed to the F-duct and adjustable front wings. It also confirms that Pirelli has been selected as the single tyre supplier for F1 for a three-year period, starting in 2011, and that any driver who fails to qualify within 107 per cent of the pole time will not be allowed to race. And it's bad news for USF1 – the WMSC reveals that the FIA has fined the team €309,000 and disqualified it from any FIA championship for failing to appear on the 2010 F1 grid.

27 EUROPEAN GRAND PRIX

Vettel easily wins the race while team-mate Webber escapes unhurt from a huge crash after vaulting over the back of Kovalainen's Lotus (below). Ferrari's day is spoilt by the subsequent safety car period, but the two McLarens fill the podium with Hamilton second and Button third. Kamui Kobayashi has a great race for BMW Sauber, pitting for soft rubber late on and passing Alonso and Buemi for seventh. Alonso is unimpressed after getting stuck behind the safety car, while Hamilton passes it and receives a drive-through – but his race is not ruined.

28 Luca di Montezemolo states on Ferrari's website that the team "paid a price that was too high for respecting the rules" after Alonso stayed behind the safety car at Valencia.

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July

07 Robert Kubica and Renault announce that they have extended their partnership until the end of 2012.

07 ART Grand Prix releases a statement which says it has withdrawn its F1 entry for the 2011 season because of economic circumstances.



08 Williams confirms that Frank Williams has handed over control of the F1 team to Adam Parr (left).

08 It emerges that HRT is dropping Bruno Senna for the British Grand Prix in favour of Sakon Yamamoto.

09 HRT confirms that Senna is only being sidelined for the one race to give Yamamoto "a chance".

10 Red Bull reveals a new front wing – then fuels favouritism stories by taking the part from Webber's car and giving it to Vettel, after his wing breaks in third practice on Saturday morning.

11 The FIA reveals minor changes to the safety car rules after the Valencia fiasco. They should ensure "no drivers are unnecessarily disadvantaged".



11 BRITISH GRAND PRIX

Webber wins the race, despite not having the 'best' front wing. After taking the chequered flag he comments on the team radio that his victory is "not bad for a number two driver..." Vettel has a puncture on the first lap but recovers to seventh, while Hamilton is second, Rosberg is third and Button fourth. Despite finishing the race in 14th and lying 47 points adrift of Hamilton in the standings, Alonso claims that he can still fight for the World Championship.

15 Franz Tost announces that both Jaime Alguersuari and Sebastien Buemi will stay at Toro Rosso for 2011.

16 HRT announces that Karun Chandhok will be replaced by Sakon Yamamoto at the German Grand Prix.

25 GERMAN GRAND PRIX

Alonso, delayed by Vettel at the start, wins a controversial race after Ferrari gives erstwhile leader Massa a not-so-coded message to move over for the Spaniard, with engineer Rob Smedley telling him, "Fernando is faster than you..." Massa dutifully moves across and shortly afterwards Smedley says, "I'm sorry, Felipe." Poleman Vettel only manages third, while the McLarens of Hamilton and Button are fourth and fifth.

25 Ferrari is fined $100,000 for using team orders at Hockenheim. The FIA says the World Motor Sport Council is considering further punishment.

25 The FIA confirms that the highly controversial 'flexible' front wings of Ferrari and Red Bull are legal.

28 A new deal is signed to guarantee the future of the Monaco Grand Prix for the next 10 years, despite Bernie Ecclestone claiming that F1 doesn't need the jewel-in-the-crown race.

August



01 HUNGARIAN GRAND PRIX

Webber drives a superb race to take victory. The Australian drops to third from pole at the start, but stays out during an early safety car period and builds a big enough gap to Alonso to stay in front. Vettel is given a drive-through penalty for not staying within 10 car lengths of the safety car, but still manages to finish third. Schumacher receives a 10-place grid penalty at Spa for his blocking manoeuvre on Barrichello (above), as the Williams driver tries to pass him on the pit straight. Rubens nearly ends up in the pitwall; afterwards Michael comments that he is not "known to give presents on the track".

17 Nick Heidfeld is released by Mercedes so that he can test for Pirelli.



29 BELGIAN GRAND PRIX

Lewis Hamilton wins at Spa after beating Webber off the line and managing two safety car periods plus the perils of heavy rain. Despite a brief trip into the gravel he maintains his lead to Webber and crosses the line 1.5 seconds ahead of the Red Bull. Vettel slams into the side of Button under braking at the Bus Stop chicane, putting the McLaren out on the spot, and Kubica finishes third for Renault.

September



04 Karun Chandhok runs 14 laps of the new Korean track in a Red Bull. But the track still looks half-finished...

07 Sauber says it will retain Japanese charger Kamui Kobayashi for 2011.

08 The FIA says that none of the new entries for 2011 are up to standard, so the grid will stay at 24 cars. A new race in India puts the calendar up to 20 GPs.

08 At a WMSC hearing in Paris it is decided that Ferrari will not be punished any further over the team orders controversy at Hockenheim.

12 ITALIAN GRAND PRIX

Alonso wins for Ferrari after passing Button in the pitstops. The McLaren driver is second with Massa third. Hamilton retires with broken steering on lap one after making contact with Massa. Vettel is fourth and Webber sixth.

12 Lotus announces that it is to end its engine deal with Cosworth.

14 Sauber confirms Nick Heidfeld will replace Pedro de la Rosa.

23 Pirelli confirms that de la Rosa will join its testing programme.

24 Lotus Racing announces that it will use the 'Team Lotus' name in 2011.

26 SINGAPORE GRAND PRIX

Alonso continues Ferrari's run of form with victory on the streets of Singapore, ahead of Vettel, Webber and Button. Hamilton suffers another blow to his title hopes after colliding with Webber. Red Bull says Webber is "extremely lucky" to finish with a tyre almost off its rim.

27 Proton, owner of Group Lotus, says Lotus Racing does not have the rights to use the name 'Team Lotus' and that it is pursuing legal action.

29 Lotus Racing extends the contract of its chief technical officer Mike Gascoyne until the end of 2015.

30 Richard Branson confirms he will continue to back the Virgin team in 2011.

October

04 Sauber signs Sergio Perez to race alongside Kamui Kobayashi in 2011.

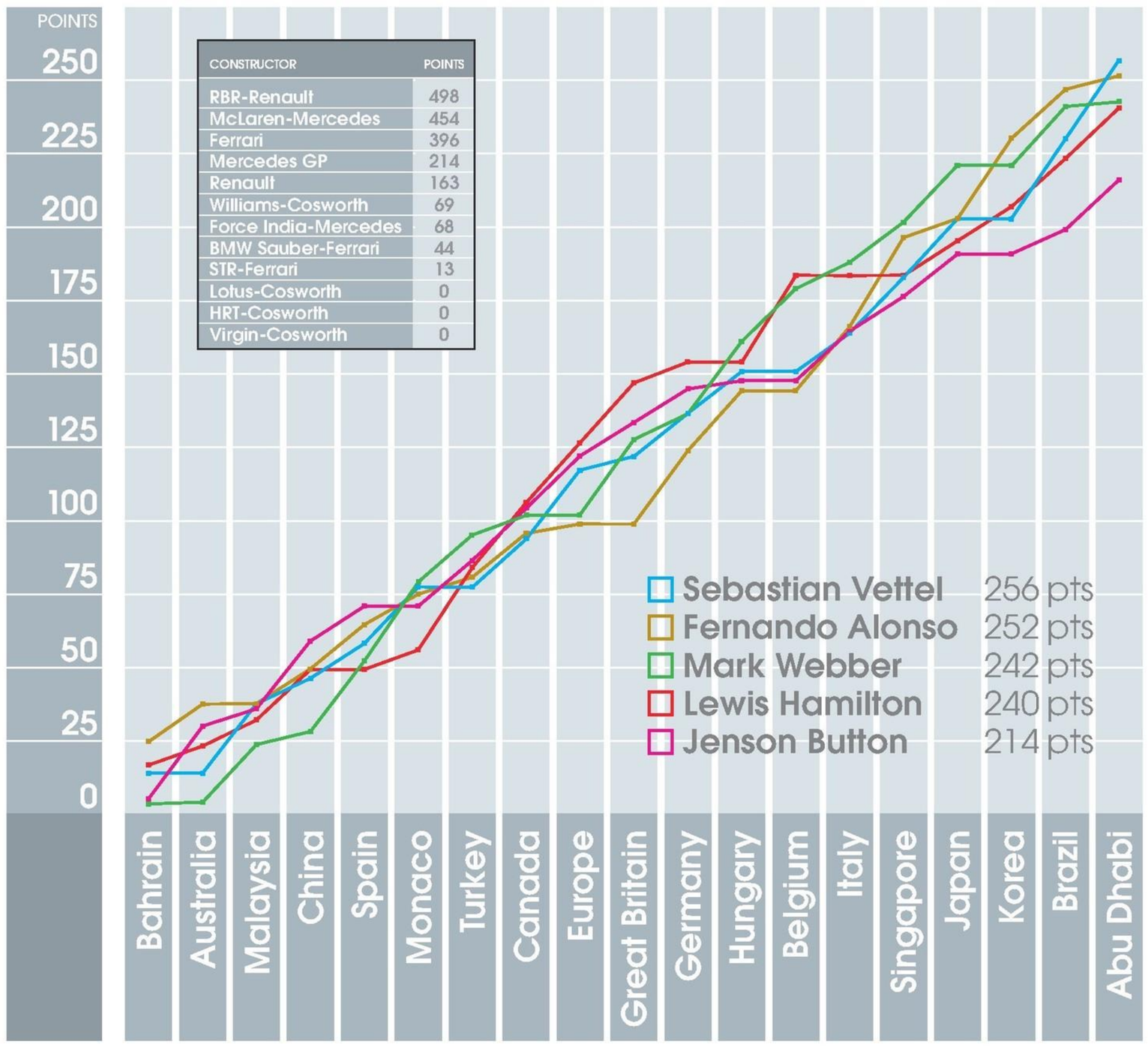
05 Lotus Racing confirms that it will use Red Bull gearboxes and hydraulic systems in 2011.

GP SEASON REVIEW 2010

DRIVER	POINTS	RACE WINS	POLE POSITIONS	FASTEST LAPS
Sebastian Vettel	256	5	10	3
Fernando Alonso	252	5	2	5
Mark Webber	242	4	5	3
Lewis Hamilton	240	3	1	5
Jenson Button	214	2	0	1
Felipe Massa	144	0	0	0
Nico Rosberg	142	0	0	0
Robert Kubica	136	0	0	1
Michael Schumacher	72	0	0	0
Rubens Barrichello	47	0	0	0
Adrian Sutil	47	0	0	0
Kamui Kobayashi	32	0	0	0
Vitaly Petrov	27	0	0	1
Nico Hulkenberg	22	0	1	0
Vitantonio Liuzzi	21	0	0	0
Sebastien Buemi	8	0	0	0
Pedro de la Rosa	6	0	0	0
Nick Heidfeld	6	0	0	0
Jaime Alguersuari	5	0	0	0
Heikki Kovalainen	0	0	0	0
Jarno Trulli	0	0	0	0
Karun Chandhok	0	0	0	0
Bruno Senna	0	0	0	0
Lucas di Grassi	0	0	0	0
Timo Glock	0	0	0	0
Sakon Yamamoto	0	0	0	0
Christian Klien	0	0	0	0



CONSTRUCTOR	POINTS
RBR-Renault	498
McLaren-Mercedes	454
Ferrari	396
Mercedes GP	214
Renault	163
Williams-Cosworth	69
Force India-Mercedes	68
BMW Sauber-Ferrari	44
STR-Ferrari	13
Lotus-Cosworth	0
HRT-Cosworth	0
Virgin-Cosworth	0



06 After weeks of speculation Kimi Räikkönen speaks out about alleged talks with Renault over a drive for 2011. The World Rally rookie says he is 100 per cent certain he will not join the team and return to F1 next season.



10 JAPANESE GRAND PRIX

Qualifying is postponed until Sunday morning after heavy rain at Suzuka, but come the race no one can stop Sebastian Vettel from taking a commanding victory ahead of team-mate Webber. Alonso finishes third, while Hamilton loses third gear and has to yield fourth place to Button.

12 After several weeks of delays and worry, the Korean Grand Prix is given the go-ahead following two days of inspections by the FIA.



24 KOREAN GRAND PRIX

Fernando Alonso takes the lead in the drivers' championship after a fortuitous first place in Korea. The start is delayed due to bad weather, and when the race does get under way 17 laps are completed behind the safety car. Webber drops it on the third racing lap and it looks like another commanding victory for Vettel is on the cards – until his engine gives up just 10 laps from the finish, promoting Alonso into first place. Hamilton finishes second and Massa is third.

November

05 Lotus Racing confirms that it will use Renault engines in 2011.



06 Williams newcomer Nico Hulkenberg takes a shock pole by over a second in drying conditions at Brazil.

07 BRAZILIAN GRAND PRIX

Red Bull wins the Constructors' World Championship after Vettel and Webber score a 1-2 finish at Interlagos, setting up a drivers' title showdown in Abu Dhabi. Alonso finishes third, while Hamilton and Button are fourth and fifth respectively, leaving the 2009 champion out of the title running.

11 Virgin Racing confirms that is has secured its F1 future after receiving backing from the Russian sports car maker Marussia Motors.

14 ABU DHABI GRAND PRIX

Sebastian Vettel becomes the youngest-ever World Champion after winning the final race in convincing fashion. Alonso's chances of a third title are ruined when he pits early to cover Webber and gets stuck behind Vitaly Petrov, who chooses this race to drive the best he has all year for Renault. Alonso is furious as he crosses the line, but Vettel has no idea he's won the title until his engine gives up on the slowing down lap.

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GP SEASON
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"I'm not scared of anything – apart from not feeling the passion for racing that I feel right now"

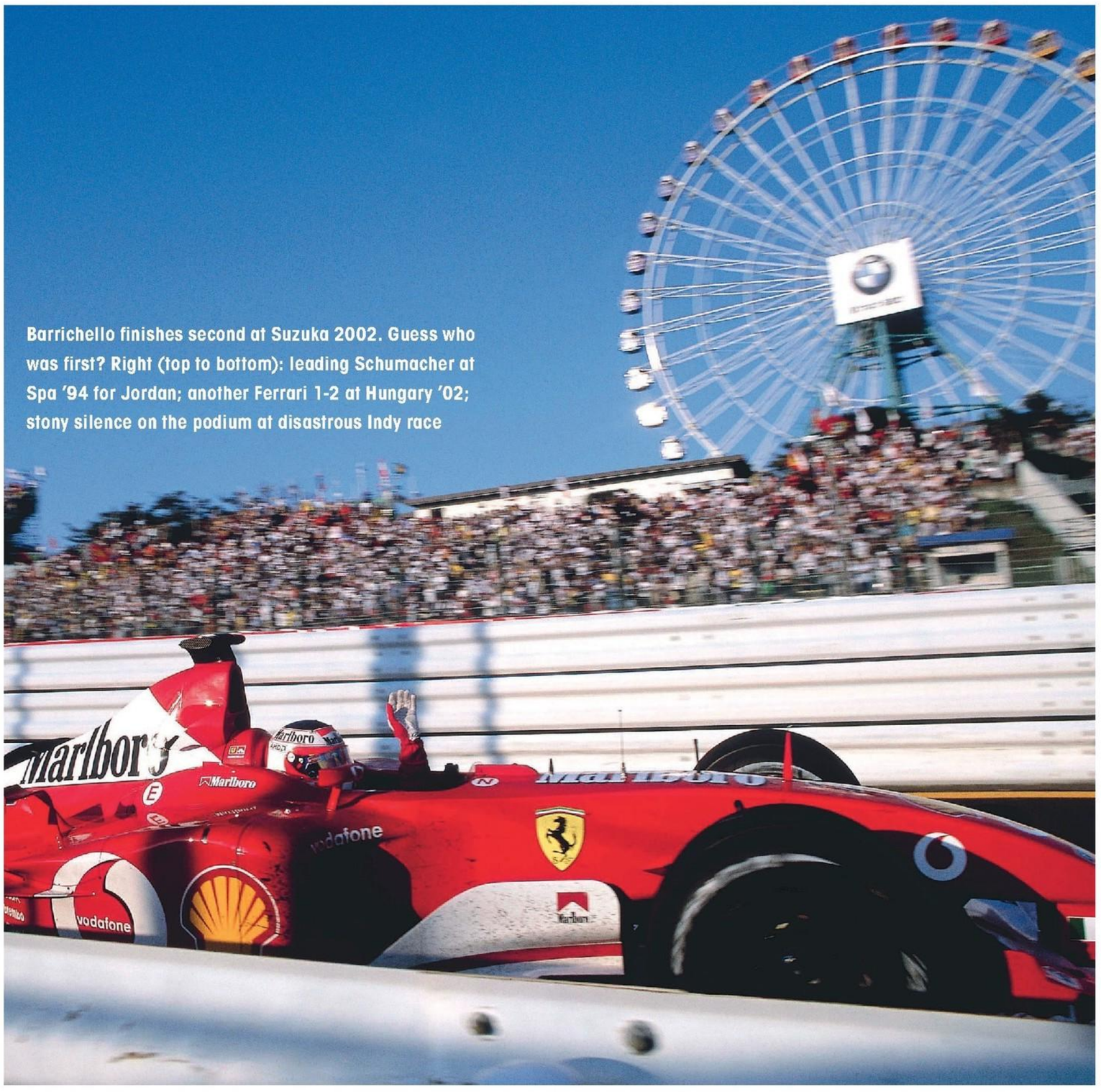
No wonder Rubens Barrichello is happy. Finally, after two decades in the top flight, he is a team leader at Williams, although a certain Mr Schumacher is still testing his patience...

BY NIGEL ROEBUCK

RUBENS BARRICHELLO III



All images LAT



Barrichello finishes second at Suzuka 2002. Guess who was first? Right (top to bottom): leading Schumacher at Spa '94 for Jordan; another Ferrari 1-2 at Hungary '02; stony silence on the podium at disastrous Indy race

No one got hurt in the US Grand Prix at Indianapolis in 2005, but otherwise it was one of the most disastrous days in the history of Formula 1. Michelin, otherwise supreme at the time, for once got its calculations wrong and turned up at the Speedway with tyres incapable of coping with the long 'oval' turn at the end of the lap.

How this could have happened seemed incomprehensible – the track hadn't changed, after all – but facts were facts: the tyres were incapable of more than about 10 safe laps – and this was the year, of course, in which tyre changes were banned.

Various options to allow a normal Grand Prix to be run were considered, including the insertion of a chicane before the problematic corner. All the drivers – save Michael Schumacher – agreed to this solution, but back in Paris Max Mosley was immovable. Hence, precisely six cars – the Bridgestone runners – went to the grid, and 120,000 fans swiftly became restive.

Michelin behaved entirely honourably, handing over millions for ticket refunds and the like, but the spectators were angry as they left that afternoon, and many took a decision never to come back.

Angry, too, were the drivers who had been unable to compete – and even one who had taken part, for that day Rubens Barrichello concluded that he had had enough of Ferrari, and wanted out.

We had known for some time that Barrichello was less than content. This was his sixth season of partnering Schumacher, and while the statistics of his spell at Maranello – nine wins, 11 pole positions, 56 podiums, 412 World Championship points – are impressive, over time Rubens became ever more unsettled by the strictures imposed on him. If you were 'the other Ferrari driver', you were absolutely not to rain on Michael's parade. In each of Barrichello's first five seasons with Ferrari, Schumacher was World Champion.

The sixth was different, though. In 2005 the ban on tyre changes put Ferrari on the back foot, for Bridgestone proved far less adept than Michelin at building a 200-mile tyre – save at Indianapolis, where the grid comprised two Ferraris, two Jordans and two Minardis.

This looked like Ferrari's only shot at winning a Grand Prix that year, and pretty silly it would have looked had it contrived to lose against such negligible opposition. The red cars were on a cruise until the first fuel stops, when Rubens moved into the lead. At the second stops he came in first – while Schumacher set the fastest lap. Michael emerged from his stop as Rubens rushed down the straight, and brushed him out of the way into the first turn.

Amazing, we thought – even on a day like this, Schumacher can't help himself. On the podium Barrichello declined even to look at him.

Presumably, I said when we sat down together recently, it was that incident that made you decide to leave Ferrari, but Rubens said not. "No, it wasn't the way Michael overtook me – that was hard, but fair. No, it was something else… At Indy I decided right then that I should quit Ferrari – that the human side was more important than anything else."

I interviewed Barrichello several times through the Ferrari years, and always he was adamant that there was no clause in his contract obliging him to give way to Schumacher. "That was true," he said again now. "There never was anything in the contract…"

David Coulthard, I mentioned, recently said that when he talked to Ferrari, it was made clear that if he went there he would be working for Schumacher; on that basis he declined to take it any further.

"Well," said Rubens, "no one at Ferrari said anything before I signed the contract, never said anything up to the moment – halfway through 2000, my first year there – that Michael and I actually 'met' on the race track, and then they said, 'Oh, you know how it works, Rubens…' I said no, I *don't* know how it works.

"I'd always thought that I could overcome problems with my natural talent, but… The pressure starts to mount when you finish second, and people on the outside start to believe that you just got beaten…"

Emphatically that wasn't the case in Austria in 2002, when Barrichello, having dominated, was patently ordered to let Schumacher through immediately before the finish line.

"No," Rubens agreed. "Austria was a 'visible' one – but there were plenty of invisible ones. Over time there were many things I heard on the radio that made me say, '*What*?!'

"Still," he shrugged, "I hate people who seek revenge. Sometimes it feels as though half the people in the paddock are waiting for my book, in which I tell all the secrets and so on – but, you know, I'm not even sure I would do that."

Barrichello is indeed writing his autobiography, a work in progress for more than a year. "I do it on the plane," he said. "I'm doing it chronologically, and my memory is quite good, fortunately – the only time where it isn't sharp is Imola '94, where Ayrton died. When I had my accident on the Friday, I had a hard bang on the head and lost a little bit of









Rubens realised a lifelong ambition in joining Williams for this season

my memory – which probably is good…"

While his situation as Schumacher's team-mate may have been less than ideal, in those years – as Rubens points out – the second Ferrari was invariably a more competitive proposition than the first anything else. "I never doubted that I had the same equipment as Michael. It was the treatment I got that was so different."

As it was, when enough had become enough, he requested that he be allowed to leave a year before the end of his contract. Did Ferrari understand his decision – even sympathise with it?

"Oh, I don't think it changed anything for them. At the end of the day they still had Michael, and they kept winning, so…"

Barrichello, though, did not keep winning, for he moved to Honda, whose disastrous F1 programme has been well chronicled. There were no podiums for him in '06, and the following year no *points*.

"The most frustrating thing about F1," said Barrichello. "is that, if you haven't got the car, you can do nothing about it – it's not like tennis where you just have a racquet, and OK, sometimes you have a bad phase, and then you come out of it. I had success at Ferrari, none at Honda, then success again with Brawn, and it was nothing to do with talent – my mind has changed over the years, but I don't think my actual *talent* has ever changed."

At the time, though, moving to Honda seemed a sound idea, and Rubens admits that his close friendship with Gil de Ferran – at that time working with the F1 team – played a part in his decision.

"Gil told me that Honda was very committed, that money was not a problem, and everything was looking good. The problem was, it didn't turn out the way he thought it would! It was the wrong decision to fire [technical director] Geoff Willis – after he left, the team went downhill."

> "I had the same equipment as Michael, but the treatment I got was so different"

By 2008 Jenson Button had effectively given up on Honda, and the team looked mainly to Barrichello to keep its motivation alive. Ross Brawn was aboard by now, but he had arrived too late to have any influence in the design of the latest car, another dog.

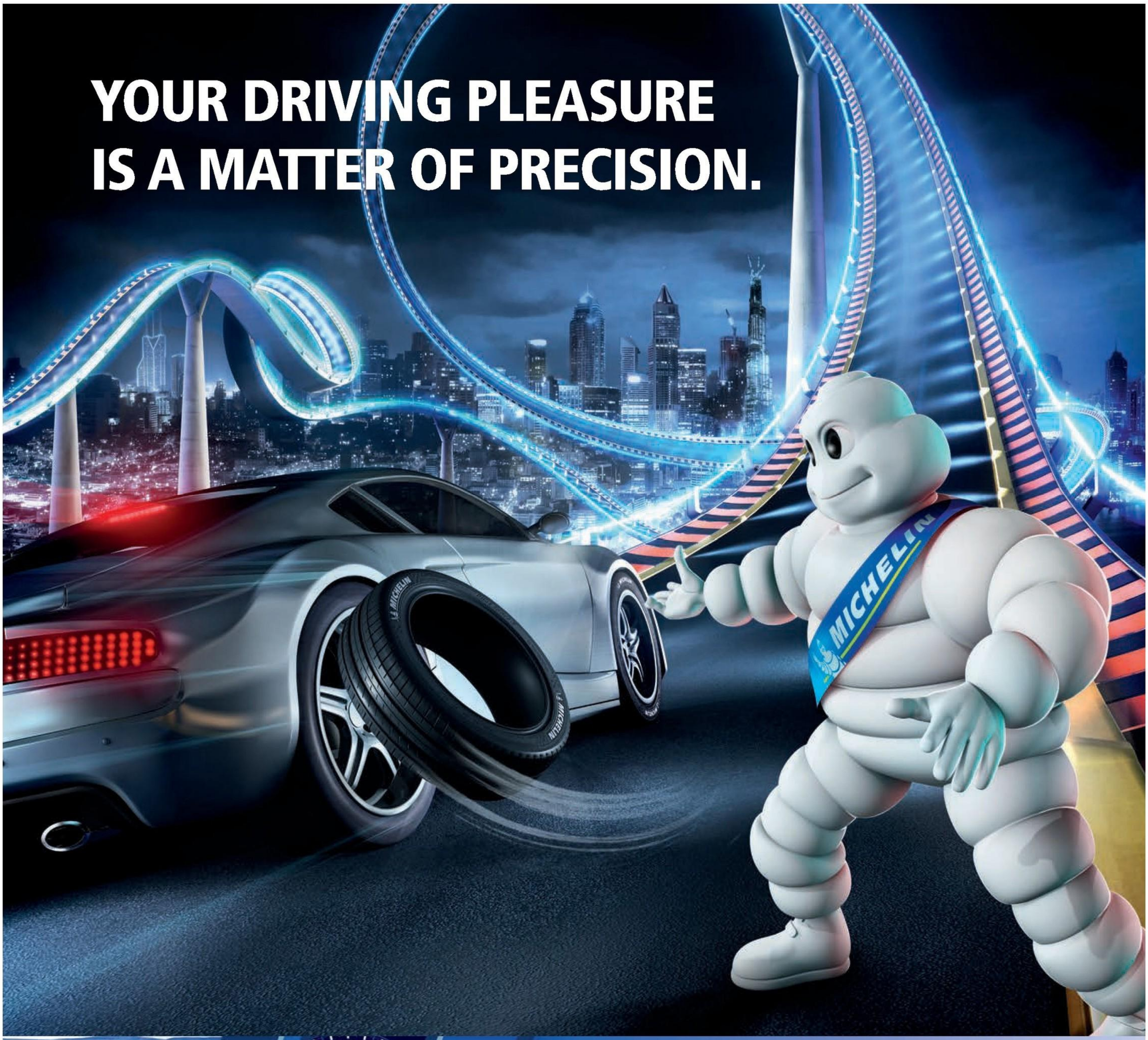
"It was always in my mind," Rubens said, "that I'd just keep working, and my better days would come back…" When he finished third in the rains of his beloved Silverstone, it was as if Honda had won the championship.

Even worse was to come, though, for at the end of '08 the company announced that it was out of F1. Immediately Brawn set about the task of somehow keeping the team alive, but for Button and Barrichello the future seemed bleak.

"I was *very* frightened," said Rubens. "Honda made their decision very late, and if Ross didn't save the team, I had nothing. That was the worst time of my life, and yet also the best, oddly enough – believe me, I really was in contact with my soul at that point! I kept telling myself that everything would be OK, even though people were telling me the opposite. I remember a Brazilian journalist phoning me – he said, 'I'm not calling to interview you, but just to tell you that *for sure* Bruno Senna has signed for the team. I'm just trying to be a friend…' Yeah, right.

"My head was all over the place, but I stayed positive. I trained hard – even harder than usual – and when it was settled, I was very emotional. I was at our house in the country, and my European mobile rang for the first time in a long time. I'd been calling Ross, and he'd say, »»»

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Victory at Monza for Brawn was "as good as any race I ever drove"

'Rubens, I'm sorry, I cannot do anything for you at the moment', but now he was offering me the drive. I went to tell my wife, and I had tears in my eyes. And then, when I first drove the car, it was magic… Just a dream coming true…"

The Mercedes-powered Brawn BGP001 appeared late in winter testing, but at once proved sensationally quick. For Barrichello and Button, after so long in the Honda wilderness, then fearing they were on the street, it was indeed a dream coming true.

For all that, it was Jenson who took over the first half of the 2009 season, winning six of the first seven races, and building a points lead which would see him to the World Championship. Thereafter, though, he never won again, and in the second half of the year Barrichello – victorious at Valencia and Monza – was Brawn's front-runner.

"When I look back on that year, I think it was a championship I basically threw away because of the brakes at the start of the season. I had the brakes that I'd used with Honda, but now for some reason the rear calipers got too hot, and the balance shift was wrong. We reached a point where there was nothing else to try – so let's try Jenson's brakes. I'd tried them in the past, and never liked them, but we put them on my car – and the problem was solved! This was after six races, and after that I was usually ahead of him, but already he'd had all these wins. And by then, too, Red Bull were really coming up – their car was the fastest, for sure.

"After three years of being nowhere, it was great to have a competitive car, and to win again. I think Monza was as good as any race I ever drove – I was on the edge the whole time, and although I'd won there before, it was so good to do it in something other than a Ferrari."

Through the year, though, Barrichello wondered about his future. In July he asked Brawn about 2010, and Ross said it could be the end of the season before anything was decided.

A couple of months earlier, Sam Michael of Williams began talking to Barrichello, and although Frank's team had been through a *very* lean spell – not since 2004, when Juan Pablo Montoya won in Brazil, had there been a victory – Rubens was interested.

"If you look back to interviews I did when I was racing go-karts in Brazil, you'll see that when I was asked which team I wanted to drive for in F1, I *always* said Williams. Over time I talked to Frank – every two years or so – about driving for him, but for one reason and another it never happened until now. And I think this is the right moment for the team to get me – they're getting all my experience and enthusiasm and love and passion for driving.

"I didn't know where it was going with Brawn. Finally, in Brazil, I had the offer from Ross – and also from McLaren – but by then I'd signed for Williams, and I was a happy man.

"McLaren were looking for someone to partner Lewis [Hamilton], and they realised that things were changing at Brawn. Actually we didn't go too far because I would only have gone there if there had been absolutely no sign of any… rules or anything like that. I like Martin [Whitmarsh] – he seems to be a nice guy, and very correct. I would have loved to talk to him a bit more, but I had to tell him that I already had a contract. It was the same with Ross: it was too late.

"When Brawn talked to me, I think they'd already signed Nico [Rosberg], but they might have been getting the impression that it was going to be difficult to sign Jenson – the discussions were taking longer than expected because of the money. As far as I know, McLaren only talked to Jenson later. Actually, I think it was a big loss for Brawn (now Mercedes) to lose both drivers at the same time. We were settling quite well, and that would have made a difference this year."

If Barrichello has had a less competitive car this year at Williams, he has looked like a man happy in his work – not least perhaps because for the first time in his life he is regarded unequivocally as a team leader. At Hockenheim I asked technical director Sam Michael how the partnership was working out, and his response was immediate: "Rubens is the best racing driver I have ever worked with in F1 – how he hasn't been World Champion three or four times I don't understand…"

It was Barrichello's absolute commitment to the team that meant so much, Michael went on – that, and the fact that his technical input is of a quality no one at Williams can remember.

"Well, that's nice to hear," Rubens said, "but, you know, information is *nothing* if you don't have passion and enthusiasm, and I think that's why they're happy with me. Everything I'm trying to do is for *our* benefit.

"Sam was my telemetry guy at Jordan years ago, and we've always worked together extremely well. Communication between us is very pure – I can go to the line in my »»

feelings about the car, and he will go to the line to make sure I get things I'm asking for. He was quite surprised when I said, 'Sam, I don't think the car is *aggressive* enough, in the way that it's made…' I think he's building something more special for next year.

"The Williams team has everything I enjoy – the right spirit, the fighting mentality, the good personnel, everything. The reason why I smile, even with a car not competitive with the best, is that I know that the future can be bright – we just need to work to make it happen. I work like *hell* on the car, and that's the way it should be – for the rest, we need to be patient, and to be good to each other.

"My relationship with Frank and Patrick [Head] is unique in my experience. People think Patrick isn't very involved any more, but he's working well with Cosworth – any engine-related problem, and I go straight to him. As for Frank, I've never seen anyone with so much *passion* for motor racing – it's truly amazing.

"I guess the view of Williams – from the outside – is like 'the Alan Jones years', isn't it? Well, I'm quite tough when I'm working – but I can also be quite soft, and actually Williams is like that, too. They work very, very hard, and they want a result – just the same as me."

As I write, Barrichello has scored 47 World Championship points, but the one – for 10th place – which says most about the man was that scored in Hungary, when he passed Schumacher.

Fifteen or so seconds earlier Rubens had been on the radio to say that Michael was up to his old tricks – leaving the door open, inviting him into the gap, then chopping across, obliging him to back off. Now, out of the last corner, the Mercedes bobbled, and Barrichello clearly had a run. At that moment, F1's doctor Gary Hartstein says he began to reach for his gloves…

"Actually," Rubens said, "I must say that the incident was much more spectacular on TV than it was in real life!"

It wasn't the TV footage that registered with me, I said, as much as a still photo – freezing that 190mph split-second when the Williams was between Schumacher's car and the pitwall.

"Yeah, I know – you're right. The thing is, you don't see it coming. My kids said, 'Daddy, you were awesome! How did you overtake?' I said, 'I just closed my eyes, and went through…' I really didn't see the wall coming – I just saw him coming on my left. As I say, it looked more spectacular on TV. You see it later on, and you say, 'Wow! You must have three balls…'"

It was a moment of acute risk, not only for Barrichello, but also for Schumacher himself. Does it not enter Michael's head, when he pulls a stunt of this kind, that *he* might be involved, might get hurt? "No, I don't think it does," said Rubens. "It *can't*."

A point made by not a few at the time was that this was a fine way for Schumacher to behave towards a man who had been his team-mate – loyal above and beyond – for six years.

"Oh, it means nothing to him. Nothing. Actually, I thought the worst thing he did was to get out of the car and be arrogant about it – that line about, 'Everyone knows I don't give presents…' I guess if he'd had any coaching from the team before he spoke to the press he would have given a different impression. Michael has been one of the greatest champions – but as a human being he has a lot to learn."





FW32 may not be the fastest car on the grid, but popular Rubens expects better next year

The general consensus is that Schumacher's performances this season have been underwhelming. As one so familiar with the man before his retirement at the end of 2006, had Barrichello expected more of him?

"Well, after stopping for three years… I didn't expect him to come back and win, no. For one thing, I drove for that team, and from the middle of last year we didn't get much new stuff. For another, winter testing tells you nothing, because a team's two drivers are never in the car at the same time. I was open-minded about him coming back, but…

"Look at it like this. I'm Rubens Barrichello, I stop for three years, I've never been World Champion, Mercedes call to offer me a drive. Would I accept? Of *course* I would – because it's offering me another chance to win the title.

"Now. I'm Michael Schumacher, I've been World Champion seven times, Mercedes make me an offer… but what is my motivation? I've got everything to lose. Well, I'm doing it for the pleasure. OK, go and drive something – go-karts or whatever – that still gives you a buzz, but lower down the scale. Here, in F1, there's no way to drive just for pleasure: you're here to compete."

This year's Belgian Grand Prix was Barrichello's 300th, and Williams hosted an informal ceremony in celebration. The turnout said everything about the affection in which Rubens is held. Bernie Ecclestone – selective in the paddock events he attends – was there, and so was virtually every driver.

Schumacher, however, was conspicuous by his absence. Barrichello shrugged. It meant a lot, this evidence of his fellows' esteem for him: statistically, Michael's record of achievement may never be equalled, but universally loved he is not.

"Well," Rubens sighed, "some people value the material side – such as the championship – more than others. I would *die* to win the championship – but in a fair way.

"I've always wondered why, in this mysterious world, I am made like this: within a team, if you give me something more than the other guy, I will feel sorry – I'd rather split everything we have, and have equality, and then we fight it out. Why am I like this – and he is like that? I probably spent too much time thinking about that – and it was bad for me. It's the way it is…"

So here is Barrichello, 38 years old, with way more Grands Prix behind him than any other driver, yet still utterly in love with F1 – indeed, his passion for it, he said, is even greater than it used to be.

"Why? I have no idea. I just love what I do. I think when you're young you have this thing that you love the driving but you hate the PR or whatever – you love this, hate that. Right now I just love everything! When I came to Williams I said, 'I know what I've got to do, but you need to treat me in a way that will make me happy', and I think we've been good for each other.

"The way I feel, I'll go on as long as I still have this passion for it. I'm in better shape physically than I used to be, so I could go on as long as I'm physically capable of doing it. When I start to feel that the travelling is too much, or the passion isn't quite what it was, that will be the time to stop. Of course I get tired of the travel – we all do – but that's the only thing.

"I'm not scared of anything in life – apart from not feeling the passion for racing that I feel right now. I don't want to go home to Brazil before my time in F1 is over – I don't want to be there, thinking I should be here…"

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Lunch with...
DAVID HOBBS

The results didn't always come his way, but over three decades this expat Brit enjoyed the sort of variety in his racing career that today's F1 stars can only dream about

BY SIMON TAYLOR

David Hobbs is 71 now, still the quintessential Englishman with the deadpan humour that stayed with him through a 30-year-plus racing career. By his own assessment, misfortune and missed opportunities meant he never reached his potential as a driver. Others take a different view, seeing a versatile professional who could be relied upon to be determined, intelligent and quick in anything. Certainly, few have raced so many different types of car, from F1 to NASCAR, from Formula Junior to Indy, from 20 starts at Le Mans to championship titles in Formula A and Trans-Am. All this from a man whose first racing car was a Morris Oxford automatic.

For over 20 years David has lived in the USA, where his enduring second career as a TV commentator has made him more famous than he ever was in his racing days. His witty, shrewd coverage of Formula 1 for Speed Channel has earned him a fan base that crosses generations, especially when his plummy English tones lapse into a politically incorrect Deep South accent. US schoolkids like to imitate one of his catchphrases: "He done blowed up." In his adopted hometown of Milwaukee he runs a thriving Honda dealership with his sons Greg and Guy, and lives in a fine, rather English house (above) overlooking Lake Michigan.

It's a long way from a wartime childhood in Leamington Spa, where his father Howard pursued a lifetime's dream to develop an efficient and compact automatic gearbox. "He made prototypes for everybody: BMC, Armstrong Siddeley, Fiat, BMW. In the end Daimler took it up for their new small car, the Lanchester Sprite, but that never went into production. Borgward were going to use it, but they went out of business too. Dad had a life of absolute disappointment. He used to say, 'Look at Rudolf Diesel. Nobody realised how brilliant his engine was, and in the end he drowned himself. Now diesels are everywhere.' Autos were big and slushy then, but Dad's was small and light, and very advanced for its time. Today's transmissions use a lot of the same thinking.

"My academic record at school is best left buried, but I was always fascinated by cars, so I joined Daimler as a teenage apprentice. ›››



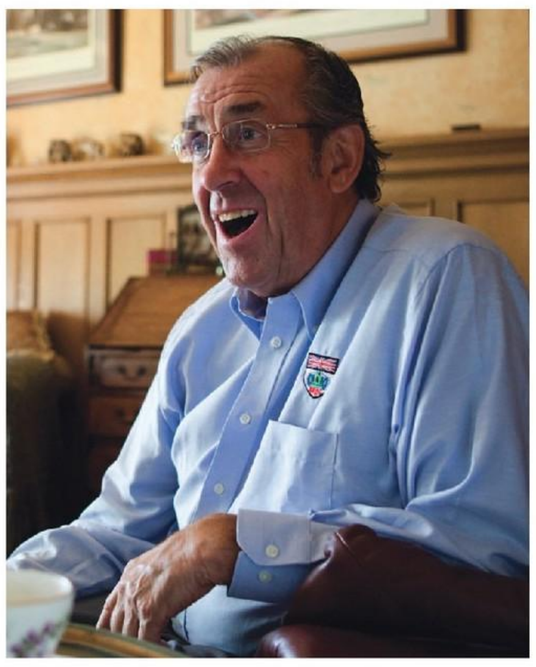




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My mother's shopping car was an old side-valve Morris Oxford, fitted with one of Dad's gearboxes. In 1959, when I was 19, I entered it for a race at Snetterton. The scrutineers said the gearbox wasn't homologated, so I had to run as a GT against the Lotus Elites and AC Aces. I lurched around at the back until, at peak revs on the Norwich Straight, the engine exploded. In Dad's shop there was an MGB engine he'd got from BMC to use for trials, so we put that in. Off I went to Goodwood to get another signature, and that blew up too.

"As his everyday car Dad had an XK140 drophead, fitted of course with a Hobbs box. After the disasters with the Morris I pleaded and whined to be allowed to race it, and finally he relented. I went to Oulton Park with the car just as it was, on Michelin X tyres, put it on the second row, and on the last lap hit the bank and turned over. I phoned home and Dad said, 'I know. I saw it on TV. You broke it, you fix it.' Margaret and I – we were already an item then, and we're still married 50 years later – we clambered into the wreck and set off for home. On the way the mangled bonnet came open and flew over the roof. I got a little man in a shed near Daventry to straighten it all out, but he must have painted it on a damp day, because it always looked rather matt after that.



