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MOTORSPORT NEWS



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Mike Jordan back in the TVR Tuscan hot seat **P20**

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World title winner buoyed after maiden outing in Hyundai

TANAK:

I AM READY TO GO ON THE ATTACK IN 2020



By David Evans

World Rally champion Ott Tanak has fired a warning shot across the bows of his rivals, admitting he's immediately comfortable with the Hyundai i20 Coupe WRC he will drive this season.

Tanak tested the car early last month, but remained tight-lipped on the outcome of his first miles in his new motor. Until now.

"Generally," he told Motorsport News, "it was driving quite easily and the feeling from the car was there immediately."

Full story, p2-3



Tanak has had his first test in Hyundai i20 Coupe WRC

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MOTORSPORT NEWS



HITS OF THE YEAR

HISTORIC RACING AND SHORT OVAL ACTION UNDER THE SPOTLIGHT **P18 & P22**



IN THIS ISSUE



Historic memories of the year

P18

JORDAN'S TVR TRIP DOWN MEMORY LANE



P20

EATON'S NEWEST CHALLENGE



P25



BLUNDELL REFLECTS ON BTCC STRUGGLES

P27

Racing news	4	The risk facing short ovals	28
Historic race and rally news	11	Sporting Scene	29
Rally news	12	Letters/Comment/What's On	30
Historic memories of the year	18	Classifieds	32
Jordan's TVR trip down memory lane	20		
Short oval hits of the year	22		
Eaton's new challenge	25		
Blundell's BTCC baptism of fire	27		



FOR MOTORSPORT NEWS STAFF CONTACT DETAILS PLEASE SEE P31



TANAK: TO WIN

World champion ready to go on the

By David Evans

World Rally champion Ott Tanak has spoken to Motorsport News about his first test aboard the Hyundai i20 Coupe WRC he will use for the defence of his title this season.

Tanak drove the car for the first time at Hyundai's private test facility before his first significant mileage came during the team's preparations in early December for the Monte Carlo Rally. Like his team-mates Thierry Neuville and Sebastien Loeb, the Estonian was in the car for a single day.

He returns to the French Alps next week in search of more wintry conditions in readiness for his third Monte in a new car in the last four years.

Tanak told MN: "The first run in the car was surprisingly OK. It was good. I'm sure there are still things to do to get it more comfortable for myself, but generally it was driving quite easily and the feeling with the car was there immediately. I did a seat fitting in the Hyundai test place before [France]. This



Adamo says that he has been impressed with Tanak's methods

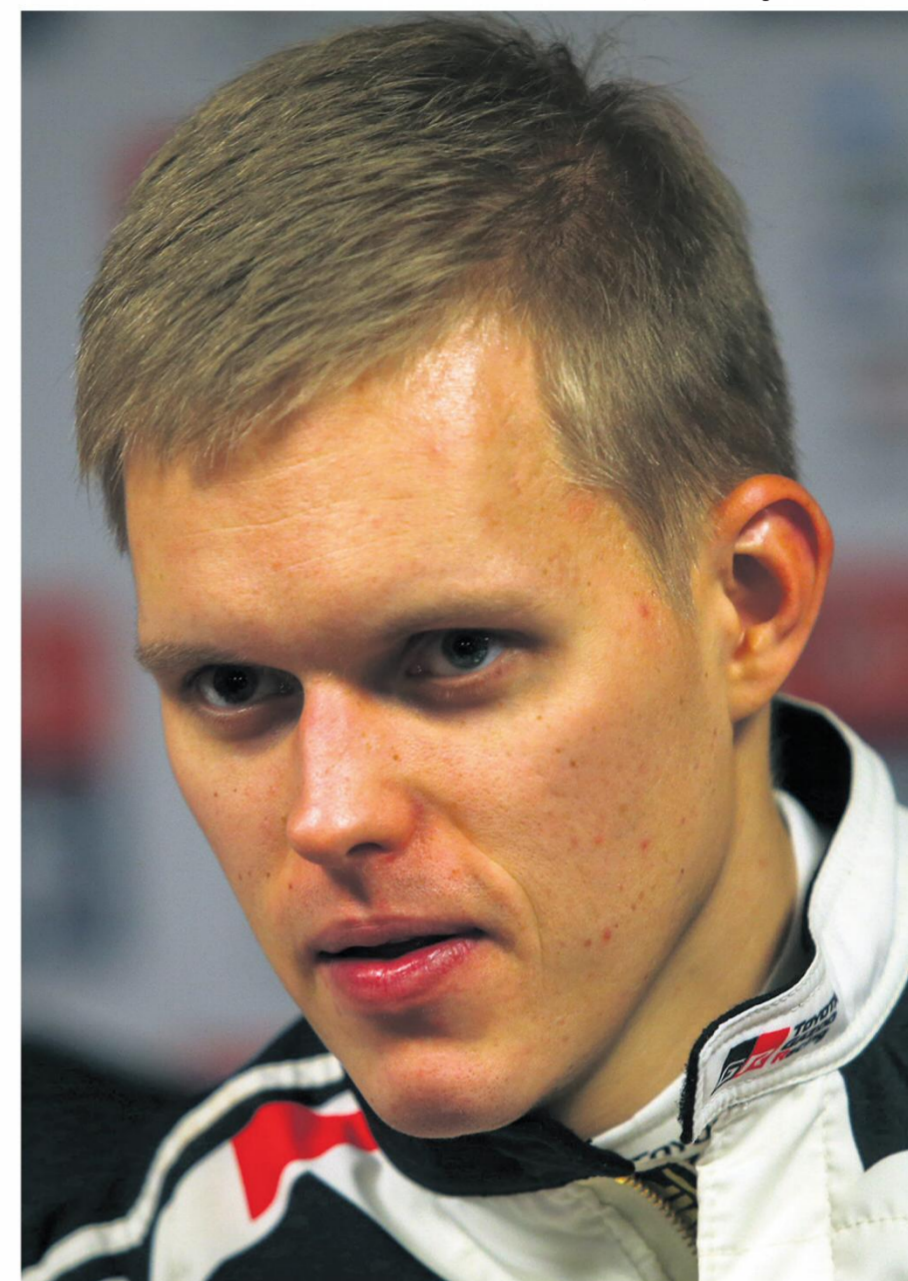
PREVIEW: THE EPIC DAKAR RALLY

HEADLINE NEWS

Photos: Julien Perez, mcklein-imagedatabase.com



Hyundai has already undertaken testing



Champ Tänak says he is full of hope driving his new Hyundai

I AM READY WITH HYUNDAI

attack from the World Rally Championship opener in Monte Carlo

helped with the preparation for the first proper test day. The [test] days are so limited, we didn't want to lose any more time trying to get comfortable."

Hyundai's i20 Coupe WRC will be the third current-generation World Rally Car. Tänak has competed in during the last four years and he says there's little to choose between the Ford Fiesta WRC, Toyota's Yaris WRC and his new motor.

Tänak said: "I remember the first time when I went to Toyota, the team was still quite young and things were not quite so simple. But now it's been a long time since the cars were in this specification and all the cars are competitive."

Tänak admitted the frosty but drying conditions were perfect for learning a new car from a base set-up, saying: "Thierry [Neuville] and Seb [Loeb] had already run the car so I had some good set ups to work from and their set-up is quite similar. You know, with cars like this one, if the car's good then the car's good and this one's good. I drove with that base set-up and after that it

was more fine-tuning for me to get comfortable with the car. We had some ice patches in the shaded areas, but it was nice to learn the car in more consistent Tarmac conditions – when we go back for the next test, I would like to see some more tricky places."

Tänak's work during his first day in the car centred mainly on the suspension side of the set-up. Team principal Andrea Adamo admitted he had been surprised at the level of preparation Tänak had gone through ahead of his first run in the car. The defending world champion had asked for a variety of alternatives for his first day.

"I just wanted to make sure I had absolutely everything and all the options available," said Tänak. "It's hard to say how many of these I went through, but I wanted to test how the car was reacting to the settings and the changes. This was not the final test before Monte, so I had a bit more time to see how things were and prepare myself a bit more for the final test this month."

"Monte Carlo is not normally so much about the peak performance, it's not all about the speed you can make from the car. It's such a tough event, it's more about finding the comfort and confidence. A lot of that comes from the small details, but I got all I wanted from my comfort in the car."

Starting his title defence with a victory in Monte Carlo in January will mean defeating his friend, former team-mate, six-time world champion and winner in the French Alps for the last six years, Sebastien Ogier. Tänak has never won in Monte Carlo, but he says he and Ogier start from the same position.

"We're both in the same place," he said. "We both have to learn with the new team. I know which tools I had when I was at Toyota and I know [what] he has to drive next year. Ogier is always a threat, he's a sporting guy who can be aggressive and go for what he wants. No doubt he will go for everything. We will have some big fights, but I'm sure they will be fair fights for the title."

Tänak remains adamant his move from Toyota and the fastest car of the current generation was the right decision for 2020.

"Moving is always a big deal," he said. "It's never easy, but from the other hand if you want to move forward and want to achieve something in the future then you have to do what's best for my career. It was important to make this move."

"I have been surprised in a positive way immediately by how professional the team is here at Hyundai – you know there's absolutely no doubt this is a factory team. The approach and the support they have given to me is really good. Definitely this is a team of people who know what they're doing; the feedback and the support I've had already is the same as their approach to everything, it's very much at the top level. I'm happy with the decision I made."

Following his second Monte Carlo test, Tänak's next time in the car was expected to be his Rally Sweden test at the end of that month.



Ott Tänak finished the 2019 season on the crest of a wave



The champion and his new Hyundai team boss Adamo

RACING NEWS

F1 ROUND-UP

British GP crowd

Official attendances released by Formula 1 shows that the British Grand Prix had the highest attendance of any race in a year in which the future of the event was secured. Silverstone and the British Racing Drivers' Club signed a new deal with F1 this year after protracted negotiations that had threatened the potential for the British GP to drop off the calendar. The British GP topped the weekend attendance numbers at 351,000, ahead of Mexico (345,694) and Australia (324,100). Eight other races logged more than 200,000 people, including Singapore, the United States, Belgium and Hungary.

Battling Bottas

Valtteri Bottas suspects he would have lost his Mercedes drive with a repeat of 2018, but instead has rediscovered the love of racing that he lost last year. Bottas failed to win a grand prix in 2018 as team-mate Lewis Hamilton swept to the title, but put up a stronger fight this season and led the points early on in a year he won four races. "If I've had a similar season to 2018, I don't [think] the team would have continued with me," he said. "That's how Formula 1 works. I've had much more fun between the races now, and kind of fell in love with the sport, which I maybe lost a little bit towards the end of last year."

Charging Bulls

Helmut Marko says Red Bull is two weeks ahead of schedule on its 2020 Formula 1 car and has no excuses as it prepares for a title challenge. Red Bull scored three victories with Max Verstappen in 2019, after recovering from a slow start in its first year with Honda power. Speaking to Red Bull-owned ServusTV, Red Bull's motorsport advisor Marko said: "We don't have any excuses for next year. For the first time, we are 14 days ahead of our normal schedule. We're going into the new year better than ever and with a great concept. Now we finally have to deliver."

Merc on their bikes

Mercedes has partnered with the Tour de France-winning INEOS cycling outfit that is working with a new 'Applied Science' division (MBAS) created by the Formula 1 squad. The deal also involves petrochemical company INEOS's sailing team, which is aiming to win the America's Cup and is led by British sailor Sir Ben Ainslie. The deal is said to involve "several projects", including aerodynamic optimisation work and sensor studies on riders and equipment. MBAS has worked with Team INEOS - which has won seven of the last eight Tour de France events, including its Team Sky guise - since August.

WOLFF: LAUDA'S DEATH THE DEFINING MOMENT

Mercedes boss reflects on 'difficult year' after Austrian's passing

By Scott Mitchell

Mercedes Formula 1 boss Toto Wolff has said racing in Monaco days after the death of non-executive chairman Niki Lauda were the most defining moments of the team's season.

Three-time F1 champion Lauda was part of Mercedes' management from 2012 until his passing in May earlier this year.

Lauda had a lung transplant in the summer of 2018 and a protracted spell in hospital, before falling ill again earlier this year, and Wolff said his passing "really affected us badly" and that 2019 will be "remembered as a difficult year".

Answering a question about the defining moments for the team this year in an end-of-season review video for Mercedes, Wolff cited recovering its form after a run of difficult weekends but said Lauda's passing was more significant than anything else. "The most defining days were

obviously the days when Niki passed and we went racing in Monaco," said Wolff. "That was something which was very difficult for the team.

"You can say that the team has achieved the six consecutive championships, which was never done before. But for me personally and many in the team, Niki passing is just the overwhelming event of the season.

"I think about him every day and it feels surreal that he's not part of the team anymore.

"So 2019 for us will be the year that we have lost Niki."

Wolff used to be married to Lauda's cousin and they started to travel to races together when Wolff was at Williams, before Wolff joined Lauda at Mercedes in 2013.

"Niki and I, we really grew together over the many seasons," said Wolff.

"And at the end, he was probably my closest confidant, friend and sparring partner.

"So I miss the protocol of



Wolff and Lauda were close friends

travelling to the races together, having him as a sounding board and somehow a safe place to talk about the ins

and outs of the team. So I wouldn't say there was a single event where I said I missed him [most], it's

just that the friend is not there anymore. "This obviously has a big impact on us."

Ferrari predicts 'significantly more expensive' 2020 season

Ferrari says it is prepared to invest more money in its Formula 1 team, including building a new simulator, as it expects a "significantly more expensive" 2020.

The Italian team's defeat to Mercedes in 2019 ensured it ended the decade without a championship success in F1, as its title drought stretched to an 11th season.

However, Ferrari CEO Louis Camilleri said that a "record" financial year for the car company, including the launch

of the SF90 Stradale hybrid, had led to "a lot of smiling faces" at Maranello.

He pledged that strong financial returns would boost the F1 programme too, because "we are one company and the car business funds Mattia's [Binotto] business".

"We're also prepared to invest," said Camilleri. "And luckily the car business can support those investments, not only in terms of people, but also in terms of infrastructure."

One of those investments is

the build of a new simulator, which is already underway. That project will coincide with Ferrari's development of its 2020 car, for which Ferrari has overhauled the engine and aerodynamic design, and the preparation for '21.

F1 will introduce sweeping technical changes for 2021 alongside a raft of other new elements, including a cost cap - which will slash Ferrari's budget to \$175m, but not until after the 2021 car is developed.

"Yes, it will be significantly more expensive," Binotto said when asked about the impact on the team's budget next year. "The budget we've got available is the one that's needed.

"Certainly, the number of projects in parallel are significantly more compared to the past. We all started very early [on the 2021 car].

"So yes, there will be significant extra budget next year, not only about money but resources - extra people would be required to run the programmes. I think it's got to be a situation to be managed right now."



Ferrari hasn't won either Formula 1 title for more than a decade

Ticktum joins Williams driver academy

Two-time Macau Grand Prix winner and ex-Red Bull Junior Dan Ticktum has joined the Williams Formula 1 team as a development driver.

Ticktum spent the second half of 2019 on the sidelines after losing his Super Formula drive early in the year when Red Bull dropped him from its own F1 programme.

However, the 2017 McLaren Autosport BRDC Award winner returned to racing in Macau for the FIA Formula 3 showpiece event, and has secured a Formula 2 drive with DAMS for 2020.

Ticktum previously said he had interest from F1 teams and Williams has now announced that the 2018 European F3 runner-up will join its driver academy.

The former Red Bull F1 tester will be "fully immersed" in the team at races and at its factory, combining a "busy" simulator

programme with attendance at two grands prix in 2020.

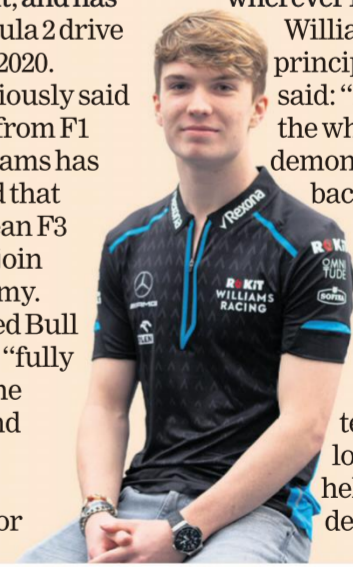
"It is a privilege to be joining the Williams Racing Driver Academy, especially given Williams's incredible heritage in our sport," said Ticktum.

"The time in the simulator and experience working with the team will prove invaluable for my development.

"Being fully integrated into the operations will be a fantastic opportunity and I look forward to assisting wherever I can."

Williams deputy team principal Claire Williams said: "His ability behind the wheel has been demonstrated with back-to-back successes at the prestigious Macau Grand Prix in 2017 and '18.

"Dan's technical expertise will prove invaluable to the team and we are looking forward to helping him grow and develop in 2020."



BLUNDELL REFLECTS ON BTCC STRUGGLES

PAGE 27



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'Eaton prepares for W Series challenge'
Interview, p25



Photos: LAT

TIMETABLE	
Le Mans 2020 practice and qualifying	
DATE	TIME
Wednesday, June 10	
Free practice:	1530-2000hrs
Free practice:	2200-2300hrs
Qualifying:	2315-0000hrs
Thursday, June 11	
Free practice:	1700-1900hrs
Hyperpole:	2100-2130hrs
Free practice:	2200-2400hrs



New qualifying format will be introduced for 2020 Le Mans 24 Hours

NEW HYPERPOLE LE MANS SHOOTOUT

Top six cars in each class will take part in new 30-minute session

By Gary Watkins

A new qualifying format dubbed 'Hyperpole' will set the top positions on the grid for next year's Le Mans 24 Hours.

The top six cars in each of the four classes during a 45-minute qualifying period on Wednesday will go forward to the half-hour Hyperpole session on Thursday ahead of next year's World Endurance Championship finale on June 13-14.