"I was now a Jaguar apprentice, because they'd taken over Daimler, and I purloined a few bits for the XK140: disc brakes, bigger SU carbs. I was sliding and opposite-locking all over the place, no idea about spring rates or anti-roll bars, but I won several races that year. The XK looked pretty dreadful by now – various dents and wounds, torn hood, only one headlamp because I'd made the other into a carburettor scoop. On the grid at Silverstone [Jaguar competitions boss] Lofty England looked down from his great height and said, 'Smart turn-out, Hobbs.' That deflated me a bit, but in the race I had a terrific dice with an Aston DB4GT, and I beat it. Afterwards Lofty said, 'I must admit, Hobbs, you do race as if you mean it.'

> "Lofty said, 'You do race as if you mean it'"

"Jaguar had just built E2A, the missing link between the D-type and the E-type, for Cunningham to run at Le Mans in 1960. I'm still an apprentice, Lofty summons me, and there's Bill Heynes, Wally Hassan, Mike Parkes too, we all go off to Silverstone with E2A and unload beside Abbey Curve. I'd never driven anything as serious as this, and after a few laps coming into Abbey, a corner I never did like much, I drop the lot. After a horrendous slide I come to a halt in a cloud of rubber smoke, right in front of everybody. All four tyres were flat-spotted, so they put it on the trailer and took it away. End of Jaguar works drive.

"Ford were now proposing to make the Hobbs box an option on Anglias and Cortinas, so it looked like we'd hit the big time. I persuaded Dad we should show the world how well the box worked by racing it. So we bought a Lotus Elite over the winter of 1960/61 and prepared it very carefully. By about May we'd found our pace, and after that we were almost never beaten. Jim Hall gets the credit for the first successful automatic race car, but he came a long time after us. I went to the Nürburgring 1000Kms with Bill Pinckney as my co-driver, and Les Leston protested us because our gearbox was non-standard. So we ran with the 1600cc sports cars, beat the Porsches and won that class anyway.

"Colin Chapman got very interested, and asked to borrow the Elite for Jimmy Clark to drive at Daytona. Lofty England fixed me up for the same race with an E-type belonging to a Hertfordshire chicken farmer called Peter Berry. My first professional drive, and my first trip to America. I was 21. I'd never met Jimmy before, but of course he was a hero to me. We flew to New York and drove flat out down through Virginia, the Carolinas, Georgia and into Florida. We were stopped a dozen times by the cops with their guns and their pressed shirts: 'Outa the car, put ya hands on the roof!' Jimmy was rather nonplussed by the whole thing. At Daytona we were introduced to Bill France Sr, Jimmy as the Formula 1 World Champion, which wasn't true yet but soon would be, and me as the British Touring Car Champion, which certainly wasn't true: the only saloon I'd ever raced was the Morris. In the race the E-type's fuel pump went – Peter Berry's cars weren't exactly honed to perfection – but Jimmy led his class by miles in my Elite until he couldn't restart it after a pitstop. The starter had been fried by the exhaust, and the one thing you couldn't do with the Hobbs box was push-start it.

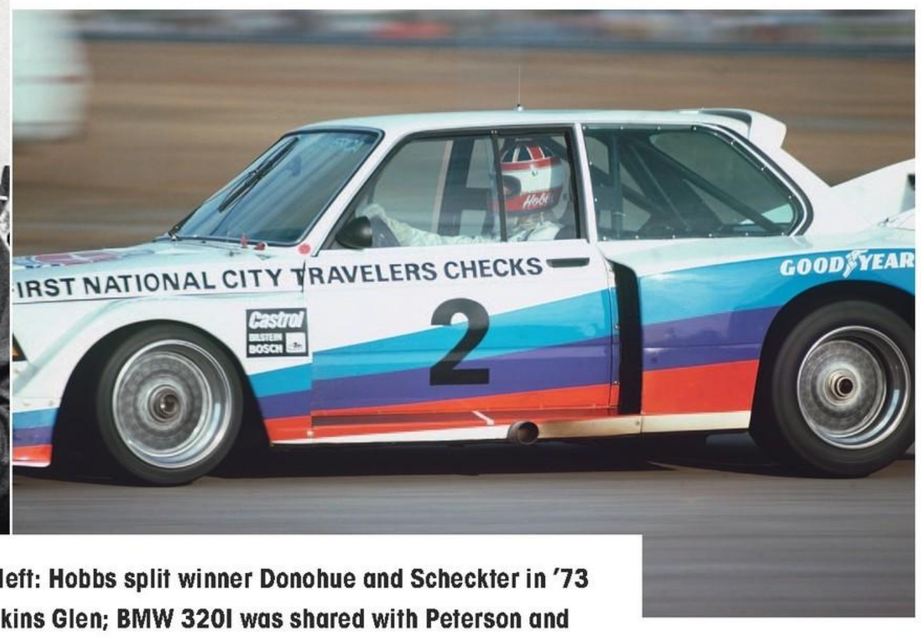
"Back in the UK I raced Berry's Jaguar 3.8 and his E-type, and then Team Elite offered me a ride at Le Mans with Frank Gardner. I'd never met Frank before, and he was wonderful: the absolute ace at one-liners. I loved Le Mans from the first. In the little Elite you spent most of your time watching the rear-view mirror, but we finished eighth overall, won the class and the Index of Thermal Efficiency. I did the Nürburgring 1000Kms again in my Elite, taking as my co-driver a fellow Jaguar apprentice called Richard Attwood. We were leading our class when something broke. In return Atty let me drive his Formula Junior Cooper at Oulton Park. It was my first single-seater race, it was raining, and everybody warned me I'd find it difficult to adapt, but I won by 13sec and set fastest lap.

"On the strength of that I was offered a Midlands Racing Partnership Formula Junior Lola for 1963 alongside Attwood and Bill Bradley. I crashed a couple of times, which upset them, but at the May Silverstone I had a good race with Denny Hulme in the works Brabham. We swapped the lead between us, and then my gearlever snapped off. On the last lap I broke the lap record trying to catch Denny, changing gear with the stub, but he beat me by a length. At Le Mans Richard and I drove the Mk6 Lola, the forerunner to the GT40, and I crashed it. The gear selection was getting progressively worse and finally on Sunday morning I arrived at the Esses in neutral. I spun and hit the wall, and that was us done.

"I took the Elite and the FJ Lola, towing a double-deck trailer behind my Ford Zephyr, down to Clermont-Ferrand, that wonderful road circuit in the Auvergne mountains. Going through the long, fast uphill left-hander in practice, Paul Hawkins came past in one of Ian Walker's yellow Lotus 23s – and coming down the hill towards us was a Simca 1000 with four French farmers in it, chatting away and smoking their Gauloises on their way to market. Somehow we both missed it, and back in the pits we gibbered at each other: 'Did you see what I just saw?' I later crashed the Elite, but I ran near the front in the FJ race until my fuel pump went on the blink.

"Then Ford changed their minds about offering the Hobbs transmission on their small cars. That was when Dad's firm went belly-up. I'd been working for him for £20 a week, and my Formula Junior racing plus the Lola at Le Mans had earned me about £900. Margaret and I were living in a little house in Warwick, one son already and one on the way. We had a summit conference, and decided I should have a go at earning a living as a racing driver. Small snag: what was I going to drive? MRP, in their wisdom, had dropped me in favour of Tony Maggs, so I went to Selwyn Hayward at Merlyn and offered my services. He paid me £25 a race to drive his 1-litre F2 car. I also drove a works Lotus-Cortina alongside Mike Spence: ➤➤➤





Clockwise from top left: Hobbs split winner Donohue and Scheckter in '73 Can-Am race at Watkins Glen; BMW 320I was shared with Peterson and Sam Posey at Daytona '77; at the Nürburgring in '67 aboard F2 Lola T100; subbing for Hailwood in McLaren M23 at Monza '74; McLaren M20 from '73 Glen race; in '74 Indy 500 he took McLaren-Offy to fifth; 'Hobbo'/Hailwood GT40 was third at Le Mans '69; Hobbs also raced Lola T310 in Can-Am; in Surtees F5000 at '69 Oulton; Lotus Elite had Hobbs Mechamatic gearbox

















LAT



Hobbs in Jaguar 3.8 at '62 Goodwood Easter meeting. Right: father's XK140 came a cropper at Oulton Park; understeering Lola FJ battled Hulme at Silverstone in '63, below

won at Roskilde in Denmark, and raced it at Road America and Marlboro. I really wanted an F2 drive for the Ron Harris Team, and I got my wish at AVUS: two long straights, wall-of-death banking at one end, tight hairpin at the other. On lap one I ran into the back of my team-mate Peter Procter at the hairpin, suspension bent, out. I got another chance two years later at Reims. Lap one, going into the Thillois Hairpin, Pedro Rodríguez missed a gear, almost stopped dead. Ran into the back of him, suspension bent, out. No more Ron Harris drives.

"In 1964 I did Le Mans in a works Triumph Spitfire with Rob Slotemaker. It would only do about 120 top whack, flat all the way from Arnage to the Esses, teetering through Tertre Rouge with its rear swing-axles on tip-toe. We won the class and I was paid £200, which was good money. In 1965 I drove for them again, but Rob crashed it. I did some F2 races for Tim Parnell, and Tim offered me my first F1 drive in the French Grand Prix, in a lovely little BRM V8-engined Lotus 25. On the way down a laundry van turned across me. Broken arm, jaw, nose and cheekbones, three weeks in hospital. I never hurt myself that badly in a racing car.

"That year I also got myself into a Lola T70. The car was run by David Fletcher and entered by his little garage at Long Melford, Harold Young Ltd, although it actually belonged to an Essex farmer called Ian Yates." Ensconced in something big and hairy, David began to attract attention. At the Easter Monday Goodwood he finished third to Jim Clark and Bruce McLaren, and two weeks later came the TT at Oulton Park. David's average speed for the two heats was the fastest, but a muddle with the chequered flag at the end of the second heat gave Denny Hulme's Brabham BT8 an extra lap and he was declared the winner. "Eric Broadley went straight to the stewards, and they said he was absolutely right, but it was too late to change the result. It would have been the T70's first big win." That came a few weeks later, when David won the Guards Trophy at Mallory Park.

"Then we made a brave foray, on a tight budget, to North America to do what became the Can-Am Series. I'd got really friendly with David Fletcher by now, but when we went out he would never drink, said it made him ill. What I didn't know was that he was a recovering alcoholic. And in Canada, away from his wife, he hit the bottle. We went to St Jovite, where I ran second to John Surtees but dropped to third after a pitstop, and Mosport, where Surtees was badly injured in that enormous accident. From Toronto we had to get to our next race in Seattle, 2000 miles away, and had no idea how to do it. Up pops this spivvy little guy with voluptuous girlfriend and voluptuous Cadillac. He was just a race fan, but we tied our trailer to the back of the Cadillac, put the spare wheels on the roof, round the top of Lake Superior, across Canada to Winnipeg, then Moose Jaw and down to Seattle. Did the race there, then Cadillac guy and his heavily endowed girl take us another 1000 miles down to California and Laguna Seca, and then Riverside. All the time David was getting steadily worse, and was now constantly inebriated. So we put him on a plane home, and said to the airline, 'Whatever you do, don't give this man a drink.' That was the last time I saw him. He was dead by March.

"For 1966 I raced a Team Surtees Lola T70, and did a lot of the testing. Eric Broadley'd be there with his clipboard and pencil, and you'd come in and say, 'It's understeering through Copse and Becketts, Eric.' 'Is it? It shouldn't be doing that. Try it again.' So you'd go out again, come back in, 'It's still understeering, Eric.' 'Is it really? It shouldn't do that, you know.' At a Mallory test I had my first lesson in aero. I was doing 46sec, understeering like mad around Gerards, then Eric gets out a couple of little strips of aluminium and says, 'We're going to try these.' The mechanic, Malcolm Malone, fag permanently stuck in the gap in his teeth, lines them up on the nose with Eric saying, 'Up a bit, down a bit' and then pop-rivets them on. I couldn't see how these little pieces could possibly make any difference, but I go out and at once I'm a second and a half quicker. I come in and say, 'It's a miracle, the understeer's gone – in fact it's oversteering now.' 'Oh, we can fix that,' says Eric, and Malcolm starts pop-riveting strips on the back. Today everybody spends millions on wind tunnels, but in those days it was Eric saying, 'Up a bit, down a bit.'

> "I blew the engine, and the heavies were not amused"

"I drove an F2 MRP Lola at Barcelona in the pouring rain, finished fourth behind Brabham, Stewart and Hulme and ahead of G Hill. And I finally got my Tim Parnell F1 drive, in the non-championship Syracuse Grand Prix. By the end of the race the spectators were all over the road, and on the slowing-down lap I was driving over their feet. It was a thin field, but I finished third behind the works Ferraris of John Surtees and Lorenzo Bandini. Afterwards Tim said, 'Bloody 'ell, Dave, I thought you'd 'ave done better than that.' There's no pleasing some people.

"Bernard White, Lord Hanson's brother, asked me to drive his GT40 in the Springbok Series, sharing with Mike Hailwood. I didn't know much about Hailwood and I didn't like the idea at all. Apparently Mike felt the same: 'Hobbs? Don't want to go with him, he's just a public school poof.' But as soon as we met each other we really hit it off. After the Kyalami Nine Hours we went across the desert to Cape Town and did the Three Hours there. I came in to hand over to Mike, the mechanic didn't shut the fuel flap properly, and when Mike slowed for the first corner fuel sloshed all over the brakes and it caught fire. We went all the way to Bulawayo and won there, and over Christmas we won at Pietermaritzburg as well. Everything with Mike was always a terrific romp. He liked the ladies, never seemed to eat breakfast and dinner with the same girl.

"I drove Bernard's little 2-litre BRM in the British Grand Prix at Silverstone, put it on the fourth row of the 4-3-4 grid and finished eighth. So he sent it to Mosport for the





LAT

Canadian GP. I qualified 12th and ran eighth in the wet early stages. Then it dried out, but I still finished ninth. But I spent most of 1967 trying to make the Aston Martin-powered T70 work. It was nothing like as strong as the old pushrod Chevy. At the same time Lofty asked me to test the XJ13 Jaguar at MIRA. They were thinking of getting back into racing. Sir William [Lyons] came along, and their aerodynamicist Malcolm Sayer. The XJ13 was antiquated – terrible gearbox, bad brakes, narrow wheels on ancient Dunlops. But the four-cam V12 was beautiful, smooth as silk, massive torque. They could have done a lot with that.

"Le Mans with the Lola-Aston was a disaster. John Surtees went to a different make of spark plug just before the race, and had a massive row with the Aston people about it. Three laps in, it burned a piston. A fortnight later, for the Reims 12 Hours, we were back on Chevy engines. John started, and after an hour and a half I was togged up and ready to take over, but he waved me away and went back out. Then the crank broke. Five weeks after that we were at Brands for the BOAC 500 and started from the middle of the front row. John led the first lap, but stopped on lap two to adjust the fuel pressure. Over the next five hours we sweated our way back up the field: then a piston went.

"But every cloud has a silver lining, because my drives in the Lola got me into John Wyer's team of Gulf GT40s for 1968, paired with Paul Hawkins. Jacky Ickx and Brian Redman were in the other car. It was a great set-up. Grady Davis of Gulf and John Wyer were a wonderful couple of old codgers – Wyer liked his martinis vay vay dray, just pass the bottle over the glass – and David Yorke was team manager, John Horsman chief engineer. The only problem was that David Yorke was in love with Jacky Ickx, a bit like Helmut Marko and Sebastian Vettel today, and Ickx could do no wrong. Not that he ever did much wrong, of course: he was always incredibly fast. But it used to infuriate Hawkins to see him wrap Yorke around his little finger.

"The GT40 was wonderfully comfortable for long races: enough room inside, pedals just right for heel-and-toe, that lovely ZF box, plenty of torque, predictable handling and no vices. At Daytona, after 15 hours, Paul and I were swapping the lead with the Siffert/Herrmann Porsche when a tiny bit of welding wire wore a hole in the fuel tank bag. At Sebring we were leading again when Paul had the incident with the Dutch girl." A Porsche 911 had to swerve to avoid Liane Engeman's very slow Javelin, and Hawkins hit the 911. His colourful Australian comments about women drivers made headlines around the world.

Next time out for JW, the Hobbo/Hawkeye pairing won the Monza 1000Kms. "I think it was the last time they used the whole of the old circuit, including the banked oval, which was so rough the car was banging about all over the place. We were fourth at Spa – Jacky walked that, of course, in the pouring rain – and then we went to Watkins Glen for the Six Hours. By the end of the race Paul and I had a full lap lead over Ickx/Lucien Bianchi in the other car, and everybody else was miles behind, so we were stroking to the finish. Suddenly Yorke gave me the EZ sign, because he wanted Ickx to win. I wasn't at all amused. I did as I was told and let the little Belgian past, but I had a row with David in the hotel afterwards, because there were no driver points involved, and JW got maximum points for their 1-2 anyway. The Gulf guys didn't like it much either: at the airport next morning one of them slipped Paul and me $1000 each.

"For 1969 my mate Hailwood replaced Hawkins as my JW co-driver, and we were leading at Daytona when the block cracked. At Le Mans Mike and I were going right along, and during the night I'm following two Porsche 908s into the Mulsanne kink when suddenly there's a flash of orange flame, headlights pointing skywards, the road's filled with smoke and debris. I burst through the smoke and there's half a Porsche stuck in the guardrail, burning merrily. Cartwheeling in front of me is the other half, and as I watch the driver pops out of it and goes bouncing down the road. I managed to miss them both, came in and said to Mike, 'We're going to be under a caution for ages, a chap's just been killed down at the kink.' But it was Udo Schütz, who was a bit overweight, and old Udo just bounced. Never had a mark.

"On my next stint, down to Mulsanne Corner from 200mph, the brake pedal goes straight to the floor. Down the escape road, quick U-turn, come in: 'We've got a major brake problem.' David Yorke says, 'It's the pads.' I say, 'It's not the pads, it happened suddenly.' He says, 'You're the driver, leave the mechanicals to me.' So they change the pads, off I go, end of the pitlane I try the brakes, pedal to the floor, nearly run down a marshal. Round again, in again, they find a caliper pipe has been chopped by a wheel balance weight. By the time they'd replaced it and bled the system we'd lost an age, and we finished third. Without that, John Horsman says to this day we would have won, and the famous battle to the line between Ickx and Herrmann would have been for second place.

"Then Wyer did his deal with Porsche to run the 917. So in November Dr Piech, Dr Bott, Herr Falk, Herr Flegl, all the Porsche heavies were assembled at Daytona to watch a JW test. Going onto the banking, up the gears from second to third, I managed to put it into first instead, and blew the engine. The heavies were not amused. Gear selection on the early cars was abysmal, and it turned out that everybody missed gears – including Jo Siffert, who did it in front of the pits when he was leading Le Mans. But Dr Piech took against me for that, so I was fired and they hired Leo Kinnunen. Except Wyer ran a third 917 at Le Mans, and they brought Hailwood and me back to drive it. Siffert missed his shift, the Rodríguez car blew its engine, the Elford car did its electrics, so we were looking good. But it was another one I didn't win. When it started to rain Mike, still on dry tyres, crashed. Wyer was absolutely furious: 'Don't ring us, Hailwood, we'll ring you.'

"On the F1 front, while John Surtees was with Honda in 1967, the air-cooled V8 had killed Jo Schlesser in its first race at Rouen. But Honda wanted to persevere with it, so John asked me to test it at Silverstone. It was terrible: very fragile, very peaky, and it had this dreadful whippy chassis. If you put stiffer springs on it, it just twisted the chassis more. But I also tested the Lola-chassis V12, and got under Chris Amon's Ferrari lap record, which really chuffed me. They had two V12s ready for the Italian GP at Monza, and I got the drive. I was in sixth place with 25 laps to go when the engine dropped a valve. A full two-car F1 season was planned for 1969, with me in the second car, but Honda chose that moment to withdraw. »»»

"So John built an F5000 car, and in the British series I scored the first win for a Surtees chassis, at Mondello. Then he sent me to America to do Formula A. I'd missed the first five rounds, but I won at Donnybrooke, St Jovite and Thompson, and then the final at Sebring. I was a bit lucky, because Mario Andretti's Lotus 70 blew its engine when he was leading me, but I missed the championship by one point."

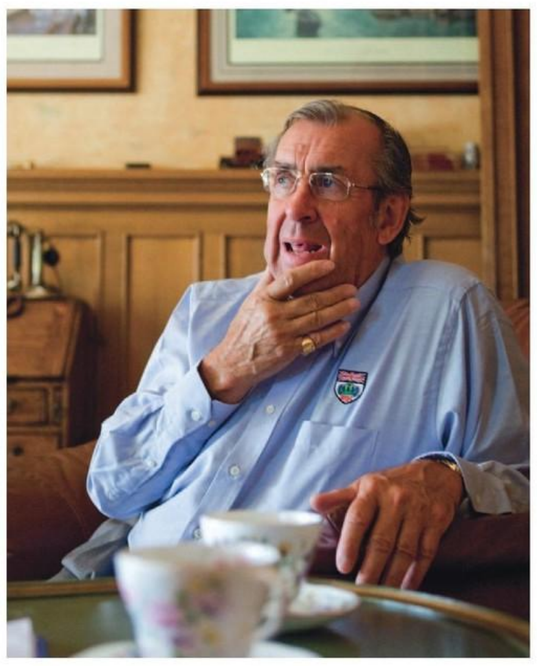
The US races brought David into contact with Mark Donohue and his mentor Roger Penske. "Penske said, 'Haabbs, come drive for me. I'm running a Ferrari 512 in sports cars, and I want you to do Indy too. If you want to do Formula A, that's fine, but not for Surtees because he's Firestone and we're Goodyear. I'll talk to Carl Hogan, you can do it for him.'

"So I did the 1971 FA championship in Hogan's McLaren, won five of the eight rounds, won the title. I went on to drive for Carl for five seasons. Meanwhile Penske brings to Daytona this incredible blue Ferrari. Works Ferraris were kind of tatty in those days, lumps of weld everywhere, but you could eat your dinner off this. It had been completely stripped and rebuilt, trick refuelling kit, Traco had done the engine. David Yorke almost had a seizure when he saw it. We start from pole and lead the race, then around midnight Elford's 917 has a puncture on the banking. Lots of dust and smoke, Mark slows for the yellows and is hit by a 911. They spent an hour sticking the 512 together with tank tape, and we still finished third. Sebring, we're on pole again, and mid-race Mark and Pedro get into a barging match. Mending that damage lost us ages, and we finished sixth. At Le Mans we were running third on Saturday evening, and the engine blew. Last outing was Watkins Glen, and I never got in the car: Mark was leading from pole and the steering broke.

"Mark was very good both as driver and engineer. Bit of a loner, introspective, felt he had to be with the guys all the time: drive the truck, sweep the floor, show them he wasn't just a driver. He was from Irish stock and didn't like the English, but he used to say, 'For an Englishman you're not a bad guy.' Some of the things he did I wasn't keen on: like he put a locked diff on the Ferrari, so you had to alter your driving technique in slow corners, chuck it in and get the rear to slide, or it just understeered. The first time I drove it I said, 'What the hell is wrong with this car?', but he said, 'That's how it's supposed to be. Get used to it.' So I adapted.

"Indy was something else again. It's not like the usual American oval, because the banking is so flat and the corners are so fast – more like four very quick bits of Spa tied together. You could see why road racers went well there. We were lapping in the 170mph bracket then, but doing 225 on the straights, so you braked for the corners. With the huge turbochargers the throttle lag was terrible, so you'd try to keep the throttle open while you were braking with your left foot. I was in Mark's old Lola-Ford from the year before, qualified it mid-grid and everything was going fine. Around half-distance I was in Turn 4, just ahead of Rick Muther in the Sugar Ripe Prune Special, when there was this terrific clattering banging noise and the engine stops. I look in my mirror, Where the hell's Rick gone? He's done a huge swerve trying to miss me, hits the wall, comes booming in from 7 o'clock, hits me, spins me round, he's up on two wheels, I hit the wall too. When it all stops I jump out, visor covered in oil, blunder towards the fence and nearly get run over by A J Foyt. My first Indy."

By now David was earning a good living, taking drives in USAC, Can-Am, Trans-Am, F5000 and even the Tasman Series. In Europe he did Le Mans for Matra, and a couple of Grands Prix for Yardley McLaren when Mike Hailwood was injured. "My best Can-Am race came in 1973, with Roy Woods' McLaren M20. By then all the quick boys had the Porsche 917 turbos, but at Watkins Glen I got second, splitting the 917s of Mark Donohue and Jody Scheckter. One of my better days. At Indy that year I was in Roy's Eagle-Offy, only qualified 22nd but I worked my way up, passed a lot of the quick guys, and I was seventh when the engine stopped. I free-wheeled into the pits and they had a poke around and decided the magneto drive had sheared. They put in another one, it fired up, and I finished 11th. For 1974 I had a McLaren-Offy, qualified ninth and finished fifth that time."



"You can't rush around at 170mph all your life"

There was the big Broadspeed Jaguar XJ12C – "a complete disaster, but Ralph Broad was such a character" – plus three seasons of IMSA in a McLaren-run BMW 320. "About 670bhp, but huge turbo lag. BMW were gathering information on racing turbos, ready to do F1 with a turbo four a few years later. In some longer races Ronnie Peterson shared with me. A very nice man. Never wanted to change the car: 'Hey Hobby, it's your car, set it up how you like it, I'll drive it like that.' Then he'd be faster than me anyway. It wasn't always reliable, but in 1979 I won the Road America 500 sharing with Derek Bell, beat all the Porsche 935s."

NASCAR too, running as Benny Parsons' team-mate in the Daytona 500: "Coming off Turn 4 on the first lap, in a pack of 42 cars, half of them scraping down the wall, concrete dust, rubber smoke, I thought, 'Do I want to be doing this?' But I managed to get into the top 12 when the rear rollbar broke and I nailed the wall. Then I did the Michigan 400 for Junie Donlavy. I'm going like Jack the Bear, running near the front behind Darrell Waltrip and Cale Yarborough, and I lose it coming off Turn 4. Spin 720 degrees and end up pointing down the pitlane, so I motor in for fresh tyres. Old Junie leans in the window and says, 'That thar was the finest drivin' I ever seen.' He didn't realise it was pure luck. It was August, hot as hell, I was like a melted pack of butter, but they said, 'Keep goin', boy, you're doin' great.' I did finish, in about 17th place. My last NASCAR race.

"In 1983 I was hired to drive in the Trans-Am Series in a two-car team of Camaros with Willy T Ribbs, $6000 a race plus a share of the prize money. I won the title, he came second. I was also running with John Fitzpatrick in Porsches: third at Le Mans again, and fourth twice. Fitz was backed by J David, real name Jerry Dominelli, who seemed to be a financial genius, investing clients' money in foreign exchanges and spending money like a one-armed paper-hanger in a gale. In fact he was a conman, but we didn't know that. He was very convincing, paid us well, and kept the 935s and 956s coming. When I sold a BMW dealership I had in Houston I invested the money with him, and this was about six weeks before the whole house of cards collapsed. He was jailed for 10 years. I did manage to get my cash back in the end.

"In 1990 I was at Dijon in a Joest 962 with Jonathan Palmer. I'd done very little racing that year and wasn't fit enough. It's all big swooping right-handers there, and after three laps of practice I couldn't hold my head up. I went to a pet shop and bought a dog lead, hooked it up to my helmet to support my neck. We finished eighth. But I knew that, after 32 seasons, it was time to stop.

"All those cars and races, all those incidents, for some reason I never hurt myself. That's why, today, I don't do historic racing seriously. I'm not superstitious, but you can't go rushing around at 170mph all your life and not expect to get hurt eventually." But at the last Goodwood Revival David did accept a guest drive in a small saloon. He likes the irony: he started in a Morris Oxford and he's come round to an Austin A40. With rather a lot in between.

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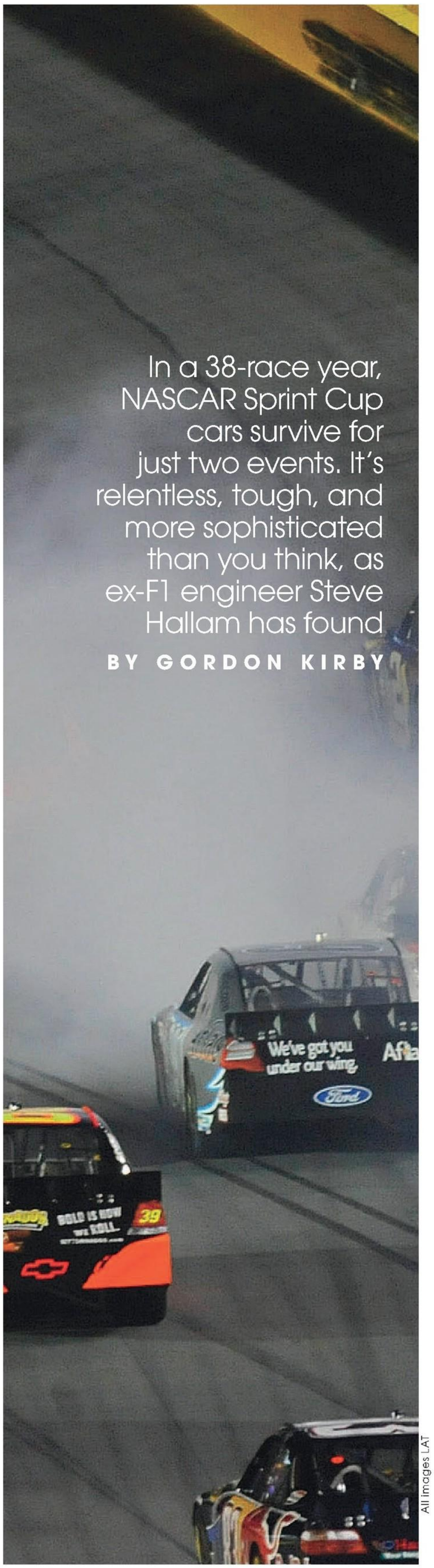
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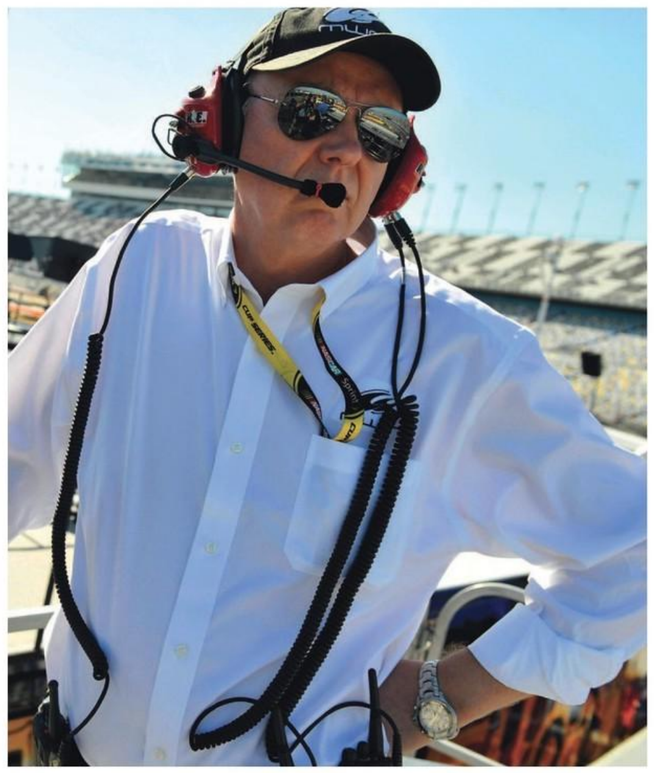
In a 38-race year, NASCAR Sprint Cup cars survive for just two events. It's relentless, tough, and more sophisticated than you think, as ex-F1 engineer Steve Hallam has found

BY GORDON KIRBY



All images LAT

After 27 years in Formula 1 with Lotus and McLaren Steve Hallam moved to North Carolina two years ago to begin a new life as director of competition for Michael Waltrip's three-car NASCAR team. Hallam goes to all 38 race weekends (36 regular season races plus two special events) to engineer David Reutimann's car and he's enjoying himself immensely. Many people in the UK and Europe underestimate both NASCAR and oval racing, but a conversation with Hallam (right) will disabuse them of that notion.



Recently I talked with Hallam about the challenges and the complexity of NASCAR. We began by discussing the massive effort that goes into building and maintaining the huge fleet of cars operated by every NASCAR team. "The scale of NASCAR in terms of car production is really unknown or appreciated in Europe," Hallam observes. "We will make around 45 cars during the course of the year for our three Cup drivers. Each driver has a rolling pool of nine cars, which are built to different specifications to suit different tracks.

"The logistics of NASCAR in terms of production and supply chain management is staggering. It's a huge industry in itself and we strive to achieve all the common goals of mainstream industry – quality, repeatability and delivery. We're generally working on a four-week cycle in terms of the next series of races. The cars for the race four weeks down the road are being built and assembled at that time and the set-up sheets will be issued a couple of weeks before the race.

"We're pushing new cars out with improvements all the time so they're getting superseded. It's a continual development process to ease weight out of the cars, bring the centre of gravity down, manage your fore and aft weight distribution and just getting the cars where you want them."

Then after all that work, NASCAR teams throw away many cars during any season. "It doesn't pay to get too close to a car because they are seriously damaged or wrecked on a regular basis," says Hallam. "It's generally not your driver who does it. Occasionally it may be, but generally another driver will in »»»

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"They've got a really good *esprit de corps* and good coaches and they train very hard. We have two pitstop cars and our own pitwall at the factory with a built-in pitbox with video analysis equipment. It was much more than I expected. We have four coaches, two strength and fitness coaches, a head pitcrew coach and assistant pitcrew coach."

The technique of pitstops is carefully analysed and developed. "There's plenty of technique coaching because there are a number of permutations to the stops that we will make. It could be a fuel-only stop, a two-tyre stop, or a four-tyre stop, or the car may be damaged or adjustments are to be made. There's a playbook of how to handle each situation.

"Every stop they make is recorded and reviewed in the Monday debriefs. The analysis software is the same style of software that's used in the NFL, the English Premier League and Rugby League – all the team sports – where tracking movement and timing movement is crucial to performance. It's very clever stuff and well-documented and executed."

A single NASCAR steel wheel and tyre with its safety inner liner weighs more than 30 kilograms. "When you see those boys toss them around and run around the car with them you think that looks easy. But you just try to pick one up, let alone do what they do with it."

In Formula 1, strategy is quite simple, most of it determined before the race starts. But in NASCAR with many pitstops every team must make frequent tactical responses to any planned strategy. "We will stop six to eight times, maybe more, because of the yellows, and of course we cannot predict them. Track position is crucial in this form of racing so the ability to think on your feet and work the cautions can help a competently performing car come up from the back of the field and run in the top ten.

"Once he's got that momentum or clear enough air his car may start to work and the crew chief may be able to make adjustments to it during those stops and keep it up there. It's a very fluid situation and the vast majority of these guys are pretty sharp at reading the race and understanding what they need to do.

"You don't want to be the last man on used tyres with everyone behind you on new tyres because you're just going to be eaten up. The hard bit is to decide where that crossover point is. That's where the toughest decisions are. If you're right at the front or the back the decisions are straightforward. But if you're in that awkward position of should I stop, or should I come in? – that's where you roll the dice."



Pitcrew are treated like athletes, with technique coaching and video review

"People in F1 should come and do this for a while"
STEVE HALLAM

The crew chiefs usually make those decisions but the best drivers also contribute. "When you listen to the radios and the chatter that goes on, some drivers have more to contribute via their experience or their savvy than others. The final decision rests with the crew chief, but there are some very sharp drivers out there who frequently make their own calls about when they're going to stop."

A few years ago NASCAR banned testing at any track that runs a NASCAR race, save for Goodyear tyre testing, so the teams are compelled to test at non-NASCAR tracks such as New Smyrna in Florida and Rockingham in North Carolina, plus road courses like Virginia International Raceway and Road Atlanta.

"We crank through a reasonable amount of testing," says Hallam. "We will probably run 50 or more car days of testing this year. When you try and fit that around 38 race weekends it's quite busy."

Data collection and telemetry are forbidden on race weekends. "So everybody does a lot of simulation. The bit you're missing is the data that you generate on race day, but we simulate and model. We put a lot of resources into that. We are very proud of the suite of programmes that our vehicle dynamics engineers have delivered for us. They are the weapons of choice of the race engineer. That's what they stand and fall by and those tools are forever being tweaked as we learn more and more throughout the year. We use test rigs to generate the measured data and then we run a vehicle model around the tracks where we've accrued data."

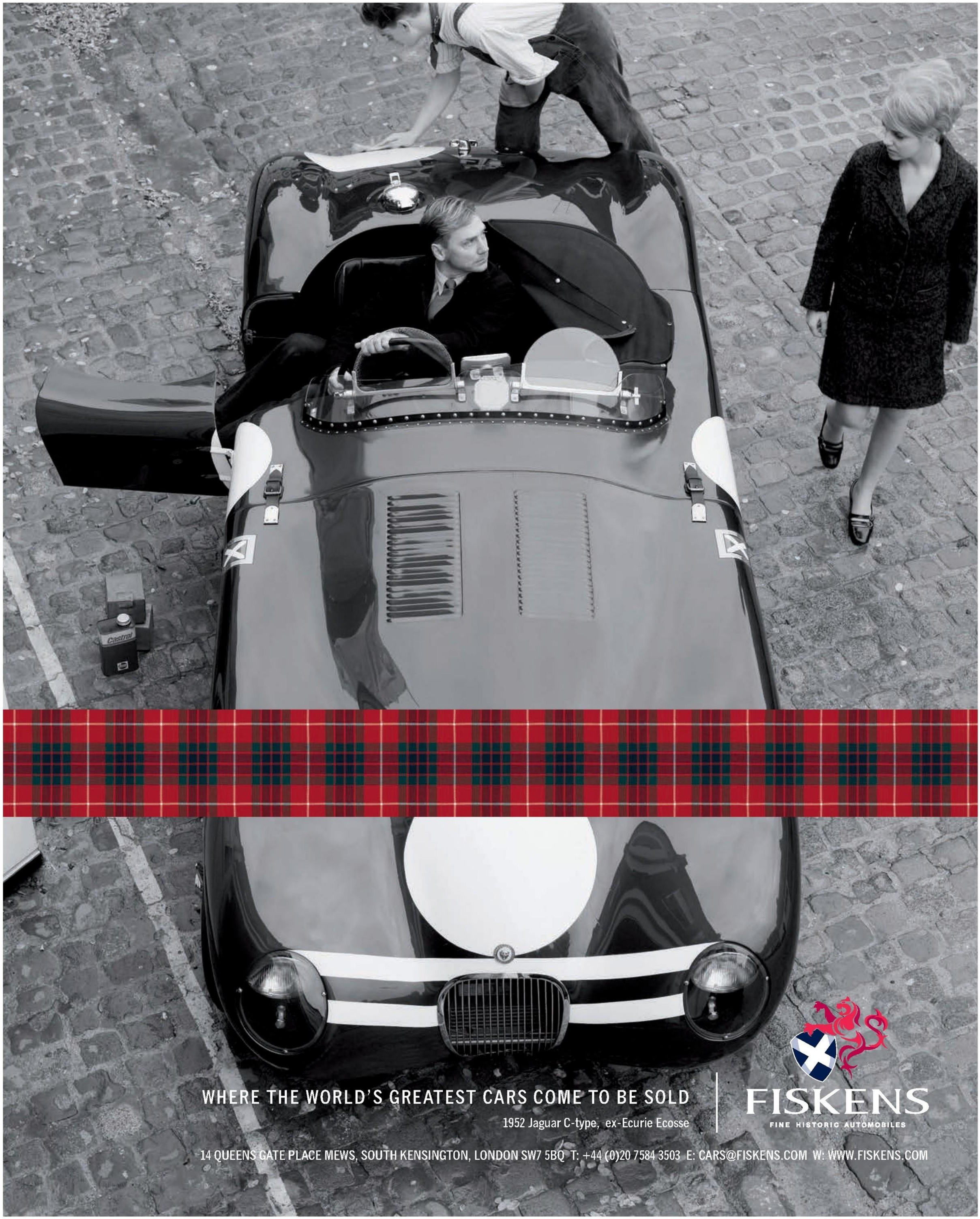
Michael Waltrip Racing employs 245 people, including 30 engineers. "At each race we have three crew chiefs, three race engineers, plus three damper guys who are part of the engineering team. Generally we bring an extra engineer to each race just to expose them to the race weekend. So there are 10 engineers minimum travelling to the races."

Hallam freely admits that NASCAR's schedule is very demanding. "People in F1 complain that going to 20 races would kill us all, but they should come and do this for a while. It is an arduous schedule. The teams have evolved to attempt to deal with it, but there is no substitute for time off and I can tell you that one day isn't enough. When you've got a 38-weekend season and you get to the end of it, all you want to do is fall in a heap and lie in a darkened room for a few days."

NASCAR consults regularly with a 25,000-member fan council and Hallam has no doubts this is NASCAR's primary lesson for Formula 1. "Don't ever forget the fans," he declares. "NASCAR is heavily fan-based. The fans are passionate and the drivers appreciate that. All of the drivers have a pen in their pockets and they'll sign autographs as they walk along.

"The other thing is I've never raced in front of so many people in my life before. 200,000 people at the Daytona 500 is phenomenal, with the back grandstands full and the front grandstands full and the infield full of campers. Many of them have been there for two weeks. And Bristol takes your breath away. The amphitheatre we race in there with 130,000 people surrounding a half-mile bullring and the noise they make and the excitement of the racing – you just have to see it. There is no other way to appreciate it. If you think it's not worth it, or you can't be bothered, you are missing a treat."

Clearly, Steve Hallam has become a NASCAR convert. If an intelligent gent like him can cross the line, maybe you should give it a try.