The 24 cars that make it through to this shootout session will be allowed one run because they will not be permitted to return to their pit during the 30 minutes.

Teams will have free choice of tyres within the existing allocation for qualifying and the race.

Wednesday qualifying will take place between 2315hrs and midnight, while the Hyperpole procedure will run from 2100hrs and 2130hrs the following day.

Pierre Fillon, president of Le Mans organiser the Automobile Club de

l'Ouest, explained that the new format was aimed at "guaranteeing two exciting sessions for both drivers and spectators, where all the focus will be on sheer speed in a quest for the perfect lap".

"Adrenalin, suspense and concentration will be at a max for every team out there," he said. "It will be a thrilling prelude to the ensuing 24-hour battle on our iconic 13km track.

"Le Mans will once again be a celebration of racing that goes on for several days, and not just a weekend."

The new Hyperpole procedure replaces the previous format that involved six hours of qualifying in three two-hour sessions across Wednesday and Thursday.

Free practice will now begin at 1530hrs on Wednesday with a session lasting four and a half hours and will continue with another short session before first qualifying.

Two further practice sessions will sandwich Hyperpole qualifying on Thursday.

Toyota says F2 champion de Vries is on its radar

Toyota has revealed that Mercedes Formula E driver and 2019 Formula 2 champion Nyck de Vries is on its radar for a World Endurance Championship race seat in the future.

Alongside the F2 championship where he won four races and sealed the title a round early, de Vries has been driving for the Racing Team Nederland LMP2 squad, where he made his Le Mans debut earlier this season.

Toyota Motorsport GmbH technical director Pascal Vasselon stated that it had been evaluating the Dutch driver before he was placed with the Japanese manufacturer for the series's rookie test in Bahrain by the WEC organisation.

"We have definitely been looking at what he has been doing in F2 and LMP2," Vasselon said. "That's why we were happy when we were told that he would be testing with us."

Asked when a seat might become available in Toyota's WEC squad, Vasselon replied: "That is another question – at the moment there are no seats immediately available."

QUICK LAPS THE FASTEST NEWS ROUND-UP

Super Formula race winner Alex Palou will compete in the 2020 IndyCar Series, driving for Dale Coyne Racing in a link-up with Le Mans 24 Hours-winning squad Team Goh. Palou will compete in the full IndyCar season after placing as the top rookie in Super Formula in third place, running with Nakajima Racing and scoring a victory and three pole positions in 2019 as he ran in title contention...

Former IndyCar driver and motorsport safety innovator Bill Simpson has died following

a stroke. His earlier drag racing exploits first triggered his interest in safety after a severe crash in 1958 left him with two broken arms.

That led to his idea of a safety parachute to slow down the Top Fuel cars of the era and, after that, Simpson worked on increasingly effective driver protection devices – helmets, firesuits, gloves and shoes – making his big breakthrough with Nomex when working for NASA... **Reigning FIA Formula 3 champion team Prema Racing has signed Logan Sargeant to mount its**

title defence in the Formula 1 support series, the first driver confirmed at the squad. American driver Sargeant, 19, finished third in the British Formula 4 Championship in 2017, and then graduated to the Formula Renault Eurocup, where he finished fourth. For 2019, Sargeant stepped up to FIA F3, but the Carlin team he raced for struggled to adapt to the new championship and finished second to last in the standings in ninth, but

he did take a podium at Macau... BMW's Bruno Spengler will call time on a 15-year DTM career to switch to the IMSA SportsCar Championship in 2020, but will remain with the manufacturer. Spengler notably won the DTM title in 2012 and he has contested 195 DTM races, winning 16. His last victory came at the Norisring earlier this year, with Spengler one of only three BMW drivers to win during a difficult 2019 campaign that has led the manufacturer to review its set-up. Spengler will now race for BMW Team RLL

in an M8 GTE and joins the IMSA programme following a trying season in the category for BMW... **IndyCar driver Matheus Leist will switch to the IMSA SportsCar Championship next season after signing to drive a Cadillac DPi-V.R for the JDC-Miller MotorSports squad. The 22-year-old Brazilian, who was BRDC British F3 champion in 2016, switches to sportscar racing after two seasons in IndyCar with AJ Foyt Racing that yielded two top-10 finishes this year.**

BMW refugee Blomqvist to race Aston Martin

Tom Blomqvist will join the R-Motorsport Aston Martin GT squad for 2020 after his departure from BMW.

Blomqvist, who was released by the German manufacturer this month after five seasons, will race an Aston Martin Vantage GT3 for the squad jointly run by the Arden and Jota Sport teams in the GT World Challenge Europe Endurance and Sprint Cups next year.

There has so far been no announcement of team-mates for the winner of the Spa 24 Hours in 2018, but R-Motorsport's two-car campaign on the twin legs of World Challenge Europe is expected to include a number of the drivers who raced for the team in 2019.

Blomqvist, son of former World Rally champion Stig, said: "I'm really looking forward to joining R-Motorsport, which is undoubtedly one of the best teams around in endurance racing.

"I've competed against them a few times and know just how competitive they are. The 2020 season promises to be a great year."

BARKER TO DRIVE MERC AFTER LONG PORSCHE ASSOCIATION

British sportscar racer Ben Barker has signed to drive a Black Falcon-prepared Mercedes AMG GT3 in the Dubai 24 Hours on January 10-11.

The 28-year-old has almost exclusively raced Porsches since beating Mitch Evans to the 2010 Australian Formula 3 title and made four appearances at Le Mans with the Gulf Racing outfit, with his only non-911 experience coming in a TRG

Aston Martin with David Calvert-Jones at COTA in 2016.

Barker will join Manuel Metzger, Jeroen Bleekemolen, Hubert Haupt and Khaled al Qubaisi in the latest evolution of the car which won the 2018 event, also entered by Black Falcon.

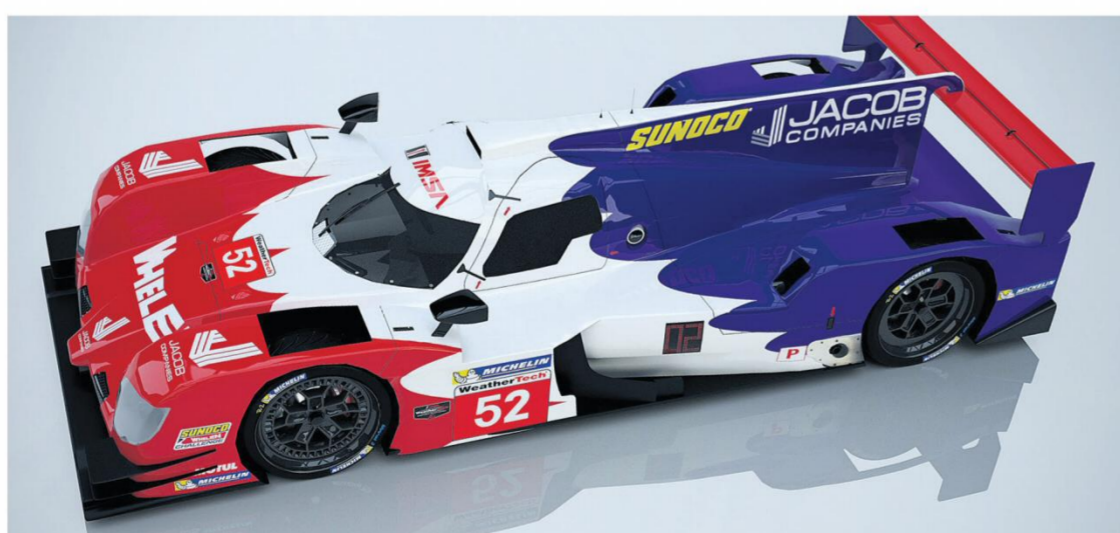
Barker said: "I'm excited to embark on what will be a competitive Dubai 24 line-up. I've not yet driven the

Mercedes, but I've heard great things and I've followed Black Falcon for years so it will be awesome to be under their umbrella."

British Touring Car race winner Rory Butcher will also compete in the event, his first appearance since he raced an Aston Martin GT4 in 2016. He will form part of Century Motorsport's line-up, driving a BMW M4 GT4.



Briton is long-time Gulf Porsche racer



Aston Martin Autosport BRDC Award winner will drive for Rick Ware Racing

Hoggard to race LMP2 car in Daytona Sunoco prize drive

Aston Martin Autosport BRDC Award winner Johnathan Hoggard's prize drive for winning the Sunoco Whelen Challenge has been revealed.

The BRDC British F3 runner-up will tackle the Daytona 24 Hours next month at the wheel of a Riley-Multimatic LMP2 machine run by Rick Ware Racing. He will be joined by the team's regular Asian Le Mans Series drivers Cody Ware and Mark Kvamme, along with IndyCar racer James Davison.

"It's really exciting and quite unexpected, but I am really happy

to be racing a prototype," said Hoggard. "It's more like a single-seater so hopefully, I'll adapt to it quite quickly, so I just have to learn the track as quickly as possible.

"It will be a different experience because all your team-mates are working together on one car to ensure that you are able to get the best possible result. Normally in single-seaters, you are the only driver you only have to worry about, however with an extra three team-mates it is definitely going to make it very interesting."

RACING NEWS

Photos: Jakob Ebrey

IN BRIEF

Allen's title

Former British Formula 4 racer Lucca Allen claimed the South East Asian F4 crown earlier this month at Sepang in Malaysia. The Irishman was 14th in the 2018 British F4 standings. He claimed the Asian title by two points over Finn Elias Seppanen after taking a win, a second, fourth and fifth places in the season finale weekend.

Mittell's plans

Champion manufacturer Mittell Cars' 750 Motor Club RGB Sports 1000 presence will be enhanced by another MC-53 next season. Sold as a new kit to Tim Pell, the chassis is yet to hit the tracks. Former karter Michael Roots, Scott Mittell's best mate at university, will race it. British GT-bound Chippy Wesemael's 2019 title-winning MC-53 has been sold to a Frenchman while Danny Andrew and Paul Smith are set to continue with their versions.

Fiesta plans

The Irish Fiesta Zetec championship has launched a karting scholarship with the winner receiving a season in the category, one of a number of initiatives designed to boost the series. The shootout will feature an on-track test and an interview. Both the Zetec series and Fiesta ST category will visit Kirkistown and Bishops court next season and the mid-season points leader in both championships will get a prize test. The Zetec leader will receive a run in an ST, while the ST pacesetter will have a test in a SEAT Supercup machine.

JSCC to VWs

Junior Saloon Car champion Scott McIntyre will switch to the Volkswagen Racing Cup next season, driving for Team Hard. McIntyre said: "The VW Racing Cup is the perfect entry into senior racing as I would like to eventually graduate into the British Touring Car Championship. With an intensive winter testing programme, I'm aiming to hit the ground running from the get-go."

Ford signing

Belgian teenager Milan De Laet will compete in the 2020 National Formula Ford 1600 season with Oldfield Motorsport. The 16-year-old competed in the recent Walter Hayes Trophy with Oldfield, finishing 17th, and is set to race the same Van Diemen JL13 in the forthcoming campaign. De Laet won the French Trophee Formule Ford Kent title in 2019 in his first year out of karting.



Hill will swap Audi for FK2 Civic



Butcher won Independents' crown with the car this year

HILL SECURES BTCC HONDA AMD DRIVE

Race winner lands seat at the wheel of a proven car for 2020 tin-top season

By Matt James

British Touring Car Championship race winner Jake Hill has signed to drive an AmDTuning.com-run Honda Civic in next year's 30-race contest.

The 25-year-old took part in his third full season in 2019 with the new Trade Price Cars Racing team driving an Audi S3. Hill finished 15th in the overall points and was

fourth in the Independents' Trophy. He also took a breakthrough maiden win at Knockhill in September.

The Trade Price Cars Racing squad was created at the start of this year and, although it was an independent team, it was run under the umbrella of AmDTuning, which fielded a brace of FK2-spec Honda Civic FK2s for Rory Butcher, Sam Tordoff and Mike Bushell. Butcher won the Independents' Trophy in the Japanese machine

and AmD won the Independents' Teams Trophy.

Hill said: "I had a fantastic year with Trade Price Cars Racing, and am hugely grateful to [team boss] Dan [Kirby] and the whole team for all their support and the opportunity to race with them. For next season, it's a different challenge. I now know what it takes to win in the BTCC.

"I have worked alongside the AmD guys and I have seen first-

hand how competitive the FK2 can be; it is the most successful front-wheel-drive car in NGTC history in terms of race wins. I have worked hard in my career to get myself into a position where I deserve a race-winning car and I truly feel like I am ready for it now.

"I want to emulate the success that Rory had with the car in 2019. That has to be my goal going into this new season and to reward the faith that AmD has shown in me."

CONFIRMED ENTRIES SO FAR

2020 BTCC	
TEAM/DRIVERS	
WSR BMW 330i M Sport	Colin Turkington, Andrew Jordan, Tom Oliphant
Laser Tools Racing Infiniti Q50	Ash Sutton, Aiden Moffat
Team Dynamics Honda Civic Type R FK8	Matt Neal, Dan Cammish
Team Hard BMW 125i M Sport	Carl Boardley
Team Hard VW CC	Mike Bushell, Jack Goff
AmDTuning Honda Civic Type R FK2	Jake Hill



Flewitt made selected BGT outings during 2019 season

Hankey and Flewitt to drive second GT4 Balfe McLaren in British GT next year

Balfe Motorsport has signed Mia Flewitt and newly-announced McLaren factory driver Euan Hankey to share its second 570S GT4 in the British GT4 Pro-Am class next season.

Hankey, 32, is a race winner in the Porsche Carrera Cup GB and European Le Mans Series with three Le Mans 24 Hours starts in a GTE-Am class Aston Martin prepared by TF Sport.

He last raced in British GT in a one-off appearance in 2018 at Silverstone when Ben Barnicoat was ineligible to compete after conducting a pre-event test session, and shared a Von Ryan Racing McLaren 650S GT3 with Salih Yoluc in 2015 until the

Turkish driver's licence was suspended following an incident-filled start to the season.

He has coached Swedish-born Flewitt for the past two years in the single-make Pure McLaren GT Series, which she has won for the past two years. Flewitt, who contested the Silverstone, Spa and Donington Park meetings last year in an all-amateur entry alongside Pure McLaren rival Stewart Proctor, also finished second in class at the Gulf 12 Hours earlier this month sharing with Hankey and British Touring Car Championship race winner Josh Cook.

Hankey and Flewitt will join returning pairing Michael

O'Brien and Graham Johnson, and team boss Shaun Balfe said the intra-team competition would spur both crews on.

"It's great that Mia felt comfortable after three competitive races with us in British GT last season and happy to return for a full campaign," he said.

"Bringing Euan with her will make the car ultra-competitive and I'm expecting to manage some internal team rivalry but, it will be very positive.

"We'll have double the data so it will boost Michael and Graham and raise the bar for everyone. I expect Mia and Euan to push them hard all year."

Goodyear's expansion continues with WTCR deal

Goodyear has continued its recent expansion in motorsport and will become the tyre supplier for the World Touring Car Cup in 2020.

The brand has been appointed to supply the series' slick and wet tyres for an initial three-year period starting next season.

It replaces Yokohama, which has been the sole tyre supplier for WTCR and its predecessor, the World Touring Car Championship, since 2006.

"It allows Goodyear to connect

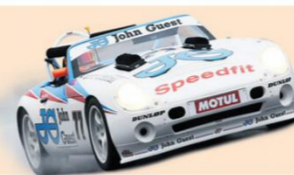
with fans in a wide range of countries, and also prove the performance of our Goodyear Eagle F1 SuperSport range of racing tyres," said Goodyear consumer Europe's vice-president and chief marketing officer, Mike Rytokosk.

The WTCR agreement is a third significant supply deal for Goodyear in recent months, following it becoming the tyre supplier for the LMP2 class of the WEC from 2020-21 and the British Touring Car Championship.



Honda has launched a turn-key race car called the Civic Type R TC. Based on the road-legal hot hatchback that is built in Swindon, the TC is capable of up to 325bhp from the factory and notably features the racing car trinkets of an adjustable rear wing, a rollcage and digital dashboard. Prices start at \$89,900, marking a substantial saving against the full-blooded \$172,000 Type R TCR car.

'It felt fast and dangerous!'
Jordan reunited with his Tuscan, p20



Revamped Clio Cup UK to run at British GT events

TOP SQUAD PYRO TO MAKE CLIO CUP RETURN IN 2020

Team places order for new fifth-generation Clio as other outfits express interest

By Stephen Lickorish

Successful Clio Cup UK squad Team Pyro will return to the revamped category next season.

The squad was a frontrunner in the championship for a number of years – Pyro drivers won the title eight times between 2008 and 2017 – but it did not compete in 2019, which was set to be the category's final season as Renault UK announced it would withdraw its backing.

But now Renault Sport Racing has stepped in and the series will continue with the new fifth-generation car and move across from the British Touring Car Championship support bill to

featuring at British GT events.

"We didn't do it this year mainly because Renault announced they were pulling out," said Pyro boss Mark Hunt. "We thought, instead of racing to the last minute and finding something new to do, we would do it now [change series]."

"I think the costs is the biggest thing – that's what attracted us to it. It's £8000 entry fees rather than £18,000, it's £33,000 for a new car rather than £50,000 for a car. We like Renault and we've been with them a long time – you know what you're going to get."

"It's quite enjoyable because you're working with youngsters at the start of their career or hobby racers. I've spoken to four or five drivers and we've been

testing one who is definitely going to do it."

Hunt, whose squad has been competing in TCR Germany this year, believes Renault Sport's decision to make the series more accessible to gentleman drivers and those with lower budgets is a good step to take.

"Clios has been too competitive over the last few years – it's only had very good drivers," he said. "They will now go and do Minis [which has replaced Clios on the BTCC package]."

"I'm trying to do it like it used to be in the early 2000s – the car is quite similar to the Clio 2 – it's a sequential, stick shift and they've gone back to basics."