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Damien Smith, Editor

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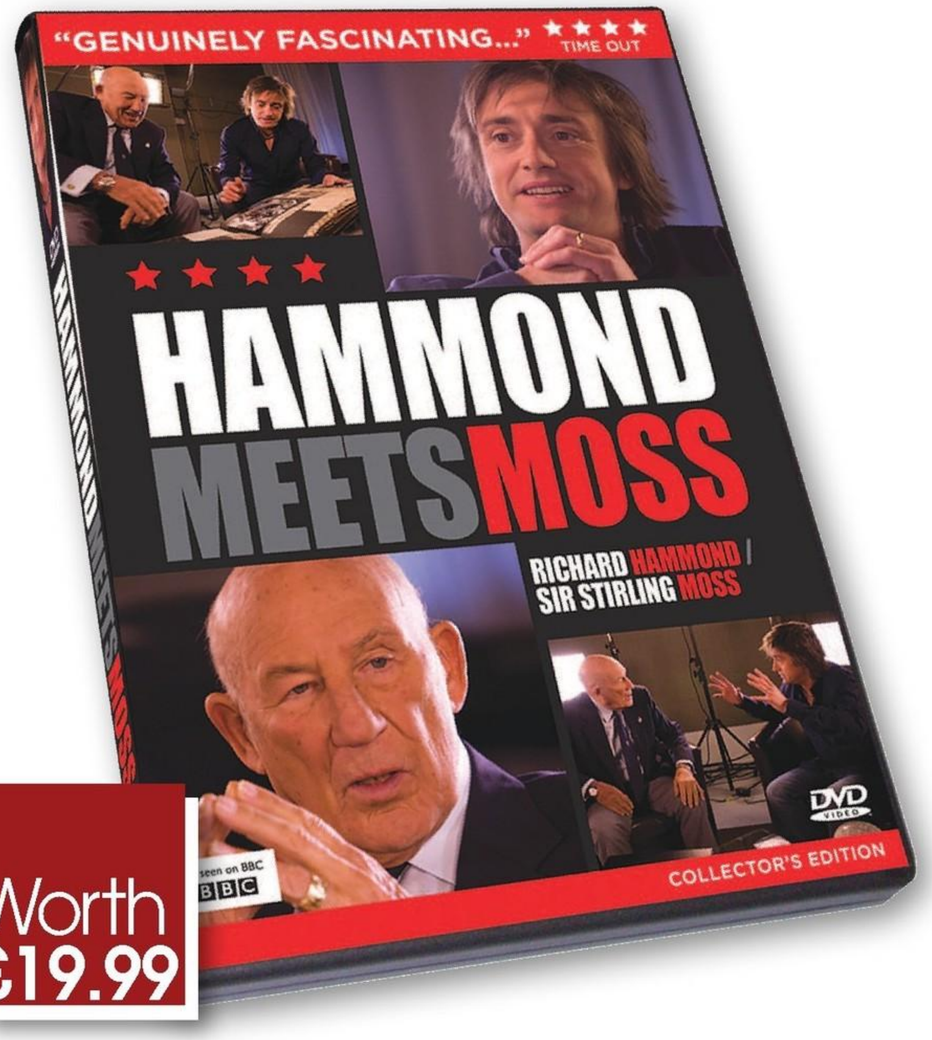




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‘Heady days in the colonies’

The 1961 Lady Wigram Trophy was one of the more dramatic races in New Zealand’s golden era of motor sport

BY EOIN YOUNG

When news broke that the Wigram air force base on the outskirts of Christchurch in New Zealand had been closed, to be swallowed by suburbia, it brought closure to another chapter of motor racing history, one which saw top international cars and drivers racing at the circuit every January from the 1950s to the ’70s. For me, mention of the place sparks a memory of a wet weekend in 1961 – incredible to think it was 50 years ago – when the grid for the Lady Wigram Trophy would have been worthy of a European Grand Prix. Heady days in the colonies, but looking back we took it for granted. We expected the world’s top drivers to be racing on our circuits.

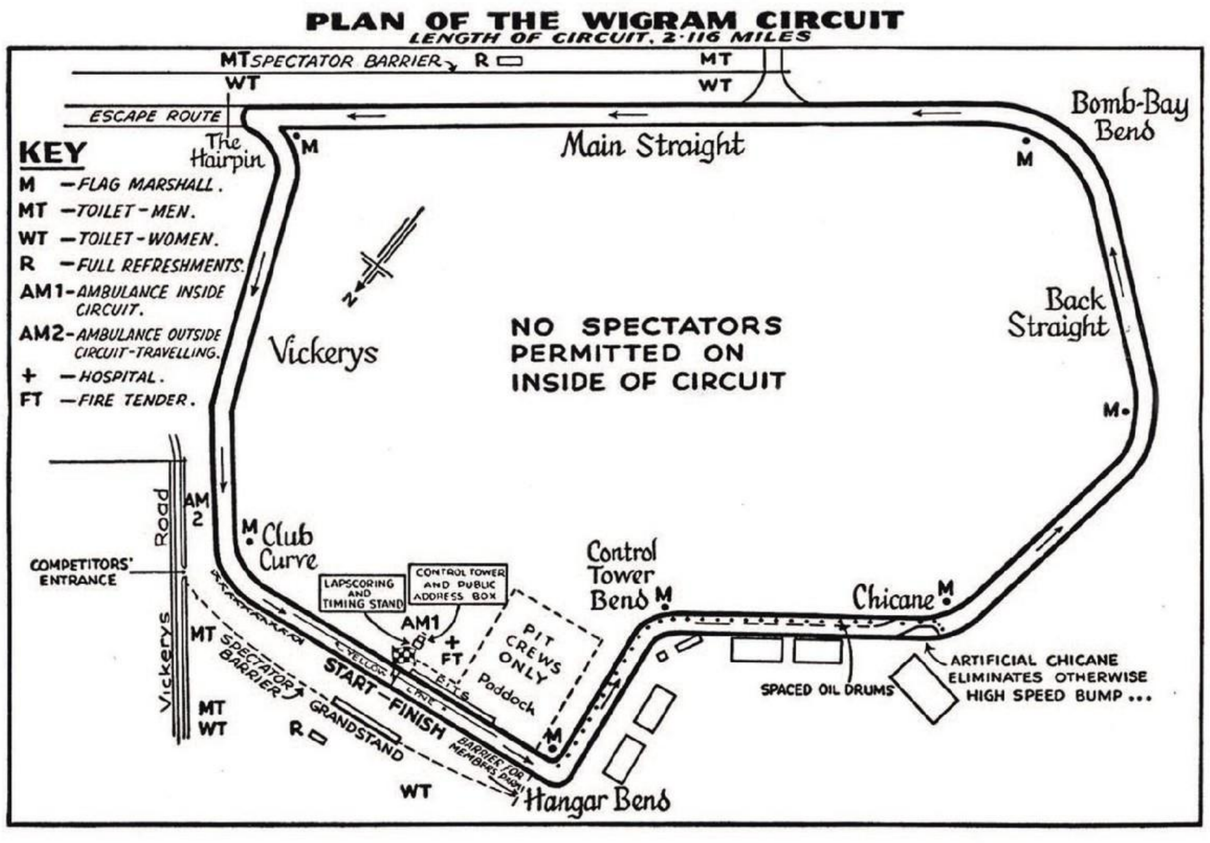
My Wigram memory was sparked by a photo of Stirling Moss in Rob Walker’s Lotus 18 with one carburettor trumpet smashed off, another battered in and the radius arm bent almost into the chassis frame. I had been at this race but was unaware of this coming-together. The photo was captioned Wigram ’61, so that made it the race when I had been watching from the far side of the infield, hardly able to see the cars in the rain, never mind spot any damage.

The front row of the grid featured John Surtees on pole in a works Lotus 18, Jack Brabham alongside in a works Cooper and Jo Bonnier beside him in a Yeoman Credit Cooper. Jim Clark was in another works Lotus on the outside of the 4-3-4 grid. Stirling Moss (Lotus) was on the second row, with Bruce McLaren (Cooper) in the middle and Malcolm Gill on the outside in the aero-engined Lycoming Special.

It was one of those weekends. It seemed never to stop raining and there was little shelter at a circuit that had been laid out overnight because it was an operational RNZAF airfield.

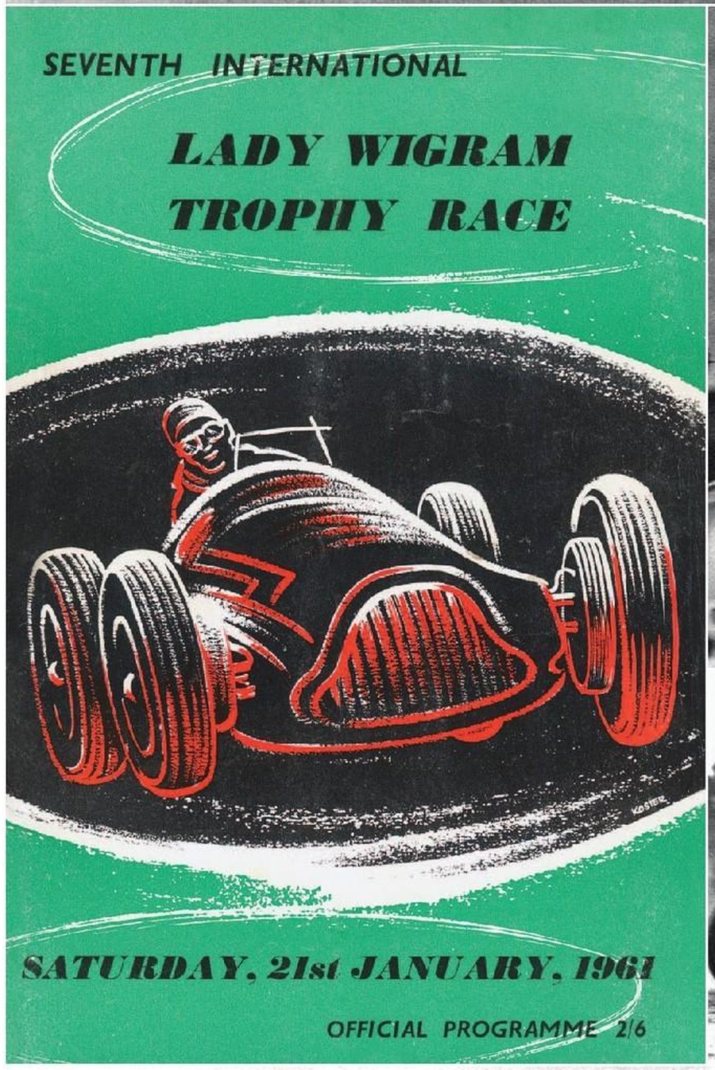
Of the locals, Johnny Mansel had just taken delivery of his TecMec, replacing the svelte black 250F Maserati he had raced with success the previous season. The TecMec was a bastardised Italian-American combination of a 250F chassis fitted with a Corvette V8, and the fast, open drenched circuit was more than a match for Mansel’s undoubted courageous ability. In practice he lost control on the fast corner leading out onto the long back straight and launched into a wide series of gyrations that ended when the big front-engined special toppled over into a broad, water-filled drainage ditch. Mansel was lucky to avoid being drowned as he struggled to get clear. He was just emerging from the ditch when he heard the ominous swish-swish of another car spinning towards him. It was Bob Smith in his Super Squalo Ferrari, which struck Johnny and went over the top of the TecMec. Mansel had the Ferrari’s tyre marks and heavy bruising on his back. As though this mayhem wasn’t enough, minutes later Brian Blackburn lost control at the same place in his 4CLT Maserati and slammed over the upturned TecMec, driving it further into the ditch, and bounced beyond the Ferrari. In his 1993 book *The Golden Era of New Zealand Motor Racing*, Graham Vercoe wrote that it was doubtful if any other ditch in history had been so filled with such expensive Italian racing machinery.

I had taken photos of the ditched cars on my 1961 equivalent of a Box Brownie, but these have long since disappeared, so I was grateful for Ross Kiddie’s research in the archives of *The Star* ›››





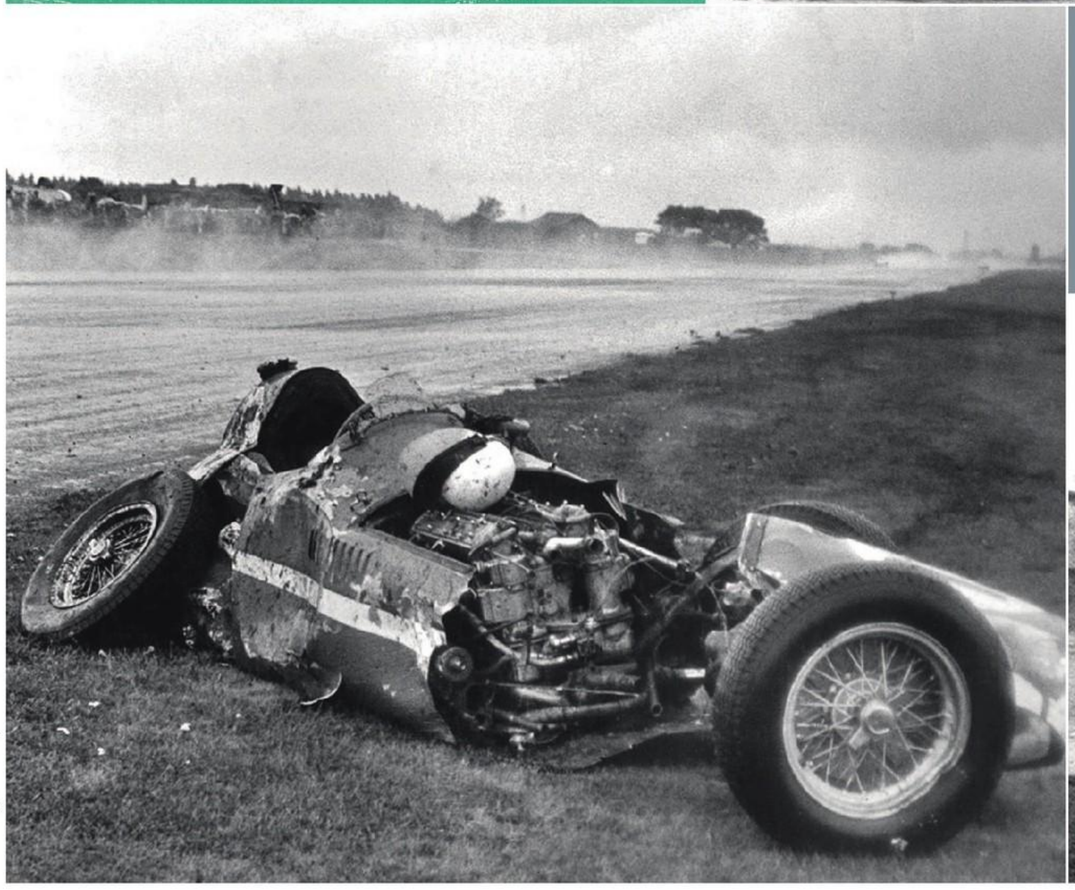












Clockwise from top left: Surtees (2), Brabham (4), Bonnier (25) and Clark (far right) take the start; timekeepers' Standard saloon after being hit by Frank Shuter's Ferrari; the photo that sparked Eoin Young's memory. Damage to carburettor trumpets and radius arm on Moss's Walker Lotus is clearly visible; Surtees' Lotus and McLaren's Cooper do battle; Sad Shuter 625 is towed away; Brabham was victorious for Cooper in shortened race; Shuter Ferrari was almost cut in half by his Standard collision



All images Terry Marshall

in Christchurch, and to Terry Marshall for photographing the picture as printed that night back in 1961. Mansel's mechanic Ray Stone had vivid memories of the scene: "It was p****** down and I ran from the pits across the infield to hear the electric fuel pump still running on the TecMec. Everybody was scared the whole thing would go up. Luckily I knew where the fuel pump switch was. Here were all these cars in and out of the ditch. Really spectacular. The TecMec was upside down with the floorpan level with the surrounding field. John was running about, probably a bit confused, but making sure the other drivers were OK…"

There seemed to have been some shuffling of the front row as Brabham had pole but asked for the second-place position because it gave him a better run into the first left-hander, which had a drain running across it. So Surtees started on what would have been pole in the Lotus, tended by Peter Bryant who would later work with the Briton on sports cars and design and build his own AutoCoast Can-Am cars. Bryant was also tending the other works Lotus driven by Jim Clark. Roy Salvadori drove another Lotus 18 entered by Yeoman Credit but was on the back of the grid after problems with the unloved Lotus 'Queerbox' with its early version of a sequential shift. Moss had asked for his Walker Lotus to be fitted with a Colotti gearbox.



"We stayed put, riveted to the spot, and the Lotus stopped a few feet from us"

It was still raining when the grid formed up for the Lady Wigram Trophy. For some reason I was standing on the infield near the back straight with Wally Willmott, who would fly to England the following year and join me in Bruce McLaren's fledgling team. We missed the mayhem on the grid when Moss and McLaren, effectively behind poleman Brabham's Cooper, both tried to follow him into the first turn and had a violent coming-together, causing the damage to the Lotus that sparked my enthusiasm to revisit the race. This clash caused chaos enough to put Gill into the lead in the Lycoming Special and he stayed ahead of the class field until he spun into a marker drum at the hairpin after three laps. Brabham then led from Bonnier until the Swede spun on lap 12 and again two laps later, bending the suspension which led to his retirement. Moss and McLaren were coming to grips with their bent cars but Bruce made the best of it and nosed past Brabham into the lead on lap 34. But he was stretched and spun, losing five places as he regained control and composure.

Clark lost his Lotus coming out of the fast turn onto the back straight, spinning several times and ending up stalled on the infield. We knew about this action because we were almost in it. It was one of those situations where Wally and I were liable to be damned if we did and damned if we didn't. We could hear the swish-swish of the spinning car, and when it came out of the murk it looked as though it could hit us. Did we run or stay put? We stayed put, probably riveted to the spot, and the Lotus stopped a few feet from us. Jim was shouting at us to push him, but the rear wheels had no grip on the wet grass. He shouted at us to push the car onto the runway straight and start him there. We might have been Kiwi country kids but we weren't stupid, and we demurred. Jim reluctantly climbed out and we trudged back to the pits, introducing ourselves on the way. We would become mates at tracks around the world when we worked our various ways to Britain and to careers in motor sport that simply would not be achievable today.

It was probably just as well that we had abandoned our viewing spot, because Christchurch driver Frank Shuter lost control of his ex-Hoare 625 Grand Prix Ferrari on the straight and spun into a Standard saloon with two timekeepers aboard. The Ferrari hit the car broadside, ripping off the left-hand side and throwing the occupants out, amazingly unharmed. The Ferrari slid to a stop 100 metres beyond, almost cut in half. Shuter escaped with a minor leg injury.

There was simply too much chaos and excitement in the limited visibility and adhesion, and before the race the organisers, with their programme already running 90 minutes late, had taken the correct decision to flag it after 47 of the scheduled 71 laps. Brabham took the flag from the battered Lotus of Moss (above). Top Kiwi honours went to Angus Hyslop in his Cooper T45 who finished third, ahead of the recovering McLaren and Hulme in his T51.

Vercoe has the last word: "It was in fact the slowest race since 1952 and the 100 bottles of champagne offered to the first driver to do a 100mph lap of Wigram went begging…"



INSIGHT

RUNWAY WINNERS

Over 45 years, Wigram airfield attracted some stellar entrants

The first Lady Wigram Trophy was held in 1949 on the Wigram Air Force Base at Christchurch. The last race was run in 1994, after which the base closed and the airfield was sold for housing. The 2.1-mile circuit that had echoed to the shriek of the V16 BRM in 1954 would be silent forever. All the top international drivers and cars competed for the prestigious Lady Wigram Trophy. On the eve of the 1968 race, the Team Lotus Type 49s were repainted in Gold Leaf cigarette colours, changing the face of F1 forever.

Noted winners included Les Moore (father of Speedway World Champion Ronnie) who drove the P3 Alfa Romeo that Tazio Nuvolari used to beat Mercedes and Auto Union at the Nürburgring in 1935. He won at Wigram in 1951-52 (above) and then sold the car to Ron Roycroft, who won in '53! Peter Whitehead won in his Ferrari in 1954, '56 and '57. The race wasn't held in '55 due to re-surfacing.

Bruce McLaren wrote his own piece of Wigram history in 1960 when he broke a conrod in the Coventry Climax of his Cooper during practice and was loaned the front-engined Lycoming Special by Malcolm Gill, which he drove to fourth with a broken rev counter and fading brakes. He sent Gill a set of disc brakes as a thank you when he returned to Britain.

Sir Henry Wigram was the pioneer of aviation and motoring in Christchurch. He was elected mayor in 1902, owned one of the first cars in town and became the first president of the Canterbury Automobile Association. In 1908 he returned to England and was well aware of the pioneer aviation activities of the time. Back in England in 1913 he visited Brooklands and saw his first aeroplane in flight, and in 1916 he bought the land that would be named after him as an airfield. When racing started in 1949 the winner's cup was named after his wife.

Volunteers would set up the circuit on Friday morning for practice that afternoon. The races were on Saturday and the airfield was restored to the RNZAF on Sunday.

Races in Lady Wigram's name are now held on the nearby Ruapuna circuit.

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TECH TALK

RACE SUSPENSION

Most of it is concealed from view, but F1's super-stiff springing is crucial to keeping the power on

BY GORDON CRUICKSHANK

Today's suspension solutions look radically different from only 20 years ago, but the aims have not changed, even though the forces involved have soared due to downforce and sticky rubber. You still must prevent the wheel moving fore and aft or sideways, while allowing controlled movement up and down. And despite a thousand variations among road cars, most racing cars rely on the simple and pure double wishbone, some form of twisting metal for springing, and a hydraulic damper to calm everything down. Setting aside active suspension, now banned in Formula 1, it's only in the last area that we have seen a major new idea lately – mass damping.

But first, back to the major principles. The suspension's function is to maintain as consistent a load as possible on the contact patch, the tyre's toe-hold on Mother Earth, while the car above moves around. On a road car those motions are substantial, and the paths of all the swivelling parts are plotted to interact so as to keep the contact patch flat – or rather at an ideal negative camber, or inward lean – even when the body leans like a yacht in a Force 5.

The priorities on a racing car are different: the track is extremely smooth, the forces far higher, and driver comfort isn't on the menu. And above all, the immense downforce on an F1 car means that the suspension must be unyielding to maintain minimum ground clearance even at high speed with full tanks. From the on-board camera you will barely see the suspension move.

Normally, car designers keep the upper and lower arms far apart for best location of the upright – not possible with an F1 car's raised nose, where the floor is level with the hub. Single, twin keels and vee keels with an open central space have all been used to locate the arms, but new front wing restrictions make airflow to the splitter critical. So keels have vanished, the lower arms now hingeing on the monocoque edges. The aero gain outweighs the higher centre of gravity and theoretically inferior geometry.

It's a long time since the springs were out in the airstream; push- or pull-rod systems are universal, making for compact packaging with the rod acting through rockers on small inboard torsion bar springs. Due to the rocker, the bars can lie in any orientation that suits – fore and aft, vertical or anywhere in between. It also allows the designer to convert the tiny wheel movement to a larger damper movement for better control. This is also where there is sometimes a third spring and/or damper. Because it connects the rockers it has little effect when one wheel rises, merely pushing the other wheel down. But when both wheels rise as the car dives it's compressed between the rockers, giving extra resistance to pitch and thus better height control, crucial to downforce with only 20-30mm ground clearance and 170kg weight change between full tanks and empty. This separation of roll control from 'heave' – up and down car movement – can be even more extreme outside F1. Some hillclimb cars rely purely on sprung washers for roll resistance, with a single coil spring for heave.

Another Formula 1 detail is the disappearance of spherical joints. Because of the minimal movement – ride height on an F1 car alters only 3mm from empty tanks to full – the ball-joint is replaced by a flexing metal blade bolted to the chassis. This obviates free play, cuts friction and weight, and avoids 'stiction'. The ride height is varied by fitting shims of different thickness at the top of the pushrod, or more radically by rotating the torsion bars by one spline.

Pushrods have become almost universal in F1 because they give clear air around the front splitter and rear diffuser tunnels. However, after diffusers were restricted for 2009 (and before Ross Brawn thought of a double version), Adrian Newey used a rear pull-rod set-up on the past two Red Bulls. Mounting the springs and dampers low and forward left a cleaner air path to the rear wing, boosting its effect, and keeping the mass low. With double diffusers banned for next year, rear pull-rods may be back in fashion.

Perhaps you have seen how some skyscrapers protect against earthquakes with a huge concrete block suspended inside. Carefully tuned, the block lags behind the building sway, reducing the extent of movement. This is mass damping.

Renault's Bob Bell exploited this principle by mounting a sprung 9kg mass within the nose of the R25 in 2005, giving him a win in the eternal trade off between soft springs (good for grip) and hard (good for consistent downforce). By reducing vertical movement this let him run softer springs without stiffer dampers, so the car was particularly good over kerbs, as the wheels stayed on the ground for longer. It was brilliant – but the FIA banned it in '06 on the grounds that by controlling pitch it was a moveable aero aid. However, inertial damping has continued invisibly, usually within the third damper.

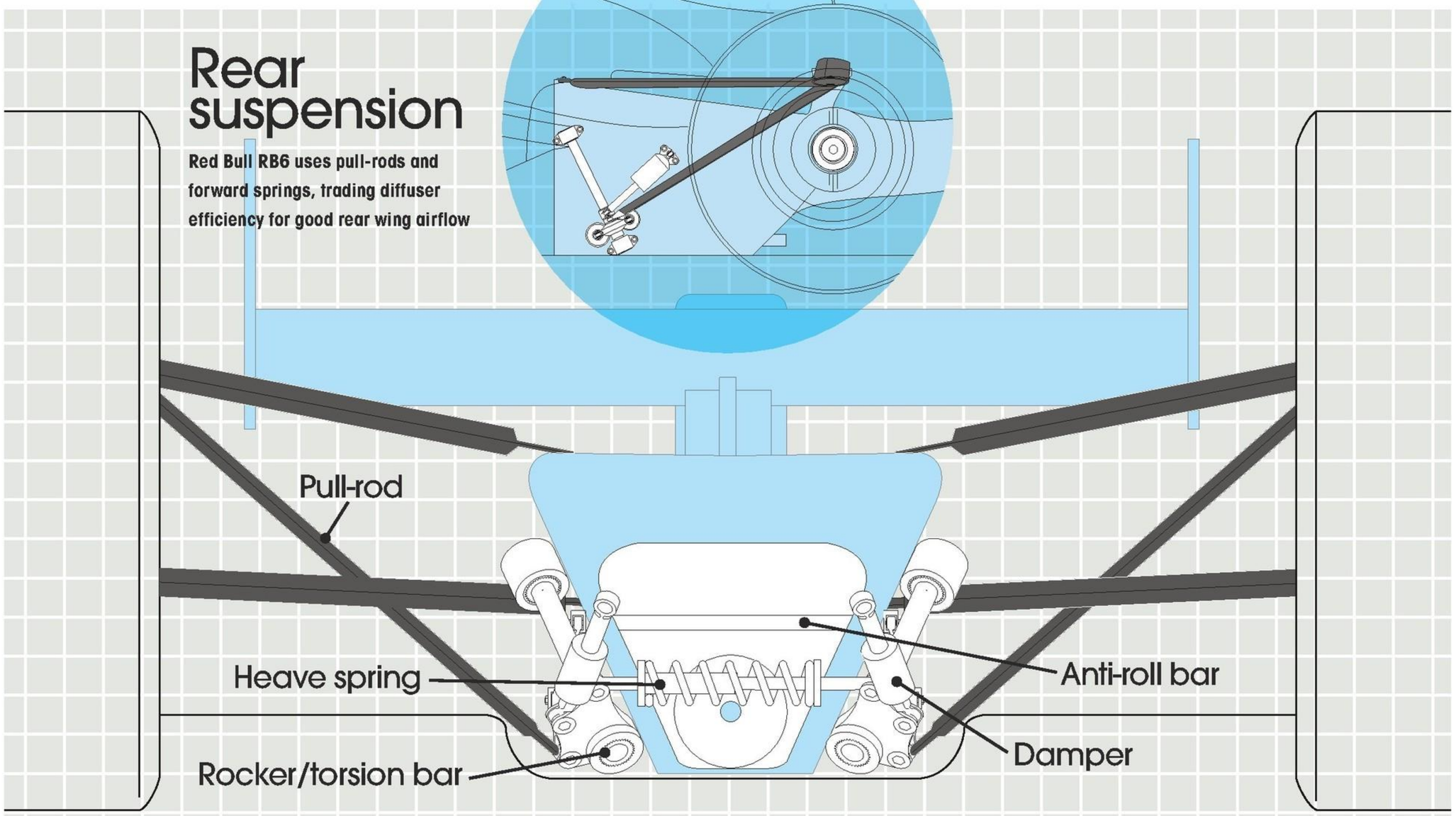
McLaren was here first with its so-called 'J-damper' in 2005, and it was a long time before the secret came out. Now called an inerter, this encloses a geared-up flywheel which spins up as the suspension moves. Remember push-and-go toy cars? The principle is similar: small movements producing a lot of rotation. And if you run one back and forth rapidly you feel all the inertia of a heavy object but without the weight – the flywheel adds 'virtual' mass. The inerter contains a spiral shaft on which a flywheel spins as the shaft slides, like one of those plunger egg-whisks, but unlike a KERS flywheel this one is not free to spin; as the wheel droops again the flywheel has to reverse. Whereas a hydraulic damper dissipates energy, the inerter stores it and feeds it back out of phase. This restricts wheel accelerations, smoothing out load variations on the tyre contact patch. Brilliant lateral thinking, but like everything else, it only works as part of a delicate package.

Every track puts different demands on the suspension, and teams have a huge array of springs, dampers, wishbones and even spacers to alter wheelbase. For super-tight Monaco teams install special extra-lock steering with stronger wishbones notched for extra wheel clearance, plus an even faster rack, or shorter steering arms which give more angle for the same input. Tuning for each race has been made harder by the rule forbidding alterations between qualifying and the race, so a light, agile qualifying set-up may get you a good grid position but will handicap you early in the race while you run with heavy fuel. Deciding where to pitch your optimum suspension set-up is one of the black arts, and no matter how many simulations you run, real life rarely conforms.

With thanks to the Lola Design Office for their consultation. For more information on Lola click on to www.lola-group.com

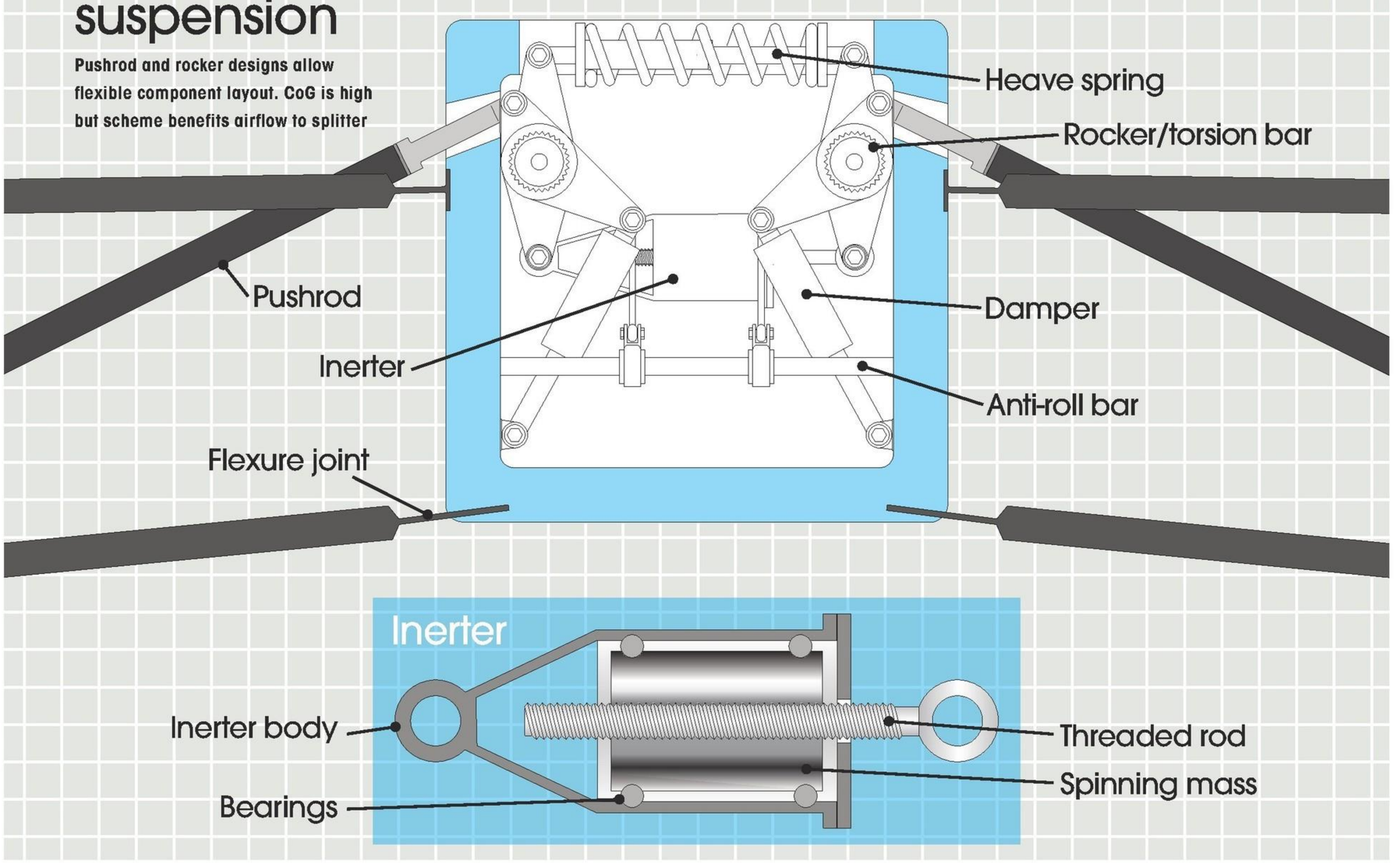
Rear suspension

Red Bull RB6 uses pull-rods and forward springs, trading diffuser efficiency for good rear wing airflow



Front suspension

Pushrod and rocker designs allow flexible component layout. CoG is high but scheme benefits airflow to splitter



Illustrations by Craig Scarborough

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BRITISH RACING BROWN

For one season only, the groovy colours of Paul Michaels' Hexagon Racing team – run from his London car dealership – gave F1's big boys a scare thanks to a young John Watson

BY RICHARD HESELTINE

With the benefit of hindsight, a high-decibel gastro-pub probably wasn't the best place to hold an interview; there's a little ambient noise. But it's of no real consequence as our heroes have long since careened 'off message', conversation now yo-yoing between the cost of Porsche Carrera four-cam engine rebuilds and the relative merits of Mark Webber and Sebastian Vettel. It's fascinating to eavesdrop as two friends who've known each other the better part of 40 years verbally thrust and parry, their patter perfectly synchronised.



But then neither John Watson nor his one-time patron Paul Michaels are ones for hype or eulogy. Before Formula 1 required GDP-size operating budgets, the duo stepped behind the velvet ropes and sat at motor racing's top table as privateers. Nor did they embarrass themselves. For one season only – 1974 – British Racing Brown rocked as Goldie Hexagon Racing took the fight to the works teams. But for one of our party, at least, it all seems a long time ago.

"Before vested interests took over, it was possible for someone like me to get into F1," says Michaels, his expansive North London BMW dealership being just a stone's throw away. "Private entrants could still do it but, by the mid-70s, it was obvious that we were no longer wanted. I rather naïvely viewed F1 as a sport first and a business second. Other than Bernie Ecclestone, most of us did. I should probably have stayed longer but it wasn't for the want of trying. More than anything, I'm just glad we did it as it was something I'd wanted to do for a very long time."

The route from wannabe to Grand Prix participant was, however, far from ordinary. "I'm sure the first word I ever uttered was 'car'," Michaels smiles. "My father was in the motor business, although he didn't actually like cars so it was an odd method of earning a living. He started off in Cricklewood before ending up in Leighton Buzzard and I can remember him bringing home all these different cars. From day one I knew exactly what I was going to do in life and left school at the earliest possible opportunity. I started the business in 1963 and set about doing what I loved most, which was messing around with cars." »»»



LAT



Watson's best result for Hexagon was fourth at the Österreichring. Left: in the mix at Kyalami, where a fuel union problem led to retirement



LAT

And how, with Hexagon of Highgate swiftly taking on all manner of marque agencies. "Not all of them profitable," Michaels quips. But there was always motor racing. "We started off in historics. I had an ex-Ecurie Ecosse Jaguar D-type and ran Mike Franey in it. We had other cars – a Maserati Tipo 61 'Birdcage' and a Lister-Jaguar in which Gerry Marshall won the last-ever race at Crystal Palace in 1972 – but we stepped up after I did a deal with an Irish wheeler-dealer for a March 721 which I traded against a Bugatti; it was funny how deals were done back then. With the car came a driver called John Watson."

"The dealer's name was Tony 'Monkey' Brown," Watson interjects. "He was your archetypical Dublin motor trader, a pathfinder to Eddie Jordan. He'd done a deal with Bernie to buy the Eiffeland-March in '72 and somehow got in touch with me. I can't say I really knew him. Anyway, we turned up at Phoenix Park with the car exactly as bought. I drove it in a Formula Libre race on what was probably the most dangerous circuit I ever competed on; a wonderful race track but there was no real protection and I was almost relieved when we retired. From there, somehow along the line Paul got the car and he ran me in it at Brands [Hatch] for the John Player Trophy where we finished sixth. By now the car had been returned to its standard March bodywork."

The 721 was subsequently sold, Michaels returning to historics as Watson embarked on a nascent Grand Prix career, only for a leg-breaking crash in the Race of Champions at Brands to end play. "From my point of view, historic racing started to become very political which was crazy," Michaels recalls. "I will never forget us painting a picture of a steering wheel alongside the name Nick Faure, who was our driver, and a spanner for the mechanic Frank Swanston on the side of our Lister. Well, all hell broke loose! It got worse and worse to the point where I thought for what it was costing me I might as well start doing some modern motor racing, so I bought a Trojan T101 F5000 car for '73.

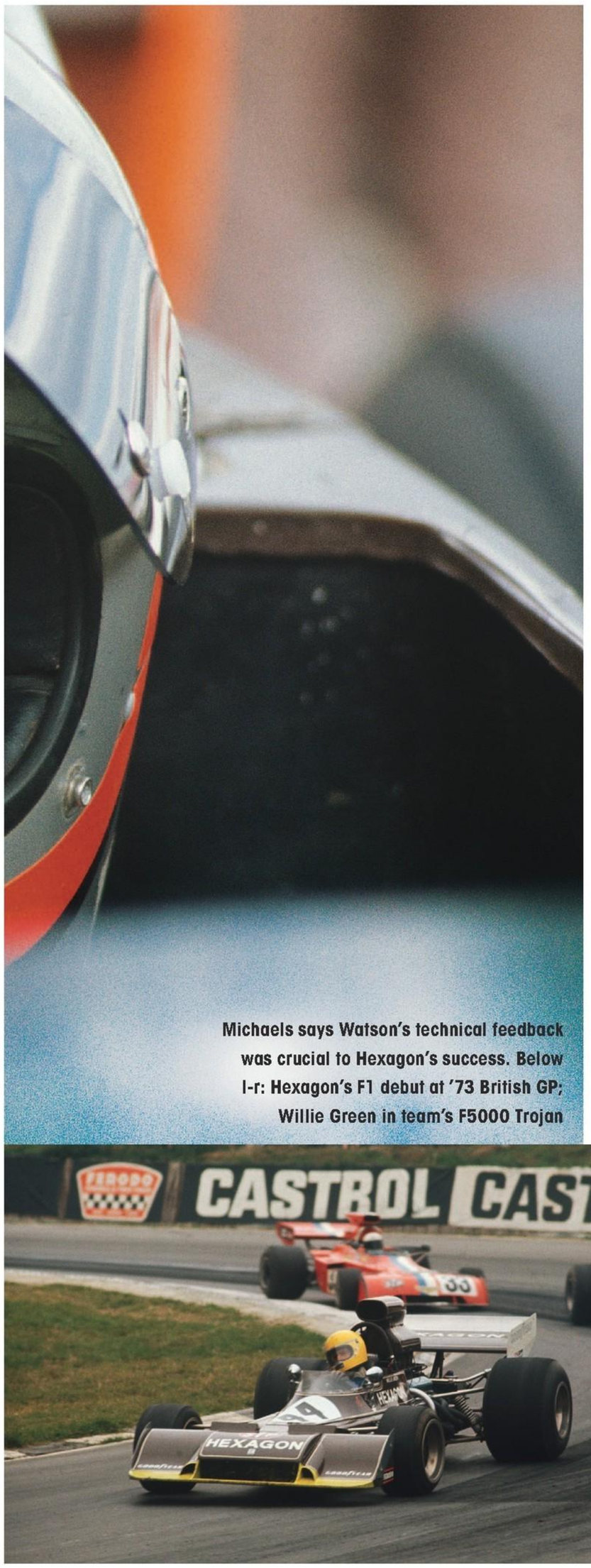
"I then needed a driver and Willie Green got first option as I'd been impressed with him in historics. But it seemed that while Willie was really good sliding around on slim little tyres – he was perhaps the best around – for whatever reason he didn't feel at home on 'fatties'. Anyway, we organised a test day and put John in the car. He'd had his big accident at Brands and was more or less fit to come back so I asked him if he'd give the car a shakedown; Willie drove in the morning and John in the afternoon. Well, John got below the lap record and so we put him in the car for the last few races. We hadn't kept up with developments, but John put it on the podium [third at Brands].



"I then thought, 'why not do F1?' I know it probably sounds crazy, but back then it wasn't such a big leap. In those days there wasn't that much difference between an F5000 package and an F1 package. I managed to get a chap called John Goldie to sponsor us – he was a property man who had just a made a lot of money with a development in Paris – and then negotiated a deal with Bernie for a second-hand BT42. The idea was that we would update to a brand-new BT44 partway through the season."

Operating out of a workshop adjacent to the Highgate showroom, the plucky equipe's toe-in-the-water run in the 1973 British GP led to full immersion the next season. "We had a brilliant finishing record and I seem to remember John's average qualifying position being 14th," says Michaels. "When we got the BT42 it was just a tub and some bits; a case of 'here you go boys'. During the first round in Argentina, it wasn't handling well. We couldn't work out why until [chief engineer] Alan McCall did a torque test. The car had been shunted and all the rivets were loose. We did an enormous botch and then did a proper build once we got it home."

"Alan was ex-McLaren," Watson elaborates. "Like a lot of New Zealanders, he knew how to work with the raw materials. He had designed



Michaels says Watson's technical feedback was crucial to Hexagon's success. Below l-r: Hexagon's F1 debut at '73 British GP; Willie Green in team's F5000 Trojan

his own F2 car called a Tui, one of which I got the nod to drive at Crystal Palace in '72 before carrying on for the rest of the season. He was very good at what he did although he left us about three races into '74."

"At Monaco we got a point for sixth, John finishing behind Emerson Fittipaldi and ahead of Graham Hill," Michaels recalls. "The adrenalin just from where I was sitting was amazing. We were invited to the palace because we had finished in the points so we then had to go out and find some DJs. I was there after the race armed with the equivalent of *The Yellow Pages* trying to find a hire shop."

"That was my first-ever point," adds Watson. "The BT42 was opposite to how an F1 car should be. It's easy to deride Bernie because he's not an engineer but he put his trust in Gordon Murray who was a truly innovative designer. Look at cars of that era, say a McLaren M23, which was long and wide. By comparison the BT42 was short and narrow so there was less to punch through the air. That was Gordon's lateral thinking. We were fourth with the new BT44 in Austria, and then came Monza."

"That race was a missed opportunity," rues Michaels. "John had just had that great result in Austria and at Monza he qualified fourth, which was amazing. We were thrilled as we were mixing it with the big boys. Unfortunately an upright broke on the slowing-down lap and we had no spares. Bernie loaned us a BT42 for the race but John went backwards as there hadn't been time to set it up to his liking. We ended up seventh. That was our big opportunity, although we did get some more points for fifth in the US GP at Watkins Glen.

> "Driving for Hexagon resurrected my career"
>
> JOHN WATSON

"By now we were clearly punching above our weight, but as a result of that things got a bit political. You have to remember that back then there was a pecking order for tyres and we were pretty low down that order. But we were doing well with Firestone and they began taking an interest in us. This was at a time when the works Brabham team was running Goodyears and I'm sure some pressure was exerted on Bernie – as much as you can exert pressure on Bernie – that it wasn't good for a privateer team on Firestones to be up there with the works cars on Goodyears." Watson nods before adding: "I can imagine Carlos [Reutemann] having a word with Bernie about privateer Brabhams, too…"

"The net result was that we had difficulties in getting spares," says Michaels. "On top of that, John Goldie became skint partway through the year so I funded the last third of the season myself. We tried desperately to raise money to carry on in '75, and I came close to a deal with Gitanes to sponsor a two-car team running John and Jean-Pierre Beltoise, but at the end of the year I decided we had to stop. That one season totalled £114,000, and it would probably have been closer to £200K in '75."

So Hexagon folded up the tables and switched off the lights, and Watson rejoined Surtees for whom he had raced in F2. "The first round of the '75 season was in the January, so the deal came together late. It was the only deal in town and I was grateful for it," he says. "I would've liked to have carried on with Paul but you have to remember that there was a move towards teams becoming constructors. They didn't want single-car guys running customer chassis. Privateers like Paul were a dying breed."

Not that Hexagon was completely done with F1, if only at ShellSport British Group 8 level, with Derek Bell winning the 1977 Oulton Park Cup aboard Michaels' Penske PC3. "We did return to 'proper' F1, if you like, as we ran Boy Hajye as a one-off for the Dutch GP at Zandvoort in '76, but I was pretty much out of the sport by the end of the decade. What pleases me, though, is that while we were in F1 we kept improving. We improved right up to the end, but having a driver like John really made all the difference.

"In those days, you didn't have telemetry – you had a pad and a pencil. John was hugely gifted at sorting a car; knowing how to translate what it was doing into a workable set-up. You need a driver like that when you're a small team. Hexagon ran other drivers – Brian Henton, Damien Magee and Derek, of course, but John was miles better than any of them. We did one race [the 1974 French GP with a second BT42] and two tests with Carlos Pace who was a lovely chap, but if you asked him how the car was he would say, 'Eeez OK', and that was that. To me, John is still highly underrated."

The appreciation is mutual. Though he would go on to become a five-time GP victor, 'Wattie' remains grateful for the leg-up Hexagon afforded him. "Racing for Hexagon was my first formal step as an F1 driver. I'm forever grateful for the opportunity Paul gave me. Driving for Hexagon resurrected my career after my Brands accident and if it hadn't been for Paul I don't know if I'd have had a contract for 1974 or whether I'd have gone back to Belfast to work in my father's motor business."

"I suspect John would've made it regardless," Michaels counters. "And as a complete aside I should add that Hexagon will be returning to F1 in 2011. Well, in spirit. I'll be sponsoring Paul Knapfield's BT44 in historics although his car will be staying white." Which prompts the question – who dreamed up the original brown and orange livery? "I think you'll find they're the international racing colours of Highgate," fires Watson, quick as a flash. Michaels merely looks a little sheepish before adding: "That was me. I only chose brown because nobody else had it. What's more, I can safely say that nobody else has had it since, either…"

Private View

A 'You Were There' special

New occasional series showcases the best readers' photos, starting with early 1970s F1

We have author Christopher Hilton to thank for the wonderful photos you see here, all taken at Watkins Glen and Mosport Grands Prix during the early 1970s. Christopher contacted us following the publication of his latest book *Grand Prix Battlegrounds*, in which he'd used some pictures take by husband-and-wife enthusiasts Linda and Gary Carlson. Would we like them to submit a selection for our readers' photos feature You Were There, he asked? Sure, we said. But when the package landed from Jamestown, New York we immediately realised they deserved special treatment.

Nigel Roebuck's December issue Reflections on Watkins Glen was still in our minds as we clicked through the Carlsons' images from various US and Canadian Grands Prix. They have inspired us to introduce this, a new (irregular) series featuring the best photographs submitted from you, the readers, for our enduring You Were There pages.

Linda Carlson explains the story behind these pictures: "I became a Grand Prix fan as a schoolkid growing up in Indiana. When the 'British invasion' of the mid-1960s occurred at the Indy 500, only to be followed by the movie *Grand Prix*, I found myself hooked on the sport and have stayed that way for these many years.

"My family moved to Western New York state in the late 1960s and I experienced true serendipity when I discovered Watkins Glen was only hours away from our house. I saw every GP at the Glen from 1968 to the end in 1980, and also attended GPs at Mosport, Montréal, Detroit, Long Beach and Brands Hatch. I dragged Gary along to his first GP at the Glen in '71 and luckily he became a fan as well."

The shots you see here, originally taken on slide transparencies by both Linda and Gary, sat at the back of a closet for 20 years and have never been published – until now. We're grateful to the Carlsons for sharing their special personal archive.

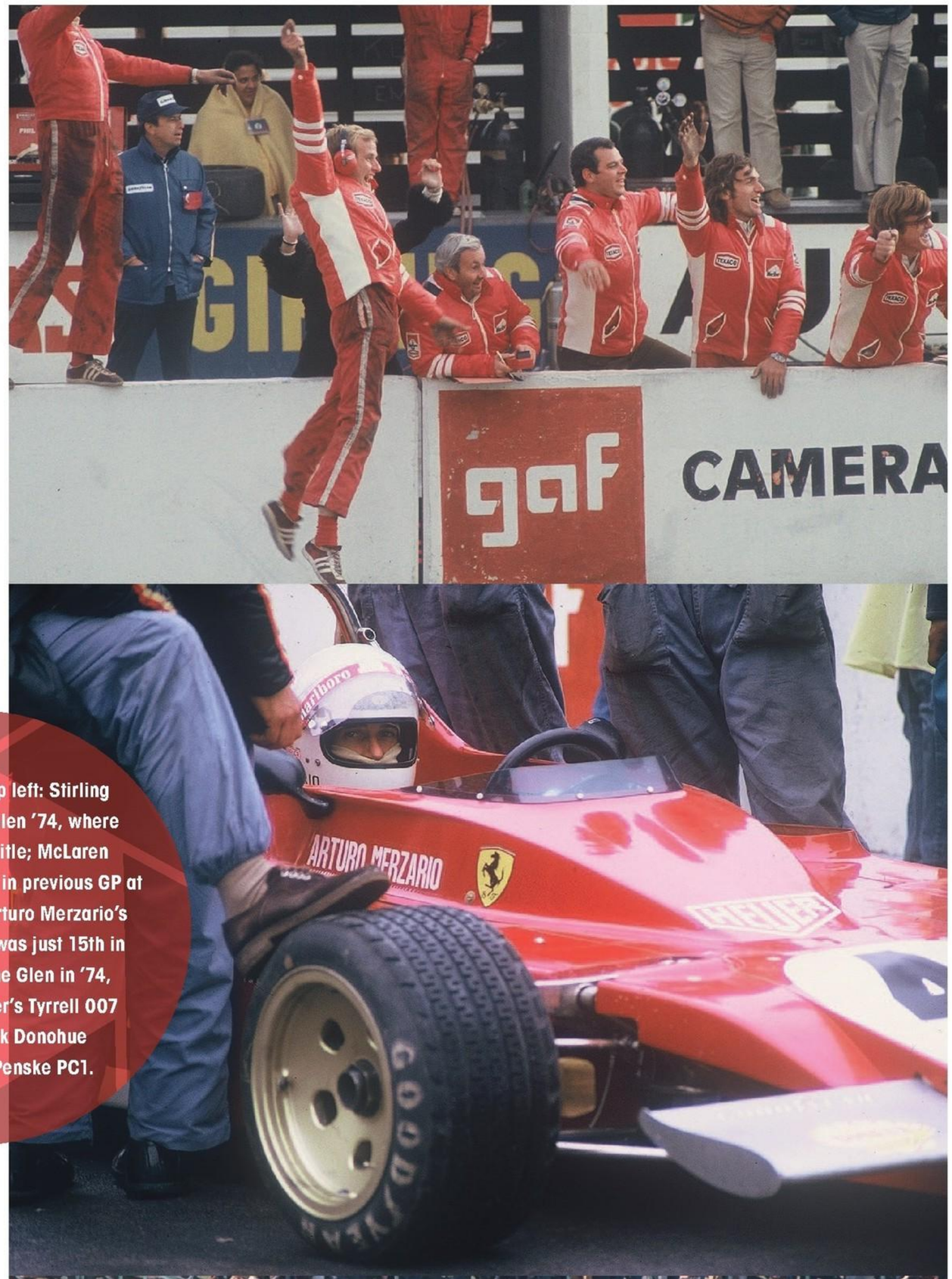






Top: Hans Stuck is in close range as his March 741 is fuelled. He failed to qualify for the 1974 US GP at Watkins Glen. Right: Derek Bell damaged his Tecno PA123 in warm-up for the '72 GP. "Derek has seen these shots," says Linda, "and thanked me for reminding him of the 'most embarrassing moment in my outstanding F1 career.'"

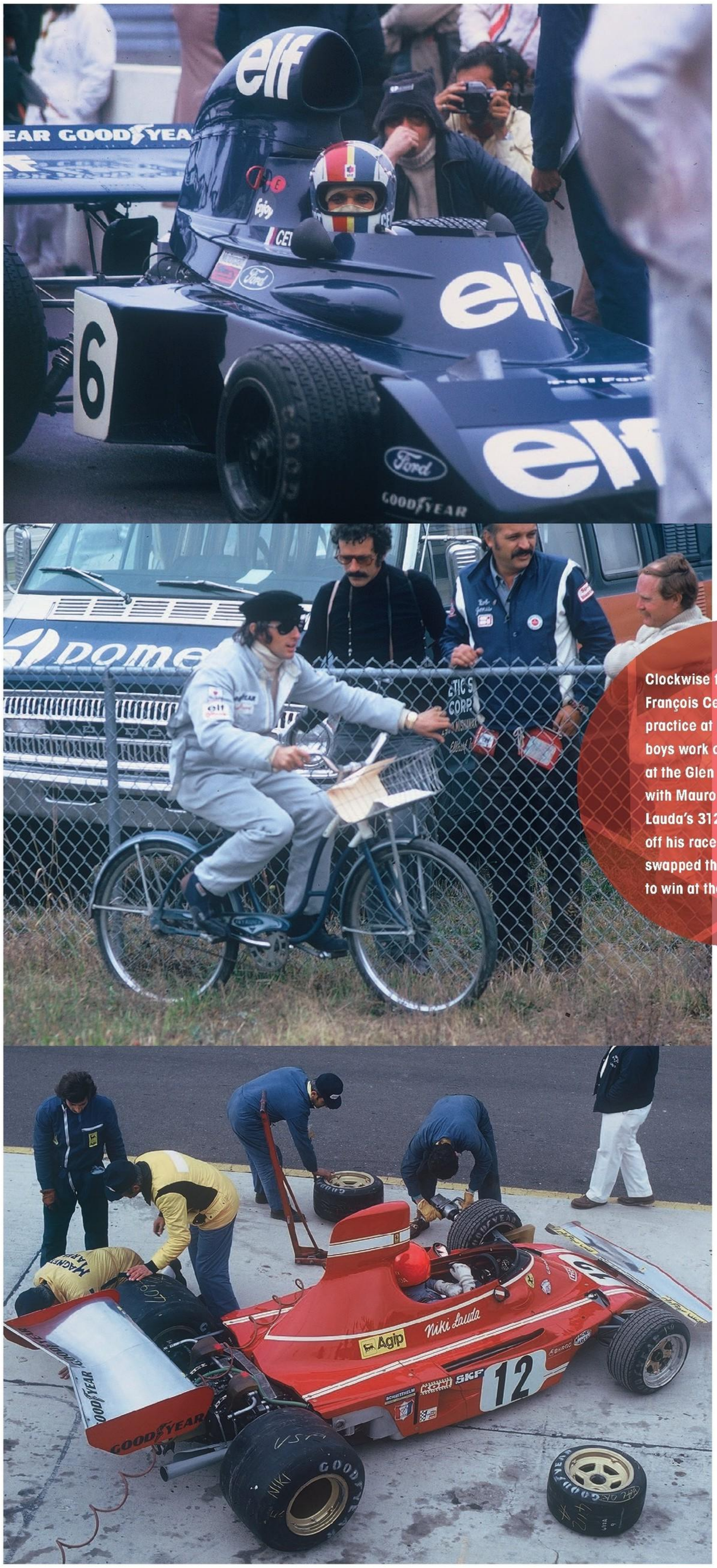




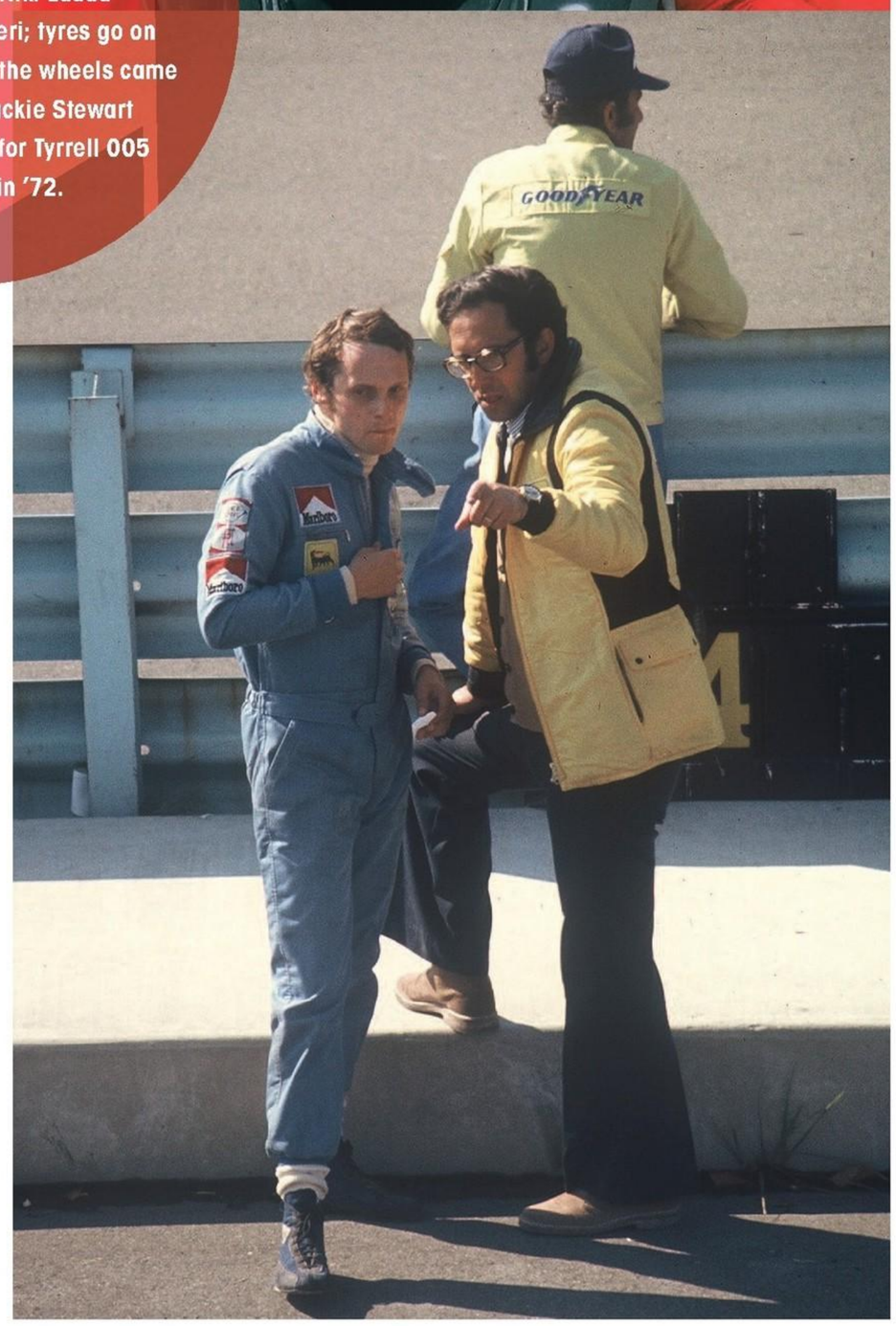




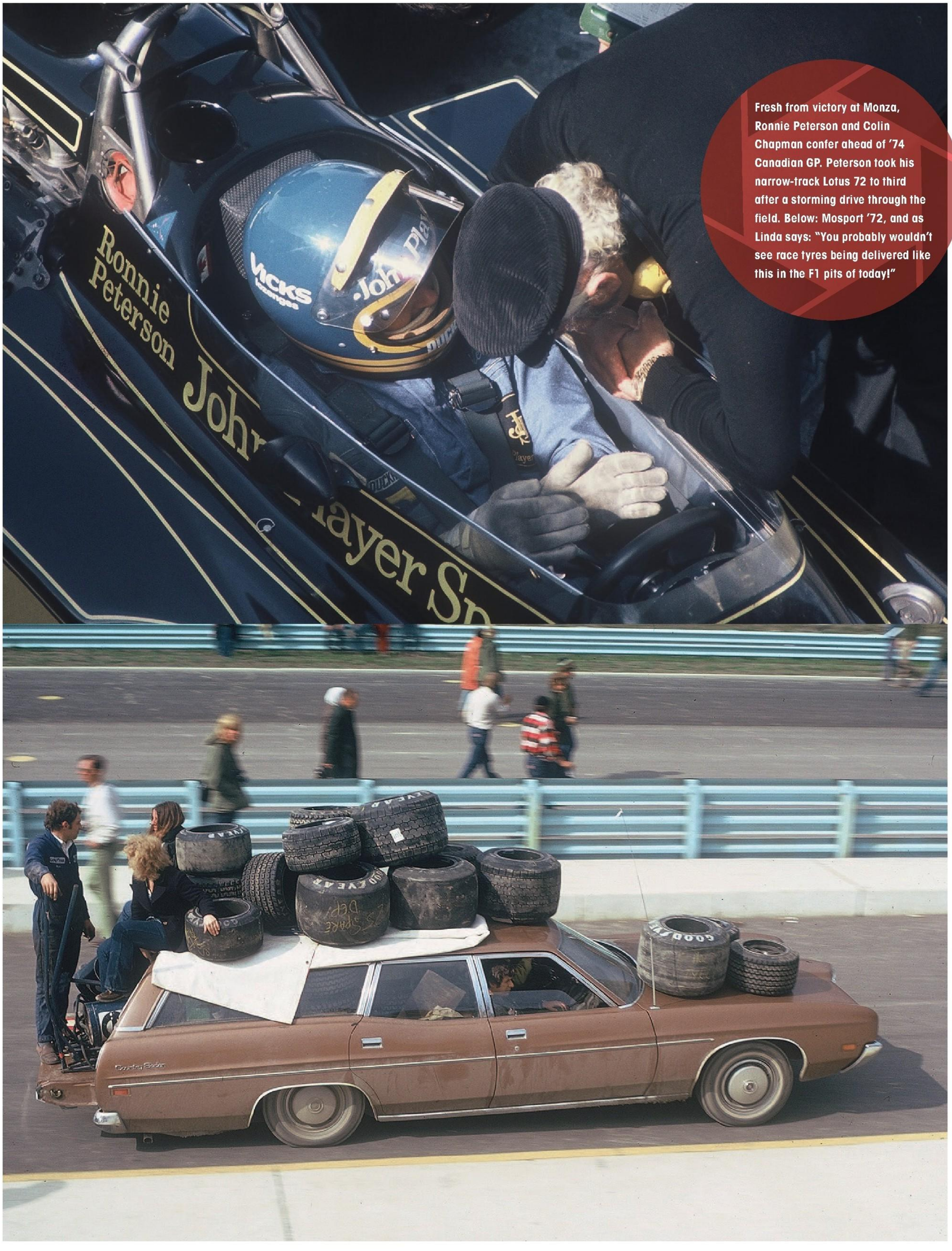
Clockwise from top left: Stirling Moss at Watkins Glen '74, where Fittipaldi won the title; McLaren cheer Emmo's win in previous GP at Mosport; in '73, Arturo Merzario's sole Ferrari 312B was just 15th in Canada; back at the Glen in '74, and Jody Scheckter's Tyrrell 007 is race-ready; Mark Donohue drew attention in Penske PC1.







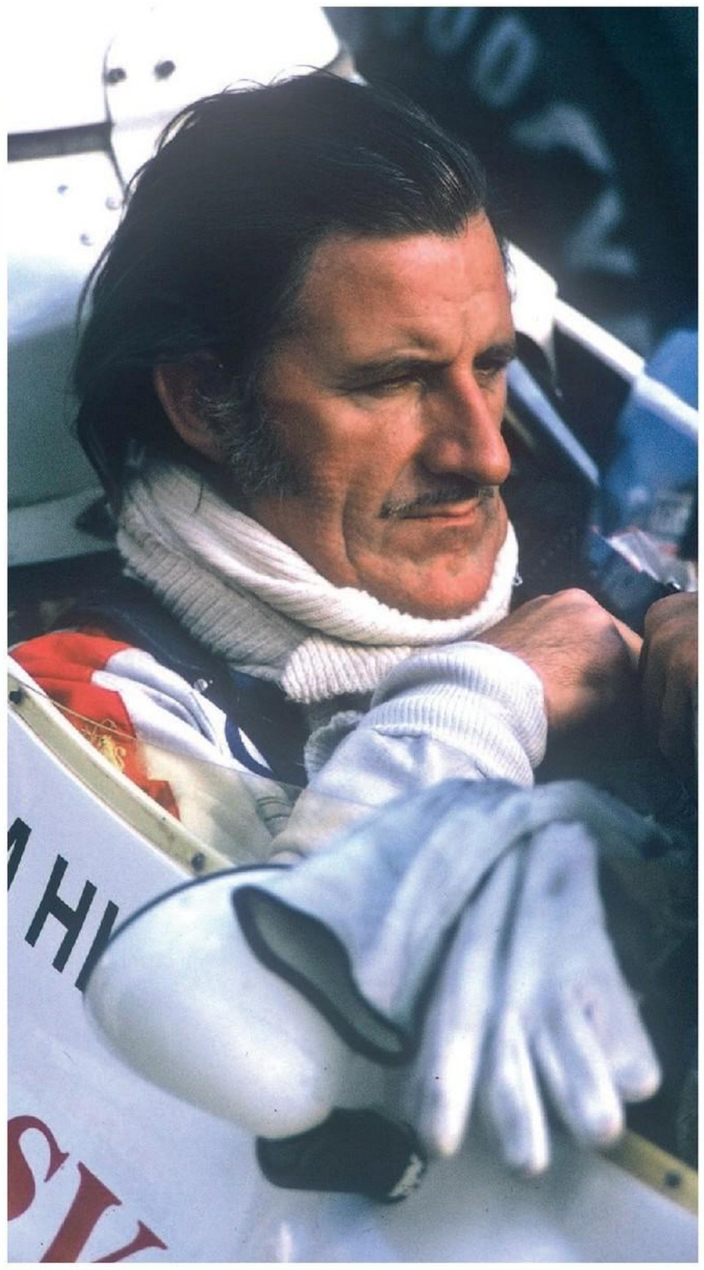
Clockwise from top left: ill-fated François Cevert awaits delayed practice at Mosport '73; McLaren boys work on Denny Hulme's M23 at the Glen in '74; Niki Lauda with Mauro Forghieri; tyres go on Lauda's 312B, but the wheels came off his race bid; Jackie Stewart swapped this ride for Tyrrell 005 to win at the Glen in '72.



Fresh from victory at Monza, Ronnie Peterson and Colin Chapman confer ahead of '74 Canadian GP. Peterson took his narrow-track Lotus 72 to third after a storming drive through the field. Below: Mosport '72, and as Linda says: "You probably wouldn't see race tyres being delivered like this in the F1 pits of today!"



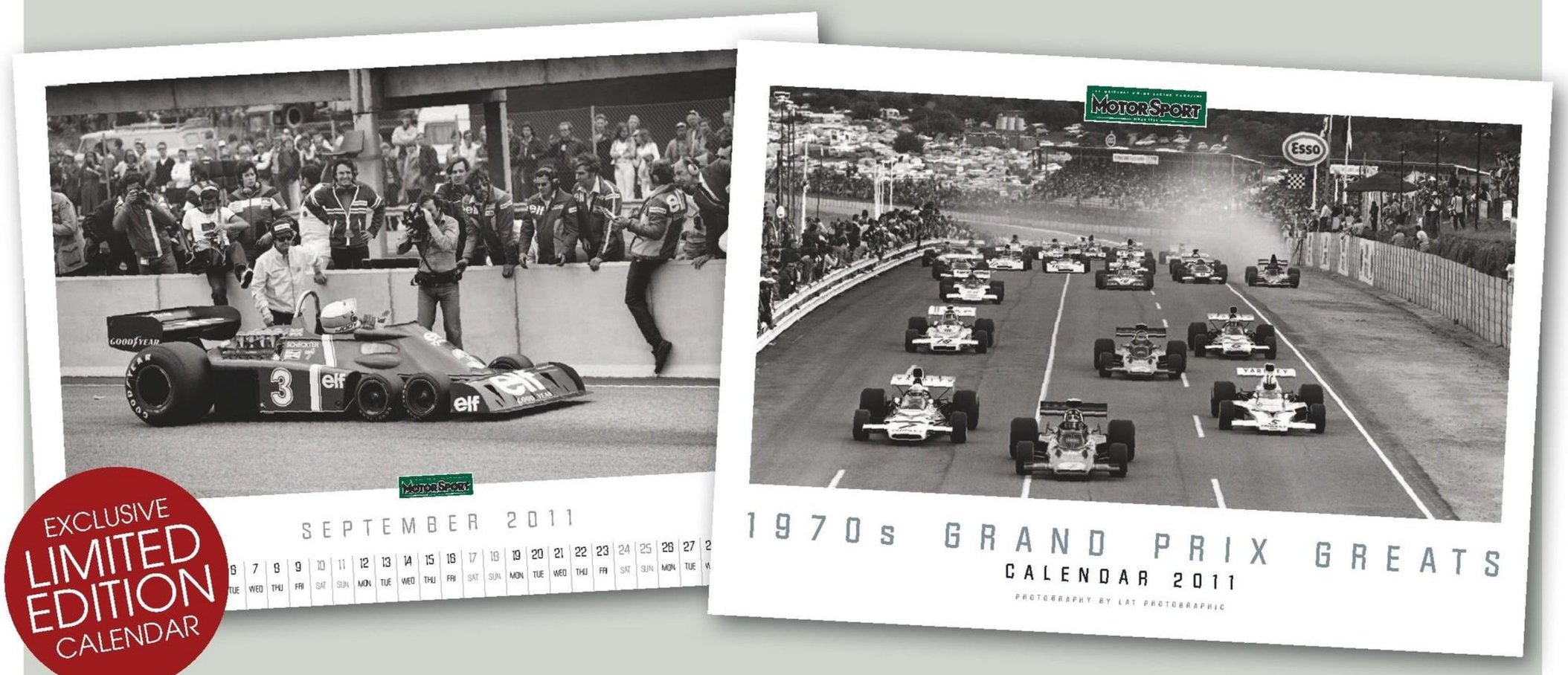




Clockwise from top left: Peter Revson won controversial '73 Canadian GP for McLaren; Chris Amon's BRM P201 is fuelled at the Glen '74; back at Mosport the previous year, and Graham Hill gets comfortable in Shadow DN1; McLaren mechanics commandeer Fittipaldi's title-winning car in the paddock at Watkins Glen.



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Who's laughing now?

Gone are the days when Škoda used to be the butt of jokes – now it's busy bagging international rally championships

BY ROB WIDDOWS

Simply clever. That is how Škoda describes itself today. Simply a secret. Few people appreciate that the company has a long history in motor sport. Simply a joke. That is how Škoda used to be described in the dark days of decades gone by.

But not any more. The Czech car manufacturer has travelled a long way since being swallowed up by Volkswagen. The German giant has embraced the plucky little company, invested heavily, nurtured a new culture of perfection, and in recent years Škoda has become a major player on the world stage – and the rally stage.

This year it won the Intercontinental Rally Challenge with the Fabia (above) convincingly, cleverly using this platform to further enhance the new image that was so badly needed. And it achieved this with a Czech driver, the talented Juha Hänninen. But to properly understand the present, we need to reel back the years.

It is not widely recognised that Škoda, so long hidden behind the Iron Curtain, started racing over a century ago. In 1895 Vaclav Laurin and Vaclav Klement began to make bicycles and then motorcycles, which they raced with huge success. In 1905 they made their first motor car, and two years later the first racer. The Laurin & Klement marque boosted the Czech reputation for quality engineering, but struggled financially and was taken over by the Škoda engineering group. Into the '30s Škodas won races and rallies throughout the Eastern Bloc, even venturing to the Monte.

Then came the war. The Škoda factory in Mlada Boleslav was pressed into service building tanks, trucks, guns and ammunition for Germany. After that came Communism. The Russians kept the lid firmly clamped down on creativity, buying in obsolete Renault tooling to build 'new' models. Hard to believe now, as we contemplate a Grand Prix in Moscow, but the Soviets shared Jean-Paul Sartre's misgivings about the human spirit being allowed absolute freedom…

But while the Soviet ethos was uninterested in racing and rallying, enthusiasm survived. Tuned Škodas were successful in Eastern Bloc competition, and even the odd single-seater emerged from the Škoda works.

Today the tanks have gone. Tesco is here. There are Maseratis and BMWs in the streets where once there were only Škodas, Trabants or Ladas. The vision of Laurin and Klement, expressed in the Škoda badge, has come to



pass. Look closely and you will see the flying arrow of progress, the single eye of precision and the wings that they foresaw reaching out into markets that were for so long forbidden.

The old factory remains a landmark in the flatlands north of Prague. A brick chimney, such as in Lowry's Salford skylines, dominates the landscape. There are 20,000 people working here – that's half the population of Mlada Boleslav. To work for Škoda is seen as an honour now rather than a necessary chore. Since 1991 the company has been part of the Volkswagen Group and in that time much has changed.

The Czechs are tough people, none more so than Laurin and Klement who established the ethos of a company that is now a significant player worldwide. Cast in bronze, the two men stand at the factory gates. They were engineers, racers – and their inspiration remains alive and respected in Mlada Boleslav.

Sitting down for a chat over lunch in the impressive museum that has been built alongside the factory, corporate communications man Jaroslav Cerny looks apprehensive. Perhaps he is expecting to be reminded of all the old jokes. But he needn't worry. We've just completed a tour of the factory, where an engine comes off the line every 50 seconds and 1000 tons of steel is consumed every day.

"At least one person from every family in this town is working here," he says, smiling at my amazement. "Some of those families have been here for four generations. There is a continuity, a passion for what they do. They are proud to be part of this new chapter in our history. They are working round the clock, seven days a week, in three shifts, and this is because we are now producing cars that people want. And these are not Volkswagens, these are Škodas. These are Czech cars. Our people are proud of the detail that goes into finishing the product, and they can see the success we are having."

This may sound like the usual spin from a communications person, but that's not the case. Walking through the vast factory halls, filled with the latest in German robotics and technology, there is a palpable atmosphere of hard graft and attention to detail.

"The joint venture with Volkswagen has been a big influence, of course," says Cerny. "And I will tell you that many people were not happy to have a German owner. There were too many memories of what happened here during World War II, but on the other side they ➤➤➤

saw it was good because the other option was Renault, and the French only wanted an assembly plant here. Today, we have our own research and development centre.

"The rally teams are run independently by Škoda Motorsport but road car engineers at Mlada Boleslav worked on the aerodynamics of the new Fabia Super 2000 rally car," explains Cerny as we walk among flying sparks from huge welding torches. "They were given 10 days to produce aerodynamic solutions for the 2010 bodywork, and they did it, testing the results in Audi's wind tunnel at Ingolstadt."

There was widespread disbelief, and not a few wry smiles, when Škoda brought the Octavia to the World Rally Championship in 1999, full of optimism following the takeover. From inside the company this was seen as a return to its competitive roots, but on the outside few were willing to bet on its success.





John Haugland/Fred Gallagher won their class on 1975 RAC Rally, and as part of that year's Dealer Team Škoda line-up (below). Left: Haugland stuck with Škoda through the '80s; the factory at Mlada Boleslav in 1971





There had been considerable success before the Octavia and Fabia. Norwegian John Haugland was a regular visitor to the RAC Rally podium with the little Favorit (sold in the UK latterly as the Estelle), dominating his class throughout the '80s. These tough 1.3-litre cars (in various guises) proved to be unlikely heroes, resilient in demanding conditions and bringing Škoda top-10 finishes – even in the Group B era. Haugland, who remained loyal to Škoda, possessed uncanny skills on icy surfaces, while the Estelle's robust character and reliability surprised many. The rear-engined car had the traction of a Renault 8 (from which it derived), but the company stayed with rear-wheel drive for too long, soldiering on until the end of '88.

Remember also that grey, snowy day in Wales in 1996 when Stig Blomqvist brought a Felicia through the blizzards to make the RAC podium. In third place and only 16 seconds behind the winning Toyota of Armin Schwarz, the Felicia won its class by half a minute.

Then came the Octavia. But neither that nor the Fabia ever truly got to grips with the WRC's top teams.

"In those days we never had enough money to develop the car," says Cerny. "The top teams had huge budgets but we never had those kind of resources. So we didn't achieve what we had aimed for. Also, we never had the top drivers, again because of the budgets. Maybe it was a step too far. But it was the only chance we had to put the cars on a world stage."

Today Škoda has the budget, the technology and the drivers. And, importantly, it is selling customer versions of the Fabia S2000, which has brought it so much success in Europe this year. The force behind this triumph is the highly experienced Michal Hrabanek, who heads Škoda Motorsport and has recruited engineers from Peugeot and Mitsubishi as well as from within Škoda. In the service park on the Czech Barum Rally in Zlin, where the team clinched the 2010 IRC Manufacturers' Championship, he sat down to talk, with one eye on news coming in from the final stages.

"I don't know what was missing in the past, but with the S2000 programme we have the best people and a well developed car, better than the Peugeot," he says. "We were under pressure to





Armin Schwarz struggled for results with the Octavia in 2000

All images LAT

deliver results because this is a big part of the company's marketing programme. It was important for us to beat Peugeot. We are still developing the car but also you need the best drivers and the best team, so it's taken time to be where we are now. This is truly an international programme, with engineers and mechanics from all over Europe, much more than we had in the WRC. But this is common – people move around within the sport, we did not steal them. We have Czech drivers which is good, but we also have Freddy Loix and Guy Wilks [since signed by Peugeot] to support the factory team. Loix has brought huge experience."

At this point Jan Kopecký, who had led the rally throughout, was off the road, allowing a Peugeot through. But Loix was right there winning stages, while championship leader Hänninen was heading for the podium to salvage some honour for the Czechs. Tense times. So would Škoda now be ready for another crack at the WRC?

A long pause from Hrabanek, eyes on the leader board. "Anything is possible. We like a challenge, but it depends on how the WRC will be promoted – the IRC has more TV coverage right now. Every car manufacturer has to promote and market its cars, and motor sport is a vital part of that strategy. Where we compete, now or in the future, is not my decision. The future of the WRC is not yet clear – who will compete, what the regulations will be. My job is to win; it's important to win."

And win Škoda has, with IRC Drivers' Champion Hänninen dominating again on October's demanding Rally of Scotland to add to its manufacturer success. Job done.

Back in the dark days car makers like Škoda and Tatra were rotting, their engineers and designers muzzled by the dictates of Communism and war. On the ground floor of a grey apartment block on the edge of Zlin, the proud history of these Eastern European makes is hidden away. A treasure trove of Škodas and Tatras has been lovingly restored, a reminder of where today's cars were born and nurtured. These are the jewels in the crown, brought back to life by inspirational engineer and historian Vladimir Hoferek.

"The Fabia S2000 is a well developed car, better than the Peugeot"

One night, on my way to a *Slivovitz* tasting (how on earth can something made from plums be so powerful?), I was invited in. This is not an official museum, but a private collection cared for by a passionate engineer.

In a corner of this anonymous space is a Tatra racing car with a V8 engine. And this engine is in the back of the car. Extraordinary. It was built in 1951 by the company named after the Tatra Mountains close to its factory at Koprivnice.

"You want to hear?" asks a mechanic. It runs? Yes, I definitely do.

Petrol is sprayed into the eight intake trumpets, a battery is connected, the V8 rumbles into life, a blast of noise filling the low-ceilinged room. VW board members stick their fingers in their ears. I had never heard of such a racing car. Neither had the senior management of Tatra. Engineers at Koprivnice told them they were building a new truck engine, the company forced by the Germans to focus on the needs of post-war Eastern Europe. Some truck engine. In secret they had developed a racing car ahead of its time, with a mighty powerful V8 just where Jack Brabham realised it should go some years later. All this and a *Slivovitz* distillery in one night. The following day Škoda took a thrilling 1-2-3 victory in the Czech Barum Rally. The town of Zlin, heaving with fans, went crazy.

"Only the best that we can do is good enough for our customers." Not a marketing soundbite from the VW Group but a statement from Vaclavs Laurin and Klement almost a century ago. The new owners would not disagree with the sentiment. Škoda production has tripled since the VW takeover, the latest cars being endorsed by consumer groups previously only too willing to join in the jokes.

Talk of a Škoda Grand Prix car is fanciful. But a return to the world stage would not be a surprise. This time, however, we would see the distinctive red, white and green cars when they are ready to win.

There were times when Škoda was too small to succeed. The time may come when, like banks in recession, it is too big to fail. For now, the burghers of Wolfsburg are happy with their investment, and justifiably so. As for those jokes, the perpetrators are laughing on the other side of their faces now.

Road cars



by Andrew Frankel

It's Car of the Year time again and depending on when you read this, you may already have the advantage on me in knowing the recipient of this highly coveted prize. As one of the six jurors that make up the UK's contribution to this pan-European award, all I currently know are the names of the seven cars I voted for and the shortlist finally settled upon.

Choosing from a list of over 40 candidates was not easy, not because it contained so many contenders, but so few. Last year there was some prodigious talent to ponder but the class of 2010 seems to have spent most of the year looking out the window. I'd rank 2009's VW Polo, Skoda Yeti and Toyota iQ ahead of any of this year's crop.

I've let my choices be influenced more by fitness for purpose than personal appeal as I don't think a shortlist of the Porsche 911 GT3 moves the debate on very far.

So, taken alphabetically, my first choice was the Alfa Giulietta. Alfa has won this event twice, with the 156 (1998) and 147 (2001) but never in my view deserved it. But the Giulietta is its best new car since the 'Sud. It has the engines and a chassis to make an Alfa worth driving again.

Next is Citroën's DS3. It's not difficult to see why Citroën cannot keep up with demand for its sub-brand. The DS3 is as expertly pitched as any new car we've seen this year, comprising just the right amount of style, driving pleasure and individuality to cause Mini the first real headache of its 10-year life.

Then it's Ford's all-new C-Max. In a normal year I expect it might have just failed to make the shortlist despite bringing new levels of ride and refinement to the class, elevating the compact MPV still further from its once traditional role as a basic beast of burden. But there's nothing clever in the seating arrangements and the fun-to-drive factor that so distinguished the previous generation of C-Max has been diluted to a small but significant extent. Whether it would have fared better in my mind had I driven it without prior knowledge of the outstanding car it is replacing is a question I cannot answer.



DS3, Leaf and Giulietta are among Frankel's cars of the year





The Jaguar XJ had no hope of winning, not least because our Eastern European and Scandinavian colleagues rarely vote for anything that is not small and affordable. But judged against the standards of its class I'd say it was a worthy contender. It achieves something few others on the list manage: in one respect at least it really moves the game on, providing its owner with an interior unrivalled by any comparable car. If what you want from your luxury car is a home from home, you're going to need to buy a Rolls to do significantly better than this.

At the other end of the spectrum I included the Nissan Leaf. I admire Nissan for having the balls to make the world's first purpose-built proper electric car (a G-Wiz is excluded on account of being a) a quadricycle, and b) execrable), but also for committing to build it in six-figure quantities in factories including their Sunderland facility. I believe the medium term still belongs to plug-in hybrids like the forthcoming Vauxhall Ampera because range anxiety is a neurosis for which there remains no known cure, but in the longer term the Leaf will be remembered as the car that started the revolution.