Hunt has placed an order for

cars and could run up to four drivers in the series.

Several other squads have also expressed interest including MRM – the team that powered Jack Young to this year's crown – and Amigo Motorsport, which has competed in a number of categories including the Ginetta GT4 Supercup and GT Cup.

"After our title success of 2019 with Jack Young, we are keen to keep racing in Renault circles and the look and feel of the new Clio Cup UK is very attractive," said MRM boss Mike Ritchie.

"The cars are affordable and the registration fee offers real value for money for drivers. Ideally we'd like to run three cars and we are in talks with drivers."



Fledgling team's Autosport show stand will feature new car

Car will be on Student Motorsport stand

The new fifth-generation Clio Cup UK machine is set to feature at Autosport International next month as part of Student Motorsport's stand.

Prospective teams and drivers had the chance to look at a test car of the new model at Renault's Formula 1 base at Enstone in November but the car at the Birmingham NEC will be much closer to the specification that will be raced.

Student Motorsport, which is entering the Clio Cup for the first time next year and has ordered two cars, has created a network to link students and graduates with education centres and career opportunities.

Its founder John Paul Latham says it is a major achievement for the fledgling team to have Renault Sport Racing's support.

"It's humbling and I feel privileged to be associated, and in part, representing Renault Sport and the Clio Cup UK," he said. "It really illustrates that Renault Sport see us as a professional brand."

"The show's about attracting sponsors, drivers and people to our website – it's promotion of the brand and what we do as a company. We will start recruiting for the team [as students will be involved as mechanics and in the operation of the team]."

Ratcliffe to switch to Carrera Cup GB

British GT racer Ryan Ratcliffe will switch to the Porsche Carrera Cup GB next season, remaining with the Team Parker Racing squad.

The 26-year-old has spent the past two seasons driving a Bentley for Parker in British GT, taking three podiums across the two years. Prior to stints in Audi and BMW machinery, he was the GT4 champion alongside Rick Parfitt Jr in 2013.

He will now switch to the Porsche series in 2020 and will run as a Pro-Am driver.

"I've been looking at this championship for the past six or seven years now," said Ratcliffe. "I've had a good run in GTs but I'm looking forward to going back to single-make racing."

"This is a long-term plan, I want to be here for at least five years."

BRSCC, CALM Porsche series to merge

The British Racing and Sports Car Club's Porsche Championship will merge with the new-for-2019 CALM All Porsche Trophy for next season.

The BRSCC category has struggled for numbers in 2019 and had already revealed plans to tweak regulations to allow a wider range of cars to compete as well as adjusting the race format to include more longer mini-endurance races.

The CALM series raises awareness for the Campaign Against Living Miserably charity that supports young men suffering from depression and anxiety. The series principally featured Porsche 924s and 944s at its events this season.

Philip Waters from the CALM All Porsche Trophy said: "This is a fantastic result for all drivers



BRSCC series has struggled for entries during 2019 season

wanting to maintain a one-make field of close Porsche racing. Combining the two Porsche race series will increase numbers and reduce costs for everyone

involved. We're thrilled to be working on this project with the BRSCC in support and look forward to what the 2020 season will bring."

DEPUTY EDITOR

STEPHEN LICKORISH

"Low costs are a big factor in teams signing up to Clios"



A lot can change in 12 months. This time a year ago came the news that Renault UK was axing its Clio Cup series at the end of 2019. A year on and the series is very much still alive, now with Renault Sport Racing France backing and having moved from the British Touring Car Championship bill to running at British GT events.

While the 2019 season may have featured a terrific fight between Jack Young and Max Coates for the title, there is no escaping the fact grids were tiny as drivers did not want to begin a new programme in the series if it was only around for one more year.

Now that uncertainty has been removed and that should help with attracting new drivers in. But it is starting from a very low base, especially given some of the nine regular drivers from 2019 will move onto pastures new anyway.

Nonetheless, the early signs are encouraging. Over the last few weeks there have been numerous announcements of teams interested in joining the series and placing car orders. Some of these are the existing 2019 teams – Westbourne Motorsport and MRM have both confirmed they will be on the grid again next season. But there have also been orders from category titan Team Pyro – which skipped the 2019 campaign – as well as Ginetta outfit Assetto Motorsport and new squad Student Motorsport. Add in the possibility of BTCC squad Power Maxed Racing and Amigo Motorsport joining and it is clear there is interest out there.

No drivers have yet officially signed up but the fact a number of these teams have placed orders for the new fifth-generation machine is a good start.

And cost is a big factor in these teams signing up. For a championship of its standing to have entry fees of £8050 + VAT – especially when it includes overseas trips to Magny-Cours and Barcelona – is a rarity and is around half the figure that was charged for the category's final season on the TOCA package. The new car is also affordable and, given that it can fairly easily be converted between racing, rallying and rallycross specifications, should be easy to sell in the future too.

The one downside is there are question marks over when the new cars will actually be delivered to teams, with the end of March the slated timescale. But series organisers have factored that into their plans as the category is skipping British GT's Oulton Park season-opener and therefore won't have its first round until Snetterton in mid-May.

It is still very early days in the reimagining of the Clio Cup UK. But what we do know is the prospects are looking significantly better than they were 12 months ago.

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RACING NEWS

BMW 116 STAR TRUNDLEY TO RACE ASTON WITH TEAM BRIT

Squad set to run four cars across the two Britcar categories next season as it helps disabled racers

By Stephen Lickorish

BMW 116 Trophy race winner Bobby Trundley will step up to driving a GT4 Aston Martin next season, as part of a four-car Team BRIT entry across Britcar's two series.

Trundley, 20, is due to share the Aston in the Britcar Endurance Championship with Compact Cup racer Aaron Morgan, providing Morgan can secure the required budget.

Trundley, who has autism, won four of the five BMW 116 Trophy races this season in his first year of car racing and is now looking forward to the challenge of racing the Aston.

"To go from what's basically a road car to a GT4 car is a big step but I'm looking forward to the challenge," said Trundley, who describes his 2019 season as "incredible". "I've driven the Aston Martin a couple of times and it's a completely

different animal."

He added that, without the support of Team BRIT – which provides racing opportunities for people with a range of disabilities – he would not have been able to make the move from karting into car racing.

"I thought I would never have the opportunity – before I got involved with Team BRIT I was doing karting and never thought I would race cars," Trundley said. "Being spotted by one of their former drivers opened up my world."

As well as the Aston, Team BRIT will also run three BMW 116 machines, for rookie drivers, in the new Britcar Trophy category for production-based models.

Over the course of the season these will be driven by Matty Street, who also has autism, paraplegics Ryan Ashman and AJ Gani, and Andrew Tucker, who suffered numerous injuries after a motorbike accident.



Trundley won four BMW 116 Trophy races

Photos: David Archer, Gary Hawkins, Richard Styles, Mick Walker



Formula Fords will get rare outing on Brands Grand Prix track

Champion of Brands gets British GT support slot on full GP circuit

Formula Ford 1600 series the Champion of Brands will race on the Brands Hatch Grand Prix circuit in 2020 as a support event for the late-August British GT/Formula 3 round.

Champion of Brands boss James Beckett recently released a provisional six-round 2020 calendar containing two dates marked as to be confirmed. He has now revealed that one of these will be an appearance at the British GT/F3 meeting on August 29-30.

Champion of Brands is open

to all Kent-engined FF1600 cars and was brought back to the schedules by Beckett in 2010 after an absence of several years. It usually runs on the Brands Indy circuit, and the GT/F3 meeting appearance will be a rare opportunity for FF1600 cars to run on the full Brands circuit. The round will also be Champion of Brands' annual Bert Ray Memorial Trophy event.

"It was the one meeting where, if I was asked where I would like to see the Champion of Brands at

Brands Hatch, the meeting I personally wanted it to go to was British GT," Beckett said. "It is a chance to get Champion of Brands back out onto the Grand Prix circuit. It didn't come in its first round of dates but a little bit of negotiation by MSVR have been helpful in accommodating."

"It makes it a busy weekend for Formula Ford-sters under the James Beckett umbrella because it is also the same weekend as the Heritage final at Oulton Park [on August 31]. Hopefully a few may do both."



Models like M2 and M4 are targeted

New turbo class for BMW Car Club Racing category

The BMW Car Club Racing championship is to introduce a turbo class for the 2020 season, aiming to attract models such as the M2, M4, 135, 335 and Mini Cooper.

The move was confirmed by a drivers' vote and will be done on an assessment basis initially. The new class will use the same power-to-weight ratio, of 300bhp per tonne, as fellow 750 Motor Club championship Club Enduro's Class A, and the turbocharged engines used should be those originally fitted to that model.

BMW Car Club Racing already had turbocharged cars competing in some 2019 rounds, with Steven Schweikhardt driving an E46 and Dean Clayton a Mini.

"We've got to acknowledge that the modern cars are coming," said championship boss Neil McDonald. "So we've got to be able to encompass [them] and race the old cars and the new cars all together if we can. We can evaluate cars during the year while they're on track."

Sports 2000 to team up with MotorSport Vision Racing for 2020 season

The Sports Racing Car Club has teamed up with MotorSport Vision Racing for next season and each of the four Sports 2000 categories will now run with MSVR.

In the past, the Sports 2000 classes have been standalone series appearing at a variety of meetings, including MSVR, but this is the first time they have formally been part of another organising club.

A provisional calendar has been released that includes

a support race slot when the GT World Challenge Europe series – formerly the Blancpain GT Series – races at Brands Hatch in May.

"We have always operated as a standalone club and frankly never thought we would find a series organiser who would be able to both organise our championships and promote our brand of sportscar racing," said Colin Feyerabend, SRCC competitions director.

"However, soon after we'd

begun exploratory talks with MSVR we were bowled over by their willingness to support us. We will continue to compete on the best UK and European circuits but will have the organisational and promotional support of MSVR.

"In turn MSVR will have one of the largest, most competitive and most sustainable grids in national motorsport; consequently it has the makings of a very mutually successful partnership."



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HISTORICS

'Rally of the Tests goes North'
New route for event in 2020, below



Photos: Paul Lawrence

DOWN THE PUB

GUY WOODCOCK

Organiser and competitor
Age: 58 Lives: Llanferres



Over 700 events for Woodcock

He started young

"I was born and bred opposite the gates to Loton Park hillclimb and that's what got me into motorsport. I was marshalling there from the age of 10. I then joined the local motor club, which was Welsh Border, and they were into rallying so I got into road rallying."

He's organised many events

"I organised my first road rally in 1981 and I've done it ever since so it will soon be 40 years. I competed on my first 12-car rally two weeks after my 17th birthday and I've competed on and off ever since. I took a bit of time off in the early 1990s when I started the business. I'm up to over 700 events I've organised or competed in."

He has a key role with HERO

"I'm now as good as full time as competition director for the Historic Endurance Rally Organisation. I was responsible for 13 events this year and next year it is 14 events, including New Zealand, South America, Greece, Spain and Portugal. We're building the organising team because it is a growing business and a massive operation. My brief is to sign the events off so that they keep the same standard and that they keep their individuality. Events like Peking to Paris are huge."

His own rallying has taken a back seat

"I've not had much time for competing lately. I did a couple of road rallies in the Pinto-engined Escort Mk2, and then did the Roger Albert Clark Rally in November, which I really enjoyed."

He also has a BDG car

"The last event in the BDG-engined Mk2 was the Isle of Man in September 2016 when the gearbox went. I didn't see the car again until November when I went to pick up some stuff from Geoff Jones in Machynlleth. I'd like to do the Manx National next year and I can see a window in the calendar of the other stuff. I do like rallying on the Isle of Man: I was deputy clerk of the course with John Skinner for six years on the national."

He's keen on closed-road events

"The Isle of Man is still a bit special but the new closed-road events that are coming in have got to be worth trying. I wasn't here for the Cardigan Bay event but I've looked at the North West Stages."



Cars like Lotus Cortina Mk2 will be eligible

NEW SERIES FOR '60s TOURING CARS

Motor Racing Legends to run category open to later 1960s machines

By Paul Lawrence

An overlooked period in touring car racing will be opened up next season in the new Sixties Touring Car Challenge from Motor Racing Legends.

The traditional cut-off date for historic touring cars has long been set at 1966 but MRL is opening up the new series to Group 1 and Group 2 cars raced in the European Touring Car Championship from 1966

to the end of 1969.

The new five-race series will include the existing U2TC grid for pre-'66 cars and accommodate late 1960s two-litre, four-cylinder cars like the Ford Escort Mk1, Lotus Cortina Mk2, BMW 2002, Lancia Fulvia and Alfa Romeo GTA variants as well as later Minis.

Duncan Wiltshire of Motor Racing Legends said: "Late 1960s touring car owners have suffered from a real void of racing opportunities so we look

forward to welcoming them into the Motor Racing Legends fold.

"Previously, U2TC has been one of the most competitive series in historic racing, by expanding the grid to allow '66 to '69 cars from the European Touring Car Championship era we are guaranteed to see some thrilling competition across our five rounds in 2020."

In a significant change to technical regulations, cars running electronic ignition will now be permitted in the

CALENDAR

Sixties Touring Car Challenge

DATE	TRACK
May 1-3	Donington Historic Festival
June 6-7	Thruxton Historic
July 31-Aug 2	Silverstone Classic
Sept 25-27	Spa Six Hours
Oct 23-25	Algarve Historic Festival

Sixties Touring Car Challenge and U2TC grid.



Eight stages in Telford

More details revealed about Historic Rally Festival demonstration

Organisers of the Historic Rally Festival, running out of Telford on June 7, have pledged to run the demonstration event to full special stage safety standards.

Following recent concerns over spectator control at other demonstration and tour events, HRF promoter Warner Lewis

has explained more about how his event will be organised.

"The stages will be run at speed with full safety equipment mandatory, with all vehicles having been scrutinised by Motorsport UK officials," said Lewis. "The stages will be run by

MSUK affiliated clubs running the same rules as a stage rally, with full medical cover, recovery and radio cars.

"We are running eight stages and there will be road sections between each stage. The stages will have a spectator safety car through, 00 and zero cars."

Group B cars for Belgian event

Group B cars, rally cars of the 1990s and specials like Millington-engined Ford Escort Mk2s could run in a demonstration category of the Legend Boucles Bastogne.

Entries for the demo section for the biggest historic rally in Belgium will be by invitation and promoter Pierre Delettre says he is looking for a number of cars that will add spectacle to the February 1-2 event.

Early applicants are an Audi Sport quattro S1, a quattro A2, a Ford Escort Cosworth WRC and two Group A Subaru Imprezas.

"The competitors whose applications are accepted will be invited, which means they will not need to pay the registration fee! Spread the word," said Delettre.



POSITIVE RESPONSE FOR HSCC'S NEW GEOFF LEES TROPHY

The Historic Sports Car Club is reporting a positive response to the Geoff Lees Trophy, its new race category for up to two-litre single-seater racing cars from the 1980s.

The series will be open to Formula 2, Formula Atlantic,

Formula 3, Formula Ford 2000, Formula Vauxhall Lotus, Formula Renault and Formula Super Vee cars built and raced during the 1980s.

Early enquiries have come from owners of two Ralt RT30s, both with notable histories, several Reynard

883s/893s, an Anson SA4, a Reynard SF88 and a Formula Atlantic Ralt RT4. At least one Formula 2 Toleman TG280 is race ready and Tim Lawrence has just completed a two-year rebuild of the ex-Paul Tracey Formula Ford 2000 Van Diemen RF86.

IN BRIEF

Tim Kuchel

MN was sorry to learn of the death of Australian racer Tim Kuchel after a battle with cancer. Kuchel, a scientist by profession, made many friends in the UK during three summer tours of European historic racing with his Brabham BT18 Formula 2 in the company of his friend Wayne Wilson. The BT18 was one of three Brabhams he owned and raced.

Saloons in Scotland

The schedule for the Dunlop Saloon Car Cup will include a trip to Knockhill in Scotland on July 4-5 as part of a four-event, eight-race season. The series for cars from 1970 right through to 2006 will headline at the 'Best of Scottish Saloon Car Festival' as well as having dates at Silverstone GP, Donington Park and the Oulton Park Gold Cup.

Beaulieu award

The National Motor Museum at Beaulieu in Hampshire has been awarded £74,000 by the Arts Council England to develop its display based around the 1929 Golden Arrow land speed record-breaker. Computer generated augmented reality and historic collections will be used to enhance visitor engagement for the 231 mph monster and the reworked display will open in March 2022.

Marathon marked

The Historic Marathon Rally Group will mark the 50th anniversary of the 1970 World Cup Rally with a special event at the British Motor Museum at Gaydon on April 19. Cars from the London-Mexico marathon are being sought along with competitors and officials from the rally that linked the venue of the 1966 World Cup with the host city of the 1970 football competition.

Tests go North

The 2020 edition of the Rally of the Tests will head north to take in a route from Leeds to Edinburgh next November. Following the success of this year's event, which ran from Torquay to Chester, the team at HERO has revealed that next year's route will switch to the north of England and Scotland for three days of classic rallying from November 6 to 8.

Jensen on show

A 1965 Jensen CV8, modified for land speed record attempts, will be on display with the Federation of British Historic Vehicle Clubs at Race Retro in February. The project, headed by Ian Northeast, is due to go to the Bonneville Speed Week this year in a bid to break the 200mph barrier. Two years ago, the car ran at 144mph.

Northern dates out

The dates for the Northern Historic Rally Championship have been released, featuring nine gravel and six asphalt events. The gravel series starts on the Riponian Stages on February 9 while the asphalt season kicks off with the North West Stages on March 21. The Jim Clark Rally is included in both championships.



Riponian is the season-opener

RALLY NEWS DAKAR RALLY PREVIEW

THE ROUTE

2020 Dakar Rally

DATE	TRACK
January 5	Jeddah-Al Wajh (198 miles)
January 6	Al-Wajh-Neom (228 miles)
January 7	Neom-Neom (251 miles)
January 8	Neom-Al Ula (281 miles)
January 9	Al Ula-Ha'il (219 miles)
January 10	Ha'il-Riyadh (297 miles)
January 11	Riyadh rest day
January 12	Riyadh-Wadi Al-Dawasir (339 miles)
January 13	Wadi Al-Dawasir-Wadi Al-Dawasir (294 miles)
January 14	Wadi Al-Dawasir-Haradh (257 miles)
January 15	Haradh-Shubaytah (331 miles)
January 16	Shubaytah-Haradh (230 miles)
January 17	Haradh-Qiddiya (232 miles)



F1 champion is part of Toyota's squad



The epic route for the 12-day Dakar Rally showdown in Saudi Arabia

ALONSO: DAKAR PREP HAS ENRICHED ME

Formula 1 champion is ready for new challenge as team-mate Al-Attiyah starts event as favourite

By David Evans

Fernando Alonso has vowed to keep calm as he starts the biggest motorsport adventure of his life – the 2020 Dakar, which gets underway on Sunday.

The Spaniard arrives at the start of the marathon rally on the back of a third-place finish in the Al Ula-Neom Rally a couple of months ago.

Alonso said: "That result is positive and it gives me confidence. I am doing the Dakar to see what it's like, but even more so to finish it. We know that only one in four people who start this event will get to the end – that's tough.

"I know it will be very difficult. I don't think there is anything more different to Formula 1 than the Dakar, but it's an interesting challenge – certainly, impossible on paper, but I want to take it on and learn. And the preparation I have done the past few months has enriched me as a driver, which is one of my priorities when I confront these kinds of challenges: to be better at the end of each of them.

"I have to approach it with a certain calmness. I don't want to go the Dakar, then quit after the second or third day because of a stupid mistake."

Alonso joins a Toyota squad packed with experience and success with three-time winner Nasser Al-Attiyah and one-time victor Giniel de Villiers also driving the South African-built and run Hilux.

Al-Attiyah scored Toyota's first win on the Dakar last year and will be looking to



Sainz will handle an X-Raid Mini

repeat that success as he moves into terrain more familiar to a 13-time Middle East Rally champion. Talking to MN ahead of the event, Al-Attiyah admitted he would start as favourite.

"The 2019 event was special," said Al-Attiyah, who has won nine of the 10 cross-country events he has started this year. "To make this first win for Toyota was so nice. And we dominated from the start to finish. I only retired in Morocco, but it was actually a good thing we had electric problems – that way we could better prepare the car and anticipate other problems for the Dakar.

"I am ready for the Dakar and quite excited. It is going to be completely different. I won races in 2008 and 2011 in this country and I know exactly what to expect. The dunes are very tricky and totally different than those in South America. It is more like Mauritania. We have the same kind of dunes in Qatar and



There will be lots of hazards to avoid on the Dakar Rally, including wildlife

I grew up driving them with my father. There are only 110kms (70 miles) between the dunes in Qatar and those in Saudi Arabia. The terrain suits me, so, yes, I believe that I am the favourite. And it's not the best car that wins, it's the best driver."

Toyota's main competition will come from the X-Raid Mini John Cooper Works team of 13-time Dakar winner Stéphane Peterhansel and two-time World Rally champion Carlos Sainz.

Despite having enjoyed such success in the past, Peterhansel is not so sure he will challenge for win number 14 this month. The reason is two-fold: the 54-year-old is getting closer to retirement and his wife Andrea is co-driving him for the first time. Despite Andrea having started nine Dakars previously, this is the highest profile start for her.

"I don't think we are favourites – there are crews more complete than us," said Peterhansel, before adding

diplomatically: "But we do get along very well in the car. We had been thinking about participating together for several years but it took us some time. This new chapter in Saudi Arabia is ideal for us to set off together. I am approaching retirement and I needed a new challenge, to do something different. If I didn't do this with Andrea, I am not sure I would continue. I am very motivated and I can feel it in our preparation. I have the impression that this challenge has brought us closer together."

Peterhansel's team-mate Sainz is confident he can score a third Dakar win and a first aboard the two-wheel-drive buggy-style Mini. Sainz has already competed in Saudi Arabia, finishing second on the Sharqiyah Baja in the middle of December.

Typically, the Spaniard is full of fighting talk. He said: "I see myself winning the Dakar 100%. If I didn't, I wouldn't do it.



Alonso says caution is important

When you reach a certain age, getting physically prepared to be at the best level and using all your abilities requires a lot of effort. You have to get up every day and do aerobic exercises and weight lifting. I think I have earned the right to decide whether or not I want to race. I just won two stages in the Morocco Rally. If I am here, it is because I believe I can win."

This year's event will include at least four sections where the co-drivers only get to see the road book the morning of the competition, offering precious little time for preparation. Sainz says that change will put more emphasis on the navigators and bring a different dimension to the rally.

He added: "I think going to a more desert country like Saudi Arabia will help restore the Dakar philosophy and I have the feeling it is going to be a tough Dakar, particularly long, with long stages and more than four to five hours in the car."

THE DARK CLOUD HANGING OVER THE UK'S SHORT OVALS

PAGE 28



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'Younger McRae for UK event'
Alister's son tipped for Knockhill run, p14



HIGGINS SAYS SOLBERG JR IS A FUTURE CHAMPION

Subaru USA team-mate says teenager has the ingredients to shine in WRC

By David Evans

David Higgins has tipped his Subaru Motorsports USA team-mate Oliver Solberg as a World Rally champion of the future following their first season together this year.

Higgins welcomed Solberg to the squad for his maiden American Rally Association series this season and was immediately impressed by the then 17-year-old's speed. The pair competed together on six rounds of the series and both drivers won three ARA rounds, but it was Higgins who celebrated a 10th American championship title.

Higgins said: "I was impressed with Oliver straight away, he had great speed straight out of the box, which was really good in quite a different car to anything he'd been driving before. If he can rein in some of his enthusiasm – which he will do as he gets more experience of the sport – then there's no doubt in my mind that he can be a world champion."

Higgins has dominated the American scene for close to a decade and admitted his approach was too conservative in the first half of the year.

"I was driving to finish rallies," he said. "My pacenotes were fairly safe and I was looking not to damage the car or be too

hard on it. When Oliver came to the team, the pace went up a level and I had to adjust to that.

"When you look at what he's done to other drivers in Europe, the guys he's beaten, I'm pretty proud of the speed we showed against him on the rallies we did together. OK, we had some problems and so did he, but the speed was there and I think we ran him closer than anybody else. Let's face it, I think he's a bit of an exception when it comes to incredible rally talent – these kind of guys come along once in a while and, like Kalle Rovanpera, Oliver's right there."

Higgins' future in the American Rally Association remains unclear at the moment. Remaining at the stateside Subaru squad he's been with since 2011 now looks unlikely, but he's adamant he's not ready to quit. "I'm definitely interested to go back to America for another year," said Higgins. "I've won 10 titles, which is one short of John Buffum's record of 11. It would be nice to equal that. I'm talking to some other teams out there, but the open class cars like the Subarus are quite different to the more regular R5 cars out there. It could be difficult, but let's see what happens."

The ARA series starts with the Sno*Drift Rally in Michigan on January 24.



Solberg Jr shone on his USA outings

Monte Carlo entry placed in Volkswagen R5 but no clues on the rest of 2020 attack

Oliver Solberg has confirmed his entry on next month's Monte Carlo Rally, but denied he has signed a deal with Skoda Motorsport.

Despite the Czech manufacturer confirming it won't be running a factory WRC 2 team next season, Solberg's name remains linked to a Fabia R5 evo for several world championship outings.

The one thing that is confirmed for the 18-year-old is his outing on the Gap-based WRC opener from January 23-26. He will drive the

same Volkswagen Polo R5 he used on his WRC debut at Wales Rally GB this season.

Asked about the year ahead, Solberg told MN: "We're doing Monte Carlo in our own Polo R5 car – I'll be doing some testing in France early next month. After that, I don't know yet what is exactly happening. We're talking to some teams and Skoda's one of those teams. Hopefully everything should be more clear and we will know more after Monte Carlo."

It looks increasingly likely that Solberg will base his season around WRC next year, despite his instant success in the American Rally Association with Subaru.

He added: "I want to be driving the R5 car in WRC 2 or WRC 3 next season and that's the dream for me. The only priority for me is to be driving. I want to do as many rounds of the championship as possible, maybe some of the long-haul rallies could be difficult, we have to see. Like I say, nothing is sure yet."

Rally Sweden – the event based close to his home near Torsby – is a priority for Solberg.

"I grew up watching my dad competing on that event close to my home," he said, "of course I want to do it! Last year was tough, remember I won Sarma Rally in Latvia and a lot of the guys were going from there straight to Sweden. I was desperate to do that! Sweden would be a big priority for me – the roads are going so close to my home and to our team in Torsby."



Gronholm was impressed

Gronholm checks in on developments to MEM's Proton Iriz R5

Two-time World Rally champion Marcus Gronholm has tested Proton's Iriz R5 for the second time and talked of the car's potential for the future.

The Finn drove the Proton as part of its early development in 2017 and was back behind the wheel in Northern Ireland the week before Christmas.

Gronholm told MN he was pleased with the progression the Bakewell-based MEM team has made with the car.

He said: "Straight away, I felt comfortable. Maybe there's things to do in the shock absorbers, but this is fine-tuning. When I drove the car for the first time, I asked that they would look at things and they did."

Most of Gronholm's time was spent on the loose, before a morning on slippery asphalt – not the Finn's favourite surface.

Gronholm said: "I remember last time I was on this island. I lost my chance for the WRC in

my last year. I crashed to the wall near a lake [on Rally Ireland in 2007]. It was much more relaxing coming back here 12 years later!"

"The Tarmac driving in the morning was difficult, it was so slippery. This was not really so much of a test, more just driving. The car was good, the next job would be to take it to Sweden or to Finland to do some pre-event testing and set-up work – but that's for the real drivers, I was just guest driver!"

Pirelli wins the tender process to supply World Rally Championship rubber from 2021

Pirelli will return as the World Rally Championship's single tyre supplier from 2021.

The Italian firm, which has supplied a control tyre to Formula 1 since 2011, will provide tyres for all factory WRC cars as well as the WRC 2 and WRC 3 series for 2021.

Four tyre companies went into the final stage of the tender process, but Pirelli edged Michelin, MRF and Hankook for the decision. Pirelli was the WRC's last single tyre supplier between 2008 and 2010.

FIA rally director Yves Matton told MN: "The main objectives

for the FIA was to ensure equity in the series and to give benefit to the different stakeholders and to the manufacturers and drivers.

"It was important to see the innovation coming [from Pirelli]. We know that motorsport is a technical laboratory. Pirelli has history in the championship and

we've seen before what it can do."

MN understands a return to a Pirelli Star Driver-style scheme was part of its tender and that is something the FIA will be working towards in the future.

Pirelli supplies the FIA Junior WRC. Its F1 commitment runs until the end of 2023.

GROUP RALLYING EDITOR

DAVID EVANS

"Alonso needs to stick to his Dakar plan"



It's that time of the year... the time when we're done with turkey, we're trying not to think about what we were doing this time last week and wondering why, once again, we didn't bother to cover the windscreen last night.

It's also the time when we spend a huge amount of time watching cars, lorries and bikes driving and riding through sand dunes.

It's Dakar time. Dakar that is in the name. After emerging from Africa, Dakar's been west to South America and now it's time to head east, or the Middle East at least as the event's third evolution gets underway in Saudi Arabia on Sunday.

The 13-day event starts from Jeddah and finishes in Qiddiya after 12 days of driving totalling close to 5000 miles, 3167 of which will be competitive sections.

But what about Saudi, what do we know about the place? Beyond the fact that my father-in-law worked out there for 20 years (something you probably didn't know) and it's the 13th biggest country in the world – but the biggest without a river – I don't know much.

That's all about to change as we tune in to watch two-time Formula 1 world champion Fernando Alonso step firmly outside his comfort zone for the best part of a dusty fortnight driving a fancy pickup through the desert. Good on Alonso for giving it a go.

What chance does the Spaniard have? Well, anybody who's in one of the Toyota Gazoo Racing Hilux is in with a good chance. So much of his progress will depend on his temperament, approach and ability to stick to his plan.

Nasser Al-Attiyah feels he's favourite for this one – as well he might: his Qatari homeland is just a hundred miles through the dunes.

But what's worth considering is that the route will be 75% run on sand. And that surface is more likely to favour X-Raid's Mini JCW buggies. Especially the Peterhansels – Stéphane and his good lady Andrea. The buggies might be rear-wheel drive, but they're still allowed to run the automatic deflation and re-inflation system on the tyres. When the sand gets soft, Stéphane and Carlos Sainz flick a switch to drop the pressures before plotting a course through the dunes. The four-wheel-drive Toyota drivers have to stop, jump out, let their tyres down, drive on, then pump them up again. Takes ages.

And, on previous South American Dakars, four-wheel drive definitely favoured the more stage-like roads in Argentina rather than the vast expanses of sand in the Atacama desert.

Before I go, one more thing I've learned about Saudi Arabia is that work has stopped on the Jeddah or Kingdom Tower. This was supposed to be the first mile-high construction, until they discovered the sand might be too wobbly. Instead, they decided to make it 3,280ft. Or one kilometre. Having reached floor 60-something out of 200 or so, building work has stopped. Not a brick's been laid for the last two years.

AGREE/DISAGREE?
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RALLY NEWS

MAX McRAE SET FOR UK RALLYING DEBUT

Alister's son tipped to join family celebrations in McRae Rally Challenge event

By David Evans

Max McRae has been tipped to make his British rallying debut at next year's McRae Rally Challenge – the Knockhill-based event to celebrate the 25th anniversary of his uncle Colin's World Rally Championship title.

The October celebration will be the first time three generations of McRae have competed at the same event with his grandfather, five-time British champion Jimmy and father, former British and Asia Pacific Rally champion Alister also set for the one-off rally.

Fifteen-year-old Max won the Arise Racing Driver Search competition at home in Australia and will compete in the Western Australia Formula 1000 series next year. Having won numerous karting titles, the move into single-seaters makes sense, but McRae Jr's ambitions remain in rallying.

"I have a great opportunity with Formula 1000 this year," he said, "driving cars like the Radical in the selection process was such good experience. I still can't believe I've won it, to be honest. I'm really excited about the season ahead and the chance to make the move out of karts and into racing cars.

"At the same time, rallying is so important for me. I had the chance to go to Wales to drive some of the cars my dad and Colin drove in their career, which was amazing."

Max is unlikely to be seen in a Subaru Impreza WRC at Knockhill next year, but father Alister is keen for him to take part.

"Obviously we're all looking forward to the McRae Rally Challenge," said Alister, "and Max's gramps is very keen to have him there on the entry list. I think it would be great to have dad, me and Max on the same event. Max will be 16 by the time October comes, so we'll have to see what's possible, see if we can't get him into a junior car, a one-litre something. We don't want him in anything quicker – we don't want to give him the chance to embarrass his gramps!"

In addition to his racing commitments in Australia, Max will also compete in a Tarmac Rallysprint Series close to his home in Perth.

The McRae Rally Challenge runs from Friday October 2-Sunday October 4. As well as the circuit-based stages, there will be evening functions with stars of the rally world on Friday and Saturday evening. Tickets and further details are available from knockhill.com.



Max (centre) is set to join Alister (l) and Jimmy
Photos: mcklein-imagedatabase.com



Olympian Hoy drove McRae's Subaru on Oulton Park stage

Hoy also wants to join commemorations of 25-year anniversary of Colin's WRC title

Sir Chris Hoy could make his stage rally debut at October's McRae Rally Challenge with the British Olympic legend keen to join the Knockhill event.

Hoy has close links with the McRae family and has driven ex-Colin McRae cars on numerous occasions – the last being at the Oulton Park

stage on Wales Rally GB this season, where he drove Jimmy McRae through the all-asphalt test in Colin's 1995 RAC-winning Subaru Impreza 555.

"I would love to do the McRae Rally Challenge," Hoy told MN. "I have to see if it's possible, but it's going to be an incredible occasion. What I did in Wales with Jimmy was

really quite emotional; the poignancy of the car and all of those people around and the love and respect people still have for Colin. It's so sad that he's not around to see it."

Competitors, rivals and fellow world champions are expected to join the 25th anniversary celebration of Colin McRae's

maiden world title in Scotland in October.

Jimmy McRae told MN: "There's been a good few folk on the phone saying they're keen to come along, a fair few of them world champions. I'm sure it's going to be a good event with some great cars – it'll be a fitting celebration of 25 years ago."

Opel begins durability testing for electric series

Opel Motorsport is durability testing its Corsa-e Rally in Germany ahead of next season's maiden ADAC Opel e-Rally Cup.

Opel is running a brace of test 100kW (136bhp) cars at the Dudenhofen test centre. The rally cars utilise the same battery as the road car, with 50kW energy storage offering 209 miles of regular use or 37 miles of competition.

"We have two objectives," said Opel Motorsport director, Jorg Schrott. "Both cars are covering as many miles as possible in order to gather the maximum amount of data at an early stage.

"There is no experience of an electric rally car that we could turn to, so initially we had to rely on calculations and simulations. These are being gradually replaced with real data. Other focuses are on loads and temperature management of the battery, as well as adapting the software. I am pleased to report our programme is going smoothly."

Schrott said the firm would switch its attention to performance

running next month – with the aim of exceeding the e-Rally Cup's predecessor, the Opel Adam Cup.

He added: "With the cup car, it is important that the performance remains constant and accessible under all conditions. The equipment should guarantee equal opportunity for all participants.