Talking of which, Peugeot's RCZ coupé is changing the way I've looked at Peugeot for too many years. It's not a great car, but it's capable enough to have something to offer the discerning driver while its shape marks it out as one of the designs of the year. Like the DS3, what stands out most is how well judged it is, how well it has understood the desires of its target customer and how fluently it has gone about realising them.

Finally the Vauxhall Meriva. I feel awkward even mentioning a car as prosaic as this on pages such as these but from its sliding side doors to its

flexible, smart and versatile interior, it is as fit for purpose as any other mentioned here.

Pleasingly, five of my seven made it to the final. Unsurprisingly my colleagues saw fit not to include the XJ and the RCZ. Instead they voted in the new Volvo S60 – which I'd not have included if the shortlist had been twice as long – and the Dacia Duster, the Renault-designed quasi-SUV that's selling out across Europe. Actually I thought hard about including the Duster because while it's not remotely special, in its dirt-cheap, no-nonsense approach to family transport it is unusually in tune with the times.

What will win? As you may already know the answer, I see no point speculating. As for what I shall vote for, I need to (and will) drive the finalists before deciding. I'm tempted to give it to the Leaf not for what it is but for the revolution it represents. Other than that I think it's between the Citroën and the Alfa, both of which would have struggled to make my shortlist last year.

I have remarked before on the obscene situation in London where a driver of a Lexus LS600h limousine pays nothing to drive in the Congestion Zone while the driver of a diesel Smart gets clobbered for the full amount. No longer. Boris has taken his time but from Christmas Eve and in exchange for an annual £10 subscription any car emitting 100g/km of CO_2 or less is exempted from the charge whether that car is powered by petrol, diesel, batteries, tea or anything else. And while pre-existing hybrids emitting over 100g/km will be exempted for the next two years, if you register one after the end of 2010 you'll be subject to the same charges as everyone else. Quite right too.

The Mayor has said that the qualifying level of exemption is a moveable feast. It will be reviewed in 2012 and may settle at 80g/km. While that sounds almost unbearably tough, by then range-extender hybrids will be on sale, all of which should have no problem meeting the new mark.

The problem I foresee is uncertainty. How many people who might feel inclined to buy a sub-100g car will be put off by the fear it may be rendered ineligible in two years? The Mayor needs to say now when any new level will apply and what it will be, and make the period a minimum of three years from now. At the least he should make it clear that someone buying an eligible car today will remain entitled to at least a partial but substantial discount in the future.

Coincidentally, I bumped into Boris – almost literally – at a hotel in Oman. Not sure why he was there but I'd just got back from a day driving the new Bentley Continental GT (p112). It was the first time Bentley had launched a car in the Middle East but not, I suspect, the last. Oman is wonderful – once clear of the cities you can drive on perfect, empty roads. Oh, and you can brim the GT's 20-gallon tank for less than £20.

MY MOTORING MONTH



DRIVEN TO THE POINT OF MADNESS IN MOROCCO

RAGS TO RICHES THIS MONTH. Spent 10 days in Morocco driving from Marrakech over the Atlas mountains to the desert and back, a trip marred only by my chosen method of transport. In fact that's not true: my preferred choice was a Ford Focus, something of which Mr Hertz was not only aware but had suggested on his website. But he still kept up his 100 per cent record of failing by a breathtaking margin to provide what I'd asked for. Last time the requested Ford C-Max mutated into a Fiat Stilo Station Wagon, proving Hertz's ability to place intolerable burdens upon the phrase 'or similar'; this time my hoped-for Focus had turned into a Toyota Corolla.

As my family would be on board and driving in Morocco is sufficiently entertaining in any car this wouldn't have been too terrible. Except what Hertz failed to mention was that someone had visited it in the small hours and removed the turbo from its diesel engine. I thought normally aspirated diesels died out with Betamax, but no, there's at least one alive and well and living in North Africa.

It took a lot of net surfing even to find a reference to its existence but found it I did: and I can tell you that a Toyota Corolla 2.0XLD 'Millenium' has 71bhp. Or, to put it another way, exactly the same power as the cheapest Smart car money can buy. Online I saw an estimated 0-60mph time of 14.1sec but with four people and a bootful of luggage on board, I couldn't get it there in under 20sec.

But you know how it is with hire cars – you live with them and several hundred miles later a guilty fondness for the old bus starts to brew in your heart. Well not this time: by the time I flung it back at Hertz I had identified but one merit and that, like all Toyotas sold in countries where breaking down can be rather more than an inconvenience, is an abject refusal to break down. I'll spare you what I put that poor thing through but suffice to say the only cars that came past in that time were competitors in the Rally of Morocco.

I'd like to say I planned to run into this Dakar curtain-raiser where the road south stops and the Sahara starts (it was won by Stéphane Peterhansel in a works BMW X3CC) but in fact one minute I was trying for the nth time to persuade the Corolla to do 100mph on the flat, the next the world was invaded by refugees from a *Mad Max* set.

All that sustained me was the knowledge that as soon as Michael O'Leary had dumped us back at Bristol airport, I was to drive to Silverstone for an Aston Martin-shaped encounter…



A BREED APART – BUT STILL WORTHY OF THE NAME

ASTON MARTIN'S PLAN TO demonstrate just how similar are its competition and street cars failed spectacularly. They provided road and racing versions of the V12 Vantage and Rapide, and jumping from one to the other confirmed what I'd long suspected, namely that even if all you do is remove all unnecessary weight from a road car (which in the Rapide amounts to a staggering half a tonne) and bolt on race suspension, tyres and brakes the result will seem, at best, only distantly related to what you began with.

I'd not have it any other way: on the road the V12 Vantage and Rapide are wonderful cars, and for very different reasons quite the best Aston makes, but around a slippery Silverstone the Vantage was comically twitchy and the Rapide clearly far removed from its comfort zone. But the racers seemed born for such an environment, largely because they were.

It's not something racing drivers like to talk about because it suits them for you to believe that only the divinely gifted can conduct a racing car at speed, but the truth is cars like this are far easier to drive than their road-going relatives. This is not as surprising as it sounds. While road cars skitter and slide about on tyres with a life expectancy measurable in months or even years, race car rubber has to survive only a matter of minutes and the differences are every bit as big as that suggests.

True, the race Astons are more intimidating because they look mean and make lots of noise, but once you're up to speed not only do they offer a precision you'd not recognise in the road versions but also revel in quite outrageous driving behaviour. Around Silverstone's National circuit you could flick the race Vantage left into Maggotts, which even on wets is nearly flat, and while it's still cranked over in the corner, mash the brakes to slow it for the sharp right at Becketts. If you'd tried that in the road car you'd probably leave the county.

These road Astons are among the best in the company's history, their racing equivalents perfect for gentleman drivers who want user-friendly long-distance racers. Both breeds are brilliant, both have Aston Martin badges on their noses. There the similarities end.

BENTLEY CONTINENTAL GT



It seems odd that the Bentley Continental GT is only seven years old. Partly this is because Bentley has made 43,000 of them (including derivatives), which is more Bentleys than the combined total made in the previous 84 years of the marque's existence. But mainly it's because life before Continental seems another era. In the BC years, Bentley was a cottage industry, making quaint and inexactly constructed leviathans for a select coterie of die-hard and monied traditionalists.

Now not only has Bentley changed beyond recognition, with the factory rebuilt to produce up to 9000 cars a year –10 times what Bentley has made in its darker days – so too have the customers. They're younger, sharper, more techno-literate and more likely to buy a Bentley for what it can do than what it represents.

And it was the Continental GT that started it all, spawning wave after wave of variants including the Flying Spur, GTC, Speed and Supersports models.

But something else has changed in this time, even more than Bentley itself, and that is the world into which such cars are born. The genius of the Continental GT lay not in its impressive but hardly game-changing design and engineering, but how well those who designed and engineered it understood the customer, despite that customer having never bought a Bentley before. That clarity of vision served Bentley so well that demand briefly even overwhelmed its ability to supply, leading to a small number being built in the Dresden factory where the glacially slow-selling but structurally similar VW Phaeton is built. Then came the crash and among the louder noises you might have heard at the time were Bentley sales falling out of bed.

In 2009 Bentley sold only 4500 cars, half what it was making just two years previously. This year will be better but only by about 500 units. So it's to the Continental GT that Bentley has turned once again to revive its fortunes. »»»



FACTFILE

ENGINE: 5998cc, 12-cylinder
TOP SPEED: 198mph
PRICE: £135,760
POWER: 567bhp at 6000rpm
FUEL/CO_2: 17.1mpg, 384g/km
www.bentleymotors.com

Frankel found new Continental GT now has grace to match its pace



Looks aside, the new CLS is an improvement on the old version

MERCEDES-BENZ CLS

SOME CAR CONCEPTS fail to take off. Do you remember the Renault Avantime? It was a car so far ahead of its time it may be centuries before anyone figures out the wisdom of a people carrier with just two doors. Others make history. The Mini, the Range Rover, etc.

The original Mercedes CLS deserves to be among their number. The idea of a coupé with four doors might seem as strange as an MPV with two but you only had to see how effortlessly integrated into near perfect lines those extra doors were to see the wisdom of it. Mercedes not only sold every one it could make, it also spawned a stream of pretenders from the VW Passat CC to the Audi A7.

Sadly the new CLS has lost something in translation, at least as far as its looks are concerned. It seems to me that car manufacturers, undoubtedly in response to customer demand, are increasingly happy to trade proportion and elegance of line for an aggressive stance and jutting prow, so while the new CLS has more presence than before, some of its raw beauty has been sacrificed.

Otherwise, it's maybe even more enticing than the old car.

What's best about it is its quality. Regulars may recall I spent last month blundering around Europe in an S-class limo, but the CLS has moved the game on further still.

I spoke to Mercedes design chief Gorden Wagener about it and he confirmed this is no coincidence: "Quality is at the heart of everything we do. Wherever everyone else is, we must be better." Which is why the CLS interior is so detailed and why what you see is, almost without exception, what you get. If it looks like metal, it is metal. Same for the wood and leather.

But this is a car designed in a more hostile environment than the last which is why for the first time it's being made available with a four-cylinder engine. This might sound like forcing Raymond Blanc to cook over a Primus stove but I find the idea quite attractive: with a 2.2-litre diesel it'll still do 150mph, hit 60mph in under 7.5sec yet return 47mpg.

Annoyingly there were none to drive at its launch so I jumped in one with the 3-litre diesel and, thanks to a well-chosen venue, was able to fling it over the Futa and Raticosa passes, roads made legendary by another Mercedes with a British driver at its helm back in 1955.

Now it's no 300SLR and I'm no Moss, but I appreciated the precision offered by this not overtly sporting car and in particular the response of its electric steering system. Indeed I'd go so far as to say it's the first car to have given up heavy, inefficient hydraulic steering for an efficient electric alternative without the driving experience suffering at all.

The CLS goes on sale in the spring, with a 540bhp AMG version due later in 2011. The act it has had to follow has been hard, but it's done so with conviction and success.

FACTFILE

ENGINE: 2987cc, four-cylinder
TOP SPEED: 155mph (limited)
PRICE: TBC
POWER: 265bhp at 3800rpm
FUEL/CO_2: 47.0mpg, 159g/km
www.mercedes-benz.com



Bentley calls this second-generation Continental GT 'new', but it isn't really. The platform is the same, the engine and gearbox altered only in detail. Despite being some 65kg lighter (over half of which comes from thinner front seats which also liberates a useful extra 46mm of real legroom), improvements in acceleration and fuel consumption are measurable in small fractions of a single unit.

Yet in the flesh it seems at least renewed. As it was decided that every body panel would change, Bentley could have gone for something radically different, as Jaguar did with the XJ. But they plumped instead for an approach so evolutionary it makes the evolution of the VW Golf look positively daring. Even so the result looks far better and more distinctive on the road than it did at its unveiling at September's Paris motor show, so you shouldn't struggle to tell it from the earlier generation. It also has a higher aluminium content, the lightweight material now forming the bonnet, front wings, doors and boot lid.



Thinner front seats allow for extra legroom but W12 engine, below, should make a better noise





Inside the fundamental architecture is carried over too, though thankfully the state of the ark telematics system has been replaced by something rather more up to date, with strong, clear graphics for the navigation.

Doesn't seem like much, does it? At least, not much to justify appending the word 'new' to the car with any conviction.

And yet when you slip behind its hand-stitched wheel it feels more changed than its bare specification suggests. You don't notice the 65kg weight reduction (this is, after all, still a 2320kg car) any more than the 6-litre W12 engine's paltry extra 14bhp, but what is instantly apparent is that this 'new' Continental GT addresses the road in a completely different manner to the old.

This is because, in time-honoured Bentley fashion, there is much more going on here than is immediately apparent. For a start the front-to-rear torque split has been varied from 50/50 to 40/60, a feature hitherto seen only on the Supersports model. It also has that car's widened front and rear track. Moreover the suspension now has aluminium uprights and revised settings not only for the springs and dampers but also the geometry at all four corners and a new front anti-roll bar.

The cumulative effect is undeniable. I spent a day thundering through the Omani desert in one and came away impressed not by its pace, which is all but unchanged, but its grace. Until

SHOWS AND LAUNCHES

NOVEMBER 2010

19: LOS ANGELES Auto Show

■ **Audi** Q5 Hybrid ■ **Bentley** Continental Supersports convertible ■ **BMW** X3 ■ **Citroën** Berlingo two-seater ■ **Citroën** C3 Picasso ■ **Citroën** C5 update ■ **Ford** C-Max ■ **Ford** Mondeo Ecoboost ■ **Ginetta** G40 ■ **Hyundai** ix20 ■ **Kia** Sportage First Edition 2.0 CRDi AWD ■ **Mercedes-Benz** CL AMG ■ **Mercedes-Benz** SL63 AMG ■ **Mitsubishi** 10MY Lancer 2.0 DI-D Juro ■ **Peugeot** 207 Sportium ■ **Renault** Laguna ■ **Volkswagen** Sharan ■ **Volkswagen** Touareg Hybrid ■ **Volvo** S60 R ■ **Volvo** V60 R

DECEMBER 2010

2: BOLOGNA Auto Show

■ **Audi** A1 1.4 TFSI ■ **Citroën** DS3 Racing ■ **Porsche** Carrera GTS

JANUARY 2011

10: DETROIT North American International Auto Show

■ **Audi** R8 Spyder (V8) ■ **Chevrolet** Orlando ■ **Citroën** C4 e-HDi 110 ■ **Ferrari** California Stop-Start ■ **Hyundai** ix20 ■ **Peugeot** 508 ■ **Porsche** Speedster ■ **Ssangyong** Korando ■ **Volkswagen** Jetta ■ **Volkswagen** Passat

FEBRUARY 2011

11: CHICAGO Auto Show

■ **Citroën** DS4 ■ **Ford** Focus ■ **Honda** Jazz Hybrid ■ **Maserati** Gran Turismo MC Stradale ■ **Toyota** Verso-S

MARCH 2011

■ **Infiniti** M35 hybrid ■ **Lexus** CT 200h ■ **Mercedes-Benz** A-Class E-Cell ■ **Mercedes-Benz** CLS500

APRIL 2011

■ **Chevrolet** Captiva

JUNE 2011

■ **Chevrolet** Cruze hatchback ■ **Chevrolet** Aveo ■ **Range Rover** Evoque

now I'd never driven a Continental that rode really well, but this one does. Hitherto the handling of a Continental GT has always played a support role to its performance, but no longer: it felt poised, precise and almost agile, at least by the standards of cars sitting on the porky side of two tonnes. Fooling around for the camera with all the electronics turned off I'd expected nothing more than varying shades of understeer, because that's what Conti GTs do. Not any more. If you're surprised to see it drifting through a third-gear curve, that makes two of us. But it was easy, both to provoke and control.

It's quieter too, though the now eerie absence of wind or road roar at a 100mph does tend to highlight both that you can never quite get away from the engine's noise and also that noise is not good enough.

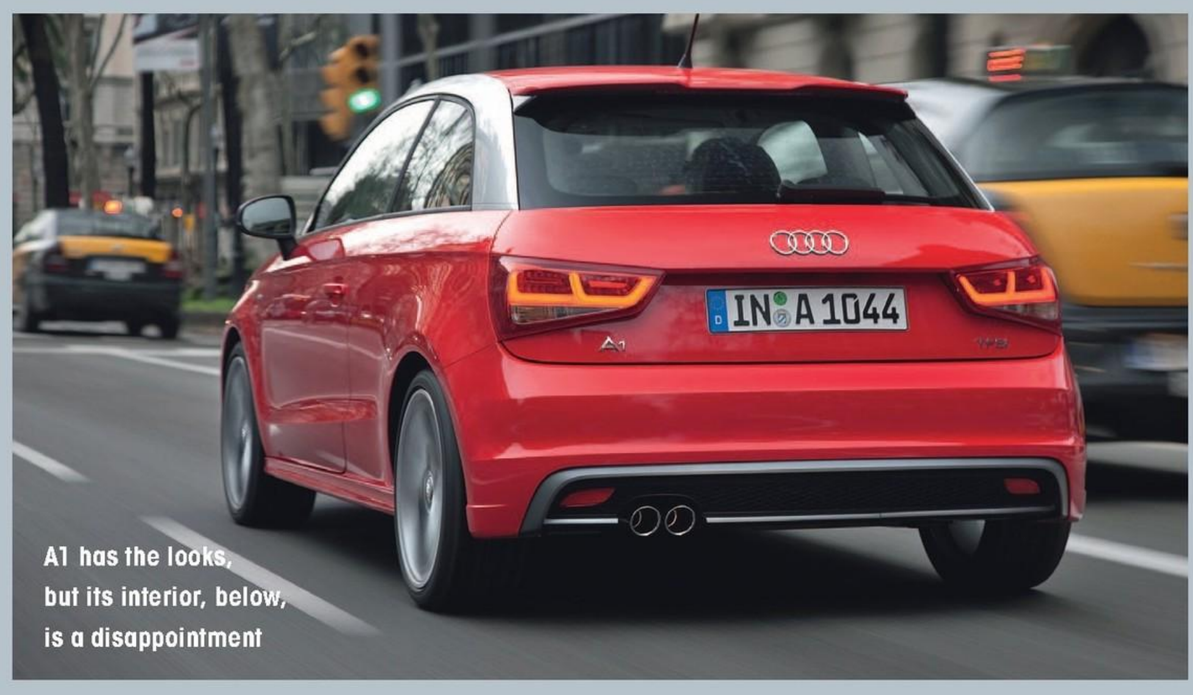
A Bentley should have a sound to savour, a fact well understood by WO over 90 years ago. And I expect it's going to get one within the year. For the strangest aspect of this allegedly new Continental GT is that despite being available for order now at £135,760 with deliveries starting in March, it's not finished yet.

I have mentioned before on these pages the forthcoming introduction of a 4-litre, twin-turbo V8 motor but other than saying it will deliver a somewhat astonishing 40 per cent improvement in emissions (and therefore fuel consumption), Bentley is remaining tediously tight-lipped on the subject. But I was told by people who'd know that it's going to be 'scarcely any slower' than this GT which, even taking into account its inevitably lower weight, will still mean an output some distance the far side of 400bhp. But as key to its performance and environmental credentials will be its eight-speed gearbox, an innovation denied the car I drove because currently the 'box is unable to handle the W12's torque. That, apparently, will change soon too.

So at least one new engine and gearbox are on the way, though Bentley insists the W12 will remain on the strength 'for as far into the future as the product plan goes' which, knowing Bentley, is some distance.

But it's the V8 I want to drive and listen to. Will it sound like a Bentley should, and deliver its torque in a solid wall from scarcely more than idling speed? I suspect it will. And it will carry the Continental 100 miles further on each tank of fuel. Minimum.

So the new Continental GT is not new, but it is more improved than I'd expected and in areas I did not predict. But it still feels like a stop-gap, a mechanically yet to be optimised necessity to get some new product on sale and get people feeling good about Bentley again. As I handed it back to Bentley that was the exact feeling in my head, tinged only by the conviction that the best is yet to come.



A1 has the looks, but its interior, below, is a disappointment

AUDI A1

IF YOU WANTED SOME indication of how slow the industry is to react to change, consider that it is only now, fully 10 seasons after its rebirth, that Mini is finally finding itself with some opposition. First came the surprisingly impressive Citroën DS3 which is currently selling out wherever it goes, but the one we've all been waiting for is the Audi A1.

Even BMW must have shivered somewhat at the prospect. The standard Mini hatchback has always been a conspicuously good car to drive but there's no doubting it has sold predominately on style and image. Yet these are precisely the things that Audi does best, a strategy that has seen Audi's sales expand inexorably over the past 15 years, despite the fact that only a small number of the vast array of Audis launched in this time have actually been any good to drive.

But the A1 is a pulled punch, and in more ways that one.

In the flesh it actually looks very good – stylish, purposeful and unmistakably an Audi. But inside the designers have played it too safe. The cabin of a Mini actually exceeds the expectations placed upon it by its exterior appearance, but the A1 interior looks like a scaled down version of any other Audi, too much the executive express, not enough the chic fashion icon. Such touches as there are, like its translucent air vents, seem added on rather than designed in.

As a result I think it likely to appeal as much to older buyers looking to downsize into something small yet smart as bright young things looking to make a style statement. And while I am sure Audi will be delighted to take their money, they won't come with the potential of a lifetime of Audi ownership ahead of them.

Even so I still quite liked the A1. As a middle-aged man to whom the height of fashion is the latest Boden catalogue I appreciated its impressive engineering and lack of affectation. The version that I drove came with a 1.4-litre turbo which responded well to the right foot and matched neatly the engaging if hardly thrilling handling.

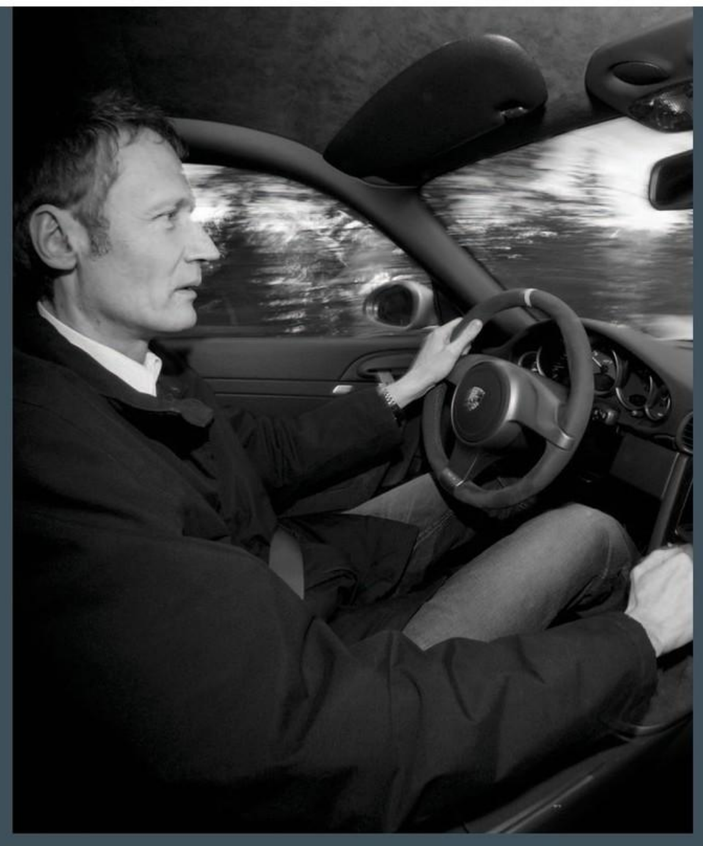
Audi would like you to think the A1 a landmark and has even had the nerve to suggest that it is the first small premium hatch, and it is of course neither of these things. What it is, however, is a capable and attractive small hatchback with few failings and some charm. Would I have it over the equivalent Mini? Probably not, but it would be a close run thing.

FACTFILE

ENGINE: 1390cc, inline four-cylinder
TOP SPEED: 126mph
PRICE: £15, 670 (Sport model)
POWER: 120bhp at 5000rpm
FUEL/CO_2: 53.3mpg, 124g/km
www.audi.com



TWENTY QUESTIONS



SUBJECT

ANDREAS PREUNINGER

OCCUPATION

MANAGER HIGH-PERFORMANCE CARS, PORSCHE MOTORSPORT

What is your greatest achievement? My son Philip, who has the Porsche virus aged three! And getting the GT street cars better and better. I'm proud of their iconic status.

What is your biggest regret? Not doing something in life to be in a position to buy a GT!

Whose work in the industry today do you admire most and why? Ferdinand Piech for his engineering genius, Walter Röhrl for his god-like ability to drive cars safely beyond the limit and Roland Kussmaul for his engineering experience combined with his efficient problem solving.

Who inspired you to join the industry and why? My father took me to Porsche Weissach R&D when I was at university. I'd always had 911 posters in my room (Carrera 2.7 RS). That visit was key: I knew I wanted to work there as an engineer.

What's the best advice you've ever been given? Actions speak louder than words.

What's the biggest challenge you're facing in the next 12 months? Keeping up the pace of GT car development.

What car do you drive for fun? I'm lucky to drive only fun cars in my job, the GT3 RS being my favourite. At the weekend I enjoy a 993.

When did you last go for a drive for the sake of it, and where? Some days ago, on an offshore boat on Lake Constance, full throttle!

What's the best moment you've had in a car? Coming home after 300kms of empty autobahn in the middle of the night, sitting in the GT3 in the driveway, ears ringing, engine ticking, feeling exhausted but wide awake.

What was your first car? A VW Scirocco GTI, spoilers all round and big wheels.

Did you pass your test first time? Yes. I started driving long before I turned 18 – my parents didn't know, but it helped me get by.

How will cars be powered in 30 years time? Hopefully with an environmentally friendly but powerful and emotionally engaging engine.

It's your last drive. One car, one road. What and where? Great Ocean Road, Australia, in a Ferrari Daytona. No, wait: Stelvio pass, Italy, in a Carrera GT. Or maybe Pikes Peak…

What music do you listen to in the car? From Robbie Williams to AC/DC, mostly rock. Status Quo have always been a favourite.

What's the best book about cars or car people you've ever read? Jeremy Clarkson's *Don't stop me now*. Actually, all his books.

Is there such a thing as a car too fast for the road? No! Speed will always fascinate people.

Will we see a Porsche Motorsport version of the Cayman or Boxster, or will you work only on 911s? I don't know – I've got my hands full with 911 work right now, but never say never.

Why don't you build cars with paddleshifts? It's due to weight and lack of driver involvement, but again, never say never.

How long can you use the old race engine for road cars when other 911s use the new flat six? It's mature and well aged, not old. It's tried and tested and it has character. We'll use it as long as it makes sense.

When will a road-legal Porsche do its first sub-seven-minute Nürburgring lap? A car set up for lap times at the 'Ring can be a dog on the street, so we have to find the best compromise. Maybe we have with the GT2 RS…

AND THAT REMINDS ME...

About the secret Grand Prix for two that ended in fits of laughter

Until now the mere existence of the Aldershot Grand Prix has been known only to a select few. It was staged just once and the only participants were myself and Colin Goodwin, a friend and colleague of many years standing.

The venue was a test track outside the aforementioned military town and our carriages were a Fiat Coupé Turbo and a Honda Prelude. It was a long time ago.

We'd gone to take some photos but afterwards one of us suggested the race. I'd never been there before, so was allowed a one-lap recce, but I've never learned any track in less than 20 laps.

I led off the line thanks to the Fiat's torque and held Colin at bay through the two corners I'd learned. Then came the third. The choice was quick left or slow right. I chose the latter and missed by one.

I positioned the Fiat on the left hand side of the track, slammed on the brakes and turned sharp right towards an apex that wasn't there. At the same time Colin positioned the Honda on the right, didn't brake and steered left towards an apex that was there but obscured by a Fiat.

The contact was hard enough to spin the Fiat, the bang loud enough to make me not want to get out and look. When I did the sight that concerned me was not so much the crunched Prelude as the prone figure of Goodwin lying next to it.

I expect we all think we've been helpless with laughter as some stage, but for most of us I doubt it's true. But for Goodwin that day it was. Apparently his limbs had failed as he opened the door and he fell on the asphalt unable to do anything other than shake and make gurgling sounds. It was some minutes before he recovered sufficiently to gasp: "what on earth was that?" except not in those exact words.

How did we keep it secret? All I can say is it involved all of Goodwin's mechanical know-how, all of my elbow grease and most of the T-Cut in Hampshire. Ⓜ



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Ferrari
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On the road
WITH ED FOSTER









Trevor Carlin reckons F3 winner Vergne is as good as Vettel. Left: trophies cover Carlin offices

ALDERSHOT, HANTS

CARLIN – CRACK BRITISH TEAM GEARS UP FOR GP2

TREVOR CARLIN'S SQUAD IS READY TO TAKE ITS WINNING FORMULA TO F1'S FEEDER SERIES

It makes for impressive reading: 187 race wins in 11 years in five different series, 30 of which came this year in two championships in the shape of British Formula 3 and the World Series by Renault. You can imagine my amusement when Trevor Carlin, co-founder and current racing director of Carlin, comments that it's "more of a can of lager team than a champagne team". A 'can of lager team' this may be, but it's the most successful in F3 history and one that will soon be competing in GP2.

When you arrive at Carlin it's not easy to picture such success coming from the small workshop in Aldershot. But once you walk in and climb the narrow staircase, flanked by photos of past drivers, you emerge into the main office – a room that has every single trophy the team has won on shelves on its walls.

These walls are overflowing with silverware and out of the corner of my eye I spot another 20-odd trophies on an extended desk. "After Narain Karthikeyan won his first race for us [the 1999 F3 Madras Grand Prix] he came into the office and put the trophy on my desk," explains Trevor. "Pretty soon another arrived, and we didn't get round to removing them. Now we always keep the current season's trophies on the desk." It's either that or there is physically no more space for them on the walls.

Recently things have been changing at Carlin. In November 2009 it was bought by Capsicum Motorsport Ltd, a company founded by Grahame Chilton, father of racers Max and Tom. "Before Grahame came on board we were a privately-funded small team and we had to do everything from our income," Trevor tells me as we sit down in a meeting room, also covered in silverware. "We grew very quickly, perhaps too quickly in hindsight, and we had a bit of bad debt. I spoke to Grahame 18 months ago and asked him for some advice and he liked what he saw, came on board and is now the majority shareholder in the team.

"What I want to do is go motor racing, win races and bring on young mechanics, engineers and drivers. That's the part I find interesting and exciting, and to me the business side is a necessary evil. I used to spend 80 per cent of my time worrying about the business and 20 per cent motor racing. Now it's the other way

Our thanks to the following for their help with this feature
www.yokohama.co.uk
www.tomtom.com

round and I'm really happy about that."

I ask him whether Carlin would have filed for a GP2 entry without new investment. "Absolutely not, and we wouldn't have even done GP3, we just wouldn't have had the funding."

This isn't the first time that Carlin has flirted with the Formula 1 feeder series as the company filed for – and was granted – an entry in 2004 for the 2005-07 programme. At that time, however, Trevor was working with Colin Kolles setting up the Midland F1 team. He didn't think it was sensible to be dabbling in GP2 as well and so let the entry go, putting all his eggs in the Midland basket – "those eggs got broken very quickly," he comments. Come 2008 and the next cycle of entries and the series didn't bring in any new teams, so 2011 is the first opportunity Carlin has had since '04 to take part.

Will Carlin be as successful in GP2 as it has been in F3 and the World Series? "I think we'd be dreaming if we expected to win the championship in the first year. Having said that, I'd be disappointed if we didn't finish in the top five – that's my target, anything more will be a bonus. The time is right for us to come into the series, as aerodynamically it's a new car and the tyres are a complete unknown. Anybody could be quick."

What Carlin won't be able to do is use its wind tunnel which has proved so useful in F3, as that sort of testing is banned in both GP2 and GP3 (in which the team has contested select events). Even without this, though, Carlin should be right up there. As Trevor says: "People who know us will realise that we're going to do everything possible to be at the front."

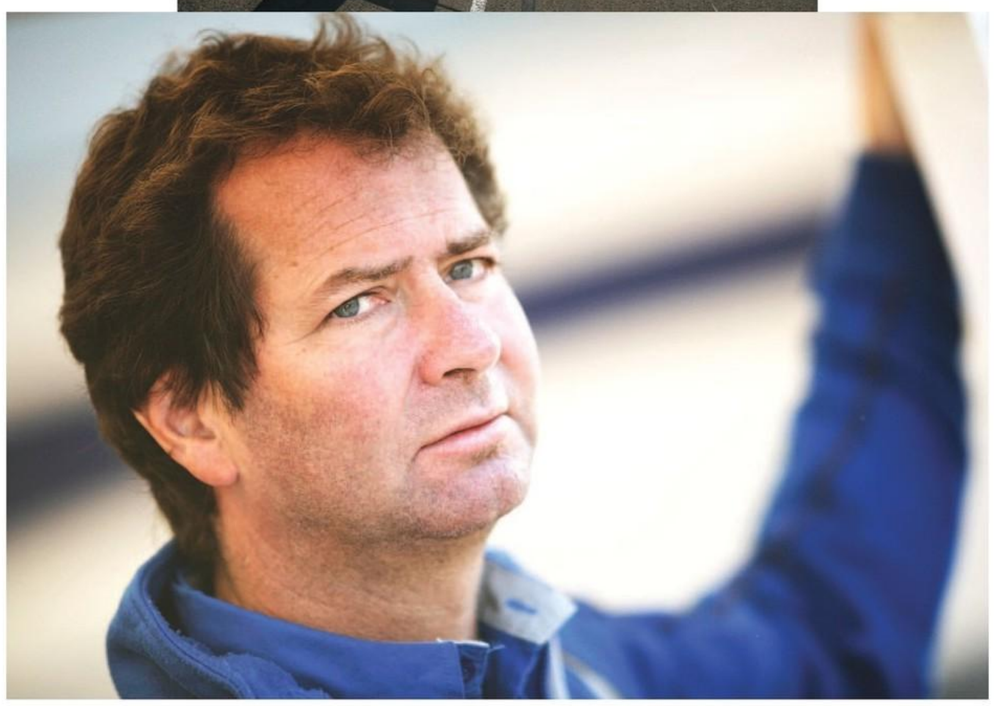
Competing at the front is exactly what Carlin has been doing for the past 11 years and Trevor is adamant that the reason for the team's success is down to hard work. "When we started in 1999 we were a new team by name, but every person in the team was very experienced in F3. We had a great teacher in Bruce Carey, who was an Australian engineer, a salt of the earth type of guy. He taught us the basics of getting a race car built and set up properly, and all we've done is carry on with the basics, there's been no magic. In fact, it's more a case of not messing up rather than doing something magic. We can go to any circuit, certainly in F3, and be on the pace immediately. That gives the drivers confidence and they then drive a bit quicker.

"One of the big factors over the years – as well as the ex-Yamaha and Brabham facility which houses the wind tunnel and model, carbon and machine shops – is that we had a couple of ex-F1 guys come to work here. What they've done is brought systems and organisation into the team that I didn't know about. Our chief race engineer Mark Owen and chief designer David Brown have made our cars more consistent. The engineers do reports after every event, they have debriefs, meetings and everything's planned. Junior motor sport used to be seat-of-the-pants stuff – lick your finger, put it in the air and say 'right, put the new tyres on now'. It's far more scientific and disciplined now."





GP3 at Hungary; 2010 World Series champ Mikhail Aleshin, above. Below: Trevor Carlin



"Junior motor sport used to be seat-of-the-pants stuff. It's more disciplined now"

The company has recruited various new staff, taking the total number of employees up to 60, but Trevor is keen that the GP2 outfit doesn't just consist of these new recruits. "I wanted the GP2 team to be 'Carlin-ised', so that we get a nice mix," he explains. "You've got to remember that although you can't put the GP2 car in a wind tunnel, you can either put it together well or put it together really well. We've now got a fantastic team to do that."

With all these ingredients in place Carlin should be right on the pace. If it is, could F1 be the next step? "I love watching it, and I *love* the technical side, but I'd be totally out of my depth on the business side of things. For me, it's the love of motor racing, winning and being competitive that I enjoy. With the greatest will in the world, how on earth is someone like Carlin ever going to compete with McLaren? It's taken them 40 years and billions and billions of dollars, and to get to that level would take years. A couple of the teams at the back of the grid now – and I don't mean this disrespectfully – aren't going to move from there. I suggest they will potentially change hands on a yearly basis because that's the nature of the beast when you're at the bottom – you're always a target."

Talk soon moves on to the current F1 drivers, quite a few of whom passed through Carlin on their way to the top. In order, Nico Rosberg, Bruno Senna, Robert Kubica, Sebastien Buemi, Sebastian Vettel and Jaime Alguersuari all raced for Carlin, but it was Vettel that really impressed Trevor in 2006 and '07 when he drove in the World Series. I ask whether anyone coming through the ranks at the moment has the same qualities. "There are an awful lot of good drivers, every year someone fresh comes on the scene," says Trevor. "Obviously I'm going to be biased and talk about our drivers, but Jean-Eric Vergne [who won the British F3 Championship convincingly this year] is a real class act. He's fantastic and potentially one of the best we've ever had.

"At Magny-Cours he started fifth in the reverse grid race and overtook two cars on the grass at the first corner. There wasn't a gap there, but he had committed and he just kept going. He must have planned it, must have known it was possible after going down there to have a look. He was P3 at the first corner, at the second corner he was P2, two laps later he was P1 and it was just the sheer aggression that amazed me." If some of Carlin's other drivers are anything to go by Vergne is certainly one to watch.

Near the end of our chat, Trevor neatly sums up how Carlin operates: "We win the race, get packed up and get to the bar. They're traditional British motor sport values – we work hard, play hard, enjoy it and then the next day get cracking again because you're only as good as your last race." If that's the case then Carlin is very good and deserves to be known as 'the team that every young driver wants to race for'. ›››







Graphics in latest game are a major step forward, and drivers are programmed using AI



LONDON

PLAYSTATION 3 FORMULA 1 2010 GAME

REALISM IS THE AIM OF THE GAME WITH THE LATEST F1 OFFERING – JUST ASK THE PROS

The other day in qualifying for the Belgian Grand Prix a certain M Schumacher blocked my lap. It was a little surprising given how blatant it was, but I feel that I got my revenge when I ran clean into the back of him at Les Combes. It was, without doubt, a less accomplished manoeuvre than Mika Häkkinen pulled off at Spa in 2000…

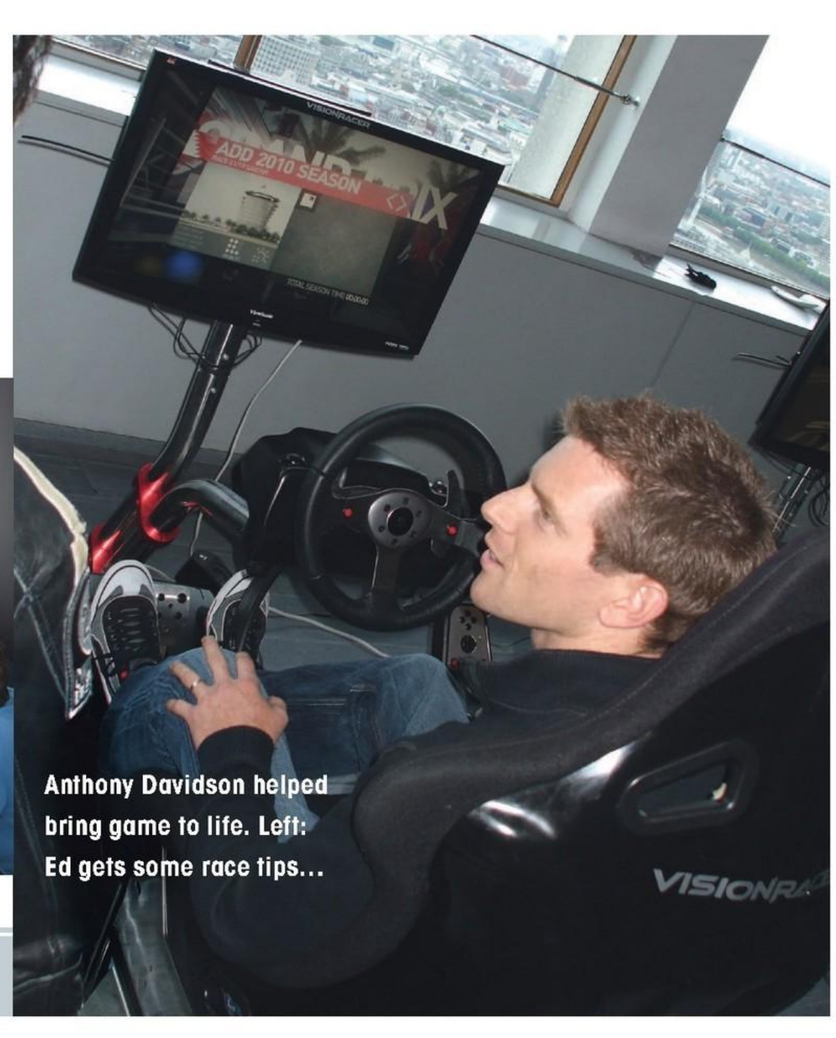
This, of course, is the PlayStation 3 Formula 1 2010 game, but it turns out that I shouldn't have been surprised that Schumacher's on-track behaviour had manifested itself on my console. "Each driver has individual Artificial Intelligence characteristics," explains Andy Gray, communications manager for the game. "Lewis Hamilton is quite aggressive, so if he comes up behind you during a race you know he's going to have a go. If you're behind Schumacher and trying to put pressure on him, he won't give two s****."

The PlayStation game is the latest F1 offering and the first from Codemasters, the firm behind the Colin McRae rally series. "We were keen to reinvent the game and take it back to where it should be," says Gray.

The latest gaming version of the sport is certainly a quantum leap from what Sony produced in 2007. But graphics and technology do move forward, so how much did Codemasters actually have to do? Gray's eyes light up at the thought of educating a very amateur gamer. "Because the '07 game was done by another company we couldn't take anything from it. The first step was to talk to Formula One Management and the circuit owners who gave us all the CAD data for the tracks – what angle the corner's at, what the camber's like, what the elevation is between each corner and so on. From there we sent a photographer to each circuit who literally walked round the track and every two or three steps stopped and took a photo front, right, left and back. We then built an asset bank of thousands of photos and after that was added we could start thinking about adding crowds, flags, cranes and all the stuff that gives atmosphere. To give you an idea, to create a single track in game form would take one man a year."







Anthony Davidson helped bring game to life. Left: Ed gets some race tips…

Where this game really amazes is in the attention to detail, and that was partly thanks to Peugeot sports car driver Anthony Davidson, a self-confessed avid gamer who provided a racer's perspective on the cars and tracks.

"Obviously these cars aren't something you can just jump into like Gran Turismo 5 and we wanted to get it right," he tells me after I've spent three laps being lapped seven times. "I must have answered a hundred e-mail questions from Codemasters over the past two years. Some have been absolutely *tiny* details, like 'how fast does an F1 car go backwards'? Well, I don't know! I'd have to check with a team.

"I spent a whole day getting the on-board cockpit view as good as we could, but I also made sure that every detail of the circuits was right – kerbs, undulation, track surface changes, grip and colour – all those things you wouldn't know unless you'd driven them."

Such is the attention to detail that Davidson says the current drivers would have been keen to try the Korean track, a circuit none of them had been to before. "I guarantee you that every F1 driver would have got hold of a copy of the game and would have gone straight to Korea. They'd choose their own car and they'd learn exactly where the track goes. It's not about improving your lap time in the real car using a computer game like this, it's about learning just how long the straight is, how tight the next corner is. You can look at a track map all you want but you'll never replace the graphical element and getting into a rhythm. Even Korea is very accurate because it's based on CAD and GPS data. I used computer games before I went to Le Mans and I did it for every single track in 2004 [when he was Honda's third driver] before I did my Friday running. It really does help."

The PlayStation 3 F1 2010 game (available on Xbox) is very addictive because not only can you build a career, race at every track, in every car and give obnoxious replies to Radio 5 Live's David Croft and Holly Samos in interviews, but it's just so realistic compared to what's come before. The plan is to bring out a new F1 game every year, but I'd urge you to give this one a go. In the meantime, I'm off to start the Belgian GP from 12th after receiving a five-place grid penalty for punting off another driver...





Black cab or Bloodhound? It was an unusual choice for those on The Strand...

LONDON

BLOODHOUND SSC COMES TO TOWN

MODEL GOES ON SHOW AS TEAM GETS CLOSER TO 1000MPH BID

THE BLOODHOUND SSC full-size model arrived on The Strand in London for a two-week stay at Coutts Bank in October. It was an impressive sight, with taxi drivers passing it wide-eyed, no doubt wondering how such a colossal machine – or any machine – could do 1000mph.

More perceptive passers-by would have noticed that there has been a fundamental design change over the past 12 months. "Over the past two years we've had a real problem with the car's aerodynamics," explains chief engineer Mark Chapman. "When we did the first run of aerodynamics on the original design we had something like 11 tonnes of lift. At the time the car weighed five and a half tonnes, so it was never going to be a pretty sight. Although we'll get the low-altitude air speed record anyway, we didn't really want Andy (Green) to achieve that by actually being off the ground.

"A year ago we swapped over the jet and rocket (which now sits underneath) and that made the car more stable. The old version was stable, but it needed all the canards and winglets to work really hard.

The car's aerodynamic shape will be frozen by Christmas and the chassis build will start next year. "The rear chassis is arriving about Easter time and by summer we should have the front end, which is a composite monocoque," says Chapman. "Hopefully we'll have a car ready for runway testing in January 2012. Realistically the summer of 2012 is the earliest we'll be attempting a Land Speed Record."

Another recent change is that the V12 Superleague engine which powered the oxidiser pump (taken from a 1960s nuclear missile, Blue Steel) has been replaced by a Cosworth CA2010 Formula 1 unit. Mounted back to front, the 750-plus bhp V8 will have to endure deceleration of 3g for 10 times as long as in an F1 car.

Some of the best news is how successful the project has been at encouraging young people to study engineering and science. "After Lord Leech's 2005 report on skills in the country (which stated that 60 per cent of aerospace industry workers were aged 40-60), people realised that something had to be done," Bloodhound SSC project director Richard Noble tells me. "Farnborough Airshow tried to encourage kids to attend in 2005, but only 500 turned up. This year we were asked to bring our schools programme, and 169 schools attended. We've now got 4000 schools on the programme and it just keeps growing. It puts us under enormous pressure because we have to produce more educational material, but we're happy to do that."

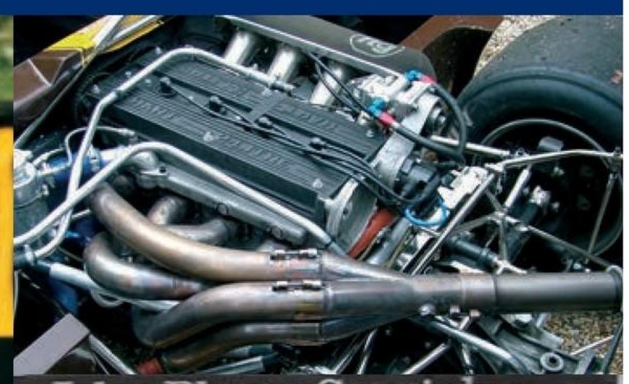
Because the Land Speed Record rules are fairly loose compared to the likes of F1, all the cars are very different. It's thanks to this that Bloodhound can make its data available to study. "We're making the technological and performance data live, as it happens," adds Noble.

There seems to be a more relaxed atmosphere in the Bloodhound team since the aero problems were fixed. The numbers suggest the car can hit 1000mph, and it's good to know the project is on track.

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First driven by Peter Gethin at the Interserie race at Silverstone in May 1974 and a week later made its world-championship debut at the Nurburgring 750 kms, where Gethin, paired with John Watson, lapped in 7 mins 35.5 secs, well inside the 2-litre lap record. Later raced all over Europe, including the famous 1974 BA 1000kms at Brands Hatch where Gethin and Brian Redman finished fourth overall, behind the 3-litre Gulf GR7-DFV and Matra MS670c's.

The car continues to be highly competitive today in Classic Endurance Racing, finishing 1st overall at the Silverstone round of CER in September and was recorded with a 4 min 26sec lap time at Le Mans Classic.

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One of two Huron 4As, the other which became the DAF Camel Variomatic prototype and Belgian Hill Climb Championship winner in 1972. Chassis 01 has a continuous history from new and has been recently fully rebuilt and race prepared by Simon Hadfield, with a fresh 2.0 BDA engine and Hewland gearbox. A unique car from the golden era of 2-litre sports-racing. Also a perfect entry for the new HSCC 2.0 Sports-Racing Car Series or Classic Endurance Racing series in 2011.

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LAT

Barcelona to host historics

THE HISTORY OF THE Montjuich Park street circuit in Barcelona will be celebrated in a new historic festival to be held at the Barcelona GP track over the weekend of April 8-10 2011.

The new event is the latest in a partnership between promoter Jesus Pozo and Masters Historic Racing, and follows on from the Monteblanco race meeting.

'Espiritu de Montjuich', the Catalan Classic Revival, will feature a full programme of classes from Masters, and will exhibit a strong Catalan theme. The races will be run on the Grand Prix track without the current F1 chicanes. The venue is 20 minutes from Barcelona.

The festival will recall the Grand Prix and sports car races held on the original street circuit from 1932 until an accident in the 1975 Grand Prix claimed the lives of five people.

The line-up includes Grand Prix Masters, World Sportscar Masters, Gentleman Drivers and Touring Cars, plus the newly announced Masters Group C category (see p124). The meeting will also mark the history of the Escuderia Montjuich race team and some of its surviving cars will be on display. The promoters will take competitors and visitors around the old circuit on guided tours accompanied by team drivers of that era.

"This new classic festival in Barcelona is a special event for us and for historic racing in general," said Christopher Tate, series director for Masters.



Paul Lawrence

Lepley tops Wales Rally GB historics

JASON LEPLEY AND HOWARD PRIDMORE headed the historic category in the clubmans rally which supported Wales Rally GB, the final round of the FIA World Rally Championship. Lepley's Mk2 Ford Escort RS1800 (above) finished with 43sec in hand over Gareth Lloyd/Llinos Davies in an ex-Roger Clark RS1800.

Crews made one run of the weekend stages as historic cars featured on the event for the first time in a decade. Among the finishers was the oldest car entered, the Austin Healey 3000 of Graham Goodall and Pete Gilbert.

Show display flags sports car series

THE EUROPEAN 2-LITRE SPORTS CAR CHAMPIONSHIP OF THE 1970s WILL BE celebrated at Autosport International in January when the Historic Sports Car Club mounts a display of racers from the category.

With a revival race series for the cars starting next May, the club will show six or seven cars from manufacturers such as Chevron and Lola, including the Crowne Racing Lola T292 driven by Chris Craft to victory in the 1973 championship. The HSCC hopes to have period drivers on hand as well.



LAT

Le Mans classic to evoke 'golden era'

THE CLASSIC RACE SUPPORTING THE LE MANS 24 Hours next June will be for cars which were eligible for the famous French endurance event from 1949 to 1965. The 45-minute race, organised by Motor Racing Legends, will be held on the morning of Saturday June 11, ahead of the start of the main race.

C-type and D-type Jaguars will be among the machines doing battle with front- and mid-engined Ferraris, while the Ford GT40 is specifically excluded in order to keep the contest as open as possible.

"The 1950s and early '60s is perhaps the most emotionally charged period of motor racing history – a genuine golden era," said organiser Duncan Wiltshire.

IN BRIEF

■ The dates for the two major Goodwood events in 2011 have been announced, and both the Festival of Speed and the Revival Race Meeting will run on the same weekends as this year. The Festival is over the weekend of July 1-3, with the Revival planned for September 16-18.

■ Bruno Pericardi, a well-known London race car preparer during the 1960s and '70s, died in October. Among many projects, he was race mechanic to Nobby Spero with the Whitney Straight Maserati 8CM and later the ex-Musso/Behra Maserati 250F when raced by Spero's son Johnny.

■ After a decade as chairman of the FIA Historic Formula 1 Championship, Tony Smith is to stand down at the end of the year. CEO Mike Whatley is also retiring and the drivers' committee, headed by vice-chairman and Lotus racer Dan Collins, will now take over the management of the championship.

■ Martin Hadwen, founder of the National Motor Racing Archive, died recently after an illness. Hadwen created the Archive in 1987, which grew into a major source of information about the sport. The archive material is now under the wing of MotorSport Vision and has been relocated to Snetterton circuit.

■ The London to Cape Town Rally has been postponed for a year because of security concerns in southern Algeria. The Endurance Rally Association had planned to start the 10,000-mile marathon from the Houses of Parliament on December 30, but has been forced to postpone the classic rally for 12 months.

■ The pre-war 12-cylinder Silver Arrows from Auto Union will be among the main attractions at next year's Solitude Revival. The three-day festival (July 22-24) will feature over 600 classic cars in action on the 12.7km circuit near Stuttgart and will also celebrate 125 years of the automobile.

■ A Lola T70 Mk3B which may have been raced by Ronnie Peterson has finally been rebuilt by marque expert Chris Fox. First owner Picko Troberg raced the car only three times in period before a Nürburgring crash. The damaged car stood in his workshop for decades.

Historic Racing News



Rival GpC series for 2011

OWNERS OF GROUP C AND GTP racing sports cars will have two sets of dates to choose from in 2011 after Masters Historic Racing announced it would be holding events for the category alongside the existing Group C Racing series.

Bob Berridge, manager of Group C Racing, is bullish about the prospects for his series in 2011, reporting strong interest from drivers new to the category. "I expect to have at least 12 new names next year," he said. "We're planning six events, with a mix of races. The job for 2010 was to turn the category around and centre the Group C identity and it was a big improvement over 2009."

The provisional Group C calendar includes races at Spa in late May, the Silverstone Classic, the Brands Hatch Superprix and Paul Ricard in October.

Among the new cars expected is a Lancia LC2, fielded by Rupert Clevely, now being race-readied by the Chamberlain Synergy team. It is chassis number 5, which took pole for the 1984 Le Mans 24 Hours in the hands of Bob Wollek. Meanwhile, the current Historic F2 champion, Katsu Kubota, is preparing a Nissan RC90 for the season.

However, the new Masters series will offer an alternative set of dates for GpC drivers, starting at Barcelona in April. "We have good support behind us from a number of GpC owners for this new venture, which has been vital in setting this in motion," said Masters founder Ron Maydon.

LAT



Historic festival for Donington

DONINGTON PARK WILL HOST A new classic event next season. The Donington Historic Festival will run over the May Day Bank Holiday weekend of April 30 and May 1/2.

Organised by Duncan Wiltshire of Motor Racing Legends, it will include races for the Stirling Moss and Woodcote Trophies, plus the Pre-War Sports Car race series and additional guest races.

"The festival will fill a clear hole in the calendar, putting the wishes of owners, drivers and enthusiasts at its heart," said Wiltshire.

Obituary

Dan Margulies

ONE OF THE CENTRAL CHARACTERS IN vintage motor racing, Dan Margulies, has died aged 85. Both aspects of his passion appeared often in *Motor Sport*: he was a regular winner in VSCC events in a huge variety of machinery but notably in his beloved Grand Prix Maseratis, and he was one of the best-known traders in racing cars. His adverts in this magazine brimmed with rare sports and racing machinery, often rescued thanks to his knowledge and devotion, while his Kensington mews base was a Mecca for old car people.

Smitten by racing at his home GP in Bucharest in 1937, he made cars his life after coming to the UK, sharing a C-type with Graham Hill on the Targa Florio as well as competing in Acropolis, Monte Carlo and RAC rallies. A true gentleman driver, he retained his love of fine machinery to the end.



Tour Britannia waives the rules

THERE WILL BE A NEW LOOK TO TOUR Britannia for 2011, with a June date and a Wales and West Country route for the classic race and rally tour. The new date runs over the weekend of June 17-19, moving from its September weekday slot.

"While it is difficult to find a fresh gap in the busy historic calendar, our announcement seems to have been well received," said event organiser Alec Poole.

The outline route includes a leg into South Wales on Friday with a race at Pembrey, while Saturday takes in the West Country with a race at Castle Combe. The finish is at Silverstone on Sunday.

Peking to Paris is 'hardest ever'

THE VAUXHALL PRINCE HENRY OF Charles Bishop claimed victory in the pre-26 category of the 10,000-mile Peking to Paris Rally, an event that veteran organiser Philip Young described as being the hardest he has ever staged.

Steve Hyde won the Vintageant class in a 1938 Chevrolet Coupé (below), having led from the start. Australian Gerry Crown, at 78 the oldest driver entered, won the Classics category in a 1974 Holden. Crown was too old to be given a Chinese driving licence so his navigator Matt Bryson had to drive for the first few days.



Pau historic to head Peter's triple

THE PETER AUTO ORGANISATION IN PARIS IS EXPANDING ITS PROGRAMME IN 2011 with an outline plan to run three major historic festivals across Europe.

As well as the return of the Grand Prix de Pau Historique on May 14/15, Patrick Peter's company will run the Spa-Francorchamps Classic over the weekend of May 27-29 and the Dix Milles Tours at Paul Ricard on October 7-9. The Peter Auto season starts with Tour Auto from April 11-16.

Huge entry for 77th Brighton run



OVER 500 VETERAN CARS TOOK the start for the 77th running of the Royal Automobile Club's London to Brighton Veteran Car Run, the highest number since the centenary event in 1996.

From 572 entries, 505 veterans crossed the startline in Hyde Park and 433 reached the finish line on Madeira Drive in Brighton after the traditional 60-mile route. The participating cars spanned the era from 1894 to 1905 and the first car away from London was the 1896 Salveson Steamer of John Brydon.

Among the first cars to reach Brighton was a 1903 Sunbeam, which had been bought at Friday's LBVCR Auction at Bonhams and was driven by British Racing Drivers' Club chairman Robert Brooks on behalf of the new owner.

"We look forward to seeing everyone again on Sunday November 6, 2011," said event director Roger Etcell. "We'll celebrate Germany as a manufacturing nation, plus the 125th anniversary of the first patented Benz motorcar."

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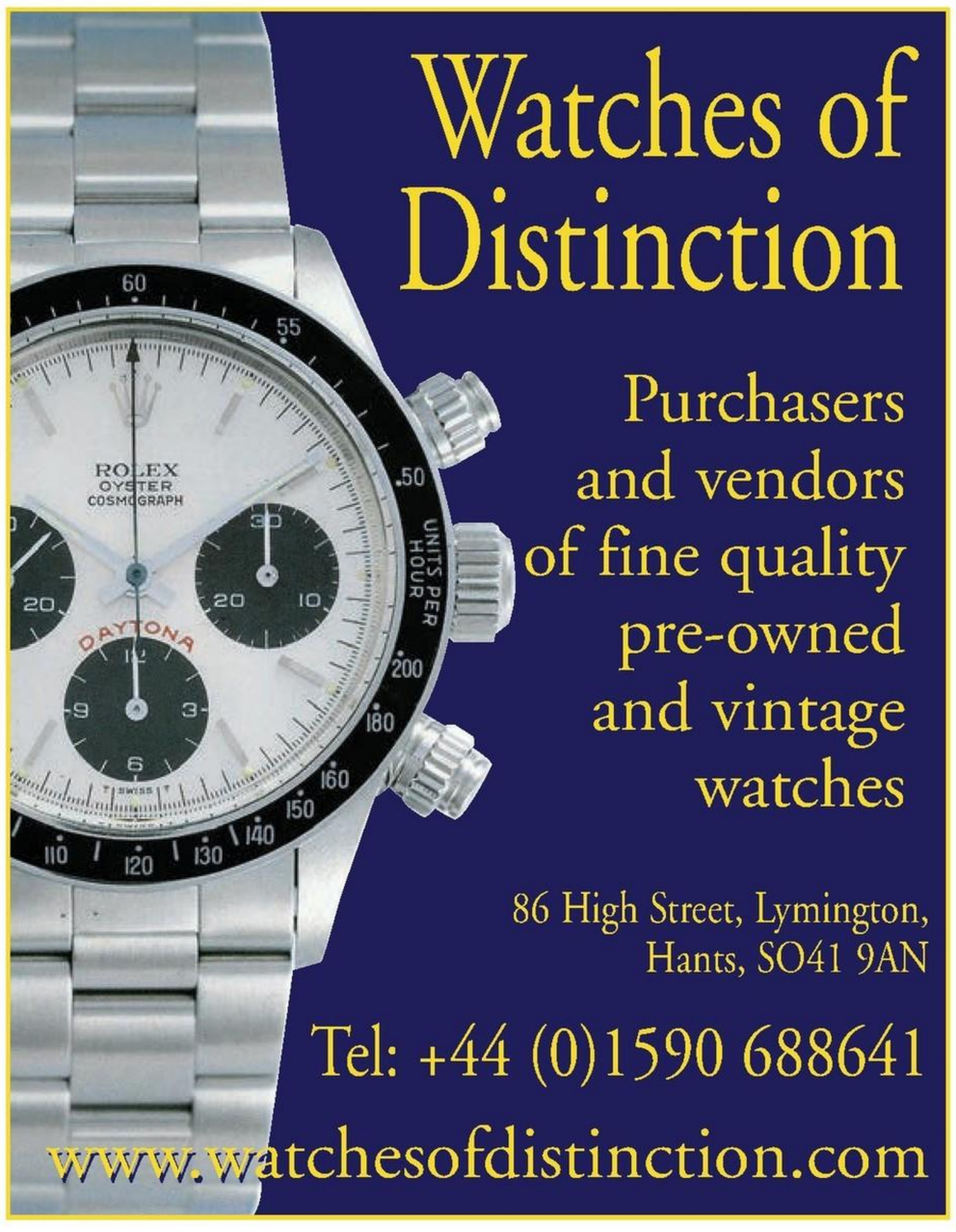
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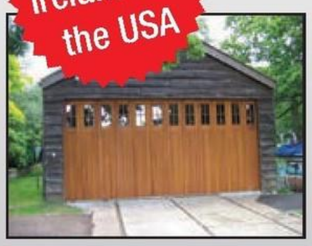
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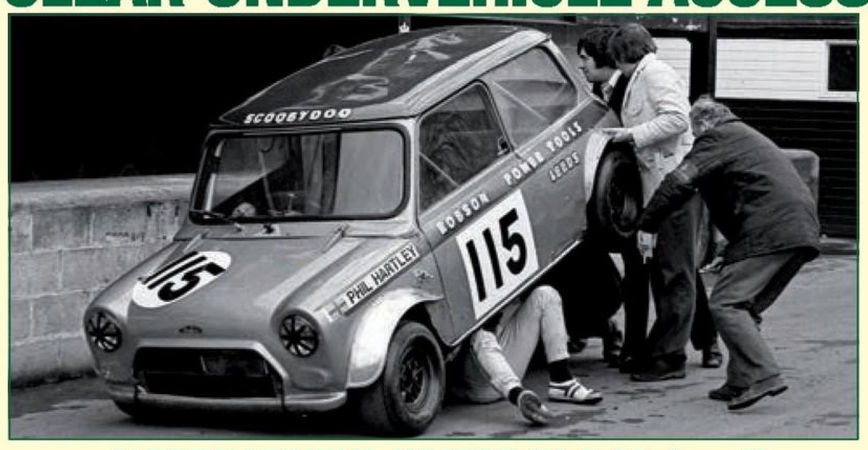


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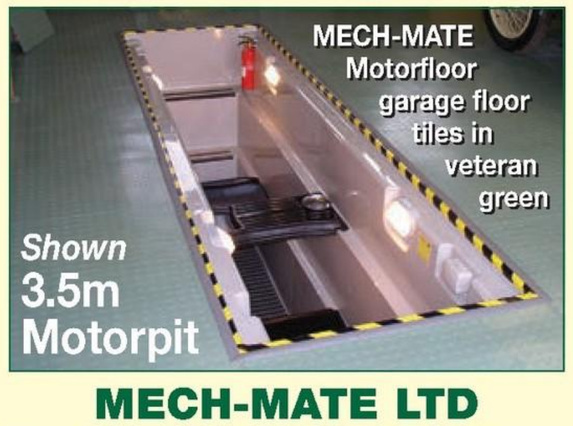
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Around the houses

NEWS FROM THE MAIN AUCTION HOUSES AROUND THE WORLD

– RM AUCTIONS –

On October 26 RM hosted its annual Battersea sale in association with Sotheby's and sold £19,147,790 worth of lots. The talk of the night was the 1964 Aston Martin DB5 James Bond car, which came complete with machine guns, oil slick sprayer and rear bulletproof shield. The car didn't reach the heady eight-figure pre-sale estimate some were suggesting, but it was bought by an American businessman for £2,912,000, who plans to "display it in his private museum just as it is". The past owner of the car, Jerry Lee, has announced that the money will go towards The Jerry Lee Foundation, which is dedicated to solving social problems associated with poverty.

Other cars that sold well included a stunning 1938 Talbot Lago T23 Teardrop coupé (£1,792,000, above), a 2010 Pagani Zonda R (£812,000) and a 1956 Maserati A6G/2000 Competizione Berlinetta (£700,000).

Surprisingly, the Ferguson P99 that *Motor Sport* featured in the November issue failed to find a new owner, despite reaching a high bid of £410,000 – £65,000 short of its bottom estimate. Another important racer that didn't sell was the ex-Masten Gregory Jaguar C-type that stopped £150,000 short of its £1.9m low estimate.

Despite these two important cars not selling, there's no denying the success of the event. In the same auction last year RM Auctions posted 'only' £11 million of sales, some £8m short of this year's event, where eight cars achieved more than $1m (£618,915) and 92 of the 106 lots changed hands.

RM is looking forward to its Automobiles of Arizona auction on January 20/21 2011 at which the company aims to sell over 160 cars. Among those is a 1973 Ferrari 365 GTB/4 Daytona Spyder which was owned by Evel Knievel (estimate £555-680,000) and a 1966 Ferrari Superfast series 1 (also estimated at £555-680,000).

The US company has announced that it will be the official auction house for the Villa d'Este concours on May 22. Starting in 2011, it will host the event every other year on an alternating basis with the Sporting Classics of Monaco sale held on the same weekend as the Grand Prix Historique de Monaco.

– YAMAHA MOTOR EUROPE –

A signed Valentino Rossi helmet (below), a set of James Toseland's leathers and a David Philippaerts race shirt are the highlights of a Yamaha online auction on eBay running from now until February 2011. All proceeds will go towards the charity Riders for Health which maintains vehicles, especially motorbikes, that are used for health care delivery in some of the remotest parts of rural Africa. The auction is only available to UK residents, but for more information and estimates please visit www.facebook.com/yamaharacing.com



FORTHCOMING AUCTIONS

■ **DECEMBER 1 BRIGHTWELLS** Classic Cars and Motorcycles, Easters Court, Leominster, Herefordshire *Tel: 01568 611122*

■ **DECEMBER 2/4 MECUM** Kansas City Auction, Bartle Hall, Kansas City *Tel: 001 815 568 8888*

■ **DECEMBER 4 HISTORICS AT BROOKLANDS** Sale of Historic Cars and Memorabilia, Brooklands, Surrey *Tel: 0800 988 3838*

■ **DECEMBER 6 BONHAMS** Important Collectors' Motor Cars, Motorcycles and Automobilia, Olympia, London *Tel: 020 7447 7447*

■ **DECEMBER 6/7 BARONS** Classic, Collectors' and Historic Cars, Esher Hall, Sandown Park, Surrey *Tel: 023 8066 8413*

■ **DECEMBER 7 COYS** True Greats, Royal Horticultural Halls, London *Tel: 020 8614 7888*

■ **DECEMBER 8 H&H SALES LTD** Classic Collectors' Cars, The Pavilion Gardens, Buxton, Derbyshire *Tel: 08458 334455*

■ **DECEMBER 8 BRIGHTWELLS** Classic Cars, Motorcycles and Automobilia, Easters Court, Leominster, Herefordshire *Tel: 01568 611122*

■ **JANUARY 15 2011 COYS** Autosport International, NEC, Birmingham *Tel: 020 8614 7888*

■ **JANUARY 17-23 BARRETT-JACKSON** Scottsdale Auction, Westworld of Scottsdale, Arizona, *Tel: 001 480 663 6255*

■ **JANUARY 19-23 RUSSO AND STEELE** Scottsdale Auction, Scottsdale, Arizona *Tel: 001 602 252 2697*

■ **JANUARY 21 RM AUCTIONS** Automobiles of Arizona, Arizona Baltimore Resort and Spa, Phoenix *Tel: 001 519 352 4575*

■ **JANUARY 21/22 GOODING & CO** Scottsdale Auction, Scottsdale Fashion Square, Arizona *Tel: 001 310 899 1960*

■ **JANUARY 26-30 MECUM** Kissimmee Florida Auction, Osceola Heritage Park, Kissimmee *Tel: 001 815 568 8888*

■ **FEBRUARY 7/8 BARONS** Classic, Historic and Thoroughbred Motor Cars, Esher Hall, Sandown Park, Surrey *Tel: 023 8066 8413*

■ **FEBRUARY 18 WORLDWIDE AUCTIONEERS** The Atlantic City Auction, Trump Taj Mahal Hotel Casino, Atlantic City, New Jersey *Tel: 001 609 449 1000*

■ **MARCH 3-5 AUCTIONS AMERICA** Collector Cars of Fort Lauderdale, Broward County Convention Centre, Florida *Tel: 001 954 566 2209*

Cars for Sale

– GORRINGES –

A 'Stig' helmet worn by Ben Collins fetched an extraordinary £3400 when it was taken to Gorringes by a former production coordinator for *Top Gear*, who had been given the item as a leaving present. The ex-Stig and presenter Richard Hammond had both signed the lid.

– JAMES ALLEN ON F1 –

A Kamui Kobayashi Sauber race suit sold for £1000 in an online auction run by the 'James Allen on F1' website to raise money for the Grand Prix Mechanics Trust. The sale ended on November 7.

– WRC RALLYTRAVEL.COM –

A number of World Rally Championship drivers turned out to help raise nearly £5000 in an annual auction run by Rallytravel.com in support of the Richard Burns Foundation and the Michael Park Fund. The evening began with Petter Solberg wrestling host Julian Porter to the ground and announcing the start of the auction, but Sébastien Loeb stole the limelight when he ran off the stage and hugged someone who had bid £775 for a pair of his driving gloves.

– SIEDEL & FRIEDRICH –

The company's automobilia auction on November 6/7 included an original photo album of the 1925 Gran Premio di Roma, which sold for £2500. There were also some images of Stirling Moss and *Motor Sport's* Denis Jenkinson on the 1955 Mille Miglia (£3880) among a fascinating assortment of period photos, magazines, trophies, programmes and posters.

– H&H SALES LTD –

Items belonging to Jenson Button were among £1m worth of cars, motorbikes and automobilia at H&H's sale at the Haynes Museum in Somerset on October 22. Last year's F1 World Champion had two lots in the sale – a Honda S600 and a VW Kombi van – which collectively made over £57,000. The Honda will now go to the Caister Castle Museum in Norfolk where it will be displayed alongside a 1893 Panhard et Levassor and Jim Clark's Lotus 33 R14.

AUCTION RESULTS

OCTOBER 22 H&H SALES LTD
- c.1933/35 supercharged Riley Special: £27,500
- 1959 Porsche 356A cabriolet: £22,000
- 1926 McLaughlin-Buick Standard Six Model 26-24: £22,550
- 1934 Alvis Speed 20 Vanden Plas tourer: £77,000

OCTOBER 23 COYS
- 1970 De Tomaso Pantera GTS: £36,980
- 1956 Porsche 356 Speedster: £121,125
- 1958 Jaguar XK150S: £63,255
- 1966 Ferrari 330GT: £87,920
- 1970 Maserati Ghibli SS: £68,010
- 1965 Alfa Romeo 2600 Spyder: £62,315
- 1964 Fiat OSCA 1600S Spyder: £19,700

OCTOBER 26 BARONS
- 1963 Bentley Continental by Mulliner: £142,000
- 1958 Jaguar XK150 roadster: £55,886
- 1967 Jaguar E-type S1 4.2 FHC: £53,093

OCTOBER 27 RM AUCTIONS
- 1955 Mercedes-Benz 300SL coupé: £420,000
- 1956 Maserati A6G/2000 Competition Berlinetta: £700,000
- 1925 Bentley 3/4½-litre Le Mans Replica: £291,200
- 1968 Chevrolet Corvette L89: £50,400
- 1928 DeSoto Indianapolis-style racer: £29,120
- 1934 MG PA/B Le Mans works racer: £78,400
- 1961 Ferguson P99: unsold
- 1954 Tojeiro-Bristol sports racer: £128,800
- 1931 Bentley 8-litre Tourer: £369,600
- 2010 Pagani Zonda R: £806,400
- 1938 Talbot-Lago T23 Teardrop coupé: £1,792,000
- 1931 Bentley 8-litre open tourer: £756,000
- 1998 Jaguar XKR James Bond special-effects film car: £56,000
- 1964 Aston Martin DB5 James Bond film car: £2,912,000
- 1972 BMW 3.0 CSL: £49,280

NOVEMBER 5 BONHAMS
- 1903 Sunbeam 10/12hp: £321,600
- 1901 Renault 4½hp Type D: £62,000
- 1904 Peugeot 9hp twin-cylinder: £78,500
- 1903 De Dion Bouton 8hp Model R: £73,000
- 1900 De Dion Bouton 3½hp vis-à-vis: £26,450
- c.1899 Decauville 5hp twin-cylinder: £27,600
- 1902 Rochet 4½hp Type D vis-à-vis: £54,850
- 1900 De Dion Bouton 4½/6hp vis-à-vis: £60,900
- 1903 Oldsmobile Model R 'Curved Dash': £42,200
- 1904 Stanley Model CX 8hp: £43,850

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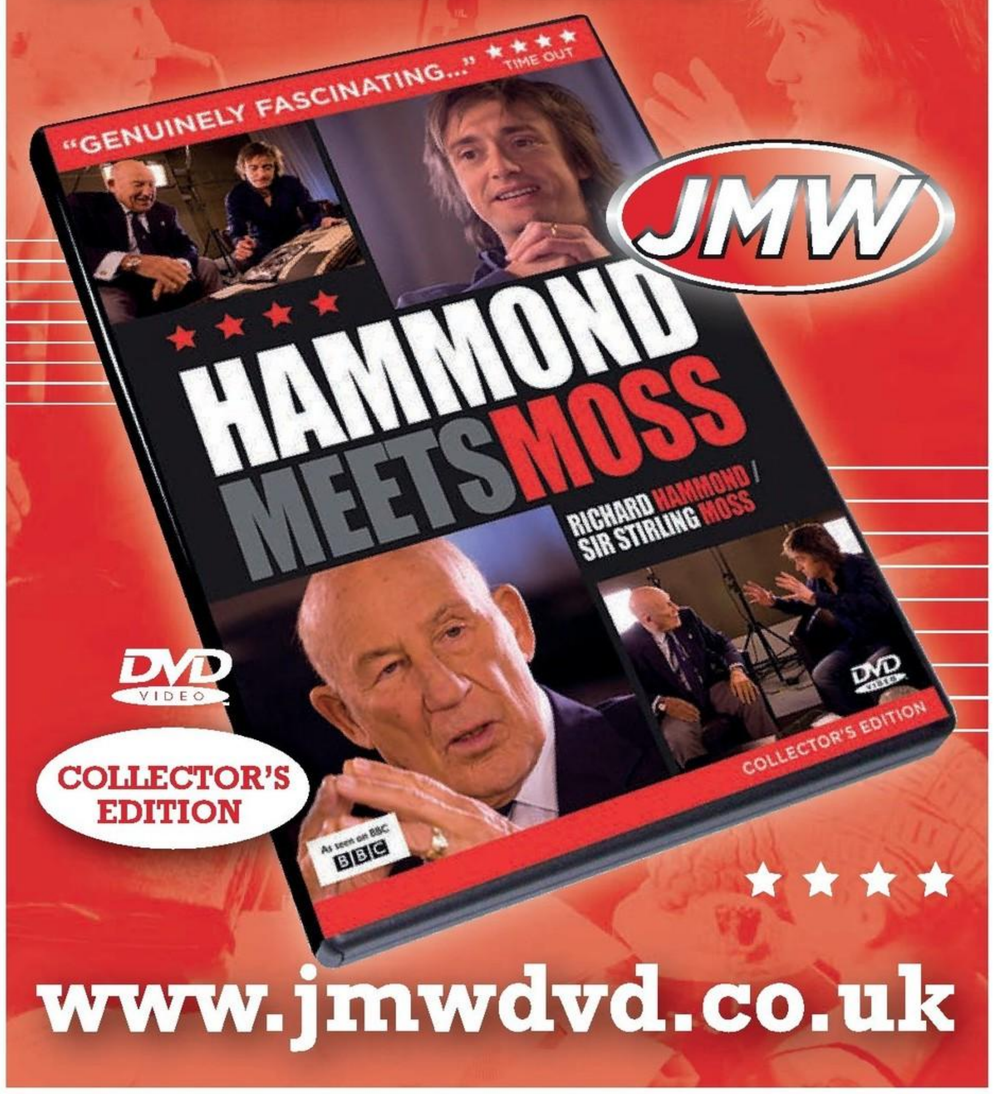
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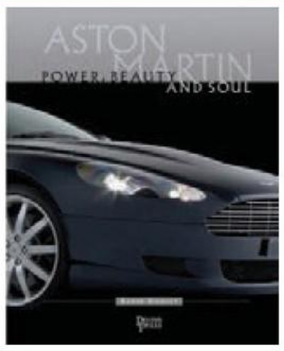
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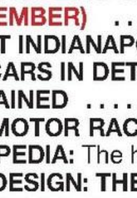
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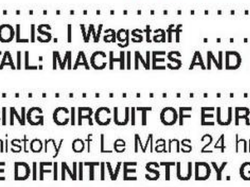
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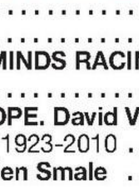
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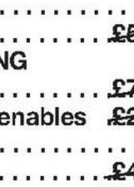
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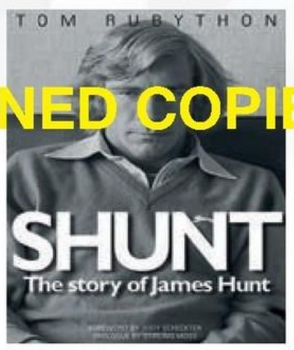
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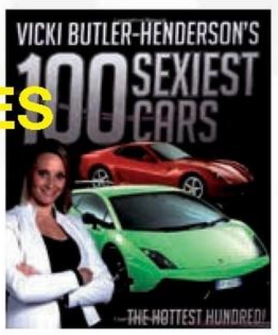
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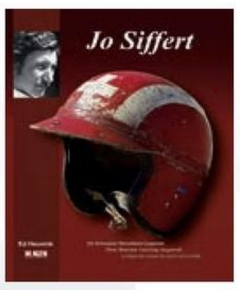
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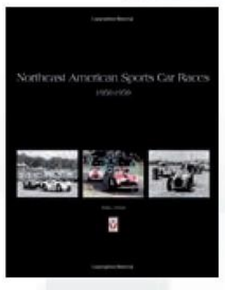
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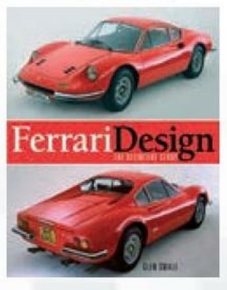


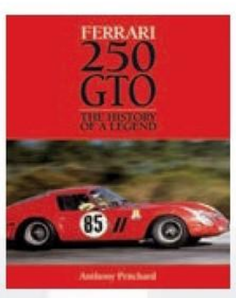


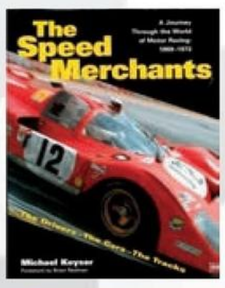
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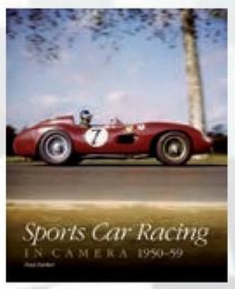


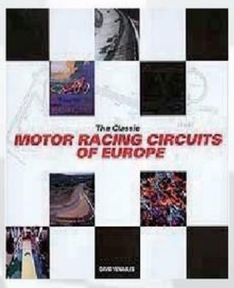




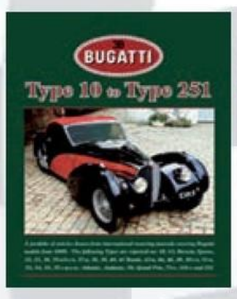




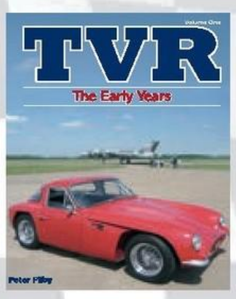


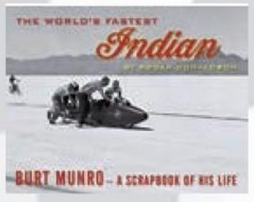


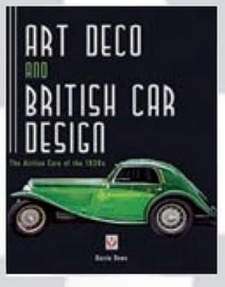










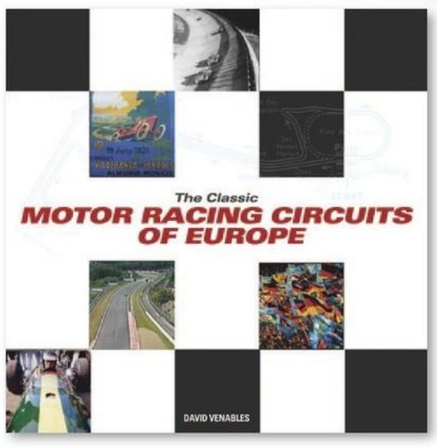


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Reviews





THE CLASSIC MOTOR RACING CIRCUITS OF EUROPE

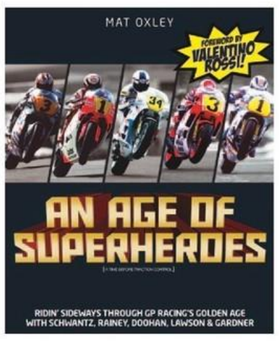
by David Venables

How fitting that a sport as prone to self-mythologising as motor racing should have found its nascent expression on the European continent. Its landscapes and cultures have enriched us with Norse sagas, chivalric romances, Greek gods, the Niebelungen and Parsifal, but they have also given us the legends of Fangio in the shadows of Schloss Nürburg, Moss on the northern Italian mountain passes, and Clark in the Belgian Ardennes forest.

David Venables' briskly and clearly written text is divided into chapters devoted to one circuit apiece. Although only a few pages in length each is rich in fascinating photographs, illuminating circuit diagrams, potted driver biographies and, especially, apposite facts. For instance, I was unaware that Otto Merz, winner of the first German Grand Prix on the Nürburgring, was chauffeur to Archduke Franz Ferdinand on that fateful June day in Sarajevo in 1914. This read is as educational as it is entertaining.

As the lights are switched off in Abu Dhabi, Venables' well-produced volume serves as a timely and salient reminder that racing's origins are to be found in the heart of Europe. It will also make an ideal Christmas present for the historian in one's life… or the mythologist. **IM**

Published by Ian Allen, ISBN 978 0 7110 3481 5, £24.99



AN AGE OF SUPERHEROES

A TIME BEFORE TRACTION CONTROL

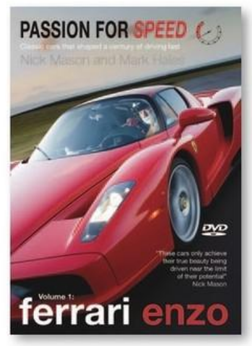
by Mat Oxley

After an impressive debut season, this factory Yamaha rider won the title the following year when the defending champion was sidelined through injury.

No, not Jorge Lorenzo. Four-time 500cc champion Eddie Lawson won his first title in 1984, and is one of Mat Oxley's five 'Superheroes' – alongside Kevin Schwantz, Wayne Rainey, Mick Doohan and Wayne Gardner.