"We also decided that the Corsa-e Rally should match or even exceed the high standards of its petrol-engine predecessor, the Opel Adam Cup. We are on the right road here too. While the power output is almost the same, the 260Nm of torque is much higher than the Adam Cup's. The centre of gravity is low, thanks to the underfloor-mounted battery and the weight distribution is also very good, which is important for an agile competition car. Now we need to find the most balanced chassis set-up, so in January we will start simulating some real rally stages."

Entries for the ADAC Opel e-Rally Cup are now open, with 15 cars available in the series which starts in July.



Corsa-e Rally electric machine will replace the old cars used in the Opel Adam Cup

New third tier of rally cars set for approval

Regulations for a third tier of homologated four-wheel-drive cars will be presented to World Motor Sport Council in March next year.

As outlined by MN in October, the FIA's new pyramid structure will sit Rally3 cars directly beneath Rally1 (World Rally Cars) and Rally2 (formerly known as R5) and are expected to become available in 2021.

While the cars will be homologated for the World Rally Championship, FIA rally director Yves Matton says they are important for regional series.

"We know we are missing a product on regional rallies for four-wheel drive," said Matton. "We are very close to publishing the final regulations. For the moment we have four manufacturers interested in this product and it will be a huge step for regional rallies, especially in Middle East, Africa and South America. This is very important."

Rally3 will be open to cars with engines of 927cc (turbo) to 1620cc (non-turbo) with power outputs restricted to run at 210bhp.

LEPLEY IMPRESSED WITH NEW FORD FIESTA R2 AFTER TEST

BTRDA Silver Star champion and other rallying youngsters take part in EDSL Sport's open test session

Photos: Chicane Media, Stanislav Kucera Photography



Lepley was happy with the Fiesta R2

By Luke Barry

Two-time BTRDA Silver Star champion George Lepley was among 10 drivers to sample a 2019-spec Ford Fiesta R2 earlier this month as he considers his options for next year.

EDSL Sport hosted an open test session around Curborough Sprint Course, allowing several young drivers the opportunity to try out the car that will exclusively be used in next year's Junior British Rally Championship.

Lepley, who was joined by Down Rally winner Jon Armstrong and BTRDA regular Zak Brown among others, was left impressed by the performance of the latest Ford Fiesta R2 as he assesses his options for the 2020 season with a move into the JBRC a possibility.

"I've only seen the new generation R2 car, I've never sat in one or driven one, so it was a good opportunity to try one and I was pleasantly surprised," Lepley told Motorsport News.

"I thought the handling was brilliant, definitely a step on from the old car. It felt more stable through the corners so that was nice [and] it felt fairly nippy. It was

a good, productive day."

Lepley has won the BTRDA Silver Star series for the past two seasons – most recently in a Hillman Avenger – and impressed on his two Gold Star outings in a Mitsubishi Lancer E10 as well, taking second overall on the Woodpecker Stages.

"It's that time of year when you have to consider all your options," he added. "Ideally I'm looking for opportunities [to progress] in the sport but it is very difficult in the UK."

EDSL Sport team principal Alex Waterman said the test day "couldn't have gone any better" and is encouraged by the level of interest shown from potential drivers.

"We had 10 drivers turn up all with varying backgrounds and aspirations," Waterman told MN. "The mix of people there created a really nice atmosphere."

"It was great to have Iain [Campbell, BRC championship manager] and Ben [Buesnel, BRC media manager] there to speak to the guys who are looking at the championship for 2020. I have my fingers firmly crossed that a lot of the positive talks turn into something and that we have a busy year in 2020."

Meadows back to BTRDA for 2020

BTRDA R2 Rallye Cup runner-up Tommi Meadows will compete in the championship again next season as he attempts to gain more experience on Tarmac.

Meadows, who claimed two class wins this season on the Nicky Grist and Woodpecker Stages, will remain in a Ford Fiesta R2 next year and will also continue with co-driver Osian Owen who he joined up with midway through 2019.

"We had looked at moving up to the British Rally Championship, but the budget was a bit too high for us," Meadows told Motorsport News.

"This year we've had such a leg up from Peter Smith to get into the R2, so the aim is to get more experience in the mixed surface next year, especially on Tarmac."

MORE HISTORIC OUTINGS FOR WATERMAN

Former Junior British Rally Championship driver Alex Waterman is considering an historic programme next season following his outing on this year's Roger Albert Clark Rally.

The team principal of EDSL Sport came 75th overall on the event in November at the wheel of a rear-engined, rear-wheel-drive Skoda 130 L having only ever rallied in a Ford Fiesta R2 before.

"It's probably the best rally I've ever done, and considering I've been to Finland I think that says quite a lot," Waterman told MN.

"I loved it so much that I came home and said to dad that we've got to go historic rallying. We've already said that we want to go back to the R.A.C. in 2021 and we're trying to find a fairly unique car for that. But we're also looking to try and get something to maybe go and do a few historic

events in the year, so Ypres Historic [and] we were looking at the BHRC Asphalt Championship.

"We're trying to find a unique car because [if] you look at the entry list for the R.A.C., for every six Ford Escort Mk2s you've got one non-Mk2. [And] the one really nice thing about the Skoda was that every person that saw it said, 'it's so nice to see this, it's something different and I haven't seen one in ages'."

Waterman intended to compete in the Mini Tempest Rally between Christmas and New Year on December 29 in his dad's Escort Mk2.

"My dad has rallied Escorts for years and is lucky enough to own a Mk2 BD," he added.

"I have always pestered him for a go and he has always said one day I would be able to do an event, and the Mini Tempest seemed like the perfect opportunity."



Waterman took Skoda 130 L to 75th on this year's R.A.C.



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RALLY NEWS



Photos: Kevin Money

Tindall in action on Christmas Stages

JOHN EASSON AWARD GOES TO TINDALL

Youngster plans full-time BTRDA R2 Rallye Cup campaign in 2020



L-r: Retson, Tindall, Hartley

By Stephen Brunson

Ewan Tindall says he hopes to gain as much experience as possible in his second season of the BTRDA R2 Rallye Cup next year after winning the 2300 Club John Easson Award.

The 18-year-old from Newcastle was one of three finalists shortlisted for the annual award, with Junior British Rally Championship driver Finlay Retson and Jack Hartley the other nominees.

Tindall, a former GB and Scottish Junior 1000 champion, will receive a total prize of £6000

meaning the teenager will embark on a full season of BTRDA for the first time in 2020 alongside experienced co-driver Andrew Roughead.

"I'm really happy to have won the award, and for the prize. We're a family-run team and we struggle for budget usually, so this will help with entry fees for next season which are pretty much paid for now," Tindall told Motorsport News.

"We'll be doing the R2 Rallye Cup again this year, which will be a great test for us in the car. I've never done the Cambrian before but hopefully we'll get some testing done before the

event. Without this prize, we wouldn't have been able to do this."

Tindall was selected as the winner from a judging panel which included recently-crowned European Rally Championship champion and former John Easson Award winner, Chris Ingram.

"As always it is unfortunate that there can only be one winner," Ingram said, "however we feel Ewan will be a worthy recipient of the John Easson Award and of course we wish runners-up Finley and Jack the very best of luck with their continued rallying."

Competitors question calendar shake-up

The decision to hold the Northern Ireland Rally Championship entirely on Tarmac next season has been questioned by competitors.

Motorsport News understands that next season's contest will not incorporate any forest-based meetings, with the calendar due to be finalised last week.

The decision means both the Lakeland Stages Rally and the Bushwhacker Rally will be dropped, but will make up another championship called the ANICC Stage Rally Gravel Challenge (MN, December 11).

As for the new-look Northern Ireland Championship, it will consist of five rallies of which two will be track meetings and take place at Kirkistown (February 15) and Bishopscourt (March 7). They will be followed by the Maiden City Stages (April 25), the Tour of the Sperrins (June 6) and the Tyrone Stages (July 18). The

Tyrone Stages, for the first time, is also a counter of the Motorsport UK Asphalt Rally Championship which the Down Rally had the honour of hosting previously.

Stephen Wright, the first person from the Republic of Ireland to lift the NI title, has labelled the changes as "strange".

"I liked the format they had but maybe they were finding competitors were sticking to one surface meaning championship battles were light?" he told MN.

"It doesn't really influence my plans, though, as I won't be in a position to defend my title next year. I do, however, hope to start a few of them."

Derek McGarrity – a seven-time winner of the championship – has been scathing of the changes. "It is a load of rubbish having two championships, it is the wrong move," he said.

Tracking system for rallying in Ireland

Motorsport Ireland will introduce a tracking system to all its events next season in a bid to improve safety for competitors, spectators and marshals.

Last September, the Irish governing body invited tenders with seven eventually submitted and examined by a special committee before the preferred tender was subsequently sanctioned by the Motorsport Council.

A merger between Lithuanian tracker company 4rally and well-known Irish motorsport company EARS (EARS Motorsport Ireland) won the tender.

Trackers will cost €37 (£31.61) for competitors per event and will be first used on the Donegal Mini Stage Rally on January 25, but won't be required for recesses.

Angela Henahan, chairperson of the Rallies Commission said: "One of

the first functions that I was given by the Motorsport Council when I took up this position last January was to explore a tracking system.

"Following a meeting in July I was mandated to continue exploring the issue provided the cost was going to be under €40.00 [€34.17, per competitor]."

"We have succeeded in doing that and competitors have warmed to the idea. It's going to be a safety and management tool for the event and I think the system will only be as good as to how we use the information.

"It will increase the safety element of our events. We now have a relationship directly with the competing cars and we will know where they are at all times."

Tracking systems have been used before, such as at this year's Mull Rally when emergency services were called to help a spectator who had fallen into a river.

MOTORSPORT NEWS REPORTER

STEFAN MACKLEY

"2020 should be another year to remember"



What an incredible year it's been for rallying in the UK. There was the return – after plenty of hard work behind the scenes, it should be noted – of the popular Mull and Jim Clark rallies after an absence of three and five years respectively.

The gruelling Roger Albert Clark Rally took place and didn't fail to entertain as thousands of fans lined the stages over five days. There was Wales Rally GB, which featured a new route beginning at Oulton Park and travelling across the country that – unless you were part of the Citroen team service crew – was widely praised and deemed a success.

The British Rally Championship title battle between Matt Edwards and Tom Cave went down to the final round, and more closed-road events were held with the first event in Wales – Rali Bae Ceredigion – making use of the new legislation.

That's not to mention some special moments from individuals. Chris Ingram becoming the first Brit since Vic Elford in 1967 to win the European Rally Championship was dramatic to say the least.

Also, two-time BRC champion Edwards popping inside the top 10 on the opening stage of Wales Rally GB was a welcome surprise to many.

There was also Craig Breen's exploits in the Irish Tarmac Rally Championship – where he dominated and showed why he's worthy of another crack at the sport's highest level – and the number of R5s taking to the stages was encouraging.

But that's enough of looking back and reminiscing as focus turns towards 2020 and what we can expect from the year ahead.

Starting from the top Elfyn Evans has his best chance yet of challenging for the World Rally Championship with Toyota and it will be interesting to see how the Welshman adapts to moving away from M-Sport after eight years with the team.

The Jim Clark Rally will once again return to its traditional May date and is part of the Scottish Rally Championship calendar.

Speaking of calendars, the BRC schedule for next year makes for interesting reading as six venues in six different countries will be used, arguably the most exciting of which is Tendring and Clacton as the event joins for the first time.

There's also the young talent coming through, such as two-time BTDR Silver Star champion George Lepley and Junior BRC champion Josh McErlean, both of whom continue to impress and excite with each outing.

Factor in all the other rallying events, incredible support from drivers, marshals and fans and the amazing range of machines out on the stages then 2020 should be another year to remember.

HISTORICS

CREATING SOME BRAND NEW MEMORIES IN SOME CLASSIC MACHINES

The range and diversity of UK historic motorsport is astounding. **Paul Lawrence** picks out a few highlights from 2019



The Mini warfare was one of the highlights of Goodwood

1 MINIS AT GOODWOOD

The 60th anniversary year of the Mini was a perfect platform for a celebration race for Britain's favourite small car. Goodwood did it best, with

the Betty Haig Memorial race at the 77th Members' Meeting.

A grid full of pre '66 cars was sure to deliver the thrills and such was the demand for entries that the timetable was shuffled to allow two heats and a final, so 60 cars went for 30 places in Sunday's finale.

The great and the good of Mini racing came out to play and the race action around the Sussex sweeps was frenetic, although the widely-anticipated chaos was largely avoided. Huge packs of slipstreaming cars, monstrous four-wheel drifts and door-handle action were all

part of the show, albeit without the unacceptable level of contact seen in a similar race at the Silverstone Classic in July.

The Goodwood final produced a glorious five-way lead fight that was only decided at the final corner as victory fell to Nick Swift after

Nick Padmore went wide at Woodcote.

Mini enthusiast Jonathan Lewis chased them home for the final podium slot with Ian Curley in tow. Swift was overjoyed to win at his favourite track. "It was the ultimate Mini race and it was the one that everyone wanted to win," he said.

2 LE MANS START AT SILVERSTONE



On the run: drivers sprint to their cars at Silverstone

The Vintage Sports-Car Club pulled off one of the sights of the year when 40 racing Bentleys took part in a Le Mans start at the club's traditional season-opener at Silverstone in April.

A Le Mans-style start was used in the UK for the first time in over 50 years for a race celebrating 100 years of Bentley.

A grid of 40 vintage Bentleys started the very special Benjafields 100 Race and the sport's governing body, Motorsport UK, gave permission for the race to start with the drivers running across the track and jumping into their

cars before leaving the grid.

It was the style of race start used in the classic French 24-hours when Bentley dominated the race in the late 1920s but it was later outlawed for the UK in 1962 on safety grounds.

The growing demands of seat belts made it unworkable.

A whopping 57 years later, the VSCC brought it back and the whole thing was a spectacular success. The race went on to be a corker as little more than a second split the top two after 45 minutes of racing as Richard Hudson and Stuart Morley narrowly fended off Ewen Getley and Robin Tuluie.

3 DONINGTON HISTORIC FESTIVAL



The iconic tin-tops put on a great show at Donington

The annual Donington Historic Festival may not have the scale of off-track activities of some rival events, but it truly packs a lot of punch with a stellar race line-up of pan-European historic categories.

This was the ninth edition of the event put together by Duncan Wiltshire and his team at Historic Promotions Ltd and it is an event that Donington Park deserves. Now at least back to its former glory after the ravages of the abortive British Grand Prix venture, the East Midlands track is always a popular destination for historic racing.

Highlights included some epic early laps in the Historic Touring Car Challenge as a gaggle of BMW

M3s, Sierra Cosworths and Cologne Capris fought mightily for the lead. Sadly the contest didn't go the distance, but it was memorable while it lasted. British Touring Car Championship aces Colin Turkington and Adam Morgan showed their class as leading players in the showdown.

Six days after the shunt that cost him the 2019 BTCC title, Andrew Jordan was back to show his class in the family Austin A40 and his total commitment down the Craner Curves belied the fact that he had left the scene in an ambulance less than a week earlier. Andrew and his father Mike topped the HRDC Touring Greats race in style.

Photos: Paul Lawrence, Richard Styles

4 SHELSLEY WALSH CLASSIC NOSTALGIA

When it comes to history, the 1000-yard hillclimb at Shelsley Walsh can top trump any other UK venue, so the annual Classic Nostalgia event really should be special.

In truth, the competitive entry of pre-'80 cars was relatively low-key until it came to the fabulous array of rally cars running with Ralli22, which featured a celebration of Group A, Group B and World Rally Cars spanning 22 years.

A special feature of the event was seven ex-works Subaru Impreza World Rally Cars, which is thought to be the most examples ever together at one event in the UK.

Over 30 cars, including a range of Group B monsters, lit up the side

of the Teme Valley, some running demonstration climbs and others pitched into competition. On Saturday, Niall Moroney topped the field in his 1998 Subaru Impreza WRC with a best of 32.89 seconds while on Sunday John Clayton's invitation Mitsubishi E9 pulled out a 32.84s best to beat Moroney by 0.14s.

However, the ultimate star of the show was Mick Strafford and his thundering V8 Chevrolet-powered Vauxhall Firenza Can-Am. In true Strafford style, he lit the rear tyres up off the startline and was still burning rubber by the time he swung left at Kennel Bend.



Mick Strafford was one of the stars at Shelsley

5 TOM PRYCE MEMORIAL MEETING



Ben Stiles leads at the Tom Pryce Memorial meeting

There is no better setting in the UK for a race track than Anglesey and, when the weather is as co-operative as it was for July's Tom Pryce Memorial Meeting, it is a glorious place to go racing.

In terms of historic racing, Anglesey has been sorely under-exposed since the fabulous new track layout was inaugurated a decade ago. The wide, smooth, flowing, three-dimensional track is an absolute delight and there are ample run-off areas at all corners. It is ideally suited to historic racing.

The Historic Sports Car Club took a mid-July date and duly set out for North Wales, with many members making their debut at the island-based venue.

The response was overwhelmingly positive and a holiday atmosphere, along with a celebration of the life of local hero Tom Pryce, made it a memorable weekend of racing.

With warm sunshine and stunning views all round, this was Anglesey at its best and the on-track action matched the quality of the surroundings.

One of the stars of the weekend was young, unassuming, talented and under-funded: just like Tom Pryce in his formative years. Ben Stiles was the star of the weekend with a fabulous double win in Formula Ford 2000.

7 CASTLE COMBE AUTUMN CLASSIC

One of the most accessible and popular historic racing festivals on a busy schedule is the annual Castle Combe Autumn Classic.

It brings a flavour of the 1960s back to one of Britain's longest-established race tracks and offers some historic categories a once-a-year chance to pit themselves against the Wiltshire track.

The eighth edition of the October event was probably the best yet, shaking off the soaking weather that dogged the 2018 fixture. The only cloud over the 2019 edition was the death of Austin A40 racer Marc Swaffer, who suffered a heart attack while at the wheel.