Few can argue with the description of a supercharged 'golden era' in this photographic tribute. The imagery is striking and reminiscences of each champion offer great insight into the 'superheroes'. Each season has a dedicated chapter, including full statistics. The concluding chapter is especially poignant, and the message that today's MotoGP is a giant leap on from yesteryear is aptly delivered. **JG**

Published by Haynes, ISBN 978 1 84425 583 2, £30



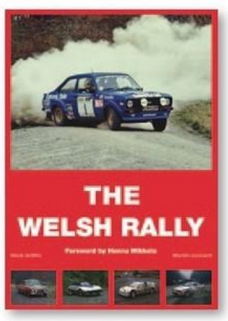
PASSION FOR SPEED, VOL 1 – FERRARI ENZO

First of a series to augment the Nick Mason/Mark Hales book *Passion for Speed*, this DVD explores in detail the musician's Ferrari Enzo, in the workshop, on track and on the road.

If you've ever watched a television road test and found yourself saying 'show us more of the cockpit!' then you'll love this. It's a full hour of probing, driving and discussing the Maranello road-rocket, with racer and journalist Hales analysing it on track, Nick and Mark discussing the car in the workshop, and a rainy drive through Gloucestershire lanes where Mason struggles with the view, reverse gear and too many knobs – "that's why you're here, Mark – as riding mechanic".

An uncut interview and extra in-car laps are included in the bonus features. If your fantasy is a day with an Enzo, this will fuel your dream. **GC**

Produced by Into the Red Films, £14.99



THE WELSH RALLY

by Mark Griffin and Martin Leonard

Turns out you can be a Fast Finn and conquer Wales… Former World Rally Champion Hannu Mikkola writes the foreword to this photographic and highly detailed history of the Welsh International Rally in its heyday, explaining that each nation's road conditions taught drivers 'the right formula for success'.

Beautifully constructed with handsome imagery aplenty, the book chronicles not only the events of each rally from 1964-91 – plus full standings – but also its inception and activities behind the scenes, with enjoyable anecdotes throughout from competitors and organisers alike. But commentary from a wide variety of contributors can become repetitive, while the book skips over the origins of the event which stretch back to 1935. Still, owning one of only 1500 copies published is an incentive in itself. For rally fans, it'll be a collectors' item. **JG**

www.griffinrally.com, £35



ENDURANCE RACING AT SILVERSTONE IN THE 1970s AND 1980s Chas Parker Another great little book in the 'Those were the days…' series. There's everything from Jägermeister 956s to MGB GT V8s covered in these two decades.

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THE SPEED MERCHANTS Michael Keyser, Bill Oursler, Balfour Walker Photo record of '70s and '80s racing marques from GT to F1 containing over 1000 images – but at three to a page they're pretty small. You'll have to be a diehard fan to justify the price.

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YOU WERE THERE

From F1 action on the streets of Long Beach we travel to Italian highways this month, where all sorts of royalty gathered for the Mille Miglia retro



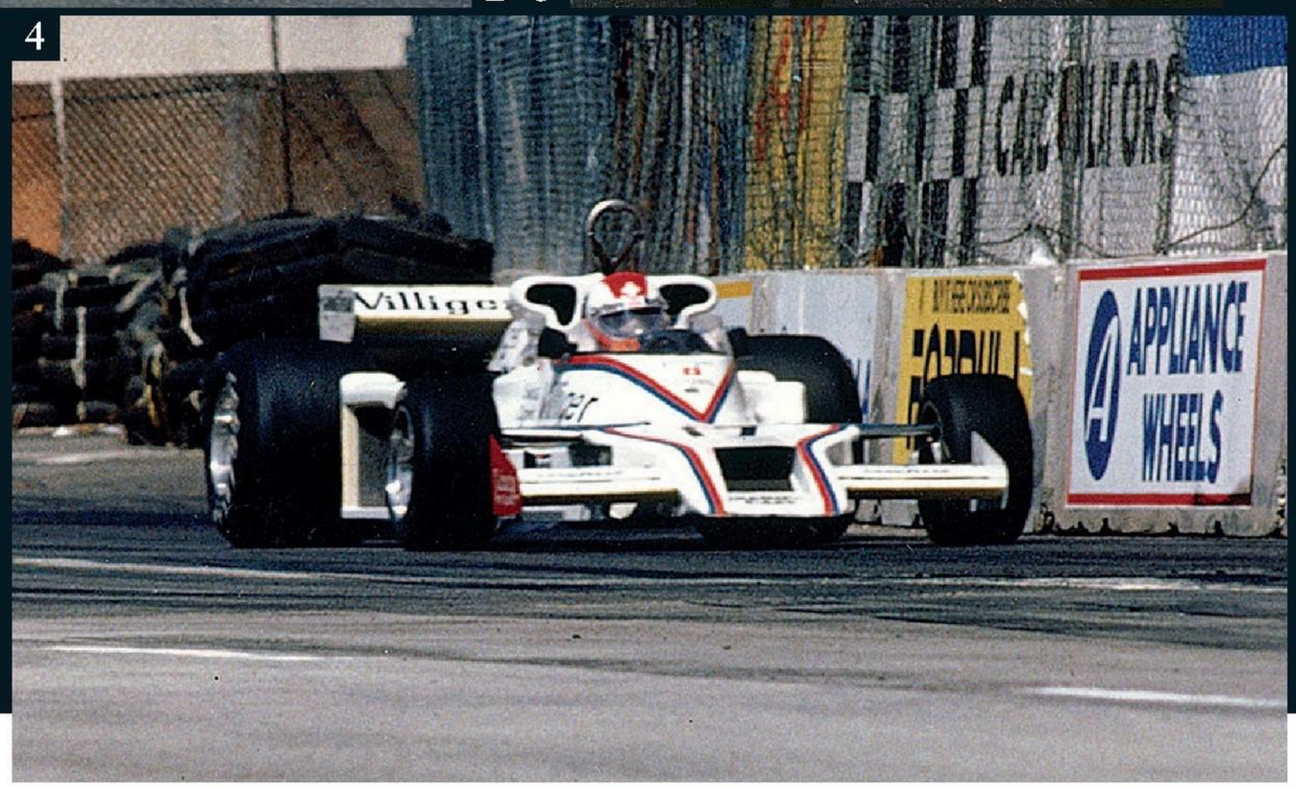
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TOM LEUTZINGER

Ex-Formula Ford racer Mr Leutzinger's photos are from the 1978 US Grand Prix West, where he was keen to see his hero James Hunt in action. "I remember him always trying so hard," says the Californian, "and I was delighted to see him win the championship." {1} The dash at the start, as seen from the pits – No17 is Clay Regazzoni's Shadow DN8. {2} Sadly for Tom, Hunt's race didn't last long – after qualifying the McLaren M26 seventh he crashed out from eighth on lap six. {3} It wasn't the best race for McLaren – Hunt's team-mate Patrick Tambay was fifth when he was taken out by Jacques Laffite (Ligier). {4} Regazzoni survived a mid-race clash with early leader Gilles Villeneuve (Ferrari) to finish a lowly 10th.



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DON COLES

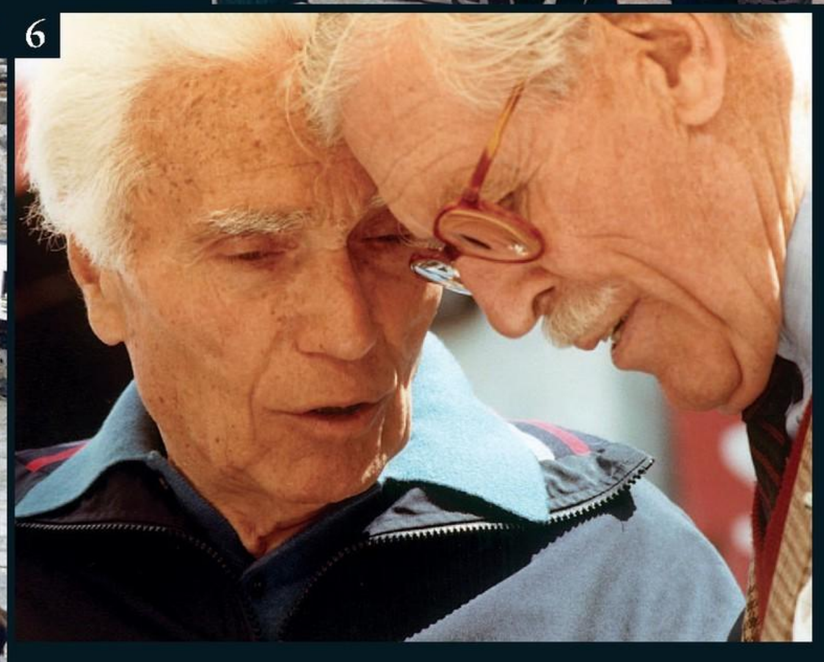
Lucky Mr Coles was invited by John Ward to co-drive his 1934 Talbot 105 Brooklands in the 1984 Mille Miglia retro, following the original Brescia-Rome-Brescia route. "At Modena, we each got a token key ring from Enzo Ferrari," he recalls. {1} Gino Valenzano starred in post-war MM races. {2} 1929 Alfa Romeo 1750. {3} Contessa Camilla Maggi Martinoni, wife of MM founder Conte Aymo Maggi, with Olivier Gendebien. {4} Stirling Moss drove Maserati 250S. {5} 1931 Alfa Romeo 1970 at Brescia. {6} Piero Taruffi and Huschke von Hanstein, winners of 1957 and 1940 MMs. {7} Ardesi/Franchina 1948 Cisitalia 202C at Radicofani. {8} Prince Michael of Kent and the Hon Gerald Lascelles (centre) were in DB2. {9} Ward and Coles' Talbot in France.



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Walker/Whitehead C-type heads DB2 en route to historic 24 Hours win and, below right, "dingy" Le Mans garage. Bottom right: Berry in D-type at '56 Silverstone International Trophy

PR EXERCISES AT JAGUAR

From acting as a translator to following Moss on the Mille Miglia, Jaguar's veteran PR man Bob Berry was never short of a job or two...

For some 30 years through the Jaguar car company's heyday, Robert Emanuel 'Bob' Berry was the engaging head of the company's publicity and promotions department. At weekends he also proved himself an extremely quick and capable racing driver – not least in Jack Broadhead's privately entered D-type, although his competition career was punctuated by some quite sizeable accidents.

Bob had joined Jaguar via a quite unusual route. His mother was the French headmistress of a school at Béthune, Northern France, and Bob studied modern languages at Cambridge where he was an avid reader of motoring magazines, and read of Jaguar entering cars at Le Mans, 1951. That same month he was going on a holiday course at Grenoble, and he just took a chance and wrote to 'Lofty' England, Jaguar's celebrated service and racing manager, and offered his services as an interpreter, fluent in French, happy to stop by at Le Mans en route to Grenoble.

Bob recalled: "To my astonishment Lofty replied, saying 'Yes – report to the Hotel de Paris, Le Mans, where we will be staying. I am sure we could use you.' So I reported there as potential go-for and from that instant forward doubt I saw a bed until the following Monday.

"I was sent to buy all the bits they had forgotten to take with them, and quickly realised that Jaguar were not just short-handed there, they were desperately short of help.

"They had three cars, one mechanic per car. I vividly remember Bill Heynes – the chief engineer – standing at a bench in a dingy Le Mans garage looking at a piece of aluminium sheet that he was about to form into a beautiful cowling for the back of a C-type headlamp. He later admitted he hadn't touched a panel basher's hammer since his apprenticeship at Humber, but to see the director of engineering tapping out a headlamp nacelle, while a new boy [me] was being sent around to buy the bits, it really shows how sparse the Jaguar presence at Le Mans was."

Of course the two Peters, Whitehead and Walker, brought their C-type home to score Jaguar's first Le Mans 24 Hours race win. That success highlighted the British industry's dismal record elsewhere on the international racing scene, in which although Cooper dominated 500cc Formula 3, and HWM was punching above its weight on a shoestring budget in Formula 2, BRM's V16s were an unraceworthy near-embarrassment in Formula 1.

So to be associated with such success as Jaguar's win at Le Mans left Berry more or less entranced. Having completed two years' national service he was also unimpressed by the notion of returning to university, and when Lofty England invited him to work at Jaguar for a couple of months, and then offered a full-time position, "I went to work with them as only the second management trainee they ever had... an experiment they never repeated. I worked in the sales department as translator of French documents, then gravitated to press and PR under Bill Rankin, and then took over PR while Bill did advertising.

"But everybody had two jobs – I did all the timekeeping at the races." In fact Jaguar's way of going racing was always peerlessly cost-conscious, and Le Mans could be really challenging in more ways than one: "Before the start each of us would be handed a white cardboard box containing something like an apple, an orange, three sandwiches, a piece of cake and a bottle of Fanta or Vichy water. And that was it for 24 hours!"

Another Bob Berry reminiscence throws more light upon the way Jaguar went racing, and upon Sir William Lyons' management style. When contemporary works team leader Stirling Moss pressed for an entry in the 1952 Mille Miglia, Bob recalled: "He was very

anxious to do it as a run-up to Le Mans and to measure our performance against the new Mercedes-Benz 300SLs." So Jaguar was rather railroaded to enter a car in the Mille Miglia – and it was done in typical Jaguar style. The lone works C-type was driven out to Brescia by Norman Dewis, accompanied by a Mark VII saloon with Bob, mechanic Frank Rainbow and Harold Hodkinson of Dunlop – in charge of the C-type's highly experimental disc brakes: "Moss flew out to Milan, and we all stayed at Count Maggi's place in Brescia. I was sent out in effect as a very junior team manager. We had no time nor budget to do a full reconnaissance but Moss and Dewis did the first 250 or 300 miles in the Mark VII. I decided we'd set ourselves up in Rome with all the parts, on the basis that if the car got that far we might be able to get it back to Brescia.

"So we drove overnight down to Rome and Moss duly appeared mid-race in a state of incoherent excitement, while Norman Dewis wandered around not feeling very well – he was being slowly poisoned with carbon monoxide because one of their several off-road excursions had split one of the flexible exhaust joints. The scene at the Rome control and service area was a bit like Christians being thrown to the lions. The whole square was surrounded by enormous stands packed with Italians who cheered the arrival of any Italian car fit to burst, while any British cars were greeted in virtual silence.

"We changed the C-type's wheels and jury-rigged its exhaust system and encouraged Moss to keep it going. I was in two minds about letting it go on. We could see its whole underside was fairly crinkled. We had a pass to follow the course while the race was on, so we piled into the Mark VII and asked at every checkpoint if they'd gone through. We got to within about a hundred miles of Brescia before we realised they hadn't appeared.

"We couldn't find them anywhere, so we finally returned to Brescia, at a loss. About four hours after we got back Moss and Dewis arrived in a taxi, for which – quite reasonably – they expected me to pay.

"Only then did we learn that they'd gone off the road again and broken the steering box away. But our car had been clearly slower than the Mercedes 300SLs on the fast bits down past Ancona, Ravenna and down to Pescara – and that discovery precipitated the aerodynamic redesign which triggered our Le Mans disaster a couple of months later. The irony is that if we'd used the 1951-shape cars with the '52 engine mods they would certainly have been fast enough to win again. That taught Jaguar the lesson that we applied ever after, which was that if it ain't broke, don't fix it."



"Everybody had two jobs – I did all the timekeeping"





All images LAT

Yet Berry recalled another legacy of that Mille Miglia race day in Rome: "We were about to pack up when Leslie Johnson – driving a Nash-Healey – arrived looking totally lost and forlorn. There was nobody there to help him. He was obviously at a complete loss, so I beckoned him in and we refuelled him. We had a couple of tyres the same size as his, which I gave him, and sent him back into the race. He made it to the finish.

"Then on the way home in the Mark VII we ran out of money. I had to sell four tyres to Peignaux, our distributor in Lyons, for cash so I could buy the fuel to get us home. When I got back I was in some trouble. I had to account for why we returned with four tyres fewer than we'd used, and I explained I'd had to sell them to buy fuel because otherwise we were left with no money and 500 miles still to drive in a Mark VII with an empty tank. Norman had filled it up with 40 gallons to get us all the way back to Coventry – and up to the north of Scotland if needs be – without appreciating we were strapped for cash, so we had a bit of an altercation and the only answer was for me to go to Peignaux.

"Back home I duly made my report, and about a fortnight later I was talking to Sir William about something else when he suddenly said, 'By the way, what's your explanation for this?' And he held up a letter headed 'Donald Healey Motor Company'. He looked at me with a dead straight face. He had blue eyes, and he looked straight through me. And you knew you were in trouble if he didn't blink. And he wasn't blinking…

"So I read the letter, and it was about the Mille Miglia, and I admitted I had given them a couple of tyres and the wheels as well, and I had also given them our surplus fuel.

"He said 'Wasn't that a competing car?' I said, 'Well, yes, I suppose you could say that, but it wasn't in the same league as the Moss/Dewis car.' He said, 'Hmm – well, he made it back didn't he?'

"'Er, yes Sir William.'

"'And on our tyres too?'

"'Well… Yes, Sir William.'

"'And using some of our fuel?'

"'Oh – aah – yes, Sir William.'"

And then the blue-eyed Jaguar chief said: "Hmm – I thought that was extremely generous of you Berry, but I'm not sure I'd like to see you do it again…"

Signs of Ferrari promise that the frustrated Amon missed

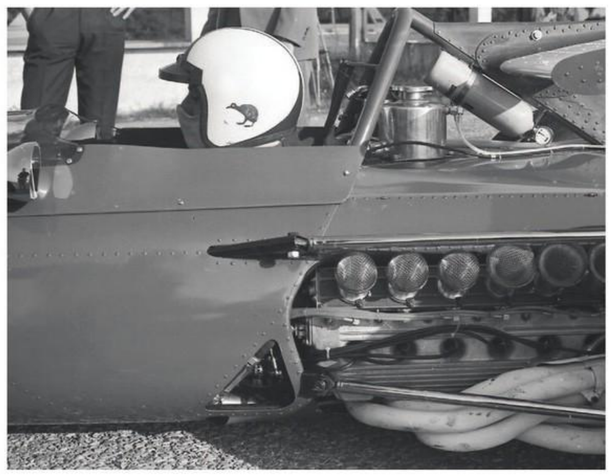
Chris Amon must hate being described as one of the most unlucky Formula 1 drivers of all time – particularly since he has survived to tell his tale, and so many of his contemporaries did not. But it's a fact. Luck did not smile upon him very often, though he still shared Ford's first Le Mans win, in 1966, and the Daytona 24 Hours and Monza 1000Kms for Ferrari in '67, followed by the BRDC International Trophy and non-championship Argentine Grand Prix in March 701 and Matra respectively.

This record certainly does not reflect the stature he achieved in period, nor the numerous races which he led, and indeed sometimes utterly dominated, only for something to spoil his day. He once told me how when his Matra MS120D began to swerve and wobble around on a deflating tyre when dominating the 1972 French Grand Prix at Clermont-Ferrand he finally concluded, "That's it – I'm never going to be allowed to win one…"

He evidently came to much the same conclusion at the end of his typically luckless period as Ferrari's team leader in 1968-69. The team's ageing 3-litre V12-engined cars simply fell off the tightrope. Engine failures in South Africa, Spain and France, transmission in Monaco and at Silverstone, and entry withdrawn pre-race in Germany added no gloss to his only Grand Prix finish that year – third place in Holland.

And then late that year he began testing a replacement flat-12-engined car – that became the superb Ferrari 312B. Looking back today, Chris recalls: "During the 1968 season we had been pretty competitive as a team and individually. In fact with a little luck we could have been competing for the championship. The car was very good even without the benefit of the big suspension-mounted wings that Lotus produced and which Ferrari himself wouldn't countenance on safety grounds. On the other hand the engine was very average compared to the DFV and comparatively thirsty.

"One of the real strengths of the team was Mauro Forghieri, a great engineer, very experienced and a realist, which wasn't always the case there. At the end of the '68 season he was appointed head of a new design group to come up with a completely new chassis and engine. They worked in an office in Modena and so were completely divorced from the '69 F1 team. Mauro's absence was one of the reasons the season became such a disaster. The car became increasingly uncompetitive and unreliable to the point that after Silverstone I suggested we miss the next races and wait for the new car, which would hopefully be ready for Monza.



New Ferrari flat-12 which Amon tested at Modena in mid-69 was at first prone to crankshaft failure

"The new 312B did, from memory, share a few components with the V12 – I believe the cylinder head and valve design was the same and maybe the piston and rod as well. However, Forghieri and some others there had by then realised that the DFV engine's success was partly due to its lower power losses from internal crankcase pressures and oil scavenging which were less than the V12's. They put great emphasis on reducing those losses, so the new flat-12 had things like four-main needle-roller bearing crankshaft and an oil/air separator pump…

"I first drove it at Modena in early August, I think, but couldn't form much of an opinion because it broke its crankshaft on the second or third lap. I think I then drove it again at Modena later in August with a similar result, and then in a critical test to decide if it would go to Monza for the Italian GP. I seem to recall completing a few more laps than before, but it still all ended in another broken crankshaft.

"That day probably was – to a degree – the final straw. Not too long after, I chose to join March, a decision I soon came to regret. Looking back, I have often thought, why did I not have more faith in Forghieri's ability to turn things around? Probably I did, but maybe I doubted he would be able to overcome Ferrari's contemporary system. I was also extremely frustrated with the lack of results and thought I couldn't stand another season like the last.

"Technically, two things I remember well which should have influenced my thinking at the time: one was that the oil temperature ran around 85deg C against the old V12 which within two laps at Modena was normally close to 110deg C, meaning the new engine really was scavenging properly; and secondly the flat-12 was something like 15km/h quicker on the straight than the V12, probably for the same reason."

Within a year of Chris's decision to join March, Jacky Ickx and Clay Regazzoni in Ferrari 312Bs won four of the last five GPs of 1970, with three 1-2 finishes. Philosophically, the great Kiwi recalls: "I guess it will always be very much a case of what might have been, but looking on the positive side if I had made a different decision I would have missed all those wonderful conversations I had with Max the following year…"

Always look on the bright side…



Amon joined March and thereby lost the chance to race 312B – which went on to dominate GP racing

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Nigel Roebuck, editor-in-chief

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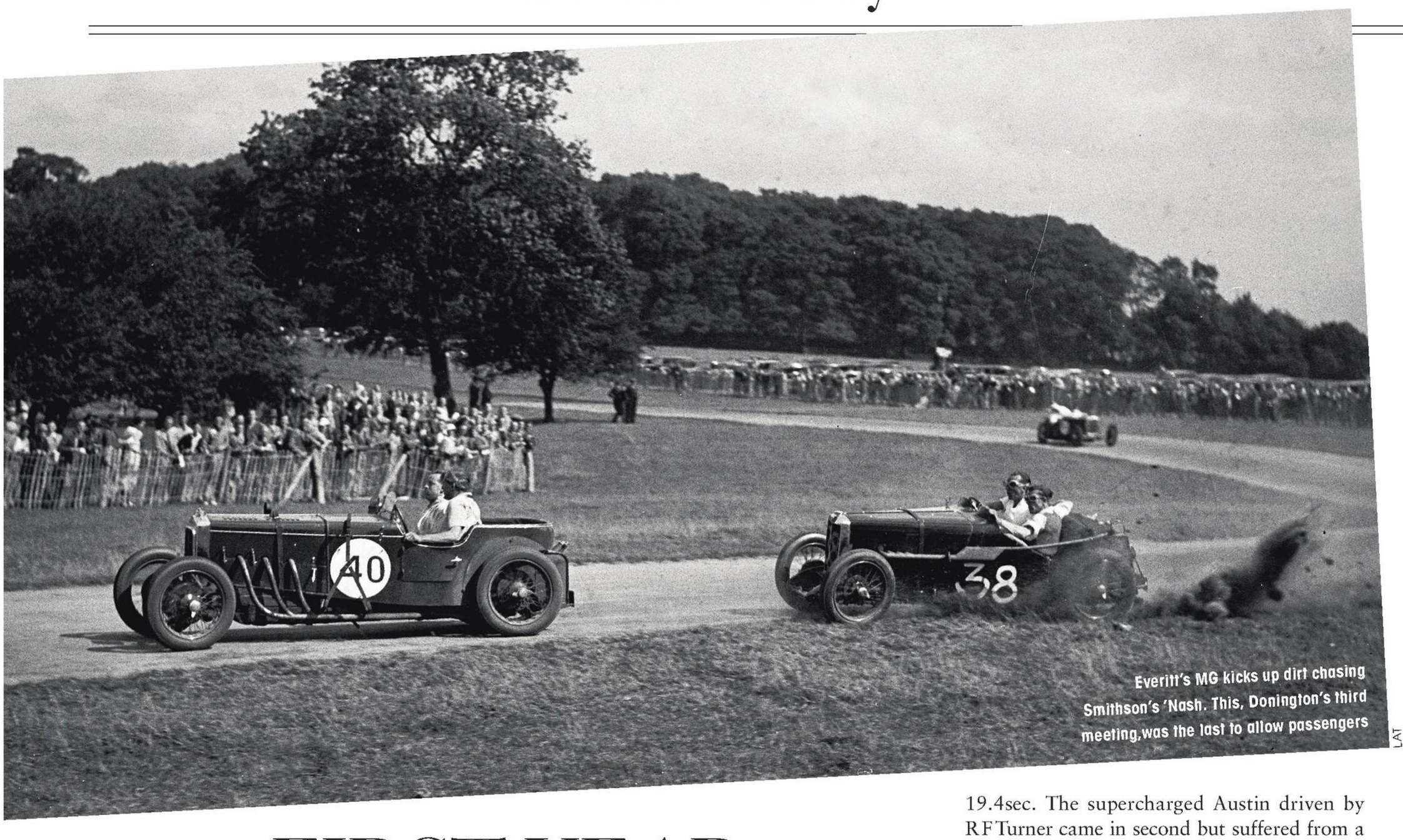
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Everitt's MG kicks up dirt chasing Smithson's 'Nash. This, Donington's third meeting, was the last to allow passengers

LAT

FIRST YEAR AT DONINGTON

If your eighteenth-century deer park is proving hard to maintain, there's only one thing to do with it...

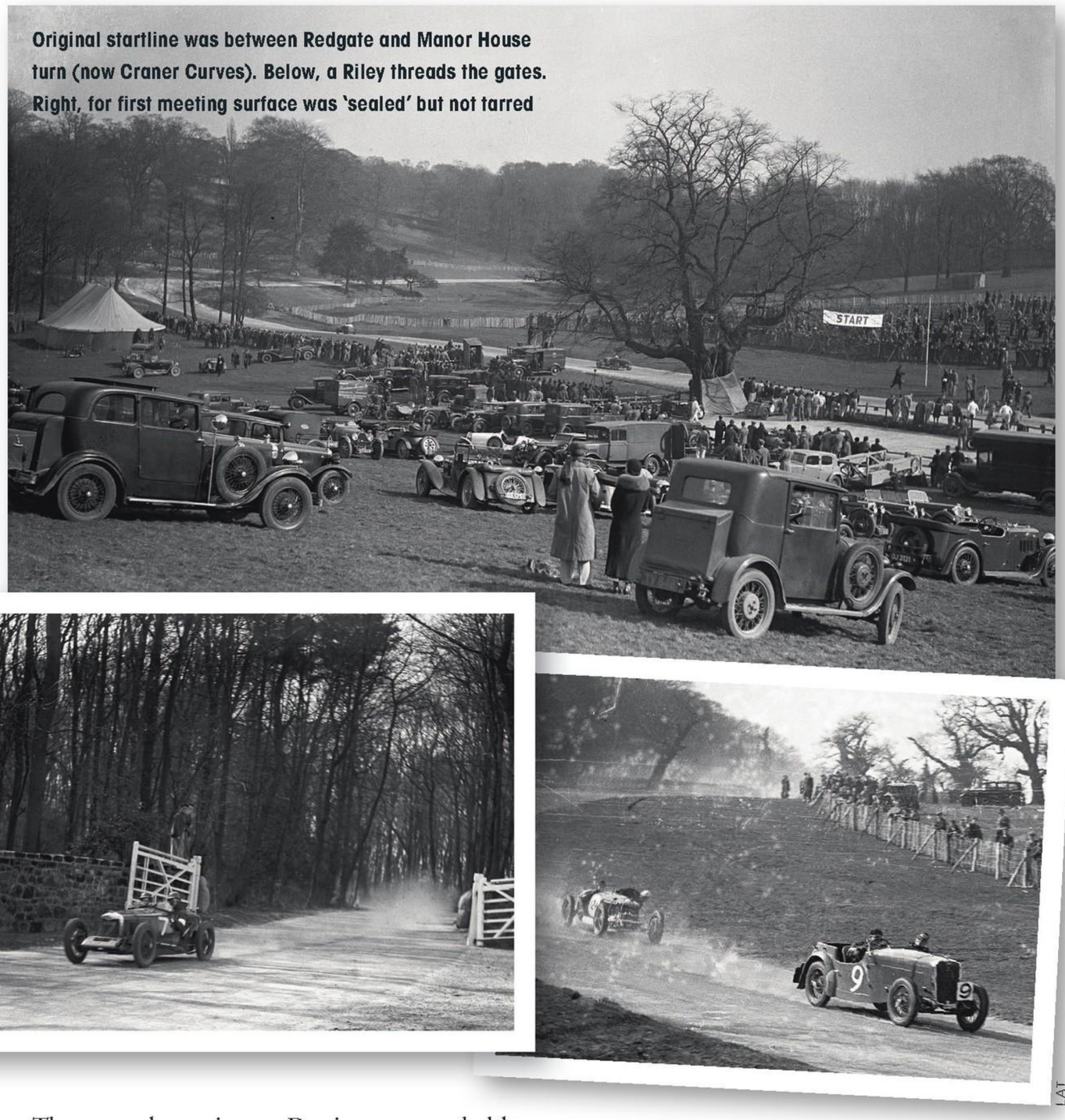
Brooklands was well established after its opening in 1907, but between the wars there arose the feeling among motor racing enthusiasts in Britain that we should follow Continental countries and have a road circuit. Some attempt was made to this end with the Campbell Circuit, built on part of Brooklands.

In 1931 the Derby and District Motor Club suggested to Mr J G Shield, the owner of a Gothic mansion called Donington Hall, that a road-racing course could be laid out on the park's existing drives and farm roads. Shield agreed and the plan went ahead. The circuit, which measured two and a quarter miles and cost £12,000, included four exciting corners which all had good spectator viewing points, except where it passed through the woods. In two places, where it ran between some farm buildings and where it squeezed through one arch of a stone bridge leading to the house, there was no passing allowed.

The circuit was opened on March 25, 1933 with short speeches by Sir G Beaumont and Col Lindsay-Lloyd of the RAC. The first race was for 850cc supercharged and un-blown cars but had only four entrants – one Austin and three MGs – with the winner being E R Hall in a supercharged MG Midget with a winning speed of 56mph; he completed the race in 23min 19.4sec. The supercharged Austin driven by R F Turner came in second but suffered from a seized blower and coasted in with a time of 23min 40.4sec. Third place was taken by J D Barnes in an unsupercharged MG Midget with a time of 27min 7.6sec.

There were six other races; the second race was run in two heats for 850cc supercharged and 1000cc unsupercharged cars. The first heat was won by E N Ward in a Riley with a time of 25min 4.4sec and the second by E R Hall's supercharged MG Midget. But unfortunately shortage of time did not allow for a final run, so the winner was decided on their times.

The third event only had two entrants, A H Langley driving a Montlhéry MG and Judson in an MG J2, who had to coast in, giving Langley a rather empty win in 23min 7.2sec. The next race was run in two heats but the winner was also decided on time, this going to G Casswell (Frazer Nash) in 24min 11.6sec for the first heat, with Freddy Dixon (Riley) in 23min 10.6sec coming second. The fifth race again only had two entries – Horton who won in a supercharged MG Magnette in 22min 5.8sec, and E R Hall in a 746cc MG supercharged Midget with 23min 5.8sec. The last race for all comers was won by Freddy Dixon in a Riley in 23min 51.2sec.



Original startline was between Redgate and Manor House turn (now Craner Curves). Below, a Riley threads the gates. Right, for first meeting surface was 'sealed' but not tarred

LAT

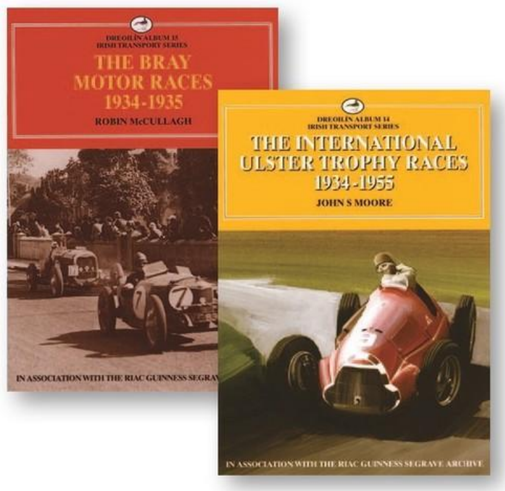
The second meeting at Donington was held on May 13 with 51 cars entered, but 13 failed to start at all and 18 more retired or were non-starters, and in three of the 10 races only two cars finished. The 9-10,000 spectators had good weather and there was some very good driving to be seen, notably by E R Hall (MG Midget), K Hutchinson (Bugatti), R F Turner (Austin), J E Gibson (Riley), E K Rayson (Riley) and H J Aldington (Frazer Nash).

The starting system had been improved so that cars were now drawn up in rows of three or four and sent away 'en masse'. In the first race there was an accident in which Sparrow overturned his Austin; he only suffered a nasty cut on the head but his passenger sustained a broken thigh. This crash bought to light the lack of drilling by the ambulance men, who tried to bring their vehicle over soft ground at the side of the track and became bogged down, so that the injured man ended up being taken away on a lorry.

The third meeting, held on August 19, was a most successful affair, having ironed out the previous problems of car capacity being limited to 1500cc, the dusty track surface and delays in the programme. The only thing that marred the event were two accidents, one fatal where J Gordon, a passenger to P J Warren in a 1½-litre Bugatti, was killed during practice.

The last meeting of the season was held in showery weather on October 7 and following the accidents at the previous meeting, when both victims were passengers while both drivers escaped, for the first time passengers were not allowed to travel in the competing cars. The last race of the season was won by E R Hall driving a 1496cc MG Magnette S, winning in 11min 44sec with an average speed of 55.88mph.

In its second season the track was extended to two miles 971 yards, and again in 1937 to three miles 220 yards for the TT and the two last Donington Grands Prix.



Twin histories of Irish road racing

Two interesting books have been published by Dreoilin Publications in the Irish Transport series in association with the RIAC Guinness Segrave Archive. No15 covers *The Bray Motor Races 1934-1935*, described by Robin McCullagh, and is a well-illustrated book of 32 pages with historic pictures of these events and the conditions under which these exciting races were run. The text covers forgotten aspects of these first road races run in Southern Ireland. Price £6, ISBN 978-1-902773-20-9

No14, by John S Moore, covers the *International Ulster Trophy Races 1934-1935* including the County Down Trophy and the Champion Handicap events which were held on four different road circuits such as Dundrod and Ballyclare circuits, with illustrated maps and race results. Price £6, ISBN 978-1-902773-18-6

Explorations in Motoring History, edited by Bryan J H Brown, is published by Oxbow Books, Oxford for Bournemouth University which in 1996 held a History of Motoring Conference, organised by The School of Conservation Sciences. This is a rather unusual book containing nine papers covering the broad spectrum of current research, and serves as an illustration of the variety of work presently in progress. These papers are the opening debate rather than seminal conclusions, with headings such as 'Imaging of motoring' by David Jeremiah, 'The history of oil and Duckhams' by Pat Lelliott, 'Reaction to the motor car: rural community response in the 1920s' by Bryan Brown and concluding with 'The development of the high-performance engine: a revisionist history' by David Hebb. Price £4.95, ISBN 190-0188-48-1

Bill Boddy



WB poses proudly with the ABC before its untimely end

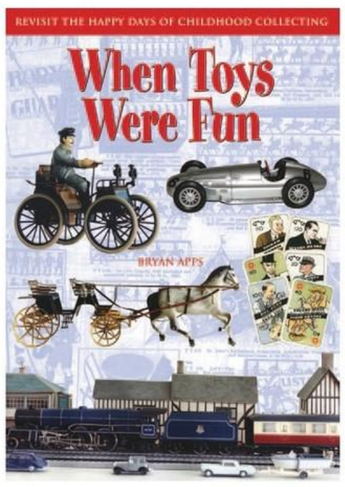
It could have been as easy as ABC...

Before owning my Austin 7 I had seen in a breaker's yard an ABC which had no tyres, but the breaker said he would put tyres on if I bought it, to which I agreed. Before I collected the car I told my close friend Tom Lush what I was buying and he said he would get away from work early and meet me at the end of the Kingston bypass. The car started alright but only got to the start of the bypass when it stopped. Unable to restart it, I flagged down a passing car which happened to be driven by a girl, and amazingly she stopped. I asked if she would mind telling my friend who would be waiting for me at the other end of the bypass. She said how would I know him and I told her that he would be dressed like me in a leather coat. She agreed to this and in due course Tom arrived and got me started and we set off back to London.

Early next morning we went to the garage where I had left the ABC that night, as Tom and I intended to drive it to a race in the Midlands. When we push-started the car it caught fire near to the petrol pumps and the garage staff quickly moved it away. Having sorted out the problems we set off and all went well until a modern car overtook us and a child poked his tongue out. This annoyed me so I opened out to re-pass them. Tom tried to stop me, but the inevitable happened; the engine blew up at the top of the hill so we coasted down to a garage at the bottom. It was still early morning so while we waited for the garage to open Tom removed the flat-twin engine, put it on the back seat and covered it with a cloth.

When a mechanic arrived we told him the engine had fallen out. He looked up the road to see if it was there, but when he discovered it was on the back seat the joke backfired as he would not then let us leave the car at the garage. So we pushed it to another garage where we left it and returned home on public transport. When we went to retrieve it the next day with a tow car we started to cross the main road, inadvertently impeding a large vehicle that was climbing the hill and whose driver shouted at us in anger, as we had caused him to stop. Eventually Tom put the car back into running order and shortly after that I sold it for a fiver, which is what I had paid for it.

Small-scale pleasures



As a change from books about full-size cars it was refreshing to receive a book by Bryan Apps entitled *When Toys Were Fun*. This medium-size book is about the author's wartime childhood playthings and his subsequent experiences with toys of all kinds, in which he describes the work of such toymakers as the Bing Brothers, Georges Carette, the Marklin Brothers and some less-remembered makers, memories of well-established stores such as Harrods, Hamleys and Gamages, with chapters entitled Hornby Trains, Dinky and Corgi Toys, and coming up to date with television-related toys.

This 144-page book, which includes many fine illustrations and catalogues of yesteryear, is an excellent recall of when toys were fun, as was the author's previous book about *When Cars Were Fun*.

Published by Halsgrove of Somerset, price £19.19, IBSN 978 0 85704 040 4. E-mail: sales@halsgrove.com

Full speed astern, and an early encounter with pond rage

As a boy I had a number of toy boats and would go with my mother to sail them on the pond at Clapham Common. One we bought from a shop in Balham, after which I went by tram to the pond. After getting it started up I placed it in the water, whereupon it went backwards. My mother had to cope with a furious boy as we took it back to the shop. The shop assistant turned the propeller the other way round, and when we returned to the pond the boat proceeded in the correct way.


The Francis Frith Collection

I also used to go to Brockwell Park to watch the miniature power boats that were kept in the club house. The boats went round and round the pole to which they were tied. On one occasion when fast laps were being made a man put a sailing model in to the pond at the same time. It was hit by a power boat which caused a lot of damage. The owner was furious and fetched a policeman but was told that those who were using the pond had permission, which the owner of the sailing boat had not, so consequently there was no claim. Ⓜ

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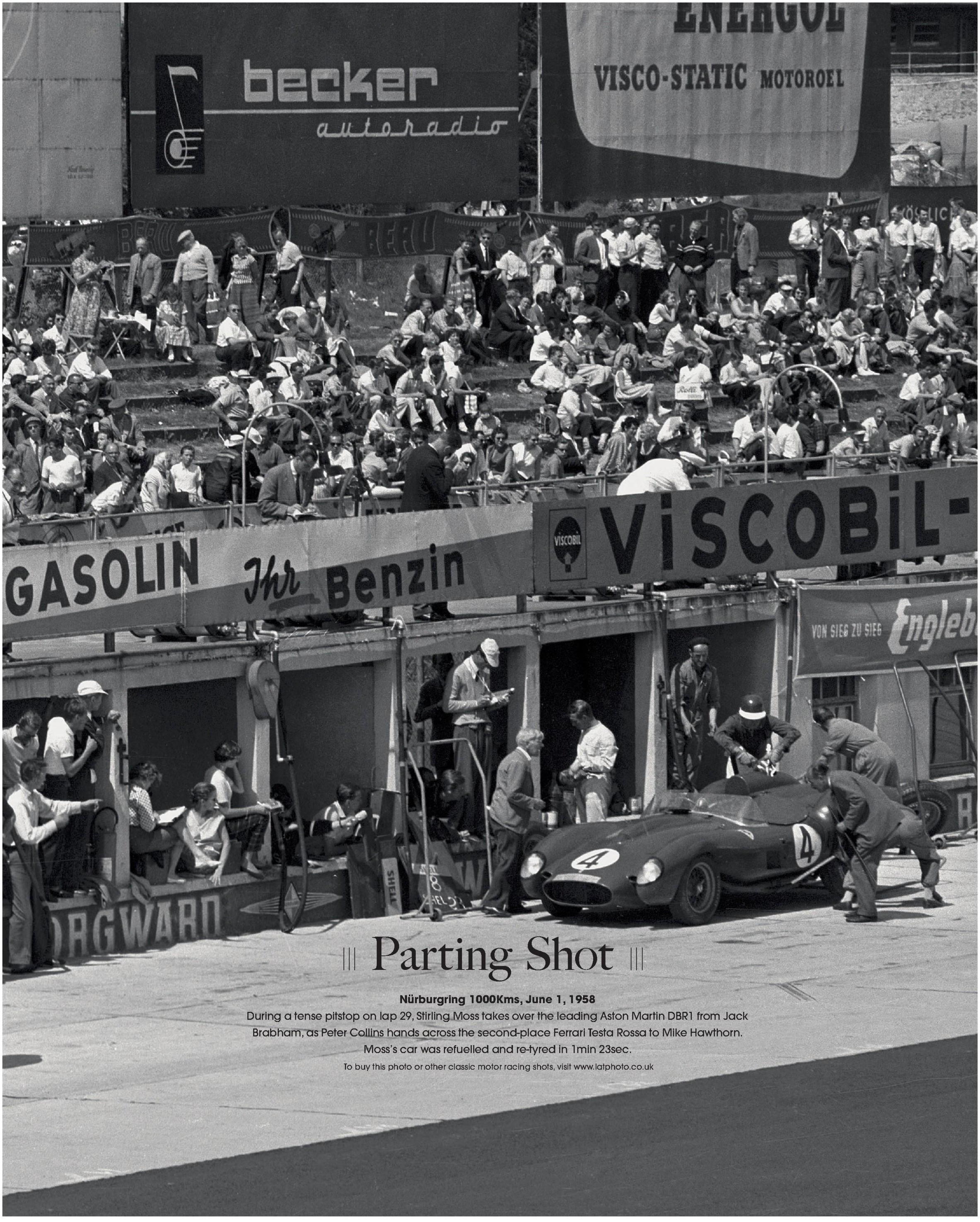
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Parting Shot

Nürburgring 1000Kms, June 1, 1958

During a tense pitstop on lap 29, Stirling Moss takes over the leading Aston Martin DBR1 from Jack Brabham, as Peter Collins hands across the second-place Ferrari Testa Rossa to Mike Hawthorn. Moss's car was refuelled and re-tyred in 1min 23sec.

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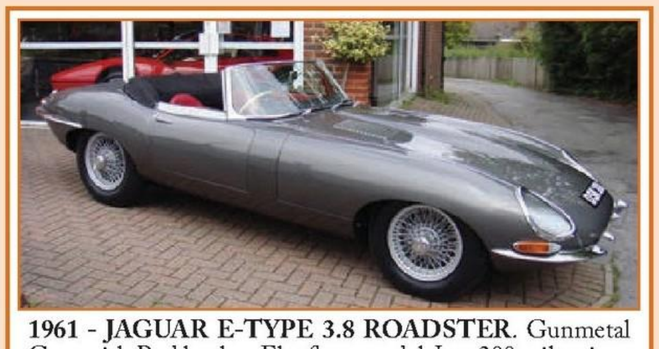
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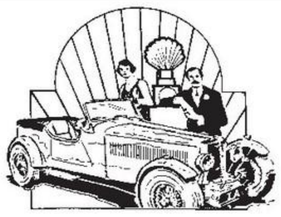


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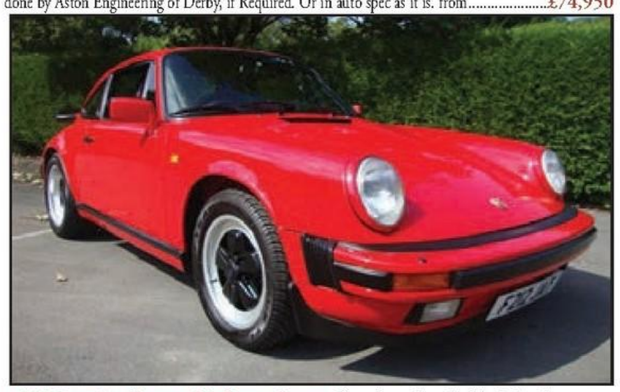
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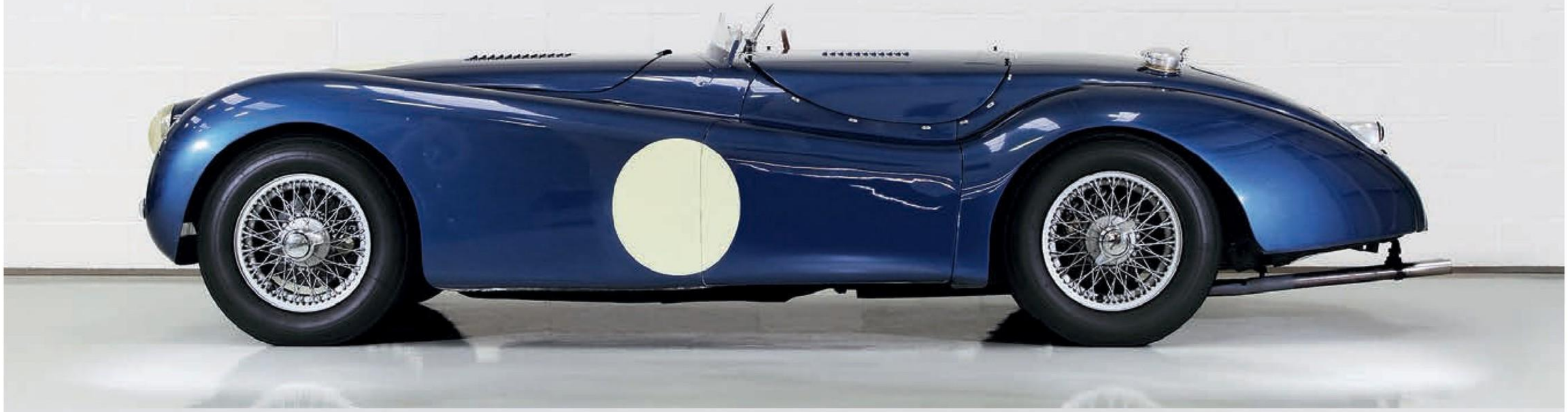
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1960 JAGUAR XK150 3.8 S ROADSTER

Carmen red with black interior and roof. First registered on the 10th May 1960, chassis number 820077 was supplied new by Barts of Birmingham to Mr J. E. Johnson of Moseley and has covered less than 40,000 miles since. Having never been restored and showing a most wonderful and mellow patina, this example of the rare and sought after 'S' model is an original right hand drive car with full matching numbers and is ready to be driven and enjoyed.



1960 JAGUAR XK150 3.8 S DHC

Dark blue with Saville grey interior and dark blue hood. This car has undergone a complete body-off restoration, refinished to an excellent standard and to its original specification. The restoration has included a full bare metal repaint and retrim, plus a full engine and gearbox rebuild. Chassis number 827507 is a UK right hand drive car with full matching numbers. A pleasure to drive with period character.



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The on site workshop facilities here at Hilton & Moss are fully equipped to cater for all your servicing requirements, from routine maintenance and MOTs through to a full restoration of concours standards. Our fully qualified and factory trained technicians are able to look after both classic and modern vehicles and are always on hand to discuss your individual requirements on a personal level to ensure that your highly prized possession gets the attention that it deserves.

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Cream, red trim. 15,117 miles from new. The feature car for Porter's 'Original XK'

JAGUAR XK 120 ROADSTER
May 1950. Black, biscuit trim. 4,000 hour total concours restoration to perfection

JAGUAR XK 140 M ROADSTER
British Racing Green, tan trim. C-Type head Last owner since 1965, recent restoration

JAGUAR XK 140 DROPHEAD
Dark blue with beige trim. Genuine UK rhd. Chassis up restoration - Truly breathtaking

JAGUAR XK 150 S 3.8 DROPHEAD
Correct, matching numbers and UK supplied One of just 69 built. The ultimate XK

JAGUAR SS 100 3.5 LITRE
Dark blue, red trim. One owner for 38 years, 3,800 miles since restoration

JAGUAR GROUP 44 XJR-5 LM - IMSA
The last car built and famously part of the Walter Hill collection many years. Awesome!

PORSCHE 962 C – JAGERMEISTER/ HYDRO *1989. Fantastic WSPC race history including 2nd in Mexico. Le Mans 1989 & 1990*

AC 428 FRUA CONVERTIBLE
One private owner from new. One of just 29 built in total. Factory restored. Stunning

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2002. Stunning example in black with a black leather interior. Incredible value

LOTUS ELAN S1 DROPHEAD
1964. White. Fabulous restored example of both the rarest and prettiest of this iconic car

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A unique and very special opportunity, with eligibility for International historic competition, for rather less than one of the 37 'originals'.



NEW MK II SHELBY DAYTONA COBRA COUPES

Glowing accolades from the Press and TV Media for the original 2004 Shelby Daytona Cobra Coupe were universal and wide-spread. Now, 5 years later, the first improved versions of these fabulous Pete Brock designed 200 + m.p.h. Supercars have just arrived in the UK. Subtle changes to both exterior and interior provide greater cabin space, head and leg-room and seat/steering adjustment, electric windows, new wheel design and much more. Mechanical improvements to suspension, drive-train and diff. and a greater range of power units (430 bhp to 600 + bhp!) all add up to a modern masterpiece of front-engined technology, eminently practical for long-distance motoring, or Track Days and Tours.
Prices start at £87,000 + VAT - fully finished, 'on the road' (UK Registered) with warranty.



AC COBRA 427 Mk III S/C 'CONTINUATION' - L.H.D.

Just 10 'Continuations' (AC Cars Ltd.'s own authentic and totally perfect reproductions of the definitive iconic 1965 '427 S/C' -accurate down to the very last detail) were fully completed by the Factory from 1990 to 2002; only 5 now remain in the UK. This is COB 5002, starring in 'Jeremy Clarkson's Motoring Years' (BBCTV), and also owned by Liam Howlett (The Prodigy). Dynoed c.500 bhp Mathwall 1965 side-oiler engine and top-loader 'Rug' gearbox. Fully trimmed with all weather equipment. Eligible for F.I.A. papers. 'Historic Vehicle' classification. M.O.T. 1,950 miles from new and 'Concours' condition to match.
Same investment potential as a 1965 'original' but around 1/3rd the price!



NEW GT40 MK I / MK II 'CONTINUATIONS'

From the highly respected South African manufacturer of the Shelby Daytona Cobra Coupe now come the definitive recreations of the legendary Le Mans winning GT 40s of 1966 to 1969. Such is their degree of precision and authenticity, that over 90% of all the component parts are interchangeable with the original 1960's cars', including the entire 'monocoque' pressed steel chassis and roof sections; in addition, chassis numbering continues from the original production run (GT40 P2000 Series), the cars are titled and badged as 'GT40's' and each is listed in the S.A.A.C. World Registry. A superb endorsement of the quality and accuracy of these 'Continuations' has been the delivery of a new red/gold Mk I to Alan Mann Racing, whose Team success in the 1960's is unrivalled. Engines are Roush/Ford V8's of 5.4 litres/430bhp, upto 7litres/550bhp. With effective air-conditioning as standard, these are among the most exciting and usable road/track supercars available today. Prices from £89,000 to £97,000 (+VAT) 'on the road', UK Registered and with full warranty.





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1966 JAGUAR E TYPE 4.2 ROADSTER

Opalescent Grey with dark blue leather interior and mohair hood. A beautifully re-engineered example with a specification including a 5 speed gearbox, adjustable front and rear suspension, alloy radiator, AP brakes, sports cooling fan, handmade stainless steel exhaust system, sports seats, sports alloy billet fluid reservoirs, Becker Mexico audio system and a strengthened bodyshell.



1964 JAGUAR E TYPE 4.2 ROADSTER

Opalescent Blue with dark blue leather interior and mohair hood. This is an original right hand drive UK supplied car with full matching numbers and comes complete with a comprehensive history file and Heritage Certificate. Fitted with many sports upgrades, including 5 speed gearbox, AP brakes, adjustable front and rear suspension, sports seats and a handmade stainless steel exhaust system.



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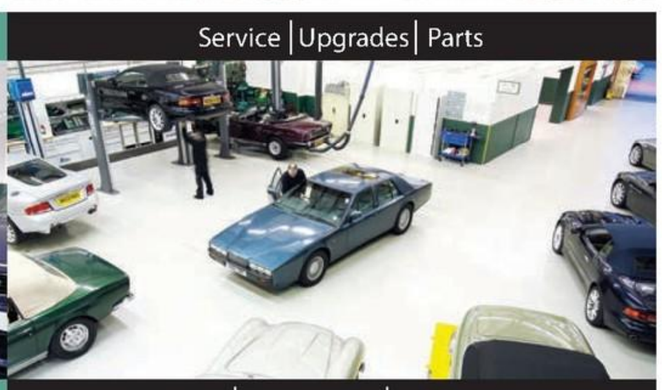
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Bentley Turbo R Left Hand Drive first registered in 1992

Finished in gleaming unmarked ebony black with black hide interior, piped in St James red, lambs wool overugs, picnic tables, cocktail cabinets, footrests, alloys, rear quarter badges, expensive in car stereo equipment, 35,000 miles, garaged from new, totally stunning **£19,750**



Aston Martin DB7 Volante Vantage 2001

Finished in Antrim Blue with matching hide interior in magnolia and blue, with matching blue power convertible top, auto power, tip-tronic steering controls, overugs, alcantara headlining, heated screen, premium stereo system, CD. Sat Nav, walnut veneer throughout, heated seats, power windows, usual Aston extras, non smokers car, only 14,000 miles from new, full Aston Martin history, garaged, mint condition **£48,750**



Jaguar SS 100 1936 Replica

Finished in Squadron Blue with Beige hide interior, headrests, radio and stereo, CD player, stainless boot rack, sparkling chrome wire wheels, auto, power steering, powered by a 4.2 Jaguar engine, fantastic to drive, all weather equipment, very rare, only a few coach built in aluminium, built by the famous Birchfield coach builders. This car is absolutely stunning. Becoming a very rare car and will enhance any collection, whilst still being a pleasure to drive. A fantastic investment **£59,750**



Jaguar E Type 1969 Roadster series 11 4.2

Finished in Gleaming Midnight Blue with Black Hide interior, headrests, C/D stereo system, manual transmission, sparkling chrome wire wheels, new white side tyres, this amazing car has 7,000 miles since very high restoration, with records and history, always garaged, just magnificent. **£57,750**



Jaguar 3.8 Mk II 1964

Finished in traditional British racing green with matching hide interior, picnic tables to rear, sparkling chrome wire wheels, auto power steering, radio stereo system, alarm, over £75,000 spent, excellent history. Magnificent **£45,500**



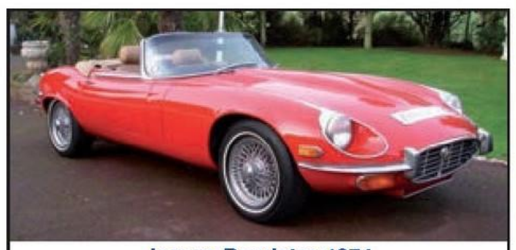
Jaguar E Type V12 Roadster 1974

Finished in gleaming signal red with as new black hide interior, headrests, stereo system, manual transmission, power steering, sparkling chrome wire wheels, white side tyres, heritage certificates, only 9,000 miles since top professional renovation, old Mots, hand book, history, always garaged, just magnificent **£75,750**



Aston Martin Virage 1991

Finished in metallic green with magnolia hide interior, piped in green, headrests, overmats, stereo system, tilt steering, usual Aston extras, only 25,000 miles from new with full service history, garaged from new **£28,750**



Jaguar Roadster 1974

Left Hand Drive finished in Signal red with beige hide interior, headrests, radio/stereo, tinted glass, air conditioning, sparkling chrome wire wheels, spare unused, manual transmission, power steering, 29,500 miles, garaged from new, superb .. **£56,500**



Jaguar E Type V12 Roadster 1974/5

Finished in Regency red with Black hide interior, headrests, stereo system, auto,power, chrome wire wheels, only 60,000 miles from new,bills and Mots, classic colour combination, very original example **£39,750**



Mercedes 560 SL Sports 1986

Left Hand Drive, finished in gleaming Signal Red with black hide interior, hard and soft tops, headrests, air bags, light up vanity mirrors, cd/stereo system, power mirrors, power windows, centre arm rest, air conditioning, climate control, cruise control, 18,000 miles, garaged from new, very difficult to repeat **£25,500**



Aston Martin DB6, 1968

Finished in Olive Green, with tan hide interior, stereo system, power windows, manual transmission, power steering, chrome wire wheels, ONLY 112,000 miles from new. ONLY 2 owners. Last owner for 33yrs service frequently, invoices & MOT, original buff log book from new, amazing condition, drives like new, pampered and garage from new, if you want the very best this is it, rapidly appreciating, ... **£125,500.**



Jaguar E type V12 Roadster 1971/2

Finished in totally unmarked gleaming British Racing green, with as new Tan hide interior, headrests, stereo system, as new chrome wire wheels, manual transmission, power steering, only 33,000 miles from new,every Mot, large history file, original British Leyland service book and handbook, this car is in absolutely mint condition, garaged from new **£74,750**



Mercedes 280 SL Sports 1969

Left Hand Drive, finished in Diamond white with cherry red hide interior, headrests, hard and soft tops, auto, power, air con, stereo system, two owners from new,this car is in amazing condition, pampered from new, looks like a one year old car and is totally superb. Also available in ivory white with dark brown hide interior **£49,750**



Aston Martin 2002 DB 7

Left hand drive Volante Vantage, Finished in Solway Silver with Cherry Red hide interior,and matching power top, Walnut veneers, overugs, touchtronic, power steering, power windows, sat nav, stereo, Cd, air con, Special Aston Larini exhaust system, only 10,000 miles from new with full Aston history,this car is just remarkable, never seen rain **£49,750**



Bentley Azure 1997 Model

Left Hand Drive finished in Silver Pearl with Black hide interior, to many extras to list, lambswool overugs, expensive stereo system, chrome wheels, anti theft device, Burr Walnut throughout, 52,000 miles, always garaged **£75,500**



1972 Rolls-Royce Phantom V1 State Limousine

Finished in Garnet over Antelope with Cherry hide interior to the front and West of England cloth to the rear, glass division, power windows, a/c, TV & video, cocktail bar, intercom, 12 stack CD player, Sundym glass, only 18,000 miles from new, 2 owners, lambswool overugs, occasional seats, show condition **£250,500**



Bentley Hooper 1956

Finished in gleaming two tone green with fine coach lines to compliment the coachwork, a matching green hide interior, with a glass like finish to walnut veneers, picnic tables to front and rear, power windows, original HMV radio, new tyres, matching thick pile lambswool overugs, only one former keeper, this very rare Bentley is ideal for showing with every possibility of winning, or for the pure pleasure of driving, possibly the finest in the world and a fine investment **£65,750**



Mercedes 280 SL 1969

Finished in champagne gold with superb interior, hard and soft tops, automatic, power steering, radio and stereo, cd and mini disc player, expensive alarm, 89,000 miles from new, good service history, garaged from new, absolutely stunning, probably the finest **£39,750**



1999 Bentley Continental SC Sedanca Coupe LHD

Finished in Silver Pearl with Stratos hide interior, 27,000 miles, matching lambswool overugs, this car has just about every possible extra, a very rare model with only seventy three ever produced, with its unique lift out glass roof, this stunning car has FBSH, garaged from new, a very famous owner, just magnificent .**£135,000**



Jaguar E Type 2+2 1968

Finished in Signal Red with Matching hide interior,auto, chrome wire wheels,sun roof, 28,000 miles may be correct as ex Jersey car,bills,old Mots,runs well, would make a very good restoration **£13,750**

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This is also the ex. Bill Burton car, owned by him for forty years and very well known in club racing from 1954 onwards and which included very many first and second places and the St. John Horsfall Trophy in 1974, so this important Aston has a fine and continuous racing history.
Completely rebuilt in the 1990's by a well known restorer for a newspaper magnate, this car has had only two owners since. With a steel crank and rod 100BHP engine by Ecurie Bertelli Ltd. this car has more recently been used in AMOC events including races and club rallies. It is regularly used, 'on the button' and very reliable.
Only thirty 'Ulsters' were built in total and they are recognized as the iconic pre-war Aston Martin, described by Bertelli as 'the best car I ever built'. With FIVA papers, this historic Aston Martin is eligible for both the Le Mans Classic and the MIlle Miglia.

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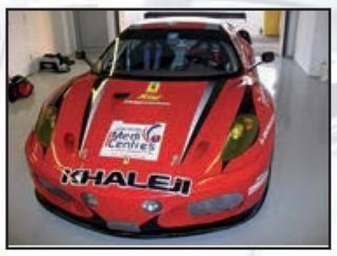
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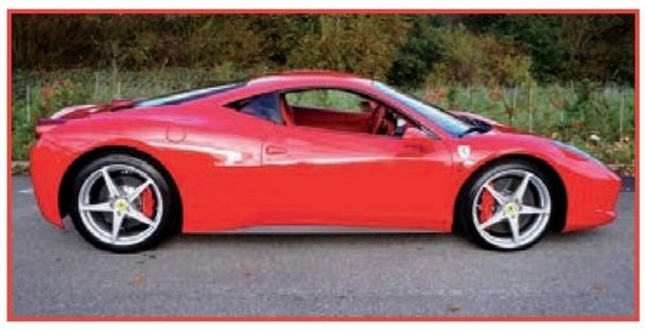
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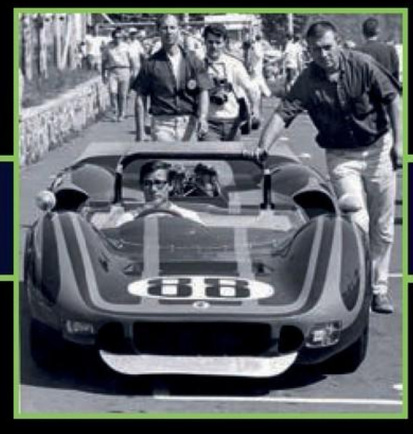
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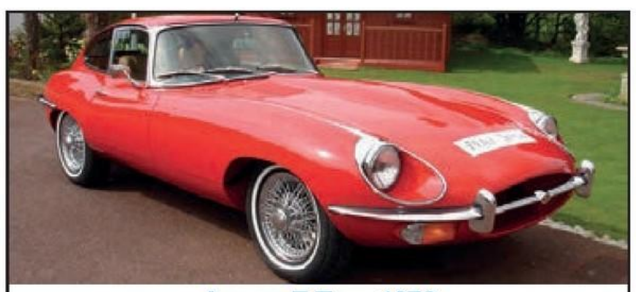
Jaguar E Type 1973/4 Roadster

Finished in Azure Blue with Tan hide interior, manual transmission, power steering, original radio,pressed chrome wheels, only 34,000 miles from new, lots of Mots and service history, original service book and handbook, superb original example. **£56,750**



Bentley Arnage T Mulliner 2005

Level 2 Finished in Silver lake with Nautic Blue with contrasting Cotswold quilted seats and door inserts, walnut veneer to fascia and waist rails, with Bentley recessed badges, Le mans vent and Mulliner badges, sat nav, sunroof, quad exhaust, parktronic, many more extras, 27,000 miles, FSH, very high spec, this car is totally stunning **£75,500**



Jaguar E Type 1970

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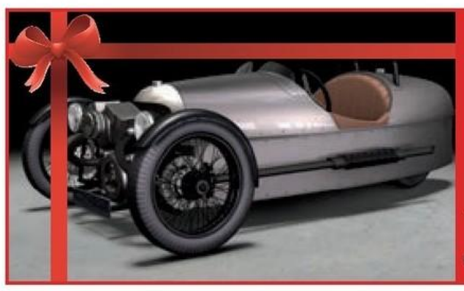
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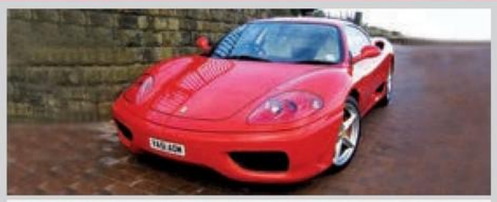
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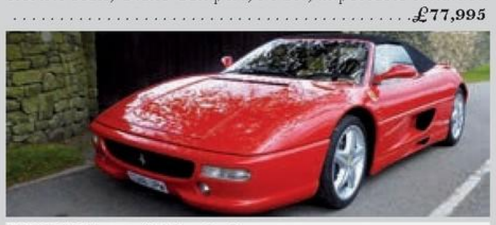
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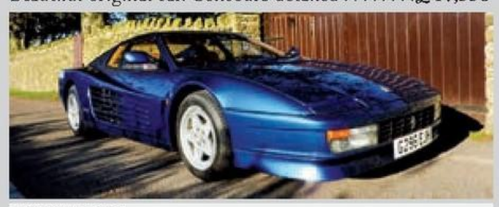
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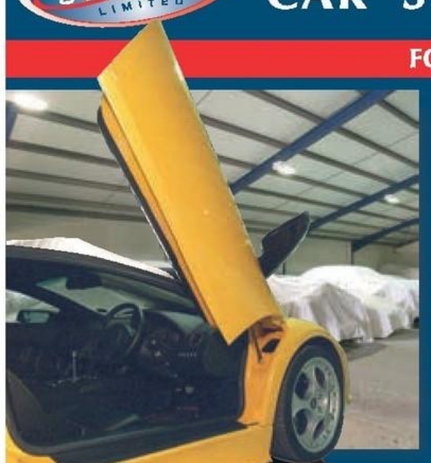
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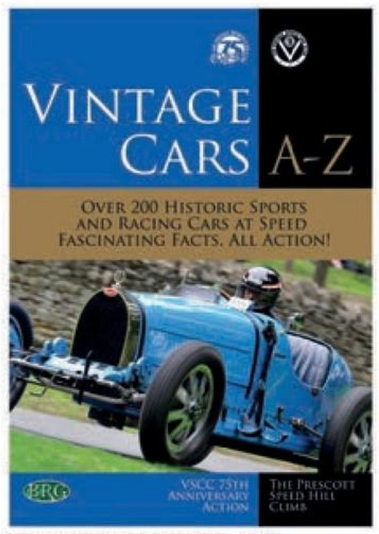
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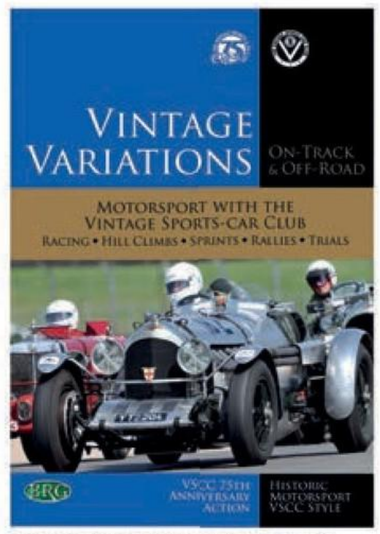
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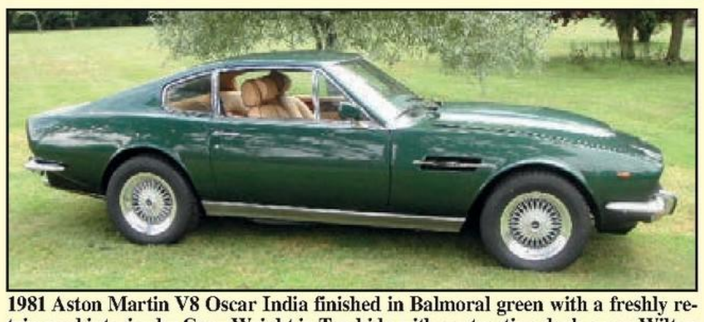
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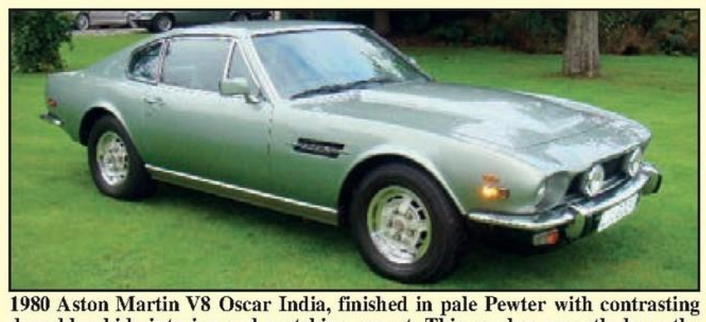
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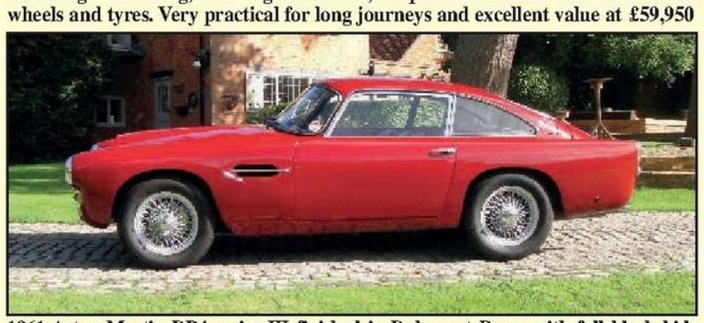
1981 Aston Martin V8 Oscar India finished in Balmoral green with a freshly re-trimmed interior by Gary Wright in Tan hide with contrasting dark green Wilton carpets. Refurbishment works by us have included a full re-paint, re-trim including headlining, full engine service, suspension rebuild and new Ronal wheels and tyres. Very practical for long journeys and excellent value at £59,950



1974 Aston Martin V8 srs III finished in Suffolk red with a bespoke mushroom hide interior retrimmed by an expert aircraft trimmer. This is a superb car with a 4"thick history file dating back to the 70's and including all invoices to the present time. Upgrades include a deep front air dam and Vantage style front grill and driving lamps, BBS alloy wheels. Very unusual and will definitely increase in value £39,950



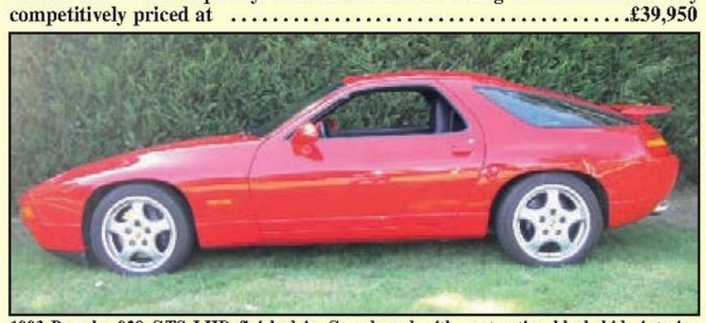
1980 Aston Martin V8 Oscar India, finished in pale Pewter with contrasting deep blue hide interior and matching carpet. This car has recently been the subject of a full suspension and steering geometry rebuild and a full Aston service and drives superbly. This model is now rising in value and is very competitively priced at £39,950



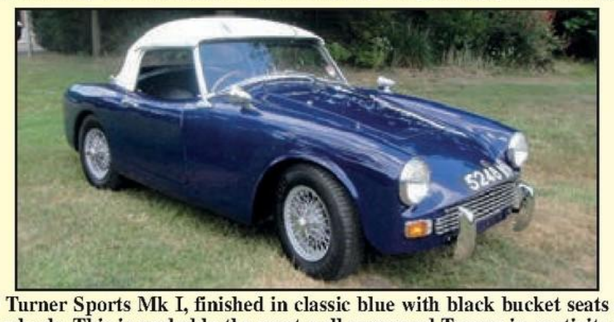
1961 Aston Martin DB4 series III finished in Dubonnet Rossa with full black hide interior. This excellent example has had the benefit of a complete engine rebuild and brake overhaul by Beaufield engineering and is both cosmetically and mechanically excellent. These cars have proved to be a superb investment over the past 20 years and will undoubtedly continue to rise in value. Still very competitively priced at £140,000



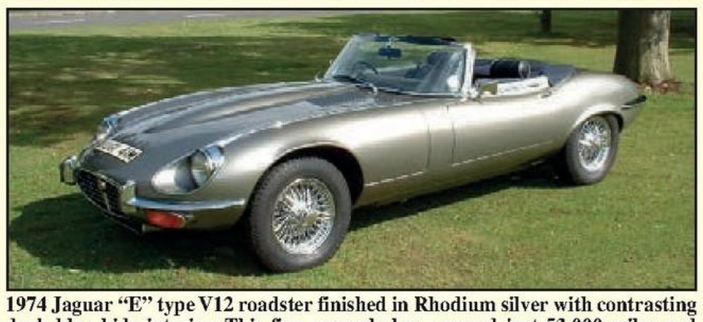
1969 Aston Martin DBS 6 cylinder, 4.0 litre finished in Champagne with contrasting black hide interior and black carpets. This car has been the subject of a complete restoration by its previous owner, including new sills, detailed engine bay, back to metal repaint and a complete engine, gearbox, axle and brake overhaul. It is superb to drive and definitely rising in value, following the previous DB range. A potential investment at £42,500



1993 Porsche 928 GTS LHD finished in Guards red with contrasting black hide interior. Imported some years ago, it has a comprehensive history both in Germany and the UK. Fitted with air conditioning, 17" cup alloys, automatic transmission, electric heated seats and adjustable steering column. This car has just had a major service and is in superb condition throughout and realistically priced for a car which is fast becoming a collector's item £16,950



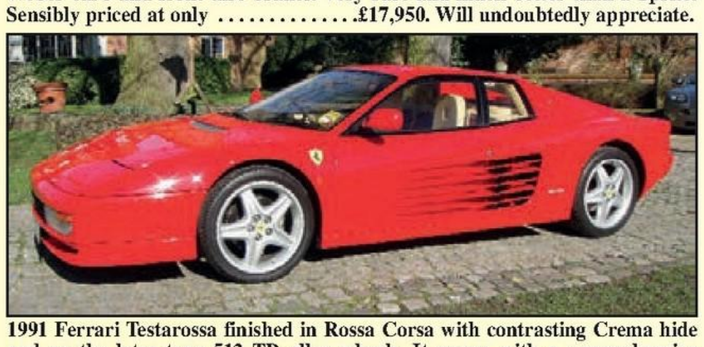
1960 Turner Sports Mk I, finished in classic blue with black bucket seats and wire wheels. This is probably the most well preserved Turner in captivity and is a credit to its previous owner. It has a 1380cc "A" series engine with 40dcoe Weber carb and front disc brakes. Very rare and much better than a Sprite. Sensibly priced at only .....£17,950. Will undoubtedly appreciate.



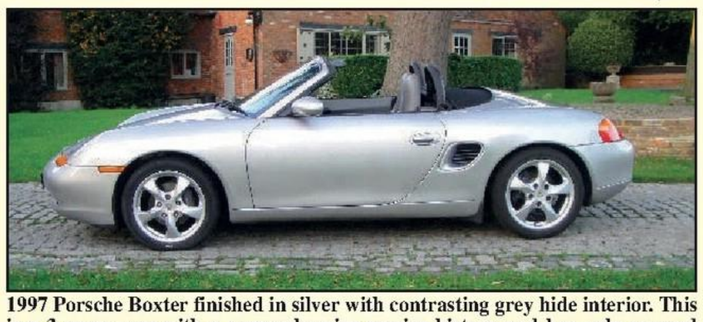
1974 Jaguar "E" type V12 roadster finished in Rhodium silver with contrasting dark blue hide interior. This fine example has covered just 53,000 miles and comes with a comprehensive history file. Fitted with chrome wire wheels and automatic transmission, the car drives superbly and is competitively priced at £42,500



1958 Aston Martin DB MkIII finished in Navy blue with contrasting blue/grey hide interior. This car has been in very long term ownership until recently and has a comprehensive history file including numerous invoices from marque specialists Four Ashes Garage. It has been the subject of a recent repaint and mechanical overhaul and is now ready to be used and enjoyed. Any inspection welcomed; please enquire for further details.



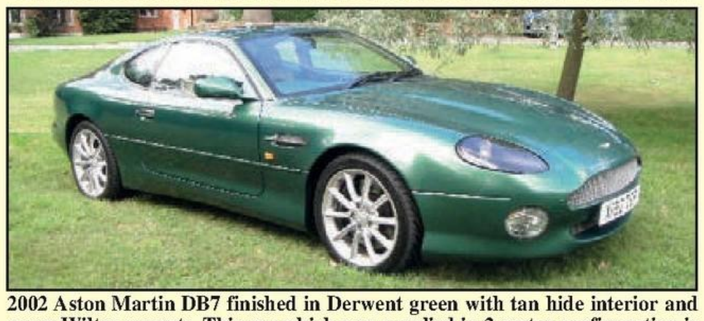
1991 Ferrari Testarossa finished in Rossa Corsa with contrasting Crema hide and on the later type 512 TR alloy wheels. It comes with a comprehensive service history which includes cam belt changes and it is both cosmetically and mechanically excellent. Undoubtedly rising in value and a sound investment at £45,000



1997 Porsche Boxter finished in silver with contrasting grey hide interior. This is a 3 owner car with a comprehensive service history and has only covered 51,000 miles. It is in excellent condition and represents wonderful value at only £8,750



1982 Ferrari Boxer 512 BBI in Rosso Corsa with Crema hide interior. This is an ex Saudi Royal family car and has covered only 13,500 miles. It has considerable service history. These cars are now well undervalued and are bound to rise in the next 24 months despite the current economic climate. We think that this is an excellent investment. Please enquire for more details.



2002 Aston Martin DB7 finished in Derwent green with tan hide interior and green Wilton carpets. This car which was supplied in 2 seater configuration is in fabulous condition and a credit to its previous owner. With only 47,000 miles, it is totally unmarked, just serviced and ready to be enjoyed. Wonderful value at £27,950



2004 Aston Martin DB7 Vantage Volante finished in Steel blue with contrasting pale grey hide interior. This car has a complete Aston Martin service history and has covered only 36,000 miles. It comes with most available options including air conditioning and 19" alloys and is competitively priced at £35,950



2000 Aston Martin DB7 Vantage finished in Mendip blue with pale grey hide interior. This is an excellent example with a full service history that has covered 68,000 miles that we have priced very sensibly for the age and mileage. The car is beautiful throughout and an inexpensive route into Aston ownership at only £24,950



1992 Mercedes 500 SL finished in Nautic blue with contrasting biscuit hide interior. This 2 owner example has covered only 53,000 miles and has a full Mercedes service history and the benefit of a new soft top fitted by us. Specification includes hard & soft tops, air conditioning, 8 hole alloys and electric heated seats. This car drives beautifully and is wonderful value at £9,950



1994 Aston Martin Virage Volante finished in Cairngorm grey with mushroom hide interior. These cars were £165,000 when new and were the flag ship of the Aston range; they now represent incredible value. Fitted with power hood, heated electric seats and air conditioning, they are a joy to drive and a pleasure to own £39,950



1966 Mercedes 500 SL finished in Arctic white with contrasting dark blue hide interior. This car is in superb condition and has an excellent spec and a continuous service history to the current mileage of 74,000. An inexpensive classic at only £12,950

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some way cause either superficial or irreparable damage to your car. You could say a car's active life is two races. If you're planning on racing a car more than twice that's probably optimistic."

Each team builds three of four different types of car for superspeedways, medium-speed ovals, short tracks and road courses. "There are aspects of the front end treatment behind the skin that we manage and that is the same for all the cars – the radiator and oil cooler


Road Course


Short Course


Medium Speed


Superspeedway

package and ducting. The road course cars are symmetrical whereas all the other cars are asymmetrical. With the superspeedway cars, of course, drag is the over-riding parameter. We spend a lot of time on the superspeedway cars."

Like many NASCAR teams MWR uses the Windshear wind tunnel in North Carolina. "It's a hell of a tunnel," Hallam says. "It lacks for nothing. We work very hard on getting the side force numbers repeatable and correct."

With such a heavy schedule of races NASCAR strictly limits the opening and closing of the garage area at each race. The garage opens each day at 7am and closes at 6pm. "That made me smile, and it is a very clever rule," Hallam observes. "That simple rule manages costs far beyond all the complexity of saying you can't use that part or that material. That regulation complements the technical regulations.

"You've got to be very well-organised and very clever indeed to get everything done in the timeframe available. If you've got a big problem you can apply to NASCAR for an extension but if they grant one it's unlikely to be more than half an hour. If you've seriously damaged your car NASCAR are on to you straight away. They decide whether you can bring your back-up or spare car out. You can't do that until you get the nod from NASCAR.

"It's the same with the engine. There needs to be a reason to change it. If the driver is not happy with the engine, that's not good enough. There needs to be a demonstrable problem. Engines can be raced about three times and we are very rarely forced to change one during a race weekend. If you do it after qualifying you're relegated to the back of the grid.

"If you make any changes that infringe or are outside the regulations there are harsh penalties – fines or suspensions – to the team and crew chief. NASCAR's punishment structure is one thing you don't want to flirt with at all, full stop, because it means fines, loss of points and suspension of the crew chief or team personnel. If you're abusing the system you'll be docked time and lose the opportunity to practice for 15 or 30 minutes at the next race."

The logistics of running 38 race weekends each year are very demanding. "The movement of equipment around the country is quite something," Hallam says. "The interstate road network across the United States helps tremendously, but it's a huge country and the trucks crank up many miles over the course of a year. It takes a tremendous amount of planning and organisation."

Like most teams MWR operates three aircraft, a 50-seater jet, a 36-seater turboprop and a smaller Beech King Air, plus Waltrip's personal aeroplane. "That's an industry in its own right," says Hallam. "There are regional express jets which the teams effectively charter or buy seats on. These jets operate from the regional airports around Charlotte such as Statesville or Concord or Charlotte itself. We operate our aircraft out of Statesville which is about 25 minutes north of our factory. At a minimum the jet and the turboprop are in use every weekend and I would say that the King Air is in use 50 per cent of the time."

Another eye-opener is NASCAR's specially-trained pitcrews which operate independently of the race teams. "I was unaware of the depth and the rigour with which the pitcrews are trained and prepared and approach their job," says Hallam. "The pitcrew are employed only as pitcrew. We have three or four overlapping players where a road crew member is also a pitcrew member, but they are predominantly specialists, and athletes. All the pitcrew guys are measured so we know their body mass index, body fat content and so on. They are quantified in that way and we are stepping that up next year.

"The training and practice regime they go through absolutely puts them in the class of athletes. They're treated as squad athletes in a team and if your numbers aren't up there you've got to work on them or you're going to be dropped. It's a rigorous environment. »»»


F1 it's not: Jeff Gordon slows up Carl Edwards, AJ Allmendinger, Tony Stewart and Juan Pablo Montoya

Getty Images/NASCAR