At the heart of the race

programme was the Historic Racing Drivers' Club with a remarkable turnout of more than 100 cars for three races. The spectacle of a 39-car grid for the Coys Trophy pouring over Avon Rise and into Quarry was one of the sights of the season. The immaculate Jordan Racing Team Lotus Cortinas of Ambrogio Perfetti and Peter Chambers went on to finish 1-2 in front of packed and appreciative spectator banks.

Earlier delays meant that the light was fading as a busy grid of Frazer Nashes tackled the Freddie Giles Memorial Trophy but the race proved that Nashes oversteer just as well in the dusk as they do the daylight.



There were some large grids at the Castle Combe spectacular



McCormack won the battle of the stages on the Roger Albert

6 HISTORIC FORMULA 2: SILVERSTONE CLASSIC

The 2019 season was a runaway success for the Historic Formula 2 category and nowhere was that more evident than at the Silverstone Classic as the class made its debut appearance at this huge event.

Initial ambitions of a record-breaking 40-car grid soon proved wide of the mark as the entry list grew like Topsy and peaked at an unprecedented 70 cars.

Never had so much support been seen for the Formula 2 and Formula Atlantic cars of the 1970s. Inevitably a few dropped by the wayside, several after a scorching weekend at Magny-Cours when keeping engine

temperatures in a workable range was almost impossible.

Nevertheless, 56 cars went out for qualifying, 52 started the first race and 51 lined up on Sunday to make a glorious spectacle. After searing heat for testing on Thursday, the temperature had dropped 20 degrees by Saturday morning to a wet 17 degrees, but the F2 pack put on two stunning races as drivers of the calibre of Martin O'Connell, Miles Griffiths and Darwin Smith battled it out.

This was the weekend when Historic F2 laid serious claim to being the best period single-seater category.



The HSCC Formula Two machines lit up Silverstone

8 RETURN OF THE ROGER ALBERT CLARK RALLY

Victory on the Roger Albert Clark Rally in November made Marty McCormack the most successful driver in the event's 13 editions as he became the first driver to chalk up three victories.

But, just like the rest, this was won the hard way. Back in 2007 the youngster from Northern Ireland really came to prominence with some stunning stage times. A year later he hassled winner Malcolm Wilson until going off in Craik.

In 2012, McCormack won an epic battle with Steve Bannister by just 17 seconds and in 2017 there was a typically sporting battle with Matthew Robinson.

This time around, it was Jason Pritchard who hounded

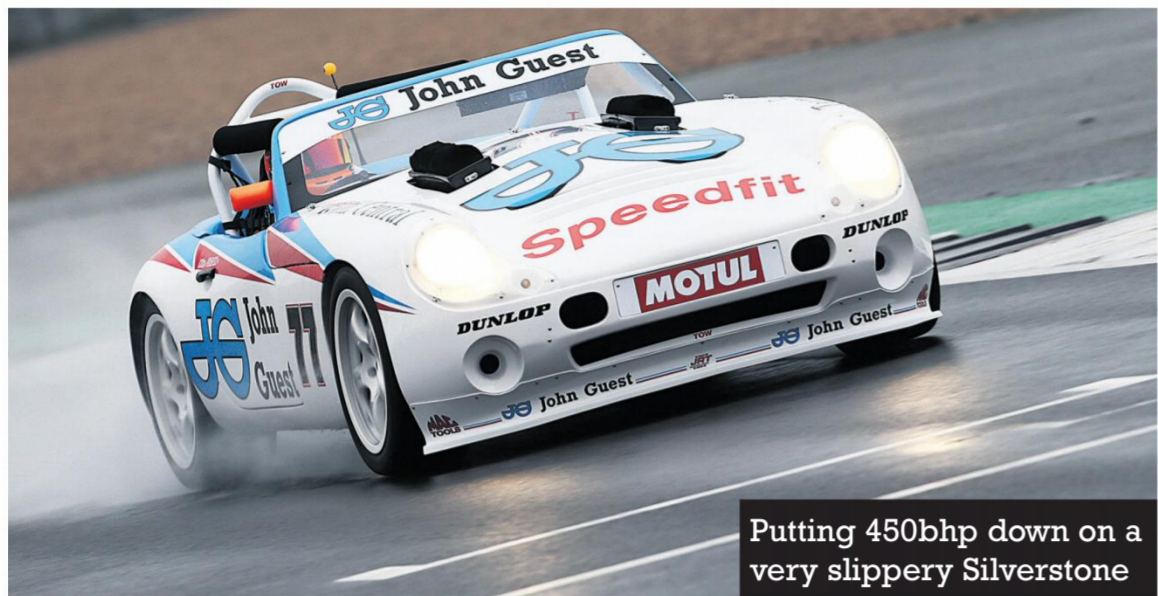
McCormack relentlessly on this truly epic rally.

From the fog of Radnor on Thursday evening to the drizzle of Bewshaugh 300 stage miles later on Monday afternoon, it was a nip-and-tuck battle between two Ford Escort Mk2 drivers at the top of their game.

When the gap at the end of the final stage dropped to 52s, Pritchard could only contemplate the puncture in Greskine on Sunday morning that cost him around 45s. He'd also watched one of McCormack's rear tyres go down in the re-group control after the Falstone stage.

It really was that close on the rally of the year.

TVR TRACK TEST



Putting 450bhp down on a very slippery Silverstone



Jordan said memories came flooding back



JORDAN TAKES A VERY WET TRIP DOWN MEMORY LANE

Matt James talks to Mike Jordan, who has tracked down and rebuilt



Mike Jordan and his favourite racing car



A packed grid: Jamie Campbell-Walter and

The rain at Silverstone in late-December was relentless, but there was no way that this appointment was going to be missed. Mike Jordan was about to be reunited with his favourite race car from his personal history.

Jordan, father of 2013 British Touring Car title winner Andrew and the 2001 British GT champion, had spent two years in the TVR Tuscan Challenge in 1999 and 2000. The seven-time Tuscan race winner had spent months painstakingly restoring his original race car, and the test session was the ultimate iteration of friends reunited.

The path to getting his backside into the cockpit of his very own 4.5-litre rocketship was a convoluted one. But, then again, wasn't everything which revolved around the TVR Tuscan Challenge?

This tale involved his former on-track Tuscan rival Michael Caine, who would go on to win the one-make title in the year 2000.

Jordan Sr explains: "It is a bit of a typical Michael Caine story, this one. A few years ago, he bought my old TVR Tuscan, which had been doing a bit of TVR Car Club stuff. He phoned me to say that he had it. I immediately asked him if he wanted to sell it to me and he refused! He said the only one he would ever want, apart from the one he used to get his title, was my one. And he said he couldn't get hold of his."

"Back in 2017 at Christmas, I was watching some old TVR Tuscan season review videos. I got an old TV out and plugged in the recorder, and I loved it. I said to Andrew that I fancied having it back."

Despite Jordan's keenness, Caine (who does, after all, often describe himself as "a second-hand car salesman from Newmarket") refused to budge. He did, though, put in an

EDITOR

MATT JAMIES

"It had great cars and a magical entry"



Admittedly, I was late to the TVR Tuscan Challenge party, but it was just getting warmed up when I arrived in the paddock as a young reporter in 1995. And what a party it was: both on- and off-track.

One of the mainstays was Ian Flux, who would go on to become the 1996 title-winner. He was also Motorsport News's resident track tester at the time, and he opened lots of doors to make sure that the print media was welcome in the TVR paddock.

The cars were the stars in the series, having already been tamed by British Touring Car Championship aces like Jeff Allam, Chris Hodgetts, Mark Hales and Gerry Marshall.

They weighed less than an old-style Mini, pushed out 450bhp and were seriously under-gripped, despite strong support from Dunlop. Cue lots of twirling arms and elbows, sideways and squirrelling cars and a packed entry list.

And while the cars were the stand-out performers, the entry list was mouth-watering too, with the cream of the national racing crop lining up to tame the beast. Alongside Flux, in the late 1990s, there were drivers such as Martin Short, Ian McKellar Junior, Bobby Verdon-Roe, Jamie Campbell-Walter, Phil Hindley, Steve Guglielmi, John Kent and Colin Blower. Later on came others like Mike Jordan, Michael Caine, David Mason, Phil Keen and Lee Caroline.

So, awesome cars and a star-studded entry list but it was the atmosphere that the series engendered that was so different from any other paddock. There was a camaraderie and a genuine friendship between several of the top performers. There were the experienced older hands and the new crop of up-and-comers who were on their way to a Le Mans career. There was bundles of respect between the competitors. The blend was perfect, and every single one of them enjoyed unwinding after each race in pretty similar fashion.

Up until the end of the series proper in 2004, before it morphed into a multi-chassis club series, there were 34 different race winners in the fearsome real-wheel-drive cars from the 279 events that took place.

The most prolific driver was Flux, with 26 wins, putting him two clear of Guglielmi and Caroline. There were 13 champions across the 16 seasons that took place, but the TVR Tuscan Challenge was about so much more than just the bare statistics.

It was a first-class national motor racing series, with first class cars and drivers and a real sense of enjoyment of motorsport, which is rare enough in itself.



Jordan's original car has been restored



Even the car's stickers are original 1999-spec

Photos: Jakob Ebrey

EVERY SPECIAL RY LANE

at his 1999 TVR Tuscan racer



and Bobby Roe share the Donington front row

TECH SPEC

TVR Tuscan Challenge car

Engine: 4.5 TVR AJP V8 (after the 4.4 Rover V8 powerplant, which was phased out in the early 1990s)
Power: 450bhp approx **Weight:** 850kgs
Torque: 380lbft **Performance:** 0-60mph 3.1secs
 0-100mph 6.9secs **Top Speed:** 190mph+
Wheelbase: 2336mm **Length:** 3937mm
Width: 1740mm **Height:** 1184mm
Gearbox: Borg Warner T5 gearbox
Wheels: 9 inch x 16 inch, O.Z. split-rim wheels
Tyres: Dunlop cross-ply



Jordan (fourth here) back in 2000

interesting caveat to his stubbornness.

"I tried with Caine again to buy the car, and he said the only way that he would agree to doing that was if he could get his own chassis back. Michael had fallen out with the guy who owned it, for reasons unbeknown, so that was a tough situation: they weren't really talking.

"I went to the person who owned Caine's car, which had been used for passenger experiences, and managed to get them to sell it to me," recalls Jordan. In the end, [Caine] had my car and I had his, and so we decided to swap."

So that was the start of the process, and it meant that the Jordan Racing Team suddenly had two original TVR Tuscan race cars to rebuild.

"During 2018, we rebuilt Michael's car," explains Jordan. "We stripped it back to a bare shell and did everything on it and this time last year, just before the new year, he came to pick it up.

"Then I set about restoring mine, but because it is your own job and the customers' work always takes priority, it always drags on a bit. It is back in its livery, and there are some little things on it that make me know it is my car. For example, I used to run a two-way radio in my car for testing, and there is a hole in the rear bulkhead where the radio was. I have left the touches like that.

"The stickers for the switches on the dashboard are still the ones that I put on in 1998 when I was preparing the car for the 1999 season. It is exactly as it was."

The process of restoring the car which was originally built more than 20 years ago was not a simple one, but there were certain aspects which made the job much easier than it might have been.

"John Reid [former TVR Tuscan coordinator and factory employee] still has a lot of stuff for the cars," explains Jordan. "We stripped it down, and the only real change we made was to put some slightly stronger seat mountings in it, because they weren't the best back in the

day. The rest of it was good. It was still on its original Penske dampers, but what is on the inside of them is the same as is on the inside of a British Touring Car Championship damper today. That was simple.

"One of the things I was worried about was the engines, because they used to be done at the factory. Somebody put me on to one of the old factory employees who used to do the race engines – he still builds them in a lock-up at the back of his house. I think that is where [another to have rebuilt his original Tuscan] Martin Short got his done. I think he has done [another former racer] Richard Hay's too."

It is interesting that Jordan mentions the damping, because that was always one of the tricks to extracting the most from the 850kg machines, which tended to wriggle and squirm around as drivers sought to use some of the epic levels of power.

"In the day, you were either a Penske man or an Ohlins man," remembers Jordan. "When I got my original car, we did lots of testing and realised that some varieties were better for some tracks and some were better for others, and so we used a mixture. I remember one morning we were testing at Castle Combe, and Jamie Campbell-Walter had done an engine in the morning, so he was sat out at Tower corner. My car was superb through there on that day.

"In typical JC-W fashion, he came up to me in the paddock afterwards and said 'bloody hell, man, I reckon a monkey could put that car on pole position: it is so good'. I replied 'a monkey probably could, but I am not sure that a monkey would be that good that he could set it up so well that his mate could put it on pole position...'"

With the machine resplendent in its original form, and with Jordan even clothed in his original sponsor's racewear from back in the day, he was ready.

Jordan fired up the 450bhp engine in the pitlane at Silverstone one month ago and

eased onto the soaking circuit, waiting for all the memories to come flooding back.

Jordan says: "As you get older, your memories change. I thought it was going to feel fantastic and I was sure it was going to feel much safer than it ever did in the day. Did it? Absolutely not! It felt just as fast and dangerous. It is a car that you feel almost wants to try and kill you at every corner.

"I remember getting out of it in 2000, when I had done two seasons and I was looking to go GT racing. I said to my wife Judith that they had been two great years, but I was bloody glad I walked away from it. They were those sorts of cars."

In typical racers' fashion, the original horizons for the rebuilt TVR have begun to shift. Jordan originally wanted the car as a trackday machine that he could take out and enjoy from time to time. However, the cogs in his brain are now whirring.

"I have noticed a few Tuscans in the Classic Sports Car Club series' and it is launching a new slick-tyred series for 2020," he muses. "I pointed out to my wife that there was a round of the CSCC series at Cadwell at the start of the year which doesn't clash with anything else. She said 'are you sure you really want to take it around there?' I *did* think twice, so I am not sure about that one."

It is all about rolling back the years for Jordan, who knows the pleasure that the Blackpool-built machines gave a host of drivers and thousands who watched them race over the top-flight category's 15-year span.

"Even just to get a top six in one of those races back in the day was a real personal achievement," says Jordan.

"There were probably, at times, up to 15 people who could win any race. And the cars were such monsters. They were so quick and such hard work. At the time, I probably didn't realise just how good it was as a one-make series." ■

REVIEW: SHORT OVAL

THE SHORT TRACKS THAT HAVE

Motorsport News' oval experts **Graham Brown** and **Colin Casserley** reflect on the headline moments of 2019

The shorter the circuit, the more action a race can pack into it – and that was certainly the case in the last 12 months.

There were some record-breaking performances on the short ovals as the National Hot Rod drivers went door-handle-to-door-handle around a selection of venues both old and renewed in 2019. In BriSCA F1, Tom Harris underlined his credentials as the man to beat in the full-contact formula.

Motorsport News has picked out the stand-out performances from the year that is now in the book.

1 CLOSE-QUARTER RACING ON A BUXTON RETURN

WHAT: NATIONAL HOT RODS WHERE: BUXTON RACEWAY WHEN: AUGUST 18, 2019

It had been 23 years since the top bracket non-contact formula had last graced the Buxton Tarmac, back on July 28, 1996, to be precise. The track is quite a long way from the bases of many National Hot Rod teams but there has long been a mood brewing that the formula needs to branch out again to tracks which have not featured on the calendar in a while: hence the return to the big, fast and picturesque Peak District oval.

Although the 19-car entry might not have looked much to write home about, it was enough to create an absolute classic in the opening heat and possibly the finest race of the season.

Alastair Lowe headed them away as a great race shaped up behind him. While Carl Waller-Barrett hunted down the early leaders,

Rob McDonald blitzed up the order.

Making up six spots in only two laps at one point, some breathtaking three-wide racing eventually allowed McDonald to hit the front. The fight to live with him had brought a host of others into the reckoning, the whole mob of them battling to the end where 10 cars charged the line as one, less than half a second covering second through to ninth.

The other heat and final were a shade less frantic but still right out of the top drawer.

Jason Kew celebrated his birthday by taking the final honours in his ever improving Ginetta, holding off form man McDonald to do so while Waller-Barrett headed Kew home after an entertaining scrap between the pair to take the other heat. **GB**



Kew (174) was the winner on NHR's Buxton comeback

2 WORLD FINAL: TOUGH McDONALD SCORES FIRST WIN FOR SCOTLAND

WHAT: NATIONAL HOT RODS WHERE: FOXHALL HEATH, IPSWICH WHEN: JULY 7, 2019



McDonald led away from pole at Foxhall Heath

After knocking on the door time and time again, 2019 was the year that it finally all came together for Rob McDonald in the National Hot Rod World Final.

Despite winning the final at the last World Series round, the Scot had failed to grab the points championship at the very last minute. It was beginning to look like it would be another year when the discipline's biggest prize slipped through his fingers, quite possibly falling to multi-champ Chris Haird again instead.

When [qualifying] Hot Laps were finished at Ipswich, however, McDonald had pole position. It was not by much, but when the entire grid is covered by only 0.56 seconds, a 0.07s gap is pretty significant. There was still plenty of work ahead if he wanted to record the first Scottish win in 47 years though. Fellow front

row starter David Casey was already twice a podium finisher, and Haird was still sitting ominously right on their shoulders too.

Following an almost immediate race-stopping crash, McDonald repeated the flawless getaway he'd made at the first time of asking. Casey couldn't stop a determined Haird from climbing to second and from that point the race became an enthralling struggle between the two leaders, the gap see-sawing between them as the traffic favoured one, then the other.

Haird chased hard every inch of the way but, in the end, could never quite get on terms. He'd needed the leader to strike some sort of problem but, by the time McDonald was forced to confront some backmarker issues, it was all a case of 'too little too late' and the first ever Scottish World Final victory was in the record books. **GB**

3 McDONALD DOUBLES UP AT NATIONALS

WHAT: NATIONAL HOT RODS WHERE: HEDNESFORD HILLS RACEWAY, CANNOCK WHEN: AUGUST 3-4, 2019

Coming these days just a month after the World Final, it has almost become traditional that the world champion will take the National too. It is far from a certainty though as the two events are run along very different lines.

World qualifying takes all year with the final grid determined by lap times. The National is condensed into a weekend, with multiple heats

on Saturday determining the starting order for Sunday.

So three decent heats are crucial and this year it turned out to be Jack Blood's brace of runner-up slots and a fourth that was good enough for pole.

Blood had come close to the upper podium steps at the World Final and it looked as though the hour of his first 'major' was at hand. But in Hot Rod racing few things are ever

a dead cert, particularly when the reigning world champ is starting right alongside you.

A first-lap clinch between the front row men went Blood's way, the pair immediately putting daylight between themselves and the rest. Behind them, the opening laps were a frantic exchange of places. But, in the end, it was going to come down to the two pacesetters to settle the outcome between

themselves. Blood looked equal to the task of staying ahead too, until a caution period became the pivotal moment of the entire 75 laps.

On what was a very warm day anyway all the lead cars had heat-soaked their brakes away and, when the green flag came back out, Blood sailed past the turn-in point for the East Bend, handing McDonald the lead and the win. **GB**



McDonald (17) chased Blood

Photos: mkpics.net, Colin Casserley

SEEN THE BIG ACTION IN 2019



Harris took advantage when his rivals collided

4 HARRIS TAKES HIS CHANCES

**WHAT: BriSCA F1 WHERE: HEDNESFORD HILLS RACEWAY
WHEN: JUNE 16, 2019**

Tom Harris was in the right place at the right time at Hednesford Hills in the middle of June to seal his maiden British championship title.

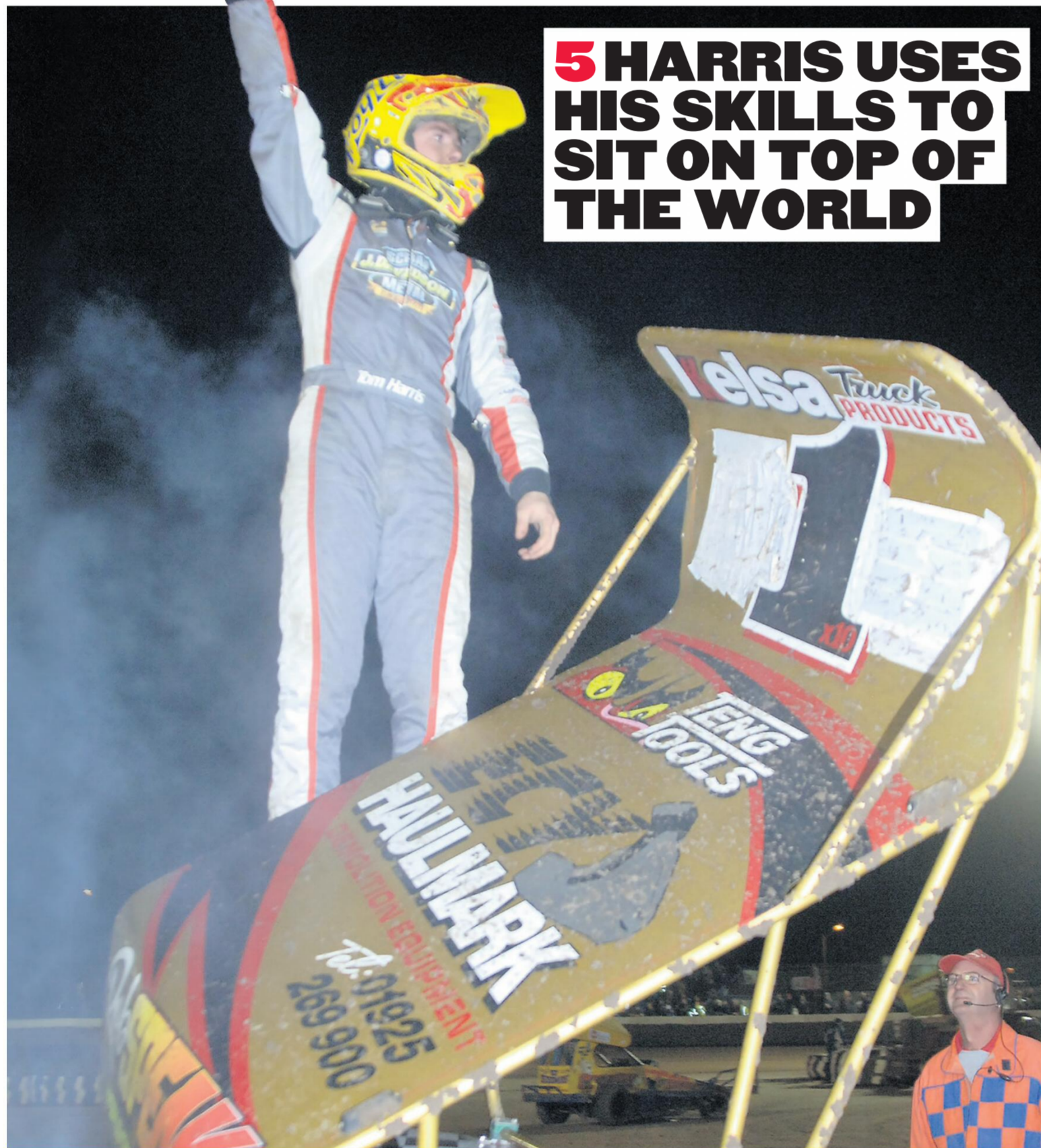
When race leader Mat Newson and second-placed man Lee Fairhurst tangled on the final turn of the high-speed Tarmac venue, Harris snuck around them to claim the big silverware, the British Championship title.

"I've not won this one before, so I really

wanted it," said the double European title winner. "We made some changes to the car before the final, it took a while for them to work and I slipped back several places at the start but the second half of the race the car came good."

For runner-up Newson, he had been a familiar feeling. "I am gutted: it's the second year in a row I have led until the last bend in the race, this feels worse than last year," he said afterwards. **CC**

5 HARRIS USES HIS SKILLS TO SIT ON TOP OF THE WORLD



WHAT: BriSCA F1 WHERE: KING'S LYNN, NORFOLK WHEN: SEPTEMBER 14, 2019

Unlike his British championship win, where he led for only the final 100 metres on the dash to the flag, Tom Harris dominated the World championship as he led every one of the 25 laps.

Harris withstood a first-bend attack from Frankie Wainman Jr and, while it may not have had the excitement of

other races during the season, it demonstrated Harris's driving ability to the full.

The two-time World Final winner said: "I knew Wainman Jr would have to try and take me out on the first lap. That was his best shot at winning, but we beefed up the car to withstand that.

"That did mean I had to adjust the car

a bit to allow for the extra weight so we were not sure how it would handle. The inside-rear tyre started to go away at the end and the car was jumping coming out the turns but luckily it held out.

"I would like to thank my family, sponsors and crew for making this possible, and to everyone who boos me: that makes me just go faster..." **CC**



Finnikin followed in his father's wheeltracks

6 FINNIKIN PUTS HIMSELF IN THE BOOKS

WHAT: BriSCA F1 WHERE: NORTHAMPTON INTERNATIONAL RACEWAY WHEN: JUNE 28, 2019

Craig Finnikin became only the eighth driver in the 65-year history of BriSCA F1 to record a victory in all four major championships when he crossed the line first in the European title race at Brafild.

Finnikin also rewrote the history books as he and his father Bert are the only father-son driver combination to have won the World, European, British and National Points titles.

Steady rain turned into a downpour just before the start of the race and that made the shale surface hazardous. Finnikin had a sizable gap for most of the race but, towards the closing stages, Tom Harris

began to eat into Finnikin's lead. He got close enough to try and punt the leader wide but Finnikin was able to hold on and, as the laps wound down, the leader began to increase his advantage.

"Those last few laps I was driving on a wing and a prayer," said Finnikin. "My goggles got clogged up around halfway and I couldn't see much. I felt someone hit my back bumper; I didn't know it was Harris until I was told after the race.

"Some backmarkers spun in front of me towards the end. I just kept my foot on the gas and barged my way through and hoped it didn't damage my car." **CC** ■



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INTERVIEW

Photos: LAT, Matthew Paul, Titans RX



W Series is the plan for next year

FROM TV TO THE RACE CIRCUIT

Abbie Eaton has made a name for herself on *The Grand Tour*, and wants to do the same in racing. By Stefan Mackley



From a thunderous V8 Australian Supercar to a whirring four-wheel-drive electric Jaguar. Or a rallycross car into a slicks-and-wings Formula 3 single-seater.

To say Abbie Eaton has driven a plethora of cars during 2019 would be a bit of understatement, and that's before taking into account any of her TV work or driver coaching.

To many, she's become a household name through her appearances on Amazon Prime's *The Grand Tour* as the show's official test driver.

But for those in the motorsport world she's a driver who has been trying to forge a professional racing career for a number of years.

She first came to prominence in 2009 after following her father, former Eurocar racer Paul, into motorsport by winning the UK Production Touring Car Championship before another title came in 2014, this time in the highly competitive one-make Mazda MX-5 Supercup.

Her last full-time campaign was in the British GT Championship in 2016 with Ebor GT, but since then has only been able to put together one-off drives and part-time campaigns due to a lack of budget, usually at the last moment with no prior testing in some cases.

"I think my mentality is just say yes to everything because you'll learn things, whether it's a positive thing or a negative thing it doesn't matter. But you've constantly got to be saying yes to the opportunities," she says.

It's this sort of attitude that allowed her to jump aboard a Ferrari 488 GT3 and take the Am class victory in the Blancpain GT Series at Monza, having done just a handful of laps before.

This year she had hoped to make her big break Down Under in the Super2 Series – the support championship to the premier Australian Supercars.

As with her other drives though, the deal was put together at the last minute

with Matt Stone Racing to drive a VF Commodore at the season-opening Adelaide round.

"The first round we literally said yes to doing it two days before the cars were taken down [to the event] so it was just really last minute. It just wasn't the best kind of environment to have my first go in it really," says Eaton, having taken a best result of 14th during the weekend.

"The view was to do the full year but the [sponsorship] partner that we were speaking to about doing it long-term basically just ghosted me. It was stuff all out of my control unfortunately which is always the way in motorsport nine times out of 10.

"I just feel like I wasn't able to give it my best shot which [means it] is kind of unfinished business. I'd love to go back out there again and do it properly and do a full season in the championship."

Not to be deterred she moved her focus elsewhere and took part in the inaugural season of the TitansRX rallycross series in a Pantera RX6, driving against maiden Formula E champion Nelson Piquet Jr, 2013 British Touring Car title winner Andrew Jordan and rallycross royalty in the form of Kevin and Timmy Hansen.

She competed in four rounds through the season in the UK, Austria, Hungary and Germany, despite having never previously driven a rallycross car.

"Again, that was one of those things at Lydden Hill [where] I jumped in the car on the race weekend. I was sh*tting myself," she says.

"I said 'what on earth do I do? I guess I'll just get on with it' and somehow I managed to."

Most recently though she got behind the wheel of an electric vehicle in the opening round of the Jaguar I-Pace eTrophy in Saudi Arabia last month, once again showing her adaptability with a best result of fourth.

Now she has switched her focus to single-seaters and been selected to take part in the second season of W Series – despite having only driven once in a single-seater prior to the evaluation day.

Eaton had previously been approached

about joining for the inaugural season but was – and still is – against the principle of segregating men and women in motorsport.

"I just didn't agree with it – not the championship and spending money on females which is brilliant – I just didn't agree with segregating men and women and I still don't agree with that," she says.

"I don't think that, long-term, it is the answer to try and get more females into motorsport.

"But now I've watched the series for the year and I've seen the people involved, and how they run it, there's no expense spared and actually what W Series is trying to do [they know] it's not a long-term solution.

"They're looking at it as a solution for now to try and at least lift the profile of females in motorsport and just try and give them a helping hand.

"The thing that kind of made my mind up was that I was supposed to be in Australia all this year so I thought to myself 'I've put a year of effort into trying to make this work I'm not going to turn my back on that'."

Next year will be the 27-year-old's first full campaign in a category for four years and she is hopeful this can be the springboard she needs to once and for all establish herself on the race track as well as the TV screens.

"My last full year was 2016 and since then I've been very lucky to have opportunities to go and do guest drives in championships but you arrive with a different mentality," she says.

"In one respect if you're doing a one-off race you don't put pressure on yourself because it's not like I need to finish this to get these points to try and win the championship, but it's a different kind of pressure.

"Being in the limelight with *The Grand Tour* and stuff like that, people are just expecting you to jump into whatever car and just be quick so it's a different kind of pressure.

"But ultimately if I don't say yes to these things I'm not going to be racing and racing is what I love." ■



Eaton tackled four rounds of the new-for-2019 Titans RX Europe series



Eaton drove in the Jaguar I-Pace eTrophy in Saudi Arabia last month



Appearance in Super2 Series was restricted to just one round at Adelaide

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INSIGHT

Photos: Jakob Ebrej

MARK BLUNDELL: THE BTCC BATTLE I AM YET TO CONQUER

Matt James speaks to the ex-F1 driver who took on his greatest career challenge



Blundell (right) had a hard season

Five points. That is not a great return for a 30-race season's work in the British Touring Car Championship, and it is even more alarming when it is noted that the points are paid down to 15th spot in the BTCC and there are a raft of bonus points up for grabs too.

It was certainly unfamiliar territory for Formula 1 podium finisher and IndyCar race-winner Mark Blundell.

He had made a huge leap of faith to join the BTCC in 2019. It was an environment which was alien to him and his first proper outing in a front-wheel-drive machine.

He joined the Trade Price Cars Racing team to handle an Audi S3 saloon alongside Jake Hill.

The up-and-coming Hill was a race winner twice (although his on-the-road victory at Oulton Park was taken away following contact with Matt Neal's Honda Civic Type R). Blundell, on the

other hand, struggled to get to grips with the two-litre turbocharged car.

In the middle of the 2019 season, he opened up about how tough the year had been.

"If you go back to the beginning of my life in motorsport in 1984, this was the worst season of my career without question," says Blundell. "It was literally the worst season I had ever had. I had never been so far back for so long during the season, so this was incredibly difficult for me. It was painful."

It was tough, but Blundell said there were a number of reasons why he found it an almost vertical task.

Firstly, he hadn't been in a regular programme for nearly a decade, and he also wasn't able to get himself into a rear-wheel-drive machine, like he'd aimed for. A deal to join BMR Racing in a Subaru came close, but it faltered. That meant he would have to learn a new drivetrain as well as a new category.

"If I had have been in a rear-wheel-drive car, that would probably be better for me.



The famous colours hit the BTCC

It would take away 30-40% of the learning I've had to do – and if you do that, it's starting from a much better place."

Blundell says that the troubles he went through in 2019 were as much a part of his unlearning the skills he had picked up in his 30-year career as much as it was about learning the new tricks.

"One of the big issues for me was braking because I drove it like it was a downforce-led car. I was much smoother on my braking input and I think my sensitivity levels are heightened.

That is not what British Touring Car Championship cars are all about: they're about stamping on the brakes and giving them a huge amount of pressure.

"You have input into the car when the rear comes up and gets light. You have to get off the brake pedal quickly and get the rotation done. When you see the quick stuff, I can match them, but I struggled in the slower parts of the circuit or even in mid-speed."

By the time the season finished, Blundell could well have been forgiven for walking away from the series, but it is not his style. But he has already expressed his desire to remain at the controls of a tin-top in the future.

"It's a huge decision to make," says Blundell, "and it's a decision that I've yet to make. I'll review and analyse thoroughly what could be the future and what couldn't be. I'll discuss it with the shareholders in my business. We will take a view."

Blundell is in the process of making that decision now and is already looking

around to put the funding in place to remain, although that could be a crucial factor in determining whether he takes one of the 30 spots on the line-up in 2020.

The 53-year-old has been through many turbulent times in his career and he has not quit any challenge that has presented itself to him. "This might be out of my control though," he says. "Time is running out for me to get the deal that I want, and there are fewer and fewer options out there that appeal."

He is frank in his assessment of what might happen in the future, and he is going to make sure that if he does return, the foundations will be as strong as they possibly can be to make sure that he doesn't have a groundhog day.

"For me to go through another season like this would be too painful," he says. "To go forward – and for my own sanity and to not make my life as difficult as I have done – it would be easier for me to be in a rear-wheel-drive car. But we will see what happens from here." ■

BLUNDELL'S UP-AND-DOWN RIDE



A tough introduction to life in the BTCC

Donington Park

When: April 28

Welcome to the BTCC, Mark. After starting 23rd in the second race of the weekend in the second meeting at Donington, Blundell slipped back at the start to run in penultimate place at the end of the opening tour. On the second lap, while trying to overtake Sam Osborne's Excel8 Motorsport MG, the pair made contact on the approach to the chicane. Blundell was penalised for his part in the shunt and collected an official reprimand, as well as two penalty points on his race licence.

Mind the gap

Thruxton

When: May 18

In the qualifying session, Blundell was on his out lap and winding up to begin his final flier, but Tom Chilton came up quickly behind him as they approached the final chicane, just about to complete his quick lap. The Motorbase Ford went to try and dive around the outside of Blundell, but the Audi skipped off a kerb and into the path of Chilton. The pair made contact and Chilton was forced into the wall. Blundell earned a verbal warning for his part in the shunt.



One stop, two steps forward

Silverstone

When: September 29

The third race of the day was a crazy affair as rain descended and made car control and tyre choice vital for a competitive run. Blundell started 18th on the grid and, under a safety car period at the end of lap five, he pitted from 20th place to swap his slicks to wets. It was an early gamble compared to some, but he profited later on as others halted to then climb to 13th place at the flag, his best result of the season.

INSIGHT

Photos: Colin Casserley, Neil Randon



Short ovals like Stoke have disappeared

THE DARK CLOUD HANGING OVER BRISCA F1'S FUTURE

Neil Randon looks at the drama that is affecting the short ovals and is putting the venues at risk

BriSCA F1 faces a crisis despite the fact the 2019 season has been, for the most part, a successful one.

Behind the scenes, an underlying threat to the short oval had been circling the stock car wagons for some time and gathering pace. Stadium closures.

BriSCA F1 looked to be moving forward after a couple of difficult years. There had been an injection of enthusiasm prior to the opening meeting of the season at King's Lynn, with spectators queuing round the block at the Adrian Flux Arena.

And, to top it off, an extremely well-attended World Final in September at the Norfolk shale track produced plenty of publicity from both the national press and on TV.

This was despite BriSCA being struck by a body blow two years previously with the sudden closure of its jewel in the crown, Coventry Stadium.

The track had gone through a series of avoidable and destructive rows between its parting and prospective proprietors

during the winter of 2016-17, during which time the stadium had been stripped of its lighting, seating, shale racing surface and other fittings and fixtures.

The abused carcass that was once BriSCA F1's most prestigious and popular facility was then left to unceremoniously rot into oblivion.

To the fans, it was an unforgivable act of recklessness and they voted with their feet. Some have never returned.

And now this year, shortly before the BriSCA F1 World Final, news broke abruptly that Stoke Stadium was to close at the end of the season. It was another bolt from the blue, the site bought for dreaded redevelopment.

Another BriSCA venue, Belle Vue Stadium, has gallantly fended off its potential sale since 2018, and now it appears extremely likely that another track, Birmingham Wheels, is being lined up for a possible purchase.

But undeterred, BriSCA chairman Steve Rees, who was the promoter at Stoke, and is currently at Belle Vue and Sheffield's Owlerton Stadium, believes the discipline's future is secure.

"BriSCA has a good future, but it needs

a five-year plan," says Rees. "You can cry about tracks going, but there is a reason and that is not enough people went to them.

"It's not just our industry – it's also speedway and greyhounds. Over the years, there was an inevitability the bigger stadiums would close because of a drop of support for their core business.

"Many of the stadiums originated from greyhound racing – stock car racing was always the icing on the cake."

In the 1960s and '70s inner city greyhound and speedway stadiums thrived and, as a result, along with their own venues, so did BriSCA F1.

In stock car racing's heartland in the north west, BriSCA F1s drew big crowds at two major stadiums in Manchester, Belle Vue (Hyde Road) and White City. Short oval racing was supported by smaller tracks at Nelson, Rochdale, Blackburn and, a few years later, Bolton.

Bradford's Odsal Stadium and Sheffield catered for fans on the other side of the Pennines, as did Aycliffe and Hartlepool further north to the east.

In the Midlands, another large pocket

of support centred around Coventry, Long Eaton, Leicester, Hednesford Hills and Northampton.

And in London, Harringay, Crayford, and later (although it was used for other formula during this period) Wimbledon catered for southern support. Even Brands Hatch got the occasional meeting.

Like greyhound racing, stock car racing was regarded as a working man's sport and BriSCA catered for its local fanbase perfectly. In the northern towns fans could, in some cases, literally walk down the road to watch their racing. Of the tracks listed above, 19 of them, only four remain.

Currently BriSCA runs nine venues, plus two in Scotland, Cowdenbeath and Lochgelly, both of which are only used once every two years.

And there is more bad news on the horizon as the spectre of closure for Belle Vue has moved sharply into focus as the council has recently given outline approval to a developer to build 250 houses on the site (see news, page 29).

For Rees, who hires the tracks he promotes, balancing the books is the issue. "Stadiums are expensive to run and now you haven't got the intensity of use we once had. So, if someone comes along and offers a huge sum of money, an owner is going to take it.

"Stock car racing has to move in a direction it has already started to go in – towards smaller raceways, where they are a lot cheaper to run, like Skegness.

"Skegness has intensive use, it has got the catering, food and beverage sales, it's cheaper to run and nobody is going to come and offer £4million for it."

In recent years, there has been a shift towards the east, with tracks such as Skegness, King's Lynn, Mildenhall and Ipswich dominating the fixture list.

But Rees is conscious of the fact short-oval sport needs to remain close to its heartlands in the north and Midlands, to cater for fans who don't want to travel so far.

"We are confident we can keep Belle Vue going," Rees says. "We have done everything we can to fight for it.

"However, if it does close it will have a big impact, because it has brought many people back to the sport from an area where people stopped going 20 years ago."

A few potential new ventures have been considered, including Leicester, Rotherham and Brampton.

"Rotherham United's old stadium would cost £500,000 to open and that doesn't include rent and rates and so it couldn't survive on just stock cars," explains Rees. "We walked away from Brampton because we couldn't get any planning permission whatsoever and the access road to the track isn't up to coping with a large crowd. These have all been looked at, but they would need to become multi-use to be viable."

Leicester would seem the most likely option. Planning permission at the Speedway track is needed to make the pit area large enough to contain 40-plus stock car transporters. "There is a long way to go," admits Rees. "We're waiting for the next step on pre-planning. I am optimistic rather than confident."

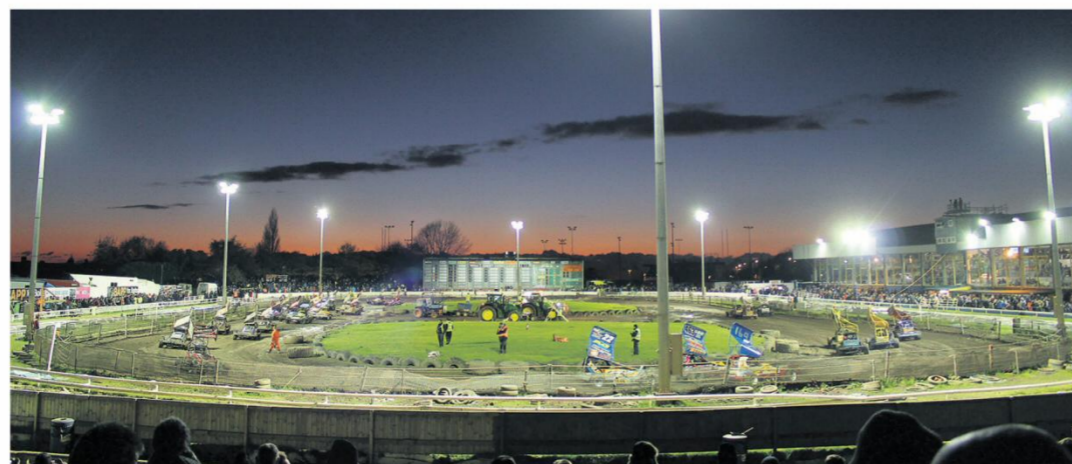
There is a reason short-oval motorsport has existed for 65 years, all the while battling off threats from developers.

The BriSCA F1 promoters and drivers, via the BSCDA (British Stock Car Drivers Association), passionately love the discipline that has given so much enjoyment to its fans.

While uncertainty hangs in the air, they instinctively and successfully make sure that stock car racing not only survives, but also prospers. ■



Coventry was a real turning point



The heat has been turned on Belle Vue with a recent council planning decision

SPORTING SCENE

DEVELOPERS TO FLATTEN BELLE VUE STADIUM

Developers to build 250 houses on the site of popular Manchester short oval

Photos: Colin Casserley, Trevor Coulson



Belle Vue will be lost to short oval motorsport

By Matt James

The Belle Vue Stadium in Manchester, which hosts BriSCA F1 and several other short oval categories, will be demolished and 250 houses will be built on the site.

Manchester City Council gave the thumbs up to developers shortly before Christmas. The move has been given the green light subject to a Section 106 agreement between the council and the developers to iron out details of the application.

Alongside stock cars, the venue, which opened in 1926, hosts greyhound racing and also is the home of the Belle Vue Aces speedway team

There has been a strong movement from short oval fans, who have petitioned the council but their protests have fallen on deaf ears.

Local officials said that "the loss of the sporting venue is outweighed by the provision of good quality residential development that provides a wide range of new accommodation for the residents of Manchester".

The venue is owned by a pension fund provider but was leased to the Greyhound Racing Association, but its tenure expired last year when the first rumours of the development surfaced. Since then, the venue has been leased to the Arena Racing Company.

Simon Walmsley, of the Friends of Belle Vue Stadium organisation, said:

"We have all attended both sports [greyhound and stock car racing] over varying numbers of decades.

"We are unashamed to say these are both working class sports. Manchester has a global reputation for being diverse and of rich heritage in culture, music and sport.

"This is not the first greyhound stadium but the last in Manchester and indeed the north west. If this closes you take away two sports from the area for good and this surely goes against the rights of those two groups of working class supporters."

The news that Belle Vue will shut its doors came just a week after Birmingham City Council, which owns the Birmingham Wheels Raceway, said that it was closing that venue down too for redevelopment.

Polish team signs up for Projekt E series

Polish team Rallytechnology will run a two-car entry in the new Projekt E all-electric rallycross series this year.

The category will support five rounds of the World Rallycross Championship in 2020.

The Polish outfit has bought a pair of kits from Projekt E kit developer STARD, but is yet to disclose what make of chassis it will be fitting the three-motor, four-wheel-drive system to for its 2020 campaign.

Rallytechnology has been a frontrunner in the Polish rally scene with 2019 WRC2 runner-up Kajetan Kajetanowicz in recent years, and has already signed one driver for its 2020 Projekt E campaign.

"Our company became successful by building and racing Group N rally cars," said Rallytechnology boss Robert Gabryszewski. "We want to be building our own cars again, which is possible in Projekt E.

"Electric racing will be the future, but up until now there was no option for a private team to even think about EV racing because of a lack of options. We see it as a huge chance for us to be among the first in this future area and at the same time take our company to the next level.

Motorsport News understands that the Polish squad will base its Projekt E machines on R5 rally chassis.

RallyX on Ice gets a call-up to be part of Sweden's version of the Winter Olympics

The annual RallyX on Ice series will take place as a single event this winter, joining the multi-discipline SM-veckan week, Sweden's own Winter Olympics at Lulea on March 28.

SM-veckan celebrates its 10th anniversary this winter, and includes disciplines like biathlon, cross-country skiing to dog-sledding, Alpine slalom, jiu-jitsu and

powerlifting. RallyX on Ice, which is run for single-make Supercar Lites cars and supported by the Crosscar buggy category, will join the Swedish Winter Rallycross Championship for Supernational machines on a purpose-built track on the frozen Lule River, in the heart of Lulea, the capital of Norrbotten County on the coast in northern Sweden.

"We are delighted to unveil the new-look RallyX on Ice for 2020, and to be included in Sweden's high-profile SM-veckan is another endorsement of the growing popularity of our series," said Jan-Erik Steen, boss of RallyX on Ice promoter, RX Promotion.

"There are always more candidate sports than places available, so it's a great honour to be a part of the show."



Ice racers will be on big stage



BTRDA cars will race indoors

BTRDA RALLYCROSSERS TO STAR AT THE NEC

The BTRDA Clubmans Rallycross Championship will take part in the Live Action Arena section of the Autosport International Show at the NEC in Birmingham on January 9-12 for the first time since 2015, with eight cars at a time in action.

Four cars will start on each side of the arena in a rallycross pursuit format. Four categories will be represented, Supercar (Clubman 4x4), Production

4x4, SuperModified and Classic. Ten cars will be rotated over 12 shows from Thursday to Sunday.

Former British RX Supercar racer Kevin McCann will return to action with his Subaru Impreza, while Production 4x4 champion James Phillips will drive his version of Subaru's Impreza.

Leigh-Anne Sedgwick (BMW Mini), Alan Crockett (Vauxhall Corsa), Sam

Bovill (Vauxhall Astra), Gary Cook (Ford Fiesta), Gary Mitchell (Ford Puma) and Marc Jones (Toyota MR2) will represent SuperModified, while David Ewin (Ford Fiesta) and John Cross (Lancia Stratos) will be in action from the Classic class. The Clubmans series has also changed the fourth round of its season at Lydden Hill to be run over a single day on Saturday, May 30 at the Kent circuit.

Teenaged racers in CrossCars to join the bill on the RallyX Nordic trail

The RallyX Nordic series has introduced a new entry-level Junior CrossCar category for 2020, for drivers as young as 12-years old, joining the Supercar, Supercar Lites and CrossCar categories on the bill.

The rear-wheel-drive Xtreme Junior machines that will be used will weigh 380kgs including driver, powered by 600cc four-stroke, four-cylinder

motorcycle-derived engines, with revs limited to a maximum 9300rpm, producing 80 horsepower. That means machines for the 12-16-year-old class can be converted for the senior CrossCar series by adjusting the revs and power. Drivers like former RallyX Nordic champion and now WRC2 frontrunner Oliver Solberg first began their careers in CrossCar (then called

Crosskart) in Scandinavia.

"We are delighted to see CrossCar Junior join the RallyX Nordic package next year," said series organiser Marko Jokinen. "I have no doubt it will be a great addition to what is already a superb series, and lowering RallyX Nordic's minimum entry age by four years will open it up to a great many promising young talents."



A new division of Junior CrossCars will be introduced for younger drivers

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MN does not always agree with opinions expressed in letters

MN SAYS...

Tanak lays out his manifesto for 2020

World champion sets out his stall ahead of what will be a demanding season

There was an element of shock when Ott Tanak decided to turn his back on Toyota and head for a new challenge for the 2020 World Rally Championship season. His decision to join Hyundai was, on the face of it, an unusual one. Toyota had finally conquered the WRC, while Hyundai laboured its way to the manufacturers' title.

Despite Hyundai's triumph in the makes race, there was a feeling that the South Korean manufacturer had come up short as its star driver Thierry Neuville, despite winning the final event of the season in Spain, was significantly adrift of the new champion. The drivers' title is the one that everyone wants to win, and the manufacturers' silverware is almost a consolation prize, even if the firms themselves will shout success loud from the rooftops in an effort to justify any spend in budget to the marketing men. Now Hyundai has the man who is the new benchmark. If Tanak fails to retain the big trophy with Hyundai this year, you have to wonder if the firm will ever take the ultimate prize.

Matt James, Editor (Twitter: @MattJMNews)



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Photographs must be of a good quality and please send no more than three images



ART EDITOR MIKE STOKOE'S
FAVOURITE OF
THE WEEK!

This Reader Pics section firmly believes that Rich Cranston has taken up residency at Donington Park. Here is his testing photo



Mike Griffin's photograph from a very soaking LeJog event



Dean Chilvers enjoyed winter Formula 1 testing in Abu Dhabi



Chris Noble sent us this photo from the epic LeJog event



Reece Tarren captured the flavour of the Grizedale Stages



Knockhill's MN Circuit round, photograph from Garrick Collier



MN correspondent Duncan Stephens not only writes, he snaps!



Yvonne Williams took this shot of a Mini on the Glyn Memorial



Peter Machin's photograph of a Russell Brookes celebration

GOT AN OPINION?

LET US KNOW: LETTERS@MOTORSPORT-NEWS.CO.UK

CHRISTMAS QUIZ ANSWERS

General knowledge

- 1 Seven
- 2 Hockenheim, Germany
- 3 ART Grand Prix
- 4 Sebastien Buemi
- 5 Rally Italy
- 6 Graham Rahal
- 7 SMP Racing
- 8 Andrew Jordan
- 9 Luciano Bacheta
- 10 Jonathan Browne

Multiple choice

- 1 B) 511
- 2 C) Jan Lammers
- 3 C) Hungaroring

4 A) Porsche and Mercedes

- 5 A) 380
- 6 C) 227.353mph
- 7 B) Peugeot
- 8 C) Matt Neal
- 9 B) Nick Tandy
- 10 C) Five

Crossword:

Down 1 Zandvoort; 2 (Sam) Bird; 4 (Petter) Solberg; 6 (Andreas) Mikkelsen; 7 VSCC; 9 British.

Across 3 (Oliver) Askew; 5 Singapore; 8 Thirteen; 10 (Marty) McCormack; 11 (Julian) Godfrey; 12 (Valtteri) Bottas; 13 (George) Russell; 14 Hyundai; 15 Three.



Schumacher won F2 race in Hungary



Russell failed to score in maiden F1 season

NEXT WEEK

OUT WEDNESDAY, JANUARY 8 2020

Autosport Show

2020 PREVIEW

The stars and cars attending the season-opening event



WHAT NEXT FOR THE WRC?

BEHIND ANDREW JORDAN'S NEW BTCC DEAL

PLUS: ALL THE USUAL NEWS, VIEWS AND REPORTS

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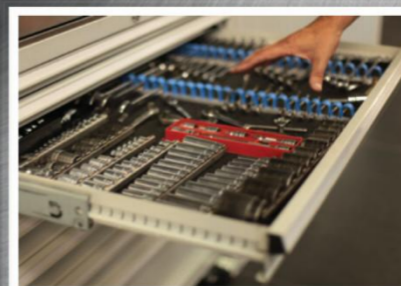


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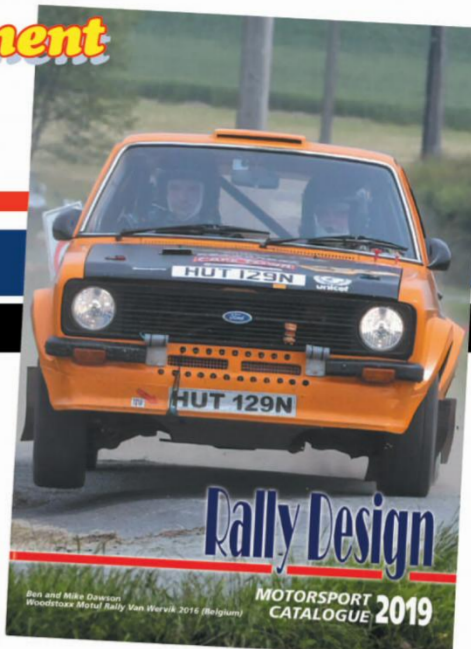
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